

**Department for Culture Media and Sport,
Minister For Culture and the Digital Economy,
Ministerial Support Team
100 Parliament Street, London SW1A 2BQ**

enquiries@culture.gsi.gov.uk

FAO: ED VAIZEY MP

DATE:

Dear Minister,

Re: INQUIRY NEEDED INTO SHEFFIELD LIBRARIES

I wish to add my voice to the protest against the drastic reduction in the statutory provision of library services in Sheffield.

My local library **[insert name of your library here]** is not one in Sheffield, but I regard all the libraries as essential to their local community. Their closure would make it much more difficult for people to use the library service.

Libraries are important because **[insert reasons here]**

The 1964 Libraries Act states that every authority must provide a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service and that the government's duty is to investigate when there are serious complaints that this is not the case.

I believe that the proposed changes would mean that we no longer have a comprehensive and efficient statutory service in Sheffield. Whilst you have asked questions of the council, you have not thoroughly investigated its replies. Surely the destruction of such a valued institution deserves better than that.

As you may know, studies show that national literacy levels are declining amongst young people, and are deplorably low compared to other countries. What's more, the proportion of children reading books and magazines is declining sharply. A spokesman for the Department for Education said: "we need to continue our drive to encourage young people to develop a love of reading. In a world of so many distractions for young minds, the place of literature is more important than ever". Local libraries form an essential part of this, and this is not the time to be cutting their funding.

I'm asking you to respect the value of our library service and have the courage to submit these changes to the scrutiny of a full and proper investigation.

Yours
(insert name)