

**A
NATIONAL
STRATEGY
FOR
SCOTTISH
MATERIAL**

**A
REPORT TO THE
SCOTTISH LIBRARY &
INFORMATION COUNCIL**

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CONTENTS

- 1 Introduction
 - 1.1 National Library of Scotland paper to SLIC Management Committee
 - 1.2 Decision of SLIC Management Committee
 - 1.3 Appointment of consultants
 - 1.4 Timescale

- 2 Background
 - 2.1 British Library policy
 - 2.2 Growth of publishing activity & difficulty in bibliographic control
 - 2.3 Technological changes
 - 2.4 Recent studies in the uptake of Scottish material
 - 2.5 Other studies
 - 2.5.1 Making the most of our libraries - BL RIC Report No. 53
 - 2.5.2 The People's Heritage: a strategic framework to deliver the vision - Report for Society of Chief Librarians & SLIC
 - 2.5.3 The legal deposit of local publications - BL RIC Report - ongoing

- 3 Methodology
 - 3.1 Preliminary consultation with NLS
 - 3.2 Statistical overview
 - 3.2.1 Public Libraries
 - 3.2.2 University Libraries
 - 3.2.3 Special Libraries
 - 3.2.4 Results in outline
(Full details in Appendix)
 - 3.3 Programme of Visits
 - 3.3.1 Selection of sites
 - 3.3.2 Issues for discussion
 - 3.3.3 Need to involve all types of libraries

- 4 The Issues
 - 4.1 Collecting & Stock Management Policies
 - 4.1.1 Extent and nature of written policies
 - 4.1.2 Status of written policies
 - 4.1.3 Informal policies and commitment to Scottish/local material
 - 4.1.4 Financial constraints on stock selection
 - 4.2 Coverage of Local Material
 - 4.2.1 Issues in particular fields of collecting e.g. School Magazines, Property Magazines/Schedules
 - 4.2.2 Local authors - responsibilities
 - 4.3 Coverage of Scottish Material
 - 4.3.1 Problems of non-local material

- 4.3.2 Contribution which acceptance of author responsibility might make
 - 4.3.3. Role of universities and special libraries
 - 4.4 Electronic Access to catalogue records
 - 4.4.1 Probable exclusion of material
 - 4.4.2 Problems of retrospective conversion
 - 4.4.3 Standards
 - 4.4.4 Collection level entries
 - 4.4.5 Benefits of major investment (cf. 2.5.1 above)
 - 4.5 Policies and practices on access to materials
 - 4.6 Retention & conservation policies
 - 4.6.1 Financial constraints on retention and conservation
 - 4.6.2 Unnecessary retention: role of networked catalogues
 - 4.7 Selection policies and procedures
 - 4.7.1 Influence of tendering and post Net Book Agreement environment
 - 4.7.2 Variation in performance of suppliers in meeting Scottish needs
 - 4.7.3 Compensatory action
 - 4.7.4 Designated staff
 - 4.8 Co-operation with NLS
 - 4.8.1 Degree of support
 - 4.8.2 Understanding of NLS
 - 4.8.3 Raising the profile of the NLS
 - 4.9 Information interchange with NLS
 - 4.9.1 Degree of support
 - 4.9.2 Methods
 - 4.9.3. Establishment of mutually beneficial results from the process
 - 4.10 Local collaborative ventures
 - 4.10.1 Extent
 - 4.10.2 Opportunities
 - 4.11 Conclusions
 - 4.11.1 Lack of support for subject specialisation schemes
 - 4.11.2 Distributed national collection drawing on existing strengths
 - 4.11.3 Need for underpinning policy framework
 - 4.11.4 Need for seamless electronic access
 - 4.11.5 Need for uniformity of physical access arrangements
 - 4.11.6 Need for improvement in stock selection procedures
 - 4.11.7 Need for improvement in stock levels
 - 4.11.8 Translation of ideals and policies into practice
- 5 Recommendations
- 5.1. To SCOTTISH LIBRARY AND INFORMATION COUNCIL
 - 5.1.1 To promote a National Catalogue Conversion Project as part of a Scottish Information Strategy
 - 5.1.2 To organise a library/book trade consensus building conference on a National Strategy for Scottish Material
 - 5.1.3 To increase awareness of collection and stock management policies as essential components in a best value regime

- 5.1.4 To organise an external advocacy campaign on the need for National Strategy for Scottish Material and for adequate funding of the core service
- 5.2 To NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND
 - 5.2.1 To develop a strategy to increase awareness of NLS functions, policies, procedures and personnel among all sections of the Library & Information Community
 - 5.2.2 To agree and establish an electronic information interchange procedure to enable libraries throughout Scotland to supply information on locally published and other hard to trace material
 - 5.2.3 To produce an explanatory leaflet on legal deposit - for distribution through libraries to small and non-commercial publishers
 - 5.2.4 To develop, in conjunction with libraries of all types, but primarily public libraries, a national collecting policy for living Scottish authors of material other than imaginative literature
- 5.3 To LIBRARY SERVICES
 - 5.3.1 To examine the merits of assigning responsibility for Scottish material to a designated member or members of staff
 - 5.3.2 To consider in the light of national cultural concerns and the examples of good practice in the commercial sector whether a high enough priority is being given to Scottish materials.
 - 5.3.3 To examine the effects of tendering on the range and quality of Scottish material available for selection
 - 5.3.4 To consider whether access policies and where appropriate levels of charging are creating barriers to legitimate use
 - 5.3.5 To support NLS in establishing an electronic information interchange procedures to enable libraries throughout Scotland to supply information on locally published material.
 - 5.3.6 To consider the opportunities for more collaborative and, where appropriate, cross-sectoral projects in the selection, retention and provision of access to Scottish materials.

6 Appendix

- 6.1 Questionnaire Summary
 - 6.1.1 Public Libraries
 - 6.1.2 University Libraries
 - 6.1.3 Special Libraries
- 6.2 Libraries consulted
- 6.3 Acknowledgements
- 6.4 Contact details

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND PAPER

In August 1998 the National Library of Scotland prepared a paper entitled *Co-operation between Local Libraries in Scotland and the National Library of Scotland on Co-ordinated Policies for the Acquisition, Provision of Access, Retention and Preservation of Scottish Printed and New Media Materials*. The paper, as well as outlining the legal deposit arrangements in the United Kingdom, and the future policies of the National Library, argued the need for increased co-operation between itself and other libraries in Scotland to ensure a better coverage of Scottish material.

The paper recommended that a survey of current policies on the collecting, provision of access, retention and preservation of Scottish materials in libraries in Scotland be carried out. The paper was sent to the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) for consideration.

1.2 DECISION OF SLIC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The paper was considered by the SLIC Management Committee in November 1998. The Committee agreed to sanction a survey of current policies along the lines recommended by the National Library.

1.3 APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANTS

In December 1998 Brian D. Osborne and Michael C. Taylor were appointed as consultants to undertake the survey of current policies in Scottish libraries on collection, provision of access, retention and preservation of Scottish materials.

1.4 TIMESCALE

The consultants were asked to report to SLIC by early July 1999.

2 BACKGROUND

The impetus for commissioning this report at this time came from a variety of sources all of which converged to make the need for a concerted national strategy both timely and possible. Among these might be mentioned the following elements.

2.1 BRITISH LIBRARY POLICY

As part of a continuing review of its operations and policies the British Library is now actively considering becoming more selective in its coverage of the publications of Wales, Ireland and Scotland, on the understanding that the legal deposit libraries in these three countries already have the primary responsibility for the publications of their own countries and will continue to fulfil this responsibility. In its response to the Government's February 1997 Consultation Paper *Legal Deposit of Publications* the British Library noted: "...the Library considers selectivity in accepting legal deposit publications to be essential for all legal deposit libraries. Selection criteria need to be determined with care bearing in mind that what is considered as significant to the national published archive can change over time. Disposal of unwanted legal deposit publications may be necessary for the efficient maintenance of the national published archive."

The implication of the operation of such a policy of selectivity and disposal is that in the short and long term overall coverage of Scottish material may be significantly downgraded, as the second copy of Scottish material that could presently be expected to be held and preserved may no longer be available.

While the National Library of Scotland has already accepted primary responsibility for Scottish materials within the UK legal deposit network, for example through the Shared Cataloguing Programme, the British Library proposals would represent a significant move away from internationally accepted standards which envisage two preservation copies being available.

While it would not be possible to replace the legal deposit collecting function it seemed desirable to consider whether the community of libraries in Scotland might, together, find some means, by co-ordinating existing policies and considering future policies, of mitigating the disadvantage that current and future users will be under as a result of this probable British Library policy change.

2.2 GROWTH OF PUBLISHING ACTIVITY AND DIFFICULTY IN BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL

The ever-growing volume of commercial and non-commercial publishing and the increasing ease and dissemination of desktop publishing has resulted in the flood of books and other publications increasing year by year. The difficulties for a national library in attempting to monitor, record and acquire this material have become increasingly apparent. Libraries of all types throughout Scotland have an obvious interest in collecting local and specialised material from a wide range of sources. By virtue of their geographical proximity to many local and non-commercial micro-publishers it was thought that these libraries were likely to be more aware of such publications than the National Library of Scotland can ever reasonably expect to be.

The desirability and practicality of using this network of libraries to feed information to and from the National Library of Scotland and other libraries in a cost-effective and mutually beneficial manner was a significant part of the remit of this report.

2.3 TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES

Just as the dissemination of computer technology has brought book production facilities to a much wider market place so the increasing use of computerised management systems and catalogues within libraries of all types offers the possibility of managing the situation in a practical and effective manner.

The advent of web-accessible catalogues, transparently searchable by use of protocols such as Z39.50, offers the prospect to researchers of a totally new level of bibliographical access. Such clumped searching of course depends on appropriate technology being in place, on cataloguing standards which support this technology and on catalogue records being in existence in machine-readable format. These are not insignificant qualifications. However the existence of the technological capacity to deliver this facility has undoubtedly generated the intellectual demand for such provision.

Part of the remit of the report was to examine the current provision of web-access to catalogues throughout Scotland.

2.4 RECENT STUDIES IN THE UPTAKE OF SCOTTISH MATERIAL

It might be thought that Scottish libraries would be particularly well supplied with Scottish material. Some might even consider that all material of Scottish interest could reasonably be expected to be found, if not in every Scottish public library authority, then in the collectivity that is the Scottish public library system.

That this is not the case has already been demonstrated, using differing methodologies, by two reports from The Robert Gordon University. The first of these (Head, M.C., Schlicke, P & Roby, T.A *Scottish Publishing Survey*) was published in 1992. The second (Smith, J.M., Stevenson, L. & Jesa, S. *Scottish Publications in Public Libraries*) was produced with the aid of a SLIC Grant and was published in 1998.

While it might be argued, in the case of the 1998 Report, that much of the material was local and of specialised interest and could not be expected to be found generally distributed; it does remain true that much of this material was not found in **any** of the reporting libraries and the conclusion seems inescapable that collecting policies, or perhaps more significantly, collecting practices, were not being effective in acquiring these items even in the area of their greatest probable interest. Overall 29 (12%) of the titles in the sample list were not held by any of the library services responding and only 92 titles (38%) were held by more than 50% of the responding services. Only 2 titles were held by every authority. There were a great many more titles of general interest, produced by major publishers, whose apparent absence from public library stocks is hard to explain.

It was thus thought to be useful to examine what classes of local material were in fact collected - and how systematically this was done. A distinction had to be made between policies on local material (where there was an obvious link to a locality) and policies on more general Scottish material.

2.5 OTHER STUDIES

As one might expect the issues and concerns that have resulted in the commissioning of this report have been echoed elsewhere and three recent, or ongoing, enquiries are worth highlighting.

2.5.1 “MAKING THE MOST OF OUR LIBRARIES” British Library RIC Report No. 53

In an interesting statement on the above report published at <http://www.ukoln.ac.uk/services/papers/bl/blri053/statement.html> the statement's editor, Philip Bryant, identifies the need for library catalogue access as a key issue:

“Books and other printed materials housed in the nation's libraries represent the collective national memory essential to understanding our

history and culture ... This national printed archive is not solely represented in the collections of the three national libraries: that responsibility is shared with other libraries, large and small, public and private.

The indispensable keys to these riches are their catalogues.”

The harmony between this view and the concepts which will emerge in this report is remarkable. Bryant goes on to propose:

“That a national strategy be adopted for the conversion of these catalogue records to machine readable form. We believe the cost can be justified in relation to national research needs in the humanities and social sciences and the overall educational and cultural benefit.”

The RIC report mapped the scale of the problem, which is formidable with 50 million records awaiting conversion in the public, higher education and special library sectors. National costs were estimated in the range of £80 - 100 million and problems of staffing, expertise, quality control and provision of access to material are equally formidable. However the concept of such a national strategy is clearly worth consideration.

2.5.2 “THE PEOPLE’S HERITAGE: A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK TO DELIVER THE VISION.” A REPORT TO THE SOCIETY OF CHIEF LIBRARIANS AND SLIC BY DAVID LIDDLE.

The author makes the point that:

“Collaboration on the collection and management of a national resource archive is only one issue, however. This archive cannot be accessed unless the material within it is accessible through machine readable catalogues.

He argues:

“... the task is to enable access nationally to local collections by the creation of records and access to them and, through digitisation, to significant sources of material itself.”

Undoubtedly much more attention has been paid to the, perhaps more obviously attractive, issue of digitisation of content than to the provision of access to the existing distributed national resource. However within the terms of reference of the present report it is difficult to see how a national strategy for the acquisition, provision of access to, retention and preservation of Scottish material can be envisaged or delivered without a key element in such a strategy being the creation of seamless access to the catalogue record of such materials.

2.5.3 “THE LEGAL DEPOSIT OF LOCAL PUBLICATIONS: A CASE STUDY OF LEICESTERSHIRE, LEICESTER AND RUTLAND” British Library RIC project (ongoing)

The Department of Information and Library Studies at the University of Loughborough has been funded to carry out a study of legal deposit of local publications in the Leicestershire/Leicester/Rutland area with a view to assessing and improving the legal deposit of locally published material and gaining an understanding of the resource implications of an increase in the volume of local material which might be gathered for legal deposit as a result of such improvements.

A first stage in this study is assessing the amount of local publishing activity in the research area. Acquisition policies of local libraries are also being surveyed and the scope for collaborative activity investigated.

While the situation in Scotland is somewhat different, with the National Library of Scotland filling a role which does not have a parallel in an English provincial context, there is nonetheless an obvious area of common ground between the Leicestershire study and the present report. Contact has been

made with the research assistant working on the Loughborough project and a further exchange of views on the issues raised by the two reports is envisaged.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION WITH NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND

In late January 1999 the consultants met with Dr. Ann Matheson of the National Library of Scotland and two of her colleagues. The aim of the meeting was to enable the consultants to learn more about the collecting policies of the National Library, its aspirations in regard to co-ordination of collecting policies, and its view of the scope for co-operation.

3.2 QUESTIONNAIRE

Following this meeting the consultants compiled a questionnaire for circulation to all Scottish public libraries, university libraries, and some special libraries whose stocks included significant collections of Scottish material. The questionnaire was designed to establish :

- a) current policies in regard to the acquisition, access to, retention and preservation of Scottish material
- b) the variation in these policies between Scottish and local material.
- c) the status of these policies
- d) the extent to which web-access to catalogue records exists
- e) the degree of support within each institution for the development of a more co-ordinated role in acquisition and preservation of Scottish material in conjunction with the National Library
- f) the constraints which each institution sees on the development of this co-operative role

g) the identification of a member of staff with whom further discussion of these issues could be pursued.

3.2.1 PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Questionnaires were sent to all 32 public library authorities.

3.2.2 UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Questionnaires were sent to the 13 university libraries.

3.2.3 SPECIAL LIBRARIES

Questionnaires were sent to 26 institutions whose libraries were thought to contain significant collections of Scottish material which might be considered in a national coverage and preservation context.

3.2.4 RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

A full analysis of the response to the questionnaire appear in the Appendix to this report.

3.3 PROGRAMME OF VISITS

Once the questionnaires were returned and studied, the consultants prepared a list of libraries to be visited to allow discussion, with appropriate members of the library's staff, of the issues raised.

3.3.1 SELECTION OF LIBRARIES TO BE VISITED

Almost all libraries replied that they would be willing for a member of staff to meet and discuss issues raised in their response. Almost all libraries indicated that they would be willing to co-operate with the National Library in the

development of a more comprehensive system for the collection, provision of access to and preservation of Scottish material.

The consultants agreed that all libraries which had written policies for the collection/preservation of Scottish material would be visited. A number of libraries which had informal policies towards Scottish material, or had raised significant issues for discussion, were also included in the list for visits.

3.3.2 ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

A number of issues were to be pursued by the consultants. Among these were: Collection and Stock Management Policies (formal and informal), Coverage of Scottish Material, Coverage of Local Material, Electronic Access to Catalogue Records, Policies on Access to Collections, Retention and Conservation Policies, Co-operation with the National Library.

3.3.3 NEED FOR INVOLVEMENT OF ALL TYPES OF LIBRARIES

The consultants were aware that it was important to include all types of libraries in their study, so as to provide as wide a picture as possible. With this in mind they visited a total of 18 public libraries, 6 university libraries, and 7 special libraries.

4 THE ISSUES

4.1 COLLECTION AND STOCK MANAGEMENT POLICIES

4.1.1 EXTENT AND NATURE OF WRITTEN POLICIES

The consultants found that written collection and stock management policies were not too common in libraries in Scotland. This is true of all library sectors, and only a handful of comprehensive and up-to-date written policy documents exist.

Some public libraries have written policies dealing with certain aspects of stock, such as local studies material, whilst a few have written guides to stock selection. Some public libraries have old statements of policy inherited from a previous library authority (pre 1996) and which now “require updating” or “redrafting.” Quite a few public libraries advised the consultants that they were “in the process of preparing written policy documents.” All of the written collection and stock management policies that were submitted by public libraries did have a statement or statements on Scottish material.

Written policy documents covering Scottish and local material were not commonly found in university and special libraries. Collection policies in the universities and colleges are chiefly designed to support the teaching and research interests of the various institutions, and policies in special libraries were geared to the interests of the particular institution.

Nearly everyone that the consultants spoke to thought that written collection and stock management policies were “a good idea” even if their library service did not possess one.

4.1.2 STATUS OF WRITTEN POLICIES

A study of the written policy documents that do exist reveal that few of these have been approved by the governing body of the libraries concerned. Some librarians indicated that such policy documents “were a guide for the staff who select stock”, whilst others said that such documents would be “for internal use only”.

Quite a number of librarians thought it would be helpful to present such documents to their governing body, as it might strengthen their arguments for more resources or to protect existing resources. Several librarians mentioned that such documents would be essential to comply with Best Value.

4.1.3 INFORMAL POLICIES AND COMMITMENT TO SCOTTISH/LOCAL MATERIAL

Nearly all the public libraries that did not have written collection and stock management policies claimed to have informal policies towards Scottish and local material. The questionnaires and the visits suggest that Scottish public libraries aim to collect as much as they can on their particular areas and retain this material for posterity. There appears to be little difference in policy towards works from mainstream and minor publishers, if it has relevance to the local area it will be acquired.

In reality the kinds of material collected varies considerably, an issue that is discussed a little later in this report.

The public library sector seems to be aware of its responsibility to collect more general Scottish material, and many responses made much of their “informal bias towards and inclination to buy Scottish material.” One librarian interviewed spoke of their service “actively seeking out Scottish material, recognising its popularity with their customers, and its importance to Scottish culture.” Another librarian said that “their service ought to have definite reasons for not buying Scottish material.” On the whole Scottish public libraries have a real commitment to Scottish material, but would also apply

tests of relevance and quality as well as observing constraints on budgets in their selection decisions.

Many of the university, college and special libraries have informal policies towards Scottish material. All these libraries collect a significant amount of Scottish material relevant to the programme of each institution. Material is not collected or acquired just because it is Scottish, but a lot of academic and research material which is Scottish in nature is collected and retained by these libraries.

4.1.4 FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS ON STOCK SELECTION

Although it was found that there was a professed commitment to collecting Scottish material and material produced by Scottish publishers, it was pointed out by many that frequent cuts in budgets puts a real strain on “purchasing as wide a range of Scottish material as the library service would like.” This seems to be especially true in the public library sector, where a number of authorities have seen sizeable cuts in the acquisitions budgets in recent years.

4.2 COVERAGE OF LOCAL MATERIAL

4.2.1 ISSUES IN PARTICULAR FIELDS OF COLLECTING

Question 16 on the questionnaire asked libraries to state what types of local material they aimed to collect. The variation within public libraries, to whom the question was mainly targeted, was perhaps surprising. All public libraries aimed to collect material on local studies, family history, and local newspapers. But in many authorities little systematic attempt is being made to collect local ephemera, school and church magazines, free newspapers, and property magazines. There was however a frequently expressed recognition of the potential value of many such items - for example many subsequently distinguished writers first appearance in print was in their school magazine and the architectural and social history significance of property schedules and estate agents publicity material can be considerable.

Universities, colleges and special libraries aim to collect everything published on or by their institutions, and in many cases material written by present and past staff of the institution, especially if it is relevant to its teaching and research. The categories of local material collected varied from institution to institution, while in general they collected very little local material although exceptionally strong local collections are held by some institutions.

4.2.2 LOCAL AUTHORS - RESPONSIBILITIES

One issue that was raised within public libraries was the collection of material by local authors. Many librarians saw the benefit of collecting works by local authors, regardless of whether the subjects of their books were local or not, although there was increasing reluctance to collect if the link of the book or the author with the locality was perceived as being less strong.

A systematic collection policy covering the work of local authors was seen by many as one solution to better coverage of Scottish material. Different

definitions of the term local author were, however, evident. Some interpreted this as an author born in an area, whilst others insisted that this meant born and lived a significant part of their life in that area. Others would include people who, despite being born and brought up elsewhere, had been resident in the area for a time, and thus have a local connection and qualify as a “local author.”

4.3 COVERAGE OF SCOTTISH MATERIAL

Whilst there are issues that need to be addressed in the coverage of local material, there are undoubtedly much greater problems associated with the coverage of Scottish material.

4.3.1 PROBLEM OF NON-LOCAL MATERIAL

It is recognised that much Scottish material is purchased because it is Scottish and because in the case of public libraries it will have broad appeal to the library users. In universities and special libraries academic and research material will be acquired to support teaching and research in these institutions.

Obviously there are no schemes in place to ensure systematic coverage of subject material. Prior to 1975, a national subject specialisation scheme operated in an attempt to ensure as comprehensive coverage of non-fiction material as was possible.

Many public libraries attempt to purchase a wide range of Scottish material which is non-local. General works on subjects such as coal mining are, for example, bought by libraries which once had mining connections, and material on subjects such as fishing and crofting are usually purchased by libraries which still have these activities in their areas.

There remains a large body of material that can be classed as general Scottish material that does not benefit from the extra impetus to purchase given by a

local connection. This general Scottish material can not be classed as local and therefore it is nobody's "responsibility" to acquire it. Even when this kind of material is acquired there are generally no reasons to retain or conserve it beyond its normal lending or reference life-cycle, other than that it is Scottish.

4.3.2 CONTRIBUTION WHICH ACCEPTANCE OF AUTHOR RESPONSIBILITY MIGHT MAKE

A contribution to solving the problem of collecting and preserving non-local Scottish material might be a wider acceptance of author responsibility. If non-local Scottish material is produced by someone living in a particular area, then the public library service of that area could acquire and retain the material even if the subject content had nothing to do with that locality. This practice is already in operation in many authorities, although there are considerable differences in both the definition of "local author" and the extent to which such policies are applied in practice

4.3.3 ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES AND SPECIAL LIBRARIES

By their very nature universities and special libraries in Scotland collect a wide range of Scottish material. Much of this material is of an academic nature and some of it may not normally find its way on to the shelves of public libraries. In addition rich collections of older Scottish material are held by these particular libraries. Most of these institutions do not notify the National Library of acquisitions thus leaving a gap in the bibliographic map of Scotland.

4.4 ELECTRONIC ACCESS TO CATALOGUE RECORDS

Most libraries in Scotland now have On-line Public Access Catalogues of their collections. Most of those who do not are actively working towards this goal, or have plans to do so in the near future. A number of libraries, particularly in the academic and special library sectors have their catalogues on the World

Wide Web greatly increasing the awareness of their collections and their availability to researchers.

4.4.1 PROBABLE EXCLUSION OF MATERIAL

Most librarians visited spoke about the advantages of electronic access to library catalogues and how this would play a significant part in any national strategy for Scottish material. But although many libraries have or are moving towards having web-accessible catalogues, large numbers of catalogue records have not been included. For example in many public libraries, only records for lending stock have been included. In some cases, only recently acquired lending and reference stock is covered. The same picture emerged in the universities where catalogue records for older material had not yet been converted. In public libraries, it was often the records for local collection material or older specialised material that had not yet been dealt with.

4.4.2 PROBLEMS OF RETROSPECTIVE CONVERSION

It became clear that there is a major problem with the conversion of catalogue records covering a whole range of material in Scottish libraries, including Scottish and local collection material. Many libraries cited shortages of staff and lack of funding as obstacles to addressing this problem. Because of this, decisions had to be taken as to which records were to be converted first, and in many cases it is the recent and up-to-date material that has been made available. It is thus very likely that valuable material which would be of interest to researchers will not become web-accessible for some considerable time.

4.4.3 STANDARDS

Another issue raised was the standard of cataloguing in use throughout the country. As many libraries had gone ahead with catalogue conversions

independently, there was no guarantee that a standard of cataloguing had been achieved which would facilitate clumped searching. One public library admitted that its local non-book material had not been catalogued due to agreement not having been reached on the standard of cataloguing to be used.

4.4.4 COLLECTION LEVEL ENTRIES

Another issue that emerged during visits of was that of collections of material held by libraries that had not been catalogued at all or have catalogue records which it is unlikely will be converted to machine readable format. This usually was older or quite specialised material, often donated to the library. It is impossible to estimate how much of this material exists, but many of the people contacted revealed, that due to staff shortages etc., considerable amounts of material had not been catalogued. It was suggested that as a compromise measure between full cataloguing and the present situation records at collection level for such discrete collections could be included in existing web catalogues, thus alerting researchers to the existence of the collection even if they had subsequently to be referred to handlists, card catalogues or other finding aids for more detailed information.

4.4.5 BENEFITS OF MAJOR INVESTMENT

At present there is no concerted programme for the conversion of catalogue records to machine readable form and for making these records available on an networked basis. It is clear from discussions with library staff round the country that many libraries will experience great difficulty in converting all their catalogue records in a reasonable time scale. In fact for some libraries this goal is a long way down the line. A systematic national programme for retrospective conversion of library catalogue records along the lines outlined in the document *Making the Most of our Libraries* seems to be very worthwhile.

4.5 POLICIES AND PRACTICES ON ACCESS TO MATERIALS

The questionnaire asked about access for the public to collections held in libraries. The question was aimed mainly at the universities and special libraries. As expected, access to collections in public libraries was unhindered and it was found that access to collections in the special libraries sector was quite good. The universities allowed members of the public (or at least *bona fide* enquirers) to consult their collections, but charged for borrowing rights. On average charges to members of the public were £30 per year. One university however indicated an intention to make a very large increase in their borrowing charges as well as the introduction of a daily charge for access.

4.6 RETENTION AND CONSERVATION POLICIES

Although a few of the written collection policy documents received included a section on the retention and preservation of material, many did not. Most libraries had informal policies on retention and preservation, particularly towards local material. It can be stated that all public libraries see it as their responsibility to retain and preserve local material, and little if any discarding of material is carried out. The problem again rests with generic Scottish material and works by authors with no clear local connection.

Some public libraries operate “a last copy in the system” policy which especially applies to Scottish material. Many libraries would appear to keep last copies of Scottish material often in reserve stockrooms, and state that they “are reluctant to withdraw Scottish material.” This applies to both non-fiction and fiction material.

4.6.1 FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS ON RETENTION AND CONSERVATION

Many librarians spoke of constraints on retaining and conserving material, particularly older Scottish material which may or may not be asked for in the future. Shortage of space was a common complaint and also financial

constraints which have affected staffing levels and budgets. Most libraries saw the need for conservation of much used local material, and many libraries purchased enough copies of local material to allow one copy to be made “a preservation copy”. Some universities transferred appropriate Scottish material into their archive collections once they had finished with it as live stock.

4.6.2 UNNECESSARY RETENTION

Quite a few interviewees mentioned that their libraries were retaining substantial amounts of material, having been asked to do so by the National Library in times past. There seemed a real possibility that some of this material need no longer be retained and that that many libraries were retaining the same titles. The comment was made by interviewees that the introduction of networked catalogues would prevent the unnecessary retention of a lot of material.

4.7 SELECTION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

As noted in 4.1.1. some libraries have written selection policies to guide staff in the purchase of material. All interviewees talked freely about the methods of stock selection within their own services. Most public libraries use an approvals system, the approvals being sent by a library supplier or suppliers, and with a team of librarians selecting the stock. Universities and special libraries tend to use subject lists and publishers catalogues to source the academic and specialist material they require.

4.7.1 INFLUENCE OF TENDERING IN POST NET BOOK AGREEMENT ENVIRONMENT

One of the more recent changes affecting the selection of stock is the introduction of tendering for library contracts. Some library authorities have put their stock purchasing funds out to competitive tendering, and are now

“locked-in” to written contracts with one or more library suppliers. This, a consequence of the ending of the Net Book Agreement, has led some libraries to “look for the best deals” and perhaps to sacrifice good subject coverage for the benefits of lowest prices from suppliers.

4.7.2 VARIATION IN PERFORMANCE OF SUPPLIERS IN MEETING SCOTTISH NEEDS

Many libraries use suppliers who are not Scottish based, and although they can provide overall high levels of service, are unlikely to have the depth of Scottish material which librarians would expect to see. Although not all stock selection is done through the approvals system, much of it is, and libraries rely to a considerable extent on the material the library supplier sends to them for possible purchase. This is not making a case for all Scottish libraries to use only Scottish-based library suppliers, but an observation suggesting that other methods of sourcing material to enable the widest selection of Scottish material need to be considered.

4.7.3 COMPENSATORY ACTION

Although approvals from library suppliers are widely used by libraries in Scotland, many librarians spoke of using other ways of selecting stock. These involved scanning other library suppliers’ lists, showroom visits, and publicity material from publishers. Some librarians insisted that staff searched through Scottish newspapers and magazines, book reviews in journals, and Scottish publishers’ catalogues to source material.

4.7.4 DESIGNATED STAFF

The visits conducted by the consultants reinforced the view that there is a high level of commitment to the collection and preservation of Scottish material in libraries in Scotland. Many of the comments made by librarians assured the consultants that Scottish material is treated seriously, and that most librarians realise its importance to Scottish culture. However there are very few examples of members of staff having a designated responsibility for Scottish material and although the responsibility may be discharged adequately by being shared among all the fundholders within the system or by the book selection team it might be more useful if libraries allocated responsibility for Scottish material to a designated member of staff so that publishers, authors, cultural organisations etc. could have a named contact within a particular library service.

4.8 CO-OPERATION WITH THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND

4.8.1 DEGREE OF SUPPORT

One of the key questions in the questionnaire asked if libraries would be willing to co-operate with the National Library in ensuring the development of a more comprehensive system for the collection, provision of access to, and preservation of Scottish material. The response was clear - that there is very substantial degree of support for such co-operation. Some libraries expressed concerns arising from their own financial and staffing difficulties, and others said that they would want to know more about the level of co-operation before finally deciding to participate in any scheme.

4.8.2 UNDERSTANDING OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND

Following the visits to libraries by the consultants, it was clear that there existed a fairly widespread lack of understanding of the functions, policies and

procedures of the National Library. It is true to say that the university libraries have more contact with the National Library than public libraries do and in consequence have a generally clearer picture of its functions, but there was a general feeling that not enough is known about what the National Library does

4.8.3 RAISING THE PROFILE OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND

Many librarians visited in the course of this study felt that the National Library needed to raise its profile among the Scottish LIS community. Many librarians in the public library sector said that their staff had little contact with staff in the National Library, and the perception was that the National Library was remote and made little effort to forge links with other libraries in Scotland. A few librarians made the point that if the Scottish library and information community did not have a clear picture of what the National Library does, the public at large were likely to be even less well informed.

4.9 INFORMATION INTERCHANGE WITH THE NLS

4.9.1 DEGREE OF SUPPORT

Another key question in the questionnaire asked if libraries saw a role for themselves in exchanging information with the National Library on locally-published material. This was an issue raised by the National Library which recognises its difficulties in hearing about locally-published material. It was felt that local library services were in an ideal position to help in this regard. All libraries thought that this was possible, and agreed that with the spread of desktop publishing etc. it was becoming harder for everyone keep track of locally-published material.

4.9.2 METHODS

A variety of methods were suggested for exchanging this information. The majority of libraries felt that an electronic method would be best (e.g. use of e-mail, electronic mailing lists, using the existing UNITY system, or outputting a report on all the library's acquisitions highlighting the local publications.

4.9.3 ESTABLISHMENT OF MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RESULTS FROM THE PROCESS

Local publishing has increased significantly over the last two decades and if the National Library wishes to maintain its coverage of Scottish materials within the UK legal deposit network then a better method of sourcing locally-published material is essential.

The benefits to the National Library of such an exchange of information is obvious, but there could also be benefits to local library services in closer contact with the National Library, thus creating a well-developed "human network" of information. If a network for the exchange of information is to be

set up it will need to have tangible benefits for all participating libraries, not simply for the National Library.

4.10 LOCAL COLLABORATIVE VENTURES

4.10.1 EXTENT

The survey of libraries revealed that there was very little in the way of local collaborative arrangements for the acquisition and retention of Scottish material. Some informal arrangements existed, especially in the special library sector, where material was exchanged between institutions.

Two neighbouring public libraries, whose boundaries had been altered at the last local government reorganisation, collaborate over the acquisition of local material for the area both authorities have an interest in.

4.10.2 OPPORTUNITIES

It might have been presupposed that there would collaboration between university and public libraries over the acquisition of some Scottish and local material. This would seem possible and desirable where expensive or esoteric items are concerned, however there is little evidence of this happening. Possible opportunities for collaboration between neighbouring public library authorities on retention of material were mentioned by some respondents.

4.11 CONCLUSIONS

4.11.1 LACK OF SUPPORT FOR SUBJECT SPECIALISATION SCHEMES

The consultants found that there was no support for the subject specialisation schemes that were in vogue before 1975. There was a feeling that

contemporary pressures in the form of performance indicators and value for money measures made such schemes untenable.

4.11.2 DISTRIBUTED NATIONAL COLLECTION DRAWING ON EXISTING STRENGTHS

There was definite support for the idea that any National Strategy should be built on existing strengths and priorities and that libraries would find it easier to justify support and involvement in any project if this could be seen as a natural development of their own service. The overlapping networks of public, university and special libraries can, collectively, offer a considerable degree of coverage of Scottish material if effectively managed.

4.11.3 NEED FOR UNDERPINNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

A National Strategy requires the support and collaboration of all sectors of the Library and Information community. It would seem to be an appropriate function for the Scottish Library and Information Council to articulate this element of a national information strategy and to seek to obtain the involvement of all Scottish libraries in this task.

4.11.4 NEED FOR SEAMLESS ELECTRONIC ACCESS

There is little benefit in creating a distributed national collection if it has to be accessed through a multiplicity of catalogue systems. The integration of collections must be mirrored in the integration of bibliographic records and a seamless access to these records must become a priority.

4.11.5 NEED FOR UNIFORMITY OF PHYSICAL ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

There is little point in creating the type of seamless electronic access discussed above if there are unnecessary barriers to providing physical access to collections. Such barriers may be in form of restrictive entry formalities or high financial charges. One element in the creation of a national strategy should be some rationalisation of access policies.

4.11.6 NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT IN STOCK SELECTION PROCEDURES

There is sufficient evidence from the two studies referred to in 2.4 above and from anecdotal evidence from the publishing and library supply industries to cast some doubt on the effectiveness of current stock selection procedures. The ending of the Net Book Agreement and the introduction of tendering in public library book supply has not had a beneficial effect on this important function. Some later recommendations to library services and to SLIC are intended to address this matter.

4.11.7 NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT IN STOCK LEVELS

The comments made above on stock selection procedures have to be tempered with an awareness that in many cases there have been substantial, and indeed damaging, cuts in the level of library materials budgets. The effectiveness of the library service cannot be assured unless adequate funding can be assured and representations on this matter would seem to be an area for action by SLIC.

4.11.8 TRANSLATION OF IDEALS AND POLICIES INTO PRACTICE

We found an encouraging level of support, even of enthusiastic support, for the idea of closer collaboration with the National Library and for the interchange of information on local publications. It is a shared responsibility for the National Library, SLIC and individual services now to take these ideas forward and to implement them. We have indicated in the recommendations the various areas in which each of these players could move forward and have also indicated some other areas in which, in our opinion, action is required to facilitate this collaboration and the realisation of a National Strategy for Scottish Materials.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations arise from the information gathered by the questionnaire survey and from the series of visits and interviews carried out subsequently. The details and wording of these recommendations are the responsibility of the authors of this report but it is hoped that they fairly represent the ideas that were put forward to us on paper and in discussion. For clarity we have grouped the recommendations into three groups; recommendations chiefly addressed to the Scottish Library and Information Council, those to the National Library of Scotland and those to individual library services. There is obviously considerable overlap in these recommendations and it is hoped that they will all be examined and considered in detail by all parties.

In the group of recommendations to library services (5.3.1 - 5.3.6) the emphasis is on the role of public libraries. However this is not to underplay the vital role which libraries in other sectors could play in the delivery of a National Strategy for Scottish Materials, it simply reflects the fact that the network of public library services conveniently covers the geographical totality of Scotland. The public library service thus offers a comprehensive network which should be capable of providing total coverage of Scottish materials at least from the local studies standpoint. As has been discussed above in sections 4.1 and 4.3 non-local, generic Scottish material and works by authors with no clear local connection present a different range of problems and it is clear that the strengths offered by academic libraries and the strengths offered by special libraries active in the field of Scottish studies would be needed to form a truly comprehensive distributed National Published Archive.

5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE SCOTTISH LIBRARY AND INFORMATION COUNCIL

5.1.1 TO PROMOTE A NATIONAL CATALOGUE CONVERSION PROJECT AS PART OF A SCOTTISH INFORMATION STRATEGY

There is at present no concerted programme for the conversion of catalogue records to machine readable form and for making such records available on a networked basis. Much activity has taken place, for example by means of non-formula funding through the Higher Education Funding Councils, but many universities still have a very large amount of stock only available on card or other non-computerised catalogues. One major university library visited in the course of this study estimated that only 45% of its stock was available on its computerised catalogue.

Public libraries are increasingly moving towards having web-accessible catalogues but closer examination of such projects often reveals that only catalogue records for recently acquired stock, or lending stock, are available. The very great riches of local and special collections are frequently not going to be made available, at least in the short term, to networked catalogues. One technically sophisticated public library service estimated that it currently had less than 35% of its very substantial local studies stock currently on line.

In the case of public libraries the prospect thus exists of web-catalogues being ever more generally available but containing little of the older, specialised and local material that would interest the wider research community.

The Scottish Library and Information Council has promoted the concept of a seamless access to information through a National Information Strategy. The benefits of a systematic national strategy for retrospective conversion of library catalogue records as a component of such a National Information Strategy are clear. The benefits are both local, to the library service and its users, and national, to the wider user and research communities. One very real benefit which would arise from this type of national catalogue is that it would be possible to save money currently being spent on storing and conserving

titles which exist in adequate numbers over the country as a whole but which, in the absence of a unified catalogue are thought to be scarce or unique.

A national catalogue conversion strategy would also enable issues of quality control, standardisation and access to be addressed. Such a strategy would complement work being done in a variety of sectors on the digitisation of physical resources - pictures, documents, texts etc.

While such a strategy would not be an easy or a cheap option it is one which needs to be tackled on a cross-sectoral and national basis and is one which SLIC would seem to be well-placed to take forward.

5.1.2 TO PROMOTE A LIBRARY/BOOK TRADE CONSENSUS BUILDING CONFERENCE ON A NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR SCOTTISH MATERIAL

One clear finding from this study and other studies, such as The Robert Gordon research referred to in 2.4 above, is that book selection procedures and outcomes, particularly in public libraries, has been very adversely affected by a wide range of recent developments, which include, but are not limited to financial stringency, local government reorganisation and the ending of the Net Book Agreement.

One public library, for example, indicated that it had been obliged for financial reasons to place its adult non-fiction supply contract with an English-based supplier and as a result was very well aware that it was not seeing in its weekly approvals collection a full range of Scottish material. This authority claimed to be taking effective steps to remedy this defect by studying lists from Scottish suppliers, publishers catalogues and by showroom selection visits to Scottish suppliers; whether all authorities in this position are being so assiduous is a moot point.

There is on the part of the publishing and library supply industries a clear view that the library market has declined and is declining. There is also a view that libraries pay lip-service to the need to see Scottish material but do not always back this up with a commensurate level of purchasing. There are also evident communication and information flow problems within the publishing, bookselling, library supply and library sectors.

Some attempt was made by a SLIC seminar following the publication of the Robert Gordon University report *Scottish Publications in Public Libraries* to bring together some of the significant players in this field. However that exercise had perhaps only limited success because it focused on the findings of a specific piece of research. A more broadly based meeting bringing together libraries, publishers, and the suppliers to discuss the implications of a National Strategy for Scottish Materials, what each sector could reasonably expect of the others, what realistic financial commitment might be forthcoming, what information and publicity services were needed, what modifications to standard contractual arrangement might be appropriate, would be a valuable contribution to a wider awareness of the needs and constraints of each sector.

The Scottish Library and Information Council would seem to be an appropriate agency to take this forward and to disseminate the findings of such a consensus building conference.

5.1.3 TO INCREASE AWARENESS OF COLLECTION AND STOCK MANAGEMENT POLICIES AS ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS IN A BEST VALUE REGIME

SLIC has developed, with member public library authorities, a Best Value toolkit. This recognises the need for stock management policies but this could usefully be enhanced to emphasise the role that selection, acquisition, conservation and retention policies for Scottish material has in the Best Value process.

The idea is sometimes allowed to flourish that Scottish material is a minority interest, requiring special treatment and special protection. The case for special treatment and special protection would surely be accepted by any nation's libraries and librarians for the creative output of that nation's writers. What is less defensible is the notion that Scottish material is a minority interest (except in the sense that all library services are directed to a mass of overlapping minorities) or that Scottish material cannot warrant sufficient interest on its own terms to justify its place in a strictly hard-headed and value-for-money driven system.

Two reflections on the current status of Scottish materials outside the library sector may suggest that Scottish libraries are underplaying the resource of Scottish material and underestimating the level of public interest in Scottish material.

The first is the practice of the large chain booksellers in Scotland, such as Waterstones, Dillons, Border Books, of allocating their prime selling sites in-store to material of Scottish interest. As commercially motivated organisations driven by policies created furth of Scotland it is a certainty that these decisions have not been taken for altruistic, nationalistic, or public relations reasons but for hard financial reasons. If some other category of stock could show a higher return per square metre of selling space it would be allocated these prime positions. That Scottish material is given this priority reflects its significance to the profitability of these stores.

Scottish libraries do not generally give this degree of prominence to Scottish material. Are they catering for a distinct client group with totally different interests? All the available evidence suggests that they are not. Are they correct in thinking that Scottish material would not repay such prioritisation? There is little evidence of any studies to show that this matter has ever been seriously considered. Are they concerned that they might be accused of parochialism and narrow nationalism by so emphasising Scottish material?

The second example from outside the library world which suggests that Scottish material is not necessarily the preserve of a small ethnically conscious minority is the fact that in the week when this section of the report was being written a children's book by a Scottish-based author topped *The New York Times* best-seller list, outselling Stephen King, John Grisham, Jack Higgins and Jackie Collins.

A library in Scotland need hardly be surprised if Scottish material proves to be popular with its readers - what might be surprising is how little Scottish material seems to be exposed to those readers. If the commercial world emphasises Scottish material in the way that it does there would seem to be an excellent case for assuming that a Scottish library which does not make the same commitment to Scottish material may not be delivering an optimum level of service.

5.1.4 TO ORGANISE AN EXTERNAL ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN ON THE NEED FOR A NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR SCOTTISH MATERIAL AND FOR ADEQUATE FUNDING OF THIS AS A CORE SERVICE

SLIC has campaigned on the need for an Information Strategy. It is suggested that this valuable role could be developed to campaign for one of the content strands of an Information Strategy. The concept of a National Strategy for Scottish Material is one that transcends sectors and individual services and is one that will find an appropriate audience in, for example, SHEFC, COSLA, the Scottish Parliament.

There is however little advantage in developing the concept of a National Strategy if the level of funding of library services is so low that they are unable to purchase a reasonable range of stock. Underpinning any National Strategy for Scottish Material must be a network of well-resourced libraries attracting and serving a high proportion of the population.

Scottish Public Library issue figures are declining: the long-term ability of these libraries to continue to deliver the large customer base which has made them so attractive to a Government wishing to use them to deliver networked learning opportunities must be questionable. Significant factors in this decline in borrowings must undoubtedly include the decline in the range and quality of stock.

An advocacy campaign aimed at revitalising the book-lending service (what one Scottish public library authority described as ‘our core business’) would support the concepts of Best Value, a National Strategy for Scottish Material and maintain the credibility of the public library service as a mass-market service.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND

5.2.1 TO DEVELOP A STRATEGY TO INCREASE AWARENESS OF NLS FUNCTIONS, POLICIES, PROCEDURES & PERSONNEL AMONG ALL SECTIONS OF THE LIBRARY & INFORMATION COMMUNITY

One very clear impression that was gained from the discussions that the authors of this report had when visiting libraries of all types throughout Scotland was of a remarkable unevenness in the level of understanding of the National Library’s functions, policies, procedures and personnel among the Scottish LIS community.

Many respondents spoke warmly and highly of the NLS and its staff - this reaction was found most frequently (but not exclusively) in the larger research libraries who had contact with the NLS through SCURL and other channels. Other respondents felt they knew little of the NLS and few of its staff. This reaction was perhaps more common in the public library sector and some regret was expressed that the former inter-lending seminars, which were seen

as providing a valuable mechanism for regular contact between the NLS and library services, were no longer being run.

The publication and distribution of the NLS newssheet *Quarto with Scottish Libraries* was welcomed but it was felt that if the National Library wished to forge better links with Scottish libraries on collection and information issues it should start by raising awareness of the Library among the Scottish LIS community. Among the ideas which were mooted included a widely distributed staff list, more contact between specialist staff in the NLS and their opposite numbers in other libraries and more regular contact with public libraries on matters of common concern

5.2.2 TO AGREE AND ESTABLISH AN ELECTRONIC INFORMATION INTERCHANGE PROCEDURE TO ENABLE LIBRARIES THROUGHOUT SCOTLAND TO SUPPLY INFORMATION ON LOCALLY PUBLISHED AND OTHER HARD TO TRACE MATERIAL

One of the remits of this study was to establish the degree of willingness of libraries to co-operate with the National Library in exchanging information on local and other publications. As will be seen from the responses (printed in the appendix below and discussed at section 4.9 above) there was an overwhelming degree of support for this concept.

A variety of possible mechanisms for this information interchange were suggested, overwhelmingly these were variations on some form of electronic information system. Suggestions included use of e-mail, electronic mailing lists, use of the UNITY system, or by outputting a report on all acquisitions in certain defined categories.

The willingness to co-operate being established it would now seem a matter for bilateral discussion and agreement between the National Library and the rest of the Scottish Library and Information community as to the best and most universally acceptable means of achieving this.

5.2.3 TO PRODUCE AN EXPLANATORY LEAFLET ON LEGAL DEPOSIT FOR DISTRIBUTION THROUGH LIBRARIES TO SMALL AND NON-COMMERCIAL PUBLISHERS

The idea that libraries in communities throughout Scotland are closer to local publishers and publishing than the National Library can be is well founded. Many local libraries have good contacts with authors, self-publishers, local societies, commercial and non-commercial publishers in their areas and there would seem to be an excellent opportunity to make use of these contacts to get a positive message about legal deposit over to such people and institutions. A leaflet explaining what legal deposit is, what its advantages for the community and the publisher are, what the practical requirements are, could be produced by the National Library and made available for distribution through local libraries. Such a leaflet could be a simple way of increasing the flow of legal deposit material and, if effective, would to some extent ease the National Library's task of researching, tracing and obtaining non-deposited material.

5.2.4 TO DEVELOP, IN CONJUNCTION WITH LIBRARIES OF ALL TYPES, BUT PRIMARILY PUBLIC LIBRARIES, A NATIONAL COLLECTING POLICY FOR LIVING SCOTTISH AUTHORS OF MATERIAL OTHER THAN IMAGINATIVE LITERATURE

One clear finding of our investigations is that "local" material - books and non-book material on a specific locality - is generally assiduously collected and carefully preserved by local studies departments in Scottish public libraries. Many buy significant items in multiple copies with the intention of designating one or more copies as preservation copies. Some of the university libraries are also active in the collection of local studies material.

What is less effectively collected - and where there is a wide variation in practice - is material of general Scottish interest. Perhaps because of the benign influence of the Scottish Fiction Reserve there is a tendency to collect

imaginative literature - novels, short stories & poetry - by authors living in a library's area of responsibility. There is no such general policy on other types of works by a local author on a non-local subject - for example the works of an author on Scottish mountaineering are not likely to be systematically collected as 'local studies' material by the library service covering the author's home.

As we have noted earlier there was little or no support for subject specialisation schemes. However it might be possible to attract support for a national policy to collect generic Scottish material by authors with a local connection.

There are a number of obvious difficulties in creating such a policy. Does collecting responsibility go with place of birth or place of residence; authors move from area to area - does collecting responsibility move with them; how is awareness of the local connection (however defined) to be established?

Nonetheless the merits of such a scheme seem to warrant further study and discussion.

If such a scheme were to be adopted the national coverage for acquisition and preservation of Scottish material could be considerably enhanced at a modest cost to individual libraries. It is also possible that if an author list could be drawn up and distributed by the National Library a number of non-public libraries might be prepared to take on a formal collection, retention and preservation responsibility for certain authors. For example, University libraries frequently attempt to collect works by and about their staff and graduates and the libraries of institutions such as the Royal Colleges of Medicine or the legal societies already collect the works of their members. If such libraries could be incorporated into a national collecting framework by undertaking collecting within their existing areas of interest and concern there would be correspondingly fewer authors requiring to be picked up by public libraries.

Such a proposal seems to the authors of this report to be in keeping with a general concept of tackling the idea of a National Strategy by a series of achievable, low-cost, incremental improvements.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS TO LIBRARY SERVICES

5.3.1 TO EXAMINE THE MERITS OF ASSIGNING RESPONSIBILITY FOR SCOTTISH MATERIAL TO A DESIGNATED MEMBER OR MEMBERS OF STAFF

In a number of cases we found that a co-ordinating responsibility for Scottish material was given to a member of staff as part of a range of duties. In one university library visited a staff member had informally taken on this role for material of general Scottish interest which fell between the defined areas of academic interest. In one public library service members of the book selection team are assigned areas of responsibility and tasked with proposing material for consideration that has not come up through the normal channels. One of these special areas of responsibility is for Scottish material.

It has long been normal practice in public libraries for a member of staff to be assigned responsibility for children's material or for audio-visual material. There seems to be no good reason why such a special responsibility could not be more widely given for Scottish material.

One beneficial result would be the identification of a contact person for publishers, promoters of books, authors and other libraries. Another benefit would be the enhancement of the status of Scottish material that such an appointment would bring. Many of those we interviewed expressed a keen commitment to supporting Scottish books and Scottish writing - the allocation of a specific subject responsibility to a member or members of staff would be an effective demonstration, both internally and externally, of this commitment.

5.3.2 TO CONSIDER IN THE LIGHT OF NATIONAL CULTURAL CONCERNS AND THE EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE IN THE COMMERCIAL SECTOR WHETHER A HIGH ENOUGH PRIORITY IS BEING GIVEN TO SCOTTISH MATERIALS.

SLIC, in conjunction with the other cultural agencies, has emphasised the role that the arts and Scottish culture play, or should play, in our national life. In the course of our visits many respondents emphasised their personal and institutional commitment to Scottish culture in all its manifestations and there is indeed evidence of much good practice. Many libraries, even without the benefit of written book selection policies, wished to emphasise that they felt that they had a responsibility to support Scottish writing and Scottish authors by buying books, wherever produced, of Scottish interest and on Scottish themes.

Scottish publishers however report low and decreasing levels of sales to libraries (as evidenced by the movement of books from, for example, Scottish Book Source to the library suppliers). Two recent promotional exercises undertaken in conjunction with the Scottish Library Association - a regular colour insert in *Scottish Libraries* and a discount offer on Scottish back list titles - failed to meet with any significant response.

The question must therefore be asked whether there is a gap between the policies of the library and the implementation of these policies and whether this gap can be entirely attributed to financial stringency.

The comparison with the commercial bookshops in the emphasis given to Scottish material is made in 5.1.3 above and need not be repeated here.

There would seem to be a case for libraries to review the priority they give to Scottish material and whether there would not be advantages in terms of increased usage and quality of service in devoting more resources to the acquisition and exploitation of Scottish material. It would also seem

appropriate for libraries to consider the mechanisms they have in place for implementing their policies in this respect and monitoring their implementation.

The concept of a National Strategy for Scottish Material does of course rely for its fulfilment on a reasonable amount of Scottish material being bought for the nation's libraries.

5.3.3 TO EXAMINE THE EFFECTS OF TENDERING ON THE RANGE AND QUALITY OF SCOTTISH MATERIAL AVAILABLE FOR SELECTION

The abolition of the Net Book Agreement and the introduction of variable discounts into the library supply market have had significant impacts on the way in which public and other libraries buy their books.

If a tender is prepared and awarded on the basis of the greatest level of discount which can be obtained without consideration being given to other factors the result may well be that the successful supplier will not be based in Scotland. While such a supplier may be excellent in many respects the fact that the overwhelming proportion of its business is carried out in England will influence the range of Scottish material which is made available for selection. Suppliers trading predominantly in Scotland, whatever their other merits or failings, should be more likely to recognise the needs and interests of the Scottish market place.

As discussed in 5.1.2 above we found examples of library authorities who had felt constrained by available levels of discount to place contracts with suppliers who were unable to expose to them a comprehensive range of Scottish material. It is suggested that such authorities consider whether they have in fact tendered on a "like for like" basis if they have contracted for a obviously inferior service when quality and price are both evaluated.

There are obvious difficulties in having to take compensatory measures to source Scottish material not presented by a contractor. There are additional costs incurred and in an era of shrinking production runs there is also the very significant chance of books being out of print when the library eventually attempts to acquire them. It is also suggested that there is a danger that the selection made by the supplier will be seen as normative and the excluded material seen as low priority and low interest and the effort required to trace and source it given equally low priority.

Other authorities have reconciled these potential contractual difficulties by writing in to their tender documents a requirement to see a specific level of Scottish material. If such requirements are made to all potential contractors there can be no question of anti-competitive terms arising.

Libraries might also usefully consider how effectively they monitor the performance of suppliers in presenting for selection an appropriate range of Scottish material.

5.3.4 TO CONSIDER WHETHER ACCESS POLICIES AND, WHERE APPROPRIATE, LEVELS OF CHARGING ARE CREATING BARRIERS TO LEGITIMATE USE

We were pleasantly surprised at the generous and unrestrictive policies on access which we found in many places. Even the libraries of private bodies supported by members' subscriptions proved in many cases to be more than willing to admit *bona fide* researchers with only minimal formalities. University libraries were, in general, equally responsive to the needs of those outwith their intended client group. However, one university library not only charges a significantly higher fee to external borrowers (£160 p.a. as compared to an average of £25/£30) but is also introducing a daily charge of £5 for access to the collections. Like many other similar institutions this library has very significant special collections of printed books and manuscripts and, in

consequence, will hold many items for which no alternative source is available.

The concept of gaining seamless electronic access to the collections of the nation is a splendid one, but an equally important issue is establishing physical access to these collections. The financial pressures and workloads on libraries with rich special collections are acknowledged as is the need to prioritise the institution's main client group; be it local residents, fellows of a learned society or staff and students of a university. However, particularly in the case of institutions funded by some form of public finance and institutions which have benefited from gifts and donations from members of the public, one might assert that there is a degree of moral responsibility to allow reasonable access.

If the proposal made in 5.1.1 above on a National Catalogue Conversion Project was to be adopted an obvious concomitant of funding would be the establishment of access protocols.

A similar point is made by Philip Bryant in the statement on the document *Making the most of our libraries* referred to at 2.5.1 above:

“A national programme of retrospective conversion requires agreed criteria to ensure satisfactory access to items in the collections of the participating institutions. The legitimate interests of owners must be protected. In return for funding, reasonable facilities for access must be guaranteed for consultation of material, either in its original state, or, where this is not possible, in a surrogate form.”

5.3.5 TO SUPPORT THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND IN ESTABLISHING AN ELECTRONIC INFORMATION INTERCHANGE PROCEDURE TO ENABLE LIBRARIES THROUGHOUT SCOTLAND TO SUPPLY INFORMATION ON LOCALLY PUBLISHED MATERIAL

The case for this has been expounded at 5.2.2 above and need not be repeated here. Libraries of all types have expressed to us an interest in this concept, which is one which could have benefits both for the NLS and for local libraries and which would usefully strengthen links between the NLS and Scottish libraries. The responsibility for initiating such a scheme would seem to rest with the National Library but it is hoped that any proposals brought forward would meet with a positive response from potential partners.

5.3.6 TO CONSIDER THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MORE COLLABORATIVE AND, WHERE APPROPRIATE, CROSS-SECTORAL PROJECTS IN THE SELECTION, RETENTION AND PROVISION OF ACCESS TO SCOTTISH MATERIALS.

In the course of our work we were interested to note how few collaborative projects were undertaken in the areas of concern to this report. There may be excellent reasons why co-operative purchasing schemes, local specialisation schemes or joint approaches to retention are not undertaken. It may also be appropriate, particularly in an environment where activities in all sectors are being ever more closely scrutinised for value for money and good governance, for this question to be examined more closely by libraries.

6 APPENDIX

6.1 QUESTIONNAIRE SUMMARY

6.1.1

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

(Responses were received from 30 of the 32 authorities)

| | |
|--|----|
| Written collection policies covering Scottish material | 7 |
| Number of above which are approved by council/committee | 3 |
| Number of above which include non-book material | 6 |
| Informal collection policies covering Scottish material | 19 |
| No policy, written or informal, covering Scottish material | 4 |
| Written collection policies covering local material | 10 |
| Number of above which are approved by council/committee | 3 |
| Informal collection policies covering local material | 18 |
| No policy, written or informal, covering local material | 2 |
| Intention to collect all local material in the following fields | |
| Local Studies | 30 |
| School magazines | 21 |
| Church magazines | 17 |
| Printed ephemera | 19 |
| Family history | 30 |
| Local newspapers (variant editions) | 30 |
| Free newspapers | 22 |
| Property magazines | 7 |
| Web access to catalogue currently available | 1 |
| Web access to catalogue planned | 21 |
| Written preservation policies for Scottish material | 3 |
| Informal preservation and retention policies for Scottish material | 18 |
| Written preservation policies for local material | 3 |
| Informal preservation and retention policies for local material | 19 |

Willing to co-operate with NLS in development of a more comprehensive system for collection, provision of access to & preservation of Scottish material

28

(In addition one respondent qualified this by requiring the co-operation to be locally based and of local interest. One respondent failed to answer this question.)

See a role for Scottish libraries in exchanging information with NLS on recently published material

29

(One respondent failed to answer this question)

Participate in local collaborative arrangements

4

6.1.2 UNIVERSITIES

(All 13 University Libraries responded. Separate responses were received from the Library and Heritage Divisions of Aberdeen University bringing the total to 14)

Written collection policies covering Scottish material 1

Number of above which are approved by governing body 1

Number of above which include non-book materials 1

Informal collection policies covering Scottish material 8

Written collection policies covering local material 1

Number of above which are approved by governing body 1

Informal collection policies covering local material 7

Intention to collect all local material in the following fields

Local Studies 3

School magazines 1

Church magazines 1

Printed ephemera 2

Family history 3

Local newspapers (variant editions) 3

Free newspapers 1

Property magazines 0

| | |
|---|----|
| Web access to catalogue currently available | 14 |
| Collections open to public | |
| Yes | 10 |
| Yes with some restrictions | 4 |
| No | 0 |
| Written preservation and retention policies for Scottish material | 0 |
| Informal preservation and retention policies for Scottish material | 6 |
| Written preservation and retention policies for local material | 0 |
| Informal preservation and retention policies for local material | 6 |
| Willing to co-operate with NLS in development of a more comprehensive system for collection, provision of access to & preservation of Scottish material | |
| Yes | 11 |
| With reservations | 2 |
| No | 1 |
| See a role for Scottish libraries in exchanging information with NLS on recently published material | |
| Yes | 13 |
| With reservations | 1 |
| Participate in local collaborative arrangements | 3 |

6.1.3 H.E. & SPECIAL LIBRARIES

(Responses were received from 18 of the 26 institutions contacted)

| | |
|---|----|
| Written collection policies covering Scottish material | 2 |
| Number of above which are approved by governing body | 2 |
| Number of above which include non-book material | 2 |
| Informal collection policies covering Scottish material | 15 |
| Written collection policies covering local material | 0 |
| Informal collection policies covering local material | 7 |
| Intention to collect all local material in the following fields | |
| Local Studies | 2 |
| School magazines | 0 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Church magazines | 0 |
| Printed ephemera | 4 |
| Family history | 1 |
| Local newspapers (variant editions) | 0 |
| Free newspapers | 0 |
| Property magazines | 1 |
| Web access to catalogue currently available | 6 |
| Web access to catalogue planned | 9 |
| Collections open to public | |
| Yes | 9 |
| Yes with some restrictions | 7 |
| No | 2 |
| Written preservation and retention policies for Scottish material | 0 |
| Informal preservation and retention policies for Scottish material | 8 |
| Written preservation and retention policies for local material | 0 |
| Informal preservation and retention policies for local material | 7 |
| Willing to co-operate with NLS in development of a more comprehensive system for collection, provision of access to & preservation of Scottish material | |
| Yes | 13 |
| No | 3 |
| Uncertain or qualified response | 2 |
| See a role for Scottish libraries in exchanging information with NLS on recently published material | |
| Yes | 13 |
| No | 2 |
| Uncertain or no response | 3 |
| Participate in local collaborative arrangements | 8 |

6.2 LIBRARIES COMPLETING QUESTIONNAIRE

• = Visited

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Aberdeen

•

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Aberdeenshire | • |
| Angus | |
| Argyll & Bute | • |
| Clackmannanshire | |
| Comhairle nan Eilan Siar | • |
| Dumfries & Galloway | • |
| Dundee | • |
| East Ayrshire | |
| East Dunbartonshire | • |
| East Lothian | • |
| East Renfrewshire | • |
| Edinburgh | • |
| Falkirk | • |
| Fife | • |
| Glasgow | • |
| Highland | |
| Inverclyde | |
| Midlothian | • |
| Moray | • |
| North Lanarkshire | |
| Orkney | |
| Perth & Kinross | • |
| Scottish Borders | |
| Shetland | |
| South Ayrshire | |
| South Lanarkshire | |
| Stirling | • |
| West Dunbartonshire | • |
| West Lothian | |

UNIVERSITIES

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Aberdeen | • |
| Abertay | |
| Caledonian | |
| Dundee | |
| Edinburgh | • |
| Glasgow | • |
| Heriot Watt | |
| Napier | |
| Paisley | • |
| Robert Gordon University | |
| St Andrews | • |
| Stirling | • |
| Strathclyde | |

H.E. & SPECIAL LIBRARIES

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Edinburgh College of Art | |
| Faculty of Advocates | |

Glasgow School of Art •
Historic Scotland •
National Galleries of Scotland
National Museums of Scotland
Queen Margaret University College
Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh
Royal College of Physicians & Surgeons of Glasgow •
Royal Commission on Ancient & Historical Monuments of Scotland •
Royal Scottish Academy of Music & Drama
Royal Scottish Geographical Society •
Scottish Music Information Centre
Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art
Scottish National Portrait Gallery
Scottish Natural Heritage
Scottish Poetry Library •
Signet Library •

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