

M25 SpeedMeet

June 2025



Questions

- **Who are you, where are you based and what do you do?**

I'm Helen Curtis and I am Director of Learning Resources and University Librarian at Oxford Brookes University. I lead our directorate, which includes the university library, special collections and archives, and digital education and design services. I'm based in Warwickshire and I travel to our university campuses in Oxford and Swindon.

- **What do you most enjoy about your job?**

It's the variety of my role. As well as working with my brilliant teams in the library, special collections, and digital education, I am part of a number of cross-university groups and projects and I get to be involved in so many new and interesting initiatives. I'm currently part of a University wide initiative looking at digital capabilities and it's been really exciting hearing about the good practice happening around the institution and thinking about how we can bring this together as an offering.

- **What motivates you in your work?**

I am genuinely motivated by seeing our students and staff succeed. I love seeing the amazing feedback about our staff and services and knowing that we have made a real difference to their university experience.

- **How can/has the M25 Consortium supported you in your career?**

When I became Director at Brookes in 2023 after many years working in Mercian Collaboration libraries I was keen to develop a new network across the M25. Connecting with my peers and

sharing problems and ideas has always been so important in my career and the variety of libraries within the consortium is a real benefit, helping to see how things are done elsewhere, and to learn creative solutions to challenges that we are all facing. Being a member of the Steering Group has been both personally and professionally rewarding and I would recommend taking on a role in any of our M25 groups.

- **What would it surprise people to know about you?**

Maybe that I own very few books! I am a big believer in reading books and passing them on for others to enjoy and, of course, in borrowing books from libraries, so apart from a handful of favourites, I don't fill my home with them. It does leave much more room on the shelves for my music collection, which is my other real passion.

- **Complete the sentence: If I wasn't working in a library I would be.....**

Probably not too far away working in our sister profession as a film archivist. After completing my film degree it was the career I was aiming for and I enjoyed some great experiences in film and media archives before being tempted from dark archive rooms to the (slightly) lighter library world. While much of my career in libraries has been all about digital advancement, I have never been more content than when I could spend my days running strips of film through the Steenbeck machine.