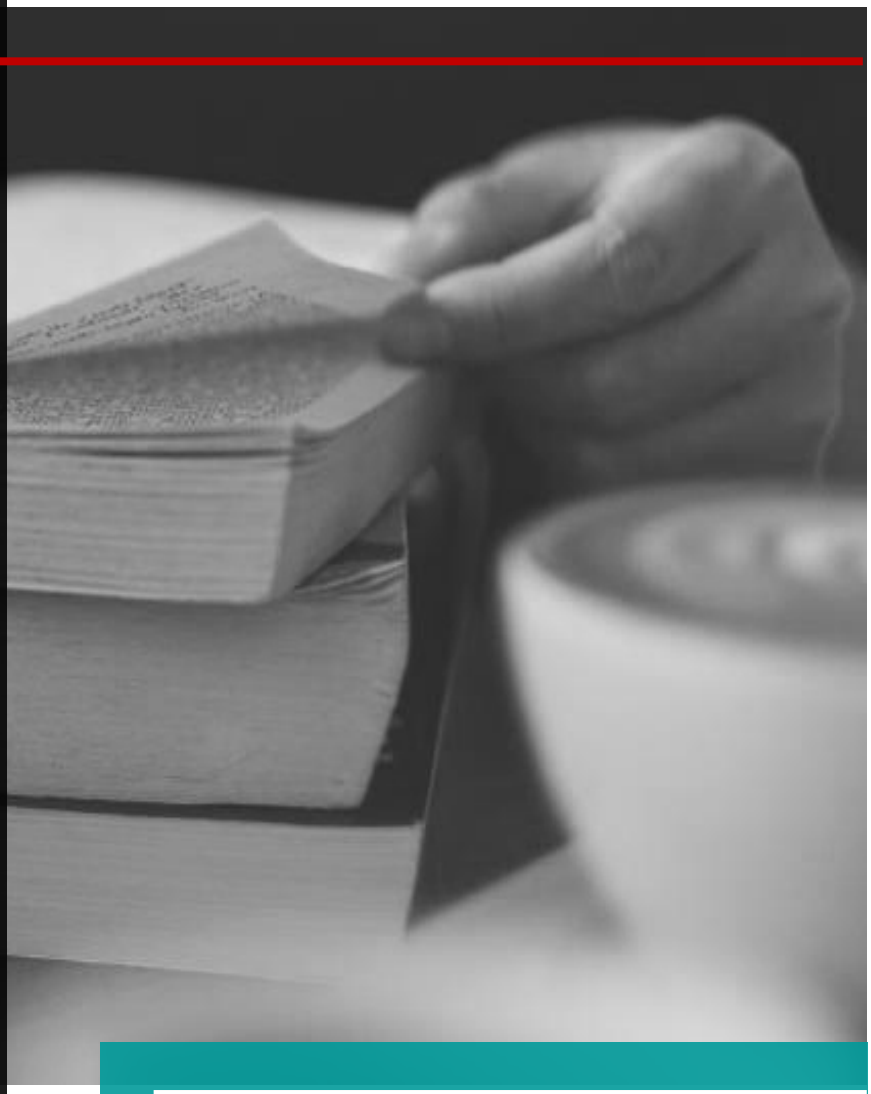
CoLRiC

Council for Learning Resources in Colleges

IMPACT

July 2020



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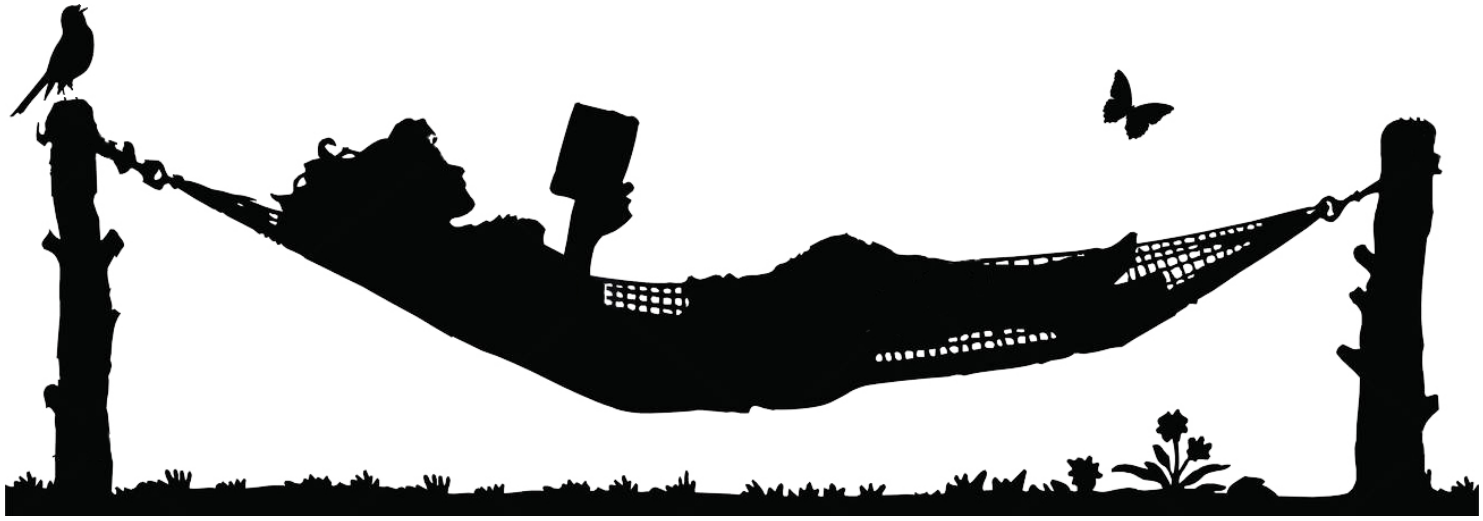
The voice of Further Education and Sixth Form College Libraries and Learning Resource Services



EDITORIAL – HELEN SHERWOOD

Another academic year over. A lockdown slowly easing. Unable to get through the day without saying Zoom at least once. A lot has happened in the last few months. Hopefully we will all get some time to relax before September.

In the early planning stages this was the 'Conference issue'. In many ways it still is. Mirna Peach (co-chair of CoLRiC) was due to present on the 5th June but instead she will share a vision for CoLRiC with us in Impact. We are still able to bring you the fascinating keynote from Chris Powis at the University of Northampton. He looks at the processes they went through to gain a new (agile) campus and how this has impacted on the way students learn and staff work.

All our main features started out as Conference presentations. I would like to thank all those involved for sharing their knowledge and experience with us in this issue.

We shouldn't be short of things to talk about as we move into the 'new normal'. Please continue to share your experiences with the rest of the CoLRiC community.

hopefully we will all get some time to relax

A WORD FROM OUR CHAIRS

Welcome to the final issue of CoLRiC Impact for the 2019/2020 academic year. It's a bumper publication, featuring a diverse range of topics, including open source solutions, future proofing skills and a case study showcasing a radical rethink of library services in the HE sector that is relevant to the FE and Sixth Form College community.

When we wrote our last message from the Chairs, we were in the very early days of lockdown. It was with a heavy heart that, like conference organisers across the globe, we decided to cancel our 2020 event. Social distancing was a relatively new concept. We wrote about the challenges of working from home, balancing home life and work, supporting home schooling and ensuring self-care. Would our tech enable us to work seamlessly from home? How could we be focused on work with so many challenges and distractions?

As the initial challenges were addressed, we all started to explore new ways of communicating with our colleagues and our students. The Zoom boom began. There were exciting opportunities to try new ways to connect, share and learn. And along with this came the challenges of the 'new normal'; rethinking our services, redefining current behaviours and practices, learning as we progressed. We're keen to publish your stories of lockdown; how your College has responded to the seismic shift in library and learning resources delivery in the midst of a pandemic. Please don't hesitate to email Gary and Val, our admin team, if you'd like to share a case study or report.

The support of peers and colleagues across the education sector has been a key factor in enabling us to contemplate unlocking libraries in a post-shutdown world. We've been thrilled to see so many of you sharing your ideas, questions and experiences on our JiscMail discussion forum. Our sponsors stepped in too, offering new content and providing virtual events and webinars. The concept of #community is more important than ever. Our regular email updates will continue, offering an overview of developments in the media, and guidelines and support tips to help you get through this crisis.

In this issue we articulate CoLRiC's strategy for the next three years. Little did the committee know when the strategy was drafted that the world was about to be turned upside down. Yet the three key tenets of our strategy remain as powerful as ever and resonate more strongly set against the Covid-19 landscape.

- Opportunity
- Influence
- Community

CoLRiC is committed to raising the profile of the FE/Sixth Form College sector and advocating for those delivering vital library and learning resource services. We want our sector to offer opportunity to all students, teachers and professional services support staff. We want to celebrate the power of community, connectivity and co-operation. We want to celebrate the power of mutual support.

The next few months will be uncertain as we enter unchartered territory. Please refer to our post shutdown guidance document Unlocking Libraries for information and advice. CoLRiC will monitor how we transition to the next academic year. Let's continue to learn from one another. Which initiatives have worked? Which have not?

We look forward to facing these challenges with you.

Mirna Peach and Corinne Walker
CoLRiC Co-Chairs

COLRIC NEWS

CoLRiC community

So much has happened since we last brought you a round-up of CoLRiC news (CoLRiC Impact, April 2020). Life under lockdown has transformed the ways in which we work, the services we offer and the support we provide. Libraries have found new ways of collaborating and have designed practical solutions for lockdown problems. Publishers and suppliers also moved swiftly. CoLRiC's sponsors have developed new content packages, created virtual events and hosted online training programmes to help support their library partners. We want to say thank you to everyone in the CoLRiC community for what you have achieved over recent weeks and for continuing to support your users, your communities, your colleagues – and each other.

CoLRiC awards

Thanks to those of you who submitted nominations for CoLRiC's two prestigious awards: The Best Practice Award (BPA) and The Jeff Cooper Inspirational Information Professional of the Year Award. Colleagues across the sector have used the lockdown to reflect on their services and achievements, and these awards provide a great opportunity to celebrate innovation, resourcefulness, creativity and enterprise. The nominations have gone out to our judging panel, so watch this space for an announcement.

CoLRiC survey

Thanks also for the response to the CoLRiC survey. Your feedback, views and ideas are crucial to the development of Library and Learning Resource Services. The new survey is designed to ensure that the information and data we gather is relevant and useful for operational and strategic planning. The data is currently being analysed and we will announce the findings of the report later in the year.

CILIP BAME Network statement

The executive committee applauds and wholeheartedly supports the recent powerful statement by **CILIP's BAME Network**. 'George Floyd's death is…one of those watershed moments that publicly confronts the global racism which has been faced by black people and people of colour for generations and demands that we acknowledge racism's very existence; that we genuinely commit to dismantling it…Library, information and knowledge professionals have a key role to play in dismantling racism. The CILIP BAME Network calls on professionals to pro-actively deliver collections, services, space and teaching with the objective of creating an anti-racist society. We ask everyone to personally reflect and take action.'

We invite all of you to share any responses or local initiatives to support this rally cry. **A recent example from Lucas Maxwell @lucasjmaxwell** received major support across social media. **Diversity in Children's Literature** is another great resource. CoLRiC co-chair Corinne Walker also recommends **Breaking New Ground**: Celebrating British Writers & Illustrators of Colour.

Unlocking Libraries

CoLRiC's post-lockdown guidance document **Unlocking Libraries** has received significant publicity and support. FE News included it in a recent **FE News Update**.

Thanks to everybody who contributed to the conversation about reopening libraries on the CoLRiC JiscMail forum. Due to considerable interest and queries from other colleagues, we have made it freely available on our website, on social media and posted it on other library and education focused JiscMail discussion groups. It has been acknowledged by Jisc, CILIP and NHS library services as a key contribution to post-shutdown guidance.

As we stated in the introduction to the guidelines, every College is unique, with its own local issues and challenges, so this will be a dynamic document, updated and recirculated on a regular basis. The first iteration is by no means exhaustive and will evolve as members share their experiences and stories of what has worked and what has not.

CoLRiC's Media Watch

Over lockdown we scanned newsfeeds from around the world to find articles and links that might be interesting, valuable or simply entertaining. These included free to access content about Covid-19 from Harvard Business Review, a radio programme about learning, free to access training course material and – unforgettably – the **soundtrack of New York Public Library**. We hope you have enjoyed these updates and found them useful. We will continue to share things we think will interest our members in our regular email updates, via Twitter or on the JiscMail forum.

Jisc's library update

Jisc recently held an '**E-books Extra Webinar**' which is available as a recording. Some of the resources cited during the event are included here in the list below. It was great to see that CoLRiC's Unlocking Libraries guidelines was referenced during the event.

- **Jisc: Learning Resource Support**
- **Jisc: Coronavirus support**
- **Jisc: LRC and Library support during Covid 19**
- **Inspiring learning**
- **CILIP corona virus support**
- **IFLA corona virus support**
- **Public Library news**
- **Facebook Library crisis**
- **Australian Libraries**

Don't forget to join the CoLRiC private JiscMail forum

Since the lockdown CoLRiC's members' only forum has been buzzing with discussion on how we can prepare to re-open our libraries safely. There is so much to consider, and the discussions have been wide ranging, including:

- Managing the concerns of our teams and colleagues
- Quarantining returned items
- Managing social distancing
- Developing online skills workshops

And much more.

This is exactly the type of discussion our **CoLRiC forum** is designed for: a safe and private space to ask questions, ask for support, share ideas and formulate strategies. Registration with JiscMail is free. To get started all you need is an active email address and the name of a mailing list you wish to join.

Val Skelton and Gary Horrocks
CoLRiC Administrators

CoLRiC COMMUNITY - PTFS EUROPE SUPPORTS LEEDS CITY COLLEGE WITH THEIR NEW LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM – Sam Goldsmith, HE and Research Librarian

Open source software: user experience of transitioning to Koha.

Launched in 2000 the Koha library management system has become widely used in the UK over the last ten years. The significant difference between Koha and other systems is that it is truly "open source." It is maintained by a world-wide community of developers and available for anyone to download and install for free. Over 2019/20 PTFS Europe's Development Manager has been working as Release Manager in the community, overseeing each of the two main annual releases. PTFS Europe, like similar Koha support companies around the world, can help its clients with the local implementation of the software and will manage hosting and support going forward.

Why did we need to migrate to a new system?

- Our primary motivation was financial. Koha managed by PTFS Europe was half the cost of our existing LMS, including hosting.

- Our previous LMS, with its on-site server and a reliance on internal IT support, was not an ideal combination. Accumulated IT knowledge had been lost over the years and our server was old and unreliable. An example of this was that our IT support staff couldn't work out a "safe" way to enable off campus access to our OPAC. To avoid excessive costs and the need to manage local servers we opted for a remotely hosted service.

- We wanted a system that complied with the communication protocol Z 39.50 for bibliographic record transfer. We were having to create all new stock records from scratch, which was neither cost effective or a good use of staff time.

- We needed a browser-based system that worked well with Chromebooks (we had become less counter based, moving round our LRCs to interact with students).

- We wanted to set up self-issue but without the associated high cost (funding was withdrawn for our planned RFID solution).

- The system had to work with our existing discovery system - EBSCO (our LMS required our internal IT support to do a regular upload from our server and this was not always achieved).

- We were also looking for a system to perform automated renewals.

Barriers and other tricky things

A primary obstacle was the state of our data! Catalogue and borrower data were inconsistent, having built up over twenty years across merged institutions. Updates to data were ad-hoc and reliant on a deep knowledge of reports. This job always seemed to get forgotten amongst other more pressing matters because it was not anyone's responsibility. We created a systems role to help negate issues with lack of IT internal support/knowledge. PTFS provided training and support to help us through the process of adjusting and preparing our data for integration.

Another problem was staff resistance. Our team had become used to the old LMS's foibles and felt confident in using it. Initial trials of Koha often resulted in negative feedback - not because it couldn't do the things we needed it to do - but because it did them differently. Staff struggled with the fact that the system speed would now be affected by access to the external host. Many complaints aimed at Koha turned out to be because our internal firewall was treating the link as a threat. When this was resolved we had much less downtime and a speedier response time.

Internal IT support and our Management Information team had to arrange access to student and staff details to automatically add to the system. Unfortunately this was tricky to achieve and early versions kept overwriting with incorrect data. This was particularly an issue with email addresses.

In conclusion

Most of our issues and trouble spots during the migration process were caused by internal factors. The PTFS Europe team had experienced similar issues with other integrations and were very knowledgeable and helpful. The internet connection will affect response time and although rare, when the network is down, this means the system cannot be used. Staff have warmed to it over time and are now just as confident with it. I suspect this initial suspicion of the LMS would be the case in any migration project.

The Koha system matches our requirements for less spend, more flexibility in ways of working and options to customise.

The reduction in administrative tasks and the addition of a systems post has meant that acquisition to shelf is much swifter. And finally, the support and know-how offered by the community of users is very helpful. PTFS Europe support is very good, with reaction time to issues being much swifter than that provided by our previous LMS.

I would thoroughly recommend looking at Koha + PTFS Europe for your next LMS system.

A word from PTFS Europe:

"PTFS Europe supports a growing number of academic libraries in the FE sector with the Koha Library Management system. A typical implementation project is run over three months; however, the project timetable is built to meet the needs of each institution. As well as the implementation and support staff at PTFS Europe, there is a team of developers who are continually working on bug-fixing and product enhancements in Koha. So, choosing the Koha LMS really does mean that your library will see new features being added and improvements being made with each upgrade. **Contact PTFS Europe** or 01483 378728 for more information."

Sam Goldsmith
Leeds City College
Samantha.Goldsmith@ucleeds.ac.uk

CoLRiC IS DELIGHTED TO HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THESE SPONSORS

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OPPORTUNITY, COMMUNITY, INFLUENCE: A STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE – Mirna Peach, Co-chair CoLRiC

CoLRiC has evolved and moulded itself to reflect the changing climate and needs of librarians working in this sector. We have celebrated real successes and have awarded those who have gone above and beyond within their roles whilst ensuring that quality service standards are not only met but recognised through our Peer Assessment Programme. This is a rigorous but fair service assessment programme which highlights the integral positive impact of libraries within education. Our waiting list for assessments demonstrates the dedication of library teams throughout the UK to provide excellent serviceswithin their own institutions.

Last year, even though we had already implemented some changes, we began to think about all of our services in terms of whether they are still relevant to current practice. We tweaked our surveys and extended our Awards scheme. We launched our members-only newsletter CoLRiC Impact. This content, written by our members for our members, creates ongoing discussions and facilitates the exchange of key information significantly at the point of need. Our website is also being updated so that it is more dynamic, relevant and responsive. Our advocacy led to a wider dialogue on e-resource pricing which in turn resulted in negotiations between publishers and brokers. We continue to provide a voice in this area. We will also be launching a new, more transparent subscription model for the next academic year which reflects Jisc's new bandings.

Throughout 2019 we gathered feedback on what our members valued about CoLRiC. We also had open and frank conversations with the CoLRiC Executive Committee, bringing together their thoughts about the organisation, both positive and negative. Interestingly, when all the information was gathered, there was clear consensus between member feedback and executive committee ideas.

CoLRiC has been the voice of FE/Sixth form college libraries for over 25 years

Building on our successes

Our membership told us it valued the up to date information we provide and the opportunity to exchange ideas and information with other members, whether it be via member email messages, the articles in Impact, face-to-face events, social media platforms or the Jisc mail discussion forum.

We are seen as the voice of FE and viewed positively for the advocacy we provide and the work we do with key stakeholders to ensure our members receive the best possible pricing deal. We are knowledgeable about the sector and about the financial constraints experienced by those working in FE. The ever-changing climate has impacted negatively on the workforce, reducing some services to a small number of colleagues who are stretching their services across college operations.

We bring together our members, developing a sense of community through networking and creating a sense of belonging. Our members generally feel that they are represented by us. Our Peer Assessment programme (PAS) gained excellent reviews. The importance of having a system which benchmarks and raises standards whilst at the same time serving as a means of recognising excellent services within the sector received the highest level of positive response. The annual awards are also well regarded, and the development of one which celebrates individuals as well as services and teams has been well received. These areas are clearly ones we do very well in, and demand for the service continues to grow.

This view of CoLRiC, a respected, professional platform offering advice and guidance and bringing to the fore the importance of libraries and library teams within the education sector is one we are very proud of. CoLRiC is committed to raising the profile of the FE/Sixth Form College sector and advocating for those delivering vital library and learning resource services.

The future

Throughout our consultation period, three clear themes emerged. These are explained in more detail below and form the tenets of our three-year strategic plan.

1. Opportunity
2. Community
3. Influence

Opportunity

We need to do more work to encourage inclusivity. Whilst we performed really well in engaging with Heads of Service, there was a clear need to include library teams, offering them the space to communicate and to learn from each other.

It can be awkward speaking your mind when your boss is there, so creating a separate Jisc mail for teams seems to be an obvious step forward. For those new to the sector, it can be an invaluable lifeline for them and will, we hope, support their progress. There is still the opportunity to be a part of all Jisc mail lists, the difference now is choice. For those same colleagues we will look at providing opportunity through mentoring. The Executive Committee has agreed to provide online support to those needing it, and through agreed times, will give those in the infancy of their career, support and guidance. And once we are able to, we will also be offering a residency opportunity for someone who would like to progress their career through committee work.

Community

A key change to how we work will be the way we support our community going forward. We have thought a lot about this, and although our conferences are well attended and greatly valued, we could be doing more throughout the year to ensure our members connect with and support each other locally. A key hindrance in the past has been the inability of some staff to leave their libraries for various reasons. We are all by now aware of and have mostly likely taken part in plenty of online meetings of some sort. Well before Covid-19, our plan included bringing local groups together, facilitating the online meetings to enable you to discuss key issues, provide mutual guidance and to support each locally, at a time that suits you. This is still our plan, but now it is an essential step needed to build local relationships from which we hope would feed into the wider CoLRiC community, through webinars, articles and discussion on the email forums. In the current climate we are also looking at putting together a digital conference, but we will continue to watch this space. Hopefully next year we can hold one physically.

Influence

CoLRiC will ensure that it gathers the latest information and research to feed into and inform these discussions. Our Executive Committee members also sit on various boards, representing CoLRiC in key areas affecting the sector. We will continue to advocate on our members behalf, feeding back to them, gathering their opinion and at times asking for their participation. We will continue to publish key articles, for instance our paper 'Unlocking Libraries' has been shared by our sponsors, used in training, referenced and appeared in key publications. The document contained information harnessed from our membership, and never has it been so important to pull together. Our membership has been a significant factor in developing our strategy and moving the organisation ahead. Our strategy will enable CoLRiC to remain the voice of FE, providing opportunity, developing communities and influencing the sector through its advocacy and inclusivity.

CoLRiC is committed to raising the profile of the FE/Sixth Form College sector and advocating for those delivering vital library and learning resource services. As always, we value your thoughts, ideas and feedback.

DOING IT ALL AT ONCE! CHANGING CAMPUSES (AND EVERYTHING ELSE) AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHAMPTON - Chris Powis, Head of Library & Learning Services

Changing everything

University of Northampton

The University of Northampton moved from its two existing sites to a brand-new purpose-built campus in August 2018. The decision was driven by our civic mission and a desire to be closer to the town centre, the rising costs of maintaining an aging estate and to enhance the university's reputation by building a beautiful and exciting campus around the student experience. This alone would have been a huge change for staff, but, as this article will show, the campus is also radically different in its design and operation. The 'ownership model' of traditional campuses has been replaced by a few integrated and shared academic buildings. Library & Learning Services are based in one of them, the Learning Hub, but this is not a library in the traditional campus sense. The move also enabled a change to our teaching model to Active Blended Learning, everyone agile working, paperless, and Bring your Own Device for students with no fixed PCs unless in a subject controlled lab. None of these things were unique – they all already existed across the private and public sectors including education. They will be familiar to many readers. What was different about Northampton was in applying them across the board over a very short period.

This article will provide a personal reflection on how these seismic physical, operational and psychological changes were managed and provide an honest view on the effect on staff and students nearly two years after the move.

A new campus

The University of Northampton has around 11,000 students on campus with thousands more based in partners around the world and our recruitment strategy is based on expanding those partnerships rather than recruiting many more campus-based student numbers. Large numbers of our students are first generation into university, nearly half are BAME and around 28% are commuting students. International recruitment is good, boosted by our TEF Gold award for Learning and Teaching Excellence.

Photo by courtesy of Richard Byles

The new campus is situated on the south of the town centre, just across the river Nene. Although it was once a former power station it is now a beautifully landscaped environment framed by the river, Delapre Abbey and open countryside on three sides with residential housing in Far Cotton to the West. The campus contains a student village, sports facilities and the Student Union offices in a superbly restored Engine Shed. The remaining campus facilities are concentrated into three academic buildings. Senate contains just under half of the general teaching rooms, space for researchers and the Office of the Vice Chancellor. The Creative Hub contains studios and lab space and everything else is concentrated in the huge Learning Hub. This includes the remaining general teaching spaces, specialist rooms for Health and Computing, all of the academic staff workspaces and most of professional services, open learning spaces, the main restaurant and a café and the library resources. These are integrated throughout the building which is not owned by any one group – there is no Library, no Business School, no Student Centre. The Learning Hub is all of these things and more.

New ways of learning

The move meant huge changes for all staff and students. Not only did the physical landscape change, but significant changes to the ways we worked and studied were made and the campus was designed to enable and embed these changes. We had begun to move to an **Active-Blended Learning (ABL) approach** regardless of the move, but the new campus was

explicitly built around this method of delivery in that it did not contain any large lecture theatres; there were/are just two teaching rooms that hold 80 with the rest accommodating between 20 – 40 students. ABL replaces the traditional lecture with active learning which may or may not be online, and smaller group work to contextualise the previous active learning. It does not mean that there are no lectures, indeed anyone can 'lecture' to an audience of one and sometimes it might be the appropriate way of delivering content. However, the campus is designed for ABL rather than fitting it into an existing traditional space.

New ways of working

All but a few staff moved to an agile working model. This had been piloted by the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and some others before the move, but most staff were based in individual or team offices of varying size on the old campuses. All academic staff, from the Dean onwards, and most professional service staff were deemed agile and provided with a laptop. Some staff needed a fixed computer to do their work and they moved to designated desks, but all other staff used either one of the three, open academic workrooms or two professional service spaces. Staff find a free desk and connect to the network and monitors as needed. The work rooms are open plan but divided through furniture layout and design and contain breakout, meeting and interview rooms alongside a staff kitchen.

Photo by courtesy of Richard Byles

There had been attempts to move to a paperless working environment for many years but this was always broken by the continued presence of filing cabinets and other storage in the many offices across the estate. The new campus was built without storage cupboards and there is no provision of filing cabinets other than in a few areas where there is a legal requirement to keep paper copies. We can print papers if we wish to work from them but we cannot store them on site.

Space, place - and parking

The lack of ownership over buildings has been a profound change. Maintenance and day to day management of the Learning Hub resides with the Estates and Facilities team and responsibility for the services within it stay with the appropriate area so, for example, the library service is still run by Library and Learning Services (LLS). However, major decisions about the development of space is now made collectively and includes academic, professional service and student voices as a matter of course. That there is no longer a Library building frees us from the tyranny of space management and allows us to concentrate on services within and without that space.

The footprint of the new campus buildings was around 60% of the previous campuses and this was true of the floor loaded spaces for library stock too. We had moved to an e-first policy some years before the move but now needed to weed around 43% of the print stock for it to fit. There was no appetite for an off-site store so, in conjunction with academic staff, we reduced the print stock over three years. We used a number of subject sensitive criteria and replaced significant numbers of print with the e-version. That this was done without significant protest from any quarter is a testament to the collaborative and sensitive approach of the Academic Librarians.

We wanted space to be as flexible as possible. This, along with the escalating IT maintenance costs, led to the decision to not have any open fixed PCs. We already knew that well over 90% of students already had a laptop or tablet when they arrived but all new undergraduate students were given a laptop as part of the offer (or equivalent in kind to spend on campus if they already had one) and we therefore felt confident in moving to a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) model. However, we also replaced all 348 PCs and laptops within the old campus libraries with new laptops for loan, although this did not come close to replacing the hundreds of open PCs in computer centres and Faculty buildings. Those students needing high-end computers for their courses retained access in labs. This flew in the face of accepted sector wisdom but we had just a handful of negative comments in the 2019 NSS. It has simply not been an issue.

The last major change was far more contentious. This involved parking. The old campuses had offered very generous numbers of student parking spaces and free parking for staff. As part of an overtly green agenda as we moved into the town centre the University began charging for staff parking and withdrew all student parking apart from disabled spaces. Although this has been amended to allow some spaces for commuting students, it still remains far less provision than the old campuses. To mitigate the effects of this decision the University worked with the Council on improved cycle and pedestrian routes and instituted a Park and Ride service on our UNO buses. However, if anyone doubted the power of parking to unite a campus then it was illustrated in the first few months of the new campus.

Consultation and debate

Planning for the move was bounded by clear red lines from very early on in the process. It was clear that the concentration of academic services and staff into just three buildings, agile and paperless working and the teaching and learning model (ABL) were set. Other issues were defined by space constraints (the capacity for book stock), location (parking) and, of course, budget. This was difficult for some staff to accept but actually made it much easier for most staff to begin conceptualising the new campus and their place within it. Once the red lines are understood there was still a huge amount of space for consultative and collaborative debate and decision making.

This debate took place in workstreams covering all aspects of the plan and the move. The workstreams reported to an overall Steering Group that reported on progress to the Governors. The intention was that representatives of all areas on these workstreams would trickle down information to, and bring back comment from, their constituencies. This worked brilliantly in some areas, the library included, but not so well in other areas, especially where the issues were known to be particularly contentious and may have perhaps been avoided. The natural churn of staff over the five-year planning period also meant that continuity of voice was difficult to maintain throughout. The result of this was that some staff were critical of communication and felt left out of decisions that would directly impact them while others felt involved and consulted throughout.

Student involvement was formally through the Student Union which played a key part across the workstreams. This was backed by smaller scale consultations of student groups and open forums conducted in person and, very successfully, via social media. The SU was excellent but involving the wider student body was made difficult because for much of the process, and certainly when the fundamental decisions were being made, we were talking to students who wouldn't be going to Waterside. This meant engagement was difficult to maintain and it was only when we got much closer to the move that students began to seriously become involved. Then it became partly about selling the decisions that had already been made rather than any deeper consultation.

Staff and student consultation was inevitably dominated by the voices of Cheerleaders and Deniers. The Cheerleaders were those who either genuinely were, or were perceived to be, enthusiastic for everything around the new campus design. Deniers were those who thought, almost up until the move, that they could argue for fundamental change, and in some cases for us not to move at all. These voices were the loudest in any forum and the majority were sometimes silenced or marginalised. It took considerable skills by the workstream leaders to negotiate through the 'noise' to understand wider staff concerns.

Possibly the biggest problem for staff and students understanding of what the campus would be like was that we were building a completely new campus well away from the existing ones. This was great in that it did not disrupt existing students at all. However, it did mean that few people could access any part of what was a huge building site until very close to the move. There was little opportunity for staff to tour buildings or to see much more than drone footage and plans and meant that it was difficult for us to visualise what our new working environment would be like.

This was mitigated somewhat by the move to ABL happening across most courses before the move so that academics and students were increasingly familiar with the methodology if not the new rooms. There was also innovative use of space for teaching with, for example, team-based learning taking place in the open learning spaces of the library and smaller scale functional integrations within Professional Services. Staff also modelled agile working, particularly effectively within the Office of the Vice-Chancellor.

Four principles of the agile campus

The new campus was built on four underlying principles. Each of these needs to work for it to function fully and each of them challenge existing sector shibboleths.

Principle 1 – we are enabled – not driven by - technology

The first principle is that the campus should be completely enabled, but not driven by, IT. There are no open PCs, no PCs in general teaching rooms in which academics and students connect to display screens via BARCO software and a teaching and learning philosophy and methodology that requires robust access to online resources which make up over 80% of the library collections. The IT, and in particular the WiFi, have to work.

The WiFi was unfortunately not very robust initially and this left a legacy of mistrust in IT. The problems were resolved but some staff and students now continue to view WiFi with mistrust. The learning, teaching and resource delivery models rely on excellent WiFi across the estate and this has obviously impacted on perceptions of all of those areas.

Our approach challenged many of the underpinning assumptions about student IT provision. We were told that Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) wouldn't work for students because the complexity around supporting different types of equipment would be too much and that it would seriously disadvantage those who were unable to afford a good laptop or tablet. Some students do have older equipment but 75% of new UK undergraduate students take up our offer of a new laptop on arrival and we are clear on specifications for those who choose to take a

benefit in kind instead. We also provide laptops for loan to supplement this and there is both an IT point on the Student Information Desk and library staff are trained to answer the many basic IT queries that they encounter. Common queries are also added to our FAQ pages (Ask Us).

The overwhelming opinion across the sector was that students wanted more PCs across campuses with many universities and colleges trying to find funding and space for extra machines. However, we went from hundreds of fixed open access PCs across the old campuses to none overnight, although we do have course specific labs with high-end computers and specialist software. We did this with some trepidation, but there has been very little negative feedback about this since the move. It simply has not been an issue.

There was some concern that the digital skills of students (or staff for that matter) were not sufficient for a move to ABL. This cannot be solved overnight, and we have put a huge amount of effort into training both academic staff and those support staff in the library and elsewhere who support students at point of need. However, there is still a digital deficit that needs addressing and we will continue to develop our support.

The move to an e-first collection development policy coupled with the dramatic replacement of print by online titles challenged the idea that academics and students preferred physical books. There are certainly people who prefer print and there are areas where print is a more suitable medium. We do still sometimes struggle to source or fund online texts. For these reasons we still have a substantial, if reduced, print collection. However, preference does not override access considerations and there has been very little negative feedback about availability of books. In fact, the opposite is true with the NSS showing a clear preference for online and usage indicates that access is not problematic with 97,000 print loans against 2.6 million chapter downloads in 2018/19.

Principle 2 – our spaces are adaptable

The second principle was that campus spaces were built to be adaptable. This means that they can be used for different purposes; to teach, study, socialise, hold meetings without doing more than rearranging furniture. They should also be able to be changed if they are no longer appropriate, for example retail space that was not working has been changed into new engineering labs or extra space for the ASSIST disability support team. This principle was behind the decision not to provide open access PCs which automatically fix space.

This challenged the notion that a campus needed prestigious buildings to attract staff, influential visitors and investors and prospective students and their parents. What could we show those

thinking of studying business if we didn't have a Business School; how could we show the gravitas of our offering without an impressive library? This challenge came mainly from staff and not from students. What the Waterside campus does have is impressive buildings that have the functions of all of the 'missing' buildings and that show ambition and an investment in students and staff. The Learning Hub is the Library, it is the Business School, it is the Student Centre. What is clear from student feedback is that a campus needs something that looks and works like a library, for example, but it doesn't need to be called a library.

There was also an idea that students and staff would lose a sense of belonging, both with their subject and with their wider Faculty. Again, this has mainly been raised by staff and the academic workspaces have been, over time, customised and zoned to provide a greater measure of collegiality. Those students who identify closely with space tend to be in the Arts and Sciences where their labs and studios become almost extensions of their homes. Although space constraints mean that some of these spaces are shared most of them have bedded in to become their spaces.

The open learning spaces were new in 2018. Many students had got a favourite space, even a favourite chair, at the old campuses and this caused some disorientation at first. However, the spaces have been designed to allow for those using them to find a space that suits them. We deliberately built in eccentric spaces rather than a homogeneous look and feel. Furniture and ethos combine to allow students to create their space without fear of censure. This has worked.

Photo by courtesy of Richard Byles

The open nature of the Learning Hub meant that it could not operate in the same way as a library given the multiple exits and entrances. Although we had security gates on most of them we did not have the staff or the will to staff them in the way we would a traditional library exit. We had to confront the fear that stock would simply disappear with this arrangement. It has been true that not all of the books leaving the building have been properly loaned via the self-service machines. We can tell what they are if they have passed through the gates but not who has them. However, most of these books are not stolen and they are returned, often before the due date if they had been properly loaned. Over 80% of our stock is online anyway and valuable or special collections are held in a mediated access room for safety. A more relaxed attitude to stock security was necessarily part of the integration of library services within the overall campus model and so far, has been manageable.

Principle 3 – integration, integration, integration

The third principle was that the campus should integrate people, resources and spaces across buildings rather than create specialised or single purpose spaces. There are, of course, specialised teaching rooms but otherwise there are very few spaces than are only used for one purpose or which only contain single teams or services. This is perhaps best illustrated by the distribution of the physical library resources throughout the Learning Hub rather than concentrated on one or two floors. It was intended that staff would work across the open workspaces, but human nature has meant that in practice teams have tended to congregate into particular areas. This, in turn has aided a sense of team or subject belonging.

The idea of integrated buildings was challenged on several fronts. There were concerns that no-one would be able to control behaviours if no-one had responsibility for spaces and if students were not sure how they were meant to behave in unspecified spaces. However, one of the perhaps unexpected effects of the move has been a significant improvement in behaviour in the Learning Hub. The old campus libraries had experienced problems with rowdiness but this has all but disappeared. I believe this is down to a number of factors; a nicer environment and clearer lines of sight through the building certainly but also the presence of academic and professional services staff throughout the building, using the same spaces and modelling appropriate behaviours. It was rare to previously see an academic working in the library but now they are researching, writing and meeting in the same spaces as the students.

The open workspaces were subject to significant criticism before we moved. In particular this centred around the need for individual offices to meet students or staff and to protect confidential working. In practice this has not been problematic. Agile working has given staff the opportunity to remove themselves from open areas to do confidential work, either on campus in bookable rooms or at home. Meetings are possible in rooms or open spaces if not discussing

confidential issues (and most don't) and many students have expressed a preference for meeting academics in open areas to level the power relationship between them that was previously inevitably reinforced by going to their office.

Collaboration between groups and individuals has certainly improved through proximity. Library staff regularly work alongside colleagues from IT and Student Services as well as academics in a way that forms bonds above work relationships and increases the likelihood of productive collaboration. Agile working has meant that a few academic staff have probably voted with their feet and are not on campus as much as they were before. This doesn't mean that they are not contactable and it doesn't mean that students are disadvantaged as these staff are still contactable. Others are actually sending more time on campus. There is, on balance, a similar likelihood that staff will meet one another formally and a greater one that people will be encountered in shared areas.

Agile working does mean that it is difficult to know exactly where a member of staff is and students have expressed some concerns over not being able to find staff when they need them. However, it is a fallacy that academics were always available in their offices on the old campuses. They had 'office' hours and they still do. Outlook calendars can be shared, contact details and expectations are shared in the VLE. Staff are very visible as they move through the shared spaces. The rules are the same even if the game is played on a different pitch.

Librarians have jealously guarded their teaching rooms and Northampton was no different in having rooms within the library but outside of the general timetable. We now have equal rights to all teaching rooms rather than a 'library' room and have found that attendance and engagement is better if our work isn't seen explicitly as the 'library' session. The teaching rooms are integrated within the book stock anyway, so there is a natural synergy between space and resources for all teaching.

Principle 4 – our spaces are democratic

Perhaps the hardest principle for staff to (initially understand) was that the spaces should be democratic. In practice this means that no-one owns the spaces but that they are owned by all users of the space and that all those users should have a say in their development. This is managed through various forums and has so far worked well. However, it has posed conceptual problems for some who still think of areas as 'theirs'.

There was concern that space couldn't be properly managed if it wasn't owned by anyone. This misunderstood the idea of democratic ownership. The buildings are managed by Building Teams who undertake maintenance and support learning and teaching activities by, for example,

changing furniture in teaching spaces. Decisions on how space should be developed are taken after consultation with those groups affected, including students. This was originally done via a Steering Group but is now effectively coordinated by the Estates team through existing university committees like the Operational Directors Group. It isn't a perfect system but it has worked to widen the influence of users of space in a way that was certainly not happening previously. Decisions are made based on the underlying principles of the campus rather than special interest groups. It also crucially recognises specialist knowledge and responsibilities over traditional power centres which were often rooted in a physical building.

A criticism of democratic ownership of space was that students and staff would only ask for more of what they had already – more PCs, more group study rooms etc. This would stifle innovation and simply replicate existing campus design. There is an element of truth in this. Early attempts to engage students in the design of the new campus met with this response. However, if seeded with different options, all users of the spaces were equally likely to be interested in thinking differently about spaces.

The impact of changing everything

We have now been at Waterside for nearly two years. The time has obviously been disrupted by the Coronavirus lockdown but we do still have enough evidence from research projects and student and staff surveys to make tentative claims about impact.

The impact on student recruitment has been interesting. Where we can see a definite impact is in conversion figures – if we can get students onto campus for open days then they are more likely to convert interest into acceptance. The national student surveys (NSS, PTES and PRES) have run one cycle since the move. Postgraduates are broadly unchanged but the NSS showed a drop in satisfaction. This appears to have been influenced by the move itself rather than the new campus which is mainly praised in the qualitative comments by the final years who took the survey in 2019. Moving students in their final year is bound to cause disruption at just the time that they are most anxious however and this drop chimes with the results for other universities that have undergone similar changes. It was also clearly impacted by the WiFi issues noted above.

Otherwise, student feedback generally has been good. There were inevitably snagging issues alongside the WiFi that irritated students, but these have been solved (issues with lifts). Some fundamental issues could only be managed (parking). The overall feeling from students is of acceptance bordering on indifference. The campus is great, but it is what we expect. This might be disappointing to some, but it is testament to the design in that students expect excellence and that is what they have.

Coronavirus hit as we were approaching 20 months on site. The campus closed but the working practices enabled by the move left us well equipped to continue to deliver learning teaching and support remotely. Most staff were already equipped with laptops and those that were not were given student laptops from the loan cabinets. Our e-first collection development policy meant that the reliance on access to print resources was not as great as it might have been a few years earlier. Active Blended Learning meant that teaching staff, including the Academic Librarians and Learning Development Tutors were digitally literate and experienced in delivering online teaching and support. Agile working meant that working at home did not cause the disruption that it might have. The integrated nature of the buildings and services meant that it was easier to establish single points of truth and to coordinate services. Waterside has enabled us to cope better operationally and psychologically than if we hadn't moved.

I have attempted to describe the new campus, but I would urge you to come and see it for yourself (when it is safe of course) to test whether the underlying principles have worked. I'd be happy to organise visits or individuals and groups so please do contact me at **chris.powis@northampton.ac.uk** if you are interested.

Photos by courtesy of Richard Byles

FUTURE PROOFING SKILLS FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF -

Katharine Levy and Clare Pelling, The College of West Anglia

These two case studies from the College of West Anglia describe the work of the LRCs in building learner skills - and the skills LRC staff need to deliver this effectively. Katharine and Clare were scheduled to speak at our annual conference and have kindly agreed to share their stories here, including updating us on how they have adapted during lockdown.

21st century skills: the role of LRCs in building resilient, work-ready learners - Katharine Levey

The role of LRCs has transformed from the traditional library to a one-stop-shop for learners, helping them to prepare for the world of work. If we want to stay relevant in an ever-changing sector and retain our role as a vital support service, we must identify and adapt to the needs of learners and staff.

We are pioneering projects to upskill both staff and students in preparation for the twenty-first century digital workplace. As a hub for digital, employability and study skills, along with close links to the wellbeing team, our holistic approach helps learners build vital skills for life and work.

LRCs at the College of West Anglia are home to our 'Careers Hubs', where learners can access careers resources, impartial careers guidance and workshops on a variety of study skills, digital skills and employability topics. In collaboration with our Student Advisor team these hubs also host daily wellbeing drop-ins making the LRC a central hub where learners know they can come for information, advice and guidance.

A key part of learners' Programme of Study is the online tutorial programme, 'iCWA', developed by the LRC team. iCWA supports learners to develop 21st century skills: vital citizenship and employability skills to take into their future career, as well as raising awareness of key topics such as British Values, modern slavery and environmental activism. In connection with the tutorial programme, we have hosted events and awareness days organised by our Student Ambassadors to encourage learners to explore key issues and foster a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion.

In the run-up to the general election, our Student Governor coordinated a hustings for learners to meet, hear and question local MP candidates. Learners participated in an online tutorial focused on building professional communication skills, which helped them frame questions for candidates. The hustings were followed by discussions in LRC Debate Clubs, where learners had the opportunity to explore diverse perspectives and build their communication skills further.

This holistic approach, impacting all aspects of the learner experience, helps position LRCs at the heart of the college community. With responsibility for Student Voice, including running the Student Council and Student Ambassador Programme, we have direct insight into learner views and a role in shaping their experience at college. This means we can not only adapt LRC services quickly to user demands, such as ensuring access to key resources, we also work with other departments to make changes to improve the wider learner experience. For instance, this academic year we launched a new student mentor scheme; a Student Council suggestion for second year learners to support new learners starting college. We have recently adapted this further, so learners can support each other remotely.

The daily running of a multi-faceted department, alongside the breadth of knowledge staff have gained by developing the tutorial programme and Student Voice, has equipped staff to quickly identify how to adapt in order to support learners transitioning to online learning. All our session provision, including careers information, advice and guidance, has transferred online, and our existing online resource offer provided a firm foundation to continue expanding and embedding resources to support learners. In addition, we have helped learners connect during lockdown by creating a virtual 'College Community' area on our VLE where learners can participate in clubs such as a virtual Wellbeing Club, with activities to help learners build resilience and support each other.

Building resilience is more vital now than ever to help learners adapt to the current situation, accept huge changes to their lifestyles and career plans, and navigate an unprecedented world and labour market. Addressing this is far from easy, but LRCs have a role in ensuring learners have the best possible access to the information, tools and guidance they need to help them move forward. Providing accessible resources to cater for diverse needs and abilities, including helping to bridge the digital divide, is a critical role LRCs can play to meet learner needs. Likewise, guiding learners towards the latest updates on progression routes and labour market changes is a way information professionals can help learners prepare for their next steps and develop the skills they need to achieve their goals.

Building staff skills & departmental relationships to enable a holistic approach to learner support - Clare Pelling.

At CWA, we have adopted an approach which puts the LRC at the heart of the college; integrating key support services such as careers and digital support within the department, plus developing links with teams such as Student Services to work with students within the LRCs.

Staff within the centres have upskilled to be multi-functional to be able to offer students a one stop shop to better meet their needs. Staff have upskilled through a mixture of online MOOCs and courses, along with in-house training and collaboration with other colleges to support them to develop the skills and behaviours they need to function effectively in their role. This has enabled us to create an adaptable and agile service which is better able to meet our learners' needs.

One of the challenges we have faced in the past is keeping curriculum teams updated about developments to the service. This year LRC team members have reached out further to curriculum teams. By attending 'golden hours' that bring the LRC to staff, providing key updates, training and helping staff discover what is available to support them and their students. This has helped us to build relationships and increase our ability to meet resource needs.

The LRC team has also worked closely with the Technology Enhanced Learning team to upskill and develop the digital skills that enable them to better support our learners. As a result of these new skills, LRC staff have got involved in the production of online learning resources to support the online tutorial programme. Gaining a greater depth of awareness of the expectations for learners in terms of developing their wider skills has enabled staff to better support learners in the centres (and more recently online!) to be able to complete these activities and also better signpost resources to support their learning.

We have also forged greater links with other departments such as Student Services and Skills Development to enable us to provide more effective support and meet learner needs. We have had joint training sessions to enable us to better understand our roles in the college and to discover ways we can enable students to access the support they need.

The LRC team has also got involved with new staff Induction so that from day one they are aware of the support and services offered by the Learning resource team to support them and their students. This has really helped embed the service in curriculum and in turn, enabled us to engage with more learners and help them to achieve their goals.

We are still on the journey but feedback so far from learners indicates that we are on the right road. By engaging with staff and student voice meetings, we can check we are on the right track and ensure we are able to shape the service around the people who matter most.

SPOTLIGHT ON……

David Chamberlain, Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS

David Chamberlain is Library and Knowledge Service Manager, Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust. He was due to present on 'Developing Resilience: surviving and thriving in tough times' at CoLRiC's cancelled June 2020 conference. The focus of his presentation was to be mindfulness, and coping strategies for difficult workplace situations. Little did we know what lay ahead, with the stress of COVID-19, lockdown and remote working. Neither were we prepared for the NHS becoming a battle ground for the UK's fight against a global pandemic.

How did you become Library & Knowledge Services Manager?

Short answer: In a long and convoluted way.

Long answer: I have a degree in English Literature – then went on to train and qualify as a Registered Mental Nurse. I used this qualification to travel abroad and worked in New Zealand for a time. I returned to the UK and then worked in Wales as a Registered Mental Health Nurse, deciding to retrain as the wards were too violent for me. I chose libraries after a career test. I did a postgraduate diploma in Libraries and Information Management and got my first library role at Llandrillo College followed by a position at Wirral Metropolitan College to cover maternity leave.

Then I stuck a pin in a map and chose a job that used my skills and offered full time prospects– a health librarian in Worcestershire. So, I moved the family there.

I stayed in what was roughly the same post for twenty years, going through four organisational changes and subsequent changes in job title. On top of this I had two children and coached their football teams for ten (long) years!

Along the way I did Chartership and Fellowship and various management and coaching courses, including Engaging Leaders and the Institute of Leadership & Management levels 3 and 5 certifications. Then, the Library & Knowledge Services Manager role became vacant and so I applied.

I now manage Library & Knowledge Services in Worcestershire. This currently covers five organisations in an ever-changing service. This covers approximately 12,000 staff.

We have three staffed libraries based at hospitals in education centres, and one unstaffed library. I manage eight staff.

Knowing what you know now what would you say to your 16-year-old self?

Be bolder – believe in your ability.

How do you keep up to date with trends in your profession?

I attend a regional (Midlands West) bi-monthly managers' group and subscribe to various related email discussion groups. We also link in to Trust strategies and national NHS publications.

If you can think of someone we could turn a spotlight on, please let us know. Contact details can be found on 'the back page'

I read various journals (including CILIP's Information Professional) and have set up email alerts. Staff attend e-procurement groups and feedback to me and I also participate in in-house training.

What are your biggest professional challenges?

- Managing myself – frustrations, conflict and motivation
- Managing others – as above!
- Managing my own mental health and resilience
- Balancing middle management – indifferent managers and expectant staff

What is your favourite book?

Tough one. For the most read author and repeated reads it would be a tie with Kurt Vonnegut and Terry Pratchett. I have read all their works at least twice.

And finally… sum yourself up in three words

White – Male – Middle-aged 😊

THE BACK PAGE

CoLRiC membership rates aligned to the new Jisc FE Bands from September 1st 2020

You will all be aware that new Jisc bands C-J for FE will come into effect on 1st August 2020, following a review in 2019. Jisc indicates that the new bands use 'the same officially published measure of college teaching and learning related income as that used by the previous scheme as the basis for band allocation. This Total Relevant Income (TRI) measure is averaged over the three academic years 2015/16 to 2017/18 to mitigate fluctuations.'

From September 1st 2020 CoLRiC's membership rates have been updated to align with the new bands and provide a fairer reflection of institutional size and income.

Your membership renewal period will remain unaffected, and you will notice a much improved, more transparent invoicing process without you having to self-assess your membership fee in future.

CoLRiC's membership rates haven't been revised for over a decade, and we will publish them to every member in a few weeks. If you have any queries during this transitional period, please don't hesitate to contact our admin team.

CoLRiC encourages the submission of articles by all members for publication in CoLRiC Impact. To discuss ideas for articles in advance please give us a call on 07879 667347 or send an e-mail with a short outline of proposed content.

If you submit an article about the service at your college, please consider including a summary of key service information that will provide the reader with some context and help them to compare with their own college e.g. staffing numbers/types/opening hours.

The Impact schedule for the 20/21 academic year will be published in due course.

To submit an article please email the following to **colric@colric.org.uk:** (a) an unformatted Word document; (b) any associated files or images; (c) any recommended further reading; and (d) any links to any external content to be embedded into the final e-bulletin. The CoLRiC editorial team will be responsible for formatting, editing and proof-reading all contributions before publication. Please include the email addresses and job titles of all contributing authors. All authors will retain their copyright.