

---

# Sheffield Libraries Review Consultation

Children's Consultation Report  
December 2013

---



## Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Background</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Objectives</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4. Methodology</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5. Executive summary</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>6. Monitoring information</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>7. Full results</b>	<b>10</b>

## 1. Introduction

Children are at the heart of many services throughout Sheffield. Their involvement in the planning, delivery and evaluation of services affecting them is critical for ensuring a service is efficient and based on actual need.

Article 12 of the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child states that,

“Children and young people have a right to express an opinion on any matter affecting them and to have that opinion taken into account”.

This statement is supported in Sheffield through the Sheffield Children and Young People's Plan and the Sheffield Children and Young People's Participation Strategy.

The Children's Involvement Team is firmly committed to this principle and is leading on consultation and participation work with children in Sheffield.

For more information on matters relating to this report or for support and advice in involving children in your setting, please contact:

Clare Humberstone  
Children's Involvement Team Manager

First Floor  
Star House  
43 Division St.  
Sheffield  
S1 4GE

Tel: 0114 228 8553

Email: [clare.humberstone@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:clare.humberstone@sheffield.gov.uk)

## 2. Background

The Children's Involvement Team (CIT) was approached in September 2013 to put forward a proposal for a consultation with primary aged children all about the future of libraries in Sheffield.

We consulted with primary school aged children (5-11 years old) across five geographical areas of Sheffield (North, South, East, West and Central) in order to seek the views of a well-represented cohort of library users and non-users.

We aimed to work with an average of 15 children and young people from each of the identified settings, which will generate responses from an overall cohort of approximately 150 children.

## 3. Objectives

- Establish if participants are library users or non-users
- Find out which libraries they use regularly and what they access there
- Find out why non-users do not use libraries
- Present the council's proposals and generate comments and opinions about them

## 4. Methodology

CIT worked with 152 school council members and general pupils from the schools identified below and used a combination of age-appropriate voting activities to find out their views.

We consulted with children at the following settings (see 6.4 for locations):

- Halfway Junior School
- Intake Primary School
- Loxley Primary School
- Lydgate Junior School
- Meynell Primary School
- St. Mary's C of E Primary School
- Tinsley Junior School
- Totley Primary School

The following schools were approached but did not choose to be part of the consultation:

### North

- Lound Junior School
- Monteney Primary School

- Shooter's Grove Primary School

#### Central

- Porter Croft C of E Primary School
- Pye Bank C of E Primary School

#### East

- Birley Spa Community Primary School
- Greenlands Junior School
- Phillimore Primary School
- Pipworth Community Primary School
- Stradbroke Primary School
- Woodthorpe Community Primary School

#### South

- Abbey Lane Primary School
- Ann's Grove Primary School
- Charnock Hall Primary School
- Greenhill Primary School
- Moss Brook Primary Special School
- Mundella Primary School
- Woodhouse West Community Primary School

### **4.1 Consultation questions**

The following questions were asked to children and young people who took part:

- Do you use a library?
- If no, why don't you use a library?
- Which library(-ies) do you use?
- What do you use the library for?
- What will you do if the library you use closes?
- What do you think of the proposals? (City centre library, hub libraries, community led libraries, mobile libraries and private business run libraries)
- General comments

## 5. Executive summary

### *Who responded:*

- 152 children were consulted with, made up of 92 girls and 60 boys
- Of all the respondents, 72% were library users and 28% were non-users

### *What libraries are currently used for:*

- The most popular use for libraries was, unsurprisingly, borrowing books, with borrowing CDs and DVDs and reading books inside the library also popular responses

### *What children will do if their library closes:*

- When asked what they would do if their local library shut down the most popular answers were: 'buy books or read them on an electronic device', 'use the school library' and 'go to the closest library'

### *Barriers which stop children accessing libraries:*

- Non-users of libraries told us that they don't use them because: 'they don't have good books', 'it's always shut' and 'they are too far away'
- Opening hours was an important issue for both users and non-users, with many comments across all question areas concerning the time they shut and the fact that they are not open long enough or at the 'correct' times, i.e. when children are not at school

### Children's thoughts and views on the proposals:

#### *Central:*

- Many respondents felt that the central library proposal was a great or good idea

#### *Hub libraries:*

- Overall children felt that the hub library proposal was a good idea
- Students from Tinsley, St. Mary's and Totley felt that their respective local libraries should be designated as hub libraries – as the current proposals left them a long distance away from a hub

#### *Community led libraries:*

- Overwhelmingly, respondents felt that people should be paid to work in community led libraries and "if you're not getting money there's no point being there"
- Equal numbers of respondents felt that community led libraries were either a good or bad idea
- Those who thought it was a bad idea generally focussed on the ability to attract volunteers with quite a lot of children doubting if people will volunteer
- Amongst the solutions to the volunteer issue were: asking retired people to help "instead of staying home all day", using unemployed

people and letting responsible adults and children over 12 years old volunteer at weekends

*Private business libraries:*

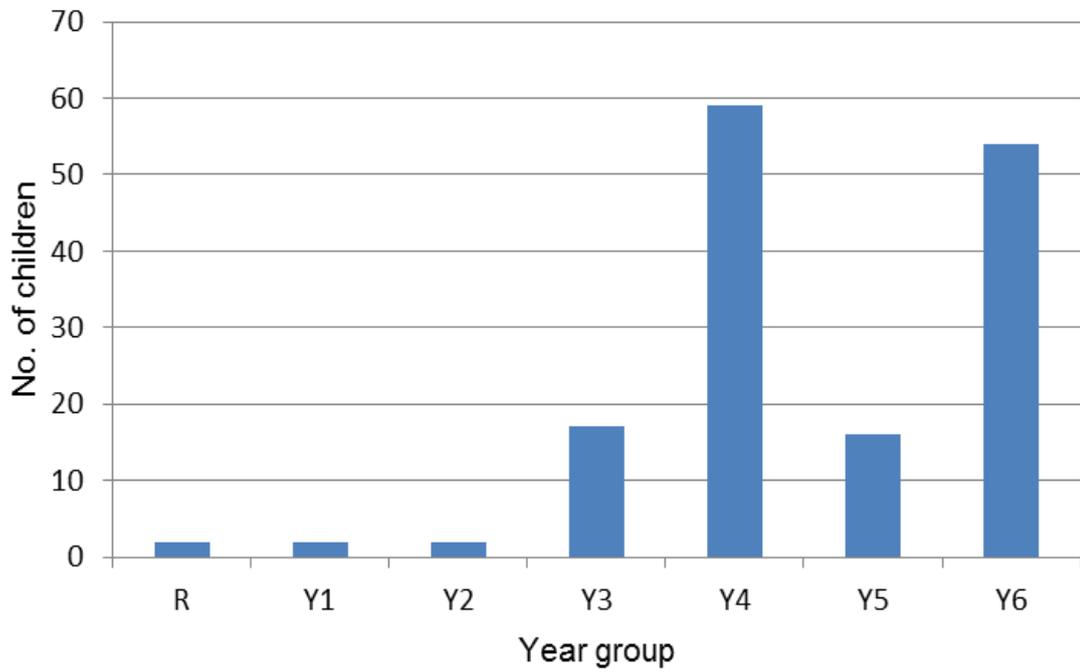
- Libraries run by private businesses were generally fairly well received with many respondents who felt it was a good idea as long as the library function was still provided by the business
- The main worry over this proposal was the fact they might charge you to read the books or make you purchase something to be able to access the library – with the message that if they had to pay they wouldn't go to the library
- Some respondents felt that libraries run by private businesses could potentially be bigger and better than their current library

*Mobile libraries:*

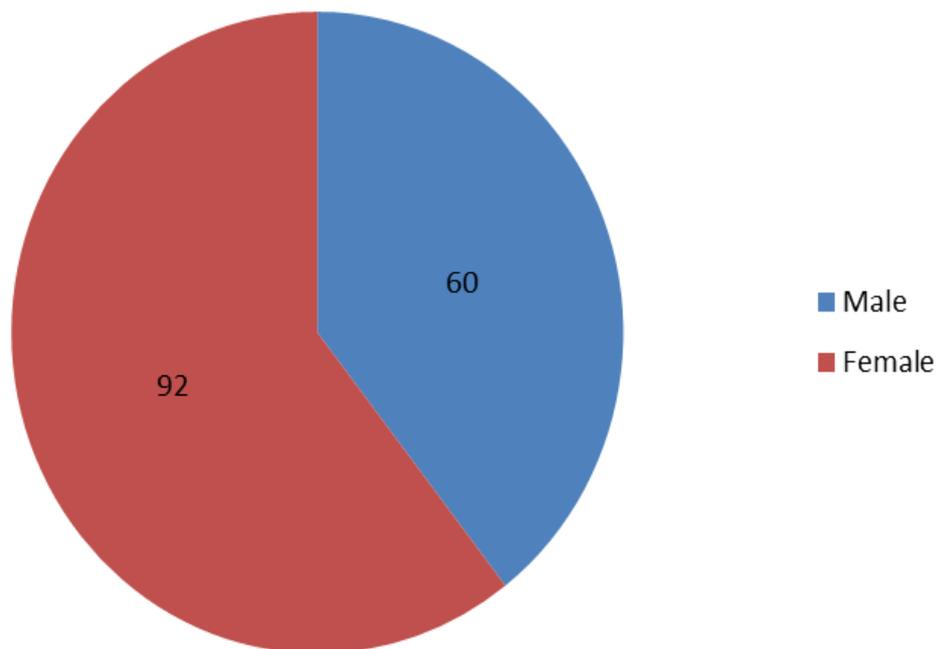
- Almost all respondents felt that the closure of the mobile library service was a bad idea, with particular concern for the elderly and disabled
- Those who agreed with this proposal felt that it “spoils the air we breathe because they use fuel”, it costs money to pay for repairs and they haven't got a good range of books on board

## 6. Monitoring information

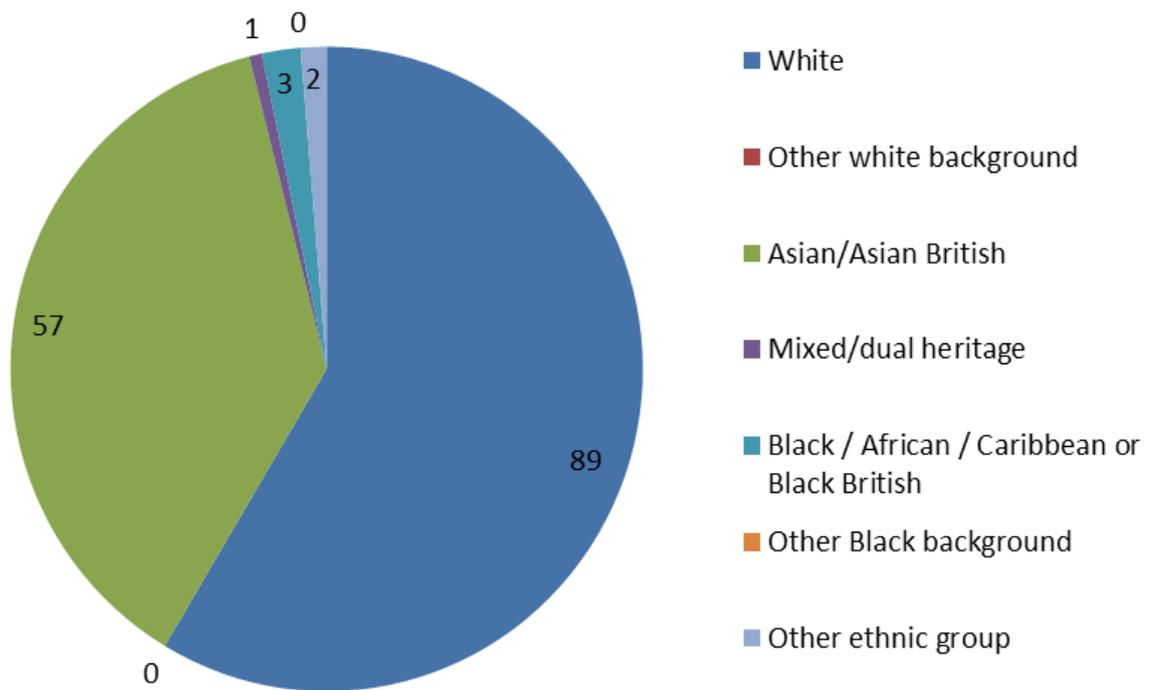
### 6.1 Ages of children and young people



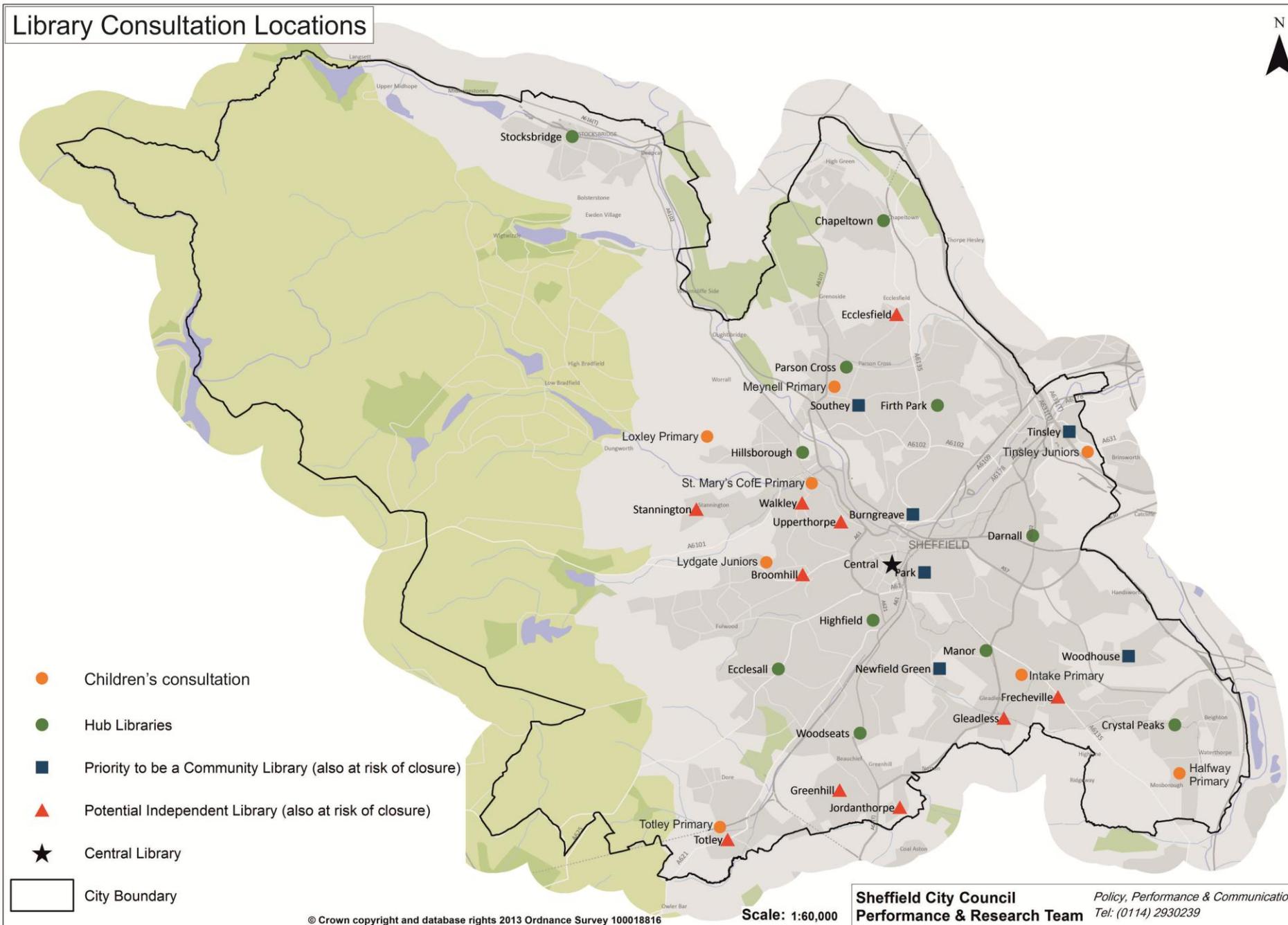
### 6.2 Gender of children and young people



### 6.3 Ethnicities of respondents



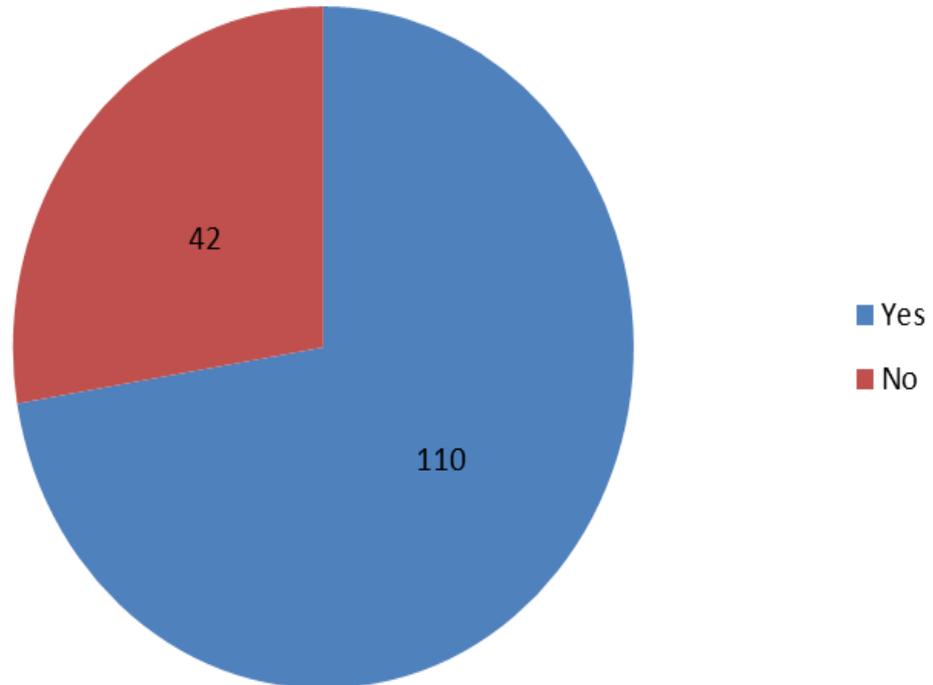
## 6.4 Geographical locations of settings involved



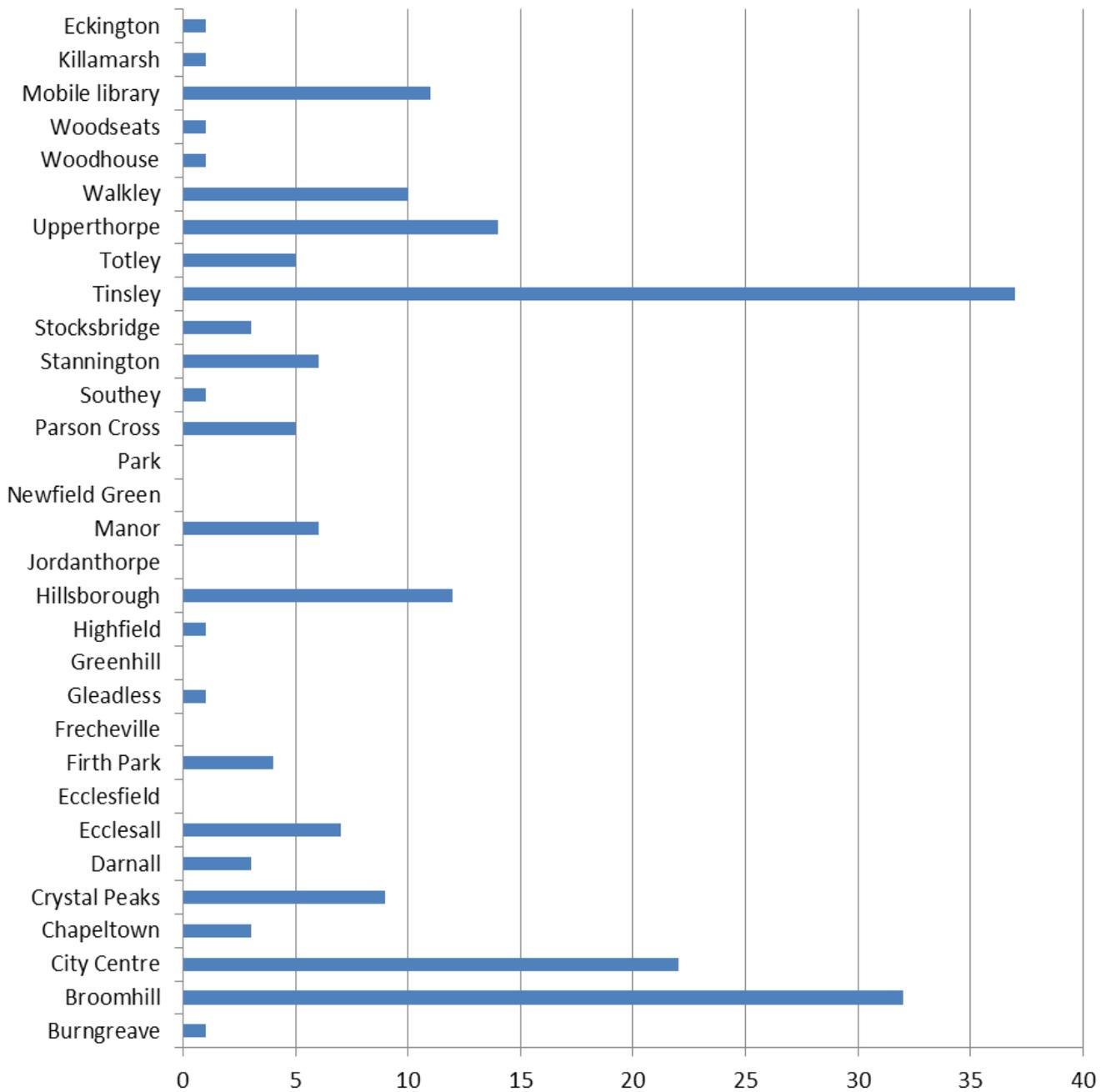
## 7. Full results

Please find a question by question breakdown of all of the results and comments generated from the consultation.

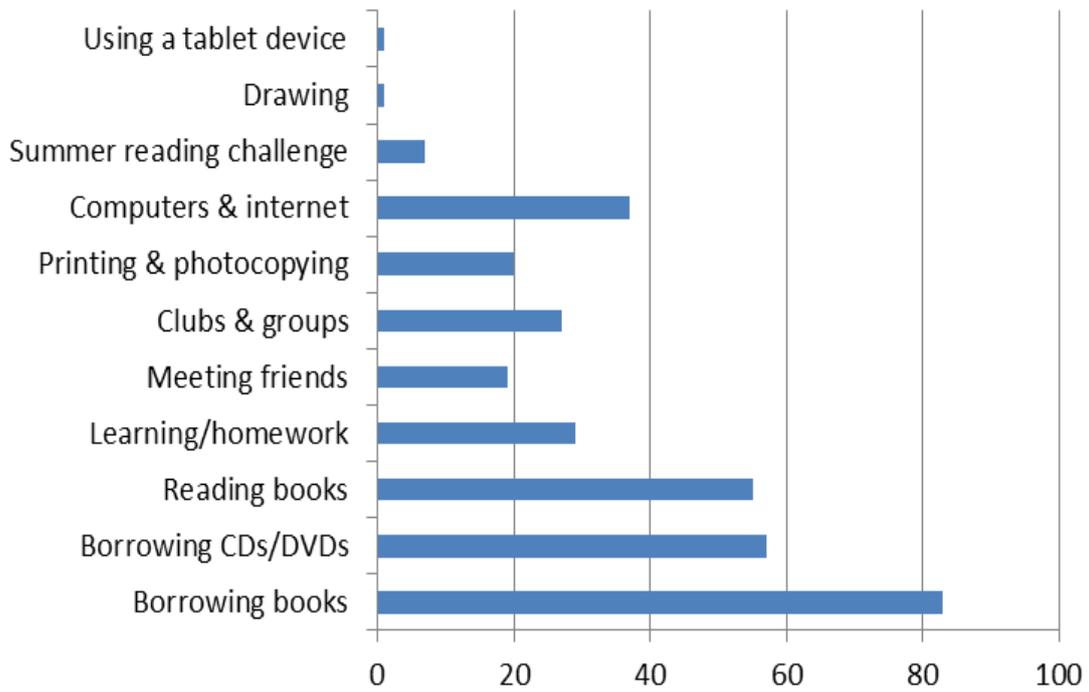
### 7.1 Do you use a library?



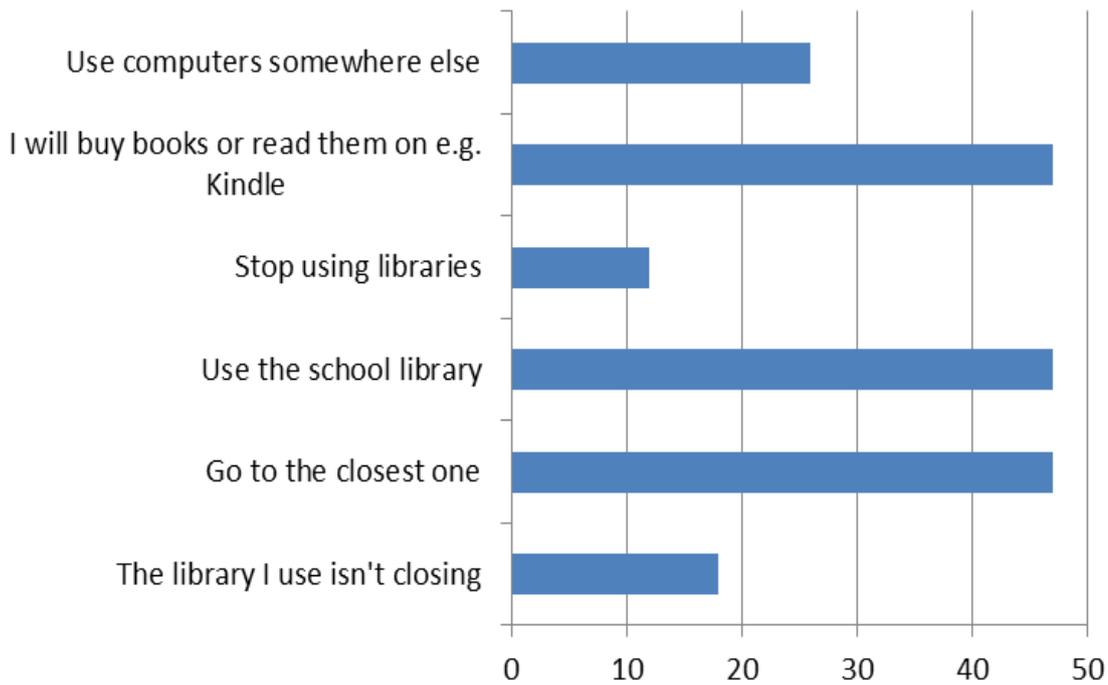
## 7.2 Which library do you use?



### 7.3 What do you use the library for?



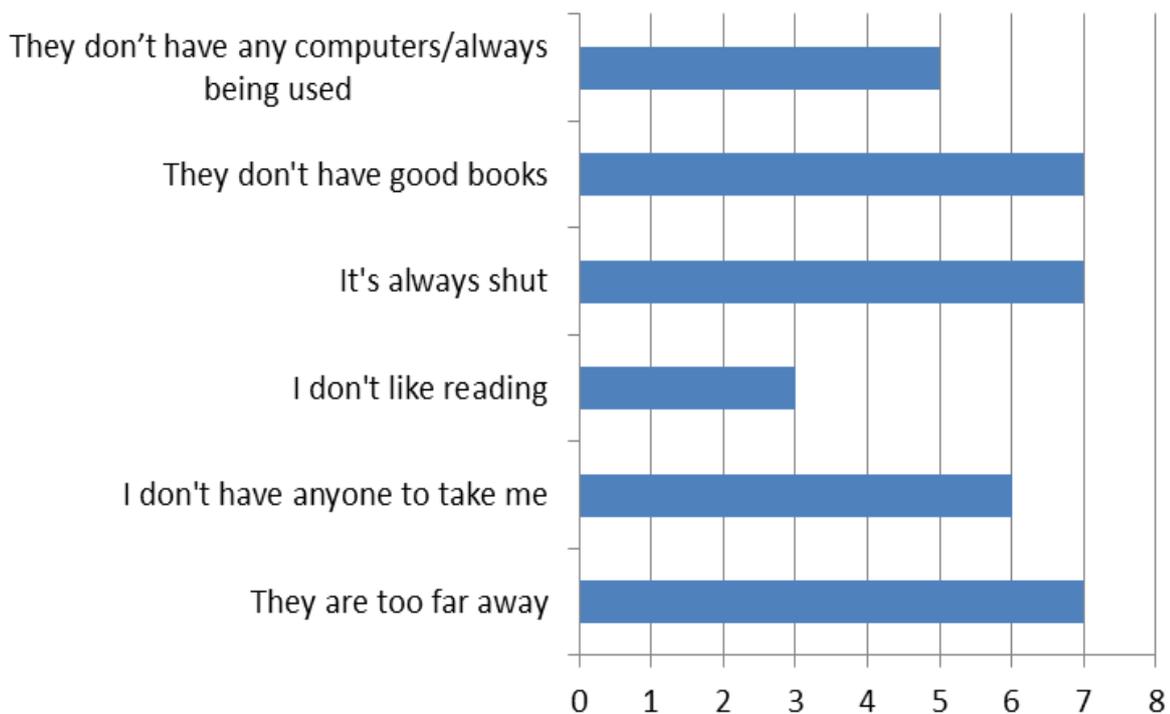
### 7.4 What will you do if the library you use closes?



**Other comments:**

- I'd cry x11
- Borrow books from friends x4
- Not use libraries as much x3
- Make a petition x3
- I will chain myself to [Tinsley] library door x2
- It might stop me reading as many books
- I've got loads of books at home I would read
- I could go to WH Smiths
- Go to the central one
- Fight for it
- It will affect our learning and education
- Order books from the council service
- Read my own books
- Protest and try and save [Broomhill] library
- Read books at home

**7.5 I don't use a library because...**



**Other comments:**

- I buy my own x5
- Too busy x4
- I don't have to leave the house to get a book...I download them on my iPhone/iPad (electronic device) x4
- I couldn't find my kind of books (e.g. JK Rowling) in the library/need more books x2

- I've got loads at home x2
- Don't have time x2
- My mum buys me books
- I don't have a library card
- It's not very fun

## 7.6 Library proposals feedback

The following proposals were explained to children and their thoughts, views and comments were collated. The feedback has been split into first **positive** comments, then **negative** comments and lastly any **questions** which were raised by respondents.

### Central library

- I think it's a good idea x22
- It should be open 7 days a week x6
- Great x4
- A lot of people use it x2
- Good variety of books x2
- I'm glad it's staying open
- OK idea
- Best library
- Town is too far to go x3
- I think that the central library should close because people who live on the outskirts won't be able to get there so easily
- You should shut this down and keep others open
- Cut the hours of this and keep more open
- Bad idea

### Hub libraries

- Good idea x14
- It will bring people together x3
- It's a place where different people can socialise with each other
- I like the sound of a place for people to talk
- I'm happy because Manor is near me and I use it
- My library (Darnall) will be open
- It's good to have hubs for everyone
- I like the Parson Cross library because I read to my baby sister there
- Tinsley library should be a Hub x6
- Broomhill library should be a hub x4
- Bad idea x4
- Totley library should be a hub library x3
- Bad because lots of people use Broomhill library x3
- Ecclesall Library shouldn't stay open because it's too far for some people to go x3
- There should be one closer to us x3

- They should be open more x2
- Our school does lots of activities at Walkley but it's closing down
- We won't have one near us (St. Mary's Primary)
- There will be no libraries close to our school (St. Mary's Primary)
- Other libraries (other than Totley) don't have stuff to play with and things to colour in
- The council should close other boring things
- The libraries that stay open should do activities and have stories read to the younger kids
- I don't go to any of the hub libraries
- Broomhill library should be a hub because it's close to Crosspool, Broomhill and Crookes
- They should have more grown-up books and a recommendations area
- There won't be enough libraries
- I want it to stay open 24 hours
- They should all be open
- The Southey library should be one
  
- Why isn't there a hub for people in our area? Uppertorpe & Walkley are both closing (St. Mary's Primary)
- Will it make the area (Crystal Peaks) busier?

### **Community led libraries**

- Good idea x9
- I think responsible people (adults and children over 12) could volunteer to work x2
- Retired people might want to run it, instead of staying home all day x2
- Tinsley library should be community-led
- I think lots of people would volunteer
- It would be nice if people volunteer
- It would be a good idea for unemployed people who want to do it
- We should have more libraries doing activities like drawing
- Clubs and groups are popular
  
- People should get paid x12
- I don't think people will volunteer x9
- Bad idea x9
- The volunteers should get at least £1 each time they work x3
- It depends if people will do it for free x2
- If you're not getting money there's no point being there x2
- No-one would get paid and it might not work
- Nobody would have the energy to open their own library
- It's not going to save enough money
  
- What will happen if no-one volunteers?

## Private business

- Good idea x11
  - Good idea as long as they keep the library x2
  - People could donate books and money x2
  - I think if they have lots of good books it would be a really good idea x2
  - If some better or more rich book shops took over libraries they might extend the building so it would be bigger x2
  - I think it sounds ok
  - It would be good if someone like WHSmiths took over if they still let people borrow books instead of paying money
  - I think it's a good idea because the council needs money
  - Good to have a shop where you read books and can eat food or have a drink
  - Someone like Waterstones would be good
  - It will be good because you can read what you have bought in the shop
  - You could get a book and a cup of coffee
  - Ecclesfield should be a private library
  - People could pay for their own library cards
  - This idea is awesome!
  - They could give spare books to schools
- 
- Bad idea x8
  - They might charge you to read a book x4
  - I wouldn't pay money to use them x3
  - There are too many private businesses in Tinsley x3
  - The more libraries close - the less people read x2
  - There are only some businesses which could take this on
  - You might have to wait a long time
  - Having things like drinks around books might damage them if they spill
  - Libraries should be free
  - Rubbish, it's meant to be free
  - I will never pay, so shut them!
  - You don't want to have to buy something just to look at a book
  - I think they are ripping you off because they're making you buy stuff that you don't want
  - Might not have a very good selection of books
  - They might not run the library right
  - Library wouldn't be as good
- 
- How much would they charge us to go and sit down and read a book?
  - How about Sheffield Hallam Uni running it?
  - What will the council do if a business takes over a library but don't sell any books?

## Mobile libraries

- It spoils the air we breathe because they use fuel x3
  - I have never seen one before and I didn't know it existed x3
  - Good idea x2
  - They haven't got a wide range of books to read
  - Terrible idea - people can't read or learn
  - It should be closed
  - The home delivery service would be better
  - I've never seen one of them
  - The delivery service is a really good idea
  - It's better if this stops because it wastes money for repairs
- 
- Bad idea x10
  - They should stay open for older people x10
  - Bad for disabled people x6
  - It should stay open x3
  - Bad for people who don't live near a library x2
  - If the book shop was full the bus could help
  - I use it very often
  - Not a lot of old people like to go on the internet
  - Its 4 busses here to get to and back from a library
  - Should be open 24 hours
- 
- What if you didn't have the internet so you couldn't use the home delivery service?

## Overall comments

- There are good and bad ideas x4
  - I like the council's ideas/I completely agree with it x2
  - We should get a vote on it x2
  - You could read to children under 5 to make money
  - You could sell refreshments to make money in libraries
  - The money could be used to buy other things when they close the library
  - We really like the Reading Challenges they do in the summer
  - Libraries should run like businesses
  - Spare books could go into nearby schools
- 
- There are good and bad ideas x4
  - Don't shut down our local libraries, we don't live near a hub x5 (St. Mary's Primary)
  - The opening hours need to change/stop closing them at silly times when people are free x5
  - It should stay the same x3
  - Tinsley library should stay open/be a hub because it's a long way for people to go to another one x3
  - There should be more types of books x2

- I think we should have a bus going to the local libraries dropping people off and you pay 20p x2
- Could be open 24 hours and people have different shifts x2
- Totley library should stay or there will be no library near us x2
- It will affect our education if it is shut down x2
- The council shouldn't close any libraries, it's not fair on the people who work there
- As a council they must have other buildings they could sell
- Parents won't be able to get books to read to their children to put them to sleep
- Judith and her assistant won't have a job! (Tinsley Juniors)
- I think closing libraries is bad because people will not be bothered to come to libraries any longer
- We need more libraries for all the people
  
- Why don't libraries charge people for books?