

Bowland Tower unveiled to the student population

Photo by Sakib Rahman: View from Tower



- The Tower, which has been refurbished into Bowland college accommodation and was built in 1968, has been completed on time for tenants to move in for the start of the term
- The accommodation provides views of campus and looks out towards Morecambe Bay

Steve Start
News Editor

In Week 1 of Lent term, Bowland Tower re-opened for residential use after a nine month renovation project and four million pounds worth of investment.

The refurbishment replaced the original accommodation that was first built in 1968. However by 2008, the Tower was deemed unsuitable for further residency and a total refurbishment was scheduled.

The new accommodation in

the Tower reaches 11 storeys in height and can house up to 55 students. Each floor offers five Superior Ensuite rooms as well as a communal kitchen, lounge and dining area with views looking west over the University and towards Morecambe Bay.

As well as the refurbishment of the Tower, the East and West wings around Alexander Square have also been converted into new accommodation facilities. These host 76 new standard rooms, adding to the existing ones in Bowland Main.

The Tower renovation has

been carried out to a very high specification. Each Superior Ensuite room now has ample wardrobe space, a large desk and floor-to-ceiling tiles in the bathrooms. The communal living spaces feature comfortable seating areas and large stainless steel fridge-freezers in the kitchens.

The students who now occupy the Tower and its East and West wings were formally residents of Bowland's Ash House. This facility is now under review and plans for future renovation are being considered.

SCAN interviewed new

Tower tenant, Claire Page, who praised the new accommodation: "The Tower is so much better than I was expecting! The best thing is the views, especially the sunsets."

There are expectations that the new facility will be extremely popular with both new and current students at the University. Residences Manager, Candace Davies, spoke to University House, saying: "We expect these rooms to be very popular with current Bowland students, and future Lancaster students..."

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Happy 2014 to you all!



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CULTURAL RELATIONS

Comment looks at the Lancaster cultural divide
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I AM SHERLOCKED

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Editor
Rachel May Quin
scan.editor@lusu.co.uk
07455 057733

Assistant Editor
Jess French
scan.assistanteditor@lusu.co.uk

Carolynne & Spine Editors
Sophie Grace Barrett
Laura Dempster
scan.carolynne@lusu.co.uk

News Editors
Jack Perry
Steve Start
scan.news@lusu.co.uk

Comment Editors
Julia Molloy
Sam Smallridge
scan.comment@lusu.co.uk

Sports Editors
Erik Apter
Iain Beddow
scan.sports@lusu.co.uk

Features Editor
Jessica Kadel
scan.features@lusu.co.uk

Lifestyle Editor
Alice Young
scan.lifestyle@lusu.co.uk

Culture Editor
Lucy Smalley
scan.culture@lusu.co.uk

Fashion Editor
Heidi Nagaitis
scan.fashion@lusu.co.uk

Photography
Mae Reddaway
scan.photography@lusu.co.uk

Web & Mobile
Jay Theis
scan.website@lusu.co.uk

Production
Emma Cianchi
scan.production@lusu.co.uk

For publicity team:
scan.publicity@lusu.co.uk

If you would like to write for SCAN, please contact the relevant section editor.

Designed by:
Rachel May Quin & Jack Smith

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EDITORIAL



Rachel May Quin
Editor

Welcome back to Lancaster! I hope you had a wonderful Christmas break and a happy New Year. Whatever you got up to, I hope you got plenty of rest because Lent term is when things really start to get busy. For first years, Lent is when you'll have to start looking at homes for next year – if you haven't been told to do so already – and thinking about who you want to commit another year of your life to. Second years will be bracing themselves for another term of hard work, rather than being able to party all the time,

and realising that third year is creeping up fast. For third years, like me, you might start to feel overwhelmed by the sheer amount of things you need to get done this term – dissertations, essay deadlines, graduate job applications, what you plan to do next, etc.

Unfortunately, with the amount of pressure we can put on ourselves at university, a large proportion of students find themselves struggling: be it because their course isn't turning out the way they expected, they're homesick, they're lonely; and a few of us may find ourselves stressed to the point where you feel like you can't cope, and it gets difficult to want to get out of bed everyday; for reasons other than a massive hangover.

This is normal. This is a completely normal reaction, to feel overwhelmed or have moments where you cry for no reason other than you need to. Whilst it might seem scary and you might feel completely alone, there are so many support systems in place for you at the University that you shouldn't be afraid to make the most of.

The best thing to do if you find yourselves in an overwhelming situation is to talk to somebody; your

friends, your flatmates if you can, your family back home, even your tutors if the source of your worry is your degree. There will always be somebody who can help talk you through your concerns or feelings to try and solve the problem.

If you find yourself awake in the dead of the night – a time when most people find themselves unable to sleep because they're worried about something – and you need to talk, you could call Nightline. Nightline is a service provided across many UK universities and we have one here at Lancaster, where fellow students volunteer their time to provide emotional support to anybody that needs it throughout the night by either phone or email.

Stephen Fry says it best, quoted on the Lancaster Nightline website: "Student life is not always the party people might think it is. I can't think of a service that does so much for so little, but even that little needs to come from...somewhere."

In the coming weeks, I hope that SCAN will be involved in an upcoming campaign about Mental Health Awareness, as it is something the majority of students will be affected by and something that we should

all feel free to talk about and seek help for if we need it, without fear of judgement.

In this issue of SCAN, we've got a whole plethora of fantastic content. We'll also be at Refreshers' Fair on Tuesday, Week 2 (or tomorrow) and of course, you're more than welcome to come chat to us about getting involved and what we do. Stop by our table and say hello if you've got a moment – it's never too late to get involved, especially with the upcoming Full Time Officer elections, which take place later this term, and 50th Roses in May!

Best of luck to you in the first couple of weeks back and to keep you motivated, here's a cute picture of my dog Doug.



Rachel. x

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News

News Editors: Jack Perry & Steve Start | scan.news@lusu.co.uk

Liberation CCOs to be discussed



Rachel May Quin
Editor

After a discussion in the Union Council during Week 7 last term, Lancaster University Students' Union (LUSU) are considering the implementation of Liberation officers, intended to provide equal representation and champion liberation campaigns involving black, disabled, women and LGBT students. The National Union of Students (NUS) is already heavily involved in supporting and voicing opinion on these campaigns, claiming that the support and promotion of liberation campaigns is a "proud tradition" of the NUS, and some students have pointed out that LUSU is somewhat behind in joining the cause during a discussion last term. Laurence Pullan, Vice President (Union Development) has so far been key in bringing the topic of liberation causes to the Union Council, having spoken to SCAN last term about the under-representation of disabled students, spoke again to SCAN about the reasons behind these discussions and where the Union plan to go next in improving representation.

"I first went to a Liberation Activism conference organised by LUSU and left suitably inspired", Pullan said, when asked where the inspiration for the discussion of liberation campaigns came from. "[I] realised that as a Union we don't represent students from Liberation Groups all that well. I also realised that there was nothing more patronising than a white, straight male trying to champion issues that liberation groups face".



Photo by Mae Reddaway

A liberation group can be any group of people that find themselves subjected to prejudice or face issues in their daily lives; as such, liberation campaigns often focus on the causes of racism, disability, women's rights and LGBT rights. For example, one campaign spearheaded by the NUS involved collecting pledges and sending over 4,000 Christmas cards to Prime Minister David Cameron, asking for his support with the Equal Marriage vote – which was passed by the Commons in February 2013.

Pullan claimed that Liberation groups and the need for an elected Officer within the Union had become increasingly important as not only would a Liberations Cross Campus Officer (CCO) champion liberation causes, but would also "make the general student body aware of liberation issues".

"I thought a good way of representing our members better was the formation of

Liberation CCOs – this was after consultation and a discussion brought to Union Council," Pullan told SCAN.

He revealed that "the Union has had liberation positions before with Liberation forums; they didn't necessarily work and so were gradually removed" – resulting also in the removal of the Liberation CCO. "I would argue this was because there was a lack of infrastructure and I now see not only a demand and need for these new CCO positions, but we also have members of staff who I think are capable of helping support these new positions if they are created".

This support stems from the training LUSU currently provide their officers, for example, the recent Winter Officer Training (WOT), which took place the week before the beginning of Lent term. Pullan spoke of his hope to establish Liberation officers properly in the Union, should they be agreed by Union Council and implemented, as well as his

concerns, stating: "In an ideal world I would love to see Liberation CCOs introduced for the next academic year, however, I would much rather... do things properly than rush through some wishy-washy byelaws and governance – this has happened in the past and would be a mistake".

He stressed the need to ensure that "our governance is water-tight to ensure that Liberation CCOs – if created – are a perfect fit in our representational structures".

Debate currently rests on how the CCOs would be implemented and who can run

for the positions, after it was discovered the current voting system used by the Union is unable to determine who can vote for what. Currently, a Liberation sub-group has been created for students who are a part of liberation groups to discuss their opinions and "formulate what the potential remits of these positions could be". Pullan is also dedicating time to researching how other Unions approach the subject, stating "I have also been in touch with the NYS and other benchmark Unions – most notably York – and enquired about their policies around election of Liberation CCOs". The Liberations sub-group is open to students, not just officers of the Union, and another discussion item will be presented in Union Council this term with regards to byelaws for the positions. All students are welcome to attend council as observers, with dates and times for upcoming councils published on the LUSU website.

Construction on Bowland Tower



Photo by Sakib Rahman



Photo by Sakib Rahman



Photo by Sakib Rahman

Continued from front page

... that come to choose college membership and accommodation this summer.”

The time taken to complete the Tower renovation is also something to be celebrated. Mark Swindlehurst, Head of Facilities, spoke to University House and said, “The programme involved a tight timeframe to ensure the work was carried out for students to move into the accommodation at Christmas. The Project Delivery team, college and contractor have worked in partnership to deliver the project on time and within budget; a fantastic team effort.”

Local contractor Askam Construction was responsible for the undertaking of the work, whilst the University managed the logistics of moving students from their contingency accommodation in Ash House prior to their return to Lancaster for the Lent term.

However, whilst the renovation is an undeniable credit to the Facilities Department and the University as a whole, the accommodation is not without its teething problems.

For starters, the Tower flats are accessible through a single, swipe key operated door at the foot of the building. In theory this may be sufficient to deter curious intruders, yet the fact that each level of the building can be accessed without additional security features, may pose potential safety risks to residents.

However, when SCAN spoke to Page, she saw past these problems, instead highlighting the social benefits that open access helps achieve. “I think I prefer the fact that there is free access onto all floors once you’ve got into the building. We all moved in from Ash

House so it’s easy to go onto another floor to see all your friends. Also, as the kitchen automatically locks every time it’s shut, everything in there is safe as only the people on that floor can get in.”

SCAN contacted Doug Shaw, Acting Security Operations Manager, concerning this potential problem.

Shaw responded to assure students that “a review of these issues raised is taking place shortly.”

Another cause for concern is the presence of just a single elevator to ascend and descend the Tower. Whilst there is little that can be done without incurring significant additional expense, the single lift – which can only hold four students at a squeeze – seems insubstantial as the volume of students wishing to travel up and down at peak times will often overwhelm its capacity. The elevator also opens directly onto the corridors of each floor. This may prove intrusive to the privacy of the occupants and may also undermine any efforts to resolve the current security issues shortly under review.

As well as these security flaws there has also been reports of damage to external panelling on the top floor of one side of the building. Talking to Alastair Brock, Facilities – Operations Safety & Compliance Manager, SCAN was informed that the damage was to the panels that protect mobile network cabling owned by the external telecommunication company Ericsson. In a statement to SCAN, Louisa Duff, Facilities Marketing & Communications Manager, relayed that the issues were “first raised by the University before the Christmas break.”

However due to Ericsson’s delays in making the repairs and the adverse

completed in time for Lent term

weather conditions that have prevailed over the holidays, the damage has worsened.

- Head of Facilities praises a “fantastic team effort” to deliver the project on time
- Students move in from Ash House, the future of which is undecided

Duff went on to confirm “they [Ericsson] will carry out the repairs very soon and [we] are in contact with them on a daily basis.”

Whilst these issues are important, it is also vital that they do not detract too strongly from the quality of the renovation work and the value it has added to the student experience at Lancaster University. Mark Swindlehurst, Director of Facilities, reiterated this by saying that “the refurbishment of Bowland Tower is part of the University’s on-going campus investment to ensure that Lancaster’s students have the very best facilities during their time here.”

With the breath-taking views and brilliant facilities that Bowland Tower now offers, this is a very difficult statement to deny. Instead, the building only adds further credibility to Lancaster University’s position as the UK’s top University for on-campus accommodation.

Photo by Mathew Gillings



Photo by Sakib Rahman

NUS and LUSU fight the government's Immigration Bill



Jack Perry
News Editor

The National Union of Students has stepped up its campaign against the government's proposed Immigration Bill, using a survey on its website to gauge the opinions of international students towards the Bill. The campaign is supported by LUSU, which passed a motion in Union Council on Thursday Week 7 of Michaelmas Term which mandated the Union to campaign against the Bill.

The Immigration Bill would impose a series of extra costs on non-EEA international students.

The introduction of the Bill would see these international students charged up to £200 extra fees for healthcare. For postgraduate research students with families, that number could be increased to as much as £3000.

The Immigration Bill is currently in its report stage in the House of Commons.

In response to the Bill, the NUS has developed a short survey for international students to help campaigning on the issue. While the NUS desired as many responses by Monday Week 1 of Lent Term, the survey is open until 5pm on Friday Week 3.

The NUS campaign is supported by LUSU, after a motion was passed during the Thursday Week 7 session of Union Council to fight the

Bill. In a statement on its website on Thursday Week 8 of Michaelmas Term, LUSU labelled the introduction of the charges "discriminatory" and "counter-productive."

"This sends the message to international students that they are not welcome in the UK," the statement read. "Thus it is increasingly likely that more students will choose to study elsewhere, at institutions with more progressive policies and greater freedom of input for all."

"We feel that the UK should be an ambassador for allowing international students the healthcare that home students are given without any extra costs."

LUSU also said that charging migrants for use of the NHS was "completely unfair" for international students studying at Lancaster, who are already paying £14,000 a year to study at the university.

LUSU Vice President (Welfare and Community) Tom Fox said that he would be campaigning to push the issue with Eric Ollerenshaw, the MP for Lancaster and Fleetwood. "We sent a letter to the local MP saying that, as a Union, we've voted for this policy to be fought against," Fox told SCAN.

"This is unfair on international students who are already paying quite a lot to be here," Fox continued. "If you're a PHD student you will be paying thousands of pounds just to step into the country so this is an issue we think needs tackling and more campaigning needs to be done."

Fox however acknowledged that this was largely a "battle the NUS has to fight now - it is beyond us."

Fox said he hoped the NUS will be successful with their campaign, though questioned their strategy. "The NUS have put out this questionnaire and asked if international students will take it. My personal perspective is that [the NUS] is just trying to get statistics to back up its own argument. That isn't a bad thing -

statistics can be a good way of convincing MPs... but at the same time a lot of international students won't vote, so why would MPs care?"

"This is why I think we need to show that home students are also interested and they feel like it is a wrong decision on the part of the government."

Fox praised Daniel Stevens, the NUS International Students Officer. "[Stevens] is an incredibly hard-working officer - one of the best - so hopefully he has something to go in there with."

In addition to NHS charges, the NUS is calling on MPs to reject the aspect of the Bill which will introduce fines for any private landlord who does not ensure their tenants have the right to remain in the UK.

In a statement on its website, the NUS said that this

proposal "will effectively make unregulated and untrained private landlords a new branch of the UK border police, which is not their responsibility. This proposal would also apply to everyone in the UK despite their citizenship, and make it difficult for those without documentation to obtain adequate housing."

"We are calling on the Government to scrap this unnecessary proposal which, when directed at students, could result in discrimination and duplication of existing heavy-handed immigration controls on students."

On this issue, Fox told SCAN: "The Immigration Bill actually has several worrying aspects, particularly the authority it will give landlords. That could be incredibly dangerous, and it could create a lot of issues for international students which they don't deserve... Hopefully MPs will find a way where this Bill will not affect international students."

Meanwhile, the government is considering further ways to charge migrants to the United Kingdom for use of the NHS. Proposals include migrants to England paying for extended prescriptions, as well as charges for some emergency care. Overseas students are

also expected to pay higher rates for dental and optical services.

The government said that the charges would allow the NHS to recoup money, while ensuring that only those who need urgent attention use the service.

It also insisted that consultation with a GP or nurse will remain free, and that nobody would be turned away in an emergency.

Speaking to the BBC, Health Minister Lord Howe said: "having a universal health service free at the point of use rightly makes us the envy of the world, but we must make sure the system is fair to the hardworking British taxpayers who fund it." Lord Howe said there are also plans to introduce a new system for identifying and recording patients who should be charged for NHS services.



Photo by Mae Reddaway

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REFRESHERS FAIR

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scan News' Review of 2013



Rachel May Quin
Editor

2013 was an exciting year for Lancaster, with a multitude of events ranging from struggles with the counselling services and the closure of the Music degree to the striking of academic staff over fair pay. SCAN has been at the forefront of it all, and this year we've decided to wrap things up by highlighting key events that have been most important to students.

In the first issue of 2013 re-



Photo courtesy of Ingy The Wingy

leased in January, SCAN ruffled feathers by reporting on Lancaster University Students' (LUSU) Union's plans to move the Graduation Ball to Blackpool Tower, instead of opting for a traditional campus venue such as the Great Hall - which increased prices for the event dramatically according to the original article, printed January 21st. LUSU Vice President (Events & Democracy) Libby Martin - a role which no longer exists due to the restructure of Full Time Officer (FTO) positions at the end of the 2012/2013 academic year - claimed the changes were "largely based on feedback" from students. However, SCAN's Assistant Editor at the time Jack Smith revealed the move was based on LUSU's loss of profit and declining ticket sales for the event, as the previous Ball had lost £15,000, "which needed to be financed from other areas of LUSU". Students reacted differently to the story, with some saying that they preferred the event

tutions leave in 2012 and its future was uncertain, and had led to an article being printed in the Times Higher Education entitled "Will the last university to leave the 1994 Group please turn out the lights?" Smith commented "My position and the University's position on the 1994 Group at the moment is very clear... Of course the 1994 Group is in flux... [it] played, and still plays in my view, an important role in the discussion over research-intensive universities...". However, it seems the Group failed to recover from their "flux" and the Group decided to close its doors after 19 years; Joel Pullan, current LUSU President, remarked "Lancaster, being part of this mission group, has been party to big decisions affecting not just our own institutions, but across the country". Whether the closure of the 1994 Group was a result of their losses in 2012 or a natural end to the group remains unanswered, however the author of the SCAN article, published No-

ember 25th, poignantly wrote "despite its competition with the Russell Group, the 1994 group remained a respected and successful establishment until its end".

In January, it was reported that the University Counselling Services were to gain additional staff, after ex-Vice President (Equality, Welfare & Diversity) Rosalia O'Reilly successfully campaigned to improve the service. The campaign focused on "the inadequacy of the building facilities as well as the deficient numbers of staff members and appointments available to both students and staff". Considered a success, this promise of additional staff contented many. However, in February it was reported that the University had decided to remove internal phones from campus accommodation, raising concerns about how students could contact volunteer-dependent service Nightline, which offers support and a friendly ear to anybody at Lancaster who requires it well into the night. Unfortunately, the situation so far appears to have worsened, as in October SCAN again reported that the apparent need for counselling had risen by 127 per cent. The article revealed "Several members of [University] staff have suggested that the rise in the number of students seeking the University's counselling service is linked to the closure and dismantling of several of the student support networks, which took place during the summer of 2010 and into the 2010/11 academic year", and has so far yet to be resolved.

2013 was also plagued with struggles in terms of campus retailers, and the situation snowballed as larger retailers purchased property in and around Alexandra Square. Branches of banks came and went, and the year began with the closure of Diggle's - popular Lancashire sandwich and coffee providers. The announcement of Subway and WHSmith coming to campus raised many eyebrows, as the University appeared to be pandering to wealthy companies and eschewing local businesses by raising rent prices. Second year student Alex Jones told SCAN "It seems that the University are forcing food outlets on campus to leave so that we have to buy food from

the outlets and bars that they own". As the year progressed, the situation only appeared to worsen. Subway, which now resides in Bowland College, has been the subject of much controversy and rumours of its arrival were suggested in SCAN as early as January. From there, it faced opposition from Bowland students, from our resident university bloodhound Ronnie Rowlands in this Comment article and from those who protested its 4am closing hour during the Quiet Period - which is enforced during summer term around exams.

Furore over the college bars continued in 2013 as it was revealed that Jo Hardman, Head



Photo by Jay Theis

of Commercial Services, had chosen to close Pendle Bar to the college for the majority of the time; with the exception of special events such as Pendle Live, Freshers' Week and Extrav. The front page of SCAN on April 29th claimed that there were fears of the college bar "shutting in stealth". The 'closure' came as a surprise to many, as SCAN had previously reported on some small renovations to the bar which suggested that all was well. Yet in April, Hardman confirmed to SCAN that "at the end of last term, a meeting was held with all the JCRs and colleges, which discussed the continuing decrease in sales of drinks in the bars and the need to agree action to improve performance of each bar against a plan". Further to this, there was discontent amongst student bar staff, as it was revealed in May they were opposing the cuts to bar staff hours and the instatement of monthly wages - a Facebook poll showed that 74% of students at Lancaster preferred to be paid weekly as

they felt it suited students better, with just 26% approving of the changes. One student staff member Christopher Osborn observed "If the University are capable of missing several deadlines forcing me to wait three or four weeks to be paid, I believe it is unlikely that they will be able to make a single deadline to ensure I am paid within four to six weeks".

It seems overall that the University has not fared well with their staff this year. After committing to the living wage in May due to pressure from LUSU, SCAN announced in November that hundreds of university academic staff are employed on controversial zero hours contracts. The use

would be moved from their current position in ASS to the Law School. In the next issue of SCAN, released February 25th, it was revealed that the University had failed to follow procedure by closing the Music degree scheme. Despite the protests of many students and an Emergency General Meeting during which students voted unanimously to save the arts, it was too late to save Music and the degree is currently being phased out. There was further bad news for Music students in October, as two members of staff resigned and it was revealed many were struggling with the course and their dissertations. The loss of Music is one that will resound throughout the University, as the FTO team at the time were accused of acting too slowly in saving the degree, and former LUSU President Ste Smith was mandated to write an open letter to Vice Chancellor Mark Smith on behalf of LUSU to "express 'grave concerns' the student body has over the University's strategy as a whole".

As always, the FTO elections - which take place late in Lent term - dominated the newspaper as we provided you with interviews and full coverage of all the candidates. Former SCAN Sport Editor, Pendle College President, Cross Campus Officer (CCO) Media and later CCO Socials Laurence Pullan was successful at the start of the year, when he won the Sir Chris Bonnington Outstanding Achievement Award at the LUSU Awards in January. Laurence and his brother



Photo by Louise Mason

Joel went on to be extremely successful during the FTO elections, with Laurence being elected Vice President (Union Development) and Joel elected as President. Rachel Harvey, Emily Pollitt, Joe O'Neill and Tom Fox were also all duly elected into FTO positions and since their elections have been successful in implementing changes to LUSU and the University. Joe O'Neill - also

known during his campaign as #FTJ0e - managed to persuade the library to open for a 24 hour trial period in April, and was successful again at the end of the 2013/2014 Michaelmas term in lobbying for a 24 hour library so that students could access its resources whenever they needed as course deadlines approached. Tom Fox featured frequently in SCAN during October and November, firstly for his successful banning of so-called 'LAD' mags in LUSU stores, and again for successfully passing an Evening Sexism motion. Rachel Harvey experienced success as she was re-elected into the newly named Vice President (Campaigns & Communications) role, after managing to separate the position of SCAN Editor from her previous role. SCAN was pleased to report in May - after an election on April 30th - that the first student editor of SCAN in over thirty years, myself, had been elected.

As the new academic year got underway, the university were at fault as many Freshers coming to Lancaster found themselves in a sticky situation, due to oversubscription of college accommodation. Many new arrivals at Lancaster were unable to secure campus accommodation and were forced to live off-campus for those tentative first weeks, if not for the entire year. SCAN was sad to report in Week 2 (Michaelmas term) of an incident in the Students' Union nightclub, The Sugarhouse, in which a young woman was sexually assaulted in a toilet

blackened window frame in Block 55 of Cartmel residence. The victim spoke to SCAN shortly after the incident occurred late on Monday, Week 5 (Michaelmas term), saying "My passport, my bank card, my library card... everything that confirms my identity is in my room. It happened so suddenly". SCAN followed up the story in the next issue, reporting that no students were harmed in the incident and many had been safely returned to their accommodation.

The campus has undergone some changes during 2013, with SCAN reporting on the construction of the new Engineering building in April and providing updates since then. Other construction on campus includes the Science Park, which was announced in April and the renovation of Bowland Tower, which the University claims will be completed in early 2014. Whilst con-



Photo by Mae Reddaway

struction can occasionally be an annoyance on campus - for example, the Underpass which remained closed for renovations for around two years - Annie Underwood wrote positively for our Comment section in November about the improvements around campus. The University also received positive attention nationally, after reaching the top ten for 'student experience' in May and receiving television fame after working on a programme with the BBC to improve the environment. 2013 also saw the retirement of LUSU CEO Pete Elliot, who spent 34 years working in the organisation and in his youth held the position of Bowland College President.

Stagecoach's poor service was also questioned and criticised in November, as their services failed students. SCAN first heard of the unrest in October, after one disgruntled student wrote in to our Letters to the Editor section saying: "Stagecoach need to get a grip and realise that the

people using their services are not just neglected, ignored

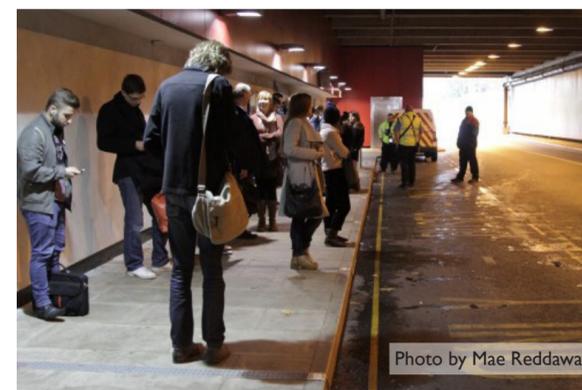


Photo by Mae Reddaway

students; surely the locals are sick [of Stagecoach] as well?" The article printed in Week 6 (Michaelmas term) reported that some students had complained of up to thirty minute waits, with the service "rapidly becoming insufficient for

cause they do have dedicated staff that work with disabled

students." Further to this, Melissa Parker wrote a touching piece in the final issue of SCAN about how her disability has not affected her experience as a student.

In SCAN's final issue of the year, released November 25th, we revealed the controversy at Lancaster's international campuses. International campuses are an issue that have recurred in SCAN throughout the year: in May, ethical concerns about a China campus were discussed after it was revealed plans were moving forward, a source within the University told SCAN that things would move "very quickly". In October, we wrote of the announcement of the new branch in Ghana, followed by our final front page of the year which spoke of Academic Standards and Quality Committee reports and revealed "the poor quality of the programmes delivered at the University's international teaching partners". In reaction to this, Comment Editor Sam Smallridge and author of SCAN's regular feature Postscript Ronnie Rowlands have both written articles for and against whether international campuses can still be a success for the University. At this moment in time, it seems difficult to tell.

Overall, it has been a successful year for SCAN as we make the transition from an FTO-led media to an entirely student produced publication. We've broken big news, responded to the Daily Mail's accusations of vanity, been retweeted by Stephen Fry and the Everyday Sexism twitter accounts and even tricked at least half the student population into thinking that Lancaster and York universities were planning to merge. Happy New Year to you all, I look forward to seeing what 2014 will bring to SCAN, the University and the Students' Union.

Union Finances in a nutshell

Laurence Pullan
 VP (Union Development)

Last term saw prudent expenditure of the Full Time Officers' budgets. So far, £3,441 of the £13,000 budget for Full Time Officers has been spent. This has gone towards various NUS Conferences for all Full Time Officers including the national SU13 Conference in Manchester, as well as the NUS Zones Conferences, also in Manchester.

All Full Time Officers have attended role-specific conferences, with VP Welfare and Community and VP Union Development, Tom Fox and Laurence Pullan, also attending the NUS Liberation Activism Day alongside the LGBTQ* Cross Campus Officer which proved to be incredibly useful.

The expenditure of the Full Time Officer budgets includes ongoing support for LA1: TV equipment (from Rachel Harvey, VP Campaigns and Communications); and various campaigning and training

materials. This has included the expenditure of £110 from Laurence Pullan, VP Union Development's budget for reading materials on Activism for student officers.

Other expenses of note include the cost of refreshments in the Pop-Up Unions put up in the Students' Union's College Spirit Week, where questions were asked about college and JCR/PG Board affinity. There were also refreshments and materials bought for an Intro Week Organisers training day over the summer, which included travel costs of the attendees. These expenses were taken from the VP Union Development Laurence Pullan's budget.

The expenses for conferences taken out of individual Full Time Officer budgets reflects the fact that only £1,886 of the £5,000 Conferences and Conventions budget pot has been spent.

Considering that the majority of conferences happen over summer and the first term, there is a healthy amount left to spend in this budget. This means that there are funds available for the upcoming

NUS Liberations Conferences and National Conference in Liverpool later this year.

In terms of Campaigns and Initiatives, £5,387 of the £15,000 budget has been spent, which means there is still plenty to be spent for future initiatives in the Students' Union. The expenditure includes further costs for College Spirit Week, as well as more funding for Student Media initiatives. There has also, recently, been a Pop-Up Nelson Mandela cafe, in his remembrance and also to show solidarity with the peaceful protests in London amidst the threat of closure of ULU, the University of London Union.

There is also a healthy budget available for Postgraduate Support of £2,000 for the remainder of the year. This has the potential to be used to support new ideas and initiatives that will benefit our Postgraduate student contingent.

There has also been £418 spent on Student Security and Welfare which has most notably gone towards the purchase of condoms.



Photo by Jay Theis

Stagecoach bus collides with footbridge near city centre



Steve Start
 News Editor

The roof of a Stagecoach double decker bus was ripped off after a collision with a bridge in Lancaster city centre.

The bus collided with a footbridge on St. George's Quay at 11.30am last Tuesday (14th).

Fortunately there were no passengers present on the bus at the time of the crash.

The police were called at 11.34am and immediately closed the road. Other emergency vehicles were soon at the scene where driver was treated for shock. There are no other reports of serious injury.

Highway officials were also shortly on the scene to assess to structure of the footbridge.

A spokesperson for Stagecoach said: "Safety is our absolute priority. The bridge involved is not part of a planned bus route and we will now investigate what has happened on this occasion as a matter of urgency."



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LUSU

The Full Time Officer team so far

Joel Pullan
LUSU President



By all accounts, I think last term was a success for the Full Time Officer team. It was incredibly busy, and by no means perfect, but a success in many ways.

Summer saw an increase in first year student admissions, so much so that some were to be housed off-campus. We demonstrated our dissatisfaction with how this was handled, and worked hard to ensure that these off campus first years would have the same student experience as any first year, with additional support such as a free bus passes

and dedicated off campus reps. These additional bits of support, albeit consolations, have helped integrate those housed off campus.

After a tiring but hugely successful Freshers' Week which welcomed record first year numbers, Week 2 saw College Spirit Week; an innovative week-long campaign aimed at engaging students and staff in the collegiate system, to great effect. We had inspiring talks from key University figures, a Battle of the Bands mini series, and observed a huge increase in awareness of the benefits of the Colleges.

With the start of a new academic year came a reinvigorated programme of department rep training, with academic representation becoming a union-wide priority. By the end of Week 5, nearly 300 department reps had been given training, a massive increase on the 20 or so reps who were trained last year. Our department reps now have the tools and confidence to raise concerns in their courses, and I'm confident that this system is now an integral component of academic excellence at Lancaster.

On October 31st and December 3rd, LUSU supported our on-campus Union's strike action, in the fight for fairer pay in Higher Education. For many academics on our campus, their pay has decreased in real terms by up to 13% – which I hope you'll agree is completely unjustified. That's also not taking into account cleaners, admin staff and porters, many of which will be on zero hours contracts. We will continue to support those who are underpaid, and I urge you to do the same.

One of the campaigns I am most proud of this term occurred in Week 7 – the White Ribbon Campaign; a male led campaign where many pledged their support to end all forms of, and to never keep silent about, domestic violence.

By the end of the week, we had nearly 1,000 pledges in support of the campaign, including our Vice Chancellor and Pro-Chancellor. The campaign gathered national support from many campaigning groups, and I'm incredibly proud that so many students pledged to and supported such an important issue.

The end of term saw

many more successes, such as breaking the all-time elections record for voter turnout – which goes to show that students are taking a greater interest in who their representatives in their colleges and cross campus are. We need to continue this attitude change to ensure that candidates produce credible manifestos, are challenged by the membership, and that the student body as a whole engages in democratic processes; from our student officer elections, to the General Election in 2015. The library was also announced as 24/7 in term time thanks to the lobbying of your Full Time Officers.

Looking ahead to what promises to be an exciting but packed term 2, it's important to focus on what exactly we want to achieve for our students. We will continue to lobby local MPs and Lords on national issues that affect our students, such as the loanbook sell off and NHS fees for international students. We must become more politically active to ensure our students get the best deal possible.

Lent term is also a crucial stage in setting the vision for

the Students' Union for years to come, as we embark upon setting a new strategic plan in which consultation must be as wide as possible. We need decisive and effective campaigns on real issues, from the under-representation of liberation groups, to positive body image and Student Money Week. We aim to break the elections record again in Week 6 when Full Time Officer elections take place, in what promises to be another interesting campaigning period.

As always, to ensure accountability to our students, there will be the opportunity for all students to observe LUSU Council, which I would wholeheartedly encourage. There will also be opportunity to bring forward policy and question your Full Time Officers at our Annual General Meeting later in the term. In the meantime, if you have any questions, comments or queries please get in touch at lusu.president@lancaster.ac.uk, or pop in for a chat.

Have a great Lent term!

World War Two veteran gains PhD

Bryony Seager

Lancaster University has awarded a PhD to their oldest student, retired teacher Eric Wooff. He received the PhD in Education only a month after celebrating his ninetieth birthday. When asked by University House about his achievement,

Mr. Wooff described the experience as "encouraging and stimulating", claiming, "University brings out the best in you".

At the beginning of his life, Wooff was educated at a grammar school, before qualifying for entry into London University after sitting his A Levels. Unfortunately war got in the way and Wooff

was evacuated to Somerset for a period, which forced him to leave school at just sixteen. He moved back to London just before the Blitz and engaged in office work in the West End. In that latter years of the conflict Wooff went on to serve in the RAF.

In 1952, after leaving London and moving north, with a wife who was "totally

supportive", Wooff retrained as a teacher and took a position at Appleby Grammar School in Cumbria, teaching maths. He worked at the school for over twenty years and reminisced how he "loved teaching and that it gave [him] immense personal satisfaction" to be involved with in all aspects of school life, including extra-curricular and promoting

Further Education within the school.

Following his retirement, Wooff discovered that he was eligible for support from the Appleby Heritage Centre. With that, Wooff began studying Education in his spare time and gained an MA from the University of East Anglia in 2003. He then went on to complete further studies at the University of Cumbria, where staff encouraged him to move to Lancaster University and study for his PhD.

Wooff claims that at the start of his life "University was not an option for me... [and] graduating was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life". Now that he has attained his PhD he hopes to submit articles to professional journals on the topics of education. Mr Wooff also hopes that his achievement under such exceptional circumstances will "encourage others" to achieve their own lifetime goals.



Eric Wooff with his children Louise, Francis, Chris and Clare, and Chancellor Sir Chris Bonnington

LU Cinema born again as



Rachel May Quin
Editor

therefore the time had come for a re-brand.

Lancaster University Cinema, or LU Cinema, has undergone a re-launch and is now Take 2 Cinema.

SCAN spoke to Take 2 Cinema President Andrew McClements about the changes; he revealed that the cinema was originally established in the 1960s and named for the university,

The student cinema is also a society, with the exec and all the cinema staff entirely managed by students volunteering their time, much the same as the other student media; McClements cited this a reason for the rebrand, telling SCAN "the original name didn't really fit well alongside the other groups of LUSU's student media (SCAN, Bailrigg, LA1:TV), we felt like the cinema needed an identity just like the other groups... We hope we can develop a better brand presence on campus that's individual to the cinema, instead of just being linked with the University".

The cinema's logo, previously a dinosaur in a top hat, has also changed as the society reinvent their identity



to a clapperboard – which McClements feels is "relevant given the name" and "more professional than our older dinosaur logo". However, the dinosaur logo had a certain charm and McClements told SCAN: "To be honest, we're not entirely sure how the dinosaur became the mascot of LU Cinema, but we're going to keep him around for some marketing materials and stuff, just so he's not completely extinct". The new name itself was also a hard decision, made by members of the cinema exec. "It took a lot of effort to

come up with a new name, I think at one stage a member of my exec suggested 'That place that shows movies' out of desperation. But, we chose Take 2 because the point of the campus cinema is to show films that have been out for a few months, so that we can keep costs down and then pass the savings onto students. We decided Take 2 would be a clever way of incorporating that."

"The rebrand is one of many changes that are being made to the cinema," McClements added. "You may recall over the last few years, the

cinema has been upgraded to digital 4K projection, and 3D capabilities were added last year. We're still in the process of changing quite a few things. For example, our plans for this term are to get the cinema repainted to a darker colour to improve viewing conditions, we're going to install a backlit sign outside displaying the new logo, and we're working with LUSU, ISS and the University on a number of other features that will be announced later in the term."

The society plan to promote the changes through better use of social networking and through a weekly e-newsletter on the website that students can subscribe to.

"It's exciting that all of this is happening considering we have such a great line up this term – you can see our complete film line-up on our website. Also for the first time ever, I'll be happy to announce, we'll be hosting a Disney all-nighter in week 5 which will feature a marathon of fan favourite Disney movies and some other surprises. The rebranding is just the beginning!"

Take 2 Cinema will be at Refreshers' Fair and you can find out more about their film schedule and joining the society on their website, Twitter or Facebook page.

Take 2 Cinema Lent Term 2014

Week	Mon	Thurs/Fri	Sat/Sun
Week 11	No showing	Rush	The Fifth Estate
Week 12	Insidious: Chapter 2	Prisoners	Turbo (3D)
Week 13	Filth	Captain Phillips	Enders Game
Week 14	Blue Jasmine	Thor: The Dark World (3D)	Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs 2 (3D)
Week 15	Philomena	Jackass: Bad Grandpa	Disney All-Nighter
Week 16	One Chance	Gravity (3D)	Don Jon
Week 17	The Butler	The Hunger Games: Catching Fire	The Counsellor
Week 18	Out of the Furnace	Carrie	Saving Mr Banks
Week 19	Kill Your Darlings	Frozen (3D)	The Family
Week 20	Homefront	The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug (3D)	Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues

Lancaster aims to celebrate 50th anniversary year in style

Dan Allen

2014 is Lancaster University's 50th anniversary and a series of events have been planned to commemorate it. The events will be varied and go on throughout 2014.

Lancaster University was established by royal charter in 1964 and accepted its first students in October of the same year. The university was one of seven 'plate glass' institutions founded during the same time period. Upon opening campus was temporarily based in the City of Lancaster. The current campus at Bailrigg opened two years later, in 1966.

Since its opening, Lancaster has gone on to be ranked as a top 10 higher education institution in the league tables of many national publications in the United Kingdom.

There are numerous events planned to commemorate the anniversary and the University has stated more will be announced as the year develops.

LUSU will also be "heavily involved" according to Joel Pullan, LUSU President and a member of the 50th Anniversary Steering group. Pullan told SCAN that his position allowed him to "see how things are progressing and provide input on all aspects of the 50th." He went on to explain that LUSU involvement would include the "50th Roses event in summer" which is "one of the 'big five' events happening."

According to Pullan, LUSU have also secured a "large amount of University funding," which will "provide activities and opportunities for students to get involved in the 50th, such as ULMS commissioning and performing a piece of music for the 50th."

Central to the celebrations will be the involvement of alumni. An appeal has been posted on the Lancaster University alumni page calling for graduates to attend events. These include numerous reunions such as a 'Grand Alumni Reunion Dinner', 'Global Alumni Gathering', and a reception for the 2014 Roses weekend. There will also



Photo by Jay Theis

be a reception for graduates who do not live close to Lancaster, which will take place in London.

Alumni living abroad will also get the chance to be involved in the celebrations with receptions in India, China, America, Malaysia and Singapore throughout the year.

Also, a 'Global Alumni Gathering' will allow both alumni and current students to send messages back to Lancaster to join in the celebrations that will take place on campus on September 13th.

Many of the anniversary events will be academic in nature. A series of public lectures will take place, spaced throughout the year, on a variety of topics. The University say that

these lectures will feature "internationally renowned experts at the forefront of their specialist fields about world-changing research, discoveries and projections for the future."

Also spread over a period of time will be the 'Westminster Faith debates', taking place between February and May. According to the University, these are "a series of free faith debates which are open to all. The debates bring together leading academics and public figures to debate the latest research on religion and values." The debates are organised by Linda Woodhead, Professor of Sociology of Religion at Lancaster University and Charles Clarke, former UK Home Secretary.

Another key academic celebration will be the Lancaster University Life Sciences event. Here the University say they will be "working with Bionow Ltd to host an event to celebrate 50 years of life science research at the University."

The Life Sciences event aims to provide a networking opportunity for both businesses and academics. The university hope this will lead to cooperation in the Life

Sciences field. The event will feature an exhibition which will show some of Lancaster University and its partner's key achievements. The University say that there will also be key note speakers from both industry and the NHS.

Some founding departments of the university will also hold their own celebrations, such as the Management Science department's anniversary event. The Languages Department will also host a ball for staff, students and alumni.

There will be other academic events taking place during the 50th anniversary year, such as the 'C4AR Pathways to Impact Seminar Series'. This will focus on how life can be improved for over 65 year olds in the UK.

The celebrations will not be limited to current students and alumni; the 'Staff and Families Celebration' in summer will allow university staff to get involved. The university say that this will be a "thank you" for the part they have played in the University's success."

One of the events that students will most anticipate is the 50th anniversary edition of the annual Roses tournament

with the University of York. The university say that the event will be "bigger than ever" for the 50th anniversary year as Lancaster hope to win on home turf.

Another student-centred event will be the 'Combined Colleges Celebration'. The event will also involve University staff and alumni for a gathering that will celebrate the rivalry and history of Lancaster University's 9 colleges.

The events listed by the University are not all that will be offered. Students or organisations can propose their own events to the Anniversary Steering Group. This can be done by downloading a form from the Lancaster University website. The University hope this will allow for smaller-scale events run for colleges or departments.

Any group can propose an event as long as it is aimed at a specific audience and fulfils the objectives set out by the University. These include increasing Lancaster University's profile and connecting with its alumni. Advice for proposing an event can be found on the University website.

Students encouraged to "feel good, take part and make it happen" during Refreshers Week

Dan Rudnick

Refreshers Week will be taking place on campus throughout Week 2 of Lent Term. A series of events organised by LUSU under the banner of 'Feel Good, Take Part and Make it Happen', Refreshers week is designed to encourage students to take up activities alongside their studies, and allow the Union's societies and sports teams another chance to advertise the opportunities they can offer.

"Refreshers Week is a week for students to be able to remind themselves of how much there is to get involved in at University,"

Emily Pollitt, LUSU's Vice President (Activities), told SCAN. "In the New Year and the new term we want people to feel good, take part and make it happen, whether that be through joining a new society, starting a business, doing exercise and being healthy or volunteering."

"We really want people to make the most of their time at university and if they haven't taken part in first term this is the perfect time for them to

find something that they will enjoy. It is also brilliant for study abroad students that have just arrived this term as they can discover all we have for them to get involved in."

Monday of Refreshers Week has been given a theme by LUSU of 'Feel Good'. There will be healthy food on offer in Alexandra Square, and other health-promoting activities available including alternative therapies offered by the Natural Health Care Centre, and walks through the campus woods.

Tuesday will bring the Refreshers Fair. As was the case for the Freshers' Fair at the start of the year, the Great Hall will be opened up for the University's societies and sports teams to encourage students to join their ranks.

With a number of new societies created since Freshers' week adding to the already long list of interests catered for, there will be more on offer for those looking for new ways to wind down away from their studies. Pollitt outlined LUSU's aims for the fair: "On the Tuesday, we want people

to think about 'taking part'... there will be stalls for lots of our sports teams and societies, overseas opportunities and retail."

On Wednesday, students will be asked to show their support for the University's sports teams by cheering on the teams at their various BUCS matches. Thursday and Friday will be dedicated to volunteering talks and information talks, organised by LUSU to help students develop their ideas for projects, new societies, or similar endeavours. Students are encouraged in particular to visit the Farmers' Market on Thursday between 10am and 3pm for advice.

Pollitt hopes that students engage as fully as they can with Refreshers week, telling SCAN: "I'd recommend that students should try to get to see all parts of the week." When asked which single event she thought students should try to go to above all else, she added: "Of all things, I would recommend they go to Refreshers Fair. There's a chance to talk to lots of people who will be able to give them information, plus, there may be some cheeky freebies!"

Pollitt said: "Students should get involved in activities and opportunities as a whole because doing something on top of your degree has so many benefits, from making you more employable to giving you a healthier body and a healthier mind."

Management School Professor receives top OR award

Jasmine Chiu

Professor Kevin Glazebrook of the Operational Research division of Lancaster University's Management School has been awarded the 2013 Beale Medal. The highly-acclaimed award was issued by the UK's Operational Research Society in recognition of his initiation of the National Taught Course Centre for Operational Research and his "significant influence" on the development of Operational Research.

The Beale Medal is a highly-acclaimed award for "sustained contribution over many years" in Operational Research. In 2011, Mark Elder, founder of SIMUL8 Corporation and an Alumni member of Lancaster's

faculty of Management Science, was awarded the Beale Medal. In 2006, Professor Peter Checkland, who currently teaches Operational Research at Lancaster University was also awarded the medal. The Operational Research Society is one of the oldest established academic associations in the UK. Founded in 1953, Operational Research (OR) is a Masters course that focuses on the applications of advanced analytical and mathematical techniques to improve management decision-making. Lancaster

University was the pioneer of the discipline and has more than 40 years of experience in running the course.

After completing his doctoral degree in Mathematics and Statistics at Cambridge University, Professor Glazebrook taught at Newcastle University in the department of Mathematics and Statistics until 2001. Following this he began teaching at Cardiff University's School of Management Science. Professor Glazebrook then finally arrived in Lancaster in 2005 and became Distinguished Professor in OR in 2008.

As well as teaching Masters Students, Professor Glazebrook founded the National Taught Course Centre (NATCOR) in 2006 along with Universities from Nottingham, Warwick, Brunel, Southampton and Cardiff. The project concerned national consortium doctoral training in Operational Research and other Mathematical Sciences. The initiative was started when the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) recognized the lack of researchers in the field. Following its success, NATCOR received funding from the EPSRC in 2011 – the very year that Professor Glazebrook retired as Director of NATCOR.



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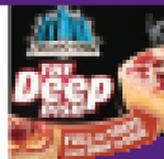


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Lancaster University Ballroom Dancing Society crowned best university at the Manchester Winter Competition



Nathalie Farrugia

In Week 9 of last term, The Lancaster University Ballroom Dancing Society (LUBDS) took home the trophy for the best University at the Manchester Winter Competition, beating York, Warwick, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester among others.

This year's team was made up of seventeen competitors, ten of which are new to the society and had never competed before. Angela Marques and Robert Novac-Tiberiu were the most successful newcomers, placing 1st in the finals for the Advanced Cha, the Advanced Jive and the Team Match Jive. Vitali Bykov and Rebecca Hurst, who are also new to the

society, reached the final of the Beginners Jive and finished in a respectable 6th place. Also placing were the LUBDS President Joe Reed and Treasurer Chloe Wellington, who came 3rd in the Novice Waltz, 5th in the Open Viennese and 2nd in the Team Match Waltz. Social secretary Hannah Metcalfe and her partner Bryn Jones placed 1st

in the Blind Rumba, 4th in the Waltz Tag, 4th in the Team Match Quickstep and 6th in the Tango. Also successful were Alex Hocknull and his partner Nicole Ellis, who came 3rd in the Beginners Quickstep.

The majority of the couples competing gained themselves a place in at least one of the semi-finals of the competition. With the society not having won the cup for at least five years, this is considered a very successful achievement.

This term was Team Captain Amber Small's first at leading a team for a competition. She told SCAN "it feels very rewarding because everyone put in so much hard work and there is not much time to prepare for the first competition, considering how many of our members that competed were brand new. It was a lot to learn in a short space of time but everyone did so well, it was a great atmosphere and I think it psyched everyone up for the next bigger competitions."

This term the society will be competing in the Northern Universities Competition and The Inter Varsity Dancing Competition (IVDC). As well as this is the highly anticipated Roses which will be held at

Lancaster this year.

Small says the Manchester competition was "a good opportunity to show them [York] what they are going to be up against in Roses 2014!"

The Annual Charity Showcase is the next big event for the society, taking place on Friday 7th February in The Great Hall, raising money for Cancer Research, a charity close to the hearts of some members of the society. Small said we should expect "lots of exciting collaborations with other societies." As for the popular "Strictly Come Dancing" part of the showcase, she said that "it will be bringing in people from all areas of campus life, so that element should be entertaining."

If you are interested in joining the Lancaster University Ballroom Dancing Society or would like more information you can visit their Facebook page.

Lancaster University collect second consecutive MBE

Katie Smith

Lancaster University's Deputy Faculty Manager of FASS, Dr Lesley Waite, has been awarded a British Empire Medal by the Queen as part of the New Year's honour list. Waite has been awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) for services to higher education and to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI).

Waite is one of 610 women that received an award this year and the second consecutive Lancaster University staff member to receive the award. Last year, Linda Woodhead,

Professor of the Sociology of Religion, received an MBE for her part in leading a £12million Religion and Society Programme carried out between 2007-2012.

The New Year's honours list is released each year on January 1st to recognise the outstanding achievements of the British public.

This year 1,195 people were commended in ceremony and

for the first time in history the honours list was populated with more women than men, with 51% of the recipients being female. When contacted by SCAN, Waite said she felt "very honoured and proud" to receive the award. Waite went on to extend her gratitude to everyone she had worked with, telling SCAN, "I work alongside some fantastic colleagues in the University and my work for the RNLI bears no comparison to the bravery of the RNLI crew, so it's only fitting [that] I share this with everyone".

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution is a donation-

funded charity that provides 24-hour lifeboat search and rescue service around the UK and Ireland, as well as a seasonal lifeguard service. Its life-saving seaside rescue service is dependent upon volunteers to function.

In response to the award, Jemma Evans, Faculty Manager of FASS, also told SCAN that she was "absolutely delighted that Lesley has been awarded a British Empire Medal." According to Evans, "Lesley is a wonderful colleague and is fantastic at her job supporting staff. Lesley is widely respected within the Faculty of Arts & Social

Sciences and the University as a whole. In addition to her full-time role at the University, she is a volunteer for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) and has done so for over 20 years."

The British Empire Medal has both a civil and military division for service that warrants recognition by the Crown. It replaced the Medal of the Order of the British Empire in 1922, and was re-established in 2012 for the Queen's Diamond jubilee. According to Waite, receiving the award has been "a very humbling experience but one that I will always treasure".

The scan archives

Taking a look back into Lancaster's history

Monday 29th April 2013 (Week 2, Summer)

No. 1 this week: **Daft Punk – Get Lucky**

Bar Wars return: Plans for Pendle Bar to only open once a fortnight

It has emerged that Pendle Bar is to be closed unless the college is holding an event, effectively leading to it ceasing to be a regularly functioning bar.

The bar, which was renamed to Bar 74 at the start of the year and refurbished just two years ago, was expected to open once a week for the Pendle Live event run by the JCR. However, since this event may become fortnightly due to the pressure it puts on to the JCR, it is possible that Pendle Bar will open just once a fortnight. The move, which has been described as the bar "shutting in stealth" by one LUSU officer, will come as a bitter disappointment to many within the college as well as those who have expressed concerns over the future of the bars ever since they were taken over by the University's Commercial Services department in 2008.

Jo Hardman, Head of Commercial Services at the University, confirmed: "At the end of last term, a meeting was held with all the JCRs and colleges, which discussed the continuing decrease in sales of drinks in the bars and the need to agree action to improve performance of each bar against a plan." He stated that, in Pendle's case, "it is clear that without activities such as bar sports or Pendle Live there is little trade: in February the nights that had no events took under £50 on average, whereas the nights that had events took a little over £200, which is still low." Hardman suggested that although Pendle bar may be closed down for now, there will be an effort to "look how more activity can be generated for the rest of this term, and importantly how it can be re-launched in October". Until then, Hardman tells SCAN that the bar will be open for darts on Wednesdays and Pendle Live.

Laurence Pullan, former president of Pendle College

and LUSU Vice President (Union Development)-elect told SCAN that he was deeply concerned for the future of the bar. Whilst he agrees with the sentiment that if the bar is not sustainable it is difficult to keep it open and admitted that the bar "has always struggled to get good business" because it has not always received adequate support; he also stated "Like a flower, if you don't water it, it will die". Pullan emphasised that if the bar received more support and an attempt was made to invigorate its status amongst the other college bars, it had the potential to be "a profitable college space". He feels that the closure of the college bar threatens the "outstanding student experience that this University prides itself on".

Roger Gould, principal of Pendle College spoke to SCAN, saying that he had recently been on a trip away from the university and had come back to confusion.

He told SCAN: "There seems to be conflicted messages. I'm not sure if the university are pulling the rug from under Pendle or if it's a matter to do with the JCR". Although Gould argued that the bar "does need to be used to justify it being there, students cannot use a bar that is closed [and so] being closed most nights of the week is bound to reduce use when the bar is actually open". With regards to the concession that the bar will be open for college events, Gould stated his belief that the bar is not "an events bar". He was however, quick to state that he was "not a

believer in the gloomy view that the university is looking to close the bars", but the closure of Pendle is sure to lead to questions about how the university supports the bars and how they plan to encourage students to use their college bars.

Gould emphasised that although the bar will be closed, Pendle, as always, is more than just a bar.

Pendle Rooms, the building which holds the bar, will still be an active social space available to all students.

Louise Davies, the University's Retail Manager, concurred with Gould and Pullan, telling SCAN "it saddens me that students are not choosing to visit Pendle more regularly... we are working hard to provide the sort of products, services and ultimately the experiences that students want, but we know that doing so will require collaborative efforts". She maintains that the college bars are an important part of the Lancaster University's experience, and that whilst "students engage in so many activities and events - we would love to see them choosing Pendle, or indeed, any other bar as a place to hold them and we actively encourage it".

The college bars were taken over by the Commercial Services department in 2008. Concerns were raised at the time that these could lead to undermining of the college system and potential closures. This was exacerbated by the changes to the bars' management structure this academic year, which saw the bars lose individual licensees.

Science park gets the green light

The construction of a state-of-the-art science park adjacent to Lancaster University is in the early stages of initiation, after a bid to renew planning application for the project was approved at a meeting of Lancaster City Council's Planning and Highways Regulatory Committee earlier this month.

The 34,000 square-metre park will be a collaborative enterprise between the city and county councils and Lancaster University. The site, just to the south of Bailrigg Lane, neighbours the university campus at its northern boundary, and will comprise science and technology hubs accessed from the A6 via a purpose-built roadway and internal 'spine' road. The area is also to be landscaped, with provision being made to protect existing trees, hedgerows and wildlife habitats.

Outline planning permission was granted by city councillors in June 2009, subject to conditions which included the stipulation that no development may commence until all third-party landowners had agreed to any works neces-

sary to lands outside that controlled by the council-university partnership. Following the committee meeting of 8 April, the detailed planning permission - originally granted before the collapse of the city council's initial funding body, Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) - was renewed.

Fortunately, the council was successful in its search for alternative funding, through which it secured £3m from the Government's Growing Places Fund through the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership.

Lancaster University submitted its support of the project to the council's consultation report, stating that its key areas of interest would be ICT, engineering and environmental sciences. The university described the project as potentially "a significant stimulus to the local economy," and the Lancaster Guardian reported that up to 1,000 new jobs opportunities could accompany the site's inception.

However, numerous objections were raised by local residents on the grounds of aesthetic concerns.

Read more online at scan.lusu.co.uk/news



Carolynne

Culture, Features, Fashion & Lifestyle

Photo of the Week

This week: Alice Southern

SCAN values creativity and not just that of the verbal sort, which is why we are giving the photographers amongst you a fantastic chance to showcase your talent; every two weeks, we will be choosing the best photographic submission to feature as our *Carolynne* cover.

All you need to do is attach your photo(s) in an email to scan.photography@lusu.co.uk, along with your name and a few words about the image(s) you've chosen. Make sure you send us the best quality version of your work so it looks superb on the front page, and good luck!



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Flashback: Stephen King

Simon James
Deputy Culture Editor

The end of last year saw the latest film adaptation of Stephen King's first novel, *Carrie*, which was directed by Kimberly Peirce and starred Chloë 'Hit-Girl' Moretz as the eponymous character. It wasn't as scary as it could have been but it was still enjoyable, with one particularly satisfying death scene that we haven't seen before. It was more of a direct adaptation than the previous two versions, but still not as good as the book... obviously. Stephen King is Stephen King.

For those who don't know, Stephen King is the closest we have to a modern-day Dickens.

Rather than having written one vastly successful series of novels like the J K Rowlings and Stephenie Meyers of this world, King has gained popularity from knocking out a stream of consistently good stories since *Carrie* was first released in 1974. He now has 50 novels and nearly 200 published short stories to his name.

King's most famous book was perhaps one of his earliest. Although his first two novels were unmistakably chilling, his third, *The Shining*, really set the tone for what his writing was going to be like: thought-provoking, character-driven, multi-layered and suspenseful. The horror genre in particular is what King has become the master of, creating tension that you wouldn't believe possible from a book unless you've experienced it yourself.

One year after *The Shining* came another fan-favourite: his post-

apocalyptic novel *The Stand*. This is his longest work, was praised for its characterisation and was adapted into a TV series. Then in 1982 came the first of his self-proclaimed 'magnum opus', the *Dark Tower* series. Currently consisting of eight novels, *The Dark Tower* combines fantasy, horror, science fiction and Western genres, and is somehow linked to many of King's other works through the different worlds it encompasses. While its epic nature may make it quite inaccessible for new readers, the real obsessives live for spotting the connections.

Over the years, King's work has been adapted onto the screen more times than is easy to count. Some films based on his work that you've probably seen or at least heard of are *The Green Mile*, *It*, *Shawshank*



Photo by The USO



Under the *Dome* series which aired on Channel 5 last year and has been recommissioned for a second season this year.

Although I consider his work to have had a significant influence on my own writing, I still feel relatively uneducated when it comes to Stephen King. There's some real fanboys (and girls) out there who know everything

about every story he's ever had published, and I'm far from being one of them. What I do know is that I've enjoyed every Stephen King story I've read. I could make it my mission to get through his entire bibliography before I die, but at the rate he's still getting stuff out there with no sign of slowing down, there's no denying I'd be swimming against the tide.

Culture Update: What's been going on?

- Nominations for the BAFTA awards were announced on January 8th. Alfonso Cuarón's *Gravity* was nominated for 11 awards, including best film and best actress for Sandra Bullock, narrowly beating recent release *12 Years a Slave* that was nominated for a still very respectable 10 awards.

- After the success of his autobiography published in October, Morrissey has announced he is halfway through writing a novel. He stated (about his controversial Penguin Classic publication): 'it has been more successful than any record I have ever released, so, yes, I am mid-way through my novel. I have my hopes.'

- Alfred Hitchcock's Holocaust documentary filmed nearly seventy years ago is due to be screened. The documentary uses footage of the liberation of Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in 1945, and the director who had been enlisted to create the film was so traumatised by what he had seen that he refused to work on it for a week. The film, now restored, will be released later on this year.

Review: LUTG Presents *Sweeney Todd*



Rachel May Quin
Editor

Lancaster University Theatre Group (LUTG) served up a somewhat dark festive treat at the end of the Michaelmas term, with their performance of the classic musical *Sweeney Todd*, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street – sponsored by our very own campus pie-makers at The Trough of Bowland. *Sweeney Todd* appeared for the first time as a murderous London barber in the nineteenth century Victorian penny dreadfuls, a pamphlet which people could buy and read. The penny dreadfuls were designed to satisfy the morbid Victorian desire for grisly everyday crimes and horror – it was their version of *Saw*, if you like. In 1979, under the musical direction of Stephen Sondheim, *Todd* was reborn on Broadway.

The Theatre Group embraced the challenge of this tormented tale, creating realistic period costumes of corsets and rags; as well as working hard in their promotion of the project via Facebook, Twitter and serving pies in Bowland bar toward the end of Michaelmas term. The plot of the musical focuses on the life of Benjamin Barker, banished to Australia as a young man on a trumped-up charge by the formidable Judge Turpin, as he returns under the new name of *Sweeney Todd*. *Todd* returns to his old residence on Fleet Street, to find Mrs. Lovett and hear the devastating story of how his wife Lucy was raped by Turpin and poisoned herself; and his baby girl Johanna has been taken hostage as Turpin's ward. Horrified and infuriated, Benjamin Barker renames himself as *Sweeney Todd*, with the intent of taking revenge upon those who harmed him and his loved ones.

On first impressions when entering the Nuffield Theatre, I was somewhat underwhelmed by the sparse grey walls and the relatively empty stage. However, Director Luke Leahy did a spectacular job of making the most of the space provided: using the floor as a multipurpose stage for Mrs. Lovett's bakery, the streets of London and the cellars where the pies are prepared and the raised level stage acting as *Sweeney's* barber shop. With the use of some visual aids and breath-taking stage make-up, LUTG managed to make the surroundings come alive – if anything the grey walls of Nuffield

created the foggy, poverty-stricken atmosphere of Victorian London.

The only version of *Sweeney Todd* I have ever seen was Tim Burton's movie adaptation in 2007, with Johnny Depp and Helena Bonham Carter as the starring characters. The beauty of *Sweeney Todd* is Sondheim's capturing original music numbers, which flow in every version of the tale – and made sure I was singing quietly along with LUTG to every number. I was not at all disappointed by this performance, if anything LUTG's version of *Sweeney Todd* has only fuelled my *Sweeney* obsession. This production was nothing but stunning, even members of the ensemble shone, despite having relatively small parts in the musical. Each and every performer in the ensemble were beautifully costumed, and collectively their vocals gave the more powerful numbers, such as 'The Ballad of *Sweeney Todd*' – which recurs throughout the musical at key points – more body and dramatic effect. The best performance by the entire cast was definitely at the beginning of Act II, which is intended to show the increasing fortune of *Todd* and *Lovett* after they begin to make their grisly cannibalistic pies. Despite the bleak surroundings of the theatre, Leahy and the cast managed to create the effect of a bustling restaurant at the beginning of Act II.

Charlotte Blatt as Mrs. Lovett was a stroke of genius. Mrs. Lovett is a character tormented by her love for *Todd* in the long years of his absence, which continue on when he returns home and is unable to think of anything but revenge. Blatt's portrayal of Lovett makes her all the more loveable, with her quirky nature and loveable charm. Mrs. Lovett's story is one riddled with blind affection for the man who ignores her, and her own streetwise charm sharpened by Victorian poverty makes people watching feel sympathetic toward *Todd's* accomplice. Blatt managed a convincing London accent and a spectacular voice, making her performance a pleasure to behold, I only wish I'd taken the time to stop by Bowland for one of her pies. Her co-star *Sweeney*, played by Tom Morris, was referred to by my friend as a "young Benedict Cumberbatch" with his solemn features and sombre performance. Morris' portrayal of *Sweeney* was more on par with how you would expect a murderous, borderline-insane man to behave, completely dis-attached from his surroundings and brooding over his past.



Photo by LUTG

In most versions of this production, *Todd* and *Lovett* adopt a young boy called Tobias who develops a strong attachment to the broody Mrs. Lovett. However it seems that in this production, Leahy decided to cast Abbie Jones as a female instead – a decision that personally I didn't quite understand, although after seeing Miss. Jones' talent I couldn't help but agree that she was the perfect fit for the role. Jones gave an engaging performance which really enhanced the themes of Lovett's maternal instinct and desire for a family, particularly during one of the final duets in the musical where Tobias speaks of protecting Lovett, no matter what the cost. She is forced to fulfil this promise at the end of the play, and as a result finds herself tormented by her experiences.

Katie Gledhill, in the role of *Todd's* unhappy daughter Johanna, did a spectacular job. Gledhill is a familiar face in LUTG, as a third year undergraduate who has performed in several plays during her time at Lancaster. It is no coincidence that she is so regularly chosen as her natural flair for the stage shone through in her portrayal of Johanna. However, the most impressive aspect of Gledhill's performance was her spectacular voice. Johanna's character is often compared to that of a caged bird, as implied in her opening song 'Green Finch and Linnet Bird', which means that any actress who dares play her must be able to hit those delicate high vocals – Gledhill never failed to master them. It must be added as well, that Tom Collins' portrayal of Judge Turpin was enlightening.

Whilst still inherently evil and just a little bit twisted, managed to make Turpin more accessible and more human, particularly during a scene where we see Turpin's religious side – as he frets over his desires towards Johanna. The character's self-flagellation and the shame he felt made me pity Turpin, rather than fear him – a emotion I never expected to feel. In this production, Judge Turpin becomes more of a man obsessed with the woman he desires and determined to win her affections, whilst fighting with his need for control.

Overall, if I were to find any flaw in this performance – and believe me, it was difficult – it would be that occasionally the orchestra drowned the voices of some of the performers, at times it felt as if Morris and Blatt were competing with the orchestra to be heard. Furthermore, my friend who came along to the performance sometimes struggled to follow the plot, as he felt that certain aspects of the story such as *Todd's* relationship with Johanna were unclear to somebody who had perhaps not seen *Sweeney* before, and they were not fully explained.

Lastly, the biggest problem with LUTG's *Sweeney Todd* is that it was only performed for three nights – as I would have strongly recommend that you should take the time to go and see it. The cast and crew evidently worked hard on this performance and their work paid off, I only hope next term's production will maintain the high standards that LUTG have set for this academic year.

Bravo.

Review: 'And the Mountains Echoed' by Khaled Hosseini

Julia Molloy
Comment Editor



Khaled Hosseini's catapult to success has occurred in a little over ten years. Since the popularity amongst both critics and the general public of *The Kite Runner* in 2003, Hosseini has sold over 38 million books worldwide and has had his debut adapted into a film by Marc Forster. His third novel, *And The Mountains Echoed*, rounds off a spectacularly good decade for the Afghan-American writer. Though described as a novel, *And The Mountains Echoed* is more of a collection of intertwining tales dealing with loss, friendship, and family.

When Abdullah and his little sister Pari travel with their father to Kabul, they imagine that they are just visiting the city whilst their father finds work. Yet when Pari is sold to a rich family in the city stories unfold from various characters' perspectives, including Pari's adopted mother and their uncle Nabi; *And The Mountains Echoed* is a torturous journey for the reader waiting for that moment when they will be reunited. Hosseini's choice of title is certainly accurate; the mountainous area of Afghanistan described certainly does echo with the heart-breaking stories that he weaves.

And The Mountains Echoed is an emotional and highly enjoyable novel. The evocative characters portrayed, particularly the relationship between Pari and Abdullah, grab us from

the moment that they take over the telling of the story, even if we are only with them for a few pages. The most gut-wrenching tale, however, comes from Idris, a doctor who fled Afghanistan for America with his family at the age of fourteen. He returns to Kabul, ingratiating

much the same way today.

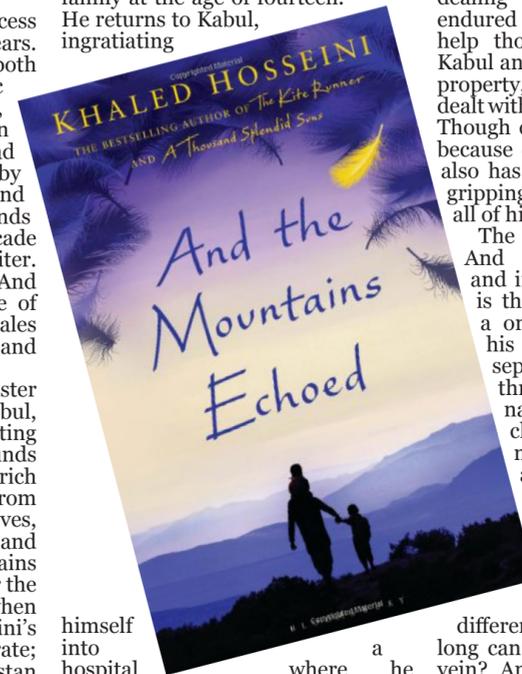
This is what Hosseini is particularly skilled at – working within the war-torn setting of Afghanistan and the many issues that arise from the country's situation. Whether he is dealing with characters who have endured the war in Kabul, tried to help those suffering, or who left Kabul and later return to claim their property, each narrative strand is dealt with sensitively and evocatively. Though clearly he is capable of this because of his own background, he also has the gift of convincing and gripping narratives that has made all of his novels successes.

The concern that I have about *And The Mountains Echoed*, and in fact Hosseini as a writer, is that he is becoming a bit of a one-trick pony. All three of his novels deal with character separation in Afghanistan; all three novels contain compiled narratives from various characters and in various manners, such as letters; and all three novels straddle at least three decades of Afghan history. Whilst Hosseini is successful at what he does, it is a worry that he is yet to branch out into something

himself into hospital

where a he encounters Rosh who has been severely attacked by her uncle. The conflict between wanting to help Rosh and his lack of conviction to find a way to do so is beautifully portrayed by Hosseini and serves to remind the reader of the many children who still suffer in

different with his writing. How long can he go writing in the same vein? *And The Mountains Echoed* is still, however, a fantastic read. If you have read *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, you will not be disappointed with Hosseini's third effort. For those of you who are yet to encounter Hosseini's writing, you should definitely give this a go; it is 404 pages of brilliance.



Review: Editors 'Honesty' EP

Lauren Webb



After three years of "our album

will be out soon I promise" and the departure of lead guitarist Chris Urbanowicz due to 'musical differences' (code word for major fall outs) in July 2013, the Editors finally released their long awaited fourth studio album 'The Weight of Your Love', and in November 2013 released their third single from the latest album: 'Honesty'.

Initially, I found the track to be quite striking and in the first verse/chorus I was absorbed in the dramatic drumming and atmospheric strings. However, as the track progressed it began to feel a bit 'samey' to me, nothing really happened to give the single that 'oomph' that makes a memorable song. I sat in my car eagerly awaiting some sort of step up, but sadly it was nowhere to be

found. Having listened to their latest album and thoroughly enjoyed it I'm not quite sure this track meets the standards set by others such as 'Formaldehyde'. I did however find a section of the lyrics quite haunting: "The broken hearts of my neighbourhood, lay cast aside like dreams in Hollywood."

'Honesty' was pleasant to listen to, the atmosphere it created could potentially be a nice backing track to a mellow Sunday afternoon. It is something I would turn up if it came on the radio but I don't think it's a track I'd go out and buy myself. It's a song that perhaps will stay with me for a few weeks, but in 10 years time I don't believe I'll be referencing back to this to bring back 'the good old days'.

You need to know: Amber Run

Andrew Sharp

It's that time of year again when the radio stations, music magazines and the like put together a list of potential breakthrough artists of the coming year. Here at SCAN we believe that music suggestions aren't just for New Year, but instead warrant a place in every issue hence my 'You Need to Know' feature. So to kick off 2014 I think you need to know Amber Run.

Just like one of 2013's most successful breakthrough artists London Grammar, Amber Run was formed whilst the members were studying at Nottingham University at the end of 2012.

A powerful cover of Imogen Heap's already heart wrenching track *Hide & Seek* proved to be a catalyst for the band's continuing emergence. Last summer the five-piece released their own original material for the first time in the form of debut EP, *Noah*.

Since edging ever further into the limelight, Amber Run's contemporary indie-folk style has seen them being compared to Noah & the Whale, To Kill A King and Mumford & Sons with the same uplifting chorus lines and orchestral flurries whilst Joe Keogh's vocals have drawn parallels to that of Bastille frontman Dan Smith.

The EP's title track became a serious new favourite of mine.

It has a certain understated majesty about it. The crisp opening, vocals are twinned with a steady piano undercurrent. After the mature intro, driving percussion and a xylophone kick in for a more upbeat feel. You get the feeling from Noah that every single second has been thoroughly thought out. Accompanied by Kites, the most conventional indie-folk song on the record, the intricately layered *Little Ghost and Champion*, a song that would not be out of a place on the soundtrack of a Hollywood blockbuster, the *Noah EP* is a thing of undeniable beauty! Recent new single *Heaven* has continued with the welcome freshness, sheer energy and powerful soft rock feel that saw them picked up by BBC Introducing for last year's Reading & Leeds festival. With a new EP out this month and a 'big support slot' booked for March (although the band are keeping tight lipped about who at the moment), I'd say your money would be safe on Amber Run becoming a familiar name in the coming 12 months.

Coriolanus @ Donmar Warehouse

Hannah Brady

With an incredible performance from star Tom Hiddleston, Josie Rourke's production of *Coriolanus* is tense, visceral and unforgettable. Assisted by a very talented cast and inventive staging, both the political strife of Rome and the personal struggles of Coriolanus spring to life in the intimate small-scale space of the Donmar Warehouse. *Coriolanus* is one of Shakespeare's least-adapted and little-known plays even after the release of Ralph Fiennes' excellent 2011 film version, but based on this production the play has plenty of reasons to merit revisiting. Here is a Rome threatened by famine, with scrawled graffiti across the stage demanding grain for the 'plebs' who are endlessly at odds with war hero Coriolanus.

As the undisputed star of the show, Tom Hiddleston is absolutely magnetic as the eponymous Coriolanus. Best known as the villainous Loki in Marvel's *Avengers Assemble* and Thor franchises, here

he delivers a performance of great subtlety and power. Caius Martius Coriolanus is not Shakespeare's greatest tragic hero: he does not have the grand soliloquies of Hamlet or Macbeth, and is not particularly self-reflective. Coriolanus is first and foremost a soldier, granted the name of Coriolanus for almost single-handedly conquering the city of Corioles. The siege on Corioles is incredibly powerful, as Hiddleston urges his soldiers (including a terrific Alfred Enoch, better known as Dean Thomas of the Harry Potter films) to "Put your shields before your hearts, and fight / With hearts more proof than shields," as they bear chairs as battering rams before scaling the walls of the theatre, with Hiddleston clambering easily up the ladder that dominates centre stage to attack the city alone.

Hiddleston's Coriolanus is at once both a charismatic figure of a Roman general and an unlikable, proud man, dismissive of the Roman people he has spent his life fighting to protect. It is to Hiddleston's credit that he does not try to make Coriolanus

particularly pleasant – the scene in which he mockingly pleads for the votes of the people to elect him to the Senate before denouncing them in a vitriolic tirade springs to mind – and yet he remains sympathetic, mostly thanks to Hiddleston's fine acting. He is capable of effortlessly moving between great comedy, rage and pathos within a single moment, and communicates Coriolanus' often complex relationships with those close to him with ease.

The play has a great deal to say about gender politics, and Rourke's production emphasises this through the central figure of Volumnia, Coriolanus' mother. Played by Deborah Findlay as a tough, manipulative and forceful woman, it is clear that off the battlefield Coriolanus is almost entirely under his mother's thumb, as she pushes him – practically kicking and screaming – into running for Senate. Her glee at discovering that her son has been wounded in battle (the better for gleaning public sympathy) casts Volumnia as a shrewd political mastermind.

It is therefore disappointing that the other integral female figure, Coriolanus' wife, Virgilia, played by Birgitte Hjort Sørensen, truly excellent in Scandinavian political drama *Borgen*, doesn't get much to do outside of weeping for her husband, and her role feels rather wasted in the cut-down script.

Similarly, Mark Gatiss of 'Sherlock' fame – here playing a Senator and Coriolanus' closest friend Menenius – feels underused.

His Menenius is a witty figure, clad in long scarf and waistcoat, who lights up the stage with a sense of warmth and clever humour, especially in his verbal sparring with the manipulative Tribunes – but outside of an incredibly moving scene in which he futilely begs Coriolanus to leave behind his quest for vengeance, we never get to see enough of him. He fights both for stagetime and for Coriolanus' attention with Hadley Fraser's Aufidius, military nemesis of Rome and Coriolanus himself. Often discussed as a prime example of homoerotic subtext in Shakespeare, Aufidius and Coriolanus are utterly fixated on each other, with Aufidius even remarking that his heart leapt more to see Coriolanus than when he saw his own wife on their wedding night. Fraser plays Aufidius as a gruff Northerner, with an intense attachment to Coriolanus, seen bathing in his bloody bathwater, with their relationship culminating in a passionate onstage kiss. 'Subtext' indeed.

Though some touches seem less successful than others – the loud electronic music that heralds scene changes being the most glaring to me – this is overall a terrific production. The staging is excellent, doing a great deal with a very small space. Ashes and rose petals fall across the stage at pivotal moments, and when Coriolanus washes away the blood and gore of battle in a shower of water, a scene that could have been purely for the Hiddleston fan-girls in the audience (myself included) was instead a visceral moment of private pain. This is a fantastic production that I count myself incredibly privileged to have seen. Though some characters feel underused, there is not a single weak actor in the cast. From start to finish, Hiddleston gives a fantastic powerhouse performance, and this ensures that the play's dramatic energy never dies.

Coriolanus will be streamed live into cinemas by the National Theatre on the 30th January, including at the Duke's Theatre in Lancaster.



Marvel Films of 2014

Jane Hodgkiss

There's no denying that 2013 was an incredible year for Marvel Studios. *Iron Man 3*, which opened to phenomenal success in May is currently ranking as the fifth highest grossing film of all time, and was 2013's highest grossing film. Marvel also released the much anticipated sequel to 2011's *Thor*, *Thor: The Dark World*, in November which earned over \$620 million worldwide. It's safe to say that the future for Marvel is as bright as the arc reactor on Tony Stark's chest and this can only continue with the release of four new films in 2014: *Captain America: The Winter Soldier*, *The Amazing Spider-Man 2*, *X-Men: Days of Future Past*, and *Guardians of the Galaxy*. Despite the fact that the rights to the Spider-Man films are still owned by Sony after the Toby Maguire trilogy, Spider-Man is first and foremost a Marvel character, even if the films aren't actually distributed by Marvel.

Captain America: The Winter Soldier

Released in the UK on the 28th March, 2014.



The Story So Far:

Don't deny it, you fell in love with Steve Rogers and his old-school charm in the first *Captain America* film way back in 2011. Set during the Second World War, the skinny but still adorable Steve Rogers (Chris Evans) desperately wants to fight for America but is unable to pass his fitness tests. A German doctor (Stanley Tucci) then sees his true potential and injects him with a serum that makes him superhuman. Although he is first used as an advertising gimmick under the guise of *Captain America*, Steve Rogers is finally allowed to prove his worth when he goes on a rescue mission to save his best friend, Bucky (Sebastian Stan). However, he gets more than he bargains for when he stumbles upon the lab of the evil Red Skull (Hugo Weaving). *Captain America* then has to defeat the villainous Red Skull and save the world from his malevolent plan.

What to Expect:

In the sequel, we see the return of some stars of the previous *Marvel* movies, including *Black Widow* (Scarlett Johansson), *Director Fury* (Samuel L. Jackson) and *Maria Hill* (Cobie Smulders). We also see the return of Bucky Barnes, *Captain America*'s presumed dead best friend, who appears this time as his nemesis, the *Winter Soldier*. A lot of angst can be expected with this one, as Cap will have to go against a very personal foe. However, I'm fairly confident it won't be all doom and gloom, as *Marvel* never fail to inject humour into their films. A lot of Steve Rogers coming to terms

with 21st century America can be expected, and I'm sure the special effects and action sequences will be superb. If you wanted any more positives, it seems that the film will be released in the UK before America, who don't receive it until the following week.

The Amazing Spider-Man 2

Released in the UK on the 18th April, 2014.



The Story So Far:

The previous *Spider-Man* film saw Andrew Garfield take on the role of our favourite web-shooting superhero to much critical acclaim, making it the seventh most successful film of 2012. In it, *Spider-Man* comes head to head with his father's old partner, Dr Curt Connors (Rhys Ifans). A seemingly mild mannered genius at first, Dr Connors soon shows his dark side when he transforms himself into Lizard, a terrifying giant reptile that goes on to wage war against New York.

What to Expect:

Once again, I'm confident that we can expect another stunning performance from Andrew Garfield, who still seems to be pulling off playing a high school student, despite turning thirty last year. Emma Stone will also be reprising her role as Peter Parker's love interest, Gwen Stacy. *Marvel* are once again introducing a new slew of villains, including *Electro* (Jamie Foxx) and the *Rhino* (Paul Giamatti). We will also be re-introduced to *Harry Osborn* (Dane DeHann), who just might make an appearance as the *Green Goblin*. The tagline promises this will be *Spider-Man*'s 'greatest battle' yet. Only time will tell...

X-Men: Days of Future Past

Released in the UK on the 22nd May, 2014.

The Story So Far:

With six previous *X-Men* films, the last one be-

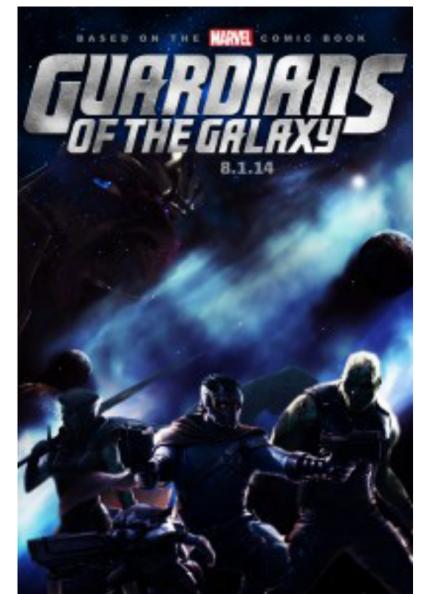
ing 2013's *The Wolverine*, it's clear that the mutant universe is still alive and thriving. Of course, having actors such as Ian McKellen, Patrick Stewart, Hugh Jackman, Jennifer Lawrence, and Halle Berry to name a few, doesn't hurt the films' success. The last time we saw the full team of mutants, it was in a prequel to the original trilogy set in the 1960's, showing the origins of *Magneto* (Michael Fassbender) and *Professor X* (James McAvoy) and their friendship turned sour. Previous to that was *X-Men: The Last Stand* - the last time we saw the X-men in the present day, with *Professor X* seemingly being killed and *Magneto* losing his powers... where do we go from here?

What to Expect:

X-Men: Days of Future Past seems to be almost like a reunion of the past six films, with many cast members from the original trilogy reprising their roles. The plot follows *Wolverine* as he is sent back in time to alter history and prevent a cataclysmic event that will destroy humans and mutants alike. With more heroes and villains than you can shake a stick at, this film promises to be an action packed adventure. How are *Magneto* and *Professor X* back in action? We'll find out in May... hopefully.

Guardians of the Galaxy

Released in the UK on the 1st August, 2014.



What to Expect:

Guardians of the Galaxy features an entirely new host of characters, previously unseen in the *Marvel* movie universe. This involves an American fighter pilot, some ex-cons and aliens. With a stellar cast behind it, including *Parks and Recreation*'s Chris Pratt, *Star Trek*'s Zoe Saldana, *Lee Pace* (currently appearing in *The Hobbit* trilogy as the elf king Thranduil), and *Doctor Who*'s Karen Gillan (if you were wondering why she shaved her head, this is the reason), this film shows no sign of disappointing fans of comic books and movies alike. As with all *Marvel* films, the visual effects will no doubt be astounding. Personally, I cannot wait to fall in love with newly accessible characters.

Mandela: *Long Walk to Freedom*

Joanna Gresty

When it comes to creating a film about someone's life, filmmakers always have a tough task ahead of them. But when it comes to making a film about one of the most well respected, influential world leaders ever, the pressure is intensified a hundred fold.

The story of Nelson Mandela's life is one of a long struggle for equality in apartheid South Africa beginning in the 1940's.

It is safe to say this film does follow the entire story in some form or another from the beginning of his adulthood.

However, Nelson Mandela's autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, is 630 pages long, and the film tries to cover more than 50 years of Mandela's life and South African history. A prisoner, a statesman,



Photo by Scott Rippon

a hero over a period of 80 years; Madiba's story does not fit a three-act structure. It's an impossible task. At times the film jumps almost a decade in one go, which doesn't help to build the impression of just how long Mandela was imprisoned for and the critical changes and developments in South Africa's political climate owing to his influence. I really think the film would have benefitted from telling the story over two films perhaps. Not only would this have allowed more time to develop principal characters, it would have allowed more time to explore the political changes in South Africa which were so crucial in shaping these lives.

In some ways it's a shame because there was so much to like in the long awaited biopic.

Idris Elba is, on all accounts, superb as Mandela carrying an elegant dignity throughout, even when he is nullified by his aging makeup – one of the major disappointments of the \$35 million picture. Supporting Elba is Naomie Harris who performs with real fire and bite and insightfully

demonstrates the true power and resilience of Mandela's second wife, Winnie. Her depicted transformation from a quiet, polite young woman to that of a leader of people in her own right demonstrates how capable she is a film actress. Her success in landing the role of the new Moneypenny in the Bond franchise is a hopeful prediction of her future numerous accomplishments on the big screen.

Like with most biopics there's an overwhelming atmosphere of history coming to life when watching the film in a sizeable theatre. Looking back, the beauty, delicacy and often shiver-inducing powerful moments of 'Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom' seem overshadowed with the feeling that writer William Nicholson and director Justin Chadwick have truly tried to cram too much life into one short movie. The elements of terrorism committed by Mandela and his comrades unfortunately seem brushed over thus causing the film to appear very one sided.

Still, the film gets 4 out of 5 stars for proving a good solid biography about a very important man of South African past and present. The breathtaking sweeping camera shots of the South African terrain doesn't hurt either.



Photo by HelenSTB

Sherlock Returns: Series 3 review

Dessita Petrova

ficially back on.

He returns as a hero, as a conqueror from his battles against Moriarty's network and this marks the start of a new Sherlock era.

To paraphrase T.S.Eliot, this is the way the world ends - not with a bang, but with a new season of Sherlock. The blame goes to the genius co-creators Gattiss and Moffat, who once again have well and truly pulled the rug from under my feet and re-defined my humble notion of great plot twists.

"Now, where is it?" Sherlock asks and confuses Mycroft with his vague question, but a second later it is being brought to him - his coat is on his shoulders again and the game is of-

However, his return doesn't go as smoothly as expected - to Sherlock's disbelief John doesn't live on Baker Street any more, and it appears he is ready to embark on a new stage in his life with the sweet and amiable Mary. However, there is this air of mystery around her and Sherlock's gauging never lies. John is furious at Sher-

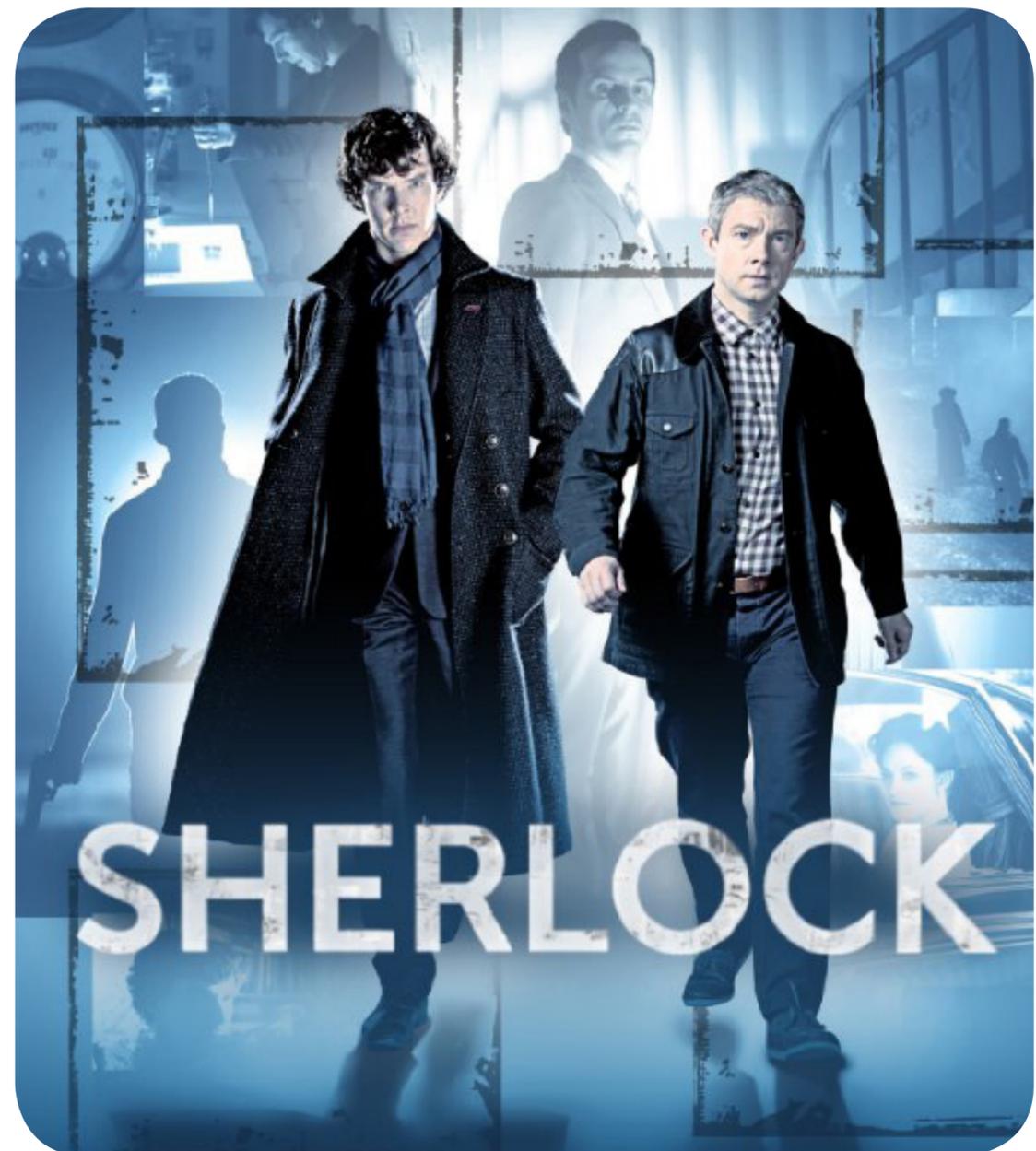
lock who fails miserably to explain to him how and why he faked his suicide and his nervousness always ends up producing questions about John's moustache and thus, the whole drama series turns into a comedy. At times *The Empty Hearse* felt surreal to me with so many moments that warmed the cockles of my heart and kept me entertained until the very end. The episode doesn't miss out on the lurking evil out there and a new villain by the name of Magnussen comes forward to torture the lives of our beloved characters as if they haven't suffered enough.

Just as heart-warming as the first episode, *The Sign of Three* revolves

around John and Mary's wedding and Sherlock's best man speech. The detective cases remain in the background and are used as flashbacks to focus more on Sherlock and John's growing and unbreakable bond. The 'funny hat detective' appears to be subject to a character development for he shows that he is more human than he appears to be, and reveals aspects of himself that were previously hidden. His uncertainty leads him to ask Lestrade for help in preparing his speech because this is a big moment for him, the title of 'best friend' is not particularly familiar to him but of a huge importance and he doesn't want to let John down. He surely doesn't, and his words convey a sheer honesty and tenderness. Yet again he doesn't miss out on the opportunity to show his sardonic side by making his typical remarks, but he is far more than a high-functioning sociopath now - he's vulnerable and fearful of losing his friend, who is not only married now but about to become a father too. And just as you start to think this episode is too soppy and missing out on the thrill, Sherlock turns on his mojo and solves a crime mystery right in the middle of the wedding. This was surely all too good to last forever, and left me to question what the writers had saved for last episode to ruin this bliss.

One thing to learn from His Last Vow is that everyone has a pressure point: Sherlock's weakness is John, John's is Mary, and mine is the end of series 3.

The hour and a half episode was devastating and uplifting at the same time and the creators proved again that they are the masters of leaving the viewers open-mouthed. It turns out that John has a tendency of bounding with psychopaths and the word LIAR coming out of Sherlock's quick gauging of Mary isn't accidental. She alone has enough dark secrets to draw Magnussen like a magnet and cause all the drama. The good news is that the funny hat detective escapes the death trap (credit goes to Moriarty saying 'John is in danger' which brings him back to life); the villain is beaten, Mary is forgiven and Sherlock's exile doesn't last for long - only 4 minutes to be exact. Villains come and go but interestingly one has decided to rise again from the ashes, Moriarty. I really hope he is back for real and this is not just some kind of a trick because, admit it, you have all missed him too. He has this elegance and style that Magnussen lacked, and no one can pull off a better comeback than him. The ending of this series can't help but make me turn my Sheldon Cooper mode on - I don't need sleep, I need answers.



January clichés

Markéta Lapáčková
Deputy News Editor

January, the first month of the year, is not only the beginning of a new year, but for many people it also represents the beginning of a new life. We are ready to start fresh and become the person we want to be. Unfortunately though, the initial boost of energy seems to vanish as soon as the month ends. Why do our New Year's resolutions always fail once the year is not so new anymore?

Usually we tend to blame ourselves for being lazy or for having not enough will power. However, not all of us always consider that it may not be us who is not good enough. It might be the goals we undertake instead. Let's look at some typical examples of New Year's resolutions. Some of them are typical for students, other apply in general. They all have one thing in common though: they generally prove non-functional:

1) **Weight loss:** Probably the biggest January cliché of all. As soon as we indulge all the Christmas treats, we start to think about consuming less and burning more calories, and about becoming a fitter, slimmer and lighter person. On average, most women plan to lose at least half a stone in the upcoming year, and they intend to keep the newly achieved weight afterwards. The weight loss goal is usually connected to resolutions to go to the gym more often, to abandon sweets, to eat healthier food and to consume more fruit and vegetables. The reality is that even though most people do lose some weight in January (and possibly February), they tend to pick it back up afterwards, due to giving up their healthy eating and new exercise habits.

2) **Saving money:** In addition to spending less, many people decide to work more, and many students decide to find a part-time job. We set ourselves a weekly budget and reject ourselves all the little lifts and joys we used to waste our finance on. Nevertheless, eventually, we come to realise that saving up is not worth refusing all our friends' invitations and wearing the same jeans all year.

3) **No more procrastination:** Anybody who has ever finished their essay half an hour before the deadline will probably agree with me that it is a very stressful thing to do. No wonder that we want to become more responsible planners, to not experience a similar rush ever again. Yet, despite our firm decision, we tend to find that our life is way too crazy and that we have way too many things to do, and that today is just too busy for doing something that we can easily do next week. Often

this resolution is accompanied by the desire to get more sleep – to go to bed earlier so that when we wake up in the morning, we don't feel tired already. That would have been easy and great, if there weren't so many better things to do at night than to sleep...

4) **Quitting a bad habit (e.g. smoking):** There are moments in life when we become annoyed with ourselves. For example, when we find how much money we unnecessarily spent on cigarettes or how ugly our nails get if we bite them every time we are nervous. From January the 1st, many of us ban ourselves from doing those annoying things at all ever again. However, this 'never again' attitude usually lasts until a first feeling of nervousness or sadness. Habits are very hard to break.

5) **Learning something new (e.g. to cook):** In most people's lives, there's something they've always wanted to do, but never have. For students it is often cooking a proper meal. However, it can also be a new sport, language, or playing an instrument. After several lessons, though, we tend to find out that the new hobby is just too time-consuming beyond our options, too difficult to learn or too expensive.

6) **Being nicer to other people, especially to our parents and other family members:** Thinking backwards, we often realise how many people we haven't been the nicest to in the past year. All of us have, sometimes, offended someone, shouted at someone, or even hurt someone and regretted it later on. As much as January is a good time to find out that we treated somebody badly, February is a good month to rediscover the reasons we had for it...

What makes those resolutions a certain failure? First of all, we attempt to jump instead of making slow, careful steps. We quit smoking completely instead of cutting to a couple of cigarettes a week. We want to go to the gym three times a week right away instead of just once. We aspire to look like a super model almost the next morning after starting our diet.

Also, we don't look at the reasons why we have or haven't done certain things until now. For example, somebody who is a member of five societies and who also works part-time twenty hours a week can't logically expect to stop procrastinating and to sleep and eat regularly, without cutting out some activities.

Therefore, I have only one New Year's resolution this time, and that is: **Make realistic wishes, estimate your options, and achieve them slowly step by step.**



Photo by Alan Cleaver

How to: *Beat the January blues*

Philippa Hawley

It's now mid-January. Christmas is over; presents are unwrapped and even your drunken New Year's Eve night out is just a perishing memory. The merry months of building up excitement has led to these joyous occasions, then in a week it's finally all over and done with. Now what? Back to University, back to work and back to enduring what seems like a perpetual winter. The first month of the year can leave even the happiest of us feeling a bit depressed, so how exactly do you beat the dreaded January blues?

There are always ways to cheer yourself up after the festive period.

Don't forget you've still got all those Christmas presents to amuse yourself with, and probably a few that you've even forgotten about! Whether it's that book you were dying to read or an outfit you were desperate to show off; now is the time to make the most of your gifts. And if you're already itching to get your hands on something else, then where better to go than the January sales. Bag a few bargains with your Christmas money from the relatives (or your overdraft) and you'll feel happy and cheery in no time.

Another thing is to make the most of your time at home before heading back to Lancaster. Cherish your home cooking and washing machine before you rush back. Of course, you want to see everyone at university, but enjoy your home comforts before you've soon got to fend for yourself for the next 10 weeks! And now

you've got time to be at home that isn't surrounded by Christmas stress. No more worrying that you haven't got a present for such-and-such yet or spent more money on him than her. Everything is done and sorted until next year; so give yourself a breather and cheer yourself up with the thought of a few weeks that are stress-free. Make your stay even better and totally content by focusing on something and set a goal. Without jumping on the cliché bandwagon, New Year's resolutions are the best distractions in January. So aim for a healthier 2014, or make loads of plans with your friends, if you're focusing on everything you've got going on at the moment, you won't miss the festive fun and feel down.

Here's one that everyone will love because from doing my research I found that more sleep is supposed to help you feel cheerier. Resist the afternoon naps to reset your body clock after the holiday parties because this will just make you feel groggy and definitely not make you feel less blue. Instead, try and get a good night's sleep every night throughout the whole of January. That means, early nights, pyjamas on and films in bed – most definitely my own way of beating the blues!

So shop and chill and you won't be feeling blue after Christmas and New Year. If all else fails you could always not give into reality yet. Pull a cracker here and there and keep the festive songs on, there's nothing wrong with a spot of Christmas cheer here and there. (Although if you're still doing it in summer you might get a few odd looks!)

But as we are told Christmas is a state of mind and not a day, so keep up the seasonal spirit and keep the January blues at bay.

My life with a brand new Jawbone



Rachel May Quin
Editor

It happens every year. Every single year when New Year's Day rolls around and everybody starts evaluating their lives now that the shiny new year is upon us, I promise myself that I will get fit, lose weight and try to be a bit happier in my own skin. I don't do too badly: I join a gym, I obsessively count my calories and I lose a few pounds. But as soon as I reach that point where I'm working hard and the scales aren't reflecting it, I give up and go back to enjoying a carefree life... until the next time where my jeans don't quite fit right.

So this year, I've decided to spend money on something that will watch my every move, that will tell me off when I'm sat at my desk staring at my laptop for far too long or watching TV - I invested in a fitness band.

Fitness bands are becoming increasingly popular amongst the general population, particularly as companies start to glamourise them as more - but they're not a new phenomenon. There are a wide variety of products out there, such as

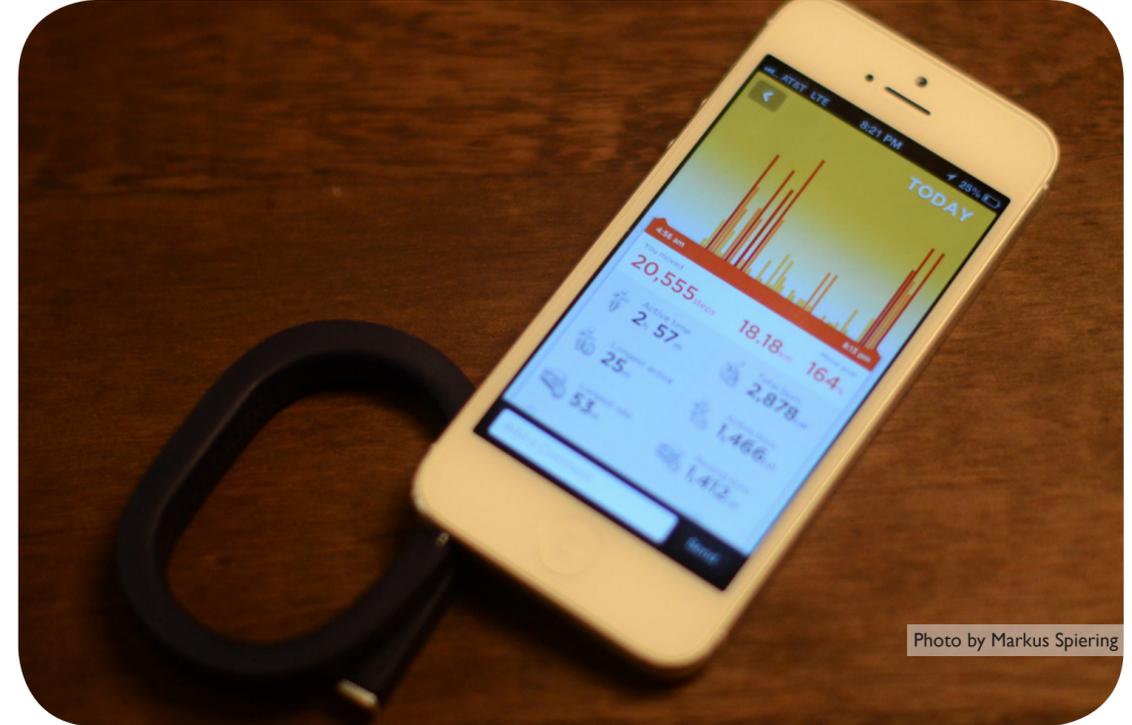


Photo by Markus Spiering

watches that can map your runs by using GPS, or calculate your calorie burn during a workout by monitoring

your heart rate. Even a simple pedometer can track your steps so you know just how active you are. So why spend a chunk of money on a fitness band like the Nike Fuelband, the Fitbit or (my personal choice) the Jawbone UP?

If you're competitive like me, a fitness band might be what you need to encourage you to be more active. Most fitness bands allow you to create support 'team' and see what your friends are doing via an app, so that you can motivate each other into taking more steps each day and chastise if one of you has eaten a few too many chocolate biscuits. It also sets you challenges tailored to your daily activity, for example, for me it challenged me to walk 13,500 steps after assessing a few days of my movement, calculating how many steps I walked daily and adding a bit extra to create a goal. Thus, despite having sore legs and blistered feet from too much walking, I felt the need to beat my fitness band and managed to complete the challenge, and then some. Pathetic? Maybe. Motivating? Definitely.

Better yet, fitness trackers don't always deal exclusively with weight loss, instead, many of these fitness trackers monitor every aspect of your daily life. It encourages you to make notes of what you're eating – and take photos to share if that's your thing – it wants you to log how much fluid you're drinking, it'll count your steps and measure your activity in a standard day and finally, it tracks how much sleep you're getting and

suggests ways you could improve the quality of your sleep. The point of Jawbone, and most fitness bands, is to encourage a holistic healthier lifestyle, which is why it looks at everything your body does and then offers suggestions on how to lead a better life. For me, it knows I can spend most of my day at my desk studying, so it lets me choose a 'period of inactivity' time and vibrates to remind me to take a walk if I've been sedentary too long. For my boyfriend, he doesn't get enough sleep due to late working hours and early mornings, so it challenges him to get to bed at a decent hour – which might seem stupid and a little controlling, but sometimes you need that nudge to encourage you to treat your body better.

So, whilst I've only had my tracker for a week now and I've already lost a couple of pounds, I feel like this year I might actually take the plunge and start living healthier. Only time will tell. But I think the most important thing about gadgets like this is that they emphasise that every small step is important in attaining your fitness and weight loss goals – even if it does push you into taking 13,500 of those small steps all at once. If you have the money to spend, it might be worth investing in something that will force you to evaluate your body and motivate you to alter your life and your health; rather than spending the first two weeks of January on a juice diet and buying a gym membership that will be forgotten and collecting dust by March.



Photo by Tom Fassbender

Adjusting to life off campus

Philippa Hawley

First year is such a new adventure; you're on your own, living away from home and enjoying your independence for the first time. Yet, we don't always realise how lucky we are to live on a university campus and literally have everything we need seconds from our doors. First year soon ends though and then you're off to live in the big wide world. Or rather, Lancaster city centre.

Whilst living off campus is great and it definitely has its perks, travelling is certainly not one of them.

We've all enjoyed this scenario: you're at the bus station waiting to go to campus, and the dreaded 2A pulls up. No one can actually enjoy getting this bus, and if they say they don't mind it, they're undeniably

lying. Most of the time, you have to stand on a heaving bus for half an hour which results in being late for your lecture - fun times. Last year I lived in Grizedale and when faced with the prospect of a seminar in county main, this would dampen my mood for hours, moping round proclaiming that I had to go "all the way to County!"

You don't know how jealous I am now of the people who only have to walk up and down the spine to make their 9 am lectures.

Although I do have a huge gripe with my journey to and from university, life away from campus certainly has more advantages than disadvantages. As much as there is on campus, it is so refreshing to live merely minutes away from the town

centre, and that said, only minutes away from clothes shops (a particular bonus for me!). You're surrounded by shops and pubs, and it certainly is fun feeling like you live in society again rather than constantly being in the campus bubble. Everything seems to be cheaper too, instead of living in Central you've got Home Bargains and Sainsbury's on your doorstep. Not to mention the cheaper nights out, no more last-minute taxis home, what's the point when you live practically next door to Sugar?!

It's also great to get more involved in the city;

there are lots of events going on in Lancaster that you neglect if you don't live directly here.

From the firework displays at the castle to the Christmas light switch on, every event is always packed and it certainly pays to get into the

community spirit of things.

I would say that living away from campus definitely helps you appreciate town more, just perhaps not when you're stuck on campus all day because there is literally no time to come home between lectures. I for one am now a huge fan of the library, it's gone from something I generally avoided during the first year to become my second home.

Who knew how much you'd eventually love the silent work room!

There's so much to occupy everyone on campus, and it might actually take everyone to move away to really understand just how much there is going on. Enjoy first year and your time living on campus, but don't dread moving away. You'll definitely be tired, but you'll probably have an even better Lancaster experience because of it.



Photo by David Bleasdale

Domestic Abuse

Abigail Davies

In 2012 approximately 1.2 million females were victims to domestic abuse, over 400,000 females were sexually assaulted, and 70,000 females were raped, according to the Home Office. Yet many of these incidents were not reported, with less than one in four sufferers of abuse informing the police. Even more surprisingly, domestic abuse and violence is not currently a crime in itself. Most offenders are being charged with assault or rape, and not being held accountable for the prolonged psychological suffering of the victim. However, with a new law being drafted that will make domestic abuse or violence a crime, this could all change.

Following the lead of the US, many MPs now support the possibility of a new law to make domestic abuse or violence an exclusive offence. This law will hold perpetrators accountable for their behaviour over a length of time, and not just confine it to one offence.

In March 2013, the Home Office altered their definition of domestic violence and abuse. It now pertains to younger individuals, from the age of 16, who may fall victim to coercive control, as well as physical violence. The Home Office states that this change is important to help ensure young people are aware of what domestic violence and abuse is, and to encourage them to get support should they need it.

#100happydays challenge

Bryony Seager

Can you remember what made you happy yesterday? Or the day before? Not things that just made you satisfied, but things that made you truly happy. I'm talking about the things that made you laugh out loud, or smile from ear to ear. I suspect a lot of people find it more difficult than they initially imagined. We spend so much time looking forward, at what we're going to do, or what we should be doing, that we often miss what is happening in the moment we're in.

#100happydays is a campaign happening on various social media platforms at the moment, in an attempt to get people to quantify what makes them happy each day for a hundred days. It can be anything from a good view on your way to work/university, to a good cup of coffee from your local café, to something bigger such as getting concert tickets. That's the point - it could be anything! The aim

of the project is to get people focusing on the little things that make them tick, rather than just letting these moments pass them by and forgetting them instantaneously.

To take part in the challenge you can visit 100happydays.com to sign up, or if you don't feel like doing that, just do it yourself! Make note of one thing every day that makes you happy, take a picture of it so you can save it to your memory. You can share it on a social media platform if you wish, or it can be just a little private project for you. I'm on day four at the moment and so far my happiness has come from my pet, a magazine, a hair-cut and an opportunity that arose for me. What will you start noticing in your life?

The orchestrators of the challenge suggest that those who successfully complete the challenge start getting more enjoyment out of their day-to-day lives, as they take note of what makes them happy. They become more optimistic, due to the fact that



Photo by Merseyside Police

DRAW A LINE ON DOMESTIC ABUSE

in almost every day you can find at least one thing to make you smile; they start being in a better mood due to getting more enjoyment from things; and they also start getting more compliments from other people - as upbeat, happy people tend to do!

This challenge is not about one-upmanship; nobody's bothered if you're posting that gold Patek Philippe you got for Christmas, followed by the Dior dress, and the tickets on a space ship etc. it's about you. What makes you happy, not what you think other people think should make you happy. If a Patek Philippe really did make you happy that's great - but if you're including it just to make other people jealous, you've already failed the challenge. I'm just hoping that I can remember to do it every day for the next ninety-six days!

So, if you fancy the challenge, go forth and try and find a little something that makes you that little bit happier each and every day!

to give sufferers the time and space they need to consider their options.

However, according to organisations such as 'Women's Resources Centre', recent legal aid cuts have further reduced support for domestic violence victims. When reporting a case of domestic abuse the sufferer must provide significant evidence that they have been domestically abused, before they can meet the criteria for legal aid. There is also a 24 month limit in which the abuse must be reported. This puts the victim under significant pressure, since many sufferers do not originally have the courage to come forward and seek help.

Many supporters of the potential new law hope that it will encourage more individuals to come forward.

By making domestic violence a statutory offence it will increase awareness of the severity of abuse, rather than upholding conceptions that it is merely an issue to be solved within the home. Harry Fletcher, an assistant general secretary of Napo, has stated that currently 'reporting is low and behaviour is missed by workers in the justice system. Conviction rates are appallingly low at 6.5%. The police and the Crown Prosecution Service tend to deal with the matter before them and not long-term, repetitive abusive behaviour. This bill will make domestic abuse an offence with a maximum sentence of up to 14 years in prison. It will be the first time that an attempt will be made to criminalise a course of domestic abuse in this country.'

If you, or someone you know is or has been a victim of domestic abuse, you can report it to your local neighbourhood police, or phone the English National Domestic Abuse Helpline on 0808 2000 247. For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/report-domestic-abuse>.

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Spring/Summer 2014: *What you should be wearing*

Hannah Hobson

the cold spring days.

Speaking of traditions, be inspired this season by the English heritage tradition.

We might have only just entered 2014 and it might feel slightly depressing seeing the high street showcasing their spring/summer collections, whilst all we want to do is keep warm, however it is a new year and therefore, there are new season trends on the table. Taken from the catwalks, here are the three top styles that you should be keeping your eyes peeled for on the high street.

The months of spring and summer always welcome their old, trusty friend the floral print with open arms and this year was no different. The floral print is a tradition that we embrace worldwide; it is a trend that can help us play it safe or aid us into creating a statement number.

However, traditions can get tedious. For anyone looking outside the box and feeling that their wardrobe doesn't need typical tunics smothered in thousands of clichéd roses then be inspired by Christopher Kane. He reinvents the floral print by making other flowers such as orchids and buttercups the focal point. He also prints such flowers accompanied by scientific annotations on sweatshirts, giving you statement pieces for casual wear.

Let floral print into your wardrobe but follow the British designers.

Think outside the box and opt for the buttercups or orchid floral prints, but on different pieces other than the typical tunics by introducing such prints to a jacquard midi skirt or a sweatshirt for

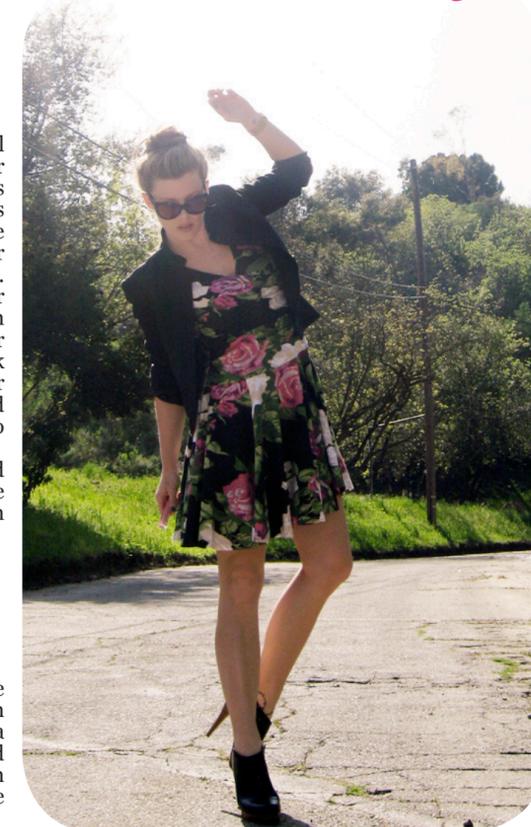
Chanel showcased the boucle tweed material in the form of A-line skirts or jackets for that polished, country-esque ensemble. This particular material has been worn in previous autumn seasons; so cleverly, Chanel took on the challenge to give this material a bit of a makeover to make it suitable for these approaching months.

Spring and summer are associated with either a bright colour or a pastel palette so when looking for that boucle tweed number, go for the item with splashes of mint or fuchsia pink instead of picking the traditional grey winter offerings. This year, couple your boucle tweed with a camisole top and pearl accessories to create a vogue ensemble.

Remember, we're going to have to endure cold days even in the coming months and therefore buy at least one jacket for when the weather in Britain lives up to its bad reputation.

Follow the fashion tribe and welcome the bomber jacket to your wardrobe.

The bomber jacket is an item which some women choose to avoid due to its less than feminine cut, but this season, its been given a new look. Ditch your trusty leather jacket and opt for this style, as this season it has been given an overhaul, with oriental prints and satin style fabrics.



scan Fashion-O-Meter

Because somebody needs to keep things stylish around here...

Damian Gray

The New Black

• New Clothes: Santa, or the sales, has delivered us all new outfits. Hurray! Now prepare to see your mate wear the same 'new' sodding jumper for the next ten weeks.

• Nigella Lawson: She is fabulous. Everything she wears sells out instantly. We are addicted.

• Wigs: We want them to be fashionable for everyone. Life would be easier. Wig Pride.

• Black: All black all the time. 2014 should be like one long funeral. Who's death? Colours.

Croc Equivalent

• Christmas Jumpers: You may have well spent £20 on it. And yes it probably did get lots of LOLs at the office party. We know you want your wear out of it but please wait another 11 months before you do so.

• Celebrity Workout DVDs: No we do not want to partake in Miranda's Maracattack.

• Yankee Candles: We admit they are the light of our life. Trouble is you have to forfeit a term's rent in order to buy one.

• January Sales: You've found some gorgeous stuff while out shopping this month. TROUBLE IS NONE OF IT IS IN THE BLOODY SALES.



Long live the sparkles!

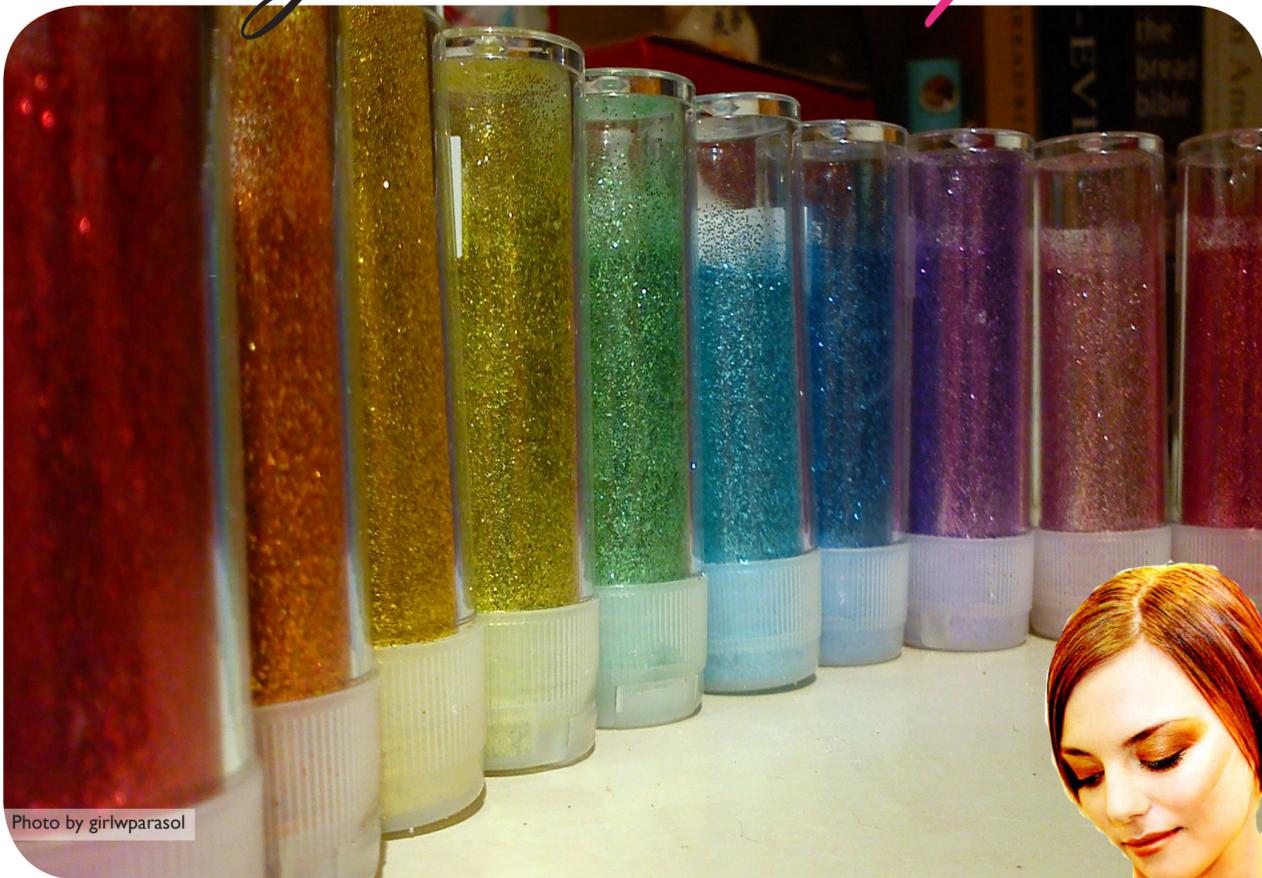


Photo by girlwparasol

Rhea Cairns
Deputy Fashion Editor

The festive season is now over, and unfortunately this has left many of us with an abundance of sparkly impulse buys that we feel we can't wear again for another year.

Yes, sparkles and velvet might stereotypically be reserved for November and December only, but there are few items of clothing that can't be dressed down and worn again throughout the year. Many of you will be disappointed to know that this doesn't include Christmas jumpers; it's a regrettable fact of life that those fluffy snowflake and 3D Santa creations can only be worn through December - there's not much that can be changed about that. But, as for your black sparkly jumpsuit, the velvet midi dress and red sequinned cami top? These beauties can all be worn - with a casual twist - throughout the coming year.

The rule that sparkles can only be worn in the festive season is made to be broken. The only thing that needs to be remembered is that outside of December, sparkles should be worn in moderation. So, you spent the

remainder of your student loan on a beautiful black sparkly jumpsuit, with the promise to yourself that you'd wear it at least five times over Christmas... but you didn't. Now Term Two has started and you're worried that it's a little bit too dressy for a night out in Sugar, but all you need to do it dress it down! Team it with a loose-fit shirt (think tartan, denim, flannel, floral... you get the idea) and either leave it open or tie it casually around your waist. Et voila! The shirt will instantly detract from the sparkles, whilst still adding enough glam for a night out.

The beautiful thing about velvet is that it adds a bit of texture to any outfit that could otherwise be a bit dull. But, like with the sparkly jumpsuit, once the festive season is over velvet can easily be dressed down to make it less 'New Years Eve Party' and more 'Standard Messy Wednesday Night Out in Lancaster' (let's face it, we've all had plenty of those nights). The difference here is all about the shoes... whereas before the midi dress would have been teamed with a startlingly high pair of platform heels, to casual it down you need to be thinking about boots. Heeled or flat, either is fine, but they need to be chunky - the chunkier the

better! Still feeling a bit too Manchester and not enough Lancaster? Try

turning the midi dress into a midi skirt by draping a slogan tee over the dress, and adding shape with either a belt or a chic little knot at the side.

Finally, the sparkly, red cami top. The problem here is more

about the colour than the actual top itself. The way to rectify this is to team it with the right pieces; before, the little cami top would have been paired perfectly with a cheeky leather skirt, velvet shorts or (if brave) then even a pair of shiny disco pants.

But post New Year think denim. Mom jeans to be precise. Simply tuck the cami in, secure with a chunky black belt and add some ankle boots. The shape of the jeans will not only compliment the dainty top, but will also detract from the bold colour of it. Does that sound a bit too scary?

Don't worry - skinny jeans and a leather jacket would work perfectly too.

So there you go - let loose, break the rules and re-wear festive clothes after the festive season. Not only will you save heaps of your precious student loan that you



Photo by TORIMBC

would have otherwise spent on the new season favourites, but you'll also be able to cling on to the festive season for just a little bit longer... although in a more casual way, of course.

Trends that are so last year...

The new year is here, so it's time to blitz your wardrobe, throw away your old make-up and make a fresh start with your style.

Georgia Shephard

Graphic leggings

First things first, leggings are not the same as trousers. If your top isn't long enough to cover your bum then step back inside, remove the leggings and replace them with jeans. It's hard to find an appropriate time to wear leggings out of the house at the best of times and they aren't always flattering either, so when you add an animal, Aztec or galaxy print to the equation your legs and bum aren't going to thank you. Leave the graphic leggings back in 2013 and, if you do decide to go there, stick to basic coloured and textured leggings this year!

Crop tops

The crop top isn't an item of clothing I greet with enthusiasm this January after a month of festivities has sent my washboard abs deeper into hiding. So please let's leave these midriff-baring tops in 2013, because unless you have killer abs this look too often results in a nasty muffin-top. Stay warm this year and keep that midsection covered.

Peplum

The peplum has been around for a while now. When it first took off it was flattering and we loved it because it hid a number of sins. Since then it has appeared in every single form, from peplum skirts to peplum coats, tops to dresses it's been hard to avoid as it creates that desired hourglass shape for everyone, everywhere. On nights out it became the go-to

evening piece as groups of girls wore slightly different variations of it, but now it's time to find a new shape. Rather than covering our bodies in clothes that alter our natural shape this year I suggest we wear clothes that highlight what we already have and emphasise our differences because, come on, no one wants to be a sheep.

Topknots

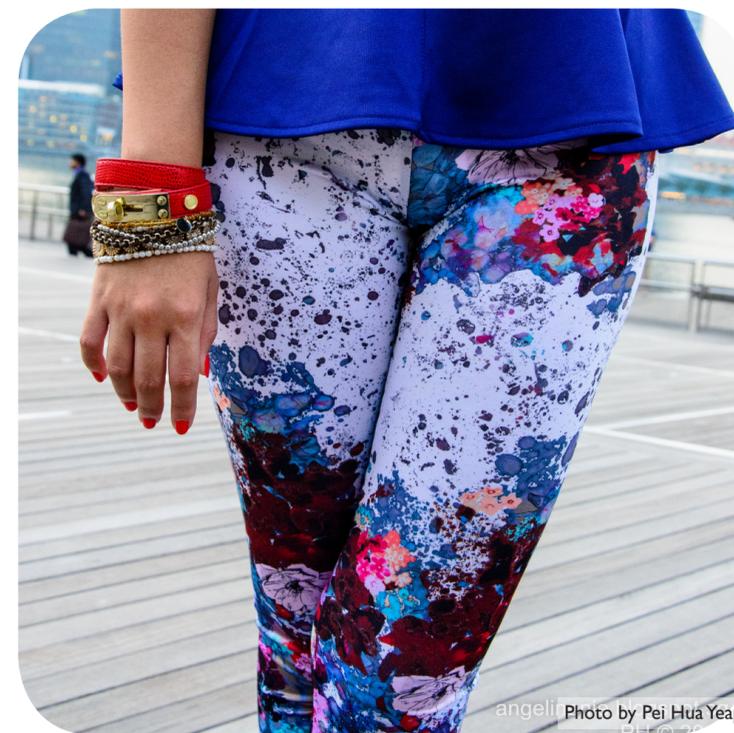
I might be bias since my hair is just too short to pull this look off, but in my opinion the topknot has to go. I understand that it's easy, it's effortless and a 'bad hair day saviour', but more commonly than not it just resembles a bird's nest piled high on your head. In 2014 I hope to see less of the topknot and more hairstyles of an average height.

Platform trainers

They were around for just a season before high street shops caught on and created their own copies but for what occasion are platform trainers really practical? Real athletes wouldn't dream of wearing trainers with a platform because they wouldn't be able to perform in them and women looking for a pair of platforms are unlikely to opt for a style that looks as ugly as many of these. Alone, neither style is distressing; in fact we probably all own a pair of trainers and a pair of heels. But it is when the two are combined together they make a frightening blend. Steer clear.

Nail art

Sigh. I love nail art I really do, but it's time-consuming and oh so fiddly, whatever happened to the simple classic French manicure?



angeli Photo by Pei Hua Yeap

2014: The year of the flawless face

Chelsea Eddy

From this single look are the essences of trends to come; bold lips, dewy skin, glittered eyes, and winged liner.

The Bold Lip

If you want your lips to look good, devoid of flaky rank texture, I recommend starting now. Exfoliate your lips regularly, just when you exfoliate your face, or brush over them with your toothbrush (sounds disgusting but this way is most effective) and moisturise them immediately afterwards. Eye moisturiser soaks in the quickest for a short fix, although carmex is usually the best. Then you can start. The key colours are berry shades ranging from raspberry pinks to blackberry purples but not to the intensity of the autumn. The muted tones of spring are achieved through stains and softening coloured balms. The rest of the face is minimal but if you're like me and need something a bit more, structure your eyebrows, apply some bronzer highlighter, and a glowing cheek colour. The bronzed effect of this combination works perfect with the bold orange lip also premiering on catwalks. For paler skin you can use orange and pull it off, for darker skin tones and olive skin like mine I would use a warmer coral.

Gilded Eyes

Depending on the shimmer you want to use, be it traditional silver or gold, or something more controversial, choose a matte colour to offset the shimmer. An example for the

traditionalists among myself, if applying a gold glitter, compliment this by firstly applying a brown shadow all over the lid from the lash line up to the crease. Apply your gold glitter with your fingertips directly to the eyelid concentrating on the centre as this opens up the eye and directs focus to this point.

Neutral Eyes & Precision Liner

'Bare' eyes are rarely literal and are in fact dressed in some kind of shadow. For a natural look apply a matte skin-colour shade, highlight the inner corner of the eye and brow arch, line your lower water line with white liner, and contour slightly with bronzer in the crease to add definition. If you want to accentuate this further apply liner on the upper lash line. Perfect liner starts with the wing, so draw the outer part first so you can get them equal on both sides then do a dot to dot along the lashline and join up all the way along. Use a cotton bud dipped in make-up remover to eradicate mistakes and keep your foundation brush ready for touch-ups. Another method I seen recently was to trace a line with black powder or pencil first and then go over with your liquid pen - whichever you find easiest.

Insider tip:

You can actually contact most cosmetic counters to book in for a trend update. They usually come at the cost of one purchase. So basically if you want some new make-up, ring beforehand and get a full tutorial at the cost of a lipstick.

Post-Christmas skin cleanse

Steph Massheder

Unightly breakouts are the kissing cousin of too much Christmas pud and endless selection boxes. If you're looking for short or long-term cosmetic gains, this is where you will find those magic-etched "top tips" that will help to successfully minimize any skin stresses this Lent term.

Products

The face wash is a bathroom-sink-cupboard essential, a potentially skin-changing bottle of magic, but it's no longer a case of popping to the shops and picking up the bottle with the shiniest packaging (sob). It's time to invest in a face wash that works for you and your particular skin type, the general types being 'normal skin', 'dry skin', 'oily skin', 'sensitive skin', and 'combination skin'.

You can determine your skin type by simply washing your face, letting it dry, and leaving it completely untouched for an hour: once you have examined the evidence, all you need to do is a spot of extra reading - sorry to add to that ever-growing list - to find out which unique ingredients will work well with your skin type and successfully cater to its needs.

Tip: Skin cells are self-renewing so do not use your face wash day-in

and day-out as this may clog your pores and lead to even more pimples. Instead, use it two or three times a week when your skin needs a bit of a 'pick-up', i.e. on a Saturday morning after that long week of work, work, and more work.

Going that extra mile with your skin-care regime always pays dividends. If you're partial to an alcohol-fuelled weekend - which, er, let's face it, most of us are - then why not treat your skin to a face-mask on a lazy, hung-over, kind of Sunday? Boys, this ain't just a fluffy, sleepover, pyjama kinda thing: simply grab the most macho film from your DVD stash, and your best boy mates, and embrace the green goo and cucumber eyes. You won't regret it.

Last week's bad-boy spot left you with an unsightly red mark? One that you just know is going to linger there forever? Well, fear not, because the good old high-street drugstores now stock the most popular skin product in celebville: Bio-oil. This fabulous little bottle contains the breakthrough ingredient PurCellin Oil, which effectively tends to scars and uneven skin tone. Oh, and the benefits don't stop there! Bio-oil is perfect for dehydrated skin so don't be afraid to use a drop or two with your moisturizer when you've got that frazzled Friday feelin'.

If your bank account has taken a battering recently, what with Christmas celebrations and Lent

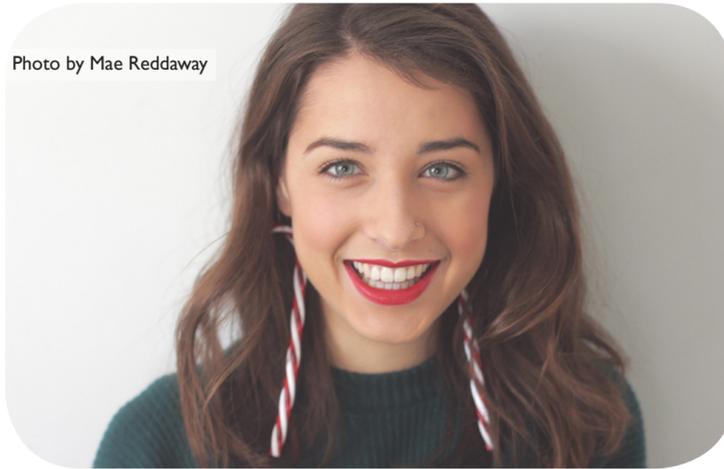


Photo by Mae Reddaway

term rent payment, then not to worry, because your kitchen cupboard just might save the day!

Honey, believe it or not, is a fantastic natural remedy for the skin. With its anti-bacterial properties and hefty serving of skin-saving antioxidants, honey is the perfect ingredient for both acne treatment and prevention. If honey is good enough to rub into your skin, then surely an extra blob (or two) with your morning porridge or cup o' tea won't harm, right? Either way, a perfect excuse.

Tips

My mum has always said that 'how you feel on the inside affects how you look on the outside', and she's right, just as mums always are.

If you're feeling low about your skin, it's almost natural to want to hide behind your baggiest and most sombre looking jumper, but this can actually have the opposite effect of what you want, and magnify the appearance of any just-come-through zits - nooo!

So - take a deep breath, and slip on your freshest and most colourful number. This is guaranteed to give you an instant lift and direct any unwanted attention away from your skin - a fantastic bonus!

Sale style: Make the most of your wardrobe

Num Sirisombut

The biggest sales of 2013 just ended and I bet most of you have already filled your wardrobe with last season's sale items. A high-end wardrobe full of fancy clothes is what every girl would die for, but unfortunately a student must stick to her budget.

However, with a good fashion sense you can still look stylish without splurging.

Here are some tips for you to make the most out of what's already in your wardrobe.

Basic items like a black dress, black trousers, black skirts and a white shirt are really useful in anyone's wardrobe as these items are never dated and can be spiced up in many ways. Pair basics with colourful pieces or keep your style minimalist. This is going to help save your pennies all year round and showing how sim-

licity can also be stylish.

'Mix and Match' is another important tool to help you save money.

Think of the colour wheel that we all learnt in primary school; all you need to do is find colours which suit your skin tone and then pair them up! You may go black if you want to look smart or you may dress in pastel colours if you want to look sweet and girly. For some inspiration, try Polyvore.



com. It's a great website to help you discover your own style. Choose from loads of items and practice matching colours and styles up.

When it comes to style, be wise and creative.

If you have a white shirt, you can wear it in many different ways to create different looks.

Try black, coloured, or patterned trousers, wear it with a mini skirt or keep it casual in jeans. Want to try something new? Try 'restyling'

your clothes and add a little interest to that white shirt. Create a cut out dress, cut-off shorts, turn a t-shirt into an indie tank top or spray paint an old pair of trainers to create a brand new look. I love embellishment which can jazz up jumpers, jackets and jeans. For inspiration try D.I.Y. videos on Youtube or have a look for blog posts for step by step instructions.

The final step is 'always check your wardrobe!' Bear in mind that fashion trends go full circle, so items that you bought years ago could be trendy again this season. Therefore, keep your wardrobe clean and organized in order to know what you have and how to make use of style staples.

To me, fashion has no rules, no right and no wrong. What looks good on others does not mean it will work for you.

Just be confident with your fashion sense and your own unique style will develop.

London Collections: Men *Autumn/Winter 2014*



Heidi Nagaitis
Fashion Editor

January 2014 is here and we're already being hounded by fashion mags and the high street to fill our wardrobes with the latest floral, embellished or tweed offerings. But what about the blokes? Women's fashion seems like a high speed juggernaut, crashing through trend after trend, keeping girls on their toes to make sure they stay stylish as the seasons change. However, if we're continuing with the transport analogy, to many, men's fashion is a little like a tug boat, occasionally catching your eye with a fabulous suit or two, but otherwise churning out the same garments year on year. Personally, I find men's fashion so much more exciting than womenswear. I'd pick a copy of GQ over Grazia, Cosmo or any other women's read, purely for the fashion pages. There I said it.

If you're a bloke reading this you may think I'm crazy. According to many of my male friends, the high street is full of the same graphic t-shirts, cable knits and vans-style shoes, you'll probably say you have no choice but to follow the flock when it comes to style. This is true to a certain extent (if you're boring.) Men's fashion is all about design and shape, you're not there to look pretty in your clothes, you're there to make a statement. The classic brogues, sharp shirts and biker jackets just

don't work on girls in the same way, so take risks and keep your eyes open for those stylish classics.

Don't believe me? You've just missed the biggest date in the men's fashion calendar; London Collections: Men. This yearly offering by the most well-known menswear brands allows London to showcase the innovative work of designers from Saville Row to LCF. Yes, women's fashion is at the heart of British culture, but menswear design in the UK has brought the world the humble bowler hat, the trench coat and the three piece suit among other creations, so for three days per season men's fashion deserves to be celebrated.

I was lucky enough to see the Autumn/Winter menswear collection for E.Tautz, a gentlemen's brand of 19th century London re-launched in 2005, owned by Saville Row's sweetheart Patrick Grant. A regular in the GQ style stakes and loved by the fashion girls, Grant has a penchant for all things elegant with his collections encapsulating the modern day dandy in bold prints, tweed and beautiful brogues. Helping backstage I got to handle the latest collection which included geometric designs, intricate embroidery and some statement coats so stylish that even the models wanted to take them home! The look was incredibly polished, described by a blogger as 'modern day Sherlock Holmes'. The look was polished, chic and oh so British, leaving the crowd, which included David Gandy, Tinie Tempier and Mark Francis of MIC fame cooing for more.

For something a little more casual, Burberry dressed their boys in loose



Photo by Heidi Nagaitis

trench coats, traditional checked scarves and polished brogues. The look was mixed with the addition of some shearling coats and oversized knits, creating a stark contrast with the stylish suit trousers, circa 1950's/Prince Philip. Feeling brave? Have a look at the MAN collection for Autumn/Winter 2014. A range designed by creatives from Topman and Fashion East, the brand are known for their rebellious attitude and they didn't disappoint this season. They hit the headlines with their silver mouth guards which shocked the press, but the real stars were the clothes on the catwalk. From Japanese-inspired designs to military berets, MAN gave guests a buffet of fashionable tidbits to chew on. Their most wearable elements included acid wash jumpers emblazoned with 'Dream on' and 'R.I.P' in the classic Disney font. Keep a beady eye on Ebay for similar, more affordable designs as I guarantee these tongue in cheek styles will hit the high street.

Granted, the styles on display were for Autumn/Winter 2014, but four key pieces will feature in any fashionable gent's wardrobe for every season. After all, a boy can do no wrong in a trench coat. No fear, I'm not talking about a beige ankle grazer offering; unless you're John Cusack in Say Anything and have a boom box handy I'd steer clear. Instead, opt for a navy blue short trench. It will keep you dry during the Lancaster monsoon weather (i.e. all year) and you'll look like a real man at those grad interviews, instead of being dressed by mummy.

Secondly, invest in some brogues. I'm not suggesting that you've all got to become hipsters, but they look great on any guy. Pair with a sharp suit for the above interview or dark jeans on a night out. If you don't want to look like you work at Topman try

something a little different and opt for a suede pair in black or a brighter colour if you're feeling brave. Suede is an educated man's spring/summer option for footwear, just please remember to not wear them to Hustle.

Next up is the suit. Yes, unfortunately one day you'll have to wear them and not just to funerals or your cousin's wedding. Yep you probably regret that cummerbund you wore for prom, but that's no excuse to shy away from the manliest garment in your wardrobe. If you pride yourself on being 'off the wall' then go ahead and get a double breasted suit, it'll probably compliment your wacky hairstyle and oversized specs. Want to play it safe? A single button suit in black, charcoal or navy blue is your best option. Stuck for inspiration? Dermot O'Leary is one of LCM's Ambassadors and he's been appointed to this role for a reason. Hate him on the XFactor, love him for his style and you'll do just fine.

Finally, make room for a fitted shirt in your wardrobe. Whether you choose a bold colour (if so PLEASE don't 'compliment' your look with fake tan) or stick to navy, grey, black or white, remember the buzz word is fitted. Make sure your shirt's not too roomy, but don't buy one that could be spray on. Fuchsia was the shade of choice for a number of designers for Spring/Summer 2013, but I'm not expecting blokes to warm to the Mr Blobby colour scheme. Like all high fashion, some choices are best left on the catwalk, however LCM is an exciting source of inspiration and effortless style which should be perused rather than strictly followed.

Just please boys, mix it up a bit.



Photo by Heidi Nagaitis

Christmas Market review

Munich

Prague

Joanna Gresty

As a Mancunian, I know no shortage of Christmas markets when the season is upon us. The sights, the smells, the bratwursts, the hustle, the bustle, the bratwursts, the dazzling lights and the bratwursts. This year, however, my partner and I decided to take a little detour from the usual Piccadilly line and, after a two hour flight, landed in Munich hoping to sample the European Christmas market everyone back home was raving about. And perhaps some of the bratwursts.

The München Christkindlmarkt proved large and dispersed enough to keep us occupied for five days, but never felt overcrowded.

One could not distinctly notice locals from any other European tourists excitedly browsing the cobbled aisles. To a certain extent, it just felt like we were enjoying a local neighbourhood tradition as opposed to a major tourist attraction. The calm order of day-time Munich with its soft meditative blue sky and rows of decorative pastel buildings completely contrasted the bustling night-time market with its garish but brilliant light shows one could marvel at for hours.

With two amazing Cathedrals a five minute walk away from one another, it became obvious that the surrounding community was built on a very Catholic sentiment. Delicate pottery nativity characters for seven euros apiece were by far the most frequent attraction lining the wooden booths.

The Glühwein (pronounced 'glue

vine' but is actually identical to our mulled wine) is a must try. I must admit, sometimes the mugs of this heated spiced treat I get from Manchester can be rather vinegary on the palette. But you can almost taste the love and pride served in an ample portion of the Munich edition to keep you nice and warm out in the frozen tundra that is a so-called "mild" German winter. Though glacial, it indeed proved a delicious meander. Chestnuts roasted to perfection, crêpes smothered in Kinder chocolate and gingerbread men so detailed that it felt immoral to bite into one.

Maybe it was a characteristic of the small area we stayed in, or maybe it was the amount of times I went back to the same stall to purchase a different flavour pretzel, but I would add that the München Markets don't have all the variety of products I expected to compare with their typical British counterpart. Safe in the knowledge that droves of tourists from all around the globe will flock to get a taste of debatably the most famous European market in the world, shop-owners are not foolish to have three quarters of their stall packed with German themed merchandise. Then again, how many versions of a bauble with an image of the Marienplatz do they think people want?

Critically speaking, I would give these particular Christmas Markets 4 out of 5 stars.

Give them a whirl, but be prepared to get on the returning flight borderline obese and with enough German produce to kit out the local town hall.



Photo by Joanna Gresty

Rachel May Quin

Stashed away in the Czech Republic, Prague is a place that I've heard of so many times before and yet never thought of visiting. But with Christmas markets becoming an ever-popular winter destination choice, Prague is a truly spectacular place to visit for its mulled beverages and breath-taking architecture; and most of all, for the city's Christmas spirit.

One of the best things about the Prague Christmas market is the way the stalls are spread out across the city, so whilst you're wandering around getting a feel for the city, you're never too far from hot mulled drinks. Over by Charles Bridge, there was a fantastic hot cherry wine stall that we frequently haunted, whilst the main part of the market was located in the Old Town Square a short walk from Charles Bridge and right next to the awe-inspiring Prague astronomical clock – built in 1410. The Prague Christmas markets are ideal if you get travel sick easily like I do, as the city is just big enough to walk absolutely everywhere. (It is also full of tramlines, so you can get about easily this way if you prefer.) Admittedly, it was cold to walk, but we stayed in a hotel about ten minutes away from the Old Town and it was fantastic to potter through the streets clutching a cup of honeywine to warm your hands – I realise I've talked a lot about the alcoholic beverages so far, but really, they were excellent.

Having never really been to a Christmas market before, other than the one in Alexandra Square – which sadly doesn't even come close to comparing – I wasn't entirely sure what to expect. You can go to the markets free at any time of the day and wile away the hours, but it was undoubtedly so much more beautiful in the dark.

Fairy lights everywhere, brightly decorated wooden stalls selling trinkets, glassware, jewellery, toys, tree decorations, somewhat creepy dolls and so much food.

Honestly, if you're dieting for some mad reason over Christmas, be wary of the Prague Christmas market.

It was jam-packed full of traditional food: hog roasts, sausages, pastries glazed in honey and sugared nuts, some sort of Czech pizza – which was basically a crispy dough that they coat in a tangy tomato sauce, sprinkle with finely grated cheese and practically drown in garlic oil. It was amazing.

Much to my partner's delight, they are also mad about their beers, and the honeywine, or mead, is like drinking liquid heaven. I think my only quailm during the whole trip was that whilst the delicacies on offer were extraordinary and I'll probably never lose that extra Christmas weight, a lot of the stalls are very similar in what they offer; it felt like once I'd seen three or four of the stalls I'd practically seen them all.

Still, the animal lover and child in me loved the petting zoo, which had sheep, donkeys, ponies and little silky goats. I spent an awful lot of time there trying to get past kids just so I could stroke the animals. Unfortunately no reindeer, but still lovely. Best of all, the Old Town Square proudly sports a huge Christmas tree draped in sparkling lights and allegedly shipped in from the Krkonose mountains in the north of the Czech Republic. All in all, if you feel like doing some travelling next Christmas, Prague is definitely the place to go. The locals were friendly, the city is gorgeous and best of all for students on a budget, it's relatively cheap and easy to get to.



New year, new term, new start

Alako Abdul-Hafiz

Last year, most of us, especially we first years, might have had a rough start in all spheres of university activities. Be it academic, extra-curricular, and even social activities. For example, academically, we might have had problems getting work done and handing it in before the deadline, and also trying our best to make it in time for lectures.

In terms of extra-curricular activities, we might have had the problems trying to fit them into our schedule (some of us might have had to forgo a couple of classes for them). Lastly, socially, most of us (especially those with 9am lectures) might have faced the problem of trying to get up and ready for the day after a wild night out.

Well, in normal circumstances, it would be my extreme pleasure to announce to you that 'it's a new year, and you can be a completely new person, and all the problems you faced will be left in 2013.' But unfortunately, this isn't the case.

No matter how many resolutions we set year after year, we still remain the same person on the inside. We hope by making these resolutions, we can change who we are for the better, but it's not the resolutions themselves that'll make the difference for us, instead, it's our will to stick to them that counts.

So as we enter this new year, I have a few tips, or better put, an acronym which can help us get through the rest of the academic year successfully.

Keep Moving Forward:

No matter what you might have faced in the previous year, just remember that for things to get better in the future, you have to let

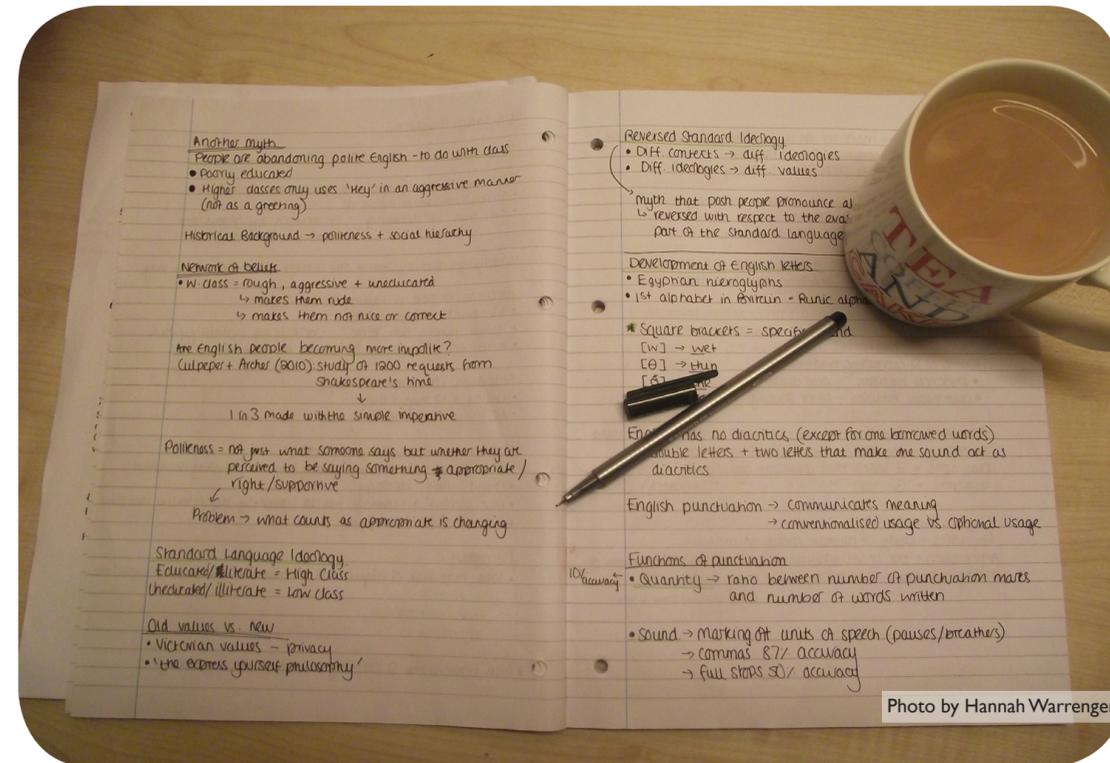


Photo by Hannah Warrenger

go and move on.

Always Be Ready:

To survive the storm of work and exams coming ahead of us, we have to be prepared for them beforehand.

Remember What's Important:

When the term starts, it's usually very easy to forget what's important, especially when there are lots of activities and things to do throughout

the term. So in order to avoid confusion, we must get our priorities right and know what comes first in our endeavours.

Minimise Weeknight Drinking:

Amidst the bustling of university night life, it's very easy to forget our timetable for lectures, and go for what we initially swear will be 'only a few drinks.' But three double vodkas, countless shots, and a particularly

potent cocktail later, chances are we're going to miss that important 9am seminar in which all the vital information we need to know for our entire year is divulged.

All is Well:

Finally we should always remember that whatever we face, good, bad or just really awkward, we should try to learn from it and let it hold us back.

On a last note, welcome to 2014 everyone, and remember: **karma**.



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The tell-tale signs that you've found yourself a *friend for life*

Kelly Bradshaw

So unless you're a hermit, you've most likely met many people at uni. But in particular, there are always a bunch of students who you know you'll be friends with for life. Here are a few signs of a friendship that's worth keeping forever.

Your close friends don't ditch you on a night out, despite the fact that you've thrown up all over town.

Even in your almost-passing-out stage, your friends still haven't left you, and rather than merely phoning for a taxi, have actually decided to come home with you for the night to make sure that you'll survive. We'd all like to think that all uni students would do this, but unfortunately, this isn't always the case. In my advice, the ones that would choose to sacrifice their night out in order to ensure that you're in good shape are the ones worth keeping, (although this doesn't mean that you should take advantage of this and recklessly drink every time you're out – easier said than done, I know, but nobody likes a weekly party pooper).

You've had a break up with the guy you hoped you'd be with forever, and your close friends have devoted much of their time to you. It's comforting to know that you have friends who are so amazing that they'd spend a large amount of their time trying to help you heal. It's so easy for people to say that they're here for you



Photo courtesy of profernity

when they're not, but when you come across



Photo courtesy of LDnest

people who are genuinely concerned about you, and can't help but walk into your room when you're upset about your ex, (even if you told them not to, secretly in the hope that they're in it for the long run. Make sure that you return the favour, too.

A friend who puts in this much effort deserves the same amount of effort from you.

Your close friends always invite you out, whether it's to the cinema, a restaurant, or even just an invite to stay in together

with a Chinese takeaway and a film. From experience, I've learnt that if it's always you making the plans, then your allegedly close friend clearly isn't as close as you'd hoped. It doesn't

matter how many times you invite them out – if they're not as keen as you, then they won't always invite



Photo courtesy of comedy_nose

you.

Of course you shouldn't expect your close friends to invite you to everything, and tagging along often insinuates that you're desperate, (for instance, it'd be pretty weird if you invited yourself to your friend's house when you know she's got her boyfriend round – a couple smooch sesh while you're sat next to them loudly munching your popcorn and watching Bridget Jones isn't subtle, or even remotely appealing).

You try on a dress which makes you look like you have thunder thighs, and your friend speaks the truth and kindly tells you that a different outfit would be more flattering. We all know those girls who will tell their girlfriends that they look gorgeous, even when it's quite clear that they couldn't have picked a worse outfit. It's not worth it if your friends can't be

honest with you.

So there you have it

– a selective pick of the tell tale signs of a valuable friendship. Friends who mop up your sick, friends who give you endless tissues whilst you sob uncontrollably, friends who never fail to invite you, and friends who tell you the truth about your outfit to save embarrassment later.

A guide to meeting the parents

Hayley Schubert
Deputy Lifestyle Editor

Congratulations!

You have miraculously tricked someone out there into believing that the snort you develop every time you laugh is actually endearing, as is managing to spill your dinner down you every single meal time, despite the fact you are twenty years old. Lo and behold, it is now time. Time for that event you only get one shot at; where first impressions have never been so important and under all circumstances you must suppress your snort and ensure any food you are given does not end up down your meticulously planned outfit. No, this is not a job interview (although similar rules may apply); it is in fact meeting your other half's parents. Cue dramatic music.

Personally, I am not so good at the whole meeting the parents shenanigan. I get nervous, which develops into me talking too much, which develops into me making no sense, which then develops into me

sitting there red faced whilst a voice in my head screams 'RUN!'. Thus, I have devised a guide to eliminate any stress and avoid making the meeting with the parents a startlingly catastrophic event.

I will begin with attire. Remember the old saying 'never judge a book by its cover'? Well, nowadays no one seems to be listening to this, so dressing appropriately is paramount for first impressions. I am not talking about splashing out on a brand new outfit; I am just saying choose wisely. Anything that leaves little to the imagination is not going to go down well and may result in your new partner's parents convincing their darling son/daughter how inappropriate you are.

Research. Treat your other half's parents a bit like you would an essay (bear with me here). Find out about their likes - mutual interests make for easy conversation - and particularly their dislikes – you don't want to be putting your foot into a sensitive subject. Give yourself an A* if said parents invite you to do something with them again in the not so distant future.

Okay, so you want to make a good impression. Your achievements and future plans will aid you in this, just don't go overboard. Boasting is not likely to go down well, instead try and slip in the fact you climbed the world's tallest mountain more subtly, rather than blurting it out when there is a lull in conversation.

PDA (public displays of affection- for those who don't know) is a no no in most situations, but particularly this one. What better way to make your partner's parents uncomfortable than kissing and cuddling on the sofa as they ask how many pets you have. Keep your hands to yourself.

Manners really do matter. There is no excuse for being late (a zombie apocalypse is the only exception) and don't forget your pleases and thank yous. Likewise, make yourself useful - a sure fire way to get into the parents' good books is offering to lend a hand. Volunteering to help with



Photo by Simon Rowe

the cooking or washing up usually goes down a treat. Note: it is okay to secretly hope that the parents pat you on the shoulder and tell you to sit down with a glass of wine instead. Whilst we are on the subject of wine... do not get drunk when meeting parents for the first time. I repeat, do not.

Remember, parents are humans too – they once had to meet their partner's parents. This isn't an interrogation, they are probably just happy that their beloved son/daughter has found someone foolish enough to accept them, faults and all!

How to: cure your cold

Philippa Hawley

We've all experienced it. You go to bed feeling absolutely fine, and then you wake up the next day unable to breathe out of your nose and practically coughing your voice out. It's a given that at this time each year you're eventually going to pick up a monster cold, the trick is knowing how to cure it. So here are a few tips to help you along the way.

Without sounding too 'mumsy', make sure that you've got the right tablets. I know that people tend to say that no amount of tablets will fight your cold, but I think there's no harm in taking the edge off your horrible stuffiness. Find a good branded cold and flu tablet, day and night nurse are always a good buy. They maybe won't help you too much but they'll certainly send you to sleep, which is always a god send because the last thing you want to do is be up all night coughing or with a runny nose.

If tablets don't do the trick there are always some home remedies that you can try. After years of singing lessons and always managing to

get a horrible cold at crucial times, I've learned that lots of hot drinks certainly do the trick. My singing teacher used to swear by hot water with honey, personally I found it vile to drink, but I wasn't going to argue and it certainly helped! (I suppose you do tend to pick up one or two things when you rely on my voice so much). If you're like me and hot honey liquid doesn't sound too appealing then switch it for a bowl of hot soup. It'll keep you hydrated, and if you make chicken soup, the protein will help strengthen your antibodies to fight of the virus. Don't just stop at soup though, because a curry can really help cure your cold. The ingredients, like chilli and garlic are well-known for their anti-viral properties, so opt for an Indian take away and have your blocked nose cleared in no time. Getting better by eating delicious food is certainly a win-win situation if you ask me.

One way that will definitely prove popular with everyone is getting a good amount of rest.

Take a couple of days to chill and

sleep and you will cure your cold a lot quicker than if you try and carry on with your daily routines. That said, don't exercise. Your body needs all of its strength to try and fight off the virus, it hasn't got time for over exertion.

Now you know. Drink plenty of hot liquids, eat spicy food, get the right balance of tablets and you'll feel fighting fit in no time. That monster cold that you'd been held by for so long will disappear and that

long anticipated moment when you breathe through your nose will finally become a reality, leaving you, (to quote cold and flu TV adverts) feeling human again.



Photo by Jazmin Scarlett



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Comment

Comment Editors: Julia Molloy & Sam Smallridge ✉ scan.comment@lusu.co.uk

Should international students have to pay to use NHS services?

Liam Stott

As of July 2013 the government unveiled proposals to introduce levies on foreign workers and students from outside the EU, who plan to remain in the UK for more than six months. The price for accessing NHS services has been proposed at £200 a year, with the intention of recuperating funds that the NHS loses as a result of treating foreign migrants, but particularly those who abuse the system through "health tourism". However, is this proposition justified when foreign students from outside of the EU are at present expected to pay higher tuition fees in order to study in the UK?

According to Department of Health estimates, the total number of migrants using NHS services each year stands at 2.6 million, with the total cost to the National Health Service estimated to be £2 billion of the NHS's £110 billion annual budget. The £200 figure would therefore seem justifiable, in order that international students make a contribution to their healthcare in the UK that is free at the point of use. According to the Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt, the figure could exclude certain treatments like IVF, cosmetic surgery, organ transplants and antenatal care for pre-existing pregnancies. Furthermore, such a figure is considered competitive in comparison to what other countries have charged foreign students for healthcare. Currently 300,000 students from outside of Europe are studying at British universities, with official projections suggesting that this figure will rise to more



Photo by Andrew Wong

than 480,000 by 2025.

It is, however, important to stress that students from outside the EU have to pay up to four times the fees charged to UK students. According to a recent survey by the Complete University Guide, undergraduate fees charged to international students in 2013-14 can start at £7,450 for lecture based courses and rise to £35,000 per annum for undergraduate medical degrees. Daniel Stevens of the NUS has criticised the rise in fees for international students, saying: "It is scandalous that non-EU students are charged fees that can be thousands of pounds higher than those of other students... universities that truly value their international students should be clear about the real cost of their courses allowing them to budget properly." Any further

cost to studying in the UK has the potential of discouraging international students from applying to British universities, but with the number of non-EU students expected to rise in future, any further treatment costs will place extra strain on NHS resources.

For too long the National Health Service has been treated as a free public resource, with no cost attached. This is of course a false assumption. The NHS has to be paid for, and is, through general taxation, particularly National Insurance contributions from the British taxpayer. However, as a consequence of exempting certain groups of individuals from contributing to the funding of NHS services, including international students, certain health care trusts may have their resources further stretched. In recent

years research has provided an increase in the number of drugs, diagnostic and treatment related technologies, all of which require additional funding in order to deliver these to patients. Furthermore, the government has suggested that GPs extend their opening hours in order to relieve the pressures being exerted on A and E departments across the country. GP leaders have, however, estimated an extra cost of £1.5 billion to enable the proposals to be realised. Therefore, any strategy implemented by government to deliver NHS services further emphasises that there is an almost indeterminate burden on the public purse.

The charging of international students to access NHS services is likely to raise less than £100 million, yet from the evidence presented it

remains a justifiable proposal from the government. The real question now is how the levy is paid? In August 2013 the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) raised the prospect that universities could 'bulk buy' the annual £200 health levies for international students. Given the already large sums in tuition fees that students from outside the EU are expected to pay, it would be a fairer solution to a contentious issue, as well as indicating that British universities truly value their international students. It is regrettable that non-EU students are charged higher fees; however, NHS funding has its limitations, and exempting certain groups from financial contributions only serves to increase the pressures on an ever expanding national health service.



BENEFITS STREET:

The biggest problem for our economy?

Steph Mitcalf

Most of what we know is derived from documentaries like Benefits Street which purely focus on extremes – it is television, after all.

“There are 99 houses, 13 nationalities” – pause whilst someone in the background shouts “WANKER!” before the voice over proceeds – “and most of the residents are claiming benefits”. This is how Benefits Street began on Channel 4. “The street feels like a family”, claims White D this snippet of conversation is carefully placed between videos of her dancing to music from a car in the street and then followed by another of her smoking. Drug dealing, drinking in the street, court cases, little formal education, void of ambition, shoplifting, even the cliché caps and tracksuits – these people were constantly shown to be different. Some have even suggested now the title “War on Welfare” is justified. However, the constant association of ‘benefits’ with people who are made out to be ‘scroungers’, which we see over and over again, is dangerous and vindictive.

For many of us, benefits may seem to be a faraway concept. It’s a system we don’t really understand because it’s just not part of our lives. Most of what we know is derived from documentaries like Benefits Street which purely focus on extremes – its television, after all. So, what’s the reality? One thing many of us disregard in the benefit spending debate are State Pensions – the most costly of all welfare spending – that none of us would dispute are absolutely necessary. From 2010–2011, this cost £69.88 billion, between 2011 and 12, this figure stood at £74.22 billion, a change of 3.7%

including inflation.

Third most expensive is Disability Living Allowance, equally as uncontroversial as pensions, this is a vital part of the system. Despite this, The Times reported in December that one in ten people with disabilities, who had experienced benefit cuts, were left reliant on food banks to feed themselves and their families. From 2010/11, the cost stood at £11.88 billion; £12.57 billion over the next two years, an increase of 3.3% including inflation. The list continues, to cover other welfare payments such as Job Seekers Allowance and TV Licenses for over 75’s, which cost considerably less.

These statistics alone show that documentaries such as Benefits Street only show a minority of a section of welfare claimants and completely ignore the vast majority. There are issues within the system that should be acknowledged. From 2012/13, 2.1% of the estimated overall benefit expenditure was overpaid because of fraud and errors

within the system; £3.5 billion, but this figure pales in comparison to the unclaimed £16 billion by working or sick people. But to combat this David Cameron has revealed plans to prevent EU migrants claiming child benefit from the UK government for children who live abroad. With George Osborne declaring to Radio 4, conveniently the same day as the broadcasting of Benefit’s Street, that “we need to find a further £25 billion of cuts after the election”. Welfare will undoubtedly be a focus as one of the biggest costs.

To put these figures into perspective, we must look at other areas of government spending. The Financial Times reported in September that “Britain has spent more than £33bn on military campaigns overseas over the last 20 years”. The NHS cost the tax payer £105.254bn in 2012/2013. Many essential UK services have seen vast cuts introduced over a short space of time which have had detrimental effects. In the meantime, loopholes have allowed

perfectly legitimate low tax costs for large corporations. Google’s UK division paid just £12 million in tax in 2012, despite revenues of £506 million.

The company faced headlines such as “Eric Schmidt: I’m very proud of our tax avoidance scheme”. Large international Companies are certainly benefiting from the government’s incompetence in producing effective tax laws. Eric Schmidt in response said “If the British system changes the tax laws then we will comply. If the taxes go up we will pay more, if they go down we will pay less. That is a political decision for the democracy that is the UK.” Yet Schmidt has not received any challenge to be taken at his word.

Unfortunately, as convenient as it may be to view welfare spending as a big useless mess responsible for all financial difficulties, this is not the case. The demonisation of the people of Benefit’s Street and the reality of benefits are worlds apart.



‘Selfies’ are older than you think

Joanna Gresty

Beating the likes of “twerk”, “twttersphere” and “girl crush” as well as overused suffixes such as –ageddon and –pocalypse, the Oxford English Dictionary has named “selfie” the official Word of the Year 2013. The Word of the Year award annually celebrates the inventiveness of the English language when confronted with social, political or technological change, with past recipients of the award including “chav” (2004), “carbon footprint” (2007) and last year’s winner “omnishambles”. The certified definition of its newest edition:

A photograph that one has taken of oneself, typically taken with a smartphone or webcam and uploaded to a social media website.



Photo by Sandra Jovanovic

thinking it nothing more than a mecca for self-indulgence and narcissistic showcases. My 15-year-old sister is very much a part of the Instagram generation and I used to tease her mercilessly for it.

Of course, like everything new and not participated in by everyone, there have been numerous modern-age “selfies” that have caused controversy. A woman posing in the foreground of a suicidal man about to jump was dubbed “the sickest selfie of all time” and the debatably “inappropriate” snap prime minister David

In spite of this, being someone whose only social virtue comes from humour by self-deprecation, I still fall into the selfie-averse crowd. I’m nowhere near flexible enough to obtain a good camera position and my lips are so chapped these days that anything near a duck face would result in not being able to eat salt and vinegar crisps for about a month. Though I used to quietly think my selfie-allergy was a symptom of humility, writer Brian Droitcour interprets it differently. “The real narcissists are the ones who never take selfies,” Droitcour argues. “They imagine their self as autonomous, hermetic–too precious to be shared.”

I’ve always enjoyed viewing people’s self-portraits, seeing faces change and age. When a popular Rembrandt exhibition came to Manchester Art Gallery I used to go there straight from college and sit for a good 45 minutes looking at that handsome self-portrait of him at thirty-three and another as an old man. Turns out selfies inspired me to go into humanistic philosophy.

Cameron and President Obama took of themselves at Mandela’s memorial service caused public outcry. But what is the real problem here? The woman couldn’t have done anything to help prevent the suicide and Mandela’s funeral was a celebration of his life. It is the worry that we are advocating and even demanding an augmentation in self-absorption.

This should not be the first time you’re hearing about how Millennials are narcissistic. It’s true. The rise of social media outlets where, to be included properly, you have to make a profile depicting yourself as best as you can has naturally led to a growth and development in the significance of self-expression online.

Of course we’re narcissistic.



Photo by Lucy Lamb

Why should I have to explain why I don’t drink?

Annie Underwood

On seeing this article, a load of people are probably already thinking “how boring is she, whinging all about alcohol and drinking”, “she’s at uni – get a life!” But bear with me.

One of the major things everyone recalls after university, and raves about whilst at university, are the socials. I loved going on a wild night out as much as the next person in my first couple of years at Lancaster, but then during my third year I had major kidney surgery, and to avoid kidney failure I am unable to drink more than a glass or two of alcohol a week, let alone in one night. While everyone makes a big point (generally only during freshers’ week) of stressing no-one has to feel obliged to drink alcohol, and hold (again, mainly during freshers’ week) “quiet night in” socials, I think more needs to be done to cater for those people who either can’t drink alcohol, or don’t want to.

I am speaking from experience when I say a night out when everyone else is getting hammered, and you’re limited to your one drink, is not the fun it could, or indeed should be. That high everyone else gets from alcohol is hard to recreate when you’re sober and forced to look after anyone who has had a bit too much. But if you instead opt not to go on a big night out you’re branded as boring and antisocial. This mindset has been clearly demonstrated by a friend talking about a social she was on, where their “aim of the night” was to get a fresher to go out to town who had not been out since freshers’ week. I think if she doesn’t want to go out she

shouldn’t be forced to, and no-one should think any less of her for that. Yet my friend made it abundantly clear that the rest of the society thought she was boring and antisocial because she didn’t relish going out and getting drunk like the rest of them. Surely the antisocial people are those who force people to do things they’re not comfortable with, or ostracise those who won’t or can’t fit into the norm of getting slashed on a Friday night?

When I go out, I tend to have a drink during pre-drinks, then stick to soft drinks whilst out. Not only does it protect my dodgy kidneys, it also saves me a lot of money. But there is always the inevitable question: “why aren’t you drinking?” Once I’ve explained people are generally fine about it, but why should I have to give an explanation for not drinking? It’s like the question is loaded with a requirement to explain your ‘boring-ness’ away.

It is essentially a double-edged sword. If you go out and don’t drink you are unlikely to have a great time because you will end up stuck on sober duty, and probably (in Lancaster anyway) freeze to death in queues and supporting people as they stumble through town because you don’t have a beer jacket on. The alternative is equally unappealing. If you don’t go out when all your friends are going out they are likely to brand you as boring and antisocial. I’m not going to go on about the health risks of excessive drinking – because I probably would do the same if my kidneys would stand up to it – and it’s your decision anyway. But I would like to say that someone who is making a conscious decision not to drink ought to be respected for that, and not looked down on as a freaky, antisocial hermit.



How private is our private information?

Marcus Johnson

Data hacks aren't something new in the news. Sony suffered a large scale breach of its security when millions of their Playstation customer details were obtained in a planned hack. Natwest has suffered numerous hacking issues on its online banking platform, and we even found out that the general public were having its data directly tapped by the American government. The vulnerability of our personal data to online hackers has become a rising concern. However with Snapchat now revealing that the data of 4.6 million customers has been obtained by hackers, this issue has been brought into mainstream concerns once again. With social media displaying lax security, it poses the question; how private are our lives on the web?

What is most alarming about these information leaks is that it affected a wide range of services. Banking, gaming

and social media are areas integral to many of our lives. We give our basic information to so many websites now. Our name, address and date of birth no longer feel like private information at all. However the amount of deeply personal information we freely offer to the internet is alarming when it's evident that even some of the most popular online services aren't totally secure.

Until now there hasn't been any devastatingly harmful leaks of data. The Snapchat hackers gathered phone numbers and the Playstation hackers managed to bag themselves a few million addresses, not ideal but still not enough to constitute a severe threat to customers privacy. However it doesn't matter what the hackers actually got their hands on, it's what they could have got their hands that is alarming.

The companies in question don't just have our basic information, between them they have our bank details, financial records, personal pictures and videos. The threat of losing banking details is

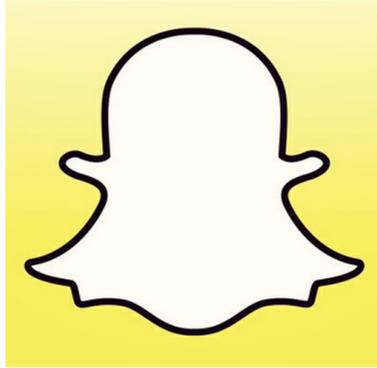
obvious. The rise in blackmail cases resulting from criminals obtaining incriminating pictures and videos highlights the devastation deeper and more harmful data hacks could cause. Although at the moment this data might be safe, it doesn't escape the fact that it is out there. This recent Snapchat security breach only serves to remind us that droves of our private data is stored in places vulnerable to cyber criminals.

The direct threat to financial services is obvious, however these tend to be the sites that have the highest levels of security.

That doesn't mean they are flawless but this isn't where the biggest threat lies. The biggest threat lies in social media. Our behaviour on social media platforms is something unique. We now freely share pictures of

ourselves, pinpoint when we are in a certain places and even publicly display what would usually be private conversations between us and our friends for no clear incentive or reward. As Snapchat along with Twitter and Facebook have shown, it is now the norm to share our lives with the world without really questioning it. We no longer solely exist in the real world, but a version of each of us exists online.

Right now social media is where we live, an extension of our own everyday lives. Many people don't see these social media platforms as a public forum at all. Some see it as a 21st century version of a private diary and this is exactly where the danger lies. Social media is public. Fact. We are lured in by talking to people we know and looking at pictures of them but doesn't mean we are totally free from



prying eyes. The Snapchat leaks only serve to emphasise that once our data is out there, it is constantly at risk from hackers. Once private information is placed online it ceases to be private at all, no matter how secure we believe it to be. As a large chunk of our lives are now lived online, the amount of private information we actually have is dwindling fast. Our information is never really safe online. As a result private and public information will no longer be two different things. And we might not even realise it.

University cultural relations should be more sweet than sour

Alex Chau

Resuming life here for my second year of university has had me reminiscing about the day I first arrived in the Arctic Circle; i.e. Lancaster. Within the first week of living in Lancaster University my diet already consisted entirely of steak bakes, I met human beings oblivious to ecosystems outside of their bedrooms and I developed a worrying fondness for the smell of rained-on tracksuit. Many things remain a mystery to me even now, but in my second year, much like those other brave Southern warriors who survived part one, I'm learning to adapt. I think. The thing about Northerners and Southerners is that we're essentially batter and Mars bars. I use the North/South divide as an example; the truth is that our university is the perfect specimen of implicit segregation.

University is, in theory, one rare place where you can truly embrace yourself for what you are and become whatever that is. Some have chosen, with this great privilege, to become

a traffic cone on Sugar Wednesdays, others dress in wizard robes, recite spells and play Quidditch beer-pong. That's alright, alarming to watch, but fine. Because the idea is, whatever route we follow, in addition to finding self-acceptance, ideally, we should validate other people and ways of life too.

Yes, that includes Scousers.

Which brings us to the main topic at hand; to write an article addressing ethnic dissension, normally, would be an exercise in futility. It's almost a cliché for the student writer to naively approach the behemoth subject of race divide, usually only to be laughed at, ridiculed and subsequently pelted with rocks and cynicism, especially when the problems are so widespread. But this is not a country or a city; this is a small manure-filled town that is home to 13,000 intellectuals

By now you'll realise I'm alluding, of course, to an ethnic divide, the detachment of our international students, some

14% of our undergrad student population. Statistics show the overwhelming majority of our international students have travelled from China, with another large portion from my father's home city: Hong Kong. In particular, I have found the Asian community to be the key example. There is a clear divide between the white and Chinese populace at this university, not due to racism but rather indifference. I recall a friend of mine last year stating, "If they leave us be, then we'll leave them." No problem, it seems. There is no explicit race conflict here, there is relative politeness and, from my experience, at it's worst, only a surly, underlying dabble of ignorance. Why should any two ethnic groups be forced to integrate? The answer lies outside of the academic environment, in the repercussions that our graduates have on society. Racial education and integration is important now because after university, especially in the case of the hundreds of ambitious business students, our political and social views are going to have a direct effect on the shaping of society. We're the

people of tomorrow and it would be lovely if we got on well.

How does one go about addressing the 1700 student-strong elephant in the room? The problem lies on both sides of the equation. My Hong Konger ex-flatmate told me, "Most English people don't talk to me", this outlook often goes both ways. In pick-up basketball games at the Grizedale courts (where Asian students make up the majority of players), I find I'm largely unacknowledged until I've made clear my own Asian heritage. In group-work, there are many accounts of there being difficulty and loathing at having to work with non-English speaking international students.

The language barrier proves to be a dominating reason behind the race disparity. It could be argued: if you've moved to a new country you should embrace its culture and attempt to learn its language. I sympathise with that notion but it can be daunting immersing yourself in a new lifestyle, especially one like ours. Our blunt, football kicking, pint-guzzling ways can be difficult to understand

when you weren't brought up on Roy Keane and channel 5. There's also the fact that in 2012, almost 407,000 of the 544,000 undergraduate applicants were white. English people make up the majority of students here and in most UK universities so, really, it's us indigenous folk who need to extend the olive branch first.

There's no need to sing kumbaya about this but, at the least, it should be acknowledged we're very lucky here. We have an ethnically diverse campus; we're harnessing cultural hybridity. We've got some of the brightest (and bravest) from all over the world working to benefit the university and its students. The influx of international students at Lancaster helped stimulate a rise from 51st place in the Guardian league table (2005) to our current 11th. We were Tranmere Rovers, now we're Arsenal. That's reason enough to say "hello" in your seminars to our non-English friends. Or at the very least, try dim sum, it's delicious. What's more char sui pork would probably taste great with a Mars Bar and batter.

HEAD TO HEAD:

Is Facebook 'dead and buried' for older teenagers?

YES: Emily-Jayne Nicholls

Apparently Facebook isn't cool anymore. Like Bebo, Myspace and MSN it has faded into cyberspace afterlife and become part of the virtual worlds' Z list. The Guardian recently reported that their research on 16-18 year olds in eight EU countries shows that as older users join Facebook, focus has shifted to more fashionable platforms such as Instagram and Twitter.

Does this research conclude that Facebook has finally been toppled of its social media throne, or has this small and fickle demographic simply lost interest?

At the grand old age of 22 I'm not going to attempt to get into the mind of a 16 year old but if I dig deep in the crevasse of my awkward teenage memory, I do remember the excitement of Bebo (first years - that's Facebook's great grandmother who has since retired to the Caribbean). I remember taking great delight in letting the whole world know just how cool and fun I was. Does any one else remember the skinz (yes with a 'z', please join me with a facepalm), when they introduced a leopard print one life was well and truly made.

If you didn't have Bebo you weren't cool (I was never cool regardless of my leopard print Bebo just for the record) it was part of the teenage schoolyard culture to have a Bebo and later MySpace account and when it became uncool you simply stopped logging in. To a teenage mind, social media is to a large degree, a social symbol, even we old people remember, and occasionally still confess to joining in, posting as many photos and statuses as possible to let the world know how much fun you're having. The more exciting, regardless of accuracy, your life is perceived the higher one climbs up the social ladder. So is that what is happening to Facebook, it's no longer an acceptable social status to have an account or is it like so many things in the fast paced, ever changing world, simply becoming obsolete?

Like all social media, Facebook is about the people you connect with, partly why Twitter is increasingly popular is you get to hear from people who actually interest you. Obama, Lady GaGa and even Boris Johnson are waiting to share their life and that's definitely more interesting than the majority of Facebook's newsfeed, as the popular, student-aimed website Coolage, scathingly points out. In fairness they are largely right, on Facebook there has been a clear drop in people posting anything overly personal or sharing any important details.

There are plenty of people on my Facebook who I don't want anywhere

near me, virtual or not but they have to be there otherwise its seen as quite simply rude. We all have family friends who only have you and their dog on their newsfeed and delights in telling your parents who you were with at Sugar before you even stumble home. But when you run into Great Uncle Albert at the annual gathering how do you explain the obvious delete.

This leads into one side of the Facebook story; young people want to escape parents and such and are searching for a more exclusive way of sharing their thoughts. We've all been there, needing a bit of social



Photo by Mae Reddaway

media

sympathy/ ranting platform but thinking twice about sharing ones thoughts or even opinion in case it gets back to someone it shouldn't. This is where social media sites such as Path and Tagged come in. Both are targeted at young people and only allow you to connect with a certain amount of people meaning you can share your inner most thoughts, or your opinions on the Sherlock bromance, without 607 people knowing or vocally disagreeing with you.

So is Facebook going anywhere? Right now I don't believe that it is, with over a billion active users it is still a highly functional platform for connecting with businesses, friends and colleagues. However is it just a matter of time before Facebook joins Myspace in cyberspace obscurity? Young people are fickle and quick to move on, it only takes one upcoming generation to decide what the new Facebook is and for the rest of the world to follow suit. It seems though that Facebook isn't cool and young people are over it, but only time will tell if it will be gone for good, after all, not everyone likes cool.

NO: Julia Molloy

Unlike most of the people I know, I first logged in to Facebook at the ripe old age (in terms of social media) of 16. Pestered by friends and experiencing that dreaded feeling of "missing out" on this mysterious social space, I started my online profile. Three and a half years later, I've gone from resisting social media for as long as possible to Facebook becoming a part of my everyday life.

Don't get me wrong - if I thought I could live without Facebook, I would certainly give it a go. Scrolling through endless statuses about people I barely know or

people I haven't seen for years crying out to the world about whether they're happy / sad / angry / depressed / something in between. It dulls the brain after a while. I've taken to liking Doctor Who meme pages just to brighten up my day when I scroll through the news feed (and yes, I am that sad).

Yet the fact is, if I didn't have Facebook, university would have been a completely different experience. Aside from most of the colleges' updates about upcoming social events happening on their Facebook pages, I probably wouldn't be sitting here writing articles as Comment Editor of SCAN. All the organisation of meetings, generating article ideas, liaising with writers and other members of the editorial team are almost exclusively done through Facebook. During term time there is barely a day go that goes by where I don't have a message in my inbox about something to do with SCAN, or a notification that isn't from one of the SCAN Facebook groups. I'm sure it's the same for all other societies.

So the Global Social Media Impact Study's suggestion that Facebook is

dead and buried for older teenagers surely cannot be the case. The study looked at 16-18 year olds' usage of Facebook in eight EU countries, coming to the conclusion that older teens are moving to social media sites such as Twitter, Snapchat, and WhatsApp as the older generations are beginning to use Facebook more and more. What the study has forgotten, however, is that university students almost have to have Facebook to participate in any social life, or at least this is the case at Lancaster. Every single society that I have come across points students to its' Facebook page for updates about meetings, and even subject areas such as English have their own Facebook groups specifically for students to post about any issues that they might have.

It's true that older teenagers such as ourselves may be migrating more towards Twitter and Snapchat (though as ever, I tend to lag behind when it comes to social media and I've barely got to grips with Twitter, let alone trying to understand the meaning of Snapchat). The world of the selfie means that Snapchat is becoming more and more popular, a way to instantly show friends what you're doing, who you're with, or simply something funny that you've seen. What it doesn't mean, however, is that we've got to the point where we've left Facebook in the dim and distant past; we're simply adding more and more social media channels to our arsenal. If I were to give up Facebook now, my life would be made a hundred times harder. I'd have to rely on people checking their emails to respond to anything I might need to ask them, I'd have to send far more texts than I do already, and I'd simply feel disconnected from the world and university life in general.

The real issue at stake is that social media such as Facebook become ingrained in our lives, to the point where we can't give them up because we can't live without them even if we wanted to. Facebook is anything but dead and buried for university students. We may convince ourselves that we're not dependent on it, or that, as I keep telling myself, we'll deactivate our accounts when we leave university. The truth is though that Facebook is like a drug. Giving it up isn't easy because of that fear that our generation has: that giving up social media like Facebook will leave us adrift and disconnected in the real world of real social lives. A significant proportion of the past three and half years of my life may have been sucked up by Facebook, but I have to be realistic and say to myself that I wouldn't be sitting here writing this article without it. As much as it pains me to say so.



Twitter: Blogging and death threats


 Steve Start
 News Editor

This January, Dr. Claire Hardaker of Lancaster University's Linguistics and English Language Department has been awarded a £200,000 grant by the Economic and Social Research Council. The funds were procured for research into the growing trends of rape and death threats on Twitter, the online micro-blogging site that has proliferated through celebrity culture and since, filtered down into mainstream use.

Since its launch, Twitter has gained an incredible 650 million users and boasts an impressive 135,000 new sign-ups everyday. With this Twitter has been dubbed as the "SMS of the Internet" by traffic site 'alexa.com' who rank it as the 11th most popular site on the web. However, Twitter's recent spike in popularity has seen the site take on a whole new character. In the past, Twitter was the mouthpiece of the celebrity; a site for the oversized egos to do battle for the public's favours, a coliseum of narcissism with a growing and jeering crowd. However, with its increasing usage among the everyday masses, Twitter has seen a transformation of its character to one of a much more malicious and sinister nature. People have begun to abuse the right of free speech to execute threats of slander and death. Two Geordie reprobates, Isabella Sorley, 23, and John Nimmo, 25, were collared and court-summoned late last year for the threats they made toward one Ms. Criado-Perez. The victim of these crimes did little more than promote the equality of women by securing at least one female, Jane Austen, to appear on the new polymer bank notes to be distributed in 2017. To this, Nimmo, brutally inferred that he would rape Criado-Perez to death for her sins whilst Sorley insisted that she would



Photo by Riku Lu

you were going to kill each one of his children before forcing him to commit an act of self-immolation you would be swiftly, duly and rightly arrested. No matter how you deny the malicious intent of your remarks, the recipient may, understandably feel violated by your words.

With the recent high profiling of cyber-bullying and the horrific consequences that can follow, it should be wholly apparent that such comments are simply unacceptable.

Even if such comments are made in delusional jest; death, rape or any other threats of physical violence or blackmail are crudely offensive and downright wrong. If you walked up to the traffic warden in the street and told him that

But are these 'cyber-threats' really something unsettling and new, an archetype of the steely "Instant Messenger" culture? Or is it the way they are received which is becoming outdated? I remember the days of MSN chat, ICQ and pixelated RPGs.

Internet 'trolls' have slipped into the mainstream media only recently, but in the darker shadows of the gamer's world they have existed since the beginning. Why is it only now that they are facing prosecution? Is the enforcement of section 127 (1) (A) of the Communications Act 2003 (the prosecution of public electronic communication network messages which are menacing in character) going to be exclusively for those in high profile positions? And how effective will the police be in prosecuting such offenses? If the statistics are true, Criado-Perez would have faced a colossal 240 death and rape threats, yet only two people have appeared before the courts. This is outrageous. For one of the most personally

directed and growing crimes there seems to almost no real resolution. With increased coverage of NSA spying and Internet paranoia, search engines like duckduckgo, which encrypt your search terms and website history, are becoming evermore popular. Even the innocent among us are deciding to hide our identities with proxies to avoid cookie advertising and search engine profiling. Bitcoin has also surged from the peripheries of drug runners, warlords and hackers to a worldwide-recognised currency that allows you to buy anything with complete anonymity.

So with greater anonymity for the user, are attempts to bring justice to those who are threatened and terrified simply a passing occurrence; a whimsical attempt to show care for the victims of an unfeeling, unregulated instant messaging culture? In the future, will we see greater repercussions for the transgressor, or simply will there be a greater onus on the user to develop a thicker skin?

law concerning smacking. Under current legislation, parents can hit their child if it constitutes "reasonable chastisement" and "does not leave serious marks." Her inability to distinguish between a mild smack and a full on beating does nothing to promote her cause to ban smacking. Any reasonable person would see that this issue should not be conflated; it comes across as an attempt to justify her argument to score political points and to garner public support. Her proclamation that her experience as a teacher effectively undermines her position in this debate.

"Having been a teacher, and never having had an issue where I'd need to use physical punishment, I believe we should move to ban it." Dr. Atkinson's judgement is wholly unfounded. With corporal punishment being banned from schools, her statement, backed up by her experience, should not be used

Smacking should not be banned

Mary Balogun

The Children's Commissioner for the UK, Maggie Atkinson, recently claimed that there should be a total ban for parents smacking their children. This comes as no surprise as the nanny state continues to dictate how parents ought to discipline their children instead of leaving it up to the parents to decide how to raise their children. Speaking to The Independent, Dr. Atkinson's assertion that "it's a moral issue. The morals are that, taken to its extreme, physical chastisement is actually physical abuse and I have never understood the line between one and the other. Better that it were not permitted," does much to blur the distinction between hitting your child to put them in line and actual physical abuse. With this, it is hardly surprising that her comments have generated an expected wave of controversy towards the increased penalisation and criminalisation of a tried and tested method of parenting.

Maggie Atkinson possesses no real understanding of the

a springboard to campaign against an anti-smacking ban in all spheres. Maggie Atkinson's appointment as the Children's Tsar is thoroughly misplaced. There are a lot of other things in the queue," Maggie Atkinson's self-aggrandising holds no relevance in today's political agenda.

Bearing no children of her own, Dr. Atkinson's lecture on "proper" disciplining practices is no better than Channel 4's Supernanny Jo Frost in handing out parenting



Photo by Ricardo Cuppini

them with a belt. Other forms of disciplining included my body going through excruciating pain as I was made to face the wall with my knees bent and arms stretching towards the ceiling. Saddening and agonising as this was, I only ever got this treatment when I was out of line. There is no doubt that Dr. Atkinson would equate this to child abuse, but my parents deployed this short sharp shock to put me in line. If anything, the threats bellowed by both of my parents and the lead up to the smacking was a much more harrowing than the smacking in itself. If the Children's Tsar's campaign is ever to be successful, the role of parents in taking responsibility for their children will be superseded by the state. Current government policy concerning smacking children is clear. "We do not condone violence towards children. However, we do not wish to criminalise parents for issuing a mild smack." Responsible parents will know where the boundaries lie and are all too aware of the psychological impact that a violent smack entails, coupled with possible criminal action if a child is reported to be abused. It is better to leave this issue to the parents and develop their child in way that they deem fit.

Growing up in an African household, physical chastisement is a standard form of parenting.

I can recall stretching my arms out and my dad whipping

No. 10 should let someone else do the Honours

Daniel Snape

For the 97th time, TSO has published the New Year Honours List. Yet again, over a thousand people are to receive a chivalric medal, and perhaps a title, in a lavish ritual with Her Majesty. Again, the prime minister is raising eyebrows with his choice in economists and nightclub owners. And yet again, somebody is bound to turn their decoration down. This begs the question: why is the 97th Honours List so much like the first?

This year's Diplomatic Service and Overseas List sent out honours to sensitive regions like the Falklands, Gibraltar, and Libya, where Brits – and particularly Brits imitating Crusaders – aren't always welcome. Many 'reluctant' knights have ditched their honorifics, or sometimes the whole ceremony, thanks to the Order's military heritage. There is something faintly ridiculous about brand new paraphernalia from a bygone empire, but also insulting for

people who remember fighting for independence. This was obvious enough even when the British Empire was around. The "the" in the Order's adage, "For God and the Empire", was introduced merely to cover empty space on the medals.

Another lingering stench is the cash-for-honours scandal. In 2006, the Jewish MP Lord Levy was charged with doctoring the Honours List to raise funds for New Labour. So many undisclosed party donations were revealed, making Levy so infamous, that Alan Sugar denounced the prosecution for anti-Semitism. Ultimately, Levy was found not guilty. Only one person, Lloyd-George's broker, was ever convicted of trading honours. Despite this, party donors remain over 6,000 times more likely to receive an honour than the average voter. Troublingly, one former Liberal Democrat fundraiser also claims that "every one of the [donors] had done other things for the party."

Some names this year clearly don't represent British interests. Jayne-Anne Gadhia,

CEO of Virgin Money, became a CBE. Despite a patriotic image, her franchise is closely related with tax avoidance. Similarly, Paul Tucker, former Deputy Governor to the Bank of England, became a Knight Bachelor. He was embroiled in the LIBOR scandal, which cost Barclays £290,000,000 in fines, but claims to have done "absolutely nothing wrong."

There are, however, some people who deserve the recognition. Previous recipients have ranged from broadcasters to beekeepers. Our very own Deputy Faculty Manager, Lesley Waite, is receiving a medal for services to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. People who can demonstrate bravery, charity, or humanity without some vested interest should be celebrated. For their sake, reforming the honours would be more help than abolishing them.

First and foremost, decision-making procedures have to

change.

Right now, fortunately, anyone can make a nomination. The ultimate say is the prime minister's, but how his ministers decide their counsel is unclear. Some nominations are investigated by HMRC in order to avoid any post-obit scandals but that clearly doesn't count for much. Some believe that only compliant favourites from the civil service stand a chance. Others think celebrities are singled out on which would make the party most popular.

For some honours, there is no decision to make. Ministerial mandarins who stick around for long enough are rewarded simply for holding the right post. This 'automaticity' is particularly clear when the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George is given to clerks and undersecretaries in the FCO. An old joke in the civil service sums up the grades nicely: CMG stands for "Call Me God", KCMG stands for "Kindly Call Me God", and the

most prestigious title, GCMG, stands for "God Calls Me God".

These concerns were already raised in real parliamentary reports. Former prime minister John Major tried to end the inequality in honours by abandoning the British Empire Medal, or "worker's gong", but ended up eliminating many ordinary people from nominations. There was also talk under Tony Blair of removing the militaristic overtones from honours, for instance, by renaming the Commanders, "Companions". Most importantly, in 2004, they strongly endorsed an independent selection body that uses clear and consistent criteria. The report was ignored.

By listening to their own investigators, the government could ensure that people making the world an easier place to live in are properly recognised and save the ministry the humiliation of trying to pick uncontroversial candidates for a partial regime. That would surely make the Honours List 2015 live up to the name.

We should think about some of the 'real' victims of the immigration hysteria

Beth Evans

Every time I pick up the paper or turn on the television it seems that someone somewhere is claiming that Britain is drowning in a sea of immigrants, who are threatening our economy – not to mention diluting and suppressing our 'cultural values'. Indeed from Nick Robinson's 'Truth About Immigration' to Nigel Farage's regular appearances all over the news stations, barely a day goes by when we can avoid getting cannonballed with statistics and opinions trying to tell us what to think about immigration.

statement in his 1968 speech stating that, due to increases in immigration, the indigenous population will find "their wives unable to obtain hospital beds in childbirth, their children unable to obtain school places, their homes and neighbourhoods changed beyond recognition, their plans and prospects for the future defeated..."

While politicians are busy engaging in heated debates over the ideal immigration policy for Britain (i.e. the one that will get the most votes in 2015),

belong. It is very worrying, it's a big increase. This past year, it really seems to be something children and young people are suffering with."

Additionally, ChildLine has noted a particular increase in Islamophobic incidents, as have the charity Show Racism The Red Card (SRTTC).

James Kingett, of SRTTC, said: "We work with around 50,000 young people every year and issues around Islamophobia have been very prevalent over the past 12 to 18 months. That idea that all Muslims are terrorists or bombers is a particular problem. We're getting that from kids with no Muslim classmates through to those in diverse schools with many Muslims."

The effect of media is also seen as a problem for SRTTC, Kingett adding: "The rhetoric at the moment around immigration is incredibly pervasive. The prominence of the immigration debate may have had a knock-on effect, filtering down in classrooms." He also mentions the impact of far-right organisations such as the English Defence League as a contributing factor in the rise of racist bullying towards young people.

It is clear that debates over immigration are not happening in a vacuum, for British adult eyes only.

Ukrainian protests show the enduring value of the EU

Joanna Gresty

Believe it or not, there are still countries in Europe where protesters enthusiastically wave the EU's star-studded flag rather than burning it in anger. These days Kiev's embattled EuroMaidan is as much the heart of the Union as the Schuman roundabout in Brussels. A refusal to deal with the European confederacy has sparked huge protests and riots on the streets of Ukraine – actions which show the EU has the support of the Ukrainian people, if not its leaders.

The deal was proposed with seemingly good intentions. It sought to improve bilateral trade, streamline industry rules and bring about key democratic reforms in Ukraine not viable before. However, Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich argued after rejecting the offer that the EU hadn't offered enough in financial incentives to secure his signature. That being, it is no secret that Russia has threatened to impose excruciating trade sanctions and colossal gas bills on Ukraine in order to derail the agreement in order to keep its ex-Soviet brother under its thumb.

Many think that Ukraine took President Putin's hostile threats too seriously at the peril of rejecting incredibly beneficial relations with the EU. But Ukraine knows first-hand the consequences of defying the Motherland. Arguments between Naftogaz Ukraine and Russian gas supplier Gazprom have been alive and ongoing since 2005. In 2009, during another round of bitter pricing disputes, Moscow cut off 90 million cubic meters of natural gas per day of exports to Ukraine on New Year's Day. A callously icy winter Ukrainians will not forget easily.

Fast-forward to present day, Gazprom is now offering Ukraine much-needed discounts for its natural gas in exchange for joining a Moscow-led Customs Union. Losing Ukraine to Russia was undoubtedly a blow for the

curtailment of free speech, but variety of opinions and a greater emphasis on fact over conjecture in our media is definitely needed. If not to give us a break from seeing Nigel Farage on our television who knows, it might just might a child's life easier?

European Union. "We may not give in to external pressure, not the least from Russia," EU President Herman Van Rompuy declared in unusually blunt terms after Yanukovich refused to put pen to paper.

This unexpected U-turn from Yanukovich has sparked mass protesting in Kiev and its surrounding area which has no doubt unhappily reminded the President of the 'Orange Revolution' wherein his election victory was overturned because of fraud in favour of his pro-West opponent, Viktor Yushchenko.

As a cause of popular unrest, "not signing a trade agreement" does not quite rank with "stealing an election".

However that Ukrainians protested is an indication not only of their desperation but also of the enduring value of the EU to those outside of it, despite its diminished reputation since the onset of the financial crisis.

Opposition leader and world boxing champion, Vitaly Klitschko, has since called for more protests so the country doesn't return to pre-1991 Eastern Europe. For Ukraine's everyman, free travel and trade with Europe is much more appealing than weekend trips to Siberia. The EU model and its association agreements are being displayed as extremely attractive to the former Soviet country, and indeed to the rest of the world. The European Union have a far better reputation with human rights than Ukraine as well. Protesters marching across Bulgaria's capital are seen carrying slogans "Ukraine is Europe" along with Ukraine's yellow-and-blue flag. The EU claims to be a great and steadfast power, and no doubt it has been in the past. It needs to rediscover the courage to use that power or it will carry on losing desired partners to their anti-Western allies.

It is also evident that the debate is often misrepresented, with politicians such as Nigel Farage taking centre stage in many interviews, while moderate voices are ignored due to fear they may not entice as many viewers.

I'm not calling for a

I'm not calling for a

I'm not calling for a



Ronnie Rowlands Postscript

Many Happy Returns

Well hello-ho-ho to you all, and may your author wish you a new year that is far better than everyone else's. It was one year ago, most verily to this very year, that SCAN Comment got a bad case of gossip wind and belched forth the very first issue of Postscript – the column that makes you wish everything was as interesting as this.

At the time of writing, your much requir'd author has been awake, writing essays for 38 caffeine abusive consecutive hours, but you can and will all be grateful that his fifth and final wind before he hits the sack will blow you senseless. Stop giggling at the back.

In 2013, your author bore you gifts in the form of inside knowledge about University management's mishandling (or, at the very least, poor handling) of degree closures, changes in committee representation, admissions crisis, the college bars, international campuses and oh so much more besides. If Lancaster University joined the rest of the superstitious in making New Year resolutions, then we can be certain that better behaviour and some common courtesy didn't quite make the list.

Still ongoing is the sheepish dilly-dallying over offering total transparency with regards to SCAN's recent breaking news story about the sprawling trail of academic and pastoral issues surrounding one or two of our international campuses. As your author pointed out in a recent article on the SCAN website, pulling up the drawbridge to information and shushing anybody who might try and make a sound when your cracks start to show isn't really the best way to show everyone that you've got control over the situation. It is my hope that, at some point in the not too distant future, some full disclosure will be forthcoming.

Interestingly, at the last meeting of the Senate (as detailed in a previous issue of Postscript – the threads all tie together), the Vice-Chancellor asked for Senate's approval to

Moving along to some general information of interest.

An email detailing drastic changes to the University's current senior management structure (specifically focusing on Pro-Vice Chancellors) was recently sent out to all Lancaster staff. Senators were then contacted with a full outline of the changes, which includes the establishment of a Pro-Vice Chancellor for Education, and changing the role of Pro-Vice Chancellor for Colleges and the Student Experience to the Provost of Student Experience, Colleges and Library, a change which the incumbent postholder was ALLEGEDLY not consulted on.

The new posts are intended to be advertised by the end of the month, and Senators have been asked to email in their opinions rather than on the new structure rather than attend a proper meeting about. No, wait, my mistake – there will be an opportunity to discuss the ins and outs of this drastic, landscape changing restructure at the next physical meeting of the Senate. Which takes place in February. After the posts have been officially advertised.

Are our alien overlords actually interested in YOUR (I mean students AND staff) opinions, or merely in giving of the illusion of doing so?

Moving along.

The role of Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research is, significantly, to be fractionalised to 0.8 FTE, so that the post-holder can remain active in their research. Incumbent post-holder Professor Trevor MacMillan is stepping down from this position to take up a new position as Deputy Vice-Chancellor as Keele University, and your author would like to wish him well in this well deserved new endeavour.

AND SO, TO BED...

search for Professor MacMillan's replacement internally in the first instance; essentially, the role would be open solely to existing Lancaster University academics.

Should a suitable candidate be non-existent amongst our own pool, it was intended that the search would broaden to external candidates.

Senate voted in favour of this, and Senate's vote, you would think, ought to be the University's bond.

According to a recent document circulated to University Senators, it would appear that we are now intending to advertise externally for this post.

More specifically, however, it states; "a similar discussion was held to that at Senate with some voices preferring tensioning of these candidates against an external pool. Hence in view of the number of applicants received, and views expressed by some colleagues about external tensioning it is intended to now advertise the role more widely."

So what do we infer from this? I mean, if Senate specifically and near unanimously voted for external advertising to ensue in the event of the internal candidates being unsuitable, then tensioning internal and external candidates against each other is going against that wish. Or is the University merely trying to spare some feelings here?

Who knows. But this is the sort of leeway and goalpost shifting you can get when you pull a motion out of thin air with no written documentation of its requirements – no accountability. And I BLOODY SAID THAT THIS WOULD HAPPEN.

Well, that's quite enough of that. In the course of wallpapering this most wondrous of pages, your author has thrown up from too much caffeine and enjoyed some rather amusing hallucinations. You're most welcome.

AND SO, TO BED...

You WOT?

Last week, the Students' Union held some Winter Officer Training or other, and by all accounts it was deemed a success. Aside from the usual Team Building Exercises (see: reliving playschool) and Networking Opportunities (see: shallow, soulless and agenda-bent conversation), it was most pleasing to learn that there was a far stronger emphasis on breeding political animalism and activism amongst our new crop of officers, and that encouragement from Full Time Officers to direct the attention of students away from their choice of Lager and towards those responsible for our bleak futures was in abundance. Your author is regretful that he couldn't attend the event.

We need fewer children's entertainers and more furious and competent campaigners on our JCR Execs if LUSU is to continue in the more political, resistant direction it has taken over the past few months, and I am informed that there was an impressive display of the latter category in the newly elected batch.

I'd like to wish all newly elected officers the very best of luck and my highest hope for their terms of office.

A Matter of Principal

LU Text (that's the University press office's outlet) has, for three issues in a row, sent out a call for applicants for the role of Principal of Lonsdale and Bowland Colleges. Having served his full six years, Dr. Keith Davidson is stepping down from his role as Lonsdale College Principal, and Postscript would like to thank him for his service to the College.

However, the wording of all three of these advertisements seems to suggest that Bowland College Principal, Mr. Joe Thornberry, also intends to step down from the role. While he has served his full six years, it is my understanding that Mr. Thornberry has expressed full intention to stand for another run as Bowland Principal.

I just thought I'd make that known, and wish all applicants for the posts good faith and much expectation.

Meanwhile, at UCUM...

Our friends at the UCUM Students' Union are holding a referendum to establish a new constitution and an exciting new initiative to improve student representation. The 'Your Ideas Panel', a proposed body to consist of various elected representatives, is set to encourage greater student engagement by virtue of having a stupid name and having processes More Accessible than its bureaucratically safeguarded and constitutionally legitimated Student Council. Oh, and it is also intended to be "the highest ranking decision making body of the Union under the Trustee Board", which somewhat contradicts the proposed new constitution's ruling that the Student Council shall be the highest ranking decision making body of the Union under the Trustee Board. Bless 'em, they're trying.

And Another Thing...

Fare thee well to Professor Tony Gatrell, who is stepping down as Dean of the Faculty of Health and Medicine. After a long and extensive search, the University has announced a replacement in Warwick's Professor Neil Johnson, so congratulations and all the best to him. As an aside, an awful lot of our recent senior appointments have come from the University of Warwick... Funny, that!

The Times Higher Education Guide has spluttered with fury over a new flurry of Vice-Chancellor pay rises across the higher education sector, while academic staff continue to enjoy freezing their nuts off on the picket line over cumulative pay cuts. If our own Vice-Chancellor had opted to be happy with his lot, you would think that the University would use it as a fantastic PR opportunity, but we can never be sure. So, the question is... Is Lancaster setting an example, or subscribing to the wisdom of crowds? I'll let you know soon.

In the last (not ever!) exciting edition of Postscript, I called out the student who felt it right to direct a rampaging stampede of online bullies in the direction of the Centre for Gender and Womens' Studies Facebook page and suggested that he explain himself in the pages of SCAN. Just a note to say that I haven't forgotten.

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Sport

Sports Editors: Erik Apter & Iain Beddow scan.sports@lusu.co.uk

Michael Schumacher: A man who has lived on the edge

Henry Saker Clark
Deputy Sport Editor

Formula One legend Michael Schumacher suffered life threatening injuries after a skiing accident in the French Alps on December 29th, where he sustained serious head injuries after skiing off piste and falling heavily, colliding his head with a rock. Schumacher, now in an induced coma, is in a stable but critical condition recovering from his injuries. Although in tragic circumstances, response to Michael's accident has signified his role as one of the worlds most successful sportsmen over more than a decade, having established himself as the most successful F1 driver of all time.

The huge impact Schumacher made upon Formula One has been made evident through the vast amount of public support for him and his family during this difficult time. The clinic in which he is being treated is not just surrounded by the world media, but also hundreds of fans who quite poignantly marked Schumacher's 45th birthday on the 3rd of January, with a silent vigil outside the hospital. This action has shown the widespread support for Schumacher's family during this traumatic time, who said they were "deeply grateful" and "utterly overwhelmed" by the action and the worldwide messages of support. Although Schumacher's physical situation has significantly improved, Doctors have still stated that he is "not out of danger" yet.

Skiing with his 14 year old son, Schumacher hit his head whilst on an unmarked slope in the Meribel resort, after skiing off piste. French investigators have stated that Schumacher, a "very good

skier", was travelling at a speed "normal for his terrain". Schumacher, who was known as a driver for being risky and ruthless, has suffered because of neither of these attributes, but for bad luck during leisure.

These events do however raise an important issue—the dangers of early season skiing off piste. As stated by commander Stephane Bozon, "unfortunately it's a season where going off piste is risky, where the rocks are hidden just below the snow."

Fortunately, Schumacher was wearing a helmet, stopping his injuries from being fatal, although skiing fatalities are still a rare occurrence.

Many have recognised the irony that Schumacher had sustained a long career in the very dangerous and high-risk world of Formula One, but suffered horrific injuries when on a family skiing holiday. Schumacher, like most Formula One drivers, retired from the sport but did not give up on life in the fast lane. When asked what gave him a buzz outside of driving he replied, "skydiving" despite having a fear of heights. This is a man whose career was indebted to ruthlessness and risk, and after leaving team Mercedes and his F1 career with it in 2012, did not look likely to put on his slippers and watch countdown. Throughout his career he was accustomed to close shaves, surviving crashes with little mark to show for it in both 1995 and 1998; In 2009 he had to postpone



his initial return to the sport after fracturing his skull in a motorcycle crash. Despite risking his life so regularly, the gravity of his situation now has still brought shock and sadness.

Schumacher's Formula One career can too easily be put down to just statistics. On paper he was the best Formula One driver of all time. He was won more titles than anyone else, recording 7 championship wins over his illustrious career, as well as 91 race wins over his career, 40 more than other driver ever. Many argue that his statistics illustrate a not entirely true picture of his ability, but nevertheless, he was undoubtedly the best driver of his generation.

He was a consistently superb driver, but it is hard to recognise whether he was able to do so because of a lack of quality competition or that he

was too talented to allow for competition. Many argue the prior, although, as is often the case with Formula One, this comes back to tragedy;

In 1994, the year in which Schumacher started to make great waves in the sport, Formula One also suffered its most recent fatality. The death of Ayrton Senna, the driver many consider the best ever (although on paper is far inferior to Schumacher), not only halted the possibility of two of the sport's greatest competitors battling it out, but encapsulated the high-risk and drama surrounding the life of a Formula 1 driver.

The sport's current crop of competitors have taken to social media to show their shock, and support for the Schumacher family. Sebastian Vettel, Romain Grosjean, Felipe Massa and Jenson Button all showing their support, Button

tweeted: "My thoughts are with Michael Schumacher at this time. Michael more than anyone has the strength to pull through this." Michael was often seen as an unpopular competitor due to his ruthless attitude behind the wheel, but clearly garners great respect and admiration from anyone involved in F1.

After his retirement in 2012, he said:

"I prefer to be described as a fighter, someone who never backed down."

All fans of the sport will be hoping he can show this mentality now in his fight for life, as much as he did behind the wheel.

2013-2014: Ashes Series Review

Lawrence Cook

Whilst the two teams were evenly matched on paper, the 2013/2014 Ashes series in Australia was a far cry from England's muted victory in the summer. In a stark contrast, this time it was the Australian team who made England look clueless.

It only took until the first afternoon in Brisbane before things started going wrong for England.

An impressive bowling performance from Stuart Broad put the Aussies on the back foot at 132-6, but with Brad Haddin and Mitchell Johnson at the crease, they reached 295. A disciplined bowling performance from Australia dismissed England for 136, a lead of 159.

Hundreds from Warner and Clarke broke England's spirit as they declared at 401-7 and despite 65 from Alistair Cook at the top of the innings, England were bowled out for 179 having lost 7 wickets for 49 runs. Mitchell Johnson claimed 9 wickets in the match, a completely different bowler from the one who was utterly hopeless just three years ago. Continuing his excellent form throughout the series, he bowled with express pace and his slinging action proved incredibly uncomfortable for England's tail on numerous occasions.

Disappointingly, this was the story for the whole series. Good Australian bowling and English batting collapses. England only reached 300 twice in the series and surprisingly both occurred in the 4th innings of matches, pointing to the fact that the pitches were not hard to bat on, just that the English batsmen got themselves out.

To compare the teams, the Aussies scored 10 hundreds and England only one, courtesy of Durham's Ben

Stokes, in what was his second test match. A player for the future in Ben Stokes and the good form of Stuart Broad were the positives for England in a series that the touring side would like to forget.

In the Bowling department England were completely outclassed.

Despite England's attack being a real asset over the last few years, in this tour they were undisciplined and ineffective. Broad alone rivaled Australia, England couldn't settle on a third seamer and James Anderson bowled uncharacteristically short and without swing, claiming just 14 wickets and average of 43.

Aussies' Mitch Johnson and Ryan Harris averaged 13.97 and 19.31 respectively. There was a difference in the spin department too as Australia attacked an out of form Swann,

whereas Lyon was allowed to bowl by England and took 19 wickets at 29.

This poses the question of tactics - Michael Clarke attacked the England batsmen relentlessly and took the game to the bowlers. On the other hand the England bowlers were impotent and the Cook's ability in the field was poor. He followed the ball with catchers and catches were dropped - Australia took their chances and had a noticeably better attitude to fielding.

It has been said that this series is the end of an era for the English team and I believe this is the case. The Flower-Strauss partnership built a good team that briefly reached number 1 in the world on the back of drubbing India and were widely praised. Since Strauss's retirement however, some of the players entering the side have been, without disrespect, temporary patch jobs and whether Cook and Flower are at the helm or not, a new team needs to be built around younger players like Stokes and Root.

After the first test in

Brisbane, Jonathan Trott left the tour as he suffers from a stress-related illness similar to Marcus Trescothick some years ago. Then, after the third test, Graeme Swann retired from all cricket to compound England's misery. Having never felt fully operational after the elbow injury he sustained, Swann said he couldn't continue and made a brave decision that has to be respected. With Matt Prior dropped for poor form, Jonny Bairstow was given the gloves, but neither man impressed with the bat.

The future of England cricket starts now - there are good young players available, such as Sam Robson, Gary Ballance and Jamie Overton, who will surely feature for England in the future and with the new selection panel, there may be changes in store. It remains to be seen whether Andy Flower will continue as coach or whether divisive batsman Kevin Pietersen will continue to play a role, but if England can develop a cut-throat winning attitude after this atrocious performance, the future could still be bright.



Photo by Dan Heap

ASHES HEAD TO HEAD: Should Cook resign as England Captain?

YES: Erik Apter

As a sports fan I am not a fan of statistics, I feel at times they can distort the truth and flatter to deceive; this one time however, I think statistics tell exactly the story that should be told:

Runs scored: Aus 3189, Eng 2158
Wkts lost: Aus 77, Eng 100
100s scored: Aus 10, Eng 1

These damning statistics accurately display how abysmal England were in a whitewash defeat that is infinitely worse than the one suffered in 2006/07. Alistair Cook and Andy Flower are rightfully the two in the firing line for the whole fiasco, which leads to the question, should Cook resign as captain? Although not a easy decision to make by any stretch of the imagination, I believe Cook should step down.

Don't get me wrong, I'm a huge fan of Alistair Cook.

Cook is one of the most talented batsmen in world cricket and when on form is arguably the best opener in the world. Any batsman who can get to 8000 runs in his career before the great Sachin Tendulkar should rightly be considered a word class batsman, but here's the thing - a great player doesn't make a great captain. Cook is not a great captain.

When it was announced that Cook would be replacing Strauss as England captain I was over the moon and convinced that they'd made the right decision - not just because he was now captain Cook either. Cook looked the natural choice for the captaincy, he'd been a staple of Strauss' successful England side as well as being his opening partner so I was sure that he was being groomed in advance for the role by Strauss and Flower. Perhaps this was the case, but I'm afraid it just hasn't worked out for Cook.

The most frustrating thing from my point of view is how the runs have dried up since becoming captain, as once again the statistics back me up perfectly. Since becoming captain, Cook has averaged over 40 only once in a series and has struggled badly in the last year with his form. One of my favorite memories in Cricket was staying up late in 2010/11 to watch Cook decimate the Australian attack, scoring huge hundreds as the Australians had no idea to get him out. In that series, Cook scored a mammoth 766 runs in just five tests, this time

around he managed a measly 246. Over 500 runs less this time on the same pitches against most of the same bowlers, that's not good enough and Cook will be first to admit it.

His batting woes are just the tip of the iceberg though as Cook's captaincy has been called into question on the field. Unimaginative field placings, misuse of bowlers and a serious lack of a plan B are all valid arguments against England's captain since at Test match level cricket, these things all count.

Micheal Vaughn like Cook, struggled with his batting once he became captain, but he could be forgiven since he was always on his game when in the field. Strauss and



Photo by Rae Allen

Flower seem to have had a symbiotic relationship where they were always on the same wavelength with each other. Cook does not seem to possess any of these qualities and there is little other than a tour of India and a less than convincing Ashes win to prove otherwise.

It would be foolish to blame England's woes entirely at the hands of Cook, our Batsmen failed, our bowlers failed and Flower should take just as much responsibility as Cook. This also culminates in the fact that Cook has had little chance to build his own side and there is now a major rebuilding job because of that. There is also the worrying point that if Cook goes, who else could possibly step in as captain?

This however, does not change my stance. Alistair Cook should go back to basics and do what he does best, what he was put on the earth to do, score a shed load of runs.

NO: Ben Ingham

To be quite frank, the notion of removing Alistair Cook as captain is absurd to me: this isn't football, you don't go chopping and changing the captain as you please. Cook isn't the most positive captain when it comes to field changes, but if your bowlers are bowling well and your batters are scoring runs, you don't need wacky field placings. Shane Warne has been quick to credit Michael Clarke with his 'aggressive' captaincy style; sticking two mid wickets in to Kevin Pietersen isn't great captaincy at all; it's stupid

batting from one of England's senior players. My girlfriend who thinks DRS is a disease could set that field to

class especially his influence over Ian Botham, but he wasn't good enough to be in the team as a player - Cook is.

I will admit, Cook has not only been out of form for this Ashes series, but also the previous series in England. But any player who struggles against a bowling attack is unlikely to turn around that form if you're thrust against the same opposition less than three months later are they?

With England struggling with the ball, Cook spent hour after hour in the field, then had to go out and open the batting - a job which requires more concentration than many are capable of doing anyway.

Picking Joe Root in the summer and dispatching of Nick Compton, only to play 'musical batting positions' with him to the point where he is dropped from the last test is embarrassing. The selectors dug the grave for Cook and his men when they excluded Compton, Onions, and Taylor from the tour.

All the batsmen have to be under scrutiny and only Stuart Broad and Ben Stokes seem to have come out of this tour in any kind of positive light. Blaming Cook because the batsmen failed and the bowlers bowled badly isn't fair. The people calling for his head are probably the same ones who called for KP to be axed and then welcomed him back when he tore India apart last year.

If you're still struggling to forgive 'Chef' for his failings in the last few months, then I ask you this: who do you bring in as captain?

Pietersen is a walking stick of dynamite, just waiting to go off in the England dressing room. Ian Bell has had a torrid series compared to the summer and has never been considered even for the vice captaincy role, so he must be crossed off the list.

Joe Root has to focus on securing a place in the team, as does Michael Carberry if they persist with him. Matt Prior cannot buy a run after being named England's player of the year last spring.

That leaves James Anderson and Stuart Broad. Anderson, I think we can all agree, has too be rested for a while while Stuart Broad's hot headed temper must rule him out also (not to mention his terrible use of the DRS system). There is no viable alternative.

Cook is not 'the best of a bad bunch' he's the best man for the job. Full stop.

Pietersen. Cook's captaincy is much like his batting: calm, collected, not flashy by any means, but it gets the job done. His management of integrating that aforementioned walking ego (Pietersen) back into the team following 'Text-Gate' during South Africa's last visit here. The role of a captain in cricket, especially international cricket, is so huge it can bring the best out of you, but it can and will eventually ruin you. Not only do you effectively manage your team on the field for five days, it's the off field management that's so vital with a cricket captain. Containing all the egos, knowing when someone needs a word in their ear, or knowing when not to say something to someone, it's an art that few are blessed with: and that's just the off field aspect. Mike Brearley, is undoubtedly one of England's best captains in my eyes; his man management was world

Premier League mid-season review

James Benson

Whilst the first 20 games of the Premier League campaign usually serve as a measure of things to come, this season has been one of the closest ever and there have been surprises week-upon-week. With a top 6 separated by just 8 points, one could feasibly argue that any of those sides within it has the potential to mount a charge for the title, such has been the nature of the league thus far.

The current leaders, Arsenal, are seeking to win their first trophy since 2005 and were the league's best performing outfit in 2013, though their chances of ending the drought will surely have been adversely affected by the loss of Theo Walcott for the remainder of the season. Manchester City on the other hand boast a squad with real depth, allowing them to cope with injuries, and are in fantastic form, unbeaten in 9 league games at the time of writing. Their strengths are mirrored by José Mourinho's Chelsea, though a lack of goals for his side's strikers may have a telling factor in their pursuit of the Premier League crown, which they won with the Portuguese at the helm in 2005 and 2006.

Liverpool currently occupy 4th position and probably would have taken that spot at the end of the season had it been offered to them in August.

However, the form of Luis Suárez in particular has propelled them in to title contention, whilst the return of Daniel Sturridge from injury will only strengthen the belief that the Anfield side could be the champions of England for the first time since 1990. Fellow Merseyside club Everton have performed above expectations too and find themselves in 5th place ahead of the derby with their arch-rivals at the end of January. Roberto Martínez



Photo by Ronnie Macdonald

has built upon the work of his predecessor and will be hopeful that his side can repeat the feat of the 2004-5 season when Everton qualified for the Champions League.

Whilst their North London adversaries have excelled in the Premier League this season, Tottenham Hotspur have struggled to reach anticipated heights. Though they lost star player Gareth Bale to Real Madrid, the squad was reinforced with over £100m of new signings, however many of the recruits have failed to perform. A revival looks set to be taking shape under André Villas-Boas' replacement Tim Sherwood; though ground lost earlier in the campaign could cost Spurs their hopes of achieving Champions League qualification.

Perhaps the most surprising performance or lack thereof, this season has been

that of reigning champions Manchester United.

Whilst the departure of Sir Alex Ferguson was bound to cause disruption at the club, few could have anticipated David Moyes would find it so difficult to follow in his footsteps. A string of uncharacteristic home defeats surmise the difficult transition period and it could be some time before the Old Trafford side return to the form that saw them win 13 of the first 21 Premier League titles.

At the other end of the table, there are a number of sides who could only dream of experiencing the purported issues that Manchester United are going through. Sunderland, bottom of the table at Christmas, will be hoping to replicate the achievement of West Bromwich Albion who are the only team to survive that fate in Premier League history. However, the side's lack of consistency looks set to scupper any improvement

made under Gus Poyet who was left with a mismatched and disillusioned squad by Paolo Di Canio.

West Ham United likewise are a side who will be seeking improvement in the new year as they strive to propel themselves up the Premier League table. Their cup exits could prove to be a blessing in disguise, as the club will be able to focus solely on their league campaign, whilst the return to fitness of record signing Andy Carroll will be a boost to squad morale.

Newly promoted Crystal Palace, currently at the foot of the table, will be hoping that Tony Pulis' experience will be enough to guide them away from relegation.

The addition of new recruits in January may also prove vital, which could be the case at fellow strugglers, Cardiff City too. Fulham, in the Premier League since 2001, should have enough about themselves to avoid a return to The Championship, though René Meulensteen's side must become more consistent to ensure survival for a 12th straight season.

Aston Villa and Norwich must improve in this respect too, to avoid being pulled in to the mire.

Ultimately the fate of the Premier League will be settled in the forthcoming 16 games, though one would expect Manchester City to regain the title with Arsenal as runners-up, whilst Cardiff City, Sunderland and West Ham United look to be in danger of falling through the league's trap door.

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Van Gerwen victory could herald a new era of darts

Erik Apter

The 2014 PDC World Darts Championship final; as the unmistakable figure of Michael Van Gerwen stepped up to the board with a trademark snarl etched upon his face, there was most definitely an air of expectancy around Alexandra Palace. The bald headed Dutchman raced away and despite a blip later in the match, he eventually found himself with a checkout to win the match.

Fittingly Van Gerwen finished the match with double top, exactly where he is in his career right now. After going one better than last year to become the 2014 PDC World Darts Champion, the scowling Dutchman became the smiling Dutchman and with just cause. On the back of his 2013 Premier League win, Van Gerwen can now claim to be the number one darts player in the world and justifiably so.

This could just be the start however, at 24 Van Gerwen is the youngest ever PDC World Champion and clearly has all the skill and determination to compete at the top level for many years. There is however, a difference between being a top player and being Phil "the power Taylor", who takes sporting dominance to an entirely new level.

Despite his shock second round exit at the hands of Michael Smith, Phil Taylor is still the ultimate darts player and the one to beat. Defeating a rising Van Gerwen in the final last year gave Taylor a record 16th world championship, re-affirming his status as the greatest darts player ever by a distance. So could Van Gerwen even come close to Taylor's continuing legacy?

Well for one, for Van Gerwin to ever to be considered a true world number one in this era he must defeat a Taylor who's playing well or even one who simply looks enthused

again. Taylor's consistent dominance means that for so long potential challengers have come and gone without ever leaving a lasting legacy, even the likes of Raymond Van Barneveld never quite achieved what there career should have.

Van Gerwen does, I think, have everything in his arsenal to in the future, be considered one of the all time greats, especially when you consider the Dutchman is just 24 years of age. He not only beats opponents but dominates them and always looks capable of a moment of magic, a prime example being his perfect 17 darts in last year's championship. The matter of whether he does go on to become a dominant world number one all depends on his commitment to darts in the future.

Van Gerwen's rise to the top could also provide a spark to the dejected looking 16 time former champion, who once again looks disillusioned



with the world of darts after his enormous successes. The Dutchman could once again ignite "the power" to claim back his title as world number one and for the first time in a number of years, offer him some real competition. The classic Barneveld vs Taylor rivalry could once again be a possibility through the new,

upcoming Dutchman.

The rota for next year's Premier League Darts has been announced and seen some notable omissions such as James Wade. Van Gerwen will be there however, to defend his title against the likes of Phil Taylor to prove that he is indeed as "mighty" as his name suggests.

Tennis takes centre stage in Australian summer of sport

Iain Beddow
Sport Editor



Melbourne hosts the year's first sporting treat, welcoming the finest tennis players from around the world, all vying for the year's first grand slam; the Australian Open.

Following Novak Djokovic's curtain drawing victory of the 2013 season in London, narratives from both men's and women's tennis duly set-up an exciting year ahead: Is Federer past it? Will Serena stride toward another year of domination? Can Murray build on two impressive seasons? And what impact will prominent new coaches have?

Last year's reigning champions Djokovic and Victoria Azarenka will seek to continue their love of the tournament, as they hunt down what would be their 4th and 3rd consecutive titles respectively. The Serbian would look the more likely to further his Melbourne monopoly, as a favourable draw paves the way toward a 'relatively' easy route to the final. In contrast, despite the Belarusian's recent history she will have to be at her tiptop best to defeat the sport's overwhelming power and current no 1, Serena Williams.

Beneath the dominant force of the hard-hitting American, the women's game offers a host of names waiting in the wings for the American to slip-up or let her fiery - at times - temperament get the better of her. Names such as the aforementioned Azarenka, the returning Maria Sharapova, Sabine Lisicki, Li Na and Petra Kvitova do pose sufficient threats. However, whether they can be deemed strong enough for Williams to relinquish lifting a 6th Australian Open on January 25th ...will be another story.

Djokovic's main rival can be seen in the man lying just above him in the rankings, Rafa Nadal. The athletic Spaniard will be gunning to justify his

no 1 spot by asserting himself in Melbourne for the first real time, since 2009 - when he last won there.

After being dealt a testing draw, Nadal will have to potentially face Federer and Murray before reaching the final which could take its toll if he were to then face Djokovic in the final.

British man of the moment Andy Murray, following his inevitable SPOTY success, faces an uphill task to emulate last year's runner-up spot.

While hard courts are

regarded his favoured surface, I believe due to his recent back surgery and subsequent lack of match fitness, the Australian Open will prove too soon an event to stake a legitimate claim for. Anything greater than a quarter-final birth can be considered a success for the man from Dunblane, as retaining the Wimbledon crown will be thought of as a more realistic target than going one step further in Oz this year.

Roger Federer has found himself outside the top 5 world rankings for the first time in ten years - stark evidence of the Swiss' disappointing form of late. Recent losses to Lleyton Hewitt and the noticeable fact he hasn't won a major since 2012, compound calls from the stands of potential retirement. The sport's biggest gentleman, now aged 33, is still enjoying his game and undoubtedly remains a pleasure to watch. While his stamina and killer

instinct seem to be fading, let's celebrate one of the sport's greatest ever players - before he and his luscious backhand are gone for good.

Interestingly old enemies shall lock horns once again albeit off the court, after Federer and Djokovic both announced new coaches to their ranks in recent months - Stefan Edberg and Boris Becker will join the Swiss' and Serb's teams respectively.

Both retired with 6 grand slams, 2 of which were in the Australian open, but this time the old foes shall be strategists plotting the successes of the players they represent, hoping to create an instant impact in Australia. With no prior coaching experience at the top level, the pair will draw on their own careers as well as Ivan Lendl for inspiration, who joined Murray in 2011 and since has won 2 grand slams with the Scot.

At the time of writing, the competition had yet to start, now well into its second week I predict this year's winners shall be the usual suspects: Djokovic and Williams. If both were to do so, Djokovic would become the first man in the open-era to hold the title five times and Williams would move tied second place on 18, along with Martina Navratilova and Chris Evert, on the all-time (open-era) list of grand slam winners.



Photo by Paul Radici



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LUDanS celebrate a successful first term

Sophie Inkster

Sophie Eyles, and was awarded first place.

Lancaster University Dance Society (LUDanS) has had a fantastic first term with a number of performances, including LUSU's Overseas event, and the Barnardo's charity fundraiser. The society has had a number of new members across all years, with many new additions participating in the bigger competitions.

At the end of November, the team auditioned competition squads at the 'Durham Dance Fusion' event, taking with them seven teams including; intermediate/advanced jazz, intermediate/advanced ballet, contemporary, tap, street as well as two solo pieces. The society did well, placing in six out of their nine entries and getting off to an excellent start for the year.

Stand out performers could be seen in the ballet and jazz routines as well as a street dance performance based on a classic romantic comedy.

The intermediate ballet was choreographed by Kate Nelson and

This was equalled in the intermediate jazz which was choreographed by LUDanS President Siana French – both great achievements. The street squad performed an impressive dance based on the film Mean Girls, which was choreographed by Beth Hallet and Marco Choi being awarded second place.

Others within the society deserving of a special mention included both the advanced ballet, choreographed by Charlotte Rutherford, which proved a complex piece featuring six dancers, and also the tap which was a lively number choreographed by Jenny Tait. Both routines placed with the former placing third and the tap second. Finally, LUDanS' contemporary piece, whilst not placing, garnered positive feedback from the judges which was choreographed by Laura Whitehouse and Vicky Wade-Matthews.

Everyone who competed at Durham did a fantastic job, demonstrating the society's strength. With the next event taking place in Manchester on



Photo by LUDanS

the 15th of February just after Valentine's Day, this strong start to the year will hopefully continue well into 2014 as the society prepares for the 50th Roses in May.

The reputed annual show of the LUDanS will take place on March the 8th and 9th, featuring dancers performing routines shown throughout the year at the events they have already taken place in.

As well as the annual show, LUDanS will be collaborating with University of Lancaster Music Society (ULMS) and the University Theatre Group (LUTG) in a production of 'The Producers', which will be on the evenings of the 25th, 26th, 27th, and 28th of March.

President Siana French spoke highly of the society, telling SCAN: "The society had an amazing first term.

We've had more people than ever at our new development classes, which has given loads of beginners the chance to get involved. Our competition squad have out done themselves once again. This is the best result we have ever had and so I'm really looking forward to what 2014 holds both for Comp Squad and for our 6th annual show. I'm determined to make it the best year yet!"

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Deputy Sport Editor Henry Saker-Clark talks about Michael Schumacher's defining career after his tragic skiing accident
- Sport go head to head as to whether England cricket captain Cook should be fired after Ashes defeat
- James Benson gives us the Premier League round-up

AND MUCH MORE.

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