Digital Promise for Public Libraries 2012

Public libraries were founded as a way to bring education to those without access to it. In keeping with this tradition, libraries should offer everyone access to the digital world.

Most public libraries already do offer digital access, many for free, and have done so for more than a decade.

It is essential that all public library authorities deliver digital services alongside traditional ones and the Society of Chief Librarians has set out to define the minimum that these services should provide, as well as what public libraries should be aiming to offer individually and collectively.

SCL Expects Every Public Library Service Should Provide:
- Free access to the Internet for every customer (for a minimum period of time)
- Clear and accessible online information about library services
- Staff trained to help customers access digital information
- Ability for customers to join online
- Ability to be contacted online/via email for answers to customer enquiries
- 24/7 access to services through a virtual library presence
- Ability to reserve & renew items remotely via an online catalogue

SCL Encourages Every Public Library Service to Provide:
- Free Internet access for all wanting to use it, including wifi
- A library APP to allow full access to all library digital services from mobile devices
- Tailored digital information for each customer
- Training in digital information literacy and access for its customers and staff both locally and remotely
- Time-relevant, quality checked digital content for the communities it serves and support for communities to create their own content
- Opportunity for e-lending of digital books, audio and video with remote access
- Loan of digital devices for those without other access
- Access to digitised local archive and local history resources
- Social networking interaction/ engagement opportunities
- Federated searching of locally held online resources
- Access to online learning opportunities (citizenship, language learning, theory driving test etc)

SCL will Work in Partnership with other parties to help deliver:
- A single point of digital contact for all public libraries in the UK
- A portal or landing page for common access to national digital services
- A national catalogue of resources for loan, referring to online or to be accessed in a designated location
- Single standard of library customer authentication adopted nationally to allow collaborative access to digital resources

· Local delivery of resources to the customer including via remote lending of digital titles.

The work done by libraries in the digital arena supports many key Government outcomes:

Outcome	Impact of Libraries Digital Work
Educational Attainment & Informal Learning	· Supporting many people to access ICT for the first time, develop confidence and skills · Supporting students of all ages engaged in formal and informal learning
Prosperity, Skills & Employability	· Supporting job seekers and SME
Health & Wellbeing	· Providing access to trusted information and support, as well as means of escape and relaxation
Quality of Life, Enjoyment, Happiness	· Helping to reduce isolation · Providing access to stimulation through reading and activities for all ages
Community Cohesion, Safer Communities	· Providing a neutral space for communities to come together and access information about each other and about how to keep themselves safer
Environment & Sustainability	· Access to trusted information to support sustainable activity and raised awareness of environmental impact
Citizenship & Participation in Community Life	· Access to local information about communities including local history · Access to opportunities for participation in local activity and volunteering
Value For Money	· Providing support and opportunity for residents to take part in 'channel shift' when interacting with 'the authorities' · Providing space &/or staff for other service providers working to support communities · Helping to minimise expenditure