

# The Kittiwake Trust

## Report for 2016 and State of Play 2017

### **Highlights**

In January we approached well-known linguist, Professor David Crystal to ask if he would consider becoming Patron for our Multilingual Library. His immediate positive response was a wonderful affirmation.

We were delighted to attain charitable status on 26 January (Survival Day for Australian Aboriginal people), with registration number 1165318.

### **Board of Trustees:**

At the AGM, Nick Sinclair stepped down after 3 years and Donna Brown joined the board. Shortly after the AGM Elaine Cusack also resigned for personal reasons.

Caroline Mitchell was co-opted onto the Board in September and has been helping Amina with funding applications and will continue to do more of this.

### **Funding:**

We received funding from the following during 2016:

|                             |               |                         |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| 1989 Willan Trust           | 2000          | (core costs)            |
| Jill Franklin Trust         | 1000          | (learning disabilities) |
| Hospital of God at Greatham | 1500          | (core costs)            |
| Sherburn Trust              | 1000          | (core costs)            |
| Better World Books          | 1000          | (for library)           |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>£6,500</b> |                         |

All the above are for core costs apart from Jill Franklin Trust which is to support our work with people with learning disabilities, and the library grant from Better World Books.

Our applications to the Hadrian Trust, Souter Charitable Trust and Yapp Charitable Trust were unsuccessful – Hadrian Trust for the second time.

Our application to the Gateshead Capacity Building fund was due to be decided before Christmas, but was finally granted in January, with payment (£5000) made in February 2017.

Our application to the Network for Social Change was approved. Final amount to be decided in February and paid in April 2017.

Our application to Greggs was unsuccessful. We can apply again in 12 months and are advised to phone first. Perhaps if we are doing more work in prisons by that time, things will go better.

## **Borderline Books**

It took a little while to settle into the new large upstairs space in Team Valley in October 2015, but by January we were back up to speed with our donations. Visitors this year included:

|  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Eslington/Redheugh Lunch Club*         | Kids Kabin*                     |
| VONNE*                                 | Northumberland Custody Suites*  |
| Highfield School, Sunderland*          | Conversation Group*             |
| Thirteen Care & Support*               |                                 |
| Denton YCP*                            |                                 |
| Leam Lane Community centre*            | Salvation Army                  |
| SEARCH (over-50s)*                     | Gateshead Young Women's Project |
| Families R Us*                         | NFSC                            |
| St Cuthbert's House*                   | Napi                            |
| New Horizon*                           | Autism Society                  |
| Inverness Libraries*                   | Barnardo's                      |
| NECA Hebburn*                          | BAFA Sunderland                 |
| Southwick Neighbourhood Youth Project* | Parkside School                 |
| De Paul House,Whitley Bay (nightstop)* | Success 4 All                   |
| HMP Low Newton*                        | Basis360                        |
| HMP Askham Grange (York)*              | Washington School               |
| HMP Leeds*                             | Carr Hill School                |
| Explore*                               | Riverside health project        |
| Helen McArdle Care                     | Teams Medical Project           |
| Chilli Studios*                        | SHAID Cree                      |
| Gosforth Junior Academy*               | Open Gate                       |
| Storybook Cafe Sheffield*              | Haven Tyneside                  |

**\* indicates new contact or first book donation to existing contact (25 in total)**

Towards the end of 2015 we were chosen by ASDA to receive donations from customers – similar to the token system used in Waitrose. In February, we received a cheque for £50 - but the best thing to come out of it was the introduction to former school-librarian, Susannah Whittock (see volunteers) who was a friend of the woman from ASDA.

### **Volunteers:**

GD continued working with us, stamping books and removing pencil marks. This was his third year and he seems happy to continue. He works approx 2 hours a week.

DS continued helping out, mainly shelving books. He works about 3½ hours a

week

KH worked until the end of April when she became ill. Her hard work and research has been missed.

SW, former school librarian sorted the children's room brilliantly. She is very conscientious and comes when she can to catch up.

O started towards the end of the year. He is self-described as 'slightly autistic'. He is very competitive and goes all out to stamp more than anyone else. He comes for about 4 hours a week. He is 21 but we have contact with his mother who came with him on his first visit. She was happy that he communicated more than expected and settled in well.

### **Festivals:**

Teams – we took part in the Teams festival once again (probably our 5<sup>th</sup> year by now). We always enjoy the enthusiasm of children who discover the delight of rummaging in boxes and finding treasures. At the same time we are saddened when we see mothers preventing their sons from coming to our table because she has a Kindle.....

Dunston put paid to our gazebo! The wind was ridiculous. Everyone fought to keep afloat in the storm, but sadly the festival was forced to close early as it was impossible to keep a gazebo planted in the ground – and when you held it down it simply bent the frame so much that the whole thing became useless. Sadly our pretty gazebo lasted only 2 years. We will have to decide whether it is worth getting a new one.

### **Open Day:**

At the end of November we held our first open day in the upstairs location. This time we invited several organizations to whom we regularly donate books to come and have an information table. In the end only a few were able to make it, partly because it was a weekend. Those who came were Kids' Kabin, Open Gate, Beyond Borders Southwick Neighbourhood Youth Project, Teams Medical Centre, and the wonderful Bibliobus.

The 'Theodelites' provided music as people were arriving and trustee Mandy Maxwell ran a poetry programme with Pippa Little, Julie Hogg, Jane Burn, Judi Sutherland and music from Renata and Trev. Ellen Phethean also read from her new book, Ren and the Blue Hands.

Once again the Samosa Sisters cooked some fabulous samosas and pakoras, which always go down a treat.

Trustee Caroline Mitchell ran a raffle with excellent prizes and brought in £120. The day as a whole raised just over £300, costs were £120.

### **New Record:**

After Kate left, Amina dealt with outreach and with fundraising as there really wasn't anyone else who could do those things – or who was in the office long enough to help. Against the odds, we managed to give away 13,500 books in 2016, which is another new record, having given away 10,053 in 2015.

### **New contact:**

An important new contact this year was Cambridge University Press, who found out about us from Haven Distribution (books for prisoners). They were needing to

find homes for several hundred dictionaries and easy readers and wanted them to go to refugees and people in prison. Thanks to the extra space in our new location, we were able to receive two or three pallet loads of books. These have been gratefully accepted by the several refugee organizations we are in touch with in Gateshead, Newcastle and Sunderland. Some local schools in Newcastle who have new pupils from Syria have taken readers – we encourage them to give books to the parents as well – dictionaries in particular. These contacts come mainly via the library. We need a better system there for liaising with schools as few of them follow up once they have been given a few samples. The prisons are also delighted to be able to take large quantities of dictionaries.

Amina met with Heidi Mulvey of CUP at London Book Fair and agreed to keep them up to date with our progress and to send useful photos etc. We also introduced them to Build on Books who supply schools in Sierra Leone and they were sent a huge load of books. They sent a wonderful series of photos of the children waving their new books in the air. Lori Spragg who runs Build on Books is another who won't take no for an answer and just keeps building and building on her project.

We will shortly be receiving another delivery of books from CUP (March 2017) as we are now pretty much their distributor for discontinued books around the north of England. - They are always pleased that we are sending books into prisons as well as to refugee support groups.

### **Prisons:**

It took about a year for HMP Low Newton to get their bookshelves, but once they did, they were happy to come to us for books.

Later in the year we contacted Askham Grange (York) and offered them books.

Their visit was a great success and they invited Amina to come to speak to their residents at some point. Their librarian also worked in Leeds, so it wasn't long before HMP Leeds came for books as well. They will also be returning soon.

Of course we ask all these prisons to let colleagues in other locations know about what we do. We are suggesting that modest cash donations would also be appreciated.

### **Custody Suites:**

We approached the office of Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumberland, (now Dame) Vera Baird to see if she would like to receive books for people detained in the six custody suites in her area. We delivered 200 books to her in late October and had very favourable reactions.

### **Spaces:**

After Yazaki moved downstairs at the Team Valley offices, the Landlord offered us their old space at no cost to ourselves. The agreement is that the Landlord will send us the funds to cover Business Rates (at 20% of the full rate as it is used for charitable purposes) and we will pay the council. They will also cover energy costs as long as they remain low. We are using this space for the educational books and have an open space for events.

We checked first with the council to be sure this was legal. It is.

In March 2016 Borderline Books Bradford moved from InCommunities (who lost

their funding) to the Bradford Bikery. We try to keep in contact with them to see how things are going and to offer support if needed. Amina hopes to visit in May 2017.

### **Multilingual Library**

By the end of 2016 we had signed up 387 members and had 15 volunteers. We now (end of March 2017) have close to 8000 books in about 77 languages and have new volunteers signing up regularly.

Most of the volunteers hear about us by word of mouth or come in and fall in love with the place.

Many visitors say they found us 'by accident' and had no idea we are there, but so far advertising with flyers and some announcements in the Crack Magazine – which did a small feature about us in August – seems to be enough. If the traffic builds up too much it may be hard to deal with until all our 18 volunteers are fully trained.

Our original idea of having one native English speaker and one person who speaks (an)other language(s) seems to be coming together of its own accord. We can now suggest that people come on a certain day if they need advice about books in specific languages.

In the spring we received a large donation of mainly children's books in multiple languages from Better World Books. We are still not lending out the picture books except to adults learning a language. We encourage parents to bring small children in and to read to them there. Some families now come in quite regularly.

In July we applied for a LEAP grant from Better World Books and were awarded £1000 to cover books, library stationery and shelving.

We have applied to the Catherine Cookson Trust for funding to set up a section on UK dialects. Meeting in March.

### **Story-time:**

Polish story-time has become a regular monthly event in Verb on Saturdays. We also held one in Portuguese, run by Little Big Butterfly. In September we had the first Chinese story-time for the Moon Festival. Rachel Tan told parents and children about the tradition of the Moon Fairy in Chinese and English. She and her daughter had also made a wonderful window display in advance, to encourage people to come.

### **Verb:** (the annexe to the Multilingual Library)

Verb has been used for language lessons mainly in French and Italian so far.

Once a month there is a meeting of LGBTQ families – Rainbow Kids – on a Saturday morning. The Migration and Justice Forum is now meeting fortnightly. Most of these pay £5 per hour for use of the room.

Refugee support groups Beyond Borders, the Conversation Group, and Culture Connect also use the space – the first two free of charge. Culture Connect was asked to contribute £5 an hour after they had used the space for a year and had received funding.

In general the policy is that teachers charging for lessons pay, organisations with

some income pay, refugee organisations without funding use it free of charge.

### **Special Events:**

The highlight of the year was the visit by David Crystal, our patron, at the end of April. He gave a talk on the importance of libraries and multilingual libraries in particular. This was recorded on video and will be available on Vimeo. The text of his talk is available on his blog and on the Multilingual Library blog as well. His support means a great deal to us. He donated a number of foreign language editions of his own books to the library and has also agreed to come again when he is in the area. As our patron he did not charge a fee for his talk but asked that we pay for his hotel. We agreed that we should book him into a good hotel and pay for dinner for him and his wife as his support is invaluable.

We also held a birthday party for the library where most of the volunteers came together to meet each other and have tea together.

At Christmas we invited Sky Hawkins to run a creative Christmas party for children – she came dressed as a fairy and in spite of incubating a cold, she coaxed some wonderful words from the children.

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Late in the year, our founder, Amina Marix Evans, received a letter saying that she had been nominated for an MBE. After some thought she decided that it would not be right to accept:

***First, the concept of Empire is outdated, and given the groups we support, particularly the refugees, many of whom are in the difficulties they are in now as a direct or indirect result of the legacy of the late British Empire, it would have felt like a slap in the face to them to accept. Also I didn't want letters after my name that do not denote any kind of academic achievement setting me apart from those I work with and for.***

***Second, I honestly feel that if the work of the Kittiwake Trust is held in such high esteem, then it would be far more appropriate to give an award to the charity and not to the individual.***

***The Kittiwake Trust will continue with our work of supporting groups working with vulnerable and disadvantaged people and of sharing the delights of words and books in as many languages as we can lay hands on.***

***If you value our work it would make much more sense to nominate the Kittiwake Trust for local or national charity awards and to help us spread Borderline Books to other parts of the country.***

***Amina Marix Evans, January 2017***

### **OUTLOOK For 2017**

Costs are soaring. We are now clearly under-insured. Our broker has researched

new options which were discussed at the AGM.

The leases (Tenancy at Will, ie rent-free but no security of tenure) for the Eldon Garden properties are now in the name of the Kittiwake Trust. Electricity costs will now be charged directly to us. Given that Eldon Garden has a very poor energy rating, it is very hot in the summer and cold in the winter. Using air conditioning in the summer was costing up to £200 per month. We do not have heating in the winter. We need to be very aware of electricity usage. Charges for use of Verb by other groups are earmarked for the electricity costs.

We have just bought 2 new fire extinguishers that need no maintenance for 10 years. Although they were relatively expensive (even with a charity discount) we do not have to sign up for maintenance contracts as with most appliances.

**Accountant:**

We have taken on a new accountant from a local firm, J F S Torbitt . They will take care of verifying our accounts and will also take on payroll services when we have employees. They are offering a much better rate than those quoted by Ellison Services and will give other financial advice to the Trust free of charge.

**Volunteers:**

Plenty of new volunteers are coming to the library and now we are finding more people for Borderline Books. As of March we have some new younger trainees (with supervisor) from Cedars College, and one from Gateshead College as well as some volunteers from a local library that has just closed.

**Patron:**

In February, writer and educational activist, Michael Rosen agreed to be patron of Borderline Books. So far we haven't had much direct contact with him, but tag him on Twitter and Facebook so that he shares our news. Amina met him briefly in London in March and we have invited him to visit as soon as his schedule permits.

**Funding:**

In February we finally received the £5000 we applied for from the Council's Capacity Building fund. This will be a big help and make sure we can cover the business rates at Team Valley (new rate will apply from April, exact cost not yet known).

Our sponsor Norman Franklin notified us that we will receive £8000 in April from the Network for Social Change. We had applied for two salaries to put an office manager in each location. This is a slight disappointment, but means that we will be able to employ an office manager to deal with the day to day work at Borderline Books. Trustees Caroline Mitchell and Mandy Maxwell have agreed to hold the interviews as they have plenty of experience.

We will apply to the Paul Hamlyn Foundation for funding to set up a new project – provisionally called New Chapter – to start up Borderline BookSpaces in various locations, to be run by people leaving prison. These would be seen as 'acclimatisation projects', giving people time to adjust to life on the outside while learning some job skills. We would like to include such things as creative writing

projects for those who benefited from writing while in prison, or other creative projects through which they can deal with the changes in their situations.

We are putting together an advisory board, headed by Mike Kirby, former governor at HMP Low Newton. Other prospective members of the advisory board are author and creative writing instructor, Richard Hardwick and representatives from CLINKS, Haven Tyneside, and Open Gate.

We are already discussing working together with Holme House, Stockton-on-Tees and Kirklevington Grange, Yarm.

We will also be listed in the directory of the Hardman Trust which lists organisations offering funding and other services to people in or recently leaving prison. We have already had a request for dictionaries and reference books from a prisoner setting up a wing library in Newton Abbot.

We will expand our donations to more custody suites

### **New projects at the library:**

During February and March we hosted a series of four local history talks by a library member.

We plan to follow this with talks on more modern local history by Yvonne Young, a local author of several books on Newcastle and Gateshead and some talks by members of the Northumbrian Language society on local dialects.

We are also planning to add more books and audio materials on UK dialects.

As of spring 2017 we also have a monthly Arabic story-time We will build on these events and hope eventually to have some kind of story-time every week.

Volunteer Cristina plans to hold language taster-sessions at the library so that people can become familiar with the sounds of different languages and learn to write their names in different scripts.

In time, Amina would like to get off the regular rota and go to the library at different times so as to keep in touch with all the volunteers and see that things are running smoothly.

We hope to find a volunteer (or a part-time employee if we can raise another salary) who has library experience to help ensure that the system is being used correctly and consistently and who can use the information we collect for analysis of our impact.

We had contact with a PhD student who was going to do a study of the library, but unfortunately she broke her ankle and all arrangements went awry. We may try again to find a student to do this as our logbooks are a mine of information.

Written for the AGM on 27 February  
Updated 28 March 2017

STOP PRESS:

After writing this report, Dr Peggy Seeger also agreed to be a patron of Borderline Books, which she calls 'A national treasure'.