How do we discover what our users think of the Library service here at Durham University? We ask them, of course.

A general survey of library users and their satisfaction with library services was undertaken in May 2000. This was an opportunity for all library users to contribute their thoughts about the service and influence the directions the library would follow in the future. We were interested to know what services library users at Durham considered to be most important and how satisfied they were with the quality of service we are providing.

1279 responses to the general user satisfaction questionnaire distributed in the Main Library, Palace Green and Education Sections were received and analysed. The results were interesting and a report detailing the main findings can be found on the centre pages.

New Sub-Librarian appointed

The Library has appointed Clare Powne to the new post of Sub-Librarian, responsible for Strategy and Planning. Clare’s previous post was as Information Services Librarian at Edinburgh University Library.

After giving her time to settle into the job, based at Main Library, we decided to interview her and find out what, exactly, the role of Sub-Librarian for strategy and planning actually involves!

Read the full interview on page 3.

Equipment for special needs students unveiled

Thanks to a generous donation from the Northern Rock Foundation, Study Rooms at Stockton Campus and Main Library have been fitted with equipment to enable students with special needs, such as those with a visual impairment or dyslexia, to make better use of items available in the Library. The new facilities were inaugurated by Pro-vice Chancellor, Professor Alan Bilsborough. For further information, please see page 2.
Library support for students with special needs

Students with impaired sight or other reading and writing difficulties are using new facilities to help them with their studies at Durham, thanks to generous support from the Northern Rock Foundation.

Their grant of over £17,000 has helped the University to install special equipment in quiet Study rooms at its Main Library in Durham and the Library at the Stockton Campus. Each room has two workstation computers with large screens, special software and other equipment including scanners, printers, and a CCTV video magnifier.

The Durham University Service for Students with Disabilities, DUSSD, has a long record of providing special learning support, particularly for people with impaired sight, hearing, or dyslexia. Dr Margaret Collins, the special adviser to DUSSD, said: “The help of Northern Rock Foundation is tremendously valuable. It enables students to make better use of items in the library or the internet in an environment that is more suited to their particular study needs.”

About 450 undergraduate or postgraduate students at the two campuses are in contact with DUSSD. Some already have enhanced features on personal computers in their own rooms, but the new facilities will give them greater access to books or other documents held in the Main Library in Durham or at Stockton Campus.

Each of the special study rooms at Main Library and Stockton has been equipped with two high specification PCs. One is connected to the Networked PC Service for DUSSD students who need to work in a silent environment, and one is a ‘stand-alone’ PC with software installed for visually impaired and dyslexic students, connected to a dedicated printer and scanner. Using these specialist software packages, DUSSD students can, for example, scan pages or documents into the PC and have them read back, or magnify screen images and text.

Using the attached CCTV magnifier, students can massively magnify the contents of a book and change the colours of the text and background to enable easier reading. As well as computer tools, both libraries used the donation to purchase low-tech aids such as handheld magnifiers which are available for loan from the issue desks.

These new facilities were officially inaugurated at Main Library on 6th November 2000 by Pro-Vice-Chancellor Professor Alan Bilsborough, University Librarian Dr. John Hall, and a representative from the Northern Rock Foundation. A video-conference link to Stockton enabled both sites to participate in the inauguration.

The facilities at Stockton and Main Library are available to DUSSD registered students only and booking is recommended due to the popularity of the rooms. For further information, please contact:

**Stockton Campus:**
Christine Purcell, c.w.purcell@durham.ac.uk

**Main Library:**
Kate Page, k.m.page@durham.ac.uk

Extended opening hours

Opening hours at Main Library and Palace Green Library will be extended at weekends for a short time during the Easter term. These extended hours have been provided to meet the anticipated increase in demand for services over the Examination period. The amended opening hours are as follows:

**Main Library**
- Fridays (27th April – 1st June only) 08:45 – 22:00
- Saturdays (21st April – 26th May only) 09:00 – 22:00

**Palace Green Library**
- Saturdays (28th April – 26th May only) 09:00 – 17:00
- Saturdays (2nd June – 16th June only) 10:00 – 13:00

Additionally, Palace Green Library will now be open until 9pm, Monday to Thursday during the Easter term. For details of our normal opening hours, please turn to page 8.
New Sub-Librarian Arrives

Clare Powne, the new Sub-Librarian for strategy and planning, talks about herself and her work at Durham.

Clare, what was your previous post and what experience have you brought with you from it?
I was Information Services Librarian at Edinburgh University, essentially a traditional reference librarian but I had a lot of responsibility for the development of electronic resources, the library’s web pages, and user education - very much a public services role, really. I was at Edinburgh for three years: I’ve worked in five different university libraries now in the UK and in Australia and I hope that I’m bringing to this job experience from all those places.

What does a Sub-Librarian for strategy and planning do?
My remit is to attend to quality issues in the Library and look at, specifically, things like performance measures - how we can identify areas where we can do things differently and better. Strategic planning is the accepted approach to running all sorts of organisations now; we have to look long-term and recognise that our users’ needs are changing. We have to position ourselves so that we are able to respond to those changes, not just in a reactive way but being pro-active about changing our services. We can’t keep on providing services in the way we always have done because the pace of change is enormous and the impact of technology upon libraries has been significant already and it’s going to continue to become increasingly so in the future.

What’s the most interesting part of your job here at the moment?
Right now I’m working with library staff on setting the groundwork, the theoretical underpinnings, for some of these quality issues. The theory is fine, but how do we actually apply that and put it into practice at Durham? That’s the challenge I’m grappling with at the moment.

What do you hope to achieve in your work here at Durham and how will it affect our users?
Durham University Library, in common with most older, traditional university libraries in this country, has been focussed on its collections and how they are managed. The responsibility for these legacy collections inhibits them from moving forward in the way that some of the new universities are readily able to do. So, I would be very happy if the one thing I achieved in my time here was to change the focus at Durham and for us to become a more customer focussed library. It’s my role to help staff look at the processes they’re involved with and try and identify areas where we could do things differently in order to deliver a better service to our users.

What are the main challenges that lie ahead for the Library?
I think one of the main challenges for us is to ‘think outside of the box’, to make ourselves think more broadly about the real business that we’re in. That libraries are not about buildings full of books, they’re about organising information and people using information. For example, I think the current developments in Virtual Learning Environments in universities is something that libraries ought to be heavily involved with. These kinds of areas will develop and libraries need to stake a claim.

How do you see Durham University Library changing over the next few years?
One of the problems with Main Library is that it is presently catering for numbers for which it was never designed. I hope very much that funding from the University will be forthcoming to allow us to redevelop, in particular, Level 2 and enable us to look at the services we are providing, how we are providing them, and deliver them better. The redevelopment of Level 2, is a priority for the Library and would allow us to introduce services such as self-issue machines and longer, unstaffed, opening hours for which there is currently a significant demand.

Many thanks to Clare Powne for agreeing to be interviewed. Clare welcomes comments and can be contacted at Main Library or by e-mail: clare.powne@dur.ac.uk

Clare Powne - Sub-Librarian, Strategy and Planning
Library satisfaction survey, May 2000

Summary of key findings

A general survey of library users and their satisfaction with library services was undertaken in May 2000. The questionnaire used was adapted from the SCONUL Pilot Library Satisfaction Survey form and invited users to assess their level of success in 8 activities undertaken in the library, and to rate the importance of, and their satisfaction with, 16 library services and facilities. 1279 responses to the general user satisfaction questionnaire distributed in the Main Library, Palace Green and Education Sections have been analysed.

Demographics of the sample indicate the percentage of various categories of user, responses by faculty and the frequency of Library use. Responses from undergraduates (86%) formed a higher percentage than the representation of this group in the total University population (70%).

Figure 1 shows library services and facilities in order of perceived importance to respondents, with the percentage of “very” or “fairly” satisfied and dissatisfied respondents

- book stock is the most important feature of the library for respondents, and an area with which they are least satisfied
- users are most dissatisfied with photocopying facilities, although this is not rated as a particularly important service
- levels of dissatisfaction with reading-list materials and the Reserve Collection are high
- the relatively low level of importance assigned to electronic information resources may reflect lack of awareness amongst respondents
- staff competence and helpfulness receive high satisfaction ratings

Results from the last general satisfaction survey carried out in 1995 are not directly comparable with this survey; different rating methods were used and questions were differently worded. However, Figure 2 shows comparisons where they can be made; “excellent” or “good” scores in 1995 are compared with “very” or “fairly satisfied” ratings in 2000, and “poor” or “very poor” 1995 scores with “very or fairly dissatisfied” ratings in 2000.

- in most areas, levels of user satisfaction have improved, very notably so for PC provision and study facilities
- users have increased difficulty finding books and journals on the shelves; 18.2% of respondents were unsuccessful in looking for material on the shelves and this was the activity in which least success was recorded
- there is greater dissatisfaction with opening hours than in 1995; free text comments suggest that most dissatisfaction relates to weekend and vacation opening hours

As part of its strategic development process for the year 2000/2001, the Library will be using the outcomes of this survey to identify and implement such service improvements as resource constraints permit. Feedback on these survey results from library users are welcomed and should be sent to;

Clare Powne, Sub-Librarian, Strategy and Planning
clare.powne@durham.ac.uk
Figure 1: Importance and Satisfaction of Services and Facilities

Figure 2: 1995 and 2000 Satisfaction Comparisons
A Musical Note:
The Library’s musical resources have recently benefited from a number of new developments.

A gift has been received of nearly 900 compact discs of classical music, published by Hyperion and presented in recognition of editorial assistance given to the firm by Dr. Jeremy Dibble. This brings the Library’s total collection of compact discs to over 2,000 items. Most of these are of classical pieces, but there is also a substantial group of ethnomusicology, featuring world-wide music from every continent. The CDs are currently being added to the Library’s on-line catalogue. They are held in the Palace Green Reserve Collection, and are available for four-hour or overnight loan.

The main Music reading room (Room 4 in the Palace Green Section of the Library) has been rearranged to provide more reader seating. A terminal giving access to the web version of the Library’s on-line catalogue is now available in the same area.

Education Library

Education databases at a distance

The School of Education has large numbers of non-residential students living off-site; postgraduates and mature students, teachers, and also distance learners based in other parts of the country and abroad. These students can experience difficulties in gaining remote access to some of the electronic information sources carried on the Library website, either because licensing terms and conditions restrict access to members of the University or that access to resources and password information is only available PCs located on-campus.

To improve matters and provide more convenient links for non-campus-based students, the Library last term set up a special web page for offsite users and distance learners:

http://www.dur.ac.uk/Library/lib/distance.htm

This page contains links enabling Durham students access to password information and various online services, including crucial databases, by identifying themselves via their IT Service logins.

Amongst the databases made available this way are several major education online services which, between them, provide international indexing coverage of thousands of journals and other publications in the education field. It is hoped that all off-campus School of Education students, particularly distance learners, will benefit from this improved service. Education Databases available include:

**Australian Education Index (AEI)** indexes journals, conference papers, research report and monographs and also includes records of theses from the **Bibliography of Education Theses in Australia**. Records dating from 1978 to the present are included in this resource.

**British Education Index (BEI)** indexes articles relating to education and training from over 300 English language journals and in addition includes thesis literature from the **British Education Theses Index**. BEI records date from 1976 to the present & BETI records date from 1950.

**Education Abstracts** indexes journal articles, mainly from the USA, and includes yearbooks, book reviews, providing abstracts of articles from 1994. The file of records dates back to 1983.

**ERIC** is the largest USA education database and includes article index records and abstracts for over 2000 journals and also indexes and provides abstracts for much non-journal material including research reports, conference papers, and academic dissertations. Records go back to 1966.
Stockton Campus Library

Meet BOBBY

Stockton Campus Library has gone self-service! Students can now issue books to themselves via the new 3M’s Self-check machine BOBBY.

BOBBY (BOorrow Books By Yourself) is a table-mounted machine which scans your library card, then scans the barcodes of the books you wish to borrow. When you have finished, it issues a receipt which gives you details of the books you have borrowed, and the dates they are due.

BOBBY is only suitable for books (not videos, software etc), and will not issue anything if its initial check reveals that there is something amiss with the borrower’s library record - e.g. books are overdue or the borrower owes money to the Library. In such instances the borrower will see a message on the screen asking them to go to the library counter. So if you want to take advantage of this new facility, keep your library record in order!

BOBBY consists of a unit containing a PC which is fully linked to the Library’s automated issuing system, and a receipt printer, topped with a monitor. To use BOBBY you follow the simple on-screen instructions.

- First you place your library card, barcode facing up, on the card recess at the front. It is scanned, and if all is OK the screen tells you to proceed.
- You then place the books you want to borrow, one at a time, on the book ledge so that the barcode is scanned. If there is no problem, the book is immediately issued, and you are invited to move onto the next book. Your library card stays on the card recess until you have finished.
- When you have finished and removed your card, BOBBY moves onto the last stage, which is the production of a receipt. This tells you the author and title of each book you have borrowed in that session, and when they are due back.

Library staff are happy to help borrowers use BOBBY for the first time, and we know that students who have used it are then demonstrating it to their friends. Some students regret not having the date stamped in the book, but if you want to copy the due date from the receipt onto the date label of each book, that’s OK.

BOBBY can only be used for borrowing books. However, to enable books and other items to be returned at times when the Information Resources Centre is closed, the Library now has a book return box. This is positioned outside the IRC on level 2 of the Ebsworth Building, and library materials put in it are checked in when the library next opens. The book return box is locked during IRC opening hours.
Contact Details

The University Library is always pleased to receive feedback and suggestions about the services we offer our users. If you have any comments or issues that you would like to draw to our attention, please address them to;

Main.Library@durham.ac.uk

General enquiries about Library services can be sent to;

Main.Counter@durham.ac.uk

All comments and suggestions about the content of this Newsletter are, of course, welcome and can be sent to;

Ex.Libris@durham.ac.uk

Library Web Pages

The Library web pages contain regularly updated information about the services we offer. They also have many links to sources of electronic information available to members of Durham University Library. The pages can be found by pointing your internet browser at:

http://www.dur.ac.uk/Library/

Web Survey Results

The Library is in the process of a major redesign and restructuring of its web pages. As part of this redesign, we felt it was important to consult Library users to discover what they thought should be included in the new site. We were very pleased with the responses that we received and would like to thank all those who participated. A summary of the results of the survey can be found on our current web site at;

http://www.dur.ac.uk/Library/news.html

Opening Hours: Easter Term

Main Library

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Closed Periods

All libraries will be closed for Easter, 12th April - 17th April and for Summer Bank Holiday, 27th August.