

## Hereford Library and Museum – Mezzanine Development

### Business Case Profile

#### 1. Introduction

This business case is an assessment of the development of the mezzanine at Hereford Library and Museum (also referred to as the first floor). The estimated expenditure is £180K-£230K to turn the space into a community and council use facility.

#### 2. Context

Hereford Library is the most used library in Hereford, often referred to as the County Library. It has a long history of public usage, since its establishment in 1837 and its purpose as a library is covered by a covenant (in subsequent years agreement was put in place to include a museum).

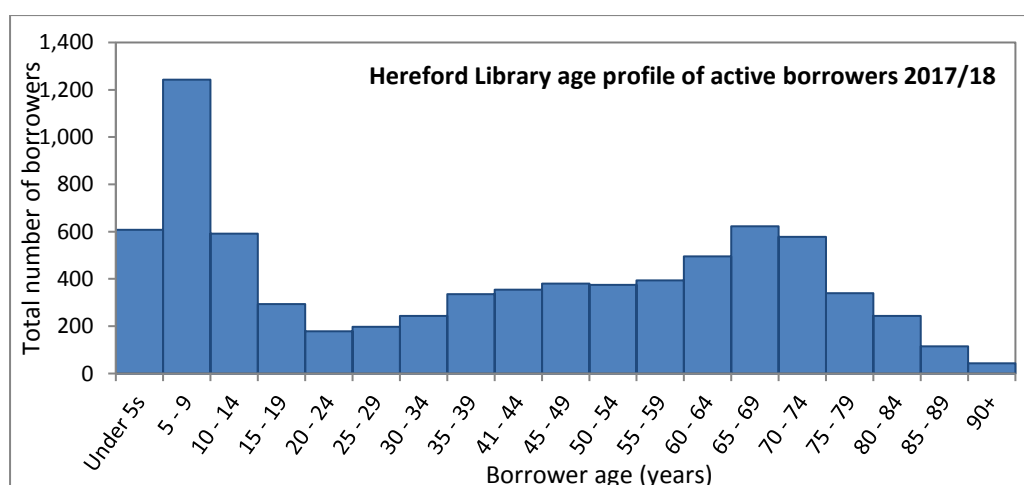
The visitor numbers and number of issues over the last 5 years are as below:

Library visits	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14
Hereford	153,029	92,330	96,692	184,434	196,325

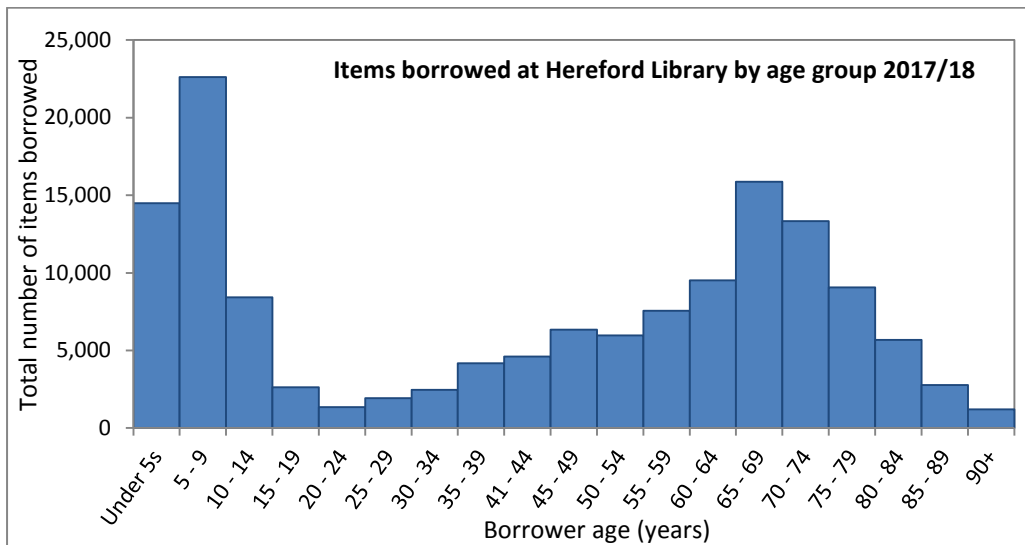
Library issues	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14
Hereford	143,289	68,755	101,493	175,608	191,255

The charts below aim to give an overview of the age profile of Hereford Library use. This is based on active borrowers (who have borrowed one or more items from Hereford Library between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018 with each borrower only counted once). This is not the total number of active borrowers who use Hereford Library; this data set only includes borrowers who have a date of birth recorded.

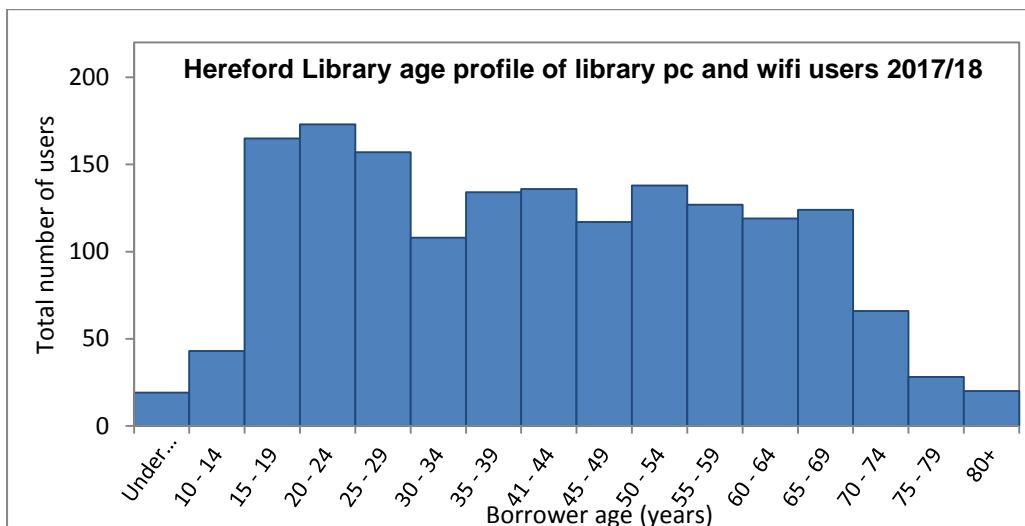
The first chart shows the age profile of active borrowers at Hereford Library.



The following chart shows the total number of items borrowed from Hereford Library between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018 by borrower age group. This is not the total number of items borrowed from Hereford Library; this data set only includes loans to borrowers who have a date of birth recorded.



The final chart shows the age profile of the total number of library computer and library WiFi users at Hereford Library between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018. Each customer is only counted once and only includes users who have a date of birth recorded and does not include library guest users.



The figures on user numbers tell us three key things:

- That use (borrowing and visits) from children between the ages of 0-10 is high, specifically 5-9 years which are formative years to children’s education preparedness.
- The usage is also important for people 65+
- Though there is a dip in use between 15 years to 60 years, the wifi and PC is important across those ages.

The annual cost of running Hereford Library is as below:

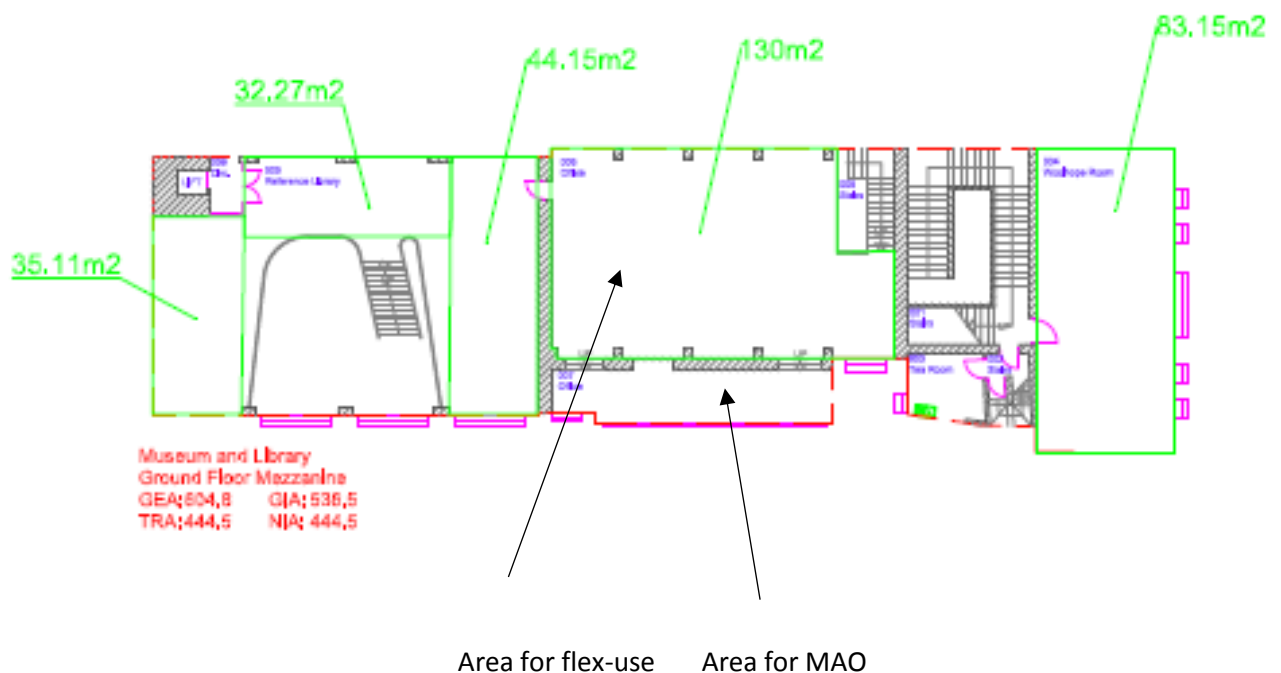
Service / function	£						
	Rates	Utilities	Revenue Budget	Income	Staffing	Book Fund	Total
Hereford Library & Museum	21,708	10,606	2,822	-27,912	149,314	57,900	214,438

(figures composed from 2017/18 property cost and revenue based on 2018/19 budget)

In September 2015 Hereford Library was closed for a period of 18 months to allow the removal of asbestos from the site; a small pop-up library operated at Hereford Town Hall during this time and extra opening at Belmont. That would account for the dip in visitor numbers and issue numbers. Since reopening on 30 January 2017 issues and visitor figures have continued to rise and are approaching pre-closure targets. As the busiest library in the county, Hereford Library has the most capacity for increased usage and income generation, but both are currently limited by lack of space within the building.

Cabinet agreed on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2016 ([Hereford Library and museum response](#)) that capital investment would be used to invest in refurbishing the site. In the course of doing this work the first floor space (previously used as storage and work room) was cleared in preparation for further works to extend public access. Access to the space is via three routes – stairway at the front to the library, stairway towards the back of the library through the reference area, and by the lift at the back of the library and through the reference area. This provides an opportunity to create a flexible multi-purpose space within the building.

The floor plan as below:



### 3. The Proposal

The current space is unused space (with the exception of storage). The purpose would be to create a flexible space in the main area to be used as:

**Study / work area** – to expand the reference library area, with flexible shelving and desk space for study in its different forms – to include wifi.

Demand: to support children and young people with homework / course work within a positive and quiet environment. To include wifi as increasingly study work is conducted on-line – a barrier to access services on-line is the cost of equipment and subscription which these proposals will aim to address. The space will also provide a study area for students as part of the university.

**Consultation** – at certain times the space can be used / hired for consultation.

Demand: As a city centre location this will be ideal (part of the library was used recently for just that purpose). It can also be an information point for major projects.

**Training** – as a hireable space for training, seminars, events and conferences.

Demand: Again as a city centre location this will suit people using Hereford and provides good public transport links. The council and the library service itself could also use the space to run events including children's holiday workshops.

**Displays** – to include heritage image and displays.

Demand: As a shared site with the museum service there is opportunity to show more of the collection of historic objects. Also, images from the Herefordshire History website (managed by the Library Service) to promote sale of images.

**Multi-agency Office** – in one area creating in the region of six desks as a multi-agency office.

Demand – as the council reduces its property portfolio and adopts more flexible working policies, the desks at the library would create work space for officers / members needing to work from Hereford. These will operate as similar to other MAO in the county in providing bookable desk space.

### 4. Outcomes

The above points regarding "demand" outlines some of the need. This fits with the agreed objectives of the library service:

There are four key principles influencing the delivery of the library service:

- Provide and enable a free core library service across Herefordshire, supporting social interaction and reducing isolation.
- For centres to provide shared spaces as part of the community life of an area, fostering local regeneration and local identity.
- Promote reading for all ages and access to books, supporting learning and discovery.
- Work with the community to provide the level of library service want through support of community-run libraries and volunteering.

The outcomes would then be:

- Improved study space for children and young people supporting educational attainment
- Create space for concentrated work such as job applications and CVs
- Support the council and other agencies on engagement / consultations
- Assist the council's approach to flexible working and efficient use of time / resources

- Form a space at the library, as a trusted and safe place, for community events
- Known as a “go to” place for information on key consultations
- Increase use of the library, creating better value for money for revenue spend for the council

The expenditure is based on works and purchase for:

- Build work including widening the door way to allow for wheelchair access
- Fixtures and fittings
- Lighting, heating, power
- Furniture
- Redecoration
- Wifi

## 5. Alternative Options

### Alternative Option 1 – do minimum

Do basic works required to lighting, power, flooring, etc. – this is to ensure compliance, not to make the investment in bringing the space into use. The library would continue to operate as is.	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The council does not need to allocate additional expenditure that will not net a return of many years.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would not meet the outcomes as outlined above.</li> <li>• Basic fit-out would still need to be done.</li> <li>• Would not extend public space or generate income.</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	£75K

### Alternative option 2 – minimum and Multi Agency Office (MAO)

To use the large room to create MAO for staff use, with smaller community use space. There would be the need to include widening door, box in staircase, power, lighting, flooring and IT.	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The council supports its approach to flexible working and de-commission of properties for office use.</li> <li>• Would cost less.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would reduce the community benefit.</li> <li>• Would not generate income.</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	£150K

### Alternative option 3 – Major redevelopment

A large scheme to redevelop the whole site linked to proposals made by Hereford Library User’s Group.	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would create an iconic library for Hereford.</li> <li>• Opportunity for greater community use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High cost.</li> <li>• Timescale in terms of raising funding could be some considerable time.</li> <li>• Risk of not happening at all with the space remaining under-utilised.</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	£5-10m

## Alternative option 4 – Apply for funding

To seek external funding to progress proposals.	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Means no or less spend for the council.</li> <li>Make the most of the building.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Takes investment to apply for funding with risk of not accessing funding after the effort of applying.</li> <li>Takes time and could lead to delay in implementing for public benefit.</li> <li>Need to meet criteria of funders which could change the nature of the scheme.</li> <li>Limited opportunity for external funding for libraries (though some through heritage for historic features).</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	£50k (to cover revenue cost of fundraiser depending on the level of the scheme)

## 6. Financial Return

The financial benefit in terms of generating an income would be:

Income	Per annum £
Hire of the space for events, seminars and consultations	7,000
Herefordshire Histories website additional sales through raised awareness	1,000
Net revenue from council operated events	3,000

Other in-direct savings:

- Provide MAO space in Hereford for staff to work effectively
- Increase use of the library making the most of the building
- Benefit to children's education, adult learning and inclusion for all ages

## 7. Risks

The risks are based on the proposal of redevelopment of the First Floor Space.

Risk: Spend on capital	Mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That the expected expenditure is higher than estimated costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirm costs via tender process</li> <li>Further decision agreed process</li> </ul>

Risk: Income less than planned	Mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That income level to the services is less than estimated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote opportunities for hire space and general promotion of the library</li> </ul>

Risk: No opportunity for further development	Mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposals give little opportunity for further development of the library and museum in the future</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposals allow for any longer term plans as a base to build from if funding is raised for further development of the site</li> </ul>

## 8. Equality Impact Assessment

The equality duty (PSED) set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 relates to different groups who share any of the “protected characteristics” of age, sex, pregnancy and maternity, disability, race, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief, sexual orientation.

Hereford Library is available to any member of the public to access and does not discriminate in terms of protected characteristics. However, it is worth considering impact on “age”, specifically children high percentage use and 65+ year use.

The key specific benefit is increased area for study and homework of age groups and more generally. Another positive impact is widening the doorway to the larger room to cater for wheelchair users. Generally, there is expanded space to meet demand from specific group groups.

## 9. Summary Findings

Additional income generated via the services will not cover the capital costs for the redevelopment of the larger room and creation of an MAO. However, to take into consideration is the added benefit of maximising the space at the library and museum. Creating a flexible space will need managing, but is the best approach making use of a city centre location. The benefits to the community and the council is difficult to measure in financial terms, but creates wider social benefit. This is specifically for the high use age groups of children and older adults, with the library service presenting well being benefits for users of the library service<sup>1</sup>.

The proposal also allows for the service to apply to funders to bring out the historic features of the large first floor room (and this can be done in tandem with preparing for the works). It also allows for any large scale scheme to be progressed by Hereford Library User’s Group or other body.

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<sup>1</sup> The Health and Well Being Benefits of Public Libraries (2015), Arts Council England: [link](#)