

Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
Leisure, Cultural & Property Services
CUSTOMER SERVICES UNIT
Library & Information Services

R3

POLICIES AND STANDARDS

READER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Issued: March 2002
Review: August 2005

CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	4
2.	Executive Summary	5

Part A

3.	The Rationale and Context for the Reader Development Strategy	7
3.1	The Strategic Importance of Library and Information Services	7
3.2	The Rationale for a Reader Centred Approach	7
3.2.i	A Popular Activity	8
3.2.ii	The Benefits of Reading for the Individual	8
3.2.iii	The Benefits of Reading to the Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	8
3.2.iv	The Wider Benefits of Reading	9
3.3	The Reader Development Strategy and Cross Cutting Policy Directives	9
3.3.i	The Annual Library Plan	9
3.3.i.a	Mission and Aims	10
3.3.ii	ICT Strategy	10
3.3.iii	Public Library Standards	10
3.3.iv	Corporate Objectives	11
3.3.iv.a	The Community Strategy	11
3.3.iv.b	Corporate ICT Plan	11
3.3.v	Best Value	12
3.4	Other Core Areas of Influence	12
3.4.i	Social Inclusion	12
3.4.ii	Life Long Learning	12
3.5	Local and Regional Cultural Strategies	13
3.5.i	Local Cultural Planning	13
3.5.ii	Regional Cultural Planning	13

Part B

4	Aim and Objectives	14
4.1	Aim	14
4.2	Objectives	14
4.2.i	Focusing on the Reader	14
4.2.ii	Developing Resources	14
4.2.iii	Developing Services	15
4.2.iv	Raising the Profile of the Service	15
4.2.v	Effective Monitoring and Evaluation	15
4.3	Anticipated Outcomes	15

Part C

5.	Action Plan	17
5.1	Focusing on the Reader	17
5.1.i	Placing the Reader at the Centre of an Integrated Framework	17
5.1.ii	Responding to the Needs of the Reader	18
5.1.iii	Building the Reading and Library Audience	18
5.1.iv	Creating a Sense of Ownership of the Services Provided	20
5.2	Developing Resources	21
5.2.i	Creating an Informed, Skilled and Confident Staff	21
5.2.ii	Building on the Relationship Between Stock Selection and Stock Management	22
5.2.iii	Ensuring that Library Resources are Accessible	22
5.2.iv	Developing the Relationship Between ICT and Reader Development	23
5.3	Developing Services	23
5.3.i	Developing Integrated Reader Services	23
5.4	Raising the Profile of the Service	24
5.4.i	Advocating the Value of Reader Development	25
5.4.ii	Developing Strategic Partnerships for the Service	25
5.4.iii	Local and Regional Planning Processes	25
5.4.iv	Developing Stronger Links with the Media	25
5.5	Effective Monitoring and Evaluation	26
5.5.i	Aims, Objectives and Outcomes	26
5.5.ii	Qualitative and Quantitative Evaluation Strategies	26
5.5.iii	Using Evaluation Effectively	26
6	Action Plan - Tasks by Year	27

Appendices

Appendix One		
	Definitions	36
Appendix Two		
	Evidence for the Benefits of Reading to the Individual	37
Appendix Three		
	Reading and the Core Areas of Influence	39
Appendix Four		
	Corporate and Library Service Objectives	42

1. INTRODUCTION

The Windsor and Maidenhead Library and Information Services' Reader Development Strategy is made up of three sections.

Part A outlines the philosophical and policy framework for the Strategy. It defines the implications of the Strategy in relation to current thinking about the role and value of reading and its relevance in the context of the objectives of cross cutting policy directives.

Part B defines the aim and objectives of the Strategy.

Part C outlines a five year Action Plan which represents a route map to achieving the aim and objectives indicated in Part B.

The appendices supporting these three sections outline the terms that provide the defining boundaries for the Strategy, advocacy evidence for the importance of reading to the individual and its impact on core areas of influence and the broader context of corporate and Library Service objectives.

The Strategy has been designed so that the three main sections of the document and the appendices, particularly the advocacy evidence of appendix two and appendix three, can be used independently and for different purposes as well as together as a whole.

WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES READER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 The Rationale for the Reader Development Strategy

Windsor and Maidenhead Library and Information Services recognise the strategic value of reader development and the importance of placing the reader at the centre of an integrated vision for the Service. The Reader Development Strategy is a means of building a coherent reader centred approach that integrates the development and delivery of reader services with efficient and effective resource management. It is also a means of raising the profile of the Royal Borough's Library Service and reinforcing its value as a community resource and cultural service provider with significant partnership potential.

For the purposes of this Strategy, Reader Development other wise referred to as reader support or the reader focused approach, means active intervention to open up reading choices, to increase readers' enjoyment and confidence and to offer opportunities for people to share their reading experiences. It also involves building the reading audience.

2.2 The Value of Reading

The Reader Development Strategy recognises the importance of reading as a democratic and popular cultural activity with benefits for the individual and the community. It also acknowledges that reading and reader support has an important role to play in supporting key priorities shaping the local and national policy agenda.

The Strategy acknowledges the contribution of reader development to:

- Library and Information Services' aims and objectives
- Corporate objectives
- Other significant policy frameworks including:
 - Life long learning
 - Social inclusion
- Local and regional cultural planning

2.3 Aim of the Strategy

To promote equal access to the enjoyment of reading and the literacy skills necessary for active involvement in cultural, democratic and economic activity.

2.4 Objectives

This will be achieved by:

- Focusing on the reader
- Developing resources
- Developing services
- Raising the profile of the service
- Effective monitoring and evaluation

2.5 Anticipated Outcomes

- The creation of quality reader resources and services that increase the enjoyment of reading for more readers and satisfy cultural, learning and leisure aspirations.
- Greater staff awareness of the reader development role and ownership of the reader centred framework for the Service.
- An increased library audience served in the library and in the community.
- A better understanding of the needs of Royal Borough residents resulting in improved access to library resources and more targeted support for individuals and groups.
- Greater participation for Borough residents in the democratic process resulting in an increased sense of ownership of reader services and awareness of the library as a community focal point.
- Improved quality of life and support for a community that is literate, informed and articulate, imaginative and creative, engaged in an accessible and democratic cultural activity, open to a range of different cultural, social and recreational experiences, healthier and more relaxed, tolerant and understanding of difference, socially inclusive and with a firm sense of local as well as regional and national identity.
- An increased profile and visibility for Library and Information Services and greater recognition of the value and far reaching implications of its reader development role.
- Greater reader focused joint working and partnership development within the unitary authority structure and also across a range of other sectors.
- More effective systems of monitoring and evaluating reader development activity and its impact.

Part A

WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES READER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

3. THE RATIONALE AND CONTEXT FOR THE READER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

3.1 The Strategic Importance of Library and Information Services

Reading is an important and popular activity. Providing free access to reading for everyone is a core public library function making public libraries a focal point for the community. The library service has a unique relationship with a vast and democratic community of readers. This relationship makes it a potentially valuable partner for a range of organisations, agencies and individuals across the statutory, commercial and voluntary sectors. For these reasons, reader development work by the public library service has implications for local and national policy priorities.

Windsor and Maidenhead Library and Information Services' Reader Development Strategy builds on the importance of its special relationship with the reader to support an integrated approach to service development and delivery, to strengthen and broaden library partnerships and to reinforce and raise the profile of its contribution to the corporate vision and to the priorities of key cross cutting policy directives.

3.2 The Rationale for a Reader Centred Approach

Windsor and Maidenhead Library and Information Services recognise the strategic value of reader development and the importance of placing the reader at the centre of an integrated vision for the Service. The Reader Development Strategy is a means of building a coherent reader centred approach that integrates the development and delivery of reader services with efficient and effective resource management. It is also a means of raising the profile of the Royal Borough's Library Service and reinforcing its value as a community resource and cultural service provider with significant partnership potential.

For the purposes of this Strategy, Reader Development other wise referred to as reader support or the reader focused approach, means active intervention to open up reading choices, to increase readers' enjoyment and confidence and to offer opportunities for people to share their reading experiences. It also involves building the reading audience.

The emphasis of the Reader Development Strategy is upon responding appropriately to the needs of the community. It will enable Windsor and Maidenhead Library and Information Services to provide the best possible support for a diverse reading community through active development of the reader and active promotion of the library as a community gateway to a range of reading material.

The far-reaching implications of the Reader Development Strategy become apparent when considered in the context of the popularity and value of the act of reading.

3.2.i A Popular Activity

Reading is a significant cultural activity. Nearly all people in Britain make use of reading materials with fiction and non-fiction books read in 90% of households. Despite competition from new media and increasing pressure on leisure time, few people think they are reading less now than five years ago.

Public libraries are key providers of reading to the community. 60% of British households borrow books from the library. From the point of view of the reader, libraries fulfil a unique role in offering the opportunity for risk free experimentation with books they might not otherwise read. Readers also borrow books because they can't afford to buy them¹ or they haven't room to store them at home. Some readers, particularly those in older age groups, feel that libraries offer a less intimidating atmosphere than bookshops with more helpful and approachable staff. They also feel they are more convenient for them to visit.²

By focusing upon the reader, the Royal Borough's Library Service is thus serving the community as a whole. It is responding to the cultural needs of a broad and diverse range of users in a way that is unrivaled by any other cultural service provider. This means that the Library and Information Service also has a significant role to play in reaching disadvantaged, difficult to reach and otherwise socially excluded groups.

3.2.ii The Benefits of Reading for the Individual

Reading is seen as a special activity. It also provides connections with other people for those who discuss what they read.

Reading benefits the individual. It relieves stress, is a form of escapism and a chance to use the imagination. It also enables the reader to find things out. Reading exercises the muscles of the imagination, fuels creativity and supports individual growth, learning and understanding. It empowers the individual and enables them to see the world from different perspectives.³

3.2.iii The Benefits of Reading to the Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Windsor and Maidenhead Library and Information Services' support for the reader is thus serving an important role in raising the quality of local life by developing healthy and informed individuals and an inclusive community.

¹ Just under half of the Royal Borough's customers are unwaged. *Report on the Public Libraries User Survey, March 2000*, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, February 2001. P.10.

² The rest of the data in this section is taken from *Reading the Situation, Book Reading, Buying and Borrowing Habits in Britain*, The Reading Partnership and Book Marketing Ltd, March 2000.

³ See Appendix two for evidence of the benefits of reading for the individual.

Specific benefits to the Borough of reader development include support for a community that is:

- Literate
- Informed and articulate, imaginative and creative
- Satisfying its leisure and recreational aspirations
- Engaged in an accessible and democratic cultural activity
- Open to a range of different experiences- cultural, social and recreational
- Healthier and more relaxed
- Tolerant and understanding of difference
- Socially inclusive and integrated
- With a firm sense of local as well as regional and national identity

3.2.iv The Wider Benefits of Reading

Reading and reader support makes a significant contribution to core areas of influence shaping the local and national policy agenda. There are strong arguments⁴ for the role of reading in relation to these priorities and therefore for the important role that the Reader Development Strategy plays in supporting key policy directives.

3.3 The Reader Development Strategy and Cross Cutting Policy Frameworks

The Reader Development Strategy will enable Windsor and Maidenhead Library and Information Services to deliver effectively in a number of contexts. It will support the Service in realising its own purpose, in achieving Best Value and in contributing to corporate objectives as embodied in the Royal Borough's Community Strategy. It will also enable it to support other important cross cutting policy directives.

3.3.i The Annual Library Plan

DCMS planning guidance for 2001 identifies reader development as a key influence to which the public library service must respond. The Windsor and Maidenhead Reader Development Strategy meets this requirement by demonstrating that reader development is integrated and sustainable. It addresses the implications of a reader focused approach for service and resource development, internal communication including the need to cascade best practice and external advocacy. It also responds to the requirement to develop effective systems to assess the impact of reader development in both qualitative and quantitative terms.

The Reader Development Strategy cannot operate as a stand-alone document just as the Library Service's work with readers is not an isolated strand of activity separate from other functions. This is clearly demonstrated by the way in which the Strategy underpins the Annual Library Plan and the service framework it describes.

⁴ Appendix three.

3.3.a.i Mission and Aims

The Reader Development Strategy contributes directly to achieving the purpose of Windsor and Maidenhead Library and Information Services.

Its aim is to ensure full and equal access to reading and to improve the quality of the reading experience offered to the reader. It thereby supports the Service in its mission to enhance the quality of life for all residents of the Borough enabling them to reach their potential and to develop their cultural, learning and leisure aspirations.

The Strategy underpins Service objectives by promoting the enjoyment of reading and literacy skills that in turn support active involvement in cultural, democratic and economic activity. Reader development also, however, contributes to social, cultural and community development by supporting the role of the library as a focal point for life long learning and as a community centre offering open access to books and the information they contain. It is a means of promoting equality of opportunity and social inclusion, of fostering partnership development and of regularly and actively consulting with users.⁵

3.3.ii ICT Strategy

The Reader Development Strategy directly addresses the recommendations of the Library and Information Services' ICT Strategy by exploring the use of ICT to increase access to information about reader services, promotions and events and to support service delivery.

3.3.iii Public Library Standards

In the context of annual planning and performance assessment, the Reader Development Strategy will also contribute to Library and Information Services meeting key Public Library Standards.

The reader development targets outlined in the Strategy will, for example, have implications for the use of the library web site. They will also have long term impact on the number of library visits and will reinforce user satisfaction with the services provided. The focus on stock selection and effective stock management will, within the budget available, support a wider and more targeted range of books being made available to users.⁶

⁵ See Appendix four.

⁶ *Comprehensive, Efficient and Modern Public Libraries - Standards and Assessment*, DCMS. See PLS 10, PLS 11 and PLS 12-15.

3.3.iv Corporate Objectives

There are a number ways in which the Reader Development Strategy will reinforce corporate objectives as expressed in the Royal Borough's Community Strategy.

3.3.iv.a The Community Strategy

A strategic approach to reader development by Library and Information Services will help support a thriving local community empowered by equality of opportunity and individual development. It will thus reinforce the 5 key themes and 3 underlying principles guiding the Royal Borough's Council Services.

Integrated reader services will reach out to the community to provide a geographically spread service targeting those in most need and encouraging wider use of library facilities. A reader focused approach will also raise awareness of the Borough's Library Service and the contribution it makes to learning for life and to the creation of an inclusive and empowered community that is safe and secure, healthy and caring and a good place in which to live and work. It will do this by working with other agencies around reading, by working with the whole community ensuring that no-one is left behind and by involving people through reader focused consultation facilitating effective customer feed back and devolved decision making.⁷

3.3.iv.b Corporate ICT Plan

The Reader Development Strategy moves the Corporate ICT Plan forward by building on the potential of ICT for continued service improvement particularly in relation to the provision of Best Value Services responsive to the needs of local people. Through the provision of a single point of access to reader services available at all times it uses information technology to respond to the changing needs of readers leading busy lives. The use of ICT to facilitate the sharing of and equal opportunity of public access to information means that the Reader Development Strategy is also enabling the Council to further develop its role as a primary source of information to and advice for the community.

In addition, the Strategy supports the requirement to increase, as appropriate, the use of more effective and environmentally friendly electronic transactions. It also enables staff to develop new and more efficient ways of working and to promote partnerships within the authority and with key organisations in the community. Finally, the Reader Development Strategy also contributes to the realisation of Government ICT projects and targets as expressed in the Corporate ICT Strategy.

⁷ See Appendix four.

3.3.v Best Value

Placing the reader at the centre of an integrated framework of library services and resources supports the delivery of an effective and efficient library service in the context of Best Value.

3.4 Other Core Areas of Influence

3.4.i Social Inclusion

Public libraries have a uniquely broad range of users from all socio-economic groups. Visiting the library to borrow a book is a significant cultural pastime across the social spectrum. It dissolves the barriers that exist in other spheres of cultural life. If readers cannot get to the library then the library will get to them through mobile services and services for the house bound.

Public libraries have an important role to play in tackling social exclusion.⁸ Windsor and Maidenhead Library Service has prioritised this role and been working on strategies to encourage participation by potentially excluded community groups.⁹ The popularity and the democratic nature of the reading experience means that the Reader Development Strategy will play a significant role in targeting excluded groups. A strategic approach to reader development will help to bring them within the social, economic and cultural framework by offering opportunities for the development of literacy skills, independent life long learning, creativity and self-expression. It will also support access to information, promote health and mental balance and contribute to the development of informed and articulate citizens.

Potentially excluded communities in the Royal Borough include people from ethnic minorities, people engaged in life long learning, teenagers, children in early years and their parents, people with a disability, people engaged in business, older people and reluctant readers.¹⁰

The Reader Development Action Plan identifies a targeted approach to these communities.

3.4.ii Life Long Learning

Reader development has important implications for life long learning. Readers are independent learners with flexible minds open to the learning experience. Reading brings the reader into contact with a range of learning opportunities. For those who have missed out on formal learning, it is an especially important route into life long learning.

⁸ *Libraries for All: Social Inclusion in Public Libraries - Policy Guidance for Local Authorities in England*. DCMS. October 1999.

⁹ *Social Inclusion*. Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Leisure and Cultural Services Directorate - Cultural and Information Services Unit, Library Services. October 01.

¹⁰ *The Annual Library Plan, 2001/2-2003/4*.

Research shows that readers read books to find things out, to satisfy curiosity, for general interest and self-improvement and to enhance knowledge.¹¹

The Reader Development Strategy will therefore offer a coherent framework for the support of life long learning enabling individuals to realise their potential and satisfy and develop their learning aspirations as well as enhancing the quality of life for the local community.

A reader focused approach is also an important source of common ground with a range of formal and informal education providers and potentially the basis for a range of education partnerships. These partnerships are important targets for the Reader Development Strategy and a means by which the Service can address the recommendations of the DFEE/DCMS Strategy for closer collaboration between libraries and educational institutions, *Empowering the Learning Community*.¹²

3.5 Local and Regional Cultural Strategies

3.5.i Local Cultural Planning

A strategic approach to Reader Development by the Library and Information Service will also contribute to the central themes of the draft local cultural strategy. In particular, a consistent approach to the support of reading and the reader will help to underpin economic vitality, greater social inclusion and responsibility, a healthier life style and life long learning.¹³

3.5.ii Regional Cultural Planning

It will also support the special role of the public library as a gateway to cultural activity as expressed in *The Cultural Cornerstone, A Strategy for the Development of Cultural Activity and its Benefits in the South East*.¹⁵

A reader focused approach reinforces the six areas of action that frame the regional cultural plan. In particular, the Reader Development Strategy will contribute to social inclusion and greater participation in cultural activity especially of disadvantaged communities. It also has a key role to play in relation to learning and partnership development and in joining up sectors including those outside of the cultural community.

¹¹ See Appendix two and Appendix three. The research cited is documented in *Reading the Situation Book Reading Buying and Borrowing in Britain*. It is also summarised in Appendix two.

¹² *Empowering the Learning Community*. DFEE/DCMS. March 2001.

¹³ See Appendix four.

¹⁵ *The Cultural Cornerstone, A Strategy for the Development of Cultural Activity and its Benefits in the South East*. South East Cultural Consortium. June 2001.

Part B

WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES READER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

4. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The Windsor and Maidenhead Library and Information Services' Reader Development Strategy is focused upon the following central aim:

4.1 Aim

To promote equal access to the enjoyment of reading and the literacy skills necessary for active involvement in cultural, democratic and economic activity.

4.2 Objectives

In achieving this aim, Windsor and Maidenhead Library and Information Services is committed to:

4.2.i Focusing on the Reader

Placing the reader at the centre of an integrated vision for Library and Information Services.

Responding to the needs of the reader and working towards an informed understanding of these needs.

Building the reading and library audience.

Creating a sense of ownership of the services provided.

4.2.ii Developing Resources

Creating an informed, skilled and confident staff.

Building on the relationship between stock selection, stock management and reader development practice.

Ensuring that library resources are accessible to all and that stock meets the needs and challenges the expectations of users/non users.

Developing the relationship between ICT and reader development.

4.2.iii Developing Services

Developing integrated reader services and functions that increase access to reading, develop reader choice and increase enjoyment.

4.2.iv Raising the Profile of the Service

Advocating the value of reading and reader development.

Developing strategic partnerships for the Service.

Advocating the role of reader development in relation to local and regional planning processes.

Developing stronger links with the media.

4.2.v Effective Monitoring and Evaluation

Clarifying the relationship between the aims, objectives and outcomes of reader development work.

Devising appropriate quantitative and qualitative evaluation strategies to measure impact.

Using evaluation evidence appropriately particularly to inform future planning and support library advocacy.

4.3 Anticipated Outcomes

It is expected that as a result of the integrated reader focused approach expressed in the five year action plan¹⁶ of the Reader Development Strategy, the following general outcomes will be achieved by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Library and Information Services:

- The creation of quality reader resources and services that increase the enjoyment of reading for more readers and satisfy cultural, learning and leisure aspirations.
- Greater staff awareness of the reader development role and ownership of the reader centred framework for the Service.
- An increased library audience served in the library and in the community.
- A better understanding of the needs of Royal Borough residents resulting in improved access to library resources and more targeted support for individuals and groups.
- Greater participation for Borough residents in the democratic process resulting in an increased sense of ownership of reader services and awareness of the library as a community focal point.
- Improved quality of life and support for a community that is literate, informed and articulate, imaginative and creative, engaged in an accessible and democratic cultural activity, open to a range of different cultural, social and recreational experiences,

¹⁶ See Part C.

healthier and more relaxed, tolerant and understanding of difference, socially inclusive and with a firm sense of local as well as regional and national identity.

- An increased profile and visibility for Library and Information Services and greater recognition of the value and far reaching implications of its reader development role.
- Greater reader focused joint working and partnership development within the unitary authority structure and also across a range of other sectors.
- More effective systems of monitoring and evaluating reader development activity and its impact.

Part C

WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES READER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

5. ACTION PLAN 2001/2-2005/6

The following action plan covers a five year period. The targets identified have been allocated to specific years within this time frame. Targets identified as ongoing span the five years of the plan. Although the Reader Development Strategy may not be formally agreed until the end of the first year of the plan, some initial development and preparation work is indicated for this period to prepare for the implementation of key actions required by the Strategy.

The successful implementation of the Strategy depends upon staff working together to achieve its aims and objectives supported by a coherent programme of training and skills sharing. The Reader Development Officer working with staff and senior management through the Reader Development Strategy Group will have a key role to play in driving the Strategy forward. The extent to which some of the actions are achieved particularly in the context of partnership working depends upon the successful development of this post from a part time to a full time appointment.

5.1 Focusing on the Reader

5.1.i Placing the reader at the centre of an integrated framework for Library and Information Services

- Ensure that work with readers is referred to in the forthcoming review of job descriptions, in staff recruitment and annual staff appraisals.
2001/2
- Implement a regular reader development slot on key staff and management team meeting agendas including those involving branches and support staff.
2001/2
- Identify financial resources to support the Reader Development Strategy both in terms of dedicated and possible support budgets.
2001/2 Initial planning and allocation of resources
2002/3 Rolling programme of financial support identified and agreed
- Approach potential funding partners to meet gaps in provision.
2001/2 Onwards
- Create a Reader Development Strategy Group with an overview of reader development activity across the service.
- The Reader Development Strategy Group will oversee the implementation of the Reader Development Strategy. It will co-ordinate events, manage a coherent approach to evaluation, co-ordinate publicity and PR, oversee a coherent staff familiarisation and training programme and ensure that reader development work is

spread throughout the Service across a continuum of levels of activity. It will also provide a two way link with other key library groupings and with senior management.

- The Group will meet quarterly to plan for the year ahead and to monitor progress. The Reader Development Officer will provide the formal link to other staff through regular meeting cycles with the Adults' and Young Peoples' Teams, with Library Supervisors and the Operations Team. This will ensure that strategic decisions are being implemented and cascaded to the teams and the individual staff who will be working with the Reader Development Officer to deliver tasks.
- A possible model for the Reader Development Strategy Group would include the Reader Development Officer, the Assistant Library and Information Services Manager, Senior Librarians representing Adult and Children and Young Peoples' Services and the Service Development Manager.
- Ultimately this group will be chaired and co-ordinated by the full time Reader Development Officer but in the short term it will be chaired alternately by the Assistant Library Services Manager and the Service Development Manager.
2001/2 Establish Reader Development Strategy Group
2002/3 Review structure and management
- The Reader Development Strategy Group through the Reader Development Officer will produce a quarterly news letter/ information sheet for all staff communicating key initiatives and giving the opportunity for staff to feed back ideas and views.
2002/3

5.1.ii Responding to the needs of the reader and working towards an informed understanding of these needs.

- Actively promote and develop the reading focused elements of the Adult and Children's Information Service.
2002/3
- Develop a more informed approach to serving the reader by identifying knowledge gaps and planning an appropriate research strategy in response. This will include limited local research by the library authority, the identification of a range of relevant information sources and linking in with/using the evidence from the research undertaken by other departments within the authority and other key bodies.
2002/3 Identify information gaps/plan research strategy
2003/4 Implement research strategy
2004/5 Review research needs
- Explore the potential for further extension of and more flexibility in opening hours and for the development of outreach service points.
2003/4

5.1.iii Building the reading and library audience

- Work actively to increase the library and reading audience by developing a strategic approach to marketing reader services in an appropriate manner to all sections of the community and by using outreach strategies including working in partnership with key agencies to reach lapsed and non-users of the library service.

2002/3 Ongoing

- Develop a network of adults and children's readers' groups meeting in library and community venues. These groups will be self-sufficient wherever possible but supported by Library and Information Services. They will also be developed in partnership with a range of relevant agencies.
 - 2002/3 Identify potential sites for new groups and develop support structure
 - 2003/4 Develop library network of at least 3 groups/identify sites for non-library groups, develop appropriate partnerships
 - 2004/5 Develop at least 2 strategically targeted community groups
 - 2005/6 Maintain and develop network if appropriate
 - Actively encourage reading by potentially excluded groups. For the purposes of this action plan, these groups include people from ethnic minorities, life long learners, teenagers, children in early years and their parents, people with a disability, people engaged in business, older people and reluctant readers.
 - In order to focus resources effectively, the Action Plan 2001/2-2005/6 prioritises work with ethnic minority communities, children and their carers, teenagers, older people and differently abled/people with a disability. It is recognised that life long learners and reluctant readers as well as being specific target areas are also broad constituencies that cut across other groups. In this context, specific promotions as well as general reader support will impact on readers' informal learning. Support for reluctant readers will also be incorporated into general reader development work as well as through specific initiatives.
 - The intention is to create a rolling programme that will extend into the next five years of the plan. The intention of this prioritisation is not to exclude work with groups in any particular year but rather to focus attention and extra resources in specific areas. The following strategies will be developed to build audiences with priority groups:
 - Ethnic minority communities**
 - Fill knowledge gaps about the requirements of ethnic minority groups and about how stock and resources are used.
 - Respond appropriately with better targeted services, events and promotions. Develop partnerships with key community groups and work with them to raise the profile of the service and its work with readers.
- 2002/3
2005/6
- Teenagers**
 - Develop existing stock and promotional collections and build on the "Looked After Children" project in partnership with Social Services.
 - Implement new strategies including partnership with Youth Services, a link with Eton Wick Youth Club and a strategic approach to teenage parents in partnership with other agencies.
- 2002/3
Phase II 2006/7
- Life long learners**
 - Existing stock support including specifically targeted materials and adult literacy collections and support for WEA classes will be reinforced through the development of partnerships with colleges, education agencies and user groups.

2003/4

Phase II 2006/7

Older People

-Promotion and development of large print stock and the housebound readers' service.
-Develop new strategies including reminiscence sessions, a library club, thematic promotions targeting the active elderly and partnerships with appropriate groups such as Age Concern.

2003/4

Children and their Carers

-Build on strategies currently in place including targeted stock, the Children's Information Service, loans to playgroups and playgroup tickets, Bookstart and strategies to target parents.
-Implement new strategies including child minder tickets, child minder sessions, story time in all branches, a broader range of stock and an extension of the seconded Early Years post.

2004/5

Differently abled/people living with a disability

-Promote existing resources such as spoken word cassettes, subtitled DVDs and access strategies such as the provision of ramps and Clear Vision, develop software provision for the visually and hearing impaired reader and the range of stock and other support resources available.

2004/5

Reluctant readers

Adult literacy/basic skills collections will be developed through WEA project work and contact with summer literacy schools. Reader development work with reluctant readers will be an integral element of all promotions and events.

2005/6

5.1.iv Creating a sense of ownership of the services provided

- Develop and implement consultation with existing readers and with non-users to consolidate effective strategies for reader support and to encourage new audiences for reading.
- This consultation will draw upon data available from RBWM's Consultation Strategy and the existing programme of consultation within the Service including the PLUS Adult Survey, the Lapsed User Survey, the PLUS Children's Survey and the Opening Hours Consultation. It will also use the opportunities provided by the Library Users' Group, the Friends' Organisation and customer comment facilities to focus on reader services.
- Reference will be made to Borough wide market research impacting on reader services including the Leisure Survey, the Household Survey, the Best Value Survey and the Life Long Learning Survey.
- Develop new consultation strategies to assess the impact of reader services using reader development activities, reading groups and partnerships with other bodies and agencies as a tool for consulting widely.

2001/2 Draw together existing evidence

- 2002/3 Utilise and refocus as appropriate existing consultation strategies
- 2003/4 Devise and implement new strategies as appropriate

5.2 Developing Resources

5.2.i Creating an informed, skilled and confident staff

- Create the partnerships and support necessary to fill the skills gaps in existing staff provision by appointing a full time Reader Development Officer. This post will build upon the work of the existing part time post to support and oversee the reader focused work of library staff through the Reader Development Strategy Group. The enhanced post will also be responsible for developing literature and reading focused work with a range of partners within and external to the authority.
- The extent to which the vision of the Reader Development Strategy can be realised depends upon the successful achievement of a full time post. This is particularly true in relation to the planned programme of partnership development. The benefits of a full time Reader Development Officer include a more effective role for the Reader Development Strategy Group, a more coherent programme of staff training and support and the development of a broader and more sustainable range local authority and external partnerships for the Service. In terms of the end user the impact will be greater access for Borough residents to a more satisfying reading experience with all its associated social, cultural, learning and economic benefits.
 - 2001/2 Planning, partnership development and fund raising
 - 2002/3 Appointment of full time post
 - 2003/4 Responsibilities and tasks assumed
- Plan and implement a programme of staff training to ensure familiarity with the reader development context, effective advocacy of the value of reader development in a library context, confidence in working with readers and awareness of the implications of the Reader Development Strategy.
- This programme will be co-ordinated by the Reader Development Officer through the Reader Development Strategy Group and will include reader development training, regular cascading of good practice through the service via reader development sessions for qualified and support staff, reader development advocacy training, mentoring and shadowing.
 - 2002/3 Reader Development Strategy training/ initial reader development training/planning
 - 2003/4-
 - 2005/6 Programme implemented
- Encourage staff to read and talk about their reading through staff reading groups, a "recommended" reading item on meeting agendas, review notice boards etc.
 - 2002/3 Onwards
- Develop a bank of reader development resources to support staff training and a specially dedicated library of reference materials, books and articles for staff use.
 - 2002/3

5.2.ii Building on the relationship between stock selection, stock management and reader development practice

- Develop coherent stock selection and stock management policies that relate to stock promotion and reader development priorities.
2002/3

5.2.iii Ensuring that library resources are accessible meeting the needs and challenging the expectations of users and non users.

- Develop library resources in line with the needs of target groups as identified through reader consultation strategies e.g. original language collections, graphic novel collections, large print collections, collections of spoken word cassettes, CD Roms and Playstation resources.
2002/3 Onwards
- Build collections that offer a wide range of reading experiences and challenge expectations by including fiction and non-fiction, literary as well as mainstream popular fiction, literature in translation and writing from different cultures and countries, new writing and writers, black writing, gay and lesbian fiction and contemporary poetry. Library stock should support and challenge readers as children, young people and adults.
2002/3 Onwards
- Explore new and more imaginative ways to display stock and make it more accessible to readers e.g. themed dump bins and displays, adapted shelving, paperback spinners and video display units.
2002/3 Onwards
- Establish special loan terms and support for Reading Groups including a subscription service for multiple copy loans.
2003/4
- Explore the possibility of enhanced loan entitlement for priority groups of users.
2003/4
- Explore new and more accessible approaches to library signage and guiding in partnership with the arts community and possibly funded through the Regional Arts Lottery Programme.
2004/5
- Explore new ways of working with the arts sector in general using books and reading as a launchpad. In particular, explore the potential relevance of the East Midlands Books Connect Arts and Libraries project funded by the Arts Lottery as a model.
2005/6

5.2.iv Developing the relationship between ICT and reader development

- Develop the use of ICT to support reader development work by carrying information supporting promotions and events on the library web page.
2002/3
- Develop use of the library management system, Dynix to support reader development work especially in the context of posting new titles lists, recommended reading lists or reading lists linked to events/displays listed on the Events calendar of the system.
2002/3 Initial development work
2003/4 Programme of support implemented
- Promote the use of Forager to support reader choice and experimentation.
2002/3
- Use ICT to support virtual reader development work through on-line readers' groups and specially designated chat rooms for the sharing of reading experiences, reviews and interactive reading trails.
2003/4
- Develop and promote ICT support for readers with special needs.
2004/5 Link with focus on people with disabilities
- Explore the potential for joint working with the arts sector using the potential offered by library ICT for reading/book focused collaborations/ commissions/ exhibitions across a range of art forms.
2005/6

5.3 Developing Services

5.3.i Developing integrated reader services and functions that increase access to reading, develop reader choice and increase enjoyment.

- Implement a coherent programme of Borough wide reader development activity including specially targeted promotions supported by a linked events programme and coherent stock selection and management and smaller scale reactive initiatives.
- The Reader Development programme will include reference to:
 - The need to spread reader development work throughout the Service at all levels and locations and to encompass a range of different levels of activity from a simple book display in response to an event or news item to a developed programme of events linked to stock purchase.
 - Support for and integration of the reading of fiction and non-fiction by adults and children.
 - The focus provided by a selected number of national events i.e. World Book Day, National Poetry Day, the adult and children's literary prize calendar and the associated resources produced to support library activity.
 - The availability of library resources produced nationally by different agencies to support reading promotion and reader development activity.
 - The availability of authors locally and regionally as well as nationally to support promotions with book events.

-The development of a network of adult and children's reading groups meeting in library as well as other venues.

-Potential and existing partnerships with local arts organisations and cultural programming in the Borough.

-Joint working with partners within the authority and in the community.

-Groups specifically targeted to support social inclusion.

2001/2 Planning for 2002/3

2002/3 Implementation and future planning

- Actively market reader services to existing borrowers to ensure that full use of the range of services available. A possible model would be the creation of a leaflet referring to the range of reader services and the existence of readers' groups and the promotions and events programme.

2002/3

- Actively market reader services to non users using out reach and partnership working with targeted organisations and agencies across a range of sectors including the arts, social services, education, community and voluntary groups.

2002/3 Utilise local authority partnerships

2003/4 Utilise broader partnership links

5.4 Raising the Profile of the Service

5.4.i Advocating the value of reading and reader development

- Develop a coherent approach to reader development advocacy sharing the importance of and common ground provided by work with readers with staff, members and individuals in key local authority positions and at strategic gatherings and meetings.

2001/2 and 2002/3 Staff/members focus

2002/3 Local authority focus

2003/4 Broaden focus

- Create an advocacy map for the Service identifying existing supporters and potential targets for library advocacy.

2002/3

- Use advocates strategically to raise the profile of Library and Information Services and its work with readers.

2003/4

- Ensure that key individuals from other sectors are invited to library meetings, openings and events.

2003/4

5.4.ii Developing strategic partnerships for the Service

- Plan and implement a programme of partnerships for the Service focusing on the common ground that a reader focused approach provides in relation to a range of different agendas.
- Partnership priorities within the authority include the Lifelong Learning and Early Years teams in the Education Directorate and Social Services particularly the section

responsible for looked after children. Community and Youth Services and Community Partnerships within the Directorate of Leisure, Cultural and Property Services also represent important partners for Library and Information Services as they incorporate Arts and Heritage, Visitor Management, Economic Development, Youth Services and Connexions Partnership.

2002/3 Onwards

- Plan and implement a programme of cross sector partnerships for the Service to support a broad-based reader development programme.
- Cross-sectoral priorities for collaboration include:
The Regional Arts Board as a funding and policy development partner.
The Arts Constituency including Norden Farm Centre for the Arts, Windsor Arts Centre and local groups.

Education providers in particular the WEA and U3A

Business in the first instance focusing on the cultural sector including local book shops/ publishers. In the longer term, the business focus may be widened using the Books and Business model.

Community groups including those representing ethnic minorities.

2001/2 Regional Arts Board funding partnership developed

2002/3 Regional Arts Board relationship developed, other partnerships prioritised

2003/4 Broader partnership programme initiated

5.4.iii Local and Regional Planning Processes

- Ensure recognition of Library and Information Services' reader development role in planning and strategy development.
- Profile work with readers as part of the Service's own planning procedures.

2001/2-2002/3

- Profile work with readers in Borough and regional planning including that of the RAB and the regional cultural consortium.

2002/3-2003/4

5.4.iv Developing Stronger Links with the Media

- Plan a coherent reader focused approach to local media to support the reader development programme and raise the profile of the Service.

2001/2 Planning

2002/3 Implementation ongoing

- Ensure that Library and Information Services' media, marketing and communication strategies reflect a reader-focused approach.

2003/4

5.5 Effective Monitoring and Evaluation

5.5.i Aims, Objectives and Outcomes

- Review procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of reader development work.
2001/2-2002/3
- Ensure that evaluation takes into account the relationship between the aims and objectives of reader development work and its impact on the reader and on increasing access to reading.
2001/2-2002/3
- Ensure that the impact upon staff is also monitored particularly in terms of confidence in the reader development role, familiarity with the needs of the reader and knowledge of books and reading.
2002/3 Onwards

5.5.ii Qualitative and Quantitative Evaluation Strategies

- Ensure that evaluation tools are effective and appropriate and take into account the qualitative as well as quantitative impact of a reader focused approach.
2001/2-2002/3 Review tools and identify gaps
2002/3 Develop and implement new qualitative tools to support existing practice

5.5.iii Using Evaluation Effectively

- Ensure that the evaluation of reader development activity is systematic and centrally co-ordinated.
2002/3
- Ensure that evaluation evidence is used effectively to inform future planning and support library advocacy.
2002/3 Onwards

6.

Appendix One

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions provide the terms of reference for the Reader Development Strategy.

Library and Information Services

The term refers directly to Library and Information Services of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. The public library service refers to the national public library network rather than to a specific authority.

The Reader

The reader is referred to generically in the Reader Development Strategy in recognition of the fact that reading is a continual process from the cradle to the grave. The term therefore encompasses the reader as child, young person and adult.

The term also accepts that readers are not a homogenous cohort but encompass active, lapsed and non-readers, physical and virtual library users, non users and readers of different race, socio-economic background and educational ability. It is understood that the outcomes of a reader-centred approach will relate directly to the needs of the targeted reader.

Reading

Reading is understood to be a highly creative activity. The reader imaginatively interprets and re-interprets the written word and thus participates in a creative relationship with the text and with the artist.

In relation to this strategy, the term recognises that there is a false distinction between fiction and non-fiction and that an interest in one often crosses into the other. Readers are in fact open to a variety of reading experiences.

It is also important to recognise that reading takes place within the context of busy lives and that this impacts upon the way in which readers access reading and therefore upon the structure and management of library services.

Imaginative Literature

The Reader Development Strategy focuses on imaginative literature. This term encompasses literature in any format that is imaginative and creative in content including graphic novels, travel writing, biographies, history, science and other forms of non-fiction as well as fiction, drama and poetry.

Appendix Two

EVIDENCE FOR THE BENEFITS OF READING FOR THE INDIVIDUAL

The following evidence for the benefits of reading for the individual is taken from *Reading the Situation, Book Reading, Buying and Borrowing in Britain*.

This study involved qualitative research examining the range of opinions about, and motives for, the reading habits of the general public. The sample used for the qualitative research contained a mix of men and women, younger and older adults, people living in different geographical locations and drawn from different socio-economic groups. There was also a mix of light, medium and heavy readers. The quantitative research was also carried out with a nationally representative sample of the population including a mix of light, medium and heavy readers.

Quantitative Evidence

The most common reason given for reading was for pleasure and entertainment. This was mentioned by 80% of respondents.

However, 62% of respondents also said they read for information purposes, 52% read out of curiosity or interest, 46% to improve their knowledge and for self improvement and 43% read to relieve stress.

Approximately 25% of respondents read books in order to use their imagination with similar proportions reading for escapism and because it was a special activity offering something different to television and computers.

Adults were twice as likely to read for escapism and five times as likely to read to relieve stress as children.¹⁶

Quantitative Evidence

For many respondents able to articulate what made reading special, the reason given was that it is a convenient way of acquiring information at their own pace.

There are books which cover absolutely everything, however obscure, and nowadays it seems relatively easy to find books...Then books you can take anywhere and read at your own leisure. (Male, 18, light reader)

For others reading is a way of relaxing in a participatory manner.

¹⁶ *Reading the Situation, Book Reading Buying and Borrowing Habits in Britain*. Book Marketing Ltd/The Reading Partnership, 2000. P.38.

When you are reading, you are actually doing something, using your imagination. The danger with TV and other visual and auditory media is that you can act just like a sponge, and not really take part in it at all. (Female, 55, heavy reader)

For others reading is a way of turning off from the world and of gaining peace.

Reading a good book gives me a sense of peace and calm, and also of achievement when I've finished one that I've enjoyed. (Male, 35, heavy reader)

For many readers, women in particular, talking about books however simplistically provides a way of connecting with other people.

At work, one of our main topics is the books we have read. We swap them between ourselves, and thus tell each other what we like or dislike. Not very deep, but useful and interesting. (Female, 18, medium reader)¹⁷

¹⁷*Reading the Situation*, pp. 137-138.

Appendix Three

READING AND CORE AREAS OF INFLUENCE¹⁸

Reading and Learning

Readers are independent learners. They develop flexible minds that are open to a range of learning experiences.

Borrowing a book from a library brings the reader into contact with a range of independent learning opportunities.

For people who have missed out on formal learning, reading for pleasure is an important route into informal life long learning opportunities.

The delight of reading underpins the development of literacy skills. New readers will practise reading if they enjoy what they read.

Libraries are an effective focus for networks the development of networks that support life long learning and literacy.

Information Gateway

Readers develop open and inquiring minds. They are able to search out, reference and gather information from their reading.

They are also able to make connections between the information acquired from imaginative literature and information acquired from elsewhere.

Cultural Enrichment

Reading fuels the imagination, helps build creativity and develop an awareness of the creativity of others.

Through lending imaginative literature, libraries help to create an audience for a wide range of cultural activity including the cultural industries and other art forms. Books inspire films, television series, music sound tracks and in their cover design, an awareness of the visual image.

There is specific evidence of reading related common ground between libraries and the arts. Book stock can be a source of inspiration and information for artists and can support theatre, cinema and exhibition programming. Library ICT offers the opportunity for

¹⁸ The arguments in this Appendix are largely taken from *Public Libraries and Readers, Building a Creative Nation*. The Reading Partnership, updated 2000.

music, film and visual arts collaborations. Library meeting spaces offer a home to amateur and professional arts groups and potential artists' workshop spaces. Libraries can play a role in local arts archiving particularly in relation to small press publishing. There are also lots of opportunities for joint marketing and promotion including arts related rewards for borrowing, discounted tickets for borrowers in arts venues, joint promotions and art form specific book lists.¹⁹

Libraries also help to support the publishing of more challenging material including writing in translation and books from other countries and cultures, through the readership they provide.

All writers begin as readers. Good writing is underpinned by wide reading.

Citizenship and Social Inclusion

Reading helps us to understand other experiences and other points of view. It helps develop tolerance, a culture of citizenship and an understanding of wider social issues.

Reading helps us to understand our past, present and future and to develop a sense of local, regional and national identity.

Public libraries have a broad range of users from all socio-economic groups. The socio-economic breakdown of people borrowing monthly is AB 16%, C1 34%, C3 23% and DE 27%.

The public library service targets readers who might otherwise be marginalised, excluded or at risk including those in special institutions, teenagers, housebound people, elderly people and the unemployed.

In supporting the reader, the public library service is able to respond to a range of different needs with appropriate services.

Reading promotes a level of literacy necessary for full participation in society.

Libraries as providers of free imaginative literature have a positive effect on community life.

Economic Development

Reading helps to build a creative workforce that that can think laterally, solve problems, use the shared experience of others and communicate effectively.

Libraries are an important point of entry for people to retrain and reskill.

¹⁹ *Public Libraries and the Arts, Pathways to Partnership, Report to the Library Association and The Arts Council of England.* David Liddle, Debbie Hicks and David Barton. CPI, 1999.

Libraries as providers of imaginative literature can have a positive effect on economic regeneration by revitalising city centres and areas of economic depression. Libraries attract readers who are also consumers.

The work of libraries with readers helps support the writing, publishing and book selling industries bringing benefits to the local and national economy.

Reading can provide the focus for a range of partnerships that create significant opportunities for working with the business and commercial sector.

Appendix Four

CORPORATE AND LIBRARY SERVICE OBJECTIVES

Library and Information Services

Mission

The Mission Statement for the Royal Borough's Library and Information Services is:

Windsor and Maidenhead Library and Information Services enhance the quality of life for all who live, work or study in the Royal Borough, enabling them to realise their full potential, providing them with full and equal access to library resources to support their cultural, learning and leisure aspirations.

In achieving this purpose the Service is committed to:

- Promoting the enjoyment of reading and literacy skills as basic skills necessary for active involvement in cultural, democratic and economic activity.
- Developing libraries as a focal point for learning in communities thereby contributing to social, community and economic development and promoting access to information and the development of citizenship by providing a gateway to Royal Borough services and access to local, national and European government information.
- Providing equality of opportunity and the promotion of social inclusion by offering a gateway to employment, career and learning opportunities for people who might otherwise be excluded and bridging the gap between the information rich and information poor, particularly through the provision of ICT resources.
- Actively seeking and promoting partnerships for the development of services.
- Regularly and actively consulting with users and non-users.

Corporate Objectives

The Community Strategy

The current Community Strategy's three underlying principles are:

- **working together** – communicating between agencies, partnership working, valuing the voluntary sector and sharing resources
- **leaving no-one behind** – social inclusion, access for everyone, help for those most in need and affordable housing
- **involving people** – of all ages, developing the community, participation and engaging communities.

Its 5 key themes are:

- **getting about** – including transport issues, traffic and ease of moving around in the community
- **learning for life** – education, citizenship, informed communities, awareness and tolerance, lifelong learning
- **being safe and secure** – community safety, developing communities and avoiding the causes of crime
- **health and caring** – promoting positive health and social care, healthy living, help for those most in need, supporting people as individuals
- **a good place to live and work** – aiming for attractive and sustainable communities, a vibrant economy, affordable housing and a balance between community and business interests.

Local Cultural Strategy

The main themes of the Local Cultural Strategy are:

- Economic vitality
- Enhanced and Protected Environment
- Greater Social Inclusion and Responsibility
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Life Long Learning