

# PLR NEWS

## Welcome to the third edition of PLR News

The Newsletter aims to bring you a digest of recent and forthcoming PLR developments, facts about the Scheme and details of the February 2004 payments. We hope you find it interesting and informative. But please let us know if there is other information about the Scheme that you would like to see here.

**YOU CAN NOW REGISTER FOR PLR ON-LINE BY VISITING OUR WEBSITE AT  
[www.plr.uk.com](http://www.plr.uk.com)**

### February 2004 payments

We will be distributing **£6.4 million** this year at a Rate Per Loan of **4.85** pence (up from last year's rate of 4.21 pence). **18,763** authors will receive a payment, including **280** (251 last year) who will qualify for the maximum payment of £6,000. See the back page for more details.

**RATE PER LOAN UP TO  
4.85 PENCE**

Payments will be made during the week beginning Monday 9 February 2004.

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### Understanding your Payment Notification

Your Notification of Payment shows the estimated national loans calculated by the PLR computer for each of your books. It also gives the amount each has earned for loans reported to PLR during the year 1 July 2002 - 30 June 2003. To see how and when you will receive any payment due to you, check the details on the **top right-hand corner** of your Notification.

Please remember: you only receive payment for books registered before 30 June 2003. Books you have registered since then will be included in **next year's** Notification.

In most cases your payment will go directly into your bank account. To check you have been paid, look out for an entry

on your bank statement reading 'PLR', followed by your PLR number, eg **PLR042712**. If you think your payment has **not** reached your account, please check with your bank in the first instance. If there is still a problem, let us know here at PLR and we will be happy to look into it for you.

**Please check that your name and bank/building society details appear correctly on your Notification, and advise us before 31 January of any change. Please remember to quote your PLR number.**

### How is your payment calculated?

The Rate Per Loan is worked out by dividing the figure for the total number of loans of books registered for PLR into the money available in the PLR Fund for payment to authors. This calculation also takes account of money freed for redistribution as a result of the minimum (£5) and maximum (£6,000) payment thresholds.

So, if your books have been borrowed 50,000 times you will receive £2,425 (50,000 x 4.85 pence).

### PLR's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary

This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passing of the PLR Act in 1979. The Act was a landmark in the history of authors' rights in the UK and came after thirty years of campaigning by British writers.

The anniversary presents an opportunity to improve public awareness of the PLR Scheme and its importance for authors. We are looking at a number of ideas for promotional events to help publicise the importance of the Scheme for authors and to emphasise the need for government funding to keep pace with the future growth of the Scheme.

## Focus on the PLR Advisory Committee

The Committee advises the Registrar and the government on PLR issues, and its recommendations can lead to changes to the Scheme. Clare Francis completed her term as Chair in August 2003. The Culture Secretary has appointed author Simon Brett to succeed her. Other Committee members are writers Theresa Breslin and Maggie Gee, literary agent Gill Coleridge,

Somerset County Librarian Rob Froud, and Miranda McKearney, Director of the Reading Agency.

If you have views on any aspect of the Scheme's operation and coverage that you would like the Committee to consider, please contact the Registrar who will be happy to pass them on to the Committee.

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## Frequently asked questions

[I know that my book has been borrowed several times from my local library – why don't these loans appear on my Payment Notification?](#)

On grounds of cost PLR is unable to collect loans data from every library in the UK. Instead, loans data comes from a sample of libraries located across the country. However, to improve authors' chances of featuring in the library sample its composition is changed regularly, and we are gradually increasing the sample size and range as more sophisticated technology reduces the cost of data collection.

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[Why are some of my books missing from my annual Payment Notification?](#)

The Notification document only shows titles which are eligible for the February 2004 payment distribution. Therefore only titles registered on or before 30 June 2003 will be listed. Any titles registered after this date will be shown on next year's Notification.

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## International developments

Legislation paving the way for the establishment of a PLR system in France passed through the French parliament during 2003. Arrangements for managing the new scheme remain to be put in place. As French authors are now eligible for UK PLR, we understand that the French PLR authorities will be willing to make payments to UK authors. As with German and Dutch PLR, payments would be distributed via ALCS.

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## Changes to the Scheme

Under the Scheme any payment of less than £5 is not made. The Advisory Committee has recommended that such payments should instead be held over for authors until such time as their accumulating payments clear the £5 threshold and can be paid out. Following last year's increase in PLR funding, the Committee also felt it only fair that the maximum threshold (currently set at £6,000) be reviewed. It has not been changed in 15 years. The Committee is recommending a rise to £6,600. The delays to last year's payments have had a knock-on effect on plans to get these Scheme changes through Parliament; and, although Ministerial approval was given last year for the changes, we now have a new DCMS Minister with responsibility for PLR who needs to be consulted. We would hope to have the agreed Scheme changes in place for the 2005 payments.

DCMS has also agreed in principle to an extension of PLR to on-the-spot consultations of reference books in public libraries. But this will require changes to the PLR Act, as opposed to the Scheme, and will have to wait for an appropriate opportunity to secure parliamentary time for the Act to be amended.

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## PLR – A family affair

In this issue we feature the Lodge family, four of whose members – father, mother and two daughters – have all registered for PLR.

Maureen Lodge (writing as Maureen Roffey) has been illustrating children's books since 1965 and has created some 150 titles. Recently she has been collaborating with her daughter Jo Lodge, who has designed the paper engineering for two pop-up books that they have produced together. Jo has also designed and illustrated 30 titles in her own right. Youngest daughter Katherine has illustrated six titles, one of which she wrote. Maureen's husband Bernard, a TV graphic designer by trade, has written fifteen books, including several illustrated by Maureen and Katherine.

Maureen comments: 'We always look forward to our PLR statements. What is interesting is that the most-borrowed books aren't necessarily the same as the ones that sell well; and of course the extra financial injection our payments bring in February is always very welcome.'

## Collecting Loans Data

To enable us to estimate how often your books have been borrowed nationally we collect loans data from a sample of library authorities across the UK. To improve the payment chances of writers of books of local and regional interest we continue to rotate the sample (five new library authorities this year) and to extend its range (769 branches, compared with 479 last year). The following 31 authorities participated during 2002-03:

### Wales

Cardiff, Carmarthenshire, Flintshire

### Scotland

Dundee, South Lanarkshire, West Lothian

### Northern Ireland

Belfast, North Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB)

### English Counties

South East Beds/Luton, Essex, Herts, Northants, Bucks/Milton Keynes

South West Devon, Somerset, Southampton, Warwickshire

Northern Durham, Lancashire, Stockton-on-Tees

### Metropolitan Boroughs

Bradford, Leeds, Sheffield, Stockport, The Wirral

### London

Bexley, Brent, Kingston upon Thames, Southwark

## Please remember ...

- Under the current Scheme earnings of less than £5 cannot be paid out. (See *Changes to the Scheme* opposite.)
- You must register separately any new editions (eg paperback, large print) of hardback titles you have already registered with us as the new editions will have different ISBNs.
- The annual closing date for book registrations is 30 June. You must register any new ISBNs with us by this date if you want them to qualify for payment in the following February.
- If you live in the UK, Income Tax will not have been deducted from your PLR payment. You should declare your payment as income on your tax return.
- If you live abroad the position with regard to deduction of tax depends on whether you live in a country that has a double tax treaty with the UK, or not. Please see the separate explanatory leaflet enclosed with your Notification for more information.

## The Society of Authors

84 Drayton Gardens, London SW10 9SB

Not yet a member? Here are some of the benefits of joining:

- clause-by-clause contract vetting
- advice on any professional issue or problem (including copyright, agents, publishers, film options)
- free copies of the extensive Quick Guide series (see website or phone for details of titles)
- quarterly journal, *The Author*, packed with useful advice, information and articles
- opportunities to meet other writers, as well as publishers and agents
- invitations to talks, seminars and regional meetings
- membership of specialist groups
- free ALCS membership
- listing and links on our website and online database
- special offers on home, travel and libel insurance
- up to 25% discount on books from Ottakar's, OUP, Foyles and the Pan Bookshop

For further information please contact:

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or visit [www.societyofauthors.org](http://www.societyofauthors.org)

## PLR Facts and Figures

Payment Date	February 2003	February 2004
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### Expenditure

Government Funding	£7 million	£7.2 million
Payments to Authors	£6.2 million	£6.4 million
Running Costs	£817,000	£812,000
Rate Per Loan	4.21 pence	4.85 pence

### Payment 'Bands'

	<u>No of authors</u>	<u>No of authors</u>
£5,000 - £6,000	320*	354*
£2,500 - £4,999.99	340	350
£1,000 - £2,499.99	759	767
£500 - £999.99	894	910
£100 - £499.99	3,952	3,875
£5 - £99.99	12,799	12,507
<b>Total Recipients</b>	<b>19,064</b>	<b>18,763</b>

### Book Loans Data

Total UK loans	406 million	377 million
Loans of registered books	184 million	169 million

\* Includes 280 authors this year and 251 in February 2003 whose payments were subject to the £6,000 maximum payment threshold.

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[www.plrinternational.com](http://www.plrinternational.com)

In accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 Public Lending Right confirms that the data that you provide in registering with this organisation will be used only for the purposes of administering any payments that may be due to you under the PLR system. Data will not be used for other purposes unless separate and specific consent has first been given by you.