

“IN IT FOR THE MONEY?”
AN INVESTIGATION OF LOAN CHARGES FOR MUSIC
RECORDINGS IN BRITISH PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

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by

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The album "We're only in it for the money" was released in February 1968 by the San Francisco psychedelic act The Mothers of Invention. Both the album's title and contents satirised the uneasy juxtaposition between the ethics of the 1960s counter-culture and the release of a commercial, mass-distributed rock album. Thirty years later, the 'Britpop' band Supergrass released "In it for the money" an album whose title poked fun at the band's status of the time as one-hit wonders, as well as self-consciously referencing their psychedelic influences. Nottinghamshire libraries currently hold copies of both albums. Only the Supergrass record is available from Sheffield libraries.

This study is dedicated to my father, who taught me to appreciate music
and my mother, who taught me to appreciate public libraries.

Special thanks to my supervisor, Peter Willett, for his patience and advice,
and of course to all staff and borrowers at West Bridgford library,
Newark library and Sheffield Central Music and Video Library.

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Abstract.

This dissertation aims to establish whether the customary charges for borrowing music recordings from British public libraries are justified. The study begins with a review of literature that is relevant to the topic of music recording loans in public libraries, including historical accounts of music provision, the issue of leisure materials in the library, the issue and origins of charges for public library services and studies covering similar areas. The research itself takes place at three public libraries, two in different parts of Nottinghamshire and one in Sheffield. None of these locations is a dedicated music library in the sense of offering sheet music, as the research is not centred solely on music enthusiasts, scholars and musicians, but on the general public who use music recordings for leisure. The data is collected in two forms; questionnaire-based surveys for users at the three libraries and face-to-face interviews with the librarians who select the recordings at each location. The user survey consists of both open- and closed-questions, in order to collect the most comprehensive and accurate results. The results are analysed both as a whole and by library, with attention to both the policies of the two library authorities and the statements of the librarians. It is found that, in the main, the public do consider the charges for music recordings justified on condition that the charges are low and that the service meets their requirements, which it clearly does at all three locations. Those who consider the charges unfair are unlikely to have this opinion changed by service as it is commonly based on personally-held views of the services ethical purpose.

1. Introduction.

1.1 Statement of purpose.

This dissertation aims to establish whether the customary charges for borrowing music recordings from British public libraries are justified. Under the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums act, it is forbidden for public libraries in the United Kingdom to charge for book loans. This means, therefore, that loans of other material, principally music recordings and feature films, are routinely charged for. As the book loan service is free, this charging would suggest to the lay-person that the quality of these charged services would be equal to, if not superior to, that of book loans.

However, there seem to be many discrepancies in the music recordings loan service:

-There is no national inter-library loans system for music recordings. If a requested recording is not available in the library authority it is requested at, the authority must either buy it itself or not fulfil the request.

-Authority's 'last copies' of music recordings are rarely conserved in the way that the equivalent fiction books are.

-Higher than normal charges are made by some authorities for the loan of recent or popular recordings. While it is the norm to make charges for music recording loans, there is variation between the amounts charged.

-Despite music recording loans being a charged service, many library staff consider it unimportant to the aims of the library service.

-Different types of music receive different treatments. Classical music seems to occupy a similar position to that of classic fiction and drama; there are always copies of the classic works available, and the complete works of the commonly-acknowledged 'great' authors and composers are constantly available within any public library authority. In the provision of fiction, a great many more contemporary authors occupy this status, based on their popularity. Much popular music, however, seems to occupy a position similar to that of 'light' fiction; there is no incentive to hold complete stocks of an author or artist's work.

1.2 Objectives.

In order to establish a clear picture of the situation regarding music recording loans, the following objectives must be established:

- Do the library-using public consider it unjust to be charged to borrow sound recordings when works of fiction are available for free?
- How does user satisfaction vary by type of music borrowed? Are different types of music borrowed by different users?
- Do fiction borrowers belong to a different category of library users than music recording borrowers? Are different opinions of the public library service held by users who borrow both fiction and music recordings and users who only borrow music?
- Do the librarians with responsibility for selecting and purchasing music see music as of equal importance to fiction?
- How do the differences in music recording policy in different authorities affect users satisfaction with the service?
- How do the attitudes of librarians affect the satisfaction of the users of their libraries?
- To what extent do libraries users needs determine the music recordings stock at their library?

1.3 Background to the research.

All public library authorities in England and Wales provide music sound recordings for loan to the public. (IAML, 1995.) It is the norm for public library sound recording collections to be self-financing, ie. the money charged for the loan of the CDs is used to cover the authority's music recordings budget, but profit made above this figure is not used to buy additional recordings or to lower the loan charge for music recording borrowers. This is in direct contrast to the policy on loans of books, which are paid for by the authority's book fund, which comes from council taxes, and are loaned free of charge. The policy for books is to have an extremely large core of material, such as every work written by popular, major authors, available somewhere in the authority so that it is simple for readers to obtain material that they require. The inter-library

loans system allows readers to request books that are not available in their local authority from other public and university libraries at an additional, but reasonable, charge. There is no equivalent to this system for sound recordings. In fact, there is very little common practice between authorities in the provision of music recordings, other than the fact that their loans are charged for. As there is no regulation whatsoever for music recordings loans, authorities are free to charge for and administer their music recording collections as they like.

1.4. The Case Studies.

West Bridgford library is a relatively small library but has the highest issue figures in the whole of Nottinghamshire per capita. It is the closest Nottinghamshire county library to the City of Nottingham, which is a unitary authority and has separate administration for its library service. West Bridgford is an affluent suburb of Nottingham and is part of the Conservative Rushcliffe parliamentary ward, which is governed by prominent Tory MP Ken Clarke. While a lack of available office space means it is not the administrative headquarters of the South Nottinghamshire group, it is the group's main library, with its area and children's services coordinators based there. The Community Services librarian for West Bridgford is responsible for the purchase and selection of Compact Discs for the South Nottinghamshire group as well as West Bridgford library. West Bridgford has a very loyal and demanding user base and very healthy issues of sound recordings in a wide variety of genres.

Newark library is the main library and administrative headquarters for Nottinghamshire libraries East group. It is located on the Eastern edge of the county and is almost on the border with Lincolnshire. Newark is a market town and its library serves a very large, mainly rural area with a diverse population. Newark is part of the Conservative ward of Newark and Sherwood. One librarian based at Newark has responsibility for sound recordings selection and purchasing for both Newark library and the whole of Nottinghamshire's East group.

Sheffield Central Music and Video library is located in the Central library in Sheffield and is a busy section of the library, separated from all print-material lending services. Sheffield is a unitary authority, separate from South Yorkshire and has been for some time. The library is centrally located in a busy part of Sheffield City centre and is part of Sheffield Central, a Labour ward. Like all libraries in the centre of large cities, Sheffield library serves an extremely culturally mixed population and a range of social groups from the poorest to the richest, including users who work and study in the city centre only. While occupying the same building as the central library's other services, it is physically separated and music can be played by the staff without disturbing users of the library's other sections. Unlike Nottinghamshire's libraries, this facility

currently has music recordings not only on Compact Disc but also on vinyl and cassette. The audio-visual librarian for Sheffield city libraries has responsibility for selecting and purchasing music recordings, not only for the central library, but for all 29 Sheffield libraries that carry music recordings, including the city's mobile library service.

1.5. Charges by Authority.

Both authorities featured in the case studies charge for the loan of music recordings by the week. However, as between many UK library authorities, there are many differences in these charges. Sheffield's policy is simple; music recordings loans are charged at 80 pence per week, regardless of format, age, musical genre or currency. Even recordings taking up more than one compact disc, record or cassette are available for this standard price.

Nottinghamshire, on the other hand, while charging a smaller rate of 50 pence per item for standard, single CDs, makes a charge of one pound per week for recordings spanning two discs or more. Nottinghamshire also has a 'premium' collection of CDs, which are bought automatically via standing order, and are loaned at the higher charge of 85 pence per week, with multi-disc premium recordings charged at one pound fifty per week. The premium items are not selected by staff, but are simply the top twenty selling CDs in the UK for each month. Once premium recordings have been in circulation for three months, they are downgraded to 'standard' status, meaning that there are a consistent number of premium items in the authority at one time, and that older CDs are not loaned at premium prices. While Sheffield Central music library has Vinyl and cassette formats available, Nottinghamshire has only Compact discs.

2. Literature Review.

While virtually every British public library loans sound recordings, and have done since the end of World War II (Cooper, 2003), relatively little has been written about the subject specifically. The loan of music recordings in the general public library has historically been covered as a part of research and writing covering other areas; the loan of sound recordings in general, including spoken-word recordings of fiction, the specialist music library aimed at the musician or connoisseur, the category of 'audio-visual' or 'multimedia' material, which includes video and sound recordings of any description, and the even broader category of charged items in the public library. There is also writing on music recordings and libraries from other countries.

2.1 Format.

Perhaps the most mundane, but most thoroughly covered area of music recordings loans is that of the format that the music is supplied on. While the format of books has been the same for centuries, the format of music recordings is ever-changing, and this presents a number of issues for the public lending library. The first of these concerns of format were of wear and tear on analogue recordings and the practicalities of storing and loaning vinyl records. The vinyl medium, while providing potentially excellent sound quality, poses a number of problems to the librarian, and these are covered in some of the earliest British works on music recordings such as Lovell (1968). It is clear that loaning music recordings in this period was a labour-intensive procedure compared to loaning books, as the descriptions of checking borrowers styli for wear show. Early works such as this concentrate on the correct storage of vinyl and issues regarding the speed of records etc. This point is one that is still prescient today; as formats change, then the listener's equipment must also be updated in order to listen to the latest recordings. As the public library serves the whole of society, it is not desirable or practical to switch over from one format to the next quickly, as not only must the library authority find large amounts of money to replace it's existing collection, but must also keep in mind that many of it's users may not possess the required equipment to play music back. Spiller (2000) notes that music is generally available from the library on compact disc only, while spoken-word recordings remain on cassette. This is still true to an extent, the reason being that the main audience for spoken word novels, senior citizens, are far more likely to own cassette decks than CD players. While music listeners are generally more up-to-date with technology, this is clearly a concern for music recordings as well, and this is reflected in the literature which concerns itself with stereo and mono compatibility of vinyl and the issue of RPM differences (Edward-Evans, 2000).

Within the last ten to fifteen years, the compact disc has been standardised for virtually all public library music loans, due to its storage and durability advantages (Beal, 1987). The issue

of durability and damage, however, is still a concern for those lending sound recordings as “contrary to popular myth, optical discs do need careful handling as finger prints and other surface marks can interfere with the ability of the laser to read the encoded data.” (Cullen, 1992, p218). Clearly, the issue of user damage is still current, but is less of an issue than in the past and modern literature is far less concerned with physical practicalities of music recording loans.

The issue of digital file sharing is currently inseparable with discussions of recorded music and it is interested to consider it's effects on, and applications for the Public library. Witkin's (2003) research concludes that there has been little impact of downloaded music, legal or illegal, on the library sound recording provision. Witkin cites the difficulty of downloading music from the internet compared with the ease of borrowing CDs from the public library. Absent from his research, however, is the issue of users copying library CDs onto their computers. While it is certainly far simpler to download music from the internet, legally or illegally, today, the quality cannot be guaranteed. In fact, the most popular legal download site, Apple's 'Itunes Music Store' allows users to download tracks only at a data-reduced quality level. Downloading illegally is even less of a guarantee of recording quality, and it is virtually impossible to find music on the internet of the sound quality of CD or vinyl. This would suggest that the public library offers a quite unique option to the serious lover of music: the cheap, legal, availability of high-quality music. There is also the issue of equipment. CD players are available far more cheaply than computers or digital music playback devices, and do not present the problem of storage space that the hard-disk music library does. The non-computer literate music lover clearly also has a use for music recordings loans. Witkin finds that music recording issues in some areas had risen while book issues fell, so, during this period at least, digital file-sharing was not directly reducing CD issues from public libraries.

2.2 The music library.

The roots of recorded music provision in British public libraries lie in the dedicated music library. While the USA was the first country in the world to loan music recordings, Britain had been the first to loan sheet music (Bryant, 1985). The importance of the recording of a piece of music, even in classical music, has assumed a more important place in the last fifty years, and music libraries have reflected this. Tom Moore recognises this change:

“(The importance of the recording over the score) is a viewpoint closer to that characteristic of the other performing arts, where what matters more is the performance: The ballet, not its notated choreography, the play on stage, not in the playbook, or indeed, the building, not the blueprint” (Moore, 2000, p73.)

Beal's (1979) report, however, finds that "users of music scores do not necessarily borrow records and similarly, users of records are not necessarily users of music scores." This would suggest that the music recording's place is not necessarily in the specialised music library. In the case of contemporary music, scores of recordings are rarely published, and this gives a clear demarcation between classical and contemporary music, suggesting that the traditional classical music with its heritage on the written page, is the natural inhabitant of the dedicated music library and other music belongs in the general or 'leisure' library. Jones (1979), however, makes the point of jazz; a form of music once considered to be 'ephemeral' which had reached the point of inclusion within the music library by his time of writing. While jazz is certainly a form of music that requires extensive theoretical knowledge to perform, it does not have the connection to the written score that classical music has, but is still commonplace in the serious music library. This shows the loose nature of provision of music recordings in general, not only between British library authorities, but also across the world, as also noted by Jones (1979).

In Cooper's balanced view of music libraries, he highlights the fact that sound recordings of any nature were first included in British public libraries "as one way of adding gloss to a depleted service" (2003, p236), a kind of recreational incentive to tempt the user to the library's traditional 'educational' resources. This would, of course, have been in specialist music library surroundings and with recordings of strictly classical music. Here we can see the origins of the music recordings 'extra' status.

2.3 Leisure.

"The basic argument for provision (of recorded music) in public libraries is that which applies to books: although individuals can, and most do, acquire collections of their own, these cannot attain a size which sustains a growing and wide-ranging appreciation of music."

(Jones, 1979, p41)

It must be remembered that music in *any* form is a relatively recent addition to the public library. Robert Snape (1995) offers a fascinating account of the history of leisure-based materials in the public library, showing the conflict between the educational purposes of the library and the provision of fiction and other resources initially considered inappropriate for the a public institution. Snape shows how the presence of fiction in the library was initially considered

to be detrimental to the purpose of the institution and “degrading...especially to a librarian” (Taylor Kay, in Snape, 1995, p67). Clearly, this view did not survive totally beyond the 19th century, but Cooper shows the similarity of this stance to that taken sixty to seventy years later to the presence of sound recordings.

“Good British bookmen tended to regard sound recordings in libraries as a diversion and a waste of money.” (Cooper, 2003, p236)

It is clear to see from this that fiction and sound recordings occupy a similar place in the library, as in the strictest sense they are not transparently educational resources, particularly not popular contemporary music recordings and generic popular fiction. Jefferson, however, opines that the division between fiction and non-fiction is, to a certain extent, arbitrary and that the division should not “...mask the fact that both categories fulfil a role of reading for relaxation and that the division is artificial as an indication of the cultural standard of reading taste.” (Jefferson, 1969, p65). It is also clear that while ‘educational’ non-fiction material can be relaxing, fiction can be edifying and instructional. This blurred boundary can also be seen in recorded music. In fact, there is less reason to class serious classical or jazz recordings as purely educational than there is for non-fiction, but neither can be seen as having no entertainment value either.

Two very different views on the supply of material classed as leisure-related in libraries are shown by Hoffmann (1984) and Davies (1974). Both write in reaction to the increase in multimedia provision in public libraries during the last third of the twentieth century. Davies sees this change as a diversion of the true purpose of the library, while Hoffmann seems positively excited by the breadth of materials. However, both point out that “Popular culture topics have tended to lie outside the areas of interest and/or expertise characterising library professionals.” (Hoffmann, 1984, p1.), something that has to be seen as a problem in popular music provision. Davies fascinatingly likens the difference between his view of the library’s true purpose and the ‘cultural and social’ library to the difference between classical and non-classical music.

“Symphony orchestras do not attempt to interest all of the people or even to reach all of those interested in music, but the importance of symphony musicians and the respect accorded to them are undiminished.” (Davies, 1974, p106)

As we have seen, though, while classical music is clearly a form of music that commands great respect, there is no such boundary that marks it apart from other forms of music. Symphony

orchestras are also not tax-funded community resources. His view shows the root of arguments against the inclusion of popular materials such as contemporary music recordings in the library, or at least in the dedicated music library.

Hoffmann, though, sees popular culture materials, which contain contemporary music recordings, as an extremely important facet of the modern library's purpose and a logical feature of the service in the modern age. It is clear that, while 'popular culture' materials are now commonly used to generate income for the library service, that it is Hoffmann's view that has prevailed.

2.4 Charges.

As previously established, music recordings carry a charge for their loan, largely due to the legal restriction on charging for printed material. This situation means that while recorded music is charged for, the sheet music of the very same piece must be lent for free. This establishes the idea of the superiority of music which is customarily written on the page, and also of the enhanced educational worth of the performance of music when compared to the appreciation of the musical performances of others. The situation of statutory charges for music recordings is, however, less clean-cut than this would suggest, as is the charging for many services the British public library offers.

Ellis (1998) provides an exhaustive study, which comprehensively covers the topic of all public library charges. The report also confirms something suggested by the preliminary research for this thesis: that it is standard practice for library authorities to charge for sound recording loans and that only the amounts charged vary from location to location. In Ellis's study users are shown to be content to pay for the loan of music recordings, but, as with all the income-generating activities evaluated in the thesis, little importance is placed on the logical justification for the charges. It would seem that once a service has carried a charge for a long enough period, there will be pressure from neither users nor management to change it, and that CDs are squarely in this category. There is no consideration of the cultural worth of the items charged for in Ellis's report, or investigation as to whether services not charged for are taken more seriously by library staff and management and there is therefore plenty of scope for expansion on these themes in this research.

The origins of charging for music recording loans are discussed in both Almquist (1987) and Bryant (1985). Almquist cites the original reason for charging for music recordings as to discourage damage, and also, presumably, to replace damaged items, which ties in with the early gramophone record library's emphasis on the correct handling of easily damaged vinyl records. Interestingly, this issue of charging relating to damaged items is not present in discussions of charges since, even though CDs can be damaged almost as easily by irresponsible handling, if not by ignorance to the correct method of replay and damaged equipment. Bryant shows that, like the lending of music recordings as a whole, charging for their loan was widespread in the United States before Britain. Indeed, only two British public libraries charged for the loan of music recordings at his original time of writing, 1959.

Richard Bolton's (1995) thesis is a qualitative study on the general situation of specialist music libraries. While the scope that Bolton has by basing his research at more than one library will be followed for this research, his lack of cohesive conclusions is not a recommendation for the wholly qualitative approach. Bolton states "There is no appreciable rationale for charging for sound recordings." This is one of the premises that were initially selected for analysis in the initial plan for this dissertation, but it has clearly been answered already.

Bishop (1994) offers a qualitative investigation into the importance afforded to audio-visual material as opposed to that given to books. His questioning is more accurate than Bolton's, with both open and closed questions, but his results are almost as vague. The results back up Ellis' findings that the main reason for sound recordings to be charged for is that they are an established 'profit centre' and that people are willing to pay for the service. The concept of sound recordings and video having to pay for themselves so as not to impinge on the valuable book fund is something that features frequently in the interviews, but, while his interviews with staff are illuminating, it would be better if the results of the questions could be compared with empirical data collected from borrowers.

Ryssdall (1987) and Kjeldsen (1987) both note that sound recordings are loaned free of charge in their countries, which shows that it is not a worldwide policy to charge for music recordings loans and that there are countries which have not followed Britain and America's path to charging for such services. Hart (1981) also makes a clear and impassioned case for free sound recording provision, which although very persuasive, was not enough to turn the tide, especially as she was writing at the beginning of an era where public library funding was to drop continuously. Lovell (1968) opines that sound recordings "should not expect to be self servicing."

However, as we have seen, they are, and while this study will investigate the implications of the loan charge and its justification there is little point making another study into why they carry fees.

2.5 Selection.

The factors governing the selection of music recordings for library collections is a topic that is central to this research. It is also one of the few widely discussed areas of music recording provision, along with the other practical consideration of format. A few recent dissertations of the University of Sheffield have covered this subject in methods comparable with this thesis.

Witkin's (2003) interviews, like Bolton and Bishop's, shed light on the process of and reasoning behind CD selection. As previously stated, it is found that, in Exeter, CD loans actually rose while book issues were falling, yet the authority maintained a policy of withdrawing one CD for every one bought. This would appear to give weight to the idea that authorities have little concern for music recordings beyond their ability to generate income. Witkin does, however, find a great deal of user-centred collection development policies in his face-to-face interviews with librarians.

“(selection is) a kind of shared thing between me and the public. The people who use the library make a lot of suggestions” (Witkin, 2003, p55)

Stevenson (1963) makes a good argument for the open-minded selection of music and for allowing the public choice, but also alights on the subject of the librarian's responsibility to educate the public in a subject in which he or she is an expert and the public library user may well be a novice. This shows the relationship between supplying the public with what they require and giving them what they 'need'. Almquist (1987), however, specifically mentions user requests leading to purchases, with five requests leading to one copy being bought in one case. This seems a little too many to encourage true diversity in the collection, but would prevent problems of enthusiastic individual borrowers weighting collections to their own tastes.

The retention of a canon of important recordings is central to Lovell's (1968) work. This is a policy that is considered basic to a public library's fiction collection, but can be neglected in music recordings provision. Perhaps most comparable to this study is Helen Janota's 1999 MA

librarianship dissertation at the University of Sheffield which was well received and won the International Association of Music Librarian's ET Bryant prize for that year (University of Sheffield, 1999). Miss Janota's project is, unlike this project but like the majority of writing concerning sound recordings in public libraries, centred on a dedicated music library, the library located in Nottingham Central library. The research is based on completely quantitative data, and is focused on user satisfaction with, and knowledge of, the facilities of this library. The aims of the study are listed as being to investigate the awareness of the collection's users of the services, policies and facilities in place. The gathering of both user opinions on the service and data on their habits of use are also listed as aims, as is the collection of information that could be used to improve the library's service. Janota's literature review, however, finds little to write about.

"Relatively little of substance has been written on the subject of music sound recordings in recent years and it is evident that there are many issues that require further research." (Janota, 1999, p9)

Janota's findings relating to user knowledge of reserve stock, policies and requests are highly relevant to this study. There are, however, no results as to whether there is crossover between users of the music library collection and the leisure library selection, due to the structure of the questionnaire.

Talja (2001) provides a fascinating and in-depth study of public and staff perceptions of music library selection, pointing out the contradictions in the varying 'discourses' of music recording selection. This work makes excellent observations on the differences in different users perceptions of the importance of different facets of the music library's provision, but does not follow the qualitative data with empirical results of user satisfaction with the approaches. The importance of the principles of the music librarian are emphasised throughout the research, and are a good example of the advantages of qualitative, open research methods.

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3. Methodology.

3.1. Scope of the study.

All three case studies must be organised and carried out in the same way, so that the only differences between the studies are those present in the libraries and their users, not the methods of assessment. In order to gain a clear picture of both the library user and the librarian's perspective, both groups would need to be questioned.

3.2. The Sample.

“Even well-designed (surveys) do not always manage to produce a high rate of response.” (Moore, 1987, p16)

It was decided that in order to establish the opinions of the users of a library's music recordings collection as a whole, a large sample would be required to avoid distortion from using too small a group. In order to establish which users were borrowers of sound recordings, a survey conducted when users either borrowed or requested music recordings would be appropriate. For a number of reasons it was decided that the questionnaire would be made as short as possible. The first of these reasons was to gain the highest number of responses in order to make the sample as natural as it could be. The problems of long questionnaires are well documented and are familiar to those with first-hand experience of completing them; the chances of receiving meaningful answers are reduced as the respondent, with no personal interest in the validity of the research, will often rush the questions and give unrepresentative answers in the interest of completing the survey as quickly as possible. For this same reason, Likert scales were also ruled out, as they can make questionnaires longer and far more tedious. As the surveys were to be handed out to users at the issue desk of the library, this gave another incentive to keep the form as direct as possible; if users could complete the survey in the time it took to be issued with the CDs, then the survey could be completed immediately as a part of the normal issue procedure. This would help with the two major problems anticipated to cause non-completion and a non-representative sample; staff reluctance to offer users the survey and users refusal to complete it. If the survey was to have the maximum completion rate, it would have to

be able for the form to be completed during the normal procedure of borrowing CDs, in order to overcome these potential problems.

3.3 Preparation of the public survey.

While exact information was required from the public, some of the information required was subjective, and it was obvious that a careful approach was required in order to establish the true feelings of the library users surveyed, without their answers being influenced by the nature of the questions. However, a fully open-ended approach was not practical, considering the aim to reduce the length of time taken to complete the form. For the surveys most important question; "Do you consider the charge for music loans recordings fair?" a simple yes/no response was followed by an open-ended request for the user's reason for this opinion. So as not to influence this response, no options were given. It was hoped that, without external stimulus, the users true opinion would be recorded. While the questions aimed at gauging users opinions on higher charges for specific types of music recordings were set as yes/no closed responses and the users taste in music ascertained from a list, the survey ends with another open-ended question, simply asking users to share any other opinions that they may have on music recordings loans from their library. This question was included in order to record any opinions passed over by the survey, to overcome any possible limitations in the questions.

3.4 Composition of the public survey.

After the fundamentals of the public survey had been decided, an initial list of questions was drawn up. After criticism by the project's supervisor, the new questionnaire was tested, firstly on staff at West Bridgford library and secondly on library users. Questions in which users were asked to choose answers from a list were revised so that any situation was accounted for. While it was initially decided that the questionnaire should not prompt users at all, the testing revealed that the second part of the third question needed to give respondents a reminder of the context of free book loans in order to elicit meaningful responses. It was decided that personal information was irrelevant to the terms of the survey and so respondents did not need to be asked for their age or gender and certainly not any other personal details. This would help accelerate completion of the questionnaire as well as ensure the maximum completion rate as

there were no means to object on privacy grounds. The final open question was altered to emphasise the surveys sole focus on music recordings loans, to limit extraneous data.

As the survey was to be conducted in both Nottinghamshire and Sheffield's library authorities, differences between the counties' provision needed to be taken into account. Sheffield, surprisingly, still loan cassettes and vinyl records, so the term 'music recordings' rather than simply 'CDs' had to be used. Sheffield also loans all it's music recordings at the flat rate of 80 pence per week, while Nottinghamshire makes higher charges for both recordings with more than one CD and recent, popular recordings, so this was reflected in how the respondents in the two authorities were questioned.

3.5 The public survey.

For examples of the actual forms given to borrowers, see appendix one.

How regularly do you borrow music recordings?

How regularly do you borrow fiction books?

These questions were posed to establish two things; firstly, the relationship between those library users who used only the music recordings facilities and those who also borrowed fiction and secondly whether this usage affected how users perceived the charges for music recordings loans. Obviously, the survey was only offered to users borrowing music recordings, so these questions could not reveal the full composition of the library users patterns of use, but it was able to reveal the difference in perceptions of service by type of use.

Considering that books are available for loan free of charge, do you consider the charge for music recordings loans fair?

In the case of this question, a closed yes/no question was followed by an open-ended request for an explanation of the borrower's view. With hindsight, the question should have been more accurately phrased "Considering that *fiction* books are available for loan free of charge" so as not to confuse leisure-purposed novels with the more clearly educational non-fiction. This reminder was added as it was found that many users needed the question putting into context in order to answer.

Recordings with more than one CD are priced higher than normal. Do you agree with this?

CDs from the top 20 initially have a 'Premium' charge. Do you think this is justified?

Would you borrow CDs with a higher charge than others (eg. Double CDs or recent top 20 releases)?

The first two of these questions were posed to Nottinghamshire borrowers, the third to users in Sheffield. Having two authorities with such differences in principal allowed analysis of the extent to which precedent affects borrowers attitude to loan charges, clearly an important issue in this area, as many accepted aspects of music recordings loans are affected by precedent and tradition. The desire to keep the questionnaires as short and varied as possible is reflected in the

slight difference in phrasing of the two questions on the Nottinghamshire survey and the combination of both questions into one on the Sheffield form. It would have been better to keep both questions separate for Sheffield users as results would then have been more directly comparable between libraries and even with one less question it seems there would be no difference in user willingness to complete the survey.

Which of the following types of music do you borrow recordings of?

This question was included, like the first two, to determine differences in attitudes to charges between listeners of different music. It was also chosen to establish differences of levels of service of different genres between different libraries and authorities. As distinct boundaries between different forms of music can be hard to distinguish, an 'other' option was added to the thirteen choices, both to clarify any confusion between genres and to collect data which had been missed off. The categories 'Blues', 'Films and Shows' 'Meditation/Ambient' and 'Gospel' were added to the analysed results due to this option. It is regretted that these options were not categories on the original form, as blues especially was surprisingly underrepresented in the results.

A final, open, question, requesting user's views on music recording loans was added, with the aim of collecting information missed out by the choice of questions.

3.6 Preparation and composition of the librarian interviews.

It was decided that the most appropriate method of ascertaining the opinions of librarians would be to interview them. As there would only be three librarians to interview, there was no issue regarding mass take-up of a questionnaire, so an interview-based method would allow the librarians to be questioned more thoroughly to ensure that the full, correct information could be retrieved. Fowler (1995, p13.) comments on the importance of all respondents answering the same questions having the same understanding of what is being asked, and the face-to-face interview format allows this. It is vital in this situation that precise information is gathered, and the relatively complicated nature of the questions for librarians meant that they were not appropriate for simplification. At the same time, it was also deemed important to keep the interview process as short as possible, less than fifteen minutes, so as not to test the librarians patience. For this reason and others, the decision was made to record the interviews onto minidisc, so full attention could be paid to the communication of the interview, and librarians would not be asked to repeat themselves for the sake of note-taking. A full transcript of the interviews would then be available for the librarians to review, in order to establish that

statements had not been misconstrued. A set of seven questions were drawn up and presented to each librarian verbally, with minor differences relating to different practices in the libraries taken into account in the presentation of the interview.

3.7 The librarian interviews.

How exactly are music recordings selected for your group?

How does this differ from fiction selection policies?

These questions were chosen to establish exactly what the selection processes are involved in the acquisition of music recordings for the librarian's respective groups, and also the differences in this procedure and the equivalent for fiction.

When music is requested that is not available in the authority, what is the procedure?

How does this differ from requests for books in the same situation?

These questions were designed to gauge the levels of user input into music recordings selection in the different groups and again, the difference between this procedure and that for novels.

Is there communication between the different groups in your authority on CD purchases and stocks?

What is the procedure for last copies of music recordings?

These questions were aimed at revealing how much emphasis was placed by the authorities on having even distribution of sound recording resources between both groups and branches, and also to establish how seriously the final withdrawal of copies of sound recordings were taken. This information was considered useful in establishing how much effort is expended to ensure that the music recordings loan service is kept relevant and comprehensive.

How does policy for music recordings differ by genre?

The topic of genre of music recordings was identified as an important point early on in the research, due to the differences between types of music, not only in their musical characteristics, but also in their use by the public. This question was intended to be related to the user responses as to their chosen genres, to reveal whether specific groups of music recording

borrowers were receiving different levels of service, and indeed whether different categories of music were borrowed by discreet groups of people or not.

Do you think that library users who use only the library's music recordings collection receive the same levels of service as those who use only the library's fiction?

This question was intended to tie-in with the first questions on the user loans survey, which would show the users satisfaction with the service compared with their regularity of use of fiction and/ or music recordings. While the responses to questions earlier in the interview had built up a picture of differences in policy between the two services, this question gave the librarians space to give their qualitative observations, which were considered to be a useful addition to the formal policy information.

3.8 The Request survey.

The relationship between users requests and the stock chosen for music recording collections was considered very important in relation to user satisfaction at the beginning of the study, so a survey of users requesting unavailable music recordings was initially chosen as the primary means of research. As users who required recordings unavailable in the library at that time's needs were not being directly met, it was considered useful to establish both why the users required them and why they were not available. Crucially, by questioning users on whether they expected to find the desired recording at the library that day, the expectations of users could be gauged. As with the loan survey, the questionnaire was kept as short as possible for the same reasons, especially as users were already providing information for the request and were not receiving a CD directly after completing the form. Four questions were asked:

Which recording are you requesting?

Did you expect to find it here today?

Why did/ didn't you expect to find it?

Have you requested music recordings before?

As before, the technique of following a closed question with a completely open one was used, to allow users to fully express their answer and possibly to gain unexpected information. Of course there are three very different reasons why users may request material that is unavailable; recordings which are currently on loan, recordings which the library the user is visiting does not own, but others in that group do, and recordings which are unavailable within the whole library authority. It was this final category that was of greatest interest, as this is the point in which staff

and user selection meet and is reflected in the questions posed to librarians. The final question was designed to gauge the number of users who regularly had requirements beyond the collections' current scope. By enquiring as to the exact recording requested, it was hoped that patterns could be established where the libraries in the study had weaknesses relating to certain types of music, or were not meeting public demand in specific areas.

3.9 Success rate and limitations of the methodology.

The loan and request survey forms were delivered to Sheffield and West Bridgford libraries during the first week of August 2005. Newark library was added to the survey a week later. Counter staff were asked to provide all users borrowing music recordings with a questionnaire as their choices were 'checked out'. As it was hoped that the format of the questionnaire would create a 100% success rate, staff were not asked to keep count of uncompleted forms. All libraries, however, reported extremely high completion rates, with staff forgetting to hand the forms to borrowers being cited as the main reason for non-completion. As library assistants experience quiet and busy periods and counters are commonly staffed by large numbers of staff, with many part-time workers, this can be seen with hindsight as unavoidable and must be noted as a limitation of the method used. Even with a method of recording borrowers who did not complete the questionnaire, this flaw would have not been reported.

The request survey, however, was not as successful, with only Sheffield central music library recording a handful of users requests. There are a number of possible reasons for this; firstly, the summer is a slow period for music recordings loans and especially requests. Sheffield staff reported that university students represent a large number of their music recording borrowers and particularly a large number of those requesting recordings. The second reason could be that in Nottinghamshire, music recording requests are generally taken by librarians at the library's enquiry desk, who work on a variety of tasks alone and are therefore more prone to forgetting to issue forms to requesting borrowers and less likely to be reminded by other staff. Both library authorities also offer online request services, which have been enthusiastically taken up, especially by music recordings borrowers. These users will obviously not have been questioned.

The three librarians were interviewed with no problems and emailed the transcriptions of their recorded interviews in order to eliminate any ambiguities in the results. All three interviews lasted between ten and fifteen minutes and are included in appendix B.

The loan questionnaires were carried out for three weeks, during which time West Bridgford library completed 98 loan surveys (Two forms were unaccounted for), Sheffield produced 69 completed forms and Newark, who had been issuing the forms for a week less than the other libraries, had produced 24. Only Sheffield produced completed request forms, totalling 6.

Clearly, the request survey would be unable to provide any useful results regarding the overall picture of the three groups, but would offer some insight into that particular library. Conversely, there were no problems whatsoever with the face to face interviews with the librarians. While there were uncompleted loan forms from all the libraries surveyed, there is nothing to suggest that the neutrality of the sample was affected, as no library reported borrower's refusal to complete the questionnaire and no bias was made to different times of the day or week. With hindsight, however, the method of research would have been far more objective had more scientific sampling and success rate recording methods been employed.

4. Results and Interpretation.

All percentages given in this section are correct to one significant figure.

4.1 Regularity of music recordings use.

The results of the question “How often do you borrow music recordings?” resulted in varied replies across the three case studies. The most immediately obvious result is that while fourteen of the total 193 users surveyed claimed to borrow music recordings less often than once a year, none of the borrowers put themselves in the ‘annually’ category. This is a possible indication of poor question design, and the options should maybe have been limited to five choices, with ‘less often’ meaning less than monthly or yearly. It can also be seen that ‘monthly’ also had a relatively small number of users, so it is possible that the specific nature of these categories discouraged users who clearly don’t plan their visits to the library with the precise regularity that these categories may suggest.

What is clear, however, is that the most common regularity of borrowing music recordings is between weekly and monthly. 75 users (38.9% of the total sample) considered this category to most accurately describe their CD usage habits, and this was the most common category in all three case studies, with between 33 and 41% of the users at each library. The rest of the categories showed less uniformity, however, with quite marked differences between the regularity of the music recordings usage between the sites. Newark would appear to have the most loyal and regular users of its collection, with 77% of the users surveyed borrowing CDs more often than once a month. This figure represents only twenty users, however, and it must be noted that Newark had the least busy music recordings collection during the survey period, with less than half of the usage of the other libraries in a two-thirds of the time. While Newark recorded only two users who borrowed CDs less than once a year, this made up 7.7% of the library’s sample, which is a little higher than the overall average, and almost halfway between the usage in this category at West Bridgford or Sheffield.

This is, however, not the only area of commonality between the case studies. All the libraries recorded more than 56% of their borrowers using the music recording collections more than once a month, so it can be seen that most of the usage of these facilities comes from loyal, regular users, with very little one-off usage. West Bridgford, though, has the most even spread of users in all the categories, and 37.7% of its borrowers use the facilities between once a month and once a year, the highest of all the libraries, suggesting that the library’s large number of issues comes from a deep, casual user base rather than a smaller, high loan volume group.

Table 1: Regularity of music recordings use.

How often?	West Bridgford	Newark	Sheffield	Total
Weekly	15 (15.3%)	8 (30.8%)	21 (30.4%)	44 (22.8%)
Weekly-monthly	40 (40.8%)	12 (46.2%)	23 (33.3%)	75 (38.9%)
Monthly	17 (17.3%)	1 (3.8%)	8 (11.6%)	26 (13.5%)
Monthly-Annually	20 (20.4%)	3 (11.5%)	11 (16%)	34 (17.6%)
Annually	0	0	0	0
Less Often	6 (6.1%)	2 (7.7%)	6 (8.7%)	14 (7.2%)
Total	98	26	69	193

4.2 Regularity of fiction use.

The results of the second survey question are, as was expected, far less even. As users were questioned only as they took out sound recordings, there was no guarantee that any of the sample would have regular habits of borrowing fiction and, as a whole, 22.3% of respondents considered themselves to belong to a group which borrowed fiction less than once a year, which of course includes never. Again, this lowest category was less subscribed to than the 'annually' bracket, but some users (at least in Nottinghamshire) did choose this option, indicating that it wasn't a complete error of survey design to include such an exact-sounding category.

Usage of fiction in relation to usage of music recordings is an interesting factor, which varied from library to library. In Newark, 38% of CD users borrowed fiction less than once a year, the highest group in the study and twice as large as any other response for that library. Despite Newark having the smallest number of respondents, this would seem to suggest that fiction readers and music recording borrowers are discreet groups in this library, although the categories 'monthly' and 'weekly' both scored relatively highly, showing that there is some crossover between the groups.

At Sheffield, the most highly subscribed bracket represents those who borrow fiction between weekly and monthly, with a very even distribution between those who almost never use the fiction stocks and those who use them between monthly and annually. Again, West Bridgford's figures are fairly evenly distributed between the usage groups, but with only 2.1% of music

recordings users borrowing fiction weekly, the lowest of all the case studies and a quarter of the overall figure of 8.3%. It would seem that while there is crossover between the groups of regular fiction and CD users at this library, those that make the most concentrated use of the two facilities are separate groups, with most users fitting into a category of using both collections, but not heavily. Of course any conclusions reached about those who use fiction only in this study are purely speculative.

Table 2: Regularity of fiction use.

How often?	West Bridgford	Newark	Sheffield	Total
Weekly	2 (2.1%)	5 (19.2%)	9 (13%)	16 (8.3%)
Weekly-monthly	25 (25.5%)	3 (11.5%)	22 (31.9%)	50 (25.9%)
Monthly	16 (16.3%)	5 (19.2%)	13 (18.8%)	34 (17.6%)
Monthly-Annually	26 (26.5%)	1 (3.8%)	12 (17.4%)	39 (20.2%)
Annually	9 (9.2%)	2 (7.7%)	0	11 (5.7%)
Less Often	20 (20.4%)	10 (38.5%)	13 (18.8%)	43 (22.3%)
Total	98	26	69	193

4.3 Opinion on fairness of loan charges.

The majority of users across all three case studies considered loan charges for music recordings fair. Of the 193 borrowers questioned, 144 answered 'yes' to question 3, giving an overall total of 74.6%. Only 44 users did not consider the charges fair, a total of 22.8% overall. Despite the simple yes/ no format of the question, five users of the three libraries did not answer, but this figure only represents 2.6% of the sample, so there is little cause for doubting the accuracy of the figures.

Examined individually, a differing regional picture develops. Sheffield was the library with least users happy to pay the loan charge, but this figure was still 68.1% of the total: 47 users. Newark was the library where most users considered the charges fair, but due to the small sample, only 21 users represented this 80.8% share of the results. Interestingly enough, West Bridgford, the library with the highest number of respondents, had the closest figures to the total average, suggesting that, given equal sample sizes at each of the locations, as had been hoped for, the figures may have been closer. West Bridgford showed 77.5% of users in agreement with charges, just 2.9% more than the total average. In contrast to the two Nottinghamshire libraries,

Sheffield had a lower than average agreement with the loan charges, at 68.1%, and with 21 users considering the charges unjustified, had a higher number of negative responses than West Bridgford, despite having a smaller number of total respondents. Sheffield's total number of positive answers was 6.5% less than the average, while Newark's was 6.2% more, showing an almost equal disparity between the libraries and the overall average, but in opposite directions.

With just 1 user, representing 1.5% of the sample, leaving this question blank, it would seem that Sheffield Central Music Library's users are more committed to their viewpoint with less ambiguity. Newark and West Bridgford's figures for non-completion in this field were 3.8% and 3.1% respectively, but no library had more than three users refuse to answer this question.

Table 3: Opinion on loan charge.

Fair or not?	West Bridgford	Newark	Sheffield	Total
Yes	76 (77.5%)	21 (80.8%)	47 (68.1%)	144 (74.6%)
No	19 (19.4%)	4 (15.4%)	21 (30.4%)	44 (22.8%)
No reply	3 (3.1%)	1 (3.8%)	1 (1.5%)	5 (2.6%)
Total	98	26	69	193

4.4 Reasons for loan charge opinion.

While there was a consensus from all three case studies that the music recording borrowing public were, in the main, prepared to pay for the loan of CDs, the answers given to the open section of question three, which asked users for their reasons for considering the loan charges fair or otherwise, were more varied from location to location. The completion of this section also varied; at West Bridgford, 34 of the 98 completed forms had this section left blank, just over a third of respondents at 34.7%. The response rate for this was also similar in Newark, with seven of the 26 respondents giving no reason, just *under* a third in this case at 26.9%. In Sheffield, however, only ten users failed to qualify their response, just 14.5% of the total. This ties in with the results of the closed part of question three; that Sheffield Central Music and Video Library's users have more strongly-held opinions as a whole than their counterparts in Nottinghamshire.

The evenness of the open responses in relation to the closed responses is also illuminating. At West Bridgford, 76 users considered the charges fair and 51 of them gave a reason-67.1%. 13 of the 19 (68.4%) who considered them unfair qualified their responses, suggesting that neither group is markedly more committed to their opinion on this matter. In Newark, only 50% of

those who considered the charges unfair gave a reason, while 76.2% of those in favour of loan charges did. A similar pattern was found from Sheffield's music recording borrowers. Despite less users overall agreeing with the charges, a higher percentage of these users (87.2%) qualified their answers than those who did not support the charge (71.4%), suggesting that users who consider the charges justified have more committed opinions on the matter than those who do not. As we have seen, Sheffield had the highest completion rate of this open question overall as well.

While the qualitative, open section of this question was designed not to limit users to categorised responses, the opinions given can be quite easily grouped together into eight reasons for charges and five against them. These categories are:

Fair.

Cheap:

"Try Buying them!" – Sheffield user

Responses fitting this category gave the reason that the loan charge was justified as it is a small, affordable amount. Bearing in mind the price differences between the authorities, this is an illuminating response.

Copyright:

"CDs are copyright protected and some of the money should be used to combat piracy."

-West Bridgford user

Users who made responses referring to the reimbursement of artists whose recordings were copied, or whose albums were borrowed rather than bought fitted this group.

An 'extra':

"Book rading and borrowing needs to be encouraged, especially amongst the young."

-West Bridgford user

Some users conformed to the view that the library's primary purpose is to supply books and promote reading, and music should therefore be paid for as a supplementary service.

Funds new CD purchases:

"It raises money to buy more CDs" –West Bridgford user

This category fits users who considered the charge to be funding music recording purchases directly, and that the amount of money taken is proportionate to the number of new recordings available.

Funds replacement CDs:

"Music recordings can get damaged a lot easier" –Newark user

Users who expressed this view regarded the charge to be covering the cost of replacing damaged or withdrawn recordings and cases.

Funds the library:

"(Libraries) still have to make money when shops charge so much!"
-Sheffield user

This category represents users who realised that the CD loan charge funds the library in general, rather than the music recording collection in general, and considered this to be a positive and justified method of income generation.

Discourages damage/ theft:

"Acts as a deterrent for taking out too many" –West Bridgford user

Users who saw the charge as a justified deterrent of the depletion of the collection fitted this group.

A service worth paying for:

“The library provides a good service at a good price.” –Sheffield user

Like the ‘cheap’ designation, this category encompasses borrowers who considered the music loan service to be worth paying for, no matter what the justification or use of the charge.

Unfair.

On principle:

“There doesn’t seem to be any good reason to differentiate between books and CDs.”

-Sheffield user

This group covers those users who deemed music recordings to be of equal cultural value to books and therefore deserving to be available for free.

Access:

“Everything should be available to everyone on an equal basis.”

-Sheffield user

Users who believed that access to music recordings by those with low incomes is unfairly restricted by the loan fee.

Doesn’t fund CDs:

“It’s only OK if finances help develop the collection.”-West Bridgford user

In direct contrast to the ‘funds new/ replacement CDs’ categories, these borrowers realised that the loan charge does not directly effect music recording provision, and is therefore unjustified.

Educational:

“Should be the same as books, ie: learning about music.”-Sheffield user

This category represents the users who considered recorded music to be an educational resource that should not be charged for.

Unhappy with service/ selection/ terms:

“The loan period is too short”-Sheffield user

Users fitting this category were unhappy with either the music available, the service within the library or the length of the loan period and therefore resented paying to borrow music recordings.

Inscrutable:

“I like reading and listening to the CDs at home”-Newark user

There were also a small minority of respondents at Sheffield and Newark who gave either irrelevant, contradictory or inscrutable answers to this question, which could not be categorised with other responses, these are recorded separately.

Table 4: Reasons for opinion on charges.

Response	West Bridgford	Newark	Sheffield
No reply	34 (34.7%)	7 (26.9%)	10 (14.5%)
Inscrutable	0 (0%)	1 (3.8%)	3 (4.3%)
<u>Fair</u>	51 (52%)	16 (61.5%)	41 (59.4%)
Worth paying for	6	3	2
Copyright	12	1	2
Funds new CDs	6	1	9
Funds replacement CDs	10	4	7
Funds library	4	1	5
Cheap	9	5	15
An 'extra'	2	0	1
Discouragement	2	1	0
<u>Unfair</u>	13 (13.3%)	2 (7.7%)	15 (21.7%)
Unhappy with service	3	0	3
On principle	8	2	7
Access	1	0	1
Doesn't fund CDs	1	0	2
Educational	0	0	2

It is interesting to see the differences in reason given for the same response at different locations. Of those who gave reasons for their belief that the charge is unfair, Sheffield's users gave a greater variety of responses, and this was the only library where borrowers considered music's educational value to be a factor. The most common reason given at all sites for this opinion was that it was against the users opinion of the library's principles, and this was the only reason given at Newark. It seems that Newark's users are the most accepting of the conditions attached to music recording loans, as not one user specifically mentioned dissatisfaction with loan period or music selection as a reason.

Of the reasons given for agreement of the charge, there was more regional variation. Strangely, West Bridgford's borrowers considered copyright to be the most important factor in this charge, a result not duplicate at the other libraries. The funding of replacement CDs was the second-highest reason given by West Bridgford's borrowers, but other library users did not seem to share this view: the relatively low cost of the loans was the number one reason given at both other libraries, with the funding of various aspects of the service being the most common

reasons behind this. As expected, few people who actually make use of the sound recordings collections considered the service an 'extra'.

The most interesting result of this qualitative factor, however, is the disparity of the positive reasons given with reality. Only ten users of the whole sample, less than five percent, explicitly stated that the CD revenue funds the library in general only, compared to 58 borrowers who gave less accurate reasons, including every person who agreed with the charge as it contributed to copyright reparations, as there is no such system in place (British Music Rights, 2000), and all funds received for music recording loans benefit only the library authority. It would be interesting to know how the results would have changed if the exact uses of the loan charge were detailed on the survey form.

4.5 Acceptance of supplementary charges.

As noted in the methodology, there is a flaw in this part of the research, as library customers in Nottinghamshire were asked their opinion on the additional charges for double CDs and 'premium' recordings separately, while in Sheffield, where charges such as these are not in use and presumably unknown to many library users, only one question on the general issue of supplementary charges was posed. While clearly limited, though, this part of the survey did create some fascinating results, especially between the Nottinghamshire libraries.

As seen above, Newark library had the highest percentage of borrowers who found the concept of charging for music recording loans fair, with West Bridgford's borrowers only a little less happy to pay. When broken down into approval for the supplementary charges imposed by Nottinghamshire, however, the users of the two locations were less concurrent.

In the case of recordings with more than one compact disc, users of both libraries agreed that a higher charge is fair, but by differing amounts. In Newark, the vast majority of users, 80.8%, thought this charge was reasonable, but in West Bridgford, only 56.1% of borrowers thought so and while 40.8% of West Bridgford's customers disagreed with the supplementary charge, only 11.5% of Newark's users disagreed, just three people, one more than failed to answer the question. West Bridgford had roughly half the percentage of non-completions on this point, 3.3% compared to Newark's 7.7%, but it must again be considered that Newark's sample was just over a quarter of West Bridgford's.

Table 5: Opinion of Nottinghamshire users on supplementary charge for recordings covering more than one CD.

Fair for 2CDs?	West Bridgford	Newark	Total
Yes	55 (56.1%)	21 (80.8%)	76 (61.3%)
No	40 (40.8%)	3 (11.5%)	43 (34.7%)
No reply	3 (3.1%)	2 (7.7%)	5 (4%)
Total	98	26	124

On the more contentious issue of the 'premium' CDs, priced higher than others for their first months of availability on account of their retail popularity, both libraries had similar percentages of consenting users; 64.3% at West Bridgford and 69.2% in Newark, but while a solid third of borrowers outright disagreed with this pricing policy, only 19.2% of Newark's were unhappy with it, with 11.6% unmoved enough to ignore the question. Only 4.1% left the section incomplete at West Bridgford. It would seem that far fewer users of Newark library are motivated against the premium charge. What must be taken into account for these questions, however, is that some listeners may never have reason to take these higher charged releases out. The jazz or classical fan, for example, is unlikely to require an album that has been in the top 20, while the punk rock enthusiast will rarely be faced with the prospect of paying a higher charge for a double- or triple-album.

Table 6: Opinion of Nottinghamshire users on supplementary charges for 'premium' CDs.

Premium charge fair?	West Bridgford	Newark	Total
Yes	63 (64.3%)	18 (69.2%)	81 (65.3%)
No	31 (31.6%)	5 (19.2%)	36 (29%)
No reply	4 (4.1%)	3 (11.6%)	7 (5.7%)
Total	98	26	124

While these questions were aimed at an audience fully aware of additional charges in Nottinghamshire, Sheffield central library listeners were faced with an abstract concept by their

fourth question, as all music recordings carry a flat rate in that authority. The results reflect this, with 46.4%-39.1% split between yes and no respectively and 14.5% either leaving the question blank or ambiguously adding 'it depends...' or similar words beside the options.

It is somewhat surprising that the majority of borrowers would agree to pay new, additional charges, especially in the library which showed the most resistance to the concept of charges, but this seems to gel with the idea that, justified or not, public library charges are sufficiently cheaper than purchasing music recordings to make them acceptable to the public. The findings In Nottinghamshire are equally surprising, as the 'premium' concept seems to appeal more to users than that of charges for longer recordings. It was anticipated that the premium charge would not meet with such a warm reception as these recordings are no longer than others and the charge is transparently artificial, as once the first period is over, the recordings are available at the standard weekly rate.

Table 7: Sheffield users acceptance of supplementary charges.

Would you pay?	Sheffield
Yes	32 (46.4%)
No	27 (39.1%)
No reply	10 (14.5%)
Total	69

4.6 Genre of music borrowed.

Due to the large number of musical genres available from all the libraries in the study and the fact that respondents were encouraged to indicate as many different types of music as they borrowed, it is very difficult to draw precise conclusions from the data gathered from this part of the survey. However, like the responses on the perceived fairness of the loan charge, it can be seen that the library-using British public in general have fairly heterogeneous tastes. The two genre categories that dominate music borrowing from the libraries are rock and (unsurprisingly) pop. But while Sheffield and West Bridgford have slightly larger groups borrowing rock music, pop dominates the tastes of Newark's users, and in fact Newark's pop borrowers have the biggest share of any group, at 23%, 5% larger than West Bridgford's rock listeners, the second-largest category. Classical music, the oldest represented category of music in British public libraries has 9% of the total at both Nottinghamshire locations, but a higher 12% at Sheffield. This would fit with the qualitative data gained from interviewing Sheffield's librarian, who

specifically mentioned classical music a number of times during the interview. Sheffield's library can be seen to have the highest share of all the more traditionally accepted types of music; jazz and world included, with Newark having the highest usage of the more 'lowbrow' forms such as dance, light and pop music. In fact Sheffield's figures of 9% jazz listeners and 4% dance borrowers is reversed at Newark. This perhaps explains both the more willing acceptance of charges for music recording loans at Newark and the disparity between regularity of fiction and sound recording use there: borrowers of music recordings at Newark library are more likely to be users of CDs first and foremost and traditional library users second; and therefore less used to the free provision of services. Again, though, it must be considered that Newark's sample was the lowest of all the libraries, so results are more subject to distortion than at Sheffield or, particularly, West Bridgford.

Sheffield showed the highest diversity of musical genres, with the three highest categories; rock, pop and classical, having 14%,13% and 12% of the sample respectively. Surprisingly, West Bridgford has a higher share of Punk and Metal listeners than for any other categories than pop and rock, as this category is far more specific than many of the other genres. This result was not duplicated at the other libraries, but the category did show fairly high percentages at all locations. This is interesting as, in sales terms, genres such as hip-hop and dance perform better than punk or metal music, so the public library in general clearly attracts the demographics who enjoy this music far better than it does listeners of, for example, soul, reggae, hip-hop or dance.

There are three limitations involved in the collection of this data, however. The first is the fact that the genres were grouped into 13 types on the form, with an 'other' category catching the remaining genres. Listeners of these types of music will not have had their memory 'jogged' by seeing the name so are less likely to have entered them. Blues is a perfect example of this, and is clearly unrepresented in the results. Secondly, this is the only question on the survey to have been presented as a long list, a form that is notorious for producing unreliable data as users tire of ticking boxes and may not endeavour to give a completely accurate answer. The final flaw is that users were not given examples or guidelines as to which music belonged in which category. This may have swelled catch-all groups such as pop, as different users may well have had different ideas of which music is in which category.

Chart 1: Genre preference: West Bridgford.

Genre preference: West Bridgford

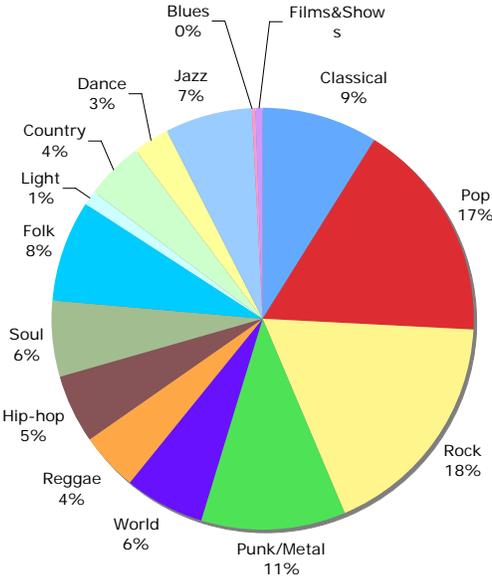


Chart 2: Genre preference: Newark.

Genre preference: Newark

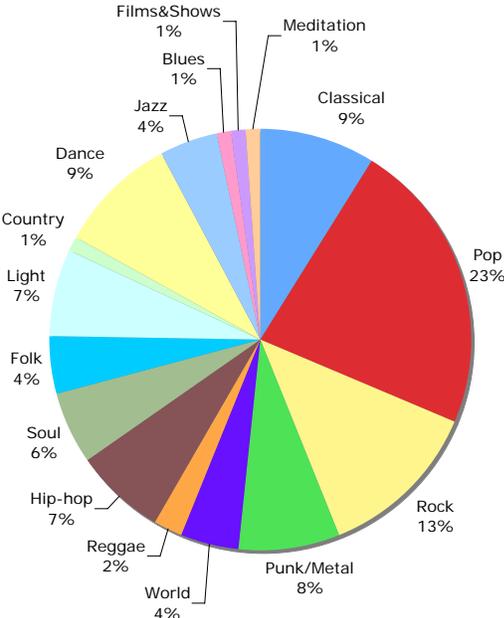
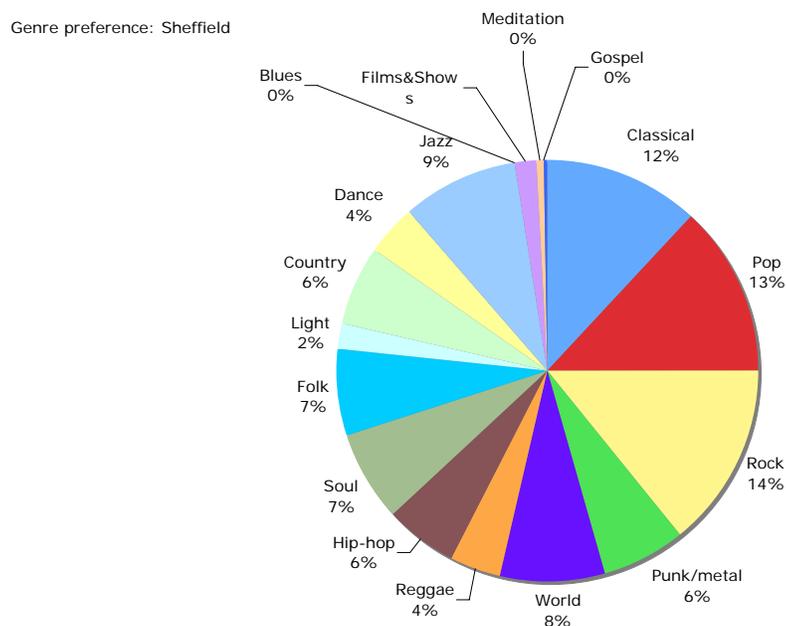


Chart 3: Genre preference: Sheffield.



4.7 Request survey.

*“More often than not, the library has what I am looking for”
Sheffield user requesting “The Best of The Cure.”*

Copies of the request survey were only completed at Sheffield, where a total of six requests were made in person at the library during the survey period. Five of the six users had requested music recordings from this location before, but only one had done so many times. It fits with the Nottinghamshire librarian’s description of the heavy requesting user that this listener was requesting two items. This user was also the only one who confessed to not expecting to find their choices at the library on that occasion, however, which reflects well on the Sheffield central music and video library. Two of the six users had not requested music before as well, suggesting that they have always had their needs met at the library before. Interestingly, four of the six users gave their reason for expecting to find the CD at the library that day as being its popularity, as did the user who did not expect to find their choices! None of the requests were for music other than pop or rock music, adding weight to the theory that Sheffield’s central library has a very good selection of the ‘highbrow’ genres.

It is a shame that these figures cannot be compared with data from Nottinghamshire, as the interviews with the librarians were structured with this in mind.

4.8 Characteristics of users unhappy with charges.

As the users who did not consider the loan charge for music recordings fair represented less than a third of all users, it is most useful to examine the characteristics of this group, to see why they do not consider the service to be worth paying for. As we have seen, though, most of these users simply object to the charge on principle rather than from any dislike of the service, but there may be other reasons. Analysis by genre is one of the most obvious ways of finding the characteristics of this group, but is unfortunately little different to the total average and in fact almost identical to Sheffield's totals. The two genres with higher representation in users unhappy with the charges are folk and reggae. Possible reasons for this are that the two genres are often 'token' collections, with low popularity meaning that while most libraries will keep recordings of these types in stock, their low usage does not justify large collections. Folk, however, is particularly well-represented at Sheffield, as many of the retained vinyl records are regional folk recordings, so this may not be the case. Another speculative reason is that the lyrics and themes of these types of music often focus on issues of social injustice, but it is naïve in the extreme to believe that listeners views correspond directly with those expressed in their choice of recordings.

The figures for library use by those who deemed the charge unfair are more revealing. It seems that this group is likely to either borrow music recordings very regularly, in which case the cost of the charge may not seem so cheap, or users who use music recording collections once a year or less. Of these groups, the first is far larger. These users may well feel that they receive no reward for being loyal users of the collections. By library, it can be seen that West Bridgford has the same number of unhappy users who use the collection weekly as less than annually, while at Sheffield, the figure of rare users disagreeing with the charge is around half that of regular ones. This can be explained by the visibility of the collections in the libraries: it is easy for an irregular visitor to Sheffield central music and video library to see the value of the collection, while West Bridgford's collection is only a part of a large number of resources in one place, and is less obvious to the user unfamiliar with it. Newark's only dissenting borrowers used the collection more than once a month, which fits with the general acceptance of charges at this site: only the users who spend the most on CDs dispute the charge.

The results of fiction use by discontent with the music recording loan charge are more interesting. None of the borrowers in this category use the fiction stocks weekly, but it does

seem that weekly to monthly borrowers of fiction are in this group, except at Newark, where all the dissenting borrowers were rare users. It is easy to explain why rarer users of fiction dislike the charge: they receive few services from the library for free, while regular users may feel that they get a lot from the library and are happy to pay. West Bridgford's users seem to fall mainly into this category, while Sheffield's are quite evenly distributed. It seems that the main factor in the disagreement of charges is simply principal, with only a few other small factors affecting this view.

Chart 4: Genre preference: Unhappy with charge.

Genre preference: Unhappy with charge

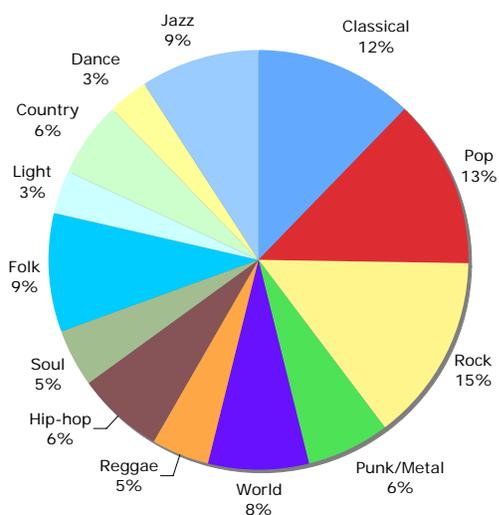


Table 8: Regularity of music recording use by those unhappy with charge.

How often?	West Bridgford	Newark	Sheffield	Total
Weekly	5 (26.3%)	2 (50%)	6 (28.6%)	13 (29.5%)
Weekly-monthly	5 (26.3%)	2 (50%)	7 (33.3%)	14 (13.8%)
Monthly	1 (5.3%)	0	3 (14.3%)	4 (9.1%)
Monthly-Annually	3 (15.8%)	0	4 (19%)	7 (15.9%)
Annually	0	0	0	0
Less Often	5 (26.3%)	0	1 (4.8%)	6 (13.7%)
Total	19	4	21	44

Table 9: Regularity of fiction use by those unhappy with charge.

How often?	West Bridgford	Newark	Sheffield	Total
Weekly	0	0	0	0
Weekly-monthly	5 (26.3%)	0	8 (38.1%)	13 (29.4%)
Monthly	0	0	5 (23.8%)	5 (11.4%)
Monthly-Annually	4 (21%)	1 (25%)	4 (19%)	9 (20.4%)
Annually	6 (31.6%)	0	0	6 (16.6%)
Less Often	4 (21%)	3 (75%)	4 (19%)	11 (25%)
Total	19	4	21	44

4.9 Librarian interviews.

The face-to-face interviews with the librarians responsible for selection and purchasing for each library gave a great chance to compare the opinions of the librarians not only with each other, but with the opinions of the public who use their libraries. As all the libraries in the study are main libraries for their respective groups, their responsibilities are similar. In the case of Newark and West Bridgford, these libraries are the purchasing centres for two groups in the same authority, while Sheffield is a single-group authority, so the librarian is in charge of purchasing music recordings for all Sheffield locations. In terms of strict policy, the Nottinghamshire librarians follow the same procedure, but their personal opinions and local methods are interesting to compare.

1.How exactly are music recordings selected for your group?

In Nottinghamshire, there is quite a formal framework for music recordings selection, based around standing orders, a monthly list of optional recordings and a further, quarterly list of more esoteric titles. This last list is accompanied by a quarterly meeting of the music recordings librarians for each group, where county policy is discussed and ideas are exchanged. Both Nottinghamshire librarians were happy with this procedure, as it allows both county-wide discussions on music selection and 'bespoke' local choices to be made. Newark's librarian also emphasised the time spent on reading reviews and researching possible purchases.

In Sheffield, there is currently no standing order policy, as the authority's suppliers do not offer this option. As the Audio-visual library has a wealth of staff with musical interests, different genres are entrusted to different staff members, in order to ensure that someone with knowledge of each type of music is involved in the process. Sheffield produces no lists of optional purchases, as all selection is done at one location.

All three librarians mentioned that user's requests or suggestions are an important part of the selection process and that non-list recordings will be purchased in the case of gaps in the libraries stock.

2.How does this differ from fiction selection policies?

All the librarians interviewed revealed that music recordings selection is far less dependent on automatic purchase than fiction, especially in Sheffield where there is no standing order system for music recordings. While Nottinghamshire's fiction purchasing is largely derived from formulae, compact discs are not, apart from the 'premium' chart recordings. Newark's librarian expressed the view that while novels of a certain type or by a specific author are guaranteed to be purchased, there are no such guarantees for music titles, as popularity of different artists and forms of music vary greatly by region.

All the interviewees were proud of the esoteric nature of the music recordings selection in relation to that of books, and seemed dismayed that fiction purchases are not as freely chosen. This would seem to form one justification for the charge attached to recorded music; it is mainly carefully selected with the library's users in mind in a way that current systems do not allow for books.

3.When music is requested that are not available in the authority, what is the procedure?

The policy of the different authorities is markedly different in this area. In Sheffield, while borrowers can place formal requests for books that are not catalogued on the authority's computer system, they cannot do the same for music recordings. Instead, a suggestions system is in force, whereby users can give recommendations for recordings that they would like the library to buy, either in a book on the music and video library's counter or online. Feedback is given on whether the material will be purchased and when. This method seems to tie-in with the open selection policy; no recordings are selected without a member of central library staff personally researching it. While this does suggest a more personal service, there is no

responsibility to a specific user in the purchase of requested material, so it would seem that the users has less formal input into the system.

In contrast, Nottinghamshire borrowers can request recordings in exactly the same way all material is requested, by means of a formal application where their details are registered. This policy fits with a comment made by both Nottinghamshire librarians, that single borrowers should not be allowed to weight the collection artificially in the favour of their personal tastes. This is not to say that requests are often denied, but large volumes of requests from singular users can be monitored efficiently using Nottinghamshire's system, which does not seem to be a factor in Sheffield's.

All three librarians touched on the point that it can be impossible to buy certain titles. This again reinforces the idea that music is 'hand-selected', with staff trying more than one option to find requested recordings.

4. How does this differ for requests for fiction in the same situation?

Clearly, in Sheffield there is a completely different procedure for non-county stock music and fiction requests, possibly due to the lack of inter-library loans for music recordings. In Nottinghamshire the procedure is the same, and, as West Bridgford's librarian pointed out, fiction can be almost as difficult to source from other counties, as the procedure is slow and fiction is not held in the same way as non-fiction on a national level. It would seem that the policy in Nottinghamshire is virtually identical for fiction and music recordings, with the major difference being that, once the decision is made not to purchase a recorded music title, the borrower will not receive it via the library at all. This difference is, however, due to national reserve and inter-library loans policy rather than from the authority legislation. It is worth noting that there is no evidence to suggest that Sheffield's listeners are less likely to be able to borrow their non-0catalogue requests, but they will not be as personally attached to the recommendation as they would be in Nottinghamshire.

5. What is the procedure for last copies of music recordings?

This question was posed differently in Sheffield to Nottinghamshire, as it was intriguing to see the presence of the 'outdated' vinyl and cassette formats in the central collection, as all music on these formats was withdrawn in Nottinghamshire years ago. It was revealed in the interview that, while the recordings were 'overdue for discontinuation' they had been retained due to not be able to replace the titles, in the case of vinyl, and as a community resource for those without up-

to-date playback equipment in the case of cassette. This shows a marked difference between the authorities 'last copies' policies, as these reasons for retention of music were clearly not employed in Nottinghamshire, despite an identical policy for spoken-word novels still being in place. While Sheffield do plan to discard this music in the near future, there is clearly more value given to rare recordings that cannot be replaced in this authority.

Surprisingly, neither authority has a formal policy regarding last copies of music recordings; it is left to librarians with responsibility for music recordings collections to handle them as they see fit. This is less surprising in Sheffield, as many of the music recording decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, but in the far larger authority of Nottinghamshire, it seems not to fit with the structured, equal policy between types of stock. Librarians in Nottinghamshire, however, do communicate well on their final copies of titles, circulating them to other libraries that may have higher user demand for them. Still, it does not seem to fit with a charged service that there are no formal constraints regarding these items, as is standard practice with books. West Bridgford's librarian expressed dismay at the lack of a formal central reserve stock for CDs, as is in place for fiction, and all librarians seemed reticent at having to completely withdraw stock at all, but this is simply a fact of public libraries. All the interviewees did, however, show an awareness of the importance of 'classic' recordings in every genre to the library. Formal policy should reflect this, especially given that users pay a charge for the service.

6. Is there communication between the different groups in your authority on CD purchases and stocks?

Again, this question had different meanings in the different authorities. Sheffield, being a small unitary authority has only one group, whilst Nottinghamshire has five separate geographical groups, and six including the City of Nottingham, which, for many purposes, including music recording selection, is part the same authority.

Both authorities, however, have meetings to allow communication between librarians in different libraries. In Sheffield, this is connected to video purchasing, and is a group of four, with two making music recordings decisions. Sheffield Central Music and Video library, however, has a far bigger selection of music recordings than its surrounding branches, a similar situation as was expressed about Newark in the Nottinghamshire East group, so few major decisions are made about other locations. It was expressed, however, that libraries in Sheffield do have collections of music recordings that reflect the tastes of their particular demographic, so selection for each location is discreet, and discussion is made about this.

Nottinghamshire has a very structured form of communication between groups, reflected in the lists of titles that librarians choose from. Both librarians in Nottinghamshire were extremely positive about this procedure, and indicated that the formal communication is complemented by informal discussion between librarians. It is clear that communication is a priority for both authorities in this respect, and that the systems in place work well in the staff's opinions.

7. How does policy for music recordings differ by genre?

As one of the most open questions posed, this subject elicited some the most variation in answers from the interviewees. In Sheffield, the need to set different priorities by genre was stressed; less popular types of music cannot be withdrawn under the same criteria as heavily-borrowed items. Across genres, the subject of 'classic' recordings was also raised; although a certain title may not have been borrowed for a long period, it is inappropriate to remove established works of excellence of any category, as they will be required sooner or later. However, recordings belonging to the more popular genres can pose a problem, as if recordings are not used heavily in their initial period, it is unlikely that they will have a long life of issues. The issue of judgement and knowledge of musical styles was emphasised in this respect, and also the input of a number of staff with deeper knowledge of specific musical disciplines.

Interestingly, West Bridgford's librarian emphasised the equal treatment of different types of music in terms of favouritism and bias. The heavy use of certain recordings from diverse genres was shown as an example of the need for non-prescriptive methods of stock management. An issue raised that was absent from that expressed in Sheffield was that of cosmetic and structural damage to the CDs and packaging. The issue of 'classic' recordings in each genre was also linked to this, as the need to diligently replace highly popular titles in cases of extreme wear. Newark's librarian focused on the issue of stock turnover being higher in the popular genres, listing purchase frequency as being as important as withdrawal. It was also noted that the more established, formal genres receive higher usage per item than pop, and this fits with the other librarian's views of heavily-used stock requiring special treatment as it forms the hub of the collection.

8. Do you think that users who only make use of the library's sound recordings collection receive the same level of service as those who only use fiction?

The interviews were concluded with a subjective question on the overall issue of this study. The opinions expressed in answer to this were varied; Newark's librarian did not want to commit to any one view, suggesting that the survey of users would give a more factual indication of the

issue. The importance of collecting data from the public was also commented on in West Bridgford, as it was revealed that, while the music listeners of this library make requests regularly, they are uncommunicative compared to fiction borrowers as regards stock enquires. It would be fascinating to find out whether this is due to a lack of confidence in library staff or in a high level of music knowledge that means they do not feel the need for assistance. As users of a paid service, it would seem that music recordings borrowers are entitled to full enquiry provision, so this is a point which should have been more fully addressed by this research.

As Sheffield has different request policies for books and music titles, it is clear that the users of the two collections do receive a different service on one level, but Sheffield's music librarian opined that, due to the completely bespoke selection services for music recordings, that the service is better in this respect. This could also be argued to be the same in Nottinghamshire, as there are far less automatic purchases on the CD side of the provision than for fiction.

5. Recommendations.

5.1 General.

The most obvious result this study has generated is that the majority of the music recording borrowing public are, for one reason or another, happy to pay the existing charges to borrow titles from public libraries in Nottinghamshire and Sheffield. There is little to suggest that users of music recordings collections are a group discrete from book borrowers, although this varies slightly from location to location. It seems that, although the music recordings service is paid for and books are not, two factors make this acceptable to users of music recordings; firstly that the charge levied is low enough compared to purchase of CDs and secondly that the service is worth the extra charge as it is administered well and organised in the interests of the borrowing public, despite the charge.

Of those who find the charge unfair, by far the most common reason given is simply the personal principals of the borrower. It must also be noted that almost all the users who disagreed with charging do not let their opinion stop them borrowing CDs at the price, with the exception being the very few whom were exempt from paying. This study, of course, was unable to gather reasons from those who consider the charge so unfair that they refuse to borrow CDs, but given the price difference of purchasing recordings and borrowing them, this must be a small group of library users.

With the advent of simple, accessible internet file-sharing, however, the public library may well be losing customers, and therefore revenue, to this section of the public. Those not indoctrinated into public library use would seem unlikely to begin using the library as a cheap source of music when there are more convenient methods with better choice available electronically. As the low price of library CD loans was a prominent factor in accepting the charge, it is clear that there must be a far larger number of listeners who choose to download music, legally or not, rather than using the library. There would seem to be a good reason for the public libraries in this study to investigate electronic music lending, or to create new customers by dropping lending charges for music, as this would make the service far more competitive with online music distribution, which may well erode the library's music recordings usage.

In terms of the use of different types of music, there also seems to be a clear overall picture; pop and rock are, unsurprisingly, the most commonly borrowed items, but the most interesting feature of the usage is how little use is made of very popular genres such as soul, reggae, hip-hop and dance music. It would seem that the groups who contribute to the large retail sales of these categories are not, for whatever reason, public library users, and this should be investigated.

5.2 West Bridgford.

West Bridgford, in providing the highest number of responses, clearly has a large userbase of music recordings. What is even more impressive is the distribution of these users between regular and occasional borrowers, not only of music recordings, but also of fiction. It is difficult to build up a picture of a typical West Bridgford CD borrower, which can only be a good thing.

West Bridgford's users seem to be highly concerned with the copyright implications of music lending, which is certainly a good factor in the face of competition to the library from online music sources. The community of this library is also highly interested in having a strong collection and are in favour of charges replacing damaged recordings and packaging.

The premium charge was surprisingly well-accepted at this library, in fact more than the supplementary charge for double CDs. It is beyond the reach of the local administration to change policy on these recordings, but it may be useful to know that only slightly more than half of west Bridgford's music recording customers approve an additional charge for these items, so they are less likely to be issued than single CDs.

As well as having the most respondents, this library also had the smallest percentages of uncompleted answers, showing that the public here are far from apathetic on these subjects. There could well be scope for further research at this library, as the comments to the survey's open question showed that West Bridgford's users have plenty of varied opinions on the service.

It was noted in the comments on the forms that West Bridgford has impressive stocks of quite unusual music, particularly punk and metal, and this is reflected in the usage figures by genre. There was a very even distribution of usage of non-mainstream music genres, and this is something that the library should be proud of and encourage.

5.3 Newark.

Newark's users were the most compliant with the loan charges, with only a very small minority of the library's users disagreeing with either the charging system in general or the supplementary charges. The users were, however, the most apathetic and the least 'vocal' of the three users groups, with the highest number of non-completed questions and the least responses to the open sections of the form. This would seem to be out of satisfaction with the service to a certain extent, however, as no complaints were made about the library's stock or loan periods at all. It seems that users are content at Newark, but not particularly committed or excited by the service.

Newark had the smallest number of responses to the survey, even allowing for the shorter survey period, showing that use of the music recordings is low here. Of more concern is the disparity between borrowers of fiction and CDs. It would seem that Newark's users of these collections are mainly separate groups, which could well explain the apathy found in some of the responses. It is recommended that Newark attempt to encourage these two groups to use more of the library's facilities and become more passionate about the library's services and purpose. This was certainly not absent in the interview with Newark's librarian!

Newark had the largest proportion of pop and dance borrowers, and, despite healthy use of the classical selection, small numbers of users for the more esoteric forms of music. This is certainly not due to selection or organisation, as the library has a very wide selection of music, meticulously categorised. Again, promotions of the wider range of material that Newark has to offer would be well advised.

5.4 Sheffield.

Sheffield certainly has a dedicated and passionate group of users. The open sections of the survey form were completed by the vast majority of users, and despite the library having the highest number of borrowers disputing the loan charges, the reasons given were mainly due to personal principles, and Sheffield actually had the largest number of positive comments about its service.

Also encouraging for Sheffield's library is the fact that it has the most even distribution of genre usage, which certainly recommends its collection and policies. With the highest use of classical and jazz recordings in the study, Sheffield is certainly not failing to satisfy users of the music

library's more traditional collections, or indeed any other collection. As the only library to record requests during the period, Sheffield certainly has demanding users, but not due to lack of stock, as most of the recordings requested were simply on loan, rather than absent from the collection. Sheffield, like West Bridgford has a high crossover of users of music recordings and fiction, and it seems rare for users of the recordings not to borrow books as well, which recommends the music facilities as a cohesive part of the service.

It is recommended, however, that Sheffield updates its request policy for non-catalogue CDs, as this currently lags behind the service given to non-paying book borrowers, which seems unjustified. Two complaints about this procedure were made on the forms, so it is not simply an academic matter.

Probably of most immediate use to the authority, though, is the data that slightly more users would support supplementary charges than not. If the authority is planning to introduce these charges, it seems that there is little string resistance to the idea, although, unsurprisingly, few users were excited by the proposal.

6.Summary and Conclusion.

In order to fully conclude this research, we must return to the initial objectives.

-Most of the library-using public do not consider it unfair that music recording loans carry a charge when fiction does not. The main reasons for this are that the charges are small and the service is good. Data from inside the service reinforces this: music recordings are selected with more care and on a more local basis than fiction or non fiction books.

-Type of music borrowed appears to make little difference to user's opinions on the service, except in a few cases of users with very esoteric tastes.

-Users who borrow fiction very regularly see the loan charge for music as fair, as they feel that they receive a great service for free on the book side of the service and are happy to pay to make up for this. Users who rarely use the book service are also happy to pay, as they are simply not accustomed to borrowing for free. Users in between these groups are more likely to object to the charge, but these cases are fairly rare.

-The librarians who select the music recordings at the three libraries are committed to music and just as equally committed to the uniformity of service levels for users of all stock.

-Users are more likely to agree with the principle of loan charges, the smaller the charges are. In the case of supplementary charges, regional variation seems to make more difference than authority policy. Policy regarding request, choice and loan term procedures are more likely to affect users satisfaction.

-Librarians committed to providing a varied, high quality service to their borrowers instil satisfaction, commitment and trust in the majority of the users of their collections. As all the librarians featured in the study were of this persuasion, judgements on staff with less commitment cannot be made.

-Library user's needs are central to the development of music recording collections at the libraries surveyed, but users also appreciate the selection of materials unknown to them by knowledgeable staff.

In conclusion, it can be seen that the charge for music recording loans is justified in the two authorities by two factors; cost of charge and quality of service. As long as loan charges are cheap and selection of recordings is both comprehensive and relevant to users, charges are

justified. Reassuringly for the authorities examined, those borrowers who consider the charges unjust feel this based on their principles and ideals of the library service, not on dissatisfaction with the service they receive.

Appendix A: Survey forms

CD Loans survey.

My name is Mike Pollitt. I work in Nottinghamshire libraries and I am an MA librarianship student at Sheffield University. I am researching the justification of charges for music recording loans in public libraries. I would be very grateful if you could share your thoughts on music recording loans. You won't be identified and all the data will be reported anonymously. Thank you for your help!

1.How often do you borrow music recordings? (Pick one)

- Weekly
- Between weekly and monthly
- Monthly
- Between monthly and yearly
- Annually
- Less often

2.How often do you borrow fiction books? (Pick one)

- Weekly
- Between weekly and monthly
- Monthly
- Between monthly and yearly
- Annually
- Less often

3.Considering that books are available for loan free of charge, do you consider the charge for music recordings loans fair?

- Yes
- No

Briefly, What are your reasons for thinking this?

PTO

4. Recordings with more than one CD are priced higher than normal. Do you agree with this?

- Yes
- No

5. CDs from the Top 20 initially have a 'Premium' charge. Do you think this is justified?

- Yes
- No

6. Which of the following types of music do you borrow recordings of?
(Pick as many as you borrow)

- Classical
- Pop
- Rock
- Punk/Metal
- World
- Reggae
- Hip-Hop
- Soul
- Folk
- Light
- Country
- Dance
- Jazz
- Other (Please Specify) _____

7. If you have any other thoughts on Sound recording loans from Nottinghamshire libraries, please let me know here:

Once again, thank you very much for your help!

CD Loans survey.

My name is Mike Pollitt. I am an MA librarianship student at Sheffield University. I am researching the justification of charges for music recording loans in public libraries. I would be very grateful if you could share your thoughts on music recording loans. You won't be identified and all the data will be reported anonymously. Thank you for your help!

1.How often do you borrow music recordings? (Pick one)

- Weekly
- Between weekly and monthly
- Monthly
- Between monthly and yearly
- Annually
- Less often

2.How often do you borrow fiction books? (Pick one)

- Weekly
- Between weekly and monthly
- Monthly
- Between monthly and yearly
- Annually
- Less often

3.Considering that books are available for loan free of charge, do you consider the charge for music recordings loans fair?

- Yes
- No

Briefly, What are your reasons for thinking this?

PTO

4. Would you borrow CDs with a higher charge than others (eg. Double CDs or recent top 20 releases)?

- Yes
- No

5. Which of the following types of music do you borrow recordings of?
(Pick as many as you borrow)

- Classical
- Pop
- Rock
- Punk/Metal
- World
- Reggae
- Hip-Hop
- Soul
- Folk
- Light
- Country
- Dance
- Jazz
- Other (Please Specify) _____

6. If you have any other thoughts on Sound recording loans from Sheffield libraries, please let me know here:

Once again, thank you very much for your help!

CD Request Survey.

My name is Mike Pollitt. I am an MA librarianship student at Sheffield University. I am researching the justification of charges for music recording loans in public libraries. I would be very grateful if you could share some information about your music request with me. You won't be identified and all the data will be reported anonymously. Thank you for your help!

1. Which recording are you requesting?

Artist/Composer:

Title: _____

2. Did you expect to find it here today?

- Yes
- No

3. Why did you / didn't you expect to find it?

4. Have you requested sound recordings before?

- No, never.
- Yes, a few times.
- Yes, many times.

Once again, thank you very much for your help!

Appendix B: Interview transcripts.

Interview A: West Bridgford Library.

1. How exactly are music recordings selected for Nottinghamshire South group?

Rather a large proportion of our music is preselected on the standing order system, depending on the position in the charts on the day of buying. We get a monthly list from the central library music department. They send us a list every month, and from that we choose what we want. Which are copies over and above the pre-ordered standing order. We buy from this list and we also buy from a quarterly list, which is a much more comprehensive list of different genres for music buying which have more esoteric titles on, perhaps not as popular as most people would perhaps want, but we like to offer that sort of facility for people who borrow non-run-of-the-mill type recordings. So we choose heavily from that, and also what comes into the equation is the fact that people do request different types of music that perhaps we don't have in county stock, and we will buy for it if we think it's a necessary thing to do and there's a gap in our stock.

2. How does this differ from fiction selection policies?

We seem to have a lot more input on the music side than we do on the book side now, because most (fiction) is being done by standing order. In fact I think it's 80% of fiction now is bought by standing order and the rest tends to be generated from stock gaps and requests. So we don't have a lot of input into the fiction buying, which is very sad. Likewise, with non-fiction. We've just got an enormous list for standing order titles to be bought, so we don't have a great deal of choice in that these days. But with the music, we do get a better crack at it, more of what we want in our own areas, depending on the taste of our own borrowers. We try to buy for them; it is their library for their use. We buy for that.

3. When music is requested that are not available in the authority, what is the procedure?

If people do request a specific item that we don't have, and it is available to buy, we will buy it, but there are riders on this, it depends whether the same person requests an awful lot of the same genre of music. We will not buy specifically just for one person to get an uneven balance in our collections. So we won't buy five or six copies of something like punk, because that's not

such a popular genre as perhaps the pop genre. We'll give them a selection, perhaps 2 or 3, and that will be it. Usually people will be happy with that, as long as they've got some sort of representative collection of what they're interested in, they're quite happy.

4. How does this differ for requests for fiction in the same situation?

Not greatly, both of them are about the same sort of criteria for buying, we do buy for requests. Fiction is more difficult to obtain than non-fiction because there's not such an easy inter-library loans system to get it. There is a fiction reserve across the country, but it can take months to find the title that you want, or the authors that you want. So we have to buy if they're in print, otherwise we have to regret them. We do have the (County) fiction reserve facility, but if it's not there, then we really are in trouble with these things.

5. What is the procedure for last copies of music recordings?

There is no official procedure for last copies, because we don't have a reserve store for CDs, which I think is quite sad. (Central) Music library do have some CDs that they keep in their reserve, but it's not a county-wide thing. In Bridgford we keep a few on reserve, but I'm not sure what other libraries do. Very often I take CDs off (Newark librarian's) hands and try them here because we don't throw an awful lot of stuff away, I must admit, if it's the last copy, I'll keep it, and if it's a classic of anything, then I will keep it too, but it would be nice to have an official CD store for these things, like we have for the fiction, which is a shame, but, like (Newark librarian) does, we can also offer things around, like something that's perhaps had it's lifetime issuing in Bridgford, but to be absolutely honest, if it doesn't go here, I don't think it'll go anywhere else. That's why we always get (Newark librarian's) offers. I don't mind giving them a go, because often they'll go straight off the shelf because (our borrowers) haven't seen them in this branch! You can't have it all, and we do try to buy most things in Bridgford, but certainly not all, because we just don't have the money, simple as that.

6. Is there communication between the different groups in your authority on CD purchases and stocks?

Yes. The quarterly meeting's excellent for that, we all sit around the table and if we've got any problems, then we all air them. We're all in contact by email, there are no communication problems as far as I can see. Nobody puts a veto on anything that we buy. So we're pretty much our own bosses on that one, we can do what we like! Within reason obviously...

7. How does policy for music recordings differ by genre?

It's across the board, it doesn't matter what genre it is, if it's had so many issues, probably over 50 and it's starting to get a bit worn, or if it looks very tatty and the sleeves gone, we can't issue it, if the CDs badly scratched then it is withdrawn and if it's been issuing well then we'll buy another copy of the same title to keep the title going. A lot depends really on its condition if it's withdrawn. But saying that, some of our CDs have had over 100 issues and nobody has complained that the sound is poor, which has surprised me! But if I notice (that a CD has a huge number of issues) when I'm doing my general revision of the stock, if it's got over 70 issues then I'll whip it off and try and buy another copy. But genre makes no difference. We'll do it for all genres, not just one, not just the popular stuff, we'll do it for the lot.

8. Do you think that users who only make use of the library's sound recordings collection receive the same level of service as those who only use fiction?

I would like to think not. It may vary from branch to branch, but in this branch, I think they do well. They don't seem to ask as much as the book-borrowing public. But the ones that do, if they come and ask we can tell them, we're quite willing to spend time going through the catalogue with them and explaining what we can do for them, but a lot of them don't seem to ask, they'll just browse, going and flicking through the shelves, and they don't seem to ask us for very much. So we don't get the enquiries like we do for fiction or just general book stock. But they are pretty sharp on putting requests in, I will say that for them, we do get a lot of CD requests. I don't think they do badly, if they ask they will be given an answer! It's as simple as that. But if they don't ask we don't know what they want! I certainly don't think anyone gets a lower standard of service just because it's CDs-there's no reason for them to. It's just another item of stock as far as I'm concerned. It makes no odds.

Interview B: Newark Library.

1. How exactly are music recordings selected for Nottinghamshire East group?

Well there are several methods, one is a monthly list, which is compiled by the music library in Nottingham, a list which includes standing order titles which are pop CDs that get into the top 10 which are automatically bought for all groups we have an option to buy additional copies as well if we wish, and the list then includes various other recent releases, not exclusively pop, but quite a lot of pop, which has been in the top 75 but doesn't make the top ten. Plus selected releases of folk, jazz, occasionally classical, world music, things that have been picked up as being, well probably they've cropped up in some other top 10 for various other categories of music so all those are on the monthly list and I then order for the group, which actually, in the East group, is basically Newark, that's the only premium library, the only major collection, So I select from there, I have a budget for the year which is somewhere in excess of 6 thousand pounds, and all the selection is from that budget. There is also a quarterly meeting of all the reps from the five groups, we meet together with the music librarian at Glaisdale and the music librarian at that meeting has ordered in actual CDs and we have a list and we look at all of these items individually and they gain are in the main categories, of pop, classical, folk, jazz, world music and we then select from those for our groups at that meeting and there are four of those meetings a year and then, on an ongoing basis I peruse various journals; Gramophone, Music Week etc. and we also get a list from our suppliers and they do a list which is categorised into the various categories of music and I'll buy from there as well. So it's a combination of a monthly list, a quarterly meeting and ongoing selection.

2. How does this differ from fiction selection policies?

Quite significantly now, because fiction is now ordered on a standing order list and in a sense there's no local selection for fiction, it's determined by a formula, whereas now with music we're still making local decisions about everything we buy so now, it's significantly different.

3. When music is requested that are not available in the authority, what is the procedure?

We do have requests for CDs and if they're not in stock I will then consider them for purchase. There are various factors which I take into account, there are a small number of people who put in a large number of requests, so I have to be careful that their requests don't make our collection a bit skew-wiff because they do ask for a lot, so they get a few that are declined because it's not fair to have the balance of the collection determined by a few enthusiasts. So, if it's something that I think will enhance the collection and is likely to be used by other people as well then I will buy it but if I feel that it's not really particularly suitable then I will decline it.

4. How does this differ for requests for fiction in the same situation?

In principal, not greatly, 'cause if something is still available, whether it's a CD or a novel, we will consider it for purchase, and in a sense, the criteria for whether we buy it or not are the same, whether it's appropriate for our library to have that item in stock. So where it differs is if something is no longer available for purchase, because we have got both a county fiction reserve and we can go to other authorities to borrow fiction if we haven't got it in our collection, whereas we have no such arrangement for sound recordings. So if a decision is made here not to buy a CD or if it's not available then that's the end of the story, there's nowhere else for us to go. It's either supplied from within Nottinghamshire or it's not supplied at all.

5. What is the procedure for last copies of music recordings?

Again, the central library in Nottingham have a reserve collection so, when we're doing any stock work, or any items come to our attention that are last copies, we will then offer them to Angel Row library and a decision will be made there as to whether they want it or not. But they're only being offered things that are last copies, so they're making a value judgement as to whether it's something that should be kept for posterity. We make a local decision that is, I think worth you considering, to keep, but they ultimately make the final decision as to whether to keep it or not.

6. Is there communication between the different groups in your authority on CD purchases and stocks?

(Answered in Q1)

7. How does policy for music recordings differ by genre?

It's fair to say that a significant proportion of the issues are pop music and therefore the purchasing reflects that, we buy a higher proportion of pop to any other single category, but we do ensure that we buy in all categories even though some of them are relatively minority interest. For example, we have a reasonable collection of classical music, but the number of issues we get from those classical CDs will be lower than the number of issues we get from pop. So basically, the buying is in proportion to the level of use. But we're prepared to buy things that are for quite specific interests if we think it'll broaden the range of the scope of the collection.

7. How does policy for music recordings differ by genre?

There shouldn't be in theory! And who knows how they perceive the service! In the sense that music is selected on more local-based knowledge than fiction, I mean, you buy fiction on the basis that you're buying a known author and if an author falls into a particular category, there'll be a certain number of copies of that book in the system whereas with music, if you know that you've got people interested in Country and Western in the library, you could have a much better selection than another library where there isn't a particular interest in that category. I think that's a question for the users! It's not an easy question for me to answer.

Interview C: Sheffield Central Music and Video Library.

1. How exactly are music recordings selected for Sheffield?

I'm responsible for buying most of the material for the central collection. A colleague and I buy most of the music for the whole system, but, in fact a lot of the material that we buy for THIS library is selected by the whole team, because we cover such a wide range of music. We give each person who works here a small area to be responsible for. One person does pop, someone else does classical or film soundtracks, country, that sort of thing. In addition to that we have a suggestions book and we use that as a kind of guide in addition to picking things up from magazines and things like that. I have information supplied to me by the suppliers; their new releases,

2. How does this differ from fiction selection policies?

I suppose a little bit in that we are concentrating on one collection, but in terms of the way we do book selection, it is still geared towards...Book selection is done in teams, so we do it much the same way. I think there is more automatic purchase on the book side, although that is something we're looking at (for CDs) at the moment; putting standing orders for some of the more obvious product, so we can concentrate on other things and also to get more of a spread of material. We don't actually have any automatic purchases set up, but we do automatically buy anything that's in the top 20 across the organisation, but not necessarily for this library.

3. When music is requested that are not available in the authority, what is the procedure?

This is really where it differs from books because we don't have a fully open reservations policy. We have a suggestions policy. There's a suggestions form on the website as well as the books here. More often than not we will buy things that come up on the list, because it's a good way of judging what people want from us; if we can get them! We then annotate the suggestions book so people know what's on order. If it's on our system, then it can be requested. At the moment we can only request things for AV that are on the catalogue, partly because we've always had a fairly limited budget, and partly because there's no inter-library loans system. We do have a

member of the cataloguing team here (at the central library) who does it for us. We don't (catalogue) ourselves.

4. How does this differ for requests for fiction in the same situation?

It is different from books, in that (No formal off-catalogue request system) respect.

5. What is the procedure for last copies of music recordings?

Because we need to keep the collection going, we do have to withdraw a lot of stock. We do try and maintain the more classic albums, if you like. We keep tabs on that, but in terms of last copies we probably don't sort of monitor it in such an in-depth way as we do for books.

5a. This library still has Vinyl and cassette. What is the policy regarding these formats?

It is unusual. It's overdue (for discontinuation) It's something that we're planning to get rid of this year and it's an overhang, we got rid of the bulk of the collection, but we hung onto a few things that we felt we couldn't replace. So the vinyl we've got will be going this year. The tape collection is maintained here because there are people who use cassettes primarily, but that's also something we'll have to make a decision on soon, 'cause there is a proposal to relocate this service. We won't have enough room for it. The only other cassette collection is the housebound service, they have a fairly big cassette collection because a lot of the people they deal with are elderly and don't have the full range of equipment that a lot of people have. We maintain the cassette collection as a service because we have the space for it.

6. Is there communication between the different groups in your authority on CD purchases and stocks?

We have a team of people, an audio-visual group. At the moment there are four of us who meet regularly to purchase videos, we also maintain the systems of music buying for the groups. At the moment the music purchasing is done by two of us who work together and make the decisions. All the staff in the different libraries know who we are and if there are things they need, they just communicate with us and we take that into the next selection. Apart from one or two collections that have particular profiles, we are buying most of the popular stuff for the other collections and they are quite small. We've got two other libraries apart from this one which have

large collections, one is the new Ecclesall library, where the music collection is really doing well, so we have been trying to buy them a much broader range of music, which seems to go out there, and there's one at crystal peaks and they have a quite a big collection there, but apart from that, all the other collections are quite small. We have one at Burngreave which is focussed more around black music, gospel, that sort of thing. We have Asian collections in a lot of places as well.

7. How does policy for music recordings differ by genre?

We weed the shelves and there are some sections of music where the criteria for pulling things off would be a much shorter gap than it would be for classical music. You couldn't expect (classical) to have 4-5 issues a month, 'cause it probably wouldn't; certainly not an opera, whereas the pop album that's only 4-5 months old, if that hasn't gone out for six weeks, that's bad news and it means nobody wants it. So we do have slightly different criteria. The thing we try and maintain, certainly with the classical collection, is to make sure that we maintain a sort of core classical content, so that certain standard things, like your Beethoven symphonies, and Verdi operas are there, as well as something new, or anything slightly more interesting that people might not have heard. So we are trying to keep a balanced collection there. If you combined the pop music, the chart stuff, the shows, the Jazz and the country, we'd probably spend more money on that, or at least buy more items on that than we do classical, as classical is actually more expensive, so you're spending more money on it to start with. It takes longer to pick (classical) items, because the staff like to read reviews before they buy something, so it does take a bit longer to buy, so we probably don't spend quite as much money, but we do spend quite a fair proportion of the budget of this library on that. But a lot of it's back catalogue; maintaining things. But, on the other hand, we do buy a lot of back catalogue on the pop side as well. The person doing pop at the moment has identified quite a lot of things that we haven't got, that we ought to. So he's got quite a long list of back catalogue, that, if we can afford it, we'll try and find the money for.

8. Do you think that users who only make use of the library's sound recordings collection receive the same level of service as those who only use fiction?

I suppose if you look at the fact that we don't have a request system for anything anybody wants to request, then that is not quite the same level of service, but I think in terms of the amount of effort that goes into maintaining the collections and the communication between staff and

customer on purchasing items and things like that, there is a lot of dialogue goes on over the counter, and I suppose that's the same as it would be for fiction.

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