

# AMBITION & OPPORTUNITY

A Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland 2015-2020





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Scottish Library &  
Information Council

### About the Scottish Library and Information Council

The Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) is the independent advisory body to the Scottish Government on library and information services. SLIC offers leadership focus and support to the Scottish library and information sector, coordinating and promoting national service developments to benefit Scotland's people and enrich our cultural, educational and economic landscape. [www.scottishlibraries.org](http://www.scottishlibraries.org)

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The Carnegie UK Trust was established by Scots-American philanthropist Andrew Carnegie in 1913. [www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk](http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk)

# FOREWORD

I am delighted to introduce this supplement to Ambition and Opportunity: A Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland 2015-2020. In 2014, as we developed the strategy, we ensured that the actions and recommendations reflected best practice in the field of public libraries. It has been a pleasure to see these recommendations become an integral part of the public library offer in Scotland. From the public library reading strategy being updated and the roll out of WiFi to all public libraries in Scotland to the introduction of Code Clubs and coworking spaces in public libraries – much has been realised. We have seen countrywide initiatives, such as Read, Write, Count, being delivered through all libraries, 3D printers being introduced to all services and film education now a core offer in many services. Several libraries have introduced makerspaces, others are proactively promoting STEM activities, and the role in which public libraries play with self-managed health-related issues is very much recognised and valued.

Ambition and Opportunity has not just been a tool to reinvigorate Scotland's public libraries, it has allowed public libraries to position themselves at the heart of national policy. Public libraries are recognised in Making it Easier: A Health Literacy Action Plan 2017-2025\* and the role which public libraries play to support social isolation is endorsed in A Connected Scotland\*\*.

The role local libraries play in supporting digital participation is further reinforced in Scotland's digital strategy\*\*\*. This is so important when public libraries play a key role in supporting employability and worklessness. Ambition and Opportunity has enabled public libraries to be recognised for the range of services which are provided over and above the essential role in which they play with reading and literacy.

Public libraries remain the most popular civic resource in Scotland, nothing else comes close. Public libraries in Scotland have remained extremely resilient over this last decade of austerity and I would like to think that the investment as a result of Ambition and Opportunity played no

small part in this. This is why we want to build on the good work achieved by Ambition and Opportunity and refresh the recommendations for the strategy. Through consultation with key stakeholder groups, the recommendations have been updated to reflect current demand and take us to the end of the lifespan of the strategy. Staff development and a communications strategy are overarching themes and the six strategic aims remain strong with refreshed action points to ensure public libraries continue to deliver.

I would like to thank everyone for their enthusiastic support of Ambition and Opportunity. I believe that public libraries in Scotland have a very healthy future.



Martyn Evans, Chair, National Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland Strategic Group 2014-2015

\* <https://www.gov.scot/publications/making-easier-health-literacy-action-plan-scotland-2017-2025/>

\*\* <https://www.gov.scot/publications/connected-scotland-tackling-social-isolation-loneliness-building-stronger-communities/>

\*\*\* <https://www.gov.scot/publications/realising-scotlands-full-potential-digital-world-digital-strategy-scotland/>



# REALISING AMBITION AND OPPORTUNITY: A STRATEGY FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN SCOTLAND 2015-2020

## Background

Scotland's first public library strategy, Ambition and Opportunity: A Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland 2015-2020, was published in June 2015.

Through delivering the strategy, a number of initiatives have reinvigorated the public library offer in Scotland, repositioned libraries within communities and re-engaged the public with their local libraries. This transformation has led to the development of this document which seeks to reflect on progress made and set out the direction for the remaining lifespan of the strategy to ensure that public libraries in Scotland are well-placed to move to the next part of their journey beyond 2021.

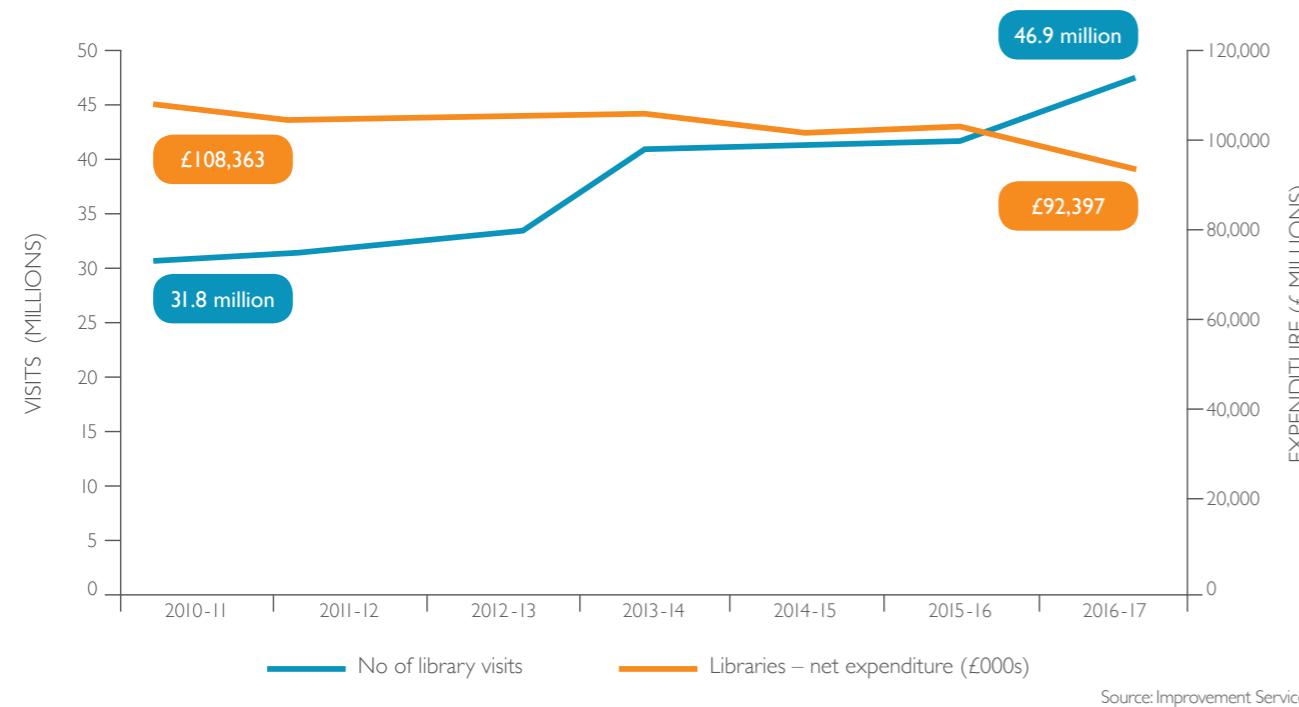
## The journey so far

Since the launch of the strategy, almost £5 million has been invested in libraries to develop services to meet the aims identified in the strategy. A considerable additional amount of funding has been invested in new or refurbished public libraries

in Scotland to create welcoming, fresh and vibrant spaces within local communities.

Public libraries are Scotland's most popular civic resource. The important role public libraries play in Scotland's cultural landscape cannot be underestimated, with reading identified as the country's most popular cultural activity. However, the achievements highlighted through realising Ambition and Opportunity: A Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland 2015-2020 show increasing numbers use libraries to learn, to access information, to experience emerging technology, to get creative and to feel part of a community.

Visits to Scotland's libraries continue to grow, with the Improvement Service reporting a 47% percent increase between 2010-2017. However, this is against a tough financial backdrop. They also report an average 15% reduction in revenue expenditure across the same time period.



Source: Improvement Service

Since the implementation of Ambition and Opportunity, a steady increase in visits to public libraries of 14% between 2015-2017 has been recorded. Scotland's public libraries have also benefited from a sustained capital injection since the implementation of the strategy, with over £20 million invested over the lifetime of the strategy to refurbish, reinvigorate and bring libraries to life.

The clear direction which Ambition and Opportunity has set illustrates book-based services continue to be the beginning of the library journey for many. With a sustained positive energy,

a financial commitment and strong partnerships, public libraries have the power to transform their services and their communities.

The six strategic aims set out in Ambition and Opportunity have provided a solid framework around which services, projects, partnerships and initiatives can be designed. The reflection of each strategic aim shows the creative, innovative and collaborative projects which have richly contributed to realising Ambition and Opportunity between 2015-2018.





## DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY REFRESH

The Scottish Government asked the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) to lead on the implementation of the strategy in 2015. Working with key stakeholder groups through an implementation group, which included public libraries, SLIC has played a leading role in shaping the direction of the strategy refresh and the renewed strategic recommendations. The emergence of two key themes, which impact the delivery of multiple strategic aims, have been developed into core strategic recommendations which form the foundations on which successful delivery of the subsequent strategic recommendations are based.

The fast-paced changes in public libraries since the launch of the strategy has also highlighted a need to revisit some of the titles of the strategic aims to ensure they remain relevant to the way in which services are being delivered.

To reflect this strategic aim 2: Digital Inclusion has been renamed Digital Participation & Innovation and strategic aim 4: Social Wellbeing has been renamed Health & Social Wellbeing.

SLIC also commissioned Young Scot to produce a co-design, The Next Chapter\*, to ensure young people's views were represented in shaping the renewed aims of Ambition and Opportunity. This has been a particularly important partnership in the design of the strategy refresh, especially during Scotland's Year of Young People 2018.

Over the course of two residential events and one-day meet-ups, Young Scot supported The Next Chapter Vision Panel to explore their own knowledge and experiences, as well as those of other young people, create new ideas and solutions to tackle barriers they identified, and to reflect on and critique their ideas to arrive at their final recommendations.

The final 24 recommendations presented by the panel aim to encourage more young people to use their public library and make libraries more appealing. These recommendations have been used to shape and inform the overall recommendations in this refresh of Ambition and Opportunity.



\* [https://www.youngscot.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/YS\\_NextChapter\\_SLIC\\_Report.pdf](https://www.youngscot.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/YS_NextChapter_SLIC_Report.pdf)

# STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS 2019-2020

## Vision and mission

Where the refreshed strategic recommendations aim to bring renewed energy and relevant areas of focus for public library service delivery, the vision and mission at the heart of the strategy remain as pertinent as they did at its initiation in 2015:



### VISION STATEMENT

Scotland's public libraries are trusted guides connecting all of our people to the world's possibilities and opportunities.



### MISSION STATEMENT

Scotland's public libraries are part of a shared civic ambition to fulfil the potential of individuals and communities.

## Core strategic recommendations

- Develop a communication strategy which all public library services can use
- Support and encourage public library staff to develop their skills through a set of core training programmes



### STRATEGIC AIM 1

Reading, literacy and learning



### STRATEGIC AIM 4

Health and social wellbeing



### STRATEGIC AIM 2

Digital participation and innovation



### STRATEGIC AIM 5

Culture and creativity



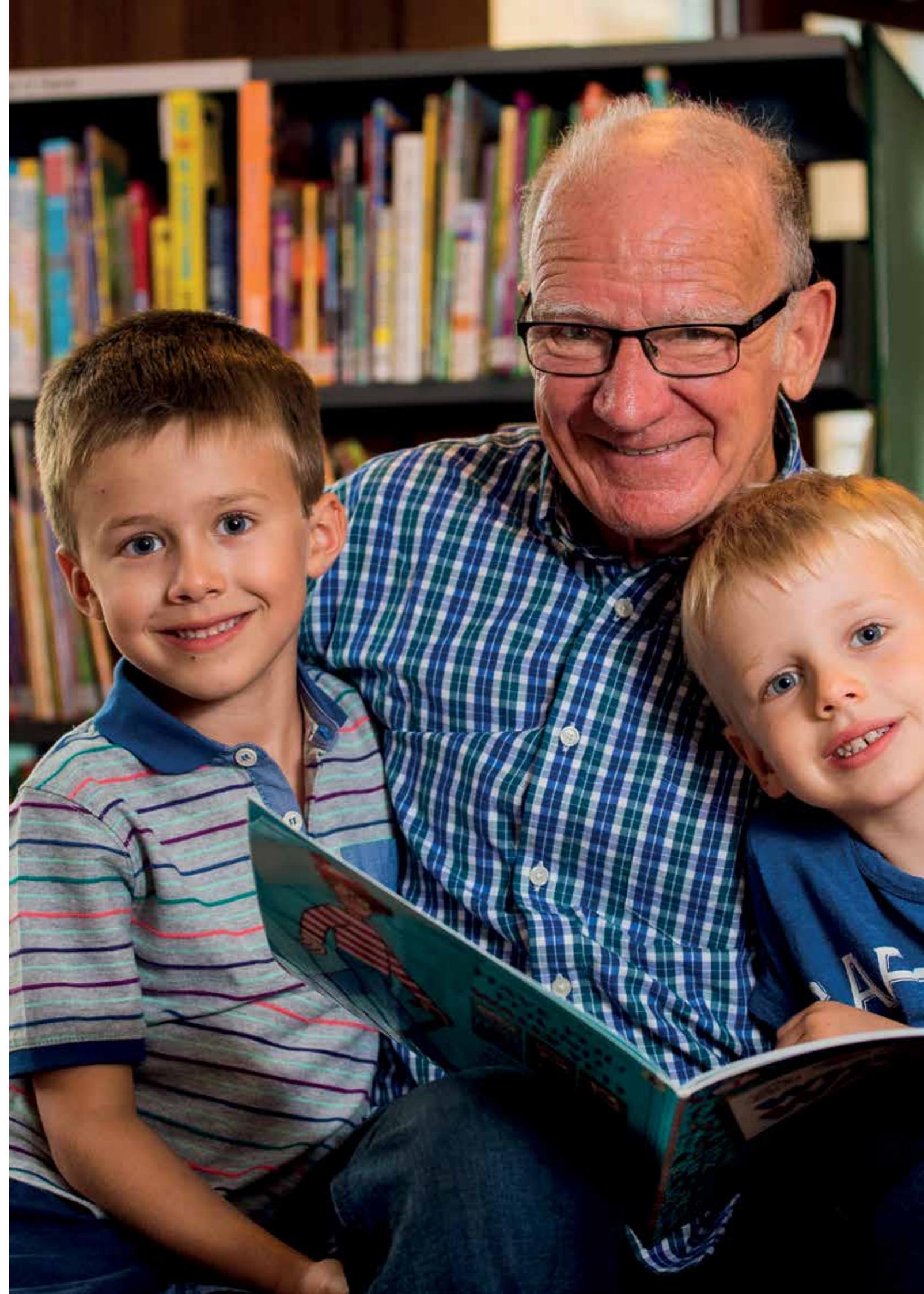
### STRATEGIC AIM 3

Economic wellbeing



### STRATEGIC AIM 6

Excellent public services





## STRATEGIC AIM 1: READING, LEARNING AND LITERACY

### AIM

Public libraries in Scotland promote education and learning for all, develop a culture of reading for pleasure, offer support for everyone from early years to older people, and enable people to make informed choices.

Promoting reading and access to information is at the heart of what libraries do. The following projects highlight the creativity, partnership working and knowledge required to drive forward the goal of having a literate nation of passionate readers who embrace learning.

### WHAT AMBITION AND OPPORTUNITY ENABLED:

#### READiscover

For the Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design 2016, libraries encouraged adults and young people to discover science fiction and technology books, such as 'Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?' by Philip K Dick and William Golding's 'The Spire'. The promotion also encouraged libraries to showcase makerspaces and digital devices to highlight the role public libraries can play in supporting innovation and design.



#### Read, Write, Count

Libraries took a lead role in the Scottish Government's initiative to encourage parental involvement in learning, with funding provided for books, storytelling sessions and author visits. Read, Write, Count packs were also distributed via libraries, helping to support parents in their child's education.

#### Book Week Scotland

Scotland's libraries play an active annual role in the Scottish Government initiative Book Week Scotland celebration, with SLIC providing funding to all local authorities to facilitate author visits and events. The past four years have seen libraries across Scotland curate exciting programmes to celebrate the themes of 'Journeys', 'Confessions', 'Nourish' and 'Rebel' and have been key distribution points for the accompanying free books given away each year.

#### First Minister's Reading Challenge

Following the successful roll out of the First Minister's Reading Challenge (FMRC) to primary schools in 2016, the programme was expanded to public libraries in autumn 2018. This expansion aimed to reach children attending schools who had not opted to participate in the FMRC and create a positive reading culture in Scotland's public libraries.

#### Read the Past, Imagine the Future

For the Year of History, Heritage, Archaeology 2017, Scottish libraries encouraged adults to widen their knowledge of local and national history and think about Scotland's future place on the global stage with the national reading campaign, 'Read the Past, Imagine the Future'. The promotion saw displays, events and competitions take place across public library authorities, culminating during Book Week Scotland and generating 27,000 issues for the specially purchased accompanying book collections.

#### Muriel Spark 100

Educational, cultural and creative partners have come together across Scotland to celebrate the centenary of the birth of Muriel Spark. This culminated in the gifting of a full collection of Muriel Spark titles to every public library in Scotland in November 2018. The gifting project was led by the Scottish Government and supported by The People's Postcode Lottery.

#### Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge

Libraries in Scotland have continued to participate in the Tesco Bank Summer Reading Challenge throughout the course of Ambition and Opportunity. The summer of 2018 saw a 4.5% increase in participation across Scotland, with nearly 40,000 children taking part. This is against a backdrop of an overall UK decrease of 8.2%, highlighting the strong commitment Scottish libraries have for supporting reading and literacy.

#### Scottish Reading Strategy

The Scottish Reading Strategy for Public Libraries was created in 2014 to draw communities together and bring reading alive. Its vision is to inspire reading across all interests and age groups – improving levels of literacy and contributing to the health and wellbeing of readers. The City of Birmingham University was commissioned to update the strategy in 2018, with input from the Adult, Young People and Children's strategy groups. The updated strategy was published in 2019 and launched at the annual reading strategy day.



## TO TAKE LIBRARIES TO 2020

### Strategic aim 1: reading, literacy and learning

- Implement the Scottish Reading Strategy
- Map out the breadth of learning opportunities available across Scotland and use this roadmap to develop a core offer
- Support public library and partner led literacy initiatives and programmes for all



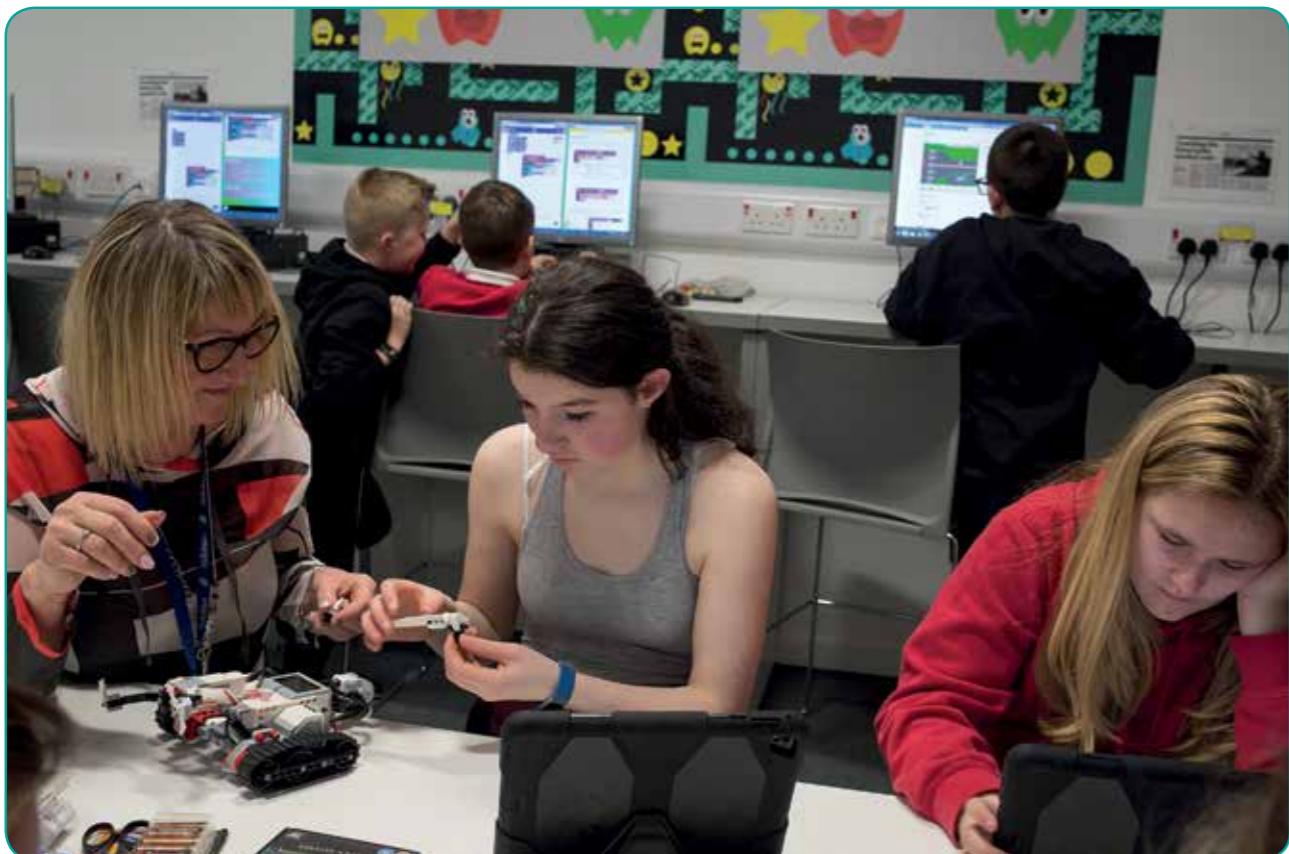
## STRATEGIC AIM 2: DIGITAL PARTICIPATION AND INNOVATION

### AIM

Public libraries in Scotland make best use of digital technologies to deliver high quality, efficient and responsive services, enabling access to information and services wherever citizens want them.

**Situated in the heart of local communities, libraries are well-placed to increase digital participation through supported access to the internet and provide an encouraging environment to explore emerging technologies.**

### WHAT AMBITION AND OPPORTUNITY ENABLED:



#### Code Clubs

Code Clubs for children are now run in library services across Scotland with over 1,500 children participating. Library staff across Scotland received training to give them the necessary skills to run programmes teaching children basic coding through Scratch and Python. The training programme was made possible through Scotland's Digital Xtra Fund. Digital Xtra was launched in May 2016 and is funded by the Scottish Government Digital

Scotland Business Excellence Partnership. The success of the training has led to a number of successful coding projects like Code Miners, run by Orkney library service.

#### 3D printer rollout

Through funding from the Scottish Government digital participation programme, 3D printers were introduced to every library service in Scotland,

opening up a whole new world of creativity and digital learning. It has inspired library services to deliver innovative digital programmes such as Active E in South Lanarkshire libraries, a Maker Space in Culture Perth and Kinross libraries, and 3D printed keepsakes for participants of the Precious Things, Precious Stories project in Aberdeenshire libraries.

#### Hackathon

Carnegie UK Trust in partnership with SLIC hosted Scotland's first public libraries focused hackathon, the 'Future Libraries Product Forge' in October 2016. The 4-day event produced four product ideas to be used in libraries and a toolkit for hosting your own Hack. One of the key ideas developed as part of the hackathon has been piloted in a multi authority project across Stirling, Falkirk, Argyll & Bute, Inverclyde and East Dunbartonshire libraries.

#### WiFi Rollout

SLIC led the national drive to deliver WiFi provision in all of Scotland's public libraries. Funding from the Scottish Government's Public Wireless Programme has helped to improve the service, with 100% of libraries now WiFi-enabled since 2016. Users can bring their own devices and take advantage of the extensive range of library services now delivered online.

#### BBC Built It Scotland

Children across Scotland helped mark the Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design 2016 by visiting libraries to get involved in the BBC Build It Scotland project, using 3D design software such as Minecraft, Tinkercad or Sketchup using PCs, laptops or Raspberry Pi's to help build Scotland's landscape in the virtual world.

#### Open Libraries

East Renfrewshire libraries are proud to be leading on the next stage of digital innovation in libraries having received Public Library Innovation Funding (PLIF) to install open plus technology at Clarkston library to allow out of hours access to library services.



## TO TAKE LIBRARIES TO 2020

### Strategic aim 2: digital participation and innovation

- Build on the success of libraries providing experiences of emerging technology with an expansion into virtual reality and a national approach to deliver WiFi printing
- Support digital inclusion through local programmes and national campaigns
- Develop a digital skills base to be delivered through the Digital Champions network



## STRATEGIC AIM 3: ECONOMIC WELLBEING

### AIM

Public libraries in Scotland contribute to Scotland's economic wellbeing, supporting jobseekers, offering courses in digital skills, language courses, and support for small businesses.

Scottish libraries have helped improve the economic wellbeing of communities through a number of innovative schemes. Libraries are viewed as trusted spaces where advice can be accessed without judgement, placing them in a unique position to offer support.

### WHAT AMBITION AND OPPORTUNITY ENABLED:



#### Coworking hubs

The Scottish Coworking Network is a Scottish Government Digital Participation funded pilot project which aims to establish a network of public library coworking hubs in order to encourage digital innovation and support the development of new businesses across Scotland. The 18-month project delivered by SLIC sees the creation and evaluation of a number of hubs within underused spaces at public libraries in Scotland. The Dunfermline Carnegie Library and Galleries, part of OnFife, welcomed the first hub in the new network.

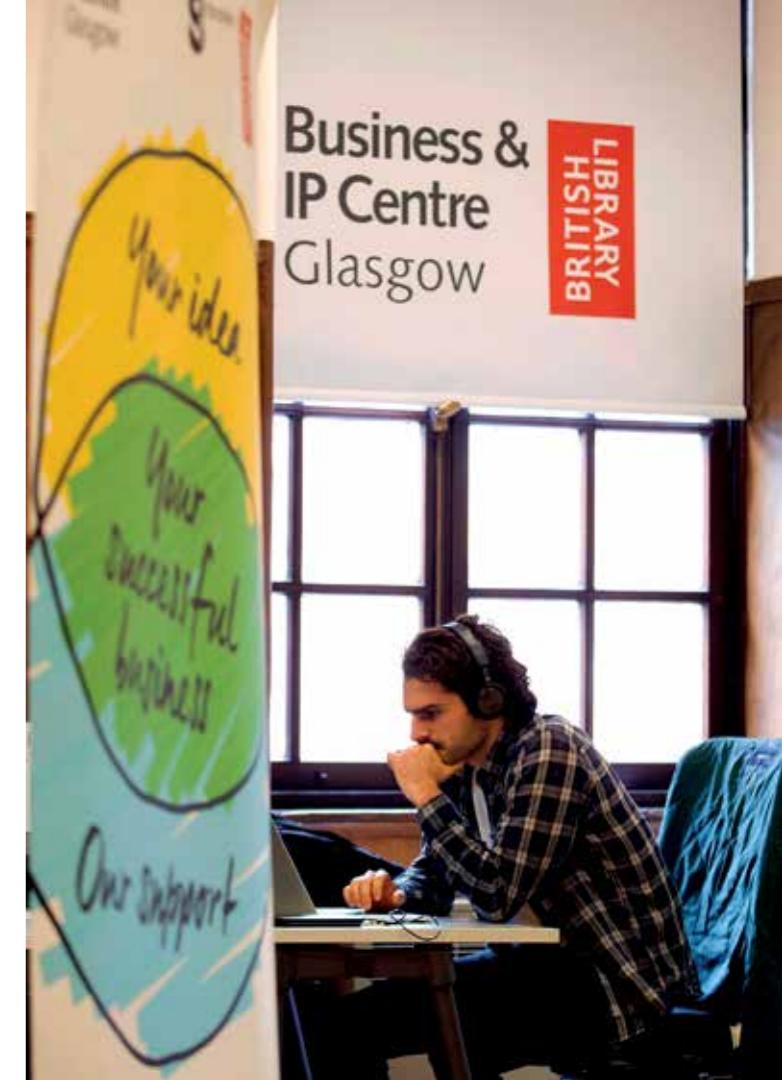
#### Employability hubs

Creating a one-stop shop for jobseekers, employability hubs are organised with partner agencies, offering a range of services from benefits advice to back-to-work training. The hubs also offer support with Universal Credit and associated government benefit programmes. The Gorbals library, part of Glasgow Life, is now home to the Business and Employability Hub. Support also comes through dedicated programmes such as Work IT in Stirling libraries and More Chances in West Lothian libraries, a project offering targeted employability support to young people.

#### BIPC Glasgow Life

2018 has brought the first Business & Intellectual Property Centre to Glasgow in one of three new pilots and part of the growing national network of co-branded centres. It is also the first of its kind in Scotland, and one of 10 centres across the UK. Housed in Glasgow's famous landmark, The Mitchell Library, it is now the hub of a city-wide information service. In partnership with the National Library of Scotland and the UK Intellectual Property Office, the Business & IP Centre in Glasgow\* allows entrepreneurs to take advantage of free intellectual property and business information and expertise.

\* [https://www.youngscot.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/YS\\_NextChapter\\_SLIC\\_Report.pdf](https://www.youngscot.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/YS_NextChapter_SLIC_Report.pdf)



## TO TAKE LIBRARIES TO 2020

### Strategic aim 3: economic wellbeing

- Develop and promote a core offer to support economic wellbeing
- Expand upon STEM provision currently being offered across libraries
- Support emerging businesses and creative opportunities for all



## STRATEGIC AIM 4: HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELLBEING

### AIM

Public libraries in Scotland contribute to social wellbeing, tackling social isolation, inequality, disadvantage, fractured communities and ill health.

All library services in Scotland offer communities a safe, friendly and welcoming space to meet, hosting a wide range of events and groups. Accessing libraries for support for health and wellbeing has experienced huge growth over the course of the strategy and the newly forged strategic partnership aims to build upon the excellent practice already established.

### WHAT AMBITION AND OPPORTUNITY ENABLED:

#### National Strategic Partnership

A national strategic partnership has been established between NHS Scotland, Association of Public Libraries Scotland (APLS), SLIC and The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland to develop the role of library staff in supporting health literacy and self-management.

A training resource has been created for public library staff to increase their knowledge of self-management of long-term conditions and health literacy enabling them to feel confident offering support and information to people about their health and wellbeing. Partnership events have also been held to allow public library and health staff to meet and collaborate.

#### Macmillan Cancer support

Macmillan Cancer has partnered with a number of library services since the strategy was launched to support people affected by cancer. This award-winning partnership means people can access information and support in a trusted community space close to where they live.

West Dunbartonshire libraries are working with Glasgow Libraries, showing the important role cross authority working has in ensuring all communities have access to great public services.



#### Health Matters

All public libraries take part in Share the Vision, a UK-wide programme, relaunched in 2016, to support visually impaired people. A number of libraries work with local NHS partners to supply hearing aid batteries to local people, making it easier for people to access the health support they need.

#### Dementia friendly libraries

The Public Library Improvement Fund (PLIF) has funded projects across Scotland to support libraries in becoming dementia friendly, including training programmes for staff in North Ayrshire libraries, a dementia library in Dundee Central Library, a memory box project at Angus Alive libraries and Playlist for Life in Moray libraries.

#### Mental Health Support

Libraries across Scotland have showcased many innovative projects offering support for mental health in holistic and inclusive ways. From Walk On at OnFife libraries, Braw Blether in Midlothian libraries and Words for Wellness in East Dunbartonshire Culture and Leisure libraries to Mind an' Read Well across North and South Ayrshire libraries. With research showing the impact reading has on reducing stress levels, libraries have an important role to play in supporting people experiencing mental health difficulties.

#### Au-some Libraries

Midlothian and Inverclyde libraries are jointly leading a project to create autism friendly spaces under the Au-some Libraries banner. The project aims to make libraries a more welcoming and supportive environment for autistic young people. The project is being delivered alongside partners with an expertise in working with young people with additional support needs.

#### Bookbug

Scotland's libraries continue to deliver Scottish Book Trust's Bookbug programme throughout the country. Rhyme time sessions, events and book gifting programmes not only contribute to the literacy, learning and development of Scotland's youngest library members but the programme also helps tackle social isolation and poor mental health often experienced by parents.



## TO TAKE LIBRARIES TO 2020

### Strategic Aim 4: health and wellbeing

- Create strong national, regional and local partnerships with integrated joint boards (IJBs), strategic organisations and community planning partners to ensure public libraries contribute to healthy lifestyles and improved health outcomes
- Contribute to tackling social isolation and loneliness through programming of events, groups and providing supporting materials
- Work with partners and develop the role of library staff to support programmes for people living with long-term conditions and those looking to access self-management and health literacy material



## STRATEGIC AIM 5: CULTURE AND CREATIVITY

### AIM

Public libraries in Scotland promote their role as cultural centres, inspiring people through books and literature, music, film and theatre, and encourage creativity.

**Libraries are places of culture and creativity. A trip to the library can inspire people in many different ways – through books, film and TV, music and events. Projects funded by multiple partners have created mini cultural hubs throughout communities in Scotland, bubbling with imagination.**

### WHAT AMBITION AND OPPORTUNITY ENABLED:



#### Film Education with Creative Scotland

Creative Scotland allocated funding to support six projects to develop creative film learning in libraries. These projects have helped improve the provision of film and moving image education across Scotland. Following the success of this pilot, a further eleven public library authorities are collaborating to expand the provision of film education across Scotland. The public have already been able to enjoy film experiences on the mainland, including Culture NL libraries and on the beautiful islands of the Western Isles, and the expanded programme will bring experiences across the length and breadth of Scotland taking in Aberdeen, Dumfries & Galloway, East Ayrshire, East Lothian and the Scottish Borders to name a few.

#### Publishing Scotland

SLIC has forged a partnership with Publishing Scotland, holding events annually where public libraries and Scottish publishers are invited to present and discuss upcoming Scottish material and the role libraries play in providing and promoting Scottish publications.

#### Library Live

Library Live was launched in Scotland in 2017 with partner Get it Loud in Libraries, bringing a live music gig experience to six community libraries across Scotland. The gigs were designed to be warm, friendly and inclusive events, suitable for all ages, where teens had no need for ID, and lone women and young people living with protected characteristics felt safe and comfortable. Following the success of the project, a second phase has been funded with seven new local authorities hosting the magic of live music amongst the bookshelves. The project has already brought bands to Highlife Highland libraries and the next roster will showcase new talent in a number of authorities taking in Scotland's smallest, Clackmannshire, to Scotland's capital, with gigs in the iconic Edinburgh Central Library.

#### WWI centenary projects

The World War I centenary has featured prominently on library programmes throughout Scotland over the course of the strategy, with projects helping communities to commemorate the contribution of those at home and abroad during the Great War. Projects have ranged from engaging with

young people with Moray libraries Great Reads of the Great War and East Dunbartonshire's War; to producing a commemorative brochure of the Home Front efforts in Angus and supporting volunteers to research and publish accounts of Shetland's role in the war through the Shetland's War 1917 programme.

#### Festival of architecture

One of the many initiatives which public libraries in Scotland undertook as part of the 2016 Festival of Architecture was to partner with Publishing Scotland to run an art competition for children and young people. Libraries showcased Scottish design and creativity through a series of workshops, reading promotions and competitions.

#### BBC strategic partnership

BBC Scotland and SLIC have a strategic partnership which enables libraries to reach out to a wider audience through joint initiatives such as Build It Scotland, Love to Read and Weather Watchers. While Build It Scotland focuses on engaging children in digital design, Love to Read encourages everyone to have their say about the books they love. As partners in this national campaign, Scotland's public libraries have already hosted a number of events, including author visits and special book clubs and outdoor broadcasts from Johnstone Library, Renfrewshire and Orkney libraries. Libraries encouraged the public to vote for Scotland's Favorite Book and have participated in a range of BBC 'Moments' from Jane Austen to Harry Potter. Through Weather Watchers, library members can also discuss the nation's favourite topic!

#### Wikimedia in Residence

Through a joint project led by Inverclyde libraries and libraries at CultureNL, SLIC hosted a Wikimedian in Residence. The residency has aimed to establish public libraries as quality content creators in the digital sphere, and to provide open access to freely usable content about Scottish culture. Delivered through training, advocacy and events, including editathons and train the trainer sessions; the Wikimedian project has helped to widen access to the vast collections of high-quality information held in Scotland's public libraries.



## TO TAKE LIBRARIES TO 2020

### Strategic Aim 5: culture and creativity

- Develop and promote local and family history collections and the role public libraries play in civic pride and sense of place
- Build on current practice to ensure libraries maintain strong partnerships with national, regional and local arts and culture organisations and provide cultural experiences for their communities
- Ensure public libraries are spaces which promote and encourage freedom of information and expression



## STRATEGIC AIM 6: EXCELLENT PUBLIC SERVICES

### AIM

Public libraries must be continually supported to continuously improve their services.

Scotland's public libraries deliver a consistently high standard of service. They feature positively in the Scottish Household survey and in 2018, attracted 43 million visitors.

### WHAT AMBITION AND OPPORTUNITY ENABLED:

#### Every Child a Library Member

During 2015/16, a pilot programme, Every Child a Library Member (ECALM) was delivered to ensure that every child in Scotland has equal access to books from birth and the support to foster a love of reading from an early age. The Robert Gordon University (RGU) undertook an evaluation of the pilot to explore how the initiative could be taken forward as part of the strategy. Following the recommendations of RGU and a working group, SLIC is continuing to support local authorities to embed ECALM and develop resources to engage children and families, encouraging them to become active members.

#### Smarter procurement

A number of library services across the country have joined forces to create the Scottish Consortium of Public Libraries (SCoPL). This has facilitated joint procurement of library management systems (LMS) and will see further efficiencies through better deals on resources, including ebooks and digital magazines.

#### Funding newsletter

SLIC produces a monthly newsletter for all members, collating information on local and national funding opportunities from charity funders, trusts and government departments. The funding newsletter also includes information for members on funds which are kindly disposed to libraries.

#### TNT training

Training in New Technologies (TNT) was redeveloped in partnership with City of Glasgow College. Now that libraries are WiFi enabled, staff are being asked to support members of the public with the range of devices which are brought into libraries. TNT provides staff with the knowledge and confidence to assist users. Following the success of the programme and to reflect the rapidly changing digital world, a new training programme is being developed which will be delivered by SLIC through the digital champions network and will support staff to deliver digital skills and encourage communities to engage with emerging and next generation technology.

#### PLIF annual evaluation

SLIC has commissioned three evaluations of PLIF funded projects during the life cycle of the strategy. RGU published an evaluation of projects in June 2015. Blake Stevenson were commissioned to undertake an evaluation of health-related PLIF funded projects, which was published in April 2017, and PLIF projects awarded in 2017/18. One of the main findings of the PLIF evaluations is how highly valued the funding is by library services. In many instances it allows services to roll-out projects which would otherwise be impossible. Not only does PLIF encourage the sharing of good practice, it can also result in investment in libraries which fosters innovation.

#### How Good Is Our Public Library Service?

The How Good Is Our Public Library Service? (HGIOPLS) framework helps public libraries demonstrate the quality of their services and the impact they have on communities. It sits alongside Ambition & Opportunity, the public library strategy for Scotland, and PLIF as the cornerstones of developing and enhancing Scotland's public libraries. Refreshed in 2017, the HGIOPLS framework takes into account the changing environment in which public libraries currently operate. It focuses on planning, service delivery and continuous improvement.



#### Mobile library review

SLIC commissioned an independent researcher in autumn 2018 to scope out the current landscape of mobile library service delivery across Scotland, the benefits they bring to communities and the impact of reducing/withdrawing services. The research engaged with public library staff across Scotland and mobile service customers. Libraries on the Move was published in early 2019, highlighting the vital role mobile library services play in connecting communities, tackling social isolation and ensuring reading and learning experiences reach all corners of Scotland.

#### Advocacy toolkit

SLIC has developed an advocacy toolkit for public libraries to help services showcase just how many different services libraries provide and how cost-effective they are. The toolkit is a way of making sure influencers and decision makers are aware of all the great initiatives taking place in libraries and the impact services have within communities. This enables them to make informed decisions. The toolkit provides case studies, templates for contacting elected members and worksheets to help services shape their key messages.



## TO TAKE LIBRARIES TO 2020

### Strategic aim 6: excellent public services

- Ensure staff and services reach their full potential by engaging proactively with How Good is Our Public Library Service?
- Explore efficiencies across services, including public and school libraries to make back office processes and LMS use more effective
- Ensure all libraries monitor and evaluate services effectively and explore new methods for impact evaluation, such as 'Storing Stories'

# SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS



## STRATEGIC AIM 1

Reading, literacy and learning

- Implement the Scottish Reading Strategy
- Map out the breadth of learning opportunities available across Scotland and use this roadmap to develop a core offer
- Support public library and partner led literacy initiatives and programmes for all



## STRATEGIC AIM 3

Economic wellbeing

- Develop and promote a core offer to support economic wellbeing
- Expand upon STEM provision currently being offered across libraries
- Support emerging businesses and creative opportunities for all



## STRATEGIC AIM 5

Culture and creativity

- Develop and promote local and family history collections and the role public libraries play in civic pride and sense of place
- Build on current practice to ensure libraries maintain strong partnerships with national, regional and local arts and culture organisations and provide cultural experiences for their communities
- Ensure public libraries are spaces which promote and encourage freedom of information and expression



## STRATEGIC AIM 6

Excellent public services

- Ensure staff and services reach their full potential by engaging proactively with How Good is Our Public Library Service?
- Explore efficiencies across services, including public and school libraries to make back office processes and LMS use more effective
- Ensure all libraries monitor and evaluate services effectively and explore new methods for impact evaluation, such as 'Storing Stories'



## STRATEGIC AIM 2

Digital participation and innovation

- Build on the success of libraries providing experiences of emerging technology with an expansion into virtual reality and a national approach to deliver WiFi printing
- Support digital inclusion through local programmes and national campaigns
- Develop a digital skills base to be delivered through the digital champions network



## STRATEGIC AIM 4

Health and social wellbeing

- Create strong national, regional and local partnerships with integrated joint boards (IJBs), strategic organisations and community planning partners to ensure public libraries contribute to healthy lifestyles and improved health outcomes
- Contribute to tackling social isolation and loneliness through programming of events, groups and providing supporting materials
- Work with partners and develop the role of library staff to support programmes for people living with long-term conditions and those looking to access self-management and health literacy material



# THE DELIVERY OF AMBITION AND OPPORTUNITY

The wide ranging, impactful and innovative projects which have been enabled by the strategy have benefitted from the support, guidance and funding of:

## The Implementation Group

Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC)  
Carnegie UK Trust  
Publishing Scotland  
Association of Public Libraries in Scotland (APLS)  
Creative Scotland  
Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)  
Scottish Book Trust  
Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals Scotland (CILIPS)  
National Library of Scotland (NLS)  
Young Scot  
Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)  
National Health Service (NHS)

The recommendations both in the strategy and in this document depend on the dedication of library services both individually and collaboratively. The continued support from the Association of Public Libraries Scotland (APLS) to enable and deliver programmes and services has contributed to progress made over the course of Ambition and Opportunity.

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