



A big thank you to everyone who completed the survey we carried out earlier this year. We received almost 900 responses which was extremely useful, and will help us to plan how we develop the site.

Thanks also to those of you who left your contact details. Although we're unable to get back to you individually we plan to carry out some more in-depth research over the coming months so hope to be in contact with some of you then.

All of your comments have been taken on board, and wherever possible we will develop the features you have asked for.

You said

The site is too slow and often appears to freeze and time you out. It doesn't seem to make any difference whether it is being used in a library or from home, and doesn't depend on the speed of the link or the time of day it is being used.

What are we doing about it?

First of all, we will be carrying out a full system audit, which will identify unused or unnecessary tables and data that can be removed or archived, to free up space. Our system suppliers will also be able to provide some database optimization on the current system as part of this audit, which should result in some performance improvements. We plan to start this process during the summer.

Secondly, we will be applying several 'patches' to improve the performance of the current site.

During the year we also plan to upgrade our web site to the latest version of the software. This upgrade will result in performance improvements, but as part of this work we will also upgrade the web server hardware that will also help improve the speed of the site.

You said

Searching the catalogue is unreliable, clunky and unsophisticated. It doesn't compare favourably to other sites such as www.amazon.co.uk. The ranking of search results appears to be very hit and miss, and the usability of the search is a problem.

What are we doing about it?

Unfortunately many of the problems with catalogue searching are fundamental to how the catalogue works, so we will not be able to fully address them in the next version of the site. Much of this will have to wait for a future version. However, there will be some improvements, including:

- a clear indication of how much it will cost to borrow a chargeable item (e.g. DVD) before making a reservation
- Some features (e.g. 'Your Loans' and 'Your Renewals') will be combined to save having to move between functions

We also asked you to tell us which new features you would like to see developed.

The most popular suggestions were

- Lists of items recently added to the catalogue (77%)
- Receive recommendations based on items I have previously borrowed (63.8%)
- News about library services, and events and activities in libraries across LibrariesWest (57.4%)
- Receive recommendations based on a profile I have set up (40.8%)

As a result we will be giving priority to developing these features in the next version of the website.