

Why We Need Libraries

It is the mid-sixties, and it
does not matter which year exactly;

it may have been the year Mrs White
threw water on the cat. It may not.

At the bottom of the hill, opposite
the football factory which will close

in 1981 (although nobody knows this
because nobody can look into the future

in fact the future is a pair
of stout walking boots in a sealed box)

they are loading books from the old
library to take to the new library

which is near the new clinic and not
far from the new old folks' home

at the top of the hill. Yes, isn't
it symbolic that these new things are

at the top of the hill. Yes, isn't
that Ian McMillan and his pal Chris

Allatt waiting outside the empty new
library, the green tickets in their

fists, their eyes hungry for Biggies?
It is the mid-sixties, and the future

is waiting to walk away from us, briskly,
as though we smell funny, leaving the new