UK THEMA NATIONAL GROUP – Minutes
CILIP Building, 7 Ridgmount Street, London WC1E 7AE
Tuesday 10th March 2015, 2pm

Present
Alaina-Marie Bassett, BIC
Graham Bell, EDItEUR
Venus Clark, Waterstones
Kat Coveyduck, Virtusales
Richard Davies, Elsevier
Katy Gibson, BIC
Azar Hussain, Faber & Faber
Alex Ingram, EDItEUR
Alan Trewartha, HarperCollins
Gabrielle Wallington, Waterstones
Alfred Willmann, Penguin Random House
Howard Willows, Nielsen (Chair)

Apologies
Sharat Gaur, Amazon
Karina Luke, BIC

1. Introductions & Apologies
HW welcomed the Group to the meeting and the apologies were delivered. The Group extended a warm welcome to Azar Hussain of Faber & Faber at this, his first, meeting.

2. Review of the minutes and actions from the previous meeting
- THEMA Implement listserv
GB informed the Group that he had now set this listserv up and they should be in receipt of an invite to subscribe shortly. He noted that a link to this listserv will be added to the EDItEUR website and that it will be a public listserv, just like the ONIX_Implement listserv.


- Suitable titles for worked examples in the Theme User Guidelines
HW noted that he had not received any suggestions prior to the meeting but commented that he would return to this later in the meeting (under point 3 of the agenda) for the Group to contribute any suitable titles.

3. Update on Theme activity
- Mappings to Thema 1.1
HW informed the Group that an update of the mapping from BIC 2.1 to Thema 1.1 is currently underway to reflect the changes to Thema 1.1. He noted that BIC subject classifications are static which makes the process easier but informed the Group that the new Thema codes were generally direct equivalents of BIC codes, and hence easy to map (e.g. in Science and Technology) or expansions of areas that were already far richer
than BIC (e.g. in Fiction) and hence impossible to reach from BIC. HW noted that this mapping will be available on the EDItEUR website as soon as possible.

Post-Meeting Update: The mapping has been completed and forwarded to EDItEUR. It will be available on the EDItEUR website shortly at http://www.editeur.org/151/Thema/

HW informed the Group that the mapping from BISAC to Thema 1.1 has been more involved than that for the BIC Subject classification, since BISAC has also undergone modifications recently (i.e. BISAC 2014), although many of the changes in Thema v1.1 were designed to improve compatibility with BISAC (e.g. in Children’s). He advised that the BISG committee has shared a draft mapping with HW and GB, that feedback has now been provided, and that the BISG committee are meeting this week to consider the feedback and finalise the mapping. He also noted that this mapping will be free to BISG members and licensed non-member users of the BISAC scheme. The mapping is not available separately, and is only available from BISG.

AT questioned whether the BISAC to Thema mapping would work in reverse, i.e. from Thema 1.1 to BISAC. HW responded that although any direct equivalent mappings would work in reverse, many areas would require conditional and combination rules to produce good BISC outcomes. HW advised he would shortly begin work on a reverse Thema v1.1 to BIC 2.1 mapping, but that mappings to & from BISAC were the responsibility of the BISG Group.

- User Guidelines for Thema 1.1
HW commented that worked examples are required for the Thema User Guidelines to illustrate the points made. He noted that the US Thema National Group has been tasked with providing examples to explain their requirements; GB and GW agreed this is a very useful practice. They also suggested that the User Guidelines should illustrate the splits between science, technology and industry.
ACTION: RD to consider suitable titles for worked examples in science / technology areas.

- International Translations of Thema
GB updated the Group on the status of international translations of Thema. He noted that the full German translation of Thema 1.1 is now online, as is the Norwegian translation. He noted that the Swedish translation has now been written but is currently in the process of being reviewed. The Spanish translation has also been written, is currently being approved and will shortly be available online. GB noted that a number of updates have been made to various translations but none that are noteworthy for the purpose of these minutes.

- Thema and Academic Journals / Serials
GB informed the Group that he has received a number of questions about whether Thema could be relevant for use with academic journals. At first glance, this is likely to
require some additional detail particularly in the science and HSS areas, and this should be considered when Thema moves forward to version 1.2.

- **Geographical Qualifiers in Thema**
  AI noted that, at the last meeting of the Thema International Steering Committee which took place at Frankfurt Book Fair, the Group had discussed geographical extensions requirements for classifying regions without National Thema groups. AI tested this by using a sample of 25 travel guides to establish whether the locations could be expressed precisely in Thema. He noted that the results suggested a 50% coverage, which will not encourage the uptake of Thema amongst publishers and booksellers in the Travel sector. He noted that organisations may become confused by such omissions or the apparent inconsistency in Thema (e.g. codes for Paris and Rome, but not Athens or Prague). However, GB warned of the potential governance issues arising from the creation of what are effectively National Extensions for countries where no National Thema Group had yet been set up. He noted that an objectively supportable hierarchy of regions will need to be established for relevant countries. AI illustrated this point by noting that Lonely Planet’s category management system includes Continent followed by Country, Region and then City. He also noted that even within cities there may be room for further detailed qualifiers, e.g. the “City of London”. AI commented that he will look into Lonely Planet’s categorisation. GB noted that any proposals will need to be discussed by the International Steering Committee meeting at London Book Fair 2015. AW suggested speaking to Dorling Kindersley about their geographical qualifiers to find out about any issues. GB agreed, noting that this Group will also need to ascertain what products are selling. GW volunteered a member of her team at Waterstones for this investigation.

**ACTION:** ALL to put forward any proposals for geographical qualifiers to GB, which will subsequently be addressed by the Thema International Steering Committee in April.

**ACTION:** AW to speak to Ingrid Harrold of Dorling Kindersley.

**ACTION:** GW to pass on the contact details for Waterstones’ travel specialist to AI.

GB noted that any urgently needed geographical qualifiers for the UK can be proposed as UK National Extensions, by this Group.

- **Update on Thema national groups**
  HW noted that current Thema national groups fall into two categories; either an established active group that has submitted proposals and is engaged in to the promotion and implementation of Thema, or a group in name only (or who may be active but have not submitted any proposals to the Thema International Steering Group (TISC)). HW noted that various organisations in Australia have suggested that they are interested in forming a National Group, but that there is no evidence of such a group being formed. GB noted that the TISC and EDItEUR encourage the formation of national groups, which should include participation from all relevant sectors of the supply chain; GB noted that a list of key contacts for each region can be found on the EDItEUR website. He suggested that new key contacts can be added, should they wish to be the
key contact for their region, or else EDItEUR can put enquirers in touch with the right person for their query.

4. **Thema promotion in the UK**

- **BIC Supply Chain Seminar London Book Fair 2015**
  AB informed the Group that BIC’s Supply Chain Seminar at London Book Fair – which will be entitled Building a Better Business Seminar – is taking place on Thursday 16th April 2015, from 10-12am. She noted that a half-hour seminar – called “International Discovery and Market Analysis: How Thema can help” – will be dedicated to Thema. She informed the Group that Len Vlahos of BISG, Azar Hussain of Faber & Faber and Fride Fosseng of Bokbasen A.S. in Norway will speak at this event. This session will run from 10am to 10:30am.
  For further information, please see the following webpage:

- **BIC Training Course**
  AB noted that BIC’s Understanding BIC Subject Classification & an Introduction to Thema training course is due to run on Tuesday 28th April 2015. GW noted that some of her colleagues at Waterstones hope to attend this course and will sign up shortly.
  **ACTION**: AB to liaise with GW regarding this training course.

- **Other types of Thema Promotion**
  HW suggested further BIC Bites or a BIC Breakfast on Thema would be of use and would simultaneously raise awareness of Thema. The Group agreed that these should be considered. AH and AT suggested that the focus of the BIC Breakfast should be on the implementation process of Thema or mappings for Thema 1.1. AW also noted that the Breakfast should look at both a publisher’s and a retailer’s perspective. GB noted that Len Vlahos will most likely take this approach at the LBF Supply Chain Seminar since he has previously worked for booksellers and as such will be able to close the gap between publishers and retailers.
  **ACTION**: AB to discuss with KL and add this BIC Breakfast topic to the agenda for the Training, Events & Communications Committee’s next meeting.

5. **Reports on Thema progress from members**

- **HW** – HW noted that Nielsen are currently generating Thema from the BIC subject classification codes and will be going live with eBook products first in the direct allocation of Thema 1.1. He noted the scale of this project but advised that the eBook system will be live in the second quarter of 2015. The eBook system will be able to ingest Thema codes submitted by publishers.

- **RD** – Elsevier are working on implementing Thema but are not able to prioritise this at this time. RD suggested that the implementation will go ahead in mid-2015.
- GB – Recent work by EDItEUR has involved updating translations for online tools. GB also noted that AI is working on UK geographical extensions, as previously discussed.

- AH – Faber & Faber are mapping from Thema 1.0 to 1.1 with the help of Virtusales. AH noted that they are working on a process to make it easier / simpler for Faber & Faber to assign Thema 1.1 codes in-house. He commented that this work will be completed soon.

- AT – The Group were informed that there have been very few new developments in the use of Thema at HarperCollins since the last meeting of this Group.

- AW – AW informed the Group that the Random House Group have been awaiting the mapping from BIC2.1 to Thema 1.1 before implementing it into their system. He noted that work will begin on this shortly and that it will take roughly 3 months to fully implement.

- KC – Virtusales have now added Thema 1.1 codes into their latest software release. KC noted that this system will be released to Virtusales’ customers shortly. She also noted that Virtusales are offering to migrate records from 1.0 to 1.1 for their customers and are discussing how to assign codes internally.

- GW – GW informed the Group that she is working to promote Thema internally at Waterstones. She noted that their new website is now running smoothly and suggested that her next move will be to encourage the implementation of Thema.

- AI – AI informed the Group that Thema is now being included in EDItEUR training courses for IPG, among other organisations.

6. A.O.B.

- Thema search tool
  AI informed the Group that he has found a bug in the online Thema search tool resulting in some missing headings following the input of particular search terms. He asked the Group whether they had encountered any similar problems but the Group did not appear to have experienced any. AI informed that Group that this matter is being looked into and will shortly be rectified.
  **ACTION:** ALL to send any feedback or information of search tool errors directly to GB.
  **Post-Meeting Update:** The bug has now been fixed.

- Reverse Thema to BIC mapping
  AT commented that a key sign of progression for Thema 1.1, from HarperCollins Publisher’s perspective, will be when organisations are using Thema but are able to supply BIC subject categorisation codes to their customers, if / when requested. HW noted that this is on the agenda but is not a top priority at the moment. GB commented
that this is the other side of the mapping process and suggested that it will be addressed during 2015.

- **BookNet Canada tool**
  GB noted that BookNet Canada’s automated tool to map from BISAC to *Thema* will be available updated to reflect Version 1.1 and BISAC 2014 within the next month or so.

7. **Date of next meeting**
   June 2015 – date TBC.
   **ACTION:** KG/AB to set up a Doodle Poll for this next meeting.