



See what you lose when libraries are cut –  
***speak up for libraries!***

### **Checklist of Key Lobby Messages**

Be clear on what you want to say to your MP before meeting them. You will want to focus on your local situation, especially the damaging impact of recent cuts on your local library service and your fears for the future.

#### **Ask your MP to ...**

##### ***Lobby Ministers and Government to***

- **Enforce the law** that says local authorities must provide a “comprehensive and efficient” library service by developing and implementing, with the Leadership for Libraries Taskforce, statutory guidance on the responsibilities of public library authorities
- **Acknowledge that libraries** are important to people – especially during a recession – by implementing policy during the 2016 Parliament which secures their statutory rights to a quality library service and recognises the contribution of libraries to overall policy objectives including economic prosperity, skills development, literacy, health and wellbeing and community cohesion
- **Give libraries a long-term future** with a clear vision for their development and standards of service by including a programme of library development and modernisation in the 2016-2020 DCMS Business Plan

##### ***Lobby government and local authorities to***

- **Ensure councils have enough** money to provide quality services that are well planned and sufficiently staffed
- **Also ask your MP** to support the EDM 1025 (Early Day Motion) on the Speak Up for Libraries Campaign (text overleaf)

## ***The Grim Situation of Public Libraries***

- **Library services have** borne the considerable brunt of public spending cuts. Over 100 libraries in Great Britain (GB) were lost last year, and at least 441 have closed in the past five years. Another 149 are currently under threat
- **Since 2010 there** has been a 22% drop in the number of all staff (full time equivalent) employed in GB's public libraries (figures are from 2010/11 to 2014/15), which at March 2015 stood at 18,028. This included a 32% reduction in professional staff
- **Over the same period** there has been a 93% increase in the number of volunteers, which in March 2015 stood at 41,402 volunteers, although each volunteer worked an average of only 38 hours a year. The skills and knowledge base of the library workforce is being seriously eroded and the quality of library service provided threatened
- **The future looks** just as bad. Following the Spending Review 2015 last year the Local Government Association commented: "Even if councils stopped filling in potholes, maintaining parks, closed all children's centres, libraries, museums, leisure centres and turned off every street light they will not have saved enough money to plug the financial black hole they face by 2020" (media release 25/11/15). As local authorities approach setting their budgets for 2016/17 the stories of further deep cuts to library services proliferate.

## **The Early Day Motion 1025** (Tabled in the House of Commons on 27/1/16)

### **SPEAK UP FOR LIBRARIES CAMPAIGN**

That this House recognises that public libraries are hugely important to our communities; acknowledges that many have already closed or are under threat; welcomes the Speak Up For Library lobby of Parliament in support of the public library service on 9 February 2016; and calls on the Government to ensure that councils have enough money to provide well-staffed quality services to enforce the law that says local authorities must provide a comprehensive and efficient library service, to implement policy which secures people's statutory rights to a quality library service and to give libraries a long-term future by including a programme of library development and modernisation in the 2016 to 2020 Department for Culture, Media and Sport Business Plan.

Speak Up for Libraries  
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[www.speakupforlibraries.org](http://www.speakupforlibraries.org)