

## **M25 SpeedMeet**



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

My name is Cliff Van Dort, and I am the Head of Library at the National Archives in Kew, Richmond. I have been in post since 2017, so nearly seven years and worked as a librarian for over 20 years mainly in UK government libraries. In a nutshell, I oversee the management and development of the TNA Library's print and digital collections, the library team (3 Librarians) , library volunteers, and manage the library budget. I also support the TNA research enquiry service and act as a Liaison Librarian for our Overseas and Military record specialists. We provide a library service to TNA staff and the public - so essentially are a public, research, reference library for British History and genealogy. I am also a civil / crown servant as we fall under the Department of Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS).

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

The variety and opportunity to learn, not just about my profession but also about the subjects the library and archive cover – essentially British history!

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

I enjoy helping people to achieve be it in research, answer queries, learning or CPD – the latter particularly for my staff – I get a lot of satisfaction in seeing them develop and reach their professional potential.

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

The M25 has provide access to a wealth of experience and knowledge, though mostly biased towards HE it has been very useful in my own development, professionally and personally in terms of networking and meeting new colleagues. I am a Co-chair of the M25 Diversity working group which has enabled me to connect to like-minded professionals who are trying to improve things in the library world and allowed me to “work” outside of the government bubble.

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

I think I am an open book and often share too much anyway to be much of a surprise to people though people are often surprised to hear that I used to live and work in China.

**Complete the sentence: If I wasn't working in a library** I would be in the care profession either as a medic or nurse or counsellor / advisor because I enjoy being of use to people, helping to try to solve problems, knowledge and insight or a helicopter pilot...maybe one day!