

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Library and Resident Contact (L&RC)

# Physical Presentation and Appearance of Service Standard

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

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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<b>Contact number:</b> 01628 796979	<b>Next review date:</b> 2025	<b>Status:</b> Drafft

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REVISION RECORD

Date	Version	Revision description
May 2002	1	Issued
Oct 2005	2	Reviewed
Aug 2010	3	Reviewed
Nov 2013	4	Reviewed
Mar 2014	5	Reviewed
Dec 2018	6	Reviewed
Sept 2021	7.1	Reviewed

## **1. TITLE**

Physical Presentation and Appearance of Service Standard

## **2. POLICY STATEMENT**

This policy covers the physical appearance of all service points where Library & Resident Contact Services are available to customers

## **3. PURPOSE**

It is important that the physical presentation of a service point, the stock, staff and equipment should create a welcoming and professional image so that customers from all sectors of the community should feel comfortable and at ease.

## **4. SCOPE**

This applies to the following:

- Library buildings
- Container

## **5. OBJECTIVE**

Services must appear friendly but also professional, clearly indicating the range of services available. Consistency in image across all service points is essential. The Access Policy is also relevant to this standard.

## **6. POLICY DETAILS**

### **6.1 External appearance**

The exterior of service points is a crucial factor in affecting the impression of services and in influencing new customers. It is important that all external parts of service points should be kept clean, tidy and in good repair. All Health and Safety standards are to be met. This will include

- Absence of rubbish
- Absence of graffiti or other defacements
- Fabric of buildings kept in good repair [eg window frames, steps]
- Windows clean
- Grounds well maintained with grass cut, hedges clipped etc.
- Container to be regularly washed

It is essential that public buildings should be accessible to all as required by the Equalities Act 2010. These aspects are covered in the Access Policy but it is important to note that visual factors will affect how accessible the building appears to customers.

The view through windows into the interior of the building is also crucial as this represents an advertisement for the service even when service points are closed. Areas on view may include public areas and staff work rooms and rest rooms. Care must be taken to ensure that shelves and counters are left as tidy as possible on closing. Staff and work areas must appear well organised, with washing up and food cleared away. Curtains and blinds should be neatly arranged and plants well cared for.

External signs and guiding are essential if customers are to be able to locate service points easily. Ideally there should be guiding in place for library buildings from town/village centres, local transport links and car parks. The library building itself must be adequately signed.

Where possible the Select and Deliver stops should have bus stop style signs at route stopping points, indicating when the Service will be at the stop.

## **6.2 Internal appearance**

The interior of the service point should appear as attractive, welcoming and tidy as possible. It should not appear cluttered and there should be space around shelving and furniture in order to ensure ease of access.

The interior of the building should be in good decorative order. Carpets should not be worn or damaged in such a manner to look unsightly or cause a hazard. The inside of the building must be kept clean with floor coverings cleaned/vacuumed, shelves dusted etc.

Levels of lighting are described in the Access Policy

Furniture and equipment

All furniture must be kept clean [with no stains or graffiti] and in a good state of repair so that it is safe to use. It should be adequate and appropriate for the purpose for which it is intended. Where possible furniture should be coordinated with and in style with other furnishings.

Shelving should conform to the Access Policy and standards. Books and other items should be shelved upright with face-on display used as much as possible.

Equipment must be suitably and safely housed and, if available for public use, with easy to understand instructions made readily available.

Seating should conform to the Access Policy and standards.

## **6.3 Signs and guiding**

Ample, clear, attractive and informative guiding is essential if customers are to be able to use stock and services effectively. Guiding must be of a professional standard with no hand written signs. It is essential that all basic services should be clearly marked.

Any charges relating to services must also be clearly displayed.

## **6.4 Staff pods and enquiry desks**

Surfaces of pods and enquiry desks should be clean, tidy and uncluttered. An appropriate balance should be maintained between allowing the maximum space possible for interaction with customers and allowing enough space for the necessary tools and equipment for the job. This is to ensure that customers do not feel there is a barrier between them and staff.

Pods and enquiry desks must appear well organised, including any shelving or storage space behind them. Storage should not be allowed to overflow into public areas and Health and safety requirements must be observed at all times.

## **6.5 Notices and posters**

Notices should **only** be affixed to boards and surfaces specifically designed for this purpose.

'What's On' folders should be available for information that it is not possible to display.

All notices displayed on behalf of the service must be printed in the house style. No notices hand written by staff may be used.

Signs professionally mounted on windows to be seen from outside should relate only to services offered within that service point. They must be replaced when faded.

Out of date notices must not be displayed. Those which do not refer to any particular event should be dated on receipt so that it is possible to rotate displays effectively. [See the Displays and Exhibitions Policy for priorities on which notices to display.]

## **6.6 Leaflets**

Leaflets should always be displayed in purpose made racks, which ensure they do not slide down or flop forward. Where there is space for a range of leaflets to be displayed, these should be organised into categories and, if possible the racks labelled accordingly. Leaflets must not be left in piles on flat surfaces.

Racks should be checked regularly to ensure that out of date or tatty items are replaced and displays are refreshed. Different leaflets should not be "displayed" in the same "pocket" of a rack. [See Displays and exhibitions Policy for priorities on which leaflets to display.]

## **6.7 Dress and personal appearance**

The personal appearance of staff is an important factor in conveying a suitable impression of the service to customers. They should, therefore, appear smart and well groomed at all times, bearing in mind that they should present a friendly and approachable image to all sectors of the public. Clothing which is designed primarily for sports or casual wear is not suitable for work eg track suits, trainers, T-shirts, sweat shirts, blue jeans or other clothing with logos [except those designed specifically for the service.]

Health and safety aspects should also be considered as each employee has a responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 'to take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself/herself and of other persons'. For this reason, flip-flops, bare feet and open shoes are not permitted.

It is helpful for customers and other members of staff, if all staff are readily identifiable as such and also named for ease of reference. For this reason staff should wear name badges

in the corporate style. These should be worn so that customers can see them easily, even if working behind a desk or counter. Volunteers should also wear a corporate badge or lanyard.

Staff involved in work not directly dealing with members of the public should remember that they may be called upon unexpectedly for counter or enquiry desk duty, or simply to walk through public areas. The above guidelines are, therefore, equally applicable.

There may be occasions or situations when staff reasonably need to wear clothing which is not according to the Standard. Managers must use their discretion in these circumstances and advise staff accordingly. Examples of such situations may include extremely hot or cold conditions or when a service point is closed for relocation or stock move requiring a variation to normal duties.

It is impossible to give close guidance regarding dress as this is a subjective issue which is also affected by fashions and the demands of varying work situations. There is also a benefit in reflecting all styles and types of dress adopted by the full range of our customers, in order to make them feel welcome, and recognise an affinity with some of our staff. This part of the Standard should be regarded as a guide for managers in order for them to assess and agree with their staff what is acceptable. The following items are given as a guide to items which would be considered unsuitable:

- Torn, patched or dishevelled clothing
- Dirty or stained items
- Blue or faded Jeans
- Leggings
- Jogging bottoms and track suits
- Clothes with slogans
- Very tight or revealing clothing e.g. short skirts, low cut or cropped tops, see-through items, strapless tops or dresses, vests.
- Shorts [unless long and tailored]
- Also considered unacceptable would be anything, which, in the opinion of the local line manager, contributes to a deliberately conspicuous or shocking appearance.

## **7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Library and Resident Contact Lead

Library and Resident Contact Team Leaders

## **8. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

Library and Resident Services Management Team and the Deputy Leader of the Council, Corporate & Resident Services, Culture & Heritage and Windsor; Armed Forces Champion