

# Collection Development Policy

## Introduction

Clare County Library is neither a building nor an institution but a resource to be used by people for information, learning, culture and the imagination thereby improving the intellectual and cultural quality of life of the community (Clare County Library mission statement).

It is a goal of the library to provide a high quality collection of books and other materials in a variety of formats and languages for all ages that is responsive to the needs and interests of the community and reflective of the diversity of the community.

## Purpose of this Collection Development Policy

This policy has been revised as an action to fulfill two of the strategic objectives of the Clare County Library Development Plan 2016-2021 - *to foster and promote a reading and learning culture and to support cultural and community expression* - specifically by devising a formal, stock collection policy which will reflect changing needs of readers but continue to supply a high quality mix of classic and authoritative works.

The purpose of the collection development policy is to ensure that Clare County Library meets the wide ranging information, educational, recreational and cultural needs of the citizens of County Clare by the effective selection, acquisition, management and promotion of its collections.

## Definition

A Collection Development Policy is concerned with the objectives, guidelines, methods and procedures relating to the selection, acquisition, maintenance, exploitation and disposal of library stock.

Patrick Jones describes collection development as “not just about buying new books; it is about mixing new releases with standard titles. It is about weeding and maintaining, not just ordering everything on a best of list. It requires a balancing act between quality and popularity, single copies and multiples, old and new.”<sup>1</sup>

## Objectives

The objective of this collection development policy is to create a set of guidelines and parameters which will assist Clare County Library to maintain a relevant and evolving collection by

- promoting a unified approach to the selection of library stock, minimising personal biases

- encouraging consistency and continuity in regard to selection and deselection of materials
- ensuring effective and efficient use of resources
- facilitating responsiveness to customer demands and needs
- fostering the promotion and exploitation of library material
- informing staff
- informing the public

The policy must ensure that the community has access to a variety of materials in a variety of formats and ensure that materials are available as efficiently and speedily as possible.

### **Principles of collection development**

Within budgetary and space limitations, the collection will serve to enhance the cultural, literary, aesthetic and educational pursuits of library users and the needs of the community as a whole.

Because user groups in the public library range across the entire social, cultural and economic spectrum, the selection of materials must reflect and cater for this diversity. The population of County Clare is made up of persons from various ethnic groups, of all ages, with various educational backgrounds and levels of skills and knowledge and with a variety of information needs. Careful selection of material by professionally qualified staff using judgement, knowledge and experience along with the input of our users will ensure that the wide-ranging educational, recreational and information needs of current and potential library users are met.

To ensure value for money and the best use of scarce financial resource, the duplication of materials that are widely available elsewhere will be avoided as far as possible.

Budgetary and space limitations preclude excessive duplication of resources within the service - these items can be obtained through reservations or rotation between branches or requested from other counties through the new Library Management System.

The library will however make every effort to select the best materials available to meet the needs and expectations of current and potential library users.

In the selection of materials, emphasis will be on good quality fiction and non-fiction with a wide appeal while being aware of our responsibility to cover minority interests as well as the most popular subject fields. Preference will be given to general books covering a whole subject rather than books on a particular aspect of a subject, or how-to-books and books of a practical nature rather than more academic texts.

Multiple copies of popular fiction and non-fiction will be purchased to satisfy initial borrower demand but attention must also be paid to less popular materials for which there will be ongoing demand. Materials of local interest or relevance will be acquired for our Local Studies reference collection.

The art critic and social commentator John Ruskin said that all books are divisible into two classes, the books of the hour and the books of all time. To achieve a balance

between these two classes of books, we will avoid overemphasis on popular works or allowing a small vocal minority unduly influence selection policy.

### **Division of Bookfund**

The stock of Clare County Library is viewed as a county-wide resource rather than the stock of a particular branch. The large bulk of the bookfund will be spent centrally with each region being allocated a small budget to respond to local needs. Centralised buying will provide a collection with a much richer diversity and less duplication and allow more scope for experimentation. It also allows for better use of scarce financial resources.

Clare County Library aims to spend approximately 40% of the total bookfund on children's materials.

An allocation will be made to the Local Studies Centre to develop its collection.

An annual allocation will also be made for stock revision/back-stocking.

### **Complaints and censorship**

To support an informed public, the collection shall represent diverse points of view, and may include materials that some members of the public consider to be controversial in nature. The library recognizes that any given item may offend some library users. The choice of reading materials is an individual matter. While a person can decide to reject materials for themselves, he or she may not restrict access to those materials by others.

Patrons may request that the inclusion of specific material in the collection be reconsidered by filling out a review of library material form (Appendix 1). These forms are available at all library branches. The library management team will review such requests for reconsideration of material.

Once an item has been accepted as qualifying under the Collection Development Policy, it will not be removed at the request of those who disagree with its inclusion, unless it can be shown that retention of the item would be in violation of that policy.

Selection of materials for the collection shall not be inhibited by the possibility that some unsuitable material may inadvertently come into the possession of children. Responsibility for the reading, listening and viewing of library materials by children rests with their parents or guardians. The library needs to protect the right of all parents to determine their own children's reading.

## **Core Collections**

Five larger regional branches (Ennis, Ennistymon, Scariff, Shannon and Kilrush) will support the smaller full-time branches (Kilkee, Killaloe, Miltown Malbay and Sixmilebridge) and the part-time branches (Corofin, Kilmihil, Kildysart, Lisdoonvarna, Newmarket on Fergus and Tulla) within their region. Concentrated collections in each regional library will support and provide back-up to the stocks of the smaller branches. The Local Studies Centre in Ennis will maintain a collection of material of particular relevance to Co Clare.

The core collection will consist of:

### **Book Material – Fiction and Non-Fiction**

#### *Fiction*

- **Adult Fiction**

All branches will contain a general fiction collection which will include popular and classic works and cover all genres of fiction.

- **Young Adult Collection**

A specific Young Adult book collection is available at all branches. Care is taken to include classic literature for this specific age group who are making the transition from the children's to the adult collection as well as including popular fiction and graphic novels.

- **Children's Fiction**

Children's fiction books are divided for ease of access to patrons in the following way:

- **Picture Books (for infants to school-going age)**

Pre-schoolers from infants to school-going age are provided with large format picture books in both hard and soft back, and a selection of board books. This collection excludes books with stickers, jigsaws and/or toys of any kind attached. Particular attention will be given to picture books to support the LGMA Spring into Storytime initiative.

- **Junior Fiction (loosely aimed at a children's readership of ages 6-9)**

- **Senior Fiction (loosely aimed at a children's readership of ages 9-12)**

Care is taken to stock a mixture of classic children's literature in both Junior and Senior Fiction categories alongside books by popular authors.

- **Large Print**

All branches will stock a large print collection, which will be frequently rotated among branches to ensure a wide choice of titles. Likewise Mills & Boon and Westerns will be rotated.

- Literacy Fiction

The 5 larger libraries will contain literacy books for adults. A separate literacy fiction collection for children will be available in all branches containing graded readers for all ages and will be refreshed and supplemented by new reading schemes as they become available.

- Foreign Fiction

The larger libraries will contain foreign fiction materials for both adults and children. This collection will be monitored and books in foreign languages will be purchased and exchanged among branches to satisfy demand within budgetary constraints. Due to these budgetary constraints it will not be possible to provide comprehensive collections in these languages.

- Irish Language material

Both fiction and non-fiction materials in the Irish language are provided for adults and children. Audio book and CD sets ‘as Gaeilge’ are provided as are materials for those wishing to learn or improve their Irish speaking skills.

### ***Non-Fiction***

The Dewey Decimal System is used to classify non-fiction materials.

- General Non-Fiction

All branches will hold a collection of non-fiction books to satisfy the information needs of both adults and children. Particular attention will be given to titles that tie into national initiatives such as Healthy Ireland and Work Matters.

- Reference

While there is an increasing trend towards the provision of reference type materials through online sources, each branch shall have a relevant and up-to-date basic reference print collection.

- Local Studies materials

The Local Studies Centre in its three main collections of material (the Clare Collection, the Irish Collection and the Periodicals Collection) aims to preserve and make available the written and published history of County Clare. A reference library for the county, it collects material on the history, geography and placenames, the antiquities and archaeology, the architecture and built environment, the habitats and natural history of the county (including the Burren), local parish histories, local sports histories, Clare biographies, Clare family histories, genealogy and family trees. There are over 20,000 books, periodicals and other materials (maps, newspapers, microfilm resources such as

parish registers) in the collection, including many standard works of Irish reference and bibliography.

### Non-Book Material

Particular attention will be paid to the provision of non-book materials in the collections of Clare County Library in response to demand and in recognition of the fact that these materials are more accessible for people with literacy, linguistic or intellectual difficulties.

- **Film Collection**

Film collections on DVD are provided in the 6 main branches. This collection focuses on classic films including foreign film and films set in Ireland or by Irish directors but also includes well reviewed and award winning modern films. All films in the collection have been age-rated according to the Irish Film Classification Office ratings. A collection of quality films for children is also available.

- **Music Collection**

There are music collections in Ennis, Ennistymon, Scariff and Shannon libraries covering classical, traditional, rock, pop and dance, blues and jazz, world and county genres. Classic recordings for each genre are featured in addition to current releases. The music collection at the Hillery Public Library, Miltown Malbay focuses on traditional Irish music with particular emphasis on the music of County Clare.

- **Audio Books**

A collection of talking books for people with sight difficulties is held at Kilrush library from where items are available through the Freepost service. A collection of audio books is also available in DeValera and Shannon Libraries from where they can be requested for delivery to any library branch. A small collection of audio books for children is also available. Books are available in CD and MP3 formats.

- **Online resources**

A range of free online resources is available to library members. They include e-books, e-audiobooks, e-magazines, e-reference, e-newspapers and e-online courses including language learning. Staff from Clare County Library are members of the Online Resources Stock Selection Committee which selects resources for this national collection.

- **Games and Toys, Lego**

A selection of educational toys, intended for use by pre-schoolers and young children, is available in our larger library branches. The collection provides this age group with an opportunity to learn through play. It consists of items such as puppets, puzzles and blocks and these resources are often used at the regular storytime sessions taking place in branches throughout the county. These items are for use in the library only and are not available for borrowing.

- Toy and sensory resource collection

The Clare County Library Toy & Sensory Resource provides a service for children with complex needs and their families. Over 70 assistive toys were purchased following advice of local speech and language therapists, special educational needs organisers and occupational therapists. This collection is only available to those referred by a medical or educational professional.

- Bookclub collection, class novel sets, storytime sets

The bookclub collection was set up to make multiple copies of books easily available for bookclubs. 10 copies of each book are available for loan to members of bookclubs who are registered with the library.

The class novel collection contains 30 copies of almost 100 different titles that can be borrowed by teachers for use in their classrooms.

- Microfilm collections

This collection in Local Studies consists of a wide selection of local newspapers and parish registers. Many items in the collection are being digitised but these resources continue to be consulted by those doing local history or genealogical research.

- **Newspapers and periodicals**

All library branches receive a local newspaper weekly. The bigger branches receive daily newspapers and magazines. The Local Studies Centre receives journals of local and national historical importance. The physical magazine and newspaper collections are supplemented by the online collections that allow 24/7 access to a wide range of titles.

### **Stock selection and acquisition**

Selection of material will mainly be undertaken at library HQ using journals, publisher's catalogues, reviewing sources, etc and orders will generally be placed through the acquisitions module of the library management system. A small allocation of funds is made to each branch annually to supplement what is received through general distribution. On occasion for backstocking and such purposes, materials will be selected through stock buys at a supplier's premises.

Locally published books and periodicals relating to Co Clare (which may not appear on such sources) will be acquired for our Local Studies collection and local branch libraries, eg historical and parish magazines. Most of these materials will be purchased directly from the authors or publishers locally.

All branch libraries will keep a record of recommendation from patrons and gaps in stock. These recommendations will be taken into account when purchasing new materials.

Acquisitions are evenly paced throughout the year to ensure a continuous supply of new material.

Particular consideration will be given to materials about Clare or by authors from or living in the county and to materials of Irish interest.

A selection of materials in a variety of formats will be supplied to develop life-long reading habits among children and young adults. It is not the purpose of the collection to take the place of school or college libraries or to supply curriculum material. The library will work cooperatively with schools at primary and post-primary level to supplement and enhance their collections.

The library recognises that certain materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some library users. Selection will not be made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of a particular title in relation to the overall collection and its value in serving the diverse interests of the community of County Clare.

### **General Criteria used when selecting stock**

- Present and potential relevance to the community needs - demand
- Reputation and authority of author or publisher
- Importance as a document of the times - sustained interest
- Relation to the existing collection and other materials on the subject. An effort will be made to include works on all sides of controversial issues.
- Attention given by critics, reviewers and the public.
- Suitability of physical form for library use
- Value for money
- Content – accurate, current and unbiased information
- Level – introductory or advanced
- Storage space availability
- Local interest
- Literary merit
- Comprehensiveness
- Objectivity
- Representation of diverse points of view

Additional criteria to be taken into consideration when selecting children's materials are

- Accessible language
- Relevant format
- Engaging and stimulating
- Illustrations appropriate to text
- Appropriate for age group
- Sensitive treatment of controversial topics

Clare County Library will generally not purchase materials such as text books, specialist technical books, books with stickers or any additional items, diaries, workbooks, gift books or books with loose leaf or ring binding unless nothing else is available on the subject.

## **Suppliers**

Materials are sourced from the suppliers who have been successful in the national tendering process administered by the Local Government Management Agency.

As much servicing as possible will be done by suppliers to save on staff time.

## **Backstocking and weeding**

Continual evaluation of library holdings is an essential part of collection development. Clare County Library shall ensure that the stock is kept up to date and in a good and attractive condition by constant replacement and refurbishment in order to meet the requirements of existing users and to attract new users. An annual programme of weeding and backstocking will be undertaken to avoid unnecessary duplication and overcrowding, ensure attractive presentation and good physical condition. Criteria used to evaluate collections will be currency, quality, subject coverage, issues, physical condition, strengths and weaknesses of collection.

There shall be an annual allocation from the bookfund for stock revision/back-stocking to keep fresh, attractive stock on the shelves in all branches through the withdrawal of out-of-date, old, damaged, and unattractive lending materials. Last copies of titles of intrinsic value, Irish interest, classics and series of books or where the books may be used in branches in the future will be kept in the backup store. The backup stock should be checked for replacement copies of older stock before a new copy is purchased.

Materials will be withdrawn from the collection to maintain the collections' usefulness, currency and relevance. Stock for wearing out should be selected by an experienced member of staff to avoid disposal of potentially valuable stock. Criteria for disposal includes lack of use, later editions, duplication, poor physical condition and inaccurate and out-dated information.

Replacements should be requested for items withdrawn due to poor condition if the item is still in demand. Withdrawn stock shall be disposed of through donation or sale. Material unsuitable for retention, sale or donation will be recycled.

The library catalogue provides access to the library collection on a 24/7 basis. Regular stock checks shall be undertaken to maintain the accuracy of the online catalogue.

Categories of stock will be rotated between branches to refresh what users see and can borrow from each service point.

## **Donations Policy**

Donations of suitable materials to Clare County Library are welcome. However, we have to be selective in what we accept due to the work involved in processing stock, the cost of storage and the cost of disposal of irrelevant stock.

Donations of material are welcome subject to the following criteria:

### Currency

Only fiction books published within the previous 2 years will be accepted.

Only non-fiction books published within the last 5 years where no newer editions are available will be accepted.

### Condition

Items for donation should be in pristine condition and DVDs and CDs must be in original packaging.

### Suitability

We consider some books to be unsuitable for a public library and will not accept donations of such material including the following:

Textbooks

Journals or magazines

Books intended for a single user e.g. workbooks, diaries

Books with spiral binding

Gift books with little intrinsic information

Books of high academic or specialist interest

Books with additional objects e.g. stickers, cards

Materials with conditions attached will generally not be accepted. We reserve the right to place items donated in any branch library of our choice. We also reserve the right to dispose of any unwanted donated items as and when we see fit.

### Exceptions

Exceptions to the above criteria may apply if the items are of Clare or Irish interest. Condition and currency may not be relevant if the items offered are ones which are not already in stock.

While the donation of research carried out by individuals on their own family tree or biographies of family members is welcomed, the decision to include such material as a resource in either hard copy or electronic format lies with the Local Studies Librarian.

## **Requests service**

Books not available through Sierra can be requested through the British Library at a charge.

## **Promotion of library materials**

Clare County Library shall encourage the use of the library and maximize the use of stock resources by promoting existing collections.

This is achieved through:

- Reliable core collections for adults and children
- Good signage
- Attractive book displays
- Regular themed displays to make the public aware of our stock
- Bright, clean and well-presented stock
- Attractively fitted buildings
- Shelf guides
- Book related events such as author visits, Children's Book festival
- Support to bookclubs through bookclub collections, etc
- Summer reading scheme and concentration on regular storytimes for children
- Formal book promotions – production of leaflets and recommended reading lists and displays
- Use of the library website – facebook, twitter, blog, book recommendations etc
- Library Tours

## **Revision of Policy**

The Collection Development Policy will be periodically evaluated and revised as necessary to provide guidance for implementing future changes in the collection, to embrace new formats and to ensure that the collection remains responsive to customer needs.

Notes

1. Patrick Jones, "To the Teen Core", School Library Journal 49, No. 3 (March 2003): 48

**Appendix 1**

**Clare County Library**

**REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF LIBRARY MATERIALS**

Material on which you are commenting:

Author:

Title:

To what in this material do you object?

What brought this material to your attention?

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Date:

Signature: