Q21 — Define ‘public good’ (Extract C, line 18) [3 marks]

A public good is a good or service that is **non-rivalrous** and **non-excludable**, meaning one person’s consumption does not reduce availability for others, and people cannot be prevented from using it. As a result, public goods are usually provided by the government.

Q22 — Amount spent on libraries per person in England in 2014/15 (4 marks)

Extract C states that approximately **£762 million** was spent on libraries in England in 2014/15.
Population of England = **54.5 million**

Spending per person =
£762 million ÷ 54.5 million = £13.98

Rounded to the nearest pound: **£14 per person**

Q23 — Two significant points of comparison between library visits by people aged 16–24 and 75+ (4 marks)

The percentage of people aged 16–24 visiting libraries fell significantly over the period, from 42.8% in 2008/09 to 27.4% in 2015/16, showing a clear downward trend among younger users.

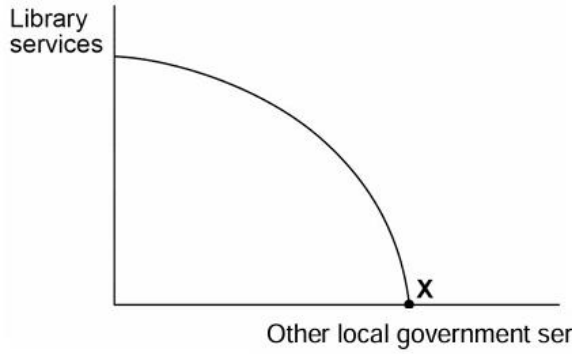
In contrast, the percentage of people aged 75+ visiting libraries remained relatively stable. Although it fluctuated, it stayed close to around 33–39% and was higher than the 16–24 age group by 2015/16, indicating libraries are used more consistently by older people.

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24 *A local authority has a limited sum of money to spend on two services, libraries and other local government services.*

Draw a production possibility diagram showing the potential provision of these two services ***and*** *assuming resources are fully employed, label a point X where no resources are used for libraries.* ***[4 marks]***

The expected diagram involves a curve bowed out from the origin (or allow a straight line) between two appropriately-labelled axes, with an X where the curve (or line) meets the 'other local government services' axis.



Q25 — Explain two reasons why demand for library services has fallen (10 marks, chain-of-analysis)

First reason:
Extract B states people are getting books from elsewhere, including e-books → increased availability of digital alternatives reduces the need to visit physical libraries → convenience and instant access increase → consumers substitute away from libraries → demand for library services falls.

Second reason:
Extract B states people have less free time and prefer other leisure activities → opportunity cost of visiting libraries increases → consumers choose cinemas, sports or online entertainment instead → library visits decline → overall demand for library services falls.

Q26 — Assess whether local authorities should continue to provide public libraries (25 marks)

Introduction:
Extract C highlights that local authorities face funding cuts and difficult choices when allocating resources. With declining library usage but significant social benefits, the issue is whether local authorities should continue to provide public libraries.

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Point 1:
Local authorities should continue providing libraries because they generate positive externalities → Extract B states libraries promote lifelong learning, health information and community engagement → these benefits extend beyond individual users → social benefits exceed private benefits → market provision would under-supply libraries → government provision improves social welfare.

Evaluation of point 1:
However, Extract C states that library use has fallen → low demand suggests resources may not be allocated efficiently → opportunity cost is high because funds could be used for healthcare, housing or social care → benefits may not justify continued spending in all areas.

Point 2:
Libraries help reduce inequality and promote social mobility → Extract B states that 11% of the population lacked internet access in 2015 → libraries provide free access to computers and digital skills → this improves employability and labour mobility → long-term economic benefits increase → supporting continued public provision.

Evaluation of point 2:
However, Extract C suggests libraries are not pure public goods → they are rivalrous and excludable → alternative funding such as community groups, volunteers or charging for some services may be possible → full government provision may not be necessary in all cases.

Conclusion:
Overall, local authorities should continue to provide libraries where they deliver significant social benefits, particularly in reducing inequality and improving skills. However, provision should be flexible and targeted, with alternative funding models considered where demand is low. This balanced approach allows scarce public funds to be used efficiently while preserving the social value of libraries.

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