

## February 2010



## Bath Spa Consults on Development Plans

Public consultation has started on plans to develop the Newton Park campus. The proposals are for developments that would include improved academic facilities, student residences and social amenities for students.

An exhibition of the outline proposals was held in the Michael Tippett Centre for University staff and students on Thursday 4 February and for the public on Friday 5 and Saturday 6 February.

The current plans are for there to be three new academic buildings in the first phase of the development. The first, and largest, will be home to an 'e-library' which will provide students from all disciplines with social learning space for collaborative work. The 'Old Library' will continue to house the University's book collections and provide silent study space for students and researchers. The first building will also provide flexible and digitally enabled teaching accommodation which will give staff and students from all disciplines across the Campus the opportunity to work in new and innovative ways. The second building will provide high-quality specialist space for the digital and creative arts. The third building will be an auditorium capable of holding up to 250 people: for lectures and public events. The guiding principle is that these buildings will deliver accommodation which is sustainable, innovative and agile, and fit for the purposes of a University committed to high-quality learning, and research, and an entrepreneurial agenda. Central to its conception is the synergistic and dynamic relationship that the architecture will promote between co-located subjects (particularly those in the creative and digital arts), and between those subjects and the new Library which will support and sustain them.

Discussions about the possible developments have been taking place between the University and key stakeholders including the Duchy of Cornwall, English Heritage and Bath and North East Somerset Council.

Issues relating to sustainability, environmental management and carbon reduction are considered to be key to the proposals, which are designed to provide better facilities for current levels of students, rather than to allow for expansion in student numbers.

Bath Spa welcomes comments and views on the proposals from anyone who has an interest in the University and its Newton Park campus.

For those who were unable to attend the exhibition in person all the information is available on the University website.



*Satellite images of football pitch in Haiti - before the earthquake (left) and after (centre/right) when occupied by survivors*



*Haiti Earthquake*



*Aerial photo of central Bath for digital mapping*

## University GIS Expertise Aids Haiti Relief Effort

Scientists from Bath Spa have been lending their expertise in digital mapping to help earthquake victims in Haiti.

Staff and students on the University's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) course were among experts worldwide asked to analyse 'before and after' satellite and aerial photos of the disaster zone.

The Bath Spa team could then advise relief agencies in Haiti, via a central computer, on the extent of damage to buildings, roads, bridges and other key infrastructure, as well as where refugees were congregating. The collation of all such data into a detailed master map is enabling aid such as food and medical supplies to reach where it is most needed and repairs to be prioritised.

Three members of Bath Spa's GIS staff – Alex Koh, Dr Esther Edwards and Dr Andrew Skellern – have been involved, together with a dozen of their students.

They are all part of a global 'virtual community', comprising 500 scientists and engineers. The newly created organisation, called the Global Earth Observation Catastrophe Assessment Network (GEO-CAN), has used the latest web technology to make a real difference for Haiti's shattered communities.

Alex Koh said: "We were glad to help and it's really heartening that research can deliver clear humanitarian benefits after such an appalling disaster."

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## Expansion of Digital Mapping for the Community

Meanwhile more communities in the Bath district have joined a new online mapping scheme involving Bath Spa's GIS experts. All 49 parish councils in Bath and North East Somerset have now been signed up for Parish Online, which supplies digital maps for each local area.

GIS staff and students at Bath Spa will advise the parishes on how to use this latest technology for communicating with their residents. It enables councils to mark up and publish on their website a local map showing anything from litter bin locations to crime hotspots. Each parish can 'adopt' a GIS student to provide guidance on making the most of the service.

The scheme has been rolled out following a conference at the University last December on how digital mapping can benefit the community. Our GIS team welcomed parish councillors from throughout the B&NES area, together with representatives from aerial photography companies Getmapping and Geosense, the People's Map and data supplier Spatial Technology.



## Bath Spa Live Reaches New Heights

Students staying awake all night may be nothing new but it has provided one of the highlights of the Bath Spa Live season. *The Insomnia Project* involved a group of our students writing, directing and performing a brand new play in just 24 hours.

Teams made up of a writer, director and five actors, none of whom had ever worked together before, took part in a highly innovative competition run by Bath's Cycling Fish Theatre Company. They had to perform not only in front of a packed auditorium in the University Theatre but also a panel of expert judges.

The winning play was *You Are Watching*, about life seen through the eyes of a CCTV operator. It was directed by Bijan Arasteh, who won the award for best director.

Another triumph for Bath Spa Live is its own, largest ever, production – Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. Bath Spa University Opera Project, featuring our Music and Performing Arts students, is staging the blackly comic tale of opera's most notorious womaniser.

This great classic provides our students with a fantastic opportunity to display their musical and dramatic abilities. Combining farce, romance, psychodrama and a ghost story, it is a perfect showcase for the next generation of performers who are training and taking their first professional steps in Bath.

Four performances at the Mission Theatre in Bath on 17, 18, 19 and 20 February will be followed by four more, this time at the Michael Tippett Centre, from 29 March to 1 April. See [www.bathspalive.com](http://www.bathspalive.com) for further details.



Music students Joe Gatley and Rachel Pitt play Don Giovanni and Zerlina



Students Ciaran O'Brien and James Cranston with the RTA Award

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## Liquid Soap Wins Student TV Award

Bath Spa's new student webcast comedy series, Liquid Soap, rounded off its first season by winning top award at the regional finals of the Royal Television Society Awards.

Liquid Soap – set in the toilets of the cafe at 'First Central University' - won the Fiction category of the competition at a packed event in Bristol on 11 February 2010. The students will go on to represent the region at the national Royal Television Society Awards in London in April.

Since October thousands of people have visited the [www.liquidsoap.tv](http://www.liquidsoap.tv) website and viewed the episodes.

The project was recently been taken over by the Students' Union and



Liquid Soap will be the first programme to be produced by its new BSUTV Society. The set has been installed at Endemol Studios in Bristol and Series Two is currently being prepared for filming in March. BSUTV also intends to create a range of other programmes for internet broadcast.

Liquid Soap will continue to be produced with the guidance and professional expertise of former EastEnders producer/director Chris Jury and Touch Films producer Nic Jeune.

Chris Jury said: "I'm absolutely delighted that the students have won this award. The Royal Television Society awards are acknowledged throughout the industry as highly prestigious commendations recognising excellence in practice."



*Jack Dean, Bard of Bath*

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### Poetry Student is Youngest Bard

Jack Dean, a 20-year-old Bath Spa undergraduate, has become the youngest Bard of Bath yet. He won the annual competition for the role, which is an honorary post to promote the Bardic tradition through talks and performances.

Jack is in his second year at the University, studying Performance Poetry as part of a BA Creative Arts degree. It's the only performance poetry module available at any British university.

Jack is the 14<sup>th</sup> Bard of Bath, or Caer Badon, since the title was revived in 1996 in a competition to find Bath's best poet, singer or storyteller. The post resurrects an Iron-Age Celtic Druid tradition where Bards were poets, musicians and history-keepers. All of them had a high status and a position in mystical and religious society.

As the winning contestant for the Bardic Chair Jack has received a robe and a beautiful carved chair, to keep for a year.

Jack is surprised by his success in the competition. He said: "My poetry is not exactly 'Bardic' and is more inspired by Hip Hop and Rap. However I am delighted to be the new Bard of Bath and I am already thinking up suitable projects to involve both students and local residents."

His plans for 2010 include "gigging furiously all around the South West", encouraging new poets and performers in Bath to emerge on the scene themselves and, hopefully, staging an open-air spoken word festival.

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Dr Dan Ashton

### Dan's Research Wins Academic Media Prize

Dr Dan Ashton, senior lecturer in Media and Cultural Studies, has been given a prestigious award by the Higher Education Academy's Art, Design and Media Subject Centre. He won the 2010 ADM-HEA Media,

Communications and Cultural Studies Prize for his paper entitled '*You just end up feeling more professional': Media production and industry-ready personhood*.

The paper draws on research undertaken at Artsworld Media as part of Dr Ashton's Research Fellowship, awarded by Bath Spa last year to fund a study on media industries, higher education and employability.

The £500 prize is presented annually at the UK Media, Communications and Cultural Studies Subject Association's conference. It is awarded for the best paper analysing key issues impacting on media, communications and cultural studies higher education. Dr Ashton's paper is being published in issue 10 of Networks magazine.



### Lucy Shortlisted for Children's Book Prize

A Bath Spa PhD student and Creative Writing graduate, Lucy Christopher, was shortlisted for the Waterstone's Children's Book Prize 2010. Her novel *Flyaway*, published by Frome publisher Chicken House, was included in a shortlist of nine books.

*Flyaway* explores the remarkable bond between a 13-year-old girl, a boy in hospital and a damaged wild bird. It's the second novel by Lucy, who graduated from the MA Creative Writing course in 2004.

### Teaching Fellowships

Congratulations to staff who have been awarded a Teaching Fellowship:

Prof Roger Heaton (Music and Performing Arts)

Robert Irwin (Science, Society and Management, Rising Star)

Miranda Lundskaer-Nielsen (Music and Performing Arts, Rising Star)

Joelle Adams (Development and Participation, Learning Support)

Ellen McWilliams (Humanities and Cultural Industries, Rising Star).



*Roaring success: Andy Burnett*

### **Andy Trains Like a Tiger for Half Marathon**

Year 2 Dance student Andy Burnett is determined to be fit enough to complete the Bath Half Marathon next month. His daily training regime involves running all the way to lectures at Newton Park from his home near Windsor Bridge in Bath.

He said: "It's hard work running to Bath Spa every day from home, but it's great preparation for the Half Marathon – and also I'm saving so much on bus fares!"

For Andy it's not just the challenge of lasting the distance on 7 March but also of racing dressed up as a tiger! He is running to raise money for an anti-poaching wildlife charity in South Africa.

His efforts have impressed the Bath Chronicle and the paper is featuring him as one of its 'magnificent seven' runners in the build-up to the event.



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### **Paw Pals Wanted for Cats and Dogs Home**

Bath Cats and Dogs Home is asking staff at the University to sponsor a pet – by joining its Paw Pal scheme.

The Home provides shelter and veterinary care for more than 3,000 animals every year. However some of them cannot be found a new home. Caring for these animals can be expensive – it costs £200 per month for one dog and £250 for a single cat. The Home, which has a non-destruction policy, needs financial support to continue looking after them.

By becoming a Paw Pal and sponsoring an animal through regular donations you will contribute towards their care. Call the Home on 01225 787321 or visit the Paw Pal section of its website for more information:

<http://www.bathcatsanddogshome.org.uk/pawpal.asp>

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### **B&NES Skills Fair 2010**

Any staff who are parents of young people aged between 14 and 19 may be interested in the B&NES Skills Fair, taking place at City of Bath College on 11th March, 12 noon - 7pm. The event aims to give young people the opportunity to take part in activities and talk to employers and education/training providers from various skills sectors.

For more information see [www.bathskillsfair.com](http://www.bathskillsfair.com).



### **Starters and Leavers**

The following staff joined the University in January:

James Treby (Domestic Services): Cleaner  
Elaine Orchard (Human Resources): Human Resources Adviser  
Michelle Murphy (Information Services): Trainee Developer  
Janet New (Student Services): Senior Admissions Officer  
Emma Sanders (Student Services); Senior Admissions Officer

The following staff left the University in January:

Bryony Blinman (International Activities): Head of International Recruitment  
Charlotte Newman (International Activities): Secretarial Assistant  
Rachel Pope (Catering): Sales/Kitchen Assistant  
Lucie Chichon (Human Resources): Human Resources Adviser  
April Setchfield (Quality Management): Admin Assistant  
Tereza Hayek (Student Services): Senior Admissions Officer