

TACIT



Information for librarians & information professionals working in Edinburgh – Jan 2011

Proposed Cuts to School Libraries

As part of the City of Edinburgh Council's proposed budget cuts, a proposal has been put forward to change the working hours of Edinburgh's school librarians from full time to term time only. Promises have been made to protect front line services, but some of these budget cut proposals would directly affect schools, directly affecting pupils' learning and attainment.

The plan to sessionalise librarians would mean that the maintenance, curricular, self evaluation and planning work that is currently done in the school holiday periods would have to take place during term time. The library, for example, would therefore have to be closed during term time for this work to be done as the librarian has no non pupil contact time and is on hand (to engage with users, answer queries, support staff and students and locate resources to suit a range of learning needs) throughout the school day - including time before school, lunchtime and after school.

Closing school libraries during term time would affect learning and teaching in the following ways:

Reduced opportunities for student centred and professional activities. Pupils would lose out on a wide range of opportunities such as author visits, book groups, homework clubs and supported private study, which aim to support pupils' education and provide encouragement to fully engage with learning and literacy. Librarians would not have time to meet and work collaboratively to produce, for example, the wide range of support materials currently available in schools throughout Edinburgh and beyond, such as the award winning Teen Titles review magazine.

Disruption to library programmes and student research projects. Closing the library during term time would mean that momentum for a variety of programmes and projects would be lost. Projects that rely on pupils forming positive, regular habits, such as paired reading, would be disadvantaged, and these are projects that are most often directed at pupils who have difficulty accessing their whole curriculum, and thus are projects that really help to raise attainment.

Decreased availability of library facilities during term time. It wouldn't be possible to maintain current service provision (library in use by classes, groups and individual pupils throughout the Librarians' working day, and the Librarian on hand to support, advise and provide learning resources)

Within Curriculum for Excellence, Literacy has been identified as being of utmost importance. Librarians are front line information and literacy professionals who play a key and unique role in helping deliver national curricular initiatives and reducing their hours would vastly reduce their ability to contribute to pupil's learning.

Edinburgh's school libraries are inspiring, vibrant and stimulating places that pupils and staff enjoy coming to.

They are unique places in school where people can learn, browse, and make choices on their own. They are places that CAN inspire and enrich but only if fully supported and properly staffed

Edinburgh school librarians are working together to highlight this issue, and to try and persuade the Council's decision makers that this is a cut not worth making. Each school librarian has prepared a detailed impact statement, explaining exactly what would be lost if their libraries were staffed merely on a term time basis. Moreover, they have compiled a portfolio of evidence and a DVD to demonstrate visually the work that is done. Additionally, school librarians have highlighted the issues to head teachers, parent associations and local elected representatives, and have gained support from their trade union also.

It is clear that similar threats are facing many of our colleagues across the country, and this article was prompted by the situation that is facing TACIT's 'View from the West' columnist. If you are also in a situation like this in your workplace, and you would like to discuss our approach, or read our impact statements to see how we are tackling the issue, please get in touch. Naturally, different types of cuts may be proposed across different sectors or authorities, but the central arguments remain the same – the focus is to show what full time qualified librarians do and why we are needed.

*Moira Paton
Broughton High School*

Full Committee Meeting – All welcome!
The next ELISA Full Committee meeting is on Thursday 10 February, at 3pm, at The Royal College of Physicians, 9 Queen Street, Edinburgh.
Anyone interested in finding out more about ELISA will be very welcome. Come along and get involved in how ELISA can develop, and suggest ways it can support the library and information service in Edinburgh.

Forthcoming Events

Information literacy: what's in it for you?
20th January 10:00 - 16:00 GLASGOW
<http://www.slainte.org.uk/events/EvntShow.cfm?uEventID=2556>

Tour of ECA Library
27th January
j.furness@eca.ac.uk

Finding Voices, Telling Stories
29th January
<http://www.cityofliterature.com/whats-on.aspx>



linking edinburgh libraries

edinburgh libraries & information services agency

www.edinburghlibrariesagency.info

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RAISING THE PROFILE



The Shore Poets' monthly poetry and music events have become a bit of an institution to those in the know. It takes the form of a relaxed evening's entertainment at a modest price when three poets each read for about 20 minutes with

three 10 minute music slots in between. There is always the opportunity to buy books or pamphlets of the evening's readers on the night with the chance of a signing. Pretty good!

The event takes place in The Lot in the Grassmarket so the name may seem a bit of a puzzle. Its derivation comes from the fact that back in 1991, poets Brian Johnstone and Ros Brackenbury organised a series of readings at the Shore Gallery in Leith and that gallery gave them the name. After this tentative dip in Leith's Shore, and with the invaluable support and encouragement of established names of the Scottish poetry world like Kathleen Jamie, Andrew Greig and Robert Crawford, they 'found their sea legs' and were off!

The following year they added fellow poet, Mark Ogle, after whom an annual memorial poem is now named. They moved to the 369 Gallery where the first anniversary celebration was held featuring the late revered Edinburgh born poet, Norman MacCaig. After the departure of Ros

Brackenbury for America, the Shore Poets become a collective comprising Hugh Dailly, Jim Glen, Ian McDonough, Dougie McKenzie, Morelle Smith and Nancy Somerville who worked to help the remaining founders in promoting the Shore Poets. They went on to invite Scottish poet and playwright Stewart Conn to become president forming the basis of the current organizing group which, at the time of writing, comprises Stewart Conn (Honorary President), Peter Cudmore (Publicity), Diana Hendry (Planning), Ian McDonough (Diary), Angela McSeveney (Treasurer), Alison Reeves (Music), Nancy Somerville (Convener), Christine De Luca, Jane McKie and Martin MacIntyre. Since then, several venues from the Fruitmarket Gallery, The Canon's Gait pub, Mai Tai restaurant to their current venue, The Lot, have played host to this group that make for a fine night out with a variety of talents on stage (and often in the audience!). Following the untimely death of esteemed Shore Poet, Mark Ogle in 1999, the annual Mark Ogle Poetry Award is now held. (see photo) The award is used to commission a poet to write in response to one of Ogle's poems, which is selected each year by his family. The first winner in 2008 was Aonghas Padraig Caimbeul who responded to the

Ogle's English Rain, in 2009, Elizabeth Burns responded to his Holy Loch and in 2010, Frances Leviston responded to his Wild Geese Feeding -a suitable tribute to honour a respected colleague.

The Shore Poets' first anthology, The Golden Goose Hour, was published in 1994 with their second, The Ice Horses, appearing in the year of the 5th anniversary, 1996. This was a landmark year on several counts. It was the year of the Shore Poets' first participation in the Fringe when lunchtime readings and music were performed at the Famous Grouse House. They then celebrated at the end of September with a day long festival of music and poetry. Looks like they'd arrived! Going from strength to strength, their tenth anniversary was celebrated in 2001 with the publication of a third anthology, Such Strange Joy.

The format is always a mix of an established poet, a Shore Poet (also established!) and a new poet along with music that can cover an eclectic range. For example the line up for the November 2010 event was Tom Pow, Diana Hendry, Susie Maguire with music from The Kitchen Stools. Over the years, big names like Jackie Kay, Donny O'Rourke, Don Paterson, Aonghas Macneacail and Gerda Stevenson have graced the stage along with wee names like my own! Edinburgh musical worthies like John Sampson and Stan Reeves have respectively tooted flutes and fiddle de diddled on stage. Shore Poets is local and inclusive yet with an international ethos.

And then of course there is Famous Lemon Cake raffle – a great mouth watering tradition and a highly coveted prize about

which several poems have been written. (see Lemon Cake on <http://www.marcabru.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/> and see photo) The Shore Poets' current programme of readings runs on the last Sunday of the month between September to June at 7.45 pm to 10.15(ish). The admission charge is a modest £4 with £3 for concessions. You can sign up for regular news about Shore Poets events, by emailing newsletter@shorepoets.org.uk and find out more on the their webpage (<http://www.marcabru.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk>). Once a year, an open mic night is held giving poets a 5 minute slot on a first come first served basis, which is a great chance for aspiring poets to get their work to a discerning audience.

Shore Poets is a grand way to spend a Sunday night at the end of any month. The chances are there'll be a few weel kent faces there!

Irene Brown

<http://leithtonight.podbean.com/2010/09> features Ian McDonough and Peter Cudmore talking on Leith FM on Shore Poets to Annabel Cooper on 22 September.



WANTED: contributions for TACIT

We're always looking for news items (50-150 words), announcements of forthcoming events, event reports (500-800 words) and profiles of library services (500-800 words).