# Why Scottish Libraries Are Essential - Feedback from Library Users

## Introduction

Thank you for participating in this research survey – it should take you less than 10 minutes to complete.

This survey will be open until 30 June 2024.

If you would like to tell us directly what impact the library has had on your life, please contact us directly at the email address below.

### How we will use your information

We intend to use this data to showcase what impact public libraries have on their communities and report back on our findings.

We will keep your feedback safe, secure and confidential. Read our privacy policy for more information.

Any comments we use in our public communications will be shared anonymously. If you have any questions email [research@scottishbooktrust.com](mailto:research@scottishbooktrust.com)

1. \* Which of the following is your local authority?

| **Local authority** | **Check box** |
| --- | --- |
| Aberdeen City |  |
| Aberdeenshire |  |
| Angus |  |
| Argyll and Bute |  |
| Clackmannanshire |  |
| Comhairle nan Eilean Siar |  |
| Dumfries and Galloway |  |
| Dundee City |  |
| East Ayrshire |  |
| East Dunbartonshire |  |
| East Lothian |  |
| East Renfrewshire |  |
| Edinburgh City |  |
| Falkirk |  |
| Fife |  |
| Glasgow City |  |
| Inverclyde |  |
| Midlothian |  |
| North Ayrshire |  |
| North Lanarkshire |  |
| Orkney Islands |  |
| Perth and Kinross |  |
| Renfrewshire |  |
| Scottish Borders |  |
| Shetland Islands |  |
| South Ayrshire |  |
| South Lanarkshire |  |
| Stirling |  |
| The Highland |  |
| The Moray |  |
| West Dunbartonshire |  |
| West Lothian |  |

## Reading for pleasure

[Reading for pleasure is the single biggest indicator of a child’s future success](https://www.worldbookday.com/about-us/our-approach/the-evidence/) – more than their family circumstances, their parents' educational background or their income.

Moreover, [reading for pleasure is proven to have a greater and longer-lasting effect on adult literacy](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/284286/reading_for_pleasure.pdf) than formal teaching.

1. \* How much time do you (or your family) spend reading for pleasure?

| **Options** | **Check box** |
| --- | --- |
| Never |  |
| Once in a while/monthly |  |
| Occasionally/weekly |  |
| Often/multiple times a week |  |
| Daily/multiple times a day |  |

1. \* Have you (or your family) ever attended any of the following activities in your local library? (Please check all that apply)

| **Activities** | **Check box** |
| --- | --- |
| Author visit |  |
| Bookbug session |  |
| Book club / book café (of all ages/genres) |  |
| Book Week Scotland activity (each November) |  |
| Craft session |  |
| Reading promotions (e.g. ‘Ready, Set, Read’; ReaDiscover; #LovetoRead) |  |
| Storytelling session |  |
| Summer Reading Challenge (Reading Agency) |  |
| Other (please specify) |  |

1. In what ways does your library support your reading for pleasure?

|  |
| --- |

## Learning opportunities

In Scotland, [over 1 in 4 adults might face challenges and constrained opportunities](https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/seldom-heard-voices-adult-literacy-in-the-uk/) in their day-to-day life due to their low literacy skills.  
  
The average worker in the UK with [very low literacy will earn approximately 7.1% less](https://www.probonoeconomics.com/paying-the-price-the-cost-of-very-poor-adult-literacy) than if they had a basic level of literacy.

1. \* Have you (or your family) ever made use of any of the following opportunities in your local library? (Please check all that apply).

| **Additional opportunities** | **Check box** |
| --- | --- |
| Business and enterprise class |  |
| Coding class |  |
| Creative writing opportunities / writing clubs |  |
| Curriculum Resources and Information Service |  |
| Digital skills / computing and information technology |  |
| Employability resources |  |
| GoCitizen (study resource for anyone applying for UK citizenship) |  |
| IELTS preparation program |  |
| Learn My Way (free courses on using a computer, browsing the web, sending an email) |  |
| Lifelong learning group/class, including languages, art and writing |  |
| Local history / genealogy |  |
| Memories Club |  |
| Typing club (web-based touch typing tutorial) |  |
| UK Driving Theory learning course/test |  |
| Other (please specify) |  |
| None of the above |  |

1. \* How important would you say your library is in providing further education/learning opportunities?

| **Options** | **Check box** |
| --- | --- |
| Not at all important |  |
| A little important |  |
| Moderately important |  |
| Quite important |  |
| Very important |  |

Please tell us the thought behind your choice:

|  |
| --- |

Libraries are [key to closing the post-pandemic literacy gap](https://www.librariesconnected.org.uk/news/libraries-key-closing-post-pandemic-literacy-gap-new-report-reveals), according to reporting by the National Literacy Trust:  
  
'Libraries are uniquely placed to help narrow the post-pandemic literacy gap by giving free access to books, fostering a strong home learning environment and inspiring children to be readers.'

1. \* To what extent do you feel libraries help with any of the following:

|  | **No, not at all** | **A little** | **Yes, a lot** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Save you money |  |  |  |
| Support your learning |  |  |  |
| Support your family’s learning |  |  |  |
| Inspire your family’s love of reading |  |  |  |
| Inspire your love of reading |  |  |  |

## Digital inclusion

Digital poverty is defined as 'the inability to interact with the online world fully, when, where, and how an individual needs to', and includes people without access to a laptop/smart phone/tablet, or affordable, reliable internet.

1. \* Have you (or your family) ever made use of the following tools in your local library? (Check all that apply)

| **Offering** | **Check box** |
| --- | --- |
| Computer with internet access |  |
| Computer \*without\* internet access |  |
| Courses in digital skills |  |
| Digital musical instruments |  |
| eBooks / eReaders |  |
| Photocopying/printing/scanning |  |
| Wifi |  |
| Other digital support / equipment (please specify) |  |

1. Please give us some individual examples of how your library supports you to get online, use digital technologies, and access digital services. How important do you feel this is?

|  |
| --- |

Only 2% of children and young people in the UK currently have the skills they need to tell [if a news story is real or fake](https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/fake-news-and-critical-literacy-final-report/).

1. \* Public libraries can help their communities to understand disinformation (deliberately false data) and misinformation (false data, usually not deliberate), and understand how to keep their personal data safe online.

Do you feel your local library has helped you to understand online information and media? (please delete as appropriate)

Yes / No / Unsure

Please tell us a little about the reason for your choice:

|  |
| --- |

## Active citizenship

Research shows that libraries,

* Reach a strongly diversified audience across all protected characteristics
* Ensure equal access to information, education, and support
* Offer safe spaces for people to remain indefinitely, without expectation of payment
* Provide access to trusted, accurate information which empowers communities to make informed decisions

([SLIC 2022](https://scottishlibraries.org/advice-guidance/national-strategies/forward-scotlands-public-library-strategy/); [CILIP 2019](https://www.cilip.org.uk/news/599345/Report-Public-Libraries-The-Case-for-Support.htm))

1. \* To what extent do you agree that your library offers you (or your family) a safe space?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Options** | **Check box** |
| Strongly disagree |  |
| Disagree |  |
| Neither agree nor disagree |  |
| Agree |  |
| Strongly agree |  |

Tell us a little about how important you feel a safe space for your community is:

|  |
| --- |
|  |

1. How often does your library operate as a community hub for informed debate/decision-making?

| **Options** | **Check box** |
| --- | --- |
| Never |  |
| Rarely |  |
| On occasion |  |
| Regularly |  |
| Daily/weekly |  |

## Final snapshot

1. \* To what extent does your library support any of the following essential needs within your local community?

| **Essential needs** | **No, not at all** | **A little** | **Moderately** | **Often** | **Yes, a lot** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Access to digital devices/wifi |  |  |  |  |  |
| Access to essential warm spaces |  |  |  |  |  |
| Access to learning resources & training |  |  |  |  |  |
| Access to trusted sources of information |  |  |  |  |  |
| Addressing social isolation |  |  |  |  |  |

1. \* To what extent does your library address any of the following issues?

| **Issues** | **No, not at all** | **A little** | **Moderately** | **Often** | **Yes, a lot** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Closing the poverty-related attainment gap |  |  |  |  |  |
| Developing media/information literacy |  |  |  |  |  |
| Having a quiet space |  |  |  |  |  |
| Improving literacy |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mental health and wellbeing support |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tackling poverty and cost-of-living crisis |  |  |  |  |  |

1. \* Please tell us anything else here about **why your library is important** to you (or your family).

|  |
| --- |

## Survey end

Thank you!

We're very grateful to you for taking the time to complete this survey.

If you have any further information or queries for Scottish Book Trust, please contact [research@scottishbooktrust.com](mailto:research@scottishbooktrust.com)