



LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT FINANCIAL YEAR 2025-26

ROYAL ORTHOPAEDIC HOSPITAL KNOWLEDGE AND LIBRARY SERVICES

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RESPECT COMPASSION
EXCELLENCE PRIDE
OPENNESS INNOVATION





INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2025-26 annual report for the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital Knowledge and Library Service. Our service is dedicated to meeting the knowledge, evidence, and information needs of all staff, students, and learners at the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

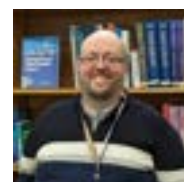
Alongside a high-quality library of physical and online resources, we also provide expert services such as literature searching, evidence support, document supply, and information skills training.

In addition to our collections, we offer a dedicated physical space for staff and students to work, study, or relax.

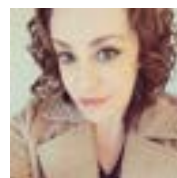
Our library strategy remains directly aligned with the Trust vision of **less pain, more independence, and life-changing care.**

LESS PAIN
MORE INDEPENDENCE
LIFE-CHANGING CARE

THE LIBRARY TEAM



Librarian Team Leader
Gareth Sunley



Assistant Librarian
Beth Boddice

2025-26

A YEAR IN NUMBERS

 **2 LIBRARIANS** 

14 of 16 QIOF Essential Indicators achieved (NHS England)
(Increase of 2 indicators since 24/25)

896

Print Book issues and renewals

Decrease 18.7% on 2024/25

1305

ClinicalKey e-resource platform materials accessed (ebooks, journal articles as “Unique Item Requests”)

8.7% increase on 24/25

226

Health Libraries Midlands Total Members

Decrease 4.7% on 24/25

52

Literature Searches by library staff

Decrease 36.4% on 24/25

16

1-1 Literature Search training sessions delivered

220% increase on 24/25

629

staff, students or learners received a library induction

Increase 12.3% on 24/25

267

OpenAthens members

Decrease 4% on 24/25

867

Trust staff hours saved on Literature searching

1:3 ‘gift of time’ ratio
289 librarian hours of searching

1251

Article Requests

Increase 6.8% on 24/25

Through responsible disposal of old books in 2025/26 we saved:

2

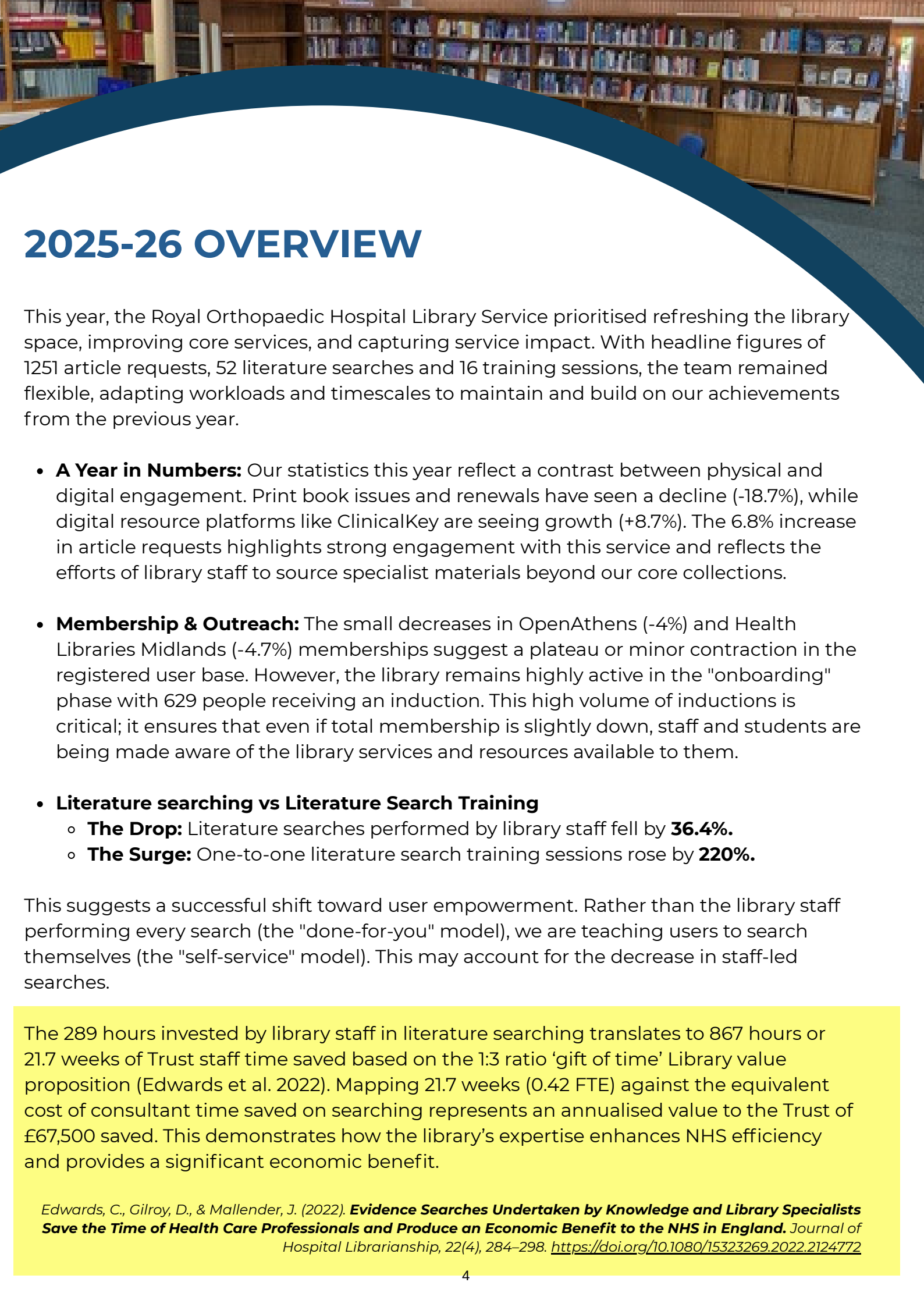
Trees

1235

gallons of water

402 kwh

of electricity



2025-26 OVERVIEW

This year, the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital Library Service prioritised refreshing the library space, improving core services, and capturing service impact. With headline figures of 1251 article requests, 52 literature searches and 16 training sessions, the team remained flexible, adapting workloads and timescales to maintain and build on our achievements from the previous year.

- **A Year in Numbers:** Our statistics this year reflect a contrast between physical and digital engagement. Print book issues and renewals have seen a decline (-18.7%), while digital resource platforms like ClinicalKey are seeing growth (+8.7%). The 6.8% increase in article requests highlights strong engagement with this service and reflects the efforts of library staff to source specialist materials beyond our core collections.
- **Membership & Outreach:** The small decreases in OpenAthens (-4%) and Health Libraries Midlands (-4.7%) memberships suggest a plateau or minor contraction in the registered user base. However, the library remains highly active in the "onboarding" phase with 629 people receiving an induction. This high volume of inductions is critical; it ensures that even if total membership is slightly down, staff and students are being made aware of the library services and resources available to them.
- **Literature searching vs Literature Search Training**
 - **The Drop:** Literature searches performed by library staff fell by **36.4%**.
 - **The Surge:** One-to-one literature search training sessions rose by **220%**.

This suggests a successful shift toward user empowerment. Rather than the library staff performing every search (the "done-for-you" model), we are teaching users to search themselves (the "self-service" model). This may account for the decrease in staff-led searches.

The 289 hours invested by library staff in literature searching translates to 867 hours or 21.7 weeks of Trust staff time saved based on the 1:3 ratio 'gift of time' Library value proposition (Edwards et al. 2022). Mapping 21.7 weeks (0.42 FTE) against the equivalent cost of consultant time saved on searching represents an annualised value to the Trust of £67,500 saved. This demonstrates how the library's expertise enhances NHS efficiency and provides a significant economic benefit.

Edwards, C., Gilroy, D., & Mallender, J. (2022). **Evidence Searches Undertaken by Knowledge and Library Specialists Save the Time of Health Care Professionals and Produce an Economic Benefit to the NHS in England.** *Journal of Hospital Librarianship*, 22(4), 284–298. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15323269.2022.2124772>



2025-26 OVERVIEW

- **Library Space Refresh:** We updated all library furniture to create a modern, functional study environment. Power sockets (a frequent user request) were increased from two to over thirty. This refresh has been well received by staff and medical students since its completion in Autumn 2025. Additionally, removing shelving at the library entrances has created a fully accessible entry point.
- **Service Improvement:** As part of a Trust cost-improvement process, we evaluated all core services to examine how we could boost efficiency and cost savings without compromising quality. A major success was streamlining literature search requests via a new online form, which captures necessary details upfront and reduces follow-up queries. We also adjusted turnaround times for searches and enquiries to balance optimal efficiency against staff capacity. Responsibility for the Knowledge Hub social media moved from being a sole library task to a shared effort across Education and Training, freeing up time and improving post frequency and quality. Throughout the year we also reviewed all physical and electronic resources against usage data and national standards to ensure our collection remains relevant, easy to find and cost-effective.
- **Impact Case Studies:** We published a bank of case studies on our website to demonstrate our value to research, education, and patient care. This ongoing project spotlights our most significant work in the past year, such as research into arthroplasty health inequalities, evidence-building for sports injury rehabilitation and contributing to a new worldwide orthopaedic imaging protocol. Additionally, these case studies have all been submitted to NHS England and subsequently approved for publication in a national database of NHS Library case studies.
- **Enquiry Count Sample Week:** In accordance with NHS England reporting requirements, we held an Enquiry Count sample week during October 2025. Over a five-day period, the library handled 105 enquiries: 70% were library-specific, while 30% related to the Knowledge Hub or the nearby Education and Training teams. These figures highlight both a high volume of library enquiries and significant support for the Knowledge Hub, demonstrating the library's essential role in the centre's daily operations.

2025-26 OVERVIEW

- **CILIP Chartership:** To ensure the ROH Library service remains at the forefront of the profession, both the Librarian Team Leader and Assistant Librarian continue to work towards Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) Chartership. Achieving this national "gold standard" will confirm our staff's expertise as highly professional librarians and ensure that the library is operated in line with industry best practice. In addition to this, the Librarian Team Leader successfully completed the CMI Level 5 Award in Management and Leadership in Autumn 2025.
- **LMS Integration:** The Library launched an updated literature searching e-learning package on the ROH Learning Management System (LMS) available 24/7. Accessed via single sign-on, these modules complement our increased 1-1 training sessions, which have enabled more staff to conduct their own literature searches independently.



These achievements reflect a year of dedicated service improvement and a renewed focus on user experience. Moving forward, our focus will be on adapting and innovating to ensure the library remains an excellent resource for the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital.

STRATEGY UPDATE

PROGRESS AGAINST QUALITY IMPROVEMENT OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK (QIOF)

NHS Library performance is measured against 16 Essential Indicators defined by the National NHS England Library team's Quality Improvement and Outcomes Framework (QIOF).

- **Current Status:** 14 of 16 Essential Indicators achieved. Agreed additional indicators under Outcome 1 and 2 remain to be achieved.
- **Recent Progress:** This year, self-evaluation confirms the achievement of Indicator 6.3 (Evidence of Impact) and Indicator 2.1 (Clinical Decision Support Advocacy).
- **Outstanding Essential Indicators:** Full compliance depends on meeting Indicator 3.2 (Feedback Analysis) and Indicator 4.1 (Professional Leadership).

PROGRESS AGAINST LIBRARY STRATEGY

Our 2023–28 strategy delivers actionable goals aligned with Trust strategy, Education and Training business plan, and the national QIOF standards. Regular reviews ensure we meet milestones and stay on track with long-term objectives. Since the last report, we have achieved the following:

Complete (C) | Ongoing (O)

Digital transformation	• Expansion of library website, ideally attached to the main ROH site (C) • Grow library website to highlight new resources and services (C) • Grow resource provision to reflect changing Trust needs (C/O)
Expanding outreach	• Develop bank of library case studies and use feedback to inform evolution of strategy (C) • Promote and advocate clinical decision tools (BMJ Best Practice) (C) • Develop suite of structured training sessions (O) • Standalone library outreach activities and 'special occasion' feedback activities that align with wider Trust initiatives and activities (O) • Develop training suite to offer more complex skills training (O) • Regular submission of papers and appearance at staff committees reporting on library developments and progress (O) • Increase engagement with staff networks, grand rounds, audit (O)
Developing services	• New look and feel for literature searches (C) • Introduction of current awareness service (C) • Define minimum standards for library services (C) • Create a PKSB on our library team to inform developments to our library service and review capacity/skill gaps in team (C) • Both library staff to gain CILIP chartership (O) • Scope potential demand for more in-depth literature-related services (O)
Enhancing space	• Optimise space for use by students (C) • Grow staff wellbeing collection in collaboration with staff groups (C) • Monitor, inform and contribute to library refurbishment plans (C) • Minimise disruption to users during Knowledge Hub refurbishment (C) • Introduce users to new library space as and when it is completed (C) • Manage the potential increase in traffic and enquiries in the Knowledge Hub (C) • Maintain and grow physical resources for staff education, information, professional development and wellbeing (O)

2025-26 LIBRARY IMPACT

Impact Showcase

This year, in line with our library strategy we celebrated the launch of the Library Impact Showcase on the library website. This initiative features a growing list of detailed impact case studies, developed in collaboration with library users, to demonstrate the tangible influence of our services on clinical practice and academic output.

These case studies highlight the library's vital contribution to diverse and high-impact areas of study, including:

- Addressing health inequalities in arthroplasty outcomes and the impact on patient care
- Supporting research into women seeking physiotherapy during menopause.
- Building an evidence base for sports rehabilitation in patients
- Advancing research into clinical musculoskeletal (MSK) imaging protocols, reducing clinical risk for patients and improved financial efficiency.

See our full impact showcase at

<https://www.healthlibrariesmidlands.nhs.uk/roh-library/rohlibraryimpact/>

Example:

NHS knowledge and library specialists
Bringing the evidence you need to inform your decisions

NHS
The Royal
Orthopaedic Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

Sourcing Success: Powering Global Musculoskeletal Imaging Protocols

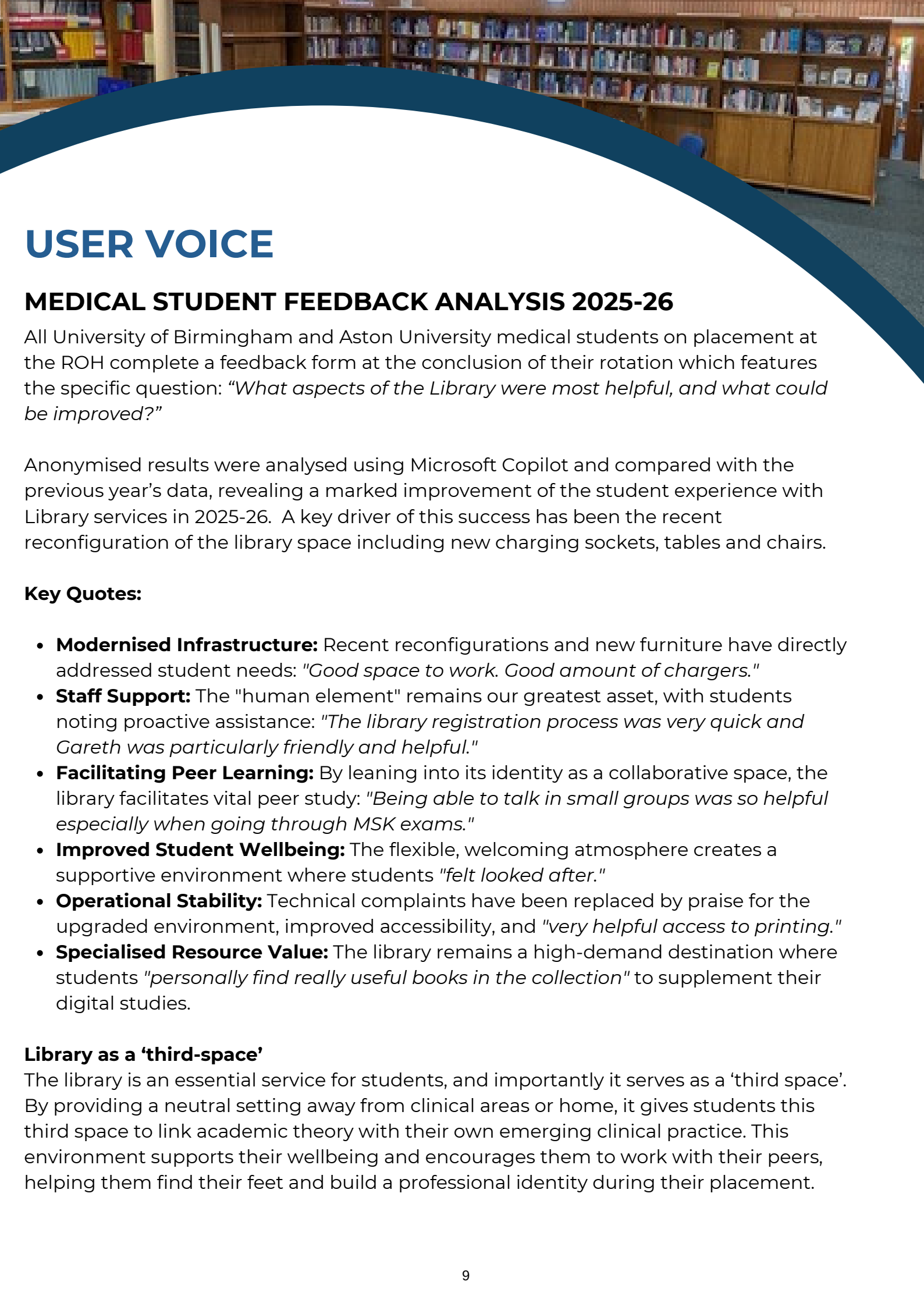
Library specialists at the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital provided essential expertise in sourcing a vast evidence base, supporting the publication of over 410 papers, 74 book chapters, and 6 textbooks. This rapid literature supply saved significant time for clinical researchers, and supported the development of the Birmingham Atypical Cartilage Tumour Imaging Protocol (BACTIP).

Now implemented worldwide, this library-backed research has standardised musculoskeletal imaging, reduced clinical risk, and improved financial efficiency through evidence-based practice.

"The ROH library service has been instrumental in ensuring evidence-based practice, standardising care, and improving outcomes for patients."

Mr Rajesh Botchu, Consultant Musculoskeletal Radiologist
The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

A MILLION DECISIONS



USER VOICE

MEDICAL STUDENT FEEDBACK ANALYSIS 2025-26

All University of Birmingham and Aston University medical students on placement at the ROH complete a feedback form at the conclusion of their rotation which features the specific question: *"What aspects of the Library were most helpful, and what could be improved?"*

Anonymised results were analysed using Microsoft Copilot and compared with the previous year's data, revealing a marked improvement of the student experience with Library services in 2025-26. A key driver of this success has been the recent reconfiguration of the library space including new charging sockets, tables and chairs.

Key Quotes:

- **Modernised Infrastructure:** Recent reconfigurations and new furniture have directly addressed student needs: *"Good space to work. Good amount of chargers."*
- **Staff Support:** The "human element" remains our greatest asset, with students noting proactive assistance: *"The library registration process was very quick and Gareth was particularly friendly and helpful."*
- **Facilitating Peer Learning:** By leaning into its identity as a collaborative space, the library facilitates vital peer study: *"Being able to talk in small groups was so helpful especially when going through MSK exams."*
- **Improved Student Wellbeing:** The flexible, welcoming atmosphere creates a supportive environment where students *"felt looked after."*
- **Operational Stability:** Technical complaints have been replaced by praise for the upgraded environment, improved accessibility, and *"very helpful access to printing."*
- **Specialised Resource Value:** The library remains a high-demand destination where students *"personally find really useful books in the collection"* to supplement their digital studies.

Library as a 'third-space'

The library is an essential service for students, and importantly it serves as a 'third space'. By providing a neutral setting away from clinical areas or home, it gives students this third space to link academic theory with their own emerging clinical practice. This environment supports their wellbeing and encourages them to work with their peers, helping them find their feet and build a professional identity during their placement.

OPERATIONAL INSIGHTS

FINANCIAL REPORT 2025-26

Description	Budget	Actual	Variance	Variance Comment
Total pay	£88718	£88655	£63	Annual leave carry-over adjustment
Total non-pay	£36600	£27119	£9481	In-year non-recurrent non-pay savings against budget = 26% inc. 5% recurrent CIP
Total Income (SIFT)	(£45000)	(£37500)	(£7500)	Variance held in Trust reserves
Total for PGMC Library	£80318	£78273	£2045	Amount saved against Trust budget

MEMBERSHIP REPORT 2025-26



Health Libraries Midlands members (ROH) per job role. Recorded 1st April 2026	Additional Clinical Services	3
	Additional Prof., Scientific and Technical	4
	Administrative and clerical	34
	Allied Health Professionals	18
	Estates and Ancillary	3
	Healthcare scientists	6
	Medical and Dental	85
	Nursing and Midwifery Registered	65
	Students	8
	TOTAL	226



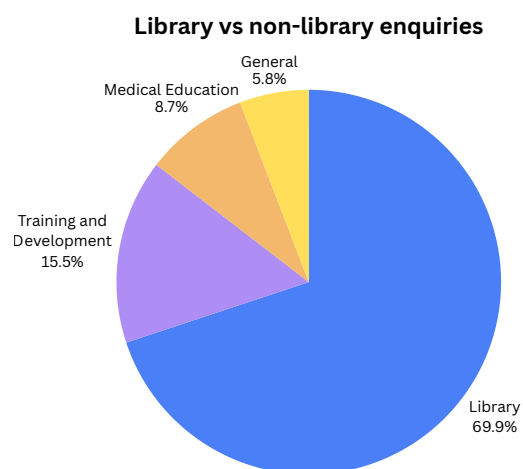
Average OpenAthens users per Job role (ROH) April 25 to March 26	Nurse/Midwife/Visit	57.5
	Allied Health Profs	54.7
	Drs (SpR, SHO, PrHO)	50
	Consultants	45.5
	Students - placement	30.1
	Admin & Managers	12.8

OPERATIONAL INSIGHTS

ENQUIRY COUNT 2025-26

Between **20th October and 24th October 2025** the Library conducted an annual enquiry count sample week in line with our reporting requirements for NHS England. Each enquiry made to the library, whether at the library counter, email or telephone call, was counted and categorised.

Team	Information / Resource	Procedural / Directional	Total
Library	37	35	72
Training and Development	5	11	16
Medical Education	1	8	9
General	0	6	6
TOTAL	43	60	103



Total Enquiries

103 enquiries were made to the library during the 5-day period.

BREAKDOWN

72 Library Enquiries

37 enquiries (51%) on Information / Resource

Support : These represent high-value interactions, inc. evidence searches, resource access, and information retrieval.

35 enquiries (49%) Procedural / Directional

Support : Questions regarding library operations, rules, and services (e.g., opening hours, membership, or equipment access). or simple requests for the physical location of facilities, rooms, or items within the building.

Conclusion - Balanced demand: The core library workload is split almost evenly between providing deep information resources and managing daily operational procedures, showing we are as much a 'knowledge partner' as we are a 'functional space'.

31 Non-library enquiries

Alongside the 69.9% of enquiries focused solely on traditional library services. Nearly 30% of our enquiries are now directly related to Learning & Development, Medical Education, or general information.

Conclusion: The library serves as a vital central information point for the Knowledge Hub. This likely reflects the reconfigured library layout and more visible counter, resulting in 30% of our enquiries being non-library related. Managing these requests may stretch librarian capacity to deliver the specialist, evidence-based work that requires sustained concentration.

OPERATIONAL INSIGHTS

LOCAL STATISTICS COMPARISON 2025-26 BIRMINGHAM AND SOLIHULL ICB (BSOL)

(TRANSITIONING TO THE BIRMINGHAM, BLACK COUNTRY AND SOLIHULL ICB CLUSTER)

Trust	Literature Searches (Librarians only)	Article Requests	Librarians (WTE) minimum B5	Paraprofessional Library Staff (WTE) grades up to B4	Total Trust Staff	Ratio of searches per total Trust staff (lower ratios = more activity)	Searches per Librarian	Article requests per total library staff headcount
Royal Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	52	1251	2	0	1450	1:28	26	626
University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust	424	2097	10	6	25000	1:59	42.4	131
Birmingham Women's and Children's NHS Foundation Trust	102	2606	2	4	6000	1:59	51	434
Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust	143	723	4.1	0.54	5000	1:35	35	176
Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust	58	432	2	2	6000	1:103	29	108
Average all Trusts	155.8	1241.8	4.02	2.5	8960	1:56	37	295

The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital (ROH) Library operates under a distinct service model compared to other libraries within the Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board (ICB). Due to the smaller scale of the Trust, the library is staffed exclusively by two professional librarians. This team directly manages the entire spectrum of operations, encompassing both strategic professional duties (such as evidence-based literature searches, resource and service management) and paraprofessional tasks (including enquiry desk coverage, book loans, and document delivery).

Performance metrics indicate exceptionally high output and engagement levels from the ROH Library staff relative to this dual responsibility:

- **Literature Searches:** The ratio of literature searches to Trust staff at the ROH is 1 search per 28 Trust Staff, representing double the regional activity rate compared to the ICB average of 1 per 56.
- **Article Requests:** In 2025–26, the library fulfilled 1,251 article requests. This equates to 626 requests per library staff member, more than twice the BSol regional average of 295 requests per library staff member.

This data demonstrates a significant operational challenge. Without a dedicated tier of paraprofessional support, the two ROH librarians balance a high volume of transactional, day-to-day tasks with complex, evidence-based research and strategic service management. In contrast, duties across other BSol libraries are generally separated between professional and paraprofessional staff.



CHALLENGES

The library service faces some uncertainty due to shifting priorities in the national NHS library landscape. Following NHS England's decommissioning of certain national e-resources, alongside the national Knowledge and Library team's upcoming 2027 transition to the Department of Health, the full impact on our own services will unfold over the coming years.

To manage rising demand and complex workloads, we have adjusted our timescales and workflows to protect the library team from burnout. While we remain committed to delivering high-quality work, we are closely monitoring service demand to ensure staff wellbeing is not compromised.

Following a Trust requirement to deliver a service review and cost improvement plan (CIP) we were successful at exceeding our cost-saving targets. This was achieved by unsubscribing to underused resources and tightening our book budget through smarter purchasing. This resulted in a non-pay spend reduction of 26% (including the original 5% CIP saving). We also reviewed and optimised our processes to ensure service delivery operates at the highest level of efficiency.

The modernised layout has greatly enhanced the library space, yet the open counter layout presents a challenge: thirty percent of enquiries are now non-library related. While this demonstrates our value to the centre, we must balance this activity against the protected time required for specialist, evidence-based work. We are currently exploring ways to protect staff capacity while remaining an accessible and welcoming space.



THE YEAR AHEAD

We remain committed to building on our successes while aligning with the upcoming ROH Trust strategy and the three core pillars of the NHS 10-Year Workforce Plan. We will also begin preparing for the next Knowledge for Healthcare strategy ahead of its 2027 launch.

In response to growing financial pressures, we are exploring regional or ICB-level consortium options for some digital resources. While these may offer cost efficiencies, we will carefully assess licensing, legal, and technical considerations to ensure shared access works effectively across organisations.

We will continue to review and reconfigure the library space to better support its core role as a dedicated knowledge and learning resource. This will include exploring ways to clearly separate Library Services from general Knowledge Hub enquiries, helping staff access the right support more efficiently while maintaining a focused environment for study, research, and specialist guidance. We will also use user experience insights to better understand how the space is used and to inform ongoing improvements.

The library team thanks everyone who has supported and used our services over the past year. We look forward to continuing our collaboration in the year ahead.