

Central Library – Frequently Asked Questions

Question: Is the Council fully committed to keeping city centre library open?

Answer: Yes.

This council absolutely recognises the value of libraries, both as community hubs and to help improve literacy and provide internet access for many who don't have it themselves – that's why we're committed to not just keeping a city centre library open, but to investing in it so it remains relevant and popular for many years to come.

We're proud of Nottingham's great literary heritage and our status as a UNESCO City of Literature, as well as our work with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. Our track record in recent years shows investment in modern neighbourhood libraries including The Dales Centre, Strelley Road Library, Bulwell, Hyson Green and St Ann's, often in new joint service centres which encourages more people to use them. Not only that, but a redeveloped Central Library at Broadmarsh would give us the opportunity to create one of the best children's libraries in the country.

This is in contrast to some councils facing budget cuts which have carried out large reductions in library provision to make savings. Bucking that trend, Nottingham City Council's ruling Labour Group has had a commitment in its last two manifestos to develop the Central Library, and this is now part of the Council Plan.

Question: Is it true that the Council has sold Angel Row Central Library so this building needs to close anyway?

Answer: No. No deal has been agreed.

Nottingham City Council has not sold the Angel Row site and will not do so, unless we can provide a new Central Library elsewhere. If people like the proposal for a new library at the Broadmarsh Car Park site, then we would seek to develop the Angel Row site for other uses, providing the financial support to pay for the development of the new Central Library.

Question: How much will the new Central Library cost and how would it be funded?

Answer: By redeveloping the existing Angel Row site and housing the library at Broadmarsh, a new library can be provided for the city of Nottingham for a net cost of £3m

The Broadmarsh area redevelopment is a £250m programme to transform the car park, bus station, shopping centre, pedestrian environment, transform Nottingham Castle and build a new college. We are in the unique position of having a site to build a modern, high quality new Central Library which is in an area where other major redevelopments are taking place. Libraries can be expensive, but by redeveloping the existing Angel Row site and housing the library at Broadmarsh, a new library can be provided for the city of Nottingham for a net cost of £3m. This redevelopment would also create much needed new office space for companies at Angel Row, bringing jobs, opportunities and trade to the area.

Question: If it is agreed to develop the new Central Library as part of the Broadmarsh Development Scheme, how long will this take?

Answer: The new library should be ready to open in early 2020.

The redevelopment of the Broadmarsh Car Park, Bus Station and New Central Library would be ready to open in 2020, in line with the programme of works around the Broadmarsh area.

Question: Will the existing Central Library remain open while the new development takes place?

Answer: For as long as possible – but there might be a period where it needs to close before a new Central Library opens.

As this is still at the consultation stage, no detailed plans on the development programmes have been agreed as yet. Once a preference is known, more detailed project planning will then take place to minimise inconvenience for library users.

Question: If the new Broadmarsh Central Library development scheme progresses, what will happen to the Contact Centre currently housed in the Angel Row site.

Answer: It is anticipated they will move to the council offices on Station Street.

There will be no interruption to its services as a result of this development.

Question: If the deal doesn't go ahead will improvements be made to the current Central Library?

Answer: We will look at ways to use existing maintenance funds to make improvements where possible, if this is the outcome of the consultation.

We know that the current library is tired and is in need of repair and refurbishment. Without the opportunity of joining with the new Broadmarsh development or redeveloping the Angel Row site to provide additional income, the council has limited funds to invest into the current Central Library. We will look at ways to use existing maintenance funds to make improvements where possible, if this is the outcome of the consultation.

Question: Will citizens have an input into the design and service provision?

Answer: Yes

We want to capture as many views as possible, both from regular library users and those who may not have used a library in some time. There will be opportunities to take part via social media, drop-in sessions and questionnaires. All feedback will be carefully considered before decisions on the new library are made, and an announcement on the future location of the Central Library will follow this consultation.

Question: Will the costs of building a new Central Library have an impact on the community libraries in Nottingham?

Answer: No

Nottingham is committed to its libraries – creating a development plan for a new Central Library is part of the Council Plan, and the council's track record of investing in community libraries has been positive over the last five years.

Q: Why does the library need re-developing?

A: To create a library fit for the 21st century.

The needs of library users are changing and we know that the existing Central Library is tired and is in a building that is not easy to adapt. We've seen with the new libraries we've developed elsewhere in the city that modern libraries become destinations which attract large numbers of people not only to borrow free books, but to access a wide range of services including learning, business intelligence, job clubs, literacy development and access to PCs and Wi-Fi. These should be spaces that encourage people to be creative, carry out research and be able to get help and professional guidance around information and using new technology.

Q: Isn't Broadmarsh too far away to be a 'central' library?

A: Not at all, especially with the Broadmarsh area redevelopment. It's in the City Centre core area, with great public transport links.

The new Central Library will be easily accessible by all modes of transport – being close to bus, tram and train services, part of the new bus station and car park building, and benefiting from vastly improved pedestrian and cycling links. The redevelopment of the Broadmarsh area will see access improvements in the area, getting to the library at Broadmarsh will be as easy as Angel Row currently is.

Q: How does this proposal impact on the original plans for the new bus station and car park – does it reduce space for these facilities?

A: There are a few car parking spaces less than the original design, but there will still be more spaces than in the old car park.

Housing the library in Broadmarsh will mean a slightly smaller number of parking spaces than originally proposed but there will still be more than the previous car park, and the bus station layout will not be affected. This is also the case for disabled car parking spaces, and there will be electric car charging points in the new Broadmarsh Car Park, unlike the old Car Park.