



The Inbetweener

Simon Bird on the perfect sitcom

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scan

STUDENT COMMENT AND NEWS

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Fresher's Week, Michaelmas Term, Friday 25th September, 2009

£3m Learning Zone open in time for Freshers' week

- **New landmark for Alexandra Square**
- **Flexible space for group activities**

Lizzie Houghton
Assistant Editor

STUDENTS WHO PREFER to study in a more flexible environment than the library finally have a viable substitute with the opening of Lancaster's new Learning Zone. Situated on the opposite side of Alexandra Square to its quieter alternative, the university hopes the Learning Zone will provide students with a more group friendly

environment to plan presentations, study and meet.

As of 5 October the Learning Zone will be open to student 24 hours a day. During Intro week the facility will be open from 9am to 5pm. The zone has comprehensive WiFi coverage, laptops available to rent and iMacs for research. The main study area has a collection of carousel style seating designed to facilitate group work. The facility also has eight bookable pods, which can be hired out for student to practice presentations or hold meetings in.

Amanda Chetwynd, Pro Vice-Chancellor (College and Student Experience), said: "The Learning Zone is an example of the university's commitment to providing a high quality learn-

ing environment for students."

Construction of the £3m facility began last year as part of a wider development of Alexandra Square and Bowland College. Despite the zone's official opening on 26 September the run up to Intro week saw building work running around the clock. It is likely minor work will continue after the facility has opened, with aspects such as furniture subject to change based on student feedback.

The zone can seat around 200 people, although many more can fit in. Some of the presentation pods include projectors, so students can practice slideshows. It is also fully wheelchair accessible and compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (2005).

Security of the 24 hour building will be manned by ISS during the day. After 6pm access will be with a valid library card only. Student ambassadors will patrol the building of a night time, supported by CCTV and campus security.

The project came as a result of comments given by students to the university. In 2007, the Lancaster Student experience survey found that, while students felt the library catered for the need to have a quiet place to study, there was a lack of group working spaces on campus. The survey also found that 20% of postgraduate students found library users were noisy at times. Students from the Management School felt happy with the group working spaces their own building provided.

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Artist impressions: The design illustrates how the space will be used

Grizedale Bar open at last



Full Story on page 3

Students left waiting two months for room deposit returns

Collette McColgan

Technical difficulties have been blamed for the delay in room deposit returns over the summer.

Students who lived on campus last year did not receive their returned deposits until 4 September, two months

after having quit their rooms. An email sent out on 6 July said the deposits would be refunded between the end of July and the beginning of August.

The email said the university could return the deposits at any time in the two months after the end of the tenancy, but students were led to expect that they could budget around the deposits being returned by the beginning

of August. The delay in the refunds was only explained to students in an email on 18 August, about a week after they were expected.

Candace Davies, residence manager at the College and Residences Office, said the delay in returning deposits to students was a "result of the need to thoroughly test our new software, which was vital to ensure all students

were picked up and received the right amount."

Michael Payne, LUSU president, said: "It is absolutely vital in the current economic climate that the University ensures quick and efficient transfer of deposits back to students at the end of the year. There are clear lessons regarding effective communication to be learnt, after all most problems have

arisen from students who were unsure of the situation or what was being done to resolve it."

Last year's room deposits were set at £190. Students who opted to continue living on campus this academic year have had to pay two of these £190 deposits, with the deposit for this year being held by the university from December 2008.

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EDITORIAL

Let's not forget that the Library needs funding as well

These new facilities are excellent, but it is important to remember that battles still need to be fought and won

What a difference a year makes. The first edition of SCAN from twelve months ago focussed on the takeover of the college bars by commercial services. The dramatic denunciation that this measure was, in essence, aiding in the gradual erosion of the college system and perhaps, even ultimately contributing to its eventual destruction was perhaps a little sensational for some more acquired tastes. It did, however, represent the action necessary and required for a student newspaper at that particular time.

Fast forward to the here and now, and the page preceding this one carries a positive message about the university's new facilities. Grizedale bar may have been a long time coming, but the initial judgements seem almost unanimously positive if one is to take on board the views of the students SCAN spoke to.

However, most surprisingly, the Learning Zone is now ready after construction work that appeared to last

eons. The luminous orange hoardings, which made Alexandra Square look like an eyesore, is now thankfully an item belonging to the distant past, albeit one that is seared into the memory for eternity.

The Learning Zone had a difficult gestation period to say the least. Initial outrage from Bowland College over the infringement to their space was tempered with the promise of a new bar and improvements to other college facilities. Tellingly, the Learning Zone is now here, but Bowland remains rooted in the past. The carrot was readily taken and the construction of the Learning Zone continued unabated.

This newspaper has expressed concerns in the past about the Learning Zone. At £3m it is a lot of money for a development worryingly described as an "experiment". There is still the possibility that this new centrepiece to Alexandra Square could be a 'white elephant', although concerns regarding its actual purpose and security for the building itself seem to have been re-

solved during the design and construction process. Above all, any significant investment in considerable new space for the student population should be warmly welcomed. This is a new building and as such, should be given the opportunity to prove itself. There is very little point in the vultures descending to deride the Learning Zone before a single student has set foot into it.

However, whilst the Learning Zone will in all probability be a success and should be given as much support as necessary to help it function effectively; it is important that other crucial student facilities are given the attention and money to flourish.

Across from the Learning Zone, the library is now entering a new phase in its history. Claire Powne was announced in August as the new librarian, replacing Jacqueline Whiteside who had occupied the post for over 15 years.

It is vital to understand that the library is the ultimate facility for students at this university, though it rarely

appears to receive the attention it deserves. Its funding has fluctuated over the last three years and although some progress has been made over extended opening hours, Lancaster lags light years behind institutions such as the University of Liverpool, where students can enjoy 24 hour library access.

Ms. Powne has had considerable experience at universities as diverse as Sydney and Durham, and will need to bring this experience to her new role. Consultation with students on how to improve the library is a must and she must be vocal enough to ensure that her superiors listen to what needs to be done.

A Learning Zone is all well and good and that is why it has received positive column inches in this edition of SCAN. However, until the library has 24-hour access, like its neighbour across the road for instance, students in Lancaster will still have something to battle against. And if and when a battle does arise, SCAN will be there at the forefront ready to fight.




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Anyone for Cocktails? One year later and Grizedale students finally toast their bar

• **Rejuvenation of college space cost over £3m**

Claire Blackburn

HAVING SPENT A year without, Grizedale College finally has its bar and social space back, putting an end to its temporary residence in Pendle. The new Grizedale cafe and bar will be officially reopened on 16 October, but it will be doing business before then, most crucially in time for Freshers' week.

The old Grizedale bar was completely demolished last August as part of a project of redeveloping the college. The new bar has a more cosmopolitan flavour than its predecessor, serving cocktails and lattes and having a far more open layout. Chaz Ginn, Grizedale's joint JCR President, said: "It's very different to the other bars on campus which is excellent. It has a very vibrant and fresh feel to it and it looks great, both as a cafe and a bar, and I'm sure it will serve its dual purpose brilliantly."

The new bar's cafe menu includes a choice of espresso drinks, frappes and chai lattes. The cocktail menu ranges from 'house classics' mojitos and cosmopolitans to the 'gz', a mixture of Bailey's, Kahlua and half cream.

Whilst their bar was out of action, Grizedale had to share with rival college Pendle. Grizedale and Pendle JCRs spent the last year coordinating their college events so that the two didn't clash in the same space. Paul Lynch, Grizedale JCR vice president, explained: "It's been incredibly hard on the students. A lot of people didn't really feel the college spirit what with trying to encourage them to chant and

learn songs and everything in Pendle bar. Socials this [last] year haven't been very well attended, in large due to this.

"However, we can't thank Pendle College enough for all their help. They have been utter

legends to us, even rearranging their social calendar at last minute to accommodate us."

Plans for the £3m complete reconstruction of Grizedale began back in 2005, with new residences being rebuilt by 2007. Grizedale JCR was involved in the redevelopment plans from the start. Ginn and her co-president Lauren Emery were invited to meet the contractors and previous Execs had been involved with the consultation and planning. "In terms of consultation with the JCR Exec I thought that was great and ultimately we got the majority of what was wanted and asked for."

Ginn added: "We don't have a single original building remaining but this bar sets off the fresh and exciting feel the new accommodation has and clearly Grizedale is stepping out from its old prison style look to something much more cosmopolitan and modern."

Father Hugh Pollock, Grizedale's Principle agreed, saying: "The building was necessary to update the bar, offices and social space and to move the power station which had to be done for the new Management building. I have to say that I am very glad the University decided to rebuild it when there has been such controversy over the bars."

"After a few teething problems which you will get on any development, I am very happy with the new building, but we will have to see how it works for the students, that is the real test. It is a far more modern design that the old Grizedale Bar, and there are differences that people will have to adjust to, though not many of our current students will remember the old bar by now."



All mod cons: The new bar and JCR is split over three levels, complete with trendy, modern furniture.

Vox Pop: What you're saying about Grizedale Bar

"The new bar looks nice and posh and I could see myself having a drink in it whilst I did some work but it's not a proper pub. It's a bar. Therefore it's not as good as it could be. I'm looking forward to the fact that the building work will be done."

David Broadhurst, Grizedale

"Giving the bar some soul, spirit and that warm feeling to restore Grizedale back to its title as the social college."

Ben Stanford, Grizedale

"It's going to be really good. Will be nice to have some independence finally. Looking forward to the cocktails & all the new events."

Elizabeth Wilde, Grizedale

"I just think that the bar will bring back the college spirit, as I think that the bar is what brings a college together, kind of like the heart of the college so now we have our heart back."

Melody Wilson, Grizedale

We put our taste testers into action to sample Grizedale's new cocktails Page 21

£3m Learning Zone open in time for Fresher's Week

Continued from front page

THE SAME YEAR the Learning Zone planning group was formed, with representative from the university and students union. A forum was set up on MyPlace for staff and students to give feedback on designs for the zone, and students were also invited to try out different style of furniture and comment on preferred layouts.

Chetwynd added: "The design has incorporated the suggestions that

were fed through by the student survey which asked second year students and postgraduates about their future needs and it's great now to see such a welcoming learning space in the centre of campus open to all students 24/7."

David Summers, Lancaster's acting librarian, welcomes the choice the Learning Zone has given students and believes the library and zone will complement each other. He said: "The Learning Zone is a fantastic development and we are excited about it. Students work in a wide variety of

different ways nowadays, particularly with the increasing emphasis on group projects and presentations, and those at Lancaster will now have a much wider choice of study environment."

On campus 24 hour access group and study space has been a bone of contention for students for many years. Lancaster University Students Union (LUSU) was involved in the Learning Zone project from the beginning, having lobbied the university for such a facility. The union was consulted on the design, usability, functionality and

operation of the Zone.

LUSU President Michael Payne said: "LUSU is and always has been fully supportive of 24 hour access group and learning space on campus. The Learning Zone has been specifically designed with the needs of students in mind and I would urge all students to make effective use of this positive investment."

Payne and Vice President (Academic Affairs), Danny Owens, have established a Learning Zone users group, which will provide feedback on the use of the Learning Zone.

Green SCAN

BEGINNING WITH THE issue you are currently reading, SCAN is to be printed on 100% recycled paper.

The long-awaited transition is in line with current LUSU policy. The recent opening of the Green Lancaster Hub in July was the prime indicator of this new stance by the union regarding environmental measures.

SCAN is printed by Trinity Mirror, based in Cardiff, and is available in paper format to over three thousand readers. Going green will also save money on spiralling printing costs.

LUSU Opportunities Group

Electric response in Parliament to LUVU's Voltage initiative

Lauren Hirst

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY'S VOLUNTEERING Unit was launched in September 2002 with the hope to get university students more involved in the local community and was funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

Since then the initiative has introduced a variety of different projects, the most successful being Voltage. The project, which was launched in 2002, helps young people who have had a difficult upbringing, to create their own social enterprises and create a better future for themselves. It has helped many vulnerable youngsters turn their lives around.

Earlier this year, Voltage received recognition from the government for its work tackling social problems such as homelessness. On Tuesday 30th June, 15 youngsters from the Voltage initiative, including volunteers from Lancaster University, travelled to the House of Commons to meet with Cabinet Minister, Jack Straw, to demonstrate their extraordinary work. Debbie

Willkie is one of the 15 attendees, along with Andrew Clairie, who presented his own experiences at the summit. Wilkie's life took a complete 180 when she got involved with Voltage and has since become the managing director of her very own company which is worlds away from her life on the streets just two years previous.

"We believe we are delivering a project like no other in the country and we are thrilled and honoured that the government wants to learn more about what we're doing" said Matthews.

Jack Straw said "Young people often get bad press, but what Debbie and the Voltage project are showing is that if we focus on unlocking their talents they can find ways to improve their communities and our society".

LUVU also received The Investing in Volunteer standard award for its hard work and dedication.

As well as the successful Voltage project, there are many other initiatives for students and youngsters to get involved in such as Safe which works in partnership with Lancashire Constabulary to help reduce the rate of door crime and also working with older and more vulnerable people to feel safer

and at ease in their own home.

Placements play a major role in LUVU by allowing students to gain more experience working with people who they would not normally encounter in everyday life. In the Energisers initiative, students can work with hard-to-reach young people aged 16-18 years. On the other hand, they can work with primary and high school students in the Schools Partnership project where it can benefit both yourself and the youngsters in the classroom by developing new skills and, in the process, inspiring them.

Currently, LUVU has 400 volunteers getting involved with the projects. However, "in the next two years we hope to have at least 1000 students taking part in one or more of our projects" said Matthews. "It keeps growing year on year".

* TO GET involved with LUVU you can either visit the website at www.luvu.org.uk or call Ben Matthews on 01524 592828. During week 3, term 1, there will also be Intro Talks where you can drop in and get information on the different LUVU project happening around campus.



Danger high voltage: LUVU staff with young volunteers outside Parliament

LUSU and Facilities combine resources to support Green Lancaster project

- **Eco-friendly hub opened as part of initiative**
- **Range of projects launched include carbon emission cutting.**

Lauren Hirst



Going green: Visitors attend grand opening of Green Lancaster Hub

WITH A MISSION to promote environmental issues to students and young people, not only around campus but also in the Lancaster area, GreenLancaster hopes to keep the green banner flying high for Lancaster University.

GreenLancaster was originally set up by Thomas Roberts, a PHD student at Lancaster University and has been running for a number of years. However, last April, the initiative was successful in their bid to receive funding from the youth volunteering charity, V, as well as the Universities' facilities department, allowing GreenLancaster to employ three full time members of staff and open the new, eco-friendly GreenLancaster Hub.

On the funding that GreenLancaster has received, Mark Taylor, manager of GreenLancaster commented that "before GreenLancaster was very limited as it did not have the means, but now we have the financial support to make a bigger impact on the university."

The New GreenLancaster Hub was opened on Tuesday 14th July by the Chair of the University Estates Committee, Gary Middlebrook, Director of Facilities, Mark Swindlehurst, and LUSU President, Michael Payne. It is here, within the electric lime green walls where volunteers can call in to find out what's going on and how they can get involved with the variety of different projects on offer.

The Carbon Competition is still going strong and will be in its third cycle this term. Joining Grizedale and County in trying to reduce their carbon emissions is Pendle, who will battle it out amongst each other to win the title of the most eco friendly flat and will collect a group prize for their hard work.

Currently, the Green Living Project is in full swing which allows a team of students to run the organic garden on campus, in conjunction with setting-up and maintaining a chicken coup.

GreenLancaster will, also, be recruiting volunteers to act as Carbon Ambassadors here at the University, providing on-campus energy audits and advice to academic departments and student residents.

GreenLancaster has additionally managed to organize projects that will enable students to venture off campus. There are a number of interesting volunteering opportunities with local organizations, including the RSPB and Lancashire Wildlife Trust. Or for those who are more at ease working with children, students can help out at local schools where they can assist and support them to deliver environmental education and work towards Eco-School status.

Taylor said "Our main aspiration is to have a wide variety of different projects for students to get involved in and keep the university as green as possible. GreenLancaster is going from strength to strength."

County student wins year's supply of stationery



Lucky prize winner: Connor Wilson is the winner of a national competition, bagging himself a year's free stationery courtesy of Ryman's.

A SECOND YEAR history student has won a year's supply of stationery in a national competition.

Connor Wilson, a County student entered the competition a year ago af-

ter applying at Freshers Fair and successfully scooped the £250 first prize, courtesy of Ryman, owned by Dragon's Den star Theo Paphitis. Connor plans to share his prize with friends.

Hewitson the proof that student business is thriving, thanks to a little help from Create

- **Lancaster's own version of Dragon's Den**
- **Create responsible for success of number of student businesses**

Lauren Hirst

THINK DRAGON'S DEN but without the camera crew, Create offers students the opportunity to become their own boss and start up their very own business.

Opened by LUSU in September 2005, Create was launched with the hope to help Lancaster University's students become more attractive to prospective employers, giving them a kick start into the world of work.

Create has assisted many youngsters to found their own businesses, by giving them advice and support, helping them to start-up funding as well as providing them with free workshops on

PR and marketing. The soup manufacturer, S'UP, in the LUSU shop is just one of the many businesses that Create have helped to launch with the company winning the 2008 Best Student Friendly Business Award.

Absolutely anyone can get involved with Create, whether you have a business idea, invention or product and would like to find out if it is viable to succeed in a risk free zone. Or you already have a business and would just simply like some help. On the other hand perhaps you just need some help with generating a business idea, Create are here to help what ever the problem is.

When discussing his aspirations for Create, Joe Buglass, manager of Create, wishes "to help develop the first multi million pound student business" and "to genuinely help students raise their employability and help them to try out their ideas. This term is our biggest and best yet!"

Thanks to the helping hands at Create, Lancaster University graduate, Faye Hewitson, has been able to set up her very own business.

On the 16th June 2009, Hewitson



Cheerleading to Success:
Faye Hewitson has established a successful business

was able to turn her dream into a reality when she opened the Cheerleading club, the Bay Stormers, in Lancaster. After regularly passing Create on her way to lectures, Hewitson decided to call in to the Create office and has never looked back.

"The reason I went to Create was be-

cause I had no idea where to start when setting up a business," stated Hewitson. "Create take no rewards from helping you and I thought that I had nothing to lose in using their expertise."

Once getting in contact with Create, Hewitson was able to receive the guidance and assurance she needed to start up her own business. Joe Buglass, manager of Create, ensured Hewitson was given the best possible information by enabling her to get in touch with local professionals who would answer questions and offer advice and suggestions.

"I think that the approach Create takes to helping young people set up a business is brilliant! The opportunity to take part in a Dragon's Den scenario certainly helped me in which I was awarded a £1000 grant," claimed Hewitson.

Hewitson, 22, only started cheerleading at age 19, when she began her University education. However, from an early age she has been involved with both dance and gymnastics and loved the ideas of incorporating both disciplines into one.

Currently, the Bay Stormers has

20 pupils who can attend classes up to twice a week, where they will be able to learn the techniques and movements involved in cheerleading as well as life skills such as team work. Additionally, Hewitson, has began hosting dinner time clubs as well as after school clubs at some local school and in the near future she will launching classes in a community centre.

On hopes for the future, Hewitson is hoping to evolve the cheerleading school into a full time job and with a bit of luck franchise the cheerleading club so that she would be able to launch several clubs around the North West with her next move being Kendal.

"I would undoubtedly recommend Create to anybody thinking about setting up a business," said Hewitson.

Faye has just been awarded Student Business of the Year in association with the Student Friendlies in Lancaster and has also managed to organize a performance at Asda supermarket in October to showcase the Bay Stormers' talents.

Find out more information about Faye, you can visit the website at www.baystormers.co.uk.

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Lancaster Loves: First ever electro music festival heading this way

Claire Blackburn

LANCASTER IS TO host its first ever music festival this month, with a line up of 30 DJs set to perform across four venues.

Lancaster Loves '09, which takes place on 6 October, will be headlined by some of electro music's biggest stars. The main act, Kissy Sell Out, has remixed many famous artists and currently has his own show on BBC Radio One.

"I did this festival to bring something new to Lancaster," said Dan O'Donnell, the event's organiser. "I have just graduated myself from Lancaster after studying Music Technology and always wished there was a large scale event like this with such credible and recognised artists.

"If you live in Lancaster, or have ever been to Lancaster, you will know that these types of events do not happen. This festival will place Lancaster firmly on the map for electronic music".

The 12 hour music festival will be taking place in the Sugarhouse, Toast and the surrounding outside areas, beginning at 5.00 pm. The line up in-



Moving in on the festival scene: It may not be summer, but Lancaster is proving that the festival season is not over with Lancaster Loves, a 12 hour extravaganza of electro music. Some amazing acts such as Scratch Perverts will be on show at an event that is the first of its kind for the area.

cludes big stars like Scratch Perverts, Grooverider, Doorly, Krysko, Shy FX, N-Type, The Whip and Andy Mac, a resident DJ at Cream. Our own resident DJs, Dirty Dan and DJ Simba, will also be on the bill.

It has taken O'Donnell, a professional DJ, four months to organise the festival. "Most of my time has been spent on negotiating deals with the agencies that the DJs are part of," he said. "Agencies are very difficult to

get hold of which is why it has taken so long. [There's] also designs for the event and health and safety. It all adds up". He added that just getting the superstar DJs to come to Lancaster was hard in itself.

As well as the acts there are food vans and an open top VK bus.

"It's the best thing that has happened to Lancaster in a long time, I wouldn't miss it for the world," said David Broadhurst, a current Grizedale

student.

O'Donnell revealed that he is planning three more big parties this year and hopes that his events will create jobs for students who want to get involved with the promotion.

Tickets for the festival, priced at £19.50, are available from the LUSU shop, Lonsdale Bar, Reef Clothing or online from www.skiddle.com. This is not a student only event, and is expected to sell out.

Payne elected chair of Unions94

LUSU PRESIDENT MICHAEL Payne has been elected as chair of the student unions' group, Unions94.

Established in 2007, Unions 94 acts as an independent sister group to the 1994 Group, a collection of 19 research intensive universities across the UK. Lancaster's Vice Chancellor, Paul Wellings, is currently chair of the 1994 Group.

"I think what Unions94 should be doing throughout what will be a very difficult year in higher education is making sure that it's shaping national policy of the NUS on behalf of its members, supporting student unions within the group and dealing with issues around the higher education sector at large," said Payne.

"It should also be ensuring they're putting significant pressure on the 1994 Group to represent our members to government and making sure that the views of the 1994 Group are what our members actually believe. But we must also be supportive of the 1994 Group where we can. So if student unions and university management agree on key issues we should be speaking as one voice."

Payne takes over the role from the University of Exeter's student union president, John Cox.



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LUSU announce new comedy nights on campus

Luke Anderson

LUSU HAS ORGANISED a series of fortnightly stand-up comedy nights to be held in Barker House Farm throughout the Michaelmas term.

In conjunction with JCRs, LUSU's Vice-President for Finance, Events, Democracy and Societies (FEDS) Andy Johnston has collaborated with Comedy Central Live, a contract agency that provides two professional circuit comedians for live performances at night.

Confirmed dates are Thursdays in Weeks 2, 4, 6 and 8. The events will be open to all students and priced under £5, with a possible discount for Purple Card holders.

The idea was introduced at the end of last year in meetings with JCR presidents, social secretaries, former LUSU General Secretary Janie Coleman and entering VP Andy Johnston. "The JCRs came up with the idea and pushed Janie Coleman and myself to put a proposal together for it," said Johnston.

"The Events committee want to try out a new idea for campus, utilising college space but not focused around drinking and bands," he added. With last year's notorious Friday Fury being



Comedy Central: The comedian Chris Mayo will be appearing at Barker House Farm on the 29th October.

the student union's event, Johnston feels it is time to include "something a bit different, relaxed and cheap."

Robbie Pickles, President of Cartmel JCR, supports the events wholeheartedly. "This could be the best organized event by LUSU in a long time," he said. Pickles hopes that Cartmel's involvement will not only allow a large number of guests but also boost the number of people who return to the bar, which had a disappointing amount of visitors last year.

Johnston is championing more inclusive university-wide events and improving cohesion between the student union and JCRs, something Pickles feels he has so far succeeded in. "[Andy] was very good to work with; he kept us

all informed on each step," he said.

Each night will feature three comedians on the bill who are all rising stars in the profession. For the first comedy night on the 15th October Joe Bor and Matt Blaize have been confirmed with an additional act as yet unnamed. Performers in later weeks include Chris Mayo, Barry Castagnola, Sally-Anne Hayward and Dave Twentymand.

Another initiative it is hoped will make the comedy night a greater success is a possible workshop with the comedians, in conjunction with the night itself, aimed at those interested in pursuing stand up. Johnston is also looking in to the possibility of a student support act to go alongside the main comedians.

Satisfaction is guaranteed as Lancaster beats North West rivals

Hannah Price

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY HAS been ranked top in the North West in this year's National Student Survey.

University guides in a number of national newspapers have shown Lancaster to have the most satisfied students in the North West. The Independent places Lancaster in the top 10 universities in England, the Guardian places it 12th in the UK and the Times continues to place Lancaster highest out of universities in the North West for overall student satisfaction. In the National Student Survey Lancaster came fifth of all institutions in the 1994 Group, a group of 19 research-oriented universities.

These prestigious positions in leagues comparing over 110 universities from across the United Kingdom are attributable to the highest standards of teaching and learning. Vice-Chancellor of Lancaster University, Professor Paul Wellings, said that the success "is a testament to our commitment to high quality research-led teaching and delivering an outstanding student experience".

LUSU President Michael Payne

put Lancaster's high ranking down to strong links between the university and the student union. "Where there is collaboration between the university and the union on student experience, both academically and socially, results improve," he said.

But while 89% of students at Lancaster University said they were satisfied with their student experience, figures across the UK have fallen from 82% in 2008 to 81% in 2009. Within the current economic climate, the rankings could have a significant effect on universities' intake.

Participation in this survey has risen to 62% this year with 223 363 students providing feedback on their experiences. The increase in response to the survey could be due to the rising costs of higher education; this year's graduating class has been the first to pay top-up university fees. The fees, which were trebled in 2006, have, according to the BBC, left students with mounting debts without showing a marked improvement in the quality of their experiences.

"Lancaster has somewhat bucked this trend," said Payne. "Institutions in the 1994 Group tend to come out on top as they have a strong focus on the student experience."

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New visa system causes admin chaos

• **Tightening of regulations not a problem for international students studying at Lancaster claims university**

Raffi Ronchetti & Sam Newsham

FEARS THAT THE UK Border Agency's new points based visa system would stop up to a third of international students arriving in Lancaster in time for Intro Week appear to be unfounded.

Under the new system – called a points based system (PBS) as students require a certain number of points to gain entry to the UK – students will need to prove they have been accepted onto a course and have enough money to support themselves before they are allowed to register.

The PBS has created a significant workload increase for Lancaster's administrative departments. "The PG admissions office alone has sent out over 600 visa letters, each one taking up to fifteen minutes to produce," said Dr Hazel Hardie, Project Officer for the University Secretary. "Staff in the admissions offices and the international student advisory service have been working hard to ensure that international applicants are given all the help and information they need."

Despite the extra organisation, Hardie believes that all visas will be allocated in time. "The international students we have provided visa letters

to haven't had any problems in getting their visas, as they have at some other universities. This may be because we have excellent links with partnership institutions in other countries, such as Malaysia and China, and we have Lancaster University staff on hand in some countries to help students with their visa applications," she explained.

The tightening of international student visas has been introduced for reasons of national security following terrorists gaining entrance to the UK by claiming to be studying at bogus colleges. All but one of the twelve men arrested on suspicion of plotting to blow up the Trafford Centre in April this year arrived in Britain on student visas.

An international student within the new points based system will need to score 40 points to be granted a visa. Thirty will be allocated for an official letter from UCAS stating an unconditional offer from an approved education provider; the remaining 10 points are from maintenance requirements. A student studying at Lancaster would have to show they have enough money in their own bank account to cover tuition fees plus £600 per month for the length of the visa applied for at the time they submit the application. The money must have been held in the account for at least 28 days.

In addition, the Border Agency requires universities to monitor attendance of international students and report any long periods of absence. To avoid discrimination, Lancaster has made plans to monitor attendance of all students. "Any problems they may have can [then] be quickly identified by the departments, and they can be offered help before they get into difficulty," said Hardie.

Lancaster's Vice Chancellor Professor Paul Wellings told The Times he is concerned about the change in student visas as universities "will have to cope with large volumes of transactions in a very short period of time." Wellings fears that the PBS will deter international students from studying in the UK. If this does happen it could lead to some departments – most notably engineering, physics and computing – starting to implode because they "have a disproportionate share of international students."

Wellings added that "to some extent international students are making sure the research and knowledge fabric is being maintained." International students pay much higher fees than those from the UK, bringing in 8% of the total income of British universities. In 2008-09 they paid almost £1.9 billion in tuition fees.

University not doing enough for disabled students according to survey

Collette McColgan

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY HAS failed to meet requirements set by Trailblazers, the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign's network for 16-30 year olds. In a recent investigation into the provisions universities provide for students with disabilities Lancaster scored only 82% for the assistance it provides.

The investigation, University Challenge, looked at 100 universities in response to statistics released by the Department of Work and Pensions in 2002, which stated that people without disabilities are twice as likely to enter higher education as those with disabilities. Trailblazers are calling on the government and universities around the country to improve the access students with disabilities have to higher education.

Universities involved in the investigation were asked 15 questions about the help and information they provide to prospective and current students with disabilities. Lancaster achieved a score that ranked it top in the North West for the services and information provided to disabled students.

However, there were areas where Lancaster fared badly, including accessibility of teaching rooms for those with mobility difficulties, lack of provi-

sion of rooms for assistants of students with disabilities and failure to provide a disabled access toilet with hoist in every university building.

Cat Clark, the newly elected Non-Sabbatical Officer for Students with Disabilities and SWD Officer for Furness College JCR Exec, sees the provisions Lancaster currently has in place as a positive step for improvements. However, she also feels there is a lot that should be in place already.

"I hope I and the other officers and fellow students can help to move on action on problem areas such as the underpass and the malfunctioning lifts," said Clark. "Hopefully with the Students with Disabilities forum being widely advertised to students more input will be gained hopefully resulting in a move forward."

The investigation also showed that the university's website lets it down, scoring zero in all 5 points looked for relating to the information it provided for prospective disabled students. This is something that Torri Crapper, the current Vice President (Education, Welfare and Diversity), sees as a point of concern. "This report highlights enormous failings by the university to provide effective information for disabled students," said Crapper, who mentioned her intentions to work with the university to correct these problems in the near future.

The University is now actively preparing for the start of the new autumn term. We would like you to assist in these preparations by taking the following steps to help prevent the spread of flu on campus.

1. Follow good hygiene advice e.g. catch it, bin it, kill it
2. Whilst at Lancaster work out who are your 'flu friends'
3. Keep yourself up to date with by using the following websites.

General Swine Flu Information & Symptoms

www.lancs.ac.uk/press/swineflu

www.direct.gov.uk/swineflu

www.nhs.uk

Tel: 0800 1513 513

The National Pandemic Flu Service

If you think you may have swine flu symptoms, contact the national pandemic flu service directly

Tel: www.pandemicflu.direct.gov.uk

0800 1513 100



Arts degree funding is improving

Emma Newman

ARTS AND SOCIAL science degrees across the country have suffered as valuable research funding has been ringfenced for management, science and engineering courses.

Despite the Higher Education Minister David Lammy speaking out recently in support of the need for funding in all disciplines, there is widespread concern that the decision to protect science funding has been damaging to other faculties.



Equal Funding: David Lammy supports the arts.

At Lancaster the situation has been described by Tony McEnery, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Science (FASS), as “certainly not the best situation but healthy despite the odds”. FASS was awarded 8 full studentships for 2009-2010 and raised around £500,000 itself as the result of a developing strategic plan and a number of “indirect sources” including reprioritising and short-term teaching contracts.

By comparison, science funding

currently stands at around £40million. McEnery said that to gain equal amounts of funding would be “simply amazing”.

Over the last five years funding for the Arts and Humanities Research Council has increased by 35% whilst universities’ core research funding for other subjects has risen 86%. Many academics are concerned that the government tried to encourage enrolment on arts degrees but is now increasingly reluctant to allocate research funding for these areas, despite a steady rise in undergraduate numbers.

Financial discrepancies increase at postgraduate level where funding is enhanced and protected for science subjects whilst arts and humanities are neglected. Nationally 50% of science PhDs are funded but only 1,500 students benefit within the arts and social sciences.

McEnery stressed that Lancaster University has “been at the vanguard in highlighting the importance of arts and social science degrees at university and national levels”. The majority of undergraduates at Lancaster are within the Faculty of Arts and Social Science and McEnery hopes that the same trend will continue at postgraduate level too.

Lancaster’s Vice-Chancellor Paul Wellings recently argued in The Guardian that the government urgently needs to invest in arts and humanities if universities are to fulfil their role in ensuring graduates have an “expansive world view.”

First class degrees doubled at Lancaster in 12 years

Sam Newsham
News Editor

THE NUMBER OF first class degrees awarded at Lancaster has more than doubled since 1997, SCAN has found.

Lancaster’s increase follows a UK-wide trend identified this summer by a cross-party group of MPs. A report into degree classifications discovered that the percentage of first class degrees given nationally rose from 7.7% in 1997 to 13.3% in 2008, leading to suggestions of grade inflation and falling standards. Over the same period Lancaster saw a steady increase from 6.4% to 14.0%.

Mathematics and Statistics topped the list of percentages of firsts awarded, with 41.5% in 2008, followed by Physics and Engineering. Head of Mathematics and Statistics Professor Gordon Blower told SCAN that in recent years the department had made the conscious decision to increase the number of firsts after comparing proportions awarded at other universities.

Throughout the twelve years studied Faculty of Science and Technology (FST) departments consistently awarded far more first class degrees than departments in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS), which numerous staff members put down to the different methods of assessments in science and arts degrees.

The department with the largest growth rate was Economics. In 1997



1.7% of degrees they awarded were first class; by 2008 this had increased by a factor of seven to 12.1%. Head of Department Professor Ian Walker said there had been no grade inflation and that the MPs’ report showed no evidence of this occurring nationally.

“I have been external examining for about 30 years around the country and I don’t see falling standards over time,” he said. “And I can say that [examining practices at LUMS are] taken very seriously and we have tough external examiners that make sure we are on our toes.”

Professor Walker cited his own research which found that on average graduates with ‘good’ degrees (firsts and 2:1s) earn 10% more than those with lower grades. This earnings premium has shown no sign of decreasing, suggesting that those gaining good degrees now are equally as competent as those who gained good degrees several years ago.

“What I can say is that Lancaster has good students and I feel that those that want to do well, can,” he added.

Whilst there have been increases

in departments across the board Lancaster’s academics were quick to refute implications of dumbing down, suggesting instead that better A-level grades were responsible.

“Over the period of time [studied] as an institution we have significantly raised our A-level entry requirements,” said Professor Tony McEnery, Dean of FASS. “One would hope that with better quality in at one end you get better quality out at the other.”

Both McEnery and Mike Doupe, Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Studies in FASS, criticised the findings of the report, saying that much of the evidence was ‘anecdotal’.

Ian Denny, Head of Student Registry, said that there is ‘no evidence whatsoever’ that exams at Lancaster are getting easier. If anything, he said, classification rules are now tighter.

Mr Denny too felt that students entering Lancaster with higher A-level grades was a factor in the awarding of more firsts, along with better teaching, the use of technology and encouragement to use the full range of marks, especially in the humanities subjects.

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Wellings urges Government to ‘reduce student numbers or increase funding for higher education’

- **Remarks made in advance of tuition fees review**
- **VP Academic Affairs concerned by Vice Chancellor’s stance**

Lizzie Houghton
Assistant Editor

THE FUTURE OF the Higher Education sector rests on the choice between cash or students according to Lancaster’s Vice Chancellor.

In a speech given at the start of the summer break, Professor Paul Wellings, who also stands as chair of the 1994 Group, a collection of 19 research-based universities across the UK, said that those in power faced a black and white decision on where more funding will come from. “The government and Higher Education sector now faces a clear choice: reduce student numbers or increase funding for higher education.”

The vice chancellor added that it would be wrong to reduce student numbers as the country has come to rely upon a highly qualified workforce, and so concluded that the only option would be to raise funds – by increasing tuition fees.

Wellings’ remarks came as the government, vice chancellors and student representatives are all preparing for a year which could markedly change the way higher education is funded. A review of tuition fees is due to begin later this year, with each faction holding onto a different idea of what needs to be done.

“To maintain quality, the fees cap needs to be high enough to bring in sufficient funding and enhance competition to further drive up quality,” Wellings said. “In addition, a sensible interest rate should be introduced on student loans, set at the current government cost of borrowing, to rectify the huge subsidy that the government currently pays.”

Wellings’ views are in line with those of most vice chancellors. More than two-thirds currently agree that fees need to be increased, with many pushing for the introduction of a minimum tuition fee level of £5000. In light of the review on tuition fees, Prof Wellings said it was essential that this time around the “benefits” of the system are clearly explained.

“The current system was never explained or communicated properly to users,” he said. “It is essential to get the politics right and clearly communicate the benefits of the variable fees



Laying it on the Line: Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Wellings holds strong views on education funding

system, and universities have a key role in helping to do this.

“The message should be that Higher Education is free to students. Whereas Higher Education used to be paid for by a general taxation, it is now a personal contribution. It is payroll deduction, not a commercial debt.”

But while university groups are in favour of a higher cap on fees, student unions have naturally taken a different stance. Danny Ovens, LUSU’s Vice President (Academic Affairs), admitted to being troubled by Wellings’ obvious support of an increase in fees.

“It does concern me that our VC openly advocates the tuition fee increase, especially since his election as chair of the 94 Group,” he said. “One of my fears is that if we try to mobilise our students against tuition fees, student apathy will rear its ugly head once more. Let’s say the cap is lifted and the vice chancellor implements a £7000 a year tuition fee. This will not affect current students, they will continue on the old system. It will only be new cohorts that will suffer this. It may potentially be difficult to engage students in something that does not affect them directly.”

Ovens added: “If it comes down to a consumerist attitude when relating to Higher Education - and I hate that it might - it’s about time the consumer got their money’s worth.”

At the time of Wellings’ speech, Wes Streeting, president of the National Union of Students, told the Telegraph: “The new chair of the 1994 Group exposes the agenda of many vice-chancellors ahead of the Government’s fees review later this year. Vice-chancellors in Britain need a reality check. It’s easy to fantasize about higher fees and higher interest rates on loans when you’re on a huge salary, but this summer many students will be graduating with record levels of debt straight onto the dole queue.”

Student Loans Company admit 50,000 will not receive their loans in time

Chris Housden

FIRST YEAR STUDENTS are being urged not to panic over student loans delays and will receive all the support they need according to the university. This reassurance comes after Student Finance England admitted that 50,000 students would begin university without their expected loans and grants.

The Student Finance England, an offshoot of the Student Loans Company which is in charge of administering loans and grants, blames the backlog on the 16.7% increase in applications this year. A record 600,000 people have applied to universities this year, with fewer alternatives available during the recession, bringing the total number of applications SFE received to over 1m. The increasing backlog of applications, lost documentation and constantly busy phone lines have worried thousands of students. One first year who expects to rely heavily on his loan said: “They just don’t seem to care”.

Without confirmation that a student loan has been approved students would not ordinarily be allowed to register at a university and many would be left with very little to live off. Students at Lancaster will still be able to register, providing they can prove they have applied for their loans and grants. Deferred rent payments will also be available to those waiting on financial aid, as will emergency loans. Student Services have also offered to help students actively chase late payments from Student Finance England, advising them to call 01524592085 or visit room A21 in University House.

Michael Payne, LUSU President, said: “Whilst Lancaster University has put in place significant measures for any students who are affected by late

loan payments, there are serious questions to be asked about the actions of Student Finance England in processing loan applications this year. It is evident that there has been no major systems failure in the Student Loans Company but this administrative cock-up could cause major problems for students already concerned about starting study at University. For that reason the government should place this at the top of their higher education agenda in what are already difficult times for students and parents.”

The National Union of Students also demanding more of SFE. Its president, Wes Streeting, wrote to SLC’s chief executive Ralph Seymour Jackson last week expressing the union’s concern over how the situation has been handled.

In the letter Streeting said: “We are experiencing an increasing volume of correspondence from students anxious about the state of their applications, many of whom have experienced a delay as a result of loss of supporting evidence and documentation by Stu-

dent Finance England [...] Seven weeks ago, we received similar enquiries and were assured by colleagues at Student Finance England that significant backlogs would not be a problem.”

Seymour Jackson has issued an “unreserved apology” and promised that all those who applied on time would receive their loan on time. The SLC released a statement promising “any customer who has applied on time and has sent the correct evidence on time should be paid on time.”

They added: “We are encouraging students to review the status of their application online and also to check the website where we will be posting regular updates. We acknowledge that this will be a worrying time for those students affected. We will process applications and deal with enquiries as quickly as possible.”

Student Finance England was set up in 2008 to deal specifically with applications from England following a government review. Originally this responsibility was held by England’s 150 local education authorities.



Letter of intent: NUS President Wes Streeting has written to the head of SLC

University to continue with campus redevelopment following £80m refinancing deal

Hannah Smith

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY HAS announced an £80 million refinancing including the redemption of its 1995 Debenture stock. The funding comes from the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) and is split between the refinancing of the £35m debenture stock, a revolving credit facility and a term loan.

The debenture stock is, in effect, a document confirming that Lancaster is indebted to various stock-holders, albeit on a secure basis.

The purpose of the refinancing is to support ongoing development on campus and will have a direct impact on Lancaster’s student population. “The £80m refinancing generates flexibility for the University and also for a

range of benefits, especially around the Student Experience, Research Infrastructure and Teaching Facilities,” said Professor Paul Wellings, Lancaster’s Vice Chancellor. “Over the next cycle of capital investment we expect to add to the Management School, build new facilities for LICA and the School of Health and Medicine and create a new Sports Centre.”

Lancaster is one of the most financially secure universities in the UK and as such the refinancing is a ‘prudent move’.

“The refinancing at this time reflects our financial strength as an institution, as can be seen in our credit rating and in our financial history over 10 years,” said Sarah Randall-Paley, Lancaster’s Director of Finance. “This has enabled us to attract finance at good rates at a time when many organisations are

struggling to do so. Redeeming the bond makes our debt service payments more affordable.”

Following the redemption of the debenture on 21st August and its subsequent replacement with a £45m facility with RBS, £35m will be set aside for a Capital Development Facility. This, the university hopes, will directly enhance the student experience through the construction of the new sports centre and improvements to the Management School. It will also allow further support to be provided for academic growth.

Over the past five years more than £300 million has been invested in transforming Lancaster’s campus, including the creation of 963 eco-residences in County and Grizedale colleges and the forthcoming redesign of Alexandra Square.

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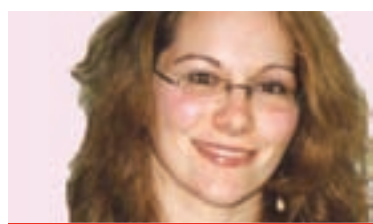
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Sam Newsham

Is Lancaster doing enough to address graduate unemployment?

Schemes such as the Lancaster Award are a step in the right direction at least

Conventional wisdom tells us there has never been a worse time to graduate from university. Top-up fees are leaving us crippled with debt whilst the number of employers cutting down or scrapping altogether their graduate recruitment schemes mean well paid jobs are thin on the ground.

Our prospects are, in a word, dismal, and perhaps nowhere more so than here at Lancaster. The fact that an institution consistently ranked well inside *The Times* top 20 overall is dragged down by its less than impressive rating of 75th for graduate employment, is a disappointing reflection on all involved in the job-finding process.

All this negativity begs the question: where now for Lancaster's graduates? It has been previously suggested by University management that low employment rates are due to students' unwillingness to engage with the Centre for Employability, Enterprise and Careers (CEEC). This, to me, seems like a lazy explanation; this is a two-way process and blaming students seems at best unthoughtful and at worst insulting.

No one, not even the staff at CEEC, is completely sure why we struggle so much to find jobs, though there have been several possible reasons identi-

fied. One involves a simple game of statistics: upon graduation, many Lancaster students go on to take the PGCE at the University of Cumbria, so are not in employment six months later when graduate destination data is collected. Many more choose to stay in the local area, where graduate level jobs are fewer.

It would be wrong for us to say that CEEC and the university have done nothing to solve the problem. Over the past few years more resources have been made available to CEEC, allowing it to build up links with local businesses and run careers roadshows and insight courses into a wide variety of careers. Student feedback has led to the annual careers fair running for two days rather than one, with separate concentrations on media and public sector and more traditional blue chip recruiters. Most importantly, it has finally been able to move to larger and more accessible premises on the west side of Alexandra Square.

In addition, the university, under the guidance of Professor Amanda Chetwynd, Pro-Vice Chancellor for the student experience, has created the Lancaster Award. To be launched this year, it requires students to take part in four different types of activity – career



development, campus, community and social development, work experience and additional skills – and will crucially form part of the degree transcript.

But as said earlier, it would be unfair to simply blame the students. As soon as the new-look CEEC opened its doors, students arrived in droves looking for guidance. Overall, there was an 84% increase in students accessing CEEC in the first year after its reopen-

ing, and numbers have steadily risen ever since statistics show.

With graduate unemployment at its highest rate in years, this is truly a cause for celebration. Because the truth is that from now on we'll need more than just a degree to get a decent job.

The recession and the Government pushing its ridiculous target of 50% of all young people entering higher education mean more graduates for fewer

jobs. The majority of recruiters are reporting an increase in the number of well-qualified applicants, and they'll need a way to differentiate between us. Those of us who want success will have to stand out from the crowd.

Is this then to be the legacy of the recession for graduates? To win the fight for employment we'll need to motivate ourselves to find the jobs that are on offer. We'll need to develop a wide range of skills and participate in a number of activities. We'll need CEEC and the university to provide more opportunities like the Lancaster Award.

So at the end of it, not only will we have a much better chance of getting a good job, but we'll be well-rounded individuals with a wealth of experience under our belts.

It's too early to say yet whether the steps taken so far have had any effect at Lancaster, but CEEC are hopeful that the most recent graduate destination data will give us a considerable boost up the rankings.

And if the legacy of the recession is to be this: more students who actively engage with careers services, more universities who are inspired to encourage and create opportunities, then perhaps it isn't such a bad time to be a graduate after all.



Michael Payne
LUSU President

Polticians may be stifling debate over higher education but students should still fight to make their voices heard

With less than six months until a general election it is no surprise that the issue of funding for Universities is in the frame again. Leader of the Lib Dems, Nick Clegg has signaled that his party may now abandon their flagship policy of scrapping tuition fees, whilst the CBI has waxed lyrical about the need for students to realize a hike in the cap on tuition fees is "inevitable."

It is no exaggeration to say that the arguments against a progressive alternative to future HE funding and calls by certain Vice-Chancellors for increased fees pose a serious challenge for the National Union of Students, Students' Unions and students themselves. But if we work together this is a challenge that we can face and one that we will stand up to.

Arrogant attacks on students and naïve assumptions of their ability to fund themselves through an already expensive experience in higher education leave me dumbfounded. And ignorance of the already significant burden placed on their parents or guardians is

inexcusable. Attacks like this should only serve to strengthen our resolve in standing together when the time comes to express ourselves and cast our vote at the ballot box.

With an indecisive government and an opposition who are unwilling to make any explicit spending commitments before a general election, we the electorate are faced with little choice. But expressing our views clearly and expanding our network of support from other groups in society is vital. It will not suffice to play armchair politics with the future of our higher education sector, we should not settle for off the cuff policies made in press releases by hubristic Vice-Chancellors. Calls for and suggestions by students of an alternative, progressive funding model for Universities will be won by engaging our parents, our younger siblings and our local schools & colleges.

It is the responsibility of Peter Mandelson and the government to now move the terms of the debate around future funding of Universities away from: the cap, how high. The planned "thorough" review of funding later this

year must consider the whole package; student support, tuition fees, maintenance loans, bursaries and hidden course costs. Rather than persistently attacking students as the group who should be primary contributors to their University education, Universities and the government alike should be persuading the business sector of the importance of a skilled and educated workforce. As Bill Clinton once retorted, "It's the economy, stupid."

In the current economic climate students appreciate there is need for them to contribute in part to their education. But proposals that would envisage that contribution rising well above 50% of the cost are ludicrous and short-sighted.

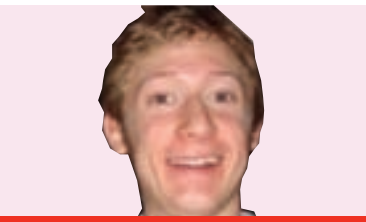
And whilst it is easy to deride the position of the 94 Group, who have explicitly called for the cap to be raised to a level that would avoid entering a alleged "valley of death" for higher education, at least they have placed their cards on the table. But the audacity of 'fat cat' business leaders and unrepresentative Vice-Chancellors must be matched strongly by vocal students

and student leaders who are elected, representative and will reflect the true views of their membership.

The political void in progressive higher education funding policies from all three major political parties in the UK, should also give us reason to be proud that the feasible progressive proposal currently attracting much attention is actually being proposed by student leaders. The NUS's model of a graduate tax based system, with no up-front costs, has catapulted the issue of fees and funding for Universities into the political foreground.

But one thing is certain there's a political waiting game going on, whereby both main political parties are remaining silent until the outcome of the fees review, rather than laying their cards on the table ahead of the general election, and letting the electorate decide. There is a serious democratic deficit when what amounts to an unspoken conspiracy between political parties keeps such a key issue out of the public's consciousness before a general election and it is our job as students to take this issue to the public at large.

With a general election around the corner it is worrying that the student voice remains unheard



David Sykes

Society should encourage the individual quest for understanding

Conflict between old ideas and new ways of thinking are what lead to the truth

John Stuart Mill, one of the most influential political philosophers argued that people should have the right to undertake 'experiments in living'. The argument is that in allowing people to live and think as they choose, society will gradually improve through new ideas being discovered and spread from person to person. This form of liberty is essential for social progress and we all embrace it to an extent. People must be free to live as they choose and to hold the beliefs and theories that they consider to be the most valid. He argued that if we suppress the ideas and of individuals, we may also suppress the truth. Truth is often found when contrasting theories clash and they are debated, defended, or defeated.

Religion has historically been immune from such practice, not because it is undeniably truthful, but because those who would challenge the church and the word of God were accused of heresy and were stigmatised at best and executed at worst. Today, stigmatism and torture are gone, but still religion tends to raise a barrier to criticism, demanding respect for its superstitions.

Mill argued that unless views and ideas are frequently challenged or called into question, they become empty shells that are mindlessly adhered

to regardless of how truthful they are. In many cases, this has occurred with religious belief. Many people believe so whole-heartedly in their specific religious hypothesis that they are willing to ignore all criticism of their ideas, they will refuse to listen to evidence that proves them wrong, and they will shy away from debate and argument over their faith. Yet it is my feeling that beliefs, however sincerely held, should always be subject to criticism. Just as a flat-Earth society member would rightly be lambasted and ridiculed, so should religious superstition be subject to the kind of criticism and scrutiny we level at other beliefs.

Yet religion seems to exist within a bubble which protects it from this kind of criticism. To some, membership of a religious community seems to give a believer a right to not be challenged, but this should not be the case.

Human beings are largely rational, intelligent beings who are capable of discerning events and identifying causes in a systematic manner. It is in this way that any of us know anything; it is from our experiences that we learn how the world works. It is this feat which differentiates us from lesser creatures that are incapable of such rationality. But willingness to believe things without substantive evidence, to



make enormous leaps of faith on barely any grounding at all, to blindly believe despite evidence to the contrary, and in the wake of multiple other explanations that are as valid or even more so is fundamentally irrational.

The possibility of the existence of something other than what we are directly able to perceive and understand should certainly not be ruled out, and it would be foolish to reject the possibility of the existence of alternatives

to the theories which have become popular in modern scientific thought. Equally, those with no faith can be guilty of close-mindedness and one-sided thinking. This lack of willingness to listen, debate and understand can be said of atheists and anyone else who is unwilling to accept the views of others in all areas.

People should not be afraid of causing offence by presenting arguments which challenge the beliefs of others, and they should not be afraid of being offended by the arguments made by believers of theories other than their own. It is in this manner that we are able to identify truth and to learn and understand the world around us. People should be far more open minded; willing to listen, discuss, argue and attempt to understand the theories and ideas of others.

The unfortunate trait of being unwilling to accept or willing to ignore argument, proof, evidence, and alternative approaches to explaining the world is a depressing and unfortunate aspect of humanity that may prevent us from reaching our true potential. Blind faith and closed-mindedness is all too common, but is something that can be overcome very easily for our improvement as individuals and collectively as a society, perhaps even as a species.

Catering need to rethink idea

Catered accommodation may work at other universities, but it won't at Lancaster writes **Liam Richardson**

A good idea is not necessarily a good idea all the time. In fact, sometimes it may just become a terrible idea. One such example is catered accommodation. The university has picked up on the fact that many parents and prospective students enquire about such a scheme. Catering has followed up these initial suggestions by sounding people out through a survey.

Of course, the obvious benefits that this system provides are evident. For parents, they gain the peace of mind that their son or daughter is eating properly. Student diets are notoriously regarded as poor or derisory. For the student, they have more time to worry about their social lives, rather than having to perform the basic and sometimes mundane task of cooking. Indeed, some students manage to spend the course of their degree having never seen the inside of an oven; instead preferring the delights offered by the likes of Pizzetta Republic or Wong's Kitchen. The university also benefits by appealing to a broader range of people and also possibly affecting various ranking performances. The catering division at Lancaster would also receive a much-needed shot in the arm as a result of increased guaranteed spending by a customer base that has dwindled in recent years due to overpricing and the availability of better, cheaper and equally convenient establishments on campus.

However, the collegiate system at Lancaster surely makes it untenable, or at the very least a logistical nightmare to implement. Surely catered accommodation would have to be centred around one college alone with the effect of this limiting choice for the students. Every college should maintain equality in terms of the services they provide, and such a move in the opposite direction can only have a negative influence on the collegiate system- the primary reason for many students attending Lancaster in the first place.

Other institutions that offer the service frequently employ set meal times. An obvious bone of contention at many of these universities is breakfast. The most important meal of the day it may be, but how many students would realistically get up at 8am for something to eat on a Thursday morning after attending the Carleton the night before? Not many.

Perhaps the fundamental problem with catered accommodation is freedom. The student experience is all about developing as an individual after having successfully escaped the watchful gaze of parents for the first time. The university shouldn't be mothering students in such a restrictive and suffocating manner. How do you expect students to prepare for the real world if they have not yet mastered basic culinary skills because the university has been there to hold their hand every step of the way? A compromise would possibly be to enhance and promote more effectively the campus dining card.

Lizzie Houghton
Assistant Editor

Students cannot afford to fall victim to the culture of spin

Looking back it really was quite a shock. Michael Payne, LUSU's President, a fundamentalist Christian? For Freshers who don't know the story I'll provide a quick recap. In the last issue of SCAN last year there was a short article on how President Payne had found God, and as a result planned on imposing a veritable cocktail of medieval dogma on the students of Lancaster. This wasn't what was shocking though. What was shocking is that so many students bought into it.

The article was part of a tradition to include a hoax article in the final issue of SCAN each year. There was not a grain of truth in it. For the gullible, there was even a disclaimer ten pages on. Without the disclaimer, however, logic dictates that such a story, were it true, would create outrage and mass protest at LUSU.

That didn't happen. What did happen involved Payne spending the last two weeks of term explaining to a sizeable chunk of the university population that he was not channeling Sarah Palin, but was instead the (willing) victim of a prank.

On the friendly playing field of student politics at Lancaster, a bit of gullibility really isn't that great a crime. The damage comes when the same level of acquiescence is given, almost automatically, to national and international politicians, corporations and media.

We live in a culture of deception where any fact can be twisted to suit the needs of the person relaying it. Particularly, in the US, attempts to smear President Obama's healthcare reform bill resulted in a group called 'Conservatives for Patients Rights' duping two British women into appearing in a television tirade against the NHS, when in fact they were both NHS supporters.

If the women themselves hadn't come out and said the CPR had twisted their words to suit their own ends, it's likely their statements would never have been challenged. After all, who would have reason to do so? With the women coming forward, one would hope that others re-evaluated their level of investment in the truth of Republican claims, but still cries of death panels and 'Get your government hands off my medicare' echo in the town halls.

The problem isn't just among the

lunatic fringe of the Republican party. The MMR 'scare' in the 1990s caused record low levels of vaccination (81%). This was all because of the willingness of opportunistic journalists to focus on a discredited study and the willingness of some of our best and brightest to believe them. University-educated parents were the most active resisters to the jab, which brings into question the notion that education makes one a more critical thinker.

But those parents who choose not to have their children vaccinated were students too once, and from a more radical generation than ours. If the student generations of the 60s and 80s didn't think to question what the media and politicians were telling them, how will our generation fare in 20 years time?

Over this next year there are two very major events on the cards which could radically alter student life: a review of tuition fees and the general election. Being easily duped or taken in could have far greater and further reaching consequences than believing a student prank; it could change the face of the country. Surely that is worth some serious thought?

How a small-scale hoax should open the debate on how susceptible we are to the powers of the media



Alex Harris
Comment Editor

Murdoch is right to charge for online news

This is perhaps the only way to preserve the dying art of journalism

Rupert Murdoch's recent decision to begin charging for online news content marks a significant change in the way journalism operates. The decision is an acknowledgement of two key things: firstly, that the internet is fast becoming a major source of news for an ever-increasing amount of people and also that the newspaper will soon no longer be the monolithic instrument of journalistic power that it has become over the centuries.

Across the medium, there has been a nauseating display of nostalgia and sentiment erupting from the pages of opinion columns and (ironically) online blogs. Wizen and bored columnists recant tales of how they bought their first newspaper, being struck by their first fiery polemic and immediately deciding that a 'newspaper guy' was what they wanted to be. In their day, who could blame them? Newspapers were conductors of the orchestra of public opinion, deciding the course of wars and toppling MPs, Prime Ministers and Presidents.

Unlike some, I don't see any point in lamenting the decline of the newspaper. All old and irrelevant technologies must eventually make way for new and more convenient ones and it would be absurd to imagine that, in 10 years time, a significant portion of the population would find it practical to carry around bulky sheets of paper that only get thrown away after a few hours' use. After all, why carry a paper when you can get the same information on your iPhone? But just as it is pointless to mourn a technology that is way past its prime, it's ignorant to blindly embrace its replacement.

Perhaps worse than the wishy-washy displays of affection for old media is the smug, congratulatory tone taken by those responsible for the new form. Today is the era of the blog, they say, the citizen journalist; the chance for anyone to have their say. Even better if it can be done in less than 140 characters.

The problem with newspapers making way for blogs is this: blogging, by and large, is not journalism. Where

a journalist will investigate and represent, a blogger will opine. Where a journalist will act with rigour, a blogger will type with a smirk. Where a journalist will chase the facts, a blogger will refine their views. All these functions do have a place in the journalistic ring, but opinion and analysis should always be a footnote to the facts. With a decreasing amount of people willing to wrangle their way through beauracracy or stand amidst a warzone in order to find the facts to print on the page, opinions themselves become less and less relevant and blogging becomes a pointless exercise.

It's not entirely fair to solely blame the internet for the current journalistic vacuum. After all – reductions in employed journalists at major newspapers were happening in a big way decades ago. 'More with less' was and still is the mantra at these dying institutions, yet when news reporting is concerned: more with less is just not possible.

The reason for the massive downsizing amongst the journalistic profession can be summed up in one single

word: profits. In the Reagan boom of the 80s, people began to realise just how lucrative news could be. In a few years, the profits of newspapers would jump from roughly 16% to anywhere between 30 and 40%. Once reporting became a means to an end rather than a noble end in itself, the trade suffered and journalistic integrity was no longer as important as the spreadsheet or the line graph.

This is why Murdoch's decision marks a crucial moment in the history of and future for reporting today. For the past few years, an increasing number of people have been enjoying the fruits of reporters' labours without paying. Great for the consumer, maybe, but bad for the profession. Yet Murdoch understands that as iTunes reinvigorated a music industry that looked doomed to destruction, charging for content may well do the same for the journalistic profession. It also marks the only time I will ever think, speak or write this phrase: God speed, Mr. Murdoch, you're doing journalism proud.

Sabb review gets its sequel

Speculation and negativity a smoke-screen for the reforms that are needed writes **Robbie Pickles**

Last year saw the passing of the controversial Sabbatical Review, which was met with negativity and mixed feelings by some members of the student populace. The review itself was embraced by others and no doubt ignored by the rest, eventually passing with a large majority. Just as a box office hit will get an inevitable sequel, the Sabbatical Review will return again this year, with returning President Michael Payne ready to devote his attention to the supporting characters of LUSU: the non-sabbatical officers. As a potentially less controversial reform, this may attract less attention than last year's counterpart, but it is nevertheless as important to the future of the Union and the way in which it communicates with its students. It also promises to bring more sweeping changes to the current system, which consists of almost 30 officers.

Information at the moment is scant, but when questioned Payne commented that the review would need to deliver accessibility for students whilst making the system easier to understand. This could see non-Sabb officers acting as intermediaries between students and Sabb officers, working with JCR Execs to best communicate with the student body. At present, the non-Sabb system is really quite bewildering. Looking at a list of officer titles, it is often impossible to tell exactly what their job entails or even if they are all the same type of officer. It would seem sensible that the first step would be to sort out these titles so that (much like our new Sabb team who all go by the title of VP) there could be some consistency that would enable students to understand the level at which these officers operate.

It also seems likely that the job roles of the new non-sabbaticals will be more clearly defined. At present, the varying remits of some officers is sketchy at best. A prime example is the remit for the Block of Six officers, who are responsible for "dealing with the general views of Lancaster University students." This lack of clarity which is apparent in the current job descriptions impacts directly on the performance of some officers and is a prime example of why this review is so necessary. Although we have had some stellar Block officers over the past few years, it would be all too easy for a lazy officer to end up doing nothing at all, with the current system clearly ensuring that such an occurrence is very much a possibility.

Finally, I would imagine that a transition from specific issue representation will become a reality, with a looser, less restrictive set of officer roles arriving in place, which will see officers act as intermediaries between different members of LUSU and the student body. Ultimately, little more is known at present about what the prospective changes might entail, but hopefully it will not be long before we get an opportunity to vote on issues which could seriously improve our union. Until then, let the speculation commence.



Liam Kay

Recession must not be an excuse for sidelining of green issues

Phone? Check. Keys? Check. Wallet? Empty. An all too familiar sequence in a world dominated by banks so comically inept they could inspire an entire series of Fawlty Towers and a MPs that seem to value the acquisition of furniture for their gardens over giving their constituents due care and attention. What a wonderful world this is.

The recession, however, does bring to light one key problem that must be dealt with on a global, national and even on a campus level: the environment. What is the future of the green movement now that financial woe has, like a dark cloud, enveloped the land in an almost fantastical display. With money funnelled into bank bail-outs, what is left for the environment?

A major worry is the side-lining of the environment as a major issue in the wake of recession. Take Lancaster for example: there have been murmurs of a reduction in funds allocated for green projects within our local area by potential councillors, something that has brought dismay to those in the local area who campaign for the protection of our planet and our local ecosystems. The question is this: are our temporary economic woes putting our environmental priorities out of focus?

I believe we need to continue and

further expand our commitment to green projects if we are to ensure that we are able to protect the environment. Now is the time, during the current political climate of upheaval, for environmentalists, championed by the left, to step up to the task and offer a credible alternative to the world of obscenely rich celebrities and woefully corrupt financial institutions. The left has a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to prove it has the ideas and the capability to reconnect with the masses and become something people can vote for.

The green movement is picking up pace and represents a genuine chance to radically improve our world, one that the left must grasp if it is to succeed as a global force. The signs are that the protection of the environment is becoming more popular amongst the general population (Lancaster University's Carbon Competition is a good example). Surely if the population is more open to Green issues, a party that could channel this passion this may have a chance to gain the backing required to ensure Westminster and local councils take the issue seriously. This is the future of the left wing; if it fails to take this golden opportunity, the gates to the halls of power may remain forever bolted shut.

Yes the recession needs money and

effort to ensure that it is able to resurrect itself but the truth of the matter is it is the system itself that remains corrupt. Embracing the ideas of the environmental left may help rejuvenate an unsteady and morally bankrupt capitalist system and help create a new breed of mainstream third-way politics. The movement to green forms of power, the creation of environmentally friendly goods and research into how to improve our current consumption levels could all aid the economy in the long-term and help safeguard humanity along the way.

These ideas can give the left-wing a new face and remove the old connections with the Soviets and despots of the world. The need to adapt to the 21st century and beyond is vital for the both left and right, yet the green movement is traditionally associated with the left side of the spectrum. It's almost impossible to understate the wealth of potential political capital available.

It is up to us to do everything we can, no matter how small, to affect the change we want to see in the world. Nothing is too small a gesture to ensure the environment gets the care and attention it deserves. Whilst the rest of the world knows the environment is the future, for the left's sake we can only hope they realise this too.

The Green movement must prove that their policies can flourish in a capitalist society

Letters to the Editor



Send your letters to scan@lancaster.ac.uk together with your name and college (even if you would like your letter printed anonymously). Letters longer than 150 words (not including signature) will be shortened. SCAN reserves the right to edit your letters for publication.

As kichten reps we will be volunteering our own time this week to look after new Furness students. Given that we've volunteered to do this we feel let down by the level of support we have been given by our college.

We been told that we cannot move into our rooms until 4pm the day before the Freshers arrive. This could potentially leave many of us moving in at an incredible rush. Tired kitchen reps are hardly going to be able to give Freshers their support.

We understand the need to put people up over summer but some people have a long way to travel to get to university, which requires them to stop overnight. Such a late move puts them at a disadvantage. Had the move in time been just two hours earlier this would have been a tremendous help.

Four Frustrated Furnessians

Room deposit delay is unacceptable

I am writing to express my frustration with the Colleges and Residences Office. I recently received my deposit back a few weeks later than usual (due to some technical problem of 'the new system' - a system that has been in place a year!) only to find that I have been charged £90 for my mattress! I appreciate that it is a busy time of year for College and Residence Officers so I have left it for now but intend to enquire soon why I have been charged. After sleeping on my mattress for a year, I think I would know if there was something wrong with it! It's not like I can afford to go without £90 either.

**A Disgruntled Returning Student
Lonsdale College**

I can't believe how long it took to get room deposits back this year. I reply upon that money to live whilst I look for a summer job and it just made the stress even worse. I can't believe that the university did not inform me about the delay until I rang up to enquire about when I would be receiving it back. The person I spoke to had no idea about when they would be returned, luckily I was one of the first to get mine back out of my friends but with the massive amount of money I pay each year to live on campus, it is ridiculous for us to wait so long for a returned deposit. What on earth takes so long?

Grumpy Grizedalian

I am a disabled student and am thrilled to hear that the union is taking access to events seriously this year. I am a wheelchair user and have had problems accessing events, especially the Big Nights Out in the past and am delighted to hear that you are providing alternative routes for other disabled students. It is time the union started looking at providing fully accessible events. I really hope that you continue to do this throughout the year.

Satisfied Student

As a non-drinker I have always felt left out of much of freshers week in the past, this year I am delighted to see the range of activities you are doing in the Great Hall throughout the week to allow me to participate in freshers week.

Tee-total History Student

**Eat
Sport,
Sleep,
Sport,
Read
Wynes**

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WEDNESDAYS

The Carleton

Student only night

Selected £1 Drinks All night

Wednesday 7th October

Back 2 Skool

Commencing 7th October

Week 1 - Back to Skool
Wednesday 7th October

Week 2 - UV Party
Wednesday 14th October

Week 3 - Sports and Shorts
Wednesday 21st October

Week 4 - Halloween
Wednesday 28th October

Week 5 - Cowboys and Indians
Wednesday 4th November

Week 6 - Cops and Robbers
Wednesday 11th November

Week 7 - Children In Need
Wednesday 18th November

Week 8 - Dr and Nurses
Wednesday 25th November

Week 9 - Army
Wednesday 2nd December

Week 10 - Christmas Party
Wednesday 9th December

Admission £4
with NUS or Library card all night
Arrive early to avoid disappointment

Advanced Bus Tickets available from the LUSU Shop from Mondays £1 or from the Underpass and walkabout on the night £1.50
Buses depart from:
Underpass (9.30pm until 11.15pm)
Walkabout (9.30pm)

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Marine Road West, Morecambe, Tel: 01524 414224

Resident testers try out Grizedale cocktails

Michael Holt & Sam Newsham

AFTER BEING OUT of action for a year Grizedale bar has re-opened. It looks very different from the dingy old cavern of old. It is now a futuristic Coffee & Cocktail bar, the abstract boars giving it the look of a gay spaceship. It's specialist niche on the roster of University bars should prove popular.

We at Scan decided to put Grizedale to the test. We have put together a comprehensive cross-section of the University at large (i.e. people we found knocking about) Steve Freekins (English Lit. 2nd year), Jenny Lee (Economics 2nd Year) and Peter Diggle (Professor, School of Health and Medicine) all volunteered to use their taste buds in the public interest. Stu Powers, the bar's head cocktail-maker was on hand to guide us.

Vodka Twister

MIDORI, VODKA, LIME CORDIAL, ORANGE JUICE, SQUEEZE OF LIME

Peter: Pleasant, a wee bit sweet, tastes like a twister ice lolly...

Stu: We designed it to taste like that as much as possible.

Peter: Ah, really?

Steve: Really Good, pretty refreshing tastes like ice cream.

Jenny: Very Summery.

Jenny: Hah! That is good, like a White Russian, a very girly drink.

Stu: It's basically a Screaming Orgasm

Cosmopolitan

VODKA, TRIPLE SEC, CRANBERRY JUICE, SQUEEZE OF LIME, GARNISHED WUTH LIME RIND

Peter: Do I use the straw?

Stu: It's just decorative (takes it off)

Peter: Mmm, more like something you'd have in the evening. A bit too 'Sex and the City' for me though. Nice still.

Steve: Good, I'm pretty drunk.

Jenny: Very powerful. Probably get you quite wasted.

The Gz

BAILEYS, KAHLUA, HALF CREAM

Steve: The Gz is great.

Peter: Really great, tastes like frozen liqueur. Put it in the fridge and it'd really hit the spot.

OVERALL TASTE TEST RATING:
Excellent



Happy Hour: cocktail testers Prof. Peter Diggle, Steve Freekins and Jenny Lee (l-r) assisted by Assistant Licensee Stu Powers



£1 PINTS
+ selected bottles
£3 entry NUS/£4 without
11pm til 3am

15TH OCTOBER

BOOMIN Live and Unsigned Finalists 2009

Michelle McShane

Over the summer, I stood in Alexandra Square in my underwear. It was extremely liberating to throw off my clothes and hop, skip and jump around the Square like it was my private space. Once graduation is over and the holidays kick in, there aren't that many people around to care. I read somewhere that London is amazing on Christmas morning because it's just bizarrely quiet. I wonder if anyone has walked through the streets of London on Christmas morning in their underwear... perhaps in a Rudolph thong.

Lancaster University is a lonely place to be during the summer. So lonely that you might resort to running around in your underwear to yank back some of that feeling of freedom that gets lost behind the closed door of your bedroom, which can quite quickly begin to feel a bit like a prison cell.

Campus life grinds to an abrupt stop when summer term ends and everyone has crammed their lives into suitcases and cardboard boxes to return home. Only stragglers remain. You have to make acquaintances where you can. One day I befriended an American student who was similarly marooned on campus. I took him on a walk to Galgate. It turned out he'd never seen a nettle before, he tried to feed some to a horse and was subsequently stung. I tried my best not to laugh, didn't want to appear culturally intolerant.

One of the highlights of staying over summer has got to be the food. One of the perks of being here when term has ended is that you can take all the food from your friends' freezers that they aren't taking home with them. I have acquired so much salmon, ice cream

and chips that I have been able to eat like a King. A king who primarily eats Sainsbury's basics; but a king nonetheless.

Also, as there are less people around to judge, you can't help but slip into a sort of hunter-gatherer mode. It's amazing what stuff people throw out, I managed to forage a brand new printer with its cables and instruction manuals safely nestled in polystyrene in its original box; as well as (curiously) a dozen Singstar microphones. I saw a gang of feral boys actually climb into the bins. Some people have no shame.

Another interesting aspect of out-of-term life is that I've had the opportunity to see the lives of academics outside of the strict structure of term-time. My course-supervisor wore the same shirt two days running with something white dribbled on it. Most likely hummus, but I'm not ruling out mayonnaise. He is strangely attractive for a man old enough to be my father, I put this down to his intelligence and Irish charm rather than his choice of shirt in the morning. Hopefully a man who is too busy to change his shirt is too busy to read Scan.

So, all in all, though the isolation can be a bit annoying, staying on campus over the summer is still worthwhile as it gives you a whole new perspective on how the University functions in term time. It also makes you realise just easy it can be to take for granted how much it's the people that give the University its character and life.

However, even when everyone is finally back, I may still carry on the habit of cart-wheeling half-naked around Alexandra square. I've developed a taste for it.

Angelique Houtkamp
The New Old School

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Michael Holt

‘The Best Week of Your Life’

Is Fresher’s Week really the best thing that it is possible to experience?



Fresher’s Fair: From these humble beginnings you have to get student smart.

Fresher’s week is the best week of your life’. Though you will be incessantly told this over the course of the coming seven days; I do not know anyone who actually believes it.

For all of the flyers posted around, all the insecure boasting of JCR officers and all of the leaflets being slithered into your pockets and orifices hailing the fresher’s week as the best thing since sliced Christ. After all the hype, it can be a bit disappointing.

On the evenings you’re forced to-

gether into cramped sweaty rooms creating ample chance for all the country’s regional germs to mingle and jive. A neon Petri-dish ensuring we all get each-others coughs, sniffles and sore-throats out of the way as efficiently as possible to minimise the irritation caused to lecturers through nasal-slurping.

During the daytime you’re subjected to the process of registering for courses and taking the unflattering photos that sit atop your Luvle page and adorn the front of your Library and Purple Cards;

these portraits follow you everywhere, burdening you with a static reminder of yourself at your most queasy and worn-out. These I.D. cards become increasingly embarrassing over the duration of a three year course. As you become a responsible and demure young adult, you will still be persistently confronted with the past-reality of your awkward, sweaty hung-over self. Like ‘The Picture of Dorian Gray’, except Dorian didn’t have to carry his portrait around, whipping it out to stern-faced bouncers every time he went to the Sugarhouse.

The reality is, unless your idea of fun is hung-over admin work and cyclical shouted conversation (‘WHERE YOU FROM!? WHAT COURSE DO YOU DO!?’) Freshers’ week is unlikely to be ‘the best week of your life’.

Persistently telling Freshers’ that it will be is actually pretty irresponsible. If you find alcohol abuse to be (Whisper it) ‘not really that fun’ it can be pretty alienating to be subjected to claims that a week long ritual dedicated to being bombarded by crap music and stale vomit is: ‘The Best Thing That Can Happen to You Ever!’ Life has peaked. This is it. This is all there is. Forget sunsets and hills. Vodka Sourz and Pendulum is the best thing that it is possible to experience. If you do not enjoy them then you are fundamentally broken as a human being.

Do not get me wrong, I am not of the brigade that patronisingly claims that ‘You can have a perfectly good time without alcohol’ because in Freshers’ week this is for all practical purposes untrue.

All the JCR’s planned non-alcoholic events are, despite best efforts, usually unavoidably lame and poorly attended. Also the annoying truth is that Alcohol abuse, in the short term, is actually pretty great.

My main problem is not the drink-

ing component of Freshers’ week. It’s that it is too shallow to really act as a barometer for how much you’re going to enjoy University.

As you become more familiar with your surroundings and begin to have actual conversations with people rather than just tribally screaming the name of your College, brief acquaintances that you made in Freshers’ week become hardened into actual friendships.

Freshers’ week wasn’t even the best week of the first month of University; let alone the best week of my life.

So, this week, if you find yourself in the middle of a dance-floor wearing ill-conceived fancy dress, other people’s arms (who you don’t know the name of) slumped on both your shoulders as you half-heartedly mime the lyrics to ‘Sex on Fire’ thinking to yourself that you have never felt more hilariously alone in your life... Just remember that those people with their arms round your shoulder are most likely thinking exactly the same thing.

Once ‘The Best Week of Your Life’ is thankfully out of the way you will be able to set about enjoying the much more attainable: ‘Three Years of Your Life That Are Really Good’. I’m two-thirds through that and, so far, it lives up to the hype.

You’ve got to fight for your right to part-time

Hannah Mackenzie

THE STUDENT LOAN company are very inconsiderate; sure, they give you the money to pay your tuition fees and accommodation expenses. But when it comes to the essentials they refuse to cough up. They don’t seem to realise how quickly bottles of Sainsbury’s basics wine add up. We students are kept on rations!

Luckily, I have found a way to get money without having to rely on those miserly bastards at Student finance. I have discovered that if you get a part-time job they will give you money in exchange for performing tasks and services. It really is a great system!

However, the world of part-time work is very different from University as you may guess. The key difference is

that actions have consequences. Here are a number of tips for making as painless a transition into the world of work as possible...

1. When you tell your colleagues that you go to University, almost without fail you will be on the receiving end of ‘The Richard Branson Story’. This is the tale of how he never went and now is one of the world’s wealthiest people. That might have been alright in black-and-white past-world where qualifications weren’t needed to run airlines; but in this day and age if you went to a job interview and they asked you ‘what relevant qualifications’ you have, and you replied ‘gumption’, they would most likely laugh you out the room. Just act dismissively towards any of your colleagues ribbing of higher education: ‘Oh no! I’m wasting three years of my life! If only I’d known sooner!’

2. A hangover at work is a much bigger liability than having one in a seminar. You will be called upon to actually speak to people, walk around and generally do things. Sometimes you may have to handle products (in the worst case scenario: alcohol) and talk courteously to customers while the urge to dry-heave makes your eyes water. Luckily bosses are generally more sympathetic than seminar tutor’s during such episodes and you may even receive a sympathetic ‘don’t worry, I’ve been there mate.’ At the pub I work in, I even overheard the manager telling the Chef in an exasperated but affectionate tone ‘I’ve told you not to get stoned before you come into work.’

3. Aristotle called it a ‘utility friendship’. Even if you’re only working part-time it makes sense to make as much of

an effort with your colleagues as possible. The generality of part-time work means that there’s likely to be a diverse range of people. From boys who spend their days-off in baggy jeans and lolling about half-pipes; to the girls who think they are from Sex and the City and start talking to you about their Rampant Rabbits within minutes of exchanging first names (loudly so the boys can ‘overhear’). You’re never likely to have more than a shallow friendship with these people but it’s less excruciating to talk about how ‘annoying greasy pans are to scrub’ rather than awkwardly scrubbing greasy pans in silence.

4. As a part-time worker you’re not going to have the level of intimate knowledge of your place of work that the full-time staff have. Don’t feel intimidated if they adopt an air of condescension towards you if you make

a minor error. You’ve only worked there for a short time whereas they’ve probably spent the best part of the last couple of years toiling away there. Just swallow your pride and let them enjoy that sweet-taste of petty superiority. It makes both of your lives easier.

5. Jobs are by their very nature boring and sometimes you may need to trick your brain into enjoying counting out petty change or cleaning plates. Daydreams can make the drudgery much easier to bear. With a bit of mental acrobatics you can take that annoying boy who incessantly quotes Family Guy in an obnoxious faux-American accent, use your imagination to class him up a bit, and picture him taking you passionately over the saladette counter. Just imagine that ‘Giggedy’ is a French expression for ‘I’m in love with your intellect’.

facebook Saving our networking souls #1 Thou Shalt Not Exhibit Self-Pity

FACEBOOK SHOULD NOT be an outlet for griping. Moaning and self-pity are annoying in real life, doubly so on the internet. People seem single-mindedly tempted to break off from essay writing or revision to fish around for the instant gratification of cheap sympathy that only the internet can provide.

Though you personally may feel upset about: ‘How much work I’ve got to do’ or ‘How much relentless you had to drink to stay up revising’. Remember that you came to University and you chose the course: everyone’s got work to do. And if you weren’t on Facebook it would be done quicker.



Sport in SCAN

George Wyatt Previews and Predictions
The Lowdown to the Carter Shield
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Videogame Review:

Batman- Arkham Asylum XBOX 360 (reviewed), PS3 and PC

Hannah Fearon
Culture Editor

WITH THE SUCCESS of The Dark Knight last year, Batman: Arkham Asylum has been one of the most anticipated games of 2009. Whilst the game is not based on the events of The Dark Knight, the film has most definitely heightened its success. The joker has been apprehended by Batman and is taken to Arkham Asylum where he escapes and begins to cause chaos,

releasing the inmates and massacring the guards. Batman must capture the joker, but in order to do so he must face many enemies from his past. The game features Harley Quinn, The Riddler, Scarecrow, Poison Ivy and many other recognisable faces from previous Batman films and the original comic book series.

As a fan of the films and comic books, I eagerly anticipated the release of Arkham Asylum and was certainly not disappointed. The game has a strong story which drives game play forward and will satisfy fans old and new. I loved the FreeFlow combat system, which is straightforward and allows players to feel that they are pulling off some awesome moves. Whilst older fans will enjoy the appearances of many characters from Batman's early days, the game has also been made accessible for younger and less experienced gamers with four difficulties, ranging from easy to expert.

The graphics in Arkham Asylum are superb; the level of detail in the characters and surroundings is fantastic. The use of slow motion moves during com-

bat heightens this and it gives the effect that you are watching a film rather than playing a game. Cinematography has obviously been given a great deal of attention and it really pays off.

Perhaps what I enjoyed most about Arkham Asylum was the decision to use such a vast amount of characters that take us back to the days before Christopher Nolan's films. That isn't to say that I didn't enjoy Batman Begins and The Dark Knight, but I was pleased to see that the game was not just re-

playing the films like so film/game combinations released lately, the story is original which makes it such a great game to play.

So what's next for Batman? A third film directed by Christopher Nolan is planned for 2011, but there are so many rumours flying around the internet that it is difficult to tell what it will be about. Official pictures indicate that the film will feature Harley Quinn, The Riddler and Catwoman. There are strong rumours that Johnny Depp

will play The Riddler (a great match for Tim Burton's Riddler, Carrey) and that Megan Fox is to play Catwoman, which has enraged gamers across the globe due to her being so young. To be honest I thought it would have had the opposite effect, what fifteen year-old boy wouldn't want to see Megan Fox pounce around in a cat suit?

If you haven't had the chance to play Arkham Asylum yet, I strongly recommend that you do so, you won't be disappointed.



Batman Returns: The Dark Knight must contend with hordes of old adversaries in this addition to the franchise

Cliched comedy still hits the spot

Film Review: The Hangover

Sophia Mills

DOUG (JUSTIN BARTHA) is getting married. So along with his friends Phil (Bradley Cooper) and Stu (Ed Helms) – to say nothing of his fiancée's socially inept brother Alan (Zach Galifianakis) – he embarks upon a road trip to Las Vegas to celebrate. The bride's father gives them his vintage Mercedes to travel in and waves them off with a warning to be back on time for the wedding.

So far so much your typical all-American comedy, but then things change. Following a brief glimpse of the first drink of the evening, we fast forward to the morning after. The hotel suite is in a state of disarray and the bridegroom is nowhere to be found. So begins a frantic backtrack of the previous day's events in the hope of locating Doug and making it home in time to get him down the aisle.

Director Todd Phillips, the brains behind Borat, previously directed high

school favourites *Road Trip* and *Old School*, and it is clear in this film that his talents have not fallen by the wayside. Cliched though the plot may be, the film is by no means mundane.

All four lead actors share good on-screen chemistry, not only making their old friendship believable but clearly showing their roles within the group. In a time when so many newly released comedies are littered with the same faces it is refreshing to see a cast lead by such an unknown but talented group. Ed Helms is especially convincing as Stu, a seemingly conservative dentist whose girlfriend has such control over him that he lies about every aspect of the bachelor trip, resulting in him acquiring a few things that are very difficult to hide!

As the credits roll *The Hangover* plays on the traditional use of outtakes with an album of photographs recovered from Alan's camera in such an entertaining way that you've a smile on your face as you leave the cinema. Add in a cameo from Mike Tyson, some superb shots of the Las Vegas skyline and more than a few excellently written quips, and this makes one American comedy that is definitely worth a watch.



On the road: Doug and friends head off to Las Vegas



The Hangover will be showing at LU Cinema during Fresher's Week on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday at 7pm. Tickets are free.

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Simon Bird: Serious about comedy

Liam Richardson
Editor

Cambridge Footlights has churned out dozens of legendary comedians and comic performers over the years, probably more so than any other amateur dramatic club in the country. Its former presidents include Eric Idle, Hugh Laurie and David Mitchell to name a few.

Simon Bird, the star of channel 4 sitcom *The Inbetweeners*, was its president in 2006, having studied English literature at Cambridge for three years. This academic background translates to Simon's approach to comedy. He is passionate and articulate about his chosen subject and speaks with real knowledge and intelligence. The different merits and approaches of American comedy is something that interests him. But how does British comedy compare?

"There are two totally different approaches. British TV gives people the opportunity they wouldn't get in America. Something like *The Office*. I think that each produces a different sort of comedy."

Bird is a true scholar of comedy and talks at length about some of his influences and particular shows that he likes. He regularly watches *Arrested Development* and *Seinfeld*, appreciating them for the precision and execution of gag after gag. He does, however, enjoy British comedies like *The Office* and is able to see the legacy that that particular show has had on *The Inbetweeners*.

Indeed, the beauty of appearing on a 'cult' channel (prior to appearing on terrestrial television *The Inbetweeners* was the first ever sitcom to debut on the digital channel E4) is that like the shows usually found on BBC 2, television producers are more inclined to let them survive.

"There is a short-termism with the untried and untested in comedy in general."

Fortunately, *The Inbetweeners* was not a victim and flourished by the time its second series debuted earlier this year with viewing figures edging past the 1m mark. Is he then surprised by the success of the show?

"I think for the first series it was the first thing any of us had ever done on television. It was a bit of a shot in the dark. The second series was stronger and funnier because we all knew what we were doing."

Simon's character, Will, is a teenage schoolboy sent to a local comprehensive following the divorce of his parents. Much of the show's humour and charm is generated by Will's awkwardness in handling social situations, in particular dealing with the opposite sex. It would be fair to say the show caricatures and accentuates the problems encountered by typical teenage boys. Although Bird sounds sincere when he tells me that he hopes he wasn't too similar to Will in his own schooldays, he does accept that as a character, he is easy to identify with.

Bird's career has taken off thanks to his portrayal of Will and he has already been snapped up by the BBC to present

a new comedy gameshow, the pilot of which is called *The King is Dead*. Simon says that it is 'similar to *Shooting Stars*' and is being road-tested over the coming months with a tour taking in over 20 dates encompassing many academic institutions. So, is the comedy panel show an avenue worth pursuing? It has certainly worked for David Mitchell, who is a permanent fixture on shows such as *Would I Lie to You* and *Mock The Week*.

"I have bigger projects than that. I want to write and star in my own sitcom. I'm not sure the panel show genre is really my bag."

Bird's vast knowledge of comedy and the weight of his predecessors from Cambridge does appear to be a burden. He is very serious about comedy, so much so that not one laugh is obtained from any part of our conversation. He tells me another ambition, apart from his own sitcom is to do more touring:

"I'm going to try and write more traditional stand-up. By that I mean one man and his mic."

Determination to succeed in his profession seems to be the defining cornerstone of Bird's philosophy. For now, however, the fate of *The Inbetweeners* is what piques my interest the most.

"There's going to be a third series, that's all confirmed. But I haven't actually had any discussions about when that might be or what might be in it. So I don't think it will be for a while"

Simon Bird Presents An Experimental Game Show is at the Lancaster Grand on 19 October



Following on from the great and good of comedy: Simon Bird reflects on his association with the world famous Cambridge Footlights. A group which has spawned legendary comedians such as Eric Idle, Clive Anderson and David Mitchell to name but a few.

Classic lines from *The Inbetweeners*

Jay: She's probably just got an old face, must be cos of all the jizz she's had on it	Jay: While you've been at home wanking over Carly all summer... i've been out porkin' loads of vadge!	Jays Dad: I know what you're up to, you think cos shes sooo massive, she'll count as 2 shags, well she doesnt!	Jay: F**k that! Look you lot can stay here and finger Neils arse if you wanna but i'm off to find the clunge.	Will: I went to fart and instead, sh*t myself
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Angelique Houtkamp: The New Old School

Elizabeth Moyser

Every bit as charming as her name, the artwork of Angelique Houtkamp has recently been enjoying a thriving international fan base. Born in Amsterdam and still living there today, Houtkamp began drawing for the first time at the age of thirty, when she became a qualified tattooist after a short career with her own jewellery company as a body piercer.

Conjuring her individual style from a charming assortment of bygone eras, Houtkamp's work from the offset is deeply ingrained with a sense of nostalgia that birthed the dawn of a new and unique Pin-Up. Houtkamp has created a whole host of beautiful women in possession of full, cupid-bow lips parallel to those of Betty Grable's, hair as noir as the night, and costume

so varied that to see them all at once would leave you wondering where such a magnificent fancy dress party was being held, and exactly why you haven't been invited yourself. Hollywood allure notwithstanding, the 1920s and even the gothic Victoriana shows its gleaming edge, tying the threads of her signature style together.

Houtkamp's work is clean and simple. She uses a combination of ink and watercolour on thick slightly textured paper which gives her work an antiqued look. Her designs compare in style and technique to the Flash Art by traditional body artists such as the original 1950's 'Old School' tattooist "Sailor Jerry". With limited prints available at prices from £150 and her work displayed in galleries as far afield as Australia you might be forgiven for losing interest. But like other well known artists, most of her work can be seen on the internet at the expense of typing her name into



Angelique Houtkamp: One of the most flamboyant and creative artists working today.

a search engine.

What you might find there, behind a spectacle of breathtaking faces is a mark of female prowess. Powerful and outwardly feminine, from an officer with a droll face, indifferently smoking a cigarette to a stern investigator surveying the viewer through a magnifying glass, Houtkamp captures women not only as an icon of pure sensuality, but of strength. A bloodstained boxer still in her gloves, ready for more and a blonde clown looking mildly amused are all striking examples of how she toys with characters in a way that displays the exceptional nature of the female psyche.

It's clear that as an artist Houtkamp knows how to have fun with her work, which is undeniably where the lasting appeal lies for fans. Living in a world where tattooed sailors battle the elements to come home to their girls, the Dutch doll's work is marked by the sort

of folk you might come across in a historical port such as Amsterdam. Awash with nautical ropes, anchors and with the odd sailor thrown in here and there for good measure, it's also the use of the mythological that adds to her distinctive aesthetic yet another playful twist; the half woman half octopus 'Fabienne', 'Annie and Fran' the two headed pirate and 'Isabella' the mermaid, all nod towards a seafarer's tale of his perilous adventures off land.

So what's next for Ms Houtkamp? Fans of her work will be on the lookout for the follow up to her first book 'Tattoo Darling', the greatly anticipated 'Tattoo Mystique', published by Outré and out in October of this year. No doubt, as her work often does, it'll have you wondering if it's quite justifiable to use your student loan to fly to Amsterdam and spend the 250 euros on a custom designed tattoo by the artist herself. Who needs to eat anyway?

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Previews and Predictions: Who will claim the George Wyatt trophy?

Oliver Holmes
Sports Editor

THE HOMECOMING OF the George Wyatt bar sports returns on Monday of week two as the competitive weekly events of Men's darts and the good-natured dominoes both begin. In addition, the Women's darts season opens on the Tuesday while the pool action gets underway on the Thursday night in what will provide quality action, impressive tactical knowledge as well as the inevitable fluke.

Darts

The Monday night marks the return of Men's darts and dominoes in what promises to be a great opening session of arrows. Furness travel to Lonsdale hoping to begin their defence of the league with victory, but with Lonsdale gathering improved form towards the end of last season, they will have to guard against any complacency that could have crept in over the summer months. The night also marks the debut action at the new Grizedale College bar who play host to last years second placed Fylde. Grizedale, who played their home games at Pendle last season could take advantage of their new surroundings and hope to make the place a fortress.

However, as was displayed more than once last season, the underdog is always capable of an upset and to stand any chance of winning the league it is vital that matches are won by a big margin rather than a 5-4 victory due to the scoring system of the league. This is highlighted by the fact that last year Bowland finished below Pendle, despite winning more games. With sixteen matches each year, it is a long, hard campaign in which each and every team must perform to their maximum.

Cartmel, Bowland, with their intimidating home atmosphere and Lonsdale will all want to improve on last year and try and compete with the likes of Pendle and Fylde but it will be Furness who are the ones to beat again this season. Graduate were the ones taken



Pot as many balls as you can: Sean Doyle, the captain of County A-team pool lines up his shot. (Photo: Joey Wong)

for a beating last season which resulted in a bottom-placed finish and unless considerable talent in numbers walks through their doors, the same could happen again.

Nevertheless, the night is made more of a spectacle due to the dominoes that are played simultaneously throughout the night. In the best of three contest, it was Fylde who took the honours last

season by a one point margin to second placed Furness. Lonsdale propped up the league some distance behind Cartmel with some teams choosing to take it more seriously than others.

The Women's darts league is a much closer affair which is displayed by the final league table of last season. County topped the league with 93 points but there was only a six point

margin between them and joint second placed Pendle and Fylde. At several points last season there was not much to choose between each side. Fylde had a great unbeaten start but stumbled against the likes of Cartmel.

For the season ahead it is likely the same three teams will run close for the league. Furness could be the ones to break through to the top three but Cartmel will struggle as they have to cope with key absentees from last season. As with their male counterparts, Grizedale are looking forward to the new season in their new home. Grizedale Captain Lara Dare said: "personally, if we are not at the bottom of the league then I am happy. I know Grizedale darts team are not the best but we are proud to be part of Grizedale."

One thing is for sure however, it is not long until the "lets play arrows" chant is ringing around the college bars on a weekly basis.

Pool

The battles played out over the pool table are a test of nerve, wit and stroke play. Over the duration of last season it was County who finished top following some no nonsense performances. However, following Bowland's near miss, they are the ones who pose the biggest threat to County's reign. John Bekalo, Captain of Bowland Men's Pool and Dominoes teams, said: "the last few years Bowland College pool teams have been very competitive winning two seasons back and coming close runners up to County last year."

"I expect the same competitiveness from my team this year and of course want to finish top of the pile as a continuation of Bowland's recent success in George Wyatt competitions."

Nevertheless, Bowland, along with the other sides in the league are aware of the danger posed by each team. Bekalo said: "I think County will once again be dangerous and Fylde have some good returning players."

County Men were not the only ones to win the league last year. County Ladies matched their coun-

terparts by bringing home the league. Looking ahead to this year, Kathryn Crawford, Captain of County College Ladies Pool Team said: "Despite many of our seasoned players graduating last year we still have two Roses players who were victorious in their games in the tournament and several others who have improved beyond measure in the last year. I am confident that the spaces that we do have will be filled up quickly by fresh talent."

However, Graduate and Pendle will look to do their talking on the table as they ran close last season but suffered crucial defeats which County were able to take advantage of.

Predictions

MEN'S DARTS – Furness: were a cut above the rest last season and probably will be the same this season. Pendle could run them close however.

WOMEN'S DARTS – Pendle: Missed out by a whisker last season and if they win their big games there will be no stopping them.

DOMINOES – ABSOLUTELY any-one: Some say it is tactical, others say it is luck. Any team has a chance of winning so Grizedale to win something in their new home.

MEN'S POOL A – Bowland: They will take their disappointment of finishing second last year as encouragement to go one better despite having to rebuild. Expect Lonsdale to push them close.

MEN'S POOL B – County: Will successfully retain the league due to their quality talent that is available in abundance. No team practices as much on campus!

WOMEN'S POOL – County: Won by some margin last year and will be equally as tough to beat this year.

Turn to the back page for exclusive information on what you can expect from the brand new sports centre, due to open in 2011.

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I'm very excited for the year ahead. I think the sporting landscape is starting to look a lot more positive and opportunities for students to get involved in sport are expanding. The University has definitely taken note and began to invest heavily in the sporting field (forgive the pun). I had a gander last week at all the improvements they've been doing on the facilities and I have to say I've been very impressed.

New pathways have been put in to improve access to the pitches and brand new fencing around the Astroturf pitches and tennis courts have been put up. They've put new drainage systems into the grass pitches and reseeded them all so they are all looking very lush and well cared for. Hopefully, this will improve the playability of the pitches and mean that fewer games are cancelled because, let's face it, we can't rely on the Lancaster weather to be kind to us. Also, it will mean that the pitches are in much better condition for matches meaning there shouldn't be any agonising mishaps like a last minute bobble of the ball before that all important strike for goal or a ball sticking in the ground, halting millimetres away from crossing the goal line. I definitely think there will be an improvement in the quality of matches and let's hope our University teams reflect this with lots of victories in the coming season.

Talking of victories, I think it's time to bring up the subject of Roses. For those of you who are new to Lancaster, the Roses tournament is a weekend of competition in over 50 sports against our rivals across the pennines, York University. It is one of the biggest intervarsity tournaments in Europe and for three consecutive years now, we have emerged second best. This year, as hosts, we need to step up to the challenge and show what we're made of. Losing is no longer an option. The recent investment by the university into upping our sports standards is paving the way for new Roses results. Lancaster is stepping into a new era for sport. Forgive me for seeming dramatic, but for too long our sporting prowess has been neglected, and this year things are set to change. Our teams have always wanted it and will always want it, but it's now a matter of giving them the support to get it done.

Obviously sporting success isn't just based on one tournament at the end of the year; however it would be fitting considering the significant investment in sports we're seeing. I hope all students, sporty or not, will support our bid to finally win back our sporting pride and prove that Lancaster does DO sport.

Grizedale seek a second successive Carter Shield triumph, though rivals ready for war

Robert Payling
Sports Editor

MICHAELMAS TERM POSES a number of challenges to new and continuing students at Lancaster but one challenge more keenly anticipated than the rest is the chance to compete in the Carter Shield.

Each college will once again be looking for its heroes to stand up and be counted in the fight for the Shield and to make this year's competition as memorable as ever.

Last year saw the rise of the underdog as Grizedale won only the second title in their history on a dramatic final day.

Their superb effort was a reminder of the unpredictable nature of the competition and that anyone with the will, spirit and determination can upset the odds.

Ability comes second to passion in each event and anyone with the desire to compete and a love of their college has every chance of causing an upset once again.

Lauren Forrester, IC Chair spoke to SCAN: "It is a competition that anybody can play regardless of their abilities, so whilst keeping its competitiveness, it also provides for a very enjoyable opportunity to have a taste of many different sports."

This year's variety of sporting events include Dodgeball, Pop Lacrosse, Ultimate Frisbee and Aeroball to name a few as well as new event Kwik Cricket.

Such diversity is to encourage people to experience as many different sports as possible, and the taster sessions running prior to the main events will allow competitors to see which sports suit them most.

She added: "I would encourage anybody to come down, even if you have never picked up a Dodgeball, or even know what Korfball is, as the main aim of the Carter Shield is to have some fun."

This year will see the self-professed sports colleges hitting back in revenge after the major blow of Grizedale tak-

ing the title.

"Both Bowland and Fylde will feel that they have a point to prove, each being previously tagged the "sports college" and will be looking for success."

Their fight back may have to wait though as the first event of the competition is Dodgeball, the event where reigning champions Grizedale excelled last year.

Fylde's earliest chance for success seems to be in Volleyball, the fourth calendar competition in the Michaelmas term and the sport where they have come out victorious in the previous two years.

Fylde's Sports Rep Ste Rutter spoke confidently on his college's chances this year: "Fylde is the home of sports so we will be one of, if not the most successful college at sport this year!"

"We have been working hard to ensure that all our college teams have success and our dreams of winning back the Carter Shield become a reality."

Sporting prestige isn't the only prize up for grabs though and many students simply take part for the chance to own bragging rights over their fellow competitors.

Marc Handley, IC Chair said: "Even though the Carter Shield is seen as a friendly competition, there's nothing better than knowing you have just got one up on your rivals!"

"The Carter Shield is also a really good way for anyone at Lancaster to enjoy sports without the pressure of

being in one of the mainstream sports that are currently contested in the three inter-college leagues."

The team that didn't take as many victories as they had hoped last year but still showed their college spirit and the social side to the Carter shield is Cartmel.

Sports Reps Mark Lord and Jen Stewart spoke to SCAN and spoke generally on the competition and their chances: "It is a great way to make friends within your college and at the University in general."

"Cartmel have difficulties in that we do not have lots of university level sports players in our teams, so we will always struggle to beat other colleges who have teams full of university players."

"As long as we can get big squads to turn up every week we should be able to compete as best we can and hopefully cause the odd upset along the way."

Cartmel are among a group of colleges who will hope to improve on last year such as runners up Bowland who narrowly missed out on the title and Furness and County who suffered from low participation levels.

A number of taster sessions for each sport will be held before competition days at the end of each term. The first sessions take place at 12:30pm on Sunday 11th October in the Sports Centre Main Hall where Dodgeball, Indoor Women's Football, Korfball and Volleyball will be contested.



A victorious war: Grizedale seal trophy with dramatic tug of war triumph.

Inter-college Netball: Can anyone bring to a halt the Fylde juggernaut?

- **Can champions repeat 100% record**
- **Bowland aim to go one better**

Oliver Holmes
Sports Editor

THE INTERCOLLEGE NETBALL season gets underway in Week Three following a long wait. After last year's total domination by Fylde the other colleges will be hoping for more of a contest this time round.

The matches that are played out on a Tuesday and Friday night this season see Cartmel and County play two of their opening games before Fylde have even thrown a ball. It is the start to the season that will provide the best op-

portunity for such teams to pile pressure on the likes of Fylde and Bowland. A good start can inspire confidence throughout the team. It can also build momentum and act as a platform for which to base the season upon.

Fylde tore their way through the league last season winning all their fourteen games, winning the title and accumulating a massive score difference of 204. Their closest rivals Bowland finished nine points behind in second. If these statistics remain in Fylde's favour it looks as though the rest of the league has a tough test in store.

Fylde's rise to the top of the league last season came as a bit of a surprise to most of their opponents as the year before they had only managed a fifth place finish. It was Grizedale who netted their way to the top when they won all their games. Such irregularity

seems to suggest that the form book is not something that should be read into and that the league is open and ready for the taking.

Success could heavily depend on the quality of netballers that arrive during fresher's week and their impact in their respective netball team could heavily shake up the league. Only time will tell whether Fylde will repeat their success of last season, but with colleges such as Bowland and County demonstrating great potential last season, they may not have it all their own way.

Pendle finished bottom last year taking some heavy thrashings along the way. They did muster a win against Cartmel but after only registering three points all season they will certainly be hoping that several new talented players inject a new lease of life into the side.

Carter Shield Timestable 2009-2010

Term One:

Dodgeball
Women's Indoor Football
Korfball
Volleyball

Term Two:

Pop Lacrosse
Men's Basketball
Aeroball
Kwik Cricket

Term Three:

Touch Rugby
Rounders
Ultimate Frisbee
Tug of War

More information available on the LUSU website:

www.bubble.lusu.co.uk/sport

Bowland recorded some impressive victories last year but could not find the consistency that would have proved so vital and helped them challenge right at the very top. However, they did have success in their Founders competition which could encourage more confidence for the season ahead.

County played some great netball at times on their way to finishing third but Grizedale were the most inconsistent as they won half their games, losing their other half. With a set of committed and determined girls, they too could mount a push for glory come the end of the season.

Lonsdale finished fifth with 18 points just ahead of Furness. After this it was a large nine point gap to Cartmel who will hope for a change of fortunes this time around as they have a decent sized squad which shows promise.

Fylde seek to retain A-league title as new football season shapes up

Oliver Holmes
Sports Editor

THE RETURN TO life at Lancaster University this week could not have come sooner for many of its students. The eagerly anticipated return of fresher's week will be what most students have been looking forward to. However, it is the second week of term that the Inter-college footballers will have at the forefront of their minds as it witnesses the return of the football season.

Week two sees various A league sides start the campaign on the traditional Wednesday afternoon slot down at the pitches that will hopefully withstand Lancaster's erratic weather conditions that graced the campus last year. The B's however will soon follow with a weekend packed with morning and evening fixtures on the astro turf.

Last years A-league champions Fylde will look to retain the unrivalled dominance which they have displayed over the past few seasons. Captain Chris Barnett said: "On the back of a successful year last year, we're out to retain our league title and progress further in the cup competitions. Consistency is the key and taking every game as a cup final."

Fylde were pushed all the way to the finishing line by unbeaten Pendle last time around and there is no doubting that they will want to go one better and snatch the title away from the self-proclaimed "Home of Sport". However, Pendle will struggle as they have lost several key players.

This could allow any of the other teams to step up and challenge. County, prior to last season enjoyed a period of success and will want to forget about a troublesome campaign. Captain Alastair Koch said: "With a disappointing mid-table finish last season and a brief cup run, we're aiming to get back in the race to bring in as much silverware as possible."

Also hoping to rise to the occasion will be last year's surprise package Grizedale. Hardworking and difficult to beat, they displayed everything a team should epitomize and deservedly won the Inter-college Cup. Similarly, last year's third-placed Furness are a solid side but know they have much to do to repeat their success.

At the other end of the table it is make or break time for the South-West colleges. Cartmel finished bottom while Lonsdale did not do much better finishing just above them. Cartmel captain Mat Chard said: "performances

improved over the course of the season and we had a strong finish in the summer cup giving us much optimism for the forthcoming season." Mat is not the only one thinking there will be a change in fortune. Lonsdale Captain Liam Jo Thorpe said: "new management and some new talented faces should mean a long awaited push for glory."

Finally, Bowland will also think they have considerable talent that will enable them to improve on their 6th place finish.

Moving into the B-league, Fylde took the title but were closely fought by a well-drilled Graduate College who could go one step further this year despite being yet again ravaged by departures. Pendle B's managed a brilliant cup run knocking several A-teams out in the process and reached the final of B-team Summer Cup. Captain Tom Persich said: "After last years display the team will be looking forward to a competitive league competition and hope to continue their form with a strong start to the season."

Cartmel finished third last season and under a restyled management team they are looking to go to the next level. Michael Phelan said: "we fully expect to capitalise and enjoy progressing on last seasons achievements."



A taste of the action: Eddie Wileman from County and Joe Carroll of Fylde battle for the ball in a match from last season.



THE LANCASTER Award

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Find out more about the award: www.lancs.ac.uk/careers/award

University give green light for brand new £20m Sports Centre

- **The new complex expected to be ready March 2011**
- **'Attitude on sports is changing,' claims LUSU VP for Sport**
- **Facilities announce other measures to improve sporting success for the uni**

Robert Payling
Sports Editor

Building work can now start on Lancaster University's state of the art sports centre after the construction plans were signed off.

The new facilities, which will be situated above the lower rugby field, will cost around £20m and are scheduled for completion in March 2011.

Enabling work has already started on the site, with the pavilion being demolished and fencing erected around the construction yard. Major work will then begin after signatures from the University secretary Fiona Aiken and two other councillors are penned.

Facilities inside the centre will include a 25 metre long swimming pool with a moveable floor that allows for two deep ends, perfect for playing water polo. A touch board timing system and display board will also be installed.

A sauna and steam room will be built along with new health & fitness suites and a dance studio. A bouldering cave is also in the plans as well as a sports hall including 8 badminton courts and 4 squash courts.

The building is to be glass fronted, enabling a climbing wall to feature as the focal point of the building and to provide a more aesthetically pleasing way to exercise with the view of the outdoor landscape in front of you.

The beginning of major construction work will be marked by a time capsule containing student sporting memorabilia being placed in to the ground.

Director of Sport, Kim Montgomery believes the new developments will change the face of sport at Lancaster. She said: "The university has turned a corner and realised just how important attracting students and increasing its profile by being successful at sport is"

"Other universities with sporting degrees, have in the past, invested a lot more money than we have and subsidised things when we always haven't here."

"The university is now putting this huge amount of money in and I don't

think there can be criticisms that the university isn't committed to sport. We're up there and above for me now."

"I've been here 19 years and this is the most positive I've felt about my own role and what's going on around us."

The signing off of the sports centre follows a busy summer of construction work at Lancaster, repairing and re-building existing sporting facilities.

£400,000 alone has been spent on digging up and resurfacing the damaged astroturf pitch, fitting CCTV and building security fencing. The new pitch will also incorporate a unique sand dressed carpet opposed to the previous sand filled carpet that existed.

A further £30,000 has been invested to improve the grass pitches, and the university's tennis courts have been fitted with new posts, nets and fencing.

Landscape Manager, Ian Sturzaker spoke on the work being done from the cash boost: "We have made significant investment in improvements to surfacing and quite a rigorous maintenance programme in place now which will take us right through on an annual basis, which will see further improvement."

The regeneration of Lancaster's sporting landscape is a positive sign that attitudes towards sport are changing at the university. It is also hoped that the changes will help to improve on the university's disappointing Roses results in recent years.

Sue Wynes, Vice President of Sports for LUSU said: "With all the improvements, the attitude on sports is changing here, that alone will improve how we do in Roses."

"You can always blame facilities, they're never perfect, but I think the fact they are improving makes a massive difference."

The university is also adhering to its green credentials by designing the centre to achieve 'BREEAM' excellence ratings - the leading environmental method accredited to new builds for their sustainable design practices.

Exercisers who enjoy the outdoors are also set to benefit from the cash injection thanks to a proposed Healthy Campus Fitness Trail joining south west campus to the sports centre via a new footpath running by the main campus.

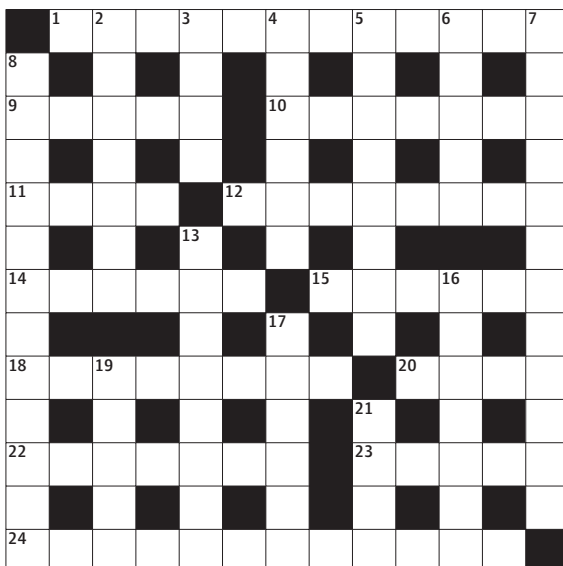
Ian Sturzaker spoke on the alternative: "Some people cannot financially afford membership to the sports centre and instead we're offering another type of activity."

Although the price is a heavy one to pay, it can no longer be said that the university is holding students back from sporting success, as foundations are laid for a brighter future.



Design of the Future: An artist's impression of the entrance to the new sports centre due to open in March 2011.

Quick crossword no. 11,830



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- Across**
- 1 Safety structure in centre of motorway (5,7)
 - 9 Form of oxygen (5)
 - 10 Make happy (7)
 - 11 Bird of prey – light, wind-borne structure (4)
 - 12 Mendacious Shakespearean knight (8)
 - 14 Constricted (6)
 - 15 Supporting staff (6)
 - 18 Principal – churchman (8)
 - 20 Serene (4)
 - 22 (Originally) a wormwood-based liqueur (7)
 - 23 Lower part of collar on coat (5)
 - 24 Dedicated to one outcome (6-6)
- Down**
- 2 Cockerel (7)
 - 3 Killed – a lot (4)
 - 4 One seeking alms (6)
 - 5 Give confidence to (8)
 - 6 South Asian republic (5)
 - 7 Ordinary (3-2-3-4)
 - 8 Blue-collar (7-5)

- 13 Imaginary – in on a lot (anag) (8)
- 16 Walk roughly over (7)
- 17 Discover the meaning of – six feet (6)
- 19 Got up (5)
- 21 Tribal group with common ancestor (4)

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Solution No 11,829

R	A	F	T	E	R	T	H	E	B	E	S
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