

Trainee Travels: Exploring Librarianship in Cambridge

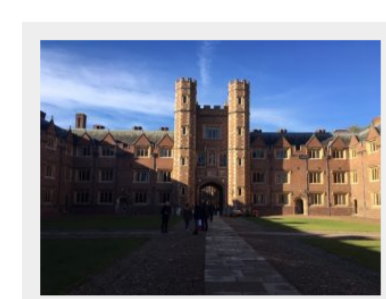
Cambridge libraries have been welcoming Graduate Trainees for over twenty years, helping new information professionals to take their first steps discovering the wonderful world of librarianship. Trainees hail from diverse backgrounds, with past members of the group coming to Cambridge from Canada, Germany, France, Ireland, Scotland, and England. The majority of us, like our predecessors, will move on to study a Masters degree in an information-related field. Though we might not all come back to Cambridge we will keep strong ties with the libraries and our trainee peers which have provided us with such an invaluable experience.

Adopt a trainee, gain a new friend for life.

Applying to Library School Event

Posted on December 3, 2018 by Ruth Long

We Graduate Trainees are lucky enough to be invited to lots of library visits and talks – and hopefully, as the year rolls on, you'll see more of our explorations here on the blog. One talk last month that was perhaps less glamorous than most, but very helpful, was an 'Applying to Library School' event, held at the lovely beautiful St John's College (where Rowan works, lucky thing!).



The lovely First Court at St John's College, St John's, not far from St. Rowan's.

As some of you reading this might already know, the Graduate Trainee posts are offered to candidates that have an interest in pursuing a career in the Library/Information sector. These days, many jobs in the sector require a postgraduate degree, and many former Graduate Trainees have gone on to University (or 'Library School') after their year in Cambridge to obtain one.

So this was a chance for us (and other interested library-orientated folks) to hear what was on offer. Seven representatives from various Universities were present, and during the event we got to know a little bit about the courses they were there to showcase, as well as taking part in a more informal discussion. There are quite a few institutions that offer courses in Library/Information Management, but of these, the following Universities were represented on the day: Aberystwyth, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Strathclyde, Sheffield, University College London and University of London.

Visiting St John's for a CLIP East event

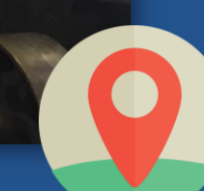


Rowan: St John's College Library

I simply would not have encountered the breadth of opportunities available at St John's outside of a traineeship. I am able to choose areas of interest and carry out my own projects. A real highlight for me has been supervising exhibitions in the Old Library and working with the college Archivist. Coming from a science degree I had not realised I would enjoy the historical side of information management so much. I am looking forward to creating my own Special Collections exhibition soon, and have definitely been given food for thought for my future career.



Meeting our trainee group for the first time and visiting the University Library



Nicola : Kings School Ely

Being a trainee in a school has enabled me to explore both my interests in librarianship and my desire to work in education. As well as the typical library skills of cataloguing, shelving and making displays, I am also involved in everyday school life. I help the students with accessing databases, researching Extended Projects and general pastoral care. For me, the best thing about being a trainee is that it has opened up new opportunities and career paths that I would not have considered before.

Raphaëlle: Trinity College Library

If I had to choose one thing that Trinity has taught me, it is that you cannot reduce being a librarian to just one task. There is always something new, or on the opposite something very old, to read, catalogue, shelve, and new questions from our users to answer everyday. The traineeship has allowed me to manipulate a large range of materials, and I am very grateful for the variety of tasks I have been able to undertake. I cannot wait to see what the remaining time at Trinity holds for me.

Daryl: Schlumberger Research Centre

I work at a corporate library for the world's largest oilfield services company. My library is different from a university library - with a smaller physical collection and no rare books, most materials are accessible electronically. My customers are mostly researchers in science and engineering.

I value my library as a communal space where people share ideas, build relationships, drink tea and reflect (perhaps even take a book out!). My traineeship enables me to pursue skills in archiving, cataloguing, IT and organising events. I frequently visit other libraries in Cambridge to gain insights into librarianship.

Eva: Newnham College Library

As a comparatively 'young' college that battled oppressive forces to even exist (!), the pride of Newnham College Library is the caring, invigorating environment it provides to its all-female student body as much as its inspiring feminist collections. Having come from working in a public library, the atmosphere of care and attentiveness towards both students and library resources suited me perfectly. I could not wish for a more pleasant environment in which to learn the ropes of cataloguing, classification and the countless other tasks required to keep an academic library running smoothly.

Isobel: Queens' College Library

At Queens' library my time and training are split equally between the student library and the old library, meaning my work is really varied. Working directly with both rare books and academic library specialists, I am able to train in aspects of both disciplines: for example, both modern and rare books cataloguing, acquisitions, social media, publicity, research and enquiries. I have helped curate an exhibition of 18th century pamphlets in the old library and also to develop a study facility for graduate students. The range of experience and training is perfect preparation for my future library career.

Natasha: Pembroke College Library

I have already learnt so much including cataloguing, researching policies and, of course, helping readers. Everything my team does is for the benefit of our readers and the Library. So far the pinnacle of my traineeship is having the opportunity to improve our service and making a lasting impact beyond the year. I am very lucky to have colleagues who enjoy training the next generation of librarians and are dedicated to supporting us.

Visit To Central Cambridge Public library

Posted on December 11, 2018 by Eva W

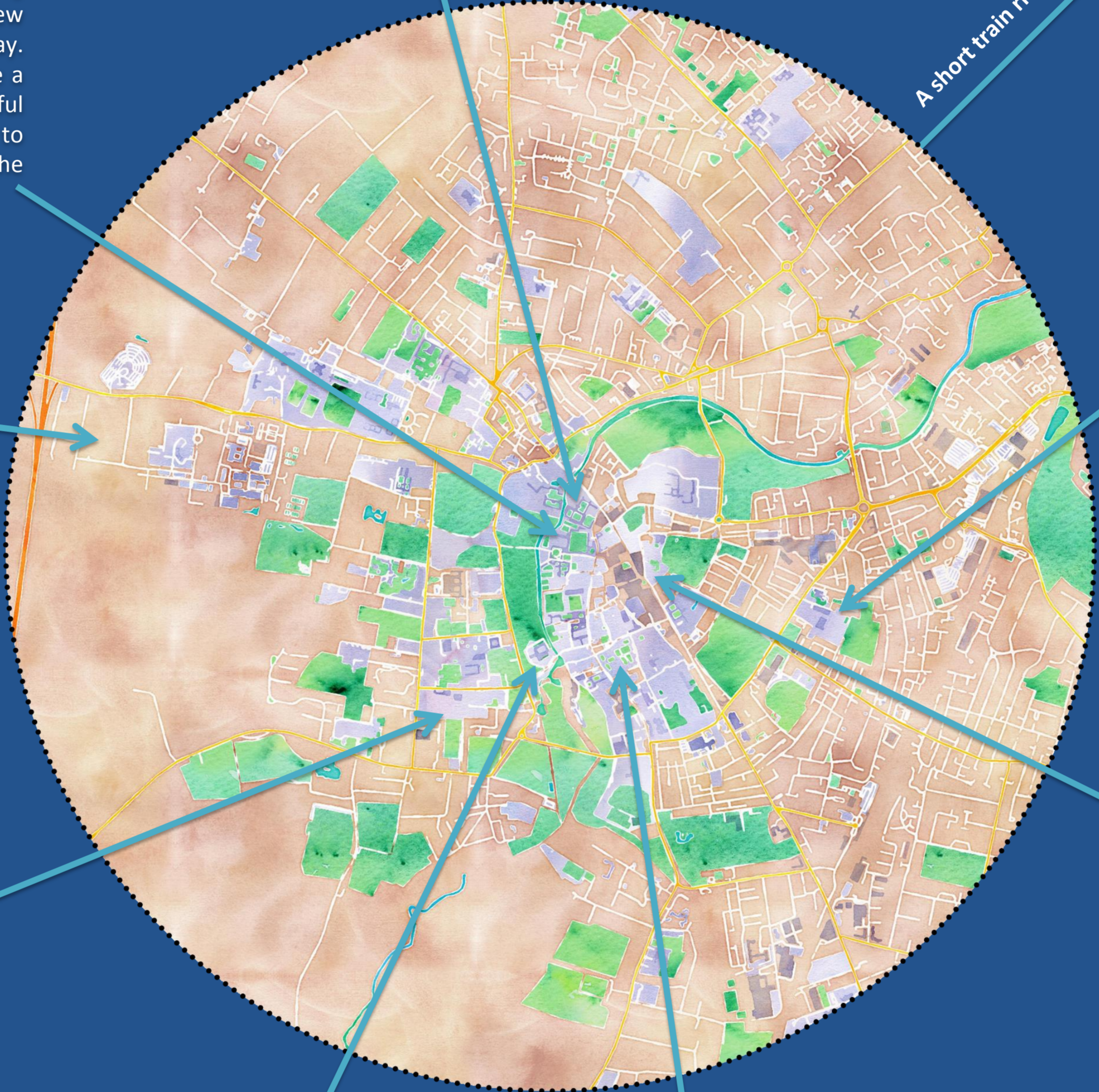
Near the end of November, my fellow trainees and I had the pleasure of visiting the central public library of Cambridge, one of the most utilised in the UK. This is an impressive feat given it is not exactly in plain sight! When initially hunting for the building I had my eyes peeled for a monolith akin to the Mitchell Library in Glasgow, when in fact its entrance is to be found slotted neatly between upmarket retail destinations on the second floor of Lion's Yard Shopping Mall. To those of us who had worked in public libraries prior to our traineeships the environment and layout was familiar – colourful, bright, spacious, and filled with the ambient buzz of its patrons (with occasional wailing from its youngest visitors).



Finding out about the world of public libraries



We are invited to lots of fun things as trainees!



A short train ride away...

Why are graduate traineeships important?

- **Mutual benefits** – Trainees visit other libraries, widening their knowledge of the profession whilst providing a new perspective and ideas that can be implemented in their own library
 - **Professional development** – Assisting in training new professionals enriches the progression opportunities of current library staff
 - **Building strong networks** – Traineeships enable the creation of lasting professional networks which support future careers
- **Practical knowledge and awareness** – Trainees go on to study information management qualifications with prior vocational knowledge resulting in high quality new professionals



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