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NEWS RELEASE

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Press Release: Library Workers Accuse Council of Insult to National Libraries Day after Cuts and Closures Announcement

Two events have been called at Minet Library at Myatt's Park, this Saturday, National Libraries Day, in response to controversial plans by the council to shut Libraries.

Lambeth Council is planning to sell the Minet and Waterloo Libraries. Funding will also be stopped for Durning, Carnegie and Upper Norwood Library. If community groups do not come forward to take over Durning, Carnegie and Upper Norwood Library, they too may face closure.

Ruth Cashman, Unison Representative for Lambeth Libraries commented;

"Library staff and our Library Friends Groups have been gearing up for a huge membership and publicity drive around National Libraries Day and now we find out the Council has announced plans which threaten half of the borough's Libraries. Frankly, it's a slap in the face to library staff, our Friends of Libraries Groups and the communities we serve. We now know exactly what the long-running and costly Cooperative Libraries project was, an attack on a comprehensive public library service across the borough. Labour was reelected boasting that it kept all our libraries open, where is that commitment to the service's future now?"

Lambeth Council launched the Cooperative Libraries initiative as part of its Cooperative Council Plans. Outlining the plans for the Cooperative Libraries Project in November 2011, Councillor Steve Reed, then Leader of Lambeth Council said;

"I'm excited about the future for Lambeth's libraries. While other boroughs have been forced to close libraries thanks to Government funding cuts, thanks to Labour in Lambeth our library service is now secure for the future."

UNISON say they will work with the community to fight the Council's proposals.

The Save Lambeth Libraries campaign have called an event called "Save Our Library Because..." at Minet Library, at 3pm on Saturday 7 February, World Libraries Day. This is followed by a candle lit vigil in Myatt's Field Park to protest both Library cuts and 50% cuts to the Park, called by the Myatt's Field Hub.

The Save Lambeth Libraries campaign have called on everyone unable to attend the events to tweet their support for their libraries. Their Facebook Page states *"We are asking people who cannot make it down to the events to tweet a photo to Jane Edbrooke, Cabinet member responsible for Libraries (@JaneEdbrooke) and your local MP with the hashtag #SaveLibraries. If you do not have a twitter account, send the photo to us at Save Lambeth Libraries and we will send it out for you."*

- *Take a big piece of paper*
- *Write "Save Our Libraries Because..." across the top*
- *Fill in your reason - it can be something you've written, a quote or a picture*
- *Send us a photo of yourself holding your "Save Our Libraries Because..." page, tweet it, post it..."*

ENDS

Note to Editors