



User Advisory Forum minutes
Tuesday 23 February 2021 – 11:00-12:15
Online meeting - Microsoft Teams

Chair: Rebecca Simpson (RS)
Minutes: Lisa Miller (LM)

Staff attending: Rebecca Simpson (RS), Caroline Kimbell (CK), Richard Warren (RW), Richard Espley (RE), Argula Rublack (AR), Leila Kassir (LK), Mura Ghosh (MG), Emma Fitzpatrick (EF), Lisa Miller (LM)

A list of Forum members (FM) may be found on the [User Advisory Forum webpage](#)

	Minutes	Action/Outcome
1	<p>Welcome & Introductions</p> <p>RS Welcomed everyone to the meeting introduced herself to the group. RS will now as Head of Engagement be taking over chairing the forum as Maria Castrillo has left the library to take up a post elsewhere.</p> <p>RS gave a brief overview of the meeting and then invited members to introduce themselves, their role or research focus.</p> <p>RS then gave a brief headline library update of activity in the last three months. How 2021 remains a challenging time for the library but despite this, much has been delivered onsite and online and there is much to be positive about and the activities undertaken and plans and opportunities that the coming months present.</p> <p>RS outlined the response the library took after the second and third lockdown, the services we were able to offer and study space bookings to those with limited resources at home with health and safety as the top priority.</p> <p>Click and collect continues to be popular since its introduction in July 2020 with an average of 100 users a week. To date, just over</p>	

	<p>14,856 members have used the Click and Collect Service with just over 19,720 items being collected.</p> <p>From February 2021 members now have access to materials at our offsite store and material held in the tower amounting to 750,000 items. Plans are now underway to scale up onsite services dependent on the rates of Covid being under control.</p> <p>Finally RS gave an update that the interviews for the recruitment of a permanent Senate House Library Librarian and Library Transformation Programme Director are due to take place shortly.</p>	<p>To update on the outcome when possible to do so.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Supporting Research: advice sessions, inductions, research days and the wellbeing collection</p> <p>RE praised the work and effort of the team and what they have achieved since lockdown. RE explained that before lockdown hit, collecting policy shifted to a digital first policy and the percentage of the budget for this in three years has gone up from 35%-92%. We have heard of the efforts for physical access to the collections through click and collect but the one thing we can't do is sit in a room and have a conversation about research and how we can support it, so we have had to rapidly deliver all those services online remotely.</p> <p>RE delighted and impressed that we have delivered these services to well over 2,000 library users since 1 August 2020.</p> <p>RE introduced the themes of the presentation on the support Academic Librarians have been providing, events that have taken place online and also the wellbeing collection another important way to support users not solely on their academic activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Themed Inductions ● Inductions for specific user groups ● Research Days – History Day and Psychology Day ● Technical experience ● Future Plans ● SHL's Wellbeing Collection <p>Themed Inductions</p> <p>LK spoke about themed inductions offered on specific topics: Feminism, Black London, Queer London, British History online, and History Research. Aimed at postgraduates but also open to all. The aim to introduce the collections, print and online. These inductions have been hosted by archivists, academics and</p>	

librarians followed by a Q&A and resources. The sessions have been well attended and positively received.

Inductions for specific user groups

MG spoke about the work that goes on every academic year to provide inductions for students on postgraduate courses and staff from across the federation and the School of Advanced Study (SAS). These inductions can take the form of introductions to the library's collections, workshops on specific resources, information skills training, subject specific research consultations in small groups or one to one. The sessions take the format of talks and demonstrations with items from the collections, training on electronic resources and conducting effective literature searches.

Since March last year adaptations have had to be made in how these sessions have been delivered due to Covid. The demand for these inductions has gone up across all subjects and librarians have had to adapt to moving core activities online. 1,938 students attended virtual or pre-recorded sessions with 43 staff hours delivering training online from the end of July to December 2020.

Research Days – History Day and Psychology Day

AR Senate House Library hosts two research days each year. In 2020, History Day took place in November and was organised in collaboration with the Institute for Historical Research. The event usually takes place as a physical fair but this year it went online. The day is for students, researchers and anyone with an interest in history. There were three live panel sessions on topics of interest to the history community, 18 self-hosted live events which included virtual tours and inductions to research resources and 67 pre-recorded contributions including blogs, online exhibitions, podcasts and videos.

There were 80 participating organisations with 32 new organisations taking part. Participants were from all over the UK. Overall, the event was well received with 867 online bookings in 2020 compared to 297 physical bookings in 2019.

Content for the day can be found by clicking this link:

<https://historycollections.blogs.sas.ac.uk/>

MG The Psychology collection serves a large national audience in addition to the students and staff of the University, with it being home to the library of the British Psychological Society (BPS). The annual Psychology Research Day is aimed at early career

researchers and those who are returning after a long break in higher education, practitioners in the field and independent researchers. Together with the BPS, the library now co-hosts this event. The first event took place in 2016 and then 2018, 2019 and online in 2020.

The event includes short talks on research skills, one to one clinics with the opportunity for networking and peer advice and a keynote talk. The event has always been oversubscribed and in 2020 online attendance amounted to 293 compared to 142 people attending the physical event in 2019. The feedback this year has been very positive. Plans are now being made for Psychology Research Day 2021.

Technical experience

AR Steep learning curve in adapting to new technological possibilities in providing research support online. Using a variety of tech options including Zoom, Microsoft Teams, library live chat and pre-recorded and live content, we have given members multiple ways of reaching us. We hope that these platforms have made us more visible and available and more accessible as a result.

Future plans

LK We are continuing with the themed inductions working with our colleagues across SAS to provide these research skills to enable access to our print and e-collections. We will use the encouraging feedback to think about the next sessions. LK then invited people to get in touch if there are any topics to explore in a themed session.

Bookable one to one research meetings with Academic Librarians will be available soon using a system called LibCal. They will be 20 minute sessions in the first instance to help students and researchers locate sources for their studies and help with research skills and queries.

To continue to support online learning, we are producing short video guides on different library formats such as ebooks, Special Collections and the database A-Z list.

To further gauge what is needed, we are in the process of circulating a questionnaire with SAS to find out what online research skills are most relevant, in the hope that we can extend this to the wider University of London community at some point in the future.

	<p>SHL's Wellbeing Collection</p> <p>EF The aim of the collection is to provide extra support to members to enable their research and act as a guide to help with university life as well as with any personal issues that may affect studies. The collection is made up of books, ebooks and other online resources covering a wide range of topics that might affect a person's wellbeing.</p> <p>The collection, listed by theme, was launched in February 2020 with a dedicated SHL Wellbeing Collection website and specific a Wellbeing Collection Online webpage which was launched in response to the library being physically closed. Printed books are available to order via the catalogue and click and collect service to support our users.</p> <p>EF welcomed feedback on the collection and to get in touch with any book recommendations or other topics to cover in the collection.</p>	
3	<p>Questions & answers and comments</p> <p>FM I was quite fascinated by the wellbeing collection. If EF can tell us a little more about the selection of the topics or themes included in the collection that would be wonderful?</p> <p>EF As a starting place for the wellbeing collection, we researched various reading lists from mental health charities and institutions as well as those by publishers. The collection contains items to support people with mental health conditions, chronic illness and other broader issues that may affect wellbeing.</p> <p>The collection is made up of practical/more clinical books about overcoming certain illnesses and overcoming anxiety or stress. These tend to be written by clinicians and have more practical exercises that you can take away and do. That's one strand. We also have a life skills section which is more to do with university life, thriving at university. We also have a section which we call personal stories and are usually autobiographies of people who have lived experiences of the challenges to wellbeing that we are covering in our collection. For example, we have a book called 'Furiously Happy' by Jenny Lawson which is all about Lawson's experiences dealing with depression.</p> <p>As part of the collection, we ensured that there were resources to help support our diverse audiences, including books/guides that address the additional challenges that LGBTQ+ users, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic users and Neurodiverse users may face.</p>	

<p>FM I think the themed inductions for specific users sound brilliant and I wish I had known about them last year. Two issues spring to mind from my perspective; one is topics and themes of research skills. Those of us who are coming back to university after 30+ years when we did our undergraduate degrees, we got two books out of the library and we used those for our research and it is entirely different now. I know there are some colleagues at Royal Holloway who were doing a Masters who went a whole year without knowing what Moodle was, without knowing we had a digital calendar or anything like that. Because there are so many people coming back to university later in life to have some trotting through the basics of how these digital calendars and research techniques work. It is fine for the younger students who have already got the familiarity with the basics of how these work they can then top up with the inductions that you are offering but maybe something that is really going back to basics would be so valuable I think.</p> <p>RE I think that is a great idea. LK I agree, I think that is absolutely essential and one of the things we are doing at the moment is trying to create videos, very short going through by format by format, basic steps, you click on this link, this is how you access an ebook taking it from the word go. This has come up repeatedly this issue. Lots of academics have got in touch with us too saying 'I'm not used to this, I am not used to dealing with the ebook world'. I think we are very alive to that and when we have sent out questionnaires recently, that has definitely come back so it is really useful to hear that this is something you would find very helpful, thank you. You have reassured us that this is the right way to go.</p> <p>RS To add to that, from the engagement perspective, introduction to e-resources events are certainly something we can look to do on a rolling basis. We'll look into that and build it into the event programming. That is really helpful.</p> <p>FM Thank you for sharing, it is very interesting the events and inductions you organise, I was wondering if you have a monthly newsletter where people can subscribe to be aware of the events you organise?</p> <p>RS At the moment there isn't a newsletter as such. We rely on social media to bring people the latest updates & news so do follow us on our social media channels @SenateHouseLib. We are currently looking at our databases and changing them over to allow us to do a regular newsletter.</p>	<p>RS Engagement event accessing eresources, look at building into event programming</p>
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FM So Twitter would be the main channels to know what you are up to?

RS Yes, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook. All of those channels. We are on there all the time, promoting events, promoting our guides and all news related items. It is the best and most immediate channel to get messages out directly to members, especially at the moment with services changing regularly in response to covid-19. We recommend that members check @SenateHouseLib on Twitter on the day they are coming to the library, just in case there are any short notice changes.

Links to Twitter - [@SenateHouseLib](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#)

FM I can only echo what FM said about online inductions. I also think young students have found it really useful at the beginning of the year instead of the physical visits to the library as it used to be in the past. You have included the NCH collection and a more general induction about the library. So I hope this will continue even though we hope to come back physically to the building in September, I think for students to have this to be able to watch if they can't join a physical tour, they can watch it in their own time it would be useful as well. So I hope we can keep it for the future.

RE I am quite sure that we will. I think we thought we were making adjustments in the short term but I think we have all realised that there are dozens of adjustments that are really beneficial so I am quite sure we are looking to update that for you.

FM Do you do what the British Library does which is to have some form of channel on You Tube which has the recordings of some of these presentations that you can look at them afterwards?

RS We produce videos on how to use services & recordings of some of our events. However, something like the inductions that are aimed at specific users and are coordinated by the Librarians are not. We will continue to share as much as we can online. Go to our [You Tube](#) channel to explore those videos and if there are any themes or anything in particular you are looking for, do get in touch. We have used videos in the past particularly for exhibitions but now we are offsite, video has become increasingly more important. We are producing a lot more video

	<p>content and we hope to continue to add to that but access to collections and staff resource is limited.</p> <p>FM There are a whole load of PhD lectures that the British Library is putting on and they always inform people at the beginning that it is going to be recorded and you can switch your video off if you want to but that way everybody can see it later so that might be worth thinking about.</p> <p>RS There is a certain amount of content that we can put up automatically but we can work with the Librarians to get more online.</p> <p>LK While we don't have a channel like the British Library for the reasons RS has outlined. We have recorded various sessions we have done for individual groups. Some of that content may be translatable so on an individual basis in the meantime I am sure we could share some of that content with you if relevant if you want to contact us.</p> <p>FM I was thinking more generally but I will have a look.</p> <p>FM When I get stuck at Royal Holloway, I can email my subject librarian, I don't know if there is the same kind of relationship with a named librarian at Senate House. When I go on the Senate House website, I feel I am there on my own and I don't know if there is anyone in particular I can go to for some hand holding?</p> <p>RE Yes absolutely, perhaps we can talk about how the website is creating that impression. That is not the impression that we want it to create. If you navigate to the collections pages. We have broken down the collections into seven themes and there is a named librarian for your area and it would be Andrea Meyer-Ludowisy, her contact details are on the website and Andrea would be happy to help.</p> <p>RS As the Librarians have mentioned, the new LibCal button on the website shortly which will allow people to book sessions with Librarians will help improve visibility on the website and I will speak to the web editor to make that more visible.</p> <p>FM Well done to everyone for being very proactive and creative. Great engagement with your users and rich programme of various interesting events.</p>	<p>RS to follow up visibility on website</p>
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	<p>FM Wow, what an astronomical effort from all of the librarians! So exciting to hear about that engagement - especially of non-London participants - that can come from online events... I think we all often want to get off Zooms/Teams as much, but I hope that access to those types of meaningful events can continue online in the future!</p> <p>RW We will also be launching an online "IT drop-in session" service where colleagues in the IT team will be on hand to assist with any problems using or accessing some of the IT services. The team will be liaising with Rebecca's team to advertise this in due course.</p> <p>Post meeting note: The IT Drop-in Sessions are now available to book online – here's the news story: https://london.ac.uk/senate-house-library/new-it-drop-in-sessions</p>	
4	<p>SHL Engagement 2020-21</p> <p>RS Gave a presentation on Senate House Library Engagement. SHL exhibitions and online public engagement.</p> <p>December 2020 saw the closing of the Childhood in Dickensian London exhibition. Originally planned to finish in June 2020, it was kept in place until mid-December 2020, in the hope that there might be an opportunity to reopen later in the year but sadly, this was not possible.</p> <p>Following the end of the calendar year, the final visitor figures are now in and we had a fantastic total of 1,261 public visitors onsite in the 8 weeks before it had to close, there were a staggering 10,382 online exhibition visits and over 180 people attending related events throughout 2020.</p> <p>Work is currently underway to review the 2020-2024 Exhibitions and Engagement Programme in light of the restrictions brought about through the coronavirus pandemic. For 2021, we're planning engagement activity around marking the 150th anniversary of Senate House Library's founding collections online (June 2021) and there will be an opportunity for members to get involved once plans have been fleshed out. We would love to tell the story of SHL in some of our key collections.</p> <p>RS Invited members to get in touch with any suggestions or beautiful items they have come across in the library and that they would be much appreciated. The hope is to create an</p>	RS to update members on how

	<p>online exhibition to show off some of these works and tell the story of the library and the vast collections that we have.</p> <p>RS then showed a video of the achievements of the SHL and the SAS libraries in 2020 and welcomed feedback on these services.</p>	<p>they can get involved</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p>RS mentioned that forum members had asked about keeping in touch with each other so asked for people who would like to do that to add their social media handle or email in the chat to build their own connections that way.</p> <p>RS Raised using Microsoft Teams for the meetings and if members are happy using this for the user advisory forum or if they would prefer to use Zoom for example and encouraged people to get in touch if they have a preference.</p> <p>RS then brought the meeting to a close and thanked everyone who took part and all the attendees for their contributions to the User Advisory Forum.</p> <p>Date of next meeting – Tuesday 25 May 2021, 11:00-12:30</p>	