



**LONDON
BOROUGH
OF BRENT**

LIBRARY SERVICE

**PUBLIC LIBRARY
POSITION STATEMENT
2004**

Draft



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1. CORPORATE VISION

1.1 Vision and ambition for the library service

Our vision is that, in ten years time, library, museum and archive services in Brent will be recognised by residents and stakeholders as exemplars of excellence at the forefront of innovation.

In order to achieve this, our aims are:

- to have well maintained, first class buildings, that are fit for purpose, and in key locations;
- to deliver excellent services that have at their heart the promotion of reading and learning; access to digital skills and services including e-government; and measures to tackle social exclusion, build community identity, and develop citizenship;
- to have in place an organisational structure that enables innovation and top quality service delivery;
- to have a committed, trained workforce whose skills and expertise match key service priorities;
- to be the partner of choice for both internal and external partners.

This vision was determined by the Best Value Review of Libraries, Museum and Archive in 2003.

1.2 Assessment of the authority's capacity to deliver the vision

The delivery of the Council's vision and ambition for the service within the corporate context are expressed through the Corporate Strategy, the Improving Brent Action Plan 2004-6 and the Best Value Review of Libraries, Museum and Archive Implementation Plan as well as other corporate plans and strategies such as the Best Value Performance Plan.

a) Corporate Strategy 2002-6

- **Promoting Quality of Life and the Green Agenda**

A key issue addressed via the Corporate Strategy action plan under this theme is **"To increase the opening hours of local libraries and provide additional resources for new stock"**.

- **Regeneration and priority neighbourhoods**

As part of the Wembley Stadium regeneration opportunities, Brent Council has published its 'Vision for Wembley' which includes the provision of a new state of the art Central Library linked to other cultural services, forming part of a new Civic Centre for Brent.

b) Best Value Review 2003 Implementation Plan

- A review of the number and location of library buildings to look at the possibilities for improving access for customers to services
- A review of the staffing structure to include the inclusion of key service delivery posts and address underpayment issues.

c) Improving Brent Action Plan 2004-6

The 'Improving Brent' Action Plan determines the improvement activity across services to deliver an 'excellent' rating in the 2006 Corporate Performance Assessment. It identifies the following priorities for the library service:

- Implementation of the BVR in order to bring facilities up to modern standards
- Increase usage by local people
- Meeting the Public Library Standards

The Action Plan commits to increasing the number of visits to libraries to 8.6 per head of population and to increase the overall public satisfaction to 70% by summer 2006.

1.2 Evidence of ability to deliver

- Brent Council has committed to increasing the Library Service revenue budget for a five-year period (from 2001/2) to meet the Public Library Standards. Library opening hours have increased by 29% since 2002. The library stockfund has increased by 51.5% in the same period.
- A strategic review of library buildings by consultants Bissett Adams is underway and will produce an initial report in September 2004 which will then be subject to member level agreement and public consultation. The Lead Member for Education, Arts & Libraries and key senior officers across the council including the CE have input into the research for this review.

- The relocation and refurbishment of library buildings will require significant capital funding either from Brent Council or through partnership working, or a combination of both, in order to bring all libraries up to the level as indicated in 'Framework to the Future'.
- The refurbishment of Ealing Road Library in April 2003 has led to a 25% increase in visitors and an 11.6% increase in issues in the year to March 2004. Ealing Road is now the second busiest library in Brent, overtaking Town Hall Library.
- Brent Library Service has shown year on year increases in physical visits, website visits and stock issues for three years and indications for this year show that this trend is continuing.
- The numbers of children taking part in the Summer Reading scheme has increased over the past two years, with 30% more children taking part in 2003 and 50% more class visits over the year.
- The library service has been awarded e-government funding to install Brent Council Self Service Points as first stop access to council services across all twelve libraries during 2004/5. This is a joint project in partnership with Brent One Stop Shop service and will be the pilot for other council customer service points.
- The relocation of the Grange Museum to Willesden Green Library Centre (funded by Heritage Lottery fund and Brent Council) will enable a small-scale refurbishment of the centre and the library by Spring 2006.
- The Wembley Stadium regeneration area offers an opportunity to build a new central library for Brent in Wembley and this is the stated vision of both members and senior officers in Brent, as part of a new civic centre. Head of Library Service has been involved with the visioning process for the new Civic Centre.
- A team of coordinators for Reader Development, Lifelong Learning and Children and Young People Services have been appointed, draft strategies for all three areas have been developed and a range of initiatives and activities are in place.
- Three Learn Direct ICT centres now deliver learning in Brent libraries, in addition to the People's Network facilities which include adaptive technology and furniture for disabled customers in every library.
- All libraries including the mobile have received Brent Council funding to implement the recommendations of the DDA and improvements include induction loops and automatic doors, improved security gate access etc.

1.3 External Evaluations

- BVPI Satisfaction Survey 2004 indicates that 56% of residents are satisfied with library services and this has not changed since previous survey of 2000/1. However, this rises to 60% amongst BME respondents and 59% of disabled respondents.
- Public Library Users Survey 2003 indicated that overall customer satisfaction has risen from 81.5 % in 2002 to 85.3%.
- The Library Service was awarded a Charter Mark for excellence in customer service in December 2002.
- The Library service has liP accreditation as part of Brent Council's overall accreditation
- A whole service review of Cultural Services by the Audit Commission in July/August 2004 produced the overall rating of '**a good service with promising prospects of improving**' with the quality of service in libraries noted as strong.

2. RESPONSE TO 'FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE'

2.1 Books, reading and learning

2.1.1 Key Strengths, constraints and challenges

Key Strengths

- Brent Council's commitment to improving the opening hours and stock of its libraries with year on year growth in revenue budget identified to 2006/7
- Library Service in Lifelong Learning and Cultural services division of Education, Arts and Libraries Department offering close working links with Youth Service, Adult Education, Museum and Archive, Cultural Services and schools
- Year on year increase in visitors and issues of library materials
- Member of WELLSTOC stock purchasing consortium ensuring value for money purchasing

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- Reader Development, Lifelong Learning and Children's & Young peoples Coordinators, in post leading cross borough service teams
- Reader Development, Lifelong Learning, and Children's & Young Peoples draft strategies in place and being consulted on
- Stock Policy in place and being updated
- Good track record of delivering innovative reader development initiatives such as ImaginAsian (Asian literature project), Black Inc (Black literature and writing project), "readallaboutit" quarterly literary magazine, author, Black History Month festival, author events and targeted book promotions.
- Extensive programme of children's reader development initiatives such as Chatterbooks, Summer Reading Scheme, Black History Month Festival, Baby Book Crawl, and targeted cultural celebrations such as Read Routes
- Extensive programme of lifelong learning activities such as family learning events, BACES taster sessions, and Adult Learners Week
- Good record of partnership working and success in attaining funding to improve and deliver services

Constraints

- Capacity to deliver projects and initiatives, both in staff numbers, resources, and skills
- Opening hours need to be extended again to offer better access to library resources
- Small management team, each member of which has multiple responsibilities
- Size/layout/condition of buildings not always adequate for events/activities for learning/reading development
- Stock fund insufficient to meet all demands for titles, formats, authors, subject coverage and quantities
- Stock holdings need refocusing to improve stock turn and issues as a % of stock

Challenges

- Still in bottom quartile for performance on visitors and issues
- Implementing recommendations of Best Value Reviews
- Under-investment in past on bookstock means collections are of poor quality and require significant year on year growth to ensure good quality and comprehensivity
- Ability to meet Public Library Standards on stock particularly PLS 18 (Time taken to replenish stock on open access or available for loan)
- Number and location of buildings means that resources are stretched or that service points are not easily accessible
- Increasing numbers of refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants adding to existing very diverse community in Brent.

2.1.2 Policies and practices for adults and young children

General

- Library membership open to all with proof of address, signature of parent/guardian where applicable
- Library members can borrow up to 8 books, four CDs and a total of six DVDs or videos at one time
- Concessions on lost library card, overdue and reservation charges for children under 14 and senior citizens
- Stock policy covers level, range and condition of stock and defines collections according to branch size
- Customer Promise outlines levels of service delivery customers can expect
- One of pilot London authorities for 'Welcome to your library' project to introduce library service and remove barriers to asylum seekers and refugees
- Provision of books, CDs, videos, DVDs, newspapers, magazines in relevant languages other than English
- Provision of materials for customers with disabilities e.g. books in large print, on tape etc.
- Stock can be renewed or reserved over the Internet
- Books can be returned to any library in Brent
- Increased delivery of reference and information materials on line

Adults

- Provision of range of stock including books, DVDs, CDs, videos, newspapers, magazines, information materials
- Provision of study areas/facilities
- Provision of programme of literature events and activities throughout the year e.g. Black History Month, Read Routes initiatives
- Provision of reading groups and writers' workshops including those specifically targeted at ethnic communities
- Provision of Family Learning events and activities to promote literacy and the love of reading through parents learning with children
- Provision of Learning Collections of basic skills materials including ESOL, CV writing, reading skills, basic maths for adults
- Working in partnership with private and educational organisations to provide a range of learning opportunities in libraries, including classes for ESOL and Basic Skills, ICT training via LearnDirect centres

Children

- Provision of range of stock including books, DVDs, CDs, videos, newspapers, magazines, information materials suitable for age range
- Specific children's areas in each library including area for under fives
- Specific teenage areas in several libraries
- Space to do homework
- Storytelling for under fives in every library
- Programme of class visits to libraries for schoolchildren
- Chatterbox reading clubs for age up to 10
- Bookstart packs for all babies born in Brent delivered via health centres
- Summer reading scheme to encourage children's reading
- Events and activities during school holidays or for cultural festivals to encourage use of libraries and reading
- Supports Sure Start programmes through Play and Learn bus, outreach collections and story and literacy sessions

2.1.3 Priorities/targets/activities

Priority	Target	Activity	Timescale	Evaluation
To ensure borough wide service planning and strategy for stock quality	<p>Ensure that library stock relevant, current, comprehensive and well maintained.</p> <p>To increase number of items borrowed</p> <p>To increase number of visitors</p> <p>Improved success rate in users obtaining specific book and in reserve supply rates.</p>	<p>a) Update stock policy in light of changing priorities and strategies</p> <p>b) Implement staff training in stock policy and maintenance</p> <p>c) Implement borough wide stock maintenance programme involving stock counts and inventories</p> <p>d) Produce stock profiles and annual stock plans for each service area</p> <p>e) To carry out Stock Quality Health Check</p> <p>f) Introduce Edi/Quotes to speed up supply of new stock into libraries</p> <p>g) Stock rotation to improve effectiveness of smaller collections</p> <p>h) Standardised stock categories and labelling across the service</p> <p>i) Survey analysis e.g. PLUS and Children's PLUS</p> <p>j) Children's fiction titles read and reviewed by staff</p>	<p>a) Ongoing</p> <p>b) Ongoing</p> <p>c) Ongoing</p> <p>d) Ongoing</p> <p>e) Aug 2004</p> <p>f) Oct 2004</p> <p>g) Ongoing</p> <p>h) Ongoing</p> <p>i) Ongoing</p> <p>j) Ongoing</p>	Annual through stock planning profiles, training courses, management information
Maximise resources available for stock	<p>To ensure value for money for stockfund</p> <p>To increase purchasing power</p> <p>To attract extra external funding</p>	<p>a) Increase stockfund from April 2005</p> <p>b) Review stock allocations in light of management information and set allocations for next year's spend</p> <p>c) Develop collaboration initiatives with WELLSTOC consortium to look at shared collections or purchasing</p> <p>d) Introduce PC and Playstation games for hire</p> <p>e) Seek external funding to extend stock provision e.g. Learning Collections</p> <p>f) Work with WELIC group of West London Libraries to seek partnership funding e.g. ImaginAsian</p>	<p>a) April 2005</p> <p>b) Jan 2005</p> <p>c) Ongoing</p> <p>d) October 2004</p> <p>e) Ongoing</p>	Management information on numbers of items added to stock, time taken to replenish stock, income generated
Ensure Reader and audience development key in library service actions	<p>To ensure Brent Library Service continues to be innovative leader in reader and audience development</p> <p>To increase visitor and issue figures</p> <p>To build new audiences from refugee, asylum seeker and new communities</p>	<p>a) Implement Reader Development Strategy</p> <p>b) Increase staffing to participate in Reader and Audience Development</p> <p>c) Conduct training and awareness days for staff in RD skills</p> <p>d) Reader development pages to be added to Library Service web site</p> <p>e) Provide purpose built reader centred furniture across all libraries</p> <p>f) Review advertising and promotional strategies to reach</p>	<p>a) Ongoing</p> <p>b) Ongoing</p> <p>c) Ongoing</p> <p>d) Apr 2005</p> <p>e) Oct 2005</p> <p>f) Apr 2005</p> <p>g) Apr 2005</p>	Monitor number of events, participants, customer satisfaction, numbers of staff trained

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		<p>non users</p> <p>g) Programme author and performance events targeting the new communities through festivals such as Respect and national programmes such as refugee Week</p>		
<p>To ensure library service contributes to raising educational standards for all ages in the borough</p>	<p>To work with partners to improve delivery of lifelong learning in library service</p> <p>Broaden the range of learning opportunities to engage new and diverse users</p> <p>To provide access to learning and opportunities that are stimulating and accessible</p>	<p>a) Implement Lifelong Learning Strategy</p> <p>b) Forge closer links with Online centres in libraries</p> <p>c) Work with BACES colleagues and WELIC to seek further funding from London West Learning and Skills Council to extend Learning Collections to all libraries in the borough</p> <p>d) Work with BACES and CNWL to extend learning provision in libraries and improve access to joint resources</p> <p>e) Plan and implement study facilities strategy to ensure adequate study provision around the borough.</p> <p>f) Work with BACES colleagues to provide IAG guidance for lifelong learning in libraries</p> <p>g) Develop and promote the BRAIN Learning Zone</p> <p>h) Implementation of Kick Into Reading Project targeting schools with low SATS</p> <p>i) Establishment of homework clubs in Area and Town Centre libraries</p> <p>j) Implement Silver Surfer Clubs at key libraries</p> <p>k) Increase range of Learning Collections to include more audio based ESOL material</p> <p>l) All librarians and key front line staff have basic skills and referral training</p> <p>m) Work to gain IAG Matrix accreditation to ensure high quality advice and guidance.</p> <p>n) Establish a Learning Zone on Library Service web pages</p>	<p>a) Ongoing</p> <p>b) Ongoing</p> <p>c) Ongoing</p> <p>d) Ongoing</p> <p>e) September 2004</p> <p>f) Ongoing – staff already trained at one library</p> <p>g) Ongoing</p> <p>h) Sep 2004</p> <p>i) Apr 2005</p> <p>j) Apr 2005</p> <p>k) Ongoing</p> <p>l) Ongoing</p> <p>m) Ongoing</p> <p>n) Apr 2005</p>	<p>Monitor number of study facilities in place, use of learning collections, number of students in LearnDirect centres. Evaluate number of learning opportunities available through library services</p>
<p>To encourage the effective use of libraries by children to encourage reading habits from an early age</p>	<p>To increase use of libraries by children and young people</p> <p>To ensure library service key deliverer of literacy and other opportunities for children and young people</p>	<p>a) Implement Children's & Young Peoples strategy</p> <p>b) Plan and implement Summer Reading Challenges for children</p> <p>c) Extend Chatterbooks reading clubs scheme</p> <p>d) Plan and implement a range of reading projects eg Imagination time</p> <p>e) Review and re-launch services to young people to</p>	<p>a) Ongoing</p> <p>b) March 2005</p> <p>c) Ongoing</p> <p>d) March 2004</p> <p>e) Ongoing</p>	<p>Improve management information to include detailed info on take-up of services by relevant age</p>

		<p>f) include Teen Reading/Creative writing clubs/music Implement programme of class visits in all libraries</p> <p>g) A walled garden of children's educational sites under development</p>	<p>f) Ongoing g) Apr 2005</p>	<p>groups Consult with children and young people on services, involve them directly in services eg stock selection Children's PLUS 2004</p>
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2.1.4 Link to Education Development Plan

The Library Service contributes to the actions and targets in the Education, Arts and Libraries Service Development Plan which in turn feeds into the Education Development Plan. The service provides actions and targets for the key Education objectives on widening participation and levels of achievement in lifelong learning and to provide opportunities for participation in cultural, creative and community activity.

2.2 Digital Citizenship

2.2.1 Key strengths, constraints and challenges

Key Strengths

- Major contributor to Brent Council's e-government services, and to its 'Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) Statement', submitted to the ODPM in October 2003.
- BRAIN, the council's community website, plays an important part in Brent's fight against crime, with an interactive 'safety zone' which allows residents to view reported crime incidents and respond with further information, and stay informed about recent incidents by registering for email alerts. (The 'Safety Zone' was developed during 2003/4 with major funding from the ODPM). BRAIN also has 'Healthy Living', 'Learn & Work' & Culture' zones, Grantfinder and links to a community arts website.
- Online services:-
 - The catalogue (which now accesses the holdings of the archive, museum and library, as well as 2,000 digitised images of historical Brent)
 - Self-reservations and renewals
 - Library Service web pages. There were 233 visits to this each day in 2003/4 – that's 85,000 visits or 480,000 hits during the year
 - Digital reference resources Newsbank, Xreferplus and Britannica Online.
- The Library Service is currently leading on the development of the Brent Information Gateway of over 2,500 recommended websites.
- Leading edge facilities-managed IT contract with Dynix, which includes a development element (for training, new services, consultancy), and a Help Desk

Constraints

- No specific e-government designated posts, and development of e-services is limited to too few officers.
- Staff concentrated on front line routine operations, with minimal scope for supporting customer online learning and information needs.

Challenges

- Changing staff behaviour to embrace IT resources
- Staff and management re-organisation to enable better service delivery to customers, using IT.
- The development of the web team
- The introduction of new interactive and online services, such as:-
 - Online enquiry services
 - Electronic forms, including the membership application form, and the 'Customer Comment & Suggestion' form
 - Online payments
 - Reader development, Children & Young People's Services and Lifelong Learning web pages, including rich content.
 - Email alert services, to notify customers about forthcoming events, and newly added stock
- The development of Learning Centres in libraries, with tutorial support, and planned Silver Surfer and other ICT training support for refugees and other socially excluded groups.

2.2.2 Policies and practices for adults and children

- The Library Service AUP is the "ICT Conditions of Use & Guidance". Internet services will be introduced on children's library PCs in autumn 2004, with a 'walled garden' of eight websites, initially. The children's catalogue will feature rich content, and clickable images.

2.2.3 Electronic library services

- Online library services such as catalogue, reservations, book renewals, links to other sites via OPACS in libraries or on Internet
- The People's Network (PN) was implemented in Brent in July 2002 with 170 public terminals in twelve libraries offering a range of online services such as Internet, and accessible ICT services in each library, including Zoomtext magnification and speech software, Kurzweill 1000 scanning and speech software, large format keyboard and large tracker ball mouse, Variable height workstations to accommodate wheelchair users
- Multicultural learning centre at Ealing Road library funded by People's Network Excellence Fund. Opened in April 2003 with email transliteration software, and word processing facilities in the 10

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most widely spoken languages in Brent; and online learning resources aimed at English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students.

- There are three other learning centres in libraries – two Learn Direct Centres in Kilburn and Willesden Green libraries, managed by Internet Exchange, and one in Harlesden library managed by NW London Online.

2.2.4 Implementation of e-government strategy

- The Library service supports the Council's e-services with Internet access in all libraries – currently on 90. Access is free in libraries, charged in two ICT centres.
- Customers can use the online library catalogue, renew items on loan and place reservations on the Internet, and download membership and comments forms. The forms will become electronic ones later this year.
- There were 85,000 visits to the Library Service website in 2003/4, and the trend is still upwards, with more than 90,000 expected this year.
- Libraries will be branded as first stop shops to council information, providing hard copy and online access to services
- BRAIN database allows community groups to amend/update own pages

2.2.5 Priorities/targets/activities/evaluation

Priority	Target	Activity	Timescale	Evaluation
To meet E-government targets	To introduce online enquiry services. To replace online forms with electronic ones. To introduce email alert services To continue the rollout programme of automated booking Develop the Library Service web pages to become more interactive and transactional	a) Do a work study on the time of Librarians, develop the procedures, and promote the new service b) Gain training in producing electronic forms, and upgrade the web pages c) Introduce an upgraded iPac online catalogue, and configure with web links relating to new additions of stock in various categories. d) Add new categories to the corporate email alert option e) To roll out to the remaining eight libraries f) Introduce online computer bookings g) Create reader development, children and young people and lifelong learning (rich) content h) Introduce online book reviews	March 2005 December 2004 March 2005 March 2004 December 2004 Mar 2005	Annual mystery shopping of enquiries with West London partners E-Plus customer satisfaction survey 2004
To develop IT Learning Centres in libraries	To develop the Ealing Road library Multicultural ICT 'Language and Learning Zone' as a resource for adult learners, refugees and other excluded people.	Seek funding to provide tutorial support in these specialist areas.	January 2005	Number of training sessions available, take up of services
Introduce internet and other IT services for children	Develop a children and young people's IT policy Enable internet services in children's libraries	a) IT User group to develop existing AUP, or write new children's one b) IT User Group, and Children and Young People's Services Team to develop internet policy, and a walled garden of specialist websites	December 2004	Number of children using Internet, sites visited etc
To develop IT services as information and learning gateways	Discontinue networked CD ROM services Market test online information services Develop IT training for all staff Develop FAQs Review the Reference Stock Standards, and compare book holdings with online ones, in terms of cost and currency	a) Negotiate with Dynix for a contract variation, based on no CD ROM service b) Information Team to lead on an evaluation programme c) Continue the advanced IT training, focussing on enquiry handling, reader development and children & young people's services. d) Continue an ongoing IT training programme aimed at developing competence in using IT to support learning and information services e) Create more FAQs and answers on the web pages to facilitate quicker access to information f) Information Team to audit availability of resources and make recommendations about holdings, format and cost	December 2004 24/08/04 24/08/04	e-Plus Survey 2004

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Priority	Target	Activity	Timescale	Evaluation
To integrate BRAIN into the work of the Lifelong learning & Cultural Services division of Education, Arts and Libraries	To seek a funding base for core BRAIN activities	a) BRAIN Strategy Working Group to develop	December 2004	Strategy working group to continue to monitor and develop BRAIN Management information on number of visits to websites, number of community groups in contact etc
	To develop lifelong learning content	b) BRAIN team to continue to consult the Lifelong Learning Forum	Ongoing	
	To improve the content and currency of information about community organisations	c) Libraries to promote the community role of BRAIN, on PCs and through a continuing awareness campaign	Ongoing	
	To promote use by community organisations	d) Produce BRAINWAVES, and develop a BRAIN user group	Ongoing	
	To develop a new 'tourism' zone	e) Establish a tourism forum to include key Brent stakeholders	September 2004	
	Develop a mentoring schemes area in the 'Learn & Work' zone	f) Using BRAIN's link with organisations to develop a portal area for all mentoring schemes in Brent (To include C&V groups and behaviour improvement programmes, online ideas, guidance, advice)	March 2005	
To research specification for new IT contract (due in July 2005), and interim IT improvements	Benchmark Dynix with other suppliers Examine network options	a) Benchmarking visits to other authorities	ongoing	Tender process for new contract, regular monitoring meetings for existing contract ongoing
	Research and introduce new services	b) Examine other network configuration options, such as NGfL, the corporate network.	October 2004	
		c) Introduce remote patron authentication (RPA), and make existing and future internet based reference tools available to Brent Library service customers remotely.	September 2004	
		d) Obtain costs for Telecirc 11, and research the viability of introducing renewals to a central telephone service	January 2005	
		e) Introduce children's internet services, within a walled garden	October 2004	
To promote improved IT services	Stakeholders event	a) Organise a promotional event in a key library	September 2004	Management information on hits to website E-Plus survey being conducted in 2004
		b) Design posters and leaflets promoting IT services in Brent libraries	October 2004	
		c) Demo existing and new services, including RPA, children's HIP catalogue, enriched content catalogue, unified catalogue	November 2004	

2.3 Community and Civic Values

2.3.1 Key strengths, constraints and challenges

Key Strengths

- Library service awarded Charter Mark for excellence in customer service in December 2002
- 99% of the population within one mile of the twelve static libraries and mobile library stops at sites 1 mile from local library
- Two libraries are open Sundays from September 2003 and a public consultation on opening hours is currently being undertaken
- Home Library Service for people who are homebound and for those in residential care
- Play and Learn Bus provides family learning opportunities in Sure Start area
- Willesden Library Centre includes One Stop Shop, cinema, bookshop, cafeteria and local arts group
- Refurbishment of Ealing Road Library; and Kilburn and Kingsbury children's libraries
- Learn Direct centres in three libraries
- One of pilot London authorities for 'Welcome to your Library' project to introduce library service and to remove barriers to asylum seekers and refugees
- Disability access improvements such as automatic doors, hearing induction loops and adaptive technology for PCs in all libraries
- Ethnicity of staff reflects diverse community
- 'Welcome to Your Library' library service leaflet available in 6 community languages
- Library presence at community festivals
- Good track record of partnership working with other council departments, Sure Start, local educational providers, careers service, and local community organisations

Constraints

- Not all libraries situated at focal points for local community
- A number of libraries in need of major refurbishment
- Part time opening of local community libraries
- Size/layout/condition of buildings/opening hours not always conducive to partnership working
- The Library Service has no written Social Inclusion Policy

Challenges

- Providing relevant and accessible library services in areas of high deprivation
- Delivering library services of high quality suitable for Brent population's highly varied ethnic composition
- A rapidly diversifying ethnic community. The number of refugees currently estimated at 15,000
- An unemployment rate of 6.7% in 2000 which is higher than the Greater London average and the National average
- Ensuring all libraries are accessible to all members of the community in Brent
- Lack of appropriate stock resources to meet needs of new communities
- Under-investment on stock in the past and low current stock fund impacts on comprehensiveness of stock and ability to respond to needs of new communities
- Ensuring staff resources are able to meet needs of partnership working and the needs of the new communities or groups such as young adults who are not traditional library users
- Implementing libraries as 'First Stop Shops'

2.3.2 Policies and practices for adults and young children

General

- Customer Promise (June 2003) outlines service provision undertakings; available also in large print format, and translation on request
- Library membership open to all with proof of address, signature of parent/guardian where applicable
- Staff trained in customer care and disability awareness to ensure all are welcome and friendly interaction with the customer
- Provision of books, CDs, videos, DVDs, newspapers, magazines and information in relevant languages other than English
- Language software and adaptive computer technology
- Provision of materials for customers with disabilities eg large print and audio books

Adult

- Programme of reader development initiatives such as Black History Month, Respect Week, Read Routes, World Book Day, The Big Read, Black Inc and ImaginAsian to foster and promote a love of reading across the whole community
- Provision of reading groups and writer's workshops including those specifically targeted at ethnic communities eg ImaginAsian, Black Inc
- Supporting basic skills needs via LearnDirect Centres in libraries, 'Learning Collections', and partnership working with BACES and other educational institutions
- Introductory talks on Library Service provision to ESOL classes, Basic Skills classes, refugee asylum seeker organisations and other community groups
- Supporting employment initiatives such as Job Search classes in libraries, work experience placements, employment advice sessions
- Library Service seeking IAG accreditation

Children

- Programme of class visits to libraries for schoolchildren and talks in assemblies by librarians
- Bookstart packs for babies delivered to health centres
- Blast Off programmes at two libraries to introduce 2-4 year olds and their parents/carers to libraries and family learning
- Summer Reading Scheme to encourage children's reading and to encourage children to join libraries
- Events and activities during school holidays and for religious and cultural festivals to encourage the use of libraries and reading
- Partnership with three Sure Start areas to promote reading and libraries and to help develop children's learning skills

2.3.3 Developing citizenship and community identity

- One of pilot authorities for pan London 'Welcome to your library project' for refugees/asylum seekers. Although project now at end, project officer continues in post.
- Library service publicity available in community languages, large print format
- Wide range of customer consultation takes place including involving customers in design of refurbished library
- Library service leads on Black History Month programme for borough each year
- Reading and writing groups aimed at Asian or black communities
- Vacancies advertised in community press where appropriate
- Staff reflect ethnic background of customer base
- Software provided in ten community languages
- Links with SureStart to focus services on children with specific needs
- Family learning initiatives across the borough
- Libraries offering online access to Council services through public terminals, including access to democratic processes such as surveys,
- Brent Council Self Service Points to be offered with full disabled access PCs linked to council website and freephone to council contact centre in all libraries 2004/5

2.3.4 Links to improvement and development of customer services

- Customer Services Team reformed as larger group to look at regular monitoring of services against set criteria and to action Charter Mark assessment recommendations
- Programme of annual quality inspections of specific services to be undertaken
- Membership of the Social Exclusion Planning Network for library services
- Progressing online accessibility to library services for customers
- Monitoring of take-up of services by age and ethnic background
- Annual Public Library Survey (CIPFA) of adult and children customers
- Consultation with appropriate groups of customers on service development
- The library service is working towards greater involvement in regeneration and neighbourhood renewal opportunities e.g.
 - Sure Start Central Brent Playbus
 - Sure Start South Kilburn Family Reading at Kilburn Library
 - Wembley Stadium regeneration opportunities
 - Neighbourhood Renewal Funding at Harlesden library

2.3.5 Priorities, targets, activities, evaluation

Priority	Target	Activity	Timescale	Evaluation
To ensure borough wide service planning and strategy for stock quality	Ensure that library stock relevant to needs of new communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Purchase new collections resulting from work of Welcome to your library project b) Improve and extend Asian language materials, signage and guiding 	Mar 2004	Through London wide project meetings, reports, management information on borrowers, items issued
To ensure library service contributes to raising educational standards for all ages in the borough	To work with partners to improve delivery of lifelong learning in library service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Partnership working with BACES, CNWL, NW London On Line to provide classes in ESOL, Basic skills in libraries b) Extend Family Reading activities borough-wide 	Ongoing	Range of classes offered, take-up of services
To explore and extend the range of services to disadvantaged groups in the community	<p>Increase in number of community organisations in contact with or served by the library service by 5%</p> <p>Increase in customers of home library service of ethnic background by 10%</p> <p>Improve take-up of services to socially excluded groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Promote Library Service at community festivals and events. b) Establish relationship and work with community groups and other relevant council service providers c) Monitor customers of home library service 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Evaluation forms at events, Borough wide list of community groups with annual evaluation of contact Management information
To explore and extend the range of services to disadvantaged groups in the community	<p>Ensure that library service delivers services relevant to whole community of Brent</p> <p>Increase use of Brent libraries by socially excluded groups</p> <p>Broaden programme of events to reflect new communities, eg Somali</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Plan and implement Social Inclusion Strategy b) Implement 'Welcome to your library ' pilot services to refugees and asylum seekers c) Refocus and redefine Outreach Service to widen community organisation contact d) Prepare bid to all three Sure Start areas for joint funding to replace Play bus with Children's mobile serving Sure Start areas. e) Translate library publicity into relevant formats and 		Through London wide project meetings, reports, management information on service take-up

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	Establish contact with refugee and asylum seeker organisations. Review service provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> f) languages Work with BACES to develop cross-sector family reading strategy and extend 'Reading Families' projects across the borough g) Develop BRAIN community information website 		
To explore and take advantage of funding opportunities for neighbourhood renewal and regeneration to address social exclusion	<p>To revise and improve library buildings</p> <p>To seize opportunities such as the Wembley redevelopment to replace library buildings with state of the art new facilities</p> <p>Refurbishment of Harlesden Library</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Ensure Library Service represented at Area Consultative Forums b) Investigate opportunities for co- or re-location of services to maximise use of library buildings and access funding opportunities c) Seek funding from Surestart Roundwood and Surestart Kilburn for children's projects d) Ensure BLS represented at Wembley Strategy Forum 	Ongoing	Consultation with customers/non-customers and stakeholders on location of buildings, refurbishments etc. Post refurb evaluation surveys

2.4 Building capacity to deliver transformation

2.4.1 Key strengths, constraints and challenges

Key strengths

- Favourable Audit Commission inspection of Cultural Services in July 2004 (two stars, good service, promising prospects for improvement). Quality of library services described as 'strong'
- Best Value Review panel report (November 2002) recognised service strengths, in particular 'the expertise of a highly competent management team'
- Growth in revenue budget in 2003/4 and further growth for 2004/5.
- Key new specialist posts of Lifelong Learning Coordinator and Children and young people coordinator now filled
- 'Improving Brent' corporate programme supports learning and development with seminars, training courses, support for quality awards, etc
- Library service received liP reaccreditation in November 2003 as part of a corporate assessment
- Library Service cross-borough training and development team identifies training needs, allocates and monitors training budget for the service
- Training and development strategy for the service in place
- Employee performance and development scheme in place
- Committed and experienced staff at all levels.
- Well-developed cross-sectoral links within the Education, Arts & Libraries department
- Key library service staff on corporate working parties eg Customer Services Steering Group, ICT Development Group, Adult Learning Forum
- Continuing high corporate profile.

Constraints

- Management capacity in terms of numbers and multiple responsibilities
- Number and location of service points means that resources are stretched or sites not easily accessible
- Current staffing structure does not include Building's Manager post identified as essential

Challenges

- Undertaking the major staffing review recommended by the Best Value Review Panel in November 2002
- Meeting the Public Library Standards and improving performance with current levels of staff and resources.
- Improving representation of ethnic minorities at senior management levels

2.4.2 Actions to improve leadership, staff capacity and skills

- Corporate Management Development programme for firstline (and aspiring), middle and senior managers
- Senior managers trained in EFQM self-assessment model and will cascade training to other managers
- Leadership was the focus of staff awaydays and seminars in November 2003
- Regular monthly Libraries Management team meetings for Head of Service and Principal Librarians and quarterly Libraries Senior Managers Team meetings for staff down to Senior Librarian level
- Library service team of key staff from around the borough in place to look at performance information and improve management information systems
- Support provided currently for three staff to obtain professional qualifications through a trainee librarian programme
- All staff have received ICT training through Peoples Network New Opportunities Fund and further training being undertaken
- Support provided currently for a number of staff studying for NVQs
- Regular programme of team briefing, staff seminars and away days.
- Training strategy now being updated and amended
- Regular programme of in-house training on enquiry handling, reader development, customer care as well as external courses underway
- Best Value Review Panel report recommends staff review and restructuring to increase capacity, address low pay issues and appoint to key posts

2.4.3 Partnerships

- Brent Adult and Community Education service to provide learning opportunities such as family learning across the borough
- Dynix Ltd to provide ICT system, facilities management, training of staff etc
- ICT provision - New Opportunities Fund and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Local schools – in Black History Month, class visits, displays in libraries
- Arts Council to provide library literary magazine 'readallaboutit'
- Black Inc African-Caribbean reading & writing initiative part funded by DCMS
- West London Lines (Westwords) Reader development initiative across West London funded by Arts Council and in partnership with LB Hillingdon, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham and Harrow
- Surestart – e.g. Play & Learn Bus, Library Outreach worker to improve services to under 4's in the area
- Bookstart to provide starter packs for babies to introduce them to library services
- College of North West London – providing Basic Skills tuition in libraries
- Lifetime Careers providing career guidance and IAG in conjunction with library service
- IAG partnership as indirect delivery partners, seeking matrix accreditation in 2005
- Internet Exchange providing LearnDirect Centres
- Part of the WELLSTOC joint stock purchasing consortium maximises our purchasing power.
- Work in partnership with the London Libraries Development agency to deliver the Read Routes reader development project
- Lead on the ImaginAsian reader development project with input from Harrow, Hillingdon and Leicester City Library Services and local groups such as Gujerati Literary Academy
- Age Concern, Brent share library premises and provide advice sessions in libraries
- Wide range of community contacts to provide displays, information sessions, activities and events in libraries
- Learning Collections of basic skills materials, funded by LSC and in partnership with LB Hillingdon and BACES
- Working Links – provide advice sessions and work experience placements to libraries – several placements now permanent members of library staff
- Active member of SKILLS West London libraries training consortium – sources and provides training courses, seminars, discussion forums for professional and non-professional library staff

2.4.4 Priorities, targets, activities, evaluation

Priority	Target	Activity	Timescale	Evaluation
To implement recommendations of BV review.	To ensure that we provide an appropriate number of service points in accessible locations.	Review of library buildings to explore options for relocation, etc. currently being undertaken by Bisset Adams.	September 2004	Annual
	To ensure that the structure of Library Service is appropriate to deliver transformation.	Review and restructure Library service.	March 2005	Ongoing evaluation of effectiveness of structure
To improve buildings.	To create key specialist post of Buildings Manager.	Appoint to post.	December 2004	Ongoing
	To implement recommendations of Buildings Review.	Consult with staff, users and stakeholders on recommendations. Produce and implement action plan.	December 2004 and ongoing	Ongoing
To ensure the delivery of continuously improving service.	To develop a local performance measurement framework that drives improved performance.	Undertake a facilitated self assessment of current Library Service performance using the EFQM Business Excellence Model.	September 2004	Ongoing using the BE Model.

3. PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS: information relating to standards met or not met in the financial year to 31st March 2004

3.1 Public Library Standards 1 to 19

Brent has not improved its position towards meeting the Public Library Standards since 2003 and still meets 19 of the possible 26 areas.

Standards met:

Brent currently meets PLS 1 on proportion of households living within 1 mile of library (99%); PLS 2 i) proportion of planned time that libraries were not available due to emergency closures (0.01%); PLS 4 Percentage of larger libraries open at least 45 hours per week (100% of Brent's larger libraries are open at least 45 hours); PLS 5 % of libraries open more than 10 hours a week with on-line catalogues (100%); PLS 6 total number of PCs available per users and percentage of libraries providing internet access; PLS 7 & 8 Book issue period and number of books customers can borrow at one time; PLS 9 % of items requested supplied within specified time frame; PLS 10 Number of visits to library website;

Standards not yet met:

- **PLS 2ii) Emergency cancelled mobile stops. (Target 4.4%, Brent performance 5.5%)**

Due to the age of the current mobile library and the fact that there is no reserve vehicle to replace it during downtime, the mobile had more time off the road for breakdowns and repairs.

- **PLS 3 Aggregate annual opening hours per 1,000 population (Target 128 hours, Brent performance 100 hours)**

The reduction of opening hours in 2000 left Brent at only 73 aggregate annual hours. Opening hours have been increased by 25% since June 2002 giving a total of 91 aggregate hours. A public consultation on the pattern of opening hours is currently underway and they will again be reviewed in 2004/5. Further growth in revenue budgets indicated for 2005/6 and 2006/7 will enable further additions to opening hours which it is planned will ensure that Brent at least compares to averages in similar authorities. In addition, a staffing structure review planned for March 2005 should enable more flexible working arrangements and therefore enhanced ability to extend opening hours.

- **PLS 11 Number of visits per 1,000 population (Target 8,600, Brent performance 7,279)**

Again, Brent has made steady progress with year on year increases in the number of visitors. In 2003/4, visitors increased by 10% across the borough. Brent figures are close to the class average figure. Enhanced opening hours and improved marketing of services will hopefully continue this trend and figures for the first quarter of this year demonstrate continued improvement.

PLS 12i) % of adults reporting success in obtaining a specific book (Target 65%, Brent performance 49%)

Brent's performance has declined and is some way from meeting the target through two factors:

- a) The quality of the stock has not yet recovered from lack of resources in previous years
- b) The catalogue database is still in the process of being 'cleaned up' (through whole stock inventories at all libraries) and therefore still provides an inaccurate record of stock holdings

A further increase in the stock fund for 2004/5 and improved recordkeeping should demonstrate an increase in satisfaction.

- **PLS 13i) % of adults reporting success in gaining information as a result of a search or enquiry (Target 75%, Brent performance 59%)**

New appointments, including four new librarians and an ongoing borough wide training programme in enquiry answering skills, as well as significant improvements to electronic information resources have improved performance from the previous survey.

PLS 14i) % of adults rating the knowledge of staff as good or very good (Target 95%, Brent performance 84%)

The factors outlined above (PLS 13i) have improved and will continue to improve Brent's performance in this standard. In addition to training and the annual survey, we also monitor performance through a West London libraries joint initiative.

- **PLS 15i) % of adult users rating the helpfulness of staff as good or very good (Target 95%, Brent performance 91%)**

The actions outlined above for PLS 13i) have achieved a positive impact on our ability to meet this target and further ongoing training in diversity and disability awareness will continue this upward trend.

(Brent meets or exceeds PLS 13-15 in respect of children as customers).

- **PLS 16 – (Brent is currently undertaking the Quality index survey of stock along with other library authorities and results will inform performance next year)**

- **PLS 17 Annual items added to stock, (Target 216, Brent performance 193)**

Although we met this target previously in 2002/3, that was largely due to an added spend on stock above the stockfund figure in that year. Increase in the stockfund for 2004/5 will improve our figure.

- **PLS 18 Time taken to replenish stock on open access or available for loan (Target 6.7 years, Brent performance 8.9 years)**

Brent's performance has declined since 2003/4 although it still shows marked improvement on 2000/1 figure of 12.6 years. Substantial increases in stockfund have helped to improve this figure but the implementation of the stock accession module on the library system has led to a more accurate record of lending stock. This figure should show improvement next year when a true comparison can be made.

- **PLS 19 Numbers of staff per 1,000 population with appropriate information management or ICT qualifications**

There are no set targets for this standard but we will be able to achieve our own targets of 0.15 and 0.5 respectively by March 2004 through the recruitment and training currently under way.

3.2 Public Library Standards – local targets

3.2.1 Services for people with disabilities

3.2.2 Services for ethnic minority communities

3.2.3 Services for socially excluded people

3.2.4 Services for children

4. RESOURCES

4.1 Spaces

Key Strengths

- Willesden Green Library Centre (opened in 1989) incorporates cinema, bookshop, one stop shop, gallery space, meeting spaces as well as library
- Ealing Road Library imaginatively refurbished in April 2003 with community involvement – to reflect ethnic communities in vibrant shopping area
- Refurbished children's libraries at Kilburn and Kingsbury libraries
- DDA accessibility in all libraries and mobile library
- 99% of the population within one mile of the twelve static libraries and mobile library stops at sites 1 mile from local library

Constraints

- Most library buildings in need of enhancement ranging from redecoration to more extensive modernisation
- Size/layout/condition of buildings/patterns of opening hours not always appropriate for modern usage or conducive to partnership working
- Resource implications of maintenance of under-performing libraries

Challenges

- Meeting the recommendations of the strategic review of locations of library buildings recognising that decisions will be subject to major sensitivities with members and the public of libraries
- Refurbishing libraries to modern standards with only minimal capital funding

Actions/Timescale

- a) Conduct review of library locations – initial report due Aug/Sep 04.
- b) Consult on recommendations of review and implement pilot improvements at one location – March 2005
- c) Create teenage areas at Harlesden and Willesden Green Libraries – March 2005
- d) Begin planning for the refurbishment of Willesden Green library as part of move of Grange Museum – 2005/6
- e) Pursue possibilities for new central library in Wembley – 2008/9

4.2 Stock

Key Strengths

- Member of WELLSTOC stock purchasing consortium ensuring value for money purchasing
- Borough wide centralised ordering and receipting, standing orders, circulating stocks ensuring faster delivery to customer
- Increase in stockfund from £330,000 in 2001/02 to £500,000 in 2004/5
- Cross-borough stock selection teams for adult, children's, information work
- Programme of annual stock counts in place and inventories of all stock holdings being conducted

Constraints

- Stockfund still low in comparison to other authorities, particularly for 12 service points and mobile/outreach services
- Numbers of professional staff to maintain stock across the borough
- Lack of stock checks/controls in past means library database inaccurate
- No central reference facility and lack of resources for information materials

Challenges

- Improving the quality and range of stock in each library to acceptable standards
- Implementing faster ordering systems eg EDI
- Resource implications for conducting comprehensive stock check at all libraries and thereafter annual stock count

Actions/Timescale

- a) Complete stock check of all libraries by March 2005.
- b) Library catalogue database amended as result of stock check March 2005
- c) Annual stock count continues April 2005
- d) Children's PLUS Oct 2004 to monitor customer satisfaction on stock
- e) Further increase in stockfund pending agreed revenue growth- April 2005
- f) Increase spending on information resources as part of stockfund increase - April 2005
- g) Central reference facility pending Wembley redevelopment – 2008/9

4.3 Staffing

Key Strengths

- Highly competent and dedicated team of managers producing good results
- Commitment of frontline staff to service quality and improvement
- Frontline staff reflect ethnic makeup of community
- Team of Coordinators in post and leading cross-borough teams

Constraints

- Other key posts such as information/e-government development not identified in structure
- Small team of managers with multiple responsibilities rather than specialists
- Numbers of professional staff to develop services across the borough
- Ability of frontline staff to provide information, handle enquiries
- Head of Library Service acting up to Asst Director post, leading to temporary hiatus in progress of staffing review

Challenges

- Reviewing and restructuring staffing to address low pay comparative to other Brent employees, lack of key posts, enable more local management of libraries
- Maintaining staff empowerment as part of restructure
- Retaining staff expertise, particularly given age profile of staff
- Appointing staff better reflecting ethnic make-up of borough to managerial levels
- Continuing programme of ICT training for all staff to support lifelong learning and e-government initiatives such Customer Relationship Management system currently in operation in Brent One Stop Shops

Actions/Timescale

- a) Recruit to third Children's and Young People's Librarian for the borough – in post September 2004
- b) Review and restructure staffing – March 2005
- c) Create/reorganise posts for ICT/e-government as part of restructure – March 2005
- d) Retrain staff in enquiry handling – completed March 2005

- e) Children's PLUS Oct 2004 to monitor customer satisfaction on staff
- f) Ensure training schemes to attract members of local community into professional/managerial posts – ongoing
- g) Revise training strategy – November 2004

4.4 ICT

Key Strengths

- Facilities management contract with Dynix ensuring faster service, upgrades, training etc.
- Library service website (www.brent.gov.uk/libraryservice) offering information, online services, links to relevant sites
- Subscribe to range of online information sources e.g. Xrefer Plus
- BRAIN community information database now part of library service
- Increasing number of hits to library website
- Joint Library, museum and archive catalogue offering access to images as well as books etc.

Constraints

- Implementation of 'walled garden' for children's internet services
- Link up to London Grid for Learning problematic with current system
- Lack of specifically designated posts at strategic level for ICT/e-government services
- Lack of funding for BRAIN staff to develop the system

Challenges

- Increasing and sustaining ICT services in libraries
- Supporting customers in ICT learning with current staffing structures
- Continual upgrading of staff learning and development in ICT
- Conducting review of FM contract with Dynix for 2005

Actions/Timescale

- a) Create/reorganise posts for ICT/e-government as part of restructure – April 2005
- b) Revenue growth bid for BRAIN – April 2005
- c) E-PLUS survey 2005 to monitor customer satisfaction on ICT services
- d) Continue discussions with Dynix to improve current system - April 2005

4.5 Resources issues

Brent Council has recognised the need for the library service to meet the public library standards, particularly in regard to opening hours, staffing and stockfund. Year on year growth in revenue budgets for the service since 2001/2 have seen improvements in all of these areas but 2003/4 CIPFA estimates show the following:

- Brent Library Service still 31st out of 32 London boroughs for number of professional staff in post
- Brent Library Service 28th out of 33 London boroughs for net expenditure per 1000 head of population on library service

Further indicative growth in 2005/6 and 2006/7 will be used to increase opening hours, review staffing structure and appoint to key posts in line with the recommendations of the Best Value Review as well as to work towards achieving the Public Library Standards.

The major challenge will be the modernising and refurbishing of the library buildings. Capital funding is primarily used for disability access, health and safety work and for repairs and maintenance extra to the existing revenue budget. In 2004/5, capital funding will be largely used for the move of the Grange Museum to Willesden Green Library Centre, which means little scope for other modernising. Brent Library Service is successful at bidding for external funding and is already working with the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund in one area to access funds to renovate Harlesden Library. In addition, Brent Council's plans for a new civic centre as part of the Wembley redevelopment incorporate a new central library, if funding allows. A radical review of library locations, cost-effectiveness will allow for better quality, better sited facilities across the borough and this review is currently being undertaken.

Executive Meeting 14th September 2004

Signed on behalf of Brent Council by the Lead Member for Education, Arts & Libraries, London Borough of Brent: