

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2016-2017

PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY, COMMUNITIES AND PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: 5TH SEPTEMBER 2016

**REPORT OF:
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND
LIFELONG LEARNING**

Agenda Item No. 8

**CUSTOMER FEEDBACK ON RHONDDA
CYNON TAF'S MOBILE LIBRARY
SERVICE**

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of the report is to provide the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee with the results of the survey undertaken with users of the Mobile Libraries.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note the content of the report;
- 2.2 Consider whether they wish to scrutinise in greater depth any matters contained in the report;
- 2.3 Where deemed appropriate, propose actions for improvement and report these to cabinet for consideration.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Rhondda Cynon Taf's Library Service is required to conduct a survey of customers every three years as part of the Welsh Public Library Standards. This survey has traditionally focussed on customers of the static libraries. Due to the changes introduced to the service since June 2014 and the widespread public consultation undertaken at that time and again in 2015/16, the customer satisfaction survey was postponed (with Welsh Government approval) to May 2016 to allow the service to better assess the impact on customers of the changes.
- 3.2 At the meeting of the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee on 15th February 2016, it was agreed that the views of mobile library customers would also be gathered as

changes had been introduced over the past two years to mobile library provision (specifically the reduction from 4 to 3 mobile vehicles and a reduction in the number of mobile stops from 490 to 413). This would enable Members of the Scrutiny Committee and the Library Service to assess whether the Mobile Service continued to meet the needs of customers and/or whether any changes needed to be considered taking account of the reduced budget now available to the service.

- 3.3 A customer satisfaction survey of mobile library customers was conducted between 4th July and 30th July 2016.
- 3.4 For information, a customer satisfaction survey of children and young people who use static libraries is due to take place between 26th September and 10th October 2016. It was postponed to accommodate the consultations on newspapers and magazines, and opening hours which took place prior to the implementation of the most recent service change on 1st June 2016 which enabled customers to identify which newspapers and/or magazines they wished to retain in their local library and their preferred opening hours under the new model.

4. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

- 4.1 The results of the Mobile Library Customer Satisfaction Survey produced by the Council's Consultation Team can be seen at Appendix 1.
- 4.2 The survey was returned by 180 customers, the majority of whom (98%) used the short-stop service.¹ 98% of these customers use the service every fortnight and 96% use the same stop every time.
- 4.3 The main reasons identified for using the service is that it is convenient (60%) or that people find it difficult to reach a branch library (23%). A small number of respondents indicated they preferred it to a branch library (7%). 16% of mobile customers indicated that they also visit a branch library but the majority (84%) only use the mobile service.
- 4.4 A high proportion (77%) of mobile library customers have been library members for over 5 years which may not be surprising when the age range of respondents is considered as it is a service that is used predominantly by older residents. The average age of those respondents who indicated their age was 74. The majority of respondents were retired (80%) while 9% indicated they suffered from a long-term illness or disability. Comments included on the survey by respondents indicate how vital the service is to them.

'This service is important to us.'

¹ A short stop is a mobile library stop of between 10 and 20 minutes. A long stop lasts for 3 hours and are evenings and Saturdays only.

'This is an invaluable service, especially since our local library closed and the nearest one since then has no car park. I have particularly appreciated being able to reserve books online and then collect them from the van.'

'It would be a sad loss to the community for it to be stopped.'

'The library service mobile is an excellent service with the staff very helpful. It goes a long way in compensating for the loss of Ynyshir library.'

'Please let it continue. It is a lifeline.'

- 4.5 Overall satisfaction rates with the service is very good and the staff who deliver the service were highly praised by respondents. 97% thought the service was very good (83%) or good (14%) with 3% recording it as adequate. Customer care received an overall rating of 90% very good and 9% good while customer comments referred to the 'excellent' service provided by the mobile librarians.

- 4.6 Areas of concern for some customers was the length of the stop (rated as poor by 2% of respondents) while 1% felt the choice of books on the mobile library was poor. In comparison the 87% of respondents thought the choice of books was very good or good and 90% were happy with the length of stop. Several respondents indicated that the service may not be as well publicised as it could be. Suggestions for improvement included the following:

'Audio books could be renewed more often.'

'A mobile library with disabled access would be great ... many people are totally unaware of this excellent service available to them and so you need to publicise this and display times and places where the mobile library can be accessed.'²

'It is not clear on the website which areas are covered by various mobiles e.g. Cynon 1 and Cynon 2. Perhaps some flyers could be left in local shops/community centres etc indicating which mobile covers the areas, when and where.'

'I would like to see more family oriented CDs and books stocked.'

'Preferably it would be great to have this service every week.'

5. PROPOSED ACTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- 5.1 There are opportunities for promoting the service further to attract new customers in particular through the Library Service's partnership with

² All mobile libraries have disabled lifts to ensure that there is wheelchair access. It is evident that this respondent was not aware of this facility.

Communities' First and Housing Associations and also through local Elected Members who have indicated their readiness to distribute leaflets to shops in their local areas.

- 5.2 Customers who have access to the internet at home need to be made more aware of the fact that they can order books, CDs etc online and pick them up from the mobile library when it is in their area. This would vastly improve the choice of books and resources they can access. The service would look at ways in which this information could be provided to customers with easy-to-use instructions on how to order materials online.
- 5.3 There is a very low level of dissatisfaction with the length of the stops. The Council has approved a budget to support a fortnightly mobile library service and this is fully utilised in delivering the existing schedule of stops. Should any stops be lengthened this will necessarily lead to a reduction in the total number of stops available and potentially have an adverse effect on more customers.
- 5.4 Bearing in mind the average age range of customers and the percentage who have indicated a disability, having vehicles with disabled access is vital. All mobile libraries have wheelchair access and a poster should be permanently displayed on the door of each vehicle to highlight this. Staff will be advised to draw attention to this information as appropriate.

6. CONCLUSION

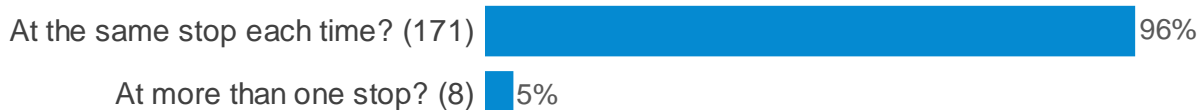
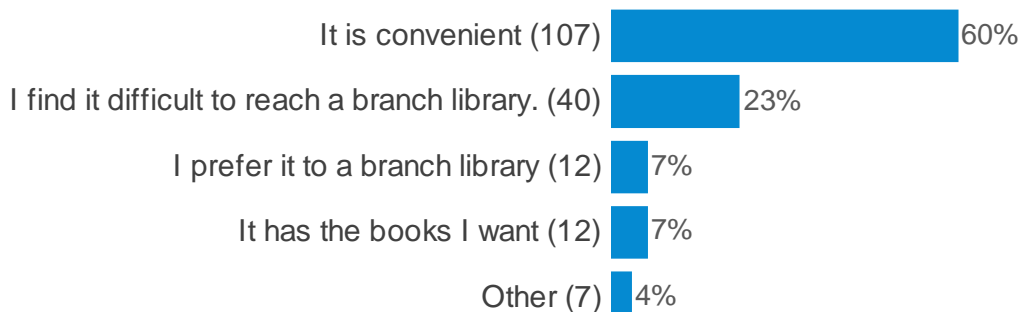
- 6.1 The past two years has seen major changes to the Library Service in Rhondda Cynon Taf, including the mobile library service. It is pleasing therefore to note that customer satisfaction with the mobile library service is very high and that no major issues of concern have been raised by customers in this survey. Their appreciation of the quality of service and customer care provided by the staff is clear in their responses and the library staff are to be commended for their continued commitment to delivering the best possible service to residents.
- 6.2 The customer feedback has identified a number of areas that will help to further improve the current mobile library service provision. It is for the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee to consider the customer feedback, the proposed actions for improvement and, as it deems appropriate, recommend next steps to Cabinet.

Library Satisfaction Survey 2016

Library Satisfaction Survey 2016

This report was generated on 12/08/16. Overall 180 respondents completed this questionnaire. The report has been filtered to show the responses for 'All Respondents'.

The following charts are restricted to the top 12 codes. Lists are restricted to the most recent 100 rows.

Which mobile service do you use?**On average, how often do you visit this library? (please tick one box)****Have you used this mobile library:****Why do you choose to use the mobile library?**

Library Satisfaction Survey 2016

Please state:

Also find it difficult to reach branch library

Find it difficult to reach a branch library

I prefer it to a branch library

Because of shift work the service provided suits me.

We do not have a branch library and with a disabled husband it is not easy to get to the town librar

I live in Rhigos, the main library is in Aberdare so i find it a lot easier to use.

My branch library was closed and the mobile library was introduced as an alternative.

There is NO branch library since they closed it

Helpful librarian

Due to physical problems I am virtually housebound

RCT closed first choice Taffs Well library then second choice Nantgarw (within the college)

I used the service on behalf of my parents, i use it now.

Local library has closed down.

The librarians are so pleasant very helpful.

IT ALSO HAS THE BOOKS I WANT

I PREFER IT TO A BRANCH LIBRARY

BECAUSE THE LOCAL LIBRARY WAS CLOSED DOWN

Hope the fortnightly service will continue

There is no branch library in Ynysybwl and it would be to heavy to carry books from Pontypridd.

It is convenient as I do not have transport and books are heavy to carry.

There is no library near me, I can't walk far as I have oesteoathritis in legs and I cannot drive

No other option left open for us.

Also the driver of the library van picks my books for me

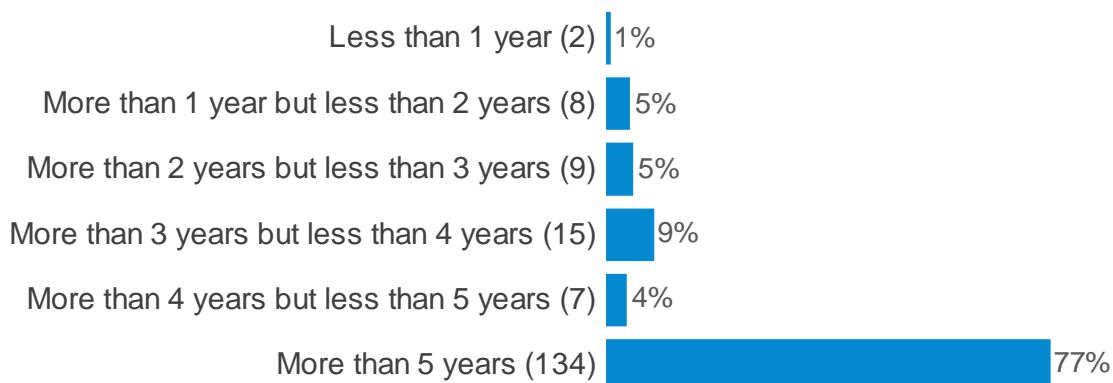
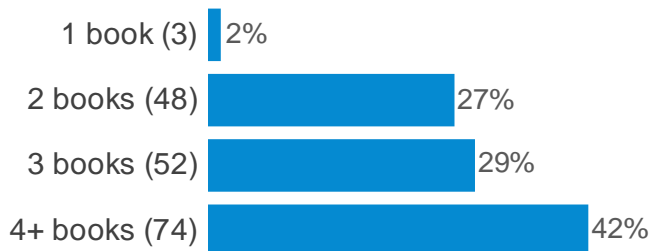
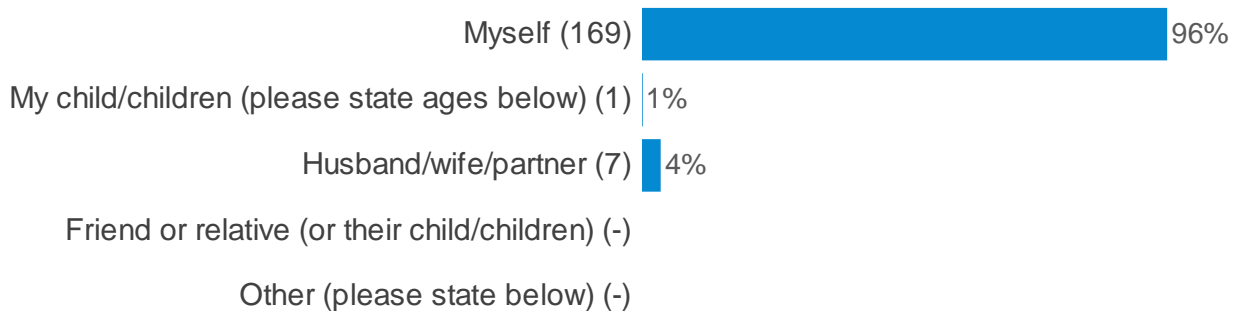
The librarian is so helpful and goes out of his way to help.

Do you use a branch library as well?

Yes (28)  16%

No (147)  84%

Library Satisfaction Survey 2016

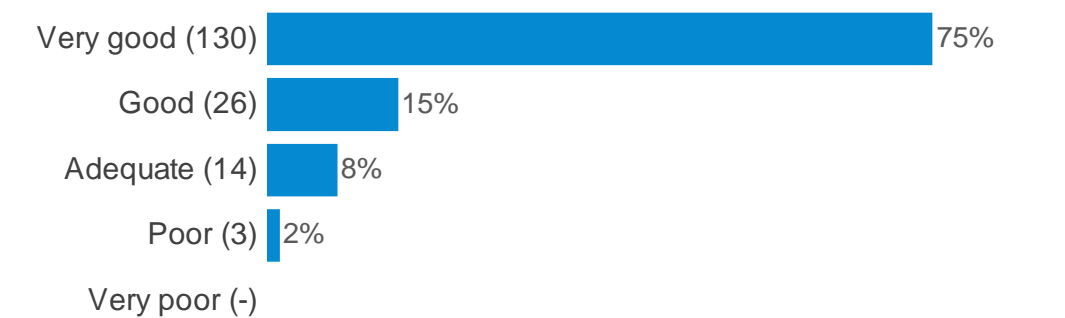
How long have you been a library member?**How many books do you usually take out at each visit to this mobile library?****Who have you taken out books for today?**

Library Satisfaction Survey 2016

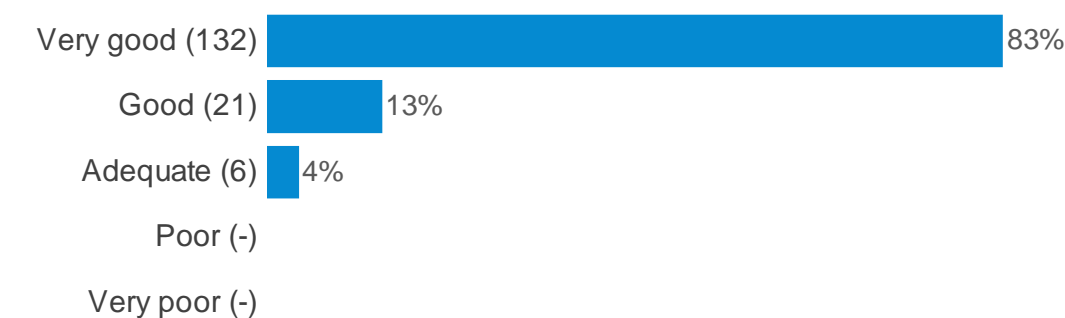
other:

I joined the Pontypridd library when I was 7 years old. I am now almost 75. I would be lost without
Also wife
husband
husband
husband
But some books are also read by my husband and some i recommened to others.
ALSO FOR A FRIEND/RELATIVE
HUSBAND/WIFE/PARTNER
Partner
My husband likes to use the talking books as he has trouble with his eyesight.
husband
wife
Sometimes I take books fo rmy grand children when they are on School holidays

What do you think of this library?
(Please tick one box) (Length of stop)

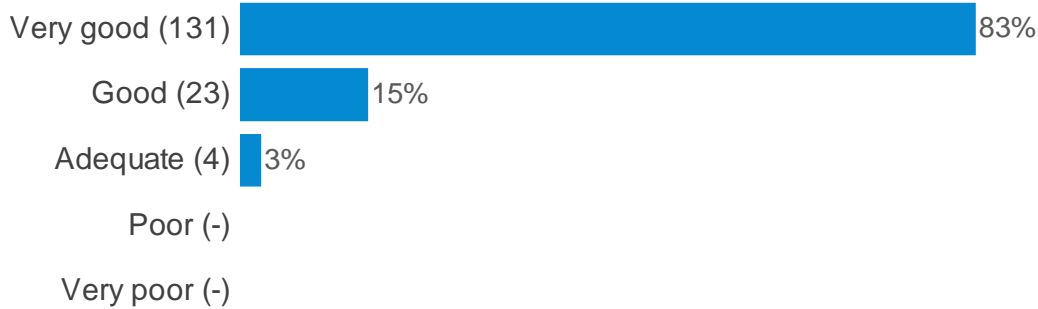


What do you think of this library?
(Please tick one box) (Location of stop)



Library Satisfaction Survey 2016

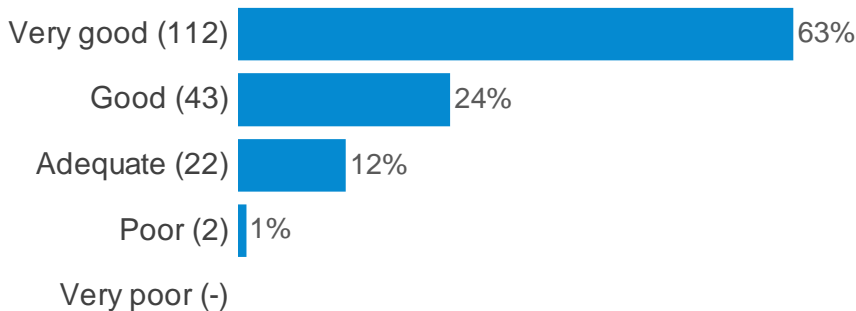
What do you think of this library? (Please tick one box) (Condition of mobile library)



What do you think of this library? (Please tick one box) (Standard of customer care)

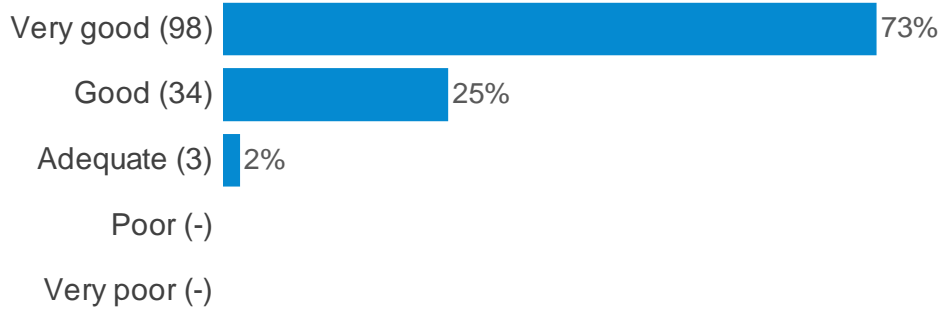


What do you think of the items in this library? (Please tick one box) (Choice)

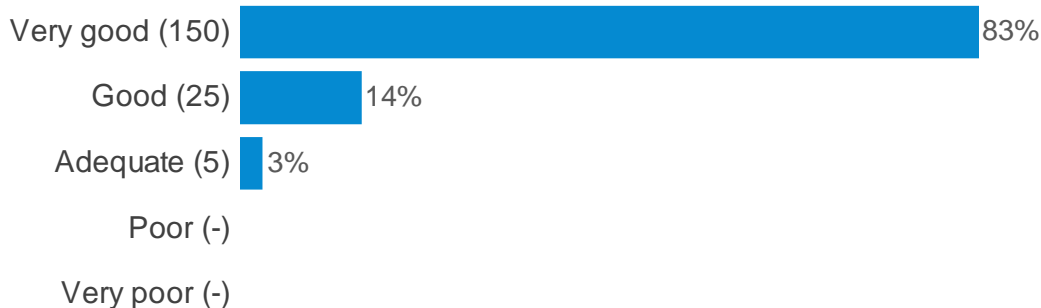


Library Satisfaction Survey 2016

What do you think of the items in this library? (Please tick one box) (Physical condition)



Taking everything into account, what do you think of this library? (Please tick one box)



Postcode: (Please write in)

CF42 5N	CF43 3D	CF43 3L	CF37 4D	CF44 0R	CF44 0E
CF42 5E	CF40 2U	CF43 3D	CF37 4R	CF45 4D	CF39 0N
CF40 1L	CF43 4S	CF40 1N	CF37 3L	CF45 3D	CF39 0N
CF41 7J	CF43 4S	CF43 3A	CF45 3T	CF45 4L	CF39 0N
CF42 6L	CF43 4B	CF37 3J	CF37 3L	CF45 3D	CF39 0N
CF40 1H	CF40 2P	CF37 3J	CF37 3N	CF44 9B	CF39 0N
CF40 1Q	CF43 4D	CF40 1N	CF37 3N	CF44 9A	CF39 9H
CF41 7E	CF43 4D	CF40 1N	CF44 0B	CF44 9H	CF39 9H
CF40 1Q	CF43 4D	CF41 7S	CF37 3P	CF44 0C	CF39 9A
CF42 6L	CF41 7A	CF43 3N	CF44 0J	CF40 2P	CF39 9A
CF40 1P	CF43 4D	CF43 3N	CF37 3P	CF39 0P	
CF41 7B	CF40 2S	CF43 3L	CF44 0J	CF39 0P	
CF15 7P	CF42 5S	CF43 3L	CF37 3P	CF37 5H	
CF41 7N	CF15 7P	CF43 3L	CF44 0U	CF45 4P	
CF40 2P	CF40 2B	CF37 4L	CF44 8L	CF39 0P	
CF15 7Q	CF39 0N	CF39 0P	CF44 7H	CF15 7S	
CF15 7Q	CF40 1L	CF37 4A	CF44 9N	CF40 1D	
CF40 2P	CF44 0E	CF39 0P	CF44 0T	CF44 0E	

Library Satisfaction Survey 2016

Postcode: (Please write in) (Your age: (Please write in, e.g. 52))

56	71	69
61	70	61
83	72	55
67	71	70
63	74	71
89	74	73
69	84	80
59	80	77
83	65	83
75	84	79
66	87	91
87	84	86
63	72	70
72	85	70
70	70	80
64	77	79
80	51	69
72	78	71
74	77	
70	90	
63	81	
82	75	
72	85	
69	88	
91	79	
62	83	
85	84	
52	54	
68	75	
82	57	
61	65	
93	74	
92	66	
67	79	
94	76	
n/a	72	
96	77	
67	77	
80	77	
68	63	
61	82	

Library Satisfaction Survey 2016

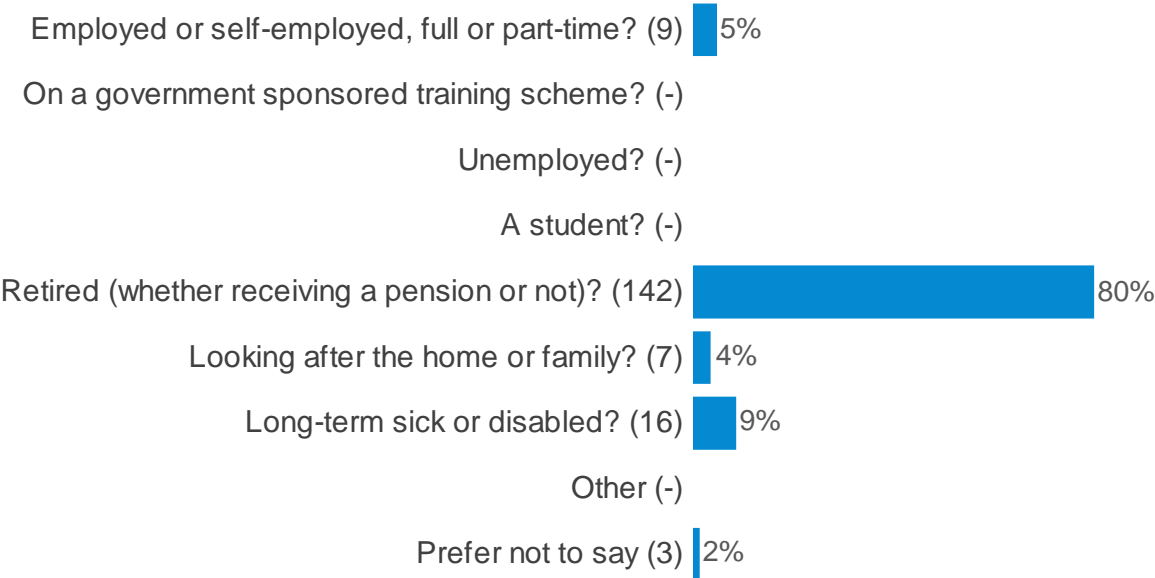
Are you: (Please tick one box)



Do you speak Welsh: (Please tick one box)



Are you currently: (Please tick one box)

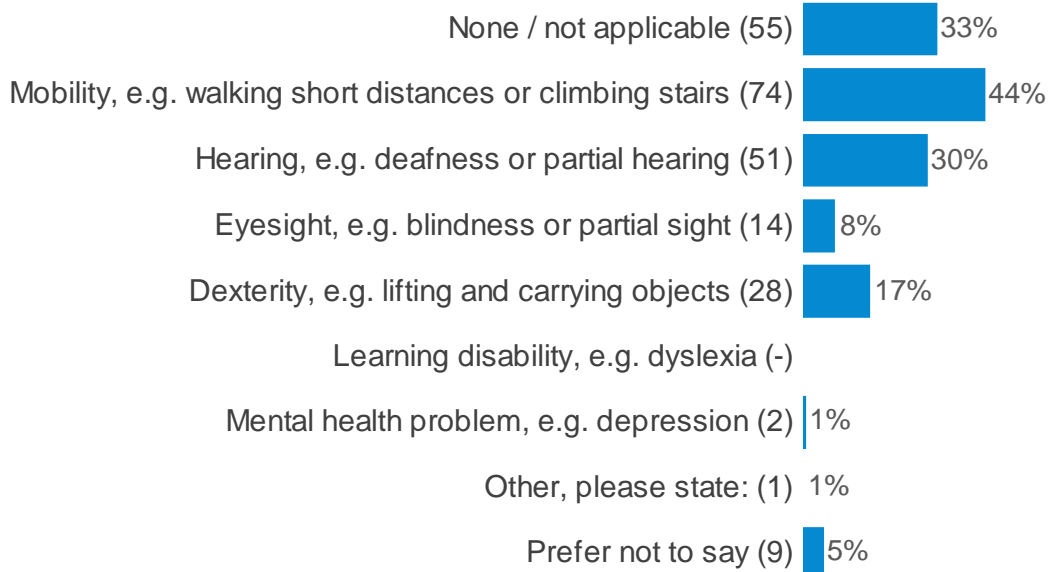


Other, please state:

- Retired
- I can't walk up hills
- Also retired
- recovering from heart op

Library Satisfaction Survey 2016

Please indicate if you consider yourself to have any of the following disabilities / conditions: (Please tick any that apply)



Other, please state:

Epilepsy - Diverticulitis

my husband has difficulty walking

diabetic arthritis

angina

asthma

Very short sighted

depend on audio books

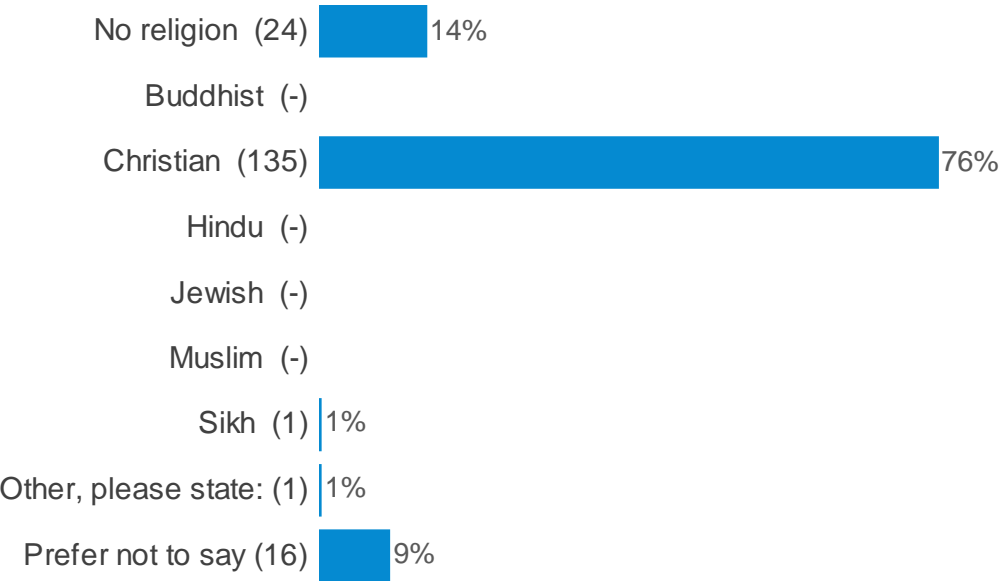
fractured both wrists. Two prolapsed discs lower back and awaiting operation on both wrists.

age

cronic back strain

Library Satisfaction Survey 2016

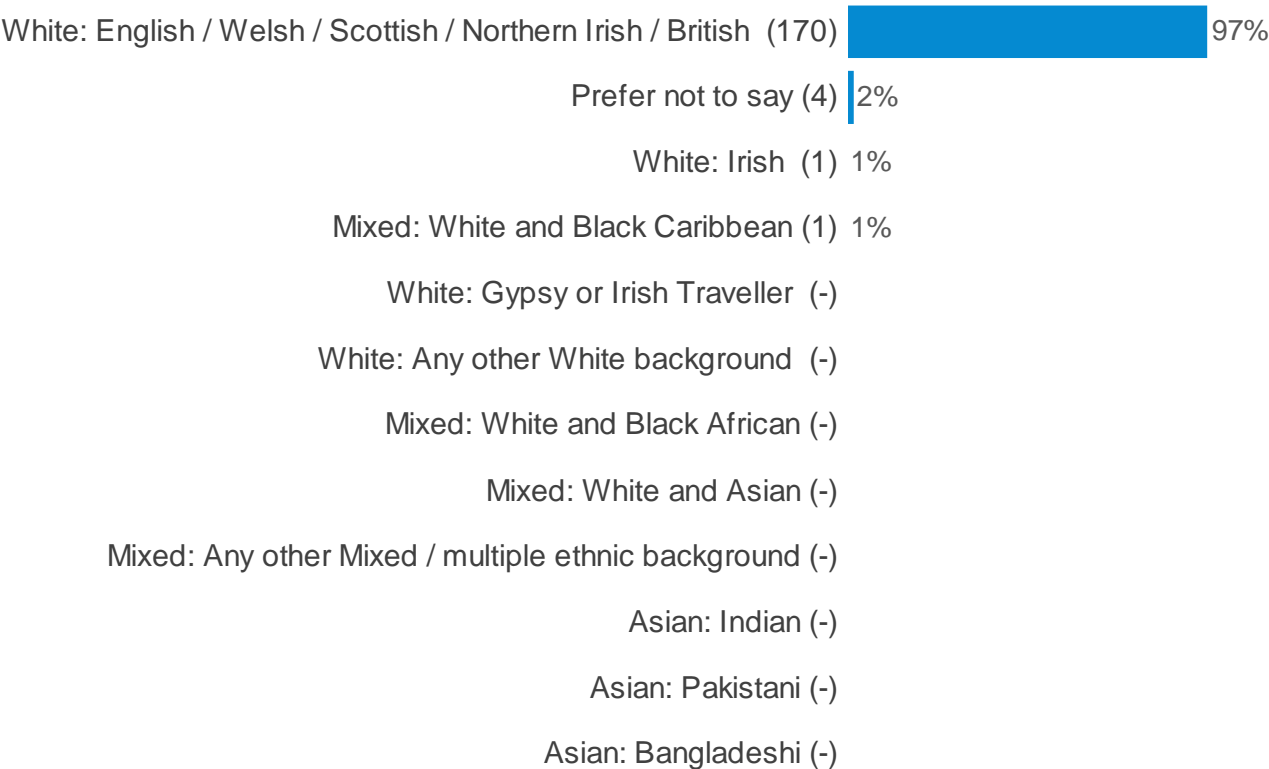
What is your religion? (Please tick one box)



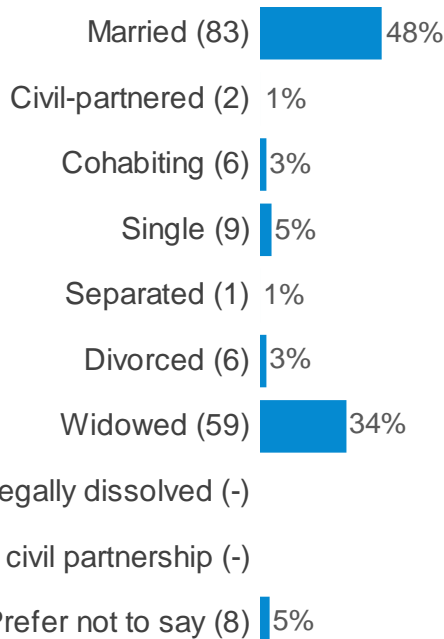
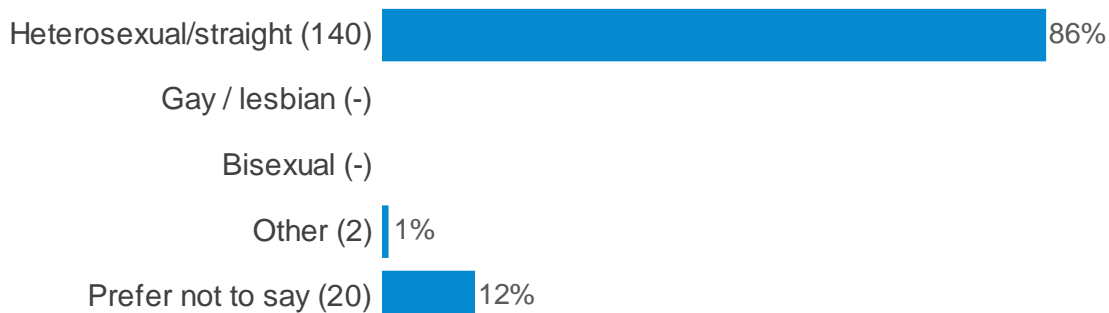
Other, please state:

- Pagan
- Catholic
- spiritualist
- Spiritualist

What is your ethnic group? (Please tick one box)



Library Satisfaction Survey 2016

What are your living arrangements? (Please tick one box)**Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself? (Please tick one box)****If you have any comments about the library or suggestions for improvement, please write them in the space below:**

I enjoy the convenience of the mobile library with it's flexibility. I like having a chat with the operatives and look forward to their visit. I think more people would use the service and enjoy it once introduced to the facility and availability. The service is valued and must continue.

The only downside is if anyone is sick or on holiday etc there is no cover. Very often I have had to wait a month for books

This library service is very much appreciated by me as you carry large print books. Thanks

This is an invaluable service, especially since our local library closed and the nearest one since then has no car park. I have particularly appreciated being able to reserve books online and then collect them from the 'van'. Thank you.

Always found the librarians pleaseant and very helpful. The bus always clean and tidy.

Not in alphabetical order sometimes, only complaint. Staff very helpful.

Library Satisfaction Survey 2016

If you have any comments about the library or suggestions for improvement, please write them in the space below:

I cannot use this mobile since the change of days as I am not available on Monday mornings. Also the books are not changed on the mobile often enough.

This is a very good service although I can get about at present who knows when I won't be able to. They are very kind to me the librarians on the van. Long may it prosper. How can you improve on what to me is perfect in my opinion. PS good choice of books especially big print.

It is a pleasure to use the mobile library as the service is so reliable, the choice of books is first class and the librarian is very helpful, knowledgeable and well informed. Nothing is too much trouble!! Great service for people who are virtually housebound.!

The mobile library is a very valuable service. It would be a tragedy to lose it. It should be seen in the light of so many branch closures but also as outreach to those who may not be used to using library services.

Audio books could be renewed more often.

The seeming reduction in thrillers, crime and drama novels in big print to make way for an increase in audio books etc has meant that we have much less choice in our normal reading matter.

the librarian is really helpful and does her best to find the sort of books i prefer. She will also try to order a book when requested and also suggests recommended reading.

i would be devastated if the mobile service stopped. The librarians are always very pleasant and helpful.

I am and have been very happy with the library and staff.

This mobile library is nanned by excellent and caring staff. Without this service I would be unable to get the books which i find invaluable to myself. It relieves the boredom when living alone please keep it up.

I am very happy with my mobile library service and the librarian is very helpful and so is the relief driver when he is on holiday.

The mobile library is a godsend for the disabled or housebound and importantly for those who are caring for the elderly or disabled. Without regular access to books life would be less enjoyable. A mobile library with disabled access would be great. However our mobile librarian is excellent at recommending or suggesting reading material for my husband and he is a very pleasant and courteous man. Thanks to driver I am able to order books which have been newly acquired by the library service as we have no really up to date bookshops in Aberdare. But many people are totally unaware of this excellent service available to them and so you need to publicise this and display times and places where the mobile library can be accessed.

Driver is very pleasant he always listens to what you say and he is very helpful.

I find the mobile library enables me to borrow books. I would not find the time to get to my local library. The staff are always helpful and pleasant. I feel this service is of vital importance to those people who are unable to access their local library.

A very helpful and friendly service.

Being retired and living in a rural area I find the mobile library service a great convenience and a prompt to continue enjoying books. The rotation of stock of books is good and the librarian is always helpful and a credit to the service.

rydw i'n derbyn llyfrau pob pythrfnos ac yn hapus gan y ddarpariaeth. Os bydd eisiau rhyw awdur arbennig arraf mae'n llyfrgellydd yn gwneud ymdrech i ar gael. Rwy'n hapus iawn a'r ddarparaeath.

I only use the Mountain Ash library once a month when i go there to have my little dog groomed. I give the book to my mobile librarian and he returns it for me. So i am quite happy with my mobile library. The librarian will get me any book i particularly want to read.

A great service with very knowledgeable and friendly staff.

The librarian in charge of the mobile libraries are especially thoughtful and helpful.

Library Satisfaction Survey 2016

If you have any comments about the library or suggestions for improvement, please write them in the space below:

Happy with everything.

I find the mobile library very convenient and satisfactory, also the staff very very helpful and polite could not wish for better, thank you for your services.

Taffs Well closed and Nantgarw closed so I have to use the mobile library.

The day and time has been changed from a Wednesday to a Thursday, this is less suitable for me.

Since the closure of two local libraries I rely on the mobile library service to select and order books and also to collect recycling bags for myself and an elderly neighbour.

This is an excellent service. Please do not stop it.

It is not clear on the website which areas are covered by various mobiles eg. Cynon 1 and Cynon 2. Perhaps some flyers could be left in local shops/community centres etc. indicating which mobile covers the area, when and where. It is very difficult for the elderly to get books from Pontypridd Library as there is no bus service outside and many find it impossible to carry books to the bus station. Other than that it requires two bus journeys to access any other libraries. The mobile service is a vital resource and should be promoted more widely.

I find this service invaluable and certainly improves my quality of life. I find the Library Assistant (Tom) very helpful and considerate.

This is an invaluable service for the elderly, housebound and handicapped. Tom Owen is always on time, always pleasant, most helpful, never fails to have searched for suitable books, and we look forward to his fortnightly visit. When Mr Owen is away unwell Donna too is always willing to help us in every way. This service is important to us.

I have not answered the questions on the last four pages as I think they are irrelevant.

The mobile library is a godsend for me because I can't get about easily on my own due to breathing problems. I love reading and I can choose my own books and I must add that the attendants on the library bus are so helpful.

Quite satisfied with present service.

No comments only to say the mobile library is convenient for me as I suffer from anxiety and won't go to the library places to get books but as they deliver where I live it is really good.

The mobile library provides an excellent service and long may it continue!

My sexuality has no bearing on my borrowing of books.

The length of time the library has allocated is not adequate. Parking issues can result in a lengthy walk, this obviously reduces the time to choose a book - no time to browse and select. Previously a longer time was allocated to each stop and was far better than the present system.

I find it very difficult because of my walking to get to the mobile van and choose a book in the short time they are allocated for Griffiths St. They park at 11am and they have to leave at 20 mins past!! Excellent girls on the van but they are allocated the time and have to be in the next stop. at 11.25am.

More range of audio books.

More turnover of books.

Lae'r gwasanaeth yn fendieth.

NOT ALWAYS A GOOD CHOICE OF BOOKS THAT I LIKE

Driver does her very best to provide the service we require.

WHY IS THIS QUALITY PAPER USED FOR THIS KIND SURVEY, MONEY COULD BE SAVED IF A LOWER GRADE OF PAPER WAS USED IN ALL DEPARTMENTS

RCT COULD SAVE MONEY IF A CHEAPER GRADE OF PAPER WAS USED FOR THIS KIND OF SURVEY AND PROBABLY IN ALL OTHER DEPARTMENTS TOO

I would like to see more family oriented CDs and books stocked.

Library Satisfaction Survey 2016

If you have any comments about the library or suggestions for improvement, please write them in the space below:

I find this library very convenient and the librarian is very helpful. Good choice of books although I would like to see more books on spiritualism.

Very pleased with the library and look forward to the fortnightly visit.

I have only recently moved to present address and was delighted when my neighbour told me about the mobile library service. The service provided is excellent in every way - I cannot fault it.

Preferably it would be great to have this service every week. It would be a sad loss to the community for it to be stopped.

Our librarian is very helpful in getting the books we ask for.

Mobile libraries are a crucial part of communities especially where library buildings have been closed down.

Monday had been the day of the library van calling. It now calls on Thursday which is the most inconvenient day for me.

Excellent service

An excellent service, well staffed, knows books, keen to help and courteous, informative and always on time

All of the librarians have been good over the forty odd years I've used the service. But the man now goes over and above his job. Excellent.

Bizarre questions on race, religion and gender. Mobile unit very handy - service excellent.

Staff extremely helpful.

I am normal

I appreciate the service. I have always been a reader (our family too) I don't understand why more people don't make use of the library van when it is on their doorstep. Does it need promoting more? Something to bring the young people and families.

Does not need improvement. Librarian always helpful and will always try to get whatever reading material has been asked for.

Very good overall no need to change anything

The library service (mobile) is an excellent service with the staff very helpful. It goes a long way in compensating for the loss of Ynyshir library.

Hope this service will not be taken away as it means a lot to people not so mobile as used to be.

Not enough time for Victoria to change her stock.

I have complete confidence in the librarians, and hope very much mobile libraries will continue for years to come.

Should include the word excellent in the survey. I find my experience excellent.

I am a new member of the mobile library but I find it excellent and the staff so helpful and considerate. As I can only visit branch libraries when taken I find this service so good. Please let it continue. It is a life line.