



Libraries Connected Innovators Network National Gathering 2024

Wed 6 March, 10:00 – 16:00, The Studio, Birmingham

Programme

10.00 Arrival, Refreshments & Icebreaker

10.30 Welcome – Ed Jewell, Libraries Connected President Elect & Chief Librarian Jersey

10.45 Libraries and Challenges of the Modern World -
Josefina Carrillo Arenas, Paterna del Campo Library, Spain

11.15 Practical Shared Learning Session 1

Library Speed Talks:

- Embracing APIs to Improve the Customer Experience - Georgina Carr, Libraries, GLL
- Dragons in the Library - Katherine Gibson, Stockport Libraries
- Dress to Remember, a Dementia Friendly Outreach Programme - Kate Elliott, Brent Libraries
- Taking the Library to GRT Communities - Sophia Richards, North Somerset Libraries
- Nature Exchange: a transatlantic penpal project - Anna McMahon, Cambridgeshire Libraries

Group discussions (45mins)

12.45 Lunch

13.45 Practical Shared Learning Session 2

Library Speed Talks:

- Thermal Imaging Camera Loaning Schemes - Oliver Hellis, Somerset Libraries
- CathARTism - Katie Plant, Wandsworth Libraries (GLL)
- Blackpool's Book Nook - Vicky Clarke, Blackpool Libraries
- Lego Robotics and First Lego League at the Library - Kendra Bucknell, Camden Libraries
- Libraries of Sanctuary – Julie McKirdy, Sandwell Libraries

Group discussions (45mins)

15.15 Breaking the Barriers: Embracing Black Culture and Heritage through Podcasts and Music - Lavinya Stennett, Ilhan Awed & Janique Berryman, The Black Curriculum.

15.45 Open Floor Sharing Session – share your innovative library projects.

16.00 Close – Helen Drakard, Libraries Connected



Guest Speakers



Josefina Carrillo Arenas has over 30 years of professional experience as a librarian, during which she has engaged in various activities to promote reading. The first project was "Read a Story to Him," and the latest one on social media is "See Yourself Reading."

She enjoys imagining how the world could be better, more humane, and how each person could contribute to achieving that, and her working style, involves carefully listening to what others think and do to improve the world.

Josefina presented at the Library Days of Andalusia in 2017 talking about "*An Experience of the Social Role of the Public Library: From Theory to Practice*", and participated in The Europe Challenge 2023 with the project: "[Cultural Opportunities to Combat Disinformation](#)".

At the Innovation Gathering, in her talk titled "*Libraries and Challenges of the Modern World*", Josefina will focus on how libraries can undertake activities to facilitate access to accurate, diverse, and high-quality information, addressing topics often overlooked by mainstream media.



Lavinya Stennett is a writer, activist, and Founder and CEO of social enterprise The Black Curriculum.

The Black Curriculum was founded in 2019 and works to teach and support the teaching of Black history all year round, aiming to empower all students with a sense of identity and belonging and campaigning to bring about permanent change to the national curriculum ensuring it is truly inclusive.

Graduating with a first class from SOAS in 2019, she has most recently authored a paper exploring Maroon ecology in Jamaica and Brazil and has been named as one of the Sunday Times 50 Women of the Year, was awarded Trailblazer of The Year by Hello Magazine and featured in Vogue, and GQ for her activism. Lavinya is currently writing her debut book on Black History 'Omitted' due out for publication in 2024.



Library Speed Talks

Embracing APIs to Improve the Customer Experience

Georgina Carr, Marketing Programme Owner, Libraries, Greenwich Leisure Limited

Traditionally, libraries have relied on third party OPAC's to deliver an online catalogue experience to their customers, with minimal control over the result. API's mean that this is no longer necessary; In this talk I'll cover how GLL has transformed their library customer journey online, and what this means for the future of online catalogue experiences.

Dragons in the Library

Katherine Gibson Development Librarian, Stockport Libraries

Dungeons and Dragons serves as a catalyst for connection, fostering a space where neurodiverse individuals can amplify their voices and cultivate vibrant communities. Through the power of storytelling, roleplay, and contagious laughter, participants come together, transcending barriers and embracing inclusivity. This immersive experience not only provides entertainment but also nurtures personal growth and social interaction, creating a welcoming environment where everyone can thrive.

Dress to Remember, a Dementia Friendly Outreach Programme

Kate Elliott, Libraries Development Officer, Brent Libraries

This project was conceived as a pilot for Brent Libraries, Arts and Heritage to deliver an outreach partnership programme for people living with dementia, following a successful funding grant bid. The programme delivered six months of workshops to two community organisations for older people, and its copyright is the producer and partner, historian, and author of the book *Style in my DNA* Lorna Holder from Tuareg Productions. Based on this book, the project focused on using photographs from it to stimulate the memory of people with dementia, encouraging them to review their family's photographic archives. The narrative was about reminiscing the choice of clothing worn for a specific occasion once valued, such as family gatherings, weddings, christenings, birthdays, and graduation ceremonies.

The programme culminated in a successful celebration event highlighting the achievements, providing a pilot for a more detailed structure for a wider reaching and supportive outreach partnership programme, a good practise model for other local authorities and very importantly, supplying an online archival exhibition for our Heritage Service.



Taking the Library to GRT Communities

Sophia Richards, Libraries Services Development Manager, North Somerset libraries

In 2023 North Somerset libraries outreach team began a successful programme of delivering services and activities to GRT communities for the first time. It has not been easy to get access to these residents and for many years we were not able to provide any library services. Find out how we are working with multiple partners to build relationships and design services for families, ensuring that all contact is sensitive and appropriate for the needs of this little-understood community.

Nature Exchange: a transatlantic penpal project

Anna McMahon, Library Development Officer, Cambridgeshire Libraries

A simple project with profound impacts, "Nature Exchange" connected library members in Cambridgeshire and New York City over the course of a year as they exchanged nature observations on hand-written postcards. Inspired by Charles Darwin's correspondence, it was a collaboration between Cambridgeshire Libraries and the New York Public Library, supported by Cambridge University Library.

Thermal Imaging Camera Loaning Schemes

Oliver Hellis, Development Officer, Somerset Libraries

Responding to energy crisis of 2022, Somerset Library Service worked in partnership to help reduce household bills of Somerset residents through the set up of the Thermal Imaging Camera loaning scheme.

CathARTism

Katie Plant, Senior Library Assistant, Wandsworth Libraries (GLL)

CathARTism is a therapeutic arts programme hosted in public libraries in Wandsworth. This presentation will cover what we get up to, as well as why arts for health is important and how libraries are the perfect spaces to tackle health and cultural inequalities.

Blackpool's Book Nook

Vicky Clarke, Head of Blackpool Libraries

The renovation and reopening of a beloved indoor market in Blackpool and how the towns library service are delivering a unique and bespoke offer in the market hall and have created a new brand and offer for residents and visitors.



Libraries Connected



Lego Robotics and First Lego League at the Library

Kendra Bucknell, Community Library Manager, Camden Council Libraries

At Camden Libraries we have managed to expand within 12 months to run Lego Robotics and First Lego League in four libraries and made four libraries into Discovery Hubs, off the back of a six-week trial. Through this many children have been introduced to or built on their knowledge of STEM and coding and many have now developed a love for both building and coding. I will be talking about how I brought this success about and covering the benefits of this for children and how we got achieved funding and visibility in our communities and within the council.

Libraries of Sanctuary

Julie McKirdy, Sandwell Libraries

More details to be added soon.

**Share your highlights on social media using #librariesinnovate
and tag us @libsconnected**