



NEWSLETTER SPRING 2003

Regions people on the go!

John Singer (Suffolk), Nika Watt (Suffolk) and
Christine Robinson (Cambridgeshire)

Co-East..it's almost legal!

Half of the legal agreements have so far been returned, so we are hopeful that by the start of the new financial year we will have attained legal status!

Co-East Around the Region..Around the World!

Co-East projects and initiatives were highlighted in the following talks:

Mike Hosking **Learning and Skills Council Regional Chief Executives Meeting** 10 October 2002 Presentation on LearnEast and Suffolk Template

Linda Berube **Information Resources Group/London Librarians Network** 30 October 2002 "Information Partnerships for the Region, Information Delivery Model for the UK" focussed on Co-East's work with establishing resource-sharing services, and especially its support of the national service, Ask A Librarian.

Linda Berube **CILIP London Executive Briefing** 13 November 2002 "Resource-sharing in the East of England" emphasised Co-East's support of the regional cross-sector/domain agenda through such

projects as Co-East Plus, and through its partnership with EEMLAC in the continued development of the Source-East portal.

Linda Berube **Information Networks for the Region, Information Models for the UK**, a talk delivered at "La Biblioteca nel Web" Conference (Rozzano, Milan, Italy-June 2002) will be published by the the Italian National Libraries Association (AIB) in a book containing all proceedings from the conference.

In addition, the Ask A Librarian Manual (<http://www.ask-a-librarian.org.uk/manual.pdf>), translated into Italian, will be included as an addendum to the proceedings.

The Resource Managers Group

EBSCO

Co-East has successfully renegotiated the continuation for another year of the EBSCO Masterfile contract. However, Suffolk has chosen (within the agreement) to subscribe to the UK Reference Centre, so we look forward to their first-hand feedback of this offering.

Co-East Opens Its Doors (in March!)

Co-East held its first ever 'E-procurement Open House' at Cambridgeshire's March Library on 2nd December 2002. Approximately 50 public librarians from across the region came together to learn about exciting new electronic developments from:

GALE (Times Digital Archive; Thompson Learning)
Lexis/Nexis (Legal Resources)
SearchRed (electronic music catalogue)
Oxford University Press (Oxford Reference Centre; OED; DNB)
Dun and Bradstreet (business resources)
Coutts/ebrary (e-books)

The suppliers were generous in support of the event, not only with their time but also with financial contributions towards cost.

Librarians viewed demonstrations of the various products and had the opportunity to consult with suppliers one-on-one or in groups. Formal evaluation sheets for the products were distributed, and librarians were encouraged to discuss the relative merits of the products.

The event as well as the venue was received with enthusiasm by all attending. Especial notice was accorded to the March Library, Cambridgeshire's newest purpose built Library and Learning Centre, also housing the Local Record Office and the March office of the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages. Carol Lockett March Service Supervisor, was called upon to give an overview of the architecture and services, as well as to give some personalised tours. In addition, the librarians appreciated the opportunity to get together with colleagues across the region to evaluate and discuss electronic resources, as well as to learn about Co-East developments and the work of the Content Group.

Among the attendees was a visiting librarian from Norway, Karin Mårteig, in the UK to investigate resource discovery and sharing models. Karin was not only impressed with the work of Co-East, but also kindly supplied us with photographs to mark the occasion.

Co-East plans to follow up this successful event with others to highlight networking issues and services.

People's Network News

Official Launch of the Peoples Network and lutonlibrary.com in Luton Libraries

Following a setback in October, when libraries in Luton were targeted by a professional gang and two libraries stripped of their Peoples Network pcs, the library service was finally able to officially launch its Peoples Network and lutonlibrary.com on Friday 13th December. (The date proved not to be an omen and all went well!)

Around 60 people attended to watch Luton born poet and comic John Hegley and the Council's Chief Executive, Darra Singh officially open the extended IT suite in the Central Library and launch the Peoples Network throughout Luton Libraries.

Videoconferencing was used for the first time at the launch with a link up to Peterborough Central Library where some unsuspecting corporate IT person got to talk to both Luton's Chief Executive and John Hegley!

The number of pcs for public use has risen from 31 to 71 and a further 10 pcs are also being added to the 35 already installed in the Central Library in January. There are an additional 19 pcs for customers to access the library catalogue direct, reserve and renew items and comment on the service.

A new booking system allows customers to access 35 minutes of free IT time a day without any staff input, with additional time being paid for if there is not a queue. Restricting the length of free time available was seen as a way of managing the system and ensuring as many people as possible access the IT.

Despite this though, there are often queues at the Central Library with Saturday and Sunday being the busiest days.

The larger libraries all have software and hardware for customers with disabilities and the Central Library and its satellite Bury Park Library also have Indic language software.

Lutonlibrary.com provides a gateway to over 600 sites including other libraries, art galleries and museums, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, newspapers etc. Links are organised for ease of use under subject headings e.g. art, government, jobs and careers, health etc. As well as information sites there are links to fun sites such as e-postcards and e-greeting cards. All the IT areas in libraries have been re-branded 'lutonlibrary.com'

The time between the thefts and the launch were spent in investigating and installing improved security. All the public pcs in branch libraries were removed temporarily as a precaution and were re-instated two weeks before the launch after alarms systems had been upgraded, fire doors strengthened and shutters installed over doors and windows. Each pc is also now locked into a heavy cage, (both the monitor and the hard drive) which in turn is

bolted to the desk. It sounds awful but actually looks quite smart and we are very pleased with how they look. One guest actually said he hadn't realised that there were security cases in place and had thought we had just bought 'trendy' pcs! The company who provided the cages, Dalen said they had never lost a pc once their cases had been installed, so watch this space!

Regional Links

Sense of Place East has launched an interim website at <http://www.senseofplaceeast.org/>

Co-East and Regional Agencies

As part of its developing partnership with EEMLAC, Co-East has supported the following initiatives:

Resource International and Access Mapping: Co-East hosted a meeting to discuss access and international initiatives in the East of England: the meeting was part of an ongoing mapping project sponsored by Resource. In attendance were Nick Moore, the Cultural Heritage Commission representative working on the mapping project for Resource; Barry George Head of Libraries Bedfordshire and Linda Berube, Co-East Regional Manager representing libraries; and Liz Stazicker Head of Heritage/County Archivist in Cambridgeshire representing archives. Arising from the meeting was the recognition that the East of England, especially in its development of the Source-East portal and its support of such national services as Ask A Librarian, was in advance of other regions in establishing models for access to information.

Resource ICT Working Group: Resource convened its first meeting for ICT in the regions on 31 October 2002, with attendees representing all the English regional agencies. Linda Berube, Co-East's Regional Manager, represented the East of England, providing Resource with an overview of ICT developments and issues. The following common issues were identified by the group:

- Networking
- Equipment/hardware
- Training
- Content creation
- ICT Learning and Access
- Standards
- Standards advice
- Digitisation
- Hardware investment
- Mapping of current practice
- Electronic records
- Integrated access for users

A number of actions were identified to address these issues:

- Creation of an index of current ICT provision in the Agencies and Resource (including details of existing policy/strategy documents where appropriate)
- Creation of a register of legacy systems in Agencies
- Establishment of an email discussion list for members of the Working Group
- Distribution channels for information (Resource website/ Agency sites)
- The establishment of sub-groups addressing XML and e-GIF compliance
- The issue of a revised version of the Resource ICT Strategy to the Working Group for comment and consultation
- Development of a proposal and eligibility criteria for a Broadband Connectivity Pilot
- A programme of regular update meetings between myself and each Agency
- A document from each Region outlining where they want to 'be' in terms of ICT provision in 2-3 year's time.

Co-East Projects

Co-East Plus final report was submitted to the British Library at the beginning of December.

The 20-page document reviewed the progress of the project, outlined issues and findings, and listed papers and presentations supporting the project. Primary lessons from Plus and its inherent value to its stakeholders have been:

- The building of resource-sharing partnerships
- The understanding of how the Plus work fits in with regional developments overall
- The education, especially for staff, in how the protocols and the related systems work
- A consideration of how this new service can or should be integrated into local interlending procedures
- Raising the security and technical issues of interoperability with the IT departments of the local institutions, specifically the FE and public library institution.

The report is reproduced on the CO-East website, along with other project documentation.

Co-East Plus Phase II training was completed in November 2002, including an overview of Co-East developments, as well as introduction to VDX and ZPortal. Led by Paul Johnson of FDI, the training was well-received and generated valuable feedback for the project, and for future resource-sharing initiatives. The Pilot has commenced with a period of testing exercises designed to take staff through the ISO-ILL protocol. Live transactions will commence at the beginning of February 2003.

EEMLAC announced its first round of grants, 'to provide strategic investment in support of sustainable and accessible museum, library and archive services in the East of England. Eligible work could include improving standards of stewardship and of public access, either in individual services or in groups of services working together'.

Co-East has been successful in its bid to fund Co-East Technical Resource-Sharing Infrastructure. The original application called for a grant of up to 10K to be matched by 10K from Co-East. The final award from EEMLAC will be 4K, one of its largest awards.

Resource has awarded Co-East £4600 in support of Ask A Librarian maintenance and development until the end of the financial year. This grant is part of an on-going partnership with Resource to scale the service as part of its 24/7 portal. Linda Berube has submitted a draft framework document, as well as written an overview of Digital Reference Services. Co-East plans to host a plenary for all Ask participants and Resource at the beginning of April in order to scope the ongoing development and financial support of the service.

The European Commission launched the 3rd Call for proposals for the eContent programme in Official Journal C 320 of 20/12/02 in accordance with the new Work Programme adopted for the years 2003 and 2004. The indicative budget for this call is € 29 million. There are two types of schemes open: fixed deadline for demonstration projects and accompanying measures and continuous submission scheme for feasibility projects within the scope of its three action lines:

- (1) improving access to and use of public sector information;
- (2) enhancing content production in a multilingual and multi-cultural environment;
- (3) increasing dynamism in the digital content market.

The call text published in the Official Journal, C 320/13, 20 December 2002 as well as the work programme 2003-2004 can be downloaded immediately from the eContent home page www.cordis.lu/econtent.

Under the events section you will find soon more details of the upcoming national information days to present the call for proposals. Moreover, the Commission will organise an Information Day in Luxembourg on 11 February 2003.

Should you be interested for further information and assistance, please contact your local National Contact Points (see list <http://www.cordis.lu/econtent/network.htm>). Please do also make use of the pre-proposal service run by the Commission in order to guide proposers in determining whether their idea is in the scope of the eContent programme.
(text taken from INFOS e-newsletter and from the CORDIS website)



The future of **Familia** was the major topic of a meeting on 9 January of the former EARL Family History Task Group, which was responsible for the development and support of the service.

The group, including librarians from West Sussex, Worcester, North Yorkshire, Westminster, Essex, Hampshire, Norfolk, considered current issues with the service, especially funding. Among options discussed was a funding model, similar to that proposed by Hampshire which is currently examining support for another former EARL service, Magnet: authorities pay a subscription fee of £100 for the update of their records. The group would also lobby Resource as to possible funding streams to maintain this valuable national service. Any subscriptions would be payable from the start of the new financial year.



EEMLAC has been successful in obtaining from Resource an additional 50K for further development of the Source-East Portal (<http://www.source-east.org>). Linda Berube, Co-East Regional Manager, wrote the proposal and bid documentation for the project, which is to be managed and directed by Co-East. Work begins in late Jan/early Feb, and will include enhancements to the web-site and database, addition of learning materials, information-gathering among the sectors, and purchase of electronic content.

Work on updating the Source-East online database of institutions is virtually complete, with all new contact details being logged to aid further communication with the groups.

Movers and Shakers (continued from front page)

John Singer (Suffolk) has departed to go and work for D.S.

Nika Watt (Suffolk) is leaving the Regional Agency work to be seconded to an HR role within the County.

Christine Robinson is saying goodbye in February to Cambridgeshire after 17 years, to take up post as Assistant Localities Manager with Essex, she will cover the east area.

