

Chapter 5: Libraries

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5.1 Introduction

This chapter examines attendance at libraries. Unless otherwise stated, attendance is defined as at least one physical visit to a library service point during the past twelve months.

Chapter structure

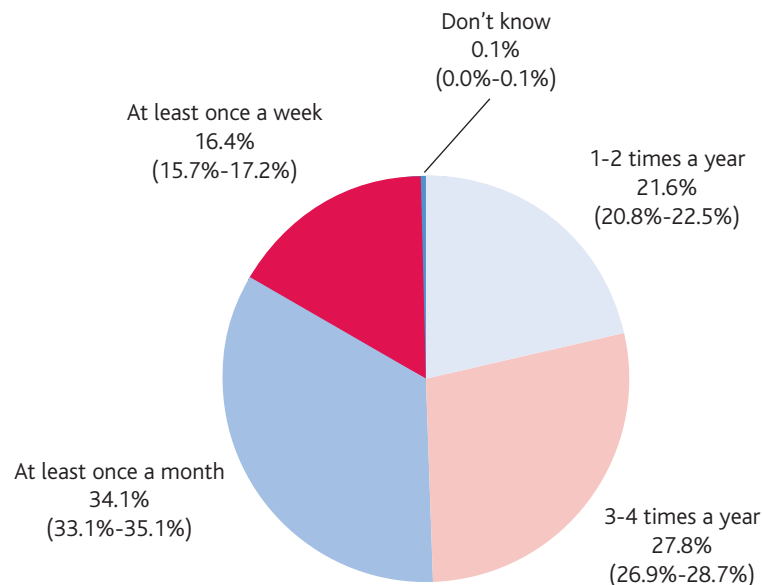
- Levels of engagement and frequency (section 5.2) examines the prevalence and frequency of attendance, and reports on variations within population sub-groups.
- Levers and Barriers (section 5.3) presents the main reason for attendance (levers) and non-attendance (barriers), as well as the factors that would encourage more frequent attendance.
- Socialisation (section 5.4) explores the relationship between recent attendance and attendance as a child.
- Other engagement (section 5.5) covers volunteering and online access.

5.2 Levels of engagement and frequency

The data show that 48 per cent of all adults had attended a library; equivalent to approximately 19.1 million adults.

The highest proportion of visitors had attended at least once a month during the past twelve months (34%) (Figure 5.2.1).

Figure 5.2.1: Frequency of attendance

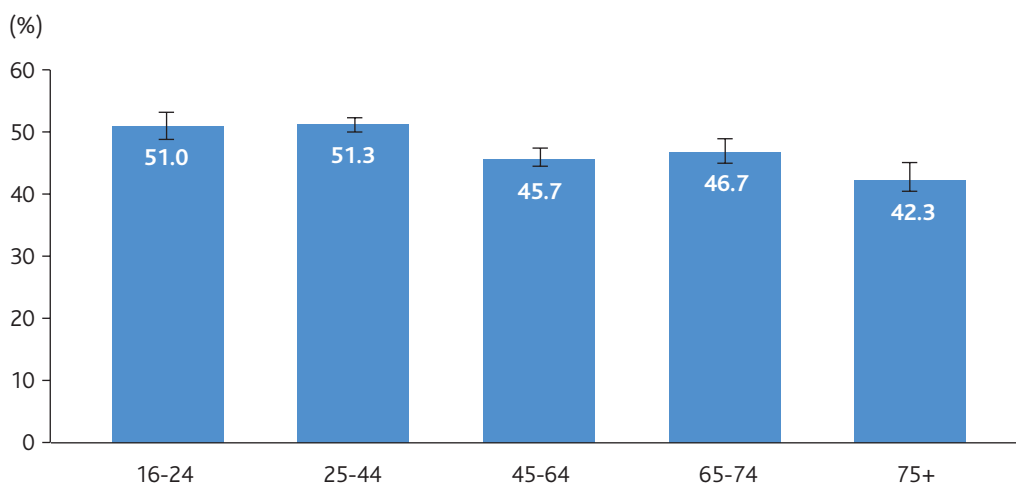


Demographic variations

AGE (Figure 5.2.2):

- Adults in the oldest age group had significantly lower rates of attendance than all other age groups.
- Adults aged 16-24 and 25-44 had significantly higher rates of attendance than all other age groups.

Figure 5.2.2: Attendance by age group



GENDER (Table 5.2.3):

- Females had significantly higher rates of attendance than males.

Table 5.2.3: Attendance by gender

	Percentage	Range (%)
Male	43.9	42.8-44.9
Female	52.3	51.3-53.3

DISABILITY/ILLNESS (Table 5.2.4):

- Adults with a limiting disability/illness had significantly lower rates of attendance than both those with a non-limiting and no disability/illness.

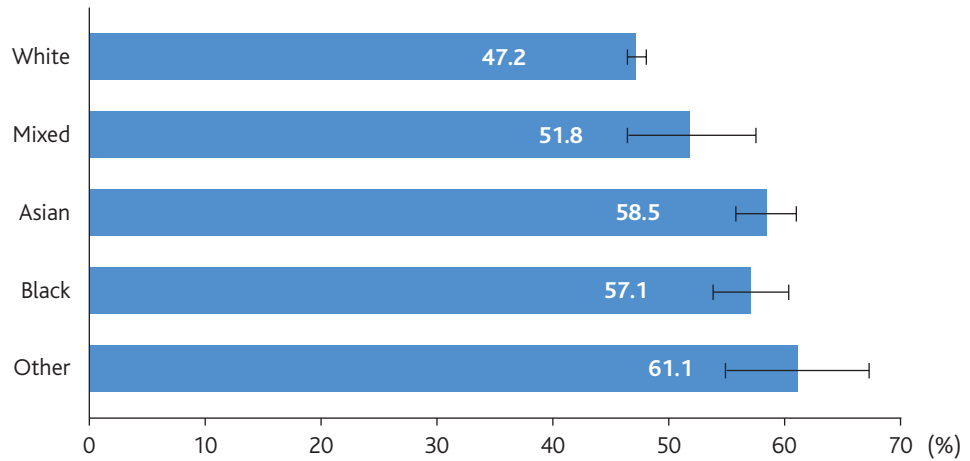
Table 5.2.4: Attendance by disability/illness

	Percentage	Range (%)
Limiting disability/illness	42.2	40.8-43.6
Non-limiting disability/illness	48.4	45.8-51.1
No disability/illness	50.0	49.1-50.9

ETHNICITY (Figure 5.2.5):

- Adults from White ethnic backgrounds had significantly lower rates of attendance than all of the remaining ethnic groups, except for those from Mixed ethnic backgrounds.
- Adults from Mixed ethnic backgrounds had significantly lower rates of attendance than both those from Asian and Other ethnic backgrounds.

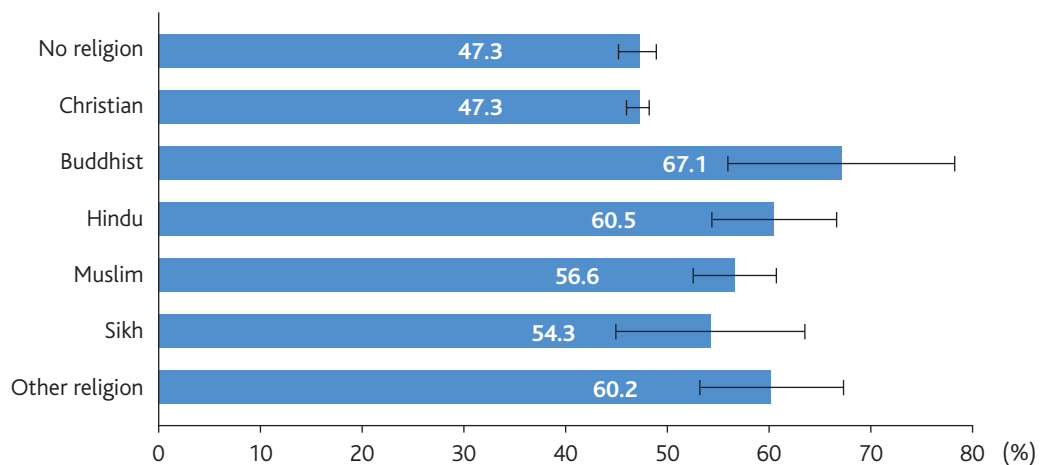
Figure 5.2.5: Attendance by ethnicity



RELIGION (Figure 5.2.6):

- Adults who reported to have no religion had significantly lower rates of attendance than all of the remaining groups, except for those who reported their religion as Christian or Sikh.
- Adults who reported their religion as Christian had significantly lower rates of attendance than all of the remaining groups, except for those who reported their religion as Sikh or reported to have no religion.

Figure 5.2.6: Attendance by religion

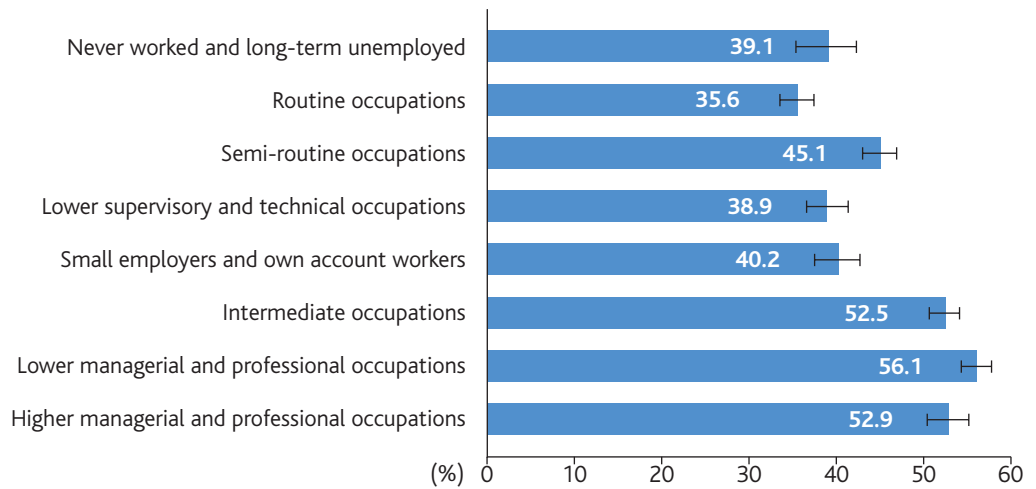


SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP (Figure 5.2.7):

- Adults from lower managerial and professional occupations had significantly higher rates of attendance than all other groups.
- Adults from higher managerial and professional occupations had significantly higher rates of attendance than all other groups, except for those from lower managerial and professional and intermediate occupations.
- Adults from semi-routine and routine occupations had significantly lower rates of attendance than those from intermediate and lower supervisory and technical occupations and those from small employers.
- Adults from intermediate occupations had significantly higher rates of attendance than those from lower supervisory and technical occupations, those from small employers and those who have never worked or are long-term unemployed.

- Adults from semi-routine occupations had significantly higher rates of attendance than both those from routine occupations and those who have never worked or are long-term unemployed.

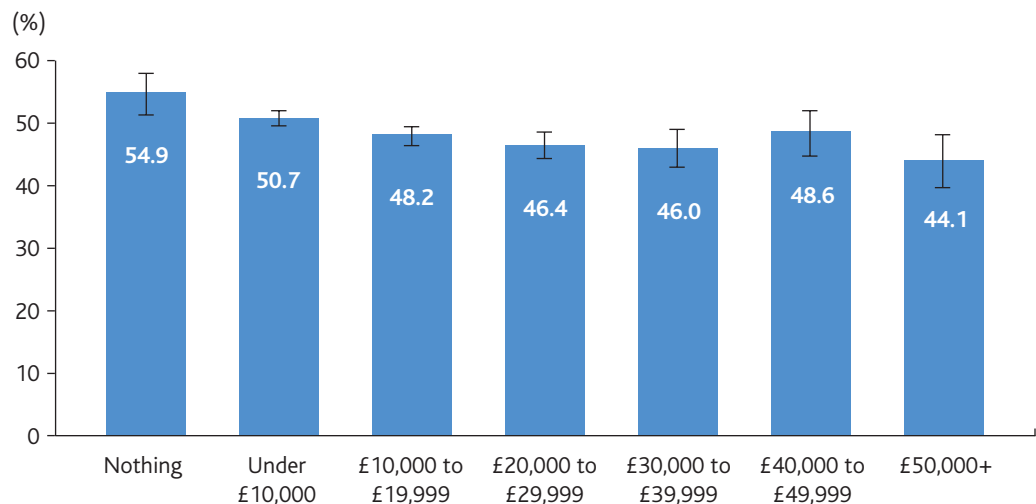
Figure 5.2.7: Attendance by socio-economic group



PERSONAL INCOME (Figure 5.2.8):

- Adults who earn nothing had significantly higher rates of attendance than all other groups.
- Adults earning under £10,000 had significantly higher rates of attendance than those in all higher income groups, except for those who earn between £40,000 and £49,999.

Figure 5.2.8: Attendance by personal income



TENURE (Table 5.2.9):

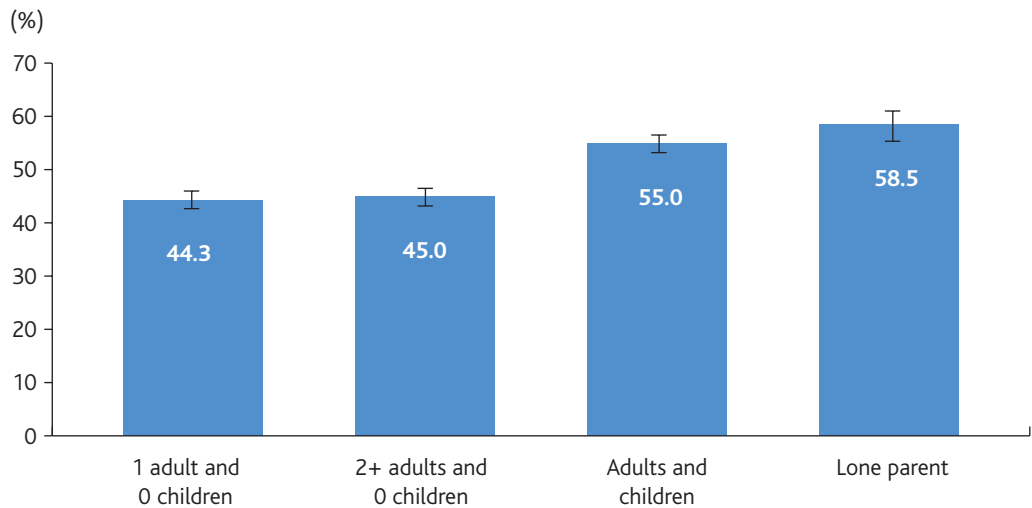
- Adults who rent from the social sector had significantly lower rates of attendance than both those who rent from the private sector and owner occupiers.
- Adults who rent from the private sector had significantly higher rates of attendance than owner occupiers.

Table 5.2.9: Attendance by tenure

	Percentage	Range (%)
Owners	48.7	47.9-49.6
Social rented sector	41.9	40.3-43.5
Private rented sector	53.3	51.2-55.4

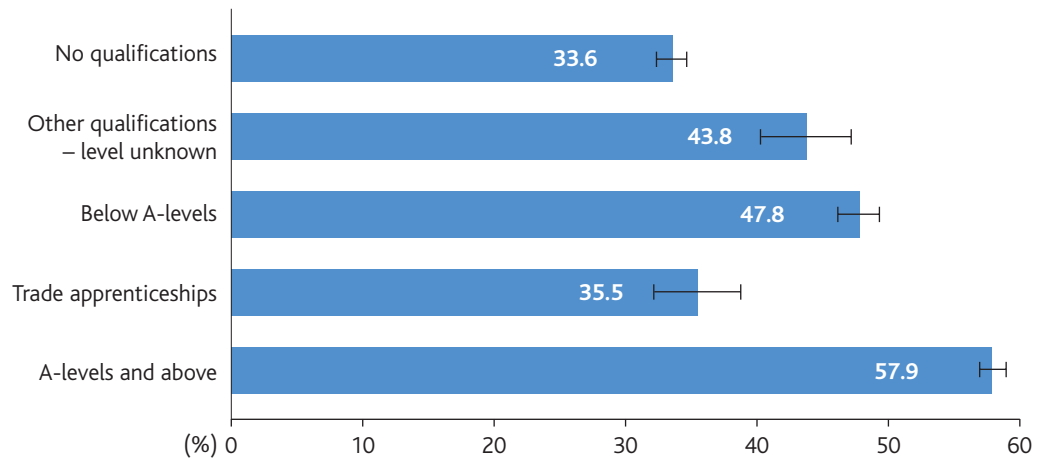
HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE (Figure 5.2.10):

- Adults living in households with children (adults and children; lone parents) had significantly higher rates of attendance than those living in households with no children (1 adult and 0 children; 2+ adults and 0 children).
- Adults living in lone parent households had significantly higher rates of attendance than all other groups.

Figure 5.2.10: Attendance by household structure

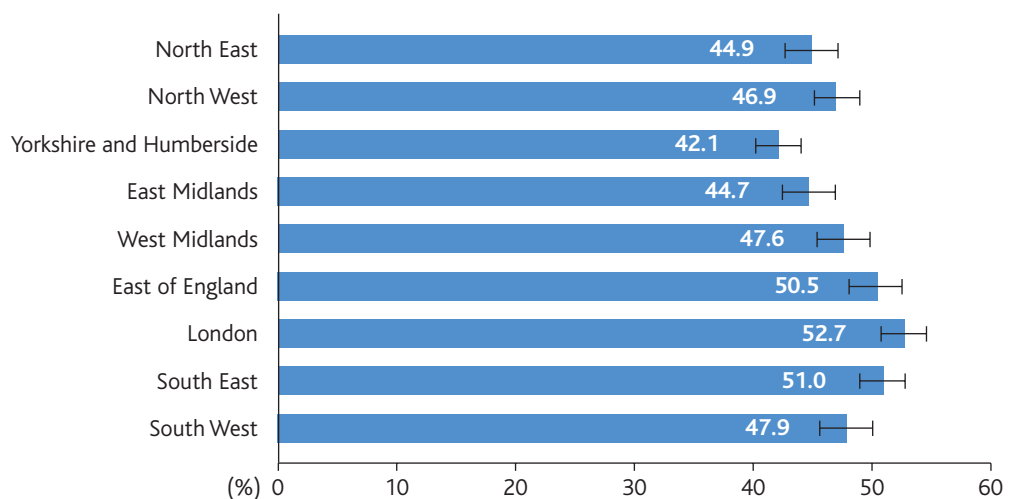
QUALIFICATIONS (Figure 5.2.11):

- Adults with A-levels or above had significantly higher rates of attendance than all other groups.
- Adults with no formal qualifications had significantly lower rates of attendance than those with some form of qualification, except for those with trade apprenticeships.
- Adults with below A-level qualifications had significantly higher rates of attendance than those with trade apprenticeships and those with some form of other qualification (the level of which is unknown).
- Adults with trade apprenticeships had significantly lower rates of attendance than those with some form of other qualification (the level of which is unknown).

Figure 5.2.11: Attendance by qualifications

GOVERNMENT OFFICE REGION (Figure 5.2.12):

- Adults living in London and the South East had significantly higher rates of attendance than those living in all other English regions, except for those living in the East of England.
- Adults living in the East of England had significantly higher rates of attendance than those living in all other English regions, except for London, the South East, the South West and the West Midlands.
- Adults living in Yorkshire and the Humberside had significantly lower rates of attendance than those living in all other English regions, except for the North East and the East Midlands.
- Adults living in the East Midlands had significantly lower rates of attendance than those living in the South West.

Figure 5.2.12: Attendance by Government Office region

AREA TYPE:

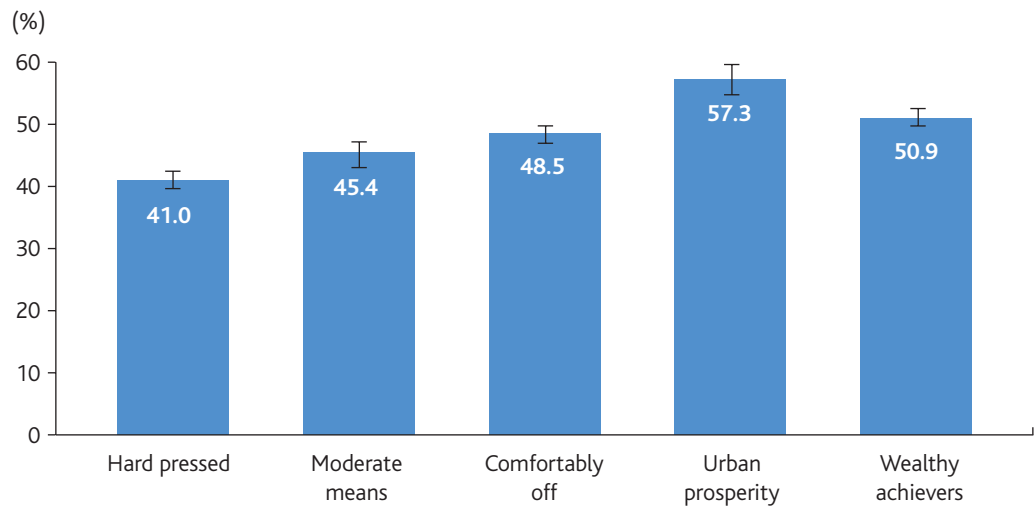
- There was no significant difference in the rates of attendance between adults living in urban and rural areas (49% and 47% respectively).

ACORN CATEGORY (Figure 5.2.13):

- Adults living in 'urban prosperity' neighbourhoods had significantly higher rates of attendance than those living in all other neighbourhood types.

- Adults living in 'hard pressed' neighbourhoods had significantly lower rates of attendance than those living in all other neighbourhood types.
- Adults living in 'wealthy achievers' neighbourhoods had significantly higher rates of attendance than those living in all other neighbourhood types, except for those living in 'urban prosperity'.
- Adults living in 'comfortably off' neighbourhoods had significantly higher rates of attendance than those living in 'moderate means'.

Figure 5.2.13: Attendance by ACORN category



5.3 Levers and Barriers

This section looks at the main reasons given for non-attendance and attendance at libraries during the past twelve months, and presents the factors that would encourage more frequent attendance in the future.

Reasons for non-attendance

Of those who had not attended a library during the past twelve months, 'no need to go' was the main reason for non-attendance followed by 'not really interested' (30% and 19% respectively) (Table 5.3.1).

Table 5.3.1: Main reason for non-attendance

	Percentage	Range (%)
No need to go	30.1	29.1-31.0
Not really interested	19.2	18.4-20.2
It's difficult to find the time	15.5	14.8-16.3

In addition to the reasons presented above, 7 per cent of non-attendees stated that they 'preferred to buy books', whilst 4 per cent stated that they 'use the internet instead'.

Reasons for attendance

Of those who attended a library at least once during the past twelve months, 'to borrow/return/renew books' was the main reason for attendance followed by 'accompanying children' (56% and 10% respectively) (Table 5.3.2).

Table 5.3.2: Main reason for attendance

	Percentage	Range (%)
To borrow/return/renew books	56.2	55.1-57.2
Accompanying children	10.2	9.6-10.9
To browse/read	7.8	7.2-8.4

Other reasons for attendance included visiting to 'use computers/internet' (6%) and 'attempting to find out information about the local area and services' (5%).

Factors that would encourage more frequent attendance

Having 'more free time' was the main factor that would encourage more frequent attendance by those who already attend once or twice a year and said that they would like to go more often, followed by a 'better selection of books' (53% and 13% respectively) (Table 5.3.3).

Table 5.3.3: Main factor that would encourage those who already attend 1-2 times a year to go more often

	Percentage	Range (%)
If I had more free time	53.3	49.4-57.1
Better selection of books	13.5	10.9-16.1
Longer opening hours	8.0	5.9-10.1

Other factors that would encourage more frequent attendance included 'more activities for children' and 'better public transport links/access to transport' (5% and 4% respectively).

5.4 Socialisation

This section explores the relationship between recent attendance at libraries and attendance as a child.

Over half (57%) of all adults were taken to a library as a child. Of which, over three-fifths (64%) attended at least once a month (Table 5.4.1).

Table 5.4.1: Frequency of attendance as a child

	Percentage	Range (%)
Less often than once a year	7.9	7.2-8.7
1-2 times a year	10.2	9.4-11.0
3-4 times a year	17.3	16.3-18.4
At least once a month	63.5	62.2-64.8
Don't know	1.0	0.8-1.3

Combining the data for recent attendance and attendance as a child shows that those who were taken to libraries as a child had significantly higher recent attendance rates than those who were not taken as a child (57% and 39% respectively).

5.5 Other engagement

This section examines volunteering within the libraries sector and contact with libraries through the internet.

During the past twelve months 3 per cent of all adults volunteered in the cultural sector, of which 7 per cent volunteered in the libraries sector; equivalent to less than 1 per cent of all adults.

Just under one-tenth (9%) of all adults visited a library website during the past twelve months.

In total, 50 per cent of all adults had either visited a library in person or accessed a library website. Of which, just over four-fifths (82%) visited in person only, just under just over one-tenth (15%) visited in person and accessed online services, with the remaining small proportion (3%) only using web-based sites (Figure 5.5.1).

Figure 5.5.1: Physical and internet visits

