Disability Action Group: Access on Campus

Anna Barnes, VP (Welfare) Students’ Union, writes about the difficulties of access for disabled students and a Day of Action on 23 February to campaign for better facilities.

Access around campus is not what it should be, due to the steep gradients of some of the slopes, architects’ designs using steps rather than ramps, and the lack of covered walkways. The recently disbanded Kulukundis Group, a registered charity particularly concerned with disabled students at Sussex, had achieved some alterations to the buildings, the most recent being the canopy over the accessible entrance to the library. Yet there are many more alterations which are necessary if disabled students are to have comparable facilities with those who are able-bodied. Estates and Maintenance have a Buildings Alterations Fund which is specifically for works to improve access. They have recently agreed to allow the Action Group to formulate a long-term (3–5 years) plan, and will help with costings as long as the Group informs them of necessary action and priorities.

The largest problem is the English Heritage listed building status given to certain campus buildings: this means that they cannot be adapted to improve accessibility. Implications of this include plans for a ramp to the Computer Centre being refused, thus rendering the Centre useless for students with mobility difficulties. Similarly, the Disability Action Group has been trying to get a lift in Falmer House, to enable all students to get to gigs, poster sales, the second-hand bookshop, student employment office, clubs and societies, the welfare unit, career development unit ... facilities which some students are otherwise unable to use.

The Group is organising a Day of Action on Wednesday 23 February (Week 8). This involves encouraging people to write to English Heritage questioning their listings policy in such an environment, developing a campaign document explaining the Group’s aims and objectives, and generally raising awareness and support for the campaign.

If you are interested in getting involved with any aspect of the campaign, have problems with access to campus buildings, or simply want to know more, contact Anna Barnes in the Students’ Union Welfare Centre, Falmer House, or any of the following via their School pigeonholes: Karen Saunders CCS ug, Jo Miller CCS ug, Charlie Budd SPRU pg, Chad Futrell EURO ug, Ollie Patten AFRAS ug, Mark O’Donnell MOLS ug, or Chris Lister MAPS ug.

PUBLIC LECTURE

Richard Vincent’s lecture will examine the reality behind our conception of the doctor’s role. Many people have an ideal picture of how an illness is cured: the appearance of symptoms prompts a visit to the doctor, who reaches an early and accurate diagnosis. The doctor then provides both counselling and a prescription, which effects a rapid cure without side effects. Real life, however, is sometimes far from ideal. Patients are often reluctant to seek help, doctors can make mistakes in diagnosis, and treatments may have unpleasant side effects. Progress towards the ideal requires a broader understanding of the body’s control mechanisms and its response to chemical, biological, psychological and socio-economic challenges. To this end, more education and research funding are essential.

Richard Vincent
Director of the Trafford Centre and Professor of Medical Science

Professorial Lecture

WHY DOCTORS CAN’T CURE DISEASES

Thursday 17 February at 6.30 pm

Molecular Sciences Lecture Theatre

- All welcome -
Purchase of Laser Pointers — A Warning

Lecturers may be tempted to purchase laser pointers instead of using heavy sticks or poles!

Following a warning from Malcolm Strong, MAPS Laboratory Manager, it has been found that 15mW class 3B lasers are being sold as light spot pointers for lecture theatres. These 3B lasers can cause irreversible eye damage if someone looks directly at the beam. Eye damage may also occur from looking at the reflected beam.

Lecturers are therefore advised to make absolutely certain that they purchase only class 2 or class 4A laser pointers. The blink reaction of the eye gives protection in the case of these lasers.

The University Local Rules for Work with Lasers require that no laser class 3B or class 4 may be brought onto the University campus or purchased without the written approval of the University Safety and Radiation Protection Adviser.

Stuck in the Mud?

Drivers parking on grass verges do so at their own risk. No assistance will be provided by the University should a vehicle require recovery, beyond the provision of the number of a recovery firm. Costs involved are likely to be in the region of £30.

News

What the papers say ...

You may be forgiven for thinking that the increasing absence of E additives on food labels suggests a more health-conscious approach by manufacturers. Not so, according to Dr Erik Millstone (SPRU), for Es actually remain but are now listed under their proper chemical name and so easily overlooked (Healthy Eating, February). Dr Millstone, a member of the Food Additives Campaign Team, believes the intention is to mislead: “E numbers have a bad press so they (manufacturers) change them to the chemical name so people will look at it and say ‘Oh it hasn’t got any E numbers in it.’” He further adds the evidence is that the affluent are probably eating less additives and the poor eating more.

The extent to which the University community, at its best, cares for its members was highlighted most movingly in an article published in last week’s Independent. Judith Davies is the mother of Christian, a postgraduate law student who died of natural causes in 1992 only three weeks into his CPE course. The substance of her article, “Different Degrees of Sympathy” is a testimony to the emotional and practical support provided by the staff and students of the University. “It was impossible to fault Sussex University,” she writes, “for generosity, compassion and sensitivity to our needs.” The University’s response to the parents’ tragedy ensured that their distress was not compounded by a range of practical problems, even down to the bookshop taking back Christian’s expensive textbooks and repaying their costs, and the accommodation office taking over his rental agreement for a telephone. The support and help given by the Director of the CPE was noted with particular gratitude, “Sussex,” Judith Davies concludes, “was deeply concerned with individuals and their needs, whether they were students or their parents. There was a recognition that a university was not only a seat of learning but also a community that was able to reach out with love. Perhaps the criteria by which universities are judged should include their handling of what has been for us, and surely for all families similarly afflicted, utter catastrophe.”

CALLING ALL WRITERS

A new magazine will shortly be launched in Brighton, focusing mainly on the region’s political and social issues. All published copy will be paid for, and the editor will also commission special reports and features. Anyone (faculty, staff or students) interested in becoming involved is invited to contact David Burke, 0273 727133.

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED BECOMING A RESIDENTIAL ADVISER IN 1994/95?

Residential Advisers (RAs) are second and third year undergraduates (plus some postgraduates) from both home and overseas who live in University-managed residences, both on and off campus. They are available to advise new students starting their first year at Sussex. They are advisers not prefects, still less any sort of warden — and there are benefits:

- Guaranteed University-managed housing, either on or off campus, for the full academic year.
- RA rebate, for a job well done, paid termly in arrears.
- Non-academic reference which could be used for employment applications.

A lot of people feel a bit lost at first but don’t worry, you’ll soon find like-minded people

RAs are involved in assisting about 20 new students at the beginning of the Autumn Term with practical help and information to enable them to settle into University life. For many new students this may be the first time they have lived away from home or for international students the first time they have visited this country. RAs act in an advisory capacity and provide liaison between residents and the support areas of campus.

If you are interested in becoming an RA from October 1994, fill in an application form available from York House Reception from 21 February to 7 March. Interviews take place on 12, 13 and 14 April in the Easter Vacation and 19, 20 and 21 April in week 1 of the Summer Term.

Those selected (there are about 110 RAs in total) attend a series of training sessions in the Summer Term, and small group meetings are held during the year.

Applicants are expected to discuss the scheme with current RAs before they complete the form, as references will be followed up before interview. Further information is also available from Ann Eyles, RA Co-ordinator, Residential Reception, York House.
BOOK AVAILABILITY IN THE LIBRARY

During the next two weeks, the Library will be carrying out an extensive survey aimed at measuring its success (or otherwise) at making books available in sufficient numbers and at the right time. Neil Jacobs, Research Assistant to the Book Availability Monitoring Project and Cynthia Barnes, Head of the Library's Teaching Support Area (seen here making a final check of the survey questionnaire) appeal for your help:

"Although the level of business in the Library, and particularly the ever-increasing number of loans (more than 11% up on last year) indicate that many people are getting hold of the books they need, there is a widespread feeling that it's getting harder to find some types of book. We want to measure this accurately and so, during the course of the next two weeks, you may be handed a survey sheet as you come into the Library. On this you'll be invited to note down any book which you looked for and failed to find during the course of that Library visit. Although we suspect that the majority of problems with book availability centre around books on reading lists, we'd really like to know about any failure to get hold of a sought book which Library users experience.

"Obviously it's important - in order to get enough data to rely on - that as many people as possible who are given a survey sheet do actually fill it in and return it to us. So, we ask for your help - if you are given a sheet (and during the two weeks you may get more than one!), please spend a few minutes filling it in, and drop it into the box at the exit as you leave. Your answers to our questions will help the Library to improve on how it provides books for all its users."

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LOW PROFILE

Name: EAM
Age: Thirty something
Appearance: Sixties something
Profession: Budget Centre
What about teaching and research? Ask the HEFCE.
What's the HEFCE? Better ask the HEQC Sounds complicated. Where do I find out? Try CCS or EAM.
But are they not very busy? Yes, with TaLaG and GRCs.
By the way, where are the STUDENTS? Waiting on tables in Brighton's restaurants.
Surely, there must be a School plan? Certainly. It is submitted in the summer when colleagues are not available for consultation.
Sounds tough on the Dean? You bet.
Why is the School in the news? An identity crisis.
What else is new? Semesterisation.
I thought that had been rejected? So was the market economy after World War II.
Favourite word: No.
Not to be confused with: A Faculty; a shoal of fish; Summer School (at least until 1996).
Most likely to say: Where is my own budget?
Least likely to say: No sweat, cobber - we have lots of space.

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Catering news

Licensing

Phil Gassman, Licensee for the University, writes:

Recently, I have received a number of Licence applications for bar extensions which, as Licensee, I have had to turn down before the applications reach the Courts. Because licensing is a vast maze of regulations, I thought it would be useful to clarify the application process.

Applications should be made at least six weeks in advance of the required extension date. Details must include:
- Location and date
- Numbers expected
- Reason for the event
- Ticket/security precautions where relevant
- Details of the evening's proceedings
- Organisers responsible
- Time of extension required

Any applications made within the six week period, will entail a personal appearance from the licensee, for which there will be an appropriate and considerable charge. An appearance cannot be guaranteed, due to other work priorities.

Generally, the Brighton Courts are strict in their acceptance of applications, which may only be permitted if:
- the occasion is 'special' in a local or national sense.
- the occasion has not been created solely for the purpose of the licensee's business
- applications by the licensee are not too frequent
- the event is to be held on the actual date of the special occasion (i.e. Valentine's Day)
- the applications are fully in accordance with all other legal obligations, such as Public Entertainments and Health and Safety Legislation.

Licensees must not 'try out' the system by making applications that do not fulfill these criteria. Therefore, as the University Licensee, I may refuse to make applications if my experience indicates failure is probable.
Monday 14 February – Sunday 20 February

Lectures, Seminars, Colloquia

■ Monday 14 February


■ Tuesday 15 February


■ Wednesday 16 February


Miscellaneous


Elameno Party at St Barnabas Hall, Hove, 19 Feb, 7pm. All welcome. £5.50 incl. food, bring own drink. Entrance by ticket only, available from Jane on ext. 3602.

Bahi’Society invites all to discussion on Unity and Cultural Diversity, Wed 16 Feb, 6pm Meeting House. Details from Evren on 694146.

Sussex University Women’s Group welcomes newcomers. Rambling on Tues (contact 812335). Gardening (contact 515475).

Sussex Trugs jazz group live at the Sports Pavilion, every Friday

Small Ads

FOR SALE: 1 bed SIC garden flat. Fiveeways/Blaker's Park area. 7 mins London Road BR. £35,000. Contact Sue Pasque on ext. 8527.

HOUSE TO LET: 3 bed house in B'ton. Modern bathroom, lge fitted kitchen, garden. Available from April. £520pcm. Contact ext. 8054.

ROOM TO LET: Patcham area. £40pw incl. bills. Contact C. Buckingham (OOG) or ph.

FOR SALE: Mini, long MOT, good runner. £200ono. Contact Frances on ext. 2583 or 478549 (eves).


WANTED: Lge rolls blank paper and fish tank for the Créche. Contact Janet on ext. 8356.

WANTED: 1 girl ugs for psych. exp. £3 for 1 hour. Contact Ash on 2812 or leave message on 8058.

WANTED: Free rehearsal venue in B'ton/Hove for local amateur dance group. Contact Jane on ext. 3602.

FOR SALE: Apricot IBM compatible PC with various software. £350. Also, Windsurfer SADIM for sale and 2 lge rooms to let £25pw each. Contact Maria on 625627.

Staff Development Workshops

Mon 28 Feb — Telling Stories: Transition, Self-Narratives and the Struggle for Meaning Among Adults in HE. 12.30-2pm. Arts D310. All who teach at Sussex are welcome. Further details from Alison Voyle, CCE on ext. 3585.

CDU Workshop Programme

Assessment Centres (Tasks etc. typical of those encountered at the real thing) — 22 Feb, 10am-4pm Design Your CV — 24 Feb, 10-12am Mock Interviews — 24 Feb, 1-4pm Opportunities in Environment and Conservation — 25 Feb, 10am-12pm All in Falmer House. Must be booked in advance (£5 returnable deposit). Details from CDU on ext. 8429.

Bulletin

The Bulletin appears on Fridays with copy deadline the preceding Friday. We welcome suggestions for news, details of events, letters and small ads. Please send contributions to Pauline O'Reilly (editor), Mike Brooks (features) or Terry O'Donnell (What's On) at the Information Office, Sussex House, ext. 8209 or Email: Bulletin@sussex.ac.uk.