



FINGAL LIBRARIES: COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Revised: December 2025

MISSION STATEMENT

Fingal Libraries is committed to providing safe, inclusive and enriching spaces within the community. We endeavour to foster learning, literacy and creativity by offering adaptive and innovative services for all.

PURPOSE

This policy acts as a framework document to determine the selection, maintenance, retention and disposal of materials held in Fingal County Libraries' collections. It provides staff members with professional guidelines while acquainting stakeholders with our methodology. Ultimately, our Collection Development Policy enables us to provide the best possible service to our borrowers in accordance with our mission to provide for their life-long educational, recreational and informational needs.

OBJECTIVES

Fingal County Libraries recognises the changing needs of our borrowers and endeavours to meet those needs. We further recognise that technology is ever-evolving and we must stay relevant in the formats and materials we offer. Fingal Libraries prides itself on its innovative collection development and we intend to build on that innovation by continuing to provide state-of-the-art digital services in conjunction with more traditional formats.

As Fingal's population increases, our collection must reflect the increasingly diverse needs of our borrowers. Our collections will, as far as is practical, meet distinct demographic, linguistic and cultural requirements. We will also serve the different needs of varying age groups and appreciate that the needs of our youngest borrowers are as relevant as those of borrowers who have been using our services for decades. Library materials are selected on the basis of their information, educational and recreational merits and are designed to meet the needs of a broad populace. Our remit requires an emphasis on materials that will be of value to the general public.

CURRENT COLLECTIONS: AN OVERVIEW

As part of our current Library Development Plan, Fingal Libraries engaged in extensive community consultation, with the aim of developing a clearer sense of local needs. This stakeholder engagement also included policy mapping, survey development and survey results analysis. This deep level of community needs assessment allowed us to appreciate, and respond to, the demographic and cultural needs of Fingallians.

GENERAL COLLECTIONS

Fingal Libraries' general collection comprises of fiction, non-fiction and reference material specifically categorised for the varying needs of adults, teenagers and children. Our audio-visual material comprises talking books on CD & MP3, as well as DVDs. We also stock non-traditional items and objects such as Energy Kits and sensory items.

Fingal Libraries also works with specialist suppliers to provide digital material, thus allowing 24 hour-a-day access to a virtual library. Our e-service platforms continue to expand, and currently offer e-books, e-audiobooks, e-magazines, and e-newspapers. We also offer online educational courses, language learning, coding, music streaming, typing classes, video streaming and numeracy courses. These digital platforms are separate to our database access to online resources such as encyclopaedias, business data, genealogical websites and research websites.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Local Studies and Archives' special collections include the Cloghran Stud Records, Cumann na mBan correspondence and memorabilia, Thomas Ashe collection, and a selection of the Talbots of Malahide estate papers. Local Studies' reference materials are accessible by appointment. Our archival stock includes The Hely-Hutchinson Collection; The Fingall Estate Papers; the Papers of the Hamilton Estate, Barons of Abbottstown; papers relating to the Battle of Ashbourne 1916, and Bridgid Connolly; the Shackleton Mill Archives, the Minutes of the Fingal Farming Society, and a number of small collections. It may also be consulted by appointment.

Healthy Ireland collection: we work as an external partner to the HSE to offer a curated collection of titles that focuses on improving people's health and wellbeing. Its goal is to prevent chronic disease by encouraging healthy lifestyle behaviours and creating healthier environments.

Irish Language collections: Fingal Libraries is committed to the development and widespread usage of the Irish language through the provision of resources for the use of people of all ages and backgrounds.

Skills for Life collection: This is a national programme that offers free resources to help adults build everyday skills, from going online and managing money to staying healthy and living more sustainably.

Work Matters collection: As part of the Libraries Ireland initiative, we stock resources designed to support employment and business needs.

Book Club titles: Library HQ and Mobile Libraries house copies of titles curated for book clubs. The aim is facilitate fast lending of multiple copies of titles that have been deemed of interest to local book clubs.

Class sets: Malahide Library houses a collection of lendable book sets for schools. Designed for use by teachers, we provide 30-copy sets of popular books from junior infants up to young adult.

Sensory Collection: we lend sensory toys and games such as balance boards, writing aids, fidget mats, and soothing toys to children or students with learning difficulties or special needs to support the development of motor, play and life skills.

PURCHASING: CONSIDERATIONS

We are legally obliged to purchase materials from those library suppliers that have won national tenders, as overseen by the Local Government Management Agency.

The allocation of resources for stock purchasing is decided by elected representatives at local level. We are committed to maximising value for money in the allocation of resources. We are further committed to engaging in green procurement practices in the acquisition of library materials.

Chiefly, stock selection is the remit of staff members in the Acquisitions section. Purchasing responsibility is assigned according to national tender areas and formats. Staff members have access to trade websites, bibliographic sources, professional periodicals and reputable publishers websites.

While the Acquisitions section is primarily involved in book purchasing, branch staff play a key role in requesting specific stock for their libraries. Branch staff members are the conduit through which borrower suggestions for purchase are made. Borrowers' suggestions for purchase are reviewed by Acquisitions for inclusion in the collection, subject to regular selection criteria.

Given the specialised nature of their stock, purchasing for Local Studies and Archives is handled primarily by their own staff members.

Criteria for selection of materials include the following:

- Relevance to the interests and needs of the community
- Suitability of subject, style and level for intended audience
- Suitability of format to Library circulation and use
- Price, availability and Acquisitions budget
- Irish subject matter and Irish language material
- Popular demand
- Enduring classics
- Reputation and qualifications of editor, author or publisher
- Accuracy, reliability and currency of material
- Ability to fill a subject gap
- Local significance of the subject or author
- Cultural interest of the subject or author
- Relevance to the existing collection's strengths and weaknesses
- Updating and replacing older material
- Maintaining a diverse range of materials

DESELECTING STOCK

A modern, relevant and broad-ranging collection can only be maintained through continual professional appraisal. Deselection of library materials is carried out to keep collections responsive to borrower needs. Deselection is an ongoing process and is the responsibility of library staff members acting in accordance with the following criteria:

- Damage or poor physical condition
- Outdated or ephemeral material
- Past use and expected future use
- Assessment of educational, recreational and informational relevance
- Replacement by newer edition and/or availability of more up-to-date subject material
- Availability elsewhere
- Availability of shelf-space and/or storage
- Duplication of copies
- Relevance to the scope of a special collection

COLLECTION EVALUATION

Fingal Libraries continuously assesses the performance of its stock through quantitative and qualitative means. We routinely assess the statistical performance of our collection via our library management system's reporting functions. Circulation and reservation figures are key to our performance indicators. Qualitatively, we rely on feedback from branch staff and borrowers to ensure we are meeting the needs of local communities.

DONATIONS

While we accept some donations, we reserve the right to determine if the materials fit current collection development policies. Acceptance, classifications, shelving, access, location and disposal will be determined by Fingal County Libraries staff. If accepted, such items are treated in the same manner as regular stock and become the property of Fingal Libraries.

RESPONSIBILITY

As per the Libraries Ireland website, Fingal Libraries affirms that "*Parents/guardians are responsible for their children in the library, and for their children's selections and use of library materials and services, including access to the internet and online resources.*"

DIVERSITY, INCLUSION & ACCESSIBILITY

Fingal libraries is committed to our statutory obligation to offer a range of materials that represent diverse cultures and viewpoints. We also acknowledge our obligation to provide equal access to all.

Fingal Libraries operates as part of the Libraries Ireland consortium, and is committed to sharing stock. We support the ethos of making items of stock available to all registered library users nationally.

We recognise the need to lend multiple-formats in order to meet varying needs of our borrowers. We purchase regular print, large print, graphic and audiobooks in physical format, as well as newspapers, periodicals, DVDs and computer games. Where available, we also purchase dyslexia-friendly and braille books. We aim to offer digital versions of books, audiobooks, periodicals and newspapers through our extensive eservices platforms.

We adapt to diverse needs of our borrowers by providing specific computer software, hearing induction loops and other assistive and adaptive technologies for library users who have special needs. We offer a dedicated Fingal Library app that allows users to manage their library account, search the catalog, renew and reserve items, and use self-checkout services within the library. It provides mobile access to library services for patrons on Android and iOS devices.

We hold materials in the Irish and English languages. However, we also endeavour to develop our stock holdings in those other languages that most reflect our local demographic needs.

For literacy and educational needs, we offer a wide range of physical and digital items that support learning at a variety of reading and numeracy levels.

In order to serve all our communities through Fingal, we offer both a Mobile and a Housebound service. Our Mobile service consists of four wheelchair-accessible vans stocked with a broad range of items. This service allows access to borrowers not currently served by a local library. Our Housebound service provides a home library service where they deliver to, and collect books and audiobooks to library members who are not able to visit a library branch.

In a commitment to providing greater access to branches, we continue to expand access through My Open Library. MOL is an initiative to allow library members access to library services including borrowing and returning library stock, internet and wi-fi, printing and photocopying and study and reading spaces on a self-service basis during extended opening times.

COPYRIGHT

Fingal Libraries conforms with all provisions of copyright legislation, as contained in S.I. No. 427/2000 – Copyright and Related Rights (Librarians and Archivists) (Copying of Protected Material) Regulations, 2000.

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

Fingal Libraries supports The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions' (IFLA) statement on intellectual freedom:

- Libraries provide access to information, ideas and works of imagination. They serve as gateways to knowledge, thought and culture
- Libraries provide essential support for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and cultural development for both individuals and groups
- Libraries contribute to the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom and help to safeguard basic democratic values and universal civil rights
- Libraries have a responsibility both to guarantee and to facilitate access to expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity. To this end, libraries shall acquire, preserve and make available the widest variety of materials, reflecting the plurality and diversity of society
- Libraries shall ensure that the selection and availability of library materials and services is governed by professional considerations and not by political, moral and religious views.
- Libraries shall acquire, organize and disseminate information freely and oppose any form of censorship.
- Libraries shall make materials, facilities and services equally accessible to all users. There shall be no discrimination due to race, creed, gender, age or for any other reason.
- Library users shall have the right to personal privacy and anonymity. Librarians and other library staff shall not disclose the identity of users or the materials they use to a third party.
- Libraries funded from public sources and to which the public have access shall uphold the principles of intellectual freedom.
- Librarians and other employees in such libraries have a duty to uphold those principles.
- Librarians and other professional libraries staff shall fulfil their responsibilities both to their employer and to their users. In cases of conflict between those responsibilities, the duty towards the user shall take precedence.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it is responsive to the changing needs of Fingal County Libraries' staff members and stakeholders.

APPENDIX A: STATUTORY & POLICY DOCUMENTS

Public Libraries Act, 1947: <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1947/act/40/enacted/en/print> LGMA:

S.I. No. 427/2000 - Copyright and Related Rights (Librarians and Archivists) (Copying of Protected Material) Regulations, 2000: <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2000/si/427/made/en/print>

OUR PUBLIC LIBRARIES 2022: <https://www.librariesireland.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/2018-12/LGMA-Our-Public-Libraries-2022-ENG.pdf>

Fingal Library Service Development Plan 2024 – 2029: <https://www.fingal.ie/sites/default/files/2024-03/b23628-flsd-plan-2024-2029-v3-2.pdf>

2017.pdf IFLA Guidelines: Guidelines for a Collection Development Policy using the Conspectus Model: <http://www.ifla.org/files/assets/acquisition-collection-development/publications/gcdp-en.pdf> Gifts for the Collections: Guidelines for Libraries: <http://www.ifla.org/files/assets/hq/publications/professional-report/112.pdf>