

Communities are supporting libraries in different ways

There is an immense variation in practice on the ground. No two library authorities have followed exactly the same approach, so there is a broad spectrum in the nature of activities. Authorities also often use more than one model, accepting that even within an area, 'one size does not fit all'. The roles that members of the community play within each library can also vary significantly.

The different approaches to involving communities in supporting or managing libraries are summarised in the table below.

Different types of community libraries

Type of Model	1) Independent Community Library These have no public sector involvement		2) Co-Produced Library These are partnership models with both public sector and community involvement		
	1a) Asset owning Independent community library, owns its own premises, sometimes after asset transfer from local authority	1b) Non-asset owning Independent community library, with no long term lease or freehold on its premises	2a) Community Managed These are community-led and largely community delivered, rarely with paid staff, but often with some form of ongoing Council support and often still part of the public library network	2b) Community supported These are Council-led and funded, usually with paid professional staff, but given significant support by volunteers	2c) Commissioned community These are commissioned and fully funded by the Council but delivered by a not-for-private-profit community, social enterprise or mutual organisation, either existing or newly created. Councils might commission i) individual libraries; or ii) the whole library service
Provision of Council staffing and funding?	No	No	Some limited support, mainly in the provision of book stock, self-service terminals and professional advice	Yes, Council continues core funding and staffing	Yes, Council remains the funder
Part of the local library management system?	No	No	Yes, usually, but access to some functions may be limited	Yes	Yes
Community asset transfer (CAT) of the building?	Yes	No	Sometimes	Unlikely	Unlikely
Part of statutory provision?	No	No	Many are, some are not	Yes	Yes
Community influence in running libraries?	High	High	High	Medium	Medium
Extent of ongoing public funding?	None	None	Low	Medium	High