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Assessing the Potential for, and needs of, Cross-Sectoral, Local Collaborative Access Schemes in the Yorkshire and Humber Region

For YMLAC

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Inspire Regional Facilitation Project

March 2006

Table of contents

List of Acronyms.....	2
1 Introduction	3
2 Background	4
2.1 Library Use and Access.....	4
2.2 Reasons for and Barriers to Using Other Libraries	5
2.3 Tips for Collaborative Schemes	6
2.4 Summary	9
3 Recommended Guidelines.....	10
3.1 Guidelines for new groups – to meet user needs.....	10
3.2 Guidelines for new groups – to meet the needs of the partnership	13
3.3 Support that could be offered by YMLAC.....	15
4 Outline of situation in Yorkshire and the Humber.....	17
4.1 Introduction and outline map of Yorkshire and Humber region.....	17
4.2 South Yorkshire (SYALL).....	18
4.3 West Yorkshire.....	19
4.4 North Yorkshire.....	21
4.5 East Yorkshire / Humber.....	22
4.6 Summary	23
5 Recommendations summary	24
References	25
Appendix A – Guidelines for new groups, user needs.....	26
Appendix B - Guidelines for new groups, partnership needs	27

List of Acronyms

FE – Further Education

GRIP – the Grimsby Information Providers group

HE – Higher Education

LASh – Libraries Access Sunderland

LINC – Library and Information Co-operation council

SAILS – Staff development for Access to Information and Learning in Sunderland

SYALL – South Yorkshire Access to Libraries for Learners

YMLAC – Yorkshire Museums, Libraries & Archives Council

1 Introduction

This report was written between November 2005 to March 2006 thanks to direct funding from YMLAC under the guidance of Jane Walton and Liz Roberts at YMLAC.

It aims to identify and assess the potential for and needs of cross-sectoral library partnerships in the Yorkshire and Humber region which aim to increase and broaden access to knowledge. It aims to do this against the background of the current roll out of Inspire (www.inspire.gov.uk) across the region and country as a whole.

The report consists of a background view of the literature available on this topic; recommended guidelines for any potential new groups and the support that could be offered to these by the regional Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, YMLAC; an outline of the current situation in our region showing the potential for new groups and finally a brief bullet point summary of recommendations made.

2 Background

There is a limited body of literature available around the area of cross-sectoral access to libraries, including who uses libraries across the sectors, the barriers to library use and most recently the experiences of setting up cross-sectoral schemes such as Inspire. The author will look briefly at some of the more relevant literature in this area starting from the APT Review (1995) and draw from this literature any information that may be useful in developing a set of guidelines for establishing new cross-sectoral groups to provide increased access to library resources.

2.1 Library Use and Access

The APT review aimed to be a comprehensive review of library co-operation across the UK and Ireland and was carried out by the APT Partnership (1995) on behalf of the Library and Information Co-operation Council (LINC). It set the scene in the mid 1990s with clear recommendations for future co-operation and was intended by LINC to spur further debate. For our purposes I wish to highlight one paragraph from pages 1.2 to 1.3:

“Academic library and information services have in recent decades developed in a self-sufficient way to service the need of formally attached students and researchers. As many of these users also make extensive use of public facilities and as they only constitute part, although a large part, of the total “studying and researching population” there is an urgent need to strengthen the links between academic and public libraries.”

This report was written with the background of worries over increasing disparity between resources available in Public and Academic libraries and concerns that implementing the Follett report (1993) would increase those disparities.

It is a theme that re-occurs frequently, with large numbers of both formal students and “lifelong learners” using public libraries and this being seen as unfair when compared with access to academic libraries often being difficult or simply not known about even when present.

The “People Flows” report by Nankivell et al (1999) which is also summarised in Nankivell & Dalton (2000), studied library use in Sheffield and Birmingham, interviewing library users in public, college and university libraries. They highlight this disparity in access, showing large numbers of students using public libraries alongside limited access to college and university libraries – even though in Sheffield the Access to Libraries for Learning (which became SYALL when extended across South Yorkshire) was already established. Their figures show almost 30% of public library users were either formally registered students or lifelong learners.

This imbalance in use between public and academic libraries is still present today and can be at least partly addressed by access schemes such as Inspire.

2.2 Reasons for and Barriers to Using Other Libraries

The “People Flows” report goes further than just describing this imbalance in library use and gives us useful information on how and why people choose which libraries to use, what the key barriers to library use were in their survey and additionally suggest some tips for successful collaboration. These tips were based primarily on follow up workshops with library staff held in Birmingham and Sheffield.

Six key reasons for using specific libraries emerged from the “People Flows” research along with four main barriers (pp. 68-69) and these are listed below –

Six key reasons for choosing a library:

- 1) Where the library is (including location, transport, parking, and proximity to home, work or place of study)
- 2) The resources within the library (including books, journals, IT facilities and study space).
- 3) When the library is open.
- 4) Who staffs the library (their knowledge, helpfulness and approachability).
- 5) How the resources within the library are organised (how easy it is to find what you want).
- 6) The general library environment.

Four key barriers to library use:

- 1) Opening hours.
- 2) Borrowing facilities.
- 3) Access to IT.
- 4) Ability to gain entry to the library.

Hull (2000) looked at barriers to accessing libraries for current students in Further and Higher education, finding a wide range of perceived barriers ranging from poor availability of books to whether the students have previous experience of using libraries. The factors that are probably most relevant to the wider population could be listed as general “Social Exclusion”; Literacy and numeracy problems; Lack of information retrieval skills; Fear of the “unknown” or of “losing face” when going into an unfamiliar library environment and finally; Computer-phobia.

“Inspiring Learning for All”, as quoted in Greenwood (2004) p. 3, produces a long list of potential barriers to library use and splits them into six areas.

Physical – Are buildings, collections, events, physically accessible to everyone?

Sensory – Can they be used by people with hearing or visual impairment?

Intellectual – Do they exclude people without extensive background knowledge or poor English language skills?

Cultural – Do we reflect and represent the interests, life experiences and culture of the community served?

Attitudinal – Is the environment welcoming, especially to new users?

Financial – Can people on low incomes afford to use our services?

Hall and Curry (2000), however, suggest a much simpler list from the SAILS research project in Sunderland, which moved outside the library sector and talked directly to potential library users, who they classed as “lifelong learners”. This was in a region that had already launched its collaborative access project, LASH and so is of great interest here despite the brevity of the list. The three main barriers to these users accessing libraries were – lack of confidence in using libraries; lack of awareness in what was available; and lack of full awareness amongst library staff which libraries people could access.

Many more specific barriers were collated during the pilot Inspire project in Cumbria and listed in Mason (2004). Comments from potential users included unwillingness to go into HE and FE libraries unaccompanied for the first time, unwillingness to use other libraries unless they could borrow items or use IT facilities.

These sorts of barriers must be kept in mind when developing any guidelines for collaborative access schemes, or there is a risk they may not meet the needs of potential users.

2.3 Tips for Collaborative Schemes

There are many suggestions on factors to bear in mind when setting up collaborative schemes. Nankivell et al (1999) in the People Flows report suggest a wide range of possible areas for such schemes, only one of which is access to libraries. They list nine key elements (on p.77), however, that they feel are essential to create and maintain successful co-operative ventures.

- 1) **Financial benefits for all.** Monitoring, reporting and review procedures must be in place to prove these benefits.
- 2) **Management co-operation and strategic planning.** All staff must know that activities are supported by senior library managers.
- 3) **Staff awareness and training.** This can ensure that staff see co-operation as a positive development – not a threat.
- 4) **Clear publicity for users and staff.** There is simply no point in making changes to access policies if staff and potential users do not know about it.
- 5) **Maintenance of organisational integrity.** No activity can take place that could threaten services for a library’s core users. Any collaborative scheme must recognize this and take it into account.
- 6) **Clarity and what each partner offers and how each expects to benefit.** Everyone must know how their partners intend to contribute from the start in order to avoid arguments in future.
- 7) **A funded and staffed co-ordinating body.** Without this any scheme is likely to be unsustainable once initial enthusiasm has died away
- 8) **Start small but think big.** It is laudable to aim for great things with any new scheme, but any new model of collaboration must start small to prove they can work and to get staff used to working in new ways before developing further.
- 9) **Evaluation and monitoring.** Any new venture must be able to evaluate it’s success to make sure that it is delivering any benefits stated at the outset.

Hall and Curry (2000) also have many tips for success based on their experience in setting up LASH – Libraries Access Sunderland. They suggest seven key success factors (p. 89):

- 1) Strong strategic direction
- 2) Formalisation of relationships
- 3) Strong focus on the client
- 4) Promotion of understanding between libraries
- 5) A positive approach
- 6) Targeting what is achievable at the start
- 7) Commitment

More of an overview may be offered by McNicol et al (2002), who set out with three aims, one of which was to “recommend ways of establishing cross-sectoral collaborative arrangements” which was largely done by looking at examples of current best practice. They have their own lists of factors necessary for success –

- 1) A strategic approach
- 2) Good planning and management, including starting projects small and then building on initial success.
- 3) Commitment from all partners
- 4) Communication between the partners and also between the organisations and users.
- 5) High-level support
- 6) Funding.

Carter, C. (2004) assess a range of pilot projects undertaken as a result of the Empowering the Learning Community report and report a range of findings. Seven of the eight projects thought all partnership projects should include someone in the role of co-ordinator (with the eighth saying probably) and suggested various functions these fulfil, including providing “coherence and co-ordination”, “take responsibility for overall delivery” and the “quality of the project”.

The author of this report has also recently looked at two collaborative access schemes in Yorkshire, WELCOME! and SYALL and drew from their experiences a small list of key lessons learnt from these two schemes.

- 1) **Central co-ordination.** The importance of having a key person who has the task of keeping the scheme going written into their everyday job description.
- 2) **Good communication.** Both SYALL and WELCOME! keep member libraries feeling part of an active group.
- 3) **Keep it simple at the start.** Any scheme should stick to offering a good level of service offering reference access to learners. Extra “daughter” groups can be added on as and when needed to start off additional services without diverting from the main effort of providing access to all.
- 4) **Promotion in and out of libraries.** When any new schemes are set up, if increasing access to libraries for all learners is important, then any guidelines for new groups should include promotion of the scheme outside the library environment.
- 5) **Staff awareness.** Any potential scheme should consider either large amounts of training and awareness raising, or perhaps an occasional brief survey of a selection of library staff to check awareness in order to ensure consistency of service levels and accurate referral of users.

There is much overlap between the different lists of success factors above, and these will feed into the authors own recommendations in the following section of this report.

There are also barriers to libraries collaborating together to provide joint access to learners. The report by Greenwood (2004) provides us with a recently researched list of these barriers as experienced by libraries in the North West. FE, HE and Public libraries often had different concerns, but the top four barriers listed as important or very important were consistently “Lack of time”; “Lack of money”; “technical and legal issues”; and “Insufficient knowledge”. This flags up the need for help and advice when setting up local collaborative schemes to reduce the impact of these concerns.

2.4 Summary

There are many valid reasons for the use of a range of libraries by learners in the community, but we have seen there are also many barriers to such use and in addition, barriers to libraries setting up collaborative schemes to help improve access. There are however a range of suggestions to help any potential scheme set up and succeed in its activities.

McNicol et al (2002) in their thorough report (p. 13) suggest the following activities for projects to increase their chances of success both in collaborative working and directly in improving access to learners.

- 1) Have a common goal which unites the partners.
- 2) Adopt a model of collaboration best suited to the aims of the collaborative initiative and the needs of member organisations.
- 3) Take advantage of opportunities to share good practice, to promote their own work and demonstrate success; to encourage others to work more collaboratively; and to learn from other initiatives.
- 4) Investigate ways to measure the success of projects to provide evidence of the benefits of collaboration, in particular the impacts on learners.
- 5) Make further use of electronic communication to overcome the barriers of time and distance faced by partners.
- 6) Where appropriate, investigate ways in which access to electronic materials might be improved.
- 7) Projects with a large number of partners over a wide geographical area might consider establishing sub-groups.
- 8) Projects with a large number of partners from different sectors may wish to establish sub-groups for those from closely allied sectors.
- 9) Consider involving learners themselves in the development of initiatives.

These, along with the other factors and tips mentioned in the literature above will be used in the following section to inform the authors own recommendations.

3 Recommended Guidelines

3.1 Guidelines for new groups – to meet user needs

From the literature above, we should address certain key points when setting up any new schemes to ensure it will meet the needs of potential users. Listed below are eight key points drawn from the lists of potential barriers to library use and reasons people choose certain libraries, together with suggested ways of addressing them.

I have then collated the points raised into a short checklist that libraries should aim for below.

1) Location of Libraries.

We need to include a wide range of libraries in any scheme to increase the chances of one being conveniently located for any potential user.

The public library service in any area must be included for this reason.

2) Resources Available.

A wide range of types of libraries must be available to increase the types of resources available.

This would preferably include public libraries, FE libraries, and at least one HE library. Any other specialist library in the area would improve this service.

3) Opening Hours.

The libraries in any scheme must cover evenings and weekends as well as standard daytime, weekday hours to satisfy this user requirement.

Normally this can be done by including a large HE library as part of a scheme. Alternatively, libraries could co-ordinate opening hours to ensure at least one library in an area is always open evenings or weekends – perhaps taking turns like a duty chemist in each town?

4) Library Staff Knowledgeable and Approachable.

It may be difficult to ensure consistent, good quality service across a range of library services.

Any new scheme should ensure adequate training across all partners in which libraries people can access. Staff can then at least be knowledgeable in this area.

5) Lack of Confidence.

Walking into an unfamiliar library can be difficult for many potential users. This can be helped by ensuring staff are well trained and users are not turned away, by providing as much information as possible to potential users so they know they are able to access a library, and by carrying out any outreach activities possible to build confidence in using libraries.

A shared library card may also be useful in building confidence as it can bring a sense of “belonging” to additional libraries.

6) **Access rights and Knowledge of what is available (Staff and users).**

All libraries in a scheme should sign up to a basic agreement for access rights (such as the Inspire Kitemark) to ensure clarity in what is available. Additional information in what is available needs to be easily available. This then needs to be communicated to staff via training and to potential users through promotional activities.

Library catalogues should be easy to access (online if possible) so users can find out if a library stocks the materials they require before visiting.

7) **Borrowing Rights.**

Recognising that libraries have a duty first and foremost to their own users this may be difficult to provide, but should be a target for partners in any scheme – especially for the larger libraries who are least likely to feel the impact of additional borrowing.

8) **IT Access.**

An area fraught with problems, especially regarding licensing of software and database provision. It should be an aim for libraries in any scheme to provide access to the internet and certain standard software as a minimum for walk in users and any database access that is possible.

This should not be done at the expense of good service to existing library users, and participating libraries may wish to limit numbers of walk in users, or limit the times they can access IT facilities.

These areas can be collated into a short checklist of activities for new schemes to aim for, thus addressing the points covered above.

Activity	Notes
Reference Access & Study Space as a minimum	Statement of intent to allow access (such as signing up to Inspire kitemark) so all libraries and potential users are clear the minimum they can expect.
A good range of libraries	Public libraries, plus one other type of library service as a bare minimum. The ideal would include a range of HE; FE; and specialist libraries as well as Public Libraries. If this range is not present initially, then the group should consider widening the geographical region covered to provide the range.
A wide range of opening hours	At least one library service in partnership to be regularly open evenings / weekends. This may be done through the range of libraries (above) or by arrangement between the partner libraries.
Staff knowledge of what is available	Regular training. Internal promotion. Either paper or web-based reference materials on partner libraries to be readily accessible to front-line staff.

Activity	Notes
User knowledge of what is available	As a minimum, promotion of scheme to members of partner libraries as well as to staff in partner libraries – e.g. posters, bookmarks, displays, printed information to handout. Ideally to also include outreach promotional activities whenever possible. Public libraries are in an ideal position to lead on this point. Basic information on member libraries to be made available through a website. Library catalogues available via the internet for non-members whenever possible.
Access to PCs to non-members	PC access to non-members to be aimed for by partner libraries either free or with minimal charge. This should not be done at the expense of service to existing core users and should be an aim, not a basic right.
Access to some electronic resources	Access to on-line or CD-ROM databases to non-members to be aimed for by partner libraries either free or with minimal charge. This should not be done at the expense of service to existing core users and should be an aim, not a basic right.
Borrowing rights	Some form of borrowing materials for non-members. May be restricted to certain types of stock or limited loan periods. This should not be done at the expense of service to existing core users and should be an aim, not a basic right.

A possible addition to the list, concerned with increasing confidence in potential users is:

Shared library card	Any sort of centrally approved card that allows reference access across a range of member libraries without additional proof of ID when visiting libraries. This is a desirable aim, but may increase the bureaucracy involved in administering referrals. It may even be seen as a retrograde step in some areas as potential users may not feel they can access a library unless they have the central card, whereas previously they may have been able to access libraries freely.
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This checklist is repeated as Appendix A of the report.

3.2 Guidelines for new groups – to meet the needs of the partnership

Certain key points can also be drawn from the literature to inform the needs of the partnership itself. This is to ensure any partnership is set up on firm foundations and can carry on past the initial enthusiasm of its founding to carry on serving the needs of potential users.

The following key points are pulled together from the suggested lists in the literature quoted above as factors the new partnerships should consider when establishing a group. This is then followed with a list of possible activities a group may undertake to address these points.

- 1) **Clear written aims and objectives.** Have a common, clear goal written down which unites the partners. Ways of revising this should be agreed from the start.
- 2) **Commitment.** There must be commitment from all partners to the project.
- 3) **A flexible model.** A model of collaboration should be developed that best suits the aims of the collaborative initiative and the needs of member organisations. The organisational integrity of individual libraries take priority – their own users must come first.
- 4) **A forum for libraries.** The partnership should act partly as a forum to allow partners to take advantage of opportunities to share good practice, to promote their own work and demonstrate success. The group as a whole should aim; to encourage others to work more collaboratively and to learn from other initiatives.
- 5) **Evidence.** If possible, the partnership should investigate ways to measure the success of projects to provide evidence of the benefits of collaboration.
- 6) **Good communication.** Make use of different modes of communication to encourage full involvement by partners. Electronic communication may help overcome the barriers of time and distance faced by partners.
- 7) **Users first.** A focus on the needs of potential users is important and partnerships should consider involving learners themselves in the development of initiatives.
- 8) **Training.** Staff awareness and training is vital to ensure all staff feel involved with the partnership as well as improving the service to users.
- 9) **A named co-ordinator.** Co-ordination of any group is important to maintain momentum and ensure objectives are achieved. This may be a separately funded executive or one or more people nominated from amongst member libraries and allowed set amounts of time to dedicate to the partnership
- 10) **Start small, think big.** Partnerships should start small and ensure targets are achievable even if the intention is to carry out a wide range of activities in future. A small successful start can be built upon easier than an overambitious failed project can be resurrected.
- 11) **Funding.** Adequate funding, whether as money or staff time, must be in place from the start.

These areas can be collated into a short checklist of activities for new schemes to aim for, thus addressing the points covered above.

Activity	Notes
Clear set of shared aims and objectives	An agreed aim and set of objectives for the scheme along with a method of reviewing these at set intervals. These should be set to ensure that they do not disadvantage any library's own users.
Formal commitment	A formal partnership agreement should be in place to show ongoing commitment.
An active group providing a forum for the exchange of ideas and best practice.	The partnership should act partly as a forum to allow partners to take advantage of opportunities to share good practice, to promote their own work and demonstrate success. The group as a whole should aim to encourage others to work more collaboratively and to learn from other initiatives.
Involving and measuring the effect on users.	A focus on the needs of potential users is important and partnerships should consider involving learners themselves in the development of initiatives. If possible, the partnership should investigate ways to measure the success of projects.
Regular and varied communication with partners.	Make use of different modes of communication to encourage full involvement by partners. Electronic communication in particular may help overcome the barriers of time and distance faced by partners
Regular staff training.	Staff awareness and training is vital to ensure all staff feel involved with the partnership as well as improving the service to users
Group commitment to funding a central co-ordinator.	Co-ordination of any group is important to maintain momentum and ensure objectives are achieved. This may be a separately funded executive or one or more people nominated from amongst member libraries and allowed set amounts of time to dedicate to the partnership
Set realistic targets that may become more ambitious with time.	New partnerships should start small, perhaps doing little more than promoting that their libraries allow reference access (such as through the basic Inspire offering). Only once started successfully should more ambitious offerings be considered.
Sufficient funding in place from the start.	A plan / source for funding sufficient to pay for identified promotional and other activities should be in place from the start. If initial funding is provided from external sources, an exit strategy from this funding should be considered from the start.

This checklist is repeated as Appendix B of the report.

3.3 Support that could be offered by YMLAC

A few key areas where YMLAC may be able to give direct support to local schemes without significant financial outlay are listed below.

1) Provide a pack of information to potential and new groups.

Provide a pack of information to new groups, or to people who express an interest in setting up a new group.

This may contain items such as:

- a) The checklists in Appendixes A and B
- b) Details of other groups in the region and contact details
- c) Sample materials produced by other groups
- d) Brief details of Inspire
- e) Details of relevant training or awareness days planned

2) Continue to raise awareness of Inspire and benefits of local schemes.

Run training (half) days and promotional activities aimed at specific groups, covering practicalities of opening up reference access of libraries, signing up to Inspire and taking part in local schemes. Target these at:

- a) FE colleges
- b) Specialist libraries (including Health)

As an alternative to targeting specific sectors, consider targeting instead all libraries within an area that has potential for a new group, such as Hull and neighbouring areas, and ensure the training is local to them.

Continue to promote Inspire and local schemes through activities such as:

- a) Materials and links on the YMLAC website.
- b) A “launch day” in Yorkshire once the Findit! site is finished and populated with sufficient information to be useful.
- c) Encouraging existing and new schemes to expand where appropriate, with Inspire as a basic model for the service offered.

3) Act as central point for exchange of ideas.

In addition to providing a pack of information (see 1), encourage a forum for the exchange of ideas between local groups to help spread good practice and problem solving between groups. This may be limited to arranging an initial meeting between possible members of the forum.

An alternative to a physical forum may be to encourage an email list between co-ordinators of the different groups, which is likely to see very light traffic but at least would provide an easy route for schemes to float ideas and ask questions of other schemes in the region.

4) Work to reduce barriers for potential users

New and existing groups should be encouraged to promote access to their libraries outside the normal library environment (not just in partner libraries) as part of any support or training offered by YMLAC.

A shared library card of some sort, or passport scheme such as recently launched in the North East can help reduce the psychological barrier to entering new libraries but there are practical problems to launching and administering such a scheme including concerns over extra paperwork in partner libraries; reliability of identification for some libraries; time spent maintaining a central database of cardholders; and cost of printing up cards and promotional materials.

SYALL have considered such a card for their libraries, but not yet produced one. If they do introduce such a scheme in future it may be possible to use this as a trial scheme for the whole region and consult with other libraries and library groups in the region about extending it if practical. A forum such as mentioned in (3) would be helpful if this was to occur.

5) Financial support for new groups

New groups need help in identifying funds to cover initial set-up costs, including promotional materials. YMLAC could provide advice on where funding may be available, and stress the need for new groups to ensure they have finances in place for ongoing support.

4 Outline of situation in Yorkshire and the Humber

4.1 Introduction and outline map of Yorkshire and Humber region.

There are currently two established collaborative schemes in the region that aim to increase access to libraries for learners. SYALL covering all of South Yorkshire (Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield) and WELCOME! covering Kirklees and Calderdale.

Emerging schemes may cover Bradford (BInspired), Grimsby in North East Lincolnshire (GRIP) and York (WELCOME! York).

This leaves large areas of the Yorkshire and Humber region not covered by local schemes. This section of the report will look at the region one area at a time, noting existing schemes and potential for new schemes. It will take into account geographical location, mix of libraries and potential for existing schemes to expand into neighbouring areas. It will briefly assess emerging schemes as well as looking at potential for new schemes.

Outline map of region^{1,2}



Note 1. Map image from <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/geography/downloads/YHNUTS.pdf> [accessed 8th March 2006]

Note 2. North Yorkshire Public Libraries cover Craven, Hambleton, Harrogate, Richmondshire, Ryedale, Scarborough and Selby.

4.2 South Yorkshire (SYALL)

Public Library Services - Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield
Higher Education Institutions – University of Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam University.
Further Education Colleges¹ – Barnsley College, Northern College, Doncaster College, Thomas Rotherham College, Rotherham College of Arts and Technology, Dearne Valley College, Castle College, Hillsborough College, Norton College, Peaks Centre, University Centre Barnsley.

South Yorkshire is completely (geographically) covered by the existing scheme, South Yorkshire Access to Libraries for Learners (SYALL) which includes Public, FE and HE libraries. Promotion of the scheme is largely through leaflets and posters within member libraries. Potential (rather than current) users are not targeted by promotional materials at present.

SYALL has been running since 1996, expanding from its initial base in Sheffield to cover all of South Yorkshire. It is a sub-group within a long established collaborative group, SINTO, which carries out a range of activities and is funded by subscriptions from all its members.

SYALL does focus on offering a basic level of service to library users in South Yorkshire. With a good range of libraries with a spread of opening hours within a fairly small, heavily built up geographical area, users have good opportunities to access a range of print resources at a time and place suitable to their needs.

Their Libraryfinder website allows users to see the subject strengths in each library. They can use broad subject headings or area headings to browse through the list of libraries and find one suitable to their needs.

SYALL has recently agreed to register all of its members with Inspire (March 2006).

Other YH areas bounded by this scheme – Kirklees (WELCOME!), Wakefield, North Yorkshire (Selby), North Lincolnshire, East Riding.

Note 1 – Includes all Colleges in SYALL

4.3 West Yorkshire

WELCOME! - Kirklees / Calderdale

Public Library Services - Kirklees, Calderdale

Higher Education Institutions – University of Huddersfield

Further Education Colleges¹ – Huddersfield Technical College, New College, Greenhead College, Dewsbury College, Calderdale College.

Also includes all the main health / careers libraries in the region.

WELCOME! has been established since January 2004 and now includes the vast majority of library services in the Kirklees and Calderdale area, offering a wide range of library services to learners in the area. It promotes reference access to member libraries primarily through member libraries, though leaflets are also sent out to a range of locations, including doctors surgeries and community centres.

It is directly supported both financially and through staff time by the University of Huddersfield and the University has written the task of co-ordinating WELCOME! into the job descriptions of two part-time librarians.

Most of its members have registered with Inspire. The exception is the Connexions / Careers libraries who have opted out of Inspire.

Other YH areas bounded by this scheme – Barnsley (SYALL), Wakefield, Leeds, Bradford (BInspired).

BInspired (Bradford) –

Public Library Services – Bradford

Higher Education Institutions – University of Bradford

Further Education Colleges² – Bradford College, Keighley College.

Also includes a wide range of libraries in Bradford, including materials held in a museum collection.

BInspired are currently establishing themselves, with an early aim being the production of an access map to libraries in Bradford. The lead institution is currently the Public Library service in Bradford.

The Binspired libraries have agreed in principle to register with Inspire (March 2006).

Other YH areas bounded by this scheme – Calderdale (WELCOME!), Kirklees (WELCOME!), Leeds, North Yorkshire.

Note 1 – Includes all colleges in WELCOME!

Note 2 – Includes all colleges asked to join BInspired.

Other West Yorkshire –

Public Library Services – Leeds, Wakefield

Higher Education Institutions – University of Leeds, Leeds Metropolitan University, Trinity & All Saints College.

Specialist colleges¹ - Leeds College of Art and Design, Leeds College of Building, Leeds College of Music, Northern School of Contemporary Dance.

Further Education Colleges¹ – Joseph Priestly College, Leeds College of Technology, New College (Pontefract), Notre Dame Sixth Form College, Park Lane College, Thomas Danby College, Wakefield College.

There are also specialist libraries and library collections in Leeds, plus a specialist mining collection at the National Coal Mining Museum in Wakefield.

The two local authority regions in West Yorkshire not currently covered by an existing scheme are Leeds and Wakefield.

Leeds has a wide range of libraries including three HE institutions in a fairly small geographical area. It would be an ideal candidate for a local scheme to promote reference access to the areas libraries, either as the Leeds area only, or together with neighbouring areas. Early adopters of Inspire such as the public library service have expressed an interest in working with partners in the area.

Wakefield does not have the quantity of libraries to maintain a local scheme but is in a good position to join any potential scheme in Leeds, or for WELCOME! or SYALL to expand into this area. Wakefield public library service is already part of SINTO – the parent organisation to SYALL. Good transport links from Wakefield to each of these neighbouring areas and the built up nature of this part of West Yorkshire means that any of these options is viable and would be useful to learners in Wakefield. Any decision would therefore depend on preference of the library services in Wakefield and the willingness of existing (or any new scheme in Leeds) to expand.

Note 1 – Larger colleges only, as listed on www.hero.ac.uk/uk/universities_colleges_fec

4.4 North Yorkshire

WELCOME! York

Public Library Services - York

Higher Education Institutions – University of York, York St John University College

Further Education Colleges – Askham Bryam College, York College.

There are also specialist libraries in locations such as the local hospital, York Minster and the Railway museum.

York has a range of libraries that may take part in WELCOME! York. York Libraries Forum have just received a report commissioned by themselves with funding from YMLAC to consider how they may approach a local collaborative access scheme in the near future.

The main recommendations involve promoting existing access arrangements under the umbrella of a Welcome York scheme, using whatever promotional route is deemed appropriate by the partners. It is also recommended that the collaboration undertakes training activities, in particular tours of member libraries to improve staff knowledge and provide a firm basis to build the collaboration on. Communication has also been recognised as vital and a range of communication routes have been suggested.

The report for York Libraries Forum suggests that keeping the offering simple at the start will enable a launch date of between Autumn 2006 and early 2007 and will provide a good basis to build on, encouraging other libraries to improve access and enable the scheme to develop sustainably.

Other YH areas bounded by this scheme – North Yorkshire, East Riding.

Other North Yorks

Public Library Services – North Yorkshire

Higher Education Institutions – None

Further Education Colleges¹ – Craven College, Scarborough Sixth Form College, Selby College, Yorkshire Coast College.

North Yorkshire is a large area with a limited range of libraries – it has boundaries with a large number of other areas both in the Yorkshire and Humber region and outside.

Any local scheme is likely to be of limited benefit to learners in the area, and the Inspire FindIt! website is likely to be the best way of finding other libraries in the region to access. Neighbouring schemes should be encouraged to promote themselves in the parts of North Yorkshire nearest their boundaries rather than inviting the whole of North Yorkshire to join a scheme that limited people would benefit from. For example, the emerging Bradford scheme, BInspired, should be encouraged to promote itself in the Skipton area – immediately adjacent to some of the BInspired libraries in Keighley.

Note 1 – Larger colleges only, as listed on www.hero.ac.uk/uk/universities_colleges_fec

4.5 East Yorkshire / Humber

GRIP – Grimsby Information Providers Group.

Public Library Services – NE Lincs

Higher Education Institutions - None

Further Education Colleges – Grimsby College, Franklin Sixth Form College.

Also includes the local NHS library.

GRIP has been set up as a local group previously but ran out of momentum and ceased to be active. They have discussed starting again with a focus of providing reference access to users using the Inspire offering as a basic concept. It is likely that this scheme will be unsuccessful again due to difficulties in operating an active scheme with the narrow range of libraries taking part.

If the scheme expanded outside the local authority boundaries it has potential to join up with North Lincolnshire and perhaps gain the “critical mass” needed to sustain the scheme. Two local authority library services together with a range of colleges may between them be able to dedicate a set amount of staff time to a local scheme and keep it going beyond the enthusiasm of the initial establishment. North Lincolnshire libraries have expressed an interest in working with a well-defined access scheme.

Other YH areas bounded by this scheme – North Lincolnshire.

Other East Riding / The Humber

Public Library Services – East Riding, Kingston upon Hull, North Lincs

Higher Education Institutions – University of Hull, University of Lincoln (Hull campus)

Further Education Colleges¹ – Bishop Burton College, East Riding College, Hull College, John Leggott College, North Lindsey College, Wilberforce College, Wyke College.

Hull has two Higher Education Institutions, together with several colleges and would make a good focus for a local scheme spread across Hull and the East riding. This would involve two local authorities and both HE and FE institutions who between them should be capable of providing dedicated staff time to set up and maintain a local scheme. The University of Hull is currently involved with many associate colleges in the area as well as the local NHS libraries and would be a key player in any local scheme, if willing to take this role on.

Note 1 – Larger colleges only, as listed on www.hero.ac.uk/uk/universities_colleges_fec

4.6 Summary

Current and Emerging Schemes

Local authority areas covered by existing schemes are:

Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield (SYALL)
Calderdale and Kirklees (WELCOME!)

Local authority areas covered by emerging schemes are:

Bradford (BInspired)
North East Lincolnshire (GRIP)
York (WELCOME! York)

Local Authority areas not yet covered by existing or emerging schemes are:

East Riding of Yorkshire
Kingston upon Hull
Leeds
North Lincolnshire
North Yorkshire
Wakefield

Potential Schemes

The author believes there is potential for local access schemes to cover all local authority areas within our region except North Yorkshire. The large, rural nature of North Yorkshire together with the amount of other regions it shares boundaries with means potential users would be better served by promotion of neighbouring schemes near these boundaries.

There is potential for new schemes to cover –

- 1) North and North East Lincolnshire (incorporating GRIP into this new scheme)
- 2) Kingston upon Hull and the East Riding
- 3) Leeds
- 4) Wakefield to be invited into a scheme with either Leeds, WELCOME! or SYALL

5 Recommendations summary

1) Guidelines for new groups

These could be used as part of a pack of information for new or potential groups, and address the needs of users and the group itself. Full details are given in section 3.1 and 3.2. These guidelines are listed in Appendixes A and B.

2) Support from YMLAC

Full details given in section 3.3

- Provide a pack of information to potential and new groups.
- Continue to raise awareness of Inspire and benefits of local schemes.
- Act as central point for exchange of ideas.
- Work to reduce barriers for potential users
- Financial support for new groups

3) Potential Schemes

As per section 4.6

Encourage three new schemes to cover:

- North and North East Lincolnshire (incorporating GRIP into this new scheme)
- Kingston upon Hull and the East Riding
- Leeds

And existing or new schemes to be extended into:

- Wakefield (to be linked with either Leeds, WELCOME! or SYALL)

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Websites

Inspiring Learning for all – www.inspiringlearningforall.co.uk

Inspire project website – www.inspire.gov.uk

SYALL libraryfinder site – www.syall.org.uk

WELCOME! Kirklees and Calderdale – <http://welcome.hud.ac.uk>

Appendix A – Guidelines for new groups, user needs

Activity	Notes
Reference Access & Study Space as a minimum	Statement of intent to allow access (such as signing up to Inspire kitemark) so all libraries and potential users are clear the minimum they can expect.
A good range of libraries	Public libraries, plus one other type of library service as a bare minimum. The ideal would include a range of HE; FE; and specialist libraries as well as Public Libraries. If this range is not present initially, then the group should consider widening the geographical region covered to provide the range.
A wide range of opening hours	At least one library service in partnership to be regularly open evenings / weekends. This may be done through the range of libraries (above) or by arrangement between the partner libraries.
Staff knowledge of what is available	Regular training. Internal promotion. Either paper or web-based reference materials on partner libraries to be readily accessible to front-line staff.
User knowledge of what is available	As a minimum, promotion of scheme to members of partner libraries as well as to staff in partner libraries – e.g. posters, bookmarks, displays, printed information to handout. Ideally to also include outreach promotional activities whenever possible. Public libraries are in an ideal position to lead on this point. Basic information on member libraries to be made available through a website. Library catalogues available via the internet for non-members whenever possible.
Access to PCs to non-members	PC access to non-members to be aimed for by partner libraries either free or with minimal charge. This should not be done at the expense of service to existing core users and should be an aim, not a basic right.
Access to some electronic resources	Access to on-line or CD-ROM databases to non-members to be aimed for by partner libraries either free or with minimal charge. This should not be done at the expense of service to existing core users and should be an aim, not a basic right.
Borrowing rights	Some form of borrowing materials for non-members. May be restricted to certain types of stock or limited loan periods. This should not be done at the expense of service to existing core users and should be an aim, not a basic right.

A possible addition to the list, concerned with increasing confidence in potential users is:

<i>Shared library card</i>	<i>Any sort of centrally approved card that allows reference access across a range of member libraries without additional proof of ID when visiting libraries. This is a desirable aim, but may increase the bureaucracy involved in administering referrals. It may even be seen as a retrograde step in some areas as potential users may not feel they can access a library unless they have the central card, whereas previously they may been able to access libraries freely.</i>
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Appendix B - Guidelines for new groups, partnership needs

Activity	Notes
Clear set of shared aims and objectives	An agreed aim and set of objectives for the scheme along with a method of reviewing these at set intervals. These should be set to ensure that they do not disadvantage any library's own users.
Formal commitment	A formal partnership agreement should be in place to show ongoing commitment.
An active group providing a forum for the exchange of ideas and best practice.	The partnership should act partly as a forum to allow partners to take advantage of opportunities to share good practice, to promote their own work and demonstrate success. The group as a whole should aim to encourage others to work more collaboratively and to learn from other initiatives.
Involving and measuring the effect on users.	A focus on the needs of potential users is important and partnerships should consider involving learners themselves in the development of initiatives. If possible, the partnership should investigate ways to measure the success of projects.
Regular and varied communication with partners.	Make use of different modes of communication to encourage full involvement by partners. Electronic communication in particular may help overcome the barriers of time and distance faced by partners
Regular staff training.	Staff awareness and training is vital to ensure all staff feel involved with the partnership as well as improving the service to users
Group commitment to funding a central co-ordinator.	Co-ordination of any group is important to maintain momentum and ensure objectives are achieved. This may be a separately funded executive or one or more people nominated from amongst member libraries and allowed set amounts of time to dedicate to the partnership
Set realistic targets that may become more ambitious with time.	New partnerships should start small, perhaps doing little more than promoting that their libraries allow reference access (such as through the basic Inspire offering). Only once started successfully should more ambitious offerings be considered.
Sufficient funding in place from the start.	A plan / source for funding sufficient to pay for identified promotional and other activities should be in place from the start. If initial funding is provided from external sources, an exit strategy from this funding should be considered from the start.