

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
Library and Resident Contact (L&RC)

Home Library Service Policy

This policy is applicable to Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Library & Resident Contact Service

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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CONTENTS

1. TITLE	3
2. POLICY STATEMENT	3
3. PURPOSE	3
4. SCOPE	3
4.1 Home Library service policy	3
5. Process of Service	3
5.1 Summary of how it works	3
5.2 Accessing the service	4
5.3 Library Membership and loan status	4
5.4 Home library service volunteers	4
5.5 Home Library service volunteer role	4
5.6 Induction for volunteers	5
5.7 Support for volunteers	5
6. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS	5
6.1 Feedback	5
7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	5
8. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW	5

REVISION RECORD

Date	Version	Revision description
October 2021	1.1	First draft

1. TITLE

Home Library Service Policy

2. POLICY STATEMENT

As a library authority, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead has a statutory duty under the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act to provide a public library service and to ensure that it is comprehensive and efficient. “It shall be the duty of every library authority to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof...”

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1964/75>

3. PURPOSE

This policy covers all aspects of the provision of the Home Library service that is a public library service strand of the Library and Resident Contact Service. It includes what the service is, who it seeks to serve, how it is delivered, and how impact assessments will be carried out to measure the needs, rights and expectations of individual users and communities.

4. SCOPE

4.1 Home Library Service

Home Library Service is positioned to cover the geographic remit of the RBWM. The service aims to ensure all residents can access library services regardless of mobility, disability, distance from a static library or any other barrier. The Home Library service is run by library staff and delivered by library volunteers.

5. PROCESS OF SERVICE

5.1. Summary of how it works

Readers can reserve their library requests online / by email / by telephone or by telling library staff or allocated library volunteers what they require. Library volunteers or staff may also select books for readers. Books are picked by staff or volunteers and issued onto mobile library volunteer accounts. If items are selected by staff on behalf of volunteers, issued items are despatched to static library locations for allocated volunteer collections. Volunteers are informed by email that their readers’ book packs are ready for collection. Readers and volunteers arrange mutually suitable appointment times for visits. In pandemic circumstances these visits may be limited to a door-step approach.

Volunteers collect / return the prepared book bags from / to the most convenient static library location.

5.2. Accessing the service

Potential home library service readers can contact any static library location to communicate their interest in the service. Library staff on duty will take their details and pass them to the Home Library service team. Potential home library service readers can also go online to complete the web-form [Select and Deliver / Home library service | Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead \(rbwm.gov.uk\)](https://www.rbwm.gov.uk) The Home Library service team will make contact via an initial telephone call. During this call, reader's preferences are discussed and an appointment is made to visit the reader, which may include the introduction of the allocated volunteer.

5.3. Library membership and loan status

Home Library service readers and assigned volunteers are identified under the Mobile category status. They will have library loans of at least six weeks and there are no overdue charges. Renewals are subject to items not being requested by other readers and dependent on availability in the wider stock system.

5.4. Home Library service volunteers

Volunteers are recruited and selected for their local proximity to the community areas they agree to deliver within. Volunteers must be adults. Volunteers must also demonstrate the capacity to engage with readers at a social and empathetic level. Volunteers must be interviewed and have the remit of the role explained to them before acceptance. Volunteers must have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) notification certificate that has been processed by the Library Volunteering and Community Development Officer.

5.5. Home Library service volunteer role

Home Library service volunteers collect and deliver book requests / packs to housebound RBWM residents unable to access a static library location. Volunteers are encouraged to take the opportunity to converse at a social level with readers during the Home Library meeting time slots. They are also able to gather feedback on reading experiences of delivered books. The purpose is to develop rapport, mitigate the effects of social isolation and vulnerability. and update the effectiveness of book stock for the service.

5.6. Induction for volunteers

Home Library service volunteers undertake an induction that includes a presentation and explanation of a Confidentiality Agreement, Volunteer's Agreement, Safeguarding Information and Guidance, and the Health and Safety protocol for Lone Working staff and volunteers. The volunteer must read and give their signature for the Confidentiality Agreement and Volunteer's Agreement. The signed documents are scanned and kept as an electronic record, and the hardcopy originals are retained by the volunteer.

5.7. Support for volunteers

Volunteers are supported by library staff in the ability to optimally deliver the library service to their assigned readers. This will be facilitated via regular feedback between readers, volunteers and library staff regarding reading experience and book selections.

Library staff must carry out initial introductions of volunteers and allocated readers before service commences. These must take place as face-to-face visits between library staff, volunteers and readers.

Volunteers can walk or drive to carry out the Home Library service. The Library is unable to compensate mileage expenses when volunteers utilize their personal vehicle to carry out this service. Home Library service volunteers can be allocated at least one reader and will be matched with more housebound readers as mutually agreed between readers, volunteers and library staff supporting volunteers. Allocation evaluations are based on volunteer-reader fit in terms of proximity of locality, diverse reading interests and an interest in helping to reduce social isolation and contribute to improving housebound readers' quality of life.

6. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

6.1. Feedback

The service has a built-in feedback process – staff are in contact with readers every three weeks via email or telephone to check/confirm book requests. Staff are also in regular contact with volunteers via email or telephone and face-face at the respective library locations volunteers collect and return their book deliveries. Customer service feedback cards may be handed out annually. These will be attached to book deliveries and collected by volunteers. Digital feedback can be given at any time using the Council's compliments, concerns and feedback process: <https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/council-and-democracy/contact-us/compliments-concerns-and-feedback> . All feedback will contribute to an on-going cycle of learning and adjusting to how to optimally deliver the service and experience for readers, volunteers and staff.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following roles are responsible for the implementation of this policy within the relevant strands of the Service:

- Library & Resident Contact Lead
- Library and Resident Contact Team Leaders
- Library Volunteering and Community Development Officer

8. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

- Library and Resident Services Management Team and the Cabinet Member responsible for Libraries will review the implementation of the policy.