



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

The  
University  
Library.

The  
University Library  
Annual Report  
2009/10.



## Welcome

One of the highlights of 2009-10 was the score our students gave us in The Times Higher's Student Satisfaction survey – the highest of any university library in the UK. It should not go without saying that this reflects great credit on the University Library's staff, many of whom worked under difficult conditions this year to maintain services as we refurbished the Western Bank Library. And it's no fluke: rather, it's the result of several years of careful planning and a steady focus on improving customer satisfaction. This is a time that has seen the opening of the Information Commons, the development of closer partnership with our academic colleagues in the way we support student learning, and innovation in the way we deliver services, such as our simplified, more flexible lending service. In the next planning period through to 2015, post-Browne and spending review, we must continue to put the learning experience of our students at the heart of our mission.

But we'll also need to address the challenges of supporting our researchers. We spend a great deal of time and effort delivering rich digital resources to researchers' desktops, but the downside of this is that we spend less time talking to them about their developing information needs. Over the next year we'll address this, so that we can work together to meet familiar challenges such as the rising costs of the scholarly communications infrastructure, and new ones such as the need to manage the University's research outputs effectively, and to ensure the preservation of our growing digital research assets.

These themes will feature in our new strategic plan for 2011-2015, one that will sit alongside the University's new strategic plan, and its Mission, Vision and Identity. We'll be meeting students and academic colleagues to get their input to the new plan during this year. And one aim for the plan is to ensure that by 2015, if the Times Higher were to carry out a *researcher* satisfaction survey, we'll be #1 for library services in that as well.

### **Martin Lewis**

Director of Library Services and University Librarian

## Redevelopment of the Western Bank Library

At the beginning of the year we began a £3.4 million refurbishment project in the Western Bank Library. We knew that the nature and quality of the public spaces in the building needed to be reconfigured to meet the requirements and expectations of the University's research community. The quality of study spaces within the building, and its generally shabby appearance, were a recurrent source of dissatisfaction amongst its users, particularly PGT and PGR students. We employed Avanti Architects who specialise in restoring listed buildings and who had prepared a conservation report for the building, and the adjacent Arts Tower, for the University.

Work was completed in January 2010 and the transformation of the study environment and the other public spaces has been dramatic. Feedback from users has been very positive and we are delighted that we can now provide a modern research Library service in this fine grade II\* listed building. The quality and sensitivity of the work has been recognised by the receipt of a Royal Institute of British Architects White Rose Gold Award for Architecture. The scheme was also placed first in the Conservation Award and the Interior Award categories.

The refurbished Main Hall



## What has changed?

The ground floor entrance lobby has a new ceiling, a revised layout with casual seating and additional heating and wireless network access. Access to the lift from this area has also been greatly improved.

The Mezzanine level has been transformed into a new exhibition space and it is now an open, light space much as it was when the building first opened. We were delighted to receive additional funding support for this part of the project from the Wolfson Foundation (£184k) and from the University's Development and Alumni Relations Office (£125k). The redesign of the Reception and security area gives a more open approach, including clearer access to Level 4, Special Collections and the National Fairground Archive.

All the windows in the Reading Room have been replaced with efficient double-glazed units and additional heating has been installed to make this space more attractive for serious study. Additional power points and wireless provision on the Reading Room platforms enable, for the first time, laptop use in this area.

The Main Hall, at the heart of the building, has been restored to reinstate the original atmosphere of the space. The information points have been completely redesigned and new areas have been incorporated to house the map collections and the printing and photocopying facilities. Access to the lift and central staircase has been greatly improved. We also have a new area which provides comfortable seating and access to newspapers.

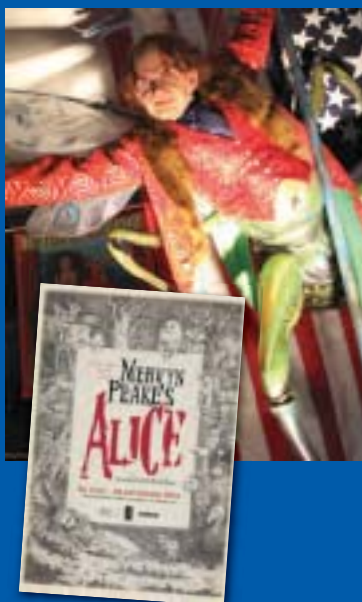


New group and individual study places on Level 4

Customers will notice a big change on Level 4 where we have created group study rooms, open access study spaces, study carrels and additional seating to make the whole area much more attractive for study. A new ceiling and new lighting have also helped created a far more user-friendly environment. On Level 3, new study spaces and casual seating have been introduced to make the Level 3 collections easier and more convenient to use. We estimate that approximately 200,000 items of stock had to be moved by our Capacity Management Team to enable the works to take place and as part of our programme to make our print collections easier to use.

## 2010 Exhibitions

The first exhibition to make use of the new Exhibition Gallery was *Humbug: Celebrating 200 Years of P.T. Barnum* which ran from March to May. Specially commissioned banners by Mark Copeland of the Insect Circus Museum were displayed alongside original archival material from the NFA and a life sized sculpture by Anthony Bennett. Later in the year we presented illustrations by Mervyn Peake for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* in association with the British Library. The exhibition included a range of previously unpublished sketches which were on display for the first time since the archive was acquired.



# Library Service Developments



## Online Submission of Document Supply Requests

With the aim of supporting researchers we have worked in tandem with the British Library to introduce secure online request submission through the University's MUSE portal. Where available in digital format, requests are also fulfilled electronically with articles being mailed directly to researchers.



## Lending Services Review

In the past year we have made a number of significant improvements in response to feedback from Library customers regarding loan periods, requests and fines. We undertook a trial early on in the year and issued each book for a normal loan period unless someone else had already requested it, in which case the loan period was shortened. We also shortened the period of time that we kept requested books for customers. This has increased the speed of supply of books to customers. In addition, people could renew books as many times as they wanted, provided no-one else was waiting for them. Following this trial period we undertook a survey and the responses showed that customers were overwhelmingly in favour of the new changes. As a result, they have been incorporated into our Library policies.



## Clinical Outreach Service

During 2009/10 the Library's clinical outreach service to Sheffield Teaching Hospitals (STH) has become a well established service, with the Library working collaboratively with individuals, groups and forums throughout STH. Over the year, almost 500 STH staff have received face to face information skills training and literature search guidance, through a series of workshops, information clinics delivered at the point of clinical care, individual meetings, and a weekly drop in session. In addition, we have worked with departments and groups to deliver evidence based practice training and to provide input into projects, audits and the development of care pathways. Work has now begun to identify what impact these activities have for clinicians in terms of their clinical decision making, service development, research and education.



## Faculty Liaison Team (FLT)

During the academic session 2009-10 Faculty Librarians arranged Strategic Liaison meetings with Faculty Directors of Operations, Learning and Teaching and Research and Innovation. The meetings ensure that the Library is aware of strategic issues in the Faculty and that there is a joined-up approach to the annual planning round. The FLT also attends Faculty Learning and Teaching Committees, Student Forums and a growing number of Student Staff Committees. These meetings offer excellent opportunities for the Library to provide information and to get feedback about service developments.



## Additional Support Developments

During 2009/10 we have made a number of improvements to our Additional Support Services including the creation of a new Assistive Technology suite on the ground floor of St George's Library. It comprises three height-adjustable desks and supportive furniture alongside new equipment and a range of assistive software to complement facilities at our other sites. We have been working closely with the Disability and Dyslexia Support Service to provide materials for visually impaired customers in their preferred format. Longer loan periods have also been introduced for eligible students as another measure of additional support.



## Improved Access to Course Readings

Digitisation of the paper Offprint Collection in the Information Commons was completed during the year. We have also enriched reading lists with selected additional digital content. The successful completion of the project has contributed to improved student satisfaction and has freed up shelving space in the IC.

# Other news



## UK Research Reserve (UKRR)

Building on our initial commitment to UKRR in 2009, we have contributed further printed journal material from a broad range of disciplines to help form the national research collection. Working in collaboration with research libraries throughout the UK and alongside the British Library, UKRR will secure the journals knowledge base into the future.



## LIFE-SHARE Project

The University of Sheffield Library, along with Leeds and York, is a partner in this White Rose Project, which is funded by the JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee). The partner libraries will each undertake a case study including a small amount of digitisation work, with the aim of sharing expertise and enabling us to work together on future digitisation projects. LIFE-SHARE will also raise awareness of the growing importance of digital preservation. The Sheffield case study focuses on Special Collections, investigating the workflow for digitising sound and video recordings.



## National Student Survey

As part of this survey all final year students were asked if they agreed with the statement "the Library services are good enough for my needs". In 2010 the satisfaction rating rose for the sixth successive year and now stands at 87%.



## Honorary Degree for Barry Hines

In April the University celebrated the conferment of the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters on Barry Hines, author of *Kes* and *Threads*, and former member of staff in the School of English, whose TV and play scripts and manuscripts of novels are held in Special Collections.



Barry Hines.



## National Fairground Archive

The National Fairground Archive continues to attract important new collections and, with the donation of the Cyril Critchlow Collection relating to magic and variety history, our holdings have substantially

increased. Recent developments in the city have resulted in the opening of a new National Fairground Archive resource room at Kelham Island Industrial Museum. To celebrate this collaboration with Sheffield Industrial Museums we presented a free event recapturing the 1940s Wakes Weekend / Holidays at Home which attracted over 5,000 visitors. Our outreach in the city has attracted over 75,000 visitors to NFA-related events including Sheffield Fayre at Norfolk Park, Fright Night and Winter Wonderland at the Botanical Gardens.



Visitors at the NFA resource room at Kelham Island Industrial Museum.



## Dr David Ryan Room, RHH

In September we opened a new flexible study space within the Health Sciences Library at the Royal Hallamshire Hospital. This was in response to student requests for better group study facilities. The provision of the new space is ensuring that collaborative inquiry and learning is being supported in our study environments. The project received funding from the Development and Alumni Relations Office, from the legacy of Dr Ryan, MBChB 1970, from the 2010 Student Medical Society, the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee and the University Library.



Dr Ryan's wife Sue and brother Richard at the event to mark the opening of the new facility.



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### Copyright Licence Agency (CLA)

The demand for the digitisation of printed course materials continues to rise and the provision of e-offprints is crucial for our customers. To provide this service we are obliged to work within the legislation under the Copyright Licensing Agency's Photocopying and Scanning HE Licence. The University was audited by the CLA in February and we are delighted to report that our methods and procedures have been commended and cited as examples of best practice in the sector.



### Working with the NHS

Our association with Sheffield Teaching Hospitals (STH) has taken a step forward this year with the signing of a new 5 year service agreement, providing a clear description of our services and a framework for future developments. Our services are currently reaching over 3,700 STH customers through the Health Sciences Library and its clinical outreach service.



### UK Research Data Service

Managing the digital data generated by research projects is becoming increasingly important both for researchers and for research funders. The HEFCE-funded UK Research Data Service project, of which Martin Lewis has been a member, has been exploring the scope for a coordinated shared services approach to this challenge, funding pilot work at three universities. The project has now ended, but its work will be taken forward by the JISC-funded Digital Curation Centre based at the University of Edinburgh.

## Facts and figures

The University Library has 173 staff (129 fte) based at five sites with a total of 2,624 study spaces. Its budget for 2009/10 was £7.67 million. The Library is a member of Research Libraries UK (RLUK) which includes libraries of the largest research-led universities in the UK and Ireland.

	2009/10	2008/09
Total number of loans	1,646,007	1,643,942
Interlibrary loan applications	4,161	5,762
Photocopies and prints made	5,306,218	5,952,069
Full text e-journal downloads	3,309,949	3,106,889
User visits to Library	2,036,000	1,971,083

## Contacting the University Library

If you have any comments or questions on the issues covered in this year's Annual Report, please contact the Office of the Director:

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