

Annual Report: April 2022-March 2023

Introduction

Welcome to our annual review for 2022-2023; this report covers the period from April 2022 to March 2023. Copies of the accounts are available on request.

Firstly, thank you for your continued support of The Network. Please see Appendix C for a reminder about ways of making the most of your subscription.

Our work

Key successes included:

- Producing newsletters for February-September 2022
- Producing 23 Ebulletins for the period April 2022-March 2023
- Regularly adding events, resources and new features to the website¹
- Participating in some 53 meetings, courses, workshops 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 – 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 Juliet Pirez and Susanna Barnes for being the counter-signatories for The Network's bank account.

John Vincent
October 2023
(revised version 25 Oct 2023)

¹ See: www.seapn.org.uk. Please note that the website is about to migrate to a new site – more info to follow.

Membership, contacts and enquiries

Organisational members at March 2023

There are 85 organisational members.

Here are the new joiners and leavers:

Joiners

None.

Leavers

Blackpool; BookTrust; York

Individual members

At March 2023, The Network had 6 individual members.

Partners

The Network is continuing to work in partnership with a number of key organisations and individuals, including CILIP; City of Sanctuary; Libraries Connected; and Share The Vision.

Membership of JISCMail lists

The following lists are open to anybody:

List	2022-23	2021-22
LAC [people working with looked-after children]	192	219
Learning Disability	186	187
LGBTQ [people working with LGBTs]	325	330
Network Ebulletin	558	586
Older people [people working with older people]	161	171
Travellers [people working with Travellers]	156	156

The following are primarily for Network members only:

List	2022-23	2021-22
Network Newsletter	284	295
The Network [for circulation of general information and enquiries]	197	209

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

List	2022-23	2021-22
Prisons	155	147

In addition, The Network manages the Reading Sight list (formerly Six Steps):

List	2022-23	2021-22
Reading Sight	310	291

Enquiries

These include enquiries made on the email lists The Network coordinates (eg Prisons):

April 2022-March 2023 56²

The Network website statistics

Here are our ‘headline’ web statistics:

- 4.4k people made 5.7k visits
- The top countries where people visited from were the UK (26.4%) and the US (22.7%)
- 5765 people visited the home page, 445 visited “about”, 253 visited courses, 243 visited the Ebulletin and 221 visited Newsletters.

Making a difference

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

- Drawing together, highlighting and disseminating innovation and good practice
- 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
- Working with Network members and across the sector to help develop strategy
- Campaigning and lobbying on behalf of the sector
- Giving advice and information, and sharing good practice from other Network members
- Giving support to colleagues.

² The range of enquiries is wide, with a number this year asking about aspects of the provision of materials in languages other than English. Six enquiries were from students, and another 10 were asking for job or project information to be circulated, eg about the Orwell Prize (<https://www.orwellfoundation.com/the-orwell-prizes/>); and about Paperchains (<https://www.paperchains.org/>).

The work of The Network, 2022-2023 – Report by the Networker

I worked some 886.75 hours for the Network between April 2022 and March 2023. This is an outline of what that involved:

Activities	Hours 2022-23	% 2022-23	Hours 2021-22	% 2021-22
<i>Externally-funded work</i>				
Preparation, delivery and follow-up to training courses	159.75	18.0%	51.50	7.3%
Birmingham LoS application	13.75	1.6%	10.25	1.5%
Birmingham Race Equality Group	-	-	10.75	1.5%
<i>Externally-funded work</i>	<i>173.50</i>	<i>19.6%</i>	<i>72.50</i>	<i>10.3%</i>
Managing The Network: admin (membership; producing Annual Report, etc)	14.00	1.6%	12.00	1.7%
Managing The Network: managing JISMAIL Lists	1.75	0.2%	3.00	0.4%
Managing The Network: accounts	48.25	5.4%	30.25	4.3%
Managing The Network: maintaining our website	3.75	0.4%	3.25	0.5%
Emails	244.00	27.5%	229.50	32.5%
Work on Newsletters & Ebulletins	173.00	19.5%	198.50	28.1%
Work on Ashgate LGBT book*	-	-	1.00	0.1%
Work on LGBT History Month etc	2.25	0.2%	-	-
Other writing	26.25	3.0%	7.50	1.1%
Other activities (eg attending meetings)	25.50	2.9%	22.25	2.1%
Jodi Mattes Trust Board meetings etc	2.50	0.3%	-	-
STV Board meetings	10.50	1.2%	8.00	1.1%
Enquiries	8.75	1.0%	6.25	0.9%
Responding to reports etc	4.75	0.5%	9.25	1.3%
Work on 'New Arrivals' & Libraries of Sanctuary	50.25	5.7%	28.00	4.0%
Work with CILIP (eg on new strategy; CDEG Committee)	36.00	4.1%	14.75	2.1%
CILIP LGBTQ+ Network Steering Group	2.75	0.3%	-	-
CILIP Benevolent Fund	41.75	4.7%	25.00	3.5%
Attending online talks, courses, conferences	7.25	0.8%	29.75	4.2%
Giving online presentations (unpaid)	10.00	1.1%	5.00	0.7%
<i>Paid for from subscriptions, income from courses, etc</i>	<i>713.25</i>	<i>80.4%</i>	<i>633.25</i>	<i>89.7%</i>
TOTAL	886.75	100%	705.75	100%

*Note: this includes follow-on work, such as responding to enquiries, dealing with the publisher, posting to the WordPress blog

Initiatives and Developments³

- John Vincent met Becky Jacobs (Prison Radio Association) to discuss “Prison Radio Podcast and Libraries” (Aug 2022)
- John Vincent was interviewed by Sian Bayley for the libraries issue of *The Bookseller* (July 2022)

³ John Vincent was commissioned by Facet Publishing to edit and write for a new series on libraries and social justice. The first title, *Libraries and Sanctuary: supporting refugees and other new arrivals* was published in Nov 2022. This is just for info, as the hours worked on writing the book are not included in the hours worked (above).

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

- Attended online CILIP LGBTQ+ Network AGM (Feb 2023)
- Attended London Metropolitan Archives LGBTQ+ Conference online (Dec 2022)
- Attended online Museums Association “Members Together” event (Nov 2022)
- Attended SWRLS AGM, Exeter College (Nov 2022)
- Attended online Maternity Action event (Nov 2022)
- Attended online launch of Libraries Connected strategy (Nov 2022)
- Attended online Family Learning webinar (Nov 2022)
- Attended online CILIP AGM (Oct 2022)
- Attended online Norfolk Libraries Drag Queen Storytime event (Aug 2022)
- Attended CILIP LGBTQ+ Network event online (June 2022)
- Attended online preparatory meetings x2 for the Allies Forum session at CILIP Conference (June, July 2022)
- Attended SWRLS Members’ Day (May 2022)
- Attended Migration Network Scotland event online (April 2022)

Share The Vision Board

John Vincent is an Observer.

- Attended meetings (online – May, Sept 2022; in-person Feb 2023)

CILIP Benevolent Fund

John Vincent became Chair in Jan 2022.

- Attended meetings (June, Oct 2022; Feb 2023)
- Introduced/attended Better With Money webinars x 2 (June 2022; Feb 2023)
- Attended meeting with Better With Money and CILIP (April 2022)

CILIP Community, Equality & Diversity Group

- Online meeting to discuss CDEG archive/website/book ideas (Oct 2022)
- Online meeting with CILIP BAME Network Committee members (Sept 2022)
- Attended Committee meetings online (June, Oct 2022; Feb 2023), plus face-to-face AGM at the People’s History Museum (April 2022)

Libraries of Sanctuary

- Attended online meeting organised by CILIP Scotland to update people on applying for Library of Sanctuary status (Nov 2022)
- Recorded podcast for Hampshire Libraries with Ashley Beckett (City of Sanctuary) (Nov 2022)
- Met Sally King (Herts Libraries) online to discuss Libraries of Sanctuary (Sept 2022)
- Attended online meeting with National Acquisitions Group to discuss supply of library materials (Sept 2022)
- Attended Libraries Connected/City of Sanctuary webinar (June 2022)
- Took part in CoS online assessment of application from Sefton Libraries (May 2022)

- Attended online meeting with Edinburgh Libraries (April 2022)

Peninsula of Sanctuary

- Spoke at CILIP SW “Grab A Break” session about Peninsula of Sanctuary (March 2023)
- Pilot online course, “Working with new arrivals and becoming a Library of Sanctuary” (March 2023)
- Attended project meetings (June, July, Sept, Nov, Dec 2022; Jan, Feb, March 2023)
- Meetings with Jane Choules (Project Co-ordinator) (Feb, March 2023)

Jodi Mattes Trust

John Vincent is a trustee.

- Board meetings (Aug, Oct 2022)

Support for students, researchers, etc

- Met Anastasia Spiliopoulou and Colin Bray re: her dissertation on provision for new arrivals (Feb 2023)
- Interviewed by Georgina Young for her dissertation, “Section 28 and the Library Association” (July 2022)
- Interviewed by Suzy Lawrence (British Library) for her research into collaborations between public and academic libraries (July 2022)

Formal responses made by the Network

- Commented on draft of *Reading Matters ...*⁴ for Improving Me (March 2023)
- Responded to survey by the SW Federation of Museums on what support they could best offer (Feb 2023)
- Commented on draft *Guide for accessible library storytimes* for RNIB (Feb 2023)
- Completed survey for LinkedIn on professional opportunities (Nov 2022)
- Completed survey for Learning & Work Institute on the impact of their work (Nov 2022)
- Completed survey on effectiveness of the Together With Refugees coalition (Aug 2022)
- Responded to a Delphi survey on “Digital literacy, social exclusion and older adults ...” (April 2022)

Publications – The Network’s own

- *The Network Newsletter*, issues 252-259
- *The Network Ebulletin*, numbers 350-372.

Publications – articles, blogs, books, reports etc

⁴ *Reading Matters* – a new resource for social prescribers, <https://www.improvingme.org.uk/about-us/news/reading-matters-a-new-resource-for-social-prescribers-from-improving-me/>.

- None in this period

Courses and other events (April 2020-March 2021)

1. Our own open courses

- None.

2. Other organisations' open courses/Lectures

- Talk "Social justice – isn't that political? An introduction to social justice" at CILIP South West AGM, Exeter (Nov 2022)
- Took part in British Library Living Knowledge Network Skill Sharing Session: Refugees in Libraries (Aug 2022)
- Co-hosted Allies Forum workshop at the CILIP Conference, Liverpool (July 2022)
- Co-presented CILIP NE online webinar, "Webinar: Pride in our Libraries" (June 2022)
- Talk "Libraries of Sanctuary" to National Acquisitions Group seminar, Birmingham (May 2022)

3. In-house courses and talks

- Seminar, "Public and School Libraries", for University of Sheffield (March 2023)
- Talk to Frimley Park Hospital NHS Trust cross-site library service's Away Day, Windlesham Golf Club (Feb 2023)
- "Working with new arrivals and becoming a Library of Sanctuary", 3x online half-day courses for Essex Libraries (Jan 2023)
- "Working with new arrivals and becoming a Library of Sanctuary", half-day course for GLL Wandsworth, Balham (Jan 2023)
- "Working with new arrivals and becoming a Library of Sanctuary", half-day course for Portsmouth Library Service, Portsmouth (Dec 2022)
- Recording a brief recap of the "Becoming a Library of Sanctuary" course for East Sussex Libraries (Nov 2022)
- "Becoming a Library of Sanctuary", 7 x half-day courses for Birmingham Library Service, Birmingham (Oct, Nov 2022; Feb 2023)
- "Working with new arrivals and becoming a Library of Sanctuary", 2x half-day courses for Hampshire Libraries, Winchester (Sept, Dec 2022)
- Online talk "Working with new arrivals" for Cambridgeshire IDEAL Network [Inclusion, Diversity, Equality for All Staff Network] (Sept 2022)
- "Working with new arrivals and becoming a Library of Sanctuary" half-day course for East Sussex Libraries, Eastbourne (Sept 2022)
- Online course, "Working with new arrivals and becoming a Library of Sanctuary", for Cambridgeshire Libraries (May 2022)

Appendix A: Meetings with key contacts

These included:

Kelly Saini Badwal (Sutton); Peter Baker (Facet Publishing); Dawn Beaumont (Birmingham Library Service); Karen Berry (CDEG); Rachel Bilton (Hertfordshire); Katherine Blamire (British Library); Colin Bray (Libraries Unlimited); Luke Burton (Arts Council); Lou Carroll (Electric Putty Ltd); Kai-Chuan Chao (British Library); Matthew Cock (VocalEyes); Hayley Dall-Smith (Scanning Pens); Gail Downe (CILIP Benevolent Fund); Sarah Edwards (Hampshire Library Service); Malcolm Elsworth (Electric Putty Ltd); Dawn Evers (Historic Environment Scotland); Bidy Fisher (CILIP Benevolent Fund); Amie Golding (School Librarian, The Cathedral School, Llandaff); Louise Greener (CILIP); Alex Grindley (British Library); Sharon Hardwick (CILIP); Jill Howard (CILIP); Oliver Jenkins (CDEG); Krisztina Lackoi (British Library); Lara Marshall (RNIB); Alex Martin (GLL); Geoff Mitchell (Birmingham LAASLO); Heather Norman-Soderlind (SWRLS); Dave Percival (Portsmouth Libraries); Claire Robe (then CILIP); Tamsin Russell (Museums Association); Richard Sandell (Leicester University); David Stokes (Birmingham Library Service); Rachel Sweeney (East Sussex Libraries); Emily Taylor (East Sussex Libraries); Emma Tweed (Barnsley Libraries)

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. 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.