Merger makes millions

Genpak shows how to put knowledge into business

Dr Julian Burke, Reader in Biochemistry, saw his dream come true this week when the business he started in a garden shed seven years ago was floated on the London Stock Exchange.

His company, Genpak, is now based at the Sussex Innovation Centre on campus. The firm, which makes equipment and reagents for DNA analysis, was bought by biotechnology PLC Genetix Group for £6.5 million prior to the flotation on 29 November – and the two companies together are now estimated to be worth more than £100 million.

“The flotation is a great achievement, but we worked hard to get there,” said Julian, who has been appointed as chief scientific officer for Genetix. The University has given him leave of absence for three years in order for him to take up the post at the Hampshire company.

He added: “It had been a long-term objective of mine to float the company onto the stock market and the ongoing consolidation in the genetics industry meant this is a good time to merge and get an influx of money to develop the business.

“Genetix and Genpak make an ideal business team. Genetix specialise in machinery and engineering, whereas most of our work is on the reagents and chemicals used in those machines. Together we have become one of the stock market’s blue-chip companies.”

The £6.5 million from the merger, in the form of cash and share options, is to be distributed among Genpak’s employees and directors (pictured above), all of whom have studied at Sussex or undertaken post-doctoral work at the University.

“There is a lock-in agreement which means the shares aren’t saleable for two years,” added Julian. “The expectation from Genetix is that we first raise another £20 million through the stock market to invest in research and development projects.”

Julian, who joined the teaching faculty in 1985, started Genpak three years before the Innovation Centre opened its doors to start-up companies. It was also prior to the University developing its ‘knowledge into business’ strategy. His success has highlighted the possibilities for anyone at Sussex with a good business scheme.

Mark Clark, head of the University’s Business Services Unit, said: “We want to encourage more academics to think this way. This just shows how university knowledge and technology can play a large role in supplying the needs of a knowledge-based economy.”

Mike Herd, director of the Innovation Centre, said: “Genpak is a fantastic success story and should be a great inspiration. The Innovation Centre is holding more and more lectures and talks with undergraduates, postgraduates and staff to take any ideas forward.”

In the business of winning awards

Mike Herd, executive director of the Sussex Innovation Centre, has been named Businessman of the Year in the prestigious Sussex Business Awards. The award winners were announced at a gala dinner held last week (23 November) at the Corn Exchange, Brighton.

When making the award, the judges were looking for evidence of dynamic leadership, strategic planning, enthusiasm and the ability to inspire colleagues, and the contribution to the local economy.

Mike, who has been at the centre since 1997, was nominated by his staff. In turn, he said afterwards: “It’s a team effort. I am a figurehead, but it’s a lot about how to take a great vision and create the reality – and we’ve all been committed to doing that. As an investor, the University of Sussex has been a major component of that success.”

The centre was set up in 1996 to provide support for the creation and growth of technology and knowledge-based companies in the county. Of the 30 companies currently in residence, four are ‘spin-outs’ started by academics at Sussex. They include the Vegas Science Trust, which was started by chemistry Nobel prizewinner Professor Sir Harry Kroto (CPES) to make science TV programmes. Two more university spin-outs are soon to join the existing four.

Other notable successes included Genpak, which won the Innovation Award for the most successful innovative product or service. Based at the Innovation Centre, Genpak makes equipment for DNA analysis.

The University/ Business Partnership Award, sponsored by the Universities of Sussex and Brighton, went to the Pyroban Group of Shoreham, which manufactures fire-proofed equipment.

For more information on the awards see www.sussex-business-awards.co.uk/sba.htm.
Elephants have jumbo memories

A Sussex behavioural ecologist has proved the old adage that an elephant never forgets. Research by Karen McComb from BIOLS found that African elephants have complex social networks and can recognise the calls of more than 100 of their ‘friends’ even after a number of years.

Until Karen published her findings in Animal Behaviour, scientists had rejected the idea on the basis of a jumbo’s brain size compared to smaller creatures.

Karen and her research assistant, Lucy Baker, have spent years listening to and recording the calls of about 100 elephants. They learned to recognise different family groups by looking at holes and tears in the elephant’s ears, marks on their tasks and the way they moved.

During trips to Kenya’s Amboseli National Park – ideal because animals there are used to being watched by people – the two researchers recorded the low-pitched ‘contact calls’ that female African elephants use to announce themselves.

The calls are unique to each elephant and can carry for miles. They are of such low frequency that they are inaudible to the human ear, which can hear only the accompanying harmonic tones.

After noting which elephants met often and which were strangers, Karen and Lucy played the calls back to 27 elephant families and watched their reaction.

When elephants knew the caller well, they called back. If they knew the caller slightly, they listened but did not respond. But if the call was unfamiliar, the elephants became agitated and defensive.

Karen found that elephants could recognise members of at least 14 other families from their calls, which suggested that each could remember around 100 other adults.

The memory of a call appeared to be long-lasting. When the call of an elephant that had died two years earlier was played back to her family members, they called back and approached the sound.

Such extensive networks of vocal communication have not been demonstrated in any other mammal, Karen believes. Her research has previously focused on lions and two species of primates.

Karen will be presenting her findings at the Experimental Psychology Seminar on Monday (4 December). Entitled ‘Vocal communication and social knowledge in African elephants’, the talk takes place in the BLR (EP 3.9) from 1.00pm to 2.00pm.

Critical social science in the global era

A new Sussex-based internet portal for critical social science has been launched this autumn. The global site (www.theglobalsite.ac.uk), which is billed as a “gateway to world politics, society and culture”, combines a publishing outlet for new work with a reviews journal cum-archive, a library of online texts and a topical commentary area.

The site is edited by Martin Shaw (SOC), with Alex Colas (AFRAS) running the review area; other members of the editorial group include Beate Jahn, Luke Martell, William Outhwaite, Kees van der Pijl, Justin Rosenberg and Paul Smith.

In an online statement of their aims, the editors write: “We believe that working through a website offers new opportunities for flexibility in scholarship and debate, and ... we encourage our contributors and readers not just to reproduce established methods of work, but to explore the new possibilities of this medium.”

The open-access, multi-lingual site will publish authoritative work addressing the interdisciplinary, intellectual challenges for critical social science in the global era. It is envisaged that the site will be a valuable teaching tool and many students are already making use of its extensive links to online texts and sites across the net.

Martin (m.shaw@sussex.ac.uk) is keen to hear from Sussex faculty and graduate students who would like to publish their research papers online (which does not preclude subsequent print publication) or to put their existing work on the net (which will usually require the permission of the print publisher).

Alex (a.colas@sussex.ac.uk) would be interested to hear from those who would like to be involved in reviewing.

Research funding opportunities

More details of these and other research opportunities are available from Debbie in the Research Services Division (RSD), on ext. 3812 or email D.Foy-Everett@sussex.ac.uk. For an extensive listing of funding opportunities, see REFUND on the RSD website, www.sussex.ac.uk/units/research.
Don’t keep your eye on the ball

It may come as a shock to the England cricket team coaches, but startling new research has shown that the best batsmen take their eyes off the ball before knocking it for six.

It takes just half a second for a fast ball to reach a batsman. Yet within 200 milliseconds of the ball leaving the bowler’s hand, the batsman is already looking ahead to the point at which he has calculated the ball will bounce. This enables him to prepare his shot.

The findings were made by Sussex neuroscientist Professor Michael Land (BIOLS) and Peter McLeod, an experimental psychologist at the University of Oxford, after analysing eye movements of a professional cricketer, a good amateur and a ‘Sunday morning enthusiast’. Each wore special head-mounted cameras during sessions in the net, when balls were delivered at 50mph from a bowling machine.

The three players were found to make the same eye movements, but the professional player’s gaze shifted more quickly to the bounce point – a crucial advantage for high-speed balls – while the least experienced player followed the ball’s trajectory for longer.

“I think batsmen will be horrified to hear they take their eyes off the ball,” said Mike. “It certainly surprised us.” He added that what happens to the ball after the bounce is also calculated according to the player’s experience. Professionals are better at ‘mapping’ the pre-bounce speed of the ball onto its post-bounce behaviour.

Mike, whose previous research work has involved studying the eye movements of drivers and pianists, said the accepted view was that batsmen took all their information from what is known as ‘image expansion’, which is the brain’s calculation of speed based on an object’s changing size. But this was an inappropriate theory for cricket, because the ball approaches in an arc and changes its speed after the bounce.

Joint bid for Brighton’s first undergraduate medical school

The Universities of Sussex and Brighton will have to wait until the first quarter of 2001 to discover if their joint bid to create Brighton’s first undergraduate medical school, submitted this week, is successful.

If the proposals go ahead, the new Brighton and Sussex Medical School will welcome its first 128 students in 2003. The Royal Sussex County Hospital will be the main teaching hospital for the clinical curriculum, with additional teaching facilities at the universities’ Falmer sites.

The school would have a syllabus modelled on that of the University of Southampton’s top-rated medical school. The proposed venture is expected to enhance patient care in Brighton and Sussex, expand the number of medically related jobs and provide greater opportunities for research in science and health-related fields.

The bid, made with the support of the NHS South East Region, is in response to a Government report recommending an increase in the number of medical students in the UK by more than 1,000. Funding for the school (an estimated £28.5 million) will come from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and the Department of Health.

Professor Alastair Smith, Vice-Chancellor, said: “The proposed new school will be firmly based on the established strengths of the two universities in educating and training health professionals and in science teaching and research. Both institutions are committed to innovation in teaching and provide an ideal base for a forward-looking approach to medical education.”

Professor Michael Whiting, Dean of the Faculty of Health at the University of Brighton and Chair of the Brighton Health Care NHS trust, said: “I believe the partnership between the two universities and the NHS locally provides an outstanding opportunity for expanding undergraduate places and developing medical education. This will meet the needs of the national plans for the future of the NHS.”

Peter Dennis, currently Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor and formerly responsible for Health Sciences in the Academic Registry at the University of Brighton, will be seconded for one year from January to develop the bid.

Council bid for campus bus from Rottingdean

Brighton & Hove Council has made a bid to finance a new bus route from Rottingdean to Falmer. The council has applied to the government’s Rural Challenge Fund for a service via Ovingdean and Woodingdean to the Universities of Brighton and then Sussex. The service would then continue through Coldean to Asda at Hollingbury.

Staff expenses to be paid direct to bank accounts

From 1 January, all staff expenses will be paid directly into bank accounts, the Finance Division has announced. This mostly affects claims for travel expenses but also covers a small number of salary advances and other occasional payments. The procedure for filling in and submitting an expense claim will remain the same, but staff will receive a remittance advice instead of a cheque. For details, see www.susx.ac.uk/Units/finance/documentation/bacs.shtml.

87 or 67?

External callers are getting confused about the new directory numbers, according to Switchboard staff. They would like to remind readers that for any extension between 2500 and 3999, the prefix is 87, not 67. For example, ext. 2500 can be dialled off campus on 872500.

Lib Dems vote for Mbeki

Liberal Democrats in Brighton say the town’s new library (being constructed on the Jubilee Street site) should be named after Sussex graduate Thabo Mbeki, who has gone on to greater things as President of South Africa. Lib Dem leader Paul Elgood told the Evening Argus: “President Mbeki is one of the town’s most famous former residents and one who ranks with George IV.”
All in a day's work

Jacqui Bealing
Press Officer

The announcement that the Universities of Sussex and Brighton have made a joint bid for an undergraduate medical school received widespread local media coverage – and all of it was positive. The Evening Argus ran the story on its front page (16 Nov) and both BBC Southern Counties Radio and Surf 107 FM covered it in their hourly bulletins throughout the day. University Registrar & Secretary Neil Gershon was interviewed for several news reports, including the breakfast show on Southern Counties. The story was also the lead item in the Argus’ opinion column (16 Nov), which made the point that if the bid is approved, a medical school will make Brighton “a centre of excellence for medicine” as well as being a major investment in the area.

Another Sussex story that made not only the local press, but also national and international news coverage, was Professor Mike Land’s research into how cricketers hit fast balls. All the daily broadsheets, most of the tabloids and BBC Radio 4 news (20 Nov) reported Mike’s findings that batsmen take their eyes off the ball before hitting it. Mike, a neuroscientist in BIOLS, was also filmed by BBC South Today (21 Nov) and Sky News (22 Nov) and interviewed live for a South African radio programme (24 Nov).

A study by Angela Jacktin and Vivienne Griffiths from the Institute of Education on why teachers are reluctant to push for promotion was covered by the Times Education Supplement (3 Nov) and featured in the Evening Argus (13 Nov).

Are you a Sussex expert?
Call ext. 7437 or email J.A.Beaing@sussex.ac.uk if you think your research findings deserve to reach a wider public.

If only lecturers could put their notes online, and make sure they are accessible to all, including those with visual impairments and dyslexia, this would help students with disabilities.

EA Draffen (on the right in the picture) manages the Assistive Technology Centre in Lancaster House. Initially funded by donations from Sussex alumni and in memory of Sally Marriott (Assistant Personnel Officer for many years), the centre opened in 1996.

Students on campus have free access to our service. We support them with their technology needs – and in particular, complex needs like voice recognition, which is very memory-hungry on any computer and not as easy as it sounds.

We also have prospective students who come to look at all the facilities and to learn about the Disabled Students’ Allowance (DSA).

As a designated Access Centre, we do need assessments for students who apply through their Local Education Authority for the DSA. The needs are related to their course and to their disability.

They can apply for capital expenditure once during their course for computer equipment or any other study aids. In the case of a hearing-impaired student, this may, for example, be a radio link loop system. There is also a non-medical helper’s allowance and a general allowance.

We are part of the National Federation of Access Centres and we have links with about 30 other centres across the country. We do the assessments here for students from the whole region.

But Sussex students benefit more because they are able to drop in to the centre and use our technology. For instance, students with severe visual impairments are able to access their email, which they’re unable to do at present on the campus network.

Part of our job is finding out what the latest technological advances are and what’s on the market. We discovered that many disability co-ordinators and others working in the field are not always aware of the latest software, where to get it from, how much it costs and what’s appropriate for what type of disability.

So we set up the National Internet Accessibility Database (NIAD), which actually tells them all those things. This means we have to know about the disabilities and the technology, and also how appropriate certain software packages may be in relation to different courses and computer platforms.

The internet has improved things for disabled students hugely; if only lecturers could put their notes online, and make sure they are accessible to all, including those with visual impairments and dyslexia, this would help matters. They can either contact us for guidance or look on the Web [www.w3.org/wai/].

We need to look at making accessibility an issue within mainstream studying so that aspects of disability are no longer dealt with only in special centres. However, we are well aware that there are often technological and physical barriers that are hard to overcome.

But it will happen; everybody wants inclusion. My dream is to have an accessible machine in every computer lab, with equipment for disabled students so that they don’t have to come to us.

I think we can make our campus considerably more accessible in the next couple of years. The government is on our side now – they’re providing more money for this sort of thing – and the technologies have moved ahead.

Students are realising that there is more on offer to help them with their disability, so they also – rightly – have increased educational aspirations. So now they’re saying, “Not only am I going to finish my degree, but I’m going on to a PhD.”

So we are getting many, many more students; they’re far more knowledgeable about their needs and they’re more capable of saying what they want. Students are now coming through with expectations – and I think that’s very exciting.

It’s an expensive business, though. We really do depend on charity for donations of equipment, because you have to upgrade so quickly. We’ve just bought a brand-new Apple Mac as a result of further support from the Marriott family and we were given a braille machine, which we couldn’t have afforded to buy, thanks to the Blatchington Court Trust.

Do give generously for Christmas, because we will soon be opening three new rooms and would like to equip them! 
Letters

Dear Editor,

I agree with Andy Clews about a webcam on the roundabout at the campus exit, not to show the people in the left-hand lane but the people in the right-hand lane who sit for ever at the front of the queue waiting for a completely empty roundabout before they pull away. If everyone learnt how to merge on a busy roundabout we would all get home much quicker.

Alison Smith
Accounts, IDS

Dear Editor,

I’ve just read Graham Curry’s letter about gravel cycle paths (Bulletin 17 November), and support his sentiments entirely. However, I’d like to add that while mountain bikes are capable of using gravel paths, that doesn’t make the paths suitable for commuting. For any cyclist it is quicker and easier to cycle on tarmac.

Providing cycle paths that are not usable by all cyclists makes life more dangerous for those that cannot use them, because drivers will not expect to find cyclists on the road.

If the University really wants to promote cycling, it should be doing what it can to promote quick and easy cycle routes, not just barely usable ones.

Although I don’t use the B2123 about which Graham is writing, I commute from Brighton, and only the last half mile of the journey has a cycle path that is actually reasonably useful for cycling, in my view. Using the rest of the route entails dodging pedestrians and losing priority at every road junction.

Cycling on the road, I can get to work in 25 minutes from Churchill Square. On the cycle paths the journey takes close to 40 minutes.

Then, when I arrive at work, there is nowhere secure to park my bike. Other universities do much better.

Ian Elliott (cyclist in a permanent strip!) Computing Service

The best kept secret on campus?

Roger Discombe
Information & Training Officer, Computing Service

Did you know about the new cluster of PCs in Arts C?

The cluster of 12 PCs is located in C168 and so is ideally sited for those based in Arts C and Arts D – especially those who frequent the AFRAS Common Room, which is just along the corridor.

The PCs are managed by the Computing Service and have the full range of software. This means they can be used for dealing with email, writing essays, accessing the new Library catalogue, surfing the Web, etc.

An advantage of using this cluster rather than those in Arts D110 and E201 is that the new room is ‘open access’, which means it cannot be booked for teaching. There is also a laser printer in C168, unlike the open-access cluster in Arts D202.

Knowing the signs can save a life

Most new students will, by now, have been vaccinated against the C strain of meningitis — if not, contact the Health Centre.

The vaccine does not protect against the B strain for meningococcal meningitis, so it is important to be vigilant about the symptoms.

The biggest problem is that most of the early symptoms are mild and similar to those you get with flu or even a hangover — for example:

- vomiting,
- pain in the back or joints
- a headache, and
- a stiff neck.

And make sure you get urgent medical help if any of the following symptoms develop:

- severe dislike of bright light, disorientation, or a bruise-like rash that doesn’t fade under pressure.

See www.meningitis-trust.org.uk for more information, or telephone their 24-hour helpline on 0845 6000 800.

Business as unusual

Body Shop opens in the bookshop

The Body Shop has added one more to its 1,500 outlets worldwide, with the launch of a branch in the University bookshop on campus.

David Abramson, who is responsible for retail development and new business at the multi-national cosmetics retailer, said that the new initiative was not only the first Body Shop in a bookshop, but also the first Body Shop outlet within another store of any kind.

The new branch of the cosmetics chain, which opened on 21 November, is staffed and managed by bookshop employees under a franchise agreement.

The company’s founder, Anita Roddick, who was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University in 1988, was unable to make the launch. In an ironic coincidence, Roddick was away on an international tour, promoting her new book. Copies of Business as Unusual are on sale in the bookshop just a few feet away from the cosmetics.

Assistant bookshop manager Sue Green-Innes said that if Roddick had been in the country, nothing would have kept her away. "It was the Sussex connection that swung it for us," she said of the Body Shop’s decision to support the new initiative.

Founded in 1976, the Body Shop rapidly evolved from one small shop in Brighton and now employs over 4,000 employees worldwide, including more than 2,800 who are based at its Littlehampton headquarters.

Market research by the bookshop produced a promising response from both men and women to the idea of an integral Body Shop concession. At present, 17 per cent of the bookshop’s turnover comes from non-book sales.

Term-time sales of books are holding up well despite competition from online book sellers, but bookshop manager Kristian Berggreen (pictured above with colleague Trish Cotton) has identified a need to broaden the product base in vacations and an opportunity to cater for vacation visitors such as conference delegates and Open University students.

Although there will be some changes in the way new titles are displayed, there are no plans to decrease the shop’s stock of 70,000 books.
Library salvage operation under way

More than 50,000 flood-damaged books and documents from the Library’s book store in Lewes have been deep frozen to prevent further deterioration while their future is decided.

The damaged stock was boxed, wrapped in cling film and transferred to cold-storage warehouses shortly after being rescued from the scene of devastation at Downs Business Park in October.

Now University staff are working out the best way to ‘restore the knowledge’, as Librarian Deborah Shorey puts it. The cost of salvaging each flood-damaged book is estimated to be £50, whereas the price of the average academic book is around £35. Another option is to provide electronic access to a journal or out-of-print book.

Among the most distressing losses was the Chester music collection of 20,000 items of sheet music, which will be restored if at all possible. It has already been decided that some 14,000 newspapers and periodicals that were in the store cannot be salvaged.

Deborah said: “We are currently assessing, item by item, which material we will seek to restore and what we might replace. At the same time we are thinking laterally about access to knowledge. The opportunities now are particularly exciting with digitisation and other electronic options.”

The damaged stock amounts to about 10 per cent of the total Library collection, which is worth more than £40 million. The book store was used for storing volumes and documents that are not in frequent demand for undergraduate teaching or research.

Core Library services have not been affected, except that inter-library requests can now be made for alternative sources any material that was stored at Lewes.

A video-recording of the damage to the store will be shown in the large-screen viewing room in the Library, on Thursday (7 December) at 1 pm. Deborah Shorey will be present to answer questions during the 30-minute session, which all are welcome to attend.

All losses are listed on the Web at http://catalogue.sussex.ac.uk/cgi-bin/lewes.cgi.

Small ads

WANTED: Full-length bookcase, with or without base cabinet. Any type considered but no valuable antiques, please. Could collect. Email eric@biols.sussex.ac.uk.

FOR SALE: Microwave, £35; gas fire (Valor homestyle), £45; full-length mirror glass x 2, £5 each. Tel. 605791.

FOR SALE: Top-loading stove (multi-fuel cylinder), £150 ono. Roof rack for SBW Land Rover (with ladder & fittings), £180 ono. Davies Mud Dog mountain bike (17" frame for 8-10-yo), £155 ono. Email t.m.cairns@sussex.ac.uk or tel. 882639.

WANTED: Colleague wishes to exchange v.large apartment in Rome for accommodation within reach of the University for himself and his wife during June 2001. Contact James on ext. 8080 or jwh@isus.ac.uk.

WANTED: Lodgings in Lewes for 25-year-old Spanish student from January. Family preferred. Email s.soutari@sussex.ac.uk or tel. 479210 (even).

FOR SALE: Ford Escort 1.4, L reg, black, 5 doors, roof rack, tow bar. New tyres, brakes and battery this year, all v.g.c. £1,600 ono. Tel. Hite on 504540 to view.

FOR SALE: 21 speed men's mountain bike, 1 yr old & hardly used. £70. Ext. 2669 or email deborah@isus.ac.uk.

ACCOMMODATION WANTED: For Danish postgraduate n/s couple in late 20s, visiting Sussex Jan. to June 2001 inc. Contact turk.bocher@akbjen@sociology.ku.dk.

TO LET: Room in family house, v. close to London Road station. Share kitchen and bathroom. Non-smoker. £55 per week inc. Contact Shirley on ext. 8841, email S.Holder@sussex.ac.uk or tel. 605522.

FOR SALE: Salomon ski-boots, size 5 (never worn) £30; lady's/teenage ski jackets & salopettes. Email A.Drew@sussex.ac.uk, ext. 8022.

WANTED: Home(s) for quantity of stick insects with case. Free to someone with access to privet leaves. Tel. Mrs Ford-Smith on 862781.

Staff vacancies

Apply by 4 December
Development Co-ordinator, CCE (ref 530)
Chief Officer, EAM (ref 531)

Apply by 7 December
Research Technician, BIOLS (ref 527)
Computer Technician, BIOLS (ref 537)

Apply by 8 December
Research Fellow, USIE (ref 540)

Apply by 14 December
P/T Tutor, Arts (ref 534)
Clerical Assistant, Library (ref 543)

Apply by 15 December
Porter, COGS (ref 539)

Apply by 16 December
Secretary, SLS (ref 538)

Apply by 19 December
Maintenance Contracts Manager, Estates (ref 487)

Apply by 20 December
Cleaner, COGS (ref 473)

Apply by 21 December
Student Employment Officer, SEO (ref 541)
Research Fellow, CPES (ref 542)

Open until filled
Research Fellow, BIOLS – Adaptive colouration and visual perception in the cuttlefish (ref 535)
Clerical Assistant, Payroll & Pensions (ref 536)

For further details, see www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/staffing/personnel/vacs or contact Staffing Services on (01273) 677806, fax (01273) 677401, email recruitment@sussex.ac.uk.
Princess gives royal backing to community project

The University's part in an innovative and nationally recognised community project received the royal seal of approval on 17 November, when HRH the Princess Royal met Pam Coare and Sonia Plato from CCE during a visit to Hastings.

During the visit, Princess Anne also met local residents and representatives of other organisations involved in the collaborative Ore Valley Project, which covers the 1,200 homes on the town's Broomgrove, Farley Bank and Deepdene Gardens estates.

The pioneering scheme aims to identify and address the needs of local people using a multi-agency community approach, which involves several agencies working in partnership with each other and with residents.

Partners in the project include the University's Centre for Continuing Education (CCE), the local health authority and NHS trust, 1066 Housing Association, Social Services and Playlink, an organisation that works with parents and children.

CCE's role in the venture is to provide educational opportunities for adults who have not previously had much access to education. Classes are offered covering personal development, computer skills and a range of level 1 higher-education courses.

Students speak the international language of sport

Sussex sportsmen and women returned triumphant from last weekend's annual sporting exchange trip to Le Havre university in north-west France. With three victories out of four, they wrested the overall trophy back from Le Havre, who won it last year when they crossed the Channel for the inaugural exchange.

A defeat for the Sussex men's basketball team was more than compensated for by convincing victories in men's rugby, women's tennis and women's basketball.

Before Saturday's matches, the 47 Sussex students and four members of staff enjoyed a visit to the nearby port of Honfleur and a tour of Le Havre's dockland. They also crossed Le Pont Neuf, the world's first self-balancing bridge.

In the spirit of entente cordiale, the English representatives were given hospitality by their French counterparts and will return the favour in March, when Le Havre are expected to bring soccer and volleyball teams as well as rugby and basketball players.

The importance of the project's collaborative approach is shown by the fact that most of the students are mothers, who need childcare provision in order to access the classes. Most commonly, students take one course, involving two contact hours per week, together with a computer course running alongside.

Pam Coare, who leads CCE's community development team and co-ordinates its work across Sussex, believes the Ore Valley Project stands out because it actually delivers. "It has changed the sense of what is possible. The people actually come along now and say what they want to do. We're not out there trying to persuade them this will be a good thing."

Sonia Plato, the CCE community development worker in Hastings, is responsible for the training and development of staff who teach on the estates. She also has a strategic role, sitting on a variety of committees associated with government initiatives such as the New Deal and Education Action Zone.

In addition, Sonia provides information and guidance to students, helping to ensure that they make the right choices. She said: "The Ore Valley Project is a true community partnership. It shows what can be achieved when residents and agencies work together."

Many of the students stay with the scheme for up to three or four years and a small number have gone on to take CCE certificates in the town or courses at Hastings College of Arts & Technology.

But Pam is looking further ahead and takes the long view on the project's effectiveness. "I think it changes people's aspirations for the next generation, and that's absolutely crucial, that residents start seeing university as a possibility for their kids, even if practically they can't do it themselves. Education is a life-changing experience, which changes people's outlook and broadens their horizons."

Have your say on campus travel

If you have received a questionnaire about travel to and from campus, please complete and return it to Amanda Hastings, Environmental Officer, by 12 December. If you have not received a copy, you can still email your thoughts on transport to her at A.Hastings@sussex.ac.uk.

Sussex joins new weather watch

The University is a partner in the Tyndall Centre of Climate Change Research, which opened at the University of East Anglia last month. The centre brings together climate scientists, economists, social scientists and engineers to explore and develop responses to climate change and help policy makers to take informed decisions.

Christmas catering

Christmas lunch (roast turkey or veggie alternative with all the trimmings, plus Christmas pudding and rum sauce) will be tempting your taste buds in the Laines Restaurant, Bramber House on 12 and 18 December. Costing £3.99, the meal is available from 12 noon to 2.15 pm. A more upmarket three-course Christmas carvery is on offer in the Orange Room, priced at £12.75 (plus VAT where applicable). To reserve a table for 12.15 pm on 12 or 19 December, tel. Jenny on ext. 8221.

Sprechen Sie Deutsch?

Scholarships are available for three- to four-week summer courses (July to September 2001) at HE Institutions in Germany, on language and literature. Undergraduate students (of any discipline) with a good knowledge of German can apply, but need to take a language test — either on campus, on Wednesday (6 December), or in London. Contact the DAAD-Lektorin, Sabine Sebright, in Arts A33 or on s.uszpelskat@sussex.ac.uk.
Lectures, seminars, colloquia

Mon 4 Dec 12.30pm-1.15pm Continuing Education Research Forum: David Goldblatt (Open), Widening participation: a case study. Arts D310.
1.00pm-2.00pm Experimental Psychology Seminar: Karen McComb (Sussex), Vocal communication and social knowledge in African elephants. BLR (EP 3.9).
3.00pm International Relations and Politics Research-in-Progress Seminar: Chris Hughes (LSE), Nationalism in Chinese cyberspace. C217.
4.00pm Sociology and Social Psychology Graduate/Faculty Seminar: Peter Dickens (Cambridge), title TBA. Arts D310.
5.00pm-5.50pm Women's Studies Research-in-Progress Seminar: Eileen Yeo (Strathclyde), Motherhood and dispora. A155.

Tue 5 Dec 1.30pm CGGS Psychology Research-in-Progress Talk: Andrew Monk (York), title TBA, PEV 5A19.

Wed 6 Dec 1.00pm IDS Seminar: J. Clark Leith (Oxford), Why Botsanwa prospered. 220, IDS.
2.00pm-4.00pm Migration Research Roundtable: The report of the Commission on Multi- Ethnic Britain, A71.
3.00pm-6.00pm Migration Research Seminar: Chris Warne (Sussex), Hip-hop culture in urban France. D680.
1.30pm History of Art Research Seminar: Timothy Barringer (Yale), The property of skill: Artist and artisan in mid-Victorian Britain. A103.
5.00pm University Graduate College Seminar: George Walter (Sussex), Inscribing madness: The poets of schizophrenia. Arts D640.
5.15pm Centre for German-Jewish Studies: Wolfgang Benz (TU Berlin), Jewish life in Germany after 1945. A105.

Thu 7 Dec 12.30pm Inorganic Discussion Group: Matthew Francis, Actinide and alkaline earth metal complexes derived from polyphosphoryl anions. CH1R143.
12.30pm-2.00pm Geography Research Seminar: Jeff Warburton (Durham), Recent studies of Upland peat erosion. D710.

Gardener Arts Centre
Box office: (01273) 685861 www.gardenerarts.co.uk

Theatre
Thu 7 Dec - Wed 3 Jan The Wizard of Oz A Christmas show for all the family. A brand-new musical adaptation for the stage by Mike Carter, with new songs, a great story and plenty of surprises. Tickets for Bulletin readers at special price of £4 each (adults and children, but subject to availability, maximum 4 tickets per person), for Sat 9 Dec 6pm, Wed 20 Dec 5.30pm; Thu 21 Dec 6pm.

Exhibitions
Thu 7 Dec - Sat 20 Jan Landscape - From Four to Foundation Interpretations of the local landscape - in a wide range of media - by pupils from schools and colleges in Brighton, Hove and East Sussex.

Fri 8 Dec 2.15pm SPRU Seminar: Massimo Warglien (Venice), Epistemic modelling, knowledge and the theory of the firm. EDB 121.

Mon 11 Dec 1.00pm-2.00pm Experimental Psychology Seminar: Danny Connolly (Sussex), Executive function and theory of mind in pre-schoolers. BLR (EP 3.9).
3.00pm International Relations and Politics Research-in-Progress Seminar: Claire Cutter (Victoria), Private power and global authority. C219.
5.00pm-7.00pm Women's Studies Research-in-Progress Seminar: Mary Evans (Kent), Can we make a difference? Gender and sociological theory. A155.

Thu 14 Dec 4.00pm-5.30pm Economics Research-in-Progress Seminar: Tim Boeri, title TBA, D310.
5.00pm History Research-in-Progress Seminar: Paul Betts (Sussex), Re-enchancing the commodity: Nails modernism reconsidered. A155.

Fri 15 Dec 2.15pm SPRU Seminar: Paul Quintas (Open), The wealth of nations: Knowledge, management and organisational contexts. EDB 121.
4.00pm Astrophysics Seminar: Ed Spiegel (Caltech), Heating the universe. Arundel 401.

Drew Milne (Cambridge), Lucien Goldman and the critique of Renaissance historicism. Arts D610.

Bulldin Bulletin The Bulletin is published fortnightly and the next issue will be out on Friday 15 December, with a copy deadline of 1.00pm on 8 December. We welcome any suggestions for news, events, letters and small ads from staff and students of the University.
Please contact the Press and Communications Office in Sussex House on ext. 6888 or email Bulletin@sussex.ac.uk.