

## **Section A: Background and Context**

### **A1: Aims of the policy**

This collection development policy sets out the principles by which Oldham Libraries stock should be acquired, managed and made available for the benefit of Oldham residents, within the budget available.

### **A2: Corporate strategic priorities**

Oldham Libraries contribute to the delivery of the Oldham Plan to create:

- Great place to live
- Healthier, happier lives
- Green and growing

### **A3: Library Service Mission and Objectives**

The vision of Oldham Heritage, Libraries and Arts (HLA) is to:

*make a positive difference to people's lives by connecting them to high-quality information and creative experiences.*

Our 11 objectives are to deliver a service that:

1. Raises literacy levels through inspiring a passion for reading, spoken word, writing, drama, theatre and the arts.
2. Inspires and develops audiences through encounters with our collections - collecting, preserving, curating and making accessible Oldham's collections for present and future generations.
3. Delivers a diverse range of participatory, co-produced, fun, creative and cultural experiences, reflecting the heritage and identity of our local area.
4. Ensures that learning remains at the heart of everything we do – providing relevant, accessible, inclusive high-quality services which encourage curiosity, fun, exploration and a sense of wonder.
5. Provides equal opportunities for all to access a range of Information and Digital learning resources and develop digital skills.

6. Works with local businesses and creatives to develop and explore funding and partnership opportunities.
7. Inspires and supports people to improve their health and wellbeing.
8. Reaches out to those in the community that are vulnerable, isolated or hard to reach and welcomes individuals and organisations into our spaces.
9. Provides a welcoming and excellent customer service by skilled, knowledgeable, and happy staff.
10. Raises the profile of our services through effective marketing and advocacy, highlighting the wider benefits and impact of heritage, libraries and arts to stakeholders.
11. Ensures we are environmentally responsible, and that we develop, embed and celebrate sustainable practices.

We deliver the Libraries Connected Universal Offers:

- Creativity and Culture
- Health and Wellbeing
- Information and Digital
- Reading
- Alongside the Children's Promise and the Vision and Print Impaired People's Promise

## **Section B: Key Principles**

### **B1:**

All stock is purchased and managed as a borough wide resource

Stock management is based on resident priorities, supports diverse community needs and encourages library use.

Budget is allocated to best meet community needs and achieve operational efficiency and cost effectiveness.

We use our Library Management System to extract data with which to make decisions about the selection, management and evaluation of stock.

Stock rotation is used to maximise use and lifespan of stock.

We work with Greater Manchester Libraries to make a wider range of materials available through our shared Library Management System.

All HLA Team Leaders have a responsibility to ensure the development and effective implementation of the Collection Development Policy.

All HLA colleagues have a responsibility to support stock management by, for example, identifying items in poor condition and by being responsive to stock management tasks.

The Collection Development Policy will be reviewed annually.

## **B2: Scope**

This stock policy will cover the following:

- How we select stock for our libraries
- How we reflect the needs of our communities
- How we promote and maintain our stock
- How we measure our stock performance

Our approach is different from that of a bookshop - we aim to provide access to backlists, as well as recent titles, and to provide an inclusive and representative selection of titles that meets the needs of the communities we serve. We review our selection processes regularly to make sure they are working well, and love to receive customer suggestions via the form on our online catalogue.

This policy is not a fixed document – it will change and adapt to best serve our communities needs.

## **B3: Approach**

Oldham Heritage, Libraries and Arts operate 12 libraries across the borough.

For the purposes of collection development, we organise our libraries in tiers, based on the size and opening hours of the library. These are as follows:

Tier A – Oldham Library

Tier B – Chadderton, Crompton, Failsworth, Lees and Uppermill, Royton

Tier C Fitton Hill, Greenfield, Limehurst, Northmoor, Royton and Delph (Community run library)

Our main suppliers of Adult Fiction, Adult Non-Fiction, Junior Fiction and Junior Non-Fiction work to supplier selection specifications based on these tiers.

Each library aims to provide stock relevant to local community need, and in an amount appropriate to its band. However, stock is managed and used on a borough wide level by:

- Purchasing stock as a borough
- Circulating stock across the borough

- Promoting use of multiple libraries, and larger libraries
- Promoting the catalogue and free reservation service
- Working together across our libraries to answer enquiries and move stock as needed.

Within space and budget constraints we aim to provide stock relevant to local communities, while not stereotyping or distorting the balance of library collections. We cannot maintain a quality service simply by reacting to public demand, but need to build collections that anticipate future needs. Our libraries are a single network and stock bought for one library is a shared resource to be exploited through our stock circulation and free reservation service.

#### **B4: Digital resources**

Our digital collection includes eBooks, eAudiobooks, eMagazines, eNewspapers, and online reference resources.

Where possible, digital resources are purchased in consortia with other Greater Manchester and North West library services, to secure discounts and maximise the range of resources available.

eBooks, eAudiobooks, eMagazines and eNewspapers are currently available via the Borrowbox app. Titles on Borrowbox are selected at Greater Manchester Libraries Consortium level. There is a small collection of eAudiobooks available on the Ulverscroft app.

For eBooks and eAudiobooks we aim to offer a wide range of fiction and non-fiction for adults and children. The focus is on reading for pleasure and the collection does not aim to support academic study.

Online reference resources include dictionaries, genealogy, newspaper archive and business collections. Contracts are reviewed annually by the Senior Development Officer responsible for stock.

#### **B5: Requests**

We welcome suggestions for stock via staff in our libraries or the form on our online catalogue. The decision not to purchase an item may be influenced by any of the following:

- Unsuitability of format, eg. Loose leaf binding
- Budget constraints
- Poor content or presentation
- Dated information
- Low demand

#### **B6: Censorship and controversial stock**

The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) states that:

*In the interest of intellectual freedom, material should not be rejected solely because it is considered controversial. A good library should encompass controversial issues and different perspectives in the interests of democracy and discovery. Challenges to selection decisions should always be considered with reference to these principles and to the library's Collection Development Policy. Over time publications covering controversial subjects may become matters of historical interest.*

*Libraries may actively promote holdings on topics of current interest to raise awareness, encourage understanding, improve accessibility and increase library usage. This is not to promote a particular belief or opinion but to enable people to follow an interest in a topic using library resources, to be exposed to new ideas, and encouraged to debate and at times challenge them. Librarians, library staff and decision-makers should, on legal advice, withhold from public access material which in case law is proven to be instrumentally linked to unlawful activity and declared illegal.*

Managing Safe and Inclusive Library Services, 2023.

Using this guidance, Oldham Libraries will make the broadest range of material available within operational and legal constraints. It is acknowledged that on occasion individuals may find items in Oldham libraries offensive, but items will not be labelled to warn of potentially offensive or sensitive content. We will endeavour to locate all materials appropriately according to category, classification and readership, in order to support informed borrowing. Where appropriate the Senior Development Officer with responsibility for stock will work with partners to assist in decisions over controversial items.

## **B7: Donations**

We will accept donations where the book:

- Is in good condition
- Has a minimum of 2 current reservations on it

Once accepted these books should:

- Be sent to our central accessions team to be made shelf ready and allocated to a library
- Donated books will not have a plastic jacket added

As a community run library service, Delph Library accepts donations more widely. For more information email [delph.library@outlook.com](mailto:delph.library@outlook.com)

## **B8: Unsolicited Material and Self-Published Material**

Authors and publishers occasionally send published material to Oldham Libraries. This will be managed in line with our collection development policy:

- The Senior Development Officer responsible for stock will assess the material and decide whether to purchase or add to stock as appropriate.
- Material will be subject to the same selection criteria as all other stock
- Items will not be returned to sender
- Regardless of whether the item is added to stock or not, disposal of the item will be at the discretion of HLA by whichever means is deemed most appropriate

## **B9: Stock outside the scope of our collections**

The following fall outside the scope of Oldham's collections:

- Items containing out of date information
- Expensive luxury editions
- Items banned under UK law
- Items restricted for purchase by UK publishers
- Items containing information that is not applicable to UK conditions and regulations
- Items intended for individual ownership, eg. workbooks
- Items with a format unsuitable for lending, eg. ring bound books

## **Section C: selection**

### **C1: Selection Overview**

Oldham Libraries are a member of the North West and Yorkshire Purchasing Consortium. The majority of our purchases are made through consortium contracts, awarded to suppliers through a rigorous tender process, in line with procurement procedures, to ensure maximum value for money.

Supplier selection is used for a large proportion of our stock, and makes use of detailed supplier selection profiles for individual libraries.

This is supplemented by:

- Purchases from stockists of specialist material
- Stock selected by staff to address stock gaps or develop new collections to meet an identified need
- Stock purchases in response to customer suggestions
- Standing orders for annual and reference materials

Standing orders are in place for stock where limited titles are published monthly, eg. romances, and large print books. This reduces unnecessary selection and speeds up acquisition time.

Our objective is to provide a wide range of titles. Multiple copies are purchased to meet demand only where it is possible to do so without significantly compromising the range of titles purchased.

## **C2: Selection Criteria**

Selection criteria include:

Content - authority and reputation of the author or publisher, educational or recreational value, quality, currency and accuracy of information.

Popularity – the potential popularity of an item is assessed using information from our Library Management System, the media, published information and identified customer needs.

Format - quality of production and durability in terms of library usage

Cost - the cost of an item will be balanced against the benefits of the item to the collection

Coverage - consideration is given to the existing coverage of the subject or genre and whether an item adds anything new to the collection

Digital resources – Oldham Libraries subscribe to a number of online subscription services. These entail additional selection criteria, for example, licence agreements, access, and consortium arrangements.

## **Section D: Maintenance and Measurement**

### **D1: Maintenance**

Oldham Libraries strive to present stock that is high quality, in good condition and relevant. We use our Library Management System to identify books that are likely to be 'grubby' (have been borrowed more than 20 times) or are 'dead' (have not been borrowed in 4 years). In addition to this, all staff have a responsibility to keep stock well maintained, assessing the condition of items as they are returned. Criteria for removing an item may include:

- Age – all items should be assessed for condition and relevance at periodic intervals commensurate with the topic dynamism and popularity (typically at 5-10 years old)
- Poor physical condition, for example, soiled, yellowing pages, damaged binding, loose pages.
- Currency – items containing out of date information are withdrawn from stock
- Performance – items not borrowed for 4 years may be displayed, promoted, or moved to another library to encourage use if appropriate. If poor performance continues, the item will be removed from stock.

Items in good condition but no longer required for library stock will be withdrawn and disposed of commercially where appropriate.

## **D2: Measurement**

Using data to measure the performance of our stock is key to our collection development. We use our Library Management System to monitor the performance of all our stock and extract data to help us to increase its performance and inform purchasing. This includes:

- Book issues by genre, Dewey Classification System number, and library
- Book category issues proportionate to category holdings
- Stock turnover and investment return by category or location
- Books issues per 1000 population
- Cost per use for digital collections

## **Section E: Promotion and Publicity**

Oldham Libraries promote books and reading in line with the Libraries Connected Universal Reading offer:

*Engage, Imagine, Discover*

*Through the Reading Offer, libraries support the growth of a literate, empathetic and confident society.*

*The offer provides diverse and inclusive reading resources, support programmes and experiences for children and adults to create excitement around reading.*

*Libraries encourage individuals of all ages to read for pleasure and purpose to increase their understanding of the world, stretch their imaginations and think differently.*

Through our reader development programme, we strive to:

Present stock in an attractive and accessible way with regularly changing displays to spark and maintain interest

Promote stock through library events, outreach activities and social media.

Participate in local and national reader development initiatives

Provide opportunities for people to share reading experiences, eg. reading groups

Offer free access to a wide range of readers group sets (10 per set) in a range of genres

Provide training to ensure staff are confident discussing books and reading with all readers.

## **Section F: Review date and contact details**

Review date: 28.1.26

Contact details:

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