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Leader column

Celebration, recognition and a focus on the future

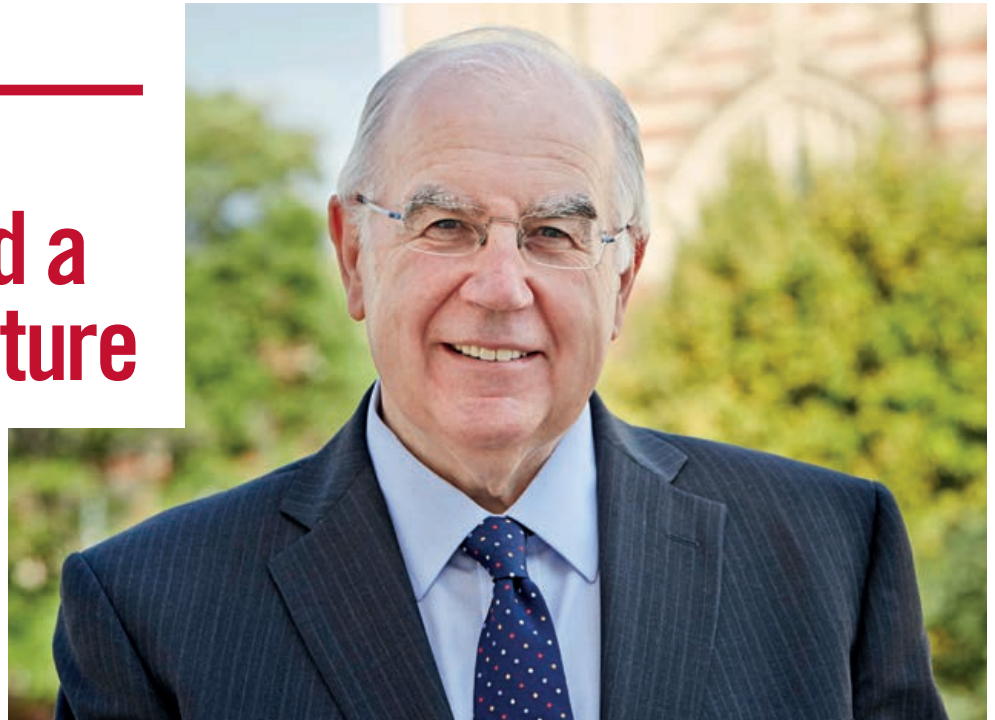
As memories of the Tour de France begin to fade and the academic year draws to a close, graduation moves into the spotlight and we look forward to two weeks of celebration.

The University will hold 38 graduation ceremonies this summer to mark the success of some 6,800 graduating students, each one eager to take their place in the world and ready to make a difference.

Working within the University's unique Partnership with students, Viv Jones and her team have developed three strong platforms – the Leeds Curriculum, LeedsforLife and the integrated Student Education Service. Although there is still work to do on all three, these initiatives are making a real difference, ensuring that students have an outstanding all-round education and opportunities for personal growth. As a result, they will graduate as global citizens who can go on to be successful in whatever career or field they choose.

At our graduation ceremonies, students more often than not shake hands with me and look over my shoulder to acknowledge a particular member of academic staff seated on the stage behind me. This simple kindness speaks volumes about the relationship between students and staff – a momentary glance that says, "I couldn't have done it without you."

So, this is also a very good time for me to say 'thank you' to all staff for your dedication, professionalism and hard work throughout the year. And perhaps the right moment to recognise outstanding achievement, including: Sheena Radford's election to the Royal Society for her "seminal contributions to understanding how proteins fold and function biologically"; the election of Julia Newton Bishop and Philip Quirke as Fellows of the Academy of Medical Sciences; Daryl O'Connor's election as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts; the Royal Society's appointment of Andrew Shepherd as a Wolfson Research Merit Award Holder; and Giles Davies and Edmund Linfield who won the Faraday Medal for outstanding contributions to experimental physics for their work on terahertz science and technology. It is equally good to know that a number of early career staff have



won fellowships and awards from organisations such as the AXA Research Fund, Leverhulme Trust, the Natural Environment Research Council, and the Economic and Social Research Council.

Looking ahead to next year, the University's Strategic Plan envisages a forward-looking environment for the education and personal development of our students, and a step change in the range and volume of world-leading research carried out at Leeds.

We have heard through the consultation process with staff on the Strategic Plan that they feel that we need to make changes to the way we work, emphasising the need for greater clarity of purpose, less bureaucracy and more flexibility to move quickly and decisively at an operational level. They believe that the current systems of monitoring and reporting are too onerous and limit the time and attention given to delivering positive change in student education and research.

As a result the University will focus on five areas in 2014/15:

- **Leadership:** ensuring that all academic and service leaders have the capability to encourage staff to be the best that they can be, engaging in a two-way dialogue on the direction the University needs to take and its priorities for action. The intention is to free up time spent on administration and to inspire all staff to contribute to continuous improvements in student education, research and the provision of services.
- **Staff engagement:** ensuring that all staff are proud to be part of the University, understand where it is going and what their contribution can be; and that they are supported to be bold, creative and innovative in contributing

to our central aim of increasing knowledge and opportunity through our research, and through our students.

- **Talent:** stimulating higher levels of performance, by attracting and retaining the very best people to work at the University, achieving a healthy balance between internal promotion and external recruitment, and ensuring that all staff can have access to the development opportunities they need to contribute to positive change.
- **Alignment and simplification of systems and processes:** ensuring that systems and processes are simple, straightforward and easy to operate, and that they balance the move to a high-trust culture with the internal and external requirements for assurance.
- **Greater external engagement:** ensuring that the University raises its profile and awareness of its strengths in education, research and knowledge exchange with partners and funders. Two priorities going forward are to establish effective working relationships with research funders and to play a full part in the economic, social and cultural life of the City.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first academic year as Vice-Chancellor of this great University and I look forward to next year with a real sense of anticipation and excitement. I take this opportunity to thank the students and staff who have guided me through the year and I hope that everyone can find time for some rest and relaxation with friends and family over the summer period. Enjoy graduation...

Alan Langlands

News

Making an impact at the Natural History Museum

Crowds of interested people descended on the University's stand at the Natural History Museum to find out more about our expertise in robotics.

A Faculty of Engineering team was there as part of Universities UK's week-long celebration of how research is improving lives. The University showcased its interactive robots – including Djedi vehicles based on the pyramid explorer robot, the iPAM rehabilitation robot which assists patients with therapeutic exercise, and Linda, a robot programmed to operate independently in human environments – encouraging visitors to see for themselves how research is transforming disaster response, exploration, surgery, prosthetics and patient rehabilitation.

Our academics also talked to existing and potential partners about future collaborations. The new £4.3 million National Facility for Innovative Robotic Systems – funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council – puts us at the forefront of robot design and construction, and the event was an important opportunity to talk to people about the work we are doing.



Demonstrating the Djedi robot

During the same week and at the same venue, three University initiatives were recognised in the 2014 Engage competition organised by the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement.

Graphic novel *Dreams of a Low Carbon Future* was in the top three in the category 'Engaging with young people'. A project led by the School of Medicine's Matthew Allsop, involving volunteers at St Gemma's Hospice charity shops, also made it to the top three in the 'Individual-led project' category. Finally, LeedsACTS! – a collaboration between the city's three universities and over 70 charity sector organisations – came in the top six in the 'Collaboration' category.

Vice-Chancellor Sir Alan Langlands says: "These are excellent examples of some of the outstanding public engagement activities that take place across campus, which inspire and involve the public in the work of the University."

Appointment of Director of Innovation and Enterprise Partnerships

Dr Ceri Williams has been appointed as Director of Innovation and Enterprise Partnerships. Working closely with Research and Innovation Services, she will be responsible for realising the University's ambitious aims for the proposed University Innovation and Enterprise Centre (UIEC: current working title).

The UIEC aims to accelerate business creation, business growth and innovation in the Leeds City Region (LCR) and beyond. It will establish a high-quality, business-facing gateway to help external partners access and engage with knowledge, research and capabilities at the University. It will grow LCR provision for science and technology incubators and increase the impact of graduate enterprise programmes and broader University knowledge exchange functions. Targeted outputs include global leadership in key technology areas, resulting in £75 million of new research and innovation funding and 50 new high-tech businesses, with the aim of generating £1 billion new income to the LCR economy.

The University is also establishing a University-wide Enterprise Steering Group and expanding the remit of the existing Enterprise Board to include all aspects of University enterprise.



Dr Ceri Williams

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About the Reporter

The *Reporter* is the University of Leeds' staff magazine, produced eight times a year. More than 7,500 copies are distributed to our staff and stakeholders. The *Reporter* is produced by the Communications team.

If you have an idea for a story, want to write a letter, comment on this edition or would like to voice your opinion about University matters, please get in touch:

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Web: www.leeds.ac.uk/forstaff/reporter

If you would prefer to receive an electronic copy of the magazine, please email internalcomms@leeds.ac.uk quoting your staff number or, if you are external to the University, your name, postcode and preferred email address.

The front cover shows Amanda Jackson and Tilly Hall at the Sustainability and Green Impact Awards event.

Photograph by Mark Ball.

News

Inspiring sculpture commissioned for Library

A landmark new sculpture by young British-Japanese artist Simon Fujiwara has been commissioned to mark the entrance to the Laidlaw Library.

"We are very excited about this artwork, which will be in a busy, public-facing place on campus and make a valuable contribution to the city's art," explains Layla Bloom, curator of the Stanley & Audrey Burton Gallery. "Simon was selected earlier this year after taking part in an appointment process arranged with assistance from our art advisors, the Contemporary Art Society. He was chosen after being interviewed by a selection panel that included senior University staff, myself – as the University's art curator – a student member and Nigel Walsh, Curator of Contemporary Art at Leeds Art Gallery."

Simon studied architecture at Cambridge and, after finishing art school in Frankfurt, won the prestigious 2010 Frieze Cartier Award for his work *Frozen*, for which he created an imaginary underground ancient city. An internationally renowned artist, he has participated in several biennials including the Singapore Biennial, Manchester International Festival and Performa, New York, all in 2011. His work has been presented at galleries around the world including Tate St Ives, the Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery in Toronto and MOT, Tokyo. In February he opened New Pompidou, a project at the Centre Pompidou, Paris, as part of the Nouveau Festival and produced by the Fondation d'Entreprise Galeries Lafayette.

Simon has already presented his initial concept for the sculpture, which is provisionally called *A Spire*. It seeks to capture the history of the city and the University while also expressing

aspirations for the future and how the University's activities are supportive of these aims. The work will be situated near the main entrance to the Library on Woodhouse Lane, and Simon is now working on the detailed design phase before it is submitted to the city planners. Fabrication will begin in the autumn and installation will take place in spring 2015.

For those who would like a taste of Simon's previous work, his sculpture *Rebekkah* has recently been installed in Leeds Art Gallery.



Portrait of Simon Fujiwara
Photograph by Carla Verera
– courtesy of the artist



Rebekkah, 2012, video (14:18 min).
Mixed-media installation, dimensions variable



The Mirror Stage, 2009, video (27:41 min). Mixed-media, dimensions variable
The Boy Who Cried Wolf, HAU1, Berlin, 2011. Photographs: Marcus Lieberenz.
Courtesy of The Tate



Installation view of *Narrating Objects: Unlocking the Stories of Sculpture* (May 2014 – June 2015), a collection display in Leeds Art Gallery, curated by the Henry Moore Institute

Knowledge Transfer Partnership celebrates a decade

The University's Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) team recently celebrated its 10th anniversary.

Over the past decade the team has achieved outstanding results, working on a diverse range of projects with companies such as Procter & Gamble, Kellogg's, DePuy, CGI International, the Phoenix Partnership Ltd, International Innovative Technologies Ltd and Yorkshire Bank.

The KTP team has experienced growth and adaptation, surviving recession and creating collaborations with companies all over the UK. Since 2004, the team has:

- supported the successful application of over 80 KTPs
- worked with seven of the University's faculties
- secured over £11 million in grant funding.

Each KTP starts with a proposal put to the Technology Strategy Board, which will then award a grant to successful projects. At Leeds, 100% of submitted proposals are funded – against a national average of just 85% – reflecting the team's dedication to supporting quality projects. Consistently ranked in the top 10 UK Universities for KTPs, over 50% of our projects are rated 'outstanding' by independent assessors, again well above the national average of less than 15%.

The team supports business and academic partners from start to finish, maximising outcomes and impact, and facilitating successful and award-winning, ongoing strategic partnerships.

For more information contact ktp@leeds.ac.uk, call (0113) 343 0928 or tweet @UniLeedsKTP

"I have been involved in a number of KTPs previously, all of which have been excellent projects with good commercial outcomes. However, this KTP has been exceptional for me with respect to the research outcomes that have been achieved, as witnessed by the number and quality of the papers produced."

Professor Anne Neville,
School of Mechanical Engineering

News

Business School appoints Deputy Dean

Professor Cathy Cassell has joined the University's Business School as Deputy Dean.

Cathy joined from Manchester Business School, where she held a number of academic leadership roles and a Chair in Organisational Psychology. She has also worked at Sheffield University Management School and Sheffield Business School.

In addition to deputising for the Dean, Professor Cassell will develop and implement the Business School's emerging corporate engagement strategy. She says: "Leeds University Business School is dynamic and forward-thinking and I am here to help consolidate and build on our position as a major international player in research and learning and teaching.

"My task is to bring about a more joined-up approach to research, teaching and engagement with our corporate clients. Corporate connections are crucial for any business school, particularly

so given the research impact agenda. LUBS has wonderful impact stories to tell and great corporate connections and my job is to integrate these more closely."

Professor Cassell is a Fellow of the British Academy of Management and an Academic Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. She is also a chartered occupational psychologist and a member of the Association of Business Schools' Research Policy Committee. Her academic research focuses on organisational change, learning and diversity, with a focus on different qualitative research methodologies.

She says: "It's quite rare to find an academic leadership role which includes a research element. I am interested in the idea of research which draws together colleagues from across different faculties and the emphasis on interdisciplinary research here was a major attraction for me. I have also been very impressed so far by the obvious commitment to



Professor Cathy Cassell

excellence in student education. Leeds feels like an entrepreneurial university and I think that I will have the opportunity to really make things happen."

Cathy is proud of having combined a successful academic career with raising three children, now aged 24, 20 and 16. She says: "I have always taken the view that work-life balance is extremely important. Universities are great places to work for many reasons, and I have found that an academic career can be both highly rewarding and also flexible when combining it with other important things in life."

Gold standard engagement

Leeds University Business School (LUBS) has been awarded a prestigious gold standard Small Business Charter Award – one of just three universities in the country to be recognised in this way for their role in helping to kick-start British enterprise.

Dean of LUBS Professor Peter Moizer received the award – which is part of the Small Business Charter Award scheme – on behalf of LUBS at 10 Downing Street. The scheme aims to encourage greater levels of engagement between business schools and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), to help the economy to grow.

Nationally, the scheme has already helped 4,700 students find work placements in Britain's micro-business and start-up sector. Small Business Charter business schools

have directly helped more than 8,000 small businesses, and over 800 new businesses have already been started.

The award is a major boost for LUBS and reflects its strength in providing support for SMEs and fostering enterprise in the region. The award means that LUBS will have the ability to play an active role in schemes such as Growth Vouchers, Growth Accelerators and Start-Up Loans provided by the government – allowing the faculty to directly invest in new start-ups and entrepreneurs.

Professor Moizer says: "We already play a significant role in fostering enterprise and supporting and engaging with businesses in the region. The award of this Charter, which reflects the commitment and hard work of staff at the Business School, will support our efforts to build on these foundations and will help us to move this work up a gear."



At the door of Number 10 (l-r): Professors Peter Moizer and Nigel Lockett, Rob Whieldon and Susanne Marchant

EQUIS accreditation

LUBS has also reaffirmed its position as a top international business school by achieving the highly sought-after five-year European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS) accreditation from the European Foundation for Management Development.

LUBS now joins the exclusive club of business schools who hold the full five-year accreditation, bringing it into Europe's top 50 alongside only 12 UK business schools.

EQUIS is a leading international system of quality assessment, improvement and accreditation of higher education institutions in management

and business administration. It assesses business schools based on their degree programmes and activities and sub-units of the institution, including research, e-learning units, executive education provision and community outreach.

Research and innovation

New book celebrates Astbury

A new book by Dr Kersten Hall (School of Philosophy, Religion and the History of Science) (PRHS) celebrates the life and work of Leeds-based scientist and pioneer William T Astbury who, through his work using X-rays to study the structure of wool fibres, helped transform understanding of molecular biology and lay the foundations for the discovery of the structure of DNA.

“James Watson and Francis Crick went on to win the Nobel Prize for their discovery of the double helical structure of DNA, but Astbury’s name is barely remembered outside Leeds,” says Dr Hall. “I hope that my book – *Man in the Monkeynut Coat* – will help remedy that neglect. It explores why the work of this unsung hero of science was so important.”

Dr Hall continues: “Astbury’s insight that the shapes of biological molecules might be deliberately altered found powerful expression in his rather unusual overcoat, which was woven from monkeynut proteins manipulated at the molecular level to produce a textile fibre substitute called Ardil. Professor Astbury wore the coat as an example of the power of the new science.”

After the Second World War, Professor Astbury sought government support to fulfil his dream

of establishing Leeds as the national centre for the new science of molecular biology but his plans met with rejection. Dr Hall says: “Some have suggested that this was such a blow to his spirits he simply gave up the pursuit of DNA, yet this seems to conflict with the image of a man for whom science was always an adventure and who was able to infect his co-workers with a similar excitement and enthusiasm. As his colleague and friend Professor Reginald D Preston wrote: ‘To be with Astbury is like a perpetual Christmas morning.’”

Today, the University of Leeds’ Astbury Centre for Structural Molecular Biology (www.astbury.leeds.ac.uk) stands as a fitting tribute to Professor Astbury and his work. The Centre was founded in 1999 as an interdisciplinary research centre and is today one of the University’s powerhouses of research, aiming to understand life in molecular detail.



More details about the book, which is published by Oxford University Press, can be found at <http://goo.gl/SmRFsl>

News in brief

Research Staff Conference success

Nearly 100 people attended the inaugural Research Staff Conference in June, organised by the Staff and Departmental Development Unit. Delegates heard Vice-Chancellor Sir Alan Langlands talk about challenges facing researchers in higher education and ambitious plans for developing the University’s research strengths.

As well as plenary sessions on communication skills, the Research Council UK’s researcher development activities and the support offered by the Research Staff Association, the conference also offered four breakout sessions which included practical advice on developing vocal confidence, handling interviews and career development. Feedback from the conference was excellent and the hope is to hold a similar event in 2015.

Summer School celebrates the Tour

Students at this year’s Leeds International Summer School (LISS) had the opportunity to study a new module celebrating British cycling and, in particular, the Tour de France visit to Yorkshire. ‘Sport in the UK: Health and Performance Issues’ focused on cycling, with topics including the biomechanics of cycling and the ethics of the sport, as well as practical elements such as bike maintenance and even a spin class. A field trip took students on a tour of Team GB’s training grounds, the Manchester Velodrome at the National Cycling Centre.

Some 55 international and EU students attended the four-week LISS, earning up to 20 credits towards their home degree. For information visit www.leeds.ac.uk/summer or contact summer@leeds.ac.uk

A new School of Languages, Cultures and Societies

From 1 August, the School of Modern Languages and Cultures will change its name to the School of Languages, Cultures and Societies (LCS). From the same date, the new School will incorporate the former Department of Classics.

Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies (AMES) in the school will change its name to Arabic, Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies (AIMES) and the Foreign Language Teaching Unit will be known as Languages for All (L4A). For further information about these changes, contact Becky Wilding on r.s.j.wilding@leeds.ac.uk

Institute for Transport Studies wins government contract

The Institute for Transport Studies (ITS) – together with Arup and Accent – has been awarded a Department for Transport contract to re-estimate official UK values of travel time savings and reliability.

The value of travel time savings is one of the most important parameters in transport planning. Re-estimation of official values is a significant undertaking and can have wide-ranging impacts on policy and practice. The

award of the contract is testament to the expertise of ITS staff, who made important contributions to previous national studies and to the scoping studies which prepared the way for this new study.



LUU Welfare Officer Charlotte Warner signing the pledge



(l-r): Robert Partridge, Charlotte Warner, and Mind Matters' Lucy Bailey and Samuel Dennis

Inspire our students

Pledge to tackle the stigma of mental health

The University and Leeds University Union (LUU) have signalled their commitment to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination and improve support services by signing a Time to Change pledge.

Robert Partridge, Director of Student Opportunity, and Charlotte Warner, LUU's Welfare Officer, worked with student-run society Mind Matters to develop the Time to Change pledge, which is centred on raising awareness, building better welfare networks and providing more support and training for staff and students throughout university life. Mind Matters had hundreds of conversations with students from across the University and a student-staff forum was attended by representatives from counselling and support services and local mental health charities.

"It's great that the University and LUU have signed the Time to Change pledge," says

Charlotte. "This will help us tackle the stigma of mental health illnesses have coordinate support to make it more consistent."

Samuel Dennis, Campaigns Coordinator for Mind Matters, says: "Our Campaigns team wanted a campaign that brought together a number of issues related to mental wellbeing, so the Time to Change pledge seemed like a great focal point for everyone at the University."

Other organisations that have pledged include BT, the Premier League, Channel 4, the Church of England, Comic Relief, several local authorities and NHS Trusts.

Business students learn from the experts

Over 30 business leaders from a range of industries – including Nokia, Marks and Spencer, John Lewis and Hallmark International – have given Management students at the University insights into their future careers and advice on job search and interview skills.

Bosses from major manufacturers and retailers, charity chief executives, entrepreneurs and directors of companies, large and small, converged on Leeds University Business School (LUBS) for the two-day Leaders in Residence event, supported by members of the Management Division advisory board.

Through workshops, mentoring sessions and social events, these established business people helped students connect the theory of their course learning to real-world practice in



Andreas Loizou, business trainer and author, opened the event. His financial thriller *The Devil's Deal* was published by Financial Times Prentice Hall and has been translated into nine languages



Management students at the Leaders in Residence Event. Facing the camera is Matteo Righetti, MBA

businesses and boardrooms around the world. They also offered their top tips for success. The Leaders, many of them alumni, also advised on the design and content of courses to ensure that Leeds' teaching reflects the fast-changing world of business.

Victoria Tomlinson, Chair of LUBS Management Division advisory board, says: "Employers often complain that graduates are not 'job-ready' but this partnership between the University and Leaders is ensuring that programmes and teaching are relevant and that students understand what employers are looking for."

MSc Management student Jeyanthi Noelpillai comments: "The Leaders in Residence events have helped me see how real-world practice

differs from business school theories. I have found the insight from the Leaders truly valuable, especially the top ten tips for success, my favourite being 'ask smart people questions!'"

Peter Cross, Communications Director for John Lewis, who studied French and Management Studies at Leeds, adds: "Leaders in Residence is a fascinating experiment in academic and business engagement, where students access a breadth of experience and business people have rewarding encounters with the leaders of tomorrow. In my case, it was also a wonderful trip down memory lane in one of the UK's very best universities!"

Sustainability

Sustainability Awards bigger and better than ever

An audience of 130 people – including staff, students and external partners – gathered in the Refectory to celebrate the annual University of Leeds Sustainability Awards and Green Impact Awards.

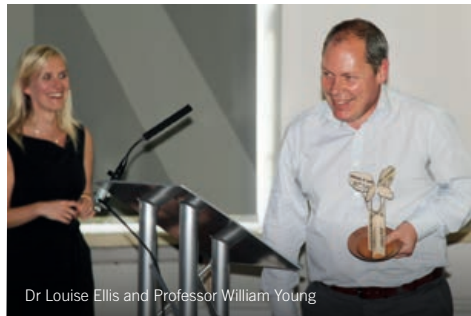
The first awards of the evening were the Sustainability Awards, presented by the Vice-Chancellor Sir Alan Langlands. He praised the professionalism and hard work of staff and students across the University and underlined our commitment to sustainability.

“These Sustainability Awards have been given to inspiring, innovative and hard-working staff and students who have contributed to sustainability at the University,” says Head of Sustainability Louise Ellis. “We received nominations from across the whole campus, and the many exciting ideas and actions made the task of picking the winners very difficult!”

The event also saw the fourth Green Impact Awards. This year, 49 awards were given – including, for the first time, Platinum and Excellence awards – making Leeds one of the largest Green Impact organisations in the UK.

Green Impact Special Awards were given to those Green Impact teams or members who had gone beyond the usual scheme and workbook to take their own independent actions to embed sustainability in the University.

“We’d like to give a big thank you to everyone who attended the event and made it such a great evening,” continues Louise “It was brilliant to hear about such amazing work on campus and we look forward to celebrating again next year!”



Dr Louise Ellis and Professor William Young



Anna Vickerstaff, Green Exchange Project Officer, and Frankie O'Byrne, LUU's Community Officer



Jenny Scattergood and Heather Strachan



Tina Kelly

The Sustainability Awards

Collaborative Organisation – Pathogen Control Engineering (PaCE) Institute

PaCE developed shared-space laboratories, including the development of a shared lab between the School of Civil Engineering and the then School of Process, Environmental and Materials Engineering.

Embedding Sustainability – Catering and Conferencing

Catering and Conferencing developed a sustainability strategy and a wide range of initiatives which have transformed their approach to sustainability.

Knowledge and Capacity – Deborah Fenney

Deborah's thesis, 'Disabled people and pro-environmental behaviour', looked into the constraints disabled people face when making pro-environmental choices, enabling her to provide recommendations for important changes.

Positive Partner in the Community – Sarah Bradbury

Sarah managed an outreach programme – Schools Out – for primary school students, engaging them with biodiversity and higher education.

Resource Management – Sean Killen

Sean championed the replacement of the Faculty of Biological Sciences' machine room air conditioner in the Garstang Building with a natural air-flow system over a conventional compressor-based system, resulting in a significant reduction in the amount of electricity used.

M&S University of Leeds Sustainable Leadership Award – William Young

William is currently developing an elective strand called 'Creating Sustainable Futures', which will be available to all first-year students at the University.

Sustainability

Work set to begin on multi-storey car park

Preparation work for the University's new 600-space multi-storey car park (MSCP) is due to begin in autumn.

With 10 levels, the much-needed facility will increase the number of spaces available for staff in the short to medium term and improve the quality and safety of parking facilities at the University.

The building, which will occupy part of the current Orange zone adjacent to the EC Stoner Building, will incorporate sustainable measures, including a green wall and sustainable drainage. Initial work will involve the removal of a number of trees and shrubs but any loss in biodiversity will be replaced.

The operation of the MSCP will be fully funded from car parking receipts, from permit holders and day parking (including external customers). However, it's also expected that the car park will bring in extra income from people using nearby facilities, such as the Leeds Arena and LGI, at evenings and weekends.



The location of the MSCP, next to the EC Stoner Building

"The MSCP is necessary due to the reduction in the number of spaces over previous years and further losses that are likely due to capital developments over the next few years. We're taking the opportunity to review the car parking policy and will incorporate permit criteria and banding which reflects and facilitates sustainability and travel plan targets and measures," says Facilities Directorate's Majid Khan. "We're currently reviewing the car parking charges and are looking at options for shorter stays which allows for greater flexibility. We're also keen to keep charges linked with carbon emissions and to give discounts to people with the most efficient vehicles. At the same time, we wish to make charges more equitable and linked to affordability with salary levels."

Construction works during the year-long project are expected to cause some disruption and colleagues will be kept informed of changes.



Artist's impression of the new car park

Valuing our people

Putting our people first

The University's People Management Framework was recognised as a sector-leading initiative at the 2014 Universities HR Awards for Excellence.

The People Management Framework (PMF) won the Organisational Impact Award, reflecting the tangible benefits which the initiative has brought across the University.

Debbie Greenwood, SDDU, project manager of the PMF initiative, who attended the awards ceremony with colleagues from Human Resources (HR), says: "We were delighted to win the award, especially as we were judged as sector-leading by some very senior people in higher education and entered against some stiff competition. This has been a real team effort University-wide."

First introduced in 2007, the aim of the PMF (previously known as TIFES) was to ensure a consistent and measurable approach to people

management in line with the University's values. Key elements of the PMF, developed since its introduction, include:

- the Leadership and Management Standard, with behavioural expectations relating to self-awareness, working with others and building future success
- the PMF survey, carried out every other year, measuring HR performance in each school and service
- the use of data from the survey to inform school and service HR action plans
- tailored training and development to support HR action plans.



People first (l-r): Debbie Greenwood, Jenny Creagh, Carolyn Walker and Judith Hardy

Matthew Knight, who has recently retired but was HR Director during the design and implementation of the PMF, says: "The People Management Framework has transformed the way we work. I'd like to congratulate all those who have worked so hard to ensure that it's now embedded in our culture. By putting HR at the heart of our annual planning, we're sending a clear message that effective people management is critical to our success at Leeds."

Valuing our people

Bigger gym on the way

Work has begun to extend the current gym at The Edge, transforming it into the largest university gym in the country with 250 stations.

“The £1.2 million development will provide an increased free-weights training area, reconfigured and increased cardiovascular equipment range, more stretch space and the refurbishment of Studio 2,” explains Gareth Dickson, Assistant Head of Sport. “In addition, the latest Technogym ARTIS range will be introduced, which comes complete with a fully web-connected functional screen, personal cloud integration and a new functional design. Much of the equipment is self-powered, and some has the ability to transform the energy generated by users back into the grid, making it the most sustainable equipment on the market!”

Due to the building works, Studio 2 will be out of action for most of the summer, with the majority of classes relocated to Cromer Terrace. The gym, Sports Hall 2 and spin room will remain open, although there may be some intermittent disruption – details will be confirmed as early as possible. Work is expected to be completed by September 2014.



LUWC in Swaledale



Still marching after 40 years

The Leeds University Staff Walking Club (LUWC) recently celebrated its 40th birthday with a walking weekend centred around a comfortable hotel in the idyllic Swaledale village of Thwaite.

“The 28 participants enjoyed two days of perfect weather and the weekend was a great success; walks of different lengths were organised amid wonderful scenery. We also managed to hold a small birthday party for the Club, with cake!” says Chair of LUWC David Shaw.

“The Club is proud of its record of holding at least one walk – sometimes more – virtually every weekend for 40 years. Our outings normally belong to one of two groups: moderate walks of 10 to 13 miles or gentle strolls of around 5 to 6 miles.

“As well as the Dales, we regularly visit the Peak District, the Lakes and North Wales. In addition, we usually organise longer treks at Easter and over the summer. In the course of these, we have completed over 20 long-distance trails in the UK and also enjoyed walking holidays in places as varied as Arran, Isle of Man, Scotland, Ireland, France, Spain, Italy, Austria, Norway, Slovenia and Sicily. Later this summer, a group from the Club will be walking in China.”

New members are always welcome. For further details of the Club's activities and the current programme of walks, visit <http://goo.gl/s26nc0> or contact the Chair of LUWC David Shaw on (0113) 285 7480 or d.c.shaw@leeds.ac.uk

Give your kids The Edge

The Edge is not just a gym – it also offers a huge range of activities for the whole family, especially children.

Activities include family swimming, parent and child courses, crash courses, children's swimming lessons, masters swimming for the more advanced swimmer, duckling classes (3-4 years), one-to-one lessons and swim clinics. You name it, The Edge provides it!

The Edge also has a great climbing wall suitable for children and runs taster sessions, climbing courses, climbing birthday parties and a climbing club, all for kids.

During the school holidays there is a range of camps to keep your children occupied

including Kings Camp – for which staff are entitled to a 15% discount – and hockey camps (11-17 years).

For those looking for a family break in the Yorkshire Dales, The Edge's outdoor activity centre at Selside offers a range of nearby activities including caving, rock climbing, hill walking, canoe/kayaking and mountain biking.

Junior (under 16s) membership is £13.74 per month, and under 18s is £22.90 per month. The Edge offers a 'partner promotion' giving partners 15% discount for public premium memberships.

For more information visit <http://sport.leeds.ac.uk> or call (0113) 343 7406.



Valuing our people

Team talk – The team behind the new Discovery Themes website (part of enhancing the Leeds Curriculum)

What does the team do?

We were brought together specifically to build the new Discovery Themes website but, generally, the Web Solutions team delivers an end-to-end web design, development and hosting service to the University. Examples of our work include the corporate website – www.leeds.ac.uk – LeedsforLife, the IT website, and the Faculty of Medicine and Health, Faculty of Arts and For Staff websites. The Student Management Information (SIMS) team has responsibility for maintaining and developing SIMS, for example BANNER and the Catalogue.

Who's in the team?

For this particular project, the Web Solutions team is made up of Paul Alexander, Matthew Blewitt, Caitlin Cunningham, Claire Duxbury, Nigel Gossage, Oliver Roberts, Mike Speight and Antony Wood. The SIMS team comprises Andrew Amies-King and Martyn Robinson.

Tell us about the Discovery Themes and the new website?

The development of the 10 interdisciplinary Discovery Themes and their sub-themes is a significant enhancement to the Leeds Curriculum. It will enable students to broaden their education in a more coherent and

structured way than previously, selecting from over 1,000 discovery modules either within or outside their programme(s).

To support these changes, the SIMS and Web Solutions team has helped design and develop a new Discovery Themes website. It will be available through the LeedsforLife website for students starting in September 2014.

To support the introduction of Discovery Themes and allow the additional information to be stored and provided to LeedsforLife, it was necessary to make amendments to the module and programme catalogues. This was done by the SIMS team, who also produced an updated information set.

The Discovery Themes website is an extension to the LeedsforLife site. It uses the latest Microsoft.Net MVC and HTML 5 technologies, so that it continues to be accessible across various mobile devices, allowing staff and students to use the site at home, on campus and on the move.

In July, a test site will be available for staff to explore, along with concise guidance on its use. From 18 August, the new intake of students for 2014/15 will be able to log on to the Portal and LeedsforLife website –

<https://leedsforlife.leeds.ac.uk> – and explore and create a shortlist of discovery modules in preparation for their online enrolment.

What gives the team the most satisfaction?

Using the latest technologies to provide our customers with effective websites that directly meet their needs and give them an up-to-date experience across a range of desktop and mobile devices.

What challenges do the team face?

In the fast-paced world of web design and development it's often difficult to keep up with the latest technologies. Combining this with delivering a packed schedule of work, alongside high customer expectations, provides a significant challenge to us!

"The Discovery Themes represent an important advance on the previous provision of elective modules for Leeds undergraduates; they will help students to understand the sheer breadth of opportunities available to them, and then to identify the modules that best meet their academic interests, personal enthusiasms and career aspirations."

Martin Purvis,
Chair of the Leeds Curriculum Broadening Group



(l-r): Oliver Roberts, Caitlin Cunningham, Martyn Robinson, Andrew Amies-King, Paul Holmes, Matthew Blewitt, Paul Alexander, Michael Speight

In the news



Dr Victoria Burley (Food Science and Nutrition) joined a lively debate on ITV's *Loose Women*, about the issue of people consuming too much **sugar** in their diets.

Professor Duncan McCargo (School of Politics and International Studies) was interviewed by *The New York Times*, Channel News Asia, Al Jazeera, Channel 4 News, BBC Radio 4's *The World Tonight* and BBC Radio 5 live about the military coup in **Thailand**.

Dr Simon Lewis (School of Geography) and his team of researchers from the University discovered a large **peat bog** in Congo-Brazzaville. His findings featured in *The Guardian*, *The Mirror*, BBC *Breakfast*, BBC News, BBC Radio 5 live, and BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme.

BBC News online featured an article based on the research of Dr Andrea Taylor (School of Earth and Environment/Leeds University Business School) which found that people in Britain associate **climate change** with wet weather, unlike other countries such as the USA where it is associated with rising temperatures.

Research by Professor David Spencer (Leeds University Business School) found that **working** shorter hours could make people more productive. The study featured on BBC News online and BBC *Breakfast*. He also wrote about the study for a feature in *The Conversation*.

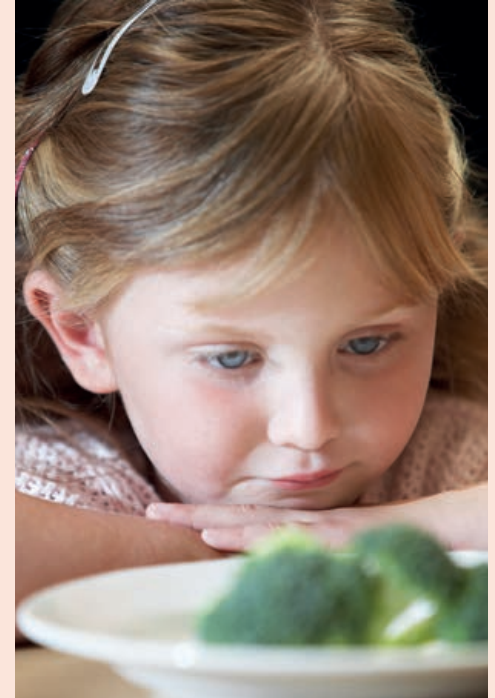
Professor Jurgen Denecke (School of Biology) was a guest on BBC Radio 4's *Farming Today*, where he discussed the many capabilities of the humble **potato**, including turning it into fuel, plastic and paper.

Research led by Professor Andrew Shepherd (School of Earth and Environment) revealed that 159 billion tonnes of **Antarctic ice** is lost every year. This was covered in *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Sun*, *The Independent*, *Mail Online*, BBC News, Al Jazeera and NBC News.

Professor David Lindley (School of English) spoke to James Shapiro in the documentary *The Mysterious Mr Webster* about how the Guy Fawkes plot influenced the writing of **John Webster**. This was broadcast on BBC Two and BBC Four.

Dr Clifford Stott (School of Law) was interviewed by BBC *Breakfast* about Boris Johnson's decision to purchase water cannons for the Metropolitan Police. He also spoke to BBC Radio WM about concerns that new football stadiums in Brazil had not been tested to full capacity before the **World Cup** and discussed safety at the World Cup 2014 with BBC Radio 5 live.

The School of Mechanical Engineering teamed up with designer Barney George to create a clock to signal the start of the Tour de France. The **countdown clock** was made using old bike clogs and was stationed at Trinity Shopping Centre. The unveiling of the clock was covered by BBC One's *Look North* and *The Yorkshire Post*.



Research carried out in the Institute of Psychological Sciences found that children are more likely to eat **vegetables** if they are introduced to them at an early age. The study received wide coverage in both national and regional publications, including BBC *Breakfast*, BBC News, *The Telegraph*, *The Times* and *The Yorkshire Post*. The research was led by Professor Marion Hetherington (Institute of Psychological Sciences).

Leeds University Business School was awarded a gold standard **Small Business Charter Award** for its work in supporting enterprise. It was one of only three organisations in the country to receive the award, which was presented at 10 Downing Street. The story was covered by *The Yorkshire Post* and *Yorkshire Evening Post*.

Dr Kahryn Hughes (School of Sociology and Social Policy) appeared on BBC One's *Look North* to discuss the growing concern over the popularity of **online gambling**, especially amongst young people.

Professor Stephen Coleman (Institute of Communications Studies) was interviewed by BBC News online about how politicians find themselves in awkward **photograph** opportunities.

Our people/honours

PhD student **Hannah Roche** (School of English) received a 'prestigious and rare' International Placement Scheme Fellowship from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). The fellowship enabled second-year student Hannah to visit the Harry Ransom Centre in Texas to work on manuscripts and letters of novelist Radclyffe Hall.

University sports scholar and Adult Nursing student **Heather Sellars** won individual silver at the 12th World University Triathlon Championships held in Brazil. Competing in her first world international race, Heather joined over 50 athletes to finish second with a time of 2:16:31.

The University's **School of Medicine** has received an international award for excellence in educating its students. Leeds joins just three other schools in the world recognised by the ASPIRE-to-Excellence award, which aims to promote outstanding performance in medical schools and acknowledge the importance of teaching alongside research. The award has been given to the School for its assessment of students. It is the first school in the UK to be recognised in this category.



Professor Alison Ashcroft

Professor Alison Ashcroft (Faculty of Biological Sciences) has been awarded the Harold Edwin Potts Medal Award for Outstanding Contribution to Chemistry by the University of Liverpool. The Potts Medal, named in honour of distinguished chemist Harold Edwin Potts, was first awarded in 1933 to Liverpool alumni. Professor Ashcroft, Professor of Biomolecular Mass Spectrometry in the Astbury Centre for Structural Molecular Biology, is the first person in 13 years to receive the award.

Sheena Radford, Astbury Professor of Biophysics at the University, has been made a Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS). The honour is the highest accolade in British science and recognises Professor Radford's "seminal contributions to understanding how proteins fold and function biologically." Her work has unlocked the molecular details of the misfolding of proteins implicated in amyloid diseases such as Alzheimer's disease and diabetes type 2, offering a key to understanding and combating these conditions.



Professor Sheena Radford



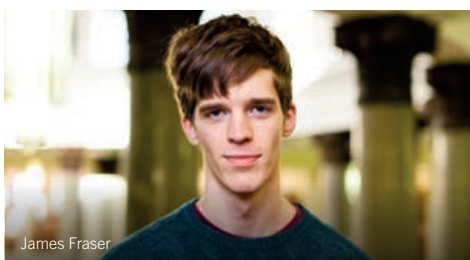
(l-r): Chief Superintendent Paul Money, Andrew Gordon-Platt, Mike Leonard, Assistant Chief Constable Mark Millsom

University Crime Prevention Advisor **Andrew Gordon-Platt** and Residential Property Manager **Mike Leonard** have received a commendation award from the West Yorkshire Police Leeds District Chief Superintendent for their work in promoting a partnership approach to reducing crime against students in Leeds. Crime levels in University accommodation have fallen by 77% since 2004.



Angela Foley

Angela Foley, General Manager of Bright Beginnings Childcare Centre on campus, has received the British Empire Medal (BEM) for services to childcare provision in higher education in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.



James Fraser

Second-year PhD student **James Fraser** (School of Philosophy, Religion and History of Science) has been awarded Western University Ontario's (WUO) Rob Clifton Prize for the best graduate paper in the philosophy of physics for his paper 'Spontaneous Symmetry Breaking in Finite Systems'. WUO is recognised as one of the best centres in the world for philosophy of science and philosophy of physics.



Dr Clifford Stott

The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) has awarded the School of Law's **Dr Clifford Stott** its 2014 Celebrating Impact Award for Outstanding Impact in Public Policy. The Award reflects Dr Stott's work with policymakers and police forces, changing the way crowd events and protests are policed. The new approach to crowd psychology developed by Dr Stott and colleagues provided powerful evidence that crowds can be managed more effectively when the police concentrate on enabling lawful behaviour – such as protests – rather than merely trying to control criminal behaviour through fear and force. Today, his ideas permeate police training and policy, and have influenced the introduction of new police liaison units designed to avoid conflict through dialogue.

News

Mature students win adult learners' awards

Two adult learners studying for degrees at the University have won regional awards in recognition of their outstanding achievements.

Emma McNamara and Ray Whitaker were nominated by the University and received their awards at the Yorkshire & Humber Adult Learners' Awards 2014 ceremony, organised by Involve Yorkshire & Humber. Both grew up in Leeds in areas of low participation in higher education and left school with few qualifications. They took part in Realise – the aspiration-raising programme run by the Lifelong Learning Centre (LLC) at the University – while studying at Deacon House, a base of Leeds City College.

Emma received the NIACE* Learning in Families and Communities Individual Award. Despite great personal setbacks, Emma returned to education aged 32 to re sit her maths GCSE. Just three years later, she has turned her life around through learning and is now working towards gaining a degree. After using the LLC's pre-entry Information Advice and Guidance service, Emma applied for the University's interdisciplinary foundation programme, Preparation for Higher Education. She completed this and is currently studying for a degree in Criminal Justice and Criminology in the School of Law. She hopes to work for

the probation service, helping others who have faced similar barriers.

Emma says: "I believe in letting other people know that with hard work and dedication you can achieve anything, no matter who you are or what barriers may stand in your way, and a better education can be achieved. Taking the step into higher education has totally transformed my and my daughter's life."

Ray received the HEART-sponsored Raising Aspirations Award**. Medically discharged from the Navy at 22, Ray lost his career, confidence and direction. Aged 40, following a series of low-paid jobs and being diagnosed with ME, Ray was determined to regain his sense of purpose and enrolled to do a maths GCSE. Motivated by his success and the support of his tutor, Ray also sought advice from the LLC's guidance service and applied for the Earth and Environmental Sciences Foundation Year. Battling through health issues and caring responsibilities, Ray passed the course and is now achieving excellent results in his first year of a degree in Sustainability and Environmental Management.



Emma McNamara

Ray Whitaker

Ray says: "I'm very proud to be at university and I regularly talk to people I meet in my area about why they should think about going to university. If I can influence just one person to make a positive change in their life, I will have achieved something."

The students' success demonstrates the importance of universities engaging with local communities to widen participation in higher education. It also shows how access to adult education in local communities is vital if people are going to continue to have opportunities to aim high and achieve their ambitions. Ray and Emma are both now volunteer learning champions for LLC, and give their time to take part in aspiration-raising activities on campus and across the city.

* The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) aims to encourage all adults to engage in learning of all kinds.

** HEART Higher Education Access, Rewarding, Transforming) is a partnership of 12 West Yorkshire providers of higher education. It is sponsoring two awards: www.heart.ac.uk

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Angel Smith 07554176502, a.k.a.smith@leeds.ac.uk

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Naomi Tickhill 37913, n.r.tickhill@leeds.ac.uk

FURNISHED ATTIC FLAT in artistic house in Leeds 8; light and spacious with bedroom, sitting room, kitchen; share bathroom with owner. £420 per month inclusive.

0750 350 7210, merlomichell@hotmail.com

THIRD FLOOR FURNISHED FLAT

A large en-suite bedroom, shared sitting room and kitchen in a 2-bedroom apartment, 5 mins walk to central train station, Male only, £450 pm.

minmwa@leeds.ac.uk

TWO-BED FLAT FOR RENT

Brand new two bedroom garden flat in the Claremonts (Headingley) available for short or long-term rent to staff or postgrads. Fully furnished with fitted kitchen, all utilities and wi-fi included.

Paul Garner 0113 294 8008, p.garner@leeds.ac.uk

2-BEDROOM FLAT

Bright, spacious 2-bedroom flat (top floor of Victorian building) in quiet side-street, Headingley, from 1/9/14 to 30/6/15. £700 + utilities per month. Ideal for academic visitor or postdoc.

Ulrike Heuer 0754 561 9777, u.heuer@leeds.ac.uk

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Seamus Corr 07815 160034, seamus.corr1@ntlworld.com

Other

QUARTER-LIFE CRISIS

Feeling stuck in life? Difficulty 'finding place in this world'? Nothing you do seems satisfactory? If yes, please consider being part of my study. Ethics no. 13-0236.

Raginie Duara psrd@leeds.ac.uk

SUMMER PROMOTION AT THE EDGE

Get 10 days of Premium membership for only £20! Unlimited access to the swimming pool, fitness suite and exercise class programme.

Small ads can be submitted online at <http://smallads.leeds.ac.uk> The charge is £7 for 10 words or part thereof (University members) or £10 (general public). The deadline for the next issue is 10 September 2014 at 12 noon. Advertisers are independent of the University. The University makes no warranty or representation as to (a) the accuracy of ads or (b) the quality of goods or services advertised. To the full extent allowed by the law the University excludes all liability. Contact the Reporter on 0113 343 6699 or the.reporter@leeds.ac.uk

Events

Upstream – Exploring the Aquatic Landscape Hebden Bridge, Friday 25 July, 10am

Meet local artist Trudi Entwistle and Rebecca Slack from the University's water@leeds group at Hebden Bridge railway station for a six-mile walk linked to Upstream – an art exhibition at Gibson Mill informed by a collaboration between Trudi and scientists at water@leeds.

The walk will include talks about the role of water in the landscape and there will be time at Gibson Mill to explore the exhibition with the artist (free admission). Although the walk is easy, there will be some climbing. Suitable for families with children aged eight and over (strictly no unaccompanied children).



The Taiwan Season – Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 1 – 24 August

stage@leedstouring is working with the Taiwanese Ministry of Culture and production company Pi on the Taiwan Season, a series of five shows that will be performed at this year's Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

stage@leedstouring is providing support to the international companies bringing their work to Edinburgh through its Fresh to the Fringe programme. They offer technical support, venue advice, rehearsal support, promotional advice and special 'Surviving the Fringe' training for visiting company members.

The inaugural Taiwan Season will present a spectacular showcase of Taiwan's performing arts through five performances: *Kid Box*, *Misa-Lisin*, *Kurakuraw – Dance Glass Bead*, *Eggs of Blessings* and *Impression of Taiwan*. Offering a diverse spectrum of contemporary dance and physical theatre, the shows will offer radical new interpretations of the country's aboriginal culture by five of its most exciting companies emerging onto the international stage.

Graduate Art Prize exhibition, 22 August – 18 October

Some of the best new art of the year will be displayed at the Stanley & Audrey Burton Gallery, when work by four recent graduates from the Fine Art and Design degree courses will be shown as part of this year's Friends of University Art and Music (FUAM) Graduate Prize Show.

Choosing the four finalists, based on the artwork they presented in their degree shows, was a panel of judges that included Cherie Federico (Editor, *Aesthetica* magazine) and Dennis Hopper (Director of Facilities Management).

The finalists will exhibit a selection of their artwork at the Gallery, working alongside professional curators on a joint display, which will be open to the public and run for four weeks.

Hemlines and Hairdos: M&S from the 60s to the 80s

Marks & Spencer Archive, Saturday 30 August

Dust off your flares, throw on your miniskirts and don your shoulder pads for a trip through three decades of M&S. Join Archive staff for a day of twisting and disco dance classes, fantastic fashion displays and expert talks about how M&S developed through this period. Come in your finest 60s, 70s or 80s outfit and enter the Best Dressed competition – there's a great prize up for grabs.

There's no need to book, just drop in between 11am and 3pm – everyone is welcome.

Leeds Museums and Galleries

An action-packed summer of activities is planned at all nine of Leeds' museums and galleries. Whether it's activities to celebrate the Festival of British Archaeology at Leeds Industrial Museum at Armley Mills (18 July), a visit to the Deli Market at Kirkstall Abbey (last Saturday of each month), a trip to Lotherton Hall to see *Dressed for Battle* – an exhibition exploring how clothes and style have been affected by war - (on until 28 September), or a 'behind the scenes' tour of the Leeds Museum Discovery Centre (every Thursday at 11am), there's something for everyone.

Full details of activities can be found on the Leeds City Council website at <http://goo.gl/bqyWrX>

FAQs

Richard Cruise, IT Support Adviser

How did you come to be at the University?

I was primary school teacher in London for 11 years and just fancied doing something different. I like helping people and had taught myself IT skills, so thought the Help Desk sounded like a good mix of both.

Tell us about working on Help Desk.

Basically our work follows the rhythm of the academic year. At the beginning of the year, lots of people come in with new equipment that they're not sure how to work and our job is to get them up and running – the biggest thing is getting them connected. When students arrive, perhaps after an all-night flight, the first thing they want to do is to get on Wifi and Skype to tell people they've arrived safely. Towards the end of the academic year, people want to know what happens to their accounts when they leave the University. In between, we're always busy – dealing with around 70,000 calls, emails and visits a year.

What's the strangest thing you've been asked at Help Desk?

Being asked whether the University would pay for train tickets as well as aeroplane tickets. This hapless lad explained in some depth that the University had given him two tickets for his graduation and he wanted to know whether they included transport to and from the airport. I had to gently explain that, unfortunately, it wasn't international flights the University was offering, it was two tickets to get in to the Great Hall for his graduation ceremony.

You're currently working on the introduction of email 365 – what's happening there?

I'm creating all the webpages associated with the upgrade on the IT website. That means giving students and staff information as the new system is introduced so they know what's happening and when. I'm producing permanent operational pages that people can refer to for guidance.

We've had some volunteers who are going to be upgraded in early July, then IT staff will be upgraded later that month. New students



coming to Leeds will be set up in August and all students will be upgraded by the first week in September. The great news for students is that they get five free copies of Microsoft Office 365 ProPlus, which they can download onto multiple devices.

Staff will be upgraded between October and the end of the year. The main advantage for them is that there'll be a much larger storage quota. In trials we moved half a million emails from just one account, so you can see the scale of information we're dealing with! Generally, 365 is much more compatible, enabling a much smoother integration between devices.

You're an enthusiastic urban explorer and photographer – what does that involve?

I've always been a keen historian and liked the sound of urban exploration after browsing an article a few years ago. I got together with some like-minded people, did some research, went along and took some photos. It's all about seeing things that are around you in a different way; there are lots of things out there but we get blinkered to them. There are abandoned, unvisited places – old factories, hospitals, cinemas, swimming pools, culverts, offices – many of which used to be full of life but are now silent and forgotten.

It can be a bit dangerous but it's very exciting and I've had some truly memorable moments. I remember walking down a corridor in an abandoned asylum somewhere in the north east as the sun came up across the wards, seeing something that very few people have ever seen.

What are your favourite techy bits and bobs?

My phone is definitely the most useful. It's odd to think that it's more powerful than office computers were a few years ago, and we don't think twice about keeping in touch with people all over the world. Of course, Google Maps is brilliant for urban exploration – you can almost do a tour of a building from your armchair!

Which four people would you choose to take urban exploring?

My friend James – he goes to most of the places with me and is as rubbish at climbing as I am, and has got my back. My dad, who got me interested in history – I was being trailed round every castle in the UK with my long-suffering mother and brother, plus he could distract any overzealous security guard with tales of his beloved Sheffield United. *Gardeners' World* presenter Monty Don would be great. He could give me some top tips on how to stop slugs from eating runner bean seedlings at my allotment while I set up my camera. Finally, I wouldn't take a person but a large dog. You get to meet all sorts in abandoned buildings – the homeless, needle-using drug abusers, metal thieves, etc – so I'd feel safer. Plus I like dogs; they're good company and are always up for adventure.

What's your most frequently asked question?

Today it's been 'Have you not got an iron?'

View Richard's photos at <http://goo.gl/g19ZSV>



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