

**Note of the meeting of the Bath City Forum
held on Wednesday, 17th January, 2018
in Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath**

RAG Meeting Attendance

Full Members	Representing
Councillor Patrick Anketell-Jones	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Rob Appleyard	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Colin Blackburn	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Jeremy Boss	Bath City Forum
Councillor Anthony Clarke	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Roger Driver	Bath City Forum
Councillor Andrew Furse	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Bob Goodman	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Michael Hill	Bath City Forum
Robin Kerr	Bath City Forum
Rosie Phillips	Bath City Forum
Councillor Joe Rayment	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Leslie Redwood	Bath City Forum
Councillor Dine Romero	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Shaun Stephenson-McGall	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Virginia Williamson	Bath City Forum

In Attendance	
Ashley Ayre	Bath & North East Somerset Council
Amanda Cameron	Bath Chronicle
Dave Dixon	Bath & North East Somerset Council
Luke John Emmett	Bath Resident
Mark Hayward	Bath & North East Somerset Council
Sir Peter Heywood	Bath Resident
Bryn Jones	Bath Resident
Gareth Lloyd	Avon Fire & Rescue Service
Tracey Long	Bath & North East Somerset Council
Councillor Michelle O'Doherty	Bath & North East Somerset Council
Mike Plows	Volunteer Centre
Stephen Quinton	Avon Fire & Rescue Service
Residents (5)	Bath Residents
Adam Reynolds	Bath Residents
Ian Savigar	Bath & North East Somerset Council
Andy Thomas	Bath & North East Somerset Council
Councillor Karen Warrington	Bath & North East Somerset Council

Apologies Received from	
Caroline Kay	Bath City Forum
Steve Kendall	Avon and Somerset Police
Penny McKissock	Bath City Forum

Councillor Michael Norton	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Lin Patterson	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Peter Turner	Bath and North East Somerset Council

1. Welcome and Apologies

Councillor Colin Blackburn welcomed all attendees and apologies were recorded.

2. Minutes from the meeting of 27 November 2017

Robin Kerr disputed the minutes of the last meeting.

The minutes stated: “Robin Kerr felt that the note included from the Fire Service regarding the number of inspections carried out on party house was not sufficient.”

What was also said was: “The October report needs to be substantially improved with respect to ‘Party Houses’, providing detail of the number of inspections which have taken place and what remedial action has been considered necessary in order to bring the danger in these potential death-traps within the kind of risk considered acceptable in hotels and guest houses.”

An update was agreed.

All other aspects were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and were agreed by Jeremy Boss and seconded by Councillor Joe Rayment.

3. Fire Service Update

Bath Fire Station Update

Station Manager, Gareth Lloyd explained that the firefighters are running their winter safety campaign.

- Home visits to the elderly and vulnerable are being carried out.
- Three nights have been spent on the towpaths with community resilience volunteers to educate young people that it's not the best placed to walk if you've been drinking. Work continues with both of the universities in Bath.
- Work has been taking place with food banks to meet vulnerable people living in the community so that visits can be arranged to check their fire safety, and advice can be given on property issues. It is hoped that this work will extend to soup kitchens.
- Requests have been made to boat owners to attend safety meetings at the George Public House in Bathampton. This work will include outreach workers for Julian House and advice on fire detection devices.

Question 1 – Cllr Dine Romero – Does the work with the university students extend to Bath College and school sixth forms?

Response – There are not presently the links that the Fire Service would like to see in place. Work on river safety is aimed at 17-21 year olds and attendance at fresher's events does take place. Social media is being used as one method of getting the messages out.

Question 2 – Cllr Andy Furse – How are interventions taking place with vulnerable people affected by rogue landlords?

Response – Work is ongoing with the Student Community Partnership and the River Safety Group. An online blog is regularly updated.

Andy added that Bath College would welcome visits from Avon Fire & Rescue.

Question 3 – Cllr Shaun Stephenson-McGall – What is the position of the Fire service in relation to the squeeze from funding cuts?

Response – The budget proposals go to The Fire Authority in February. The service commitment from the front end responders remains 24 hour / 7 day a week operation.

Question 4 - Cllr Shaun Stephenson-McGall asked how the fire service deals with the issue of washing machine / tumble dryers which are potential “death traps”.

Response – The Fire Service keeps an eye on product recalls and issues alerts for the public.

Question 5 – Robin Kerr – Could a response be given on fire safety around party houses. The Council are holding a scrutiny day in February on this topic. Brighton and Hove Council are ahead of us in dealing with these issues, East Sussex Fire Service has reported that they have powers to shut down premises.

Stephen Quinton, Group Manager – Risk Reduction responded:

- The fire service does have a responsibility to carry out fire inspections at party houses, including Air BnB lets - “Party houses are regulated”. It was stated that there no inspection issues that are “too difficult”.
- Sleeping accommodation is a priority for fire inspections.
- Named unlicensed party houses have been added to its list for checks. There were no specific complaints about any of those properties and there is no evidence to suggest that party houses are any more dangerous than licensed premises.
- 28 properties have been inspected, 5 turned out not to be party houses. None have received any enforcement action. Only one was assessed above level 3 of fire hazard (= advisory), requiring addition of some door closers and smoke alarms.
- A single exception was assessed as level 5 (= the worst) and would have been closed down that night, had not the owner managed to install a wireless detection system before the deadline.
- There are 320 Air BnB’s advertised in B&NES area which provide a challenge as the only way to contact them is to book a room or email them.
- There is nothing to stop owners from illegally blocking or removing fire safety measures (e.g. door closers) once the inspectors have gone.
- There are also 8,000 businesses in B&NES, and a number of care homes, which are a bigger priority for the fire services.
- A premise above a shop was facing prosecution, on return to the property the landlord had installed a fire protection system that covered the issues that had been picked up in the initial inspection.
- Once an inspection is carried out the premise is added to a plan but the reality is that a long time passes before a return visit is carried out.
- The fire service has only two fire safety officers to cover B&NES, this is why a risk-based fire safety assessment system is run.
- It was disappointing to see a reference to Grenfell in relation to party house fire safety in Bath. We will be doing everything in our power to keep you updated.”

Cllr Rob Appleyard felt that the feedback that had been provided was of a high quality and extremely useful. The language that is used future discussion needs to be responsible and measured.

Robin Kerr added his thanks to the information provided.

4. Police Update - Handout

The Police were unable to attend this meeting, a handout was provided covering the latest crime statistics.

5. Modern Community Libraries

Ian Savigar introducing an update on modern libraries and explained that the council is currently in the “engagement and design” phase of the plans for Bath Central Library.

Tracey Long presented on Branch libraries

- There are a maximum of 16 per cent of active library users, who have registered, in any area in B&NES. However, the council realises more people than that actually use libraries.
- There is a high usage of Bath Central Library but little usage of the mobile library.
- A large proportion of residents in Weston and Newbridge use their local library.
- Some 265,000 people took out books from Bath Central Library in the 2016 financial with 192,000 using the online select and collect option.
- The mobile library bus is visited more at some stops than others, it is hoped that we will be able to transfer some of the libraries over to the community and we want to see enhanced services.
- The five branch libraries could be managed by a community body, there has been some interest and the council has a “package of support” to help people take over running the libraries.

There are three models for running a community library:

OPTION C

Independent Stock Community Run Library would see:

- Running and staffing costs all funded by local group
- Book/issues and membership rules (including fees and charges) determined at local level
- IT equipment/support and maintenance, Wi-Fi, printing and any other systems funded by local group
- Income from local sales and services retained by local group
- B&NES decommissioned book stock plus any local sourced stock
- Professional support from B&NES available through networking and training events
- Eligible for one off Community Library Start Up Grant

OPTION B

B&NES stock only Community Run Library would see:

- Running and staffing costs all funded by local group
- Book/issues and membership rules (including fees and charges) determined at local level for rotated stock

- IT equipment/support and maintenance, Wi-Fi, printing and any other systems funded by local group
- Income from local sales and services retained by local group
- B&NES identified rotated book stock plus any local sourced stock
- Professional support from B&NES available through networking and training events
- Eligible for one off Community Library Start Up Grant

OPTION A

B&NES and Consortium Stock Community Run Library would see:

Running and staffing costs all funded by local group

Catalogue book stock and professional support provided by B&NES

Part of Libraries West Consortium stock and reservations network

IT equipment/support and maintenance, Wi-Fi, printing and any other systems funded by local group

All loan related fees, fines and charges income retained by B&NES

Income from local sales and services retained by local group

Click and collect point for core Library stock on Libraries West Consortium system but any related fees, fines and charges income retained by B&NES for consortium system orders

Eligible for one off Community Library Start Up Grant

Library support and funding

- The council will help community groups devise a business case that is sustainable and that was grant funding available.
- The council will set up an example of Option A so that people could come along and have a look at this model.
- Conversations in Weston and Moorland Road have started, groups in other areas of Bath come forward with any ideas they may have.

Roger Driver asked if there was a way to estimate the number of people who use libraries in ways other than taking out books, e.g., using wifi and computers for social welfare applications. Response – The footfall and books borrowed can be measured but it is difficult to categorise other uses in the smaller branch libraries. The aim is to fit into other spaces and have places with mixed resources that fit the community needs.

Roger requested that what information is available on the use of other services be made shared with the forum/communities.

Cllr Shaun Andrew Stephenson-McGall asked whether it was achievable for a community to run a library for 20-30 hours a week on a volunteer basis.

Response - It's so surprising how many people want to do this and it works very well nationally. We already have examples of high numbers of volunteers in Saltford, Bishop Sutton and at a national level. Bath has a large student population that could help.

Cllr Joe Rayment sought assurance that the principle of a library would be maintained and that you would be able to sit there for as long as you liked without buying anything. The word "library sales" in the presentation did not feel right. Joe felt that there was the question of what would be the incentive for running a as a not for profit organisation?

Cllr Karen Warrington, Cabinet Member for Policy and Transformation explained that some groups might want to generate a revenue stream, but one size does not fit all. The request is

that communities will now contact Council Officers to build on established ideas or show where there is support for new options.

6. New Electoral Arrangements - Local Government Boundary Commission Draft Proposals

Jeremy Boss gave a Local Government Boundary Commission Draft Proposals short presentation about Local Government Boundary Commission Draft Proposals which would see changes to ward boundaries in Bath. Jeremy felt that the draft proposals do not meet the stated objectives and principles. Whoever has put together these proposals has done a good job in terms of cutting the number of councillors to the wanted 59 (from 66), but a “lousy job” in terms of reflecting local communities and there has to be a better understanding of local knowledge.

The University of Bath is distorting the position for the South of Bath. The proposed ward for Claverton Down has no real basis.

Jeremy recommended that the Bath City Forum ask the Commission to revisit its proposals for Bath by:

- Staying within the City boundary
- Placing a greater emphasis on community identity and cohesion (noting submissions from local groups and residents)
- Reconsidering the position for the University / Claverton Down
- Seeking for wards to be predominantly with 2 Cllrs

Bryn Jones from Lambridge ward said the proposals meant there would be seven single-member wards in the north of Bath. (Full details of these representations are included in the minute papers)

“You’d have to put all your money on one horse.”

He said Fairfield Park would disappear into Walcot.

“This is an example of a lack of respect for community integrity in the Lambridge area.”

Cllr Rob Appleyard said: “We need to build from the bottom upwards. It is about communities.”

Jeremy Boss thought the forum should go back to the Boundary Commission and ask them to take better account of communities.

Cllr Rayment said he thought the main point should be about the overall boundary of the city as the split between parished and unparished areas would cause problems.

Cllr Anthony Clarke felt that it was virtually impossible now for politicians to have an effect on the outcome as they had already had their opportunity.

Cllr Dine Romero disagreed on this point as local parties can still contribute.

Virginia Williamson explained that Bear Flat would be split through the heart of the community by the new ward boundaries proposed. Virginia had looked at the notes on the website on how communities should respond and where resident associations are set up representation is easier. The areas without a group will need some level of help from their Ward Councillors in making their representation.

Cllr Shaun Stephenson-McGall had no issue if the whole of the authority had single-member wards because it's very easy for members that contribute very little to hide behind a good member covering the same ward.

Cllr Shaun Stephenson-McGall was not bothered by changes to the City boundary.

The university issue is link to national registration on 1 December, a date which means university students are not captured.

The changing ward boundaries do not, ultimately, matter. It just meant wards would have to work on cross-boundary matters, as they do now.

Cllr Joe Rayment said the forum represents the unparished area of B&NES, so keeping the city boundary is good for the future of the forum.

Cllr Andrew Furse said 59 was not necessarily the right number of councillors and remained neutral on whether one and two-member wards, this does however need to be driven by communities

Cllr Bob Goodman felt that the proposals have got this badly wrong, the Bath boundary needs to be kept intact and communities need to go back with their concerns

Cllr Bob Goodman explained that Harry Patch, who is the most famous person in Combe Down, would no longer be in Combe Down if this were to go ahead.

The forum voted that they were in favour of a letter being written to the Electoral Boundary Commission. (17 - Yes / Nil - No)

The forum voted on three points that they wished to have included in the letter being written to the Electoral Boundary Commission

- (i) Staying within the City boundary (Yes - 15 / No - 0)
- (ii) Placing a greater emphasis on community identity and cohesion (noting submissions from local groups and residents) (Yes - 17 / No - 0)
- (iii) Seeking for wards to be predominantly with 2 Cllrs (Yes - 12 / No - 3)

7. Working Group Recommendations for CIL and CEF

Cllr Appleyard went through a list of funding recommendations from the Bath City Forum Working Group.

Community Empowerment Funding

- £6,000 for a shelter at Brickfields Park in Westmoreland
- £5,200 for training and start-up costs for a group of Bath Clean Air Champions to tackle vehicle anti-idling
- £15,000 for Bath Comedy Festival 2018

An application for the Bath City Brand was not recommended.

Bath Neighbourhood CIL Funding

- £7,500 for Bath Festival of Nature 2018
- £3,500 towards Bathscape Walking Festival 2018

- £25,000 towards the protection and restoration of Free Fields near Foxhill.

An application for speed signage in Bathwick/Claverton has been deferred as further information needs to be considered before a final decision can be given.

Councillor Joe Rayment felt that this scheme is important as the road is dangerous; he added that that this should scheme should not be dismissed if the University of Bath are not willing to be involved.

Councillor Colin Blackburn explained this application has now been differed and will come back once the working group have looked at this with the additional information provided.

Virginia Williamson had concerns that there may be differences in the wording on the website and in the criteria guidance document for the Community Empowerment Fund. Virginia also felt that the application form needs clearer guidance around the need for a forum signatory and a clearer way to show the breakdown of costs included in the application.

Council Officers will review the website; criteria document and application form. Amendments will be made if required.

8. Forum Development and Forward Plans

Luke John Emmett, requested to speak to the forum about community engagement (the full speech is included in the minutes papers).

Luke said 90 per cent of the B&NES residents are white and British and that most of the forum members are “white, male and middle class”.

He asked whether the remaining 10 per cent of B&NES residents were properly represented, and called for a series of mock council meetings so people who might find them intimidating could get used to them.

Cllr Dine Romero asked how the Forum meeting tonight felt compared to other Council meetings.

Luke felt that politics had been kept out of the meeting tonight which was a good thing. The room setting is very formal and could be intimidating for those people who are not used to such a set up. Luke suggested that if the venue were to be made available for open days which would allow barriers to be broken down.

Cllr Dine Romero wondered whether there might be a cost barrier to mock council meetings.

Rosie Phillips suggested that forum members had links in the community and there were other ways of reaching out to the community to show them how they can get involved more.

Cllr Colin Blackburn explained

- The forum wants community member to come along and take part.
- The point of the forum was to make Bath a better place to live and work.
- Personally he felt he needs to do more to tell his constituents about the work of the forum.
- Funding recommendations that we deliver aim to improve the City.
- We need to get better at the way we communicate.

Cllr Shaun Stephenson-McGall said it was more difficult to get community engagement in a big community like Bath without having parish councils.

Shaun felt that the forum should not beat ourselves up too much over the problems we’re facing, it will be difficult to solve the community engagement issues with a small budget.”

Shaun added that Bath has in the past tried other formats, different venues and other membership models which have all had issues of their own. There are other places such as Bristol and South Gloucestershire, who also struggle with similar issues of engagement,

Cllr Joe Rayment said there was a lot of talk about people resigning from the forum because it was too political. Joe felt that if that's the case, then issues shouldn't be sent to the forums that are contentious because people are political beings and bring their political beliefs to the table. If the forum supports parishing in Bath then we need to have a proper discussion. Joe added that the diversity is an issue, very few councillors are under forty, very few are full time workers and not many have to rent their home.

Jeremy Boss felt that the acid test is what we do. The forum discussions tend to be dominated by councillors because they were better informed, but councillors need to keep in mind that discussions must suit lay members as well to keep them engaged.

Cllr Colin Blackburn said he would like to see more topics brought to the forum that residents are interested in. The scale of how moving to a parished Bath model needs to be explored and explained.

Jeremy Boss felt there has been very little appetite in his community for a parished Bath.

Cllr Blackburn closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

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Avon and Somerset Constabulary

Bath City Forum Quarterly Report**BaNES Crime and Disorder – Fourth Quarter Data (Oct – Dec) 2017**

Constabulary Crime and Disorder Change 12 Month Rolling Average +4.6%

BaNES Crime and Disorder Change 12 Month Rolling Average +4.2%

Current Offence Group	Crime current yr latest qtr	Crime previous yr latest qtr	change in qtr	% change in quarter
Arson	13	12	1	8.33%
Burglary	255	282	-27	-9.57%
Criminal Damage	355	322	33	10.25%
Drug Offences	51	49	2	4.08%
Fraud Forgery	3	1	2	200.00%
Other Offences	68	81	-13	-16.05%
Robbery	36	19	17	89.47%
Sexual Offences	85	74	11	14.86%
Theft And Handling Stolen Goods	930	855	75	8.77%
Violence Against The Person	1,252	1,308	-56	-4.28%
Sum:	3,048	3,003	45	1.50%

Hate Crime Indicator	Crime current yr latest qtr	Crime previous yr latest qtr	change in qtr	% change in quarter
Yes	85	81	4	4.94%

ASB Disposal	Count of Incidents	Count of Incidents	ASB change in qtr	ASB % change in quarter
ASB - ENVIRONMENTAL	54	44	10	22.73%
ASB - NUISANCE	818	1,037	-219	-21.12%
ASB - PERSONAL	69	78	-9	-11.54%
Sum:	941	1,159	-218	-18.81%

Requests for service

BaNES police had a +4.1% increase in requests for service over the last 12 months (rolling average).

In total 38,609 requests for police services in BaNES were received over the last 12 months. Constabulary total +3.2 % or 436,650 requests for service.

Customer Satisfaction

Constabulary Customer Satisfaction : 79.5%

BaNES Customer Satisfaction : 80.2%

How to contact us:

www.avonandsomerset.police.uk

In an emergency dial 999

For non-emergency issues dial 101

Your local points of contact are:

BaNES Neighbourhood Inspector

Inspector Sarah Treweek

Sarah.Treweek@avonandsomerset.police.uk

City Centre Neighbourhood Team

Sgt Jon Raisey

Jonathan.Raiseey@avonandsomerset.police.uk

Bath Outer Areas Neighbourhood Team

City Outer: Bath University, Batheaston, Larkhall, Northstoke, Bathford and Weston.

City South: Foxhill, Combe Down, Widcombe, Bear Flat and Bloomfield.

City West: Twerton, Whiteway, Oldfield Park and Southdown

Sgt Adam O'Loughlin

Adam.O'Loughlin@avonandsomerset.police.uk

Radstock Neighbourhood Team

Sgt Philipa Ives

Philippa.Ives@avonandsomerset.police.uk

Keynsham Neighbourhood Team

Sgt Jon Bagnowiec

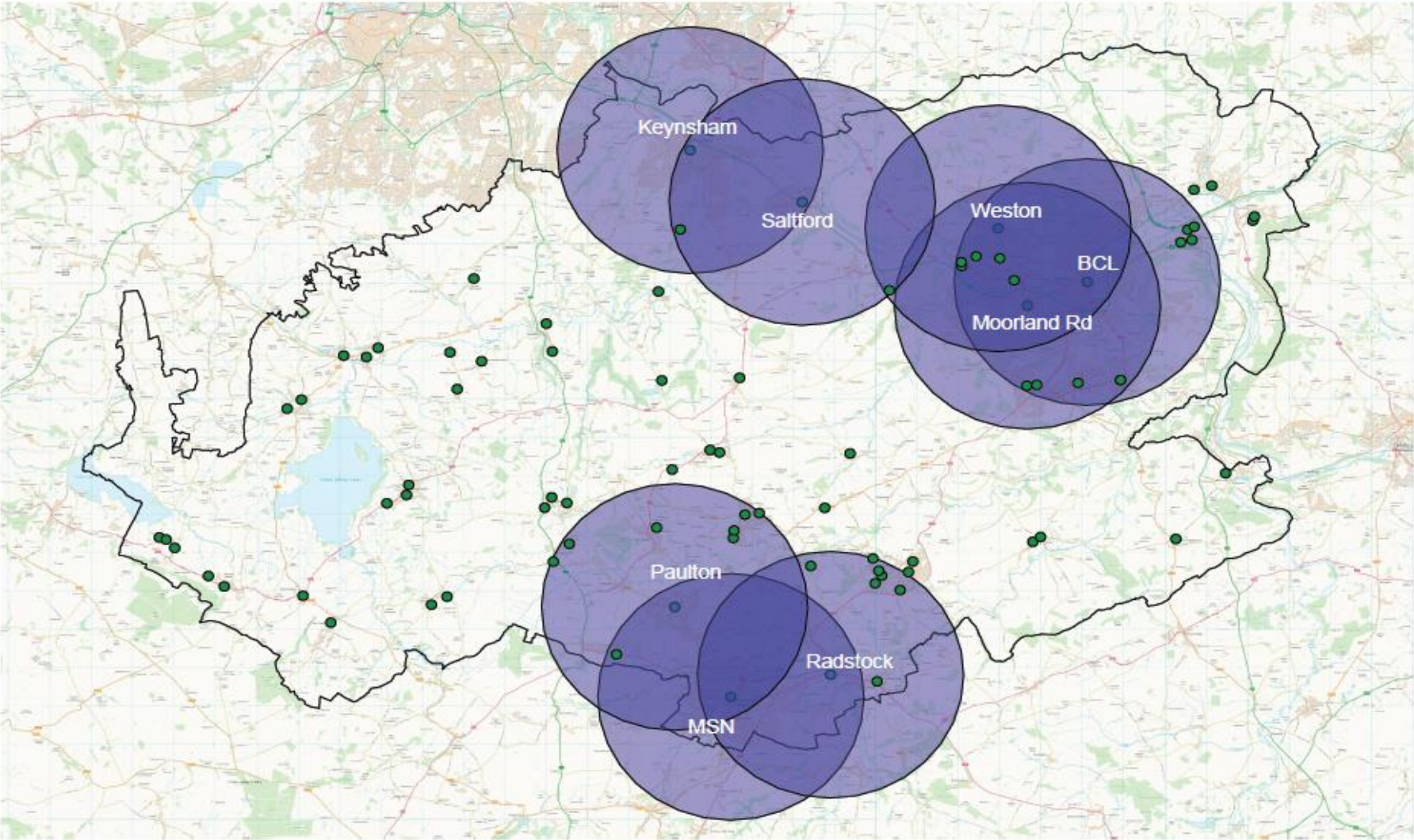
Jon.Bagnowiec@avonandsomerset.police.uk

Anonymous Reporting



Current Library Network Provision

**Libraries in Bath and North East Somerset
And Mobile Library Stops**

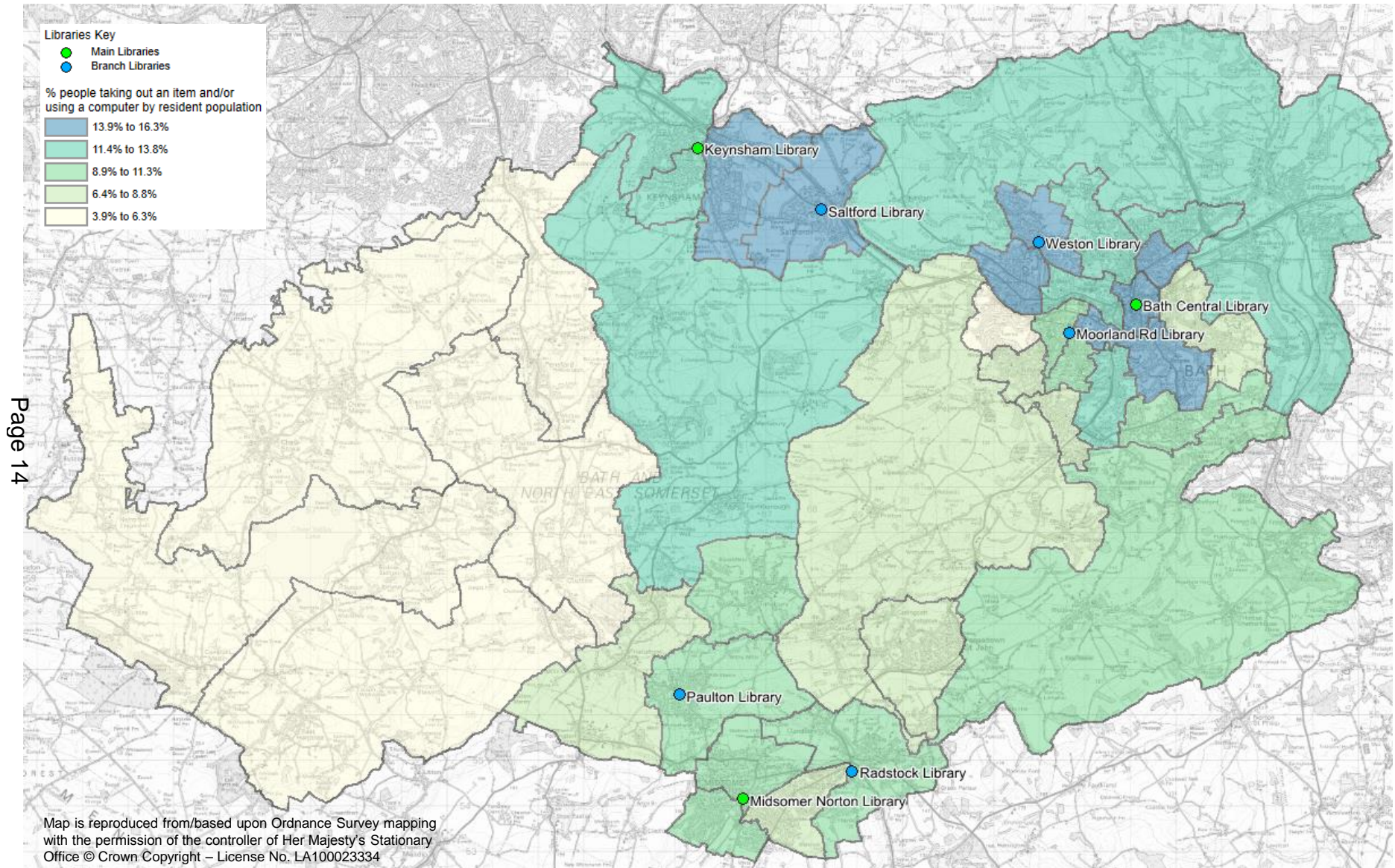


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B&NES library locations and % registered users by ward

Appendix A



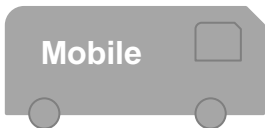
Bath City



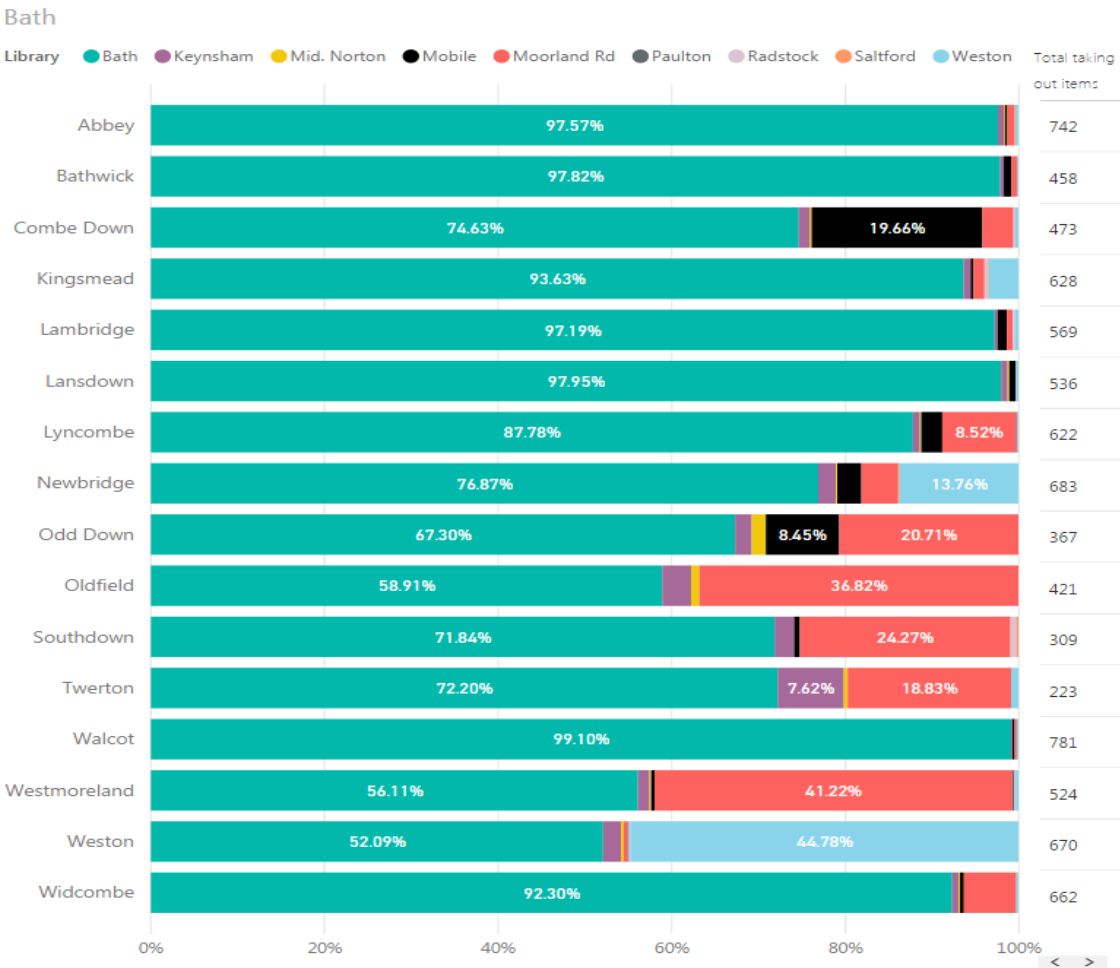
Three Council run Libraries:
Bath Central, Weston &
Moorland Road



Two Community Libraries:
New Oriel Hall, Larkhall &
Southside Youth Hub



The Mobile Library
visits Combe Down,
Odd Down & Newbridge



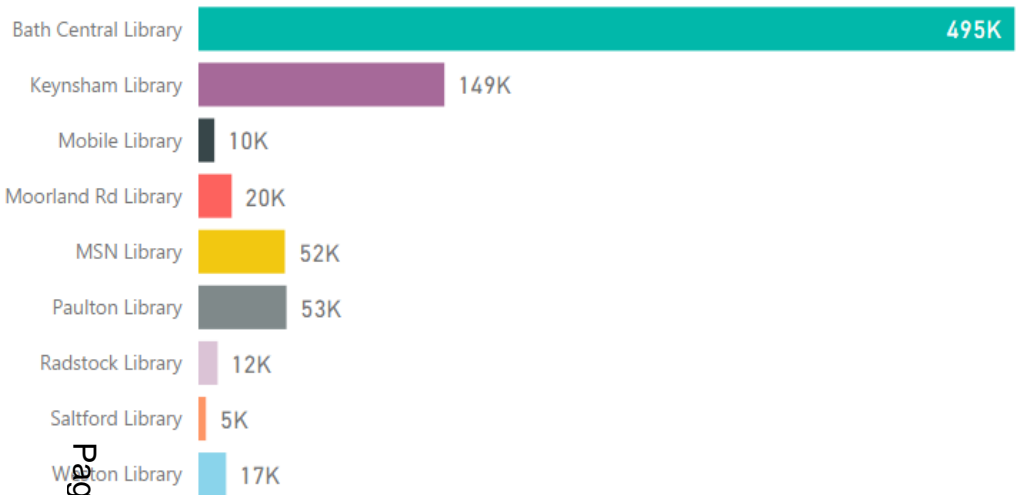
Source: Library Management System. LibrariesWest users with a Bath and North East Somerset postcode who have taken out at least one item in the period.

The data has been aggregated to ward and analysed by library of issue as a % of all issues for that ward to provide a standardised comparison. NB: The consequence of this is that someone who uses multiple libraries will be double-counted.

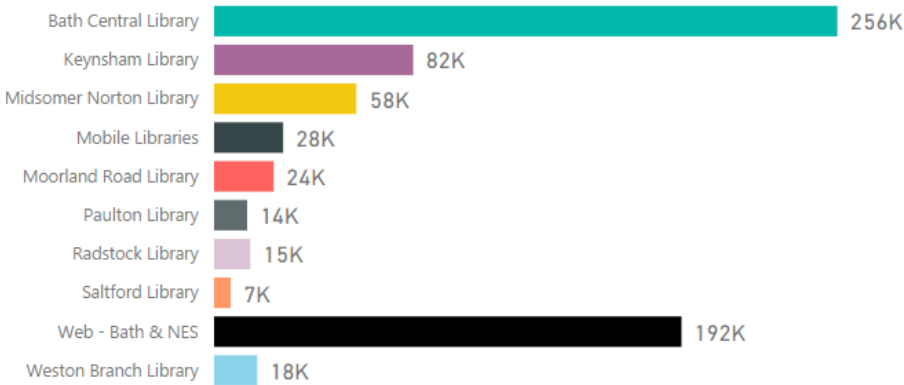
The data included in this analysis is extracted from 01/06/2016 to 28/02/2017 to provide consistency with the Library Needs Assessment published in June 2017

2016 Activity Snapshot

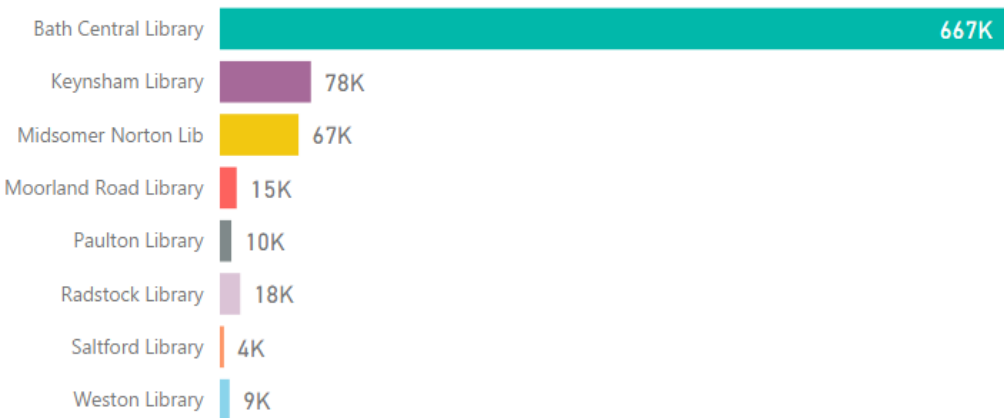
Footfall 2016 Calendar Year



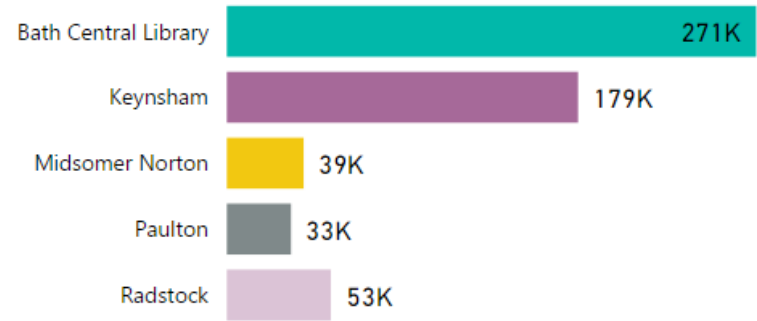
Issues 2016 financial year



Computer reservations 2016 Calendar Year



Projected unique wi-fi devices 16/17



Navigation icons: back, forward, home, search, etc.

Legend

Mobile Library 2016 to 2017 usage

- 2 or less visits per fortnight
- 3 or 4 visits per fortnight
- 5 or 6 visits per fortnight
- 7 or more visits per fortnight

OS 1 to 50000

Map Layers

- OS Mapping
- OS Mapping (Faded)
- OS Mapping (Combo)
- OS Mapping (Greyscale)
- OS Mapping (No Text)
- OS Mapping (Faded No Text)
- OS OpenData
- OS OpenData (Faded)



BathCity - Microsoft Excel

Feature Id	Village	Stop	Time	Day	Day Num	Usage 201	Fortnightly average
1	Combe Down	Hawthorn Grove	10.00 - 10.45	Monday	Day 1	142	6
2	Combe Down	The Firs	11.00 - 13.00	Monday	Day 1	411	19
3	Combe Down	The Firs	14.00 - 16.45	Monday	Day 1	564	26
4	Newbridge	Partis Way	16.35 - 17.00	Wednesday	Day 8	59	3
6	Newbridge/Combe Park	St John's Hospital	16.10 - 16.30	Wednesday	Day 8	41	2
7	Odd Down	Upper Bloomfield Road	13.35 - 15.30	Wednesday	Day 8	272	12



New Service Model

Core Library Services

Community Run Libraries

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By 2020, it is anticipated that there will be three core council run libraries in our main population centres. These will be located with other Council Services and our partners providing advice and information the general public.

Bath One Stop Shop & Library

Keynsham One Stop Shop & Library

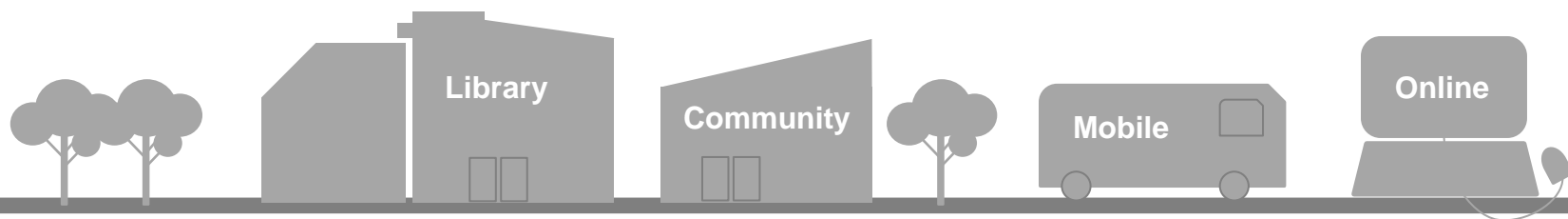
Midsomer Norton One Stop Shop & Library

How communities decide to run and enhance local library services may have an impact on the 'shape' of mobile provision (routes & times) to make potential improvements, but there are no plans to close or reduce the service.

Existing Branch Libraries may transition from Local Authority management to be managed by the local community as Community Run Libraries.

We will offer support to communities, key organisations and stakeholders expressing an interest in making this transition, or providing new library services, based on their local conversations and identified community need.

We will offer a package of professional and funding support to ensure the sustainability and, in many cases, an improvement in community library service provision.



Community Run Library Models

OPTION A

B&NES and Consortium Stock Community Run Library

- Running and staffing costs all funded by local group
- Catalogue book stock and professional support provided by B&NES
- Part of LibrariesWest Consortium stock and reservations network
- IT equipment/support and maintenance, Wi-Fi, printing and any other systems funded by local group
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OPTION C

Independent Stock Community Run Library

- Running and staffing costs all funded by local group
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- IT equipment/support and maintenance, Wi-Fi, printing and any other systems funded by local group
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Community Commitment

Community

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- Maintain or create a suitable legal structure to deliver community services i.e. Town/Parish Council, CIC or similar entity
- Be compliant with legislation and the agreed LibrariesWest service standards where appropriate and B&NES library byelaws and regulations (including management of reserved items for other consortium libraries for delivery/pick up if option A)
- Potential community asset transfer of building lease or licence to occupy
- Development of a sustainable business plan and service delivery plan to move to Independent Community Run Library model
- Issue library membership cards
- Maintain or create a suitable structure to manage the planned staffing resource whether volunteer or paid
- Responsible for all revenue running costs – utilities, rent, rates etc.
- Retention of any income generated through fees/charges or the sale of goods or services managed by the local group
- Responsible for all volunteers or paid staff costs
- A commitment to protect and make the delivery universally available and to take part in National and topical library events
- Provision of, and funding for, any IT equipment/support and maintenance, Wi-Fi, printing and any other relevant systems - for Option A there is a minimum requirement of 2 PCs or laptops for customer use with scanners and printer
- Compliance with legislation and licensing for sale of goods or services
- Retain or improve current opening hours if an existing Authority run branch library



B&NES Commitment

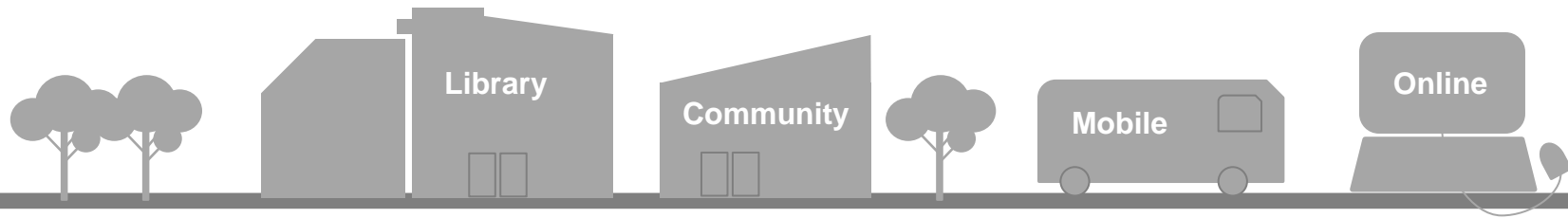
B&NES

- Supply of book stock , rotation and management of stock as agreed with Community group to meet local needs
- Quarterly contact with the Library Service and the Independent Community Library Network
- Support through Community Engagement Team to access external funds, support and grants
- Volunteer management support (recruitment, DBS checks etc.) via the Volunteer Centre and Network
- Delivery and pick up of reserved stock ordered on line or via the App (if Option A chosen)
- Provision of Community Library Fund Start Up Grant
- Supply of blank library membership cards
- Professional support from B&NES available through a programme of site visits, meetings and training, including start up support
- Ongoing support via email contact/phone line
- Access to some online subscription resources funded by B&NES
- Co-ordination of the Independent Community Library Network
- Retention of all income from fees, fines or charges related to stock (Option A)



Process for developing Community Run Libraries





Community Library Fund Grant

- Funded from Modern Libraries Programme budget
- Intended as one off capital pump priming/development funding
- Weighted to priority areas and transition of existing facilities to release savings
- 2 step process –
 - Expression of Interest form (on website & widely promoted)
 - Application form & business plan template following accepted EOI
- Up to £5K per application
- Signposting to other funders – e.g. GLL Community Foundation Fund Crowdfunding for community libraries

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New Electoral Arrangements

Local Government Boundary Commission Draft Proposals

Link to website for detailed proposals:
<https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/9913>

New Ward proposals for BANES

- Objectives:
 - Reduce the number of Councillors in BANES to 59 (from 66), considering;
 - Electoral Equality
 - Community Identity
 - Effective & Convenient Local Government

Underlying Principles

- Electoral Equality
 - Each Councillor represents a similar number of voters
- Community Identity
 - Reflects community interests, identities and links
 - Active Community Groups
 - Shared facilities (shops, schools, services)
 - Transport links
 - Shared interests in an area
- Effective local government
 - Strong easily identifiable boundaries
 - Not too small or too large
 - Appropriate ward name

Overview of Bath proposals

Ward	Cllrs
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Abbey	1
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Kingsmead	2
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Lansdown	1
----------	---

Larkhall	1
----------	---

Newbridge	2
-----------	---

Walcot	2
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Western	2
---------	---

Bathwick	1
----------	---

Claverton Down	1
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Combe Down	1
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Widcombe	1
----------	---

Lyncombe	1
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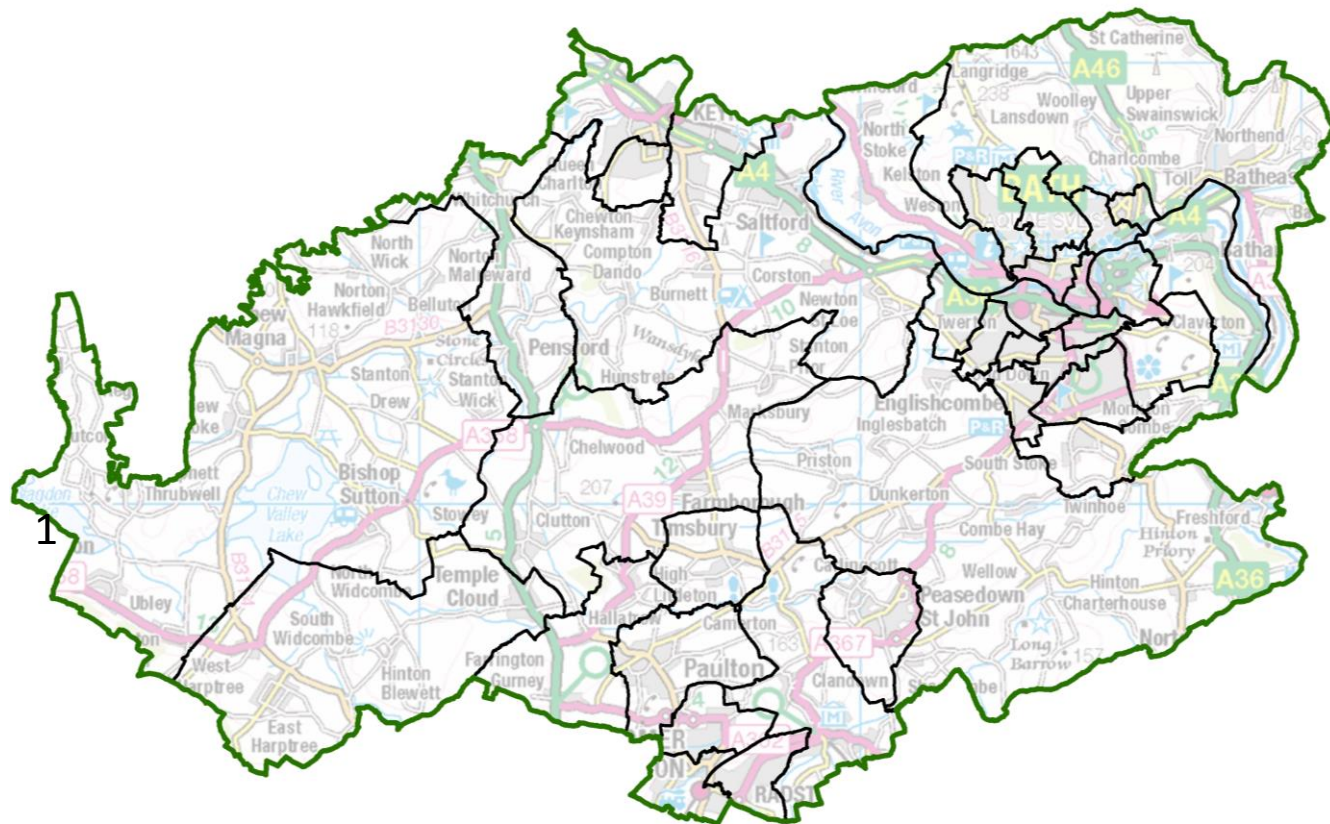
Moorlands	1
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Odd Down	2
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Oldfield Park	3
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Southdown	2
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Twerton	2
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Key Question for the Forum

1. Do the draft proposals for the City of Bath meet the stated objectives and principles? **NO**
2. Should the Bath City Forum seek to comment on the draft proposals? **YES**

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Note:

- The suggestion is that we should comment on the proposals for City-wide issues but not for individual wards.
- We remain politically neutral on this.
- Other groups, political and residents are expected to comment on detailed ward proposals separately.

Proposed submission points

- The following slide suggests points of overall principle that the Bath City Forum might wish to submit to the Boundary Commission.
- Other points may be added after the Forum discussion

Proposed Submission Points

Comment	Basis
The proposals seem skewed towards electoral equality rather than community identity	1 Electoral equality can be achieved without breaking up communities
It is vital that the City boundary (un-parished boundary) is not breached	1 Community Identity 2 Effective local government 3 Obscures parish funding arrangements 4 Newbridge ward does this
The University is distorting the position for the South of Bath. The proposed ward for Claverton Down has no real basis.	1 University better to stay with Bathwick 2 Claverton Down makes no sense in terms of community or effective government
Wards should ideally have 2 councillors in the City. (not 1 – nine wards or 3 – one ward)	1 Two Cllrs allow for more effective representation 2 Avoids small or large wards
Strong communities should not be split up or areas isolated outside from their natural links	1 Community identity 2 Community cohesion 3 E.g. Widcombe, Combe Down, Oldfield Park, Bathwick or Lansdown (Cavendish Rd split)
Strong boundaries should be recognised	1 River, Railway, Canal major roads, historic parish boundaries

Recommendation

- That the Bath City Forum responds to the consultation covering the points identified on slide 7 (as agreed or amended at the meeting)
- That the BCF invites the Commission to revisit its proposals for Bath by:
 - Staying within the City boundary
 - Placing a greater emphasis on community identity and cohesion (noting submissions from local groups and residents)
 - Reconsidering the position for the University / Claverton Down
 - Seeking for wards to be predominantly with 2 Cllrs
- That the Forum requests the Chair writes and signs a letter seeking the above changes.

Algorithm Democracy

The Boundary Committee of the Electoral Commission has recently published its draft recommendations for changes to the BathNES ward boundaries w.e.f. 2018.

These proposals and the process of their determination raise critical issues for local democratic representation and for participation in local elections.

Anyone who cares about local democracy should be concerned and campaign to stop the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) proposals. The issues are, in descending order of generality, as follows.

1. On 18th May 2017 full council decided to back a review on dubious and potentially anti-democratic grounds. Specifically that the overall number of councillors should reduce from 65 to 59, for the following reasons.
 - (a) the council has shifted from delivering a comprehensive range of direct services to being a 'commissioning focussed organisation'.
 - (b) central government funding has been reduced
 - (c) social media and new technology make it easier to engage with constituents and more easily resolve queries with Council services.

<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/documents/s46537/Review%20of%20Electoral%20Arrangements%20in%20BNES.pdf>

Comments

Relative to other major areas of expenditure, BANES is well able to afford the electoral and remuneration costs of eight councillors. Commissioned services do not necessarily generate less problems than in-house provision and may well create more issues for residents. Online technologies actually increase the amount of exchanges and communications between representatives and citizens.

Inadequate council minutes do not state if any members opposed these proposals and assumptions.
<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/documents/s47127/Minutes%20of%20Previous%20Meeting.pdf>

2. The list of respondents to the invitation from the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) to submit proposals includes the Conservative Party, Liberal Democrat Party and the Independents group of councillors.
http://www.lgbce.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0017/36521/Bath-and-North-East-Somerset-Draft-Recommendations-Report.pdf

Comment

Why are these groups apparently so keen on reducing democratic representation? Why are they ranking cost saving above democratic principles? Do they perceive some electoral advantage for themselves such a reduction and reorganisation? Why stop at a 9% reduction? A 50% reduction would save even more money. There does not seem to have been any cost-benefit analysis of the impacts yet some residents and probably individual councillors must lose out.

3. The present distribution of councillors has only 10 single-member wards. All of these are in NE Somerset. The LGBC proposes 14 such wards: 7 in NE Somerset and 7 in the city boundaries. Proposed single member city wards are: Abbey, Claverton Down, Lansdown, Larkhall, Lyncombe, Moorlands, Widcombe. These figures show it is disproportionately city wards being carved up to equalise the ratio of voters per ward across the authority. To justify the creation of single member wards some residential areas would be transferred from two-member wards in order to provide sufficient electors to meet the LGC preferred ratio of approximately 2,300 voters per councillor.

'Larkhall' is a case in point. This new electoral unit would constitute the core of the present Lambridge ward. Its voter population would be cut by transferring neighbourhoods to Walcot in the west, Lansdown in the north and Bathavon North in the east. These transfers would 'compensate' the latter wards for losses to neighbouring wards adjacent to them; e.g. the loss of the Bathwick estate from Walcot to Bathwick ward.

Comment

The committee claims to have 'visited the area in order to look at the various different proposals on the ground' and to 'have taken into account local evidence which provided evidence of community links and locally recognised boundaries.' This must have been a perfunctory exercise as the committee have failed to recognise the importance of one of their own criteria –that boundaries 'reflect community identity' – in some case. For example, in the Lambridge area the Larkhall community extends as far as Fairfield Park – witness the furore over the axing of the Larkhall-Fairfield bus service – parts of Walcot and Bailbrook. The LGBC proposes to hive off the latter to Bathavon South on the grounds that there is a natural contiguity with Batheaston village; despite the distance from Batheaston being much longer than that between Bailbrook and Larkhall centre.

4. Implications for smaller parties and some independents are significant. Chances of gaining seats in existing wards such as Lambridge or Lyncombe have diminished because in the new single member wards voters will no longer be able to 'split the ticket' and vote for, say, one Lib Dem and one Labour or Green candidate. In other wards their extension into the more rural areas, such as Newbridge's extension as far as North Stoke, will include more Conservative-inclined voters.

Conclusion

From a general democratic point of view, these proposals are regressive and unfair.

They are based on bureaucratic efficiency criteria and arithmetic population averages - which have little to do with effective democratic representation.

The rationale for a reduction in the total number of councillors is itself dubious. As recent protests over council decision-making for an eastern Park and Ride and the mooted relocation of the main Library have shown, there are increasing demands for accountability which a net loss of council representatives in the city would only frustrate rather than satisfy.

Councillors' workloads are unlikely to be diminishing, as the rationale claims.

It is also unhelpful to party democracy if this bureaucratic gerrymandering benefits areas where Conservatives and Lib Dems are strongest.

Action: in light of the main parties collaboration in this gerrymandering it is important that community and campaign groups and smaller parties, as well as individual residents, send objections to the anomalies and disadvantages described above.

At this stage it is probably pointless to protest the underlying rationale of reducing councillor numbers; but some of the more invidious proposals relating to reduced ward areas, particularly the number of single councillor wards should surely be opposed. Suggested grounds for objection are:

- * the disregard for the LGBC's own principle of community links, locally recognised boundaries and community identity as, for example, in the case of Larkhall/Lambridge;
- * the invidious loading of a disproportionate number of single-councillor units onto the city wards –that will probably benefit some political parties at the expense of others.

Send objections and comments to:

<https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/have-your-say/9913?bbox=351518,152173.5,379993,171823.5>

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SPEECH BATH CITY FORUM

WEDS 17 JAN 2018

Good evening and thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak tonight.

I am here to talk about community engagement.

- What does that actually mean?
- How can the ways in which we engage with community be improved?

I look around this room tonight and I see that the majority of people here are male, white and middle class.

- Bath clearly has a diversity problem when we look at its representative groups.
 - While Bathnes is 90% White British – against 80% UK average, are 10% of our public representatives from BAME backgrounds?
 - Almost 9% of residents were born outside the UK
 - There are more women than men resident here, as across the world now.
 - Over 10% (21,000) residents don't earn a living wage for a single person, Over 20% (36,000) residents don't earn a living wage for a couple of family.
- It is not just the Council but it's inherent within other organisations as well.
- I come from a theatre background. Even this traditionally "liberal" world has a massive diversity problem.
- It is slowly improving but there is a long way to go.
 - A regional theatre asked local BAME residents why they did not come to see shows at the theatre.
 - Amongst obvious things such as the price of tickets, another common theme emerged.
 - The answer? The shows were white middle-class actors telling white stories.
 - They did not see **anything – or anyone – on stage that reflected them, their communities or their stories.**
- Could Bathnes's failure to engage with different communities be down to the largely white male and middle class profile? **Are local people not seeing themselves represented and therefore feel excluded?**
- As human beings, we all tend to gravitate towards those who share similar values, speak the same way we speak, think in a similar way.
- But we know this is dangerous.
- If the US election and the unexpected nature of the Brexit result showed anything, it is the danger of echo chambers – **the danger of assumptions that come with privilege.**
- Another barrier to engagement is a physical one.
 - The buildings where we meet are designed to impress, not welcome.
 - That can be very intimidating.

- Theatres are not that different.
- One local mum's kids went to a youth group at a regional theatre.
- At the end of each session she would always wait outside
- When asked why, she said: "I've never been to a theatre. I've no idea how to behave in one. Do I have to talk with a posh voice?"
- The building was a barrier.
- Members of the community can understandably feel the same way about the Council chamber.
 - They've no idea what to expect in meetings, how they're supposed to act, what will happen.
 - **The meetings themselves prevent community engagement.**
- I have highlighted a few issues I believe cause some of the problems that community members have fed back to me over the last year.
- These are not anybody's fault and they can all be fixed.
- **But if nothing changes, then the problem does become deliberate.**

To recap, some of the barriers I have identified are:

- Lack of diversity and voices from different backgrounds
- Buildings as barriers
- Processes that are opaque, rules that need learning, language that's unnecessarily high-falutin'
- In the Council's Corporate Strategy for 2016-2020, section 3 clearly states that one of the Council's ambitions is A new relationship with customers and communities: **Putting residents first in everything that we do**

With that in mind here are some positive ways to make change.

- Kenneth Hogg was a civil servant based in Scotland
- His TED-X talk – available on YouTube – is called "Change Starts Here"
 - He tells the story of how the Scottish Government rolled out a program from MIT called ULab, across Scotland.
 - ULab has helped communities across the country engage with their councils and the public sector in a new way – going into discussions with questions, rather than answers.
 - Mr Hogg openly admits it had been uncomfortable. It was a completely new way of working.
 - Dealing with people as people and actually learning to listen and leave preconceived views at the door.
 - The results have improved how the Scottish Government works
 - There is now a spirit of openness and true engagement with the community.
- I believe it is time that this Council learnt to become uncomfortable.
 - But more than that – become comfortable with a new state of uncomfortableness, of uncertainty, of questioning without knowing the answers.

- I would like to work with officers to hold a series of mock Council meetings which shows residents exactly what to expect.
 - Break down the policies and procedures
 - Let them try out public speaking for 3 minutes with the traffic light system – without the stakes being any higher than learning something new.

I believe that if we work together we really can improve local engagement with the Council, and perhaps raise awareness of issues within the city which are currently not finding a voice.

Thank you for your time.

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