

Decision Taker:	Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Jobs & Business
Date:	22 November 2024
Report title:	Library of Things – New Locations
Ward(s) or groups affected:	Goose Green, St George's
Classification:	Open
Reason for lateness (if applicable):	Not applicable
From:	Climate Change Programme Director

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Jobs & Business:

1. Approves £83,170 from the Climate Capital Fund to Library of Things.
2. Approves the installation and license to occupy for a Library of Things kiosk in Dulwich Leisure Centre and Castle Leisure Centre.
3. Approves the use of the earmarked Climate Change Emergency Reserve to fund the ongoing maintenance costs for the service for a period of up to four years, based on a sliding scale. The costs will be partially offset by the income received directly to the council.
4. Approves the delegation of any minor variations to the design and delivery of the new Library of Things kiosks to the Climate Change and Sustainability Director, in consultation with Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Jobs & Business.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

5. Since declaring a climate emergency in 2019, we have been taking urgent action to reduce carbon emissions in the borough. Our ambition remains to do all we can for the whole borough to become carbon neutral by 2030. In July 2021, the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan was finalised and set out the actions we need to take. The council is directly responsible for around 12% of emissions and so while we are working hard to reduce these, it is also important for us to support our residents and communities to take action in their neighbourhoods so that together we can all create a net zero borough.

6. Of the key themes within the Climate Action Plan, was a 'circular economy with green jobs' and a commitment to both help residents reduce waste and develop a sharing economy. One of the actions outlined in this action plan was therefore as follows:

'Promote and partner with and invest in community groups to develop sharing/circular economy e.g. repair café, library of things, community fridge, food redistribution centres.'

7. To deliver against this action, in late June 2023, the first Library of Things (LoT) was opened in Southwark at Canada Water Library with support from Southwark Council.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

8. Library of Things (LoT) is a social enterprise that rents out affordable and useful items like cleaning equipment, drills, sewing machines and kitchen utensils from local spaces to the community. Established in 2014, they now have 19 sites across London including Canada Water, Greenwich and Bromley. Their central objectives are to reduce waste and carbon emissions and help residents save money.
9. Following the opening of the LoT in Canada Water, officers have been working closely across Climate Change and Libraries departments, alongside LoT, to monitor and support the ongoing performance of the site.
10. The site has enjoyed a successful first 15 months. In this time, more than 1200 people have borrowed items.
11. At the end of August 2024, this meant that, by borrowing instead of buying, these residents had saved a combined total of £243,243, 35.9 tonnes of carbon and 12.5 tonnes of waste.
12. Whilst the site at Canada Water has shown that the model provided by LoT is successful and popular in Southwark, its location means that it only serves a small portion of the borough. LoT advise that most users of their sites come from within a two-kilometre radius.
13. Data provided by LoT also showed that there was interest in areas of the borough for another site, particularly in East Dulwich.
14. Following the success of the first year of the LoT at Canada Water Library. Officers have been working with LoT to find suitable sites for the expansion of LoT in Southwark to increase the amount of the borough that has a site within two kilometres.
15. This will mean that more of the borough is covered by this service that promotes the circular economy, in line with our climate change commitments.
16. Dulwich Leisure Centre and Castle Leisure Centre have been chosen as the most appropriate sites. This would provide coverage for the majority of the borough being within two kilometres of a LoT.

17. Dulwich Leisure Centre has space for a kiosk in its lobby area next to the cafe. It enjoys a footfall of 7500 per week and is well used by residents, schools and community groups. It is situated on the edge of East Dulwich, meaning it will provide coverage to large parts of Peckham and Camberwell as well as East Dulwich.
18. Castle Leisure Centre has space for a kiosk in its lobby area next to the café which is used by residents to socialise. It enjoys a footfall of approximately 3000 people per week and is well used by residents, schools and community groups. It is situated in Elephant and Castle, meaning it will provide coverage to large parts of Walworth, Bankside and London Bridge as well as Elephant and Castle.
19. Figure 1 shows the coverage of a two kilometre radius from the proposed sites in Dulwich Leisure Centre and Castle Leisure Centre, alongside the existing sites in Canada Water and Crystal Palace.

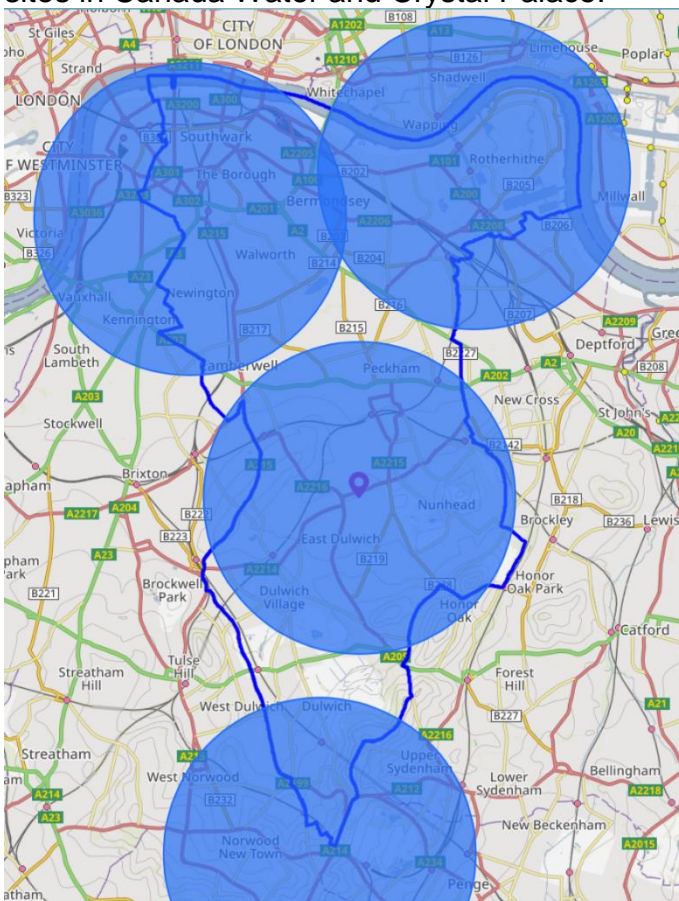


Figure 1 A map of the coverage of two kilometre radius from Library of Things

20. LOT are able to measure estimated tonnes of emissions and waste prevented for each borrower, as well as the total money saved. Southwark Council will have access to this information and this will be used to monitor usage of the sites. We will annually review this data to determine how successful the project has been, with a particular focus on estimated carbon saving. We will compare data with other LOTs to benchmark progress.
21. Initial fabrication and installation costs are £83,170 and will be sourced from the Council's Climate Change Capital Fund.

22. The council will pay a monthly service charge to LoT to maintain the items and the service. This service charge will be costed based on the number of borrows which the site has had in a given month. This will initially be charged at £2000 per month per site. At the end of year one there will then be a readjustment based on the actual borrows. Each month this will be offset by income received directly to the council.
23. Based on the number of borrows from our established site at Canada Water, the net cost of operating both new sites is estimated to cost a combined £23,213 over two years. These costs will be funded through use of the Climate Change Reserves for up to four years.
24. Details of this ongoing revenue funding is laid out in Schedule 3 of each site's respective legal agreement between the council and Library of Things.
25. The funding model has been reviewed by Southwark's Legal Team, and the agreement is subject to a review at the 24-month period.
26. In September 2024, the second round of Southwark Green Investment was launched. It aims to raise £500,000 to spend on green projects in the borough. One of the projects earmarked for this round of funding is the expansion of Library of Things.
27. Subject to the success of this fundraising round, this will mean that a portion of the funding required for the new LoT sites will be able to be covered by this innovative new arrangement. This will provide increased opportunities for local engagement around the new sites.
28. On launch, the Council and LoT will promote the sites jointly as part of the council's wider communication and engagement plan. We anticipate that the Library of Things will be launched in early 2025. To help with manufacturing and production, it is likely that the sites will be staggered with an ambition for both of them to be open by March 2025.

Policy framework implications

29. The recommendations contained within this report are consistent with key actions set out in the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, particularly:
 - Partner with and invest in community groups to develop sharing and circular economy.
 - Use connections to businesses and markets to facilitate shorter supply and distribution chains

COMMUNITY, EQUALITIES (INCLUDING SOCIO-ECONOMIC) AND HEALTH IMPACTS

Community impact statement

30. The funding of more Library of Things in the borough will allow for a greater amount of local residents to have access to tools and resources at a lower cost, and help people reduce their personal carbon footprint.

31. Measures will be taken by LoT to ensure that the installation of the library does not impede on the other services provided by Dulwich Leisure Centre and Castle Leisure Centre. They will also look to ensure that installations happen quickly, and with minimal impact to the local community in terms of noise and disruption.

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement

32. The funding agreement requires LoT to put in place appropriate equal opportunities and complaints policy/procedures and to not unlawfully discriminate against any person.

33. One of the core objectives of the Library of Things is to help reduce costs for local residents.

34. LoT offers a 'no questions asked' 25% discount for any residents, and items are available to be borrowed for as little as £1.50 per day.

35. Data provided by LoT showed that between June 2023 and August 2024, residents saved a combined total of £243,143 by borrowing instead of buying at the Canada Water site.

36. The project will help support families and individuals who are experiencing socio-economic deprivation and help meet some of their essential needs.

37. The recommendation in this report is not considered to have a disproportionate effect on any other community or group.

Health impact statement

38. The funding agreement requires LoT to take all necessary steps to secure the health, safety and welfare of all persons involved in or attending the Project.

39. Residents are able to borrow dehumidifiers, thermal imaging cameras and moisture meters from LoT, all of which can help to assess housing conditions and potential impact on health.

Climate change implications

40. The measures support the aims of the council's Climate Change Strategy under Priority 4 - A Circular Economy with Green Jobs. Key aims of the council's Climate Change Strategy include to 'encourage a more circular economy that reduces consumption, keeps resources in use for as long as possible, and recycles used materials' and 'support local supply chains and local businesses to be more sustainable. The measures set out as part of the development of LoT strongly support that ambition.

41. Data from LoT has shown that between June 2023 and August 2024, the site in Canada Water helped to save 35.9 tonnes of carbon dioxide, reuse 11.9 tonnes of electricals and prevented 12.5 tonnes of waste.

42. A just and inclusive transition is at the heart of the council's emerging climate policy. These proposals prioritise the local community, helping them reduce costs whilst also reducing their carbon footprint.

Financial implications

43. The estimated cost of initial fabrication and installation is £83,170.

44. This project will be funded from the council's Climate Capital Fund with funding raised through Southwark Green Investment, and delivered by existing resource within the Climate Change and Leisure teams.

45. Alongside this capital allocation, funding from the Council's Climate Change reserve has been earmarked as part of the policy set out in the respective legal agreements. This funding will be used to ensure the ongoing success of the project, and that it connects to the local community.

46. The total expenditure and sources of funding for the scheme will be monitored and reported on as part of the overall Capital Programme.

Consultation

47. LoT have consulted with our Leisure services, and general managers of each respective leisure centre on the compatibility of the project with the space and within the local area.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Legal implications (Concurrent Report of the Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance)

48. This report seeks approval of a grant of £83,170 from the Climate Capital Fund with funding raised through the Southwark Green Investment for the purposes of the installation and licence to occupy for a Library of Things kiosk in Dulwich Leisure Centre and Castle Leisure Centre.

49. Paragraphs 11 to 17 explain that the proposed grant will enable the expansion of the Library of Things from its initial opening location in Canada Water to other areas of the borough.

50. Under Part 3D of the council Constitution the approval of grants to voluntary organisations over £2,500 is one of a number of matters which are expressly reserved to the Cabinet Member. Part 3D also authorises the Cabinet Member to promote effective partnerships, between the council and other agencies and bodies affecting the community, in relation to their areas of responsibility.

Strategic Director of Resources (ESL24/090)

51. The Strategic Director of Resources (SDR) notes the recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Jobs & Business in relation to new

locations for the Library of Things (LoT) project as detailed in paragraphs 1-4 of this report.

52. The SDR also notes the financial implications of expanding the number of LoT sites in the borough, in line with the council's Climate Action Plan. The SDR also notes the sources of funding for the project.

53. Staffing and any other costs associated with the recommendations in this report will be contained within existing departmental revenue budgets.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

This section must be included in all reports.

Lead Officer	Tom Sharland - Climate Change Programme Director	
Report Author	James Senior - Climate Change Communications and Engagement Officer	
Version	Final	
Dated	21 November 2024	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Resources	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		22 November 2024