Library Strategy Consultation Report

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Consultation Summary

The Draft Library Strategy consultation shows strong support for all six priorities shaping the future of Haringey Libraries. Responses showed support ranging from 75% to 91% across all priorities.

Respondents expressed strong support for libraries as inclusive community assets, highlighting their role in learning, social connection, and cultural engagement. However, concerns about reduced and inconsistent opening hours emerged as the most significant barrier to equitable access and service delivery.

Feedback also pointed to a disconnect between strategic priorities and operational realities, particularly around accessibility and equity. There was broad endorsement for diverse collections, inclusive cultural programming, and staff diversity, with calls for inclusive programming to be embedded year-round and not just aligned with awareness weeks.

Respondents emphasised the need for clear performance measures to be included in the strategy, including SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) targets and transparent monitoring. Respondents felt the inclusion of these would ensure accountability.

Community ownership featured prominently, with suggestions for co-design of local plans and more in-person engagement opportunities.

Additional infrastructure improvements were also requested, such as clean, welcoming spaces, better signage, and amenities like toilets and refreshments. Funding and staffing concerns were raised, alongside the need to balance digital innovation with core library functions.

Improved communication and outreach—especially multilingual and offline channels—were seen as essential. Overall, respondents urged commitments to consistent, extended opening hours, clear KPIs (Key Performance Indicators), strengthened community engagement, inclusive programming, and maintaining libraries as free public services without over-commercialisation.

Consultation Method

Residents and stakeholders were invited to respond to the consultation on the draft Library Strategy between 24th September 2025 and 4th November 2025 inclusive.

The consultation was hosted on https://haringeylibraries.commonplace.is/ and was also available as a print on request document at Haringey libraries.

The survey received a total of 53 responses

52 responses were received via https://haringeylibraries.commonplace.is/

1 response was received via email and can be read in full at end of this report in the Appendix.

No print on request surveys were received via libraries.

Consultation Respondents' Demographic Data

<u>Sex</u>

The majority, 57.7%, of respondents indicated that they were female.

Please tick the box that best describes your sex.

- Add something else: 3.8%
- Female: 57.7%
- Male: 30.8%
- Prefer not to say: 7.7%

All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.
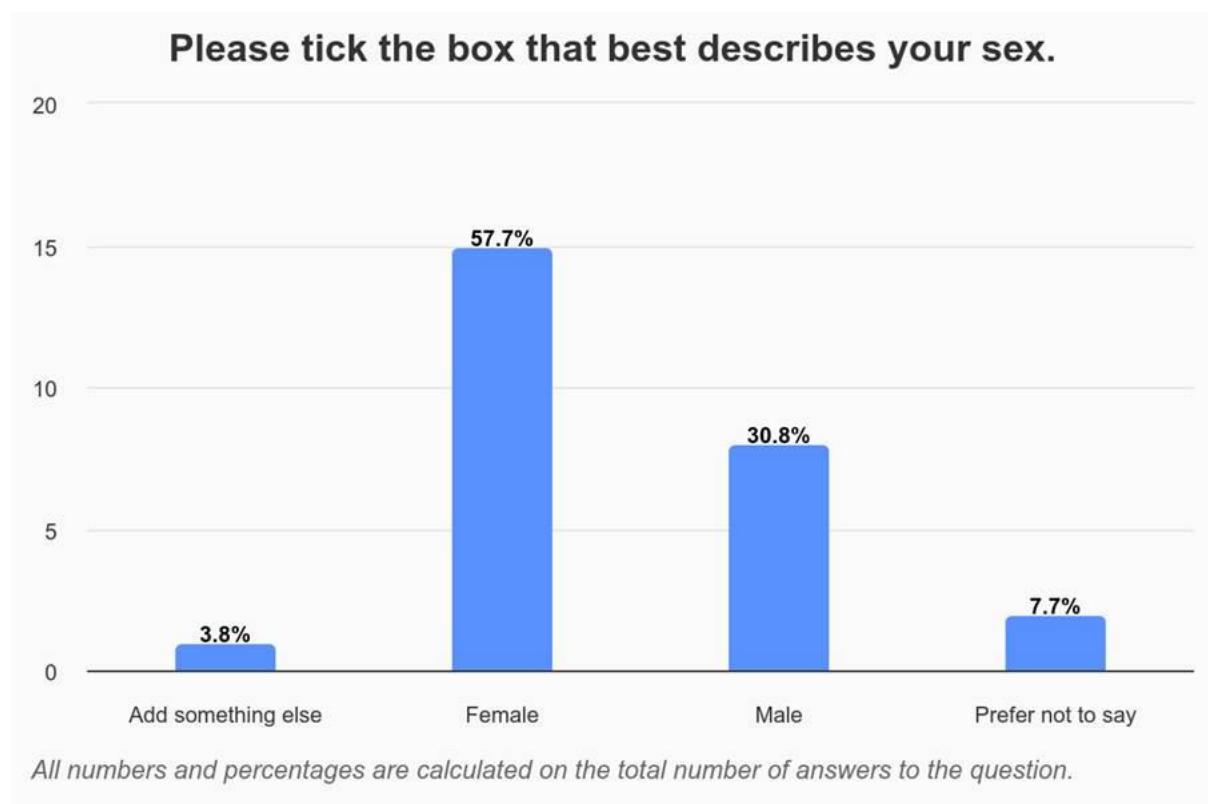
Age

The largest proportion of respondents (23.1%) were aged 45–54, with notable representation from the 35–44 and 65–74 age groups (both 19.2%), while younger respondents (under 25) and those aged 75+ were least represented.

Which age group applies to you?
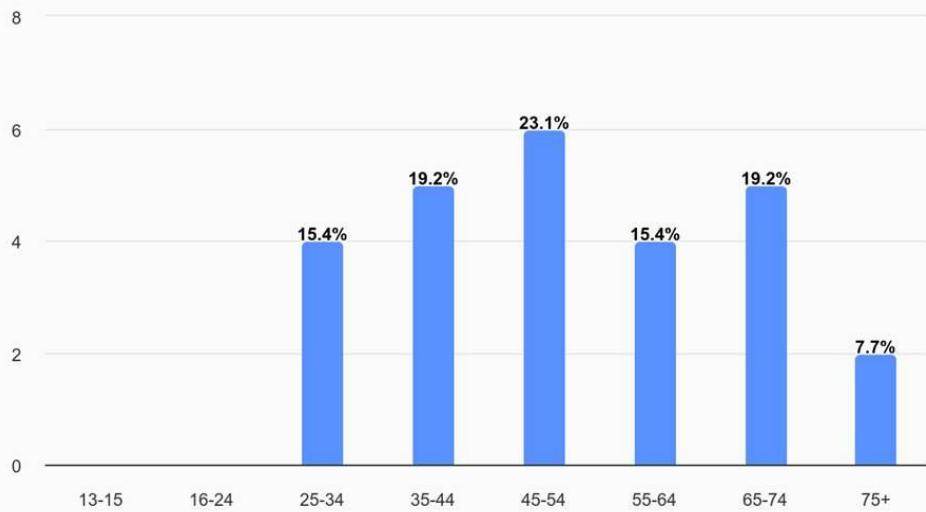
All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

Trans

3.4% of respondents indicated they are trans.

Do you consider yourself to be trans? (Trans is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender identity is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were regarded to be at birth)
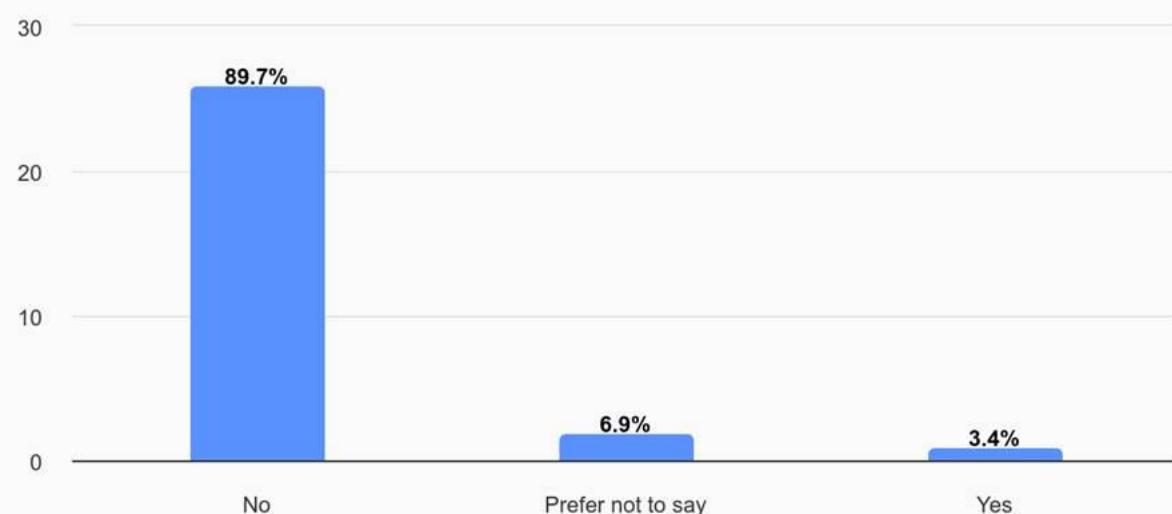
All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

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Education

The vast majority of respondents indicated they were educated to level 4 or above.

Education - which of these qualifications do you have? Tick every box that applies if you have any of the qualifications listed. If your UK qualification is not listed, tick the box that contains its nearest equivalent.

	Level 1 e.g. 1-4 GCSEs, Scottish Standard Grade or equivalent qualifications	Level 2 - e.g. 5 or more GCSEs, Scottish Higher, Scottish Advaced Higher or equivalent qualifications	Level 3 - e.g. 2 or more A-Levels, HNC, HND, SVQ level 4 or equivalent qualifications	Level 4 or above - e.g. first or higher degree, professional qualifications or other equivalent higher education qualifications	No formal qualifications	Other qualifications - e.g. other vocational/ work-related qualifications and non-UK/foreign qualifications	Prefer not to say
			3.3%	86.7%	3.3%		6.7%

All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

Socio-economic Status

The majority of respondents indicated that they were not in receipt of benefits.

Socioeconomic Status - Please tick which of the following benefits you receive, if any
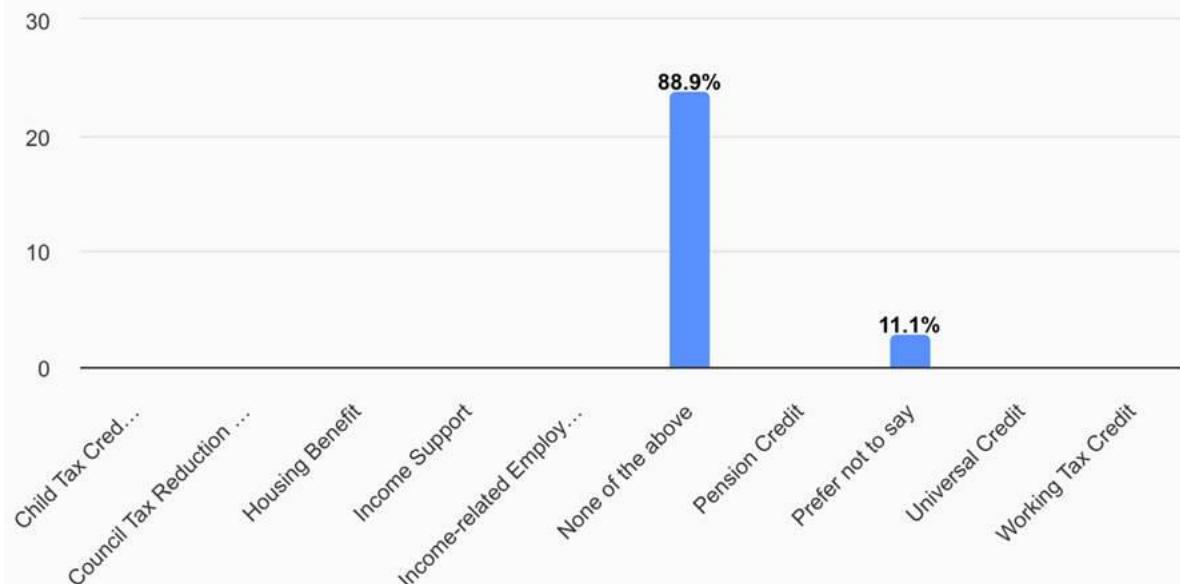
None of the above: 88.9%
Prefer not to say: 11.1%

(Categories: Child Tax Cred..., Council Tax Reduction..., Housing Benefit, Income Support, Income-related Employ..., None of the above, Pension Credit, Prefer not to say, Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit)

All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

Parent or Carer of SEND child

The majority of respondents indicated that they were not parents or carers of a SEND child.

Are you a parent or carer of a SEND child or young person aged 0-25

85.7% (No)

14.3% (Yes)

*All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.*
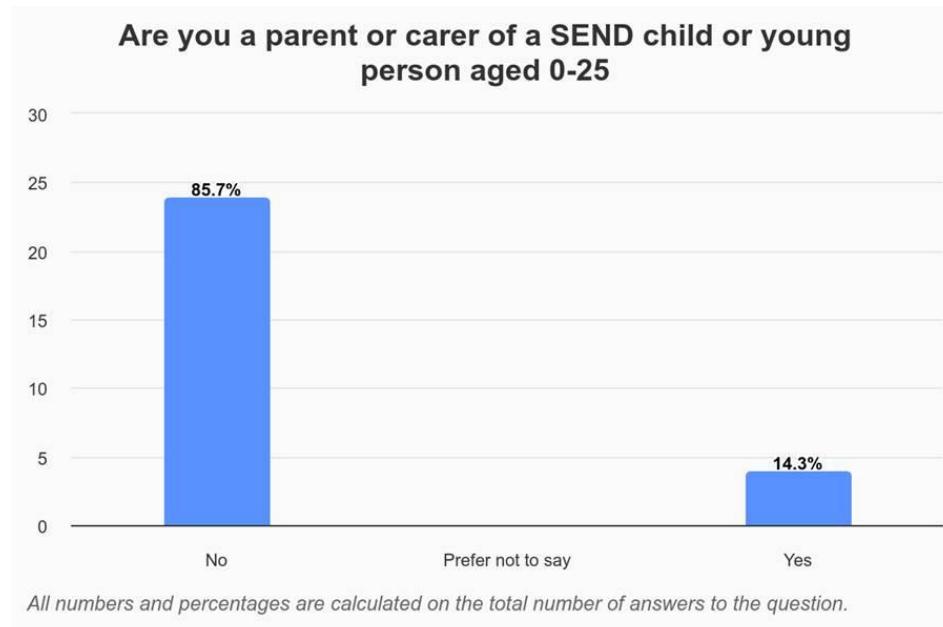
Parent or Carer of 5 Year Old or Under

10.3% of respondents indicated that they are a parent or carer of a 5 year old or under.

Are you a parent or carer of 5-year old or under?

86.2% (No)

3.4% (Prefer not to say)

10.3% (Yes)

All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.
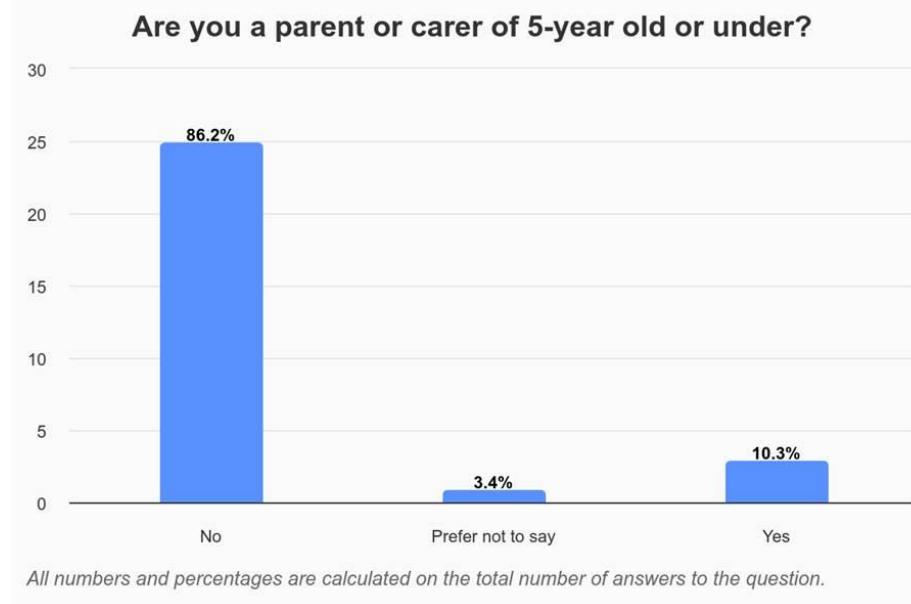
Maternity

No respondents indicated that they had given birth in the last 12 months.

Have you had a baby in the last 12 months?

*All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.*
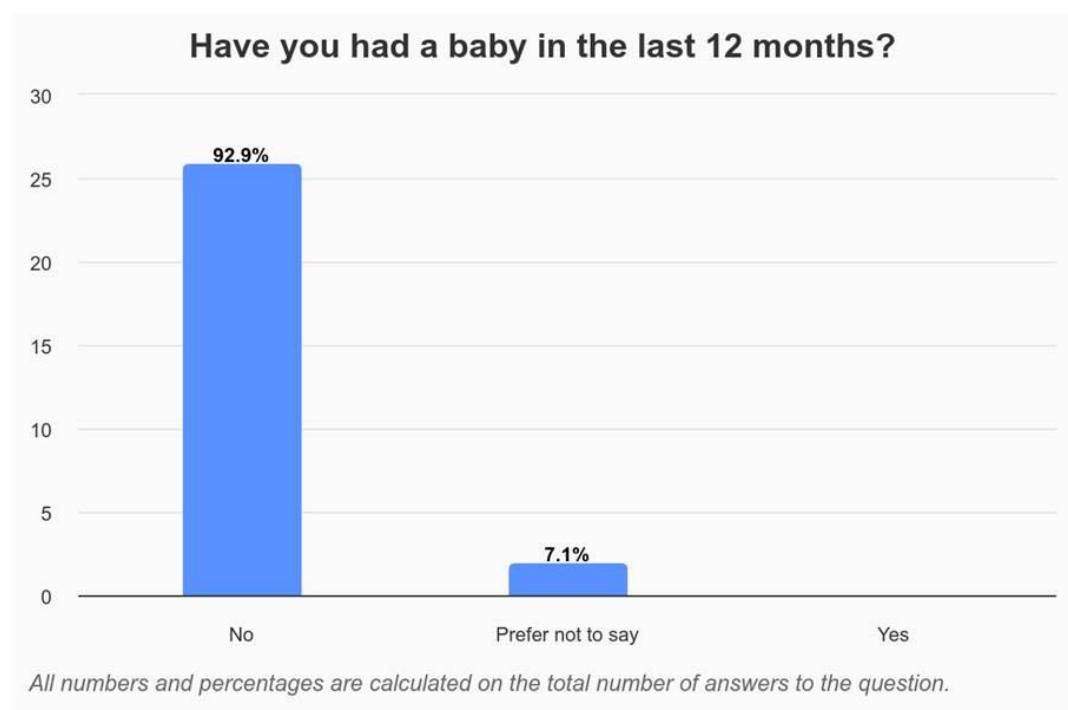
Pregnancy

No respondents indicated they were currently pregnant. The next largest grouping, one fifth of respondents, preferred not to say.

Are you pregnant?

All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.
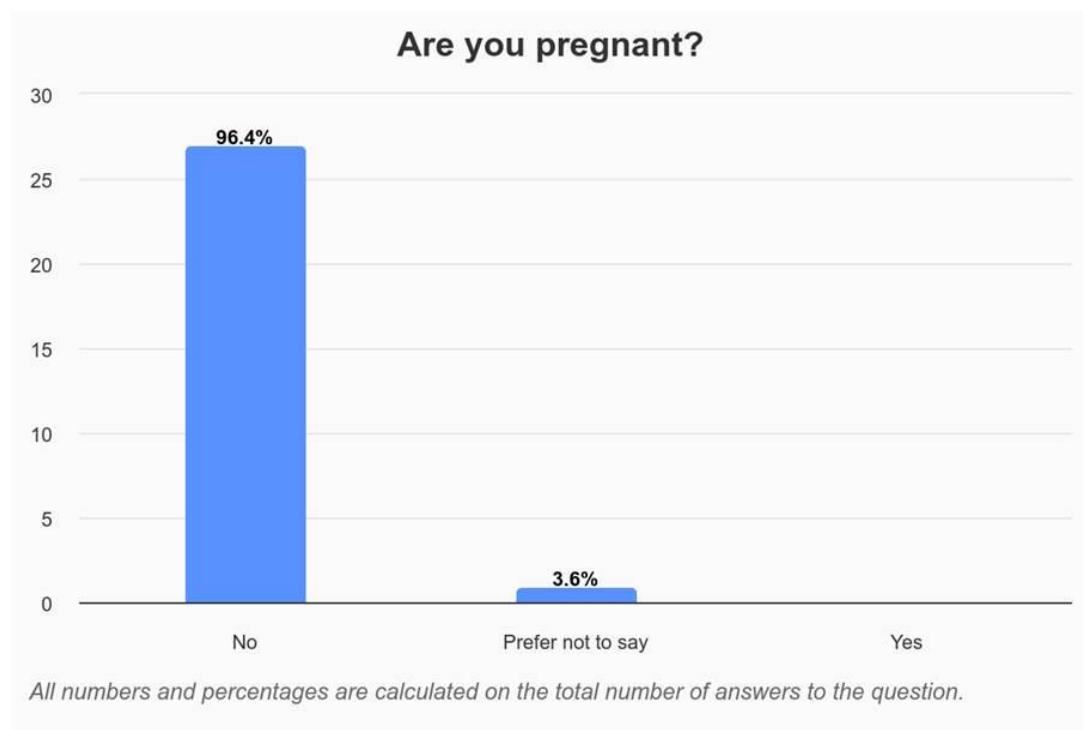
Sexual Orientation

Most respondents indicated they were heterosexual.

Sexual Orientation

All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.
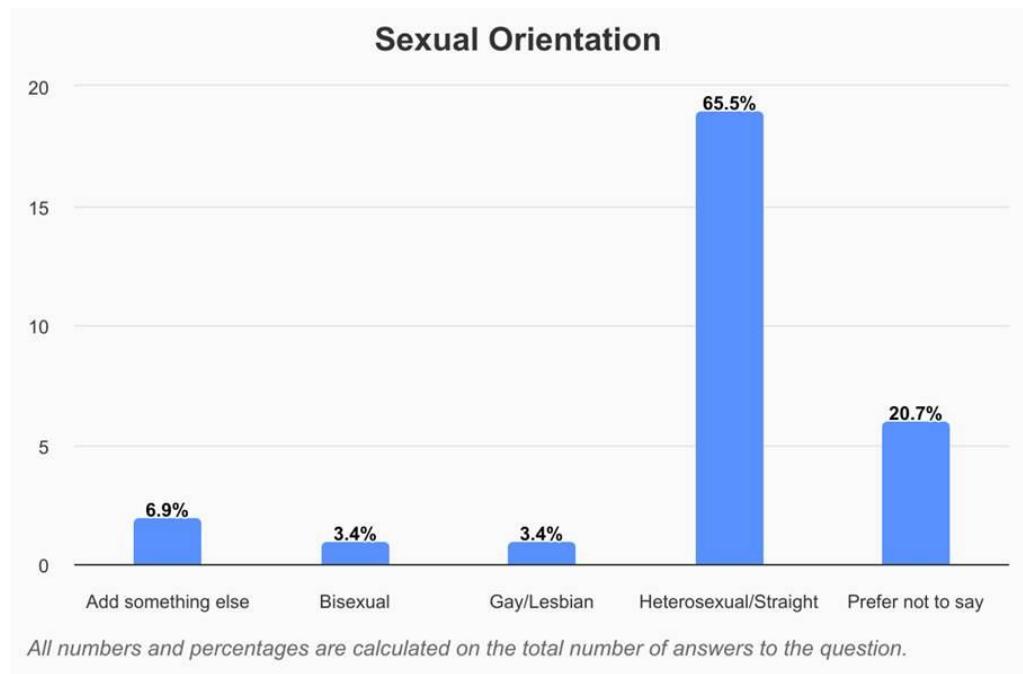
Preferred Language

The majority of respondents indicated their preferred language is English, with 3.4% preferring Turkish.

Language: Please tick the boxes that best describe your preferred language

All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.
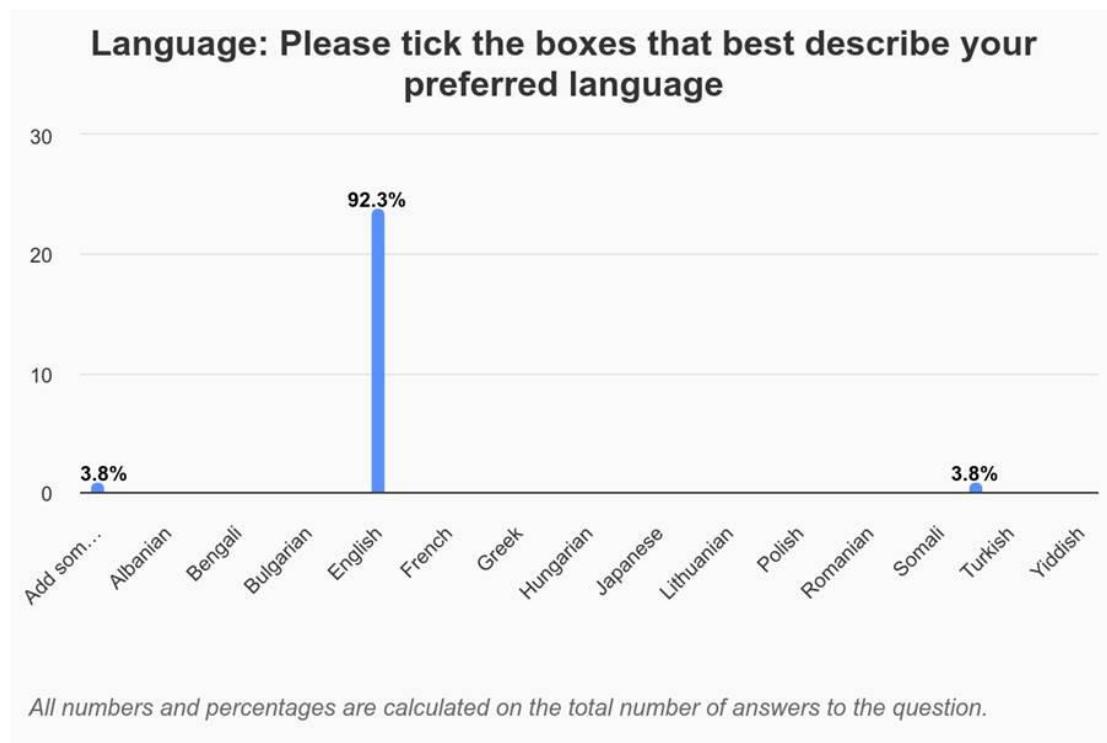
Ethnicity

Respondents represented a range of ethnic groupings.

Ethnicity

- Add something else 6.9%
- Asian/Asian British - Chinese 3.4%
- Prefer not to say 10.3%
- White - English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British 44.8%
- White - Irish 10.3%
- White Other 20.7%

All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.
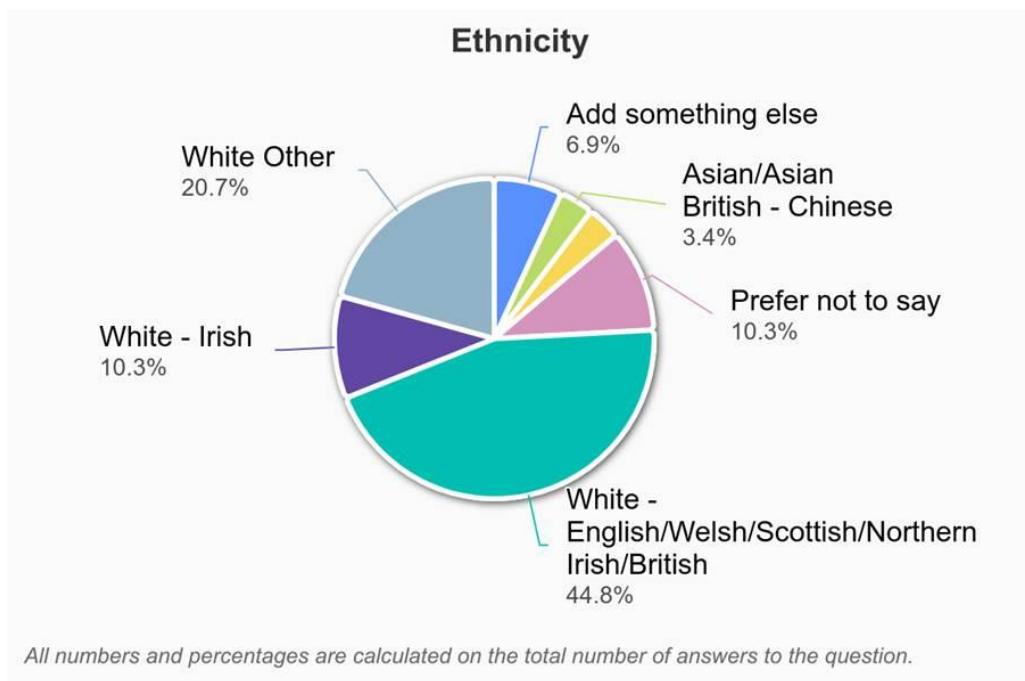
Disability

13.3% of respondents indicated they have a disability.

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is considered to have a disability if she/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her/his ability to carry out normal day to day activities. Are you disabled?

- No: 76.7%
- Prefer not to say: 10.0%
- Yes: 13.3%

All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.
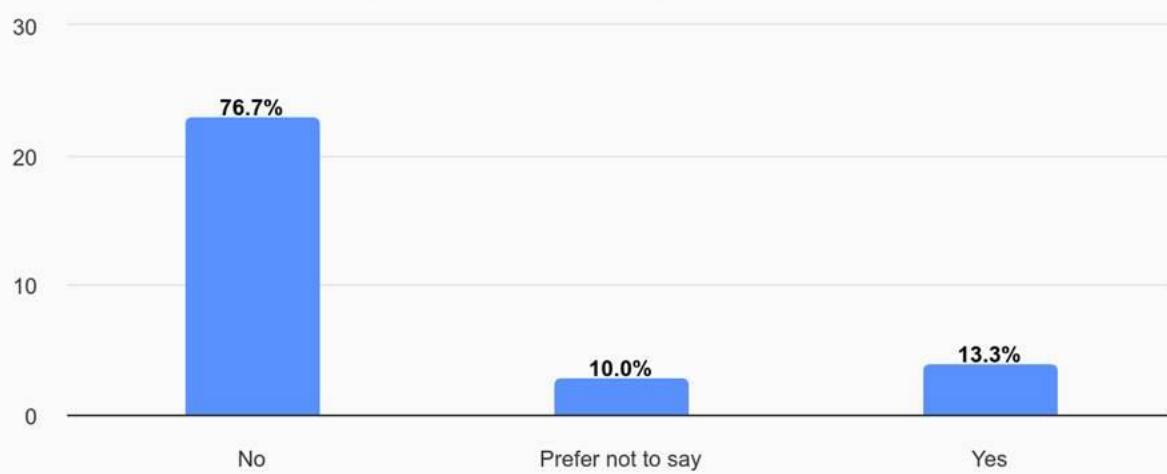
Disabilities

If you have a disability, please tell us which of the following apply to you. You may tick more than one box.
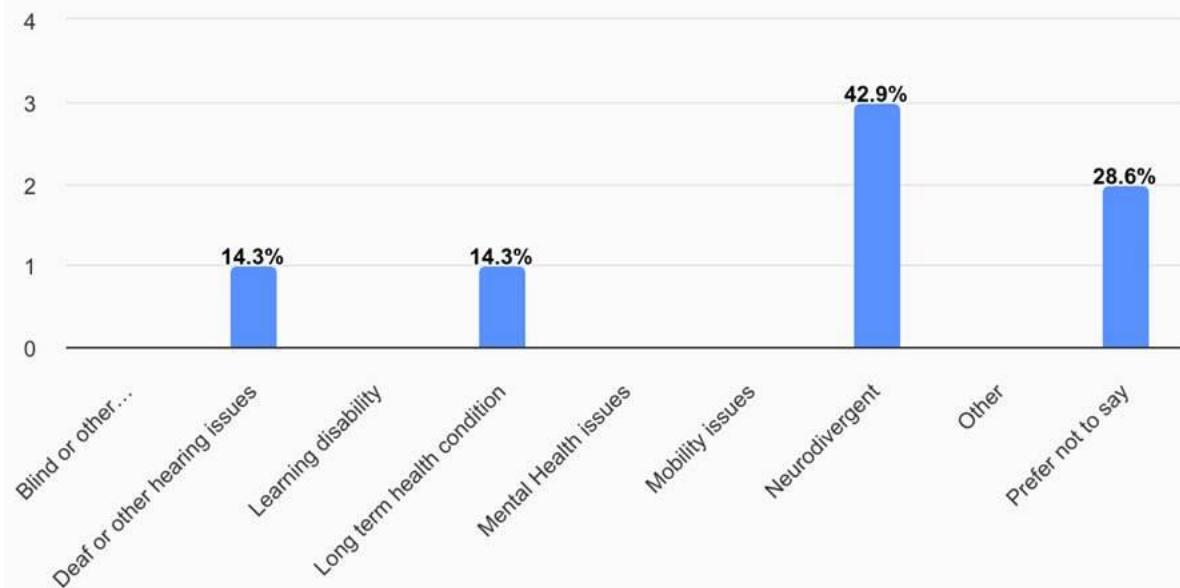
All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

Religion and Belief

The majority of respondents indicated that they are atheist.

How would you describe your religion or belief?
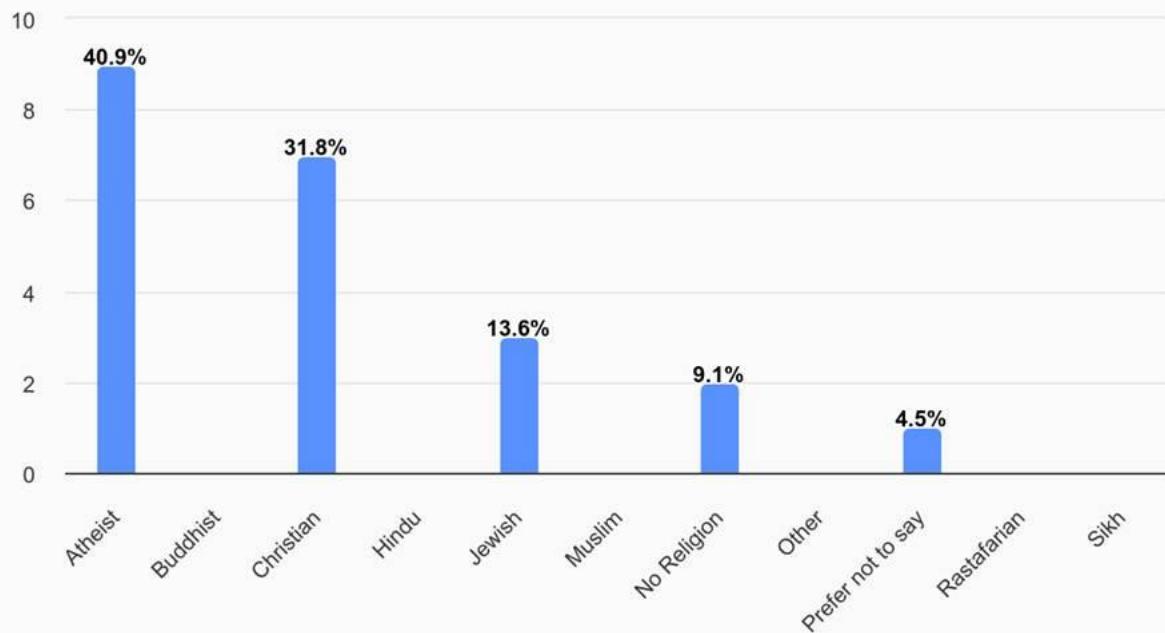
All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

34 respondents kindly shared their demographic data during this consultation.

Library Strategy: Priorities

The draft Library Strategy identified the following priorities, designed to meet the evolving needs of Haringey residents.

The following sections contain the priorities, a summary of consultation responses, and verbatim responses to each question. Please note that verbatim responses are reproduced as provided in the survey response.

Priority 1: Upholding Equity

This priority was supported by 88% of respondents. Nonetheless, respondents stressed that inclusivity must be an everyday practice and that the basics include maintaining predictable opening hours and safe environments. Respondents also stressed that equity and inclusion is not one single thing but a range of actions involving staff and visitors, reflecting that different people have different needs. One respondent emphasised the importance of partnerships and outreach to realise this priority.

Questions and Responses

Our goal is to promote equity, by ensuring that all our libraries are inclusive, welcoming spaces, that everyone - regardless of background, identity, or circumstance - can access and benefit from.
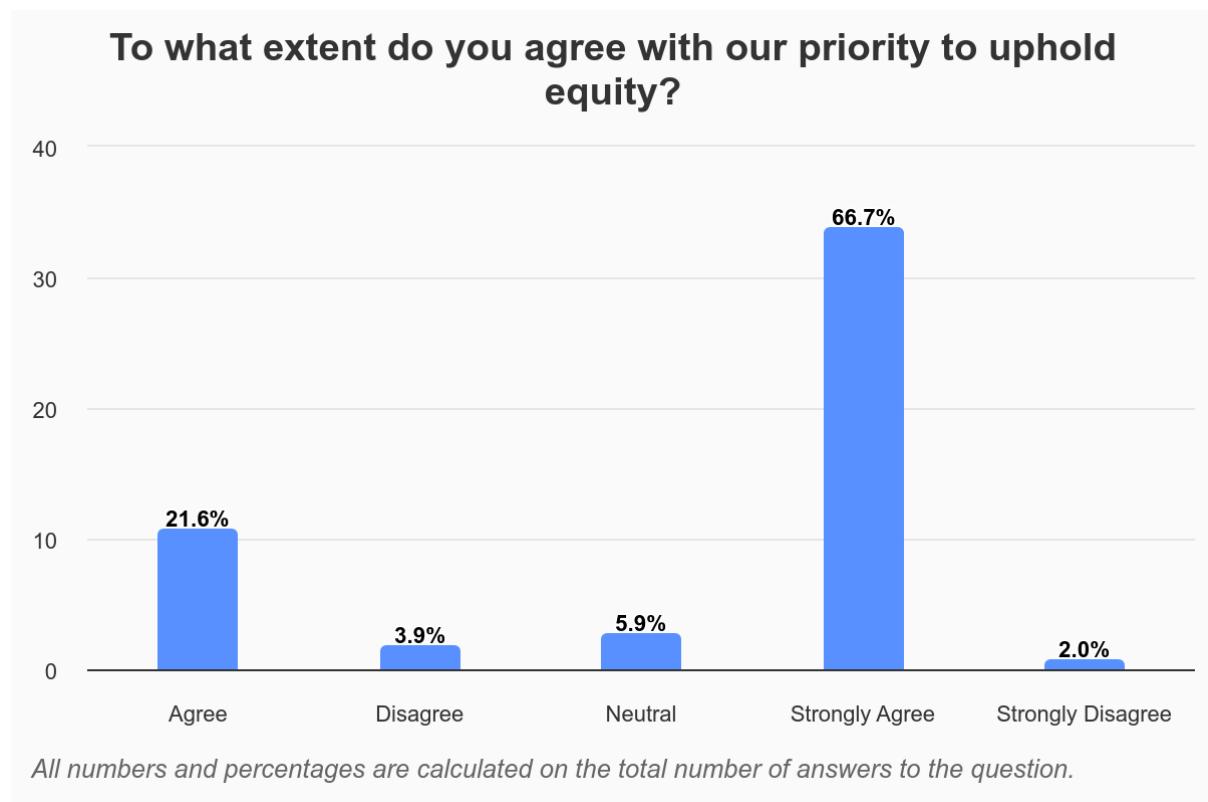
To what extent do you agree with our priority to uphold equity?

All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

Do you have any other comments about this priority?

Verbatim Responses

NO to reductions in provision

Equitable access to libraries is dependent on opening hours. These have been significantly cut recently but the strategy doesn't make any commitments regarding opening hours. This is a significant omission

Equitable access depends on opening hours. These strategy makes no commitment regarding opening hours. This is a significant omission

This is better seen as an outcome, not a goal in itself.

I don't want libraries to welcome people who are loud, abusive or disrespectful though.

Please be mindful that an inclusive library means different things to people.

I work at BookTrust, and I know from our research with families on low incomes that only about half of them have a library card. New data analysis from DCMS also shows that only about 10.5% of the population of England is a library member. Outreach and community partnerships will be an integral to prioritising and increasing equity in Haringey libraries.

Seems a strange first priority

_This is key and should be a defining matter within the staff and the users of the libraries_

The people who benefit most from the library are those with less, we absolutely should make sure it's accessible, inclusive and welcoming.

Priority 2: Improving Access

Questions and Responses

This priority was supported by 88% of respondents. However, some respondents stressed the importance of maintaining a balance between the provision of more traditional resources such as books and new technology. In person provision was valued. Physical access to facilities was mentioned as an important consideration, with some respondents commenting on the need to keep these clean and safe. The negative impact of a reduction in opening hours was also cited by some respondents.

Our goal is to make our libraries more accessible, by transforming our digital and IT provision, through better communication of what libraries have to offer, and by supporting people who face barriers to getting online.

To what extent do you agree with our priority to improve access?
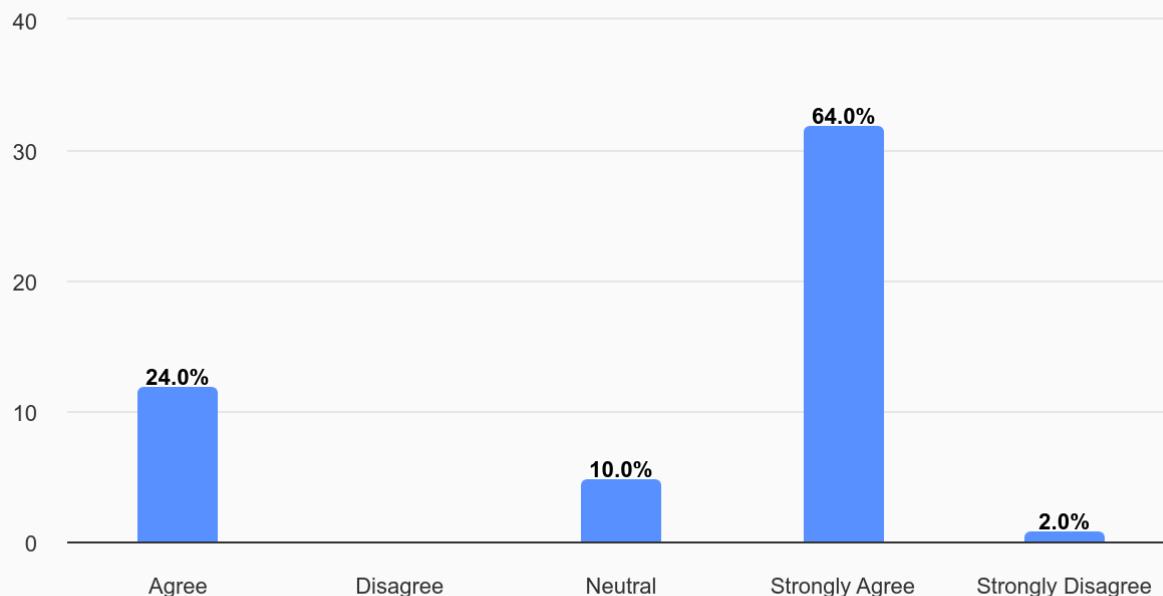
A bar chart showing:
- Agree: 24.0%
- Disagree: 0%
- Neutral: 10.0%
- Strongly Agree: 64.0%
- Strongly Disagree: 2.0%

All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

Do you have any other comments about this priority?

Verbatim Responses

NO to reductions in provision

Libraries should not become gaming hubs. Choice of equipment, guidelines around rights of use, and supporting staff to enforce guidelines may all be necessary.

Digital access is only part of library services.

I think libraries are primarily for books and community events about books. Online access is a different need which is also important but IT provision should not be at the expense of books and learning opportunities. Or are you trying to make community centres?

As long as it isn't at the expense of physical materials

The recent reduction and erratic, last minute nature of closures does nothing to encourage users to attend the library. It results in frustrated people to be less likely to be a regular user. Hours need to be as long as possible to serve the local community, and stable so that people do not have a wasted journey. Ideally hours that serve schoolchildren after school and mornings for those with young children/who do not work, plus Saturdays. Opening hours need to be publicised on the website/social media as well as on the main door and information needs to be up-to-date.

I used to use the Muswell Hill library on Saturday mornings exclusively. It's now collard at that time. This is really unfortunate.

How does cutting library hours and closing for entire days 'improve access'??

I agree as long as this is not at the expense of in person provision

"This is very important and we have lifts and access for wheel chair users.

Sometimes the entrance is not very welcoming (wood Green)

The disabled toilets are not always cleaned and this needs to be a priority

Sometimes outside the library it can be very noisy (Wood Green)

There should be another way to respond to this survey which involves people speaking and not writing as not everyone is literate

There could be plant trolleys that are moved around the library and donated by Morrisons, This helps with generall well being "

Could do more to spread the word about libraries also offering audio and ebook loans.

Don't understand

Priority 3: Encouraging Collaboration

Questions and Responses

This priority was supported by 89% of respondents. Many respondents expressed an appetite for partnerships with schools, businesses, and community groups. Some questioned the structures needed for effective collaboration and staff capacity to deliver. Another respondent felt that group activities taking place could be distracting and requested protected quiet spaces for study.

Our goal is for library staff to work in partnership with local communities, Library Friends, local businesses and library users, to design and deliver events and activities. By working together, we can improve our library service and increase public engagement.

To what extent do you agree with our priority to encourage collaboration?
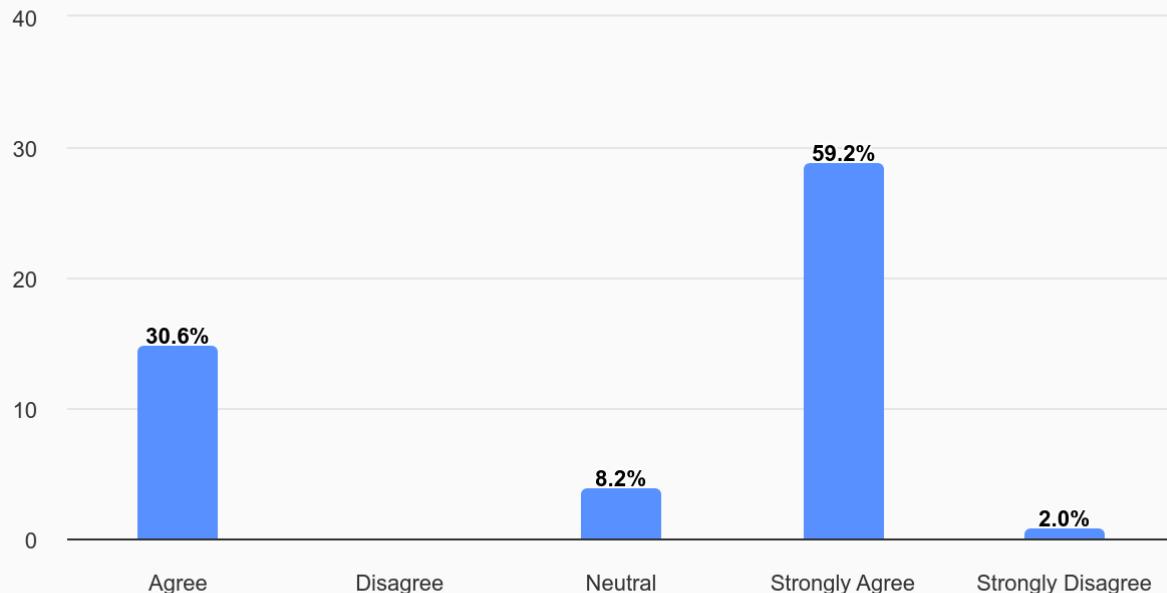
All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

Do you have any other comments about this priority?

Verbatim Responses

NO to reductions in provision

What structures will be put in place to facilitate collaboration and how will these be facilitated and supported? I think more discussions are needed

This should improving the resources to be made available, besides encouraging their use

Please don't only listen to the loudest people.

It's not clear to me that current library staff have the necessary skills to do this.

We need to be working in collaboration with the local community. At WG there is a Morrisons and we need to reach out to that supermarket to see how we can work with them within out local library strategy

Have found some partner events taking place in the library distracting as they are noisy and I am trying to study. I would like to keep certain areas in library very quite for study

A library should be the centre of any community, so many opportunities to create things that best serve people in those communities

No

Strongly agree - as the founder of Laoxa Ltd. I'd love to host our rug tufting / creative workshops at your space. There's a number of creatives that would be interested too.

Priority 4: Supporting Growth

Questions and Responses

This priority was supported by 75% of respondents. Respondents expressed mixed views regarding this priority. While some welcomed the potential for income generation, many opposed the drive for commercialisation, emphasising libraries as public services rather than services to generate revenue streams.

Some respondents picked up on the different types of growth under this priority, for example supporting personal growth but not supporting income generation by libraries. A few respondents suggested that income generation and personal growth should be separate priorities.

A number of respondents felt unsure about holding a view without understanding how growth was to be achieved and how it would align with existing library services.

Our goal is to establish a sustainable and affordable service, that enhances library usage and increases earned income. Our libraries will fuel personal, social, and economic growth, through initiatives that support well-being, life chances, skills development and pathways into work.

To what extent do you agree with our priority to support growth?
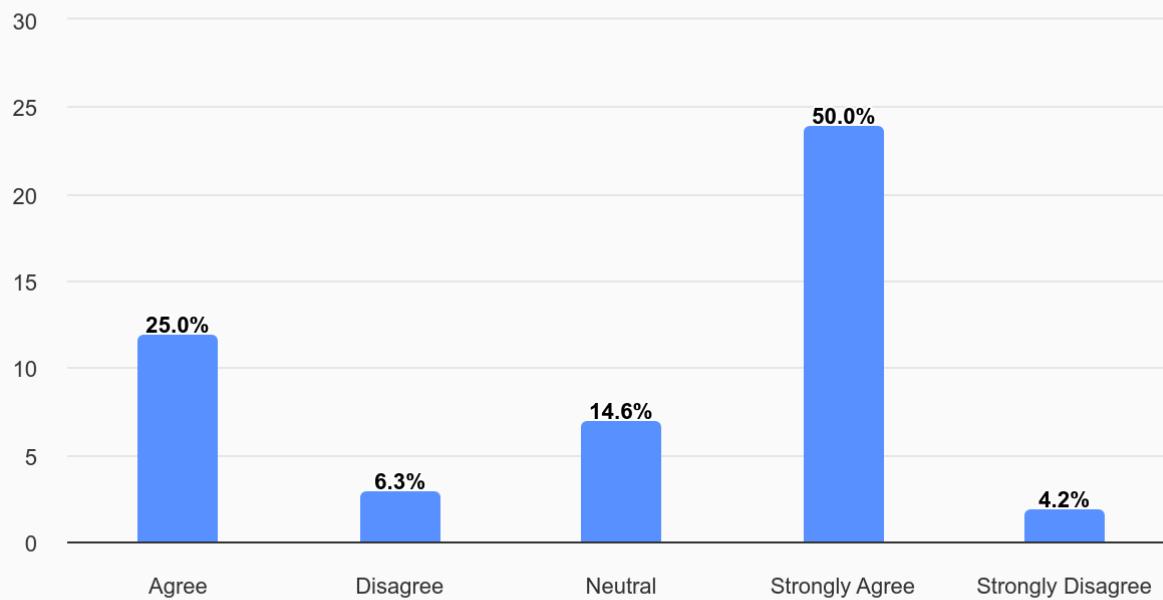
Agree: 25.0%
Disagree: 6.3%
Neutral: 14.6%
Strongly Agree: 50.0%
Strongly Disagree: 4.2%

All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

Do you have any other comments about this priority?

Verbatim Responses

NO to reductions in provision

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What will be the income generation targets for each library and who will be responsible for achieving these? Without accountability it's unlikely income will be generated.

It's hard to know what this means or how it is understood. If it means trying to increase income earned by the Library service, I disagree. If it means increasing the income of the users, it's unnecessary given the (preferable) formulation of fuelling 'personal, social and economic growth.

I believe this should be a secondary rather than primary priority. Please just do one or two things traditionally done by public libraries well, rather than diversify and dilute beneficial effect

Library's should be a service first. That might mean not making money.

The phrase 'supporting growth' is unclear. It seems to cover multiple priorities 'personal development, community well-being, financial sustainability, income generation, and pathways into employment. These are all valuable, but they are very different goals and I don't think all library priorities. Without knowing which type of growth is the main focus, it's difficult to give a meaningful rating. I would prefer to see these separated out so they can be considered and prioritised individually.

I don't think income should be a priority for the libraries. I understand the strain funding cuts have placed on Libraries, but in order to best support the community Library staff should be able to concentrate on providing services, not raising income. In addition, Libraries should be about building a love of reading and the arts, engaging in community projects, etc., not pushing the government's inhumane work-centric policies. People deserve to have a fulfilling life outside of work that doesn't cost them money, and that is supported by their local council and national government.

OK, but libraries should not be taking over the role of social services.

As long as it's still possible to use libraries to borrow books. it's fine to add in other 'initiatives'.

This seems an excuse for privatisation. Libraries should remain a free public service

It is very important that the libraries are seen as libraries first and that the customer services part can return into the council offices. I am keen to discuss this further with the council

I do not think we should be charging 40p fines for every day the book is overdue. Or charging 2.70 to order a book? This does not happen in other boroughs ...

Community groups who use the library need to have the service for free and do not have to pay booking fees

Other private companies can be encouraged to use the library spaces. At present the local companies do not really know which rooms are free,

At all times the community groups should have priority

concern about them becoming sources of income. I pay my council tax for this service will charges creep in.

The two sentences here seem to be about separate things? Growth of library income vs personal development of users?

In furture

Libraries shouldn't have to earn income.

Priority 5: Embedding Lifelong Learning

Questions and Responses

This priority was supported by 91% of respondents. Respondents highly valued learning especially for children and young people. Respondents called for stronger links with schools and reading programmes that targeted teens. One respondent also urged older adults to be kept in mind.

One respondent felt that this priority should be the top priority.

Our goal is to promote a love of reading and learning at every stage of life. Our libraries will support this by enhancing our Early Years provision, introducing specific services for teenagers, and encouraging learning and engagement for children and adults, through a wide range of resources, activities, and partnerships.

To what extent do you agree with our priority to embed lifelong learning?
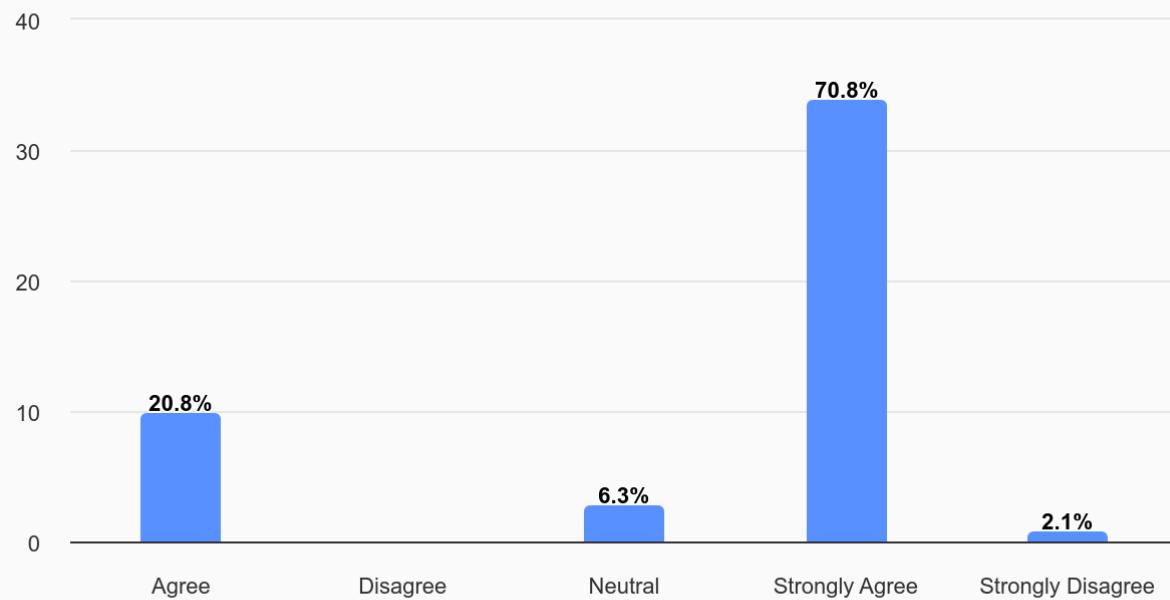
Agree	20.8%
Disagree	
Neutral	6.3%
Strongly Agree	70.8%
Strongly Disagree	2.1%

All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

Do you have any other comments about this priority?

Verbatim Responses

NO to reductions in provision

This should be priority no. 1 (and current priority 4 should be the 2nd priority. Setting six 'priorities' is a cop-out and the rest should be ditched.

Please don't forget older adults.

I am THRILLED that you've cited BookTrust research and case studies and Reading Rights! Thank you! It's so exciting to see our research and policy work having real impact in my very own neighbourhood!

Young people need help to learn to love to read again as they get older. They may love reading as young children but are losing the practice in teenage years. This is a crisis of reading that libraries can help address. Book clubs, reading lists, researching suitable teen literature would really help, and interaction with schools to teach reading and its value during citizenship classes for example. Young people need to know WHY it matters so much.

The focus should be on book reading.

Again - closing libaries on certain days and cutting hours does not encourage library use as one never knows if they will be open.

This actually means that the libraries need to be open on Sundays from 1.00-6.00 as a reflection that the local community maybe working the other days and Sunday may be the only day they can study for GCSEs and A levels

But please can this be done while keeping quite spaces for adults who are trying to study

Yes! So many resources for children and young people, and parents, have been decimated. Libraries are so important for these groups.

Haringey Labrary Staffs only

Priority 6: Promoting Visibility and Representation

Questions and Responses

This priority was supported by 77% of respondents, however there were concerns that the goal needed to be fully accessible to all residents including by providing more printed materials for those without internet access.

Some respondents highlighted the importance of fostering social cohesion and avoiding approaches that might emphasise differences. Other suggestions included ensuring proportional representation of communities.

Several respondents felt the goal would be better integrated across other priorities rather than standing alone, while a few expressed disagreement with its inclusion.

Our goal is for our libraries to celebrate the cultural richness of Haringey and its many diaspora communities. We will achieve this by maintaining diverse and evolving library collections, and building on our programme of events and activities that reflect the voices and experiences of the people who make up the borough.

To what extent do you agree with our goal to promote visibility and representation?

To what extent do you agree with our goal to promote visibility and representation?
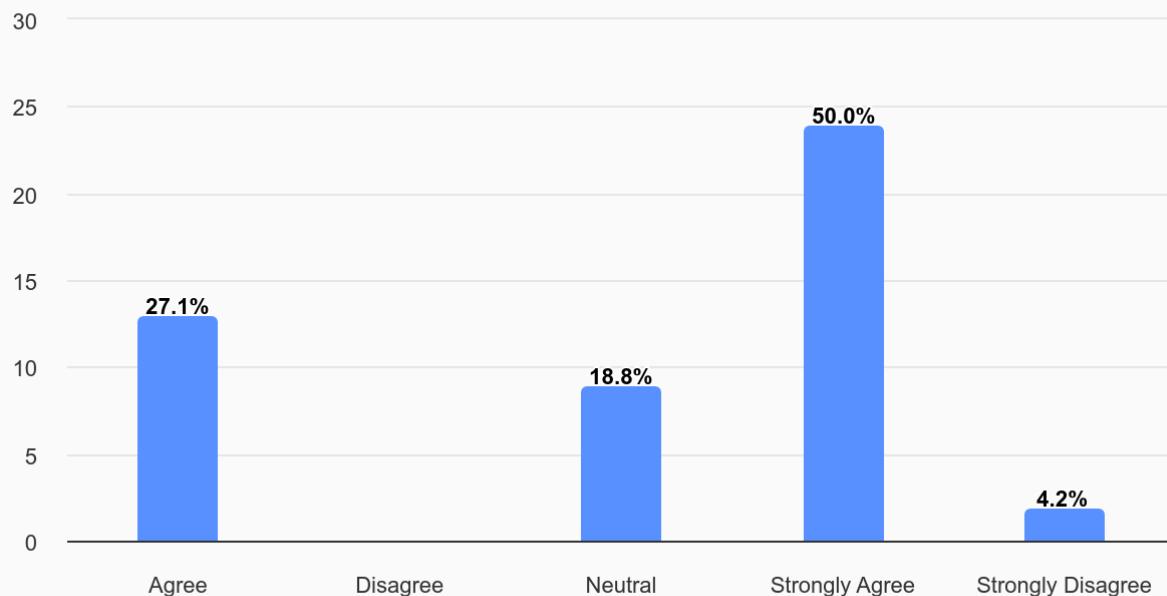
All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

Do you have any other comments about this priority?

Verbatim Responses

NO to reductions in provision

Good goal but don't think this goal is accessible to all of the borough residents.

Runs counter to the need to create an integrated society by promoting our differences which encourage comparison, competition and discrimination.

OK, but reflect the actual proportionality of different communities.

There need to be many more posters and leaflets available and hard copies for people that do not have access to the internet at home. It is not acceptable to only print off one copy of everything. That needs to change

This should underpin and be threaded throughout all other priorities rather than be a goal in itself? A nice-to-have, not a need-to-have.

No

Additional Question

Thinking about the strategy as a whole and its priorities, is there anything you would like to see added?

Respondents strongly valued maintaining current library services. Key concerns included the absence of clear performance indicators, monitoring processes, and risk mitigation in the strategy. There was a call for the use of clearer, plain-English in the strategy.

Feedback emphasised libraries' role as inclusive community hubs. However, some respondents clearly prioritised books and reading while others supported offering diverse

events, building partnerships with schools, and offering flexible and affordable spaces for local activities.

Operational issues featured prominently, with repeated calls for extended and reliable opening hours, improved staffing, better facilities (such as refreshments and toilets), and transparency around budgets and decision-making.

While some respondents praised the strategy as thoughtful and forward-looking, others felt it lacked specificity and operational clarity.

Verbatim Responses

To continue the good service that the libraries currently provide

Managed decline is NOT acceptable

1) Key performance indicators are missing. Without clear SMART targets it will not be possible to measure progress. 2) how will progress towards achieving these strategy be monitored? This is not clear 3) what are the risks and how will these be mitigated?

These goals are very difficult to understand. I don't think plain English principles have been followed.

Libraries should be for everyone. They are not a business. They are a service. "

Making libraries embedded in local community so they are owned and loved by everyone living in the areas by offering essential support groups for every age group. Making a love of books, words and learning at the core of it all ie. Parent and baby groups, toddler groups, walking book groups, older people meeting groups around common interests such as art, poetry, quiz knowledge. More spaces which the community can hire for parties, events, book launches etc

More about the books being central to this

More community based events and links with schools and cultural groups/charities. Maybe used as pop up surgery for CAB/vaccinations/public awareness campaigns etc.

Strategy around how it can be staffed to maximise opening hours. "

All very laudable BUT if libraries are not actually OPEN when the website says they are, no strategy will have any EFFECT.

The strategy is excellent.

Direct partnerships with schools to help young people realise the joy and value of reading again.

No

More opening hours, particularly in branch libraries which most people can actually get to!

"The questions are a little leading. I can't imagine there will be too many objections to the aims and objectives

I was expecting to see more practical questions, ie about library opening times, loans/returns policy, reservations, materials to be stocked, etc"

Encouraging young people to explore education and culture through their local libraries.

The most important thing for me and my family, by far, is having good opening hours on the weekend - this is the only time that we're able to go as a family, and we really like doing so when we can.

I would like to see added a relook at opening hours also hot drinks available in each library

Refreshments available

Toilets for library staff and library users cleaned once a day and repaired. (WG)

More creative and artistic events for all library users across the borough

More books bought so the collection is not reduced but expanded

I would like to know when the civic centre will be finished as the customer services need to relocate to the civic centre and we need to return to the library being a library and a place for study and community "

Current times in Muswell Hill and Alexandra Park are only until 6pm in the week, I think this excludes those working and paying for this service who probably wont get home for 6pm. I think there should be at least one week night in each library where the library stays open until 7pm...not just the main libraires. Even it this means they open an hour later in the morning.

Opening hours, Human Resources

Diversify activities, all about learning (books, music, talks, readings, but also well-being such as gentle exercise classes, meditation etc. and craft activities.

Do you have any other comments on the proposed library strategy?

The ruling group on Haringey Council can take a jump off the Archway Bridge.

The info doesn't say which council meeting will review and approve the strategy. It would be helpful to know the date of this

As set out above, there should be two priories only; numbers 5 and 4 in the list. The remainder are either a consequence rather than a goal, or irrelevant.

You're making cuts in the wrong places (losing staff). Please just focus on the main traditional role of public library - to make books accessible for everyone and act as a hub for the local community.

I am not very clear what these goals actually mean operationally.

It's excellent and thoughtful. I was very worried to see library hours cut across the borough recently (even though I think the council did that as thoughtfully and carefully as it could), so it is very heartening and inspiring to see how thoughtfully the council will be deploying its resources to improve people's lives.

All looks good but it feels quite general without many specifics. I understand it is a strategy which needs to be built on, but I feel local communities would relate better to tangible ideas if you are looking for buy-in.

No

I hope that the renovations have not been a waste of money. The library (for me, Alexandra Park) is a crucial hub in our area and needs to continue as an open, accessible resource for the whole community, not just for a few hours a day on a few days in the week.

I would honestly just like the library to be open reliably, and for longer

I would love to see and back all efforts for all London Local Council to provide certain numbers of libraries that are backed by statuary government grant etc. and mostly financially supported by by well-off member of the society, these Public Libraries represent the nations advance social and cultural standard and seal of Civilized nations. As these Libraries must be open throughout the year for certain hours per day, for any decent, average member of public to spend some hours there as their social and cultural hub of information, and for most lonely people of all ages to go as one of their safe place to spend some time in safe social cultural environment; a place to learn at any age and stay up-to-date with info on social events taking place around their local areas, such as Music gigs, social cultural events, and place to visit for interesting talks on interesting topics etc. Also Local Libraries are the crucial safe last resort for those folks who in desperation need to get access to computer/internet, or wish to seek some info from customer service desk at the Local Library, or borrow videos, video games, or documentary videos etc,   Hence Local libraries are tremendous source of information for average member of public, especially when living in advance civilised society/Nation.

Libraries should not lose sight of the fact that their primary purpose is to provide books and promote the benefits of reading.

Keep them free, keep them diverse, keep them interesting.

Yes I do

I need clarity about how the Pride of Place money that is a givernment comittment of £10 billion and that 1.5 million is available for Haringey will be spent

How does it relate to the Boruogh of culture 2027

There needs to be much more transparency about budgets overall

see times comment above

Great to see forward thinking and positive goals for the lib, thankyou everyone involved!

Better Opening Hours and improved facilities, Human resources

Would be great to know how to collaborate with the library if there's any opportunities.

Appendix

Consultation response received via email 4th November 2026

Dear all,

We would like to offer our thoughts on the Draft Library Strategy.

As we have already provided feedback on the principles informing the Strategy it will not be surprising that our thoughts on the Draft Strategy do not differ from the comments previously.

Again, we are pleased to see Haringey consulting on a Library Service Strategy after asking that for many years, decisions in merit would be guided by a strategy and a clear idea of the role and scope of the Library services.

We are concerned though that the proposed strategy has only a 5 year timescale, as many of the ideas and proposals discussed require procurements and some time to implement. So we hope that there will be a plan and a strategy in place for the service offering for more years to come, and beyond the imminent requirements and commitments of the 'Borough of Culture' award.

We note that there have been clear themes identified from the engagement activities, but it is not clear how the Council has reflected these in the strategy and its implementation, as there seems to be a disconnect between what residents have asked and what Haringey Council has heard.

With respect to accessibility and opening hours, residents have asked for predictable opening hours, and weekend and evening access, which is essential for working people, but the implementation for this priority highlights 'hosting events and activities with the help of Library Friends and volunteers' and mostly improving access in terms of increasing use of digital tools. So it's not clear how the Council will ensure that residents can rely on opening hours and ensure there will be a library to access in the evenings and weekends. Similarly requests for community hubs, social connections, events, learning, partnership and collaborations will be limited by the reduction in opening hours, and much more in the West of the borough which has been disproportionately impacted by the reduction.

This is also why we remain puzzled by the interpretation of equity and its implementation as de facto divide in the operating hours of libraries between different parts of the borough. The result is that this interpretation will be impacting those who use libraries the most, despite the strategy seemingly aiming at listening to library users and wanting to adopt a local approach to reflect community priorities. Certainly most used libraries do indicate a need and priority in the area?

We also note a mention to 'monitor and report on equity-related KPIs quarterly to inform service improvements and accountability' but there is no indication on what those KPI are and how will be determined and monitored, and we would appreciate more information be provided.

Even when considering the residents' request for support to children's activities and embedding lifelong learning as a core priority and the need of supporting children and young people - and their Early Years development - we find another example of disconnect between ask and heard. Alexandra Park library which, according to the EQIA, has the second highest 'under 16' group of residents in its catchment area (23.1% second only to 23.3% in Coombes

Croft) and the highest registered user profile for 'under 16' users (47.8%) is the library that has received the highest reduction in opening hours among all libraries, from 57 to 32.5 hours a week.

And we would like to reiterate that in many places in the west of the borough there are no other services that meet the needs of parents and children to access a play area or a book service after school, or for Community Hubs and Social Connection that residents have highlighted in the response to the survey.

We hope Haringey Cabinet will reconsider this approach and will again look at the way the operating hours of our borough's most-used libraries have been cut disproportionately, seemingly targeting residents in one part of the borough.

We have offered suggestions in the past on how to fund longer operating hours in libraries, and how money set aside for the construction of offices at the Civic Centre could be used. We invite again Haringey to look at how other local authorities, like Bristol, have been able to protect their libraries budget.

With respect to priorities 3 to 5: As mentioned in our previous feedback we welcome activities aiming at encouraging collaboration, participation and empowerment of local communities and possibly helping with funding additional operating hours or bringing services closer to residents so we are pleased to see the Strategy agreeing with this approach and evaluating the introduction of 'Libraries of things' , also suggested by residents, and partnerships with Council services. As part of this partnership we also invite the Council to consider the placement of 'Community Rangers' who could assist with developing ideas to improve neighbourhoods, as well as reporting issues, arranging clean-ups/litter picks, co-ordinating snow and ice removal, engaging with all who make up our community, and much more.

In the same way we are also pleased to see the spirit of our 'Work and Life Skills' proposal in the focus on libraries supporting initiatives for adult learning and delivering employment skills programmes. Therefore we encourage the Library service to explore having dedicated officers with a remit to increase apprenticeships and develop a Haringey PSHE / Citizenship curriculum for the borough.

Like for the KPI, we welcome establishing an annual Libraries Performance Report, but we would ask that clear metrics can be identified to evaluate the performance and drive recommendations and development in each library.

We also welcome the inclusion of residents in developing individual Libraries Plan priorities for each of our nine libraries, which we highlighted was missing in the initial proposal, we hope to see this going further to include Councillors as mentioned in our previous submission, and the organisation of at least one in-person and one online event to gather feedback from library users and make the co-design of these plan as inclusive as possible.

As we share a desire for 'everyone in our borough to be proud of our libraries and to take full advantage of all that they have to offer' we hope to be able to support the development of the Library Strategy beyond 2030 and support the exploration of alternative options to ensure residents have as much access as possible to the libraries and services on offer.

Kind regards,

Alessandra

Alessandra Rossetti

Liberal Democrat Member for Alexandra Park Ward
Haringey Liberal Democrat Spokeperson for Council and Customer Services

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