

**SPL Poets Advisory Group**  
**Meeting I: 9 Dec 2017**  
**Suggestions of the Group for SPL Activities**

**Cross-Scotland Reach**

- Establishing small lending shelves in remote locations (following the model of the shelves in Ullapool marked “Scottish Poetry Library”).
- Establishing a “Reading Squad” to tour public locations across Scotland reading poems and facilitating discussions/workshops. Members do not need to be poets themselves.
- Creating a network of poets in cities/towns across Scotland with the goal of establishing an SPL representative in each area. This figure could distribute SPL programs, share information re the Postal Library, and connect local reading/writing groups with each other.
- SPL presence at every literary festival occurring in Scotland. SPL representatives can offer information on SPL activities and the Postal Library.

**Engagement with Young People**

- More SPL engagement with schools in deprived areas.
- More programming connecting young people with poets in face-to-face interaction. Perhaps a buddy program? Or more programming of slams in schools?

**Welcoming Diverse Communities**

- More SPL collaboration with ‘non-bookish’ organisations (i.e. cancer centres, the LGBTQ Healthy Living Centre) to engage those populations with poetry.
- Ensuring that the ‘evidence-based programme’ cited in the SPL business plan involves mapping the uptake of all SPL projects (as far as is practical and legal within data protection limits) by postcode and correlating this data with specific indicators of poverty (i.e. data regarding people on benefits, using Foodbanks, etc.).
- Hosting themed readings (i.e. readings of LGBTQ+ poets, poets of colour) and themed displays to welcome a diverse range of people into the library.
- Booking more non-English language poets (every 3 or 4 events) at the SPL. Reaching out to Urdu, Polish, etc reading groups in Scotland to welcome them in, and ensuring the SPL has material in the collections for these groups.
- Programming more events with BSL translators and booking D/deaf poets to perform, perhaps with a hearing translator.

**Professional Development/Support for Poets**

- Providing a package of services similar to the SBT New Writers’ Awards package, including mentorship, advice on professional development, etc. Either as an award or generally available via the website.
- Ensuring that the vocabulary for programming is carefully edited—the venue, the name of the project involved, how often it is—to avoid jeopardising those on benefits who wish to take part.
- Setting rates for poet payment in order to establish a payment standard in Scotland, and making these rates available on the SPL website.

- Setting up advice sessions at the SPL with the Citizens Advice Bureau for poets to ask questions re self-assessment forms, royalties, any other industry questions.
- SPL operating as a sort of trade union giving advice to poets regarding fair payment, liaising between poets on benefits and the DWP, etc.

### **Creative Projects**

- SPL being involved in/coordinating a film-poem challenge next year, perhaps in conjunction with the 100th anniversary of Margaret Tait's birth in 2018.
- Hosting/facilitating gatherings of writers to discuss craft and practice. Organising more events with Q&As to facilitate discussion of craft.

### **Website Enhancement**

- Encouraging more events organisers in Scotland to post their events on the SPL website, or making this the responsibility of an SPL staffer.
- Updating the list of regularly occurring live events on the SPL website posted by the SPL ambassadors.
- Hosting on the SPL website a list of writers groups in Scotland with details of how open the groups are, when/where they meet, etc.
- Hosting on the SPL website a database of accessible venues in Scotland with accessibility information and information on fees.
- Hosting on the SPL website information supporting poets in publishing ventures: contacts with publishers, more support making zines, resources for self-publishing, etc.
- SPL expanding its poets database to a comparable model to the SBT Live Lit database, so businesses/organisations can look up and contact poets for projects.
- Hosting on the website advice for poets/poetry organisations seeking funding, including a list of all organisations offering funding to poets in Scotland, advice on grant-writing, and a list of grant-writers in Scotland and their fees.

If you have any comments on these suggestions, please email PAG Chair Katie Ailes at [splambassadors@gmail.com](mailto:splambassadors@gmail.com)