

Gardens & Museums IT

Issue 24
Winter 2025

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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 the Winter Edition of the Gardens & Museums IT Newsletter.

We once again find ourselves in December, and what a year it has been. The months have certainly flown by and without much time for true reflection, as we swiftly move from one project to another.

Fortunately writing this newsletter and carrying out the recent Colleague Feedback Survey (more on this later) have provided some moments for contemplation. and thought. The newsletter is actually quite a cathartic experience for me, and one which affords an opportunity to reflect on the recent period and acknowledge the work and successes within.

So, as we approach the end of the year, and as in previous Winter Editions of the Newsletter, we'll be looking back on the year and surfacing some of those special moments and exciting developments.

Also, there's a new feature being introduced titled "What's Teacher reading this month..." A bit of an obscure title, but it will make sense when you read, and hopefully it will be a positive addition to the newsletter.

And finally, the animals are back by popular demand! We've shared some moments from the furry creatures which provide welcome (and sometimes unwelcome) distraction to us.

And finally, finally, a massive thankyou from the team for all of your patience, support, kindness and good company. Some of us have found it all truly difficult at points this year, and many of you have helped to pick us up and keep us going, and we really do appreciate this.

So, here's to an amazing end to 2025, and a restful and recuperative festive period, and a happy new year!

Take care and see you all soon!



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

Staying Safe Online over the Festive Period

In the run up to, and over the Festive Period (due to sales period) the amount of online shopping increases, as does the amount of marketing. Sadly, the number of opportunists looking to take advantage of this phase are also more active at this time of year, and as they're making use of AI, spotting a phishing email or scam site is more difficult than ever. Below are some useful webpages providing guidance on steps to take to stay safe, alongside things to look out for.

- **Get Safe Online - Online Safety for Christmas:** <https://www.getsafeonline.org/safeonlinechristmas/>
- **Get Safe Online - Shopping, Banking & Payments:** <https://www.getsafeonline.org/personal/article-category/shopping-banking/>
- **National Cyber Security Centre - Stay alert to holiday shopping cyber scams**
<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/news/stay-alert-to-holiday-shopping-cyber-scams>

And, if you do find yourself in an instance where you're not sure whether you've received a phishing email or are viewing a scam site, please reach out to us before clicking, forwarding or responding in any way, as we'll be more than happy to offer guidance, support and clarification.

CONNECT Replacements & Computer Numbers

The CONNECT Aged Computer Replacement Project is officially done, done, done. About 200 computers were replaced in total, with many colleagues being moved to a hybrid working setup.

All in all, despite being an especially challenging project at points, the results have made all the hard work worthwhile. And being able to realise the ambitions of the project, whilst making people happy along the way is incredibly gratifying.

Many of you may remember that an initial obstacle we faced with the project was the number of CONNECT Computers which we had in use had surpassed 500, and we only had budget for the annual cost of 400. Having completed the replacements, we carried out a post inventory exercise, and I'm delighted to say that we are below 400. This is a massive achievement, and I really appreciate the parts that so many have you played in this, so a massive thankyou.

And now, that we have true understanding of computing numbers and an acceptable control of them, it will make further replacement activities much easier. We'll be able to easily identify those computers that are due for replacement and able to progress quickly with the Central University IT Services Team.

AI Advent Calendar

AI has become a pretty big conversation point within the University over the last year with various trials and innovations linked to its use. And this interest has grown further in the last few months since the provision of ChatGPT Edu for University Staff.

As exciting as it is, generally speaking we're all exploring it's benefits at a similar time. Helpfully the AI Competency Centre has provided an excellent Festive resource to support engagement and exploration with an AI Advent Calendar.

It's available to view here: <https://oerc.ox.ac.uk/ai-centre> . And includes new daily tips, tricks and guides. So, if you're interested in AI, this could be really helpful to you.

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

Colleague Feedback Survey - Equipment Requests...

We have a section in this Newsletter covering some of the feedback which was recently received. But there were some requests for equipment within the comments, which due to the survey being anonymous we're unable to discuss with those who identified additional needs.

If you do need additional equipment, please write to it@museums.ox.ac.uk and we'll happily discuss the need with you in view to either directly supplying or providing a cost for the equipment.

Information Security & Data Protection Training

It wouldn't be an IT Newsletter without a quick reminder to carry out your Information Security & Data Protection Training. If you haven't done this in the last year please do find the time, as it is a really helpful and important exercise.

The training can be accessed from here: <https://www.infosec.ox.ac.uk/do-the-online-training> .

CONNECT Computer - Single Sign On Login

As briefly mentioned in the last newsletter Central IT Services have been busily working on a significant improvement to the CONNECT Service, with the introduction of Single Sign On log in. This means, that those users who migrate, will no longer login with a different username and password (CONNECT Account) but will use the same username and password which they use for most other Oxford Services, including Email and Teams. In addition to this, it will also offer enhanced security through the utilisation of the computer's hardware.

We'll be sending out some wider communications on this in the New Year, but if you're interested in becoming an early adopter to this please do get in touch via it@museums.ox.ac.uk and we can share a bit more information and discuss next steps.

Microsoft Teams Phone (Telephony over Teams) - Telephony Replacement Project

The University is currently working with local departmental phone providers and phone administrators on the Telephony Replacement Project.

This project has two goals, the first being a response to BT turning off analogue phonelines between January 2026 and January 2027, thus impacting those analogue and critical phone lines which are in use.

The second goal is the transition from Chorus VoIP Digital lines to Microsoft Teams Phone (formally known as Telephony over Teams). Full information is available on the Telephony Replacement webpages (<https://projects.it.ox.ac.uk/telephony-replacement>). For reassurance we are actively working with relevant parties at a University and a local level on this, but if you do have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out via it@museums.ox.ac.uk .

IT Support over the Festive Period!

The Festive Period is almost upon us, and this means a mixture of site closures and time away.

But unlike previous years when we have been off for considerable parts of the period, this year we'll be around a bit more and operating a 'skeleton service'.

There will be only a few days when we won't have at least one person on site. On those working days we will be focussing on priority situations, and if time affords other bits and pieces and therefore wanted to share some guidance and sources of information which are good to know for throughout the year, but especially in times where we're away, or when support options may be limited.



How to get IT support

To receive IT support over the Festive Period, please send a message to IT@museums.ox.ac.uk or call **01865 288188** as normal. As mentioned, we will have at least one member of the team onsite throughout the period, with the exception of the 27th and 28th of December, and the 3rd and 4th of January. For these days we have an arrangement set up with the Central University IT Services Out of Hours Support Service for any major incidents to be directly escalated to us as emergencies.

Therefore, if any of the below instances occur on the 27th, 28th of December or 3rd and 4th of January please call **01865 612345**.

- **Network Failure / Outage** – wired, wireless, public WiFi
- **Cyber and Information Security** – cyber-attack, ransomware, virus infection, information disclosure (phishing / spam, etc)
- **Widescale computer outage** – wide-scale failure or unavailability of service of Managed Computers (CONNECT; GMIT Apple (Jamf); GMIT Windows (Intune))

Self-Help Resources - Guidance & Information

The IT Services webpages (www.it.ox.ac.uk) provide extensive information and guidance on many of the major University of Oxford IT systems and services. Below are some particularly useful pages which could assist if you happen to get stuck.

- Help Homepage: <https://help.it.ox.ac.uk/>
- University Accounts (including SSO): <https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/your-university-accounts>
- Nexus 365: <https://help.it.ox.ac.uk/nexus365>
- Multi Factor Authentication (MFA): <https://help.it.ox.ac.uk/mfa>
- Information Security: <https://www.infosec.ox.ac.uk/>
- CONNECT Managed Desktop: <https://help.it.ox.ac.uk/managed-staff-desktop-collection>

Colleague Feedback Survey - 2025

Throughout November 2025 the Gardens & Museum IT Team have been carrying out a Colleague Feedback Survey. We used a small number of questions to establish our colleagues' thoughts and opinions on the IT provision within the Gardens & Museums. Our aims were to discover current levels of satisfaction towards the support aspects of the service, alongside the aspects of the provision which are most valued. We also sought to identify those IT areas, services and solutions which require improvement.

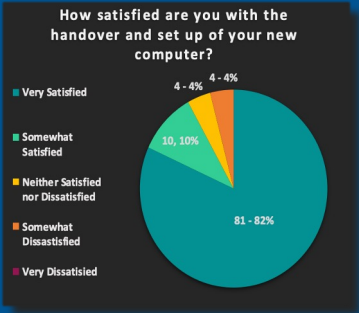
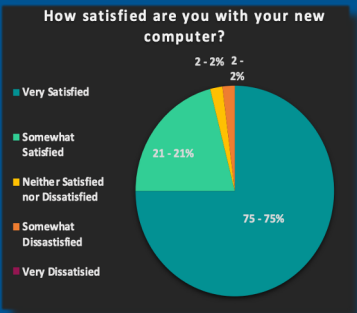
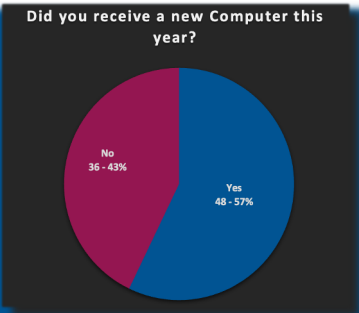
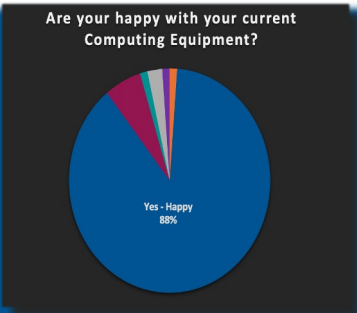
We received just over 80 responses to the survey, which included many incredibly kind and supportive comments, and over the next two pages you'll find some highlights from the survey. But if you're interested in reading more, the full findings are available on our website within the Service Reports section (<https://it.museums.ox.ac.uk/article/service-reports>).

Thoughts on Computer Equipment...

We're incredibly mindful that the computer and equipment you use at work are tools to do your jobs. And although more complex than a stapler or a pair of scissors we understand the importance of ensuring you have what is needed and that it performs to expectations.

88% of the people surveyed were happy with their device.

We also asked questions relating to the Aged Computing Replacement Project, with a generally positive response to both the new computer received and the handover process.



Colleague Satisfaction

We pride ourselves on offering a user focussed IT service, and work really hard to focus our efforts on how best to support you. Therefore, understanding whether we've achieving this is incredibly important to us.

And 98% of the responses were either Very Satisfied or Somewhat Satisfied. This is incredibly gratifying and rewarding and helps to justify the approach we have towards the delivery of IT to you all.

When asked what parts of the provision our colleagues valued the most Face-to face IT Support, Service Desk Operations, Hybrid Working, and Communications all scored highly.

Very Satisfied - 88%

Somewhat Satisfied - 10%

Neutral - 1%
(neither satisfied or dissatisfied)

Somewhat Dissatisfied - 1%

Very Dissatisfied - 0%

Colleague Feedback Survey - 2025

How can the IT provision be improved?

In this section we were looking to identify areas of the existing service which needed to be improved, or ideas for new initiatives which could be of benefit.

We established the following repeated responses when asking for areas where improvement was needed, or exploration into a new technology or IT area was required.

- **Audio Visual Systems & Service**
- **Cyber Security Guidance & Advice**
- **Training & Guidance - File Storage and Artificial Intelligence**

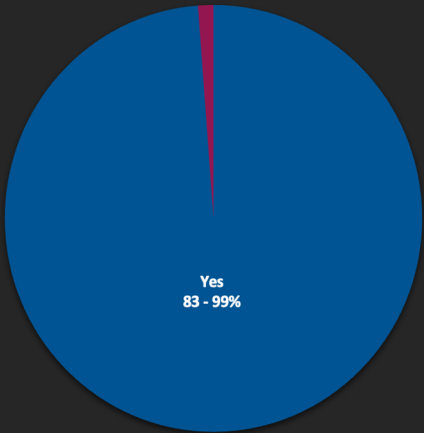
Single Point of Contact

In 2025 we introduced Single Point of Contact, as previous feedback activities had referenced the frustrations to the dual support mechanism which was in place. As this was a significant change to the way IT support was delivered within the Gardens & Museums, and to ensure it has been positively received and is proving to be successful we asked some questions relating to this.

And the responses received to the Single Point of Contact related questions were all incredibly positive. With one example being that

83 out of the 84 people who completed the survey thought it was a positive change (99%). This was really great to see having worked so hard to initially campaign for this change, and the work that the team has put in to ensuring that standards haven't dropped despite receiving extra demand.

Do you think this was a positive change?

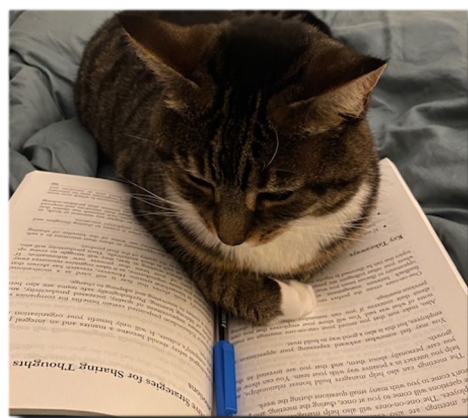


What we've learned...

In summary, the survey has been an really useful exercise. We are incredibly grateful to those who took the time to complete the survey, and the kind comments given. And not only has it helped to confirm the dedication, effectiveness, and positive values offered by the Gardens & Museums IT team and the IT service more generally, it has also helped to identify success stories and potential areas for improvement, exploration and engagement.

What's Teacher reading this month?

So, excuse the somewhat erroneous title (it needs work I know), there are no teacher's involved in this, and this won't be an article on what we're currently reading (though if interested I'm currently reading 'Dungeon Crawler Carl' - not about me, but it is about a guy called Carl who has a Cat. The similarities end there, but it is a great read). But, for context I was recently visiting a school as my son will soon be moving from Primary to Secondary School. And in one of the schools each Teacher had a note on their door outlining what they were reading that month. I thought this was a great idea, and had been racking my brain ever since as to how we could use this.



Fortunately, I got a little bit of help from some responses within the Colleague Feedback Survey which suggested some recommendations from us on training and resources could be helpful.

So, here we are. This may be a one-off item, or it may be something more regular. But below are some links to University and external content which we've recently come across that we've found beneficial.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI is very much the talk of the University right now and seems to either be in use or a discussion point at meetings right now. And as we all explore this technology below are some resources we've recently discovered...

- AI at Oxford: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/ai-oxford>
- Your University GenAI Access: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/it/your-university-genai-access>
- Google Deepmind Podcast: <https://deepmind.google/the-podcast/>
- People of AI: <https://sites.libsyn.com/464853/website>

Cyber Security

Another talking point across the University and further beyond is Cyber Security. And although the University offers some interesting and helpful guidance and resources on this business risk, we've been able to find some other options which have been interesting and enlightening.

- National Cyber Security Centre Top Tips for Staff: <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/training/top-tips-for-staff/top-tips-for-staff-raw-0cqnR1Cp/content/index.html#/>
- National Cyber Security Centre Cyber Security for Boards Training: <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyber-governance-for-boards/training>
- The Microsoft Threat Intelligence Podcast: <https://thecyberwire.com/podcasts/microsoft-threat-intelligence/>

GMIT Open Sessions – Early 2026

The dates for the next Gardens & Museums IT Open Sessions have been arranged and can be found below.

Like the December session, the January session will have a Multi-Factor Authentication focus in view to helping colleagues review their current settings, and if needed to look at more enhanced methods such as the Microsoft Authenticator or USB Security Key.

For those who may have something else to discuss, or if you’re new to the Gardens & Museums, or would simply just like to catch up, you are of course more than welcome to come and visit.

We anticipate normal service to resume for the February and March sessions, but if there is a subject which you’d like us to focus on for a future session then please write to it@museums.ox.ac.uk and we’ll more than happily consider.

Date	Location	Time
Wednesday 14 th January	Headley Lecture Theatre Ashmolean Museum	10.30AM – 12.30PM
Wednesday 11 th February	Seminar Room History of Science Museum	11.00AM – 12.30PM
Wednesday 11 th March	Lecture Theatre Pitt Rivers Museum	11.00AM – 12.30PM

The sessions will offer an opportunity....

- 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 upcoming 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.

Carl's Cheerful Celebrations!

This year has certainly been a busy one, and one where a number of projects which had been in a planning phase for years came to fruition all at the same time. Fortunately, as challenging as it seemed, a little bit of time to rest and reflect has afforded an opportunity to look back and reflect on the successes we've experienced along the way. And below are certainly prime examples of this!

1. Single Point Of Contact

In March we implemented Single Point of Contact, which was something I had been looking to introduce for some time. But despite best intentions a number of elements had to fall into place in order to achieve this. Fortunately, some changes in leadership and considerable work in enhancing existing relationships and trusts, brought about a more aligned understanding as to how IT support should be delivered within the Gardens & Museums.

It's fair to say the implementation had its risks, as we weren't fully aware as to the level of additional work it would cause the team, but the reception to this change from colleagues has been amazing. It hasn't been easy to achieve, but the team have worked incredibly hard in fulfilling the new requirements. And the success of the exercise has led to some additional new developments which we'll look to place early next year.

2. Ashmolean Rome Gallery

The Rome Gallery Renovation was another project which seemed to span a number of years - and I still fondly remember conversations with Paul about his research, explorations and ideas for the space. And to see many of these ideas realised, and having been part of the journey, it really felt like a major success when the gallery re-opened.

It was a project which certainly had its bumps along the way, but knowing the work and energy that so many people from across the museum put into making this change it really is something which needs celebration, and alongside the obvious output I was able to make some great new relationships along the way.



3. Aged Computer Replacement Project

The Computer Replacement Project has been something which has brought out the best and worst of me, and really did require a lot of effort, energy and resilience to fulfil. At all stages it was testing - from the consolidation activities, to negotiations and finally the installations. At no point did it feel easy, but it was only really when we were faced with, and able to physically touch the computers did we understand the scale of the challenge. Across 6 months around 200 computers were replaced, with the majority of this work taking place between July and October.

It was a phenomenal achievement, and one which was reached without any additional resource, and as a collaborative effort between ourselves and Central IT Services. And this collaboration has led to improved relationships and a better understanding of each other! A special mention and thanks to Adrian - as without his endeavour and commitment this would not have been possible!

Jona's Jolly Jubilations!

2025 has been another busy year for Jona, and in amongst the busy-ness he's overseen some considerable activities, projects and improvements, and has shared the below as moments which have truly stood out!

1. Ashmolean Museum - Welcome Desk Videowall

In July, alongside the museum facilities team and an AV contractor, we replaced the Ashmolean Welcome Desk Videowall. After 12 years of service the previous technology had definitely delivered value, but it was increasingly prone to failure and required significant time to keep it running. The new installation is a substantial step up, moving from what was effectively 12 separate panels to a single, seamless, edgeless display.



2. Pitt Rivers Museum - Audio Visual Improvements

In September, we supported a fast-paced project to upgrade the AV systems in the Pitt Rivers Lecture Theatre and Seminar Room. The existing setups in both spaces had been assembled incrementally over time; this project replaced them with a single, integrated solution, fully supporting hybrid teaching and meetings. The chosen system aligns closely with the approach used in the CTRC, and we see it as a strong potential model for future upgrades across G&M sites as opportunities arise. This work was delivered to a very tight deadline, ready for the start of Michaelmas term.



3. Botanic Garden Christmas Fair!

A key item in the December infrastructure work plan was supporting Wi-Fi at the OBG Christmas Fair. Providing fast, reliable connectivity to a marquee environment is always a challenge, but this year we worked with Central IT's Improving Wireless Team and That Event Company to deploy seven temporary access points across the site. While coordinating across more teams added complexity, it also enabled a signal survey to confirm coverage and performance matched expectations. We've already begun discussions with the Improving Wireless team about longer-term Wi-Fi solutions for parts of the Botanic Garden, with the aim (planning permission permitting) of having a permanent installation in place ahead of future fairs.

4. Cyber Security Improvements

Behind the scenes, but just as important, our cyber security improvement programme has also progressed significantly this year. We've completed several workstreams spanning endpoint protection, vulnerability management, and network segmentation. This remains a key focus for 2026, with further substantial work already in planning.

Helen's Ho Ho Highlights!

A special guest piece from Helen Moulden - Commercial Systems Manager

As we wind down for the festive season, it's the perfect moment to look back on a year packed with change, progress, and plenty of collaboration. With major projects delivered, new systems adopted across GLAM, and 3,247 support requests resolved along the way, 2025 has certainly kept us on our toes! Here's a look at our year's standout moments.

1. Completing the Galaxy Audience Platform Project

One of the year's major milestones was the completion of the Galaxy Audience Platform (GAP) project. A fully integrated CRM system and the new Dotdigital marketing platform are now live across all GLAM sites, helping us communicate more effectively and more consistently than ever.

Highlights so far:

- 137,687 new contacts added (230,592 → 368,279)
- OUMNH newsletter subscribers: 20k → 44k
- Pitt Rivers Museum subscribers: 0 → 18k in four weeks
- 3 million+ emails sent via Dotdigital
- 52% average email open rate across GLAM (above average for the sector)

A big welcome also goes to Emma Goldstone, who joined our team this year as our CRM & Marketing Coordinator, supporting the continued growth of the platform.

2. Adyen Goes Live Across GLAM

Another major step forward was the rollout of Adyen, replacing WorldPay as our payment platform. Visitors now enjoy faster, smoother transactions and more payment options—including better support for international guests. Work in 2026 will continue to build on this, introducing additional payment methods and donation functionality.

3. Future-Proofing Our Hardware and Infrastructure

Behind the scenes, plenty of essential work took place to keep operations steady through even the busiest seasons:

- Replacement of tills and contactless donation devices
- Partnership with Gardens & Museums IT on the Windows 11 Upgrade and Computer Replacement
- Continued improvements to system reliability and security

Thank you

A heartfelt thank you to colleagues across GLAM for your support, teamwork, and patience throughout another busy and productive year.

Wishing you all a restful break, a sprinkle of festive cheer, and a wonderful start to the New Year!

Helen, Freya, Stuart and Emma - Commercial Systems Team

Pets Corner 3 - Feline Good!

"Guess who's back, back again - the pet's are back! But you already knew that, as I mentioned it on the frontpage. More condensed than in previous years but there are still tails to tell (and yes, the pun is intended! So, read on for an update on Helen's Cats, Huckle and Pixel and their development over the last year, alongside the furthering maturity of my cat Jasmine!

Huckle & Pixel - Helen's Cats

Huckle has apparently learned to count, at least when it comes to biscuits. If we short-change him by even a single biskie, he sits down, locks eyes with us, puts his ears back, and waits in silent judgment until the full quota is restored.

And Pixel has developed a deep and abiding passion for... sellotape. As a result, wrapping Christmas presents now requires military-level secrecy, as she will otherwise immediately attempt to nibble the taped corners of every parcel.



Jasmine - Carl's Cat

Last year I mentioned how our cat Jasmine, who was originally adopted and a known terror to the neighbourhood, had mellowed as she'd aged. And now at 7 and a senior cat (yes, a senior at 7 - the Vet told me that last week) the mellowing and maturity has reached a new level.

No longer is she darting around causing mayhem all the time (only occasionally now) she is more often found curled up on the sofa 'chilling out'. Now, this would be ok, but Jasmine's 'chilled out' state and positioning is a little odd - in that, as shown by the image, her curling up is better described as cat-spreading. This brings considerable hilarity to my children, whilst Jasmine returns the attention with a 'what do you want look (as cats do).

And finally, I'm still waiting to share a special (and cat meme) moment between Jasmine and our Robot Vacuum. The vacuum has suffered a few jab punches, and is frequently used as a seat, but not as a transportation device (yet!)



Service & Support Statistics –
1st August 2025 to 31st October 2025

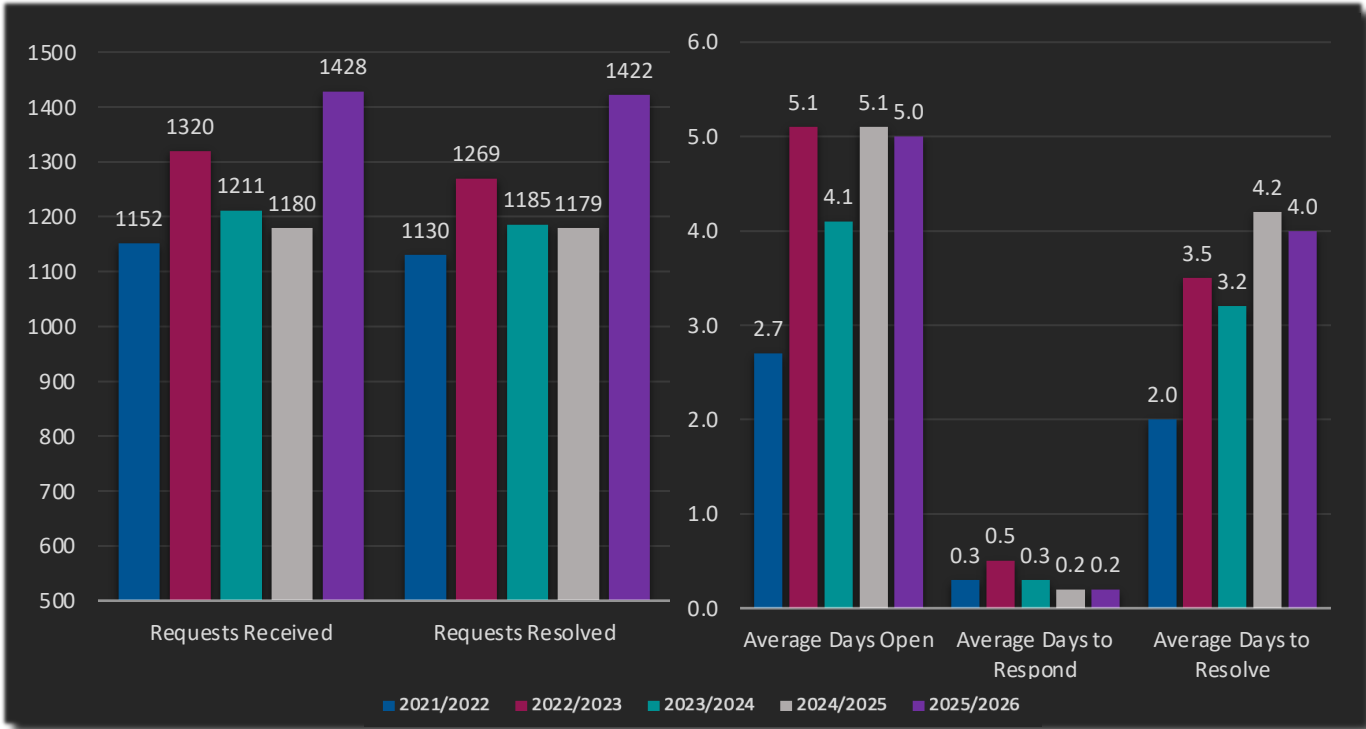
Quarter 1 of the 2025/26 University Academic Year has been an incredibly busy period for us. This has been heavily influenced by the continuation and completion of a number of projects including Audio-Visual Improvement work at the Pitt Rivers Museum, the CONNECT Aged Computer Replacement Project and the Windows 11 Upgrade. We also continue to see an increase in demand since Single Point of Contact (a simplification of the mechanisms for receiving IT support) was implemented in March.

Requests Received
1428

Requests Resolved
1422

Avg. Days to Respond
0.2

Avg. Days to Resolve
4.0



Location	Requests	Percentage
Ashmolean Museum	611	38%
Museum of Natural History	157	10%
Pitt Rivers Museum	163	10%
History of Science Museum	109	7%
Botanic Gardens & Arboretum	84	5%
GLAM Divisional Office	108	6%
Bodleian Libraries	29	2%
GLAM Stores	14	1%
All sites - requests and activities which benefit or impact all locations	345	21%

2025/2026 Gardens & Museums IT Roadmap

