

## **LIBRARY SERVICES**

Essex libraries cater for all ages, interests and needs. The leaflet "The journey begins here" gives details of a whole range of library services that are available to everyone e.g. borrowing books, audio-books, CDs, DVDs and videos; access to computers; baby and toddler time; the Fresh Start Readers' Collection for people with basic skills needs. You can also get information on the Essex library service website at [www.essexcc.gov.uk](http://www.essexcc.gov.uk) Click on "Enjoying Essex".

Libraries provide services for blind and partially sighted people, housebound people and people with basic education needs. They have a number of online services, including subscriptions to databases such as Times Digital Archive. These can be accessed for free, either from the library or home. E-books are a growing area.

A free housebound library service, Library Direct, is available to those who are unable to visit their local library because of disability, frailty or responsibility as a full-time carer. Books, spoken-word tapes, music CDs and videos can be delivered to their home on a regular basis by trained volunteers.

Blind and partially sighted people can borrow large print books, audio-books and audio-described videos free from the library. The library can also arrange a subscription to the RNIB Talking Book Service, which supplies a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books on CD by post. You can borrow a CD player if needed. If you need Braille books, the library will also pay for membership of the National Library for the Blind.

All public computer terminals have software, called Zoomtext, which magnifies the screen and reads the text. Some of the larger libraries have a computer which has other accessible software (Open Book and Jaws) and a scanner attached. Open Book reads aloud scanned text. Jaws is a special screen reader which reads aloud any on-screen information.

Deaf and hearing impaired people can borrow the growing collection of DVDs with subtitles, which can be played on an ordinary DVD player. Close captioned videos can be borrowed from library stock but the captions can be seen only if the viewer has a caption reader. You can borrow a viewer for 4 weeks to help you decide if you want to buy one.

All libraries have induction loops installed at counters and enquiry desks, so that hearing impaired customers with hearing aids can listen with less background interference, by switching their hearing aid to position "T".

Library staff are pleased to answer any queries. Library information services can help you track down a club or support group, find the facts your business needs or solve a homework query. Just ask at the enquiry desk or contact:

01245 438438	Answers Direct
01245 490745	Textphone

For more information on any Harlow library service, contact:-

Harlow Library, The High, Harlow CM20 1HA  
(01279) 413772

Great Parndon Library, Staple Tye, Harlow CM18 7LZ  
(01279) 435101

Mark Hall Library, The Stow, Harlow CM20 3AP  
(01279) 425533

Old Harlow Library, High Street, Old Harlow CM17 0DW  
(01279) 433170

Tye Green Library, Bush Fair, Harlow CM18 6LU  
(01279) 425002