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2013/14

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

GLOBAL AMBITIONS



Vice-Chancellor, Professor David Eastwood

YOUR BUZZ

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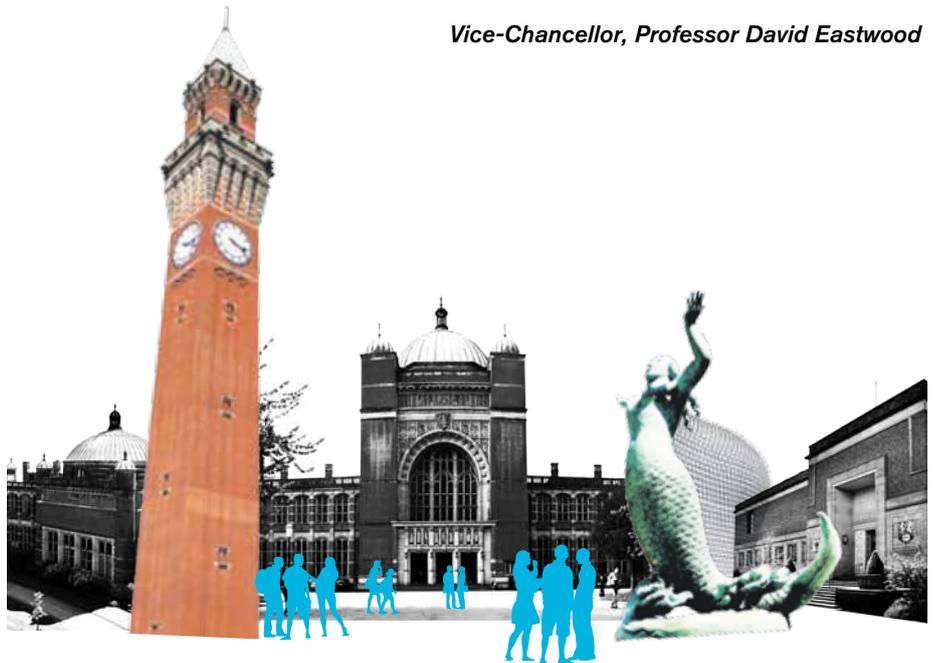
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Views expressed in the magazine are not necessarily those of the University or a statement of University policy. All submissions may be subject to editing. The Editor's decision is final.

Vice-Chancellor's *view*

IN THE UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR ONE THING IS NOW CLEAR:
WE WILL NOT REST 'TIL WE ARE BEST AND THAT DAY IS GETTING NEAR

Vice-Chancellor, Professor David Eastwood



Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Lecture Series

11 February, 6.00–7.00pm, Bramall Music Building
'The British State: Past, Present, and Future' Professor David Eastwood, Vice-Chancellor, University of Birmingham.

Vice-Chancellor's Open Forum

Tuesday 28 January, 12.30pm,
Elgar Concert Hall, Bramall Music Building

Join the Vice-Chancellor, Professor David Eastwood, for his first Open Forum of 2014. He encourages all staff to attend and further details will be circulated shortly.

Front cover image: Vivian Zheng, Director of Operations and Business Development Guangzhou.

UoB GLOBAL

CHINA

There is a long history of collaboration between China and the University; Chinese students have been studying here for more than 100 years, and in 2012–13 the University educated 1,219 students from China.

The University opened an office in Shanghai in 2010, and our Guangzhou Centre opened in 2011 to develop joint research and education projects with Chinese partners. The University also has a strategic partnership with the municipal government of Guangzhou, for which a joint steering group has been established co-chaired by the Vice-Chancellor and a Vice-Mayor of GMG. The group's recent steering group meeting was held in Birmingham, during which a further collaborative document was signed to mark mutual commitment in strengthening and widening the partnership.

Five joint research projects have been launched, including Biobank Studies, Born in Guangzhou Cohort Study, Birmingham-Guangzhou Brain Cognition Centre, Stem Cell Therapy for Hepatitis and a Service Industry Study. In a recent visit to Guangzhou, Minister of State for Universities and Science, David Willetts visited the Born in Guangzhou Cohort

Study led by Birmingham Professor KK Cheng and commented that *'the work of the University Medical and Dental College in Guangzhou was nothing short of inspirational.'*

In Birmingham, the China Institute was created in 2012 to act as an 'umbrella' structure for the extensive China interests across the University. *'Since the Institute was launched, jointly by the Vice-Chancellor and the Ambassador Liu Xiaoming from the Chinese Embassy, we have organised many successful events, including a series of internal workshops for Colleges to discuss their engagement with China'* says Professor Edward Peck, Chair of the China Institute and Head of College of Social Sciences.

Recent activity has included a UK-China Strategic Workshop on Smart Grids, a guest lecture on The Challenges and Opportunities of Urbanisation in China by officials from Guangzhou Municipal Government, and a lecture on Ecology

and Politics in Pre-modern Eastern Eurasia by Professor Naomi Standen.

The British Council also offer funded placements and scholarships for UK students as part of 'Generation UK'. This year three Birmingham students have been awarded scholarships to study in China. There was also a Generation UK workshop on campus, jointly organised by the China Institute and British Council, China, in October 2013.

Learn more

For further details on UoB engagement with China please contact Wenwei Wu, International Development Manager (East Asia), at w.wu@bham.ac.uk Turn to page 16 of *buzz* for a profile of Vivian Zheng, Director of Operations and Business Development – Guangzhou.



CAMPUS CURIOSITIES

This Qur'an dates from the 9th century and originates from the Arabian peninsula. It is written in a kufic script in ink on parchment with gold headings.

The Qur'an is part of the internationally important Mingana Collection of Middle Eastern Manuscripts kept in the Cadbury Research Library at the University. It can currently be seen in the 'Faith and Fortune' exhibition at The Barber Institute of Fine Arts until 30 November 2014, the whole manuscript can be read online in the Virtual Manuscript Room vmr.bham.ac.uk

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

Since becoming a founding partner of The Conversation UK in May, Birmingham has become one of the most engaged institutions involved in the open access news and commentary website.

Over 70 articles have been produced by nearly 50 Birmingham academics from across all Colleges, supported by the University press office and The Conversation's editorial team.

The website offers an excellent platform for academics to showcase their research in a safe publishing environment, where

articles are only published with the academic's approval.

Dr Adam Quinn from the College of Social Sciences has written several articles for the site and recommends it to academic colleagues. 'Going from nothing to delivering text which is read within such a short period offers a sense of immediate

Learn more

If you are interested in setting the news agenda and spreading the word about your academic specialism through The Conversation, contact pressoffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk or visit www.theconversation.com/uk

satisfaction not available in other areas of academic work. Almost all of us want to get our ideas out there somehow, and this is a fast and efficient way of doing it. The challenge of trying to communicate to a wider audience than the academic one is also rewarding, and can feed back usefully to our research.'

Wellbeing Collection



The University's Counselling Service and Library Services have collaborated to launch the 'Wellbeing Collection' of books and resources for staff and students. The project resulted from a joint bid to the Alumni Impact Fund, and comprises a range of books aimed at supporting students and staff who are struggling with common emotional and psychological difficulties.

There are over 30 titles in the collection; both print and ebooks; with print editions available in the Short Loan area of the Main Library. Topics include overcoming perfectionism, dealing with eating issues, building self-esteem, handling relationship problems and coping with anxiety. More details of the collection are at intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/libraryservices/library



Circles of influence

BUAFTAs 2014

Raffle tickets now on sale

Thank you to all of you who nominated staff for BUAFTA awards. A total of 913 nominations have been submitted from staff and students. It is wonderful to see that so many of you appreciate the importance of recognising tremendous achievements of staff across the University. The judging panel will shortly review all nominations, and shortlisted nominees will be invited to an evening gala in the Great Hall, Aston Webb Building, on Friday 28 February 2014.

It is now time for the BUAFTA raffle. This year all money raised will be donated to Acorns Children's Hospice. As well as supporting the charity, you can enter our draw to win fantastic prizes such as dinner for two at Michelin starred restaurant Adams, an iPad, and two tickets for a Worcester Warriors Rugby Match. Raffle tickets are £1 each and can be obtained from your local BUAFTA champion. For more information look out for posters across campus, follow us on Twitter @BUAFTAs, or visit intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/BUAFTAs for a full list of prizes.



Congratulations

The University was shortlisted for both Best Internal Publication for *buzz*, and Best External Publication for *Original* magazine at the Chartered Institute of Public Relations Pride Awards 2013.

Margaret Flynn, of Careers Network, was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award at September's AGCAS (Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services) Biennial Conference. Margaret won for her remarkable list of accomplishments and achievements, and for the wealth of careers information resources that she has produced for the careers profession.

THE BEAT GOES ON... BRITISH HEART FOUNDATION ON CAMPUS

For the last seven years the University has worked with the British Heart Foundation (BHF) to raise much needed charitable donations from students when they move out of their University accommodation.



'CLEAN AND GLEAM' BID TO TIDY STREETS

The Guild of Students' Community Wardens recently recruited a team of students to help clean up the streets of Bournbrook and Selly Oak, for the start of term. More than 20 roads were tackled as part of the Selly Oak 'Clean and Glean' project. Over 100 bags of rubbish were removed from streets and gardens over the course of three days, leaving the local area clean and presentable for students and local residents.

The Community Wardens, a scheme set up in 2005 by the Guild of Students and the University of Birmingham, have since encouraged students to keep the area clean and tidy for the remainder of the academic year, and have plans to 'litter pick' in the area again next term.

have worked with BHF to provide donation points on campus so that staff and students can make valuable donations all year round. Recycling banks have been located at Grange Road car park, and Munrow Sports Centre car park. Items such as books, CDs DVDs, small electrical items, clothing and shoes are valuable to charities and your donations would be welcomed.

For more information please contact Peter Larkin at p.j.larkin@bham.ac.uk

In 2012 an innovative scheme **Junkbusters** was launched in partnership with the Guild of Students; who distributed branded charity donation bags to all houses in Selly Oak and Bournbrook. The scheme was developed to increase recycling and re-use, foster good community spirit with local residents, and provide much needed stock for local BHF shops.

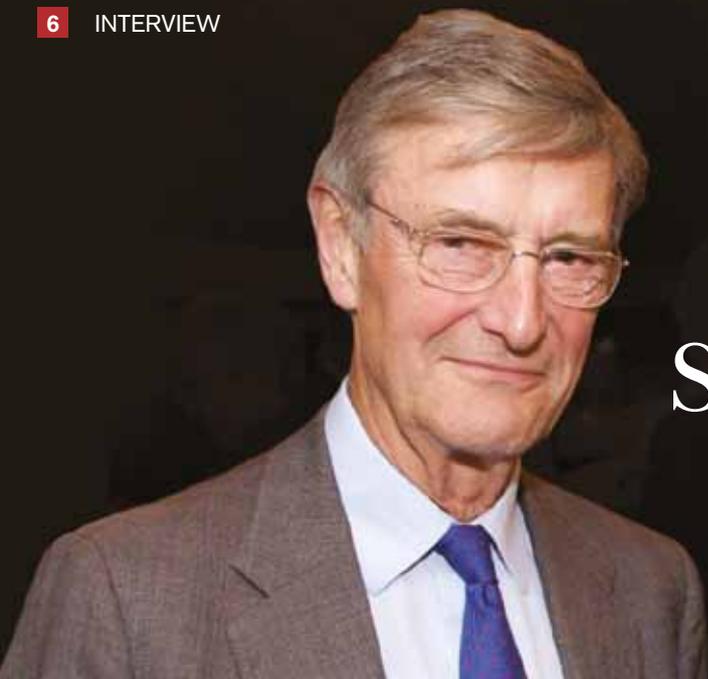
Environmental Services purchased a classic electric milk float ECO1, and invested funds to refurbish and repaint the float which you will see around campus as it hooks up with our green fleet and 'The Green Machine'. Over 1,100 bags were collected in summer 2012, raising an impressive £9,000 for BHF. This summer over £37,000 was raised for BHF through Junkbusters, donations from students in University accommodation, and charity donation banks in Selly Oak and Bournbrook. Following the success of the scheme, BHF have engaged other city councils and universities nationally to expand the campaign.

This hard work and amazing fundraising achievement was recognised by Birmingham City Council, who awarded Junkbusters three awards in their annual Recycling Awards:

- **Best Waste Reduction Scheme** – Education
- **Highly Commended** – Best Community or Neighbourhood Project
- **Overall Winner** – Birmingham City Council Recycling Awards 2013

'This is fantastic recognition for all the hard work and commitment from staff in Environmental Services, and staff and volunteers from the Guild of Students' says Peter Larkin, Policy and Environmental Services Manager. *'Junkbusters is an innovative and community minded project; a great model of close working between the University and the Guild which helps BHF change many lives, and reduces waste in the community.'*

In order to build on our recent success and increase much needed donations we



Sir Dominic Cadbury

interview

by Ros Dodd

In nearly 12 years as Chancellor, Sir Dominic Cadbury has helped to steer the University on a steadily upward course. It is fitting, therefore, that just before he stepped down from the role Birmingham was named University of the Year 2013–14 in *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* Good University Guide.

More importantly still, there is 'a terrific momentum' towards even greater success and world renown.

'The award is very satisfying, but it's a step on the path to being even more successful and even higher in the league tables, which do matter because they affect how the outside world, both in this country and internationally, sees us,' says Sir Dominic.

'For me, the exciting thing is that the trend is clearly upward and there is a terrific momentum: the developments taking place on campus and the support from alumni and other donors are all ensuring that the University, going forward, is attracting the best students.'

A former group chief executive of Cadbury Schweppes, Sir Dominic's business acumen has played a valuable part in the University's progress during a time when it's become necessary for universities to operate more commercially. He has also been probably the most hands-on Chancellor in the University's history.

On top of his designated duties, Sir Dominic has been a fervent fundraiser: He was President of the Circles of Influence campaign, and launched the Chancellor's Challenge Fund – with £250,000 of his own money – to raise £2 million by July 2014 to support campus developments such as the new sports centre, library and Lapworth Museum refurbishment. He was also instrumental in setting up the Access to Birmingham (A2B) scheme to enable talented but disadvantaged young people to study at the University.

He is reluctant to term his achievements a legacy

– 'because that is a grand word' – but says: 'I like to think I have been involved in the University in a way that perhaps chancellors who haven't lived close by and haven't had the same background weren't able to be. I have had a close personal involvement in ways that can be helpful without interfering in the running of the University.'

'Only this week I have been writing back to students who were part of the A2B scheme – I have a lovely lot of letters from people who have benefited from it – and that gives you a lot of satisfaction; it's been an involvement that clearly has had results.'

'The world of higher education has gone through a very turbulent time, the most significant feature of which has been the raising of tuition fees. People now going to university are opting, in most cases, to take on significant debts, so they have to feel it's worthwhile to do so. I believe Birmingham has been in the front of the field in taking steps to ease the burden for some students, by offering bursaries and raising funds on a voluntary basis.'

The Challenge Fund is also proving a big success. 'It was a good idea for my last year as a way of injecting another stimulus to the fundraising campaign we're running. We've had a huge response to it – we've attracted at least 1,500 new donors.'

Sir Dominic, aged 73, has mixed feelings about stepping down, but believes he's going at the right time.

'When you leave something you've been very involved with, and people you've got to know well, there are obviously mixed feelings. It's been a wonderful time to be involved with the University but you never want to overstay your time and I think it's very sensible for someone else to take over now.'

'My leaving is also made easier by the fact I'm around Birmingham a lot, so I will still keep in touch with what's happening. I'm not saying goodbye to Birmingham.'

‘For me, the exciting thing is that the trend is clearly upward and there is a terrific momentum.’

£15 MILLION GIFT ENABLES CREATION OF FOREST RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Last month the University received an exceptional £15 million gift, one of the largest gifts to a UK university. **Samantha Williams** explains the significance of this donation.

Philanthropy has shaped the University. From the donations of all sizes that founded the institution over 100 years ago to the modern day, charitable gifts support the boldest projects that drive the University – just think Bramall!

Professor Jo Bradwell and his wife Barbara recently made a transformational donation of £15 million to support the University's plans for a unique Forest Research Institute. The Vice-Chancellor, Professor David Eastwood, publicly thanked Professor Bradwell, Barbara and the Trustees of the JABBS Foundation for their generosity. He said *'We are hugely grateful for this inspirational donation. Philanthropic gifts like this have become vital for universities, increasing their ability and agility to tackle global challenges. This donation will enable us to fulfil our desire to be an international force in this emerging yet critical area of research and to create an institute that will be unique in Europe and produce research results that will be crucial to many of the great societal issues facing us today.'*

The University has now received £130 million through philanthropy from many

thousands of donors to the Circles of Influence campaign – the most successful university fundraising campaign in the Midlands. To find out more about the extensive impact of this campaign visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni

SO WHAT WILL THE INSTITUTE DO?

Former academic and alumnus Professor Bradwell and his wife made the donation to establish an Institute for Forest Research, which will study the impact of climate and environmental change on woodlands, and the resilience of trees to pests and diseases. Professor Bradwell highlighted that *'The UK has the lowest woodland cover of any large, European country because of deforestation over the centuries. What little we have remaining is now under serious threat from climate change and imported tree diseases. The new forestry institute will increase our understanding of these challenges in order to help planners, owners and foresters to maintain and improve the health of our woods.'*

Forests are critical components of global carbon, nutrient and water cycles,

'The University is ideally placed to integrate research and education in forests and forestry with its global strengths in related areas such as microbiology, ecology, climatology, and sustainability science. With our bold ambitions to build such a unique facility we intend to attract the best scientists who can work with us to make this centre the best in the world.'

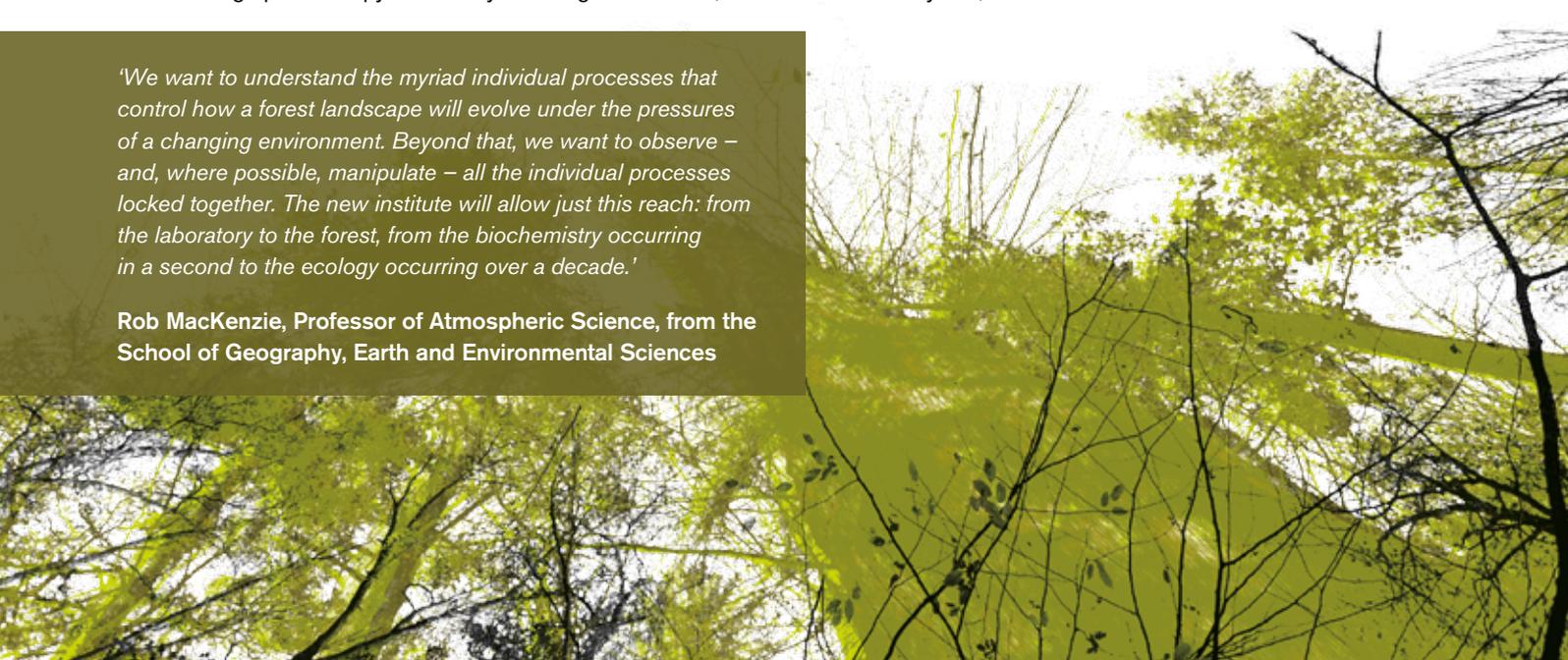
Professor Malcolm Press,
Pro-Vice-Chancellor

influencing the thermal balance of the planet, and are home to more than half of all known species. Forests deliver direct economic, environmental and social benefits, ranging from fuel and building materials, to the sense of well-being associated with a walk in the woods. More subtly, forests also deliver services that underpin the production of food, clean water, and the breakdown of waste products. As human populations have expanded, increasing pressures have been placed on forests, with the 20th Century witnessing the steepest rise in rates of deforestation.

The £15 million gift will enable the University to establish a unique, world-leading centre for ambitious research. In addition to on-campus laboratories, it is the intention that the Institute will comprise ground-breaking field facilities, enabling scientists to take measurements from deep within the soil to above the tree canopy. Autonomous sensors and instrumented trees will allow scientists to take measurements continuously and remotely, over timescales ranging from seconds to decades.

'We want to understand the myriad individual processes that control how a forest landscape will evolve under the pressures of a changing environment. Beyond that, we want to observe – and, where possible, manipulate – all the individual processes locked together. The new institute will allow just this reach: from the laboratory to the forest, from the biochemistry occurring in a second to the ecology occurring over a decade.'

Rob MacKenzie, Professor of Atmospheric Science, from the School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences





BIRMINGHAM
POLICY COMMISSIONS

A POLICY FOR CHANGE

Bryoney Johnson finds out about the wide-ranging impact of the University's Policy Commissions initiative.

Established in 2010, Birmingham Policy Commissions bring leading figures from the public, private and third sectors together with Birmingham academics to generate new thinking and identify innovative policy solutions around issues of global, national and civic concern. While hosted by the College of Social Sciences, Commissions engage academic and Professional Services colleagues from across the University. They are supported by a £300,000 internal investment, enabling them to have dedicated administrative and research support.

Each Commission runs for approximately 11 months: Commissioners explore the issue, invite and consider evidence from experts, draw on research from within the University, and publish high-profile reports that are launched through the media and other channels including Party Conferences and Westminster events. Commissions have had impact with local and national policy makers and inform Birmingham research, teaching and collaborative activity.

The Security Impact of Drones: Challenges and Opportunities for the UK

Exploring the implications of warfare becoming increasingly remote in the 21st century, examining the challenges and opportunities that drone technology pose for current and successive UK governments.

Commission Chair:
Professor Sir David Omand GCB
Academic Lead:
Professor Nicholas Wheeler

Three Commissions have published their findings and policy recommendations, and a further three are underway, due to report in 2014. *'The Birmingham Policy Commissions show our university at its best,'* says Professor Chris Skelcher, Director of the Policy Commissions, *'engaging colleagues who use creative ways to increase public understanding and debate on major issues of the day.'*

Learn more
birmingham.ac.uk/research/impact/policy-commissions

Nuclear Energy: What Does the Future Hold?

Evaluated the role of nuclear power generation beyond the present horizon, exploring technical, environmental, political, sociological and economic factors.

Commission Chair:
Lord Hunt of Kings Heath OBE, PC
Academic Lead:
Professor Martin Freer

The Future of Local Public Services

Explored the future of public services in the context of the coalition government's 'big society' initiative.

Commission Chair:
Deborah Cadman OBE
Academic Lead:
Professor Helen Sullivan

Healthy Ageing in the 21st Century

Exploring the mechanisms for achieving positive health and wellbeing in later life in a multicultural/superdiverse society. It considers the roles played by different actors in promoting the conditions for good ageing.

Commission Chair:
**The Right Reverend David Urquhart,
Lord Bishop of Birmingham**
Academic Leads:
**Professor Heather Draper,
Professor Jean McHale**

Future Urban Living

Assessing whether cities will be the most appropriate settings for accommodating changing populations, demographics and societal needs in the future, and what is expected of them if they are to serve this purpose.

Commission Chair:
Lord Shipley of Gosforth
Academic Lead:
Professor Chris Rogers

The Distribution of Wealth in the UK

Examined some of the fundamental questions facing wealth distribution in the UK, assessing the nature of wealth and whether wealth inequality is a problem.

Commission Chair:
Professor Steve Field CBE
Academic Leads:
**Professor Karen Rowlingson,
Professor Andrew Mullineux**



meet the
TEAM

Business Engagement

'The recent joining together of Development and Alumni Relations and the Business Engagement team provides a massive opportunity to build coherent and multi-faceted partnerships that will make sense to business and benefit the University.'

Nick Blinco, Director of Engagement

The University of Birmingham has always had a central role in the life of the West Midlands. We were founded with the purpose of training the city's, and the world's, future business leaders, as well as undertaking research that improves lives, societies and industries. Today our strategic and corporate partnerships with businesses such as Rolls-Royce, P&G, JLR and GlaxoSmithKline, and engagement with Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs), have a real impact on our University and the regional and national economy. They also allow us to improve the quality and recognition of our research, improve student experience, and generate valuable income.

The University's newly formed Business Engagement team, within Development, Alumni, and Business Engagement (DABE) undertake activity that will generate positive reputation, impact, and income from engaging with business. Their mission is to provide academic colleagues, and business, with a holistic, professional and efficient experience that makes working together simple and effective so that they, and the University as a whole, can benefit.

Business Engagement is split into two teams, Business Engagement Partners, headed up by Gurmit Kler, and Business Engagement Marketing led by David Fiskin.

Business Engagement Partners (BEPs)

BEPs are embedded within each college. There is also a BEP responsible for international projects in Asia, and a Business Engagement Manager for SME engagement. Working with college research support and knowledge transfer offices, and college alumni relations managers, they support academic colleagues to work with business.

As well as improving existing business relationships, BEPs act as a 'matchmaker' connecting academic colleagues, and their research, to new business opportunities. They signpost any available funding opportunities, and provide help and advice as the partnership evolves. This ranges from assisting with the preparation of proposals, and project management to brokering and attending meetings with business. In short, they are here to help in all areas of business engagement.



The Business Engagement (BE) team:

Seated front row L-R: David Fiskin (Head of BE Marketing); Jazz Jemahl (PA), Nick Blinco (Director of Engagement); Gurmit Kler (Head of BE Partners/CAL); Andy Mountain (MDS) Back Row L-R: Andy Newnham (CoSS); Paddie Murphy (LES); Laura McKenzie (Marketing); Jayne Rowe (Marketing); Bing Liu (International - Asia); Kate Jermy (SMEs); Tim Yates (Marketing). Not pictured - Richard Fox (EPS)

Business Engagement Marketing

Business Engagement Marketing is responsible for raising the profile of the University to business and generating new leads for the BEP team to pursue. One of the ways they do this is by publishing press releases and case studies to celebrate successful business partnerships. These appear in relevant trade press, business magazines, newsletters, and on the University website. The marketing team also attends, and organises, events that involve a business audience, both on, and off campus. In addition they have produced a suite of University-branded promotional materials, all targeted at a business audience, and available to colleagues.

As well as working closely with their colleagues in Development and Alumni Relations, building on the many excellent existing relationships the University has with alumni working in business, the team has a very close working relationship with many areas of the University. Key partners are Careers Network and the Finance Office, including Research and Innovation Services and the University's technology transfer company, Alta Innovations.

Learn more

To find out more about Business Engagement visit intranet/Birmingham.ac.uk/DABE or call 414 5070

Did you know?

- Each college has a dedicated Business Engagement Partner
- We regularly welcome businesses onto campus to showcase our research through 'Discovery Days'
- In 2011-12 £7.86 million of income was generated for the University from commercial sources
- Business Engagement can help to find business partners relevant to specific areas of research
- Last year over 1,100 businesses attended events led, or supported, by Business Engagement

REF2014: at Birmingham

Elizabeth Westlake, Deputy Director Research Planning, tells *buzz* more about the process and next steps for REF 2014.

On 29 November, the University's REF 2014 submission was submitted to the Funding Councils. This was the culmination of well over two years of preparatory work, and a good deal longer than that in terms of the actual research and impact activities of our academic colleagues which form the basis for our return.

What is the REF?

The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is the process by which the UK's higher education funding councils determine how to allocate the research-related element of the block grant each university receives. The outcomes also have a far wider reputational significance, as they feature in league tables and affect subsequent research grant capture. The REF is based on peer-review, with subject-based panels comprising leading academics and research users reviewing the submissions made by each institution. The process has actually been around for nearly 30 years, although over that period it has evolved very considerably. Many *buzz* readers will be familiar with its earlier incarnation as the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE).

What is in the submission?

Institutions are required to provide information about their research-active staff, a representative sample of their best research outputs (usually but not always four outputs per individual), and information about research income and PhD completions over the period. Submissions also include a description

of the environment within which research is undertaken, including the quality of our facilities, and, for the first time in this round, impact case studies and a description of how the delivery of impact is supported.

What's Impact?

Impact is how our research changes or benefits the world outside academia. We are submitting a very exciting portfolio of case studies for REF2014 that represent the wide-ranging impact of research from across the University. This includes medical research that is improving the lives of those suffering from a whole range of conditions, and industry-related impact where we have worked productively with companies significantly to improve their products or to enable them to enter new markets. We have submitted case studies on policy-related impact, where researchers have successfully demonstrated the need to change national and international policy in a whole range of arenas such as medical, educational or social. We have also demonstrated cultural impact where research has enriched the lives of people through enhancing their understanding or appreciation of particular creative or cultural experiences.

How was the REF submission compiled?

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Transfer has had overall responsibility for the REF process on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, supported by the REF Manager. Each school or

REF2014: key facts

- The period that is assessed by REF2014 runs from 2008 to 2013
- There are 36 subject-based panels, called 'units of assessment' or UOAs, to which institutions can submit and Birmingham's submission comprises 33 separate returns to 30 UOAs
- Around 1,060 staff are being submitted
- Total research income in the return is £570 million
- Total number of PhD completions in the return is around 2,500
- 139 impact case studies are being included

department has a REF lead who has overseen putting together the material for their return, and leads have been supported by a project team based in the Planning Office. However this is only a small selection of the many staff across the University who have been involved in the process. Professional Services colleagues in a variety of roles have provided extensive support with the submission; in particular colleagues from the Research Support Offices. Academic staff have authored many impact case studies, and read and graded outputs and a large number of Academic and Professional Services staff have reviewed and commented on draft material. In all, around 300 University staff have been involved in putting together the submission.

What happens next?

During 2014, the subject panels will meet to review and grade submissions, with the outcome of these deliberations published in December 2014. Each submission will receive a grade profile, indicating the percentage of activity it is judged to be undertaking at different levels, with U or 'unclassified' being the lowest and 4* or 'world-leading' the highest. It is anticipated that we will learn the financial implications of the process by summer 2015.

Learn more

Contact Elizabeth Westlake, Emily Collins, or Max Krafchik in the Planning Office with any queries.



2014 IS GOING TO BE AN INCREDIBLE YEAR FOR ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY.

From our Birmingham Speakers programme at the new Library of Birmingham (January–April), our Arts and Science Festival (17–21 March) and a month-long 'pop-up' space in the city centre, there is an exciting run up to our hosting of the national British Science Festival from 6–11 September 2014, incorporating our annual Community Day celebration. The British Science Festival is one of the UK's most established and respected public celebrations of science, engineering and technology, encouraging researchers to share their work with the public and offering a range of entertaining and thought-provoking events and activities for everyone, from family groups to professionals.

THIS IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO GET INVOLVED.

The British Science Festival Scientific programme aims to present the very latest in scientific research, explore its impact on our lives and allow the public to talk directly to those doing the research. It attracts a diverse audience and a great amount of media attention.

The University has been given 20 programme slots to showcase our world-leading research within the main scientific programme. We would therefore request that all proposals from the University be submitted directly to Claire Doggett on c.j.doggett@bham.ac.uk for consideration by 15 January 2014. Information on how to do this can be found on www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/BSF

We are also currently looking for proposals for the entertainment and family programme. In the entertainment programme, we merge science and culture, presenting science in its everyday context and celebrating the scientific and industrial past, present and future of the local region. This part of the programme will be dramatic, musical, fun and eclectic. The family programme aims to enthuse

and entertain children and their families with the wonder of science. Through specially developed shows and workshops it aims to position careers in science, engineering and technology as attainable, desirable and exciting.

So, if you want to present a musical about medicine, a play about physics, a dance about dentistry or make comedy about chemistry, please let your imagination run wild! Or if you have ideas of trips to places of scientific interest, behind-the-scenes tours of research facilities and special collections then please let us know.

PLEASE ALSO TELL YOUR COLLEAGUES OR CONTACTS SO THEY CAN GET INVOLVED TOO.

We are also looking for submissions for the Young People's Programme which runs alongside the public programme. This will be aimed at young people aged 14–19, including those studying KS 4 and 5, but also young people on vocational courses and apprenticeships. The focus of which will be the theme 'Where can science take me?' It is hoped that each interactive science-based activity will also link to research being launched at the wider festival and to a business or organisation to provide a link to how the science is used in real life and how the experience young people have had can lead to exciting future careers in science. Learn more about how to apply on www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/BSF

Learn more www.britishecienceassociation.org/british-science-festival or contact Claire Doggett, British Science Festival Project Manager Birmingham 2014 at c.j.doggett@bham.ac.uk

LOCAL SUPPORT AND FUNDING

We are keen to give you the chance to discuss and develop your ideas with local support and funding. We are running two workshops in December that will showcase examples of engagement approaches, provide a forum to discuss ideas, and give you access to local funding to support the creation of new props and activities. Hopefully this will lead to some exciting content for the pop-up space and Arts and Science Festival, as well as stimulating new ideas for the British Science Festival.

Learn more www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/BSF

birmingham**news**

New Centre for Research in Race and Education

Twenty years after the death of black teenager Stephen Lawrence, his mother, Doreen Lawrence helped to launch a new Centre for Research in Race and Education at the University in February.

Virtual world to help relieve patients' pain

University of Birmingham computer scientists and medical experts have been working with staff at Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham to pioneer the use of computer game technology to alleviate patients' pain and discomfort through distraction therapy.

World's oldest calendar discovery

British archaeology experts discovered what they believe to be the world's oldest 'calendar', created by hunter-gatherer societies and dating back to around 8000 BC.



Robots for the future

Birmingham scientists are pioneering research into using humanoid robots in the classroom to assist teaching practice and even care support and security aids. Projects include developing empathetic robot teachers and utilising robots as classroom buddies for autistic children.

The road to Rio

Mega-event legacies and school sport policy topped the agenda as the University's partnership with the Brazilian Ministry of Sport strengthened.



Maori remains make the long journey to their ancestral home

A collection of Maori skeletal remains and a tattooed Maori head discovered at the University of Birmingham were handed back to New Zealand in a spiritual ceremony in October.

Heads-up on concussion dangers

Birmingham scientists informed public debate on concussion in rugby and the dangers of suffering a subsequent head injury.



WE ARE UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR

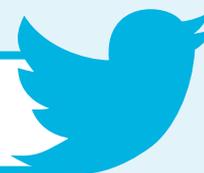
andviews2013

Birmingham remains one of the most active UK universities across social media.

over **53,000**
fans on Facebook



33,000
followers on Twitter



Buzz's dedicated Twitter feed **@buzzunibham** is now just short of **2,000 followers!**



more than **325,000** views on our YouTube channel

#AskAnExpert

Our popular Twitter feature returned to offer students the chance to quiz academic and non-academic staff from across campus. This year's experts included campus policeman PC Andy Smith, Erin Lee, Mature and Part-time Students Officer from the Guild of Students and Jane Tope, Equality and Diversity Advisor.

Gradstagram

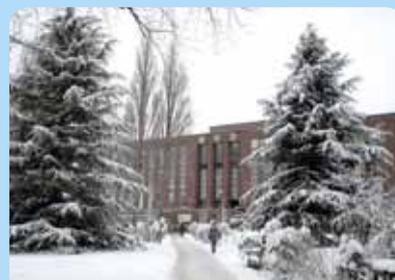
During this year's summer graduations, we celebrated the success of our graduands by inviting them to our special Gradstagram photobooth. They were encouraged to write one word that described their time at Birmingham before having their photograph taken.



A year of innovations

We launched our Virtual Tour site at www.virtualltour.bham.ac.uk allowing prospective students the opportunity to explore our 250-acre campus from the comfort of their own homes. The site also allowed us to stream our June and October Open Days live. Seen by 3,000 people from across the world, we interviewed current students at key locations on campus.

Seasonal campus



Rémi Avril, Erasmus student, Geography and Planning, January 2013



Rémi Avril, Erasmus student, Geography and Planning, April 2013



Yongquan Xie, Mechanical Engineering postgraduate, October 2013

A day in the life

The Birmingham YouTube channel www.youtube.com/unibirmingham has been brimming with engaging content throughout 2013, including our *A Day in the Life* videos. Written, produced and presented by our own students.



We've been overwhelmed by the beautiful photos and videos of our Edgbaston campus sent by students, staff, alumni and friends and have picked out some of our favourite snaps from each term.



EMERGENCY PLANNING

Chris Hoad, Head of Security and Emergency Planning, tells *buzz* more about the people and procedures that are at the forefront of ensuring our campus remains a safe and enjoyable environment.

Emergency planning probably isn't most people's idea of a good time. I enjoy it, but then that's why I don't get many party invites (the host generally takes exception to me sussing out the best escape routes). Emergency planning is a bit like going to the dentist, we know we should do it and we know it makes sense and we will get around to it – at some point. Unlike the dentist however we can't make an appointment with an emergency, it usually turns up unannounced.

Most of us will remember the 'UoB Blackout' last year when the entire campus lost power before the sterling efforts of Estates, IT Services, and many other colleagues got us back on our feet again. While other Higher Education Institutions probably enjoyed a bit of Schadenfreude at our expense, it did make them think about what plans they had in place to deal not just with blackouts, but with emergency situations generally.

Our University does have a Strategic Emergency Response Plan; but it is only an overarching framework for reference by the Registrar's senior management team. No document could possibly cover all situations that could arise across our

Colleges and Corporate Service Directorates. That is why we are embarking upon a process to ensure that all Senior Officers have suitable local contingency plans. There is a generally accepted principle in emergency planning circles that during an incident, the earlier that mistakes are made, the bigger they get; and so the object of planning is to avoid as many early mistakes as possible.

A local contingency plan should cover some basic fundamentals. What are the biggest risks in your area? Some will be common to everyone, such as fire or bomb threat; others will be unique to a specific area, such as toxic substances. All good plans start with some simple questions including *What could go wrong here?* *Who would we need to contact and what would be our immediate priorities?* From these questions (often termed a 'risk register') we can start to build a picture of our current vulnerabilities and what we need to do to build up as much resilience as possible.

It's a fact that organisations with tested emergency plans recover far quicker and far healthier from emergencies than those that don't. My role as Head of Emergency

Planning is to help people be wise before the event and that is why over the coming months I will be working with the Colleges and Corporate Service areas to help managers formulate local contingency plans for their areas. We have to see this as more than a 'tick box' exercise. The future is always ready to hold us accountable and we have a clear responsibility to protect our business and our community by preparing for emergencies, responding effectively to them and repairing any damage as quickly as possible.

So while this may not seem particularly exciting, with some thought, leadership and effort, it is far preferable to the kind of excitement caused by an unexpected incident that isn't matched to a plan. Once you have a plan in place, don't forget to test it so that everyone knows what they have to do and that it works.

**WELCOME TO THE PARTY,
MY PARTY.**

Learn more

on the work of the Security Team visit birmingham.ac.uk/security

Events

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



ICCS

Institute for Conflict
Cooperation and Security

ICCS seminar series Empathy in protracted conflict: normalisation or resistance?

20 January, 5.00pm

Room 420, Muirhead Tower

Dr Naomi Head, Lecturer in Politics at the University of Glasgow and Honorary Research Fellow at the ICCS examines 'The case of Israel and Palestine'.

Chaplaincy Lecture

17 January, 5.30pm

The University's Multifaith Chaplaincy is pleased to announce that this year's chaplaincy lecture will be given by Professor Mona Siddiqui, Professor of Islamic and Inter-religious Studies at The University of Edinburgh, and Chair of BBC Scotland's Religious Advisory Committee. Professor Siddiqui's research interests are the interface between classical Islamic Law and contemporary ethics, and Christian-Muslim relations and their theological history. All are welcome but registration is required via email to chaplaincy.lecture@contacts.bham.ac.uk



Christmas on campus

Buzz would like to wish all University staff and students a very happy festive break, and to remind readers that the University will be closed from **Monday 23 December 2013 until Thursday 2 January 2014**. There is still plenty going on before the end of term including:

University carol service

9 December, 6.15pm

Great Hall, Aston Webb Building

A feast of music, and readings, this year's service will also be a chance to hear the newly formed University Women's Chamber Choir. This is a great event for bringing together students and staff as a University community and also the University with members of the wider community. All are welcome and registration is not required.

Galleries night

11 December, 5.00–9.00pm

The Barber Institute, Ikon, RBSA, Eastside Projects, and mac birmingham

Galleries Night returns this festive season, providing gallery-lovers with another great free evening out! Enjoy the delights of the collections and exhibitions at five of Birmingham's top galleries, with the free Art Bus between venues, a glass of wine and mince pie, and guided tours available at each. Timetables are available at barber.org.uk

THE
BARBER
INSTITUTE OF
FINE ARTS



John Monks – The Process of Painting

Until 26 January

Barber Institute of Fine Arts

London-based John Monks is as much influenced by historical art and the interiors of galleries and historic buildings as he is by the work of contemporary artists. This set of captivating paintings that include a triptych specially created for this exhibition, features interiors and everyday objects, depicted in such a way that they challenge the viewer to look anew at the familiar and the commonplace.

Barber Evening Concert

22 January, 7.30pm

Barber Concert Hall

Michael Collins' dazzling virtuosity and sensitive musicianship have earned him recognition as one of today's most distinguished soloists and a leading exponent of his instrument. He is joined by Irish pianist, David Quigley, for a programme featuring some of the mainstays of the clarinet and piano repertory. To reserve tickets call 0121 414 7333 or purchase at the Barber reception desk. Admission: £15, £12 concessions, £8 Friends, £5 students

Vivian Zheng, Director of Operations and Business Development – Guangzhou... in my own words



I come from the city of Guangzhou, so working for the University's partnership with Guangzhou has particular meaning for me. I vividly remember when the University of Birmingham opened its Guangzhou Centre two years ago. The ceremony venue was packed with local government officials as well as representatives from our local partners and the business community. This major event also marked the first week of my life working for the University.

The Guangzhou Centre, a major overseas investment by the University, was set up to support our partnerships in China, and in particular, with the Guangzhou Municipal Government, in the areas of research, education, technology transfer and capacity building. The past two years have seen the University establish itself as the partner of choice for the local government – and as a consequence ten joint research projects with Guangzhou have been launched.

It was the international vision of the University which inspired and attracted me to this job and I feel fortunate to be part of these exciting ongoing developments. I first came to know about the University's ambitions in China when I was working for the British Consulate in Guangzhou and advising the University on its developmental plan in the country. That plan has led to UoB embedding itself in Guangzhou through a series of mutually beneficial and long-term collaborations with a range of agencies that have the potential to undertake a broad spectrum of research, teaching and knowledge transfer activities.

Our 'partnership platform' approach to global engagement is a broad and distinctive strategy which allows us to develop focused but flexible partnerships. It has proved to work well in China. I am thrilled to see our relationships with local partners grow stronger and the resultant growth in collaborative programmes, joint research and student exchanges with China.

Of course, we face various challenges due to differences in cultures, expectations, and work practices. The primary cornerstone of the University's presence in Guangzhou is the Guangzhou Municipal Government, but as there are no precedents for such a far reaching city–university partnership in either

Birmingham or Guangzhou, progress has not been without its complexities.

However these challenges are part of a healthy process that ensures we achieve a mutually beneficial relationship that learns and grows. I am particularly grateful for the level of support that I get from the University without which we wouldn't have been able to overcome difficulties and move forward so successfully.

This has been a very interesting two years for me, and for my two colleagues at the Centre. In our daily work we assist academic colleagues in developing links with Chinese partners, identifying common interests, pursuing funding opportunities and promoting education programmes. In doing so, it gives us the opportunity to work with colleagues from right across the University and gain a perspective of the institution as a vibrant and exciting place.

The partnership with Guangzhou has strategic importance to the University's engagement with China. Guangzhou is the third largest municipal economy in China after Beijing and Shanghai, with a total population of 14 million. Located in the Pearl River Delta and adjacent to Hong Kong, Macao and the South China Sea, Guangzhou is known as the 'Southern Gateway to China' and as a trade hub with over 2,000 years of history. It is the centre for politics, industry and commerce, science and technology, education and culture in South China.

I am encouraged to see the progress we have already made. This is only the start of our development plan in China, and a series of exciting developments are underway; including teaching collaborations, student mobility, learning experience, and capacity building programmes. I look forward to seeing how the relationship between the University and Guangzhou continues to unfold.

We would be happy to talk to colleagues who want to know more about our work, and discuss how we could support your efforts in partnerships with China. Please contact me on v.zheng@bham.ac.uk for further details. ”