

Library changes

Frequently asked questions

Why are you leaving Essex Library Service?

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council regularly reviews the way it provides all its services to ensure they are high quality and competitively priced. During 2017, we reviewed our library services and identified that we could offer local people access to a greater range of books and other library resources at a lower cost to both the Council and library users, if we left the Essex Library Service and instead joined the South East Library Management System (SELMS).

When do the changes take effect?

Southend Libraries are due to change over to the SELMS consortium on 26 March 2018. **From 5 February**, you will no longer be able to reserve an item from Essex Library Service at a Southend Library. Neither will you be able to order an item from Southend Libraries at an Essex Library. **From 5 March until 26 March**, you will not be able to view Southend's library catalogue online. This is because we will be transferring all our stock and data from the Essex Library System to SELMS in this period. You will still be able to use libraries and borrow items in this period.

Which library service will I be a member of in future?

When you joined the Essex Library Service, you were asked to choose a "home library".

If your home library is in the Southend Borough, you will automatically transfer to the SELMS service and will no longer be able to use libraries in the rest of Essex **from 5 March** with your current ticket. If you wish to keep using libraries in Essex as well, you will need to register to become a new member of Essex Library Service from **5 March**.

If your home library is in Essex or Thurrock, you will remain a member of the Essex Library Service and will no longer be able to use libraries in Southend from 5 March with your current ticket. If you wish to keep using libraries in Southend, you will need to register to become a new member of Southend Libraries from **5 March**.

If you are unsure of which is your home library, you can check and amend your online account **before 5 March**. Alternatively, speak to a staff member when you next visit the library.

Do I need to get a new library card to continue using libraries in Southend?

If your home library is in Southend, you will continue to be able to use your current library card to access library services in Southend. However, when your current library card expires, you will be issued with a new SELMS library card. If you wish to use libraries in both Essex and Southend, you will need to be a member of both. This is allowed under a reciprocal arrangement we have reached with Essex Library Service. However, once the new service is introduced, books borrowed from Southend libraries must be returned to Southend libraries and books borrowed from Essex libraries must be returned to Essex libraries.

Will I still be able to use libraries in other areas of Essex?

If you live in Southend and wish to use libraries in Essex – and vice versa – you will need to be a member of both Southend and Essex Library Service. You can be a member of both library services if you wish. You can register to become a new member of Southend Libraries or Essex libraries from 5 March.

Will the mobile library and home library services continue?

Both the mobile and home library services will continue.

Which libraries outside Essex will I be able to borrow from?

In addition to libraries in Southend, you will be able to borrow books from any other SELMS member's libraries. You can find out participating library services by visiting <https://selms.spydus.co.uk>. However, you will not be able to borrow audio or DVD stock from other SELMS libraries.

How will reservation charges be affected?

Requests from other Southend Libraries will stay the same, ie free if placed online or £1 if it is a staff assisted request. Items requested from outside Southend Borough through a SELMS library (inter-library loans) will reduce by half compared to the amount charged through Essex Library Service.

A full schedule of charges will be made available at www.southend.gov.uk/libraries once they have been finalised.

Will I still be able to access books in foreign languages?

Books will still be available in a range of languages.

Will the Summer Reading Challenge continue?

Yes, the Summer Reading Challenge will continue to run as usual.

Will Southend Libraries continue to take part in the Essex Book Festival?

Yes, Essex Book Festival is unaffected.