

# Local libraries to be shut down

Eight out of the nine libraries across West Berkshire are in fear of getting closed down, according to the Newbury Weekly News. The public are disappointed to see the libraries go downhill and disappear. Areas affected include Wash Common, Burghfield Common, Hungerford, Lambourn, Pangbourne, Theale and Mortimer.



The council has described the closure as, ‘unthinkable’, but said it had been left with little choice as it battles with a 44% reduction from the government.

This is because the council is trying to save 19m pounds a year. This could be a positive move because the council may have more money for other facilities like hospitals, bus links and schools.

Nine libraries were under threat of closing but one was saved and that was Newbury library.

Local Newbury residents have said that they would like the libraries to stay because it is part of their community. One member of the public says she is ‘disgusted’ by the council’s behaviour towards the libraries. The general public are concerned that it will affect the education of children because they won’t have access to reading material. There is also concern that some jobs might be lost.

At the Newbury library a lady in her mid thirties told us that she was dissappointed for her daughter. Her daughter goes to a small community school and every month they get to borrow books from the local library. Now the library is closing down, her daughters school will not have that many books.

Others from areas like Kingslere will now have to come all the way to Newbury just to use the library. In particular the elderly have said, “Some of us don’t have cars so we have to take public transport to just get to the only library left open”.

A key question is what exactly will happen to the books? Martin Dunscombe, a press officer from the council has confirmed that the books will go to schools, other libraries or other council departments.

There are also concerns about overcrowding of the Newbury library, but Mr Dunscombe assures the public that this won’t happen. The Government have saved 19m pounds for the libraries, Martin Dunscombe has a very strong point about this, “Next year the government will give us less money so we will not be able to pay for all the things we have done this year. This means we will have to stop doing things, or do them in a different way, otherwise we will run out of money.”

The problem of the library closures has raised a lot of concerns in the public. Now the real question, is what is the community going to do about it.?

What are your opinions on the library closures? @St\_Barts\_School

Report written by Josie Saberton, Cerys Hutchins, Sophie Gonzalez, Frankie Lochhead and Rebecca Lane