

# OXFORD UNIVERSITY GAZETTE

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## FORWARD PLANNING FOR THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SERVICES

SUPPLEMENT (2) TO NO. 4617

WEDNESDAY, 20 MARCH 2002

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### **FORWARD PLANNING FOR THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SERVICES: A STATEMENT BY THE CURATORS OF THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES**

1. In view of recent discussion and debate within the University, the Curators of the University Libraries, as the committee of Council charged under the Statutes with 'the safe keeping, preservation, orderly administration, finance, and general policy of the libraries within the Oxford University Library Services', wish to make the following statement about their plans for the Oxford University Library Services<sup>1</sup> (OULS), including the Bodleian Library.

<sup>1</sup>The thirty-two libraries and four other service units that currently make up the managerially integrated Oxford University Library Services are listed in *Vision for 2007* (printed below).

2. The Curators have the responsibility of advising Council on strategy and provision for the libraries (including the major research libraries) in their care. They include members elected by Council (two of them external), by the Divisional Boards, by Congregation, and by the Conference of Colleges, and two Junior Members, and are chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Academic Services and University Collections. The Curators work closely with the Director of University Library Services and Bodley's Librarian and his senior colleagues.

3. Since the introduction of the integrated library service in February 2000, the Curators have been addressing important planning issues for the service. They have had to do that in the context of the serious budgetary and resource constraints with which, as members of Congregation will be aware, the University is currently faced. As well as those fundamental financial issues, the Curators have been addressing the key questions of library accommodation and space, and of the electronic and other resources appropriate for a research library system of international status in the twenty-first century. Their proposals have been the subject of extensive consultation and discussion.

4. Academic libraries currently face challenges of many kinds. In the UK they share the same difficult resource issues as their parent institutions, and they experience all the financial pressures familiar to every public service: buildings that are expensive to maintain, particularly if they are of historic importance and are listed; increased pressure on staff; the struggle to find the necessary funds to equip themselves adequately---especially in applying Information Technology to the modernisation of their processes and services; and rising expectations from an increasingly diverse and demanding body of users. In addition to a steady increase in the amount of

material published in traditional print format, the rapid growth of electronic publications has added a new area of high cost that has not yet been accompanied by any compensating reduction of pressure on budgets for traditional print publications. Above all there are annual increases in the cost of library materials (both print and electronic) that routinely outstrip average rates of inflation. Periodical prices, for instance, increased by 291 per cent in the period 1986--2000, roughly four times the RPI over the same period.

5. Thanks to its legal deposit status, the Bodleian's acquisition of UK publications is to some extent 'inflation proofed'. Furthermore, as the Curators gratefully acknowledge, the methods the University has used to calculate compensation for inflation have reflected the well-above-average annual rates for library materials. However, that protection does not extend to income from other sources on which the Library relies to supplement its acquisitions budget. Nor have contracting university budgets been able to yield sufficient resources to keep pace with the steady annual growth in the volume of non legal deposit publications that our libraries should be acquiring. Consequently the ability to maintain the level of non-UK purchases has been eroded, with a particular impact on the acquisition of monographs in foreign languages. At the same time, the growing funding gap, though attenuated until 1995 by the annual receipt of roughly £400,000 from the Campaign for Oxford, has necessitated freezing posts as they fall vacant. When the posts frozen have been in cataloguing and conservation, the result has been an increase in the backlogs of uncatalogued and untreated materials.

6. Oxford's central research libraries have the added responsibility for the long-term retention of steadily growing national collections<sup>2</sup> that are used and stored in historic buildings where the physical environment cannot easily keep pace with modern standards of preservation and storage. The legacies of history make it difficult both to reduce running costs and to introduce modern facilities and services. Occupancy of important heritage buildings also brings with it responsibility for managing significant tourist traffic.

<sup>2</sup>The collections across OULS are currently growing by approximately 5.2 km each year, of which 3.95 km are Bodleian intake, of which, in turn, about half is legal deposit material. The British Library forecasts a continuing rise of intake at a rate of approximately 2.5 per cent a year.

7. The fundamental constraints facing Oxford's libraries are inadequate resources and infrastructure. Unlike its international comparators---such as the libraries of Harvard or Yale---the University's principal library, the Bodleian, has only a limited endowment with which to underpin and maintain its role as an internationally important resource. Its small endowment brings it only a relatively modest recurrent income which cannot make a significant contribution to protecting the Library's core activities. Despite the Bodleian's success, over the last fifteen years in particular, in attracting benefactions and bequests, all too little of this external income has been available to strengthen the Library's endowments. Instead, in order to avoid damaging cuts, it has been needed to support underfunded core services such as acquisitions, maintaining opening hours and reading room services, cataloguing materials, and developing electronic provision of resources.

8. The conjunction of the challenges common to all academic libraries with the

complexities specific to Oxford's history and legacy has made it apparent for some time that maintaining the international reputation and role of our libraries calls for changes of considerable magnitude if the expectations and varied needs of present and future users both within and outside Oxford are to be adequately met. The creation of an integrated library service gives the University the means of addressing the challenges in something other than a piecemeal and unco-ordinated fashion. Plans will continue to be developed both to address the long-standing problems and also to meet the increasing needs of an expanding University at a time when library functions are changing greatly. The Curators accept that where major, and radical, developments are proposed reluctance or resistance to change will inevitably be encountered, but they will continue to recommend to the University such measures as they, advised by the Director of University Library Services and Bodley's Librarian, consider necessary to ensure that the library services are capable of supporting Oxford's status as a world class research and teaching university.

9. The Curators have set out detailed plans for the University's library services as a whole in the OULS *Vision for 2007*. This document has already been made available electronically at <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/librarian> and is now published as part of the present supplement. It constitutes the rolling strategic plan of the OULS, and as such is regularly reviewed and updated and submitted to the Curators for endorsement or modification. The Curators are convinced that the plans set out here represent an appropriate way forward, given the present challenges and constraints. The *Vision for 2007* seeks to balance the urgent needs to expand and redevelop the OULS estate, to develop modern systems and services, and to maintain and care for the University's outstanding library collections. It incorporates an e-strategy and a long-term accommodation strategy, with the funding for both of these being planned as largely separate from, and supplementary to, the library system's core funding from the University.

10. Together, the electronic and the accommodation strategies define the development in Oxford of a 'hybrid library' consisting of a co-ordinated and coherent array of physical and virtual collections and information resources, providing researchers and scholars across all disciplines with comprehensive desk-top access to information about the library system's holdings, combined with networked access to an expanding range of materials in electronic form, held locally or remotely.

11. In conjunction with this vision, the Curators---with welcome support from the Libraries Development Board and the University Development Office---have formulated a £40m Capital Campaign which, in its final form, received the approval of the Planning and Resource Allocation Committee and Council in Michaelmas Term 2001. While the figure of £40m does not cover all current desiderata, it does represent a judgement of what it is presently feasible to set out to accomplish within Oxford's overall development portfolio. Although specific acquisitions of outstanding importance can be the subject of fund-raising campaigns, experience has shown that raising funds for day-to-day acquisitions is a well-nigh impossible task since external benefactors generally regard this as the responsibility of the University itself. However, experience also shows that additional funds can be raised for the refurbishment and construction of buildings and for the care of collections, and that generous support can also be attracted for much-needed

improvements to services such as extended opening, IT facilities, and digitisation.

12. Refurbishment of the New Bodleian Library must be the first priority. Almost 60 per cent of the Bodleian's holdings, including the principal special collections of rare books and manuscripts, are held in the central stack, whose eleven floors form the core of the New Bodleian. The condition of the New Library, construction of which was completed in 1939, is a particular cause for concern, as more than £10m must be spent on improvements to the building's infrastructure and services simply to meet the standards required by the Historical Manuscripts Commission and other bodies.

13. The most radical solution to the problems of the New Bodleian might have been to demolish it entirely and either to rebuild it, or to reverse the University's 1930s decision---to keep the Bodleian's principal buildings in Broad Street---by constructing a major new building in which all of the central Bodleian's collections, facilities and services could be brought together in an entirely new location. Given that some, at least, of the central Bodleian's high running costs are directly attributable to the age and layout of its buildings (the Old Bodleian, the Radcliffe Camera, the Clarendon Building and the New Bodleian itself), as well as to the inbuilt inefficiencies of such a large number of separate reading rooms and service points, there would be many advantages in a single, new facility. The 'Cambridge solution', of starting from scratch away from the evident limitations of historic buildings, controversial in its time in the 1920s, would no doubt have commended itself to many, not least because it would have been possible to make a very much higher proportion of the Bodleian's stock available on open access, as in Cambridge. The Curators, the University's Building and Estates Subcommittee, and the Planning and Resource Allocation Committee, are, however, agreed that the cost estimates are sufficient to put such radical solutions beyond the bounds of realistic achievement. To rebuild the New Bodleian on its present site would cost at least £120m, while £350m would be barely adequate to build a unified Bodleian Library on any site in central Oxford that might become available. Not even the most optimistic fund-raising expectations could have persuaded the University to undertake either of these projects.

14. Having established that a complete rebuilding of the New Bodleian would be prohibitively expensive, Council agreed in 2001 to provide £10m towards the necessary renovations, with the remainder to come from fundraising within the Capital Campaign. At the same time, it is clear to the Curators that the long-term objectives of the expansion and development of the library system's preservation facilities, the physical consolidation of the OULS Systems and Electronic Resources Service (recently created by merging the Bodleian Systems Section and the Libraries Automation Service), and provision of adequate facilities for staff training could not be achieved within the New Bodleian Library, nor indeed anywhere else in library premises in central Oxford.

15. Furthermore, following the 1997 Report of the Working Party on University Sites, and subsequent discussion of it, the New Bodleian Library was also coming under pressure as the appropriate place to provide new reader facilities not present elsewhere in the library system. Given all this, the Curators concluded that the necessary renovation of the building should be accompanied by a reallocation of its

space, and that a case should be made to the University for new offsite accommodation in which a number of library support departments could be housed. Only in this way would it be possible both to provide more accommodation for library departments and to reallocate the space vacated for improved reader services on the central site.

16. The case for an offsite facility was accepted by the Buildings Committee in 1999 (in connection with an unsuccessful bid by OULS for Ewert House, in Summertown), and in 2000 the University was able to offer the alternative prospect of a site at Osney Mead (half a mile to the west of Oxford station), with two existing buildings (the modern Blackwell's Science office building and the adjacent former Kemp Hall Bindery) which were capable of adaptation and use for library purposes. After some initial hesitations (subsequently overcome upon careful enquiry), the Curators accepted this offer and, since the beginning of 2001, they have overseen a detailed appraisal of the implications of bringing the Osney Mead site into use. The substantial costs of adapting and running the new facility have been built into the Libraries Capital Campaign, and the Osney Mead project, like all the other Campaign project proposals, has been subjected to the rigorous project appraisal process which is now required as standard practice by the University for such large schemes. Within the library sector itself, there have been and will continue to be consultations with library staff, in order to ensure that there is proper provision for personal security, for split-site working where required, and for transport to and from the central site.

17. With the inclusion of a large proportion of the Bodleian Library's Technical Services Department, responsible for the ordering, receipt, processing and cataloguing of the library book stock, among the support staff to be transferred to the new offsite premises, the space vacated in the New Bodleian will enable more and better provision to be made for services to readers. Large collections of research materials held in microform by the Bodleian will become immediately accessible in a single place, with accompanying reader-printing facilities. Much more material will be available on open access, and direct self-service access to the stacks will be increased. IT workstations and photocopying and imaging facilities will be improved. The entrance hall of the New Bodleian will be revamped, with cloakrooms and enhanced security arrangements. There will be improved access and facilities for the disabled. There will be more effective use of space overall, and storage conditions in the stacks which house primary research materials will at last be brought up to modern standards. The two buildings at Osney Mead will also provide the vital decanting space to allow the New Bodleian to remain open to readers throughout the extended period of renovation. The site will also provide the opportunity to establish a stock management unit, where library materials can be sorted and a coherent collections policy for all OULS libraries effectively implemented and developed. Finally, the new accommodation at Osney Mead will permit OULS to consolidate and expand its preservation capacity, and to bring together on a single site a number of other library support activities now spread around the city. These include Systems and Electronic Resources Services (65 St Giles'), the Oxford Digital Library (99 Banbury Road), and the Oxford Resources for the Blind (Ewert House).

18. Notwithstanding its separation from the central site, the Curators are confident

that the use of Osney Mead will provide excellent accommodation for the library staff who will work there, and that it will enable the integrated library system, including the Bodleian, to achieve a number of key long-term objectives. It will give the library service a much needed increase (some 8 per cent) in its available space, and will allow the development of greatly enhanced staff and reader facilities on the central site. The opportunities afforded by the site are in fact much greater than those which Ewert House could have offered.

19. The Curators' five-year plan, supported by the Capital Campaign, addresses many library needs. It presents a programme to meet the storage requirements of the Bodleian and the other research libraries. It will renew and develop the libraries' IT infrastructure and services during the planning period, subject to additional funds from the University and from the Capital Campaign. Buildings in addition to the New Library will be refurbished or renovated and their facilities improved (Clarendon Building; Upper Radcliffe Camera; Law Library). The wider OULS service will be enhanced by the construction of a new Medical Library and Information Centre on the Churchill site; the Economics Library will be extended and consolidated as the principal library serving the Social Sciences generally; and the Taylor Institution Library will be extended and upgraded.

20. Despite all the constraints, and especially against a financial outlook which seems certain to worsen before it improves, the Curators firmly believe that the plans outlined here, and amplified in *Vision for 2007*, represent the best way forward for the Bodleian and for the other libraries entrusted by the University to their oversight and care.

# **VISION FOR 2007: A FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN (2002--7) FOR THE CENTRAL LIBRARIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD**

## **Mission of the Oxford University Library Services (OULS)**

To provide the most effective university library service possible, in response to current and future users' needs; and to maintain and develop access to Oxford's collections as a national and international research resource.

## **Summary of the *Vision for 2007***

By 2007, the OULS will be delivering a more user-focused, technologically sophisticated and efficient library service, revitalised to meet the contemporary information needs of a world-class teaching and research institution and of the wider world of scholarship generally. This will be achieved, as resources permit, by reorganising and reconfiguring the basic infrastructures (managerial, operational, physical and technical) of the centrally-funded libraries in the University, building on the integrated approach initiated in 1997 and formalised in 2000.

## **The background: library integration**

The Oxford University Library Services (OULS) was formally established, with the approval of the University, in February 2000. Governed by the Curators of the University Libraries (a committee of the University Council) and managed by the Director of University Library Services and Bodley's Librarian, the OULS is an integrated organisation consisting of 30 centrally-funded libraries (as well as a number of library service units). [See below.] The governance of the OULS is assisted by a network of widely representative functional and subject committees reporting to the Curators (and, in certain cases, jointly to relevant academic bodies), and its staff are organised in a range of functional and subject teams reporting to the Director and the OULS Strategy Team. [Full details may be found at: <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/ulsd/oxonly/ulssg/> and <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/oxonly/lib/>.]

At the same time, the OULS itself has been placed within a wider divisional grouping of university services---the Academic Services and University Collections (ASUC)---in the context of the recent reorganisation of the University into five academic divisions under the new Planning and Resource Allocation Committee and the University Council. The strategy and resourcing of the University's central libraries are thus being fully integrated within the streamlined planning mechanisms of a reorganised institution.

In order to align OULS strategy even more closely with the emerging plans of the academic divisions, formal and informal consultative mechanisms are being introduced and exploited; and in this context, ongoing discussions are taking place about the role, resourcing and management of non-OULS departmental libraries

(mostly in the Sciences). Attention is also being given, in collaboration with the Committee of College Libraries (whose Chairman is a University Libraries Curator ex officio), to the co-ordination of OULS provision with the services offered by the college libraries sector.

As a result of all these recent developments, the University of Oxford now possesses at its centre, for the first time in its long history, a library service which, given its integrated form, is able to take a system-wide overview of the key infrastructural challenges facing the central libraries in Oxford, and of responding coherently and effectively to them.

## **Libraries and Services in OULS**

Bodleian Japanese Library  
Bodleian Law Library  
Cairns (Medical) Library  
Central Bodleian  
Classics Lending Library  
Eastern Art Library  
Economics Library  
Educational Studies Library  
English Faculty Library  
Health Care Libraries Unit  
History Faculty Library  
Hooke Library  
Indian Institute Library  
Institute for Chinese Studies Library  
Institute of Health Sciences Library  
International Development Centre Library (QEH)  
Modern Languages Faculty Library  
Music Faculty Library  
Nuffield Department of Anaesthetics Library  
Oriental Institute Library  
Philosophy Library  
Plant Sciences Library  
Politics, International Relations and Sociology Library  
Preservation Services  
Radcliffe Science Library  
Refugee Studies Centre Library  
Rhodes House Library  
Sackler Library  
Sainsbury Library (Said Business School)  
Service Assessment and Planning  
Social Policy and Social Work Library  
Staff Development and Training Service  
Systems and Electronic Resources Service  
Taylor Institution Library  
Theology Faculty Library

## **The collections**

The collections of primary research materials within the OULS libraries are as important and as extensive as any held by higher education institutions anywhere in the world. *It is an integral part of the OULS mission not only to develop and exploit these collections for the benefit of scholarship generally, but also to retain and preserve them for posterity.*

## **Strategic planning**

The radically changed organisational context provides the necessary springboard for an entirely new approach to strategic planning in the library sector and for the development of a coherent and forward-looking plan for library and information services in Oxford, based on the enhanced management and exploitation of its extraordinarily rich and diverse library collections. The OULS is now actively developing and clarifying its plans for the transformation of its library services, through the systematic redevelopment of the *managerial, operational, physical, and technical infrastructure* of the central library system over the next five years.

## **The managerial (staff) infrastructure**

Starting from the premise that staff are a key resource, and building on the new integrated approach, the reform of the OULS managerial infrastructure is being addressed, as an enabling strategy to improve the library system's performance, cost-effectiveness, and accountability. Financial transparency is being enhanced, through the introduction of new budgetary, accounting and financial planning mechanisms (the University-wide introduction of the OSIRIS system forming a key element in this approach); a staffing strategy is under development which, within the context of a staff establishment review, will include the exploration of the scope for the removal of anomalies in gradings and conditions of service across the OULS, as well as for the potential for rationalisation (through OMIS and other means), for the enhancement of career development, and for addressing the issues of recruitment, retention and reward of key staff (as an integral part of the University's Human Resources Strategy); staff training and development will continue to be improved, with the emphasis on enhanced facilities and key skills; an integrated approach is being taken to the management of library collections, with the aim of reducing unplanned duplication throughout the system, of building on existing strengths, and with the ultimate goal of having "the right book in the right place at the right time"; and the work of appropriate staff is being reorganised, with a much greater emphasis on the provision of subject-based services, tailored to the particular needs of user constituencies, both within and beyond the University. Preservation activity will be further reorganised, and expanded; IT systems development and support is being rationalised; other administrative support

functions are being streamlined, and common services developed wherever possible; and fund-raising and income-generation activities are being enhanced. *All of these developments will have as their ultimate aim the enhancement of the library staff's ability to deliver a more responsive and effective service, for the direct benefit of library users.*

### **The operational (service) infrastructure**

In service terms, the integrated approach will enable the library system's operational infrastructure to be systematically enhanced over the next few years. The integration of so many libraries has opened up the possibility of reorganising the delivery of many of the key public services which have tended hitherto to develop along separate lines. A more coherent and planned approach will therefore be taken to service issues such as opening hours; admissions; the provision of information and library skills to support learning, teaching and research; inter-library loans and electronic document delivery; book delivery (where the introduction of an automated stack request system is being given high priority); general and subject-based reference services; imaging services (including digital copying on demand); microform reading facilities; printing from library computers; on-line catalogue provision; access to electronic information resources; and service standards. *By 2007, integrated operational developments in all these areas should have significantly improved the service levels experienced by library users generally.*

### **The physical infrastructure**

The delivery of many of these managerial and operational enhancements, however, will depend crucially on a number of urgently needed changes in the library system's physical infrastructure. Accommodation-related issues and, especially, the ad hoc nature of library growth in Oxford, have represented the most significant single infrastructural constraint on library services in the past. They constitute the biggest single obstacle to the realisation of the service enhancement vision which is outlined here. For this reason, *the OULS has given a great deal of attention to the formulation of a long-term accommodation strategy, the implementation of which is the key enabling element underpinning the vision of a new paradigm of library service.* (The strategy is printed below, and forms an integral part of the plans delineated here.) In particular, the desperate need for the continuation, and acceleration, of the libraries' storage repository programme (focused hitherto at Nuneham Courtenay) will be pressed to a satisfactory resolution.

The long-term accommodation strategy sets out in detail the planning principles governing the necessary reconfiguration and expansion of the OULS library estate, as well as a number of practical proposals aimed at overcoming many of the major historic physical constraints on the library system. *These proposals will involve a major programme of redevelopment and of new building spanning at least five to six years, at the end of which the integrated library system should be*

*much better positioned to deliver on the radical service enhancements envisaged.*

[*Note:* The bulk of the funding required to implement this strategy will be provided by the planned Libraries Capital Campaign, which was approved by the University in November 2001. Designed to raise £40m, and with an additional contribution of £10m from the University, the Campaign is due for public launch in 2002 (the quatercentenary year of the opening of the Bodleian Library in 1602). Further details of the approved portfolio for the Libraries Capital Campaign will be found on the OULS Web site.]

## **The technical infrastructure**

While the implementation of the long-term accommodation strategy will form the necessary basis for the major enhancement of the *physical* infrastructure of the library system (which itself is essential to maximise the service benefits arising from the integrated managerial and operational changes already under way), the systematic development of the libraries' technical infrastructure forms the final element in this vision of a radically transformed library service.

While Oxford's central libraries have already achieved a great deal in the application of IT to library processes and services, the OULS has recognised the need to take a strategic planning approach in this key area of library development. To this end, an *e-strategy* has been formulated as a vital component of the vision for the future. The strategy, which is printed below, envisages the innovative exploitation of new and existing technologies to provide easy, seamlessly organised and user-friendly access to the burgeoning range of electronic information which is increasingly being made available both within and beyond the Oxford library domain. With electronic information of every conceivable kind already forming a major component of the OULS collections and services, the e-strategy has become an integral part of the core activities of the OULS, and its implementation will enable large quantities of digital materials to become fully integrated, in both managerial and service terms, with access to the library service's more traditional world-class collections of printed and manuscript materials.

The five- to six-year vision for the OULS is therefore based on the working concept of the 'hybrid library', which is being defined as 'a managed combination of physical and virtual collections and information services', and which is seen as the most appropriate model for a major academic library system in which very large-scale holdings of physical materials will continue to grow and be exploited by the use of IT-based systems in the context of a rapidly increasing use of electronic information.

In specific developmental terms, the e-strategy includes the following components, many of which are already in place, underway, or planned:

---the replacement, within the planning period, of the library service's principal automated system;

---the development of an integrated computing environment for the OULS, and the implementation of an OULS management information strategy

(consistent with other University-wide systems, including OSIRIS);

---the completion and upgrade of the on-line union catalogue of printed holdings (OLIS) and its further development in Web-compliance;

---the expansion of access to electronic datasets and e-journals;

---the pervasive use of technology for access to manuscript and archival holdings information and materials;

---the growth of the Oxford Digital Library (comprising locally-created digital content);

---the introduction of an on-demand digitisation service;

---the development of an electronic document delivery service;

---the development of robust digital archiving facilities (principally through collaboration with the OUCS and the use of the University's Hierarchical File Store);

---the building of a standards-based hybrid library user interface, capable of enabling easy search-and-retrieval access to all the electronic information and resources available within the library system and beyond.

*Taken together, all of these components will transform the depth, range and quality of the library system's service array, and will provide the University, and the wider world of scholarship, with a hybrid library and information infrastructure second to none in the UK, and on a par with those of many of Oxford's international peers.*

The vision is exciting, innovative, and ambitious. But with the necessary energy, commitment and investment, both of staff effort and of resources, it is achievable. Above all, it represents a future which the University itself simply has to reach if it is to meet the rising expectations and information needs of its scholars and students. In that sense, this vision has also to be seen as a key component of the University's own ambition to maintain and enhance its world-class status in teaching and research.

### **The five-year plan, 2002--7**

The table that follows is a summary breakdown of the key infrastructural changes which are required in order to achieve the *Vision for 2007*, and it specifies the particular planning targets envisaged for the five-year period. The overall plan is subdivided into the four broad infrastructure areas identified in the Vision, as outlined above.

## Strategic Plan, 2002- 2007

[Note: Cost indicators are shown in terms of the following code:

0 = cost neutral    1 = increased costs    2 = significant increased costs    -1 = cost saving possibilities    -2 = significant cost saving possibilities

Where costs are likely to be met from non-University sources, these indicators are shown **in bold**]

### **MANAGERIAL**

The staff infrastructure

No	Description	Cost Commentary	2002-03	2003-04
1	Delivering integration benefits <i>Operational review of the post-2000 structures</i>	<i>Staff development review process should assist a review of changes arising from integration, at marginal additional cost</i>	0	0
2	Integration of further libraries <i>Review of possible further libraries to be integrated within OULS (esp. science departmental libraries)</i>	<i>Rationalisation of provision should achieve some savings</i>	0	-1
3	Review and implementation of administrative and management support needs	<i>Some additional costs associated with provision of OULS services on a wider scale</i>	1	0
4	Introduction of a staffing strategy and establishment review <i>Need to address staff recruitment, retention and reward issues, together with conditions of service and staff duties in some areas</i>	<i>Review could marginally affect staff costs</i>	0	1

5	Further enhance staff development and training <i>Expansion of staff development and training capabilities within the OULS</i>	<i>To include improved training facilities (to be provided under the Capital Campaign plans, at Osney Mead)</i>	0	<b>1</b>
6	Provide for running cost implications of new buildings/extensions/refurbishments	<i>New (mostly staff) costs for service enhancements in expanded and remodelled OULS estate (under the Capital Campaign, and including 2004-05 moving costs for St Cross Phase 2 building)</i>	0	<b>2</b>
7	Provide for ongoing staffing implications of systems support and of e-strategy developments	<i>Additional costs incurred as a result of expansion of systems and electronic services (some e-strategy developments to be funded by Capital Campaign)</i>	<b>1(1)</b>	<b>1(1)</b>
8	Provide for staffing expansion for preservation/conservation activities within OULS as a whole	<i>Increased staffing required (under Capital Campaign) for expanded conservation activity, to maximise new workshop capacity at Osney Mead</i>	0	<b>1</b>
9	Review cost centre structures, activity costing, and resource allocation <i>Needed to harmonise with PRAC and RAM requirements</i>	<i>Consultancy costs already identified. May involve some (marginal) training costs</i>	0	0
10	Ensure value for money <i>Enhanced monitoring of expenditure within integrated system</i>	<i>Within existing resources, and a possible outcome of activity costing and bench-marking exercise</i>	0	0
11	Review of income generation	<i>Possible self-funded staff costs to increase income generation</i>	0	-1

**OPERATIONAL**

The service infrastructure

12	Opening hours <i>Review and where possible reconfigure OULS opening hours overall to best meet a range of identified user needs</i>	<i>Should be cost-neutral if not all sites are expected to have longer opening hours</i>	0	0
13	Extension of subject-specific support for teaching, learning and research <i>Through OULS subject and functional teams and the underlying subject approach, to introduce and extend subject consultancy posts and to develop closer links with faculties to enhance library support for teaching, learning and research</i>	<i>Involves reorganisation of existing resources and roles, with some marginal additional staffing resource required</i>	1	1
14	Develop a more co-ordinated and proactive approach to the delivery of user education, and promote the importance of information literacy as a key transferable skill	<i>Will require some strategic reallocation of OULS resources</i>	0	0
15	Develop and implement an OULS communications and PR strategy <i>To enhance the levels of OULS service to library staff and all user constituencies</i>	<i>Responsibility of senior member of staff in OULS Director's Office</i>	1	0

16	Redesign of loan and reference services <i>Collection Management and Reader Services Teams to develop clear policies for the location of lending and research collections, and devise, for all categories of user, state-of-the-art reference and enquiry services, accessible on-site and remotely, together with appropriate service standards</i>	<i>Will require some reorganization of existing roles and resources (and some additional core funding)</i>	0	1
17	Upgrade reprographic services and facilities <i>Extend use of common card for photocopying, with ongoing price/income review. Introduction of a system for charging for printing from electronic resources. Introduction of on-demand digitisation service</i>	<i>Policy needed on OULS assumptions about reprographic income generation, and internal redistribution of income. Some costs within e-strategy/Capital Campaign</i>	1	<b>2</b>
18	Document delivery service <i>Enhance access to the collections of OULS both within Oxford, through physical interlending of materials and electronic means, and globally, through the development of an effective document delivery service which combines physical interlending and electronic delivery in line with relevant service standards</i>	<i>There will be additional costs for hardware and software but also increased income potential. It is not clear at this stage whether full cost-recovery could or should be achieved.(Some start-up costs, from fundraising)</i>	<b>1</b>	0
19	Security <i>OULS review of internal and perimeter security</i>	<i>Consultancy costs together with security equipment costs</i>	1	1

20	Reconfiguration of reading rooms <i>Review of use of reading rooms (as part of refurbishment/extension/upgrade programme and general review of research provision)</i>	<i>Costs will be met from the Capital Campaign, or from minor works</i>	<b>1(1)</b>	<b>2(1)</b>
21	Book delivery improvements <i>Ongoing improvement of book delivery via Automated Stack Request system (ASR), conveyor replacement, and staffing levels</i>	<i>Most costs already funded, or within the Capital Campaign. Extra book-handling staff costs may be required to meet additional demand from ASR</i>	<b>1</b>	<b>1(1)</b>
22	Introduce integrated OULS collection management/retention and disposal practices <i>Further development and implementation of collection management, retention and disposal policies, especially in the context of legal deposit materials, and within the framework being developed by the OULS Collection Management Team</i>	<i>Possibility of some initial costs to enable rationalisation</i>	0	1
23	Streamline admissions procedures in OULS libraries <i>Further review of integrated admissions and registration procedures, linked with OULS card access in libraries to provide enhanced management information</i>	<i>Some equipment costs likely</i>	1	0
24	Enhanced catalogue provision <i>Improvements to OLIS information, further retrospective conversion of manual records for printed materials, and electronic cataloguing of manuscript and archive collections</i>	<i>Additional staff costs to be provided by a combination of special grants, Capital Campaign, and University funding</i>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

## PHYSICAL

The accommodation/space infrastructure  
(details in the long-term accommodation  
strategy)

25	Put in place a continuation (and acceleration) of the repository programme for long-term retention materials <i>Urgently required to deal with ongoing growth in physical holdings</i>	<i>Significant capital investment needed on a continuing and planned basis (University Rolling Programme)</i>	0	2
26	Preservation/conservation capacity <i>Enhancement/refurbishment of buildings and facilities to meet current preservation standards and to expand capacity to meet needs of world-class holdings</i>	<i>Costs mostly within Capital Campaign</i>	0	2
27	New buildings/extensions <i>Provision of new buildings/extensions, in order to meet new needs and to provide for development of services, support operations, and rationalisation</i>	<i>Project costs within Capital Campaign (New Bodleian; Osney Mead; New Medical Library; Taylorian Library; Bodleian Law Library; Clarendon Building; Radcliffe Camera). Further fundraising needed for others (St Cross Phase 2). Some additional premises costs</i>	1	2(1)

## TECHNICAL

The technical infrastructure for the hybrid library (details in the e-strategy)

28	Automated integrated library system <i>Upgrade and eventual replacement of current system</i>	<i>Review GEAC system and upgrade and replace within four years</i>	0	0
29	Develop and implement an OULS management information strategy <i>Essential for OULS to respond adequately to new University structures and to improve and monitor service quality</i>	<i>Initial costs likely to be incurred to ensure consistency with other University-wide systems developments (eg. OSIRIS)</i>	1	0
30	Develop the 'hybrid library' approach through to full implementation <i>Develop the hybrid library, through: the expansion of electronic resources (incl. datasets, e-books, electronic journals and digitised local holdings), and the creation of a hybrid library interface</i>	<i>Strategic reallocation of resources required for increased access to electronic materials. Work part-funded by the Capital Campaign.</i>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
31	Oxford Digital Library <i>Specify and implement the technical, systems and metadata requirements for the Oxford Digital Library</i>	<i>Substantial additional resources will be needed to put this in place. Funding sources (some already in place) will include the Capital Campaign</i>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
32	Automation of cataloguing of manuscripts and archival holdings. <i>Develop and apply the necessary technical standards to facilitate the conversion of catalogue records into electronic form</i>	<i>Funded from Capital Campaign and other grants and income</i>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

# OXFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SERVICES (OULS): LONG-TERM ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY

## **1. Introduction**

During 1999, the Director of University Library Services presented a paper to the Libraries Committee of the University entitled Library buildings and accommodation: an overview of space issues in the Libraries Committee sector. The paper focused attention on the growing library accommodation crisis, which had arisen over many years in virtually all of the Libraries Committee's libraries owing to the lack of a long-term strategy and the absence of a co-ordinated planning approach. The paper drew a number of important conclusions about the accommodation problems facing the libraries sector. In particular, it concluded that there was a widespread need for expansion space for open-shelf collections, a longstanding requirement for a higher proportion of library materials to be made accessible on open shelves in central Oxford, and an urgent necessity to accelerate the provision of off-site storage space for the long-term retention of lower use library stock. These conclusions were endorsed by the Libraries Committee, and the Director was invited to draft a long-term accommodation strategy, based on a set of planning principles which would determine the approach for addressing these urgent problems in a practical and achievable way.

The present paper is an updated and revised version of that draft strategy, which was first presented to, and approved by, the Libraries Committee early in 2000 [LIB (00) 19]. The present strategy document also takes account of subsequent developments in this key area of library policy and planning. For example, it incorporates the various approvals given by university committees to OULS buildings-related proposals during 2000--1, including the plans for the use of the Kemp Hall Bindery and the Blackwell's Science Building (at Osney Mead), and for the various projects in the Libraries Capital Campaign, promoted by the Libraries Development Board and approved by the University's Planning and Resource Allocation Committee in November 2001 (with a £10 million contribution from the University). A proposal for the development of a consolidated Humanities Lending Library on a possible central site was separately submitted to a university working party in December 2000. The funding of Phase II of the St Cross building extension under the SRIF initiative is also an integral part of the OULS accommodation strategy, since the plans include a major extension of the Economics Library. By 2004--5, this important development should provide the Social Studies Libraries with the additional space to rationalise their on-site support for the Social Sciences Division. Finally, attention will be given, during 2002, to developing an appropriate scheme for managing tourist visitors within the Old Bodleian Library complex, to replace the earlier plans for a more ambitious scheme, withdrawn in November 2001.

## **2. Key issues influencing the OULS accommodation strategy**

The creation of the integrated University Library Services (from February 2000), now consisting of thirty-two centrally-funded libraries, has enabled the University, for the very first time, through the Libraries Committee (now the Curators of the

University Libraries) and the Director of University Library Services, to take a holistic overview of the accommodation issues faced by one of the institution's key academic services, and to address those issues in a strategic planning context. The key issues are as follows:

(a) *The Director of University Library Services is required to develop a libraries-wide long-term retention and storage policy.* Requested by the Working Party on University Sites (the Lucas Report) in 1997, the elaboration of such a policy is now being actively addressed within the context of an OULS Collection Management Framework, which will be put out for general consultation in the first part of 2002.

(b) *A long-term storage plan for library materials is a critical requirement for an institution with legal deposit status and responsibilities.* The library system's major storage repository at Nuneham Courtenay will be completely full by 2002, and a plan for an accelerated succession of further storage modules (capable of storing the continuously expanding intake of materials, at an estimated capital cost of £600,000 per module) is now being promoted, and urgently needs to be put in place. (See also Fundamental principles b. and f. below.)

(c) *There is an urgent requirement to release space on the central Bodleian site for the introduction of expanded and enhanced reader services to support academic research.* These developments are strongly supported by the relevant faculties and departments, and represent major desiderata for the upgrading of library facilities to appropriately modern and cost-effective standards of service.

(d) *There is a long-standing recognition of the need for the development and expansion of the various facilities supporting library materials preservation in the integrated libraries sector and beyond.* A range of improvements is being planned in this area (under the Libraries Capital Campaign), in line with the former Libraries Board's Preservation Report (1996), and in keeping with the University's stewardship responsibilities for library collections of international importance.

(e) *It is a key element in the integrated approach of the OULS to merge, both managerially and physically, the various systems support and development units within the libraries sector.* Until 2001, this support was split between the Libraries Automation Service---whose premises in St Giles' need to be vacated to provide expansion space for Classics---and the Bodleian Systems Section, which was inadequately housed in the Radcliffe Science Library and elsewhere. In August 2001, these units were merged with the creation of the OULS Systems and Electronic Resources Service (SERS); but the provision of an appropriate physical location for the new service remains a major desideratum, since without it the real benefits of the integrated approach (including the development of the Oxford Digital Library and the roll-out of the e-strategy) will continue to be seriously hampered. Pending the redevelopment of the Blackwell's Science building at Osney Mead (under the Libraries Capital Campaign), a temporary solution is planned by the use, during 2002, of the former Kemp Hall Bindery.

(f) *The Director of University Library Services is specifically charged with improving the facilities for the training and development of large numbers of*

*library staff, within and beyond the integrated sector.* While many improvements have been made in this area in the last few years, the introduction of adequate training facilities cannot be made until the Blackwell's Science building is fitted out for the purpose. In the meantime the work of the OULS Staff Development and Training Service remains greatly inhibited by the present highly unsatisfactory arrangements.

(g) *Equal opportunities legislation provides the impetus for more appropriate long-term provision to be made for the needs of the Oxford Resources for the Blind.* The ORB is a service managed by the Bodleian Library on behalf of the University as a whole. It is temporarily located at Ewert House, but is due to move, under the Capital Campaign, to Osney Mead.

### **3. Fundamental principles**

The OULS long-term accommodation strategy is also based on a number of fundamental principles:

(a) *The decision, taken in Victorian times and confirmed in 1931, to retain the Bodleian Library in its historic buildings---with all the consequences of space pressures, fragmented development, service inefficiencies and increased operating costs---is effectively irreversible.*

[*Note:* In the course of its consideration, during 2001, of the plans for the Libraries Capital Campaign, the University's Planning and Resource Allocation Committee (PRAC) revisited this key issue. Since the construction of a purpose-built unitary 'University Library' incorporating all of the OULS libraries (including the Bodleian) had been estimated to cost more than £350 million to build, PRAC agreed that such an option was non-viable.]

The effect of this major policy decision---felt mainly, but not uniquely, by the Bodleian---is that, given the growth in library materials, staff numbers and service requirements since the 1930s, the University Library Services libraries are all subject to increasing space pressures which cannot be adequately addressed by solutions based on the availability of adequate alternative accommodation in central Oxford.

(b) *There needs to be a more aggressive off-campus repository approach for the integrated libraries sector as a whole for materials in lesser demand and lower current use.* The Nuneham Courtenay repository presently serves the library storage needs of the Bodleian, the Ashmolean and the Taylorian; but an acceleration in the provision of off-campus storage facilities is now absolutely essential to provide for the increased rate at which legal deposit materials are being published in the UK. It would also enable the OULS to develop a sector-wide policy for the storage of library retention materials, and this would contribute to resolving, much more systematically than hitherto, many of the otherwise intractable accommodation problems of the libraries in the integrated sector.

(c) *In addition to this critical shortage of closed access storage space in the library system generally, there is also an acute need for expansion space for open*

*shelf materials as well as for space to make a higher proportion of current stock more accessible in open shelf locations, as a means of greatly improving both reader convenience and library efficiency. This 'open shelf' issue, while it cannot realistically be solved by a single new building, must be systematically built into the design criteria for all future library buildings in central Oxford. (It is already being built into the plans, within the Libraries Capital Campaign, for the redevelopment of the New Bodleian Library.)*

*(d) The Bodleian Library should be enabled to concentrate uniquely, in its major central buildings (the Old and New Bodleian Libraries), on provision for research support, with enhanced undergraduate provision being made elsewhere in the system. The central Bodleian buildings are currently 'falling between two stools'; and while research provision would also be made elsewhere, an overt emphasis on provision for research would enable the two main Bodleian buildings to achieve much more satisfactory levels of service than at present, when they are trying---against the odds---to be all things to all people.*

*(e) Priority needs to be given to developing services for readers (including the disabled) on the central site(s), and to providing suitable off-site accommodation for certain library support operations. This principle is particularly significant for the Bodleian Library, where the necessary development of library support activities--acquisitions, processing, cataloguing, conservation, imaging facilities, training, and systems support---is competing on a major scale with the need to devote more space to reader services. (Residual support facilities will, however, still need to be accommodated on the central site.)*

*(f) As an institution of legal deposit, Oxford will continue to acquire and retain (and will have to house) hundreds of thousands of printed items every year. All the evidence points to the fact that, even taking into account the growth of digital media, and after maximum recourse has been had to the pursuit of co-operative acquisition and retention policies with the other UK copyright libraries, the intake of physical materials under legal deposit will continue to grow for the foreseeable future. Not only will these continuously expanding collections of physical materials need to be retained, but electronic access to them will also need to be seamlessly integrated with the growing range of digital library resources and services, as a key component of the forward-looking e-strategy, and within the 'hybrid library' vision for the future of library services in Oxford.*

#### **4. Benefits**

The overt acceptance of these six principles will---if they are built into all future strategic decisions about library accommodation needs and if their implications are systematically followed through and implemented over time---lead to the following major benefits for the integrated libraries in their service to users:

*(a) The desirable objective of having 'the right book in the right place' could be more systematically addressed than hitherto. A clearer and more rational articulation of the core purposes of all the OULS library buildings in central Oxford, supported by more carefully targeted acquisitions policies and by more*

robust plans for storing lower use materials off the central site, would lead to the more effective and more appropriately targeted provision of library support for both teaching and research. This approach would be complemented, within the developing e-strategy, by the pervasive provision of electronic access to library resources and services, supported by appropriate off-site systems capabilities.

*(b) A generally more cost-effective and efficient use of library space overall would be achieved.*

*(c) There would be improved access to and availability of core library materials in central Oxford.*

*(d) A targeted approach to more appropriate library opening hours in response to expressed user needs would be easier to implement.*

*(e) Greatly enhanced provision for reader services in key locations would be facilitated.*

*(f) Better provision for disabled access to key facilities could be made.*

*(g) Proper provision for library staff space and training needs in appropriate locations could be made.*

*(h) There would be more scope for the provision of space for exhibitions in the Old Bodleian.*

*(i) The reduction in the number of separate library sites in central Oxford would lead to cost savings and reader-related benefits.*

*(j) A rationalisation of library administrative functions would bring consequent improvements in operating efficiency.*

*(k) Savings would be achieved as a result of reduced movement of large quantities of library stock within and between buildings. Having the stock in more adequate and appropriate locations would avoid the waste of resources caused by frequent book moves and fragmentation of stock due to the squeezing of books into inadequate spaces.*

## **5. Practical steps: towards the implementation of an integrated library accommodation strategy**

By enabling the OULS collections, operations and services to be accommodated and managed more efficiently, these benefits could be *achieved by the following practical steps*, combined with the implementation of the policies and plans for long-term retention and storage already mentioned. All of these steps will be taken within the next four to five years, and they form a basic building block in efforts being made to transform the library system's overall performance and service delivery capabilities.

(a) *The OULS now has agreement in principle for the creation of a major new off-campus facility, providing accommodation for acquisitions, cataloguing, preservation, systems, training and other appropriate library support activities.* The acquisition by the University of two contiguous buildings at Osney Mead (the Kemp Hall Bindery and the Blackwell's Scientific building) now makes a new facility along these lines a realistic prospect, and plans are actively being prepared to bring this development to fruition. This off-site accommodation will enable much material to be processed and stored without it having first to be delivered into central Oxford (the legal deposit materials would be delivered direct to it from London), and it will release sufficient space in the central library buildings to permit the other pressing needs, described above, to be met there.

(b) Consistent with the refocusing of the Old and New Bodleian buildings on research provision, urgent plans are also being made *to upgrade the environmental conditions in the New Bodleian---especially in the Bookstack, where the highest value research materials are housed* in order to meet the standards required by the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, and the University has recently earmarked £10m to help address these concerns at the earliest possible date.

(c) Consistent with the need to rationalise library buildings and services wherever physically possible, consideration is being given to the following library developments which are in line with the need to address undergraduate and research support provision in a more systematic fashion:

(i) *The possibility of rehousing the History Faculty Library in a more appropriate location in central Oxford.* Such a move, if agreed as feasible, could release much-needed space within the Old Indian Institute building and also enable improved undergraduate facilities to be provided.

(ii) *The possibility of creating a new Humanities Library on a central site.* This proposal, present in the Lucas Report (1997), and now strongly supported by the Humanities Division, would be entirely consistent with the strategy outlined in this paper. The more Humanities Faculty libraries which could be included within such a facility, the greater the synergy, service enhancement and cost-effectiveness which could be achieved. Ongoing discussions with the Humanities Division are seeking to build a consensual view about the appropriate subject components (and size) of such a library facility, within or close to a new Humanities Centre. The possibilities include provision for Theology, Modern Languages, Philosophy, and, possibly, English and History.

(iii) *The possibility of relocating the Official Papers collections from the hideously inadequate basement of the Radcliffe Camera to a more appropriate part of the library system.*

(d) As outlined in the introduction, *it is an integral part of the objectives of the OULS to support the priority aim of the Social Sciences Division to complete the phased expansion of the St Cross Building*, which includes plans for the extension of the Economics Library. This development is itself an important element in the further integration and consolidation of OULS support for teaching and research in the Social Sciences.

*(e) Plans are in hand for the further development of the Clarendon Building as the administrative headquarters of the OULS. The Clarendon Building, appropriately refurbished, has a strategically significant part to play in delivering some of the benefits envisaged in the integration proposals endorsed by the University during 2000.*

*(f) During 2002 the Bodleian Library will be consulting on revised proposals for the management of tourists on the central Bodleian site. The proposals will aim to reduce inconvenience to readers and to enhance the experience for visitors.*

*(g) The University has formally approved, and the University Development Office will actively support, a Libraries Capital Campaign designed to raise £40m over four to five years to underpin many of the capital developments described in this paper. Other library capital projects (all of which are consistent with the strategic planning principles rehearsed here) will also depend critically on the success of the Campaign (which it is hoped to launch formally in March 2002). These **additional** proposals include: enhanced library IT infrastructure, to enable the implementation of a comprehensive e-strategy; a new medical library and information facility on the South Headington site; an extension to the Taylor Institution Library; and physical upgrades to the Bodleian Law Library and the Upper Radcliffe Camera.*

It is worth bearing in mind, in connection with all of these schemes, that the *libraries sector has an excellent track record in raising funds from external sources*. Finally, given the importance of the issues raised in this paper in the context of the University's sites strategy and the libraries' significant role in support of the academic excellence of the institution, the strategy and plans presented here can be seen as crucial to the development of the University as a whole and to the maintenance of its status, reputation, and performance.

# AN INTEGRATED E-STRATEGY FOR THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SERVICES (OULS): THE HYBRID LIBRARY APPROACH TO INFORMATION ACCESS, HANDLING, CREATION, DISSEMINATION, AND STORAGE

## **1. The background: the environmental and local factors**

The following are the key factors which underpin and shape the overarching vision, the strategic objectives and the operational development plans for the libraries now constituting the newly-integrated OULS:

---The University of Oxford is, and aspires to remain, a world-class university, whose support facilities for teaching, learning and research are crucial to the institution's ability to maintain and develop its excellence.

---Developments in information technology over the past decade, and in particular the advent of the Internet and its associated technologies, are rapidly becoming embedded in all the activities of the University, transforming the majority of its processes, and opening up the possibilities for the greatly enhanced performance of its key tasks.

---With information, in all its variety of forms, at the core of the University's business, it is crucial to the institution's continuing success that it should harness the transforming power of technology to maintain its competitive advantage at the leading edge of world scholarship.

---The University, with its vast scholarly library collections, and in particular those of the Bodleian Library (which has been a library of deposit for almost 400 years), has been a resource for the support of national and international scholarship for centuries in the pre-digital world (to its own great and continuing benefit), and has a historic mission to maintain and develop that support in an electronically-networked world .

---The libraries forming the OULS---many of which have exploited information technology for more than a decade as a means of enhancing their routine support for the developing information needs of the University in all its parts---are now established within a managerial structure which is capable of taking them on to a new level of support for the institution's teaching, learning and research activities.

---The OULS requires the phased and systematic implementation of a strategic development plan, rooted in the use of leading-edge information technology, in order to be able more effectively to exploit Oxford's immense physical holdings of primary research and teaching materials and to support the scholars and students of the University as their own work is transformed by developments in technology.

## 2. The overarching vision: towards 'the hybrid library'

In the early twenty-first century, major research libraries throughout the world are sharing in the elaboration of the concept of *the hybrid library*---a construct which is especially appropriate as an overarching vision for a large holdings library system like Oxford's, as it seeks to refashion its services in the modern networked world. The Director of University Library Services has written about this concept in the following terms: 'Libraries are services which provide organised access to the intellectual record, wherever it resides, whether in physical places or in scattered digital information spaces. The "hybrid" library of the future will be a managed combination of physical and virtual collections and information resources.'

In practical terms, such a vision means that, for the Oxford University Library Services, the application of information technology must pervade every aspect of *what* the library system does, and *how* it does it. This does not mean that electronic access to Oxford's, or to the world's, information resources will (or must) wholly replace a user's physical access to library holdings. (The printed book is very far from dead, as the increased numbers of physical items being published year by year continues to indicate; and, in any case, the cost of digitising more than just a fraction of the holdings of a research library system like Oxford's could not be met, even if it were thought desirable.) *The 'hybrid library' approach does however, envisage, as a key strategic objective, the provision of comprehensive desk-top access for the scholar to information about the library system's holdings, together with incrementally increasing networked access to an expanding range of materials in electronic form (both digitised and 'born digital', and locally or remotely held or owned).*

## 3. Progress to date

OULS has made considerable progress with e-strategy developments, and already has in place the following key elements of a hybrid library, at various stages of development:

--A libraries-wide automated 'housekeeping' system, for the efficient support, management, and delivery of basic library processing tasks (accessions and cataloguing of printed materials (books, serials and pamphlets), user databases, and lending). The central GEAC system replaced an earlier DOBIS/LIBIS system in 1995, and the vast majority of Oxford's libraries (including many outside the OULS) have implemented it to support these tasks. (The system will, however, need to be replaced within four to five years.)

---A University-wide online union catalogue of printed holdings. The Oxford Libraries Information System (OLIS) is already well-established on the GEAC platform, with a large number of the University's libraries cataloguing online into it, and with an ambitious programme of retrospective catalogue conversions to machine-readable form well under way. (The completion of the retrospective conversion of all manual records in the OULS libraries, and the many other needed enhancements to the OLIS

system, still represent major tasks for which considerable resources will be required.)

---*Campus-wide provision of access to remotely-held (commercial and non-commercial) library and information datasets and other electronic information resources (including electronic journals).* A University-wide Electronic Resources Committee is in place, and has responsibility for managing the purchase and licensing of external electronic information resources, for campus-wide availability on a more centralised and cost-effective basis.

---*Pervasive library connectivity to the University network, to JANET, and to the Internet.* All of the OULS libraries are well-connected to the campus network, and are making quite sophisticated use of the institutional intranet and of the Internet itself, with resulting service benefits being delivered to all parts of the University, as well as to 'remote' library users more generally.

---*Project-based electronic library and information service development initiatives.* While the OULS itself is not funded to undertake research and development activities, a number of its libraries have been successful in obtaining external funding (from HEFCE/JISC library and information initiatives such as e-Lib and the Non-formula funding initiative, and from private foundations and benefactors) for the innovative testing and application of IT in a library service context. (These include work on electronic journals, interfaces, digitisation of original materials, electronic document delivery systems, and retrospective conversion programmes.)

#### **4. Necessary steps: integration, consolidation, and the missing elements**

Since 1997 three steps in particular have been taken to move the libraries on to the next level in the development of the hybrid library approach and the implementation of a comprehensive e-strategy for the OULS.

(a) *The integration of the governance and management of the University's centrally-funded libraries.* Achieved in February 2000, this was an essential prerequisite for the strategic and more cost-effective use of the available resources (human, operational, physical, and technical) within the University's principal libraries. In this context, a new managerial and operational structure for library IT systems support and development has recently been put into place, as a basis for a properly planned and managed approach to the further development of digital library services in Oxford.

(b) *The consolidation of the existing elements of the hybrid library approach.* Subject to available finances (including external funding), every effort has been made to ensure that across-the-board investments have been made in all of the building blocks already in place. In particular, the various modules of the GEAC system have been more widely implemented, the OLIS system has been greatly expanded, the Datasets Committee has been given a much-enhanced budget and the number of datasets and electronic journals has been significantly expanded, and

connectivity to, and use of, the Internet has been more widely developed. The effect of all this work has been to ensure that these existing elements of library activity are firmly established as integral parts of the core services of the OULS.

(c) *The identification of the missing elements in the e-strategy and the planning of their development to complete the implementation of the hybrid library vision.* Four key elements in particular have been identified as the additional building blocks required to move the library system towards the full implementation of the e-strategy most appropriate for a world-class research library. Various developmental efforts have been, and continue to be, made to progress these important issues, as follows:

*---The conversion to machine-readable form of the library system's manual catalogues and descriptions of manuscript and archival materials.* A good start has been made (principally within the Bodleian Library) on the use of the international standard EAD format for this work. The aim, ultimately, must be to develop such machine-readable cataloguing of manuscript finding-aids as the default process for current records also, in order to enable users to access information about all such materials electronically (as is now routinely the case for printed materials).

*---The routine creation of local digital content as a core library service.* The digitisation of key locally-held materials has been undertaken within Oxford's libraries for many years (as elsewhere in the University). But until recently such activities were unco-ordinated, and they were opportunistic rather than strategic. The Mellon-funded scoping study of 1998--9 pointed the way towards a strategic development plan for the creation of appropriate digital content drawn from Oxford's outstanding collections of library materials. The establishment, in 2000, of an Oxford Digital Library (ODL), with the support of a major grant from the Mellon Foundation, represented the first major step towards the embedding of digital content creation within the library system's core services. In particular, the ODL will achieve three key strategic objectives within the overall development of digital library services in Oxford: the migration of the Bodleian Photographic Studio service to a self-funding on-demand digitisation service; a major new line of library support for the teaching and research activities of the University; and a significant production stream of digitised material, based on Oxford holdings, for subsequent reuse in a variety of developmental contexts of local and general benefit (such as the OULS contribution to the innovative Cultural Materials Service of the Research Libraries Group).

*---The establishment of an OULS-based electronic document delivery service.* Such a service is a key desideratum for a major research library system. Oxford's current inter-library lending system, based largely on low-tech and inefficient manual procedures, is seriously inadequate by today's standards, is ineffectively and unevenly distributed across the OULS libraries, and urgently requires to be brought into the machine age. Planning efforts, based around the possible use of low-cost software being actively developed by the Research Libraries Group, are currently underway, with desk-top delivery as the ultimate goal.

*---The establishment of robust digital archiving mechanisms for the long-term preservation of the library system's digital assets.* As a medium-term development objective, and as a matter of both good housekeeping and of digital library service resilience, OULS is considering the most appropriate means of permanently archiving the library system's growing range of digital assets. Together with the OUCS, it is involved, with Oxford as a lead site, in the JISC-funded digital preservation project CEDARS, and, as a recipient of electronic material under the DCMS-sponsored voluntary legal deposit scheme for non-printed materials, is developing with the other UK copyright libraries arrangements for a secure electronic network for persistent access to all such information resources. As an interim measure, the library system's digital assets are being stored in the University's Hierarchical File Server. In the longer term, once the true costs of permanent archiving and access to such materials are better understood, OULS will expect to be directly involved in the elaboration of a University-wide strategy in this important emerging arena.

The implementation of this e-strategy as a core part of the library system's ongoing development will enable the vast resources and collections of the OULS to be made accessible to students and researchers wherever they are, in a seamless and user-oriented fashion.