



Relocation of Camelford Library and Town Council Offices

Information Sheet for Residents

Camelford Town Council (CTC) is currently progressing the potential relocation of the library and council offices from the Town Hall to the Camel Centre (previously Adult Education Centre), located adjacent to Sir James Smith's School, following a vote that took place in the full council meeting on February 24th 2026.

CTC have produced this document to ensure that residents have clear, transparent information about why this option is being progressed and how it may improve long-term library and council service provision in Camelford: below you will find the reasons behind the proposal, the potential benefits, and the issues the Council is seeking to address.

Background and Previous Discussions

This exploration is part of a long-standing conversation. Past proposals have involved:

- Camelford Hall (approved unanimously by council but later abandoned in 2023)
- The Co-op building
- Abbeyfield House

The current proposal is therefore a continuation, not a new or sudden idea.

Why the Move Is Being Considered Now

The Town Council's Lease on the Town Hall expired in February 2025.

Accessibility and Parking

Current challenges:

The library's existing site has very limited parking, which is also difficult to access. This presents barriers for many residents, particularly those who are elderly or who have mobility issues.

Improvements at the proposed new site:

- The Library and offices will be all on one level, making it accessible to all.
- Multiple dedicated parking spaces for library users.
- If required, the walk from Clease Road Car Park to the new site will be very similar in distance, time, and elevation when compared with the walk from Churchfield Car Park to the current library site.

The new site therefore provides safer, flatter, and more reliable access for all users.

Costs and Financial Impact

Initial setup costs:

Adapting the Camel Centre (previously the Adult Education Centre) for library and council use (creating suitable rooms, installing facilities, etc.) will be paid for using existing council reserves. These one-off costs will *not* increase council tax.

Yearly running costs:

Despite providing a larger and more flexible space, annual running costs are expected to remain similar to the costs at the current location. No increase to the precept is anticipated, other than to remain in-line with anticipated inflation rates.

Space and Community Use

CTC remains committed to supporting local venues such as The Old Bank and Camelford Hall by directing groups there where appropriate, but will also look to provide new opportunities at the proposed site.

Implementing the use of a second building/space alongside the existing library space has been considered by council, but the requirement then for additional staffing would lead to an inevitable increase in the precept.

The new library space will:

- Provide a separate community room, which will be used for Council meetings and community groups.
- Offer activities that do *not* currently operate elsewhere in Camelford, meaning they represent additional provision rather than competition.
- Provide green/outdoor space for use alongside the library.

The existing library has no suitable space for Town Council meetings.

Limitations of the current space for use in meetings:

- Bookshelves must be pushed aside to fit a small number of chairs.
- Only a limited number of councillors and attendees can sit.
- If several members of the public attend, they are often forced to stand due to lack of space.

This arrangement is not compliant with best practice for public meetings, nor is it comfortable or accessible for residents.

The proposed new site will provide:

- A dedicated, appropriately sized meeting room.
- More seated space for councillors, staff, and the public to attend comfortably.
- A more professional and accessible environment for democratic engagement.

Opportunities for Local Schools

The new location will create:

- A shared community-school educational hub.
- Increased careers education and work experience opportunities.
- Pathways for students to engage with the Cornwall Youth Council, supported by greater local visibility of council operations.

Public Toilets

Current known problems:

- The library toilet is located inside the council office, behind the library desk.
- It is generally inaccessible during meetings or when confidential materials are present.
- There is no disabled-access toilet on site.

The new premises will enable CTC to provide:

- Separate male, female, and disabled-access public access toilets.
- No compromised office security.
- More dignity and independence for users with disabilities, families, and children.

Summary

CTC made the decision to enter into lease negotiations with a view to moving the library in February 2026, as it believes that the new location will provide improved accessibility, space, links to the local schools, public access toilets, all at little to no additional yearly cost when compared with the existing site.

CTC also believes that, despite doing all it can in its current location, as footfall is declining in-line with national town-centre trends the library service could eventually become unsustainable. This could lead to reduced hours or even closure (latter would require public consultation). In that scenario, the Town Hall would have no tenant, and Camelford would risk losing its library entirely.

CTC believes that relocating the library and council offices will lead to:

- Improved accessibility and parking
- Modernised library and office spaces
- Increased support and opportunities for local schools and students
- More suitable publicly accessible toilets (including disabled facilities)
- Adequate and professional meeting spaces
- A financially sustainable future for the library and council services
- All of the above with minimal to no financial impact on residents