

# **“Public Libraries in Learning Communities”**

## **A Research Paper**

**Adele Kenneally**  
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The author is responsible for any errors, omissions, or misinterpretations of information. All views in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Glenelg Regional Library Corporation or the Library Board of Victoria.

Further information on this paper and its contents can be obtained by contacting the author:

Adele Kenneally  
Glenelg Regional Library Corporation  
P.O. Box 272  
Hamilton, Vic., 3000  
Australia

E: [ceo@grlc.vic.gov.au](mailto:ceo@grlc.vic.gov.au)  
P: 03 55723277  
F: 03 55712310

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## List of Acronyms

ALLIN	Access to Learning, Libraries and Information in Northamptonshire
BC	British Columbia
BLIS	Birmingham Library & Information Service
BwD	Blackburn with Darwen
CALL	Community Access to Lifelong Learning
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
ECDL	European Computer Drivers Licence
ECLIS	Edinburgh City Library and Information Service
EIC	European Information Centre
ELLP	Edinburgh Lifelong Learning Partnership
EMERALD	East Midlands Regional Arts Lottery Program
HRDC	Human Resources Development Canada
ICT	Information Communications Technology
LALA	Lillooet Area Library Association
LIAG	Local Information, Advice & Guidance
LIC	Library and Information Commission
LLCS	Lillooet Learning Communities Society
LSC	Learning Skills Council
NCC	Northamptonshire County Council
NCC	Nottingham City Libraries
NLIS	Norfolk Library & Information Service
NNML	Norfolk & Norwich Millennium Library
NOF	New Opportunities Fund
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-Operation
OLT	Office of Learning Technology (Canada)
RMOW	Resort Municipality of Whistler
SLIS	Southwark Library & Information Service
UK	United Kingdom
WMCLCP	Whistler Mt Currie Learning Community Partnership

## Introduction

### What is a 'Learning Community'?

As Australia moves towards the newer globalised knowledge economy, communities in rural and regional areas are confronted by many challenges. According to Michael Gurstein this "new economy is characterised by the significance of knowledge, in the form of research and development technology, and advanced education as input component of overall economic activity" (Gurstein, 2001). He goes on further to note the characteristics of the 'new economy' as:

- Information and knowledge driven
- Entrepreneurial
- Skill intensive
- Continually innovative
- Has a high concentration of virtual, knowledge based or symbolic goods; and with a
- High proportion of services and 'experiential' products

Most rural and remote communities in Australia are based on simple resource extraction and or primary production. As a consequence, many individuals have historically been able to make a comfortable living with little education or effort. In recent years employment opportunities in resource based communities have been mostly in decline – the resource base is no longer sufficient to support the local population, which results in local economic and population decline. Communities are under pressure to re skill and upgrade their capacities to become globally competitive. They are seeking to redevelop for themselves the skills and knowledge for the creation of a future.

Some communities here and internationally are facing these challenges through the implementation of learning strategies to promote social cohesion, regeneration and economic development. This model is known as the "learning community" model. It has been effectively argued by Faris, Longworth and others that 'lifelong' learning is necessary for transition to and on-going participation in the 'new' knowledge economy.

LIFELONG LEARNING IS....  
**the development of human potential**  
through a **continuously supportive process**  
which **stimulates and empowers *individuals***  
**to acquire all the knowledge, values, skills, and understanding**  
they will require **throughout their lifetimes** and  
**to apply them with confidence, creativity and enjoyment**  
in all **roles, circumstances and environments.**

Longworth and Davies, 1996

The concept of the learning community / city / town / village has been around since the 1970s, but it was given new impetus following an Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) conference in Gothenburg in 1992. More recently it has been given emphasis in the UK following the preparation of the 'Skills strategy', formally known as "21st Century skills, realising our potential, individuals, employers, nation" in July 2003.

According to the OECD concept:

*'a learning community is a village, town, city or region that is preparing for the rapidly emerging knowledge-based society by using the concept of lifelong learning as an organising principle and social goal, mobilizing learning resources of (knowledge and*

*skills) of all five of its sectors (civic, public, economic, education, voluntary) and making practical but imaginative use of learning technologies as a tool' (Faris, 2001)*

The OECD Centre for Educational Research and Innovation launched a learning region initiative in six countries – Spain, France, Denmark-Sweden, Germany and the UK in 1997. A Learning Cities Network was developed in the UK in 1996 with a target of 75 sites in 2002. An international “Learning Village” project was initiated in 1999 by research bodies in Finland, Portugal and Italy. The Victorian Government created the first State learning communities policy and program in Australia in 2000, with the Australian National Training Authority providing further impetus in 2001 through the Learning Communities National Project.

Much has been written about ‘learning communities’, and a select list of references is provided as Appendix 1.

Ron Faris provides a succinct definition of the ‘learning community’ term:

*The term “learning community” is defined as any city, town or village and surrounding area, that using lifelong learning as an organising principle and social goal promotes collaboration of the civic, private, voluntary and education sectors in the process of achieving agreed upon objectives related to the twin goals of sustainable economic development and social inclusiveness. (Faris, 1998)*

### **Learning Communities in Australia**

In 2001, the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) began its learning communities pilot national project to encourage the development of learning communities and learn more about them. Ten rural and regional communities received funding to undertake a learning audit as the initial stage of becoming a learning community. (Australian National Training Authority, 2002, online)

One of these communities, the Southern Grampians Shire Council, is a member council of the Glenelg Regional Library Corporation. The audit process undertaken by the community identified many strong links between various agencies, attesting to a strong foundation for a learning community. Several initiatives were identified and adopted as workable initial strategies. At the outset of this project it was hoped that the community would be fully engaged in the project by July 2003, and that ongoing funding would have been sourced by the project committee to enable the learning initiative to continue.

In addition, the Glenelg Shire Council, the other member council of the Glenelg Regional Library Corporation was selected for the location of a pilot ‘televillage’ project as part of the Bracks Government “Connecting Victoria” strategy in 1999.

Worldwide, many projects have developed around the theme of “televillage”. Each project has developed with different characteristics reflecting the specific needs of the communities involved. A “televillage” can be defined as a holistic term to describe the utilisation of telecommunications and information resources to build and extend development in a rural area. During the period 2000-2001, consultants worked with the Portland community to define and develop a ‘televillage’ concept to meet the specific aspirations and needs of the Portland and broader shire communities.

One of the outcomes of the Portland community consultation was the desire for a ‘community hub’ – a complex incorporating training rooms, meeting facilities, public gallery space, public access to ICT equipment and online services, and business incubations space. This concept became known as the Portland Telecentre. In 2002, the Glenelg Shire Council and the Glenelg Regional Library Corporation worked collaboratively to gain funding from the Living Libraries, Public Library Infrastructure Program to redevelop the Portland Library to create an ‘information gateway’ – an attractive and exciting community meeting place incorporating the

Portland Telecentre. This facility is intended to be a state of the art public access building providing a range of learning, teaching and recreating experiences around the themes of information technology and multimedia. This study tour was also intended to inform this process and provide examples of good practice.

### **Learning Communities and Public Libraries**

Traditionally, there has not been a close relationship between community/adult education and economic development. Learning has been linked mostly to education providers such as schools, TAFE colleges, universities, and occasionally libraries. According to Michael Gurstein, the emergence of the newer 'information economy' provides a challenge for local communities to find ways to redevelop so as to create the conditions for a new economy (Gurstein, 2001).

Public libraries have often been described as 'the working man's university' and have quietly underpinned education programs in a passive and non-intrusive manner in most western communities over the past 150 years. However, more recently some public libraries in Canada are actively participating as partners in 'Learning Communities'.

According to an article by Ron Faris in the 'Journal of lifelong learning initiatives', while the Australian model has strong civic, private sector and educational partners at their helm, the learning community models developing in British Columbia has an even broader partnership that includes libraries, museums, health and social agencies, wide voluntary /community sector participation, and active cross-cultural partnerships with First Nation communities. (Faris, 2001)

A slightly different approach is being taken in the United Kingdom where public libraries are being funded to roll out programs to support the national agenda of lifelong learning, and are actively contributing to the regeneration of local communities and their economic development. Several public libraries are participants in 'Learning Partnerships' and others view lifelong learning as part of their core role.

### **Project Description**

This project, funded through the Margery C. Ramsay Scholarship provided by the Library Board of Victoria, involved a study tour of Canada and the UK to explore the different approaches and models in various successful learning communities and the roles undertaken by participating public libraries. The tour was undertaken between 20 June and 30 July 2003 (see Appendix No. 2 for Itinerary)

### **Project Objectives**

The objectives of this project "Public Libraries in Learning Communities" included:

- To identify successful 'learning communities' where public libraries have played a significant role in their development and ongoing activities
- Undertake a study tour to those communities in the UK and Canada to:
  - ❖ Analyse the strategies utilised by the libraries and the communities in the establishment of the 'learning communities'
  - ❖ Explore the collaborative activities and programs undertaken by libraries in partnership with other community agencies
  - ❖ Understand the main types of approaches taken by libraries in establishing partnerships and collaborative projects

- ❖ Establish networks with libraries and agencies within those communities
- Evaluate the strategies and programs in order to identify and initiate potential practices for the Southern Grampians and Glenelg projects
- Apply the ‘learning’ from this project to local projects
- Develop a paper for use by other communities and public libraries interested in participating in “learning communities”.

This project was also an excellent subject for reflective and experiential learning in addition to the acquisition of practical knowledge and personal development.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Canada

The OECD learning community model had been adopted in Canada and was informed by UK experience and research. Different regional and community profiles mean that a “one size fits all” approach was neither effective nor possible. Different communities have therefore developed in different ways. According to Ron Faris, a number of communities across Canada are pioneering projects that reflect the key elements of the “learning community model”. (Faris, 2001)

In British Columbia (BC), a growing number of learning communities are preparing for the rapidly emerging knowledge based society by using the learning resources of the various local sectors including public libraries. BC is working towards linking the formal and non-formal learning resources of communities through the establishment of community learning networks that forge social learning relationships within the communities themselves and among other learning communities. The Office of Learning Technologies of Human Resources Development Canada, has granted local host agencies \$25,000 to develop a community learning network project proposal so that learning technologies can be used as tools to achieve a Community Partnership’s learning objectives. Each Partnership then seeks an additional \$300,000 from HRDC on a 50% matching or cost shared basis to carry out a 3-year pilot project.

In BC, it was also discovered that early attention to assuring social inclusion can lead to successful cross-cultural bridge building between aboriginal and non-aboriginal neighbours committed to working together for the common good (Faris, 2001). The Upper Skeena, Lillooet and Whistler-Mt Currie Learning Community Partnerships are current examples of active collaboration between First Nations and non-First Nation neighbours.

Faris notes that:

*“learning communities in B.C. are proving to be effective means of:*

- *Building bridges of social capital between First Nations and non-First Nation communities;*
- *Promoting pathways between formal and non-formal learning through use of adult Prior Learning Assessment and External Credit for high school students engaged in learning through programs such as 4-H, cadets, traditional dancing, and music instruction;*
- *Mobilizing the total education and training resources in communities faced by major market dislocations; and*
- *Challenging youth to engage in service learning projects that leave a legacy in their community”* (Faris, 2001)

Communities identified by Faris as “learning communities” with libraries playing key roles include Lillooet, Mt Currie and Whistler.

## **Mt. Currie and Whistler**

The Resort Municipality of Whistler and the Mt Currie First Nation are located in the northern end of south west British Columbia. Whistler, the busiest ski resort in North America, is about 120 kilometres from North Vancouver, while Mt Currie is located approximately 40 kilometres north of Whistler and about 160 kilometres from Vancouver.

Mt Currie is located on its ancestral home of the St'at'imc Territory. The Mt Currie Band is traditionally known as the Lil'wat Nation within the 11 community St'at'imc nation language group. In 2000, the population of Mt Currie was 1,720 members with 70% of them living on reserve. According to the Whistler – Mt Currie Learning Community Partnership Pilot Proposal (2001), the population increase over the 1990s was 6%, and in 2005 the projected population is expected to be 2200. The number of unemployed employable adults in Mt Currie is estimated to be about 35% of the total on-reserve population.

Whistler's resident population in 1999 is estimated at 9,600 – an increase of 110% from the 1991 census of 4,589. According to the municipal website ([www.whistler.ca](http://www.whistler.ca)) the number of guests or visitors to the resort is estimated to be over 2 million per year. Whistler enjoys low unemployment rates of about 2.2% and has a relatively young population, with a higher proportion of single and non-family individuals than that of British Columbia in total. The average per capita income is also higher than the provincial average. The municipal website also advises that the cost of living in Whistler is 20% higher than in any other BC town, and that long term accommodation is difficult to find.

Whistler is an unusual community according to Bob Kusch, Manager of Program Services and Community Liaison with the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW). Whistler has not been built from the ground up, but has grown rapidly since the 1970s and community development has been unable to keep pace. In most communities development occurs over a long slow process. As a consequence, Whistler does not have a strong sense of community.

Whistler faces a number of other challenges also:

- Labour shortages
- Lack of transportation from nearby towns and communities
- High cost housing and accommodation
- High numbers of transient workers, the relative lack of social inclusion and unhealthy lifestyles of these workers
- Engaging a large non resident population (second homeowners)

Moreover, Whistler has been chosen as the site for the 2010 Winter Olympics, which may compound these issues further ([www.winter2010.com](http://www.winter2010.com)).

However, few communities in Canada possess the human capital of Whistler. It has an extraordinary educational profile -a highly educated population with lots of professionals. According to the Pilot Proposal for the Whistler - Mt Currie Learning Community Partnership (2001), 'its social capital – the trust, networking and shared values of its members – provide a substantial foundation'. In this Proposal, it also notes that Whistler has a ratio of one voluntary association for every 100 community members, which is very high and 'reflects the active nature of the community'.

Prior to the development of the pilot proposal for the Whistler-Mt Currie Learning Community Partnership (WMCLCP) , Whistler was engaged in four innovative civic initiatives:

- The Natural Step (economic ecology practice for Whistler firms and organisations)
- Healthy Community
- Cultural (Arts) Plan
- Environmental Strategy

All of the above are designed to promote new knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. The acquisition of learning and behavioural change on the part of the wider community is required for the success of these ventures. It is anticipated that the Learning communities project will play a vital support role in enabling the success of these initiatives.

### **Whistler-Mt Currie Learning Community Partnership**

The Resort Municipality of Whistler and the Whistler Chamber of Commerce took a leadership role in the formation of a steering committee to develop the WMCLCP pilot proposal. The steering committee comprises representatives from a wide range of other socio-economic initiatives in Whistler – Mt Currie and district. According to the Proposal:

*“their community knowledge and involvement (including key cross-memberships with other community initiatives) made it possible to easily adapt the OECD /UK learning community model as an organising concept and analytical tool that served the Committee well”* (Whistler-Mt Currie Learning Community Partnership Pilot Proposal, 2001)

The Steering Committee was structured with representation from all five sectors of the community – civic, economic, public, education, and voluntary/community. Each representative consults with organisations and individuals in their respective sectors. The Partnership proposal was developed over a one-year period, with extensive use of focus groups and public forums to inform and engage the Whistler community. The Director of the Whistler Public Library is one of the twelve representatives on the Steering Committee. According to Bob Kusch, the project is now becoming ‘community driven’ rather than ‘municipality driven’.

As a consequence of this process, the WMCLCP Pilot Proposal was completed and submitted to the Office of Learning Technologies of Human Resources Development Canada at the end of 2001. A three-year Action Plan (April 2003 – March 2006) was developed as part of the Proposal and a number of learning objectives and targets were identified and included. A summary of the objectives was provided in the Proposal:

Joint objectives:

- ❖ *Strengthening training and employment opportunities in both communities with a special emphasis on increasing the opportunities for good Whistler jobs for Mt Currie people;*
- ❖ *Developing a Web-based Learning Exchange linking Whistler and Mt Currie that provides a directory of learning opportunities and events (including Aboriginal cultural and knowledge based activities), educational bartering, and useful learning links for not only community members but also the many visitors and transient work-force; and*
- ❖ *Increasing the number of open learning (mixed distance and face to face learning) opportunities that can be justified by combined Mt Currie- Whistler student registrations*

Specific Whistler objectives include creating a Learning Hub information and guidance clearinghouse to promote formal and non-formal learning opportunities, while Mt Currie has identified marketable office skills and development of traditional cultural activities as its priorities. Unique features of this proposal include preparing the two communities for the major challenge of hosting the 2010 Winter Olympics, and focusing on their shared environmental values and desire to build their communities’ capacity to benefit from the event rather than merely survive.

### **Whistler Public Library**

Although the project is still in its infancy, the public library has been involved as a fully participating organisation in the Partnership since the project’s inception.

According to the municipal web site ([www.whistler.ca](http://www.whistler.ca)), the service is growing with circulation increasing by 10% per year and new membership up by 20-30%. The Library holds a

collection of approximately 38,000 items and is open 52 hours per week over 6 days. The library is currently located (or more aptly – squeezed) in a 2,800 square facility. The RMOW is planning for a new library/museum facility to be located on the current village location. Designed as green building, it is expected to cost \$9 million dollars. The RMOW has committed \$4.5 million and the rest is expected to be raised through a community fundraising campaign. The library website ([www.whistlerlibrary.ca](http://www.whistlerlibrary.ca)) describes the new facility as:

*...a place where locals and tourists alike will be able to meet, participate in a variety of interesting educational programs, borrow books, CDs, videos, DVDs or magazines. A separate computer/business centre will be available for word processing, research, and computer learning. A children's area including a story/craft room will allow for flexible children's programming. The fireplace lounge will have coffee and the latest newspapers/magazines for a relaxing reprieve for work or play. Quiet study areas will be found throughout the library...*

According to the Director, Joan Richoz, the library contributes to the WMCLCP objectives through a range of formal and informal learning opportunities. The Library has an important partnership with the Serebra Learning Corporation and provides access to online learning via the library web site. Courses relate to the attainment of skills in the areas of information technology, PC end user, professional and business development skills and various certifications courses such as the Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer. The library also refers members of the community onto the Learning Hub, provides display space, assists in the promotion of programs provided by the other partners, and works with the New Commerce Centre in providing volunteer opportunities. An extensive list of connections and partnerships is included in the Library Annual Report. In addition, the library provides a range of literacy related programs such as:

*Storytimes:*

*Library drop in for preschoolers (ages 2-4)*

*Library drop in for preschoolers (ages 2-6)*

*Library drop in – baby time*

*Monthly seasonal programs for school aged children*

*Books for babes*

*Creative writing contest for teenagers*

*Bookclub for 9-12 year olds*

*Summer Reading Club for preschoolers and 5-9 year olds*

*Author readings*

And events such as the following:

**OLYMPIC SCAVENGER HUNT**

9-12 YEAR OLDS

Get set ... ready? Hunt!! Join the Whistler Public Library for an evening full of questions, clues and excitement in an Olympic Scavenger Hunt! Use your detective library skills to locate clues, and win amazing prizes. If you are between the ages of 9 and 12, and you have an inquisitive mind, come and enjoy this event. Fun provided by the participants...food and drinks provided by the library!!

**OLYMPIC CHARADES**

Are you an actor deep down inside? Do you like to make faces at people? Do you like to use your body to express yourself? If you answered 'yes' to any of the above, then you should join the Whistler Public Library in an evening of Olympic Charades! The event promises to be very entertaining, with prizes to be won, and food and drinks provided by the Library. For 13-16 year olds, free of charge.

**Whistler's Youth Authors**

Winners of the Whistler Public Library young writers contest will read their stories in a public forum and have their stories published in the Literary Leanings Anthology.

### **Literary Leanings**

Each night will feature well-known Vancouver based writers and four emerging Whistler writers. These two events will be gala events that feature food and drink. We will produce an anthology at the end of the event featuring the work read by Whistler's emerging writers.

Due to the limitations of the library facility, a lot of effort appears to have been placed in providing relevant links and information on the library web site. A link called 'about Whistler' provides community information (contacts and links etc for local groups and organisations), plus local information relating to the arts, animal care, education, health services, history, religion, social clubs, etc.

Interestingly, the Director also notes that the Canadian government has provided large amounts of funds for computer labs, but not much additional funding for staffing and other operating costs. She also noted that extensive cost shifting has been occurring from the provincial government to municipal government.

### **Lillooet**

Lillooet is located 180km north of Hope and 340km northeast of Vancouver BC. Lillooet is located on the banks of the Fraser River at the tip of the northern desert that reaches into British Columbia. The population of Lillooet itself is approximately 3000, however, the population of the larger community is about 6000 with the balance in surrounding rural areas, including six First Nations Bands (Faris and Peterson, 2000)

The First Nations people, the Northern St'at'imc are located mainly on the six reserves in the vicinity of the community of Lillooet. Sheila Pfeiffer, the Chief Librarian of the Lillooet Area Library Association claims that the St'at'imc form about 50% of the population of the service area of the Lillooet Public Library, the main branch of the Lillooet Area Library Association (LALA). (Pfeiffer, 2003).

As stated on the Lillooet Learns website ([www.lillooetlearns.ca](http://www.lillooetlearns.ca)), Lillooet is a community in transition, struggling with the difficult challenges of switching its economic reliance upon resource extraction to a new foundation of services and knowledge based industries and businesses. Two major events have had an impact on the Lillooet communities – The downturn in the forest economy due to the soft wood lumber export problems and the downsizing of the provincial government offices in the area. The Lillooet Forest District Office and the School District Learning Resource Centre have been closed, and the University College of the Cariboo has significantly reduced the number of its activities in the smaller communities. Consequently, a large number of provincial government employees are considering leaving the community or taking up self employment options, forest workers are under extreme pressure and adult education opportunities were diminishing.

### **Lillooet Learning Communities Society**

According to Rod Paynter, Executive Director of LillooetLearns, The Lillooet Learning Communities Society was formed out of a partnership of the following local and regional organisations:

- ❖ District of Lillooet
- ❖ Lillooet Area Library Association
- ❖ Lillooet Friendship Centre
- ❖ Lillooet Tribal Council
- ❖ School District #74
- ❖ St'at'imc Education Authority
- ❖ T'it'q'et Administration
- ❖ University College of the Cariboo (UCC)

## ❖ Upper St'at'imc Language, Culture and Education Society

This ad hoc group formed the Lillooet Learning Communities Partnership and in 2001 was successful in gaining funding of \$300,000 from the Office of Learning Technologies. The Lillooet Area Library Association served as the lead agency and entered into the contract to receive the funding over the next 2.5 years to pursue the following objectives:

- ❖ *Build strong families and communities to guide our children through the early years, the school years, and on into adulthood as active members of the communities.*
- ❖ *Build on the capacity of local people, through band councils and municipal government, and community, business, and volunteer organisations to make decisions, plan for the future, and act effectively and efficiently for the good of all.*
- ❖ *Collaborate on a community and family resource centre to foster lifelong learning and community economic development through the collaborative use of learning technologies.*

([www.lillooetlearns.ca/lillooetlearns/society.htm](http://www.lillooetlearns.ca/lillooetlearns/society.htm))

In May 2001 the Lillooet Learning Communities Society (LLCS) was incorporated as a Not for Profit Society and was established to promote the development of the Lillooet area as a learning community.

## **Lillooet Area Library Association**

The Lillooet Area Library Association operates 3 branch libraries in Gold Bridge, Bridge River and Lillooet. The Squamish Lillooet Regional District and the Province of British Columbia Ministry of Municipal Affairs fund the LALA ([www.lillooetlibrary.bc.ca](http://www.lillooetlibrary.bc.ca)).

The Lillooet Library is co-located at the Recreational Centre with a gymnasium, indoor swimming pool, squash courts, and the preschool centre. The Library is open for 36 hours per week and provides 4 public access Internet PCs for community use.

According to the LALA 2002 Annual Report, the Library has partnered with the LLCS on a number of co-operative ventures. The Library also provides a range of literacy programs and is in the process of developing a range of First Nation programs. Pfeifer claims that these initiatives have “served to connect on-reserve St'at'imc with their local public library”. She goes on further to reflect that “important aspects of this success have been respect and the gradual building of relationships with the Northern St'at'imc communities”. (Pfeifer, 2003)

The LALA programs include:

### Books for Babies

The Library provides each new born with a new book. Babies also receive a book when they go for their inoculations, and the program has also expanded to provide new books to each child on their birthday up to age 5. Mothers are also invited and encouraged to bring their children to the library to access the baby board books and early childhood collection. This program is sponsored by about 6 agencies, including Literacy BC.

### Books for Babies Translation Program

Working in tandem with the local schools to revive the St'at'imc language, the library has had the books “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” translated into the St'at'imc language with an audiobook of the melody and song in each language to accompany the text. The Library plans to extend this translation program.

### Blue Boxes

Four large blue plastic buckets are filled with books, puppets, games, videos and audio for children each September. First Nations-sensitive materials are chosen to encourage literacy skills and include things such as music cassettes of local First Nation musicians, animal

stories, Inuit dolls, animal puppets, etc. These are taken out to three on-reserve pre-schools and the Yalakom School, for use by parents, teachers and children, and then traded all around three times. This program is also supported by Literacy BC.

#### Read-to-me Club

This program runs for 6 weeks over summer and is aimed at young children who cannot read by themselves yet. It involves a range of learning activities and storytelling and reading. For children going on vacation, the library provides a 'Take a Trip Kit', which includes Easy Reading books, bookmarks, toys etc.

#### On Reserve with the Gates Lab

The Bill and Melinda Gates portable computer lab is booked on an annual basis to provide on-reserve training at the band offices of the four First Nation reserves. The Lab is administered by the Public Library Services Branch of the Provincial Government and is available for use by the public libraries in British Columbia. LALA obtains the help of St'at'imc University students who return home for the summer to work in the Library. Funding for these students is provided by the Youth@BC initiative of the Public Library Services Branch of the BC Government. Training provided on the reserves includes web site creation, email, e-bay, sites for children and basic Internet skills. Last summer the students also provided a "Cybercamp" Internet training program to the young people at the T'it'qet Youth Centre on reserve.

In addition to the above programs, the library also provides regular story times both in the library and out on the reserves, runs a summer reading program and provides one on one free Internet training which is extensively used by seniors. LALA has also partnered with the LLCS to provide workshops on pre-reading skills for parents and the development of games to play with toddlers, a program developed by a local university professor. In 2002 the LALA in partnership with Lillooet Learns received funding from the Federal Rural Partnership Initiative for an architect to develop options for possible layout changes and renovations to the REC centre, including an addition to the Library.

In recent times, the Lillooet Library and Lillooet Learns have developed a St'at'imc conversational language course for those who do not want a full University course.

As the OLT funding finished in December 2003, sustainability is a real issue for the LLCS. LALA has been audited federally with regard to status as a charitable organisation, and according to Rod Paynter, Executive Director of the LLCS, will act as a front for the LLCS to seek funding from charitable organisations. Ongoing sponsorship for special events has been provided, and several funding proposals to philanthropic foundations are in process. At the time of this study tour in June 2003, the LLCS and library staff were optimistic of the project continuation. Further correspondence indicates that the community remains optimistic as the Lillooet Learns has just completed a strategic plan, which will hopefully see more projects into the future.

## United Kingdom

Life long learning was high on the political agenda in the United Kingdom from about 1997 to 2001. Several papers and policy documents were produced on the topic of lifelong learning during this period, including the report 'The Learning Age: a new renaissance for Britain' (DfEE, 1998) In this report it was noted that 7 million adults had no formal qualifications and one in five adults had poor literacy skills. Many of these reports are also listed in Appendix 1.

The topic of lifelong learning seemed to go on the back burner at the end of the nineties, however it is back on the agenda again due to the publishing of the UK Government's Skills Strategy in 2003. Again, it was noted that the percentage of the UK workforce qualified to intermediate skill levels (apprenticeship, skilled craft and technician level) is low: 28 percent in the UK compared with 51% in France and 65% in Germany. (UK Parliament, 2003). In addition, in spite of the extensive skills and adult learning reforms put in place over the past 7 years, significantly more young people in England leave education or training by the age of 17 than in most other developed countries. As a consequence the Blair Government aims to provide a framework which motivates and supports adults to want to engage in skills training and qualifications at all levels. Although specifically aimed at increasing skills for employability and economic benefit, the national skills strategy also seeks to safeguard a 'varied range of learning opportunities for personal fulfilment, community development and active citizenship'. One of the key measures in the strategy is the support for development of Local Strategic Partnerships leading to the building of learning communities.

### Libraries

There has been considerable debate over the past few years about the role of public libraries into the future and in particular their role in the UK 'knowledge economy' agenda. Interestingly, in the UK the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) are responsible for developing the strategies and policies for public libraries, and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is responsible for funding. According to many public library managers, this division of responsibility leads to considerable conflict at the central government level.

In 1997, the DCMS commissioned a research report on the role of the public library in the next century. This report entitled "New Library: Peoples Network" argued for the transformation of libraries and what they do. According to this report, the key role of public libraries was to be linked to learning and would play a central role in the 'University for Industry'. It also noted that the library is an enormously powerful agent for change and 'could do more for the spread of information and IT skills than any other measure the government could introduce'.

However, 'Building Better Library Services', published in May 2002 by the UK Audit Commission noted that 'despite growing demand for books and information (and broadly stable resources of £770 million) traditional library services are in decline'. The report was critical of the reduced expenditure on books, decline in opening hours and the poor condition of the buildings of the majority of English library services. It does also note that there is growing recognition of the wider contribution that libraries can play in promoting national and local priorities such as social inclusion, education and lifelong learning, e-government, community regeneration and local cultural strategies. However in reality it notes that this has been 'piecemeal and fragmented'. Furthermore, it asserts that there is a danger that when these objectives are given a high profile, the core role of the service may be neglected.

"Empowering the Learning Community " (LIC, 2001) also supports the agenda of building lifelong learning partnerships, raising standards and increasing access to learning. This report recommends that local library and education services 'join – up' their planning and services.

“Start with the Child”, also published in 2002 is another key research report that is influencing the development of public library services in the UK. Undertaken by consultants, Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, this report on library services for young people indicated that although the development needs of children themselves have not changed, the context in which children grow and learn is radically different in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It recommends ‘that a successful library service for children and young people needs to encompass appropriate environments, services that are relevant and responsive, appropriate help for young people and for those that support them, and support from the community at large to use and benefit from services that are marketed to them and their parents’.

“Framework for the Future” published in 2003 by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, is the government’s strategic vision for the UK public library service. This document was widely criticised by library managers, as being very uninspiring; “been there and done that” was a theme echoed in many locations. However, this document identifies the operation of public libraries as community centres of formal and informal learning as a key strength. It goes on further to describe the activities of libraries in supporting learning, in particular ‘self motivated learning’ and in promoting reading which is a key element of the role of the public library in supporting learning. It emphasises the ‘support role’ of public libraries through their involvement in programs such as the Sure Start Program for disadvantaged young children and the Connexions Program for young people aged 13-19 amongst others.

The 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act requires Library Authorities to provide a ‘comprehensive and efficient’ public library service. In 2001, DCMS published ‘Comprehensive, Efficient and Modern Public Libraries – Standards and Assessment’, a set of new national standards for public libraries. The standards were intended to guide the continuous improvement of socially inclusive services, and were designed to complement the approach taken by Best Value, and to drive up library performance. These standards are widely criticised as being mechanistic and not inspired and are viewed as being the result of ‘rows between the different government levels’. Many managers expressed the view that the somewhat cynical view that the government didn’t want to include anything in the standards that “might result in an additional cost for them”.

Nonetheless, public libraries are required to develop an annual ‘Position Statement’ that sets out how the library service is responding to ‘Framework for the Future’.

Following on from ‘Framework for the Future’, Charles Leadbeater fuelled further debate with the publishing of “Overdue; how to create a modern public library service”. This report was commissioned by the Laser Foundation to ‘undertake a critical review of the current state of the public library sector and to give pointers to ways in which a modern library system for the future might be achieved’ (Leadbeater, 2003). Leadbeater claims that ‘libraries are sleepwalking to disaster’ and are in serious decline. He also notes that

*“Because of the highly fragmented public library system, it is difficult to devise and take on projects that mobilise libraries as a network. As a result, public libraries run many projects relating to social inclusion, learning, e-government and crime for government departments. What they lack is a sense of their own mission or of their place in a modern society, a sense that they are places for people to use to access books, information and knowledge far more easily than even 10 years ago.”*

Nevertheless, Leadbeater recommends that ‘library hubs’ are created and based in shopping centres to combine learning and leisure. One of his key recommendations is that a national library development service (NDLA) is created, and among other things, should form ‘a close working alliance with the Dfes to help achieve key education and learning goals’.

At the same time that this ongoing debate about the role and future of public libraries is taking place, several national programs are being rolled out in partnership with libraries and others to deliver the workforce development and lifelong learning agenda.

## **Learndirect**

Learndirect is a network of online learning and information services, which was introduced across England, Wales and Northern Ireland in 2000 by Ufi Ltd. There are nearly 2000 learndirect centres in locations such as shopping malls, pubs, colleges, companies, libraries and football clubs. Learndirect is aimed at anyone over the age of 16, and is aimed to widen participation in learning and encourage people to improve or develop new skills. This program promotes e-learning through the use of online courses, CD Roms, tasters and some workbook based courses. ([www.learndirect.co.uk](http://www.learndirect.co.uk))

## **Gates Foundation Gift**

In 1999 the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation provided a gift of over £2.6 million for the establishment of information technology learning centres in public libraries in some of the most deprived communities in the UK. By 2003, authorities (identified from deprivation indices) were installing additional 2-12 terminals in their libraries to ensure higher levels of Internet access are provided in these areas. ([www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk/infra/billgates.asp](http://www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk/infra/billgates.asp))

## **Peoples Network Project**

Public libraries in the UK received funding from the New Opportunities Fund (lotteries funding) through a program called the Community Access to Lifelong Learning (CALL Program) to establish UK online learning centres as well as providing library staff with computer literacy and learner support skills. A related £50 million program is also creating online content. ([www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk](http://www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk))

On another note, Shanti Wong also noted that a number of ICT learning centres have been set up in libraries under the 'learning cities' umbrella in the UK. In her report following her study tour in January 2002, she reported that they are attracting large numbers of participants including migrants and young people. She further commented that a complementary outcome has been the revitalisation of libraries as a result of the ICT provision and the re-engagement of people with books and other library facilities and events. (Wong, 2002)

Several libraries were subsequently identified for the purpose of this study tour as providing innovative programs to support the national learning agenda. They were identified through the available literature and by liaison with David McNulty and Martin Yarnit.

## **Birmingham**

Birmingham is the second largest city in the United Kingdom, with a population just under 1 million. It is a very young and diverse community with 30% of the population from black and minority ethnic communities, and 44% of residents under 30 years of age compared with the average for England of 38%. Estimates indicate that by 2020, the majority of the population will be from the ethnic minority groups of Asian, African, in particular Caribbean and Chinese origins. According to Linda Butler, Head of Best Value for the Birmingham Library and Information Services, there are also a significant number of refugees and asylum seekers from a further 51 different communities. Addressing the issues of social inclusion is high on the Birmingham City Council's agenda.

Located in the West Midlands, Birmingham has traditionally been the hub of the nation's principal industrial and commercial regions, however, in recent years, Birmingham has seen its manufacturing base eroded. High levels of unemployment exist in the inner city wards and among the black and minority ethnic communities. The Birmingham Libraries Divisional Plan for 2003-2004 reports that 52% of unemployed people in Birmingham have no qualifications at all, and that re-skilling the workforce is a local as well as a national priority.

Birmingham includes the creation of a “Learning City” as one of its six strategic themes, and has developed a Lifelong Learning Plan and a Strategic Lifelong Learning Partnership, to give appropriate emphasis to this theme. Birmingham has also been short-listed to be the European Capital of Culture in 2008, and is developing a local Cultural Strategy to achieve this.

## **Birmingham Libraries**

Birmingham Library and Information Services (BLIS) comprises 39 community libraries and 3 mobile libraries to deliver services to estates and areas cut off from the city. The Libraries are located under the Leisure and Culture Department of the Council, and are funded by the central government and the city council. According to the BLIS Divisional Plan for 2003-2004, both library loans and visitor figures are declining, and only 18.6% of the City’s population are active borrowers.

According to Linda Butler, the library share of the city funding is being eroded, and the library service in its current format is unsustainable. Library budgets are under huge pressure and there are lots of unscheduled library closures. Also, according to Butler, the book vote has remained static for at least 5 years, and Birmingham Libraries spend less on their lending stock than many authorities. Most service development is undertaken with external funding, with no mainstream funding to sustain the projects. Unfortunately this leads to a ‘project mentality’, which sets up unrealistic expectations, is ad hoc and can skew the library services core services and priorities. The BLIS Divisional Plan notes that::

*“the inclusion of external funding in the net expenditure mask the declining core investment in the service. The majority of innovative service developments have been set up through external funding and this has implications for the long-term sustainability of this work”.* (Birmingham Libraries, 2003)

Birmingham Council is in the process of transferring services to a new localised service structure based on constituencies rather than service departments. The aim is to encourage local initiatives to build differences on top of core entitlements and strategic direction. The devolution of responsibility to constituency committees for budgets also poses some challenges for Birmingham Libraries. With community libraries located in different constituencies, Linda Butler comments, ‘it will be difficult to sustain a networked library structure’.

However, in spite of the difficulties, Birmingham has formal learning centres in 6 libraries ([www.birmingham.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/libraries)). In addition to the Birmingham Central Library, community libraries at South Yardley and Shards End were also visited as part of this study tour. These centres have been established in partnership with the Birmingham Adult Education Service and provide access to over 750 ‘learnirect’ courses, run adult education courses, and deliver ‘taster sessions’. A learnirect centre is also located in the Central Library.

A ‘Learning Shop’ is co-located on the ground floor of the Birmingham Central Library. A partnership between the Birmingham City Council, the Birmingham Lifelong Learning Partnership and the Birmingham and Solihull Lifelong Learning Information, Advice and Guidance Network, the ‘Learning Shop’ offers a drop in service for advice and information on learning and training possibilities, career guidance and job search assistance.

The research facilities of the Birmingham Central Library also contribute significantly to the Birmingham Council Lifelong Learning Strategy. A major reference library, it is heavily used by learners of all ages, according to the Position Statement.

The Library also is actively engaged in supporting ‘family learning’ and undertakes a number of partnership activities with SureStart in targeted areas of the city. The Birmingham Libraries Position Statement for 2003-04 reports that 38 Homework Help Clubs make use of ICT resources, special core collections of homework study materials and staff expertise to

support homework activities. "Starting Point" collections of materials in the Central Library are designed to be introductory to the main collections in all subjects and cater for the needs of teenage users. One of the mobile libraries is titled 'Words on Wheels' and specifically services parents and carers of under 5 year olds in hard to reach areas such as prisons, playgroups, nursery and health clinics and gipsies. It is specifically aimed at 'excluded groups'.

Based in the Centre for the Child in the Central Library, the Childcare Information Bureau is a corporate initiative and has become established as the major information provider in the city for day-care, education, and other services for children and their families. The Divisional Plan notes that it is open for 52 hours a week as a drop-in centre, and operates a telephone help line service. This initiative is funded through external sources including the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

The Birmingham Libraries also provide a Schools Library Service. This is self-funding and promotes the development of school libraries, provides materials to support the National Curriculum and the National Literacy Strategy. Specialist advice is provided and training courses are offered to raise awareness of current issues and support literacy initiatives.

The BLIS Divisional Plan also notes that a number of the Birmingham Library buildings, including the Central Library are 'inadequate to cope comfortably with significant changes in the library service, notably increased ICT – based provision, whilst others lack space for the range of activities and events that would now be considered as standard in Birmingham'. The Library has access to capital funds of £2.9 million over a 3 year period to refurbish and / or replace several library buildings. A new Central Library is a key feature in the Eastside regeneration plan, and a concept design has been developed. The funding strategy and a business plan for the new Central Library are in development, and it is hoped that the new Central Library will open in 2008.

Birmingham Libraries contribute in a significant way to several of the Council plans and strategies. In particular, it notes in the Divisional Plan for 2003-04 that the Libraries contribute through 'our emphasis on equality of opportunity, partnership working, impartial information, advice and guidance for learners, particularly those who have limited educational opportunities'. However, it is also interesting to note that the Birmingham Libraries are not featured in the City Lifelong Learning Plan.

## **Blackburn with Darwen**

The Borough of Blackburn with Darwen (hereafter referred to as BwD) is located in the East Lancashire Region in the North West of the UK and includes the towns of Blackburn, Darwen and the immediate surrounding rural areas. The population is about 138,000, with most densely populated areas located in the inner wards of Blackburn. It is a multi-cultural Borough with a significant ethnic minority community including around 23% of residents of Asian heritage. According to the 2002 Annual Library Plan, BwD is categorised as the 26<sup>th</sup> most deprived Borough in England and the most deprived Borough in East Lancashire (Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Annual Library Plan 2002). It has a strong manufacturing economy however the unemployment rates exceed the nation average and the average weekly earnings are around 10% lower than the North West regional average.

## **Lifelong Learning Forum**

Blackburn with Darwen is a member of the Learning Communities Network (formerly Learning City Network) through their Learning Forum. The Council established a Lifelong Learning Strategic Forum soon after the Borough gained Unitary Status in 1998. According to the Borough website, the function of the Forum is to 'act as a steering group to co-ordinate

lifelong learning activities across the Borough' and to oversee the various Task Groups working on specific activities and related partnerships. (<http://council.blackburnworld.com>)

## **Blackburn with Darwen Library and Information Services**

The library service is delivered through 5 static branch libraries and mobile library. The central library in Blackburn opens in excess of 60 hours per week and the building has been 'transformed through a £1 million refurbishment' to become the 'Council's flagship and a central information resource centre'.

The BwD Library Service employs approximately 81 FTE staff, and is recognised as a Beacon Library Authority. The Library is also a member and partner of the Lifelong Learning Forum and works together with a range of partners on a wide range of initiatives.

The BwD Library is only one of four library authorities in the UK to be awarded a Public Service Agreement. This agreement stipulates that in return for the library's commitment to and achievement of a series of 'stretched' targets, the library will receive approximately £1 million in resources. Targets include, for example, increasing active usage by 16-24 year olds to 35% and opening the library for 60 hours per week. The resources have provided the BwD Library and Information Service the opportunity to 'reshape the service and re-engineer delivery'. This funding has enabled the library to undertake the extensive refurbishment program, which was completed in April 2003.

The library staffing has been restructured 4 times in the last 4 years. The staffing profile has been changed to reflect the community profile with the employment of younger staff and people of different ethnic backgrounds. According to Adele Karwat, the Central Library Manager, they are looking at using staff more effectively to expand opening hours and have therefore introduced self-check out units. Currently 16% of loans are issued through the self-serve checkouts, and BwD Library is aiming to have 80% of all loans issued in this manner.

The building is innovative and exciting with plasma screens dotted around the library displaying the digitised work of local artists, listening posts providing access to the music of local bands, and a 'retail look' with a lot of books with face on display. Adele Karwat also stated that in redeveloping the library service, the Borough worked to ensure that they linked it to the recommendations in the Audit Commission's 'Building Better Library Services Report' (2002).

A 'Quick Choice Collection' of new and 'in demand titles' was established following research that indicated that people were in the library for an average of 8 minutes. They mostly didn't know what they wanted, and expressed the desire to be 'tempted' The reference stock was heavily weeded and most were integrated with lending stock, and stock categories shelved together as in book shops (eg, mind body and spirit collection). Adele Karwat claims that these collections have been 'blitzed' since the new library opened, and the opening hours have been extended 4 times since opening without additional funding. In addition, the library is attracting 30% of young people aged 15-24 (up from 19% in 2002), and 30% of visitors are using the Internet and computers (more than double the 2002 number).

A "hot desk" has been provided for local agencies to use for dispensing advice and information. It provides access for many local organisations to the 3000+ people through the door over the course of 1 week.

The library's second floor is essentially a 'learning zone', and the library is repositioned to take a key role in the Borough's learning strategies. All staff are in the process of receiving ICT training, with various degrees of competency. The European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) is the core base level for staff accreditation. More detail on the staff-training plan can be found in the libraries ICT Training Plan 2000-2004.

([http://library.blackburnworld.com/how\\_we\\_perform/strategies\\_and\\_plans/index.htm](http://library.blackburnworld.com/how_we_perform/strategies_and_plans/index.htm))

The Library and Information Service is part of the Community, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, and according to the Library NOF ICT Training Plan 2000-2004, is 'committed to lifelong learning and places emphasis on education and learning' (<http://library.blackburnworld.com>)

The Learning Centre is a LearnDirect access point, and funding from the Peoples Network has provided a network of 10mb lines to points of the library service. The Blackburn Central Library provides public access to 43 PCs and works in partnership with the Blackburn College and 'Training 2000' to provide approximately 200 online courses with support from an online tutor. The Learning Centre also provides free short introductory courses to ICT led by qualified tutors. They also run a range of taster sessions and courses for families, including downloading music from the Internet, 'safe surfing for you and your children', building kit cars and model construction sessions, for example. Next door to the Learning Centre, the Library has provided a 'quiet room' for meditation or space for thinking.

The BwD Library and Information Service also provide a 'Sure start' Library as part of the UK Government's Sure Start Program ([www.surestart.gov.uk](http://www.surestart.gov.uk)) located in the local Sure Start Centre. The Library is designed especially for under 3's and their families and has a collection of colourful board and picture books, story tapes and other multi media materials. The Borough has taken particular note of the recommendations by Morris Hargreaves McIntyre in the report 'Start with the child' (2002) in designing their services and buildings for young people and children, particularly as 24% of the Borough's population is aged between 0-15years. The BwD Library subscribes to several interactive online educational games such as Spark Island ([www.sparkisland.com](http://www.sparkisland.com)) and Education City ([www.educationcity.net](http://www.educationcity.net)) to support the key learning objectives of the Borough.

The Library caters for users at all levels working in partnership with many other organisations and agencies to deliver services and provide materials to reach different target groups in support of the Borough's overarching strategies and plans. For example, the Library has worked with the local Blind Society in developing submissions for funding £40,000 of special needs equipment; partners with the Deaf Society by providing them with meeting rooms to run their programs; and is working with the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames to pool resources in developing and managing a digital audio book collection.

According to Ian Sutton, Library Information and Development Officer, BwD is one of the 3 top learning communities in the UK. He further mentions that the BwD Library & Information is disadvantaged by its location in the Cultural Department rather than the Education Department of Council. Nonetheless, the library contributes to the creation of a 'learning culture' throughout the Borough by 'creating friendly, unthreatening supportive learning environments at each community point and utilising ICT as a hook to attract learners of all ages. Particular attention is paid to attracting new young learners and linking ICT and learning to traditional core services.' (BwD Annual Library Plan, 2002-2003)

Sutton also commented that libraries have traditionally championed individual learning. He went on further to note: "that the UK Government is pushing for learning and ICT in parallel, and that just putting the ICT into libraries is not enough. There needs to be a supportive environment with skilled staff and there needs to be relevant content." He also advised that at Blackburn they started out by telling people what they should know, but it didn't work. They then consulted the local communities and developed basic ICT courses to suit them. It was evident that it was a "trust thing", and that many people preferred to be shown how to use the technology by library staff rather than attending courses at the local colleges. This proved rather difficult, as the Library was taking staff off the desk to support people with ICT, so the BwD Library and Information Service was restructured to include a specific learning support team. This team develops learning programs and works with a variety of partners to support curriculum needs and adult learning. Many programs are piloted with focus groups,

and the library is moving away from courses in CD format to subscribing to a greater number of online services.

Sutton mentioned that the Library had always 'done events', but that now many of them are under the 'lifelong learning' heading. The Library also supports 'recreational' or 'leisure' learning, and usually bring others in to run these particular sessions in the library. The Library then provides the materials to support these programs. He also provided a word of caution, and that in all of this, "you have to be careful to retain the traditional users and take them with you".

## **Northamptonshire**

Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) is located in the East Midlands Region with a population of approximately 630,000 people. Approximately 4.9% of the population are from ethnic minority groups, which is considerably lower than the figure for England at 9%. In summary, Northamptonshire can be described as a stable mostly rural white community, although according to the County website ([www.northamptonshire.gov.uk](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk)), the county is the 5<sup>th</sup> fastest growing county in the UK.

Most of the county is rural, though more than half of the population lives in the county's six main towns of Northampton, Corby, Daventry, Kettering, Wellingborough and Rushden. The County has a strong economy (based on service industries and manufacturing) which is performing well overall, however pockets of deprivation are concentrated in the urban areas of Northampton, Corby and Kettering, with high levels of unemployment and low levels of income. These areas are in stark contrast to the affluent areas of South Northamptonshire and Daventry. According to the NCC Public Library and Information Services Plan in 2002, there are also a number of rural areas in the north and south of the County which face significant geographical isolation.

Northamptonshire County Council has an ambitious program to reach excellence by 2006, articulated through the County Council's Annual Plan and implemented through the Improvement Plan. The development of services is integral to this ambition and 'Education for Life is one of the County Council's key commitments articulated in its County Council's Annual Plan.

The Northamptonshire Regeneration Partnership was formed in March 2002 and is an association which links key players in the development of an economic strategy for the county. The key issues of ICT and learning have been identified as priority themes of the Partnership.

The Northamptonshire Learning Partnership is funded through the Learning Skills Council, and 'Learnnorthants' ([www.learnnorthants.org](http://www.learnnorthants.org)) is supported by the LSC and other learning partners. Learnnorthants is the first stop for information and learning in Northamptonshire and provides a courses directory with details of courses from the various providers throughout the county, links to the learning providers, and information about related news and events.

## **Northamptonshire Library and Information Service**

The Northamptonshire Library and Information Service (NLIS) provides services through a network of 35 static libraries and 6 mobile libraries. NLIS is located within the Services Northamptonshire department, however in July 2003 was about to be restructured into a new directorate which was to include adult social services, libraries and archives and lifelong learning.

Annual reports for the last 2-3 years indicate that the number of loans and visits to NLIS libraries are in decline, although loans of videos and DVD collections have increased.

According to Eric Wright, Head of Cultural Services, NLIS does have some sustainability issues. £300 million of building maintenance is required, however NLIS only has £100 million in the budget. A large amount of funds have been expended on accessibility issues, however the routine budget items are posing problems. Some increases have been made over the past decade to the resources budget, however a lot has been lost in purchasing power due to the CPI increases. Wright indicated that with 167,000 new households planned for the south area of Northamptonshire, the library would need to plan future services very carefully. The NLIS Annual Plan (2002) notes that the rapidly growing population will impact upon their ability to meet the National Standards for opening hours, and also has implication for the standards in relation to the number of electronic library workstations, numbers of visits, annual items added and staffing levels.

Nick Matthews, Principal Libraries and Information Officer (Service Delivery) indicated that the sustainability of the ICT equipment was also an issue. The Peoples Network machines were already 12 months old, and in 3-5 years would need to be replaced with new technology. Matthews noted that most of the NLIS communities were still low in the ICT skill areas.

Nevertheless, NLIS is involved in a number of plans and related activities under the Learning for Life Agenda. LearnDirect access points are provided at 5 libraries, including the Weston Favell and Brixworth Branches, which were visited as part of the Study Tour. The Learning Centre at Brixworth is mostly used by approximately 40 regulars (young people) and is used as a classroom by the local school throughout the day. In the evenings it is used to conduct adult education classes. The Weston Favell Library is located near a supermarket in the local shopping centre.

Evelyn Jarvis, Principal Libraries and Information Officer (Service Development), commented that the County libraries used to be located in the right places, however this was no longer always the case. Plans are in place to develop a new Community Library in the new secondary school in Wootton Fields. A new concept for NLS as it is proposed that the library will be managed by a contracted facilities management company and fully integrated in the NLS public library network. It will also provide a Learning Resource Centre for the school. Funding is also being sought to develop a library to be the focal point of the newly developing Grange Park, a housing and industrial estate to the south-east of Northampton. The upgrade and redevelopment of the Corby and Northamptonshire Central Library are also high on the NLS priority list.

All branches of the NLIS provide regular Information Direct ICT taster sessions, and the NLS participates in the Getting Started with IT, a UK Online funded project providing a taste of IT for community groups in specific Daventry, Wellingborough and Weston Favell wards. NLS also provide regular sessions in their libraries on subject areas such as 'Researching your family history' and 'Discovering hidden treasures in your library'. Access to online learning through LearnDirect courses and the BBC Absolute Beginners Guide to Computers and Skillswise (help with reading, writing and numbers) is also provided. NLS also provides access to a range of jobs and careers websites through the Information Direct Subject Gateways and the Northamptonshire Local Information Advice & Guidance (LIAG) partnership locate their job and career advisers in some of the NLS libraries.

Homework Centres are provided in 3 select branches with staff available to help after school in term time. Another 4 centres are planned for 2004. NLS also runs the Learning Resources for Education Service, which provides a library and advisory service to schools across the County. Reader development programs are also given priority in NLIS, with the "Reading Really Matters" program accessible through the WebPages:  
[www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/Reading+Really+Matters/Homepage.htm](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/Reading+Really+Matters/Homepage.htm)

According to the NILES Plan and Positions Statement September 2003, (available from: [www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/Living+and+Working/Libraries+and+Information+Service/Home.htm](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/Living+and+Working/Libraries+and+Information+Service/Home.htm)), the NILES participates in the following learning partnerships: Local Information Advice and Guidance Network (LIAG), The Learning Partnership for Northamptonshire (Post 16 Basic Skills Forum, External Funding Group), Northampton Learning Town Initiative, and the Learning & Skills Council. Formally launched in 1997, the ALLIN (Access to Learning Libraries and Information in Northamptonshire) partnership has successfully worked on joint funding bids. NILES is also recognised by learning providers throughout the County and represented in the content of many of the learning plans.

## **Norwich**

Norwich City Council is located within the borders of the County of Norfolk in Eastern England. The County Council provides the strategic and more costly services such as social services, education and libraries. The District, Borough and City Councils such as Norwich are responsible for housing, waste management, economic development, and environmental health and leisure facilities ([www.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk)).

Norwich City has a population of 123,800 and covers an area of approximately 4000 hectares. Norwich has higher than average proportions of single person and lone parent households, and higher proportions in the 16-29 and 45-64 age groups. Employment is mostly in the finance, service and hospitality industries, with manufacturing now accounting for about 10% of jobs in the area. Unemployment at 4.2% is higher than the national rate (3.1%) and 25% of Norwich residents of working age have no qualifications compared with 19% in the UK as a whole. The ethnic minority population at 3% is low, however it is increasing. Norwich also has widespread and significant deprivation, and is ranked in the 20% most deprived areas on a national basis.

## **Norwich Learning City Partnership**

According to Martin Yarnit, Norwich Learning City Partnership (LCP) developed in 1995 as a direct response to a series of factory closures and downsizing by major local employers. (Yarnit, 2000). Norwich is also a founding member of the Learning City Network in the UK. Although economic prospects have improved in Norwich since 1997, the Learning City badge has been important in attracting investment. Yarnit also notes that there are still skill shortages, particularly intermediate skills and the retail sector. He also notes that the LCP and the Council are using the lifelong learning approach to respond to the issues of social inclusion and disengagement. He also comments that organisations not involved in the LCP at the outset can be difficult to involve later. It is interesting to note that the Norwich Library is not one of the LCP partners, and is not featured in the LCP documentation available on the Norwich Council website ([www.norwich.gov.uk](http://www.norwich.gov.uk)).

## **Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library**

The Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library (NNML) is located at the Forum, a landmark Millennium building that was funded with a grant for the Millennium Commission (National Lottery funds) with matching support from Norfolk County Council, Norwich City Council and the business community. The Library is one of the branches managed by the Norfolk Library & Information Service (NLIS), within the Leisure Department of the Norfolk County Council. According to Jan Holden, Principal Librarian at the NNML, the original Norwich Library was burnt down in 1994 hence the need for a new building. The new NNML was opened in November 2001 at a cost of £70 million following a significant amount of thinking and research by the stakeholders. Jan Holden commented that the concept of the Forum evolved as a 'vibrant meeting place and the hub of knowledge, information, entertainment and learning opportunities available to the entire region'. According to Holden, the NNML and the Forum promote:

*“Information and Learning” – in its widest sense*

*“Aspiration” – they want people to aspire to something rather good; not to be mediocre*

*“Inclusion” – Addressing the issues of low attainment, lack of literacy skills, ethnic minorities and young people*

*“Economic Re-generation” – contributing to the regeneration of Norfolk County*

The Forum Building includes the Library, which occupies just under half of the space, and is co-located with:

- The heritage information interactive project – Origins
- Norwich Tourist Information Centre
- The Learning Shop where people can find out about adult learning opportunities (operated by a consortium of further and higher education providers)
- The Learning Station (operated by a local college) offering training in IT, business and management related subjects
- BBC Norwich based television and radio broadcasting facilities
- Pizza Express and Café Marzano
- Three level 200 space car park underneath
- An Atrium area for public exhibitions and performances
- LearnDirect Centre with access to over 600 on line courses

The Forum Trust is a charitable trust with responsibility for the management of the Forum building. This is a partnership between the Norfolk County Council and the Norwich City Council. NLS works with the Forum Trust to ensure the profile of The Forum as a whole is promoted and that the mission of the Forum as a hub of lifelong learning within Norfolk is delivered (NLIS Annual Library Plan 2002-2003). Jan Holden remarked that there is a ‘loose amalgamation’ of partners in the building, and they all have the ability to compromise and provide mutual support. Occasionally there are problems, (usually when the Trust gets involved!), though they are working on a framework for working together. Sometimes there can also be some conflict of interest within the building, for example when noisy activities in the atrium bother some of the library customers.

The NNML is included in the ‘Framework for the future’ (DCMS, 2003) as an example of best practice in building services around the user and accessible IT and Internet services. The Library includes computerised “finding posts” for guiding users around the library. These were developed in partnership with a private computer company (VfactO, Scotland) and the NLIS receives royalties from each sale. The “finding posts” are relational databases which can direct customers from where they are standing to the subject they are looking for. Using touch technology, customers can navigate round the building and print out maps.

The NNML holds 120,000 books and provides over 85 PCs with free Internet, email and office software ([www.library.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.library.norfolk.gov.uk)). There are 220 study spaces, access to CD Roms and a community information database, videos and DVDs, CDs and music scores. Since opening, usage has gone from loans of around 65,000 per month to more than 91,000 per month and visitors from approximately 1,800 per day to 3,200 per day. More than 20,000 new customers have joined the library and usage of the ICT equipment is also growing.

The Express service located on the ground floor is also considered to be ‘Best Practice’. Research undertaken by the NLIS revealed that 75% of library customers never actually get as far as the shelves in the library, and don’t know how they are organised. The Express collection includes a range of contemporary fiction, popular fiction, non-fiction, and recent books on current topics, biographies, best sellers, mysteries, travel books, graphic novels and teenage materials. This collection is aimed at getting adults reading more widely and ensuring that customers can find something they will enjoy reading more easily. This area is open longer than the hours of the main library and customers can use the self-service workstations to borrow books late in the evenings and on Sundays. This area is laid out in

bookshop style displays and layouts in various ways – in colours, themed collections, and rough alphabetical order and on non-fiction displays.

The 'Millennial Stock' is a collection of in-depth material on a range of subjects aimed at serious researchers. This collection is linked to the strategy for Lifelong Learning. The stock is funded by the Millennium Commission and is defined as that which is of use to the advanced professional, the post graduate student and the technical researcher. The material has proved to be very popular and the number of students using the NNML has increased, reflecting the value of this high level stock. NNML also holds collections to support Open University courses, including postgraduate degrees. The Library has established links with education and training providers to develop subject links and inform the purchase of academic material (NLIS Annual Library Plan 2002-2003).

NNML also provides a range of reader development programs 'to support reading and learning for everyone'. The NLIS Reader Development Strategy outlines the related activities and links with the work of "Wordwaves" the Literature Development Project for Norfolk. NLIS helps to fund a Literature Development Worker based in the NNML.

NLIS also runs the Business Link Information Service under contract from Business Link Norfolk. The Business Library is housed on the second floor of the NNML and it supports small to medium sized business and individuals. A fee-based information is provided and requests are mostly received by telephone and email. The NNML also hosts the European Information Centre (EIC) which provides a first stop on European Community information. The EIC is part of a network of over 280 centres across the European membership, which provide information and assistance to businesses.

Jan Holden commented that one of the major issues for the NNML has been the changing of the staff culture to 'put people at the heart of the organisation rather than staff and books'. The former culture was on for 'protecting resources' rather than 'wanting to help people'. In order to bring about change, the management constantly talked up the mission statement: 'Libraries support reading and learning for everyone'. The new library was challenging for many staff, as for example there was no traditional reference library and no specialist staff positions. Staff were involved in decision making and discussions and an intensive training program 'Delivering our service' was held over 2 days. Various behaviours were illustrated using actors, and guidelines were developed for customer care. Work is continuing on team development and the staff are kept on their toes through the use of "mystery shoppers", however there is still a small hub of resistance that provides some problems.

In 2002, the NLIS developed a Learning Statement to clarify their lifelong learning role:

*Our libraries have always been regarded as "street corner universities". Today creating lifelong learners is a national and local priority. This and changes in technology have created impetus and new ways for libraries to support learning throughout life. Through libraries you can:*

- *Learn with your family, however young or old*
- *Find out about cross stitch or welding or how to cook a Thai meal*
- *Read your way to new experiences*
- *Keep up to date with newspapers and magazines*
- *Enjoy videos, DVD, CDs and spoken word*
- *Develop IT skills*
- *Have free use of the Internet and email*
- *Get help with homework and course work*
- *Find out about colleges and courses*
- *Find space to study*
- *Get help to find information*
- *Learn at your own pace and in your own time*

*Libraries support reading and learning for everyone* (NLIS Annual Library Plan 2002-2003).

The County Council and NLIS partner with a range of organisations, training and learning providers, schools, and trade unions in the Norfolk Strategic Learning Partnership. The Director of Cultural Services also jointly manages the Council's Lifelong Learning strategy with the Director of Education.

## **Nottingham**

Nottingham is the largest city in the East Midlands of England. The Nottingham City Council became a Unitary Authority in 1998 and recovered control of several local government areas such as education, social services and libraries. The city has a population of approximately 282,900 across an area of about 7,437 hectares. The area of greater Nottingham has a population of 621,700.

Over 25% of the city's population are under 20 years of age, which can be attributed to the number of students attending the two universities in Nottingham. Nearly 10% of the city's population are students. The unemployment rate in Nottingham City at 4.3% is higher than the national figures (2.5%) although it has been decreasing at a higher rate than the national figure. The City has a higher proportion of service sector jobs and a lower proportion of manufacturing jobs than in England. This is a reverse of the situation in 1991. Higher proportions of City and Greater Nottingham residents have no qualifications than in England overall and a relatively low proportion of City residents are educated to degree level or have a professional qualification, despite the importance of education and health to the local economy.

Education and lifelong learning are top priorities for the Nottingham City Council ([www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk](http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk)), and are linked to the successful regeneration of the city. One of the city's stated aspirations is for Nottingham to be a fairer city, where good education is available to all allowing everyone to benefit from learning and wider opportunities. The Local Education Authority produces a range of strategic documents under the aegis of the Educational Development Plan including the Lifelong Learning Development Plan, the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the Early Years Development Plan. The Lifelong Learning Development Plan has four aims:

- raise achievement*
- support regeneration*
- widen participation*
- promote inclusive learning opportunities*

## **Nottingham City Libraries**

Nottingham City Libraries (NCL) is located within the Leisure and Community Services Council Department. NCL comprise a major central library, 19 community libraries and a mobile library. The Central Library is open for 51.5 hours per week and community libraries open at differing times depending on the demographic of their communities. The number of loans of books and other items has been declining over the past 3 years, however the number of visits is increasing, which NCL attributes to the ICT facilities.

[http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/coun/department/leisure\\_com/libraries/default.asp](http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/coun/department/leisure_com/libraries/default.asp)

A major review is currently being undertaken of the NCL structure and operation. The review was commenced in May 2003 and is expected to be completed by April 2005. Among other things, the review is being undertaken as a result of changing and rising user expectations, increased difficulty in recruiting staff at all levels and the new agendas for learning information and access to services.

NCL participates in a range of regional reader development projects in partnership with East Midlands Arts and reading. EMERALD, funded by the East Midlands Regional Arts Lottery

Program is a partnership with 'Opening the Book.' It includes a training program to improve reading development skills among library staff, a regional reading development strategy and some action research projects. Books Connect, in partnership, this time with 'The Reading Partnership' and the Library Association, is a project designed to develop models of partnership between libraries, museums and the arts to promote reading. In all cases, the outcomes of these projects have been set to benefit key excluded groups.

NCL has developed a Lifelong Learning Strategy to form the basis for seamless access to learning materials, service development and partnership building. NCL are also active in contributing to the 8 priority areas of the Council's Education Development Plan for 2002-07. Lifelong learning is also linked with aspects of other NCL strategies, notably Reader Development, ICT and Social Inclusion. The key objectives for lifelong learning are to:

- *Provide an informal resource for learning and support to the individual learner*
- *Provide information, education and cultural opportunities*
- *Provide a venue for study*
- *Signpost lifelong learning opportunities*
- *Provide access to ICT and open learning resources for individual learners*
- *Help users to access library resources and equipment*
- *Work with a range of partners to promote lifelong learning to help us achieve our aims (eg schools, FE Colleges, learndirect, Learning and Skills Council, Universities, Area Committees, and family learning projects)* (Nottingham City Council, Annual Library Plan 2002-2003)

In addition to the Nottingham Central Library, the community library at Clifton was also visited as part of this study tour. Clifton Library was opened in 2002 as a joint use UKOnline Employment and Training facility. The facility is operated in partnership with the South Nottingham College and the Nottingham City Council. According to Helen Pollard, the Area Committee Librarian at Clifton, "the intent was to create a seamless look; to give the impression that it is the one service in the building". The Learning Centre is a distinct and separate part of the building with a visual link between the library and the centre. Pollard comments: "people can see friends and neighbours in each facility, thereby making the facilities less daunting".

The Learning Centre comprises a learning room, public access area, and space available for local agencies to provide access to people. An Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) advisory service is also provided at the centre. The Library has a community room that holds about 30 people and is used for meetings, staff training, etc. Pollard notes that the library supports informal learning (one on one in the library) then people gain the confidence to move into the formal courses provided in the Learning Centre. They tend to use the workstations in the library for practice. The Library partners with the Learning Centre, for example, to run storytelling sessions to coincide with programs aimed at single parents such as the 'Cloud 9' Project. (A free make over is provided for parents completing the course!).

The Learning Centre located in the Central Library is staffed through funding sourced externally. According to Natalie Sellears, the Area Co-Ordinator, the Centre also undertakes outreach work and builds capacity through the provision of the "Computers for the Terrified!" courses. The Centre provides one-on-one assistance with setting up on-line banking and email, particularly for the older people. The centre provides 9 Internet workstations, which can be booked through an internal Internet Management system – at any branch at any time. Individuals are allowed 6 hours access per week. The Library encourages people to use the facility, for as Sellears explains, people will use the library but not the Learning Centre.

In addition to the Learning Centre, the Central Library provides 60 computers throughout the building. These have been purchased with New Opportunity Funds as part of the Peoples Network to develop social inclusion, lifelong learning, and to provide staff support and training. To date, all staff have completed the European Computer Drivers Licence training.

ICT assistants, funded through NOF funding also undertake project work such as training asylum seekers in accessing electronic resources. They also assist in an unofficial capacity on the help desk for IT problems in the Library. Natalie Sellears comments that the sustainability of these programs is an issue due to the project nature of the funding for the staff.

## **Southwark**

Southwark is an inner London borough covering an area of 2,876 hectares with a population of approximately 243,000. Southwark suffers from high levels of deprivation characterised by the levels of unemployment, benefit dependency, ill health, crime and low levels of educational achievement. Southwark is the fourth most deprived London Borough in relation to access to employment, with an employment rate of about 7.9% compared with the national average of 3.4%. The borough contains some of the most deprived wards in the country, particularly in the Peckham area. In addition, 29.36% of the population are from ethnic minority communities, primarily Black Caribbean and Black African. Over 62% of school children are from ethnic minority communities and 38% speak a language other than English at home. ([www.southwark.gov.uk](http://www.southwark.gov.uk))

Following the 2002 local government elections, Southwark changed from being a Labour to a minority Liberal Democrat administration. A new constitution was subsequently produced with the following priorities:

- Tackling poverty
- Cutting crime and fear of crime
- Cleaner and greener
- Raising education standards

The Community Plan includes the following priorities: Stable and inclusive communities; a thriving and sustainable economy and a customer focus.

The council's Adult Learning Plan identifies the Southwark Network for Lifelong Learning (of which the Library is a member) and its associated action plan as the key delivery mechanism for improving services.

## **Southwark Library and Information Service**

The Southwark Library and Information Service (SLIS) is a business unit located with the Education and Culture Department of the Borough and provides a tiered approach to library services through the following

([www.southwark.gov.uk/OurServices/LibrariesSection/LibrariesHome.html](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/OurServices/LibrariesSection/LibrariesHome.html)):

- 3 strategic libraries, including Peckham, providing a comprehensive range of services, including significant reference and ICT facilities
- 4 town centre libraries in locally distinctive areas offering a core of essential services and some specialist provision dependant upon location
- 5 community libraries with smaller stocks and services tailored to the needs of the locale they serve, particularly children and the elderly.

The Peckham Library was visited as part of this study tour. The Borough of Southwark commissioned this new library building as part of an ambitious urban regeneration project in one of London's poorer areas. Designed by Will Alsop, it won the prestigious Stirling Award in 2000 for the best new building in Britain. The Library opened in March 2000 and immediately attracted large use (over 500,000 visits in 2001/02). This modernist building is clad in copper, which gives it a greenish-blue hue, the bottom two floors house the information and media centre, whilst the top two floors cantilever dramatically eighteen metres across the plaza and are supported by thin, spindly columns set at bizarre, diagonal angles. A giant orange tongue-shaped attachment flops out of the roof. The north-facing

side is covered with multi-coloured glass panels, and inside a selection of giant pods house meeting areas, children's areas, and an Afro-Caribbean section. According to Mark Challon, Senior Librarian for Peckham Library, the pods have not been entirely successful. People are reluctant to use the spaces and seem to prefer the more crowded areas in the main library. Nonetheless, the success of the Peckham Library has led to the library involvement in major regeneration schemes and has encouraged the council to provide capital funding to rebuild and refurbish other SILS branch libraries. Council has allocated £1.2 million for the refurbishment of 3 libraries, and is seeking further funds to refurbish the rest of the libraries. At least 2 other libraries are located in old Victorian buildings that are struggling to meet the DCMS standards.

The Peckham Library building hosts a One Stop Shop, operated by the council's Community and Customer relations section, and a Learning Centre operated by the Southwark Education and Training Advice for Adults service. The Learning Centre is co-located and not integrated with the library, and offers careers guidance, job search support, open learning and psychometric testing. Learning Centres at Blue Anchor and Nunhead Libraries are integrated with the library services and are funded through the Neighbourhood Renewal Program. Although successful, the sustainability of these centres is not assured as the funding ceases in 2004. However SILS is seeking further funding to keep them online and extend the learning centres to include another library (NILS Position Statement 2003/2004), nevertheless a Learning Centre Exit Strategy is in development.

The Mission Statement for the SLIS is:

*"To meet government and council objectives in relation to lifelong learning, social inclusion, and modernising government, as expressed in the Community Plan".*  
(NILS Position Statement 2003/2004).

Southwark is one of the 7 library authorities that make up the Central London Learning and Skills Council area. According to the SLIS Annual Library Plan for 2002/2003, they are currently working together, with the Central London Learning Partnership, and with borough adult learning representatives, to put a joint bid to the LSC to improve lifelong learning facilities and opportunities in libraries across central London. The 7 authorities have already received funding from the LSC to purchase basic skills materials. Basic Skills collections are provided in all libraries and customers are often referred onto the Adult Learning Centres.

SLIS participates in many partnerships to facilitate reading, education and learning and are involved in a number of consortium activities, including training and benchmarking. SILS is involved in 5 Sure Start Programs, which include providing Bookstart Plus packs for 18 and 36 month old babies, extra book and toy stock and a part time worker to deliver Sure Start Sessions at 5 libraries. SLIS reports that they have achieved a 400% increase in 0-3s membership at Newington Library due to Sure Start Library activities.

Eight libraries hold homework Help Clubs from 4-7pm either 1-2 times per week. Dedicated Homework Helpers are funded by the boroughs After School Service, who provide assistance to young people aged 10-15. Access to the CD Rom network is provided with approximately 50 databases and educational resources with free printouts. In addition each library has a duplicate collection of GCSE textbooks covering all the common subjects. In addition, SLIS provide programs such as Family Reading Groups, Teenage Reading Groups (run by project workers), Adult Reading Groups, Creative Writing Workshops, and other reading promotional programs.

Stand Alone health information kiosks have been installed in 3 of the SLIS libraries, including Peckham. These are ISDN linked and provide touchscreen access to online medical information and web links in 30 languages.

Funding has been received by SLIS from the New Opportunities Fund Community Access to Lifelong Learning program to provide free Internet access via a broadband structure in all

libraries. 160 public access workstations have been installed using 2Mb links. Additional funding was also received for staff training in ICT. SLIS is partnering with the Borough and WS Atkins to share the broadband Internet connection feed into the borough provided as part of the London Grid for Learning. Mark Challis expressed concern at the 'project nature' of this funding and the implications for 3-5 years time when the technology will need replacing.

## **Tower Hamlets**

Tower Hamlets is one of London's smallest Boroughs, covering an area of just less than 8 sq miles. The borough is bounded to the south by the River Thames and the river frontage runs for 8 miles. The borough has a population of 196,106 of a variety of ethnic backgrounds – over 33% are Bangladeshi and 6% are from African Caribbean backgrounds. The population has grown rapidly over the past 10 years and the borough now has one of the highest population densities in inner London. Tower Hamlets is home to the Docklands and hosts a large part of the media and financial services industry with some of the foremost international companies located at Canary Wharf. In contrast, the borough has also some of the most deprived wards in the country, in fact Tower Hamlets is acknowledged as suffering some of the highest levels of deprivation to be found anywhere in Europe.

The rapid decline of the traditional dock related industries and the steady decline in transport, distribution and traditional manufacturing have prompted the council to ensure that regeneration is a key strategic issue. Unemployment is over 11% compared with the national average of 3.6%, and crime and anti social behaviour are major concerns for most residents. Over 25% of the population are under 16 and the borough has some of the highest levels of basic skills needs anywhere in the country ([www.towerhamlets.gov.uk](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk)).

The Council's vision is to improve the quality of life for everyone living and working in Tower Hamlets. This entails helping to create a thriving achieving community in which people feel at ease with one another, have good learning and employment opportunities, experience a higher standard of living and health, and enjoy a safe and attractive environment together with a wide range of cultural and leisure opportunities. One of the borough's key priorities, identified through widespread consultation, is to seek to make Tower Hamlets a "Better Place for Learning, Achievement and Leisure – raising educational aspirations, expectation and achievement, providing the widest range of arts and leisure opportunities for all and celebrating the rich diversity of our communities".

## **Idea Stores**

Tower Hamlets currently has 7 'full time' libraries (which open 5 days a week), 5 part time libraries, a mobile library and an 'outreach' library service for housebound people. Many are not centrally located, require substantial maintenance, and are shabby and uninviting. Up to 2001, library usage was in decline and user numbers were low ([www.ideastore.co.uk](http://www.ideastore.co.uk)).

In 1998, Council agreed to a strategy to locate libraries and adult education together. An extensive consultation was carried out and market research undertaken, resulting in responses from 1 in 10 households in the borough. Most users and non-users felt that the service was run-down and old fashioned, the opening hours didn't suit, there was poor selection of books and many non-users didn't like the atmosphere. When asked what would make a difference, non-users (70% of the population) wanted: Longer opening hours; Access to shopping; Council information services; Sunday opening; Art and exhibitions; Video lending and better book stock

In addition, using digital mapping technology, the catchment areas of the existing libraries were plotted and the results indicated that almost every resident lived in the catchment areas of at least 2 libraries. Following the consultation and further work, the idea store concept evolved and a 'Library and Lifelong Learning Development Strategy' was drawn up for Tower

Hamlets. A summary of the key principles for the development of the idea stores is as follows:

- *The development of each Idea Store will proceed when the required funding has been secured*
  - *The adoption of the strategy will signal the commitment of the Council to increase the amount of money it currently spends on library and lifelong learning provision*
  - *The Ideas Stores will move to 7 day opening and will remain open in the evenings*
  - *There will be a significant increase in the range and availability of lifelong learning courses*
  - *Every Idea Store will provide full access for people with disabilities*
  - *Everyone in the Borough will be within 20 minutes travel time of an Idea Store*
  - *The existing outreach services will be retained and improved*
  - *The Council will no longer persist with the provision of services in the locations that are unable to provide a satisfactory standard of service or are duplicating services for the same catchment population as other nearby and better facilities*
  - *There will be a reduction of library service points from 12 to 7 on a programmed basis over 5 years*
  - *No library will be repositioned until the new or improved facilities covering the area are ready for use*
  - *Capital receipts from the sale of library and adult education buildings to be freed up by the Idea Store program will be reinvested in the community to fund the improved Idea Store facilities*
- (Tower Hamlets, Annual Library Plan 2002/2003)

The first Idea Store opened in 2002, and is open 7 days a week for 71 hours. This study tour included a visit to the Bow Idea Store on Roman Road. Over 50,000 books, CDs, DVDs and CD Roms are available in various zones, together with over 40 public access workstations and a further 30 in training areas. Café and creche facilities are also provided. The integration of Library Services and Lifelong Learning Services is being implemented at the service and at the staffing level. Traditional library services are offered alongside lifelong learning courses, family learning, homework clubs and ICT drop in facilities. Usage has increased and the Bow Store trebled the previous library usage in the first 12 months. The Store has a relaxed informal atmosphere with branding that distinguishes it from the former municipal image. Self Service Check outs are provided freeing up staff who are encouraged to 'floorwalk', undertake shelving and approach and interact with the clients. Plasma screens replace the more traditional posters and many programs are offered such as "Golden Time", where senior citizens are offered tea and coffee and a choice of new books. The staff are encouraged to seek out ways of engaging with the community.

According to Kate Pentol, from the Tower Hamlets Council, the Idea Store staff are recruited on their abilities rather than on their competencies. They seek employees that are flexible, friendly, adaptable, etc., and are placing people from both lifelong learning and library backgrounds. The integrated staffing structures provide seamless services promoting both stock and courses. All new staff members receive induction training based on retail strategies, and are expected to be customer focused and multi skilled. Ideas Stores and the Council are developing a retail style cross over training with a customer care program based on the "Fish Philosophy" of putting the customer first; making them feel the most important person in the world and introducing fun into transactions and dealings with the customer.

Pentol went onto describe the recruitment process whereby Tower Hamlets undertake group interviews with icebreaker exercises. Applicants are asked to present / sell a product to the rest of the team, and those that are comfortable with other people are recruited. They also often provide the opportunity for applicants to work a shift for experience and then return for a second interview.

*"The primary objective of Idea Stores is to empower individuals to help themselves, whether it be learning to read, pursuing hobbies, becoming more employable, learning about healthy living or seeking a job. They will also act as feeders to existing colleges and vocational training schemes and act as a base for outreach skills and training work.*

*Just as importantly, they will also be places where people go to have fun, participate in cultural activities, meet friends and relax. Idea is about the whole person. As much*

*emphasis will be placed on bringing the community together on a stimulating environments as on information and learning. Idea is about getting people off estates and out of their houses to meet others and experience a wide range of activities. They will become an essential and integral part of everyone's lives".*  
(Tower Hamlets, Library and Lifelong Learning Strategy, 1999)

## Scotland

The Scottish Parliament and Scottish Executive have produced and commissioned several reports and research projects regarding adult literacy and numeracy, training and education and lifelong learning. In 2001 the Scottish Office published a report 'Communities: change through learning'. Consequently all local government authorities in Scotland were required to develop community learning strategies and plans to address the learning needs of their communities, working in partnership at all levels with the voluntary sector, local adult guidance networks, other education providers, health, and community safety. In particular, they were asked to highlight the needs of those at transition stages who are, or who are at risk of becoming, alienated from society because their educational experience has left them dissatisfied or their lifestyle makes them more vulnerable. Emphasis was also to be given to the importance of providing educational support to individuals, families, people with disabilities, interest groups and communities that are endeavouring to improve the quality of their lives ([www.edinburgh.gov.uk/libraries/](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/libraries/)).

## Edinburgh

Edinburgh has a population of 453,430, which has increased since 1991 and contrasts with a slow population decline for Scotland as a whole. Edinburgh is enjoying growth, bolstered by additional employment opportunities in information technology, tourism, leisure, retailing, health and other public services. Despite recent increases in land values, house prices, commuting etc. it has come to be regarded as an attractive alternative for companies and individuals seeking to escape the 'overheated' economy of London and South East England.

According to 'Edinburgh's census 2001 – city trends' (City of Edinburgh Council, 2003), the number of elderly (65+) outweighs the number of children (0-15), and the 20-24 year olds comprise the largest 5-year group in Edinburgh's structure. Figures indicate a declining population in the large social housing estates, but substantial increases in the inner city areas, and single households (38%) are now the commonest size of household. Edinburgh is becoming an increasingly cosmopolitan city, with 22% of its population not native to Scotland. People born overseas form 8.3% of the population, and people from minority ethnic backgrounds form 4.1% of the population.

In addition, unemployment is dropping and there has been significant job growth. People who are not economically active because they are 'permanently sick' or have 'limiting long term illness' have grown to represent a sizeable proportion of the population.

The Census figures also indicated that only 25% of households in Edinburgh are online, which is well below the UK and EU average.

The City of Edinburgh Council in 2001 prepared "Delivering the Smart City: a 21st Century Government Action Plan" giving details of the Council's Smart City Vision that aims to develop a "city portal", providing a single gateway to all relevant services and information ([www.edinburgh.gov.uk](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk)). Customers will be able to access this as preferred through the Internet, Digital TV, mobile phone, call centre or local one stop shop. The Action Plan looks at:

- the aims and principles which underpin the Council's Smart City Vision;
- the management arrangements that support the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Partnership and Smart City implementation;

- a broad outline of the Change Management Program that will support Smart City implementation;
- planned initiatives aimed at developing the infrastructure and environment in which citizens and partners can more closely work with the Council;
- detail of the technical infrastructure that will underpin the implementation of Smart City;
- an outline of opportunities that are currently being explored through the ICT Partnership;
- a detailed action plan that sets specific and measurable targets for implementation;
- the resource implications of the Council's plans.

## **Edinburgh Learning**

The Edinburgh Lifelong Learning Partnership (Edinburgh Learning) was established in 1997 as a collaborative venture of public, private, business and voluntary/community sectors in Edinburgh ([www.edinburghlearning.com](http://www.edinburghlearning.com)). The aim of the partnership is to:

*“Conceive, encourage, implement and facilitate initiatives designed to create a culture of lifelong learning in Edinburgh. In this, it will seek to promote social inclusion and enhance the uptake of learning opportunities by all residents of the city, regardless of age, sex, social grouping, employment status or learning history.”*

The partnership operates as a limited company for charitable objectives and is managed by a Board of Directors, nominated from within the partners. The work of the Edinburgh Lifelong Learning Partnership (ELLP) is carried out by four action groups; Key employers, Research and Information; Marketing and Funding. The ELLP has been successful in obtaining funding of £0.5m lottery funding from the New Opportunities Fund for a Community Access to Lifelong Learning Strategic Project.

Successful NOF and Modernising Government funding applications by Edinburgh Learning resulted in a city-wide ICT project 'Cityconnect' in 2002. The project employs staff called 'Cityconnectors' to provide ICT taster sessions in local accessible venues, targeting people identified as being 'digitally excluded.' Cityconnect also offers ICT support to community and voluntary organisations and is developing a 'Community Grid for Learning' ([www.myedinburgh.org](http://www.myedinburgh.org), a website giving access to information and resources about learning in Edinburgh). Cityconnect has also been supporting small organisations to develop their use of ICT. This has included 'cascade training,' supported by the National Grid for Learning, which involves a commitment from those who have been trained that they will in turn train other people.

## **Edinburgh City Libraries and Information Services**

The responsibility for public libraries in Edinburgh rests with the Culture and Leisure Department of the City of Edinburgh. Edinburgh City Libraries and Information Services (ECLIS) provides services through 26 libraries; the Central Library and 25 community libraries. This study tour included visits to the Central Library and to the Western Hailes community library located in West Edinburgh.

ECLIS has been successful in a range of funding bids for ICT and learning related projects from NOF. Programs have included the training of library staff and teachers to ECDL standard and the installation and maintenance of an ICT public access network through the libraries for 3 years. In 2002, ECLIS undertook a branding exercise to identify public Internet services as a quality product rather than just an add-on, which has been dropped into the library. CONNECT Library Learning and Internet Centres is the branding intended to reflect the aim of the service to provide everybody with the opportunity to connect with ICT technology and ICT based resources

ECLIS is also a partner in the Edinburgh Lifelong Learning Partnership and participates in and provides programs on their behalf. Ten locations around the city have separate Learning Centre suites with between 6 and 14 machines and a number of locations also provide clusters of 6 machines either in the main library floor or in community rooms. Bill Wallace, Head of Libraries and Information Services with ECLIS indicated that staffing these Learning Centres has been an issue; “they just don’t have library staff surplus to work in the centres”. He also went on further to add that there are sustainability and finding issues related to the provision of “ICT facilitators”, however ECLIS is working in partnership with the local college to appoint staff with a view to running paid training sessions.

Edinburgh is considered to be a ‘library rich’ city with over 100 libraries, including public, academic, the National Library of Scotland, and other professional, commercial and charitable organisations. The Edinburgh Libraries Strategy is a formal policy which brings every library in the city to ‘engage in effective partnership working and to provide a structure that will allow each individual institution to make its own contribution. The Strategy aspires to have Edinburgh known and celebrated locally, nationally and internationally as a ‘Library City’. It also aspires to provide city residents with equity of access to all the resources in the city, whether through physical or electronic means in 10 years time. This strategy aims to support learning for the community as a whole.

ECLIS also has a number of issues and challenges in updating and rebuilding some of their libraries in more accessible locations. About 7 new libraries have been built since 1995, however, overall the opening hours have been reduced and book stock has suffered. Bill Wallace maintains that “partnership is the only avenue for potential development, and it is important for libraries to demonstrate (with hard evidence) their contribution to lifelong learning”. He also is of the opinion that libraries are core delivery points for ICT and learning – they already have a community frontage and a neutral aspect.

ECLIS participate in and run a number of innovative and well used programs around ICT, up-skilling the community, learning, literacy and reader development. Jim Thompson, Community Libraries Co-Ordinator, also advised that ECLIS runs and maintains the council website, provides a resource base for literacy workers and students, and sits on the steering committee of the myEdinburgh portal, etc. However, he feels that it is important to measure and map the impact of all these programs as well as the ICT and Learning Centre activities, and this is the challenge for ECLIS.

## **Glasgow**

Glasgow is the largest of Scotland’s cities with a population of approximately 609,000, and people from minority ethnic groups account for about 5% of the population. In common with many other UK cities, Glasgow is faced with the challenge of reversing population decline. In Glasgow, the number of 20-29 year olds as a percentage of the population (16%) is above the Scottish average and the proportion of pensioners in Glasgow’s population is lower than the average for Scotland. Glasgow also has mortality rates higher than the Scottish average, reflecting in part, the poor state of health in the city.

Over the past 20 years, the Glasgow economy has experienced significant change. The traditional base of mercantile, engineering and marine activities has been reshaped, other production industries have modernised around new technologies, and City Centre services have increased in importance. Glasgow however, still remains one of the UK’s key manufacturing centres with a sizeable corporate presence in engineering, publishing, food and drink and clothing industries. Nonetheless the official unemployment rate is running at 11.6% - far in excess of the Scottish average of 6.6% ([www.glasgow.gov.uk](http://www.glasgow.gov.uk)).

## **Real**

Real is the brand name for learning in Glasgow. It is a partnership between the key learning providers in Glasgow, including the Universities, city council, colleges, Scottish Enterprise and Learning and Teaching Scotland ([www.intoreal.com](http://www.intoreal.com)). The Real partnership's ambition is to create 'Glasgow- the Learning City', building on the city's worldwide reputation for excellence in education.

A network of Real Learning Centres have been established throughout Glasgow in libraries, businesses, universities and colleges. Real has established 2 types of Learning Centres; Real Community Centres and Real Business Centres. The first Community learning centres were opened in Shettleston and Ibrox libraries in 2000. The model for the Lifelong Learning units was the successful computer suite in the Pollok Library. Relocated in the Pollok Leisure Centre the previous year with improved facilities and a networked PC suite, Pollok Library noted a massive 60% increase in usership over next 9 months. Real Business Centres are located in small and medium sized companies throughout Glasgow and their aim is to make learning an integral part of the working environment.

Real also provides support through Lifelong Learning Supervisors, Learning Champions, and Online tutors. The Supervisors are specially trained community library staff who provide help on getting started and general guidance and advice about learning. The Champions are located in each Business Centre and liaise between the company and Real, provide support to new learners, encourage independent learning and promote the Real benefits to staff. The Real Centres provide a wide range of classes and courses in community settings in subjects including: computing, health, DIY, Gaelic, multimedia studies, childcare and parenting skills, supported study, personal care and presentation, literacy and numeracy skills, relaxation and stress management techniques. Free child care and learning materials are provided in most instances.

The present-day equivalent of a mobile library - Real on the Road - is high-tech vehicle which aims to give users access to cutting edge computer technology, tutorial support, satellite connection and a wealth of computerised research material in a stylish and fun environment. The Real mobile learning centre, operated by Glasgow City Council, includes a suite of 10 computers linked to the Internet via satellite, printers, scanners, learning materials and a plasma screen. Supported by BT Scotland, which has invested £100,000 and was actively involved in the development stages, Real on the Road operates within the Glasgow Social Inclusion Partnership areas.

## **Glasgow Libraries, Information and Learning**

Community Learning is the responsibility of the Cultural and Leisure Services Department of the Glasgow City Council, and has been integrated into 'Glasgow libraries, information and learning'. Jim Pauley, Community and Learning Co-Ordinator, notes that libraries have become the focal point for community learning over the past 3 years. It was formerly the responsibility of the Education Department and separate Community Education Centres were dotted around the city. Now, however, "libraries are being used as the flagships for the new learning initiatives". Following a Best Value Review undertaken 4 years ago, Pauley commented that a lot of "tweaking and changes were made" resulting in the current set up. Finances are stable and improving and membership and loans are also increasing. Pauley claims that the Learning Centres are responsible for an increase of 18% in visitors to libraries.

Libraries are being created in unusual places in Glasgow. Springburn and Pollok libraries are located within leisure centres, another library is located in the Gallery of Modern Art, and

the Gorbals library is located underneath a set of office blocks. Situating them in “these different contexts have provided distinct benefits in terms of increased profile and usage”, according to Jim Pauley.

NOF has also provided resources for staff development and upskilling. The community learning service across Glasgow is structured across 3 teams with a staffing complement of 21. The ICT officers are aged between 16 - 26 years. Libraries also now have a much closer link to the council management team and council policy.

This study tour included a visit to the Mitchell Library, which is the heart of the library service located in the centre of Glasgow. It is one of Europe’s largest public reference libraries and holds material relating to the City of Glasgow, as well as rare and valuable items including records of the city dating from the 12th century, the world renowned Robert Burns Collection, maps and a Family history and genealogy centre. Real @ the Mitchell is a Learning Centre with 50 PCs. Introduced in May 2003, the Centre also includes scanning and printing facilities, desktop publishing software and a wide range of learning opportunities including self study packs, CD Roms, online learning, informal workshops and traditional classes.

Glasgow has 33 community libraries; 98% have Learning Centres funded through the Community Learning Partnership Strategy. Four of the community libraries are also designated as Literacy Centres with funding from the NOF. According to Susan Taylor, Lifelong Learning Project Officer, “partnership will be the main sustainability key”.

## **Conclusion**

It appears that many libraries in both Canada and the UK are developing services and programs under the lifelong learning umbrella. However, it was quite frequently commented that public libraries had always been doing these things, such as the various literacy programs, promotion of reading and undertaking reader development programs, homework clubs, and providing support materials for local education providers. Therefore the only change for some libraries was that they now linked these programs, particularly in the UK, to the national ‘lifelong learning agenda’, and were able to obtain some funding assistance specific to these activities with some minor ‘tweaking’ and renaming of programs.

The People’s Network and the NOF funding has enabled all UK libraries to provide a network of ICT equipment and online workstations. It has also enabled them to provide free or low cost access for their communities and staff training and development opportunities. However, the sustainability of these services is an issue and a huge challenge for many library authorities. In the next 2-3 years or even earlier, this huge bank of equipment will need replacing, as the next generation of ICT equipment becomes available. As with many Victorian public libraries, there is the danger that libraries may need to increase the level of funding to support these activities at the expense of collections and appropriate staffing levels. This may fuel the debate even further on the ‘role and purpose of the 21<sup>st</sup> century public library’. Although not mentioned yet in the available literature, it would be interesting to map the effects that this huge program has had on the ICT literacy levels in the UK, and to measure the impact. This could be a powerful tool for promoting the role of public libraries and for sustainable funding to continue with the programs.

The ‘Learning Community’ concept is an exciting theory, and in many communities both in the UK and Canada organisations and agencies are working together to achieve tangible results. Sometimes public libraries are involved in the partnerships and are ‘sitting at the table’, but mostly they are not. Lillooet and Whistler are exceptions, as is Glasgow. The reasons for this are many and varied, but in summary it appears that it depends on:

- The location of the library within the council structure. Those located in the Education Department, or that have community learning integrated into their areas (such as Glasgow) are more likely to be partners in the strategy and have access to the funds and programs.
- The size of the community. Obviously in smaller communities such as Whistler and Lillooet there is less bureaucracy and libraries have a larger profile
- The overall vision of the local authority; the ability of the library management to align the library with the vision and to promote the library as the vehicle to assist the council to achieve it (Blackburn, Norwich and Tower Hamlets)
- The Networking skills and abilities of the senior library staff and the profile of the library within the broader community and the local authority

Learning Centres have been co-located or integrated into many libraries throughout the UK, and have mostly been funded through project funds from a variety of sources. The sustainability of these facilities is questionable once the funding ceases, particularly in the cases where they are just add-ons. Again it would be useful to have some measurement of the impact of these projects in terms of meeting the objectives of the programs and 'making a difference'.

Some libraries and local authorities have approached the lifelong learning agenda in a different fashion. Libraries at Tower Hamlets (with their Idea Stores), Blackburn and Norwich have been transformed and revitalised with learning in its broadest sense at the centre of their operations. It has been implicitly acknowledged by those local government and library authorities that at the heart of lifelong learning lies relevant and up to date collections, customer focussed and people oriented staff, bright and attractive modern facilities and opening hours that suit the majority of the community. They offer programs that reach out into the communities and provide spaces that are attracting the young back into libraries. They are backed by increased funding and are providing results with rapidly increasing usage and high profiles within their communities.



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## Web sites:

<i>Organisation</i>	<i>Website</i>
Learning City Network, UK	<a href="http://www.lc-network.com">www.lc-network.com</a>
Adult Learning Australia	<a href="http://www.ala.asn.au">www.ala.asn.au</a>
Learndirect, UK	<a href="http://www.learndirect.co.uk">www.learndirect.co.uk</a>
UK Government Online	<a href="http://www.ukonline.gov.uk">www.ukonline.gov.uk</a>
Organisation for Economic Co-Operation & Development	<a href="http://www.oecd.org">www.oecd.org</a>
UK Audit Commission	<a href="http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk">www.audit-commission.gov.uk</a>
Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, UK	<a href="http://www.cilip.org.uk">www.cilip.org.uk</a>
DCMS Public Library Position Statements	<a href="http://www.libplans.ws">www.libplans.ws</a>
Lifelong Learning, UK	<a href="http://www.lifelearning.co.co.uk">www.lifelearning.co.co.uk</a>
Department for Education and Skills, UK	<a href="http://www.dfes.gov.uk">www.dfes.gov.uk</a>
DfES & LSC – Success for All Program	<a href="http://www.successforall.gov.uk">www.successforall.gov.uk</a>
Learning and Skills Council, UK	<a href="http://www.lsc.gov.uk">www.lsc.gov.uk</a>
Learning and Skills Development Agency, UK	<a href="http://www.lsd.gov.uk">www.lsd.gov.uk</a>
Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, UK	<a href="http://www.neighbourhood.gov.uk">www.neighbourhood.gov.uk</a>
Local Strategic Partnerships	<a href="http://www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/partnerships.asp">www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/partnerships.asp</a>
National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, UK	<a href="http://www.niace.org.uk">www.niace.org.uk</a>
Basic Skills Agency, UK	<a href="http://www.basic-skills.co.uk">www.basic-skills.co.uk</a>
Social Exclusion Unit, UK	<a href="http://www.socialexclusionunit.gov.uk">www.socialexclusionunit.gov.uk</a>
Neighbourhood Learning in Disadvantaged Communities	<a href="http://www.skills.org.uk">www.skills.org.uk</a>
Resource; the council for museums, archives and libraries, UK	<a href="http://www.resource.gov.uk">www.resource.gov.uk</a>
EUCLID International; Cultural Leadership & Development	<a href="http://www.euclid.co.uk">www.euclid.co.uk</a>
Promoting Active Lifelong Learning in Australia, Canada & Europe	<a href="http://www.pallace.net">www.pallace.net</a>
European Lifelong learning Initiative	<a href="http://www.ellinet.org">www.ellinet.org</a>
Open Learning and Information Network (OLIN)	<a href="http://www.olin.nf.ca">www.olin.nf.ca</a>
Community Learning Network (British Columbia)	<a href="http://www.cln.org">www.cln.org</a>
Centre for Research and Learning in Regional Australia	<a href="http://www.crlra.utas.edu.au">www.crlra.utas.edu.au</a>
Learning Communities Catalyst, Australia	<a href="http://www.lcc.edu.au">www.lcc.edu.au</a>
Australian National Training Authority	<a href="http://www.anta.gov.au">www.anta.gov.au</a>
Library and Information Commission, UK	<a href="http://www.lic.gov.uk">www.lic.gov.uk</a>
Australian Learning Communities Network	<a href="http://www.lcc.edu.au">www.lcc.edu.au</a>
Museums Libraries and Archives Council, UK	<a href="http://www.resource.gov.uk">www.resource.gov.uk</a>
Human Resources and skills development Canada	<a href="http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/home.shtml">http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/home.shtml</a>
Learning Cities Network	<a href="http://www.learningcities.net">www.learningcities.net</a>
UK Surestart Program	<a href="http://www.surestart.gov.uk">www.surestart.gov.uk</a>
People's Network Program UK	<a href="http://www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk">www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk</a>
UK Public Libraries Page	<a href="http://dSPACE.dial.pipex.com/town/square/ac940/weblibs.html">http://dSPACE.dial.pipex.com/town/square/ac940/weblibs.html</a>
UK Public Library Plans and Annual Position Statements	<a href="http://www.libplans.ws">www.libplans.ws</a>

## Appendix No. 2

### Study Tour Itinerary

Date	Place / Organisation visited
23 June 2003	Vancouver
24-25 June 2003	Whistler, BC
26-27 June 2003	Lillooet, BC
1 July 2003	London - Ideas Store (Tower Hamlets)
2 July 2003	London –Peckham (Southwark)
4 July 2003	Norwich
8 July 2003	Blackburn
9-10 July 2003	Nottingham
11 July 2003	Birmingham
14 July 2003	Northampton
16-18 July 2003	Edinburgh
21-22 July 2003	Glasgow

## Appendix No. 3

### Interviewees and contacts

Name	Organisation	Email
Stephanie Wells	Whistler Chamber of Commerce	<a href="mailto:Stephanie@whistlerchamber.com">Stephanie@whistlerchamber.com</a>
Bob Kusch	Resort Municipality of Whistler	<a href="mailto:Bkusch@whistler.ca">Bkusch@whistler.ca</a>
Joan Richoiz	Whistler Public Library	<a href="mailto:Jrichoz@whistlerlibrary.ca">Jrichoz@whistlerlibrary.ca</a>
Rod Paynter	Lillooet Learning Communities Society	<a href="mailto:Rod@lillooetlearns.ca">Rod@lillooetlearns.ca</a>
Sheila Pfeifer	Lillooet Library	<a href="mailto:Lala@lillooetlibrary.bc.ca">Lala@lillooetlibrary.bc.ca</a>
Lorain Hupman	Lillooet Learning Communities Society	<a href="mailto:Lorain@lillooetlearns.ca">Lorain@lillooetlearns.ca</a>
Kate Pentol	Idea Store (Tower Hamlets)	<a href="mailto:Kate.Pentol@towerhamlets.gov.au">Kate.Pentol@towerhamlets.gov.au</a>
Mark Challon	Peckham Library (Southwark)	<a href="mailto:Mark.Challen@southwark.gov.uk">Mark.Challen@southwark.gov.uk</a>
Adrian Olsen	Southwark Libraries	<a href="mailto:Adrian.Olsen@southwark.gov.uk">Adrian.Olsen@southwark.gov.uk</a>
Janet Holden	Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library (Norfolk)	<a href="mailto:Janet.holden@norfolk.gov.uk">Janet.holden@norfolk.gov.uk</a>
Ian Sutton	Blackburn Library and Information Services	<a href="mailto:Ian.sutton@blackburn.gov.uk">Ian.sutton@blackburn.gov.uk</a>
Adele Karwat	Blackburn Library and Information Services	<a href="mailto:Adele.karwat@blackburn.gov.uk">Adele.karwat@blackburn.gov.uk</a>
Susan Law	Department of Culture, Leisure & Sport, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	<a href="mailto:susan.law@blackburn.gov.uk">susan.law@blackburn.gov.uk</a>
Martin Schuller	Nottingham Central Library	<a href="mailto:martin.schuller@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">martin.schuller@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a>
Helen Pollard	Clifton Library, Nottingham	<a href="mailto:Helen.pollard@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">Helen.pollard@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a>
Natalie Sellears	Learning Centre Nottingham Central Library	<a href="mailto:Natalie.sellears@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">Natalie.sellears@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a>
John Turner	Nottingham Central Library	<a href="mailto:john.turner@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">john.turner@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a>
Roger Parish	Nottingham Central Library	<a href="mailto:roger.parish@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">roger.parish@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a>
Jenny York	Birmingham	<a href="mailto:Jenny.york@birmingham.gov.uk">Jenny.york@birmingham.gov.uk</a>
Linda Butler	Birmingham City Council Leisure and Culture Library and Information Services	<a href="mailto:Linda.butler@birmingham.gov.uk">Linda.butler@birmingham.gov.uk</a>
Eric Wright	Northamptonshire County Council Libraries and Information Service	<a href="mailto:Ewright@northamptonshire.gov.uk">Ewright@northamptonshire.gov.uk</a>
Evelyn Jarvis	Northamptonshire County Council Libraries and Information Service	<a href="mailto:Ejarvis@northamptonshire.gov.uk">Ejarvis@northamptonshire.gov.uk</a>
Nick Matthews	Northamptonshire County Council Libraries and Information Service	<a href="mailto:nmatthews@northamptonshire.gov.uk">nmatthews@northamptonshire.gov.uk</a>
Alison Davies	Edinburgh City Libraries and Information Service	<a href="mailto:Eclis@edinburgh.gov.uk">Eclis@edinburgh.gov.uk</a>
Susan Taylor	Glasgow	<a href="mailto:Susan.taylor@cls.glasgow.gov.uk">Susan.taylor@cls.glasgow.gov.uk</a>

Jim Pauley	Glasgow	<a href="mailto:James.pauley@CLS.Glasgow.gov.uk">James.pauley@CLS.Glasgow.gov.uk</a>
Bill Wallace	Edinburgh	<a href="mailto:Bill.wallace@edinburgh.gov.uk">Bill.wallace@edinburgh.gov.uk</a>
Grace McCaig	Edinburgh	<a href="mailto:Grace.mccaig@edinburgh.gov.uk">Grace.mccaig@edinburgh.gov.uk</a>
Jim Thompson	Edinburgh	<a href="mailto:Jim.thompson@edinburgh.gov.uk">Jim.thompson@edinburgh.gov.uk</a>
Ron Faris	Golden Horizen Ventures, BC	<a href="mailto:Rfaris@shaw.ca">Rfaris@shaw.ca</a>
Martin Yarnit	UK	<a href="mailto:Martin.yarnit@virgin.net">Martin.yarnit@virgin.net</a>
Karen Shepperson	Learning Communities Network, UK	<a href="mailto:Lc-network@ntlworld.com">Lc-network@ntlworld.com</a>

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