Council approves plans for Gardner building

The University’s governing body has approved plans to refurbish and develop the Gardner building, which has been empty since April 2007.

Now that Council has approved the latest plans, refurbishment work could begin in 2009 and the main dedicated arts space on campus could re-open in time for the University’s 50th-anniversary celebrations in 2011–12.

Refurbishment, at a cost of £3.8m–£4.8m, would provide a flexible auditorium with a mixture of up to three stages and up to 500 seats; an exhibition gallery; a café; and three studios of different sizes.

The plans were drawn up by specialist consultants, who analysed a number of scenarios for the future of the building in conjunction with key stakeholders both internally and externally. Each scenario comprised a mix of the same activities (including external hire, internal use, teaching and learning space, research space, seminars, etc.), but with a focus on one activity.

The chosen option, which Council approved at its meeting on 21 November, proposes that the Gardner building (right) becomes the focus of a new Centre for Practice-Based Research in the Humanities, playing a central role in the academic programmes and research of the arts and humanities schools.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Paul Layzell, says: “The Gardner building is set to become an exciting and stimulating venue for the exploration, presentation and study of creativity and the creative arts.”

Activities might include:
- workshops (including a range of teaching and practical/practitioner-based activities)
- shows, exhibition and performance, spanning teaching- and research-focused work through graduate shows to student-promoted activity
- symposia, conferences, etc.
- residencies with national and international companies or practitioners
- exchanges and co-commissions with other universities, research centres and venues
- links to Brighton’s festival seasons
- special commissions generated by arts schools or the University centrally.

“These activities will help stimulate new approaches to learning and research in the arts and humanities, as well as contributing to a climate of innovation,” says Paul.

The next step involves further consultation with key people at Sussex (including the new heads of English and Media and Film) and external stakeholders (including the Arts Council South East and the Brighton Festival).

The business case for investment should be completed in early 2009. If refurbishment begins soon after, the Gardner building could re-open, with an established programme running, by 2011–12.

Crystallography on a Christmas card

It may look like a Christmas tree, but the image on this year’s University of Sussex Christmas card (above) actually shows the atomic structure of redox sensing repressor, a protein found in the human body.

The image was produced by biochemist Dr Darren Thompson (right), using a structure determined by X-ray crystallography.

Darren has recently been awarded a major research grant of £352,186 from the Medical Research Council to analyse the structure and stability of proteins involved in innate immunity.

His work involves using X-ray diffraction to determine the molecular structures of proteins under differing conditions, in order to understand more about their changing behaviours. This information can then be used as a basis for designing pharmaceuticals.

He also works in collaboration with colleagues in Chemistry, BSMS and the Genome Centre, helping develop drugs to tackle cancer, arthritis and cardiovascular disease.
Staff and students bring virtual campus to life

The virtual world Second Life has been creating quite a buzz recently, with virtual romantic liaisons leading to real-life divorces. While there haven't been such headline-grabbing activities on Sussex's own virtual campus, some developments have taken place since its launch in spring 2008.

The Tardis is in the 'sandbox' behind the Arts A building, for example, will transport you to the Library - where you can browse the catalogue.

And the InQbate creativity zone now has a virtual version of itself on campus - although space restrictions mean that it's found on a 'spare' plot of land behind Chichester 1 rather than in Pevensey 3. If you go into the creativity zone you have most of the 'real' features available: you can move walls or curtains, change the colours of the lights and watch a video.

Tom Hamilton, InQbate's director, believes that Second Life could be a useful dissemination tool. He recently gave a paper at an online conference at which people who were unable to visit Sussex in person could visit the virtual zone.

The InQbate team also wants tutors to be able to use the Second Life creativity zone to experiment with layouts and set-ups for their real-life teaching sessions.

In addition, they are looking for tutors who would like a 'risk-free' opportunity to see what Second Life has to offer for teaching and learning.

This opportunity follows on from a previous project, funded by InQbate and headed up by Dr Judith Good, to look at the ways in which Second Life could be used as a platform for innovative teaching experiences, exploring specifically topics that might be difficult, dangerous or even impossible to teach in real life (e.g. helping trainee police officers learn to conduct drug searches, or nurses to calculate correct drip dosages).

Students from the Informatics department's course on 'Interactive Learning Environments' worked in teams to produce virtual-learning environments in Second Life for external 'clients' from institutions of further and higher education. For more information on the project, see www.inqbate.co.uk/content/view/108/101.

The experience will be repeated in the spring term 2009, but with eight lecturers from across the Sussex campus acting as clients for the student teams.

Judith says: "This is a unique opportunity to have a talented team of students working to design an innovative virtual-learning experience that can address a real need."

Any teaching staff with a topic that might usefully be explored in a virtual environment are invited to contact Judith at j.good@sussex.ac.uk

For general information about Second Life at Sussex, see www.sussex.ac.uk/secondlife

Sussex strengthens particle physics

Two new physics faculty are negotiating to bring Sussex membership of the world's largest scientific experiment.

Dr Antonella De Santo and Dr Fabrizio Salvatore, who have joined the Experimental Particle Physics (EPP) group, are members of the ATLAS experiment at CERN's Large Hadron Collider.

The world's largest and highest-energy particle accelerator, the Large Hadron Collider lies underneath the Franco-Swiss border.

The ATLAS experiment, which was launched in September, aims to recreate conditions shortly after the Big Bang by smashing together protons. About 2,500 physicists from 37 countries are involved in the project, which aims to advance our understanding of the nature, structure and interactions of the particles that make up our Universe.

The EPP group's leader, Professor Philip Harris, says: "This is absolutely the ideal time to move into this arena. Once the formalities of joining are passed which we anticipate will take about a year - we will start to reap the benefits."

The Science and Technology Facilities Council recently ranked three areas of research that it funds as being of the "highest importance": ATLAS, another experiment at the Large Hadron Collider, and the so-called electro dipole moment of the neutron.

Joining ATLAS therefore significantly strengthens Sussex's research profile in particle physics, and makes it one of only two UK universities - the other being Oxford - that are involved in two of these three top-priority experiments.

The EPP group has also appointed a neutrino physicist, Dr Jeff Hartnell, to boost its effort in this area. Jeff and fellow group members Mr Lisa Falck and Dr Simon Peters hope to join an upcoming experiment that should help to resolve fundamental questions about the nature of the neutrino, such as how heavy it is and whether it is its own antiparticle.

Philip is delighted with the developments. "From being one of the country's smallest particle-physics groups, specialising in a niche area, we have evolved into a substantial group with leadership in three important aspects of the UK's future particle-physics programme.

"We are now superbly placed to go forwards with confidence into the upcoming grants round, and we anticipate that our new profile will draw many more students here to study with us."

Sussex symposium on genocide convention

Academics from Sussex and other universities will mark the 60th anniversary of a United Nations (UN) convention on genocide with a symposium in Brighton.


Sixty years on, scholars in history, sociology, anthropology and international relations, as well as law, have developed increasingly wide-ranging scholarship in the new interdisciplinary field of 'genocide studies', which has provided many new insights into historical and contemporary genocidal violence.

Speakers at the symposium on Thursday and Friday (4 and 5 December) will include Sussex academics Professor Craig Barker (Law), Dr Nigel Eltringham (Anthropology) and Professor Martin Shaw (International Relations).

They and other delegates will address issues surrounding three main questions on the current agenda of genocide studies:

- How have genocide and the patterns of its occurrence developed over the last 60 years?
- How adequate has the Convention proved, and has international law responded to new challenges?
- How adequate has the historiography and social science of genocide been in responding to the challenges of understanding genocide?

Organised by the Justice and Violence Research Centre at Sussex, the event takes place at the Friends' Meeting House in Brighton.
RAE results due 18 December

Academic faculty at Sussex and other universities are eagerly awaiting the results of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), to be published on 18 December.

The RAE is a huge exercise; panels of academics across the UK have been reviewing each others’ work in a total of 67 subject areas known as ‘units of assessment’ and judging its quality.

The four national funding councils will use the results to calculate funding allocations from 2009–10.

Sussex made submissions to 26 units of assessment and for 557 academic staff – representing more than 85% of the potential staff cohort.

Professor Bob Allison, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), has been spearheading the work for more than two years, working with research directors and heads of department.

He says: “The RAE results are hugely important to Sussex. They will have a significant effect on the University’s reputation and finances in the next few years.

“That’s why colleagues worked so hard to present our research activity in the best possible way. We prepared rigorously for the RAE and I look forward with confidence to receiving the results.”

The way in which the RAE is carried out has changed significantly since the last exercise took place in 2001.

Each panel has considered three overarching components: research outputs, research environment, and indicators of esteem.

The results will be published as a graded profile for each unit of assessment: 4* (research that is “world-leading”), 3* (“internationally excellent”), 2* (“recognised internationally”) or 1* (“recognised nationally”).

The Vice-Chancellor’s Executive Group (VCEG) will meet during January and March to discuss the implications of the results for Sussex.

The 2008 RAE will be the last one of its kind: the funding councils are developing a new national system for quality assessment and funding, to be known as the Research Excellence Framework.

Planning priorities for 2009–10

The Council meeting this month provided an opportunity for reflection on strategic issues facing Sussex, as well as normal business overseeing the life and work of the University.

That strategic context was very useful for confirming the planning priorities that Council has now set for 2009–10.

Prof Michael Farthing, Vice-Chancellor

We used time on 20 November to look at a number of key issues, including the internationalisation agenda for the University, informed by a review that consultant Tim Rogers (formerly of LSE and Warwick) has undertaken, and the developing research and enterprise agenda, with presentations from Professor Bob Allison, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), and Ian Carter, the new Director of Research and Enterprise.

Council endorsed the direction set by the Rogers review, which aims to strengthen our international standing through student recruitment, partnership working, student support and international staff.

We will be communicating and sharing that agenda with colleagues over the coming months.

One specific recommendation that we will be taking forward with due speed is the creation of an additional pro-vice-chancellor post specifically to lead on the international agenda – a characteristic feature of high-performing UK universities.

At the meeting on 21 November, Council signed off the strategic plan, which lays out the long-term aims of the University.

We will be publishing that before the end of term. That plan is of course predicated on growing academic activity in terms of volume and quality – drawing, in particular, on the University’s tradition and heritage of interdisciplinary working.

Within that context, Council also agreed key strategic priorities for 2009–10:

• increasing recruitment of international fee-paying students;
• expanding income from research and enterprise; and
• refocusing academic staff recruitment and development.

In relation to international students, Sussex currently under-recruits compared to peer institutions. Council expects to see significant progress towards implementing the recommendations of the internationalisation review and the start of a progressive increase in the number of international fee-paying students, particularly through a combination of refreshment of the programme portfolio and improved outreach activity.

In relation to research, Council noted that the 2008 RAE results (to be announced on 18 December) could have significant impact on the overall funding of the University, as well as on particular disciplines. As there are limits on the public funding of research, it will be important for the University to diversify its sources of research funding, especially from business and industry, and to pursue other diversification streams such as consultancy.

Thirdly, in relation to academic staff recruitment and development, Council is clear that investment in appointing and developing staff is critical to our success.

Academic leadership and a track record of performance at professorial level are vital ingredients in growing the University and Council wishes to see greater emphasis placed on the appointment of academic staff with a proven track record, in more senior grades. Council recognises also the importance of developing existing academic staff and expects the University to bring forward coherent plans for a more proactive approach to academic staff development.

These priorities focus on academic activities and the Professional Services support needed for delivery. They do not of course cover all activities that the University will be undertaking in the year ahead, but identify the priorities that we need to reflect in planning our activity for 2009–10.
Study Group success

Many of the students who had progressed from the International Study Centre (ISC) onto Sussex degree programmes this year received their foundation year ‘completion’ certificates in a lively ceremony on 7 November that focused on celebrating individual achievement.

Close to 120 students made the transfer successfully from the campus-based ISC to undergraduate programmes across a range of subject areas, including Business and Management, Law, Economics and Media Studies.

Study Group International (SGI) runs the preparatory courses in the ISC. The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Farthing, has signalled to SGI that it is the University’s intention to work towards an extension to the existing contract between SGI and Sussex, subject to satisfactory academic re-acknowledgement and revalidation processes in February 2009.

With both ISC admission and University progression targets being exceeded year on year, it is clear to both parties that the three-year-old partnership has proved a great success. However, spreadsheet statistics cannot reveal the human story that exists behind every cold digit.

Take Ruth Gondwe (third from right). Not only was this Malawian law student awarded the honour of ISC Student of the Year 2007–08 but, according to one of her tutors, Ruth was the best and brightest student she had taught in a 40-year career.

Ruth, who is now in her first year in the Sussex Law School, accepted her prize certificate graciously and made a warmly received speech that emphasised the importance of both attitude and participation in gaining maximum benefit from university preparatory courses aimed at international students.

Someone else who knows all about making a smooth transition from the ISC to Sussex is Soroush Ahmadi, who has thrived since travelling to the UK from his home country of Iran. Not only was he a star student on the Sussex-validated foundation year in its first year of delivery, but he has continued to shine on his BSc in Business and Management, in SPRU.

Ever adventurous, Soroush is currently enjoying the first term of his second year studying at Georgia Tech, in Atlanta, USA, and will return to campus in spring 2009.

With a Pre-Masters preparatory programme in Business, Management and Economics now added to the ISC’s offerings, its head Paul Lovegrove (third from left) can claim with confidence that the Sussex centre remains the flagship institution for the other eight ISC across the UK.

Grow your own food on campus

A University of Sussex society has turned a disused allotment on campus into a communal garden where like-minded staff and students can grow food and explore practical sustainability.

Sussex Roots got involved with the site behind the Brighthelm halls of residence after its private owners were unable to keep it maintained and handed it over to the University in the summer of 2007. After working hard for over a year getting the foundational structure in place, the society is now keen to open up the opportunity to get involved to the entire campus community.

Dulcie Few, a student who works on the project, is hoping staff and students will use the garden to rebuild a “real relationship” with food.

She said: “Ben, a second-year student who is heavily involved with the site, took some carrots back from the plot last year and his flat mates threw them away. They mistook the earth on the carrots for mould.

“We’ve become so accustomed to fruit and veg that is preened and polished and doesn’t taste half as good! It is wonderful to eat the food you’ve grown together.”

The society is also using the plot to explore permaculture – growing food in a way that doesn’t damage the environment. For example, instead of pulling up weeds when they appear, they flatten the weeds before covering them with hay or cardboard and then compost.

“When you remove weeds, you also remove the nutrients from the soil,” Dulcie said. “Growing in this way allows the new seeds to use the weeds as nutrients.”

They are currently talking to local artists about displaying eco-friendly artwork at the site, and hope to build a clay oven in the future.

For more information about Sussex Roots, go to www.sussexroots.org.uk or email sussexroots@susu.sussex.ac.uk. Alternatively, you can just turn up at the site for an informal chat. Members meet every Sunday from 12 noon.
Sports bursaries 2008–09

Three new undergraduates are among six students who have been presented with University sports bursaries for the 2008–09 academic year.

James Adams, Lena Erdli and Graham Monaghan, who all started at Sussex this autumn, join three other students who are now in their second year of receiving a sports bursary (Emily Llewellyn, Todd Leckie and Miles Gandoff).

The bursaries are offered annually to Sussex sports men and women who are of an international, national or high county standard.

The support package includes free use of University sports facilities; fitness testing and programming; physiotherapy/sports massage; a parking permit; a financial package; and regular mentoring sessions.

On 5 November the students received their bursary awards from the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Farthing, as part of an awards evening in Sussex House.

James Adams (History) (left)

Triathlon

James’s greatest sporting achievement has been competing in the world junior elite triathlon championships in June in Vancouver, where he finished 30th despite a training injury.

The 19-year-old from Crawley is hoping Sussex’s sports facilities will help him to achieve his goal of competing in the London Olympics in 2012.

This year will be his first at senior level and he hopes that, during his time at Sussex, he can establish himself as the best in the country. He said: “The Sussex bursary obviously provides significant financial help, and provides academic mentoring and access to the sports facilities on campus.

“The help is very important to help me achieve what I want to both at uni and in triathlon.

“My coach is based in Eastbourne. I moved there in my gap year to train full time with the squad there. It helped that Sussex is a very good uni and the history course is also excellent.”

Lena Erdli (Politics and Contemporary European Studies) (middle)

Windsurfing

Lena is Turkey’s number one windsurfer at junior level and number two at senior level. She came second in the 2008 Youth World Championships and was seventh in the Professional Windsurfers Association’s (PWA) official rankings for the 2008 world tour.

The 19-year-old aims to break into the world’s top three in the next year and then qualify for the 2012 London Olympics. She hopes that the sports bursary will help her achieve her goals. She said: “I’m working with a special fitness programme prepared by my tutor, which helps me a lot.

“The money is very helpful especially because windsurfing, unfortunately, involves lots of driving and fuel.

“I have been given a parking permit which is crucial for transporting my gear to and from the sea and means I will be able to attend races within the academic year.”

Graham Monaghan (Media and Film) (right)

Lacrosse

Graham is a Scotland senior lacrosse team player. This summer he was part of the first ever Scotland team to compete in the Under 19s World Lacrosse Championships in Vancouver, Canada. Finishing second in their group, it was the furthest a Scottish team has ever been in an international lacrosse tournament.

Over the next year, he hopes to cement his place in the Scotland senior team and get picked for the Celtic Cup and the British National Championships. He said: “The Sussex sports bursary has meant I am able to play lacrosse on a weekly basis – the nearest team is in Eastbourne which is expensive to travel to.

“As the use of the gym and personal trainers has helped me prepare so I am in the best possible physical condition to perform to the best of my abilities.”

Emily Llewellyn (SPRU) is a champion show jumper and last week won the 2008 Sussex Young Sports Personality of the Year after winning two gold medals in the Young Rider European Championships this summer.

Medical student Todd Leckie won gold at the BUSA (British Universities Sports Association) triathlon championships in May. Miles Gandoff, also studying medicine, was part of the Sussex men’s fencing team that won the BUSA shield in April.

Todd and Miles, both from BSMS, receive joint sports bursaries from the universities of Sussex and Brighton.

Student is ‘sports personality of the year’

Champion show jumper and Sussex student Emily Llewellyn has been named Sussex Young Sports Personality of the Year for 2008.

The Business and Management Studies student – who receives a sports bursary from Sussex – was presented with the award at a ceremony at the Hilton Brighton Metropole hotel on 21 November.

Emily was one of three youngsters in the running for the prestigious title after judges whittled down an initial list of 13.

The 19-year-old became only the seventh person in 27 years this summer to win both individual and team gold medals at the Young Rider European Championships in Germany.

Sussex graduate and road cyclist David Stone, who won two gold medals at the Beijing Paralympics this summer, was named as Sussex Disabled Sports Personality of the Year for 2008 at the same event.

The Sussex Sports Awards is one of the most important events in the county’s sporting calendar and aims to recognise outstanding achievements and contributions to sport across Sussex.
Gordon MacKerron to head SPRU

Professor Gordon MacKerron is to become the new director of SPRU - Science and Technology Policy Research.

SPRU is a world-leading centre for research, consultancy and teaching in the field of science, technology and innovation policy and management, and the largest centre of its kind worldwide.

From August 2009 SPRU will be part of the new School of Business, Management and Economics, which will also contain the current Economics department and a new, to be created, Business and Management unit.

Professor MacKerron will take up the post on 1 December. He said: “I am delighted to have the opportunity to lead SPRU. I very much want to help enhance SPRU’s world-leading position in researching, teaching and – critically – making a difference in science, technology and innovation policy and management.”

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Farthing, said: “SPRU is a proud part of Sussex’s reputation as an innovative, interdisciplinary, international university – and a vital part of Sussex’s future. This is therefore a major strategic appointment for the University.”

Professor MacKerron has been director of the Sussex Energy Group in SPRU since April 2005, following four years as Associate Director at NERA Economic Consulting in London and an earlier career for over 20 years at SPRU.

He is an economist specialising in energy and environmental economics, with a degree in economics from Cambridge and a Masters in development economics from Sussex.

His main research interests are in the economics, politics and technology of short-term and long-term energy policy, especially in relation to sustainability and the possible trade-offs between different energy policy objectives. He specialises in the analysis of electricity systems, especially the economics, regulation, innovation and politics of nuclear power.

In 2001 Professor MacKerron spent six months on secondment to the Cabinet Office as deputy leader of the government’s energy review team. He then assisted the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in its consultation process leading up to a major white paper on energy, released in 2003. From 2003-07 he was chair of the Independent Committee on Radioactive Waste Management, which developed a new strategy for government for the management of radioactive waste. He has frequently been a specialist adviser or invited witness before House of Commons Select Committee inquiries on energy subjects.

Professor MacKerron convenes the MSc in Science and Technology for Sustainability and supervises nine doctoral students.

Obituary

Gilford Ward, Emeritus Professor of Mathematics, died on 13 November after a short illness, aged 90.

Gilford was the University’s first Professor of Applied Mathematics, appointed in 1965.

After graduating from Cambridge in 1939, he spent the next seven years in government research establishments, working first on anti-submarine devices and then on anti-missile systems.

Although Gilford was a qualified pilot he never drove a car, believing it to be more dangerous than flying. Before coming to Sussex he was Senior Lecturer at Manchester and Professor at Cranfield College of Aeronautics.

His research interests were in the theoretical foundations of classical mechanics, and in fluid mechanics and aerodynamics. His book on Linearized Theory of Steady High Speed Flow was a classic of its day and for a time he was chairman of the Aeronautical Research Council.

Gilford served as Chairman of the Mathematics Division and as Dean of the School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences (MAPS).

His friends and colleagues will remember him as always courteous and attentive, with a fund of stories from his war-time experiences, told with wit and good humour, often over lunch in the old Senior Common Room.

His lectures were models of clarity and delivered in his, perhaps, old fashioned style – he always addressed his students by surname as Mr or Miss until his retirement in 1982.

There will be a funeral service at 2pm on Wednesday 3 December at St Anne’s Church, Lewes.

Peter Bushell, Emeritus Professor, Mathematics department
FIRST CLASS

Kirsty Flower, a research student in Biochemistry, has won two gold medals and one silver in the ASA National Synchronized Swimming Masters competition.

Fourth-year student Annah Herbert-Graham came runner-up for England in the essay and photography categories of the annual prize competition for UK students who have studied abroad under the Erasmus programme.

Annah, who studies Linguistics with Spanish, spent the third year of her degree working in a primary school in the heart of Barcelona. The placement was organised through the British Council Language Assistants programme, in which around 15 Sussex students participate annually.

Southern Ring Road to be resurfaced 16 December

Resurfacing works on the Southern Ring Road will result in a road closure on Tuesday 16 December.

A new road surface will be laid between the junction of North-South Rd (in front of the Medical School) and just before the main entrance junction that comes from the A27.

In the past it has been possible to keep campus roads open while these type of works take place but the high health and safety risk in this particular section means that it will be necessary to close the road.

Access to the Sportcentre, Sussex House and Visitors car parks will not be possible from 10am on 16 December. Any drivers who park in those locations before 10am will not be able to move their cars until the resurfacing works are complete, which is anticipated to be 5pm.

In addition, the access roads adjacent to Sussex House and Falmer House will also be closed. Any deliveries planned on that day will need to be made before 10am.

A walk on the wild side

The sighting of a Red Admiral butterfly, albeit a somewhat tattered individual, on some waste ground in Brighton on 19 November prompted us to wonder what effects the mild autumn might be having more generally.

Almost a year ago we reported on the number of plants that we found in flower during our New Year walk around campus (see Bulletin 11 January 2008). Although not a strict comparison as the New Year is still five weeks off, we thought that we would repeat the exercise to see if there was any difference in the number surviving the autumn and still in flower. Our New Year tally was ten and on 21 November our list was 22. This looks like a real difference but we will check in the New Year to get a legitimate comparison.

However, it was two plants that weren’t flowering that particularly caught the eye. They were both goosefoots; Red Goosefoot is a widespread plant of highly fertile soils but Fig-leaved Goosefoot is much less frequent.

What is interesting is that they have both expanded their range dramatically in the last 50 years. Fig-leaved Goosefoot in particular was formerly more or less restricted to the East Anglian fens and the London area but is now widespread south-east of a line from The Wash to the Severn. What has triggered these expansions is somewhat of a mystery as they predate most of the changes usually attributed to global warming.

The ever-shortening days confirm that winter is approaching and mean that the nocturnal wildlife of campus is becoming more obvious.

On several occasions in November we watched Red Foxes wandering brazenly through campus soon after sunset, passing within metres of people loudly enquiring whether they were seeing a fox, and whether their companions had seen one before. Before 6pm on many evenings, one or even two foxes have been warning on the lawns around the Mantell Building. Foxes do not “foot paddle” like gulls (see our previous Bulletin column, on 31 October), but cautiously stalk worms that have exposed themselves above the ground.

Some mammals come into campus buildings at this time of year. A recent phone call summoned us to “vermin” in a ground-floor lavatory in the Arundel building. To our surprise and delight, a Yellow-necked Mice was in the wastepaper bin: the pleasure paled considerably when she bit her rescuer!

This was the deepest penetration into campus that we have detected by what is usually reputed to a denizen of ancient woodland. Yellow-necked Mice closely resemble Wood Mice, which winter in many campus buildings. As their name implies, Yellow-necked Mice have a large patch of ochre fur on their throats; they are also larger than Wood Mice.

We confess that since we let our assailant go in the nearby Woodland Walk, she probably promptly returned to her comfy new home.
Academic events

MON 1 DEC
3pm International Relations seminar: Collen Bell (Bristol), The re-emergence of counterinsurgency and the politics of war, Arts C233.

4pm Languages and Linguistics seminar: Peter Reid (Sussex), Perspectives on free relatives in English. Arts A71.

5pm Education seminar: Gerard Delanty (Sussex), The idea of the university today. Russell Building 12.

6pm BSMS Annual Discourse: Richard Horton (The Lancet), title tbc. BSMS lecture theatre.

TUE 2 DEC
12noon Education seminar: Jane Henway (Morash), The research imagination in a world on the move. Gallery room 2, Bramber House Conference Centre.

2pm SEI seminar: Sara Birzer Hobolt (DfD), How voters decide in referenda on European integration. Arts C233.

4pm American Studies seminar: Eric White (Anglia Ruskin), Transatlantic print culture. Arts A155.

4pm Cognitive Science seminar: Marek McGann (Limerick), Times, minds and bodies. Pevenson 1 A17.

THU 4 DEC
1pm Ecology seminar: Dave Fisher Barham and Jonathan Green (Sussex), title tbc. JMS 4D14.

1pm Geography seminar: Kath Brown (Brighton), Trans in the gay city. Arts C175.

4pm Maths seminar: Roger Bowers (Liverpool), Can possible evolutionary outcomes be determined directly from population dynamics? Mantell 2A01.

4pm Psychology lecture: Daryl O’Connor (Leeds), The effects of stress on health. Pevenson 1, 183.

5pm Development lecture: Rachel Sabates-Wheeler (IDS), Migration, legality and poverty. Chichester lecture theatre.

FRI 5 DEC
1pm Biochemistry seminar: Tom Wilman, Use of cellular responses to starvation as a defence against viral infection. JMS lecture theatre.

2pm Environmental History seminar: Mark Hix, Some reflections on China’s use of energy, mainly in premodern times, prompted by Paul Warde’s ‘Energy Consumption in England and Wales, 1560–2000’. Arts D741.

2pm Life History seminar: Bransen Davies (BBC), Professional life-story detective. Special Collections, Library.

2.15pm Freeman Centre seminar: Patrick Urenna (Louis Pasteur), Running the marathon. Freeman Centre G24/25.

3.30pm Physics seminar: Nicholas Devenish (Sussex), MINS. Pevenson 2 S419.

TUE 9 DEC
4pm American Studies seminar: James Harding (Sussex), John Dos Passos, the new playwrights and Russian constructivism. Arts A155.

4pm Cognitive Science seminar: Aaron Storm (Birmingham), A new approach to philosophy of mathematics: Design a young, mathematically disposed universe. Pevenson 1 A17.

WED 10 DEC
12.30pm GDSC seminar: Frank Uhlmann (Cancer Research UK), Mechanisms of cohesion function. GDSC seminar room.

2pm Music seminar: Julian Phillips (Sussex), Notions of the new. Palmer House 120.

2pm Politics seminar: Dan Keith (Sussex), Comparative European communist party organisations. Arts C233.

4.30pm Art History seminar: Felicity Myrone (British Library), The topographical collections at the British Library. Arts A103.

5pm Media, Film and Cultural Studies seminar: Kate Lacey (Sussex), On listening in media history and theory. Arts D110.

5pm Migration seminar: Robert Thomas (Manchester), Asylum decision-making: Who is a refugee? Arts C233.

5pm English seminar: Marian Hobson (Queen Mary), Statistics, statuses and the average man. Arts A155.

THU 11 DEC
1pm Ecology seminar: Joel Peck (Sussex), title tbc. JMS 4D14.

4pm Maths seminar: Jeremy Levesley (Lancaster), Integration and point spacing on projective spaces, Mantell 2A01.

FRI 12 DEC

To let: Double room in 7 Dials balcony flat. Share with 26-yr-old F staff member. £450 pcm incl. E c.matthews@ids.ac.uk

Short-term let: Large U/F double room in 2-bed flat nr Preston Pk. £500 pcm, incl. N/S only. Suit visiting lecturer or mature student. Avail. 1 Dec–31 Mar. T James Bluring on 07766 395448, E jtb20@sussex.ac.uk

To let: 2-bed flat nr Hove station. Furnished or U/F. Sips up to 4, £1,200 pcm. T 07590 296372.

The fortnightly Bulletin is written and produced by Alison Field and James Haines. The next issue will be out on 12 December, with a copy deadline of 1pm on 5 December. We welcome any letters or small ads from staff and students of the University and can advise you on ways to tell people about your news or story ideas. Please contact us on ext. 88888 or email internalcsm@sussex.ac.uk.