

CILIPS Conference 2018

I was extremely pleased to receive the personal development fund for attendance at the two day CILIPS conference held at the Apex Hotel in Dundee on 4th and 5th of June 2018.

The theme for the conference was Collaborative communities: connecting with our networks and this was evident throughout the sessions I attended where common threads emerged around sharing, community, collaboration and engagement. A narrative of change in the library and wider environment was also a key consideration in many sessions as well as being evident in the chats with others between sessions. Across many sessions we also heard the library described as a haven, an oasis and a safe space which is inclusive and enabling with people at the heart.

Day one started with a welcome by the President, the conference sessions began with a keynote by Leonie Bell on the Culture Strategy. We heard about the draft strategy, presented was the need for a strategy to reflect how important culture in Scotland is now and in the future and something which can show Scotland as inclusive, innovative and open to the world.

Following the keynote we moved on to parallel sessions, I decided to attend Books behind bars - why prison libraries matter by James King and Pete White as this is the area of libraries I know the least about. This was an extremely interesting session where we learned of the challenges facing prisoners as well as the opportunities available. Pete White gave an insightful window in to prison life and the opportunities available via education and the library and the positive impact on a person both in prison and returning to society.

Lunch was a welcome change from other events I have attended, having a sit down meal made it easy to mix with a wide range of colleagues from across all sectors and easy to network and share ideas.

Next I attended Collaborative communities – Scottish libraries working together. In this session we heard of different partnerships and projects in Scotland which highlighted the opportunities available and the positive outcomes of working in partnership with our wider library networks.

I then attended the session by Duncan Chappell on the reconstructing of the Mackintosh Library after the dreadful fire in 2014. Duncan talked of the difficulties and opportunities presented in the situation along with the practicalities of recovery. It was interesting to hear of the systematic approaches used such as decision trees to help with objectivity and transparency.

The day came to a close with a presentation by David McNeill on the role of libraries in Scotland's digital future. David highlighted changes from ownership to subscription being the norm and how information, advice and support are being sought in different ways.

At the end of day one there was an optional walking tour of the Dundee waterfront led by Dark Dundee and sponsored by CILIPS Tayside Branch. An opportunity to learn about Dundee history and to chat to others from the conference, this was a very nice way to end the day.

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On to day two and as networking is an area I find difficult I decided to attend the optional networking breakfast to help develop my skills in this area. I was a little apprehensive about this as I thought about how I would approach others but the format of the session was more structured than I expected leading to an easy way to engage on key points. The session also gave us an opportunity to feed information back to CILIP on the conference experience.

The first keynote of the day was by Pamela Tulloch from SLIC on enriching lives through libraries. In this presentation we heard about the SLIC funding opportunities available and detail on partnerships, innovation and opportunity in libraries. A phrase used by Pamela which summed this up nicely for me was "dare to dream".

I attended the parallel session on the knowledge and information management community by Karen McFarlane. This was a thought-provoking presentation on the role of today's professional. We learned of the benefits to services when knowledge and information are treated as assets.

Next was the session on protecting your privacy by Aude Charillon and Nik Williams. This was a good overview of privacy risks and considerations and how we as information professionals can help educate our library users.

My next session choice was on the year of young people by Kirsten Urquhart. One of the most interesting points in the presentation for me in thinking about my day to day work was the idea of expectation transfer from services used daily by young people to services provided by the library.

Day two came to a close with the final keynote by Darren McGarvey on why libraries matter. Darren provided an overview of life in deprived areas and how for some people, stepping in to a library can be the first step to overcome adversity in their life. The insight Darren provided was very interesting and made me stop and think about a number of things, I have just obtained a copy of Darren's book Poverty Safari and look forward to reading more about the challenges he describes.

The conference provided an excellent two days of sessions and collaboration with plenty of networking opportunities throughout. I have gone back to work with new ideas, new contacts and lots to write up from the conference for my CILIP Chartership portfolio. I will definitely be back again next year.

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