

## **LIBRARIES: VISION AND STEPS TO GET THERE**

### **Vision**

1. Public libraries are a public gateway to information for everybody, serving specific communities in the ways each community demands, publicly funded, and managed in a way that is democratically accountable.
2. Public libraries have values: they are welcoming, interesting, democratic and adaptable. They aim to civilise and to enhance freedom through the spread of information.
3. Public libraries give people access to information in many forms, not just books. They make sure that the information is managed well, and as accessible as it possibly can be.
4. Public libraries are sometimes imposing public buildings. Sometimes they are online. They take whatever physical form helps them serve their communities best and maximise people's access.
5. Public libraries are interesting, stimulating, and exciting, and increasing numbers of people want to use them.

### **Ways to get there**

Put libraries at the disposal of all the many other services that need to inform the public – insofar as public health, planning, crime prevention, economic development are about information to citizens, libraries are the public services' prime contact point.

Realistic attitude to books – look after the ones we've got, or dispose of unwanted ones with the greatest attention, but recognise that books are just one channel.

Better use of capital assets. Put service above buildings. Do not be inhibited about reconfiguring and make the argument for the service improvements it can deliver.

Recognise what traditional librarianship is for: better access to information. Today's librarianship must be about the same thing, which means abandoning the librarians' craft skills from a pre-technological age and focussing on customers' needs and preferences.