

Welsh Public Library Standards 2017-2020: Cardiff

Annual Assessment Report 2018/19

This report has been prepared based on information provided in Cardiff's annual return, case studies and narrative report submitted to the Museums, Archives and Libraries Division of the Welsh Government.

1 Executive summary

Cardiff meets 11 of the 12 core entitlements in full, and does not meet 1.

Of the 10 quality indicators which have targets, Cardiff achieved 8 in full, 1 in part and did not achieve 1.

In 2018/19 Cardiff Hubs & Library service underwent a restructure, as part of the creation of Community Well-being Hubs, in line with the authority's Community Well-being Strategy. This restructure has influenced a number of areas of activity under the framework, including the delivery of user surveys, events programming, and professional staffing levels, but performance generally remains strong. Numbers of qualified staff are among the lowest in Wales however, and this is a potential concern for sustaining service quality in the longer term. The full impact of this restructure, and the establishment of a new Library Strategy Team, will be seen in the service return for 2019/20.

- Support for health and well-being remains strong with Cardiff one of only two authorities regularly offering the full range of services under QI 4 at all service points, and the service taking the lead on sector-wide initiatives.
- Although attendance at activities and events has fallen in 2018/19, performance remains among the highest per capita in Wales.
- Cardiff has continued to perform particularly strongly in relation to most indicators of use, although adult book issues have fallen again on 2017/18 levels.
- The acquisitions targets (QI 9) remain challenging for the service, but spending on materials has increased in 2018/19 and Cardiff continues to invest strongly in Welsh language resources, with the requirements here (QI 10) met.
- Overall staffing levels have been maintained, with Cardiff now the only service in Wales to meet the per capita staffing target, although this does reflect the integrated staffing provision provided through Hub service points. Numbers of qualified staff have fallen further, and remain among the lowest in Wales.
- Total revenue expenditure has increased again in 2018/19, a reflection of the costs of implementing the restructure to establish Community Well-being Hubs.

2 Performance against the standards

The standards framework comprises of core entitlements, quality indicators with targets, quality indicators with benchmarks and impact measures. Section 2 summarises achievements against these areas. A narrative assessment of the authority's performance is provided in Section 3.

2.1 Core entitlements

Cardiff is meeting 11 of the 12 core entitlements in full, but a delay to the finalisation of the new service strategy 2019/2023 means that CE12 is still not met. It is noted that the service expects to complete its consultation on the strategy for consideration by Cabinet later in 2019. The service continues to meet the requirements in all other areas, with its Hub strategy delivering enhancements to library buildings, and strong partnerships sustaining and developing a range of services.

2.2 Quality indicators with targets

There are 16 quality indicators (QIs), of which ten have constituent targets. Of these, Cardiff is achieving 8 in full, 1 in part and does not achieve 1 of the indicators.

Quality Indicator	Met?	
QI 3 Support for individual development:		Met in full
a) ICT support	✓	
b) Information literacy and skills training	✓	
c) E-government support	✓	
d) Reader development	✓	
QI 4 (a) Support for health and well-being		Met in full
i) Book Prescription Wales scheme	✓	
ii) Better with Books scheme	✓	
iii) Designated health & well-being collection	✓	
iv) Information about healthy lifestyles and behaviours	✓	
v) Signposting to health & well-being services	✓	
QI 6 all static service points offer events/activities for users with special requirements	✓	Met in full
QI 7 Location of service points	✓	Met in full
QI 9 Up-to-date and appropriate reading material		Not met
Acquisitions per capita	x	
<u>or</u> Materials spend per capita	x	
QI 10 Welsh Language Resources		Met in full
% of material budget spent on Welsh	✓	
<u>or</u> Spend on Welsh per capita	✓	
QI 11 Online access:		Met in full
a) i) Public access to Internet	✓	
ii) Wi-Fi provision	✓	
QI 12 Supply of requests		Met in full
a) % of requests satisfied within 7 days	✓	
b) % of requests satisfied within 15 days	✓	
QI 13 Staffing levels and qualifications:		Partially met
i) Staff per capita	✓	
ii) Qualified staff per capita	x	
iii) Head of service qualification/training	✓	
iv) CPD percentage	✓	
QI 16 Opening hours per capita	✓	Met in full

There is a small improvement on 2017/18, with Cardiff achieving the target for satisfaction of requests within 15 days, such that QI 12 is now fully met.

2.3 Impact measures

The framework includes three indicators aimed at assessing the impact of library use on people's lives. These indicators do not have targets, and authorities are only required to carry out user surveys for QI 1 once over the three-year period of the framework. The summary figures (lowest, median and highest) are therefore based on those authorities indicating they completed their user survey during 2017/18 or 2018/19. Rankings reflect the numbers of respondents, where 1 is the highest scoring authority.

Completion of Cardiff's user surveys will now take place in the third year of the framework; the service completes its own exit surveys at Hub locations, which consistently achieve satisfaction ratings of around 95-99%.

Performance indicator	Rank	Lowest	Median	Highest	
QI 1 Making a difference					
b) % of young people who think that the library helps them learn and find things out:	n/a	60%	94%	97%	
e) % of adults who think that the library has made a difference to their lives:	n/a	38%	88%	95%	
QI 5 b) % of attendees of training sessions who said that the training had helped them achieve their goals:	100%	=1/20	80%	97%	100%

Authorities are also asked to provide up to four case studies describing the impact which the library service has had on an individual or on a group of individuals during the year. Cardiff provided four such case studies:

- Dementia Café – this meets twice monthly in the Central library and other Hub / library locations, providing information for people living with dementia, and a safe space to talk and share ideas. For one user who attends regularly, the Cafés are an important opportunity to socialise, participate in reminiscence sessions and other activities, and exercise (using the table tennis facility that her interest in playing inspired).
- Welsh Reading Group – how for one retiree, attending the monthly Central library reading group, has helped him develop his love of reading, try new literary genres, and make friends. The group is an important social activity for him, and he helped instigate the creation of a WhatsApp group to allow discussions to continue outside meetings.
- Poetry Workshop – a project working with a local primary school using the library resources available at Llanishen Hub to engage with poetry and create their own individual and group poem. The workshop brought out the creative and descriptive abilities of the children, and inspired one child with selective mutism to participate fully.
- Refugee Employment Support – the impact of this library programme on one Syrian refugee, a widow and single mother with PTSD, and no literacy or financial management skills or experience. Through the programme she has been encouraged to seek counselling, has improved her confidence, learnt how to budget her finances, is learning English through classes at the Central Library, and is making new friends.

2.4 Quality indicators and benchmarks

The remaining indicators do not have targets, but allow services to monitor and benchmark their performance over time, in comparison with other authorities. The following table

summarises Cardiff's position for 2018/19. Ranks are included out of 22, where 1 is the highest, and 22 the lowest scoring authority, unless stated otherwise. Indicators where fewer than 22 authorities supplied data are those where relevant data was not available to some authorities. Figures from the first year of the sixth framework or relevant previous surveys have also been included for comparison. Indicators 'per capita' are calculated per 1,000 population unless otherwise noted.

Performance indicator	Rank	Lowest	Median	Highest	2017/18	
QI 1 Making a difference					[Framework 5]	
a) % of adults who think that using the library has helped them develop new skills	n/a	24%	82%	96%	71%	
c) health and well-being	n/a	33%	62%	94%	43%	
d) enjoyable, safe and inclusive	n/a	90%	97%	100%	95%	
QI 2 Customer satisfaction					[Framework 5]	
a) 'very good' or 'good' choice of books	n/a	81%	91%	98%	84%	
b) 'very good' or 'good' customer care	n/a	93%	99%	100%	93%	
c) 'very good' or 'good' IT facilities	n/a	65%	91%	95%		
d) 'very good' or 'good' overall	n/a	93%	97%	99%	95%	
e) users aged 16 & under rating out of ten	n/a	8.5	9.3	9.5	9.5	
QI 5 User training						
a) attendances per capita	184	2/22	13	30	208	212
c) informal training per capita	245	10/22	15	199	433	242
QI 6 attendances at events per capita	499	3/22	91	295	689	684
QI 8 Library use¹						
a) visits per capita	7,170*	1/22	2,596	3,969	7,170*	7,014
b) virtual visits per capita	2,205	1/22	345	885	2,205	2,211
c) active borrowers per capita	251	1/22	58	150	251	229
QI 10 Welsh issues per capita²	1,193	2/22	95	602	1,424	1,183
QI 11 Online access						
b) Computers per capita ³	11	4/22	5	10	14	11
c) % of available time used by the public	49%	3/22	14%	25%	63%	56%
QI 13 Staffing levels and qualifications						
(v) a) total volunteers	214	1/21	3	30	214	196
b) total volunteer hours	6,587	2/21	90	1,477	9,806	6,145
QI 14 Operational expenditure						
a) total expenditure per capita	£17,153	3/22	£7,181	£12,145	£19,449	£15,937
b) % on staff,	76%	2/22	47%	62%	78%	74%
% on information resources	8.7%	20/22	8%	13%	21%	9%
% on equipment and buildings	15%	3/22	0.4%	4%	25%	17%
% on other operational costs	0.3%	22/22	0.3%	16%	37%	0%
c) capital expenditure per capita	£3,549	5/22	£0	£467	£8,829	£12,736
QI 15 Net cost per visit	£1.39	=17/22	£1.18	£1.82	£2.52	£1.24

¹ figures for co-located services are marked with an asterisk; performances for these services are likely to reflect higher footfall, and will not therefore be directly comparable with stand-alone library provision ² per 1,000 Welsh speaking resident population; figures from 2017/18 reports corrected following a calculation error ³ per 10,000 resident population

QI 16 Opening hours ⁴						
(iii) a) % hours unplanned closure of static service points	0.02%	16/22	0.00%	0.00%	0.25%	0.01%
b) % mobile stops / home deliveries missed	0.73%	14/20	0.00%	0.28%	7.99%	0.33%

⁴ Rankings here have been reversed, so that 1 is the lowest scoring (best performing) authority.

It is acknowledged that service costs (QI 14 and 15) now relate to integrated Hub and Library budgets, and are not therefore directly comparable with other library authorities.

3 Analysis of performance

The core entitlements and quality indicators can be divided into four key areas. This section of the report outlines performance under these areas, and compares this performance with the first year of the sixth framework (2017/18).

3.1 Meeting customer needs (QI 1-5)

Cardiff has yet to conduct its user surveys, which it is noted will now take place in year three of the framework. All static libraries open for 10 hours or more continue to provide a full range of support for individual development, and full support for health and well-being, with Cardiff leading on sector-wide initiatives in this area. Attendance at pre-arranged training sessions has fallen on 2017/18, reflecting a reduced offer due to refurbishment work at one Hub site, although per capita performance here is still the second highest in Wales. Numbers helped by means of informal training have however risen, linked to the high demand for specific support from key demographics, and performance here remains above the median level.

3.2 Access and use (QI 6-8)

Cardiff continues to meet the target for easy access to service points, and offers events / activities for users with special requirements at all static libraries. Attendance in this area has however seen the significant gains of 2017/18 fall back to below 2016-17 levels, although performance still remains among the highest per capita in Wales. The restructuring of the service, under Cardiff's Community Well-being Strategy is cited as a factor here, and the service still offers a diverse and wide-ranging programme. Visitor levels have continued to increase, reflecting the fact that most services now operate as Community or Well-being Hubs delivering a range of services. Numbers of active borrowers and library members have however also risen, indicating that library services are continuing to extend their reach. While adult book issues have fallen, children's borrowing remains strong, with the service now recording the highest number of children's loans per capita in Wales.

3.3 Facilities and services (QI 9-12)ⁱ

The service continues to find the requirements in relation to up-to-date reading material (QI 9) challenging, and the targets here are not met. It has however increased spending on materials in 2018/19, and continues to invest strongly in children's resources, and in Welsh language materials (QI 10), where the standard is met. Performance in relation to supply of requests has improved on 2017/18, with both targets now achieved. PC provision has again increased in order to provide support for Universal Credit; usage has fallen in 2018/19 however, a trend seen across Wales as more users access Wi-Fi from their own devices.

3.4 Expertise and capacity (QI 13-16)

Overall staffing provision has been maintained at 2017/18 levels, and Cardiff is now the only service in Wales to meet the total staff per capita target (QI 13), although this does reflect the integrated staffing provision provided through Hub service points. Numbers of qualified staff have however continued to fall, and are now close to being the lowest per capita in Wales, a potential concern for sustaining service quality in the longer term. It is noted that a number of qualified staff chose to leave the service during a recent restructure, and that this has impacted on performance here. The new structure has put in place a professionally qualified Library Strategy Team, who are driving library-specific service development, and the service is also continuing to support staff to complete relevant qualifications. Qualified leadership is in place, and Cardiff has continued to improve its investment in staff training / development. Volunteer numbers and hours have increased, with 214 volunteers each contributing around 31 hours to the service.

Total revenue expenditure has risen again in 2018/19, with an increased spend on staffing reflecting the employment of temporary staff during the implementation of the restructure. Aggregate annual opening hours have been maintained at 2017/18 levels, and the target here continues to be met, with minimal interruptions to the service.

4 Strategic context

As part of the return authorities are asked to report on how the library service is contributing to wider Welsh Government priorities and strategic goals. Cardiff sets out how the Hubs & Library service contributes to the achievements of the national strategy Prosperity for All, and supports delivery of the Well-being goals. This includes support for learning and skills development, work with partners to improve health and well-being, support for the Ageing Well agenda, and in addressing social isolation.

5 Future direction

Reporting on the authority's future direction and plans for the library service over the following year, Cardiff reports on the continued development of its Community Well-being Hub strategy, which will see developments within the north of the city at the remaining standalone libraries. The new Hubs will provide a wide range of services based on local needs, but with library provision as a core element, addressing key priorities to encourage reading, promote health and well-being, support children and young people, promote digital inclusion, tackle poverty, and celebrate heritage and culture. Other plans involve continuing to offer training opportunities to staff, including library NVQ qualifications.

6 Conclusion

In 2018/19 Cardiff Hubs & Library service underwent a restructure, as part of the creation of Community Well-being Hubs, in line with the authority's Community Well-being Strategy. This restructure has influenced a number of areas of activity under the framework, including the delivery of user surveys, events programming, and professional staffing levels, but performance generally remains strong. Numbers of qualified staff are among the lowest in Wales however, and this is a potential concern for sustaining service quality in the longer term. The full impact of this restructure, and the establishment of a new Library Strategy Team, will be seen in the service return for 2019/20.

ⁱ E-resources purchased through centrally-funded subscriptions have been excluded from acquisitions figures for QI 9 in 2018/19 to ensure that the standard accurately reflects individual authority strategy, investment and performance. In some cases this has impacted on achievement against the standard in comparison with 2017/18. CIPFA Statistics Returns continue to include figures for centrally-procured resources.