

Proposal to move Central Library services to Stockroom.

Consultation from 23rd August to 18th October 2021

www.stockport.gov.uk/haveyoursay

Stockport Council has been awarded £14.5 million Future High Streets Funding by the government to spend on Stockroom. Thanks to the people who took part in the first phase of engagement on Stockroom which received 1299 responses to an online survey as well feedback from various stakeholder groups.

Following the positive response to the proposal to include 21st Century library facilities in Stockroom, we now want to consult with people about moving the Town Centre library services from Central Library into Stockroom.

We would now like to consult with all stakeholders to understand the level of support and impact on them if library services currently provided in Central Library relocated into the new Stockroom development in Merseyway. All feedback will be used to inform any decisions made on this proposal.

In the UK, every Council has to provide a “comprehensive and efficient library service” by law. Each Council has to decide how best to provide this service in terms of its physical location; access; and types of services on offer.

Exterior, Central Library



These services include but are not limited to book loans; computer and Wi-Fi access; heritage and archive material access; activities and events; council advice and support and much more. Some of these services operate from the Central Library building on the A6 close to Stockport Town Centre. Central Library was opened in 1913 and has operated as the Town Centre library since then.

The layout of the building was suitable for how people used libraries through much of the 20th Century. However, the way the building is laid out and the investment needed make it a challenge to deliver a comprehensive and efficient library service, fit for the 21st Century, from the building. The Heritage and Archive library is also only on a provisional accreditation and Place of Deposit status as the Archive Service Accreditation assessment identified risks in current storage that could damage the local heritage collections.

The rules governing how the Future High Streets Fund money can be spent mean spending it on refurbishing Central Library is not possible. The money must be spent on supporting the High Street and repurposing vacant retail space.

It is important to note that this is a government award which has been given to Stockport Council and this investment will not mean less Council investment in any of our community library buildings across the borough.

We are asking people to complete this short questionnaire to understand people's views on the proposed move of library services from the Central Library building, into Stockroom. Whatever the result of this formal consultation process there is no intent from the council to demolish or abandon the Central Library building - it is a Grade II listed building and is a much loved and important part of our town's heritage which we want to preserve. As such, Stockport Council has agreed some clear pledges for the future of the Central Library Building.

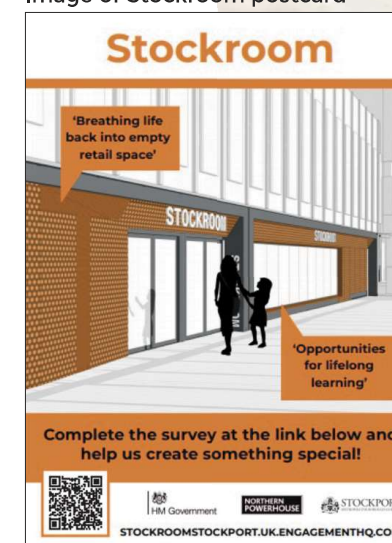
- The building will not be abandoned or demolished
- The Council will seek future uses that would be sensitive to the historic nature of the building and would retain public access to the building
- The Council will not sell the freehold or allow the building to be developed for residential use that would mean the public losing access to this heritage asset

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been developed to ensure and demonstrate that this proposal complies with the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) for those with protected characteristics. The EqIA is intended as a working document which is developed alongside, and informs decision making. This is available to view in libraries.

Exterior, Central Library



Image of Stockroom postcard



CGI of Stockroom



Current trends in library usage

Nationally library visitor numbers have been declining over the past decade.

Stockport Central library has seen visitor numbers fall by almost half (42%) from April 2012 to March 2020 and it now attracts just over 100,000 visitors a year.

In addition, loans have fallen 35% among 10 to 14-year-olds between April 2017 and March 2020, while loans have fallen 61% among 15 to 19-year-olds between April 2017 and March 2020.

But the Council believe Stockroom will be able to attract more people to use the fantastic services our libraries provide.

Where other local authorities have re-imagined their library services for the 21st Century there has been a substantial uptake in the use of those services.

Chester Storyhouse



Chester Storyhouse



Chester Storyhouse

- 800,000 visits to library, cafe and community spaces in the first year of opening
- Children's book loans increased by 50%

Ideas Stores - Tower Hamlets

- Increased library visits from 550,000 to 2 million
- Enrolment in Adult Learning doubled to 8000 per year



Ideas Stores - Tower Hamlets



Ideas Stores - Tower Hamlets

Our vision for Stockroom

Stockroom will be a centrally located and convenient new arrival point for the town centre, which will breathe new life into empty retail spaces in the heart of Merseyway and bring thousands of people to the town centre to better support shops and businesses.

Stockroom will be larger than a football pitch, offering five times the floor space of Stockport's current Central Library.

The building could accommodate more than 20,000 books and provide new spaces for Stockport's historic archive and 21st Century touchscreen learning.

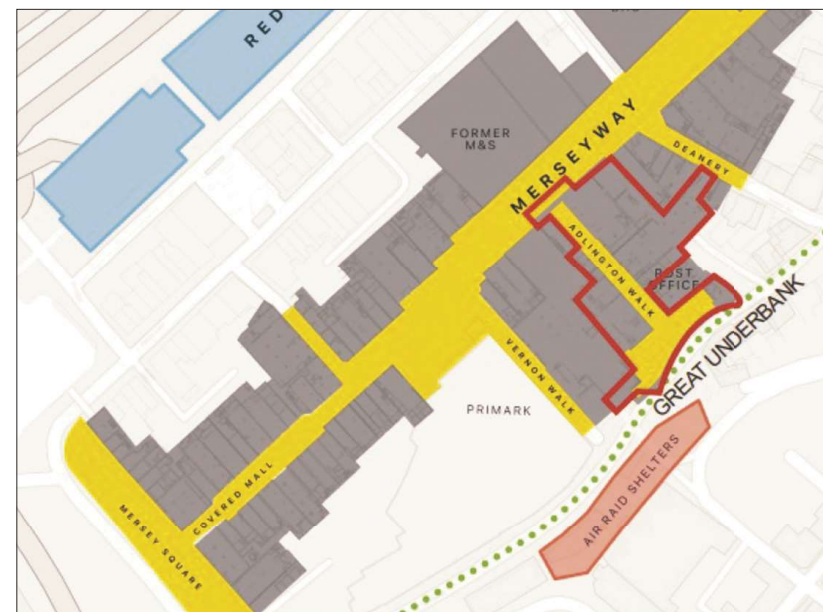
Stockroom's size and location, in the heart of the high street means it will be able to provide more space, more services, more things to do and longer opening hours.

Stockroom will be an inclusive space for everyone to use regardless of age or mobility and brand new 'best in class' toilets with enhanced facilities for people with a disability.

Stockroom will have direct access to over 800 car parking spaces including designated disabled and family spaces.



Adlington Walk, Merseyway



Plan of Stockroom location

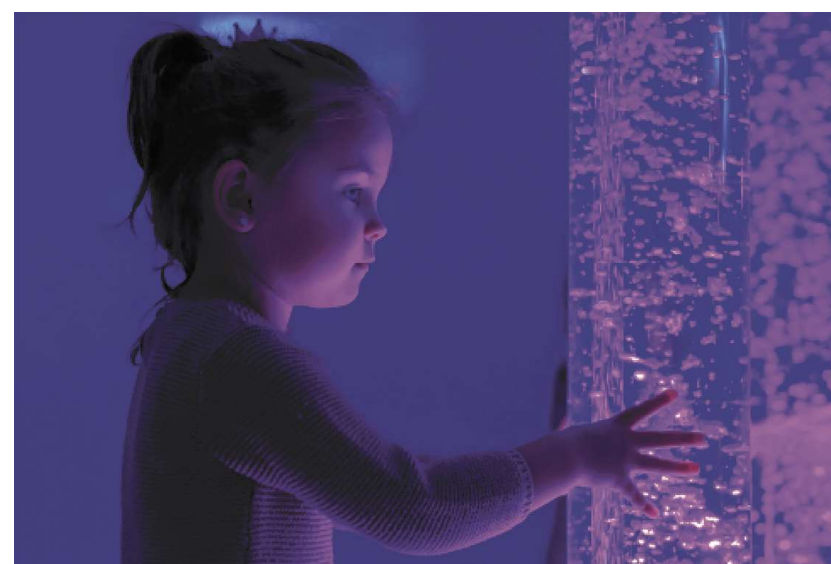
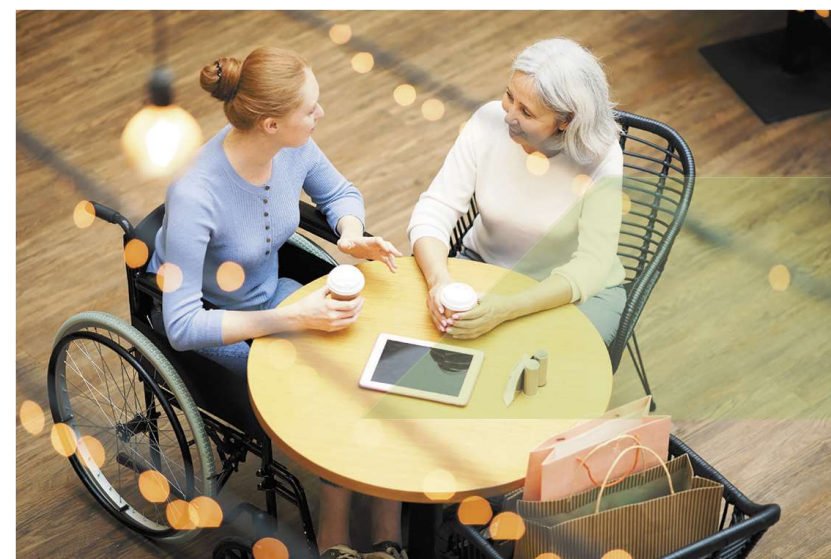


Empty retail units to be redeveloped for Stockroom

Stockroom will be a place to learn, play and relax, providing a new café and meeting point as well as high-quality children's library and research and study spaces for people of all ages to inspire lifelong learning.

Stockroom will provide better access to digital services and technology and adult learning opportunities to help people to achieve their full potential, allowing them to learn new skills and secure better jobs and good business growth.

It will also be a place for people of all ages and backgrounds to come together and celebrate our heritage.



Questionnaire

The questionnaire should not take more than 10 minutes to complete and by taking part you not only have a chance to make your voice heard but you could also win a £100 worth of High Street shopping vouchers. The questionnaire is available online at: www.stockport.gov.uk/haveyoursay and paper copies are available from libraries across the borough. A set of FAQs are available in libraries across the borough and at the link above.



For taking the time to let us have your views, you will be entered into a free prize draw (simply complete the additional information at the end) to be in with a chance of winning £100 of High Street shopping vouchers.

Section 1: Current usage of library services

Question 1.

How often do you use any of Stockport Council's library buildings or services?

SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Every other month
- ☐ A few times per year
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

Question 2.

And how often do you visit the Central Library building in Stockport?

SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Every other month
- ☐ A few times per year
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

If NEVER AT Q2 GO TO Q8, ALL OTHERS ASK Q3



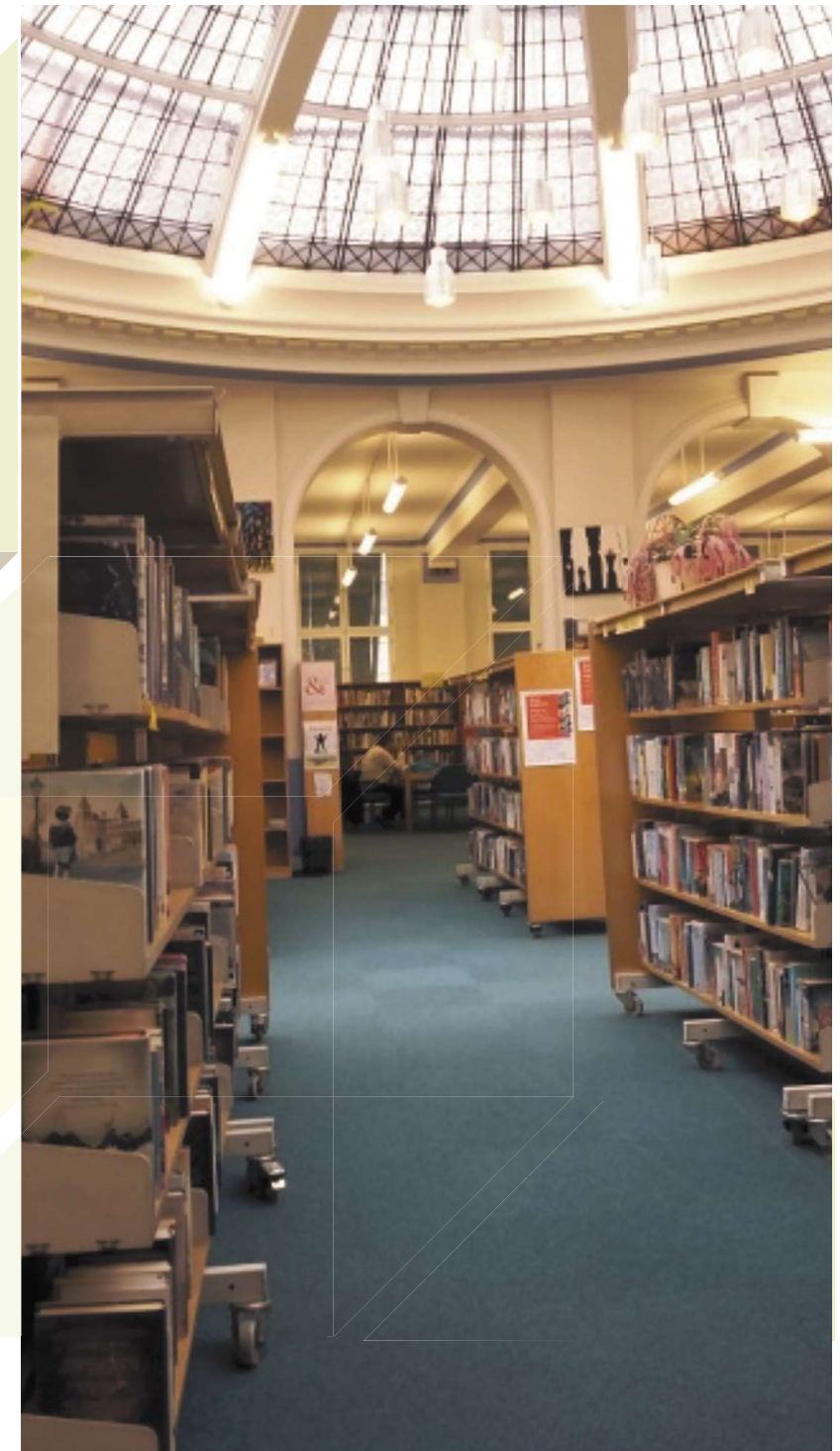
Exterior, Central Library

Question 3.

**When do you next plan to visit the
Central Library building in Stockport?**

SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY

- ☐ Today
- ☐ This week
- ☐ Next week
- ☐ Next month
- ☐ At some point after next month
- ☐ Never
- ☐ Don't know



Lending library, Central Library

Question 4.

How often do you use each of the following library services?

SELECT ONE ANSWER FOR EACH SERVICE

- Book loans – in person
- Book loans – online
- Computer or wifi access
- Heritage and archive materials
- Council advice and guidance
- Browse a range of periodicals and news publications
- Research or Study

Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Every other Month	A few times per year	Rarely	Never
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Question 5.

And to what extent are each of the following library services important to you as a Stockport resident?

SELECT ONE ANSWER FOR EACH SERVICE

	Not at all important	Not very important	Neither important nor unimportant	Slightly important	Very important	Don't know / can't say
• Book loans – in person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Book loans – online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Computer or wifi access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Heritage and archive materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Council advice and guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Browse a range of periodicals and news publications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Research or Study	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Question 6.

Which of the following modes of transport would you typically use to travel to the Central Library building?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Walking/By foot
- ☐ Bicycle
- ☐ Car/motorbike
- ☐ Public bus/coach service
- ☐ Train

Other (please specify)



Exterior, Central Library

Question 7.

How would you rate the quality of each of the following services provided by the Central Library?

SELECT ONE ANSWER IN EACH ROW

- Variety and availability of books
- Public PCs and internet access
- Community events and activities
- Family and children’s activities
- Heritage library services (e.g. archives to explore Stockport’s or your own family history)
- Provision of other information e.g. tourist information or information about council services

	Very poor	Fairly poor	Neither good nor poor	Fairly good	Very good	Never used this service prior to the Covid-19 pandemic
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Question 8.

Why do you never use the Stockport Central Library?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ No interest in library services
- ☐ Difficulty getting to the library
- ☐ Difficulty accessing the library building
- ☐ Opening hours don't suit me
- ☐ Not applicable to me
- ☐ Not local to me
- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ I can get whatever I need from my local library
- ☐ I can access what I need online
- ☐ Cost of parking

Other (please specify)



Exterior, Central Library

Section 2: Proposal to move library services

‘We are asking people to complete this short questionnaire to understand people’s views on the proposed move of library services from the Central Library building, into Stockroom.’

Question 9.

How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal outlined above to move library services from Central Library to Stockroom?

SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Tend to agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Tend to disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Don't know

Question 10.

‘Please explain why you agree with the proposal to move library services from Central Library to Stockroom?’

PLEASE SPECIFY

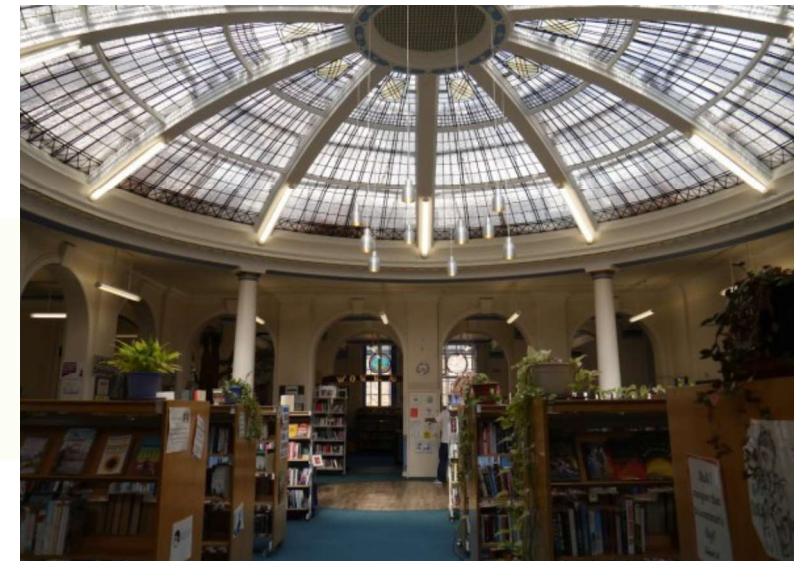


CGI of Stockroom site

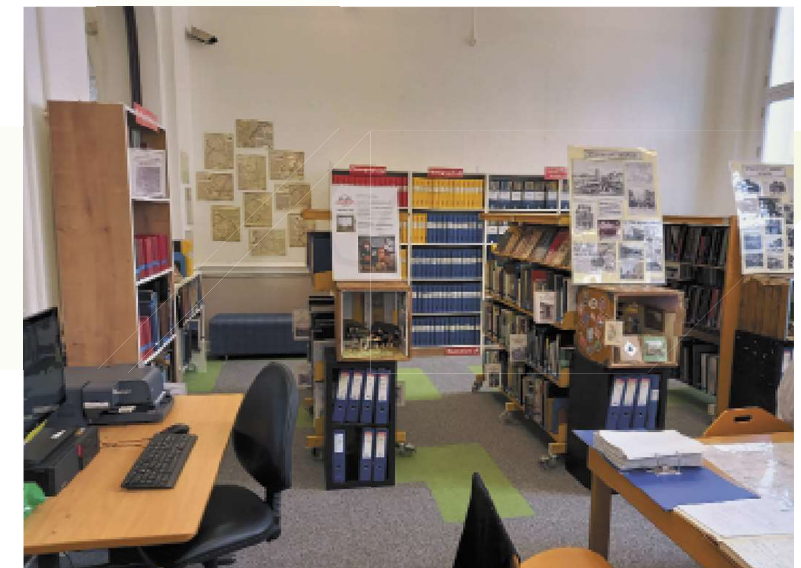
Question 11.

Please explain why you disagree with the proposal to move library services from Central Library to Stockroom?

PLEASE SPECIFY



Central Library, interior



Current Heritage Library area, Central Library



Exterior, Central Library

CGI of Stockroom site



Question 12.

Should the decision be made to relocate the library service from the Central Library building, the Council will explore potential future uses for this much loved and important part of the town's heritage. The Council has already made the following commitments in respect of the building:

- It will not demolish or abandon the building
- It will not sell the freehold to it so that the long term of control of the building remains with the Council for the residents of Stockport
- It will not allow the building to be developed for residential use as this would mean the public losing access to this heritage asset

Any potential use will ensure that public access can be retained to the building. If the decision is made to relocate the library service to Stockroom, it is anticipated that the earliest date that the library would relocate is in the Summer of 2023. The service will be retained in the building until this date.

Given that it may be two years before any potential new use could even begin to fit out the building, it is very early stages in considering what that use might be. However the initial work that the Council has undertaken and will continue to work on between now and the end of the year has highlighted a number of potential uses based on experience of what other buildings of this nature have been used as elsewhere in the country and what there might be demand for.

These are a broad range of uses which have been grouped together below but there may be other uses which people can suggest through this process or come to light in the next two years:

- Hospitality uses – this would include performance venues for music, theatre or the arts, conference facilities, boutique hotel,
- Food and Beverage uses – this would include restaurants, cafes or bars
- Shared office or working space uses – this would be space for people to work on a flexible basis away from the home
- Other Council uses – the Council will continue to review during the next stage of work whether there are any Council services which would be appropriate for the building
- Other Public Sector uses – the Council will continue to review during the next stage of work whether there are any wider uses within the public sector which could use the building
- Community uses – use as a space that would be available to the community and groups from the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector for working in or holding meetings or events

Some of these uses could be combined in the building. We would like to hear what you think about the suggestions above and if you have any other suggestions for alternative uses for the Central Library building if the library service is relocated to Stockroom.

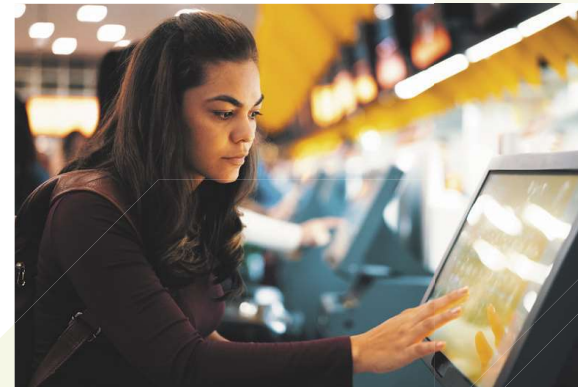
WRITE IN

Question 13.

Based on the proposal to move library services from Central Library to Stockroom, how often do you think you would visit the library in the new location?

SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Every other month
- ☐ A few times per year
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never



Question 14.

What other comments or suggestions do you have about the proposal to move services from Central Library to Stockroom?

☐ No other comments

Question 15.

Are you responding as...

- ☐ A resident of Stockport
- ☐ On behalf of a voluntary or community group
- ☐ A local business owner
- ☐ A public sector organisation
- ☐ A councilor or MP
- Other (please specify)

Would you like to be entered into the prize draw to win £100 High Street shopping vouchers?

If you would like to be entered in the draw for a chance to win, please provide your name and contact details
Your contact details will not be used for any other purpose. Names will be selected at random.

Entering the prize draw is voluntary, you do not have to enter the draw to take part in the consultation.

Name

Email address

Phone Number

Section 3: About you

Finally, we'd like to find out a little more about you. Completion of this form is entirely voluntary.

Gathering this information allows us to understand which communities or groups of people you might belong to, so we know the levels of participation across different groups of people in our engagement and research.

We may also use this data to understand if there are any similarities in experiences or opinions of people across different demographic groups. This helps us identify the possible needs of different groups of people or the potential impacts of a proposed change.

We share this data with our research partner QA Research for analysis of this project. You can find details of QA Research by visiting their website here <https://www.qaresearch.co.uk/> You can also find out more about how Stockport Council process your data by visiting our website here:

<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/topic/data-protection>

Our lawful basis for processing your personal data is consent and explicit consent.

No identifiable information will be shared in public reports.

Question 16.

Are you?

SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Non-binary
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify)

Question 17.

What is your age?

- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55-64
- ☐ 65-74
- ☐ 75-84
- ☐ 85+
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Question 18.

How would you define your ethnic group?

- ☐ White - English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
- ☐ White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- ☐ Mixed - White and Black Caribbean
- ☐ Mixed - White and Asian
- ☐ Asian or Asian British - Indian
- ☐ Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi
- ☐ Any other Asian background, please specify

- ☐ Black or Black British - Caribbean
- ☐ Other ethnic group - Arab
- ☐ White - Irish
- ☐ White - any other White background, please specify

- ☐ Mixed - White and Black African
- ☐ Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background, please specify

- ☐ Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
- ☐ Asian or Asian British - Chinese
- ☐ Black or Black British - African
- ☐ Any other Black/African/Caribbean background, please specify

Any other ethnic group, please specify

Prefer not to answer. Please specify

Question 19.

What is your religion or belief?

- ☐ No religion
- ☐ Christian
- ☐ Buddhist
- ☐ Hindu
- ☐ Jewish
- ☐ Muslim
- ☐ Sikh
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Question 20.

What is your sexuality?

- ☐ Heterosexual/straight
- ☐ Gay or Lesbian
- ☐ Bisexual
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Question 21.

Do you consider yourself to have a disability, or long term health condition?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Question 22.

What is your employment status?

- ☐ Single response
- ☐ Employed full-time
- ☐ Employed part-time
- ☐ Self-employed
- ☐ Full time student
- ☐ Out of work and looking for work
- ☐ Out of work and not looking for work
- ☐ Unable to work due to long term illness or disability
- ☐ Full-time carer (and unable to work)
- ☐ Looking after home or family
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to say

If Q24 is employed full-time or employed part-time ask Q25. Others go to Q26

Question 23.

Are you...?

- ☐ Furloughed for all of your contracted hours
- ☐ Furloughed for some of your contracted hours
- ☐ Not furloughed
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Question 24.

Do you have any children under the age of 18 in your household?

- ☐ Yes - children aged under 5 years old
- ☐ Yes - children aged 5 to 10 years old
- ☐ Yes - children aged 11 to 15 years old
- ☐ Yes - children aged 16 or 17 years old
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Question 25.

What is your home postcode?

- ☐ Prefer not to say



CGI of Stockroom site



Exterior, Central Library

Thankyou

