

Somerset Library Services Consultation 2018 Summary Proposal

Tell us your views on how we are proposing to deliver future library services in South East Somerset - Area 7 - Bruton, Castle Cary and Wincanton Libraries

We'd like to invite you to tell us your views on some potential changes we are considering making to the future delivery of library services in your community and across Somerset.

Somerset County Council is fully committed to continuing to deliver a thriving, modern library service across Somerset. As with many Authorities, however, we continue to face challenging financial times. Somerset County Council received £90million in 2013/14 from central government to support our services. This has reduced to just over £26million for 2017/18 and is set to reduce to nothing by 2020/21- whilst demand for services has increased, particularly in adult and children social care. We have managed to reduce our library budget by 20% since 2011, whilst keeping all of our libraries open. Going forward, we may need to consider more challenging changes in order to keep the Libraries Service on a sustainable financial footing.

The following summary proposal provides **options** for the libraries in this area exploring how we might deliver library services in your community in future. There are another eight area summary proposals available to view, which include library proposals for the remaining areas of Somerset.

Please carefully read the following information, consider the three proposed options then complete the questionnaire, basing your answers on the library you visit most often.

We stress that no decisions about the future delivery of library services in any community have been taken at this time and the results of this consultation will be taken into account in our decision-making. No decisions will be made until the results of this consultation (now ending on 10 June) have been fully analysed and reviewed.

More detailed information is available online (www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries_consultation). You can also attend drop-in sessions taking place at some libraries during the consultation to discuss the proposals and give your feedback.

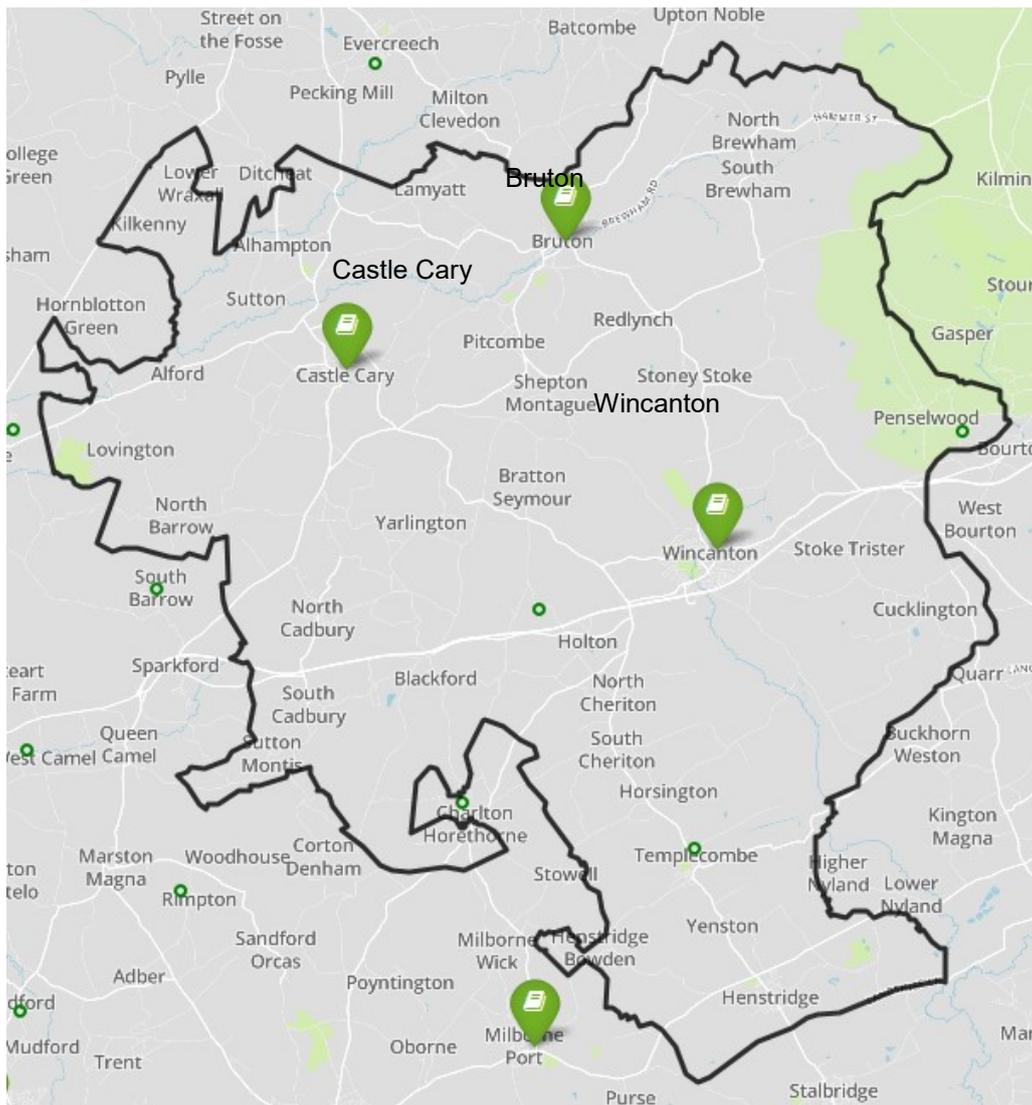
What are library services?

Our 34 Somerset libraries deliver a range of library services including book, audio book and DVD loans, public computer access, reading and support groups, digital skills support, a range of digital resources (such as 3D printing, Microbits and Raspberry Pis), events and activities, business support - and lots more besides.

Many services are available online or through a network of mobile library stops. In addition, we provide a home delivery service for customers unable to visit a library for themselves.

Area 7: South East Somerset Area profile

The map below shows the existing three library buildings (green pins) in Bruton, Castle Cary and Wincanton and the existing mobile library stops (green dots) – 4 stops in this area per month.



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- The area includes the eastern part of South Somerset District.
- It has the smallest population (total 22,360) of the 9 library areas, and is relatively sparsely populated. The main towns are Wincanton (pop. 5,435), Castle Cary (pop. 3,232) and Bruton (pop. 2,984, including adjoining Pitcombe). Other sizeable communities include Templecombe (pop. 1,560) and Henstridge (pop. 1,530) in the south of the area.

- Commercial bus services run between Wincanton and Yeovil, linking Templecombe and Henstridge to Wincanton. A subsidised bus route links Castle Cary and Bruton to Wincanton and Street, and community transport serves most of the area, again running into Wincanton. The urban areas are small enough for walking and cycling access to town centres.
- The area is some distance away from the major towns of Somerset, with drive times to Yeovil / Frome of approximately 25 / 30 minutes from Wincanton and Castle Cary. In contrast, the three major towns are all within 10 minutes' drive of one another, and the vast majority of the area can be reached in 15 minutes' drive from Wincanton.
- Compared to other library areas, there are no significant areas of deprivation. Only 3 neighbourhoods – in Wincanton, Henstridge and Castle Cary – are more deprived than the Somerset average. Employment and income levels are higher than elsewhere in Somerset in the area as a whole, however income is relatively low (in the 40% most deprived for income deprivation) in Castle Cary. Many of the rural parts of the area have high levels of income and employment.
- Educational attainment and school readiness levels are lowest in Wincanton (which has a neighbourhood in the 20% most deprived nationally for education deprivation); educational attainment in Castle Cary is also relatively low. Social isolation is most pronounced in Castle Cary and Wincanton, and digital exclusion appears to be a significant issue in Castle Cary and Henstridge.

	Bruton Library	Castle Cary Library	Wincanton Library
Catchment population	4,698	8,326	18,121
Opening Hours per week	12	19.5	28.5
Active borrowers*	355	592	1,671
Annual footfall	5,096	8,832	29,564

Further evidence of need (including deprivation and usage), access to alternative libraries and value for money, which we have used to develop our proposals can be found online at www.somerset.gov.uk/librariesconsultation .

The detailed impact assessments can also be found here. We are seeking your views on all of this information, and would encourage you to look at this further detail.

Proposals

The following options demonstrate the aim to keep as many library buildings as possible open. The options highlight, however, that for a number of libraries we may require community support to help us achieve this. We stress that library services will continue across Somerset, whatever the outcome of this consultation.

If we are unable to keep library buildings open in communities, we will deliver library services in other ways, such as through outreach (i.e. in alternative venues within communities), online or mobile library services.

Please now consider the following **option proposals** and complete the questionnaire, basing your answers on the library you visit most often.

BRUTON LIBRARY	PROPOSALS
Option A	Provide library services through a partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in Bruton.
Option B	Provide library services through an additional mobile library stop in Bruton (at least once a month). This would mean the closure of the current library building.

CASTLE CARY LIBRARY	Options
Option A	Provide library services through a partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in Castle Cary (supported by some funding from the County Council).
Option B	Provide library services through an additional mobile library stop in Castle Cary (at least once a month). This would mean the closure of the current library building, with library services being provided in other ways.

WINCANTON LIBRARY	PROPOSAL
Option A	No change to existing library services.

For further detailed information on the proposals, please visit www.somerset.gov.uk/librariesconsultation