University and Kew cultivate new research partnership

Helping to save the world’s endangered plant species and finding new medicinal uses for plants are among the ideas being considered for an exciting new research collaboration between the University and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

The new partnership, to be formalised at a special event at Kew on Thursday (31 January), is the latest development in a growing relationship between Kew and the University. For example, Sussex postgraduate students in Plant Conservation are taught by Sussex staff and by staff at Kew’s Millennium Seed Bank in Wakehurst Place near Haywards Heath.

Now, both institutions want to extend this relationship into new areas of scientific research that will benefit science and research at Kew and the University, to the benefit of academics, students, the wider community and the regional economy.

Professor Bob Allison, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), says: “This collaboration provides ample opportunity to explore the possibilities not just of plant science and conservation, but wider areas of Kew’s heritage and archive material. We’re sowing the seeds for exciting new research and I anticipate a fruitful partnership.”

Academics at Sussex have also identified research areas they would like to collaborate on with scientists at Kew, including:
- Conservation of plant species at risk of local or global extinction, both in situ and ex situ;
- The ecology and practice of restoration of plant populations and plant communities;
- Analysis and meta-analysis of large databases, for example on the seed biology and germination behaviour of plant species, and on physiological and biochemical properties (e.g. salt tolerance);
- Metabolomics (global study of all small molecules), and its application to studies of seed changes during germination, and root recognition behaviour;
- Exploration of the medicinal and pharmaceutical potential, and allergenic properties, of plant species.

Other ideas outside scientific research would involve Kew’s rich archival resources and academics with interests in art history, heritage and education.

To mark this development, Vice-Chancellor Professor Michael Farthing and the Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Professor Steve Hopper, will sign a special Memorandum of Agreement at Kew.

Following the signing, there will be a reception for invited guests, including MPs and representatives from key funding bodies.

Sowing the seeds: Exciting new collaboration between Kew (above) and the University of Sussex.

Make professorial lectures a priority

The Sussex Lectures series for the spring term began on 22 January with a fascinating talk by Professor Jane Oakhill (Experimental Psychology), which examined the problems experienced by some 7-to-11-year-olds with comprehending texts, and showed how her findings can help children to improve their reading skills.

Malcolm Heggie (Theoretical Chemistry) will give his lecture, on ‘Graphite: A new twist’ on Tuesday 19 January. This is followed by Rob Liffe (Intellectual History and History of Science), whose lecture on Tuesday 4 March is entitled ‘Atrocity, apostasy and apocalypse: Newton’s radical heroes in the digital age’. Finally, Andrew Smith’s lecture, ‘The flame of life: Teaching old enzymes new tricks’, will be on Tuesday 11 March.

All these lectures will be in the Chown Lecture Theatre, BSMS at 6.30pm.

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Farthing, is keen that Sussex academics should have the opportunity to give their inaugural lectures as soon as possible after they receive their professorship, so the programme of lectures has been extended to four per term.

Professor Farthing commented: “Professorial lectures are among the highlights of our academic year. Please make them a priority for your diary in 2008.”

If you would like to attend any of the professorial lectures, phone ext 7707 or email events@sussex.ac.uk to book a place. Full details can be found at www.sussex.ac.uk/lectures
Could the Universe be tied up with cosmic string?

A team of physicists and astronomers at Sussex and Imperial College London have uncovered hints that there may be cosmic strings – lines of pure mass-energy – stretching across the entire Universe.

Cosmic strings are predicted by high energy physics theories, including superstring theory. This is based on the idea that particles are not just little points, but tiny vibrating bits of string.

Cosmic strings are predicted to have extraordinary amounts of mass – perhaps as much as the mass of the Sun – packed into each metre of a tube whose width is less than a billion billionth of the size of an atom.

The four-person team are members of COSMOS, the UK’s world-leading cosmology supercomputing consortium founded by Stephen Hawking.

Using a Silicon Graphics supercomputer, they made predictions of how the strings would affect the Cosmic Microwave Background, relic radio waves from the Big Bang which fill the universe. They turned out to be the best explanation for the pattern of this radiation was a theory which included strings.

Mark said that better data is required before the existence of cosmic strings can be confirmed. He hopes this will be produced by the European Space Agency’s Planck Satellite mission (due for launch this year).

The results were published in Physical Review Letters on 18 January.

Priorities for 2008–09

The Council meeting on Tuesday (22 January) discussed and approved the University’s planning priorities for 2008–09. The priorities are based on a review of the previous year’s performance and an analysis of the emerging strategic plan (see this page).

The main priorities identified are:

- further development of business and management programmes – this is seen as the most realistic area for immediate step change and growth, vital for wider University development;
- increasing unregulated student numbers – continuing the drive to boost Sussex international and postgraduate research numbers closer to those of competitor institutions;
- improving student satisfaction – building and delivering on the NSS (National Student Survey) and other plans to deliver a much stronger student experience;
- improving research performance – aiming for research performance at Sussex to reflect the quality and potential of its research base and its status as a leading research-intensive university;
- infrastructure improvements to strengthen the staff and student experience – both through the physical estate itself, and in particular in relation to catering, retail and sports provision.

These priorities will set the context for the planning by academic and Professional Services units.

The priorities as approved by the Council are now published on the Strategy, Planning and Governance website: www.sussex.ac.uk/spg

All Council papers are published and staff can access papers from the ‘Committees’ section of Sussex Direct.
Help us improve our cafes

The University has invited two student film-makers to join in with the work that is already underway to plan and deliver improvements to food on campus.

Lydia Mediand and Lauren Simpson have produced a film, ‘Food for us’, which looks at the ethical and local sourcing of food nationally and on campus.

Charles Dudley, Director of Residential, Sport and Trading Services, attended the first showing of the film on campus.

He has invited the film-makers to join the work already underway on the University’s catering review. “It would be great to have the energy and enthusiasm of these students helping to inform the improvements we are planning,” says Charles. “We can add their voices and ideas to the hundreds who have already contributed.”

He added: “Responding to the kinds of issues that the film raises are absolutely part of the way ahead for food at Sussex.”

The first results of the catering review, which started in summer 2007, were published in December. It drew on the views of over 500 students and 600 members of staff; ethical and local sourcing of food and healthy eating were identified as important priorities for many.

Open meetings were held before Christmas. The staff and students who attended them broadly welcomed the proposed way forward.

The development of new menus and better café spaces that meet the needs of staff and students is part of the next phase of work. Proposals will be presented to the campus community towards the end of March, as part of continuing engagement on the development of catering and retail.

See www.sussex.ac.uk/catering/review for further information. Ideas and comments can continue to be sent to cateringreview@sussex.ac.uk

Taking our ambitions forward

I am keen that everyone at Sussex should take the opportunity to read and comment on the Green Paper that takes forward the preparation of a new strategic plan for the University.

The Green Paper, endorsed by our Council, lays out the proposed basic framework for the emerging plan and identifies more of the key strategies needed to deliver it, putting a sense of scale and detail around these ideas.

It also presents a series of questions for the wider University community to comment upon. You can access it at www.sussex.ac.uk/vc/ambition; to be an effective plan, this needs to be owned by us all.

The document explicitly builds on the earlier and extensive consultation throughout the autumn term on the document, ‘Setting the scope of our ambitions’. I am grateful to the hundreds of staff and students whose ideas and involvement have taken us forward to this stage.

For example, based on these discussions, I am keen we should sharpen the themes that we want to characterise Sussex – which might be around the “3 Is” of ‘innovation’, ‘internationalisation’ and ‘impact’. I want us to have a memorable, identifiable purpose and ambition. What do we want our university to be known for?

We have also begun here to put a sense of scale on the ‘step change’ that these strategic plans imply: growing by 25% in terms of turnover above current plans for 2011; growing by 2,000 in terms of student numbers; and a capital plan of £1.8bn over 10 years.

These are significant and serious ambitions for any institution. But, with commitment, I am confident they are the right scale of challenging and ambitious targets we should aim for.

Much of the growth will need to come from research and business engagement, and the enterprise agenda will be a theme of the next planning conference for our schools and departments in early February.

But wider than this, I believe Sussex should place renewed emphasis on community engagement and outreach, where we have much to offer and to gain.

The important discussions that PVCs Bob Allison and Joanne Wright are leading on research themes and curriculum development are reflected in the Green Paper.

I myself have started positive discussions with a range of colleagues about how we can strengthen leadership across the University, particularly reinforcing the role of heads of department as academic leaders and managers.

What do we want our university to be known for?

How can we get the right sets of responsibilities at each level, and have the best organisation that flows from that? This needs to be organic development – building on the best of what we have, not ripping up the plant and starting again.

Finally, it is critically important to me that these plans are sustainable – whether financially or environmentally. Much growth will be delivered from our own efforts, bringing in new income from student numbers and research. But we should look to make use of external levers for change and development – for example in bidding to the HEFCE Strategic Development Fund.

Comments are invited on this next stage by Wednesday 19 March. I will be seeking views at the open staff forum on 12 and 14 February and I look forward to discussion at Senate on 14 March.

All of this input will be vital in shaping the strategic plan, which will be developed for presentation in draft to Council on 4 April.

A longer version of this column is available on the VC’s blog at www.sussex.ac.uk/vc/blog
News in brief

Time to elect new USSU sabbys

Nominations open on Monday (28 January) for the Students’ Union sabbatical officers for 2008-09. Sabbatical officers are full-time paid positions elected by the student body. Collectively they run the Union with support from Union staff and working alongside a number of part-time elected student officers. Nomination forms and more information are available online at www.usss.info/elections. Nominations close on 13 February at 4pm.

Postgraduate Open Day

The Postgraduate Open Day will take place on Wednesday (30 January) from 11.30am to 2.30pm. It provides an opportunity to meet academic faculty representing a wide range of taught degree programmes and research subjects, and to talk to current students about life as a postgraduate student. There will be information on accommodation, careers, computing services and sport as well as how to fund postgraduate study. For details and to book, see www.sussex.ac.uk/units/ pgrad/open-days/

Study abroad with the Rotary Foundation

Do you want to spend a year studying in almost any country in the world? Students at Sussex whose study is funded by the Rotary Foundation are holding an information session on Ambassadorial Scholarships, World Peace Fellowships, and Group Study Exchanges. Undergraduates, postgraduates and university teachers welcome. It’s on 31 January at 1pm, in CDEC Seminar Room 2 on the second floor of Falmer House.

Audit of GTS rooms

An audit of General Teaching Space (GTS) seminar rooms takes place the week beginning Monday 4 February. Student helpers will check on each room and the number of occupants on an hourly basis. They are under instruction to be as unobtrusive as possible and cause minimum disruption to seminars. The Student Systems Office thank staff and students in advance for bearing with any inconvenience caused.

Undergraduates carry out original research

The School of Social Sciences and Cultural Studies (SoCul) is seeking students to be Junior Research Associates during the summer vacation.

The purpose of these bursaries is to provide an opportunity for undergraduates to participate in original research, with the hope that they will consider a career in research after graduation.

Any first- or second-year student in SoCul is eligible; applications must be sponsored by a member of faculty in the school who is willing to act as mentor.

Bursaries of £200 per week, normally for a period of eight weeks, are available. An additional sum of £200 may be awarded for essential research costs.

Last year, six students received funding for their projects. One of them was Justin Pickard (BA International Relations and Anthropology) who looked at the way activist organizations involved in labour issues in the global garment industry are starting to use the internet.

He particularly focused on user-generated content and social networking platforms such as Facebook and MySpace.

"I feel as though I have gained a real depth of expertise, something which looks as though it might end up serving me well in other areas of my life," says Justin.

"I may have successfully identified an issue area which I wouldn’t object to specialising in at a later stage either through postgraduate study or in the workplace."

Justin valued spending time with the other bursary recipients both in a social and work setting. He says: “Having a small group of people drawn from different disciplines and working on very different projects meant that you could always find a different perspective on any problems that you encountered.”

David Addison (BSc Geography) gained experience in the use of a Scanning Electron Microscope to analyse core samples from Greece and Peru. The work included searching samples for evidence of oribid mites, to demonstrate their use in the estimation of the growth and decline of llama - and by implication human - populations during the Inca period.

"I found the research bursary extremely rewarding in terms of the experience I learned, as well as the £200 a week, tax free!”, says David.

Application forms for the Junior Research Associate Bursaries are available from the SoCul School Office and the closing date is 5pm on 29 February.

Research students develop life skills

Research students at Sussex have welcomed a new course that develops their personal skills.

All first-year DPhil students, as well as part-time students in their second year, were invited to attend the intensive three-day course in Bramber House. The response was positive and the courses were oversubscribed. A total of 100 postgraduates applied for two separate sessions (from 9-11 January and 18-20 January).

Each student spent the entire course as part of a 'syndicate', working with nine fellow postgraduates from different departments and supported by a tutor. The team of tutors was drawn from industry, government and academia.

In their feedback, a number of participants welcomed the opportunity to work with DPhil students from other disciplines. Ronan Palen, who is in the first year of an English doctorate, said: "It was really interesting to see that we face the same problems."

Over three full days, the students in each group of 10 got to know each other as they took part in case studies, role play and other exercises to develop their transferable skills.

These included negotiating skills, decision-making, problem solving, team work and communications (such as giving presentations, networking, and explaining their research to a lay audience).

Many of the overseas students on the course were faced with the additional challenge of working in a foreign language. Participants reported that they “gained a huge amount of practical ideas” and developed transferable skills that will be “applicable to a wide range of situations”.

The course was developed and run by external consultant Gill Pullan of the GPA Partnership. She said: “By the end the students were more self-confident, more aware of the skills that they already have, and more able to benefit from their research."

"It is the most successful course I could ever have been involved in,” concluded one postgraduate.

The event was so successful that it will be repeated for the next cohort of new research students, in December 2008.

Gill is also working with staff at Sussex to develop a similar course for second-year DPhil students. This will focus on career skills (CVs, interviews, etc.) and will run at the end of this summer.

All articles are also featured on the internet at www.sussex.ac.uk/press_office/bulletin
Students celebrate success at winter graduation

Around 1,800 students will be awarded degrees at the winter graduation ceremonies at the Brighton Dome. Graduands, together with their friends and families, will attend two ceremonies, presided over by the University's Chancellor, Lord Attenborough, and the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Farthing.

Prize-winning research into migrant pupils

Reynolds, who graduates today (Friday) with a Master’s degree.

Grace, who now works as a TV researcher and film-maker, earned a prize for the best dissertation and gained a distinction for her MA. She is now working to turn her research into a documentary for Channel 4.

Her findings support recent calls from the National Association of Headteachers for better support for schools with migrant children.

Grace observed and interviewed migrant pupils at two secondary schools – one a large inner-city school and another in a semi-rural area. She watched them interact in the playground with classmates and talked to teachers, head teachers and focus groups with migrant students to build a picture of what it’s really like to be in a school with a large migrant community.

She says: “Many of the children felt isolated. Some told me of spending lunch breaks alone in the library trying to learn English, while others banded together for safety in groups, which could cause tension. There were many good stories too, though, of migrant children making friends despite difficulties.”

Grace found that the urban school, which had far greater ethnic diversity (students come from 45 different ethnic backgrounds), had learned coping strategies such as encouraging sport, music and other activities that cross diverse groups.

Grace says: “The focus on sport helped to bond people across groups. This is important, particularly where language barriers are a problem.”

She concluded that government-supported English-language tuition, along with migrant-specific support and initiatives such as good sports provision, could help to combat prejudice and encourage better inclusion of migrant children in UK schools.

New mum graduates with distinction

After successfully juggling full-time work and a new baby during her studies, Alexandra Loske will now be focusing her time on investigating the interior design of the Royal Pavilion.

“I had been working in the Sussex Language Institute for six years and I wanted to do something different,” says Alexandra, who graduates this afternoon (Friday) with an MA with distinction in Art History.

“I juggled working full-time with my part-time studies by working late every day and I only missed one session.”

Alexandra had to complete the last term of the course and also write her final dissertation, on 18th-century Oriental costume, while looking after baby Flora, born in February 2007.

“I would write while the baby was asleep and I received incredible support from my supervisor and everyone on the course,” says Alexandra.

Alexandra is now undertaking part-time DPhil research at Sussex, working at the Royal Pavilion in Brighton. The research - on the colour scheme in the Royal Pavilion and the links between the Royal Family at the time and Germany - is funded by a scholarship from the Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

Campaigner honoured posthumously

Student Robyn Tainty, who spent the final months of her life campaigning for greater awareness about organ donation, will be honoured today (Friday) in a special posthumous graduation ceremony.

Robyn, who died aged 24 in the Adult Cystic Fibrosis Unit at Southampton Hospital in September 2007, had battled all her life against the debilitating effects of the lung disease.

She had been waiting for two-and-a-half years for a life-saving double lung transplant and had been putting the finishing touches to her Gender Studies MA thesis in hospital when her condition worsened.

The University decided to honour Robyn’s outstanding academic work and her extraordinary personal achievements by awarding her degree posthumously. She has been awarded a Masters degree with distinction – the highest mark possible – for her research into women and binge drinking.

Her parents, Steve Large and Rae Stephenson, will take Robyn’s place in the graduation ceremony, collecting her certificate and shaking hands with the Chancellor, Lord Attenborough.

Steve said: “For Robyn, academic life was not just about study, and at school and university she lived life to the full. She had a wide range of friends and interests, and revelled in the independence of student life.”

Before her final illness, Robyn had been preparing to start research at Sussex for a doctorate.

Director of Gender Studies, Dr Alison Phipps, said: “Robyn was an outstanding student and a real intellectual in the making. She will be much missed by her tutors and colleagues, and I am delighted that the University is able to recognise her considerable academic and personal achievements at the graduation ceremony. Personally, I feel very privileged to have known her.”
News in brief

Open staff forums

The Vice-Chancellor’s open staff forum for the spring term will take place on Tuesday 12 February, at 2.15pm in Engineering 2 AS3; and on Thursday 14 February, at 11.30am in the Terrace Room, Bramber House.

Sussex Teaching Awards 2008

Nominations are now open for the University of Sussex Teaching Awards, which recognise individuals who make outstanding contributions to teaching and learning. The awards are open to all those involved in teaching, research supervision, and providing academic support for courses approved or validated by the University at any level (foundation, undergraduate or taught postgraduate).

For further information, see www.sussex.ac.uk/tdu/1.5-9.html. The deadline for submission of nomination forms is 5pm on Friday 8 February.

Memorial service for Stephen Medcalf

A memorial service for Stephen Medcalf, Lecturer and Reader in English from 1963-2002, will take place on Friday 1 February. The service is in the Meeting House chapel at 12 noon, followed by refreshments in the Quiet Room. All welcome.

Leaving do for Paul Feast

Paul Feast, who has been a key player in the Estates management team since 1989, is leaving the University to take up a senior position elsewhere. Colleagues and friends are invited to his send-off on Thursday (31 January) at 12.30pm in the Meeting House. RSVP for catering to Michaela Shepherd on ext 3289. E mjs39@sussex.ac.uk.

Bill Bott dies

R. W. (Bill) Bott, Emeritus Reader in Chemistry, died on 19 January. As a close colleague of and collaborator with the late Professor Colin Eaborn, Bill played an important role in the University from soon after its foundation until his retirement. He was the first sub-dean of the then School of Molecular Sciences and helped to establish the Chemistry library.

Discretionary pay review 2007

Following the creation of the new pay and grading framework, an interim process has been launched for the discretionary pay review of staff on new grades 1 to 9, which covers staff performance in 2006-07.

The procedure for pay review is designed to reward exceptional performance; defined as “a level of performance that goes significantly beyond that which would normally be expected from a member of staff in their role”.

Jane Summerville, Director of Human Resources, said: “Having not had a discretionary pay review pending the creation of the new framework, I am pleased that we have now put an interim process in place for all staff up to and including grade 9.

“Although the new framework provides appropriate pay levels and incremental increases for all grades, it is right we should be able to reward exceptional performance in a fair and equitable way.”

The payments made to staff will be effective from 1 October 2007 and can include bonus payments to individuals or teams, accelerated increments and use of discretionary increments. Collated submissions from schools and Professional Services teams will be put forward to Human Resources from Deans and from heads of the Professional Services by 15 February.

These submissions will be considered by a Pay Award Panel chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in late February, before recommendations go to the University’s Remuneration and Review Committee. Staff receiving an award will be notified of outcomes in March, with payment in April pay packets.

This review process is an interim one in relation to performance in 2006-07. Consultation on a substantive process for future years is under way with the trades unions.

Further information is available at www.sussex.ac.uk/Users/staffing/personnel/reviews/.

Update on IT Services

Daryl Hindmarsh from KPMG will assist the senior IT Services team during the next six months pending the appointment of a new Director. Daryl has spent the past year as Acting Director at Warwick University.

Daryl’s primary focus will be to assist in implementing major changes resulting from the Professional Services Review and the recent report by PriceWaterhouseCooper on corporate information systems.

As a result, to ensure clear lines of responsibility and accountability, the post of Acting Director of IT Services has been split into two roles.

Caroline House continues as Acting Director of IT Services (Service Delivery) and Daryl Hindmarsh’s title is Acting Director of IT Services (Transformation). These titles reflect Caroline’s continuing general oversight of IT Services and ongoing operations and Daryl’s role in implementing the change agenda.

Both Caroline and Daryl report to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Paul Layzell.

These arrangements will remain in place until the appointment of a new Director of IT Services (who will then assume responsibility for all aspects of IT Services). A specialist executive search firm is assisting with recruitment and an advertisement will appear shortly. Final interviews for the post will be held in early April.

First class

For her work in the local community on joint arts and science projects, Dr Natalia Beloff (Informatics) has been elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Manufacturers and Commerce (RSA).
LETTERS

Yet another masterplan?

I see yet another "masterplan" was included with the last Bulletin (11 January).

The last one I saw had the Science car park remodelled as a woodland walk, and must have cost thousands just to produce. As usual, nothing came of it.

So I am naturally disturbed at yet another "plan" coming out and the enormous costs involved just to produce it.

If, like the last one, nothing comes of this new masterplan, can I suggest that a significant saving might be made by curtailing these unnecessary and costly activities and maybe spending more money on academic posts, where it will be well spent and used?

Mick Henry, Chemistry

David Kirkwood, Director of Estates, replies:

I'm happy to reassure Mick that this is not "another masterplan" and, far from incurring additional costs, it has already saved us both time and money.

As the pull-out on campus development in the last Bulletin says, this is the very same masterplan that was developed in 2004. It does exactly what we said it would do - provide a framework for the development of the campus over the next 30 years.

It has already been extremely useful for streamlining discussion with the local council and other planning bodies. This represents a way of saving money as we develop the campus - by not incurring unnecessary additional planning time and costs every time we move forward with a new building.

And the fact that we have built Swanborough, and are now proceeding with the new teaching building, and are now developing plans for North Field and the new academic building - all sites identified for development on the masterplan - demonstrates that a great deal has already come from it.

The masterplan does indeed provide the concept for a new green space and buildings where we currently have the Science car park; as part of a 30-year vision for the campus, that's the right way to be thinking.

You can read more about the campus development plans at www.sussex.ac.uk/efm/projects

Let's use plain English

Am I just being a grumpy old man, or is "wayfinding strategy" not the most appalling neologism (Bulletin 11 January, "New map design")? What's wrong with "guide" or "directions"?

Please let's use plain English wherever possible, and avoid the gobbledegook beloved by consultants.

Incidentally, what's the difference between a "mapping design" and a "map"?

Dr Roger Luther, Mathematics

A pedant writes:

"Wayfinding" actually has pretty respectable historic and academic roots. At its simplest it means "how people find their way" - and it is therefore more than just a "guide" or "directions".

"Mapping design" means "how we design our maps" - and again is therefore more than just a fancy synonym for "map". Roger will be pleased that we did however avoid using the term "cartographic symbology".

Sussex generates own electricity

A newly installed, energy-efficient engine is generating around 20% of the University's electricity.

The Combined Heat & Power (CHP) unit provides hot water and electricity to the core buildings on the campus network.

When retired University boilerman John Goldsmith (pictured above) switched on the new CHP unit last week, it marked the completion of a £6 million, two-year project to install a reliable heating system on campus.

The project began in summer 2006 with the laying of 7km of pipelines under paths, roads and soft ground.

During the second phase, in summer 2007, two new boilers were delivered and hooked up to the pipework, which in turn was connected into 45 plant rooms in each of the core buildings on campus.

All that remains to be done is landscaping work outside a small number of these plant rooms and staff in Estates and Facilities Management (EFM) expect this landscaping to be completed by early February.

Paul Feast, who has been managing the project, says: "The new heating system will save the University at least £250,000 per year in gas and electricity costs.

"Additionally, it provides about a fifth of all our electricity requirements.

"More importantly it will be reliable - which the old system most certainly wasn't - and it will be easier, and consequently cheaper, to maintain and operate.

"It will also dramatically reduce the University's carbon emissions and our overall impact on the environment."

Toddlers' mini-marathon

Children from the campus Crèche have raised more than £500 for the Meningitis Trust by taking part in its annual Toddle Waddle.

Last month ten toddlers waddled around Mandela Hall in Falmer House and between them raised a massive £514, thanks largely to generous colleagues all over campus.

Meningitis B kills more children under the age of five in the UK than any other infectious disease.
Academic events↓

MON 28 JAN

3pm International Relations seminar: Roseleen Duffy, Flinders University, An impeding of gemstone mining in Madagascar: Transnational networks, criminalisation and global integration. Arts C233.

5pm Education seminar: Angelina M. Barrett (Bristol), Quality teaching and learning in sub-Saharan Africa at a time of expansion. Arts D110.

TUE 29 JAN

12.30pm Life History seminar: Jackie Blackwell and Rachel Steel, Our Newhaven: The setting up of a multimedia life history project in the town. Pevensey 1.2AZ.

2pm SEI seminar: Aleks Szczepanski and Monika Bil (Sussex). The invisible impact of the EU on Polish party politics. Arts C233.

4.15pm Anthropology seminar: Jamie Cross (Sussex). The educated, uneducated worker: Social politics and industrial production in South India. Arts C233.

WED 30 JAN

2pm Politics seminar: Neil Gavin (Liverpool), Global warming and the media. Arts C233.

4pm Social and Political Thought seminar: Andrew Williams (Warwick), title TBA, Brantmer House 242.

4pm Seminar: Wolfgang Stephan (Munich), The population genetics of adaptation. JMS Lecture Theatre.


5pm Migration seminar: Eva Jespersen or Shahin Yavou (Florence), Children and migration: Global issue, local concerns. Arts C233.

THU 31 JAN

1pm Postgraduate seminar: Daniel Sawyer (Sussex) and Calvin Davidson (Sussex), title TBA. Medical School lecture theatre.

1pm LifeSci postgraduate seminar: Chichester 3R143.

4pm Psychology seminar: Eike Gerhardt (St Andrews, Maastricht), Discriminating fact from fiction in recovered memories. Pevensey 1, 1B3.

4pm History seminar: Ian Gazeley (Sussex), Poverty in Britain in 1904. Arts A155.

FRI 1 FEB

1pm Biochemistry and Genetics & Development seminar: Kimberly Watson (Reading), Predicting function of unknown proteins. JMS lecture theatre.

4pm South Asia seminar: Devi Sridhar (Oxford), Understanding hunger in India: Choice or circumstance. Arts A71.

WED 6 FEB

2pm Politics seminar: Ed Mayfield (Sussex). A new right for the new Europe? The case of Romania’s Democratic party. Arts C233.

THU 7 FEB

4pm History seminar: Sarah Hooges (Warwick), Bioterror: Medical garbage in India. Arts A155.

FRI 8 FEB

1pm Biochemistry and Genetics & Development seminar: Ian Clarke (Southampton), The molecular biology of neuroviruses. JMS lecture theatre.

Small ads↓

To let: House in Newhaven. 2/3 beds. River views, garden, off-road parking. Unfurnished. £775 pcm. T 01323 490266.

For sale: VW Golf GTi 16V. R Reg., 126k miles, FSH, ABS, alarm/immobiliser, alloys. Dragon green. £1,350 ono. T 07776 746731.

Wanted: Inexpensive rental or house-sit, academic in 2008-09, for new lecturer + 2 school-aged children. E s.crangie@sussex.ac.uk.

Wanted: House or flat rental for visiting faculty member from USA for 4 wks 20 June - 19 July. If interested, house exchange also possible for house in Atascadero, California, with swimming pool (pictures available). Contact Beth: E b.blake@sussex.ac.uk; t 2717.

To let: Room in family house nr Queens Pk for visiting academic or PG; 2 nights p/w, Wed & Thu. (Poss of extra night if required). £20 p/n incl breakfast, wi-fi internet & tv. E c.sweeney@gold.ac.uk.

Holiday house swap. Interested in exchanging your house/flat later this yr for riverside holiday cottage in Snowdonia? Cottage (4/5s) belongs to retired academic working on archival records at Sussex and looking for short-term base nr campus. Timing flexible. E james.hinton@gmail.com.