

# CHOOSE YOUR OWN RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE

**Alex Ball**, University of Bath

**Kellie Snow**, University of Bristol

**Pete Obee**, Cardiff University

**Greg Simpson**, University of Exeter

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THE ADVENTURE  
BEGINS...

You are sitting in a packed auditorium, eager to hear what the speaker has to say. You wonder if any of these topics will come up:

- What the presentation is **all about**
- The **inspiration** behind this guidance thingy
- How it was **developed**
- What the **reaction to it** was
- What the **next steps** will be

# INTRODUCTION

While the speaker does the introductions, you consult the abstract of the paper on the USB stick. Skimming through, you pick out these points:

- It is about an [RDM Triage Tool](#), whatever that is.
- It was developed by the [GW4 Research Data Services Group](#).
- It is aimed at [researchers](#).
- It has something to do with [interactive fiction](#).

# GW4 RDM TRIAGE TOOL

The screenshot shows the GW4 Research Data Management Triage Tool interface. At the top left is the GW4 logo. In the top right corner, there is a red 'Restart' link. The main heading is 'RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT TRIAGE TOOL'. Below this, a paragraph explains that it is an interactive tool for research data management questions. Another paragraph states that users can return to the start by clicking 'Restart'. A section titled 'What would you like help with?' contains five red links: 'Writing a plan for managing/sharing data', 'Storing data', 'Organising data', 'Documenting data', and 'Sharing data'. At the bottom, a text line identifies the tool as a collaboration between four universities, followed by their respective logos: University of Bath, University of Bristol, Cardiff University, and University of Exeter.

GW4

[Restart](#)

## RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT TRIAGE TOOL

This is an interactive tool to help you find answers to any research data management questions you may have.

If you find you take a wrong turn, or have several questions, you can return here at any point by selecting the 'Restart' link at the top of the page.

What would you like help with?

- > [Writing a plan for managing/sharing data](#)
- > [Storing data](#)
- > [Organising data](#)
- > [Documenting data](#)
- > [Sharing data](#)

GW4 is a collaboration between University of Bath, University of Bristol, Cardiff University & University of Exeter.

 UNIVERSITY OF BATH

 University of BRISTOL

 CARDIFF UNIVERSITY

 UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

Figure 1

# GW4 RESEARCH DATA SERVICES GROUP

Listening attentively, you discover these key facts:

- GW4 is a collaboration between
  - University of Bath
  - University of Bristol
  - Cardiff University
  - University of Exeter
- It enables various communities to share good practice, co-ordinate activity, collaborate on research, and provide shared infrastructure.
- The Research Data Services Group is for staff supporting research data management activities.

# TARGET AUDIENCE

Reading the paper in more depth, you see the tool is aimed at **postgraduate researchers**. The authors give two reasons:

- Expectations at more of an introductory level
- Less likely to have highly specialist problems

You wonder briefly if that is true and conclude it probably is, with some exceptions.



INSPIRATION

# GAMEBOOKS



Figure 2

## 66

You soon find a rack of computer disks marked 'University Records'. You are only interested in the two current ones and discard the rest. Will you look through them now (turn to **174**), or take them away with you (turn to **316**)?

— *Rebel Planet*, by Robin Waterfield

# INTERACTIVE FICTION



Figure 3

DEVELOPMENT

# STYLE OF GAME

## PARSER-BASED

An iron-barred gate leads north.

> **open gate**

You shouldn't be able to open it, heavy as it is, but it swings aside lightly at your touch. The Beast said that it knows friend from enemy; and the castle, at least, still regards you as friend.

> **go north**

There is no fire in the big fireplace, and no one is waiting for you here; the air is very cold. Over the gate, the old familiar warning sign is painted.

— *Bronze*, by Emily Short

# CHOICE-BASED

You sit at your desk, turn to the computer, and hunt around the desktop and menus as you try to work out where to start. Eventually, you give up, and **open up the web browser** in order to do some research, after you've checked Facebook, obviously...

Instead of your usual home page, the browser brings up some kind of web archiving user interface. The system presents you with three options.

How can I help you?




- **Crawl**
- **Replay**
- **Preserve**

— *Understanding Web Archiving*, by Andrew N. Jackson

# SOFTWARE TO USE

Shortlist of three possible systems:

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	 <b>Twine 2</b>	 <b>Twee2</b>	 <b>Sq. Squiffy</b>
Version control	✗ Hard	✓ Easy	✓ Easy
Installation or using online	✓ No problem	✗ Problematic	✓ No problem
Ease of use	✓ Fairly easy	✓ Fairly easy	✓ Easy
Game has 'undo'	✓ Yes	✓ Yes	✗ No
Game has autosave	✗ No	✗ No	✓ Yes

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✓ **Selected!**



# PLANNING AND WRITING

## MAY 2016: PLANNING THE STRUCTURE

- What questions should the tool answer?
- How should users find the right questions?

## JUNE 2016: WRITING INITIAL CONTENT

- Organising data – Bristol
- Documenting data – Bath

## JULY 2016: INTERNAL REVIEW

- Clear screen vs long transcript
- When to gather context
- Level of detail

## AUGUST 2016 – JANUARY 2017

- Revisions to content so far
- Planning, Storing data, Sharing data
- Institution-specific guidance

# USER TESTING

# METHOD

You imagine what the testers might have been told and asked:

- Spend 10 minutes or so trying to find answers to questions
- Talk about what you're doing, and how you're reacting to the tool
- At the end:

## **Questions**

- Which aspects of the tool did you like or dislike?
- Was the tool self-explanatory? Was there anything you wish you had known at the start?
- Is there anything it doesn't do that you would like it to do?
- Would you use it again, or recommend it to a peer?

# RESULTS

After 12 tests — staff and students at 3 institutions:

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## Good points

- ✔ Clear and concise information
  - ✔ Good coverage of issues
  - ✔ Friendly and conversational
  - ✔ Easy to use, mostly intuitive
  - ✔ Attractive look and feel
  - ✔ Nearly all would recommend
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## Bad points

- ✘ Want traditional website navigation
- ✘ Some topics hard to find
- ✘ Want an 'undo' button
- ✘ Effects of links inconsistent
- ✘ Not suited for browsing around

# JUST ANOTHER WEBSITE?

Hmm. It looks promising, but you can see the group has some tough questions to consider:

- Users want breadcrumbs, headers, rigid hierarchy of pages
  - Do they just want normal website guidance?
  - Or is the Triage Tool just not gamebook-like *enough*?
- Will the group be able to justify keeping another resource up to date?
- Is this idea worth pursuing further?

# VALUE OF THE TRIAGE TOOL

The speaker seems convinced it is, citing the following points:

- Interactive filtering of information
  - Users only see what is relevant
  - Keeps the message as clear as possible
- Can provide many routes to same information
  - Disposal of data → Non-digital data → Sensitive data
  - Sensitive data → Disposal of data → Non-digital data
- Can provide several levels of detail
  - If users need more explanation, they can get it.
  - If they don't, they are not held up by it.

# VALUE OF COLLABORATION

- Reminder of the line between the global and local
- Prompt for sharing expertise
- Helpful for gap analysis
- Division of labour



AND FINALLY...

# NEXT STEPS

- Complete user testing
- Revise tool in response
- Translate into Welsh
- Publish online
- [Release source code](#)
- Implement maintenance/release procedure

# CONCLUSIONS

You know the speaker must be winding up because you hear things like:

- The Triage Tool is a fresh approach to providing RDM guidance
- It complements, rather than competes with, existing resources
- It won't suit everyone
- But it can provide quick answers to quick questions

# YOU HAVE SURVIVED

Thank you for playing.

ANY QUESTIONS?

