

5. Physical Facilities

Introduction

A documentation service should provide adequate physical facilities to enable its staff to do their work properly and its users to make effective use of information sources and services. The service needs a minimum of furniture and equipment, including computers and associated equipment. These, together with the collections of information materials, the staff who maintain them and the users who consult them, need to be physically accommodated in suitable premises in a convenient location. Adequate arrangements need to be made to ensure the safety and security of collections, staff and users. In summary a local documentation service needs

- adequate space
- suitable furniture and equipment
- regular supplies of consumables

The service must also be located in an appropriate place in the parent institution, and arranged in such a way as to ensure that its operations can be carried out efficiently.

Location and layout

The service should

- be located in an area which is frequently visited by those who will use the service most
- be easily accessible to users, including people with disabilities
- be free from noise and offensive smells
- have room for expansion
- be easy to find.

The service should not have to share space with other activities. If this is not possible, it may be housed in a room used for meetings, or even in a general office, but should not be located in the office of a staff member.

An open rectangular space without internal load bearing walls is the most suitable for a documentation service. This will make it easy to arrange the furniture and equipment at the outset and to change the arrangement in future if required. Once the service grows beyond the basic initial level, it should be divided into a public area and a staff workroom area.

Space requirements

It is essential to provide enough space for:

- documents
- users
- staff
- office equipment

See also: Healthlink Worldwide Resource Centre Manual

- 3.1 Location, size and structure
 - 3.1.1 Choosing a location
 - 3.1.2 Working out the size
 - 3.1.3 Ensuring a secure structure
- 3.2 Planning the layout
 - 3.2.1 How to measure space for shelves
 - 3.2.2 Space for different uses

The amount of space needed will depend on many factors, including:

- the number of users who are expected to use the service
- the numbers of documents of different kinds which the service contains at the outset
- the rate at which the document collection is expected to grow
- the kinds of user services to be provided
- the numbers of staff to be employed
- the kinds of office equipment to be used

Some basic norms for use in calculating how much space is needed in particular situations are presented in Appendix B.

Accommodation for documents

Different types of storage accommodation need to be provided for documents of different kinds, including:

- atlases
- audiocassettes and reel-to-reel tapes
- books
- bound volumes of periodicals
- broadsheets
- brochures
- compact discs-read only memory (CD-ROMs)
- current periodicals
- digital video discs (DVDs)
- diskettes
- maps
- microfiche

- microfilms
- newspapers
- pamphlets
- photocopies
- photographs
- posters
- press cuttings
- reports
- slides (35mm transparencies)
- technical drawings
- video cassettes and discs

Accommodation for users

Users need space to:

- browse or search the document collections on the shelves, in storage cabinets, etc.
- consult the catalogue of the collections
- use the computer and search for information from online sources
- read various kinds of documents (including those for which equipment must be used, e.g. microfilms, slides, etc.)
- consult the staff
- return and borrow materials.

Users doing serious study and research often prefer individual tables or study carrels (a table with screens on three sides to give privacy and avoid distractions). Other users may prefer to use communal tables with several seats. Not more than four seats should be provided at one table.

Casual seating, in easy chairs or sofas, may be provided for users wishing only to read newspapers or magazines.

Staff accommodation

Staff need space to:

- supervise the public area
- keep the document collections in order
- keep the public area tidy
- deal with correspondence and administrative tasks
- perform the technical operations needed to develop and maintain the information resources of the service
- create and provide information products and services to users.

The technical operations need more space than normal office work. Adequate space should be provided in the workroom area for operations such as unpacking, sorting, checking, and processing documents, and steps should be taken to ensure that the

documents are secure during this process. The workroom should be separate from the public area and be kept locked when not in use.

There should be one workspace for each staff member. At least one workspace should be located in the public area with a good view of users' seats and document collections. This should function as a service counter and control desk. All staff workspaces need easy access to storage cupboards for stationery and supplies, and should have secretarial swivel chairs on castors.

Staff should have easy access to toilet and washing facilities.

Furniture,

The service will need some or all of the following types of furniture:

In the public area:

- bookshelves
- display units
- easy chairs
- noticeboard
- reading tables
- staff workspace (desk and chair or purpose-made service counter)
- storage cabinets for different kinds of documents (e.g. videos, maps, etc.)
- study carrels
- upright chairs

In the workroom area:

- bookshelves
- cupboards
- desks
- filing cabinets
- office chairs
- tables for unpacking, sorting etc.
- upright chairs

Equipment

In the initial stages, the documentation service may have to share some equipment with other offices in the parent institution. As soon as possible, however, it should be provided with its own photocopier and computer to enable staff to carry out technical operations and provide services to users without having to interfere with the work of other units. The service will need some or all of the following types of equipment:

In the public area:

- computer(s) with online connection
- display equipment

In the workroom area:

- audiovisual equipment
- computer with online connection
- document binder
- fax machine
- guillotine
- microfiche/microfilm reader/printer (if the collection contains microforms)
- photocopier
- printer
- scanner
- telephone connections (preferably more than one, for voice, fax, Internet connection)

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3.3 Choosing furniture and equipment

3.3.1 Shelving

3.3.2 Display equipment

3.3.3 Other furniture and equipment

3.3.2 List of furniture and equipment

Computer equipment

Computer technology is today essential even in a small documentation service. This is to catalogue documents, store documents electronically and to access the Internet. As well as one or more computers, the documentation service will need to install software, including specialised library services, anti-virus programmes and a firewall, and other equipment allied to the computer, such as a printer and a scanner. Computers are used for:

- creating, maintaining and consulting the catalogue or database of the document collections
- providing access to information sources on CD-ROM and DVD
- providing access to information sources on the Internet
- exchanging information with other documentation services through information networks
- communicating via e-mail
- publishing information on the Internet
- preparing information products (newsletters, lists of new acquisitions, etc.)
- providing information services (enquiry and reference services, etc.)
- placing and progress-chasing of orders for new documents
- maintaining records of receipt for current periodicals
- maintaining accounting records
- preparing reports and correspondence
- preparing promotional materials and presentations.

Computers may be used by both staff and users. Whenever possible, one or more computers should be provided for staff and one or more for users. Providing extra computers is a good way of attracting users to the documentation service, or of transforming it into a telecentre or open learning centre.

Staff will need to use computers for the full range of activities listed above; users will need to use them for accessing and consulting both internal and external information sources. To be used effectively for these purposes, the computers need to be provided with suitable software.

See also Healthlink Worldwide Resource Centre Manual

- 6 Computers, electronic communication and databases
- 6.1 Advantages of computers

The ItrainOnline web site provides links to numerous useful resources on how to develop the basic skills needed to use computers effectively (see Box 5A).

Box 5A: ItrainOnline: basic skills

Tools and resources to help build the basic skills needed to make effective use of computers and the Internet.

Computer Basics

Resources on how computers work, how to maintain computers and use them safely, and how to protect computers from viruses.

Office Productivity Software

Links to articles and tutorials on using common office productivity software such as MS Word and Excel, and to information on Open Source alternatives to mainstream commercial software.

Internet and E-mail Basics

Resources on Internet and e-mail basics, ranging from general introductions to the Internet, to guidance on specific tools such as e-mail and web browsers.

Finding Information Online

Tools and resources on how to find information online and to evaluate the quality of that information.

http://www.itrainonline.org/itrainonline/english/basic_skills.shtml

The Computer Basics section of the ItrainOnline web site provides links to further sources of information on how a computer works, how to choose and maintain computers and use them safely, and how to protect computers from viruses (Box 5B).

Box 5B: ItrainOnline: computer basics

Resources to help you understand how computers work, how to maintain computers and use them safely, and how to protect them from viruses.

- General – including buying new and used computers, how to back up data
- Using computers safely (Ergonomics)
- Maintaining a PC
- Virus protection
- File formats
- Data compression tools

<http://www.itrainonline.org/itrainonline/english/computers.shtml>

Computer hardware

The hardware is the actual computer itself. The development of computers is still a rapidly changing world. Those responsible for computer services in the parent institution should be consulted before final decisions are made.

See also: Healthlink Worldwide Resource Centre Manual

- 6.2 Choosing a computer
- 6.2.1 How to plan for computers
- 6.3 Hardware and software

Computer software

The choice of operating system and office suite software for the service will be influenced by what is already being used by the parent institution. Although Microsoft Windows has become a default operating system except in specialised services, there are alternatives and an increasing range of open source software which provide a wide range of software, including office productivity software, bibliographical software and library management software, available free or at low cost and which may usually be downloaded directly via the Internet. 'Open source' means that they are open to further development by a worldwide community of users on a co-operative basis.

It essential to ensure that computer system and software chosen for the documentation service is compatible with other software in the organisation or with collaborating organisations. It is also essential to ensure that the computer system is properly protected from viruses and from illicit hackers when connected to the Internet.

Further information on open source software and links to other sources are provided in the Open Source section of the ItrainOnline web site and through the UNESCO Free Software Portal (see Box 5C).

Box 5C: Internet sources of information on open source software

ItrainOnline: open source

<http://www.itrainonline.org/itrainonline/english/opensource.shtml>

- Introduction – including the advantages of open source software
- General resources
- Tips for migrating (to open source software from commercial software)
- Open source for development/NGOs
- Open source for education
- Open source for libraries
- Linux-related
- Case studies and examples
- Office productivity and project management
- Content management
- Where to find open source software
- Open content

UNESCO free software portal

http://portal.unesco.org/ci/ev.php?URL_ID=12034&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201

This section of the UNESCO Communication and Information Sector web site gives access to documents and web sites which are references for the Free Software/Open Source Technology movement. It is also a gateway to resources related to Free Software.

Free Software Technology Resources

- General Information: Associations / Initiatives / Web sites / Articles/ Reports
- Developer Documentation: Developer Collections / Developer Books / Security
- Software: Communication / Courseware Tools / Development Tools / Digital Library / Operating System / Productivity Tools / Science and Education / Virtual Laboratory

Free Software Technology Movement

- Free Software History / Free Software Licenses / Free Software Development Process / Free Software and Business / Case Studies / Online Bibliography
-
- Other sources
- Chawner, Brenda, Open Source Software and Libraries Bibliography. Available online at: http://www2.vuw.ac.nz/staff/brenda_chawner/biblio.html.
- Includes announcements, journal articles, and web documents about open source software development in libraries, including descriptions of specific open source applications used in libraries, in particular Koha, Greenstone, and MyLibrary (Box 5F)

The Office Productivity Software section of the ItrainOnline web site provides links to sources of advice on choosing and using office software, including open source alternatives to Microsoft Office (see Box 5D).

Box 5D: ItrainOnline: office productivity software

Links to articles and tutorials on using common office productivity software such as MS Word and Excel, information on Open Source alternatives to mainstream commercial software, and links to software sites.

- Open Source office productivity tools
- Microsoft office productivity software
- PDF [Portable Document Format]
- General – including online tutorials
-
- <http://www.itrainonline.org/itrainonline/english/office.shtml>

Information retrieval and library management software

Special software will be needed to create and maintain the service's catalogue or database and to exchange information with other services. These facilities are often included in general library management software covering cataloguing, acquisitions, document circulation and other facilities.

The choice of bibliographical software may be influenced by what is already being used by other information services, particularly the members of any networks in which the service plans to participate. It is much easier to exchange information – particularly bibliographical information, if all members of a network use the same software. More experienced users of the software can also provide valuable technical support to new users.

An advanced information storage and retrieval software package which is available free of charge from UNESCO and from some 90 official national distributors around the world is CDS/ISIS (Computerised Documentation Service/Integrated Set of Information Systems). This software may possibly be considered to be too advanced for a small local documentation service without professionally-qualified staff, but it may be advisable if it is already used by other documentation services with which the service intends to exchange information and bibliographical data. A number of library management modules for CDS/ISIS have been developed under licence and are generally available free of charge. Official national CDS/ISIS distributors, and existing users of the software, are able to provide training, advice and technical support to new users (see Box 5E)

Box 5E: UNESCO's CDS/ISIS software

CDS/ISIS is an advanced non-numerical information storage and retrieval software developed by UNESCO since 1985 to satisfy the need expressed by many institutions, especially in developing countries, to be able to streamline their information processing activities by using modern (and relatively inexpensive) technologies.

Contents of the CDS/ISIS web site

- CDS/ISIS and XML
- CDS/ISIS for Windows
- the main CDS/ISIS software; available for downloading from the web site
- GenISIS
- open source software for search interfaces for CDS/ISIS databases
- Information Processing Tools
- IsisASCII
- a tool for importing ASCII delimited and tagged files into CDS/ISIS databases
- IsisMARC
- data entry interface for CDS/ISIS data bases
- JavISIS
- News

CDS/ISIS Manual

The CDS/ISIS for Windows Reference Manual is available in English, French, Spanish and other languages.

CDS/ISIS national distributors

A worldwide distribution network has been a key factor in the widespread success CDS/ISIS, with national distributors in some 90 countries who can supply information on local services, training opportunities and software solutions in local languages. Lists of national distributors are available on the web site.

http://www.unesco.org/cgi-bin/webworld/cds_isis_db/

Box 5F: Open source library software

Selected items from the UNESCO Free Software Portal

http://www.unesco.org/cgi-bin/webworld/portal_freesoftware/cgi/page.cgi?g=Software/Digital_Library/

Greenstone:

<http://sourceforge.net/projects/greenstone/>

Greenstone is a suite of software for building and distributing digital library collections. It provides a new way of organising information and publishing it on the Internet or on CD-ROM. Greenstone is produced by the New Zealand Digital Library project at the University of Waikato, and distributed in co-operation with UNESCO and the Humanity Libraries Project. It is open-source software, available under the terms of the GNU General Public License.

Avanti Circulation System:

<http://www.nsls.info/~schlumpf/avanti/>

The Avanti circulation system is a simple, scalable, networkable, client/server circulation system that can be deployed in small to medium scale libraries. The end product will be modular: consisting of a system core, circulation module, minimal OPAC, and network and user interfaces. The entire system is written in Java. Avanti 0.3.1 was developed using the Blackdown JDK v1.1.7 on a Linux system with the servlet classes being developed using the Apache Jserv servlet engine.

GNUTECA:

<http://gnuteca.codigolivre.org.br/>

GNUTECA is a free, open source software for library automation, including a Loan System, Catalog Collaboration, MARC Editing among others. It has a Web and GTK (graphic) interface.

Koha Open Source Library System: <http://www.koha.org/>

Made in New Zealand by the Horowhenua Library Trust and Katipo Communications Ltd the Koha system is a full catalogue, OPAC, circulation and acquisitions system.

LearningAccess ILS:

<http://www.learningaccess.org>

The LearningAccess ILS is a full-feature open source library automation system developed for use by public and school libraries throughout world. The Institute will make this system available free to libraries that, because of cost, have been unable to achieve the benefits of automation. The system fully supports MARC21, Z39.50, Unicode and other critical library standards as identified by IFLA.

The Open Source Digital Library System Project (PYTHEAS):

<http://osdls.library.arizona.edu/index.html>

PYTHEAS1 (Powerful Yet Tactfully Helpful Electronic Arranger of Sources) is designed to be a multi-tier ILS (Integrated Library System). The two major building blocks for providing server-based metadata and information retrieval capabilities in PYTHEAS are MARC (MACHine Readable Cataloguing) and RDF (the Resource Description Framework), standards that define a format for describing objects and can package highly structured metadata for describing content and content relationships in physical and digital objects. The client environment for PYTHEAS can best be described as "web-centric". The objective is to provide a platform and language neutral environment for accessing and manipulating the information in PYTHEAS.

The Digital Library section of the UNESCO Free Software web site provides annotated links to a number of open source library management software packages (Box 5F).

Connecting to the Internet

- A local documentation service will need to establish an Internet connection in order to use its computer to:
- provide access to information sources on the Internet (including the sources of free and open source software and of technical advice and support referred to above)
- exchange information and bibliographical data with other documentation services
- communicate via e-mail
- publish information on the Internet

For computers that are connected to the Internet or used for e-mail a firewall should be installed (hardware or software) and anti virus programmes kept up to date daily. Without such protection, 'life expectancy' of going onto the Internet without protection is only a few minutes before the computer is attacked or a virus is transmitted. The information technology or computer staff of the service's parent institution, and officials of the local telecommunications authority, should be consulted at what facilities are available in the institution or the locality, under what conditions. (Box 5G).

Box 5G: ItrainOnline: Internet and e-mail basics

- Introduction to the Internet
- Getting connected
- Web browsers
- Using web-to-e-mail services
- Downloading information
- E-mail
- Mailing lists, newsgroups, and other discussion forums
- Spam and scams
- General – including resources for learning and teaching Internet skills.

See also: Healthlink Worldwide Resource Centre Manual

6.5 The Internet

6.6 E-mail services

6.7 The World Wide Web

6.7.5 How to access the World Wide Web via e-mail

<http://www.itrainonline.org/itrainonline/english/computers.shtml>

Printers

If the service has computers, it will also need one or more printers. Laser printers and inkjet printers are both suitable for use in a documentation service: Both can produce high quality output on plain paper, photographic paper, overhead transparencies, etc.

Laser printers can produce very high quality output and are generally faster and more expensive than inkjet printers; however, the cheaper models cannot print in colour, while colour laser printers are several times as expensive.

Inkjet printers can also produce high quality output, in both colour and black-and-white, and are generally cheaper than laser printers, although they are also slower. Many now can print photographs straight from the digital card used in a digital camera.

A drawback to both types of printer is the cost of the toner or ink cartridges used respectively by laser printers and inkjet printers, though again, inkjets are cheaper in this respect. The cost of these supplies should be taken into account when deciding which printer to acquire. See Box 5H for further information on printers.

Scanners

Scanners are used to translate text or illustrations from printed documents into electronic formats that can be used by the computer. There are various types of scanner, from small and inexpensive flatbed models suitable for home use to large and expensive machines used in graphics studios and print shops.

The choice of scanner for a local documentation service will depend on the amount of scanning it is expected to do and the kinds of documents involved. For occasional scanning of ordinary documents, a small flatbed scanner should be adequate; if it is intended to scan large quantities of photographic or other images a more sophisticated machine will be needed. Some scanners can scan multiple pages without intervention. Others can also scan from slides or photographic negatives. Alternatively this work may be contracted out to an outside organisation. See Box 5H for further information on scanners.

Box 5H: Internet information on printers and scanners

TechSoup: the technology place for non-profit organisations

Printer Primer

Advice on choosing and using inkjet and laser printers, with links to other sources.

<http://www.techsoup.org/howto/articlepage.cfm?ArticleId=44&topicid=1>

What to Look For in a Scanner

Advice on choosing and using sheet-fed and flatbed scanners, with links to other sources.

<http://www.techsoup.org/howto/articlepage.cfm?articleid=138&topicid=1>

Photocopiers

A photocopier will be needed for

- general office copying
- making copies of documents for users
- producing newsletters, circulars, etc.

The types of copier available range from small desktop machines suitable for low-volume copying to large standalone machines capable of producing large quantities of copies at high speed, collating and sorting documents, etc. Copiers are available which can produce full colour copies, but these are expensive. The cost of toner and paper can be high for photocopiers and these costs should be factored into the running costs.

Fax machines

A fax machine sends and receives copies of documents over the telephone line. Fax machines work either by scanning a paper copy of a document or by transmitting a copy direct from a computer.

Fax machines have been replaced to a large extent by e-mail and other electronic methods of transferring documents. They can still be very useful where it is necessary to transfer an exact copy of a document which is not in the computer system, e.g. one containing handwritten text or images.

A fax machine equipped with a telephone handset may be used for sending faxes or as a normal telephone, but not for both at the same time.

Multifunction devices

A small documentation service may be unable to afford to buy all these items of equipment – printer, scanner, fax machine and photocopier – or may not have enough space for so many machines. A possible solution is to acquire a multifunction device which combines these functions in one machine. These machines have fallen in cost and the quality has improved so that they are virtually as good as each specialised machine. The main disadvantages to multifunction devices are:

- with only one machine there is more likely to be a bottleneck of people wanting to use different functions
- if the machine breaks down the documentation service will be without any of its functions until it is repaired
- multifunction devices are not suitable for long runs of lots of pages and should not therefore replace heavy duty photocopiers

Microfiche/microfilm reader/printer

Microfilming is a method of making microscopic copies of documents in order to save space or protect rare or fragile originals from damage. The copies may be made on rolls of film (microfilm) or on flat sheets of film (microfiche), collectively known as microforms. The creation and use of microforms has become less widespread in recent years due to the development of methods of creating digital copies of documents through the use of computers. However, users still need access to any existing collections of microforms (for example, of maps, technical drawings, reports and logs, etc.) and need special equipment, in the form of a microfilm or microfiche reader, or a dual-function reader, needed to be able read them.

Audiovisual equipment

If the documentation service maintains collections of audiovisual material – slides, filmstrips, overhead transparencies, videocassettes, digital video discs (DVDs), etc. - it will also need equipment for creating and viewing these materials, such as:

- DVD burner/player (now likely to be included as part of a modern computer)
- filmstrip viewer/projector
- overhead transparency projector
- slide viewer/projector
- video recorder/player.

Uninterruptible power supply (UPS)

In places where the mains electricity supply is unreliable, voltage fluctuations or complete loss of power can lead to loss of data during computer operations and even cause damage

to sensitive equipment. One or more UPS units should be installed to protect equipment from fluctuations and to allow a controlled close-down in the event of a power failure.

Supplies

The various items of equipment cannot operate without supplies of consumables such as paper, ink, toner, and so on. In addition, the documentation service will need various kinds of library and office stationery and supplies in order to carry out its routine functions. Lists of supplies are provided at Appendix B.

Security and Safety

An important aspect of the physical arrangements in a local documentation service is the need to ensure the security and safety of

- the document collections
- the records of the collections
- the furniture and equipment
- the premises
- the staff
- the users.

Protection against damage

The physical protection of documents (see 7.6 below) helps to protect them against normal wear and tear. However, documents also need to be protected against damage caused by:

- climate
- animal, insect or other pests
- users

Documents should not be exposed to excessive heat, light or damp, or to the risk of damage by insects, animals or small children. Eating and drinking on the premises should be discouraged, as scraps of food and drops of liquid attract pests.

In humid climates, documents are easily damaged by fungal growths and moulds. In dry climates, they may be damaged by dust or termites. Some kinds of documents, particularly audiovisual materials, are very easily damaged in this way, as are old and rare books and their bindings. Special storage will be needed for such materials if the climate is adverse. Air-conditioning is the most effective way of protecting documents against damage caused by climatic conditions. An air-conditioned service is also much more attractive to users. If other offices in the parent institution are air-conditioned, the documentation service should be too.

If not air-conditioned, the centre should be well ventilated (particularly in humid climates), with adequate protection against sunlight, dust and rain. Shelving units should have open

backs and be set slightly away from the walls to allow air to circulate, and the room and its contents should be thoroughly cleaned at frequent intervals.

Insecticides and pesticides should be used to deter and destroy pests. Documents which have already become infested with fungi or insect pests such as silverfish should be opened and exposed to fresh air or air-conditioning and cleaned as thoroughly as possible. Damage to documents by users can usually be prevented by educating them in the care of documents. If important documents are damaged, local conservation specialists should be asked to advise on how to treat them. Such specialists may usually be found at the national library, archive or documentation service, or in large academic libraries.

See also: Healthlink Worldwide Resource Centre Manual

3.4 Taking care of materials

Protection against theft

Deliberate and systematic theft of documents is not usually a serious problem in small local documentation services of the type discussed here, but computers and other expensive equipment such as overhead projectors, are vulnerable to theft. Such equipment can be clamped to tables. Windows and doors should be locked when the service is not in use and rare, valuable or sensitive materials should be kept in locked cupboards or bookcases.

In a small local documentation service, supervision is the only practical and effective method of preventing theft. The risk of theft during opening hours may be reduced by requiring users to leave bags and briefcases at the door or with the person in charge until they leave the service. It also helps not to use the service for other purposes, such as meetings, unless adequate supervision can be maintained.

Protection against disasters

Document collections are very vulnerable to damage or destruction by fire, flooding and other natural disasters. Rebuilding a document collection which has suffered in this way is a major task and often a very expensive one. The difficulty of rebuilding a collection will be greatly increased if the records of the contents of the collection -- especially the catalogue or database -- have also been destroyed. Such disasters may also pose a serious threat to the safety of the staff and users of the documentation service.

It is important to guard against such disasters as far as possible, and to make arrangements to protect the records of the document collections, the documents themselves, the staff and the users, if they do occur. As an added precaution, it is advisable to make back-up copies of the records of the collections and to store them in a separate place. All computer files should be backed up either to an on-line depository or to CD-ROM or other discs which are kept off the premises.

Local fire regulations should be complied with and fire extinguishers provided. The building in which the service is housed, and its immediate surroundings, should be well-maintained and designed to prevent flooding or the entry of rainwater. Staff should be trained in the actions to be taken in an emergency.

In some countries, the staff of libraries and documentation services are held personally responsible for any documents which are lost, stolen or damaged. To avoid this, the staff of such institutions often keep the documents under lock and key and make it very difficult for users to make use of them. This defeats the purpose of establishing a documentation service. Security is an organisational issue which demands team vigilance and good systems to be in place. Staff should not be held personally responsible for the service's collections in this way.