Reaching Out
The Public Library Serving the Community

A study of community engagement, community partnerships, joint use libraries and volunteering in public libraries in Ireland

Public Library Research Programme

Interim Report

Meath County Council Library Service

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The Public Library Serving the Community:
A study of community engagement, community partnerships, joint use libraries and volunteering in public libraries in Ireland

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List of Abbreviations

ACL	An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (The Library Council)
ACRA	Association of Combined Residents Associations
ALA	American Library Association
ALIA	Australian Library and Information Association
AUMA	Alberta Urban Municipalities Association
BIG	Big Lottery Fund
BME	Black and minority ethnic
CCMA	City and County Managers' Association
CE	Community Employment
CET	Citizen engagement toolkit
CEV	Centre Européen du Volontariat - European Volunteer Centre
CILIP	Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (Formally the Library Association (LA) until April 2002)
CSV	Community Service Volunteers
DCMS	Department of Culture, Media and Sport
DECLG	Department of Environment, Community and Local Government
DG-EAC	Directorate General – Education and Culture
ELLIS	English language learning and improvement service
ENFO	A website of the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government
FÁS	Foras Áiseanna Sathair (Ireland's National Training and Employment Authority)
GIY	Grow It Yourself
GP	General medical practitioner
GSO	Generic social outcome
HR	Human Resources
HSE	Health Services Executive
IAP2	International Association of Public Participation
ICA	Irish Countrywomen's Association
ICTs	Information and communications technologies
IDA	Industrial Development Authority
IFLA	International Federation of Library Associations
IMPACT	Irish Municipal Public and Civil Trade Union
IR	Industrial Relations
LA	Library Association (now formally CILIP)
LGA	Local Government Association
LGMA	Local Government Management Agency
MLA	Museums, Libraries and Archives Council
NCBI	National Council for the Blind Ireland
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NCTE	National Centre for Technology in Education
NESF	National Economic and Social Forum
NSU	Nova Southeastern University
NTW	Navan Traveller's Workshop
OECD	Organisation for European Cooperation and Development
PCSP	Primary Curriculum Support Programme
PLRC	Public Library Research Committee
PLRP	Public Library Research Programme
RAPID	Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development
SROI	Social return on investment
TRA	The Reading Agency
UCC	University College Cork

UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States
VCI	Volunteers Centre Ireland
VCS	Voluntary and community sector
VEC	Vocational Education Committee
VPL	Vancouver Library Board

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This is an interim report on a research project undertaken by Meath County Council Library Service with part funding under the Public Libraries Research Programme (PLRP). The PLRP assists local authorities in carrying out public library research. The Programme is co-funded by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and local authorities, and is managed by An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (ACL)/The Library Council.

The project examines a broad range of national and international initiatives designed to enable public library authorities to improve the degree of involvement of local communities with their public library services. These community initiatives by library authorities are intended to enhance existing library services, develop new services, and promote collaboration with community, voluntary and other agencies. These initiatives can foster social inclusion, active citizenship and community empowerment of benefit to all parties.

The initiatives fall into four strands of interaction between service providers and the communities they serve. Innovative, progressive and at times challenging forms of interaction designed to reach out to and include all members of the community are researched, examined and presented in this report.

The four strands of the investigation comprise the following:

- Community engagement
- Community partnerships
- Joint use libraries i.e. the sharing of public library facilities with other agencies and/or groups within the community
- Volunteering

1.2 Definitions of terms

For the purposes of this project:

- Community engagement means engaging with the general public and with other service providers, community groups and local organisations to devise and plan the best and most appropriate public library provision for a given community. It involves openness in communication, in encouraging community involvement, in space sharing, and in project innovation to encourage maximum use of library services for the benefit of all sectors of the local community.

- Community Partnership means establishing formal links with service providers and other organisations who share the public library service ethos of openness, space for all and social inclusion. This involves researching and establishing appropriate partnerships to deliver joint services, projects and initiatives to benefit all sectors of society. It also involves assisting groups and individuals to achieve their full potential in their communities.

- Joint use means sharing library premises with other groups in the community such as, for example, health service providers or Heritage Centres; or providing library services to distinct user groups such

as the general public and college students from one library premises. Joint use can allow for greater use of a premises, or better stock and service provision for greater numbers of people.

- Volunteering means that individuals or groups freely offer their services of time and expertise for the benefit of society at large or their local community. In this research study, it also means examining the formal establishment of volunteer programmes through community engagement and partnership initiatives and joint use policies for the betterment of public library service provision

1.3 Project Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the project are to:

- Undertake an international review and evaluation of the current status of policies and practice by public library authorities in countries outside Ireland in the areas of community engagement, community partnership, joint use libraries and volunteering.

- Undertake a review and evaluation of the current status of policies and practice by public library authorities in Ireland in the areas of community engagement, community partnership, joint use libraries and volunteering.

- Ascertain the views of all relevant parties in Ireland on issues relating to the four stated strands of community engagement, community partnership, joint use and volunteering in public libraries, including the following:

    - City and County librarians and frontline library staff
    - City and Council Managers Association (CCMA)
    - Local Government Management Agency (LGMA)
    - Local Authority Directors of Services
    - Relevant trades unions
    - Volunteers

- On the basis of desk and field research, define and assess public library policies, good practice models and operational and developmental issues relating to the four strands, both at home and abroad.

Design and test a pilot model, or models, of best practice in the four stated strands

- For application by public library authorities in Ireland.

- On the basis of the findings of literature surveys and pilot testing, make recommendations for an appropriate model, or models, of best practice for adoption by public library authorities in the Ireland.

- Report on the research findings and disseminate the conclusions and recommendations to all relevant parties.

1.4 Project Management

The project is managed by Meath County Council Library Service with support from An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (ACL)/The Library Council. It is overseen by a Steering Group Committee (SGC) on which ACL and the following library authorities and agencies are represented: Sligo County Library, Local Government Management Agency and Meath County Council Library Service.
The project officers report monthly to the SGC and have presented progress reports to the Public Library Research Committee (PLRC). This interim report describes the initial research phase of the project.

Chapter 2

Project Methodology

The methodology adopted in the preliminary research phase covered by this interim report was as follows:

- A literature review on community engagement, community partnership, joint use and volunteering in the public library service in Ireland and abroad, mainly in the UK, North America and Australia.

- An online questionnaire survey of city and county library authorities in Ireland. All 32 library authorities were requested to complete an online questionnaire (see Appendix A) . All 32 authorities responded. This survey was undertaken in the early stages of the study and has a strong focus on volunteering and community partnership. Initial desk research revealed important and interesting data on community engagement and this strand of investigation is subsequently enlarged. This extension of the project specification was reflected in the question sets for interviews with representatives of the City and County Managers Association (CCMA), the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) and IMPACT, the main public sector trade union (see below).

- A structured interview with Mr. Eddie Breen, Chairperson of the CCMA. The interview question template is presented in Appendix B.

- A structured interview with Ms. Jane Brophy, Human Resource Executive representing the LGMA. The interview question template is presented in Appendix C. (It was not possible to arrange a face to face interview with Ms. Brophy, but she provided a written response to the interview question set having selected the questions most relevant to the role of her organisation).

- A structured interview with Mr. Peter Nolan, National Secretary of the Irish Municipal Public and Civil Trade Union (IMPACT). The interview question template is presented in Appendix D.

The proposed methodology for a subsequent pilot phase of the project, subject to approval by the PLRC of the preliminary research phase, and a proposal for a pilot phase, will be as follows:

- Selection of an appropriate, representative site, or sites, in which to undertake a pilot study.
- Survey and interviews with volunteers from the pilot sites involved in the project.
- Interviews with City/County Librarian(s) and library staff from the pilot sites involved in the project.
- Interviews with Directors of Services from the library authorities in which pilot studies are undertaken.
- Preparation of conclusions and recommendations for further action, based on the information gathered from the surveys, interviews, case studies and the international literature review.
- Preparation of final report and presentation to PLRC.
- Reporting and dissemination of results.

Chapter 3

An International Review of Community Engagement Activities by Public Libraries

Community engagement is defined in this report (section 1.2) as engagement with the general public and with other service providers, community groups and local organisations to devise and plan the best and most appropriate public library provision for a given community. It involves openness in communication, in encouraging community involvement, in space sharing, and in project innovation to encourage maximum use of library services for the benefit of all sectors of the local community.

The following is an outline of recent trends in community engagement policies, programmes and research tools (toolkits) being developed and applied by central and local government bodies and by public library authorities outside Ireland.

3.1 Examples of Initiatives at International Level

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)[1] was first set up in 1990 by public participation practitioners with an initial mission to promote the values and best practices associated with involving the public in government and industry decisions which affect their lives. It soon developed and expanded into an organization which looks beyond the formal practitioner to include all people involved in public participation. IAP2 has published a wide range of practitioner tools, including a toolbox on public participation which was launched in 2006[2]. This is widely used as a generic toolbox by local authorities wishing to develop research tools to investigate and promote community engagement. The toolbox offers a detailed information and advice matrix on a wide range of techniques used to share information, compile and provide feedback and bring people together.

The United Nations (UN) published a civic engagement toolkit in January 2008, "*highlighting emerging innovative processes, methods and mechanisms that foster the engagement of civil society, the private sector and citizens in general in public policies*"[3]. The toolkit "*aims to assist governments, civil society and other relevant stakeholders in having a common and shared understanding of civic engagement and the necessary knowledge and capacity to establish, design, formulate, implement, evaluate and monitor public and socio-economic policies and programmes with greater engagement of all stakeholders*".

3.2 The United Kingdom (UK)

In February 2003, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) published *Framework for the Future*, the first ever policy report on a national strategy for public libraries in the UK[4]. The report laid down the

[1] International Association for Public Participation IAP2, http://www.iap2.org/ (accessed 31/01/2011)

[2] International Association for Public Participation IAP2, 2006, IAP2's public participation toolbox, http://iap2.affiniscape.com/associations/4748/files/06Dec_Toolbox.pdf (accessed 31/01/2011)

[3] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, (January 2008), Civic engagement in public policies: a toolkit, ISBN 13: 9789211231731. https://unp.un.org/Details.aspx?pid=17309 (accessed 31/01/2011)

[4] Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), (2003), Framework for the future: Libraries, Learning and Information in the next decade. http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/4505.aspx (accessed 31/01/2011)

government's long term strategic vision for the role of public libraries in society and was intended to help local and library authorities to agree on key objectives for the public library service with central government and local communities.

According to the report[5], "*Libraries will prosper most and benefit the communities they serve if they can communicate and deliver a clear sense of mission*". The policy framework proposed in the report was "*designed to help libraries to work with their current and future funders, partners and users to agree on that mission and then organise to deliver it*".

In the following three years significant advances were made in the area of community engagement and in the spring of 2006 the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) reported on the status and likely future development of community engagement in public libraries in the UK[6]. According to the report, "*community engagement in public libraries means involving the community in decision making. It is about the community identifying needs and working in equal partnerships to address these. Libraries can take this opportunity to deliver on key targets and agendas; to widen participation contributing to community cohesion; or, to increase active citizenship and thereby to increase use of library services*"[7] . While some of the 96 library authorities surveyed were working closely with their communities, it was revealed that "*many staff in the library sector had fears about working this way*" [5(p.iii)]. It was suggested that MLA and other agencies working with libraries should provide training and networking opportunities for staff in order to improve their understanding of community engagement. It was also recommended that good practice be shared among library staff and with the community and voluntary sectors and that community engagement activities be monitored and evaluated, with the community directly involved in peer reviewing.

The above status report by MLA was accompanied by a community engagement toolkit for public library staff[8]. Consultation with middle managers in libraries had suggested that a toolkit format would be familiar

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[5] Ibid., p.13

[6] CSV Consulting, Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), (2006), Community engagement in public libraries, A report on current practice and future developments, ISBN 1-903743-97-4. http://research.mla.gov.uk/evidence/documents/community_engagement_report_9654.pdf (accessed 31/01/2011)

[7] Ibid., p. iii

[8] Watts, H., (CSV Consulting), Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), (2006), Community engagement in public libraries: A toolkit for public library staff, ISBN 1-903743-98-2. http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/publications/~/media/Files/pdf/2006/community_engagement_toolkit_9659.ashx (accessed 31/01/2011)
MLA, (2006), Community Engagement in Public Libraries: Toolkit Appendix A: Understanding community engagement, http://research.mla.gov.uk/evidence/view-publication.php?dm=nrm&pubid=141 (accessed 31/01/2011)
MLA, (2006), Community Engagement in Public Libraries: Toolkit Appendix B: Case studies, http://research.mla.gov.uk/evidence/view-publication.php?dm=nrm&pubid=142 (accessed 31/01/2011)
MLA, (2006), Community Engagement in Public Libraries: Toolkit Appendix C: Planning community engagement, http://research.mla.gov.uk/evidence/view-publication.php?dm=nrm&pubid=143 (accessed 31/01/2011)
MLA, (2006), Community Engagement in Public Libraries: Toolkit Appendix D: Further reading, http://research.mla.gov.uk/evidence/view-publication.php?dm=nrm&pubid=144 (accessed 31/01/2011)
MLA, (2006), Community Engagement in Public Libraries: Toolkit Appendix E: Volunteer management checklist, http://research.mla.gov.uk/evidence/view-publication.php?dm=nrm&pubid=145 (accessed 31/01/2011)
MLA, (2006), Community Engagement in Public Libraries: Toolkit Appendix F: Staff training guidance, http://research.mla.gov.uk/evidence/view-publication.php?dm=nrm&pubid=146 (accessed 31/01/2011)

to library staff and that this format would serve as a helpful means of introducing the concept of community engagement. The toolkit outlines the benefits for all parties involved in community engagement, how to get started, how to work in partnership and identifies sources of further assistance in the UK. A series of appendices provide details on understanding the concept of community engagement, planning worksheets, volunteer management checklists and training sessions. This information is supplemented by nine case studies which demonstrate different aspects of community engagement encountered in the nationwide study.

The Big Lottery Fund (BIG)[9] was another development of major importance to community engagement in 2006. The Fund dedicated £80 million to a Community Libraries programme[10] and, in October 2006, invited applications from public library authorities for grants ranging from £250,000 - £2 million each to renovate, extend or build new libraries for community-focused projects with an emphasis on reaching new clientele. The Community Libraries programme was designed to strengthen relations between libraries and their communities and in particular to "*(a) invigorate libraries as centres of wider community learning and development and learning based activities (b) create, improve and develop library spaces that meet the needs of the whole community and (c) be innovative and promote good practice in the ways libraries are designed and run*"[11].

By October 2007, 58 applications were successful and proceeded "*to complete business plans and community engagement plans to demonstrate that communities were actively engaged in the development, delivery and management of library services*". The aim of the programme "*was to see libraries working with disadvantaged groups, existing users and non-users, voluntary and community groups and other community service providers"* and that libraries should also reflect local and national strategies.

The successful applicants had consulted and worked closely with their communities to identify activities and services that would best meet local community needs. Many different opportunities were identified, including "*reading groups, writing groups, language classes, family learning activities, art and museum exhibitions, cultural activities such as drama, health activities such as well-being classes, information seminars about local volunteering or other opportunities, work experience library gardens, and outreach activities into more remote communities*".

The growing impetus by central and local government to engage local communities more actively was reflected in the publication of a joint action plan in October 2007.[12] This plan was aimed at communities and local government and the Local Government Association (LGA). Its purpose was to implement a shared community empowerment agenda.

MLA, (2006), Community Engagement in Public Libraries: Toolkit Appendix G: Ideas for community engagement projects, http://research.mla.gov.uk/evidence/view-publication.php?dm=nrm&pubid=147 (accessed 31/01/2011)

[9] Big Lottery Fund (BIG), http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/index (accessed 31/01/2011)

[10] Community libraries, summary of the programme, http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_community_libraries (accessed 31/01/2011)

[11] Ibid.

[12] Communities and Local Government, (2007), An action plan for community empowerment: building on success, Local Government Association. http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/actionplan.pdf (accessed 31/01/2011)

In the spring of 2008, MLA published a report[13] presenting an overview of a baseline for community engagement in libraries, designed as a starting point for an evaluation of the BIG Community Libraries programme. The baseline was formulated by examining five case study library authorities of the 58 authorities that had successfully applied for BIG grants for community projects, together with another case study, Newcastle, which was outside the BIG Communities programme. The BIG case study authorities were Bristol, North Yorkshire, Nottingham, Sandwell and Slough. Case studies were selected in order to give the widest possible representation of the 58 successful bids across the following range of criteria:

- region
- county authorities
- urban, deprived areas
- rural areas
- multi site projects
- new building projects
- projects targeting older people
- joint services with other parts of local authorities or partner organisations
- a regeneration element
- targeting young people
- providing advice services
- community cohesion
- ethnic groups
- learning and skills
- health
- disabilities

Newcastle intended to create a new landmark city library offering new and improved services that were to be defined on the basis of extensive consultation with the local community. The proposed new library was not part of the Community Libraries programme but was to be built under a public/private partnership scheme PF1 (see Chapter 4). There was a strong focus on consultation with young people but local residents, current users, hard to reach groups and other key stakeholders were also included in the consultation process. The project aimed to use the library building as a "*neutral and safe public space for the community and to support the Council's corporate priority areas including children's services, educational achievement and social inclusion*"[14].

Bristol library authority proposed to build a new creative learning centre to bring together all aspects of cultural services for the first time and to engage with local people in new ways. The main aim of the project was "*to engage the local community in the development, delivery and management of the new centre*"[15] and it was envisaged that local people would volunteer at the centre and form part of the management structure. The creative learning centre was to include a heritage zone, a children's zone, exhibition space for local artists, a community kitchen, a community zone and crèche facilities The creative learning centre will be located in a highly multicultural deprived area of Bristol and "*attempts to consider from first principles*

[13] Taylor, B and Pask, R., (2008), Community libraries programme evaluation: An overview of the baseline for community engagement in libraries, MLA, ISBN 978-1-905867-24-0. http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/publications/~/media/Files/pdf/2008/community_libraries_evaluation_Updated.ashx (accessed 31/01/2011)

[14] Ibid., p.17

[15] Ibid., P.16

how deprived communities can be engaged in the arts, history and reading in a way which can change lives"[16].

North Yorkshire proposed to refurbish Harrogate library involving a comprehensive redesign of the building to provide innovative spaces, including an outer courtyard area, which would be attractive to all sections of the community. The project promised to launch a comprehensive suite of new services, including a One Stop Shop for council services, adult learning, health promotion and inter-generational work. Particular emphasis is to be placed on reaching older people in order to complement the council's wider wellbeing agenda and to cater for expected local demographic future trends. A 'centre of excellence' was envisaged through close working with the local voluntary and community sectors and by means of extensive consultation with the local community to design and deliver these services.

The **Nottingham** project will transform the existing library building and involve the local community in the planning, equipping and management of the new library which will be designed to have a greater impact across the community. The initiative will engage people through local community groups and volunteer action and will focus on the empowerment of citizens and community cohesion in an area of the city with multiple deprivation and in need of regeneration. The key beneficiaries of the project were highlighted as children and young people, black and minority ethnic (BME) communities, the unemployed, refugees and asylum seekers. According to the MLA baseline report "*Nottingham provides a good example of a library service working within and seeking to build existing social networks in an area of multiple deprivation. The library service is well connected to community groups and to other public sector and voluntary organisations seeking to generate community engagement*"[17].

Sandwell library authority aimed to transform the space and services offered by two libraries, Bleakhouse and Smethwick, and in so doing, to change the way in which they involve local people in designing and delivering services. Accommodation upgrades will provide family friendly facilities and café space, access for disabled people and accessible toilets. Planned new services include one to one surgeries by advice agencies and performance space for local groups. The project aims to overcome language and access barriers using a network of volunteer 'buddies', and to tackle unemployment by a variety of means such as training, work experience, and volunteering opportunities.

The **Slough** project will revitalise the newly extended Cippenham Library in consultation with the local community. The focus is on the family unit, and parents, carers and children under five are highlighted as the main target group. Services envisaged include support for family learning activities, a toy library and mother and toddler sessions, together with a Council 'One Stop Shop' providing benefits advice and access to other council services. The library would also be a forum for other local services, hosting adult health events such as healthy eating sessions and health visitor developmental checks.

The **Garforth** project[18] is another example of an opportunity that was used to engage with the local community in order to explore how new premises can best be used to support that community. In 2008 Leeds Library and Information Service received £14 million from the Communities Libraries Big Lottery fund. The funding was to extend and refurbish a 1960s building into a library and one-stop-shop centre which would include a café, IT suite, youth facilities and meeting rooms.

[16] Ibid., P.16

[17] Ibid., p.18

[18] Space to Place: Try something new in Garforth, Leeds. http://living-places.org.uk/living-places-in-action/case-study-subject/culture-and-sport-infrastructure/space-to-place-try-something-new-in-garforth-leeds.html (accessed 4/04/2011)

A community engagement plan was devised so that the local community and individuals could play a role in its development. Between January and March 2009 nine themed focus groups were set up to engage in the decision making process from the beginning of the project. Those involved included immigrant, business, voluntary and community groups. Young people, for whom the facility is being developed, were particularly encouraged to join this process through participation in innovative film making and music workshops. This raised awareness of the project and gave local people a sense of ownership. It encouraged them to use the new facilities as the space was being established. It focused on those groups who perhaps are reluctant to use the library such as the elderly, teenagers and migrant workers.

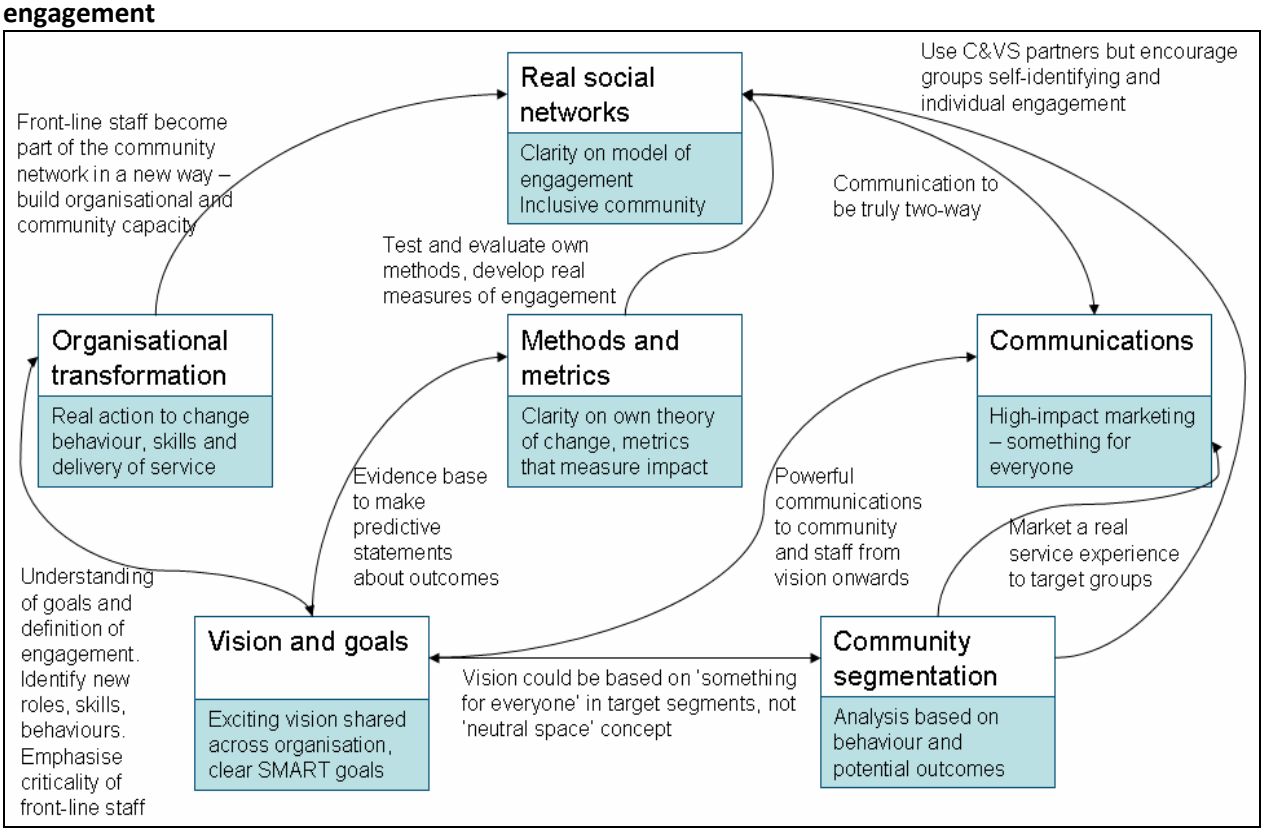
Community engagement took several forms. Feedback and suggestions were given via blogs, podcasts, websites and face-to-face meetings. This resulted in the identification of new partnerships and groups who were seeking new opportunities to use the library as a venue to hold meetings and events. Volunteer co-ordinators were also recruited to train new volunteers to deliver services such as setting up reading groups and a housebound delivery service. New partnerships were made with the local historical society which resulted in the digitisation of archival material. This widened community access to resources and celebrated community memories.

Steering group members and representatives were given the opportunity to select book stock for the new library again adding to their sense of ownership. It is also noted that the library staff played a major role in the delivery of the project leading to a sense of ownership of the project and pride in their library service.

The success of the community engagement plan is demonstrated by the fact that it will form part of the annual library planning process. It will also be used as a toolkit for a consultation and participation model of future new libraries nationwide.

The above case study sample of the 58 successful projects operating under the BIG Community Libraries programme, together with the Newcastle project funded under the public/private partnership scheme, demonstrate an extensive range of community engagement initiatives and herald a new and exciting corporate mindset among public library authorities in providing services to their communities. Strong examples of innovation and best practice were found among the case study group outlined above and six key areas, shown in Figure 1 below, were identified in the baseline report as having the potential to greatly increase positive results for individuals and communities.

Figure 1: Elements of change required for effective community engagement



Source: Taylor, B and Pask, R., (2008), p.20

The main recommendations included the following:

- "*Visions should be collaboratively developed, focused and properly communicated.*
- *Community segmentation should increasingly focus on behavioural segments; delivery should focus on delivery of service experiences in addition to products.*
- *The potential impact of organisational transformation on staff must be recognised, and effective communication and engagement processes must be put in place to ensure ownership.*
- *External communications should be creative and carefully targeted, in addition to provision of generic service information.*
- *Community engagement plans should be more robust, with an emphasis on monitoring progress*"[19]. 10(p.7-8)

In the same year, MLA also published a five year action plan for public libraries[20] and, as a strategic leader, undertook to work with local government, national agencies, professional bodies, chief librarians and cultural leaders. Starting in 2008, MLA pledged to

- "*advocate the relevance of public libraries and highlight the advantages of integrated provision in response to local needs*
- *promote 'best practice', innovation and community engagement, especially in relation to local authority priorities*

[19] Taylor, B and Pask, R., op. cit., (2008), p.7-8

[20] MLA, (2008), Framework for the future – MLA action plan for public libraries – towards 2013, http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/strategies/~/media/Files/pdf/2008/library_action_plan (accessed 31/01/2011)

- *support improvements in learning, information and reading services.*
- *establish broad-based competencies for library staff and sustain investment in workforce development*
- *plan for coherent, national digital resources and services"*[21]

Priorities in the plan include learning, communities and supporting excellence and success will rely on spreading "best practice", innovation and improvement. The programme of action involves the following four key challenges

- collection and generation of research and evidence,
- identification and promotion of best practice,
- support for innovation by various means, including promotion of community engagement
- advancement of digital change via, for example, faster broadband links, improvement of digital data management and promotion of online libraries.

The UK government's agenda on community empowerment was further advanced in 2008 by the publication of a White Paper[22]. The general thrust of the agenda is to pass power into the hands of local communities, thereby generating vibrant local democracy in every part of the country and giving real control over local decisions and services to a wider pool of active citizens. Seven key issues are treated from the perspective of individual citizens, namely: being active in your community; access to information; having an influence; challenge; redress; standing for office; and ownership and control. The role of libraries as central players in providing access to information and in supporting local communities is acknowledged in the report.

A final report[23] on an evaluation of the BIG Community Libraries programme was published in June 2010. The evaluation exercise sought to establish whether or not BIG funding had made an impact on (a) enhancing the role of libraries in engaging with their communities (users and non-users), (b) changing perceptions of library services and (c) learning and skills development for users, staff and volunteers.

The study found that initiatives focusing on enhancing the experience of users and non-users had made a positive impact on the perceptions of local libraries, and in particular on the perceptions held by those who had previously never or seldom used the library. When new or refurbished libraries had been open for a sufficiently long period for meaningful data to be collected, higher user numbers and more diverse user profiles were observed. This had been partly achieved by adopting a variety of community engagement modalities, for example, by employing new staff, deploying volunteers with whom some community groups had greater empathy and by training existing staff. Community engagement with young people, who have traditionally been difficult to reach, was very successful with usage increases of up to 200% reported in Nottingham for 11-15 year olds. Several case studies included "*examples of libraries being invigorated as centres of wider community based learning and skills"*[24] and participation in scheduled learning activities was

[21] Ibid., p.3-4

[22] Communities and Local Government, (2008), Communities in control: Real people, real power, (White Paper), Local Government Association, ISBN: 978 0 10 174272 6. http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/886045.pdf (accessed 31/01/2011)

[23] ERS Research and Consultancy / MLA, (2010), Community Engagement in Public Libraries: an evaluation as part of the Big lottery Fund Community libraries Programme, ISBN 978-1-905867-46-2. http://research.mla.gov.uk/evidence/view-publication.php?dm=nrm&pubid=1114 (accessed 31/01/2011)

[24] Taylor, B and Pask, R., op. cit., (2008), p.4

reported to have led to "*expectations of improved levels of educational attainment amongst children and young people and enhanced employability among adults*"[25] [13(p.4)].

The BIG Community Libraries programme was found to have strengthened existing partnerships in that it led to a greater appreciation by local authority colleagues and external partners of the value of libraries in facilitating access to local communities. The case study libraries also reported the formation of new partnerships, particularly where library facilities had been declared 'better fit for use' by community and voluntary sector agencies.

The study found that some library staff lacked confidence in community engagement activities and that "*there are barriers to changing the hearts and minds of 'traditional' library staff*"[26]. Notwithstanding this, many staff had embraced new ways of working and risen to the challenges. In many cases "*the investment in library buildings and in community engagement activities had positive spin-off effects for library staff: where there had been fear and anxiety due to changes in working practice and job roles, there is also hope and excitement about the opportunities for libraries to make a difference to their communities and enhance staff skills through community engagement training*"[27].

In keeping with current trends towards the use of improved, more meaningful performance indicators in measuring library effectiveness and efficiency, the evaluation revealed that, in the context of community engagement, measurement instruments such as Social Return on Investment (SROI), Generic Social Outcomes (GSOs) and Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs) were applied by many libraries to assess their progress in meeting programme objectives.

The report concluded with recommendations on how lessons might be learned in the following areas:

- "*How to engage communities successfully, over the long-term and develop more innovative approaches to community engagement*
- *How to target young people*
- *How to retain existing users*
- *How to develop successful partnerships*
- *How to involve library staff and build their confidence in engaging with the community*
- *How to get the most from volunteering*
- *How to address the lack of representation of local communities on project groups that aim to benefit the communities*"[28].

Early in 2010, following a nationwide consultation process, DCMS published a new policy paper on the modernisation of public libraries[29]. The document identifies five main challenges for the UK public library

[25] ERS Research and Consultancy / MLA, (2010), Community Engagement in Public Libraries: an evaluation as part of the Big lottery Fund Community libraries Programme, ISBN 978-1-905867-46-2. p.4, http://research.mla.gov.uk/evidence/view-publication.php?dm=nrm&pubid=1114 (accessed 31/01/2011)

[26] Ibid., p.4

[27] Ibid., p.4

[28] Ibid., p.7

[29] Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), (2010), The modernisation review of public libraries - a policy statement, ISBN 978-0-10-178212-8. http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/consultation_responses/modernisation_review_public_libraries.pdf (accessed 31/01/2011)

service, comprising 151 public library authorities, 3,500 libraries and 21,000 staff. These challenges are identified as follows:

- "*How can we reverse the current trend of decline in library usage and grow the numbers using the library service?*
- *How can the library service respond to limited public resource and economic pressures?*
- *How can all libraries respond to a 24/7 culture and to changing expectations of people who want immediate access to information?*
- *How can all libraries grasp the opportunities presented by digitisation?*
- *How can the library service demonstrate to citizens, commentators and politicians that they are still relevant and vital?"*[30]

The paper recommends that a "*Library Offer"* be made to the public for all public libraries in England and that this be made up of a '*core offer'* of services, which all public library authorities should deliver, and a '*local offer*' of services, shaped and delivered at local level. The local offer should include, among other things, "*programmes of engagement with the community, including outreach initiatives and ways of encouraging wider usage* .. (and) .. *spaces for community use*" [31].

In all, 54 policy proposals are made, including topics such as connecting to local priorities, contributing to local services, championing partnership working, using volunteers to complement the workforce and contributing to education, health and wellbeing. A very useful model of the impact of the public library on the individual and the community is provided as an appendix (A) in the document.

A new government initiative, the *Future Libraries Programme*[32], was introduced in August 2010. This is an expert support programme led by MLA and LGA and is intended to support councils as they adapt to the current economic challenge, helping them deliver key services while reducing costs. The first phase of the programme involves working intensively with ten library authorities and, on its completion, any lessons learned will be shared with the wider public library network. The programme is based on the principle that local services know their communities best and that the solutions should be owned and driven by councils.

According to a DCMS press release on 16 August 2010 "*The programme promises to build momentum on the ideas that have been generated and spread learning between library authorities to achieve cost savings, new partnerships and governance models, and to take advantage of digital opportunities. Central to the programme is the vision for library services to have greater connection with other local services and an ambition for services to be designed around the needs of the public, rather than based on organisational boundaries*"[33].

The initial ten phase one areas, chosen for their individual strengths, type of project, geographical spread, and rural and urban mix, are as follows:

- Northumberland with Durham
- Bolton, with Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Wigan
- Bradford

[30] Ibid., p.3

[31] Ibid., p.6

[32] Future Libraries programme http://www.culture.gov.uk/news/news_stories/7381.aspx (accessed 31/01/2011)

[33] First ten areas to join future libraries programme announced, http://www.culture.gov.uk/news/media_releases/7379.aspx (accessed 31/01/2011)

- Lincolnshire, with Rutland, Cambridgeshire, North East Lincs, Peterborough
- Suffolk
- Oxfordshire with Kent
- Herefordshire with Shropshire
- Cornwall with Devon, Plymouth, Torbay
- Lewisham with Bexley, Bromley, Croydon, Greenwich, Lambeth and Southwark
- Kensington & Chelsea with Hammersmith & Fulham

Of the above, four area projects are particularly focused on community engagement and these include the following:

Going Digital, Going Local; transforming libraries in Northumberland and Durham

Northumberland and Durham have joined forces to "*put libraries at the heart of their communities*" in dealing with similar issues facing both authorities relating to broadband access, digital exclusion and rural outreach. "*Community engagement will be central to the project* (and) *particular emphasis will be given to improving IT skills and confidence through the use of volunteers, testing how on-line borrowing challenges can be overcome, and looking at new models for the rural offer including work with rural community transport providers*". The two councils will combine forces to provide access to a wide range of services and "*local communities will be able to use libraries to learn, make transactions, obtain the best sources of information and develop information handling skills, as well as accessing employment opportunities*"[34)].

Modernising Library Services in two sparse rural counties (Herefordshire and Shropshire)

This project intends to use new models of service delivery, building on the experience of both authorities in working with communities to deliver and improve services to sparse populations in highly rural areas. The programme will examine a range of delivery and management options that will shape sustainable services, including neighbourhood run libraries and will ensure that they meet the needs of predominantly rural counties and build on the innovation and best practice found in both authorities.

Breaking Boundaries (Lincolnshire, Rutland, Cambridgeshire, North East Lincs; Peterborough)

The aim of this project is "*to reposition libraries as a core service of local government, making them relevant and responsive. It will ask how communities should be involved in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of library services*". It will be driven by cooperation between Lincolnshire and neighbouring authorities and the active involvement of local communities in order to "*develop library services beyond their perceived traditional role and across a large geographical area*". Two core elements within the project will focus on key stakeholders – "*how to involve communities in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of library services; and how to engage local councillors, the private and voluntary sectors in the development of high performing, value for money library services which meet the needs of local communities*"[35].

Local Libraries (Suffolk)

The Suffolk initiative proposes to work with community groups to support them in running their local library, shaping it to fit their locality and making savings in management and bureaucracy. These community run libraries will be supported by a countywide online service, a network which allows people to borrow from one place and return to another, as well as a 'value for money' book lending and reservation service.

[34] Ibid., p.2

[35] Ibid., p.3

Examples of UK Community Engagement Toolkits

The advanced status of community engagement policies, programmes and general activities among public library authorities in the UK is reflected in the number and variety of toolkits that have emerged in recent years, including toolkits by Dundee City Council[36], Halton Strategic Partnership[37], Liverpool City Council[38], London Borough of Bexley[39], Manchester City Council[40] and Newcastle City Council[41] [42].

3.3 North America – Canada and the United States (US)

According to Defaveri and Gagnon[43], Vancouver Public Library initiated a *Working Together* project in 2004 to develop methods for libraries to work with low-income communities through a community development approach. Three other libraries were also involved in the project – Regina Public Library, Toronto Public Library and Halifax Regional Libraries and funding was provided for four years by the Canadian Office of Learning Technologies. Each library authority employed a community development librarian with responsibility for creating new ways of collaborating and partnering with local communities to address issues of service equity, systemic barriers, and inclusive library practices.

In June 2010 Vancouver Library Board (VPL) approved a *Community Engagement Values Statement* in which it undertook to "*involve its diverse communities in service planning and delivery; recognizing community members know best what their needs and interests are*"[44]. It also stated that library staff need to be open

[36] Dundee City Council, April 2009, Community engagement toolkit: a portfolio of techniques, http://www.dundeecity.gov.uk/leisurecomms/communityengagement/ (accessed 31/01/2011)

[37] Halton Strategic partnership, Community engagement toolkit, http://www.haltonpartnership.net/communityengagement/images/stories/engagement_toolkit.pdf (accessed 31/01/2011)

[38] Liverpool City Council, Community engagement toolkit, http://www.liverpool.nsw.gov.au/haveyoursay/communityengagementtoolkit.htm (accessed 31/01/2011)

[39] London Borough of Bexley, 2008, Part 3, Community Engagement toolkit, http://www.bexley.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=307&p=0 (accessed 31/01/2011)

[40] Manchester City Council, The Manchester Community engagement toolkit, http://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/500006/community_engagement/164/community_engagement/4 (accessed 31/01/2011)

[41] Newcastle City Council, Community engagement strategy, http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/a/engagementstrat (accessed 31/01/2011)

[42] Newcastle City Council, Community engagement toolkit, (Header page at - http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/a/engagement Toolkit (Open minds; a guide to engaging communities) can be found at - http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/wwwfileroot/cxo/consultation/Engagementtoolkit.pdf (accessed 31/01/2011)

[43] Defaveri, A. and Gagnon, A, (2008), Working together: Community-Led Libraries Toolkit, Paper presented at IFLA, Quebec, 2008, http://archive.ifla.org/IV/ifla74/papers/149-DeFaveri_Gagnon-en.pdf (accessed 31/01/2011)

[44] Vancouver PL, (June 2010), A community engagement values statement, http://www.vpl.ca/about/details/community_engagement_values_statement (accessed 31/01/2011)

and accessible to all community members and to engage both users and non-users of services in spaces where community members feel most comfortable. Accordingly, it was stated that VPL staff will actively:

- "*Involve community members in discussions about their unique assets and specific needs, and how the library can support them.*
- *Include information on community engagement strategies in all project proposals.*
- *Budget sufficient funds, time, and staff for community engagement in service planning activities.*
- *Share decision making, outcomes, and evaluation with community members using effective and meaningful approaches.*
- *Document and report on how community members were involved in service decisions*".

As part of the Working Together Project, VPL also published a comprehensive 150 page community engagement toolkit[45] [46]. The tools are segmented into the following elements with detailed application and implementation instructions provided for each element:

- Community entry
- Community mapping
- Relationship building
- Partnerships
- Programme planning
- Computer training
- Collection development
- Customer service

Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) has prepared a citizen engagement toolkit (CET) which is intended to assist municipalities in preparing effective community engagement plans[47]. This is a generic tool with a guide to a customised engagement plan according to specific needs. The catalogue of tools, techniques and best practices provided with the programme may be used by any public body, including library authorities, to undertake community engagement initiatives.

As noted above, there is considerable activity underway in Canada in the area of community engagement and it is also worth noting that Tamarack[48], An Institute for Community Engagement based in Ontario, is a useful source of up to date information on both national and international developments in this field.

An example of the many initiatives in the US is demonstrated by Ohio Library Council which has produced a toolkit entitled "*Community Connections: A Toolkit for Public Libraries*"[49] The toolkit is designed "*to help*

[45] Vancouver Public Library, (2008), Working Together Project, Community-Led Libraries Toolkit. Report, http://www.librariesincommunities.ca/resources/Community-Led_Libraries_Toolkit.pdf (accessed 31/01/2011)

[46] The Network: Tackling social exclusion in libraries, museums, archives and galleries, http://www.seapn.org.uk/informationResources.asp?cat_id=16&cSort=dateDesc (accessed 31/01/2011)

[47] AUMA, Citizen engagement toolkit, http://www.auma.ca/live/AUMA/Toolkits+%26+Initiatives/Citizen_Engagement_Toolkit (accessed 31/01/2011)

[48] Tamarack – An Institute for Community Engagement, http://tamarackcommunity.ca/g1s6.html (accessed 31/01/2011)

[49] Ohio Library Council, (2006), Community connections: a toolkit for public libraries http://www.olc.org/communityconnections.asp (accessed 31/01/2011)

library directors develop a public engagement plan and to put in place policies that will protect and aid the library in times of challenge".

3.4 Australia

New South Wales Department of Planning in Sydney, Australia has developed a useful range of community engagement tools designed to address various forms of community engagement[50]. Some of the tools promote passive community engagement (e.g. informing, consultation, and participation) while others focus on more proactive approaches (e.g. collaboration, empowerment and development). The original toolkits were produced in print in 2003, but various updates have appeared on the Department's website.

Warringah Council in New South Wales published a 50 page community engagement toolkit[51] in October 2010. The toolkit is part of a total *Community Engagement Framework* developed by the Council to encourage effective engagement with the community and internally within the Council itself. The framework consists of an engagement policy, an engagement matrix and an engagement toolkit. The policy provides the broad framework and direction; the matrix provides staff with advice on engagement planning and guidance on how and when they should engage with the community for different situations; and the toolkit provides specific information and advice on how to undertake different types of engagement with the community. The toolkit reflects the five levels of community engagement recommended in the matrix and is based on the IAP2 spectrum for public participation similar to those noted above, i.e. inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower.

A draft national policy report on a five year strategic plan for public libraries was published by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) in October 2010[52, 53, 54]. The proposed vision and framework for public libraries is that they should be united, collaborative, community focused and valued. The strand advocating community focus (strategy 3) recommended that public library services should be shaped to suit the changing needs of communities and that a community engagement profiling toolkit should be produced to enable library managers to improve the service to their communities. Work on the toolkit was scheduled to begin in December 2010[55].

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[50] Tamarack, Profile of community engagement techniques, http://tamarackcommunity.ca/g3s136.html (accessed 31/01/2011)

[51] Warringah Council, Australia, October 2010, Community engagement policy and framework review (survey inviting citizens to have their say – and a Draft Community Engagement toolkit), http://yoursaywarringah.com.au/communityengagementframework (accessed 31/01/2011)

[52] Australian Library and Information Assoc (ALIA), (October 2010), National vision and framework 2010-2015, Document 1 of 3: Strategic overview for the library sector, http://www.pdf-finder.com/NATIONAL-VISION-AND-FRAMEWORK-2010---2015-Document-1-of-3-....html (accessed 31/01/2011)

[53] Australian Library and Information Assoc (ALIA), (October 2010), National vision and framework 2010-2015, Document 2 of 3: Workplan for the library sector, http://www.alia.org.au/governance/committees/public.libraries/NVF2of3draft.pdf (accessed 31/01/2011)

[54] Australian Library and Information Assoc (ALIA), National vision and framework 2010-2015, Document 3 of 3: Executive Summary, http://www.alia.org.au/governance/committees/public.libraries/NationalVisionandFrameworkDocument3.pdf (accessed 31/01/2011)

[55] Australian Library and Information Assoc (ALIA), (October 2010), National vision and framework 2010-2015, Document 2 of 3: Workplan for the library sector, http://www.alia.org.au/governance/committees/public.libraries/NVF2of3draft.pdf (accessed 31/01/2011)

Conclusion

It is evident from the above review that, over the last decade, the UK has been a leader in advancing community engagement by public libraries, both at national policy level and in terms of activities on the ground. This was set in motion as part of a wider government agenda on community empowerment and the encouragement of vibrant local democracy. Until recently, the government has backed up its agenda with the funding required for implementation and public library authorities have taken up the challenge and responded with enthusiasm to the government's call for innovation and change in public services. However, in the recent past, the Big Society is encountering problems of definition and financing and the recent abolition of the MLA [56] does not auger well for further research and development in this field.

[56] Harrison, J., (9 December 2010), Arts Council England assumes museums and libraries functions, http://www.mla.gov.uk/news_and_views/press_releases/2010/ACE_assumes_functions (accessed 31/01/2011)

Chapter 4

An International Review of Community Partnership Activities by Public Libraries

Community Partnership is defined in this report (section 1.2) as the establishment of formal links with service providers and other organisations who share the public library service ethos of openness, space for all and social inclusion. This involves researching and establishing appropriate partnerships to deliver joint services, projects and initiatives to benefit all sectors of society. It also involves assisting groups and individuals to achieve their full potential in their communities.

4.1 Examples of Initiatives at International Level

The International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) published a report in 2008 on trends in collaboration and cooperation in public libraries, archives and museums[1]. Various collaborative projects around the world were examined involving exhibitions, community programmes, digital resources and joint use facilities. Countries covered included the UK, Germany, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Canada, the US, Russia, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. On the basis of the evidence collected in the global review, the report provides guidelines on collaboration and offers some examples of best practice, as well as a comprehensive bibliography of resources consulted.

The IFLA report states that previous research has suggested that "*collaboration may enable … museums and libraries to strengthen their public standing, improve their services and programs, and better meet the needs of larger and more diverse cross-sections of learners, especially underserved learners*". On foot of this, IFLA posited that partnerships of various kinds can help museums, libraries and archives (MLA) to achieve these goals and serve the community to the best of their collective abilities.

The IFLA review revealed three main types of partnership: those focusing on collaborative programming, partnerships designed to create digital resources and co-location of partners. Collaborative programming includes community and heritage programmes and may involve partnership within the MLA sector and/or with other community based organisations. The second type of partnership, collaboration on the creation of digital collections, represents one of the major trends in institutional cooperation because of the obvious economies of scale, avoidance of duplication of effort, pooling of collective knowledge and the facilitation of a presence on the web for all partners. The third form of partnership, co-location and/or joint use, is discussed in Chapter 5 below.

4.2 The United Kingdom (UK)

Most of the UK policy reports, guidelines and toolkits on community engagement that have already been identified in Chapter 3 of this report are also of direct relevance to community partnership, which is a form of the more generic activity of community engagement.

For example, on a national level, the DCMS in its 2010 policy statement on the modernisation of public libraries[2] states that:

[1]Yarrow, A., Clubb, B. and Draper, J.L., (IFLA Public Libraries Section Standing Committee), (June 2008), Public Libraries, Archives and Museums: Trends in Collaboration and Cooperation, IFLA, ISBN 978-90-77897-28-7. http://archive.ifla.org/VII/s8/pub/Profrep108.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011

[2] Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), (March 2010), The modernisation review of public libraries - a policy statement, ISBN 978-0-10-178212-8. http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm78/7821/7821.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011

"*Partnership programmes between libraries and third sector partners like The Reading Agency (TRA), the National Literacy Trust and Booktrust have been instrumental in growing readership especially among young people. The number of library led reading groups nearly trebled to 10,000 between 2004 and 2008, and 100,000 people now belong to a group*".

It is recommended that "*all library services should explore innovative new funding streams and ways of delivering services through commercial partnerships or initiatives"* (and) *"using improved evidence of impact, library leaders should develop their role as a respected partner in cross-authority strategic partnerships that deliver improved outcomes for communities*".[3]

Proposal 43 of the DCMS policy statement advocates that: "*Local authority chief executives should champion the partnership agenda for libraries, encouraging relationships with the private and third sectors as well as those between libraries and other public services or institutions – for instance early years and children's centres, schools and their libraries; and libraries in further and higher education – to deliver improved services and greater efficiencies, particularly through co-location and joint back office functions*".[4]

Total Place[5], an initiative that looks at how a 'whole area' approach to public services can lead to better services at less cost, is cited as an example where library services could be engaged as a partner. There are 13 Total Place pilot areas in the UK focussing on themes covering physical and mental health of adults and children, crime and antisocial behaviour, deprivation, worklessness, asset management and procurement. The involvement of libraries could identify valuable improvements and efficiencies and, given their role as community hubs, libraries could be a critical part of this process.[6]

The MLA toolkit on community engagement in public libraries devotes a full section to community partnership[7]. The author of the report, Hayley Watts, states that "*working as a partnership will mean having an ongoing relationship with another organisation. Making a success of this relationship will require time and effort, clear communication, and shared goals*".[8] She recommends that the library should first decide on a target group or groups with which it wishes to engage, for example, young people, older people, people with reading and literacy issues etc. This will determine who the library's partners might be and the likely nature and extent of the partnership.

The toolkit lays out a step by step guide to seeking out new partnerships with appropriate bodies in the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and suggests the following steps:[9]

- "*Research, find out about the groups working in the field you are interested in.*
- *How do the organisation's values, aims and objectives relate to your interests?*

[3] Ibid p.9-10

[4] Ibid p.47

[5] Total Place: Better for less, http://www.localleadership.gov.uk/totalplace/ (accessed 4/04/2011

[6]Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), (March 2010), The modernisation review of public libraries - a policy statement, (p.30), ISBN 978-0-10-178212-8. http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm78/7821/7821.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

[7] Watts, H., (CSV Consulting), Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), (2006), Community engagement in public libraries: A toolkit for public library staff, ISBN 1-903743-98-2. http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/publications/~/media/Files/pdf/2006/community_engagement_toolkit_9659.ashx (accessed 31/01/2011)

[8] Ibid p.13

[9] Ibid p.13

- *Do any of your colleagues or existing partners already work with the organisation you are interested in talking to? Build on their knowledge.*
- *Before approaching potential partners, identify how you and the partners can benefit from working together.*
- *Be clear about what you have to offer.*
- *Be willing to negotiate.*
- *When you approach organisations think about what you want to achieve.*
- *Be open and flexible to working with different ideas, styles and networks.*
- *Be open to learning and receptive to new ideas/ ways of doing things*".

In addition to identifying the responsibilities of library staff in community partnership initiatives and in giving consideration to the drawing up a partnership agreement, the ingredients for effective community partnerships are identified by Watts as follows:[10]

- "*The partners have an agreed aim and shared objectives.*
- *Partner organisations have an equal say.*
- *Responsibilities that the community want to take on are defined.*
- *Boundaries of decision makers are agreed.*
- *There are plans showing how community members will be recruited.*
- *Mechanisms for good communication are in place.*
- *Training for members of the community is provided.*
- *How individuals will be managed/ supported is documented.*
- *Training for staff involved is provided.*
- *Each group has clear roles and responsibilities.*
- *How to handle disputes or disagreements.*
- *What you can and cannot compromise about*".

VCS organisations that might be considered as potential partners by library authorities include community groups, charities, social enterprises, self-help groups and various other local groups. Where community partnership is intended by the library as a means of promoting social cohesion, it is suggested that efforts be made to engage representative bodies of new groups of non-users, for example, people from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups, disabled people, faith communities, employed people, young people and older people.

Linda Ashcroft[11] has described a study undertaken in 2005 for the MLA on partnerships between public libraries and other agencies in England for the provision of adult learning. The aim of the study was "*to review selectively adult learning provision inside and outside public libraries in England, to identify key strengths in public library services for adult learners and to produce definitions of, and a baseline level for, adult learning provision within public libraries in England*".

The purposeful select sample of six library services in the study all worked with other organisations to provide adult learning services, and a wide range of partners had been established.

A large selection of courses and services was on offer, including basic ICT courses, English as a second language and "Bitesize" taster courses to attract new learners. This diversity in provision led to diversity in partnerships between libraries and other agencies. Partner organisations needed to have access to library space to deliver adult learning services, thereby encouraging adult learners into the library environment. All

[10] Ibid p.14

[11] Ashcroft, L., (2008), Partnerships between Public Libraries and other agencies in England for provision of adult learning, World Library and Information Congress, 74th IFLA General Conference and Council, 10-14 August 2008, Quebec, Canada. . http://archive.ifla.org/IV/ifla74/papers/122-Ashcroft-en.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

library services sampled expressed a willingness to provide space, facilities and ambience for learners. Public library staff were found to be flexible in their approach to adult learning and were innovative, willing to try new ideas, and offer a variety of courses and support services. In general, public library authorities demonstrated adaptability and benefited significantly by working in partnership with other organisations.

4.3 North America – Canada and the United States (US)

4.3.1 Canada

Partnership experiences at Hamilton Public Library Service in Ontario have been described by Hovius[12]. Various forms of partnership are described in detail, together with lessons learned by the library. Examples include links with an Adult Basic Education Association, a Disability Information Services Helpline, Career and Employment Resources Centres, the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board, Multicultural Early Learning Initiatives (MELD), Summer Reading Clubs, the Hamilton Spectator, the City of Hamilton, the Hamilton-Wentworth Information Network, the Hamilton Community Portal and the Hamilton Tiger Cats football team.

Barrie Public Library, Ontario is also an active participant in community partnership. The library's website[13] states that "*Barrie Public Library has a large number of valuable partnerships within our community. Our partnerships take different forms, from informal to formal, and encompass various sections of our community such as business, not-for-profit groups and charities, and corporate. We believe that by forging vital links - by working with business, and by assisting other groups and organisations - we help to build a strong vibrant community for all who live in the Barrie area*".

As part of various community partnership initiatives the library undertakes the following:

- Puts on displays as part of the ArtCity project in collaboration with the MacLaren Art Centre.
- houses the genealogy collection of the Ontario Genealogical Society (Simcoe County Branch).
- acts as host for the annual Barrie Jazz and Blues Festival.
- hosts monthly open stage events and occasional folk concerts.
- participates in the Barrie Dragon Boat Festival in cooperation with various businesses and community groups.

4.3.2 US

Public libraries are currently at the top of the policy agenda in the US as evidenced by the launch of strategic report by the Urban Libraries Council on 8 November 2010 – *Partners for the Future: Public libraries and local governments creating sustainable communities*[14]. The report examines how public libraries can work with municipal and county governments to make their communities more economically prosperous, environmentally sustainable, and socially equitable.

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[12] Hovius, Beth, (Aug 2005), Public library partnerships which ad d value to the community: The Hamilton Library experience, World Library and Information Congress: 71st IFLA General Conference and Council, 14-18 August 2005, Oslo, Norway. http://archive.ifla.org/IV/ifla71/papers/041e-Hovius.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

[13] Barrie Public Library, Community partnerships, http://www.library.barrie.on.ca/about/community/community_open.htm (accessed 4/04/2011)

[14] Urban Libraries Council (ULC), (8 November 2010), Partners for the future: Public libraries and local governments creating sustainable communities, ULC, Chicago. http://urbanlibraries.org/associations/9851/files/0110ulc_sustainability_singlepages_rev.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

In a summary of the report, the Colorado Association of Libraries[15] identified eight categories of initiatives undertaken by public libraries in cooperation with other local (municipal and county) government bodies i.e.

- "*Library Literacy programmes, for example, The Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County trained librarians in early childhood development skills and the engagement of parents and other caregivers in programs for young readers.*
- *Libraries are connecting unemployed or underemployed residents with employment opportunities and skill development programs*
- *Libraries are supporting small local businesses. On an annual basis, the Johnson County Library in Kansas holds "GovFest for Entrepreneurs" to help local small business owners connect with government and non-profit services.*
- *Library building construction is being used to inspire downtown and neighborhood real estate development.*
- *Library buildings are being used to demonstrate environmentally friendly (so-called "green") technologies to reduce energy consumption in public buildings. The Fayettville Public Library in Fayettville, Arkansas is part of a city government-public library-university program to test solar energy. Thanks to a grant from the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), 60 solar panels were designed and installed on the roof of the library, which incidentally helps a small company from the area, Arkansas Power Electronics International.*
- *Libraries are helping educate the public about individual environmental responsibility. The San Francisco Public Library has the Green Stacks outreach program to alter residents to local priorities. In Virginia, the Arlington Public Library had a speakers' series attended by the county board chair that featured prominent authors.*
- *Libraries are providing resources for vulnerable people (the freshly unemployed, immigrants, and "at-risk youth"). The Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County works closely with the Ohio One Stop workforce development center, Consumer Credit Counseling, and Catholic Charities.*
- *Libraries are meeting their community's immediate needs while building long-term economic stability. Part of that involves helping people face the future with hope, if not confidence, during these dark economic times"*.

Techsoup for Libraries[16], a non-profit organisation with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation suggests the following tips for creating strong partnerships:

- "*Build from existing relationships.*
- *Make sure the library is in the right place at the right time.*
- *Join existing coalitions and networks.*
- *Target groups and initiate specific strategies.*
- *Conduct focus groups to stay aware of community needs and opportunities.*
- *Organize a committee or meetings with community leaders.*
- *Contact members individually or meet one-on-one with leaders informally.*
- *Identify local groups and potential community partners.*
- *Include individuals and organizations that are well connected to the community.*
- *Make sure there are benefits for all parties.*
- *Utilize effective communication strategies.*

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[15] Colorado Association of Libraries, (15 November 2010), ULC report on the future of libraries, http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=10150334512340122 (accessed 4/04/2011)

[16] Techsoup for Libraries: Learning and Resources for Libraries, Tips and techniques for creating strong partnerships, http://www.techsoupforlibraries.org/planning-for-success/communication-and-partnerships/tools/tips-and-techniques-for-creating-strong-pa (accessed 4/04/2011)

- *Have designated and responsible representatives.*
- *Focus on a specific project, program or issue.*
- *Put the right people in the right positions. Because collaborations are built on trust and convergent goals, the major determinate of success lies in the human factor*".

As part of its programme to promote collaboration in library environments, Techsoup for Libraries has published details of ten examples of successful collaborative projects in the following public libraries[17]: Tempe in Arizona, Salt Lake City, Laramie County, Nashville, Boston, Brooks Memorial Library in Vermont, Southwest Harbor on Mount Desert Island in Maine, Pryor, Richland County and Princeton. A wide range of collaboration, co-location and partnership arrangements is represented in the sample and it covers services aimed at the full demographic spectrum of user and non-user, socioeconomic, ethnic and disadvantaged groups in the community.

A good example of a very recent (February 2011) press release on a community partnership programme is that of Madison County Public Library in North Carolina[18]. The library is partnered with Madison County Partnership for Children, Smart Start, in two ways. Firstly, Smart Start purchases books, magazines and videos with information on children up to age five and aimed primarily at parents and child care workers. The library hosts the Smart Start resources in a special collection in the children's wing of the Central Library, thereby providing access to the public. Secondly, the library also hosts the Kith & Kin programme at the Central Library and at the branch in Hot Springs. This is a Smart Start funded programme which is focused on very young children and their carers and also offers parents and grandparents ideas for playing with their children at home. The programme aims to help infants and toddlers to grow and learn in a healthy environment through games, music and a wide range of other activities.

Madison Public Library also has a partnership agreement with JobLink as a means of assisting job seekers, people looking for a career change and those wishing to pursue a college education through online programmes. As part of the agreement the library provides accommodation for JobLink staff so that they can meet face to face with members of the public and give one-to-one assistance on jobs and careers. The partnership has had a knock on effect on library staff by helping them to become more familiar with the range of services offered by JobLink and other agencies and online programs to help individuals to connect to the resources they need.

With the onset of summer, the library's children's services and adult programming staff "*are exploring ways to bring members of other agencies to the library to share their knowledge and expertise with adults and children on many topics ranging from fire safety, to plant and animal life, to making music or writing stories*".

Finally, the library's meeting rooms are busy with "*organizations and groups of all kinds who need a space where they can share ideas, present programs, and enjoy fellowship with each other*".

For those interested in partnerships between public libraries and schools, Carleton[19] has produced a useful bibliography.

[17] Techsoup for Libraries: Learning and Resources for Libraries, Ten examples of successful library collaborative projects, http://www.techsoupforlibraries.org/cookbook-3/communication-and-partnerships/tools/ten-examples-of-successful-library-collaborative-pro (accessed 4/04/2011)

[18] Phillips, Kathleen., (3 Feb 2011), Community partnerships, Madison County Public Library, North Carolina, US, http://www.madisoncountylibrary.org/home/director-s-page/communitypartnerships-bykathleenphillipslibrarydirector (accessed 4/04/2011)

[19] Carleton, P., (modified by Hardacre, M.), (19/08/2009), Schools/public library partnerships bibliography. http://connect.ala.org/node/80733 (accessed 4/04/2011)

4.4 Australia

As already noted in Chapter 3 on Community Engagement, a draft national policy report on a five year strategic plan for public libraries was published by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) in October 2010[20][21]. The proposed vision and framework for public libraries is that they should be united, collaborative, community focused and valued. The strand advocating community focus (strategy 3) recommended that public library services should be shaped to suit the changing needs of communities and that a community engagement profiling toolkit should be produced to enable library managers to improve the service to their communities. It is also recommended in the national workplan[22] (section 2.7) that a target partnership programme be developed for public libraries in order to take advantage of opportunities to further develop and expand services.

In Australia partnerships are commonplace in public libraries. They vary from local agreements regarding sharing a venue and associated costs of programmes to large scale agreements between government agencies or business. One such community partnership exists between Fairfield Library Service[23] and Liverpool Library Service[24] in Sydney and the Macarthur Community College[25]. The programme "Cool Babies" is a free six week programme designed to educate parents about the importance of talking, listening, reading and playing with their babies from birth[26]. Parents are encouraged to use reading as a tool to aid baby's development and are introduced by library staff to a range of books to do this. This fosters parenting and reading skills. As the baby develops parents move onto the library's Baby Time programme where they can continue mixing with other babies and learn to build on new skills. The programme is taught in the libraries but administered by the college.

Several other early literacy programmes exist in Australia such as the RED Tent Literacy project in Fairfield[27]. This is an early literacy interest group where the library service partners educational and non governmental agencies to get reading out into the community to people who might not necessarily use either the library service or other available services. A tent is used as a marquee to store picture books and can be transported to different events such as festivals and parks. These initiatives emphasize the importance of partnership not just for financial reasons but also as a means of contributing to community inclusion.

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[20] Australian Library and Information Assoc (ALIA), (October 2010), National vision and framework 2010-2015, Document 1 of 3: Strategic overview for the library sector, http://www.pdf-finder.com/NATIONAL-VISION-AND-FRAMEWORK-2010---2015-Document-1-of-3-....html (accessed 4/04/2011)

[21] Australian Library and Information Assoc (ALIA), National vision and framework 2010-2015, Document 3 of 3: Executive Summary, http://www.alia.org.au/governance/committees/public.libraries/NationalVisionandFrameworkDocument3.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

[22] Australian Library and Information Assoc (ALIA), (October 2010), National vision and framework 2010-2015, Document 2 of 3: Workplan for the library sector, http://www.alia.org.au/governance/committees/public.libraries/NVF2of3draft.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

[23] Fairfield City Library and Museum, http://www.fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au/default.asp?iNavCatId=1&iSubCatId=12 (accessed 4/04/2011)

[24] Liverpool City Library Services, http://www.liverpool.nsw.gov.au/library.htm (accessed 4/04/2011)

[25] Macarthur Community College, http://www.macarthurcc.com.au/index.html (accessed 4/04/2011)

[26] Working with schools, parents and other community groups, http://goliath.ecnext.com/coms2/gi_0199-6649472/Working-with-schools-parents-and.html (accessed 4/04/2011)

[27] Bourke, Carolyn, Libraries for Life: Creating library services for a diverse Community, Fairfield City Council, Australia, http://lib.tut.ac.za/ifla/documents/carolynbourke.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

Finally, on the basis of a survey of public libraries in Australia, Bourke has reviewed practical ways that public libraries can work with children and their families to provide better learning outcomes, and promote literacy and numeracy skills in culturally and linguistically diverse communities[28]. She provides examples of community partnerships and discusses specific library programs which encourage building on the strengths of the community and working in partnership with a wide range of government, business and not for profit organisations.

[28]Bourke, Carolyn, (Sept 2007), Public libraries: partnerships, funding and relevance, Australasian Public Libraries and Information Services, http://www.britannica.com/bps/additionalcontent/18/26651972/PUBLIC-LIBRARIES-PARTNERSHIPS-FUNDING-AND-RELEVANCE (accessed 4/04/2011)

Chapter 5

An International Review of Joint Use Libraries

The definition of "*joint use*" adopted in this report is the sharing of library premises with other groups in the community such as, for example, health service providers or heritage centres; or providing library services to distinct user groups such as the general public and college students from one library premises. Joint use can allow for greater use of a premises, or better stock and service provision for greater numbers of people.

According to the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), joint-use libraries either serve two or more distinct user groups and are managed co-operatively or operate two or more services from a single shared facility. Examples of joint-use facilities include joint school and public libraries, joint public and university libraries, joint public and health libraries and joint public libraries and community services[1].

Other examples of joint use arrangements within local communities include the library as an anchor tenant in shopping centres, or the co-location of the public library with facilities such as cultural, community, health or tourist information centres and county or town council service centres.

According to Massis[2], reporting on an international conference held in Manchester UK in 2007, the top challenges facing joint use are funding, staffing and evaluation[3]. The conference concluded that joint-use libraries offer significant benefits, including –

- "*shared resources,*
- *greater accessibility to collections and technology*
- *the opportunity to reach new users*
- *the possibility of collaboration on new and varied services*".

McNicol[4] agrees that benefits are to be derived from joint use, for example, between a public and a school library and cites the following:

- "*elimination of duplication of materials*
- *sharing of costs*
- *convenience of longer opening hours*
- *presence of a professional librarian in a school*
- *availability of a broader range of formats*
- *provision of a library service in small communities*
- *acting as a community focal point*

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[1] CILIP, Joint use libraries: a practical guide. http://www.cilip.org.uk/membership/benefits/informed/practical-guides/Pages/joint-use-libraries.aspx (accessed 4/04/2011)

[2] Massis, B., (2007), Joint-use Libraries get analysis and encouragement, OH Library Journal 1-09-2007 http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6471094.html (accessed 4/04/2011)

[3] Bundy, A. (ed), (2007), Joint use libraries: an international conference, 19-21 June 2007, Manchester, UK, Proceedings, ISBN 9780980330144.

[4] McNicol, S., (2003), Joint use libraries in the UK, Australasian Public Library and Information Services, June 2003, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_hb3315/is_2_16/ai_n29012328/?tag=rel.res3 (accessed 4/04/2011)

- *fostering greater understanding between the school and community*
- *educational advantages such as a whole community approach to information literacy development and the promotion of lifelong learning*"

She identifies the disadvantages of joint-use libraries, again in the context of public library/school joint use, to be as follows:

- "*the distance of joint use libraries from business and shopping areas*
- *duplication of resources*
- *lack of real savings*
- *differing purposes of school and public libraries*
- *insufficient training for staff*
- *difficulties meeting the great variety of user needs*
- *reluctance of adults to use a library in a school building during school hours*"

Although not specifically mentioned by McNicol, security and keyholding responsibilities are issues to be addressed if a library premises is to be used by community groups outside library opening hours.

5.1 Examples of Initiatives at International Level

In the IFLA report on trends in collaboration and cooperation, already referred to in Chapter 4 above[5], a joint use library facility was defined as "*a cooperative arrangement between a library and another institution, such as a school, community college or university, in which both institutions share the same facility and/or collections*"[6]. Three types of joint use/integrated facilities were identified and a large number of case studies worldwide were discussed.

- Minimal integration (co-located facilities with individual services maintained)
- Selective integration (sharing of specific projects of departments)
- Full integration (both facilities share one mission)

Examples of best practices in the field of library, museum and archival collaboration were selected on the basis of one or more of the following criteria:

- "*They support life-long learning and/or community development*
- *They optimise the services provided*
- *They enable universal access to community resources*
- *They broaden the customer base in the community for the institutions involved*
- *They address the need for preservation of heritage materials*" [7]

A bullet point guide to successful collaboration is distilled from the review of best practice and presented as a five stage process i.e. preplanning, planning, implementation, evaluation and sharing experience.

[5] Yarrow, A., Clubb, B. and Draper, J.L., (IFLA Public Libraries Section Standing Committee), (June 2008), Public Libraries, Archives and Museums: Trends in Collaboration and Cooperation, IFLA, ISBN 978-90-77897-28-7. http://archive.ifla.org/VII/s8/pub/Profrep108.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

[6] Ibid, p.25

[7] Ibid, p.31

As a general guide to developments in various countries, the entire Spring 2006 issue of *Library Trends*[8] is devoted to joint use libraries and includes a useful contribution by Ken Haycock[9] offering guidelines for successful dual-use libraries.

The proceedings of an international conference held in Manchester in 2007 are also a useful source of developments in Europe, North America and Australia[10].

5.2 The United Kingdom (UK)

CILIP[11] has produced a practical guide which "*explains what is meant by a joint-use library and gives a brief history of the development of joint-use library services in the UK. Some advantages and disadvantages are listed. Recent policy supporting joint-use libraries is outlined, and examples of frameworks of cooperation are set out. There is also guidance on setting up and evaluating a joint-use library*".

The development of joint use libraries in the UK has been well documented by Sarah McNicol[12] of the University of Central England, Birmingham. In an early review (2003) she claimed that "*joint use libraries have been largely neglected in the UK"* (although) *"a number of recent government initiatives have stimulated greater interest in the idea of joint school and public library facilities*". In her recent book she examines all aspects of joint use libraries, including design, operational and evaluation issues as well as partnership working, staffing, management and community involvement. The forms of joint use considered include public-school, public-college, public-university and health-university libraries[13].
Wigan in Lancashire is a large metropolitan borough midway between Liverpool and Manchester with a population of 300,000 and an area of about 200 square kilometres. The Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust[14], a charitable body working on behalf of Wigan Council to deliver leisure and cultural facilities throughout the borough, has a policy of "*co-locating libraries with similar social agencies and ensuring libraries are at the heart of communities*". A good example of a relatively recent adventurous joint use initiative in the UK is represented by the Platt Bridge Community library which opened in November 2006[15]. This project was part

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[8] Library Trends, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1387/is_4_54/ (accessed 4/04/2011)

[9] Haycock, K., Dual use libraries: guidelines for success, Library Trends, Spring 2006. http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1387/is_4_54/ai_n26915945/?tag=content;col1 (accessed 4/04/2011)

[10] Joint use libraries: an international conference, Manchester, 19-21 June 2007, http://www.ebase.bcu.ac.uk/events/joint-use-conference.htm (accessed 4/04/2011)

[11] CILIP, Joint use libraries: a practical guide. http://www.cilip.org.uk/membership/benefits/informed/practical-guides/Pages/joint-use-libraries.aspx (accessed 4/04/2011)

[12] McNicol, S., (2003), Joint use libraries in the UK, Australasian Public Library and Information Services, June 2003, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_hb3315/is_2_16/ai_n29012328/?tag=rel.res3 (accessed 4/04/2011)

[13] McNicol, S., (2008), Joint use libraries, pbk, Woodhead Publishing, ISBN 9781843343844 http://www.bookshop.kennys.ie/book/UK/9781843343844/Joint_Use_Libraries%22 see also http://www.woodheadpublishing.com/en/book.aspx?bookID=1851&ChandosTitle=1 (accessed 4/04/2011)

[14] Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust, http://www.wlct.org/aboutus/aboutus.htm (accessed 4/04/2011)

[15] Platt Bridge Community Library, Wigan, http://www.ebase.bcu.ac.uk/dualuse/featured.htm (accessed 4/04/2011)

of Platt Bridge Community First, "*an extended school project which includes a new primary school for over 300 pupils; a Sure Start children's centre with 'wrap-around' nursery and full day care and baby unit; a family support centre; a community health centre, a public library and a housing office.* The Abram library, which had previously served the Wigan borough and was the second quietest library in terms of book issues, was relocated to Platt Bridge. The new Community Library "*aims to increase visitor numbers; maximise opening hours; increase issues; improve access to IT and information; and improve access to and participation in learning activities*".

The physical layout of the building is such that the library desk, in addition to serving library users, also functions as the main reception point for visitors to the school, Surestart and the family support centre. This means that the duties of library staff have been extended to include general reception work such as room booking and referrals to other agencies in the building. Initially, some concern was expressed by library staff at having to take on extra duties and work with staff from other services. However, the project manager worked to keep them informed and involved in the process and most library staff have now come to see the benefits of co-location and cooperation and have developed good working relationships with staff employed in other centres.

Significant changes have resulted from the joint-use arrangement. For example, demand in the afternoons has led to a revision of library opening hours to cater for local pupils and parents, as well as children from other schools, who wish to use the library after school. The library has extended its market research, is attracting users from a wider catchment area and book issues have increased. On the financial side, the school makes an annual contribution towards the cost of children's bookstock and joint use has resulted in significant saving on overheads for the library service.

Many other examples of joint use initiatives involving public libraries in the UK are described in the proceedings of the Manchester conference referred to above, including the following[16]:

- Tribal Group UK, *Wootton Fields Joint Use public/school library*, (Richard Beveridge)
- Westlothian Library Service - Blac*kburn Connected: A joint use case study*, (Irene Brough)
- Staffordshire Library Service - Staffordshire's one stop shops, (Hilary Jackson)
- Bolton Library Service – *The Bolton Library experience: Collaborative communities – a new service delivery model for lifelong learning in Scotland*, (Mary Keane)
- Warwickshire Library and Information Services, *Joint use of libraries*, (Ayub Khan)
- Hull Central Library, *Staffing and management of joint use libraries: a case study*, (Susan Richmond)
- Manchester Library and Information Service, *Partnership and co-location: the Mancunian way*, (Neil MacInnes). Projects reported in Manchester involved the co-location of a health centre, GP, dentist surgeries, a leisure centre (pool and gym), café, college, adult education centre, job centre and a public library.

Birmingham City University operates a website, *Joint Use Library Community of Practice,* which "i*s intended to support anyone working in or managing a dual use library - or provide information for anyone with a general interest in the area*". The website[17] offers the following facilities

- Database of joint use libraries: a database of basic information about joint use libraries, including contact details. The database may be viewed and library authorities may add details of their own libraries.

[16] Joint use libraries: an international conference, Manchester, 19-21 June 2007, http://www.ebase.bcu.ac.uk/events/joint-use-conference.htm (accessed 4/04/2011)

[17] Birmingham City University, Joint Use Library Community of Practice, http://www.ebase.bcu.ac.uk/dualuse/index.htm (accessed 4/04/2011)

- Featured library: One library from the database is featured each quarter, for example, Platt Bridge in Wigan.
- Evidence base - Details of articles, reports, case studies and other information about joint use libraries around the world.

5.3 North America

The American Library Association (ALA) has recently published a fact sheet containing a selected list of articles, books, and web sites covering the subject of combined and joint-use libraries[18]. The two most common types of joint use libraries are covered - public libraries combined with school library media centers and public libraries combined with academic libraries.

MacDougall[19] describes a five year assessment of a fully integrated joint use programme in 2007 at the Alvin Sherman Library of Nova Southeastern University (NSU), Fort Lauderdale, Broward County in Florida. She claims that NSU is the largest independent higher education institution in the US and has a student body of 26,000. There is an extensive network of regional and branch public libraries serving a population of approximately 1.8 million in the county and the Broward library authority has a reputation for innovative partnerships with over 500 community partners.

A new library, planned and built under a 40 year contract by the university and the local library authority, was built as a green field project during 2000-1 for fully integrated joint use by university students and the general public. The library, which is owned, managed and staffed by the university, provides a full range of services to students and public alike and stages regular exhibitions and other public events such as storytelling, reading and literacy programmes, to promote community involvement. Regular monitoring of the library since 2002 has revealed the following:

- "*Circulation statistics have shown the public users consistently check out over 50% of all library items circulated.*
- *Reference questions show 40% are from public users.*
- *Circulation and reference statistics have increased dramatically in the new library for student groups.*
- *Entrance gate statistics show 500,000 – 600,000 visitors a year.*
- *Since opening there have been over 43,000 library cards issued to public users*".

Other examples of joint use libraries in the US and Canada include those described by Barton and Ryan of the Metropolitan State University, Bauer of Florida State University, Bozeman of the University of Central Florida, Kifer of San Jose State University and McNamee of Alberta Municipal Affairs and Housing, Canada[20].

5.4 Australia

The Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) in a recent policy statement[21], supports the establishment of joint-use libraries "*if they equal or better the level of service which would be given in*

[18] ALA, (June 2010), Joint use libraries: a bibliography, ALA Fact Sheet no. 20, http://www.ala.org/ala/professionalresources/libfactsheets/alalibraryfactsheet20.cfm (accessed 4/04/2011)

[19] Harriett MacDougall, Alvin Sherman Library, Nova Southeastern University, USA, A five year assessment of a large joint use library in south east Florida, http://www.ebase.bcu.ac.uk/events/joint-use-conference.htm (Powerpoint presentation) (accessed 4/04/2011)

[20] Joint use libraries: an international conference, Manchester, 19-21 June 2007, http://www.ebase.bcu.ac.uk/events/joint-use-conference.htm (accessed 4/04/2011)

separate facilities". ALIA claims that "*experience in Australia and overseas has shown that joint-use libraries are complex to manage and operate, are particularly demanding of staff, and are vulnerable to operational difficulties or failure*".

Criteria for successful joint-use library development are defined by the ALIA to be as follows:

- "*The unequivocal commitment of all interested parties;*
- *Full consultation involving all the parties concerned prior to any decision on establishment;*
- *Professional advice at an early stage of consideration of a joint-use library - the Australian Library and Information Association can supply names of appropriate consultants;*
- *Careful consideration of the site of the institution, and of the position and visibility of the library so that convenient access for all potential users is guaranteed;*
- *Access by all users during the institution's operating hours, with adequate provision for use outside those hours and during vacations;*
- *Signing of a formal agreement by each of the parties covering all areas relating to the development, funding and continued maintenance of the library;*
- *The size of the library and its staffing to meet the needs of the whole community served;*
- *Formal agreement on the process to be followed for a new building or extensions if, after a period of operation, the size of the library proves to be inadequate;*
- *A Board of Management, representative of all parties and advisory to the library manager;*
- *An integrated staffing structure with a single library manager. Where a joint-use library is to serve as the library for an educational institution and the public, the appointment of staff with education and public library expertise is desirable;*
- *A regular, preferably externally facilitated, evaluation of the library*".

Best practice examples of shared facility libraries, together with guidelines and a toolkit, are provided by the State Library of Queensland in a recent bibliography[22].

A good example of an Australian joint use library is the Rockingham Regional Campus Community Library[23] in Queensland which was established in February 1998. It aims to meet the information and recreational needs of three stakeholder groups: Murdoch University, serving 18,000 students and 1,400 staff, the Challenger Institute of Technology, which has 25,000 full and part time students and the city of Rockingham with a population of 100,230.

The library is governed one employer, Murdoch University, which provides outsourced library services to Challenger Institute and the City of Rockingham. It is managed by a campus librarian with support from a Policy Advisory Committee which has representation from all stakeholder groups. The Committee meets quarterly to approve the library budget, endorse its strategic direction and plan for the future needs of the three partner institutions. The library has provided a client services charter on its website, setting out its mission and vision, defining what can be expected of the service, explaining how clients can help the service and informing them how to submit complaints if appropriate.

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[21] ALIA statement on joint use libraries, http://www.alia.org.au/policies/joint-use.html (accessed 4/04/2011)

[22] Guidelines and toolkit for shared facilities best practice, (Dec 2008), http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/132093/Guidelines_and_toolkit.pdf (in) State Library of Queensland, Queensland public library standards and guidelines, http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/info/publib/policy/guidelines (accessed 4/04/2011)

[23] The Rockingham Regional Campus Community Library, http://rockinghamlibrary.murdoch.edu.au/about.html (accessed 4/04/2011)

The issue of evaluation of joint use programmes has been raised by Bundy[24] who notes that most published work relates to combinations of high school and public libraries. He suggests that "*literature often still emphasizes the susceptibility of joint use libraries to dysfunctionality or even failures, although the record of successful combinations is improving because of informed planning and consideration of the requirements for success. Evaluation of joint use library performance and progress is one requirement that is still given little attention in planning and formal agreements. The uniqueness of most joint use libraries also militates against general evaluation criteria and benchmarking. Difficulties in a joint use library, therefore, tend to be unrecognized by its institutional partners until there is a crisis*".

He recommends continuous self-evaluation and a commitment to transparent periodic external evaluation as a means of minimizing difficulties and fostering joint use library synergies. He provides a joint use library evaluation methodology which involves an internal ongoing formative evaluation using critical success factors together with external five-to-seven-year reviews commencing within three years of a library's establishment.

[24] Bundy, A., Libraries like no others: evaluating the performance and progress of joint use libraries, Library Trends, Spring 2006, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1387/is_4_54/ai_n26915946/?tag=content;col1 (accessed 4/04/2011)

Chapter 6

An International Review of Volunteering in Public Libraries

In this report (section 1.1) volunteering is defined as individuals or groups that freely offer their services of time and expertise for the benefit of their local community and/or society at large. This study is also focused on the establishment of volunteer programmes through community engagement and partnership initiatives and joint use policies for the betterment of public library service provision

6.1 Examples of Initiatives at International Level

In 2006 the European Volunteer Centre, a network of 38 development agencies and volunteer centres, whose aim is to support voluntary activity, published a manifesto[1] for volunteering in Europe. The manifesto was targeted at European decision makers and aimed to -

- explain why volunteering matters,
- propose concrete actions on how representatives of the EU institutions can, within their respective powers and competences, recognise, promote and facilitate volunteering in the EU,
- encourage stakeholders from government, business and the NGO sectors to work together to ensure a "volunteer friendly society",
- demonstrate how the European Union contributes to this common effort.

The manifesto claimed that volunteering, in all its forms, plays a crucial role across the EU and specifically that it –

- is a means of advancing social inclusion and integration, contributing to a cohesive society and social capital,
- contributes to positive change in society,
- can be used as a tool to stimulate active and responsible European citizenship,
- offers volunteers opportunities to gain and exercise a wide range of skills that often lead to paid jobs based on these skills,
- helps to improve the quantity and quality of services and to creatively develop new services which, in turn, can lead to new employment opportunities.

The CEV manifesto urged institutions of the EU to engage in a volunteering agenda on the basis of three main strands – (a) actively promote and recognise volunteering, (b) support and facilitate volunteering and (c) actively foster networking.

Under (a) active promotion and recognition of volunteering, it was recommended that Institutions of the EU should –

[1] European Volunteer Centre (CEV) and Volunteering England, (2006), Manifesto for volunteering in Europe http://www.cev.be/64-cev_manifesto_for_volunteering_in_europe-en.html (accessed 4/04/2011)

- continue special volunteering programmes such as those aimed at young people and develop similar programmes for other social groups such as the elderly and people with disabilities,
- acknowledge the major impact of volunteering on the inclusion and empowerment of traditionally excluded social groups,
- acknowledge the value of volunteering in the development of skills and competences, lifelong learning and employability of volunteers,
- pay special attention to granting official recognition of skills developed through non-formal and informal learning experiences,
- recognise the need for a greater understanding of the EU volunteering landscape and the need for European comparative research in this area,
- include alternative economic indicators in the EUROSTAT database that make the contribution of the non-profit sector, including volunteering, more visible,
- designate a European Year of Active Citizenship through Volunteering.

The second strand, (b) supporting and facilitating volunteering, included recommendations to –

- the institutions of the EU to publish a white paper on voluntary action and active citizenship,
- national governments to formulate national volunteering policies,
- the EU and national governments to allocate resources on a matching funds basis for a European Volunteer Centre Development Fund.

The third layer of recommendations (c) focused on networking and advocated the establishment of working groups and single access points in the European Commission and Parliament to deal with the horizontal nature of volunteering in the framework of EU policies. It also proposed mechanisms for the exchange of information and data on volunteering across the EU and the building of relationships between relevant corporate bodies at national and EU levels to foster volunteering policies and programmes.

A study on volunteering in the European Union was launched by EU Directorate General on Education and Culture (DG-EAC) at the end of 2008 within the context of its reflections on volunteering and as part of its preparation for a European Year of Volunteering[2].

The final report[3], released in February 2010, "*provides research and insights into the current situation of volunteering in the European Union. It includes a comparative analysis of volunteering in 27 Member States with 27 national reports, a sector study on volunteering in sport and 27 national fiches on volunteering in sport*".

The report reveals significant differences in the level of volunteering identified in the 27 member states, ranging from approximately 10% to over 40% of the adult population engaging in voluntary activities. Volunteering levels are ranked as very high, high, medium high, relatively low and low. Countries in the high to very high categories include Austria, UK, Scandinavia, Netherlands,

[2] European Commission (Feb 2010), Press release: The Study on Volunteering in the European Union is now available online (including 27 national reports) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/news/news1015_en.htm (accessed 4/04/2011)

[3] GHK for Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), EU- DG Education & Culture, (Feb 2010), Study on Volunteering in the European Union: Final Report, pp 326, http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/eyv2011/doc/Volunteering%20in%20the%20EU%20Final%20Report.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

Germany and Luxembourg while Ireland, together with Belgium, Portugal, Spain and some central and eastern European member states, ranks among the relatively low level of volunteering at 10-19% of the adult population. However, caution is advised in making comparisons because survey methodologies varied among member states.

The main challenges for volunteering were identified as follows:

- engaging volunteers: for example, difficulties due to mismatch between the needs of voluntary bodies and the aspirations of volunteers, preference for short rather than long term commitment by volunteers etc.,
- increasing professionalism of the voluntary sector which is leading to volunteers being confronted with increasingly difficult tasks requiring specialist skills,
- the lack of a clear legal framework in many member states for engaging volunteers,
- lack of sustainable funding for volunteering,
- lack of recognition and reward for voluntary work.

The report advocates a number of measures at EU and national levels which mirror closely those of the 2006 CEV manifesto on volunteering.

One of the recommendations of the CEV manifesto, to designate a European Year of Active Citizenship through Volunteering, has been accepted and 2011 has been designated by the European Commission as the European Year of Volunteering (EYV)[4]. The four main objectives of the Year are to-

1. "*create an enabling and facilitating environment for volunteering in the EU,*
2. *empower volunteer organisations and improve the quality of volunteering,*
3. *reward and recognise volunteering activities,*
4. *raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering*".

The programme was allocated a preparatory actions budget of €3 million in 2010 and an implementation budget of €8 million for 2011. The programme is aimed at existing and potential volunteers, policy makers and civil society at large. A wide range of activities is anticipated including communication and awareness-raising measures i.e. EYV Tour, EYV Relay and an EYV Website, as well as a number of thematic conferences.

It is intended to involve all levels of society in the programme – European, national, regional and local, but the emphasis is very much on a bottom-up approach in order to ensure that ownership of the European Year will remain as much as possible with the volunteers and the volunteer organisations.

Each Member State has been asked to designate a National Coordinating Body (NCB) that will be responsible for the planning, coordination and organisation of events and activities in its territory during the European Year. The European Commission will be working closely with the NCBs and with the EYV 2011 Alliance, an informal network of major NGO European networks representing more than 1500 volunteering organisations across the EU. Volunteer Ireland has been appointed NCB for Ireland.

[4] EU, (Sept 2010), European Year of Volunteering 2011 http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/focus/focus840_en.htm (accessed 4/04/2011)

6.2 United Kingdom (UK)

According to a recent (2010) policy statement[5] by the UK Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) "*All libraries should consider how best to attract, nurture and utilise volunteers, to complement their workforce*".

The policy report states that "*volunteers play an important role in supporting key activities by providing services such as home visits and supporting staff in the library team*" and it was noted that volunteers "*often have skills which complement (but don't replace) staff expertise*". The DCMS was of the view that "*without radical change in the workforce, library services will not be able to modernise nor achieve the potential role set out here. Real change needs partnership working, leadership within local government and the library sector and a readiness from all library staff to embrace a new role*". (p.37).

Early investigative work on volunteering in the UK began in 1999 with a survey of all public library authorities in the UK, commissioned by the Library Association (LA)[6]. The study sought to identify (a) the reasons why people volunteer, (b) the benefits of volunteering for the library service and (c) how volunteers were managed within the library service. The project also set out to formulate a policy on best practice and the acceptable use of volunteers.

The response of 87% (182 authorities) was encouraging and reflected a keen interest in volunteering among the library authorities and also lent weight to the validity of the findings. More than 80% of English and Scottish authorities, and two thirds of Welsh authorities, reported that they were using volunteers in the following top ranked service areas:

- Housebound services (75% of all authorities)
- Local studies
- Hospital services
- Story telling
- Children's promotion

Other areas covered by volunteers included homework assistance, leading reading groups, IT and adult promotion.

Library volunteers were reported to consist of diverse groups with a wide range of needs and expectations and most preferred a short-term limited commitment. Reasons for volunteering were as complex and diverse as the people who volunteer, but generally included a mix of both personal gain and altruism. The following are some examples:[7]

- Gain skills and experience
- Use existing skills
- Develop self-confidence

[5] DCMS, (March 2010), The modernisation review of public libraries: a policy statement, http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm78/7821/7821.pdf (proposal 26, p.37) (accessed 4/04/2011)

[6] Cookman, N, Haynes, D and Streatfield, D, (2000) "The Use of Volunteers in Public Libraries" Library Association.

[7] Cookman, N, (2001), Volunteers – a way of encouraging active community participation, Library and Information Research News, vol. 25, no.1, Winter 2001, pp8-11, http://eprints.rclis.org/bitstream/10760/6027/1/article81a.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

- Make new friends
- Help others
- See a need in the community
- Related to existing paid work
- Had spare time

The results indicated that, as a result of volunteering, library authorities were able to raise their profile, build a stronger relationship with their local communities and expand their services. They were also enabled to deliver extra non-core services which promoted social inclusion, attracted a broader clientele and provided the library with access to specialist knowledge and subject expertise, as well as cost benefit advantages.

The report emphasised the importance of mutual benefit i.e. both library and volunteers should benefit from volunteering. Library managers were advised to think creatively when considering involving volunteers and to endeavour to reduce staff fears regarding possible job substitution. Each library authority should have its own volunteer policy and an identifiable manager or supervisor of volunteers. The importance of vetting procedures in advance of volunteer placements was also stressed.

Soon after the LA survey, a major DCMS funded study on volunteering in public libraries, the Lending Time Project (2002-5)[8], was undertaken by CSV (Community Service Volunteers), a volunteering and training charity, in cooperation with six library authorities – Bournemouth, Gateshead, Kent, Knowsley, Merton and Staffordshire.

Lending Time was a ground-breaking, innovative pilot project that *"set out to demonstrate the variety of ways in which volunteers could enhance and support libraries – and the ways in which libraries could offer fulfilling volunteering roles for members of their local communities*".

The main focus of the Lending Time initiative was to see if volunteers could develop and enhance the library service by introducing new services and developing existing ones. It was envisaged that volunteers would bring "*fresh perspectives*" and introduce new ways of working. It was also hoped that the project would address policy objectives set out by the government in its *Framework for the Future* report[9].

Over 700 volunteers took part in the project. They were drawn from a wide range of age groups and backgrounds, demonstrating the appeal libraries hold for different types of volunteers. Activities in which volunteers were involved ranged from information and communications technology (ICT) initiatives, reader development, local history events and meet and greet services. Some library authorities were criticised for the slow progression from recruitment to the placement of volunteers as well as not actively promoting activities that could be volunteer led. Nevertheless, it was concluded that volunteerism in public library services was successful because it –

[8] CSV (Community Service Volunteers), (June 2004), CSV Lending Time Pilot Project: Summary of final evaluation http://www.csv.org.uk/sites/default/files/CSV%20Libraries%20Project%20Evaluation.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

[9] Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), (2003), Framework for the future: Libraries, Learning and Information in the next decade. http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/4505.aspx (accessed 4/04/2011)

- achieved added value for the service by offering additional services,
- extended or improved existing services,
- improved library resources,
- described some putative roles of volunteers,
- freed staff to concentrate on core work,
- enhanced specialist skills base, e.g. ICT skills.

Prior to introducing the project, the library authorities involved were keen to emphasise to their staff that the volunteers were not to act as substitutes for existing paid staff. The project reaffirmed this and succeeded in allaying any negative views held by staff in relation to volunteering and persuaded them to accept volunteers as an integral part of the library service. A gradual positive shift in the attitudes of library staff led to the creation of an embedded volunteering culture in the pilot libraries. As with similar projects, it was agreed that a dedicated project manager was a key element in achieving a successful outcome.

Recommended further actions included the following:

- extending the project to continue momentum within the library and introducing measures to expand the activities of the library,
- standardising procedures for involving volunteers e.g. recruitment, training in volunteer management for library professionals,
- engaging in a strong publicity drive, not only to attract volunteers, but to create more awareness of the library service.

The Lending Time project was considered to have achieved its original aims and to have laid strong foundations for the development of new opportunities and the continuous recruitment of volunteers across library authorities.

Gateshead[10] was one of the six library authorities which took part in the Lending Time Project and after the project ended it carried on with its own volunteering programme. This is now run entirely by Gateshead Council and involves almost 100 volunteers. The initial focus of the project was to create roles in ICT support in which volunteers would help people develop their computer skills. Volunteering roles have expanded with volunteers now involved in archival work and in reminiscence sessions. These are transferred onto CD for visually impaired users and for heritage guiding. This not only provides a source of revenue for the service but it also promotes the local studies and cultural heritage areas of the service and attracts new users. Although this project is focused on those aged 55 or older, volunteering opportunities are not restricted to this group and some volunteers are in younger age groups.

Gateshead is noted as fulfilling several of the recommendations made in the various reports on volunteering in general, including:

- Recognition of the important role that volunteers play in social inclusion by bringing communities together in the delivery of services.

[10] MLA Case Studies: Volunteering: Gateshead Library Service. http://research.mla.gov.uk/case-studies/display-case-study.php?prnt=1&prjid=152 (accessed 4/04/2011)

- Reassurance of staff, who may have felt wary of volunteer involvement due to the perceived threat to paid employment, through continuous communication by the volunteer co-ordinator on the positive benefits of involving volunteers.
- The importance of keeping volunteers' roles interesting and relevant.
- The establishment of a volunteers' forum in which volunteers can give feedback on their experiences of the service.
- Volunteers were given the option of formal training for their particular roles.
- It is hoped that an accredited course will run in the future.
- The need for diversity among volunteers was also highlighted to promote inclusion of individuals and groups with special needs and interests.

Kent Library and Archive Service[11] was also one of the pilot authorities in the Lending Time project. They too extended the programme which they called Time2Give. It still has the same agenda as Lending Time but focuses on encouraging participation from local people who perhaps might not otherwise use the library.

Kent has also involved members of staff in managing the day-to-day work of the volunteers. This allows staff to learn new skills and to gain more responsibility. The programme is such a major success that there are plans to extend it into Kent's home library service plan. This will result in a consistent approach to recruitment and volunteer training which, in turn, will encourage the involvement of a more diverse group of volunteers within the service.

In 2005 the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) commissioned the Institute for Volunteering Research (IVR) "*to map and evaluate the role and development of volunteers in the museums, libraries and archive sector*"[12]. The survey was based on a random sample of 1,892 organisations across England in mid-2005 (464 museums, 952 libraries and 476 archives). 585 organisations completed the survey (of which 175 were libraries), representing a 31% response rate. In addition to the national survey, six qualitative case studies (two museums, two libraries and two archives) were undertaken in the autumn of 2005 "*to identify good practice in volunteer involvement and management*".

The study revealed that 67% of responding libraries made use of volunteers compared to 79% of archives and 95% of museums.

The most common reason identified by organisations for involving volunteers was that it allowed them to do things they would not normally be able to do (74%). Other reasons included the need to promote user involvement (47%), saving money or an inability to pay staff to do the work undertaken by volunteers (31%).

Although, on average, organisations received 62 hours per week of volunteer time, half of them reported that they did not have enough volunteers. Women, rather than men, were more likely to serve as volunteers and 65% of volunteers were aged 55 and over. Two thirds of organisations had engaged disabled volunteers.

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[11] MLA Case Studies: Time2Give, Kent Library and Archive Service, http://research.mla.gov.uk/case-studies/display-case-study.php?prnt=1&prjid=260 (accessed 4/04/2011)

[12] Howlett, S, Machin, J and Malmersjo, G, Institute for Volunteering Research, (Dec 2005), Volunteering in museums, libraries and archives, MLA, p.3 http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/publications/~/media/Files/pdf/2006/volunteer_survey.ashx (accessed 4/04/2011)

Barriers to volunteering were identified as a lack of time and a lack of a specific staff member to manage volunteer recruitment, supervision and training. Other issues presenting difficulties included "*the different skills needed to manage volunteers, a lack of capacity to train volunteers properly, health and safety issues and concerns over the commitment of volunteers*". The case studies confirmed the importance of a key contact in the library, preferably a volunteer manager/coordinator, as a prerequisite for a successful volunteer programme. A primary area of good practice that emerged in the case studies was the need to identify the reason for involving volunteers and the role that they play.

2005 was the Year of the Volunteer (YV05) in the UK and was based on a partnership network led by CSV and Volunteering England[13]. It was organised in twelve monthly themes and was designed to celebrate and further promote volunteerism and, in particular, to encourage young people, those with no qualifications, black and minority ethnic (BME) groups and disabled people to become involved on volunteering.

MLA[14], in its 2006 review of current practice and future developments in community engagement in public libraries in the UK noted that "*Libraries that have understood the advantages which volunteer involvement can bring are able to involve under represented groups in this way, contributing to social inclusion and community cohesion*"(p.8). The report also noted that "*many library staff want to work further with volunteers*" (p.8). It was recommended that public library authorities should show their commitment to community engagement by actively encouraging their staff to participate in employee volunteering schemes, including local community schemes, thereby informing staff attitudes and reducing barriers to volunteering.

In the same year MLA also produced a community engagement toolkit[15] which included the following guidelines on volunteer management in response to the many questions posed by librarians as to what should be included in a volunteer programme:

- "*Staff are aware of, and understand the authority's volunteer/ community engagement policies*
- *Volunteers are included in other relevant policies (e.g. health and safety)*
- *Staff understand the reasons for involving the community*
- *Strategic plans refer to the objectives of the activities undertaken by the community*
- *Activities are fully risk assessed and are discussed with volunteers during or before their induction*
- *Expenses are paid*
- *Opportunities are available to suit all levels of ability*
- *Role descriptions are produced*
- *Recruitment matches skills/ interests of individual*

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[13] Brooks, J and Chason, K, Year of the volunteer 2005, Volunteering England, http://www.volunteering.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/F233569C-EB12-4073-AE80-C8D868D2D460/0/YearoftheVolunteer.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

[14] CSV Consulting, Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), (2006), Community engagement in public libraries, A report on current practice and future developments, ISBN 1-903743-97-4. http://research.mla.gov.uk/evidence/documents/community_engagement_report_9654.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

[15] MLA, (2006), Community Engagement in Public Libraries: Toolkit Appendix E: Volunteer management checklist, http://research.mla.gov.uk/evidence/view-publication.php?dm=nrm&pubid=145 (accessed 4/04/2011)

- *The recruitment plan identifies how different groups will be targeted*
- *Selection of participants is standardised and is based upon the skills needed to complete the task*
- *Applicants who are unsuccessful are offered alternative tasks and given reasons for decisions made*
- *References and CRB disclosures are taken up when relevant and do not act as a barrier to involvement*
- *Volunteer agreements are in place setting out expectations of both parties*
- *Volunteers are provided with an induction to their role and the organisation*
- *Volunteers are allocated a supervisor with the skills and training to fulfil this role*
- *Ongoing training is provided*
- *Staff receive training in working with volunteers*
- *Volunteer management is included in staff job descriptions*
- *Members of staff with responsibility for community involvement and volunteering are clearly identified*
- *There are forums in which to discuss volunteer issues*
- *Volunteers are thanked, both formally and informally*
- *Volunteers are included in the organisation*
- *Feedback is sought from volunteers*
- *Standards are maintained ('volunteer' does not mean 'unprofessional')*
- *Those ending their involvement are offered an exit interview*"

The findings of the IVR study in 2005 were confirmed by McNabola[16] in a research briefing published by MLA in December 2008, which offered advice on the effective use of volunteers. The report presented an overview of research on 'what works' to practitioners in the museum, library and archive sector. The key elements highlighted by research are summarised as follows: Organisations should

- have a clear understanding of aims when recruiting volunteers
- consider volunteer expectations and satisfaction
- create a structured volunteer programme
- appoint a member of staff to manage the volunteer programme

In terms of age profiles of volunteers, much has been written about the role played by older people, aged 55 and over, who make a major contribution to all forms of volunteering. At the other end of the spectrum, efforts are underway to attract young people to volunteer in library environment. A youth volunteering project, Young Voices[17], was started by CSV Consulting in 2007 following consultation with young people on how they felt about libraries and volunteering. The consultation exercise had revealed that young people had negative perceptions of their libraries and the services provided by libraries to their age group. Young Voices ran for three years and was operated by CSV in partnership with The Reading Agency (TRA) and three library services in North West England (Widnes Library in Halton, Oldham Library and the Moss Side Powerhouse Library in Manchester).

[16] McNabola, A, MLA, (2008), Research briefing 5: Effective use of volunteers, MLA http://research.mla.gov.uk/evidence/view-publication.php?dm=nrm&pubid=927 (accessed 4/04/2011)

[17] CSV, Young Voices, http://www.csv.org.uk/volunteering/youth/young-voices (accessed 4/04/2011)

The project focused on young people as volunteers, aged 11-18, who were given responsibility for running activities and events for other young people in their local library. The initiative engaged young people as volunteers in a library environment and was driven mainly by the young people themselves with support from library staff acting as Project Officers/Managers.

The stated aim of the project was "*to motivate and encourage young people to volunteer in a wide range of projects using libraries as their base, giving teenagers opportunities to set up activities, events, and other community projects for themselves and others*".

The main achievement of the project over a year long span was a positive shift in the perceptions of young people with regard to the library service and with the active involvement of young people in the service. Other positive outcomes were that adults too, in particular staff, had their preconceived ideas of young people change. Volunteers developed new skills and self-confidence. A sense of community cohesion was created with people of all ages and from all backgrounds working together on projects and activities[18].

According to Silvia Anton[19], in a recent (2010) MLA discussion document on volunteering in the museums, libraries and archives sector "*volunteering is set in the context of a government-led civic renewal debate and the drive to recruit volunteers is gaining momentum in museums, libraries and archives because of their increasingly important role as engines for community engagement*". The document also suggests that there is currently "*greater potential to attract more volunteers, especially from the ethnic and social communities that libraries serve, also from the younger community groups; and that there is potential to find tasks that complement the skills of permanent staff and enhances volunteers' skills*".

Data on volunteering in public libraries in the UK indicates that 15,000 volunteers donated 500,400 hours working in public libraries during 2008/9, representing an average of 33 hours per volunteer. Several examples of good practice in volunteering are referred to in the report, specifically Lancashire, where a Volunteer Services Officer (VSO) was employed and had delivered volunteer engagement training to library staff.

The view of the library and information professional body, CILIP, on the use of volunteers in public libraries is reflected in its policy statement of 6th October 2010[20].

"*CILIP acknowledges the contribution that volunteers make to libraries, enriching the services they provide and helping to sustain their viability. In order to optimise the value of that contribution it should form part of a professionally managed public library service that has at its core sufficient paid staff to ensure the direction, development and quality of the service provided. Volunteers are not 'free' and need proper management, training and development. In many cases a volunteers' co-ordinator should be appointed to ensure appropriate management and recognition of the value of volunteers*".

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[18] Earnshaw, S, (January 2010), An evaluation report of the CSV Young Voices project in the North West of England, http://www.csv.org.uk/sites/default/files/CSV-Young-Voices-Evaluation-Report.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011

[19] Anton, S, MLA, (2010), Volunteering in the mla sector: a discussion, http://research.mla.gov.uk/evidence/view-publication.php?dm=nrm&pubid=1122 (accessed 4/04/2011)

[20] CILIP, (October 2010), Use of volunteers in public libraries. http://www.cilip.org.uk/get-involved/policy/statements/Pages/use-of-volunteers.aspx (accessed 4/04/2011)

For those interested in a wider sweep on volunteering research, it should be noted that general facts and figures on volunteering in Europe during 2004 -2007 are available on the Volunteer Ireland website[21]. Countries include Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK. An older survey (2002) is included in the Irish *Tipping the Balance* report and covers case study approaches to volunteering in Northern Ireland, Scotland, Denmark, Germany and Canada[22].

6.3 North America - Canada and United States (US)

6.3.1 Canada

Canadian public libraries are quite advanced in their use of volunteers and involve them in a wide range of activities within and outside the library. The following examples serve to represent the content, presentation and promotion of volunteer programmes throughout the country.

Toronto Public Library[23] has an extensive volunteer programme which includes the following:

- Adult Literacy: Helping English-speaking adults improve their reading, writing, and basic math skills.
- Homework Help for Teens: Giving one-to-one help to students in grades 7-12. This after school programme gives teens a place for them to do their homework and receive extra help in their community.
- After School Newcomer Hubs: Helping newcomers in grades 7-10 with their homework. Subjects include maths, science, English, French, and other subjects as needed.
- Leading to Reading: Adults and teens helping elementary school age children who are having difficulty at their grade level, on a one-to-one basis. Volunteers help to improve their reading and learning skills, sometimes assisting with homework too.
- Youth Advisory Groups (YAGs) – For Teens: Teens are recommended to join a Youth Advisory Group at their local branch library and get the community hours required for a high school diploma.
- Kids@Computers: Providing assistance with computer training for children and their families as part of the Library's **Kids@Computers** programme.

Halifax Public Library volunteer programme[24] offers positions in teenage volunteering, reading support, adult literacy, English language learning for adults and home delivery services, all of which are described on the library website and are accompanied by an online application form.

Stratford Public Library[25] engages volunteers for regular daily or weekly in-library duties which include:

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[21] Volunteering Ireland, http://www.volunteeringireland.com/page.php?id=11 (accessed 4/04/2011)

[22] National Committee on Volunteering, (2002), Tipping the balance: Report and recommendations to government on supporting and developing volunteering in Ireland: Chapter 9: International approaches to volunteering, pp.77-94. http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/resources/policy-documents/national/doc/tipping-the-balance-report.html (accessed 4/04/2011)

[23] Toronto Public Library Volunteering, http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/support-us/volunteering/ (accessed 4/04/2011)

[24] Halifax (Nova Scotia), Halifax Public Library Volunteer opportunities, http://www.halifaxpubliclibraries.ca/about/opportunities/volunteer.html (accessed 4/04/2011)

[25] Stratford (Ontario, Canada) Public Library Volunteer program http://www.stratford.library.on.ca/volunteer.html (accessed 4/04/2011)

- library collection maintenance - shelf-reading, book mending
- administrative support -date card stamping, community bulletin board maintenance, folding brochures, craft preparation and plant care
- custodial support - sorting/distributing recyclable materials and dusting shelves
- Friends of the Stratford Public Library support - monthly warehouse deliveries of book donations for the annual book sale and assistance at the annual book sale.

Stratford volunteers are also used for in-library occasional duties such as assistance with volunteer programme administration, special events, Foundation and Friends events and annual book sales. The Library's outreach programme also uses volunteers for home delivery services.

6.3.2 The United States (US)

American library authorities are very pro-volunteering and most appear to have well defined, structured volunteer programmes. Full documentation is made available on most library websites, including information on library volunteer policies, volunteer roles, conditions, rules and administrative procedures for volunteer engagement and downloadable application forms for various demographic groups and volunteering activities.

Brooklyn Public Library Volunteer Program[26] is a good example of such a programme. Volunteer positions are available in adult literacy, after-school homework help, meeting and greeting users, computer coaching, conversation group leader in English language classes, reading troubadour, school year book buddy and ICT training.

Los Angeles Public Library[27] also has a well organised volunteer programme which offers opportunities to work in the following areas:

- Central Library docents (qualified people who are not on the library's staff)
- Friends Groups - active community members joining together to support their local branch library or Central Library department.
- GAB (Grandparents and Books) - Adults 21 years and older read books aloud to children in the library
- Homebound Friends and Neighbours – delivering books and other library materials to the homebound
- Literacy - providing individual instruction in basic reading and writing skills.
- Special Events – volunteers act as hosts at cultural and educational events, including children's festivals, poetry readings, author-led book discussions, and distinguished lecturer series.
- Special Projects - behind-the-scenes volunteers help in many important ways e.g. by introducing patrons to the library's computer and electronic resources; assisting the Library Foundation gift store in the Central Library; processing library books and materials; and tutoring and mentoring teen library patrons.

Details of similar volunteer programmes, including full documentation, application forms etc., are to be found on the websites of public library authorities in Austin (Texas)[28], Fairfax (Virginia)[29], San

[26] Brooklyn Public Library Volunteer Program, http://www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/support/volunteer/ (accessed 4/04/2011)

[27] Los Angeles Public Library Volunteer Program http://www.lapl.org/about/volunteer.html (accessed 4/04/2011)

[28] Austin Public Library Volunteer Program (header page)

Diego (California)[30], Seattle (Washington)[31] and in many other areas of the US. Vigo Public Library[32], Indiana, has a programme specifically targeted at teenagers and provides a documentation pack which includes "teen volunteer behaviour guidelines"

Norfolk Public Library[33] in Nebraska has recently (2008) produced a very useful, detailed volunteer handbook which is aimed at both library staff and volunteers. The stated aim of the handbook is to "*generate and facilitate well-planned and administered volunteer services to supplement and complement NPL staff members. It is to assist staff members in the management of volunteers as well as a reference tool for current and potential volunteers. It will also expand knowledge, understanding and mission of the Norfolk Public Library Volunteer Program*". This document should serve as a helpful template for library authorities wishing to introduce a volunteer programme.

Other volunteering toolkits also exist, for example, the American Library Association's (ALA) toolkit by Driggers and Dumas[34]. However, this is now rather dated (2002) and must be purchased – unlike the Norfolk handbook which is downloadable.

A more generic practical guide, which is not confined to libraries, on developing and managing volunteer programmes has been produced by McNamara[35] and includes a toolkit for volunteer leaders.

In addition to advertising for volunteers on their home websites, American libraries also make use of national websites which aim to link organisations and volunteers nationwide. VolunteerMatch[36], a non-profit organisation, brings potential volunteers and volunteering opportunities together. Its aim is to be the middle party between volunteers and organisations, removing any barriers that

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http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/library/libvol.htm see also - procedures for adult and youth volunteers at http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/library/volunteering.htm (accessed 4/04/2011)

[29] Fairfax County Public Library Volunteer Program http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/volunteer/ (accessed 4/04/2011)

[30] San Diego, Volunteer Opportunities, http://www.sandiego.gov/volunteer-program/opportunities/library.shtml (accessed 4/04/2011)

[31] Seattle Public Library, Volunteer opportunities, http://www.spl.org/default.asp?pageID=about_support_volunteering (accessed 4/04/2011)

[32] Vigo Public Library, Volunteer at VCPL, http://www.vigo.lib.in.us/volunteer (accessed 4/04/2011)

[33] Norfolk (USA) PL Volunteer Handbook http://www.npl.lib.va.us/volunteers/volunteer_handbook.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

[34] Driggers, P. And Dumas, E., (2002) Managing Volunteers: a practical toolkit, American Library Association, ISBN 0-8389-0806-3. http://books.google.ie/books?id=Ir1T0PyxHEMC&pg=PR5&lpg=PR5&dq=volunteer+programme+%22public+library%22&source=bl&ots=am2tceh-Pb&sig=Kpxaiu_EZMjOXM5ld1NPiHfzMqI&hl=en&ei=jMFKTd7UD8aWOoLnjNIP&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=3&ved=0CB8Q6AEwAjha#v=onepage&q&f=false (full text not available on web – pages missing from file and no part can be printed) (accessed 4/04/2011)

[35] McNamara, C, Developing and managing volunteer programs, http://managementhelp.org/staffing/outsrcng/volnteer/volnteer.htm (accessed 4/04/2011)

[36] VolunteerMatch, http://www.volunteermatch.org/ (accessed 4/04/2011)

keep either party from finding each other. Since its inception in 1998 its website has had 8.4 million visitors and has made 4.5 million volunteer referrals.

California State Libraries have used VolunteerMatch in their initiative *Get Involved: Powered By Your Library* to recruit volunteers for various projects[37]. The California initiative raises awareness of the benefits of using volunteers within the library service, provides a uniform system of recruitment and training of volunteers and appropriately matches volunteers with work opportunities.

Berkeley Public Library is using VolunteerMatch in a digital recording project[38]. In this project local Baby Boomers gather and record first person narratives covering the social, political and personal aspects of Berkeley's voluntary school desegregation of 1964-68, a turbulent period in the city's history. The recordings are available to borrow and to download from the library's website. This project allows the community to revisit, discuss and re-evaluate stories about this pivotal period and has led to community healing and legacy building. The volunteer-run project is being extended to gather material on other topics of community interest.

In 2009 Bernier[39] undertook a comparative study of adult and young adult (YA) volunteering in Oakland Public library in California, based on management statistics collected over a 24 month period from January 2005 to December 2006. The library authority consists of a main library and 15 branch libraries and serves a multicultural population of 420,000 in a moderately sized urban environment. Total volunteer hours for the two year period amounted to 18,500 for the branch libraries only and of these, an average of 44% were provided by young adults, with peaks of 49-51% in the months of June, July and December. In the main library, however, young adults contributed 77-80% of the 16,884 volunteer hours during the same period. According to Bernier, young people are an undervalued resource. They continue to present themselves to libraries and are offering their labour in ever increasing numbers and yet, he claims, "*other than producing long lists of tasks to show how libraries use this labour, we know very little about the actual experiences of young people as library volunteers, about staff as facilitators of this experience, or about the managerial questions at play*". Further research is recommended to examine the dynamics of volunteering from the viewpoints of all the participants.

Other more general sites on volunteering in the US include *Volunteer.gov / gov*[40] and *United We Serve*[41]. A similar general volunteering matching service, *Get Involved*[42], exists in Canada.

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[37] California State Library Blog, http://blog.library.ca.gov/archive/2009/02/09/Get-Involved_3A00_-Powered-by-Your-Library-Information-Workshops.aspx (accessed 4/04/2011

[38] Berkeley Public Library, http://berkeleypubliclibrary.org/ (accessed 4/04/2011)

[39] Bernier, A.. Young Adult Volunteering in Public Libraries: Managerial Implications, Library Leadership and Management, vol. 23, no. 3, pp. 133-139, Summer 2009 http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/llama/publications/llandm/llmhome/23n3/23n3_bernier.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

[40] Volunteer.gov/gov, America's Natural and Cultural Resources Volunteer Portal, http://www.volunteer.gov/GOV/ (accessed 4/04/2011)

[41] United We Serve: Corporation for National and Community Service http://www.serve.gov/ (accessed 4/04/2011)

[42] Get Involved, Canada, http://www.getinvolved.ca/ (accessed 4/04/2011)

6.4 Australia

The Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), in a 2009 policy statement on voluntary work[43], is of the view that the "*use of volunteers in library and information services for specific purposes is acceptable but must never compromise the quality of service provision, nor replace paid employment in any way. Library services can be enhanced by well supported volunteers, and providing volunteers with meaningful community roles is a legitimate function of a public library service*".

According to the State Library of South Australia[44], "*volunteers are vital*" (and) "*the Library has benefited enormously from the work of volunteers for over three quarters of a century and this tradition continues*".

Volunteer opportunities at the State Library "*are organised on the basis that they enhance, without replacing, the work of paid staff. All volunteer work is validated by the Library's union representative and abides by the Library's Volunteer Program and other policies*". Under the programme, "volunteer customer service groups" have been set up and include library ambassadors, accredited tour guides and ELLIS (English Language Learning and Improvement Service) tutors. Examples of library volunteer projects include:

- researching biographies
- sorting and indexing wine labels
- sorting ephemera
- previewing and writing summaries of films
- transcribing diaries of early pioneers
- working with church records

The State Library of Queensland has issued a series of library volunteer guidelines and tools for use by library authorities[45]. These cover job descriptions, duties and roles of volunteers; staff guidelines for managing a successful volunteer programme; volunteer policy; and guidelines for the volunteers.

An internal survey of volunteers in 2008/9 by Fairfield City Libraries and Museum Service, New South Wales, sought to discover who they were, what motivated them and what areas they saw as needing improvement[46]. Most of the 65 volunteers working with library were longterm (over 5 years) and 73% were over 60 years of age. On the basis of the survey and a literature review, the research paper considered the ways in which libraries recruit, train and retain volunteers so that

[43] Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), (2009), Voluntary work in library and information services, http://www.alia.org.au/policies/volunteer.workers.html (accessed 4/04/2011)

[44] State Library of South Australia, Volunteers, http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=196 (accessed 4/04/2011)

[45] State Library of Queensland, (Oct 2010), Policies, standards and protocols, http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/info/publib/policy (accessed 4/04/2011)

[46] The Free Library by Farlex, Working with older volunteers: opportunities and potential, http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Working+with+older+volunteers%3A+opportunities+and+potential.-a0215481580 (accessed 4/04/2011)

the process can be an enriching and rewarding one for all concerned. Particular attention was focused on the advantages of engaging older volunteers who have been shown to give more time over longer periods than younger volunteers and so represent a very good investment for the time spent in recruiting and training them. It was also posited that baby boomers give important social dividends to an organisation due to their life experiences and developed social capital.

In most developed countries, general trends in volunteering are monitored by national bodies and in the case of Australia, national surveys are undertaken annually by Volunteering Australia which reports on volunteering patterns and their impacts on individuals, organizations and company employee volunteer programmes[47].

Some key findings[48] in 2010 were:

- Over 80% of volunteers said their work as a volunteer had increased their sense of belonging to the community and had provided them with opportunities to learn
- 26% of volunteers said the training they had received as part of their voluntary work had helped them to acquire an accreditation or qualification
- 18% said they had gained skills useful for current or future paid employment
- One in four organisations stated that the available supply of suitable volunteers and limited organisational capacity were the most common barriers to involving volunteers
- The need to allocate resources and introduce new or different approaches to promoting volunteering was identified by 45% and 29% of organisations respectively

The following were identified as potential problem areas that need to be addressed and improved:

- Volunteer appraisal/performance management processes, exit interview/feedback process; return to work procedures for sick/injured volunteers, confusion/conflict between the roles of volunteers and paid staff.
- One third of volunteers who worked in organisations with paid employees reported that they had experienced or witnessed confusion or conflict between the roles of volunteers and paid employees.
- Approximately 1 in 4 volunteers reported they had not been trained or briefed on occupational health and safety in their organisation.

Conclusions

Volunteering plays a vital role in society and is a key element in promoting understanding, cohesion and wellbeing among local communities. Young and old alike are keen to donate their time and expertise to others and the most effective and efficient means of doing this is through non-profit making organisations at all levels – local, national and international. Volunteering levels are high in many countries and the fact that the volunteerism is seen as a powerful resource in society is reflected in initiatives by governments and international agencies such as the European

[47] Volunteering Australia, National Survey on volunteering issues 2010 – key findings released, http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/html/s02_article/article_view.asp?article_id=4183&nav_cat_id=-1&nav_top_id=-1 (accessed 4/04/2011)

[48] Volunteering Australia, National Survey on volunteering issues 2010: Preliminary findings - summary, (Dec 2010), (copy of report) http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/files/N2S56TZLZ3/IVD_Summary_of_Selected_Findings_NSVI_2010.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

Commission to promote, develop and more fully exploit it for the social, economic and cultural benefits of communities. Volunteerism is currently being advocated at national and international policy levels as part of a civic renewal debate on local democracy and empowerment.

Although many public libraries in the developed world have recognised the potential of volunteerism as a means of augmenting their services and developing new ones, and strengthening links with local communities, there are many barriers to be overcome in introducing and operating volunteer programmes. Much investigative work has, and is being done to explore volunteerism in the library environment and steady progress is being made in developing operating models, preparing and testing toolkits and designing metrics for evaluation.

The key issues highlighted in the literature are the need to ensure that volunteering is of mutual benefit to the library and to the volunteer; the need to have a management and organisational structure within the library that can accommodate, drive and make best use of volunteers; and the need to assure and prove to library staff that they are not being replaced by volunteers. Other elements, such as a national legal framework for volunteering, vetting procedures and risk assessment also need to be considered and addressed.

Chapter 7

A Review and Survey of Community Initiatives by Public Library Authorities in Ireland

7.1 Introduction

The first public libraries in Ireland were opened over 150 years ago, and since then the public library has become one of the most popular and most used services provided by Irish local authorities. Within Ireland there are 32 library authorities. Over eleven million visits are made annually to the 359 public libraries in Ireland with issues to the public numbering sixteen million items each year.[1]

The three traditional aspects of library provision, reading for recreation, education and information, have developed and expanded significantly over recent years. Libraries are engaged in innovative projects maximising their use of such resources as highly trained and motivated staff, information and communications technologies (ICTs) and creative partnerships with other community stakeholders. National projects and initiatives that are currently part of normal public library service provision include:

Writers in Libraries Scheme. This was established by the Arts Council in 1985 and re-launched in September 2010. The Scheme is co-funded by the Arts Council and An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (ACL) and is managed and administered by Poetry Ireland, which has fourteen years experience in working in this area. It provides funding for imaginative literary events in libraries across the country. Schemes such as this are designed to encourage libraries to partner with local and national literary festivals and resource organisations and to exploit digital and social media.[2]

Changing Libraries Programme. This provides a comprehensive online collection of Irish content from the local studies collections of public libraries, genealogy, reference and general interest service, through partnership with public and private bodies, including access to:

- Griffith's Valuation records and maps overlaid on Google maps
- Historical Maps, in agreement with Ordnance Survey Ireland.
- Irish Times Archive, in partnership with the Irish Times and the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.
- ENFO, in partnership with the Environmental Awareness Section of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, providing high quality, user-friendly content and a gateway to the many environmental online resources available from state and other bodies (see 7.3.3 below).

www.AskAboutIreland.ie – This website is the Changing Libraries Programme online local studies content resource and portal. It is now one of the best used Irish cultural websites. In 2010 the website attracted up to 24,500 visits per week spending an average time of 6 minutes on the site per visit. In 2009, the Department requested that www.enfo.ie and www.change.ie be developed and managed as part of the www.askaboutireland.ie service. In 2010, the Department added www.greeningcommunities.ie to the site and this is under development. This initiative has resulted in the digitisation of content from the local studies collections of public libraries, making this material available to users worldwide. It includes a Learning Zone section with a variety of content for primary and secondary school children developed in cooperation with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), the National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE) and the Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP) to support the primary school curriculum.

Eight libraries are working with the European Commission to support the **Europe Direct Information Centres** for the period 2009 – 2012. Each library provides information on the EU free of charge and carries a stock of publications and brochures from EU institutions. Visitors can access computers to search for EU material and a freephone link to the Europe Direct Helpdesk is provided.

[1] http://www.librarycouncil.ie/ (accessed 4/04/2011)

[2] http://www.library.ie/2010/10/01/writers-in-libraries-scheme-re-launched/ (accessed 4/04/2011)

Bord Gáis Energy **READISCOVER Your Local Library Week**, run annually in April, in association with public library service, encourages people to explore and use their library through events such as author visits, competitions and exhibitions.

eLearning at the Library. Users can sign up for free online courses in a collaborative venture between FÁS, public library authorities and An Chomhairle Leabharlanna. Users are offered free online courses at participating eLearning libraries with the support of a dedicated facilitator. Courses are aimed at beginners and those wishing to improve their skills and are also beneficial for those returning to work.

A recent publication by the OECD entitled *Ireland: Towards an Integrated Public Service* noted that the key public service reform challenge for Ireland is for the different parts of the Irish Public Service to work cohesively together with a more integrated approach at national and local levels. This, they state, will allow Ireland to achieve broad societal goals and deliver coherent services to citizens more effectively.[3] The public library national network, which operates on the basis of an open and inclusive public service ethos, is engaged in a wide variety of innovative projects and maintains creative and vibrant partnerships with community stakeholders, serves as a potential model of best practice in the coherent and effective delivery of services to citizens.

Locally, individual city and county library authorities are delivering a wide range of library, information and other community focused services and some examples of these are presented under the four research strands below.

As described in Chapter 2, information on community initiatives by library authorities in Ireland was collected by means of desk research, an online self-completion questionnaire survey of all 32 library authorities, telephone interviews with selected authorities that provided details of examples of services described below and interviews with representatives of the City and County Managers Association (CCMA), the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) and IMPACT, a public sector trade union.

7.2 Community Engagement.

Community engagement by public library authorities in the context of this report is defined as "*engaging with the general public and with other service providers, community groups and local organisations to devise, plan and provide the best and most appropriate public library provision for a given community. It involves openness in communication, in encouraging community involvement, in space sharing, and in project innovation to encourage maximum use of library services for the benefit of all sectors of the local community*" (see section 1.2).

Many library authorities throughout the country are actively involved with their local communities in a diverse range of collaborative activities, events and projects for the benefit and enjoyment of citizens. The following examples are representative of the creativity, diversity and innovative approaches being adopted by Irish library authorities to engage with their communities.

7.2.1 The CCMA Perspective on Community Engagement

In the interview survey, the Chairman of the CCMA (City and County Managers Association), Mr. Eddie Breen, Wexford County Manager, strongly supported the view that local authorities should actively engage with the community in planning library services. He cited the case of Wexford County Council in building a

[3] OECD, (2008) OECD Public Management Reviews - Ireland: Towards and integrated public service, ISBN 9789264043251 http://www.oecd.org/document/31/0,3343,en_2649_33735_40529119_1_1_1_1,00.html (accessed 4/04/2011)

new multi-service civic centre in Gorey which includes an adult education centre, a court house, a HSE building, a public library and a civic office – i.e. an entire suite of public service offices. At the beginning of the project, before the planning stage, the authority engaged the public by holding a public meeting and conducting an extensive survey to elicit the views of the community on the services and facilities they required. Feedback from almost 600 responses was fed into the planning process. He considered that "*there is a very strong rapport between the library service and the community*" and that "*people would look to the library service for activities in the community*". He believed that there is a sense of ownership on the part of the community when it is engaged by the library and the library, in turn, can "*calibrate the service*" on the basis of feedback and be responsive to community needs.

According to Mr. Breen, community engagement can also raise issues related to the expectations of individuals, groups and/or the local community as a whole. For example, consultation may lead to the expectation of a veto by individuals or groups with single issue agendas and they may be disappointed if their views are not acted on, even though their opinions may be at odds with a majority view. "Blank sheet" consultation, asking the community what it wants, may also lead to raised expectations which cannot be delivered by the library for practical and/or resource-related reasons. However, these potential problems are far outweighed by the advantages of consultation and engagement.

The CCMA believes that all appropriate research tools should be used by library authorities in planning, implementing, maintaining and evaluating community engagement policies and programmes. These include feedback from library staff involved in community activities and events, opinion surveys by self-completion questionnaires and/or interviews and, where appropriate, community focus groups. The role of formal library advisory committees appears to be on the wane but strategic policy committees (SPCs) are performing effectively as representative mechanisms and communication channels between library authorities, other local government agencies and the community at large.

7.2.2 The IMPACT Perspective on Community Engagement

Mr. Peter Nolan, National Secretary of the Local Government Division of IMPACT, expressed the view that there should be widespread engagement with the community by library authorities and considered libraries to be a "*huge vehicle in terms of enabling people to participate fully in society*". He hoped that there would be a greater fit between the services delivered and the services required and that this would lead to improved satisfaction ratings. The library service has the potential to showcase local authority services to the community because it is of immediate tangible benefit, unlike many of the less glamorous utility services such as sewage services and other local authority facilities provided to the community.

7.2.3 Some Examples of Community Engagement by Library Authorities

The recently built Gorey Civic Centre is an excellent example of a local authority engaging the community in the design and development of a new green field public service facility which included a public library alongside other public service centres. The annual Ennis Book Festival, described under 'volunteering' below, is also an excellent example of both community engagement and volunteering. Other examples of community engagement initiatives include the 'Human Library' by South Dublin Libraries and 'One Author, One Town' by Meath County Council Library.

The Gorey Civic Centre, County Wexford

During the construction of a new library and civic offices in Gorey, public consultation was carried out by library personnel to find out what services and materials the people of the area would like to see in their new library. The new library provides almost 550m^2 of core library space and almost 280m^2 of public facilities and activities space that is shared with the Wexford County Council Area Office. The new library replaces the part-time library which operated in temporary accommodation. The survey was carried out in late February and early March 2009.

The large number of responses received indicates that there is high level of interest in, and demand for, the existing and new library services in the Gorey area.

The principal aim of the survey was to engage with the community to inform the delivery of all aspects of library services in the new Gorey Library. The preferences and opinions provided in the responses gave the Library Service options to consider with regard to the use of space and the provision of services, facilities and activities in the new library.

Research was carried out to establish a community profile through analysing the population and community demographics before commencing the consultation. This identified key community sectors and groups representative of the population as well as fulfilling its social inclusion and disability audit requirements.

The survey, devised for distribution in paper and online formats, was influenced in content and distribution strategy by the community profile. Websites and online fora such as www.rollercoaster.ie, www.mykidstime.ie. and www.boards.ie were used in the survey. A total of 448 out of 775 paper copies were returned and 139 online responses were received.

Interviews were held with community champions and a series of focus group meetings was organised with key sectors such as business, newcomers, people with disabilities and the unemployed. Data analysis, including detailed community segmentation, was possible through application of survey monkey software.

The large number of responses received and the quality of discussions with local groups indicated a high level of demand for the existing and new library services in the Gorey area. Preferences and opinions expressed by survey participants suggested options for consideration with regard to the use of space and the provision of services, facilities and activities in the new library. Equally, information about the reading and library activity preferences of different age and occupation groups is being used to tailor selection of stock. The delivery of library programmes and will lead to greater levels of community engagement and partnership.

The survey produced demographic information about non-members and those who are less likely to visit the new library, including their reading and activity interests as well as information about their age and occupation. This information will be used to develop services which will meet their expressed needs and to attract new members to the library.

Information about the times of the day and week that people prefer to visit the library will be used to schedule library programmes for different groups at appropriate times.

The Human Library – South Dublin County Libraries

South Dublin County Council Service, spearheaded by the Libraries and Social Inclusion departments, first offered the Human Library to their patrons in 2009. Based on the success of the initiative, South Dublin County Libraries are including the service as part of their normal community engagement activity. Library staff are ideally placed to know their communities well and to respond to their needs objectively, as well as being experienced events facilitators. When the event takes place in a South Dublin library the people with whom a library user may converse include a priest, a lesbian, a Muslim man, a Muslim woman, an older person, and environmentalist, a newly literate person, a disabled person, a member of the travelling community, a native Irish speaker and a gay man. A government minister will also be available in the near future. South Dublin County Libraries have found that the neutral and inclusive space offered by libraries, coupled with the expertise of staff, is ideal for encouraging diverse members of the community to sit down and talk together and to begin to socialize and work together in planning and running events to promote social inclusion and community spirit. [4]

One Author, One town – Meath County Council Library Service

The idea for this event stemmed from the 'One Book One Community' concept which is a community reading project bringing together families, schools and libraries. It originated from the Washington Centre for the book.[5]

The essence of the idea is for home school liaison officers to extend their work in promoting family literacy throughout entire communities. The project also forges community building by encouraging groups of people to come together and participate in the event.

The Irish novelist, Roddy Doyle, was invited by Meath County Council Library Service to visit the town of Navan in County Meath in October 2009. He participated in a one-day event in which local schools and community groups gathered together to talk about his books and ask him questions. The library service engaged with the local schools and community education groups to suggest several of the author's books to read prior to his visit and then discuss with him. The objective was to encourage as many people as possible to read the same books. As well as school children, adults of all reading abilities were involved in the project, as were students from literacy groups and adults with special needs. The event was seen as a major success by the library service and by local schools and community groups. It focused attention on a well known author and his very popular works. This fostered a communal sense of sharing in the reading and author discussion sessions among several age groups and reading abilities.
The concept has happened in various other library authorities with different authors and themes.

[4] Human library at Ballyroan Library Rathfarnham, Dublin, Ireland, http://humanlibrary.org/ballyroan-library-rathfarnham-dublin-ireland1.html (accessed 4/04/2011)

[5] Seattle Public Library, Washington Center for the Book, http://www.spl.org/default.asp?pageID=about_leaders_washingtoncenter (accessed 4/04/2011)

7.3 Community Partnership.

Community Partnership is defined for the purpose of this report as "*establishing formal links with service providers and other organisations who share the public library service ethos of openness, space for all and social inclusion. This involves researching and establishing appropriate partnerships to deliver joint services, projects and initiatives to benefit all sectors of society. It also involves assisting groups and individuals to achieve their full potential in their communities*" (see section 1.2).

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) report, *Branching Out – Future Directions*, published in 2008, endorses library partnerships by stating that "*fundamental to the Branching Out recommendations on improving co-operation between libraries and other organisations is the belief that the library exists, not for its own purpose, but as a service to its users. . . a more proactive approach [needs] to be taken . . to ensure that co-operation is as effective and as comprehensive as possible . . .*"[6]. The report also notes that demographic trends present the public library service with many challenges in terms of "*engagement and participation, including - developing partnership approaches and furthering cooperation on educational issues both with the education sector and with agencies involved in lifelong learning*" [7](p. 41).

The various initiatives noted in the Introduction above represent examples of community partnership between public libraries and other bodies i.e. the Writer in Libraries Scheme, the Changing Libraries Programme, Europe Direct Information Centres, Bord Gáis Energy READISCOVER Your Local Library Week and eLearning at the Library.

Other examples include community partnership projects undertaken by individual library authorities, some of which are described in section 7.3.3 below.

7.3.1 The CCMA Perspective on Community Partnership

Mr. Breen, Chairman of the CCMA, expressed the opinion that partners must "*have a shared vision for the objective of the partnership*" and there cannot be a "*dominant force*" or a "*dominant view*" if the partnership is to be successful. Whatever the objective is to be, it must be drawn from the agendas of both partners and "*each must have a commitment to that vision having set up the partnership*".

All the activities and issues listed in the survey were considered to be relevant in the context of partnership between the library authority and the community i.e. citizen participation, community building, enhanced local democracy, improved access to services, equality, social inclusion, community consensus on services, provision of sustainable services, efficient use of human and other resources, underpinning existing initiatives such as community and enterprise schemes; tidy town/pride of place; heritage forum; various arts events; and RAPID, an investment and development programme relating to youth development, unemployment, childcare and community facilities, drug misuse, housing, education, health and policing.

It was suggested by the CCMA chairman that local authorities would typically have partnerships with county development boards, enterprise boards, community fora and regional tourism authorities. It was posited that public libraries should be more widely recognised as a valuable resource and used more by the above agencies. This could be possibly be achieved by more joint working in some of the initiatives that these agencies are endeavouring to deliver. National agencies such as the HSE and FÁS use libraries to

[6] Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG), (2008), Branching Out – Future Directions, The Stationery Office, Dublin. (pp.35, 41).

[7] http://www.environ.ie/en/Publications/LocalGovernment/PublicLibraries/FileDownLoad,17652,en.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

communicate their message nationally and perhaps other agencies such as the IDA and Enterprise Ireland could more fully exploit the public library in this regard. Libraries working in partnership with enterprise boards could ensure that appropriate books and other materials are stocked for use by the newly and longer term unemployed and by those wishing to make a career move. Other potential partners could include VECs and third level colleges, travellers' organisations, galleries, theatres, and local industry. There are many examples of informal partnerships between libraries and local agencies – for example, during the Wexford Opera Festival the Opera has used the library service to present talks on operas that were scheduled to be performed at the festival.

In regard to the co-funding of partnerships the CCMA chairman was in favour of co-funded partnership but felt that there is often a problem in that the county council, through the library service, tends to fund, or is expected to fund, a disproportionate component of project costs. Some groups want the library to provide a service tailored to their specific needs but have nothing to bring to the table. This scenario generally does not constitute a meaningful partnership. On the other hand, agencies such as the HSE have provided funding for library based projects and therefore have an interest because of their investment and their ownership of the project. In order to function effectively a partnership should be co-funded in principle and if other agencies wish to engage in a joint venture with a library authority they should provide 50% of funding.

On the question of funding mechanisms, a once-off launch payment was considered to be the easiest, but the weakest form of funding. This arrangement may serve to launch a project but fail to sustain it and the burden to continue falls on the library authority. Projects should be fully costed from beginning to end and the costs shared proportionately between the partners over the duration of the project, with payments drawn down in tranches at specified stages or milestones.

Examples of community projects in which local authorities in Ireland are involved include the RAPID programme, local sports partnerships and traveller interagency groups.

7.3.2 The IMPACT Perspective on Community Partnership

Mr. Peter Nolan of IMPACT sees the fundamental principles of community partnership as the capacity of society to enable everybody to avail of services and the strengthening of supports for voluntary bodies. He suggested that the types of partnerships in which local authorities might engage could include the big voluntary movements in the country such as sports bodies, credit unions and trades unions. These would "*provide a huge level of access and a huge critical mass in terms of doing business*". Residents associations could also be considered as potential partners, possibly through their national representative body, the Association of Combined Residents Associations (ACRA).

Mr. Nolan was of the view that community partnership should ideally result in a value being placed on service delivery and that the service would be seen as a high end service.

7.3.3 Some Examples of Community Partnership Initiatives by Library Authorities

ENFOpoints

In 2009, the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, having identified public library branches as being uniquely placed to act as a countrywide community network, announced the development of environmental services in public libraries in conjunction with the online information service www.enfo.ie. ENFOpoints were established in four pilot library authorities in 2010 in order to investigate good models of service delivery - Middleton Library, County Cork, Clara Library in County Offaly, Tallaght Library in South Dublin and Waterford City Central Library. The service is managed by An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, supported by the DEHLG, and it is planned to expand the new ENFOpoint service to all library authorities in 2011.

As demand for environmental information is continually increasing, libraries are uniquely placed in the heart of the community as the recognised and trusted providers of knowledge and information. Libraries also provide natural centres for communities to showcase their environmental projects, such as Tidy Towns, Pride of Place and Grow it Yourself (GIY), to local organisations and community groups.

The objectives of the ENFOpoints are to ensure the public identify libraries as a source of environmental information and to encourage other local authority departments to identify libraries as a natural conduit for environmental information to the public. The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government provides a small start up grant after which the ENFOpoint is incorporated in to the general library service.

The service is delivered in partnership with the Environmental Awareness Officer in the local authority. The topics covered by ENFOpoints are closely aligned with the local authority functional areas, e.g. water, waste, air quality, noise and environmental protection and the ENFO service is seen as an integrated, rather than a separate service.

Experience to date has shown that different models work in different communities. The first and most well developed ENFOpoint is based in Middleton Public Library, County Cork http://www.askaboutireland.ie/reading-room/environment-geography/environmental-information/county-focus/cork/. The libraries report a good response from individuals and community groups. New partnerships are being developed with community groups, such as Grow It Yourself (GIY Middleton), who hold their monthly meetings in the library and provide talks for the general public.

Library managers and staff have responded to this initiative with enthusiasm. It is an area of growing interest and concern to all Irish citizens and communities and is seen as central to our development for the future. Initial planning meetings were held to agree models. Library staff received training on the contents of the ENFO website and the referral sources for further enquiries. They were also trained on content creation for uploading remotely to their 'County Focus' section of the ENFO website. A new map interface makes this local content more visible.

There is no requirement for environmental expertise, just knowledge of where to find the information and where to refer. The ENFO site is maintained centrally and kept up to date on local national and international information and news.

In addition to the ENFOPoint network, many individual library authorities, such as Cork and Meath, are engaging in partnerships with local and national community agencies.

Cork City Library Authority

In recent years Cork City Library authority has placed a major emphasis on supporting formal and informal learning in libraries. As an integral element of this strand of service the library has greatly strengthened its existing links with relevant agencies and initiated links with some other agencies. The authority's main partnerships are currently with the City of Cork VEC, the Lifelong Learning Festival, the Centre for Adult & Continuing Education at University College Cork (UCC) and FÁS. These partnerships have been put in place in order to enhance the range and quality of library support for the learning city.

Lifelong Learning Festival

The Central Library and six local libraries are key players in the Lifelong Learning Festival (held each April in Cork) and a full programme of events has been held in all libraries every year since the festival began in 2004. These events – workshops, talks, demonstrations – are used to highlight the extensive learning resources available in libraries. The range of learning opportunities offered during the festival continues to

grow and develop. On a similar note libraries participate in the Adult Education Exhibition each year, having won the award for Best Statutory Stand in 2006.
http://www.cometocork.ie/calendar/events/404/

Computer Classes

Since 2006 the Council, together with the City of Cork VEC, has provided classes in basic computer skills, each spring and autumn in libraries around the city. The library provides the computers and training spaces free of charge and the VEC provides the tutors. There is no fee payable by participants. These classes were originally aimed primarily at older people who had never used computers, but in the past two years unemployed persons with no ICT skills are given first preference. In 2009 a series of more advanced e-learning classes began in co-operation with the FÁS online college. This is part of a national programme which was piloted in the city. Classes are currently available in all seven service points and because of take-up, they are scheduled in two lots of classes in two of the libraries. FÁS provides the tutors and the library provides computers and training spaces. Libraries also host computer training for visually impaired persons in partnership with the National Council for the Blind Ireland (NCBI).

Continuing Education

One of the closest partnerships in operation by the library is with the Centre for Adult Continuing Education (CACE) in UCC. This was initiated in the autumn of 2008 to make short courses accessible to local communities via libraries. The initiative has been very successful, with Mayfield Library, Tory Top Library, Bishopstown Library, Blackpool Library, and the Central Library taking part. Courses are in subjects such as History of Irish Food, Art History, Health etc.
http://www.ucc.ie/en/study/ace/

The Council continues to host literacy classes and classes on basic English, in conjunction with the VEC, Welcome English and other agencies.

Careers and Jobs

Libraries hold valuable resources to help people to develop their careers, prepare for job interviews and start their own businesses. In October 2009 Cork City Libraries staff organised '*Get that Job! Create that Job! An Open Day on Jobs and Careers'*. This event provided an opportunity for agencies involved in careers, job creation, education and related initiatives to engage with the public in the welcoming and trusted environment of the public library, with information stands, displays and presentations through the afternoon and evening. This was a very fruitful one-off partnership and it is intended that the library will arrange and host such an event, on a partnership basis, at least annually.

Lecture Series

Series of talks/lectures on specific topics are a relatively new departure for Cork City Libraries. 'China: life in the Middle Kingdom' was the first lecture series held in the library over seven weeks beginning in February 2007. Jointly organised with the Irish Institute of Chinese Studies at UCC, the lecture series covered topics such as Chinese Customs and Religion, China Today, Travelling in China, Women in China etc. Since that series the library has organized other lecture series, again on a partnership basis, on topics such as European film, the best of romantic fiction, etc.

St. Patrick's Park Community Library, Navan, County Meath

St Patrick's Park halting site in Navan, County Meath was built in 2005 to provide permanent homes for traveller families. St Patrick's Park has been developed with the consultation and partnership of local residents living on the site and by a formal partnership with Navan Traveller's Workshop (NTW). To date, there are approximately 58 residents comprising adults, teenagers and young children. Within the site there is a purpose built room for residents to meet.

Meath County Council Library Service opened a library in this room on April 15th 2010 and the library currently has forty members, the majority of whom are residents of St Patrick's Park. The library is managed by a community resource assistant who is undertaking postgraduate studies in librarianship and is employed under the FÁS Community Employment (CE) Scheme. The library is heavily accessed by traveller children who enjoy participating in the many library events throughout the year, including a Children's Book Festival and the Summer Reading Scheme. It is intended that, as well as offering a library service, the room will be used by other agencies to offer adult education classes and after school clubs.

A Traveller Employment Support Facilitator works closely with the library service to organise placements for adults at the library, although in its early stages it is planned to develop this further and ensure maximum participation by the residents.

Although this library venture is still new it has been a valuable learning experience to date. It is an interesting example of partnership working in the community and is a potentially suitable model for consideration in developing action research. Several areas that could be developed and explored include numeracy and literacy support for adults and children as well as projects relating to traveller history and traditions.

Meath Healthy Reading Scheme

This is a collaborative scheme between two statutory agencies; the Health Services Executive (HSE) and Meath County Council Library Service, working in partnership, using existing staff and infrastructural resources and pooling their expertise in information provision and health care to deliver an innovative, client focused service.

The aim of the project is to promote the good mental health and well-being of individuals and families in Meath by recommending and making available quality self-help books to enable people to help themselves.

The Meath scheme involves general medical practitioners (GPs) and other health professionals, such as public health nurses, psychiatrists, social workers, psychologists and community mental health nurses, recommending specific books to their clients from a child and family booklist and an adult booklist. As the book collection is held in four local libraries, this treatment is easily and freely accessible within a neutral and open environment that offers further opportunities for personal development through the use of other library services. Since its launch in April 2008 the collection issue rate has reached the 2000 mark and the books have proven very popular, especially those in the child and family list.

An evaluation was carried out by the Meath Adult Health Psychology Service in October 2010 which identified the most issued books in the collection and elicited valuable feedback from both health professionals and those who borrowed items from the collection. Titles on parenting, depression and anxiety have been the most popular books and these have been considered when choosing the new additional titles. The feedback from both parties was very positive and funding has been awarded from both the HSE and the library service to expand the scheme in 2011.

New titles, including audiovisual materials, have been added to both reading lists on foot of requested items identified in the feedback report. Four additional branch libraries will house the collection making a total of eight of the twelve libraries in Meath now holding a full collection of the healthy reading scheme. A re-launch of the scheme will take place early in 2011.

The scheme has many benefits for both the HSE and library service. It has made both services aware of each other's roles and how successfully ~~a~~ well matched partnership can work. Furthermore, it has increased membership of the library's reading groups for adults within the mental health service. Similar schemes to this have emerged in various other counties.

7.4 Joint Use and Co-location of Library Premises.

Joint use is defined in this report as "*sharing library premises with other groups in the community such as, for example, health service providers or Heritage Centres; or providing library services to distinct user groups such as the general public and college students from one library premises. Joint use can allow for greater use of a premises, or better stock and service provision for greater numbers of people*" (see section 1.2).

Co-location arises when a library premises is situated adjacent to the premises of other bodies such as a civic office, health centre, a citizens' advice bureau, an arts centre etc. and usually in a single building or complex with shared facilities such as car parks, grounds, public lighting, security etc.

There are many examples of joint use and co-location of libraries in Ireland, some of which are described below.

7.4.1 The Online Survey of Library Authorities

The online national survey of the 32 city and county library authorities provides an overview of the joint use of library premises by local community and national agencies. In the survey, joint use is defined as facilitating community groups to host events or meetings in a library premises either within or outside of library hours. In general, case studies present a positive picture of joint use and demonstrate how libraries can work very well alongside other agencies as well as adding value to their service.

The survey revealed that, staff permitting, nineteen of the 27 responding libraries (70%) allow their premises to be used by local community groups outside normal library opening hours. The types of groups that were accommodated included the following:

- Adult literacy groups
- Age Action
- Book clubs
- Civil defence
- Committees
- Computer classes
- Disability groups
- FÁS
- Gardeners
- historical groups
- Language classes
- Music groups
- Photography clubs
- Special European Union Programmes
- Sport groups
- Vocational Educational; Committees (VECs)
- Writers' groups

Twelve of 26 responding libraries (46%) reported that they were unable to accommodate, or had to turn away some groups. As it is an unwritten rule that libraries as public buildings and neutral spaces are not affiliated with profit or political bodies, some of the groups were not facilitated because they were political

or profit making. Another reason why some library authorities could not accommodate particular groups was lack of staff resources to do so.

Eleven authorities stated that there were groups that could not be accommodated, either in their building or within the service. Reasons given were that some groups wanted to charge for their service; staff were unavailable to assist with, for example, disability groups who would need more attention, and groups who represented particular religious or political views were not accommodated. Only one authority reported experiencing any difficulties or problems with any of the groups using the library.

Despite the large number of community groups and partnerships that library authorities host, only one authority, Fingal, has a written policy on working with community groups. This highlights the need for such a policy to be devised for each authority, based on their needs and services.

7.4.2 The CCMA Perspective on Joint Use

The CCMA chairman supports the joint use of public space as a common sense principle of mutual benefit to all parties. Citing the Gorey civic centre as an example it was suggested that the adult education centre would be likely to make very extensive use of the public library and the court services would possibly organise launches or training using the library as a venue. Groups with a public or voluntary mission or a community mandate would be likely automatic candidates for joint use of library space, although other groups could also be considered as potential partners in this regard.

The benefits of joint use are seen as shared costs, shared ancillary facilities such as car parks, public lighting and landscaping, as well as synergies between two or more sets of staff. The one stop shop facility in Gorey has all these advantages – the building costs were shared, maintenance overheads are shared and the communal ancillary facilities function well. In fact, it is unlikely that the building of a public library in isolation could have been justified or funded by the local authority because the cost would have been prohibitive.

There may also be some disadvantages associated with joint use. Each partner loses a certain amount of ownership and there may be conflicts of interest, personal or corporate turf wars, but this is normal in human relations and can be managed by negotiation and mutual consideration for others.

Although joint use seems to work well in cases where there is a joint library, for example, a public and a school library or a public and a third level library, there are many examples where it can work with non-library organisations. One case might be a library working alongside or within a supermarket where there is normal community activity going on, either in or in close proximity to the library. This scenario provides the footfall and ancillary services for joint use and in the case where the library is a shared space within the supermarket, it may be opened or closed as required by means of easy to use modern shuttering devices. However, supermarkets operate in the private sector and are driven by profit-making and may see little advantage in sharing space with public bodies such as libraries. If a library authority sees a possible advantage in an arrangement with a supermarket or other vendor, it may require persuasion on the part of the library to set up a workable partnership.

There are management issues to be addressed if joint use is to operate satisfactorily, for example, exposure of valuable book stock to possible damage or theft and providing access by non-library personnel to library space outside library opening hours represent potential problem areas. In general, it was felt that key holding and alarm codes should be retained by the library authority and if there is a cost to the library in making space available outside normal operating hours it could be fully or partly recoverable from community groups, many of which are well funded and caretaker costs might not be an issue for them.

7.4.3 The IMPACT Perspective on Joint Use

The likelihood that all parties making joint use of a facility would become more familiar with the work of each other and would promote each other's services was considered by the IMPACT representative as a benefit of joint use. On the down side, governance and the possible erosion of standards were seen as possible disadvantages and arrangements for the provision of access to joint use premises would be a likely barrier to such initiatives.

The concept of joint use was considered to be very progressive and it was suggested that perhaps the horizons in this regard have not yet been sufficiently expanded.

7.4.4 Some Examples of Joint Use and Co-location of Library Premises

Abbeyfeale Library, County Limerick

Abbeyfeale Library is located in a converted and extended single-storey courthouse which was built c.1900. The library shares the building with the district court eleven times a year. To facilitate court days all wall shelving can be fitted with panels which can be locked into place and a folding partition separates the rest of the library from the shared space. Library study desks can be opened out to serve as bench units on court days.

According to the library authority it is quite possible that a town like Abbeyfeale would never have secured funding for a project such as this without the joint investment from the Department of Justice and the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. The advantages of joint use in this case include the following:

The extra space that is allotted for the Court is of huge benefit to the Library and it is designed so that there is very little movement of books during Court setup – all bookshelves have lockable roller doors that seal the books away during Court sessions.
The extra space is also of use during exhibitions and civic/cultural events. The Court Services also gain from this arrangement by the fact that they have little or no input into the day to day running or maintenance of the building while always having a Courthouse that is in pristine condition for each monthly court sitting.
A caretaker is employed by the library and is always on duty on Court days to supervise the building. It is the caretaker's responsibility to transform the building back into library mode.
The Court seating (56 cinema style seats) can also be used for events held in the library.

The only minor negative aspects experienced by the library are:-

It takes three people a minimum of one hour to transform the library into the courthouse which is done after library closing time.
The seating is rather heavy and lighter weight material is recommended.
From time to time people who are not from the locality call to the library in order to pay court fines.
On rare occasions there is a callout for an emergency Court sitting.

Overall the library's experience over the past thirteen years has been extremely positive and the joint use concept is recommended.

Dunboyne Library, County Meath

Dunboyne Library is located in a purpose built development comprising the local Health Centre and a RehabCare facility. The original branch was opened in 1983 and, after a €700,000 refurbishment and extension to the building, it was reopened to the public in 2004.The refurbishment and extension doubled the floor area of the library to approximately 3,000 square feet and it provided additional shared facilities including a kitchen, toilets and reception areas.

The 2004 refurbishment and extension were initiated as part of a wider project to enable Meath County Council to provide a site to RehabCare and also to allow the HSE to expand and upgrade their existing Health Centre which was co-located with the Library. All partners benefitted from the co-location in terms of shared capital costs and continue to benefit from shared running costs such as lighting, heating and security. The partners also have the advantage of shared landscaping and parking which make the building attractive to visit.

The Library benefits from the HSE and RehabCare footfall and has adapted services to suit the client profile generated by the other tenants including an adult mental health reading group, parent and toddler sessions at mutually beneficial hours, optical scanning facilities, room hire for one to one adult literacy sessions and 'back to education' initiatives. The Library is centrally located in the town, adjacent to schools and the local credit union. However it is away from the commercial core of the area and the partner agencies cannot generate a commercially comparable footfall. In 2010 the library had a membership of 2,447, issued 52,110 items and provided 1,718 Internet sessions.

Tubbercurry Library, County Sligo

Tubbercurry Library is a purpose-built space with additional accommodation provided in two terraced, two-storey houses built around 1860. In addition to the library, the building houses several local authority services including the courts service (eleven times a year), a citizen information service, the Northwestern Health Board and FÁS. During a court session the library space is halved and the furniture and shelving moved to one side with a sound proof partition separating the sections to allow both services to function at the same time.

As the building is run in a collaborative way, disparate opening hours mean that the spaces are alive from morning to night. The library may be divided into two distinct areas using a sliding partition. Natural lighting exists from circular roof lights and all shelving is flexible.

From the outset the local community was actively involved in the library. The early months saw the establishment of a book club for members of the Tubbercurry Active Retirement Association. This twelve-member group continues to meet on a monthly basis. The library has been instrumental in facilitating the setting up of a number of other groups in the community such as the Tubbercurry Writers Group, the Tubbercurry Bookworms Reading Group and the Library Chess and Draughts Club for children. A number of other community groups such as the Tubbercurry Women's Group and the Tubbercurry Historical Society meet regularly in the library. The library is now the sole venue in County Sligo for a number of different exhibitions and collections and also serves as a venue for many workshops, presentations and lectures of interest to local people

The Source Arts Centre & Library, Thurles, County Tipperary

Thurles Library forms one part of the Source, a multi-disciplinary building in Thurles, Co. Tipperary that combines a branch library and local studies department with an art gallery, café and 250-seater auditorium. There are three partners involved in the operation of the Source – County Tipperary Joint Libraries Committee, Thurles Regional Arts Centre Ltd and Thurles Town Council, who are responsible for the underground public car park.

While each aspect of the Source is run independently of the other, there is a shared management approach on two levels. Firstly, the library is represented on the Board of Directors of Thurles Regional Arts Centre Ltd. Secondly, regular meetings are held between the managers of the library, Arts Centre and the town clerk on issues to do with building maintenance.

There are shared areas in the building, which are used by both the library and Arts Centre, namely the foyer and gallery on the ground floor and the community space on the first floor. These allow a seamless access to the cultural, educational and artistic activities within the building.

To access the library, visitors must first pass the box office in the foyer, bringing them to the first point of contact with the Arts Centre. In the foyer the shared space is used to display notice boards on activities in the three organisations.

The gallery is accessible from the foyer and from the library. The Arts Centre holds four exhibitions per year, each running for two months and the library also holds four exhibitions, which run for one month. Early on it was agreed that each organisation should have a different remit for exhibitions. The library works with community groups and amateur artists and the Arts Centre works with professional artists.

The community space, which is on the library side of the building, but is also accessible from the Arts Centre, is a multi-purpose room used by both organisations. There is an online booking system, which allows all partners to see when the room is booked, by whom and for what purpose. For example, the Arts Centre hires out this room for Pilates, yoga and drama classes. The library uses the space for book clubs, author visits, lectures etc. When bookings clash, flexibility is shown by both organisations and events can be moved to the gallery if needed. All agencies do their best to accommodate each other and ensure continuity of service for their customers.

There are many benefits to sharing space with an Arts Centre, namely that it brings people into the building who might never visit a public library. For example, people who attend evening classes in the community space pass through the library and information on library services is displayed in the community space. As a result, there has been a take-up of library membership by these people. The library often works with the Arts Centre on linking the promotion of its stock with their events e.g. a dramatisation of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* resulted in the library promoting Irish writers and playwrights. Finally, on days when all parts of the building are in use – library, community space, gallery, café and auditorium – there is tangible electricity in the air. This vibrant buzz of activity puts the building at the heart of the community and makes it a special place to work.

On the financial side, all agencies divide common bills on a fixed percentage rate. The Arts Centre takes on the initial payment of all bills and then invoices the library. Some common bills include electricity, insurance, pest control, security. As a shared building it makes sense to do it this way, as it reduces the bureaucracy of each agency dealing separately with contractors.

On the negative side, sharing space can bring some limitations. If the community space is booked, events can be held in the gallery, provided an exhibition is not being held on the gallery floor space. As this is uncertain from month to month, it has meant that the library has lost the 'Grow It Yourself' (GIY) group meetings. The library floor space is insufficient for the group, but it cannot guarantee monthly access to the community space or gallery. Also, communication between the organisations is vital as flexibility is often called for. When communications break down, problems begin to arise and solutions require work and effort.

7.5 Volunteering

7.5.1 General Patterns in Volunteering in Ireland

In the context of this report, volunteering is understood to involve individuals or groups freely offering their services of time and expertise for the benefit of society at large or their local community. This project is also concerned with examining the formal establishment of volunteer programmes through community engagement and partnership initiatives and joint use policies for the betterment of public library service provision (see section 1.2).

Ireland has many and varied traditions of voluntary action, deriving from medieval times and later from Protestant philanthropy in the 18th century and the rise of Catholic religious philanthropy in the 19th century. Apart from philanthropy, volunteering has continued through the Gaelic revival in the late 19th century, safe-

help in the co-operative movement and through the local customs of "cooring" (from the verb comhair meaning to co operate) and the Meitheal (organising farm work).

In the 20th century volunteering has been a key aspect of community development in organisations such as Muintir na Tire in the 1930s. This was to lay the foundations for volunteer organisations based on the unit of the parish which would develop cultural and social activity.

The latter part of the 20th century saw major changes in volunteering in Ireland. In the late 1990s it was "belief in the cause", "being asked to help" and "wanting to help" or "being neighbourly" that were the main reasons for engaging in volunteering. The most important benefits of volunteering were "seeing results", "doing good", "meeting people" and "enjoyment". As the decade progressed "wanting to help" declined by 17%.[8]

During the Celtic Tiger years volunteering faced numerous challenges and opportunities. These stemmed from demographic changes, increased employment and the growth of consumerism. The volunteer model had to be reassessed to sustain and increase volunteer activity. It seems therefore that volunteering patterns, certainly in the case of Ireland, are influenced by its economic status.

A report carried out by Joint Committee on Arts, Sport, Tourism, Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs 2005[9] indicated that the stereotypical view of volunteering as "helping" or "giving" needed to be changed which, as the report suggested, would raise a greater awareness of its value. Further recommendations included:

- the need for more up to date research into volunteering in Ireland
- the provision of academic accreditation to long term volunteers
- the introduction of financial incentives for organisations to encourage volunteering by staff
- the setting up of a volunteer passport to provide a record of individuals volunteering activity
- the establishment of a thorough vetting procedure for those wishing to work with children and vulnerable adults.

The 2006 Census

The 2006 census[10] was the first to include a question on voluntary activity, but no question on volunteering, apart from unpaid assistance to friends and relatives, has been included in the 2011 census. The 2006 census asked respondents if they had engaged in any of the following:

- Social organisation
- Charitable organisation
- Religious group
- Sporting organisation
- Political organisation

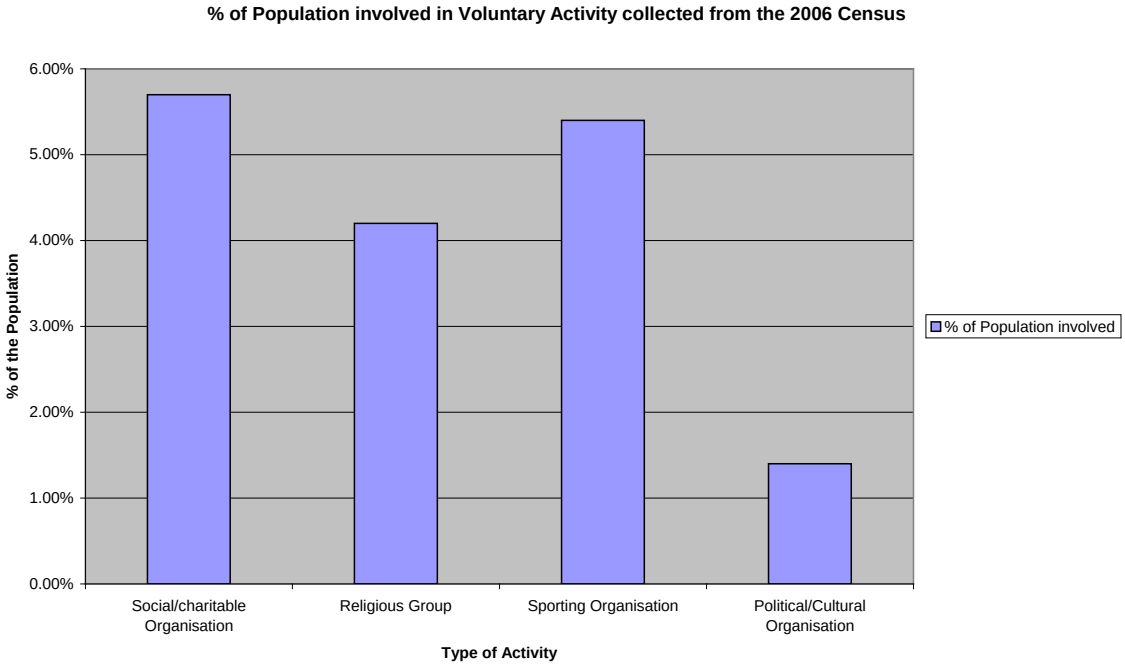
[8] Tipping the Balance: Report and Recommendations to Government on Supporting and Developing Volunteering in Ireland National Committee on Volunteering, 2002, (2003). http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/resources/policy-documents/national/doc/tipping-the-balance-report.html (accessed 4/04/2011)

[9] Joint Committee on Arts, Tourism, Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, 2002, "Volunteers and Volunteering in Ireland" 2004

[10] Volunteering Ireland / Volunteer Centre Dublin City North (12 July 2010), Promoting, supporting and facilitating voluntary action in Ireland. http://www.volunteeringireland.ie. (accessed 4/04/2011)

- Cultural organisation
- Any other voluntary activity

The census results indicated that 16.5% of people aged 15 years or over were involved in at least one of five voluntary activities listed.



Further analysis of the census results indicated that:

- There was little difference between the number of males and the number of females volunteering.
- The age group with the highest participation rate in voluntary activities was 45-49 years (23.3%).
- The lowest participating age group was 20-24 years; higher and lower professionals had the highest participation rates in voluntary activities (24.7% and 25.6% respectively)
- Semi skilled and unskilled workers (12.9% and 9.4% respectively) participated least.

The only concrete statistics to compare these figures to are those produced by the National Economic and Social Forum (NESF)[11] in its report on the Policy Implications of Social Capital, published in 2003. The 2006 Census confirms the findings of the NESF report with respect to the greater likelihood of volunteering in mid-life (40-64 years of age). However, the 2006 Census records a much higher percentage of persons aged 65 and over engaged in volunteering (15%) than the NESF 2002 study (6%).

A recent press release by the Volunteers Centre Ireland (VCI)[12] recorded a 102% increase in volunteers registering in over twenty volunteer centres across the country. This increase, they believe, is due to the economic downturn and rising unemployment. The most interesting statistic is that 66% of those registered are under 35 years old and 70% have never volunteered previously. The profile of volunteers is also changing significantly according to the VCI. Volunteers tend to be highly skilled and volunteer centres are under pressure to find "meatier roles" for their volunteers. In response to this and to collect more in-depth

[11] National Economic and Social Forum (NESF), (2003) Policy Implications of Social Capital, http://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/5696/ (accessed 4/04/2011)

[12] Press Releases - Volunteer Centres Ireland. Volunteer Centres Ireland, (13 July 2010). http://www.volunteer.ie/Press-Releases.html (accessed 4/04/2011)

statistics, the VCI has added “recently made redundant” to their list of reasons for volunteering. This, they say, is now one of the top ten reasons why people wish to volunteer, “free time” and ”to gain work experience” are the second and third most popular reasons for volunteering.

The European Commission has recently conducted a 27 member state survey[13] on volunteering and this includes a national report on Ireland[14].

7.5.2 The Online Survey of Public Library Authorities

All 32 county and city library authorities completed the online survey. Fourteen respondents (44%) stated that they involve volunteers within their service and a majority, 18 authorities (56%), indicated that they do not. Library authorities that involve volunteers in their service are listed in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Library Authorities that use Volunteers

Cork City	Meath
Dublin City	Sligo
Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	South County Dublin
Kildare	Tipperary
Kilkenny	Waterford City
Limerick City	Waterford County
Louth	Wexford

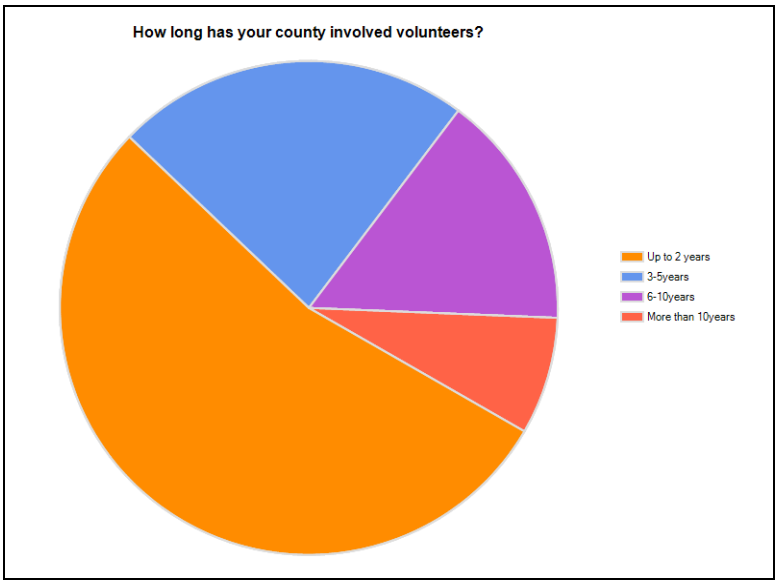
Of the eight city and 24 county library authorities in Ireland, six city (75%) and eight county authorities (33%) use volunteers. The greater use of volunteers by city authorities may be due to a larger pool of locally available people and/or a greater need for services among a concentrated population.

Seven of the above fourteen authorities have involved volunteers for up to two years. These include Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, Kilkenny, Limerick City, Sligo, South Dublin, Tipperary and Waterford County. Wexford has been using volunteers longer than any other authority (more than 10 years) while Dublin City and Meath have had volunteers on board over a period of six to ten years (see Figure 1).

[13]European Commission, Citizenship, (Feb 2010), Study on Volunteering, National Report: Ireland, http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/eyv2011/doc/National%20report%20IE.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

[14] European Commission, Citizenship, (Feb 2010), Study on Volunteering, National Report: Ireland, http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/eyv2011/doc/National%20report%20IE.pdf (accessed 4/04/2011)

Figure 1



Main Reasons for Using Volunteers

Of the eleven authorities that responded to this question, nine (82%) stated that the main reason for using volunteers was that It allowed them to do things which they could not normally do. Other reasons cited were "*saving money*" (five authorities, 46%), "*giving people a route into employment"* (five authorities 46%) and "*promoting user involvement*" (three authorities 27%). One library service added that use of volunteer staff: "*provides access to specialist expertise for free (and) it creates local resources otherwise not available*."

Volunteers run three community spaces that were set up by Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown libraries in November 2009. The library service provides training and support for these spaces but they are run by volunteers.

Overall, the reasons given for using volunteers included the ability to extend existing library services and to provide additional services to users. Interestingly, library personnel also see the value of personal development for users in encouraging interested members of the public to volunteer both time and expertise for mutual benefit.

Numbers and Profiles of Volunteers

Twelve authorities responded to this question. The majority had between five and ten volunteers involved in their service at any one time with the exception of Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown which reported having thirty volunteers due to the establishment of three community spaces. Table 2 summarises the numbers, gender and age distribution of volunteers serving each library authority.

Table 2: Numbers and Profiles of Volunteers in Irish Libraries

Library Authority (12)	No. of Volunteers	Male	Female	Under 18yrs	18-35yrs	36--55yrs	56-65yrs
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown	30	6	24			6	24
Dublin City	10	3	7		3	4	3
South Dublin	10	7	3		3	6	1
Limerick City	6	4	2		2	4	
Meath	5	2	3	1	1	3	
Sligo	5	1	4		5		
Waterford County	5	2	3	1	2		2
Wexford County	5	2	3				5
Kilkenny	3	2	1		1	2	
Cork City	2	1	1	1		1	
Tipperary	2	0	2			1	1
Waterford City	2	0	2			1	1
Totals	85	30	55	3	17	28	37

Responses indicated that while volunteering seems to be predominantly a female activity (55 versus 30 male), the results are somewhat skewed by the relatively large number of volunteers (30) in Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown most of whom (24) are female. If the Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown response is factored out of the results, the gender imbalance in the remaining eleven authorities is less pronounced (31 female, 24 male).

Volunteer Hours

The total amount of time volunteers give to each library authority was reported to vary from one to 44 hours per week (see Table 3).

Table 3: Total Volunteer Hours per week per Library Authority

Authority (12)	Hours per Week
Waterford County	44
South Dublin	16
Meath	12
Sligo	12
Cork city	10
Limerick city	10
Waterford City	6
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown	2
Kilkenny	1
Tipperary	1
Wexford County	varies
Dublin City	varies

Waterford County obtains an average of 8.8 hours work per week from each of its five volunteers which is a substantial contribution of time and service to the library. In marked contrast, Kilkenny and Tipperary, with three and two volunteers respectively, receive only one volunteer hour each per week.

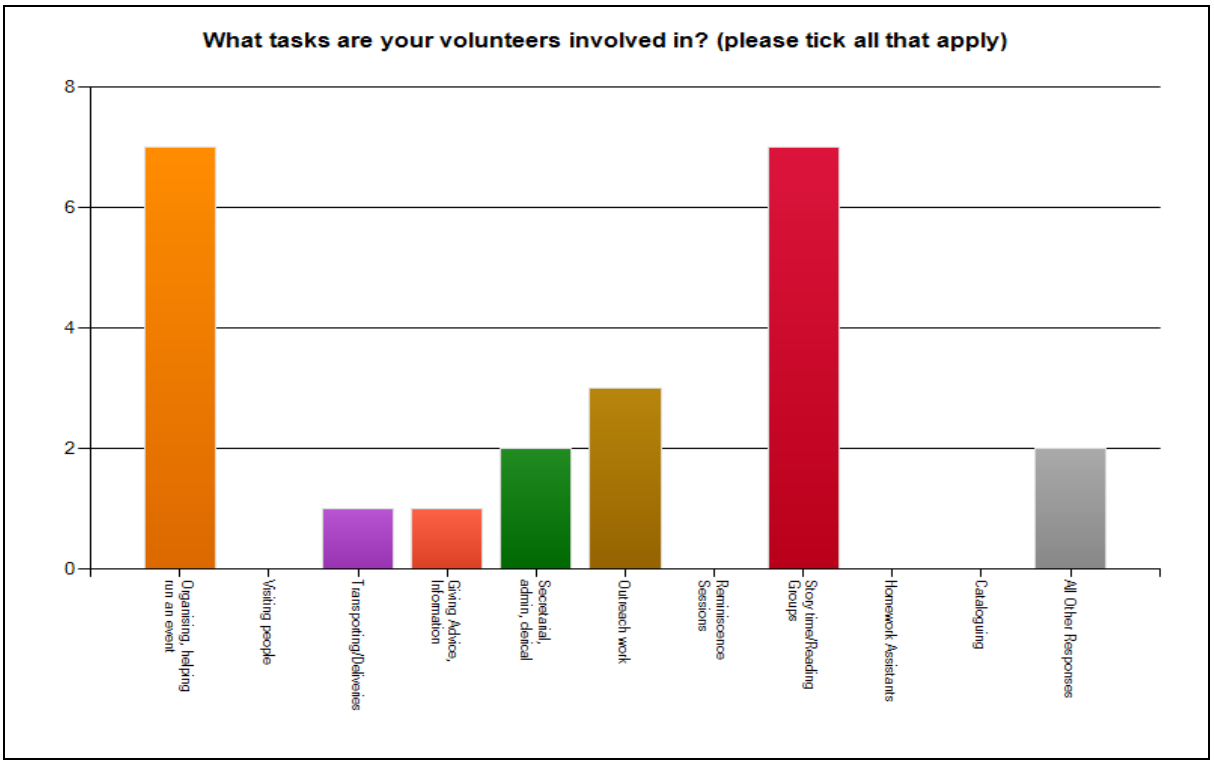
Tasks undertaken by Volunteers

Of the ten authorities that responded to this question, seven identified story time/reading groups as the main tasks in which their volunteers are involved (Kilkenny, Laois, Meath, Sligo, South Dublin, Tipperary and Waterford County). (See Figure 2).

The second most popular task was organising or helping to run an event. This was cited by seven authorities – Cork City, Dublin City, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, Limerick City, Meath, Sligo and Waterford County.

Other volunteer tasks identified included IT training (Limerick city), local studies work (Wexford and Dublin City) and shelving (Waterford City). Dublin City also referred to tasks undertaken on behalf of other organisations of which the volunteer is a member, for example, ICA volunteers who deliver books to homebound readers.

Figure 2



With the exception of shelving duties, the range of activities reported to be undertaken or supported by volunteers indicates that they participate in community engagement and development events. The responses suggest that volunteering leads to an enhancement of services offered by libraries, adds social and cultural value to local communities as well as providing good opportunities for personal development and training of volunteers.

Recruiting Volunteers

Nine of the twelve library authorities (75%) that responded to this question, and who engage volunteers, stated that they did not have enough volunteers to allow them to do what they wish to do. Only Tipperary, Wexford and Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown felt they have sufficient numbers of volunteers for their library service.

Nine of eleven respondents (82%) found it easy to attract/recruit volunteers to their library service with only Cork City and Limerick City disagreeing.

Organisational structure and policy for volunteer management

Six of the fourteen authorities (43%) that involve volunteers have a specific person (at grade 6 or 7 level) who has responsibility for the management and deployment of volunteers. These are Cork City, Limerick City, Meath, Sligo, South Dublin and Tipperary. For the remaining eight authorities further investigation is worthwhile to determine their management policies.

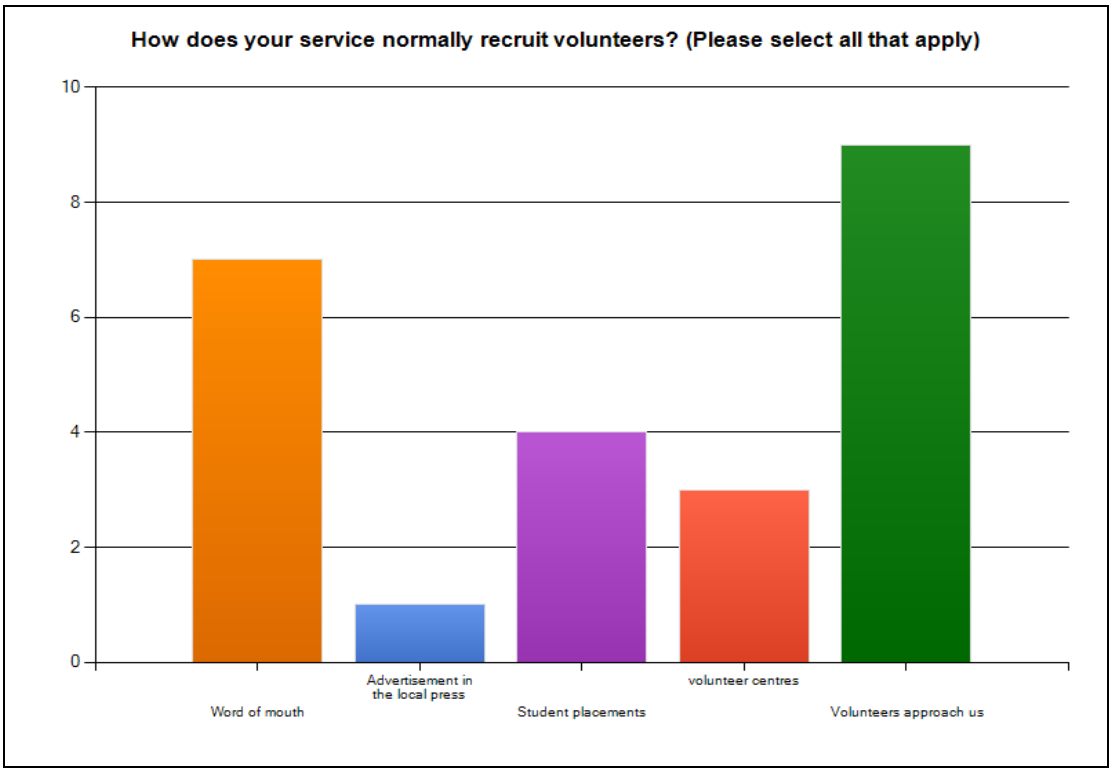
Only two of the thirteen authorities that responded to this part of the question claimed to have a written volunteer policy - Meath and South Dublin. These authorities have written policies, which are not volunteer specific, but which include induction to the library service and information on terms of work. Dublin City and Waterford County are currently working on preparing a volunteer policy. A clear finding of this survey is the need to formulate a volunteer policy for library services in consultation with all authorities, both those who use and do not use volunteers in their services.

Of the thirteen authorities that responded to the question on volunteer training, nine (69%) indicated that they provide training. Training given to volunteers includes: health and safety; library systems training; child protection; manual handling; computer skills and project specific training.

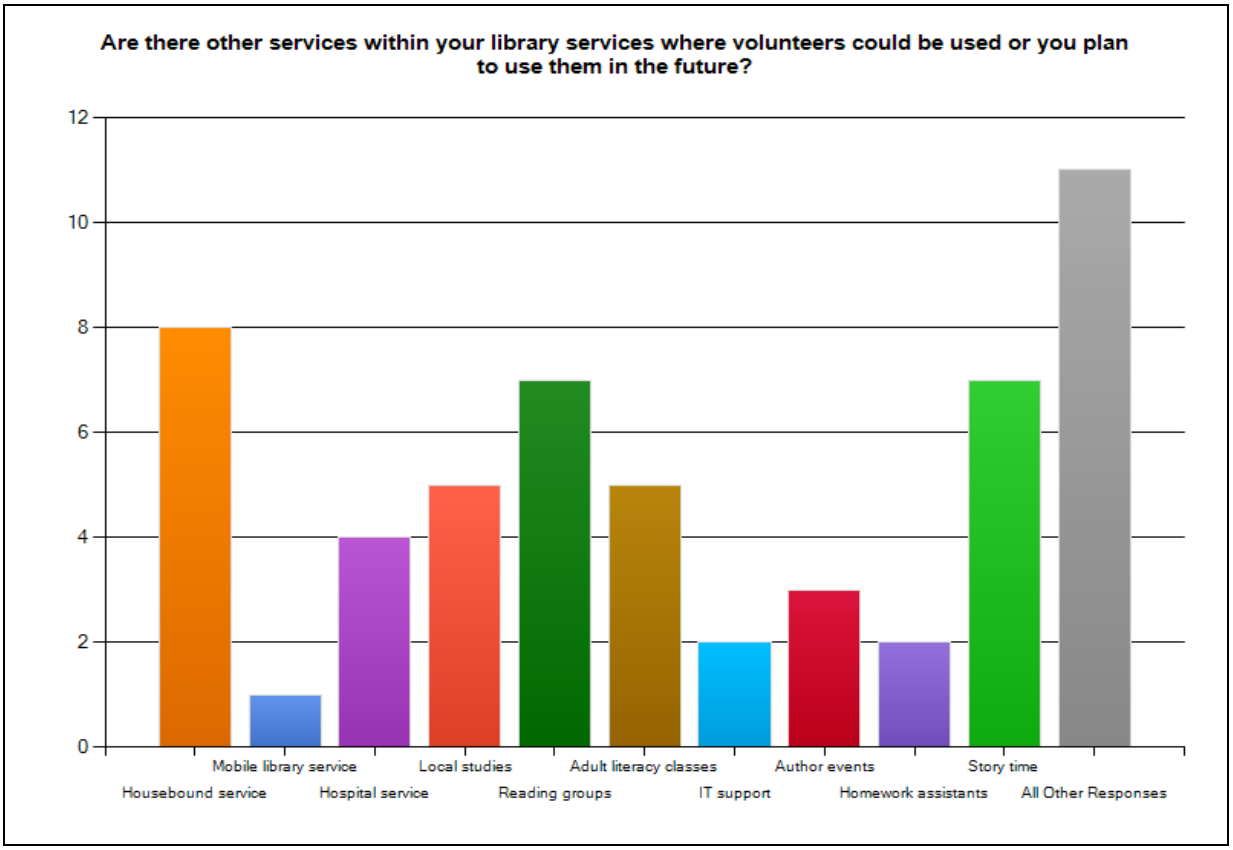
The responses to questions on volunteer training merit further examination. Some training is mandatory in local authorities and should be provided for all regardless of their employment conditions or status. These include health and safety, child protection and manual handling training. Outside of mandatory training, good opportunities exist for volunteers to enhance their personal skills and for library staff to maximise volunteer potential through training programmes. This issue requires both clarification and elaboration in a written volunteer policy document.

Twelve authorities answered the question on methods used to recruit volunteers. Nine (75%) stated that volunteers approached them to volunteer within the service. Word of mouth was cited by seven authorities (58%) as the next most popular means of recruitment (see Figure 3). This suggests informal methods are used in attracting volunteers. Other recruitment methods used included the placing of notices in parish newsletters and approaching possible volunteers who have the appropriate skills needed for specific projects.

Figure 3



The four most popular areas envisaged by twelve responding library authorities as future roles for volunteers were housebound services (66%), reading groups (58%), story time (58%) and children's activities (50%). (see Figure 4).



Reasons why some Library Authorities do not use Volunteers

The eighteen library authorities that stated that they were not currently using volunteers were asked if they had ever done so in the past. Nine responded positively and some gave reasons why they no longer did so. These were mainly due to industrial relations issues. One response was interesting as it suggested that with the expansion of services and the increase in numbers of staff during the affluent Celtic Tiger years (1995-2007) there was little need for volunteers and with a booming economy and full employment people were less willing to give up their free time to volunteer.

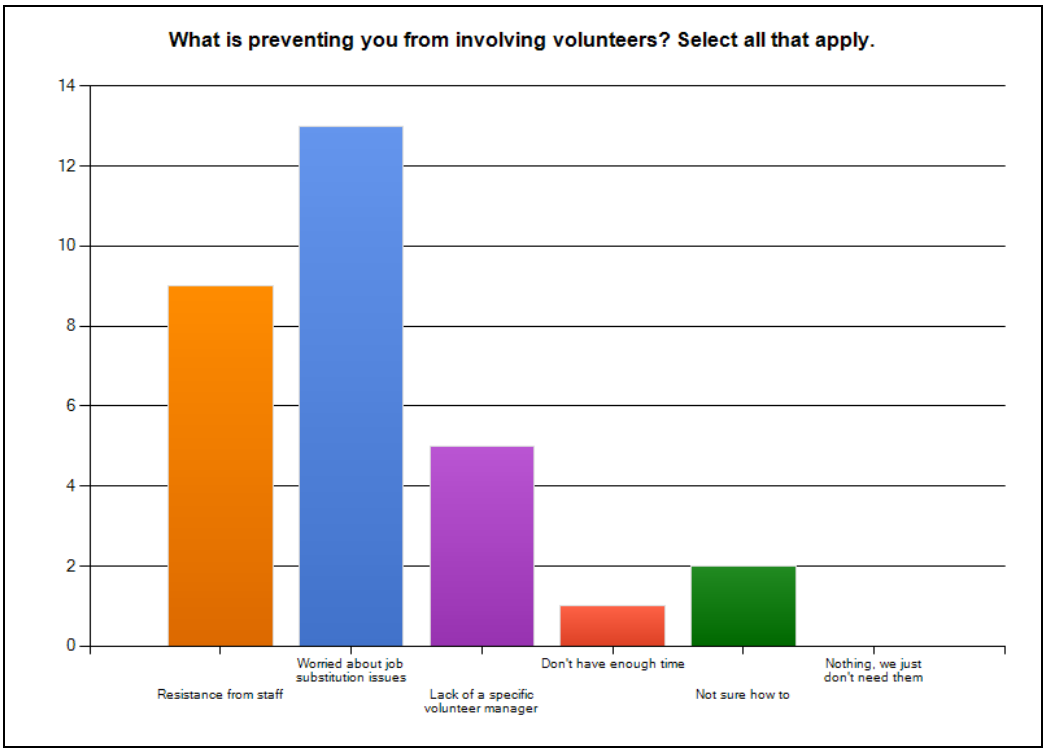
Asked why they did not, or no longer, involved volunteers in their service, only eight of the eighteen authorities responded and all stated that health and safety issues prevented them from doing so. Time constraints were also a factor in the case of five of the eight authorities. Some authorities also cited current industrial relations and work to rule issues (March-May 2010).

When asked what prevented them from involving volunteers, thirteen of the fifteen respondents (87%) were worried about job substitution issues, nine (60%) had experienced resistance from staff and five (33%) said that they did not have a staff member assigned to manage volunteers. If volunteers became involved in library service provision, some library staff felt that perhaps volunteers would not be as willing as permanent staff or have the time to devote to tasks if they worked for shorter periods than permanent staff.

A distinction was made by one respondent between library volunteers and members of the public doing some voluntary work in libraries. People volunteering to do story telling or to run poetry events, and students on professional library training courses gaining some work experience, offer valuable time and service to libraries but are not considered as volunteers. The same respondent noted:

"*We brought in volunteers to train them. The experience was not a happy one. Volunteers feel that they need not be bound by a timetable. Also, their enthusiasm quickly wears off and they disappear. Then you have to train a new set of volunteers. "Minding" volunteers takes a lot of work*".

Figure 5



Respondents were also conscious of safeguarding the profession of librarianship and some were of the view that the use of volunteers "*could threaten the professional/semi-professional structures in place. The securing of professional structures has been hard fought down the years and introducing volunteers could lead to a dilution of same*"

Despite the stated reservations, five of nineteen respondents (26%) reported that they were considering introducing volunteers in the future; these were Cavan, Clare, Dublin City, Fingal and Waterford City. This would depend on the resolution of the industrial relations concerns that were an issue at the time of the survey (May 2010). Finding appropriate areas in which volunteers might become involved and having appropriate vetting procedures in place as part of a child protection policy were raised as important considerations. One authority stated that as 2011 has been designated as a Year of Volunteering it may consider taking on volunteers. Another respondent indicated that volunteers would be taken on when an appropriate policy was in place. This again highlights the need for a national written policy covering all aspects of volunteer work in library authorities.

7.5.3 The CCMA Perspective on Volunteering

Although the CCMA does not have a formal policy on volunteering, the CCMA chairman was in favour of volunteering and believed that city and county managers should actively support it. He suggested that the CCMA would probably rely on policy and other documentation of Volunteering Ireland for guidance in this matter. When questioned on what written policies should be in place before setting up a volunteer programme, the respondent identified child protection as a high priority area for those working with children. Health and safety training was also specified as essential for volunteers because the library authority has responsibility for all personnel engaged in library activities. In addition, human resources (HR) training was seen as important, as well as some induction training on industrial relations (IR) issues for volunteers who might not be used to a formal working environment.

In general, the public service obligations of local authorities in relation to working with communities and individuals were considered by the respondent to be covered by their statutory role in providing services. He was of the view that libraries, as part of the local authority administration, have a public service obligation to extend their role beyond the lending of books to include services such as information technology (IT) and self-help facilities such as the work being carried out in public libraries in conjunction with FÁS.

The enablement of people to be re-energised through engaging in active citizenship and having a role in the community was identified as an advantage of volunteering. It was emphasised by the respondent that volunteers should not replace professional library staff but they do offer the advantage of helping the library to provide extra services which it would otherwise not be in a position to offer.

On the potentially negative side, it was noted that if a library authority does not have a well thought out volunteer scheme, which is clearly understood and accepted by library staff and their representatives, it could create IR issues. The question may be asked – is this a Trojan horse to replace paid people with free labour? Will new libraries be manned by voluntary staff? Does professionalism suffer if you use volunteers who do not have library qualifications? This raises a quality issue and, in particular, an enthusiastic amateur should never replace a professional librarian. The public must be made aware that volunteering is not to be a new model for library service provision. It is very much an emergency response to the current shortfall in resources. In order for volunteer schemes to work care must be taken in selecting volunteers in terms of their motivation and suitability for the tasks to be assigned to them. There would also be some concern if library authorities were to take on volunteers as a response to an unemployment situation and to give work experience to people who have no affinity with the library and don't particularly wish to be there. However, the current economic situation means that the pool of potential recruits has grown significantly and a well structured volunteer policy can yield suitable candidates who will make a constructive contribution to the library service.

There are some fundamental prerequisites to be addressed before a library authority takes volunteers on board and these relate to the points already made above. Staff engagement is essential and this might be facilitated by some form of advisory group on which staff, HR and IR personnel are represented. All parties involved should be able to see the merit in it. Certain procedures, such as Garda vetting, will need to be in place. This is already required for membership of the Civil Defence and does not seem to be a problem.

Local history research, community activity, counter duty and 'meet and greet' activities were suggested as areas of work that could be suitable for volunteers. A big opening for volunteering would be in small towns where branch libraries cannot stay open for very long and part-time staff may need support from volunteers to help out. However, it was noted that librarians might have a totally different view on this issue and the respondent said he was speaking as a citizen rather than as a manager.

I t was acknowledged that volunteers would have an impact on permanent library staff for a number of reasons. Firstly, unlike staff, volunteers are under no obligation to be present or to perform in the library, so there are different sets of rules in operation for both groups and this may give rise to some tension. However, this also applies to Community Employment (CE) schemes which operate throughout the country. Secondly, some volunteers, such as people with successful business backgrounds who wish to give something back to the community, may expect to come into the library and run the service. They may not be content with doing routine tasks and may wish to undertake higher level work which they consider to be more in keeping with their skills. Although these issues may be problematic they are not unmanageable if the staff are on side and the programme is well designed.

Among the barriers encountered by library authorities in taking on volunteers, the training of volunteers and industrial relations (IR) were raised as potentially problematic areas. People may be prepared to volunteer but may not be willing to invest time in training in order to undertake library work and they may also be unwilling to be subjected to Garda vetting. IR, for the reasons noted above, is a delicate issue and may serve as a barrier if staff feel threatened by volunteers.

It was agreed by Mr. Breen that, in addition to direct recruitment, volunteers could be placed in public library work environments by means of student placements, graduate experience programmes, adult work experience programmes and friends of libraries schemes. He felt it was important to have commitment and enthusiasm in order to have a real volunteer force in the library.

As a final comment, the respondent referred to the rise of reading clubs and 'voluntary' libraries in places such as golf clubs where people bring a book and take a book from a collection. He felt that these trends are helping the library service because they encourage and support reading and general engagement with books.

7.5.4 The LGMA Perspective on Volunteering

A representative of the LGMA (Local Government Management Agency), Ms. Jane Brophy, Human Resource Executive, was included in the survey and provided a written response on issues related only to volunteering. She indicated that the LGMA had no written policy on volunteering but suggested that local authorities should have policies in place on Garda vetting of volunteers and on the need to ensure that "*all volunteers will be inducted in the same manner as all other local authority employees and made aware of all HR issues and health and safety policies*". Ms. Brophy recommended that all volunteers should be asked to complete a declaration form in relation to child protection and that the local authority should provide training regarding mandatory health and safety and dignity at work policies. IR issues were identified as health, safety and dignity at wok issues and "*the threat of volunteer roles taking on permanent duties that are presently assigned to full-time equivalent staff*". The main barrier to volunteering in the library was stated to be the need to ensure that "*existing staff resources are available to induct staff to the organisation and to supervise and / or train staff in an appropriate manner*".

7.5.5 The IMPACT Perspective on Volunteering

Mr. Nolan stated that it is the union's view that volunteers should not be used to replace posts within the public service. However, he believed that there is plenty of scope, within the definition of volunteering adopted in this research project, to continue to promote volunteering as a concept within the library service. IMPACT is very clear in drawing a line in relation to the use of volunteers and the work they undertake. He noted that at the time of the interview there was an ongoing dispute in a public library because management was seeking to run the service based on the operation of volunteers and no prior consultation had taken place with the union. He mentioned that there was a work experience programme in operation under a FÁS arrangement, but this had been introduced in consultation with the unions on the clear and absolute understanding that it would not be used to replace existing jobs or to cover for jobs that had been lost in the past.

IMPACT does not have a formal policy document on volunteering but the position described above has been adopted at an executive meeting and is reflected in the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government circular on FÁS placements. IMPACT has no immediate plans to prepare a document on volunteering but the principles are clear – volunteers are not to be used to replace existing jobs or to cover for jobs that have been lost in the moratorium on public sector recruitment.

The public service obligations of local authorities in relation to working with communities and individuals were considered by the IMPACT representative to include insurance cover, issues relating to childcare and meeting the full requirements of duty of care to their employees.

An important policy that should be adopted by library authorities in advance of setting up volunteer programmes is that they should consult with trades unions representing all staff, including library staff, van drivers and attendants, i.e. IMPACT, SIPTU and other unions where relevant. The best way to secure the support of trades unions is to sit down in advance, consult, give assurances and engage in the context of discussing a proposed initiative or development where everybody can be assured that there will be no abuse of employees' rights. According to the respondent, in the current economic recession and in the context of the ban on public service recruitment, there "*is a huge suspicion that any moves in this area* (i.e. volunteering) *have their origin in the moratorium, so it doesn't create a good background in which to move*".

As regards the impact on library staff of working with volunteers, attempting to achieve a greater understanding of different stakeholders in the library environment was seen as a positive outcome. On the other hand, the need to supervise, train and monitor volunteers who don't come to the table with the same professional requirements as library trainees may be burdensome on library staff. Volunteers may not understand how and why certain practices and procedures are used in the library and may interfere with the smooth running of the library and cause bureaucratic problems.

When questioned on whether or not there is a public service duty to open work and experience opportunities to volunteers, the respondent stated that "*it should always be an obligation of the public service to provide work experience"* but in his opinion "*volunteering has nothing to do with work experience*" and he would be "*very suspicious that there would be that link between work experience and volunteerism*".

IR issues related to volunteering have been raised in some of the points already made above. These include issues of job replacement, erosion of terms and conditions of employees, duty of care obligations, codes of practice regarding bullying and harassment and the applicability, or otherwise, of labour legislation to volunteers.

The areas of work that would be considered suitable for volunteers would be such that they do not involve the replacement of library staff. Examples might include members of the community giving history lessons or music lessons and other similar activities.

7.5.6 Some Examples of Volunteering in Public Libraries

Fingal Library service – Housebound Service, Dublin

The Housebound Library which is part of the library service was set up in 2002. It brings all library services to homebound people with disabilities and to people confined in nursing homes and hospitals and those attending day care units. In addition, it serves young adults who are intellectually challenged and attending training centres and it also visits centres for travellers as well as a children's hospital.

Initially the service did not have a dedicated mobile driver and had to rely on drivers on standby from other mobile library services in the area. As the mobile service got busier the library services needed their own drivers fulltime and, as a result, a partnership was formed with Fingal Volunteering Centre. Volunteer drivers were made available to deliver the housebound service in 2006. The volunteers were mostly parents and foreign nationals who had some free time in the mornings to volunteer.

The volunteer centre was successful in matching appropriate volunteers for the service and in return the library was able to provide references for the volunteers to obtain employment, which several of them did. Overall it worked well but due to the expansion of the service and reported objections from the trades unions, permanent staff, rather than volunteers, were required to operate the service.

A very important element in the setting up and delivery of the service was the relationship built up with those groups and individuals in community who work directly on a day to day basis in the caring professions. Fingal County library service coordinated the publication of two books of reminiscences in a day care facility and one book with individual contributions at a Central Remedial Day Care Unit. The library also organises art and writing competitions.

The service is currently operated by library staff in Fingal with no involvement by volunteers.

The Ennis Annual Book Club Festival, Ennis County Clare

The Ennis Book Club Festival was launched in March 2007 and has now become an annual celebration of reading on the first weekend in March. Author readings, discussions, lectures, workshops, poetry, drama, exhibitions and walking tours are on offer. There are sessions on how to organise a book club, advice on reading lists, and an opportunity to compare notes and chat with other book club members.

The aims of the festival are as follows:

To promote the value of literature in a non-elitist way and encourage the reading habit
To link libraries and communities for the benefit of both, and include local artists/writers and young people
To promote and highlight the role of library services in the community
To lessen the elitism sometimes associated with literary festivals
To provide a space for readers to share their love of books
To provide a platform for writers to showcase their work and interact with readers
To appeal to a local, national and international audience
To differentiate from other literary festivals by placing the emphasis on the reader
To make a contribution to the cultural life and economy of the Ennis region

The festival is organised by a voluntary committee of six people, along with one library staff member. The committee has a range of complementary skills and experience in management, media, communications and finance. The committee meets monthly from April to November and on a more regular basis from December to March. On the weekend of the festival the library enlists the help of about thirty loyal volunteers, most of whom have been involved since the festival began in 2007. Specific tasks are allocated in advance of the festival and a review takes place with the committee and volunteers after the event.

Funding comes from various sources - local authority funding is received from Ennis Town Council, Clare Arts Office and Oifig na Gaeilge. Other funding comes from The Arts Council, Fáilte Ireland, Poetry Ireland, Library Book Suppliers, bookshops and other commercial sponsors. Ticket sales for the various festival events make up the shortfall. The benefit-in-kind made available by Clare County Library – staff time, postage, phone access and photocopying facilities, makes the whole event possible.

Benefits to the town of Ennis

In economic terms, the festival generates valuable income for the region. Spending on venue hire, advertising, technical hire, consultancy, design, printing and production benefits local companies. The boutiques, bookshops, shoe shops, taxis etc also report increased sales over that weekend. The fact that it is held at an off-peak time of year is also beneficial - early March normally sees few tourists in the region and many accommodation providers and business people have acknowledged that this helps to kick start their season.

The festival has also been beneficial to Glór Theatre in Ennis. They work with the library in providing a centralised ticket sales system for the festival and the extra work creates local employment in advance of, and during, the festival. They have also commented that the festival has helped to develop an audience for other events which they run throughout the year in Glór.

As well as the direct economic benefit to the region there is also the benefit of increased awareness of Ennis as a weekend break destination that is created by the festival. The economic benefit of this type of promotion is hard to quantify but there is no doubt that it raises the profile of the town. Much of the festival's publicity highlights the resource that is Ennis – a historic town, narrow streets, restaurants, cafes and great shops.

Benefits to the Library Service

The help and encouragement received from library authorities all around the country has been exceptional and the festival organisers are very grateful for that support. For library staff who attend the festival, meeting like-minded people from libraries all over the country in an informal setting, the contacts made, and the ideas shared and discussed are extremely valuable. This year a professional development workshop on 'Marketing for the Busy Librarian', conducted by Nancy Dowd from New Jersey State Library was provided free of charge for library staff nationwide and had an attendance of over 80.

The festival has highlighted the library in a very positive light to the community. It has demonstrated how local authorities can benefit from investment in culture. In this regard Clare County Council and the Ennis Town Manager have been very supportive. Positive links have been made with councillors and the Town Mayor who have seen the potential of the festival to impact on economic and social outcomes in the region. The festival has also presented new types of work and new ways of working than can have far reaching effects on all participants.

The database of contacts developed for the festival is also of great benefit in notifying the local community of upcoming library events. Each email sent to authors and speakers bears the name of Clare Library and so, even if only subliminally, is reinforcing the involvement of the library in these types of events. The contacts made by library staff in the community, the free training opportunities availed of through Shannon Development and Fáilte Ireland and the exposure to national media, have all been very helpful and the skills learned have been of benefit in other areas of library work.

Benefits to the community

There is a real sense that the townspeople are behind the festival. As well as the economic benefits to the business community, the festival has developed strong links with the broader community, engaging with youth groups, schools, local writers, musicians, actors and artists. Several local artists have been commissioned for work over the years. The festival brings authors of international standing to County Clare, making it possible for people to extend their experiences of the arts. It is hoped that the festival has in some way enriched the lives of the local population.

Benefits to the committee and helpers

The library's volunteer base is very loyal and they act as excellent ambassadors for the town and county. The festival has been a big learning experience for all and the valuable contribution made by the active voluntary committee has to be greatly admired. It proves that partnerships between libraries and the local community can work extremely well. The benefits to the volunteers are certainly not monetary and it is impossible to put a value on them so what is the benefit for them? They have learned new skills and experienced being part of something positive, they have given something back to the community and built new friendships and there is the feel-good factor of doing something worthwhile. They have also played a role in developing a vibrant arts profile at a local as well as a national level.

Chapter 8

Main Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 Main Conclusions

8.1.1 Overview

The emergence of national policies on citizenship, local community democracy and empowerment in developed countries over the last decade has helped to focus attention on the public library as a meeting and communications hub within local communities. These citizen centred policies have followed on from the national information policies of the nineties, which also identified the public library as a vital node in national information infrastructures. Citizenship policies have driven, and continue to drive, initiatives in all forms of community engagement by public libraries as a subset of a broader social, economic and cultural agenda and have therefore provided investment in effort and funding for research in the field. As evidenced by the international review of the literature, much has been revealed about the complex workings of relationships between the public library and other local community agencies and groups and between public libraries and individual citizens, some of whom serve as volunteers.

When community engagement is considered as a generic process to include all forms of interaction between the library and the community, including informal and formal partnership arrangements with other agencies, joint use libraries and/or co-location of a library with other organisations on one site, and the use of volunteers in libraries, the following general conclusions may be drawn from the international literature and the fieldwork undertaken in the Republic of Ireland.

Community engagement is seen a catalyst and a channel for local democracy and the empowerment of local communities.

In general, libraries that are involved in community engagement have a closer relationship with their communities and provide a more comprehensive range of services than those that do not.

Community engagement enables the library to enhance existing services, generate new services and reach those who would not normally avail of the services of the library.

Community engagement, properly planned, managed and administered, is generally of mutual benefit to all stakeholders. In the case of partnerships with local agencies and/or groups the resulting services are often greater than the sum of the parts and each partner gains an insight into the workings and the missions of the other organisations. Co-location of libraries with other agencies can lead to a reduction in overheads and other cost savings and can also expose and promote the library to new clients who might not otherwise have considered using it. In the case of volunteering, the library benefits from the time, effort and expertise of the volunteer, while the latter may derive satisfaction and fulfilment from the work, learn new skills and feel that he or she is contributing to their community.

Although the models for community engagement in libraries, as developed in the UK, were not sufficiently advanced as to be comprehensively tested, the practice of central government support for community engagement in library development via a funding stream associated with specific objectives seems worthwhile and merits further investigation for application in Ireland.
In Ireland where there are good examples of community engagement, they appeared to be project based and not sustained beyond the life of the project.

There are organisational and management issues to be addressed in order to ensure the success of community engagement programmes:

- Firstly, a community engagement policy and programme needs to be defined and adopted (in writing). This should include a statement of mission, content, implementation and defined roles of library staff and other agencies and/or people (e.g. volunteers). (Only one Irish library authority reported having a written policy on community involvement –see below).
- Measures should be adopted to fully inform library staff, to allay any fears they may have and to bring them, and their representative trades unions, on board before embarking on any form of engagement with an outside party. The professional status and job descriptions of library staff should not be compromised by any community engagement activity, whether it is a partnership or co-location arrangement or the recruitment of volunteers.
- A member of the library staff should be assigned responsibility for the engagement programme.
- Provision should be made for training library staff, other agency staff and volunteers where appropriate.
- Roles of library staff and other agencies/people should be clearly defined and monitored.
- Reward mechanisms should be provided to motivate those who contribute to the process – e.g. accreditation for volunteers.
- Problem areas need to be anticipated and addressed – e.g. when working with volunteers, security checks should be mandatory when they are to be assigned to work with children and young people; some volunteers may be unreliable, uncommitted and favour only a short term engagement which may not justify the library's investment in training.

The following is a summary of the conclusions drawn under the four research strands – community engagement, community partnership, joint use libraries and volunteering.

8.1.2 Community Engagement

The international review of the literature has shown the UK to be among the world's leaders over the last decade in advancing community engagement by public libraries, both at national policy level and in terms of activities on the ground. This was set in motion as part of a wider government agenda on community empowerment and the encouragement of vibrant local democracy under the aegis of programmes such as the Big Society. However, in the recent past, the Big Society is encountering problems of definition and financing and the recent abolition of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) does not auger well for further research and development in this field.

Nevertheless, the advanced status of community engagement policies, programmes and general activities among public library authorities in the UK is reflected in the number and variety of toolkits that have emerged in recent years, including the generic toolkit by the MLA as well as tailor-made toolkits by authorities such as Dundee City Council, Halton Strategic Partnership, Liverpool City Council, London Borough of Bexley, Manchester City Council and Newcastle City Council. (for details see Chapter 3).

Community engagement initiatives among public library authorities are also well advanced in North America and Australia as reflected in policies and programmes at national and local library levels and in the publication of guidelines, toolkits and other devices to assist library authorities wishing to more fully and actively engage with their communities. Examples of community engagement guidelines published in North America and Australia include toolkits by Vancouver Public Library, Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, Ohio Library Council and Warringah Council in New South Wales.

At international level, the United Nations has recently (2008) produced a civic engagement toolkit, reflecting a wider social interest in community engagement.

There is some evidence of community engagement activities among **Irish public library authorities**, for example, the Gorey Civic Centre represents a model of good practice in consulting with the community before building a joint public services facility to meet their needs. It is both a community engagement and co-location project which demonstrates the advantages of a common footfall and shared facilities such as car parking, public lighting and security, as well as the capital and maintenance cost savings that result from this arrangement. Community engagement also includes partnership with local community groups, joint use of library facilities and volunteering in libraries and many examples of innovative and exciting initiatives by Irish libraries are described in the report.

Representatives of the CCMA and IMPACT expressed their full support for all forms of community engagement by public libraries.

8.1.3 Community Partnership

Partnerships can involve high level collaboration between local, regional and national state agencies in literacy provision, technology training, social and cultural inclusion and integration, healthcare, environmental and many other areas.

A comprehensive worldwide survey of collaboration and cooperation among libraries, museums and archives published by the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) includes some examples of best practice in community partnership at a variety of levels, including fully collaborative programming and co-location of partners.

At national level, the UK is again shown to be well advanced in terms of policy, programmes and actions at local level in this area. The MLA toolkit referred to above covers community partnership as an important element of the wider concept of community engagement. The generic toolkit lays out a step by step guide to seeking out new partnerships with appropriate bodies in the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and suggests a number of steps which merit repeating here:

- "*Research, find out about the groups working in the field you are interested in.*
- *How do the organisation's values, aims and objectives relate to your interests?*
- *Do any of your colleagues or existing partners already work with the organisation you are interested in talking to? Build on their knowledge.*
- *Before approaching potential partners, identify how you and the partners can benefit from working together.*
- *Be clear about what you have to offer.*
- *Be willing to negotiate.*
- *When you approach organisations think about what you want to achieve.*
- *Be open and flexible to working with different ideas, styles and networks.*
- *Be open to learning and receptive to new ideas/ ways of doing things*".

In addition to identifying the responsibilities of library staff in community partnership initiatives, and in giving consideration to the drawing up a partnership agreement, the ingredients for effective community partnerships are identified as follows:

- "*The partners have an agreed aim and shared objectives.*
- *Partner organisations have an equal say.*

- *Responsibilities that the community want to take on are defined.*
- *Boundaries of decision makers are agreed.*
- *There are plans showing how community members will be recruited.*
- *Mechanisms for good communication are in place.*
- *Training for members of the community is provided.*
- *How individuals will be managed/ supported is documented.*
- *Training for staff involved is provided.*
- *Each group has clear roles and responsibilities.*
- *How to handle disputes or disagreements.*
- *What you can and cannot compromise about*".

A wide range of community partnership projects has been reported in **North America**. Partnership experiences at Hamilton Public Library Service and Barrie Public Library, both situated in Ontario, Canada, serve to demonstrate the potential variety of innovative initiatives possible in this area. Policy in the US has been greatly boosted by the Urban Libraries Council's policy report – "*Partners for the Future*" in 2010. The report examines how public libraries can work with municipal and county governments to make their communities more economically prosperous, environmentally sustainable, and socially equitable. Eight categories of initiatives undertaken by public libraries in cooperation with local and municipal government bodies are identified.

An abundance of advice on creating strong sustainable partnerships is available from *Techsoup for Libraries*, a non-profit organisation which supports libraries and an example of good practice is to be found in Madison Public Library in North Carolina.

Community partnerships appear to be commonplace in **Australia** and the issue has been taken on board by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) as part of a recent (2010) proposed national vision and framework for public libraries.

Some interesting examples of community partnership initiatives are reported in **Ireland** (Chapter 7). Cork City Library is actively involved with a wide variety of partners in delivering computer classes (with Cork VEC and FÁS), adult continuing education (with the Centre for Adult Continuing Education (CACE) in UCC) and literacy classes (with Cork VEC) as well as organising events such as a Lifelong Learning Festival, open days on careers and jobs and a series of lectures on various topics. Meath County Council Library Service is working in partnership with the HSE to provide a Healthy Reading Scheme and works with local residents at St. Patrick's halting site in Navan to provide library services to the traveller community.

Although partnerships do exist between Irish library authorities and local community groups only one authority reported having a written policy on working with community groups.

Representatives of CCMA and IMPACT were strongly in favour of community partnership between libraries and their communities. The CCMA respondent recommended that partners should have a shared vision for the objective of the partnership and that there should not be a dominant force or a dominant view. Library authorities should not be expected to fund all, or a disproportionate component, of project costs and, for a partnership to be meaningful, other players should bring up to 50% of funds to the table. It was suggested that authorities would typically have partnerships with county development boards, enterprise boards, community fora and regional tourism authorities. It was noted that the HSE and FÁS use libraries to communicate their message nationally and perhaps other agencies such as the IDA and Enterprise Ireland could more fully exploit the public library in this regard.

IMPACT sees the fundamental principles of community partnership as the capacity of society to enable everybody to avail of services and the strengthening of supports for voluntary bodies. It was suggested that local authorities might engage with organisations such as sports bodies, credit

unions and trades unions and that community partnership should ideally result in a value being placed on high end service delivery.

8.1.4 Joint Use Libraries

The IFLA global survey on collaboration and cooperation among libraries, museums and archives already noted above, identified three forms of joint use/integration of services - minimal integration (co-located facilities with individual services maintained); selective integration (sharing of specific projects of departments); and full integration (both facilities share one mission).

The international literature is dotted with examples of all forms of the above, although public/school library joint use appears to be common in the UK and Australia, while public/academic library co-location features quite prominently in the US, in addition to public/school cooperation.

Examples of good practice in the **UK** are highlighted by the Platt Bridge Community Library project in Wigan, as well as programmes in Westlothian, Staffordshire, Bolton, Warwickshire, Hull and Manchester.

North America has good reason to boast about a grand scale, multimillion dollar, fully integrated academic/public joint use project at the Alvin Sherman Library of Nova Scotia Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. This was a green field project which involved the building of a new, dedicated joint use library under a 40 year contract between the university and the local library authority.

In a reference to evaluation of joint use programmes Bundy recommends continuous self-evaluation and a commitment to transparent periodic external evaluation as a means of minimizing difficulties and fostering joint use library synergies (see Chapter 5). He provides a joint use library evaluation methodology which involves an internal ongoing formative evaluation using critical success factors together with external five-to-seven-year reviews commencing within three years of a library's establishment.

In **Ireland**, in the national survey of the 32 library authorities (Chapter 7), eighteen of the 27 library authorities that responded, reported that they accommodate a wide variety of community groups concerned with topics and groups such as adult literacy, computer training, local history, gardening, photography, music, sports, book clubs and writers' groups. Some libraries reported that because they regarded the library as a neutral space, they were unable to accommodate some groups that were politically orientated or profit-making. Another reason for not providing access was a lack of library staff to deal with joint use management.

There are many examples throughout the country of co-location of library premises with other facilities and centres. This includes Abbeyfeale Library in Limerick which shares premises with the local Courthouse which sits eleven times a year. Tubbercurry Library in Sligo also shares a Courthouse but also includes accommodation for a citizen information service, the Northwestern Health Board and FÁS. Dunboyne Library in Meath is located in a purpose built development consisting of the local Health Centre and a RehabCare facility. The Source Arts Centre & Library in Thurles is a multidisciplinary building operated and managed by three partners - County Tipperary Joint Libraries Committee, Thurles Regional Arts Centre Ltd and Thurles Town Council. It combines a branch library and local studies department with an art gallery, a café and a 250-seater auditorium. Details of the above are presented in Chapter 7.

The CCMA supports the joint use of public space as a common sense principle of mutual benefit to all parties and it was suggested that groups with a public or voluntary mission or a community mandate would be likely

candidates for joint use of library space. IMPACT considers the concept of joint use to be very progressive and is of the view that horizons in this regard have not yet been sufficiently expanded.

8.1.5 Volunteering

The fact that the European Commission has designated 2011 as the *European Year of Volunteering*, with a total budget allocation of €11 million, reflects the increasing importance of volunteering in modern society.

Again, the UK has made significant advances in volunteering policy, programmes and practice and considerable research has been undertaken on volunteering in the public library environment. Notable among the research projects were a national survey by the Library Association on volunteering in public library authorities in 1999, followed in 2002-5 by a Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) funded study on the same topic and known as the Lending Time Project. This was a detailed, ground-breaking, innovative pilot project that *"set out to demonstrate the variety of ways in which volunteers could enhance and support libraries – and the ways in which libraries could offer fulfilling volunteering roles for members of their local communities*".

On the basis of a survey of over 700 volunteers serving in six library authorities it was concluded that volunteering in public library services was successful because it –

- achieved added value for the service by offering additional services,
- extended or improved existing services,
- improved library resources,
- described some putative roles of volunteers,
- freed staff to concentrate on core work,
- enhanced specialist skills base, e.g. ICT skills.

The Lending Time Project recommended the following follow-up actions to build on the success of the initiative:

- extending the project to continue momentum within the library and introducing measures to expand the activities of the library,
- standardising procedures for involving volunteers e.g. recruitment, training in volunteer management for library professionals,
- engaging in a strong publicity drive, not only to attract volunteers, but to create more awareness of the library service.

The MLA has also commissioned and published a number of research reports on volunteering in public libraries from 2005 through 2006 including a survey by the Institute of Volunteering Research (IVR) on the role and development of volunteers in libraries (2005) and the toolkit already mentioned on community engagement which includes guidelines for volunteer programmes in public libraries (2006) (see details in Chapter 6).

The IVR study revealed that two thirds of responding libraries used volunteers and received, on average 62 hours per week of volunteer time. Women, rather than men, were more likely to serve as volunteers and two thirds of volunteers were aged 55 and over. Barriers to volunteering were identified as a lack of time and a lack of a specific staff member to manage volunteer recruitment, supervision and training. Other issues presenting difficulties included "*the different skills needed to manage volunteers, a lack of capacity to train volunteers properly, health and safety issues and*

concerns over the commitment of volunteers". The case studies confirmed the importance of a key contact in the library, preferably a volunteer manager/coordinator, as a prerequisite for a successful volunteer programme. A primary area of good practice that emerged in the case studies was the need to identify the reason for involving volunteers and the role that they play.

There are many examples of library volunteering to be found in North America. For example, Toronto Public Library and Halifax Public Library have extensive, sophisticated volunteer programmes which serve as examples of good practice. American public libraries are very pro-volunteering and most have posted details of their programmes on their websites, allowing people to apply online. Examples include Brooklyn Public Library, Los Angeles Public Library and Norfolk in Nebraska. Norfolk Public Library has recently (2008) produced a very useful, detailed volunteer handbook which is aimed at both library staff and volunteers. The stated aim of the handbook is to "*generate and facilitate well-planned and administered volunteer services to supplement and complement NPL staff members. It is to assist staff members in the management of volunteers as well as a reference tool for current and potential volunteers. It will also expand knowledge, understanding and mission of the Norfolk Public Library Volunteer Program*". This document should serve as a helpful template for library authorities wishing to introduce a volunteer programme.

Other US volunteering toolkits also exist, for example, the American Library Association's (ALA) toolkit by Driggers and Dumas, although this is now rather dated (2002) and must be purchased – unlike the Norfolk handbook which is downloadable.

Volunteering is very much on the agenda in Australia and is covered in a recent policy statement by the ALIA (2009). The State Library of South Australia has an active volunteer programme and Fairfield City Libraries and Museum Service has recently reported on an internal survey of volunteers. A series of volunteer guidelines and tools for use by library authorities has been issued by the State Library of Queensland. On a broader level, Volunteering Australia reported in 2010 on general volunteering patterns in Australia.

In the case of **Ireland**, there is no national policy on volunteering in public libraries. The 2006 census provided useful information on general volunteering patterns throughout the country and the European Commission has also produced a 27 member state survey on volunteering in the EU which includes a national report on Ireland.

The 2006 census revealed that almost equal numbers of males and females were engaged in volunteering; the lowest participating age group was 20-24 years; the 45-49 year age group represented the highest participation rate in voluntary activities (23%); and there was a greater likelihood of volunteering in mid-life (40-64 years of age).

In the national survey of the 32 library authorities (Chapter 7), consisting of eight city and 24 county authorities, six city authorities and eight county authorities (total fourteen) reported that they engage volunteers. The remaining eighteen authorities do not use volunteers.

Of the fourteen authorities using volunteers, most have been using them for two years or less and only three have availed of volunteers for more than six years. The majority of volunteers are female, aged 36-55 years and volunteer for up to 10 hours per week. They are mainly involved in reading groups and organising and running library events, although there are plans by some authorities to involve them in housebound services and other children's activities in the future. Some authorities have decided not to introduce volunteers into their service, mainly because of staff resistance, volunteers' perceptions of library work and industrial relations issues.

Demographic profiles, details of volunteer hours, tasks undertaken by volunteers and organisational and policy issues for library authorities are described more fully in Chapter 7.

Although the CCMA, the LGMA and IMPACT do not have formal written policies on volunteering the representatives of all three organisations considered that while it is acceptable to involve volunteers in a library environment, they should not be used to replace posts in the public service and should not undertake work that is normally undertaken by library staff. All three respondents recommended that the agreement of library staff and relevant trades unions should be secured before volunteers are recruited and that volunteers be provided with mandatory and other appropriate induction and training courses, particularly in areas such as health and safety, industrial relations (IR) and dignity at work issues.

8.2 Recommendations

Community engagement is seen as a generic process to include all forms of interaction between the library and the community, including informal and formal partnership arrangements with other agencies, joint use libraries and/or co-location of a library with other organisations on one site, and the use of volunteers in libraries.

There is a need for a national policy on all forms of community engagement by the public library service in Ireland – including library partnerships with community groups and other agencies, joint use and co-location of library premises and volunteering in libraries.

An education and promotion programme is needed to encourage library authorities and library staff to become involved in community engagement programmes.

Community engagement should be promoted to library authorities as a means of improving linkages to their communities, enhancing their services and developing new services.

Library authorities should be encouraged to audit their communities with a view to designing, planning and implementing community engagement programmes.

There is a need for a (written) community engagement policy to be adopted by individual library authorities to cater for circumstances at local community level. This could be advanced by making a community engagement toolkit/template available that would cover all forms of engagement covered in this report – partnership, joint use and co-location of library premises and volunteering in libraries.

Organisational and management infrastructures, staff motivation measures and training in library authorities should be adapted to accommodate and encourage staff involvement in community engagement programmes.

Library authorities intending to take on volunteers should:

- have a clear understanding of organisational objectives when recruiting volunteers.
- ensure that volunteering is of mutual benefit to the library and to the volunteer.
- have a clearly defined, structured written volunteer programme.
- have a management and organisational structure within the library that can accommodate, drive and make best use of volunteers, including the appointment of a staff member to deal with volunteering, provision of staff training to help them to work alongside volunteers, provision of induction and appropriate training courses for volunteers etc.
- introduce reward schemes for library staff and volunteers e.g. accredited courses for training in volunteer management and accredited course for volunteers.

- assure and prove to library staff that they are not being replaced by volunteers.
- consult and maintain contact with all relevant trades unions when considering the introduction of community initiatives that may affect library authority staff.
- maintain contact with volunteering agencies in order to promote libraries as volunteer sites.

Other elements of volunteering, such as a national legal framework for volunteering, vetting procedures and risk assessment also need to be considered and addressed.

All other issues and problems identified above under organisational and management of community engagement activities should be addressed.

Having completed the research phase of this project, Meath County Council Library Service should consider applying to the Public Library Research Committee (PLRC) for support to progress to a pilot phase, as defined in the project specification, in order to field test the findings of this report and advance the project towards a working model of community engagement by public library authorities in Ireland.

A copy and paste version of the survey which was sent to all library authorities is attached here for illustrative purposes.

The survey was conducted online, using the SurveyMonkey© research package. For further information on this package please see: http://www.surveymonkey.com

PAGE 1

1. Community Partnerships and the Public Library Service

This survey is being carried out as part of the research project on Community Partnerships and the Public Service in conjunction with the Library Council and Meath County Council Library Service.
This survey contains questions about the involvement and management of volunteers and community partnerships in your library service.
One copy of the survey is being distributed to each county council library service in Ireland.

PAGE 2

2. SECTION A

General Information

1. Name of Person completing form

2. Name of County

3. Which directorship are you currently under

4. Email Address

5. Does your library service involve volunteers?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

PAGE 3

3. SECTION B

Level of Participation

6. How long has your county involved volunteers?

- [ ] Up to 2 years
- [ ] 3-5years
- [ ] 6-10years
- [ ] More than 10years

7. What are your main reasons for involving volunteers? Select all that apply.

- [ ] It promotes user involvement
- [ ] To give people a route to employment
- [ ] It allows us to do things we could not normally do
- [ ] It saves money

Other (please specify)

8. How many volunteers does your service involve in total?

9. How many volunteers would you take at any one time through the course of a year?

10. Please approximate your number of volunteers in terms of gender?

Male

Female

11. What is the number make-up of your volunteers in terms of age? (Approximate if necessary)

Under 18

18-35

36-55

56-65

12. How many of your volunteers has a disability?

13. On average, how many hours do your volunteers work each week? Please give a total weekly figure for all your volunteers, not for individuals. (Approximate if necessary)

14. What tasks are your volunteers involved in? (please tick all that apply)

- Organising, helping run an event
- Visiting people
- Transporting/Deliveries
- Giving Advice, Information
- Secretarial, admin, clerical
- Outreach work

- ☐ Reminiscence Sessions
- ☐ Story time/Reading Groups
- ☐ Homework Assistants
- ☐ Cataloguing
- ☐ Archiving work

Other (please specify)

15. Do you have enough volunteers to allow you to do what you want to do?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

16. Do you find it easy to attract/recruit volunteers to your library service?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

4. SECTION C

The Organisation of Volunteer Involvement

17. Does your library service have a specific person who has responsibility to manage and deploy volunteers?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, what is their job title?

18. Does your library service have a written volunteer policy?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, could you outline what is included in the policy and attach a copy?

19. Do you pay your volunteers expenses?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

20. Do you provide your volunteers with training?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, could you outline what this involves

21. How does your service normally recruit volunteers? (Please select all that apply)

- ☐ Word of mouth
- ☐ Advertisement in the local press
- ☐ Student placements
- ☐ volunteer centres
- ☐ Volunteers approach us

Other (please specify)

22. Are there other services within your library services where volunteers could be used or you plan to use them in the future?

- ☐ Housebound service
- ☐ Mobile library service
- ☐ Hospital service

- [ ] Local studies
- [ ] Reading groups
- [ ] Adult literacy classes
- [ ] IT support
- [ ] Author events
- [ ] Homework assistants
- [ ] Story time
- [ ] Work on specialist stock areas
- [ ] shelf tidying
- [ ] Handing out questionnaires
- [ ] Childrens' Activities

Other (please specify)

5. SECTION D

Non-Involvement of Volunteers

23. Have you ever involved volunteers in your service?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If yes, why do you no longer involve them in your service?

24. If you do not involve volunteers, can you state why? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Too time consuming
- ☐ Too expensive
- ☐ Never thought about it
- ☐ Health and Safety issues
- ☐ Don't need to

Other (please specify)

25. Are you considering involving volunteers?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, could you give a time-scale?

26. What is preventing you from involving volunteers? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Resistance from staff
- ☐ Worried about job substitution issues
- ☐ Lack of a specific volunteer manager
- ☐ Don't have enough time
- ☐ Not sure how to
- ☐ Nothing, we just don't need them

Other (please specify)

6. SECTION E

Community Partnerships

27. Does your library service facilitate local community groups outside its normal opening hours?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If Yes, please list the groups? If no, please state the reason why?

28. Do you have a written policy on working with community groups? If yes, could you outline what is contained in the policy?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

29. Which areas of your buildings do the groups use?

30. Do library staff become involved with the activities of these groups?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

31. What security arrangements are in place for locking up the building if

outside the normal opening hours?

32. Have you had any difficulties or problems with any of the groups?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If yes, please state.

33. Have there been any groups which you could not accommodate and had to turn away?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If yes, please state the reason(s) why

7. This is the end of the survey.

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete it. The results are very important and we will be keeping you informed of the progress of the project.

Appendix B

CCMA – Interview

Introduction

Meath County Council Library Service is currently undertaking a Research Project entitled Community Partnerships and the Public Library Service ***as part of the Public Library Research Programme under the auspices of An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (The Library Council of Ireland).***

The project focuses on local authority public library service provision and examines the four strands of

- Community Engagement
- Community Partnerships
- Joint-Use Libraries
- Volunteering in Public Libraries

The project is undertaken in two parts.

Part One is a survey and analysis of public library practice and provision in Ireland and internationally under the four named strands.

Part Two will be the implementation and monitoring of pilot projects in public libraries from March to December 2011 based around these four key areas.

This interview is structured in four sections corresponding with the four stated strands of enquiry. Each section begins with a definition of the strand as examined for the purposes of this research project. Question sets follow to elicit the views of the CCMA, these views will be included in the final project report.

Section 1 – Community Engagement

Section 2 – Community Partnership

Section 3 – Joint-Use Libraries

Section 4 – Volunteering in Public Libraries

Section 1 – Community Engagement

DEFINITION FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS RESEARCH PROJECT:

Community engagement means engaging with the public and other service providers, community groups and local organisations to devise and plan the best and most appropriate public library provision for a given community. It involves openness in communication, in encouraging community involvement, in space sharing, and in project innovation to encourage maximum use of library services for the benefit of all sectors of the local community.

1.1 Do you agree, or not agree, that the local authority should actively engage with the community in planning library services?

1.2 What specific form(s), if any, should that engagement take?

1.3 What role(s), if any, should the public library play in community engagement?

1.4 What advantages, if any, are likely to be derived by all parties involved in community engagement?

1.5 What disadvantages, if any, are likely to be incurred by all parties in community engagement?

1.6 What general problems, if any, are likely to arise in community engagement?

1.7 Are you aware of any examples of community engagement initiatives that are already in place? If so, please describe (distinguish between flagships projects, if any, and less successful ventures, if any)

1.8 Have you any interpretation(s) of community engagement other than that defined by this project?

1.9 In your opinion are the following tools helpful, or not helpful, in library engagement with the community:

- Opinion surveys on library services e.g. by means of self-completion questionnaires, interviews etc.
- Establishment of community focus groups to elicit opinions, suggestions and feedback on services
- Library staff participation in community events, meet and greet sessions and such like

1.10 If focus groups are deemed appropriate, what should their make-up be in terms of representation?

1.11 Under which directorship should the library service most appropriately be placed?

1.12 Are library advisory committees beneficial, or not beneficial, as a means of community engagement?

1.13 Is library participation on SPC's (Special Policy Committees) effective, or not effective, as a means of community engagement?

1.10 Have you suggestions for models of community engagement between local authority public libraries and members of the public in their catchment areas?

1.11 Have you any other comments to make on community engagement?

Section 2
Community Partnerships

DEFINITION FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS RESEARCH PROJECT:

Community Partnership means establishing formal links with service providers and other organisations who share the public library service ethos of openness, space for all and social inclusion. This involves researching and establishing appropriate partnerships to deliver joint services, projects and initiatives to benefit all sectors of society. It also involves assisting groups and individuals to achieve their full potential in their communities.

2.1 What do you consider to be the fundamental principles of community partnership?

2.2 Are any / all of the following relevant?

a) Citizen participation
b) Community building
c) Enhanced local democracy
d) Improved access to services
e) Equality
f) Social inclusion
g) Community consensus on services
h) Provision of sustainable services
I) efficient use of human and other resources
j) Underpinning existing initiatives
- RAPID
- Community and enterprise schemes
- Tidy Towns/Pride of Place
- Heritage forum
- Arts events
- Other

2.3 What formal partnerships, if any, do you consider should exist between the local authority and other bodies?

2.5 What specific partnerships, if any, would you like to see involving the library and other groups?

2.4 What about with the following bodies? for example:

a) VEC
b) 3rd level colleges
c) HSE
d) Travellers
e) galleries/theatres
f) FAS
g) Local industry
h) Other, please specify

2.6 What, if any, outcomes would be desirable as a result of community partnership?

2.7 What are your views, if any, about funding or co-funding partnerships?

2.8 Which, if any, of the following funding possibilities may be appropriate?

- Once-off payment to launch a partnership
- Regular financial assistance from local authority on proviso of submission of audited accounts from partnership body
- Self-sustaining partnership only would be considered
- Cost sharing between LA and other members of partnership
- Sponsorship from community entity
- Other, any suggestions?

2.9 Are you aware of any examples of community partnerships in which local authorities are involved? If yes, please describe

2.10 Do you have any additional comments to make on community partnerships?

Section 3
Joint-Use Libraries

DEFINITION FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS RESEARCH PROJECT:

Joint use means sharing library premises with other groups in the community such as health service providers or Heritage Centres, for example; or providing library services to distinct user groups such as the general public, and college students from one library premises. Joint use can allow for greater use of a premises, or better stock and service provision for greater numbers of people.

3.1 Are you in favour, or not in favour, of Joint-Use Libraries as defined by this project?

3.2 What groups/partnerships, if any, should be allowed to use library premises?

a) During opening hours
b) Outside opening hours

3.3 What are the implications, if any, of sharing premises with another body? For example:

- Planning / design of premises
- Financial costs – set up
- Financial costs – running
- Management structure
- HR management
- Staff facilities
- Supervision
- Security
- Caretaking
- Key-holding

3.4 What are the benefits, if any, of joint use?

3.5 What are the disadvantages, if any, of joint use?

3.6 What are the barriers, if any, to joint use policies?

3.7 Do you have any other comments or ideas on the concept of joint use libraries, if so, please describe.

Section 4
Volunteering

DEFINITION FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS RESEARCH PROJECT:

Volunteering means that individuals or groups freely offer their services of time and expertise for the benefit of society at large or their local community. In this research study, it also means examining the formal establishment of volunteer programmes through community engagement and partnership initiatives and joint use policies for the betterment of public library service provision

4.1 What are the views, if any, of the CCMA regarding the use of volunteers?

4.2 Has the CCMA a written policy on volunteering/volunteers?
Or recommendations regarding the formulation of such a policy? (If yes, may we request reference and/or document copy)

4.3 What written policies, if any, should be in place in advance of setting up volunteer programmes?

a) on behalf of the local authority
b) on behalf of the library authority
c) on behalf of the relevant trade union

4.4 What public service obligations, if any, do Local Authorities have in relation to working with communities and individual members of society?

4.5 What are the merits, if any, of involving volunteers in library services?

4.6 What are the disadvantages, if any, of involving volunteers in library services?

4.7 What measure(s), if any, should the local authority have in place before volunteers are taken on?

4.8 What are the impacts, if any, of the current economic situation on volunteering issues?

4.9 In harsh economic times is it, or is it not, a public service duty to open work and experience opportunities to volunteers?

4.10 What are the IR issues, if any, involved in taking on volunteers?

4.11 What areas of work, if any, are suitable for volunteers?

4.12 What are the impacts, if any, on permanent library staff of having volunteers in the service?

4.13 What are the barriers, if any, to taking on volunteers?

4.14 Are there other mechanisms whereby “volunteers” can be placed in public library work situations, for example, student placements, graduate experience programmes, adult work experience programmes, “Friends of the Library” helpers? Other?

4.15 Do you have any other comments or ideas on the concept of volunteers in local authority libraries, if so, please describe.

Thank you for your assistance with this project.

Shauna Henry, Executive Librarian, Meath County Council Library Service
Frances Tallon, Senior Executive Librarian, Meath County Council Library Service

Appendix C

Trade Union Interview

Introduction

Meath County Council Library Service is currently undertaking a Research Project entitled ***Community Partnerships and the Public Library Service*** as part of the Public Library Research Programme under the auspices of An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (The Library Council of Ireland).

The project focuses on local authority public library service provision and examines the four strands of

- Community Engagement
- Community Partnerships
- Joint-Use Libraries
- Volunteering in Public Libraries

The project is undertaken in two parts.

Part One is a survey and analysis of public library practice and provision in Ireland and internationally under the four named strands.

Part Two will be the implementation and monitoring of pilot projects in public libraries from March to December 2011 based around these four key areas.

This interview seeks the views of the IMPACT trade union on all 4 strands of the project, but with a particular emphasis on volunteering. The interview is structured in four sections corresponding with the four stated strands of enquiry. Each section begins with a definition of the strand as examined for the purposes of this research project. Question sets follow to elicit the views of IMPACT; these views will be included in the final project report.

Section 1 Community Engagement

Section 2 Community Partnership

Section 3 Joint-Use Libraries

Section 4 Volunteering in Public Libraries

DEFINITION FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS RESEARCH PROJECT:

Community engagement means engaging with the public and other service providers, community groups and local organisations to devise and plan the best and most appropriate public library provision for a given community. It involves openness in communication, in encouraging community involvement, in space sharing, and in project innovation to encourage maximum use of library services for the benefit of all sectors of the local community.

1.10 What role(s), if any, should the public library play in community engagement?

1.11 What advantages, if any, are likely to be derived by all parties involved in community engagement?

1.12 What disadvantages, if any, are likely to be derived by all parties involved in community engagement?

1.13 Have you any interpretation(s) of community engagement other than that defined by this project?

1.14 Have you suggestions for models of community engagement between local authority public libraries and members of the public in their catchment areas?

1.6 Have you any other comments to make on community engagement?

Section 2
Community Partnerships

DEFINITION FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS RESEARCH PROJECT:

Community Partnership means establishing formal links with service providers and other organisations who share the public library service ethos of openness, space for all and social inclusion. This involves researching and establishing appropriate partnerships to deliver joint services, projects and initiatives to benefit all sectors of society. It also involves assisting groups and individuals to achieve their full potential in their communities.

2.1 What do you consider to be the fundamental principles of community partnership?

2.2 What formal partnerships, if any, do you consider should exist between the local authority and other bodies?

2.3 What, if any, outcomes would be desirable as a result of community partnership?

2.4 Are you aware of any examples of community partnerships in which local authorities are involved? If yes, please describe

2.5 Do you have any additional comments to make on community partnerships?

Section 3
Joint-Use Libraries

DEFINITION FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS RESEARCH PROJECT:

Joint use means sharing library premises with other groups in the community such as health service providers or Heritage Centres, for example; or providing library services to distinct user groups such as the general public, and college students from one library premises. Joint use can allow for greater use of a premises, or better stock and service provision for greater numbers of people.

3.1 What are the benefits, if any, of joint use?

3.2 What are the disadvantages, if any, of joint use?

3.3 What are the barriers, if any, to joint use policies?

3.4 Do you have any other comments or ideas on the concept of joint use libraries, if so, please describe.

Section 4
Volunteering

DEFINITION FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS RESEARCH PROJECT:

Volunteering means that individuals or groups freely offer their services of time and expertise for the benefit of society at large or their local community. In this research study, it also means examining the formal establishment of volunteer programmes through community engagement and partnership initiatives and joint use policies for the betterment of public library service provision

4.1 What are the Union's views, if any, on volunteering in public library services?

4.2 Does IMPACT have an official documented policy on volunteering?

4.3 If yes, may we have a copy?

4.4 If not, does the union intend to formulate and document such a policy?

4.5 What written policies, if any, should the library authority have in place in advance of setting up volunteer programmes?

4.6 What public service obligations, if any, do Local Authorities have in relation to working with communities and individual members of society?

4.7 What measure(s), if any, should the library authority have in placebefore volunteers are taken on?

4.8 What are the impacts, if any, on library staff of working with volunteers?

4.9 In harsh economic times is it, or is it not, a public service duty to open work and experience opportunities to volunteers?

4.10 What are the IR issues, if any, involved in taking on volunteers?

4.11What areas of work, if any, are suitable for volunteers?

4.12 What are the impacts, if any, on permanent library staff of having volunteers in the services?

4.13 What are the barriers, if any, to taking on volunteers?

4.14 Are there other mechanisms whereby “volunteers” can be placed in public library work situations, for example, student placements, graduate experience programmes, adult work experience programmes, “Friends of the Library” helpers? Etc.

4.15 Do you have any other comments or ideas on the concept of volunteers in local authority libraries, if so, please describe.

Thank you for your assistance with this project.

Shauna Henry, Executive Librarian, Meath County Council Library Service
Frances Tallon, Senior Executive Librarian, Meath County Council Library Service

Appendix D

LGMA – Interview

Introduction

Meath County Council Library Service is currently undertaking a Research Project entitled Community Partnerships and the Public Library Service ***as part of the Public Library Research Programme under the auspices of An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (The Library Council of Ireland).***

The project focuses on local authority public library service provision and examines the four strands of

- Community Engagement
- Community Partnerships
- Joint-Use Libraries
- Volunteering in Public Libraries

The project is undertaken in two parts.

Part One is a survey and analysis of public library practice and provision in Ireland and internationally under the four named strands.

Part Two will be the implementation and monitoring of pilot projects in public libraries during 2011 based around these four key areas.

This interview is structured in four sections corresponding with the four stated strands of enquiry. Each section begins with a definition of the strand as examined for the purposes of this research project. Question sets follow to elicit the views of the LGMA, these views will be included in the final project report.

Section 1 – Community Engagement

Section 2 – Community Partnership

Section 3 – Joint-Use Libraries

Section 4 – Volunteering in Public Libraries

Section 1 – Community Engagement

DEFINITION FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS RESEARCH PROJECT:

Community engagement means engaging with the public and other service providers, community groups and local organisations to devise and plan the best and most appropriate public library provision for a given community. It involves openness in communication, in encouraging community involvement, in space sharing, and in project innovation to encourage maximum use of library services for the benefit of all sectors of the local community.

1.15 Do you agree, or not agree, that the local authority should actively engage with the community in planning library services?

1.16 What specific form(s), if any, should that engagement take?

1.17 What role(s), if any, should the public library play in community engagement?

1.18 What advantages, if any, are likely to be derived by all parties involved in community engagement?

1.19 What disadvantages, if any, are likely to be incurred by all parties in community engagement?

1.20 What general problems, if any, are likely to arise in community engagement?

1.21 Are you aware of any examples of community engagement initiatives that are already in place? If so, please describe (distinguish between flagships projects, if any, and less successful ventures, if any)

1.22 Have you any interpretation(s) of community engagement other than that defined by this project?

1.23 In your opinion are the following tools helpful, or not helpful, in library engagement with the community:

- Opinion surveys on library services e.g. by means of self-completion questionnaires, interviews etc.
- Establishment of community focus groups to elicit opinions, suggestions and feedback on services
- Library staff participation in community events, meet and greet sessions and such like

1.10 If focus groups are deemed appropriate, what should their make-up be in terms of representation?

1.11 Under which directorship should the library service most appropriately be placed?

1.12 Are library advisory committees beneficial, or not beneficial, as a means of community engagement?

1.13 Is library participation on SPC's (Special Policy Committees) effective, or not effective, as a means of community engagement?

1.10 Have you suggestions for models of community engagement between local authority public libraries and members of the public in their catchment areas?

1.11 Have you any other comments to make on community engagement?

Section 2
Community Partnerships

DEFINITION FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS RESEARCH PROJECT:

Community Partnership means establishing formal links with service providers and other organisations who share the public library service ethos of openness, space for all and social inclusion. This involves researching and establishing appropriate partnerships to deliver joint services, projects and initiatives to benefit all sectors of society. It also involves assisting groups and individuals to achieve their full potential in their communities.

2.1 What do you consider to be the fundamental principles of community partnership?

2.2 Are any / all of the following relevant?

a) Citizen participation
b) Community building
c) Enhanced local democracy
d) Improved access to services
e) Equality
f) Social inclusion
g) Community consensus on services
h) Provision of sustainable services
I) efficient use of human and other resources
j) Underpinning existing initiatives
- RAPID
- Community and enterprise schemes
- Tidy Towns/Pride of Place
- Heritage forum
- Arts events
- Other

2.3 What formal partnerships, if any, do you consider should exist between the local authority and other bodies?

2.5 What specific partnerships, if any, would you like to see involving the library and other groups?

2.4 What about with the following bodies? for example:

a) VEC
b) 3rd level colleges
c) HSE
d) Travellers
e) galleries/theatres
f) FAS
g) Local industry
h) Other, please specify

2.6 What, if any, outcomes would be desirable as a result of community partnership?

2.7 What are your views, if any, about funding or co-funding partnerships?

2.8 Which, if any, of the following funding possibilities may be appropriate?

- Once-off payment to launch a partnership
- Regular financial assistance from local authority on proviso of submission of audited accounts from partnership body
- Self-sustaining partnership only would be considered
- Cost sharing between LA and other members of partnership
- Sponsorship from community entity
- Other, any suggestions?

2.9 Are you aware of any examples of community partnerships in which local authorities are involved? If yes, please describe

2.10 Do you have any additional comments to make on community partnerships?

Section 3
Joint-Use Libraries

DEFINITION FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS RESEARCH PROJECT:

Joint use means sharing library premises with other groups in the community such as health service providers or Heritage Centres, for example; or providing library services to distinct user groups such as the general public, and college students from one library premises. Joint use can allow for greater use of a premises, or better stock and service provision for greater numbers of people.

3.1 Are you in favour, or not in favour, of Joint-Use Libraries as defined by this project?

3.2 What groups/partnerships, if any, should be allowed to use library premises?
a) During opening hours
b) Outside opening hours

3.3 What are the implications, if any, of sharing premises with another body? For example:

- Planning / design of premises
- Financial costs – set up

- Financial costs – running
- Management structure
- HR management
- Staff facilities
- Supervision
- Security
- Caretaking
- Key-holding

3.4 What are the benefits, if any, of joint use?

3.5 What are the disadvantages, if any, of joint use?

3.6 What are the barriers, if any, to joint use policies?

3.7 Do you have any other comments or ideas on the concept of joint use libraries, if so, please describe.

Section 4
Volunteering

DEFINITION FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS RESEARCH PROJECT:

Volunteering means that individuals or groups freely offer their services of time and expertise for the benefit of society at large or their local community. In this research study, it also means examining the formal establishment of volunteer programmes through community engagement and partnership initiatives and joint use policies for the betterment of public library service provision

4.1 What are the views, if any, of the LGMA regarding the use of volunteers?

4.2 Has the LGMA a written policy on volunteering/volunteers?
Or recommendations regarding the formulation of such a policy? (If yes, may we request reference and/or document copy)

4.3 What written policies, if any, should be in place in advance of setting up volunteer programmes?

d) on behalf of the local authority
e) on behalf of the library authority
f) on behalf of the relevant trade union

4.4 What public service obligations, if any, do Local Authorities have in relation to working with communities and individual members of society?

4.5 What are the merits, if any, of involving volunteers in library services?

4.6 What are the disadvantages, if any, of involving volunteers in library services?

4.7 What measure(s), if any, should the local authority have in place before volunteers are taken on?

4.8 What are the impacts, if any, of the current economic situation on volunteering issues?

4.9 In harsh economic times is it, or is it not, a public service duty to open work and experience opportunities to volunteers?

4.10 What are the IR issues, if any, involved in taking on volunteers?

4.11 What areas of work, if any, are suitable for volunteers?

4.12 What are the impacts, if any, on permanent library staff of having volunteers in the service?

4.13 What are the barriers, if any, to taking on volunteers?

4.14 Are there other mechanisms whereby “volunteers” can be placed in public library work situations, for example, student placements, graduate experience programmes, adult work experience programmes, “Friends of the Library” helpers? Other?

4.15 Do you have any other comments or ideas on the concept of volunteers in local authority libraries, if so, please describe.

Thank you for your assistance with this project.

Shauna Henry, Executive Librarian, Meath County Council Library Service
Frances Tallon, Senior Executive Librarian, Meath County Council Library Service