

Camden Libraries Stock Strategy and Policy

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Introduction

Camden and its libraries

Camden serves a resident population of approx. 210,400, plus large numbers who work or study in the borough. Library services are provided by 9 static service points, a Local Studies and Archives Centre and a Home Library Service. We work in partnership with other organisations to provide a wide range of support to our local communities.

Camden Libraries' Mission Statement:

'Camden Libraries are at the heart of their neighbourhoods. Delivering an inclusive and welcoming service with a diverse range of cultural events; learning opportunities; information and support; representative collections; and digital access. Our libraries are spaces for the generation of ideas, innovation, the meeting of local needs and the facilitation and promotion of healthy, connected communities.'

Camden Libraries are a place for everyone.'

Legal Context

The 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act requires local authorities to provide:
'a comprehensive and efficient library service to all persons desiring to make use thereof'.

Stock provision exists within a framework of legislation, which includes the following statutes:

- The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Obscene Publications Act 1959, amended 1964
- Sex Discrimination Act 1986
- Video Recordings Act 2010
- Public Order Act 1986
- Local Government Act 1999 (2003)
- Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988
- The Children's Act 1989
- Computer Misuse act 1990
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Library Charges (England and Wales) Regulations 1991
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- General Data Protection Regulation 2018
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Terrorism Acts 2001 & 2006
- Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
- Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007
- Equalities Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Terrorism Act 2006

Intellectual Freedom

Within the ability of our budget, our stock will represent all shades of opinion. In fulfilling our legal obligations, we accept the statement on censorship produced by [CILIP](#) (Chartered Institute for Library and Information Professionals):

CILIP is committed to promoting a society where intellectual activity and creativity, freedom of expression and debate, and access to information are encouraged and nurtured as vital elements underpinning individual and community fulfilment in all aspects of human life. It is the role of a library and information service that is funded from the public purse to provide, as far as resources allow, access to all publicly available information, whether factual or fiction and regardless of media or format, in which its users claim legitimate interest.

Access should not be restricted on any grounds except that of the law. If publicly available material has not incurred legal penalties then it should not be excluded on moral, political, religious, racial or gender grounds, to satisfy the demands of sectional interest. The legal basis of any restriction on access should always be stated.

CILIP 2005

We will also take into account the MLA's 2007 ["Guidance on the management of controversial material in public libraries."](#)

British Board of Film Censors

The library is unable to issue certificated DVDs to people who are or appear to be under the appropriate age.

Stock management policy objectives

In selecting stock, in all categories Camden Libraries is aiming to satisfy the need of existing and potential customers and to build up customer expectations of the library stock. Hardbacks and paperbacks in both major and secondary authors including new writers are bought for Camden Libraries and apportioned to libraries according to their Tier status.

However, stock will be provided in the most economical format to satisfy customer demands, e.g. where popular titles are initially published in hardback, enough copies will be purchased to satisfy known demands. Where reservations have been placed for a new title, we will purchase one for every four reservations.

The Stock Management Policy is a responsive working document and will be regularly revised to help in delivering a good service to our customers.

Our objectives

- Ensure we offer a wide range of library materials, in relevant formats to meet the needs of our customers using data to inform our purchasing for each library and to rotate and manage the collections.
- Attract and retain library customers by providing the widest possible choice of materials, both print and electronic, which reflects the different interest and tastes of the whole community.
- Maximise the funds available by obtaining best value in contracting arrangements.
- Maximise the use of stock by a structured approach to stock management, ensuring that the stock is regularly rotated and moved to where it is most needed informed by using an electronic stock management tool.
- Maximise access to resources by cataloguing them, circulating them in an organised way and publicising the reservations service.
- Balance the need for sufficient copies of popular titles with the aspiration to develop choice and range.
- Maintain high standards in the collection and presentation of stock using peer audits to support this
- Enable access to advanced or specialist materials through co-operative arrangements or inter-library lending where we do not expect use to justify purchase. Benefitting from the consortium arrangement.
- Promote and expand the reading experience ensuring displays linked to the Libraries Connected cultural calendar encourage people to broaden their reading choices.
- Provide a customer focus to stock, by listening and responding to the needs of the diverse community
- Support the educational role of the library service and develop lifelong learning
- Provide services to children and young people, supporting early years development and literacy including being part of the Bookstart programme
- Develop and promote reference and information services ensuring all staff are able to signpost people to local support and guide people to find relevant and bona fide information online.
- Promote the cultural and heritage aspects of Camden by working closely with the Archive and Local Studies team and the Libraries Connected cultural calendar.

Equality, Diversity, Community

Camden is proud of its diversity and the council will challenge discrimination in all its forms.

Stock will be provided in different formats to ensure the widest access to literature, information, sound and vision e.g. large print, talking books and subscriptions to web-based e-sources. Stock will be wide ranging enough to meet the requirements of the Equalities Act.

Stock Management - Criteria, Selection, Provision, Exclusions

Criteria

Camden Libraries endeavour to provide a wide range of materials, within its financial and space restrictions, to meet the recreational, educational, lifelong learning and information needs of the community.

Our approach to stock is based on the principle of the stock being considered as a Borough wide resource, rather than as separate collections in individual libraries.

The basic criteria used to select an item to add to our stock include the following:

- Appropriateness in content, format and language to the immediate and anticipated needs and interests of individuals and/or the community
- Relative importance in comparison with other known materials on the subject.
- Appropriateness of format for library use and/or loan
- Standard of physical presentation in terms of size of item, typeface, illustrations, papers, binding, indexing.
- Price and value for money
- Paperback editions will be chosen in most circumstances
- Hardback maybe considered in certain categories e.g. Children's picture books and or for requested items where the paperback is not yet available.
- Currency of information contained in the publication
- Readership level
- Reputation and significance of the author, illustrator, publisher etc
- Current and past popularity and anticipated demand for the subject, genre, author, illustrator etc
- Favourable opinions by reviewers and critics
- Existing coverage of the subject currently in stock
- Loan records, usage patterns and performance of items by same author, illustrator, composer, performer, director, or of the same genre/subject etc
- Local or regional relevance
- Availability elsewhere in the community or through library networks, or in other media such as electronic format
- Importance as an historical record for present and future use, such as local studies

In addition, the following factors are considered for children and young people.

- In-line with fast-changing interests and trends
- Age-appropriate level
- Appropriate and good illustrations particularly in picture books.
- Up-to-date content, attitudes, and views.

Camden Libraries are part of the CBC (Central Buying Consortium) Supplier Selection which ensures value for money, based on specifications determined by the library service.

Stock decisions are also made within the context of using professional library expertise, and without personal preference or bias of library staff.

The aim of supplier selection is to achieve the highest possible stock usage and value for money. The majority of physical book stock is supplier selected. Some of the stock fund is allocated to each library so that they can make local decisions.

Camden's supplier is provided with a set of criteria such as:

- numbers of copies required,
- age range
- broad stock categories,
- popularity of authors,
- budget allocation

Stock selected by our main supplier will arrive categorised and spine labelled. The database records and labelling of non-supplier selected stock are completed on arrival.

Camden is part of a large group of Local Authorities that make up the Central Buying Consortium, who have pooled resources to maximise the benefits obtained from Library Suppliers and minimise administrative costs and processes.

The suppliers are awarded the contract for supply based on several criteria which all contribute to “Best Value”:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Supply times | • References |
| • Stock holdings | • Discount offered |
| • Added value services | • Cost of servicing |
| • Supply of management information | • Supply of catalogue records |

The stock contract is monitored overall by the lead authority (West Sussex) and management information provided to the members on a quarterly basis.

The London Borough of Camden has nine libraries located around the borough including a Local Studies and Archives Centre and a Home Library Service. Swiss Cottage Library is Camden’s central library, it is the largest library and holds the largest stock collections including Camden libraries reserve stock. Bibliographic Services is also housed at Swiss Cottage Library.

We provide a wide range of materials for loan both physical and digital print and non-print materials for customers as a resource for the recreational, informational, educational and lifelong learning needs of adults of all ages. There will be some duplication with the Children’s service, of crossover items aimed at young adults. We provide a range of large print for customers who have difficulty reading standard size print. Our audiobook collection on CD cover a wide range of popular fiction, classics and non-fiction in both abridged and unabridged formats.

Our adult non-fiction is kept in the Dewey Decimal Classification sequence. The adult fiction is kept in alphabetical author order, except for the following which are in separate genre sequence which are indicated with a spine label of the first 3 letters of the category: Crime & Thriller / Romance / Sci-Fi & Fantasy / Horror /Graphic Novels

The largest collection of adult lending book stock is held at Swiss Cottage Library, followed by Kentish Town library. The other seven Camden libraries hold correspondingly smaller stock according to their tier status.

Specialist suppliers are used to obtain audiobooks and large print materials.

e-Books and e-Audio books are provided by Overdrive and Bolinda.

The Council sets the level of stock budget each year. Therefore, with these resources and with the increasing number of published works every year, Camden Libraries can only stock a proportion of available material for the general reader. However, extremely specialised, technical or academic publications are expected to be provided by other library and educational agencies.

As an inner London Borough, stock provision in Camden will also be determined by:

- The proximity of the British Library
- Loans through our SELMS Partners.
- Resources available in other larger London libraries
- Resources available online

Stock Selection Methods:

- We use a variety of stock selection methods to ensure best value and best stock.
- Stock is selected:
 - Supplier selection to a specification
 - Standing Orders
- Use of retail intelligence, e.g. Bookseller
- Lists and advanced information from suppliers
- Specialist supplier visits and demonstrations
- Catalogues and brochures.

Experienced librarians select stock and we encourage all library staff to provide stock suggestions from their branch libraries. There are funds available for gaps in stock requests.

Provision: All nine Camden libraries stock the following physical items:

- Adult Fiction Books
- Adult Non-Fiction Books
- Teen Fiction (Young Adults)
- Children's books, including picture and board books
- Large Print books
- Audio Books/Talking Books
- Reference books
- Music Scores (Swiss Cottage Library)
- Ordinance survey maps (Swiss Cottage Library)
- We do not offer newspapers or magazines in any of our libraries. However, all newspapers can be accessed free online through 'Press Reader' (Digital Library) and Magazines through Overdrive on all devices including bring your own, library PC's and Library Hublets (Tablets)
- A selection of periodicals are available in libraries

Online Digital Library

Camden library customers have access to a wide range of free online resources, eBooks (Adult Fiction, popular non-fiction, and children's) e-Audio books (Adult Fiction, Non-Fiction, and Children's), e-magazines and newspapers through the Borough's website at any time and at no cost to the library member. A valid library card and pin number is required to access the online library service on the customer's initial visit. After which apps can be downloaded to access the above.

Exclusions

Not every book is appropriate for use in public libraries. The following will not be considered for stock:

- Those which incite discrimination or degradation on the grounds of race, sex, disability or age.
- Items that are in breach of copyright
- Any which seek to make a cult of violence or weapons or which incite criminal or threatening behaviour.
- Titles published or created abroad that have no legal right of publication or dissemination in the UK
- Items that are in an unsuitable format for library loan e.g. spiral bound, loose leaf, leaflets, luxury/collectors' editions; 'fill the gaps' workbooks
- Titles that are of poor physical quality e.g. paper, binding, typeface, printing
- Items of a size, shape or binding inappropriate to library use
- Books that contain loose components that would be easily lost
- Vanity publishing

- Manuals for specific brands, e.g. car manuals, cameras
- Reading schemes or workbooks primarily intended for use with or by a teacher, which cannot easily be used independently.
- Titles that would be expected to be provided by academic and special libraries, generally aimed at undergraduate, postgraduate, vocational, research and professional readership level.
- GCSE, A Level, GNVC BTEC and Access Course work and guidebooks.
- Items that are priced excessively to comparable works
- Titles containing inaccurate/out-of-date information
- Items which form part of a larger work or series, which we will not be acquiring as a whole
- Titles already in stock in one format, might not be duplicated in an alternative format

Circulating stock

To ensure that library customers get to see more books at their local library, some categories of stock are circulated through a rotation plan. This includes adult large print and audiobooks. Other books are moved using a stock report from digital stock management tool.

The benefits of moving stock between libraries are:

- Customers see more titles at their local branch.
- A wider choice of titles can be purchased, increasing the reading experience we offer
- Stock is regularly refreshed
- Maximum use is made of the stock, especially expensive items such as unabridged audiobooks.
- Allows Home Library Service customers access to a wider range of titles.

Children and Young People

Camden libraries hold children's and young people's printed fiction, non-fiction, and audio book materials for ages 0-16 yrs. Children's stock will be selected based on providing materials that satisfy needs for information, education and reading for pleasure, leading to a lifelong love of reading for pleasure and practical support through life.

- Most of the children's stock is selected by supplier selection. The aim is to maximise the highest possible stock usage and value for money. Suppliers are provided with a set of criteria like the adult selection. Stock selected by main suppliers arrive categorised and spine labelled.
- The books should be of high quality, appealing, stimulating, reflect current interests and provided in formats age appropriate.
- A wide range of ability levels and age-related interests so that every child can find the book that is right for them. This includes reluctant older readers, who should be able to find books that appeal to them and are at the right reading level, as well as competent younger readers who should be able to find books that stretch and challenge them.
- Our books should reflect and celebrate our diverse communities and children should be able to identify with depictions of children in the stories.
- Children should expect to find a selection of books by very well known modern children's authors in all libraries including a range of classic children's stories.
- Newly published children's books should be available soon after being published.
- Books should support children's emotional and intellectual development.
- There should be a balance of familiar, comforting books as well as books to challenge, excite and delight children.

Children's eBook and e-Audio books are available on Camden's Digital library.

Procurement

Camden is committed to maximising Supplier Selection to minimise in-house costs.

A large proportion of Camden's stock fund is used to procure new publications, but a proportion is set aside for the acquisition of reader requests, gaps in stock, retrospective purchasing (for replacing well used worn stock or missing key titles).

The allocation of resources for each area of stock is determined by the Library Lead responsible for Bibliographical Services on the recommendation of the Bibs Team at the beginning of each financial year and may be revised to take into account changes to the funding allocations and use of stock, as the year progresses.

Camden has a Bibs Unit that manages all payments from the stock fund, receipt of all stock, budget control, database management, interlibrary loans, servicing (where not provided by non-CBC suppliers), monitoring of orders and supplier performance.

New stock from our suppliers is delivered to each library. Large print books are delivered centrally to minimise duplication of work processes and distributed to the libraries as appropriate, with priority given to customer requests.

Stock Maintenance

Responsibility for repairing, withdrawing, and suggestions for replacing and filling stock gaps lies with Library Managers and advice from the Bibliographic Team. Printed advice is available to assist in this. A stock performance tool is also used to support decision making.

Weeding and withdrawal

Good stock management is essential to maintain the effectiveness and quality of our collections. To achieve this, stock is periodically 'weeded' (examined) in a continuous cycle. For this we have Collection HQ Lite (an evidenced based reporting tool) which provides reports of stock for removal or moved to another library.

Minor repairs to stock are undertaken at each library. Repairing of the lending book stock is not regularly undertaken. If the book/item is a popular or necessary title; a new copy would normally be bought if available.

Stock may be removed from the shelves for many reasons, including:

- Poor physical condition or damage
- Size of the library including availability of shelving.
- The information contained in the book is now out of date, misleading or inaccurate
- A newer edition is available
- A better book on the same subject is available
- Declining pattern of use
- The item may be better used in another location
- Availability of multiple copies
- Other volumes of a series are no longer in stock
- Part/s of a multi-media set is missing

A decision is made as to whether each stock item should be retained, replaced or withdrawn. When the item is withdrawn, the library catalogue is amended. Stock reports are provided to each library every month for withdrawal of stock. The material listed is then considered for replacement, reallocation or disposed of. Last copies of titles maybe shelved in the reserved stack at Swiss Cottage Library. These titles can be reserved and/or loaned.

Donations

We only accept donations that meet the same selection criteria, which are applied to purchased stock. We do not accept house clearance material or old and shabby books.

Donations are accepted on the understanding that the gift is without conditions and becomes the property of the Library Service. Camden retains the right to evaluate, use or dispose of material that is not required.

Stock that has been selected for withdrawal, including donations that do not meet selection criteria, will be sent to external companies for a very small price. Books may also be donated to a charity following approval by the Library Management Team. It is not possible to withdraw a book/item from stock on request.

Responding to customers

We encourage requests and suggestions in order to respond to our customer's needs valuing the positive contribution this makes. Material can be reserved both online and at our branches, whether currently in stock or not. Stock suggestions can also be made online and at the local library. There are separate Reservations costs which are reviewed and set annually.

Reservations for books and audiobooks are free of charge. We will either purchase the reserved item or customers have the option to borrow the item through inter-library loan service (ILL), from our SELMS partners or the British Library. There is however a charge for borrowing from these other sources. We cannot guarantee to supply every item requested.

The decision to buy or not depends on the availability, price, currency of information, potential of reasonable future use, and the same general selection criteria outlined within this document.

Reserved Stock and Special Collection

Camden Libraries holds the Borough's Reserve Stock at Swiss Cottage library including a special Philosophy and Psychology collection. A Joint Fiction Reserve (JFC) is held at Holborn library. These collections and the Reserved stock are closed access at both libraries. However, this stock can be borrowed by library customers and SELMS partners.

DVDs and Music CDs

Camden Libraries no longer offer DVDs in any of our libraries. CDs are only available to borrow at Swiss Cottage Library. However, we do offer existing DVDs to our Home Library Service customers free of charge.

Social inclusion

The aims are:

- To ensure that the stock provided is diverse and relevant to the needs of the local community
- To ensure that the needs of the local community are targeted / met
- To ensure that those people unable to attend public libraries through disability or through cultural barriers are given an opportunity to receive library material on a regular basis

The Home Library Service

Camden home library service delivers books to some of the most vulnerable and housebound residents in the borough; older people; people with disabilities; residents living in care homes or sheltered accommodation. We work in partnership with Islington Education library service to deliver the book and audio items to our residents. This is a very valued service with residents who enjoy the face to face contact with the delivery team.

Stock lost or damaged

It is the responsibility of a borrower (or their guardian) to return or renew items at the end of the lending period. Failure to do so may result in the accumulation of fines on the customer's library account, preventing any further loans until the items are returned and fines paid or the costs of replacement are paid. Cost of replacement is determined by the library staff for every individual item lost or damaged.

