

Annual Report: January 2012-March 2013

Introduction

Welcome to our annual review for 2012-2013, and thank you for your continued support of The Network.

This report covers the period from January 2012 to March 2013: after this one, the annual reports will run from April to March to parallel The Network's financial year.

This has continued to be a difficult time for the cultural sector as a whole, and this has been reflected in the membership of the Network. Although 2012-2013 did see some members decide not to renew their subscriptions (a mix of budget pressures and staffing reductions), there was an overall increase in organisational members, thanks to the social justice initiative in the South West. In addition, a number of members took advantage of the offer to pay the level of subscription that they chose. The majority of members renewed their subscriptions which have enabled libraries, museums, archives, and cultural & heritage organisations across the country to respond to social justice issues and to make a difference to individuals and groups in their communities – please see Appendix B for a reminder about ways of making the most of your subscription.

Our work

Key successes included:

- Producing newsletters for January 2012-March 2013
- Producing Ebulletins for January 2012-March 2013
- Regularly adding events, resources and new features to the website¹ (eg the “Good Practice & Innovation” pages)
- Developing, running and participating in some 14² courses and conferences
- Being invited to give a paper at a conference in Hamburg.

Further information about these – and other – areas of work are in the report that follows.

Working towards social justice and developing approaches to community engagement are still very much live issues – in fact, some organisations have even started referring to ‘social exclusion’ again: it is increasingly clear that libraries, museums, archives and cultural & heritage organisations have a key role to play in this (despite the economic position), and The Network is contributing to the spread of good practice and the raising of our sector profile.

Finally, my thanks to all those who shared good practice, made enquiries, and generally contributed to The Network – please continue doing so!

John Vincent
April 2013

¹ See: www.seapn.org.uk.

² 19 in 2011, 18 in 2010, 24 in 2009, 30 in 2008.

Membership, contacts and enquiries

Organisational members at March 2013

There are 117 organisational members (up four from 2011).

Here are the new joiners and leavers (following consideration by the South West Society of Chief Librarians of the report on developing advocacy for social justice work in the South West, most of the library authorities joined The Network):

Joiners

British Museum (re-joined)
Cornwall (via SWACL)
Cyprus Well
Dorset (via SWACL)
Gloucestershire (re-joined via SWACL)
North Somerset (via SWACL)
Plymouth (via SWACL)
Somerset (via SWACL)
South Gloucestershire (via SWACL)
SWRLS (via SWACL)
Torbay (via SWACL)

Leavers

Cheshire Shared Services
Gateshead
Hartlepool
Leicester
Sunderland

Individual members

At March 2013, The Network had 18 individual members (same as in 2011).

Partners

The Network is working in partnership with a number of key organisations and individuals, including Bill Bolloten and Anne Harding; ASCEL (with whom we swap ebulletins); Bookscan; CILIP Scotland; CILIP Wales; CyMAL (who are using the Ebulletin to inform lis-Wales); DCMS; Kestrel Info Services, Canada (with whom we swap ebulletins and newsletters); RNIB; Share The Vision; The Reading Agency; Sound Delivery; the Time To Read network; and World Language Books (who offer Network members a discount on the products).

Membership of JISCMail lists

The following lists are open to anybody:

List	2012-13	2011
LAC [people working with looked-after children]	346	361
Learning Disability	45	11
LGBT [people working with LGBTs]	183	161
Network ebulletin [combining WTYL & Newsletter subscribers]	809	874
Older people [people working with older people]	181	147
Travellers [people working with Travellers]	193	194

The following are primarily for Network members only:

List	2012-13	2011
Network Newsletter	449	471
The Network [for circulation of general information and enquiries]	289	289

The following is primarily for Network and Prison Libraries Group members only³:

List	2012-13	2011
Prisons	112	109

Enquiries

These now include enquiries made on the elists The Network coordinates (eg Prisons):

2012-2013 [January 2012-March 2013]	104 ⁴
2011 [January-December 2011]	100
2010 [January-December 2010]	117
2009 [January-December 2009]	108
2008 [January-December 2008]	87
2007 [January-December 2007]	75
2006 [January-December 2006]	122
2005 [January-December 2005]	83
2004 [January-December 2004]	102
2003/4 [April-December 2003]	50
2002/3	46
2001/2	15
2000/1	8

³ *Prison Libraries Journal* no.2, 2011 [pp9-10] included a round-up of discussions on the Prisons JISCMail list.

⁴ 3 of the 104 were from students, requesting information for and help with their dissertations. There were also enquiries from abroad, requesting information about social justice issues in UK libraries. The 2012-2013 figure also includes two jobs that The Network was asked to circulate to its members; and a request from *Museum Practice* for background information for an article on how museums, archives and libraries work with prisoners and ex-offenders.

Website statistics

For the first time, this report also includes our 'headline' web statistics.

- 4156 people made 5285 visits
- Nearly 68% were from UK, 12.58% from US; the rest included the Philippines, Canada, Australia, India, etc.
- Top six popular pages were:
 - Home page
 - Events & courses
 - Who we are
 - Search page
 - Newsletters
 - Good practice blog.

Making a difference

As noted above, The Network makes a difference, including:

- Drawing together, highlighting and disseminating innovation and good practice (eg information about work with people with dementia and their families)
- Being active in the sector on behalf of members: adding to and widening the debate about libraries, museums, archives, cultural heritage organisations and social justice issues (eg in relation to provision for LGBT people)
- Working with Network members and across the sector to help develop strategy (eg in work with older people)
- Campaigning and lobbying on behalf of the sector (eg ensuring that our role in social justice was recognised by the research for Dan Jarvis MP)
- Giving advice and information, and sharing good practice from other Network members
- Giving support for colleagues
- Linking the UK cultural sector's social justice work to that abroad (eg in the US and Canada).

The work of The Network, 2012-2013 – Report by the Networker

I worked some 1056.25 hours for the Network between January 2012 and March 2013. This is an outline of what that has involved.

Activities	Hours 2012-13	% 2012- 13	Hours 2011	% 2011
Preparation, delivery and follow-up to training courses [self-financing]	176.00	19.1%	184.25	17.6%
Preparatory meeting, training workshop and follow-up report for Fresh Horizons/Chestnut Centre (funded by Arts Council England)	25.25	3.00%	-	-
Preparation for training courses supported by STV + first course	41.50	<1%	-	-
"Welcome to Your Library" further work	-	-	00.50	<1%
<i>Externally-funded work</i>	<i>242.75</i>	<i>22.1%</i>	<i>184.75</i>	<i>17.6%</i>
Managing The Network, including new members, adding to JISCMAIL lists, filing, etc (23.75); accounts (63.00); maintaining our website (10.50)	96.25	8.8%	113.75	10.9%
Emails	236.25	21.8%	203.00	19.4%
Work on Newsletters & Ebulletins	244.50	22.8%	265.75	25.4%
Other writing	4.75	0.6%	53.50	5.1%
Social justice blogs	0.75	<1%	1.50	<1%
Work on SW social justice advocacy	1.00	<1%	24.50	2.3%
Other activities (eg attending meetings)	113.75	10.9%	132.75	12.7%
Enquiries	20.25	1.8%	Not kept separately prior to 2012	
Responding to reports etc	17.75	1.9%		
Supporting work with older people	-	-	5.75	0.6%
Supporting work with looked-after children	4.75	<1%	00.50	<1%
Member of judges panel for CILIP Libraries Change Lives Award	49.00	5.4%	43.00	4.1%
Trustee of the Jodi Awards	24.50	2.9%	17.25	1.7%
<i>Paid for from subscriptions, income from courses, etc</i>	<i>813.50</i>	<i>77.0%</i>	<i>861.25</i>	<i>82.2%</i>
TOTAL	1056.25	100%	1046.00	100%

Initiatives and Developments

- Worked with Stephen Carter (Researcher for Dan Jarvis MP) to develop the social justice background for the Labour Party paper on public libraries⁵
- Shortlisting entries and visiting shortlisted pieces of work for the CILIP Libraries Change Lives Award 2012 and 2013
- John Vincent and Dave Muddiman were interviewed as part of a research project looking at the impact of research on librarianship practice (in this case, the lasting impact of *Open to all?*). The final project report⁶ highlighted the ongoing legacy of *Open to all?* with The Network serving as an active community of practice.
- Issued a round-up of information about work with people with dementia (and their families),
http://www.seapn.org.uk/content_files/files/work_with_people_with_dementia.doc.

Attendance at conferences, seminars, formal and other meetings, etc

- "Our History – Ourselves", LGBT workshop, London Metropolitan Archives (December 2012)
- Launch of English Heritage's "Disability in Time and Place" website, (December 2012)

⁵ *Libraries: innovation, co-location and partnership*. Labour Party, 2012, <http://www.yourbritain.org.uk/uploads/editor/files/LIBRARIES.pdf>.

⁶ Peter Cruickshank, Hazel Hall and Ella Taylor-Smith. *Enhancing the impact of LIS Research Projects: RiLIES Project Report*. Library and Information Science Research Coalition, 2012, http://lisresearchcoalition.files.wordpress.com/2012/02/rilies1_report.pdf.

- Meeting of Lincolnshire Libraries Focus Group Peer review Meeting (November 2012)
- Visit Deighton Library/Chestnut Centre in preparation for training course (November 2012)
- CILIP CDEG Committee meetings (October 2012)
- Arts Council Libraries Consultation workshop, Ivybridge (May 2012)
- Meetings of the Diversity Heritage Group (March & April 2012)
- Meetings of Jodi Mattes Trust (February, April, November 2012) plus telephone meetings (August, December 2012)
- Meeting of Booktrust Strategic Advisory Group – Secondary (January 2012)
- Attendance at Charity Skills course on charities and the role of trustees (January 2012)

Support for students, researchers, etc

- Completed online survey for research project, “The last outing: exploring end of life experiences and care needs in the lives of older LGBT people” (March 2013)
- Completed online survey for Nehal Chohan’s research, “Libraries and the Digital Divide” (March 2013)
- Meetings with Becky Howell to discuss her dissertation (April & July 2012)

Formal responses made by the Network

- Response to Urban Forum on their future plans (May 2012) and follow-up feedback survey (March 2013)
- Response to impact survey from Clinks (February 2013)⁷
- Response to the NCVO *Code of Good Impact Practice Consultation Survey* (February 2013)
- Survey response for the Exeter Cultural Strategy (February 2013)
- Response to the Southend on Sea Library Review (December 2012)
- Response to email from Elizabeth Oxborrow-Cowan (Consultant Archivist) seeking views on local authorities charging archive users (October 2012)
- Response to CILIP’s Draft Equal Opportunities paper (August 2012)
- Response to Stephen Carter on the draft paper, *A vision for a 21st century library: a policy report from Labour’s DCMS team on the future of public libraries* (May 2012)
- Responses to Creating Capacity on their proposal to introduce a revised method for booking courses (February, May 2012)
- Response to the draft paper on transferring the functions of Public Lending Right (May 2012)
- Response to CILIP’s draft Body of Professional Knowledge and Skills (April 2012)
- Response on CILIP’s consultation about the future of the Seal of Recognition (April 2012)
- Response to Ipsos MORI survey on “Envisioning the library of the future” (March 2012)
- Responded to HLF survey on usage of online/digital media (March 2012)
- Response to Dan Jarvis MP: *Public libraries and social justice – examples of impact*⁸

⁷ We won a year’s free subscription with this response!

- Response to CILIP Community Services Group on the merger with Diversity Group proposals (February 2012)
- Response to the Culture, Media and Sport Committee Inquiry into library closures (January 2012)⁹
- Response to Creating Capacity's survey of people's views on CPD (January 2012)

Comments (eg on draft publications) made by the Network

- Commenting on draft PowerPoint presentation by Andrew Russell for Sheffield University (March 2013)
- Commenting on a draft article by Anne Harding for *Write4Children* (February 2013)
- Commenting on proposed resources to include in Booktrust's "Beyond Booked Up" (June 2012)
- Commenting on draft article for CILIP *Update* on the creation of and plans for CDEG (May 2012)
- Commenting on draft proposal for taking forward community cohesion work in Southend (April 2012)

Publications – The Network's own

- *The Network Newsletter*, issues 129-142
- *The Network Ebulletin*, numbers 95-124.

Publications – articles, blogs, etc

- Invited to contribute "The role of public libraries in social justice" to *Prometheus: Critical Studies in Innovation*, 30 (3), pp349-351¹⁰
- Invited to guest-post to the Arts Council's "Envisioning the library of the future" blog: "Guest post #1 – Libraries and social justice, by John Vincent, The Network"¹¹
- Contributed to the "Social Justice Librarian" blog¹².

Publications – book

- John Vincent has completed the draft of a book on the relationship between LGBT people and libraries, museums, archives, and the cultural & heritage sector – to be published by Ashgate Publishing in Dec 2013¹³

Other developments

⁸ See: http://www.seapn.org.uk/content_files/files/evidence_of_impact.pdf.

⁹ Published as:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmcmmeds/writev/library/lib032.htm>.

¹⁰ See: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/08109028.2012.702057>.

¹¹ See: <http://librariesconversation.wordpress.com/2012/03/22/future-libraries-by-john-vincent-the-network/>.

¹² See: <https://sjlibrarian.wordpress.com/>.

¹³ John Vincent. *LGBT people and the UK cultural sector: the response of libraries, museums, archives and heritage since 1950*. Ashgate, 2013.

- John Vincent was nominated by the CILIP CDEG for a European Diversity Award 2012, in the “Royal Bank of Scotland – Lifetime achievement award” category (this is “recognising the contributions made by an individual or company in the field of diversity and inclusion over the whole of their lifetime.”)

Courses and other events (January 2012- March 2013)

1. Our own open courses

“Delivering services for looked-after children”, one-day course (with Anne Harding), Woking (March 2012)

2. Other organisations’ open courses/Lectures

“Improving our services for blind and partially sighted people: implementing the Six Steps and more”, one-day course for Share The Vision, London (March 2013)

Panel presentation and workshop leader at “Brave New World”, the London Metropolitan Archives 10th anniversary LGBT Conference (February 2013)

“Volunteering”, workshop for SCL West Midlands (October 2012)

“Challenge and change: Public libraries in Britain, 2012”, paper by John Dolan and John Vincent, presented by John Dolan at the Deutscher Bibliothekartag [Conference, Hamburg], “Bibliotheken – Tore zur Welt des Wissens“ (May 2012)

“Improving our services for blind and partially sighted people: implementing the Six Steps and more”, a one-day seminar organised by BASIN/LibrariesWest (March 2012)

“Community Development”, part of the Public Library Skills Programme, University of Brighton (February 2012)

3. In-house courses and talks

Seminars for information studies students at the University of West of England, Bristol (February 2012 and 2013)

“Tackling social exclusion”, workshop for Fresh Horizons/Chestnut Centre, Deighton, Huddersfield (November 2012)

“Reaching out to our whole community” for East Sussex Libraries, Uckfield, (October 2012)

“Working with the community” for East Sussex Libraries, Eastbourne (September 2012)

Half-day seminar for students from the University of Missouri (with Anne Harding and staff & young people from Skipton Rewind), York Library (July 2012)

“Profiling your community” for London Borough of Lambeth (March 2012)

“Library services for LGBTs”, Hertfordshire Library Service (February, March, July, September & December 2012, March 2013, 6 x half-day courses)

Appendix A: Meetings with key contacts 2012-2013

These included:

Updating meetings/Network business

- Ajamu (Artist & Community Archivist)
- Colin Bray (Devon Libraries)
- Christina Burnett (Lambeth Digital Bazaar)
- Stephen Carter (Researcher for Dan Jarvis MP)
- Jocelyn Dodd (RCMG)
- Jonathan Douglas (NLT)
- Simon Edwards (CILIP)
- Tracey Guiry (Cypress Well)
- Marcus Dickey Horley (Tate)
- Katie Lusty (Arts Council SW)
- Nicky Morgan (Arts Council)

Appendix B: Making the most of your subscription

Member organisations and individuals use The Network to:

- Ensure that their services are well placed to meet national, regional and local objectives
- Draw on and share expertise and good practice
- Work with other Network members to benchmark services
- Keep up-to-date effectively with new developments across the social justice field, without having to read every new document themselves as the information has already been distilled for them
- Ensure that colleagues across their service are also able to keep up-to-date via targeted emails to their desk-tops
- Ensure value for money by being able to book places on Network courses and receive in-house training at reduced cost.

When a library (or museum or archive) service from a local authority joins The Network, this automatically confers membership on the **whole local authority**.

The benefits are that:

- Council departments can share knowledge about issues that matter to them, and your service is placed at the centre of this authority-wide information-sharing
- It's a cost-effective way of stretching limited resources (and, in addition, other Council departments could contribute towards the cost of the subscription)
- Related organisations within the local authority area, such as independent and District Council museums, archive collections, schools, and others, can also share this targeted information in an extremely effective way.

Some public library services forward the Newsletter and Ebulletin (as well as other emails from our elists) to targeted contacts across the Council (thereby ensuring that the library service is contributing to corporate targets and agendas), and have also subscribed key local authority staff to some of the elists. Information is also forwarded to contacts in the community.

They also regularly share updates on service developments with other Network contacts, and ask for advice and suggestions on service plans. In one authority, a contribution towards the cost of the annual subscription is received from other Council departments in recognition of the value of this information-sharing.