



Scottish Library & Information Council





Annual Review 2005-2006

●●●Foreword from the Chair

The Scottish Library and Information Council was established in 1991 to advise, promote and develop library and information services in Scotland. This Annual Report demonstrates the wide range of activities undertaken by the Council on behalf of members and to support members. The Council has been actively involved in discussions and consultations with the Scottish Executive in areas including the development of standards, digital inclusion, digital media strategy, culture, Scottish publishing, information literacy and education.

Patricia Ferguson, Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport responded to the Cultural Commission's report, in Scotland's Culture, published in January 2006. She endorsed the developments which the Council has been making in her announcement of £500,000 per annum for the next 2 years to develop quality standards for public libraries and facilitate cooperation.

There is still much more for the Council to do to improve standards of library and information services provision throughout Scotland and facilitate co-operation and collaboration between services. The Council is currently working with members, the Scottish Executive and other key agencies to develop services. In particular, in key areas of Lifelong Learning, Information Policy, Electronic Networks, Scottish Culture and the Arts. Through these, the Council aims to build on existing provision and develop quality services which Scotland can be proud of locally, nationally and internationally.

Christine May, MSP
Chair



Co-ordination of Library Services

●●●Crichton Consultancy

SLIC received a consultancy from the Joint Management Group of the Crichton University Campus to look at the support for a shared learning space to be built on the site. This major piece of consultancy work will be carried out in partnership with SCURL.

●●●JISC

Support for the tertiary education sector continued through participation in JISC. SLIC has been invited to join the Board of MIMAS, the national data centre which provides information to support teaching, learning and research in UK higher education, further education and research.

●●●2000 learners

2000 learners project aimed to encourage learners to improve their ability to manage information effectively and to improve their ICT skills and employment prospects. SLIC received Scottish Executive funding to help up to 2000 post-16 year olds. Learners were supported to follow the Information Handling Skills course, launched by SLIC and partners in January 2004, and to gain an SQA qualification at Intermediate II Level. The project met its objectives of raising awareness of the course and the qualification although numbers participating was disappointing. Following feedback, the Scottish Executive agreed to the balance of the funding to be used to review the Information Handling Skills course.

●●●Wi-Fi projects

SLIC co-ordinated a Scottish Executive project to explore the feasibility of Wi-Fi connections in libraries. Funding was available for 5 authorities and each adopted a different model of provision.

The provision of the Wi-Fi hotspots sought to test the technology, explore the barriers to access, increase connectivity for users with laptops and PDAs.

Wi-Fi has the potential to significantly reduce the revenue costs for library services. Work is on-going and the evaluation report will be available in 2006/7.





Standards, Service Development and Quality Assurance

●●●Public Library Quality Improvement Matrix

In early 2004, the Minister asked SLIC to develop a framework for public library improvement. The current library legislation places a duty on local authorities to deliver free public library services. However the legislation does not clearly define the term “adequate”. Although COSLA has developed two sets of public library standards, these have not resulted in equitable core provision across Scotland.

Public Library Quality Improvement Matrix is a guide to self evaluation for public library services in Scotland and is linked to the frameworks already embedded in local authority use - “*How good is our school*” (revised edition 2002) and “*How good is our community learning and development*”. Using the “*How good is our school*” (revised edition 2002) model, seven quality indicators were agreed – 4 service and 3 management areas. Library services are invited to identify a range of evidence, which can vary from the library service plan, statistical information to feedback from users and photographs of events. Using the HMI’s 6-point performance scale, services can assess the level of their provision.

In late 2005, the Minister asked SLIC to pilot the draft framework. Nine authorities have been involved in that process and SLIC continues to work with key stakeholders to finalise the process and to identify evidence of outcomes and impact.

In the Scottish Executive's response to the Cultural Commission report, *Scotland's Culture*, the Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport announced a fund “*to help the public library service to improve its standards of provision and facilitate co-operation.*” The funding is intended to help redress the imbalance in provision and raise standards nation-wide, by providing incentive funding to support the Public Libraries Quality Improvement Matrix.

●●●Prison Library Standards

SLIC was asked by the Minister for Justice, Cathy Jamieson, to work with the Scottish Prison Service to develop a set of guidelines and standards which aligned with the Learning agenda for prisoners in Scotland. The work is complete and SLIC is currently considering how best to make these available as there are a number of changes within the Scottish Prison Service has meant that publication and dissemination has not yet been possible.

●●●Improving services through partnership

SLIC continues to be represented on a range of bodies and contribute to discussions and planning, including Learning and Teaching Scotland’s ICT Reference Group, OFCOM’s Media Literacy Round table, the Scottish Science Information Strategy Working Group and related working groups on procurement, science portal and open access publishing, the European Conference on Digital Libraries, the Scottish Executive’s Digital Media Strategy, the Scottish Executive’s Common Infrastructure Standards Advisory Group and SLIC is responsible for the co-ordination of the CISAG Cultural Technical Group.



SLIC supports the work of other cultural partners, such as the Literature Forum, the Scottish Publishers' Forum Library Group, the Reading Agency's Reading Partners and Bookstart.

Representatives of SLIC also attend the CIPFA Cultural Statistics Working Party and the Scottish Executive's Evidence Network in Culture and Sport.

Joint Initiatives

●●●Resource Sharing Scotland

The Ayrshire Libraries Forum received funding from SLIC to test issues surrounding resource sharing at a national and local level between cross-sectoral library partners. The Resource Sharing Scotland Project has been established and is gradually moving towards operational status. Using Horizon URSA software from project partner SirsiDynix, much has been learned about barriers to interoperability and the development of seamless services.

●●●Careers Information Points

Careers Information Points were established in 100 libraries in 27 local authority areas, as part of a SLIC and Careers Scotland partnership initiative. Funding from the European Social Fund was used to provide appropriate electronic and print careers resources and develop clear branding. Over 300 library staff received training in the use of the resources. Jane Campbell, an experienced careers adviser, joined the SLIC team to develop and implement the project. Launches took place in late 2005 and early 2006. A full evaluation of the service development will be completed in summer 2006.



●●●UK Joint Forum

SLIC, the Scottish Museums Council and the Scottish Council on Archives are each represented on the UK Joint Forum, where projects and policy with UK-wide implications are discussed. Strategic organisations use the Forum for communication on a wide range of issues. Working groups have responsibility for Marketing and Workforce Development. Meetings of the UK Joint Forum take place twice a year.

Development of ICT

●●●Smartcards

Working with the Scottish Executive's Improvement Service, the Council has been seeking to engage library services in the Smartcard agenda. All 32 local authorities have signed up to the development and a number of meetings have been held with systems suppliers to ensure full functionality with library automated systems. The technical specifications are being developed.

●●●Digital Inclusion Consultation

SLIC responded to the Scottish Executive's Digital Inclusion consultation at the beginning of 2006, making a number of recommendations. These included sustainable funding for a replacement programme for IT infrastructure for public libraries, maintaining free public access and working to increase longer hours of access for the public. Other points raised were support for accredited IT training qualifications to ensure quality, increased participation of partners in the Digital Inclusion Policy and support for the development of local branding. The use of quality brands, such as IIP, Charter Mark, learndirect Scotland and SQA centre approval, was also highlighted. Responses will be used by the Scottish Executive in the development of their strategy and an action plan will be developed in discussion with stakeholders.



Lifelong Learning

●●●Lifelong Learning

Positive working relationships have been established with both the London and Scottish offices of Lifelong Learning UK, the new sector skills council which succeeded the Information Services National Training Organisation. Sector Skills Councils are employer-led bodies with responsibility for workforce planning, labour market intelligence and standards and qualifications structures. Director Elaine Fulton represents SLIC on the Scottish Country Panel. SLIC has been involved in the initial consultation workshops on the development of new national occupational standards for library, information and archives services.

●●●ICT skills for library staff

In December 2004, the Big Lottery Fund commissioned the Scottish Library and Information Council to work with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) to develop retrospective accreditation of the People's Network library outcomes, as a key legacy of the People's Network. Two new awards, a Diploma in Applications of ICT in Libraries and an Advanced Diploma in Applications of ICT in Libraries, were approved by the SQA in June 2005. The other strategic bodies supported the development of qualifications which are relevant throughout the UK. The qualifications were developed within a 3 month period.



The funding provided by the Big Lottery Fund allowed for the development of assessment tools and free online learning through www.ictl.org.uk.

The qualifications are targeted at staff working in the public library services in the UK and support the CILIP Framework of Qualifications. SLIC will be working with local authorities, approved centres, the SQA and through the UK Joint Forum of strategic cultural agencies to ensure that the Diplomas are used and integrated into standards for library staff.

●●●Readership Development skills for library staff

Continued funding from the Scottish Arts Council Lottery Fund has supported the Reader Development training in Scotland for a further year. Introductory training to reader development was delivered in September 2005. Further training included Marketing & Audience Development, Introduction to scottishreaders.net website, Writing for the Web and National Promotion Planning. Training was also delivered to up to three delegates per Scottish local authority in The Reader Friendly Library. Opening the Book, the reader development training specialists, designed and delivered the training and worked with the Reader Development Co-ordinators on a number of projects.

●●●Literacy skills

The Big Plus in Libraries is partnership promotion of literacies opportunities between local authorities across Scotland, adult literacies partnerships, Learning Connections, Communities Scotland and the Scottish Library and Information Council. The promotion placed nearly 100,000 items in 100 community libraries to support new readers and those wishing to improve their reading skills. The new items include books and audio books and cover a broad range of reading interests and abilities. £127,000 funding was provided by Learning Connections to support this initiative.

Over 70 members of staff from libraries and adult literacies partnerships have received specialist training and have been able to share good ideas about how to help people improve their reading, confidence and skills. The evaluation feedback is extremely positive.

●●●Their Past Your Future

Big Lottery Fund supported a programme of events to mark the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II. Throughout 2005, SLIC developed and maintained the Their Past Your Future website which had full details of the commemorative events run at local and national level. SLIC has been working with the Scottish Museums Council and Learning and Teaching Scotland on the War Detectives initiative. Primary school pupils have been encouraged to investigate the impact of the war on their community through interviews and research. Content has been developed and a range of digital resources have been created by schools and made accessible by SLIC on www.wardetectives.info. The e-learning is a legacy for future generations and discussions were taking place with the Big Lottery Fund about the archive.





Scottish Culture and the Arts

●●●Scotland's Culture

Deliberations of the Cultural Commission were published in mid 2005, with over 120 recommendations. Patricia Ferguson, Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport responded to the Cultural Commission's report, in *Scotland's Culture*, published in January 2006. Key recommendations were to establish a new Scottish cultural development agency, to be called "Creative Scotland", amalgamating the Scottish Arts Council and Scottish Screen - but transferring support for the national performing companies to the Executive - and transferring the Screen Archive to the National Library of Scotland. The Minister endorsed the developments which the Council has been making in her announcement of £500,000 per annum for the next 2 years to develop quality standards for public libraries and facilitate cooperation.



●●●War in Words

Christine May, MSP, Chair of the Scottish Libraries and Information Council and Councillor James Brennan of Fife Council launched the public libraries' War in Words promotion in May 2005. War in Words commemorated the anniversary of the end of World War II.

Staff in libraries across Scotland worked together to identify and promote books, both fiction and non-fiction, about World War II and the years immediately before and after. Promotional materials included a specially designed reading ration card, posters, stickers and bags.

●●●scottishreaders.net

The Scottishreaders.net website was launched in May 2005. It hosts all adult reader development information for Scotland and it has seven key areas hosting reading information from promotions such as The War in Words and Read the Festival as well as information for readers. The Reader Development Co-ordinators are now adding fresh titles, following specialist training. Funding and co-ordination has also been provided by the Council for 4ureaders, the teenage readers website.





Member Activity

●●● **Innovation and Development Fund 2005**

Homebound users on-line access	Falkirk Council Library Service	To enhance homebound users access to library service resources via web based catalogue using laptop computers and mobile phone technology.	£7727
Cultural diversity evaluation toolkit	West Lothian College	To produce a resource and service evaluation kit that will enable libraries to respond fully to the legislative requirements of the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000.	£10000
Project Wishart	Dundee City Council Communities Department	To develop a transferable model for applying library and information services to the sharp end of drug and alcohol rehabilitation.	£10000
Ensuring metadata interoperability best practice	Centre for Digital Library Research at Strathclyde University	To create guidelines for best practice in choosing and using metadata for the management of digital objects in the Scottish Information Environment.	£9997
Help yourself to learning	Scottish Borders Library & Information Service	To develop and deliver tutor supported learning opportunities, encourage self help access to learning and generate hard copy support materials to include in the 'Help Yourself' literacies initiative collections in libraries.	£10000



Events

SLIC supports many events throughout the year, key highlights include;

●●●E-Books

The 5th annual E-Books event jointly organised by SLIC, SCURL and MMITS was held in the National Library of Scotland building at Causewayside in Edinburgh. Titles 'E-merging services: from ebooks to i-pods' the event attracted 80 delegates from throughout the UK to hear a range of speakers address the topics of e-marketing, e-services and e-resources.

●●●Electric Connections

The third annual Electric Connections Conference was jointly funded by SLIC and the Scottish Museums Council and organised by COSMIC. Held in Perth and titled 'A vision for virtual Scotland' the Conference which attracted in excess of 100 delegates explored issues pertaining to the management of digital resources across all domains, including preservation, metadata, interoperability, user issues, and open access issues.

●●●JISC

SLIC worked with CDLR and supported John Wheatley College in progressing the aims of the JISC funded MANDATE (Managing Digital Assets in Tertiary Education) project by advising on metadata and other good practice with a view to disseminating the results to the wider professional community.

PHOTO CREDITS

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Statement of Financial Accounts Year Ended 31 March 2006

	SLIC	SNMU	CHALLENGE FUND	NOF RESIDUE ACCOUNT	PORTALS ACCOUNT	ADULT LITERACY	3RD LITERACY	ICTL TRAINING	TOTAL	2005
	£	£	£						£	£
Incoming resources										
Incoming resources from charitable activities	386,822	0	0	0	0	50,000	45,154	76,866	558,842	640,763
Investment income	11,261	358	242	0	2	0	0	0	11,864	15,922
Total incoming resources	398,083	358	242	0	2	50,000	45,154	76,866	570,706	656,685
Resources expended										
Charitable activities	376,797	0	0	8,650	46,095	119,691	40,137	95,633	687,003	645,844
Governance costs	11,027	0	0	0	0	421	421	421	12,290	14,493
Total resources expended	387,824	0	0	8,650	46,095	(120,112)	40,558	96,054	699,293	660,337
Net incoming / (outgoing) resources before transfers	10,259	358	242	(8,650)	(46,093)	(70,112)	4,596	(19,188)	(128,588)	(3,652)
Gross transfers between funds	(43,988)			(6,739)	50,727	0	0	0	0	0
Net movement in funds	(37,289)	358	242	(15,389)	4,634	(70,112)	4,596	(19,188)	(128,588)	
Funds brought forward as at 31 March 2005	253,866	23,186	3,338	(15,389)	(4,634)	98,791	0	0	389,936	393,588
Funds carried forward as at 31 March 2006	220,137	23,544	3,580	-	-	28,679	4,596	(19,188)	261,348	389,936

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