



Coventry City Council

5

Public Report

Report to

Cabinet
Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

12 December 2006

13 December 2006

Report of

Director of Community Services

Title

Review of Library Buildings

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To notify Cabinet of the issues relating to the closure of Holbrook Library
- 1.2 To seek Cabinet approval to institute proceedings to close Holbrook Library
- 1.3 To identify alternative provision to serve the community unable to access alternative static library provision
- 1.4 To address the concerns raised by Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on the 22nd November 2006 which were that:
 - The report contained little information relating to the financial implications of closing the Library and the Cabinet Member and Officers could not provide information requested at the meeting
 - No assessment had been made on the likely impact of the proposal on the area
 - The report contained no information about consultation being carried out on the proposal. Although officers provided some information at the meeting Members were particularly concerned that local schools had not been consulted.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve the closure of Holbrook Library.

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 In 2003 The Audit Commission judged Coventry's library service as being "Fair with Promising Prospects." Prior to 2003, Coventry had insufficient libraries per 1,000 head of population to meet Public Library Service Standards 1 & 2 with only 13 libraries and with some communities not served. The communities not served were Cheylesmore, Whoberley and Wyken. For a population of 304,000 the city should have 16 libraries as a minimum. Since 2003, the City Council has progressively increased the number of libraries to 18 with the addition of Arena Park, Cheylesmore, Hillfields, Whoberley and Wyken. (Appendix 1 shows the 1mile catchment area of libraries in the city). The Library Service Standard is that everyone should live within 2 miles of a Library and that 95% of people should live within 1 mile.

- 3.2 Cheylesmore, Whoberley and Wyken were developed to fill in the gaps in the City's provision to meet the Public Library Service Standards. Whoberley is a temporary library for which Capital funding has been granted to build a permanent library alongside a rebuilding of Tile Hill as a Library, One Stop Shop, Adult Education Centre and Neighbourhood Wardens base approved by Cabinet in August 2006. The interim library at Wyken was opened pending transfer to a dual use facility at the PFI funded Caludon Castle School in Spring 2007. (Appendix 2 shows the performance of all libraries across the city and Appendix 3 illustrates the usage of Arena Park Library including from the Holbrook Library catchment area).
- 3.3 The addition of the innovative Arena Park Library based in a retail shopping outlet which serves Holbrooks and Longford Wards has been monitored and evaluated and is judged nationally as an exemplar of a successful innovative location for a library. Additionally the opportunity was taken to seek external funding to pilot a library in Hillfields that is funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) until December 2008. In addition the City has significantly improved the quality of accommodation in a number of libraries with refurbishments at Stoke, Bell Green, Foleshill and Earlsdon.
- 3.4 The overall approach has been to introduce new libraries where required and refurbish others to ensure adequate provision across the city while reviewing those which are in poor condition or are poor performing within the revenue funding of the Service. (Appendix 2 shows the performance and costs of all libraries across the city).
- 3.5 No Council can afford to provide two libraries above the government's minimum standards without it having an impact on other key priorities both inside and outside the Service. The purpose of this review and proposed closure is to ensure that both the Council and the library service are getting value for money and to bring the service closer into line with these minimum national library standards. It is proposed to close one city library as part of this review (Holbrook) which is located in an ageing building with major access problems and is not compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA).
- 3.6 One of the reasons Holbrook has been recommended for closure is because of its close proximity to other libraries. The community in Holbrooks are well served not only by the excellent facilities at the new Arena Park library (0.6miles away) but also within reasonable distance (as defined by the Public Library Service Standards) of Foleshill (1.63miles) and Jubilee Crescent libraries (1.3miles away). The area also has reasonable bus links with these libraries.
- 3.7 Although there are other instances around the city of libraries overlapping with each other library standards indicate that 95% of residents need to live within one miles of a library and 100% within two miles. Removing one of these other libraries would mean that the City did not achieve its library standards.
- 3.8 People in the area now benefit from the Arena Park Library (opened in January 2005), which contains many new and innovative facilities for children as well as adults and has performed extremely well for book issues (5th) and visits (6th). Innovations include a CD Listening Station, Self Issue terminals and a bookshop style interior. Holbrook is only open 35.5 hours per week over 5 days while Arena Park is open 60 hours over 7 days. (Appendix 3 illustrates the usage of Arena Park Library including usage from the Holbrook Library catchment area).
- 3.9 Holbrook is considerably more expensive than Arena Park library. It costs £1.13 to issue a book at Arena Park compared with £3.45 at Holbrook when measured against the cost of staffing in each library. A recent Access Survey for the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)

has indicated a need for £16,000 of works to make Holbrook Library DDA compliant whereas Arena Park is fully DDA compliant.

- 3.10 From April 2005 to April 2006 visitor numbers at the Holbrook library have fallen by 39% and risen by 102% at Arena Park over the same period. Four out of ten Holbrook registered borrowers have borrowed from the Arena Park service since it began in January 2005. Appendix three shows clearly that the origin of many Arena Park borrowers is from the area served immediately by Holbrook Library.
- 3.11 Closure of Holbrook Library will end over-provision of library services in the north of the city, will release well trained and experienced staff, book-stock, ICT equipment and pc's to be used elsewhere in the city.

4 Concerns of Scrutiny Co-ordination

- 4.1 At its meeting on 22 November Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee expressed concern that the Report had contained
- little information about the financial implications of closing the library;
 - no assessment had been made on the likely impact of the proposal in the area;
 - no information about consultation, especially in relation to schools
- 4.2 Finance
The annual Revenue cost of Holbrook Library is £53,000 per annum. On closure the building would need to be disposed of by the Property Assets Team but until this could be achieved, a sum of £10,000 would need to be expended on the building to make it secure by boarding up of windows, upgrading the alarm system and additional security on the fencing. These costs will be managed within the Libraries & Information Services Revenue Budget. There will be no savings from the 2006/07 budgets.
- 4.3 Impact Assessment
The membership database has been searched to analyse the level of usage of Holbrook Library. 202 children and young people under 15, 4.8% of the total estimated catchment population use the library; 258 people aged 15-64, 2.21% of total estimated catchment population use the library; and 91 people 65+, 3.44% of total estimated catchment population use the library. A total of 551 people are designated as active users of Holbrooks Library (active being defined as the number of members who have used the library in the last year). There will be a loss of access of 4 public access PC's in Holbrook Library.
- 4.4 To mitigate the closure of Holbrook Library the following actions will be initiated the library and information service will write to everyone who has used the service in the last 2 years to detail the alternative provision that is available both in terms of information about the 3 nearest libraries, Arena Park, Foleshill and Jubilee Crescent and the services available and also what additionally will be done to mitigate closure.
- 4.5 The library and information service will work with Age Concern to promote the availability of the housebound reader service to ensure people in Holbrooks have equal access to the service and are able to take it up if this is helpful.
- 4.6 At its annual review, mobile library stops will be assessed and if possible routes will be rescheduled to serve Holbrooks to ensure that parents and carers with young children have access to books and materials for leisure and school study/homework.
- 4.7 The Service will provide library and learning related activities and maintain library presence in the Holbrooks area through work with adult learners and community groups.

- 4.8 The Service will support literacy and numeracy activities with schools - user education, study skills, reading events, summer reading scheme etc. led by the Senior Community Librarian and Library Manager based at Arena Park supported by the service's lead for services to children and young people.

Books and other media can be renewed on-line or by telephone or returned to any library in the city.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 There is no legal requirement to consult on the closure of a Library. No consultation took place before the original Cabinet Paper was published. On that day, 23rd October 2006 the staff in the Library were informed of the proposal being put to Cabinet and on the following day the Trade Unions were formally advised of the Cabinet Member's intention.
- 5.2 Consultation on options for alternative library and information services and to hear users views has been carried out by Council Officers. Public reaction to the closure from this consultation has been negligible although concerns have been expressed.
- 5.3 Printed information regarding the opportunities for people resident in Holbrooks to meet with managers was given to all attendees of the Holbrooks Ward Forum on 2 November. The ward forum was given the opportunity to discuss the closure and no concerns were raised from the meeting.
- 5.4 The Head of Service wrote over 1,000 letters to people who have used Holbrook Library in the last 2 years. This letter has only elicited 1 phone call, 1 letter and 4 email responses. Notices about the proposed closure and "Meet the Manager" Sessions have been advertised. The 4 "Meet the Manager" Sessions drew 5 members of the public plus 1 Councillor and 1 Trade Union Representative. Ward Councillors were also briefed on the proposals on the 23rd October.
- 5.5 All the Primary Schools and Secondary Schools in the area have been written to by the Head of Service and additionally contacted by the Manager, Operations for the East Area for them to raise any concerns or queries. None have responded with concerns about the specific impact on their work.
- 5.6 Both Community Centres have been visited to explore the option of locating a Deposit Collection of books in them.
- 5.7 Consultation has taken place with Trade Unions (see 6.7 below). They have opposed the closure of the Library but have not offered any alternative suggestions on which library might be closed. Unison has initiated a Petition, supported by local councillors to oppose the proposed closure. The petition will be handed to Council on the night of the December 12th.
- 5.8 Libraries Management will conduct a further ongoing review of library premises over the next 2 years to determine the priorities for the Service.

6 Proposals

- 6.1 It is proposed that closure of Holbrook Library be achieved by 31st December 2006.

- 6.2 The current staffing establishment at Holbrook of 2.68 FTE – 3 people, will be relocated to other vacant posts in libraries in the City, following consultation with the affected staff and Human Resources. Other staff that additionally work at Holbrook Library will be timetabled to work elsewhere following closure.
- 6.3 The Home Reader Service operated in partnership with Age Concern will be promoted to residents of all ages who would benefit from it together with a publicity campaign that will be developed to notify people of the changes in library provision in the Holbrooks area.
- 6.4 Closure will also enable the relocation of the Multicultural Services Team to Central Library which will conclude an aspect of the Collection Development Unit Review and relocation of the City bookstore of out of print and less popular stock to Central Library where it can be more readily accessed for use across the whole city for book requests.
- 6.5 That alternative provision in the form of a Deposit Collection is investigated at Holbrooks Community Centre and local schools.
- 6.6 The Senior Community Librarian & Library Manager for Arena Park will work with local schools and adult learning groups to develop literacy and numeracy skills by promotion of the library service and by provision of adult basic skills materials.
- 6.7 A publicity and information campaign will be developed to notify people of the changes in library provision in the Holbrook area.

7 Attainment of Public Library Service Standards

7.1 Holbrook Community Library contributes to a range of KPI's including Public Library Service Standards (PLSS). The following illustrates the impact of closure of specific KPI's.

- **Public Library Service Standard 1 - Distance from static library or mobile stop**

The closure of Holbrooks will not have a significant impact on this PLSS. Holbrook's catchment area is almost entirely within Arena Park Library and Jubilee Crescent catchments.

- **Public Library Service Standard 2 - Aggregate opening Hours per 1000 of the population**

The standard is 128 hours per thousand. The closure of Holbrook's would reduce aggregate opening hours by 1846 hours per year from 149/1000 to 143/1000 still 11.7% above the standard and in the current upper quartile for opening hours.

- **Public Library Service Standard 3 – Internet access**

No effect. Access measured by network available at time of measurement.

- **Public Library Service Standard 4 – Electronic workstations available to users**

No effect. Workstations redeployed to other libraries

- **Public Library Service Standard 5 - % of requests supplied in x days**

No effect. Standard based on performance of current network of libraries.

- **Public Library Service Standard 6 – Library visits per 1000 population**

Holbrook's currently contributes 34,122 visits per year. Closure would reduce Overall visits from 6,929 per 1000 (target 6,000) to 6,817, still above the current standard and still over 10% above that level which continues to place us in the upper quartile. Visits should be recouped by visits to new mobile library stops and other libraries.

- **Public Library Service Standard 7 – User satisfaction**

No effect. Holbrook's achieves the average customer satisfaction rating.

- **Public Library Service Standard 8 – Customer Satisfaction – Children**

No effect.

- **Public Library Service Standard 9 – Annual number of items purchased per 1000**

No effect. No alteration in materials purchased.

- **Public Library Service Standard 10 – stock replacement rate.**

No effect. Existing resources redeployed to other libraries.

8 Other specific implications

8.1

	Implications (See below)	No Implications
Neighbourhood Management		✓
Best Value	✓	
Children and Young People	✓	
Comparable Benchmark Data		✓
Corporate Parenting		✓
Coventry Community Plan		✓
Crime and Disorder		✓
Equal Opportunities	✓	
Finance	✓	
Health and Safety		✓
Human Resources	✓	
Human Rights Act		✓
Impact on Partner Organisations		✓
Information and Communications Technology		✓
Legal Implications		✓

	Implications (See below)	No Implications
Property Implications	✓	
Race Equality Scheme		✓
Risk Management		✓
Sustainable Development		✓
Trade Union Consultation	✓	
Voluntary Sector – The Coventry Compact	✓	

- 8.2 **Best Value** Closure will enable the Service to operate more cost-effectively by providing services in a more strategic way reflecting Government Standards and Value for money criteria. The closure proposal is an adjustment to service provision to achieve Best Value while still meeting Public Library Service Standards/Impact Measures.
- 8.2.1 **Children and Young People** Children and Young People make up 35% (202) of Holbrooks Library users and the Manager, Development: Children & Young Peoples Services and the Senior Community Librarian & Library Manager for Arena Park will work with local schools and the Community Centres to promote libraries and reading for this age group.
- 8.2.2 **Finance** The annual revenue cost of Holbrook Library is £53,000. Closure of the Library will result in a saving within the current Libraries & Information Services budget. There will be interim costs, estimated at £10,000 to make the building secure following closure. Any further associated costs will be managed within the CLIS Revenue Budget. There will be no savings from the 2006/07 budgets.
- 8.2.3 **Equal Opportunities** Children and Young People and Older People make particular use of library services and an Equality Impact Assessment has been carried to identify key issues.
- 8.2.4 **Human Resources** The current staff at Holbrook Library will be offered alternative locations within Libraries & Information Services. Staff will be supported by Human Resources and options discussed with them.
- 8.2.5 **Property** The property will be declared surplus to the requirements of Community Services and 'handed back' to City Development to determine future use.
- 8.2.6 **Trade Union Consultation** A copy of this report has been sent to the Trade Unions. The Trade Unions will also be involved in consultation over staff relocations. The Trade Unions were briefed on 24th October and again 21st November.
- 8.2.7 **Voluntary sector-Coventry Compact** Negotiation will be undertaken with Age Concern to increase the availability of the Home Reader Service in the area.

9 Monitoring

- 9.1 The progress of the closure will be monitored through the regular management processes and reported to the Cabinet Member at a later date.

10 Timescale and expected outcomes

- 10.1 Closure of the library is to be achieved by 31 December 2006 work will be carried out before closure to relocate staff, materials, ICT, furniture and equipment and to

accommodate Multi-Cultural Services staff and the City Bookstore in Central Library. Work will be undertaken to make the building secure.

10.2 Alternative library and information services will be provided by promotion of Arena Park, Foleshill and Jubilee Crescent libraries, the option of locating a Deposit Collection at the Community Centre or local schools will be explored and access and promotion to the Home Reader Service.

	Yes	No
Key Decision	√	
Scrutiny Consideration (if yes, which Scrutiny meeting and date)		
Council Consideration (if yes, date of Council meeting)		

List of background papers

Proper officer: John Bolton, Director of Community Services

Author: Telephone 024 7683 1579
 Andrew Green, Head of Libraries & Information Services,
 (Any enquiries should be directed to the above)

Other contributors:

Alice Davey, Head of Culture, Leisure and Libraries – Phone 024 7983 2380
 Nigel Clews, Head of Property Assets – Phone 024 7683 2708
 Allan French, Head of Customer & Business Services – Phone 024 7683 3819
 Jan Nicholls, Head of Neighbourhood Management – Phone 024 76831097
 Allan Newbold, Strategic Officer, Adult Education – Phone 024 7622 3831
 Sorrelle Clements, Assistant Head of Libraries & Information Services, East Area – Phone 024 7683 2800
 Kathryn Sutherland, Financial Services Manager, Culture, Leisure and Libraries Finance – Phone 024 7683 3937
 Dot Law, Human Resources Advisor, Culture, Leisure and Libraries – 024 7683 4249
 Richard Brankowski, Principal Committee Officer - 024 7683 3077

Papers open to Public Inspection

Description of paper	Location
Impact Assessment on Library Closure in Holbrooks	

Libraries and Information Services

Performance Table

Library	Visits pa	Cost per visit £	Visits/hr	Issues pa	Cost per issue £	Issue Hr	Issue per item pa	Enquiry pa	PC use hrs pa	Overall Ranking
Central	712868 (1)	1.10 (6)	206.1 (1)	480306 (1)	1.63 (9)	139 (1)	4.4 (10)	97795 (1)	113429(1)	1
Earlsdon^{1*}	272207 (2)	0.92 (3)	78.7 (2)	162602(2)	1.55 (7)	47.0 (2)	5.3 (6)	25421 (3)	19499(4)	2
Stoke*	200179 (3)	0.77 (1)	74.7 (3)	101794(4)	1.51 (6)	38.0(4)	3.7 (11=)	18866 (5)	28331(3)	3
Tile Hill	114320 (8)	1.38 (10)	42.7 (6)	114442(3)	1.38 (5)	42.7(3)	4.6 (8)	16674 (6)	15138(5)	6
Foleshill*	136727 (5)	1.37 (9)	39.5 (9)	79235 (9)	2.37 (14)	23(12)	2.5 (15=)	13126 (9)	33120(2)	5
Arena Park*	125036 (6)	0.89 (2)	40.1 (7=)	98221 (5)	1.13 (3)	31.5(7)	8.9 (2)	14073 (7)	6936 (9)	7
Bell Green*	172424 (4)	1.00 (5)	55.7 (4)	92549 (7)	1.86 (12)	29.9(8=)	6.3 (4)	9648 (11)	14471(6)	4
Coundon	60802 (10)	1.79 (12)	22.7 (11)	94236 (6)	1.15 (4)	35.2(5)	4.5 (9)	9302 (12)	5129(10)	10
Jubilee	120790 (7)	1.17 (7)	45.1 (5)	85467 (8)	1.66 (10)	31.9(6)	3.7 (11=)	13887 (8)	9628(8)	8
Willenhall	95329 (9)	0.97 (4)	40.1 (7=)	58140 (11)	1.59 (8)	24.5(10)	3.4 (14)	28167 (2)	12294(7)	9
Finham	59583 (11)	1.24 (8)	24.1 (10)	73756 (10)	1.01 (2)	29.9(8=)	5.5 (5)	9952 (10)	3992(11)	11
Cheylesmore*	36334 (12)	2.08 (15)	17.7 (13)	39223 (13)	1.93 (13)	19.0(13)	6.5 (3)	6014 (13)	3564(12)	12
Mobile*	16499 (15)	1.94 (13)	10.1 (16)	41773 (12)	0.77 (1)	25.5(10)	15.2 (1)	850 (19)	N/a	13
Aldermoor	10359 (17)	2.54 (16)	11.7 (15)	6126(18)	4.31 (18)	6.9 (18)	0.6 (19)	20962 (4)	1730 (16)	16
Canley	30665 (14)	2.74 (17)	17.1 (14)	23023 (14)	3.65 (16)	12.8(14)	2.5 (15=)	2681 (16)	2888(14)	14
Holbrook	34122 (13)	1.64 (11)	18.4 (12)	18826 (15)	3.45 (15)	10.2(15)	1.9 (17)	3757 (15)	3150(13)	15
Whoberley* **	10734 (16)	6.01 (18)	5.9 (17)	14459 (17)	4.47 (19)	7.9(17)	4.8 (7)	5221 (14)	N/a	17
Wyken* ***	8382 (18)	7.75 (19)	4.2 (18=)	16409(16)	3.96 (17)	9.8(16)	3.6 (13)	1689(18)	316(17)	18
Hillfields*	4569 (19)	2.03 (14)	4.2 (18=)	5219 (19)	1.78 (11)	4.8(19)	1.5 (18)	1769 (17)	1795(15)	19

*Refurbished or new libraries during past 5 years.

** Capital approved for permanent library to open 2007/08.

*** Due to relocate to Caludon Castle School spring 2007.

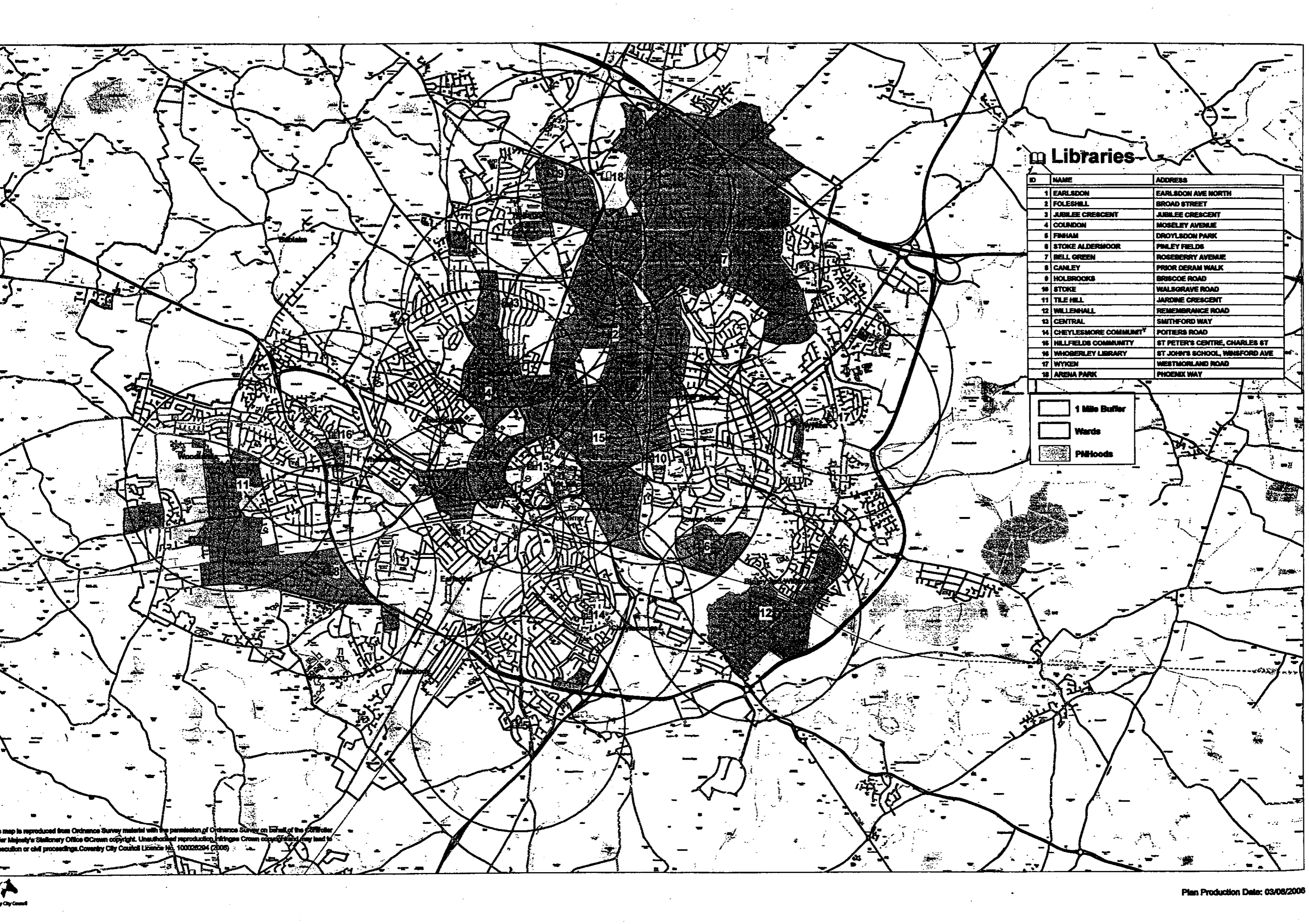
¹ 2004/5 figures (last full year before refurbishment and operation from mobile)

Appendix Three

Map of Arena Park usage

Arena Park Library - Origin of Borrowers -





Libraries

ID	NAME	ADDRESS
1	EARLSDON	EARLSDON AVE NORTH
2	FOLESHILL	BROAD STREET
3	JUBILEE CRESCENT	JUBILEE CRESCENT
4	COUNDON	MOSELEY AVENUE
5	FINHAM	DROYLSDON PARK
6	STOKE ALDERMOOR	FINLEY FIELDS
7	BELL GREEN	ROSEBERRY AVENUE
8	CANLEY	PROOR DERAM WALK
9	HOLBROOKS	BRISCOE ROAD
10	STOKE	WALSGRAVE ROAD
11	TILE HILL	JARDINE CRESCENT
12	WILLENHALL	REMEMBRANCE ROAD
13	CENTRAL	SMITHFORD WAY
14	CHEYLESMORE COMMUNITY	POTTERS ROAD
15	HILLFIELDS COMMUNITY	ST PETER'S CENTRE, CHARLES ST
16	WHORBERLEY LIBRARY	ST JOHN'S SCHOOL, WINSFORD AVE
17	WYKEN	WESTMORLAND ROAD
18	ARENA PARK	PHOENIX WAY

1 Mile Buffer
 Wards
 PFI floods

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