

55708

The number of challenges received by your service to items in your collections, and the number of challenges related to library events received in the period 2019-2024. We define a challenge as an attempt to remove or restrict (library) materials, or cancel an event, based upon the objections of a person or group.

Title Challenges = 8

Event Challenges = 2

Total No. of Challenges = 10

The titles of the items or events challenged and, if known, the category of person making the challenge (i.e. parent, member of staff, elected official, organisation).

The specific reason(s) provided by the complainant(s) for those challenges (e.g. cultural, values-based, related to sex and/or sexuality, etc)

The result of/response to the challenge (e.g. no action, direct engagement with complainant, relocating or reclassifying material, labelling the material or its catalogue record, etc)

Title Challenges

The trial of Magneto by Chris Claremont, John Romita, Barry Windsor-Smith.

A complaint was made by a service user about racist language in the text. All copies were withdrawn. A newer edition with those sections containing racist language removed is available and has been ordered.

Aurton par haram magar kiya? by Khalid Abdurrahman al Ak

A ten-year-old Hindi language book. A complaint was raised by a service user that the information contained in it around Islam and women was incorrect. Given the challenges of translating the text it was agreed to withdraw the book on the basis of age.

Trans: When Ideology Meets Reality by Helen Joyce

A complaint was raised by a service user that this book criticises transgender rights. The title was not removed from stock as Edinburgh libraries holds other books that provide alternative views on the subject of transgender rights – a specific example being *The Transgender Issue: An Argument for Justice* by Shon Faye

Beyond Magenta by Susan Kuklin

Service user complained at branch about language and sexually explicit references. Description of oral sex and suggestion that it was enjoyed by a child. It is a book based on true life trans experience. It was held In the Teen book section, so was transferred to the adult section.

Irreversible Damage – the transgender craze seducing our daughters by Abigail Shrier

A complaint was raised by a service user that this book promotes anti-trans ideas. The title was not removed from stock as Edinburgh libraries holds other books that provide alternative views on the subject of transgender rights – a specific example being *The Transgender Issue: An Argument for Justice* by Shon Faye

Grandads Pride by Harry Woodgate

Complaint raised by a parent regarding concerns about the appropriateness of the images and ideas in the book. After investigation, the complaint was partially upheld based on some of the illustrations, but not the content and storyline of the book. It was established that a later edition had been edited and images replaced by the publisher to make it more suitable for the age group concerned and the original copies were replaced with later edition copies.

Feminism for Women by Julie Bindel

Difficult Women by Helen Lewis.

Complaint made by service user regarding books by 'anti-trans activists' in the Leith Library International Women's Day display. These titles form part of our citywide adults' non-fiction collection within our range of resources that aim, where possible, to give access to a variety and balance of opinions. This enables readers to do their own research and draw their own conclusions. Our process of selection for this particular display was to feature a variety of relevant books on the topics of feminism and celebrating women and offered a variety of opinions. Therefore, the complaint was not upheld, and the books were not removed.

Event Challenges

'School and Gender Identity' – Maggie Mellon - Room Booking at Portobello Library

This was not a library event, but rather a community room booking made by a member of the local community. We received 200+ complaints asking us to cancel this booking as the speaker was a vocal opponent to the 'Gender Recognition Bill' proposed by the Scottish Government and claims that the community members organising were 'known gender critics' and that the event 'would allow them to grow their transphobic networks and spread misinformation'. The booking was not cancelled and went ahead as planned after considering of all relevant legislation and case law. As a service it is important that we recognise that everyone has the right to freedom of expression, which includes freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference. Due to the volume of complaints it was agreed with organisers that the event could take place after CEC Public Safety team risk assessment and provision of safety and security was in place, and adhered to, at the expense of the event organisers.

Community Assembly – Leith and Palestine Solidarity - organised by a member of the community on behalf of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) Edinburgh Branch – Room booking at MacDonald Road Library

This was not a library event, but rather a community room booking made by a member of the local community. A complaint was made claiming that the event was antisemitic and stirring up racial hatred as the flyer included the phrase "Declare Leith a Zionist Free Zone". After considering relevant overriding provisions such as the European Convention on Human Rights, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010, in relation to this room booking, we made the decision that the event could go ahead, with some additional measures put in place by the organiser to satisfy the requirements for the public safety. Whilst we acknowledged that the expression "Declare Leith a Zionist Free Zone" arguably went beyond simply asserting a right to freedom of expression/belief, it did not, in our view, reach the standard required by ss17 to 19 of the Public Order Act 1986 such that the organisers are guilty of an offence of stirring up racial hatred.