64913 Book Challenges

The number of book challenges received by City of Edinburgh for each calendar year between January 2020-August 2026.

A ‘book challenge’ in this context is defined as a formal complaint from any source requesting that materials be removed from a library because of content or inappropriateness.

Please provide the following for each year:

1. The number of challenges received

2. The title and author of each book challenge

3. The reason provided for each book challenge

4. The action taken in response to each book challenge (for example, book removed, book relocated or reclassified or no action taken)

1. The number of challenges received 8
2. The title and author of the books challenged - As below
3. The reason (if any) provided for the challenge - As below
4. The action taken in response to the challenge – As below

From 2020 to date there have been 7 formal complaints/objections received about 8 different titles in Libraries.

Year: 2021

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

A complaint was made 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 All copies were withdrawn.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.

Year: 2022

Aurton par haram magar kiya? by Khalid Abdurrahman al Ak

A ten year old Hindi language book. A complaint was raised 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.

Year: 2023

Trans: When Ideology Meets Reality by Helen Joyce

A complaint was raised 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 Fay

Year: 2023

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.

Year: 2023

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

A complaint was raised 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

Year: 2024

Grandads Pride by Harry Woodgate

Complaint raised 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.

Year: 2025

Feminism for Women by Julie Bindel

Difficult Women by Helen Lewis.

Complaint 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.