

Welcome To Your Library Project
Developing public library services for asylum
seekers and refugees

in the
London Boroughs of
Brent* Camden* Enfield* Merton* Newham

Final Report

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Report available from: London Libraries Development Agency, 35 St Martin's Street, London WC2H 7HP. T 020 7641 5266

2. Facts About Refugees and Note on Abbreviations and Use of Terms in This Report

2.1 Definition of Terms

Refugee and Asylum Seeker

Under international law, the word 'refugee' has a very precise meaning, as set out in the [1951 United Nations Convention Relating to Refugees](#). In the Convention, a refugee is defined as someone who:

- has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion;
- is outside the country they belong to or normally reside in, and
- is unable or unwilling to return home for fear of persecution.

The Convention was drafted in the context of the millions of refugees in post-war Europe, and only applied to European nationals. In 1967, a UN protocol extended the convention to cover any person, anywhere in the world, at any time. The UK, along with over 130 other countries, is a signatory to the Convention and its protocol. These two documents remain the foundation of refugee law today, committing signatories to certain obligations. However the interpretation of these international instruments varies from country to country.

Whilst someone is waiting for their application to be considered by the Government, they are known as an 'asylum seeker'.

This information is taken from the Refugee Council website. See <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/infocentre/faqs/faqs001.htm#1>

2.2 Facts about Refugees and Asylum Seekers

For asylum and migration fact files see Institute of Public Policy Research: <http://www.ippr.org.uk/research/index.php?current=19&project=158>

See also:

<http://www.cre.gov.uk/gdpract/refuge.html>

2.3 Abbreviations

The following are regularly abbreviated throughout this report:

Welcome To Your Library (WTYL)

Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs)

London Borough (LB)

2.4 Use of Terms

The phrase refugee communities, as used in this report, means refugees and asylum seekers.

3. Report Summary

Public libraries have a key role to play in the lives of asylum seekers and refugees, which fits closely with the current policy priorities defined by government and strategic bodies. In particular, *Framework for the Future: Libraries Learning and Information in the Next Decade*, published by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in February 2003, set out three priorities for libraries, all of which are relevant in this context:

- Promotion of reading and informal learning
- Access to digital skills and services including e-government
- Measures to tackle social exclusion, build community identity and develop citizenship.

In the past year, Welcome To Your Library (WTYL) has led the way in improving access to and the quality of public library services for asylum seekers and refugees, working in five London boroughs (Brent, Camden, Enfield, Merton and Newham). The London Libraries Development Agency (LLDA) is co-ordinating WTYL, which is funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. The team includes five part-time Project Officers (one each recruited to each borough's library service) and a part-time Project Co-ordinator.

Evidence gathered through WTYL shows there are many barriers to the use of public libraries by refugee communities. These include:

- Lack of awareness and understanding of services on offer
- Library joining procedures that put asylum seekers in particular at a disadvantage
- Lack of relevant and appropriate stock.

In addition, libraries often do not have adequate community profile data and management information to plan and deliver relevant services for and with this audience. Staff may lack awareness of the key issues affecting refugee communities and also might not have developed the skills and confidence to work with them. As well as addressing these issues, library services also need to take a proactive role in developing effective local partnerships with refugee community organisations (RCOs) and other relevant bodies.

Achievements of WTYL include devising and implementing strategies to deal with some of these problems, such as:

- Mapping of the location, identity and needs of emerging communities and the organisations that support them in all the participating boroughs
- Collecting and enhancing management information for service planning for and with refugee communities
- Developing new local partnerships with RCOs and others and more cross-departmental working within councils across the project

- Raising the profile of services on offer with refugee communities, including production of materials in relevant community languages
- Raising the profile of public libraries and the role they play in meeting the needs of refugee communities with policy makers and practitioners in different sectors
- Simplifying library joining procedures
- Taking part in planning of celebratory cultural events bringing different communities together
- Running introductory tours for refugees leading to over 300 new users
- Facilitating ICT taster sessions
- Negotiating the purchase of new stock with involvement from refugee communities
- Brokering relevant training for over 200 library staff.

These achievements are illustrated in the report through case studies, with key lessons highlighted after each.

The single most important factor that will determine success in the long run is changing organisational culture and attitudes and taking a dynamic and proactive approach where all staff are involved in engaging with external partners. The eight key lessons the project has learnt overall show that public libraries need to:

- Build their capacity and manage change, so they can fulfil their potential over time
- Adopt a strategic approach backed up with practical actions to support this process
- Gather relevant evidence consistently about local communities to provide management information and strengthen policy arguments
- Set priorities based on evidence rather than a "one size fits all" approach
- Monitor and evaluate their work and use this to develop services further
- Involve refugee umbrella and community organisations and others working on their behalf - provide human, financial and physical resources so that RCOs and other agencies can be active partners in service development as well as individual asylum seekers and refugees themselves
- Learn from other sectors working with asylum seekers and refugees and share good practice as widely as possible.
- Use work in this field to raise the profile and demonstrate the value of public libraries locally, regionally and nationally.

Significant funding has already been found to sustain the work in the participating boroughs, for example through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. At the time of writing this report plans are in progress to:

- Disseminate the evidence of good practice from WTYL and other pioneering work
- Identify the most effective ways to share this good practice information
- Develop work with new partners to widen the future impact of project achievements

- Publicise the crucial role public libraries play locally, regionally and nationally with government departments and other agencies.

In the interim, the key lessons highlighted after each case study in this report provide action points for any public library wanting to address access to refugees and asylum seekers and can also be used as checklists for ensuring good practice.

Funding applications are currently being made to extend the work of WTYL both in and outside London. This will involve four elements:

- Change management in public libraries
- Information and good practice support
- Advocacy of the key role public libraries play, through local partners, but also regionally and nationally
- Monitoring and evaluation. This may include surveys and other qualitative and quantitative evidence gathering and recording to show the impact of the work.

4. Introduction

4.1 Background to Welcome To Your Library project

Welcome To Your Library (WTYL) is a pilot project that aimed to identify and overcome barriers to use of public library and information services by asylum seekers and refugees. The project ran from May 2003 to June 2004.

Public library services in five London boroughs participated: Brent, Camden, Enfield, Merton and Newham. The Paul Hamlyn Foundation funded WTYL with a grant of £119,000 and the London Libraries Development Agency co-ordinated the project. The staff team was recruited from a range of backgrounds and comprised a dedicated part-time Project Officer in each borough's public library service and a part-time Project Co-ordinator.

The project drew on pioneering work with refugees and asylum seekers in the London Borough of Merton's Library & Heritage Service, for which they were awarded the Libraries Change Lives Award in 2001. It was also able to benefit from work of The Network and of library authorities outside London, including Birmingham City Council, Kent County Council and Norfolk County Council.

For further background and contact information for the London Libraries Development Agency, the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and The Network see Appendix One.

4.2 Purpose of Report

Each WTYL Project Officer is producing a report with recommendations to sustain work in this field in their borough. WTYL has also commissioned external consultants, Advice Development Project, to provide an objective overall evaluation of the work undertaken. This report, by the WTYL Project Co-ordinator, is intended to complement the other reports. It does not list all of the activities each Project Officer has undertaken. Through case studies it simply aims to highlight some of the key issues and lessons, successes and impact of what has been done so far.

5. Setting the Scene

5.1 National Policy Context

Public libraries have a vital role to play in meeting core government policy priorities, including tackling social exclusion and promoting inclusion, community cohesion and race equality, and raising educational achievement, including basic skills.

Framework for the Future. Libraries Learning and Information in the Next Decade, published by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in February 2003, spells out three priorities for libraries:

- Promotion of reading and informal learning
- Access to digital skills and services including e-government
- Measures to tackle social exclusion, build community identity and develop citizenship.

Current work in key government departments responsible for refugees, including the Home Office, Department of Health and the Department for Education and Skills, offers an opportunity to ensure that they fully recognise and support the key role of public libraries in delivering the priorities above and their own agendas. The WTYL project can be seen as a small-scale practical demonstration of public library services learning from each other and working cross-sectorally with external agencies to tackle key policies set out, not only by DCMS, but by government as a whole.

Selected policy documents relevant to the work of the WTYL project are listed in Appendix Two.

5.2 The Importance of Welcome To Your Library

Public library services are required by the DCMS to produce position statements outlining their actions for tackling the priorities set out in *Framework for the Future*, which includes tackling social exclusion (see above). They should be doing this as part of their overall vision and strategy for the development of their service.

It is clearly essential good practice to back up proposed actions to tackle social exclusion with evidence. This means that public libraries need to:

- Gather and regularly update local demographic statistics
- Work proactively with relevant local services, partnerships and voluntary sector organisations to identify needs and barriers to public library use by those who are currently not using public libraries as well as those who are.

Gathering this information and working in this way will help them to:

- Build an evidence-based argument for the human and financial resources and skills required to develop relevant services to meet local needs effectively
- Communicate successfully with elected members, senior managers and all public library staff in their service the reasons for targeting particular audiences.

Refugees and asylum seekers are amongst the most excluded from society. Despite having gone through extraordinary and often very traumatic experiences, many are extremely keen to access opportunities for reading, learning and information that are relevant and important to them to improve their position. Often their circumstances mean that options such as studying or using computers at home or buying books are not available to them.

Public libraries provide some essential services in relation to this audience. With the right approaches in place, public libraries working with asylum seekers and refugees will be able to help them meet their needs, and in so doing, meet the needs of many other current non-users of their services as well. As a result public libraries will also increase their overall usage, visitor numbers, membership, lending and enquiry rates, and enhance their role as focal point for local communities as a whole.

There is widespread public misunderstanding and suspicion about asylum seekers and refugees, about how many people are here in these circumstances and why, and the difficulties they face. Hostile feelings and attitudes are fuelled by the way in which the media present this subject. Public library staff are not exempt from this. They therefore need to be accurately informed themselves in order to develop the confidence, skills and resources necessary to work proactively and effectively with this audience.

In general, work with excluded groups in public libraries has been fragmented and marginalised because in the main it has been project-based. Activity is very uneven from one library service to another, with some still reluctant to engage with "hard to reach" audiences. This is despite reports such as Open to All and Public Libraries, Ethnic Diversity and Citizenship (see Appendix Two).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, work specifically with asylum seekers and refugees in public libraries has tended to be avoided. Public libraries often have an "introverted" and insular approach. Staff may lack awareness, skills and confidence in how to work proactively to find out about the communities they are there to serve and there may be no strategic leadership to tackle this. Public libraries have a low profile in other sectors and often library staff have no clear overview of the key role public libraries play in meeting government priorities as a whole. As a result they have not been able to work in new ways, or identify opportunities to access additional resources.

There has to be strategic commitment to improve access to and quality of public library services for refugees and asylum seekers as part of a wider policy to improve and develop services. This needs to be backed up by local

action plans with staff time, skills and relevant support in place to deliver results.

The work of WTYL has been important as a first step in gathering a picture within several public library services about refugee communities in their neighbourhoods, why they do not use library services and their needs in relation to library service provision. By doing this it has enabled some groundwork to be laid for public libraries to share experiences with each other and work proactively with new partners across sectors not only at local, but also at regional and national level to deliver government policy. The small-scale consultation and practical work carried out as part of the project demonstrates how, by working directly with asylum seekers and refugees, public libraries are uniquely well-placed to contribute to better cultural understanding between different communities as well as meeting reading, learning and information needs. It also demonstrates that understanding this role is just the beginning.

6. Aims and Management of Welcome To Your Library

Project aims are to:

- Develop public library and information services for and with asylum seekers and refugees in the London boroughs of Brent, Camden, Enfield, Merton and Newham, building on work already undertaken in Merton
- Identify barriers faced by refugees and asylum seekers to using public library services and identify ways to overcome these.

At our first team meeting in June 2003 we agreed to aim for the following outcomes:

- Achieve sustainability
- Pilot at least one new initiative in each borough
- Develop new internal and external partnerships to support library work with refugees and asylum seekers
- Make recommendations for future plans with funding implications
- Disseminate lessons learnt
- Increase participation in and awareness of library services by refugee and asylum seekers communities in each borough.

Each Project Officer and Project Co-ordinator was asked to keep and circulate a monthly diary. The team met and minuted monthly meetings throughout the year to discuss issues arising from work in progress and share experiences and learning face-to-face and for mutual support. Team meetings were held at the London Libraries Development Agency (LLDA) offices and attended by the LLDA Development Manager. Sometimes there were visiting speakers.

Between team meetings team communication was largely by e-mail. The Project Co-ordinator regularly identified information from various agencies and organisations (e.g. voluntary sector bodies, education agencies, government) relevant to the project and circulated this as background to the team on an as-and-when basis. She also circulated informal notes of meetings she held through the year with a range of organisations outside the library world. Team members did likewise. Each Project Officer reported to a local library manager and the Development Manager of the LLDA provided support for the Project Co-ordinator.

The following eight case studies highlight some of the work undertaken as part of the project, the kinds of internal and external partnerships developed and actions aimed at increasing awareness of and participation in services and service development by asylum seekers and refugees over the longer term.

7. Case Studies

7.1 Case Study One Identification and Local Profiling of Refugee Communities

Each Project Officer undertook a mapping exercise to understand as well as possible the size, location and make-up of the refugee communities in their area. This process included:

- Identifying who, in their local authority or elsewhere, already had access to relevant statistical and other information
- Contacting these people directly to ensure that library services work together with, rather than in isolation from, other council departments and relevant external agencies
- Collecting additional anecdotal information throughout the year through direct engagement with refugee community organisations (RCOs) and others
- Raising awareness of the importance within public library services of collecting information about library users *and* non-users to measure impact of work and inform management planning.

It is notoriously hard to produce statistically robust information on the number and ethnicity of refugee communities in individual boroughs. High levels of mobility and rapidly changing world politics make it difficult to keep pace. Using census information alone is highly misleading and inadequate. Despite these difficulties, Project Officers did get a picture that was not necessarily available to the library service before.

In summary, in at least one London borough, asylum seekers and refugees account for an estimated 8% or more of the population and in individual wards this figure is certainly even higher. There is often a higher proportion of young people than in the population as a whole, including vulnerable unaccompanied minors.

The value of the work undertaken is much wider than simply gathering statistics about asylum seekers and refugees. It has enabled library services to open up dialogue that would not otherwise have happened with different council departments, RCOs and other external agencies. Through the WTYL project individual library services also found out more than they knew before about BME communities in general. This has included finding out more about settled but "hidden" BME communities as well as more recent arrivals. For example the LB of Newham identified a larger Chinese community than it had previously been aware of. Project staff also have a better understanding of how to access general trend information from the Home Office and other sources, and have shared this skill with other staff. This is essential for both for management planning and skills development.

In each case, specific refugee communities tended to be clustered in particular parts of each borough. The individual Project Officers have gathered

this information in their reports. In brief, the picture in each borough is as follows:

London Borough of Brent: Refugee communities comprise about 6.5-7.5% of the population as a whole and about 10% of the school population. Countries of origin include Sri Lanka, Somalia, Kosovo, Iraq, Iran, Albania, Eritrea, Cameroon, Algeria and other African countries.

London Borough of Camden: Last census showed 28% of population born outside UK. Largest refugee group is Bangladeshi. Established community languages include Greek, Gujarati and Chinese. This is changing: largest recent refugee communities are Somalis, Bosnians and Congolese. This last group is the fastest growing. Somalis alone account for about 3% of population.

London Borough of Enfield: It is estimated that refugee communities comprise just under 4% of the population. There is a long-established Cypriot community (many originally refugees), Turkish community and Turkish-speaking Kurds (inc. refugees). Other languages spoken include Albanian, Somali and French (Zaire and Congo), Farsi (Iran) and East European languages spoken by Roma.

London Borough of Merton: A combination of statistical sources and anecdotal information suggests largest refugee communities are Tamil and Somali and other African. In 2002, in some wards refugees accounted for over 10% of population. Refugees from Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo and Albania are scattered throughout the borough, but not in as large numbers as other communities.

London Borough of Newham: Most ethnically diverse borough in the country. Estimated 8% of population are from refugee communities and school population (primary) 16.9% and (secondary) 12.6%. By far the largest group is Somalis, followed by Congolese. Other groups include Tamils, Lithuanians, Kosovo Albanians, Polish-speaking Roma, Vietnamese and about 2,000 Latin Americans, mainly from Ecuador, Bolivia and Colombia.

In most boroughs little, if any, targeted service provision in relation to the fastest growing and most recent refugee communities had been undertaken in the library service, either in terms of stock or active outreach work, prior to the WTYL project. The work carried out in the short period of the project has provided foundations on which to build.

Statistical information sources used are at Appendix Three.

Identification and Local Profiling of Refugee Communities

Key Lessons:

- Use statistics to get a general idea of scale, composition and location of refugee population locally
- Accept there are gaps in statistical data available - and don't use this as an excuse not to devise methods of reaching out and providing services to meet the needs of local communities
- Make intelligent management use of what you do have
- Picture changes rapidly - ensure what you are doing is not based on a very out-of-date analysis, and always strike a balance in favour of finding pragmatic solutions to identified local issues
- Don't reinvent the wheel - there is a wealth of information and contacts to be tapped outside the library service, in government departments, other council departments and in RCOs
- Seek advice and share information locally on as regular a basis as possible through whatever networks exist or create such a network if it does not exist already and there is a need.

7.2 Case Study Two

Needs of Refugees and Asylum Seekers and Barriers Faced in Accessing Library Services

Project Officers have made direct contact with nearly 200 RCOs, voluntary sector organisations working on their behalf and relevant council departments to identify barriers to use of public library services by refugee communities and have made full records of these contacts available to colleagues. They have also started to identify methods to reach and involve different audiences. Inevitably, in the time available, this is still at an early stage rather than a sustained, comprehensive exercise with all refugee communities in each borough.

Project Officers have also acted on their findings to introduce effective small-scale projects aimed at improving access and quality of services for this audience - see other case studies in this report for examples.

People of different ages, gender, cultural background and ethnicity obviously have very different needs from each other, but refugee communities do also share some needs as a result of their particular experiences. Outreach work carried out in the London Borough of Merton prior to the WTYL project showed that the main need was:

"To connect and to find a cultural route-map showing the local customs and rules of society to enable the newcomer to access services and integrate into the local community." (WTYL Project Officer, LB Merton, Di Reynolds)

Much of what follows is drawn from the report by the LB Newham WTYL Project Officer. These findings are echoed in the reports of other WTYL team members.

Social/Cultural Loss

Displacement and exile often results in disorientation, loss of self-esteem, alienation, insecurity and marginalisation from society. Many refugees and asylum seekers have had very traumatic experiences. They often lack the information required to make informed decisions regarding activities such as finding a GP, getting their children into school or obtaining English language tuition. The uncertainty of asylum claims, the insecurity of their housing situation and the fact that they are not allowed to work to provide for their families often leads to feelings of 'uselessness', being in a state of 'limbo', a loss of self confidence, and health and financial problems.

Public libraries potentially have a very important role for people in this position but consultation showed that many asylum seekers and refugees do not have any idea of what a public library is. They did not know about the range of services already on offer, or believed it was not for them.

However, many of those who have used public libraries have been positive. For example, the LB Camden WTYL Project Officer obtained anecdotal

evidence that unaccompanied asylum seekers aged 16-19, who face even more difficulties and pressures than others, had told Education staff in Camden Council how useful they have found the library service.

Language Needs

A large number of those consulted in LB Newham mentioned language barriers as a key reason why they do not use library services. A lack of language skills can result in a lack of confidence to approach services and introversion into one's immediate community.

It is worth pointing out here that the Department for Education and Skills in its Skills for Life survey, conducted from 2002-3, identified that 21% of people living in London do not have English as their first language. Of course this does not indicate how many of these have difficulties communicating in English, nor how many are refugees, but the numbers involved do show why public libraries should be paying more attention to language needs in general.

In the course of WTYL, Project Officers, working with RCOs and others, identified a shortage of appropriate basic skills and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) materials available through the public library service suited to the needs of more recently arrived refugee communities.

Development of library stock in different languages is discussed in more detail in case study seven. Project Officers also organised a range of structured taster sessions to bring new users from refugee communities into public libraries for the first time. This is discussed in more detail in case study six.

Educational Needs of Refugee Children

Refugee children are often housed in temporary accommodation. Consequently they can experience many barriers to learning. This includes inability to find school places or admittance to school mid-term, frequently having to move school and cramped conditions in which to do homework. Mobility has a huge effect on their achievement levels. They often require additional support to access the curriculum because of disrupted schooling and/or language barriers. These experiences can be exacerbated by the parents' inability to help with homework and their lack of knowledge and therefore ability to guide their children through the schooling process.

The public library can play a very important role in refugee children's learning, and provide a means of drawing in their parents. The Project Officer in LB Brent and the Project Co-ordinator made contact with Salusbury World (see Appendix Four), a refugee centre in a local primary school, which provides educational, social and emotional support for refugee children and is increasingly giving advice and guidance to others working in this field. There is an opportunity to develop initiatives drawing on their expertise and the expertise of others (such as the Children's Fund and Save the Children) who work with refugee children.

Education and Training Needs of Adult Refugees

Refugees bring with them a wide range of professional and vocational qualifications and in many cases refugees are highly skilled with a lot to offer the UK job market. ...The key barriers to securing employment can be summarised as follows: language barriers, lack of UK work experience, lack of information on the job market and how to access employment and training opportunities, lack of recognition by employers of refugees' qualifications and discrimination against refugees *per se*.

There are also opportunities for public libraries to develop their role in supporting refugees and others in accessing education and employment. Work of this kind is already happening - for example in LB Camden, where UK Online learning centres offer basic skills courses and e-learning courses that are free or free to people on low incomes. There is scope for public libraries to work more closely with organisations such as RETAS (Refugee Education and Training Advisory Service) and RAGU (Refugee Assessment and Guidance Unit). See Appendices Four and Five for details of organisations relevant to library service development in this field.

At the time of writing this report, LB Camden is proposing to develop opportunities for work placements in public libraries for refugees. This is something that could be undertaken much more widely in library services. It should be added, however, that local authorities need to ensure that they do not contravene Home Office restrictions placed on asylum seekers (not refugees) in relation to voluntary work.

Barriers to Access to Public Library Services

Many RCOs work with very excluded people living on the margins of society who lack access to information and knowledge on how to access information. Nearly all those questioned in RCOs in LB Newham had never used public libraries in the borough.

The pattern of low awareness of what was on offer was repeated in the other participating boroughs. Many refugees and asylum seekers rely on informal social networks and community groups for help and advice.

In LB Newham the wide range of community groups providing services including advice, advocacy, language classes and homework clubs are more likely to be used than mainstream services.

Lack of Confidence

Lack of confidence in using library services is due to language barriers and a lack of understanding of how the service operates. A community centre in LB Newham has set up its own resource library as students lacked the skills and confidence to order their own books or to use the public library service. They prefer to access books from an environment in which they are familiar and where they feel safe. Similarly, an Albanian women's group meets once a week in the Sure Start premises based at the local public library. However, they do not make use of the library itself, as they 'lack the confidence' to do so due to poor spoken English.

Understanding the relationship between poor literacy, low self-esteem and low confidence is critical. Public libraries have the opportunity to work in partnership with RCOs and others to help improve literacy, and in so doing, to raise self-esteem and confidence as well.

Poor Literacy in Mother Tongue Languages

The Congolese Women's Association in LB Newham stated that many of the women are illiterate in their mother tongue. They need to be 'empowered to use the library service – how can these women be expected to walk into a library if they have difficulty accessing information in their own language?'

In LB Camden, a Somali Sure Start organiser pointed out 'Although they shop in the market they won't go in the library...They don't read books and they don't know what it is. The Sure Start organiser is introducing Somali women to books through early years work.

In LB Enfield, after the WTYL Project Officer made contact with a Somali women's group and obtained similar feedback, a Somali-speaking member of the library service's Roll On Reading team is providing bilingual support for Somali children at one of the library's homework clubs one evening a week. The WTYL Project Officer has distributed information in Somali about this to relevant RCOs.

Cultural Barriers

Different communities have different cultural barriers. For example the Roma community may be particularly difficult to engage with through lack of trust in statutory services. Refugee home/school support workers in LB Newham said it could be difficult to get some Roma families to commit to sending their children to schools. Similarly, other communities come from countries that do not have a public library system as in the UK.

Consultation in LB Newham showed that many did not perceive the library service to be of use or relevance to them – 'libraries are perceived as being for students and academics' (Shpresa – Albanian Community Group).

Public Libraries not Perceived as Relevant

Many of the groups consulted in LB Newham stated that the people they work with are struggling to survive from day to day, in sub-standard overcrowded accommodation, on inadequate resources and with the fear of being deported or sent home at any time. Consequently libraries are not perceived as being of any relevance to their immediate needs.

Disaffected Youth and Associated Identity Issues

In LB Newham, organisations such as the Association for the Literary Advancement of African Refugees, the Somali Youth Forum and the Manor Park and East Ham Afro-Caribbean Association work specifically with young people who are underachieving in school. These young people are experiencing identity problems as a result of displacement, migration and/or loss of cultural heritage.

Library Joining Procedures

In LB Enfield, an additional barrier to library use was the requirement to produce two pieces of identity to join the library service, when many asylum seekers and refugees had only one - their paperwork from NASS (National Asylum Support Service). For more information see case study four.

Needs of Refugees and Asylum Seekers and Barriers Faced in Accessing Library Services

Key Lessons

- Do not make assumptions about people's understanding of public library services. Find out about their perceptions and needs by engaging with them directly at local level
- Work with RCOs and others to devise strategies to reach non-library users within given communities and to find out why they don't use them
- Ensure staff who carry out this work have the skills to build relationships of trust and elicit information
- Ensure that strategic management and resource support is in place so the service can respond quickly to findings, otherwise community groups feel let down and outreach staff become marginalised
- Speak to representatives and individuals from different refugee organisations and sections of the community, otherwise there is a danger of getting a very incomplete picture of that community's needs
- Be prepared for conflicting needs - people of different ages, gender, ethnicity, country of origin and cultural background may have different requirements. Library services should not be frightened of developing priorities based on evidence available.
- In many cases improving services for and with asylum seekers and refugees will improve services across the board
- Invest time locally to build on groundwork - this is a long-term process not a short-term project
- Share and build on good practice to ensure this work is embedded into core service provision.

7.3 Case Study Three

Raising the Profile of Public Libraries

A key WTYL project activity has been raising the profile of public libraries. At local level this has involved making connections and working directly with RCOs and other organisations working on their behalf. It has also involved linking with different council departments where working relationships had not necessarily existed before.

Raising the profile of public libraries has also been a fundamental part of the Project Co-ordinator's role, making connections at regional and national level, both with RCOs and with regional and national government. For example the Project Co-ordinator has briefed members of the National Refugee Integration Forum, co-ordinated by the Home Office, about the WTYL project, with a view to getting representation from the public library sector. Making connections at all levels has been essential to develop the groundwork for cross-sector partnership working and shared learning in the long-term.

The process has raised awareness both of the WTYL project and the key role of public libraries in meeting reading, learning and information needs and providing an ideal civic space for cultural discovery and exchange.

A list of organisations (not including library contacts) approached by the WTYL Project Co-ordinator is at Appendix Five. Notes of meetings and contact details have been recorded for the use of the WTYL team. There have already been concrete results from connections made across the project as a whole.

Just one example is the connection made with London Advice Services Alliance (LASA). A preliminary visit to find out more about their work led to co-operation with their Multikulti website project. This website (www.multikulti.org.uk) aims to support citizenship by providing accurate and culturally appropriate information in 11 languages. This covers the key areas of debt, education, employment, health, housing, immigration and asylum and welfare benefits. The website is used by a wide range of community agencies to give advice as well as by individuals directly.

There is an opportunity to widen awareness and use of this website in public libraries. Indeed as a result of the collaboration a press release has been posted to a number of public library email lists to achieve just that.

After the preliminary meeting, two members of the Multikulti staff team gave a presentation at a WTYL staff team meeting. Following this the WTYL Project Co-ordinator went to a meeting of the Multikulti translators and proof-readers, who have direct contact with and knowledge of communities relevant to the WTYL project. Her aim was to get feedback from them on needs and identify possible ways to collaborate.

As a result, the WTYL Project Co-ordinator was invited to draft text in English for the Multikulti website education pages, specifically designed to encourage

new library service users who may never have been in a public library before and may be unsure what to expect. This has now been translated into Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, English, Farsi, French, Gujarati, Somali, Spanish and Turkish. It is the first time information about public libraries has been included on the website.

Another example of co-operation across the project as a whole is sharing a platform with ICAR (Information Centre about Asylum and Refugees) at the Library and Information Show 2004. At this event ICAR's Information Manager and the WTYL Project Co-ordinator gave a joint presentation on working with asylum seekers and refugees as part of the seminar programme. This in turn led to making new contacts with members of the audience and raising the profile of the WTYL project with ICAR staff.

At local level, work by WTYL Project Officers has led to library service representation for the first time in a range of relevant settings including refugee forums. Face-to-face communication through presentations or discussion with others has been vital. The Project Officers have also produced or enabled others to produce appropriate multi-lingual material to promote what the library service offers. In LB Enfield, for example, a new multi-lingual WTYL leaflet introducing what is on offer is now on the council's website. In LB Camden, a multi-lingual WTYL bookmark has been produced, "welcoming" in Somali, Albanian and Bengali, with addresses of local libraries. There is also now a link from the library catalogue to language and refugee information websites called "New to UK".

At all levels the purpose of raising the profile of public libraries has been:

- to move towards relationships of trust between those working in public libraries, refugees and asylum seekers and community and other organisations working on their behalf
- to develop knowledge and understanding across sectors and in specific communities of what public libraries offer and how this is useful to help meet refugee communities' reading, learning and information needs
- to influence people in the library world and outside it what the merits are of working together
- to demonstrate why public libraries have such an important role in tackling social exclusion, enhancing community cohesion and promoting integration of emerging communities.

Raising the Profile of Public Libraries

Key Lessons

- Public libraries need to be clear about their role and able to promote this succinctly externally
- Public libraries have a key role within the overall context of government agendas related to citizenship, community cohesion and social inclusion and they need to perform and communicate this much more effectively locally, regionally and nationally
- Public libraries need to make a strategic commitment to working with refugees and asylum seekers as part of this wider agenda and allocate resources to achieve this effectively
- The process of developing understanding of the role of libraries in relation to refugee communities and raising awareness has begun, but there is much more to do both with refugee communities and with policy makers
- Staff at all levels must be committed to work with RCOs if work begun through the WTYL project is to be integrated and sustained across the service and over time
- Libraries need to be represented in umbrella forums related to refugees at local level to ensure they have a voice and can be proactive
- Senior management may need training to ensure that all library staff understand the wider picture and their role in it
- Library staff working with audiences such as refugees must communicate what they learn to colleagues, including senior management.

7.4 Case Study Four Simplifying Joining Procedures

In LB Enfield, the WTYL Project Officer identified very quickly that two pieces of identity were required to join the library service and that this needed to be changed. Library staff were unaware of the barriers this system posed for asylum seekers in particular, the vast majority of whom are highly unlikely to be able to produce identity information other than paperwork from NASS (National Asylum Support Service). From consultations with RCOs and other organisations working with refugee communities this emerged as the most commonly named obstacle in LB Enfield to full enjoyment of library services and temporary membership was seen as second class membership.

Having assembled a strong case the Project Officer wrote a report for the Joint Management Committee recommending abolition of temporary membership and enabling full membership to be granted with one proof of ID only. Library membership procedures are now being reformed as a result.

LB Camden has been able to produce some evidence of growth in the numbers of asylum seekers and refugees joining the library. The following table is a snapshot:

Number Joining LB Camden Public Library Service

	Jan 2002	Jun 2002	Dec 2003
Kosovars	25	46	131
Somalis	4	12	63

However, work to date across the participating boroughs has shown that public libraries do not have adequate ways of measuring the numbers of asylum seekers and refugees joining the library or using their services.

For example, the number of Black Africans in LB Camden joining the library service grew from 282 in April to June 2003 to 750 in the following quarter. This is due at least in part to the work of the WTYL Project Officer. However, it is not possible to identify how many of these were asylum seekers or refugees due to insufficient evidence gathered from the joining forms. This form is now being reviewed and the Project Officer has recommended that the council look corporately at how they can better monitor ethnicity so that information gathered can assist libraries to cater for specific needs.

At a small-scale the participating boroughs have started to join library members directly through their outreach work - for example at community events. There is scope to expand this approach significantly - and at the same time, measure numbers of asylum seekers and refugees joining or using services.

Simplifying Joining Procedures

Key Lessons

- Simplify joining procedures as much as possible and translate the forms to meet local needs
- Take a flexible approach to enlist members at community events or other groups — e.g. those participating in ESOL classes
- Get RCO participation — e.g. in designing joining packs or in assessing quality of library welcome (overall environment and staff as well as joining procedures) and improve if necessary
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the barriers faced by asylum seekers and refugees in accessing services
- Produce guidelines to ensure consistency in the way joining procedures are explained and that appropriate help is given as required
- Ensure joining pack enables library to gather necessary management information to cater for specific needs.

7.5 Case Study Five

Storytelling, Events and Workshops

Black History Month

The WTYL Project Officer in LB Brent organised a Somali evening in Harlesden Library to welcome and celebrate the Somali community. About 75-80 people attended, from Somali to Irish backgrounds, some of whom had never been in the library before. The event demonstrated the need to provide opportunities to bring the Somali community together for cultural exchange and also social contact with people from different cultural backgrounds.

In the LB Camden the library service organised activities designed to attract the Somali and Congolese communities amongst others and drew in children, their parents and friends by showcasing the work of African and Caribbean writers and journalists. The six adult events were attended by nearly 400 people and the children's storytelling was attended by nearly 150 children. Half were not library members before they attended but were encouraged to join.

Reading and Literacy Project

In LB Brent, the WTYL Project Officer also developed a reading and literacy project together with Brent Youth Partnership (BYP) in a local secondary school. The project aims to encourage the young people involved to read for pleasure and counter negative stereotypes of refugees through arts activities, publication of their work and a public performance in a local theatre to celebrate and promote understanding of their contribution to the community.

An ESOL tutor is involved and a series of 20 workshops have used pictures, drama and music to convey the stories of young refugees. The young people have also had tours of the public library and become members. Their work will go on display in Harlesden library during Refugee Week in June 2004.

Storytelling with Roma Children

In LB Enfield the library service has been celebrating Romany culture by working with Roma children and their classmates from local primary schools. The WTYL Project Officer developed a two-day pilot project with support from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund in December 2003. This involved the Traveller Support Service and an experienced storyteller. Over 120 children attended from four classes from three different schools and worked with the storyteller at the library. Each class produced an art display and this was displayed in the library before being returned to the school that created it.

Positive feedback from one of the teachers involved stated:

"I thought the balance of activities - music, storytelling and artwork worked well. The children all thoroughly enjoyed the visit...It was excellent for the Roma pupils to be able to engage so fully as an interpreter was provided."

One of the children stated in their feedback: 'I wish that we had stad longe I really enoyd it.'

The success of the pilot project enabled the WTYL Project Officer to obtain grants from Esmee Fairbairn Foundation and from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation to run a further project aimed at Roma children and their classmates. This involves 12 workshops on the theme of journeys with more children over the summer term. A book, "how-to" kit and travelling exhibition will be produced of the children's work.

Storytelling, Events and Workshops

Key Lessons

- Events and storytelling can be used as a means of celebrating different communities and bringing people together
- Religious beliefs and festivals need to be taken into account when planning events
- Plan ahead as far as possible, be flexible and form an event-planning team
- Produce a "how-to" event planning checklist for the library service as a whole if there isn't one already, to pass on to staff who may be new to event management
- Take advantage of key times in calendar to link into wider programmes - for example, Refugee Week, Black History Month (see Appendix Four)
- Ensure you know who your target audience is for an event, how you are going to involve and/or reach them before you start and establish the likely demand for what you are proposing. The best way to do this is to involve RCOs in event planning.

7.6 Case Study Six

Structured Taster Visits/ICT Sessions

All the participating WTYL boroughs have conducted structured taster visits to introduce asylum seekers and refugees to the public library for the first time. The following are examples - more complete information is in the individual Project Officers' reports and diaries.

In LB Merton the Project Officer worked with the Lending Time Project (a library-based volunteering scheme) in which LB Merton is a partner. Through this initiative, structured introductions to using computers were run in two of Merton's libraries using 17 year-old students from a local college as volunteers. Amongst others, clients of Asylum Welcome drop-in centre attended these and started to use the library on a regular basis as a result. An additional benefit was bringing the students into contact with refugee communities for the first time.

In LB Newham the WTYL Project Officer set up a book voucher project in partnership with the Social Services Asylum Team, which enabled 13 unaccompanied minors to be taken to a local bookshop where they were given £20 worth of vouchers each to spend on books. This trip was followed by an introductory library visit. The aim was to promote book ownership and introduce how the library service could support these young people with their study and other social and educational needs. She also worked with the Roma Education Project. A local library hosted a library tour and induction session for 15 young Polish Roma, resulting in them joining the library and taking out books for loan.

In LB Brent library tours and taster sessions have been a key feature of the year, involving seven sessions in at least four libraries with links made directly with relevant RCOs, and both primary and secondary schools with large numbers of students from refugee communities. At least 100 young people from many countries have participated and it is estimated that about half have gone on to join the library service.

In LB Camden groups of adults from Somali, Congolese, Bosnian and Bengali communities are being introduced to basic skills and Internet sessions in libraries. Also in LB Camden a number of 17 year-old refugee pupils from two secondary schools have now become library members after visiting local libraries for taster sessions, with the Project Officer acting as a catalyst for this. Groups are now making their own arrangements to continue with these visits. There is scope to extend this to all nine secondary schools in the borough and certainly the will to do so.

Library tours in each case have involved:

- Making initial contact with the school or RCO
- Visiting them to find out what they wanted to get from the library visit
- Explaining background to the WTYL project

- Organising possible dates and whatever back-up was needed
- Getting library staff involved and fully briefed on what they were being asked to do and why
- Practical arrangements to get groups to the library
- Designing appropriate ways to monitor and evaluate visits and gather statistical evidence of impact.

There is now a need to ensure that this last point is achieved in a consistent way over time.

Once momentum was generated the WTYL Project Officer in LB Camden found that RCOs she had visited were making contact with local libraries independently. As a result, one library, together with the local Somali community, opened its doors on Sundays to run an English language club for parents while children did homework or educational games with a Somali community member.

Structured Taster Visits/ICT Sessions

Key Lessons

- Don't underestimate time and energy required to set up visits and what is involved
- Use the opportunity to build up working relationships with relevant partners
- Library staff need to be flexible and prepared to work hours which they may consider anti-social
- Always evaluate your work. You may not get it right first time, but you do need to find out how you can improve. Ad-hoc and verbal feedback can be very valuable — do not rely solely on forms, as asylum seekers and refugees may not be comfortable with this. Consider using the Generic Learning Outcomes of the Inspiring Learning for All framework to capture anecdotal feedback (see Appendix Four)
- Introductory tours are a very important way of beginning to break down barriers. Signage you cannot understand and lack of knowledge of what libraries can offer makes a first-time visit very daunting, especially if you cannot find anything without asking library staff who may be busy and do not speak your language. This has also emerged from Londoners Need to Read research - see Appendix Four
- Use taster sessions to get feedback on how your service comes across to first-time users. Find out what you should be doing to ensure they come back.

7.7 Case Study Seven

Stock and Other Resource Development

Refugee communities' reading needs are as wide as they are across society as a whole, from very basic reading to academic texts. It is clearly not possible for public libraries to provide everything for everyone all of the time. This is why gathering evidence is so important so that local library services can develop priorities based on as full and up-to-date an assessment as possible of local needs. Because refugee communities are mobile and change quickly, it is necessary to ensure that library services do not focus efforts solely on longer-established communities whilst ignoring the needs of relative newcomers.

Public libraries have a role in demonstrating the importance of choosing, sharing and enjoying books and having access to imaginative reading experiences. There is an opportunity to reach adult refugee communities through children and young people by developing reading groups, drop-in ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) facilities, or language clubs for example, possibly with separate provision specifically targeting women and young children. WTYL Project Officers have all started working with specific refugee communities in local neighbourhoods to identify and target particular interests and needs.

In LB Enfield, the Project Officer has worked with RCOs prior to making a bid for stock development covering:

- Launch of African books collection in French, Somali and English
- Expansion of African and particularly Congolese music CD collection
- Expansion of Somali and beginning of Lingala dictionary collection
- Expansion of children's foreign mono and dual language collections and Somali children's dictionaries
- Subscription to the French African magazine, Jeune Afrique
- Introduction of multi-lingual software.

In LB Camden stock development has followed development of links with the Somali and Congolese communities. After consultation with the Somali Community Centre to establish what they wanted the library to provide, £1000 has been spent on mother tongue stock, chosen with the help and advice of Somalis. French African stock will be bought in another library, a new Somali collection in a third and books in these languages and Albanian will be hired for four months at a time from an appropriate supplier.

In LB Merton the Project Officer is enabling other library staff to work with RCOs and other appropriate partners to identify needs prior to developing a Resource Centre for refugees and asylum seekers in one of the borough's libraries. Work is currently in progress also to assess the overall environment and quality of welcome people currently receive to identify improvements. Refugee community involvement is key in this process.

In LB Newham there are plans to purchase software in community languages, linking libraries to the borough's translation service, production of WTYL packs in different languages and a series of WTYL events with authors. This is in addition to purchasing stock with input from, for example, the Albanian speaking community, who will accompany library staff to appropriate bookshops for stock picks.

In LB Brent, for the first time, a budget has been allocated to develop appropriate stock to serve the needs of local refugee communities. The Project Officer has recommended:

- A review of all basic skills and ESOL materials to enable investment to be made appropriately to boost what is available
- Investment in contemporary fiction by refugee and asylum seeker writers and non-fiction including culture, language, politics, history and recipes
- Purchase of more books with English language tapes
- Involvement of users in stock purchase by setting up a focus group
- Purchase of relevant dictionaries in appropriate languages
- Updating computers to enable users to use audio services in the library.

Stock and Other Resource Development

Key Lessons

- Involve refugee communities in identifying gaps in stock and in stock purchase
- User involvement is key to ensuring stock is relevant and provides an opportunity to develop reader groups
- Appropriate materials may be wide-ranging from language resource e.g. basic skills, ESOL and dictionaries, fiction and non-fiction written by refugees, as well as academic texts
- Relevant materials will not be confined to books - magazines, CDs, language tapes (with equipment to listen to them in the library) and translated software are all important
- Identify language requirements. These will vary depending on who you are talking to and you may need to reconcile contradictory demands e.g. from different generations
- Translate leaflets on how to use library and ensure they indicate which language they are in for identification by non-speakers
- All staff should be aware of refugee communities' needs
- Create clear and visible signage of stock, if possible identified with a readily understood visual motif. This echoes the findings of Londoners Need to Read research (see Appendix Two)
- Look for opportunities for external funding as part of wider development work
- As with mainstream stock there is scope in London for development of sub-regional co-operation to achieve economies of scale with stock purchases, particularly in field of ESOL resources.

7.8 Case Study Eight

Influencing, Awareness-Raising and Training for Library Staff

In several of the participating boroughs staff training has been part of the WTYL programme, or is currently in planning stage. All staff in public libraries, from senior management to frontline staff need to understand the definition of the terms asylum seeker and refugee and the distinction between them. They also need to understand what the facts are about refugee communities' experiences and their reasons for flight and migration, what government policy is, how public libraries fit into this and what their own role is. Without this background library staff will not be able to engage in a meaningful way with refugee communities to improve services at either a strategic or a practical level.

There needs to be a clear commitment from senior management to fundamental change backed up with human and financial resources to deliver this across the entire service. This change is not a short-term project but a long-term process. It is part of a much wider cultural shift required so that public libraries play a much more proactive role in identifying and meeting community needs.

In the course of the WTYL project work has begun to raise awareness and influence staff thinking through training courses. In LB Enfield, the WTYL Project Officer worked in conjunction with library managers and The Network to organise and deliver a series of six day-long training modules to all permanent staff, entitled Welcome To Your Library.

The aim of the training was:

- To define social exclusion and place the work of the library service in this area within the government and council's agenda
- To provide information and dispel myths about asylum-seekers and refugees nationally and locally
- To consult with staff about WTYL's recommendations on simplifying joining procedures.

In LB Brent refugee training has been proposed for front-line staff. The aim of this is:

- To look at key issues relating to the experience of refugees in their home country and here
- To identify the sorts of services libraries can provide that refugees will most benefit from
- Provide background on the work of WTYL.

A course for senior management is also proposed to raise awareness of key issues as above and

- To identify ways of implementing real changes in practice
- For the trainer to work with one or two designated staff members to review progress after 6 months
- To implement agreed changes in practice.

This training programme is expected to take place with the involvement of Salusbury World as trainers - see Appendix Four.

In LB Newham training courses are being planned to take place in autumn 2004, again with the involvement of external expertise from people who work with refugee communities.

In LB Camden the WTYL project has followed on from the council's scrutiny panel, which produced a report in July 2003: *Working with refugees: report of the scrutiny panel looking at further education, employment and training opportunities for refugees in Camden*. The library service contributed to this and reported that refugee groups would be identified and consulted with to discover information needs with reference to libraries, and to increase service use and accessibility.

This meant that there was already a foundation on which to build not only across the library service but also across the council as a whole. The Project Officer has been able to work cross-departmentally and produce support material for library staff to help them access funding, source good practice material, find information on consultation processes, arrange events and visits and so on. There is an opportunity to build on this approach to develop a virtual library of good practice and information accessible to library authorities everywhere.

There is also an opportunity to develop awareness and influence library staff over time by ensuring that recruitment practices are inclusive and that job advertisements, go, for example, to refugee support organisations. Much more needs to be done to ensure that the profile of library staff reflects better the profile of the communities that they serve. Work is already proposed in LB Camden, which will enable refugee work placements in the public library service.

Influencing, Awareness-Raising and Training for Library Staff

Key Lessons

- Commitment from senior management and designated staff to change how public libraries work is vital, with appropriate external support. This takes time
- Managers need leadership and communication skills and the resources necessary to carry all staff with them to deliver strategic policy goals
- All library staff need training and development so they understand the facts and key issues affecting refugee communities in relation to library services and their role in taking appropriate action
- Training is best undertaken as part of a wider commitment to serving the under-served
- There may be opportunities to deliver training not only through regional and sub-regional consortia and individual authorities, but also CILIP and other relevant agencies.

8. Summary of Key Issues and Lessons

Public libraries have great potential to promote integration of emerging communities and enhance community cohesion. There is a real opportunity, through work with asylum seekers and refugees, to close the gap between policy goals and implementation in this field. Examples of small-scale practical initiatives included in the case studies in this report, can be applied anywhere. These need to be seen, not as fragmented examples of good work, but in an overall strategic context that will lead to longer term shared learning and development across the whole of the public library world. The following are the eight key issues and lessons that have emerged from the project as a whole.

Public libraries need to:

- **Build their capacity and manage change, so they can fulfil their potential over time**
- **Adopt a strategic approach backed up with practical actions to support this process**
- **Gather relevant evidence consistently and continually about their local communities and what they want. Use this necessary management information to strengthen policy arguments**
- **Set priorities based on evidence available rather than a "one size fits all" approach**
- **Monitor and evaluate their work and use this to develop services further**
- **Involve refugee umbrella and community organisations and others working on their behalf. Provide human, financial and physical resources for this so they can be active participants in service development as well as users**
- **Learn from other sectors working with asylum seekers and refugees and share good practice as widely as possible.**
- **Use work in this field to raise the profile and demonstrate the value of public libraries locally, regionally and nationally.**

9. Successes and Impact

Key achievements of the WTYL project include:

- Detailed mapping of the location, identity and needs of emerging communities and the organisations that support them in every participating borough
- Development of new local partnerships with RCOs and others across the project
- Relevant training for over 200 library staff with more at planning stage at the time of writing
- Enhanced management information for service planning for and with refugee communities
- Simplified library joining procedures and proposals to capture better data on number of refugees who are public library members
- Introductory tours of public libraries for refugee communities leading to over 300 new users
- ICT and other taster sessions
- Purchase of relevant stock with active involvement of refugee communities
- Celebratory cultural events bringing different communities together.

The WTYL project has run for just 12 months, with part-time staff. It is too soon to measure fully the impact of the work as much of what has been done has aimed to lay the groundwork for longer-term developments (see section on sustaining the work below for more information).

10. Sustaining the Work

The single most important factor that will determine success in the long -run is changing organisational culture and attitudes and taking a dynamic and proactive approach where all staff are involved in engaging with external partners. Inevitably this requires a strategic approach, underpinned by practical measures that include all staff. Working in this way would have an impact on work with all socially excluded groups and new library audiences, not just asylum seekers and refugees.

The challenge now is to develop practice from this project so that it becomes part of the mainstream of what public libraries do. Cross-cutting links also need to be developed so that public libraries feature as an integrated part of a range of local, regional and national government programmes relating to social inclusion, basic skills, lifelong learning, neighbourhood renewal and community cohesion.

The work so far is just a beginning, but it has provided the outline of a possible framework and infrastructure. Developing the work carried out by WTYL is under discussion with potential funders at the time of writing this report.

There is now an opportunity to:

- Disseminate the evidence of good practice from WTYL and other pioneering work
- Identify the most effective ways to share this
- Develop work with new partners to widen its impact
- Advocate the crucial role public libraries play locally, regionally and nationally with government departments and other agencies.

As part of the dissemination process ALM London will host a conference at the Museum of London on 14 July 2004 entitled *Enriching Communities: How Libraries, Museums and Archives Can Work with Asylum Seekers and Refugees*. The primary case study will be the WTYL project. This report and the external report by Advice Development Project will be circulated widely.

At local level, each of the Project Officer's reports contains recommendations to take work forward. There has already been significant progress in finding additional resources to sustain the work of WTYL. This is the position at the time of writing, but new developments continue.

LB Newham has secured c£350,000 from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. The WTYL project was identified as a priority and consequently c£100,000 was awarded to continue the work over the next two years, with the intention of mainstreaming and sustaining all WTYL activities thereafter. The library service is undertaking a service improvement review. This is expected to develop new ways of tackling social exclusion, including the creation of new posts. It is expected that a new team would include at least one worker with experience in this area of work and responsibility for its co-ordination.

In LB Brent the Project Officer's contract has been extended as a continuation of the Welcome To Your Library project. Part of this will involve developing activities for Black History Month. The library service is currently planning staff training related to working with refugees and asylum seekers. In the longer run the library service is looking at staffing structures and may develop a post with responsibility for social inclusion of which the WTYL work would form a part.

In LB Merton there is commitment to develop a library resource centre for refugees and asylum seekers and to continue the work. The exact details of how this will be done have not been finalised at the time of writing as a new Head of Service has only just come into post.

In LB Enfield, the Project Officer secured £10,000 additional funding for her work from the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation small grants fund. She will continue working until the end of July 2004. At the time of writing this report the library service is in the process of looking for ways of continuing the work and finding additional resources.

In LB Camden, funding has just been secured to continue the work and spread its ownership, in particular to support 24 short work placements in Camden library services, which will be specifically available to refugees and asylum seekers.

Funding applications have been or are about to be made to extend the work of WTYL outside London and to additional boroughs in London. This will involve four elements:

- Change management in public libraries. This will require practical commitment from senior library staff, training and mentoring, partnership building and refugee user involvement.
- Information and good practice support. This will include development of resources including a website and other e-communication to share information and learning. A small cross-sector advisory group will support this and the change management work
- Advocacy of the key role public libraries play, through local partners, but also regionally and nationally
- Monitoring and evaluation. This may include surveys and other qualitative and quantitative evidence gathering and recording to show the impact of the work.

At the end of this first year, there are already more people in different sectors who are better placed than they were to champion what public libraries can do. We now hope to continue to sustain momentum to build on what has been learnt so far.

11. Appendices

Appendix One

London Libraries Development Agency (LLDA)

The LLDA's role is to provide a co-ordinated strategic vision for library and information services across London. The LLDA works to:

- Forge partnerships and build links to improve the quality and scope of library services, improve access and increase the resources available;
- Act as a first point of contact for those who seek to work with libraries;
- Make the case for libraries using advocacy materials to stimulate debate and discussion about the roles libraries can play.

For more information: <http://www.lda.org.uk>

Contact: Fiona O'Brien, Development Manager 020 7641 5266

The Paul Hamlyn Foundation

The Paul Hamlyn Foundation was established in 1987 by Paul Hamlyn, the publisher and philanthropist who died in 2001. His overriding concern was to address issues of inequality and disadvantage, particularly in relation to young people, and this is the focus of the Foundations' grant-giving programmes. Improving access to books and reading is one of the Foundation's priorities.

For more information: <http://www.phf.org.uk>

Contact: Susan Blishen, Education Project Manager 020 7227 3500

The Network

The Network aims to assist libraries, museums, archives and galleries and other organisations to tackle social exclusion through the development of policy and practice to enable them better to interact with their local communities and wider audiences.

For more information: <http://www.seapn.org.uk>

Contact: John Vincent, john@nadder.org.uk

Welcome To Your Library Project Team

Helen Carpenter Project Co-ordinator

Linda George Project Officer, London Borough of Brent

Helen Pollock, Project Officer, London Borough of Camden

Hilary Plews, Project Officer, London Borough of Enfield

Shanthi Ahilathirunayagam, Project Officer, London Borough of Merton Jun-Dec 2003

Di Reynolds Project Officer, London Borough of Merton Jan- May 2004

Sarah Henderson, Project Officer, London Borough of Newham.

Appendix Two

Selected Policy and Research Documents relevant to Welcome To Your Library

Framework for the Future: Libraries, Learning and Information in the Next Decade. Department for Culture, Media and Sport. February 2003

http://www.culture.gov.uk/global/publications/archive_2003/framework_future.htm

Libraries For All: Social Inclusion in Public Libraries. Policy Guidance for Local Authorities in England. Department for Culture, Media and Sport, October 1999

http://www.culture.gov.uk/global/publications/archive_1999/default.htm?properties=archive%5F1999%2C%2C

Libraries, Museums, Galleries and Archives For All: Co-operating Across the Sectors To Tackle Social Exclusion. Department for Culture, Media and Sport, January 2001.

http://www.culture.gov.uk/PDF/libraries_archives_for_all.pdf

Londoners Need to Read. Funded by Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit of the Department for Education and Skills and the DCMS (April 2003-May 2004) Managed by London Museums Archives & Libraries, with support from Museums Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and Government Office for London.

http://www.lmal.org.uk/uploads/documents/Need_to_read_v-3.pdf

Meeting the needs of refugee families and their children. Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Social Policy Research 86 - November 1995

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/sp86.asp>

Open to All? The Public Library and Social Exclusion. Resource, 2000. Libraries & Information Commission research report.

<http://www.cilip.org.uk/groups/csg/si/ota.html>

Public Libraries, Ethnic Diversity, and Citizenship. Roach, Patrick and Morrison, Marlene. 1998. British Library Research and Innovations Report 76, CEDAR (Centre for Education Development, Appraisal and Research) /CRER: University of Warwick.

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/cedar/publications/reports/>

Somali refugees in London: oral culture in a Western information environment. Anthony Olden, Libri, 49 (4), pp212-224, 1999.

Tackling Social Exclusion: Taking Stock and Looking to the Future - Emerging Findings. Social Exclusion Unit, March 2004

<http://www.socialexclusionunit.gov.uk/impactstrends/impacts220304.htm>

Reports and policy documents available from the Greater London Authority on refugees - see <http://www.london.gov.uk/gla/publications/refugees.jsp>

See also work commissioned through the Home Office, Department of Health and Department for Education and Skills and Connexions Service.

Appendix Three

Sources of Statistical Information on Refugees Used in Welcome To Your Library Project

Local Sources

Asylum Teams
Children's Fund
Council translating and interpreting services
Council websites
Crime and Disorder Strategies
Equalities Units
Local education authorities (e.g. pupil data surveys, language surveys, performance surveys)
Local Strategic Partnerships
Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies
RCOs - analysis by location and direct consultation
Research and statistics officers or departments

Regional Sources

London Asylum Seeker Consortium. See
<http://www.westminster.gov.uk/socialservices/lasc/index.cfm>

Greater London Authority. See
<http://www.london.gov.uk/gla/publications/refugees.jsp>

National Sources

Home Office. See <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html>

Census information. See www.statistics.gov.uk

Indices of Deprivation 2000. Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions. See

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Product.asp?vlnk=9421>

Or

<http://www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/indices.asp>

ACORN neighbourhood profiles. See www.upmystreet.co.uk

Institute of Public Policy Research. See

<http://www.ippr.org.uk/research/index.php?current=19&project=158>

Appendix Four. Selected Organisations and Websites

Book Trusted

Aims to help teachers, librarians, parents and young people find out about books. Includes Booktrusted News, which ran a special issue on refugees in winter 2002.
<http://www.booktrusted.co.uk/magazine/issue3/index.html>

Count Me In Calendar

Provides comprehensive calendar of events.

<http://www.countmeincalendar.info/countme/CMIHome.nsf/frmMainHomepage?ReadForm>

Exiled Writers Ink!

Aims to facilitate the wider dissemination of work by writers in exile and to ensure they have a platform.
<http://www.exiledwriters.co.uk/>

Inspiring Learning for All

Online resource for museums, libraries and archives
<http://www.inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk/default.aspx?flash=true>

London Advice Services Alliance

Multikulti website provides Information advice and guidance in community languages, including information about public libraries on the education page.
www.multikulti.org.uk

National Information Forum

Has produced several relevant publications relating to refugees and asylum seekers
<http://www.nif.org.uk/>

National Literacy Trust

A lot of useful information on libraries and on social inclusion
<http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/index.html>

The Network

See also Appendix One. This website has a particularly useful list of suppliers of black, ethnic minority and community language materials
www.seapn.org.uk

New Arrivals

BBC website aimed at asylum seekers and refugees.
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newarrivals/>

Refugees Asylum Seekers and the Media (RAM) Project

Website includes very useful diary
<http://www.ramproject.org.uk/diary.php>

Salisbury World

<http://www.salisburyworld.org.uk/>
Provides educational, social and emotional support for refugee children and is based in a London primary school. It has amassed much useful experience. With Save the

Children it has produced Home from Home, a guidance and resource pack for school and other organisations working with refugee children and their families.

Appendix Five. Organisations and Individuals Contacted By The WTYL Project Co-ordinator Outside the Library World

Advice UK <http://www.adviceuk.org.uk/>
Arts Learning Partnership <http://www.artslearningpartnership.org>
Children's Society <http://www.the-childrens-society.org.uk/>
Citizens Advice (London) <http://www.nacab.org.uk/>
Community Service Volunteers <http://www.csv.org.uk/>
Education Action International (RETAS)
<http://www.education-action.org/home.asp.htm>
Employability Forum <http://www.employabilityforum.co.uk/>
Evelyn Oldfield Unit <http://www.evelynoldfield.co.uk/main.htm>
Exiled Writers Ink! <http://www.exiledwriters.co.uk/>
Government Office for London (FRESA) <http://www.fresa-london.org/>
Greater London Authority (Richard Stanton) <http://www.london.gov.uk/>
Health for Asylum Seekers and Refugees Portal <http://www.harweb.org.uk/>
ICAR (Information Centre about Asylum & Refugees) <http://www.icar.org.uk/>
London Advice Services Alliance (Multikulti) <http://www.multikulti.org.uk/>
London Asylum Seekers Consortium
<http://www.westminster.gov.uk/socialservices/lasc/index.cfm>
London Metropolitan University (Jill Rutter, Dept of Education)
<http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/>
National Information Forum <http://www.nif.org.uk/>
National Refugee Integration Forum (Christine Herrick)
<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/>
Refugee Action <http://www.refugee-action.org.uk/>
Refugee Council <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/>
Refugee Assessment & Guidance Unit
<http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/ragu/home.cfm>
Refugee Education Steering Group (London) and REFED
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/refed/>
Refugee Housing Association <http://www.refugeehousing.org.uk/>
Refugee Women's Association (RWA) <http://www.refugeewomen.org/rwa.htm>
Refugee Youth Agency <http://www.refugeeyouth.org.uk/>
Resource Unit (supplementary schools) <http://www.resourceunit.com>
Salisbury World <http://www.salisburyworld.org.uk/>
University of East London, Refugee Studies (Phil Marfleet)
<http://www.uel.ac.uk/>