LGMA
Local Government
Management Agency
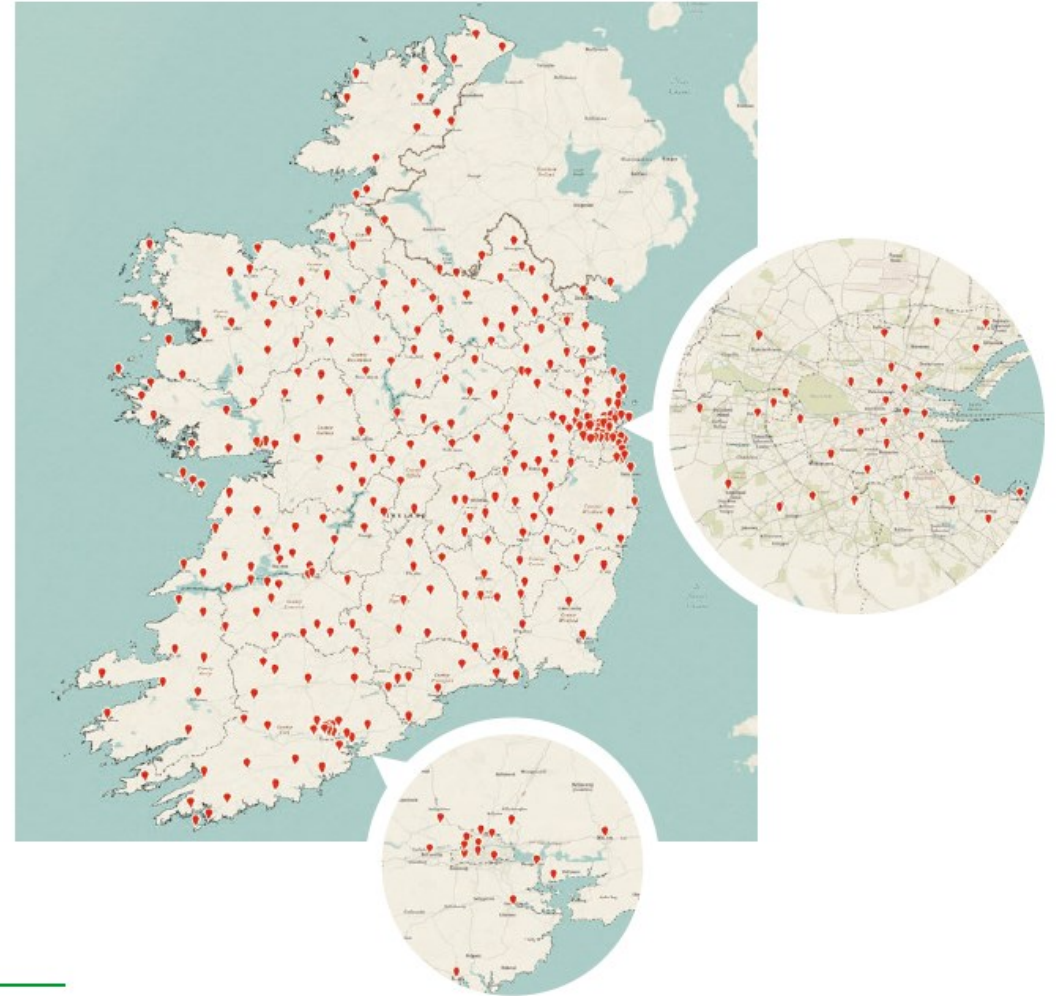
The Library is the Place:

Information, Recreation, Inspiration

EIFL Public Access Webinar July 19th 2023

Structure of the Sector

- 330 public libraries (urban, rural, island)
- 23 mobile libraries
- 1600+ staff
- 765,000 registered users (14.8% of population)
- 17 million visits p.a. (pre-COVID)
- Integrated highly valued NATIONAL service (as per all surveys!)
- Government? Dept of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)
- Delivery? 30 local authorities, represented in City and County Managers Association
- Legislation? Local Government Act 2001
- Strategy implementation? Libraries Development Committee, Local Government Management Agency (LGMA)
- Coordination? Libraries Development, LGMA
- Input and direction? 3 Strategy Committees, various WGs

Location of Public Libraries across the Country

Public Access in Libraries

- All libraries internet-connected

- Hardware mix: PCs, latpops, tablets

- Different speeds, different capacities across local authorities

- Increasingly digitally skilled staff

22nd November 2022 Deansgrange Library. Photo by Peter Cavanagh Must credit No Reprodu...

Role of Libraries in National Broadband Ecosystem?

- Key provider of public access and skills training
- Major national and local government investment in 2018 – desktops, laptops, printers
- Continuing investment ever since – tablets, makerspaces, digital recording, sensory equipment – funded however we can
- Increasing recognition that public access is crucial to government policy and achieving objectives
- Libraries seen as delivery partner in SDGs, digital inclusion and media literacy/disinformation frameworks
- New strategy = new opportunities

The Answers from Ireland

- What are the key lessons learnt and challenges faced in providing public access to ICT in libraries?
- How has the use of public access technology in libraries changed over the years?
- How does public access to ICT change library services?
- Who are the users of public access technology in libraries?
- How do people use public access technology in libraries?
- What are the impacts of public access to ICT in libraries and how to measure them?

Strategy Development

- Strategy Working Group set up: DRCD, Directors of Service, County Librarians, LGMA
- External facilitator brought in to develop and run consultation
- Reporting into the Libraries Development Committee

Strategy Consultation

17 stakeholder organisation surveys returned

Two key stakeholder focus groups with **23** organisations

Key stakeholder interviews

2,993 returned questionnaires

Focus groups with **over 300** members of staff

Feedback from government departments

Workshops

Workshop with Local Authority Directors of Service

Workshop with young people under 18

Workshop with City and County Librarians

Workshop with Irish language stakeholders (as Gaeilge/in Irish)

Our Vision

Ireland's public libraries are leaders in enabling and supporting all people across all communities to be informed, connected, literate individuals, skilled for life.

Our Mission

To enrich the lives of people and communities in Ireland by providing universal access to information and resources to promote reading and enjoyment, lifelong learning, life skills, education and cultural engagement.

Our Values

Quality and Excellence

Trustworthiness and Integrity

Intellectual Freedom

Civic Participation

Creativity, Innovation, and Imagination

Universal Accessibility

Equality, Inclusivity and Diversity

Theme One: People

1. Reading and Literacy is at the Heart of What We Do

- Increased bookfund

- Irish languages

- Bookclubs

- PLR

2. Libraries for All

- Increase active use

- Opening hours and MOL

- Programmes: HI@YL, Little Library

3. Skills for Life

- Digital skills, media literacy, health, business, financial literacy, green literacy

Theme Two: Spaces

4. Library as the Centre of the Community

- Increase visitors

- User-centred design

- Local Economic and Community Plans

5. Our Buildings

- Capital programme

- Standards and benchmarks

6. Sustainability and Climate Action

- Buildings

- Vehicles

- SDGs

- Home energy saving kits

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Theme Three: Connections

7. Our Digital Offer
- Library Management System
- Apps
- Library-owned eBook infrastructure
- Gigabit libraries network

8. Culture
- Online platform for access to digital cultural heritage
- Creative Ireland & Creative Communities

9. Cross-border and Transnational Co-operation
- European and international best practice
- EU Projects
- Peer learning programme
- Libraries NI and leadership

Three Strategic Enablers

10. Data Supported and User-focused Service Design

- Data Dashboard
- Impact Evaluation

11. Marketing

- Promotions and communications training
- National public libraries open day

12. Library Team

- Workforce development
- Leadership
- Competencies, Recruitment and Retention

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Information, Recreation, Inspiration

National Public Library Strategy
2023-2027

Prepared by the Department of Rural and Community Development,
the City and County Management Association and
the Local Government Management Agency.

Launched Monday 17th

- https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/7f5616-public-libraries/w.gov.ie)