

Somerset Library Services Consultation 2018 Summary Proposal

Tell us your views on how we are proposing to deliver future library services in Frome and Surrounding Area 8 - Frome library.

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 the **option** for the library 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 proposed option 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.

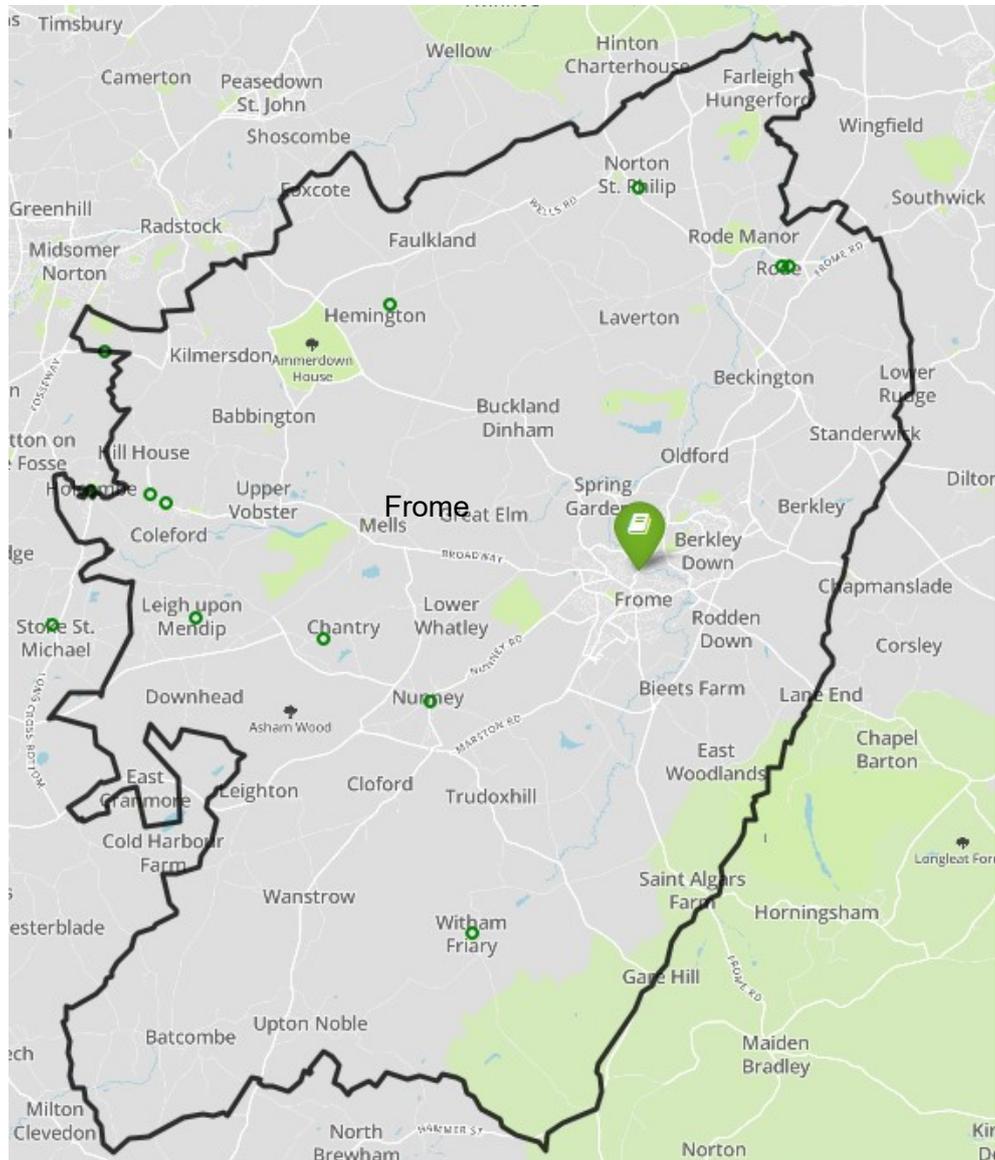
What are library services?

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 8: Frome and Surrounding Area

The map below shows the existing library building (green pin) in Frome and the existing mobile library stops (green dots) – 7 stops in this area per month.



© Mapbox
© Open street map contributors

- This includes the north eastern part of Mendip Council area, from the Wiltshire and North-East Somerset border in the north and east, across to Coleford and Batcombe in the west..
- The area has a population of 40,733, most of whom live in the major town of Frome (pop. 26,203). The only other sizable community is Coleford (pop. 2,151). Many of the rural areas to the south and north of the area are sparsely populated.
- Frome library catchment extends across the whole area and beyond. There are no other Library buildings in this area. Frome and the surrounding villages, as well the area around Coleford, are close to other towns and villages outside of

Somerset, and many people living the area travel regularly to Trowbridge, Warminster, Bath and Midsomer Norton / Radstock.

- Frome is well served by commercial bus services, linking villages along the major routes to Frome town centre. Frome also has a limited town bus service. The whole area is served by Community Transport, centred mainly on Frome (although some communities in the west of the area are linked to Shepton and Wells).
- Relatively good road links mean that driving times into Frome from rural areas are convenient for those with vehicle access. Most of the area is 10-15 minutes' drive from Frome; areas around the southern and western boundaries are up to 20 minutes' drive from Frome and slightly closer to Shepton Mallet or Wells. Much of the population of Frome live within walking or cycling distance of the town centre.
- Frome and the north-eastern part of the area are a relatively long way from other major towns in Somerset – Shepton and Wells are 25-30 minutes by car from the communities of Rode and Norton St. Philip in the far north-east of the County.
- Some of the rural districts to the east of Frome are relatively wealthy, as are some parts of Frome; Frome also has some relatively deprived neighbourhoods (1 neighbourhood in the 20% most deprived nationally). Across the area as a whole deprivation, income and employment levels are in line with the average for Somerset.
- The percentage of under 5s reaching the expected level school readiness is slightly lower than the Somerset average across the area as a whole, and around 15-20 percentage points lower in parts of Frome and some of the rural districts in the west of the area. Income and employment levels, health and educational attainment are also very low in the most deprived parts of Frome.
- Social isolation and digital exclusion vary across the area, and tend to align with areas of deprivation. Again, parts of Frome have the highest levels of social isolation and digital exclusion, with a notable pocket of digital exclusion in and around Coleford.

	Frome Library
Catchment population	48,391
Opening Hours per week	44
Active borrowers*	7,158
Annual footfall	188,279

Proposal

Our 9 area proposals demonstrate the aim to keep as many library buildings as possible open across Somerset. Some of our proposals 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.

We are proposing a limited change to current library services in this area. The change proposed will provide additional outreach library services in communities that need them the most.

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

FROME LIBRARY	PROPOSAL
Option A	No change to existing library services provided in Frome town centre. We propose to provide additional Library Outreach Services (events and activities for children, and technology activities for adults) in the Trinity and The Mount areas of Frome, where these are needed most. We will work with other partners, including our Family Support service, to do this.

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