# Cambridgeshire Library Service Review

# Report of Public Consultation

**Cambridgeshire County Council, November 2010**

**Contents**

## 1. Executive summary

Public consultation on the Cambridgeshire Library Service Review took place during August and September 2010. It was undertaken through a questionnaire, a series of public meetings, and a touring road show and was widely publicised using a variety of methods including press releases, e-newsletters, film, posters and postcards.

The purpose of the consultation was to engage the public in understanding and discussing the challenge facing the County Council, in providing a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service against a backdrop of unprecedented funding cuts. This will help County Council officers and Members with difficult choices about the future of the service.

There was an overwhelming response to the questionnaire, with over 5600 people completing it, far exceeding expectations. The results of the survey have also provided valuable additional information about how people use Cambridgeshire library services, and have highlighted key differences between those who increasingly use our online services and those who use libraries in a more traditional way. This will guide our approach as to how we market our services in the future.

Key Findings:
- There is strong public support to proceed with the 'Alternative Service Delivery' approach based on the idea of maximising self-service in libraries whilst reducing the number of staff. 69% of respondents supported the use of this approach in future, as an alternative to closing libraries.
- A high proportion (48%) of respondents stated that they would be prepared to support the library service by volunteering in some capacity, with the highest number (28%) prepared to be a general volunteer. 1800 people have already registered their interest in volunteering.
- There is significant support for working to establish libraries as multi-agency community hubs. 77% of respondents believe that library buildings could also be used as community meeting places for groups, exhibitions and other activities.
- Public opinion reinforces the focus on prioritising services for children and young people (59%), with weight also given to vulnerable older people (52%).
- Findings reinforce the importance of localism, a key aspect of our approach as we move forward. This is illustrated by the fact that over 50% of respondents use just one community library regularly and the high level of support for the use of library buildings as community hubs.

The consultation, with its excellent respondent rate, has provided hugely valuable information about users and non-users of library services in Cambridgeshire. It has highlighted strong public support for the Alternative Service Delivery approach and a recommendation for where it is acceptable to users to increase income. There is some additional, more detailed, statistical analysis to be undertaken. In addition to the information generated from the consultation, we will also use the results of the MLA[1] national survey[2] in refining and developing our approach.

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[1] Museums Libraries and Archives Council
[2] *What do the public want from libraries? User and non-user research – full research report* published by MLA in November 2010 based on research by Ipsos MORI and Shared Intelligence

## 2. Purpose and scope of the consultation

The purpose of the Library Service Review consultation was to engage the public in understanding and discussing the challenge, facing the County Council, in providing a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service. This is against a backdrop of unprecedented funding cuts and the results will serve to help County Council officers and Members with difficult choices about the future of the service.

This report draws on the results of the following:

- Library Service Review questionnaire
- Library Service Review road show events
- MLA commissioned Mori report on user and non user research. Cambridgeshire Libraries took part in the 'lapsed users' part of this research, by providing (with their permission) contact details of users who had not actively used the service within the previous year.

It does not report on the consultation undertaken in connection with specific proposals for the Mobile Library Service and Library Access Points. Feedback on the changes to these services has been answered individually, and comments taken on board in planning the changes that have now been implemented.

## 3. Methodology

Public consultation on the Library Service Review in Cambridgeshire took place during August and September 2010. The consultation was undertaken through:
- a questionnaire
- a series of public meetings
- a touring road show

The consultation was publicised through press releases, posters and postcards, the Library Service e-newsletter, and a short film 'advertisement' which was used during the road show, online via YouTube, and on library plasma screens.

### 3.1 Questionnaire
The questionnaire is shown in Appendix 1. This was made available in both printed and online formats and distributed throughout Cambridgeshire Libraries, as well as given out at the road show venues and to existing consultative groups. The Council's Research Group advised that a return of 1200 questionnaires would provide a statistically valid sample. The actual number of responses numbered 5648, far exceeding expectations and demonstrating the high level of public feeling and support for library services. 3557 of these responses were received in paper format and 2091 online.

The data gathered as part of the consultation is adequately representative of people who use library services; no socio economic group is over or under represented by more than a maximum of 3% and in most cases there is less than 1% difference. The same is true when comparing respondents with the population of Cambridgeshire as a whole, with the exception of 'residents of isolated rural communities' who formed only 2.2% of respondents although this group makes up 9.4% of the population. We have analysed this information using Mosaic, a social classification/customer insight tool that uses a range of datasets to classify people into different groups and types. Three groups were slightly over-represented within the consultation: couples with young children living in comfortable modern housing, middle income families living in moderate suburban semis and young, well-educated city dwellers. Conversely, residents of successful professionals living in suburban or semi-rural homes were slightly under-represented in this consultation. Notably, residents of small and mid-sized towns with strong local roots made up 14.6% of survey respondents, which is 100% representative of their postcode area which equals 14.6% of the county.

### 3.2 Public meetings
Ten open public meetings were held, two in each District Council area, addressed by the County Council's portfolio holder, Sir Peter Brown, the Executive Director for Community and Adult Services, Rod Craig, and senior managers. Senior staff also attended various library friends' group meetings on request. Altogether these meetings were estimated to have been attended by around 300 people. A full list of all these meetings is given at Appendix 2.

### 3.3 Road show
A road show, comprising a display and literature and accompanied by staff, toured libraries and other venues such as supermarkets and shopping centres, in order to encourage interest in the consultation. These events particularly aimed to engage non-users, lapsed users and those who have difficulty completing questionnaires unaided. A full list of the road show dates and venues is given at Appendix 3.

Please note that throughout this report, percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number for ease of reading.

## 4. Current use of library services

Whilst the Service collects and uses a great deal of data about the use of library services – both within libraries and online – less detail is available about which services people are using, how often and why. The questionnaire sought to help answer some of these questions, in order to build up a better picture of the current use of library services, and to identify any differences between those who operate online and those who don't. This information can now be used to build 'user profiles' in order to better define, segment and market library services in future. From the answers to the questions and, more particularly, from the further comments contributed on the questionnaires we can analyse need in relation to library and information services and provide evidence of the ways those needs are being met and of the benefits and outcomes of using the services for individuals and communities. Finally, we also sought to find out more about why people *don't* use libraries, usually a much more difficult question to answer, in order to address issues and barriers that are preventing people making use of these services.

### 4.1. *How often do people use library services?*

43% of respondents visit a library at least once a week, and a further 46% visit at least once a month. This indicates that the vast majority (89%) of current library users are in the library 'habit' and have a regular pattern to their visits, presumably based around their rate of borrowing and returning items.

However, these totals mask a significant difference (highlighted below) between those who responded to the paper questionnaire and those who responded online. Whilst nearly half of the former visit at least once a week, only a third of the latter visit once a week and more visit monthly. Since those who completed the questionnaire online are also those most likely to be using online library services (see Table 2), this is strong confirmation that the ability to request and renew items, and to find information, online is a contributory factor to a decline in the number of physical library visits.

**Table 1: Q1. How often have you visited a public library in the last year?**

|  | Completed in hardcopy | | Completed online | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | % |  | % |  | % |
| At least once a week | 1707 | 48.0 | 694 | 33.2 | **2401** | **42.5** |
| At least once a month | 1476 | 41.5 | 1101 | 52.6 | **2577** | **45.6** |
| At least once every three months | 186 | 5.2 | 205 | 9.8 | **391** | **6.9** |
| Less often than once every three months | 64 | 1.8 | 73 | 3.5 | **137** | **2.4** |
| Never | 70 | 2.0 | 10 | 0.5 | **80** | **1.4** |
| No answer | 54 | 1.5 | 8 | 0.4 | **62** | **1.1** |

Around 11% of respondents visit a library every three months or less, possibly to use other kinds of library services and facilities than borrowing, or reflective of the maximum loan period including renewals.

It is interesting to compare these results to the frequency of use of online library services. 29% of respondents use online library services at least once a month, whilst 15% use them at least once a week. This contrasts with 22% who never use the online service and 12% who use it at least once every three months. Whilst these figures are still much lower than those for physical visits to libraries, our statistics show that online use is growing rapidly, with a 47% increase over the last five years, and remote use of the library service has grown from 5% to 23% of overall use since 2002.

**Table 2: Q6. How often do you use public library services online from home, workplace or college?**

|  | Completed in hardcopy | | Completed online | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | % |  | % |  | % |
| At least once a week | 464 | 13.1 | 379 | 18.1 | **843** | **15.0** |
| At least once a month | 742 | 20.9 | 897 | 42.9 | **1639** | **29.0** |
| At least once every three months | 338 | 9.5 | 352 | 16.8 | **690** | **12.2** |
| less often than once every three months | 372 | 10.5 | 184 | 8.8 | **556** | **9.9** |
| Never | 1027 | 28.9 | 203 | 9.7 | **1230** | **21.8** |
| No answer | 612 | 17.2 | 76 | 3.6 | **688** | **12.2** |

## 4.2 *Which libraries do people use?*

Over half (52%) of respondents use just one community library regularly, whilst 9% use only Central Library. A further fifth (20%) use their local library plus Central Library, and 13% use more than two community libraries. These figures both confirm the importance people place on the convenience of their local library, and hint at the different, special and complementary role of the Central Library, which is used in addition by 20% of respondents.

Again, the totals mask a significant difference between the answers from those who completed on paper and those online (highlighted below). A much higher proportion of online respondents use only Central Library and a much lower proportion use more than one library. This indicates that online service users are able to use the online catalogue and services to access books and information across the service without having to 'shop around' by visiting more than one library. It may also indicate that these users are seeking access to the greater range and depth of resources available at the Central Library.

**Table 3: Q2. Which library do you use?**

|  | Completed in hardcopy | | Completed online | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | % |  | % |  | % |
| Cambridge Central only | 155 | 4.4 | 361 | 17.2 | **516** | **9.1** |
| Cambridge Central plus one or more other | 691 | 19.4 | 435 | 20.8 | **1126** | **19.9** |
| Any other one library only | 1831 | 51.5 | 1108 | 52.9 | **2939** | **52.0** |
| Any other more than one library | 560 | 15.8 | 149 | 7.1 | **709** | **12.6** |
| No answer | 319 | 9.0 | 40 | 1.9 | **359** | **6.4** |

## 4.3 *Why do people use library services?*

The highest proportion of respondents (70%) use libraries to follow up on interests and generally for pleasure (66%), whilst 28% use it in connection with learning and 16% in connection with their work. Encouraging children and introducing children to libraries was not on the original questionnaire but as added as it came up so frequently. This was very high; mentioned by 7.3% of respondents which might account for children's library use increasing – children's item issues now account for 38% of all library issues.

**Table 4: Q3. If you use public library services, do you do this:**

|  | Completed in hardcopy | | Completed online | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | % |  | % |  | % |
| In connection with your work | 530 | 14.9 | 399 | 19.1 | **929** | **16.44** |
| In connection with your studies or learning | 939 | 26.4 | 645 | 30.8 | **1585** | **28.1** |
| To follow up interests | 2382 | 67.0 | 1585 | 75.7 | **3968** | **70.2** |
| For pleasure apart from following interests | 2824 | 79.4 | 927 | 44.3 | **3752** | **66.4** |
| Encourage children / introduce kids to libraries | 175 | 4.9 | 235 | 11.2 | **410** | **7.3** |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Other | 69 | 1.9 | 25 | 1.2 | **94** | **1.7** |

## 4.4  *Which library services do people use?*

Respondents were allowed to provide multiple answers to this question. A huge 95% of respondents still use libraries primarily for borrowing books, with 40% borrowing audio visual items.  The second most popular service is finding information, at 58%, with 24% researching topics, such as looking up local or family history, giving a combined score of 82%.  The use of newspapers and magazines at 32% is surprisingly slightly higher than the quarter (25%) of respondents using PCs and the internet.  18% are bringing their children to Storytimes or other children's events, whilst 13% attend exhibitions or community meetings, 12% use the library for studying / homework, and 10% attend reading groups or author talks.  None of the other wide range of services accounted for more than 5% of the use of services, partly due to their lack of penetration throughout the service – only some libraries offer these additional services. There is a high degree of similarity in the use made of services, regardless of whether people responded in paper or online.

**Table 5: Q4.  If you visit a public library, which services do you use:**

| | Completed in hardcopy | | Completed online | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | % | | % | | % |
| Borrow a book | 3337 | 93.8 | 2040 | 97.3 | **5377** | **95.2** |
| Borrow multimedia items (talking books, music CDs, DVDs, Blu Ray) | 1388 | 39.0 | 905 | 43.2 | **2294** | **40.6** |
| Read magazines or newspapers | 1169 | 32.9 | 617 | 29.5 | **1786** | **31.6** |
| Find something out / look for information | 2080 | 58.5 | 1172 | 56.0 | **3253** | **57.6** |
| Research topics – e.g. local or family history | 821 | 23.1 | 548 | 26.2 | **1369** | **24.2** |
| Study or homework facilities | 401 | 11.3 | 274 | 13.1 | **675** | **11.9** |
| Follow a computer-based learning course | 207 | 5.8 | 66 | 3.2 | **273** | **4.8** |
| Use the computer and internet facilities | 939 | 26.4 | 492 | 23.5 | **1431** | **25.3** |
| Use wi-fi | 148 | 4.2 | 159 | 7.6 | **307** | **5.4** |
| Take children to Storytime or other activities | 574 | 16.1 | 441 | 21.1 | **1016** | **18.0** |
| Attend a reading group or author talk | 384 | 10.8 | 200 | 9.6 | **584** | **10.3** |
| Attend an exhibition or community meeting | 477 | 13.4 | 263 | 12.6 | **740** | **13.1** |
| Attend an Engage (over-50's club) session | 120 | 3.4 | 49 | 2.3 | **169** | **3.0** |
| **Other services cited:** | | | | | | |
| To use café / coffee shop / restaurant | 53 | 1.5 | 57 | 2.7 | **110** | **2.0** |
| To use BFI mediatheque | 9 | 0.3 | 18 | 0.9 | **27** | **0.5** |
| To use fax / photocopier / printer | 49 | 1.4 | 25 | 1.2 | **74** | **1.3** |
| To look for local / community information | 41 | 1.2 | 43 | 2.1 | **84** | **1.5** |
| For company / to meet people | 20 | 0.6 | 20 | 1.0 | **40** | **0.7** |
| To buy second-hand books / stamps / cards | 14 | 0.4 | 8 | 0.4 | **22** | **0.4** |
| Other services or facilities | 106 | 3.0 | 50 | 2.4 | **156** | **2.8** |

When looking at online library services, more than half of respondents (55%) said they use the internet service to look for, request and renew books.  29% use the internet to look for information, 15% to look for and request multimedia items, and 14% to research topics.  Only 6% of respondents consult newspapers and magazines online compared to 32% using them in libraries.  Once again, the totals hide a significant variation in the responses from online users as opposed to those responding in hard copy, as highlighted below.  Not surprisingly, those completing online scored the use of online services much higher than those who did not.

**Table 6: Q5.  Do you use any of the following public library services online?**

| | Completed in hardcopy | | Completed online | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | % | | % | | % |
| Look for and request books | 1639 | 46.1 | 1479 | 70.6 | **3118** | **55.2** |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Look for and request multimedia items (talking books, music CDs, DVDs, Blu-Ray) | 443 | 12.5 | 405 | 19.3 | **848** | **15.0** |
| Renew books or multimedia items you have borrowed | 1567 | 44.1 | 1570 | 75.0 | **3139** | **55..6** |
| Find something out / look for information | 904 | 25.4 | 738 | 35.3 | **1643** | **29.1** |
| Research topics (e.g. in encyclopedias, dictionaries or other online reference books, local and family history resources) | 446 | 12.5 | 372 | 17.8 | **818** | **14.5** |
| Read magazines and newspapers | 230 | 6.5 | 111 | 5.3 | **341** | **6.0** |
| Follow a computer-based learning course | 77 | 2.2 | 29 | 1.4 | **106** | **1.9** |
| Other services or facilities | 33 | 1.0 | 18 | 1.0 | **51** | **0.9** |

## *4.5 Comparison of physical and online use of library services*

The table below shows some of the results where the difference between those who responded in paper format and those who responded online is most marked. Together, these form a picture of two potentially quite different sets of library users.

**Table 7:  Selected responses for comparison**

| | Completed in hardcopy | | Completed online | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Visit Cambridge Central only | 155 | 4.4% | 361 | 17.2% | **516** | **9.1** |
| Use online service at least once a month | 1206 | 34% | 1276 | 61% | **2482** | **44.0** |
| Never use online library service | 1027 | 28.9% | 203 | 9.7% | **1230** | **21.8** |
| Look for and request books online | 1639 | 46.1% | 1479 | 70.6% | **3118** | **55.2** |
| Renew books or multimedia items online | 1567 | 44.1% | 1570 | 75.0% | **3139** | **55..6** |

## 5. Non use of libraries and lapsed users

It proved very difficult to engage with and obtain responses from current non-users of library services during the public consultation.  As a result, we were only able to reach a very small sample of non users.  In order to elicit more responses, only those questions relating specifically to non-use of services were asked of people who said they do not currently use library services. A national lapsed user survey undertaken by MORI on behalf of MLA is therefore a very useful addition to this data, especially since it included a sample of Cambridgeshire users. Lack of time was by far the most common reason cited for not using library services (33%), even more than the 24% of people nationally who gave this reason[3].  Unlike the national survey, in which 25% respondents said they prefer to buy their books, only 15% gave this answer in Cambridgeshire.

**Table 8:  Q7. If you don't visit or use public library services, what stops you from doing so?**

|  | Completed in hardcopy | | Completed online | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | % |  | % |  | % |
| Lack of time | 193 | 33.6 | 160 | 32.7 | **353** | **33.1** |
| Lack of  interest | 16 | 2.8 | 7 | 1.4 | **23** | **2.2** |
| I find everything I need online or from other sources | 72 | 12.5 | 44 | 9 | **116** | **10.9** |
| I buy my own books | 101 | 17.6 | 60 | 12.2 | **161** | **15.1** |
| Inconvenient opening hours | 58 | 10.1 | 96 | 19.6 | **154** | **14.5** |
| Poor choice of books | 36 | 6.3 | 51 | 10.4 | **87** | **8.2** |
| Overdue charges | 23 | 4 | 27 | 5.5 | **50** | **4.7** |
| Other reason(s) | 76 | 13.2 | 45 | 9.2 | **121** | **11.4** |
| Total | 575 | 100 | 490 | 100 | **1065** | **100** |

In conversation with people during the road show, staff reported a variety of verbal responses to this question, including:
- I use the Internet and electronic downloads instead
- I have plenty of books and newspapers to read at home
- I don't read, or I'm dyslexic
- I don't have time, I'm too busy doing other things, I don't like waiting for the book to come
- I use charity shops- buying books helps them, and I return the books to sell again
- I exchange books with friends

A wide range of answers was given for what would entice non-users to use the library service, with a high proportion (37%) stating that nothing could entice them in their present circumstances.  The location and accessibility of libraries was an additional reason given by some respondents for their non-use, and the availability of stock and opening hours clearly has some impact.

**Table 9:  Q8. If you don't visit or use library services, what would entice you to do so?**

|  | Completed in hardcopy | | Completed online | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | % |  | % |  | % |
| Better stock | 18 | 7.9 | 15 | 10.8 | **33** | **9** |
| Better opening hours | 18 | 7.9 | 33 | 23.8 | **51** | **13.9** |
| Location / accessibility of library | 4 | 1.8 | 1 | 0.7 | **5** | **1.4** |
| Nothing | 112 | 49.3 | 25 | 18 | **137** | **37.4** |
| Other | 75 | 33 | 65 | 46.8 | **140** | **38.3** |

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[3] See section 5, pp30-42 of the MLA report

| Total | | 227 | 100 | 139 | 100 | 366 | **100** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

## 6. Future use of Library services

One of the main purposes of the consultation was to seek people's views (especially those of library users) on a range of ideas and proposals for the future of the service which have been developed by staff during the Library Service Review.

Some respondents commented that they found these questions 'leading' or 'unimaginative', so a sample of comments added to the questionnaires have been given at Appendix 4.

### 6.1 *Increasing income from services*

One way of helping to sustain library services in this time of massive budget reductions is to increase income by charging more for more services. The Service already has a budget target to increase income by £50,000 in each of the financial years 2010 – 2013. Interestingly, many people in the public meetings commented that they would be prepared to pay for library services in order to help them survive. However, in reality, experience shows that most people tend to say that charges should be made for services they *don't* use (e.g. people who don't use public PCs think that those who do should be charged). The question below aimed to find out which services people were most likely to pay for to continue using. The most compelling result is for 'Events and activities for adults' for which 21% of respondents said they might be prepared to pay, with a 15% potential drop out rate if charges were applied. At the other end of the scale, more people (32%) said they would not use public computers and the internet if they were charged for this than said they would be prepared to pay (16%)

**Table 10: Q9. Which of the following services would you be prepared to pay a reasonable charge to use?**

| | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | % |
| Use of computers and internet | Would use for a reasonable charge | **895** | **15.8** |
| | Might use for a reasonable charge | **1248** | **22.1** |
| | Would not use if charged | **1829** | **32.4** |
| | | | |
| Use of wi-fi | Would use for a reasonable charge | **441** | **7.8** |
| | Might use for a reasonable charge | **874** | **15.5** |
| | Would not use if charged | **1881** | **33.3** |
| | | | |
| Children's events and activities | Would use for a reasonable charge | **739** | **13.1** |
| | Might use for a reasonable charge | **1180** | **20.9** |
| | Would not use if charged | **1205** | **21.3** |
| | | | |
| Events and activities for adults | Would use for a reasonable charge | **1210** | **21.4** |
| | Might use for a reasonable charge | **1903** | **33.7** |
| | Would not use if charged | **835** | **14.8** |
| | | | |
| Posting books to your home | Would use for a reasonable charge | **1081** | **19.1** |
| | Might use for a reasonable charge | **1567** | **27.7** |
| | Would not use if charged | **1232** | **21.8** |
| | | | |
| Posting multimedia items to your home | Would use for a reasonable charge | **786** | **13.9** |
| | Might use for a reasonable charge | **1303** | **23.1** |
| | Would not use if charged | **1301** | **23** |

## 6.2 *Targeting services at people with particular need*

The Library Service is a universal service to which everyone is entitled in law. Within this, however, there is scope to prioritise the provision of special services and the use of resources to particular groups, whilst continuing to provide a service for everyone. The aim of this question was to find out to whom libraries should (positively) target services. Both older people and unemployed people scored highly, however the highest result at 59% was for targeting children and young people. Unfortunately some people found the wording of this question ambiguous, so this result must be taken with a degree of caution.

**Table 11: Q11. Given we will have less money to run the library service in future, do you think we should target certain groups in particular (whilst continuing to meet the requirement to be available to everyone)? (Please tick all that apply)**

|  | Completed in hardcopy | | Completed online | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | % |  | % |  | % |
| Older people | 1866 | 52.5 | 1069 | 51.0 | **2936** | **52.0** |
| Children and young people | 2032 | 57.1 | 1298 | 61.9 | **3329** | **58.9** |
| Unemployed people | 1117 | 31.4 | 732 | 35.0 | **1850** | **32.7** |
| **Other answers:** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Disabled / handicapped | 66 | 1.8 | 47 | 2.2 | **112** | **2.0** |
| Students / further education | 31 | 0.9 | 17 | 1.0 | **48** | **0.9** |
| Do not target – everyone should be equal | 311 | 8.8 | 136 | 6.5 | **447** | **7.9** |
| Housebound / isolated | 16 | 0.5 | 19 | 1.0 | **35** | **0.6** |
| Those with limited / no internet access | 8 | 0.2 | 2 | 0.1 | **10** | **0.2** |
| This is a confusing question – can't answer | 56 | 1.6 | 38 | 1.8 | **94** | **1.7** |
| Other groups | 163 | 4.6 | 91 | 4.3 | **221** | **3.9** |

## 6.3 *Future scenarios*

There are a range of possibilities for the future of the Library Service, all of which are under active consideration by services across the country. These questions sought to gauge people's appetite for potential changes and developments in library services that are happening nationwide. By far the most popular of these, at over 75%, was the suggestion that library buildings also be used as places for community meetings and activities, with the second highest level of support (54%) given to the suggestion that other public services share library buildings. The least popular idea was that of library services being mostly available digitally, indicating that there is a long way to go before everyone wishes to use the service online, despite current trends in that direction.

**Table 12: Q12. Thinking about library services in 5-10 years time, which of the following scenarios most appeal to you? (Please tick all that apply)**

|  | Completed in hardcopy | | Completed online | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | % |  | % |  | % |
| Fewer, bigger better libraries | 476 | 13.4 | 367 | 17.5 | **843** | **14.9** |
| Library services mostly digital - e.g. downloadable e-books | 401 | 11.3 | 501 | 23.9 | **904** | **16.0** |
| Library services mostly digital - e.g. downloadable e-audio books | 290 | 8.2 | 347 | 16.6 | **637** | **11.3** |
| Library services mostly digital - e.g. more information online | 400 | 11.3 | 459 | 21.9 | **859** | **15.2** |
| Library buildings also used as community meeting places - for community groups, exhibitions and other activities | 2694 | 75.8 | 1652 | 78.9 | **4346** | **76.9** |

| | Completed in hardcopy | | Completed online | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Other public services sharing library building | 1852 | 52.1 | 1219 | 58.2 | **3072** | **54.4** |
| Collections of books for loan in local public places e.g. doctor's surgeries, community centres or pubs | 750 | 21.1 | 438 | 20.9 | **1188** | **21.0** |
| Information kiosks for access to library services and resources in local public places e.g. doctor's surgeries or pubs | 641 | 18.0 | 113 | 5.4 | **757** | **13.4** |

## 6.4 *Alternative Service Delivery approach*

One of the main proposals being put forward is an alternative approach to service delivery, maximising self service in libraries whilst reducing the numbers of staff.  This was first raised as an alternative to library closures, by stretching staff resources more thinly.  At 69%, there is overwhelming support for this proposal as an alternative to library closures, despite many comments in support of staff (see Appendix 4).

**Table 13: Q13. We are proposing to put self-service machines into all our libraries, reducing the number of paid staff, and recruiting volunteers to help deliver the service. This way of working has the potential to save money without closing any libraries. Do you think:**

| | Completed in hardcopy | | Completed online | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | % | | % | | % |
| This is a good idea if it prevents library closure | 2327 | 65.4 | 1541 | 73.7 | **3868** | **68.5** |
| You would rather see fewer libraries but fully run by paid staff | 472 | 13.3 | 233 | 11.1 | **705** | **12.5** |
| Didn't answer / couldn't commit to one or the other | 758 | 21.3 | 317 | 15.2 | **1075** | **19.0** |

Related to this was a question aimed at gauging the level of public support for volunteering in libraries.  A surprisingly high proportion (48%) of respondents said they would be prepared to support the library service by volunteering in some capacity, with the highest number (28%) prepared to be a general volunteer.  Again, this result gives a significant level of support to the Alternative Service Delivery approach.

**Table 14:  Q14. Would you be willing to support your local library by volunteering to help in any of the following types of activity:**

| | Completed in hardcopy | | Completed online | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | % | | % | | % |
| General volunteering, e.g. assisting customers, shelving books | 1006 | 28.3 | 551 | 26.4 | **1558** | **27.6** |
| Increasing access to library buildings such as developing their use as community venues | 284 | 7.8 | 191 | 9.1 | **475** | **8.4** |
| Assisting with children's activities such as Storytimes | 453 | 12.7 | 270 | 12.9 | **723** | **12.8** |
| Assisting with older people's activities | 407 | 11.5 | 213 | 10.1 | **620** | **11.0** |
| Helping people to learn e.g. basic IT skills | 307 | 8.6 | 264 | 12.6 | **571** | **10.1** |
| Promotion and fundraising activities | 278 | 7.8 | 156 | 7.5 | **434** | **7.7** |
| Being a member of a Community Management Board (monitoring, decision making, advocacy) | 337 | 9.5 | 255 | 12.2 | **592** | **10.5** |
| Other activities | 37 | 1.0 | 22 | 1.1 | **59** | **1.0** |
| No / blank | | | | | | **52%** |

## 7. Conclusions / recommendations

The public consultation on the Library Service Review of Cambridgeshire had an outstanding number of responses and aimed to engage all residents; both library users and non-users. It has provided valuable information about why people choose and choose not to use Cambridgeshire libraries and, within these, the facilities they use most often. Furthermore, it has highlighted a clear differentiation between those who use library services online and those who regularly visit a library.

The consultation demonstrated that we have strong public support to proceed with the Alternative Service Delivery approach, with 69% of respondents agreeing that this is a good idea if it prevents library closure. This is underpinned by a confidence that a substantial number of people will come forward to volunteer to support the service (however, more research will need to be undertaken to establish whether this figure is spread evenly across the county and across all service areas). It has also illustrated that there is significant public support (77%) for working to establish libraries as multi-agency community hubs.

This is further reinforced by the public supporting the current focus on prioritisng services for children and young people, with weight also given to vulnerable older people. The community hub model would provide further support for these groups in particular at a local level and allow them to access a number of multi-agency services.

One of the aims of the consultation was to establish where the public would consider paying for services to help us achieve our increased income targets in the financial years 2010-2013. Based on the evidence, there is a clear recommendation for charging for people to attend adult activities in libraries, but not to charge for using public PCs / internet access.

Although this consultation has provided us with excellent statistical information reflecting public opinion and will help to move the Library Services Review forward, there is some more detailed analysis to be undertaken. We will complete further work on profiling 'typical' library users, with a view to better segmentation and marketing of the service to sustain or increase use.

The consultation provided useful information from those individuals who are not library users or are lapsed users. When asked what stops non-users or lapsed users from visiting a library, the most common answer (33%) cited was a lack of time. When asked what would entice non-users to visit a library, the opening hours and availability of stock had some impact. Therefore, moving forward, we will review our approach to stock and opening hours with a view to ensuring these best meet the needs of users.

The consultation, with its excellent respondent rate, has provided invaluable information about users and non-users of library services in Cambridgeshire. It has highlighted strong public support for the Alternative Service Delivery approach and a recommendation with where it is acceptable to users to increase income. There is some additional, more detailed, statistical analysis to be undertaken. In addition to the information generated from the consultation, we will also use the results of the MLA national survey in refining and developing our approach.

**Appendix 1: Questionnaire**

# Library Service Review Questionnaire

The Library Service in Cambridgeshire is facing tough budget pressures and we are consulting on a range of ideas to transform the service and make the savings required. This consultation will take place over the summer, for decisions to be made in autumn, ready for implementation starting in 2011. The purpose of the consultation is to find out:

- what people want and need from their library service for the future
- whether services should be targeted at certain groups in particular
  (remembering that by law the Library Service has to be available to all who wish to use it)
- which services have potential to generate more income
- how far information technology can be used to deliver services
- how services can be delivered or made accessible outside library buildings
- the extent to which communities can become involved in managing and running local libraries

Please help by taking a few minutes to answer the following questions.

## If you would like a copy of this questionnaire in large print, Braille, audio tape or another language please call Dawn Coleman on 0345 045 5225.

**Your use of the library service**

1. How often have you visited a public library in the last year? (Please tick one)

| | |
|---|---|
| • at least once a week | ☐ |
| • at least once a month | ☐ |
| • at least once every three months | ☐ |
| • less often than once every three months | ☐ |
| • never (skip to Question 5) | ☐ |

2. Which library/libraries do you use?

_____

_____

3. If you use public library services, do you do this: (Please tick all that apply)

| | |
|---|---|
| • in connection with your work | ☐ |
| • in connection with your studies or learning | ☐ |
| • to follow up interests | ☐ |
| • for pleasure apart from following interests | ☐ |
| • for other reason(s) (please specify): | |

4. If you visit a public library, which services do you use? (Please tick all that apply)

| | |
|---|---|
| • borrow books | ☐ |
| • borrow multimedia items (talking books, music CDs, DVDs, Blu Ray) | ☐ |
| • read magazines or newspapers | ☐ |
| • find something out / look for information | ☐ |
| • research topics – e.g. local or family history | ☐ |
| • study or homework facilities | ☐ |
| • follow a computer-based learning course | ☐ |
| • use the computer and internet facilities | ☐ |
| • use wi-fi | ☐ |
| • take children to Storytime or other activities | ☐ |
| • attend a reading group or author talk | ☐ |
| • attend an exhibition or community meeting | ☐ |
| • attend an Engage (over-50's club) session | ☐ |
| • other services or facilities (please specify): | |

5. Do you use any of the following public library services online? (Please tick all that apply)

| | |
|---|---|
| • look for and request books | ☐ |
| • look for and request multimedia items (talking books, music CDs, DVDs, Blu Ray) | ☐ |
| • renew books or multimedia items you have borrowed | ☐ |
| • find something out / look for information | ☐ |
| • research topics (e.g. in encyclopaedias, dictionaries or other online reference books, local and family history resources) | ☐ |
| • read magazines and newspapers | ☐ |
| • follow a computer-based learning course | ☐ |
| • other services or facilities (please specify): | |

6. How often do you use public library services online from home, workplace or college?

| | |
|---|---|
| • at least once a week | ☐ |
| • at least once a month | ☐ |
| • at least once every three months | ☐ |
| • less often than once every three months | ☐ |
| • never | ☐ |

7. If you don't visit or use public library services, what stops you from doing so? (Please tick all that apply)

| | |
|---|---|
| • lack of time | ☐ |
| • lack of interest | ☐ |
| • I find everything I need online or from other sources | ☐ |
| • I buy my own books | ☐ |
| • inconvenient opening hours | ☐ |
| • poor choice of books | ☐ |
| • overdue charges | ☐ |
| • other reason(s) (please specify): | |

8. If you don't visit or use library services, what would entice you to do so?

| | |
|---|---|
| • any of the services listed in questions 4 and 5 above (please specify) | ☐ |
| • nothing | ☐ |
| • something else (please specify): | |

**Your views about the future of the library service**

9. Which of the following services would you be prepared to pay a reasonable charge to use?
(Please tick one box for each service)

| | Would use for a reasonable charge | Might use for a reasonable charge | Would not use if charged |
|---|---|---|---|
| • use of computers and the internet | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| • use of wi-fi | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| • children's events and activities | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| • events and activities for adults | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| • posting books to your home | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| • posting multimedia items to your home | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

10. Now, please rank the services in the order in which you would be prepared to pay for them.
(1 = most likely to pay to use; 6 = least likely to pay to use)

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| • use of computers and the internet | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| • use of wi-fi | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| • children's events and activities | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| • events and activities for adults | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| • posting books to your home | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| • posting multimedia items to your home | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

11. Given we will have less money to run the library service in future, do you think we should target certain groups in particular (whilst continuing to meet the requirement to be available to everyone)?
(Please tick all that apply)

| | |
|---|---|
| • older people | ☐ |
| • children and young people | ☐ |
| • unemployed people | ☐ |
| • other groups (please specify): | |

12. Thinking about library services in 5-10 years time, which of the following scenarios most appeal to you?
(Please tick all that apply)

| | |
|---|---|
| • fewer, bigger better libraries | ☐ |
| • library services mostly digital - e.g. | |
|    • downloadable e-books | ☐ |
|    • downloadable e-audio books | ☐ |
|    • more information online | ☐ |
| • library buildings also used as community meeting places - for community groups, exhibitions and other activities | ☐ |
| • other public services sharing library buildings | ☐ |
| • collections of books for loan in local public places e.g. doctor's surgeries, community centres or pubs | ☐ |
| • information kiosks for access to library services and resources in local public places e.g. doctor's surgeries or pubs | ☐ |

13. We are proposing to put self-service machines into all our libraries, reducing the number of paid staff, and recruiting volunteers to help deliver the service.  This way of working has the potential to save money without closing any libraries. Do you think:

| | |
|---|---|
| • this is a good idea if it prevents library closures | ☐ |
| • you would rather see fewer libraries but fully run by paid staff | ☐ |
| • other comments: | |

14. **Would you be willing to support your local library by volunteering to help in any of the following types of activity: (If yes, please supply your contact details below)**

| | |
|---|---|
| • general volunteering, e.g. assisting customers, shelving books | ☐ |
| • increasing access to library buildings such as developing their use as community venues | ☐ |
| • assisting with children's activities such as Storytimes | ☐ |
| • assisting with older people's activities | ☐ |
| • helping people to learn e.g. basic IT skills | ☐ |
| • promotion and fundraising activities | ☐ |
| • being a member of a Community Management Board (monitoring, decision making, advocacy) | ☐ |
| • other activities: | |

**Contact details (optional)**

Name:

Telephone/mobile:

Email:

Address:

**About you (or the person on whose behalf you are answering):**

**Gender (Please tick one)**

| | |
|---|---|
| • Male | ☐ |
| • Female | ☐ |

**Age group (Please tick one)**

| | |
|---|---|
| • Under 5 | ☐ |
| • 5 to 10 | ☐ |
| • 11 to 14 | ☐ |
| • 15 to 19 | ☐ |
| • 20 to 24 | ☐ |
| • 25 to 34 | ☐ |
| • 35 to 44 | ☐ |
| • 45 to 54 | ☐ |
| • 55 to 64 | ☐ |
| • 65 to 74 | ☐ |
| • 75 to 84 | ☐ |
| • 85 or over | ☐ |

Home address (Please complete both if possible)

• Town/Village

• Postcode

Are you: (Please tick all that apply)

| | |
|---|---|
| • in full-time employment | ☐ |
| • in part-time employment | ☐ |
| • self-employed | ☐ |
| • unemployed | ☐ |
| • full-time student | ☐ |
| • part-time student | ☐ |
| • looking after home / family | ☐ |
| • permanently sick / disabled | ☐ |
| • under 5 | ☐ |
| • retired | ☐ |

Do you have children: (Please tick all that apply)

| | |
|---|---|
| • under school age | ☐ |
| • primary school age | ☐ |
| • secondary school age | ☐ |

**Please feel free to use this space to add any other comments you may have.**

Thank you, please return this form to your local library, or to Dawn Coleman at
CC1111, Castle Court, Shire Hall, Castle Hill, Cambridge, CB3 0AP by 30th September 2010.

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library

## Appendix 2: Schedule of consultation meetings

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 5th August | Rock Road Library Friends Group meeting | Rock Road Library, Cambridge |
| 9th August | Public meeting, East Cambs | Little Thetford Village Hall |
| 10th August | Public meeting, City | Central Library |
| 12th August | Public meeting, South Cambs | Over Conference & Community Centre |
| 13th August | Older People's Partnership Board meeting | Ely |
| 13th August | Public meeting, Huntingdonshire | Huntingdon Library |
| 18th August | Public meeting, Fenland | March Library |
| 20th August | City Council Officers meeting | Guildhall, Cambridge |
| 2nd September | Milton Road Library Friends Group meeting | Milton Road Library, Cambridge |
| 2nd September | Warboys Library Friends Group meeting | Warboys Library |
| 6th September | Arbury Library Friends Group meeting | Arbury Library, Cambridge |
| 7th September | Public meeting, East Cambs | Ely Library |
| 9th September | Public meeting, City | Central Library |
| 10th September | Public meeting, Fenland | March Library |
| 14th September | Public meeting, South Cambs | Over Conference & Community Centre |
| 16th September | Public meeting Huntingdonshire | Huntingdon Library |
| 28th September | Barnwell Road Library Friends Group meeting | Barnwell Road Library, Cambridge |

## Appendix 3: Road show schedule

| Date | Large Libraries | Medium size Libraries |
|---|---|---|
| 16th August | N/A | Arbury Court Library |
| 17th August | March Library | Arbury Court Library |
| 18th August | March Library | N/A |
| 19th August | March Library | Cherry Hinton Library |
| 20h August | March Library | Cherry Hinton Library |
| 23rd August | Whittlesey Library | Chatteris Library |
| 24th August | Whittlesey Library | Chatteris Library |
| 25th August | Whittlesey Library | N/A |
| 26th August | N/A | Soham Library |
| 27th August | Ely Library | Soham Library |
| 28th August | Ely Library | N/A |
| 29th August | Ely Library | N/A |
| 30th August | N/A | Bar Hill Library |
| 31st August | Wisbech Library | Bar Hill Library |
| 1st September | Wisbech Library | Bar Hill Library |
| 2nd September | Wisbech Library | N/A |
| 3rd September | Wisbech Library | Yaxley Library |
| 4th September | N/A | Yaxley Library |
| 6th September | St Neots Library | N/A |
| 7th September | St Neots Library | Huntingdon – Supermarket |
| 8th September | St Neots Library | N/A |
| 9th September | N/A | Great Shelford Library |
| 10th September | St Ives Library | Great Shelford |
| 11th September | St Ives Library | N/A |
| 12th September | St Ives Library | N/A |
| 13th September | St Ives Library | Cambourne Library |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 14th September | N/A | Cambourne Library |
| 16th September | Huntingdon Library | Rock Road Library |
| 17th September | Huntingdon Library | Rock Road Library |
| 18th September | Huntingdon Library | Rock Road Library |
| 19th September | Huntingdon Library | N/A |
| 20th September | N/A | Milton Road Library |
| 21st September | Cambridge Central Library | Milton Road Library |
| 22nd September | Cambridge Central Library | Milton Road Library |
| 23rd September | Cambridge Central Library | N/A |
| 24th September | Cambridge Central Library | Histon Library |
| 25th September | Cambridge Central Library | Histon Library |
| 26th September | Cambridge Central Library | N/A |
| 27th September | Lion Yard, Cambridge | N/A |
| 28th September | Lion Yard, Cambridge | Ramsey Library |
| 29th September | Lion Yard, Cambridge | Ramsey Library |
| 30th September | Lion Yard, Cambridge | N/A |

**Appendix 4 – Sample additional comments from questionnaires (with the number of similar comments shown)**

| | |
|---|---|
| **1. EXTERNALISATION (TRUSTS, COMMERCIAL ORGANISATIONS, OUTSOURCING ETC.)** | |
| Need to think more about linking with commercial organisations / get local businesses to sponsor / business sponsorship should be considered for notice board areas, IT suites, children's reading areas etc to fund specific areas of interest relevant to local or national businesses /Arbury Library really it should be expanded - perhaps you could do a deal with Budgens? | **15** |
| Rent out space when libraries are closed, particularly those that only open a few days a week  / we have a wonderful building, lets make full use of it all the time | **9** |
| Cambourne Library is a really useful service, especially being in the same building at the doctors. | **7** |
| Invite in franchises such as Costa Coffee or a café that can bring in extra money | **6** |
| Moving into retail parks may be the way to go / combine with retail centres | **3** |
| Negotiate contracts with increased funding from developers of new housing or commercial developments | **2** |
| | |
| **2. ALTERNATIVE SERVICE DELIVERY (FEWER STAFF, SELF SERVICE, USE OF VOLUNTEERS)** | |
| | |
| **Use of Volunteers** | |
| Please do not replace trained staff with volunteers | **210** |
| The use of volunteers is risky, as it may make the Service seem less professional / I do not think a high quality service can be maintained with volunteer labour only in some libraries or other centres / it is a sobering thought that those in authority think that all the work and study of dedicated staff can be replaced by volunteers, however well-meaning they are | **181** |
| Volunteer labour is not without cost - training, organizing schedules etc | **152** |
| By all mean use volunteers, but to supplement paid staff, not to replace them / to help with additional activities, not core library functions | **120** |
| I would not volunteer in the library if it ment one of the staff was made redundant / it's immoral to make someone redundant and replace their work with volunteers | **48** |
| I am concerned about the loss of expertise by using volunteers, librarians provide an invaluable service that cannot be offered by even the most willing volunteer /Volunteers are okay to do some jobs but in my opinion not the everyday running of the service | **33** |
| | |
| **Self service machines** | |
| I am pleased with the new  electronic service / The new checking-in system is very good / self-service is very easy to use | **42** |
| The self service machine is a good idea but they often break down and need staff support to sort them out | **39** |

| | |
|---|---|
| Self service machines have a place in bigger libraries not small community libraries | **11** |
| I do not like self-service machines in supermarkets and I don't want them in the library | **4** |
| | |
| **Reducing the number of paid staff** | |
| Staff are always helpful / friendly / polite / nothing is too much trouble / staff are knowledgeable / an integral part of the world of books / the librarian has a wealth of knowledge and expertise / I usually ask the staff for their help and guidance on what I require / especially the more senior members, appear to have an excellent knowledge of so many titles and have proactively suggested further reading / staff are efficient / if there were fewer staff the service would go downhill | **382** |
| | |
| **Other ideas for alternative service delivery** | |
| Extend use of libraries to include community, but don't dilute them into pubs or GP surgeries / feel strongly that library in a pub is sending out the wrong message / | **21** |
| The option to borrow fiction e-books is a service I would be happy to pay for, and would encourage me to buy and use an e-book reader / I would borrow e-books if available | **7** |
| Posting books or multimedia would be costly in terms of postage | **6** |
| The idea of an online service posting books to people's homes is a good one / I imagine a service like this could charge in the same way as DVD rental services, with the promise of no late fees and a much better stock provision than a small local library | **3** |
| | |
| **3. RAISING INCOME (CHARGES, SPONSORSHIP, INCOME, WHAT PEOPLE WOULD BE PREPARED TO PAY FOR)** | |
| Would rather pay charges for some services than see libraries closed / I would be more than happy to pay for more services in the library / libraries have a legal obligation to provide a free book borrowing service, but any other service or facility is an opportunity to generate revenue | **59** |
| Should charge for use of computers / wi-fi | **41** |
| Re-introduce charge for reserving books / requesting books from other libraries | **38** |
| Charge temporary residents a fee to use library services | **27** |
| Would be prepared to pay a small charge for borrowing books / you will have to think of a way of charging all library users, with the usual exemptions – I know this isn't currently allowed, but can't the council change the rules? / have you considered an annual membership for the use of the library? | **24** |
| Encourage donation of books | **17** |
| You could have a collection box for such contributions./I would be willing to make a voluntary contribution for borrowing books | **8** |
| The baby groups are essential and many people would be happy to pay to be a member of those on an annual basis or pay as you go per child, say 50p per child. | **7** |
| We would be prepared to pay a small amount extra in Council Tax if it was ring-fenced for libraries | **6** |
| | |
| **Charges – negative** | |

| | |
|---|---|
| I am fundamentally opposed to these cuts / the money must be found elsewhere / libraries are already under-funded / we already pay for libraries through our taxes | **108** |
| I think libraries are very valuable to those looking for employment which may be a problem if charges apply to use if the internet / if the decision is made to pay for any services it will only drive people away, so my advice would be not to do it / I use the computer facilities regularly, mainly for printing and don't mind paying a reasonable charge to print but I don't think I would use this service as much if I had to also pay for time on the computer. | **13** |

## 4. LIBRARIES AS COMMUNITY HUBS (SHARED USE OF BUILDINGS, MEETING FACILITIES, MULTI AGENCY APPROACH

| | |
|---|---|
| I believe libraries are an essential feature of communities and opportunities should be identified to strengthen links with other relevant organisations, i.e. heath care providers, council advice kiosks, etc / Developing community links could be a really useful way of developing libraries in the future / Include more local services such as 'one stop shop' / Citizens Advice Bureau / Post Office | **18** |
| Greater use of library buildings for public meetings | **13** |
| I believe library services should be extended to include and offer additional services such as keep fit / health advice | **8** |
| More co-operation with schools / combining with school libraries where possible | **6** |
| Put libraries in community centres / sports centre | **4** |
| Learn Direct seems to be under-used – why not invite in commercial learning organisations to use facilities when its quiet? | **2** |
| Idea is to keep supplying books *locally* – doesn't have to be in a library building / rural libraries could create partnerships to use other premises | **2** |
| Don't like the idea of introducing more community groups – the beauty of a library should be that it is a quiet place | **2** |

## 5. REVIEW OF LIBRARIES (URBAN VS RURAL PROVISION, CENTRAL VS COMMUNITY LIBRARIES, SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUAL LIBRARIES X NUMBERS)

| | |
|---|---|
| Rural libraries are vital to our communities / many people would not be able to use library services if not provided locally | **131** |
| Our library is the hub of our community / if the library closed, the village would lose it's heart / | **85** |

## 6. EVIDENCE OF THE IMPACT AND OUTCOMES OF USING LIBRARY SERVICES

| | |
|---|---|
| Libraries are essential for our children / I used the library daily when my children were little, as a way of giving them a love of books / libraries are an important part of a child's education / nothing can replace the pleasure of a child being able to go on their own to their local library / I would be devastated if the library closed and we no longer had access to Rhymetime and story time | **492** |
| Please don't close the library / I would miss the library if it wasn't there / I don't know how I would survive without my local library / the library plays a very important role in my life / please don't change anything – the library service is great just as it is | **324** |

| | |
|---|---|
| Our library is the hub of our local community / closing the library would take the heart out of the community / a focal point in our village / town | **198** |
| Libraries are a life-line for older people / going to the library is sometimes the only contact older / isolated people have in their day / reading is such a pleasure for retired people and often they would not be able to get to another library | **141** |
| Many of the above suggestions will … isolate the most vulnerable in our communities, i.e. the lowest income and incapacitated. At a time of economic down-turn, communities need local facilities all the more. | **98** |
| Libraries are a vital part of a civilized society / I believe very strongly in the principle of the public library as a service for all | **79** |
| The library building is important, not just the supply of books / it is a place that I can browse and pass the time of day with other like-minded people / the library is more than just a place to borrow books, it's a place to meet people / spend time / come for company / come to de-stress / a safe place to be | **67** |
| If my local library closed, I would no longer be able to use a library as I do not have any means of getting to another library | **38** |
| With what is known of the general standards of literacy these days, how could library closures become a priority / the provision of library services for all is crucial for the literacy of the next generation | **27** |
| The library was a life-line when I was unemployed / I was recently unemployed for 6 months. During that time, I often used the library's Internet access and borrowed a lot of books to read. I truly appreciate the service offered and I want the library service staff to know that the service is appreciated. | **21** |
| Reading is my only hobby / I find reading one of the most important activities for me / I don't know what I would do if I couldn't get hold of books | **15** |