

The LIBRARY *Campaigner*

Supporting friends and users of libraries



'Pockets of excellence' but ... SPECIAL ISSUE ON THE SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT **What we said, and what they said!**

Plus ...

**LIBRARY + INFORMATION
SHOW PREVIEW**

– see pages 15–16

**WHAT THE CAMPAIGN
HAS BEEN DOING**

– see pages 3, 14



**SPRING 2005
No. 70**

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THE LIBRARY CAMPAIGN – AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

To advance the lifelong education of the public by the promotion, support, assistance and improvement of libraries through the activities of friends and users groups.

Executive Committee Meetings 2005 dates

May 14 (AGM)
July 9
September 17
November 19

The Officers and the Executive Committee meet regularly every two months, 1–4pm on a Saturday, usually in central London. Campaign members are always very welcome to attend. If you want to come to a meeting contact the Secretary to receive an agenda.

We would like to hold more of these meetings in the regions, both to encourage members to come and to help those committee members who have a long journey to London. Last year a meeting in Lewes was managed, and the first meeting for 2005 will be in Birmingham.

If a local group would like to invite us to meet in their area, we would be delighted to come.

Another date for your diary:
20/21 April 2005
the

Library and Information Show
at the NEC in Birmingham.

The Campaign hopes to have a stand again.



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Thanks to ...

- **Unison**, for its continued and valued support.
- **CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library & Information Professionals)** for permission to adapt certain material for this issue from its journal, **Update**.

Chairman's Message

Quite a lot seems to have happened since I introduced myself in last issue of The Campaigner. The new website has been developed and will be up and running by the time you read this.

John Kershaw has done a splendid job: a very user-friendly skeletal structure that can be edited easily and quickly. Ideally, we would like someone to be the Webmaster to update it when necessary. Any volunteers?

On a recent visit to Cornwall I met Carol Bunbury, Hon Secretary of the British Association of Friends of Museums (BAFM), and our own Membership Officer, Tricia Kings. Both meetings proved extremely useful and productive.

Carol and I explored ways our two organisations could work more closely together. We are currently setting up a meeting in Bristol to work out more detailed proposals. Meanwhile – see page 15.

Tricia Kings has done a splendid job with our membership database. Your Executive Committee decided at its meeting in January to use some of the money currently being saved by not employing a Director to buy a couple of days of Tricia's time so that she can improve it still further.

The Campaign also received a very favourable and supportive response from

Chairman's Message

Brian M. Hall
Campaign Chairman



Bob McKee, Chief Executive of CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library & Information Professionals, formerly the Library Association). He has not only pledged his support but has also indicated his wish that CILIP should become a member of TLC.

I attended a session of the House of Commons select committee (see pages 5-13) on the day when CILIP, the Society of Chief Librarians and the Audit Commission all gave evidence.

Bob McKee and Maggie Haines (CILIP President) spoke well, ably supported by Catherine Blanshard of the SCL. It was disappointing to hear the Audit Commission re-inventing the wheel, e.g. the 'novel idea' (sic) of dual-function libraries was floated. All their talk was of value for money and performance measurements.

It took the Chairman, Sir Gerald Kaufman, to remind them, to his everlasting credit, that public libraries were part of that mid-19th century municipal socialism which saw them as institutions that benefit the

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SELECT COMMITTEE SPECIAL
A House of Commons select committee has been looking at public libraries. Evidence was given by everybody who matters – including the Campaign and Unison.

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community. He undertook to 'lie in the road' to defend them. Bob McKee offered to join him there!

The other major recent event was the latest of our regular meetings with Andrew Stevens at the MLA (Museums, Libraries & Archives Council). He gave us a preview of the MLA's planned marketing strategy. It was an impressive display. If promoted properly it should prove very valuable in getting wider recognition and support for public libraries.

The Library Campaign

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 14 May 2005

The Annual General Meeting of the Campaign will take place at 13:00 hrs on Saturday 14 May at the Friends Meeting House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ.

The AGM will be followed by a meeting of the Executive Committee which all those present for the AGM are welcome to attend. This will end by 16:00 hrs.

NOTES

A. The minutes of the 2004 AGM, the Annual Report of the Executive Committee and the Accounts will be circulated before the meeting and made available on the Campaign website. They can also be requested from the Secretary. **B.** The Executive comprises the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer plus 3 to 6 ordinary members of the Campaign (two of whom shall be elected from representatives of local friends or user groups.) Nominations must be received by the Secretary by 30 April 2005.

It is helpful but not essential if members (or representatives of local groups and affiliates) can let the Secretary know in advance if they intend to come to the AGM. This is so that we can ensure that we have booked an appropriate room.

AGENDA

1. To receive the minutes of the 2004 Annual General Meeting.
2. To receive the Annual report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 31 March 2004.
3. To receive the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2004.
4. To elect the Executive Committee for the year ending March 2006.
5. To discuss any motions.
6. To discuss any other urgent business.

LIBRARY CAMPAIGN POSTCARDS

Different designs (pictured) – promoting libraries – £1.50 for 12 (including p&p)



T-shirts: one size only/ XL /cream with Campaign logo in green – £10 inc p&p

A3 Poster of **Victoria Wood** promoting libraries – £2.50 each.

*Orders to: Eric Hirons-Smith,
Materials Officer,
2 Arrowsmith House, Wharnccliffe Hill,
Rotherham, South Yorks S65 1HQ*

MEMBERSHIP FORM

I wish to join The Library Campaign and enclose a Cheque/PO for £for one year's membership.

Name

Address

Post code Tel:..... Email

MEMBERSHIP RATES

- Individual £15.00
- Local Organisation £20.00
- Local Authorities £200.00
- Concessionary Rate £10.00
- Trade Union Branches £30.00
- Company/National Trade Unions £100.00
- Others please write for details

Please make cheques payable to: The Library Campaign.
It saves a lot of time and money if you pay by Bankers Order.
If you are able to do this please fill in the form and return it to us.

BANKERS ORDER FORM

To The Manager.....(Name and address of your bank)

Please pay The Library Campaign
(HSBC, Salford University Branch, The Crescent, Salford M5 4PB. 40-40-39, a/c 61277405) the sum of
£every year starting on(date) until further notice

Signed..... Account No.....

Name..... Address

..... Post code.....

(BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE)

Please return to: The Library Campaign, 22 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0TB.

Registered Charity No. 1102634

Select Committee Report on Public Libraries

SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT 2005



Late last year the House of Commons Culture, Media & Sport Committee announced an inquiry into public libraries. The last inquiry was as recent as 1999. Thanks to continuing media and public interest, libraries remain a hot topic. And the Campaign is in better shape than ever to ensure users' views are taken into account. After a mad scramble to meet a very sudden deadline, written evidence was prepared. Alas, our invitation to add oral evidence was not taken up – which may be food for thought in itself. Now, the government has until May 9 to reply...

What The Campaign said ... to the MPs

Submission of The Library Campaign – supporting friends and users of libraries (registered charity 1102634).

1. The Library Campaign is the only organisation founded by and for users of libraries. In 2004, the twentieth year of our existence, we have achieved charitable status with the objects: “To advance the lifelong education of the public by the promotion, support, assistance and improvement of libraries through the activities of friends and user groups”.

2. On behalf of library users we welcome the inquiry and the opportunity to submit views. The Committee may recall that we were invited to give oral evidence to its last inquiry into public libraries. We would be pleased to do so again as we believe that as the voice of the library user we can assist the Committee.

3. Our submission follows the ‘bullet points’ in the committee’s announcement of its inquiry and call for submissions.

Accessibility, location and community-wide appeal

4. We welcome the improvements to opening hours that have been made in recent years, many prompted by the Public Library Standards. We know that many library authorities are striving to do more. Opening on Sundays and at other times outside those traditionally set (such as later in the evening or earlier in the morning) is to be encouraged, so that all the services of the libraries are as accessible as possible in the 24/7 society.

5. However, those same standards that have produced these steps forward are

also perceived by users as being used as the justification for reductions in other senses, including closures of branch libraries. The flexibility in rural areas to use mobile libraries or unstaffed service points instead of conventional libraries, and the use of ‘as the crow flies’ measurement (including libraries provided by other local authorities) to explain branch closures in more urban environments is seen as service reduction, whatever use is made of the financial savings. Closures for reasons of distance alone are likely to discriminate against children, the elderly and other vulnerable groups who find it more difficult to travel across busy roads or to afford public transport etc.

6. Such closures may also be encouraged by other factors. One is the cost of refurbishment. The cost of bringing current building stock up to desirable standards was estimated by the Society of Chief Librarians (SCL) several years ago at many millions of pounds. This situation is largely unchanged.

7. We welcome the development of new buildings to make the library services more accessible. We welcome the use of planning gain and partnership arrangements to secure library buildings in accessible and well-used locations.

8. Such new buildings should take account of the diverse feelings of library users (and potential users) about what they expect from a library now and in the future. Modern architecture is to be

expected, but inside the front door needs to be welcoming. It has been said many times that one of the things users value from their library is the personal touch. If they have to look round displays of stock (however shiny and up to date) to find a member of staff, some people will be deterred.

9. On behalf of library users we are concerned about library stocks. The stock needs to appeal to as many (potential) users as possible. Users require a constantly changing selection of interesting books in good condition on the shelves. Libraries, of course, should hold adequate supplies of new titles and bestsellers etc. But they should also have material which will appeal to less confident readers and those for whom English is not the first language or who may want to read in their first language, however good their command of English.

10. We call the attention of the Committee to the need for a wide range of books to be available in alternative formats – large print, audio books and Braille, for example.

11. Because libraries must embrace new communication media we welcome the inclusion in library stocks of sound recordings and video recordings.

Increasing use

12. We welcome steps to involve people in their library through the use of Smartcards etc which may double as library cards as one of their uses.

Libraries can work with Friends and User Groups in 'registration drives'.

13. We believe that the availability in libraries of electronic information sources, as well as internet access through the People's Network (PN), is to be applauded and encouraged. We have always been concerned at the sustainability of the PN. This concern now seems to be justified as anything up to a third of library authorities begin to charge for access. Unless and until this is reversed, we will be worried that use will drop off, or be confined to a core of users, and cease to be an attraction of the library service. It is one of the few, if not the only, government IT project to come in on time and in budget, and it was a bargain in terms of being able to guarantee ICT access with help to everyone, everywhere. It helps government to claim it is meeting targets for social inclusion, lifelong learning and extra help for schoolchildren as well as those at the other end of the age spectrum.

Funding and balance of spending

14. A good deal of attention has been given to this area during the past few months, not least following the Who's in Charge? report published by Libri [see The Campaigner, Winter 2004]. It is certainly true that economies of scale in the procurement of library materials can be achieved, and we would be surprised if there are not more to be gained.

15. However, we would not want to dilute the local nature of the service and ability to exercise choice at authority level, if not below.

16. Nevertheless, users know that the supply of new and replacement books is inadequate to meet their needs. It is clear that despite the increase in library purchases of paperback books, the number of books purchased is inadequate to meet the needs of library users.

17. We do not see a simple balance between spending on stock and on staff. Users greatly value the opportunity to talk to, and indeed build relationships with, staff. Having fewer staff to whom they can talk and/or staff demoralised by cuts in pay and status is not conducive to this.

18. More positively, the new developments with which libraries are associated, such as the internet, reader

development initiatives and work with children on such initiatives as Bookstart, seem to give staff new ways of making contact with users and presumably new ways of bringing new users to the library. To implement many of these initiatives requires both training and experience, and this cannot be done with only a skeleton staff employed only on the counter and enquiry desk.

19. In terms of buildings we have already referred to partnerships and we do think that the requirement for authorities to have an asset management strategy can assist in making the best use of library buildings, or offer opportunities for resiting them more usefully. This may be felt to carry a presumption that the library service has sufficient status within the organisation of which it is a part, to stake a claim to proper consideration.

20. Changes in the organisation and management of local authorities have meant that users of libraries have fewer opportunities to present their case for maintaining and improving services. This issue of the status of libraries in local government concerns us. It is tied in with that of leadership and the administrative framework, on which we comment below. But whatever the leadership a service with poor buildings, and few of them, is in a bad place to start arguing for a place at the top table within their authority. And we know that there are services which lead for the authority on web development, internal information provision, partnership working etc. Notwithstanding this, there is still a worry that libraries are not given enough weight by the politicians. This is not helped by

the inclusion of library funding in the EPCS element of the government's settlement formula. (In saying that, we should be clear that we are not arguing for a separate libraries' heading.)

21. As said above, we support the provision of electronic sources of information. However, some users are concerned that this may be at the expense of the purchase of the paper copy. Apart from the perceived convenience of the book form there is once again the matter of charging for access to the internet, as well as, in at least some places or times, the reportedly insufficient number of PCs for all those who may wish to use them.

Models of provision and policy demands

22. Most of what we perceive as coming under these headings we support. The initiatives derived from Framework for the Future (F4F), for instance, will make libraries more relevant to both current users (reader development initiatives, for instance) as well as attracting new ones such as work on lifelong learning. Similarly the use of the new technologies to offer services in new venues (even a kiosk with the catalogue and other basic library services is an innovation in most places.) Self service is welcome for those library users who are confident in their library use, though again we return to the importance of having staff at the 'point of use' for others.

23. These new developments must not come at the expense of enabling users to find and borrow books as they always have done. There is the danger of giving the impression that these new developments



Staffordshire's library service has been scored by inspectors as 'excellent, with excellent prospects for improvement'.

are squeezing out traditional library services, and it is one against which library authorities should guard.

Legislative, strategic and administrative framework

24. The enforcement of 'comprehensive and efficient' library services in line with the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act has still never been achieved. The new Position Statements and CPA assessments do not ensure change and improvements in standards. Nor do the Public Library Standards. We are agnostic on the idea of a regulator. However, in the absence of such an office the role of MLA [Museums, Libraries & Archives Council] and DCMS [Department for Culture, Media & Sport] remain important. The former has no power in this respect. The latter has been weakened recently by the departure of the Chief Library Adviser with his background in the profession. In addition the fact that DCMS has no funds to dispense throws library service back at the mercy of the ODPM [Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, which funds local authorities]. We have already referred to the way in which the local government formula is less than specific about how much should be spent on libraries. In addition when so much local authority grant is actually or all but passported, the available funds for libraries suffer.

25. Notwithstanding this, we support the retention of public libraries as a local government function. We want to see the potential for local involvement and decision making retained, and indeed this offers the best opportunity for local user groups to have an input (see below).

Recruitment and training

26. We have concerns about this. Users are aware when their authority reduces the number of qualified librarians. Although we understand that there are arguments about whether these staff are carrying out work which does not employ their training and skills, this need not entail a reduction in their numbers because we see much more appropriate work for them to do, such as helping to bring more users to the library, developing the stock and/or assisting users in the libraries.

27. If it is felt that staff with no library qualifications can undertake many tasks, they still need to be trained adequately

and we would support initiatives such as MLA's workforce development strategy. We note incidentally this also makes reference to drawing in staff from non-traditional library user communities as part of strategies to get these communities into libraries as users.

28. At the other end of the spectrum, we see the need for effective leaders of library services to advocate their role within the wider local authority (and indeed community) as well as to inspire staff in delivering the varied services which libraries now offer. Again MLA and IDeA [the agency that helps local authority development work] are to be applauded for their efforts in this.

Role of institutional and specialist libraries

29. We support the wider involvement of libraries from other sectors in delivering the aims of the public library. In places like Sunderland and (we understand soon) Worcester, there are already welcome signs of co-operation and the allowance of users to cross boundaries. We look forward to more of this as well as the increased co-ordination of, for instance, school libraries and the public library service, especially but not only where there are shared premises.

The People's Network

30. We have already referred to this above. In summary our view is that it is a welcome development but we are concerned about sustainability and the increase in authorities charging for its use.

31. Related to this we are pleased to see the start of wi-fi enabled library premises. For those who have their own laptops etc, this may offer a way of making more use of libraries without taking up the computing facilities provided for the less fortunate user.

Other issues

32. It is ironic that a user organisation has to use this section to make a plea for increased consultation with, and support for, users and their organisations. We recognise that the existence of user groups, whether associated with the Campaign or not, is patchy throughout the country. We also believe, however, that where they exist they have been useful for authorities to consult as they

plan new developments and projects. As well as increasing the number, it is important that user groups are truly representative of all the users (including those who are presently only potential users) of services.

33. While many local libraries or librarians are doing good work on the ground consulting with their users, many others, and many local authorities, are still using 'consultation' in a purely lip service way – and they are still able to get away with it because there is no attempt to define quality or depth or comprehensiveness of consultation, let alone a standard for it, or to research what works etc. And very little attempt, for instance, to involve users/young people etc to be involved in choosing stock or decor.

34. In some authorities, the user groups have been set up by or with the support of the library service itself. We welcome this, but would also want authorities to try and find ways to work with groups set up separately. Whoever advocates support for the service is welcome. From time to time there will be arguments and differences of opinion. Now that the Campaign is a charity we are making ourselves more available to authorities and local groups to aid them in their work.

35. We are pleased that the MLA/LGA [Local Government Association] supported peer reviews of selected library authorities [see The Campaigner, winter 2004] and have sought to consult with user groups. We have said that we will seek to facilitate this.

Conclusion

36. We believe, on behalf of users of libraries, that the public library service has a strong and important future. It must change as users change, innovate, be able to lead, to play its part in the cultural life of the community, to seize the opportunities to increase efficiency, embrace new technologies and improve the ability and morale of staff to deliver new and existing services. Given leadership and strong and well-informed support from government ministers and their civil servants, local government has the capacity to maintain and improve the excellent public library service that the country has enjoyed. The Select Committee has a new opportunity to make sure that this happens.



The Select Committee's Report

This is the House of Commons select committee's own summary of its findings. The full report was published on March 10, 2005. It's well worth reading. Go to www.parliament.uk and look under Committees. Or ask your library for a printed copy, of course!

1. We commend the Government for attempting to establish a national strategy for the provision of library services, and national standards for the quality and performance of those services, in accordance with its statutory responsibilities. We were, however, dismayed by the chopping and changing that has taken place in the process of trying to settle on a set of workable arrangements. We suspect that the overall policy of granting "freedoms and flexibilities" to local authorities may have been applied too liberally by DCMS in this area to the detriment of improvements in library services; not least the 50% of such services that remain persistently below standard. (Paragraph 20)

2. We commend the British Library in its efforts to support and advise the public library sector and recommend that such links be developed further in the future with achievable targets being set to enable progress to be monitored and assessed. (Paragraph 24)

3. We support the continuation and development of the Public Lending Right Scheme as a mechanism for encouraging and sustaining writing talent. Furthermore, the PLRS contributes to the development and maintenance of important links between writers and libraries and, through libraries, to readers. (Paragraph 27)

4. We recognise and support the importance of listening to the results of consultation with service users – and we were extremely impressed by all the Idea Stores had to offer (inside and out) – but we regret that the word "library" seems to have accreted such negative overtones. We would far prefer to see the re-invigoration

of what libraries mean to the public (by improvement of the services) than the re-branding of institutions. (Paragraph 32)

5. We are in no doubt that, while libraries are about more than books (and newspapers and journals), these traditional materials must be the bedrock upon which the library services rest no matter how the institution is refreshed or re-branded in the light of local consultation. The explosion of relevant new technologies has to be embraced by institutions but this should be done in the context of their key functions to gather, order, present and disseminate challenging, as well as relevant, material and information for their local communities. (Paragraph 35)

6. We recognise that libraries are viewed as safe public environments and as such have the potential to act as a suitable home for services meeting a wide range of community needs and wishes. However, it is equally clear to us that libraries must not be over-loaded with objectives or expectations that strain their resources or inhibit the fulfilment of their core functions as outlined above. Libraries and their staff cannot be expected to constitute a one-stop shop for all a community's demands for information and advice without the appropriate allocation, and clear demarcation, of resources. (Paragraph 36)

7. All libraries, however, whatever their location, should be set core minimum standards of provision focused on a core purpose to provide access to the written word, including high quality and relevant books – both modern titles as well as the classics, and otherwise, of the past – newspapers and journals and the internet, all in a welcoming and safe environment

at the hours that their users want. Once these fundamentals are in place, a library may then build on the range of services it offers or the range of services that the local authority, after consultation and with appropriate funding, seeks to co-locate on the site. However, within this plethora of services, the notion of simply reading for pleasure must be fundamental. (Paragraph 38)

8. When over half of public libraries are rated as below an acceptable standard by the Audit Commission, it is our view that the foundations must first be sound before libraries diversify into other areas. (Paragraph 39)

9. We believe the balance between book loans and book sales is in large measure due to the reduced price of books from different sources on the one hand and poor book stocks in many libraries on the other. We welcome the fact that books have, at least, a place in the nation's shopping basket. Public libraries must seek to capitalise on the public's obvious appetite for reading. (Paragraph 41)

10. We believe that the improvement of the quality, range and number of books in stock in our public libraries should be made a priority. The current average spend on books of 9% of total funding is very low; especially in comparison with the 1980s when 17% to 18% was the norm. (Paragraph 43)

11. A substantial increase in the percentage of funding spent by each library authority on books should be a priority. The precise level, or formula for setting that level, must take into account variations between libraries, their current



'Pockets of excellence' like Staffordshire are not the norm, says the committee ...

stocks and the demands of the communities they serve. However, we recommend that each library authority reviews its investment in books against a new Public Library Service Standard seeking improvement in the desired outcome: book issues per head of population and, perhaps separately, book issues per child. (Paragraph 44)

12. We commend the Government's recent decision to fund Bookstart and we note that it is the Government's intention to extend this programme to provide further free books to children at eighteen months old and two years of age. Of course, once ignited, any enthusiasm for books and reading on the part of carers and their charges must be tended effectively by access to a wide choice of suitable material, as well as attractive environs, at local libraries. (Paragraph 47)

13. We urge DCMS to foster the cooperation between public libraries and the Reading Agency, together with primary schools in particular, to work together to plan and introduce more initiatives to nurture a love of reading across the country. (Paragraph 48)

14. Having emphasised the importance of books and reading, we recognise that libraries can offer more to the communities which they serve. Public libraries have always been part of tackling social exclusion (whatever this objective has been called over time) and we would encourage a continuing focus on those areas where libraries have a unique contribution to make to this end. (Paragraph 49)

15. If local authorities are the correct level of government to manage the

country's library services – and we received no evidence to the contrary – then the DCMS is probably best qualified to hold overall policy responsibility and the logical source of strategy, advocacy and targeted resources with which to seek improvements. (Paragraph 57)

16. While we see no case for moving responsibility for libraries to a different department, it is vital that the DCMS raises its game and acts far more effectively as a champion and advocate for libraries across Government. In the absence of levers with which directly to achieve improvements against the statutory criteria for a satisfactory service, the DCMS must establish other means to secure improvements which we discuss below. (Paragraph 58)

17. In summary we believe that the list of standards should be extended and/or revised to include measures of: the number of adult and children's book loans; the provision of material for users with disabilities; extended opening times; value for money and the three Es (efficiency, effectiveness and economy - including the balance of management and frontline staff); free access to the internet; and the quality of user consultation (and subsequent action). (Paragraph 63)

18. We hope, and expect, that the library impact measures, being drawn up by the government and the library sector together, will eventually enable the DCMS and local library authorities to assess the outcomes of library service provision in a specific community, with a view to the improvement of those services and those outcomes. (Paragraph 64)

19. The right standards, properly reported to Government and triggering remedial action in the event of poor performance, are all crucial elements in helping to improve the quality of the service. We recommend that the DCMS reviews its system with this in mind. (Paragraph 67)

20. We believe that Comprehensive Performance Assessments (CPA) have an important role to play in bridging the central/local divide with respect to library policy. CPA has the potential to connect performance against national library standards to local government decision-making over priorities; supplying something of a "stick" to augment the potential "carrots" available from the centre via the DCMS and MLA (Paragraph 71)

21. We strongly recommend that the meeting of national library standards by a local authority be made a key factor in the eventual overall CPA score to establish a mutually reinforcing mechanism to link national and local responsibilities in this area which has so long been the subject of "frustration" for the Secretary of State amongst others. (Paragraph 73)

22. We believe that the MLA, the Government's Peer Review programme and the Library Improvement programme contain the seeds of an effective programme for change and should be considered for significant coordination and expansion. (Paragraph 78)

23. We recommend that the DCMS reviews the case for new legislation to govern public libraries, standards and framework, and report to this Committee on its conclusions in its reply to this Report. (Paragraph 80)

24. A long hard look at efficiencies within and across the public library sector ... with one eye on the potential for economies of scale (where local responsiveness will not be inhibited) ... is well overdue. We recommend a new initiative aimed at inspiring an efficiency drive within libraries and library services generally; including a substantial shift of resources to frontline services. This should be co-ordinated at a national level by DCMS and MLA with the assistance of the Audit Commission. Progress should be driven by the inclusion of a value for money indicator amongst the national library standards. (Paragraph 85)

25. According to the MLA: “a survey conducted 10 years ago identified a backlog of building repairs and refurbishments totalling £650 million in England alone. There is reason to believe this potential cost has increased substantially.” This suggests a total significantly higher than the £240 million that can be extrapolated from the Department’s figures. There is manifestly a problem and with such vast, if differing, amounts being put forward as estimates, the solution cannot be simple. (Paragraph 86)

26. We recommend that DCMS, ODPM, MLA and local authorities work actively together to produce a more accurate picture of the condition of the public library estate and to estimate the potential call for capital investment. This needs to be prioritised along a spectrum from essential and urgent maintenance, through timely repair, to desirable refurbishment. Those libraries that merit consideration in heritage terms should be identified. A plan for action is needed that reflects and balances the realities of available funds with the identified priorities. We believe that the public library estate, in principle, merits assistance from a partnership of local and central government alongside appropriate Lottery distributors. (Paragraph 89)

27. We recommend further consideration be given to extending the role of PFI projects in the area of libraries. (Paragraph 90)

28. We would urge local authorities to consider more frequently the possibility of including provision for library development in section 106 agreements with developers. (Paragraph 91)

29. We would support the notion that, where possible, new libraries be co-located with other public services depending on the circumstances of a particular community. (Paragraph 92)

30. We believe that a clearer standard for opening hours should be put in place to fulfil the Minister’s stated objective of informing users. We recommend that this be augmented by a challenging target explicitly aimed at encouraging libraries to open outside normal office, and particularly school, hours and at weekends; subject to local demands. (Paragraph 95)

31. We recognise the challenges inherent in such a development; in terms of demands on staff and on service

resources. However, many other organisations have changed their culture and have achieved increased opening hours with flexible working patterns which actually allow staff to balance more effectively home – and work – life. We expect that, in a majority of residential areas, local communities would prefer extended opening hours but we recommend that local library authorities make it a priority to ascertain the views of both their existing users and the wider community in this area and act accordingly. (Paragraph 96)

32. We believe that charging for the People’s Network contravenes at least the spirit of the 1964 Act which permits libraries to impose fees only “where facilities made available to any person by a library authority go beyond those ordinarily provided by the authority as part of the library service.” We believe that the provision of the People’s Network in all public libraries, coupled with the Government’s target for universal access to the internet, suggests strongly that the service now falls within the statutory definition of a facility “ordinarily provided by the authority as part of the library service” and charges should not be imposed. Given evidence we received on the variations in the charges that libraries do impose, we further recommend that, where charging for services wrongly persists, the case for an applicable national standard be reviewed. (Paragraph 102)

33. We recommend DCMS, ODPM, MLA and local authorities review plans and budgets for the costs of maintenance and upgrading of the system with a view to exercising the considerable purchasing power of the combined sector. (Paragraph 103)

34. We recommend that the NAO undertakes a study of the People’s Network to assess the value for money secured by its procurement policy. Furthermore, the NAO should, perhaps in cooperation with the Audit Commission, identify whether savings can be made in the future along the lines suggested above. (Paragraph 104)

35. Provision of access to libraries for people with disabilities should be a high priority for local authorities and this requires a co-ordinated policy. We recommend that such a policy is drawn up

following discussion with the Disability Rights Commission. (Paragraph 108)

36. We recommend that secure funding is made available for the maintenance and development of Revealweb over the longer term. (Paragraph 110)

37. We recommend that DCMS takes a lead within Government in securing funding to support the production of a much greater range of material in alternative formats which are accessible to people with disabilities. We believe that the provision of material in such formats should be the subject of a national standard. (Paragraph 111)

38. We recognise and support the profession’s moves to train and qualify people from within but we strongly believe the profession must not be complacent. It needs to market itself more effectively and to cast its net more widely among potential recruits. (Paragraph 115)

39. The library profession must recognise its shortcomings in this area of leadership and advocacy and plan both to train its staff internally and to recruit people with appropriate experience from outside the profession. Library leaders of the future need skills, crucially including management skills, beyond those that come with a professional librarianship qualification. (Paragraph 117)

40. Although they are not strictly within the terms of reference of this inquiry, we believe that the assessment of what is happening in school libraries is extremely important and that the Government ought to be in a position to ascertain whether schools who have had funding delegated to them are in fact spending that money on library services and whether delegation of such funding is having a positive or negative effect on library services in schools. (Paragraph 124)

41. Ofsted should undertake a thematic study on the state of school library services and the relationship between schools and public libraries. In addition, Ofsted, in its report on a school, must include reference to how that school provides its library services and the standard of its provision. (Paragraph 125)

42. We commend the Government for including, as one of their exemplar designs for Building Schools for the Future, a model providing for the co-location of public libraries with schools. (Paragraph 126)



What Unison said...

This is a shortened version of Unison's evidence to the select committee.

Unison has always recognised the value of publicly funded libraries as an essential contribution to the social, educational, cultural and economic wellbeing of local communities. Unison wishes to see this reflected in the planning and financial policies and practices of both central and local government. This submission is based on reports by local authority branches/members, who as front-line staff have first-hand experience of the state of library services.

Many local authority libraries suffer from staff shortages. One important factor is shortage of funding. Most Unison branches identified inability to recruit qualified librarians and library staff as a major problem. This is caused by low pay and, often, little or no career development structures, particularly for library assistants. There is a widespread lack of recognition of the multi-skilled nature of library work, with its high degree of customer contact and the need for skills in Information Communications Technology (ICT). Some branches also reported severe problems in retaining library assistants.

Another common and growing problem is the trend towards the use of casual and temporary staff, many of whom are non-professionals. In several authorities, casual staff are employed solely at weekends. Such staff have no security of employment. In other authorities vacancies remain unfilled, sometimes with existing staff working more hours. All these trends mean that the quality and level of service to the public has deteriorated. It has also led to the demoralisation of library staff, some of whom are suffering from stress. One

branch stated that 'front line staffing levels are an issue, as it's often impossible for staff to spend time helping each customer to the level they need.'

A typical branch states: 'Recruitment would be aided by better salaries, although the authority is better off than most – elsewhere you still see adverts for qualified librarians on £13,000 to £15,000 a year, not calculated to attract high flyers. Career structures in many authorities have been wrecked by previous rounds of cuts.'

Another major difficulty is that library staff are not being adequately trained to perform all the tasks demanded of them. One branch, whilst welcoming training for ICT, commented: 'The People's Network has enabled training to improve employees' computer skills. Priority is given to ICT training rather than training in other skills, where there is a conflict with service delivery versus release for training. Many staff are not being trained in the skills they require to do the job, from enquiry and customer service training to manual handling, risk assessment and supervisory skills.'

This conflict is a significant issue for the development of libraries. A branch commented: 'Libraries will only succeed as Lifelong Learning Centres if this is extended to employees. Successful learning experiences enthuse people about learning and this can be very infectious, as has been shown by the Union Learning Representative experience.'

Unfortunately, such lifelong learning is not always provided for library staff. There is also little or no help for

professional training of library assistants. In some authorities there are serious problems recruiting specialist librarians, including music and children's librarians. Since many libraries no longer employ specialist staff, this results in fewer universities offering specialist courses.

Unison also supports the view of one branch that there is no substitute for having motivated, trained and committed staff. However, staff need to be adequately remunerated. Library assistants, who do most of the interfacing with the general public, are on low salaries. Library workers are committed to the ethos of public libraries as a tool of lifelong learning. The same branch noted: 'Libraries need employees who are passionate, lively and enthusiastic about books, learning and information provision to enthuse about reader development and lifelong learning. Many current library assistants are graduates. This will not be the case in the future, as salary levels will not enable graduates to pay off their student loans.'

In a number of authorities, staff training budgets have been reduced. One branch stated: 'The training budget is far less than a few years ago. Training now tends to be what they have to do to fulfil statutory duties (eg kinetic handling for health and safety reasons) and stuff that is focused on implementing new central government initiatives and anticipating inspections. On the job training takes place, but new staff have to get up to speed pretty quickly, as there is no time to waste.' Another branch stated that the small budget has led to a lot of poor quality 'cascade' training.

A branch suggested that one way to deliver library development, training and recruitment would be to provide creches for staff, learners and visitors. It pointed out: 'It is particularly difficult to recruit to posts which include evening hours and weekends, when nurseries are closed.'

Unison library staff recognise that lifestyle patterns have changed, and libraries need to reflect this. So Unison is fully supportive of increased accessibility, both in response to public demand and as a way of tackling social exclusion. However, local authorities must provide funding to ensure there are enough trained and adequately paid staff. They should not provide longer opening hours by imposition, by running skeleton staffs or by arbitrary changes in conditions of work. One branch commented: 'We can't just stretch existing staff numbers more thinly over more opening hours.'

Unison wants central and local government to recognise that employees need to juggle the demands of their lives, particularly families and caring responsibilities, with the demand for longer opening hours. Unison encourages good employment practice whereby staff and their representatives are consulted on any changes to working patterns. Any changes should reflect a better work-life balance as well as providing a better service. A branch pointed out: 'While libraries which are open on Sundays are a great boon to families, they can mean deprivation for the children and partners of staff.'

Funding is a major factor that impacts on the opening hours and accessibility of local authority libraries. A library representative stated: 'Until there is a better budget, I cannot see an extension of opening hours – it is more likely to be the reverse. Two mobile libraries came off the road last year and it is almost certain that another will go next year. Plans for Sunday opening were shelved following last year's budget cuts.' Indeed there continue to be library closures, partly due to lack of funds.

Unison is concerned about the increasing use of volunteers, particularly where they take over areas of work traditionally provided by paid staff. It also remains opposed to situations where workers are made redundant and volunteers brought in to replace them. Use of volunteers to provide additional services may be

acceptable, provided that local authorities and volunteering agencies consult staff and their trade union representatives. Volunteers must also be properly trained and supervised.

Of great concern have been reports from several Unison branches of increased abuse and violence towards staff. A local authority branch outside London says: 'The People's Network has resulted in increased use of libraries by young people and brought in some new [faces], but policing their use of the internet has meant increased pressure on workloads. There has also been an increase in aggression and violence. In 2003-4, there were 62 assaults against front-line staff. This represents only incidents reported. In some libraries, abuse from young people has become a daily reality, and therefore only serious incidents are reported. Everything else has become "the norm".' In the same authority, two branches employ private security firms outside school hours.

Despite the national Public Library Standards, there is still a shortfall in the funding of many libraries. This should be seen in the context of the overall funding gap for local government. The Local Government Association has stated that the 2004-5 Revenue Support Grant Settlement for England covers less than half the £800m gap. Insufficient funding continues to put pressure on budgets. Too often, library services suffer as other important services take priority. Substantial capital investment is also required in buildings because of prolonged neglect over a number of years – dilapidated buildings (and poor stock) are major disincentives to use.

In some authorities this has been exacerbated by year-on-year budget cuts, whilst at the same time the population has increased. One Unison branch identified that 'funding for libraries remains the same in absolute terms, with threats of reductions next year, in spite of the increase in population. This means that spending per head is going down.'

Another commented: 'Library staff don't feel short of ideas to stimulate greater use of libraries, but most imply a far higher level of funding than our libraries currently receive. The book fund sustained a £100,000 reduction this year, will sustain the same next year and has received proportionately fewer successful

capital growth bids over the last five years, outside of the People's Network. The result is that current funding is focused on just about maintaining the core elements of service.'

A number of Unison local government branches, whilst welcoming central government funding for individual initiatives, were concerned about the piecemeal approach taken. One branch expressed concern that: 'Funding seems too dependent on central government initiatives and handouts (e.g. People's Network, Best Value). Until local government is properly funded we will no doubt continue to lurch from one crisis to another, patching up as we go. If central government wants an efficient, responsive service able to undertake all the new duties connected with social inclusion, lifelong learning etc, it will have to face up to paying for it.'

Another stated: 'Funding is often project based. This means that when the funding stops, the service has to stop. Also although money is given for the books, which is great, there is no increase in the staffing budget, so staff experience increased workloads.'

Unison members also felt there is an imbalance in funding and spending between books and ICT. They were the key to the success of initiatives such as the People's Network, which provided greater public access to ICT. But library staff are concerned that at the same time as this, fewer resources were provided for books. This is despite demand for more and new books running parallel with demand for ICT.

One branch stated that it was 'time for more resources to go back into books. I think they've got a bit left behind in recent years, as priorities have focused elsewhere. New books fly out – we just haven't got enough. Surveys of customers always reveal that more new books are a major factor in what they want us to do better.' Another branch commented that: 'We have probably lost a third of our stock since the People's Network. This has caused complaints from the public, mainly to front-line staff.'

Although the Local Government Act 2003 provides a prudential framework for local authorities to borrow to fund capital projects, it does not help those already in financial difficulty. Many are still unable

to finance renovation or new build for library buildings. Therefore many are out of date, and sometimes too small for the full range of modern services required by the public and the government. A Unison branch said: 'The library is a Victorian building and has been adapted well to make it accessible for all. Unfortunately owing to its outdated design, it is difficult to fit in all the new technology.'

This is even more problematic when the library is in a listed building. A Unison branch stated: 'The improvements required to upgrade our 30-year-old building to keep it fit for purpose were ruled unsuitable because it is listed. Libraries are living, functional buildings which should be allowed to change with the times.'

Another Unison branch pointed out: 'Better buildings are not possible without funding. Authorities are probably not going to be able to extend library services without cutting somewhere else. Paradoxically, we could probably cut spending on buildings if we had better designed, more energy-efficient ones. We could also be more efficient in our working practices.'

Unison members and representatives welcome (and create) successful initiatives to tackle social exclusion. But they deplore the difficulty in sustaining them due to lack of funding and staff.

One branch commented: 'Government money for Bookstart has been brilliant, but there was no money for staffing, storage etc. All these books will need to be sorted and prepared, and contacts made for distribution and servicing. With the advent of Every Child Matters the need for specialist staff to improve the service to children and their parents/carers will increase, not decline. We have four Sure Start librarians. This has made a significant impact. However, there is an end date attached to Sure Start, and a need to continue to employ these librarians after the funding has stopped – social inclusion.'

The same branch discussed staff development and involvement in tackling social exclusion. 'In our authority 14.8% of the population are from ethnic minorities, and we have residential areas that are among the 20% most deprived in the country (at least one is among the 10% most deprived). Social inclusion is something we have worked hard to achieve.'

'We currently have a multi-cultural team looking after not only our Black minority ethnic (BME) and Indian communities, but also Chinese, Vietnamese, Polish, Lithuanian, Greek, Kosovan, Bosnian, Somalian, Iranian and Iraqi people (this is not an exhaustive list). This team has procured significant book collections in seven Asian languages and reaches out with activities, visits, housebound services and an Asian poetry group which attracts visitors from across the country. The Manager was nominated by the community for her MBE.'

'She wants to set up mini libraries in factories with a high proportion of BME workers, and centres for people on English as a Second Language (ESOL) courses. She also wants to send mobile libraries to community centres and places of worship at festival times. This will require employees with the right language skills and cultural knowledge, adequately trained and sensitive to the needs of different cultures. This team is now under threat in a proposed staffing restructure. This is the result of the authority's interpretation of government advice expressed through a Best Value Inspection. Our children's team is also threatened. It needs to be expanded, not disbanded.'

Several Unison branches have highlighted the negative impact of the trend for fewer but bigger libraries. One

commented: 'We have been told that the ultimate vision is to have three in the three main town centres, and all our smaller libraries on the estates will probably go. We do not believe this fits in with any social inclusion policy.'

Unison believes that public libraries need to remain a statutory responsibility for local authorities. One area that should be addressed by the Public Library Standards is the quality of library buildings. A Unison branch suggested that 'planning regulations should be exploited so that housing and other developments result in contributions to community projects, such as new libraries. This is beginning to have a positive effect in my own authority.'

Another major issue is that, although Lottery funding was available for the establishment of the People's Network, there is none for maintaining its infrastructure. This includes repairing and upgrading personal computers. One Unison branch commented: 'The funding of the hardware was a one-off, so maintenance of this huge number of new machines will fall to the local authority. Well, with budgets as they are, it will be very difficult to maintain a free service. More friction on the way...'

As one branch has pointed out, Unison believes that libraries should be a radical weapon in the transformation of communities, the regeneration of areas and the fight against poverty through improving the knowledge and skills of local people. Unison recognises that the state of library authorities in the UK is mixed, with some able to provide an improved service despite limited funding and shortage of staff, whilst others struggle to maintain, let alone improve, a service.

All the positive initiatives and developments of the last few years could be put in jeopardy by lack of funding.

Decades of poor investment have left a legacy that will take years to set right and will require continued significant investment for many years. There must be proper investment from central and local government to allow library services to be accessible to all local communities, to train well-paid library staff to enable that access to take place, and to be a viable and rewarding experience for all.

What can be done to increase the public's use of local libraries? Various suggestions were put forward, most of which need greater funding, including:

- Improved parking for library users;
- Public toilets, cafes;
- Visits to/from playgroups, schools;
- Invest in Bookstart & Sure Start;
- Build new libraries or renovate existing buildings;
- Continue to introduce and upgrade new technology;
- One stop shop approach: libraries providing, in addition to traditional services, information on education, the community and welfare rights.

National contacts

A delegation from the Campaign regularly meets the MLA (Museums, Libraries & Archives Council) to exchange updates

In January Andrew Coburn, Kathleen Frenchman, Brian Hall and Ron Salmons from The Library Campaign met Andrew Stevens and Val King from the MLA.

Among other things, the group told Andrew and Val that TLC intends to write to all English library authorities asking for details of local friends / user groups to be compiled in a national register (to be made available, perhaps through the TLC website). MLA indicated that they would be willing to offer help (their logo on the letter, for instance, to demonstrate MLA's support). The Society of Chief Librarians will also be approached for support.

The group also expressed its disappointment that no users were asked to give oral evidence to the Commons select committee.

Andrew Stevens showed a Powerpoint presentation which is the outline of a marketing campaign for public libraries, to be approved in early April (they hope) by the Advisory Council on Libraries (ACL). If it goes ahead, it will be launched in April.

Work continues at MLA on compiling a demographic profile of volunteers in libraries. TLC will be contacted when the questionnaire is ready for distribution.

MLA has just published an ambitious workforce development strategy (see www.mla.gov.uk). It is widely recognised that library staff don't currently have all the skills they need to progress in a rapidly-changing service. A tender to devise 'generic skill sets' for the new agenda is being let with the South West Museums, Libraries & Archives Council (a regional mini-MLA).

In the south-west, NIACE (the national adult education body) is currently conducting a Training Needs Analysis for library staff, with a view to developing 'E-Guides for Libraries' –

training materials targeted specifically at library staff. In the south-east, Brighton University has been doing a workforce mapping study, as a pilot from which to develop a tool-kit for others.

The MLA experts also recommended TLC to look at the new Russell Commission. This consultation on 'Youth Action and Engagement' comes from the government's Active Citizenship Unit and is now available (for a while) at www.russellcommission.org.

Also in train is the Community Engagement project, to develop training and promotion resources through the regional MLAs. Andrew Stevens will share information as it progresses, and TLC should have the opportunity to contribute.

He also gave TLC details of the next round of peer reviews (see *The Campaigner*, winter 2004). We will contact any local groups we know of in these authorities, to make sure they get the chance to be involved.

Finally, the Audit Commission – the body that inspects libraries, among other things – is conducting its own review of the cost of providing library materials. It is not relying on the model used for the Libri study (see *The Campaigner*, winter 2004) ...

Local heroes

The Friends of Heath Library in north London was born of the belief that small is beautiful, says Ruth Gorb

Twelve years ago, fearing that their very small library would disappear into the jaws of one mega Camden Library, eight people decided to go for it: they would fight their corner, in the most civilised way of course, and preserve the tradition that had meant so much for generations of Hampstead book-lovers. Twelve years on the library is still there, and it is thriving.

Heath Library starts with an almost unfair advantage. Only a few hundred yards from Hampstead Heath, it is housed in a pretty 1930s building, its roof a multi-coloured glass dome. It is approached by a York stone path shaded on one side by a holm oak, and bordered on the other by the garden in which John Keats wrote his Ode to a Nightingale. Its immediate neighbour is Keats House. Its literary credentials are impeccable.

When the Friends group was formed, it set itself several aims. It would raise money, and with that money provide little extras that would make the library an even pleasanter place to use. As a result



The Friends of Crayford Library in the London Borough of Bexley meet monthly. They act as a friendly social group but also help with children's events in the library, organise a local history archive for the town and run talks and events.

there are new bookshelves in the children's library, more DVDs, a special stand for videos, a coffee machine.

The Friends provide a large range of magazines and periodicals – The New Statesman, The Literary Review, The Oldie, The Spectator and many more – and prizes for an annual children's short story competition. One green-fingered Friend keeps the library supplied with handsome indoor plants.

The other main aim was to raise the profile of the library, and to make it a social centre for local residents. The once-monthly Wednesday evenings have become a high spot in people's calendars, and the list of speakers is impressive: Jonathan Miller, Doris Lessing, Maureen Lipman, Margaret Drabble, Beryl Bainbridge, Deborah Moggach, Michael Palin, John Mortimer, Alan Bennett, Claire Tomalin and many, many more over the years have given their time with remarkable generosity because they too, like us, care about the future of our local branch libraries.

An important date in the Friends' year is the annual autumn book sale. Many hundreds of books are donated and two hectic days heaving, sorting and selling are thoroughly worthwhile, as the sale brings in some £1,000 every time. This money, plus yearly donations from Friends who now number several hundred, means that there is money available for library improvements such as the recent restoration and cleaning of the dome, and the laying of a new floor in the foyer.

The relationship between the Friends and the librarians is warm and fruitful. Librarians suggest items that are needed, the committee discusses the whys and wherefores and provides the funds. It is a two-way process, with the Friends coming up with ideas that they think would enhance the library. There is a scheme afoot, for instance, to replace the harsh 'brain surgery' strip lighting with something a little friendlier – and how about a little sofa for really sybaritic browsing?

If there is one tiny cloud on the horizon, it is that there are no young enthusiasts to take over the running of the Friends, not to mention the hard labour involved in setting up the book sale. But we live in hope – and there's plenty of life in us yet.

It's Birmingham 2005!

This year you don't have to travel to London for the big library show of the year! By popular request the 2005 Library + information Show (LiS) takes place somewhere a little further north – at the Pavilion, NEC Birmingham on Wednesday and Thursday 20-21 April. Don't forget – it's free!

If you've never been before (or even if you have) LiS is well worth a visit. Now in its 16th year, LiS aims to cater for all sectors of the library and information world.

So for library users it's an ultra-convenient one-stop shop where you can see new design ideas and new services and products – from security systems to electronic encyclopaedias.

Best of all, you can meet some of the people who work for the Library Campaign! We will be running a stand, as usual – and a session during the seminar programme, too. Look out for details.

With more than 130 stands booked as we go to press, the 2005 exhibition is the largest ever. And for the first time this year LiS will run alongside Murex, the UK's national museum and heritage event. The Campaign is starting to work more closely with our counterparts in the

museum world, so that makes it especially useful.

If you pre-register (free) you can avoid the queues to get in – and use the secure 'reunion bar' website set up for visitors to contact each other. The bar has a real-life counterpart at the centre of the exhibition, ideal for mini-meetings. This is the usual venue for overspill meetings after the seminars, and for author signings.

As well as many big name publishers of books and audio-visual material, 40 independent publishers have a joint stand to offer books with a difference.

Many companies defer their new launches until LiS, so you can also be first to know about a huge range of products covering ICT, furniture, book protection, security, e-publications, income generation ideas, training, services for special needs, design – and more...

The Seminars:

The popular programme of free seminars offers something to four major sectors: public, academic, school and workplace libraries. For library users it's a unique chance to be in on this year's hot topics.

On the public library side, if you haven't seen them before we recommend Tim Coates – as controversial and ubiquitous this year as in 2004 – and the two specialists in reading – Miranda McKearney and Rachel Van Riel, who always have new, exciting projects on hand. Other topics range from highly practical to controversial.

There are also three author appearances – novelist Helen Cross, popular children's

writer Bali Rai and poet/performer Benjamin Zephaniah, Benjamin (a Birmingham boy) will be presenting the Libraries Change Lives Award. This award, from CILIP (the librarians' professional association) spotlights innovative services. This year the shortlist is: a Black history project in Northamptonshire, a computer project in Enfield for people with learning difficulties and a low-tech, high results project to take public library services out to deprived estates in Islington, London.

Check the website (www.lishow.co.uk) for details and precise times.

MEET THE CAMPAIGN

TLC has a stand at the show. We are also presenting a seminar session at 12 noon on Wednesday 20th. It will be a joint presentation with the British Association of Friends of Museums on the work of our two organisations. We hope to see you there!

Where the library + information community comes together



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information professionals and knowledge workers from government, health, legal, industrial and commercial sectors



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public library staff and local authority personnel responsible for library services



academic

library managers and learning resource managers from further and higher education



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