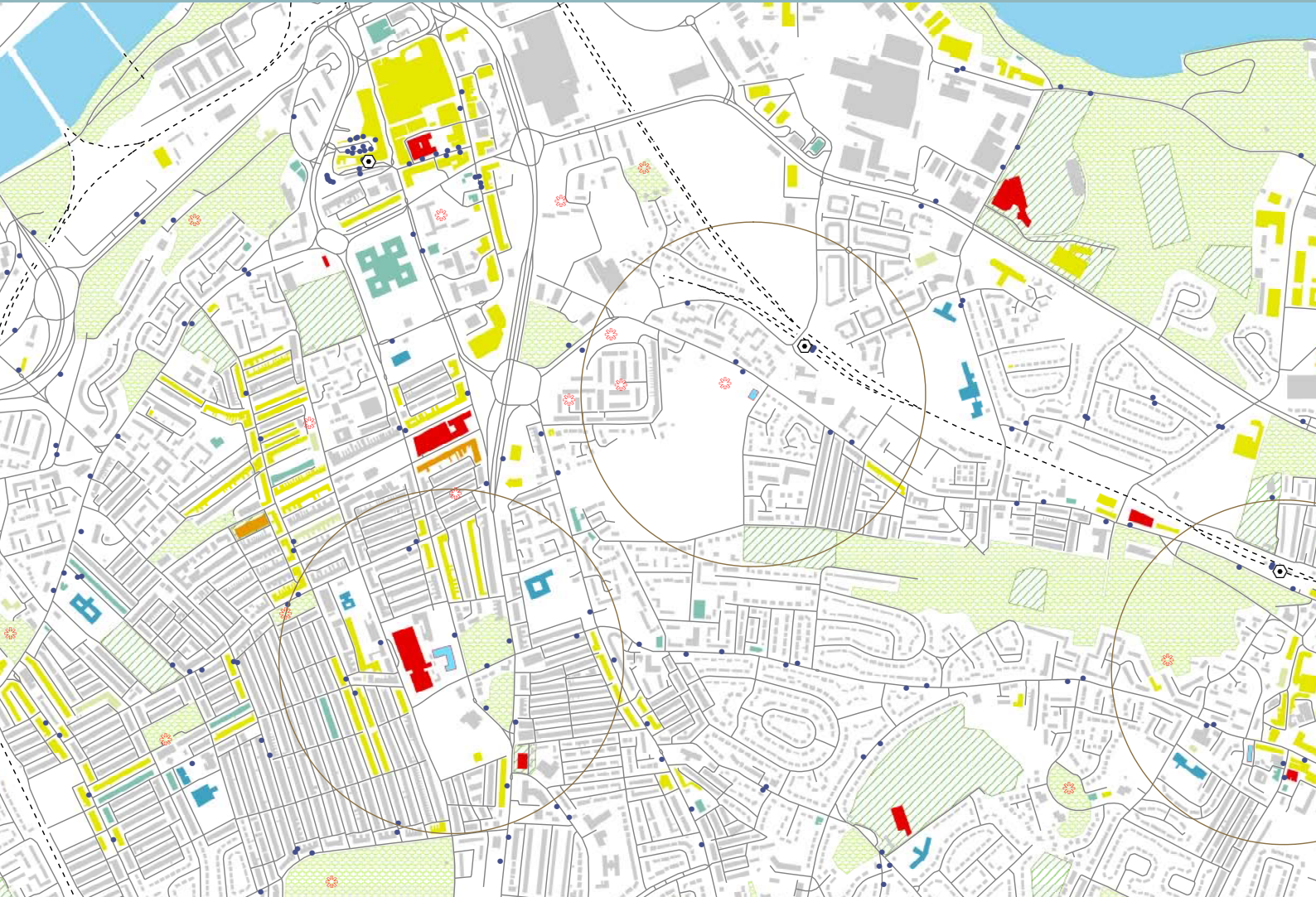


# Understanding Everyday Participation

**The effect of place and space on  
patterns of participation in libraries  
and leisure centres**

Authors: Varina Delrieu and Lisanne Gibson



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## The effect of place and space on patterns of participation in libraries and leisure centres

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# Understanding Everyday Participation:

## The effect of place and space on patterns of participation in libraries and leisure centres

### Introduction

The research project 'Understanding Everyday Participation- Articulating Cultural Values' (AHRC 2012-2018) explores the ways in which the 'situatedness' or the social/spatial context of participation is an important factor in understanding the socio-political dynamics of cultural participation (Miles and Gibson, 2016 and see project [www at http://www.everydayparticipation.org/](http://www.everydayparticipation.org/)). This report on the geography of library and leisure centre discusses the impact of geography and *asset attractiveness*<sup>1</sup> on particular kinds of cultural and leisure participation.

Traditionally, participation studies have focused on 'push' factors, associating attendance and participation in their various forms with individual and household-level demographic and socio-economic characteristics (e.g. Bennett, Savage et al, 2009). However, a number of recent studies have also revealed the significant effects of supply and proximity on participation (Brook, 2013 and 2016; Widdop and Cutts, 2012; and, Hooper-Greenhill et al, 2009).

In this report our approach to the geography of participation focuses on the role of what we are terming 'pull' factors to participation at specific locales over others. Many forms of participation involve a level of spatial decision-making, weighing up factors relating to the



<sup>1</sup> Italicised words and phrases appear in the Glossary.

destination(s), and the time and effort of getting there. How much do these 'pull' factors impact on participation, and are they quantifiable?

## Connecting with the Cultural Policy Agenda

Participation is instrumental to well-being, and is considered an important factor in other policy agendas promoting education, criminal justice, economic regeneration and tourism (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2016a, p. 4 and 2016b, p. 32). Better community cohesion, social relations and safer neighbourhoods are also cited as being positive outcomes of increased participation (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2015). Local geography forms a significant context within which culture is situated, and can play a role in enhancing (or diminishing) the potential for cultural participation activities to take place.

*Culture has a key role in 'Place Making' and making a location an attractive place to work and visit*

(Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2016a, p. 6)

## Trip-chaining: everyday engagement with people and places around us

Work in the field of transport planning has observed a pattern of travelling that incorporates multiple visits to places between an origin (typically home) and a final destination (often place of work) in order to complete a range of tasks. Complex so-called *trip-chaining* can incorporate shopping with social and recreational activities, drop-off and pick-up, work and personal business (Primerano et al, 2008; Thill and Thomas, 1987; Bertolini et al, 2005). With this in mind, *everyday participation* can be facilitated or inhibited by the quality of trip-chaining opportunities in an area, and the geographic characteristics of the physical space can influence the type, frequency and scope of that participation.

## Library and leisure centre usage: everyday participation

In assessing the effect of geography on participation within our two study areas Gateshead and Manchester we sought data that would provide us with a pattern of movement between home and a destination based participatory activity. This presents a challenge as there are few comparable datasets for exploring participation

patterns linked to participant destination origin, many everyday activities are not associated with robust and accessible data e.g. visiting a park, restaurant, pub, post office, supermarket etc. The use of libraries and leisure centres however, does offer an insight as we know where the member lives and which centre or library they are using. We hypothesised that using libraries and leisure centres could be part of *trip-chaining* activity, in conjunction with the user visiting other 'everyday places', such as shopping, health care facilities, schools, banks and so forth (Delrieu & Gibson 2017a). Current research relating to library usage indicates that they have a significant and wide-ranging role in the local community, enabling people to participate in culture and knowledge exchange, as well as offering support services and through these activities enhancing well-being in users (Arts Council England, 2017a-d). Similarly Sport England's research on participation in sport has found that 'sport can, and does, make a profound and positive impact on individuals, communities and wider society' (Sport England, 2016). Thus, we used library and leisure centre usage data to explore the ways in which geography impacts upon destination choices in everyday cultural and leisure participation.





## Headlines

The **libraries** with the highest number of users typically have good connectivity to the public transport network and other local assets, especially supermarkets, and have longer opening hours as well as providing a good range of services within.

**Leisure centres** have a strong local usership, with users attending from the local area in high proportions. Non local users of a centre are much less influenced by *trip-chaining* opportunities, and make their choice based on a range of other factors including the range of services provided by the Centre, neighbourhood perceptions and personal attachment (e.g. because of cultural identity).



## Key Findings

1. Geographic proximity to the home is more important for the users of leisure centres, but a more complex picture emerges for libraries.
2. Opportunities for *trip-chaining* (the practice of undertaking more than one activity while out of the house) are an important factor in the use of libraries, but this aspect of *asset attractiveness* is not so important for leisure centre use.
3. Patterns of use in urban and suburban libraries reflect the impact of relative attractiveness, whereas peri-urban or rural libraries have much more localised usage.
4. Neighbourhood perception and personal attachment (e.g. because of cultural identity) are influential factors in determining the use of particular libraries and leisure centres.
5. Standalone libraries and leisure centres are as likely to be used as those which are co-located together or with other services such as academies, community hubs or learning centres.



## Research Methods

**Manchester** is a densely urban multicultural city within the Greater Manchester conurbation, along with nine other local authority areas which together make up the Greater Manchester Combined Authority. Within Manchester City Council jurisdiction, there are 22 libraries, 6 of which are volunteer-run, and 9 leisure centres, 8 with a pool and one sports hall without. For the purposes of this research, Manchester City Library and the Manchester Aquatics Centre are excluded from the study as their heightened attractiveness and usership, following recent investment and capital development were resulting in a substantial bias when included in the analysis.

Case Study Area	Manchester City Council	Gateshead Borough Council
Region of England	North West	North East
Spatial Extent (km <sup>2</sup> )	116	143
Population (mid 2015 est.)	530,300	201,000
Population density (per km <sup>2</sup> )	4,585	1,400
Population: White %	67	94
Population: Asian %	14	2
Population: Black %	7	0.5

**Table 1: Social and geographical differences between the two case study areas:**

**Gateshead** comprises a smaller more urbanised core and a peri-urban / rural population which is largely white. It has 17 libraries, 6 of which were volunteer run at the time of this study, and has 7 sports facilities: 4 leisure centres with pools, 1 standalone swimming pool, one neighbouring sport centre without a pool and the International Stadium (an athletics centre without a pool). Again for the purposes of reducing bias, Gateshead Central Library and Leisure Centre are excluded from the majority of the study.

Of the six case study areas covered by the UEP project<sup>2</sup>, Manchester and Gateshead provide an insight into two contrasting Northern urban areas. Given their different ethnic profiles and urban density distributions, we were interested in understanding how patterns of participation would vary or mirror each other.

For the remainder of this report, the term 'leisure centre' is used to describe all sports facilities.

<sup>2</sup> These are Aberdeen, Dartmoor National Park, Gateshead, Manchester, Peterborough and the Scottish Western Isles.

## Attractiveness Classification Scheme

**Exterior:** the locale around the facility

- The number of other *everyday spaces* (see Appendix 1) <400m<sup>3</sup>
- Presence or absence of a mid/large sized supermarket <400m
- Number of education facilities (nursery, crèche, primary or secondary school) <400m
- Number of unique bus routes, tram lines, and train stations <400m
- *Segment depth (accessibility)*: how accessible a space is compared to other spaces around it, and therefore its potential as a destination

**Interior:** range of services offered within the facility

- Number of regular user group activities / clubs in libraries<sup>4</sup>
- Number of different activities in leisure centres<sup>4</sup>
- Total hours open
- Weekend hours open
- Square meterage of the interior (where provided)

These variables are turned into z-scores to give an indication of how above or below average the relative attractiveness of a facility is compared to other facilities.

## Relative attractiveness of libraries and leisure centres for trip-chaining opportunities

We adapted the methodology used by O'Reilly et al (2015) on the 'sportscape' of Greater Toronto to create a classification of the libraries and leisure centres in Gateshead and Manchester, through available quantifiable data. This classification system allows us to consider the relative attractiveness of a site compared to others in terms of both *trip-chaining* opportunities and the range of services offered within the facility. We can therefore

<sup>3</sup> This represents a 5 minute walk for people with average mobility, commonly cited in urban and transport planning e.g. Masini, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Telephone audit (2016): In libraries groups included toddler sing song time, knit & natter, language classes, computer classes etc. and in leisure centres groups included gym classes, swim school, sport hall, football pitches, number of pools, etc. for leisure centres.



assess the role of the local neighbourhood for inhibiting or facilitating everyday participation and in relation to the 'pull' of the specific services provided. The variables calculated comprise interior and exterior metrics:

We are interested in finding out if people simply use their nearest facility irrespective of its quality or spatial context, and in what proportions people are coming from other catchments. In order to do this, we divided the City or Borough boundary into theoretical catchment areas for each facility using *Thiessen Polygons* in a geographical information system (GIS). Each postcode was then assigned to their nearest library or leisure facility (See maps 1 - 4 below). The contrasting urban/rural nature of the study areas means that the catchments are of greatly varying sizes (see Appendix 2 for details of the range of hectares for catchments).

## Usership data

In assessing the importance of geography in participation in libraries and leisure centres, we obtained user data from Gateshead Borough Council, Manchester City Council and GLL (Better), the charitable trust that runs leisure centres in Manchester. We identified three separate metrics as useful for our analysis:

1. Number of members who have used the library or leisure centre in the previous 12 months (one count per facility),
2. The proportion of users that have come from outside the local catchment area, and
3. The proportion of users who use their local facility.





# Findings

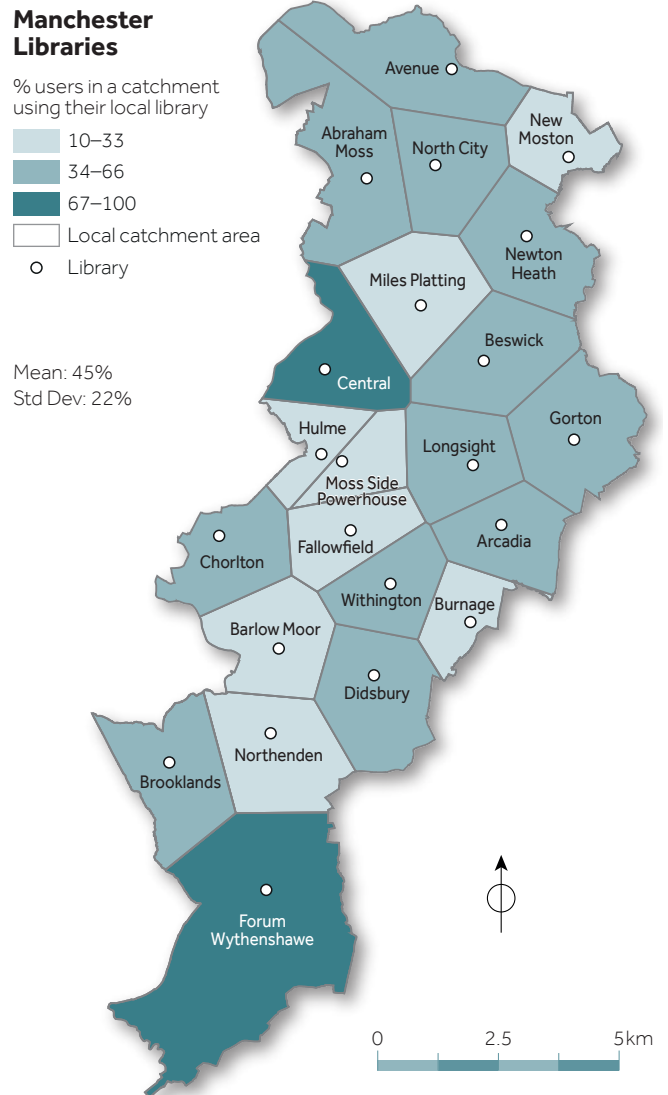
## Finding 1: Geographical proximity to home is more important for the users of leisure centres but a more complex picture emerges for libraries.

### Libraries

In Manchester less than 33% of library users living in the catchment areas coloured in lightest turquoise in Map 1 use their local library. Only the two catchment areas coloured in darkest turquoise – Central and Wythenshawe libraries – have over 66% users using their local facility. On average 45% of library-using residents use the library in their catchment in Manchester.

Similarly in Gateshead, there are five catchments where only a small number of library users go to their local library (in lightest turquoise, Map 2). Conversely in eight other catchments (in darkest turquoise), over 66% of users are using their local library.

**Map 1: Manchester** percentage of users in a catchment that use their local library



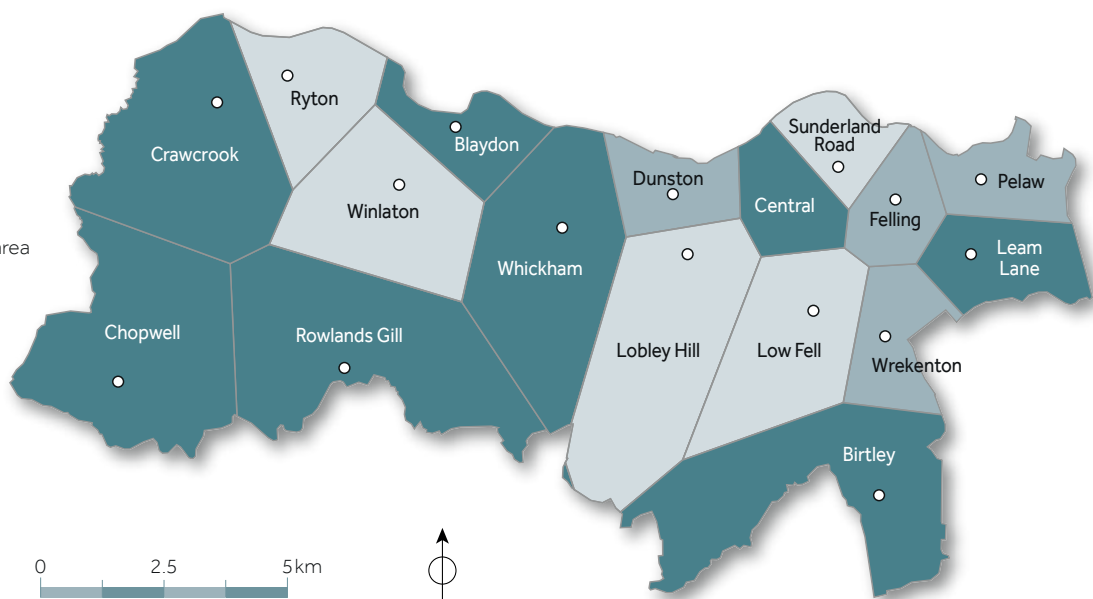
**Map 2: Gateshead** percentage of users in a catchment that use their local library

### Gateshead Libraries

% users in a catchment using their local library

- 6–33
- 34–66
- 67–100
- Local catchment area
- Library

Mean: 54%  
Std Dev: 28%



## Leisure Centres

For leisure centres the picture is more straight forward. In Manchester over 66% of leisure centre-users in five of the eight catchments use their local leisure centre, and three of these catchments have over 90% local users. The overall average for users using their local centre is 71% (Map 3).

Of the seven leisure centres in Gateshead (Birtley leisure centre and swimming pool are in the same catchment), half of the facilities have a high number of local users and only one, the International Stadium, has a low percentage (21%) of users living in the local catchment using the stadium. On average 63% of local users in Gateshead are using their local centre (Map 4).

We wanted to understand why some facilities had higher or lower proportions of local users; what would motivate someone to travel further than their nearest facility, and why is that more common for users of libraries than leisure centres?

When assessing the local area around a facility for *asset attractiveness* and looking at the geographical location of the facility within the wider context of the urban area, we found that patterns emerged which indicated the reasons for the choices users are making.

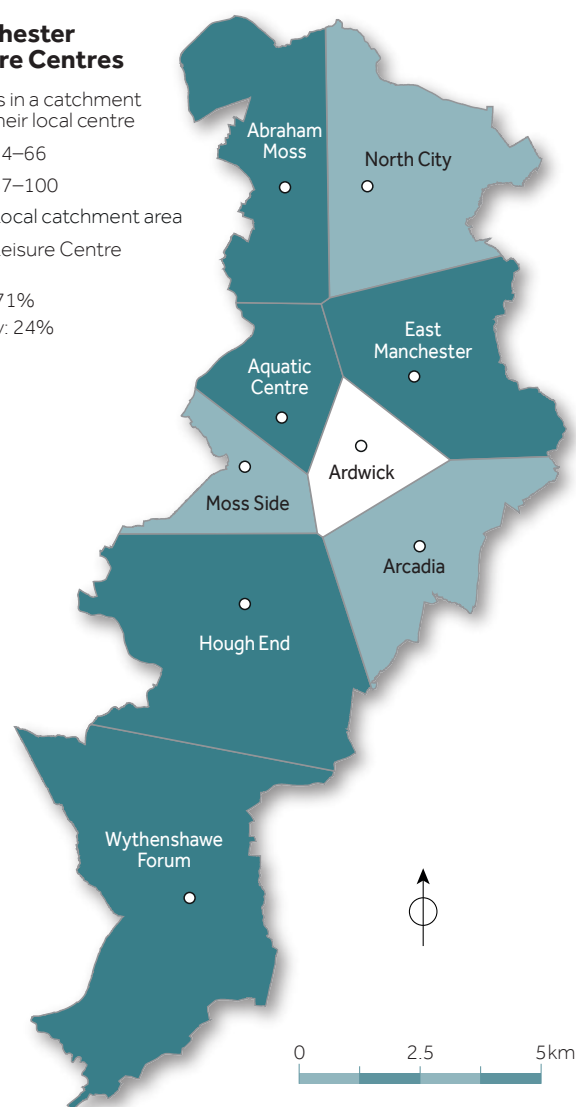
**Map 3: Manchester** percentage of users in a catchment that use their local leisure centre (Note: Ardwick Sports Hall has no 'members')

### Manchester Leisure Centres

% users in a catchment using their local centre



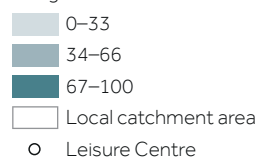
Mean: 71%  
Std Dev: 24%



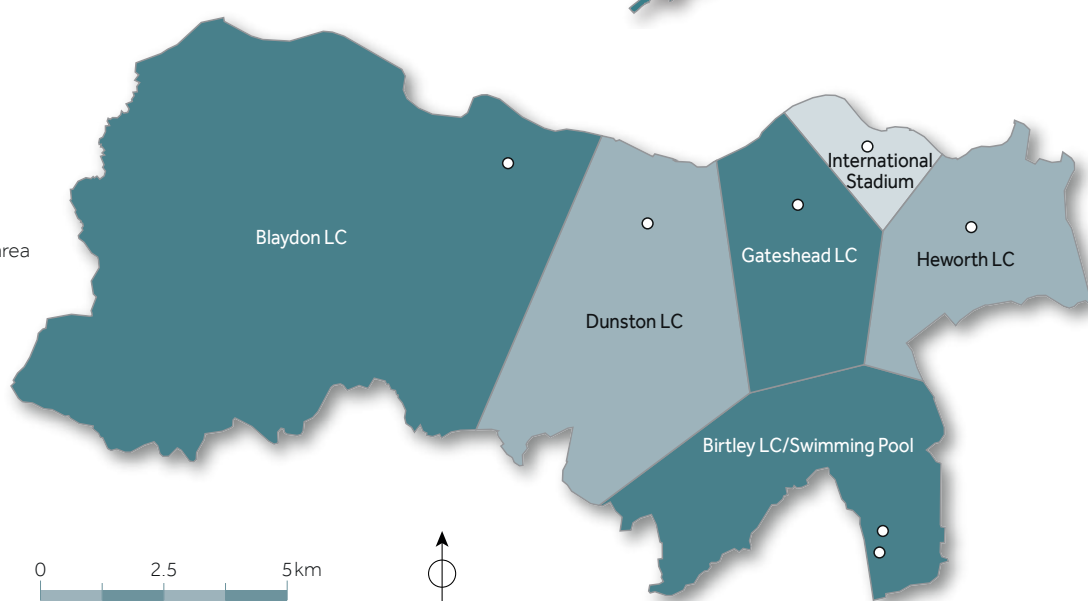
**Map 4: Gateshead** percentage of users in a catchment that use their local leisure centre

### Gateshead Leisure Centres

% users in a catchment using their local centre



Mean: 63%  
Std Dev: 21%



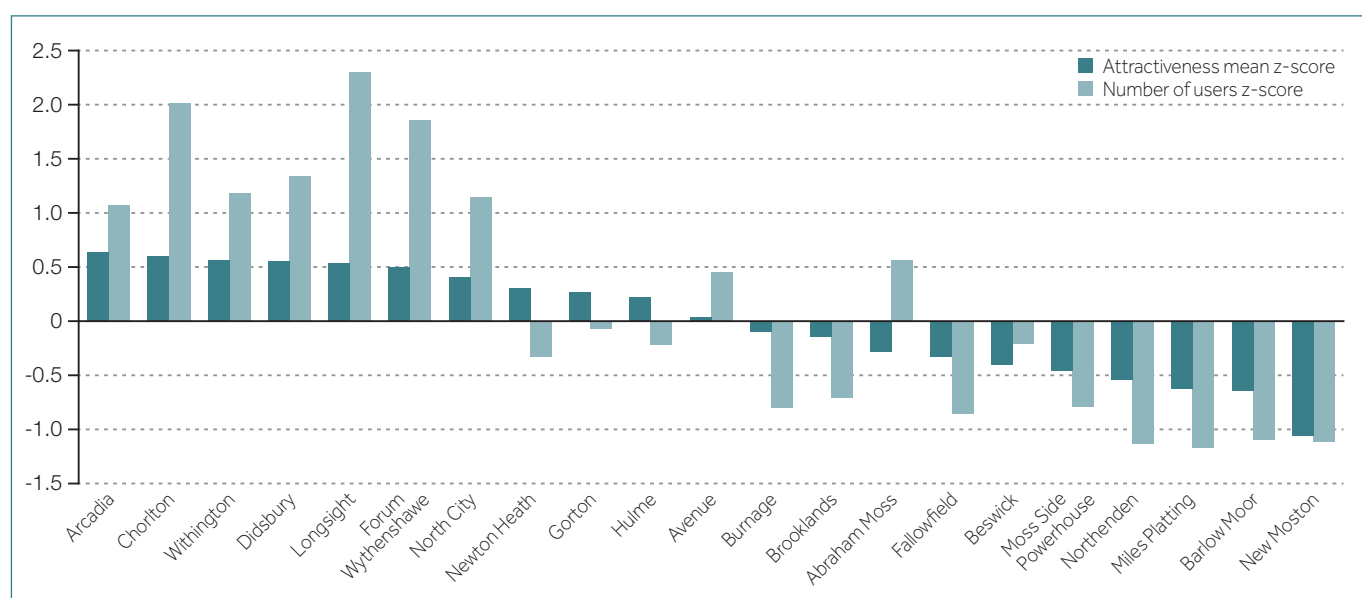
## Finding 2: Opportunities for *trip-chaining* are an important factor in the use of many libraries, but this aspect of asset attractiveness is not so important for leisure centre use.

Using the Attractiveness Classification Scheme described on p.6, we can identify which libraries and leisure centres have more or less opportunities for *trip-chaining* relative to each other in addition to the attractiveness of the services offered within the facility (see Appendix 3 for *Asset attractiveness* scores for facilities).

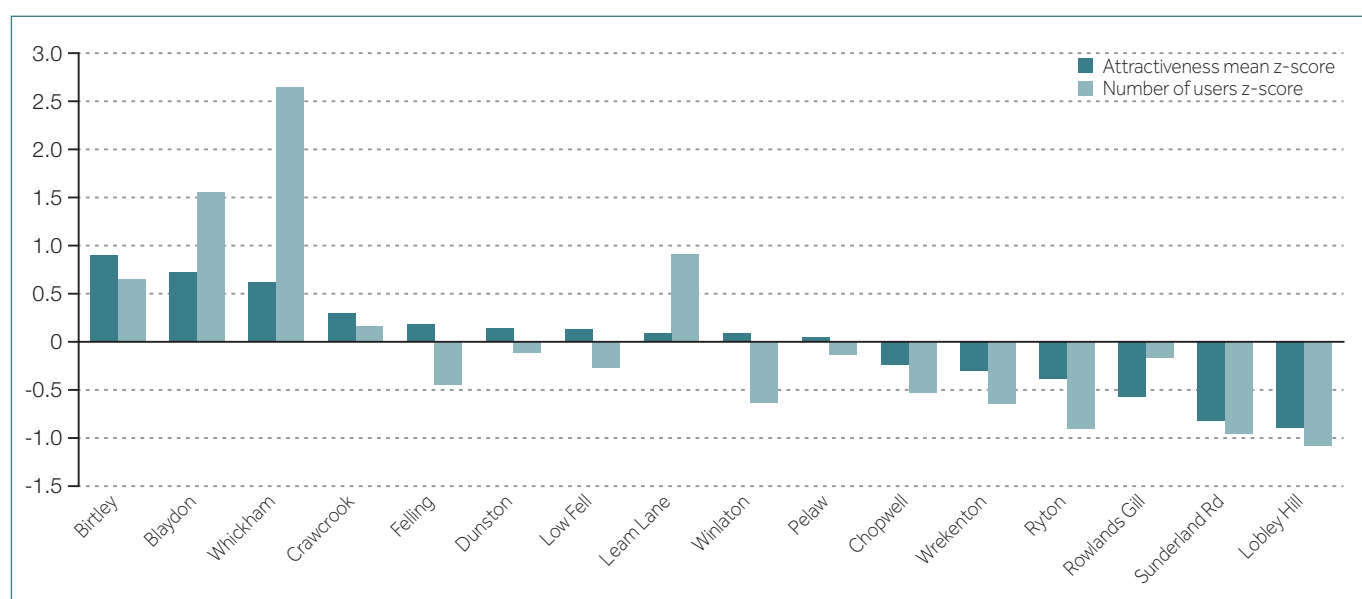
### Libraries

The sample of libraries in charts 1 and 2 indicates that a broad correlation exists – the more attractive the library, the more users attend, and the reverse is true of unattractive libraries. The libraries with the highest user numbers sometimes have high values for 'interior'

variables (opening hours and number of services) and less high for 'exterior' variables (such as nearby *everyday spaces*, accessibility and transport connections) and sometimes the converse is true. No single factor dominated the trend, although in general, proximity to a medium to large-sized supermarket, higher number of bus



**Chart 1: Manchester Libraries** Above and below average relative attractiveness score vs. numbers of users (most > least attractive)



**Chart 2: Gateshead Libraries** Above and below average relative attractiveness score vs. numbers of users (most > least attractive)



routes and longer opening hours are all important factors for the libraries with the highest numbers of users, in addition to good facilities within.

There were a select few libraries that did not fit this overall pattern, and these are discussed in greater detail in Findings 3 and 4 below.

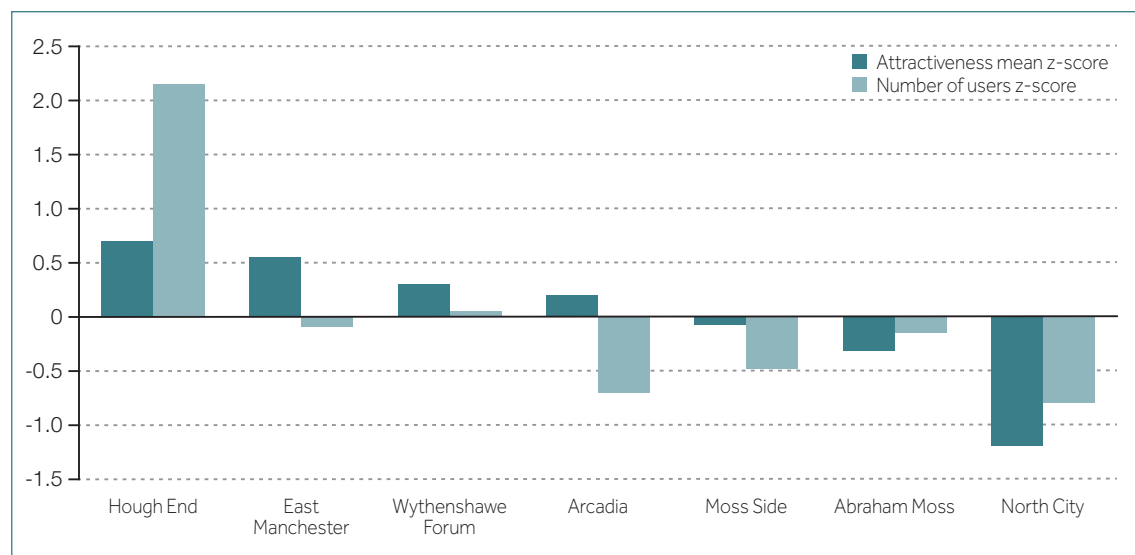
## Leisure Centres

There is a much stronger link between numbers of users of a leisure centre and the interior variables, such as numbers of facilities on site, and total and weekend opening hours for the gym and pool. When the attractiveness score includes the exterior values, the correlation between most attractive leisure centres and their user numbers is much less clear, implying that *trip-chaining* opportunities are of less importance for leisure centre users (charts 3 and 4).

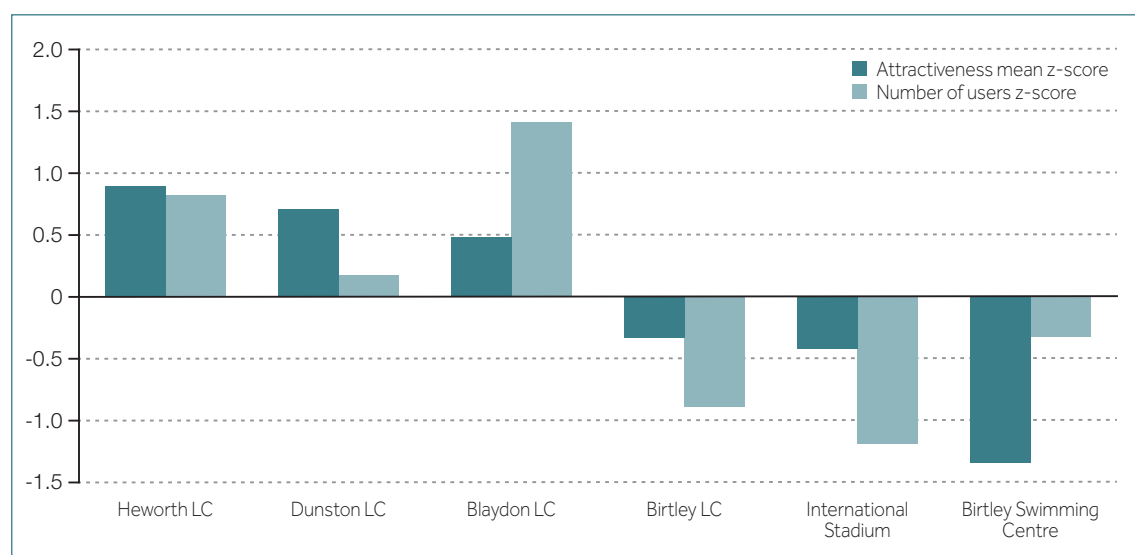
Whilst the sample of leisure centres is small, it appears that the majority of users go to the facility nearest to home. When users choose a centre that is not nearest to home, they often choose a facility that has more attractive facilities and services. The quality of the exterior variables, opportunities to *trip-chain* in the local neighbourhood, are not as influential as they are for the usage of libraries.

We propose that library visits are more often part of a *trip-chain* alongside other out of home tasks. In contrast the use of a leisure centre is more commonly a specific task that is undertaken as a single purpose trip.

Whilst there is a broad link between relative attractiveness and usage levels for both libraries and leisure centres, there are interesting exceptions to the overall pattern. In these cases, where people were coming from and where they were going bears closer examination, as discussed in more detail below in Finding 3.



**Chart 3:**  
**Manchester Leisure Centres**  
Above and below average relative attractiveness for interior variables only vs. numbers of users (most > least attractive)



**Chart 4:**  
**Gateshead Leisure Centres**  
Above and below average relative attractiveness for interior variables only vs. numbers of users (most > least attractive)

### Finding 3: Patterns of use in urban and suburban libraries reflect the impact of attractiveness, whereas peri-urban or rural libraries have a more localised usage.

Analysing the usage patterns of users, interesting spatial decisions become evident which we have found can be explained as relating to *asset attractiveness*. We discussed in Findings 1 and 2 that fewer than half of users go to their nearest library, with others often choosing to travel further to a facility that has better opportunities for *trip-chaining* and better on-site facilities (see Appendix 3 for the relative attractiveness z-scores for each library).

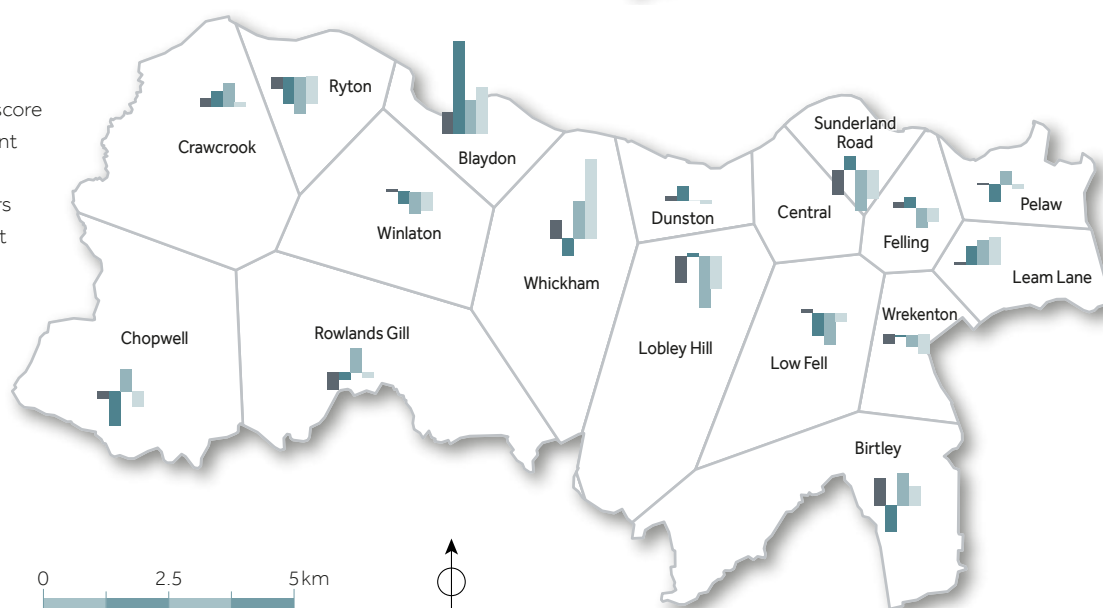
If we consider the proportion of a library's users that come from other catchments, that is, the non-local users, we are able to understand better how influential a library's attractiveness is to the population. Where a facility has a high attractiveness rating, yet does not attract a significant proportion of users from other catchments, this in turn provides a further indication of the importance of place, geographically and socially.

In the case of libraries in both Manchester and in Gateshead if it has a high attractiveness rating then above average levels of local users use it and above average levels of users come from other catchments. This is the case despite the differing urban characteristics of these two areas.

**Map 6: Gateshead Libraries** Relative attractiveness score vs. percentage from outside the local catchment, percentage of users using their local facility and total number of users (above and below average z-scores)

#### Gateshead Libraries

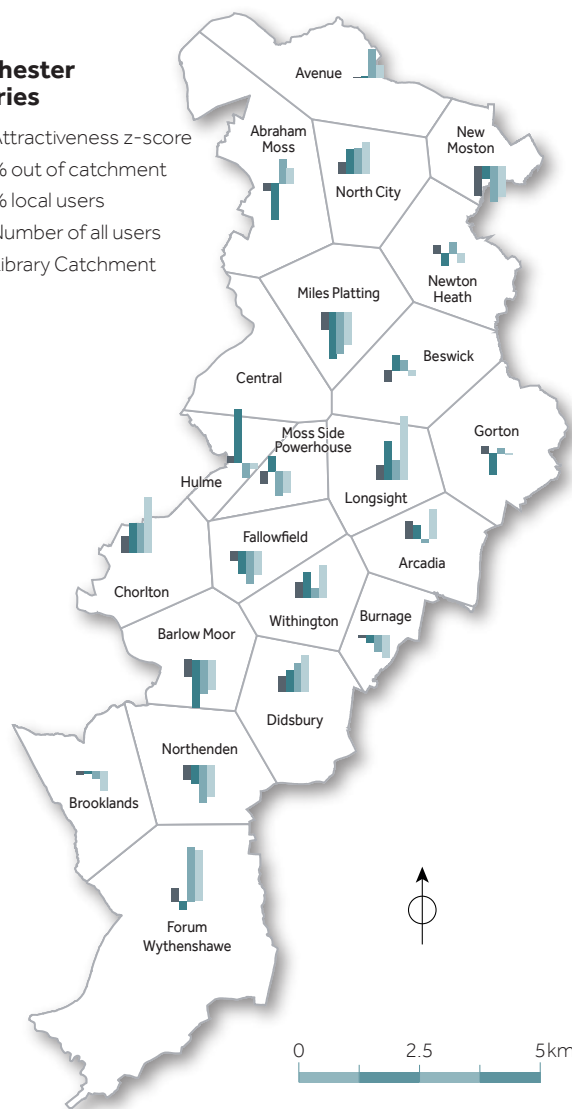
- Attractiveness z-score
- % out of catchment
- % local users
- Number of all users
- Library Catchment



**Map 5: Manchester Libraries** Relative attractiveness score vs. percentage from outside the local catchment, percentage of users using their local facility and total number of users (above and below average z-scores)

#### Manchester Libraries

- Attractiveness z-score
- % out of catchment
- % local users
- Number of all users
- Library Catchment



In Manchester above average levels of users attend the highly attractive libraries of Didsbury, Longsight, and North City Manchester, which is densely urban and part of a large conurbation (Map 5). What is also evident is, if a relatively unattractive library is near a much more attractive library, many of its local users will travel further to use the more attractive facility, for example Fallowfield, New Moston and Northenden.

In Gateshead, Blaydon is highly attractive due to its proximity to many large shops and good connectivity to the transport network, and therefore many locals use it, as do users from other catchment areas. Nearby libraries such as Ryton and Winlaton have many of their local users travelling further to use Blaydon instead. The same is true

of Sunderland Road, Low Fell, Lobley Hill and Dunston which surround Central Library (Map 6).

However, what is more apparent in Gateshead, which is considerably less dense than Manchester in many areas of Borough, is the impact for libraries of being located at the periphery of the urban core. Here, libraries such as Chopwell, Rowlands Gill, Whickham, Birtley and Pelaw, share a similar pattern of user distribution (see also Wythenshaw Forum at the southern edge of Manchester). Whilst the total numbers of users vary with the relative attractiveness score, these libraries all have higher than average proportions of local users, and below average proportions of users coming from other catchments. Thus, we can see that where accessibility is low, such as in more rural areas, users are more inclined to use their nearest library.

#### **Finding 4: Neighbourhood perception and personal cultural attachment (e.g. because of cultural identity) are influential factors in determining the use of particular libraries and leisure centres.**

When exploring user patterns, we can see that whilst some usage levels are explained by facility attractiveness and others by proximity to home or the urban core, there are some libraries and leisure centres that have patterns of use that cannot be attributed to these explanations. Our research (which included interviews with local practitioners, policy makers and site observation) reveals that there are some facilities that attract usage due to personal attachment (e.g. because of cultural identity) and some facilities where perceptions of the neighbourhood discourage usage.

##### **Positive Correlation**

In Manchester, the popularity of Longsight library with users from other catchment areas, could be attributed to the social connections the Asian community have with this neighbourhood (Manchester City Council Neighbourhood Library Development team – personal communication May 2017). Similarly, Abraham Moss library has a very local usage pattern, with close ties to the large Pakistani community within which it is situated (Census 2011).

Provision at Manchester's Moss Side Powerhouse library is heavily aimed at the under 25s; it is open exclusively to them 15:00 – 19:00 every weekday and is co-located with a youth centre. This attractiveness to a particular group of people is reflected in the relatively high percentage of out-of-catchment users, despite the fact that this library does not have a high relative attractiveness score, it lacks

*trip-chaining* opportunities (no supermarket and poor transport links) and it has an average provision of user groups and opening hours (Chart 5).

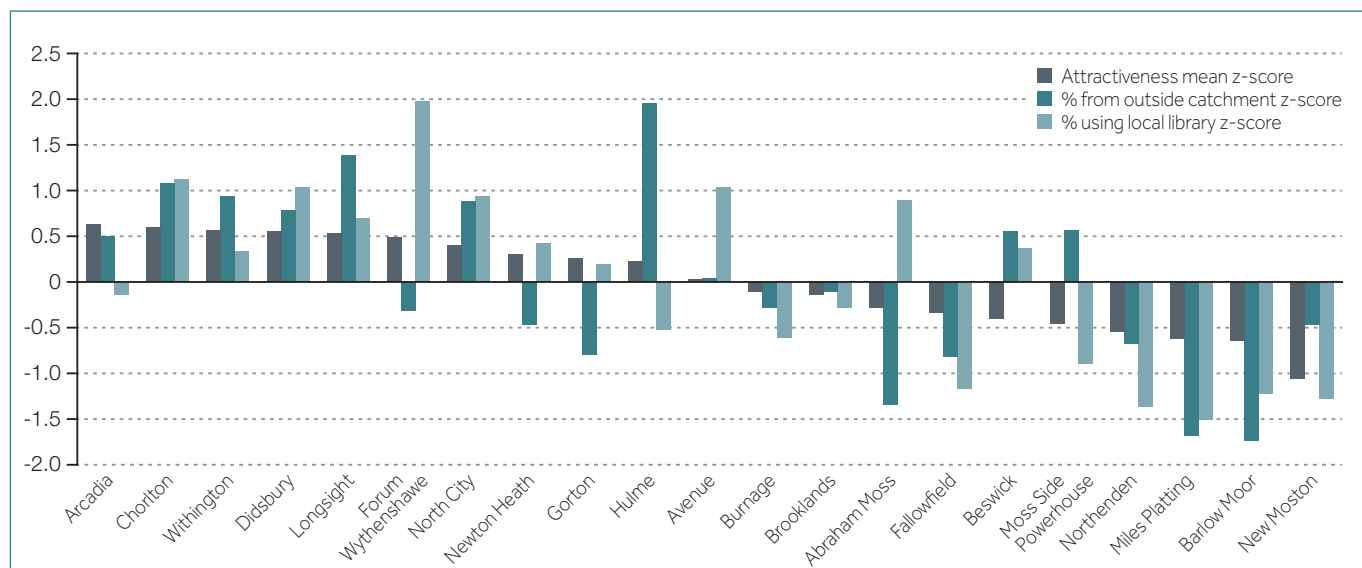
##### **Negative Correlation**

Users can also be discouraged from using particular libraries, we found a correlation between a below average percentage of users using their local library and a negative perception of particular neighbourhoods revealed in the interviews conducted with residents in the UEP case study areas<sup>5</sup>. For instance, in Gateshead we found this correlation for Felling and Wrekenton libraries which interviewees in Gateshead identified as places they rarely or never visit; these libraries have relatively low levels of use which seem disproportionate to their attractiveness scores (Chart 6).

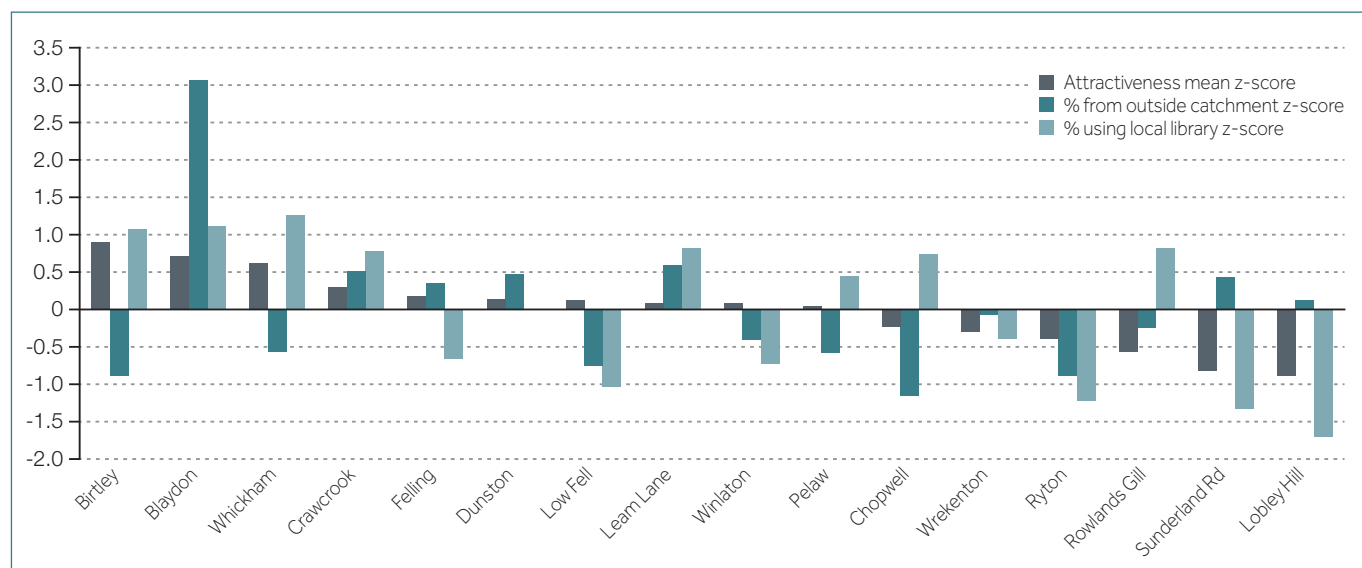
Hulme library and co-located Moss Side leisure centre in Manchester, both have a high proportion of users from other catchments compared to other facilities. This is partially due to their proximity to many places of employment, and geographical location close to the border with Trafford and Salford where many users live (Chart 5 and 7). However, the local catchment population around Hulme prefer to go to Central library. Crime statistics from the Greater Manchester Police show

<sup>5</sup> Sixty 2 hour structured interviews on the respondent's everyday participation experiences were conducted in each case study location, see for detail on project methodology Miles and Gibson, 2016.

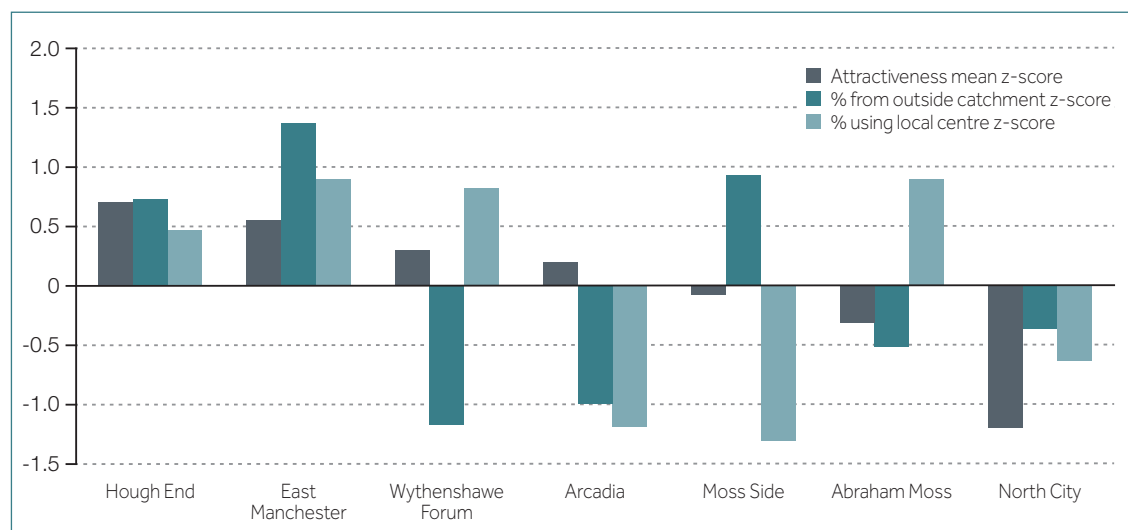




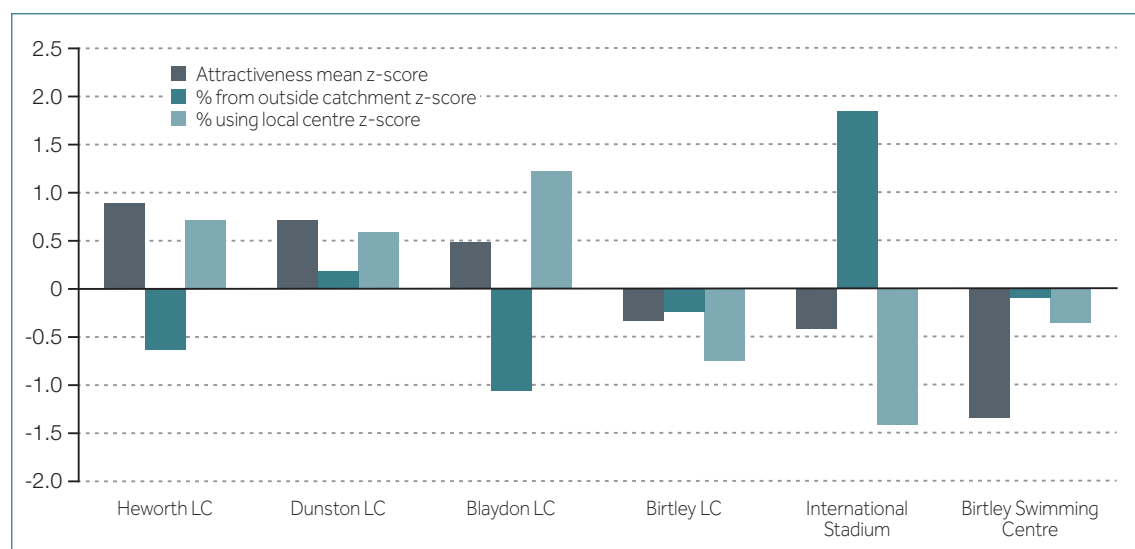
**Chart 5: Manchester Libraries** above and below average relative attractiveness vs. percentages of users coming in from other catchments and users using their local facility (most > least attractive)



**Chart 6: Gateshead Libraries** above and below average relative attractiveness vs. percentages of users coming in from other catchments and users using their local facility (most > least attractive)



**Chart 7: Manchester Leisure Centres** above and below average relative attractiveness for interior variables only vs. percentages of users coming in from other catchments and users using their local facility (most > least attractive)



**Chart 8:**  
**Gateshead**  
**Leisure Centres**  
above and below  
average relative  
attractiveness  
for interior  
variables only  
vs. percentages  
of users coming  
in from other  
catchments and  
users using their  
local facility (most >  
least attractive)

that in July 2017 (the latest available figures) there was a significant concentration of crime in the neighbourhood around Hulme Library, including anti-social behaviour, car crime, robbery and assault (see Appendix 4 for a screenshot of the local crime map). Thus, it may be that the lower level of local use of this library and leisure centre is related to the ongoing criminal behaviour prevalent in the area, although only interviews with local residents would allow us to definitely establish this as a factor.

In Gateshead, the perception of the International Stadium, as revealed in the project interviews with Gateshead

residents, was a potential reason for the low level of users. Of those users it is also notable that a high proportion of them came from other catchments (Chart 8). Interviews revealed that the stadium was seen as a place for 'serious athletes' despite the gym being council run and open to the public.

It is evident that the decision making process involved in which facility to attend has many layers, particularly for users of libraries. Distance from home, quality of services on offer within the facility, opportunities to *trip-chain* in the local area, and cultural attachments can all play a part.

## Finding 5: Standalone libraries or leisure centres are as likely to be used as those which are co-located together, or with services such as academies, community hubs or learning centres

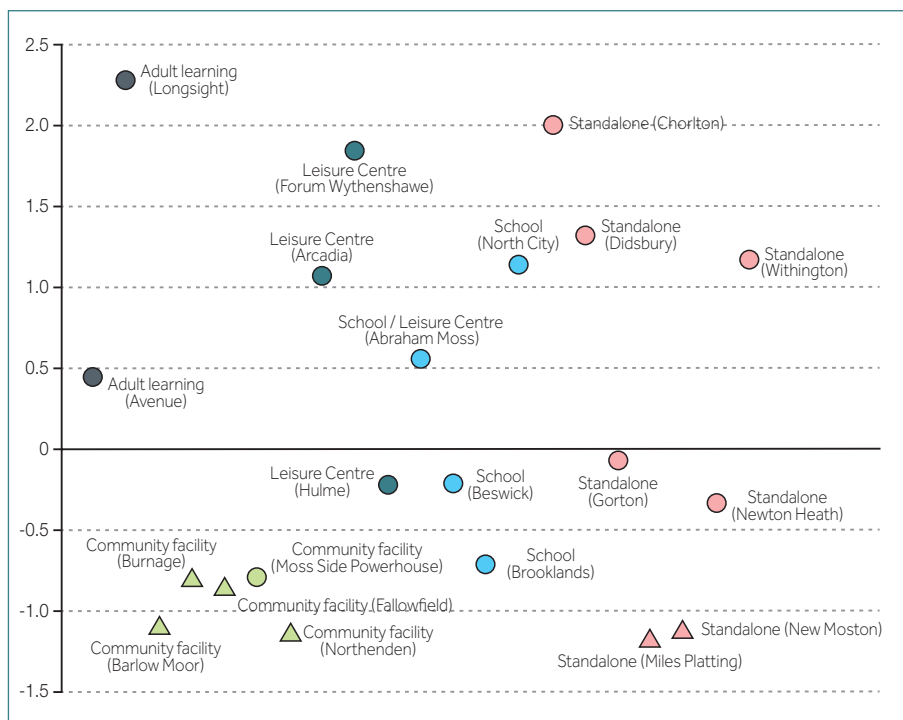
In Manchester, the practice of co-locating a library or leisure centre together or with other services such as schools or adult learning centres is more prevalent than in Gateshead. Our research found that, a standalone facility is as likely to be used as a facility that is co-located with other facilities and services.

### Manchester Libraries

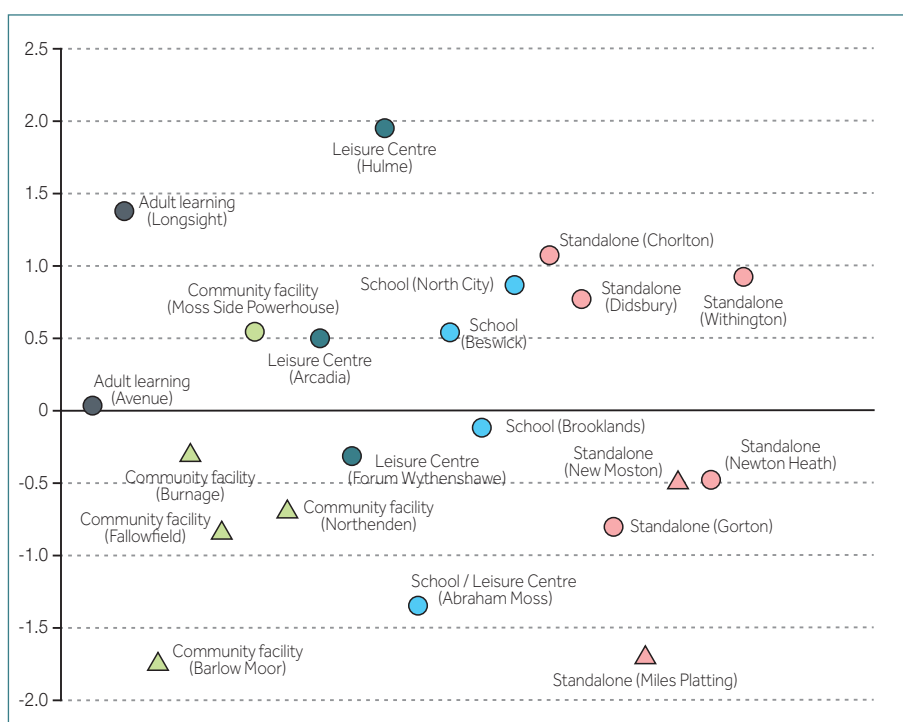
Chart 9 illustrates the numbers of users as above and below the average, against different co-location types. The two standalone libraries Miles Platting and New Moston that have scores below -0.5 for numbers of users are volunteer run, as are almost all the libraries co-located with community facilities. Along with Brooklands library (co-located within a secondary school), these libraries typically have either the least *trip-chaining* opportunities, poorest transport connections and/or the lowest opening hours,

along with some of the lowest ratings for services and facilities. Other standalone libraries have average or above average numbers of users, similar to libraries co-located with leisure centres, adult learning centres or schools.

In Chart 10, when exploring the proportion of users coming in from other catchments (i.e. non-local users), standalone libraries attract users from beyond the local catchment at comparable levels to libraries that are co-located. Brooklands library is no longer at the bottom of the chart, as it has close to average levels of non-local users, probably due to pupils coming in from beyond the local catchment boundary. The three standalone libraries that have above average non-local users, along with the other libraries in the top half of the chart are attractive both for local *trip-chaining* opportunities as well as having a good range of facilities and/or opening hours.



**Chart 9: Manchester Libraries**  
co-location types vs. number of users  
above and below average (volunteer-run  
libraries as triangles)



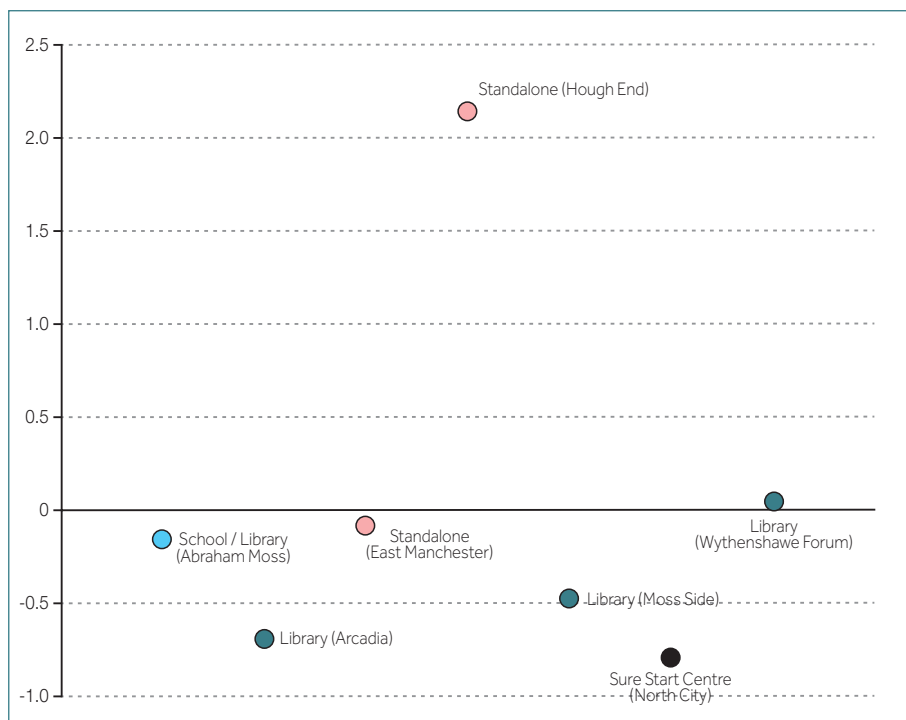
**Chart 10: Manchester Libraries**  
co-location types vs. proportion of users  
from outside the local catchment area:  
above and below average (volunteer-run  
libraries as triangles)

## Manchester Leisure Centres

Of the seven leisure centres being studied in Manchester, two are standalone, three are co-located with a library one with a school, and North City is co-located with a Sure Start Children's Centre. Chart 11 reveals that the high number of users of Hough End (a standalone leisure centre) relative to the other centres, means that all other centres have relatively average or below average user

numbers. As discussed in finding 2 user numbers for the centres broadly reflects their attractiveness and Hough End is the most attractive for interior variables. Although the leisure centre at the bottom of the chart, North City, is in a neighbourhood that has good *trip-chaining* opportunities, it still has the lowest level of user numbers, which we suggest is a reflection of the relatively low number of services at the centre and its shorter opening hours.





**Chart 11: Manchester Leisure Centres co-location types vs. number of users (above and below average)**



**Chart 12: Manchester Leisure Centres co-location types vs. percentage of users coming from other catchments (above and below average)**

Chart 12 illustrates above and below average percentages of users that have come from other catchments to use a centre that is not their nearest. The chart reveals that the standalone centres, Hough End and East Manchester, attract non-local users in a higher proportion than those co-located with other facilities, again reflecting their greater attractiveness. For the other leisure centres, geographical position (such as Wythenshawe Forum at the edge of the city, and Moss Side close to both areas of work

and the boundary with Trafford and Salford), or personal cultural attachment with a local community (Abraham Moss) impacts on the level of out-of-catchment users.

For both libraries and leisure centres, we suggest that factors such as *trip-chaining* opportunities, personal attachment (e.g. because of cultural identity) as well as internal attractiveness factors such as opening hours, services and facilities offered have a greater impact upon user choice than any specific co-location types.

# Conclusion: the effect of place and space on patterns of participation in libraries and leisure centres

This report reveals the ways in which participation in libraries and leisure centres is influenced by the geographic and cultural specificity of different contexts, such as spatial configurations and personal attachment, which leads to a localised 'signature' of participation provision and practice.

Analysing the spatial patterns of use of both libraries and leisure centres has revealed how the quality of the service a facility offers is only part of the 'pull'. This is more evident for leisure centre users who often visit their local centre; up to 90% of users are local in some areas of Manchester. Some library users are also discerning about the local neighbourhood: they are 'pulled' to libraries where they have the opportunity to *trip-chain*, to carry out other everyday tasks like shopping or going to the doctor, where there are strong transport connections and good accessibility. Both groups of users are aware to varying extents of cultural attachments or personal perceptions about a place, either travelling further than simply the nearest facility or, conversely, avoiding it.

These connections enrich previous studies that have explored the link between everyday participation and geography, and seek to give a deeper contextual meaning to the journeys people make when using such facilities.

The following observations are of particular note:

- **Geographic proximity to the home is more important for the users of leisure centres, but a more complex picture emerges for libraries.** Around half of users of libraries visit their nearest facility in Manchester and Gateshead, whereas two thirds or more of users choose to use their nearest leisure centre, although in some cases there are interesting geographic patterns that suggest further factors also influence choice.
- **Opportunities for *trip-chaining* (the practice of undertaking more than one activity while out of the house) are an important factor in the use of many libraries, but this aspect of asset attractiveness is not so important for leisure centre use.** The numbers of users of libraries reflects

the positive or negative values associated with exterior variables such as opportunities to carry out other tasks in the local neighbourhood, transport connections or accessibility, as well as internal variables such as opening hours and numbers of user groups. However, the numbers of users of leisure centres are less influenced by exterior variables and more reflective of the quality of services offered within the centre.

- **Patterns of use in urban and suburban libraries reflect the impact of relative attractiveness, whereas peri-urban or rural libraries have much more localised usage.** Where there is a greater concentration of library provision, such as within an urban core, users are making more complex spatial decisions, often choosing alternative destinations that are more attractive than their local facility. For users living in the peri-urban or rural fringe, they use their nearest facility irrespective of its attractiveness score, reflecting the reduced level of accessibility.
- **Neighbourhood perception and personal attachment (e.g. because of cultural identity) are influential factors in determining the use of particular libraries and leisure centres.** It is evident that for some facilities, non-local users are coming in greater volume than can be explained by its attractiveness, in some cases this can possibly be explained by the connection the place has with certain communities. The reverse is true where a library appears relatively attractive, but for other social reasons, negative perceptions prevent users from visiting.
- **Standalone libraries and leisure centres are as likely to be used as those which are co-located together or with other services such as academies, community hubs or learning centres.** In Manchester, factors such as trip-chaining opportunities, transport connections, and / or opening hours and the range of services on offer are more influential in attracting users than any specific co-location type or standalone nature of a facility.

## Policy and Practice recommendations

- In the case of libraries, as there are relatively lower percentages of people using the local facility, we have shown that multiple important elements are considered when deciding which one to use, some of which are associated with the local neighbourhood, both for *trip-chaining* and personal attachment (e.g. because of cultural identity) reasons. Therefore, encouraging the use of a library during a trip-chain, providing opportunities to easily visit other *everyday spaces*, could encourage higher usage.
- For leisure centres, the most important factors for users is distance from home plus the range of services and facilities, and they appear less influenced by *trip-chaining* opportunities. Therefore increasing the range of facilities and services on offer in the centre would be more of a priority for influencing usage than proximity to other *everyday spaces* such as shops, schools, or health facilities.



# Glossary

## Asset attractiveness

See Attractiveness Classification Scheme p.7. A range of attributes were generated that were presumed to be influential in terms of a user's decision-making process to attend one facility over another. This 'attractiveness score' quantified both internal and external factors. Internal factors were deemed to be the quality of the library's provision defined by total hours open per week and the number of drop-in user groups offered such as knit and natter, toddler rhyme time and language or computer courses at a library; or aqua-natal, aqua-aerobics, spin, women only classes etc in a leisure centre. External factors are based on the notion of trip-chaining, therefore proximity to other significant cultural and social places, places and services are included (see Appendix 1 for a full list). Through these means we generated an overview of the relative attractiveness of a library or leisure centre, defined in terms of the services it offers and its surrounding geographical locale.

## Everyday participation

A phrase which prompts us to understand cultural and leisure participation as encompassing 'everyday' activities such as shopping, dog walking, recreational walking, hobbies and so forth, rather than the more limited range of activities generally brought to mind by the term 'cultural participation'.

## Everyday Spaces

These are places (buildings) and spaces (neighbourhoods, outside areas) that people may choose to visit in the course of their everyday lives, such as a café, post office, bank, GP surgery, supermarket, park, cash machine etc. See Appendix 1 for a full listing of places counted from the Ordnance Survey AddressBase Premium dataset.

## Segment Depth (accessibility)

These values were derived from maps created using the UCL DepthMapX software that gives an indication of the level of 'integration' a site (library or leisure centre) has within a certain radius, defined by the average distance travelled between a user's home and their destination. The integration measure can be interpreted as how 'accessible' a library or leisure centre is, relative to the other places within the radius, and therefore how much potential it has

a destination. The better connected, the library or centre is the higher destination potential it has since people make many short trips compared to less common longer trips (see UCL Bartlett School of Graduate Studies, 2008 and Pinelo 2010 for further details).

## Thiessen Polygons

These are polygons that are mathematically derived, so that their boundaries are perpendicular bisectors between two 'points' useful for creating a 'catchment area' around the point. Any location (such as a user's home) within a catchment polygon is closest to the 'point' (the library or leisure centre) within the catchment polygon, and therefore we can assign each postcode of a user to their 'nearest' facility.

## Trip-chaining

The phenomenon of trip-chaining refers to the practice of visiting multiple destinations during a single trip between an origin and destination; such as place of work and home. Researchers note that complex trip chains most often combine shopping with social and recreational activities, drop-off and pick-up, work and personal business. Following Primerano et al, 2008 (although they do not mention libraries or leisure centres specifically) and for the purposes of this analytical exercise, we posit that a visit to these facilities could take place in the course of multi-segmented journey. This may be in conjunction with visiting other everyday places in order to complete auxiliary tasks, such as shops, health-care facilities, schools, banks and so forth. If this is applicable, then the transport infrastructure and urban character of the immediate locale surrounding the facility gains importance.

## Z-scores

The value of the attribute minus the average of all the values, divided by the standard deviation. If a score is 0, it is exactly the same as the sample average, and all other values are expressed as standard deviations above or below the average, which is also commonly within the range of 0.5 to -0.5. Turning all the values to a z-score standardises the results so they are easily comparable.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Everyday spaces from OS AddressBase

List of everyday assets used in the Attractiveness Classification Scheme:

Class Code	Class Description
C	Commercial
CC	Community Services
CC04	Public / Village Hall / Other Community Facility
CC04YR	Youth Recreational / Social Club
CC10	Recycling Site
CE	Education
CE01	College
CE01FE	Further Education
CE01HE	Higher Education
CE02	Children's Nursery / Crèche
CE03	Preparatory / First / Primary / Infant / Junior / Middle School
CE03FS	First School
CE03IS	Infant School
CE03JS	Junior School
CE03MS	Middle School
CE03NP	Non State Primary / Preparatory School
CE03PS	Primary School
CE04	Secondary / High School
CE04NS	Non State Secondary School
CE04SS	Secondary School
CE05	University
CE06	Special Needs Establishment
CE07	Other Educational Establishment
CL	Leisure - Applicable to recreational sites and enterprises
CL01	Amusements
CL01LP	Leisure Pier
CL03	Library
CL06	Indoor / Outdoor Leisure / Sporting Activity / Centre
CL06AH	Athletics Facility
CL06BF	Bowls Facility
CL06CK	Cricket Facility
CL06CU	Curling Facility
CL06DS	Diving / Swimming Facility
CL06EQ	Equestrian Sports Facility
CL06FB	Football Facility
CL06FI	Fishing / Angling Facility
CL06GF	Golf Facility
CL06GL	Gliding Facility
CL06GR	Greyhound Racing Facility
CL06HF	Hockey Facility
CL06HR	Horse Racing Facility
CL06HV	Historic Vessel / Aircraft / Vehicle
CL06LS	Activity / Leisure / Sports Centre
CL06RF	Rugby Facility
CL06RG	Recreation Ground
CL06SK	Skateboarding Facility

CL06TB	Tenpin Bowling Facility
CL06TN	Public Tennis Court
CL06WA	Water Sports Facility
CL06YF	Cycling Sports Facility
CL06PF	Playing Field
CL06QS	Racquet Sports Facility
CL07	Bingo Hall / Cinema / Conference / Exhibition Centre / Theatre / Concert Hall
CL07CI	Cinema
CL07EN	Entertainment Complex
CL07TH	Theatre
CL10	Licensed Private Members' Club
CL10RE	Recreational / Social Club
CM	Medical
CM01	Dentist
CM02	General Practice Surgery / Clinic
CM02HC	Health Centre
CM02HL	Health Care Services
CM03HP	Hospital
CO01GV	Central Government Service
CO01LG	Local Government Service
CR	Retail
CR01	Bank / Financial Service
CR02PO	Post Office
CR04	Market (Indoor / Outdoor)
CR04FK	Fish Market
CR04FV	Fruit / Vegetable Market
CR04LV	Livestock Market
CR05	Petrol Filling Station
CR06	Public House / Bar / Nightclub
CR07	Restaurant / Cafeteria
CR08	Shop / Showroom
CR08GC	Garden Centre
CR09	Other Licensed Premise / Vendor
CR10	Fast Food Outlet / Takeaway (Hot / Cold)
CR11	Automated Teller Machine (ATM)
LP	Park
LP01	Public Park / Garden
LP02	Public Open Space / Nature Reserve
LP03	Playground
LP03PA	Play Area
LP03PD	Paddling Pool
OR01	Postal Box
OT03	Footbridge / Walkway
OT05	Subway / Underpass
OU01	Cycle Parking Facility
RC	Car Park Space
RC01	Allocated Parking

## Appendix 2: Catchment ranges for different facility types

Site catchments	Minimum (ha)	Maximum (ha)	Mean (ha)	Std Dev (ha)
Manchester libraries	238	1624	525	274
Manchester sport & leisure centres	497	2606	1285	683
Gateshead libraries	330	1576	838	462
Gateshead sport & leisure centres	406	6878	2374	2112

Catchment sizes per facility type in hectares (related to maps 1-4)

## Appendix 3: Relative Attractiveness Scores

	Exterior variables						Interior variables				
	No. of everyday places <400m	Y/N Supermarket <400m	Bus routes <400m	Tram lines <400m	No. of Edcn <400m	Segment Depth Integration 1.75km	User groups	Total services	Total open hours	Weekend open hours	Attractiveness mean z-score
Manchester Library											
Abraham Moss	-1.07	-1.71	-0.92	1.51	1.20	-0.49	-1.23	-0.59	0.16	0.33	-0.28
Arcadia	1.82	0.54	-0.34	-0.53	-1.26	0.76	-0.07	-0.59	2.76	3.24	0.63
Avenue	-0.34	0.54	1.97	-0.53	-1.26	0.58	-0.65	-0.34	0.26	0.10	0.03
Barlow Moor	-1.01	0.53	-0.63	-0.53	0.59	-2.66	-0.94	-0.72	-0.14	-0.91	-0.64
Beswick	-0.54	-1.71	-1.79	-0.53	1.20	-0.36	-0.65	0.42	-0.11	0.10	-0.40
Brooklands	-1.07	0.54	0.52	1.51	-0.64	-1.35	-0.65	0.17	-0.30	-0.12	-0.14
Burnage	-0.60	0.54	-0.92	-0.53	1.20	-0.84	1.67	0.17	-0.86	-0.80	-0.10
Chorlton	2.10	0.54	0.23	-0.53	0.59	-0.90	1.67	1.95	0.26	0.10	0.60
Didsbury	1.36	0.54	0.23	2.52	1.81	0.29	-1.23	-0.34	0.26	0.10	0.55
Fallowfield	-0.66	0.54	-0.92	-0.53	-0.03	0.45	0.51	-0.85	-0.99	-0.80	-0.33
Forum Wythenshawe	0.96	0.54	0.23	1.51	-0.03	0.73	-0.07	0.68	0.26	0.10	0.49
Gorton	0.32	0.54	0.81	-0.53	-0.64	0.68	1.09	0.93	-0.44	-0.12	0.26
Hulme	-0.34	0.54	-0.34	-0.53	-1.26	1.78	-0.94	-0.98	2.34	1.90	0.22
Longsight	0.87	0.54	-1.21	-0.53	1.20	1.11	1.38	1.57	0.26	0.10	0.53
Miles Platting	-0.88	-1.71	1.10	-0.53	-0.03	-0.49	-0.07	-1.61	-1.23	-0.80	-0.62
Moss Side Powerhouse	-0.49	-1.71	-0.34	-0.53	-1.26	0.50	-0.07	-0.08	-0.30	-0.35	-0.46
New Moston	-1.11	-1.71	-1.21	-0.53	-0.64	0.27	-1.81	-1.87	-1.13	-0.80	-1.06
Newton Heath	0.29	0.54	1.68	1.51	-0.64	-0.71	0.51	0.42	-0.44	-0.12	0.30
North City	0.14	0.54	0.52	-0.53	0.59	0.60	1.09	0.68	0.26	0.10	0.40
Northenden	-0.77	0.54	0.23	-0.53	-1.26	-0.48	-0.07	-0.47	-1.13	-1.47	-0.54
Withingdon	1.02	0.54	1.10	-0.53	0.59	0.54	0.51	1.44	0.26	0.10	0.56

z-scores for exterior and interior variables: above and below average. Volunteer-run libraries are highlighted in red

	Exterior variables							Interior variables					
Gateshead Library	No. of everyday places <400m	Y/N Supermarket <400m	Bus routes <400m	Bus routes <100m	Rail Access <400m	No. of Edcn <400m	Segment Depth 1.5km	User groups	Total services	Sqm	Total open hours	Weekend open hours	Attractiveness mean z-score
Birtley	1.51	0.37	0.39	1.29	-0.65	0.52	-0.26	1.54	1.59	2.50	1.29	0.72	0.90
Blaydon	1.19	0.37	1.73	-1.08	1.44	-0.76	0.41	1.09	1.07	1.17	1.29	0.72	0.72
Chopwell	-0.59	0.37	-0.65	0.95	-0.65	-0.76	-1.87	0.17	0.21	-0.25	-0.56	0.72	-0.24
Crawcrook	-0.13	0.37	-0.35	0.78	-0.65	1.80	-0.09	0.63	0.21	0.21	0.36	0.43	0.30
Dunston	0.25	0.37	-0.35	0.44	1.44	-0.12	0.41	-1.20	-0.64	-0.27	0.62	0.72	0.14
Felling	2.10	0.37	-0.06	-1.08	1.44	0.52	1.47	0.17	0.04	-0.88	-0.22	-1.65	0.18
Learn Lane	-0.48	0.37	-0.35	0.61	-0.65	-0.12	0.15	-0.74	0.04	0.27	1.29	0.72	0.09
Lobley Hill	-1.09	0.37	1.14	-0.57	-0.65	0.52	-1.27	-1.20	-3.05	-1.29	-1.90	-1.65	-0.89
Low Fell	-0.81	-2.56	0.99	1.80	-0.65	0.52	-0.11	1.09	0.39	0.24	0.20	0.43	0.13
Pelaw	-0.08	0.37	-1.40	-0.57	1.44	-0.76	-1.28	1.09	0.90	0.10	0.36	0.43	0.05
Rowlands Gill	-1.16	0.37	0.09	-1.08	-0.65	-1.40	-1.19	-0.74	0.04	-0.51	-0.81	0.13	-0.57
Ryton	-0.81	0.37	-0.65	0.78	-0.65	-1.40	0.81	-0.74	-0.47	-1.21	-1.14	0.43	-0.39
Sunderland Road	-1.16	-2.56	-2.14	-0.74	1.44	-1.40	0.75	-1.66	-0.13	0.51	-1.06	-1.65	-0.82
Whickham	1.00	0.37	-0.06	0.61	-0.65	1.16	0.95	0.63	0.39	1.02	1.29	0.72	0.62
Winlaton	0.34	0.37	1.29	-1.08	-0.65	1.16	1.42	-0.74	-0.30	-0.41	-0.77	0.43	0.09
Wrekenton	-0.13	0.37	0.39	-1.08	-0.65	0.52	-0.30	0.63	-0.30	-1.20	-0.22	-1.65	-0.30

z-scores for exterior and interior variables: above and below average. Volunteer-run libraries are highlighted in red

	Exterior variables								Interior variables						
Manchester Leisure Centre	No. of everyday places <400m	Y/N Supermarket <400m	Bus routes <400m	Bus routes <100m	Train Access <400m	Tram Lines <400m	No. of Edcn <400m	Segment Depth 2km	No. of site facilities	Total Gym open hours	Weekend Gym hours	Total General Swim Hours	Weekend Swim Hours	Attractiveness mean z-score	Attractiveness INTERIOR ONLY mean z-score
Abraham Moss	-0.74	-0.94	-0.41	0.49	-0.35	0.90	1.13	-1.85	0.65	-0.63	-0.63	-0.78	-0.19	-0.26	-0.31
Arcadia	1.86	0.94	0.00	0.49	2.47	-0.70	-1.13	-0.60	0.22	1.00	0.06	0.13	-0.42	0.33	0.20
Ardwick Sports Hall (no pool)	-0.68	-0.94	-0.81	-1.14	-0.35	-0.70	0.56	0.75	-1.96	-1.17	2.33	—	—	-0.37	-0.27
East Manchester	-0.50	-0.94	-0.81	-1.14	-0.35	-0.70	1.13	0.96	-0.43	1.14	0.06	1.46	0.51	0.03	0.55
Hough End	-1.04	-0.94	-0.61	0.16	-0.35	1.70	-1.13	0.17	0.43	1.14	0.06	0.43	1.45	0.11	0.70
Moss Side	-0.23	0.94	0.00	-1.14	-0.35	-0.70	-1.13	0.99	0.43	-0.49	-0.63	0.04	0.28	-0.15	-0.07
North City	0.28	0.94	2.23	1.14	-0.35	-0.70	0.56	-0.77	-0.65	-1.17	-0.63	-1.70	-1.82	-0.20	-1.19
Wythenshaw Forum	1.04	0.94	0.41	1.14	-0.35	0.90	0.00	0.35	1.30	0.19	-0.63	0.43	0.19	0.45	0.30

z-scores for exterior and interior variables: above and below average.

	Exterior variables							Interior variables				
Gateshead Leisure Centre	No. of everyday places <400m	Y/N Supermarket <400m	Bus routes <400m	Bus routes <100m	No. of Edcn <400m	Segment Depth 2km	No. of site facilities	Total open hours	Weekend hours open		Attractiveness mean z-score	Attractiveness INTERIOR ONLY mean z-score
Birtley LC	-0.33	-0.65	-0.74	-0.58	-1.12	-1.12	-1.43	-0.19	0.65		-0.61	-0.33
Birtley Swimming Centre	1.79	1.29	0.55	-0.58	1.12	-1.15	-0.90	-1.84	-1.29		-0.11	-1.34
Blaydon LC	-0.98	-0.65	1.12	1.99	-1.12	1.03	0.18	0.63	0.65		0.32	0.48
Dunston LC	-0.10	-0.65	0.83	-0.21	0.00	0.08	0.72	0.77	0.65		0.23	0.71
Heworth LC	-0.75	-0.65	-0.31	-0.58	0.00	1.17	1.25	0.77	0.65		0.17	0.89
International Stadium	0.37	1.29	1.29	-1.45	1.12	-0.02	0.18	-0.14	-1.29		0.00	-0.42

z-scores for exterior and interior variables: above and below average.



The map shows the area around Birley Fields, with streets such as Greenheys Ln W, Moss Ln E, and Alexandra Rd. Numbered black circles indicate crime locations, with counts ranging from 1 to 23. Landmarks like Birley Fields Community Centre and Birley Fields Primary School are visible. A legend at the top left shows 'All crime (588)' and 'reported in July 2017'. A toolbar at the top right includes navigation and search icons.

UNDERSTANDING EVERYDAY PARTICIPATION  
ARTICULATING CULTURAL VALUES

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