

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2020

buzz

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CREATING
MOSSWERK
OUR NEW CAMPUS
SCULPTURE

FINANCIAL
INCLUSION
AND THE RISE
OF POVERTY



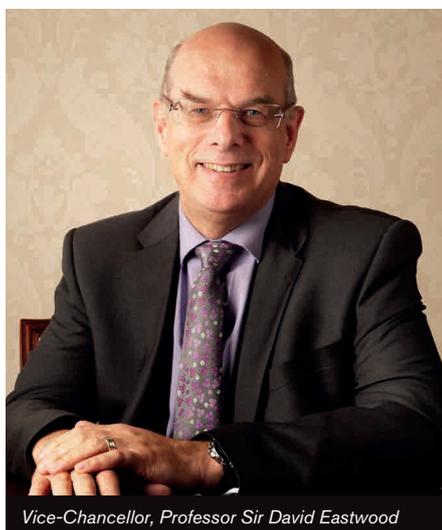
ROLLING OUT
LinkedIn Learning
TO STAFF AND
STUDENTS

THE BARBER'S
CORNWALL
AS CRUCIBLE
EXHIBITION



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

Vice-Chancellor's *view*



Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir David Eastwood

So, the Red Wall has fallen. The political geography of England has been turned around. The self-styled new government is prioritising retaining those seats which, in the words of the Prime Minister, have been 'loaned' to the Conservatives. As a result of this, the North is in the news and big news.

Full disclosure. Until I came to Birmingham, I was a passionate Mancunian. I had been born in Oldham, and grew up in Sandbach just south of Manchester. Manchester is where I went to listen to the Hallé. It is where I went for my violin lessons. It's where I played in many orchestras. Hours were spent at both Old Traffords watching United and Lancashire. I made pilgrimages to Manchester to buy books and to buy records. It was 'my' city.

I used to tease my younger brother because I and my sister were both born in Lancashire but he was born in Cheshire. As I pointed out, in cricketing terms a 'minor county'. Because I came from a Northern family, living in the middle of Cheshire seemed as if we had 'gone South'. We were no longer 'in the North'.

Indeed, for professional Northerners, and I once was one, where the North started and where the rest of the country ended was a fascinating point of discussion. There are no good answers to this. Geography doesn't tell much, regional accents are hugely varied, and there is thus no obvious point where the Midlands gives way to the North. Years ago, when I was a teenager, the BBC's news magazine programme *Nationwide* had an item on where the North was.

Nationwide was presented by Michael Barrett, who had grown up in Sheffield. This turned out to be relevant. Various luminaries came on and talked about where the North might start. They all disagreed. In the end, one commentator said that it was pretty obvious that the North had all the best football clubs in the country. Thus he drew a line south of Liverpool, south of Manchester, and south of Leeds (this was in Leeds' heyday as a football team) and extrapolated the line to the North Sea. That, he concluded, represented the North.

Michael Barrett at this point harrumphed and said, 'well I would have thought Sheffield was obviously in the North'.

Definitions have not moved on much since then, so though the government will talk a lot about 'the North' I don't think we are much clearer knowing where the North begins or ends. Why might all of this matter to the University of Birmingham, and indeed to Birmingham more generally? It matters because the idea of 'the North', however imperfectly articulated, has been lodged in political consciousness for a while. It sat behind George Osborne's 'Northern Powerhouse', and it received a massive boost as a result of the recent election. Sceptics have, and will, say a lot of this doesn't amount to much more than supporting Manchester, and the 'Northern Powerhouse' is as much about picking up crumbs falling from Manchester's table as anything else. Nevertheless, and scepticism aside, the idea of the North and the Northern Powerhouse are politically real.

For us in Birmingham, there are risks and opportunities, though it may well be that the risks outweigh the opportunities. If the North is ill-defined, the Midlands are still more ambiguous. Where the Midlands come together, they often come together with a tension between the West Midlands and the East Midlands.

While the North has accommodated itself to the primacy of Manchester, the Midlands has strongly resisted the primacy of Birmingham.

It is easy to argue this when we are based in Birmingham, but the logic of the primacy of Birmingham is unarguable. In economic terms, in terms of size, and in terms of connectivity, Birmingham's relationship

to the Midlands should be both more powerful and more obvious to Manchester's to the North. Unless this is accepted, the Midlands will underperform. Although the West Midlands is a helpful alternative construct, it is not the same and does not have quite the same political resonance.

Although, as I write, there is speculation that the House of Lords and the headquarters of the Conservative party might come to Birmingham, no one should hold their breath. As other national institutions have been relocated out of London, Birmingham has not been a beneficiary. We saw this with the BBC, we saw this with Channel 4, and there is a real risk that we might see it again with HS2. Were Birmingham

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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.

Front cover image:

A participant at the Feral Sculpture Making workshop hosted by artist duo Juneau Projects in September 2019. Participants foraged for natural materials around campus to craft into a sculpture, creating original artworks using mud, stones and leaves.

Photo credit: *Greg Milner photography*

and the West Midlands to lose HS2 and the benefits of connectivity, actual and symbolic, the impact would be real and long-lasting.

What this means is that those of us who work in Birmingham and, critically, those of us who work in one of Birmingham's great institutions, need to argue passionately for our city and, to a lesser extent, for our region. We need to ensure that in the putative rebalancing of the country, this is not simply a trade-off between the South and the North. The Midlands in general, and Birmingham in particular, must not be squeezed and must not become the flyover or bypass part of the country if the South moves North.

What I have discovered in my time at Birmingham is that we have to make the case repeatedly for Birmingham. Perhaps this doesn't come particularly easily to Birmingham. This, after all, was a city of self-help. It was a city that prided itself on making its own way in the world. It was a city that developed its own confidence.

This culture, in many ways, has served its city well. We see it in the fresh vibrancy of the city centre, our ability to attract inward private and foreign investment, and the renaissance of so much in and around the centre of our city.

Nevertheless, we cannot and should not rest on where we are. As a university, a thriving Birmingham is a huge fillip. As a civic university, we owe it to our city to play our part in making Birmingham's case. This we should do, if anything, with renewed vigour.

The opportunities for Birmingham in this new landscape are real. It is not certain that we will win, but we should. All of us contribute to the success of the city as well as the success of the University. All of us can celebrate what Birmingham is. Let us both as individuals and as a university play our part in ensuring that the future of our city and the future of our region is as bright as it can be. Above all, let us ensure that we are eclipsed by no one.

*Vice-Chancellor,
Professor Sir David Eastwood*

Thank you!

Over 1,000 students, staff, alumni and community members joined the University's Ecumenical Chaplaincy Team for the annual Carol Service to celebrate the joy of the Christmas season on 9 December.

There were more people than could fit in the Great Hall, and so an additional viewing venue with a live feed of the service was provided in a lecture theatre.

This traditional service of carols and readings is one of the biggest gatherings of students, staff and our community in the academic calendar. The service included fabulous and inspiring music from the Department of Music and readings, both Biblical and poetic.

During the service an offering was taken for the important work of Let's Feed Brum.

We are pleased to share that a record £1,655 was raised at the Carol Service.

Your donations will help the homeless of our city find food, warmth and compassion. The Chaplaincy team's hope is that you too will find food, warmth and compassion this New Year.



The Campus Mile

This circular route passes some of the University of Birmingham's key landmarks; from the Green Heart and Old Joe clock tower, to the Barber Institute and Lapworth Museum.

The Campus Mile is an easy way to get some exercise, take a break and enjoy being outdoors. It's perfect for a lunchtime walk, or if you are looking to kick-start your fitness routine, you might choose to jog or run it. It is a little over one mile so you can expect to clock up at least 2,000 steps.

You can see the route on the online campus map and the Campus Map App by clicking on the signpost icon. The route includes some steps, but you'll find that there's always a step-free option close by.

Look out for the green signs on campus
#CampusMile

The Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Lecture Series



Dr Tristram Hunt

As part of the Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Lecture series, the University is delighted to welcome Dr Tristram Hunt, Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum and Former Shadow Secretary of State for Education.

On **Tuesday 11 February**, from **6.00–7.00pm** in the Bramall, Dr Tristram Hunt will deliver a lecture on *'The Civic and the Global: The V&A and the cultural mission of museums'*.

Dr Tristram Hunt is the Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London – the world's leading museum of art, design and performance. Prior to joining the V&A, Dr Hunt was MP for Stoke-on-Trent Central and Shadow Secretary of State for Education. His doctorate is in Victorian history from the University of Cambridge and he has written several books, including *'Ten Cities That Made an Empire'* (2014).

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Vice-Chancellor's Open Forum
Tuesday 11 February, 12.30–1.30pm,
The Bramall.

The Vice-Chancellor will be interviewed by Nick Hillman of the Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) on key issues facing the Higher Education sector and the University.

Birmingham Professional Forum
Tuesday 17 March, 11.00am–12.00noon,
The Bramall.

All staff are warmly invited to the forum, which is introduced by the Registrar and Secretary, Lee Sanders. The agenda will follow closer to the event.

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We are delighted to provide all of our staff and students with free access to LinkedIn Learning.

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We join other leading global and UK universities including Oxford, UCL, Imperial and Edinburgh in providing this trusted resource to staff and students. Local teams including HEFi, IT Services, Careers and Library are creating a series of University of Birmingham learning pathways, specifically tailored to the needs of our staff and students. Check back often, you'll regularly find something new.

Get the most from this outstanding new benefit

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- An individual annual LinkedIn Learning account is valued at £250 per year. Your University email address and password gives you access for free.
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- Consider using LinkedIn Learning to support your professional development planning.
- It's not just for your professional learning, but your personal development too. Learn to play the guitar at home or learn a language at the gym.

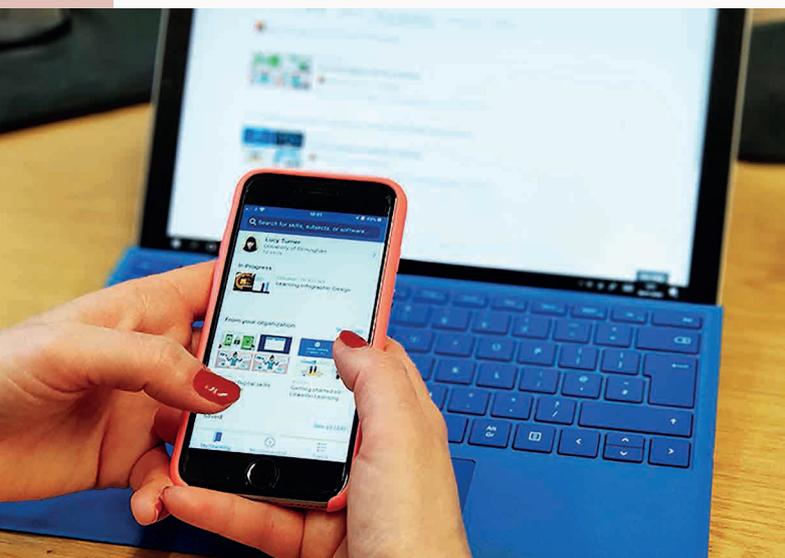
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- Content can be curated and easily shared on Canvas, and all courses are subtitled, with downloadable transcripts for improved accessibility.
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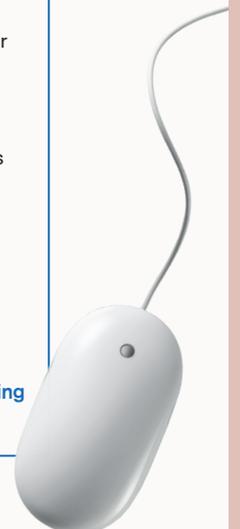
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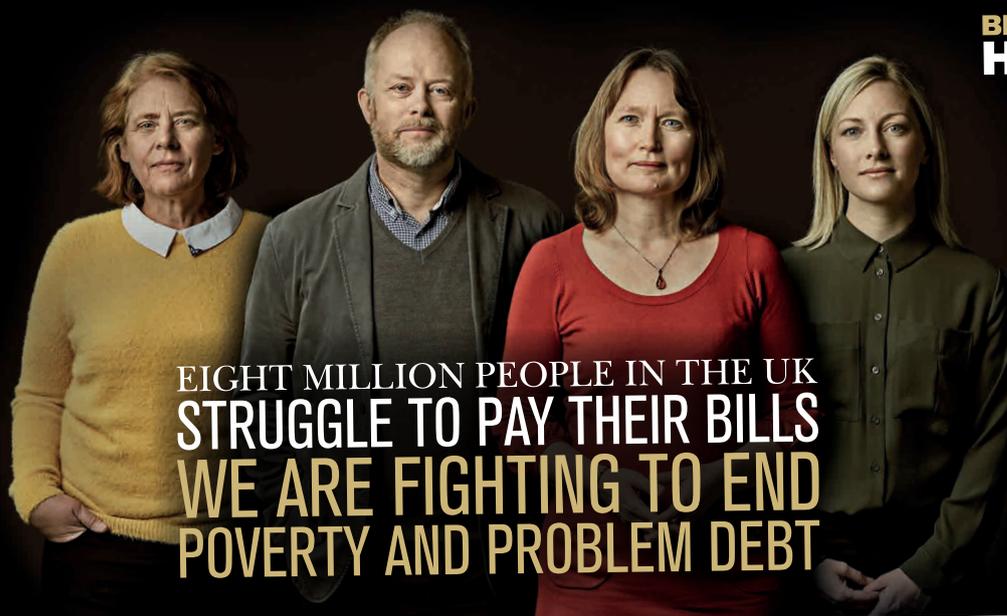
LinkedIn Learning is available now through your desktop or mobile device. You can download videos to your mobile device and watch them offline later, making it easy to view content anytime from anywhere. All you need to access your account is your University email address and password. Your data is secure and never made public.

To activate your individual profile and better understand how LinkedIn Learning works and what courses are available, check out the information and support on the intranet: intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/linkedinlearning (staff intranet login required).



LinkedIn Learning





**EIGHT MILLION PEOPLE IN THE UK
STRUGGLE TO PAY THEIR BILLS
WE ARE FIGHTING TO END
POVERTY AND PROBLEM DEBT**

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

For many people in the UK, Christmas will have exacerbated the difficulties they face making ends meet. It is therefore timely to revisit a report that was launched in October by the Centre on Household Assets and Savings Management (CHASM), which showed that poverty is rising for all groups, even those people who are in work.

The Briefing *'The Financial Inclusion Monitor 2019'*, co-authored by Karen Rowlingson, Professor of Social Policy and Dr Louise Overton, Deputy Director of CHASM (with Professor Stephen McKay at the University of Lincoln), found:

About the Financial Inclusion Monitor

The University has been monitoring financial inclusion in Britain since 2013. It reports on ten key indicators: the economy; employment; poverty; financial wellbeing; access to financial products; savings; pensions; borrowing; problem debt; and, insurance.

If you would like to find out more about financial inclusion and the research, please visit: www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/chasm/financial-inclusion



1.6 million

Almost 1.6 million people are falling behind with paying Council Tax



Six in ten

Six in ten people who fall within the poorest 20% of the population report that they are in problem debt: most commonly Council Tax, rent or utility bills



1 million

Nearly 1 million people are behind with rent payments and over a million are behind on water bills



2.2 million

2.2 million people report having been contacted by bailiffs



Over 70,000

A growing number of personal insolvencies: over 70,000 Individual Voluntary Arrangements (formal alternative to bankruptcy) were made in 2018, up from 40,000 in 2015

The report also highlighted that the number of people without a bank account has reached an all-time low – just over 1 million people. Although some financial institutions like the Co-operative Bank are making particularly strong efforts to provide basic accounts, others are doing relatively little, and banks are making an estimated £2.4 billion from unarranged overdrafts; with people in deprived areas more likely to pay these fees.

While levels of employment have grown in recent years, there were still nearly 1 million people with zero-hour contracts in 2018. And the average weekly wage, in real terms, has still not recovered to the levels seen before the 2008 financial crash. People working in four types of industry have particularly high rates of poverty: accommodation and food services; agriculture, forestry and fishing; administrative and support services; and wholesale and retail. Other findings include:

- The UK's household savings rate is lower than the EU average and far lower than many of our largest and closest Western European neighbours
- The last four years have seen a dramatic rise in the number of people with an active private sector pension, from 2.8 million in 2013 to 8.8 million in 2017
- From April 2019, the minimum contributions to workplace pensions increased from 5% to 8% (2% to 3% for employers and 3% to 5% for employees)
- Only six in ten working-age adults had home contents insurance in 2017/18



The government has said that austerity is over but our research shows that millions of people are still struggling to pay essential bills. Much more needs to be done to increase people's incomes both in and out of work to help them make ends meet.

Professor Rowlingson



ARTS & SCIENCE SCULPTURE CO

Arts & Science Festival is delighted to announce the winners of a brand new sculpture commission on campus for 2020. Birmingham-based artist duo, **Juneau Projects**, were awarded the commission by a team of expert judges, with the help of a public vote. Art is a vital part of campus life and this exciting commission continues the University of Birmingham's long history of working with leading artists. The new public sculpture brings together arts and science in the University's recently expanded campus parkland, **The Green Heart**.



Juneau Projects artists Philip Duckworth and Ben Sadler

Juneau Projects are Philip Duckworth and Ben Sadler, two artists based in Birmingham.

They have worked together for nearly 20 years, developing a practice that looks at the possibilities of artistic production through collaboration and participation.

Over the next nine months, Juneau Projects will be working collaboratively to develop *Mosswerk*, a wooden tower filled with nooks and crannies and decorated with organic imagery representing the life-cycle of moss. Exploring the artists' long-standing interest in the relationship between technology, nature and people, the imagery will be developed in partnership with University students, staff and the local community.

The sculpture will have a hollow centre with an integral watering system and will be treated to encourage the growth of moss and other bryophytes. This group of moisture-loving plants will grow over time in response to the surrounding environment, and will invite both visitors and wildlife to interact with the work. The artists' hope is that the sculpture will focus attention on their distinctive forms and their important ecological role as bioindicators of air pollution and extractors of harmful chemicals.

The new sculpture will be unveiled in the Autumn Term 2020, as part of the University's year-round Arts & Science Festival. Stay tuned for events and updates [#MosswerkInProgress](#).



The project is generously supported by National Lottery through Arts Council England.



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



E MISSION



We met with Juneau Projects in their Digbeth studio to find out more about *Mosswerk*, what inspires them as artists and how the public can get involved...

Congratulations on winning the Arts & Science Sculpture Commission. Can you tell us more about how you came up with the idea for *Mosswerk*?

The idea for the proposal came from a piece we made previously for Tate Britain, called *Trappenkamp*, which was a large outdoor structure made with a series of decorative plywood panels. We wanted the sculpture to look like an artificial ruin, and treated the wood to encourage moss to grow and weather its appearance.

The sculpture proposal for the Green Heart seemed like an opportunity to think about what we had learned from that piece and expand on ways to make the moss cultivation more prominent. *Mosswerk* is designed to encourage moss and lichen growth, which will in turn encourage both further plant growth and cause wildlife to interact with the work. It will hold a central chamber where the moss can be sheltered and watered consistently, making a healthy environment for it. The sculpture's surfaces will evolve and grow over time in response to the surrounding environment. In this way, it is intentionally embedded and responsive to the Green Heart space and will quite literally have an internal green heart of moss – it is very much a sculpture specifically for the University.

How did you become interested in moss and how does this focus on the environment relate to your wider practice?

One of the reasons for liking moss is that it is almost this underlying life, which quietly grows all around us. We hope *Mosswerk* can create a context where people and nature are equally important, and can be considered together. Our early work looked at the relationship between people, nature and society; how we define what is natural or unnatural. *Mosswerk* is part of a continuation but foregrounds these issues in a different way by being quite explicit about ecological themes.

We are also going into much more depth to make each element of the sculpture as sustainable as possible. Plywood has a big carbon footprint, as it is made with a lot of chemicals and often flown in from South East Asia or similarly far places. We are looking into sourcing reclaimed timber for the structure and cladding to minimise that environmental impact.

Your work often invites others to participate in the formulation of ideas and the creative making process. How can the public become involved with the making of *Mosswerk*?

The development of *Mosswerk* provides the chance for us to open up the design through collaborative workshops. We have always worked with other people, but increasingly over the last five years, it has been at the core of our work to involve people as much as possible at different stages of our projects.

We are going to host a series of creative workshops for people to design the imagery for the sculpture. We are also keen to have conversations with different academic departments about the wider issues around the sculpture, and how these tie in to research concerns already present at the University. Through these discourses, we can address how people interpret and interact with the sculpture, and gain a deeper understanding of the piece.

We are constantly surprised by working with other people, by ideas that emerge from conversations, and ways of working that we would never have come up with alone. Being able to meet people and create frameworks that can generate those beautiful surprises is one of our main reasons for doing what we do.

If you are interested in getting involved or taking part in the public programme of events, please visit www.artsandsciencefestival.co.uk/sculpture-commission for more information.



Join Juneau Projects for *Lichen Landscapes and Mossy Minds*, a one-off family workshop inspired by their sculpture proposal as part of Arts & Science Festival's winter season. Make and paint mini plant sculptures using laser cut wooden pieces and add them to a growing moss and mushroom landscape within the workshop space – then take your creations home with you!

Date:

Friday 21 February, 2.00–4.00pm (drop in)

Venue:

Lapworth Museum of Geology

Juneau Projects

Describe your practice in five words...

Nature, technology, people, useful, fun.

'Creativity is a fundamental impulse for humankind, and sculpture, in its widest form, is central to this – tools, instruments, statues, clothes, etc, all display people's evolving relationship with materials and space.'

transforming our campus



Successes in 2019

2019 was a year of positive developments for the campus, with the completion of the Business School extension, the formal opening of the Collaborative Teaching Laboratory and the unveiling of the Green Heart.

And it isn't just those who are based on campus who have been impressed with these developments, but also external organisations. The Estates Team and the wider University teams they work with were thrilled to win a series of awards throughout the year.



For the Collaborative Teaching Laboratory:
 RIBA West Midlands Award
 RIBA West Midlands Sustainability Award
 RIBA West Midlands Project Architect of the Year Award (awarded to Alex Smith)
 RIBA West Midlands Building of the Year Award
 Insider West Midlands Award for Sustainability



For the Green Heart:
 The Infrastructure Award at the Midland Counties Regional Awards for the Institution of Structural Engineers
 In addition, the Green Heart has just been announced as a national finalist in the 2020 Civic Trust Awards, which will be decided in March.



For the Library:
 Best Medium-Large Library 2016–19 awarded by the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL)

These buildings along with the Old Gym, Garth House and Edgbaston Park Hotel were also shortlisted for 12 other honours. Also, the University's overarching Estates Strategy was itself shortlisted at the Times Higher Education Awards, which took place in November.

RIBA 
 Royal Institute of British Architects

SCONUL 

The Institution of Structural Engineers



2020 vision

The pace of development continues, with the opening of the Teaching and Learning Building. Providing two lecture theatres, ten seminar rooms and hundreds of study spaces, it will transform the learning and teaching experience for staff and students. It specifically responds to feedback that students have given in recent years about the amount and quality of study space, and its design was informed through extensive student engagement and a dedicated student reference group.

The facility opened its doors at the beginning of term in January, and was celebrated in a day of talks from a vast range of academics at UoBe Enlightened, attended by hundreds of staff and students.

2020 will see the completion of the new School of Engineering, which will sit alongside a UKRRIN rail facility which will operate in partnership with industry. In September 2020, students will be welcomed into the new development, which celebrated its topping out on a cold, wet and windy day in December.

The next project to break ground will be the Molecular Sciences Building, which will be on the former Munrow Sport centre site. It will provide a designated hub for the School of Chemistry, and a home for Environmental Sciences research from the School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (GEES) spanning aspects of Clean Air, Environmental Nanoscience, Pollution, Climate Change and Water activity.

Opening in 2022, the facility will strengthen the University's core research capabilities in the chemical, environmental and bio-molecular sciences, and foster an environment conducive to undertaking world-leading research. It will be a showcase for challenge-led, thematic research, for innovation and a place to connect research with education.



CORNWALL AS CRUCIBLE: MODERNITY AND ABSTRACTION IN MID-CENTURY BRITAIN

The unlikely role St Ives played in the development of avant-garde art is explored in this spring's major exhibition at the Barber Institute.

CORNWALL AS CRUCIBLE: MODERNITY AND ABSTRACTION IN MID-CENTURY BRITAIN, ORGANISED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE JERWOOD COLLECTION, TAKES A FRESH LOOK AT ARTISTS WORKING IN AND AROUND THE REMOTE AND PICTURESQUE FISHING PORT – WHICH BECAME A HOTBED OF EXPERIMENTATION AND MODERNISM DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR.



Still life (Buoys), Kehelland, Cornwall
by Alexander Mackenzie (1923–2002)
Jerwood Collection © The Artist's Estate



Vista by John Wells (1907–2000)
Jerwood Collection © The Estate of John Wells. All Rights Reserved DACS 2020

Established artists Ben Nicholson and Christopher Wood were holidaying in St Ives in 1928 when they 'discovered' retired fisherman and self-taught painter Alfred Wallis, whose direct approach to representation had a profound influence on their work. When war broke out in 1939, Nicholson and his wife, sculptor Barbara Hepworth, moved from London to the relative safety of Cornwall. They were soon joined by their friend, émigré Russian Constructivist sculptor Naum Gabo.

Nicholson, Hepworth and Gabo, with their direct experience of interwar European avant-garde art, attracted around them a wider group of artists. A few, like Peter Lanyon, were native to Cornwall, or, like Patrick Heron and John Tunnard, were already settled in the area. Predominantly, however, they were drawn by the pull that West Cornwall already exerted as an artistic colony, and by the impact of the war.

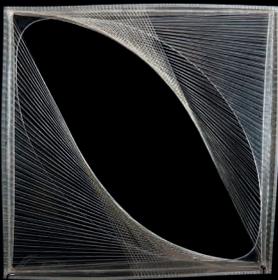
Gabo's iconic modernist sculpture, *Linear Construction in Space No 1*, was a product of his time in Cornwall, and the Barber's recently acquired example sits at the centre of the exhibition, surrounded by works made by his British St Ives contemporaries. The distinctive approach to modernism that developed in the War years could be summarised as abstraction

meeting the presence of Cornwall itself – a wind-battered, primal landscape surrounded by the sea. For Gabo, as for many of his fellow St Ives artists, the natural world was an important inspiration. The exhibition also highlights the significant contribution made by women artists, such as Wilhelmina Barns-Graham, Margaret Mellis and Sandra Blow, alongside Hepworth herself.

As well as works from the Jerwood Collection, the exhibition includes rarely seen drawings by Hepworth and Lanyon from the University's Research and Cultural Collections. Visitors will also be encouraged to explore campus, taking in Hepworth's sculpture, *Ancestor I* (1970) in the Green Heart, and a major Lanyon mural in the Arts Building, commissioned by the University in 1963.

The show's interpretation features interviews with some of the artists, recorded as part of the National Life Stories Artists' Lives project, which often draw attention to the sometimes-contested nature of creative influence and inspiration.

Cornwall as Crucible is accompanied by events ranging from family activities and a Barber Association weekend preview with Cornish cream tea, to lectures by leading scholars, including Dr Jutta Vinzent from the Department of Art History, Curating and Visual Studies.



Linear Construction in Space No. 1 by Naum Gabo
(1890–1977) © Nina & Graham Williams, 2020

Cornwall as Crucible: Modernity and Abstraction in Mid-century Britain runs from **19 February to 17 May**. Admission free. www.barber.org.uk



THE
JUBILEE CENTRE
FOR CHARACTER & VIRTUES



Character Matters

How can we best help our children grow into responsible, compassionate and moral citizens? Experts from the University's Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues are helping to set the national agenda for developing character and virtue in society.

The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues was founded in 2012 and is a pioneering research centre that promotes a moral concept of character, virtues and values in the interest of human flourishing. Moral virtues are stable character traits that allow us to respond appropriately to situations in all areas of life. These qualities enable us to live, co-operate and learn with others in a way that is peaceful, neighbourly and morally justifiable, promoting a flourishing and meaningful existence.

The work of the Centre focuses on exploring the language of character and virtues, how it applies to one's own life, and how it is applied in education. Beyond schooling, the Centre's work has been used in debates on tackling issues of social mobility and educational inequalities both internationally and in the UK. The Centre is internationally recognised as the leading informant on issues of character and its staff have stimulated policy debate, transformed professional standards and influenced campaigns for social change.

In 2015, the Centre launched a bespoke programme of character education for the University of Birmingham School, which has since been commended by Ofsted in the School's first inspection. The programme underpins the curriculum with an ethos and focus on character education and enrichment, providing pupils with the experience and skills needed to make wise choices for a happy and fulfilled life. Indeed, the Centre's work influenced the explicit focus on character in the Ofsted Inspection Framework published in 2019.

More recently, during the University's winter congregations, the Centre saw its first students graduate from the MA Character Education, the first course of its kind globally. The course welcomed students from around the world and across a wide range of backgrounds and experiences, including the voluntary, business and education sectors. The graduates were also joined by Jim Rahn, President of the Kern Family Foundation, who accepted the honour of being inducted to the Chancellor's Guild of Benefactors, on behalf of the Foundation. The Foundation has generously supported the work of the Jubilee Centre and their commitment to furthering character education.

Since founding the Centre, the work of our researchers has helped to inform and influence a wide range of audiences from the general public to royalty. In 2018, Director and founder of the Centre, Professor James Arthur was awarded an OBE for his services to character and values education and later that year, the Centre was joined on campus by His Royal Highness, The Duke of Cambridge for the Prince William Award Graduation.



Our vision for the Centre is not simply to research past and present attitudes to character and virtues, but shape the future attitudes and behaviours of the British people. We aim to enable British people to explore their character and virtues and, if and where required, transform them.

Professor James Arthur

Developing Character

- Character contributes to a flourishing society
- Good role models are important
- Direct teaching of character provides the rationale, language and tools to use in and out of school
- Character is the foundation for better results, better behaviour and increased employability
- Character should be developed in partnership with parents, employers and community organisations
- Character results in academic gains for students, such as higher grades
- Character empowers students and is liberating
- Character promotes democratic citizenship





CAMPUS CURIOSITIES

What is it?

Coffin footboard, ancient Egyptian, Likely Third Intermediate Period (c.1069–664 BC) – Late Period (664–332 BC), Research and Cultural Collections

Where is it?

Archaeology Museum, Arts Building (R16 on campus map. The museum is accessible by appointment).

This wooden panel from the footboard of an ancient Egyptian coffin depicts the Apis bull carrying the mummified body of the deceased upon his back. The bull was a sacred animal and symbol of physical strength and male fertility, and was particularly revered in the area of Memphis in northern Egypt. While early textual and iconographic sources linked the Apis bull with the god Ptah, the principal deity of Memphis, from the New Kingdom (c.1550–1069 BC) the bull also became intrinsically connected to the god Osiris. Later assimilated with the god and known as 'Osiris-Apis' (or Serapis in the Greco-Roman era), the bull acted as a protector of the deceased and was often depicted on funerary items such as coffins carrying the body to the afterlife. Such representations like this footboard typically date from the Third Intermediate Period (c.1069–664 BC) onwards. This object was gifted to the University in 1939 from the private collection of Sir Robert Mond (1867–1938), forming the first collection of Egyptian artefacts as part of the Archaeology Collection.

Find out more

In October 2019, the Archaeology Collection was relaunched with an exciting new redisplay giving insight into aspects of ancient European, Greek, Roman, Egyptian, and Mesopotamian cultures. The new display is a joint venture between the Department of Classics, Ancient History and Archaeology and Research and Cultural Collections created with the assistance of student volunteers. The Archaeology Lunchtime Talk series celebrates the redisplay through object-focused talks; you can find out more here: www.researchandculturalcollections.eventbrite.com

Research and Cultural Collections hosts a vast range of extraordinary objects that play a valuable social, cultural and educational role in campus life. To find out more, visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/rcc

Chancellor's column

The University of Birmingham has many firsts to its name since its existence. In our December 2019 Degree Ceremonies, for the first time we awarded degrees in Character Education. We awarded the MA in Character Education which is the first and only distance learning MA Character Education programme in the world focusing on the theory and practice of human flourishing.

The programme is run by the University's Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues. The centre is widely recognised and respected as one of the world's finest centres specialising in how character and virtues impact individuals and society. Its Director, Professor James Arthur OBE, has written authoritatively about the subject over the years.

We were privileged to induct into the Chancellor's Guild, The Kern Family Foundation, who have generously supported our work on Character Education. The Kern Family Foundation's mission is to empower the rising generations to build flourishing lives anchored in strong character – a perfect fit for our centre and our degree. The Kern Family Foundation's donation once again demonstrates the crucial, continuing importance of benefaction since the inception of our university.

It is so important that students at our university graduate, not only having received the finest education in their subjects, but also with the right values, with character and virtue – humility, courage, compassion, passion, drive, ambition, a spirit of partnership, a sense of justice and fairness, and most importantly, integrity. How wonderful that we are unique as a university to have a centre and a degree researching and teaching Character and Virtue for the benefit for all our students.

Lord Bilimoria is the founder and chairman of Cobra Beer, Chancellor of the University of Birmingham and the founding Chairman of the UK-India Business Council.

CELEBRATING LGBT History Month *and* International Women's Day

The Spring Term will see staff and students celebrate LGBT History Month in February and International Women's Day in March, with a large programme of events that reflect the diversity that enriches our campus.

The LGBT History month programme will include a panel discussion with founding members of the University's Gaysoc and Lesbian and Gays support the Miners; a Rainbow Family Day at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts and a conference focusing on education and inclusivity for LGBT+ people in STEM. Events will also reflect the national theme: 'Plays, poetry, workshop' with poetry workshops and a talk about Henry Reed at the Cadbury Research Library.

Professor Robin Mason, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International) and Executive Lead for LGBT Equality:



LGBT History Month is a perfect demonstration of University staff and students coming together with an engaging programme that fosters and celebrates inclusivity, and promotes LGBT+ equality to a wide audience.



The Women's Staff Network, which launched last year, has created their first International Women's Day programme, focusing on women's physical and mental health. Events throughout the month will include an event with the charity Cysters around reproductive health, a book club session and a conference in collaboration with Queen Elizabeth Hospital Trust exploring the stories of women in Science and Medicine.

Professor Jo Duberley, Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) highlights that events such as these are such an important part of the University's Equality Agenda:



As the new DPVC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, I am delighted to see an increase in staff and student engagement at celebrations such as LGBT History Month and International Women's Day. This also reflects the University's commitment to Equality and Diversity, and I am looking forward to working with the University community to develop the new Equality Scheme.

LGBT HISTORY
MONTH
FEBRUARY

INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S DAY
MARCH

More information about all the events taking place can be found at:
www.birmingham.ac.uk/lgbthm

To find out more about the University's staff networks, visit:
intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/collaboration/equality