

Environmental and Sustainable  
Communities Overview  
& Scrutiny Committee

County Durham Libraries

20 December 2022



# Outline of Presentation

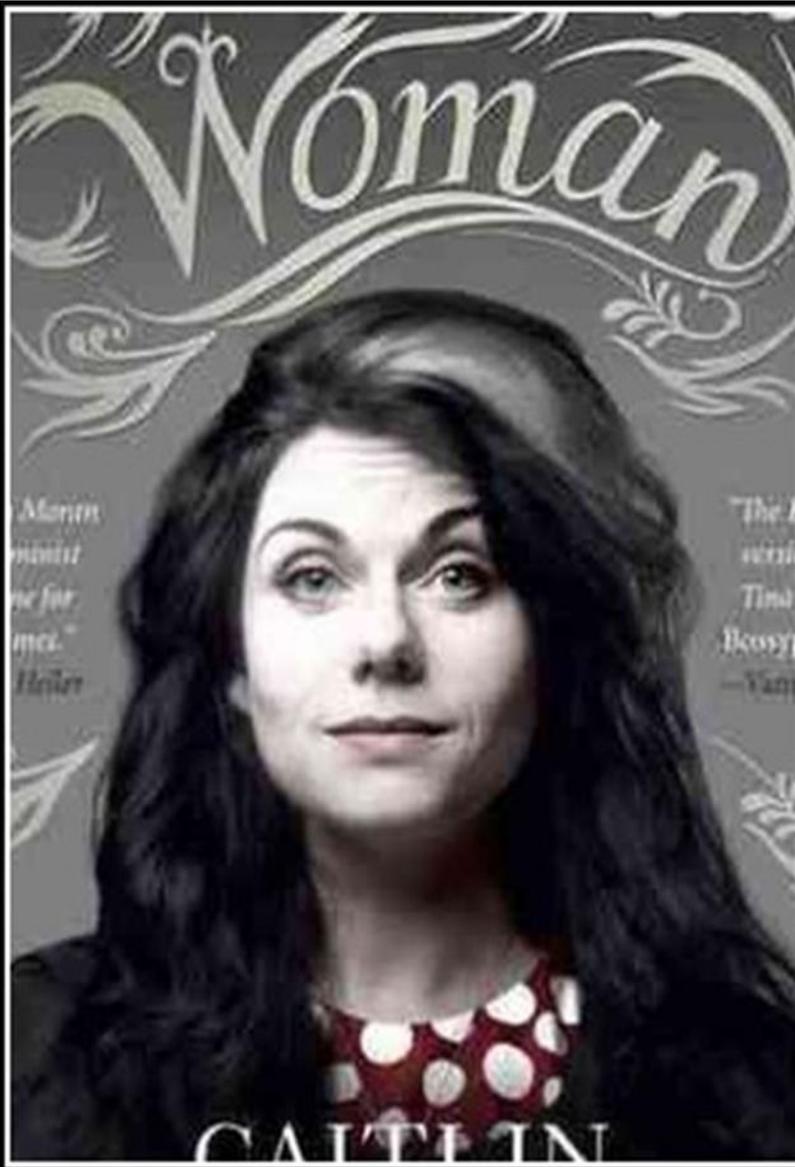
1. Overview and context of the Library Service
2. The impact of COVID-19 and pandemic recovery
3. Library Transformation – approach and direction
4. Initial findings of the needs assessment
5. Summary and next steps



# 1. Overview and context of the Library Service

**Public Libraries are a statutory service,  
as defined under the Public Libraries and  
Museums Act 1964**

Upper tier authorities have an obligation  
to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient  
service'.



A library in the middle of a community is a cross between an emergency exit, a life raft and a festival. They are cathedrals of the mind; hospitals of the soul; theme parks of the imagination. On a cold, rainy island, they are the only sheltered public spaces where you are not a consumer, but a citizen, instead.

— Caitlin Moran —

AZ QUOTES

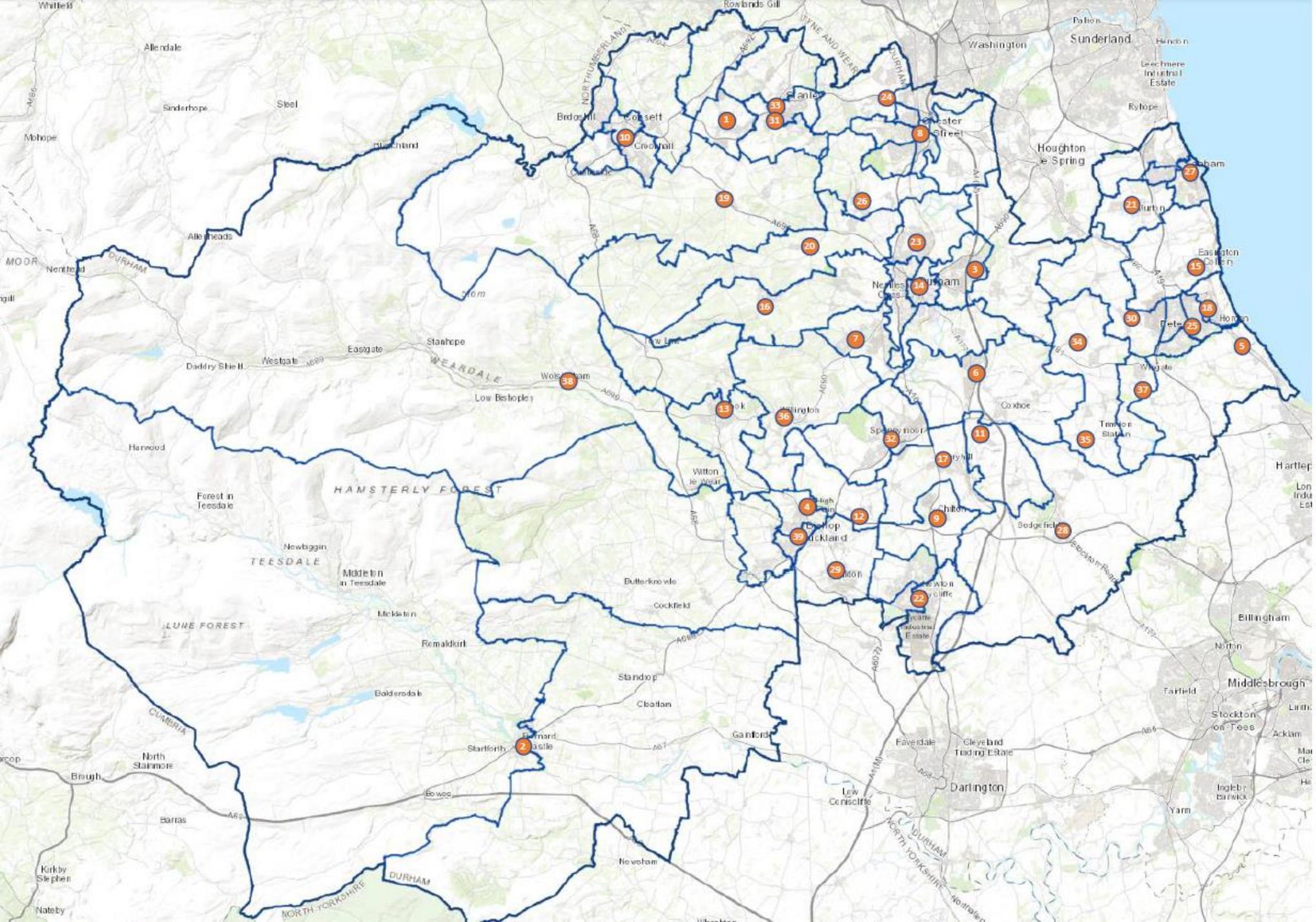
# *County Durham Libraries – an overview*

- **39 libraries** - City Centre (1), town centre (11), community (27)
- **Books on wheels** – delivered services to over 150 clients own homes
- **Book bus** – vehicle calling at care homes to enable clients to choose their own books
- **Mobile library service** - delivering to over 80 settlements across the largely rural west of the county
- **Sevenhills – library HQ** - shared building with CYPS, from which stock support is managed, vehicles housed and distribution takes place, prison library service base, county bookstore, and Growing and Learning team base.
- **Online presence** – access to e-books, e-audiobooks, e-magazines, online book ordering and renewal

# Location by Ward

## Key:

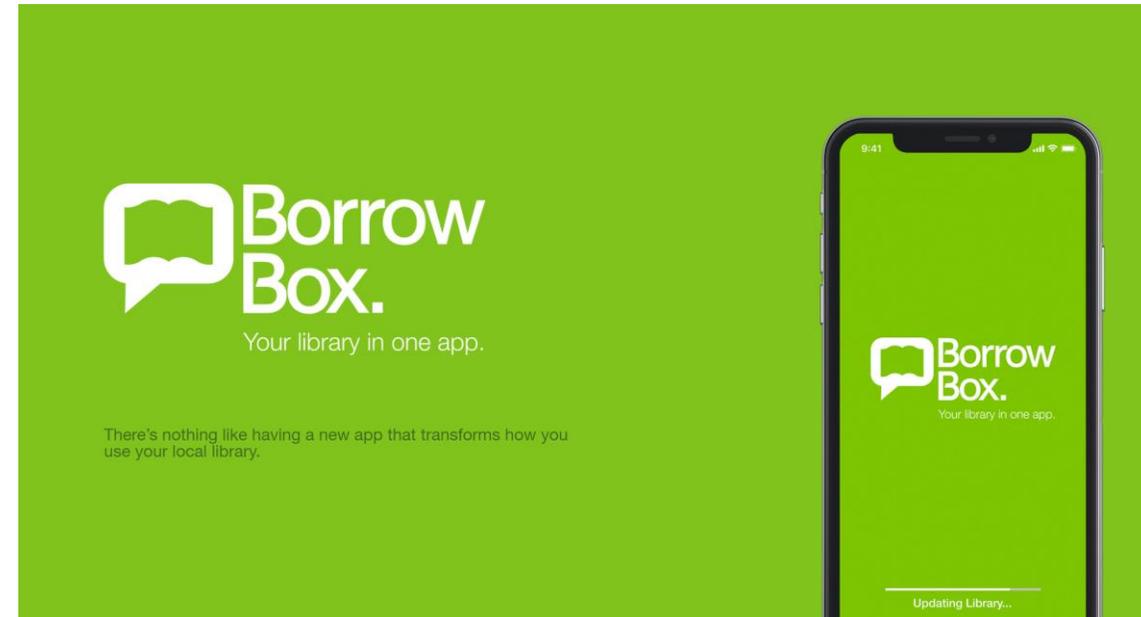
- |                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Annfield Plain      | 21 Murton          |
| 2 Barnard Castle      | 22 Newton Aycliffe |
| 3 Belmont             | 23 Newton Hall     |
| 4 Bishop Auckland     | 24 Pelton          |
| 5 Blackhall           | 25 Peterlee        |
| 6 Bowburn             | 26 Sacriston       |
| 7 Brandon             | 27 Seaham          |
| 8 Chester le Street   | 28 Sedgefield      |
| 9 Chilton             | 29 Shildon         |
| 10 Consett            | 30 Shotton         |
| 11 Cornforth          | 31 South Moor      |
| 12 Coundon            | 32 Spennymoor      |
| 13 Crook              | 33 Stanley         |
| 14 Durham Clayport    | 34 Thornley        |
| 15 Easington Collier, | 35 Trimdon         |
| 16 Esh Winning        | 36 Willington      |
| 17 Ferryhill          | 37 Wingate         |
| 18 Horden             | 38 Wolsingham      |
| 19 Lanchester         | 39 Woodhouse Close |
| 20 Langley Park       |                    |



# Online Library Services

## Library Online:

- Reserve items you find on the catalogue.
- Renew items you currently have on loan.
- Book one of our public access internet PCs in any of our libraries.
- Download eBooks, eComics and eMagazines
- Find out when and where the mobile library stops



# Mobile Library Services

- Mobile Library
- Books on wheels
- Book Bus



# Library HQ Sevenhills

- Library stock support:
  - Ordering
  - Relocating
  - Circulating
  - disposal
- Home of mobile library services



# Library Events & Activities



## Post details

ID: 474376178169034

## Post overview

This view of your post may not represent exactly how it appears in Facebook's News Feed.

**County Durham Libraries**  
Published by [Karen Milburn](#) · 4 d ·  · 

Did you know all 39 of our County Durham libraries are part of the Warm Spaces network? The network aims to support residents through the winter following an increase in energy costs and the rising cost-of-living. Our library Warm Spaces are free, and you can stay for as long, or for as short a period as you wish, within each libraries opening hours. We have free Wi-Fi, colouring sheets to keep children occupied and lots of books to browse.

For further information on Warm S... [See more](#)



## Post performance

There may be delays in stats reporting. To see the most up-to-date stats, please go to your live post.

# 4,641

## People reached <sup>1</sup>

0% from boosted posts

4,641 organic

0 paid

# 382

## Post engagements <sup>1</sup>

**125 reactions**

32 on post

93 on shares

**70 shares**

70 on post

0 on shares

**22 comments**

1 on post

21 on shares

**165 clicks**

14 photo clicks

27 link clicks

0 clicks to play

## 2. Impact of COVID-19 and pandemic recovery

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Visits to all libraries	1,240,446	1,143,849	38,687	327,470	240,678
Number of books loaned	1,607,134	1,446,486	152,580	801,171	535,149
Members	239,223	228,092	230,202	214,686	165,473
Active Borrowers	53,528	50,682	21,192	35,188	40,761

### 3. Library Transformation – approach and direction

- (a) Phase one “*Get Involved*” – 2022 incorporating the needs assessment findings to generate a report on options and adaptations.
- (b) Phase two “*Have your say*” 2023, will include work on a further consultation on the options put forward from Phase One, with any redefined service offer following public views.
- (c) A final report on changes to the service and implementation is scheduled to go to Cabinet around Autumn 2023. Implementation of the recommendations from this report will begin in Spring 2024.

# *Why transform ?*

- Making sure that our libraries **meet the future needs** of our communities by co production
- Maintaining compliance with Public Libraries and Museums Act (1964) criteria
- Almost a decade since the last major review
- Learning from Sector **best practice**
- Reflecting **DCMS guidance for library service development**
- Applying what we have learned about the role of libraries during **covid**

## 4. Initial findings of the needs assessment

- 1. A strategic review of the existing physical library network**
- 2. A review of library opening hours**
- 3. Alignment of library outcomes with Council plans and priorities.**
- 4. Investment in technology, and digital content and infrastructure**

- 5. A workforce skills review and associated training**
- 6. A review of communications and marketing**
- 7. Develop and deliver a compelling and accessible events programme**
- 8. Develop an ambitious plan for outreach and partnerships**
- 9. A review of the current stock and content policy**

## 5. Next Steps

Following analysis of the outputs of the Needs Assessment, preferred options identified based on the available evidence and proposals for a new library offer will be formally consulted on with members of the public in Spring 2023