

Gardens & Museums IT

Issue 14
Summer 2023

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Gardens & Museums IT Contact Details

- Feedback Email: it@glam.ox.ac.uk
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If you require this document in an alternative format please contact us via it@museums.ox.ac.uk

Welcome

Welcome to Issue 14, and the Summer 2023 Gardens & Museums IT Newsletter.

The last time I wrote it was March, the beginning of Spring, and it was snowing! I'm happy to say that now we're in June the weather has improved, and we're now able to enjoy the longer and warmer days .

From a GLAM, and IT perspective, the last 3 months have certainly been eventful, with a number of planned, and an equal amount of unplanned instances keeping us all very busy.

Security changes have had a significant impact on this, and make up a fair amount of the information within this newsletter (I apologise in advance, but it is all important). During Spring we saw the University VPN Upgrade, which has been swiftly followed by the commencement of the removal of automatic external email forwarding. These pieces of work are all part of strengthening and improving the University's Information Security position, and this work alongside the need to be vigilant and to be following best practice such as the prudent installation of security updates , is incredibly pertinent right now with the high-level data breaches recently seen in the UK, including USS, which has directly impacted many of us. Within the newsletter you'll find updates on the VPN and Email Forwarding Projects, alongside some advice on how to stay safe on-line, and things we all need to do to protect ourselves, our data, and the University.

On a different note the AV and Commercial Systems and Services project has continued, including a recent and very exciting development which is shared within this Newsletter.

Please read on for more on the above, and other things that we've been up to throughout Spring, and what's coming this Summer.

All the best

Carl

What's been going on? And what's coming?

WiFi Project

The WiFi Replacement Project is progressing well, with the first installation taking place at the History of Science Museum this week. Plans are now being formalised alongside IT Services and local Museum coordinators for the installation in the other Museums - please do look out for email updates on this.

University of Oxford VPN Update

The Oxford VPN Update work completed at the end of April. Please see Page 9 for more on this.

Code42 name change to CrashPlan

The University Oxford's recommended backup solution has recently changed its name from Code42 to CrashPlan. The service operates in exactly the same way, but branding has been updated to reflect the name change. Our guidance document has also been updated which can be viewed here :

<https://it.museums.ox.ac.uk/article/documents> .

Nexus Mail Forwarding

A change was recently made to the University of Oxford IT Regulations forbidding the use of automatic forwarding of email from a University of Oxford Email Address to a non-University Email Address or Account. Please see Page 10 for further information on this, and how it will impact you.

OxFile Retirement

On Monday 19th June IT Services will be retiring the OxFile file exchange service, with users advised to utilise Microsoft OneDrive moving forward. Further information on this, including guidance on using OneDrive can be found here: <https://help.it.ox.ac.uk/oxfile-migration-to-onedrive> .

Procurement

As is regularly the case at this time of the year we receive a number of requests for assistance in the purchasing of technical equipment. As some of these requests can come very close to Financial deadlines, we ask that such requests are raised as soon as possible, to ensure availability within the required timeframes.

Botanic Garden Old Library Hybrid Meeting Space

We have recently been working with Heidi and Lauren improve the Hybrid Meeting functionality of the Old Library space at the Botanic Garden.

After a successful test phase, in which temporary equipment was installed to ensure a suitable and fit for purpose solution, the fixed installation of a large LG LED TV and Panacast 50 video conferencing bar has now taken place.

What's been going on? And what's coming?

Dell Laptop Availability

As many of you will be aware there have been some issues with ordering Dell Laptops since May. These issues were not related to problems in supply, but between Dell and the University agreeing on University pricing for these laptops. Fortunately, this has now been resolved and orders can once more be made. Please bear in mind that there is a backlog due to the issues with pricing, so if you do have an existing order, please be patient whilst the backlog is worked through. And if you have a new requirement, please get this to us as soon as possible so that the order can be placed.



macOS Ventura Upgrade

We will shortly commence the project to upgrade Apple Computers to the latest version of macOS (Ventura). If you're an Apple user, please look out for upcoming communications on this.

Secure Password Management

We have recently been investigating Password Management applications in view to establishing a recommended option for use across the Gardens & Museums, that is both secure and fit for purpose. Fortunately, the University have also been carrying out their own investigations and 1Password has been established as offering the required functionality whilst also being secure. Further to this 1Password has been confirmed as compliant with University Infosec requirements. Therefore, If you do have a password management requirement, please do reach out so that we can assist with this

History of Science Gallery Interactives

Throughout the Spring we have been working with HSM on reviewing their varied Interactives, with aims to improve, secure and document each solution.

I'm happy to say that as a result of excellent collaboration between ourselves and Andrea and Lisa at HSM, we have been able to re-provision the Interactives in a secure manner, whilst introducing service improvements including automations, and have fully documented the solutions. We were able to utilise existing processes that have been implemented in other parts of the Gardens & Museums, thus further demonstrating the benefits of a standardised approach to operational, technical and service delivery.

Ipads, Ipads, Ipads

The number of iPads in use across the Gardens & Museums is ever growing with the devices themselves being utilised in a number of ways, including standard administrative use, as interactives, and now as Commercial Point of Sale devices. The flexibility that iPads offer, alongside the device management processes we can provide and University pricing, allow for iPads to be continued to be utilised in a variety of ways. If you do have an upcoming requirement for a tablet device-based activity please do get in contact so we can assist in a secure, cost-effective and supported solution.

GMIT Open Sessions – Summer 2023 Dates

Due to the success of the Gardens & Museums Open Sessions in February and March, and also the VPN Changeover sessions in April, we will be running further sessions throughout the Summer.

The Open Sessions themselves proved to be popular with many appreciating and positively feeding back on the benefits that the sessions offered. In particular as an alternative means to give support to our colleagues and deal with some of the minor niggly issues that plague us but we never get resolved, whilst also being a great way to introduce upcoming projects and establish at an early stage IT requirements and to identify people in the team to engage with.

The schedule for the Summer can be found below, and we look forward to seeing you then (if not before).

Date	Location	Time
Wednesday 14 th June	Westwood Room Museum of Natural History	2.00PM – 3.30PM
Tuesday 11 th July	Headley Lecture Theatre Ashmolean Museum	12.00PM – 1.30PM
Friday 18 th August	Seminar Room History of Science Museum	11.30AM – 1.00PM

The sessions will offer an opportunity to....

- To meet us face-to-face in an open forum to discuss any matter.
- To discuss or get advice on any IT issues or problems which you may have, whether big or small.
- To discuss any up-coming projects or innovations within your respective departments and location.
- For new members of staff to meet with us and receive an overview of IT within the University and the Gardens & Museums.
- To talk through any general IT matter.

Audio-Visual Systems & Services Update

Way back in the Winter 2021 Newsletter I began giving updates on work related to the review of the Audio-Visual and Commercial Systems and Services in use across the Gardens & Museums. As an important project and development within the Gardens & Museums there have been substantial investigations and associated pieces of work carried out within these key business, and a variety of updates via reports and articles in the Newsletters since.

In this issue as opposed to writing in detail about the AV and Commercial System developments which have taken place (though some have been briefly touched upon on pages 2 and 3) I'm going to focus on a recent, and incredibly satisfying update to the project, which is especially important as we reach its 1 year conclusion at the end of July this year.

So, during the summer of 2022 we began recruiting for a 1 Year Fixed-term IT and AV Officer to directly assist in investigations in to AV and Commercial Systems, and to fully identify requirements, whilst helping to make improvements in operations, service and security. I'll admit at the time I had my reservations about being able to successfully hire based on IT recruitment being incredibly difficult within Oxford at the time and that the role was fixed-term for a year. Despite this the recruitment process was incredibly successful and we were fortunate to recruit Calum Smythe from Hertford College – thank you to Jona and Helen for your support with this!

Since August 2022 many of you would have had the opportunity to meet and work with Calum during this time, and seen first-hand what he brings to the team. Having come from within the University, Calum brought a lot of institutional knowledge with him, and knowledge which was built from a demanding and varied role. This allowed Calum to make an incredible impact from almost day 1, and I remember saying in November last year how I couldn't imagine the Gardens & Museums IT Team without him – which was a thought echoed by many of the team!

During the 11 months since a significant amount has been achieved and a vast number of improvements made, with much a result of Calum's knowledge, curiosity and drive. It's quite incredible the level of positive impact he has made, and how critical he has become to the team in such a short period of time. Calum's endeavours have been a massive part of the AV and Commercial Systems & Services review, and has made the various conversations and reporting which has taken place that much easier - as the benefits of the role and value shown has been visible for all to see. And it's for these reasons and many others that I'm happy (and incredibly relieved) to announce that the IT/AV Officer role has been made permanent, and delighted that Calum will be continuing to work with us.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has engaged with and supported the project, allowing Calum and I to review the services in place and look at ways we can improve them. I'd also like to thank those involved on a high-level who have assisted with the various reports and discussions which have allowed us to get hear.

And finally a massive thank you to Calum for taking a chance on us, and all the effort and endeavour you've put in thus far. We are incredibly grateful to continue working with you.

University Educational Media Services

Over the course of the Audio Visual review we have identified and experienced a large number and a varied range of AV requests, and it has been very telling how one persons AV requirements can be strikingly different than the next, particularly in an environment like ours, where many elements are niche to the Gardens & Museums.

Our focus within the AV Review was to assess the current requirements and technologies in place and focus upon building a service to match these more standard, and constant requirements which the Gardens & Museums have. And to reduce the need for consultancy, and therefore added costs, to provision such services, whilst also ensuring the consistent and continued maintenance of our AV equipment, systems and spaces.

AV areas which were identified as having more specialist requirements and needing particular skillsets, and therefore better suited to external consultancy, are Live Events and Media Production. Fortunately the University do offer such services via the Educational Media Services Team. Further information on the Educational Media Services Team, including services offered and contact details can be found via the IT Services Media webpage here: <https://help.it.ox.ac.uk/media> .

And in particular the following services may be of interest...

Media Production

The Educational Media Services Team can assist with the production of video and audio for research conferences, lectures, podcasts and webcasts. More information is available here: <https://help.it.ox.ac.uk/digital-video-production>

Replay Lecture Capture

The Replay Lecture Capture service allows the automatic or manual recording of lectures and the accompanying slides. More on this service is available here: <https://help.it.ox.ac.uk/replay> .

Podcasting

The Educational Media Services Team manage the University podcasting platform, and the publication platform MediaPub for the distribution of podcasts. For more on the podcasting service please see: <https://help.it.ox.ac.uk/podcasting-and-media-publishing> .

Live Streaming

The Educational Media Services Team offer a live streaming and broadcasting solution, which can be achieved either from their studio or across Oxford. More information on the Live Streaming service can be found here: <https://help.it.ox.ac.uk/live-streaming-service> .

Microsoft Teams Live Event Support

The Educational Media Services Team can provide support for running online events using Microsoft Teams Live. Please see : <https://help.it.ox.ac.uk/teamslive> for more on this.

Information Security – how we can all help

Information Security seems to be more pressing and important than ever right now as news and updates on Information Security seems to be everywhere. Some of which is particularly concerning, including the USS data breach and the cyber attack which has impacted a number of high-level British companies. Sadly it seems that such instances get closer to the University each time, and it's no longer safe to think of this as an if, but more likely a when. And therefore it's even more important for us all to be security aware and conscious.

The University continues to make improvements to the University's security posture, including the recent Oxford VPN Upgrade (Page 9) and the upcoming removal of automatic email forwarding to external email providers (Page 10). And we (Gardens & Museums IT) continue to make improvements to the security of our networks, systems, and end-user devices, whilst continuing to introduce monitoring to all appropriate systems and services.



Also a number of the team have recently undertaken advanced Information Security Training and gained certification in this area to improve our knowledge and the guidance we offer across the various elements of Information Security.

Despite this, there are many things that we all can do to protect ourselves, our data, the Gardens & Museums and the University.

University of Oxford Information Security Awareness Training

Completing the University Security Awareness Training is an annual requirement, but there is merit to carrying this out more regularly, perhaps every 6 months, to update and reinforce your knowledge.

Read the University 'Staying Safe Online' webpages

The University 'Staying Safe Online' webpages (<https://www.infosec.ox.ac.uk/stay-safe-online-oxford>) include lots of useful information on Information Security and how to be safe online.

Reading this information, and making yourself aware can be an incredibly important preventative step to being secure - both within the workplace and outside.

Be vigilant to Phishing Emails and ask for guidance if unsure

Phishing Emails become more and more impressive and difficult to spot, therefore its important to be vigilant. And if ever you're unsure please get in contact for guidance. Being careful and seeking advice is far better, and less disruptive, than clicking on something and regretting it later.

Information Security – how we can all help

Report Information Security Incidents

If you are a victim of an Information Security Incident, or suspect that one has occurred, it is incredibly important to report it as soon as possible so that the appropriate action can be taken as efficiently and effectively as possible. The following pages outline the Reporting methods in place: <https://www.infosec.ox.ac.uk/report-incident> .

Updating your Computer and Devices

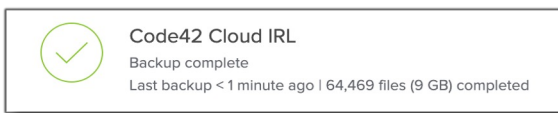
Many Information Security incidents are linked to compromised computers and networked devices. If you're ever prompted to update, please carry this out as soon as possible, and do not ignore update messages. And this is important on personal devices as well.

Although the updates do feel as though they're coming all the time, it is very much in our interest to install them, and to do so in a timely manner. And if you ever need help, guidance or assistance with this please do reach out.



Back up your data regularly

Backing up your data is incredibly important. Backup mechanisms are in place for CONNECT Computers, but for all other computers we recommend using the University CrashPlan (previously Code42) solution. Guidance on this can be found here: <https://it.museums.ox.ac.uk/article/documents> .



If you have concerns about backing up your data, need help with setting up CrashPlan, or securing data on a different device please get in touch for assistance.

Ask for help and guidance with new systems and services

The Gardens & Museums are very creative places, with new systems and services being developed and implemented regularly. But it is incredibly important that security measures are included within the design process and incorporated in to the product.

If you are currently leading on the development of a new system or service which has IT elements, includes data, or interfaces with the internet in any way, please reach out for our assistance – it is far easier to incorporate Information Security measures in to the design of a product, as opposed to trying to implement afterwards, or worse, having to see something removed from service due to not being secure.

University of Oxford VPN Update

On the 26th of April 2023 a significant and important change was made to the University of Oxford VPN service, which was impactful in a number of different ways. I am happy to report that the change itself was relatively smooth, as were the type and numbers of queries that we received as a result of this change.

Despite the process going well there have been a number of repeated queries since that are important to address.

CONNECT Computing - VPN Management Tunnel

At the same time as the Oxford VPN Service was changed IT Services made a service improvement to the CONNECT Managed Service to simplify remote working, with the removal of the 'Start-before-login' VPN and introduction of a VPN Management Tunnel.

The Management Tunnel, which is further described here: <https://help.it.ox.ac.uk/sbl-vpn-managed-pc#collapse3082516>, essentially allows any CONNECT device pre-approved access to CONNECT Services, such as desktop, file shares, whenever it has an internet connection without the use of VPN. Therefore once you log in now, all CONNECT services should just be available!

This means that if working on a CONNECT Laptop either remotely or on Eduroam you will only need to use the Oxford VPN service in situations where you need to access Oxford systems which hold sensitive information including HR Self-Service and the Oracle R12 Financials system.

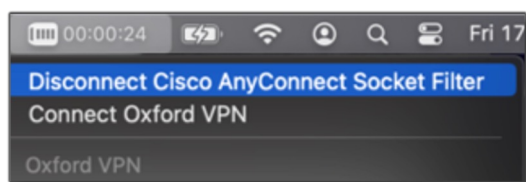
Cisco AnyConnect Socket Filter

One subject which has caused a number of queries and confusion since the change, and in particular from Apple users, is the Cisco AnyConnect Socket Filter.

The Socket Filter is a component of the Cisco AnyConnect VPN Application and makes it seem on first look as though the VPN is constantly connected (see picture above). This is not the case, it is simply the Socket Filter component which has a connection and not the VPN itself. To mitigate the confusion this has caused we have removed the network notification from those Apple machines that we manage whilst we fully investigate and review.

We have directly discussed the Cisco AnyConnect Socket Filter with the University Networks Team, who have in turn questioned the operations and requirements of the AnyConnect Socket Filter with Cisco themselves. During these discussions it has been determined that the AnyConnect Socket Filter is a key component of the AnyConnect software, and despite being able to be uninstalled without impact to the VPN software, it should be maintained.

We are continuing to monitor the Socket Filter and its impact, and if you have noticed a change in performance since the VPN change to your Apple Computer, or have concerns please do reach out via it@museums.ox.ac.uk.



University of Oxford Email Security Project – Removal of Automatic Email Forwarding

As you may be aware a recent change was made to the University of Oxford IT Regulations, and was communicated on the 4th May in the University Gazette. The change relates to the removal of automatic forwarding or routing of email from a University of Oxford Email Address to a non-University Email Address or Account, and will come into effect from the 1st August 2023.

This means that if you currently have automatic forwarding set up from your University of Oxford Nexus Email Account, or a generic/project account that you are responsible for, to an external email account such as another University, Google Gmail, or Microsoft Hotmail, this will soon be a forbidden activity. You will still be able to manually forward individual emails but certain care and consideration for the content within the email should be taken before doing so.

Nexus365



The automatic forwarding of email to external mailboxes provides a means to circumvent many of the recently applied Information Security Improvements, including lengthened passwords and Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA), so put our data at risk. This alongside many other reasons can be seen in full on the IT Services Project Pages here: <https://projects.it.ox.ac.uk/email-security-and-simplification-project> , and have been briefly summarised below

- It's a significant security risk.
- It's a major personal data handling risk.
- There's a reputational risk that all our email will be marked as spam.
- It can result in an accidental breach of contract.

We (Gardens & Museums IT) have checked all Nexus Accounts in use across the Gardens & Museums to identify any that have forwarding set up and will be affected by this change and are currently working with those impacted to further discuss this change, the implications of, and how email should be accessed moving forward.

If you have received a message relating to this please do respond as soon as possible so that we can assist you in the removal of automatic forwarding, and ensure that action is taken before the removal is enforced, and crucially ensure that access to your University email continues, but in a safe and secure manner.

Service & Support Statistics – 1st February 2023 to 30th April 2023

Quarter 3 of the 2022/23 Academic Year has continued to be busy as shown by the 1223 support requests. Although this is lower than the 1584 received in the same period of the 2021/22 Academic Year, it is much higher than the preceding years (1008 – 2019/20; 1014 – 2020/21).

A number of developments and projects, alongside the continuation of the Audio Visual and Commercial Systems and Services Review have contributed substantially to this number.

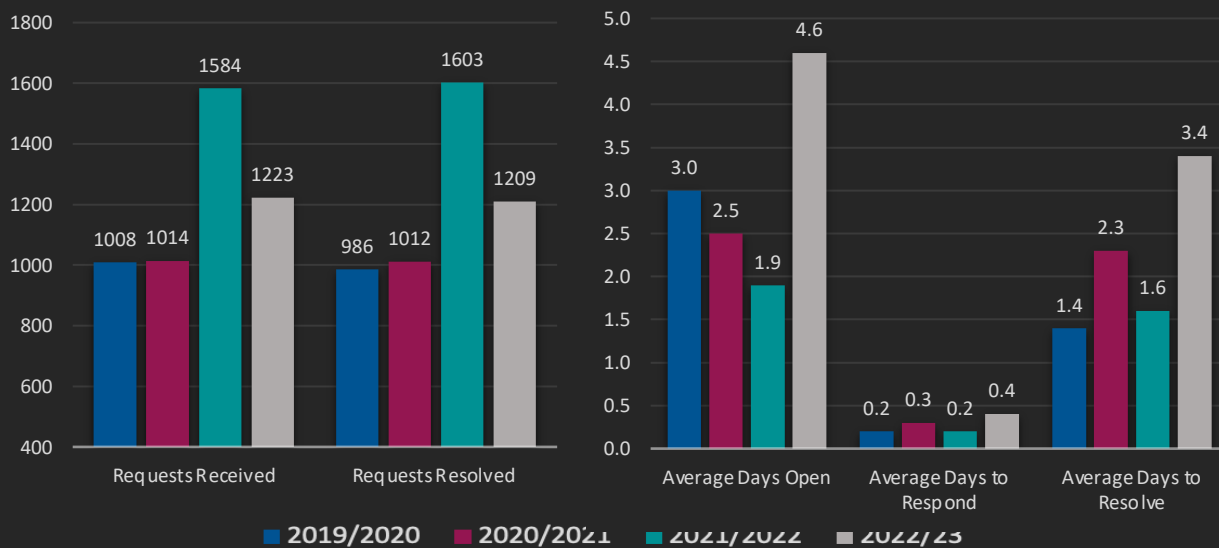
Requests Received
1223

Requests Resolved
1209

Avg. Days to Respond
0.4

Avg. Days to Resolve
3.4

Support Request Comparison - 2019/2020; 2020/2021; 2021/2022; 2022/2023



Location	Requests	Percentage
Ashmolean Museum	402	33%
Museum of Natural History	123	10%
Pitt Rivers Museum	178	14%
History of Science Museum	46	4%
Botanic Gardens & Arboretum	53	4%
GLAM Divisional Office	72	6%
Bodleian Libraries	10	1%
All sites - requests and activities which benefit or impact all locations	339	28%

2022/2023 Gardens & Museums IT Roadmap

