

## Appendix A

### **Some of the things Public Librarians and Library Staff do.**

#### **Interacting With Library Users:**

1. Suggesting a book for anyone from an 8 year old boy who never reads to a 70 year old woman who has read everything;
2. Being unfazed by complex enquiries which could be of a sensitive nature;
3. Understanding how to help people with computers who have zero confidence/experience and believe they can't use them;
4. Dealing with abusive visitors;
5. Dealing with young people behaving badly – police have been called to library branches when young people have been climbing on bookshelves, causing problems, refusing to leave premises etc;
6. Dealing sensitively with people who have mental health problems or learning disabilities and may be challenging to help properly;
7. Keeping user information confidential;
8. Huge training requirement around legal/ethical issues;
9. Understanding the issues around safeguarding children and the elderly;
10. Providing a safe, friendly space that welcomes everyone;
11. Directing homeless people to the nearest shelter;
12. Helping people with little or no English to use the library service by translating, using translation services or taking special care and attention to ensure people understand information;
13. Collecting knives and guns;
14. Sensitively working with people who are distressed and may have mental health issues to find out their information needs and make phone calls on their behalf if appropriate.

#### **Helping People Find Information**

1. Information literacy i.e. teaching people how to research, study and helping people develop lifelong learning skills essential for an informed citizenship;

2. Understanding what users need and how they go about finding it (and working out where the problems are);
3. Teaching people how to search effectively;
4. Helping people organise information effectively;
5. Helping people assess which information is reliable, for example the NHS expect patients to use online sources to find out about healthcare, but a lot of information on the internet is not reliable and can misinform people;
6. Showing people how to find information about legal issues;
7. Helping businesses find business information;
8. Helping people research their family history or local history;
9. Unearthing the needed information from the mounded heaps of print and electronic, free and subscription services, efficiently and accurately;
10. Ensuring that less easy-to-find materials are available for particular groups – community languages, LGBT, people with/ disabilities etc;
11. Being able to interpret research requests – working out what people want when they're not sure how to explain
12. Providing pointers on free and paid resources;
13. Knowing how to do proper subject searches and suggest unthought-of sources of information;
14. Signposting to a huge range of services & say what they can offer: advice/help on immigration, debt, tax, legal, benefits, housing;
15. Providing specialist information i.e. market research/patents/EU/law/health;
16. Helping people if the library doesn't have what they need;
17. Understanding the need for access and negotiating access to information that may be blocked by council filters;
18. Subscribing to information sources such as WHICH reports to help people make informed choices before purchasing goods and services.

## **Helping People With Research**

1. Teaching people how to research effectively;
2. Current awareness services, all types of research;
3. Personal training sessions on resources;
4. Filtering materials for relevance.

## **Supporting People to Use Technology**

1. Teaching people to use the internet;
2. Helping people set up email accounts;
3. Showing people how to use online job boards;
4. Showing people how to use online council & government services;
5. Teaching people to use online resources e.g. e-books, e-journals;
6. Giving people login details for library computers and helping them when they have problems/forget passwords etc.;
7. Providing technical support on systems and tools (i.e. loading e-books from something like Overdrive on to a e-reader);
8. Helping people use the photocopier/printer/fax machine;
9. Showing people how to integrate emerging technologies into their daily lives;
10. Helping people with online council housing lists;
11. Explaining how Wi-Fi works;
12. Helping people structure and write CVs using word processing software and online forms;
13. Providing IT classes.

## **Organising and Running Events and Activities**

1. Organising/promoting events for kids/teens/adults that promote a love of reading;
2. Rhyme time and story time sessions, increasing childhood literacy and promoting reading;
3. Children's activities;
4. Visiting authors and poets;
5. Book festivals;
6. Gigs (such as Get It Loud In Libraries);
7. Helping with homework and school projects;
8. Running and supporting book groups for children and adults which includes activities, discussions and ordering/tracking down multiple copies of books.
9. Doing the risk assessments needed to make sure everyone is safe and secure at events;
10. Dressing the library for events, making it look attractive and impressive (professional);
11. Organising school visits;
12. Providing Bag Books (stories with props) sessions for adults and children with complex needs;

### 13. Running a Home Delivery Service.

## **Working with Schools and Organisations**

1. A working and up to date knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and the way schools function;
2. Working with teachers to improve reading skills;
3. Working with schools & other community groups to promote the library and showcase all it has to offer;
4. Visiting schools, talking to parents to promoting a lifelong love of reading with parents and children;
5. Giving talks on request from teachers on referencing and the importance of bibliographies for GCSEs/A levels;
6. Working with U3A and other community groups to help public with online information;
7. Working in partnership with other organisations to bid for funding to offer additional services;
8. Working with Adult Social Care to give feedback on standards in residential homes and sheltered housing.

## **Managing the Library**

1. Understanding how libraries work together, dealing with interlibrary loans and the British Library;
2. Making sure that data protection rules are being adhered to;
3. Reporting on library use and user needs;
4. Using statistics to identify trends and assess levels of use;
5. Managing electronic resources;
6. Paying invoices;
7. Making sure that the library is getting value for money via professional management, organization and promotion of resources;
8. Promoting and marketing the libraries, including using social media to promote the library service;
9. Attending training and events to make sure that the library service is keeping up with developments;
10. Dealing with legislation including reproduction and attendant copyright law: photocopying/scanning for personal use, hi-res resources for publication/TV;
11. Maintaining and building technical solutions for users' needs;
12. Maintaining a safe, interesting quiet environment;

13. Being a premises controller: be responsible for a large public bldg, know what to do when heating breaks down, roof leaks etc;
14. Training for fire marshals etc;
15. Reporting to local Councillors, showing how libraries meet the wider council aims;
16. Managing budgets and staffing, liaising with those who provide the funds;
17. Managing a 'community toilet' because it is the only public toilet available, often requiring library staff to be in charge of giving out a key and/or cleaning the facilities. Some libraries require staff to escort people to the staff toilets for security reasons if there is not a public toilet.
18. Doing market research to identify and understand customer groups, in order to serve them better. (Includes doing surveys, focus groups, and larger studies.)
19. Writing strategic plans, marketing plans, communication plans;
20. Keeping current on new technologies so you can choose the ones to buy, implement, and maintain;
21. Fundraising;
22. Interacting with other professionals around the globe to share best practices, implement innovations, and move the industry forward;
23. Building and maintaining websites, blogs, and social media presence to promote the service;
24. Reading and writing professional articles to publicise the work of the library and library staff so that other libraries can develop too;
25. Participating in local, regional, and national associations in order to continuously learn and teach peers;
26. Decorating the library – displays, posters and book stands, and seasonal decorating;
27. Rearranging furniture and shelf stacks. Preparing for refurbishment (packing up stock etc.)

## **Managing the Library's Resources**

1. Ordering database and journal subscriptions;
2. Promoting/displaying/ weeding/ordering stock;
3. Making sure the books and other items in the library are ones that users want/need/will benefit from;

4. Reader and community development – encouraging people to read more widely and helping communities build knowledge and skills – matching resources to people’s needs;
5. Describing/cataloguing/arranging physical or digital material in useful ways so that people can find it;
6. Chasing and collecting books back and enforcing fines;
7. Matching stock held with local community group(s) needs;
8. Dealing with stock management / complaints etc. in accordance with international agreements on intellectual freedom.

### **Handling Archives and Special Collections**

1. Digitisation and digital preservation, making sure information will be accessible in future;
2. Storing and conserving media (including old/rare books);
3. Making sure the collections are stored safely and are not damaged.

### **Taking Care of Other Council Services Provided Through Libraries**

1. Dealing with people paying council tax and parking fines;
2. Giving out condoms and bin bags;
3. Issuing firearms certificates;
4. Selling charity Christmas cards;
5. Selling food recycling waste bags and garden waste stickers;
6. Issuing blue badges;
7. Issuing over 60s bus passes;
8. Loaning electricity monitors.

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