



DUNCHURCH LIBRARY EARMARKED FOR CLOSURE!

The July 2009 edition of the Dunchurch Dialogue warned that our library was under threat of closure. We now see the results of Warwickshire County Council's review of the library service, which they are obliged to provide by Act of Parliament: 16 libraries including Dunchurch's, almost half of the County's total of 34, have been earmarked for closure. This is in spite of the fact that Dunchurch is the best used of all the rural branch libraries in Warwickshire. Of course the major towns all retain their libraries; it is the rural areas that will suffer. WCC see that Warwickshire's biggest library in Rugby is but 3 miles distant and 'is easily accessible for Dunchurch residents' This is a major factor in the selection of Dunchurch for closure.

This is what WCC is saying:

"The library service in Warwickshire has already been undergoing change for some time to reflect the changing way people access information, books and its services. The reality of major reductions in funding that the Council is facing, means we cannot afford to sustain the library network in its current form."

"We are reviewing the whole network of libraries and have identified 16 libraries that are no longer sustainable in their current form." They do not define "sustainable" They continue:

We are proposing continuing to run the county's most used libraries – those that account for more than 90% of all library visits. Financial pressures are an undeniable factor as the library service must reduce

its annual costs by £2 million over the next three financial years (by April 2014)."

WCC proposes to reshape the library network, providing three categories or levels:

Category 1 with the widest range of opening hours
Category 2 with opening hours that reflect community needs
Category 3 online library open 24/7 plus mobile and outreach services to local communities

"Reconfiguring services at all 16 would reduce the number of buildings by almost half but would affect only 9.6% of the current visitors. The aim would be to look at alternative ways of providing our service to these customers and the Council is open to looking at how this could be done with local communities."

"In addition there will also be a need to reduce the opening hours in the remaining libraries. The precise hours and days of opening will be discussed with local communities as part of the proposed consultation process for these changes."

"It is also proposed to reduce the current fleet of mobile libraries from five to three"

Consultation

"Warwickshire County Council will conduct a three-month public consultation on the proposed changes so people's views can be considered and taken into account before any final decisions are made."(consultation period March - June)

"A consultation plan will be drawn up to give local people their say in discussing these options and e.g. local meetings will be held and

questionnaires made available, in libraries and online, explaining the issues behind the options and inviting opinions.”

“The consultation information will include a factsheet for each of Warwickshire 34 libraries so people can see exactly what the options are for their local service - and why, so that people can have their input into the future shape of the libraries. The consultation will give the public an opportunity to say how the proposed changes would affect them, if implemented.”

“Anyone who lives, works, or is being educated in Warwickshire will be invited to make their views known by completing the consultation questionnaire, and/or by attending one of a series of public meetings to be arranged.”

Community options

“As part of the decision making process, discussions with communities will look at a range of options for the provision of a library service for the community. These will include:

- **The local community delivering library services (Big Society principles)***
- **Working in partnership to deliver library services from another building in the community***
- **Use the existing building to deliver extra services to provide income to maintain a library service”***

“The Library and Information Service already works with many volunteers on a regular basis, for example through the housebound reader service. Through consultation communities may express an interest in providing a volunteer-run service.”

“Communities would need to come forward with a robust business case for operating their own service, which we will explore with them. The business case will need to cover all the associated costs e.g. buildings and would need to take account of the on-costs and resource implications which would also need careful consideration. If no sustainable option is identified, Warwickshire County Council will vacate the building at that location.”

“We will contact/consult:

- *Library users*
- *Our staff and union representative*
- *Warwickshire MPs*
- *County, Parish, Town, District and Borough Councillors*
- *Warwickshire schools*
- *Our partners and wider stakeholders”*

What should we be doing?

It is essential that all Residents of Dunchurch and the satellite villages who care about our library service take an active part in any campaign to save the library. Watch Out for notices regarding meetings on notice-boards and the Parish web-site, www.dunchurchpc.org

Also, let your Councillors and the Parish Council know what your feelings are. Contact us on:

Warwickshire County Councillor

Robin Hazelton Tel.: 01788 817705 Email:
cllrhazelton@warwickshire.gov.uk

Borough Councillors

Howard Roberts Tel.: 01788 519603 Email: howard.roberts@rugby.gov.uk
Sally Ravenhall Tel.: 024 7654 2985 Email: sally.ravenhall@rugby.gov.uk
Ian Lowe Tel.: 01788 815861 Email: ian.Lowe@rugby.gov.uk

Parish Council

Clerk

Mrs P Knowles Tel.: 01788 817500 Email: clerk@dunchurchpc.org

Chairman

Robin Aird Tel.: 01788 816340 Email: robin.aird@dunchurchpc.org