



Sustainable Shelves Program

CASE STUDY

Harrow Council Libraries



Harrow Council in Northwest London hosts six libraries and serves a population of more than 200,000. With

community at the heart of the library's mission, the team strives to deliver a vibrant and varied collection to meet the needs of its diverse users.

In 2019, Harrow Council Libraries began a project to relocate their central library. A limited stock budget coupled with a move to a new building, presented a challenge to the library's ability to deliver a new and appealing collection while managing the responsible removal of unwanted stock. The team sought a solution that would ensure a seamless, cost-effective refresh and recycle workflow.

The Sustainable Shelves Program

The Sustainable Shelves Program (SSP) from collectionHQ helps libraries responsibly remove weeded or unwanted books from their collections in exchange for cash or credit. Using the action plans straight from collectionHQ, the library can efficiently weed dead and grubby items which will be collected by collectionHQ at no cost. The library will then be credited for those items after collection.

Lee Stallard, Operations Manager at Harrow Council Libraries, discovered SSP at a user group meeting in late 2019 which he described as "perfect timing" given the pending move. Joining the program was an easy decision to make!

collectionHQ Integration

Having subscribed to collectionHQ since 2016 to support evidence-based purchasing and the removal of dead stock, Lee was delighted to learn that collectionHQ could now manage the library's stock recycling process. Lee explained: "It's a one-stop-shop. We can deal directly with one organisation for both stock removal and recycling."



Supporting Sustainability Efforts

Introducing the SSP at Harrow Council Libraries emphasises the library's commitment to managing public spending responsibly and offsetting its carbon footprint. Lee commented: "We have always attempted to sell withdrawn books to make sure they achieve maximum use. Where it hasn't been possible to sell items, we have used recycling bins, but this is not efficient for larger scale stock maintenance." The SSP provides the library with confidence that items with no commercial value are recycled responsibly with the added benefit of injecting cash back into the stock budget to spend on new material.

Reinvesting into the Library

Lee plans on reinvesting the funds generated from the SSP back into the library's stock budget to support the delivery of a vibrant, popular collection. He added: "The SSP helps to demonstrate that non-used books support the purchase of new books that are more relevant to community needs and can replace dead items that have been removed."

Conclusion

At first, Lee felt the SSP was "too good to be true" and has been delighted to discover the program has delivered "exactly" on its promise!

Contact SustainableShelves@collectionhq.com to find out how much your discarded material could be worth.

collectionhq.com/sustainable-shelves-program



Collection

Keep your collection relevant and circulating



Conservation

Reduce your library's environmental impact



Community

Reinvest in your library and impact outreach and literacy in your community

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collectionHQ

data. insight. solutions.