

BODLEIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

The mission of Bodleian Libraries is to provide an excellent service to support the learning, teaching and research objectives of the University of Oxford; and to develop and maintain access to Oxford's unique collections for the benefit of scholarship and society.

The Bodleian Social Science Library is part of the Bodleian Libraries and exists to support the University's social scientists, particularly in the departments of: Economics, International Development, Politics & International Relations, Sociology, and Social Policy & Intervention; and in the Centres for: Criminology, Refugee Studies, Russian & East European Studies, and Socio-Legal Studies; and in the Blavatnik School of Government. We seek to deliver exceptional collections, services and facilities, and to manage them effectively for the benefit of staff and students of the University.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2017-18

Key developments achieved during the past year by Bodleian Social Science Library (SSL) staff in support of the Social Sciences Division are highlighted below.

Research Support

SSL staff continued to send welcome letters to new researchers and academics, and to offer one-to-one research support consultations. Examples of research areas supported include social cohesion and immigration stemming from the rise in anti-immigrant and populist sentiments in the US and UK, increase in the number of child brides in Mozambique as a response to climate change, resettlement experiences of Sri Lankan Tamils arriving in Australia in the 1980s and 1990s, review of road safety legislation in relation to mobile device usage, effectiveness of interventions aimed at reducing racial bias in Higher Education, data on trading of rare earth metals.

Positive feedback includes:

- *"This was one of the elements on which I received a distinction, and it was only possible with your guidance helping me quickly locate the right literatures."*
- *"Thank you for your generous help. The manual you kindly set aside for me is something I had been looking for for perhaps two years, and it will be critical for my dissertation."*
- *"You've helped to take a huge burden off my shoulders."*

Our subject consultants also provided research support to visitors from other institutions, such as Deakin University in Australia, University of Freiburg, Ewha Womans' University in South Korea, and the University of South Florida. There has been a renewed interest in the SSL Goodwin-Gill archive, a collection of personal papers that belonged to Professor Guy Goodwin-Gill, Emeritus Professor of International Refugee Law at the University of Oxford.

The SSL continues to support the Open Access (OA) agenda for Oxford-based authors and library staff contributed to the success of the Open Access Oxford Week, 11-15 June 2018, which provided a series of events about current developments in open access publishing and dissemination.

Collection Development

SSL technical services staff worked hard to provide print and online resources for research and teaching. During 2017-18 more than 2,800 monographs (books, theses, reports, etc.) and almost 1,000 serial parts (journal issues, statistical series, etc.) were added to the library collections. Just over 170 e-book titles were licenced to support reading lists and research requests. SSL staff also continued to catalogue new material for the Education Library and Tylor Anthropology Library.

New eresources purchased during 2017-18 include Eikon (a financial market intelligence database), The Economist Online, UK Comtrade (import and export flow data for over 200 countries), and the Daily Mail Historical Archive (1896-2004).

The SSL Data Area has been developed to give the library data discovery service a physical presence. Terminals in this area provide specialised resources with restricted access, such as Bloomberg and Eikon. The SSL new books display and associated web page have been refreshed to include e-books. The new books web page is at <https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ssl/newbooks>.

Supporting taught courses

At the beginning of the academic year the SSL ran a comprehensive induction programme designed to familiarise new students with key services, collections and online resources. Twenty-eight induction sessions were attended by 814 new students. Eighty-six tours were attended by 593 new students. The number of tours has increased steadily every year, since October 2013 when 20 tours were provided.

The SSL will take an active role in the University Education IT Board project to investigate and pilot a reading list management system, and SSL staff will work closely with 3 departments: the Centre for Criminology, Department of Sociology and the Oxford Internet Institute. This system will enable students to access their reading lists in a digital environment, with direct links to full-text resources and catalogue availability data. The pilot will run during 2018-19, and if it is successful the system will be made available to more departments for the 2019-20 academic year.

The SSL eReadings service continues to provide access to digital copies of print-only book chapters and articles cited on reading lists supported by the SSL. Almost 300 new scans were added to the SSL Weblearn site during 2017-18, which brings the total number of available scans to 1,875.

The SSL Trinity Term Student Survey took place during 7-20 May 2018, and received 367 responses. Feedback was generally positive but improvements could be made. Actions identified included refreshing and promoting the High Demand (3-hour loan) collection for key textbooks, encouraging

students to use the SSL eReadings service, and encouraging departments to send reading lists to the library.

SSL staff developed a new online 'binding' video which provides step-by-step instructions to help students use the binding machine for their dissertation or thesis. This complements the existing videos on copyright and library inductions. All videos are available on the SSL website www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ssl.

Developing information skills

Graduate students and researchers carry out comprehensive literature searches drawing on a wide range of primary and secondary resources for their dissertations and theses. During 2017-18 the library provided bespoke hands-on search skills workshops to students from 8 Departments and Centres. New induction and search skills sessions were provided for the MSc Economics for Development students this year; this completes the suite of sessions for all MSc and MPhil courses at the Oxford Department of International Development.

SSL staff also contributed to several centralised Social Sciences Research and Training and Bodleian iSkills programmes. Workshops included: *Managing Research Data and Data Management Planning*, *Open Access Oxford: What's Happening?*, *Referencing: Choosing and Using Software*.

Study space

Notable improvements to the study spaces include 18 new desk-mounted power sockets in the Phase 1 reader area, and the redecoration of the Large Discussion Room and East Graduate Study Room. The cost of these were met by the Bodleian Libraries Minor Works fund. Three new height-adjustable desks, four ergonomic chairs and a video magnifier are now available, with costs met by the Bodleian Libraries Accessibility Equipment fund. New LED lights are also being installed throughout the SSL as part of a Manor Road Building improvement project.

The SSL issue desk is one of the busiest service points in the Bodleian Libraries handling thousands of transactions and enquiries each year. During 2017-18, readers made use of SSL issue desk services by borrowing books (16,852 check-outs at the desk) and/or collecting items requested to the SSL from closed stacks (7,336 items). There was a grand total of 47,696 check-outs, with 65% of these being taken via the SSL self-issue machines. Readers placed 2,023 reservations and books were renewed 84,338 times. Readers enter the SSL by swiping their University or Bodleian Card; during 2017-18 a total of 195,398 swipes through the entry gate by 8,912 different individuals were recorded.

The library operates a challenging set of service standards for re-shelving during weeks 0-9 of term. More than 61,000 items were re-shelved during 2017-18; library-use-only books were shelved within 1 day 100% of the time, and loanable books were shelved within 2 days 98% of the time.

The SSL continues to provide key support to readers with disabilities, including extended borrowing permissions and permission to book one of the ten study carrels for up to five consecutive days. This year 133 students were contacted upon receipt of their details from the Disability Advisory Service, and offered a one-to-one meeting to discuss best use of SSL facilities and services. This represents a 6% increase on the figure for 2016-17, and a 196% increase on the figure for 2013-14.

Consultation and communication

The SSL website continues to provide a key source of information for readers, and it received more than 56,000 page views from 22,580 unique users during the year. This represents a 32% increase on the number of unique users during 2016-17. The feedback page brings together the different channels by which readers can get in touch including the CLiPS (Committee for Library and Information Provision and Strategy), contact details for individual staff, the SSL Facebook page, SSL Twitter Feed, SOLO Live Help, and the Bodleian Libraries Instagram page.

During 2017-18, 217 tweets were sent from the @SSLBod Twitter account, and the SSL Blog provides a platform for the SSL RSS feed and Twitter responses. The SSL Blog received 3,871 visits during the year. SSL staff post to the Bodleian Libraries Instagram account once a week during term, and the most popular post was a book Christmas tree, with 2,317 “Likes”. This was the SSL’s 100th post and holds the current record for being the most liked post on the Bodleian Libraries Instagram page.

SSL staff provide a set of 14 subject-based online guides for research resources using LibGuides software. These LibGuides are available on the Oxford LibGuides page and received nearly 39,000 page views during the year, which represents a 73% increase on the number of page views during 2016-17.

The Summer Vacation is a busy time for supporting summer schools and open days. The SSL was pleased to support the 2018 Summer Institute in Quantitative Methods, the International Summer School in Forced Migration, the UNIQ Summer School for PPE, and the St Antony’s College International Politics Summer School. These were attended by a total of 114 participants, and 9 library tours were provided. The SSL also received 299 visitors during three University-wide open days for prospective students.

In line with the Bodleian Libraries Key Strategic Goal 4, which states *“We will improve access to highly-used hub libraries by increasing opening hours to better reflect user requirements, focusing especially on weekend and vacation hours”*, the SSL ran a survey during February 2018. The survey received 194 responses and results were reviewed alongside headcount and entry gate data. Respondents were generally satisfied with SSL opening hours. There was some demand for extending opening hours at weekends in term-time and for opening the SSL on Sundays during the Easter Vacation. The Library Committee supported the SSL’s intention to seek funding to open on Sundays in the Easter Vacation 2019 as a pilot.

Staff development

Social Science Library staff continue to attract positive feedback:

- *“In the 14 years I’ve been here – as student and staff – I have to say that the librarians [sic] and library service have been brilliant. Thank you!”*
- *“All the help (and smiles) SSL Staff gave me during the three months I spent in Oxford were essential to the success of my research”.*
- *“Thank you for all the help I receive here at the SSL, you are such lovely people. Do you have a special psychometric test that enables you to recruit only nice people, I wonder?”*

SSL staff attended and contributed to a wide range of training courses and events throughout the year, including: Enquiry and Referral Skills; Mental Health First Aid; LILAC (Information Literacy) Conference 2018; CILIP (UK Library and Information Association) Conference 2018.

New staff: Sarah Humphreys was appointed as Senior Library Assistant for Scholarly Communication on 22 January 2018, Beth Paton was appointed as Senior Library Assistant for Acquisitions on 26 March 2018, Pinelopi Flaouna was promoted to Senior Library Assistant for Acquisitions on 1 April 2018, and Elizabeth Hanlon was appointed as Senior Library Assistant for Research Support on 30 July 2018.

Sarah Rhodes, Subject Consultant for Forced Migration, African and Commonwealth Studies is a member of the Standing Conference on Library Materials on Africa (SCOLMA) committee, and helped organise this year’s annual conference *Document to Digital: How does Digitisation Aid African Research?*, National Library of Scotland. Sarah also attended the inaugural screening of *Barbara Harrell-Bond: A Life Not Ordinary*, a film to celebrate the life and career of the founder of the Oxford Refugee Studies Centre. Sarah appears in the film, talking about the inception and growth of the refugee collections now held in the SSL.

John Southall, Bodleian Data Librarian and Subject Consultant for Economics, Sociology and Social Policy & Intervention, presented at the *10th Qualitative and Quantitative methods in Libraries International Conference (QQML2018)* in Greece during May 2018, and contributed to the ALISS (Association of Librarians and Information Professionals in the Social Sciences) *Masterclass for Information Professionals* at Aston University in August.

The SSL Green Team continues to promote sustainable working to staff and readers. This year the team organised lunchtime nature walks for staff and investigated sustainability practices and commitments of 29 publishers who supply books to the SSL. The team has also implemented an evening/weekend photocopier switch-off to save energy and reduce carbon emissions.

**Jo Gardner, Bodleian Social Science Librarian
January 2019**