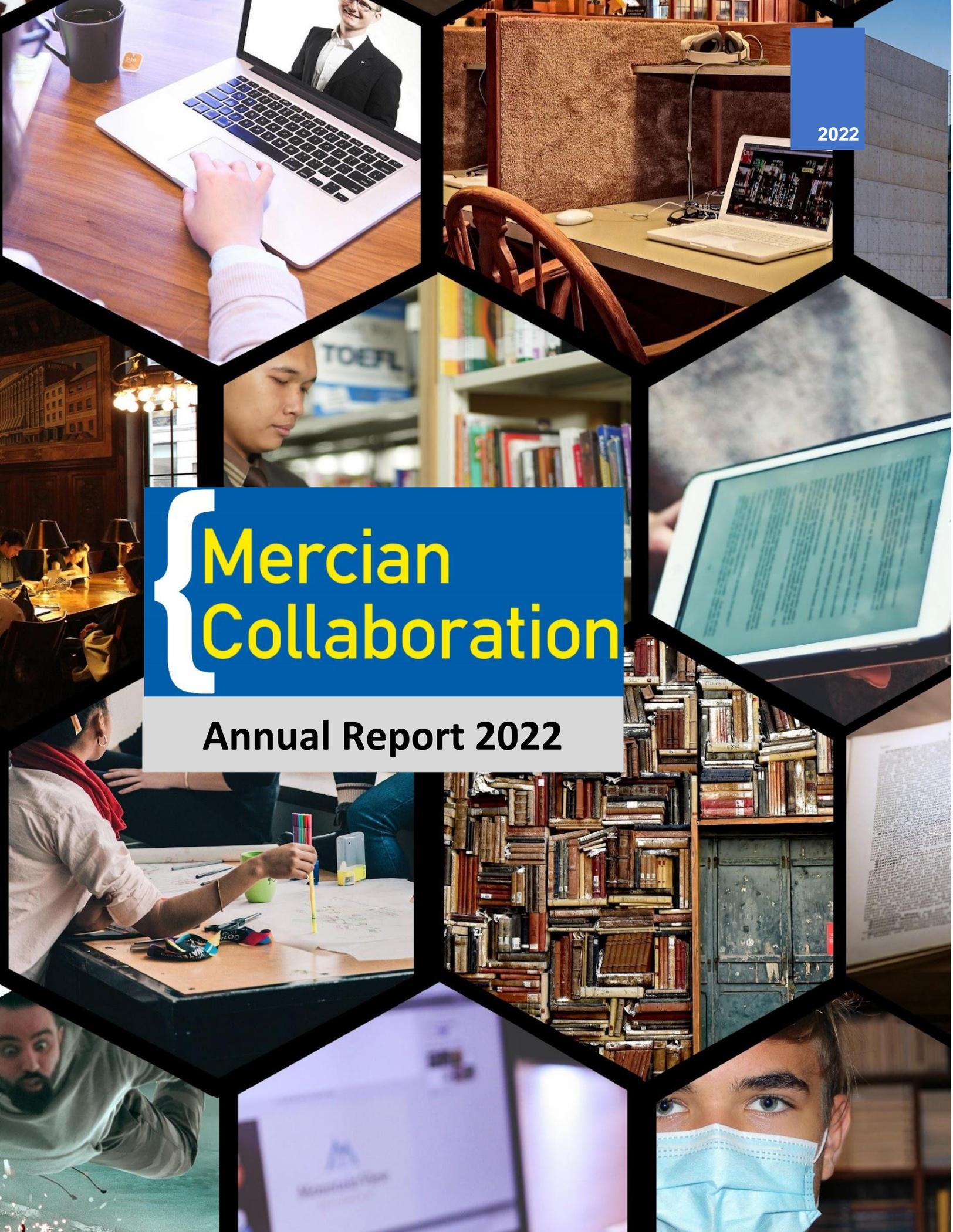


2022

# Mercian Collaboration

Annual Report 2022



# Mercian Collaboration Annual Report 2022

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## Chair's Introduction

2022 was an eventful year; we lost a Queen and gained a King, we had a veritable revolving door of Prime Ministers, together with four Chancellors, and four Education Secretaries.

War returned to Europe and the cost-of-living crisis made a major impact on our operations, our students and our staff, and led to widespread industrial action across many sectors including our own. Against this background, the Mercian Collaboration has provided much-needed encouragement, peer-support and development for members from front-line staff to directors. We have experienced a return to more normal activities, with many of our special interest groups, meetings and training seeing a return to in-person activity, and opportunities to consider and reflect on changes to the sector and its mission.



**Chris Porter**

*Chair (2021-2023),  
Director of Library & Learning Services,  
Newman University, Birmingham*

We saw a major change to the operational life of the Collaboration, when we lost some of our 'institutional memory', along with the expertise and charisma of the former Executive Officer, Gareth Johnson, who moved on to pastures new after almost seven years of being the glue that holds us together.

On behalf of the Collaboration, I'd like to thank our amazing community for pulling together and keeping the momentum going with a reduced amount of executive support for the interim period.

I would specifically like to thank Natalie Baker-Fosker who has done sterling work in keeping the ship afloat while we recruited for a new Executive Officer, stepping with great effectiveness into a new and challenging role, very different from the day job.

As you will see from the enclosed reports - from the chairs of our operational groups and special interest groups - the Mercian Collaboration has continued to offer a stimulating programme of events for our members and their staff, whilst the member highlights showcase some of the excellent practice that has been embedded in the light of continual changes.

I encourage you to read and be inspired by this record of successes and resourcefulness that demonstrate the value of our Collaboration and the ingenuity and perseverance that characterises our profession.

I am grateful to all the officers and members of our various groups, and to the Steering Committee who have supported and shaped the work of the Collaboration.

As I come to the end of my two years as Chair, I am delighted to hand on a Collaboration in good shape - embodying the ambition and enthusiasm of our region and sector.

We are continuing to grow, thrive and engage with big issues, while supporting and encouraging one another as practitioners and peers. This sense of building value by community is the heart of our Collaboration, and I commend this report as a record of our common achievements.

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## Preface

Welcome to the sixth Mercian Collaboration annual report!

During 2022, the Collaboration continued to offer a vibrant programme of activities. We have continued to encourage the virtual attendance of meetings and events but have also started to return to offering some in-person activities where appropriate. On behalf of the collaboration, sincere thanks are given to everyone who helped organise, facilitate, speak at, or participate in our events programme in 2022, including our first ever hybrid conference.

As with our [prior annual reports](#), this document is intended to provide insight into the Collaboration's activities throughout 2022. However, this report only represents a snapshot of activity. For a more detailed and regularly updated view of ongoing and planned activities, please see the Mercian Collaboration's website - [www.merciancollaboration.org.uk](http://www.merciancollaboration.org.uk).

We hope that this report is of value to our members as well as organisations in comparable higher education settings - beyond the UK Midlands region - including our parent body, SCONUL.

**Natalie Baker-Fosker**, Interim Cover for Executive Officer

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## About the Collaboration

The **Mercian Collaboration** is a regional library network based in the UK Midlands. Founded as the *Midlands Academic Library Group* in 2014, we now have 23 academic library members.

The Mercian Collaboration is known informally as "The Collaboration". It is governed by the Mercian Directors board, and its parent body is SCONUL.

Member libraries provide the Collaboration's operating capital through an annual, institutional subscription model. Contributions are proportionate to member's income as reported to SCONUL, with levels reviewed annually by the Treasurer and Steering Group, with any changes subject to agreement by the Directors Board.



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## Governance

### Directors Board

The Board is the Collaboration's ultimate governing body and is comprised of member libraries' directors, or equivalent senior leader representatives. It meets twice annually, normally March and October, to discuss high-level issues and exchange experiences, along with deciding on the

Collaboration’s future strategic direction. Where directors are unable to attend, a senior staff member is normally deputised to appear in their place. Minutes, agenda, and reports relating to these meetings, and indeed all Collaboration groups, can be found online on our website.

## Steering Group

Operationally, a Steering Group oversees and advances the Collaboration’s agenda and activities outside of the Board meetings. The Board nominates, and where necessary, elects Officers and Ordinary Members from within its own ranks to serve on the Steering Group for a two-year term of office. The Steering Group also has responsibility for monitoring and supporting the activity of the Collaboration’s subgroups. Individual Steering Group members act as group sponsors for particular subgroups, alongside representing their interests to the Board and Collaboration at large. The Steering Group includes three officer roles (Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer) as well as three non-officer member director positions. Apart from the Vice-Chair, Steering Group members serve two-year terms. The Vice-Chair usually serves a four-year term, normally progressing to Chair after the first two. The current Steering Group was elected in March 2021, with the next round of elections due to take place in March 2023.

### *Steering Group Members (2021-23)*



Left to right: (top row) Chris Porter (Chair, Newman), Laura Pilsel (Vice-Chair, Harper Adams), Helen Curtis (Treasurer, Aston).  
(bottom row) Chris Powis (Northampton), Jo-Anne Watts (Wolverhampton), Judith Keene (Worcester).

## Executive Officer

The Executive Officer is employed part-time on behalf of the Collaboration by SCONUL, reporting to the Chair. Their role is to provide executive management of the Collaboration, assisting in realising its objectives, projects, groups, services and developments. The Officer usually leads on coordinating governance and formal reporting requirements by and to the Collaboration’s governing and parent body. Crucially, they facilitate operational matters including communication, liaison and relationships between subgroups and their officers, as the Board and Steering Group’s representative. Consequently, they are an ex officio member on all subgroup committees and organising bodies, where they seek to advise, inform and guide activities within the Collaboration’s overarching goals. Additionally, the Officer is the primary point of contact for all external enquiries along with maintaining the Collaboration’s online and social media presences.

The substantive Executive Officer, Gareth Johnson, left his post in July 2022. The vacant post was advertised in December 2022 and shortlisting for the role is ongoing at the time of writing this report. The Executive Officer role was partially covered for the interim period by Natalie Baker-Fosker of Newman University, who provided administrative cover to keep the Mercian Collaboration's activities running smoothly, by managing the Email inboxes and responding to queries, writing meeting minutes as needed, and updating the website as appropriate.

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## Policy & Reports

A limited number of closed-access reports were produced for the Steering Group and Board, with limited circulation due to the operationally sensitive nature of their contents. However, wherever possible all reports and policy documents continue to be made openly available on the Collaboration's website, as per our underlying transparency and open access ethos.

All key documents are available at: <https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/key-documents>

### *Strategic Plan & Membership Values*

The [Strategic Plan](#) was launched in early 2020 and was revised in February 2022 to address the impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic by accommodating the altered circumstances of the sector.

The document sought to clarify how the Collaboration delivers membership value through enabling collaborative solutions and support within a changing policy, practice and societal context. It also provided a statement of intent against which future activities could be aligned and successes measured.

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## Treasurer's Report

The Collaboration's finances have been healthy this year with low overall expenditure coupled with salary savings made following the departure of the Collaboration's Executive Officer in July 2022.

The conference once again being held online reduced costs and the conference group were successful in obtaining sponsorship from Bibliu, totalling £1,250 and generating a profit after covering expenses. We are grateful to Cranfield University for hosting the conference online at no cost to the Collaboration.

We received £18,927.78 in membership fees and with expenditure of £17,405.34\* the reserves total approximately £30,174.40\* for 2023.

**\*Note:** expenditure and therefore the reserves are estimated at the time of writing as a payment has not yet been made to Newman University for the hours covering the interim Officer role. It is hoped that a more accurate figure will be available for the meeting of the Directors' Board in March.

The Steering Group agreed a moderate 2% increase to subscriptions for 2023 to support the increased salary of the new Executive Officer who is expected to work two days per week, once in post, and the return of an in-person conference this year.

The Treasurer and Steering Group will continue to monitor finances during the year.

**Helen Curtis**

Treasurer, Mercian Collaboration; Aston University

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# Communications

## Web Presence

First launched in early 2017, the website continues to represent the main public facing presence of the Collaboration to the world. Alongside representing the Collaboration as a whole, it also offers a location where member organisations' staff can learn about our aims, activities, membership and key contacts. The site provides access to a wealth of information including, but not limited to: forthcoming events, news, reports, policy, governance and committee minutes. The site's broad range of openly accessible content reflects the inherent transparency embodied within the Collaboration's organisation ethos. The site itself is overseen, updated and checked by the Executive Officer, with platform hosting and support outsourced to SCOUNL's web provider.

## Social Media

In addition to the website, the Officer also manages a twitter presence to further promote the Collaboration, highlighting events and news, alongside raising the organisation's visibility with its members' staff and the wider academic library community. Twitter interaction with members, outside of coverage of the annual conference, remains minor, but with followers continuing to climb, it represents a low-resource, easy additional route to raise awareness of the Collaboration's work. For the period 1<sup>st</sup> January – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022, 129 tweets were posted on behalf of the Mercian Collaboration.

## Mailing Lists

A general distribution Jiscmail list, exclusive to staff at member organisations is also maintained as a further source of information on events, meetings and developments. The general mailing list may also be used on occasion to promote vacancies within member organisations, as well as spotlight selected, unaffiliated regional events and news. Each of the Collaboration's subgroups, along with the Directors Board and Steering Group, also maintain operations thorough various Jiscmail private distribution lists, typically maintained by the Officer, Steering Group Chair and/or Vice-Chair.

## News & Announcements

Throughout 2022, the Collaboration continued to highlight outputs from subgroup events, as well as drawing members' attentions to developments pertaining to the conference. As in previous years the majority of the news content was produced by the Officer, in their role as the public face and marketing lead for the Collaboration.

Headline	Date	Associated Group	Author / Poster
<a href="#">Call for Conference Group members 2023</a>	06/12/2022	Conference Group	Executive Officer (Interim cover) on behalf of Laura Newman
<a href="#">Mercian Buddy Scheme Relunched (Nov '22)</a>	25/11/2022	MSDG	Executive Officer (Interim cover) on behalf of Cheryl Gardner
<a href="#">Conference feedback prize winners</a>	18/11/2022	Conference Group	Executive Officer (Interim cover)

<a href="#"><u>Feedback for Conference 2022</u></a>	07/09/2022	Conference Group	Executive Officer (Interim cover)
<a href="#"><u>Introducing your Mercian Conference 2022 speakers</u></a>	05/09/2022	Conference Group	Executive Officer (Interim cover)
<a href="#"><u>2022 Conference bookings now open</u></a>	04/08/2022	Conference Group	Executive Officer (Interim cover)
<a href="#"><u>Announcing Our Title Sponsor for Conference 2022</u></a>	01/07/2022	Conference Group	Dr Gaz J Johnson
<a href="#"><u>Points of Departure – Farewell to the Executive Officer</u></a>	24/06/2022	N/A	Dr Gaz J Johnson
<a href="#"><u>Keynote Speaker for 2022 Conference Announced</u></a>	17/06/2022	Conference Group	Dr Gaz J Johnson
<a href="#"><u>Recordings &amp; Presentations – Building on the Wins</u></a>	23/05/2022	Conference Group	Deborah Munro
<a href="#"><u>Recordings &amp; Presentations - Speaker Briefing Events '22</u></a>	23/05/2022	Conference Group	Dr Gaz J Johnson
<a href="#"><u>Presentations &amp; Recordings - All the Same Nottingham ('22)</u></a>	06/05/2022	Conference Group	Dr Gaz J Johnson
<a href="#"><u>Redefining Engagement Conference 2022: Call for Speakers</u></a>	08/04/2022	Conference Group	Dr Gaz J Johnson on behalf of Conference Group
<a href="#"><u>Annual Report 2021 Published</u></a>	30/03/2022	Steering Group	Dr Gaz J Johnson
<a href="#"><u>Reflections from the Outgoing MSDG Chair</u></a>	30/03/2022	MSDG	Sarah Pittaway
<a href="#"><u>Call for Conference Sponsors – Redefining Engagement</u></a>	21/03/2022	Conference Group	Dr Gaz J Johnson
<a href="#"><u>Conference Theme 2022 Announced - Redefining Engagement</u></a>	16/03/2022	Conference Group	Dr Gaz J Johnson
<a href="#"><u>Recruiting Online and Being Recruited Online – Recording and Presentations</u></a>	02/03/2022	MSDG	Dr Gaz J Johnson
<a href="#"><u>Subgroups Back from the Ashes?</u></a>	16/02/2022	Copyright Group and Marketing Group	Dr Gaz J Johnson
<a href="#"><u>Monthly Newsletters – Are You Getting Them?</u></a>	02/02/2022	N/A	Dr Gaz J Johnson
<a href="#"><u>Save the Date - Conference 2022</u></a>	02/02/2022	Conference Group	Dr Gaz J Johnson
<a href="#"><u>Member Survey on Future Conferences Results Published</u></a>	25/01/2022	Conference Group	Dr Gaz J Johnson

## Newsletter

A member only perk, the newsletter is designed to offer a summary of forthcoming events, alongside highlighting news of group meetings and announcements. The newsletter also carries occasional job advertisements within the region, and more rarely, information on activities and events from outside the Collaboration.

The newsletter was distributed as a PDF via Jiscmail each month, however, it ceased to be produced after the departure of the Executive Officer in July. As a result, only seven issues were produced and made available in 2022. It is hoped that the newsletter will return in 2023 once a new Executive Officer is appointed.

## Events

During 2022, a reduced but strong events programme was offered by the various subgroups over the year, including our first hybrid annual conference.

Events in 2022, facilitated by the Collaboration were as follows:

Date	Event	Venue	Affiliated Group	Organiser
<b>Tue 1st Mar</b>	<u>Recruiting Online and Being Recruited Online</u>	Online event	MSDG	Teresa Jordan (UoB)
<b>Tue 26th Apr</b>	<u>Building on the Wins</u>	Online event	MSDG	Hope Williard (Lincoln), Karen Jackson (Warwick), Deborah Munro (UOB)
<b>Wed 27th Apr</b>	<u>MMG Forum &amp; AGM</u>	Aston University	Metadata Group	Richard Birley (BCU)
<b>Thu 28th Apr</b>	<u>All the Same, But Different (Nottingham)</u>	Online event	MSDG	Rachel French & Sally Barratt (Nottingham)
<b>Wed 4th May</b>	<u>Knowledge Exchange: ILL &amp; Digitisation</u>	Online event	MSDG	Scott McGowan (Keele)
<b>Tue 10th May</b>	<u>Conference Speaker Briefing Event (1)</u>	Online event	Conference Group	Gareth Johnson (Mercian)
<b>Thu 19th May</b>	<u>Conference Speaker Briefing Event (2)</u>	Online event	Conference Group	Gareth Johnson (Mercian)
<b>Mon 23rd May</b>	MSDG/MDF Inclusivity Task & Finish Group	Online meeting	MSDG / MDF	Unknown
<b>6 &amp; 7 Sept</b>	<u>Mercian Collaboration Conference 2022</u>	Online event	Conference Group	Hosted at Cranfield University
<b>Wed 16th Nov</b>	<u>Dealing with Difficult Customers (MSDG)</u>	Loughborough University	MSDG	Matt Cunningham (Loughborough)
<b>Tue 22nd Nov</b>	<u>All the Same, But Different Visit (MSDG)</u>	BCU	MSDG	Mercedes Malloy (BCU)
<b>Tue 29th Nov</b>	<u>All the Same, But Different (MSDG)</u>	Online meeting	MSDG	Mercedes Malloy (BCU)

### Key Links

**Website:** [merciancollaboration.org.uk](https://merciancollaboration.org.uk)

**Twitter:** [@MercianCollab](https://twitter.com/MercianCollab)

**Mailing List:** [mercian-collaboration@jiscmail](mailto:mercian-collaboration@jiscmail)

**News:** [merciancollaboration.org.uk/news](https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/news)

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## Operations

### Subgroups

Since its formation, the Collaboration has established several subgroups, which sought to enable experience exchanges, form communities of practice and offer expertise within the region. Moreover, many of these subgroups contribute to maintaining an ongoing professional development environment for library staff, within their particular areas of focus. Consequently, subgroups contribute significantly to furthering the Collaboration's aims and objectives in line with its strategic plan, along with representing a key tangible and highly visible value to its membership.

The Collaboration operates two types of subgroups: *operational* and *special interest groups*.

Operational groups primarily deliver on providing tangible, membership outputs through their respective programme of events. Hence, while experiential sharing at their committee meetings is an acknowledged benefit of participation, it is not their primary operational goal.

Conversely, special interest groups committees are chiefly tasked with being regularly hosted forums for experiential exchange which enables library staff working in particular roles to develop and update their personal knowledge base. Special interest groups may, and many choose to, organise successful events for their members and other interested library staff. However, it is not expected nor a requirement of their operations.

No matter their configuration, all subgroups benefit from regular liaison with the Executive Officer, who in turn provides them with support, guidance, communication and updates as part of their Collaboration coordination activities. The Officer also sits as an *ex officio* member of all subgroup committees. Additionally, each subgroup benefits from a [Steering Group Sponsor](#), who alongside providing further channels of communication and support, operate as each the group's representative to the Steering Group and Directors Board. Sponsors also help in identifying topics of cross-Collaboration interest and assist in facilitating exchanges between other subgroups.

## Operational Groups

### [Conference Group \(CG\)](#)

*The Conference Group's role is to plan, develop and deliver the annual Mercian Collaboration conference. Because of the need to deliver on such a time-sensitive and crucial Collaboration output, committee members are proposed by their Directors. The group's sponsor is **Jo-Anne Watts** (Wolverhampton) with the group's chair for 2022 being **Deborah Munro** (Aston) and Vice-Chair **Laura Newman** (Loughborough). Because of their own contemporaneous events programme, the MSDG provides an observer to provide liaison between the two group..*

The 2022 conference was once again held online and split over two half days, the Collaboration conference saw a record 142 delegates and speakers register to attend on 6-7 September. The conference was presented in a hybrid format, with some speakers online and some live in the studio. The Conference Group would like to extend our thanks once again to Cranfield University Broadcast and Record Studio who generously gave their time and expertise to host the conference.

The theme for the 2022 event, [Redefining Engagement: Connections, Collections, and Communities](#), was chosen to allow for a wide range of submissions from all areas of Library Services. The keynote paper from Ant Brewerton (Associate Director for Academic Library Services, Bodleian Libraries) was an excellent introduction, and received glowing feedback from delegates. We then had 22 papers from 12 different member organisations, with topics covering multiple teams including Research, Teaching Support, Collections and User Services. Sessions were presented live and had a Q&A session at the end so that audience members could interact directly with speakers and generate discussions around each topic. We also ran a Round Table discussion as a finale to the conference, with a range of staff from different institutions and a student representative. Feedback from delegates around this was excellent and we'd like to extend our thanks to all those who contributed to such an interesting discussion.

Delegate feedback was overwhelmingly positive for the event, and while not everything worked perfectly on the day, a lot of praise was given to the seamless work by the team at Cranfield. Once again, we also sought external sponsorship to support our endeavours and were delighted to have Bibliu as our platinum sponsor. Their generosity allowed us to offer a number of prizes for those delegates who chose to return their conference feedback forms. As always, the Conference Group is also grateful to the delegates and speakers for helping make the 2022 conference a resounding success. As past Vice-Chair, and now Chair, of the group I also deeply applaud the contributions of the past committee members for making the event happen under challenging circumstances. As a committee we are already looking towards the 2023 conference and have welcomed a number of new and willing members, while saying a fond farewell to others who had served their time. We are hopeful that we can go back to an in-person conference for 2023 and are looking forward to being able to bring back networking opportunities for Collaboration members which have been sorely missed.

**Laura Newman**, Conference Group Chair, Loughborough University

### [Staff Development Group \(MSDG\)](#)

The MSDG has a remit to organise an annual programme of development and training events and manages the Mercian Buddying Network, which aims to professionally connect staff across the region. The group's sponsor is **Chris Porter** (Newman), and the current chair is **Anmarie Lee** (Birmingham City University).

The past year has seen a rejuvenated focus on staff development and a move towards online learning. The Staff Development group have embraced this by offering a varied and diverse programme based on member feedback and reflective of the achievements and lessons learned from the pandemic. Following the rapid shift to online recruitment in 2020, the *Recruiting Online and Being Recruited Online* session offered the opportunity to share lessons learnt and reflect on what recruitment may look like in the future. *Building on the Wins: Positive changes and lessons learned* focussed on the impact of the pandemic on services at three academic libraries in the Midlands and how they were able to build on the wins of the challenges faced. The sessions were well received by attendees who fed back that sharing experiences and learning from others was the most useful takeaway.

To build on the success of the learning exchanges, we have continued to draw on the expertise from member institutions to offer a broad programme of staff development, including a knowledge exchange on interlibrary loans and digitisation and by reprising the popular All the same but Different events. We have also been able to revert back to in-person events with sessions on Dealing with Difficult customers and have offered both in-person and online sessions for All the Same but Different events. In total we delivered 7 events in 2022, in addition to delivering a joint conference session with the Mercian Disability Forum on accessibility and inclusivity for staff training. The paper presented will be used to form the basis of a workshop to be delivered as part of the staff development programme for 2023. Feedback from delegates at all events continues to be positive and is being used to shape our 23/24 programme. Events for 2023 aim to focus on addressing topical issues across the membership including the changing role of the Library Assistant, Open Access, blended learning and supporting equality, diversity and inclusion.

The Mercian Buddying scheme relaunched in November 2022 and is there to offer informal peer-to-peer support and networking opportunities across Mercian institutions. The scheme is aimed at those starting in a new post or role or those interested in moving into a new area of library work or level of responsibility. Since relaunching the scheme at the end of November we had 18 people requesting a buddy and 16 people volunteering their support as a buddy. More information on the scheme can be found at: [www.merciancollaboration.org.uk/sdg/buddying-scheme](http://www.merciancollaboration.org.uk/sdg/buddying-scheme) and applications made at: [www.merciancollaboration.org.uk/buddying-application](http://www.merciancollaboration.org.uk/buddying-application). We're particularly interested in increasing our pool of people willing and available to be a buddy to newer peers outside their organisation.

In closing, I would like to thank all the MSDG committee members for their insight, contributions and support this year, in particular the officers and the interim cover for the Executive Officer. Thank you also to all members who have presented, delivered and attended events and for the continued support of the Mercian Collaboration Steering Group.

**Ann-Marie Lee**, MSDG Group Chair, Birmingham City University

## Special Interest Groups

### [Copyright Group \(MCG\)](#)

*The MCG is a network of library staff with a responsibility for Copyright guidance and advocacy at their institutions. Membership is representational and largely self-selected by individuals within membership organisations. The group's sponsor is **Chris Porter**, and currently, the group is chaired by a committee: **Caroline Long** (Aston) **Emma Sansby** (Bishop Grosseteste) **Guy Lavender** (Open University) and **Luke Fowler** (Wolverhampton).*

In 2022, the copyright group reconvened for the first time since the covid pandemic, to take a fresh look at its membership, purpose and format going forward. There was a strong agreement from previous members that there is a benefit to reviving the group as a community of practice and discussion space for copyright practitioners in the region. The group also agreed to widen the scope of membership to include multiple delegates per institution, and to allow for interested Scholarly Communications colleagues to join alongside those focussed on copyright in learning and teaching resources.

The group has identified a new coordinating committee for future activity which includes: Caroline Long (Aston) Emma Sansby (Bishop Grosseteste) Guy Lavender (Open University) and Luke Fowler (Wolverhampton).

Future meetings are being arranged presently, and initial agenda suggestions include: copyright for accessibility, discussion on transformative agreements, resource sharing with Ukraine universities and plans to co-create new openly licenced copyright training materials.

**Luke Fowler**, Copyright Group, University of Wolverhampton

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### [Deputies & Senior Staff Group \(D&SSG\)](#)

*The D&SSG is a forum for senior managers and leaders, residing below directorial level. Membership is open to all staff in senior graded roles within libraries, with members coming together several times each year to exchange experiences. The intent is for members to participate in horizon scanning, obtain support for strategic planning and gain insights into the operationalisation of national agenda items. The group's sponsor is **Chris Porter** and the position of meeting chair and minute-taker rotates among members present.*

Following the pattern set in previous years, the group met three times in 2022, chaired by Chris Porter (Newman), Anne Knight (Cranfield), and Ann-Marie James (UCB) respectively.

At the March meeting, discussions were on:

- National Student Survey - Including impacts from pandemic, timing of return, differences of institutional approach, promotion and strategy.
- The future of print collections - Including changing trends, space considerations, print vs electronic, loans statistics, 'sortation' systems, value for money, and circulation policies.

Attendees were also offered the opportunity to provide brief institutional updates.

Discussions at the June meeting were centred around:

- Staffing matters - levels, resource, working arrangements, recruitment etc
- Student induction - autumn preparations, blended delivery & cross department collaboration.
- GJJ also shared the results of the member preferences survey for format of future meetings, whereby it was noted that the preference is for the format to remain as online or hybrid meetings.

The November meeting was in-person and hosted at UCB. Round-table discussions included:

- Workforce development
- EDI, decolonisation and collection management
- Budgets, finance and VFM
- Engagement and comms
- Civic engagement

The meeting concluded with a tour of the UCB library. It was agreed that the next meeting would take place online in spring 2023.

**Natalie Baker-Fosker**, Interim Cover for Executive Officer,  
On behalf of Mercian Deputies and Senior Staff Group, Newman University

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### [Marketing & Communications \(MarComms\)](#)

*The MarComms group comprises library professionals with a particular interest in the marketing, promotion and reputational enhancement of academic libraries. Membership is representational and largely self-selected by individuals within membership organisations. The group's sponsor is **Helen Curtis** and the current organising committee is made up of: **Claire Brown** (University of Birmingham), **Emma Halford-Busby** (University of Nottingham), **Joe Carey** (University of Wolverhampton) and **Susan O'Sullivan** (Birmingham City University).*

The Marketing and Communications Group returned to operational status with new organisational leads following a period of review. The group's remit remained the same with all members keen to have a regular discussion forum to share experiences, insights and tips with other library professionals working on communications and marketing activities for academic libraries.

Since its relaunch in March 2022, the group have met three times – in May, July and November. To date, all meetings have been online and have proven to be an excellent forum for sharing challenges, ideas and best practice.

In the May meeting the focus was on engaging the disengaged or reluctant user and opportunities for collaboration with students, particularly on social media and video content. Both of these discussions were particularly apt considering the impact of the pandemic on student engagement.

At the July meeting, as well as the regular regional roundup, the group chose to discuss the topic of induction marketing and communications. With all members busy working on their plans to welcome

new students and re-engage current students, the conversation was perfectly timed to provide an opportunity to share plans and inspiration.

The group's final meeting of the year took place in November. The topics discussed included a review of member's induction marketing and communications activities as well as looking forward to plans for exam period communications.

2022 has been a fantastic return to operational status for the group and we look forward to another year of insightful and supportive meetings in 2023. Thank you to everyone who has participated.

2022 has been a fantastic return to operational status for the group and we look forward to another year of insightful and supportive meetings in 2023. Thank you to everyone who has participated.

**Emma Halford-Busby,**

On behalf of Marketing and Comms Group, University of Nottingham

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[Mercian Disability Forum \(MDF\)](#)

*The MDF comprises library professionals working within member institutions with an interest in, or responsibility for, supporting disabled students. Membership is representational and largely self-selected by individuals within membership organisations. The group's sponsor is **Chris Powis**, and the current chair is **Simon Satchwell-Giles (Newman)**.*

MDF met only once during 2022, the second meeting being postponed to early 2023 because of industrial action. We continue to meet online, as we have done since the onset of the Pandemic. This has been the general preference of members of the forum as videoconferencing allows them to attend around their roles, many of which have become much busier since the return to campus working.

An important part of all MDF meetings is 'round-table' time for members to bring developments at their institutions, and their experiences of supporting accessibility and inclusion, to the attention of the group. This part of the meeting affords a wide range of discussion points, be it in the form of seeking or offering advice and best practice, or simply contextualising and benchmarking experience and practice against other institutions.

Discussion points this year have focussed on the challenges and opportunities that the return to on-site working has afforded. The experience of Covid-19 has led many institutions – and libraries within them – to a deeper appreciation of the accessibility and inclusion issues. Pleasingly, some colleagues reported that changes, both small and large, made within their service had considered accessibility and inclusion of disabled students and staff from the outset.

There were discussions of several initiatives within libraries around inclusion, in the form of awareness, listening, sharing best practice and co-production of services. Issues around staff time, training, and expertise to offer some of the increased services that were now expected were also brought up. Most colleagues noted a sharp increase in their workloads and, for some, job roles and responsibilities. Members continued to discuss the various platforms and technologies used to provide alternative formats, and shared information on processes and practices for institutions to make the best of these.

As a result of ongoing discussions with Ann-Marie Lee, chair of the Mercian Staff Development Group, this year saw the establishment of the joint MDF-SDG task group. This group met between April and September 2022 with the aim of developing resources for member institutions to assist them in making internal training and CPD more accessible and inclusive to staff with diverse needs. These meetings culminated in a paper delivered at Conference in September. This paper presented the work-in-progress development of a workshop, intended to be delivered as part of the Collaboration's 'All the same but different' programme, as well as some online resources. We are looking forward to pursuing these plans in 2023.

MDF were sad to see the departure of Gaz Johnson, who provided not only an excellent administrative service, but an enthusiasm about and belief in the aims of MDF, and contributed much to our meetings. We wish him all the very best in his future endeavours.

MDF continues to be a well-attended SIG with representation across the region and from a diverse range of institutions. At the next meeting in January 2023 (postponed from November 2022), we will elect a Chair for 2023-25.

**Simon Satchwell Giles,**  
Mercian Disability Forum Chair (2021-2023), Newman University

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[Mercian Metadata Group \(MMG\)](#)

*MMG group members have particular interests in around the creation and management of metadata. Membership is representational and largely self-selected by individuals within membership organisations. The group's sponsor is **Judith Keene** with the current organisers being **William Peaden** (Aston) and **Richard Birley** (BCU).*

The Mercian Metadata Group had a very quiet year in 2022. Aside from holding our AGM in April (minutes are available on the Mercian Collaboration's site), where we welcomed our new Secretary, Sally Rimmer (Derby University), we have struggled to organise any events due to our ever-increasing workloads. The joint chairs did meet in November 2022, to sketch out a plan for 2023 and hopefully we will be able to implement some of this, including another MarcEdit event, in the coming year.

**Richard Birley,**  
On behalf of the Mercian Metadata Group, BCU

## Membership Highlights

Each year the Collaboration presents highlight reports from our member libraries. These are brief updates which highlight notable activities or occurrences within our services or institutions. Report submission is not a member requirement, nor is it possible to provide an overview of all activities within each member library, so the following are only a taste of the regional academic libraries' achievements. For more information on specific member libraries, goals and activities, readers are advised to approach the appropriate Director of Library Services, or equivalent.

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### **Aston University**

2022 has been a very positive year for Aston University Library following the challenging period of the pandemic. It has been great to see so many students return to campus and see the visits to the Library building increase. It has given the opportunity to refresh and improve library study spaces to adapt to the new ways students are studying, and to continue to develop enhanced online services to support Aston's blended learning approach.

We were delighted to have been awarded an Aston Achievement Award for Best Customer Service for the second consecutive year, this time for our extensive eTextbook programme, and to have also seen the impact of this reflected in a significantly improved NSS score for the Library. This comment from the survey shows what it has meant to our students:

“One of the biggest positives was the access to online textbooks. I am honestly so grateful to Aston Uni for this. It has been such an incredible help being able to access any essential textbook at any time”.

We carried out a full evaluation of the programme this year to understand how students and academics are now using digital resources to support learning and teaching. Information Specialists Kerstin and Nicola shared the learning from this at the Mercian conference and we are continuing to work with student ambassadors to develop and promote library resources and digital tools.

The Library was successful in obtaining funding for a project to digitise Aston's historic theses making these available to a wider audience, and we have worked with CoSector and Arkivum to improve preservation within Aston's Publications Explorer.

One of the most significant developments has been going out to tender for a new Library Management System and Discovery platform. Aston will be working with OCLC to implement WMS in 2023 and the library team are grateful to colleagues at Newman University and others in the region who have shared their experiences of changing library systems.



Aston University Library staff with Perry the Bull. Photos courtesy of @AstonUniLibrary on Instagram

We enjoyed a very hot Summer in Birmingham during the time when Aston was proud to be an official University partner of the 2022 Commonwealth Games and we had the pleasure of many visits from the official mascot 'Perry the Bull' who had his own library card and changing room in the library.

We have welcomed new staff to the library this year including Kika in the new role of Open Research Assistant in the Open Research Team, and our User Services Manager Deborah, who joined Aston in June and shortly after made her debut online at Cranfield University as Chair of the Conference Group.



Deborah Munro and colleagues in the Studio at Cranfield University. Photo courtesy of Cranfield University Studio, taken from @MercianCollab on Twitter

The year ended with a celebration of Aston’s history. The Library has been involved in the development of the Aston Archives Committee who, with funding from the National Manuscripts Trust, were able to restore some of the University’s unique materials and historical records. This culminated in an [Archives exhibition](#) ‘Preserving the Histories of a Community of Makers’ opened by Aston’s new Vice-Chancellor Professor Aleks Subric. It was a fantastic evening and the committee were delighted to see the archives come to life as shown by the smiles below!



Annette Rubery, Ilaria Scaglia and Aston Library’s Will Peaden at the Aston University Archives Exhibition, November 2022

This will be my last report from Aston as I leave to join Oxford Brookes University in 2023. I would like to thank my amazing team at Aston for their support during the most remarkable time, fellow members of the Mercian Steering Group, and my many friends and former colleagues across the Mercian Collaboration.

**Helen Curtis**, Director of Library Services,  
Aston University, January 2023

## Birmingham City University

2021 posed a unique challenge for the sector, moving into 2022, reflection and a renewed focus on the strategic goals of the service became the priority alongside staff development and wellbeing.

### **Student Experience**

In response to student feedback, the space booking system modified introduced during the pandemic was retained and library spaces repurposed to meet evolving needs. Online tutorials were also retained and developed.

Outreach work featured regularly through the year with cross team collaboration employed to raise awareness of library services at our smaller, more specialist sites such as St Paul's Square library, part of the School of Jewellery, and these resulted in an uplift in use. We were delighted to snap the VC, Philip Plowden at one of our pop-up library events!



Further investigation into Demand Driven Acquisition with the DDA+ trial showed positive results in bringing VFM and speed of delivery. It is hoped that the service can continue to develop more flexible and responsive approaches to resource provision.

Appointment of Research Services and Special Collections librarians along with a temporary role investigating library resources for Transnational Education partners reaffirmed L&LR's support for the wider community.

Accessibility of online resources, particularly Subject Guides became an important focus for the Web Team. Significant work took place to ensure resources were legally compliant with the team delivering training and workshops helping guide editors (Subject Librarians in most cases) to assess and edit content with these legal requirements in mind.

Work continues to promote the library as a secure, warm space offering 24/7 support and with a focus on wellbeing including calm spaces where students can take time out from their studies.

### **Staff Development and Wellbeing**

With issues such as Accessibility fresh in the mind, a series of online events delivered by colleagues took place over the course of a week to raise levels of digital literacy among the service and to showcase the diverse range of resources and tools employed across the service.

Renewed focus on staff wellbeing became ever more important with a dedicated group formed organising numerous activities and groups meeting up regularly. Recognising achievement and excellence at work featured with regular awards given under the Customer Services Stars Awards where colleagues (from any team) can be nominated for outstanding Customer Service.

In recognition of the support provided to the faculty of Health, Education and Life Sciences (HELs) during the pandemic response, Library and Learning Resources along with other faculty professional services were formally acknowledged during an awards ceremony held at the City South Campus.

Bespoke medals were designed by colleagues at the School of Jewellery and presented during the ceremony.



### **Looking Ahead**

BCU continues to expand in the City Centre of Birmingham with the opening of STEAMHouse; a unique collaborative project between the arts and STEM subjects providing support for business across the region.

We also look forward to welcoming Dr Sarah Pittaway as the new director of L&LR (March 2023). Our thanks and best wishes to Ruth Jenkins and acting director Ann-Marie James.



*BCU STEAMHouse. Image © BCU Assets*

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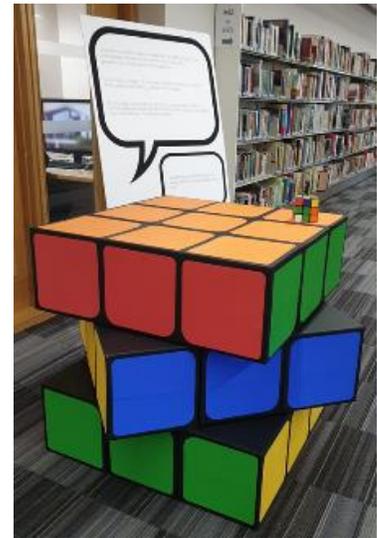
### **Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln**

Early 2022 represented the tail-end of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Our library team had largely remained on campus - with relatively little home working - since late 2020, and the last major Covid-19 restriction at our university (compulsory face masks) was lifted in February 2022. The slow recovery of footfall to the library building did however remain a concern throughout 2022.

On a more positive note, and despite losing our Collections Librarian to retirement in May, the combined efforts of our small team allowed us to achieve a great deal in 2022, mostly especially in four areas of activity:

### **Diversity and inclusion**

We developed a *Toolkit for Diversifying Reading Lists* and launched it at the University's Learning & Teaching Conference in June. We worked proactively with the University's (student-led) autism group to identify spaces in the Library where students with autism feel comfortable to study, and provided space for four autism-related art installations in November (one of which is pictured here). We also expanded access to the RNIB Bookshare platform by working with the University's Student Advice department to identify and engage with eligible students.



### **Collection management**

Having acquired an RFID wand in 2019, we began to use it in earnest in 2022 to stocktake our collections. Our main collection of 82,851 items was scanned in just 23 days and a clever spreadsheet devised by our Discovery Services Librarian allowed us to closely monitor progress at all points of the process.

We accepted a donation of over 400 children's books from primary education specialist (and BGU alumna) Prue Goodwin and undertook a project to thoroughly weed our art collection (no longer taught as a standalone subject). We updated the University's *Guidance Notes on the Creation and Review of Reading Lists* and also our RDA cataloguing guidelines, and began a project to rationalise our remaining print journals.

### **Publicity and promotion**

We showcased our fantastic Teaching Resources Collection at an event for World Book Day and published two editions of our 'Library Update' newsletter which is hand-delivered to all permanent members of academic staff. We also began to use our Instagram account more intensively to promote library activities.

### **Student satisfaction**

Perhaps our proudest achievement was related to student satisfaction when our library achieved its best ever ranking for the National Student Survey's question 19 ('library resources supported your learning well'). This was terrifically satisfying for our team, especially given the general dip in student satisfaction in 2021 as a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic.



We were also buoyed by satisfaction levels in the University's internal student satisfaction survey in which just 0.6% of respondents were dissatisfied with the support and advice they received from the library team.

## Cranfield University

Tim Wales joined Library Services as the new University Librarian in May 2022 following the retirement of Simon Bevan.

Various student experience projects were initiated this year to maintain our excellent PTES and PRES satisfaction scores. Our Management Information and Resource Centre (MIRC) in the School of Management was refurbished following a prolonged closure during Covid (due to the size of the space). The book stock was returned and RFID self-issue was implemented for the first time. New information screens were installed and further developments, including a change of name (*School of Management Library*), are planned for early 2023.

A new Customer Experience team was created across our libraries following minor changes to our organisational structure. This team has already changed the way that rotas are managed for in-person and online support. They are also finding ways of working more consistently between service points with increased use of LibAnswers.

24/7 webchat has been implemented on our website. This proved very popular during the Christmas period when staff were on leave and demonstrates the value of service continuity. We are now evaluating the chats undertaken by staff from the global co-operative to ensure they reflect the levels of service we would expect to provide.

We have taken a leading role in tackling academic misconduct within the University. Our online referencing and plagiarism course is now mandatory for all students and we participated in a live discussion about research integrity. We also provided additional skills support both in-person and online, including the launch of English Support drop-in sessions and a new 'Lunch and Learn' teaching series. Our English for Academic Purposes team were heavily involved in supporting our contract with Jiangsu University last summer, providing large scale pre-sessional language tuition to enable the Chinese students to meet our entry requirements before starting their Masters' courses.

At our Barrington Library (at the Defence Academy in Shrivenham) we have created more teaching space, with parallel investment in hybrid meeting spaces. We aim to install RFID there for the first time later this year to facilitate self-service, especially as we will be launching a Library app (SirsiDynix BLUEcloud Mobile) to offer self-service checkout functionality via RFID beacons.

In terms of research support we have started a major project with our colleagues in IT Services and the Research and Innovation Office to replace the University's research information system (currently Converis), currently in the procurement process. This will enable us to better automate our publication workflows, removing much of the manual data entry currently required of library staff, and integrate with external services such as ORCID. It will also significantly improve our support for research dissemination, assessment and reporting. We hope to upgrade our repository infrastructure concurrently.

We have actively sought funding to digitise the University's Photographic Archive and won a National Archives Scoping Grant to access expert guidance. We hope to take forward the recommendations in 2023.

Finally, we were delighted to host the Mercian Conference virtually via the University's Grenville Turner Broadcast Suite. The two-day conference included live broadcasts from studio and several breakout seminars.

You can see the conference and Studio in use here: <https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/conference-2022/presentations-2022>

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## Harper Adams University

After being successful in a capital bid, the Library team conducted a mini competition and awarded the contract to EFG. The new furniture (see images) was installed in late summer and placed in a redesigned area of the ground floor. It has been positively received by staff and students alike, and is now a key selling point for the Library. We hope to utilise the feedback gained to build the case for further investment. One of its key design outcomes was to be inclusive and accessible to all, and the wide makeup of users that have utilised the space suggests that this part of the brief is being achieved. Furthermore, the Library has been approached for advice by other departments who are considering their own space, and who wish to reflect a similar design and feel in their areas.



Image 1: View from the entrance to the Library.



Image 2: New Wellbeing Area.



Image 3: High desk for group study.



Image 4: Individual study carrels.

While this new furniture has been fantastic, the Library space as a whole is not without its challenges. Over the last few years – despite COVID – the multi-purpose use of the physical Library is evident and increasingly, the physical Library struggles to meet not only the competing needs of students (individual/group study vs social vs eating vs pastoral/safe space), but also, the educational expectations (e.g. growing demand for individual enclosed study pods for online tutorials, interviews or assessments). Multi-purpose use of space is valuable and welcomed, but it is an aging building, very much one of its time, inflexible and showing its wear and tear. The Library team has and will continue to advocate for a full refurbishment!

We continue to develop our collections and access to resources through document supply. We joined WHELP (Welsh Higher Education Library Forum) in the summer, subscribed to new resources (such as

VetLexicon and CoStar) and transitioned more of our print commentaries/journals subscriptions onto their electronic counterpart. The Library has invested heavily in online resources over the last four years and it has meant a gradual move away from the printed equivalent, which was hastened by the pandemic. During the summer, the Library team worked on a significant review of our print journal collection and it has led to the sizable reduction of most of its physical holdings. The upstairs of the Library has been reconfigured to factor in the changes, opening up the space for future development and refurbishment.

We also conducted and completed a long overdue stock take.

We created three new print collections: 'Wellbeing', 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion', and 'Reading for Pleasure'. These have been developed in part with input from our Student Services, but also from staff and student feedback. They have been welcomed by the students. Furthermore, aware of the impact of the pandemic on our student body and the need for a sense of belonging, the Library has considered ways in which it can continue to contribute to supporting our wider community and build upon its new collection. As such, we introduced Harper's Book Club last term. The group meets monthly and the book is voted for by the students. As it is new, we are developing it with the input from students and we hope in time that it will be a student-led initiative.

In August 2022, we initiated a significant and ambitious project to review and transform our information, digital and research skills programme. As part of this, we welcomed a new member of the team to act as the Library's Learning and Teaching Project Co-ordinator, on a secondment basis. This Co-ordinator has had a successful teaching career and brings plenty of insight and enthusiasm into the project. Progress in the project has been slow due to staff shortages, but we are looking forward to the opportunities, developments and collaborations that the project will deliver.

2022 was also a year of hellos and goodbyes. We welcomed two new staff (one Library Assistant and one Senior Library Assistant) in February/March and said goodbye to two long-serving Librarians, who retired at the end of September. We entered into the new academic year without a Librarian team, and it has been particularly challenging to deliver our services and teaching at a critical time. The Library team, though, rose to the occasion and worked tirelessly to minimise the impact on students and services. The first recruitment round proved unsuccessful, but we begin 2023 with a fresh attempt and the posts have been retitled to Academic Support Librarians.

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## Loughborough University

2022 has seen some significant changes for Loughborough Library Services. Prior to the pandemic and then during 2021 we put the final touches to our new [Library Blueprint](#), our plan for the future. Taking the time to ensure our dynamic plan aligns with our new University Strategy, *Creating Better futures. Together* was essential and so this year we have been working on



moving the Library from planning and vision to tangible activity with the development of an implementation plan and by readying ourselves for change, looking at roles and structures, processes, and activity

### **New roles**

To deliver against both the University and Library strategies we have also looked at our team structures and introduced the role of Deputy Director of Library Services. Helen Young as Deputy Director will work with me to enhance and develop opportunities for collaboration and partnership with both Professional Service units, academic colleagues, our students, researchers, and other user communities to enhance and review our offer. We have also recruited a new Archivist and to new roles in our Content and Open Research teams as well as an additional role for our London Campus Library.

### **Partnerships**

Developing partnerships is key to the success of our plans and we worked with a several units and services and our academic colleagues. Including:

- Our Academic Language Support Services and Student Success Academy on skills support and teaching sessions;
- With the Doctoral College and Organisational Development on support for researchers;
- Across the institution on submission to our Research Repository seeing the number of items exceed 50,000;
- LU Arts to explore opportunities to work together including the installation of art works in the library space;
- Our Marketing and Advancement Teams on the the University’s return to in-person Open days in June and September, hosting a range of services and acting as a hub for our visitors and prospective students.



*NEW WORKS OF ART INSTALLED IN THE LIBRARY BUILDING*



### A RETURN TO IN-PERSON OPEN DAYS

#### **EDI and Accessibility**

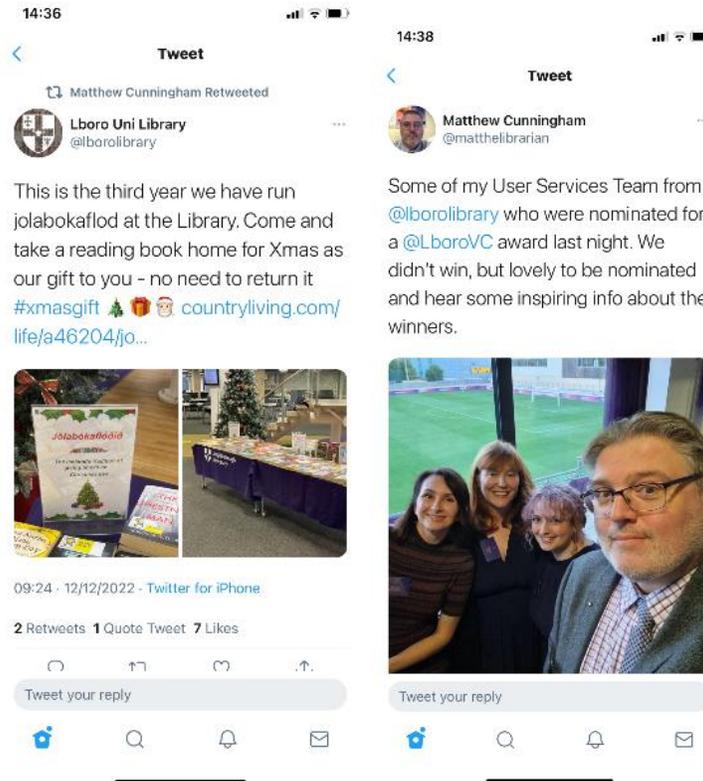
Over the past year we have initiated a range of initiatives to embed EDI principles and practice into the Library service we have:

- Formed an EDI Group made up of interested staff within the Library Service;
- Rolled out Anti-racism training for all staff;
- Diversified our leisure reading collection;
- Carried out work looking at accessibility with colleagues in Student Services and acquired SensusAccess;
- Altered some elements of our recruitment processes to be more accessible.

With plans for more activity in this area across our services and collections.

#### **In other news...**

It was fantastic that our front-line services team were nominated for a Vice Chancellor's Award and attended an event in September. In December we ran another successful Jolabokafloð. An Icelandic Christmas book giving celebration.



Images - Screenshot of Tweet: December’s Jolabokafloð and Screenshot of Tweet: Colleagues at the Vice Chancellor’s Awards

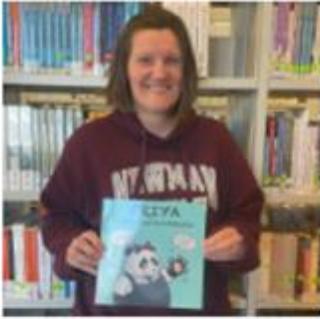
I feel very positive about our direction and the plans and reviews we are making but am also mindful of the challenges that we all face. I am exceptionally proud of all my colleagues and their commitment to delivering valuable services for all of our user communities.

## Newman University

For Newman University, 2022 was dominated by a single project: the implementation of our new Library Management System, OCLC’s WorldShare Management Services (WMS).

This was a huge undertaking for our small team, but they showed incredible skill and commitment in getting everything ready for the go live date on 3 August. As with all implementation projects, there has been no chance to rest on our laurels and we are continuing to refine and





improve our workflows to get the most out of WMS, but we are already seeing improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of our processes behind the scenes and have received compliments from staff and students on our new Discovery service, Library Search.



Our physical space still seems quieter than it did before the Covid pandemic. During the first half of the year, we brought the building back up to full capacity, although we retained some bookable study spaces which allowed for social distancing to be maintained. There have also been some changes to the Library footprint, with part of the Level 1 spaces previously occupied by the Library being separated off to form an airier, more welcoming space for the Students' Union. In return, we have taken possession of a former teaching room on level 2, which is currently being redeveloped as 'The Exchange', providing a variety of group study spaces, as well as a bookable consultation room that our Academic Service Librarians can use for one-to-one appointments.



Personnel changes within the team have given us an opportunity to review our service hours and tailor them more appropriately to our customers' patterns of usage. Consequently, we have reduced our staffed services on weeknights and over the weekends and created a new full-time post of Assistant Librarian for Engagement (ALfE). This means we are now able to offer an in-person enquiry and reference support service during core hours and throughout the year.



The ALfE also takes a lead on the library website and social media, one consequence of which is that Newman Library is now on TikTok as well as Instagram. We have also started to redevelop our website, reorganising existing pages into a new 'task-driven' framework – replacing the original role-centred approach – and identifying opportunities to create new and expanded guides.



2022 has also been a year of co-operation and collaboration for our two Library teams. In addition to the LMS project group, we have convened a number of new working groups, bringing together expertise from across the Library in key areas. Our Research Support Group have been drafting a new institutional Open Access policy and working on a roadmap to improve our offering for researchers, our informal Marketing group has been officially constituted with an expanded membership, and our LibGuides implementation group has been replaced by a new Library Online Engagement Group.

As a stand-out moment amongst a year of hard work and successes was being awarded Professional and Support Staff Team of the Year in the Students' Union Annual Awards. It was positive recognition for all the hard work the team have put into supporting our student body and giving them a great service.



Julie Robinson holding the library's "Department of the year" award.

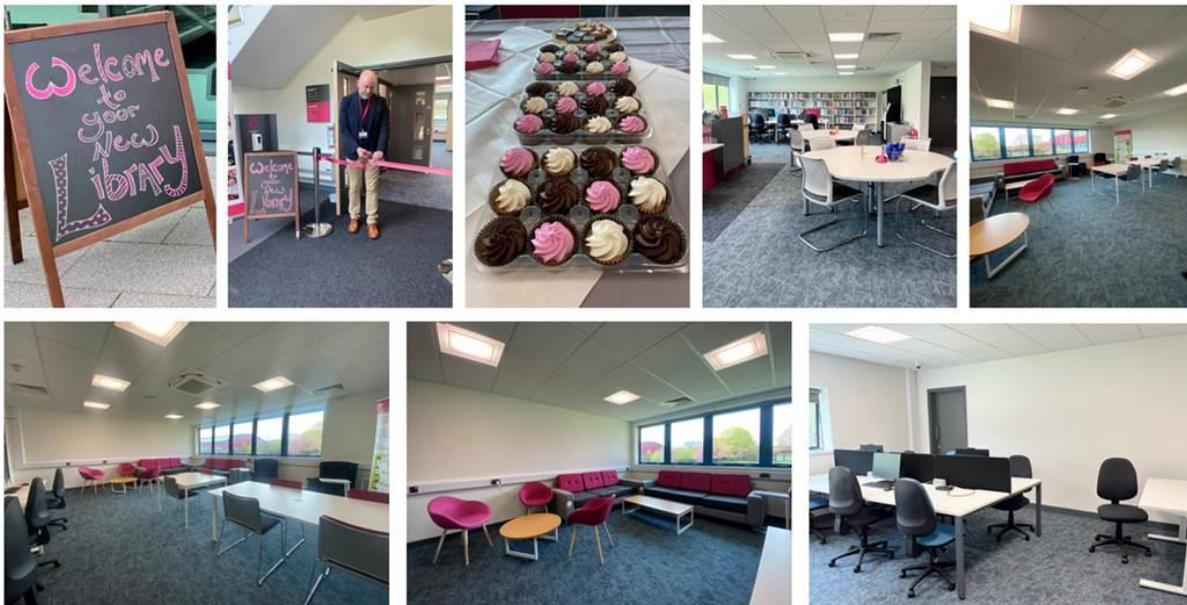
## Nottingham Trent University

It has been another busy year with a huge amount of work by the whole Libraries and Learning Resources (LLR) team at NTU – and just a few of the important developments have included:

Towards the end of 2022, we put in place a new leadership structure at NTU. The Library's **Senior Leadership Team** is chaired by the Director of Libraries and Learning Resources (Pete Maggs) and now consists of the following senior team leaders:

- Head of Academic Engagement (Cliff Neal)
- Head of Discovery and Digital Futures (Richard Cross)
- Head of Resources and Accessibility (Helen Adey)
- Head of User Experience and Environment (Kate Marshall)

A number of our Library spaces have been developed over the last year including our new Library at **NTU's Mansfield hub** - with a grand opening in April 2022



The repurposed building has been completely refitted to create a variety of study options:

- A quiet main library space with Info desk, laptop lending cabinet, self-service equipment, black and white and colour printing, a height-adjustable desk, PCs and Bring Your Own Device desks (pic 4)

- A group room with formal study spaces with PCs, informal study spaces with desktop power, a height-adjustable desk and soft furnishings (pics 5, 6, 7)
- A silent study rooms with a height-adjustable desk, PCs and Bring Your Own Device desks (pic 8)
- A classroom which will be available as study space when not booked

**Leganto** goes live! The Leganto resource list management system, which replaced the library’s Talis platform, went live in July 2022, as the second phase of our Alma project launches. Leganto is supporting the resource list activities of three cohorts of users:

- Academics - providing an online platform for the authoring and delivery of resource lists
- Students - giving them access to resource lists matching their NTU course enrolments
- LLR staff - supporting the streamlined acquisition of library resources and the quality assurance of online connections

Leganto is essentially an extension of Alma and of Primo VE. This means we are able to leverage the benefits of that close, real-time integration to the benefit of students and of academics. Over the summer/autumn our Learning and Teaching Team led the rollout of Leganto to academics across the university and supported students in using the new environment. Our Information Resources Team began work on optimising our back-of-house processes to make best use of the new system, and providing familiarisation and support materials for our frontline Customer Services colleagues.

The great work of our staff was formally recognised through our successful **Customer Service Excellence (CSE)** standard re-accreditation in November. Following the annual CSE re-accreditation meeting with our external assessor, which this year took place online, LLR were successfully re-accredited, with all elements fully compliant and retaining Compliance Plus in 13 elements. The strong culture of customer service was evident to the assessor, who noted that “the focus on the user is embedded throughout the organisation”.

**Decolonising the Library.** This year the library launched a new campaign called ‘Hidden Voices’ in a bid to find the ‘unsung heroes’ in different subject areas, whose voices have not been heard. Staff and students were invited to take part by sharing articles and books they have read, written by authors from a historically marginalised\* background. These are being added to the library collection as we aim to develop the collection, moving away from a Euro-American framework, to reflect a worldview of knowledge. [\*Groups of people who have experienced discrimination and exclusion due to race, disability, sexuality and/or gender as a result of various social, political, and economic factors, having been given little or no importance in society]

Longer-term, the library focus will be on developing a new service offer to support academic staff interested in decolonising their modules. The service will help academic colleagues trace resources that go beyond the traditional Euro-American authorship and hierarchies of knowledge presented by the West.



**Schemes to support BTEC and Mature Students.** The Library now is now running 2 schemes aimed at either [BTEC students](#): Ready? BTEC, Go! or, new for 2022-23, [mature students](#): Mature Student Booster! who could benefit from a personalised study skills intervention. Via the use of a diagnostic tool, students will be offered 1-1 appointments with a Library Student Mentor from their School, who will work with them to provide personalised guidance and support, boosting their confidence and increasing their success.

To access this support, students complete a brief survey and they are then assigned a Library Student Mentor who will provide useful tips and explanations about the aspects of university study that they might not feel quite so confident about.

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## Open University

### **Website user-experience improvements**

The OU Library's [Digital and Information Literacy Framework](#) was updated and simplified in 2022 to include more of the thinking from [Jisc's digital capabilities model](#). The result is greater emphasis on the use and evaluation of software tools, digital wellbeing, ethical use of a range of digital media and online collaboration. The framework is used during module creation to support student skills development.



In February, we completed our move from Primo back office to Primo VE, with little disruption to students. We promoted the 'citation trail' which allows users to see the citations within a given resource, and where that resource itself is cited; and the 'search inside' feature which enables searching for articles within the journal you are viewing.

### **Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

As part of the Library's EDI provision we've been working to encourage staff and students to include diversity in their research. The new "Diverse voices, alternative sources" activity on our Digital Skills for Study VLE site highlights the challenges of finding diverse content, discusses the current lack of diversity in some mainstream academic databases and provides practical guidance on where to find more diverse content. A corresponding live library training session is available from early 2023. We have also collated a Diverse Voices collection of databases, websites and directories which explicitly seek to provide access to writers who are typically under-represented in commercial publications.

The Metadata Team has commenced three Metadata for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (MEDI) pilots, covering names, archives and research. The intention is to better represent the diversity of OU people and our collections, to raise marginalised voices, and to flag potentially offensive content - all in collaboration with colleagues across the University. We're working towards aligning metadata for our content creators to an international authority file as part of the MEDI-Names Pilot. Please email [library-metadata@open.ac.uk](mailto:library-metadata@open.ac.uk) if you'd like to feed into the conversation.

The Library's dedicated Accessibility Team ensure that our content, activities and services can be used by everyone as far as is reasonably practical. In 2022, Library Assistants accessibility tested over 340

articles and book chapters to make sure they are accessible for screen reader users, finding 160 required conversion. In March our case study on [Supporting OU Students in prison](#) was published in the Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education.

Insight work carried out with the Library's student panel produced [3 videos](#) telling first-hand stories about the difficulties students with disabilities face when using Library e-resources. Sharing this evidence with publishers helps them understand these difficulties from the users' perspective.

### **Library building facility development**



A [new Archive Research Room](#) opened during 2022. The Archive has always welcomed researchers to visit and work with the collections, and the new room provides more space for playback equipment (such as reel-to-reel tapes, VHS tapes, DVDs and microfilm) to be permanently set up, as well as more table space for archive researchers to spread out onto. For more information, contact [University-Archive@open.ac.uk](mailto:University-Archive@open.ac.uk).

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## **Staffordshire University**

Staffordshire University 2022 began at Staffordshire University with the opening of the new state of the art 'Catalyst' building – a £40m development at the heart of the campus. Our Library and Academic Skills team are based in the building and use it as a base from which to deliver library and academic skills sessions to our students. The Catalyst is also the main location for bookable study spaces on our main campus – the library offers a click and collect service in the building so students can pick up their items on the way into the building.



Early in the year we introduced our new reading list system (Leganto) to the university with a big push on engagement with academic colleagues. The response has been excellent and a big thanks to our Resources & Systems and Academic Librarian teams for their work to deliver effective training and awareness and to process acquisitions so effectively.

At the start of Summer, Staffs welcomed the results of REF2021 with a rise of 22 places in the Times Higher League Table. A big thanks to members of Library and Learning Services who delivered to colleagues the necessary communications and training around open access, and submission and compliance via the university research repository.

In the Autumn our Special Collections were visited by Scottish TV who were filming a segment for the BBC show Antiques Road Trip. Antiquarian Margie Cooper interviewed local historian Ray Johnson about Arnold Bennet. Thanks go to the special collections team who facilitated the visit at very short notice!



Towards the end of the year, we were delighted to be shortlisted in the ‘Outstanding Library Team’ category at the THES Awards. This recognised the hard work of our teams in developing our ‘Student Connect’ team, reorganising and rebuilding the library and university front of house customer service teams into a single student facing team organised around the provision of an AI enabled digital helper app (<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/campus/digital-first-how-use-ai-enhance-customer-service-universities>).

The team scrubbed up well and had a fabulous evening at the awards!

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## University College Birmingham

In 2022 University College Birmingham Library has welcomed a new member to our Senior Library Assistant team and sadly said goodbye to 2 team members who have moved onto pastures new, one who had been with us for over 25 years. The University has added a brand new School to its portfolio which covers the subject areas Sustainable Construction, Engineering and Digital. The Library team has been working hard to support the set-up of these new curriculum areas with new resources both physically and online and we are now planning appropriate staffing changes for the future to better support the additional students and staff.

In August we went live with our new discovery system – OCLC WMS – as well as integrating new technology like Lean Library and LibKey to better support the online research process for our students. We have also extensively updated the design and content of our online internal portal area and our Academic Skills Support area.

We have launched several new online workshops covering various research and referencing topics for the first time using our VLE platform which have proved very popular. We have also been working closely with our Web Development team to set up new data streams into Power BI so that as a team we can quickly and efficiently compare data points and use this in our future development strategies.

We’ve also been working closely with our Student Engagement Team to support wellbeing initiatives and notable dates such as Black History Month with events such as book clubs. We’ve struggled to engage the students, but this is something we’re really focusing on improving for 2023.

Looking to 2023, we are hoping to gather lots more data and feedback from students on their experiences with the new library systems and resources and channel this into our library strategy for 2023-24. We anticipate another busy year with our highest student figures in a number of years and look forward as a team to embracing our improved library service and supporting our students and fellow staff.

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## University of Derby



2022 marked the appointment of the university's first ever *University Librarian*, a senior post with accountability for leading the strategic direction of the Library and the institution's personal skills development opportunities. This newly created position reinforces the strategic emphasis the university places in its library service as a key enabler of its academic experience.

Through 2022 the Library has been working to develop a new strategic framework in support of the university's mission, with a specific focus on *Community, Confidence and Content*.

Within our *community* theme, we improved facilities through the investment of circa £120K in the library estate and made contributions to the Derby Book Festival as part of our civic initiatives.

Through our *confidence* theme, we instigated a personal development initiative called *Develop@Derby* which aims to provide a co-ordinated model that harmonises the wide range of institutional opportunities to support and scaffold the progressive development of the necessary skills and attributes required to ensure graduates are successful through the university and as they embark on their chosen future. The first phase of this saw us implement a new [web hub platform](#) with activity now underway in support of phase two, embedding *Develop@Derby* within programme/module delivery.

Finally, through our *content* theme, 2022 saw us implement new platform technologies in support of our content & discovery operations as well as our work to support the university's research. We went 'live' with a new repository platform in March, [UDORA](#), the Alma Library Management System and [Library Search](#) (PrimoVE) in July and the Leganto reading lists platform in October.

Looking forward, 2023 will bring further change to our library service at Derby and we look forward to working with our Mercian partners and colleagues from across the sector in our mutually beneficial endeavours.

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## University of Leicester

Our year started with our new University Librarian and Director of Library and Learning Services, Steve Williams, taking up his post from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021. The year has been a busy and interesting one with the resumption of old and new Services post pandemic notably with the return of students to Campus.

The University opened its new campus development on Freemans Common in September incorporating a new Learning and Teaching Building and student accommodation. Hybrid working for professional service staff continued under the WorkSmart banner. Except for our frontline and building based services with staff within the Library staff work both remotely and on campus.

Student experience has been a large focus this year with development of our new Student and Library Information Service and our Academic Skills Centre. This has seen wider collaboration between the Library and Student and Academic Services as well as the Students Union.

The year also provided us with the opportunity to revitalise the Library Foyer, install a new service desk, to create an Exhibition space, develop our leisure collection, improve our Academic Skills Centre, and increase our laptop loan provision, introduce more managed individual and group study spaces across the Campus.

Our Library Champions scheme (<https://le.ac.uk/library/get-involved/library-champions>) under the leadership of Heena Karavendra has continued to achieve impressive results with the students undertaking a wide range of projects. Our Library Champions were recognised at the University's volunteering awards. Heena was recognised as one of the University's inspirational women for 2022 for her work with the Library Champions and our Represent collection (<https://le.ac.uk/library/get-involved/represent>).

Our Inclusive Collections Group has continued to work with the Institution on diversifying reading lists and utilising the inclusive curricula toolkit in conjunction with our Institute for Inclusivity in Higher Education.

The Library is collaborating closely with one of five new Research Institutes, The Institute for Digital Culture creating a Digital Culture Studio within the David Wilson Library. This has a makerspace, exhibition space, a VR suite, digital display walls as well as meeting and collaboration spaces.

Our Archives and Special Collections played a key role in the University's Centenary celebrations, which concluded in 2022. This has laid the foundations for our second century and our rich heritage. Work is also underway with a National Lottery Heritage Fund project on our East Midlands Oral History Archive building on our successful British Library sound heritage project, as a Unlocking our Sound Heritage Regional Hub.

Our ESRC funded SafePod was installed in the Library in March after a two-year delay and became available for bookings in May.

A new Open Scholarship Leadership Group, under the chair of the Deputy PVC Research supported by our Research Services Team was created to push forward the University's open research and scholarship agenda. The Team are busy championing Open Research and Scholarship, including Open Access publishing and use of our read and publish agreements, as well as contributing to the wider publisher negotiations on transformative agreements.



*Image of the new SafePod.*

## University of Nottingham

A key area of activity we'd like to showcase from 2022 is our Libraries Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Programme.

In 2021 we held a preliminary consultation, with a survey sent to all our staff around their genuine lived experiences in the EDI space. This was to allow us to identify the current picture and understand some of the areas upon which we needed to focus.

A key consideration at all times in this work has been the importance of staff involvement, rather than a top-down approach. As such, a Task and Finish Group was established, with representation from staff across all grades and from within the different sections which make up UoN Libraries. This group carefully analysed the responses to the initial survey and produced a report of recommendations.

In 2022, based on these recommendations, five workstreams of activity were created:

- Workstream 1: Recruitment
- Workstream 2: Experience and retention
- Workstream 3: Growth and Development
- Workstream 4a: Connection and belonging
- Workstream 4b: Awareness and understanding

Staff were invited to join the workstreams and project teams were assembled, with each workstream having a mission and purpose.

For example, the mission of our recruitment workstream is around ensuring we have the recruitment foundations in place to become a more inclusive department, which reflects our local demographics and student community. One key part of this work has been a review of all our recruitment information, to ensure that the language and descriptions used in both our role profiles and job adverts is welcoming and inclusive. We're also trialling a number of other initiatives to improve our recruitment practices, but it definitely feels like we're moving in the right direction. And we've received a number of positive tweets from the 'Fair Library Jobs' Twitter account, which is also very encouraging.



In addition to the individual workstreams, an EDI programme board has been established to ensure that all our EDI activity is joined up and that we're adopting a holistic approach. Our aim at UoN Libraries is to be a diverse and inclusive community where every person is welcome and valued. This is, of course, an ongoing journey, but it definitely feels that we've taken some very positive steps forward over the last year.

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## University of Warwick

This year we saw the well-earned retirement of Robin Green. Robin first joined the University in 1985, and over the years progressed through a number of roles within the Library, with the last ten being as University Librarian. He is greatly missed. We welcomed Caroline Taylor, previously University Librarian at the University of Leicester who came out of retirement to hold the fort while a recruitment process was undertaken before finally appointing Anna O'Neill. Anna joined us on 1 November from the University of Southampton where she held the post of Director of Library Services and Arts Strategy (University Librarian).

We also said a fond farewell to Ant Brewerton who left to take up the post of Associate Director for Academic Library Services, and Keeper of Collections at the Bodleian Libraries. A wonderful opportunity and at least he is close by!



This year we also negotiated the acquisition of the archive of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) which will be securely stored and cared for within the MRC (Modern Records Centre). We have appointed a three-year Project Archivist to appraise, weed, sort, catalogue and partially digitize the NUM collection. We will shortly be appointing an 18 months' Outreach Officer to digitise key parts of the collection, develop a project website and outreach/academic activities, as well as a Midlands' coal heritage network and a UK Industrial Health Digital Archive.

2022 also kicked off the University's five-year Institutional Teaching and Learning Review. This differs from most normal 'Quality Assurance' processes undertaken at all Universities which tend to work on a rolling programme. Here at Warwick every department is reviewed at the same time and professional services are also included. It is a mammoth undertaking, but the output will form the basis of the new Education Strategy and the Library is firmly embedded as both reviewer and reviewee.

Like many others our campus sprung to life at the start of the new academic year, so the autumn term has very much focused on making sure our spaces and services met the needs of our students, academic

and researchers. It's been a year of change and adjustment, but it feels like we might finally be back to what could be described as business as usual, expect that's never the case is it?

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## **University of Wolverhampton**

The University has been going through a significant transformation programme and the end of 2022 saw the library join a new directorate. The Directorate of Students and Education, led by the Dean of Students & Education, brings together a number of areas with remits related to student experience and teaching and learning. Teams within the directorate include Library & Skills, Apprenticeships & Lifelong Learning, Learning Enhancement & Academic Development and Student Belonging & Inclusivity.

### **Library Study Space**

We continued on our recovery from the impact of the pandemic with library usage increasing but ultimately plateauing slightly below pre-pandemic numbers. Lots of focus has been on our study spaces, learning from how students are engaging with the spaces and responding to the reduced demand for print. At our Walsall campus library we created a new helpdesk better situated within the main library entrance area. We also reduced a significant amount of shelving, allowing us to bring in new study spaces (equipped with desktop power sockets!) so that we have more desks suited for laptop use with more natural light allowed to carry across the floor. Not wanting the shelving to go to waste, we relocated all of the removed shelving from our Walsall Campus library over to our City campus library, replacing all of the ancient shelving in one of our more popular study areas. This made a significant improvement to the feel of that floor and help to create more study spaces (with sockets!) next to windows.

### **Academic Skills Support**

It was a busy 2022 for the academic skills team who continued to deliver a mixture of in-person and remote support. Demand for remote skills workshops remained high in 2022 and has become the main way the team deliver workshops. However, the daily academic skills drop-ins service, delivered on campus, continued to be a highly valued service for our students, especially during key study periods. The team also joined our other library support teams on our LibAnswers platform which has helped with referrals and will benefit us by providing more consistent analytics across all of the library support services. The skills team launched a Digital Confidence course on Canvas, our VLE. The course follows the UK Government's 'Digital Capabilities Framework' to cover all of the basic IT skills required for successful study. This is in response to an ongoing gap between students' digital skills, and the expectations of the University.

### **Content and Discovery**

It's been another busy year for our Content and Discovery team, highlights include:

- Expanding the team with the creation of a new Resources Librarian post
- Moving into two additional read and publish deals for Cambridge University Press and Taylor & Francis and awarding new supply contracts for books and ebooks, including appointing Browns Books as a new supplier alongside returners EBSCO and Proquest

- We also successfully implemented the Rialto acquisitions marketplace within our LMS, moving us towards an integrated workflow and improving our user experience of DDA content
- Renewing our partnership with Kortext for a second year, and starting to reflect on the project further, particularly with the return to more face-to-face activities, to identify the continued benefit of unlimited access to core textbooks for our students
- Inter-Library Loan continued to be a popular service with the library processing over 4300 requests from our members. While this is a very positive uptake, it has been challenging to manage at peak times, so we'll be looking to new solutions to support ILL management in the future.

### **Research Support**

Moving on from REF2021, this year was one of broadening horizons for the Scholarly Communications team, who organised an Open Research Working Group that includes academics and professional staff who meet regularly to discuss the University's approach to open research matters. Scholarly Communications Librarian, Stuart Bentley, presented on the journey of creating and recruiting to the group at the Mercian Collaboration Conference in September. Alongside this, an APC fund for researchers with grants from UKRI, Wellcome Trust and NIHR was set up with accompanying processes established. The team has also reviewed and updated the research data management policy and the open research statement for the university. On the training support side, the team have begun creating bitesize videos on data management topics to complement workshops delivered and are currently undertaking a review of web content to update and refresh what is available in 2023.

## **University of Worcester**

### **Looking at services post-COVID**

It's been such a pleasure to see people come back to using the library building after the last difficult years. But it prompted us to think, do our customers still want or expect the same services from us? Our triennial university staff survey showed a switch in their use of the library and the most used services from 2019, from help and advice to online resources and TEL tools – perhaps not surprisingly given the circumstances but indicating that we had successfully supported them throughout the pandemic. Staff identified the most significant impacts of library services as being to enrich student learning, supporting them be more effective teachers, and enabling them to stay current in their field.

Still on the online theme, we are seeing a growth in distance and highly blended courses, and are exploring staffing and resource requirements to support these as well as working to get more consistently involved at the early stages of course approval and planning.

We've also been carrying out a major piece of work to explore students' expectations and needs post-pandemic. What do 'excellent' services look like to them, and how can we measure that? Like many, we found it challenging to engage students in 21-22 – thankfully, that seems to be changing this academic year. But we managed to have some great conversations which identified themes that we're currently testing with a wider pool of students. This will generate a new set of service standards which we'll launch in academic year 23-24. A recurring theme, whether talking about spaces, resources, or help and support, is the importance of ease of use, accessibility, and flexibility to meet individual needs

and lifestyles. We have subscribed to Third Iron's Libkey and Browzine products as a partial response to this.

We've also reviewed our online drop-in 'Discovery' sessions which were developed during the pandemic – these continue to be highly popular and successful and we're starting to assess their medium and longer-term impact on student confidence and Information Literacy competencies. A new cross-institutional study skills portal and self-audit tool, the development and maintenance of which is led by library services, is being well used, with positive feedback from both students and staff.

Our focus on EDI continues – it was pleasing that the staff survey identified virtually no barriers to services, but we're not being complacent. A new group of Diversity Champions, drawn from both County Council and University staff, raise ideas and issues and have started formally inputting to all event planning and delivery.

### **Community Engagement**

New members of staff have revitalised The Hive events programme and are building links with members of the university to extend our reach into the community. Throughout the early part of the year we celebrated 10 years of The Hive's successful partnership between County Council and University, culminating in a very well attended community day on 2<sup>nd</sup> July, the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of opening. We have held public lectures and workshops, film viewings, childrens' activities and much more. Students tell us that using a joint library helps them feel part of the wider community and are interested in volunteering and work placement opportunities.



*Community artwork in the childrens' library*



*Our welcoming bees were very popular!*

We are trialling our Study Happy and online enquiries services to sixth formers and GCSE students using public libraries county-wide which we hope will be a valuable service as well as promoting the University to potential applicants.

### **Staff wellbeing**

Finally, we continue to support our staff back to a more 'normal' way of work, albeit with greater opportunities for home working. Some rebuilding of links between teams is still underway.

## Vice-Chair's Closing statement

The higher education sector continues to undergo significant shifts. Our universities remain committed to developing and enhancing our institutional offers to current and prospective students, building on the gains from the pandemic (including blended learning). Many are now in the process of creating or refreshing University strategies, laying the foundations for the next 5-10 years and with a greater focus on graduate employability and sustainability. At the end of January, moreover, institutions needed to provide submissions for the new Teaching Excellence Framework exercise (TEF 2023) and each has undoubtedly used data and feedback from staff and students from across departments, schools and directorates to build their story of excellence (Libraries included!). The outcomes will be published from September 2023.

Our universities are doing this within a turbulent political and economic climate, one which will necessitate further transformation and smarter budgeting. Over the next year, for example, we will likely see more changes in educational and assessment approaches, course redesign (including potential course closures), capital investment may begin to slow, and the wellbeing provision for staff and students – already increased by the pandemic – will need to be improved further as people navigate the cost of living.

Within this complex environment, our Libraries and every member of our teams remain essential to our universities, as we are partners and educators to our academic, professional support and student communities. Despite the potential challenges of 2023, we can stay optimistic as we have, and will continue to be, leaders in innovation, ideas and knowledge.

Together, our positivity, perseverance, compassion and collaborative spirit will see us through the year ahead.

Finally, a massive “thank you” to everyone for their contributions whether it be through participation on one of the Collaboration’s groups or through attendance at events. To the Steering Group, whose term ends in March, I would also like to say “thank you” on behalf of us all. As the outgoing Chair, a special thanks to Chris Porter, who has excelled in the role and has been unwavering in her support for the work of the Collaboration and its members, sharing her expertise, boundless energy and good humour.



**Laura Pilsel**  
*Vice Chair  
(2021-2023),  
University Librarian  
and Head of  
Registration,  
Assessment Records  
and Awards*



The Mercian Collaboration is a regional library network based in the UK Midlands. Originally founded as the Midlands Academic Library Group in 2014, it currently comprises 23 academic libraries.

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## Vital Statistics

<b>Members:</b> 23 Academic Libraries	<b>Networking Events in 2022:</b> 12
<b>Furthest North:</b> Bishop Grosseteste University	<b>Committee/Group Meetings in 2022:</b> 34
<b>Furthest South:</b> The Open University	<b>Twitter Followers:</b> 258 (237 in 2021)
<b>Furthest West:</b> Harper Adams University	<b>General Mailing List Members</b> 196 (189 in 2021)
<b>Furthest East:</b> Bishop Grosseteste University	
<b>Subgroups:</b> 7 (2 operational & 5 special interest groups)	
<b>Steering Group:</b> 3 Officers, 3 Representatives, 1 Ex Officio	

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## Contact

For more information, visit our website or contact the Executive Officer.

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