



Oxfordshire Libraries  
Community Services  
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Dear Library User

### **Proposals for the future of Oxfordshire's libraries**

Oxfordshire County Council is asking local communities to come up with innovative ideas to run their local libraries as it proposes to cease funding 20 of the 43 facilities that currently operate in the county, with possible further changes in future years.

Following the Government's Spending Review and cuts in funding to local authorities, Oxfordshire County Council currently calculates that it will have to save around £155m by 2015. These savings will need to be made across all of its services and the library service is one of the areas that will have to contribute to making that saving. The council is already on target to make £35m of savings in 2010/11 with a pay freeze and driving down the costs of contracts with suppliers contributing to this.

### **What is the vision for the future of libraries?**

Proposals have been formulated around a clear vision of providing library hubs centred on key areas of population in Oxfordshire with a quality support network of mobile library services and an extension of the library loan service to include e-books and e-audio downloads. Residents will continue to be able to go online and order books from the catalogue. The books can be delivered either to the nearest library hub or to the village/town by the mobile library service for users to collect.

In formulating any new proposals there has been a strong emphasis on the comparative quality of the public transport links that enable local communities to reach libraries in individual localities and geographical spread. Library usage figures have also been considered.

### **Which libraries will see funding cease?**

A total of 82 per cent of library visits take place to the 23 libraries that are currently proposed for continued funding by the county council.



The Government Standard

Oxford and Banbury have excellent transport links with a high quality bus service meaning that libraries are very easy to reach. Oxford Central Library is accessible in the city and it is proposed that opening hours should be extended to include Sundays. Cowley Library is also proposed to remain as part of the county council's network of libraries.

Summertown, Headington, Littlemore, Old Marston and Blackbird Leys in Oxford would see funding discontinued as would Adderbury, Bampton, Benson, Berinsfield, Botley, Charlbury, Chinnor, Deddington, Grove, Kennington, Neithrop, North Leigh, Sonning Common, Stonesfield and Woodcote elsewhere in the county.

### **Cash to help innovative ideas**

In line with the Government's Big Society agenda, Oxfordshire County Council is to set up a pot of money to which local communities can bid for funds to help them take responsibility for any library that the council is seeking to end funding.

This would see services shaped by community needs and possibly hosted by partner organisations offering space in community buildings such as, children's centres, community centres, schools and health centres etc.

### **When can I have my say on these proposals?**

We will consult formally on these proposals in the new year but if you would like to comment now, you may email us at [futurelibraries@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:futurelibraries@oxfordshire.gov.uk) or you may write to me at Oxfordshire Libraries, Community Services, Holton, Oxford OX33 1QQ. We will read and record all the comments we receive and we shall respond to the issues that you raise in our overall response to the consultation on these proposals.

Councillor Keith Mitchell, the Leader of Oxfordshire County Council, has said:

"We have a clear vision to have a quality, core network of libraries based on centres of population. These will still be run by the council and they will be supplemented by mobile libraries.

"In line with the Government's Big Society agenda, we are very keen to hear from local communities and organisations who may wish to take on the running of local libraries and we believe there will be enthusiasm from people who wish to get involved."

We look forward to receiving your comments and feedback on these proposals.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Taylor  
County Librarian