

Libraries Unlimited

**A Strategic Direction for Dublin City
Libraries 2019-2023**



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

Leabharlann
Library



Dublin City Council's mission is to “provide quality services for its citizens and visitors and act to protect and promote Dublin's distinct identity in a way that acknowledges our past and secures our future.”

Ultimately, this plan is about libraries' pivotal role in enabling Dublin City Council to deliver information and supports to citizens, visitors and workers in the city.

Introduction

In recent years, public libraries and local authorities have risen to the challenges of social, digital and economic change. Our public libraries continue to provide a wide range of services that cannot easily be afforded by some citizens on their own and are, in addition, being recognised as important cultural spaces offering open, non-authoritarian and non-commercial public space in the privatised environment of the city. This role as a gateway both to knowledge and inclusion in local communities is unique. In this context we are delighted to present *Libraries Unlimited: a Strategic Direction for Dublin City Libraries 2019-2023* which sets out a strong vision and clear strategic direction for the sustainable development of Dublin City Council's public library and archive services over the five year period from 2019 to 2023.

This ambitious plan is set within a strategic framework of six high-level strategic ambitions, themes and priority actions and builds on previous plans and programmes delivered by the city's library service. It has been shaped and informed by a review of the existing service; consultation with stakeholders and analysis of change drivers and trends. It also takes into account current policies, in particular the recently published *Our Public Libraries 2022*, the *National Strategy for Public Libraries in Ireland*.

Building on existing strengths, this plan charts an ambitious but achievable course for new, innovative and improved services that meet Dublin's citizens changing needs and interests.

Lord Mayor
Chief Executive

A changing context

In recent years Dublin Public Libraries and the wider City Council have risen to the challenges arising from ongoing social, digital and economic changes. Libraries Unlimited 2019-2023 responds to a world that is increasingly shaped by internet and mobile technologies and the way they impact on how we access information and seek out new knowledge. An individual's ability to engage with this wide range of technologies and opportunities, depends in the first instance on the development of literacy in all of its forms. It is probably the most fundamental part of education and lifelong learning, crucial to a person's ability to develop fully as an individual, unleash their potential, and to participate fully in our society. Libraries are a vital resource in supporting literacy in our communities. Through expert selection and provision of a wide range of books and other materials in a free, open and informal setting, libraries can both support the acquisition of literacy skills and help foster a love of reading.

Our consultations suggest that:

- Access to technology and digital literacy is now more integral to accessing public services.
- There is evidence of Information overload and increasing lack of trust in source and provenance of available information.
- People need space to recharge devices, check social media and get easy access to the Internet.
- Self-determination and lifelong learning are key to improving quality of life.
- Changing work patterns and a variety of contracts of employment are becoming the normal.
- Minimising the impact of isolation and supporting people's requirement to learn and make local connections is increasingly necessary in a global world.
- Changing demographics including ageing and cultural and ethnic diversity, are now realities alongside social exclusion and homelessness.

Change and trends in Libraries

- People who use our services expect easier access and more online content.
- In the midst of a digital revolution, libraries need to innovate to demonstrate their worth in order to avoid being seen as old-fashioned and tired.
- Our citizens are growing up and living in a multi-cultural capital city.
- People in cities tend to have less privacy and fewer public spaces for reflection and relaxation.
- On-going investment in technological infrastructure is essential to ensure we are ahead of the curve.
- There is a dynamic tension between centralisation of services and the need for local services ready to respond to the local environments.
- The staff resource was stretched as a consequence of the recession and the moratorium on staff recruitment.
- Library spaces are changing to become multi-purpose community facilities that contribute to place-making and community connection, providing a space for creativity and participation, where people come together to share ideas and create new knowledge.

Vision

Dublin City Libraries are trusted places that nurture curiosity so that opportunity, ambition and imagination flourish.

Values

**Equity of
access**

**Right to
know**

**Respect for
everyone**

Guiding principles – Our ambition

The core principles that will guide the continued growth and development of Dublin City Libraries over the course of this plan emanate from an organisational culture with a strong social inclusion and customer service ethos.

A Space for life-long learning

A cornerstone of our ambition is the provision of welcoming spaces where people are free to access materials and seek guidance on anything that allows a spirit of discovery and life-long learning to flourish at all stages of life.

The joy of reading

We recognise the inherent value of reading and literacy in expanding life chances, and we also encourage everyone to enjoy reading to relax and discover different worlds.

Libraries are free

We believe that free public libraries are at the heart of local authority services responding to changing Dublin City communities. We provide free access to knowledge and information to enable personal and community empowerment and build a more informed society

Equality and diversity

We create content and knowledge from our diverse collections and support library users in creating their own content. We enable people and communities to tell stories that reflect values of respect and inclusion and give voice to the diversity of culture and experience in our city. We particularly reach out to those who may not see libraries and culture as something for them.

Changing needs and expectations

We are committed to meeting our users' expectations for sophisticated and social access to digital material. We continue to anticipate and respond to what our communities can expect from the libraries that serve them.

Creativity and innovation

Our staff team is resilient and resourceful in responding to a rapidly changing environment. We aim to be a learning service that values innovation and creativity and continues to bench-mark against best practice internationally.

Strategic Direction

1

Theme
Our Library
Spaces

Intended Impact
Strengthen
Connections
in Communities

2

Theme
Our shelves
and online

Intended Impact
Mediate content to
broaden horizons
and engage the
public

3

Theme
Our
Dublin

Intended Impact
Celebrate Dublin's
uniqueness in
heritage, history and
culture

4

Theme
Our libraries as
trusted, active
community spaces

Intended Impact
Recognise capacity
and extend what's
possible as a
cultural resource in
local communities

5

Theme
Our
People

Intended Impact
Develop the
capacity of
staff so that our
library network
is sustained and
enriched

6

Theme
Our friends
and partners

Intended Impact
Consolidate our
partnership and
collaborative work
with organisations
and initiatives

1

Theme Our Library Spaces

Intended Impact Strengthen Connections in Communities



The capacity of our service to engage individuals and communities is directly related to the quality of our infrastructure. Library spaces are multi-purpose community facilities that contribute to place-making and community connection. They are vibrant, accessible and open places for meeting, learning and inspiration. These spaces and the digital infrastructure that sustains and animates them are as fundamental to our service as our collections and our staff. We must be agile in response to a fast changing environment and ensure robust infrastructure and networks support the growing digital library as well as improving and expanding the physical network. This is central to our ambition for the next five years.

Actions

We will work to deliver the City Library, Parnell Square Cultural Quarter during the lifetime of this plan. [insert link to 'in-focus' piece on the city library](#)

We will maintain and improve our branch network of twenty-one libraries, carrying out a rolling programme of refurbishments and investing in day-to-day maintenance and accessibility.

We will complete major refurbishment projects at Coolock and Inchicore and bring re-development plans for Finglas and Terenure to an advanced stage of stage of design

We will expand our branch network with new libraries by identifying and acquiring sites for libraries in Crumlin-Drimnagh and the Northern Fringe of the City

We will ensure our ICT infrastructure is up-to-date, robust and fit for purpose by investing in equipment and software and implementing replacement programmes as required.

We will embrace the opportunities created by new and emerging technologies, keeping pace with our users' expectations for cutting edge digital technologies.

2

Theme
Our shelves
and online

Intended Impact
Mediate content to
broaden horizons
and engage the
public



We select and buy books and many other resources in all sorts of diverse formats to meet the needs of library users, responding to demands and meeting many different needs. We work to deliver sustainable and customer driven collections, using digital media to provide opportunities for those who cannot read standard print and who have never been able to use public libraries fully, or for whom print is not the dominant way of accessing knowledge. Our collections support the pursuit of pleasure, leisure, learning, business, information and life-long learning. The digital shift has already put the library in every pocket, reflecting the speed of change to mobile connection and interaction, as customers both consume and create digital content. We also create new content, mining our collections and working to animate and improve access to them for every reader.

Actions

We will manage, maintain and build on existing collections, both print and online, and develop new collections.

We will source new technologies and content in new formats to meet the needs of the widest possible audience

We will develop the range of online resources and services available for free to library patrons in-house and remotely, 24/7. We will increase remote and in-branch take up these resources and services for work, leisure, learning and creativity purposes.

We will promote access to, and use of, the widest possible range of digital library and archive collections and resources both locally and online.

3

Theme Our Dublin

Intended Impact Celebrate Dublin's uniqueness in heritage, history and culture



We deliver a range of services and initiatives that are uniquely of and about Dublin. We work to support Dublin City Council's vision for Dublin as 'the best place in which to be, to live, to work, to do business and to enjoy. A city that has everything by being friendly, progressive, different and brilliant.'

We do this by developing services that respond to the conditions of the city and to the needs of our citizens as well as showcasing Dublin as an innovative and creative City, with a rich culture. We will cherish and promote the Irish Language. We are proud of our City and we want to continue to celebrate and share Dublin's unique stories and innovate to deliver interesting experiences for our library users.

Actions

We will continue preserve, share and promote the record of Dublin and Irish heritage, enable historical research and build awareness of the Library and Archive as the memory of the City.

We work to celebrate Dublin's unique literary culture and status through the written and spoken word and strive to support creativity and sustainability from writer to reader, building on the city's designation as a UNESCO City of Literature.

We will actively lead and contribute to collaborative projects locally in Dublin as well as internationally among the members of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network and work to achieve UNESCO's Sustainable Development Goals in the planning of activities.

We will support Dublin's position as a learning and innovative city by offering learners a lifelong engagement with informal, non-formal and formal learning activities and provide resources, staff facilitation and assistance from external partners to help library users achieve their learning goals.

4

Theme

Our libraries as trusted, active community spaces

Intended Impact

Recognise capacity and extend what's possible as a cultural resource in local communities



Our libraries have an increasingly important role as cultural spaces offering open, non-authoritarian and non-commercial public cultural space in the increasingly privatised urban environment of the capital city. Each library is a cultural hub, where users spend time and enjoy the library's different services as well as borrowing books and other materials. For many people public libraries are becoming a "living room in the city" as well as a location for self-directed learning. We will work to activate our spaces with innovative programmes, events and services that inspire learning and participation, encouraging people to use libraries in many different ways and at various life stages. We will strive to offer an array of cultural engagement and interactions to connect people with the world of information and ideas. Live music, poetry, art, dance, theatre, exhibitions, writing, and many more are all cultural activities that happen in our libraries. A strong underlying theme in all of our programming is the encouragement and development of readers and a reading culture. We will explore multiple ways of extending the connection between readers and books and between authors and readers.

Actions

We will co-ordinate an annual calendar of culture events and learning programmes where citizens can develop and flourish through shared experiences. Our library events will compliment national library initiatives such as through:

- Healthy Ireland @ Your Library
- Right to Read,
- Work Matters @ Your Library

We will present programmes and festivals reflecting on The Decade of Commemorations.

We will ensure that every child has an opportunity to be a reader and every child can become a library member. We will do this by developing a children's services strategy during the lifetime of this plan. We want all children from birth to experience the magic of reading and discovery that libraries offer. We will support whole families with their literacy and reading journey.

We will support local initiative and programmes and strive to be responsive to local interests and opportunities, cooperating with local, organisations and communities.

We will review opening hours in our libraries with a view to optimising public hours consistent with resources and local demand.

5

Theme Our People

Intended Impact
Develop the
capacity of
staff so that our
library network
is sustained and
enriched



Libraries are about people, the people that use them and the people that staff them. Our Library users tell us that the help and expertise of our staff is one of the most important aspects in their satisfaction with the service. We will ensure that our libraries are staffed with welcoming, well trained, reliable, flexible staff, capable of responding to the changing needs of citizens. We will do this by providing a supportive environment for staff that encourages creativity and innovation within our teams.

The success of our service depends on having staff with a ‘can do’ attitude who work alongside the customer and who embrace change. Our modern libraries require a rich range of knowledge and skills: the experience and knowledge of the professional librarian, digital and information technology expertise, teaching skills, and knowledge and experience of community engagement and development.

We want our staff to reflect the make-up of the communities they serve, to be inter-culturally competent and to use their skills, talents and interest for the wider benefit of customers and communities. We understand that it is vital that career development opportunities are provided to ensure staff grow and develop professionally.

Actions

We will work to secure the funding to recruit staff to maintain staff numbers required to deliver library services, recruiting staff with a rich range of strong skills and a ‘can do’ attitude that embraces change

We will foster a learning culture for individual and organisational improvement and provide continuing development opportunities for staff throughout their careers. In particular we will ensure that library staff have the necessary support and training in the use of the digital technologies and on line resources

We will develop workforce planning and talent management to ensure we have the best people to succeed, with a particular focus on developing leadership at all levels in the organisation to build the confidence of staff so they feel trusted to lead change.

6

Theme **Our friends and partners**

Intended Impact **Consolidate our partnership and collaborative work with organisations and initiatives**



We will achieve our vision with a strong commitment to collaboration and co-operation. We will develop partnerships across sectors and agencies, seeking others with similar aspirations and goals to extend the effective reach of our services. We will work to be worthwhile and expert partners across a range of shared endeavours, knowing that we can achieve more together with others than on our own. In forging these relationships and networks we will gain leverage to deliver more than we are able to separately, as well as access to ideas that complement our expertise. We will develop these partnerships within the City Council, with the wider community, and with agencies across regional, national and international networks so that we collaborate on cultural initiatives and engage with citizens to enhance the social, cultural and economic life of the city

Actions

We will partner with organisations in a strategic and sustainable manner to deliver national policies and programmes to a high standard while using our own local expertise.

We will work with a range of colleagues and partners to ensure that new Dublin City library projects, including the new City Library, achieve best practice in all areas and meet our users' growing expectations.

We will inspire communities to realise their creative potential through the Creative Ireland programme while ensuring that our libraries are active cultural centres, uniquely positioned to offer cultural developments and events that are more than just the traditional public reading by authors.

We will continue to support the national Library Management System (LMS) on an agency basis.

We will continue to work in partnership locally, nationally and Internationally to deliver programmes including Dublin UNESCO City of Literature programmes, Healthy Ireland @ your Library, Work Matters @ your Library and the Right to Read

1

The City Library at
Parnell Square

2

Tapping the Power
of Residencies

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The Dublin Festival
of History

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Making at the
Library

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Our Library
Spaces

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The Library Staff
Role 'You Have
Permission to Ask
Me'

7

Services to
Children

1

Focus Area The City Library at Parnell Square



In October 2018 a significant milestone was reached in the project with the submission of a planning application to An Bord Pleanála for the development. The achievement of this milestone is the culmination of a period of intensive engagement between the library team and the multidisciplinary design team led by Grafton Architects.

The project will deliver an 11,000 sq metre development of new and existing buildings and public realm on the north side of Parnell Square on the site of the former Colaiste Mhuire. The centre piece of the project will be a NEW CITY LIBRARY for Dublin. There will be a range of cultural facilities, including a music hub, a design space, an intercultural space an education centre, café and exhibition areas all connected by new high quality public plaza.

The project, guided by the themes of LEARN CREATE PARTICIPATE, is about transformation, not only through regeneration of the physical project area, but transformation opportunities for the people who use the library and the other facilities.

These new facilities will provide open public spaces for learning, culture and social communication. The spaces will be designed to inspire, excite, welcome and include. Visitors to the Cultural Quarter will enjoy a menu of opportunities, events and services on offer. There are seven key concepts or themes that describe the nature of the library.

1. Life-long Learning at the heart of the library.
2. An inspiring place for children, young adults and families
3. A civic meeting place and cultural hub
4. The StoryHouse: A space for contemporary culture and literature.
5. Supporting business and entrepreneurship
6. Forging relationships, connections and collaboration
7. A digital library for the 21st century

The PSCQ project links strongly to, and supports civic, national and EU level agendas around lifelong learning, digital literacy, social and cultural inclusion. The European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) recently issued a briefing paper on the new role of public libraries. They found that:

Public libraries are important gateways to knowledge and inclusion. The EU's 65,000 libraries have 100 million visitors - in many countries they are the most used cultural institution

Uniquely among public services, they provide open, non-authoritarian, non-commercial public cultural space.

They are increasingly recognised by urban planners as anchors for the high street, contributing to urban redevelopment and bringing life to deserted parts of the city.

Libraries have an economic value to their communities that can be measured. Canadian and North American libraries have calculated their Return on Investment (ROI). For every \$1 invested in them, libraries generated \$5.63 in counter value. They also calculated that library patrons annually received services worth \$500. These examples document impressively that public libraries can generate added value to the public funds that are spent on them.

The City Library in Numbers

- The Library will welcome 3000 visitors a day, 1 million visitors a year
- It will operate a 7 Day Service
- An 8,000 sq metre library as part of a 11,500 sq metre development
- 1000 seats for readers
- 150,000 items in the collection
- 200 Seat conference space
- 2 intimate performance spaces of 45 and 60 for spoken word and music.
- A range of meeting spaces for small groups of 2, for larger groups of 25 and upwards

Programme for delivery

Planning decision: May 2019

Completion of tender period: 2020

Completion of Construction: Early 2023

Fit -Out and opening: Autumn 2023

2

Focus Area Tapping the Power of Residencies



As far back as the 1990s we have explored the possibilities and opportunities offered by library based residencies to engage with library users. Facilitating residencies has allowed us to undertake the vital work of activating our collections, building partnerships, and address the pressing issues of our time in a lively, inventive way. While in the past books were the principal medium by which we helped people to visit other worlds, now we embrace everything from dance, food and play to digital media and cultural programming on the most provocative themes to engage our audiences.

From writers, readers, poets, artists, and more recently, historians and musicians, our active residency programmes have allowed us to work in partnership with ‘unusual friends’ providing an effective way of delivering positive outcomes for all of our users. There are reciprocal benefits in these programmes. Residents are provided with resources including space, time, and financial support to create works, investigate ideas, and experiment, as well as the opportunity to develop their practice by excavating the ideas contained within the library. It also gives them access to new audience while creating new bodies of work. Perhaps their most important contribution is their ability to surprise and delight our users and to encourage the general public to think about libraries as creative spaces.

By providing programming, demonstrations, and training with library users as well as our staff, all parties benefit. Staff members are enthusiastic and willing to promote the programmes, eager to learn new skills and ideas, and excited about working in collaboration with the residents. Our residents have delivered a diverse range of events, including writing workshops, art installations, theatre, dance, presentations and engagements with schools, families and local groups, allowing them to share their methods, their projects, and their inspiration with the community. Through blog posts and diverse public happenings our residents have helped to shine a light on the value, breadth, and accessibility of library collections while bringing them to a much wider audience.

We have measured the success of these programmes against our initial goals, including the high level of interest in the programmes offered and attendance at events, the range of positive comments made by library users, the level and frequency of engagement with communities, and positive stories of increased empowerment to explore and learn from the programmes.

DUBLIN CITY HISTORIANS IN RESIDENCE

In Spring 2017 we engaged a team of part-time Historians in Residence working with communities across the city under the auspices of the Decade of Commemorations. The historians work in the five administrative areas of Dublin City to make history and historical sources accessible and enjoyable for all. The residents work on all sorts of history events throughout the city including talks, walks, tours, discussions, history book clubs, blogs, exhibitions and more.

‘The single most important contribution I feel we have made individually and collectively is bringing history into places where it is normally absent. In my case, this has been lectures around Herbert Simms in working class inner-city communities, Gaelic Sunday talks in GAA clubhouses and our prison lecture series.’
Donal Fallon, Historian in Residence

“Developing a growing interest in our shared heritage with all ages and backgrounds across South Central, explaining National history through events that happened locally through talks, walks, re-enactments, exhibitions and functions.”
Cathy Scuffil, Historian in Residence South Central Area

DUBLIN UNESCO CITY OF LITERATURE - READERS IN RESIDENCE

The Reader-in-Residence programme is an innovative way of providing opportunities for positive engagement with libraries and reading for the children living in inner-city Dublin. Three experts in children’s literature were employed over the last two years using funding secured from the North East Inner City Initiative. The programme encourages reading for pleasure by introducing children to a wide variety of high-quality, age-appropriate books from a range of authors and genres.

The Readers’ role is to visit groups within their schools and chose exciting books and activities to introduce to the children and young people. Participants take part in library visits, receive a library membership card and participate in skills activities as part of the programme.

Many of the programme’s young readers have also had the opportunity to attend events with award winning authors and illustrators including Jeff Kinney, Dave Rudden, Andy Griffiths, Pamela Butchart, Korky Paul, Caroline Busher and Helena Duggan. In advance of these events the Readers introduce their groups to the author’s work and make the practical arrangements with the schools.

‘Reader-in-Residence is a very unique and special role, it has allowed me to work with hundreds of children, introducing them to a world of books they never knew existed. Discovering a love of reading is something that can happen at any stage in a person’s life, but discovering it at a young age is a gift you will carry throughout your life. I truly believe that the Reader-in-Residence Programme has helped many young people discover this love of books and reading. Seeing children squeal with joy when you tell them they are going to the library, their delight and pride in getting their own library card and watching their faces light up at a story, are what make my job so rewarding.’

Julianne Mooney Reader-in-Residence
(Primary Schools)

North East Inner City Project - THE DIGITAL SKILLS PROJECT.

Coding is an increasingly popular activity for children and young people. The Digital Skills Project was set up to provide a high quality coding programme in a library environment. Coder Dojo is a grassroots movement 'of free, volunteer-led, community-based computer programming clubs for young people.' A Project Co-ordinator, Joanne Dolan, was employed with funding from the Dublin North East Inner City Initiative to run the programme. On Saturdays, in Charleville Mall library, a Family Dojo provides sessions where children aged 7 to 12 can learn how to code, while family members (parents, siblings, etc.) are encouraged to make use of the library facilities. On Wednesdays, in the Central Library, teenagers, aged 13-17, are welcome to work on computer projects in a casual, social environment.

This programme was chosen to represent Irish libraries at Generation Code: Born at the Library, a Public Libraries 2020 initiative, hosted in the European Parliament which aims to showcase innovative digital projects in European libraries and to raise awareness of library services.

'What inspires me, particularly, about the approach, are the social networks forming among teen participants, the educational and professional aspirations developing in younger attendees, and the connectedness participants are beginning to show with the libraries providing the sessions'

Joanne Dolan, CoderDojo Coordinator

DUBLIN UNESCO CITY OF LITERATURE - WRITERS IN RESIDENCE

Declan Burke and Elizabeth Reapy, writers in residence have worked with library-based writing groups around the city, as well as doing public readings and working on their own new writing. Activities include free master classes in dialogue, readings for the public in Irish Writers Centre and sessions for writing groups in exploring approaches to poetry writing.

'There were many enjoyable aspects to the writer-in-residence role, some of them related to unexpected friendships that will survive long after I have left the position, some of them relating to realising exactly how wide and deep is the untapped pool of writing talent that exists within the framework of the Dublin City library writer groups. For my own part, the year spent as writer-in-residence served as a long overdue wake-up call, a reminder of the reason I first picked up a pen and began defacing perfectly good blank pages: the simple and pure joy – that simplest and purest of all joys – of putting words in their best order.'

Writer in Residence Declan Burke

DUBLIN CITY MUSICIAN IN RESIDENCE

Riona Sally Hartman is Dublin City Council's first Musician in Residence. She is a vocalist, composer, educator and bandleader who performs and composes in English and Irish. The Musician in Residence programme has the goal of offering a range of music engagement opportunities for members of the public to listen, play, perform and compose music in a structured supportive environment. The programme also offers valuable experiences in piloting music initiatives to inform programming at the City Library and Parnell Square Cultural Quarter. Aimed at all age groups but with a

particular focus on engaging with young adults and adults, the programme has offered taster ukulele workshops for all ages, lyric writing workshops aimed at young adults and adults, the formation of an adult choir who performed “Song for Suffrage” at the Dublin Festival of History, music listening parties aimed at adults who selected music from the Music Library resources to play and discuss and support for a newly formed young adult band

“Whenever people come together with the intention of making music, it will happen regardless of abilities.”

Ríona Sally Hartman, Musician in Residence

FUTURE RESIDENCY PLANS

Digital Champions/Makers in Residence

The popularity of creation through digital media is a defining characteristic of today’s younger generations. Young people are redefining creative works with the use of digital audio and video, and they are eager to learn and use all of the technological tools they can to exercise their creativity. During the lifetime of ‘Libraries Unlimited’ we will continue to work with residencies and other models to ensure that as many citizens as possible have the opportunity to engage creatively with digital media. We will meet the increasing requirement for provision of digital services by engaging a number of area based Digital Champions. Their role will be to help library users become familiar with the full range of digital technologies and promote their use. Multimedia production tools will be available for use by library staff as well as the public. This use will be supported by a maker in residence who will be tasked with cultivating a “hacker ethic” among library users and staff alike.

Readers-in-Residence:

We will expand the readers-in-residence project to continue current engagement and extend engagement to more schools, reaching each DCC area.

Youth worker/Community out-reach worker in residence

We will investigate the potential of engaging with youth and community practitioners to expand the reach of our services to those groups who may not see libraries as services for them, exploring areas such as Digital youth work and community outreach to engage with communities in homeless services, family hubs and direct provision.

3

Focus Area The Dublin Festival of History



In 2013 Dublin City Libraries launched the first Dublin Festival of History. The festival supports our overarching objective to preserve, share and promote the history and heritage of Dublin and Ireland and to encourage and facilitate historical research. The events aim to make history more accessible by offering a wide range of interesting history topics, presented by excellent communicators, giving an insight into a piece of history in an entertaining and informative way.

Since then the initiative has gone from strength to strength and it is now Ireland's biggest, free history festival. Over the last 6 years speakers have included Jung Chang, Alison Weir, Ian Kershaw, Tom Holland, Simon Schama, Peter Frankopan, Richard Evans, Charles Spencer, Hew Strachan, Peter Snow, Robert Harris, Janina Ramirez, Michael Palin and many more. The Festival showcases history from many different eras, genres and geographies: from international history to local history, from quizzes and maps, to topics as diverse as shipwrecks, poverty, street play, Georgian era shopping, and even Johnny Cash. It has gained a reputation for attracting best-selling Irish and international historians to Dublin as well as bringing Irish historians and their research to a wider audience, showcasing new writings and scholarship on a variety of history topics. The Festival also provides a platform for the City Council to highlight its work, with colleagues from archaeology; the Arts Office; Dublin City Gallery The Hugh Lane; the Mansion House; heritage services; Richmond Barracks; City Hall; 14 Henrietta Street, and the historians in residence all taking part in collaboration with library and archives staff.

4

Focus Area **Making at the** **Library**



We will work to develop maker spaces in our libraries. Maker spaces in public libraries offer users an opportunity to create things (either physical or virtual) using resources such as computers, audio and video capture and editing tools, laser and vinyl cutters, soldering guns, coding, robotics, 3-D printers as well as traditional crafts supplies such as sewing machines, Lego and art materials. In a library makerspace, people of varying ages can work together, alone, or with library staff on creative projects. They connect people to tools, technology, and social connections that they might not otherwise have access to. The goal is to allow everyone to learn through direct experimentation and from each other while inspiring an interest in science, technology, design, and lifelong learning

During the lifetime of the plan we will develop 3 new maker spaces in Coolock Library, Ballyfermot Library and a mobile maker van to allow engagement with schools, clubs and other community groups. The ultimate aim is that the activities in each library will grow and develop, reflecting the unique interests of each of the communities served.

Our Library maker spaces will be supported by digital residencies. (see residencies page) The aim of the programme will be to help library users and staff become familiar with the full range of digital technologies and promote their use.

5

Focus Area Our Library Spaces



Refurbishment projects at Ballyfermot and Kevin Street Libraries were completed between 2013 and 2018. The level of investment in these projects represents a stepping up in Dublin City Libraries' commitment to improving our spaces. Total investment in Ballyfermot came to €2.7m, while Kevin St has just been completed for €4m. What has been delivered with both of these projects are libraries which are equipped to provide the services expected by our users: increased space for public use; flexibility and improved availability of event spaces, whether through the provision of extra rooms at Ballyfermot or the installation of movable furniture at Kevin St; accessibility improvements; bright, modern design incorporating links to local communities; increased public access PC provision and self-service technology; and improved energy efficiency through heating system and glazing upgrades. These projects have also built on our organisational body of knowledge, providing an opportunity to learn from one project to the next, improving as we go.

The lessons learned from the Ballyfermot and Kevin Street Library projects are vital as we move into a period of significant investment both in the improvement of our existing branches through the refurbishment of Coolock, Finglas and Terenure but also the expansion of our branch network into Crumlin-Drimnagh and the North-Central city limits.

The refurbishment of Coolock Library draws specifically on the lessons learned from the Ballyfermot project – making the best use of large, open-plan, late-20th Century buildings, transforming dated, functional buildings into bright, flexible spaces where imagination can flourish. Ballyfermot and Coolock will be home to the first of our maker spaces - a collaborative work space for making, learning, exploring and sharing that uses high tech to no tech tools. These spaces are open to kids, adults, and entrepreneurs and have a variety of maker equipment including 3D printers, laser cutters, soldering irons and even sewing machines.

Our ability to make buildings conceived and built in another era usable today while conserving those historical elements that make those buildings unique has been honed through the refurbishments of Pembroke and Rathmines libraries and most recently with Kevin Street. The flexibility of the fit-out in Kevin Street Library along with the refurbishment work carried out on Drumcondra Library, will inform our work on all of our heritage buildings.

6

Focus Area **The Library Staff** **Role 'You Have** **Permission to Ask** **Me'**



The ability to take library services out into the community will require different competencies from those needed to serve customers at a counter. We expect that new skill areas will arise and that there will be a continuous need for refreshment, which will be vital to support customer access to services and ongoing innovation

Libraries are a familiar public facility, which have well-established roots in communities. People care about what happens in their library and library staff are proud of what they make happen by their constant engagement with the public on a day-to-day basis.

- We sustain physical collections in print and digital form for future generations
- We remove barriers to knowledge and preserve knowledge for future generations
- We open doors for enquiring minds at the heart of communities
- We help you develop a love of reading
- We help you find, understand and use the information that you need in your life
- We provide a free and welcoming local space that enables you to reflect, explore and have loads of fun as you relax and learn at your own pace and in your own way
- We encourage self-reliance, and a capacity to collaborate, communicate and solve problems

7

Focus Area Services to Children



During the lifetime of our previous development plan, we have programmed 2090 events for children, teenagers and families offering possibilities to 70,000 attendees across a variety of areas of interest while promoting the library space and resources.

The programmes ranged from visiting an exhibition, participating in a workshop, watching a theatrical performance, learning a new skill or hearing an inspirational speaker.

Dublin City Libraries partnered the Arts office, Science Foundation Ireland, Children's Books Ireland, Dublin Book Festival, to bring subjects alive for children, teenagers and their families.

The reading habit

Reading is a strong strand of library programming from the popular weekly story-time with finger rhymes and picture books to city wide reading campaign. Schools are invited to tours of the library, story times and author visits. City wide reading campaigns and Childrens' Book Festival are annual calendar events, celebrating the best in Irish writing and connecting authors with readers. This interaction is invaluable in exciting children to read, write and draw more. It's an important role for libraries also to support Irish local talent so Irish children and their lives are reflected in Irish writing.

During the summer months, Dublin City Libraries are buzzing with children signing up for reading cards for the National Summer Reading Campaign. Keeping children reading over the summer months ensures literacy standards don't slip and the reading campaign is a cornerstone of the 'Right to Read', national library policy. At the end of the summer, children and their families are invited into the library for a ceremony to celebrate their reading achievement.

An Exhibition: Anne Frank

Anne Frank's Diary of A young girl is probably one of the most well-known memoirs written by a teenager. The Anne Frank Trust developed an engaging multimedia exhibition which told Anne's Story and updated it to promote messages of tolerance and respect for others. The exhibition ran for two months in Pearse Street Library, and was hugely popular with 118 schools from Dublin area visiting Pearse Street Library over the period. Each visit involved a guided tour followed by a viewing of Anne Frank Story. The children found it powerful and emotive and brought the story to life for the children. One pupil from a gaelscoil said – "Is breá liom tú, tá tú mo role-model."

Culture and Arts for children:

The Children's Arts in Libraries Programme is a unique partnership between the libraries and arts office in Dublin City Council to bring quality programmes in the arts to children. Libraries are hives of activity for children with workshops on writing stories, making art, creating music and stop animation.. Over the years, children saw high quality theatre performances from Branar Theatre, Púca Puppets, Bombinate Theatre and Theatre Lovett. They created work with musicians, artists, writers and dancers. This wonderful dimension to libraries as spaces where arts are explored will continue with emerging 'creative hubs' in particular areas. The first creative hub has begun in Ballyfermot library where 4 schools are involved in learning about dance and working with dance choreographer, Maria Nilson Waller in Winter 2018 / Spring 2019. Other local cultural partners are also involved in the hub such as Kylemore College of Music, Family Base, Ballyfermot / Chapelizod Partnership and Dublin City Arts and Community Office.

Science:

Every year we develop a programme of events during Science Week and Engineers Week. The aim is to encourage children to develop an interest in the field of science and STEM subjects. Programmes include practical workshops, coding, lego workshops and talks by experts in many fields. Dublin City Libraries was shortlisted for a Chambers award in 2012 for its science programme. Science is all around us. In 2014, the Science Foundation of Ireland, brought NASA astronaut Greg 'Box' Johnson to Ballyfermot library. Johnson served on two space flights and has been to the International Space Station. Asked did he feel underwhelmed having landed back on earth, he said "Gosh no, I haven't been to Australia yet and I'd love to play guitar in a rock band, what could be more cool than that". Listening to Johnson speak was inspirational with a message 'you can achieve this just like I did. It just takes hard work.'



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

Leabharlann
Library

