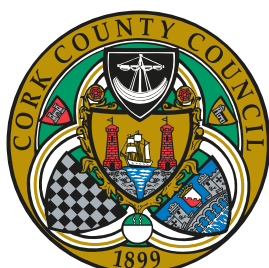




PERSPECTIVES

Library Development Plan
2014-2019



Cork County Library and Arts Service
- A service provided by Cork County Council

Front cover images:

Launch of Do it Yourself – Self-Help on the Shelf in Bandon Library

Knitting group Mallow Library

Presentation of Logainmneacha Chorcaí to Cork County Library

“Reading, almost as much as breathing, is our essential function.”
-Alberto Manguel (Speaker at the 2014 West Cork Literary Festival)

Mission Statement

Cork County Library aims to empower communities by providing access to resources that educate, inform, enlighten and enrich the lives of their citizens, by supporting and promoting literacy and a love of reading, and by collecting and preserving resources relating to the cultural heritage of Co. Cork.

Method

Cork County Library will continue to fulfil its mission through a branch and mobile library network that places libraries at the centre of their communities, as well as through a growing online presence that seeks to connect with and serve people in a digital society. We hope to retain our place in local communities into the future, despite the economic pressures, by being clear about what we are here to do while continuously reviewing how we do it. This plan details some of the steps we intend to take to realise that vision over the next 5 years.

Foreword from Mayor

Cork County Library occupies a special place in the hearts of library users throughout County Cork, from Youghal to Castletownbere to Charleville. While regular library users are familiar with the ever-widening range of services, non-users of libraries may still be unaware of how relevant the local library could be to their lives. Events such as storytelling, exhibitions and bookclub meetings, online services such as emagazines and downloadable audio books, availability of local, community and citizen's information and access to back issues of newspapers and magazines, all suggest that there are very few people in the county who wouldn't benefit from using their local library. And while embracing change is now a constant for public libraries, it should be acknowledged that the fundamental appeal of a library, as a treasure trove of books, is what has kept the core customer base coming back again and again, down through the decades. The pleasure of reading or browsing a good book can fulfil a passing fancy or can leave a deep impression that lasts a lifetime. I have no doubt that Cork County Library and Arts Service will continue to inform and enrich the lives of our citizens during the lifetime of this plan and far beyond.

Cllr. Noel O'Connor
Mayor of the County of Cork

Foreword from Manager

Cork County Library continues to be one of the most successful services provided by Cork County Council, widely used and deeply appreciated by the people of County Cork. Despite a considerable reduction in staff numbers, a huge effort has been made to mitigate the impact on opening hours. The quality and range of services provided continues to evolve, and the identity of libraries as artistic and cultural spaces open to all has enriched the

social fabric of local communities. This is due in large part to the flexibility, commitment and passion of library staff and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank them for the superb work they have always done and continue to do, especially during turbulent economic times. One of our librarians refers to library work as a calling, and I have no doubt that to many of the staff in Cork County Library, it is just that. Without the enthusiasm of library staff for promoting literacy and a love of literature, for helping people to find information and for engaging with their communities in many different ways, libraries would lose some of the soul that makes them such a core part of the towns and villages that they serve. Long may our libraries continue to be a source of enlightenment throughout the county.

Tim Lucey
County Manager

Extracts from public submissions to the plan

"Keep up the excellent work. Some 'pulse' and 'heartbeat' for rural Ireland. A social hub in isolated locations." - Florence Newman, Schull

"Cobh Library is invaluable to me and my family. I cannot afford to buy books but am an inveterate reader. Reading is my sanity in a busy life. I use it for reference and escape. I bring my children regularly and wish to inculcate in them the love of knowledge that will enrich their lives. My children also visit the library with their schools. This is especially important for my son, who has autism. The staff are welcoming, helpful and inclusive – qualities not always present for my child in shops, etc. – it is a safe haven for him. I think a toy library (non-battery toys) might be a useful addition to its already outstanding services." - Niamh Linehan, Cobh

"I have been coming to Dunmanway Library for over 20 years and cannot think how to improve the service. It is perfect. As well as giving fantastic value for money (I would happily pay a little more if needs be), I, and others, will draw attention to the incalculable benefits this facility brings to the town. There is nowhere else like it. To see so many people and children, from such a huge variety of backgrounds, faiths and political beliefs, mixing together peacefully gives us all hope for the future in these difficult times. Give the staff a pay-rise!" - Mrs. K. Forest, mother of two children, Dunmanway

"Fermoy Library is a wonderful facility for everyone, young and old. I frequently recommend it to everyone, not only for books, but Internet and art displays and book clubs. If I could recommend one thing it would be a coffee dock! This would be a great and wondrous thing!" - Fiona Kiely, Fermoy

See Appendix 1 for the full list of public submissions.

INTRODUCTION

Cork County Library was founded after the passing of the Local Government Act in 1925 and though much has changed in the intervening 89 years, the fundamental social, cultural and educational values that form the ethos of a public library service remain unchanged. The service is delivered through a branch and mobile network, supplemented by a growing suite of online services. The 28 branch libraries are located in the main towns throughout Co. Cork and include the Library HQ on Carrigrohane Road, which also serves as the centre for Reference and Local Studies, bibliographic services and administration. Towns and villages not served by a branch library are served by a fleet of 4 mobile libraries, which operates a fortnightly schedule across the 7,500 sq km expanse of the county.

This library plan has been prepared in the context of ongoing change in public service provision, as envisaged in Putting People First: action programme for effective local government and Opportunities for All: the public library as a catalyst for economic, social and cultural development, which outlines objectives for public libraries at a national level in specific areas such as physical space, service provision, culture and community, co-operation, partnership and promotion.

The preparation of this plan involved a process of public and staff consultation, to acquire feedback on how library services are delivered and how they could be improved. The submissions received, listed in full in Appendix 1, were very informative, constructive and creative, and above all, confirmed the value of the library service to the people of Co. Cork.

The plan is divided into two sections, looking back at what has been achieved since the last development plan and looking forward at what can be achieved in the next five years. Navigating a course through continuing economic difficulties and a rapidly changing environment will be a challenge, but we have a number of advantages in this regard. We have clarity of purpose, we have a team of highly-skilled librarians committed to public service, and we have the appreciation and support of the people we serve, be they residents of Co. Cork or visitors to Co. Cork.

I would like to thank the outgoing Library Committee for their hard work, support and interest in the library service over the last 5 years and wish them the very best for the future. Thanks also to library staff, elected members, the management of Cork County Council and all who contributed to the compilation of this plan.

Eileen O'Brien
Acting County Librarian
May 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Library Development Plan will act as a framework to direct the future development of Cork County Library Service as it continues to provide access to reading, information, knowledge, culture and learning to the people of County Cork and beyond. The next five years will see new challenges and opportunities and this plan is intended to enable the Library Service to meet those challenges and seize those opportunities, providing for the people of County Cork a user-focused, value-for-money, innovative and evolving library service.

This plan lays out the foundation for that development by focusing on the following key areas.

1. *Maintaining and expanding the current provision of a high level of customer service using a range of delivery mechanisms to ensure that the services of the library are accessible to all the residents of and visitors to County Cork.*
2. *Working with neighbouring libraries to identify areas for shared service where greater efficiencies and savings can be achieved.*
3. *Introducing greater flexibility in work practices to deal with changing environmental, financial and technological changes in the provision of the library service.*
4. *Maintaining and improving the existing library infrastructure and exploring options to allow for upgrading or establishment of new service points where need arises.*
5. *Embedding best practice policies in areas of collection development, reader development, staff development, health and safety, energy-saving, organizational efficiency, procurement, accessibility, child protection and customer service.*
6. *Reaching out to the more remote communities in County Cork through investment in and development of the Mobile Library Service.*
7. *Developing ICT systems that serve to efficiently enhance and expand the library service, empowering both public and staff.*
8. *Creating a motivating workplace for staff through the provision of support and training and encouragement to develop and use their skills and talents.*
9. *Continuing to provide access to a wide range of reading material, both book and non-book, embracing new formats and platforms in tandem with the guidelines of the library's Collection Development Policy.*
10. *Focusing on collaboration with different partners, internal and external, library and non-library in the development and operation of the library service, in order to achieve added value and offer a better service to the public.*
11. *Promoting the library as a centre of literature, reading and culture for all ages, through the library's collections, publications and activities programmes, publishing activities, including bookclubs, writers groups, storytelling and author visits.*
12. *Preserving and promoting the local heritage and history of Cork County through the library's local studies collections, digitization programme, online resources and outreach programmes.*

1. LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2006-2011

Cork County Library has seen much development since the writing of the previous Development Plan in 2006, with most planned objectives being implemented, and more besides.

1.1 Service Delivery

- Despite the continuous reduction in staff numbers in the latter years of the last plan and since, the Library has maintained excellent library services at optimal levels, thanks to the ongoing commitment of library staff.
- Issues and membership numbers have shown an upward trajectory over the period of the last plan and since. Registered members have risen from 55,464 in 2006 to 58,424 in 2013, while issues have risen from 1,432,689 in 2006 to 1,761,508 in 2013. Visitor figures were first recorded in 2007 and at that time totalled 1,184,100; by 2013 this had risen to 1,681,400.
- A programme of branch library improvements has delivered an upgraded branch network across the county, completed by the mobile library service, placing libraries at the heart of the community.
- Often as a result of the adoption of improved service delivery methods, considerable savings have been delivered in areas such as postage, telephone costs, stationery, energy efficiency, procurement and workflow practices. Cobh Library during Phase 1 refurbishment



Pictured Above: Cobh Library during Phase 1 refurbishment

1.1.1 Service Delivery: the physical infrastructure

- In 2006, Mallow Library moved from the second floor of the Town Hall building to a modern, accessible, two-storey building on Thomas Davis Street. The new library is the largest and busiest in the County, a thriving community space with a heaving schedule of activities.
- In 2007, Youghal Library moved from a small building on Church Street to a much more central premises in the Rivergate Mall, near Youghal's Clock Tower, more than doubling the floor space and providing capacity for a greater range of activities, such as launch events, workshops and computer courses.
- In 2008, Middleton Library was fully refurbished, thereby increasing the accessible area from 93 sq m to the maximum ground floor capacity of 371 sq m. The remodelled library provides more spacious, comfortable surroundings for its users as well as increased book stock, computers and accommodation for library events and activities.
- In 2009, the Library Headquarters, including the Reference, Local Studies and Lending departments moved from rented accommodation to a new, purpose-built, accessible library, adjacent to the County Hall. The new building provides much needed accommodation for stock processing, storage and administration, essential to the efficient delivery of services

throughout the county via the large branch and mobile network. The new HQ also provides comfortable study space for researchers and future-proofed accommodation for the library's extensive reference and local studies collection, which serves the whole county. A state-of-the-art, multipurpose events room is available for exhibitions, meetings, lectures, performances and workshops.

- 2009 also saw Carrigaline Library relocated to much larger, modern premises, centrally located with high visibility near Dunnes Stores. The larger space has allowed the library to expand the services provided to the community of Carrigaline and surrounding areas and the new library is highly accessible, both in terms of parking and physical access to and within the building.
- In 2010, a new port-a-cabin was put in place by the Island Co-operative on Oileán Chléire, to replace a much deteriorated port-a-cabin that had served as library premises for many years. The new library has a good selection of books for all ages and tastes in a variety of formats, and broadband is provided via an island-based, not-for-profit company.
- In 2011, Mitchelstown Library relocated from the second floor of the Courthouse to ground floor premises at Sutton's Court. The new library is considerably larger and more accessible, with a floor area increase from 45 sq m to approximately 370 sq m, allowing much improved circulation space, accommodation for events, and computer facilities. The Library has increased its opening hours (from part-time to full-time), and this has been reflected by an increase in the numbers of people using the library service and the range of services provided.

"The arrival of our new library was a dream for the people of Mitchelstown ... complimented by the superb staff. They make use of the library something to look forward to, their pleasant demeanour, their willingness to be of assistance, and the general air of good feeling they create, is a joy to behold. Thanks to you all for a bit of brightness brought to Mitchelstown."
- Gretta and Dan Coughlan

- In 2012, urgent refurbishment work on the exterior of Cobh Library building was completed. The project, funded principally by Cork County Council with some grant support from the DOECLG, has ensured that the architectural and structural integrity of the Arch Building is conserved.
- In 2013, Newmarket Library was relocated to new, rented premises on High Street, following serious safety concerns with the old library building on Scarteen Street. A quality selection of books and other items is provided for borrowers of all ages and interests.
- In 2013, Castletownbere Library moved across the road to the town's square to a more spacious, functional building, allowing the Library to extend its services and activities.
- Minor refurbishment works were carried out on many libraries during this period. These included general upkeep of buildings as well as works to meet specific requirements and targets, such as health and safety standards, accessibility standards and energy savings targets. Among them were the revamping of both Bantry and Fermoy libraries and the installation of a platform lift in the split level library in Fermoy.
- The Library has commenced a programme of energy saving measures in branches where remedial works were required. This is in line with the Public Service requirement to reduce energy usage by 33% in 2020.
- Cork County Council's Safety Management System has been embedded into the day to day operations of the library. This includes regular Tours of Inspection of all library premises.
- A replacement branches van was purchased for the library service in 2008, to ensure ongoing delivery of the stock exchange programme between branches and to maximise exploitation of book stock across the county.
- A replacement delivery van was purchased for the library service in 2010, to ensure the continued efficiency of the hugely successful requests service.



1.1.2 Service delivery: online

- The service-wide Internet Use Policy was originally put in place in 2007 and sets out the terms of use of the Internet service in Cork County Library, with a view to streamlining the operation of the service and providing a safer, more secure environment for library Internet service users. This policy is regularly reviewed to ensure that it keeps pace with developments in Internet access.
- In 2008, the automation of branch libraries was completed, thereby significantly improving services to library users, through the provision of online access to the combined catalogues of all branches and the full exploitation of countywide collections, the provision of secure access to account information online, and increased efficiency of circulation and administrative tasks.
- Since 2009, FÁS e-learning at the library has been growing from strength to strength, with computer literacy courses now being provided to FETAC level 3, the number of participating libraries having grown from 3 in 2009 to 10 in 2013.
- In 2010, the Dynix Library Management System, which had been jointly purchased with Cork City Library in 1992, was replaced by Horizon, a Windows-compatible system, more userfriendly, with more functionality and lower in cost. The new system allowed for the introduction of SMS texting for hold notices and overdue notices later in the year, leading to significant savings on postage, and instant delivery of notices. The response from library members has been excellent.
- The Library's Twitter presence, set up in 2010 to allow for easier and increased dissemination of information about the Library and its activities, has continued to attract steadily increasing numbers of followers, and library staff continue to update content with library events and branch news on a regular basis. In addition, the library has been one of the most active users of the Council's Facebook page during this period.
- The installation of a computer reservation and print management system in 24 libraries between 2011 and 2012, has improved efficiency and accountability in the management of the public Internet service as well as delivering savings on wasted print-outs and enabling automation of administrative tasks such as collation of statistics and recording of user details.

- In 2011, Cork County Library began subscribing to Clipper downloadable audiobooks on behalf of its patrons. These have proved very popular and the Library has recently added e-magazines to its portfolio of online services, which has generated extremely positive responses.

"Can you please pass on a well done to whoever is developing the magazines on line available at the library? I sent the link to my sister who is working in CIT and she told some colleagues. It generated great excitement it seems and two staff members went immediately to join the library. All very impressed it seems."

- Valerie Hayes

- In 2013, Cork County Library, Kerry County Library and Cork City Libraries prepared a joint submission to the project board for the procurement of a National Library Management System, to ensure that any national system meets local needs as well as national goals.
- From 2006 to 2013, computer hardware and communications infrastructures were continually upgraded, including the installation of Assistive Technology, broadband and most recently wi-fi, which was installed in 21 branch libraries at the end of 2013, and has increased Internet access for members.
- The Library continued to review and develop the Library website through the provision of current information on library branches and services, access to the full catalogue, news on activities and events, access to digitized collections and remote access to Britannica Online, Oxford Art and Oxford Music Online.
- The expansion of online subscriptions has enhanced the existing reference and information services. The databases now available online at library branches and/or remotely include Britannica Online, Irish Times Archive, Irish Newspaper Archive, JSTOR and Oxford Art and Music Online.

1.2 Staff development

In 2007, Cork County Library finalized negotiations on the restructuring of the library service. The structure agreed between Cork County Council and the DOEHLG was one which mirrored the divisional organisation of other Cork County Council services, with Senior Executive Librarian posts for North, West and South Cork. The strategic management of three key operational areas (HR, IT and Bibliographic services) continued to be the remit of senior library staff, at Senior Executive Librarian level.

The new structure made provision for Executive Librarians to manage full-time, medium and large branches, with smaller, full-time branches being operated by Assistant Librarians or Staff Officers. Senior Library Assistants would provide support to branch managers or in the case of smaller, part-time branches, would be in charge of managing the branch.



The new structure was shaped by the size of the county, the population of the county and the large number of service points, and it led to significant improvements in the organization and efficiency of service delivery. The appointment of Divisional Librarians has allowed staff working in branches, located up to 150km from HQ, the opportunity to have regular face to face contact with Library Management, and has also facilitated the roll-out of the Council's Safety Management System. The appointment of experienced, professional librarians to dedicated areas within bibliographic services and to medium and large branch libraries, ensured that specialist skills were employed in delivering library services that meet best international standards.

The embargo on recruitment, the cessation of acting posts, the loss of non-permanent staff and the retirement without replacement of a considerable

number of long-serving librarians has put significant strain on service provision. Yet library staff remain among the most committed and passionate public servants, and service levels at Cork County Library have been optimized within the remaining resources, largely due to the goodwill and dedication of those staff.

"I am a member of the library and use the facilities at Macroom and Dunmanway. It is an excellent service and by far the best thing is the quality of the staff. They are exceptionally helpful, well-informed and hard-working."
-Ann Crowley

In addition to the restructuring of the service in 2007, the following developments have also taken place:

- 13 Library staff qualified as professional librarians since 2006, having completed professional LIS courses with various Schools of Library and Information Studies.
- 18 staff members also completed the Library Council funded Frontline course in Reader Development.
- Training for staff was rolled out in the areas of Disability Awareness and Accessible Services, Health and Safety, Child Safeguarding, Customer Service, Library Management System and Financial Management System. Library staff have contributed to the development of Cork County Council's Child Safeguarding Policy to ensure that the Library is at all times a safe environment for both adults and children.
- Library staff have also contributed to the implementation of the Council's Safety Management System, in particular through participation in the schedule of tours of inspection by staff at grade Grade 5 level and upwards.
- 40 members of library staff were presented with Long Service Awards in 2012.

1.3 Collection management and development

- With more space available in the new Library HQ, initiatives have been taken over the last 4 years to improve the exploitation, management and collection development of stock. More efficient practices in this area have led to the speedier delivery of stock to the branch libraries and in turn to the public, as well as ensuring that the material on branch shelves is continually renewed and kept up-to-date.
- Increased development of Irish language, foreign language, teen and young adult collections has augmented the comprehensiveness of branch collections, while the expansion of collections to include non-book formats such as DVDs, audio-visual, multi-media, Downloadable Audiobook and E-Magazine services, ensures that delivery of content keeps pace with technological developments.
- The expansion of online subscriptions has enhanced the existing reference and information services. These include, among others, JSTOR, Britannica Online, Irish Newspaper Archive and the Irish Times Digital Archive.
- The joint procurement of stock with Cork City Library has led to an increase in purchasing power with average discounts received increasing by 50%.

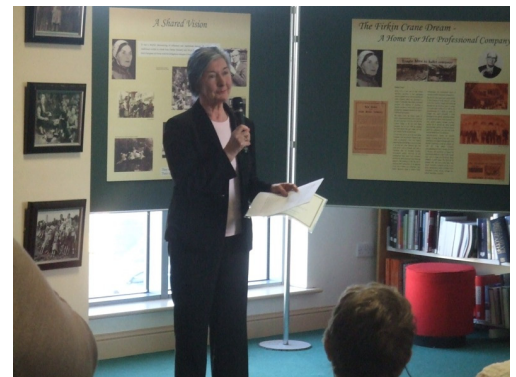


1.4 Outreach and Partnership

- In 2008, the library initiated its own Class Novel Loan Scheme for primary schools, following the withdrawal of the Department of Education grant for the provision of library books to primary schools, to ensure that the schools of County Cork continue to be adequately served and to continue the library's specialist contribution to the development of reading skills in children.
- Initiated in 2009, FAS e-learning at the library has been a very fruitful partnership, providing communities with an opportunity to undertake computer training at selected branch libraries to FETAC Level 3. FAS has benefitted from the existing building and IT infrastructure of our branch library network, as well as the backup of library staff in providing administrative assistance and promotion of the courses. Cork County Library has also benefitted: the delivery of formal education to local communities through the branch library network has cemented our role as

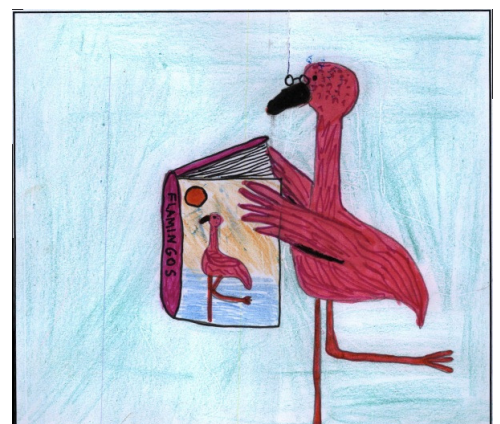
facilitators of lifelong learning as well as having increased usage of library PCs. Similar circumstances have ensured the equal success and mutual benefits of Age Action facilitated computer courses in library branches, which are less formally structured, for those who wish to take learning at their own pace. The variety of successful approaches to IT skills demonstrate the flexibility of the library as a learning environment.

- The West Cork Arts Trail has been run during Bealtaine each year since 2009, in partnership with the West Cork Arts Centre, The Arts for Health Programme and The West Cork Older People's Network. It celebrates creativity in older people, incorporating paintings, photography and craft work on chosen themes, by individuals and art groups. The work is exhibited in West Cork branch libraries and other community and commercial premises to widen its reach.
- In 2011, Cork County Library and the HSE joined forces to introduce a bibliotherapy initiative in Mallow Library, entitled Your Good Self. The aim of the scheme is to provide quality information to people on how to look after their emotional well-being as part of their overall health. Booklists were compiled by Clinical Psychologists and other health professionals on a variety of emotional well-being topics and a discrete collection was set up within the library. Following on the success of the Mallow pilot, the programme was rolled out to Bandon Library in 2013.
- Partnership approaches with other libraries continued to be developed. Joint procurement of book stock with Cork City Libraries since 2012 has resulted in the book funds of both authorities stretching further. The two authorities also came together with Kerry County Library to make a joint submission to the Project Board for the procurement of a National Library Management System in 2013. Joint funding of Douglas Library with Cork City Council is an ongoing success, as is the partnership with UCC's Boole Library and Cork City Libraries in the joint funding of the Cork City and County Archives. Meanwhile, CorkPAL has seen Cork County Library, Cork City Libraries, the Boole Library and CIT Library partnering to make the vast combined collections of the four libraries reference-accessible to each of those libraries' patrons.
- Less formal contacts with local history groups, community groups, arts groups and others have also been developed further since the writing of the last plan.



1.5 Literature, Culture and the Arts

- The harmonious relationship between literature and other artistic interests has become embedded in library culture, with the library calendar now punctuated by a series of annual literary, cultural and artistic festivals such as Bealtine, Children's Book Festival and Seachtain na Gaeilge. These festivals have maintained strong roots in libraries despite the impact of the recession. Library involvement in local festivals has also been retained, an example being A Taste of West Cork food festival.
- In addition, the County Library and Arts Service has maintained a wide range of high-quality, low-cost and varied events outside the festival calendar, including exhibitions, storytelling, bookclubs, craft groups, ciorcal cainte and more.
- The Library has continued to support the West Cork Literary Festival, celebrating 16 years in 2014, bringing national and international authors, poets and other writers of renown to West Cork, for an annual programme of reliably high quality literary events.
- Since its inception in 2004, the Cork County Library and Arts Service Short Story Competition has grown from strength to strength. Originally a countywide competition to mark the Bealtaine Festival, the theme was that the central character of the stories would be an older person. The number of entries increased steadily each year and in 2011, the brief was



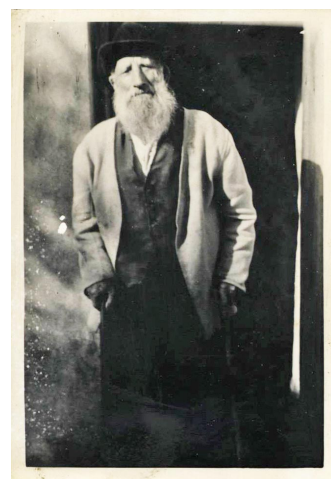
Pictured Above: The Flamingo Library Card, by Jane O'Brien

expanded to incorporate national entries without a specified theme. Each year, the author of the winning story, selected by a panel of distinguished Irish writers, wins a place on a weeklong workshop at the West Cork Literary Festival in Bantry and Cork County Library and Arts Service publishes a collection of the shortlisted entries under the title of the winning story.

- In 2011, a children's art competition was held to design a library card for juvenile members. The winning design, featuring a flamingo reading a book, was printed on 20,000 cards for distribution throughout the county. Following the success of this scheme, it was decided to repeat the initiative in Cobh Library in 2012, to mark the Titanic centenary commemorations, this time holding a design competition for both adult and juvenile members. The initiative generated significant interest among tourists visiting Cobh, many of whom joined the library just to get a souvenir card.
- In 2013, a children's art competition was held to design a calendar for 2014, around the theme "I love my library". The winning design was printed on 10,000 colourful calendars which were distributed for free at service points throughout the county.
- The West Cork Arts Trail has been run during Bealtaine each year since 2009, in conjunction with the West Cork Arts Centre, The Arts for Health Programme and The West Cork Older People's Network. It celebrates creativity in older people, incorporating paintings, photography and craft work on chosen themes, by individuals and groups, including art groups, active retirement groups, hospital and residential patients. The work is exhibited in West Cork branch libraries and also in other community and commercial premises to widen its impact.

1.6 Information services, Local Studies and Cultural Heritage

- In 2006, Macroom Library became a Europe Direct Information Centre for the South West of the country, promoting and providing access to information on the European Union. The contract for the EDIC in Macroom Library completed in 2011 and the service moved to Killarney; however Cork County Library has undertaken to host this service again from 2013 to 2018 in Mallow Library.
- In 2009, the provision of environmental information through a dedicated ENFO service point in Dublin was formally transferred to public libraries, with Midleton Library being chosen as Cork County Library's ENFOpoint. Support from Cork County Council's Environmental and Energy Sections has ensured that locally produced environmental information is to the fore at the Midleton ENFOpoint and the promotion of environmental awareness through library events has been ongoing.
- During the past 6 years, the Library has commenced and progressed a programme of digitization of a number of historically important photographic collections and other resources, with a view to conserving this information for future generations and making it more accessible to the general public via the Library's website.
- Over the past few years, the Library has expanded its own in-house work in Heritage and Local History, curating a number of very well received exhibitions and talks. Recently, exhibitions on the County Hall, the Irish Tourist Association, James N.Healy and Youghal Bridge, as well as talks on topics as varied as The Administrative Divisions of Co. Cork and The Dog in



- Irish History, have served to highlight the Library's comprehensive collection of resources relating to the cultural heritage of the County.
- These have been complemented by visiting international exhibitions, such as the Famine Exhibition from the University of New Brunswick, and an exhibition of icons by artists from both Crete and Ireland, thereby widening the scope of events to other cultures.
 - In accordance with Heritage Council guidelines, Cork County Council's Heritage Unit have taken steps to ensure that information collected during surveys of historic graveyards is deposited with Cork County Library, to guarantee long term preservation for future generations. The Library has taken receipt from Eachtra Archaeological Projects of the entire body of background data that is currently retrievable on the Historic Graves site, www.historicgraves.ie, in a format that is platform independent and suitable for long-term preservation.
 - The relationship between the Library and the Heritage Unit of Cork County Council has also borne fruit in a number of other ways recently, with the presentation of the Saul Archive to the Library by David and Liz Maddox and the launch of the Heritage Unit publication "Heritage Bridges of County Cork" at Library HQ.



2. PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Looking to the future in a time of recession can be challenging. Recent years have taken a heavy toll on public services throughout the country, the scale of which was not envisaged at the time of writing the last Library Development Plan. The aspirations of the past can sometimes seem like a distant dream, but the spirit of those goals should not necessarily change. Rather, they should be framed in the realism of the prevailing conditions.

The implementation of the goals in this plan will depend on a number of factors, not least of which is government policy on provision of public services and the wider economic environment. While it is less possible than ever to know what the future holds for public library services, this plan will be implemented on the basis of 6 monthly reviews, which will assess the level of progress on individual aims as well as the continuing relevance or appropriateness of those aims. Where aims are impacted by conditions in the wider landscape, they will be revised accordingly.



The implementation and monitoring of the plan will be assigned to a Senior Executive Librarian, with reviews conducted by the full Library Management Team. Updates on achievements under the plan will be publicised on the Library's website.

2.1 Service Delivery

- Maintain and expand the current provision of a high level of personal customer service through a variety of channels, including the branch libraries, mobile libraries, the website and social media.
- Explore with the County Council, the Department of the Environment and other appropriate agencies ways to invest further in the County Library Service – in its staff resources and development, its buildings and infrastructure, to ensure that the objectives as outlined in this plan can be pursued and achieved, that the Library Service can embrace new opportunities that may present themselves during the lifetime of this plan and that Cork County Council can continue to provide a high quality service to the citizens of County Cork.
- Explore the potential for further sharing services with Cork City Library, following on the success of the joint procurement of books, with particular attention to shared storage, cataloguing, and maintenance of the buildings infrastructure.

- Explore funding opportunities for developing new libraries and/or upgrading existing libraries, with particular attention paid to Glanmire, Kanturk, Kinsale and mobile libraries.

"All my family are members (6) and we all love the library here in Macroom and all the staff who are wonderful, helpful and friendly. The children's bookclub was a great facility to encourage the children to read and keep reading- they'll have a lifelong love of reading and learning. The library is the best value for money in Cork county."
 - Joan Twomey O'Sullivan, Macroom

- Deliver optimum services to children and young adults through the Schools' Library Service, the mobile libraries and the branch network, to ensure that our younger citizens are given the best possible start in terms of literacy and knowledge, while at the same time encouraging the intangible but invaluable asset that is the childhood imagination. Seek to remove membership fees for children.
- Optimise social inclusion for potentially marginalised groups, working to remove barriers to physical, geographical, cultural or socio-economic access. Potentially vulnerable groups may include older people, people with disabilities and/or people with literacy or other learning difficulties, and continuing efforts to meet at least some of their needs through library services may mitigate the impact of cutbacks to services in other areas that affect them.



"It's great to see the local library involved with the local schools. There is definitely room for developing this area. It gives children who have no interest in reading a chance to experience different authors and how exciting reading can be. Good idea to invite different authors. A good library for children in rural areas is very important."
 -Jo McSweeney, retired, Dunmanway

2.1.1 Service delivery: the branch network

- Investigate options for the relocation of Glanmire library to new premises with equivalent or larger floor area, reduced annual rent, situated on higher ground than the current library and incorporating energy efficiency measures as part of the fit-out.
- Complete the refurbishment of Cobh Library. Cobh Library is located in the listed Arch Building, a former Market House. Funding has been secured to complete Phase 2 of the renovation project, namely the refurbishment of the first floor, in 2014. Funding for Phase 3, the refurbishment of the entrance hall, stairwell and lift, will be sought in 2015.

"The library provides a vital service to the town and people of Cobh and should be returned to its original premises, where the increased space available allows it to fulfil that role best."

-Damien Byrne, Cobh GAA

- Increase opening hours of Kinsale Library to full-time hours, subject to the removal of the staff embargo, and seek capital funding from the Department for the conversion of the Old Mill into a modern and spacious library for the town. The library serves a catchment area population of 11,355, and the town itself is a prominent tourist destination. More spacious accommodation is required for Kinsale Library to deliver the full range of services that the public have come to expect from a library, including study space, exhibition space and space for library events such as storytelling and bookclub meetings. The Mill was purchased in the 1980s and was intended to serve as a library for the town, but a funding application process with the Department did not reach completion at the time. A fresh application will be prepared for Department funding of this refurbishment, with a view to relocating within the life of this plan.

"Kinsale Library is far too small - not just for basic library functions, but there is no room for community activities, e.g. such as those in Bandon – music – children – knitting – talks and other community involvements. Whatever happened to the plan of the mid 1980s – that the old mill be the local library in the ground floor?"

-Nora M. Hickey, Kinsale

- Investigate options for alternative accommodation for Sherkin Island Library. Sherkin Library is housed in a small portacabin next to the community centre on the Island. During the life of this plan it is hoped to secure more suitable accommodation for the library. In the short term, this will involve exploring co-funding options with the Sherkin Island Development Society for a shared space, whether a larger, more comfortable prefabricated building or space in a permanent structure.
- Explore long-term accommodation options for Kanturk Library. The library is

currently housed in rented premises at the heart of Kanturk, but a number of alternative options will be investigated during the life of this plan, including negotiation of a lease on the existing premises which incorporates upgrades required by Cork County Council, as well as looking at alternative premises.

- Review long-term library requirements for Youghal, with a view to developing a plan for the Collins Bakery premises.
- Cork County Library service will continue to strive for energy efficiencies within the framework of E-MAP, the programme used by Cork County Council for the implementation of the public service requirement to reduce energy usage by 33% in 2020. Potential for improvement in the energy performance of each library building will be assessed countywide on an annual basis, with works decided upon early in the year and delivered by the end of the year. We will work to ensure that all new buildings, including leased buildings, meet the required energy standards from the outset.



In 2014, projects will include upgrading the heating systems in Passage West and Schull Libraries and installing/upgrading ceiling insulation at both locations.

- Maximise accessibility of library service points in terms of physical access to buildings/mobiles and the circulation space and facilities within them, and ensure that all new library buildings, including leased buildings, meet accessibility standards from the outset. Optimise access to library service points by monitoring the effectiveness and suitability of existing opening hours.

"Schull Library should be open on Saturday or Monday, not Sunday. The original reason for Sunday opening (to facilitate the islanders who came to the mainland once a week for Sunday Mass) no longer applies."

-Schull Library user

- Subject to the removal of the staff embargo and Council Finance improving, seek to reverse any reductions made to opening hours during the latter part of the last plan and since, as well as the possible increase of opening hours where a need is identified.
- Aim for high health and safety standards throughout the service, carrying out risk assessments in 2014 at each library location and mobile stop and implementing the controls recommended therein. Continue to embed the Council's safety management system into operations at all levels of the library service.
- Continue to monitor areas of increasing population and evaluate their library needs. See Appendix 2 for map of library locations over population by ED (Census 2011).

2.1.2 Service Delivery: Mobile Libraries

The Mobile Library Service has been an integral part of service delivery in Cork County Library since the early 1960s. Notwithstanding the development of service levels through the branch library network, the mobile service continues to play a key role ensuring all citizens have access to the Library Service irrespective of their location or personal circumstances. Groups which are, and will continue to be dependent on the mobile library service include those geographically isolated, the elderly, disabled, housebound, nursing home residents and children attending rural schools. In 2003, a generous grant from central government for the purchase of new vehicles ensured the continuation of the service into the present decade. The following developments are now both opportune and necessary to secure the future of the service during the lifetime of the new Library Development Plan:

- Reduce units from 5 to 4 to take account of improvements in the branch network coverage and achieve operational economies. A review of mobile library services in 2013 found that efficiencies could be achieved by consolidating nearby stops and rationalising routes of all mobile libraries. By combining the routes of the two South Cork services, with support for outlying stops from the other mobile services, savings on staff, diesel, motor tax and vehicle maintenance can be delivered with little impact on the end users who depend on the services.
- Replace the current fleet of public access vehicles (4) on a phased basis

over the period 2014-2018 to comply with the Health & Safety requirements, energy efficiency requirements and provide improved facilities for patrons and staff. Funding will be sought from the Department for this with an initial application for two new vehicles in 2014.

- Extend the Library Management System to the remaining mobiles to provide a level of service on a par with that provided in branches.
- Seek the appointment of suitably qualified driver / assistants whose role is central in service delivery and meeting stringent H & S standards.
- Implement a programme of quarterly meetings with maintenance foreman and fleet manager to monitor the maintenance programme and H&S issues.

"The library visits Glengarriff every two weeks. I am delighted to say that the staff are very friendly and helpful. I have often found that people in the area are unaware of the library calling to the village. Advertising the date, approximate time and location of the bus in the different villages in West Cork can be arranged free of charge in the Southern Star Newspaper in Skibbereen. Each village has its own correspondent who reports items of interest to the local community. Another source of free advertising is the local church newsletters. The rural areas would be bereft without the library."
-Ann Barron, Glengarriff

2.1.3 Service delivery: online

Online delivery of services and collections will continue to grow and to comfortably co-habit with physical books in physical buildings

- Implement a new, web-based library management system that offers the user seamlessly integrated access to all library databases as well as the library website, accommodates a wide variety of formats, interfaces with social media, facilitates user interaction and delivers a wider range of online services. The recent tender process for a national library management system, for which Cork County Council, Kerry County Council and Cork City Council prepared a joint submission, is likely to result in the procurement of a system that meets all of these requirements. Cork County Library will investigate the possibility of joint implementation of any new system with Kerry County Council and Cork City Council.
- Expand the range of e-resources held to include e-books, and continue to promote and evaluate the success of these services. Following on the success of e-audiobooks and e-magazines, the addition of e-books to the catalogue of titles held will further increase the choice of platforms through which reading material can be accessed, serving a preference for digital delivery of literature as well as a seemingly thriving taste for the physical book. New developments in this sector will be closely observed as the market develops.

"What ever gets people reading and keeps them reading means we have to be constantly monitoring what our readership want. To me reading is the most important issue and whatever type of platform is used by people to read, I embrace that."

-Paula Courtney, Senior Library Assistant, Cobh Library

- Develop a library app to encapsulate a range of e-services in one virtual location, enabling easier on-the-move access to our services.
- Advance the use of social media as a core tool for promoting library events, services and initiatives and as one of the main communication channels with the public on matters of literature, culture, heritage and the arts. The success of social media as a way of interacting with the public was recently evinced in a Cork County Library original tweet about Napoleon's travelling library, which was retweeted all over the world, gaining us a large number of new followers. The Library Service continues to be one of the most active users of the Cork County Council Facebook Page. The next five years will see the development of a library-specific Social Media Policy and the setting up of a library-specific Facebook page, as well as the integration of social media into the LMS. New developments in the sector will also be monitored and responded to as appropriate.

"Many libraries I know have a Facebook page in which they post events, updates and the book selection for the book club. This means members who weren't able to make it to the last meeting can get updates by friending or liking (if a business page). It also means that an ongoing discussion can be conducted about the current or past book and those that are unable to make the actual discussion in the library can follow one and post their thoughts."

-Kristen Gleeson

- Subject to ongoing partnership with FAS, expand the e-learning in libraries programme, to augment access to lifelong learning in the field of computer literacy.
- Subject to funding and/or staff resources, commence a project of retrospective RFID tagging of the bookstore collection. Radio-frequency identification is a valuable tool in efficient collection management and one which would deliver further workflow efficiencies in this area.
- Explore with the IT department of Cork County Council and relevant IT support companies, the possibility of providing support for library branches on Saturdays and late evenings. (Emer Kelleher, Senior Library Assistant, Middleton Library)
- Conduct a survey of library staff to determine the level and type of IT skills needed on the job and investigate options available for providing this training.
- Explore possible avenues for providing informal training sessions in social media to older members of the library.



The support provided by the staff to Internet users is excellent, perhaps it could be extended by providing informal classes in new technology for those of us who are not using Twitter and Facebook - and have not grown up with it! (I mean oldies!) Blogging etc are just words, I would like to learn more and not necessarily use it all for work but just to keep up to date and involved in the community."

-Ann Crowley, Dunmanway

2.2 Policies and planning

- Seek to implement new Cork County Library byelaws under the Local Government Act 2001. The existing byelaws of Cork County Library date from 15th June 1920 and were put in place under the Public Libraries Acts 1855 to 1902 and, while of historical interest, are largely inappropriate for and inapplicable in modern Irish society. During the life of this plan, the library will seek to have new byelaws put in place which adequately reflect the environment of and issues affecting the modern Irish library.
- Update the Collection Development Policy. A collection development policy is a tool that helps to define the rationale for decisions relating to stock acquisition, management and withdrawal, particularly important in the light of the bookfund reductions which have taken place since 2008. The revision of our existing policy is also timely in the context of the increasing ways in which library collections are being delivered to the public, including digital formats.
- Finalise a draft library disaster plan for library HQ and library branches. The increased instance of flood events throughout Co. Cork in recent years has highlighted the importance of prevention and preparedness for homes, businesses and other organisations, including libraries. While severe weather events cannot be controlled, damage to library collections, equipment and buildings can be mitigated through careful planning.
- Develop a Social Media Policy for the library in conjunction with Corporate Affairs, that assimilates essential elements of Cork County Council's Social Media Policy, but also allows for the different aims of the Library's engagement with social media, which include promotion of the service and two-way communication with followers.
- Prioritise the remaining recommendations of the Library Service Review. Many of the recommendations of the Library Service Review, conducted in 2011, have been implemented and others have been revised. The remaining recommendations will be assessed and prioritised for implementation.
- Develop a shared services programme with the City Library, to be reviewed every three years.
- Continue to implement the Cork County Council Child Protection Policy, while monitoring developments in Child Protection nationally, specifically the passing of the Children's Act and the LGMA Guidelines on Child Protection for Libraries (in preparation at the time of writing), with a view to providing as much certainty as possible on how to deal with child protection issues that can arise in libraries.

2.3 Staff Development

The achievement of objectives under this plan will be the responsibility of library staff, and the following targets are being set to ensure that staff are equipped with the skills and expertise required to deliver these achievements:

- Work to restore funding for the professional library qualification, in order to continue the professional development, empowerment and motivation of library staff, and to build on the expertise that already exists in the service.
- Define appropriate training needs for current and future staff duties, informed by a staff survey, and determine the vehicles best suited to deliver these training needs.
- Develop a programme of in-house training on a range of library operation and management skills, from dealing with genealogy queries to setting up and running book clubs. This programme should harness existing staff skills and expertise, allowing staff to share their knowledge with other staff through the delivery of workshops, talks and/or mentoring, in a training co-operative. (Suggested by a number of staff)
- Invest in externally facilitated workshops in a range of skills areas, such as the use of social media as a promotion and communication tool, to augment and complement in-house training.
- Encourage continuing professional development through attendance at Library Association of Ireland conferences and other appropriate events, to further staff knowledge and sharing of experience.
- Develop a schedule of visits to branch libraries by senior library management to enhance communication and effective service delivery. Subject to minimal impact on opening hours, bi-annual group meetings of branch managers in a division, with their divisional manager, will also be undertaken. (Linda McEvoy, Executive Librarian, Clonakilty Library)
- Develop a programme of staff exchanges between branches and library HQ to enhance in-house training and increase awareness and understanding of processes and activities of different areas of service provision. (Mairead Clabby, Assistant Librarian, Dunmanway)
- Compile a list of subject/genre “experts” (staff with interest in a particular area such as gardening, crime writing, biographies) for sharing advice/ expertise on an ongoing basis.
- Make recommendations to the organisation regarding an appropriate staff structure (professional/para-professional ratio) and staff levels for Cork County Library to deliver continued excellence in library services, in the context of developments in the sector, locally and nationally.
- Implement Cork County Council’s Performance Management and Development System.



Pictured Above: Sheila Mullane of Fermoy Library being presented with her Frontline Certificate by Bernie Wallace, North Cork Librarian

2.4 Collection Management and Development

"[I'd like to see] more circulation of stock between local libraries, just to ensure 'novel' selections!"
-Tom Boland, WIT

- With issues of physical books reaching a healthy 1.76 million in 2013, the main focus of Cork County Library service will continue to be the delivery of literature in its material form through our branch and mobile library network. The regular updating of all categories of books in all branches is key to this success and the programme of refreshing and rotating physical book stock will continue during the life of this plan.
- However, as platforms evolve, we will expand the formats of stock held alongside the physical book, and promote and evaluate the success of all new services. The usage of e-audiobooks and e-magazines, added to the library's portfolio of resources in recent years, has shown a continuous upward trajectory, and seems to have broken through the traditional library user/non-user divide, generating new interest in library services among people who have not recently been members of a library. The addition of e-books to the catalogue of titles held will further increase the choice of media through which reading material is delivered, serving a preference for digital formats as well as the continuing high level of demand for the physical book. New developments in this sector will be closely observed as the market develops.
- Update the Collection Development Policy to contextualise our stock decisions in a continually changing environment. [See Policies and Planning above].
- Continue and extend the practice of joint procurement of stock with Cork City Libraries, investigating the possibility of including other formats not included in the scope of the pilot tender.
- Strive to restore the bookfund to pre-recession levels and beyond, to reach the national per capita target spend of €3.77 per annum.
- Explore options for joint procurement with Cork City Library of online subscription resources such as encyclopaedia, e-magazines, newspaper archives and other information databases, to deliver further savings under a shared services programme.
- Review current workflow practices in the Bibliographic Services

- department, to optimise use of existing staff resources in the section.
- Further develop existing guidelines for staff on stock management in branches and the bookstore.
 - Regularly review stock management, capacity and storage requirements in Library HQ as well as the MUMs bookstore. Increase the level of compact shelving in the bookstore according to requirements. This will be done in tandem with the development of a shared storage agreement with Cork City Library.
 - Evaluate options for income generation with regard to stock withdrawals.
 - Through regular stock checks, continue to maintain currency and accuracy of the catalogue, to ensure that the location of each item of stock can be confirmed.
 - Expand on the success of the Bibliotherapy programme by extending it to other branches in the county.
 - Develop the range of resources on offer to cater for the current and evolving interests of younger readers, so as to reflect in our collections the feedback received by this demographic
 - Develop the holdings of literature in Irish and foreign languages.



"I get an outstandingly good service from Dunmanway Library. It is a wonderful facility in our community and is a credit to all the staff there. I have a particular interest in reading modern European literature in the original language (in my case French and Spanish). I realise that this is a very minority interest but I feel that with an increasingly diverse population in Cork there would be an interest in books in European languages if they were available. My suggestion would be that a supply of such books could be held in the central library with a catalogue available either in local libraries or on line. Interested readers could then request these books through their local library. In this way a minority interest could be catered for at a relatively low cost."

-Pam de Haas

2.5 Outreach and partnership

- Further explore the potential for sharing services with Cork City Library, following on the success of the joint procurement of books, with particular attention to shared storage, cataloguing, and maintenance of the buildings infrastructure.
- Continue to examine strategic partnership possibilities with other libraries in the Cork and South West region, developing Cork PAL as a vehicle for sharing services with UCC, CIT and Cork City Libraries, and building on the relationship formed with Kerry County Library for the LMS submission. Procurement, storage, technology and promotion are just some of the areas where symbiotic potential exists.
- Market and promote the County Library and its services across the whole county by engaging in new and innovative formats, including social media and sms messaging, as well as continuing with traditional methods which have successfully served the library, such as brochures, newsletters and local radio, with a view to augmenting our visibility within the community and ensuring that every resident in County Cork is aware of the Library service.
- Build on the success of the bibliotherapy scheme partnership with the HSE by extending the programme to additional branch libraries.
- Develop a visible, county-wide, promotional event or programme that is immediately identifiable with library services.
- Deliver reader development initiatives for all ages, such as summer reading schemes to sustain and enhance children's reading skills during the summer holidays.
- Offer experience to trainee teachers in organising and managing initiatives for children, such as facilitators of bookclubs and storytelling. (Gillian Kelleher, Branch Librarian, Macroom)
- Subject to ongoing partnership with FAS, expand the e-learning in libraries programme, to augment access to lifelong learning in the field of computer literacy.
- Engage with local groups such as local history groups, youth groups, active retirement groups, arts and crafts groups and support groups, to

raise awareness of the services that libraries can offer them. Recent initiatives include liaising with Men's Sheds to inform them of our services and support the development of their own service, as well as co-operation with the Canon Sheehan Commemoration Group, by hosting writers' workshops, a short story competition and a Readers' Day.

- Engage with and contribute to national non-profit and charitable initiatives, such as the recent donations of books to the London Irish Centre by a selection of Irish Public Libraries.

"The present library services are excellent, but I would like to see more educational services for library users, e.g. philosophy groups, legal studies, arts groups, etc."

-Peter McManamon, Passage West

- Develop a collaborative approach to cultural events with other Cork institutions such as the Cork Archives Institute and UCC in bringing cultural events and programmes to people all over the county.
- Liaise with other departments of Cork County Council such as the Heritage Unit and Tourism Development Section, to deliver cultural, heritage and information events and content to the citizens of Cork and visitors to Cork.
- Develop links with external tourist bodies to promote the package of services available to visitors, including genealogical and local history services and develop a visitor/tourist section on the website.



Pictured Above: Alternative entertainment for children during the Midleton Food Festival

2.6 Literature, Culture and the Arts

- Celebrate our literary heritage through events that bring the literature and literary figures of the past alive for the present, such as the Canon Sheehan Centenary Celebrations, the Thomas Davis Memorial Celebrations and Bloomsday.
- Promote continued excellence in literary output through the short story competition and support for writers groups.
- Promote living and working writers and creators through the hosting of author visits and literary and arts workshops.

"I propose reading aloud workshops and sessions for transition year pupils to read to elders, youngsters and romantics."

-Mary Moore, Macroom

- As well as supporting bookclubs through the provision of reading lists, book loans and hosting of meetings, explore new, low-cost ways of promoting a love of reading and literature among all groups in the community, such as reading aloud sessions.
- Continue to support and play a key role in the West Cork Literary Festival, keeping the library at the heart of the festival.
- Promote artistic creativity in borrowers through a series of design competitions that also promote Cork County Library and Arts service, such as Design a Library Card, Design a Calendar.
- In 2014, expand the programme of library arts funded activities occurring outside the festival calendar.
- Annually review ways of delivering optimum value for money from the library arts budget, to ensure that this resource is spread as evenly but also

as effectively as possible throughout the branch and mobile library network over the next 5 years.

- Supplement library arts programmes by tapping into the skills and talents of staff for one-off or festival events, where staff members are willing to facilitate arts/crafts workshops, provide storytelling sessions or give musical performances. (Liz Desmond, Executive Librarian, Fermoy Library)
- Through a programme of in-house training and knowledge sharing, expand staff expertise in setting up and facilitating literature, culture and arts groups including book clubs, writers' groups, knitting clubs, ciorcail cainte and so on.
- Expand and promote the programme of events and exhibitions at LHQ and promote use of the space to cultural, artistic and community groups.
- Where space allows, promote library branches as venues for community artists and arts groups to exhibit their work.



"Until a few years ago, I displayed a selection of the work from the adult education art class on the walls of Schull Library; since my cancer diagnosis, the classes haven't run, but having now got my health back, I have approached the new principal and hope we may re-start the classes. Some new artwork on the walls would add to the improvement of Schull Library in recent years, especially during Schull Art Week."
-John Abbott, Long Island, Schull

2.7 Local History, Genealogy and Cultural Heritage

- Develop a plan for the activities of the Reference and Local Studies service to ensure continued development of its print and multi-media collections, and improvement of its services through promotion, training, outreach and partnerships with branch staff and the public. Develop the local studies website as a hub for local history and heritage throughout the county.
- Advance the programme of digitisation of rare, unique and/or significant items and collections, with reference to copyright law, potential usage, content already digitised by other institutions and the condition of items/collections. Continue to make digitised collections available through the Cork County Library website.
- Publish one book or booklet per year on a topic related to Cork County's local history and use the income from sales to fund the following year's project. We no longer see our role as being simply to hold and preserve rare local history collections, but also to bring them alive through continuous use of the information contained therein. This role will be further developed in the coming years through the funding of local history publications, within clearly-defined parameters, to promote the body of information held in the Library.
- Continue to contribute a programme of exhibitions and talks on local history topics to coincide with national festivals such as Heritage Week and Culture Night. Make the content of such talks/exhibitions available on the website where possible.



"The library at Carrigaline is a wonderful place and all the staff are very helpful. The only comment I would like to make: could we have more talks on a variety of different topics."
-Anne Oulsnam, Carrigaline

- Offer one-to-one and group sessions by appointment on the full range of resources available for local studies or genealogical research, or a specific area of interest.
- Promote of the reference and local studies service to History teachers to develop awareness of the range of resources available to Leaving Certificate History students doing self-directed essays. (Danielle Crowley, Library Staff Officer, Cobh Library)
- Develop links with local media, exploring the possibility of having a weekly column in local or parish newsletters, and making staff available to review material in broadcasting and/or print. (Kieran Wyse, Reference and Local Studies Library)
- Achieve resolution on the future of the considerable genealogical resource of parish registers indexed as part of the genealogy indexing project, through assessment of the various vehicles already available for publishing the indexed records, the opportunities and obligations attaching to each, and evaluating alternative routes that might be taken. Once the platform is agreed, promote this resource to citizens of Cork, visitors to Cork and the Cork diaspora abroad.
- Develop a brochure on genealogical services and “how to” guide to tracing ancestry. (Elizabeth Desmond, Executive Librarian, Fermoy Library)
- Mark the centenary of the most revolutionary period in recent Irish history through the development of a programme of events that commemorates those turbulent times from 1916-1923, using exhibitions, publications and lectures, to explore our past and how it has shaped our present, from the vantage point of 100 years on.
- Examine the resources required to open the Reference and Local Studies Library to the public on Saturday mornings and proceed with opening if resources allow.

APPENDIX 1- SUBMISSIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

"I have been coming to Dunmanway Library for over 20 years and cannot think how to improve the service. It is perfect. As well as giving fantastic value for money (I would happily pay a little more if needs be), I, and others, will draw attention to the incalculable benefits this facility brings to the town. There is nowhere else like it. To see so many people and children, from such a huge variety of backgrounds, faiths and political beliefs, mixing together peacefully gives us all hope for the future in these difficult times. Give the staff a pay-rise!" (Ms. Karen Forest, Dunmanway)

"It's great to see the local library involved with the local schools. There is definitely room for developing this area. It gives children who have no interest in reading a chance to experience different authors and how exciting reading can be. Good idea to invite different authors. A good library for children in rural areas is very important." (Jo McSweeney, Dunmanway)

"Second computer please. Allow client 45 minutes on Internet. Space available if configured creatively. Second newspaper area. For adults. Potential space left of librarian's desk, facing librarian, facing east in other words. Could be separated/screened off with a free-standing or grounded partition. Toilet for public? Language-learning booth? Skype booth? Internet booth? Room for group discussion. Book club. Tea-making facilities!! Strong, durable headphones. Scanning/scanner. Tourist info!! Socials every 6 months. Innumerable ideas! Keep up the excellent work. Some 'pulse' and 'heartbeat' for rural Ireland. A social hub in isolated locations. Sin a méid." (Florence Newman, Schull)

"The library at Carrigaline is a wonderful place and all the staff are very helpful. The only comment I would like to make: could we have talks on a variety of different topics." (Anne Oulsnam, Crosshaven)

"Toys for babies while big kids and Mams and Dads are reading; cushions to sit on; storytelling sessions (every day)." (Gemma- young Dunmanway Library user)

"Bean bags for kids to read on; old kids' movies on DVD, e.g. Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, Shirley Temple, etc." (Molly, young Dunmanway Library user)

"Maybe if the library could open late one or two evenings per week. I used to live in Blessington in Co. Wicklow and it was really appreciated. They retained the evening service in spite of cutbacks by opening from 1pm-8pm, two days per week, which also facilitated people who wish to visit during their lunch break." (Melanie Smith, Fermoy)

"Fermoy Library is a wonderful facility for everyone, young and old. I frequently recommend it to everyone, not only for books, but Internet and art displays and book clubs. If I could recommend one thing it would be a coffee dock! This would be a great and wondrous thing!" (Fiona Kiely, Fermoy)

"My local library is Kinsale Library and the librarian there, Mrs. O'Connell, is very nice and helpful. My suggestions for the library – a larger premises for the library with an area for children, toilets and a baby changing facility; DVD hire; longer book hire. In my previous library in Christchurch, NZ, they had split the hire periods – one week for newly released books with a \$5NZ charge and the rest of the books were for 4 weeks. This I found worked well." (Jeanette, Kinsale Library user)

"I really like the warmth, atmosphere and facilities in Macroom Library. I would further like the library to open one night a week for talks, films, till about 9.30 - 10pm. Over the years, I have been involved with creative writing, scrabble and chess for youngsters in Macroom Library and would love to see these facilitated in the future. Top marks to the Macroom Library staff for making the library one of the great attractions in Macroom." (Macroom Library user)

"All my family are members (6) and we all love the library here in Macroom and all the staff who are wonderful, helpful and friendly. The children's bookclub was a great facility to encourage the children to read and keep reading- they'll have a lifelong love of reading and learning. The library is the best value for money in Cork county." (Macroom Library user)

"Kinsale Library is far too small - not just for basic library functions, but there is no room for community activities, e.g. such as those in Bandon – music – children – knitting – talks and other community involvements. Whatever happened to the plan of the mid 1980s – that the old mill be the local library in the ground floor?" (Nora M. Hickey, Kinsale)

"Cobh Library is invaluable to me and my family. I cannot afford to buy books but am an inveterate reader. Reading is my sanity in a busy life. I use it for reference and escape. I bring my children regularly and wish to inculcate in them the love of knowledge that will enrich their lives. My children also visit the library with their schools. This is especially important for my son, who has autism. The staff are welcoming, helpful and inclusive – qualities not always present for my child in shops, etc. – it is a safe haven for him. I think a toy library (non-battery toys) might be a useful addition to its already outstanding services." (Niamh Linehan, Cobh)

"The staff need their normal workplace. The conditions in which they work are not suitable to a modern day library. I also feel, as a member, I need more space to choose my books." (Anne Greene, Cobh)

"The present library services are excellent, but I would like to see more educational services for library users, e.g. philosophy groups, legal studies, arts groups, etc." (Passage West Library user)

"More Magic Rainbow books; get children's DVDs." (Ciara, young library user)

"I propose reading aloud workshops and sessions for transition year pupils to read to elders, youngsters and romantics." (Macroom Library user)

"The library visits Glengarriff every two weeks. I am delighted to say that the staff are very friendly and helpful. I have often found that people in the area are unaware of the library calling to the village. Advertising the date, approximate time and location of the bus in the different villages in West Cork could be arranged with local notes in the Southern Star Newspaper in Skibbereen. Each village has its own correspondent who reports items of interest to the local community. Another source of advertising is the local church newsletters. The rural areas would be bereft without the library." (Ann Barron, Glengarriff, West Cork Mobile Library user)

"I believe that it is crucial that, not only should Cobh retain its library, but it should return to its original, larger premises. The library is an incredibly valuable local resource, and for it to be used in the most effective way, its expansion is essential. As an educational resource (reading groups, book club, story-telling, etc.), the library space, as it is, does not serve this purpose adequately. The people of Cobh, and the dedicated and committed staff of Cobh Library, deserve a significant improvement/enhancement of our local library." (Jim Quinlan, Councillor, Cobh)

"The library is a vital service to our community, particularly our school community. The library provides a wide range of literature for children, to improve their reading skills and level of interest. Due to severe cutbacks to school funding, schools do not have resources to update our library on a regular basis, however, the local library provides an alternative for local children, and as a local school, our classes use it regularly. The current facility is not adequate for school visits for classes of 30+. We would be able to visit more regularly if the old facility was re-opened. There are 6 primary schools in the Cobh area and every school needs the library to provide further motivation for reading and improvement of literacy skills." (Teacher, Cobh Library user)

"The library provides a vital service to the town and people of Cobh and should be returned to its original premises, where the increased space available allows it to fulfil that role best." (Cobh Library user)

"Our library here in Kinsale is the central part of the community. Unfortunately, we have a very small space for the number of people that use it. We could do with extra space, and a space especially for children. Also, we could do with a regular change of books as this doesn't happen very often. As regards our librarian, she is second to none, always very helpful, knows the people and is always in a very pleasant disposition. It would be hard to replace her." (Elizabeth O'Leary, Kinsale)

"Schull Library should be open on Saturday or Monday, not Sunday. The original reason for Sunday opening (to facilitate the islanders who came to the mainland once a week for Sunday Mass) no longer applies." (Schull Library user)

"Until a few years ago, I displayed a selection of the work from the adult education art class on the walls of Schull Library; since my cancer diagnosis, the classes haven't run, but having now got my health back, I have approached the new principal and hope we may re-start the classes. Some new artwork on the walls would add to the improvement of Schull Library in recent years, especially during Schull Art Week." (John Abbott, Long Island, Schull)

"I would like a second computer could be installed at the library in Schull. The 30 minute slots at present are quite restricting and make any sort of affairs difficult to complete in the set time. The computer is a wonderful addition to the library as it provides cheap access to the Internet and a PC that might otherwise be beyond the ordinary person." (Schull Library user)

"It would be extremely helpful if members could request books held in different libraries via the online catalogue. It should really be easy to do this with the technology available." (Library user)

"Show respect in library for silence rule; sound proof areas needed for book club members for book discussions and debate; sound proof area for children's storytelling sessions, to avoid causing too much disturbance for main area of library; more privacy for computer users, i.e. situation of computer to give more privacy." (Clonakilty Library user)

"I am a member of the library and use the facilities at Macroom and Dunmanway. It is an excellent service and by far the best thing is the quality of the staff. They are exceptionally helpful, well-informed and hard-working. I am a member of the Circle Cainte and the Book Club in Macroom and they are extremely well run and enjoyable experiences - as well as helping to keep me 'in tune' with spoken Irish and a wide range of books. There are other groups in the library as well which are well attended and contribute to the quality of life in the rural area of North West Cork. Suggestion: The support provided by the staff to Internet users is excellent, perhaps it could be extended by providing informal classes in new technology for those of us who are not using Twitter and Facebook - and have not grown up with it! (I mean oldies!) Blogging etc are just words, I would like to learn more and not necessarily use it all for work but just to keep up to date and involved in the community." (User of Macroom and Dunmanway Libraries)

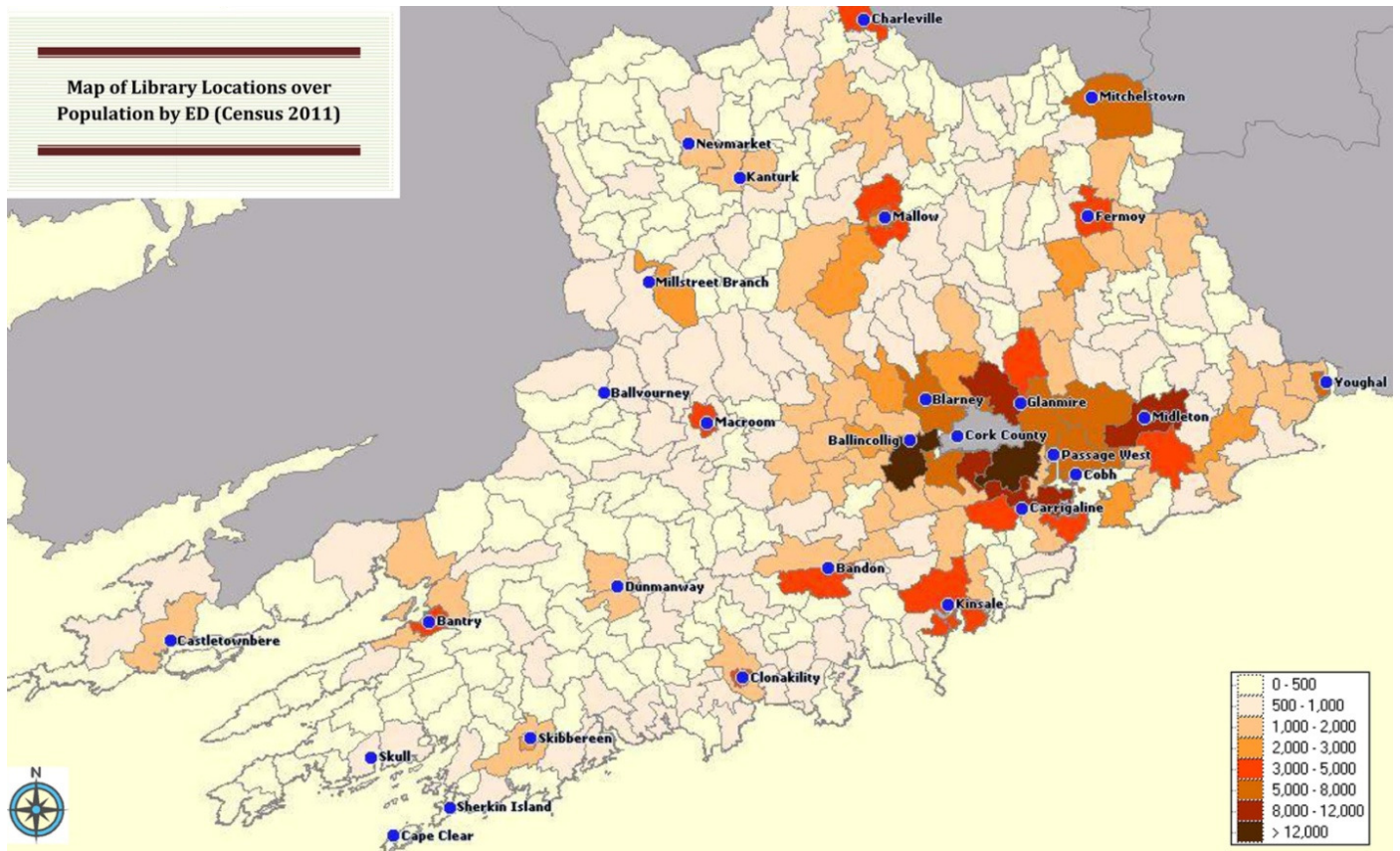
"I thought I might offer some input for the long range planning that the library service is undertaking based on some impressions of my own and my colleagues who work in America and the UK. There are so many challenges ahead and I was happy to hear that a long range plan was in the making. Funding and justifying existence is the daily existence for many of my colleagues in America where the libraries are for the most part subject to local and regional funding. As such they have close connections to members of the community who serve on the library boards and township councils that provide the bulk of their funding. In light of that they have tried various elements to create a greater sense of community with their membership and tried to keep abreast of various trends, some with little funding and others (in more affluent areas) with substantial funding. Some have tried the 'all things to all people' approach as is common in the UK. Fowey Library, in Cornwall, UK is a one stop shop for all community services. The council has a small resource room there for unemployment materials and other social services, the citizen's advice comes regularly. An art group meets there, writing group, book club, and a craft group. This meant they were able to get an extra person from the council to help out and enabled them to maintain more hours. They also had a little coffee machine (self service) set up in a small corner of the library for people to browse books and sip.

The coffee shop in a library is common in the US as an outgrowth of the bookshop trend. Now the bookshops are closing (except for small indie ones) and so how much the coffee shop adds to keeping members and funding is a point. Other more simple aspects that seem relevant to County Cork Library Services is the use of social media to draw in and appeal to more members in the coming years. Many libraries I know have a Facebook page in which they post events, updates and the book selection for the book club. This means members who weren't able to make it to the last meeting can get updates by friending or liking (if a business page). It also means that an ongoing discussion can be conducted about the current or past book and those that are unable to make the actual discussion in the library can follow one and post their thoughts. I know in Ballyvourney book club some of the members have had to drop out because of shift of work patterns or looking after grandkids. They still get the book and like to follow what we read, but they can only give in their input indirectly and don't get a real chance to hear what others might have to say about it. This discussion potential might draw in members of junior or teen book clubs. Most of the teens now have smart phones and this number will only increase. The immediacy of their reaction and pleasure shared with their friends can be extended and perhaps also draw in new members. The Facebook page can also be a place to announce new books or other materials and keep the page an ongoing active element. It might not suit every library to have a page, but the links for those who do could be posted on the library website. Failing that, these elements could be put on the library website, but Facebook is so much more accessible for many people who check their Facebook page at least once a day. Social media seems to be a growing area of which I've become increasingly aware as I've marketed my books in the past few years. I would be willing to help out to some degree, especially in Ballyvourney Library since I'm on social media just about everyday." (Kristen Gleeson, Macroom Library user and former staff member)

"Thanks for opportunity to make a submission. Regarding library in Ballincollig; service excellent. I would like to see children's area moved to same position at front of library, and newspapers moved near the computers. Also could email accounts be shut down when people sign out or are shut out after 1 hour? I find myself going into people's email accounts, because they didn't sign out. They think because they are shut out - their email automatically shuts off, under their password and library card number. Also printer toner is very faint. It is an excellent service." (Ballincollig Library user)

"I get an outstandingly good service from Dunmanway Library. It is a wonderful facility in our community and is a credit to all the staff there. I have a particular interest in reading modern European literature in the original language (in my case French and Spanish). I realise that this is a very minority interest but I feel that with an increasingly diverse population in Cork there would be an interest in books in European languages if they were available. My suggestion would be that a supply of such books could be held in the central library with a catalogue available either in local libraries or on line. Interested readers could then request these books through their local library. In this way a minority interest could be catered for at a relatively low cost." (Pam de Haas)

APPENDIX 2- MAP OF LIBRARY LOCATIONS OVER POPULATION BY ED



APPENDIX 3- 2013 STATISTICS

BRANCH TOTALS	Members	Loans	Visitors	Internet
Ballincollig	3,135	95,363	96,800	4,703
Ballyvourney	339	12,394	7,400	329
Bandon	2,795	87,773	138,850	3,876
Bantry	2,102	64,805	77,050	3,272
Blarney	1,042	35,541	18,450	626
Carrigaline	3,782	98,899	99,950	5,778
Castletownbere	719	18,367	12,850	454
Charleville	1,395	48,491	56,650	3,543
Clonakilty	3,034	94,407	97,200	5,481
Cobh	1,488	43,434	35,200	2,730
Dunmanway	1,604	64,498	37,550	2,027
Fermoy	2,653	76,689	70,350	3,368
Glanmire	2,678	85,813	67,650	4,881
Kanturk	1,211	45,345	35,800	1,928
Kinsale	779	22,824	13,900	1,218
Lending HQ / Ref	802	25,357	26,200	3,546
Macroom	2,352	70,298	73,400	7,005
Mallow	4,299	116,559	134,550	14,047
Midleton	4,545	107,690	138,250	9,430
Millstreet	881	40,535	40,050	2,135
Mitchelstown	2,148	55,796	44,650	5,331
Newmarket	379	9,459	16,100	101
Oileain Chleire	58	1,656	2,100	1,093
Passage west	404	13,973	10,300	209
Schull	459	8,690	8,200	720
Sherkin Island	70	2,121	1,850	395
Skibbereen	2,399	82,592	55,400	3,760
Youghal	2,084	48,772	71,800	5,636
Mobile 1	1,687	45,218	31,800	0
Mobile 2	1,792	52,022	35,400	0
West Cork Mobile	1,456	53,854	47,050	0
Fermoy Mobile	1,970	68,598	41,700	0
Kanturk Mobile	1,883	61,047	36,950	0
Downloadable Audio		2,244		
Downloadable magazines		384		
Wifi				239
TOTAL	58,424	1,761,508	1,681,400	97,861

APPENDIX 4- BRANCH PROFILE

Branch	Address	Floor area	Date opened	Extent of opening	Catchment Area Population
Ballincollig	Village Shopping Centre	418	1998	FT	30,183
Bhaile Bhuirne	Main St., Ballymakeera	93	2004	PT	2166
Bandon	South Main St., Bandon	186	1988	FT	11,561
Bantry	Bridge St., Bantry	465	1976	FT	6243
Blarney	The Square, Blarney	93	1997	FT	18,225
Carrigaline	Crosshaven Rd	372	2009	FT	24,291
Castletownbere	The Square, Castletownbere	71	2013	PT	3,830
Charleville	Main St., Charleville	232	1991	FT	5,925
Clonakilty	Kent St., Clonakilty	225	1988	FT	7816
Cobh	Arch Building, Casement Sq., Cobh	372	1984	FT	14,034
Reference/Lending HQ	County Library Building, Carrigrohane Rd	1,000	2009	FT	Undefined
Dunmanway	Main St., Dunmanway	279	1997	FT	4,851
Fermoy	Connolly St., Fermoy	320	1969	FT	13,946
Glanmire	Hazlewood Shopping Centre	325	2004	FT	28,759
Kanturk	Main St., Kanturk	232	1998	FT	4,810
Kinsale	Methodist Church, Kinsale	62	1991	PT	11,355
Macroom	Briery Gap Cultural Centre	232	2000	FT	9,306
Mallow	Davis St.	743	2006	FT	18,468
Midleton	Main St	372	1997	FT	26,185
Millstreet	Council Offices, Millstreet	99	1926	FT	5,262
Mitchelstown	Suttons Court, Clonmel Rd., Mitchelstown	366	2011	FT	7,894
Newmarket	High St., Newmarket	61	2013	PT	4,905
Oileain Chleire	North Harbour, O. Chleire	21	1999	PT	124
Passage West	Community Centre	116	1991	PT	6,129
Schull	Uppr Main St, Schull	93	1981	PT	2,506
Sherkin Island	Community Centre, Sherkin Island	15	2003	PT	114
Skibbereen	North St., Skibbereen	214	1992	FT	8,166
Youghal	Rivergate Mall, Main St., Youghal	232	2007	FT	9,252



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