

University of Sussex

Library Consultative Group

Notes of the 85th meeting held on Wednesday, 4 June 1997

Present: G. Bennett (SMS SJC), K. Berggreen (Bookshop), Ms. L. Cooper (SPRU), R. Discombe (Computing Service), S. Goddard (Library), Ms. S. Hinchliffe (CCE), Dr. L. John (BIOLS), D. Kredler (EURO SJC), L. Martell, (SOCS), Ms. L. Newman (Library), A.N. Peasgood (Librarian (Chair)), Prof. C. Watts (ENGAM), Dr. F. Watts (BIOLS), Dr. G. Wraith (SMS),

Apologies: Ms. C. Culver (Student Union), Prof. B. Graham (EURO), Dr. M. Howard (CCS)

657. The notes of the 84th meeting were confirmed.

658. Matters arising.

652. Pushchairs in the Library. The Group received the Librarian's report ([LCG/85/3](#)) on his discussions with Pro-Vice-Chancellors resulting in the decision that the Library would allow pushchair users to use the entrance primarily intended for wheelchair users; (this change in policy had already been implemented.) He drew attention to the invitation to the Library to specify in the Library Regulations next year areas of the Library where children and pushchairs were excluded. These arrangements appeared to be in the spirit of the discussion at the Spring meeting.

654. Queuing to return books. This item had been deferred from the previous agenda because the student member who raised the subject had to leave before the item was reached. He was not present at this meeting, so there was again no discussion.

651. Periodicals Review. The Librarian reported that because of the problems with the University's financial situation and the delay in providing budget allocations for next year, it had not been possible to issue the draft list of cancellations and new subscription titles as planned. It was hoped to issue them before the end of term.

646. Exam papers on USIS. The bid to the Teaching & Learning Development Fund to put exam papers in electronic form on USIS had been successful and the project would start on 9 June.

655. Defacement of stock. Paper ([LCG/85/4](#)) summarised reports on the results of a survey at the University of Kansas, the most substantial recent review of the problem in an academic library.

659. [The Librarian's Report, February - June, 1997](#) was noted.

Copyright. The Librarian reported a further extension of the present licence which would run to 31 January; another sub-group representing CLA and CVCP would attempt to agree during the autumn the basis of a totally new licence.

Financial outlook. The Librarian had been interviewed by the Financial Review Group. A draft budget was required for Planning Committee so draft allocations to units should be announced within the next few days.

British Library Reading Rooms. The Group discussed the Librarian's briefing comments in respect of a University view of the possible introduction of charges by the British Library. Arguments against were 1) there should be freedom of access to information in the national library, 2) charging for use of the British Library will invite reciprocal charges on UK scholars abroad in national libraries, 3) it would have consequences for School and Subject Group budgets if staff and researchers recharged to their unit of affiliation. Although no figures have

been officially published indicative figures are given as between £50 and £300 p.a. On the other hand, given the enormous reduction in the budget of the British Library and the reduction in its purchasing by 30% in recent years, some would feel that if charges to users are the only way to maintain the British Library's holdings to support research at an advanced level, these charges may be defensible.

660. Request for enhanced photocopy articles service.

At the CCS School Spring term meeting a service for part-time students was suggested which would locate, copy and mail articles not found by a student in the Library on a visit which, typically for a part-time student, might not be repeated for a week. The Librarian asked the Group their opinion as to whether there was a need for such a service and if so, whether it should be for all users rather than for part-time students only; also whether it would be used if the Library recovered its costs for such a service. After discussion, it was felt that some people would use such a service, not all part-time students, but if the cost would be £7-8 each time the service was used, the cost would be prohibitive for most undergraduates and Schools to support. Finally it was suggested that a solution would be for tutors to arrange for photocopies of relevant journal articles to be lodged in the Reserve Collection where they would be more readily available.

661. Request for changes to Short Loan lending policies during the Easter vacation

The Librarian reported that every vacation, and particularly at Easter, complaints were received from students, particularly those who stay on campus during vacations, that Short Loan books have been allowed to be borrowed for the vacation. Short Loan books have always been available for borrowing during the vacations and most students welcome this practice. Statistics obtained this Easter show that a large majority of Short Loan books borrowed in the week prior to the vacation and during the vacation were kept until the first week of the new term. The Group discussed possible remedies, including the transfer of Short Loan books to the Reserve collection during vacations. The Library would keep its policy under review and similar statistics will be collected in future vacations.

662. [User education](#)

Linda Newman introduced her paper seeking the Group's views on the Library's user education programme. Management of user education had become more important since the increase in student numbers reduced the time Library staff have available to spend with individuals and the Library Standing Committee on User Education was responsible for proposing initiatives to create the most effective structures for user education. Proposals for handling user enquiries in the new Library extension had been reviewed by the Consultative Group at the Spring meeting; what were now involved were attempts to reduce the need for enquiries at all.

In discussion it was noted that if user education was incorporated more formally into the curriculum, something else had to be left out and students had been resistant to that. It was claimed that in some parts of the Science area, students could obtain a good degree without ever entering the Library. The nature of teaching and learning across the University was agreed to be very varied, with correspondingly varied requirements in respect of Library use. It was suggested that poor use of the Library was associated with many different issues, from user inertia to stock shortages. It was thought that committing more Library staff effort to user education directly would probably be inappropriate; however, it was felt that students were already teaching each other and mentors could be a good idea.

It was suggested too that if some form of pressure was required to encourage students to learn skills when people who set assessment tasks were themselves not fully aware of what the Library could offer, liaison between Library and faculty setting a course would be one way to do it.

Overall it was considered that most needs in this area generally were being met and that resources should be concentrated on enquiries rather than education. The provision of enquiry services out of hours would then become a key concern.

663. Relocations of stock and services

The Librarian's paper ([LCG/85/9](#)) was a revised version of the paper prepared for Subject Groups earlier in the term but was the same as the version for School Meetings.

The paper indicated periods when particular sequences of books and periodicals would be moved and unavailable other than by way of a fetching service. The fetching service would be operated from Loan Enquiries until the Library becomes busy, when there will be a separate service point. A maximum turnaround time of 30 minutes will be advertised, and telephone, Email and personal requests will be accepted.

664. Any other business

- **Photocopying cards.**

Post-graduate students in SPRU found they collected a number of photocopying cards from various libraries etc. during the course of their studies, and asked whether some rationalisation of campus copy cards was possible. The Librarian explained that there were many independent copying services on campus, reflecting University policy of budgetary devolution; the only time there had been a common currency was when the machines were coin operated. Technology had not so far enabled the matching of expenditure to income within the Library the same card could be used for photocopying, laser printing and printing from fiche and film.

- **Books incorrectly catalogued.**

Asked if there was a convenient mechanism for liaison between Library staff and a member of academic faculty who believed that a book had been wrongly catalogued, the Librarian replied that there should be a designated individual for each subject, known by name and office who would act as an intermediary on any issue.