NEWS IN BRIEF

A fifth University nursery will be opening this summer in the Triangle Building on the Old Road Campus. The nursery, which will be managed by nursery provider Bright Horizons, will offer 98 full-time equivalent places and open from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, for 50 weeks of the year. Staff on the Childcare Services waiting list have been contacted and offered the option of changing one of their nursery choices to the Triangle. Online applications for new applicants will be available shortly at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/childcare/nurseryinformation.

The recently launched Oxfordshire Green Paper (www.ox.ac.uk/oxgreenpaper) looks ahead 20 years and asks how the county, which already attracts new businesses, serious investment and the world’s best and brightest students and researchers, can build on its status as one of Europe’s leading ‘innovation engines’. The signatories, who comprise leading figures from local government, education, health, science, enterprise and innovation, hope the paper will stimulate discussion about how to make Oxfordshire even more dynamic and offer an even better quality of life.

A new shuttle bus service, linking the Harwell Science and Innovation Campus with the University of Oxford and the Science & Technology Facilities Council, will at first only be open to University staff and students and to Harwell Campus staff. Details about the service, including timetables and fares, will be available shortly at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/estates/ourservices/travel.

What’s the key to success for women who work in science? A new website launched last month aims to support women making career decisions by offering them the opportunity to delve into the various experiences of successful female scientists at Oxford. The collection of 39 video interviews tell an inspiring story of an ongoing culture shift for women working in science, where – according to those interviewed – the work is fun, interesting and exciting. Visit www.womeninscience.ox.ac.uk to find out more.

The Radcliffe Science Library has launched its third Parallel Universe poetry competition. Science and Medicine is the theme for submissions and the competition is open to all members of the University – students, staff and alumni – until 19 September 2016. The ten winning poems will be displayed around the library and featured on the library’s website. The winners will also be invited to a reception, launch and reading in October. For more details visit www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/science.

Need an event venue? The University’s Facilities Management team has launched a new website bringing together information for five of their managed sites and the services that they offer. The Examination Schools, Sheldonian Theatre, William Osler House, St Luke’s Chapel and the University Club are suitable for a variety of meetings, conferences, receptions and dinners and can cater for between 10 and 750 guests. Visit www.venues.ox.ac.uk for more details.

Widening the range of people represented in portraits across the University is the aim of a new project, Diversifying Portraiture, supported by the Vice-Chancellor’s Diversity Fund. The first stage has been to find and highlight existing portraits, illustrating the diversity of the University’s past and present. Among the 250 highlighted to date is the portrait of Marie Beazley (left), wife of Oxford archaeologist Sir John Beazley. Marie (1885–1967), a skilled photographer and artist, who was known for her imposing and sometimes eccentric presence in the University’s cultural and social life, took many of the pictures now in the Beazley archive.

In the second phase, 25 new portraits are to be commissioned and exhibited. Staff, students and alumni will be invited to nominate people to be the subjects of this new set of commissions. Subjects should be living at the time of nomination, have a significant link to the University, and have made a major contribution to Oxford or to the wider world. To find out more visit www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/impractice/portraiture or email equality@admin.ox.ac.uk and watch out for the call for nominations which will be sent out soon.

From top: Nursery news; building a better county; all aboard the Science Shuttle; hold your event here.
Virtual reality can help treat severe paranoia by allowing people to face situations they fear, an Oxford University study with patients from the Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust has found. The simulations of a crowded lift and a tube journey allowed people to learn that situations they feared were actually safe. About 1–2% of people have severe paranoia, typically as a central feature of mental health disorders such as schizophrenia. However, coping strategies – like avoiding eye contact – actually reinforce paranoid fears. Professor Daniel Freeman’s team at the Department of Psychiatry wanted to test whether patients could ‘relearn’ that a situation was safe, by experiencing it without using their defence behaviours. Virtual reality was used to overcome the intolerable anxiety of attempting this in real life. Over 50% of patients who fully tested out their fears by lowering their defences no longer had severe paranoia at the end of the testing day.

Oxford scientists have ranked the world’s most ‘popular’ reptiles, revealing the species that capture the public’s imagination and providing valuable data towards the debate surrounding conservation priorities. Using data taken from Wikipedia, the research team – comprising zoologists, geographers and computer scientists – found that fearsome species such as the Komodo dragon, saltwater crocodile and king cobra were of greatest interest to website users. Study author John C Mittermeier, a DPhil candidate at Oxford, says: ‘There is a debate in conservation as to whether the fact we like a particular species justifies conserving it, regardless of its ecological importance. But although this idea of some species being “culturally valuable” has been around for some time, it has been difficult to measure and define.’

New research by Oxford economist Dr Climent Quintana-Domeque has measured the ‘wealth effect’ of upgrading infrastructure in poorer parts of cities. Revamps, such as surfacing roads and connecting them to the city grid, dramatically push up land and property prices. The study, published in the journal The Review of Economics and Statistics, shows that in just three years (the period for the work to be completed), prices for plots of land connected by resurfaced roads rose by an estimated 72% when compared with similar plots connected by dirt tracks, based on real estate agents’ appraisals. The study in Mexico also shows that residents who benefited from the higher property and land values could obtain more credit for spending on home improvements, cars and household goods.

Poorer patients and those who require surgery at weekends are less likely to receive a total hip replacement (THR), despite clear national guidelines. A team from the Nuffield Department of Orthopaedics, Rheumatology and Musculoskeletal Sciences found that just 32% of those eligible for a THR actually got one. 42% of those undergoing the procedure did not meet eligibility criteria. Being admitted at the weekend or living in a poorer area reduced the odds of patients receiving the operation. The team say the operation cannot be performed by all orthopaedic surgeons, so the availability of suitably experienced staff might explain the reduced use of the procedure at weekends. However, this does not account for more deprived patients being less likely to get a THR.

Oxford academics and students have reconstructed a 15th-century church service using music which they believe has not been heard or studied since the Reformation. Earlier this month, Dr Matthew Cheung Salisbury of the Faculty of Music performed the piece with members of the choir at Worcester College in St Helen’s Church in Ranworth, Norfolk. It is believed that this is the church in which the original composition was intended to be sung. Dr Salisbury edited the manuscript, which contained music from the Middle Ages, after taking digital images of it using equipment from the University’s Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music. ‘Only rarely do we have the opportunity to study and perform liturgical music in the actual venue for which it was designed,’ he says.
**PEOPLE AND PRIZES**

**Dapo Akande**, Professor of Public International Law, has been appointed as a member of the African Group for Justice and Accountability, an independent group of 12 senior African experts on international criminal law and human rights, which supports efforts to strengthen justice and accountability measures in Africa.

**Alexander Betts**, Professor of Forced Migration and International Affairs and Director of the Refugee Studies Centre at the Oxford Department of International Development, has been named one of the Young Global Leaders – Class of 2016 by the World Economic Forum.

**Stephen Broadberry**, Professor of Economic History, has been appointed as President of the Economics History Society for 2016 to 2019.

**Andrew Carr**, Nuffield Professor of Orthopaedics, has received the Arthur Steindler Award of the Orthopaedic Research Association for his outstanding global contribution to orthopaedic research. His work focuses on improving evidence for the effectiveness of surgery generally and translating new surgical techniques and implants into the clinic.

**Liam Dolan**, Sherardian Professor of Botany, has been appointed to the Board of Trustees of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

**Horst Eidenmüller**, Freshfields Professor of Commercial Law, has been elected as an ordinary member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts.

**John Geddes**, Professor of Epidemiological Psychiatry, has won the 2016 European College of Neuropsychopharmacology Award in recognition of his ground-breaking work on the psychopharmacology of bipolar disorder.

**Keith Gull**, Principal of St Edmund Hall and Professor of Molecular Biology, is to be awarded the 2017 Biochemical Society Award. His research focuses on the biochemistry of the microtubule cytoskeleton, cell motility and division; he was also commended for his service on government, learned society and medical charity committees and his interests in graduate education.

**Peter Neary**, Professor of Economics, has become President-Elect of the Royal Economic Society, and will serve as President 2017–18. Founded in 1890, the society is the premier representative body for UK economists in academia and in the public and private sectors.

**Professor Louise Richardson**, the Vice-Chancellor, has been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. The academy, one of the oldest learned societies and independent policy research centres in the US, convenes leaders from the academic, business and government sectors to respond to the world’s most pressing challenges.

**Dr Clive Siviour**, associate professor in Engineering Science, has received the 2016 JSA Young Investigator Lecturer award from the Society of Experimental Mechanics for ‘outstanding early-career contributions to experimental mechanics’.

**Dr Rob Style**, of the Mathematical Institute has been awarded the 2016 Adhesion Society Young Scientist Award for his fundamental contributions to our understanding of the coupling of surface tension to elastic deformation.

**Sir Andrew Wiles**, Royal Society Research Professor of Mathematics, has been awarded the 2016 Abel Prize, regarded as mathematics’ equivalent of the Nobel Prize, ‘for his stunning proof of Fermat’s Last Theorem by way of the modularity conjecture for semistable elliptic curves, opening a new era in number theory’.

Widely regarded by mathematicians as seemingly intractable, the theorem formulated by French mathematician Pierre de Fermat in 1637 states that there are no whole number solutions to the equation $x^n + y^n = z^n$ when $n$ is greater than 2.

Sir Andrew, who was fascinated by the equation from the age of 10, announced he had found a proof in 1993 that combined three complex mathematical fields – modular forms, elliptic curves and Galois representations – and in so doing created entirely new directions in mathematics.

**Bodley Medal for Mary Beard**

Classicist and TV historian Professor Mary Beard has been awarded the Bodley Medal, the Bodleian Libraries’ highest honour, which recognises people who have made outstanding contributions to areas with which the Bodleian is closely connected.

Professor Beard holds a chair of classics at the University of Cambridge and is classics editor of the Times Literary Supplement. She is well known for her numerous books and television documentaries on the classical period including the Wolfson Award-winning book Pompeii: The Life of a Roman Town and her BBC series Meet the Romans with Mary Beard.
NEW FELLOWS OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY

This year’s new Fellows of the Royal Society include seven Oxford academics – more than any other university.

Steven Balbus, Savilian Professor of Astronomy and Head of Astrophysics, is distinguished for studies of astrophysical fluids. He established how accretion discs work and showed how an accretion disc can enter a limit cycle in which periods of high and low viscosity alternate. He also showed that restriction of heat conduction to magnetic field lines creates buoyant instabilities and by using ‘residual entropy’ gained insight into the sun’s convective zone and analytic fits to the results of helioseismology.

Martin Bridson, Whitehead Professor of Pure Mathematics and Head of the Mathematical Institute, has played a leading role in establishing geometric group theory as a major field and co-authored the seminal text on spaces of non-positive curvature. He has provided deep insights into the nature of the word problem for finitely presented groups and has proved remarkable structure theorems for residually-free groups.

Bill David, Professor of Chemistry, is a leader in the experimental, computational and theoretical development of neutron and X-ray powder diffraction techniques, and has made substantial contributions across a broad range of materials research from lithium batteries and high-temperature superconductors to fullerenes and pharmaceutical compounds. He pioneered time-of-flight neutron powder diffraction, and is a key figure in establishing powder diffraction as a routine technique for the structure determination of molecular compounds. His materials research focuses on low-carbon chemical energy storage.

Marcos du Sautoy, Simonyi Professor for the Public Understanding of Science and Professor of Mathematics, is one of science’s most successful ambassadors, communicating the importance, excitement and relevance of both mathematics and science to the general public worldwide. His mathematics research straddles areas such as group theory, number theory, model theory and algebraic geometry, and has completely transformed the study of zeta functions of groups.

Artur Ekert, Professor of Quantum Physics at the Mathematical Institute, is a pioneer of quantum information science. His invention of entanglement-based quantum cryptography triggered an explosion of research efforts worldwide and continues to inspire new research directions. As well as discovering that Bell’s inequalities can be used to test for eavesdropping, he has contributed to many of the most important advances in the foundations and experimental realisations of quantum communication and computation.

Antony Galione, Chair of Pharmacology and Head of the Department of Pharmacology, has transformed our understanding of calcium signalling pathways. He established the concept of multiple calcium mobilising messengers, and identified their target channels and organelles. He showed that cyclic ADP-ribose regulates calcium-induced calcium release and globalisation of calcium signals, and that NAADP is a ubiquitous trigger for initiating and coordinating calcium signals. By developing novel pharmacological, molecular and physiological approaches, he has demonstrated that these novel messengers selectively control many fundamental cellular processes.

Gil McVean, Professor of Statistical Genetics and Director of the Li Ka Shing Big Data Institute, is distinguished for research into the nature and causes of molecular genetic variation. He developed a sophisticated statistical method for estimating fine-scale recombination rates from data documenting genetic variation and produced the first fine-scale genetic maps of the human genome. He has made substantial contributions to our understanding of mutation and natural selection, and played a central role in the HapMap and 1,000 Genomes projects.

VIETNAM HONOURS MEDICAL COLLABORATORS

Two Oxford tropical diseases experts, Professors Peter Horby (on the left) and Heiman Wertheim, have been awarded the Vietnam Ministry of Health’s Medal for the People’s Health at a ceremony in Hanoi celebrating 10 years of collaboration between the National Hospital of Tropical Diseases and the Oxford University Clinical Research Unit (OUCRU).

Professor Horby, who is now the director of the Epidemic diseases Research Group Oxford (ERGO), started working with Vietnamese colleagues to investigate and control the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003, followed by avian influenza A/H5N1 in 2004. He established OUCRU at the National Hospital for Tropical Diseases in Hanoi in January 2006, and opened research facilities at the National Institute for Hygiene and Epidemiology in 2007.

Professor Wertheim continued to build on the unit’s successes, expanding and improving its laboratory facilities. As well as focusing on respiratory infections, he was instrumental in highlighting the incidence of antimicrobial drug resistance in the area and set up a national surveillance network for antibiotic use and resistance in Vietnam and for hospital-acquired infections on 16 Vietnamese intensive care units.
Eight Oxford medical researchers have been elected as Fellows of the Academy of Medical Sciences.

Christopher Butler, Professor of Primary Care and Clinical Director of the University of Oxford Primary Care Clinical Trials Unit, researches common infections, especially the appropriate use of antibiotics and antibiotic resistance, and health behaviour change.

Martin Maiden, Wellcome Trust Senior Research Fellow and Professor of Molecular Epidemiology, studies the population biology and evolution of bacterial pathogens, aiming to translate the insights obtained into benefits for human health.

Georg Holländer, Hoffmann and Action Professor of Paediatrics and Head of the Department of Paediatrics, studies the development and function of the immune system in health and disease.

Timothy Maughan, Professor of Clinical Oncology and Deputy Director of the CRUK/MRC Oxford Institute for Radiation Oncology, undertakes research on the treatment of patients with colorectal cancer. He is also involved in clinical trial design and execution in gastrointestinal cancers.

Sarah Lamb, Kadoorie Professor of Trauma Rehabilitation and Co-Director of the Oxford Clinical Trials Research Unit, undertakes research focused on clinical trials and medical statistics. She is chief investigator for a number of trials of rehabilitation interventions.

Gil McVean, Professor of Statistical Genetics, Head of Bioinformatics and Statistical Genetics and Director of the Big Data Institute, investigates several areas in the analysis of genetic variation, combining the development of methods for analysing high-throughput sequencing data, theoretical work and empirical analysis.

Andrew Pollard, Professor of Paediatric Infection and Immunity, Director of the Oxford Vaccine Group and Honorary Consultant Paediatrician, is currently working on clinical trials of new and improved vaccines for children, invasive bacterial diseases in children in Nepal, studies of cellular and humoral immune responses to glycoconjugate vaccines, and development of a serogroup B meningococcal vaccine.

Elizabeth Robertson, Professor of Developmental Biology and Wellcome Trust Principal Research Fellow, is using mouse genetics to investigate the key signalling cues and transcriptional regulators governing cell fate decisions in the developing mammalian embryo.

**UNIVERSITY FILMS**

**WIN AWARDS**

Two University-related films have won national prizes.

*Oak Tree: Nature’s Greatest Survivor,* which was conceived by Dr Keith Kirby of Plant Sciences and filmed at the University’s Wytham Woods, has won the Science and Natural History Programme Award at the 2016 Royal Television Society awards.

The film – a BBC4 documentary made by Furnace Productions – focuses on a year in the life of an oak tree, which has been flourishing in the woods for around 400 years. The Wytham team was involved in setting up and maintaining the time-lapse cameras that filmed for the entire period.

In addition, a short film about West African soldiers in World War II, directed by Dr Oliver Owen *(on the left)* of the Oxford Department of International Development, has been named best documentary at the Imperial War Museum’s 2016 Short Film Festival.

*The Forgotten Army of WWII: West Africa’s Soldiers in Burma* was made for the *Guardian* and tells how some 90,000 West African soldiers, the majority of them Nigerians, were deployed to Southeast Asia after 1943 as part of the British army’s 81st and 82nd (West Africa) Divisions. But while the role of Indians and Gurkhas in the campaign to drive the Japanese out of Burma is well known, the role of their African colleagues has never been fully recognised.

The film won the Annie Dodds Award for Best Documentary and the award for Best Use of IWM Archive Material at the film festival.

**RIBA RECOGNISES EXCELLENCE**

The Blavatnik School of Government, the Weston Library, the Investcorp Building at St Antony’s College *(pictured)*, Wolfson College’s Academic Wing and the Ruskin School of Art’s site in east Oxford have all been given regional awards for architectural excellence by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA).

The Weston Library, designed by WilkinsonEyre, was named Regional Building of the Year; the Blavatnik School, designed by Herzog & de Meuron, won Regional Client of the Year; and Wolfson’s Academic Wing, by Berman Guedes Stretton, won the Conservation Award.

The buildings are also eligible for RIBA national awards, to be announced on 23 June.
SOMERVILLE SHINES

Two members of Somerville’s housekeeping staff have received awards from Activate Enterprise (an organisation which delivers training, apprenticeships and consultancy).

Oluwaseun (Seun) Alabi, Somerville’s Housekeeping Supervisor, who manages a team of over 20 housekeeping staff, was named Apprentice of the Year out of 1,500 learners in the Thames Valley. She was commended for being ‘highly motivated to achieve her apprenticeship – she applies 100% to whatever she needs to do and has worked hard to achieve Level 2 ICT Functional Skills.’

Teresa Walsh, Somerville’s Housekeeping Manager, was chosen out of 1,000 employers in the Thames Valley as Employer of the Year. She was nominated for the excellent support she offers her staff, taking great interest in their progress and seeing employees completing courses as positive for both the learner and the employer.

LIFESAVING LUNCH BREAK

Andrew Waligo, who works in the Facilities and Events team in the Examination Schools, was last month awarded a Royal Humane Society resuscitation award for saving a man’s life.

As he was walking back to work after a lunch break last August, Mr Waligo noticed a man desperately trying to wake the occupant of a parked car. Concerned, he introduced himself as a first aider. ‘I was shocked to see the colour of the man in the car,’ he says, ‘so I immediately asked a passerby to help me carry him from the car and onto the pavement where I wanted to try and resuscitate him.’

Realising that there was no response and the man was becoming paler, he began CPR and continued until an ambulance arrived. A few days later he heard that the man had survived.

Mr Waligo’s boss, senior facilities manager George Day, nominated him for the award. ‘I thought what Andrew did was not only remarkable but very brave… this has not only made me as his manager very proud, but he is a credit to the University,’ he commented.
**LET THERE BE LIGHT**

Oxford researchers are explaining the complexities of migration, reports *Maria Coyle*

As campaigns intensify in the run-up to the EU referendum, one topic fuelling the debate is migration. Researchers at the University’s Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) aim to shed light rather than heat on the issues discussed.

Some research staff work for a high-profile project known as the Migration Observatory, a web-based portal set up to provide impartial, independent, evidence-based analysis of data on migration and migrants in the UK. They painstakingly pick their way through the latest raw data collected by the Office of National Statistics to find trends or give some context in their briefings and analyses on the website.

As well as carrying out their own original research, they analyse the findings of NGOs, think-tanks and other relevant groups. ‘We want the Migration Observatory to be viewed as the voice of reason in a debate driven by politicised positions,’ says the Head of Media and Communications at the Migration Observatory, Rob McNeil. ‘Our aim is to show that, whatever it concludes, its objectivity can’t be disputed.’

Professor Bridget Anderson, Professor of Migration and Citizenship and Research Director at COMPAS, identifies Tony Blair’s government as the first to show real interest in looking at the evidence behind migration policies. Shortly before COMPAS was set up in 2003, Oxford researchers did some work for Blair’s government, looking at the issues around the integration of immigrants in the UK. Michael Keith was a commissioner on the Blair government’s response to the 2005 London bombings – the Commission on Integration and Cohesion – and is the current Director of COMPAS. The Migration Observatory is keen to involve people of all political persuasions; indeed, the then Migration Minister and a Conservative MP, Damian Green, was the guest of honour at its launch.

COMPAS boasts a multidisciplinary team of researchers, who often enter a somewhat polarised debate. Those involved with the Migration Observatory frequently do media interviews, communicating their analyses as clearly as possible to a non-academic audience. There are graphs, charts, briefings and videos on their website, as such technical data might otherwise seem incomprehensible to those other than academics or policy wonks. Crucially, they try to present as balanced a picture as possible, providing the flapsides to multifaceted arguments and drawing attention to ‘gaps’ in the evidence too.

Examples of where the Migration Observatory has influenced the debate include work by Dr Scott Blinder on public attitudes towards migrants. He found that British people surveyed in 2011 most often thought of migrants as asylum-seekers; attitudes were less negative than the polls at the time suggested when the public were asked about other types of migrants, such as students. Later, in 2012, the Observatory produced a report that questioned whether government attempts to stabilise the UK population below 70 million would even be possible. It came out just before a parliamentary debate about whether immigration levels should be reduced and outlined the ‘trade-offs’, including the potentially damaging effects on universities and business. ‘It was quite a moment to see MPs on all sides in the House of Commons brandishing the Migration Observatory report on TV,’ says Rob McNeil.

COMPAS research is driven by the academics’ own interests, covering a spectrum of global migration processes: from the conditions where migrants come from, to institutions and activities affecting their mobility, to the social and economic conditions of the host countries. COMPAS has particular expertise in relation to migration and the labour market. One publication, the book *Who Needs Migrant Workers?*, edited by Professor Bridget Anderson and Dr Martin Ruhs, was highly acclaimed by many working in the field and received national media coverage.

‘Discussing the theory behind policy is really important,’ says Professor Anderson. ‘At a recent COMPAS workshop on begging, police officers who attended were really excited by an explanation of theories of political thought.’

COMPAS recently started the Global Exchange on Migration and Diversity to encourage more information sharing between academics, policymakers and professionals, and led a drama project in schools where pupils put on performances exploring migrant issues.

While the migration debate may remain toxic, the researchers hope conversations are now ‘more complicated’, with more talk of what is ‘known’ or ‘unknown’ amid the claims being made.

To find out more, visit the COMPAS website at www.compas.ox.ac.uk and the Migration Observatory pages at www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk
‘I used to like everything – arts and sciences and everything,’ says Dr Zamin Iqbal. It’s this enthusiasm for everything that has underpinned his career. The desire to understand things took him from a Cambridge maths degree – ‘it offered lots of puzzles to solve’ – to leading an Oxford lab researching computational genetics.

He did his doctorate at Oxford before joining software firm Symbian, attracted by a three-month training period in which to learn the business of programming. ‘I learned a lot,’ he explains. ‘Programming for phones which, especially then, didn’t have powerful processors meant I learned to programme efficiently.’

After eight years he wanted more of a challenge: ‘Software engineering is challenging but a lot of it is about how to meet business goals. I wanted to answer questions that are more fundamental.’ That desire led him to the European Bioinformatics Institute, working on the 1,000 Genomes project as a programmer but learning about genetics on the job and through intensive spare-time study.

Then came the offer of a postdoc research post with Professor Gil McVean at the Oxford-based Wellcome Trust Centre for Human Genetics, a man Zamin Iqbal describes as ‘fundamental to the rest of my career’.

‘A “tube map” of a genome could be used to very quickly identify new strains of a disease, or for improved vaccine design’

He turned to methods for how to analyse genomes, creating an alternative to the existing technique of selecting a baseline genome and then identifying where other genomes varied from that. While the technique is useful for some areas of the genetic code, other areas show far more variation between individuals. Zamin’s method enabled comparison between groups of people, and he has since focused on how to identify differences and similarities in genomes.

One product of this is Mykrobe, software that can analyse a file of genetic sequence data from a TB or MRSA bacterium and identify which drugs it will resist. Traditional techniques to establish drug resistance are time-consuming so anything that can speed up identifying the right treatment is welcome. Revealing Zamin’s background in efficient programming, Mykrobe can even run on a Raspberry Pi microcomputer, producing a visual output to make it easier for busy doctors to understand and act on the results.

Zamin’s research group is working on improvements, including adding the ability to analyse other bacteria. A further project uses Oxford Nanopore’s pocket-size MinION sequencer to provide data directly into Mykrobe, delivering analysis in near parallel with sequencing. The ultimate aim is a result the same day a sample is taken. Another project will sequence 100,000 TB genomes to provide a clearer picture of the genes that cause resistance. The data will refine Mykrobe’s analysis, but will also be openly available.

Such data sharing is a key research area. If you are analysing an infection, Zamin explains, you want results that are useful to the patient and to researchers and public health staff. A data-sharing solution that works both computationally and for patient privacy could enable individual strains of diseases to be tracked in a global surveillance network, while we could understand how particular strains and the drugs used to treat them affected patient recovery.

That solution means tying together genetic data, drug resistance data and patient data. Zamin likens it to producing a ‘tube map’ of a genome – one student in the Iqbal lab is currently doing this for malaria. Such ‘maps’ could be used to very quickly identify new strains of a disease, or for improved vaccine design.

As for the future, Zamin sets out some intriguing facts. Bacteria evolve very fast. Our immune systems evolve extremely fast in response. Eventually, by analysing a sample from a person you could be able to see their entire history of infection, or provide real-time information on the health of children in a nursery.

There’s a long way to travel before we get to that point. But someone’s working on the map, enable individual strains of diseases to be tracked in a global surveillance network, while we could understand how particular strains and the drugs used to treat them affected patient recovery.

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What we eat affects the social, economic, environmental and health dimensions of our lives, discovers Stuart Gillespie

A worldwide switch to diets that rely less on meat and more on fruit and vegetables could save up to eight million lives by 2050, as well as reducing greenhouse gas emissions by two-thirds, according to Oxford research. Such a switch could also avoid global healthcare costs of up to US$1,000 billion.

The news story that resulted from this research – fittingly for a truly global issue – was covered by major media outlets all over the world. The lead author of the report that sparked the story was Dr Marco Springmann, a James Martin Fellow at the Oxford Martin Programme on the Future of Food.

The programme has been running since 2012 and – in common with similar projects based at the Oxford Martin School – aims to address one of the most pressing challenges facing the world in the 21st century: how to feed the global population sustainably, healthily and equitably.

The Future of Food programme thus has four main aims: to act as a focal point for food-related research at the University of Oxford; to fund and coordinate a small number of innovative, interdisciplinary research projects that will help find solutions to the challenges of feeding a fast-growing population; to facilitate interactions between researchers and policymakers; and to help build interest in this area among Oxford’s undergraduates and postgraduate students.

Dr Springmann, who is also a postdoctoral researcher in the Nuffield Department of Population Health, is clear about the importance of food as a topic – and the role the Oxford Martin programme can play in tackling it. ‘The food system is tightly connected to the social, economic, environmental and health dimensions of our lives,’ he says. ‘Thus, studying it requires multiple perspectives and an interdisciplinary research approach. This is where the Future of Food programme comes in: it connects different departments and research groups across Oxford with the aim of approaching questions about the food system in a more comprehensive and holistic way than would be possible in a traditional department.’

One of the questions being addressed by Dr Springmann and colleagues is the impact our current dietary habits are having on the planet. His recent paper, published in the journal PNAS, explored our fondness for red meat and the positive effects that could be brought about by a switch to a more plant-based diet.

‘It is clear that current and future diets in most regions are not in line with even the most minimal health guidelines, nor with the aim of averting dangerous global warming of more than two degrees Celsius,’ says Dr Springmann. ‘In our recent study, we therefore tried to bring together the environmental and health aspects related to dietary change, as well as offering an economic assessment.

‘We found that changes towards more plant-based diets that are in line with global dietary guidelines could avert between five and eight million deaths in 2050, which is a 6–10% reduction in global mortality. It could also reduce food-related greenhouse gas emissions by more than two-thirds compared with what would otherwise be expected, and have a value to society of US$1–30 trillion – up to a tenth of global GDP in 2050.’

But the relationship between diet, health and the environment goes both ways. Another recent study led by Dr Springmann, published in The Lancet, found that climate change could kill more than 500,000 adults worldwide in 2050 as a result of changes in diet and bodyweight from reduced crop productivity – particularly fruit and vegetables. The research provides the strongest evidence yet that unless urgent action is taken, climate change could have damaging consequences for food production and health worldwide. According to the study, China and India will be among the worst-affected countries.

Food, then, is going to be a crucial factor as we seek to mitigate the damage we are doing to the planet and to ourselves. That’s reflected in the increasing number of column inches and amount of airtime devoted to the issue – something Professor Charles Godfray, Director of the Future of Food programme and Hope Professor in the Department of Zoology, has noted.

‘The recent volatility of food prices has moved the topic of food up the political agenda, as has the increasing realisation of the health effects of poor diets,’ says Professor Godfray. ‘The world faces numerous challenges relating to food: for example, how do we make food production more sustainable, what is going to bring about dietary change, and how do we stress-test and shock-proof the global food system?’

Dr Springmann offers his own take: ‘Food is a very intimate part of our lives. Everybody eats, every day, multiple times. At the same time, we are beginning to understand what effects our dietary choices have – not just have on ourselves, but also on the environment. One well-publicised example of this is the high impact that the livestock system has on climate change.’

For Professor Godfray, the Future of Food programme is well placed to make a telling contribution to this important topic. ‘I believe the added value of the Oxford Martin programme rests in its capacity to work across the academic divisions and its ability to bring people together,’ he says. ‘The programme has certainly helped the University respond to calls for more interdisciplinary research.’

More information at www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/research/programmes/future-food

THE FUTURE OF FOOD
**Redevelopment of a Radiant Gem**

The year-long restoration of Trinity College’s chapel has returned the space to its original 17th-century aesthetic, finds Charlie Tyson

Staff and students at Oxford and elsewhere have long grown accustomed to the tangled yellow tape and mounds of dirt that mark the construction and redesign projects that are nowadays constant fixtures around a university.

The renovation of Trinity College’s chapel, which reopened on 23 April after a year of closure, was, however, no ordinary construction effort. The project was a painstaking historical reclamation that has left the inner sanctum and its famed woodcarvings by Grinling Gibbons (1648–1721) looking much as they did when the chapel first opened its doors in 1694.

The restoration involved exhaustive cleaning, repair and conservation of the building’s ceiling, windows, plasterwork and woodcarvings. The work cost just over £1m and the college had raised roughly £600,000 in donations by the end of April, according to Tom Knollys, the college’s alumni relations officer. The renovation gave college officials a chance to alter the chapel’s overall aesthetic, exchanging an austere Victorian colour scheme for a warmer appearance that accent the grains and hues of the original wood.

In the mid-1860s, most of the Grinling Gibbons’ woodcarvings that the chapel houses – eerily lifelike faces of seraphs and saints, elegant whirls of flowers and palms – were stained black, in line with design tastes of the time. A team led by Alan Lamb, a sculptor who oversaw the restoration of the Gibbons pieces, used an ethanol-based chemical stripper to work away the layers of black varnish and restore the carvings to their original rich brown.

Woodworm tunnels had devastated the limewood carvings behind the altar, Lamb says. His team used 19th-century photographs to replace missing pieces of carvings and plasterwork.

‘The renovation exchanged an austere Victorian colour scheme for a warmer appearance that accents the grains and hues of the original wood’

The renovated chapel diverges from its original appearance in at least one crucial respect: its stained-glass windows. The 17th-century chapel would have been built with plain glass. Conservators cleaned each of the chapel’s stained-glass windows, gingerly swabbing with small cotton buds, explains the Reverend Emma Percy, Trinity College’s chaplain. ‘Before, we couldn’t see through the windows, they were so dirty,’ she says.

The college has reinstalled a brightly coloured stained-glass window crafted in the 1870s in honour of Isaac Williams, a fellow of Trinity and a prominent figure in the Oxford Movement. Because the Williams window does not match the other seven in the chapel, it had rested unseen in an attic since the 1940s. (All of the chapel’s stained glass was removed during World War II to avoid damage from bombs and shrapnel.)

The chapel is unusual in that it contains a tomb with the remains of Thomas Pope, the college’s founder. College officials believe the tomb contains the remains not just of Pope but also of his first wife, Margaret, whom he outlived, and his second wife, Elizabeth, who survived him. The college considered opening up the tomb during the renovation but decided against it, Percy says.

The year-long project put some strain on the college’s religious life – Percy’s office became a temporary prayer room – but it’s all been worth it, Percy says. ‘It’s been exciting for people to see something they’ve loved as a kind of familiar and important space just becoming glorious,’ she comments. ‘It’s like seeing an old and loved friend being revived.’

Slip through the chapel door now, and you’ll find yourself in a small antechapel flanked by a carved screen that divides the entrance from the chapel’s main chamber. From the screen the faces of cherubs gaze forward, resting upon looping tendrils of wood. On sunny days the entrance is flooded with light, and the wooden walls glow like warm chestnut. When students play the piano in the foyer, under a stained-glass window of the Venerable Bede, tones of Chopin and Liszt well up and drift toward the ceiling.

The renovation, says Emeritus Professor Martin Kemp, an art historian and honorary fellow of Trinity College, is ‘radiant, exhilarating, but in a very subtle way’. Kemp has long admired the chapel, and published a short book on its history and design in 2013. The chapel’s achievement, Kemp feels, is its union of painting, sculpture, and architecture into a dynamic, baroque ensemble. ‘With the restoration’, he says, ‘there’s been a general uplift of the light, the tone, the legibility.’

For more information, visit www.trinity.ox.ac.uk/chapel-renovation

The chapel is open to visitors on weekdays from 10am to noon and 2pm to 5pm, as well as weekend afternoons.
WHAT’S ON

EXHIBITIONS

Microsculpture – the insect portraiture of Levon Biss
From 27 May to 30 October 2016
Museum of Natural History
www.microsculpture.net
Insect specimens from the museum’s collections, shown in large-format and exquisitely-lit detail.

Storms, war and shipwrecks: treasures from the Sicilian seas
From 21 June to 25 September 2016
Ashmolean Museum
www.ashmolean.org/exhibitions
Tickets £10 / £9 / £5 free for members and under-12s
Extraordinary discoveries made by underwater archaeologists.

CONCERTS

Music Faculty Recital Series
Thursdays 2, 9 and 16 June, 12.30pm
Denis Arnold Hall, Faculty of Music
www.music.ox.ac.uk/calendar/upcoming
Listen to students performing pieces for their upcoming examinations. Feel free to bring your lunch.

Chamber Group: Piano, Clarinet, Violins
Saturday 11 June, 1.30pm
The Queen’s College
www.eglesfieldmusic.co.uk/?Events
Free concert (with retiring collection) from the Eglesfield Music Society, comprising musicians from across the University and run by a committee of students.

Classical & Jazz with Benet and Viv McLean
Thursday 30 June, 7.30pm
St John the Evangelist Church
www.sje-oxford.org/events
Tickets £20 / £17 / £10
A classical/jazz extravaganza including Beethoven’s Diabelli Variations.

LECTURES AND TALKS

Shakespeare Oxford 2016 lectures
Every Wednesday (until 29 June), 1pm
Weston Library
www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/whatson/whats-on
A series of hourly lunchtime lectures celebrating the work and times of Shakespeare.

The European refugee crisis: what is to be done?
Friday 10 June, 5pm
Pembroke College
www.pmb.ox.ac.uk/fullbright2016
Professor Michael Ignatieff discusses the European refugee crisis and how to address it.

Observing the observers
Tuesday 28 June, 7pm
Museum of the History of Science
www.bit.ly/mhs-events
Lee Macdonald reveals new research on the remarkable story of Kew Observatory, dating back to King George III’s private observatory.

Drama

Love’s Labour’s Lost
28 June – 18 August
Wadham College Gardens
www.oxfordshakespearecompany.co.uk
Tickets £13 / £18 / £23
Enjoy an interactive open-air performance of this popular Shakespeare comedy.

FAMILY FRIENDLY

Wild fair
Saturday 4 June, 10am to 4pm
Museum of Natural History
www.oum.ox.ac.uk/visiting/whatson.htm
Drop in to celebrate Oxford’s biodiversity with crafts, conservationists and family friendly talks.

Mammal detectives at Wytham Woods
Saturday 11 June, 10am to 2pm (age 7+)
Wytham Woods
www.facebook.com/WythamWoods
Book a place to join Oxfordshire Mammal Group and look for signs of badgers, deer and small mammals and to hear from University researchers working in the woods.

Bate family gamelan concert
Sunday 19 June, 3pm
Holywell Music Room
www.bate.ox.ac.uk/family-friendly-concert
Tickets £5 (children free)
Discover the bronze gongs and metallophones of the Javanese Gamelan.

Dancing the tree of life
Saturday 2 July, performance 4pm; talk 5.15pm
Museum of Natural History
www.bit.ly/mnhevents
Join evolutionary biologist Yan Wong, choreographer Joelle Pappas and dancers to see how evolution works – as they dance you through the tree of life.

Visit www.museums.ox.ac.uk/content/family-friendly-events for more family activities

A selection of stunning insect portraits (top) and treasures recovered from Sicilian seas (left) are on view this summer.
Once a year, on a Wednesday in June, a procession of men and women in colourful academic gowns walks in line through the centre of Oxford. This procession is part of Encaenia, the ceremony at which the University of Oxford awards honorary degrees to people who have achieved distinction in a range of fields.

Encaenia – the name is a Greek word for a festival of renewal – is always held on the Wednesday of ninth week during Trinity term. For readers who use a normal calendar, this year’s ceremony takes place on 22 June.

‘The procession is one of the most iconic sights in Oxford,’ says Clare Woodcock, Deputy Head of the University’s News and Information Office, who organises the media arrangements for each year’s ceremony. ‘To get a good view of the procession, the best place for people to stand is in Radcliffe Square.’

‘The procession is one of the most iconic sights in Oxford’

Members of staff from all over the University are involved in putting Encaenia together. The University’s security services accompany the procession. Fortunately, there has never been a real-life repeat of the Inspector Morse episode in which an honorand was murdered.

This year’s honorands include director and screenwriter Pedro Almodóvar, opera singer Jessye Norman and Apple’s head designer Sir Jonathan Ive. Before the ceremony at the Sheldonian Theatre, the honorands will wait in the Divinity School where they sign their names in the Honorary Degrees Book. ‘With all the names that have received honorary degrees in the past, this must be one of the most incredible collections of autographs in the world,’ says Ms Woodcock.

In the ceremony, each honorand is introduced with a speech in Latin by the Chancellor admitting them to their degree. The Public Orator then delivers a speech called the Creweian Oration about the events of the past year and to thank benefactors. In alternate years, the second part of this speech is given by the Professor of Poetry.

Unlike in honorary degree ceremonies at most other universities, Oxford’s honorands do not give a speech. But an exception was made for Aung San Suu Kyi in 2012. Daw Suu, a former undergraduate at St Hugh’s College, was returning to Oxford for the first time after being held under house arrest in Burma for many years. Her speech was very moving. ‘During the most difficult years, I was upheld by memories of Oxford,’ she told the audience. ‘These were among the most important inner resources that helped me to cope with all the challenges I had to face.’

But the ceremony is only one part of Encaenia. The night before, the honorands have dinner with the University’s Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and Public Orator. The next morning, the honorands, heads of house and other senior University members assemble at Exeter College in full academic dress for a reception called Lord Crewe’s benefaction, at which peaches, strawberries and champagne are served. Lord Crewe, the Rector of Lincoln College and subsequently Bishop of Oxford, left a significant sum of money to the University for Encaenia after he died in 1721.

Suitably refreshed, the honorands and officials then walk in procession to the Sheldonian Theatre for the ceremony – a walk which can be seen on postcards in shops across Oxford.

As the procession enters the Sheldonian Theatre, it is accompanied by ceremonial officials of the University called Bedels. Janet Avison, a picture researcher in the University’s Design and Publications Office, has just been appointed the University’s Bedel of the Arts. She says the chance to be involved in Encaenia is one of the reasons why she applied to become a Bedel. ‘It’s such a well-known ceremony, and it has happened for centuries, so this is a chance to be part of Oxford University’s history,’ she says.

After the ceremony, All Souls College hosts the honorands for a lunch, then a garden party for the honorands, their guests and members of Congregation is held at one of the colleges.

Unsurprisingly, the logistics of the day are complicated. ‘We start planning for Encaenia six months prior to the day, and everyone in our office is involved in some part of the event,’ says Lisa Seddon, Head of the University’s Events Office. ‘It is a lot of work, but it is always very rewarding when it all comes together. Personally, it was a thrill seeing Hilary Mantel in 2015 and I’m pleased Pedro Almodóvar has been nominated.’

Encaenia is the surviving part of an unusual historical ceremony in Oxford called the ‘Act’, which used to include music and an apparently often ‘scandalous’ speech by an anonymous speaker known as the ‘Son of the Earth’. The ceremony was originally held in the University Church of St Mary the Virgin, but was moved to the Sheldonian Theatre in 1670. It is thought the first honorary degrees to be awarded at a ceremony in Oxford were in 1566.

For more information on Encaenia and how to apply for a ticket, visit www.ox.ac.uk/Encaenia
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for more details see www.newcollegechoir.com
**WHY AM I HERE?**

**Lesley Paterson**

*Senior Facilitator and Coordinator, Public Engagement with Research, Research Services*

**What is Public Engagement with Research?**

It’s where researchers involve the public in part or all of the research process – from shaping the direction of research, taking part in the conduct of research, through to sharing the results of the findings. The ultimate aim is to improve the quality or impact of the research but there are many other benefits including access to additional funding, professional skills development, hearing new perspectives and profile-raising. Many researchers report that it is a rewarding and motivating experience.

**How is the University approaching this?**

I work closely with Professor Sarah Whatmore, the University’s Academic Champion for Public Engagement with Research. The aim is to equip and support academics, researchers and graduate students to develop and deliver high-quality public engagement activities embedded within their research activities. Oxford’s world-class research portfolio, together with its outstanding museums, libraries and collections, creates an extraordinary environment in which high-quality Public Engagement with Research (PER) can really flourish. We want public engagement at Oxford to have the same high reputation for excellence as does its research.

It’s important to think carefully about which public audiences or ‘constituents’ you should engage – it should be those with the potential to improve the quality or impact of the research taking place. I’m really interested in how we can support our researchers overseas and how public engagement may differ in different countries.

**What does your own job entail?**

My role is to facilitate, coordinate and support PER at the university-wide level. I work with colleagues across the collegiate University and, as facilitator for the development of the University’s recently approved strategic plan for PER, oversaw a ten-month consultation process gathering the views of nearly 100 staff. I also develop and deliver activities to help create a climate in which public engagement can flourish. For example, I’m currently administering the proposals that were submitted to the University’s PER grants scheme which provides seed funding for academics and researchers.

**So how do you come to be doing this?**

I started life wanting to be a marine biologist, working with dolphins, but ended up slightly down the evolutionary scale with a PhD in marine worms. I became interested in public engagement and did a Science Communication postgraduate degree.

I’ve worked in public engagement and communications for over 15 years. Immediately prior to Oxford, I was the Royal Academy of Engineering’s first Head of Public Engagement before becoming the Head of Communications and Engagement responsible for all the ‘pubs’ – public engagement, public relations, public affairs and publications.

**Any striking memories?**

I was really intrigued when I first started at Oxford (June 2015) to find out that staff benefits include a 10% discount in the ukulele store! I had an image of all my colleagues strumming away at home…

**Give us a taste of events being planned**

We’ve worked closely with both the Oxfordshire Science Festival and the Oxford Festival of the Arts this year and over 60 of Oxford’s researchers will be taking part in these festivals in June and July. We’ve also submitted a grant proposal for a European Researchers’ Night in September 2017 that would enable us to deliver the biggest PER event that has taken place at Oxford, with activities in all four museums, the Bodleian Libraries, the Botanic Garden, Wytham Woods and the city centre, with over 200 researchers taking part.

**So how can staff become involved?**

Two excellent initiatives to explore are Oxford Sparks (a portal for science engagement) and TORCH (The Oxford Research Centre for the Humanities) for engagement opportunities and training. Staff can also sign up to the PER Digest, a monthly email with news, updates and details of public engagement training, events and opportunities available – email me at lesley.paterson@admin.ox.ac.uk with ‘Start PER Digest’ in the subject header. We’re also creating PER webpages.

**Finally, isn’t there a new University award in this area?**

Yes, the new Vice-Chancellor’s Public Engagement with Research Awards, announced last April, aim to find and celebrate the high-quality PER projects and activities that have been developed and delivered by staff. The winning entries will receive recognition at an awards ceremony on 1 July and the overall winner will receive a cash prize of £1,500.

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**VIEWFINDER**

Where’s this caring Madonna? Answer on p.4.