



SOUTH WESTERN REGIONAL LIBRARY SERVICES

Uniting, inspiring and collaborating across libraries, information services and cultural organisations in the South West.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2017 - 2020

1. SWRLS purpose and mission:

South Western Regional Library Services is a sector support, charitable organisation. It acts as an advocate for libraries and promotes co-operation across all sectors in the south west. Its mission is: taking a strategic and partnership approach to serving our communities by developing staff, services and resources that are inclusive, sustainable and enhance learning.

SWRLS charitable objects are:

1. The advancement of education for the benefit of the public by:
 - a. Promoting cross sector co-operation between members.
 - b. Promoting access to library collections and specialist knowledge.
 - c. Providing a framework for the interlending of materials.
 - d. Advancing the skills and knowledge of the workforce and their stakeholders.
 - e. Facilitating a collaborative network to share best practice and excellence.
2. The advancement of culture for the benefit of the public by:
 - a. Promoting access to specialist resources.
 - b. Promoting cultural activities and partnerships.

2. The planning process:

The 2017 - 2020 Strategic Plan was first developed by members attending the Regional Council meeting on 5 April, 2017 at Bath Spa University. All members were asked to comment on the resulting first draft by e-mail during May 2017. Comments were considered by the Trustees at their Board Meeting on 14 June, 2017 at the Exeter Community Centre and by e-mail. The final Plan was agreed by the Trustees on 3 August 2017.

3. The organisation:

SWRLS was originally founded, as one of a network of regional library systems, in 1937 and is celebrating its 80th year in 2017. It is the only original regional system still in existence. It became a charity in May 1982 and is managed by a Board of 12 Trustees to whom day to day operation is delegated by the membership. The work of the organisation is governed by a Constitution. A part time, paid Director post provides strategic and administrative support to the Board.

The organisation currently has 59 members representing public, university, college, national, school, health and specialist libraries. Following a Fundamental Review, SWRLS has redefined its offer to members:

- **Networking:** support and expertise and the provision of an information exchange and advice service;
- **Workforce development:** the provision of courses and CPD events;
- **Grants:** to support cross sector initiatives and individual training opportunities;
- **Interlibrary loans:** free access to the rich range of resources held in members' libraries;
- **Strategic partnerships:** seeking out appropriate partnerships to enhance the member offer, bid for funding and contribute to the provision of cost effective services.

4. Review of SWRLS Strategic Plan, 2014 - 2017.

1. Key achievements:

- 7 new Trustees appointed, bringing the Board up to full strength for the first time in many years. A new Chair was also appointed following the retirement of the previous Chair;
- New Director appointed;
- The charity appointed a sector specific consultancy to carry out a Fundamental Review, the results of which have informed this Strategic Plan. The Review involved all members and has resulted in the following being agreed:
 - a new Constitution and Rules of Membership;
 - new objects;
 - new membership subscription rates;
 - to dissolve the charity and set up a new Charitable Incorporated Organisation.
- A new website was launched with, for the first time, a members only section;
- The Grant Scheme was reviewed and relaunched. Five grants were awarded;
- The reading development initiative, Reading Passport, was extended to include all member library services in partnership with Literature Works;
- Workforce development - two courses delivered, Overcoming Invisible Barriers and the Art of Bibliotherapy. Both were well attended. The AGMs and Regional Council meetings have attracted a range of speakers and topics;
- Four new members were welcomed from under represented sectors - schools (2), health (1) and specialist (1).

2. Issues/challenges to take forward:

- Marketing and advocacy - raising SWRLS profile;
- Developing effective partnerships;
- Widening workforce development opportunities;
- Defining the role of Board members;
- Review of administrative procedures;
- Exploiting the website to its full potential;
- Ensuring a financially secure future;
- Loss of four members - three colleges and one school.

5. The delivery of the Plan.

The Trustees will aim to achieve the Plan by being mindful of the following:

- Maintaining a risk management log to identify risks and ways of mitigating them. The log will be reviewed at Board meetings at least twice a year;
- Developing annual action plans, if appropriate, to provide further details as the Plan progresses;
- Reviewing the Plan at Board meetings and reporting progress to members;
- Reviewing the financial health of the organisation at Board meetings and taking appropriate action to ensure it is financially secure and sustainable;
- Continuing to advocate for libraries in the South West;
- Seeking out partnerships to provide value for money and efficient services;
- A commitment to ensure equality and inclusion, particularly in the promotion of cultural events;
- Allocating responsibility for specific aspects of the Plan to individual Board members and the Director.

6. Executive summary.

The Plan builds on the successes of the previous three year Plan and consolidates the recommendations of the Fundamental Review. The changes made following the Fundamental Review will be kept under review to ensure they are effective and taking the organisation forward. New ways of working will be embedded, new sources of income will be investigated and partnerships will be developed with like-minded organisations. SWRLS will continue to support reader development and access to the vast range of resources available in members' libraries.

Five goals have been identified with detailed actions and tasks:

1. Co-operative working and partnerships:
 - Developing networking opportunities;
 - Developing strategic partnerships.
2. Resource sharing:
 - Promoting access to collections;
 - Providing guidance on interlending;
 - Exploiting the results of the *Hidden Collections* project.
3. Developing the workforce:
 - Investigating on-line training;
 - Widening the CPD offer, including work shadowing opportunities.
4. Supporting the cultural and community engagement role of libraries:
 - Supporting the *South West Region of Readers* reading development project.
5. Efficient governance:
 - Submitting application for CIO status;
 - Succession planning for new Director;
 - Ensuring financial stability;
 - Reviewing website;
 - Developing new marketing material.

7. Goals, actions and tasks 2017 - 2020

SP No.	Key actions	Key tasks	Outcome measures/KPI	Timescale/ Progress	Lead and Resource	Obj. ref
Goal 1. Co-operative working and partnerships.						
1.1	Respond to national and local government agendas and other external influences on members' services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share knowledge from training courses. - Keep abreast of developments in new apprenticeships for LIS sector and identify opportunities of benefit for SWRLS members. - Use SWRLS' unique position and knowledge to respond to national consultation reports which may impact on members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance at training events. - Area of website for sharing knowledge e.g. blog to share information about apprenticeships. - Links established to Six Steps initiatives. 	<p>On-going</p> <p>By middle 2019</p> <p>By end of 2018</p>	Jackie Chelin. Time	1a
1.2	Generate and promote networking opportunities between SWRLS members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop appropriate communication mechanisms to support networking. - Share the expertise of SWRLS members via members only section of website e.g. on curation of collections. - Maximise use of website to support/inform members of relevant activities within and outside SWRLS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use/impact of website. - No. of twitter followers 200+. - New content added regularly. 	On-going	Director Time	1e

SP No.	Key actions	Key tasks	Outcome measures/KPI	Timescale/ Progress	Lead and Resource	Obj. ref
		- Establish web forums to enable discussion on and support for topics of mutual interest/concern of members.	- Web forum for each topic/issue.	By middle of 2019		
1.3	Identify opportunities to work collaboratively on projects/initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respond to funding opportunities, capitalising on the uniqueness of SWRLS' cross sector characteristics. - Promote outcomes of SWRLS funded projects. - Generate/promote case studies of best practice to use in advocacy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No. of bids applied for. - Funds generated/no. grants agreed. - No. of reports/studies on website. - 2 case studies per year. 	On going	Board Time Director Time Board	1a
1.4	Develop/maintain strategic partnerships with relevant regional bodies.	- Identify appropriate organisations with which to develop partnerships ensuring best use of shared resources and capitalising on mutual interests to expand sphere of influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appropriate working relationships identified, established and monitored, where appropriate, through service level agreements. - Impact/benefit to SWRLS members and their users. 	On-going. Regular monitoring of relationship and any SLAs developed.	Board Time Costs of SLAs, if appropriate.	2b
Goal 2. Resource sharing						
2.1	Promote access to SWRLS members' catalogues and collections, including specialist resources.	- Disseminate outputs of the <i>Hidden Collections</i> project and identify a means of sustaining the currency of the information gathered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Database of <i>Hidden Collections</i> developed and promoted. - Recommendations considered by the Board. 	By March 2020.	Director Time	1b/ 2a

SP No.	Key actions	Key tasks	Outcome measures/KPI	Timescale/ Progress	Lead and Resource	Obj. ref
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage replication of the <i>Open Doors</i> project approach to reciprocal borrowing within sub regions. - Promote and support outcomes of the SWRLS grant supported project <i>Joining the Dots</i> (music provision in the SW). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of institutions offering this initiative. - Music loan statistics. 	<p>By February 2018.</p> <p>On-going ACE funded course in October 2019</p>	<p>Jackie Chelin Time</p> <p>Director Time</p>	
2.2	Facilitate interlending between members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a framework and guidance for interlending activities; - Review and develop best practice in relation to providing electronic materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guidance provided and promoted on website. - Monitor use of guidance. - Interlending statistics. 	Complete	<p>SIL Time</p> <p>Cost of meetings</p>	1c
Goal 3. Developing the workforce.						
3.1	Align SWRLS training offer with members' needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offer an inspiring framework of training and events that appeal cross sectors and to all levels of staff. - Build relationships and collaborate with other bodies in the SW to develop and complement the training offer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No. of events per year. - Nos. attending/cross sector attendance. - Sharing of costs/income generated. - Satisfaction levels of those taking part. 	On-going	<p>Director/ Board Time</p> <p>Any subsidies to support courses</p>	1d

SP No.	Key actions	Key tasks	Outcome measures/KPI	Timescale/ Progress	Lead and Resource	Obj. ref
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Devise a funding model that is cost neutral or offers the possibility of income generation for training events. - Investigate the costs and opportunities of online events booking systems; - Draw up an annual programme of training and development opportunities ensuring geographic spread across the region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workable funding model. - System in place (or reasons why not). - Training programme appeals e.g. training fully subscribed. 	<p>By March 2019</p> <p>By June 2017 (initial research completed) By Dec. annually for following year, with 6 month review in June.</p>		
3.2	Investigate feasibility of online training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Audit capability of SWRLS website to offer on-line training and capability of members to access training online. - Audit on-line training needs of members. - Investigate the financial model to provide inter-connectivity to training. - Identify partners with whom to collaborate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Audit complete and recommendations considered by the Board. - No. and range of resources available and accessed. - Income generated. - Partners identified. - No. of links created. 	March 2019.	Director Time	1d

SP No.	Key actions	Key tasks	Outcome measures/KPI	Timescale/ Progress	Lead and Resource	Obj. ref
		- Identify and signpost relevant online training resources that are free at point of use.				
3.3	Develop a framework for supporting members' professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use the members' only section of the website to record contact details and expertise. - Facilitate brokerage of informal coaching and mentoring support. - Facilitate visits/job shadowing to strengthen knowledge of the sector within the region. 	- Analysis of feedback from those taking part.	On-going JISC list updated and promoted	Director Time	1d
Goal 4. Supporting the cultural and community engagement role of libraries.						
4.1	Promote cultural activities and events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a wider reach for the Reading Passport in its new digital format; - Use the new Reading Passport to develop partnerships with other cultural organisations; - Identify key contacts for cultural activities such as festivals, performances and exhibitions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of app/no. of hits on website. - Feedback. 		Director Time	2b

SP No.	Key actions	Key tasks	Outcome measures/KPI	Timescale/ Progress	Lead and Resource	Obj. ref
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>South West Region of Readers</i> project. - Provide support to any follow up work on the SWRLS grant supported project <i>Joining the Dots</i> (music provision in the SW). - <i>Word on Tour</i> ACE Strategic Touring Fund project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital app for Reading Passport adopted by all SWRLS member libraries. - A proportion of SWRLS member libraries involved in contributing towards and ensuring engagement in the community reading events and associated creative community activities. - Decision regarding the role of SWRLS in any future provision. See also 2.1 - SWRLS member libraries support the project activities in the areas focused on by the bid. 	<p>Up to March 2019 App launched in October 2018</p> <p>Complete</p>	<p>£8000 Director Time</p> <p>£4000</p>	
Goal 5. Effective Governance.						
5.1	Submit application to the charity Commission to become SWRLS CIO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure all necessary documents in place to enable application to be processed quickly. - Provide timely response to any questions raised by the Charity Commission. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CIO status achieved. - Smooth transition to new status. 	Complete	Director Time	

SP No.	Key actions	Key tasks	Outcome measures/KPI	Timescale/ Progress	Lead and Resource	Obj. ref
5.2	Succession planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review role of Director, identifying any new roles. - Review admin functions and potential for outsourcing. - Plan for recruitment of new Director. - Recruit new Director and manage handover. - Annual review of Director. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Role clarified and new Job Description written. - Partners identified and, if appropriate, service level agreements set up and monitored. - New Director appointed and handover successful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aug - Sept 2019 Aug - Sept 2019 Sept - Dec 2019 Feb - May 2020 April 2019 April 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair/Director Time Director Time Cost of SLA's if relevant Board Recruitment costs and time. Board 	
5.3	Review Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review impact of Fundamental Review. - Review new Constitution. - Review role of the Board, including roles of Board members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feedback from members. - New constitution fit for purpose and effective. - Role descriptions written and agreed. Full Board membership is maintained. Skills gaps identified and filled. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> April - June 2019 April - June 2019 Sept - Dec 2018 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board/Director Time 	
5.4	Ensure financial stability of the charity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review banking arrangements ready for SWRLS CIO. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Smooth transition to CIO. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Sept - Dec 2018 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treasurer Time 	

SP No.	Key actions	Key tasks	Outcome measures/KPI	Timescale/ Progress	Lead and Resource	Obj. ref
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review new subscription model and impact on the business. - Draw up Reserves Policy. - Seek alternate funding streams, including assessing feasibility of fund raising. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Membership numbers retained. Target set for no. new members. - Target(s) set for fund raising. Partners/ sources of sponsorship identified and targets set for funding to be achieved. 	<p>Mar 19</p> <p>Sept 2019 for initial work, reviews at Board meetings</p>		
5.5	Marketing and advocacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop new marketing material - new banner/leaflet. - Review new marketing material; - Review content and use of Website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Material available for use, targets set for use/impact. - Set target of new members joining. - Develop questionnaire for members - determine appropriate satisfaction level. User testing. - Findings acted on and improvements made. - New content developed. 	<p>New logo adopted.</p> <p>Sept 2019 (review)</p> <p>Mar - May 2019</p> <p>Jun - Sept 2019</p> <p>April - Sept 2018 initially reviewed six monthly</p>	<p>Director</p> <p>Cost of new material</p> <p>Annual cost of website. Any new costs needed to improve the site.</p>	