This JIBS User Group workshop was subtitled "strategies for e-resource budgeting, negotiation and collection review". Held on December 2 when York and all points north were deep in snow and ice - compounding somehow the reality of austerity Britain - it was touch-and-go whether the workshop would happen at all. But all the speakers made it, if not all the delegates ...

Is HE finally coming out fighting from its grumbling at the perfect storm of inflation/price increases, damaging fluctuations in exchange rates, deterioration of the value of sterling and now the rise in VAT in 2011? What is the role of collection development in this current economic climate? Is there a need for a new skill set for the profession, a consistency of approach in our plea bargaining? How do we approach vendor management and the acquisition of content and to what extent will a consumer ethos being introduced into HE affect purchasing decision-making? How can services be reconfigured during this period of economic decline?

The questions were familiar from reports such as the RIN/CIBER "Challenges for academic libraries in difficult economic times" that Sally Curry discussed in her keynote. That report suggests library directors sense they are in a "war of attrition" with publishers, weighing up the alternatives to staying in existing deals and the relative appeal and disincentives of different purchasing models. However, the report goes on to recommend working together with the JISC and publishers ("acting in concert with others") as the preferred way forward. In her presentation Sally Curry surveyed the strategies libraries are currently deploying to make savings, comparing our predicament with the US via the Charleston Observatory library budgets survey (also reported on in: "The impact of the economic downturn on libraries: with special reference to university libraries" Journal of academic librarianship, v.36:issue 5(Sept. 2010)), from which comparison the UK fares significantly less well. Not least concerning is the apparent slow start to radical change, with "some thought" given to restructuring but freezing posts vacated and stalling recruitment are still predominantly the favoured means of addressing budget cuts. In the Charleston Observatory report "Libraries and the economic downturn" Curry's point is backed-up in its "trade-off analysis" where with librarians' backs to the wall it remains resources that face cuts, not staffing levels. An overarching theme of the workshop proved to be the imperative to demonstrate libraries' value, but Curry concluded her survey with the observation that however much empirically it is shown that usage correlates closely with research outcomes the objective proof remains unobtainable - the quantitative obscures the qualitative in libraries' reliance on usage data.

David Prosser in "Reassessing the value proposition: towards a fair(er) price for scholarly journals" brought the workshop up-to-date with the actions of the RLUK. RLUK's signal to publishers' price increases is basically not to change from the red to the green light. It is a clear and resolute message: "we do not have the money to sign deals where prices rise and budgets fall". The campaign is now rising to full strength with vice and pro- vice chancellors taking the lead, advocacy packs to be made available to academics, and a communication strategy that has so far seen articles in the THES and the Wall Street Journal Europe. Prosser supplied a detailed background to the current crisis leading up to the 2009 ICOLC statement to which most publishers had made no concession (in the main only smaller and society publishers had kept prices static or reduced them). His summary took three lines of attack: 1, a stark contrasting of libraries' budget cuts (illustrated for example via the

ARL's survey of 2009 that showed 40% of institutions had already faced cuts) with publishers' relentless increases in revenues (Wiley CEO's compensation package fell from c. $9 million to $7 million from 2008 to 2009!); 2, an exposure of a state of "business unusual" in the journals market that was all too familiar (the disconnect between price and quality, inflexibility of big deals, obsolescence of historic spend as the model for setting pricing, vagaries of standardization in peer review, the effective interest-free loans of payments well ahead of content delivery ...), 3, a dysfunctional market that has allowed exponential price rises to continue for decades. After all this, delegates jaws' still (but unsurprisingly) hit the floor at Prosser's slide of (the Director of Educational, Academic and Professional Publishing at the Publishers' Association) Graham Taylor's statement "The only way for universities to save money is to make people redundant". Regrettably publishers were notable by their absence, so discussion in this forum was restrained. RLUK is now entering the new year with an instruction to JISC Collections to return the two major deals up for renegotiation, Wiley and Elsevier, back to 2007 prices. Prosser stressed that this was not seen as a solution to the problem outright but at best a mechanism to halt price increases to allow a space for more root-and-branch reconfiguration of the marketplace between libraries and publishers (an expected rise to 15% of QR by 2015 is simply unsustainable). And while the actions just now are within the RLUK domain only, RLUK is receiving and is keen to embrace support from within the UK (e.g. SCONUL) and internationally. A stalemate is the last outcome RLUK wants, but planning for it is vital and it is working towards refining contingency planning ahead of negotiations failing in 2011 (more details on this are to be made available in the new year).

Dragons' Den serves as a useful touchstone since it started in 2005 and Martin Gill used it to ask the same questions Prosser had, but from the perspective of just one of the Russell Group members - the University of Leeds. Would any of the dragons credit the business model we have with journals? You can just see Theo Paphitis' wince, hear Duncan Bannatyne's disbelief wrapped up in stony dismissiveness and cringe at Peter Jones smirk. His use of the reality TV show made more sense as Gill took us through the realities of Leeds' attempts to tackle a £35 million savings target for 2010/11. Leeds' resource allocation model and their scenarios are typical - "no option but to review package deals up for renewal", review of ILL costs, a 12% cut in real terms devolved across all schools. Gill was especially informative and probing about the headache that is analysis of usage data and the tying-up of usage statistics to pricing. Everything conspires to make the exercise fraught, from exchange rates to mismatches between differences in pricing between quotations and invoices coming in, from transfer titles to the inconsistent use of ISSN across multiple sources. Leeds now stands on a precipice having cancelled two major deals which will see the loss of 2,760 titles. It waits with some anticipation academics' reaction. Academics, Gill knows, are after a far more rigorous justification of cancellation than that afforded by cost per use. As the Leeds VC (Chair of the Russell Group) said in November this year "we need to reassess the costs of electronic access and find a new balance between value added by publishers and the charges they make". Librarians meanwhile are growing ever more desperate to open up the dialogue with publishers, to get transparency in an opaque process.

The workshop heard with interest the overview of SHEDL from Tony Kidd as a model that has departed from individual institution-to-publisher negotiation. On the scale SHEDL is now operating significant costs savings have been found, via early and single payments and price caps. Other advantages have been the blanket application of the Portico licence across SHEDL institutions and there is even the possibility of a single shared platform in the future and extension of activities into ebooks and datasets. The statistics back-up the perception: an increase of 41% in usage over 2008 to 2009. Kidd discussed (with reference to the report "Bloc payment methods for online journals") the influence of the SHEDL experience on licencing nationwide and the consideration given by JISC Collections of the possibility of devolving costs to institutions more equably were deals to be struck with publishers as "UK-wide-all-in" licences, although such cost redistribution has not as yet been a model implemented within SHEDL.

Following the JIBS AGM and presentation of the new JIBS student dissertation prize to Nicky Ransom for "Facets of user assigned tags and their effectiveness in image retrieval", Liam Earney gave a disarming and frank look back over 2010 and the brokerage of deals for 2011, and forward to 2012. Had it been, as it appeared in one light to be, a year of "complete failure"? Only with the AIP deal had the goal of no price rise for 2011 been achieved, although with most other deals price increases had been achieved at 5% or lower. To have worked so hard for o%, to have wanted to get away from the notion of a 5% increase as "acceptable", the year was so frustrating you had to wonder if you had to be negotiating from Ireland or with an economy in a state of total collapse to get that o%. Focusing on two negotations in particular (one a society publisher, the other a major A&I supplier) Earney lamented the results, albeit as successful as they could have got, that left neither side ultimately happy. Only at the prospect of complete collapse was a clear agreement reached in one case, and in the other the negotiations had to be steered through a "toys thrown out of the pram" meeting after an initial rejection of an increase of 10% JISC Collections knew could not be taken to libraries. To get a better understanding of libraries' needs JISC Collections surveyed institutions ahead of the Wiley and Elsevier renegotiations. Earney reviewed the findings from the survey many of which could be addressed by an online-only closed consortium model (after SHEDL and now being explored also by the WHELF), taking into account institutions' continuing preference for bulk purchasing. The emphasis must remain on a unified voice to publishers from HE institutions, a concerted approach that is gaining momentum with RLUK, SCONUL and the 1994 group. Earney concluded with JISC's future work with subscription agents to manage better the early payments that hamper the often drawn-out timescales of negotiations and JISC's aim of working with publishers to make deals attractive to their interests also. A streamlining of negotiation of price could be achieved by negotiation of the licence terms quite separately, more as an "organic" process that didn't impinge on concluding the deal.

Stephen Town is Director of the Library & Archives at the University of York and could take a step back from journals to place the themes of the day in a broader context. He attended to the "value proposition" libraries should be making to their customers. This linked-in both to Martin Gill's predictions for a commodification of higher education whereby students' fees are competed for as means of increasing an institutions' journal purchasing power and the imbalance between quantitative and qualitative data to demonstrate value (and the relationship of journal collections and content to research). From a director's point of view the "refusal" of journal purchasing and collection development to be containable as a cost (as one of multiple budget heads) led to some interesting conclusions. Should we not be charging back to publishers the costs we incur from the bid deals, it being a myth that the costs are minimized from the efficiencies the deals are ostensibly meant to bring us? And that we need "strategic solutions" rather than "tactical responses" which in large measure are only what Town had heard from the presentations thus far. It will be fascinating to see where the libraries' directors lead us, away from institutions' former "self-sufficiency" to a "corporate endeavour" both in terms of service delivery and with a common voice in negotiation with journal publishers.

This JIBS User Group workshop was subtitled "strategies for e-resource budgeting, negotiation and collection review". Held on December 2 when York and all points north were deep in snow and ice - compounding somehow the reality of austerity Britain - it was touch-and-go whether the workshop would happen at all. But all the speakers made it, if not all the delegates ...

Is HE finally coming out fighting from its grumbling at the perfect storm of inflation/price increases, damaging fluctuations in exchange rates, deterioration of the value of sterling and now the rise in VAT in 2011? What is the role of collection development in this current economic climate? Is there a need for a new skill set for the profession, a consistency of approach in our plea bargaining? How do we approach vendor management and the acquisition of content and to what extent will a consumer ethos being introduced into HE affect purchasing decision-making? How can services be reconfigured during this period of economic decline?

The questions were familiar from reports such as the RIN/CIBER "Challenges for academic libraries in difficult economic times" that Sally Curry discussed in her keynote. That report suggests library directors sense they are in a "war of attrition" with publishers, weighing up the alternatives to staying in existing deals and the relative appeal and disincentives of different purchasing models. However, the report goes on to recommend working together with the JISC and publishers ("acting in concert with others") as the preferred way forward. In her presentation Sally Curry surveyed the strategies libraries are currently deploying to make savings, comparing our predicament with the US via the Charleston Observatory library budgets survey (also reported on in: "The impact of the economic downturn on libraries: with special reference to university libraries" Journal of academic librarianship, v.36:issue 5(Sept. 2010)), from which comparison the UK fares significantly less well. Not least concerning is the apparent slow start to radical change, with "some thought" given to restructuring but freezing posts vacated and stalling recruitment are still predominantly the favoured means of addressing budget cuts. In the Charleston Observatory report "Libraries and the economic downturn" Curry's point is backed-up in its "trade-off analysis" where with librarians' backs to the wall it remains resources that face cuts, not staffing levels. An overarching theme of the workshop proved to be the imperative to demonstrate libraries' value, but Curry concluded her survey with the observation that however much empirically it is shown that usage correlates closely with research outcomes the objective proof remains unobtainable - the quantitative obscures the qualitative in libraries' reliance on usage data.

David Prosser in "Reassessing the value proposition: towards a fair(er) price for scholarly journals" brought the workshop up-to-date with the actions of the RLUK. RLUK's signal to publishers' price increases is basically not to change from the red to the green light. It is a clear and resolute message: "we do not have the money to sign deals where prices rise and budgets fall". The campaign is now rising to full strength with vice and pro- vice chancellors taking the lead, advocacy packs to be made available to academics, and a communication strategy that has so far seen articles in the THES and the Wall Street Journal Europe. Prosser supplied a detailed background to the current crisis leading up to the 2009 ICOLC statement to which most publishers had made no concession (in the main only smaller and society publishers had kept prices static or reduced them). His summary took three lines of attack: 1, a stark contrasting of libraries' budget cuts (illustrated for example via the ARL's survey of 2009 that showed 40% of institutions had already faced cuts) with publishers' relentless increases in revenues (Wiley CEO's compensation package fell from c. $9 million to $7 million from 2008 to 2009!); 2, an exposure of a state of "business unusual" in the journals market that was all too familiar (the disconnect between price and quality, inflexibility of big deals, obsolescence of historic spend as the model for setting pricing, vagaries of standardization in peer review, the effective interest-free loans of payments well ahead of content delivery ...), 3, a dysfunctional market that has allowed exponential price rises to continue for decades. After all this, delegates jaws' still (but unsurprisingly) hit the floor at Prosser's slide of (the Director of Educational, Academic and Professional Publishing at the Publishers' Association) Graham Taylor's statement "The only way for universities to save money is to make people redundant". Regrettably publishers were notable by their absence, so discussion in this forum was restrained. RLUK is now entering the new year with an instruction to JISC Collections to return the two major deals up for renegotiation, Wiley and Elsevier, back to 2007 prices. Prosser stressed that this was not seen as a solution to the problem outright but at best a mechanism to halt price increases to allow a space for more root-and-branch reconfiguration of the marketplace between libraries and publishers (an expected rise to 15% of QR by 2015 is simply unsustainable). And while the actions just now are within the RLUK domain only, RLUK is receiving and is keen to embrace support from within the UK (e.g. SCONUL) and internationally. A stalemate is the last outcome RLUK wants, but planning for it is vital and it is working towards refining contingency planning ahead of negotiations failing in 2011 (more details on this are to be made available in the new year).

Dragons' Den serves as a useful touchstone since it started in 2005 and Martin Gill used it to ask the same questions Prosser had, but from the perspective of just one of the Russell Group members - the University of Leeds. Would any of the dragons credit the business model we have with journals? You can just see Theo Paphitis' wince, hear Duncan Bannatyne's

disbelief wrapped up in stony dismissiveness and cringe at Peter Jones smirk. His use of the reality TV show made more sense as Gill took us through the realities of Leeds' attempts to tackle a £35 million savings target for 2010/11. Leeds' resource allocation model and their scenarios are typical - "no option but to review package deals up for renewal", review of ILL costs, a 12% cut in real terms devolved across all schools. Gill was especially informative and probing about the headache that is analysis of usage data and the tying-up of usage statistics to pricing. Everything conspires to make the exercise fraught, from exchange rates to mismatches between differences in pricing between quotations and invoices coming in, from transfer titles to the inconsistent use of ISSN across multiple sources. Leeds now stands on a precipice having cancelled two major deals which will see the loss of 2,760 titles. It waits with some anticipation academics' reaction. Academics, Gill knows, are after a far more rigorous justification of cancellation than that afforded by cost per use. As the Leeds VC (Chair of the Russell Group) said in November this year "we need to reassess the costs of electronic access and find a new balance between value added by publishers and the charges they make". Librarians meanwhile are growing ever more desperate to open up the dialogue with publishers, to get transparency in an opaque process.

The workshop heard with interest the overview of SHEDL from Tony Kidd as a model that has departed from individual institution-to-publisher negotiation. On the scale SHEDL is now operating significant costs savings have been found, via early and single payments and price caps. Other advantages have been the blanket application of the Portico licence across SHEDL institutions and there is even the possibility of a single shared platform in the future and extension of activities into ebooks and datasets. The statistics back-up the perception: an increase of 41% in usage over 2008 to 2009. Kidd discussed (with reference to the report "Bloc payment methods for online journals") the influence of the SHEDL experience on licencing nationwide and the consideration given by JISC Collections of the possibility of devolving costs to institutions more equably were deals to be struck with publishers as "UK-wide-all-in" licences, although such cost redistribution has not as yet been a model implemented within SHEDL.

Following the JIBS AGM and presentation of the new JIBS student dissertation prize to Nicky Ransom for "Facets of user assigned tags and their effectiveness in image retrieval", Liam Earney gave a disarming and frank look back over 2010 and the brokerage of deals for 2011, and forward to 2012. Had it been, as it appeared in one light to be, a year of "complete failure"? Only with the AIP deal had the goal of no price rise for 2011 been achieved, although with most other deals price increases had been achieved at 5% or lower. To have worked so hard for o%, to have wanted to get away from the notion of a 5% increase as "acceptable", the year was so frustrating you had to wonder if you had to be negotiating from Ireland or with an economy in a state of total collapse to get that o%. Focusing on two negotations in particular (one a society publisher, the other a major A&I supplier) Earney lamented the results, albeit as successful as they could have got, that left neither side ultimately happy. Only at the prospect of complete collapse was a clear agreement reached in one case, and in the other the negotiations had to be steered through a "toys thrown out of the pram" meeting after an initial rejection of an increase of 10% JISC Collections knew could not be taken to libraries. To get a better understanding of libraries' needs JISC

Collections surveyed institutions ahead of the Wiley and Elsevier renegotiations. Earney reviewed the findings from the survey many of which could be addressed by an online-only closed consortium model (after SHEDL and now being explored also by the WHELF), taking into account institutions' continuing preference for bulk purchasing. The emphasis must remain on a unified voice to publishers from HE institutions, a concerted approach that is gaining momentum with RLUK, SCONUL and the 1994 group. Earney concluded with JISC's future work with subscription agents to manage better the early payments that hamper the often drawn-out timescales of negotiations and JISC's aim of working with publishers to make deals attractive to their interests also. A streamlining of negotiation of price could be achieved by negotiation of the licence terms quite separately, more as an "organic" process that didn't impinge on concluding the deal.

Stephen Town is Director of the Library & Archives at the University of York and could take a step back from journals to place the themes of the day in a broader context. He attended to the "value proposition" libraries should be making to their customers. This linked-in both to Martin Gill's predictions for a commodification of higher education whereby students' fees are competed for as means of increasing an institutions' journal purchasing power and the imbalance between quantitative and qualitative data to demonstrate value (and the relationship of journal collections and content to research). From a director's point of view the "refusal" of journal purchasing and collection development to be containable as a cost (as one of multiple budget heads) led to some interesting conclusions. Should we not be charging back to publishers the costs we incur from the bid deals, it being a myth that the costs are minimized from the efficiencies the deals are ostensibly meant to bring us? And that we need "strategic solutions" rather than "tactical responses" which in large measure are only what Town had heard from the presentations thus far. It will be fascinating to see where the libraries' directors lead us, away from institutions' former "self-sufficiency" to a "corporate endeavour" both in terms of service delivery and with a common voice in negotiation with journal publishers.