Senate supports overall direction of plans to invest in excellence

Outline plans for the future academic size and shape of Sussex were approved by Senate, the University's academic body, at its termly meeting on 17 March. They were presented to Council, the governing body, today (Friday 24 March).

The plans aim to improve the University's academic and financial performance to bring about higher quality teaching and research, supported by increases in income from a wide range of sources.

The proposals include plans for immediate investment to start a first phase of recruitment from April to up to 40 academic posts across a range of subjects in which Sussex is a strong and leading institution nationally.

Managers plan to invest in a further 35 posts in areas of strength and excellence, with recruitment starting from the late summer. This depends on making savings in each school, equivalent to around 45 posts across the University as a whole. As far as possible these changes will be on a voluntary basis.

"We are committed to developing and maintaining a strong academic base across the arts and the sciences," said the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alasdair Smith. "I am pleased that Senate has supported the direction of these plans overall, and the proposals for investing in excellence."

Senate recommended to Council an urgent review of the plans for Life Sciences. They included significant new investment in the school, but also contained a proposal to refocus the Chemistry department, which has generated considerable controversy.

As part of this proposal, Sussex would no longer offer straight chemistry degrees and the current staff of 14 academics would be reduced to seven through a voluntary severance scheme. From 2007 the department would be renamed the Department of Chemical Biology.

"We are committed to developing and maintaining a strong academic base across the arts and the sciences"

The Dean of Life Sciences, Professor Jonathan Bacon, will now be working with his academic colleagues, in consultation with staff and students, and with external advice, to look urgently at all the options for the way forward across Life Sciences. Terms of reference for the review were due to be formally approved by Council today.

In order to allow all options for Life Sciences in general and chemistry in particular to be considered (as asked for by Senate), it will be necessary to hold back some of the first phase of investment in posts across other schools, pending the outcome of the review. Discussions have this week taken place with deans to identify the highest priority posts, which were presented to Council today.

The aim is to have the review completed by around the end of April and to call a special meeting of Senate near the start of the summer term. In light of that, any initial investments in Life Sciences and further investments in other areas could be taken forward.

Sussex students stage Library "learn-in"

Approximately 75-100 students staged a "learn-in" at the campus Library on 8 March, in protest, they said, at "falling standards" at Sussex.

The occupation was peaceful: the students simply did not leave the building when it was due to close at 9.30pm. The protest came to an end at about 2.15am the following morning, when the last occupants left.

"The students were in good humour throughout," reports David Lamper, Head of Security. "But the Library staff who stayed on duty did a terrific job under what at first were uncertain conditions."

The occupiers issued a "Learn-in Manifesto", in which they stated: "The recent cuts to the library epitomise the problems facing students at this university."

University managers, however, refute the protesters' claim that spending in the Library has been cut: the Library budget of £3.5m in 2003-04 rose to £3.7m in 2004-05 and is forecast to be £3.8m in 2005-06.

Although the action was not an official Students' Union protest, the students said that their action was in support of the Union's 'Sort Us Out' campaign, which has raised a range of issues.

University senior managers responded to these issues on 10 February and invited the Students' Union to join the University in addressing them.

A new twice-a-term meeting between Students' Union officers and senior managers is being established to oversee liaison.

Inside

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Project tracks Brighton's elusive nocturnal residents.

3 VC's voice
Personal reflections on where we are, after a challenging fortnight.

4 Global links
Building bridges between Sussex, China and Mexico.

5 London event
Prof Shami Chakrabarti lectures on extremism to decision-makers.

7 IT move
Better services and more space in the move to EN601.
Research to unearth secret world of Brighton’s badgers

The mysterious night-time habits of an elusive group of seaside residents are keeping Sussex researchers on their toes after dark.

Biologists Maren Huck and John Davison have been braving the chilly nights while out tracking their subjects – the urban badgers of Brighton.

The nocturnal treks are part of ongoing, government-funded research to find out more about the habits and behaviour of badgers who live in towns – and how best to deal with them when they cause problems for their human neighbours. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) receives around 600–700 complaints a year about badgers, with increasing numbers referring to urban badgers.

The Sussex part of the project, led by biologist Professor Tim Roper, involves plotting badger movements using an electronic tracking system. Different frequencies are used to identify individual badgers that have been fitted with radio transmitters by the research team.

The data collected will help build a picture of the urban badgers’ behaviour and how it differs from that of their country cousins, including what they eat, how far they travel and how they build their setts. This information will be used to create guidelines for how to manage potentially ‘antisocial’ urban badger behaviour and to examine why urban badger numbers might be increasing.

Initial findings show that urban badger populations are scattered in pockets across towns rather than concentrated in one area and that they tend to have smaller territories, because food and shelter are easily available. Urban badgers are also fatter, weighing around 11 kilos to the average rural badger’s nine kilos, possibly because life is easier.

Are urban badgers problem neighbours? “It rather depends on your point of view,” says Tim. “They pose no health threat or danger to humans – in fact, urban badgers are in fantastically good condition – but gardeners might not be so keen if a whole tribe moved in next door. Many people regard urban wildlife as an amenity and encourage it by putting out food, but that can spell problems for others.”

“A typical conflict arises when they are encouraged to share space with humans, for example by finding an untended, overgrown garden. They have little incentive to move further abroad and will settle in, establishing a sett. Over time, this will get bigger and more complex, as badgers are prone to adding and improving their burrows. They can destroy gardens and undermine house foundations.”

For the most part, though, the nocturnal badger is a quieter and less obtrusive neighbour than, say, the urban fox. Tim says: “It’s not clear yet whether urban badgers have moved into towns because of urban sprawl, or whether urban communities have just grown up around badger territories.”

Coastal research at Sussex is EU showcase star

Research by Sussex geographers that will shed light on the future of our threatened coastline has been given pride of place at a special European Union (EU) showcase highlighting the crucial work of EU-funded projects.

Out of 200 schemes, the Sussex-led Beaches at Risk (BAR) project was one of only three picked to be showcased at the event this month at the Government Office of the South East in Ashford, Kent.

Dr Cherith Moses, Lecturer in Physical Geography, gave a talk on the project to an audience of 150 French and English delegates. The project also had a stand with leaflets, posters and reports on display.

The BAR project brings together geographers, geologists, ecologists and coastal managers from both sides of the Channel. It aims to promote the importance of effective beach management for coastal defence, dune rehabilitation, tourism and biodiversity conservation along the Channel coastline.

To do this, the project is studying beaches suffering greatest erosion on both the Channel coasts in Brighton and Hove, East Sussex and Kent and Seine Maritime, Somme, Nord and Pas-de-Calais.

“We are studying the effect of sea-level rise on coastal areas in partnership with East Sussex County Council and in collaboration with Brighton and Hove City Council and other organisations,” says Cherith.

“If beach volumes are declining, changing the shape of the shoreline, this leaves coastal structures and land more susceptible to erosion.

“The region we’re studying contains outstanding coastal areas that are under pressure from property development, localised rapid erosion and high levels of tourism. The BAR project will help to inform effective beach-management strategies,” says Cherith.

“The project is now in its fourth year and it is a measure of its success that it has been selected as an EU showcase project.”

For more information on the BAR project, see www.sussex.ac.uk/BAR.
The past two weeks have been, as they say, a challenging time for the University as an institution, the University as a community and many individuals, as we debate the future of chemistry at Sussex.

The issues are set out in the papers that have gone to Senate and Council, elsewhere in this Bulletin and on the University website, and have been extensively commented on in the media. So I thought that rather than using this column to rehearse the detailed issues, I might instead offer some personal reflections on where we are.

There are particular difficulties about conducting the business of the University in the glare of publicity. Within two days of the proposals being announced internally, the future of chemistry at Sussex was debated on BBC Radio 4’s ‘Today’ programme as the nation brushed its teeth, and this was just one element of the extensive media coverage. Next Monday (27 March), Dr Gerry Lawless and I will join the acting chief executive of the Funding Council in a session of the House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee devoted to chemistry at Sussex.

For me, the most impressive element in response to my proposals for chemistry has been that of the department’s students. At the meetings that were held to outline and discuss the proposals, in particular their implications for students, the student response was to argue with persistence, intelligence and personal commitment and they have subsequently run a skilful and effective public campaign.

I found some of the response of the wider academic community outside the University less impressive. The commonest arguments had a formulaic air: ‘Chemistry is essential because it underpins so many other sciences, and a serious university must have a chemistry department’. Such arguments seem to me to beg the interesting and tough questions: When non-chemists need to tap into the expertise of chemists, do they typically do that within their own institutions? If all three main branches of chemistry need to be well represented in every department, what is the critical mass necessary to achieve excellence in teaching and research in chemistry?

I very much welcome the decision of Senate to review all the options for chemistry over the next few weeks, and I hope the outcome of the process will be to secure a strong future for chemistry at Sussex.

It is important to see these debates in the wider context of the strategic direction of the University. The outline plan of which the proposals for chemistry are a part sets a clear path forward for the University. In an increasingly competitive higher education world, I think Sussex must aim to be a high-performing institution in both teaching and research, and excellence in research is the base on which excellence in teaching can be delivered. We need to make tough demands and hard decisions if we are to achieve the standards to which we ought to aspire.

There is an alternative future, a perfectly respectable future, in which we aimed to build excellence in teaching and in the student experience on a research base that was good but not outstanding. In some ways that would be a more comfortable path to take, but I think it would be a very risky path, whose temptations we should resist.

Chemistry at Sussex

Sussex is not alone in considering changes to its chemistry provision. In recent years, changes have been made at other leading research universities including Dundee, Exeter, King’s College London and Queen Mary, University of London.

Chemistry at Sussex is a relatively small department nationally (14 academics) with a small student intake (around 20 new undergraduates per year). It accounts for less than one per cent of all new chemistry students in England.

The department has however had an outstanding academic history, with two Nobel prize winners in the past and a five rating in the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE).

It has also generated strong rankings in league tables and is currently ranked at number two in the Guardian and number six in The Times. This of course reflects underlying quality at Sussex, although the position is significantly boosted by low student-staff ratios, due to the size of Sussex student intakes.

Through hard work by the chemistry admissions team and as a result of standings in the league tables, undergraduate applications for 2006–07 are up 40% on 2005–06, at about 350. Applications, unfortunately, do not necessarily translate into offers being accepted by students who achieve the required A level grades.

While applications have grown in recent years, the numbers of undergraduates finally admitted have remained at around 20 each year. Out of 300 offers made this year, Sussex could at very best hope for an intake of around 35–40.

Chemistry – like other Life Sciences departments at Sussex – does generate significant external research income. It also brings in around £50,000 a year from intellectual property (IP), which is a significant proportion of the University’s total IP income.

Looking at the financial position overall for chemistry – taking account of income earned for teaching and research, its own costs and its share of central costs – the department is slightly in deficit.

The department has lost some leading researchers in recent years to larger chemistry departments. It has made a number of strong appointments of younger researchers in areas around chemical biology; they should be well placed to develop research performance in the future, although this does not guarantee that Sussex can match the 2001 RAE rating.

A fundamental financial question concerns funding achieved through the RAE. Even if a high RAE score were achieved in 2008, the significantly smaller number of staff being submitted this time – 12 now compared to 24 in 2001 – would significantly reduce future funding from government.

Retaining a chemistry department in its present form for the long term at this lower volume would therefore cost an extra £750,000 a year.

Senior managers argued in presenting plans for change that this kind of investment would be better deployed in the Life Sciences as a whole and in the areas of chemistry most closely related to biosciences, where Sussex also has academic strengths.

Since the plans were made public, a number of scientists in this field have argued that it would not be possible to have a credible department of chemical biology without the rest of chemistry being in place to support it through research and teaching.

Campaign: Students protested outside the Senate meeting on 17 March against plans to refocus the Chemistry department at Sussex.
Building international links

Over recent weeks Sussex has been strengthening its international links and establishing new ones in two very different countries. Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Professor John Dearlove, first travelled to China with Dr William Wang (Engineering and Design), and then to Mexico with Els Lemaire (International Officer).

In China a co-operation agreement was signed at one of the capital’s leading institutions, Beijing Jiaotong University (BJU), where the director of the Office of International Cooperation and Exchange, Dr Zhu Hengjun, is a Sussex engineering graduate. One of the first areas to be explored with BJU will be the possibility of their faculty and administrators coming to Sussex for training programmes.

John and William also visited the Beijing Limai School, which offers a foundation course leading to Sussex degrees in the School of Science and Technology. Since 2001 30 students have progressed from this course to Bachelor’s degrees at Sussex. Alumni also hold leading roles at this School: the principal, Prof Guilan Wang was a visiting fellow at Sussex and the course director, Dr Kai On Li, obtained his BSc and DPhil from Sussex.

The recently formed partnership with Study Group in connection with the international foundation year was also reinforced by a presentation given to Study Group representatives and joint marketing activities in Beijing and Shanghai.

After a brief stopover in the UK, John then flew to join Els in Mexico, where they were helped by Mexican alumni at a recruitment exhibition organised by Conacyt, the Mexican government’s postgraduate scholarships agency, with which the University has had a partnership arrangement since 2000.

Sussex also works very closely in a number of consortia in Mexico. With the Britmex group, a partnership of seven research-led UK universities, it has managed to establish a reputation of excellence, working together with Mexican universities, the British Council and several funding agencies.

In addition to several institutional visits with Britmex, giving presentations and providing counselling sessions for students interested in studying in the UK, John and Els also met with the presidents and heads of departments at Colegio de Mexico, Mexico’s top research institute for the social sciences; at La Salle, which boasts Mexico’s number one medical school; and at Tec de Monterrey, which is the largest private university, with more than 30 campuses across Mexico.

Partnerships exist with some of these universities for receiving study abroad students: Sussex has been a founding member of a British Council initiative establishing a study abroad consortium, bringing fee-paying Mexican students to the UK. Sussex has since welcomed an increased number of Mexican students on its undergraduate Study Abroad programme, several of whom returned for their Master’s degrees and have now joined the ranks of the successful and growing Mexican Alumni Society, working together with the University to promote Sussex programmes in Mexico.

New possibilities are being explored to work more closely with Colegio de Mexico at both under- and postgraduate level, to receive groups of students for Sussex’s International Summer School, and to arrange work placements for medical students to gain experience working in hospitals both here and in Mexico.

Members of academic staff with interests in research links or faculty exchanges in China, Mexico or elsewhere can contact Dr Philip Baker or Els Lemaire in the ISAO for further information and contacts.
Forgive but don’t forget?

Revenge or reconciliation – which is the best way forward for communities facing up to the aftermath of war and atrocity?

That question was the theme of a special event at the Meeting House on 8 March to mark the arrival of the Forgiveness Project in Brighton.

The Forgiveness Project is a non-religious, non-political charity set up to promote conflict resolution by collecting and sharing personal stories of those who have experienced conflict and violence. It also delivers educational and self-help programmes and fosters debate about how individuals and communities can learn to celebrate difference and overcome division.

The event featured talks by Sussex research students who have had first-hand experience of life in Rwanda and East Timor following periods of appalling violence, a discussion session and a chance to view the Forgiveness Project exhibition.

The aim was to examine whether Truth and Reconciliation Commissions – and other means communities use to bring injustice to light and to make people publicly account for their actions – are the best way to rebuild society, or whether more punitive forms of justice should prevail.

A panel discussion followed, chaired by Quaker Chaplain Dr Paul Oestreicher, who has extensive experience of peace and reconciliation movements in South Africa and the Middle East.

Father Rob Esdaile, the Catholic Chaplain, organised the event with lecturer Chana Moshenska. He said: "The names which crop up day after day in news bulletins – Iraq, Israel, Palestine, Darfur, Chechnya, the Congo, and so on – demonstrate that this is no abstract academic exercise. Either communities divided by violence learn to face up to what has been done and find new paths of peace together or there can be no healing for our world."

SEI seminar considers EU reform

The Sussex European Institute (SEI) held a two-day high-level policy seminar with the Office for European Integration in the Polish government in the last week of term.

The seminar was also attended by the Chevening Fellows, who are spending three months at SEI on a Foreign and Commonwealth Office scheme for mid-career civil servants from the EU's new member states, Turkey and the Caucasus.

The subject of the seminar was economic reform in the EU: sessions were held on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), cohesion policy and the EU budget as well as more general aspects of EU reform.

The Polish Ministry team, led by Sussex alumnus Piotr Serafin, initiated the idea of the joint seminar, with a view to improving EU policy-making in Warsaw.

Professor Jim Rollo, director of SEI, said: "The seminar was a great success and we have already planned to repeat the event in 2007."
Can he teach 'em?

A Sussex Lecturer in Education is contributing to the debate about educational standards over the last 50 years by appearing in a TV series.

The third series of 'That'll Teach 'Em' starts on Channel 4 next month, featuring James Williams as deputy headmaster, housemaster and biology teacher in a fictional 1950s grammar school for boarders.

It was after he was asked to advise the programme-makers on the history of science and science teaching that James got involved with the historical reality series, teaching 30 teenagers in single-sex classes.

"For four weeks I lived in the 50s," he recalls. "I slept on the same type of iron-framed hospital bed as they did, ate the same food, went to sleep in the early hours and got up in the early hours, especially if I was punishing the boys with an early morning run or shoe shine.

"We were filmed for up to 16 hours a day, and had always to be 'in role'. We had full teaching days, with prep and detentions."

James drew on his own memories of being a pupil to become a harsh disciplinarian and at one point told an outspoken youngster to shut up because he was a child who therefore could not have an opinion. "In those days teachers tolerated no backchat and no opinions from children," he says.

Does he train his Sussex students to teach like that? "Actually, I've told them that if I catch them teaching like me I'd fail them immediately and throw them off the teacher training course."

But with boys these days falling further and further behind girls in exam tables and displaying chronic disinterest in the sciences, the series asks whether reverting to a practical, 1950s-style single-sex education would make a difference. Will the boys close the gap, or will the girls stretch their lead? Find out from 4 April.

A spin-off series, 'That'll Test 'Em', has also been filmed. Hosted by comedian Jeremy Hardy, it pitches pupils from the fictional school against their parents and relatives. James is a 'surprise' supply teacher in the third programme, due to be aired on 25 April.

Disciplinarian: James Williams takes on the role of deputy head in Channel 4's reality history series 'That'll Teach 'Em'.

Thefts from offices

There has been an outbreak of stealing from offices in various buildings on campus. Because many of the items stolen are not in everyday use it has been difficult to say when exactly some of the thefts occurred. However some people have returned to their office, which was locked overnight, to find property missing.

"We all know that one can prevent crime completely," says David Lamper, Head of Security. "Equally it is known that the vast majority of crime falls into the 'opportunists' category."

David gives the following advice on how to minimise such opportunities:

- When leaving work, ensure that items of value are locked away.
- Do not leave your office unattended and unlocked, even if you "will only be a couple of minutes". Ensure all doors and windows are locked.
- Do not leave the keys in your office, no matter how well you think you have hidden them - a thief will find them (as in a recent case on campus).
- Try to get into a routine; as you leave work, just spend a minute checking that you have left everything secure.
- When arriving at work, check that everything is alright in your office and let the Security Unit know it, despite your efforts, you find anything amiss.

"Hopefully by making the thief's life more difficult we will make our University an even safer place," says David.

Nominations open for exceptional award

It's time to start thinking about who you might like to nominate for one of the 2006 Chancellor's Awards. The scheme recognises exceptional contributions to the work and life of the University by members of staff. It provides the opportunity, alongside the Teaching Awards, to acknowledge the wide range of work that goes into making Sussex the place it is.

Nominations can be made for any activity, aside from direct teaching and research. Examples of successful activities might include attracting more and better students or staff to the University, providing improved support to staff and students; enhancing students' experience while at university; helping students prepare for success in their future careers; or improving the standing of the University in the local community.

The awards are open to all staff, whether full- or part-time, permanent or fixed term. There is no minimum or maximum age or length-of-service requirement.

People may be nominated by any member of staff, student or former student, or can be self-nominated, but will need a supporting statement from the nominee's manager.

The panel considering nominations is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor and includes a number of senior staff and members of Council.

Further information and nomination forms are available at www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/Registrar/chancellorsawards.shtml or in hard copy from the Registrar's Office.
Teaching rooms to be refurbished

Most seminar rooms on campus are to be upgraded, in a rolling programme of work that starts this Easter and will continue through to the end of the summer vacation and beyond.

Work will vary depending on what is needed in each room, but will include redecoration, lighting, new carpets and new blinds. New technology (data projectors, whiteboards and interactive whiteboards) will also be installed in some seminar rooms.

In addition, the Chichester Lecture Theatre is to undergo major refurbishment. By the start of the academic year 2006-07 it will have a new roof, new seating and new audio-visual technology, as well as a redecorated lobby and toilets.

By summer 2007 there will also be new suites of seminar rooms in Arundel and on the second floor of Bramber House (mainly to replace the division of current teaching rooms within the Arts buildings to other uses).

The upgrades and refurbishments are being funded by HEFCE (the Higher Education Funding Council for England).

LETTERS

LPG – The environmentally cleaner alternative vehicle fuel

When car parking fees were introduced, I invested £1,240 to have specialists install LPG equipment to my vehicle. [Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) is a mixture of propane and butane, produced as a by-product in both the extraction and refining stages of oil production.]

LPG has received considerable financial support from the government and provides real environmental, economic and social benefits.

My fuel costs dropped by 40% and the investment paid for itself in less than 18 months. I’m currently paying 49p per litre. There are now 1,253 outlets in the UK.

How about the University encouraging LPG use, in line with the environmental reasons for imposing parking fees, by exempting LPG users from parking charges?

Martin Lamont,
Health, Safety and Environment Office

Aggressive seagulls

Last Friday I was eating outside when a seagull swooped down at me to try and steal my food. Fortunately I spotted it and took evasive action. The blighter kept circling me at close range and I had to finish what I was eating before it would fly off.

It is my opinion that they are getting bolder and more aggressive these days, as well as appearing in greater numbers. If they’re this adventurous now I dread to think what they’ll be like when the breeding season gets properly underway.

Are there any plans to limit their numbers this year by, for example, putting down food laced with seagull contraceptive? I seem to remember one year a hawk was brought in to chase them off.

DavidTail,
Senior Premises Assistant, Pevensey

LP – The colony of Herring Gulls on campus is small – probably only 14 pairs raised young last year – but it is increasing in size. They are already the subject of research by Dr David Reby (Life Sciences).

These birds are supreme opportunists, often foraging several kilometres from their nest. We cannot solve any perceived problems simply by restricting food on campus. It is our flat roofs they fancy – as nest sites.

Most of the solutions suggested – usually by firms wanting to make money – are useless, Plastic Eagle Owls, live cats, coloured streamers, balloons with large ‘eyes’, fireworks, rows of spikes, and so on, are rapidly ignored. Playing distress calls and flying birds of prey work better, but the gulls still get used to them.

Nest removal is expensive and simply shifts the gulls onto nearby roofs. Sterilisation (or killing chicks, which requires a licence) achieves little. It does not remove the adults (which are long-lived; the average age lifespan is 19 years), and would need to be undertaken every year.

Landowners can engage people to kill gulls if they are a demonstrable threat to public health or safety. Nuisance alone is not a legal justification. In a populated area like campus both shooting and poisoning would, quite rightly, have us prosecuted. Moreover, there is no evidence that killing adults ‘works’; other gulls turn up within days to replace the dead ones.

David Harper, Senior Lecturer in Evolutionary Biology, replies:

IT Services to move

IT Services in Chichester 1 are planning a move to the building next door, currently known as Engineering 1 (ENG1).

When the campus computing services were restructured in October 2004 to form IT Services, this included IT staff who were located in a variety of buildings and offices around campus. This move will enable many IT staff to be collocated to open-plan offices on the first floor of the newly converted building.

IT Services will continue to provide all the services currently offered but the move will provide an opportunity to update and upgrade the user area.

Students and staff will benefit from a larger, refurbished 24-hour access area where they can use IT Services computers and specialist IT equipment. In particular, students will have access to a larger number of new computers and a more spacious, specially designed laptop area.

The new IT Services enquiries area is being designed so that staff on the help desk as well as service users will have more space.

There will be two training rooms for small specialist courses and/or larger group training. Other improvements include better heating facilities and the installation of automatic door push pads, giving 24-hour access to wheelchair users.

Many IT services will be unaffected by the move. Staff in ITS Arts and the Media Services Unit (MSU) will not be moving. The computer machine rooms in Chichester 1 and Sussex House will remain, as will all the ITS computer cluster rooms that are located around campus (except those in Chichester 1).

The move to the new building is likely to start in mid May, and be completed by the summer. To minimise disruption to students’ academic work, the 24-hour access user area will be moved during the summer vacation.
**Art event**

**For sale**: 3-dr purple Nissan Micra 1.0. Reg. 76K miles. FSH, MoT Oct. £495 ono. 5-dr silver Nissan Almera S 1.5. 52 reg (Nov 02). 34K miles, air con, CD, e-windows, alarm, clocking, FSH, MoT Nov. £3,295 ono. E z.peng@sussex.ac.uk, T 07900 983881 or ext. 89286.

**For sale**: Peugeot 306 LX, 1.9L turbo diesel, 8 yrs old, 115K miles, sunroof, CD player. MoT Dec 06, tax July 06. £1,500. T 07717 865926.

**For sale**: Fiat Brava 1.4 SX. P reg., 46K miles, new clutch, replacement gearbox, new MoT, tax May. £1,950 ono. T 07896 196790.

**For sale**: Fiat Cinquecento SX. N reg., 31K miles, MoT June, tax May. £800 ono. T 232248, E susansu@bols.sussex.ac.uk.

**Wanted**: English-speaking companion/nanny for 2 children (7 & 10) in Catalan family, in Ampurias on Mediterranean. July to mid Aug. Good rate of pay. E teixidort@aol.com or T 505171.

**To let**: 3-bed refurbished FF flat. Small balcony, gardens, unrestricted parking. London Rd, Venn Road. From mid Apr. £520 pcm. Faculty/admin/mature students only. E b.j.allen@sussex.ac.uk.

**For sale**: 4-bed detached house + 90ft garden in Hailsham. Garage, driveway, quiet residential street nr common pond & Cuckoo Trail. £220,950 ono. Ext. 8473, T 01323 849050, E a.j.lester@sussex.ac.uk.

**To let**: 2-bed furnished house in Hanover, May–Sep only. Inc weekly cleaner. Faculty/Pels. £715pcm. T 625858/77890 727633.

**Creative Writing Group**: Meets monthly in Balcombe, Mon 8–10pm. Interested? E k.e.stockland@sussex.ac.uk.

**To let**: Double room in family house in Lewes (station 10 min walk). Own bathroom. Suit mature student. £390 pcm incl. T Ted Nixon on 41323, E technixon@hotmail.com.

**To let**: 1-bed patio flat nr West Pier. For Aug 06. E575. Suit couple or single person. T 727066.

**Wanted**: 2- or 3-bed furnished house in B’n’or Lewes, to rent for 1 yr from mid Apr. G/F flat considered if with garden. Garage or off-street parking pref. For Japanese IDS Visiting Fellow & family (2 boys, 7 & 4). E watanebe@ru.ac.jp or T 678264 (Diane).

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**Academic events**

**WED 29 MAR**

10pm Genome seminar: John Yarnold (ICR). Breast mortality is falling: The contribution of radiotherapy. GDSG seminar room.

**THU 30 MAR**

6pm BSMS inaugural lecture: Mike Peters (BSMS), Tracking normal and abnormal human physiology with radioucdes. Mayfield House, University of Brighton.

**WED 5 APR**

1pm Genome seminar: Kenji Funaya (Sussex), title TBA. GDSG seminar room.

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**competition winner**

A member of staff will be enjoying a free stay at Blanch House Hotel in Brighton, and all she did was a simple bit of online research. Anne Smith, a clerical assistant in the International and Study Abroad Office, found out how many rooms the hotel has by looking at the list of University-approved hotels and guest houses (www.sussex.ac.uk/about/hotels). Anne’s reward is a one-night stay in the hotel’s best available room.

**PC software survey and review**

The results so far of the software review by IT Services reveal that the three most-used applications are Word, Explorer and Excel; the three least-used are Nivo, Nud*ist and Minitab. You can still register your views online at www.sussex.ac.uk/its/facilities/software/survey.

**Staff cricketers needed**

Sussex will be playing the University of Brighton staff cricket team on Tuesday 30 May at 6pm at the Falmer Sports Complex and Tuesday 18 July at 5.30pm at Brighton’s Falmer site. Any staff members who wish to take part, contact Neil Linstrem on ext. 82228 or 71225, email N.J.Linstrem@sussex.ac.uk.

**Temple Cup**

University staff and students are needed on Wednesday 12 July to compete against local companies in a number of sports for the Temple Cup. For further information or to enter, contact Mark Beresford on ext. 82228 or 71225, email M.Beresford@sussex.ac.uk.

**International Relations and Politics**

A departmental re-organisation has been agreed in the School of Social Sciences and Cultural Studies. The present International Relations and Politics department will be dissolved and there will be a new Department of International Relations. Politics will join the Sussex European Institute (SEI) in a new Department of Politics and European Studies.