

CIPFA Research

London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Public Library User Survey 2015 Summary Report

Survey of Adult Library Users in Richmond upon Thames Libraries

January 2016

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1. Executive Summary

- The survey response rate for the authority was 81%, although by library this varied from 68% to 91%, the overall result is good
- Those that took part in the survey can be deemed to represent the general profile, by age and gender, of visitors to the library service
- The standard of customer care is high with some 96% rating this aspect of service as very good or good
- The opening hours were also scored at a high level with 91% of survey respondents rating this as either very good or good
- From a health / environmental perspective the fact that some 59% of respondents came to the library on foot should be viewed positively
- More than half of all respondents came to borrow a book and of those that did the vast majority (85%) succeeded in doing so
- One in five visitors came to use the library computers, whilst one in ten brought their own device (BYOD)
- A quarter of survey respondents came to find something out / make an enquiry, the majority were successful
- Overall some 94% considered the library service to be very good or good, with a slightly larger proportion stating it was very good
- Close to two-thirds of respondents have been using a library for 3 or more years
- Two in every three visitors have claimed that the library has helped them with their studying or learning.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background

In the week commencing Monday, 16 November 2015 the twelve libraries of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames undertook a survey of their adult visitors, ie those aged 16 or over. Each library could adopt an approach that best suited the number of adult visits they received, as follows¹:

Sample	Census
Richmond Lending Library	Castelnau
Twickenham	Kew
East Sheen	Ham
Teddington	Hampton Wick
Whitton	
Hampton	
Hampton Hill	
Richmond Information and Reference Library	

In total 3,524 questionnaires were issued of which 3,342 were returned completed, however a further 580 refused to take part. Despite this a highly credible response rate of 81% was achieved.

2.2 Survey reliability

Several methods can be used to ascertain how reliable the overall survey results are, and whether they are subject to any bias. The first is to consider the impact of refusals on the results; that is, those visitors that were invited to take part in the survey but refused². By adding together the number of respondents with the number of refusals, we can create a hypothetical stratified group. By comparing the stratified group with the respondent group, we can determine whether there was any bias by gender or age.

		Respondents	Stratified	Refusals	Variation (respondents to stratified)
Gender	Female	64%	63%	59%	+1%
	Male	36%	37%	41%	-1%

¹ A **sample survey** is where a certain number of library visitors aged 16 and older are invited to take part per two hour slot. A **census survey** is where *everyone* that visits the library aged 16 and older is invited to take part. Sample surveys are typically used where libraries attract very high number of visitors.

² Library staff were asked to record the gender and approximate age category of those that refused to take part in the survey.

		Respondents	Stratified	Refusals	Variation (respondents to stratified)
Age	Under 25	5%	5%	5%	0%
	25 to 44	33%	33%	36%	0%
	45 to 64	33%	33%	29%	0%
	65 to 74	18%	19%	23%	-1%
	75 or over	11%	10%	6%	+1

The table demonstrates that there was a slight gender bias towards females; a small under-representation of those aged 65 to 74; and a small over-representation of those aged 75 or over.

From a statistical perspective, the survey fell within the parameters set for surveys of this type, ie an error rate of $\pm 5\%$ for individual libraries and $\pm 3\%$ for the authority overall. Three-quarters (9 of 12) of all libraries had an error rate of less than $\pm 5\%$, whilst the other 3 (**Twickenham**, **Hampton** and **Hampton Hill**) had slightly elevated error rates but certainly nothing to warrant concern. At the overall authority level, compared to the target of $\pm 3\%$, the survey achieved an error rate of $\pm 1.5\%$.

Example of the impact of error, for Q18. Are you (gender)

	Survey result	Error rate	But there is a 95% chance it varies between	
			Upper	Lower
Female	64.5%	$\pm 1.5\%$	63%	66%
Male	35.5%	$\pm 1.5\%$	34%	37%

3. Key Findings

3.1 What do you think of this library?

Overall, the following aspects of the library were scored as “very good” or “good”:

Aspect	Overall 'very good' / 'good' score
Opening hours	91%
Attractiveness of the library outside	79%
Attractiveness of the library inside	86%
Standard of customer care	96%

When analysing the highest possible scores, the results are below:

Aspect	Overall 'very good' score	Highest 'very good' score	Lowest 'very good' score
Opening hours	53%	Teddington (67%)	Hampton Wick (7%)
Attractiveness of the library outside	38%	Teddington (56%)	Kew (5%)
Attractiveness of the library inside	40%	Ham (63%)	Kew (19%)
Standard of customer care	64%	Hampton Wick (80%)	Teddington (57%)

3.2 What was your primary method of travel to this area / library today?

Aspect	%
On foot	59%
Public transport, e.g. bus, train, metro / tram	19%
Private transport e.g. car, motorbike	17%
Bicycle	5%
Other	0%
Number of cases	3,002
Response rate	90%

Base: 3,342; Sorted in descending order by %

Table sorted in descending order by %

The most frequent method of travel to the respondent's respective library was on foot (59%) with roughly equal proportions using either public or private transport (19% and 17% respectively). Those visiting **Kew** were most likely to visit on foot (84%) whilst those visiting the **Information and Reference Library** were the most unlikely to do so (42%), in fact more were likely to come by public transport (47%). Those visiting **Hampton** were the most likely to use private transport (46%). Visitors to **Hampton** were the most unlikely to use public transport with just 3% doing so. Apart from the sole exception of the **Information and Reference Library**, the majority of visitors to all other 11 libraries did so on foot. Overall just one in twenty (5%) used a bicycle with little variation from library to library, albeit that 7% of visitors to **Teddington** did so whilst just 3% of visitors to **Whitton** chose this option.

3.3 Borrowing Books

Aspect	Yes	No	No. of cases	Response rate
Did you come to this library today intending to borrow one or more books?	56%	44%	3,074	92%
Did you actually borrow one or more books today?	49%	51%	3,001	90%
Did you actually borrow one or more books today? (filtered by those stating Yes to intending to borrow)	85%	15%	1,639	97%

Base: 3,342 for intending to borrow and actually borrowed

Base: 1,690 actually borrowed filtered by yes intended to borrow

Aspect	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very Poor	No. of cases	Response rate
Choice	31%	47%	20%	2%	0%	2,991	89%
Physical condition	35%	55%	9%	0%	0%	2,777	83%

Base: 3,342

- It would appear that the majority of respondents did come to borrow a book (56%)
- Generally close to half (49%) were successful in their attempts to borrow a book
- However, of those that purposefully came to find a book some 85% succeeded in doing so
- Visitors were generally more satisfied with the physical condition of the book (90% very good / good) than they were with the choice (78% very good / good)
- Slightly over one in five respondents (22%) thought that the choice of books available was either adequate or poor, whereas in respect of the physical condition this only applied to around one in ten respondents (9%).

3.4 Computer use

Aspect	Yes	No	No. of cases	Response rate
Did you intend to use a library computer during your visit today?	21%	79%	3,290	98%
Did you actually use a library computer during your visit today?	20%	80%	3,256	97%
Did you actually use a library computer during your visit today? (filtered by those stating Yes to intending to use)	91%	9%	676	98%
Did you use your own computer during your visit today?	10%	90%	3,251	97%

Base: 3,342 for intending to use, actually use and use your own

Base: 690 for intending to use filtered by yes intended to use

What do you think of the computer facilities in this library?

Score	%
Very good	23%
Good	48%
Adequate	27%
Poor	2%
Very poor	0%
Number of cases	2,690
Response rate	80%

Base: 3,342

- Generally around one in five visitors came to the library to use a library computer (21%)
- A similar proportion (20%) were successful in finding a library computer to use
- However, of those who specifically stated that (yes) they came to use a library computer some 91% were able to do so

- In total one in ten of our survey respondents (10%) used their own computer in the library. However, this ranged from as low as 4% at **Hampton Wick** to as high as 26% at the **Information and Reference Library**
- Overall some 71% considered the computer facilities at the library to be very good or good, although at **Kew** it was 52% and at Ham 86%.

3.5 Finding information

Aspect	Yes	In part	No	No. of cases	Response rate
Did you come here today to find something out?	26%		74%	3,274	98%
If you came here today to find something out, did you succeed?	54%	12%	34%	1,454	44%
If you came here today to find something out, did you succeed? (filtered by those stating Yes at come to find things out)	83%	14%	3%	861	99%

Base: 3,342 for intending to find and did you succeed

Base: 870 for did you succeed filtered by yes intending to find out

What do you think of information provision in this library?

Score	%
Very good	28%
Good	54%
Adequate	17%
Poor	1%
Very poor	0%
Number of cases	2,959
Response rate	89%

Base: 3,342

- Slightly over one in four (26%) came to the library to find something out
- Generally just over half of respondents were successful in doing so
- For those who answered yes to intending to finding out information some 83% said they were able to do so

- Respondents were more likely to report that information provision at the library was good (54%) than very good (28%).

3.6 Taking everything into account, what do you think of this library?

Score	%
Very Good	49%
Good	45%
Adequate	5%
Poor	0%
Very Poor	0%
Number of cases	3,281
Response rate	98%

Base: 3,342

- Overall respondents were very positive about the service with a slightly larger proportion stating this aspect of service was very good (49%) rather than good (45%).

3.7 The Library and You

How long have you been using this library?

- 64% of respondents have been using the library they visited for more than 3 years, while only 5% were first time visitors
- This level of long term usage was highest at **Whitton** and **Hampton** (70%) both and lowest at **Hampton Hill** (50%)
- First time users were more in evidence at the **Reference and Information Library** (8%) and least at **Hampton Wick** (1%)
- **Castelnau** had the highest proportions of those who had been using the library for less than a year (22%) and **Hampton Wick** the lowest at 7%.

Has using the library helped you with...

The questionnaire listed a range of issues the library might help visitors with.

Overall, the top three issues that the library helped respondents with were **study / learning** (64%); **health and wellbeing** (37%); and **getting online** (31%).

Issue	Overall	Highest	Lowest
Study / learning?	64%	Information and Reference Library (74%)	Castelnau (53%)
Health and well being?	37%	Ham (45%)	Information and Reference Library (25%)
Getting online?	31%	Information and Reference Library (52%)	Hampton Hill (23%)
Family / relationships?	22%	Ham (34%)	Information and Reference Library (9%)
Meeting people?	19%	Ham (41%)	Hampton (13%)
Your retirement?	17%	Hampton Wick (29%)	East Sheen (11%)
Your job?	12%	Information and Reference Library (21%)	Twickenham (7%)
Personal finance / consumer matters?	10%	Information and Reference Library (17%)	Hampton Hill (7%)
Job seeking?	8%	Information and Reference Library (14%)	Hampton Wick (5%)

Sorted in descending order by Overall

3.8 Demographics

Postcode

- On average visitors travelled³ 2.7km to get to the library. This varied from as low as 1.0km for visitors to **Hampton Wick** to as high as 6.8km for the **Information and Reference Library** and 6.9km for **Kew**
- The vast majority of visitors live within the Borough of Richmond upon Thames (88%) however some 5% reside in Hounslow and 2% in Ealing.

Age

- The two largest age groups were those aged 25 to 44 and 45 to 64 (33% both), with some 18% reporting they were aged 65 to 74, 11% were 75 or over and just 5% at Under 25
- **Richmond Lending** and **Richmond Information and Reference** had the highest proportions of those aged Under 25 (7% both)
- **Castelnau** had the largest proportion of those aged 75 or over (17%)
- **Hampton, Kew, Hampton Wick** and the **Information and Reference Library** all had more than 20% of their respondents aged 65 to 74.

Gender

- Overall, nearly two-thirds (64%) of respondents were **female**
- **Kew, Hampton Hill** and **Hampton Wick** libraries had the largest proportions of females (74% all)
- **Richmond Information and Reference Library** had a larger proportion of males to females (59% and 41% respectively).

Employment status

- Exactly half of all visitors were Employed or self-employed, full or part-time (50%)
- The majority of other visitors (32%) described themselves as Retired (whether receiving a pension or not)
- Interestingly, some one in ten respondents reported that they were Looking after the home or family (9%).

Disabilities / life-limiting conditions

- Overall, some 83% of respondents said they had No disabilities or conditions.

Ethnic group and Religion

- The top two identified ethnic groups were English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British (72%) and Any other White background (13%)
- Libraries with the most ethnically diverse visitors were **Castelnau** (Asian 10%; Mixed 5%; Black 2%; Other 2%) and **Whitton** (Asian 10%; Black 4%; Mixed 2%; Other 1%)
- Overall the majority of respondents were either Christian (56%) or had No religion (35%).

³ The straight line distance from the postcode of the visitor to that of the library, not necessarily the same as the actual distance travelled

Living arrangements and sexual orientation

- The largest proportion of visitors to the authorities libraries were married (54%), the second largest group were those who identified as being single (25%)
- Individual libraries with significant proportions of married visitors were **Hampton** and **Kew** (65% both), the **Information and Reference Library** had the smallest proportion (29%)
- Over half (51%) of all visitors to the **Information and Reference Library** were single
- All visitors (100%) to both **Hampton Wick** and **Whitton** described themselves as Heterosexual / Straight
- The **Information and Reference Library** had the smallest proportion of heterosexuals (92%).

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