**Impact and Needs Assessment
Customer Services and Libraries – Phase 2**

1.   Introduction

The report to Cabinet for the 23rd January 2014 outlines changes in policy and practice for the operation of customer services which incorporates the front line delivery of library functions.

The purpose of an Impact and Needs Assessment is to enable Cabinet to make an informed decision in understanding the consequences of services changes, and recommend forms of mitigation to minimise the impact.

This impact assessment looks at the key elements of those changes and the potential consequence on customers who will be affected by the changes. The impacts need to be considered in the light of any savings will be redirected to address the needs of the most vulnerable in the community via Adult Well Being and Children Safeguarding.

This impact assessment should be considered as a supplement to the Equalities Impact and Needs Assessment that accompanied the Cabinet Report of the 19th September 2013 which outlined the options for Customer Services and Libraries. Reference is made to the Impact Survey that ran from 4th July to 8th August 2013 to specifically understand real and current usage of customers and how possible change would have an effect on them.

This report, therefore, will focus on the second phase of changes effecting customer services and libraries, cross referenced with the highest impact categories previously highlighted as:

Age – Children
- The evidence suggests that young children benefit from a library service in terms of their reading and education attainment.
- Families in crisis affecting children's prospects and development.

Age – Older
- Impact study found high use of service by 65+.
- Less likely to use the internet to access services.
- At risk of isolation.

Disability
- Less likely to use the internet.
- Isolation and mobility challenges.
- Use of services such as talking books.
- Multiple disabilities need to be considered.

Poverty
- Less likely to afford computer and access to the internet.
- Higher use of public access PCs.
- Less funds available to spend on travel.
- Combined factor of being in crisis.

Rural
- Access to services locally.
- Reduced options for public transport.
- Combined factor with poverty, disability and age to create isolation.

Geography in terms of access to services is not a protective characteristic, but is considered in this report due to the rural nature of the county and the sparseness of the population. Poverty is also not listed as a protective characteristic but given consideration in this report due to Herefordshire's low wage economy and the multiplier effect poverty has on disadvantage.

The 19th September Impact and Needs Assessment also highlighted that a person might face several challenges that will have an impact on ability to access services. Also, characteristics will change during people's life time, for example disability or poverty may be a temporary factor.

2.   New Approach to Service Delivery and mitigation

The tables below offer an overview of the impact on the people likely to be affected by the new approach to service delivery.

Key: Under each category is a "star" system with the following relevance:
*no or limited negative impact
**relevant negative impact but not significant with mitigation
***high negative impact with high levels mitigation required

2.1   Case Base

Case based approach to focus on combined needs of people who have no other option to use face to face or phone contact due to the nature of the service or personal circumstances.	
Age – Children *	Limited relevance with positive impact in dealing with a range of family based issues captured or referred at one time.
Age – Older *	Positive impact in enabling several issues to be addressed at one contact.
Disability *	Positive impact as a person with disability may have a number of interactions with the council that need to be addressed.
Poverty *	Positive impact to support a range of opportunities that may help a person or family in poverty.
Rural *	Limited relevance.

Mitigation:
- Ensure a joined-up approach to cross department services and effective back office referral system.

2.2   Use of the Internet

To migrate use to internet access from people phoning or visiting one of the contact centres.	
Age – Children *	Limited impact as children and young people are high users of the internet.
Age – Older ***	High impact with high proportion of older people never having used the internet.

Disability **	High impact with evidence that disabled people are less likely to use the internet.
Poverty **	High impact with citizens unable to access the internet because of cost of equipment and subscription.
Rural **	Medium impact due to broadband coverage in some rural areas.

Mitigation:
- Increase the number of services available to access via the web.
- Continue to deliver superfast broadband roll-out in rural areas.
- Campaign of training and awareness for maximising internet use, specifically targeting older people and people with disabilities.
- Support service transformation through digital technologies to foster cultural change within service delivery and user experience.
- Increase the number of public access PCs and wifi in Customer Service Centres and Libraries, as well as other publicly used venues.

2.3 Retain services in Hereford, Ross and Leominster

Retain the level of Customer Service Centres and Libraries in Hereford, Ross and Leominster.	
Age – Children *	Positive impact for access to learning through libraries, and family access to Customer Service Centres.
Age – Older *	High usage of libraries from older people having a positive impact on retaining services, with the potential to access other services on sites.
Disability *	Positive impact on access to library buildings as considered "safe" centres with access to learning and recreation.
Poverty *	Positive impact on accessing services. Free library service, including public access PCs and information on job opportunities. Access to benefit advice, home point services and payment at customer service centres.
Rural *	Positive impact as major bus routes lead to Hereford City and the market towns.

Mitigation:
- Maximise the use of the sites through offering a range of services from across the local authority and external partners.

2.4 Risk to centres in Kington, Bromyard, Belmont and Ledbury

Reduced funding for the smaller libraries of Kington, Bromyard, Belmont and Ledbury.	
Age – Children ***	High impact on children who access the libraries in those areas and who use the services to access reading material, use the public access PCs or use the centres for recreation.
Age – Older ***	The impact study showed high use of libraries by older people, therefore high impact on older people in that area who use the facilities, includes older people who prefer face to face customer services.
Disability ***	High impact on people who use the venues as considered "safe" sites. Specific issue for people who access services and benefits via customer services.
Poverty ***	High impact specifically on users of the public access PCs. Use centres to access benefits, advice or employment opportunities.
Rural ***	High impact on people who use the sites, especially considering potential reduction to public transport and higher cost of fuel for additional travel.

Mitigation:
Realise the savings from April 2015 in order to explore and establish ways of retaining services through partnership by:
- Work with local groups / local councils to facilitate the existing opening hours including becoming community libraries
- Generate external income to cover costs, include hire of venue
- Create co-located services to maximise the use of the centres and share costs
- New partners based on cost sharing and mutual benefits in the operation of sites.

2.5   Cashless services

Operate a cashless system within the Customer Service to reduce officer time and additional space made available in the facilities.	
Age – Children *	No impact. Some links to families in poverty to pay in cash.
Age – Older ***	High impact with older people using centres to make payments based on trust of the local authority and less likely to use the internet.
Disability **	Medium impact as customers with disabilities will have to change their payment methods which may cause difficulties.
Poverty ***	High impact with people on low incomes as less likely to have bank account to use. Cashless approach. Also poverty a barrier to access services via the internet.
Rural *	Low impact, though an issue when compounded with limited access to the internet and need to travel to locations to make payments.

Mitigation:
- Promote alternative payment locations and methods, including PayPoints, post office payments, via phone and on-line
- Ensure all payments to the council have the ability to make alternatives to cash payments
- Additional public access PCs in libraries and other public venues.

2.6   Traded Service

Increase opportunity for traded services, generating additional income and instigate partnership based on financial benefit.	
Age – Children *	No impact. Possible link to families in poverty if services are charged for.
Age – Older *	No impact. Possible link to older people in poverty.
Disability *	No impact. Possible link to disabled people in poverty.
Poverty ***	Potentially high impact on people in poverty depending on the nature of the service being charged for and linked to increased cost of living.
Rural *	No impact, though compounded when linked to other factors that reduce disposable income e.g. increased cost of living, fuel poverty, utility charges.

Mitigation:
- Consider charging on a case by case basis and its effects of people in poverty.

3.   Data and Evidence Base

This part of the report reviews relevant data and evidence on highest levels of negative impacts relating to:
- Reducing or withdrawing lower use Customer Service Centres and Libraries
- Migrating to digital services with less face to face, phone services and cashless systems.

This is set against highest level of negative impact:
- People of an older age
- Low income and poverty
- Ability to access services due to rural isolation.

3.1   General profile of Herefordshire by Age and Disability

Herefordshire has an older age profile than both the region and England and Wales, with a noticeably higher proportion of its population in the older age groups. Just over a fifth of Herefordshire's population is aged 65 and over (22%), compared to 16% nationally[1]. The numbers of older people have grown more rapidly locally than nationally, a trend which is expected to continue as the post-war 'baby-boom' generation moves into old age.

Age profile of Herefordshire

Age Group	Male number	Male %	Female number	Female %	Total number	Total %
0-15	16,200	17.8%	15,400	16.4%	31,500	17.0%
16-24	9,200	10.1%	8,600	9.2%	17,800	9.6%
25-44	21,200	23.3%	20,800	22.2%	42,100	22.8%
45-64	25,900	28.4%	26,800	28.5%	52,700	28.5%
65-74	10,600	11.6%	11,200	11.9%	21,800	11.8%
75+	8,000	8.8%	11,100	11.8%	19,000	10.3%
All ages	91,100	100.0%	93,900	100.0%	184,900	100.0%

Source: Office for National Statistics 2012 mid-year estimates

The number of people aged 65+ forecasted to be living in Herefordshire by 2031 will be 62,600. In particular, the number of people aged 85+ to 12,200 in 2031. This is reflected in the table below.

Mid-year estimates and forecasts

	Mid-year estimates			2011-based forecasts	
	2001	2011	2012	2021	2031
Under 16	34,000	31,400	31,500	32,400	32,300
16 to 64	107,200	112,900	112,600	110,600	110,300
65 and over	33,700	39,400	40,800	50,700	62,600
Total population	175,800	183,600	184,900	193,700	205,300

Source: Office for National Statistics mid-year estimates; 2011-based forecasts,
GL Hearn Property Consultants

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[1] Understanding Herefordshire, 2013

Enabling older people to stay in their homes rather than residential care can enable people to have more control over their lives and is more cost effective than residential care (for the public sector or individual). However, isolation can be a key factor - 3.1m people in the UK over 65 years of age don't see family, friend or neighbour even once a week[2] and 51% over 75 years of age live alone, with just over 1 million (11%) aged 65+ say they always or often feel lonely[3].

Impact on age was by far the most common characteristic mentioned in the responses to the Impact Study. Over a third (35%) of answers to the question of which groups would be particularly affected by the proposals mentioned the elderly or older people.

Impact survey age profile

	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents	Per cent of population
0-15 years	91	3%	17%
16-24 years	116	3%	10%
25-44 years*	526	16%	23%
45-64 years*	1,021	31%	29%
65-74 years	935	28%	12%
75+ years	657	20%	10%
All ages	3,346	100%	100%

Source: Herefordshire Council
*c20 year measure

Often linked to older age is disability, specifically mobility. In the 2011 Census 18.7% of people said they had some form of limiting long term health problem or disability. This is similar to the national percentage and to the 2001 Census - this can include problems related to old age.

The 2012 Herefordshire Quality of Life survey asked the 22% of adults (aged 18+) respondents who said they had a limiting long-term illness what was the nature.

Limiting long term illness

Nature of limiting long term illness	% of adults respondents who had an LLTI
Deaf / hard of hearing / acute hearing	12%
Blind / partially sighted / sensitive to light	4%
Learning disability or difficulty	4%
Mental health	10%
Progressive / chronic illness (e.g. MS, cancer)	16%
Mobility difficulties	**41%**
Other	42%

Source: 2012 Herefordshire Quality of Life Survey (people can have more than one disability)

Responses to the Impact Study were broadly representative of the population, with 19% of respondents saying they had a disability, long-term illness or health problem (12 months or more) which limits their daily activities or the work they can do.

Disability was one of the most common characteristics mentioned in the responses to the question about whether the proposals would particularly affect any group of people. Comments ranged from

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[2] Participle.net
[3] Agenda for Later Life, Age UK

people with mental disabilities needing face-to-face help, to the social aspect of talking to people (staff and others). From the transport difficulties that having to travel further would pose for those with mobility problems.

3.2   Poverty and Low Income

Poverty is a lack of income (or material possessions) to such a level that it is not considered acceptable by society. Officially a household is considered to be in poverty if its income (after taxes and housing costs) is less than 60% of the average (median) income nationally. In 2007-08 (the latest date for which local authority estimates are available) this was equal to £199 per week for a couple with no children. In the same year an estimated 19% of households (14,500 households) in Herefordshire had income below this level[4].

Nationally, of those people classed as living in poverty:
o   22% are married families
o   22% are working age adults (16-59 years)
o   46% are lone parent households
o   29% are under 16 years old
o   16% are older people

Poverty can be a symptom of several circumstances – low wages (Herefordshire weekly wage is £384 compared to £512 nationally); unemployment which has increased as a result of the recession; under employment with the proportion of people working part-time. In Herefordshire 15% work part-time compared to 14% nationally[5].

Also, there are links between poverty and health risks, poverty and education attainment for the most deprived neighbourhoods in Herefordshire[6].

Whilst the greatest numbers of households in poverty live in urban areas, some households in rural areas also live in poverty. There are also other financial pressures associated with living in rural areas that, whilst not relevant to the official definition of poverty, do make it harder for residents of rural areas. Additional costs associated with transport and domestic heating mean some rural households have to spend more to achieve the same standards of living as equivalent households living in urban areas[7].

3.3   Rurality

54% of Herefordshire's population live in rural areas, of which 44% live in the most rural locations. Access to services particularly some health services such as the dentist, GP and hospital were felt to be difficult to access by Herefordshire residents, along with other services such as post office and public transport[8]. Also, internet coverage is often harder to deliver in rural areas as premises area a distance way of structures to enable broadband.

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[4] Poverty in Herefordshire (2012): http://factsandfigures.herefordshire.gov.uk/1975.aspx
[5] 2011 Census, Annual Population Survey, Annual Business Inquiry, Herefordshire Employers' Survey 2010 and the UK competitiveness index
[6] Herefordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2010
[7] A Minimum Income Standard for Rural Households, Rowntree Foundations, 2010
[8] Understanding Herefordshire, 2013

49% of responses to the impact survey drove to a centre (41% "drove myself", and 8% via a lift). 44% people walked to a site showing that there was very local use (though a high number of responses came from the use of Hereford facilities reflecting the higher population use). Public transport was relatively low use at 10% of respondees.

4. Reducing or Withdrawing lower use Customer Service Centres and Libraries

The following data profiles the centres at risk of closure referencing customer data, modes of access centres and a profile of the area in terms of poverty.

4.1 Kington

Customer Trends
The Kington Centre is a combined Customer Service Centre and Library and has seen steady use over the last five years. The number of issues of stock (whether books or other media) has decreased likely based on the easier access to books over time, whilst as expected public access PC use has increased.

Library Service

Library sites	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Visits	38,242	35,096	35,434	34,435	36,227
Issues	42,368	39,567	37,301	35,687	33,223
Reservations	1,202	1,497	1,379	1,567	1,296
PC Sessions	3,064	4,747	5,381	5,619	5,472

Customer Services

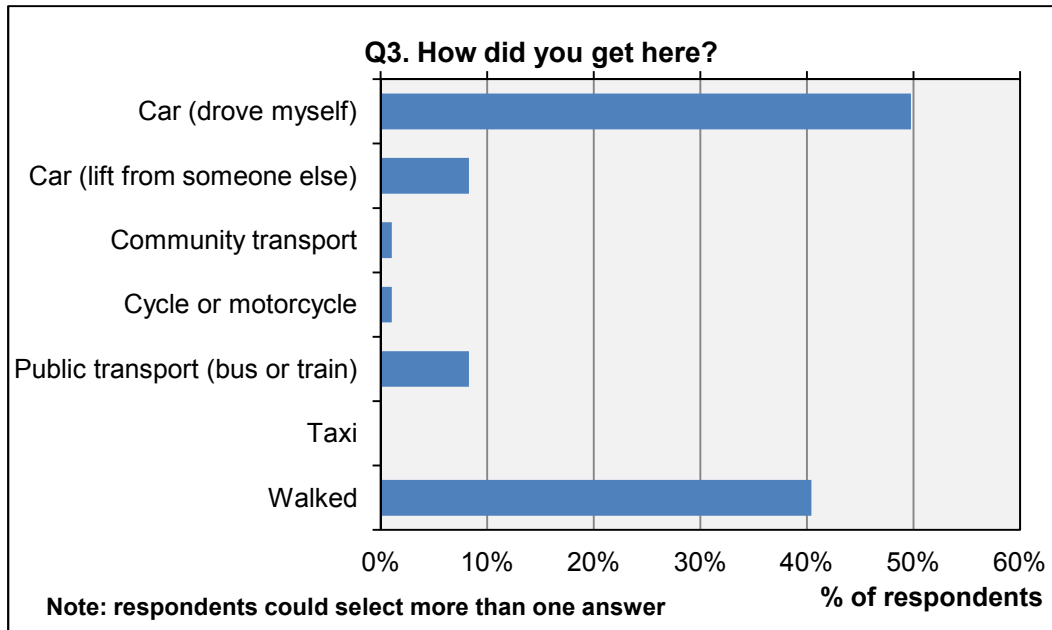| Site	Annual Customer Services Face-to-Face Contact	Annual Customer Services Payments
Kington Customer Services	4,111	4,217

Access Accounts
The table below shows by use the type of library stock accessed which reflects the number of issues under each category and gives some insight into age use. The library service offers access accounts (self-selected) which gives an insight of use by some protected characteristics, specifically disability.

Adult	Age 18+	12,163
Teenplus	Age 15-17	242
Teenage	Age 12-14	386
Junior	Age 5-11	1,505
Under 5	Age 0-4	497
The criteria for entitlement to an Access card are: • Unpaid carers • Looked after children • Blind and partially sighted • Claiming Disability Living Allowance or a Blue Badge holder • Disability which prevents the holding of a book • Dyslexia and others whose ability to read is impaired • Learning difficulties.	Access Adult Access Teenplus Access Teenage Access Junior Access Under Five	461 55 24 0 0

Travel

This information taken from the Impact Study show modes of transport is relatively evenly split between car use and walking. This suggests high local use, but also use from the rural areas surrounding Kington.

Q3. How did you get here?

Mode	% of respondents
Car (drove myself)	50%
Car (lift from someone else)	8%
Community transport	1%
Cycle or motorcycle	1%
Public transport (bus or train)	8%
Taxi	0%
Walked	40%

Note: respondents could select more than one answer

Poverty

The following information is taken from the facts and figures data produced by Herefordshire Council: as well as being amongst the most employment deprived in the county, 'Kington Central' falls within the 20% most deprived in Herefordshire in terms of overall income deprivation as well as income deprivation affecting children and income deprivation affecting older people. The town has a high rate of housing benefit claimants – close to a quarter of households – only lower than Leominster and south Hereford.

Mitigation for Kington Centre

Though usage is generally low and likely to be based on the same people using the facility several times the recommendations are to:
- Focus on retaining a library function, whilst raising awareness of how people can make payment in the town or on line.
- Maximise the use of the building through co-location with a tenant.
- Explore the potential for community asset transfer of the building run as a community library.
- Retain public access PCs in the Town.
- To explore an outreach option of at least one day a week provision for customer services.

4.2   Bromyard

Customer Trends

The Customer Services Centre and Library is co-located with Halo facilities offering a range of recreational opportunities. The library use in Bromyard has declined quite dramatically in the last five years reflective of visits and issues. However, public access PC use has risen linked to the world wide increase in use of technology and access to services digitally.

Library usage:

Library sites	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Bromyard					
Visits	64,564	60,909	59,193	55,125	50,916
Issues	53,117	49,460	44,887	41,724	38,993
Reservations	931	1,062	1,029	989	1,033
PC Sessions	4,618	4,580	11,076	12,201	11,333

Customer Services usage:

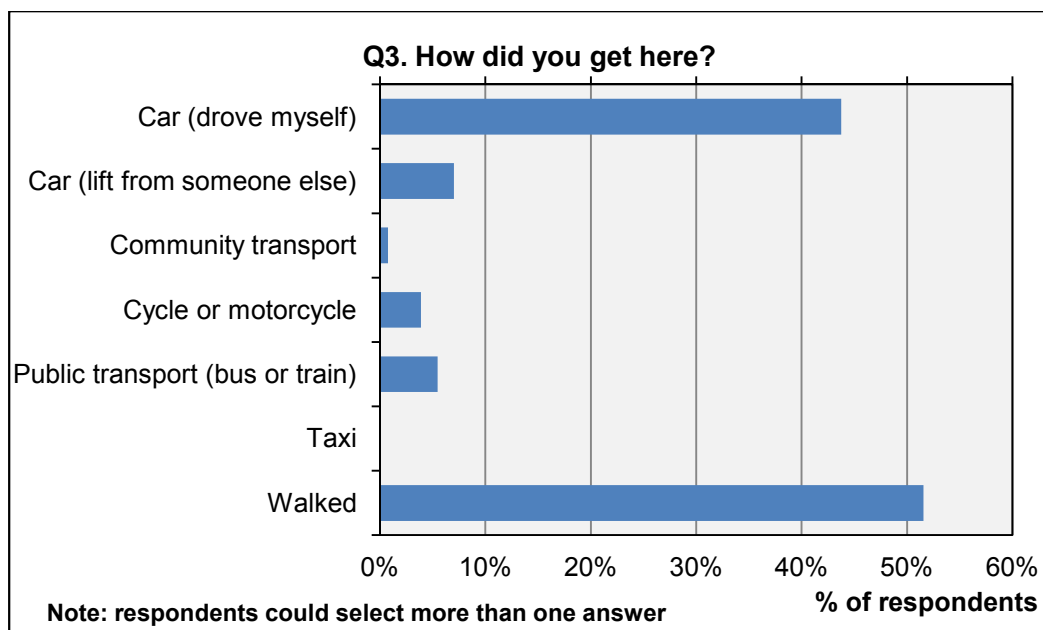| Site	Annual Customer Services Face-to-Face Contact	Annual Customer Services Payments
Bromyard Customer Services	3,193	3,774

Access Accounts

The table below shows by use the type of library stock accessed reflective of the number of issues under each category giving some insight into age use. The library service offers access to accounts which gives an insight into where there is use by people who will be linked to the protected characteristics, specifically disability.

Adult	Age 18+	15465
Teenplus	Age 15-17	144
Teenage	Age 12-14	277
Junior	Age 5-11	1887
Under 5	Age 0-4	750
The criteria for entitlement to an Access card are:	Access Adult	555
• Unpaid carers	Access Teenplus	2
• Looked after children	Access Teenage	5
• Blind and partially sighted	Access Junior	20
• Claiming Disability Living Allowance or a Blue Badge holder	Access Under Five	0
• Disability which prevents the holding of a book		
• Dyslexia and others whose ability to read is impaired		
• Learning difficulties.		

Travel

This information taken from the Impact Study shows model of transport is relatively evenly split between car use and walking – high walking to the site suggests strong local use.

Q3. How did you get here?

A horizontal bar chart showing the percentage of respondents by mode of transport:

- Car (drove myself): ~44%
- Car (lift from someone else): ~7%
- Community transport: ~1%
- Cycle or motorcycle: ~4%
- Public transport (bus or train): ~5%
- Taxi: 0%
- Walked: ~51%

X-axis: % of respondents (0% to 60%)

Note: respondents could select more than one answer

Poverty

The following information is taken from the facts and figures data produced by Herefordshire Council: 'Bromyard central' and 'Bromyard rural' are amongst the 20% most employment deprived areas of the county. Overall the area has the third highest proportion (after Leominster and south Hereford) of working age people that are employment deprived (11%). One in six people of working age in 'Central' claim an out-of-work benefit – the proportions claiming incapacity and income related benefits are particularly high compared to other parts of the county.

Mitigation for Bromyard Centre

- That there is a focus on library services using a smaller footprint of the building to enable services to be retained.
- Explore ways in which a reduced customer service can be provided working with external provider or outreach service.
- Raise awareness of alternative payment outlets including on-line and in the Town.
- That the public access PCs remain in the Town.

4.3 Belmont

Customer Trends

Belmont offers a library service on the southern edge of Hereford City in an urban area on one of the main routes into Hereford. The use over five years has been relatively consistent.

Library usage:

| Library sites	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Visits	23,671	29,815	29,235	27,714	25,020
Issues	33,058	34,747	30,437	29,654	26,497
Reservations	931	1,190	1,209	1,216	1,153
PC Sessions	761	1,468	1,133	1,084	1,027

Access Account

The table below shows by use the type of library stock accessed which reflects the number of issues under each category and gives some insight into age use. The library service offers access accounts which gives an insight into use by some protected characteristics, specifically disability. The number of "Access Adults" and "Access Junior" is high for the number of total users compared to the other sites and fits with the local demographic.

Adult	Age 18+	7435
Teenplus	Age 15-17	87
Teenage	Age 12-14	214
Junior	Age 5-11	1006
Under 5	Age 0-4	666
The criteria for entitlement to an Access card are: • Unpaid carers • Looked after children • Blind and partially sighted • Claiming Disability Living Allowance or a Blue Badge holder • Disability which prevents the holding of a book • Dyslexia and others whose ability to read is impaired • Learning difficulties.	Access Adult Access Teenplus Access Teenage Access Junior Access Under Five	790 11 0 231 0

Travel

As expected the mode of travel shows that people will use the library from outside of the catchment because it is close to a main route (and possibly because of its proximity to high use shopping facility). Walking remains high due to its urban location, along with alternative methods of transport, specifically public transport.
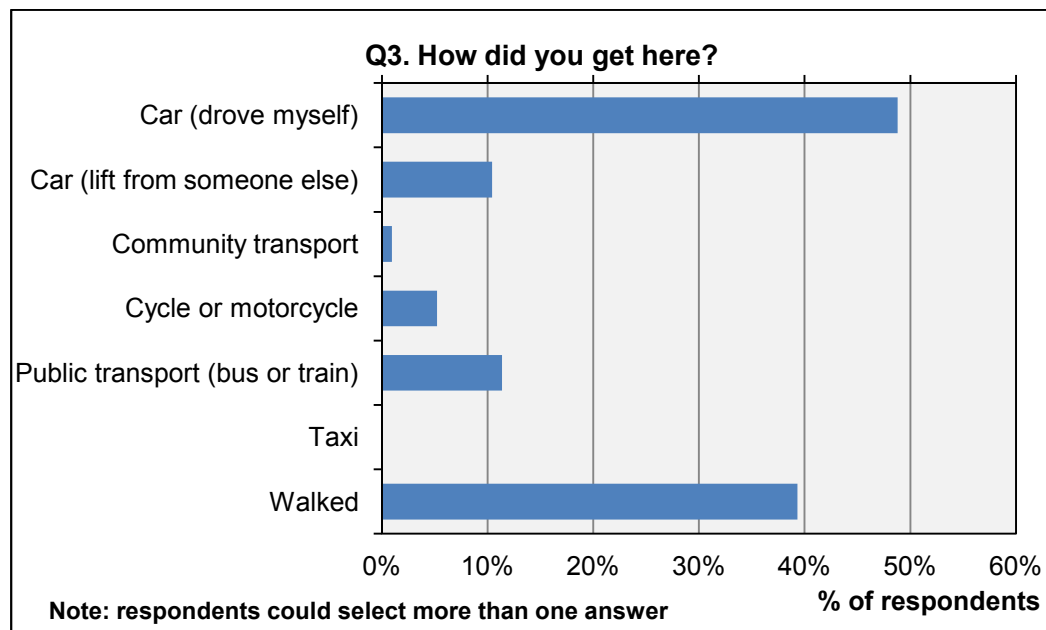
Q3. How did you get here?

Note: respondents could select more than one answer

% of respondents

Poverty indicator
This information is taken from the facts and figures data produced by Herefordshire Council: South Hereford has the county's highest rate of out-of work benefit claiming: more than one in five people of working age in 'Newton Farm-Brampton Road', 'Hunderton', 'Redhill-Belmont Road', 'Bishop's Meadow-Hunderton' and 'Golden Post-Newton Farm' (one in three people in the latter). This applies to both jobseekers (i.e. high unemployment rates) and those claiming incapacity and other income-related benefits. The proportion of young people aged 16-19 not in education, employment or training is the highest in the county.

All except the areas of 'Broadleys', 'Dales and Pastures' and Belmont Rural are amongst the 25% most deprived in Herefordshire in terms of employment (five of these are amongst the most deprived in England). Of those who do work few are self-employed and a relatively high proportion work part-time. In contrast the two newer areas of Belmont are amongst the least deprived with the highest rates of economic activity in the county and relatively few working part-time. South Hereford has the second highest rate of employment deprivation (11%) after Leominster town.

Mitigation for Belmont Library
A significant factor for Belmont Library is the catchment that will include people in poverty and low income.
- That a local partnership is established to share / cover costs based on a community library model.

4.4   Ledbury

The Ledbury Library is currently housed separately from the Customer Services Centre which is based close by. The functions will be brought together on the single site at the Masters House. The move to the single site will create positive benefit for people will disability to access library services.

Customer Trends
The use of the library has decreased over the last three years quite significantly, with corresponding reduction of issues. This can be down to the poor quality of the site, and people choosing to travel to other locations.

Library usage:

Library sites	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Visits	91,355	88,666	82,655	77,948	72,583
Issues	85,755	85,472	83,111	78,349	68,517
Reservations	3,137	3,203	3,732	3,672	2,808
PC Sessions	8,201	9,435	8,014	6,415	7,313

Customer services usage:

Site	Annual Customer Services Face-to-Face Contact	Annual Customer Services Payments
Ledbury Customer Service Centre	5,335	6,073

**Access Accounts**
The table below shows by use the type of library stock access which reflects the number of issues under each category and gives some insight into age use. The library service offers access accounts (self-selected) which gives an insight into use by some protected characteristics, specifically disability. High "Access Adults" is reflective of the general higher use.

Adult	Age 18+	27,517
Teenplus	Age 15-17	150
Teenage	Age 12-14	778
Junior	Age 5-11	2,894
Under 5	Age 0-4	1,156
The criteria for entitlement to an Access card are: • Unpaid carers • Looked after children • Blind and partially sighted • Claiming Disability Living Allowance or a Blue Badge holder • Disability which prevents the holding of a book • Dyslexia and others whose ability to read is impaired • Learning difficulties.	Access Adult Access Teenplus Access Teenage Access Junior Access Under Five	1,229 4 3 38 3

Travel

By far the most popular mode of transport is walking which implies that use is local, with some car use capturing use by surrounding areas.
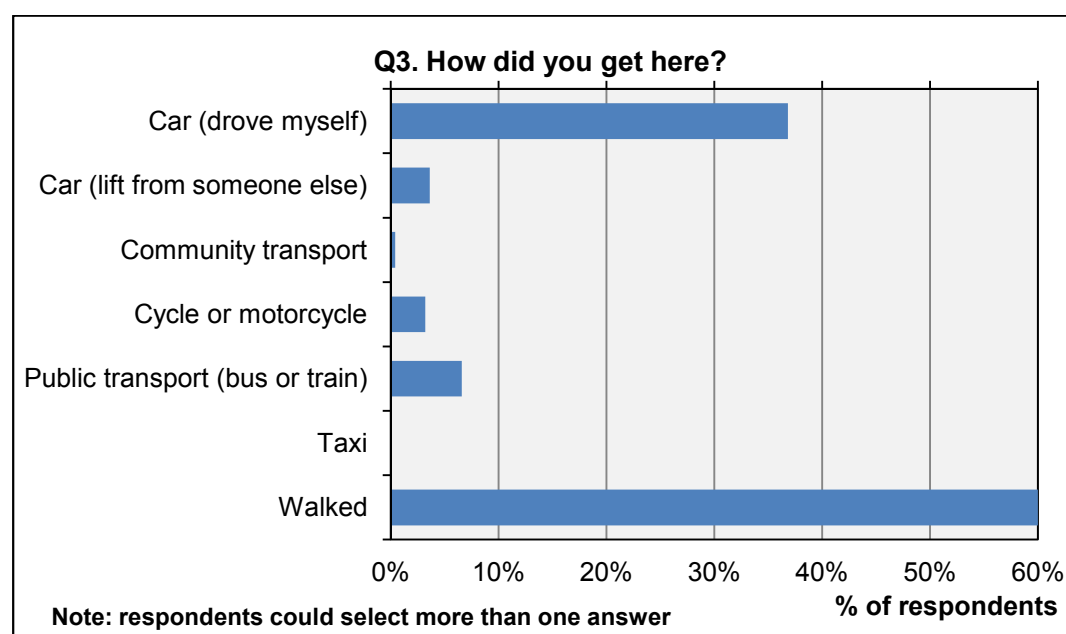
Q3. How did you get here?

Poverty indicator

This information is taken from the facts and figures data produced by Herefordshire Council: Ledbury has relatively low levels of income deprivation, with 'New Mills' and 'Spiral' amongst the least deprived both nationally and locally. The exceptions are 'Central' and 'Ring Road', which are amongst the most deprived in Herefordshire in terms of income deprivation – for the total population and for children. 'Central' is also one of the most deprived in Herefordshire in terms of income deprivation affecting older people.

Mitigation for Ledbury Customer Services and Library

- Retain an element of staff presence to support the library and customer service functions, balanced with community support
- Design the public spaces of the building that allows for self-service
- whilst raising awareness of how people can make payment in the town or on line
- Maximise the use of the building through co-location, including collaboration with co-tenants to even extend opening hours.
- Retain public access PCs in the Town.

5.   Digital Exclusion

This Impact and Needs Assessment considers digital exclusion because of the increased reliance of services being accessed on-line, specifically payments and access a range of customer services and fault reporting.

This data assesses who currently use and don't use the internet, the barriers for being on-line, and any mitigation that can be put in place.

5.1   Use and Non-Use

Internet use has increased significantly over time, more frequently and through a range of devices which make connection much more flexible and available. For example in 2013, 36 million adults (73%) in Great Britain accessed the Internet every day, 20 million more than in 2006; and using a mobile phone to access the internet has more than doubled between 2010 and 2013, from 24% to 53%[9].

Percentage of internet users and non-users, by low level geographical location, UK (Persons aged 16 years and over)

	Ever used %		Never used%	
	2012 Q2	**2013 Q2**	**2012 Q2**	**2013 Q2**
UK	84.3	85.9	15.5	13.9
West Midlands	81.8	84.1	18.0	15.7
County of Herefordshire	**85.0**	**87.6**	**15.0**	**11.7**
Worcestershire	80.3	89.3	19.7	10.7
Warwickshire	81.1	83.9	18.8	15.8
Telford and Wrekin	78.8	79.5	20.3	20.5
Shropshire CC	86.3	87.5	13.7	12.0
Stoke-on-Trent	84.5	79.5	15.2	20.5

Source: Office of National Statistics

Information from the Office for National Statistics also shows that certain protected characteristics are less likely to use the internet[10].

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[9] Statistic Bulletin: internet access, households and individuals, 8 August 2013
[10] Office for National Statistics Quarterly Update on Internet Access, August 2013

Older people less likely to use the internet: Almost all adults aged 16 to 24 years (99%) had ever used the Internet (7.1 million people). In contrast, only 33% of adults aged 75 years and over had ever used the Internet.

Internet non users by age, 2013 Q2

	Survey estimate
All *(thousands)*	7,075
All *(%)*	13.9
Age group *(years; %)*	
16-24	0.5
25-34	1.1
35-44	2.6
45-54	6.8
55-64	14.3
65-74	32.5
75+	67.3

Source: Office of National Statistics

Difference in use between genders is higher in older age: Non-use was relatively similar for males and females aged 16 to 64 years, however, internet non-use differed for adults aged 65 years and over. Where 28% of males aged 65 to 74 years had never used the Internet, the corresponding total for females was 36%. This difference grows to 14 percentage points for males and females aged 75 years and over.

Older people access the internet less frequently: adults over 75 years were the most likely to have last used the Internet more than 3 months ago. In contrast, less than 1% of Internet users aged 16 to 24 years had last used it more than 3 months ago.

When adults last used the Internet by age group (%), Q2 2013

	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Within last 3 months	99.3	99.0	98.7	97.5	95.7	92.2	85.8
More than 3 months ago	0.7	1.0	1.3	2.5	4.3	7.8	14.2

Source: Office of National Statistics

Disabled people are less likely to use the internet: Individuals with a disability are approximately four times more likely to have never used the Internet than individuals without a disability. At Q2 2013, there were 3.8 million disabled adults, as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), who had never used the Internet. This represents 33% of those who were disabled and over half (54%) of the 7.1 million adults who had never used the Internet.

Internet non-users by disability status %

	Q1 2011	Q2 2011	Q3 2011	Q4 2011	Q1 2012	Q2 2012	Q3 2012	Q4 2012	Q1 2013
DDA disabled	35.8	36.8	36.3	34.5	34.6	33.7	33.4	32.8	31.9
Work limiting disability only	11.2	11.4	11.1	10.8	10.3	10.0	9.6	8.7	8.0
No disability	11.9	11.6	10.8	10.9	10.6	10.1	9.6	9.3	8.6

Source: Office of National Statistics

People on lower income less likely to use the Internet: Of those adults in employment whose gross weekly pay was less than £200 per week, 6% (315,000) had never used the Internet. Internet use has almost reached full coverage for those earning in excess of £500 a week, with Internet use at 99% or above for all adults with weekly pay rates above this level.

Internet use and non-use by gross weekly pay % (persons 16 years and over)

Pay Band		Never used				
	2011 Q2	2012 Q2	2012 Q3	2012 Q4	2013 Q1	2013 Q2
<£200	9.2	6.5	6.6	5.7	5.4	5.9
£200-£299	7.5	5.1	5.5	4.9	4.3	4.6
£300-£399*	**4.7**	**4.1**	**4.3**	**3.1**	**4.1**	**2.2**
£400-£499	3.3	2.6	3.0	2.3	2.4	1.9
£500-£599	2.5	1.3	1.7	1.7	1.1	0.9
£600-£699	1.8	2.1	1.4	0.3	0.5	0.6
£700-£799	0.7	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.6	1.0
£800-£899	0.8	1.0	0.9	0.4	0.2	0.0
£900-£999	1.4	0.0	0.3	0.4	1.8	0.8
£1000-£1499	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.0
£1500-£1999	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
£2000+	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Source: Office for National Statistics
*Herefordshire average weekly wage is £384

Moving in the right direction: There is a range of evidence that is indicating that more people are using the Internet – across the age, ability and wage spectrum:
- Internet use has increased over time for those individuals earning less than £200 per week.
- At Q2 2011 approximately 9% (511,000) had never used the Internet, this compares with 6% (315,000) at Q2 2013.
- A sizable increase in daily computer use, by age, in the past seven years has been for adults aged 65 and over.
- In 2006, just 9% reported that they used a computer every day, this compares to 37% in 2013[11].
- 18% of pensioners are now signed up to one social networking site[12] and 2% of UK Facebook visitors were over the age of 65[13].

5.2   Barriers to Use

Of the 4 million households without Internet access, the majority (59%) said that they didn't have a connection because they 'did not need it'. Approximately (20%) indicated that they did not have the Internet in their household due to a lack of computer skills, with equipment costs (13%) and access costs (12%) being barriers to use[14].

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[11] Statistic Bulletin: internet access, households and individuals, 8 August 2013
[12] WeLoveLocalGov Blog, What Can Change in Five Years, 2011, From Housing and Litter to Facebook and Twitter Updating your Status, BDO Local Government, March 2012
[13] From Housing and Litter to Facebook and Twitter Updating your Status, BDO Local Government, March 2012
[14] Internet Access - Households and Individuals, 2013, 8 August 2013

Barriers	2006	2013
Don't need Internet (not useful, not interesting, etc.)	34	59
Lack of skills	-	20
Equipment costs too high	21	13
Access costs too high (telephone, broadband subscription)	16	12
Have access to the Internet elsewhere	10	7
Privacy or security concerns	8	2
Physical or sensorial disability	3	2
Other reason	13	13

Source: Internet Access - Households and Individuals, 2013, 8 August 2013

These findings reflect research regarding Herefordshire residents' internet use through a survey that ran from September 2011 to February 2012 and generated 5,057 responses from the county with 157 responses were from residents without the Internet. Also more recent work conducted across the LEP area of the Marches and Gloucestershire shows barriers of need within people who do not have access to the internet.

By putting the data together it can be assumed that over half of the people who have never used the internet consider they do not need or want it. This would be approximately 6% of the Herefordshire population (11.7% of the population never used the internet next to 59% of people never used the internet don't consider they need to). Again based on data this is likely to be older people and specifically older women. The trend data shows that more people are migrating to using the internet, though this cultural shift will take more effort and longer with the later adapter.

Recommendations

Based on the Impact and Needs Assessment findings the recommendations are based on:

- Conduct further impact assessment between April and September 2014 to understand alternative methods of accessing services for people most affected.
- Delay budget savings until April 2015 to develop opportunities to work with local communities and to support change in use of accessing services.
- Instigate change in advance for April 2015 when there is limited impact on the protected characteristics.
- Develop programmes that encourage greater awareness and training for people to use the internet.
- Work across department to ensure mechanisms are in place for people to pay through cashless systems.
- Conduct relevant training for volunteers operating the library service, including equality training.
- The case based approach is considered a positive way forward in addressing needs of people who have a combination of issues and can be a way of preventing people reaching crisis point.

Usage across libraries					
Library sites	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Hereford					
Visits	262,042	254,803	236,182	232,817	227,240
Issues	273,715	263,550	251,849	241,398	212,577
Reservations	5,753	5,872	6,204	6,265	5,245
PC Sessions	39,304	47,660	38,166	37,355	35,868
Leominster					
Visits	131,928	122,478	112,540	111,954	105,283
Issues	173,699	163,101	151,497	156,528	142,058
Reservations	4,334	3,980	3,864	3,804	3,632
PC Sessions	17,513	22,203	17,957	17,455	16,604
Ross					
Visits	114,982	112,022	109,916	108,275	115,219
Issues	138,747	137,886	132,998	132,493	130,241
Reservations	3,431	4,187	4,333	4,329	3,462
PC Sessions	15,266	21,885	14,655	12,334	18,888
Ledbury					
Visits	91,355	88,666	82,655	77,948	72,583
Issues	85,755	85,472	83,111	78,349	68,517
Reservations	3,137	3,203	3,732	3,672	2,808
PC Sessions	8,201	9,435	8,014	6,415	7,313
Bromyard					
Visits	64,564	60,909	59,193	55,125	50,916
Issues	53,117	49,460	44,887	41,724	38,993
Reservations	931	1,062	1,029	989	1,033
PC Sessions	4,618	4,580	11,076	12,201	11,333
Kington					
Visits	38,242	35,096	35,434	34,435	36,227
Issues	42,368	39,567	37,301	35,687	33,223
Reservations	1,202	1,497	1,379	1,567	1,296
PC Sessions	3,064	4,747	5,381	5,619	5,472
Belmont					
Visits	23,671	29,815	29,235	27,714	25,020
Issues	33,058	34,747	30,437	29,654	26,497
Reservations	931	1,190	1,209	1,216	1,153
PC Sessions	761	1,468	1,133	1,084	1,027
Colwall					
Visits	16,662	16,229	16,230	16,886	14,685
Issues	21,504	21,871	21,574	21,539	18,687
Reservations	1,223	1,181	1,216	1,424	1,266
PC Sessions	4,419	5,906	3,824	3,526	3,362
Weobley					
Visits	3,780	3,499	3,040	3,167	2,930
Issues	9,264	9,579	7,669	7,699	7,039
Reservations	546	550	531	671	522
PC Sessions	425	404	223	128	113
Leintwardine					
Visits	2,590	2,359	2,079	2,703	2,427
Issues	6,669	5,998	4,699	5,673	5,324
Reservations	465	545	348	440	456
PC Sessions	131	114	52	81	101