

Annual Report: January-December 2008

Introduction

2008 was another good year for The Network, including:

- Developing, running and participating in some 30¹ courses and conferences
- Producing newsletters for January-December 2008
- Producing the irregular ebulletins from April 2008 onwards
- Adding resources and new features to the website
- Working with the LLDA and the partner library services to deliver the final phase of “Welcome to Your Library”
- Working with the Paul Hamlyn Foundation to promote the role that libraries play in supporting looked-after children and young people
- Attending a number of key conferences and meetings.

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

Membership has continued to grow. Although we have lost two members, we have gained 5 new organisational members.

Increasingly, The Network is being seen as one of the places to make contact with other people to share and develop good practice, to ask for information, and as a way in to libraries, museums and archives.

Tackling social exclusion, creating community cohesion and developing approaches to community engagement are all still at the top of the Government agenda: it is increasingly clear that libraries, museums and archives have a key role to play in this, and The Network is contributing to the spread of good practice and the raising of our profile. However, 2009 is going to bring a number of new challenges, particularly around funding (in the current economic climate), the changes to local government and the personalisation agenda, and (in England) the restructuring of MLA – together we can ensure that The Network continues to contribute to all this and to support members in developing services.

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

John Vincent
December 2008

¹ Also 30 in 2007.

Membership, contacts and enquiries

Organisational members at December 2008

There are 138² organisational members (plus the MLA Partnership and the LLDA).

Here are the new joiners and leavers.

Joiners

Argyll & Bute
Booktrust
Reading
The Reader
Waltham Forest

Leavers

Newport
Science Museum.

Individual members

At December 2008, The Network had 12 individual members.

Partners

The Network is working in partnership with a number of key organisations and individuals, including Anne Harding, Bookscan, CILIP Scotland, CILIP Wales, CyMAL, DCMS, NAAN [English Heritage's New Audiences and Access Network], NALD [The National Association for Literature Development], the Quality Leaders Project, RNIB, The Reading Agency, and the Time To Read network, and they also receive copies of the newsletter.

Membership of JISCMail lists

The following lists are open to anybody:

List	2008	2007
LAC [people working with looked-after children]	325	306
LGBT [people working with LGBTs – new list]	63	25
Network ebulletin [combining WTYL & Newsletter subscribers]	794	-
Older people [people working with older people – new list]	14	-
Travellers [people working with Travellers]	139	117
WTYL ["Welcome to Your Library"]	closed	401

The following are for Network members only:

² At December 2008, there were 133.

List	2008	2007
Network Newsletter	485	440
The Network [for circulation of general information and enquiries]	272	248

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

List	2008	2007
Prisons [new list]	65	29

Contacts abroad

We have had a number of enquiries about The Network (particularly the newsletter) from people outside the UK, and now email the newsletters to:

- Albert Arko-Cobbah (Vista Campus Library, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa)
- Marcia Aronson (Manager, Adult & Readers' Advisory Services, Ottawa Public Library)
- John Gehner (Coordinator, Hunger, Homelessness & Poverty Task Force, ALA Social Responsibility Round Table)
- Liza Harrington (InterFuture Scholar, Suffolk University, Boston, Mass.)
- Anne Berit Helland (Bergen Public Library, Norway)
- Nick Jones (Nacka Library, Sweden)
- Raj Kumar Gandharba (Executive Director of the Jana Utthan Pratishan (JUP) in Nepal)
- Rajashekhar Kumbar (Padre Conceicao College of Engineering, Goa, India)
- Marian Morgan-Bindon (Queensland)
- Bern Nolen (Eastern Regional Libraries, Victoria, Australia)
- Lorraine Seeger (Eastern Regional Libraries, Victoria, Australia)
- Ken Williment (Halifax Public Libraries, Canada)

Enquiries

2008 [January-December 2008]	87 ³
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 Since April 2003, this figure also includes enquiries made to JISCMail.

The work of The Network, 2008

Report by the Networker

I worked some 1,325 hours for the Network between January-December 2008. This is an outline of what that has involved.

A major part of the work has been in developing and delivering the wide range of training courses, and the involvement in the second phase of "Welcome to Your Library". I have contributed one article to *Public Library Journal* and have collected most of the content for and written the Newsletters in this period. The number of emails received continues to mushroom!

I have also attended a number of meetings with key contacts (the list of which is at Appendix A).

In addition, I have carried out all the administration for the Network, including invoicing and banking income; dealing with suppliers' invoices and raising cheques; and answering the large number of letters and e-mails about the Network's work.

The work can be broken down approximately as follows:

Activities	Hours 2008	% 2008	Hours 2007	% 2007
Preparation, delivery and follow-up to training courses [self-financing]	321.00	24%	274.75	18%
"Welcome to Your Library" Phase 2	113.25	8%	289.50	19%
Looked-after children & young people – "Right to Read" advocacy [Paul Hamlyn Foundation-funded]	49.25	4%	98.00	6.5%
Action Learning Set for MLA SE	24.25	2%	67.00	4.5%
Southampton report for MLA SE and follow-on training	5.50	<1%	7.00	<1%
Work on Good Practice Guide for working with older people [DOH-funded]	36.750	3%		
<i>Externally-funded work</i>		<i>c41%</i>		<i>c49.5%</i>
Managing The Network, including new members, adding to JISCMail lists, filing, etc (42.25); enquiries (14.75); accounts (69.00); maintaining our website (23.50); responding to reports etc (19.50)	169.00	13%	212.25	14%
Emails	221.75	17%	203.75	13.5%
Work on newsletters	214.50	16%	208.00	14%
Other writing	12.25	1%	-	-
Other activities (eg attending meetings)	157.75	12%	130.50	9%
<i>Paid for from subscriptions, income from courses, etc</i>		<i>c59%</i>		<i>c50.5%</i>
TOTAL	1325.25	100%	1504.50	100%

Welcome To Your Library

The Network has continued to work with Helen Carpenter (the WTYL Coordinator) and the LLDA on the final stage of the project – which primarily involved ensuring the future of the e-digest and that there was an effective legacy website.

From the beginning of December 2008, we merged the WTYL Digest with the irregular Network ebulletin, and the first two ebulletins in this new format were sent out at the end of 2008. (As noted above, one result of this has been to widen The Network's reach, with nearly 800 people now receiving this ebulletin.)

MLA South East work on community engagement

As noted last year, The Network was part of a successful bid coordinated by Local Level⁴ to run training courses and facilitate Action Learning Sets for MLA SE. I facilitated eight Action Learning Sets, involving staff from libraries and a museum in the South East.

Following this, Cathy Herman and I were asked to carry out a series of courses for MLA – and then for MLA London – on community engagement.

Initiatives and Developments

- Working with East Midlands SCL, The Network has produced benchmarking guides for services for looked-after children & young people⁵ and migrant workers⁶.

Attendance at seminars, formal and other meetings, etc

- CSG meetings (January, October 2008)
- Meeting at British Library to discuss the exhibition that would eventually become "Taking Liberties" (January 2008)
- Meeting of the Paul Hamlyn Foundations' Reading & Libraries Challenge Fund Panel (February 2008)
- East Midlands Society of Chief Librarians meeting to discuss working together (February 2008)
- Meeting with John Dolan and Sarah Wilkie (MLA) (with Helen Carpenter) to discuss the future development of the Libraries Action Plan (April 2008)
- Meeting with Catherine Max (LLDA) to discuss the future development of libraries in London (July 2008)
- Meeting of the CILIP Equalities and Diversity Panel (July 2008)
- First meeting of informal group of consultants, led by Sector projects, Birmingham (August 2008)
- Reception at Penguin Books to launch Letterbox Club (September 2008)
- Legacy event for MLA South East (September 2008)

⁴ See: http://www.local-level.org.uk/Local_Level.asp.

⁵ See: http://www.seapn.org.uk/content_files/files/benchmarking_lac.doc.

⁶ See: http://www.seapn.org.uk/content_files/files/benchmarking_migrant_workers.doc.

Conferences, seminars, etc attended

- Sat in on WTYL course for Southwark Libraries run by Bill Bolloten (June 2008)
- “Access All Areas” CILIP Diversity Group conference, (June 2008)
- CILIP ILIG Seminar, London (October 2008)
- Sound Delivery seminar on social media, London (December 2008)

Visitors from abroad

- Raj Kumar Gandharba, winner of CILIP’s Anthony Thompson Award for 2008. Raj is Executive Director of the non-government organisation the Jana Utthan Pratishan (JUP) in Nepal, and his work includes management of Community Learning Centres with special importance given to the Dalit peoples⁷.

Other Key Activities

- Production of monthly newsletters
- Co-production of WTYL Digest

Formal responses made by the Network

- DCLG new Place Survey (January 2008)
- “Controversial stock in public libraries”, MLA draft (March 2008)
- Consultation on draft BSI Specification “Code of Practice for Cultural Collections Management” (July 2008)
- Response to National Literacy Trust survey on literacy issues for 2009 (December 2008)
- Response to DCMS Public Library Review (December 2008)
- Response for CILIP to DCLG “Delivering Digital Inclusion” consultation (December 2008)

Comments (eg on draft publications) made by the Network

- Draft report by Helen Carpenter for the Winston Churchill Memorial Travelling Fellowship (January 2008)
- Feedback to Exiled Writers Ink on their website (January 2008)
- Request by CILIP’s Diversity Group for feedback on their activities (June 2008)
- Feedback to Linda Constable on CILIP Advocacy Campaign (June 2008)
- Feedback to Booktrust on Letterbox Club website (July 2008)
- Comments on draft of ‘*Like a light going on*’, Local Level’s report on the Living Library (September 2008)
- Feedback on Hackney’s application for funding for “Words Unite” (October 2008)
- Comments on draft funding application for Big Book Share (October 2008).

⁷ See: <http://www.cilip.org.uk/aboutcilip/newsandpressreleases/news080501.htm>.

Publications

Articles

- John Vincent, with Margaret Sloan “Are we stretching ourselves?”, *Public Library Journal* (“Social exclusion” column) Winter 2008, pp29-30.

Courses and other events (January – December 2008)

1. Our own open courses

None in 2008.

2. Other organisations’ open courses/Lectures

“Community Engagement: Planning & Evaluation”, one-day course (with Cathy Herman) for MLA London (November 2008)

“Learning from the Best ...”, seminar organised by BASIN/LibrariesWest (November 2008)

“Community Engagement: Partnerships”, one-day course (with Cathy Herman) for MLA London (October 2008)

“Tackling social exclusion”, one-day course, Renaissance East Midlands, Derby (October 2008)

Closing talk for the Prison Libraries Group Conference, Hinckley (October 2008)

“Introduction to community engagement”, talk to Society of Chief Librarians North East Workforce Development Group residential course, Middlesbrough (October 2008)

“Community Engagement”, one-day course (with Cathy Herman) for MLA London (September 2008)

“Supporting Looked-after Children”, one-day course (with Anne Harding) for CILIP, London (June 2008)

“Services to older adults”, seminar organised by CILIP East of England (May 2008)

“Community Engagement”, one-day course (with Cathy Herman) for SHARE, London (May 2008)

“Community Engagement”, one-day course (with Cathy Herman) for MLA, Bristol (May 2008)

Talk to ALLIS [Accessing Lancashire Library and Information Services] AGM, Edge Hill University (April 2008)

“Community Engagement”, one-day course (with Cathy Herman) for MLA, London (April 2008)

“Mental Health Seminar”, organised by BASIN/LibrariesWest (April 2008)

“Community Engagement”, one-day course (with Cathy Herman) for MLA, Birmingham (February 2008)

Facilitating a workshop on working with looked-after children, and giving closing talk, East Midlands CILIP Members’ Day, Nottingham (February 2008)

“Community Engagement”, one-day course (with Cathy Herman) for MLA, Leeds (February 2008)

“Community Engagement”, one-day course (with Cathy Herman) for MLA South East, (January 2008)

“Community Cohesion”, Renaissance East Midlands, Grantham (January 2008)

3. In-house courses and talks

“Library services for LGBTs”, Hertfordshire Library Service (November 2008, half-day course)

“Tackling social exclusion”, Southampton Library Service (October 2008, one-day course)

“Tackling social exclusion”, Hastings College (July 2008, half-day course)

“Tackling social exclusion”, lecture to MSc students, UWE, Bristol (April 2008)

Facilitating Action Learning Set on Community Engagement for MLA South East (March 2008)

Facilitating workshop on Big Lottery Fund bids for MLA London (March 2008)

Facilitating Action Learning Set on Community Engagement for MLA South East (February 2008)

“Tackling social exclusion”, Southend Library Service (February 2008)

“Tackling social exclusion” workshop, University of Brighton MA in Librarianship course (February 2008)

“Library services for LGBTs”, Hertfordshire Library Service (February 2008, two half-day courses)

Facilitating Action Learning Set on Community Engagement for MLA South East (January 2008)

4. Conference

None in 2008.

Appendix A: Meetings with key contacts 2008

These included meetings with: Margaret Sloan and Nye Harries (DOH) to discuss the Good Practice Guide on working with older people; Michele Jones about the National Year of Reading; Helen Carpenter, Bill Bolloten and Tim Spafford about the future of WTYL; Ajamu (Rukus Foundation) to update each other; Jonathan Douglas to update each other; Nick Batty (National Literacy Trust) to discuss work with looked-after children and prisons; Deidre McGrath and Dermot Kennedy (MLA London) to discuss training; Raina Sheridan (The Fostering Network) to discuss work with looked-after children; Valerie Bearne (BASIN) and Jon Scown (LibrariesWest) to discuss seminars; Anne Harding to prepare training courses; Natasha Innocent (MLA) to update each other; Rachel Hasted (English Heritage) to update each other; Ben Taylor (Sector Projects) to explore working together; Rebecca Linley to update each other; René Kinzett (National Council on Archives) to discuss how NCA and The Network can develop their work together; Fiona O'Brien (NYR) to discuss work with looked-after children; Alison Shakspeare to update each other; Mike Clarke (Camden) to update each other; Makeda Coaston (GLA) to discuss the Mayor's Commission; Cathy Herman to prepare training courses; Amanda Denham (Exeter CVS) to discuss The Network's status in relation to becoming a charity; Lynn Osborne (SWRLS) to discuss working together; Angie McTiernan to update each other; Stephanie Hall and Adele Sidhom ("Find Your Talent") to discuss working together; Colin Bray (Devon Libraries) to update each other; Jane Davis and Chris Catterall (The Reader) with Helen Carpenter to discuss working together; Elizabeth Elford (British Library/SCL) to discuss working together; John Pateman to discuss allocating work on our forthcoming book; Jennifer Ngyou (MLA) to update each other.