



MALTON LIBRARY

Case **STUDY**

The **BRIEF**

Malton is a busy market town in North Yorkshire, with its 1960's library seeing 1,000 visitors a week integral to the local community.

Some of the original shelving was still in place, and although the full-length windows provided plenty of light, the library needed a refresh with colours, layout and additional facilities, plus structural work to open up and improve the space.

The aim of the refurbishment was to create a warm, welcoming, and friendly space for people to visit. As a popular destination for all, the library needed to offer modern facilities, WiFi and space for 'Bring Your Own Device', a place for personal study and a suitable space for the public access computers. A family friendly area and a children's zone was also a key requirement to encourage young readers.



The **CONSIDERATIONS**

- The HVAC building constraints dictated the location of air ducts, which needed to be kept clear and accessible
- Customer survey requested that book spines could be clearly seen at all heights.
- The children's space was to be made a feature at the front of the library.
- Although mainly open plan, quiet zones were requested for reading and study.
- A new dedicated IT area, a WiFi zone, and public access to computers and library technology
- Design was to incorporate future-proof and adaptable space, for changing public demand and ongoing technology developments
- The access to the library is via a tight street, with a requirement to reserve the carpark in advance for delivery vehicles and fitting teams.
- The library was also enjoying a £15k investment of new books for all ages, therefore, the book space was also to include this additional volume.



The DESIGN

- The design process was supportive and collaborative and the stakeholders were fully informed throughout. Various layouts were proposed, ensuring flexibility and futureproofing
- The colour scheme was chosen to give a warm, contemporary feel. This was achieved by using nature inspired earth colours and various shades of green. Timber based elements of maple, graphite, mint and petrol were selected and paired with fabrics such as Atlantic (petrol green), Tigerlily (earth red) and Gooseberry (green).
- The library team were keen to have a 'bookshop' feel, and so the design included LANDSCAPE shelving with 'wow' display end panels, signage and book supports, all helping to bring the finesse of a bookshop. With a mix of single and double-sided shelving, the book stock requirements of the library were accommodated.
- Oxford sofas were selected for their comfort, support and style.
- Realising the need for books to be accessible at all heights, the LANDSCAPE shelving system was specified with angled shelving at the bottom which also allows the spines to be clearly seen. Grilles were also built into the shelving plinths against the walls.
- In the children's area, a minimalist woodland theme was chosen, linking to the Yorkshire countryside and bringing a rural theme inside. This features owls, squirrels and foxes with vibrant orange as well as greens and blues. Tactile 'pasadena pine' was added as a striking backdrop
- Providing an inclusive environment for all children, the design team proposed a feature 'Tree Storywall' with a double sided hideaway and a waterfall unit



which facilitates the display of forward facing picture books

- Designing for the 'connected' world, pluto units were installed. These are fun tabletop power units which allow people to charge their devices at various points
- Understanding the need for a flexible space, the central shelving was specified as mobile. Lockable castors give stability but can be quickly released and moved, enabling the area to be reconfigured for events and community clubs



The **CHALLENGES**

- The plans took several months to come to fruition and the FGLL team remained focused on the design brief and users throughout, recommending a number of design revisions to suit all stakeholders.
- With the onset of Covid this meant there were a number of challenges to overcome; including delays with the building work and limited numbers able to work within the building during the refurbishment.
- Working on a projects which include structural changes and multiple stakeholders can often be a challenge, to manage this FGLL formed a tight project management team to fully communicate internally and externally. Building a rapport with all stakeholders involved, understanding their constraints and challenges as well as the unexpected challenges caused by the pandemic was achieved, forming close relationships with all.



The **OUTCOME**

- During an unprecedented time, FGLL systems and project management were tested and fully withstood all additional pressures of the the covid-19 pandemic. The FGLL team continuously updated everyone involved, accepting site delays and disruption, implementing additional H&S requirements and with no financial implications.
- Originally only able to open for browsing for a short time before a further lockdown was enforced, the reaction of library customers was really positive, with the library having a 'wow' factor that families can enjoy.
- In particular, the wow end panels and increased face-on display space meant that books were 'flying off the shelves' (see testimonial)
- The Malton library meets the needs of todays users, as well as having furniture which has function, form and adaptability for the developing trends of the public and demands of an agile public space, providing a place for today and the future.

CLIENT COMMENTS

Library refit project:

Hazel Smith, North Yorkshire County Council

“The onset of Covid meant there were a number of challenges to overcome; including delays with the building work and limited numbers able to work within the building during the refurbishment.

The design process was supportive and collaborative. We had to work within the constraints of the building as well as responding to customer needs. The final result was just what we wanted.

Although we were only able to open for browsing for a short time before we went back into lockdown, the reaction of library customers was really positive. In particular the end panels and increased face-on display space meant that books were ‘flying off the shelves’.”

Full client testimonial available on our website:
www.fglibrary.co.uk

Press: Library opening client comments:

County Cllr Greg White, executive member for libraries

“This refurbishment brings customers a range of benefits, not only in the form of excellent library facilities, but also a flexible space to allow the community to make best use of the venue and online access to an expanded range of county council and district council services.

“Staff and volunteers are looking forward to welcoming people back into the new library space and customers can be assured that a range of measures is in place to ensure they have a safe and enjoyable visit.”



fg library & learning

Complete, inspired design solutions

