



Collaboration Development Officer's Report, Oct 2018

Dr Gaz J Johnson, October 2018

This report is an update on activities conducted by the Mercian Collaboration (MC) Development Officer (MCDO), covering the period Mar-Nov 2018. The following are matters of interest which the MCDO wishes to bring to Directors' attention.

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Governance

The Steering Group met via telcon twice during this period (11th May, 9th Aug), with the latter meeting a face-to-face workshop in Birmingham, focussing on the strategic future direction of the Collaboration. Notably, work on formalising and documenting the strategic plan have formed a key strand of governance related activity, alongside operational discussions relating the SCOUNL MoU and its impacts.

The Development Officer also conducted preparations and audits functions for the implementation of the Data Protection Act 2018¹. This included the development of a number of privacy notices for use online and at events, and [Data Privacy Policy](#) for the Collaboration a whole, with support from the Collaboration's Chair.

SIG

A number of SIG Committee meetings were attended during this period, notably a number in support of the conference including the pre-event operational planning day. As is usual, due to competing work demands attendance at all SIG events or meetings remains regrettably impractical. However, contact with the SIG chairs forms a regular near-weekly activity for the MCDO. On behalf of the Conference Group, and in the absence of its chair, the Development Officer co-chaired and facilitated the Collaboration's conference (11th Sept).

Notably, the Copyright Group are coming to the end of their requested probationary year, and a discussion with their chair is needed as part of the decision-making process to decide if they are to remain an ongoing part of the Collaboration.

Marketing and Communications²

The Development Officer represented the Collaboration at the CILIP Conference (Brighton, June 2018), alongside representatives from the M25 and White Rose Libraries. The Officer also graphically designed and obtained two pull-up banners for use as marketing and branding items during the conference.

The Website has continued to be developed and grown in content, especially relating to SIG meetings and activities, over this period. Notably, the section relating to the 2018 Conference formed a considerable additional source of new ingest. The site has remained stable and functional, although an issue due to developer error with the statistics ID overlapping with that of NoWAL has likely impacted on its metrics. Populating the news section with fresh content remains an ongoing challenge, with only 8 new items added in the reporting period (~ 5 months)³.

¹ E.g. GDPR preparations

² <http://merciancollaboration.org.uk>

³ This contrasts with 9 in the previous reporting period.

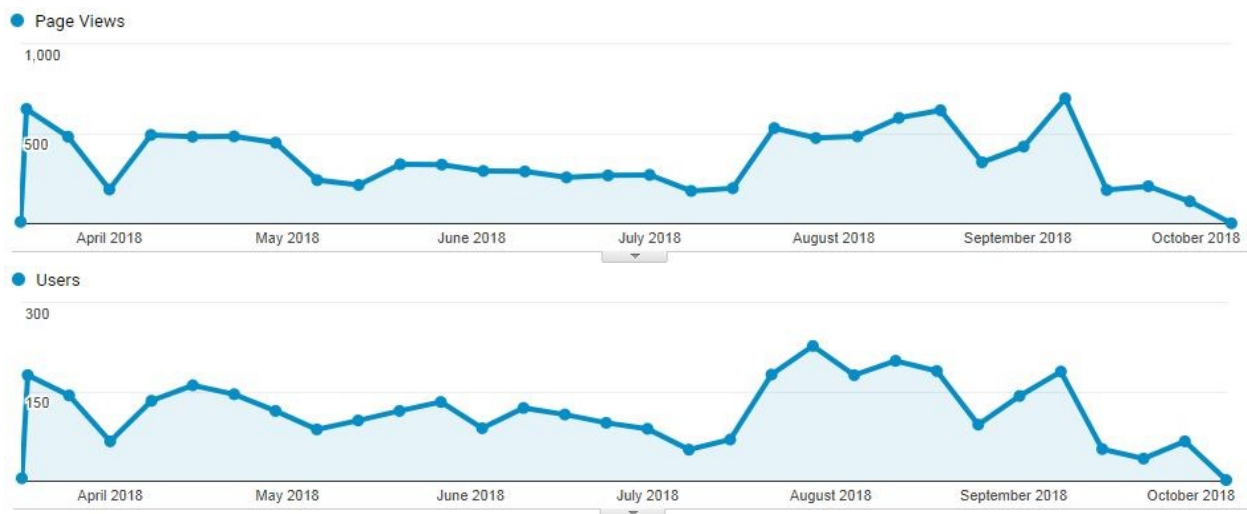
Mercian Section	Number of News Items	Previous Report Period
General News	1	2
Conference Group	3	4
Copyright Group	0	1
Mercian Disability Forum	1 ⁴	0
RDM Support Group	1	0
Mercian Staff Development Group	2	2

Encouragement to subgroup members has yielded a few event reports suitable for publication, for which the Development Officer is most grateful. However, the number of public event reports procured still falls far short of reflecting the range and extent of Collaboration activities, especially in terms of MSDG events⁵.

Weekly accesses remain relatively low but steady, with on average ~100-150 unique weekly users⁶, 72%⁷ of whom originate in the UK⁸ (97% within England), as would be anticipated given the site's audience.

Rank	Top Geographic Accesses	Previous Report Period
1	UK (72%)	UK (80.2%)
2	France (9.6%)	USA (10.3%)
3	USA (7.4%)	South Korea: (2%)
4	South Korea (3%)	India (1.4%)
5	Brazil (1%)	Germany (0.6%)

Page views vary between 180-700 (min/max) pages accessed weekly, with noticeable slump in traffic during the summer vacation months, and sharply marked increase in activity in the months leading up to and during the annual conference. Post conference, usage of the site has returned to its regular low level. Overall, this degree of access reflects a minor decrease on the previous reporting period.



⁴ This was two separate reports on the same event, combined into one item

⁵ 11 MSDG events during the period Nov 2017-Oct 2018, yielded 4 reports (36% representation)

⁶ n=2,548

⁷ This contrasts with 82% in the last report

⁸ (1) UK: 80.2% (2) US: 10.3% (3) South Korea: 2% (4) India 1.4% (5) Germany (0.6%)



Other Channels

Our Twitter account ([@MercianCollab](#)) has grown to 158 followers (122 at last reporting), with continued engagement from delegates to Collaboration events but increasingly in response to original tweets. Content and alerts are pushed through this channel by the Development during working days, and on other occasions as time allows. With respect to promoting the conference, scheduled tweets were used to maintain a higher rate of promotion than could be normally achieved for the event. The 'open to all Collaboration member staff' discussion list (mercian-collaboration@jiscmail.ac.uk), launched in early March, has now grown to 114 members (from 20 at last reporting), and is serving as a useful additional broadcast channel for Collaboration related events and news, with most but not all member institutions having members on the list.

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Training and Development

There are no training or development issues to report during this period.

Workload

During this period the working split between office working versus traveling to and attending meetings/events on Collaboration business has once more been almost 50:50. Notably, administration, liaison, coordination, website support and communications remain the core routine activities. In terms of specific focus work on developing the strategic plan, representation of the Collaboration at external events and support for the conference have been the major other tasks. More sporadic work relates to dealing with external queries to the Collaboration, from national bodies and individuals alike.

Anticipated forthcoming work for the remainder of 2018 is likely to comprise work on redeveloping the strategic plan, further data protection protocol development, development of the annual report alongside the evaluation and planning cycle for the annual conference.