

Hello all,

Whilst many offices and workplaces find themselves somewhat deserted over August, I imagine the reverse is true for libraries as families, young people and children make the most of time off and reading for pleasure, visiting their local library and getting involved in initiatives like the Summer Reading Challenge. A relatively quiet Friday has been given a bit of excitement, after the WI's libraries petition was sent through to me at lunchtime, since then I have been receiving email after email asking that UNISON gets behind the initiative. So without further delay, read on for details of the petition and some of the week's other news.....

WI love libraries too - sign the e-petition!

<http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/1269>

Many of you will recall that the WI voted to make libraries their latest campaigning issue at their AGM earlier in the summer. This week they have launched an e-petition which aims to reach 100,000 signatures and trigger a debate in Parliament. Since I added my signature an hour ago the number of signatures has risen by nearly 100, so please do follow the link, sign the petition and then send it on to colleagues, friends and family. UNISON is meeting with the WI campaigning team next week to discuss our respective campaigns and potential future work together.

Similar battles across the pond

<http://www.ala.org/ala/professionalresources/outsourcing/ALAKeepingPublicLibrariesPublicFINAL0611.pdf>

It's been impossible to avoid stories about the US debt crisis and the ongoing economic struggles in the Eurozone this week, so it's worth reflecting that internationally we are not alone in the battle to save public libraries in the face of swingeing public spending cuts. Countries such as South Korea, which top literacy tables may have built 180 new libraries over the past few months, but this is the exception rather than the norm. This document from the American Libraries Association outlines their approach to keeping public libraries public.

Legal challenges update

http://www.thebookseller.com/news/legal-battle-over-libraries-hots.html#.TjZq9IM_gFM.email

As the number of high profile legal challenges continue, here is an update from the Bookseller about the current state of play.

Best wishes,

Hannah

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