



## Tackle inequality so people have a fair chance

### INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

<p><b>Title of proposal:</b></p> <p><b>Public Health Wellbeing</b></p> <p><b>Library Service withdrawal from St Mary's Heritage Centre</b></p>	Age	Race	Sex	Gender reassignment	Disability	Religion or Belief	Pregnancy and Maternity	Sexual Orientation	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Description of potential mitigation
<p><b>Equality impact: (✓ all that apply. The assessment should also consider impact on council employees and carers where applicable)</b></p> <p>Description of impact:</p> <p>St Mary's Heritage Centre, provides a programme of activities with regular heritage talks and tours, concerts and activities.</p> <p>Since 2014 the emphasis on private hires to generate income, especially for wedding receptions but also for civic functions, concerts, training sessions, meetings and conferences has been the main focus of building activity. Currently the Council services offered from the building, including facilitation of the weddings and events are run by Library staff.</p>	x				x					<p>Some heritage focussed activity will move away from this building to other community and/or shared council facilities.</p> <p>Gateshead Archive opened in 2019 and offers access to a wide range of heritage and cultural information from Gateshead Central Library. The Archive team will continue to deliver heritage sessions in venues across the borough as part of this offer.</p> <p>The staff from St Mary's site will continue to be part of the library service and will be able to continue to offer their knowledge and skills in other venues.</p>



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<p>The library service can no longer provide the staff to run this building and it is proposed that the service withdraw from the building in 2023.</p> <p>Weddings already booked in 2023 will be honoured.</p> <p>The building belongs to the council and questions have been raised about the cost of running this building, its current use and whether the Council can continue to support the cost of the building in the longer term. A process to review the buildings use and explore potential future options has begun.</p> <p>In the future the St Mary's building will be managed differently and this may involve changes to opening hours and public access to the building.</p> <p>Visitor data on current groups and services using St Mary's is limited, many are just walk in customers visiting the site. We can assume that that the age is a protected characteristic where there could be an equality impact. A greater proportion of service users are likely to be children and young people of school age and over 65s.</p> <p>We anticipate disability is a protected characteristic due to the age profile of service users, with a number of over 65, and therefore more likely to have a health limiting condition or age related frailty.</p>											
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<p>Our existing data on service users does not inform us of other protected characteristics.</p>											
<p><b>Health impact: (eg physical, mental health, wellbeing, substance misuse)</b>          The withdrawal from St Mary’s doesn’t mean the closure of any library services. We are aiming to improve the range of things that are happening in the core library buildings and to encourage local people to engage and steer the conversation about what they need locally.</p>	<p>A wider service offer delivered at a community level through an integrated place based approach will ensure that equality and equity of access is preserved. This could</p>										



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<p>Access to St Mary's as a heritage site will continue to be supported and visitors will still be able to visit the building, although the opening hours and access arrangements will change.</p> <p>The library staff will work in different ways in the future and they will be able to take their services and support out into the community.</p>	<p>result in a positive impact on local health and wellbeing.</p>
<p><b>Socio Economic impact: (eg neighbourhood, ward, area of deprivation, household group, income, wealth)</b></p> <p>St Mary's is a stand alone site and is not close to any residential area. The withdrawal of the library service will mean that the use of the site as a venue will change. The impact of that change will depend on how the Council decide to manage the future use of the building.</p>	<p>The Council will seek to find an alternative heritage or commercial use for the site.</p>
<p><b>Environmental impact: (does the proposal impact on climate change and the Council's commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030?)</b></p> <p>All council buildings are monitored for their impact on the environment</p>	<p>NA</p>
<p><b>Cumulative impact: (consider impact based on successive budgetary decisions relating to the proposal or is the proposal part of wider budgetary considerations that may collectively have an impact on service users, and is potentially at odds with the Thrive agenda)</b></p> <p>We do not believe a significant cumulative impact will result from the proposed different delivery model of library services.</p>	
<p><b>Summary of consultation/data/research undertaken to inform the assessment:</b> (eg feedback and engagement with service users, trade unions, employees, partners, public, benchmarking, case studies)</p>	



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The 2022 review of Library services was reported to Cabinet in October 2022. It confirmed that after consultation with the staff and public about the role of Gateshead libraries, that the 5 council library buildings consulted on would be recognised as “community spaces” and that they will become a part of the Councils locality working approach. It was also recognised that the future arrangement of library and other services within council buildings will vary from place to place and will be driven by local circumstances – success rests on reflecting and responding to local need so every community space will be different.

St Mary’s is not a part of the statutory library service and as such was not a part of that consultation process.

The service withdrawal from St Mary’s will allow staff resources to be targeted into the locality model.

**Signed: (completing officer) Natalie Goodman,**  
**Agreed Rachel Ridley - Service Manager – Libraries and Heritage**  
**Date: 19.12.2022**

**Service Director: (approved) Andy Graham, Service Director Public Health and Wellbeing**  
**Date: 19.12.2022**