

# NEWSLETTER

THE MAGAZINE FOR THE STAFF OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

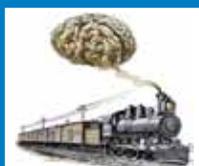
MICHAELMAS TERM 2013



## Wild about Cambridge Focus on biodiversity



UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE



**Plans for a 'brain  
train' gather steam**  
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**Public engagement:  
inspiring, consulting,  
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# SNAPSHOT

**Festival of Ideas:** Celebrating the best of the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Cambridge's Festival of Ideas is back. Now in its sixth year, this year's festival theme is frontiers. From a pop-up art gallery (right) and a discussion about the impact of CS Lewis on science 50 years after his death, to a debate on how possible future wars are being depicted in science fiction, there are more than 200 events across the city to choose from. Runs from 23 October to 3 November 2013.

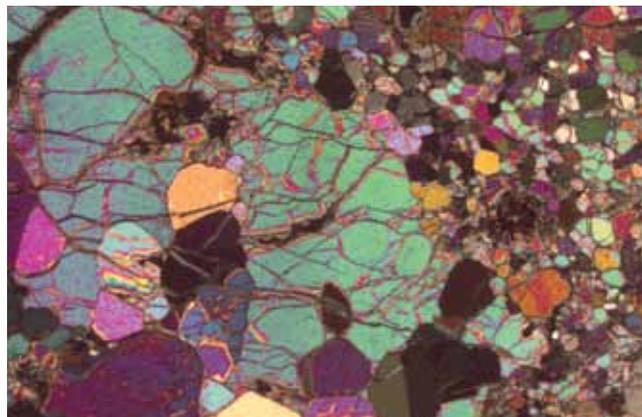


EMMA TAYLOR

**Objects in the Field:** Based on her artist associateship at the Institute of Astronomy, *Objects in the Field* is a new exhibition at Kettle's Yard by London artist Sophy Rickett. Building on her previous work around landscape and the night, the exhibition includes large-scale photographs made in response to her encounter with retired fellow Dr Roderick Willstrop, and the 125 black and white film negatives taken by the Three Mirror Telescope he designed and built. Runs to 3 November 2013.



**Rock on:** A new study funded by the Natural Environment Research Council in the University's Department of Earth Sciences has turned to a unique rock collection, amassed since at least the early 1800s and held in the Sedgwick Museum, to provide a fresh understanding of the make-up of the Earth's mantle. The collection contains around 160,000 specimens of rock and about 250,000 slide-mounted rock slices that, at half the width of a human hair, are thin enough to let light through.



**Last chance to see:** Echoing William Blake's etching *I want, I want*, artist and writer Ian Starsmore's installation of ladders made from cleared or fallen tree branches is still on show at the University Library. *The Cambridge Ladders* includes a cabinet of 10 tiny silver ladders that Starsmore hid in the Norfolk countryside, and a 7.5m silver birch ladder that arrived in Cambridge via Norwich Cathedral and the marshes at Cley-next-the-Sea. Runs to December 2013.



IAN STARSMORE

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From birds of prey to the humble honeybee, Cambridge gardens are buzzing with biodiversity. We ask gardeners across the collegiate University why they're so passionate about wildlife. Turn to page 8.



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Front cover photograph: Chris Loades

## NEWSLETTER

The *Newsletter* is published for the staff of the University of Cambridge and is produced by the Office of External Affairs and Communications. If you have a story, or ideas for other ways we can improve the Newsletter, please get in touch. Tel: (3)32300 or email [newsletter@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:newsletter@admin.cam.ac.uk). Suggestions for articles for the next edition should reach the Editor by 10 November. Managing Editor: Andrew Aldridge  
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## NEWSLETTER ONLINE

[www.cam.ac.uk/for-staff](http://www.cam.ac.uk/for-staff)



Your comments and contributions are always welcome. Please send them to the Editor at [newsletter@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:newsletter@admin.cam.ac.uk). The deadline for the next issue is **10 November**.

## VC: growth is good – but brings crucial choices

THE VICE-CHANCELLOR used his annual 1 October speech to urge members of the collegiate University to get involved in debate about how the University develops over the coming decades.

Speaking at the start of the new academic year, Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz said three questions faced the University: how it grows while maintaining its distinctiveness; how it educates a changing student body; and how it develops its research and engages its supporters.

"The answers we choose will shape what the University looks and feels like in 20 years' time," he told the Senate House audience. "I ask you to contribute to these debates. These choices are critical; our responsibility is great."

With development of North West Cambridge, the Biomedical Campus, the arrival of AstraZeneca's global headquarters and the projected move by Papworth Hospital, the first decision concerns the growth of the estate.

"This growth is good, and is a vote of confidence in Cambridge. And yet we prize, rightly, Cambridge's human scale – the unplanned conversations, the coming together of a rich diversity of knowledge and experience, the spark that comes from a collision of ideas from different sorts of mind. The first choice facing us, then, is this: how to preserve that distinctiveness as we grow?"

The second choice concerns education and research: how Cambridge's unique system based around the individual student evolves as the student body grows; and how the University responds to new research challenges.

"The challenges change, as do our strengths, and we need to make timely choices when they do. Not just about what we create, but who we work with – our partnerships with research funders, industry and philanthropists," he said.

The third and arguably the biggest decision concerns the collegiate University's partnerships



**"We prize, rightly, Cambridge's human scale – the unplanned conversations, the coming together of a diversity of knowledge and experience"**

**Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz**

with benefactors. "We earn only 90 pence for every pound we spend on research, giving us a funding gap of around £50 million per year. If we choose to continue to grow our research programme, then this deficit will increase," he said. "The only way to bridge a growing gap while maintaining our institutional and academic freedoms is through attracting benefaction."

"When it comes to creating long-lasting infrastructure for research and teaching alike, the partnership between academic leaders, donors, and the Development Office – newly reconfigured for the growing challenge – will create an exceptional opportunity. We must seek to work with benefactors in partnership, so that they feel an integral part of the family of collegiate Cambridge."

To read the speech in full, visit [www.cam.ac.uk/notices](http://www.cam.ac.uk/notices)

## New support for returning carers

A NEW SCHEME has been launched to support the career development of research and academic staff going on – or returning from – caring responsibilities.

The Returning Carers Scheme offers funding to assist qualifying staff who have had a period of absence, or reduced their working hours. Eligibility includes maternity leave, paternity leave, adoption leave, and leave to care for a dependant.

Funds are for a range of uses, including buying out teaching and administrative duties for a specific period; covering the cost of attendance at conferences (either for the individual or for related childcare); covering the cost of a collaborator to come to Cambridge; or for the use of equipment.

Open to both men and women, the scheme is part of a wider programme to encourage heads of schools and departments to support women in their career development.

Staff who are interested in applying to the scheme should contact their School HR Business Manager in the first instance. Requests for funds should not normally exceed £10,000, although exceptional cases for support of up to £20,000 may be considered.

This year's scheme was launched on 1 August and will run until 31 July 2014. There are two deadline dates: 31 October 2013 for the first round of applications; and 28 February 2014 for the second round.

More details are at [www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/policy](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/policy)

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## Cambridge Sports Centre is up and running



Outside in: North lights in the domed and vaulted roof let in air and light

THE NEW CAMBRIDGE Sports Centre at West Cambridge opened its doors this summer. "It's been a long time coming," Karen Pearce, the centre's Deputy Director told visitors during an Open Cambridge tour. "It will be a major boost for the University's 52 sports clubs, and an important facility

for the city's residents as well as the University."

The first event hosted by the Cambridge Sports Centre was the Generation Games. Organised by Cambridge City Council, the games gave free sample sessions of sports, from table tennis and trampolining to

football and kung fu.

With its veil of timber fins, distinctive domed and vaulted roof with north lights, and a vibrant colour scheme, the centre is marked out by great architecture as well as first-class facilities. According to David Height of Arup Associates, which designed the building: "We were very conscious of users coming out here on a bleak, February evening, so the building is energetic and welcoming. It's open, transparent and colourful – an extraordinary place and somewhere that will draw people in.

"It is designed to be as sustainable as possible," he added. "The main sports hall is, as far as possible, lit and ventilated naturally. We wanted views to the sky and fresh air so that you feel you're in open space."

Together with a sports hall for

basketball, badminton, boxing, five-a-side football, volleyball, netball and other court games, the first phase of the centre has a state-of-the-art fitness suite, a strength and conditioning wing with free weights and a three-lane plyometric track, a multi-purpose room for martial arts and exercise classes, plus Eton and Rugby Fives courts.

Plans for phases two and three include a tennis centre and swimming pool.

The Centre offers a variety of membership deals for staff, students, alumni and the community including peak, off-peak and other options.



**FIND OUT MORE**

[www.sport.cam.ac.uk/facilities/CambridgeSportsCentre/index.html](http://www.sport.cam.ac.uk/facilities/CambridgeSportsCentre/index.html)

### IN BRIEF

→ Potter and Cambridge alumnus Edmund de Waal takes over three galleries of the Fitzwilliam Museum this winter for a new exhibition, *On White*. The re-curated spaces feature objects from de Waal's 2012 residency in China, alongside pieces from the museum's collection, poetry, photographs and letters, plus two major installations, including a new work commissioned especially for the exhibition. *On White* runs from 23 November to 23 February 2014.

→ Archaeologists have found what they believe to be part of the mediaeval cemetery attached to St Edmund's Chapel in front of Cambridge Judge Business School. Human remains were uncovered during a dig in August. The dig was part of a pre-planning requirement by the City Council and associated with an application for new development at Cambridge Judge Business School.

## Addenbrooke's becomes first general hospital to receive leading cancer status

THE CAMBRIDGE CANCER CENTRE – a partnership including Cambridge University Hospitals (CUH), the University of Cambridge and Cancer Research UK (CRUK) – has been accredited by the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECI) as a comprehensive cancer centre.

The accreditation makes Addenbrooke's the first general hospital in Europe to receive the stamp of approval from the OECI for cancer care and research.

The status recognises specialist cancer centres that can offer the combination of world-class research, a wide range of ground-breaking treatments, the highest educational standards, and a clinical service with good outcomes for patients.

Professor Patrick Maxwell, Chair of the Centre and Head of the University of Cambridge Clinical School, and Professor Sir Bruce Ponder, Director

of the Centre, received the certificate from OECI President Professor Wim van Harten at a special event to showcase research programmes that are changing the face of cancer treatment worldwide.

Welcoming the news, Ponder said: "This status is recognition of the hard work and collaboration between the University, CRUK and Addenbrooke's over the last six years since the centre was established. We are bringing Cambridge science to bear on the practical problems of cancer. Closer interaction between the clinic and the lab will be the foundation for our future progress and for better outcomes for patients."

The accreditation, said CRUK CEO Harpal S Kumar, recognises Cambridge's outstanding track record in cancer research: "The city is hugely important to the work of Cancer Research UK, receiving

our largest investment in a single location, outside of London. This supports a range of exceptional basic, translational, clinical and population research.

"It is an exciting time for CRUK and the Cambridge Cancer Centre and there is great potential for us to continue to work closely together to make a significant impact on cancer outcomes."

According to Dr Keith McNeil, Chief Executive Officer of CUH: "Addenbrooke's already provides excellent outcomes for cancer patients compared to other hospitals in the UK and cancer will be one of the top priorities for us in the future.

"I am eagerly looking forward to forging even closer collaborations with the University and Cancer Research UK in the pursuit of cancer research that transforms the lives and futures for patients."



Your comments and contributions are always welcome. Please send them to the Editor at [newsletter@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:newsletter@admin.cam.ac.uk). The deadline for the next issue is **10 November**.

## New senior post to support post-docs

PROFESSOR CHRIS ABELL of the Department of Chemistry has been appointed to the new position of Director of Post-Doctoral Affairs.

Professor Abell, who will work part time in the post and draw on the help of a small Post-Doctoral Affairs Office in the Old Schools, will champion the cause of post-docs at Cambridge and work with a range of offices and groups to develop a coordinated network of support services.

He will focus on three broad areas: representing post-docs and the post-doc agenda on senior level University committees; engaging post-docs in individual faculty and departments; and integrating various strands of activity at the University that relate to post-docs.

"Institutionally, we need to move on from thinking that post-docs are here for two or three years

and recognise their contribution," he said.

"Post-docs are our biggest group of employees at the University, and make a vital contribution to research and other activities – but they are also the most under-represented. We should be looking at ways to help them develop their careers – for example, by improving review and mentoring schemes. We should also make them more aware of the opportunities here, and make them feel more involved in the broader University community."

Professor Abell said that he and the Office of Post-Doctoral Affairs will consult widely with groups and institutions across Cambridge with an interest in post-docs – departments and faculties, key HR offices, the Careers Service and the colleges, to name just a few – and look to build

on existing work and structures. In particular, he emphasised the important role played by the PdOC Society.

His plans include setting up a drop-in office in central Cambridge where post-docs can come for advice, and exploring new ways to build a culture of voluntary help and support within departments and faculties.

"The University should look to enhance the experience of post-docs throughout their time at Cambridge," he added. "From before they arrive, when they are looking to find housing and schools for their children, while they are here developing their careers, and beyond."

Professor Jeremy Sanders, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Institutional Affairs, said: "This is an exciting



**Professor Chris Abell plans a new drop-in office for post-docs**

opportunity to transform the post-doctoral experience in Cambridge over the next few years, especially when it is combined with the North West Cambridge development."

## The artistic life of Pi

FIVE ARTISTS have been exploring the creative possibilities of the Raspberry Pi – the cheap and tiny computer developed in Cambridge – this summer thanks to a new educational research programme from Wysing Arts Centre. As part of *Defining Pi*, the artists have been learning computer programming from Dr Sam Aaron of the Computer Laboratory. They are now using their new skills to make new work with the Raspberry Pi.

One of the five taking part is Dan Tombs, a video artist whose work includes video performances for electronic musicians: "My work involves quite a lot of technology. It's not always generated through a lens but through synthetic processes."

Armed with new coding skills, Tombs is using the Raspberry Pi to create a colour organ, a 21st century version of the musical mechanical devices first built in the 1700s. "Trying to find a relationship between music

and images is something people have struggled with for two or three hundred years," he said. "Using the camera module of the Raspberry Pi, I am creating a colour organ, but doing it backwards. You find a dominant colour, like a green apple, the computer takes a photo of it, analyses it and plays the corresponding note so you can create a musical piece by presenting it with colour."

Education as well as art is a key part of the programme. According to Rachel Drury, *Defining Pi* project manager: "It is an experiment that seeks to explore how artists adapt to programming and how it affects their artistic practice. We hope that the results, which will be shared online and through talks and workshops in Cambridge this autumn, will inspire other people of all ages to try it."

The other artists are Richard Healy, Kate Owens, Rob Smith and Choo Ly Tan.

## CELEBRATE WITH THE UNIVERSITY CENTRE

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The Varsity Line closed in 1967 – but a head of steam is now building up among politicians and campaigners to reunite Oxford and Cambridge with a direct rail link

# All aboard the brain train

**NEXT STOP: CAMBRIDGE.** So read the placards and banners when a group of transport campaigners gathered in Priory Country Park, Bedford, on a Saturday in June. Their plan was to walk the seven-and-a-half miles to the Market Square in Sandy, Bedfordshire, along a footpath and cycleway now given the drab identifier of Sustrans National Cycle Route 51.

The route's alternative name – the University Way – offers a clue as to its former use. This was once the trackbed for part of the Oxford to Cambridge railway, popularly known as the Varsity Line or 'Brain Line', until its closure in the late-1960s.

The purpose of the walk was twofold: to celebrate the success of the campaign in restoring rail services between Oxford and Bedford; and to press the case for extending the line to Cambridge. And now, more than ever, there is a sense that trains may once more run between the two university cities without a lengthy detour via London.

Many of those present represented pressure groups and charities that had long been fighting to have the line reopened, including Railfuture and the Campaign for Better Transport. Some were directly involved with the East West Rail Consortium, a group of local authorities and businesses that has taken the helm in developing the case. And reflecting the wide support that the plans have attracted, the walkers included two MPs – Iain Stewart (Milton Keynes South) and Richard Fuller (Bedford) – plus county and district councillors from Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire and Suffolk.

Among other participants was Noel Kavanagh, a retired business

**“The Oxford-Cambridge arc has been a magnet for high-tech industry, and all the towns along the route are expanding”**

development manager at Cambridge University Press and the transport spokesman for the Labour Party on Cambridgeshire County Council. “I met some of the experts and enthusiasts, which was very enlightening,” he says. “You can certainly learn a lot about rail networks on a walk. I feel optimistic that the plan will come to fruition, as there seems to be a new atmosphere of positivity around it. But these things can take time; and by time, I mean up to a quarter of a century.”

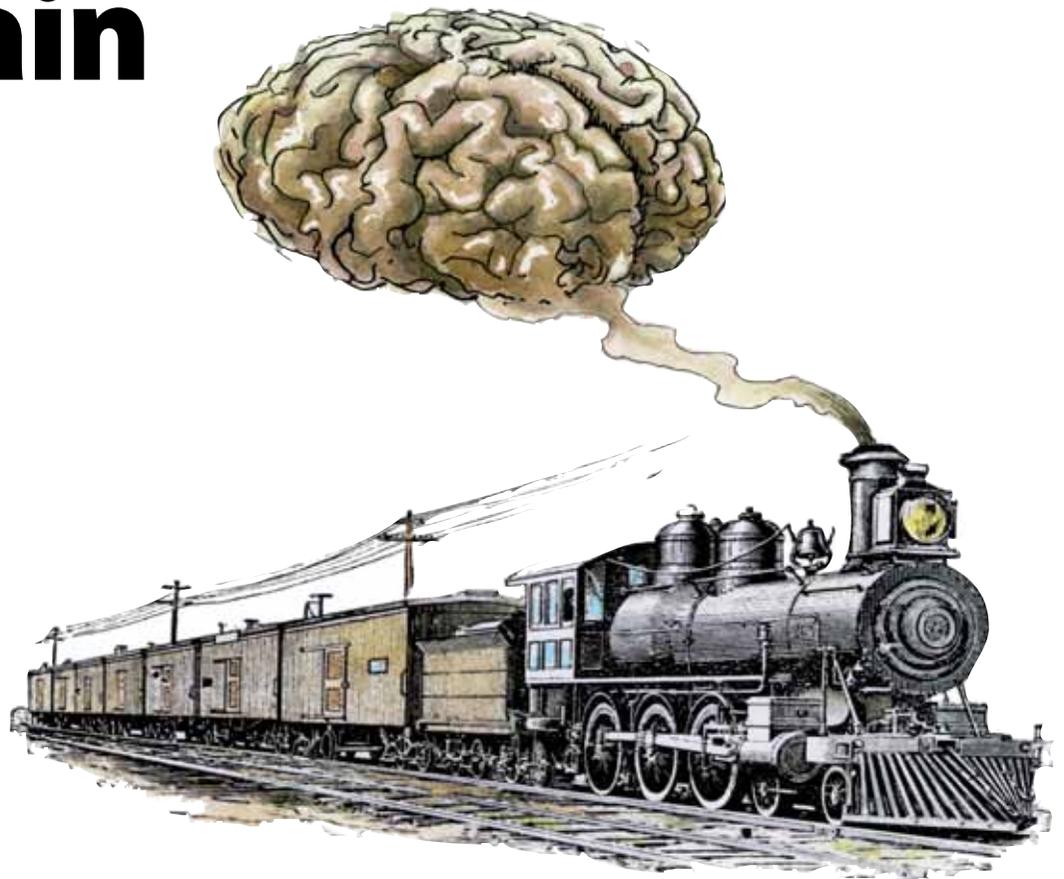
In fact, if all goes to schedule and the Oxford to Bedford section opens in 2017, it will be almost half a century after services were withdrawn, and more than 150 years after its original opening. Built

in stages between 1846 and 1862, the Varsity Line served stations including Bicester, Bletchley, Bedford and Sandy on its route between Oxford to Cambridge.

Contrary to more than one recent newspaper report, it was not slated for closure in the Beeching report of 1963, which ultimately led to the reduction and reshaping of the UK's rail network. But after a decline in passenger numbers in the subsequent years – in part thanks to faster express trains on an alternate route via London – the last direct service between the two university towns ran in 1967.

Plans to reopen the line have been mooted since the early 1980s, and there have been many false dawns. In 2001,

ILLUSTRATIONS: FELIX BENNETT



the transport correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* confidently reported that “a direct rail link between Oxford and Cambridge is to be restored after 34 years, in a £200 million scheme” and that “the aim is to complete the line by 2006”. In reality, the campaign has involved a lot of onerous and unglamorous work – putting together feasibility studies and lobbying local and central government – and the recent success has been hard won.

### Enormous response

Peter Wakefield, chairman of the East Anglia branch of Railfuture and a Cambridge resident, says: “It’s a very interesting project in the way it has progressed. In 1995 we put out a pamphlet about the East West Rail plan and sent it to every councillor in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, and all across to Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Wiltshire. We got an enormous response, and the East West Rail Consortium was formed in 1995.

“Over the years these councils have just beavered away. It really has been a grassroots thing: it hasn’t been from the government down; it has been from the counties and districts up, and these people have really kept at it for the past 20 years.”

Recently, a number of factors have strengthened the consortium’s case. The Oxford-Cambridge arc has become a magnet for high-tech industry, and all the towns along the route are expanding – most notably Bicester and Milton Keynes, with the latter’s population expected to exceed that of Edinburgh within five years. All the while, the region’s transport links have been proving ever more inadequate, with the A14 becoming one of the UK’s most notorious routes for traffic congestion. A new rail route could relieve the overcrowding on commuter rail to the north of the capital.

“The Department of Transport was dismissive at first, but then it started to take it on board,” says Wakefield. “The national railway has become busier and we need new routes for freight and passengers.”

The East West Rail proposals – which in their totality, encompass a connection all the way from Reading to Ipswich and Norwich via Cambridge – now enjoy unprecedented political support. In late 2011, a Parliamentary All-Party Group for the scheme was formed, with Cambridge MP Julian Huppert as vice-chair; and it has been successful in keeping the

scheme in the national spotlight.

In January 2013, Network Rail finally announced that the western section of the East West Rail Link would be built as part of its Strategic Business Plan for 2014-19, with the financial backing of the Department for Transport. The target date for services to be operational is December 2017, and there are plans to electrify the line by 2019.

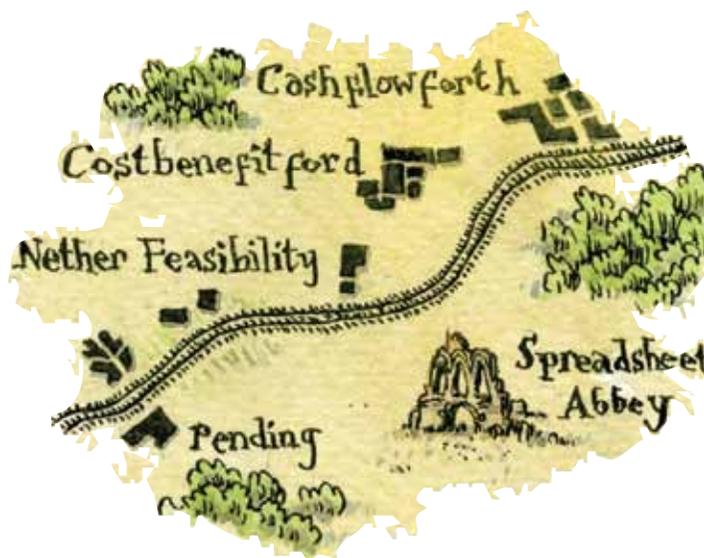
Patrick O’Sullivan, rail consultant for the East West Rail Consortium, says: “We’ve obviously achieved a considerable amount of success on the western section, and that’s because a few things were to our advantage. For one thing, the track is still there – the land has not been sold off and it’s still under the ownership of Network Rail, so there’s no dispute about the route. We’ve been able to prove a very good business case, and it’s been hugely supported by all the local authorities in the area.

“With the success of the western section, we’re now turning our attention to the central section – not that we ever forgot about the central section, because an awful lot of work has been done on it.”

### Range of alignments

To date, there is no agreement as to the route that a Bedford-Cambridge link could take. And this is where the consensus that has been painstakingly built over the past 20 years could begin to crumble. Authorities in the north of the region are likely to favour a reasonably direct route between the two places. Those living in Hertfordshire and Luton, however, may well prefer to take the line via Luton and Stevenage; and there are a range of other alignments that are under consideration, each with potential to link up other communities in the region.

The consortium is now taking a step back, having appointed consultants to come up with a definitive study into the economic case for each route option.



### FIND OUT MORE

For more information about East West Rail, see [www.eastwestrail.org.uk](http://www.eastwestrail.org.uk)

“Rather than just looking at how to get from A to B, we’ll be doing a study of the whole region, looking at what’s driving the economy, what’s the potential for development and how transport links can help that development,” says O’Sullivan.

He is adamant that this is a time for being hard-headed, and putting aside romantic notions of restoring the once-loved Varsity Line. “This can be the danger of rail enthusiasts,” he says. “They want to reopen the railway because it used to be there. It’s a bit like bringing back steam trains, though that’s exaggerating the point to make the point.

“It’s going to cost not far short of a billion pounds to build a new railway between Bedford and Cambridge, and you’ve got to ask what the benefits are of spending a billion pounds of probably public money.”

Nevertheless, O’Sullivan thinks that there is a great likelihood of a full Oxford-Cambridge service getting the green light in the medium term. The Department of Transport works to five-year cycles, and he believes a realistic aim is for confirmation in the 2019-2024 ‘control period’.

“There’s an awful lot of political support for reopening a route to Cambridge,” he says. “Ironically, the politicians at Westminster are more supportive of the central section than they were of the western section – although they obviously welcomed that reopening.

“But because it’s going to be so expensive, the benefits will need to be very, very high to mitigate the capital cost of the scheme. So that’s where we are at the moment. There’s lots of support for doing it, but we’ve got to do a lot of work to make a case for it.”



# Biodiversity begins at home



Fruitful work: "We encourage students to be out in the garden and to pick things," says Murray Edwards Head Gardener Jo Cobb

From the Backs and the Botanic Garden to commons and college gardens, Cambridge's green spaces delight residents and tourists alike. Now, thanks to the efforts of gardeners and bee keepers, they are buzzing with biodiversity

FOR MOST GARDENERS, winning a medal at the Chelsea Flower Show is the acme of achievement. For the team of gardeners at Murray Edwards, however, winning a bronze medal in 2007 was a catalyst for change as well as cause for celebration.

"Chelsea was the pinnacle of us being a display garden; that 'look but don't touch' approach," Jo Cobb, Head Gardener at Murray Edwards, remembers. "When we came back we had this huge crisis and began asking ourselves why are we gardening, what are we doing here?"

Six years on, the answer is clear: there are grape vines scrambling up the tennis court fencing; fruit and veg overflowing from raised beds tended by Transition

Cambridge's community gardeners; and a plot of spinach that, for the first half of the year, fed the whole college.

"People come into colleges expecting to see gardens, but here you see folk collecting crops," she says. "We actively encourage students to be out in the garden, to pick things, to walk on the grass. When you see grass that's been cut to within an inch of its life you think: if they can do that to nature, what are they going to do to me? We want to say something different – that we care about biodiversity in the garden, and we also care about you."

Putting up bird boxes, leaving the hollow trunk of an old beech for

woodpeckers to nest in, and building log piles for insects and amphibians have all helped, but the new pond in the Fellows' Garden – funded by wildlife charity the Panton Trust and hand dug by fellows in 2010 – has been the biggest boost for biodiversity. According to Cobb: "It supports plenty of frogs and newts, and also attracts butterflies and dragonflies. They climb up the iris stems and you'll see where they shed their skins and the newly hatched dragonflies drying their wings, ready to take off. Birds and deer come to drink, and there's a heron."

The Panton Trust also funded a biodiversity area along Huntingdon Road. Full of spring bulbs, and managed as

**"We have a lot of open space here and it shouldn't just be beautifully manicured lawns to the detriment of biodiversity"**

rough meadow, plants are allowed to seed themselves and the gardeners are happy for trees to do the same. "Like most local horse chestnuts, the trees along the edge of the college have leaf miner and a wet rot, so will need to be removed at some point. They will be replaced by beech, hornbeam, hawthorn, holly and lime, which have all self-seeded thanks to the birds," says Cobb. "I'm delighted about this, as growing trees undisturbed on their own roots is the gold standard in forestry."

Trees also form a major plank of efforts to boost biodiversity at Jesus, where Head Gardener Paul Stearn and his team have turned the tree belt along Jesus ditch into a nature trail. "We embarked on a 10-year programme in the early 1990s, and that started by opening up the Close – the nature trail in the woodland area," he explains. "It's always just been a tree belt, but we thought by making a path through it we could open it up, start identifying what's there, protect what needs protecting and introduce things like bird boxes, bat boxes, and wood piles for newts, which we have a lot of."

As well as planting plenty of native tree and hedgerow species, by changing the way they manage the ditch each winter, the gardeners at Jesus have given a helping hand to one protected but declining species. "We leave some cover on the bank to give moorhens a place to nest and get under the bank. In the process, without realising, we've provided a safe haven for water voles. Not cutting all the brambles along the bank seems to have encouraged them," Stearn says.

In 2003, the college entered – and won – a Cambridge City Council biodiversity competition. The prize

included an ecological survey of college grounds, something Stearn would love to repeat. "It was a really good thing for us, having an ecologist come in and report on what was here," he says. "One of the things they identified – and which we have tons of – is garlic mustard, which is really important for particular butterflies and moths. The survey helped highlight some of the things we take for granted and made us more aware of why they're important so that we can encourage them."

Like Murray Edwards and Jesus, Downing has begun to walk on the wild side, installing bird and bat boxes, turning some of its formal lawn into meadow and planting a herb garden near its pinetum. As well as providing pickings for college chefs, the herbs in flower are a handy snack for the college's newest residents – honeybees.

The bees were brought to the college by Assistant Bursar turned bee keeper Rob Beardwell. "We asked the college authorities if we could keep some hives here, for which we offered to pay the traditional rent of 1lb of honey per hive, although the chef is keen to get his hands on substantially more," he says.

Not keen on honey himself, Beardwell says bees bring other benefits: "It's an interesting way of engaging with the world. You become more aware of what's in flower, and what the weather's like, how the seasons are changing," he explains. "Colleges are very cyclical places, they have their own seasons and especially with my job, which is primarily around IT, it's easy to forget what's going on outside."

Junior Bursar Dick Taplin believes keeping bees at Downing also says something important about the college. "It's a message that we're operating in



Above top and bottom: Bee borders at the Botanic Garden  
Above middle: Great spotted woodpecker at Jesus  
Below left: Peter Kirkham and Jo Cobb in the Murray Edwards garden

HOWARD RICE

an environmentally friendly manner, it advertises the qualities we believe in," he says. "We have a lot of open space here and it shouldn't just be beautifully manicured lawns to the detriment of biodiversity."

As bees feed up to one and a half miles away from their hives, Downing's bees are likely to forage in the Botanic Garden, whose bee beds were designed to feed butterflies and bees across the flowering season. According to Professor Beverley Glover, Director of the Botanic Garden: "One of the issues for bees in the eastern region is that it's great when the oil seed rape is in flower, but then there's this massive drop in resource availability."

Because bees see less well at the red end of the spectrum, blues and yellows dominate the planting, with variety in height as well as flowering time. "If you visit the beds regularly you'll see there's a succession of plants providing resource, including both nectar flowers and pollen flowers," she says.

At the other end of the site, plans are under way to renovate the Station Road boundary before building work begins. Planting will draw on long-term studies in the Botanic Garden by Dr Nancy Harrison at Anglia Ruskin University, who found that blue tits and great tits breed most successfully in areas dominated by those trees and shrubs that support the most invertebrates.

By including species such as birch, hazel and cherry with fastigiate oak and lime, the boundary should boost bird life in the Botanic Garden, says its curator and deputy director Dr Tim Upson: "The planting is intended to be an exemplar of how to plant for wildlife in an urban situation, and show that careful selection of native species and exotic trees can be used to benefit invertebrates and the birds that feed on them."

And as urban gardens become increasingly important habitats, the crucial thing is evaluating what works, and doing what works best, says Bill Sutherland, Miriam Rothschild Professor of Conservation Biology: "It's increasingly clear that there are a lot of species for which gardens are very important habitats. We have looked at various ways of managing birds, bees, amphibians and bats, and it's clear that we're not using the best available evidence to decide what to do. I am sure we could be more efficient. The trick is to apply Cambridge's cutting-edge evidence-based conservation science to benefit Cambridge's traditional stunning landscapes."



CHRIS LOADES

CHRIS LOADES

As hundreds of staff and students prepare to entertain and engage audiences across Cambridge in this year's Festival of Ideas, we discover how – and why – the University finds creative and meaningful ways to reach out

# The engaged university



CAMBRIDGE INITIATIVE

WHETHER YOU'RE INTO activism, blogging, podcasting or comedy, if you're keen to communicate your work in discussion with public audiences, there are more ways than ever to engage and inspire. The University's annual Science Festival and Festival of Ideas provide over a thousand staff and students each year with a platform for sharing a passion for knowledge. And while performers are welcome, public engagement needs collaborators and lifelong learners too.

According to Nicola Buckley, the University's Head of Public Engagement: "Public engagement describes ways in which the work of higher education can be shared, 'sharing' being the operative word. Public engagement is not just about the people beyond universities listening – it's about getting people involved in the conversation."

Over the past decade, this emphasis on two-way communication has changed the nature of public engagement itself. What practitioners referred to in the past as PUS (public understanding of science) has given way to the equally ungainly PEST (public engagement with science and technology).

Adopted beyond the confines of university science, the model of engagement increasingly stresses the involvement, opinions and contributions of people outside higher education itself.

Public engagement also shares some of the features of knowledge exchange, where specific organisations, as well as individuals, are engaged for mutual learning and exchanging expertise. With

research funders actively encouraging these activities, the supporting context for external engagement is developing all the time.

With a diversity of public engagement activity at Cambridge, it's unsurprising that researchers' motives are diverse too. "Researchers may talk about making the world a better place, enhancing their careers, or inspiring learning among others. Some want to increase the quality and impact of their work; others are concerned with being ethical, accountable and transparent – thereby winning support for research and the work of higher education," says Buckley.

All those active in this area are contributing to the growth of a public engagement community that already involves staff and students, as well as educational, business and other organisations. Everyone can play an important role in making public engagement happen; indeed, it is a community that benefits from the organisational and communications skills of all its members, and a shared commitment to the value of what they are doing.

"In a sense, this marks the development of something that has been around for generations," says Buckley. "The University has outstanding assets for public engagement – including the University museums, collections and the Botanic Garden. It has a long history of continuing education and publishing, as well as college and student-led activity, and recent developments like online film

and audio for channels like YouTube and iTunesU."

Technology has been a major enabler for public engagement, and whether through online and social media, or at live events, most communications activities now include opportunities for feedback and debate, generating possibilities for mutual learning for everyone involved.

### Inspiring

David Spiegelhalter, the Winton Professor for the Public Understanding of Risk, is involved in a range of activities designed to inspire interest and engagement with everyday problems of uncertainty. Casting his work as 'public understanding of science', he says: "We try to take a view of the subject that extends beyond the application of probability and statistics, acknowledging that there are deeper uncertainties that cannot easily be put into a formal framework."

Spiegelhalter has developed a unique set of public communications activities that complement his research, from mass participation experiments and newspaper columns to TV appearances, social media and outreach activity with schools. He has even been spotted trying to negotiate the wobbly big red balls on BBC One's *Winter Wipeout*. Combining world-class research,

**"Everyone can play an important role in making public engagement happen – it is a community that benefits from the skills of all its members"**



public service and media work is not an approach everyone can emulate without slipping up – and his contribution is all the more notable for that.

Dr Peter Wothers, who gave the Royal Institution Christmas lectures in 2012, and Professor Mary Beard, whose latest documentary for BBC Two tackled Caligula, are also experts in the art of communicating their subject to diverse audiences.

### Consulting

Perhaps less obvious is the range of public consultation work taking place at Cambridge, but consultation processes are going on all the time in research fields, often in tandem with wider policy exercises.

Professor Bill Sutherland has pioneered a method for consulting widely among academics, policy-makers, and external organisation representatives to identify key questions for research in conservation, science policy and poverty alleviation.

Dr Robert Doubleday, Director of the University's Centre for Science and Policy, has reviewed public consultations on issues from geo-engineering and synthetic biology to nanotechnology and stem cell research. Common

themes showed that research is often conditionally welcomed, as is the participation of business. People also want to see wider society involved in setting public research agendas, and research focused on clear social needs. In these consultations, people tended to prefer step-by-step changes to tackle societal challenges, and to be sceptical about the value of high-tech solutions to complex social and environmental problems. Consultees also stressed regulation of emerging technologies as well as their use in research and innovation.

The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, which commissioned the study, used it to inform resources for researchers to carry out public dialogues. Dr Beatrix Schlarb-Ridley and Dr Nino Nikolovski then organised a bio-energy public dialogue regarding future scenarios in June 2013, with feedback gathered.

"While researchers are encouraged to become involved in 'outreach', consultation and dialogue work shows how any university also needs to respond to the demand for 'in-reach' from the public, private and third sectors," says Buckley. "This is something which requires care, focus and attention – but there are opportunities in doing so for research, teaching and knowledge exchange."

### Collaborating

Indeed, more opportunities are opening up for collaborative research. In conservation, heritage, languages and beyond, researchers are collaborating with partners in the public, private and third sectors.

One Cambridge academic who is doing this is archaeologist Dr Carenza Lewis, who over the past 18 months has led a publicly funded scheme matching archaeological and historical researchers with community groups. Through the scheme, Cambridge Community

Heritage, ten researchers have supported 27 groups in East Anglia who have received grants in excess of £200,000 to investigate, preserve and share a wide range of heritage projects.

Thanks to the scheme, several villages have carried out community digs with researchers, contributing data to University research into medieval settlements as well as enhancing community life. "I have lived in this village since 1972 and have never seen the village come together so united in one common pursuit," one participant on a recent dig reported.

Another well developed collaborative initiative with knowledge exchange and public engagement aspects is the Cambridge Conservation Initiative, involving the University in partnership with research-based conservation organisations.

An engaged university needs to draw on the talents and commitment of students as well as staff and researchers. There are strong traditions of student volunteering in Cambridge and further afield. Students have also been exploring other forms of social action, including social enterprise, collaborative learning with external organisations as part of the curriculum, and a range of vacation opportunities including supported internship programmes. Organisations such as Student Community Action, the Student Hub and the Humanitarian Centre work to facilitate opportunities for students to learn in tandem with external organisations as part of their experience at University.

Being one of the great centres for learning in the world gives the University and its members opportunities to originate and participate in enriching and rewarding public engagement and knowledge exchange activities. These can generate financial and public support for the University, and help its members to disseminate knowledge and form new partnerships.

For the University to fulfil the potential of the knowledge contributions it can make to society locally, nationally and internationally requires a range of enabling public engagement activities. Buckley is optimistic about the future: "Reviewing some of the good practice already developed and looking ahead it's encouraging to consider the great opportunities – alongside the challenges – in increasingly embedding public engagement practices with the pursuit of excellence in research and teaching."



### FIND OUT MORE

[www.cam.ac.uk/  
public-engagement](http://www.cam.ac.uk/public-engagement)



## Leadership team for Development and Alumni Relations

A NEW SENIOR leadership team is now in place to take the University's philanthropic agenda to its next and most ambitious phase. Led by **Alison Traub**, who joined in June from the University of Virginia, the office – retitled University of Cambridge Development and Alumni Relations – has made five other major appointments.

The new Head of Alumni and Supporter Relations is **Holly Peterson**. Responsible for delivering Cambridge's global engagement strategy for alumni and key supporters, she was previously Assistant Director of External Relations at the University of Exeter.

**Morven Knowles** becomes Head of Alumni and Development Communications, and will deliver the strategic internal and external

communications that underpin the University's alumni engagement and philanthropic objectives. Previously Alumni Relations Communications & Marketing Manager in the Alumni Relations Office, in 2009 she led the award-winning redesign of the University's alumni magazine *CAM*.

Joining as Head of Major Gifts, Schools-Based, is **Chris Chaney**. He will be responsible for the design, support and delivery of a major gifts programme to support specific Schools, Faculties and Departments across the University. He joins Cambridge from Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity, where he was Deputy Director of Major Gift Fundraising.

As Head of Major Gift Partnerships, **Clare Birch** will lead the team

responsible for attracting major gifts and co-ordinating fundraising activity from corporates, foundations and trusts, and internationally based donors. Most recently Associate Director, International Fundraising at Cambridge, she has been a senior major gift fundraiser at the University since 2004 and has extensive experience, particularly in international fundraising.

Completing the team is **Sarah Baker**, Head of Prospect Information and Analysis. Previously Director of Prospect Development at the University of California at Berkeley, she has more than ten years' experience in development research and analytics in both the UK and US. The Prospect Information and Analysis team will lead research,

**“The team will take the University's philanthropic agenda to its most ambitious stage yet”**

**Alison Traub**

analytics and prospect information providing key support to the fundraising functions.

Alison Traub said: “I'm delighted to see the leadership team for the Development and Alumni Relations office coming together. Between them they represent a great range of expertise with the skills to make a real impact and will be a substantial asset in achieving our ambitious agenda for the future.”



### New Director of Communications

Paul Mylrea has joined the University as its new Director of Communications. He has worked at a senior level in government, public sector bodies and the not-for-profit sector. Most recently he was Director of Public Affairs at the BBC. He began his career as a journalist, working as a Reuters correspondent for more than 20 years, before becoming Head of Media at Oxfam GB. He then moved to be Director of Group Media Relations for Transport for London. In 2007 he became Communications Director at the Department for International Development, before joining the BBC as Head of Press and Media Relations. He became Director of Communications at the BBC in 2011.



### North West Cambridge Deputy Project Director

Heather Topel has been appointed Deputy Project Director at the North West Cambridge Development. She joins the University from AECOM, a global provider of professional technical and management support services, where she played a valued role in advising the University on the development. Heather will lead on planning, consultation and general management of the project for the University, working closely with the local authorities. Roger Taylor, Project Director of North West Cambridge, said: “Heather's intimate knowledge of the development and its ambitions, alongside her expertise in town planning, will stand the University in great stead as we look to create an urban extension befitting the city of Cambridge.”



### Head of Counselling Service for students

Géraldine Dufour is the new Head of the University Counselling Service for students, joining from Birmingham City University. As a member of the executive of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy University and College Division, and the Chair of the Executive Committee of Heads of University Counselling Services, she has a deep understanding of the issues affecting student mental health. She has been a clinician for 16 years, working with students, sexual assault survivors and young adults and as an addiction counsellor. She said: “I am especially interested in the welfare of international students, the extra pressure they face and the impact this can have on their mental health.”

## IN BRIEF

### → Professor Ron Martin

(Department of Geography) has been appointed a member of the Government's Chief Scientific Officer's Foresight Project on the Future of Cities. Launched earlier this year, the two-year project will imagine what Britain's cities will look like over the next 25-50 years, the challenges they are likely to face, and the policies needed to ensure they are prosperous, sustainable and liveable spaces.

→ **Professor Andrea Brand** of the Gurdon Institute has joined the board of Cambridge Science Centre, which opened on Jesus Lane earlier this year. Her appointment will help enhance the centre's outreach and boost collaboration with the University. “Providing a public environment for scientific exploration can really inspire young people,” she said.

“Cambridge is an amazing environment in which to develop world-class public engagement programmes and the Cambridge Science Centre has pulled together a really talented team. I'm looking forward to contributing to the development of this great initiative.”

# ADVERTISEMENTS

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## HOUSES TO RENT

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### → Nice, France

Quiet apartment near the Promenade des Anglais and city centre. It is in the 'Musicians' area' on the fourth floor, accessed by lift. Sleeps two, with living room, bedroom with double bed, separate, fully equipped kitchen, modern bathroom, separate w/c, small balconies front and back. Price per week, including linen, £350 October to March, £400 April, May, September, £450 June to August. Contact Robin Spence on [rjs2@cam.ac.uk](mailto:rjs2@cam.ac.uk) or 07808932943.

### → Winter holiday escape

Noosa, Queensland, Australia. Waterfront, two-bedroom holiday apartment from Aust. \$720 (approx. £430 sterling) per week. Minimum stays/seasonal rates apply. Email [brianjohnson828@btinternet.com](mailto:brianjohnson828@btinternet.com) or [andysdawson@hotmail.com](mailto:andysdawson@hotmail.com).

## SERVICES

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# PRIZES, AWARDS AND HONOURS

## Awards

→ **Professor David Abulafia** of the Faculty of History has been awarded one of the first British Academy Medals. Up to three medals will be awarded annually for landmark achievements in the humanities and social sciences. The award is for Abulafia's book *The Great Sea: a Human History of the Mediterranean*.

→ **Dr Joy Archer** of the Department of Veterinary Medicine has been awarded an Honorary Fellowship of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.

→ **Professor Wendy Bennett** (Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics) has been awarded the Georges Dumézil prize by the French Academy for her book *Remarques et observations sur la langue française: histoire et évolution d'un genre*. Written with her research associate Magali Seijido and published in 2011, the book was part of an AHRC-funded project on the contribution of French remarqueurs, authors of volumes of observations on the use of the French language.

→ **Professor Sir Partha Dasgupta** (Faculty of Economics) has been awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Law by Harvard University.

→ **Professor Nick Davies** of the Department of Zoology, who has studied cuckoos on Wicken Fen since 1985, has had one of the birds named after him by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO). 'Nick' is one of 18 cuckoos fitted with satellite trackers to allow the BTO to monitor their journeys back to Africa for the winter. The birds' progress can be followed at [www.bto.org/cuckoos](http://www.bto.org/cuckoos).

→ **Professor Chris Dobson** of the Department of Chemistry and Master of St John's has been elected a Foreign Associate of the US National Academy of Sciences. Members are elected to the NAS – which this year celebrated its 150th anniversary – in recognition of their distinguished and continuing achievements in original research. There are currently 400 Foreign Associates, with a maximum of 21 elected each year.

→ This year's Classic Paper Prize at the International Conference on Machine Learning has been won by **Professor Zoubin Ghahramani** (Department of Engineering) and his co-authors. The prize is given to the paper published at ICML 10 years previously that has had the most impact on the field. The paper, which has gone on to be cited more than 1,400 times, was first rejected by another major conference. According

to Ghahramani: "Perhaps a moral to this story for young researchers is not to take rejection to heart."

→ **Professor Simon Goldhill** (Faculty of Classics) has won the 2013 Runciman Award for the best book in English on a subject related to Greece for his book *Sophocles and the Language of Tragedy*.

→ **Professor Jean-Pierre Hansen** (Department of Chemistry) has won the Berni J. Alider CECAM prize, which recognises exceptional contributions to the field of microscopic simulation of matter.

→ Cambridge software firm RealVNC has won this year's MacRobert Award for engineering innovation. **Dr Andy Harter** (Computer Laboratory) received the £50,000 award from the Princess Royal at a ceremony in London in July. Set up in 2002 by Harter and others at the University of Cambridge, RealVNC software is now used on more than a billion devices worldwide.

→ Department of Engineering PhD student **Matthew Henderson** has been selected as a 2013 Global Google PhD Fellow. The fellowships, 39 of which were given this year, recognise the world's most promising young academics. Henderson's work focuses on computer systems you can converse with.

→ The American Psychological Association has announced that **Professor Michael Lamb** (Department of Psychology) is the winner of the 2014 Stanley Hall Award for Distinguished Contribution to Developmental Psychology.

→ **Tony Lemons** (Physical Education Department) has been awarded an MBE for Services to University Sport. Over the past 30 years, he has transformed the position of sport within the University and local community, developing extensive partnerships and delivering new opportunities for sport, exercise and health-related fitness across the region. He also led work on the new £50m Sports Centre, which opens this year. According to Lemons: "I am absolutely thrilled to receive this honour and particularly at this time when we are about to open our wonderful new facilities in West Cambridge. All projects are a team effort and I have had the privilege of working with many talented and dedicated people over the years especially here in Cambridge both in the University and the city. This award reflects their achievement as much as my own."

→ **Professor Stephen O'Rahilly** of the Clinical School was appointed a



Wendy Bennett



Bill Sutherland



Joy Archer



Michael Ramage

Knight Bachelor in the Queen's Birthday Honours this year for his services to medical research. His work focuses on the aetiology and pathophysiology of human metabolic and endocrine disease and how such information might be used to improve diagnosis, prognostication, therapy and prevention. Reacting to the news he said: "This is a great honour and one which reflects the work of all my colleagues at Addenbrooke's and the University in establishing Cambridge as a world-leading centre of research and clinical care into metabolic disease."

→ **Michael Ramage** (Department of Architecture) is one of the three architects behind South Africa's Mapungubwe National Park Interpretation Centre, which has been shortlisted for the \$1 million Aga Kahn Award for Architecture. Using novel design and construction techniques to allow local materials and labour to be used in production, the project is developed for labour-intensive construction to enable poverty relief and skills transfer into the surrounding area.

→ The Royal Society has honoured three University academics for their groundbreaking research that will help to forward the future of science. **Professor Henning Siringhaus** (Department of Physics) won the Hughes Medal for his pioneering work developing and improving inkjet printing processes for organic semiconductor devices. Past winners of the Hughes Medal, awarded biennially for original discoveries relating to the generation, storage and use of energy, include Alexander Graham Bell and Stephen Hawking. **Professor Lynn Gladden** (Department of Chemical Engineering) has been awarded the Bakerian Lecture for her development of magnetic resonance techniques to study multi-component adsorption, diffusion, flow and reaction processes, and **Dr Duncan Odom** (Cancer Research UK Cambridge Institute) has been awarded the Francis Crick Lecture in recognition of his pioneering work in comparative functional genomics, which has changed our understanding of the evolution of mammalian transcriptional regulation.

→ **Professor Kenichi Soga** of the Department of Engineering has been elected a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering.

→ **Professor Bill Sutherland** (Department of Zoology) is the new president of the British Ecological Society. The BES, which celebrated its centenary in 2013, is the oldest ecological society in the world.

→ **Eben Upton**, co-founder of the Raspberry Pi, has been awarded a Silver Medal from the Royal Academy of Engineering. Set up in 2009, the Raspberry Pi Foundation last year launched the Raspberry Pi – a low-cost, single-board computer – to promote the study of basic computer science in schools.

→ Professor Eilís Ferran (Faculty of Law), Professor Usha Goswami (Department of Psychology), Professor Richard Hunter (Faculty of Classics), Professor John Kerrigan (Faculty of English), Professor Christopher Page (Faculty of English), Professor Hamid Sabourian (Faculty of Economics), and Professor Roel Sterckx and Professor Hans van de Ven (both of the Faculty of Asian & Middle Eastern Studies) have been elected **Fellows of the British Academy**. Welcoming the new fellows, Lord Stern, President of the British Academy, said: “The humanities and social sciences celebrate the study of what it means to be human and how we relate to the world around us. They can also help us tackle many of the challenges faced in this country and the world as a whole.”

## 2013 Pilkington Prizes for teaching excellence

Thirteen academic staff received Pilkington Prizes this year at an event hosted by Murray Edwards College. The annual prizes, which honour excellence in teaching across the collegiate University, went to Dr Jennifer Bavidge (Institute of Continuing Education), Dr Abigail Brundin (Department of Italian), Dr Christine Farr (Department of Genetics), Dr Dick Fenner and Dr Andrew Flewitt (Department of Engineering), Dr Richard Hickman (Faculty of Education), Dr Christopher Lester (Department of Physics), Dr Lesley MacVinish (Department of Pharmacology), Dr Sanjay Ojha and Dr Jessica White (Clinical School), Dr William O'Reilly (Faculty of History), Professor David Tong (Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics) and Dr Benjamin Walton (Faculty of Music).

Now in their 20th year, the prizes were initiated by Sir Alastair Pilkington, the first Chairman of the Cambridge Foundation, who believed passionately that the quality of teaching was fundamental to the



Teaching talent: this year's Pilkington Prize winners with the Vice-Chancellor and High Steward

success of the University of Cambridge.

According to one student – but typifying the difference great teachers make to Cambridge students: “He is the only lecturer I’ve come across who had more people attending in week eight than week one, because word had spread that his lectures were just wonderful.”

Do you have an award that you would like publicising in the Newsletter? Email details to [newsletter@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:newsletter@admin.cam.ac.uk)

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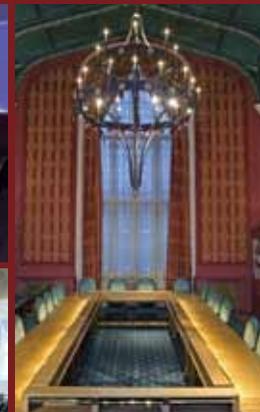




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