

Help us shape the future of Wrexham Libraries and Community Resource Centres

Wrexham County Borough Council

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Like most other councils, Wrexham is under huge financial pressure and it's getting harder to make ends meet.

We have to do more with less following more than a decade of reduced funding, increased costs, inflation, interest rate rises, and more residents needing our support.

So we're having to rethink the way we do things, and this includes looking at our library service and community resource centres...

How many libraries and resource centres do we have?

Wrexham Council manages 10 branch libraries, a homelink library and a pop up library, and five community resource centres.

Our library service provides books, digital resources, study space, and access to groups and social activities for all ages.

Our resource centres provide space for local community groups and activities.

We recognise that both the libraries and centres make an enormous contribution to the wellbeing of those that use them.

Why do we need to change things?

As a council, we're facing a budget gap of around £28 million over the next two years. We need to re-consider the services we deliver and how we deliver them in order to meet this budget pressure and remain financially resilient.

As a result, we must make a saving of at least £185,000 from our operating budget for libraries and centres.

No decisions have been made on how we're going to make these savings, but we do have a range of options that we want people's views on.

So please take part in this consultation, and help inform our next steps.

What is our vision?

We want to work with local people to understand what they expect in terms of a library service and community resource centres.

We also want to empower organisations and communities who might be interested in helping to run some of these services.

We also want to ensure:

- Libraries continue to offer access to a wide range of books and learning materials;
- The Welsh language is treated no less favourably than English (we have a duty under the Welsh Language Standards);
- Libraries and centres offer good access to the internet;
- They provide learning spaces in well-equipped buildings;
- They help provide warm spaces for everyone – especially during the winter months; and
- That services are accessible to everyone, both in terms of physical location and online.

Where are the libraries and centres?

Our 10 branch libraries are based at:

- Brynteg, land belongs to the community council, with an agreement in place to provide a public library
- Chirk
- Gwersyllt
- Llay
- Ruabon
- Cefn Mawr
- Coedpoeth
- Overton, located in the Cocoa Rooms which is a community building
- Rhos
- Wrexham

We also have our [Homelink](#) and [Pop Up](#) libraries, which help us to provide books to people in their own homes and in communities without a branch library.

Our five resource centres are based at:

- [Acton](#);
- [Brynteg](#), land belongs to the community council;
- [Gwersyllt](#);
- [Llay](#) (includes a Multi-Use Games Area); and
- [Plas Pentwyn](#) (Coedpoeth)

What are we proposing for libraries?

- At this stage, we have an open mind as to how we achieve the necessary changes to meet our saving targets. However, 'doing nothing' is not an option.
- We will seek to retain as many libraries as we can, retaining Wrexham library as a minimum, but some may have to close or have reduced opening hours and/or be run by third parties or the community council, such as Brynteg.
- To facilitate this, we will investigate opportunities for community asset transfer and co-location of services and facilities, such as with community resource centres.
- We will also look to work with organisations or groups to establish a network of volunteers to provide the Homelink library service.

What are we proposing for resource centres?

- We will look at the community resource centres that we operate and to see if co-location with other services is feasible; and
- We will also look at whether it is feasible to transfer any of our community resource centres to the community under a community asset transfer.
- We will seek to work with third parties or the community council to retain a community resource centre, but some may have to close or have reduced opening.

Anything else?

On top of these measures, we're proposing to:

- Decarbonise our libraries, centres and fleet vehicles through energy efficiency investment;
- Develop digital solutions that enhance the experience of customers;
- Review the rent and service charges paid by organisations and businesses based in our libraries and centres;
- Provide more volunteering opportunities to enable local people to get involved in helping to run libraries and centres.

How much would this save?

By reducing operating, staffing and maintenance costs, these proposals would save us at least £185,000.

The final figure would depend on various factors, including further suggestions from employees, residents, communities and interested parties and other 'reshaping' measures adopted by the council.

The estimated savings would be made from reduced operating, staffing and maintenance costs, although some short-term up-front investment might be needed for some of these new approaches.

Do we have to provide libraries and resource centres?

Councils have a statutory duty to provide a range of services, including library services.

We also have a duty under the [Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964](#). In Wales, all Local Authorities must comply with [Welsh Public Library Standards Framework](#).

We don't have a statutory or discretionary duty to provide community resource centres.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

Like all councils in Wales, Wrexham must adhere to the Welsh Language Standards, and ensure Welsh is not treated less favourably than English.

The outcome of this review could affect opportunities to learn, practice and speak Welsh. It could also have an impact on access to Welsh resources in libraries and resource centres.

Please tell us if you think the proposed changes could affect Welsh language opportunities in the county borough, and if you have any ideas about how we could ease the impact.

How to take part in this consultation

The closing date for this consultation is **19th January 2025**.

We need you to take part so we can reshape these services in a way that will both meet your needs and save public money.

You can share your views by:

- [Completing the questionnaire online](#)
- Picking up a paper copy from your library or community resource centre (please remember to return it before or by 19th January 2025).
- [Attending one of our community roadshows](#)
- [Complete the online expression of interest form](#)

If you have any questions, need help to take part or need a copy of this information in a different format or language, please contact us at:

Wrexham Libraries and Community Resource Centres Consultation

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What will happen next?

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Once the consultation is complete and the results have been analysed, recommendations will be presented to the Council's Executive Board for a decision.