

Library suggestion cards

The Library received a total of 22 suggestion cards in the 12 months between May 2017 and May 2018.

Below are transcripts of the replies given by Library staff.

Suggestion: Open 24/7

With regards to your suggestion about opening 24/7 for the whole of the summer term, we would love to be able to do this. Unfortunately, we only have a limited budget given to us by the University for extended opening so we have to target it when it will be most effective - which is why 24/7 usually only runs during the exam period itself. We are back open until 2am every day until 24/7 starts at the end of the month though, so there is some more scope for working late night. You are also able to swipe into the Haslegrave PC labs late at night with your student ID card so can access that 24/7 throughout the year if you need to.

Suggestion: Give plastic cutlery

With regard to your specific comment about leaving plastic cutlery for when the cafe is closed, the Library doesn't actually run the cafe – it is managed by Campus Living. I will pass your comment on to the manager of the cafe, but I would imagine the reason they don't do it is because providing cutlery (even plastic sets) costs them money and they don't subsidise external companies' profits at their own expense. They may be able to reconsider and provide it, however. If that is the case we will get back in contact with you.

Suggestion: Let us know how many people are in the Library

With regard to your specific comment about a counter of how many people are in the Library as they do in the gyms on campus, we did look into doing just that when we redesigned our webpages last summer as I completely agree it would be really useful. Unfortunately, due to the systems in place that support the access controls across campus, we were not able to do this (the gym system isn't run on the same system as the others) as it puts the live server at risk - which could, potentially, mean the doors across campus wouldn't work. We will be working with colleagues in FM and IT Services to develop a project for this, but I don't have a timeframe for any potential changes, I'm afraid.

I hope that explains why we don't do it at the moment. If the situation does change, we will make sure it is publicised on our webpages accordingly.

Suggestion: Open at weekends during summer vacation

With regards to your specific suggestion regarding opening one day at the weekends, we are currently unable to do so due to finite funding from the University. We are trying to prove a business case to extend our opening at the moment as we do

recognise that for staff and postgraduates on campus during the summer, we don't currently meet their needs in this respect. This is a long process, however, and is unlikely to happen this summer. However, if anything does change, we will make sure people are aware of it. I will add your suggestion to the evidence we have gathered so far.

Suggestion: Open later in summer vacation

With regards to your specific suggestion regarding opening as normal during the summer, we are currently unable to do so due to finite funding from the University. We are trying to prove a business case to extend our opening at the moment as we do recognise that for staff and postgraduates on campus during the summer, we don't currently meet their needs in this respect. This is a long process, however, and is unlikely to happen this summer. However, if anything does change, we will make sure people are aware of it. I will add your suggestion to the evidence we have gathered so far.

Suggestion: Improve wi-fi

I completely agree with you – the wi-fi in the building certainly could do with being improved (I get no wi-fi signal at all in my office, so I know how frustrating it can be). Colleagues in IT Services have completed a survey about wi-fi use across campus and have identified areas that need improvement (including the Library, which has 18 out of the top 20 most used wi-fi hotspots). I will pass your comments on to them. I know they are intending to do some work over the next 12 months, so hopefully things will improve.

Suggestion: Give students access to the roof and have outward facing desks

With regards to your specific suggestions:

- Public access to the roof: The Library had a major refurbishment 4 summers ago. As part of this, a special type of roofing material was fitted to our flat roof. Unfortunately, this roofing does not allow for access (other than for repairs etc). Had we asked for roof access, it would have added considerable cost to the overall project (which had already come in at close to £5m), so it wasn't considered to be a priority. There are also a number of health and safety restrictions, which would mean that things such as barriers would have had to be installed which would, again, have increased the cost and complexity of the work.
- Desks facing out of the window in silent study area: again, as part of the refurbishment, we installed new desks on L4 of the Library. They are placed in their current positions to allow for power to be added to each desk from the underfloor areas. It isn't possible to move these to face the window at the moment. However, if we have any more work done in this area, we will certainly look to see what is possible, so will feed your comments back to the Library's Building Development Group.

Suggestion: Provide water fountains

With regards to your specific comment about water fountains – we do have them – on all 4 floors of the Library. If you're not sure where they are, please feel free to ask at one of the enquiry desks and staff will be able to show you their location.

Suggestion: Add more booths to the study space

With regard to your specific comment about adding more booths like on the ground floor, I presume you mean the bookable study carrels (that have seats for 2 people and you can close the door)? We do have some more of these on L2, but don't currently have any plans to add more – they were added when the Library was first built and so could easily be incorporated into the structure of the building.

Adding additional booths would take up a lot of space and would be a significant building exercise. We do try and balance the need for individual space with more open areas in any building project, however, so I will feed your comments into the wish list considered by the Library's Building Development Group.

As an aside, were you aware Wavytop had a lot of refurbishment work done this summer? I know there are study rooms designed for students there. They aren't bookable at the moment, but it might be worth checking out as they seem pretty quiet – possibly because no-one knows about them yet.

Suggestion: Give us a stationary table near the printer

With regard to your specific comment about a stationary table, we did use to have one of these next to the printers. However, we found that equipment was constantly going missing or being damaged, so we decided to take it away. We do, however, have staplers and scissors that you can use at the main desk on L3, so there is still somewhere you can do it in the Library – just ask at the counter if you can't see what you want.

Suggestion: Give the plasma screens the ability to give out sound

With regards to your specific comment regarding sound on the TVs in the group study rooms, there should be sound on all of them – we haven't disabled this since they were installed 4 years ago. The sound may have been reduced by another user with the control buttons behind the screen, but we haven't changed them. If you do have sound, we ask that users keep it to a minimum as the rooms themselves aren't soundproof and we don't want excess noise leaking out to disturb other users outside the rooms.

Suggestion: Give access to roof

Rooftop level for outdoor study: The Library had a major refurbishment 4 summers ago. As part of this, a special type of roofing material was fitted to our flat roof. Unfortunately, this roofing does not allow for access (other than for repairs etc). Had

we asked for roof access, it would have added considerable cost to the overall project (which had already come in at close to £5m), so it wasn't considered to be a priority. There are also a number of health and safety restrictions, which would mean that things such as barriers would have had to be installed which would, again, have increased the cost and complexity of the work. We are working with colleagues in FM to see how feasible outside study space around the foot of the Library is – this is certainly more achievable, but isn't likely to happen within the next 18 months as funding needs to be found in the budget.

Suggestion: Add more PCs to the lower floors

With regards to your specific comment about computers on the lower floors, we are currently at our capacity with the number of data points on levels 1 and 2, so it would require significant investment to extend the number of data sockets. We also have to balance the needs of people who want quiet study with those who want a PC as these automatically tend to create more noise than just a study desk on its own.

We do continually review our study areas as part of the Library's longer term planning, so will certainly feed the issues you raise to that group. As an aside, are you aware that work was done on Wavytop over the summer? I know there are a number of PCs in that building that people aren't aware of yet. It may well be that these PCs are a lot quieter than the ones on L3.

Suggestion: Make the Library warmer

With regards to your specific comment about the temperature in the Library, I'm afraid there isn't a lot we can do to raise or lower the temperature in individual areas. We have fed back concerns to Facilities Management on campus who sent an engineer out to check everything was working as it should, but he confirmed everything was operational. We are very aware that the heating/air conditioning isn't the best (which is why the stereotype of a librarian wearing a cardigan is often true) and have fed this back to the University. It would, unfortunately, cost a considerable amount of money to upgrade the systems we have on the lower floors.

It does tend to be warmer on L4 of the Library as this was completed as part of the refurbishment a few years ago, so it might be worth trying there if you have chance. The other thing we would encourage users to do is actually report issues to FM yourself – they tend to listen more to students than us. fmhelp@lboro.ac.uk

Suggestion: Make things cheaper in the café

You may not be aware that all cafes on campus are run by Campus Living, so the Library doesn't actually have any control over the pricing of products. Where there are things we can control, we have implemented changes e.g. the free cold water fountains on all the floors were added as part of the refurbishment a few years ago. I will feed your comment through to the management of campus living so they are aware of the issue.

Suggestion: Put benches outside the Library

With regard to your specific comment about benches outside the Library, we have had similar thoughts as well. We have mentioned it to colleagues in Facilities Management (who actually control the space around campus) and have it as a development aim for the Library's Building Development Group if we can find some funding for it. I can't guarantee exactly what timescale we will achieve this in, but as soon as we know we will publicise it.

Suggestion: Add a microwave

I'm afraid there is no likelihood of a microwave any time soon. This is for health and safety reasons and also because of the potential for mess that we would then have to clear up – apparently microwaves cause the most issues in hall kitchens, so you can imagine what it would be like in a library space. However, Campus Living are probably remodelling the cafe space this summer, so we will certainly bear your suggestion in mind for any plans they develop (I know they have installed two microwaves in the Wolfson School shop).

Suggestion: Change how long you can book a study carrel

You can currently book 2 study carrel slots at a time. We did actually change the booking slots last year after feedback from our users that the previous 3 hour slots were no good as people couldn't guarantee they would be there for the whole time and felt shorter slots would fit better around lectures times etc. We will keep this under review again this year. BTW – did you know there is a whole building of study spaces that opened up at the beginning of the year in Wavytop? This has study rooms and desks and a PC lab that aren't bookable so you can stay there as long as you need to?

Suggestion: Add extra grey booths

With regards to your specific comment about more grey booths, I'm glad to hear that you like the new grey booths we installed at the beginning of the academic year. We weren't sure how popular they would be, but they do seem to be a real success and are always in use. We don't currently have the budget to purchase any more (the ones we have cost approx £10,000 each) but we are certainly looking into getting more when we have the ability/money to do so. I will feed your comments into the Library's Building Development group too so that they can include it in any funding bids.

Suggestion: Install a cash machine

Unfortunately, it is highly unlikely we are going to have a cash machine installed any time soon. There is one just outside the Library near the Elvyn Dining Room and both the shop and the cafe accept card payments (as do our self-service machines) so I think it would take a lot to convince University management to install one. I will,

however, pass your comment on to the Library's Building Development Group so that it can be considered if any work is completed in the next 12 months or so.

Suggestion: I'm struggling to use the new catalogue

I'm sorry to hear you are having problems with our new catalogue system. I'm afraid we can't go back to the old system at this stage as it is not compatible with our current systems (and which is why we had to change). We are still working on the new system so having your feedback is extremely useful as we can feed it into the project team who are dealing with issues after our initial go live date last month.

If you haven't already met Louise Fletcher (the academic librarian for your subject) it may be worth making an appointment to see her at a mutually convenient time as she can look into search strategies and results to ensure you optimise them.

Suggestion: Let us eat on lower floors

Food and drink is quite an emotive issue. In the last couple of years we have extended where you can eat/drink in the library so you can now have food on Levels 3 & 4 and can have drinks on Levels 1 & 2. We have to balance different opinions about food- we do actually get complaints from people when people have made a mess on the lower levels or the noise it can cause if people eat in the quiet areas. You might want to mention it to the Students Union - they were consulted when we set the initial rules and were happy with what we suggested. If they were to say they wanted it to be different, we could certainly look at it again – I know my team don't like to be the bad guy telling people off on the lower floors.