

North Yorkshire Council
Thirsk and Malton Area Committee

12 June 2026

Local Libraries overview

Report of the Corporate Director - Nic Harne

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To give Members an overview of what services are available at local libraries within the Area Committee's area.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members have requested an update on the services offered by libraries in the local area.

3.0 LOCAL LIBRARY SERVICES IN THE AREA

- 3.1 The Library Service is a statutory service delivered under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, which states that local authorities must provide a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service to all who live, work or study in the area.
- 3.2 The service is provided via a network of 43 libraries: six Core libraries (Malton, Northallerton, Scarborough, Skipton, Selby and Harrogate), five Hybrid libraries, run in conjunction with a group who manage the volunteers (Whitby, Pickering, Filey, Ripon and Knaresborough), 31 Community Managed Libraries (run in partnership with a volunteer management group, usually a charity or community interest organisation) and one Mobile Library that visits an additional 41 communities across the county. We consider it important that all our libraries form part of this statutory provision and our staffing structure supports the community library model, with paid staff and volunteers working together to deliver services.
- 3.3 North Yorkshire Libraries offer more than a collection of books; they are vibrant and accessible community assets that contain the resources and tools to support individuals and communities to thrive and prosper. They offer bright, attractive spaces; support from trained and dedicated professional staff and volunteers; quality book stock; public computers; and a programme of activities and events for the local community.
- 3.4 Our Library Strategy, Your Library Your Place, 2020-2030 (included at appendix A), which has recently been reviewed, focuses on four core objectives for North Yorkshire, reflecting local priorities: Reading (Literacy & Learning), Health & Wellbeing, Digital and Communities. This guides our work and is delivered by our team of Area and Community Development Librarians and via our core promotions: the Summer Reading Challenge, Under 5s Fortnight, Local & Community History Month, Get Online Week and Self Care Week.
- 3.5 Our Libraries:
- Provide material in a variety of formats, including physical books and a digital library of e-books and e-audiobooks, e-magazines and newspapers.
 - Promote reading for pleasure, study and learning.

- Arrange activities and events including talks, reading groups, story times, social groups and creative opportunities.
- Provide internet access and free Wi-Fi.
- Assist customers to access council and public services and support them to use services online.
- Signpost customers to other services.
- Provide free online resources such as Ancestry (Genealogy) and COBRA (Business information).
- Assist customers to find reliable information whether from books, the internet, or other organisations.
- Provide information on the local area including local events and attractions.
- Provide a local, safe and neutral space for the community.
- Help to reduce isolation by providing a Home Library delivery service.

3.6 As well as providing the full range of services above, each of our libraries has a unique identity and serves the needs of the local area:

- **Thirsk Community Library:** This is a thriving community managed library situated within the Meadowfields extra care development behind the Market Place. It also provides a Digital Hub with dedicated volunteers providing digital support alongside the book lending service. Regular events include Lego Club, Drop In - Craft Table, Tea & Tech, Friday Friends, Makaton Storytime Session, Preschool Construction Play and PCSO drop-in Sessions.
- **Malton Library:** This is a core library is situated in the centre of town and is now home to three major high street banks who operate out of the branch on different days. Library volunteers support customers on Wednesday and Friday lunchtimes with blue badge and bus passes and with the fortnightly Home Library service. The library hosts weekly Stay and Play and Storytime sessions for under 5s (including guest story-times from members of the community including vets and PCSOs) and monthly Dungeons and Dragons club for older children. The library has welcomed pop-up exhibitions from the Rillington One place study and Malton Museum as part of Local and Community History month throughout May.
- **Norton Hive Community Library Hub:** The building is used as a meeting place for many local clubs and groups including Yoga, Bee keeping, Andy's Man's Club and the Romanian Community. Popular events at the library include the weekly 'Harmini's' session for under 5s, Lego Club, and Knit and Natter. The library also boasts a sensory garden which is maintained by volunteers and new for this year the library has launched a 'seed bank' in conjunction with Malton in Bloom.
- **Helmsley Community Library:** Ideally situated in the centre of Helmsley the library provides a very welcoming environment for both residents and visitors. Alongside a varied range of books, it also provides tourist information and hosts a successful Storytime session on Tuesdays. In addition, the library has a close relationship with Helmsley Primary School and has weekly class visits during which children can borrow books of their own choice.
- **Pickering Library:** A very busy hybrid library which is well used by both residents and visitors. It provides a wide range of regular activities including Baby Bounce and Storytime sessions, crochet club and LEGO club. For adults there are German, French, Italian and Spanish conversation groups and a Craft Club. Once a month the library hosts a Community Cafe with refreshments, crafts and representatives from organisations such as The Citizens Advice Bureau, Town Council, Sight Support,

Ryedale Special Families and Carers Support. Pickering also has Barclays Bank on Mondays, and this coincides with a PCSO drop in.

- **Kirkbymoorside Community Library:** Sited at the top of the Market Place in Kirkbymoorside it provides a very welcoming hub for both residents and visitors. Alongside the book lending service, it provides tourist information and digital support. Regular events include pre-school Storytime and Makers Group.
- **Filey Library:** This hybrid library is situated in the heart of the coastal community and serves as a welcoming hub for residents and visitors alike. Regular activities include two weekly Storytime and Rhyme time sessions for under 5s, as well as children's craft and activity sessions. These sit alongside a varied programme of events, including the popular monthly Poetry Afterhours sessions and partnerships such as Coastal Sight and Hearing Support, who hold weekly meetings and have taken on the maintenance of our gardens as part of a community project. The library also hosts a range of groups, including two monthly book groups, Knit and Natter, Mandala colouring for mindfulness, Lego Club, and home education social sessions, as well as creative and seasonal activities that reflect local interests. In addition, the library supports customers through initiatives such as the Home Library Service and provides digital access, alongside IT support for those applying for blue badge permits and bus passes or simply needing help to get started on their digital journey. Together, these services ensure that the library remains at the heart of Filey's community life.
- **Bedale Community Library** – Situated in Bedale Hall, Bedale Library is a bright and friendly library, that welcomes the local schools and nurseries on a regular basis. They have recently been successful in gaining over £20k of grant funding to put towards a refurbishment to be completed at the end of June which will see a focus on a new children's area as well as a much needed refresh throughout. The Library has worked with the Museum as part of their reopening and there are further potential collaboration opportunities going forward. A new coffee morning has started on the first Friday of the month after a successful trial. Bedale have a very successful Friends group which raises valuable funds for the Library.

4.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

4.1 The Library Strategy aligns with the priorities in the latest Council Plan and contributes as following:

- **Support thriving places and empowered communities that live, work, visit and do business in North Yorkshire**
- Libraries provide a network of 43 branches, including 31 run in partnership with local communities and a mobile library to support communities across the county
- **Develop more sustainable and connected places across North Yorkshire**
- Libraries support access to digital services and promote digital inclusion by offering IT support, access to public computers and free WiFi.
- **Ensure the people of North Yorkshire are safe, healthy and living well**
- Libraries work with partners including Public Health to provide support and information as well as resources and spaces to meet in order to promote health and wellbeing
- **Maximise the potential of North Yorkshire's people and communities**
- Libraries offer free access to books and learning opportunities for all, from material to support early language, speech and communication to resources and spaces to support self-study.

5.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

5.1 To see first-hand the Library Services on offer in the local area.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

i) We encourage Members to visit their local library and are happy to arrange visits to all our sites on an informal or more formal basis.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Library Strategy Mid-Term Review

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