

Equalities Monitoring – Services

Appendix I – Libraries

Annual Report - 2017-18



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1. Introduction

The library service has nine libraries located throughout the Borough. They provide a wide range of resources to their local communities and visitors to the area. These resources include books, e-books and e-magazines, spoken word CDs, DVDs, computer games, newspapers, free internet access via public computers, digital resources, photocopying, printing and scanning, plus a wide range of activities and events.

Residents and visitors to the area can apply for an e+ smartcard that acts as a membership card to access the resources. Each time the card is used a transaction is recorded to enable usage to be monitored.

The purpose of equalities monitoring is to ensure the Council is providing a fair and equitable service to all its residents.

To ensure the service is fair and equitable, monitoring has been undertaken in terms of:

- Access to the service

It has been analysed by the following equality groups:

- Age
- Race
- Sex
- Religion

A satisfaction survey of the library services was not undertaken during 2015, the next was scheduled to take place in 2018, on a rolling three-year programme. However, due to the number of technological changes that are taking place in Libraries during the summer and autumn of 2018; the survey has been deferred until 2019 to enable customers to become accustomed to the new technology before a satisfaction survey is conducted.

When sufficient data for analysis is available for the other protected groups in the Equality Act 2010, these will also be included.

The data below has been taken from:

e+ smartcard database – enrolments and transactions for libraries (1/04/17 to 31/03/18).

Office for National Statistics (ONS) population estimates unit published tables. Crown copyright.

Office for National Statistics (ONS) - Census 2011.

2. Access to the service

Access to the library service can be measured by enrolments and transactions using the e+ smartcard at the nine libraries. Although people who do not use the e+ card may also use the service, the e+ card numbers are sufficiently high to make this a viable measurement of access to the library services.

As people may enrol for the e+ card but not use it, transactions have also been analysed. The tables below show the age, gender, ethnicity and religious belief of those who are using the library facilities.

All data is for residents of Bracknell Forest only. Enrolments for access to library facilities by non-residents were 701 in the year; transactions were 14,371 in the year.

Table 1 – Enrolments by age

Enrolments in e+ card - Libraries 01/04/2017 - 31/03/2018 (Bracknell Forest residents only)					
Age Range	Enrolments in e+ card	E+ card %	Bracknell Forest population Mid-2016	Bracknell Forest population Mid-2016 %	Variance
Under 18	1254	37%	28174	24%	13%
18 to 34	767	22%	24707	21%	1%
35 to 49	689	20%	27260	23%	-3%
50 to 64	401	12%	22637	19%	-7%
65 to 79	273	8%	12362	10%	-2%
over 80	41	1%	4307	4%	-3%
Total	3425	100%	119447	100%	

N.B Percentages may not sum due to rounding

Table 2 – Transactions by age

Transactions - Libraries 01/04/2017 - 31/03/2018 (Bracknell Forest residents only)					
Age Range	Library transactions	Library transactions %	Bracknell Forest population Mid-2016	Bracknell Forest population Mid-2016 %	Variance
Under 18	27316	30%	28174	24%	6%
18 to 34	4300	4%	24707	21%	-17%
35 to 49	12951	14%	27260	23%	-9%
50 to 64	14370	15%	22637	19%	-4%
65 to 79	25703	28%	12362	10%	18%
over 80	7956	9%	4307	4%	5%
Total	92596	100%	119447	100%	

N.B Percentages may not sum due to rounding

Comments

The number of enrolments within a majority of the age ranges is slightly below the Bracknell Forest population, with the major exception being the 'under 18' group where there is a positive variation of 13%, this is a continuing trend from the previous year where there was a 12% variance.

The number of transactions varies considerably amongst each age range, with significant negative variances within the 18-34 (-17%) and 35-49 (-9%) brackets, whilst the opposite is the case within the 65-79 age range with positive variance of 18%. This is a similar trend that was noticed in the previous two years.

Table 3 – Enrolments by Race

Enrolments in e+ card for Libraries - Race 01/04/2017 - 31/03/2018 (Residents of Bracknell Forest only)					
	Resident	% (exc. 'unknown')	BF pop. Census 2011	BF pop. Census 2011 %	Variance
White	905	28%	102,554	91%	-63%
Mixed	19	1%	2303	2%	-1%
Dual Heritage	0	0%	0	0%	0%
Asian	124	4%	5664	5%	-1%
Black	57	2%	2189	2%	0%
Other	17	1%	495	1%	0%
Not known	2064	64%			
Total (exc. not known)	3186	100%	113,205	100%	

N.B Percentages may not sum due to rounding

Non-specific data included under not known

Table 4 – Transactions by Race

Transactions for Libraries using e+ card - Race 01/04/2017 - 31/03/2018 (Residents of Bracknell Forest only)					
	Library transactions	Library transactions % (exc. unknown)	BF pop. Census 2011	BF pop. Census 2011 %	Variance
White	43377	46%	102,554	91%	-45%
Mixed	377	1%	2303	2%	-1%
Dual Heritage	199	0%	0	0%	0%
Asian	3030	3%	5664	5%	-2%
Black	815	1%	2189	2%	-1%
Other	377	1%	495	1%	0%
Not known	44405	48%			
Total (exc. not known)	92580	100%	113,205	100%	

N.B Percentages may not sum due to rounding

Non-specific data included under not known

Comments

Apart from people identified as “white”, race enrolments and transactions using the e+ card are broadly in line with most of the population. However, given the number of enrolments and transactions where people have opted not to give their ethnicity, the results are rather skewed. The reality is that the majority of Library users actually reflect the Bracknell Forest Census data.

Table 5 – Enrolments by Sex

Total enrolments by Gender for Library Service 01/04/2017 - 31/03/2018 (Bracknell Forest Residents only)					
Gender	Resident	Leisure transactions % (exc. unknown)	Bracknell Forest population Mid-2016	Bracknell Forest %	Variance
Female	1,925	56%	60,147	50%	6%
Male	1,475	44%	59,300	50%	-6%
Unknown	15				
Total	3,415	100%	119,447	100%	

N.B Percentages may not sum due to rounding

Table 6 – Transactions by Sex

Transactions - Libraries 01/04/2017 - 31/03/2018 (Bracknell Forest residents only)					
Gender	Library transactions	Library transactions % (exc. unknown)	Bracknell Forest population Mid-2016	Bracknell Forest %	Variance
Female	53,549	58%	60,147	50%	8%
Male	29,083	42%	59,300	50%	-8%
Unknown	9,957				
Total	92,589	100%	119,447	100%	

N.B Percentages may not sum due to rounding

Comments

Enrolments show more women than men are enrolling for the e+ card. Females are also shown to have completed more transactions during the year with a variance of 8%.

It is a national trend that women are the majority of users of a library service. Bracknell Forest is clearly reflecting this. This has also been corroborated by previous user surveys.

Table 7 – Enrolments by Religion

Enrolments in e+ card - Libraries 01/04/2017 - 31/03/2018 (Bracknell Forest residents only)					
Religion	Enrolments in e+ card	E+ card %	Bracknell Forest population Census 2011	Bracknell Forest population Census 2011 %	Variance
Christian	97	49%	68,524	65%	-16%
Buddhist	3	2%	825	1%	1%
Hindu	3	2%	1,824	2%	0%
Jewish	1	0%	176	0%	0%
Muslim	4	2%	1276	1%	1%
Sikh	3	2%	455	0%	2%
Other religion	0	0%	490	0%	0%
No religion	88	43%	32184	30%	13%
Prefer not to say	2,987		7451		0%
Total	199	100%	105,754	100%	0%

*N.B Percentages may not sum due to rounding
Non-specific data included under prefer not to say*

Table 8 – Transactions by Religion

Transactions - Libraries 01/04/2017 - 31/03/2018 (Bracknell Forest residents only)					
Religion	Library transactions	E+ card %	Bracknell Forest population Census 2011	Bracknell Forest population Census 2011 %	Variance
Christian	9,539	63%	68,524	65%	-2%
Buddhist	61	1%	825	1%	0%
Hindu	359	2%	1,824	2%	0%
Jewish	149	1%	176	0%	1%
Muslim	226	2%	1276	1%	1%
Sikh	48	0%	455	0%	0%
Other religion	38	0%	490	0%	0%
No religion	4607	31%	32184	30%	1%
Prefer not to say	77,569		7451		0%
Total	15,027	100%	105,754	100%	0%

*N.B Percentages may not sum due to rounding
Non-specific data included under prefer not to say*

Comments

Religious group enrolments and transactions using the e+ card are broadly in line with the population, with only exceptions being the negative variance with regards to Christian enrolments, and a positive variance towards the enrolments of those who declared themselves to have no religion.

3. Actions from last year's equalities monitoring

A Public Library User Survey has not been carried out since 2015. They are conducted on a three year cycle. However, as part of the Library Service's Transformation Review programme, the public were able to take part in two separate consultation surveys about future service provision in 2016. They also had the opportunity to attend 8 public consultation meetings, led by the Director of Environment, Culture and Communities, Cllr Iain McCracken.

The review has included consultation with all members of the community, including children and young people. As a result of the feedback received, the Library Service has actively recruited over one hundred volunteers from all sectors of the community to assist with service delivery, and will be extending opening hours through self-service technology and technology enabled-opening in 2018.