Mercian Disability Forum

Monday 9th December

Lanchester Library Coventry University

Welcome and introductions

Simon Satchell- *Newman*

John Mackay- *Nottingham Trent*

Jessica Moore- *Leicester*

Hossam Kassem- *Open University.*

Liz Lafferty- *Keele*

Laura Waller- *Warwick*

Janice Morris- *Bishop Grosseteste*

Round table updates from individual institutions.

Warwick:

- New accessibility website with standardised approach to assistive software across campus with IT Services and Disability Services.
- Human Library events working closely with PG Community Engagement Teams, very positive responses from staff and students. 3rd event to be held in March.
- Improved equipment availability, still limited take up by students
  Awareness events held for Dyslexia & Dyspraxia Awareness Week and World Sight Day
- Increased staff training with bespoke sessions for set staff roles
- Reaching out to departments and visiting to promote support available at the Library
- Held first 'assistive software' workshop for all students in the Library.

Keele

- Alternative formats service supporting approximately 23 students with varying needs.
- New student accessibility room- high screens, adjustable tables, keyboard.
- 'Come and chat' event specifically for those who use alternative format service.
- Staff need training with assistive technology. Often pushed to IT Services.

Open University

- 23,000 students who have declared disability just under 20%.
- Print materials and send to students.
- Training sessions on how to improve the student experience studying online. It involved showing them SensusAccess, how to change colour, size, contrast, where to go for help. In

2018/19 we ran it twice and it was attended by total of 15 students. This year we ran it twice and the total was 35 attendees. The session length is 45 min

- Database testing focus.
- Working with cite n write to improve accessibility.
- WCAG2.1 accessibility statement. Statement for Library: 3rd party accessibility is under what we are doing to improve accessibility. Suppliers are working but not fully accessible. 25 years for work to make repository accessible. Challenges with accessible maths.
- Staff training- NVDA

Leicester

- Accessibility team located in the Library but isolated. Need for improved links with the Library.
- White card system- students given a white card which they can present so that staff know there may be additional needs.
- Wider university equality and diversity team are introducing sunflower lanyards. Not used in university library yet.
- Recent refurb- power assisted doors, adjustable furniture.
- Currently reviewing website-improve accessibility in progress.

Nottingham Trent

- Busy year, fetch and carry services – victims of success.
- Develop wellbeing space- UBWell, uncertainty to where the space should be. Currently self-help books and grow out to holistic spaces
- Developing groups study rooms- accessibility focus, more assistive tech on group study rooms. Make provision more inclusive.

Newman

- More of a student focus for services and support for dyslexia.
- RNIB Bookshare.
- Under-staffed for central services. Adhoc basis needs more systematic.
- Wider strategic realignment which may improve services
- Redesigning library website- moves to lib guides. Currently on 2.0 not 2.1

Bishop Grosseteste

- Working on using RNIB Bookshare for alternative formats
- Working with student support, recognise all the students who may need additional support.
- Webinars through Tallis.

RNIB Bookshare

Warwick have implemented with a joint approach with central Disability Services. The Library co-ordinate the RNIB Bookshare promotion and login, Disability Services confirm eligibility to access. An online form has been designed which allows students to request access by sharing documentation, but not needing to register with Disability Services. Already proving to be very useful for students.

Group raised concerns with copyright. RNIB have previously sent confirmation re copyright which was shared with the group. Separate concerns with the 'student request' aspect.

Newman reported difficulties with US publishers.

A fast turnaround at oxford university press for alternative format was noted.

***Action- all.* Good news stories required by RNIB Bookshare.**

Laura- email RNIB regarding student request aspect of RNIB and copyright.

Disability Support- the role of Library Assistants- *Liz Lafferty, Keele.*
Liz circulated a questionnaire regarding the role of Library assistants.

What disability support currently exists in your library?	Number of positive responses
Digitisation service - alternative formats	6 (100%)
Postal service	6 (100%)
Library inductions - for individual needs	5 (83%)
Book collection service	5 (83%)
Delegated/Proxy access to library account	4 (67%)
Assistive technology - student training/support	3 (50%)
Accessible study spaces - bookable by registered students	3 (50%)

Benchmarking disability support across institutions- *John Mackay, Nottingham Trent.*
John has been set an objective to benchmark types of service across Mercian Libraries. John will be compiling a questionnaire. The group were happy to support.

Action: Simon and John to work together to develop further

Mercian Staff Development Group Collaboration- *Laura Waller, Warwick.*
Overall discussion on how the group could contribute to the forthcoming SDG events calendar. Areas highlighted were Marketing, Systematic Reviews and Roles of a Library Assistant.

Action: LW to contact SDG

WCAG 2.1 Web Accessibility guideline- request from the Directors.
The group have received a request form the Directors to compile a report of current actions in line with the new WCAG2.1 guidelines as below

"*It was agreed to request the MDF to pull together a brief report to establish what is being done at each member institution in terms of: which department is leading, what has been done, and progress to date.*"

Action: Members to send updates to LW

AOB
Discussions around providing a training event for IA's and front-line staff on assistive software.

Ideas included:

- NVDA- OU have workshops already established

- Free software's and apps

- AbilityNet

- Warwick- General Overview of inbuilt accessibility.

Next meeting date to be in April. OU have kindly offered to host.