Figure 1: Connecting service to the community

(Museums Libraries and Archives Council, 2011a)
Figure 2: Research Design

Phase 1
- Delphi study of experts
- Synthesis/analysis of responses
- Selection of case studies based on maximum variation

Phase 2
- Case study 1
  - Staff interviews
  - Library user interviews
  - Volunteer interviews
- Case study 2
  - Staff interviews
  - Library user interviews
  - Volunteer interviews

Purposive sampling

Triangulation
Figure 3: Volunteer Roles

Roles covered by volunteers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deliver bookstart books</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea/coffee</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardening/grounds</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft events helper</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile library support</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community managed library roles</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General support roles (baking, data entry)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storylines</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local studies</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home delivery service (and reading)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT assistance (support website maintenance, tutorials)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visually impaired persons - reading groups and support</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events IN Children’s book festival, summer coding</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends group (promotion, ambassador, fundraising)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital library service</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading groups</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4: Benefits of Volunteer Use for the Library Service

- Extend and enhance existing library service: 57
- Greater engagement with community: 35
- More advocates and supporters of the library service: 24
- Provides services we cannot afford to provide: 22
- Audience expansion through new contact e.g. young people: 21
- Gains time (taking roles away that are not appropriate for paid staff e.g. making tea): 14
- Greater integration between council policy and local need/delivery: 13
- Increases the skills base the library can offer: 11
- Adds value to a not-for-profit organisation: 10
- Financial savings: 6
- A different perspective on our offer: 2
The need to work with salaried staff to provide a clear explanation of the volunteer’s role

Assumption by politicians that use of volunteers saves money

The potential for integrity and quality of service to be undermined

Safeguarding, data protection, training and equality duties are critical and need to be managed

Ensuring the right volunteers are selected for the right role

To ensure a good volunteer experience – for volunteer and service

Budgetary pressure changing the role of volunteers as a cost-cutting measure

Creating a clear line between what volunteers and salaried staff do

To ensure there are enough resources to support the intensive induction of volunteers

Cost benefit analysis – the costs of recruitment/selection and training of volunteers versus the time they may spend...

To manage volunteer numbers effectively, so balance between salaried staff and volunteers

The need to work with salaried staff to provide a clear explanation of the volunteer’s role

Key issues for the library service
What do you see as the future of library volunteers for your Library Service, and public libraries generally?

Large untested assumption that sufficient volunteers exist to increase service provision
Salaried staff devalued
Partnership working with volunteers and other agencies to ensure the sustainability of the service
Lack of understanding by volunteers, and those outside the library world about what a library does
Concern for a library wholly run by volunteers who lack knowledge and skills
Each Community will act differently to the 'opportunity' to take on running their local library
Volunteering will enhance the skills and opportunities for those who are unemployed
Increasing pressure to fill frontline roles with volunteers
The experience of being a library volunteer will change
1964 Act is outdated, and needs to reflect the potential for community-shaping
Volunteer support of customers with specific needs (visually impaired people)
Volunteers acting as positive marketing ambassadors, in areas not responsive to libraries
Political support through the community engagement agenda
Volunteers are used in affluent areas to keep threatened libraries open
Increase in youth volunteering
Volunteers are a growth area
Employment agency schemes will encourage voluntary participation in disadvantaged areas

Figure 6: The Future of Volunteer Use for Public Libraries