

Stock management policy

Newcastle Libraries stock management policy sets out the principles by which books, audiovisual materials and other resources should be acquired, managed, and made available for the maximum benefit to residents, within the available budget.

Aims and objectives

Our aim is to ensure that the stock in Newcastle Libraries should be provided, promoted, and made available in such a way as to interest, inform and excite our customers. We aim to provide a modern service with relevant diverse collections that support reading, information, and learning.

The key objectives are:

- to provide an overall stock that meets the needs of the whole community, recognising the needs of people with disabilities and those from diverse cultural, social, and economic backgrounds
- to provide reading choices by promoting a breadth and range of fiction and non-fiction stock while also providing popular material which will enhance our customers' quality of life through reading
- to ensure that the most relevant and cost-effective resources are made as accessible as possible
- to increase participation, encourage new members and the retention of existing members
- to ensure stock is well-presented, well-managed and in good physical condition

We will use this policy to ensure that the funds allocated for stock purchase are used effectively to offer value for money.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Stock management principles

Books and other materials are made available to users as a single, city-wide resource. Items can be requested free of charge from any library across the city.

A huge volume of material is published annually in print and electronic formats, and the constraints of space and budget mean that it is impossible for the library service to buy everything.

Our aim is to provide access to as wide a range of material as possible to support: the information; learning; business; cultural; and leisure needs of the city and its communities.

This document shows how we select our stock and defines the principles that underpin this process.

Within the budget available, we aim to ensure a balanced and comprehensive collection, with range and breadth, and in sufficient quantity to meet public demand.

Stock selection criteria

Stock is selected by a team of professional library staff.

Decisions on stock selection include the following range of criteria and assessments:

- Quality and presentation
- Content
- Relevance, scope, range, and coverage
- Popularity
- Potential use and value for money
- Local Interest
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
- Digital stock

Exclusions

The following categories of stock will normally fall outside the scope of our collections:

- Items unsuitable in format for their purpose e.g., ring-bound items for lending stock, (unless the information contained is unavailable in any other form)
- Expensive luxury editions

- Reading schemes and workbooks primarily intended for use with, or by, a teacher
- Items intended for individual ownership e.g., workbooks with spaces left for the owner to complete
- Items containing practical information inapplicable to UK conditions or regulations
- Some items above undergraduate level
- Items banned under UK law
- Items restricted for purchase by territorial rights and publisher restrictions

Book requests and suggestions

Items from our stock can be requested to be collected free of charge from any library in the city. Where demand for a particular title is high, multiple copies may be purchased. These may be in a range of formats, including physical and digital stock. To ensure breadth of stock is maintained, where multiple copies are already in our collection, requests for additional copies may be declined.

Items not in stock and unavailable for purchase can be requested via the Inter Library Loan service for a fee.

Stock suggestions for all formats are welcomed and can be made in person or online using [Suggest a title for Newcastle Libraries](#). The standard selection criteria apply, and the library service reserves the right to decline to acquire items which have been requested.

Self-published items

The library service is sometimes asked to acquire, either by purchase or donation, books which have been self-published. These items may not have been through the rigorous editing and legal content checks undertaken by mainstream publishers. Where the library service agrees that such an item may be of use in our collection (often in cases of local interest), it is the responsibility of the author to ensure and demonstrate that content is reliable and does not contravene any laws.

Self-published stock will be subject to the same selection criteria as stock published by a mainstream publisher: quality; format; content; and anticipated demand. Items will not automatically be added to stock if they are donated by the author but must also meet the relevant selection criteria.

Reading Groups

We support reading groups via a dedicated Reading Group catalogue (available online) which offers sets of books containing multiple copies of titles for loan. Suggestions for titles are welcomed, but purchase of reading group stock is in line with the overall stock selection policy. As a result, we may be unable to fulfil all such requests.

City Library Stack

Some stock which is older and no longer suitable for display, is retained in City Library if we feel it may have some future value for our customers. These tend to be books which are no longer in print and cannot be replaced. These are accessible on request.

Reference and information

The nature and provision of information materials within libraries has changed dramatically in recent years. The advent of both free and subscription-only online resources has significantly enhanced the provision of information services. Our preference is to provide online information which is always available over the internet and is free for our customers to access.

Each library will have a small reference collection. Some material may be available only to be viewed in the library due its condition or rarity.

Heritage

Heritage material from the North East, with a clear focus on Newcastle, including books, maps and other media is available at City Library. We aim to acquire all published material related to Newcastle. Each branch library maintains a level of stock relating to the local area appropriate to the size of the branch.

Newcastle Libraries accepts donations to its Heritage Collections in the form of gifts, deposits, bequests, local authority transfer or temporary loans.

Any items from the categories above must relate to Newcastle and the surrounding area and be of local significance. We reserve the right to refuse any items, while our Heritage Loans Policy outlines the terms and conditions.

Donations

The library service accepts donations of recently published material that meets our criteria for stock selection and is of a sufficiently high physical standard for library needs.

For example, we will consider:

- Bestselling authors and significant titles missing from our collection

We will not accept:

- Items containing out of date information
- Textbooks
- Magazines
- Board games
- CDs / DVDs

Donations become the property of the service as a whole and will be treated in accordance with our existing stock guidelines. Donations are accepted on the understanding that they may not necessarily be added to stock or retained at a particular branch. We are unable to return items that are not selected for stock, and we reserve the right to dispose of any items we are unable to use, in line with our disposal policy.

Unsolicited items

Unsolicited items sent to the library service will not be considered for purchase by library staff. Items will only be returned to the sender if contact details have been provided, and this can be done so at no cost to Newcastle Libraries.

Stock editing and revision

It is the responsibility of the library team to ensure that stock remains relevant and in good condition at all service points. Stock is monitored and evaluated using automated stock management tools, national and in-house surveys, stock suggestions and customer comment forms.

The library team periodically 'weed' the shelves and analyse the stock gaps and stock demand. This remains an important part of the stock management process.

Withdrawal and disposal

Items may be disposed of in line with the [City Library Stack Management and Retention Policy](#).

Items which have been withdrawn may be sold or recycled.

Overdue, lost, damaged or defaced items

Fines are no longer charged for overdue items.

If an item is lost, damaged, or defaced, the library service will ask the customer to pay the cost of replacing the item.

Controversial material

Newcastle Libraries subscribes to the guidelines laid down by the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP):

"It is the role of a library and information service that is funded from the public purse to provide, as far as resources allow, access to all publicly available information, whether factual or fiction and regardless of media or format, in which its users claim legitimate interest.

Access should not be restricted on any grounds except that of the law. If publicly available material has not incurred legal penalties, then it should not be excluded on

moral, political, religious, racial or gender grounds, to satisfy the demands of sectional interest. The legal basis of any restriction on access should always be stated."

Our primary objective is to provide the widest possible choice of published material, in the most appropriate format, which does not contravene any law and to provide such material, either on the shelves or on demand, to all users of the library service without prejudice.

The library service will not add or remove an item from our shelves solely at the request of any individual or group. Library staff are responsible for the management and disposal of stock following the principles outlined in this stock management policy. The final decision as to whether an item is considered suitable for library stock rests with the Head of Service.

It is the responsibility of parents, guardians, or carers to determine the suitability of materials used by their children.