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## WELCOME BOOST TO AUTHOR EARNINGS AS PLR ANNOUNCES SUBSTANTIAL RATE INCREASE

Authors receiving their Public Lending Right cheques this April are in for a significant boost to their earnings. The rate per loan has increased from 2.67 pence to 4.21 pence for books lent out by UK libraries between July 2001 and June 2002.

At 4.21 pence more authors than ever before will receive payment between the minimum of £5 and maximum of £6,000. Nearly 1,500 additional authors will now benefit from PLR payouts this Spring with over 100 new names receiving the top payout of £6,000.

The boost to the rate per loan is due to the fact that PLR has now received its long awaited 40% funding increase, first announced in 2000. This brings the total fund to £7 million enabling the rate per loan to finally catch up with inflation.

*“Writers have had to wait a long time for this,” says PLR’s Chair, Clare Francis. “PLR is a statutory right, not a discretionary grant, and should never have been allowed to fall behind inflation to this extent. Research shows that many writers rely on their PLR payment each year. We’re delighted that the extra funding this year will allow us to provide a substantial increase in the rate per loan and make a real difference to authors’ earnings.”*

A survey conducted by the Society of Authors in 2000 showed that 60% of authors earned less than £10,000 in 1999, with 75% earning less than half the national average wage.\* The majority of authors depend to some extent on their annual PLR payment and it is particularly important to writers who have a backlist that is no longer widely available in bookshops. Such titles are often still keenly borrowed through the nation’s libraries providing an invaluable source of income for the writer.

PLR, whose future was confirmed by a government review this year, is also leading the way in Europe by opening up the scheme to include European Union authors whose books are borrowed from UK libraries. In addition to this, PLR is assisting several Eastern European countries who are setting up their own schemes.

PLR’s Registrar, Jim Parker, says, *“The combination of increased funding and the successful outcome of the government’s review of PLR have given us a real boost this year. It has also been rewarding to contribute to PLR developments elsewhere and to see the progress being made, particularly by the ‘new’ European countries.”*

**Ends/March 2003**

## **Editors Notes**

1. PLR was established by an Act of Parliament in 1979. It gives authors the legal right to receive remuneration from government for the public's use of their work through the public library system.
2. Following a major five-yearly review, PLR's sponsor department, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), has confirmed the government's continuing commitment to PLR as a key means of support for UK authors. The report praised the way the Scheme is currently managed by the Registrar and his team, and made a number of recommendations, including support for the extension of PLR to reference books consultations.
3. Increase in PLR funding. In 2000, DCMS Ministers accepted the case for a 40% increase in funding. With effect from 1 April 2002 the Fund increased to £7 million; a further increase to £7.2 million will take effect from April 2003.
4. In 2003 – relating to book loans during the period July 2001 – June 2002, PLR will distribute £6.2 million to 19,064 authors at a rate per loan of 4.21 pence.
5. Authors are eligible for payment if their PLR earnings reach a minimum of £5. There is a payment limit of £6,000 for the top-lending authors.
6. Since its inception in 1979, PLR has distributed almost £77 million to authors.
7. Author Clare Francis was appointed to succeed Michael Holroyd as chair of the PLR Advisory Committee in August 2000. The appointment runs for three years.
8. \* Society of Authors Survey: 'For Love Not Money' by Kate Pool, 2000.