



**LIBRARIES
GIVE US
POWER**

THE PROJECT



Libraries Give Us Power is a project to tackle mis/dis information and support democracy by making the link between media literacy and active citizenship.

This was achieved through:

- ☐ The development of library collections and resources
- ☐ Media literacy sessions
- ☐ A programme of events to facilitate discussion and debate

The project addressed the key strategic aims of Forward: Scotland's Public Library Strategy by encouraging active citizenship through access to accurate information, empowering communities to make informed decisions.

The project also addressed the focused aims introduced by Fast Forward: Scotland's Public Library Strategy Refresh by empowering citizens to navigate information and democracy.

THE ROLE



To encourage active citizenship by providing supported access in the library to trusted, accurate information, empowering communities to make informed decisions.

Develop and strengthen partnerships to reach a wider range of people within the community, including underrepresented groups.

Co-produce events and develop collections in consultation with the local community.

Deliver a programme of staff training on supporting democratic engagement in libraries and media literacy awareness.



Finland: Public Libraries Act, 2017

- ☐ Promotes the objectives of active citizenship, democracy, and freedom of expression.
- ☐ Following the Act, libraries became a wider part of civil society and Sitra, the Finnish Innovation Fund, explored methods for increasing democracy in libraries.

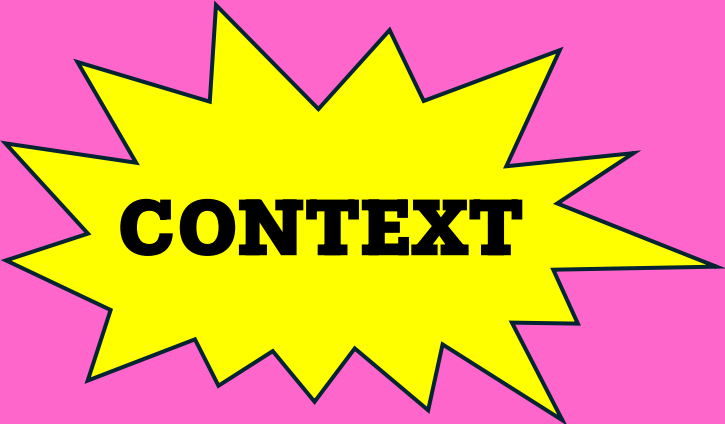
Libraries as Forums of Democracy, 2020-2021

- ☐ A pilot project that transformed six libraries into venues for dialogue between the public and decision-makers.
- ☐ The subsequent report, *How to Make Libraries Forums of Democracy?* presents ways that can help public libraries create opportunities for democratic participation.

INSPIRATION

Strengthening Europe Through Public Libraries, 2026

- ☐ Identifies strengthening the resilience and the functioning of democracy as one of the key societal challenges libraries are well placed to address.



CONTEXT

COSLA: Strengthening Local Democracy in Scotland: A Case for Action and a Plan for Change, April 2026

- ☐ The white paper acknowledges that a strong working relationship between local and national government is essential to protect and strengthen democracy.
- ☐ Recognises that democracy begins and ends in local communities.

SLIC: Beyond Adequate, February 2026

- ☐ Reinforces the role of public libraries as core civic infrastructure supporting national priorities across learning, digital inclusion, and community resilience.

2025/26 Public Library Improvement Fund

- ☐ Administered by the Scottish Library and Information Council on behalf of the Scottish Government, prioritised projects tackling mis/dis Information and supporting democracy.



MEDIA LITERACY SESSIONS

The offer comprised of four weekly 1-1.5-hour sessions which introduced useful resources to critically evaluate information while allowing time for participants to raise concerns and experiences through guided group discussion.

- ☐ Encourage active citizenship by supporting access to accurate information.
- ☐ Raise awareness of issues around mis/dis information and media bias.
- ☐ Demonstrate effective search strategies, tools, and resources to evaluate information.
- ☐ Facilitate discussion and debate.

- ☐ **Identifying Inaccurate Information:**
Explored media framing, bias and context.
- ☐ **AI Generated Content:**
Examined generative AI.
- ☐ **The Spread of Mis/Disinformation:**
Discussed online platforms and algorithms.
- ☐ **Wider Implications:**
Explored the real-world impact of information disorder, as well as the environmental and economic effects of AI infrastructure.

MEDIA LITERACY FEEDBACK



- ☐ 82 attendees participated across 28 sessions.
- ☐ Of those who completed both pre- and post session evaluations, the proportion who felt fairly confident in judging whether online information was true increased from 30% to 70%.
- ☐ Confidence identifying AI content increased from 20% to 60%.
- ☐ 75% of participants reported that the sessions had changed how they evaluate online content.

Libraries helping to tackle misinformation

INVERCLYDE Libraries are taking action to help the public spot misinformation.

Inverclyde Libraries is offering a series of free media literacy workshops aimed at helping people make sense of the information they encounter.

Sessions will run over four weeks at Greenock Central Library from Thursday, June 11, 5.30pm to 6.30pm, and at Gourock Library from Tuesday, June 9, 2pm to 3pm.

The workshops are part of Inverclyde Libraries' Active

Citizenship project which encourages active citizenship by providing access to information.

The sessions are supported by the Scottish Government Public Library Improvement Fund.

To register, contact your local library or call [01475 712323](tel:01475712323).

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Library sessions help people navigate AI

PIONEERING library sessions have been helping people navigate the world of AI and online media.

The workshops, which have been running at Gourrock and Greenock Central Libraries, focus on media literacy, misinformation and disinformation.

The sessions are part of a wider project called Libraries Give Us Power, aiming to build a link between information provision and active citizenship.

Liam Haggarty, an active citizenship librarian, has been leading the sessions.

He said the service has a responsibility to give people the tools to recognise what is true or false in a world increasingly shaped by AI.

He said: "A library is a

Lorraine Tinney
ltinney@greenocklibrary.co.uk

trusted place where people can access information, discuss issues and impart skills to assess information as well.

"People today are overwhelmed by information, by the use of AI and chatbots and by misinformation."

Liam hopes the project can tackle misinformation and encourage greater democratic engagement.

Iris Potter, from Port Glasgow, who has been attending the sessions, said: "I joined because of AI. I feel it's getting out of hand."

"It's getting to the point you don't know what is true and what is not."

Fellow student Bob Campbell, 75, said: "These sessions have given me



Switched on From left are Iris Potter, Liam Haggarty, Bob Campbell and Isabel Giffillan.
Picture: George Munro

the questions to ask when dealing with AI.

"We have been comparing ChatGPT and Clyde, Inverclyde Council's new chatbot."

"I definitely feel better equipped."

Isabel Giffillan, 87, ad-

mitted she felt a bit 'overwhelmed' by IT, but said the sessions have helped.

Liam said the four-week blocks at each library had proved so successful that the course ran for a further two weeks in Gourrock, with this week

marking the final session. There are also other events planned later in the year.

Inverclyde Libraries has secured funding through the Public Library Improvement Fund to run the project.

Ofcom's Adults' Media Use and Attitudes Report, 2026

- ☐ 54% of UK adults say they use AI tools, such as ChatGPT, Copilot and Gemini.
- ☐ 45% of users turn to AI for factual information.
- ☐ 75% of online adults read AI search summaries, sometimes called AI Overviews, which provide a short, automated summary of information drawn from across the internet.

DEMOS: Electoral Hallucinations: Safeguarding UK Elections in the World of LLMs and AI, 2026

- ☐ Researchers tested how the services ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Google AI Overviews, Grok and Replika performed on a single day during the 2026 Scottish pre-election window.
- ☐ One third (34.1%) of responses across chatbots contained factual errors.

VERIFICATION RESOURCES

BBC Verify

Fact-checks information, verifies videos.

The Ferret

Independent, investigative journalism cooperative.

Full Fact

The UK's independent fact checking charity.



LIBRARY RESOURCES

PressReader

Free access to thousands of newspapers.

Britannica Library

Age-appropriate levels to conduct research.

British Newspaper Archive

Access to millions of pages of British and Irish newspapers.

AI EDUCATION RESOURCES

APRS Data Centre Map

Map of planned hyperscale data centre projects in Scotland.

Scottish AI Register

A register of the systems in use by the Scottish Government.

Critical AI Literacy Library

Investigate AI through a critical lens.

EVENTS

Book & Music Groups

- ☐ Book Groups discussed the theme of 'Polemic' and works which illuminate major political themes.
- ☐ Muso Mondays Music Group discussed albums that have shaped their worldview by addressing social and cultural themes and events.

Author Events & Panel Events

- ☐ Authors: Darren McGarvey, Orwell Prize winning author
- ☐ EIBF Streams: Irvine Welsh, Cory Doctorow, David Olusoga
- ☐ Panels: Literacy & Technology, Feminist Librarianship, Democracy and Information Disorder

Workshops

- ☐ Public writing workshop on place, nature and climate change with Dr Dominic Hinde, sociologist, journalist and nature writer.



DEMOCRACY & INFORMATION DISORDER

At a time when misinformation, disinformation, and growing polarisation are challenging public trust, this event explored how communities can rebuild civic confidence and strengthen democratic participation.

Featuring a panel of Dr Claire Bynner, Sir John Curtice, and Dr Ruth Lightbody, the event showcased the library as a community space where people can connect and discuss issues of importance.



- ☐ 100% of respondents agreed that libraries have a role in supporting informed and engaged communities.
- ☐ 92% said the event provided ideas or information that could help them take action within their community.
- ☐ “This event was a powerful illustration of why libraries are vital to our community. The audience was fully engaged, diverse and energised by the whole event.”

COLLECTIONS

Reading develops critical thinking, exposes people to diverse perspectives, and encourages reflection on complex social and political issues.

Research by The Reading Agency highlights the connections and empathy borne from reading, those who consider themselves regular readers are 86% more likely to report feeling a sense of belonging to their community.

Enshit-
tification

Why Everything
Suddenly Got
Worse 🐞
and What
Do About It

Cory
Doc

OCCUPY!
OCCUPY!
OCCUPY!

NO MORE PIE IN THE SKY
WHEN WE DIE...

STOP THE
CUTS
KILL AND
STOP THE
CUTS

A PEOPLE'S
HISTORY OF
OCCUPATION

AMNESIA

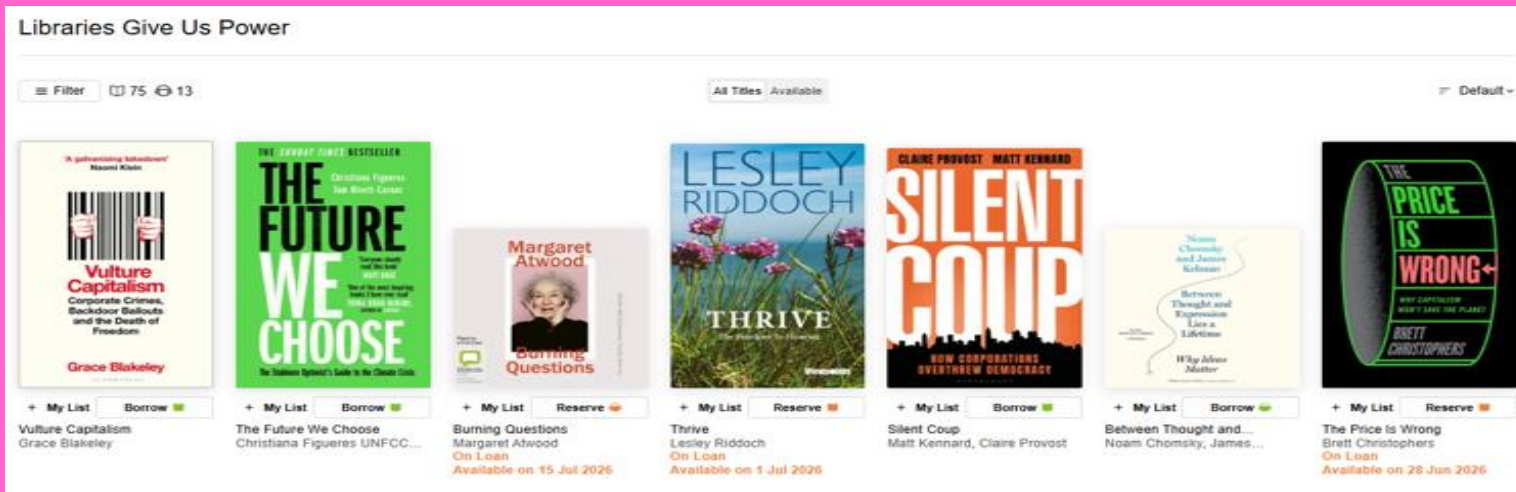
Rewriting the
Economic Crisis

Laura Basu

Media
Amnesia

Rewriting the
Economic Crisis

Laura Basu



NEXT STEPS

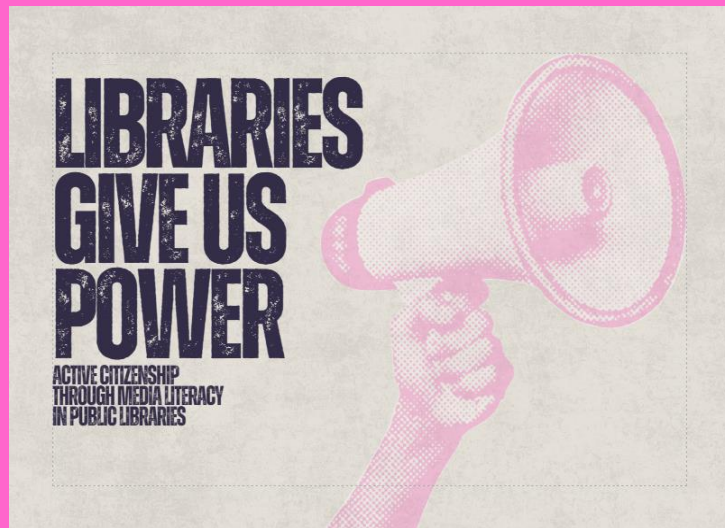
A Toolkit: Active Citizenship Through Media Literacy in Public Libraries

- ☐ Highlights learning and good practice from the Libraries Give Us Power project.
- ☐ Provides insight into what was delivered and how it was achieved, including recommended resources, further reading lists, and templates for media literacy sessions.

Continue to **PROACTIVELY** advocate for libraries as a space for democratic discussion and debate, foster a culture within the library service that embraces rather than avoiding this.

ACTIVATE: Young Voices In Action

- ☐ SLIF funded project to develop critical and independent thinking skills in young people by exposing them to concepts of democratic participation through discussion, reading, media analysis, and creative activities.



Andrew Givan

Team Leader – Inverclyde Libraries

andrew.givan@inverclyde.gov.uk

Liam Haggerty

Active Citizenship Librarian – Inverclyde Libraries

liam.haggerty@inverclyde.gov.uk

