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07 Academic and Professional Services

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Library and Digital Services

2018-07-02

No need to dive for this PEARL

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http://hdl.handle.net/10026.1/11776

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No need to dive for this PEARL

Elena Menéndez-Alonso and Carly Seller





PEARL (Plymouth Electronic Archive and Research Library) is the open access (OA) research repository for the University of Plymouth, safeguarding the University's research outputs, theses and data. In this poster, we reflect on the history of our repository, revisiting the milestones that have taken it from very humble beginnings to its current status as a core institutional resource.



2006: A GRAIN OF SAND

Many believe that pearls originate from a single grain of sand, which over time grows into a beautiful gem. That may not be the entire truth about the natural origin of these stones, but it is a good analogy for the history of our repository. PEARL was first set up in 2006. In the early days, most of the interest in the repository was from research groups looking for a place where they could store reports and other grey literature. Few could imagine that one day PEARL would become the key resource it is today.



2010: RESEARCH THESES GO 'E'

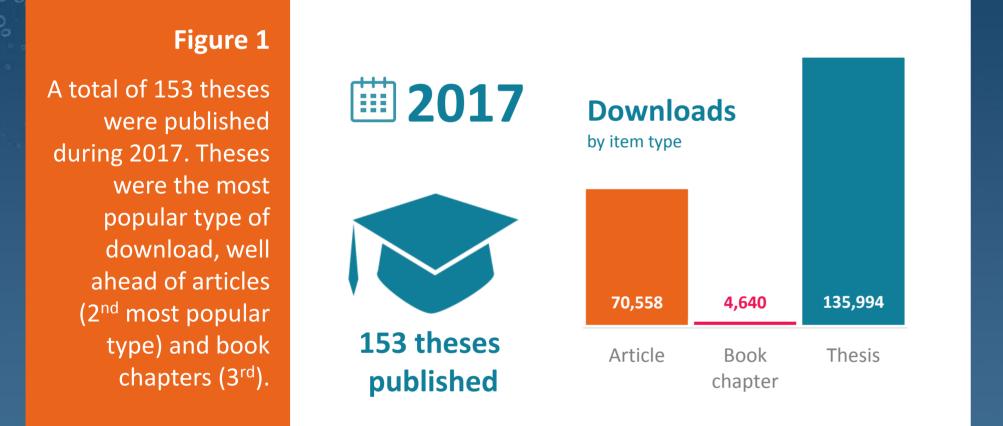
The decision to move to electronic thesis deposit and make this a condition for the award of research degrees was a significant milestone in the life of PEARL. A year later, in 2011, the Library started to digitise its physical thesis collection. This piece of work was completed by 2013, contributing to a significant increase in the overall number of deposits. The Research Theses collection remains one of the most popular in PEARL, accounting for 62% of all item downloads in 2017 (Figure 1). On average, every thesis deposited in PEARL last year has been downloaded 889 times, putting us in the Top 25 UK repositories by number of theses downloads.



2017: COUNTING THE PEARLS

During 2017 we focussed on developing metrics capability. Deposit and usage data were collected from IRUS-UK, Google Analytics and the newly implemented *Content and Usage Analytics* module, developed by *AtMire*³ for DSpace. We use the data to produce monthly infographics and provide evidence of engagement with the repository. OA deposit is growing healthily, encouraged by the HEFCE REF OA mandate and our institutional publications policy (Figure 3). We can now demonstrate the benefits of open deposit by showing researchers how their work attracts interest all over the world (Figure 4).



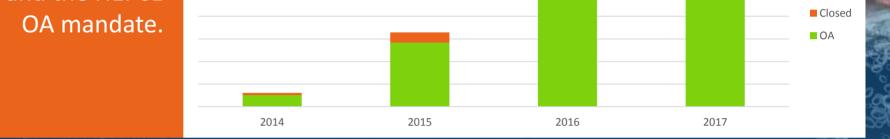




2015: REPOSITORY SURGERY

With a focus on REF2014 putting the brake on upgrades, and internal reorganisations resulting in a loss of technical expertise, by 2014 PEARL was falling behind the curve. Both the repository, and the University's CRIS (Symplectic Elements) were running outdated versions and were in need of updates. It took the best part of a year to coordinate the work, but by spring 2015 both systems had been upgraded to the latest versions. This allowed us to start planning additional development to ensure that PEARL was able to support new funder requirements.











2018: PEARL HUNTERS

With the deposit of articles and conference papers building up nicely, we are beginning to hunt for other types of *pearls*. Last year, we set up our first collections of open access journals, published by the University staff and students. PEARL offers improved discovery and improved preservation, reducing the risk of content loss when websites suddenly disappear! The new content has proven very popular – over the last 12 months, seven of the Top 20 articles came from the Journals Collection (Figure 5).

In collaboration with the research community, we are also using PEARL to curate and showcase research portfolios, with diverse content types including reports, data and rich-media.

Figure 5

Over the last 12 months, seven of the Top 20 articles (by number of



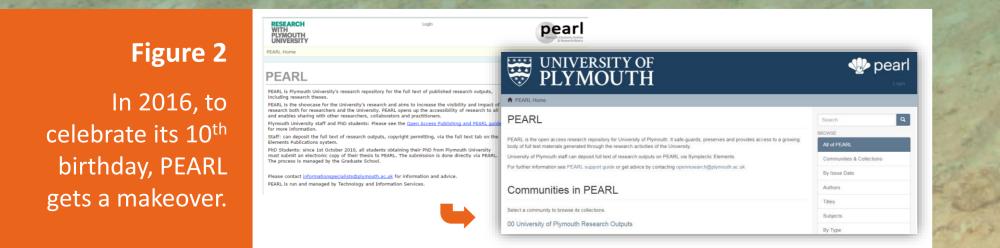


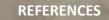


2016: A BEAUTIFUL PEARL

2016 saw the implementation of changes to ensure that we could meet funder mandates around open access and research data. Improvements included support for *RIOXX*¹ metadata, dataset deposit and enhanced research theses deposit, as well as setting up the connection with $IRUS-UK^2$ to help us track content usage.

The changes also reached the front-end, with PEARL getting a new and much sleeker interface (Figure 2).





- 1. RIOXX. Retrieved from
- 2. IRUS-UK. Retrieved from
- 3. Atmire. Retrieved from

4. COAR (2017). Behaviours and Technical Recommendations of the COAR Next Generation Repositories Working Group. Retrieved from

downloads) were from the new University Journals Collection.

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e Plymouth Law & Criminal Justice Review, Volume 4		1	The molybdenum blue reaction for the S determination of orthophosphate What Does Doodling do? 5	Iciences	3147 2560	
e Plymouth Law & Criminal Justice Review, Volume 5		3	Adapting relationships with place: 5 Investigating the evolving place	Iciences	2183	Recent Submissions
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e Plymouth Law & Criminal Justice Review, Volume 8		•	Is the Common Law Defence of Insanity U Ineffective and In Need of		1535	Magagna, D; Rousseau, N; San Bruno, G; O'Hagan, AM; Chambel Leitao, J; Perez- Collazo. C (Streamlining of Ocean Wave Farms Impact Assessment (SOWFIA)
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	and to examine the impact of physical		change on Plymouth's waterfront	University of Planewith Insertals	616	Greaves, D; Perez-Collazo, C; Magagna, D; Conley, D; Bailey, I; Simas, T; Holmes, B; O'Hagan, AM; O'Callagahn, J; Torre Encirso, Y; Marina, D; Huertas Olivares, C; Le
	prisoners and key stakeholders, such a	10	Relation to the Removal of Foreign	Susiness Lew Social Sciences and Education	615	Crom, I; Saulnier, JB; Sundberg, J; Embling, C; Witt, M; Goodley, B; Chambel Leitão,
ACREMENTS AND		17	sustainable manufacturing The role of Big Data in explaining B	Susiness, Law, Social Sciences and Education	530	J (Streamlining of Ocean Wave Farms Impact Assessment (SOWFIA)
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		19	governance and rurality in Western Detailed statistical analysis plan for a fi	Medicine, Dentistry and Health	495	The Streamlining of Ocean Wave Farms Impact Assessment (SOWFIA) Project
		20		aniversity of Plymouth Journals	485	(IEE/09/809/ SI2.558291) is an EU Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE) funded project
			Insolvency Law			

THE FUTURE: A PEARLY BALL READING

As we increasingly stretch PEARL to meet new and more complex requirements, we are aware that the repository would look quite different if we were to design it from scratch today. Our wish list would include improvements in interoperability, ability to create hybrid and multi-layered collections of interrelated objects, resource interactivity, preservation workflows, access control, and analytics.

These requirements are starting to be addressed as vendors and developers adapt their systems to the recommendations of the COAR Next-Gen Repositories report⁴. In the not too distant future we will be reviewing how these new solutions can help us to move PEARL into new repository open waters.