Sussex influences new housing policy

National Housing Week was launched last week with the publication of a report written by Mike Barrow and Ray Bachan of the University’s Centre for Urban and Regional Research. The report, entitled *The Costs of Neglect*, was floated at a half-day conference hosted by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors in London.

The event caught the interest of the national media and Peter Ambrose, head of the Centre, discussed the issues raised by the report on BBC lunchtime and evening news. Poor quality housing, he said, is costing millions in health care, law and order and education.

The researchers found that on two poor estates in Stepney, east London, the annual cost of dealing with crime is £325 per household, and ill health is costing at least £500 per household each year. Considering that there are 375,000 unfit homes in the public sector in England, the potential cost of poor housing could be over £300 million.

In her first major speech Tessa Jowell, the new Minister of State for Public Health, cited poor housing as one of the root causes of poor health. It is almost unprecedented for a Health Minister to argue in support of housing improvements, but Tessa Jowell had reportedly been influenced by reports produced by the University’s Centre for Urban and Regional Research.

Peter Ambrose is pleased with the influence that the Centre is exerting. “It seems clear that work being done in the Centre is having considerable policy effects,” he says. “We are also taking steps to get the major lenders into social housing more overtly involved in the quality argument – discussions along these lines have been opened with the Halifax.”

Not-so-easy riders

This year’s South Downs Way Randonee proved less than enjoyable for two members of the University’s Mountain Bike Club. The ride was organised by the Brighton and Hove Cycling Opportunities Group and involved 130 people in a gruelling 110 mile trek from Winchester to Eastbourne. Nick Herbert (pictured above, mending a puncture) finished second in the event last year, but this year his bike’s frame fractured after 57 miles. Gary Jones ran into a Force 5 headwind at Ditchling Beacon which, along with the scorching sun, ‘sapped all his energy’.

Six members of the Mountain Bike Club were also recently involved in a charity ride, raising £105 for orphanages in the UK and China. *Two Wheels For One World* was a 25 mile loop from Shoreham, and the club’s riders incorporated it into their usual Sunday excursion.

For further details of the club, which is open to all members of the University, contact Nick Herbert on 2748. Turn to page 3 for more cycling news.

SUSSEX LEADS ROYAL SOCIETY EXHIBITION

Research from CPES will be displayed in two of the 20 stands at the Royal Society’s New Frontiers in Science Exhibition. The event, which will take place in London next week, is designed to show off recent advances in basic scientific research. All kinds of organisations, from the Natural History Museum to the Defence Research Agency, will be represented.

The Royal Society chose the most exciting and novel research for the exhibition after receiving applications from a vast range of businesses, universities and other research institutions. Sussex was the only institution to be accepted for two exhibitions. One focuses on ‘buckyballs’ and the other is entitled ‘Atomic Snooker Tables and Trampolines’ and displays the research of Professor Ed Hinds.

See page 2 for details of ‘atomic snooker’.
**Development Opportunities**

**Computing Service Courses for Staff - Summer Vacation. Free to University Staff (Funded by Staff Development)**

The Computing Service are running a series of courses teaching basic IT skills. To book a place please come to the Computing Centre Reception or phone 8090. The booking fee has been waived for staff for this set of courses so BOOK NOW - course places are limited.

2 to 4 July (3 half days, am)

**HTML WORKSHOP**

This workshop is designed for those members of staff who wish to learn to produce on-line information that will be available over the World Wide Web. The workshop is primarily for those who have to publish information for their school, subject group, etc.

**Monday 7 July 9.15-12.30**

**INTRODUCTION TO WORD PROCESSING AND WINDOWS**

This trains course participants to use Windows 3 to manipulate their desktop, use File Manager to manage their files and offers a very simple introduction to WORD 2.

**Wednesday 9 July 9.15 - 12.00**

**INTRODUCTION TO SPREADSHEETS**

This offers training in the basic concepts needed to create spreadsheets and charts using Excel 4.

**Thursday 10 July 9.15-12.00**

**INTRODUCTION TO E-MAIL**

This module trains course participants to send, read, reply, forward, print and save electronic mail using ECS mail.

**Friday 11 July 9.15 - 12.00**

**INTERMEDIATE WORD PROCESSING**

This follows on from the Introduction to Word Processing and Windows and covers the principal features of WORD 2 enabling you to create a professional looking document.

**Monday 14 July 9.15-11.30**

**ACCESSING THE INTERNET**

Course participants will use the Netscape browser to gain access to the internet. Using on-line course material, training will be given to find information sources on the World Wide Web. The course also looks at two general information gateways, the NISS Gateway and The Pier (the gateway which is updated and maintained by the University of Sussex Information Services).

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**News**

**Incredible bouncing atoms**

When Professor Ed Hinds talks about snooker tables and trampolines, he is not discussing his interest in sport. His 'snooker table' is a device that levitates the atoms of a gas above a magnetic surface, enabling experimenters to "roll" the atoms around the table, watching their behaviour. The trampoline is a bouncy surface for atoms - a 'magnetic mirror' made out of a floppy disk. Atoms dropped onto its surface rebound, fall back down under the influence of gravity, and then rebound again.

Dropping atoms onto a floppy disk is not a straightforward procedure - normally, atoms in a gas are speeding around in a random fashion, colliding with each other and generally displaying unruly behaviour. The researchers at the Sussex Centre for Optical and Atomic Physics (SCOAP) have to cool the atoms using a 'laser refrigerator': lasers, better known for their heating and cutting properties, can also absorb energy from atoms, leaving them almost completely stationary. Once they have stopped the atoms in their tracks, though, they can play with them to their heart's content.

The work is important because atoms that can be tamed and confined within certain physical boundaries can be used in tiny instruments that behave just like standard optical equipment. The hope is that well-controlled beams of atoms can be used to build instruments like gyroscopes, which normally rely on beams of light. The new technology will also open up new areas of instrumentation, enabling scientists to make devices more sensitive and accurate than anything currently available.

"Instead of controlling light beams, you can control beams of atoms," says Ed Hinds, who leads the SCOAP team.

"The current problem with atom optics is that the atoms are falling all the time under gravity - you've only got them for about a second before they've gone out of your apparatus."

Removing the effect of gravity through magnetic levitation means that Ed Hinds can hold the atoms indefinitely, trapping them within boundaries set by magnetic fields and moving them around with laser beams. The technique could bring a revolution in optical technology: a 'big break', you might say.

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**Postgraduate survey**

Thanks to all the postgraduate students who took part in the recent questionnaire survey into the research student experience.

The winners of the prize draw are Catherine Kelley of the Graduate Research Centre in the Social Sciences and Simon Goodwin of the Astronomy Centre who will each receive a book token worth £30.

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**Disciplinary Panel**

The Disciplinary Panel met on 7 March 1997 to consider a case referred to it by the Discipline Committee. A student in the Centre for Legal Studies was found guilty of one charge of sexually harassing a female student. He was issued with a reprimand and a warning as to his future conduct and required to write a letter of apology to his victim. A second charge of sexual harassment was found not proven.

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**Wynne Baxter Godfree Law Lecture**

Earlier this term, Dr David Thomas, the eminent Cambridge criminologist gave the annual Wynne Baxter Godfrey law lecture hosted by the Centre for Legal Studies. Dr Thomas, whose lecture was entitled Sentencing: Parliament and the Courts, amused, entertained and fascinated an audience of over 150 with his profound and sensitive historical discussion of punishment in Britain. He scorned the recent contentious legislation of the previous government which had tried to remove a deeply entrenched judicial discretion in the matter of sentencing and hoped for better things from the new administration. Pictured l to r: Prof Harry Rajak (Director of CLS), Dr Thomas, Pro-Vice-Chancellor David Streeter, Mrs Thomas and Frank Skelton of Wynne Baxter Godfree.
THE CHANGING FACE OF HOUSING

A time when poor housing provision is being blamed as a contributor to many of our society's problems (see front page story), David Gann of SPRU has just received an award of £125,000 from The Housing Corporation to investigate the way forward for housing production. The existing housing market provides poor value for money, he believes. "There is no real customer choice, there is not enough new housing and it is all simply too expensive," he says. Add to that the inflexibility of modern housing (rare is the house that is built to its resident's requirements), and the need for innovation becomes clear.

Most of our houses are the architectural equivalent of a 1965 Ford Anglia. The wealth of new materials available through modern technology could be used in constructing the house of the future, displacing some of the traditional materials. "A lot of the components and materials that we use in housing degrade the environment and are energy intensive," says David Gann.

Bricks are a prime example: they cost a great deal of energy to make, and traditional construction methods provide poor insulation. The trend towards smaller and smaller windows in UK housing is just about the only way that brick and block houses can meet the legal requirements for energy efficiency. But if we change the materials and the construction methods we could have a revolution: houses that are energy efficient and built to suit our requirements.

Environmental impact will be one of the major design constraints for the new generation of houses. Green field sites are off-limits, so landfills, inner-city areas, contaminated land and other so-called 'brown-field sites' will be used. This will call for new construction methods and materials. Energy efficiency will be a major criterion for the new materials.

The Osaka Building - one of the Japanese ventures into new housing which could bring significant savings on energy costs and reductions in pollution.

Another issue facing David and his team will be lifespan - should a house be built to last for centuries? Whatever the outcome of the study, it is clear that something has to change. "We have been sinking into the mire with our housing," says David Gann. Hopefully the Housing Corporation's project will ensure that the house of the future is built on firmer foundations.

In brief

Russian reunion

The regular Russian Studies seminar was transformed on 6 June into a symposium to which all former students and teachers of Russian subjects at Sussex were invited, together with the present students. Robin Milner-Gulland, Professor of Russian and East European Studies, writes:

Over 60 people filled Arts A1 to hear a panel of speakers of various generations. Former student (1967-71), LINDSEY HUGHES (just awarded a personal chair in Russian History at London) spoke on the forthcoming 300th anniversary of Peter the Great's visit to England. PIERS BURTON-PAGE (BBC, Radio 3, who did an MA on Shostakovich in 1970) intriguingly titled his talk, "I think of Socialist Realism more often than you would suppose..." JANA HOWLETT (Sussex 1966-70, and now a Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, with a daughter among our undergraduates) spoke on the problems and rewards of publishing newly-opened Soviet archives. ANDREW WHITLEY, who was also here in the late 1960s, spoke eloquently about Sussex in that period and about an unusual career that took him from the BBC Russian Service to becoming a professional baker, eventually able to re-export the secrets of traditional Russian rye bread to Russians who had lost them. Finally a current Sussex doctoral student JACOB KAL TENBACH, just back from a year teaching in Tula, gave us fascinating "Notes from a Provincial Polling-Station" on the current nature of Russian life.

A lively party followed, at which a toast of thanks and good health to the Russian subject group at Sussex, was proposed by KATHERINE SMITH (née Lawrence), one of the University's first 50 students and our senior Russianist.

"Bike Bonanza!

Promoting Cycling for a Better Environment

Friday 20 June, 12 – 3.30 Outside the Refectory

Doctor Bike will be visiting campus again this summer as part of a special event to promote cycling at the University during national Green Transport Week. The Bike Doctor will be outside the Refectory Building from 12 to 3.30pm on Friday 20 June, offering free repairs and advice to students and staff who bring along their bicycles. Last year's visit by the Bike Doctor attracted a large number of people, so if your bike is in need of repair, hurry along to be first in the queue.

Other attractions at 'Bike Bonanza!' will include the launch of a newly produced guide to cycling at the University, which includes information about cycle discounts available to staff and students as well as interest free bike loans. There will be displays and information available from Bricycles, Sustrans and Brighton and Hove Council. The occasion will also be used to collect the names of people who are interested in setting up a Bicycle User Group.

Earlier in the day there will be an organised bike ride along the new cycle path from Sainsbury's to the campus, offering an ideal opportunity for inexperienced cyclists to try out the route in the company of others. The ride will start from the lay-by at the start of the route near Sainsbury's at 8.30 (to arrive by 9am) and both beginners and experienced cyclists are welcome to join in.

So if you would like to get your bike fixed, try out the new cycle lane or simply find out more about cycling, join us at 'Bike Bonanza!' on 20 June. Further information can be obtained from your local Environmental Rep. or Penelope Chapple, Environmental Adviser (x8904/ P.J.Capple@sussex.ac.uk).
Monday 16 June – Sunday 22 June

Music

■ 20th Century Music Ensemble

■ Lunchtime Recital
Tuesday 17 June at 1.20pm in the Meeting House Chapel. Rita Noakes – soprano.

■ Music for Midsummer
Wednesday 18 June at 7.30pm in the Meeting House Chapel. A celebration of the Churches Year in Music.

■ Composers Concert
Friday 20 June at 1.15pm, Recital Room, Falmer House. Compositions by music students: Marie Angélique Bueter, Norman Jacobs, Simon Scardanelli, Dominic Shann, Daniel Mahlberg and Diana Worman. All welcome.

Miscellaneous

■ Computing Service
Improve your PC skills this vacation. The Computing Service will be running a variety of PC training courses during the Summer vacation. For full details please contact Computing Service Reception, ext. 8090, or email training-matters.

■ Summer Playscheme
This summer’s playscheme for 5 to 11 year-olds will run from 11 – 22 August. Registration opens for students 23 June; staff 30 June. For further details or to book a place, contact the Students’ Union Reception, Falmer House, 8152.

Small Ads

■ SHORT LET for up to six weeks from 16 July: luxury one-bedroom apartment near seafront in Lancing Close £115 per week. Would suit visiting faculty and partner. Contact 749147, email: shortlet@gunpoint.prestel.co.uk

■ WANTED: as pair for approx six weeks late July to early Sept for two children (11 and 15). Possibility that 3 weeks will be in Switzerland in August therefore French speaker required (suit language student?). Rest of time in central Brighton, large house backing onto Preston Park. Tel: 621773.


■ MATHS TUITION for GCSE, A level and university courses offered by professional maths PhD with teaching experience. Call 556699.

■ DECORATOR AVAILABLE: interior and exterior work welcome. Experienced mature student. Call Annemarie Frank on 389968.

FOR SALE: Notebook Computer. A Packard Bell Statesman Notebook Specification: 4 MB RAM Cyrix 486, 33 MHz Main processor 205 MB Hard Disk Space PCMCIA Slot Price: now £500 ono Contact: Inman at 01273 881051 or email: i.matin@sussex.ac.uk.

AUTUMN TERM ACCOMMODATION (self-contained) required by member of faculty. Please call Annis May Timpson on 202818, email: A.M.Timpson@sussex.ac.uk.

FOR SALE: Karrimor K-SB walking boots. Brand new. Size 8 £100 new. Will sell for £80 ono. Tel.: Nick or Siri 558738 or 2748.

FOR SALE: Misc. cheap cycling stuff. 'specialised' helmet, Trek cycle top, Nike Nrga II SPD shoes, Panaracer MTB slicks (new), Panaracer 'SMOKES' (part-worn), Mountainair Gore Windstopper fleece. For further details on any item please call Andy on 7655 or 0336 767144

ACCOMMODATION: person required to share lovely 2-bedroom flat (partly furnished) with one female. North Laines, 3 mins from Brighton station. £55 pw, 0402 853515 or 01273 877284 (weekdays) 01365 242642 (weekends), e-mail a.n.scott@sussex.ac.uk.

QUIET ROOM AVAILABLE from July, a second similar room from mid August for post-grad/mature students in large terraced house shared with landlady working in COGS. Near Preston Park Station, 10/11 bus route. £48 per week inc. gas/electric. Tel. 551786 or 8981.

TO LET from 29 June: two pleasant attic rooms with cooking facilities, in Queen’s Park area. Suit female research student wanting peace and quiet to study. £35 per week. Call Pauline on 8209 or 607602.

TO LET: furnished 3-bedroom house; gas central heating, fully equipped kitchen, garden, recently redecorated, close to UoS; Available from July 97. Tel: 474738 ev. or 8125.

FOR SALE: EPSON ‘ActionNote’ Notebook book 486-255X, 200MB HD, 4MB RAM, Large Case. only £200. Please contact Thanos at 0976 725768 or e-mail: tna31@central.sussex.ac.uk

WANTED: a copy of An Introduction to Artificial Intelligence by Charniak and McDermott. Please contact Shirley Wright on e-mail s.wright@sussex.ac.uk or on 8042.

Bulletin

The last Bulletin this term will appear on 20 June, copy date 13 June. There will be further Bulletins in the Summer vacation. As well as the usual news, events, letters and small ads, please send in any vacation notices that you would like published to the Information Office, Sussex House, on ext. 8209, or email: Bulletin@sussex.ac.uk