

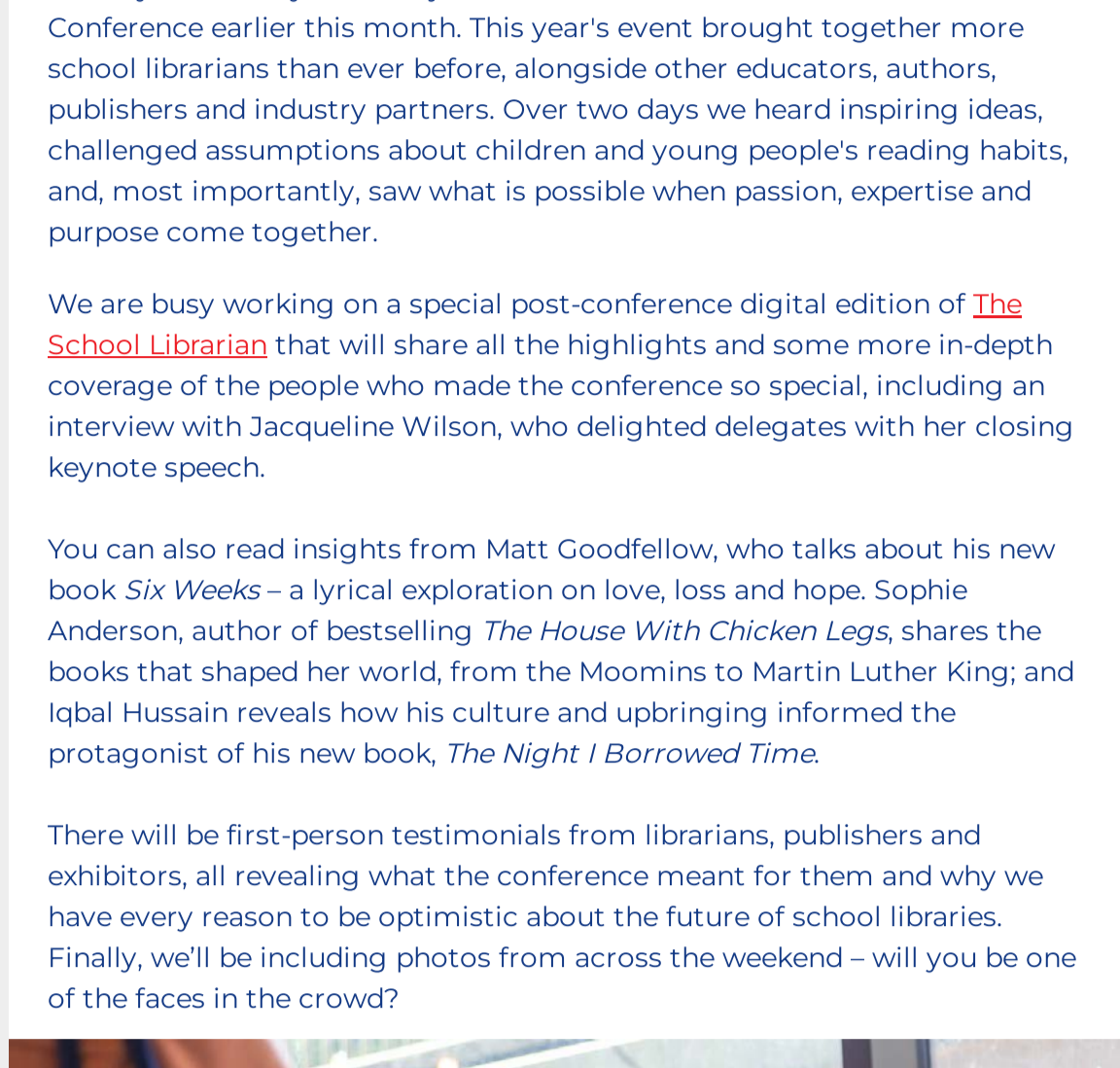
Welcome to your final newsletter of the academic year! It has been an extraordinary year for the sector, one that has included the launch of the [National Year of Reading campaign](#), the Government commitment to funding a school library for the one in seven primary schools who don't currently have one, and a renewed national focus on children and young people, their experience of education, and their relationship with books and reading.

The latest iteration of this attention is the Government's announcement that children in every part of the country will get access to enriching activities through the [£134.5 million Every Child Can't programme](#). We know that school libraries are already delivering on enrichment in school communities, and believe they should be part of any 'new' in-school strategy. From book groups to creative writing clubs, Dungeons and Dragons to origami, school librarians support children and young people daily to experience connection and community. The school library can be a hub of enrichment activity with programmes like pupil librarians schemes enabling pupils to develop the skills and confidence so often valued in later life. We look forward to working with colleagues across the sector in response to this announcement, and hope to help build on existing initiatives and develop new approaches through school libraries in the new school year.

This week has also seen confirmation of a [ban on social media for under 16s](#). We all agree that protecting children online is essential, but alongside any new restrictions there has to be a continued and wider focus on education. Children and young people need to understand how social media works to influence them, how to discern what is real and what is not, and how to be responsible digital citizens. These are critical thinking skills that belong across the entire curriculum, and can be thoroughly supported through a well-resourced, staffed school library.

The summer break is an opportunity for us all to take stock of these emerging changes and opportunities. Although we hope you will have lots of time to rest and recharge before the start of the new school year, please do keep checking in with our website and social media for our responses to policy announcements, sector news, and all that's new in children's literature.

Finally, we were sad to hear the recent news of the death of Alec Williams. Alec became Chair of the School Library Association in 2004 and brought the warmth and wit of a true storyteller to his role, alongside an irresistible enthusiasm for getting more children reading. The School Library Association extends heartfelt condolences to all who knew and loved Alec - he will be remembered by everyone who worked alongside him.



Changing narratives at the School Library Association conference

Thank you to everyone who joined us for a fantastic weekend at our Annual Conference earlier this month. This year's event brought together more school librarians than ever before, alongside other educators, authors, publishers and industry partners. Over two days we heard inspiring ideas, challenged assumptions about children and young people's reading habits, and, most importantly, saw what is possible when passion, expertise and purpose come together.

We are busy working on a special post-conference digital edition of [The School Librarian](#) that will share all the highlights and some more in-depth coverage of the people who made the conference so special, including an interview with Jacqueline Wilson, who delighted delegates with her closing keynote speech.

You can also read insights from Matt Goodfellow, who talks about his new book *Six Weeks* – a lyrical exploration on love, loss and hope. Sophie Anderson, author of bestselling *The House With Chicken Legs*, shares the books that shaped her world, from the Moomins to Martin Luther King; and Iqbal Hussain reveals how his culture and upbringing informed the protagonist of his new book, *The Night I Borrowed Time*.

There will be first-person testimonials from librarians, publishers and exhibitors, all revealing what the conference meant for them and why we have every reason to be optimistic about the future of school libraries. Finally, we'll be including photos from across the weekend – will you be one of the faces in the crowd?



Share your stories

The conference always reminds us how important it is to shout about the brilliant work being done in school libraries. We are building a body of evidence to demonstrate the difference school libraries make, and we cannot do it without your input. Whether you have been running book groups, wellbeing activities or media and information literacy lessons, collaborating with teachers, or managing regular library lessons, we want to hear about it! [Please share your story with us](#)



Learning Disability Week 2026 and supporting readers with SEND

This week is Learning Disability Week, and the theme for 2026 is 'Do you see me?', which is all about people with a learning disability being seen, heard and valued. As part of our National Year of Reading partnership with Accessit Library, we are delighted to be hosting a free webinar exploring how school libraries can better support readers with SEND and improve access to books.

Taking place on Thursday 18 June, the webinar will examine the barriers that can prevent children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities from accessing reading, and share practical approaches for creating more inclusive reading environments.

We have an exciting line-up of speakers joining us from across the education, publishing and literacy sectors. Professor Jessie Ricketts of Royal Holloway University, who will share the latest research on reading and SEND, while acclaimed authors Eve Ainsworth and Sally Gardner will share more about their lived experiences and how their work has helped shape conversations around inclusion and dyslexia. The programme also includes a special pre-recorded Q&A with author, presenter and ADHD advocate Sam Thompson, trailed above, offering insights into neurodiversity and reading.

Emma Steel from Every Cherry Publishing will discuss the growing importance of accessible books, while school library assistant April Ingram will share practical examples of supporting pupils with SEND and dyslexia through inclusive collections, outreach work and assistive technology.

We hope this session will offer valuable insights into developing a whole-school reading culture that embraces all learners, sharing ways to engage staff, pupils and the wider school community in creating inclusive reading opportunities.

[Book your free place now.](#) A recording will be available for those unable to join live.



Could your school be part of our new Reading Reboot programme?

Our [Reading Reboot](#) programme is now recruiting secondary schools in London, the West Midlands and the North East of England. If your school is in one of those regions, applications are open until 22 June.

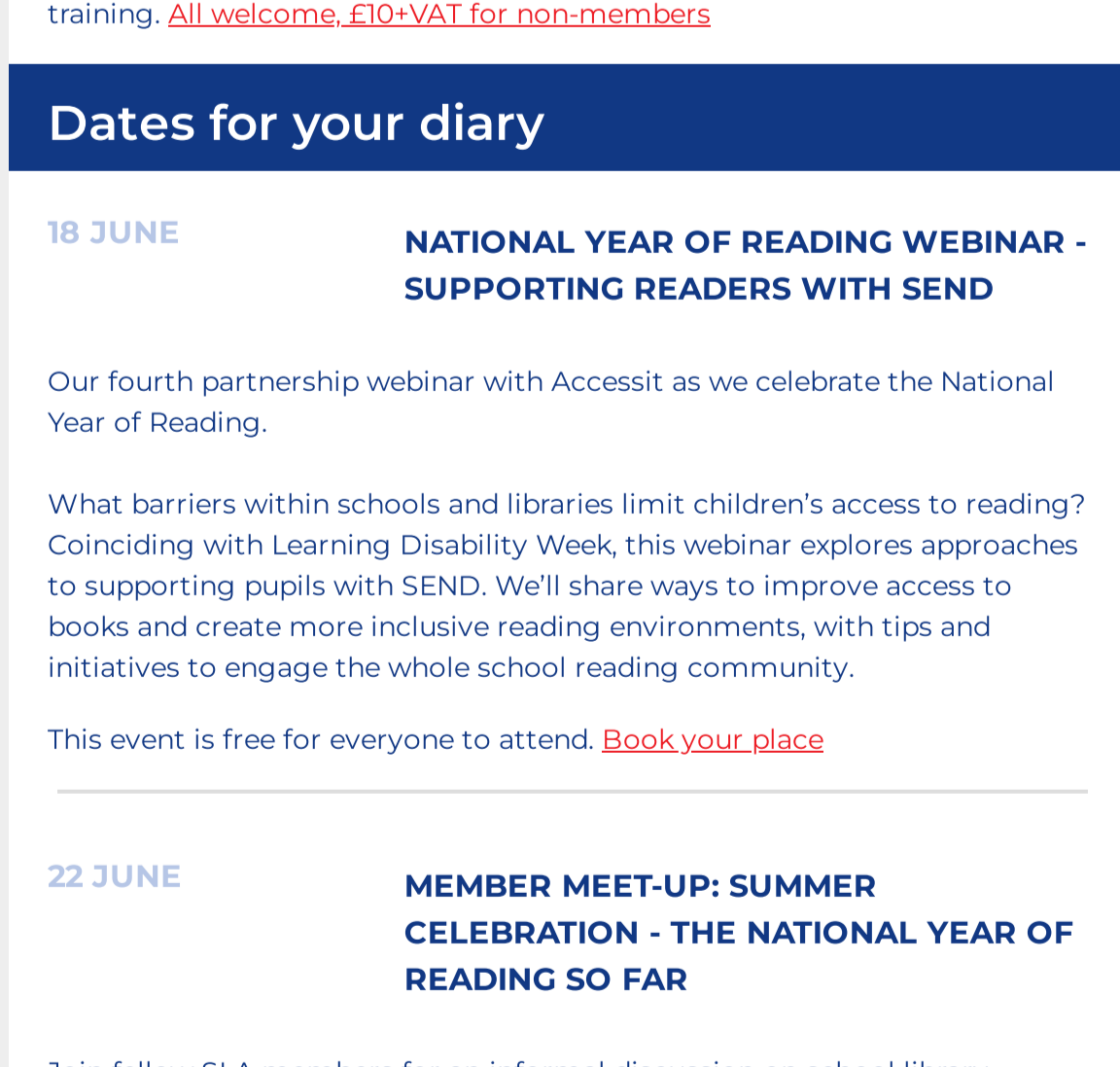
Reading Reboot - a reading programme funded by the Charlotte Aitken Trust, will deliver 1,000 social book clubs in over 100 secondary school libraries over three years, directly reaching over 6,000 Year 8 pupils.

The pioneering programme will focus on Year 8 pupils, targeting the age at which reading for pleasure often shows the steepest decline, and a year group that will soon be subject to a new mandatory reading test. Reading Reboot will deliver ten-week book clubs, run by school librarians who will be supported by the School Library Association. Each participating school will receive dedicated book stock of around 200 new books, with pupils having free choice of titles, but no requirement to read.

This simple, low-pressure approach to book clubs has been proven to increase reading engagement, increase reading age outcomes, improve the wellbeing of participating young people and build the positive, social associations with books and literature that will change attitudes to reading – taking it from a subject to be learnt, to an activity that can bring joy.

Participation is free to eligible state schools: schools in London, the West Midlands or the North East, with 20 per cent or more FSM pupils and a school librarian to deliver the programme.

Apply for your school [here](#) or contact Gareth Morgan, Reading Reboot Project Manager with any questions or queries: gareth.morgan@sla.org.uk



SLA Publicity and Partnerships Director talks books, reading and passing on a love of literature

Saira Aspinall, our Publicity and Partnerships Director, was recently invited to join journalist and author Sam Parker on The Good Father Podcast to discuss the decline in children reading for pleasure. The conversation explored the impact and importance of school libraries in encouraging children to choose to read, and how parents can nurture a love of reading in their own children, without pressure or expectation. This is a warm and wide-ranging chat about what books represent for each of us, and how much the work we do means to the School Library Association team. [Listen now](#)

Mary Rose Grieve joins School Library Association Board of Trustees

We are delighted to welcome Mary Rose Grieve to the School Library Association Board of Trustees.

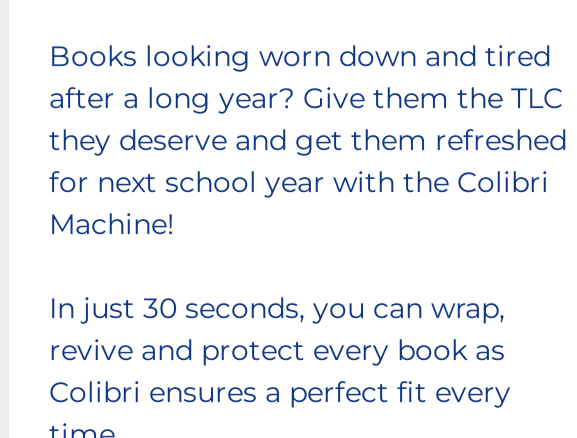
Mary Rose has been the librarian at Hartland International School since 2015, where she oversees three libraries and serves as Whole School Literacy Champion, with responsibility for the reading curriculum in primary and the whole school reading policy.

Named UAE School Librarian of the Year in 2019, Mary Rose is a founding director of the UAE Association of School Librarians. She also sits on the Carnegie Organisation Group and chairs the Christina Mary Hendrie Trust, a Scotland-based grant-giving body, bringing valuable experience of the charitable sector to her new role.

Mary Rose said: "It is such an honour to join the board of the School Library Association at such an exciting time for both the organisation and our profession. The National Year of Reading reminds everyone involved in education and literacy that school libraries and their staff are the backbone of literacy provision in schools and I am so excited to be joining the team as they prepare for their 90th anniversary." [Find out more about our trustees](#)

Book giveaway

Win one of 10 copies and a bookmark!



Penguin Random House have 10 copies of *Augusta Pine Does Not Exist* to give away to UK school libraries, each with a branded lenticular bookmark. This reverse twist thriller follows teen spy and hacker, Augusta Pine, who must outsmart a team of criminals to free a building of innocent hostages – and herself.

With it's pacy, action packed narrative and futuristic sci-fi themes, this is a brilliant, fun and accessible read, and the perfect book for both avid and more reluctant teen readers. [Enter via email](#) by 26 June.

Upcoming branch events

17 JUNE SURREY BRANCH EVENT - DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS FOR BEGINNERS

For some students, Dungeons & Dragons is a brilliant way to promote reading and also create a real sense of community among fans. The school's library manager organises a thriving group and will run a practical workshop to explain how to set up these activities in your library.

Do come along to this informal and fun event and enjoy chatting to colleagues and have a look round someone else's library. For Primary and Secondary levels; school librarians, teachers, teaching assistants and trainees all welcome. [All welcome, £5+VAT for non-members.](#)

24 JUNE SUSSEX BRANCH ONLINE MEET-UP

Join an informal virtual meet-up for members of the Sussex Branch. This is a chance to catch up and share successes and challenges from this academic year, as well support each other with getting ready for the year ahead. [Find out more and book your place](#)

24 JUNE GLOUCESTERSHIRE BRANCH MEET-UP

All those working in school libraries in Gloucestershire and its borders are warmly welcomed at the branch's next network meeting. [Find out more and book your place](#)

25 JUNE OXFORDSHIRE BRANCH SUMMER MEETING

Join the Oxfordshire branch of the School Library Association for a round-up of the academic year and a midday review of the National Year of Reading. Tea, coffees and refreshments will be provided. [Find out more and book your place](#)

29 JUNE HERTFORDSHIRE BRANCH EVENT - THE POWER OF GRAPHIC NOVELS TO ENGAGE RELUCTANT READERS

Join the Hertfordshire Branch to discuss how to best use graphic novels to engage your students. Outlining the value of graphic novels and manga in stimulating, enhancing and supporting reading. Guidance on sourcing, stocking and cataloguing this format within the school library, including advice on how to participate in the Excelsior Award, the nationwide book award for graphic novels and manga. Lucy Forrester, children's librarian and now the comics and manga specialist at Peters Books, will be delivering the training. [All welcome, £10+VAT for non-members](#)

Dates for your diary

18 JUNE NATIONAL YEAR OF READING WEBINAR - SUPPORTING READERS WITH SEND

Our fourth partnership webinar with Accessit as we celebrate the National Year of Reading.

What barriers within schools and libraries limit children's access to reading? Coinciding with Learning Disability Week, this webinar explores approaches to supporting pupils with SEND. We'll share ways to improve access to books and create more inclusive reading environments, with tips and initiatives to engage the whole school reading community.

This event is free for everyone to attend. [Book your place](#)

22 JUNE MEMBER MEET-UP: SUMMER CELEBRATIONS - THE NATIONAL YEAR OF READING SO FAR

Join fellow SLA members for an informal discussion on school library success stories during the National Year of Reading so far! We'll also discuss ways to encourage reading over the summer holidays.

This is designed to be an informal conversation, so do come along ready to discuss what has worked for you this year, or what you are doing to encourage reading over the summer with our other members. Cameras and microphones will be needed to participate.

This is a free event, exclusive to SLA members. [Book now](#)

30 JUNE NEW MEMBER MEET-UP

Join our virtual networking session for our newest members!

Whether you are new to the SLA, new to school libraries or have recently changed school, all are welcome. Everyone has a different story to share, challenges to face and moments to be proud of. This is a great opportunity to connect with fellow school librarians.

This is a free event, exclusive to SLA members. [Book now](#)

8 JULY TWILIGHT TRAINING: END OF YEAR STOCK MANAGEMENT

As the school year closes, it's the perfect time to tackle essential tasks like stock checks and large-scale weeding. These activities keep your collection healthy and set you up for the year ahead.

This session will focus on why stock checks are important and how to perform them and how to identify books for withdrawal based on library best practices. Plus, we'll share some creative and fun things you can do with removed books.

This is a paid for event (£30+VAT), with a discount for SLA members (£22.50+VAT). [Book now](#)

Get involved

FREE ONE MONTH TRIAL - COLIBRI MACHINE **FREE DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR SIX WEEKS**

SPONSORED CONTENT

Get ahead for the next school year! Get a one-month free trial of the Colibri Machine today.

Books looking worn down and tired after a long year? Give them the TLC they deserve and get them refreshed for next school year with the Colibri Machine!

In just 30 seconds, you can wring, revive and protect every book as Colibri ensures a perfect fit every time.

Experience effortless book covering with a one-month FREE TRIAL – with no commitment. [Find out more and apply for your free trial](#)

SPONSORED CONTENT

Download a free discussion guide for Matt Goodfellow's new book *"I say children's books are for everyone and Six Weeks exemplifies my argument. Destined to be a future classic"* – Tom Griffiths, headteacher and book blogger

From the award-winning author of *The Final Year* comes a powerful story of love and loss, family and hope. Written in verse, *Six Weeks* is an unforgettable story that promotes empathy and compassion and sensitively explores family and grief. [Download a free discussion guide and classroom activity sheets here](#)