

COUNTRY FACTSHEET

# Shining a Light

## Welsh data about attitudes to and use of public libraries 2011–2016

Five years ago the Carnegie UK Trust conducted research into the use of public libraries and public attitudes towards libraries in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and Ireland. This was the first time data was generated that enabled direct comparison across these jurisdictions.

In 2016 we ran the survey again to examine whether attitudes towards libraries and levels of use have changed since 2011. We added some new questions to reflect some of the current debate around volunteers and changes in services. Research was carried out by Ipsos MORI for the Carnegie UK Trust. The research consisted of an omnibus poll carried out in all five jurisdictions covered by the Trust in its work.

This factsheet contains the data which relates to Wales. In Wales **1,011 adults** over the age of 16 were included in the poll. Where relevant, comparison is made with the 2011 statistics. The findings from the omnibus poll provide comparable data from all five jurisdictions.



### DATA FROM OTHER JURISDICTIONS

The factsheets covering the other four jurisdictions and a booklet comparing the various jurisdictions can be downloaded at <http://bit.ly/shining-a-light>. If you would like to access the datasets in SPSS format please contact [info@carnegieuk.org](mailto:info@carnegieuk.org)



## THE PICTURE IN 2016

The data shows that around 3/4 (76%) of people in Wales say that public libraries are important for their communities and just under half of people (46%) used a library in the previous year. Around two-thirds of people (37%) say libraries are important for themselves personally. These findings are comparable with those from other jurisdictions.

In Wales, women and people with children in their household are more likely to use libraries than men and those without children in their household. Whilst women are also more likely to use libraries frequently, the presence of children in the household has little impact on the frequency of library use.

Over 55s are less likely to use libraries than other age groups, part time employees are more likely to use libraries than full time employees or retirees. Those not working are also more likely to use libraries frequently than retirees. Frequency of use only varies a little by working status. There are also some key variations in use by socio-economic group: ABC1 is more likely to use the library than C2DE; AB is more likely to use the library than C1, C2 or DE; C1 is more likely to use the library than C2 or DE; and C2 is more likely to use the library than DE. Again, ABC1 is more likely to use the library frequently than C2DE and C1 is more likely to use the library frequently than C2.

### TERMINOLOGY

**Use** – used or contacted the library in the 12 months prior to the omnibus poll

**Frequent use** – used or contacted the library at least once every month in the 12 months prior to the omnibus poll

**Library user** – refers to those who used the library in the 12 months prior to the omnibus poll

**Non-user** – refers to those who have not used the library in the 12 months prior to the omnibus poll

**Frequent user** – library users that used or contacted the library at least once every month in the 12 months prior to the omnibus poll

**Prolific reader** – refers to those who read at least one book every eight weeks

**Important** – refers to the categories of ‘essential’ and ‘very important’ alone. ‘Fairly important’ has been excluded from this definition to sharpen analysis.

## COMPARING 2011 AND 2016

Wales sees an increase of one percentage point in library use 2011 to 2016 (45%-46%). It also sees a significant decline in frequent use (57%-41%) which is the biggest drop in frequent use of all the jurisdictions. Changes in library use 2011-2016 by gender, age, working status or by households with/without children are relatively small. However, there are sharp declines in frequent use among men (-16 percentage points), women (-17 percentage points), 15-24 year olds (-31 percentage points), 34-54 year olds (-15 percentage points), over 55s (-16 percentage points), full time employees (-11 percentage points), part time employees (-15 percentage points) and retirees (-24 percentage points), and households with and without children (-20 and -14 percentage points respectively). There are also declines in library use among socio-economic group C2 (-10 percentage points) and declines in frequent library use among ABC1 and C2DE (-14 and -18 percentage points respectively).

Overall there is an increase in support for improvements and changes to encourage library use in Wales, and people broadly support volunteers to augment existing staff but are opposed to volunteers replacing staff.

### Notes

There is one difference in how data was collated in 2016 compared with 2011. In 2016 the definition of ‘prolific readership’ was changed to ‘one or more books every eight weeks’ from ‘one or more books in six weeks’ to better align answers to interview questions.

### PREDICTORS

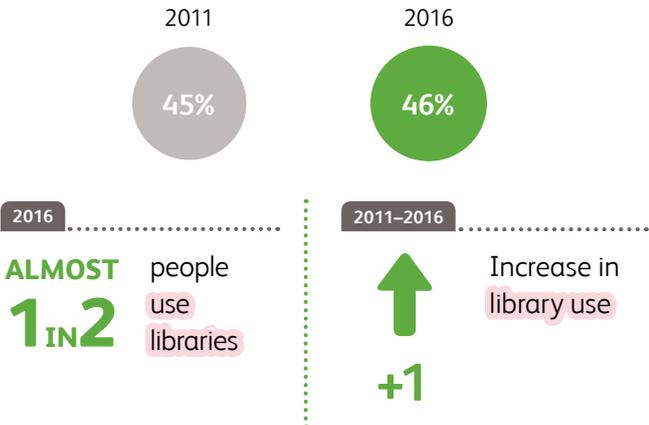
**Logistic regression identifies the following factors as predictors for the likelihood of respondents in Wales having used a library in the previous 12 months:**

- Being a woman
- Being younger (aged 15-24)
- Being in socio-economic group ABC1
- Being a ‘prolific’ reader

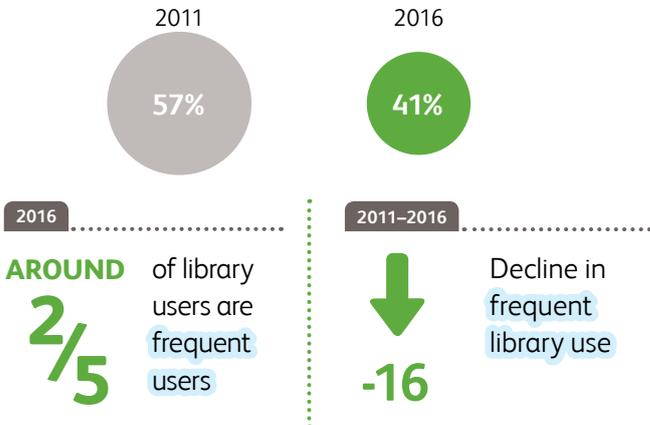


# THE OVERALL PICTURE IN WALES

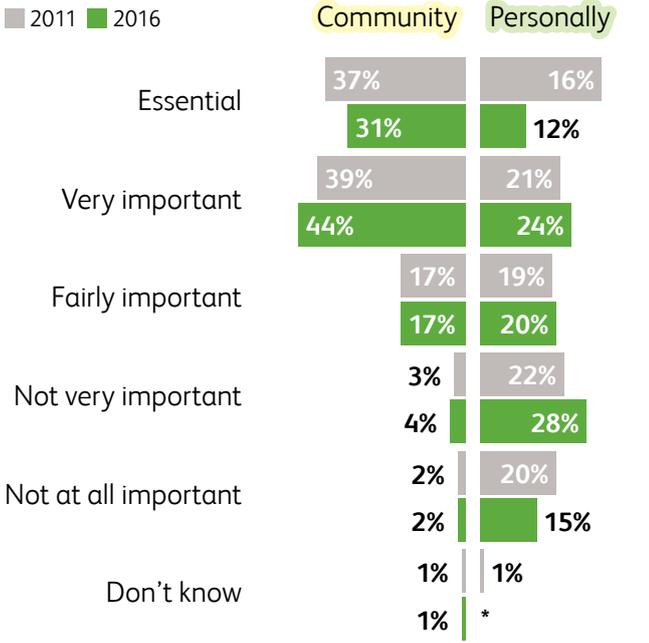
## Library use



## Frequency of library use

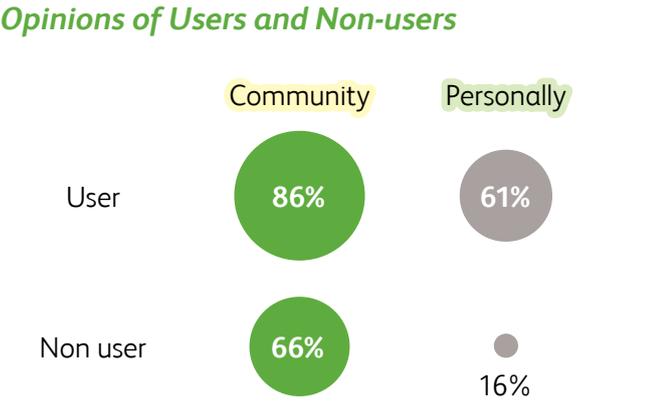


## Importance of libraries to the community and personally



Library users more likely to say libraries important for community and for themselves personally

## Opinions of Users and Non-users



### 2016 SUMMARY

The overall picture in Wales

Use	46%
Frequency of use	41%
Importance to community	76%
Importance personally	37%

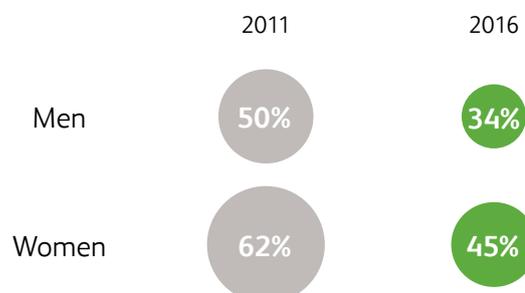


## FOCUSING IN ON GENDER IN WALES

### Library use by gender



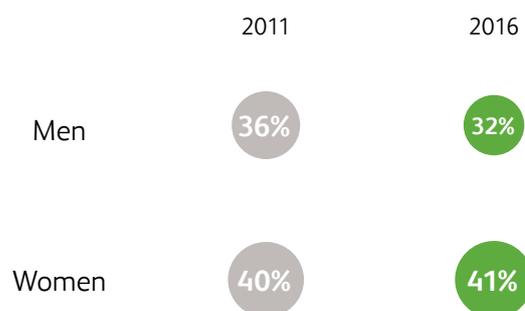
### Frequency of library use by gender



### Importance of libraries to community



### Importance of libraries to me personally



### PREDICTORS

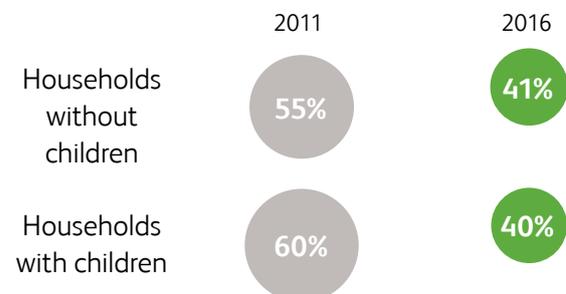
*Logistic regression analysis, which controls for other factors, shows that being a woman is a predictor for the likelihood of people in Wales having used a library in the past 12 months.*

## FOCUSING IN ON HOUSEHOLDS WITH AND WITHOUT CHILDREN IN WALES

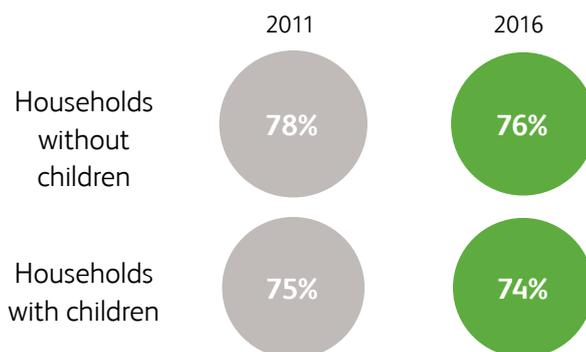
### Library use by households with children



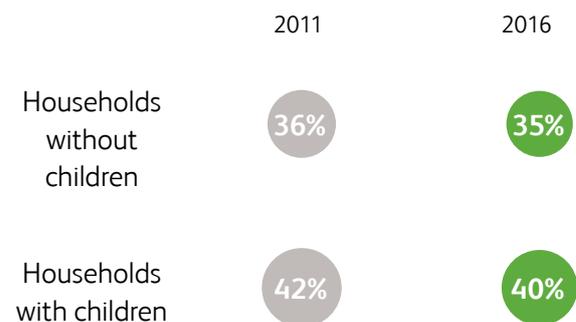
### Frequency of library use by households with children



### Importance of libraries to community



### Importance of libraries to me personally



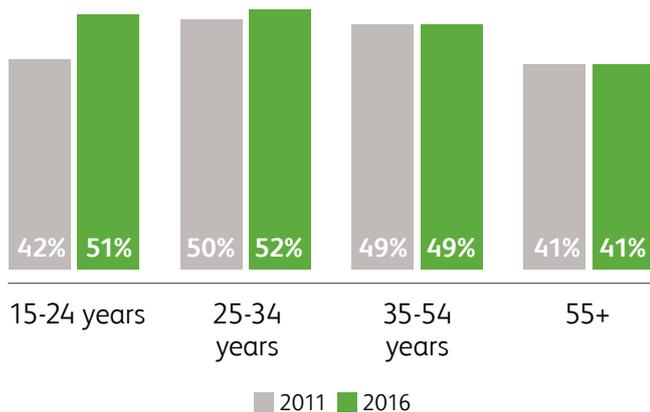
### PREDICTORS

Logistic regression analysis, which controls for other factors, shows that having children in the household is a predictor for the likelihood of people in Wales having used a library in the past 12 months.

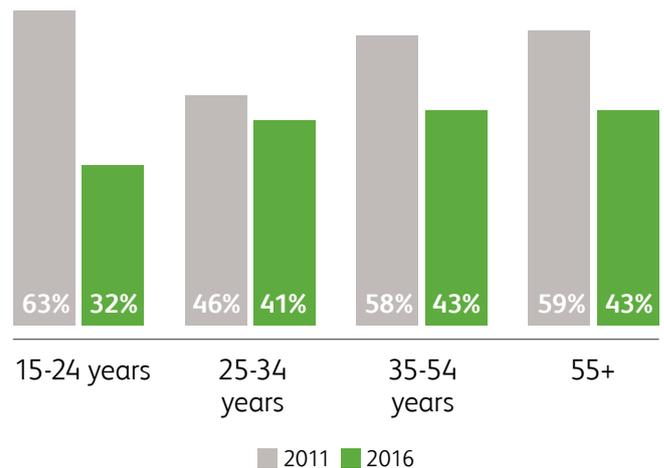


## FOCUSING IN ON AGE IN WALES

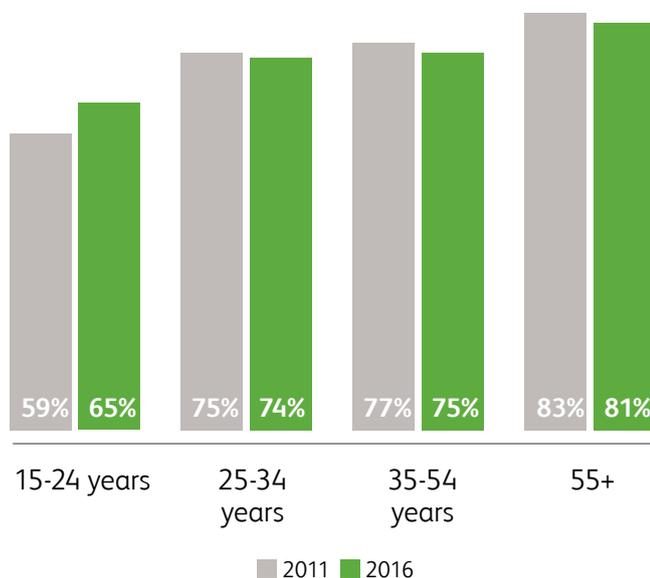
### Library use by age



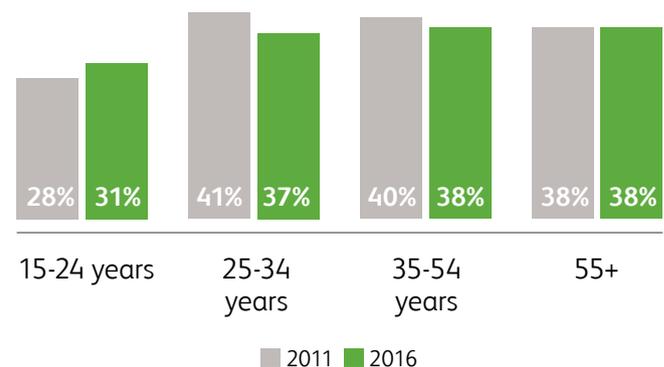
### Frequency of library use by age



### Importance of libraries to community



### Importance of libraries to me personally

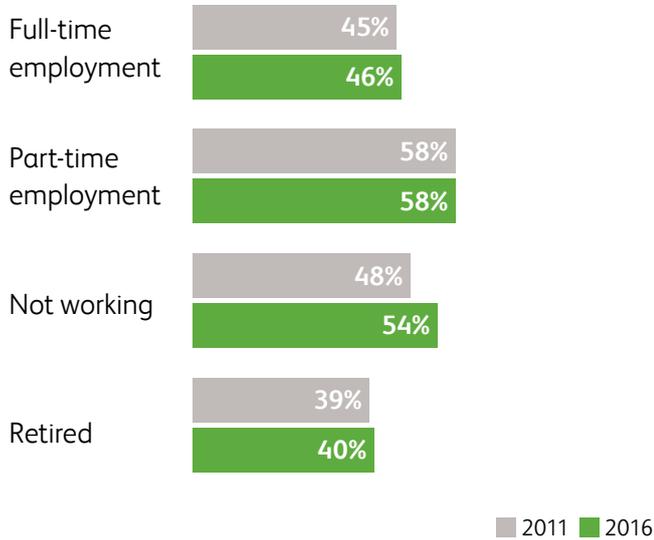


## PREDICTORS

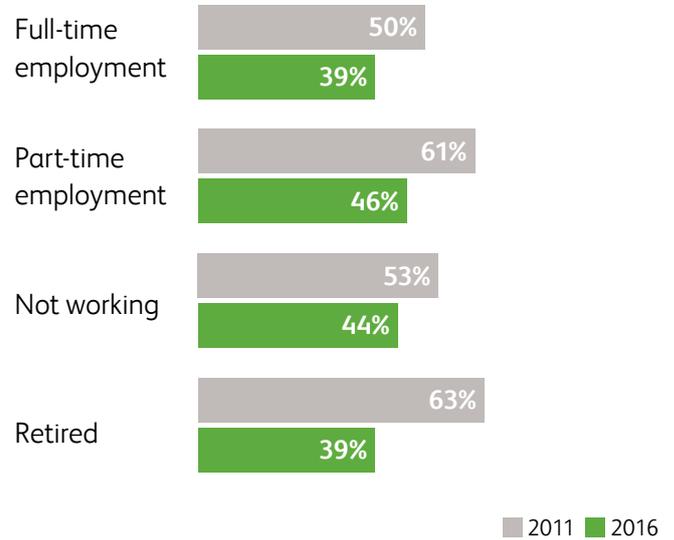
Logistic regression analysis, which controls for other factors, shows that being 15-24 years old is a predictor for the likelihood of people in Wales having used a library in the past 12 months.

## FOCUSING IN ON WORKING STATUS IN WALES

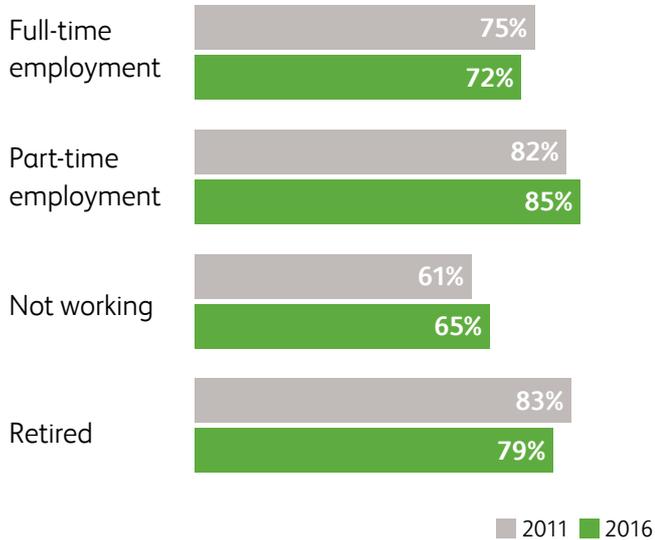
### Library use by working status



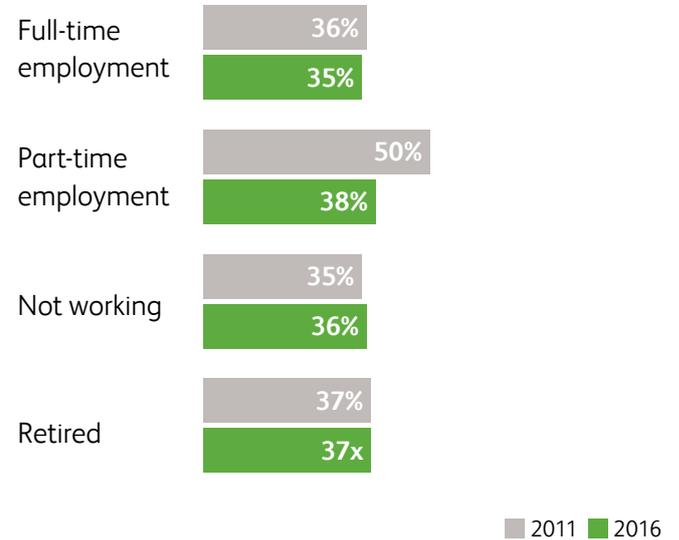
### Frequency of library use by working status



### Importance of libraries to community



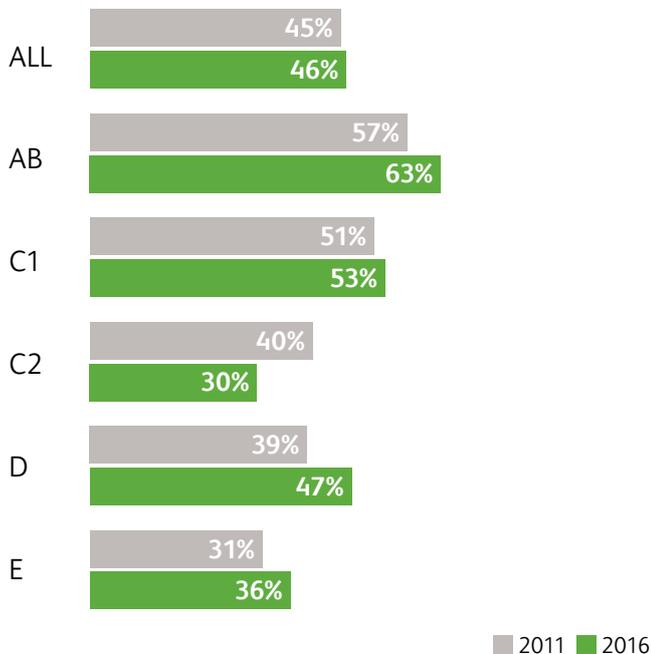
### Importance of libraries to me personally



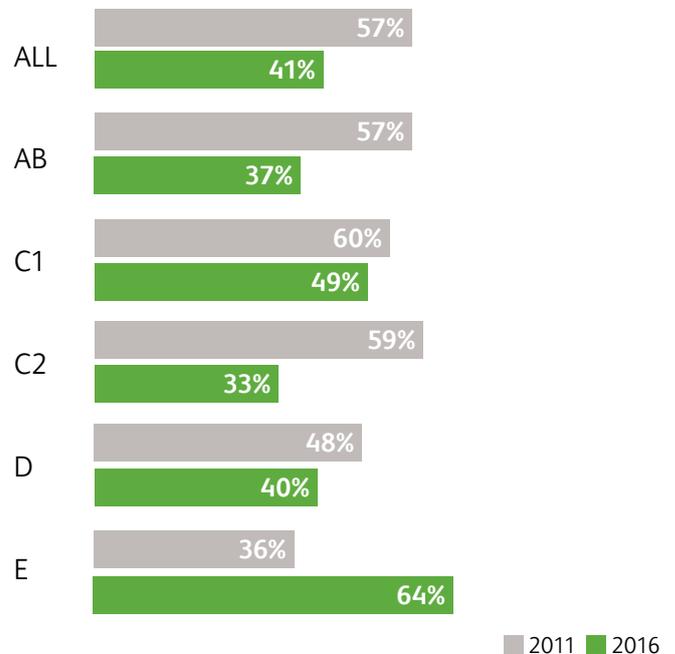


## FOCUSING IN ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP IN WALES

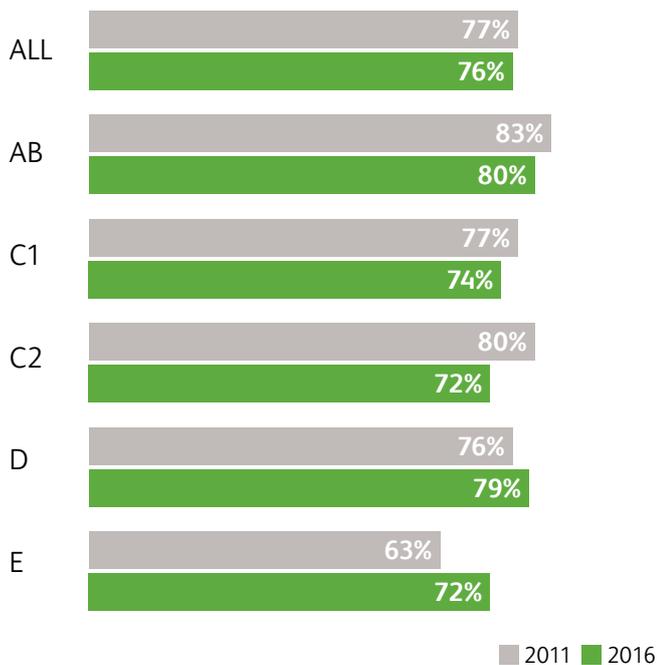
### Library use by socio-economic group



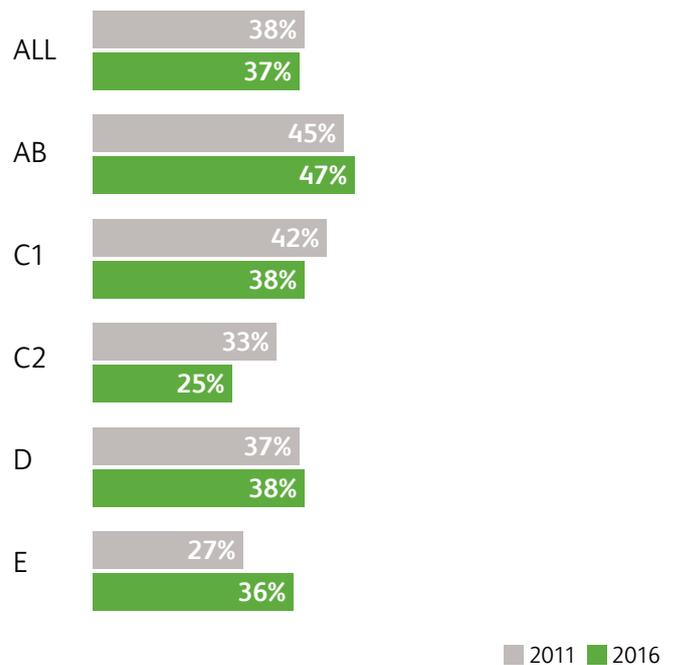
### Frequency of library use by socio-economic group



### Importance of libraries to community



### Importance of libraries to me personally



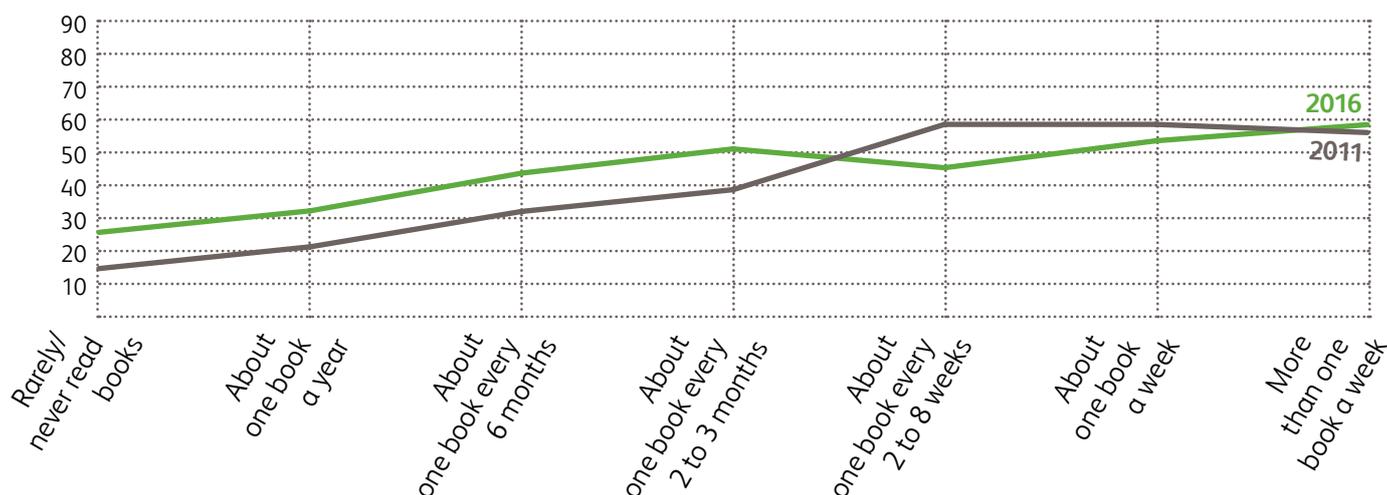
### PREDICTORS

Logistic regression analysis, which controls for other factors, shows that being in socio-economic group ABC1 is a predictor for the likelihood of people in Wales having used a library in the past 12 months.

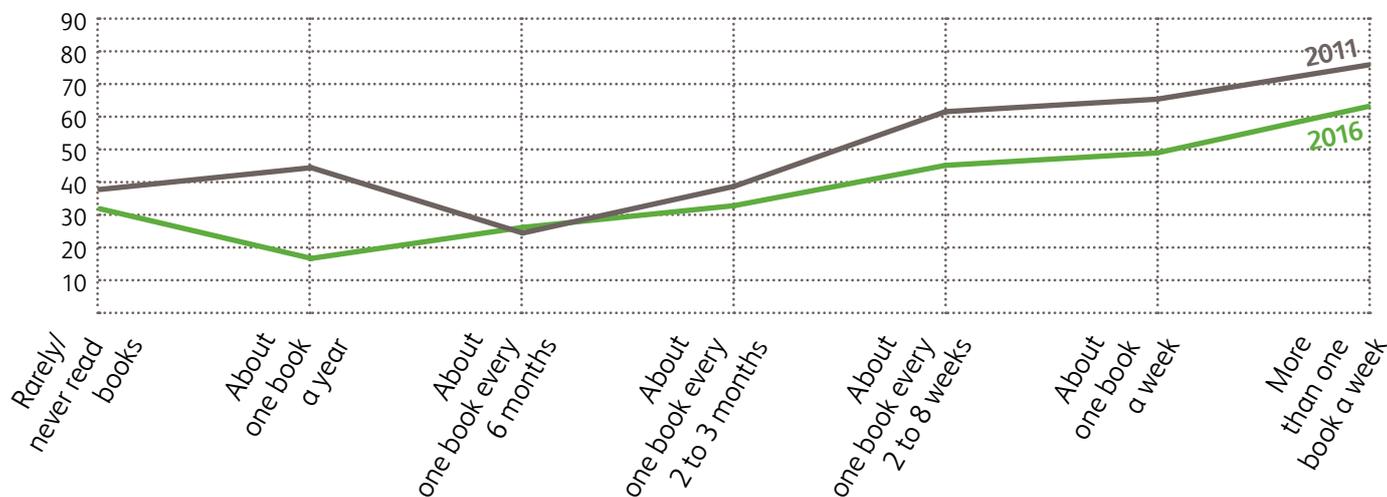
## FOCUSING IN ON READING BEHAVIOUR IN WALES

### Library use by readership (%)

Readership is defined in terms of books that are read in any format (eg a physical book, on a e-reader or other device, or audio book) not including books that are read for paid work or academic study.



### Frequency of library use by readership (%)



### PREDICTORS

Logistic regression analysis, which controls for other factors, shows that being a prolific reader is a predictor for the likelihood of people in Wales having used a library in the past 12 months.

Logistic regression analysis, which controls for other factors, shows that being a prolific reader is a predictor for the likelihood of people in Wales having frequently used a library in the past 12 months.

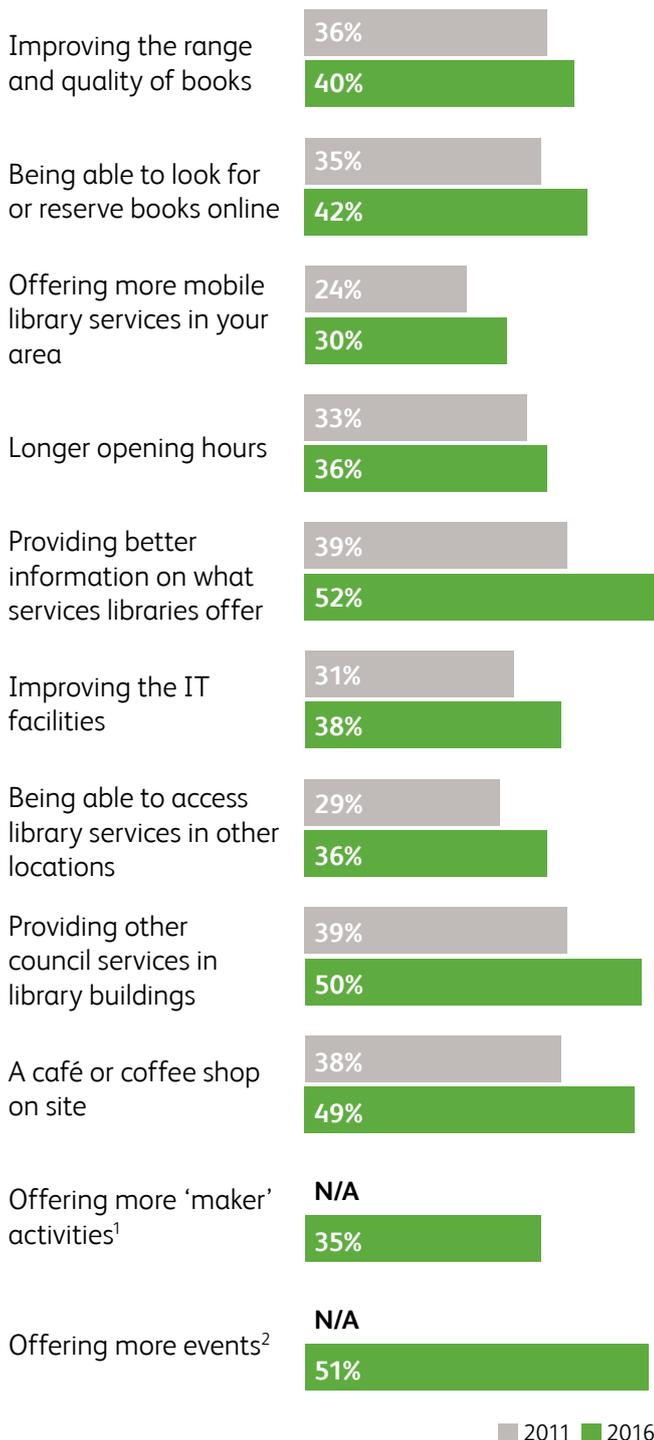
“ Although there is a statistically significant relationship between library use and prolific readership, 24% of people who rarely or never read books use the library. ”



## ATTITUDES TO POSSIBLE SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS IN WALES

We asked people in Wales to consider whether or not a number of potential changes would encourage them to make more use of library services. Overall, compared with 2011, respondents were more likely to be encouraged to use their library if services were to change or improve.

### Support for suggested improvement and changes to service 2011 and 2016



1 This was a new category for 2016.

2 This was a new category for 2016.

2011–2016

### Most popular suggested improvements to the service in 2011



Providing **better information** on the services that are delivered (39%)



Providing **other council services** in the library building (39%)



Opening a **café or coffee shop** (38%)

### Most popular suggested improvements to the service in 2016



Providing **better information** on the services that are delivered (52%)



Offering **more events** (51%)



Providing **other council services** in the library building (50%)

USERS & NON-USERS

### Most popular improvements among library users



Providing **better information** on what services libraries offer (66%)



Offering **more events** (64%)



Providing **other council services** in library buildings (63%)

### ... and non-library users



Providing **better information** on what services libraries offer (39%)



Offering **more events** (39%)



Providing **other council services** in library buildings (39%)

“ Overall, users more likely to say suggested improvements would increase library use than non-users. ”

## ATTITUDES TO POSSIBLE SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS IN WALES

2016

### Most popular improvements for other groups:

#### Frequent users



Offering more events  
(65%)

#### Men



Providing better information on what services libraries offer  
(50%)

#### Women



A café or coffee shop on site  
(54%)

#### Households with children



Offering more events  
(63%)

#### Households without children



Providing better information on what services libraries offer  
(48%)

#### 15-24 year olds



Being able to look for or reserve books online  
(68%)

#### 25-35 year olds



Offering more events  
(62%)

#### 35-54 year olds



Providing better information on what services libraries offer  
(56%)

#### 55+ year olds



Providing other council services in library buildings  
(44%)

#### Full time employed



Providing better information on what services libraries offer  
(57%)

#### Part time employed



Offering more events  
(62%)

#### Not working



Offering more events  
(61%)

#### Retired



Providing other council services in library buildings  
(46%)

#### Social grade A<sup>3</sup>



Offering more events  
(67%)

#### Social grade B



Offering more events  
(60%)

#### Social grade C1



Providing better information on what services libraries offer  
(56%)

#### Social grade C2



Providing better information on what services libraries offer  
(42%)

#### Social grade D



Providing other council services in library buildings  
(58%)

#### Social grade E



Offering more events  
(51%)

#### Prolific readers



Providing better information on what services libraries offer  
(59%)

#### Those that rarely/never read books



Providing other council services in library buildings  
(38%)

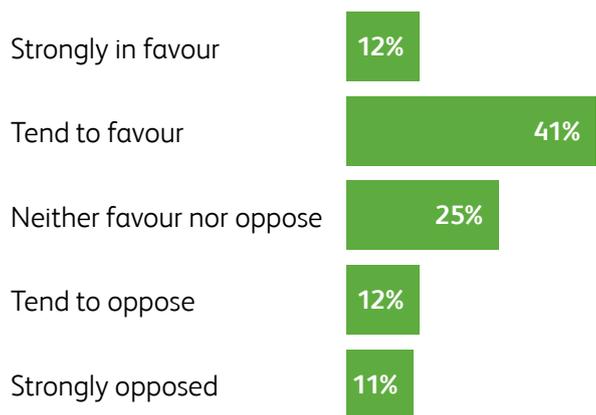
3 Figure in this category should be treated as indicative rather than representative as the base size is small.



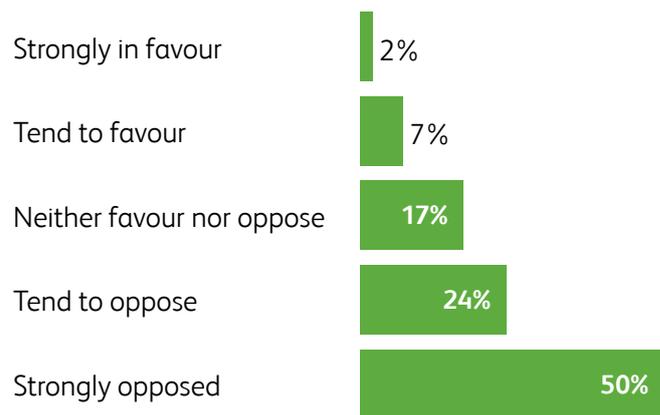
## ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE USE OF VOLUNTEERS IN RELATION TO THE LIBRARY SERVICE IN WALES

In 2016 we introduced a question to gauge people’s opinions on volunteer involvement with public libraries.

### Use of volunteers to add value to the services paid staff offer



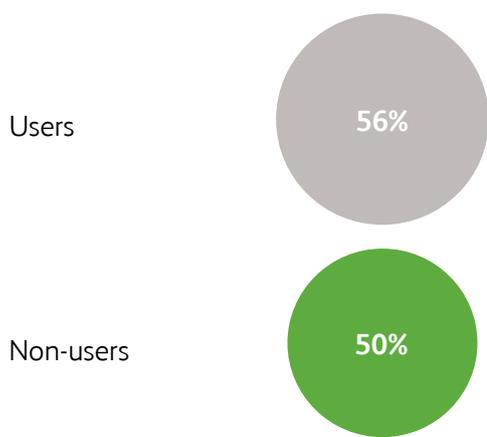
### Use of volunteers to replace all paid staff



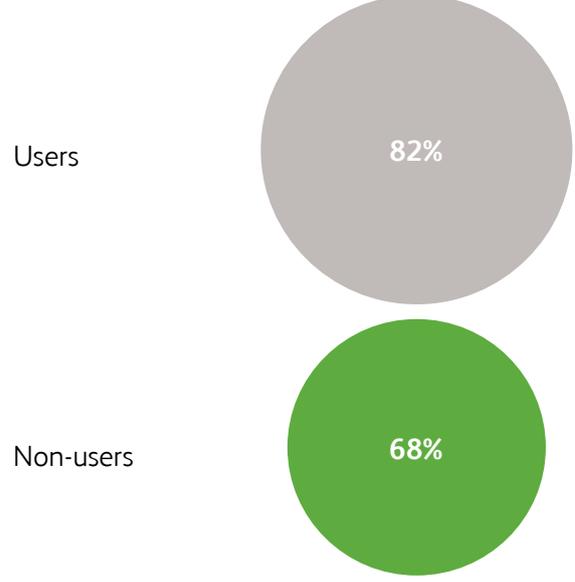
**JUST OVER**  $\frac{1}{2}$  of people are in favour of volunteers adding value to the services that paid library staff offer

**LESS THAN**  $\frac{1}{10}$  people in favour of volunteers replacing all paid staff

### In favour of volunteers adding value to work of paid staff



### Opposed to volunteers replacing all paid staff



## APPENDIX

# Statistically significant differences and changes over time

## 1) OVERVIEW

### Differences over time

#### FREQUENCY OF USE

- Decline among women (57% 2011, 41% 2016)  
= -16 percentage points

## 2) GENDER

### Differences between groups

#### LIBRARY USE

- Women (53%) higher than men (39%) = 14 percentage points  
FREQUENCY OF USE – Women (45%)  
higher than men (34%) = 11 percentage points

#### IMPORTANCE TO COMMUNITY

- Women (79%) higher than men (71%) = 8 percentage points

#### IMPORTANCE PERSONALLY

- Women (41%) higher than men (32%) = 9 percentage points

### Differences over time

#### FREQUENCY OF USE

- Decline among women (62% 2011, 45% 2016)  
= -17 percentage points
- Decline among men (50% 2011, 34% 2016)  
= -16 percentage points

## 3) HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN

### Differences between groups

#### LIBRARY USE

- Households with children (55%) higher than  
households without (43%) = 12 percentage points

### Differences over time

#### FREQUENCY OF USE

- Decline among households with children (55% 2011,  
41% 2016) = -14 percentage points
- Decline among households without children (60% 2011,  
40% 2016) = -20 percentage points

## 4) AGE

### Differences between groups

#### LIBRARY USE

- 15-24 year olds (51%) higher than over 55s (41%)  
= 10 percentage points
- 25-34 year olds (52%) higher than over 55s (41%)  
= 11 percentage points
- 35-54 year olds (49%) higher than over 55s (41%)  
= 8 percentage points

#### IMPORTANCE TO COMMUNITY

- 35-54 year olds (75%) higher than 15-24 year olds (65%)  
= 10 percentage points
- Over 55s (81%) higher than 15-24 year olds (65%)  
= 16 percentage points
- 55s (81%) higher than 25-34 year olds (74%)  
= 7 percentage points

### Differences over time

#### FREQUENCY OF USE

- Decline among 15-24 year olds (63% 2011, 32% 2016)  
= -31 percentage points
- Decline among 35-54 year olds (58% 2011, 43% 2016)  
= -15 percentage points
- Decline among over 55s (59% 2011, 43% 2016)  
= -16 percentage points

## 5) WORKING STATUS

### Differences between groups

#### LIBRARY USE

- Part-time employees (58%) higher than full-time  
employees (46%) = 12 percentage points
- Part-time employees (58%) higher than retirees (40%)  
= 18 percentage points
- Not working higher (54%) than retirees (40%)  
= 14 percentage points



### Differences over time

#### FREQUENCY OF USE

- Decline among full-time employees (50% 2011, 39% 2016) = -11 percentage points
- Decline among part-time employees (61% 2011, 46% 2016) = -15 percentage points
- Decline among retirees (63% 2011, 39% 2016) = -24 percentage points

### 6) SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP<sup>4</sup>

#### Differences between groups

##### LIBRARY USE

- ABC1 (56%) higher than C2DE (38%) = 18 percentage points
- AB (63%) higher than C1C2 (44%) = 19 percentage points
- AB (63%) higher than C1 (53%) = 10 percentage points
- AB (63%) higher than C2 (30%) = 33 percentage points
- AB (63%) higher than DE (43%) = 20 percentage points
- C1 (53%) higher than C2 (30%) = 23 percentage points
- C1 (53%) higher than DE (43%) = 10 percentage points
- DE (43%) higher than C2 (30%) = 13 percentage points

##### FREQUENCY OF USE

- ABC1 (45%) higher than C2DE (37%) = 8 percentage points
- C1 (49%) higher than C2 (33%) = 16 percentage points

##### IMPORTANCE PERSONALLY

- ABC1 (41%) higher than C2DE (33%) = 8 percentage points
- AB (47%) higher than C1C2 (33%) = 14 percentage points
- AB (47%) higher than C2 (25%) = 22 percentage points
- AB (47%) higher than DE (37%) = 10 percentage points
- C1 (38%) higher than C2 (25%) = 13 percentage points
- DE (37%) higher than C2 (25%) = 12 percentage points

### Differences over time

#### LIBRARY USE

- Decline among C2 (40% 2011, 30% 2016) = -10 percentage points

#### FREQUENCY OF USE-

- Decline among ABC1 (59% 2011, 45% 2016) = -14 percentage points
- Decline among C2DE (55% 2011, 37% 2016) = -18 percentage points

#### IMPORTANCE TO COMMUNITY

- Decline among C2 (80% 2011, 72% 2016) = -8 percentage points

#### IMPORTANCE PERSONALLY

- Decline among C2 (33% 2011, 25% 2016) = -8 percentage points

### 7) READERSHIP

#### Differences between groups

##### LIBRARY USE

- Prolific readers (60%) higher than other readers (50%) = 10 percentage points

##### FREQUENCY OF USE

- Prolific readers (31%) higher than other readers (15%) = 16 percentage points

### Differences over time

#### LIBRARY USE

- Decline among prolific readers (68% 2011, 60% 2016) = -8 percentage points
- Increase among infrequent readers (17% 2011, 26% 2016) = 9 percentage points

#### FREQUENCY OF USE

- Decline among prolific readers (45% 2011, 31% 2016) = -14 percentage points

4 Tests carried out for: ABC1 / C2DE; AB / C1 / C2 / DE; AB / C1C2 / DE



A series of horizontal dotted lines spanning the width of the page, intended for handwritten notes or responses.

The Carnegie UK Trust works to improve the lives of people throughout the UK and Ireland, by changing minds through influencing policy, and by changing lives through innovative practice and partnership work. The Carnegie UK Trust was established by Scots-American philanthropist Andrew Carnegie in 1913.

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This report was written by Dr Jenny Peachey  
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