

Footnotes

¹ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1369496> accessed 14 May 2021

² <https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/opd> accessed 14 May 2021

³ <https://wayback.archive-it.org/6780/20210202015042/https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/news/2010/2010-nov-18> accessed 14 May 2021

⁴ <https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/about-us/about-faculty/st-cross-building> accessed 14 May 2021

⁵ For further information on the refurbishment please refer to Margaret Watson's article which gives an excellent overview of the project. Margaret Watson, "All change at the Bodleian Law Library [2018] November/December Information Professional 32–35

Biography

Helen Garner was appointed as the Bodleian Law Librarian at the University of Oxford in January 2018. Previously Helen held the post of Information Resources Librarian. Prior to working at the Bodleian Law Library Helen worked as a librarian in the City of London at Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer and White & Case. Helen was a member of the Editorial Board for the 5th edition of the Moys Classification Scheme published in 2012.

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The IALS Library Transformed!

Abstract: In this article David Gee, the Librarian at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (IALS), describes the recent two year 'IALS Transformation Project' that Charles Clore House at 17 Russell Square has undergone and the benefits for the Institute and its library that have resulted from the refurbishment work that has been carried out. He looks at the aims of the project, explains how a continuity of services and activities during the works has been assured and how the transformation of the building meets the needs of the postgraduate law students and legal researchers of today.

Keywords: building projects; library refurbishment; academic law libraries; Institute of Advanced Legal Studies

IALS: AN INTRODUCTION

The Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (IALS) opened in 1947 as the national centre for the advanced study of law. From the start IALS was based within the University of London, but it has always been nationally funded by the UK government to provide a free national legal research library for all postgraduates, researchers and academics based at university law faculties across the UK and overseas. Currently IALS Library offers academics and research students from the UK and overseas free access to over 320,000 primary and secondary legal texts, numerous foreign and international legal research databases, e-journals and eBook packages, legal research

skills training programmes, and a number of focused legal research facilitation tools. Many of the subscription e-resources (particularly the eBook packages), online training programmes, reference desk sessions and the free IALS-created research tools (such as the Eagle-I Law Portal, the Foreign Law Guide and the Current Legal Research Topics database) are now accessible both onsite and remotely so UK researchers do not have to travel to London to benefit from IALS Library's national collections and services. IALS Library continues to be one of the largest legal research libraries in Europe and is particularly rich in the law of the UK, Commonwealth and European countries, the USA and EU, as well as foreign,

international and comparative law. It also manages several legal archive collections including those for the Society of Legal Scholars (SLS), the Socio-Legal Studies Association (SLSA), the International Law Association (ILA), the British and Irish Association of Law Librarians (BIALL) and the International Association of Law Libraries (IALL). Further details about the rich and extensive national legal research collections and services offered by IALS Library to UK researchers are available at: ials.sas.ac.uk.

IALS occupies eight floors of Charles Clore House, which overlooks the north side of Russell Square, Bloomsbury, London and is part of the listed Grade II* Bedford Way building complex designed in the Brutalist style by the renowned British architect Sir Denys Lasdun (1914–2001). The building has not had a major refurbishment since it was opened in April 1976. After much sterling preparatory planning work and persuasive advocacy undertaken by the previous IALS Director and Librarian, Jules Winterton, in early 2018 the University of London approved £11.5 million funding towards a major two-year Transformation Project for the complete re-design and refurbishment of the IALS building and Library to replace the deteriorating infrastructure and plant and assist IALS in meeting the current and future needs of its users. The University successfully undertook planning approval based on the detailed plans drawn up by Burwell Architects, completed the necessary procurement stages and appointed Overbury PLC as the main building contractor. Andrew Beach was appointed by the University to the liaison post of Project Officer. His role proved to be key as he liaised very successfully on a day-to-day basis with the clients (i.e. the University and more specifically IALS) and the architects and the builders to ensure the client's views and concerns were appropriately addressed as the project progressed. A more formal IALS Transformation Steering Group, chaired by Edward Hartill, was also established by the University to oversee the project, monitor its progress and ensure the appropriate spending of the University's significant investment. The IALS Director, Professor Carl Stychin, the IALS Librarian, David Gee, and the IALS Manager, Alex Bussey were active members and key contributors to this important group and spent much time over the two years in helping to ensure that the major project progressed as smoothly as possible for the building users, library readers and staff and ultimately resulted in a transformed IALS building and Library that meets the needs of current and future users of IALS.

AIMS OF THE IALS TRANSFORMATION PROJECT

The following excerpt from the Architects' Design and Access Statement summarises very well the many long-standing problems with the IALS building and Library space. With much of its building infrastructure nearing the end of its life, the University of London became

convinced that a major investment in IALS was required. IALS and its Library also took the opportunity to include significant improvements to the internal space arrangement, layout and library services, rather than simply replacing like for like:

'Charles Clore House at 17 Russell Square was purposely designed to accommodate the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies. The building remains relatively unaltered from its original arrangement. The interior of this well-used building was consciously designed for flexibility and reuse. Currently however, parts of the building and its infrastructure are nearing the end of their serviceable life. This, combined with developments in working, studying and learning patterns, and long-standing issues regarding energy use, occupant comfort and the confusing internal layout, require a significant refurbishment of the building.'

The project aims to:

- *Remedy legacy FM / environmental issues which impact on services and quality of space.*
- *Improve accessibility for all throughout the building.*
- *Re-plan existing layouts to improve utilisation of existing space with the objective of supporting the growth of the student population and creating improved learning space and office space.*
- *Reduce the building running costs and improve upon efficiency and sustainability aspects of the building.*
- *Reflect the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies academic vision, and provide research, learning and working facilities that are of the highest quality and reflect current practices.*

The completion of the proposed programme of works will ensure that the building remains 'fit for purpose' for its intended use as a base for the IALS.'

CONTINUITY OF SERVICES

Throughout the major two-year IALS Transformation Project the building, seminar rooms, lecture theatre and main reading rooms of the Library continued to remain open to users, whilst the builders worked on transforming and refurbishing each floor one at a time. This was possible as the IALS academic and professional staff moved out of the 5th floor into a separate building for the duration of the project and this vacant 5th floor was used to accommodate the IALS library staff area. In turn the builders could then start working on the newly vacant 4th floor of the library. Gradually the builders worked down the building, refurbishing one floor at a time. In the process all the research collections and shelving on the 3rd floor and the 2nd floor had to be moved from their original library floors to their newly refurbished library floors. This provided the perfect opportunity to clean all the books and clean all the

shelving as the project progressed. The detailed planning for this schedule of phased work was challenging as the public entrance to the library also had to move floors temporarily during the project. Ultimately, however, the plans proved successful as all the library collections remained available on-site, and e-resources continued to be available onsite and offsite for researchers. Research skills training sessions also continued to be offered and library staff continued to be available on-site for research assistance and consultation.

Detailed arrangements were agreed with the building contractor at the beginning of the project to reduce the amount of loud building noise after 10.00am each day and to therefore try to minimise the noise and disruption for readers throughout the project. Regular information updates were sent to all current users and stakeholders to keep them as up to date as possible with the progress of project and the IALS website also provided everybody with regular updates on progress.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE IALS BUILDING: MEETING THE NEEDS OF OUR USERS

The 1970's iconic IALS building designed by Sir Denys Lasdun at 17 Russell Square has been truly transformed internally by the successful University of London building project to meet the current and future needs of our users. The major phase of the two-year £11.5 million project was completed on time and on budget in early March 2020. As well as replacing all the tired building infrastructure and deteriorating plant, it has significantly re-designed and refurbished the IALS academic and research areas on the 5th floor and the IALS Library floors below to make much better use of the space.

The work to re-design and refurbish the IALS academic and research areas on the 5th floor has created new and inspiring spaces for the Director, research staff, academic centres, fellows and the supporting professional staff. Welcoming and stimulating spaces have also been created for our cohort of IALS PhD, MPhil and LLM students. Furthermore, new larger automated front doors and a new external lift have been installed at the main entrance to ensure complete accessibility to the building from the pavement.

The University's transformation project has also re-designed the IALS Library space and allowed us to introduce new library services to help us to meet the current and future needs of our library users. There is now a spacious and welcoming library entrance on the 2nd floor with natural light, uninterrupted views looking out over Russell Square and an exhibition space for displaying our rare books and archive collection.

The entrance and exit gate systems have been replaced with up-to-date RFID technology-based library security equipment. New facilities and services for users such as a large group training room with increased capacity, two bookable 'group study' rooms, a reference advice room for one-to-one training, an IT room with appropriate equipment and software for users with special needs, and a free self-issue "laptop for loans" service have all been designed and created. Library research carrels for senior researchers and IALS visiting fellows have been re-designed and increased to a total of 38. Secondary glazing to reduce the impact of outside traffic noise and new and improved Wi-Fi access points have been installed around the building on all library floors. Across the library space there are 50 additional study desk spaces and more casual seating areas which have significantly increased seating capacity, whilst new



Figure 1: The new Enquiries Desk at the new library entrance on the 2nd floor.



Figure 2: Part of one of the refurbished library reading rooms.

modern desks (with individual desk lamps) and adjustable chairs have replaced the old furniture throughout the library. Finally, a new sophisticated cooling and heating system has been installed on the roof of the building which will give us more control over the temperatures in the library reading rooms.

The architects' new colour scheme for the library and its new furniture has been a triumph and drawn inspiration from the original 1970's plans, using a cool and calm colour palette of complementary browns, yellows, greys and creams. In addition, in partnership with the Senate House Library and two art consultants, an exciting project is underway to loan a number of contemporary artworks from the University of London Art Collection to adorn the new white walls of the library. Appropriately, the chosen artworks were all created in the 1970's when the Brutalist building was designed and opened.

REMAINING MINOR PHASE OF THE REFURBISHMENT

For the remaining minor phase of works an additional £300,000 funding has been raised by the University of London's Development Office from private donations, including a substantial donation from the Clore Duffield Foundation whose chair is Dame Vivien Duffield. The generous involvement of Dame Vivien Duffield is very appropriate as her father, Sir Charles Clore, contributed significantly to the financing of the IALS building and it is named after him in his honour. Both Dame Vivien and Sir Charles Clore attended the opening ceremony of the IALS building in April 1976 and there are a number of colour photographs of them with the Queen Mother (the Chancellor of the University of London at the time) in the IALS Archive. The private donations will now be

used to complete the refurbishment of the ground floor entrance area, the public toilets on the lower floors, the IALS Archive Room on floor L2, and the two large lower library floors (i.e. the reading room on floor L2 and the depository on floor L3). It is planned that this remaining refurbishment work will be undertaken in early 2021 whilst the building is less busy because of the Coronavirus lockdown restrictions.

FEEDBACK FROM READERS

Just before the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and closure of the IALS building in mid-March 2020, IALS Library was lucky to be able to elicit initial feedback from readers on the IALS Transformation project as part of our annual reader satisfaction survey of readers: <https://ials.sas.ac.uk/library/library-services/ials-library-reader-satisfaction-survey-2020>. Readers were asked, firstly, to rate and comment on the permanently transformed library space and new library services, and secondly, to comment on how the two year building works were handled in terms of keeping the noise and disruption to a minimum and effective communications. The reader satisfaction rating for the newly transformed library space was 97.4% which is very impressive. Also, almost all of the comments on the new library space were very positive and complimentary. Here are a few examples:

"Very well laid out, and it is a better environment than ever in which to work."

"I come here to be productive and am always happy with the spaces available."

"Wonderfully quiet and the computers are excellent."

"Much more comfortable space, very happy with the improvement."

"Beautiful space."



Figure 3: Some of the new lockable library research carrels

“It is now a modern, extremely well-resourced study centre.”

It was very reassuring to have evidence that our detailed plans for the new library space and the new library services are meeting reader expectations and needs.

The comments on the handling of the building works were more mixed with some readers complaining about the inevitable noise. However, a majority seem to understand the reasons for the noise and disruption and the long-term benefits for readers and many complimented us on our temporary arrangements in keeping the library open throughout the duration of the works. Here are a few examples:

“Great, I believe. I always knew what was going on, either through Facebook or the info board at the entrance.”

“Could have been worse. Builders always friendly and pleasant.”

“There were a few insignificant noises. I sit mostly at the 3rd floor and it didn’t really impact my study experience.”

“Some serious noise issues, but this was inevitable. Otherwise excellent.”

“The result has been worth any inconvenience.”

“Was expecting it to have been much worse.”

Overall IALS is very pleased with these survey results, particularly the impressive 97.4% satisfaction rating and very positive comments about the newly transformed library space and new library services.

THANKS

On behalf of our current and future users and staff, IALS is very grateful to the University and to the private donors for their generous investment. We also applaud the sensitive and innovative redesign plans of Burwell Architects and their successful realisation by the University’s Capital Projects team and Overbury PLC. Finally, we wish to thank our staff, students and other library users for their continued forbearance and good humour during our two-year transformation project. The firm consensus of all who have seen and used the new building and its new services and facilities is that they will serve us very well in meeting the needs of our users in the years to come.

Biography

David Gee has more than twenty-five years’ experience working in academic libraries and legal information management and is currently Librarian at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies in the University of London. He was a member of the BIALL Council and a senior member of the Editorial Board of *Legal Information Management* for many years and has written a number of articles for UK and international professional journals. He was a Visiting Fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law in Hamburg in September 2012. In July 2019 he was re-elected to the Board of the International Association of Law Libraries (IALL) for the 2019–2022 term as IALL Secretary. In 2020 he was elected to the LLMC Digital Advisory Council and was appointed to the University of London Federal Libraries Group.