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# Delivering Tomorrow's Libraries

Public Library Standards –  
2021/22 Performance Position



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# Delivering Tomorrow's Libraries: Public Library Standards – 2021/22 Performance Position

The attached document contains the outturn results for the 2021/22 Public Library Standards which form part of the Department for Communities Delivering Tomorrow's Libraries Policy<sup>1</sup>.

During 2021/22 Libraries NI had a resource budget of £30.244m of which £3.503m was dedicated to spend on library stock. Supporting literacy and supporting a love of reading remains the core work of Libraries NI. Libraries NI faced continued uncertainty and disruption to library operations and services during 2021/22 due to the global coronavirus pandemic. Restrictions, in place at different times during the year, impacted Libraries NI's ability to deliver services in local libraries and consequently prevented the public from accessing the full range of library services and programmes. While many normal branch library activities were constrained, resources were made available online, and programmes and activities were adapted and delivered through the Libraries NI website and social media channels. With the lifting of restrictions in February 2022, Libraries NI focused on reinstating services that had been disrupted and connecting with the people and communities they serve.

The capital budget was £3.149m and this allowed for the completion of a number of projects carried forward from 2020/21 and expenditure on a number of new minor works and small estates projects, including design work for the new Enniskillen library, as well as essential investment in replacement IT systems, services and infrastructure.

Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, data collection for Continuous Household Survey (CHS) 2020/21 moved from face-to-face interviewing to telephone mode with a reduction in the number of questions. The results from the CHS 2021/22 are not directly comparable to previous years due to the significant changes to the survey in terms of methodology and content, combined with library closures and restricted services.

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<sup>1</sup> Delivering Tomorrow's Libraries was published in July 2006

## Theme:

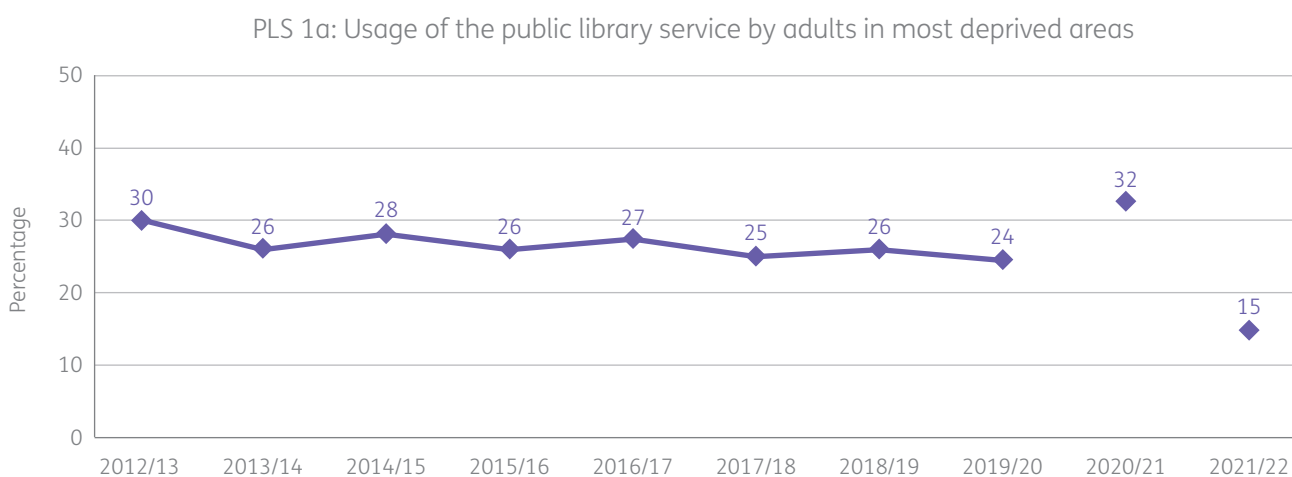
Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion

## Target(s):

PLS 1a: Increase library usage by adults (aged 16+) living in the 20% most deprived Super Output Areas by 6 percentage points over 3 years from the 2012/13 baseline.

2012/13 baseline – 30%

## Position as per 2019/20: Red



Library usage by adults in the 20% most deprived areas was 15% for 2021/22. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and changes in survey methodology, the results from the CHS 2021/22 and 2020/21 are not directly comparable to previous years, with 2019/20 reflecting the last reliable year of comparable data. It should also be noted that during much of 2020 and 2021, library services were restricted due to the pandemic.

**Data Source:** Continuous Household Survey (Annual)

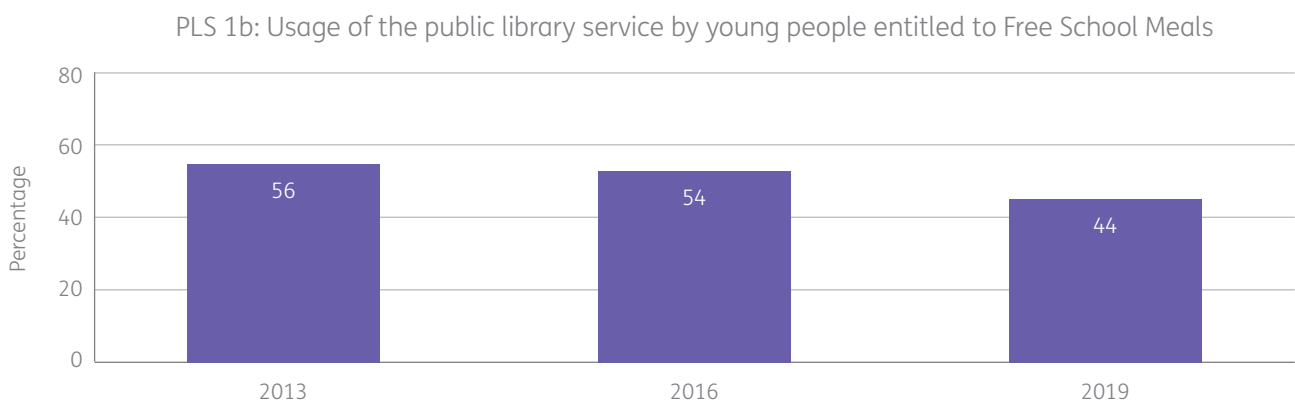
## Theme:

Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion

## Target(s):

PLS 1b: At least 50% of young people (aged 11-16) entitled to Free School Meals to have used the public library service in the last 12 months.

**Current Position: Amber**



In 2019, 44% of young people entitled to Free School Meals had used the public library service.

**Data Source:** Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitudes Survey (Triennial)

**Theme:**

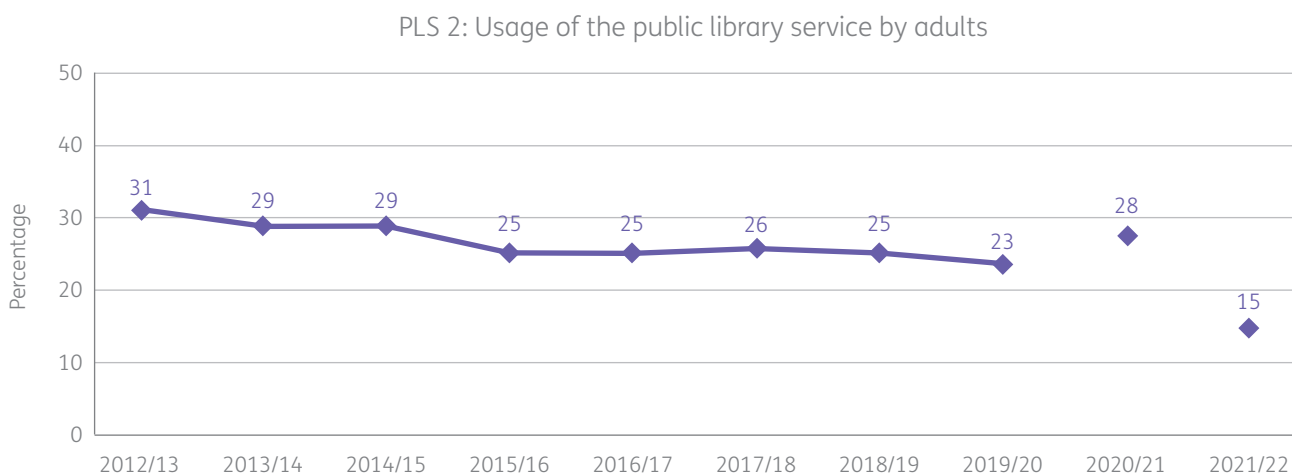
Participation

**Target(s):**

PLS 2: Increase by 3 percentage points, from 2012/13 baseline levels, the percentage of the adult population (aged 16+) who have used the public library service at least once in the last 12 months.

2012/13 baseline – 31%

**Position as per 2019/20: Red**



For 2021/22, 15% of adults (aged 16+) used the public library service at least once in the previous 12 months. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and changes in survey methodology, the results from the CHS 2021/22 and 2020/21 are not directly comparable to previous years, with 2019/20 reflecting the last reliable year of comparable data. It should also be noted that during much of 2020 and 2021, library services were restricted due to the pandemic.

**Data Source:** Continuous Household Survey (Annual)

## Theme:

Participation

## Target(s):

PLS 3: Increase by 6% over 3 years from 2013/14 baselines, the number of instances of participation in core and regular activities organised by Libraries NI by adults, children and young people. (Genealogy was no longer delivered in 2017/18.)

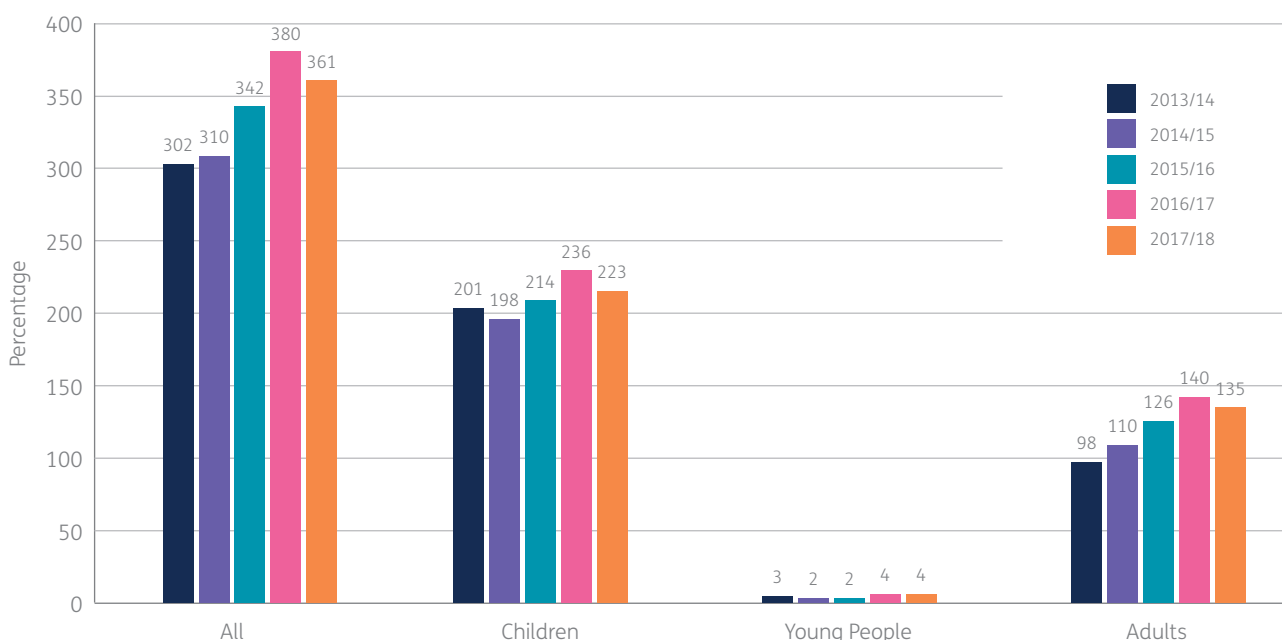
2013/14 baseline:

- All – 302,117
- Children – 200,991
- Young people – 2,678
- Adults – 98,448

Note: Data for 2018/19 – 2021/22 is not available

## Current Position: Green

PLS 3: Participation in core and regular activities



Participation in 2017/18 shows an increase of 20% compared with 2013/14. The overall number of instances of participation increased by 59,000, reflecting increases in participation of 36,000 adults, 1,000 young people and 22,000 children.

**Data Source:** Libraries NI Activity Database (Annual)

## Theme:

Participation

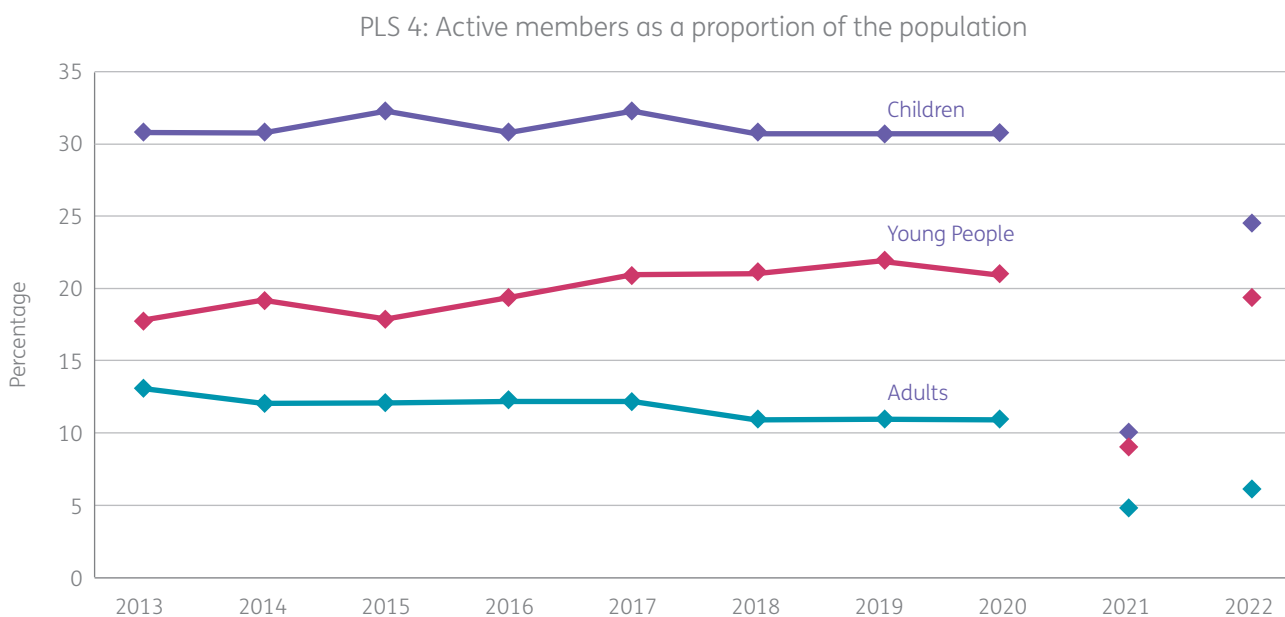
## Target(s):

PLS 4: Increase the number of active members as a proportion of the population by 3 percentage points over 3 years from baseline levels at 1 April 2013 by adults, children and young people. (Excludes eBook/eAudiobook/eMagazine/eNewspaper only users.)

2013 baseline:

- All – 16%
- Children – 31%
- Young people – 18%
- Adults – 13%

## Position at 1 April 2020: Red



The number of active members as a proportion of the population was 10% at 1 April 2022. Note that due to the COVID-19 pandemic there were library closures in 2020, as well as restrictions on the services that could be provided (such as browsing/borrowing and IT services) when they re-opened in 2021 and continued in place, resulting in an adverse impact on the ability of members to be active. Therefore, figures for 1 April 2022 (and 1 April 2021) should not be compared with previous years, with 1 April 2020 reflecting the last reliable date of comparable data.

**Data Source:** Libraries NI Management System; NISRA Mid-Year Population Estimates (Annual)



## Theme:

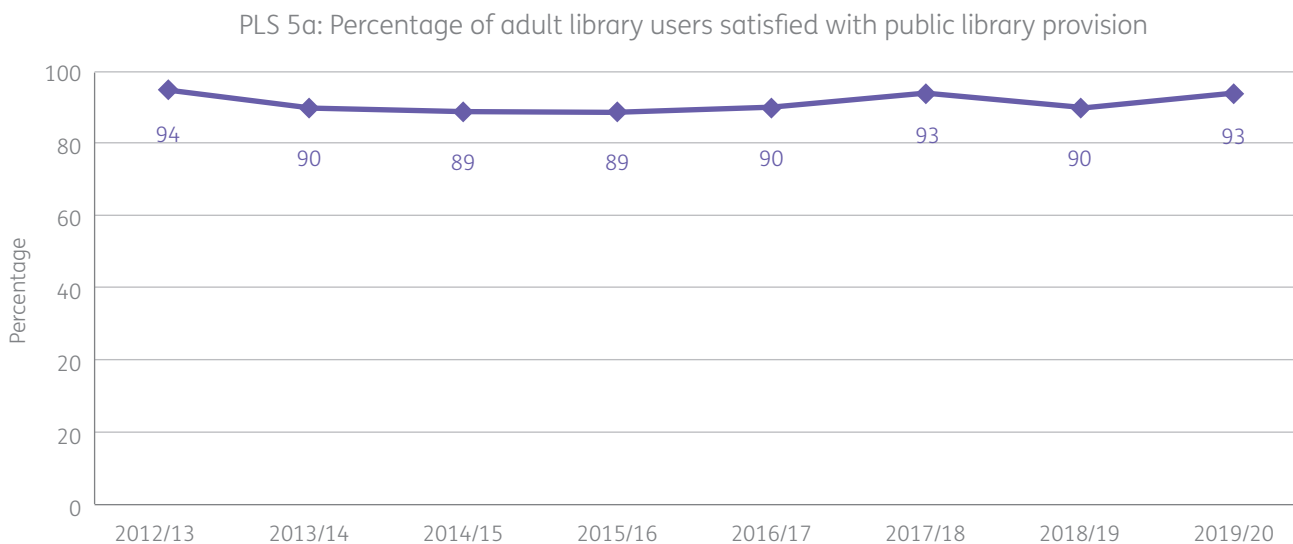
Customer Satisfaction

## Target(s):

PLS 5a: At least 90% of adult library users are satisfied/very satisfied with public library provision.

Note: Data for 2020/21 and 2021/22 is not available.

## Current Position: Green



The percentage of adult library users who were satisfied with public library provision has remained stable since 2013/14.

**Data Source:** Continuous Household Survey (Annual)

## Theme:

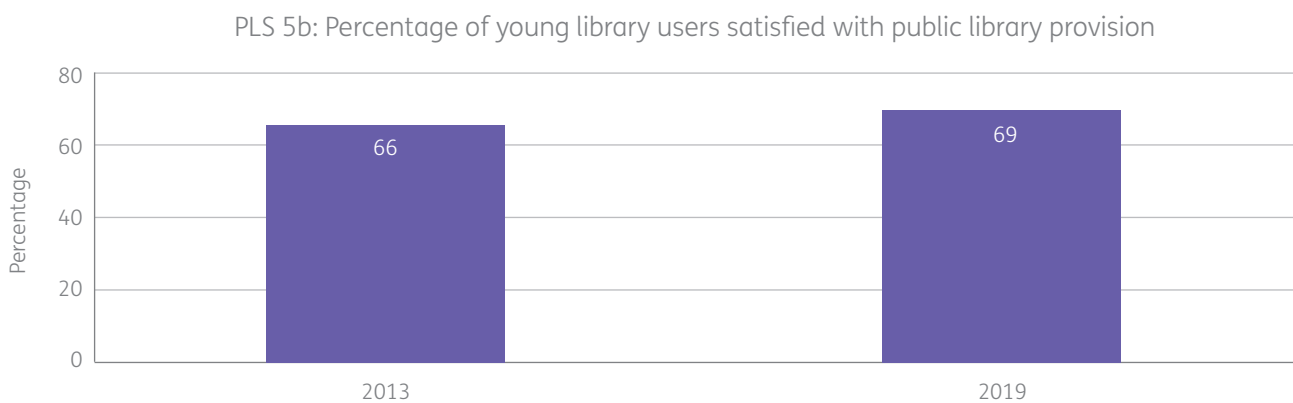
Customer Satisfaction

## Target(s):

PLS 5b: At least 60% of young library users (aged 11-16) are fairly satisfied/very satisfied with public library provision.

Note: Data for 2016 is not available.

## Current Position: Green



In 2019, 69% of young library users were satisfied with public library provision.

**Data Source:** Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitudes Survey (Triennial)

**Theme:**

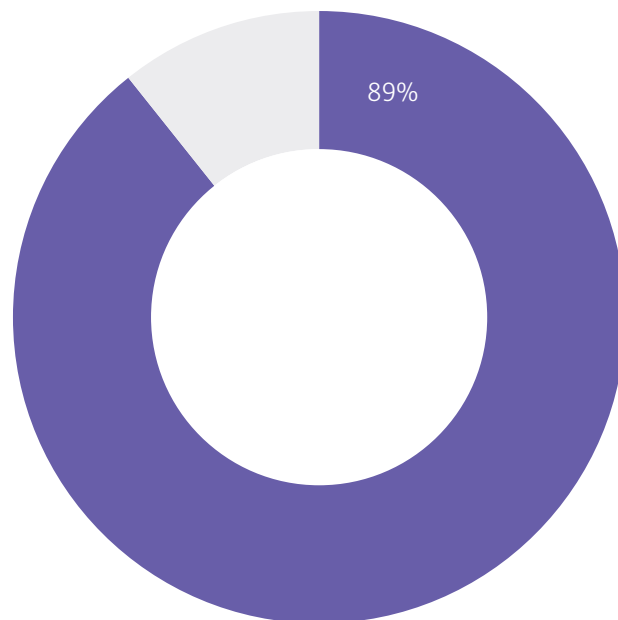
Access

**Target(s):**

PLS 6: At least 85% of households should have access to a library service point within 2 miles.

**Current Position: Green**

PLS 6: Access to a library service point within 2 miles



In 2014, 89% of households had access to a library service point within 2 miles.

**Data Source:** Mapping the Library Service in NI 2014 (Ad hoc)

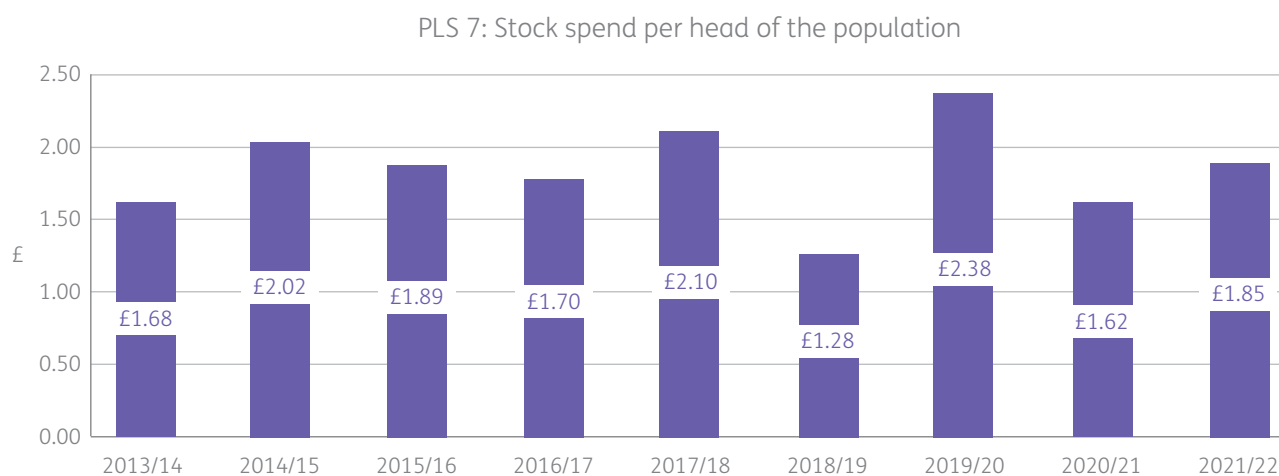
## Theme:

Stock

## Target(s):

PLS 7: To achieve a minimum stock spend of £2.25 per head of population.

## Current Position: Red



Spend per head on stock in 2021/22 is £1.85 which is below the target of £2.25.

**Data Source:** Libraries NI stock spend; NISRA mid-year population estimates (Annual)

**Theme:**

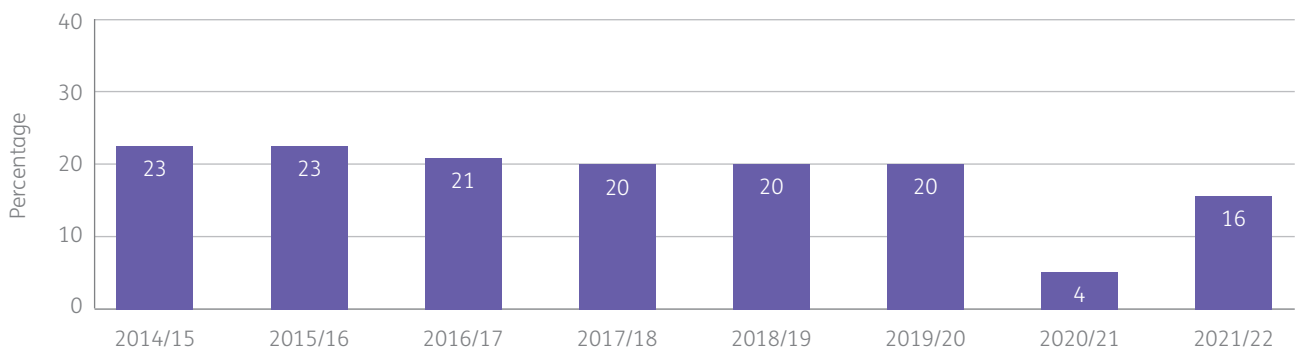
Stock

**Target(s):**

PLS 8: Establish a baseline for 2014/15 of the annual average proportion of borrowable stock on loan, followed by a 3 percentage point increase over the following 2 years

**Position as per 2019/20: Red**

PLS 8: Annual average proportion of borrowable stock on loan



The annual average proportion of borrowable stock on loan was 16% in 2021/22. Note that due to the COVID-19 pandemic there were library closures in 2020, as well as restrictions on the services that could be provided (such as browsing/borrowing and IT services) when libraries re-opened in 2021 and continued in place, resulting in an adverse impact on the ability of members to borrow stock. Therefore, figures for 2021/22 (and 2020/21) should not be compared with previous years, with 2019/20 reflecting the last reliable year of comparable data.

**Data Source:** Libraries NI Library Management System (Annual)

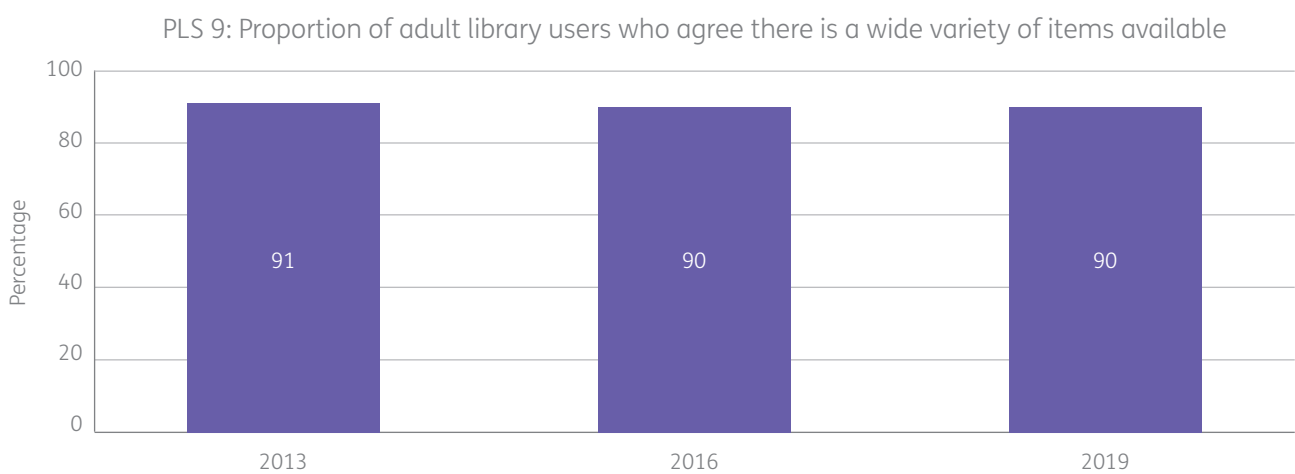
## Theme:

Stock

## Target(s):

PLS 9: At least 90% of adult library users (aged 16+) who have browsed through or borrowed stock in the last 12 months agree/strongly agree that there is a wide variety of items available.

## Current Position: Green



In 2019, 90% of adult library users who have browsed through or borrowed stock in the last 12 months agreed that there is a wide variety of items available.

**Data Source:** Libraries NI Customer Survey (Triennial)

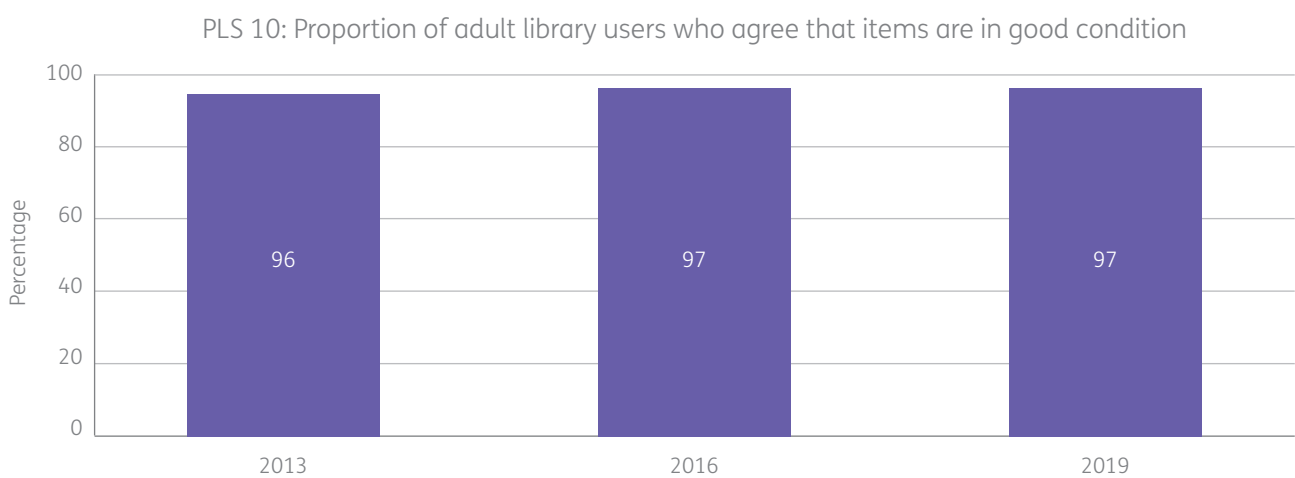
## Theme:

Stock

## Target(s):

PLS 10: At least 90% of adult library users (aged 16+) who have browsed through or borrowed stock in the last 12 months agree/strongly agree that the items are in good condition.

## Current Position: Green



In 2019, 97% of adult library users who have browsed through or borrowed stock in the last 12 months agreed that the items are in good condition.

**Data Source:** Libraries NI Customer Survey (Triennial)

**Theme:**

Access to Information & Communications Technology (ICT)

**Target(s):**

PLS 11a: All static libraries to provide access to the Internet with bandwidth that is scalable to provide effective delivery of voice, data and video content to all users using recognised industry standards.

**Current Position: Green**

During the reporting period Libraries NI provided a Multi-Protocol Switching (MPLS) service which has applied both Quality of Service and Class of Service conditions. The associated bandwidth is delivering effective high quality voice, data and video content to Libraries NI users in line with industry standards. The service is available in all static libraries in Northern Ireland and is subject to service levels as defined in Schedule 2.2 of the e2 Contract.

In 2021/22, access to the Internet was available in all static libraries.

**Data Source:** e2 contract Libraries NI/Fujitsu (Annual)



## Theme:

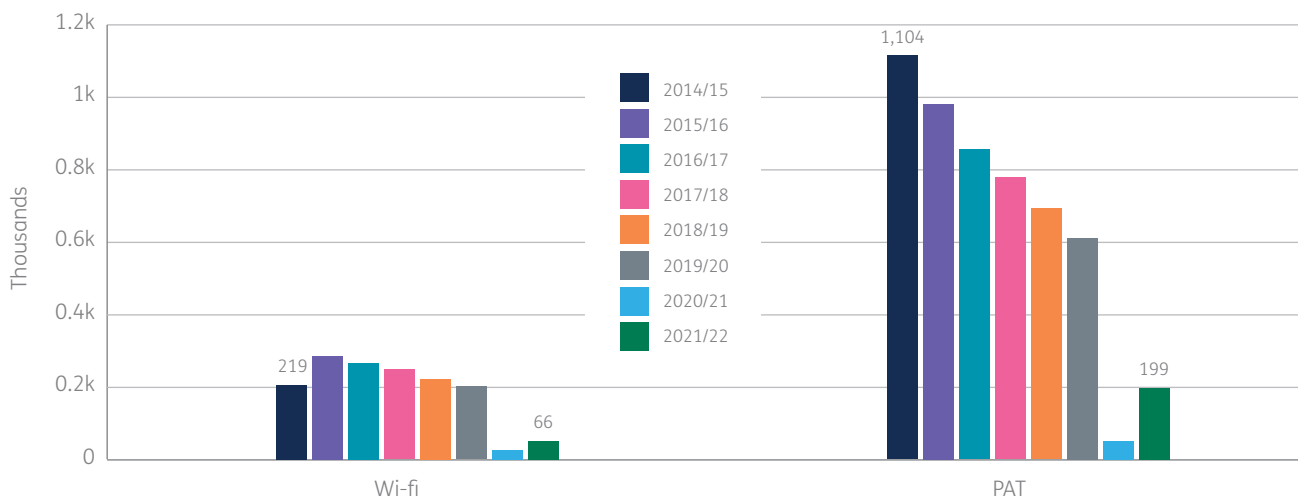
Access to Information & Communications Technology (ICT)

## Target(s):

PLS 11b: To establish a baseline in 2014/15 for the number of Wi-Fi and Public Access Terminal (PAT) sessions in 2014/15 and to increase the number of Wi-Fi and PAT sessions by 2% over 2 years.

## Position as per 2019/20: **Red**

PLS 11b: Number of Wi-Fi and Public Access Terminal (PAT) sessions



In 2021/22, the number of Wi-Fi sessions was 66,002 and the number of PAT sessions was 198,678. Note that due to the COVID-19 pandemic there were library closures in 2020, as well as restrictions on the services that could be provided (such as browsing/borrowing and IT services) when libraries re-opened in 2021 and continued in place, resulting in an adverse impact on the ability of members to use Wi-Fi and Public Access Terminals. Therefore, figures for 2021/22 (and 2020/21) should not be compared with previous years, with 2019/20 reflecting the last reliable year of comparable data.

**Data Source:** Libraries NI Library Management System (Annual)

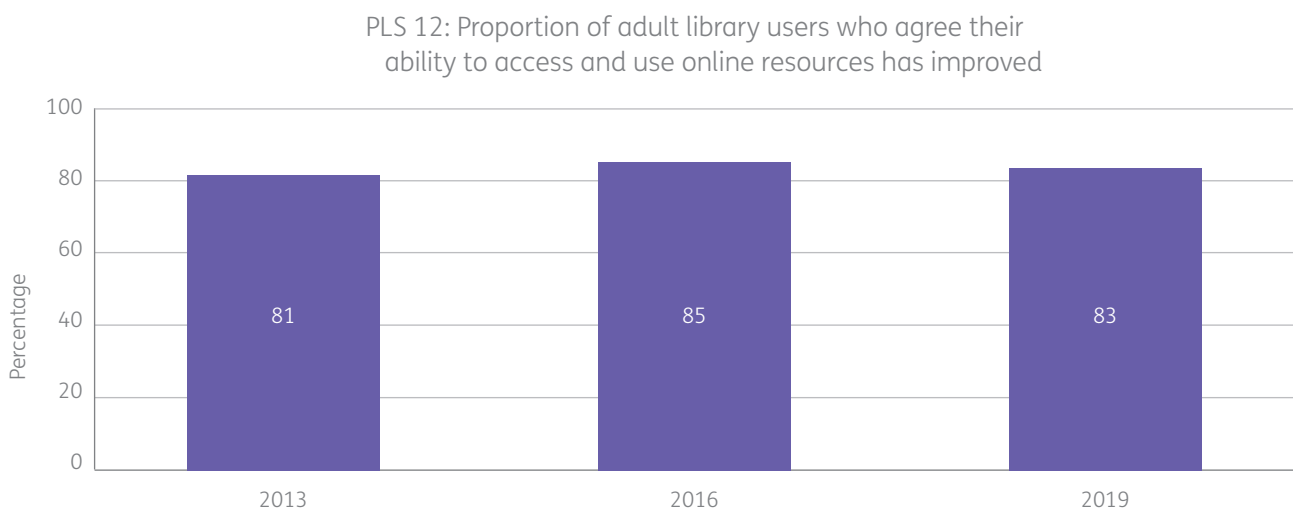
## Theme:

ICT Provision

## Target(s):

PLS 12: At least 80% of library users who have been supported by library staff to access/use library IT services or equipment in the last 12 months agree/strongly agree that their ability to access and use online resources/services has improved due to support provided by library staff.

## Current Position: Green



In 2019, 83% of library users agreed that their ability to access and use online resources/services had improved due to support provided by library staff.

**Data Source:** Libraries NI Customer Survey (Triennial)

## Technical Notes

1. Performance against the Public Library Standards (PLS) is presented using the traffic light system. There are two types of data used in the PLS: survey data including the Continuous Household Survey, the Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitudes Survey and the Libraries NI Customer Survey; and administrative data including the Libraries NI Management System and expenditure figures.

### Colour: Green

#### Description

Survey data: Performance has improved and is expected to meet the target.

Administrative data: Performance has already or is expected to meet the target.

### Colour: Amber

#### Description

Survey data: Performance has been maintained but has not reached the target.

Administrative data: Performance has improved but may not reach the target.

### Colour: Red

#### Description

Survey data: Performance has declined and is unlikely to meet the target.

Administrative data: Performance has declined and is unlikely to meet the target.

2. Statistical significance: Any statements in this report regarding an increase or decrease across years from survey data are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. This means that we can be 95% confident that the differences between years are actual differences and have not just arisen by chance. Correspondingly, there are some reports against targets which look like they could have increased or decreased, but statistical tests suggest these are not actual differences and could have arisen by chance, therefore we say they are unchanged or being maintained.
3. PLS 3 and PLS 4 are both broken down by adults, children, and young people. However, it should be noted that the definitions of the age groups differ.

Children	0-11 years	0-11 years
Young people	12-17 years	12-15 years
Adults	18 years and over	16 years and over

4. More information on the definitions of the PLS can be found in the Measurement Annex.

