

Suffolk Residents invited to help shape the future of library services

Suffolk County Council has launched a public consultation encouraging Suffolk Residents to tell Suffolk County Council what they want from their library services in the future. Suffolk County Council's contract with Suffolk's Libraries Industrial and Provident Society (IPS) Limited, the independent charity that runs the library service, comes to an end on 31 May 2025, with a new contract set to begin in June 2025. The Council is therefore seeking views from the public about what is important to them, ahead of awarding the new contract.

The 13-week consultation, will be followed by a competitive Tender Process, before the new contract is awarded in November 2024.

To inform the consultation, the council has undertaken engagement with over 30 organisations including Suffolk Libraries staff, key service users, schools and partner organisations. A key focus of the consultation is the council's Library outreach services, which include three mobile library vehicles, serving more than 500 stops across rural parts of the county each month, for the pickup and exchange of books. The mobile library vehicles are coming to the end of their life and the council therefore needs to consider the best way to deliver these services to people in rural areas of the county going forward. Library Outreach services also include Pop-up Libraries and a home library service, run by local volunteers, is also available for Suffolk residents that find it difficult to access a static or mobile library.

The consultation is made up of two parts. Part one gives residents an opportunity to tell the council what they value in their library service and what they would like to see more of in the future. Part two seeks views on how Library Outreach services could be run in the future.

The council is keen to hear from people who currently use library services and those who do not, to better understand the needs across the county. This feedback will help to inform the requirements for the future contract.

The consultation is open until Friday 26 January 2024.

Residents can have their say by visiting

<https://link.edgepilot.com/s/056c85fc/NqPZEbSPBEq4UU3QcaJGdA?u=http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/LibraryConsultation>

Easy read and translated versions of the consultation are available on request. Those who cannot access the consultation online, can request a printed copy by calling 0345 603 1842.