[9] Copyright Licensing Agency (2016) The CLA Higher Education Copyright Licence: good practice guide in the creation of course packs, available at: https://www.cla.co.uk/sites/default/files/CLA-HE-Good-Practice-Guide_2016-2019.pdf.

[10] For discussion on a range of strategies to create new campus partnerships see Jackson, P. (2007) Integrating information literacy into Blackboard: building campus partnerships for successful student learning. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 33 (4) pp. 458.

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[12] Gorham, U. and Jaegar, P.T. (2017) The Law School Library or the Library at the Law School: how lessons from other types of libraries can inform the evolution of the academic law library in the digital age. *Law Library Journal* 109 (1).

[13] For example, McNeish, J., Foster, M., Francescucci, A. and West, B. (2012) The surprising foil to online education: why students won't give up paper textbooks. *Journal for Advancement of Marketing Education.* 20 (3).

[14] For an interesting insight into the VLE module created at New York University see Collard, S. and Tempelman-Kluit, N. (2006) The other way in: goal-based library content through CMS. *Internet Reference Services Quarterly* 11(4).

Biography

Lizz Edwards-Waller is a Library Assistant at the Squire Law Library, University of Cambridge. She is responsible for uploading library resources to the Moodle VLE and oversees the dedicated short-loan collections for students enrolled on the LL.M and Master of Corporate Law (MCL) courses. She has previously worked at Cambridge University Library.

Usage and User Experience in an Academic Law Library

Abstract: This article, written by Josephine Bailey and Kate Faulkner, discusses the collection of library usage data at the Squire Law Library, an academic law library embedded in the Faculty of Law at the University of Cambridge. Two initiatives were employed to survey usage: firstly, regular headcounts of library users and secondly, occasional spot-checks of university cards. This article details the data that was collected and how it fits into a wider ethnographic approach to understanding how students and researchers use libraries. The article also discusses how the pilots have developed into long-term procedures, and how this has led to improvements to the delivery of the service.

Keywords: usage statistics; surveys; academic law libraries

INTRODUCTION

The Squire Law Library is the dedicated library that supports the Faculty of Law at the University of Cambridge. It shares a building with the Faculty of Law; the building includes lecture theatres, administrative offices and a café on the lower three floors. The library is situated on the top three floors of the building, known as the David Williams Building. The library is very much embedded within the Law Faculty and many offices of the law

lecturing staff are located along the sides of each floor of the library.

The Squire is also an affiliated library of Cambridge University Library (often referred to as the UL) and the Squire staff are UL employees; we follow the UL collections and admissions policies, and we hold most of the law-related books received through the Legal Deposit legislation. Nevertheless, the Squire itself is in a separate building located about seven minutes' walk away from the UL.

There are approximately 900 students studying law at Cambridge at any one time, including about 100 PhD students, 180 postgraduate students (on taught courses) and 500-600 undergraduates taking the law Tripos course. A student at Cambridge might typically make use of a minimum of three libraries: their college library, a departmental or faculty library and the UL. Within the Cambridge University library network (using that term informally) there are over 100 libraries including 31 college libraries.

Students are usually welcome in other department and faculty libraries although they may have to register to use them. Many of the libraries will let any registered user borrow books, but the Squire is predominantly a reference library (although we allow academics and PhD students to borrow monographs).

Although college libraries remain just for members of their college, the reciprocal arrangement between department libraries regarding student access was taken to a new level when the UL's Futurelib[1] programme produced the website called Spacefinder.

FUTURELIB AND SPACEFINDER

The Futurelib innovation programme, at Cambridge University Library, researches the current and future role of academic libraries within the University of Cambridge. The programme seeks to improve awareness and usage of all library services by employing ethnographic and user-centred design techniques to undertake detailed exploration of the current user experience of Cambridge libraries. The programme's projects have included using eye-tracking software to see how long it takes students to find books using the catalogue and on the shelf, and observing and creating heat maps of how students use study spaces. They are currently working on data collected by students using digital diaries to record their learning journeys.

The Futurelib projects have been incredibly enlightening and it is wonderful how the staff have come together to take the time to conduct this research to underpin the day-to-day work we do.

Spacefinder is a website (spacefinder.lib.cam.ac.uk) that lists places in Cambridge where a student can study, including libraries and coffee shops, with details of their facilities (e.g. WiFi availability, desk size, loos) and rules (need to register, whether drinks and food allowed). Spacefinder has enabled a generation of students, who are already well-versed in the notion of consumer choice, to explore more libraries and more study space options. For example, some students like to study in a different

department library from their own because they like the location, the size of the desks or maybe the lighting. Some people like the facilities of a modern building, e.g. with access to more plug sockets for charging devices, while others might prefer an older, traditional library building as the grandeur helps them focus on their studies. Some students want to study with their friends – others want to get away from their friends for peace and quiet.

One benefit of the number of Cambridge libraries is that each library does not have to be everything to all students. Each library can have its own identity, climate and noise level and students can pick and choose their study environment according to their needs that day.

For us as at the Squire, we realised over time that more and more non-law students were using our library. The advent of Spacefinder has meant we have had to broaden our idea of our 'typical customers'. The absence of a card swipe system upon entry to the library presents a few problems; an inability to control who enters the library, to monitor items taken in and out or gather statistics on library usage and footfall. To address these issues, two initiatives were piloted: a long-term project to conduct regular headcounts of library users and occasional spot-checks of university and library cards.

DATA GATHERING

It was decided that we would introduce headcounts, an exercise that American librarians appear to call 'seating sweeps'[2,3]. The headcounts were introduced at the beginning of Lent Term 2015 and were conducted every weekday at 11:30am and 15:50pm to maintain consistency.

The morning and afternoon counts were recorded and an overall average was calculated for each day. Three years later, there is now sufficient data to begin recognising trends and generating comparisons.

Figure one provides an overlay of the annual data from each year for comparison. The data is organised following the academic year to represent the cycles and phases of the year, displaying high numbers at the start of term in October, a decline over Easter in March, followed by rising figures during the exam period of April – June. The majority of June-September is excluded from figure one as this is the summer vacation and the usage is significantly lower compared to the rest of the year.

Figure two compares the total average figures for each calendar month with a trendline representing the average of each month.

KEY TRENDS

There are approximately 400 spaces or seats in the Squire Law Library in total. The busiest month was May 2016/17 with an average of 138 users at any time.
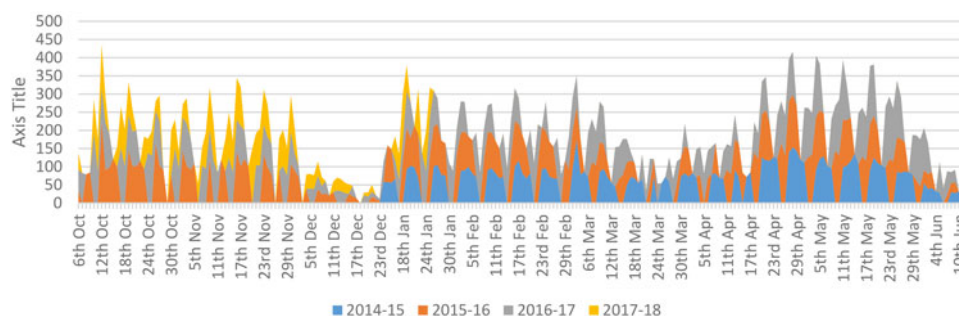
Figure 1. Footfall averages during term: 2014/15-2017/18.

Comparatively, the 'revision and exam' months of April and May consistently saw the highest number of users.

The highest recorded total of 234 users in the library was recorded at 11:30 on 12th October 2017.

During term, Monday is often the busiest day with the numbers decreasing each day of the week. Similarly, footfall sees on average, a 10% decrease between the morning and afternoon counts. Unsurprisingly then, the data shows that the busiest time during term is Monday morning and the quietest is Friday afternoon. Anecdotally, a similar phenomenon is experienced by gyms!

During vacation this is not the case, with Thursday and Friday recording a higher total and the afternoon seeing an increase in footfall from the morning.

There has been much commentary on library usage and the effect on footfall of increasing online services that can be accessed remotely. As most librarians will already know, the customer/reader belief that they do not use the library is mistaken. Customers, in our case students, researchers and faculty teaching staff, are using the e-resources provided by the library, and paid for by the library, every day. They are also using the reading material provided courtesy of the virtual learning environment (in our case, Moodle) that has been made available by the library staff. This involves members of the library team purchasing of resources, uploading material and checking for copyright compliance – even when the student thinks the academic does all the work, it transpires that they were often trained or helped by library staff! But this is the stuff of another article.

The data gathered in figure three demonstrates steady if not rising footfall over the last three to four years. Without figures for the total number of student enrolments we cannot provide proportionate correlations, nevertheless, consistent statistics such as this can demonstrate value to the wider organisation and be used to defend staff budgets, justify opening hours and deflect negative narratives of declining library usage.

An unforeseen advantage of the headcount project was the heightened visibility of staff around the library and the roving reference service that resulted as staff were stopped during their patrol, or were able to direct students they encountered looking for resources.

An unexpected discovery was the influence the weather had on footfall. It was noticeable that poor weather, particularly at weekends, meant students were more likely to stay in their college or their room. Correspondingly, sunny days brought people out of their rooms but meant some chose to study outside rather than in a library.

SUNDAY OPENING TRIAL

The recognition of consistent usage patterns as demonstrated above can be used to co-ordinate staff rotas and plan projects. For example, a pilot of Sunday opening
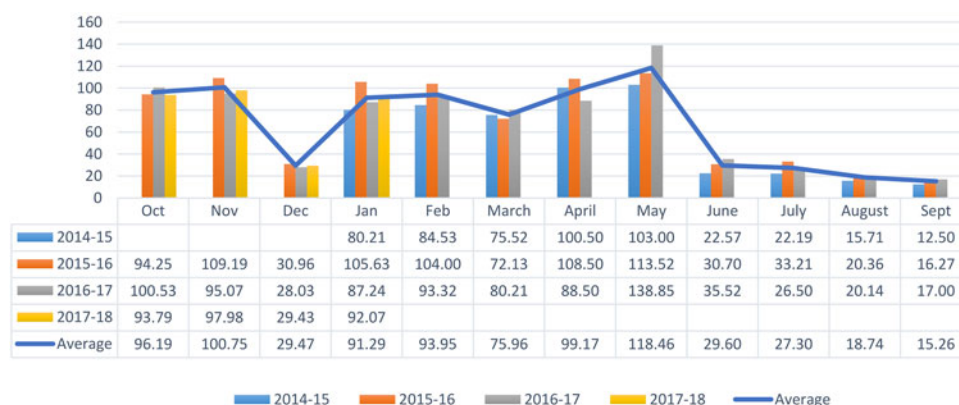

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept
2014-15				80.21	84.53	75.52	100.50	103.00	22.57	22.19	15.71	12.50
2015-16	94.25	109.19	30.96	105.63	104.00	72.13	108.50	113.52	30.70	33.21	20.36	16.27
2016-17	100.53	95.07	28.03	87.24	93.32	80.21	88.50	138.85	35.52	26.50	20.14	17.00
2017-18	93.79	97.98	29.43	92.07								
Average	96.19	100.75	29.47	91.29	93.95	75.96	99.17	118.46	29.60	27.30	18.74	15.26

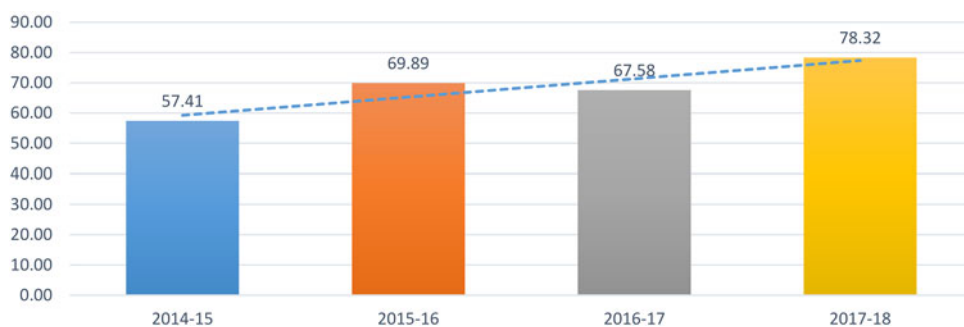*Figure 2. Footfall averages by calendar month: 2014/15-2017/18.*

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Figure 3. Annual average footfall 2014/15 - 2017/18.

times was trialled for the exam period only, as this was clearly the period of highest demand. Sunday opening hours were initially set to 11am – 5pm and extended the library's overall opening hours to seven days a week. The footfall was recorded during the new Sunday opening hours with a headcount at 14:30.

Figure four demonstrates that the number of readers increases as we progress through the term and then decreases as the exam season draws to a close; this evidence is, of course, not unexpected. The same bell curve occurs on our weekday and Saturday statistics. The Sunday statistics were compared, where possible, with previous days demonstrating an overall average decrease of 19% in footfall compared to Friday but nonetheless evidencing a respectable turnout.

CARD AUDIT

The headcount statistics were very useful, but we realised we now needed to know *who* was using our library, and we therefore decided to carry out a card audit. The lack of swipe card access gates into the Squire has represented a problem for the library for some time, not least with reference to gathering usage data.

The main university card is also the library card so all students should be carrying one. Staff and faculty have the same blue university card. Other private researchers and readers should have a white reader's ticket issued by the UL. Cambridge University alumni can also use the

library and they are encouraged to get a UL readers' ticket or a CamCard.

We picked a busy day in term and took it in turns to stand at the gates and ask to see people's cards as they came in. Usually, we do not routinely ask people to present their cards as they walk into the library; so, everyone was surprised at being stopped and asked to show their card! We had to reassure readers that we were not planning to prevent people coming in to the library, but were trying to find out who our customers were. Admittedly, it was an added bonus that the exercise would demonstrate to our users that we do check from time to time and they should always carry their card. Only a couple of students didn't have their card with them but we were able to check their identity on the library management system.

Six card audits have been conducted in the library since 2016: Friday 5th February, Friday 15th April, Tuesday 17th May, Tuesday 25th October, Tuesday 7th March 2017 and Friday 7th April 2017. All readers entering the library between 9am – 5pm were asked to display their university card. The following graph charts the statistics gathered over the six audits, presented simultaneously for comparison.

The card audits surveyed 1,447 people in total. The audits were most useful in establishing our largest user group. As demonstrated in figure five, 1,346 readers (93%) were members of the University. 101 readers (7%) were visitors from other institutions.
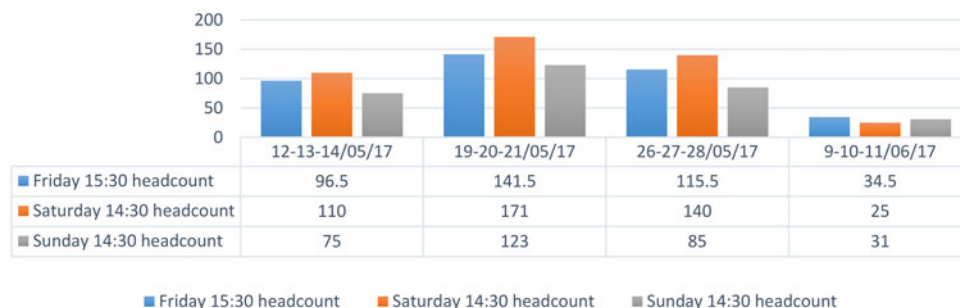

	12-13-14/05/17	19-20-21/05/17	26-27-28/05/17	9-10-11/06/17
■ Friday 15:30 headcount	96.5	141.5	115.5	34.5
■ Saturday 14:30 headcount	110	171	140	25
■ Sunday 14:30 headcount	75	123	85	31

■ Friday 15:30 headcount   ■ Saturday 14:30 headcount   ■ Sunday 14:30 headcount

Figure 4. Sunday footfall in comparison to previous days.

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	05-02-2016	15-04-2016	17-05-2016	25-10-2016	07-03-2017	07-04-2017
Law	204	56	76	289	232	55
Non-law	64	73	104	76	75	42
Non-university	12	10	10	24	21	24
Total	280	139	190	389	328	121

Figure 5. Patron demographic.

Despite occasional complaints from staff and students that library facilities were being used by other students, the audits revealed that of the 1,346 university members, 912 (68%) library users were from the Law Faculty and 434 (32%) from other faculties.

The audits also revealed that undergraduates were overwhelmingly the largest user group, followed by post-graduate students, postdoctoral students and staff. This is to be expected as it reflects the demographics of the faculty overall.

By clarifying which departments users had come from, we discovered that students from 35 different departments had been represented in the library. Whilst some faculties were situated far away and students used the Law Faculty as a convenient study space, other faculties were located nearby, demonstrating a preference of environment or the penchant for students to study with friends.

As we now conduct an audit routinely, once a term, many of our regular users are accustomed to it; although we always see a few people turn away at the gates. We also think there are a couple of situations where students panic, fib and say they are from the Law Faculty as they then walk away giggling conspiratorially. We cannot tell a student's faculty from their card, which means we have to ask people. Each time we plan our card audit we debate whether we should forewarn our customers that we will be doing a card audit or not.

Again, an unexpected plus side is that it increases the interaction with our customers. It often leads to them asking a question or telling us how much they like studying in our library; for this alone it has been a worthwhile exercise. However, the card audit is very labour intensive as we need two people on duty at the desk all day. The enquiry desk is situated beside the gate therefore if one member of staff gets involved with an enquiry they cannot also check cards. Students also tend to arrive in large numbers, on the hour, as lectures finish. This year we have started allowing people to bring coffee (or any drink with a lid) into the library, in response to student feedback. This has created another complication as the students try to get their university card out of their wallet whilst balancing a bag, some books, laptop, a phone, a bike helmet and a cup of coffee. We often have to guide them to the enquiry desk surface to allow them to put their coffee down. Next time we plan to set up an additional table giving us another surface but we do not want our library entrance to look like airport security.

Most students are fine with being stopped, however, supervisions (tutorials) are often held in academic's offices and spare rooms which are alongside the library and if a student is late they do not want to be stopped. Many have headphones on and are (of course) looking down at their phones; we have to be prepared to wave and make a fool of ourselves to get their attention. It's a library, so of course we can't shout (and you shouldn't shout at your customers anyway).

Another inconvenience is that to use the bathroom on the first floor, readers have to leave the library and come back in past the enquiry desk. Students will also pop out to lectures or lunch and come back later. We only want to survey people once a day therefore we have to check with everyone coming in whether we have already checked them. With some readers this becomes a running joke as the day progresses.

USER FEEDBACK SURVEY

The introduction to Walters' article 'Beyond use statistics' points out that librarians "are almost entirely concerned with 'usage'" but "individuals often have different conceptions of use."[4] For example, just because a book is borrowed it does not mean it is necessarily read or that the student or academic finds it relevant and incorporates it in their research. Some qualitative research was needed.

However, the card audit day is also the opportunity to hand out survey forms. In 2017 we handed everyone a short paper survey and asked them to pop it in the box on the way out. In 2018 we just handed out some comment cards for the masters' students in collaboration with another project being run by the Futurelib team at the UL. Having the interaction of the card audit day does gives us the opportunity to ask people to complete a paper survey.

To complement the data gathered above and to add to a growing picture of our user-base and their preferences, we conducted a voluntary user feedback survey on March 24th 2017. The survey received 174 responses,

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with undergraduates representing 58% of the respondents and the Law Faculty representing 80% of the respondents.

The survey enquired after users' primary reason for visiting the library, with study space the most popular option followed by access to printed resources, access to computers or printing facilities and access to online resources. A small percentage visited to see friends and one respondent admitted their primary reason for visiting the library was to nap!

The most popular length of visit was over 3 hours. The majority of respondents selected the environment as the aspect they liked best about the library, followed by the resources and convenient location. Other reasons added by students were space, light and helpful staff.

The first floor was voted the most popular area which is well known as space on this floor is occasionally contested during busy periods such as exam time. Access to the English law collections in this area was one of the key factors.

Overall, the survey produced favourable results and provided an anonymous format for users to record grievances which had not been addressed to staff in person. A free space for comments, questions or concerns was included which 62 respondents took advantage of. Positive complements were received and a number of specific complaints were noted such as building temperature, broken fixtures, complaints about other users and requests for more facilities, longer opening hours or refreshments.

The complaints raised by the survey were addressed and followed up with a feedback board advertising the changes that were made or providing explanations for issues which were not within staff influence.

FEEDBACK WEEK

In the Lent term of 2018 we decided to embrace a card audit day, the small survey and our Squire Roadshow (where we set up a library stand in the café area) and put all the activities into the same week. The Squire's team called it 'feedback week'. We also had a pop-up whiteboard which we moved around the library for students to add comments. Our week finished on card audit day and we put out chocolates and 'love heart' sweets as it was also Valentine's Day! Combining the activities into the one week focused our minds and we hope to replicate that in future years. Most importantly, we put the library's responses to the feedback on the board and stood it by the enquiry desk for a few days afterwards, allowing students to read it on the way in. We were amazed that almost all the students took the time to stop and read it all. Although many of the questions on the board are FAQs that staff know all too well (e.g. why can't there be a water fountain on a higher floor of the library) it was an effective way of communicating answers and reasons to a new cohort.
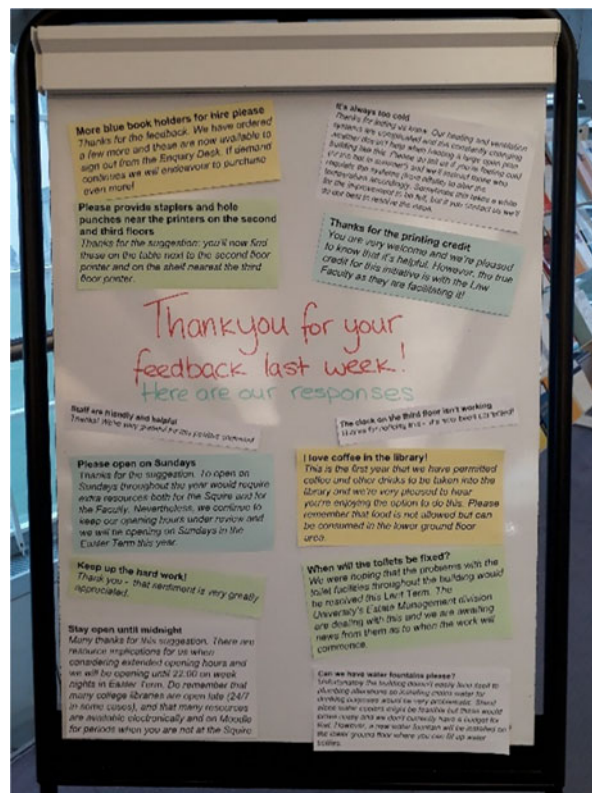

Figure 6. Feedback week response board.

UNDERGRADUATES

So far, when conducting the card audit, our focus has been how many non-law students use the Squire. We already knew that our MCL and LLM students (the two masters programme in law) were heavy users of the library as they are on intense nine-month courses and the statistics bear that out. However, in future we'd like to analyse the usage of the different undergraduate students: first, second and third year. Although collection policies differ between the college libraries, the colleges that have a larger law cohort, stock all the set texts for first and second year undergraduates. It would be interesting to find out whether the Squire is more heavily used by the third years students. Our concern, however, is that by the third year they might think that they don't need the faculty library.

We also need to be aware of the issue of 'survey fatigue'. Although we need to glean feedback from our customers, expecting them to willingly have the time or inclination to fill in a survey, whether it be on paper or on-line, is a bit naïve. A better solution might be to ask students quickfire questions at the library gate (and elsewhere in the faculty), such as the method used by Newcastle University's Customer Service Group.[5]

CONCLUSION

The data evaluated above was gathered through a number of projects intended to better understand our users, their behaviours and their experiences. Although our

efforts to collect data are largely quantitative, they are part of a wider ethnographic ethos at Cambridge University which I mentioned earlier. Both quantitative and qualitative data are needed to build up a picture of user experience.

Consequently, the information collated both confirmed details staff had been aware of and provided some new discoveries. Satisfyingly, the statistics reassured staff that library usage was not declining, that the students were mostly satisfied and provided a means of gathering anonymous ideas on what could be done to improve the service.

Library footfall and usage increase shows that students still need study spaces and they still prefer to be near physical collections and support staff. We like to think that we are listening to our students and improving their study environment wherever possible. The Squire Law Library is fortunate enough to have natural light, open plan space and large desks. In the past few years the library has invested in very good quality, comfortable and adjustable chairs. It has also moved the plug sockets to desk height (rather than relying on the floor boxes) and, with the help of our IT colleagues, the WiFi reception around the building has been improved. We have also brought ten bookrests, a box of disposable earplugs and allowed students to bring in drinks. Funding has been secured to improve the toilets this summer. These are all everyday concerns but they make a real difference to comfort and show the students we are listening and responding to their feedback.

Footnotes

[1] https://futurelib.wordpress.com/

[2] Dominguez, G. (2016) Beyond gate counts: seating studies and observations to assess library space usage. 117 (5/6) *New Library World* 321–328

[3] Hillman, C. et al. (2017) User-focused, User-led: Space Assessment to Transform a Small Academic Library. 12 (4) *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice*, 41–61

[4] Walters, W.H. Beyond Use Statistics: Recall, Precision and Relevance in the Assessment and Management of Academic Libraries. 48(4) *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 340–352

[5] Gavillet, E.L. (2011) "The "just do it" approach to customer service development: A case study" *C&RL News,* 229–236

Biographies

Josephine Bailey first entered the library profession as a Junior Library Assistant at Cambridge University Library in 2013 before progressing to a position as LLM and MCL Collection Supervisor at the Squire Law Library in 2015. Josephine has recently graduated with a Masters in Library and Information Services Management from the University of Sheffield and has moved into the world of Information Management for local government. She volunteers as co-treasurer of the CILIP East Members Network Committee and vice-chair of the Commercial, Legal and Scientific Information Group. Josephine also sits on the Cambridge County Advisory Group on Archives and Local Studies.

Kate Faulkner is a chartered librarian who has worked in public, academic and law libraries. After her MSc at City University she trained at Lincoln's Inn and then worked at the law firm Baker & McKenzie as Serials Librarian. She ran the BIALL Duplicates Exchange Scheme from 2001-2007. She is indexing historical volumes for the Honourable Society of Inner Temple Archives and helps out with the Library's award-winning Current Awareness blog. Kate currently combines freelance indexing work with a part-time role at the Squire Law Library.