

**Libraries  
Unlimited**



# **Libraries Unlimited Trustee Information Pack**

**Libraries Unlimited believes...**

in the unlimited potential of library services to make a positive difference to people's lives and communities through a shared love of reading and access to high quality information and facilities.



## Dear Applicant

I am delighted that you are interested in helping shape, oversee and lead the future for Libraries Unlimited. Libraries Unlimited is an independent staff and community owned social enterprise and charity, established in April 2016 with the support of Devon County Council. We are a company limited by guarantee with registered charity status. Our mission is to bring ideas, imagination, knowledge and creativity to people's lives and communities.

Libraries Unlimited is committed to making the biggest differences to people's lives through imaginative library and learning services. We are a not for profit organisation and have the freedom and flexibility to design and deliver a wider range of services, greater opportunities to develop income generating initiatives and secure funding opportunities.

We are a commercial organisation with a robust business plan that ensures that we can survive and thrive. Developing a culture of innovation and public service entrepreneurship is central to our business model, delivering libraries across Devon, Torbay and beyond, whilst also developing new services and income streams. We prioritise the positive social impact of our services and reinvest any surplus profit to support our mission and purposes.

Our Trustees have a passion for the future of libraries, along with the vision, expertise and creativity to help us develop and grow sustainably. The Board of Trustees provide the organisation with effective challenge and scrutiny and are collectively responsible for setting and reviewing our strategic direction, in line with Libraries Unlimited's charitable objectives.

New trustee appointees to our Board will share our collective passion for libraries and enjoy the challenge of working in a creative, new business environment. In 2017 we secured additional funding through a variety of competitive tenders and funding bids. In 2018/19 our annual turnover will increase from £7.7m to around £9m. Therefore, we are looking for an independent financial trustee with a wide-ranging financial background and experience to help and support our continued growth.

This information pack is designed to provide you with information about the organisation's mission, core purposes and future plans and details about the key skills and attributes we are looking for in a trustee.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Julie Dent CBE

# Introduction to Libraries Unlimited

Our mission is to bring ideas, imagination, information and knowledge to people's lives and communities through our six core purposes:

- Promoting and encouraging a love of reading.
- Providing free access to information to help people in their everyday lives.
- Inspiring people of all ages to learn, imagine, create, succeed and realise their potential.
- Guiding and supporting people to explore and connect to the wider world.
- Offering a welcoming space to meet, socialise, learn, read and enjoy new experiences.
- Supporting the health and wellbeing of individuals and local communities.



**Our values** are founded on the principles of trust, neutrality and openness and include being welcoming, having integrity, being creative and collaborative and fostering enjoyment through our work.

**Our impact** and commitment to contributing to positive outcomes for people and communities is central to our organisational culture.

Libraries Unlimited contributes to key cross-cutting local and national outcomes, from economic prosperity to health and wellbeing to resilience and safety. We continue to participate in major initiatives like the FabLab, based in Exeter and Barnstaple Library and the national Living Knowledge Network. Through such experiences we are clear that our libraries must be at the forefront of digital technologies and supporting economic growth in the future.

**Our partnerships** are wide ranging and we have strong local and national links and partnerships with for example, The University of Exeter, The British Library and Arts Council England. Our Business and Intellectual Property Centre service provides support to business owners, entrepreneurs and inventors, in partnership with the British Library. We run a Bookstart Outreach programme working with a range of statutory and community based organisations to gift free books to pre-school children.

We have an excellent track record of working collaboratively with local communities and our network of Friends Groups.

### **In the next year, we aim to:**

- Start to deliver a high-quality arts and culture programme funded by Arts Council England
- Refurbish and improve several of our rural libraries
- Rollout a range of new ICT systems, providing increased connectivity and better services
- Develop and implement a new fundraising strategy
- Take forward exciting plans to develop new library and cultural provision in Bideford
- Develop our marketing strategy to attract new audiences and sustain existing use of libraries across Devon and Torbay

## Key facts

- 50 libraries across Devon
- 4 libraries in Torbay
- 347 villages (455 stops) served by 4 mobile libraries
- 2 FabLabs providing leading edge digital technologies
- 3 prison libraries
- A home library service supported by the Royal Voluntary Service (RVS)
- 1 café



During 2016/17 there were:

- Over 2.7 million visits to Devon libraries
- Over 2.2 million items borrowed by 114,000 members
- Over 380,000 individual Wi-Fi sessions
- 354 staff (163 full-time equivalents)
- 15,439 events throughout the year
- 835 volunteers working across the organisation
- 140 one-to-one sessions at the Business and Intellectual Property Centre
- 32,834 children and young people that were members of Devon Libraries
- 32,926 new people joining Devon Libraries
- 28,208 digital magazine downloads
- 84,327 eBook and Audiobook downloads



## Business Development

Libraries Unlimited delivers the library service across Devon, in partnership with Devon County Council, with a 5 year contract and the option to extend for a further 5 years. As of April 1<sup>st</sup> 2018, Libraries Unlimited also took on the running of Torbay Libraries, in partnership with Torbay Council.

The organisation's annual turnover for 2018/19 will be in the region of £9m.

We intend to increase the level of income generated by our current services (by improving access and increasing activity), while also developing a range of new services that meet need, realise social value and reduce the organisation's dependence upon Devon County Council funding.

Our core service offer during 2017/2018 included the following services:



## Our Board of Trustees

Our Board of Trustees comprises representation from independent trustees, Friends Groups (community trustees) and Libraries Unlimited staff (staff trustees).

You can see our current Board members here:

[librariesunlimited.org.uk/about/our-board/](https://librariesunlimited.org.uk/about/our-board/)

## The Role of Trustee and Person Specification

This is a part-time, voluntary role but reasonable expenses will be paid.

Location:  
Devon

Time commitment:  
Approximately 12 days a year

Tenure:  
Up to three years, with a maximum of two consecutive terms

## The role

Board members of Libraries Unlimited will be both directors of a company and trustees of a charity. They will therefore, have duties and responsibilities under company law and charity law.

Whilst not onerous these must be taken seriously.

Details about being a trustee and the duties of a trustee can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-what-you-need-to-do>

## Key Role of Trustees:

- To ensure the organisation complies with its governing document and pursues the objectives defined in it.
- To ensure the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objectives.
- To contribute actively to the Board of Trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To safeguard the good name and values of the organisation.
- To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.
- To ensure the financial stability of the organisation.
- To protect and manage the property of the organisation and to ensure the proper investment of the organisation's funds.
- To appoint the Chief Executive Officer and monitor his or her performance.

In addition with other trustees, each trustee must hold the charity "in trust" for current and future beneficiaries by:

- Ensuring that the charity has a clear vision, purpose and strategic direction and is focused on achieving these.
- Being responsible for the performance of the charity and for its "corporate" behaviour; ensuring that the charity complies with all legal and regulatory requirements.

- Acting as guardians of the charity's assets, both tangible and intangible.
- Ensuring that the charity's governance is of the highest possible standard.

As well as the various statutory duties, any trustee should make full use of any specific skills, knowledge or experience to help the Board make good decisions.

The above list of duties is indicative only. Trustees will be expected to perform all such additional duties as are reasonably proportionate with the role.

## Person Specification

### Values

- A commitment to the mission, purposes and values of Libraries Unlimited.
- A commitment to embedding diversity and inclusion across the organisation.
- A commitment to Nolan's 7 principles of standards in public life – selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.





## Knowledge, skills and understanding

- Commitment to the organisation and a willingness to devote time and effort.
- Understanding of the role and value of libraries, and commitment to raising awareness of library services.
- Willing to challenge and be challenged.
- Good, independent judgement and strategic vision.
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship.
- An understanding of the challenges of leading an organisation in its early development, or in periods of significant change.

## Experience

- Demonstrable experience of building and sustaining relationships with key stakeholders and colleagues to achieve organisational objectives.
- A proven track record of sound judgement and effective decision making.
- A history of impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences.
- A track record of commitment to promoting equality and diversity.
- Experience of leading in a voluntary capacity (e.g. school governor, Parent Teachers Association, previous Board level experience).

## Other

- Willingness to attend Board meetings and be available for and respond to telephone calls and electronic communication from senior management of the organisation.
- Willingness to attend occasional daytime and evening events.

Financial experience is required:

- A background in finance, with experience as a Finance Director or Chief Financial Officer in a business or charity
- Appropriate financial/accounting qualifications
- Knowledge and understanding of accounting and financial reporting
- An ability to understand financial information and sound business/commercial skills
- Experience of managing/governing significant organisational growth
- Sufficient and diverse experience to hold management to account

### To Apply:

Please send your CV, including details of two referees (these will not be contacted without your prior knowledge and consent) to [info@librariesunlimited.org.uk](mailto:info@librariesunlimited.org.uk).

Please include a supporting statement (of no longer than 2 pages) explaining how you believe your skills and experiences match the requirements of the role, directly addressing the person specification, and complete and return the Equality Monitoring Form.



[librariesunlimited.org.uk](http://librariesunlimited.org.uk)



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