



Interlend Conference 2018 Birmingham

As I boarded the train for Birmingham New Street with a mix of anticipation and excitement, I began to wonder what the next few days would have in store for me at the 2018 FIL Interlend Conference. I honestly felt a bit of an imposter, aware that public library workers were often few and far between at such conferences. Despite being in my current role for a few years now I had only been given a 2 hour handover to learn the ropes from the last Music and Drama librarian incarnation, who then merrily disappeared off into the sunset of retirement, leaving me to fumble and guess my way through the archaic paper based system I had inherited. With public library funding facing dire restrictions, the prospect of ever being able to represent our team at a national gathering of library professionals seemed highly unlikely. Sponsorship seemed the only way, but I was aware that competition would be tough as many institutions, private and public, struggled to afford to provide staff with the training and development budgets that they should like. So, when I submitted my application to be considered for a funded place at this year's conference I never thought I would be chosen as one of the sponsored delegates. As luck would have it, I now found myself North bound to spend the weekend in the beautiful bustle of Birmingham to do just that.

As I had to travel some way to Birmingham, I choose to arrive the day before. After getting up bright and early to check out of my room I made my way to the Hayatt Regency Hotel, the destination of this year's 2 day conference. A strong cup of coffee and a much needed pastry were waiting for me on arrival along with a room of friendly faces all eager to introduce themselves. I was pleasantly surprised to discover a wide mix of professionals from all over the UK and from different sectors of the industry, from Higher Education as well as fellow Public Libraries (yay) to more specialist areas such as Copyright.

Day 1:

Keynote Ayub Khan: *Rethinking the library*

The conference opened with Key note speaker Ayub Kahn, the current CILIP President, introducing his Keynote talk 'Rethinking the Library'. Its focus was on libraries key requirements to be flexible and reactive to changing need and the importance of Libraries to stay relevant by delivering their key universal offers.

Ayub talked about The Hive, Worcester, Europe's first joint university and public library. He discussed preparing learners for the unknown future of libraries. His talk focused on the cultural and creative enrichments libraries can bring to communities along with raising reading and literacy rates and helping everyone achieve their full potential. Greater prosperity can be achieved whilst building stronger more resilient communities. Libraries need to be every changing and seen as evolving living organisms. The Opening day of a new library is not the end of its story, they must adapt and grow with the needs of their users.

Ayub discussed the life span of the Library user, categorising users into four categories. Children/ young people, Active learners, Active citizens and Active aging, looking into how these categories use the service in different ways. The 'life span' of the library was also talked about and how the institution of libraries has changed and developed over time. In the 19th Century the library was a

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store for precious books, sometimes seen as elitist. This developed in the 20th Century to being less restrictive and including more outreach and development services. By the 21st Century, libraries have become more personalised, targeted services. Libraries now need to engage with some users that may never actually personally visit, rather engaging in digital, On Demand style services.

Looking at nationwide participation, we are told three quarter of a million children signed up to this year's Summer Reading Challenge. The National Literacy trust was quoted as stating 'Children who use libraries are twice as likely to be above average readers'. Libraries still have very real relevance to many, with 60% of population having a library card and 224.6 million recorded physical visits to libraries a year in 2015.

Digital literacy was discussed, highlighting its benefits for customer to build confidence, make financial savings, elevating boredom, pursuing hobbies, facilitate employment seeking and reducing social isolation. This also becomes very real savings from health and wellbeing budgets for social services and the NHS with Mobile libraries providing these services for housebound and rural users. Libraries have even sprung up in refugee camps for people fleeing war zones, showing the very important role that they can play in people's positive wellbeing.

This was an interesting and engaging presentation, as a public library worker I was thrilled to hear that public libraries were still being valued as important assets to communities. I came away not only feeling positive about the future of the service but also with the valuable library trivia that Birmingham library is the only library to feature on a stamp!



Michael webb and Abimbola Alayo: BaseDoc: a tool for managing interlending library loan requests

Michael and Abimbola presented around the subject of BaseDoc, discussing its use to fulfil timely healthcare article/ literature requests.

One of its features is that customers can see status of requests once logged. The programme has lots of flexibility- PDF vs paper delivery method with minimal customer physical contact and no need to contact each time confirming payment agreement. It delivers Real-time stats with Request turn around down from 3 days to 1 day. BaseDoc allows for broadening customer base, with the hope to use NHS URL and UK based host site. Streamlining of data base system to replace old spreadsheet / individual library system. Based on this presentation BaseDoc seems a valuable tool for managing interloans.

Alan Dawson, Marie Lancaster & Gareth Owen: WHELF consortium reciprocal borrowing partnership- Sharing is caring

Wales Higher Education Library Forum is a dynamic collaborative for maximising mutual benefits which comprises of 9 universities, the national library of Wales and 30 NHS wales providers. In 2014 there were 6 LMS systems running over the consortium members and a variety of discovery layers, now there is 1 uniformed LMS and 1 discovery layer. The benefits of WHELF are lower supplier costs,

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lower procurement costs, a common shared platform, lower cost of Welsh / English transition and shared training. Another massive cost saving is that of borrow within the consortium vs the British Library, as there are no borrowing fees internally.

The team were clear that the concept of one uniformed LMS is Key to WHELFS success. Percentages of ILLS supplied by WHELFF members have gone up once they joined the consortium, comparative to before they joined. Institutions seemed happier to lend now knowing they can borrow in return as freely. Large cost savings have been calculated with monthly skype meetings, and by sharing information and knowledge of cataloguing, analytics and collection management.

It was suggested that if an organisation wanted to implement a similar consortium, then data is key to the business case, focusing on benefits, cost saving, maximising collections and shared expertise. Look at staff cost calculations, postage costs, meeting costs and consider costs vs borrowing from outside consortium.

The talk ended with examples of some success stories- the quickest turnaround time they had recorded was 30 minutes from request time to borrower!

Shirley Cousins & Bethan Ruddock: The Jisc national bibliographic knowledgebase (NKB) and interlending

This talk focused on why data quality mattered with the aim of the NKB being to consolidate duplicated information to form just one record per document. Before deduplication the quality of data can vary, with catalogue entries not always being complete, with different standards and different LMS programmes requiring different information. This can make data hard to read as it can be difficult to tell the required details such as edition and condition.

Next steps for the team is to support libraries in identifying records for upgrade through data support groups. The plan is to clearly differentiate between a libraries owned data and that which is licensed to them and ascertain if this precludes it from being included in sharing within a consortium.

Collection management can be a very timely and costly endeavour but essential as there is an argument to say that there is no point in having an item if no one knows where it is or how to access it. Shirley and Bethan suggested it was better to just target parts of collection for improvement if resources were scarce, as it is better to do some than none. This is where knowing your users and their preferences and needs is so important. What is important for some is not for others so if you are only able to streamline some of your entries why not focus on the ones that will potentially hold the most benefit for your community of clients.

Saskia van Elberg & Nicola Tricker: Plymouth University library 2018 interlending loan review and BL ILL APO implementation

As with so many libraries, we hear from Saskia and Nicola that Plymouth University is facing a major restructure with a projected loss of just under 20 staff. They are therefore looking to streamline and improve their procedures as their current processes are very long. They are looking at the benefits of an In-house ILL form vs primo and if the primo 'fetch it' form could remove some steps. The team have tried to skill share by asking other institutions how they deal with ILLs but there seems to be no clear pattern! Once again cost of process in house vs external is always being looked at. The cost savings that Saskia and Nicola discussed resonated with many of the audience in the room, leading

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to interesting conversations across the conference on how different institutions manage to continue to provide a comprehensive ILL service whilst facing strict budget cuts.

Natalie Guest: Reviewing and shaping interlending's place within your organisation.

Natalie began her talk focusing on the question of charging vs not charging and the pros and cons that can occur either way. She discussed the need to move away from the 'Moving money around' voucher system most places use. Natalie mentioned the growing trend of moving away from customers using ILLs altogether as information is now so readily available from other sources such as journal package acquisitions.

Natalie next helpfully discussed suggestions for improvements to your own institutions service. She suggested that we review what we offer- talk about trends/ issues with current system with our own teams and also with the users and ask lots of questions! Find out what we don't know about our service, where the gaps in our team's knowledge are. Next, gather evidence- what we are doing, who for, why, how much does it cost to run? Gather a complete financial picture and find out what is being borrowed. What does your data tell us? Importantly, learn from other institutions about how they tackle ILLs. Knowing who are users are is paramount for shaping the future of our service. How many are unique users? Many may only use the service once. One loan could fulfil all the information a customer needs to complete and important research/ assignment, if it is a high impact service should it really be free? Natalie talked about making a case for the service being free in our institution. Show what is happening, benefits that align with other service priorities, the reputation of the institution, the benefit to our organisation.

Natalie's talk left many with strong ideas and questions to take back to their settings.

After the full first day was finished, there was a very welcome Pre- dinner drinks reception, giving us an opportunity to network, share ideas and generally get to know the other attendees a little better. The conference dinner followed allowing for another great opportunity to mix and mingle with like-minded professionals sharing the same passion and enthusiasm for the sector.

Day 2

Having never attended a conference before it had never crossed my mind that we may be able to use some of the other fantastic facilities available at the hotel. Having talked about this with someone at the end of day one, I hot footed it into town before getting ready that evening and bought a swimming costume to make the most of the hotel's fantastic fitness suite. Whilst I am by no means a gym fanatic, an early 6.30am jacuzzi before breakfast 2 was a fabulous way to collect my thoughts, think about what was discussed the previous day and readied myself for day 2!

Keynote Donna Lanclos: The meaning of Libraries and library expertise: Drawing on insights from ethnographic research in HE

Donna kicked off day two with a wonderfully impassioned Keynote speech centring around the question 'Who gets to use ILL?' Donna asked us to think about our own service and who we serve? Do we charge? And are there limits? How is it advertised? How do they (the user) know what is possible? If an item is not available, then most people with the means will just buy it. The knowledge of what our interactions with customers are should shape the idea of our service. Relationships with users should be embedded in the larger picture of our service, we cannot fix with better individual systems, we need to work together.

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Donna suggested that Libraries have choices in terms of how visible they are. We are all being asked to do more with less which means work can become invisible. Providing information and help is our profession but it can be detrimental to be 'too helpful'. Donna warns us to be cautious, seamless provision can devalue work/ labour. If we don't show the 'seams' of how things work, we can't expect customers to know the true value of work. This helps to justify budget requirements as the cost of staff resourcing is more obvious. This visibility can be achieved through branded links, signposting at each stage of the transaction who/ what department is doing what work. Library work can also become more visible through relationships with communities, share what is going on so local communities feel included.

A theme that has come up several times during this conference is the question of whether or not the cost of ILLs should be passed to the customer. Donna looks at this question in terms of value vs accessibility. She questions if we as library staff should we be the judges who decided who should access information. She argues that budgets should have nothing to do with scholarship and that passing this cost on to customers cost could be 'passing the buck' of responsibility for opportunity to access on to the customer. The access to learning materials should be fair for all not only available to those who can pay.

One a different vain, Donna deliberated the idea that ILLs are often used to fill the gap in collections, and that this was not their original purpose. They should we a tool to enrich not replace collections. Fear of losing items should not stop departments from lending to others as this means the items are rarely, if ever, getting used.

Donna ended by asking us to think about what do we lose if we don't have ILLs? What is the real cost to shared access to resources if we don't have them? And to remember when looking at budgets that the service will cost money, it will always cost money, it is a service!!

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Andy Priestner: Lego Serious Play

Our Serious Lego Play session did exactly what it said on the tin- getting serious about playing with Lego! Andy got us looking at how Lego can be used as a tool for communication within working teams to allow people to freely express frustrations, confusions, positives and negatives.

Through a series of individual, paired and group tasks Andy got us quickly working together, and communicating well. It was interesting to see other attendees' interpretations of the same task and how similar the frustrations and grievances were when the groups talked of the hurdles at work. Lego was not a mode of expression that I had thought of using with my own colleagues before but one that I now felt would be sure to defuse many a difficult work-based conversation. Our Lego Clubs brick box may very well need a raid at our next staff meeting!!



Above: *Lego interpretation of my average working day (including my Web of Multi-Tasking, Hat of Multi-Roles and Truncheon of Resilience required for working with the conveyor belt of general public!)*

Rebecca Turpin & Sophie Lindley: International interlending at the University of Leeds Library

Rebecca and Sophie's talk summarised the role of international interlending within Leeds University. They stated that 9416 requests came in in the last year for books, journals, conference papers and government reports. They followed this with the sort of stat only a room full of Librarians would appreciate, we learned that this would visualise as a sperm whales' length of UK and international lending!!!

They discussed that International library to library loaning can obviously take time to arrive with the furthest they have received coming from the National Library of New Zeland, despite several uk libraries having copies in their 'Precious' collections and not willing to lend. In stark comparison to paper based International Interloans, Online Article requests can be fulfilled within 35 mins. One of the advantages to this system is the ability to obtain newly published books and printed copies only available as ebooks in the UK. Also time differences can work in your favour for article requests meaning they can arrive in minuets! Some disadvantages can be language barriers especially on websites and the higher costs of postage. Some interesting Case studies of international lending were given Including US state department files of Cuba on micro film, Insulin discovery and rare botany.

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Interlending means underused items are being seen. Very specific research is being supported by use of wonderful, often under used stock. Within the article exchange programme an example of a 1897 hebrew version of Tobit, pages having never been cut, and never been read had been found!

IFLA vouchers are used so no bank charges, no money lost in exchange rates, no invoices. Vouchers retained for further use (no validity period) – this encourages libraries to offer effective ILL service to ‘earn’ vouchers which they can use or redeem. Questions were raised over whether the network of sharing will be affected by Brexit?

Amanda Foster & Lee Blyth: from interlending to on demand: the journey to digital transformation at Northumbria University Library

Amanda and Lees aim was to inform us of the digital transformation that was occurring in Northumbria University Library. They informed us that the Interlend service is now called ‘On Demand’ not ILLs as it is not a request it is a demand for access. They established that if users are aware for an item then they want to be able to access it when they need. It is free to all at point of need, generating 8,000+ requests a year. They run a Digital first strategy, believing technology can live alongside the physical. An example of this was given- a physical ‘book’ (box with QR code link to ebook on) is placed at the shelf mark of the most popular 100 books. When Ebook reservations are available a direct like to the item is included in the notification. Their ebook provision has a 5-minute ebook preview which helps to curtail borrowers using items they do not need. 51% don’t make it past first 5-minute preview which is offered for free.

Choice is key to their delivery- choice of format (print, E) choice of timescale (instant, tomorrow, 1 week), choice of location to access (email/ library / home/ amazon locker). To run a service this comprehensive it needs to be manageable with clear processes. Questions need to be asked like how does the process flow? Library visibility is mentioned again with the Library brand used to show who had done the work around the University.

Joanne Cox: British Library update

Joanna Cox ended the conference updating the gathering with information about the British Library. DRM LITE has now replaced File Open. Publisher licensing team has created lists of backfiles for digital options. Joanne discussed ‘Digitisation Services’ that the BL offers that can digitise external libraries collections as well as their own. 3D Camera can now digitalize physical options such as gloves and boxes. This can be done inhouse or on your site. BL can also provide storage, they can store temporarily when libraries are refurbishing for example.

Joanne talked about the Public Lending Right (PLR)- the payment made for ‘free loan’ from public libraries as of the 1979 Public Libraries act and Public Lending scheme. This has now come under British Library governance. Rights holders (author, illustrator etc) register with system, they are then given money from the government when their titles are borrowed. Libraries send usage data and a rate per loan is worked out, divvying money up fairly to registered rights owners.

Joanne touched on the hugely successful Harry Potter exhibition that has been the biggest exhibition to date and shall be on tour in New York from October 2018.

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Also the Treasures gallery was mentioned, with an exciting innovation- you are now able to 'Scan the art, Uncover the story' by scanning with app for added information about the items on display. Popular guided tours are also available of the treasure's gallery.

Once the conference had come to an end, and good byes had been said I found myself with a few hours to spare before my train home. I decided to head to the beautiful Library opposite the hotel as I had never visited it before. In the gorgeous rooftop garden, I was able to reflect on what I had heard over the past two days and what I had learnt from my fellow information professionals, many of whom I had bumped into on the various library floors, evidently having the same idea as me. Clearly you can't keep us away from libraries, even in our down time!



The beautiful 'Secret Garden' on the 7th floor of Library of Birmingham