

# Annual Report: April 2016-March 2017

## Introduction

Welcome to our annual review for 2016-2017; this report covers the period from April 2016 to March 2017.

Firstly, thank you for your continued support of The Network.

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 2015-2016 did see some members decide not to renew their subscriptions (a mix of budget pressures and staffing reductions), 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 (members have commented during the year on what good value membership is!).

## Our work

Key successes included:

- Producing newsletters for April 2016-February 2017 (plus an additional “Libraries Deliver special” in December 2016)
- Producing 25 Ebulletins for the period April 2016-March 2017
- Regularly adding events, resources and new features to the website<sup>1</sup>
- Developing, running and participating in a number of courses and conferences.

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!

My particular thanks also go to Carol Boswarthack and Madeline Barratt for taking on being the counter-signatories for The Network’s bank account.

John Vincent  
April 2017

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<sup>1</sup> See: [www.seapn.org.uk](http://www.seapn.org.uk).

## Membership, contacts and enquiries

### Organisational members at March 2017

There are 109 organisational members.

Here are the new joiners and leavers:

#### Joiners

Bath Spa University

#### Leavers

Derby

Libraries and Information East Midlands

Lincolnshire

### Individual members

At March 2017, The Network had 15 individual members.

### Partners

The Network is continuing to work in partnership with a number of key organisations and individuals, including ASCEL (with whom we swap ebulletins); Bookscan; CILIP Scotland; CILIP Wales; CyMAL (who are using the Ebulletin to inform lis-Wales); Share The Vision; The Reading Agency; and Sound Delivery.

### Membership of JISCMAIL lists

The following lists are open to anybody:

| List  | 2016-17 | 2015-16 |
|---|---------|---------|
| LAC [people working with looked-after children]             | 285     | 311     |
| Learning Disability   | 149     | 128     |
| LGBT [people working with LGBTs]                            | 284     | 263     |
| Network Ebulletin [combining WTYL & Newsletter subscribers] | 688     | 720     |
| Older people [people working with older people]             | 204     | 209     |
| Travellers [people working with Travellers]                 | 188     | 200     |

The following are primarily for Network members only:

| List   | 2015-16 | 2014-15 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Network Newsletter   | 389     | 406     |
| The Network [for circulation of general information and enquiries] | 269     | 284     |

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

| List    | 2016-17 | 2015-16 |
|---------|---------|---------|
| Prisons | 146     | 146     |

In addition, from November 2015, The Network took over responsibility for managing the Six Steps list:

| List      | 2016-17 | 2015-16 |
|-----------|---------|---------|
| Six Steps | 187     | 178     |

## Enquiries

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

|                                     |                 |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 2016-2017 [April 2016-March 2017]   | 85 <sup>2</sup> |
| 2015-2016 [April 2015-March 2016]   | 69 <sup>3</sup> |
| 2014-2015 [April 2014-March 2015]   | 82 <sup>4</sup> |
| 2013-2014 [April 2013-March 2014]   | 111             |
| 2012-2013 [January 2012-March 2013] | 104             |
| 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               |

## The Network website statistics

Here are our 'headline' web statistics:

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<sup>2</sup> One of these was a survey by Thomas Barker for the Prisons JISCMail list in preparation for a presentation at the Prison Libraries Group day course, May 2016. Nine of these were from students, including one from Brazil, one from Turkey, and one from Germany. Several of the enquiries involved a considerable amount of work, eg an enquiry from the MA about socially inclusive museums; and enquiry from consultants working for the Arts Council on references to equality and diversity in public libraries; and several about work with new arrivals and/or Welcome To Your Library.

<sup>3</sup> 14 of these were from students, requesting information for dissertations; 2 of these were emails with information about jobs, that we were asked to circulate. In addition, one enquiry was from Germany and one from Australia, plus several following up the CILIP blogpost on provision for new arrivals.

<sup>4</sup> 4 of these were from students, requesting information for dissertations; 6 of these were emails with information about jobs, that we were asked to circulate.

- 4419 people made 5484 visits
- 80% of visitors were new, 20% returning.

## **Making a difference**

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

- Drawing together, highlighting and disseminating innovation and good practice (eg information about the ways in which the cultural sector can support new arrivals)
- 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 LGBTQ people, and for new arrivals)
- Working with Network members and across the sector to help develop strategy (eg in work with LGBTQ people)
- Campaigning and lobbying on behalf of the sector
- Giving advice and information, and sharing good practice from other Network members (eg web resources for supporting LGBTQ people; work with homeless people; work with new arrivals)
- Giving support to colleagues (eg advice on finding information about looked-after children's attainment; examples of evidence-based librarianship)
- Linking the UK cultural sector's social justice work to that abroad (eg in the US, Canada, Germany, and Australia)
- A Network contact emailed as she was about to retire:
 

“Thank you for all the information you have sent over the years, plus the additional conversations over and above this. The work you do is so important and becomes even more so as the months and years go by.
- John Vincent was thanked in the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary issue of *Teen Librarian Monthly* for his contributions and support
- In *Public Libraries News* 8 Dec 2016, Ian Anstice wrote:
 

“Here are some informal suggestions about finding ideas for possible projects. Projects should be new and innovative for your service but you can base them on ideas tried out by other library services in England and elsewhere.

  - The Network for Social Exclusion: The Network's Website is at [www.seapn.org.uk](http://www.seapn.org.uk) and includes information on courses, good practice, specific socially excluded groups, as well as the archive of the Network Newsletter. This is an invaluable resource.”
- The Network tries to support its members as widely as possible. After the terrible murder of Jo Cox MP, we sent the following message to Kirklees Libraries:

“Just a very quick message for your colleagues who were involved in the terrible events in Birstall to say that people across The Network are thinking of them and wishing them well.”

## The work of The Network, 2016-2017 – Report by the Networker

I worked some 1013.00 hours for the Network between April 2016 and March 2017. This is an outline of what that has involved:

| Activities   | Hours 2016-17  | % 2016-17     | Hours 2015-16 | % 2015-16    |
|--|----------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| Preparation, delivery and follow-up to training courses [self-financing]   | 100.75         | 9.9%          | 93.75         | 9.5%         |
| Organising training day for SWRLS  | 22.25          | 2.2%          | 17.00         | 1.7%         |
| STV/SCL/CDEG/RNIB Six Steps courses + follow-up  | 30.50          | 3%            | 18.00         | 1.8%         |
| Enfield LGBTQ Development Programme  | -              | -             | 6.50          | 0.7%         |
| Arts Council Equality & Diversity project  | 38.00          | 3.75%         | -             | -            |
| <i>Externally-funded work</i>  | <i>191.50</i>  | <i>18.85%</i> | <i>135.25</i> | <i>13.7%</i> |
| Managing The Network, including new members, adding to JISMAIL lists (2.50), filing, etc (26.00); accounts (44.25); maintaining our website (3.25) | 76.00          | 7.5%          | 89.50         | 9.0%         |
| Emails   | 156.75         | 15.5%         | 163.75        | 16.6%        |
| Work on Newsletters & Ebulletins   | 293.50         | 29%           | 322.00        | 32.7%        |
| Work on Ashgate LGBT book*   | 13.00          | 1.3%          | 17.00         | 1.7%         |
| Work on LGBT History Month   | 15.25          | 1.5%          | 12.25         | 1.7%         |
| Other writing  | 61.50          | 6%            | 29.75         | 3.0%         |
| Other activities (eg attending meetings)   | 92.00          | 9%            | 84.25         | 8.5%         |
| Enquiries  | 17.75          | 1.75%         | 18.25         | 1.9%         |
| Responding to reports etc  | 11.00          | 1%            | 5.75          | 0.6%         |
| Supporting work with older people  | -              | -             | -             | -            |
| Supporting work with looked-after children   | 0.25           | ~             | 1.75          | 0.2%         |
| Work on 'New Arrivals' (post-WTYL)   | 1.25           | 0.1%          | 10.75         | 1.1%         |
| Member of judging panel for CILIP Libraries Change Lives Award   | 74.75          | 7.4%          | 80.50         | 8.2%         |
| Trustee of the Jodi Awards   | 8.75           | 0.9%          | 13.25         | 1.3%         |
| <i>Paid for from subscriptions, income from courses, etc</i>   | <i>745.75</i>  | <i>81%</i>    | <i>848.75</i> | <i>86.5%</i> |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>1013.25</b> | <b>~100%</b>  | <b>984.00</b> | <b>~100%</b> |

\*Note: this does not include time spent researching and writing the book, but includes follow-on work, such as responding to enquiries, dealing with the publisher, posting to the WordPress blog

### Initiatives and Developments

- John Vincent was asked to join a working group to update the Six Steps Promise
- John Vincent was invited to join the Advisory Board for Library and Information Resources for Harrington Park Press.

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

- Visited Coventry Library Service to discuss Arts Council paper (March 2017)
- Attended celebration evening for "From Pen to Print", Barking (March 2017)
- Attended the launch of the Exeter University project, "Rethinking Sexology", Exeter (February 2017)
- Attended the launch of the Exeter Hub of LGBT History Month, Exeter RAMM (February 2017)
- Attended the London "Libraries Deliver" (Libraries Taskforce) workshop, London (January 2017)

- Attended “Queer Time, Queer Place, Queer Action”, the 14<sup>th</sup> LGBTQ+ Conference at London Metropolitan Archives (December 2016)
- Attended meeting to discuss preparations for LGBT History Month in Exeter (November 2016)
- Attended Committee meetings of CILIP Community, Diversity and Equality Group (November 2016, March 2017)
- Attended “Our Libraries” Conference (October 2016)
- Attended CILIP AGM, Leeds (September 2016)
- Visited Alison Baud and team at Bath Spa University Library (September 2016)
- Attended CILIP CDEG Committee AGM (September 2016)
- Met a student at UCL to discuss the legacy of Welcome To Your Library (July 2016)
- Attended (and chaired a panel session at) “Without Borders”, the LGBTQ+ Archives, Libraries, Museums and Special Collections Conference, London (June 2016)
- Attended an “Ambition for Public Libraries” (Libraries Taskforce) workshop, Exeter (May 2016)
- Attended the launch of Libraries Unlimited South West, Exeter (April 2016)

### **CILIP Libraries Change Lives Award**

- Attended meeting at CILIP to prepare for 2017 Awards (January 2017)
- Attended the Award-giving at the CILIP AGM, Leeds (September 2016)
- Visited shortlisted services at Sefton; Renfrewshire; and Norfolk (September 2016)
- Shortlisting meeting, CILIP (July 2016)

### **Jodi Mattes Trust**

John Vincent is a trustee.

- Attended Board Meetings (July & December 2016, January 2017)

### **Formal responses made by the Network**

- Responded to a survey from the Learning and Work Institute about its role and future (December 2016)
- Responded to the survey for the Vision for the Archives Sector consultation (December 2016)
- Responded to the ARA survey about new CPD proposals (November 2016)
- Responded to request from the Aspen Institute for feedback on their *Action guide for re-envisioning your public library* (October 2016)
- Feedback to the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art on reading journals in Issuu format (July 2016)
- Responded to UCL/Northumbria University survey on “Brexit: opportunities and threats for information and ICT professionals” (June 2016)
- Commented on draft proposals for the DWP Age Action Alliance newsletter (June 2016)
- Commented on the draft Government Policy on Archives (June 2016)
- Responded to draft “Libraries Deliver” proposals following Exeter regional workshop (June 2016)

- Responded to the consultation on “Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016-21” (May 2016)

### **Comments (eg on draft publications) made by the Network**

- Commented on draft text and designs for the British Museum’s LGBT Exhibition (March 2017)
- Commented on layout and content of Zachari Duncalf’s website (January 2017)
- Commented on new website for Plymouth Arts & Heritage (December 2016)

### **Comments on CILIP matters (via CDEG) made by the Network**

- Commented on draft CILIP response to the Industrial Strategy Green Paper (March 2017)
- Commented on draft interview with Miguel Figueroa for CDEG (March 2017)
- Responded to survey about the usefulness of the University of Portsmouth Equality & Diversity Newsletter (February 2017)

### **Publications – The Network’s own**

- *The Network Newsletter*, issues 179-192
- *The Network Ebulletin*, numbers 207-231.

### **Publications – articles, blogs, etc**

- John Vincent and John Pateman’s chapter for *British librarianship and information work 2011-2015* was published (February 2017)<sup>5</sup>

### **Courses and other events (April 2016-March 2017)**

#### 1. Our own open courses

None.

#### 2. Other organisations’ open courses/Lectures

- Presentation, “Flicking back the pages ...” (on the role of libraries in providing access to LGBTQ materials and information), Exeter LGBT History Month (February 2017)
- Presentation, “The Network – what does tackling social exclusion involve?”, at CILIP Rare Books and Special Collections Group Conference, “A rich tapestry ...”, Liverpool (September 2016)
- Post-Conference workshop on equality and diversity, at CILIP Rare Books and Special Collections Group Conference, “A rich tapestry ...”, Liverpool (September 2016)

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<sup>5</sup> John Vincent and John Pateman “From social justice to growing inequality” in John Bowman (ed) *British librarianship and information work 2011-2015*. John Bowman (via lulu), 2017, pp40-104.

- “Libraries really do change lives!”, presentation at the CLIP Conference, Brighton (July 2016)<sup>6</sup>
- Co-organised and hosted the SWRLS course, “Overcoming invisible barriers: working with people with needs we may not be aware of”, Exeter (May 2016)

### 3. In-house courses and talks

- “LGBTQ Awareness”, Surrey History Centre (December 2016, 2 x half-day courses)
- “Working with Young Offenders” [with Anne Harding], course for staff at the Galleries of Justice Museum, Nottingham (July 2016)
- “LGBTQ Awareness”, Surrey Library Service (May 2016, 3 x half-day courses)
- Seminars for information studies students at the University of Sheffield (April 2016, March 2017)
- Workshop on equality & diversity for the CILIP Board (April 2016)

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## Appendix A: Meetings with key contacts 2016-2017

These included:

Dymphna Evans (ARC Impact publishers); Kevin Grist (SparkedEcho Ltd); Jana Funke (Exeter University); Laura Phillips (British Museum); Rob Trimble (Bromley by Bow Centre)

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<sup>6</sup> This was reported in the *PMLG Newsletter*, July 2016: “A CILIP Conference 2016 in a Nutshell”, a report by PMLG Bursary Winner Allie Cingi:

“It was uplifting to see the 2016 conference open with Scott Bonner’s message: ‘In a crisis, just be a library.’ Libraries are safe, neutral spaces, open ‘to all human beings’, where extraordinary things can happen: not just activities to foster lifelong learning and cultural literacy, but also anything else that’s needed in a community.

This flexibility was captured in the ‘Everyday Innovation’ strand:

- Kirklees Libraries showed us how to captivate new users with healthy, low-cost family storywalks
- Bath Spa University crowd-sourced ideas, book titles and influential people to spark reading and debate about equality and diversity. An interactive timeline was created with Tiki Toki ([www.tiki-toki.com](http://www.tiki-toki.com)).
- John Vincent took us through a showcase of projects that were awarded the ‘Libraries Change Lives’ award, showing the impact of libraries on issues like inequality, health, minorities, poverty, and access to information. The aim of the award is to “get the story out there”, gather evidence of impact and use it to shift the debate. Videos of past years’ finalists are available on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=CILIP+libraries+change+lives+award](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=CILIP+libraries+change+lives+award).”

## 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 email lists.<sup>7</sup> 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.

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<sup>7</sup> For example, Edinburgh promoted The Network in this way in Dec 2016:

“Just to remind you that as we have a subscription to the John Vincent Network, all staff in the Council can benefit from receiving (free) this electronic information & newsletter direct by registering as below. This current awareness information network is very useful, bang up to date, well informed and a rich source of information on children and young people in care, people in prison, refugee and asylum seekers, migrant workers, people with disabilities, people affected by mental health issues, older people, equality and human rights, community engagement, social justice. Contexts are right across the spectrum of statutory and voluntary public services. To register with the Network you just need to email John Vincent who will add you to the contacts list [john@nadder.org.uk](mailto:john@nadder.org.uk). If you are aware of other staff groups which would benefit please feel free to forward this email to them.”