Introduction

Welcome to our annual review for 2015-2016, and thank you for your continued support of The Network. This report covers the period from April 2015 to March 2016.

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.

Our work

Key successes included:

- Producing newsletters for April 2015-March 2016
- Producing 30 Ebulletins for the period April 2015-March 2016
- Regularly adding events, resources and new features to the website[1]
- 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 Julie Gibson (formerly Head of Libraries, Enfield) for being one of the counter-signatories for The Network's bank account until March 2016; and to Carol Boswarthack and Madeline Barratt for taking on and continuing in this role.

John Vincent
April 2016

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[1] See: www.seapn.org.uk.

Membership, contacts and enquiries

Organisational members at March 2016

There are 112 organisational members.

Here are the new joiners and leavers:

Joiners
Carillion (Croydon, Harrow, Hounslow)
RNIB

Leavers
Bracknell Forest
West Lothian

Individual members

At March 2016, The Network had 13 individual members.

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); Share The Vision; The Reading Agency; and Sound Delivery.

Membership of JISCMAIL lists

The following lists are open to anybody:

List	2015-16	2014-15
LAC [people working with looked-after children]	311	313
Learning Disability	128	108
LGBT [people working with LGBTs]	263	232
Network Ebulletin [combining WTYL & Newsletter subscribers]	720	769
Older people [people working with older people]	209	200
Travellers [people working with Travellers]	200	200

The following are primarily for Network members only:

List	2015-16	2014-15
Network Newsletter	406	440
The Network [for circulation of general information and enquiries]	284	304

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

List	2015-16	2014-15
Prisons	146	138

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

List	2015-16	2014-15
Six Steps	178	N/A

Enquiries

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

2015-2016 [April 2015-March 2016]	69[2]
2014-2015 [April 2014-March 2015]	82[3]
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:

- 3187 people made 3994 visits
- Just under 47% were from UK, the rest included the US, Russia, China, Canada and Brazil
- 79.7% of visitors were new, 20.3% returning

Looking at the new website for the period 1 April 2015-31 March 2016, the top six popular pages were:

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[2] 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.

[3] 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.

- Home page
- "How can the cultural sector support refugees?"[4]
- Events & courses
- About The Network
- Newsletters
- Ebulletins.

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 refugees)

- 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 older people – for an enquiry from Australia; tracking down a museum in London that wanted to work with prisoners; provision for Arabic-speaking communities)

- Giving support to colleagues (eg advice on finding information about looked-after children's attainment; the needs for hearing loops in community libraries; examples of evidence-based librarianship; background social policy information for an archives studies student)

- Supporting people outside the sector (eg helping a funding officer find research and/or evidence to demonstrate the impact of public libraries; supporting a film-maker looking for trans contacts)

- Linking the UK cultural sector's social justice work to that abroad (eg in the US, Canada, Germany, and Australia)

- Someone leaving the Prisons JISCMAIL list in October 2015 emailed to comment:

  "Thank you, I just wanted to say that the information that you have disseminated whilst I've been part of this mailing list has been invaluable. So thank you very much and I wish you all the best."

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[4] See: http://www.seapn.org.uk/post/how-can-the-cultural-sector-support-refugees.

The work of The Network, 2015-2016 – Report by the Networker

I worked some 984.00 hours for the Network between April 2015 and March 2016. This is an outline of what that has involved:

Activities	Hours 2015-16	% 2015-16	Hours 2014-15	% 2014-15
Preparation, delivery and follow-up to training courses [self-financing]	93.75	9.5%	37.25	4.2%
Organising training day for SWRLS	17.00	1.7%	-	-
STV/SCL/CDEG/RNIB Six Steps courses + follow-up	18.00	1.8%	5.00	0.6%
Enfield LGBTQ Development Programme	6.50	0.7%	28.25	3.2%
Externally-funded work	*135.25*	*13.7%*	*70.50*	*8.0%*
Managing The Network, including new members, adding to JISCMAIL lists, filing, etc (26.00); accounts (46.00); maintaining our website (17.50)	89.50	9.0%	127.50	14.3%
Emails	163.75	16.6%	191.00	21.4%
Work on Newsletters & Ebulletins	322.00	32.7%	299.25	33.5%
Work on Ashgate LGBT book*	17.00	1.7%	15.50	1.7%
Work on LGBT History Month	12.25	1.7%	1.50	1.4%
Other writing	29.75	3.0%	16.25	1.8%
Other activities (eg attending meetings)	84.25	8.5%	55.50	5.4%
Enquiries	18.25	1.9%	16.75	1.9%
Responding to reports etc	5.75	0.6%	12.50	1.4%
Supporting work with older people	-	-	8.50	1%
Supporting work with looked-after children	1.75	0.2%	3.50	0.4%
Work on 'New Arrivals' (post-WTYL)	10.75	1.1%	-	-
Member of judging panel for CILIP Libraries Change Lives Award	80.50	8.2%	54.00	6.1%
Trustee of the Jodi Awards	13.25	1.3%	9.25	1%
Paid for from subscriptions, income from courses, etc	*848.75*	*86.5%*	*811.00*	*91.3%*
TOTAL	984.00	~100%	881.50	~100%

*Note: this does not include time spent researching and writing the book.

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

- Attended reception to announce the CILIP Carnegie and Kate Greenaway Medals shortlists and the Amnesty CILIP Honour (March 2016)
- Attended British Museum LGBTQ special event: "Love throughout History" (February 2016)
- Attended the Museums Association Conference, Birmingham (November 2015)
- Attended the joint YLG/CDEG Conference, Glasgow (October 2015)
- Attended the CILIP AGM, London (September 2015)
- Attended Committee meetings of CILIP Community, Diversity and Equality Group (July & December 2015, March 2016)
- Attended CILIP Conference, Liverpool (July 2015)

- Attended "Marking 2017", a workshop to explore the commemoration of the passing of the 1967 Sexual Offences Act, Tate Britain (June 2015).

CILIP Libraries Change Lives Award

- Attended meeting at CILIP to prepare for 2016 Awards (February 2016)
- Attended the Award-giving at the CILIP AGM, London (September 2015)
- Attended decision-making meeting (July 2015)
- Visited shortlisted services at St Helens; Irvine; Portsmouth (July 2015)
- Shortlisting meeting, CILIP (June 2015)

Jodi Mattes Trust

John Vincent is a trustee.

- Attended Board Meeting (September 2015)
- Attended Jodi Awards-giving, British Library (May 2015)

Formal responses made by the Network

- Response to CILIP's "Shape the Future" report (December 2015)

Comments (eg on draft publications) made by the Network

- Responded to survey on LGBT Allies (February 2016)
- Commented on "Review of the Education of Children in Care Network" (LinkedIn group) (February 2016)
- Commenting on draft book proposal (January 2016)
- Responded to Masters student's survey on public libraries' work with children in care (December 2015)
- Commenting on draft social prescribing report for Health Education England – North West (October 2015)
- Commenting on draft Statement by SCL/ASCEL re: refugees (September 2015)
- Commenting on draft research questionnaire for LIS student (June 2015)
- Responding to lis-pub-libs discussion on ceasing inter-library-loans (June 2015)
- Commenting on pre-production version of *British way of living* (June 2015)
- Commenting on draft Share The Vision blog (May 2015)

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

- Commented on draft publicity bookmarks for CDEG (March 2016)
- Commenting to CDEG on draft CILIP response to the Review of Prison Education (November 2015)
- Commenting to CDEG on proposal to establish a new CILIP Special Interest Group (November 2015)
- Commenting on draft response from CILIP to the "Inquiry into Sustainable Development Goals" (August 2015)

Publications – The Network's own

- *The Network Newsletter*, issues 167-178
- *The Network Ebulletin*, numbers 177-206.

Publications – articles, blogs, etc

- John Vincent's article on libraries' provision for LGBT people for the US library journal, *Library Trends* was published[5] (March 2016)

- Liz Chapman and John Vincent contributed a blogpost to the CILIP blog, "Preparing for LGBT History Month – our top tips"[6] (January 2016)

- John Vincent and Liz Chapman wrote a CILIP blogpost, "Anti-Bullying Week – what can libraries do?"[7] (November 2015)

- John Vincent wrote a CILIP blogpost "Welcoming Refugees to the UK (and to Libraries)"[8] (September 2015). This linked to a resource on The Network website, "How can the cultural sector support refugees?"[9], and both have been picked up in the UK[10] and across Europe[11]. John Vincent has also been contacted by a number of interested individuals, including Olivier Kugler who was interested in mounting an exhibition in libraries about refugees.

- The Network and John Vincent were cited in Mark Freeman's presentation to the IFLA Conference (September 2015):

  > "Most recently, as part of the continuing programme of work to develop the Six Steps approach, a series of workshops has been offered in several parts of the UK, including opportunities in Edinburgh, London and Cardiff.
  >
  > The Six Steps Workshop programme has been offered in conjunction with The Network (an independent organisation which exists solely to tackle social exclusion in communities) over the past two years. Each workshop has followed a similar pattern and has been offered to around 50 participants at a time and, where possible, based in a library venue in one of the nine English regions, Wales or in Scotland.
  >
  > At each event, agendas have included a background to the Six Steps offer and the reasons for its existence, a print-disabled speaker explaining the challenges that face people with sight loss and other disabilities and a

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[5] John Vincent "Why do we need to bother? Public library services for LGBTQI people", *Library Trends* 64 (2), Fall 2015, pp285-298.
[6] See: http://www.cilip.org.uk/blog/preparing-lgbt-history-month-our-top-tips.
[7] See: http://www.cilip.org.uk/blog/anti-bullying-week-what-can-libraries-do.
[8] See: http://www.cilip.org.uk/blog/welcoming-refugees-uk-libraries.
[9] See: http://www.seapn.org.uk/post/how-can-the-cultural-sector-support-refugees.
[10] "CILIP urges libraries to welcome refugees", http://www.thebookseller.com/news/cilip-urges-libraries-welcome-refugees-313738; *Public Libraries News*, 29 September 2015, http://www.publiclibrariesnews.com/?s=refugee.
[11] For example, *EBLIDA Newsletter*, October 2015, http://us9.campaign-archive2.com/?u=e89f2b03e1c5beec6e43581dd&id=eedc3f274f; *Public Libraries Online*, http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2015/11/refugees-supported-by-public-libraries-in-europe/. .

background to access technology to give simple solutions to common challenges. Working with both Royal National Institute of Blind People and with Action for the Blind, the workshop organiser, John Vincent, has been able to provide a varied experience which has shown participants how to make use of the access features of PCs, Apple products and other tablets and readers. Most important, it has given participants the opportunity to come together and talk about their individual experiences and challenges in their day-to-day work.

As the workshops have been supported both by the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals and Share the Vision, costs have been minimised which, in view of recent reductions in many library service budgets, has meant more staff have been able to attend. Feedback from the face-to-face workshop events has been extremely positive and a further programme is planned for 2015-2016, once again in a partnership between Share the Vision and The Network. In the coming programme, the issues around digital access and the move towards self-service in both library terms and more generally in terms of engaging with both national and local government in the UK will be a high priority."[12]

- John Vincent was cited in "The future of public libraries: some thoughts from a library user", a blogpost by Briony Birdi on the Sheffield University *Information School News*[13] (July 2015)

Other developments

- Network members have access to NCVO training videos via their Study Zone[14]

Courses and other events (April 2015-March 2016)

1. Our own open courses

None.

2. Other organisations' open courses/Lectures

- "LGBTQ community history and the heritage sector", keynote paper at the London Metropolitan Archives 13th Annual LGBTQ History and Archives Conference, "Speak Up! Speak Out!" (December 2015)

- John Vincent and Liz Chapman ran a workshop, "LGBTQIA* library provision for children & young people" at the joint YLG/CDEG Conference, "Diversity, variety and choice: how to put the right book in the right hands", Glasgow (October 2015)

3. In-house courses and talks

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[12] Mark Freeman "'Taking Six Steps' to reading Improving public library services for people with sight loss in the UK through staff development and reader engagement", http://library.ifla.org/1293/1/092-freeman-en.pdf.
[13] See: http://information-studies.blogspot.co.uk/2015/07/the-future-of-public-libraries-some.html.
[14] See: http://knowhownonprofit.org/studyzone?_cldee=am9obkBuYWRkZXIub3JnLnVr&urlid=1.

- "LGBTQ Awareness", Surrey Library Service (February & March 2016, 12 x half-day courses)

- Seminar for information studies students at the University of West of England, Bristol (October 2015)

- "LGBTQ Awareness", Enfield Library Service (June 2015, half-day course)

- Seminar for information studies students at the University of Sheffield (March 2015)

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Appendix A: Meetings with key contacts 2015-2016

These included:

Ajamu X; Colin Bray (Devon Libraries); Alan Butler (Pride in Plymouth); Liz Chapman; Ciara Eastell; Mark Freeman (Share The Vision); Julie Gibson & Madeline Barratt (Enfield); Anne Harding; Sam Harris (CEDA); Mark Jennett; Shelagh Levett (SWRLS); Patrick Lyster-Todd (London Pride); Praveen Manghani & Rachel Levy (Sutton); Laura Phillips (British Museum); Nick Poole (CILIP); Sue Wilkinson (The Reading Agency).

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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.

Profit & Loss Accounts: April 2015-March 2016

Note to the accounts: One of the problems with an annual accounting system is that it does not include funds carried forward from previous years. Therefore, although the 2015-2016 Profit & Loss Accounts show a loss, in fact we still have funds in the bank.

Income

Royalties from sales of *LGBT people and the UK cultural sector* (Ashgate)	20.96
Share the Vision	275.69
Subscriptions – annual	5,555.50
Reimbursed expenses (eg for travel to CDEG meetings)	212.30
Training courses – in-house/open:	
Reimbursed expenses (Surrey)	268.40
Total income	**6,332.85**

Expense

CILIP LCLA expenses		6.45
Conferences expenses (CILIP & MA)		471.95
Insurance		477.37
Postage and delivery		135.87
Professional fees		7,662.00
Subscriptions[15]		262.00
Telephone[16]		164.07
Training course expenses		16.20
Travel		613.90
Website		
Hosting	57.60	
Redesign and construction	888.00	

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[15] Archives & Records Association; Equality Trust; Museums Association; and National Children's Bureau.

[16] Includes contributions to the annual charges for broadband on Devon and London 'phone lines.

Total website:	945.60
Total expenses	**10,755.41**
Other income – Interest	00.87
Net Income	**-4,421.69**