

Libraries Annual Report 2007/2008



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**West Lothian
Council**

welcome

West Lothian Library Services have been working hard to meet the needs of our customers. We have been listening to what you, our users, want of our services and have endeavoured to provide that. We have introduced short term loan top twenty titles in our libraries and delivered training on the new emergent online technologies. We have created an integrated Council Information Service and Library in Blackburn to make meeting your needs easier. Libraries are meeting your needs, moving with the times, but at our core, the passion for fiction, information and informal learning opportunities, as we have over the last 153 years in Scotland.



Jeannette Castle
Library Services Manager

foreword

In a changing world, libraries, museums and archives have a relevant and important part to play in our lives. In times of economic difficulty libraries offer a free service, which allows people free access to the wide range of fiction and factual books published. Staff are there to assist people in finding the right information at the right times. Our libraries, museums and archives are important gems available to us all.



Councillor Jim Walker
Spokesperson for Cultural Services

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the library service



There are 14 **public** libraries across West Lothian, plus 2 **mobile** libraries, a **reference** library within West Lothian College, and a library specialising in **local history**. The service also provides an **Archive** and **Records Management** Centre and five **museum** display areas and supports three independent museums. All of these facilities are open to the public.

A **housebound service** brings library services to those people who are unable to come to a library building. West Lothian Library Services, in common with all library services across the UK, follows the trend of falling books issues, but also finds increasing numbers of people coming into libraries to use the Lifelearn PCs and to access **online information** sources.

Libraries increasingly find that they play a more relevant role in people's lives be it for reading, learning, information seeking, online services or leisure and seek to strengthen that relevance.

Blackburn Connected was launched early in 2007 and is the first an integrated model of delivery for Library Services and Council Information Services.

Carmondean Connected was opened in May 2008 which brings together a library, CIS video conferencing and payment facility and a Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Centre.

The Library Service endeavours to provide effective and efficient services for all ages. Our mission is to provide for the learning, leisure and cultural requirements of people who live, work or have an interest in West Lothian.

We do this by:

- providing a comprehensive range of books and related material
- providing access to the Internet and electronic resources
- delivering the service through a well trained workforce.

The Service aims:

- to provide books and materials which meet the expectations of customers
- to provide library facilities which are well designed, comfortable and appropriate to the needs of each community
- to actively seek the opinions of customers and to respond appropriately to their expressed needs
- to have in place meaningful performance indicators which are monitored at regular intervals
- to provide for the information needs of the local population
- to maintain usage of the service
- to have in place a well trained, highly motivated staff.

organisational chart



library services for adults

A total of 38,777 people are active library users who have either borrowed stock from or used a computer in a library within the year. This represents a 8% decrease on the previous year.

Issues to public library customers fell yet again by a disappointing 2.5% to 880,706 items, but DVD issues rose by over 3%.

Visits to libraries also fell by 14.5% from the previous year, some of which can be accounted for by libraries closing for major refurbishments.

Percentage of requested books supplied within 15 days = 56%

Number of enquiries answered = 69751

Ten libraries (Almondbank, Bathgate, Blackburn, Broxburn, Carmondean, East Calder, Lanthorn, West Calder, Whitburn and Linlithgow) hire out feature film DVDs overnight. In addition, collections of Classic, World Cinema and Bollywood DVD titles have been rotated in other libraries, and these are loaned out for a week at a time.

These DVD rental collections are self financing and all income is used to buy stock.

Three libraries (Carmondean, East Calder and Linlithgow) hire out rock and pop music on compact disc. As with the DVDs, these collections are self financing.

All libraries continue to work with the Adult Literacy Partnership have been participating in the BBC's Raw and the Big Plus campaigns, promoting adult learning, numeracy and literacy. There are special collections of books now available for emergent readers and staff are able to refer customers to the specialist services offered by literacy partners.

Some major refurbishment has take place in libraries over the year. Almondbank Library closed at Christmas for major refurbishment and will reopen mid October 2008 Whitburn Library benefited from major work on the roof, new windows installed, repainting and recarpeting.

Fauldhouse Library has been closed to make way for the building of a new partnership centre with a new library, and services have been moved to St Andrew's Church Hall for the interim 60-week period.

Carmondean Library also had a major refurbishment to include a Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service and CIS Connected services.

33 complaints were received by Library Services over the year. The average response time to these complaints was 3 days.

Customer comments

"Dual language books very helpful."

"A wonderful service! I see a book in the Scotsman, ask for it and you can always get it for me."

"Pleased to see the changes in the library with DVD's and top-twenty books."



library services for children

10,322 children were attracted into libraries to take part in 951 promotional events such as Chatterbooks reader groups, after school clubs, Haggis hurling parties and seed planting sessions.

There were 50 Chatterbooks Bookgroup meetings with an average of 6 to 12 children taking part in each meeting, and more if school classes were involved.

151 pre-5s Bounce and Tickle/ Bookcrawl in libraries events took place.

Libraries held weekly storytime sessions in all libraries attracting an average of 5 to 10 children each time.

148 class visits were hosted by local libraries with an average of 20 children in each class.

10 authors visited libraries to speak to children and 265 children attended these activities.

469 children participated in the "Big Wild Read" summer reading scheme.

Over 9,000 new books were added to the children's stock of over 50,000 items.

8,688 entries were received from 55 schools to the Young Writer of the Year' competition, which aims to increase pupil interest and skill in writing.

Children were the hosts and presenters of the prize giving red carpet event in 2007 and there were 40 prizewinners.

Our Bookstart co-ordinator, who delivers a "Books for Babies" service to encourage literacy and numeracy in pre-school children, handed out 2080 Bookstart baby bags to health visitors and partners for distribution to parents of babies aged from four months to one year. 2364 Bookstart plus bags were gifted and 2118 Treasure Chests.

1895 parents and carers attended the Rhymetime Bounce and Tickle and Storytelling sessions over the last year. Approximately 230 Bookstart Babies joined the library service.

406 children voted for the best new Scottish children's book in the Royal Mail BRAW awards.

The number of resources borrowed from the schools' special collections has increased dramatically over the past twelve months (issues have gone up 60%) Requests for Polish dual language material continue to increase and now account for well over a quarter (27%) of all enquiries made. Requests for dual language Polish materials have increased from 74 in 2006-2007 to 91 in 2007 – 2008. 2733 resources were issued from the Support for learning and multicultural collections.



other services provided by libraries

Joint CIS/Library – Carmondean Connected

A new model of CIS/Library integration has been developed for the busiest of West Lothian Libraries, Carmondean Connected. Funding from Macmillan Cancer Support has been received to build a Information and Support unit within the library, and there will also be a “teletalk” facility for customers to ink with the Customer Contact Centre. A payment machine will be installed for the payment of council tax, council house rent etc.

Blackburn Connected

Blackburn Connected’s first report card is testament to the success of this project. From surveys we have 100% customer satisfaction rates and 92.31% of customers were seen within ten minutes of arriving at the facility. Enquiries have increased by 38.4% and PC use by 57.8%. In a climate of decreasing issues UK wide, those at Blackburn have increased by 1.2%. The staff are also involved in outreach work to St John’s Hospital with advice and support to Macmillan Centre patients.

Reference Library

The partnership agreement with West Lothian College provides access to the reference library and information services for public use. College staff dealt with 4,420 reference queries and issued 6,227 books.

heritage services

Heritage

The Local History librarian hosted 19 group visits, events and workshops, issued 49 schools’ packs, gave 9 talks to local groups and societies, and was involved in the publication of 2 books and 3 new primary schools’ packs.

Museums staff issued 1,552 items from the Reminiscence box loan scheme, and displayed 22 exhibitions at 5 museums venues.

The Museums Service staff presented object handling sessions to 1,571 schoolchildren, an increase of 5% on the previous year.

Health Initiatives

The Books on Prescription project has been developed as a partnership between NHS Lothian Community Health and Care Partnership and West Lothian Library Services. Health Professionals in West Lothian now have the option to prescribe self help reading materials as an alternative or in addition to prescribing medicine to patients. Topics include anxiety, depression, stress, obsessive compulsive disorder, and childhood bereavement, and there are plans to include other topics in the future. The project started in March 2007 and during its first year 1155 books were issued

Outreach

39 residents at 4 residential homes and customers of several day centres were supplied with outreach services.

182 homebound customers had 6,227 books and story tapes delivered to their own homes by library staff or volunteers.

18,012 books were issued to class teachers to supplement school resources required to teach the curriculum in primary schools. In total, 1,679 requests for boxes of resources were received from schools, of which 79% were fulfilled.

Customer comments

“Thank you for some very successful topic boxes this year. They are much appreciated and make a real contribution to the children’s progress.”

“I like this one stop idea.”

Customer comments

“The slavery display is fascinating, especially the links to West Lothian people.”

“I always enjoy coming in to the library and seeing if there is a new exhibition on show. And on such a wide variety of subjects!”

computers in libraries

All our libraries offer free use of computers, with Internet access as well as scanning and printing facilities. The number of computers available at each location varies from one in our smallest libraries to eleven in the largest.

The computers within libraries were used by 4.5% of the population of West Lothian.

Use of computers increased for the sixth year running, by 2% on the previous year, with 93,584 sessions being booked.

220 courses were run either by library staff or by Community Learning and Development staff. 275 learners were involved this year.

One-to-one help from volunteers is also available, and a total of 92 "buddy" sessions took place over the year.

NETT (New Emergent Technological Tools) courses were run for all library staff and for customers, and the courseware for this Scottish Government Funded project is now available online on the Get Online and Learn website.

Average monthly use of the four WiFi networks set up in Linlithgow, Carmondean, Whitburn and Bathgate libraries is 277 hours per month.

Customers were able to access the information contained in Encyclopedia Britannica, KnowUK and NewsUK from their home computers through the online library catalogue at <http://webpac.westlothian.gov.uk> under the Online Resources tab.

Customer comments

"Ann has a very good manner. I never feel silly and she explains things clearly to me."

"Marlyn was very helpful and took time to explain the various skills you need to operate a computer."

"I found the course enjoyable and the staff very helpful. This in turn gave me confidence in myself. Thank you."



deployment of resources

The public library service in West Lothian is provided through 14 static libraries and two mobiles. A headquarters building in Blackburn houses most other services, including the Local History library, the resource service for schools, and the Museums Service. The Archives and Records Centre is in Dunlop Square on Deans Industrial Estate. The Public Reference Library is provided on an agency basis by West Lothian College in Livingston.

Staffing in Library Services, Museums and Archives

As some staff work part-time, the full-time equivalents employed in each area of Library Services are shown below.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Public libraries | 38.4 |
| Mobile libraries | 3.3 |
| Information services | 2.7 |
| Local history | 1.5 |
| Requests | 1 |
| Delivery vans | 2 |
| Bibliographic & schools services* | 7.4 |
| Archives & records management | 3 |
| Museums | 1.5 |
| Management team | 5 |
| Marketing | 1 |
| Systems administration | 1.5 |
| Administration | 1.5 |
| Total | 69.8 |

* Incorporating the services to schools, support for learning, outreach to residential homes, and cataloguing.

Cost of Library Services, Museums and Archives

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Revenue expenditure | |
| Employees | £1,723,522 |
| Property | £264,691 |
| Transport | £58,958 |
| Supplies & services | £235,791 |
| Misc. payments for services* | £121,184 |
| Capital charges | £599,570 |
| Council support services | £ n/a |
| Less income | £284,351 |
| Sub-total | £2,719,365 |
| Capital expenditure | |
| Books & materials fund | £401,000 |
| Purchase of computers | £4,000 |
| Sub-total | £405,000 |
| Total | £3,124,365 |

* Payments made to support the independent museums in West Lothian, to West Lothian College for reference services, and to the Volunteer Centre West Lothian for running a library service to the homebound.