



Utlåning, besök och antal bibliotek har sjunkit i Sverige sista tio år. Bibliotekarier i olika länder. De svar vi fick varierar i längd och form. Fattningen av enkäten. På BiS hemsida - www.foreningenbis.com - ställde:

- *How do you, from your personal perspective, value the situation of the public libraries in your country?*
- *Would you say that the support of public libraries is strong among the people in your country?*

Storbritannien: Bibliotekslagen hotad!

John Pateman:

Public libraries are facing 2 significant threats to their future existence:

1. The legal basis for a public library service in the UK - The 1964 Public Libraries Act - is being reviewed. This Act makes it compulsory for every local authority to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient' public library service. If the Act is repealed then many councils will not continue to provide a public library service. If the Act is amended - Eg to remove the provision for the free loan of books - then councils will be able to charge for this service. Charges are already being introduced for the loan of e-books and it will be a small step to extend this to real books.

2. Public spending cuts, ostensibly to reduce the national deficit but really driven by political ideology, are forcing councils to prioritise which services they can continue to fund. Although public libraries are very popular with the public and are well used, they are not deemed by councils to be as important as other services such as schools and social care for the elderly. Some councils are just closing libraries to save money while others are trying to keep them going by staffing them with volunteers or transferring ownership to local communities in line with the government's so-called 'Big Society Agenda'.

Public libraries are still very popular with many people in society who have an emotional attachment to them even if they do not use them very often. They are regarded in a similar way as the National Health Service which is free at the point of need. Whenever a public library is threatened with closure a local campaign group is formed which attracts plenty of support and publicity. However, there are also many people who say that we can no longer afford public libraries because they are a luxury at a time when the country needs to save money. There is also a growing view that libraries are old fashioned and have been overtaken by e-books and the internet.

John Pateman har lång erfarenhet som bibliotekschef, har skrivit artiklar och böcker kring bl a social exklusion och bibliotek. 2010 gav han ut boken Public libraries and Social justice.

John Vincent:

As you will know, this is a sad period in public library history in the UK. Whilst some libraries are still thriving, many have had their funding/staffing cut, and a growing number is actually being closed - or turned into "community libraries". The current Coalition Government is making the reduction of the UK's budget deficit its no.1 priority, which has led to savage cuts across the public sector. Linked to this, the Government is pushing its "Big Society" policy which, whilst it may have good intentions (getting local people more involved with services, for example) is also being used as a way of saying that the voluntary sector and local people can pick up responsibility for actually delivering services - it has already been shown that, whilst this may have a degree of success in richer neighbourhoods, it is highly unlikely to work in deprived areas - and deprived areas are getting more deprived under current Government policy.

As a result of all this, many libraries are also pulling back to what they see as "core" services, eg little or no outreach, stopping social justice programmes, etc.

2. I think that, on the whole, public libraries have not made a good job of creating relationships across their communities, so, as noted above, wealthier areas may value their libraries and people would be prepared to volunteer to run them, but this is certainly not the case everywhere. Whilst visits and issues may be dropping, I don't think this means that people think less of their libraries - some people are finding different ways of using them (eg online), and some people, sadly, have never seen the value of libraries so have never used them.

At the same time, lots of people do still use their libraries, particularly for activities and support for children & young people.

However, the support in communities for libraries is growing, eg the public anger over the threatened closures of libraries in Somerset and Gloucestershire, leading to a legal challenge in the High Court, which has been won (for now!)

John Vincent har bibliotekserfarenhet sedan 1960-talet och har varit engagerad i "The Network - tackling social exclusion in libraries, museums, archives and galleries". Medförfattare till rapporten Open to all?

en. Hur allvarligt är det? Hur ser det ut i andra länder? bis skickade frågan till ett antal bib-
Folkbiblioteken är trängda av åtstramningar, men satsar också offensivt är de korta samman-
finns inläggen samlade med plats för kompletteringar och kommentarer. Det här är frågorna vi

ic library in your country?

le/in your community/society?

Österrike: Frivilligarbete grunden

Nikolaus Hamann:

For the first question on national level please see the article. In Vienna, where I work, we have now 39 branches of the Vienna Public Libraries (including the Main Library), which is more than 30% less than we had in the 1990ies, with 1.6 millions of media for 1.8 million inhabitants. In Vienna also the rooms are much too small, so our management had the magnificent idea reducing the collections instead of looking for better rooms.

It is clear that Public Libraries in Austria don't have much support among the people, as only 10% of the inhabitants are interested in their offers.

A glimpse on Public libraries, in Austria called Öffentliche Büchereien or Öffentliche Bibliotheken:

When I use the term Public Libraries, one must not think about Public Libraries as they are known in countries like Great Britain, Denmark, the Netherlands or Finland. In those countries Public Libraries offer a wide range of knowledge and information, have opening times of 40 hours a week or even more and are frequented by 40 to 80% of the inhabitants. Öffentliche Büchereien in Austria (except in the large cities as Vienna, Salzburg or Linz) exist under rather bad circumstances. As – in opposite to the most European countries – there is no library law in Austria, Public Libraries are a free offer by their supporters. In Denmark for example the communities are obliged to run a Public Library, not so in Austria. And there are of course no compulsory standards which have to be fulfilled.

Outside of the larger cities there would be no libraries at all, if there was not voluntary work. There are 2.357 communities in Austria, nearly 1.400 of them have no library at all. From the 1.479 existing Public Libraries only 40% are run by communities, a bit more than 17% by parishes, and 30,5% are supported by cooperations of - for example - a community and a parish.

In these nearly 1.500 Public Libraries work 8.575 librarians. Only 10% of them are paid for their work, 560 do library work in addition to their main profession, and more than 80% do it voluntarily or get a small reimbursement of expenses.

Under these circumstances it is not astonishing, that the large majority of rural libraries are very small (nearly 50% are smaller than 50m²), have only few opening hours on 2 or 3

days a week and rather small collections.

Nevertheless there is good labour done in the libraries. Although not getting paid and doing their library work in the leisure time, many of the library volunteers have a qualification as librarians and take part in further education trainings. They cooperate with kindergartens and schools in reading activities, bring into operation intercultural understanding and organize evening events.

If one looks on the conditions Public Libraries work in, it is not astonishing that only 10% of Austrians visit a Public Library at least once a year, although libraries do their best in making public relations, for example organizing a reading festival ("Österreich liest. Treffpunkt Bibliothek") every year.

To close up with the best Public Library systems in Europe, Austrian Public Libraries dearly need a library law laying down the duty of communities to run a library, and establishing good standards concerning size, collections, opening hours, qualification of staff and rate of replacement of media. They would also need more paid full-time jobs in order to comply with these standards, and they need considerable budgets to be able to fulfil the wishes of the – as we all hope – growing number of users and to guarantee the people a sufficient sustenance of information and knowledge.

The Austrian Public Libraries show, that if an important part of social life is based on voluntary work only, proper supply of the users and good development of the institutions are not guaranteed.

Nikolaus Hamann

Nikolaus Hamann är en av koordinatörerna i KRIBIBI /Arbeitskreis kritischer Bibliothekarinnen und Bibliothekare in Österreich) och arbetar på stadsbiblioteket i Wien



Kanada: Satsning på uppsökande verksamhet

Canadian Libraries: Innovating and Creating Inclusive Services

Pilar Martinez

Kenneth Williment

A number of Canadian public libraries are pioneering a new service delivery model, which emphasizes collaborative service development and delivery, with library staff and the communities the library serves. Through this community-led service framework, library staff work with communities to understand their needs and deliver services that meet those needs, often devoting significant time outside the library walls. This article highlights two Canadian urban libraries which have embraced the community-led service approach, in order to remain relevant in our ever-changing environment.

The Environment in Canadian Public Libraries

The current situation of Canadian public libraries is both similar and unique to libraries in other national contexts. Globally, numerous industries which provide many of the 'traditional' products libraries commonly utilize are experiencing rapid and successive changes (e.g. the publishing industry and technological innovations). While libraries are constantly addressing challenges raised by the uptake and adaptation of these products, the application of these innovations has the potential to increase public library relevance.

New technological innovations (such as RFID) are providing public libraries with unique opportunities to reassess their service delivery models. For example, the introduction of self-check-out and automated check-in processes has enabled public libraries to shift staff time previously allocated to materials handling and transactional activities to more meaningful and qualitative customer service relationships. While the challenges of cost and technological 'know how' associated with using these new tools can potentially create barriers to accessing services, technology is a tool in an ever expanding arsenal for library staff to connect with their communities. As the digital divide continues to expand, library staff are presented with a magnificent opportunity to assist in developing the digital literacy skills of our communities, particularly with those who are disenfranchised.

While Canadian public libraries are experiencing the same rapid trends, changes, and challenges libraries around the world are facing, there are also a number of very significant differences. As of December 2011, all three levels of

government (Federal, Provincial and Municipal) have remained relatively unscathed from the great worldwide recession of 2008. Luckily, although there is rumbling in some quarters, the large scale implementation of austerity in public libraries and other governmental services has not yet come to be realized.

Creating innovative and Collaborative Approaches to Library Service Development and Delivery

There is one distinctive trend in Canadian Public Libraries which could potentially have significant international impacts on the advancement of public library services. The following approach has been developed over the last decade and purposely extends the role of library services beyond existing library users. It also examines the development and role of public libraries for both existing and non-library users.

The 2000 UK based publication, *Open to All? The Public Library and Social Exclusion*, struck a chord within some Canadian library circles. In response, a number of progressive librarians from across Canada began not only to theoretically question the perceived social inclusiveness of public library services, but also began to test and implement new ways to collaboratively develop and provide library services with socially excluded communities. Under the direction of Brian Campbell [and later Sandra Singh] at Vancouver Public Library, this new found momentum led to the creation of the national, multi-library system Working Together Project [2004-2008].

A number of substantial learnings resulted from the Working Together Project (Campbell, 2005, Muzzerall, 2005, Working Together, 2008, Williment, 2009). In part, these included:

- the baseline understanding of how programs and services were being identified, created, and delivered by library staff to current library users. This same process did not work well when working with socially excluded community members,
- the development of a community-led service planning model, where underserved community members [and even current library users] are involved in identifying, developing, delivering and evaluating relevant programs and services with library staff, and

- the development of non-prescriptive community entry and engagement techniques.

As a result of this project, a number of Canadian public libraries are now well positioned to develop innovative library services with their communities (Williment, Jones and Somers, 2011, Edmonton Public Library, 2010, Prendergast, 2011). This approach is very exciting because it expands the role of public libraries beyond traditional library users to include underserved communities, both inside and outside the library. This leads to library staff beginning to learn from community what the expanded vision and role of library services can become!

As with all new ways of approaching work, the integration and sustainability of a community-led approach into the way in which library staff do their work is a change management process. As a non-prescriptive approach, which is highly adaptable to the individual circumstances of local communities and library systems, a large number of progressive Canadian library systems and library schools are grappling with the implications of this new approach on localized library service development and education. As decisions are made, and some library systems begin incorporating aspects of community-led services into their existing library structures, it has been important to engage both internal (staff) and external communities.

The skill sets required for this type of library work are not customary to the library profession. The 'new' librarian needs excellent interpersonal skills, a high degree of flexibility and adaptability, superb facilitation and listening skills, a sense of humility, and above all, leadership - the ability to influence and navigate the change process in the library, so the library can shift to meet the needs of communities where they are.

Local Contexts

There are a number of Canadian library systems that are integrating community-led work. At this point, we will solely focus on the authors' two library systems, Edmonton and Halifax.

Edmonton Public Library

Edmonton Public Library (EPL) has led the charge in the integration of community-led work into the way in which librarians and other library staff 'do their work'. As one of the first urban libraries in Canada to implement a system-wide community-led service philosophy, 19 community librarians work at service points throughout the library system. The Library's Community-Led Service Philosophy was initially defined as a way to build relationships and to improve EPL's ability to identify customer strengths and meet customer needs, with a focus on anyone facing barriers to using library services. "Anyone facing barriers" could include not only homeless and socially excluded people, those who simply lacked awareness of library service, but also for example a middle-class mom who had a bad customer experience during a program and did not want to return to the library. This broad approach has allowed service points to prioritize, within EPL's overall strategic directions, services based on the needs of their specific communities.

Efforts at implementing a more integrated, system-wide

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and strategic approach to community-led work at EPL was inspired in part by both John Pateman's work in the UK and by Canada's *Working Together* project. However, distinctions from the *Working Together* approach emerged at EPL in three main ways: 1.) EPL's model is a system-wide framework used by all staff in varying degrees ("one library, one staff"), promoting community service as a shared value 2.) EPL's community librarians are expected to do community work both inside and outside library walls; and 3.) EPL's focus extends beyond socially excluded populations to include anyone who faces barriers to library service.

The application of the Community-Led Service Philosophy varies according to the nature of the communities served by the various library branches. Community librarians work with organizations representing a range of individuals and groups, including Aboriginal, multicultural, Somali, seniors, newcomers, youth, students, preschoolers, persons with mental health issues, women who have been abused, and the City of Edmonton. In 2010, community librarians worked with over 310 organizations in Edmonton for a total of 145 hours per week on average. These collaborations have yielded some substantial impacts.

Other collaborations have resulted in significant system-wide practice and policy changes geared towards reducing barriers to library services: EPL created a six-month computer/Internet pass card for individuals who are ineligible to obtain a full library membership, because they do not have a fixed address; an agency referral letter was created, allowing agency clients with no permanent address to obtain a library card using the agency's address; a 5-item-limit library card was created for customers who have difficulty returning items; and EPL revised its Customer Conduct Policy to diminish the rigidity of its provisions. All of these initiatives reflect a commitment to reduce barriers, to be socially responsible, and to establish policies based on self-identified community needs.

Efforts are now focused on evaluation and further integrating this community-led service framework into all library staff roles. For example, Library Assistants now accompany community librarians on visits to various agencies and deliver early literacy and computer training workshops outside the library.

Halifax Public Libraries

As a project, *Working Together* produced a number of specific learnings and deliverables. As one of the original *Working Together* sites, Halifax Public Libraries focused on integrating the community-led approach across the library system (Williment, Grant and Somers, 2011). Halifax believes that community-led work should not be the focus of a few designated staff, but should be incorporated across the system. However, the systemic incorporation of community-led work into the day-to-day approaches library staff use to work with community takes on increasing complexity outside the confines of a pilot project. In order to help facilitate the use of the community-led approach at Halifax, a Manager of Community Development position was immediately created at the end of the *Working Together* Project to assist in the regional application of the approach.

Library staff have the most direct contact with the community through library branches. During the *Working Together*



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Seniors' peer coaching that community librarian and library assistants support, Edmonton

Project, Halifax concentrated on developing a “model branch,” where learnings and approaches to incorporating community-led work were used by branch staff. Initially, two library branches were targeted for piloting the community-led approach. In both of these branches, the work completed with library staff and community has varied, based upon existing staff strengths and community-based need. Additionally, it was quickly recognized that engagement opportunities needed to be explored with existing library users and targeted communities (Williment and Somers, 2011).

By implementing processes which actively engage community, Halifax is able to develop a better understanding of community needs and priorities. Through discussions with community based partners, during a recent regional based initiative known as Art Attack, the library was able to develop and sustain strong relationships - resulting in truly hearing community based needs. As a result, both community and the library system collaboratively realigned the direction and objectives of the initiative. This demonstrated and ensured that the community sees value and understands the public libraries role in community.

One of the major outcomes of community-led work in Halifax is the development of multi-phased regional service plans. These formalized plans provide library staff with pathways, support and accountability for collaboratively identifying, developing and implementing relevant programs and services to targeted communities (e.g. Service to Immigrants Plan). Each service plan initially includes the baseline understanding of internal library based strengths and assets while discovering community based or external assets. The second phase of the plan ensures increased library staff capacity while creating stronger and sustained relationships with external communities. Finally, resulting changes to programs and services are based

on collaborative work with community.

One tool Halifax has worked extensively to develop and refine is asset mapping. Asset mapping shifts conversations with community members: from libraries providing information out to community – to libraries hearing about community-based strengths, gaps, and community-identified linkages and roles for library services. There are a number of additional outcomes that have resulted from asset mapping, including the development of close relationships with community-based service providers, direct access to hard to reach community members, and community recognition of the library as important community-based partner.

It has also been vital to constantly document and communicate successes and challenges within the library system and externally. So library staff can respond to community identified priorities, community-based information is shared internally with decision makers. Additionally, to help other library systems incorporate community-led approaches, Halifax has been very active, presenting at conferences regionally, nationally and internationally, and publishing papers.

Finally, a number of other major activities at Halifax embody many of the characteristics of community-led service development. The recently updated vision *Halifax Public Libraries: Where we shape the future together...Imagine the possibilities* and mission *Connecting people, enriching communities, inspiring discovery* both reflect the central role of community in library services. Additionally, the building of a new Central Library in Halifax has been dramatically impacted through an extraordinarily inclusive consultation process. This process allowed both library staff and architects to learn and adapt the new Central Library to meet the needs of various communities, and resulted in other libraries considering the

adoption of similar consultation processes (Chianello, 2011).

Communities' Perceptions of Library Services

As public library systems in Canada either begin or continue to incorporate collaborative service planning within their localized communities, libraries will evolve. Involving the community in these discussions will help libraries expand their role beyond the traditional stereotype of a place to just get a book (Moloney, 2011), to a wide range of possibilities, including diverse social gathering spaces, places to co-create and share information and knowledge. This positions the public library as a democratic institution that facilitates civic engagement. When this occurs, it will be important for libraries to effectively communicate these changes with the broader community.

While the community-led approach provides library systems with a mechanism to become and to remain relevant to the needs of local communities, this change process will take time to communicate, not only to library staff but also to the community.

Final thoughts

The traditional service development process provides a number of ways in which library staff can internally generate programs and services to meet library staffs' perceptions of community needs. Community-led service development provides a new set of tools which library staff can build upon to ensure the continued relevance of public libraries that truly meet community needs. Unfortunately, systems which continue to guess at community needs will run the risk of being left in the 20th century. This may lead to the development of two tiered library service development, where 1. dynamic library systems respond to community needs beyond those of traditional library users while 2. other systems minimally engage users and try to maintain their relevance to community by marketing and informing communities of 'their' services.

As with all other professions, industries and organizations, public libraries need to embrace innovation, thus ensuring that their services are relevant to both funders and the people they are meant to serve. The discussions and innovative practices occurring in Canadian public libraries are exciting because – ultimately - change will occur. The question will always remain – who will determine how public libraries will adapt? It will either happen proactively and internally, and hopefully based on collaborative decisions made with library staff and their communities – or else passive public libraries will be at the mercy of the outside forces imposing the change.

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* publicerad i svensk översättning i bis nr 2/2011



Pilar Martinez, Edmonton Public Library, Executive Director, Public Services. Canadian Library Association Vice-President/President-Elect



Kenneth Williment, Community Development Manager, Halifax Public Libraries,



Tyskland: Avgifter och neddragningar

Frauke Mahrt-Thomsen :

How do you, from your personal perspective, value the situation of the public library in your country?

We have no library laws which oblige local communities to establish public libraries and the existing laws in some of the federal states don't guarantee financial support. Public libraries in Germany are voluntary tasks of the local communities. In many communities with 5000 inhabitants or more you will not find a public library with professional staff, a lot of existing libraries in small communities or quite a number of branch libraries in bigger towns are run by volunteers or by the churches. Medium sized or bigger towns mostly have a well established public library system, but due to restricted budgets many of them started already 25-30 years ago to charge their patrons for booklending.

Due to the financial crisis the public libraries are suffering from severe budget cuts, in cities with more than 100 000 inhabitants two third of the public libraries have budget cuts up to 50 %. Staff reduction forces many libraries to reduce their programmes and their opening hours, to mainstream their collection building through 'standing order' and 'bestseller-services', to close branch libraries or to render them to volunteers.

The thinning out of the library net has been extremely strong in cities like Berlin, where after the opening of the wall we had about 220 public libraries and now there are around 75, so only one third of the places is left where the citizens used to find their next library. The public libraries in Berlin are run by the districts which are more or less independent communities with low budgets left for voluntary tasks. On the upper level the Senate is in charge for the central library and the legal and administrative framework. In the last time they discovered that the library system is an ideal field to test new technologies like RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) on a broad scale. If they want it or not, the patrons have to accept the new technology with its risks and follow-ups like self-checking and further staff reduction.

Another example for the decision making in this town: Berlins central library, the ZLB (Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin) consists of two houses and several magazines and urgently needs a new building. The mayor discovered the topic in pre-election time and put the new

central library on his agenda. But then he didn't start a dialogue with the patrons, colleagues and public, where they want their new central library but decided once and for ever: the new library has to be built in the southwest corner of the Tempelhofer Feld (former airport of Berlin), quite a way out from the city. The reason: he wants to construct a new industrial quarter there, with a few apartment houses, and this needs some vitalization. What is better making people to come to this isolated quarter? The new library!

But the people who really use and love their central library they want it in the middle of the town. Just opposite the town hall is a wonderful open space called Marx-Engels-Forum. Why does the mayor not want to see the big new central library when he looks out of his window?

Would you say that the support of public libraries is strong among the people/in your community/society?

Though the service of the public libraries in Germany is suffering from restrictions like it was indicated above the people still love their libraries, visit their libraries (almost 700 000 a day, 200 million a year), fight with a lot of activities against the closing of their libraries, organize 'friends' and other support groups, and in a growing number keep their libraries open through voluntary work.

In the last years there has been more support for libraries through politicians, for example in the Enquête Commission 'Culture in Germany', and through state parliaments who voted for library laws in Thüringen, Saxony-Anhalt, Hessen. But up to now these laws are 'toothless tigers' as long as they are mainly friendly declarations about the importance of libraries, with no financial obligations. In Berlin, the leading Social Democrats even when they were in government together with the Left Party, they were not ready to make any kind of library law and substantial support for the district libraries. I don't think they will do it in this legislative era, together with the Christian Democrats.

Frauke Mahrt-Thomsen bor i Berlin är pensionerad bibliotekarie och har varit aktiv i KRBIBIE, som nu efterträds av en ny förening: KRITISCHE BIBLIOTHEK



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