Beyond the Horizon conference
18th May 2026 1pm start

Programme with abstracts of speaker talks

1:00-1:05	Welcome - Louise Masson
1:05-1:30	Back to basics: Developing, implementing, and evaluating stock management training for a public library service. Elena Bill - Resources and Reader Development Support Assistant, Surrey Libraries
1:30-1:55	Academic podcasting as a new layer of research support Domi Smithson - Research Librarian, Sheffield Hallam University.
1:55-2:20	Much Ado About Data: evidencing the impact of libraries Lucy Carlton-Walker - Creative Director, Warwickshire Libraries
2.20-2.30	Break
2:30-2:55	Library Use and Non-Usage by Staff Working in the Same Building as a Library Martin Hall - Graduating LIS student, Aberystwyth University
2:55-3:20	National Year of Reading 2026: The School Library's Role Vanesa Dimitrova- Assistant Librarian, Epsom College
3:20-3:35	Break
3:35-3.40	Overview of NECILIP work
3:40-4:05	The Carnegie medals for Writing & Illustration for children – how & why you can & should be involved Paula Wride, CILIP Youth Libraries Group - North East Secretary and lead on 'Picture Books in the Pub'
4:05-4.30	"Who is challenging children's and young adult literature in UK public libraries and what are the reasons?" Jemima Clair Sims - Library Assistant, University of Lincoln.
4.30-4.35	Conference summary and close

Abstracts

Back to basics: Developing, implementing, and evaluating stock management training for a public library service.

Elena Bill - Resources and Reader Development Support Assistant, Surrey Libraries

For the past three years I have been working for Surrey Libraries at our central stock hub which receives thousands of items a week from Surrey's 52 branches. At this birds-eye-level, my colleagues and I noticed how seemingly inconsequential discrepancies in front-line staff's understanding of stock processes could compound to cause issues in the larger system of a public library service. In the summer of 2025, after one of these discrepancies led to crates of brand-new stock being unnecessarily removed from our catalogue, a colleague and I were tasked with developing training resources for Surrey's over 400 staff members to address this problem. I would like to talk about how we approached creating these resources, the channels we used for distribution, and how we evaluated the impact of the training and used this to develop further materials. Overall my talk would be about the importance of strengthening foundational practices and the difficulties of disseminating information on a larger scale.

Academic podcasting as a new layer of research support

Domi Smithson - Research Librarian, Sheffield Hallam University.

At Sheffield Hallam University, we have launched the SHU Open Research podcast, a library-led initiative designed to translate the principles of open research into practice. Podcasting offers a flexible, accessible platform for sharing research stories, showcasing expertise, and fostering dialogue across disciplines and beyond the university. Unlike traditional workshops or training sessions, podcasts can be accessed anytime and anywhere, enabling researchers to engage with professional development at their own pace.

This project demonstrates how academic libraries can move beyond resource provision to actively facilitate knowledge exchange and community engagement. Each episode explores themes such as transparency, reproducibility, research integrity, responsible metrics, and the latest developments, including AI. By inviting researchers and professional staff to share their perspectives and findings, the podcast raises researcher profiles, encourages transdisciplinary collaboration, and promotes a culture of openness in scholarship.

The SHU Open Research podcast serves both as an outreach tool and an educational resource, highlighting the library’s evolving role in supporting research. It illustrates how innovative communication platforms can transform how knowledge is shared, support professional development, and embed open practices into everyday research. This project is a case study in how libraries can translate openness into action, shaping a more transparent, collaborative, and engaged research community.

Much Ado About Data: evidencing the impact of libraries

Lucy Carlton-Walker - Creative Director, Warwickshire Libraries

Warwickshire Libraries is the only library service in the West Midlands to be a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) funded by Arts Council England and one of 16 nationally.
The NPO would like to share our journey of creating a Data Dashboard working in partnership with the internal Warwickshire County Council Business Intelligence (BI) team. This will include sharing the processes we went through, the lessons we learned and the finished dashboard.
We are now in the process of developing this for Warwickshire Libraries due to piloting it for the NPO.
The dashboard's creation is a testament to the strength of collaboration, determination, and problem-solving, and represents best practice in the demonstration of cultural impact in the sector.
If you would like to see screenshots of the dashboard, then please get in touch.

Library Use and Non-Usage by Staff Working in the Same Building as a Library

Martin Hall - Graduating LIS student, Aberystwyth University

I have recently completed my dissertation by doing an original piece of research looking into Stafford Library. The library is based in the same building as Staffordshire County Council and I was interested to find out if the council workers took advantage of being so close to the library on a daily basis. I conducted a survey to ascertain if they used the library, why/why not, and asked if they did not, was there anything that the library could do in order to get them to use it. The topic is relevant in the library sphere today as there are increasing numbers of libraries being put together in buildings with other council services for financial reasons, but is there truly any crossover between the two or do they just exist within the same space. What can libraries do to engage with this potential audience that could be their most frequent visitors due to attending the building regularly for work?

National Year of Reading 2026: The School Library’s Role

Vanesa Dimitrova- Assistant Librarian, Epsom College

The National Literacy Trust and the Education Secretary launched the National Year of Reading 2026 this year. As a school librarian, I want to present on the opportunities and challenges which a school library can face when leading this initiative for the whole school community. Linking towards reading statistics and research in literacy, I will outline the impact of school library projects which promote reading, such as reading-focused assemblies, book clubs, competitions, and collaborations with teachers. Also, I would like to recommend resources for school libraries which I have found useful to any interested listeners.

The Carnegie medals for Writing & Illustration for children – how & why you can & should be involved

Paula Wride, CILIP Youth Libraries Group - North East Secretary and lead on 'Picture Books in the Pub'

The Carnegies, now in their 89th year, celebrate outstanding achievement in writing and illustrating books for children and are unique in being judged solely by librarians.
I would like to raise awareness that all CILIP members (not just those working in ‘children’s or schools’ environments) can nominate books for, and ‘Shadow’ the Carnegie medals each year, and the opportunities this can provide for acquiring new CPD skills (including cross-sectoral experience), which may be applied to CILIP’s Professional Registration and Revalidation processes.
I will explain the role of Youth Libraries Group (YLG), one of CILIP’s Special Interest Groups, in running the Carnegies, and how our North East YLG contributes to the process of nominating and judging the books. I will also make it clear how all CILIP members can benefit from joining a ‘Shadowing’ scheme for discussing the shortlisted books, either as interested adults (by joining our sociable NE ‘Picture Books in the Pub’ group), or with children in schools and children’s libraries.
Finally, I will explore the benefits of becoming a Carnegie judge, just as two CILIP NE members (neither of whom worked in the ‘children's or schools’ sector) have done in the past!

“Who is challenging children’s and young adult literature in UK public libraries and what are the reasons?”

Jemima Clair Sims - Library Assistant, University of Lincoln.

The purpose of the dissertation was to explore answers to the questions “who is challenging children’s and young adult literature in UK public libraries, and what are the reasons?”

A first aim was to identify common themes from questionnaires and interviews regarding challenges to UK library collections. A second aim was to compare information found on US library challenges, and to observe possible correlations with reasons for UK challenges. A third aim was to investigate potential challenges from library users, parents, or organized groups, focusing on public libraries’ children’s and young adult (YA) sections. The fourth aim was to discover reasons for challenges, whether concerning political, sexual, violent, or LGBTQ content, therefore providing data for discussion around book banning in the UK.

The main objectives of the dissertation were:

- To investigate levels of challenges to UK public library collections.
- To understand the nature of these challenges.
- To understand how libraries have responded to these challenges.
- To understand more detail regarding experience of library challenges.
- To understand these challenges’ impact on UK public library services.