

SLIC Annual Report 2009

Scottish Library and Information Council
Hamilton, October 2009

Foreword from Christine May, Chair

At times of financial pressure working together as a community becomes even more important, but is often difficult to achieve. SLIC's cross sectoral membership is a key strength and in the coming years we will need all our combined strength to ensure that we are able to support our membership in schools, colleges, universities, public, health and specialist libraries.

Whilst funding has been difficult, increased efficiencies have been achieved. SLIC, through continued support from its members, the National Library of Scotland, the Scottish Government and good partnerships with others, has helped to achieve greater value for all members. Additionally, our relationship and shared services with the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in Scotland benefits both members and their organisations.

We continue to work, advocate and lobby for the libraries' role in a range of policy initiatives including Skills for Scotland, cultural policy, education, standards and evaluation, digital access/inclusion, shared services and efficiency programmes, such as the National Entitlement Card.

The demand for improvement and efficiency, combined with an even tougher public finance landscape than before, means there are significant challenges to simply sustain services and even greater challenges to make improvements. To this end our work with quality and standards has continued across schools, colleges, public and digital libraries.

The Public Library Quality Improvement Matrix is now beginning to provide credible benchmarks of adequate provision. Reports have been published and used in advocacy locally and nationally to demonstrate that local authorities are discharging their statutory obligation to provide an "adequate" service. As a result of its success the State Government of Victoria, Australia invited SLIC to act as consultants to develop their own model based on PLQIM.

In Higher Education, SLIC continues to support the Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries (SCURL), through its joint funding with NLS of the SCURL Service Development Manager's post. This has enabled SCURL to work collaboratively on a range of projects including the Scottish Higher Education Digital Library (SHEDL), IRI Scotland and SCABS.

A close relationship with the JISC Regional Support Centres and Scotland's Colleges ensures that the needs of the further education sector are raised and promoted.

In supporting the development of a digital and information environment, SLIC has led the way in development of services such as Web2.0 through its shared website with CILIPS. SLAINTE now uses a suite of Web2.0 services and has recently been recognized by the International Federation of Library Associations as world leading.

The years ahead will be challenging for SLIC and its members. By working together we can ensure that library and information services in Scotland are secured for the future, and continue to contribute to the social fabric, economic development and learning in a modern Scotland. We look forward to working with you and to your continued support.



Christine May

Quality, Standards and Evaluation

Across the public library, schools and further education sectors, SLIC continued to develop quality standards and evaluative frameworks to assist library and information professionals in their work.

The FE working party being led by Charles Sweeney, former manager of the JISC Regional Support Centre Scotland South and West, continued its work to update and develop a toolkit for library and information services in FE, based on the new arrangements from HMIE published in 2008.

The working party has been addressing issues such as social networking, hard indicators, shared learning spaces and services in the context of new quality review arrangements.

Work to update self evaluation framework for school libraries following the implementation of a Curriculum for Excellence and the introduction of *How good is our school* (HGIOS3) continued towards publication of new guidance.

Following representations from CILIPS, SLIC, the School Library Association and others, the [Curriculum for Excellence Literacy across Learning Principles and Practice](#) now includes the following statement: "It is expected that the literacy experiences and outcomes, and this accompanying paper, will be read by a range of practitioners, including those who work in school library resource centres, who make an enormous contribution to the development of the literacy

skills of children and young people."

Scottish Government support for the *Public Library Quality Improvement Matrix* (PLQIM) continues and the toolkit is set to sit within the overarching framework for the evaluation of cultural services. In 2008 the Scottish Government agreed to continue [PLQIM](#) funding for a further three year period.

Accordingly another round of awards was made in November 2008 with project reports submitted in March 2009.

These reports demonstrate how well supported library services can be developed, encouraging staff and communities to shape the services to cater for users



Melton Library
Victoria, Australia

from a range of backgrounds.

SLIC also published an [impact study](#) based on the first round of public library projects to receive awards from the *Public Library Improvement Fund*.

Audit Scotland issued their proposals for changes to [Statutory Performance Indicators](#). These direct their local authorities to report visitor numbers and to use the PLQIM for performance reporting.

During February 2009, SLIC

undertook a consultancy with Australian public libraries to create a performance framework based on PLQIM. [Being the Best we Can](#) is now into its second pilot phase.

The link between the PLQIM and the *Public Library Improvement Fund* administered by SLIC continues with services bidding for funding to help improve the quality and diversity of Scotland's public library services. A total of £450,000 was disbursed. The successful projects were:

East Dunbartonshire

Mobile classroom and self-issue to facilitate learning for carers and research

East Lothian

Self issue to facilitate reader development

Edinburgh

Digital storytelling with young people

Perth and Kinross

Health information and bibliotherapy

Scottish Borders

Health information and ICT

Shetland

Improving learning opportunities for disability groups

South Lanarkshire

Wi-fi to facilitate learning

Stirling

Integrating learning and wi-fi and research

West Dunbartonshire

Wi Fi and laptops for loan

AskScotland

Collaborative national virtual reference service

Scottish Information Environment

SLIC's activity in lobbying and advocating for a national approach to creating and accessing information in the digital age has continued with some exciting developments and achievements to report. The Scottish Government funded *AskScotland* project is a collaborative national service that pools staff and resources from Scotland's public library services. It forms part of the wider *Scotland's Information* service that brings together information available in Scotland's libraries, museums and archives to offer a single user-friendly access point to the resources and collections held in Scotland.

The first phase of the Scotland's Information initiative was launched by SLIC. The scotlandsinformation.com website aims to open up the content of Scotland's archive, library and museum collections by providing a user-friendly online service for identifying content.

Scotland's Information is delivered via a map-based interface which allows users to click on geographical locations to obtain details of information collec-

tions. Search results also include contact details, a summary of services and opening hours, as well as information on accessibility. The service has been developed by the Centre for Digital Library Research (CDLR) and will be maintained by SLIC.

The Scottish Higher Education Digital Library (SHEDL) has been supported by SLIC and all of Scotland's HEI's with the aim of providing easier access to journals and stimulating better research and learning opportunities. The first project of its kind in the United Kingdom, it has signed key academic publishers to the pilot scheme negotiated by JISC Collections and led by the Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries.

A new initiative aimed at widening access to online genealogy information through Scottish libraries was launched in December 2008. *Scotland's People* is the official government web source of family history information in Scotland. The initiative in public libraries is designed to overcome social and technological barriers to accessing information, allowing

more people to uncover their Scottish roots by providing support and training in the use of the Internet and *Scotland's People* in combination with additional material from local collections.



Reading Roots launch
McDonald Road Library, Edinburgh

An innovative website to attract new readers was launched in March 2009. *Reading Roots* is supported by the PLQIF and was developed by SLIC in collaboration with CILIP in Scotland, with participation from all Scottish local authorities. The website features 300 Scottish titles across 14 reading lists drawn from a broad range of themes and almost 60% of the titles come from Scottish publishers.

Sectoral Priorities

One of the key initiatives of the Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries (SCURL) has been the establishment of a Scottish Higher Education Digital Library (SHEDL). SLIC is working with SCURL to support its implementation.

SLIC assisted the further education sector in examining the case for collaborative purchase and worked with APUC to help the sector reach agreement on this important topic.

Whilst PLIQM is the main focus for public libraries, SLIC has

been engaged in a number of other areas on their behalf including negotiations with the Performing Rights Society, BBC Learning Partnership, national procurement of electronic subscriptions with JISC Collections, and Libraries in Areas of Multiple Deprivation.

Innovation and Service Development

Work to promote and encourage innovation in library service provision continues to be funded through the SLIC *Innovation and Development Award* programme.

Two projects were successful in securing a grant from the fund in 2008/09:

Virtual Enquiry: Supporting users' changing needs

Napier University received £9950 to pursue with partners a project to produce a road-map for a virtual reference service to support the needs of learners in the HE and FE sectors.

IT Takes 2.0

East Renfrewshire Libraries won funding worth £8400 for a project, to train East Renfrewshire library staff in the use of Web 2.0 online tools.

SLIC has been working hard to incorporate innovative technologies into our service delivery framework. The SLAINTE website has been refreshed and new services for members introduced. The use of online forms has eased the administrative burden on staff and a new facility permits members to submit images and feedback via SLAINTE.

The SLAINTE web 2.0 content continues to be maintained and developed, attracting a steady audience base. We now support a range of web 2.0 services, which have helped realise efficiencies in printing costs, while improving our communicative reach.

Work to support libraries in adopting new technologies has been ongoing through the creation of cross sector web 2.0 guidelines. The guidelines aim to provide practical support to our membership in adopting social networking tools and techniques and will be published late 2009.

Consultations, responses to Government and working with others

SLIC has provided responses to the following: The Calman Commission, Mapping criminal justice voluntary sector provision; Learning Connections; Digital access for children and young people in Scotland outwith school hours; Big Lottery Fund, The future: Keeping ahead of the game; Gowers Review of Intellectual Property; and the EU Green paper on copyright in the knowledge economy.

A [petition](#) urging the Scottish Government to ensure continued provision of local libraries and to protect the vital social and educational role they serve was presented at the end of 2008 to the Scottish parliament and SLIC provided a supporting submission.

The evidence gathered through the PLQIM processes has enabled library services to demonstrate that they are fulfilling their legal requirement to deliver an adequate service.

SLIC worked in partnership with Learning Connections, Skills Development Scotland, the National Literacy trust and the Scottish Premier League to run the *SPL Reading Stars* programme. The innovative literacy scheme was designed to use footballers' favourite books to encourage families to read and visit their local libraries. The 12 SPL Clubs forged new links with their library services, including trips to the library.

Audit Scotland also invited SLIC to participate in a study of the Impact of Race Equality Duty on

local authorities. Libraries were chosen as one of the services reviewed. Libraries performed much better than other services, but there is still more that could be done.

SLIC along with Museums and Galleries Scotland provided funding for the JODI awards. This UK event is aimed at promoting accessible digital culture in libraries museums and archives.

SLIC was also engaged in consultancy work through the year. In addition to work for the State of Victoria in Australian consultancy was carried out for Edinburgh City Council and the University of the West of Scotland, Crichton Campus.

Coordination, Collaboration and Cooperation

National Entitlement Card

Work to implement the *National Entitlement Card* through the Improvement Service continues 16 local authorities can now accept the smartcard with their systems.

Young Scot

SLIC is also working with Young Scot to review the potential use of the card in higher education. Abertay University and Dundee City Council have been piloting this project to develop a lifelong learning card for the city.

In partnership with SLIC, Young Scot is developing a national youth information framework to support those who provide information services to young people in Scotland, which will review information provision and develop programmes to improve information skills.

Scottish Collections Policy

SLIC, the National Library of

Scotland and SCURL have developed a Scottish Collections Policy. This work grew out of the establishment of the UK Research Reserve by the British Library, which supersedes CASS (Collaborative Academic Store for Scotland).

All parties wished to ensure that unique items in Scotland were retained and access for future generations assured. Further discussion is on going with higher education and public libraries to develop an implementation and process to support the policy.

Digital Access Scotland

Some progress is being made through Digital Access Scotland to develop a shared framework amongst national collecting institutions and the strategic agencies for archives, libraries and museums. It is hoped to develop this work further in

2009/2010.

UK Joint Forum

The UK Joint Forum comprises membership from the strategic bodies in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales for libraries, museums and archives.

Members of the forum have identified funding to appoint a new UK joint forum coordinator, to work on programmes and areas across the UK which add value to the work of individual strategic bodies. Katrina Thomson, has been appointed to work out of the SLIC office from August 2009.



National Entitlement Cards

Workforce Development

SLIC has continued to work with Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) and Scottish Qualifications Agency (SQA) to support workforce and skills development for the sector. In collaboration with SQA, we have updated the Diploma and Advanced Diploma for the use of ICT in libraries.

Working with LLUK we have been able to promote the role of library and information services in the *Skills for Scotland* agenda and in the promotion and development of National

Occupational Standards.

A training package, which supports the development of online resource cataloguing skills for Scottish educational libraries and resource management staff, has been developed by SLIC, JISC and John Wheatley College.

The package is also appropriate for adaptation to support skills development in other educational and public library information service sectors.

The relationship with the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in Scotland (CILIPS) is extremely important to ensure that the workforce and employers have access to training programmes and events to improve the skills base of the sector. This will be particularly important in coming years when the workforce will be diminishing through natural wastage and library and information services need to consider the long term succession planning issues.

Management Board

Chair

Christine May

Chief Executive/Director

Elaine Fulton

Company Secretary

James Beaton (until Nov 2009)

Christopher Phillips (from Nov 2009)

Elected Members

Dorothy Browse

Sheila Cannell

Helen Durndell

Carole Gray

Alison Hunter

Christopher Phillips

Joanna Ptolomey

David Scott

Evelyn Simpson

Seconded Member as per Memorandum

Moira Methven

Organisational Members

David Beards

Lindsay McGregor

Marilyn Milligan

Fraser Muir

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Events and Conferences

Engagement with members and stakeholders has been conducted through a range of events, meetings, training and conferences.

The third annual FE Conference took place in Edinburgh in November with web 2.0 as the theme. JISC sponsored a 'Libraries of the future' round table discussion and a post conference reception after the event, which featured Dave Pattern and Phil Bradley in the speaker line-up.

The *Innovation and Development Showcase*, which presents best practice from the Scottish

library and information world and highlights SLIC funded initiatives with cross-sectoral lessons to share, was this year combined with AGM and held in Edinburgh.

Together with the JISC Regional Support Centres in Scotland SLIC hosted a free cross sectoral event on 'Introducing RFID – Are you on the right wavelength?' at the Lighthouse in Glasgow.

Jointly with MMITS and SCURL we held the 8th annual e-books conference 'Digital Literacy in an e-world' offered a platform for discussing the role of e-books and e-content across the

sectors and for sharing experience and good practice.

In 2008 SLIC and CILIPS hosted a visit from Finnish and Estonia colleagues. SLIC organized a study tour and they then attended the CILIPS Centenary Conference.



Espoo Library, Espoo, Finland