

Forward focus



August/September 2013

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

Vice-Chancellor's *view*

People who know me well know that I do not like beetroot. I hate beetroot. It is unpleasant, overrated, casts its stain on any meat, fish, or vegetable in its proximity. In short, the world would be a better place without beetroot.



Vice-Chancellor, Professor David Eastwood

YOUR BUZZ

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Please let us know if you want extra copies of Buzz or if you think we need to amend your distribution details.

Views expressed in the magazine are not necessarily those of the University or a statement of University policy. All submissions may be subject to editing. The Editor's decision is final.

Front cover image: Professor Adam Tickell, Provost and Vice-Principal.

Last summer Jan and I were on holiday in the Low Countries and went to a local restaurant. The starter I would otherwise have most liked contained beetroot. I thought of asking the waiter if I could have the starter without beetroot, and I thought of choosing an alternative. My wife, nevertheless, persuaded me to order the starter, not to trouble the chef with removing the beetroot, and suggested I could leave the beetroot on the side of my plate. This, as so often with my wife's advice, seemed a sensible way forward.

When the starter arrived, with some trepidation but demonstrating I am ever open-minded, I decided I would taste the beetroot. It turned out to be delicious. Anybody who says they do not like beetroot is depriving themselves of gastronomic pleasure. The texture and taste of beetroot are a joy in themselves, and a wonderful complement to other foods. The fact that beetroot stains other things in the dish merely adds to its charm and hints at the way in which it complements their taste.

Why I used to say I did not like beetroot is a deep mystery. It presumably goes back to some bad experience I had of beetroot in my youth; a foolishness on my part which has clearly deprived me of pleasure for something like half a century. I mention this because, very often, we all have attitudes as fixed, irrational, and as ultimately self-defeating as my attitude to beetroot. For reasons which passeth all understanding, we resist other people's suggestions, claim that change is for the worse, insist that we know what we like because we like what we know, and happily align ourselves in the vanguard of resistance to change.

Of course not all change is good, and of course not all innovations are wise. We do, however, live in an era in which the world is changing with enormous rapidity, and the world of higher education is changing faster than many other sectors. As a University, and as those working

in and for the University, we do ourselves no favours through self-referential resistance to new ideas and change. In fact, change is very often as refreshing and as surprisingly enjoyable as my encounter with beetroot last year.

Here at the University of Birmingham we are in the process of embracing change in thoughtful, imaginative, and ultimately ambitious ways. Our willingness to do things differently has underpinned our recent huge success in increasing the University's research income. A willingness to think boldly and differently is at the heart of our Curriculum Review. A whole series of investments in new disciplines, new research initiatives, Birmingham Fellows, increasing the employability of our students, open online courses, and in re-thinking and refreshing the campus have all been grounded in our commitment to retain all that is finest in the University's history and inheritance, but to complement that by a relevance to the challenges of today and anticipating the world of tomorrow.

What animates this process is a willingness to think openly but still critically about ideas for change, and that willingness – which is characteristic of so much that happens here – to do more and to do differently.

As we begin a new academic year, we can do so confident that this great university is exceptionally well-placed to meet the challenges of the future. We have and we are making the kinds of changes that we need to in order fully to achieve our potential. The contribution of staff right across the University has been critical to getting us to where we are, and will be just as important as we continue to adapt and develop to succeed in the future.

So next time you are tempted to say to yourself *'That's not the way we do it here,'* or *'That won't work and I won't like it,'* reflect for a moment that you might be as misguided as I was about beetroot. Liking what we know is not the same as knowing what we should like.

There are, however, limits. Beetroot is great but nobody in their right mind should eat pineapples!

*Vice-Chancellor,
Professor David Eastwood*

NASA technology at UBSport



The Alter-G can be booked via sport.bham.ac.uk/alterg (£20.50 for 45 minutes), plus introduce a friend before 20 September and receive a free anti-gravity treadmill session.

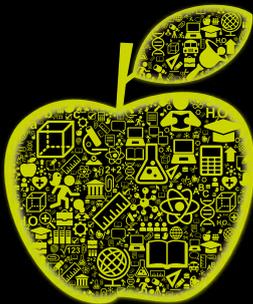
The University's Hi Performance Centre has announced the arrival of the Alter-G, a cutting edge anti-gravity treadmill. Designed to help reduce impact on joints, prevent long term injury risk, or help with return to sport post injury.

The Alter-G uses patented NASA technology, to gently lift the user and precisely alter their weight from 100–20 per cent. UBSport Senior Sports Scientist, Eleanor Jones, explains 'The Alter-G's main mechanism is to reduce the impact you have when you strike the floor whilst running. The relevance of this is that those who have stress fractures, are injured, or suffering from pain can reduce the

impact that goes through them while they return to function.'

UBSport invested in the equipment to help the University's high performing sport clubs and scholars, but the high-technology equipment is not just useful for elite athletes. 'It is beneficial for a range of users', says Eleanor. 'You could be an elderly person with reduced mobility who wants to stay active, or an overweight person who needs support when exercising to reduce loading on joints, or you may even be new to exercise and want to build up endurance – the Alter-G can assist in all these circumstances using very specialist functions.'

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10th anniversary conference celebration

The University recently hosted its 10th annual Teaching and Learning conference. The conference provided staff with an opportunity to share and discuss teaching practices, hear presentations from across the Higher Education sector, and network with colleagues from other Schools and departments. The theme *Technology Enhanced Learning*, complimented the launch of the University's new Virtual Learning Environment.

Delegates participated in more than 20 presentations covering a wide range of topics; from using iPads as reference tools during clinical placements, to investigations into 'lecture flipping' – the practice of delivering lectures online to allow more effective use of contact hours.

For further details visit
www.bham.ac.uk/tlc

Planning is already underway for next year's conference; add your content suggestions by emailing tlconference@contacts.bham.ac.uk

CAMPUS CURIOSITIES

We will all be familiar with 'Old Joe', the University's clock tower that forms the centre of Chancellor's Court; however we may not be quite so familiar with some of Joe's hidden talents and history.

- Old Joe was built as a water tower, and still provides hot water and central heating for central campus buildings
- Joe is on Twitter! Follow [@oldjoeclock](https://twitter.com/oldjoeclock) for the latest tower tweets
- The top of the tower is home to a pair of nesting Peregrine falcons
- The tallest free standing clock tower in the world – there are almost 360 stairs from ground level to the top of Old Joe

University clock tower, affectionately known as 'Old Joe'

UoB GLOBAL

BRAZIL

As part of the ongoing partnership between the Universities of Birmingham and Nottingham, we are making a significant joint investment of £4 million to support partnership development and research collaboration in Brazil.

UoB and Nottingham have established a joint investment fund with the State of São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP) for projects between FAPESP-funded researchers and Birmingham and Nottingham academics. The universities also offer a total of 20 full-fee PhD scholarships for Brazilian students annually, with the funding council CAPES providing living expenses and travel costs.

'Our decision to invest significant funding at the start of this initiative, demonstrated our commitment to building long term collaboration with Brazil and encouraged Brazilian funding councils and partner institutions to quickly agree to match fund activities,' says Professor Malcolm Press, Pro-Vice Chancellor for the Americas. *'We took a very*

collaborative approach to developing our engagement strategy,' continues Andréa Edwards, Director of International Development, *'by asking key partners and organisations in Brazil: "What are the key challenges we face and how can we work together to resolve them?"'*

An emerging partnership with the National Institute of Cancer in Brazil will support the development of collaboration in research and education, and UoB's Brazil Visiting Fellows programme has enabled 15 early career lecturers and post-doctoral researchers from Brazilian universities to conduct research projects at Birmingham. Birmingham will also welcome over 60 study abroad students to the University in September through President Dilma's Science without Borders scheme.

Following UoB's success in hosting the Jamaican track and field training camp for London 2012, Birmingham is helping the 2016 Olympics host city, Rio de Janeiro to ensure the Games have a lasting benefit to the country. Initiatives include hosting an international conference on the legacy of global mega-events, and a sports science-based agreement with Brazil's Ministry of Sport to develop its policy around engagement in sport and the training of elite athletes.

Alan Charlton, Ambassador to Brazil, recently commented that *'the Universities of Birmingham and Nottingham have showed imagination and determination in seeking to create and deepen partnerships in Brazil.'* The Vice-Chancellor will lead a delegation to Brazil in October 2013, with the University of Nottingham, to further enhance this engagement through a series of high profile policy forums and events. There will also be a second round of FAPESP funding and a new visiting fellows scheme launched for 2013–14.

International Relations are keen to hear from colleagues engaged in Brazil. For further information contact Marion Fleming-Froy, International Relations Partnership Coordinator, at m.flemingfroy@bham.ac.uk or visit birmingham.ac.uk/international/Global-engagement/brazil

Celebrating 800 years' service to the University



The Vice-Chancellor recently hosted a celebration for 32 members of staff in recognition of achieving 25 years of service to the University. Award recipients celebrated their collective 800 years at the University with colleagues, friends and family. Vice-Chancellor, Professor David Eastwood, paid a personal tribute to the award winners, citing that universities depend on people for their success and reputation. He said. *'This event is all about you and your commitment and dedication to the University, and it is an honour for me to have a chance to recognise your contributions. Between you, you represent all five Colleges and several Corporate Services departments and your careers span a diverse range of professional and academic roles. It is clear from speaking to your colleagues that you are all popular and valued members of the University community.'*

Founders' Awards 2013

The University's degree congregations are the highpoint of the academic year. A celebration of the achievements of our graduates and honorary graduates, they also recognise the role that the wider University community has played in this success. The Founders' Awards reflect the University's ongoing commitment to research excellence and development, and awards are named after some of

our most influential founders and benefactors. Nominations are received by staff across the University for colleagues whose groundbreaking research has benefits locally, nationally and internationally. Congratulations to all of this year's nominees and to our winners who received their awards from the Vice-Chancellor at the Chancellor's dinner held in July.

Joseph Chamberlain Award for Academic Advancement

Professor Mark Viant, Chair in Metabolomics, has brought unprecedented recognition to the University within the growing field of metabolomics.

Also shortlisted were:

- Professor Arri Coomarasamy, Professor of Gynaecology and Reproductive Medicine
- Professor Chris Skelcher, Professor of Public Governance

Charles Beale Award for Policy Advancement

Professor Heather Widdows, Professor of Global Ethics, has led funded projects on issues of property in the body; reproductive rights; and the ethics of war and terrorism.

Also shortlisted were:

- Professor Marie Fox, Professor of Socio-legal Studies
- Professor Martin Freer, Professor of Nuclear Physics

Josiah Mason Award for Business Advancement

Professor Mark Drayson, Director of Clinical Immunology Service (CIS), has overseen the growth of (CIS) at Birmingham.

Also shortlisted were:

- Dr Moataz Attallah, Lecturer in Advanced Materials Processing
- Professor John Bryson, Department of Management

Aston Webb Award for Outstanding Early-Career Academic

Dr David Gange, Lecturer in History, has co-written a successful proposal for an ERC grant worth 2 million Euros.

Also shortlisted were:

- Dr Owen Addison, Lecturer in Restorative Dentistry
- Dr Zoe Schnepf, Birmingham Fellow School of Chemistry



An English Summer at Winterbourne

In the summer sunshine, Winterbourne House and Garden is well and truly the place to be! University staff benefit from free access 7 days a week, with a valid University ID card. The team at Winterbourne are running a photo competition to celebrate the season. Simply send in your photo, taken in the garden at Winterbourne, that you feel sums up 'An English Summer' to be in with a chance of winning an Afternoon Tea for two. Closing date is 31 August 2013, and shortlisted entries will be posted online. Email photos to enquiries@winterbourne.org.uk.



Creative Minds AT BIRMINGHAM

The School of English, Drama, and American & Canadian Studies (EDACS) is launching an exclusive new series of talks this autumn, entitled Creative Minds at Birmingham. The series will see an exciting variety of renowned writers, poets and theatre leaders visit the University to give talks or reading, showcasing their latest works. Creative Minds at Birmingham launches on 24 October when award-winning poet Jamie McKendrick will read and discuss his work. Future speakers include Bernard MacLaverty, Michael Longley, and Kathleen Jamie.

For further information visit:

birmingham.ac.uk/creativeminds

GO CENTRAL



Bryoney Johnson looks at some of the new facilities being developed at the heart of our Edgbaston campus.

Further details on campus shops and services are available at intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/has

Those of us walking across campus over the past few weeks may have noticed a few changes in progress at University Centre and Staff House. This is part of an initiative to enhance and extend the catering, entertainment and retail offering for University staff, students, and visitors.

As many will have seen, Waterstones chose to close their branch at the University earlier this year, as part of a company wide scheme. The University recognised that this is still a vital service to provide on campus, and a group comprising Professor Jeff Bale, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education; Diane Job, Director of Library Services; Stuart Richards, Director of Hospitality and Accommodation Services; and Rob Arnold, Head of Infrastructure Services; was convened to consult on a new bookseller for the campus.

John Smith's have been approved for their well established status at other universities, award winning service, and commitment to high quality delivery for staff and students. *'The panel chose J Smith as we felt that they provided*

the best option in terms of service to staff and students,' said Stuart Richards, *'and in particular their expertise in digital delivery and technology offer.'* The shop will open on the ground floor of University centre for the start of term.

'We are delighted to be opening our doors on campus at the University of Birmingham,' said Jonathan Verity of John Smith's. *'We are thrilled to be working at such a prestigious university; we currently operate out of 24 other university campuses in the UK, and John Smith's as a bookseller has been around since 1751.'*

The store will offer a wide range of services including an Amazon price match, and second hand books 'buy-back'; and are also keen to work with University staff to ensure a good stock of reading list items.

'Go' University Centre

The 'Go' catering services currently available in University centre will also be extended and enhanced over the summer, to include a wide range of fresh food options to suit all budgets, tastes and dietary requirements. The current 'Avanti'

site is being redeveloped as 'Go Central', an exciting new venue for students, staff and visitors. There will be separate serving stations offering diverse and tasty options from Go Mex, Go Italia, and Go Britannia, plus an improved breakfast range, and seating areas. The new look 'Go Central' is scheduled to open for the start of the 2013-14 academic year; Hospitality and Accommodation Services (HAS) are offering buzz readers a great opening offer with the voucher below.

Further planned enhancements to services and facilities in University centre include the opening of a 'Global Lounge' in partnership with the University's International Student Advisory Service, and a new campus gift shop that will extend the current 'Off the Wall' card and gift shop offering to include some great UoB branded items. The courtyard area will also be landscaped to open University centre to the heart of campus and provide an outdoor stage and performance space. Plus watch out for another exciting development currently on the drawing board that will be announced shortly.



GO CENTRAL SPECIAL OFFER

As an opening offer, **Go Central** is offering all University staff a great discount on their Long Boat breakfast. Use this voucher to receive any six items from the breakfast station, plus toast and a 'bottomless' tea or coffee for the reduced price of **£2.50** (normal price £3.70).

Photocopies will not be accepted, offer ends 31 October 2013



GO
THINK FOOD



THE BEGINNING OF TIME?

Birmingham researchers are in the global spotlight after uncovering what could be the world's oldest 'calendar'.

Main image:

Professor Vince Gaffney and Eamonn Baldwin, at Warren Field.

Image below:

Artist's impression of a fire burning in one of the pits at the monument.



Archaeology experts from the University of Birmingham have enjoyed global media coverage after publishing brand new research showing they have discovered what could be the world's oldest 'calendar' in a field in Scotland.

The Mesolithic monument, created by hunter-gatherer societies and dating back to around 8,000 BC, was originally excavated in Aberdeenshire, Scotland, by the National Trust for Scotland in 2004. Fresh analysis by a team led by Professor Vince Gaffney, Professor of Landscape Archaeology, published in the journal *Internet Archaeology*, has shed remarkable new light on the luni-solar device, showing it pre-dates the first formal time-measuring devices known to Man by nearly 5,000 years.

The capacity to measure time is among the most important of human achievements and the issue of when time was 'created' by humankind is critical in understanding how society has developed.

Until now the first formal calendars appear to have been created in Mesopotamia c. 5,000 years ago. But during this project, which made use of the latest geophysical surveying techniques, the researchers discovered that the monument in Scotland appears to mimic the phases of the Moon in order to track lunar months over the course of a year.

The site, at Warren Field, Crathes, Aberdeenshire, also aligns on the Midwinter Sunrise, providing an annual astronomic correction in order to maintain the link

between the passage of time, indicated by the Moon, the asynchronous solar year and the associated seasons.

Vince, who is a Director of the University's Heritage and Cultural Learning Hub, explains: *'The evidence suggests that hunter-gatherer societies in Scotland had both the need and sophistication to track time across the years, to correct for seasonal drift of the lunar year and that this occurred nearly 5,000 years before the first formal calendars known in the Near East. This illustrates one important step towards the formal construction of time and therefore history itself.'*

The Warren Field site was first discovered as unusual crop marks spotted from the air by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. From 2004–6 the National Trust for Scotland excavated the Warren Field pit alignment, which lies on its Crathes Castle Estate, in collaboration with Murray Archaeological Services.

As news of the historic find spread, Vince spent a hectic 24 hours talking to the world's print and broadcast media. *'The interest in this find has been quite remarkable'*, he says. *'The story has been covered by media from the UK dailies to National Geographic and from the Dhaka Post to the Huffington Post. The story even trended on Twitter! This demonstrates that communities everywhere have a real interest in how mankind has developed from the earliest times and want to hear about the leading research on the subject carried out at Birmingham.'*

Meet (UEB)

The University Executive Board (UEB) is made up of 13 senior leaders who make the key decisions that guide our development as a University community.

UEB is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal and includes the Provost and Vice-Principal, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College of each of the five Colleges, the Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Education, Research and Knowledge Transfer, and Estates and Infrastructure, the Registrar and Secretary, the Director of Finance, and Director of Human Resources.

We have given a brief introduction to who's who on UEB below; for further details visit birmingham.ac.uk/university/welcome/vc-office

Staff events

intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/events



Vice-Chancellor's Open Forum



Birmingham Professional Forum

Buzz



Buzz Bitesize monthly e-newsletter emailed to all staff



Magazine for staff issued six times per year intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/buzz

Intranet

The latest news, events, information and guidance for staff and students intranet.birmingham.ac.uk



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A WIMBLEDON VICTORY... WAS SCIENCE THE SECRET BEHIND MURRAY'S SUCCESS?

Professor Nikos Ntoumanis, Professor of Exercise and Sport Psychology, tells how sports science can play a major part in sporting success.

Andy Murray's Wimbledon victory was, in many ways, unsurprising. He was long regarded among many tennis fans and experts as a highly talented tennis player. However, until last year, his talent and incredible determination had proved insufficient to secure a grand slam victory.

The turning point in Murray's career was the appointment of Ivan Lendl, a tennis legend in the 80s, as his coach in 2012. Under Lendl's guidance, Murray won the 2012 US Open and the Gold Medal in the London 2012 Olympics. Working with Lendl, Murray's training started to include sports science support in terms of rehabilitation, nutrition and psychological preparation, to a much greater extent.

Before Lendl, Murray was dismissive of sport psychologists' input on the grounds that they could not offer him any useful advice, having not experienced the same pressures he encounters on centre court. With Lendl's encouragement, Murray began meeting a sport psychologist. Unfortunately, in sport there is still a widespread perception that seeing a sport psychologist is a sign of mental weakness. This is far from the truth; sport psychologists help athletes optimise their performance by teaching them important mental skills such

as positive self-talk, helping them with motivation or stress-related issues and discussing broader life issues that can impact on sport performance.

The coach-athlete relationship is paramount to sporting success. Research carried out at the University of Birmingham has shown that coaches who are supportive of athletes' efforts, offer constructive and honest advice, listen to their athletes' opinions before they make a suggestion and use a non-pressurised and non-judgmental language are likely to support an athlete's inner motivation for sporting success.

In interviews Murray has praised Lendl for changing his 'mentality' in match situations. Members of the press have applauded Murray's resilience. After all, coping successfully with national expectations for a British Wimbledon men's champion – following 77 years of disappointment –

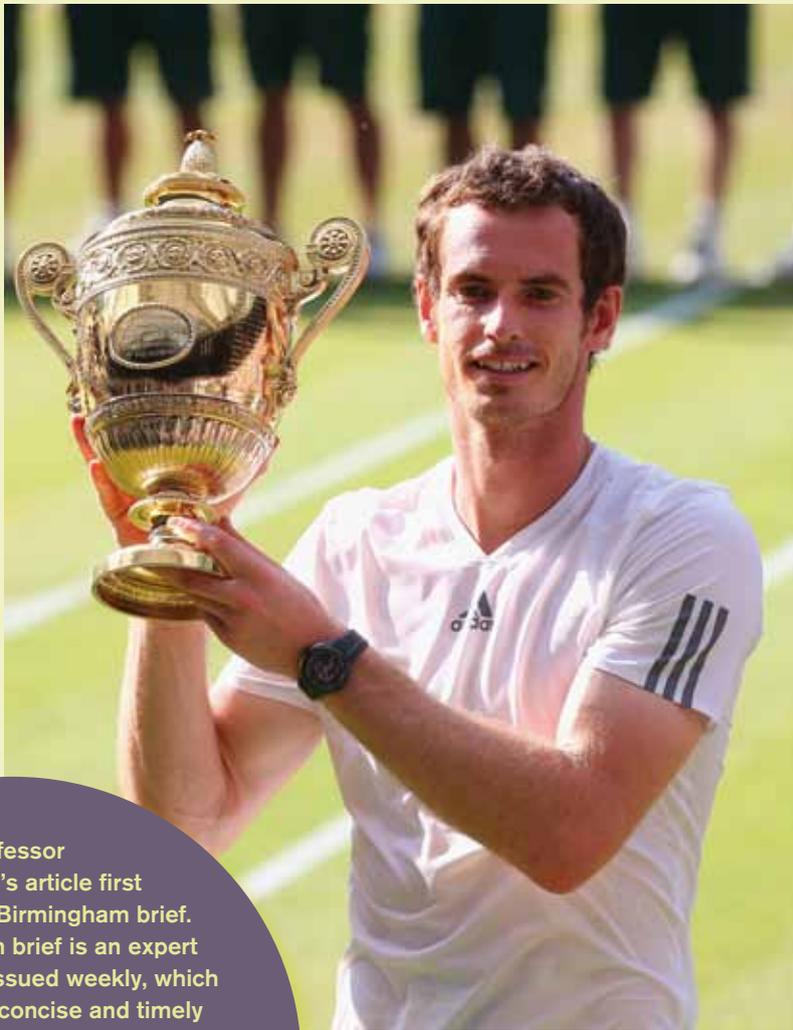
Professor Ntoumanis's article first appeared as a Birmingham brief. The Birmingham brief is an expert comment piece, issued weekly, which aims to provide concise and timely comment for policy makers and the media demonstrating the breadth and quality of Birmingham's work. It helps to develop relationships with relevant politicians, political advisors and journalists.

To read the latest Birmingham Brief visit birmingham.ac.uk/news/thebirminghambrief

is not for the faint-hearted! Mental toughness represents a collection of personal resources that allow individuals to regularly attain and sustain performances to the upper limits of their abilities, regardless of circumstances encountered. Mentally tough athletes do experience setbacks. However, they can bounce back from failure and remain positive, determined and confident.

Murray's performances, including at the recent Wimbledon final, showed ample signs of mental toughness and inner determination to persist and succeed. Our research has shown that mental toughness is partly influenced by a coach's motivational style. When coaches use non-pressuring language, show personal interest and invite athletes' input, their athletes are likely to report high levels of mental toughness. However, being mentally tough does not mean that athletes should be inflexible with their goal striving.

Sometimes, it is important to re-prioritise goals. For example, Murray decided to drop out of the French Open this year after an injury, letting go of his goal of playing in four grand slam finals in a row. But this decision allowed him to recuperate in time for Wimbledon, and secure his place in history.



GUILD OFFICER TEAM ELECTIONS 2013



Earlier this year the Guild of Students held its annual Officer Team elections to elect those students who will represent all 28,000 studying at the University, and lead the Guild in the 2013/14 academic year.

This year 37 students stood to become one of sixteen Guild Officers. Each candidate campaigned across campus and Selly Oak in a bid to win votes from their peers, resulting in almost 7,000 students casting their vote and having their say on who should represent them.

The new team comprised of seven sabbatical officers; students who take a year out post-graduation or during their studies; formally took office in July, following a month-long intensive training programme. The sabbaticals will be joined by a further eleven non-sabbatical officers who will deliver the role on a part-time basis when they return to the University in September. Whilst each Officer has a different and specific remit it is the role of all Officers to improve the university experience and work together, with Guild staff, to move the Guild forward.

Poppy Wilkinson, President of the Guild of Students 2013/14 comments: *'It's my role to ensure that as a student's union we are campaigning on issues that are relevant to students at Birmingham. We have a diverse student body, and it's important that the Guild is relevant and responsive to the needs of each and every student. The Guild and what we have to offer is a great way for students to access help and support, get involved in activities such as volunteering and student groups, and develop skills for life.'*

The Satellite Sites Officer and Postgraduate Students' Officer will be elected in the Officer Team By-Elections in October 2013. If you would like to find out more about the 2013/14 Guild Officer Team, visit guildofstudents.com/yourofficerteam

Sabbatical Officers:

- 1** President – **Poppy Wilkinson**
- 2** Vice President (Activities and Development) – **Molly Wright**
- 3** Vice President (Democracy and Resources) – **Thomas Wragg**
- 4** Vice President (Education) – **Hattie Craig**
- 5** Vice President (Housing and Community) – **David Charles**
- 6** Vice President (Sport) – **Vicki Harris**
- 7** Vice President (Welfare) – **Jethro Lee**

Non-Sabbatical Officers:

- Anti-Racism Anti-Fascism Officer – **Georgia Levine**
- Community Action Officer – **Roz Burgin**
- Disabled Students' Officer – **Ellis Palmer**
- Ethical and Environmental Officer – **Rachel Cavet**
- Ethnic Minority Students' Officer – **Tracy Makale**
- Home Students' Officer – **Jagpal Pahal**
- International Students' Officer – **Bihe Chen**
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer Students' Officer – **Leilani Rabemananjara**
- Mature and Part-time Students' Officer – **Erin Lee**
- Women's Officer – **Mae Rohani**

Getting



for the future

Jessica Holloway Swift, Student Engagement Officer, tells buzz how Careers Network is helping students gain valuable work experience and employability skills without leaving campus.

People often ask me what I like most about my job at Careers Network and I can honestly say it is working with our Student Engagement Team (SET). Every year we hire around 40 undergraduates and postgraduates to work several hours a week in a variety of roles. Having optimistic, enthusiastic and engaged students at the heart of our work helps us benefit from the student perspective to develop great services and reach parts of the student population that can be hard to engage.

We get to watch students develop over the months, and sometimes years, that they work with us, and stay in contact with them well after graduation. Working in a professional setting helps SET members define their career goals, and the majority of the team graduating this year are about

to start working with some great companies including KPMG, Maverick Television, Deutsche Bank, and the Civil Service.

The student team are treated like colleagues; they are given training opportunities and a chance for personal development. When they start the job, I give them a long, and probably tedious, speech about what is expected from them and the phrase that always make their eyes light up is: *'The more you put into this opportunity, the more you will get out of it.'* This is certainly true of the students I have worked with over the last two years.

Learn more

To find out more please contact Jessica at J.S.HollowaySwift@bham.ac.uk

In-house interns

Andy Newnham, Internship Officer, introduces the University's internship programme.

The Birmingham Undergraduate Internship Programme (BUIP) provides Professional Services departments with the opportunity to utilise the wealth of knowledge and skills within the University's undergraduate community, and students to gain valuable insights into a career in Higher Education. BUIP was set up by Careers Network in 2012, and this summer there are nine interns working in Student Services, Registry, CLAD, Library Services, Engineering and Physical Sciences, Arts and Law, Careers Network, and Enterprise and Innovation.

The key benefits for interns are that they gain experience as a member of staff, and take part in specially tailored training alongside work in their host department. This weekly training is focused on improving their future employability.

In 2012–13, our Academic Services internships were generously paid for by the Director of Academic Services, with Alumni Relations interns paid for by their respective budgets.

In 2013–14 we'll be asking host departments to fund their own interns, however the majority of administration and training will be offered by Careers Network. Internships can be from 4 weeks to 3 months, and we'd love to hear from anyone interested in joining the scheme. Email Andy at a.newnham@bham.ac.uk for details.

'BUIP is a unique opportunity to make connections and has shown me a host of new options in higher education and in Birmingham.'

Caroline Saxon,
Geography, 3rd year

'Working for the Careers Network is great, it's a really flexible job and they're really good at letting you work around your studies. Everyone there is so nice, and it feels like a family. As a student, you don't feel like you're getting in the way – we're treated as equals and our opinion and input is valued just as much as anyone else working there.'

Hannah Witton, History BA

CLASS OF 2013

Bryoney Johnson shares some of the highlights from this year's summer Degree Congregations.

More than 5,000 students collected their degrees from the University of Birmingham in ceremonies held in the iconic Great Hall from 3–11 July. Staff from across the University worked together to ensure that the ceremonies were a success and to help our students and their guests to celebrate their achievements.

The sun shone throughout the Congregations, and Chancellor's Court became a prime location for relaxing in our UoB deckchairs and getting those

all-important shots of mortarboard throwing on the steps of the Aston Webb building.

Director-General of the BBC Lord Tony Hall, Polish-English Holocaust survivor Kitty Hart-Moxon, and founder of Moshi Monsters, Michael Acton Smith were amongst 17 graduands given honorary degrees at the ceremonies. Our honorary graduands were asked what advice they would give to graduating students, and their responses may be just as useful for buzz readers!

A full list of our 2013 honorary graduates is available at birmingham.ac.uk/news.

If you are interested in nominating somebody for an honorary degree, you can find more information at birmingham.ac.uk/honorary-degrees.



Dr Kay Alexander

'If there's something you really want to do, do it: in the years ahead you must be able to say: At least I tried'

Dr Kay Alexander, Former Director of the Birmingham Hippodrome, with a career spanning almost 40 years on BBC Midlands Today news.

'Never relent from paying greatest attention to the minutest detail'

Professor Pritam B Sharma, Founder Vice Chancellor of Delhi Technological University, and Founder Vice Chancellor of Rajiv Gandhi Technology University, Bhopal.



Lord Tony Hall



Michael Acton Smith

'Learn from mistakes in history; never cease to value the important aspects of life: human rights, freedom and the ability to decide your future'

Dr Kitty Hart-Moxon OBE, Polish-English Holocaust survivor who has dedicated her life to raising awareness of the Holocaust.



Dr Kitty Hart-Moxon



Dr Chris Addison

'The most important things you can do in any situation in life are: (1) Turn up; (2) Be kind'

Dr Chris Addison, Stand-up comedian, actor, and Birmingham alumnus.

news+views



in the news...

Many articles about UoB research and expertise appear in local, national and international press every day, here are just a few examples of our recent news highlights...

Research into using virtual environments and gaming technology to aid the recovery of injured soldiers and ease their pain was featured widely in the national and international media including the *New Scientist*, the *Independent* and *Beijing News*. Led from the University by Professor Bob Stone, Director of the Human Interface Technologies Team, the developments enable patients to wander around a virtual world based on the natural delights of Devon, with simulated 'walks' along a coastal path or through woodland.

Not only was Lecturer in Zoology Dr Julia Myatt Scientific Adviser to BBC *Horizon's The Secret Life of the Cat*, which was broadcast in June, she was also interviewed by John Humphries on BBC Radio 4's *Today Programme* about a new study into orang-utans spending more time on the forest floor.

Chair of Shakespeare Studies and Fellow of the University's Shakespeare Institute, Professor Ewan Fernie's book *The Demonic: Literature and Experience* received a glowing review in the *Huffington Post*. The reviewer wrote: '*Fernie is a scholar whose high personal credentials of intellect and insight seize your mind and shuffle it through the pages of his book with persistent astuteness. I cannot recommend the book enough!*'

Dr Chris Allen, Lecturer in Social Policy, has spoken widely to the media over the past few months about his research into Islamophobia. In light of the Woolwich murder of Drummer Lee Rigby, the recent bombings in Birmingham, and EDL gatherings, he has become a regular commentator for the *Huffington Post* as well as local radio.

Following June's announcement that by 2020 47 per cent of people in Britain will get cancer, Nick James, Professor of Clinical Oncology, became a go-to expert for debate on the significance of these new statistics. Professor James was interviewed live on BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme as well as BBC radio 5 *live*.

Join the UoB online community

Follow us on Twitter at [@unibirmingham](https://twitter.com/unibirmingham). If you use social media at work and would like to increase your visibility, get in touch with our Digital Marketing and Communications Team via k.connolly@bham.ac.uk

If you would like to work with the press office, or find out more about how they can help you promote your research, email pressoffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk or call 0121 414 6029

feeling social...



The weather was extremely kind for this year's summer Degree Congregations. We hosted 'Gradstagram', where students were encouraged to pop in to our special photo booth and have their photograph taken holding a whiteboard with one word on it to describe their time at Birmingham. It was a perfect opportunity to engage with our newest alumni and also allowed graduates to reflect on their academic life and the people and experiences that made it unique. Gradstagram revealed stories such as an unexpected study trip abroad and a marriage proposal! You can see a selection of the images at facebook.com/unibirmingham, or a video which can be seen on YouTube at youtube.com/unibirmingham

We've recently launched a new Virtual Tour site, which offers a fully interactive exploration of our stunning 250-acre Edgbaston campus. Photos, videos and 360 panoramas are used to immerse users in our beautiful surroundings, and guided routes focus on some of our highlights. The site is a perfect way to showcase the University to those who haven't been able to visit in person, and features Tweets and Instagram photos from people who have messaged us whilst on campus. The site also allows us to host live events, which was perfect for our recent Open Days, when we broadcast to 2,000 viewers across the world! virtualltour.bham.ac.uk



These are some highlights of the events coming up across the University, to find out more visit birmingham.ac.uk/oncampus.index.aspx

Environment Day 2013

8 October,
Great Hall

Our third annual environment Day is a great chance to learn more about the University's environmental research and campus wide environmental projects, and an opportunity to find out what initiatives you can take part in. Admission is free, for further information visit environment.bham.ac.uk.



Fight for Sight
Pioneering eye research

Carrots NightWalk 2013

20 September

Fight for Sight are a major supporter of ophthalmology research at the University and QE Hospital, and the Carrots NightWalk is their flagship fundraising event, for pioneering research to prevent sight loss and treat eye disease. The NightWalk will start and finish on campus at the Old Joe clock tower, and walkers can choose between a 6 mile and 15 mile route. Register at fightforsight.org.uk/carrots or contact Dr S John Curnow at s.j.curnow@bham.ac.uk for further details.

National Archives Conference

4 September

The Cadbury Research Library and the National Archives will host *Enhancing Impact, Inspiring Excellence: Collaborative Approaches between Archives and universities*. This one day event will bring together archivists, academics, and students to discuss ways in which archives and universities can work together. To register for a free place visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/visit/events-elsewhere

International GLOW Conference 2013

1 November

The second annual Global Women's Health (GLOW) Conference at the University will bring together leading researchers and practitioners in the field of maternal healthcare, to disseminate new knowledge and ideas, and work more effectively towards a world of safe pregnancy and childbirth. Keynote speaker will be Carole Presern, Executive Director of the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health. Tickets can be purchased at glowconference.org For further details contact Sarah Magson at s.j.magson@bham.ac.uk.

Music-making day

29 September, 10am–6pm

Come along for a day of fun music-making in the Elgar Concert Hall, Bramall Music Building, and find out about the many University ensembles and choirs that you can join!

Come and Play Sibelius and Smetana!

10.30am–1.30pm

Daniele Rosina, Director of Orchestral Studies, conducts a one-off performance of Sibelius' *Finlandia* and Smetana's *Vltava*. Bring your instrument, and experience these classics for yourself!

Come and Sing Haydn!

3.00–6.00pm

All singers are welcome to join in this singalong of excerpts from Haydn's ever-popular *Creation Mass*, led by Professor Simon Halsey, Director of Choral Studies. Admission free; please email c.holmes@bham.ac.uk to register.



Humphreys Lecture 2013 – Sir Paul Nurse

4 September, 1pm
Leonard Deacon Lecture Theatre, Medical School

Sir Paul Nurse, Chief Executive and Director of the Francis Crick Institute, President of the Royal Society and Birmingham alumnus, will present this year's Humphreys Lecture titled 'Controlling the Cell Cycle'. Sir Paul was honoured with a knighthood for services to cancer research and cell biology in 1999, and awarded the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine in 2001. This lecture is open to all, pre-registration is not required. For details contact Yvonne Dawson at y.dawson@bham.ac.uk.

Professor Adam Tickell, Provost and Vice-Principal ...in my own words



I never had a grand plan to become an academic. In fact, when I started my PhD I did so only because one of my lecturers at Manchester – Peter Dicken – caught me on graduation day to offer me a funded studentship. Despite a certainty in my mind that I'd leave the university world after that, Peter nurtured me and, together with the arrival of the person who would become my close friend and writing partner, Jamie Peck, helped me to understand the potentials of academic life. I owe a huge amount to these two people and many others who have, often without my knowledge at the time, supported my career and I try to provide similar support and encouragement for others.

One of the many privileges that come with a senior position in the University is the opportunity to meet staff from across the institution. The thing that strikes me is the affection and sense of ownership that so many people who work here have for the University. I love going to visit academics in their labs and offices and to get a feel for the wide range of research and teaching that we do here, but I equally love the strong sense of community, commitment and dedication that I see when I talk with members of the professional and support staff.

As a member of the senior team, I never forget that I am working as part of a university community and I'm always happy to talk with and hear from anybody. In my role as Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Transfer I saw first hand how the University's research environment and many areas of outstanding research rests upon talented people, a strong infrastructure, and strong professional support.

One of the biggest challenges that the University has had to face up to over the last few years has been a relative decline in our research performance. Although we have many areas in which we are world-class in research, and many individual academics who are themselves world-class, compared to comparable universities in the UK we have been off the boil. Even

recognising this has been something of a challenge, but this is also a major opportunity because our many talented staff have been outstanding in their response over the last two or three years.

We continue to appoint great people to lectureships, senior lectureships, readerships, and chairs, and our Birmingham Fellows scheme has not only allowed us to recruit some of the best early career academics in the world but it has made an important statement about the ambition of Birmingham to rejoin the ranks of the very best universities in the world. Attracting and developing the very best staff will remain a key priority in the coming year, alongside our focus on equality in employment, which UEB has designated a key area for the next academic session.

The biggest challenge as Provost and Vice-Principal will be, undoubtedly, responding to the very difficult external environment for funding. The University now needs to compete for research income and students at a time when all universities are becoming much better at competing. I genuinely believe that we are well placed to respond to this challenge, but it won't be easy and we will need to continue to improve – and be seen to improve every year.

One thing buzz readers may not know about me is that I'm quite a keen cyclist and have over the last few years been able to use this as an excuse to shake my friends down for charitable donations. In 2006 I joined a team of cyclists from Lancaster to ride from Land's End to John O'Groats over eight days and was fortunate enough to raise around £5,000 for the charity now known as Torture Care. Over the last few years I've only managed to do shorter rides but last year raised around £1,500 for A2B students at Birmingham and this year I am raising funds to support JDRF, a charity which researches into preventing, ameliorating, and curing Type 1 diabetes.]



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