Five measures are being introduced to improve the University's financial position and enable it to achieve a surplus of 5% by 2018/19. The measures include a new endowment to support existing academic posts and activities; the full recovery of research overheads; headcount budgets for University-funded non-academic staff, together with a targeted voluntary redundancy scheme where posts can be closed; a review of planned expenditure on capital projects; and purchasing improvements, such as a new e-invoicing system. Find out more at www.ox.ac.uk/financialposition.

The University has revised its arrangements for licensing to spinout companies in order to help boost the volume and value of translated science from Oxford. A new standardised approach is being offered for the licensing of intellectual property (IP) to spinouts. This will simplify the terms and streamline the process of licensing and ensure that financial returns to the inventors and the University are directly aligned. The new FLRF partnership is aimed at improving the overall health, nutritional status and development of high-risk infants, as well as training the next generation of neonatologists and paediatricians in evidence-based feeding and monitoring practices.

WebLearn has been Oxford's online learning and teaching tool for some years, but does it still meet our needs today? Help shape the future of WebLearn by sharing your views at www.it.ox.ac.uk/VLEreview. By completing the survey, you could win a £25 Amazon voucher. Individual academics and representatives of teaching and learning committees are also encouraged to contribute to a broader survey of the technologies they currently use in teaching. The results will be used to help the Education IT Board determine priorities for funding. Details at www.digitaleducation.ox.ac.uk.

In the run-up to Christmas, why not make the most of the seasonal staff discounts at the University shops? On Thursdays in December (1, 8, 15 and 22) the shops at the Bodleian (Weston Library and the Old Bodleian), the Bate Collection on St Aldate’s and the University of Oxford shop on the High Street are offering staff a double discount (20%) on their goods. Discounted items include CDs and publications at the Bate (open 2pm to 5pm), homeware and accessories at the Bodleian (open 10am to 5.30pm) and merchandise and gifts at the University shop (open 9am to 7pm). You can also enjoy the same discount at the Ashmolean (open 10am to 5pm) and the University shops at the Bodleian (open 10am to 5pm), homeware and accessories at the Bodleian (open 10am to 5.30pm), and merchandise and gifts at the University shop (open 9am to 7pm).

In addition, the gift shops at the Ashmolean (open 10am to 5pm) are offering staff a 25% discount during the week of Sunday 5 to Monday 6 December and you can also claim 20% off goods in the Museum of the History of Science shop (open 12pm to 5pm) on Fridays in December. Just show your University Card to take advantage of the offers.

Do you know about the University’s Carbon Innovation Programme? Now in its second year, the award-winning programme uses the expertise and creativity of Oxford staff and students to help the University reduce its carbon emissions by a third by the end of 2020/21. Teams and individuals put forward ideas for innovative projects or services that can generate carbon savings, and the most viable receive support and possibly funding to put them into action. Details at www.energy.ox.ac.uk/carbon-innovation-programme.

Oxford has recently joined the library partnership programme at Open Book Publishers, the largest open access academic publisher of monographs in the UK. Membership means that University staff and students can read and download for free any digital title from Open Book Publishers’ range. 84 books are currently available, with a further 18 titles due to be published in the next year. You can also enjoy 15% off any print edition purchased from their website. To browse the range, visit www.openbookpublishers.com.
Men in the 17th century believed they were outnumbered by women despite a lack of evidence for this claim, new research has revealed. Oxford historian Dr Margaret Pelling looked at books, pamphlets and religious tracts from the period for a study which has been published in *The Historical Journal*. She found numerous references by male writers to being outnumbered by women, but no statistical evidence to support this view. In fact, a contemporary survey of mortality records in London by John Graunt showed that, in the capital, slightly more men than women were born during the period, so the balance between men and women would have been roughly equal. ‘Early modern men were most likely to make numerical claims about women where there were too many of a “problematic” kind,’ she says. ‘Women were expected to be silent, chaste and more or less confined to the household, their identity submerged in that of a husband, father or master.’

A change in self-defence laws in Florida in 2005 gave citizens the right to use lethal force to protect themselves in public places, as well as on their own property, if they believed there was an imminent threat of death or serious physical harm from an intruder. A study led by Dr David Humphreys from the Department of Social Policy and Intervention has found this change, known as the ‘stand your ground’ law, is associated with a 24% rise in the state’s homicide rates between 2005 and 2014, and a rise of 31% for homicide rates involving firearms. Meanwhile, elsewhere in the United States, homicide rates in general have been declining since the 1990s says the study, published in the journal *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

A new character in the popular TV series *Vikings* has been inspired by an Oxford historian’s research. Michael Hirst, creator of *Vikings*, read *The Silk Roads: A New History of the World* by Dr Peter Frankopan, Director of the Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research. He was inspired by the book to create a new character called Astrid, who will appear in the fifth series of the drama, which is watched by millions in the USA and Canada. Dr Frankopan’s research showed the importance of the east and the role it had in shaping modern Europe. ‘There is nothing more exciting as a historian to know that things you’ve written are being read far and wide – and completely thrilling when they are brought into mainstream media,’ he says.

Prescribing medications to some prisoners after release may cut the number of violent re-offences, a new study has shown. Researchers looked at released prisoners from across Sweden between 2005 and 2010, who were prescribed antipsychotics, psychostimulants and drugs for addictive disorders. By comparing the periods when they were and were not prescribed these medications, the team was able to show a drop in the rate of violent reoffending while they were receiving treatment. Professor Seena Fazel of Oxford’s Department of Psychiatry says that the research shows that, in a population with many mental health problems and high risks of re-offending, improving adherence and links with community health services may offer an effective way to improve outcomes for the individual prisoner and also public health and safety more broadly.

An unassuming brown pebble, found more than a decade ago by a fossil hunter in Sussex, has been confirmed as the first example of fossilised brain tissue from a dinosaur. The fossil, most likely from a species closely related to the herbivore Iguanodon, displays distinct similarities to the brains of modern-day crocodiles and birds. The results are reported in a special publication of the Geological Society of London, published in tribute to Professor Martin Brasier of Oxford’s Department of Earth Sciences, who coordinated the research but died in a road traffic accident in 2014. Researchers say the tissue was so well preserved because the dinosaur’s brain was essentially ‘pickled’ in a highly acidic, low-oxygen body of water shortly after its death.

For more information, visit www.ox.ac.uk/news and www.ox.ac.uk/staffnews
for his pioneering work in social economics, which is ‘rooted in important substantive questions, and informed by the rigorous application of statistical methods to extensive sources of data’.

Stephen Baker, Professor of Molecular Microbiology, who works at the Oxford University Clinical Research Unit (OUCRU) in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, has been awarded the 2017 Fleming Prize by the Microbiology Society. His work focuses on enteric diseases, which cause a significant disease burden in low- and middle-income countries, and he also manages research programmes in Nepal and Indonesia, looking at the genetics, epidemiology and treatment of enteric infections.

Gui-Qiang Chen, Professor in the Analysis of Partial Differential Equations and Director of the EPSRC Centre for Doctoral Training in Partial Differential Equations, has been elected a Fellow of the American Mathematical Society in recognition of his contribution to partial differential equations, nonlinear analysis, fluid mechanics, hyperbolic conservation laws, and shock-wave theory.

Jo Cook, a research nurse in the Nuffield Department of Surgical Sciences, won a ‘Star Research Nurse’ award at the inaugural Thames Valley Health Research Awards last month. She has undertaken the recruitment and ten-year follow-up of over 400 patients with heart disease for the Arterial Revascularisation Trial into cardiac surgery in Oxford.

Cyrus Cooper, Professor of Musculoskeletal Sciences at Oxford and Director of the MRC LifeCourse Epidemiology Unit at the University of Southampton, has been appointed as a Deputy Lieutenant of Hampshire, supporting the Lord-Lieutenant in carrying out his functions as HM The Queen’s representative in the county. He will continue his research in the epidemiology of musculoskeletal disorders, especially osteoporosis.

Pietro Corsi, Emeritus Professor of the History of Science, has been chosen by the Société de Physique et d’Histoire Naturelle de Genève as the 2016 recipient of the Marc-Auguste Pictet Medal in the History of Science. The award recognises his ‘exceptional contribution to the history of the Philosophy of Science, and the relationships between science, religion and society from the 18th to 21st centuries’.

Dr Gabriele De Luca, Associate Professor in the Nuffield Department of Clinical Neurosciences, has been selected by the British Neuropathological Society to receive the Society’s 2016 Cavanagh Prize for his work on the neuropathology of demyelinating diseases of the central nervous system.

Dr Charles Foster, an associate fellow of Green Templeton College and Senior Research Associate at the Uehiro Centre for Practical Ethics, is a joint winner of the 2016 Ig Nobel prize in biology for his book Being a Beast, which saw him take on the perspective of a badger, an otter, a fox, a red deer and a swift. The Ig Nobels are annual awards given for the most unusual or trivial achievements in scientific research.

Dr Dmitri Levitin, Research Fellow at All Souls College, is the recipient of the inaugural Leszek Kołakowski Prize, awarded by the Foundation for Polish Science. The purpose of the prize is ‘to recognise scholars with distinguished research achievements in the history of ideas and medieval and modern philosophy to 1939’.

Dame Carol Robinson, Dr Lee’s Professor of Chemistry, has been named as one of the top 50 most influential women in the analytical sciences via the 2016 Power List published by The Analytical Scientist.

Dr Angela Russell, Associate Professor of Medicinal Chemistry and co-founder of OxStem Ltd, has been named as a ‘rising star’ in the BioBeat 50 Movers and Shakers list in the BioBusiness 2016 report. The report celebrates 50 outstanding women entrepreneurs and business leaders who are recognised for their contributions to global health innovation.

Edwin Williamson, King Alfonso XIII Professor of Spanish Studies, has been elected a Corresponding Fellow of the Real Academia Española.

Professor Sir Tony Atkinson, Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for New Economic Thinking at the Oxford Martin School, has been awarded an honorary fellowship by the Royal Statistics Society for his pioneering work in social economics, which is ‘rooted in important substantive questions, and informed by the rigorous application of statistical methods to extensive sources of data’.

Nigel Hitchin, Savilian Professor of Geometry in the Mathematical Institute, has been awarded the Shaw Prize in Mathematical Sciences for 2016. The Shaw Prizes, established under the auspices of Sir Run Run Shaw, the Hong Kong-based philanthropist, are awarded to ‘individuals who have achieved significant breakthroughs in academic and scientific research or applications, and whose work has resulted in a positive and profound impact on mankind’. Professor Hitchin received the award ‘for his far-reaching contributions to geometry, representation theory and theoretical physics’. The citation adds: ‘The fundamental and elegant concepts and techniques that he has introduced have had wide impact and are of lasting importance.’
NEW FELLOWS OF ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

The Academy of Social Sciences has conferred the award of Fellow on three Oxford social scientists.

Jo-Anne Baird, Pearson Professor of Educational Assessment and Director of the Department of Education, has long been a leader in the field of educational assessment, pioneering the research-based identification and analysis of the educational policy implications of different approaches to assessment.

David M Clark, Professor of Experimental Psychology, has made exceptional contributions to clinical and abnormal psychology and has been a leading figure in cognitive behavioural therapy. He is particularly known for his work on understanding and treating anxiety disorders, including PTSD, and therapies arising from his work are recommended as first-line interventions in the NICE guidelines.

Mary Daly, Professor of Sociology and Social Policy, is a long-established leader in sociology and social policy, with particular interests in gender, welfare in contemporary society, family income and poverty.

MALARIA RESEARCH RECOGNISED

Kevin Marsh, Professor of Tropical Medicine and a principal investigator at the KEMRI–Wellcome Trust Research Programme in Kilifi, Kenya, as well as senior adviser to the African Academy of Sciences, has won the Al-Sumait Prize for Health for his contributions to health in Africa. His award recognises his sustained efforts to control and eradicate malaria, which impacts the health of tens of millions of African children.

The $1m prize will be used to support the work of the African Academy of Sciences and the Africa Oxford Initiative, a new platform which brings together academics from across the University and from many African institutions to build equitable collaborations in all academic disciplines.

Professor Marsh’s research on malaria spans more than three decades, from studying the immunology of malaria in the Gambia to his role as director of the KEMRI–Wellcome programme from 1989 to 2014.

DINING IN STYLE

The excellence of the catering teams in Oxford’s colleges has been recognised by a new category, ‘Best College Dining Room’, in the annual Oxfordshire Restaurant Awards. Four colleges were nominated for the 2016 award: St Anne’s College came first, Lady Margaret Hall won second place, and St Anne’s College and Wolfson College were joint third.

Ray Killick, Head Chef at St Anne’s (see ‘Why am I here?’ Blueprint Nov 2014), came third in the ‘Chef of the Year’ award, which recognises ‘a chef that has excelled in many areas, worked well under pressure and created some masterpieces’.

In addition, two college kitchen trainees won awards in the ‘2016 City of Oxford College Trainee’ category. Chris Angus of St Anne’s won first place, and Aishia Johnston of Wolfson came third.

The Vaults & Garden Café at the University Church of St Mary the Virgin was also a winner, coming first in the ‘Most Sustainable Restaurant’ category.

CUTTING-EDGE APPROACH TO BUSINESS EDUCATION

Peter Tufano, Peter Moores Dean and Professor of Finance at the Said Business School, has been awarded the 2016 Aspen Faculty Pioneer Award, with a Special Award Distinction for Institutional Leadership. The annual awards celebrate leading educators that challenge conventional teaching to prompt students to think differently about the relationship between the role of the corporation and the public good.

Professor Tufano and the Said Business School were recognised for ‘Global Opportunities and Threats, Oxford’ (GOTO), a course he pioneered and that a team of faculty from across the school and the University have designed and delivered to the MBA class for the past four years.

GOTO addresses some of the forces that will affect business over the next 25 years such as demographic change, new technologies affecting the structure of the workplace, natural resource issues and global warming. It aims to give students a set of skills to deal with long-horizon problems and uncertainty, and to give them content around the messy issues that they will encounter in their future careers.

BRITISH ACADEMY PRIZES

Oxford academics are among the winners of the British Academy’s 2016 Prizes and Medals.

Dr Margaret Bent, emeritus fellow of All Souls College, has won the Derek Allen Prize for Musicology for her contribution to the field of musicology, in particular English, French and Italian music from the 14th to 16th centuries.

Dr Sebastian Brock, retired reader in Syriac studies in the Faculty of Oriental Studies, has won the Edward Ullendorff Medal for Semitic Languages and Ethiopian Studies, in recognition of his extensive contribution to the study of Syriac language and literature.

Dr Leofranc Holford-Strevens has been awarded the prestigious President’s Medal for services to the humanities and social sciences, presented to individuals who play important roles in Britain’s cultural life. He held the positions of proof reader, copy editor and finally Consultant Scholar–Editor at Oxford University Press from 1971 until his retirement in 2011.
LEVERHULME PRIZES

Four Oxford researchers are among the recipients of 2016 Philip Leverhulme Prizes. The prizes, awarded by The Leverhulme Trust, recognise the achievement of outstanding young researchers whose work has already attracted international recognition and whose future career is exceptionally promising. The Oxford winners are:

Dr Susana Carvalho, Associate Professor in Palaeoanthropology, a primatologist and archaeologist interested in the evolution of technological behaviour and specialising in wild chimpanzee tool use and in Pliocene archaeology.

Mark Graham, Professor of Internet Geography, whose research focuses on internet and information geographies, and the overlaps between ICTs and economic development.

Dr Kalina Manova, Associate Professor in Economics, an applied economist who specialises in international trade and investment.

Dr Susan Perkin, Associate Professor of Physical Chemistry, whose research interests include many aspects of liquid–solid interface science such as hydrophobicity, molecular mechanisms of lubrication, electrode interfaces with novel electrolytes, and bio-interfaces.

NEED HELP SLEEPING?

Do you have problems falling asleep at night? Or maybe you wake in the early hours and can’t drop off again until minutes before your alarm goes off? Poor sleep quality can impact many aspects of our lives – from relationships to productivity at work – so its potential impact should not be underestimated.

If you’re unfortunate enough to suffer with any kind of sleep problem you may be interested in signing up to the online Sleepio programme, which the University’s Occupational Health Service is now offering to all staff.

Sleepio, a clinically proven sleep improvement programme, is designed to teach you how to overcome poor sleep issues without pills or potions. Instead, the programme looks at a number of lifestyle and environmental factors that may be impacting your sleep, and then teaches you to build a personalised 24-hour schedule to help improve things.

The good news is that Sleepio is very simple to use and can be easily accessed online, on an iPad or via an iPhone app. The first step is to set your goals for improvement and answer the questions in the two-minute sleep test to establish what your Sleep Score is.

Following this, using the information you’ve supplied, you’ll be given scientifically proven advice to help improve your sleep. You’ll also be introduced to your virtual sleep expert, ‘the Prof’, who’ll guide you through the programme.

Gary Tideswell, Director of Occupational Health and Safety says: ‘We’re really pleased to be able to offer Sleepio to staff. The programme can offer great long-term benefits, but it’s important to remember that it doesn’t come with a magic wand – it can require significant effort from participants in order to see the improvements – but we know it’s worth it.’

Check your Sleep Score and find out more at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/uohs.
Julia Paolitto looks at Oxford’s participation in Ambitious Futures, the graduate programme for university leadership

Claire Castles was looking for public and charity sector jobs after graduating from Oxford in 2014 with a BA in Japanese Studies when she first came across the graduate trainee programme Ambitious Futures. She’d applied for other graduate programmes in the civil service and local government, but it was the higher education sector trainee programme’s ‘welcoming and supportive atmosphere’ that set it apart, she says. Now, after 15 months of placements at Oxford and the University of the Arts London (UAL), ‘that first impression has really carried over into my experience of working in higher education, where the most effective way to achieve things is usually through consultation and collaboration with colleagues,’ she says.

Oxford is one of 22 UK universities currently involved in Ambitious Futures, which started in 2012 with 16 graduate trainees recruited from a group of eight universities (Oxford joined late in 2014 when the programme expanded). Organised by the Association of Heads of University Administration, the scheme aims to train future university leaders by providing them with work placements in a variety of administrative roles while studying for a management qualification. Trainees on the highly structured programme complete three placements over a 15-month period: two are at their host institution and the third is undertaken at a different university in the same regional cluster of participating institutions – in Oxford’s case this includes Cambridge and a number of London universities. All participants also take part in group learning activities with other trainees from their regional cluster, and are assigned a mentor at their host institution.

While it may be more of a niche graduate trainee programme than some of the schemes run by the government or big private-sector industries, the selection process for Ambitious Futures involves a similar process of screening followed by a day-long assessment via interviews, role play and written exercises. Unlike many other graduate schemes, however, participants need to search for jobs at universities once their initial training contract is over – placements are not given out with particular institutional job vacancies in mind.

Vanessa Howe, Head of Recruitment and Employee Development, manages the scheme at Oxford and feels that both participants and institutions benefit equally from this structure. The programme at Oxford is sponsored by the Registrar’s Office, which means that departments offering placements ‘benefit from an extra temporary resource to get projects done’. And not just any temporary resource – feedback on the Ambitious Futures participants from their project managers has been very strong: ‘They are high-calibre candidates, very capable of being flexible and want to take on as much as possible – they are people set on higher education admin roles and are really dedicated and focused.’

Fiona Whelan, the second participant from Oxford’s first cohort of Ambitious Futures trainees, says that her secondment to University College London’s Library Services was a particularly valuable part of the programme: ‘Exposure to another institution is vital to allow you to understand the different mechanisms in which other universities operate, especially more centralised universities in comparison with the collegiate system here. It also allows the trainees to bring fresh perspectives back to their home institutions and allows further connections and contacts to be nurtured for future career changes.’

Oxford’s current Ambitious Futures trainees are Kira Brayman, currently working in Research Services, and Danielle Lloyd, based in the Examination Schools. PRAS (the University’s Planning and Resource Allocation Section) and Student Services have also hosted placements and other departments are welcome to join in.

While many participants segue into jobs at their host institutions, others go on to posts at other institutions – Castles has started a job as Student Engagement Officer at Hull University, while Whelan has moved from Ambitious Futures into a role as Executive Officer in Student Welfare and Support Services at Oxford. Either way, exposure to a range of work settings and understanding of higher education benefit both participants and the institutions where they eventually work.

‘We are monitoring closely how Ambitious Futures can contribute to recruitment at Oxford,’ says Vanessa Howe. ‘So far the feedback has been good, and we look forward to seeing the results from the next two cohorts.’ The next set of Ambitious Futures placements will be available from Michaelmas 2017, and Claire Castles hopes others will take advantage of the programme: ‘Higher education administration is a career path which is not well known, but if you are interested in working for the public or charities sector, this scheme is one of the best accelerated routes into a career which is interesting, diverse and rewarding.’

Find out more at www.ambitiousfutures.co.uk. Departments interested in hosting a placement should contact Amira Harb (amira.harb@admin.ox.ac.uk).

www.ox.ac.uk/blueprint

November 2016 BLUEPRINT | 7
What’s On

Exhibitions

Back from the Dead: Demystifying Antibiotics
Until 21 May 2017
Museum of the History of Science
www.mhs.ox.ac.uk/backfromthedead
An exhibition to mark the 75th anniversary of the first human trials of penicillin and the role the University has played in uncovering the miraculous and precarious nature of antibiotics. Check the website for details of free curator-led tours and workshops offering visitors the opportunity to make their own ‘votive offerings’ and add them to the participatory artwork.

Power and Protection
Until 15 January 2017
Ashmolean Museum
Tickets £10, concessions £9, 12–17 years £5
www.ashmolean.org/exhibitions
The first major exhibition to explore the supernatural in the art of the Islamic world and how it has been used as a source of guidance and protection over the centuries.

Artweek Arctic
Until 29 January 2017
Oxford University Museum of Natural History
www.oum.ox.ac.uk/visiting/whatson.htm
Arctic-inspired glasswork, paintings, photography, textiles and ceramics created by Oxfordshire Artweeks artists.

Concerts

Family Carol Concert
Christ Church Cathedral
Saturday 3 December, 2.30pm
Tickets £5–£20, concessions and group discounts available
www.chchchoir.org/events
The boys of Christ Church Cathedral Choir present an afternoon concert including popular carols and a couple of special surprises.

Christmas Brass Cushion Concerts
Sunday 11 December, 10am, 11am and 12pm
Jacqueline du Pré Music Building
Tickets £5, family of four £16
www.jdp.st-hildas.ox.ac.uk
Tom and his trumpet introduce children and their families to different instruments and how they make music. Bring your own cushion!

Lectures and Talks

Romanes Lecture 2016
Monday 5 December, 5.45pm
Sheldonian Theatre
Booking essential www.ox.ac.uk/romanes

Oxford Mathematics Christmas Public Lecture
Thursday 15 December, 5pm
Andrew Wiles Building, ROQ
Register by email: external-relations@maths.ox.ac.uk
www.maths.ox.ac.uk/events
Ian Stewart, Emeritus Professor of Mathematics at Warwick University, leads this non-technical and highly illustrated lecture exploring the mathematics of visual illusions.

Café Scientifique
Second Tuesday of every month, 7.30 to 9pm
Oxford University Museum of Natural History
www.rowingservice.com/cafescientifique/oxford
Listen to scientists discuss their current work and its implications for society over a glass of wine.

Professor of Poetry Lecture
Wednesday 8 February, 5.30pm
Examination Schools
www.english.ox.ac.uk/professor-poetry
Join Simon Armitage, Professor of Poetry, for his termly lecture.

Family Friendly

Oxford Botanic Garden Christmas Fair
3 and 4 December, Saturday 10am–8pm, Sunday 10am–4pm
University of Oxford Botanic Garden
Adults £5, concessions £3.50, under-16s free
www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk/event
Enjoy the festivities in the Botanic Garden’s festive (and heated) marquee. Pick up unusual gifts and feast on seasonal favourites.

Recycled Christmas
Saturday 10 December, 10.30am–2.30pm
University of Oxford Botanic Garden
www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk/event
Drop-in event to create decorations to take home or to adorn the Botanic Garden’s own Christmas tree.

China Day
Sunday 29 January, 11am–4pm
Ashmolean Museum
www.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/events
Celebrate the Chinese New Year with storytelling, dragon mask and lantern making.

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

Visit www.ox.ac.uk/events-list for details of a wide range of events taking place across the University
During the Second World War, recalls Sandy Fredman, her grandfather confronted the pro-Nazi, black-shirted fascists who marched through Johannesburg; her father talked of the frequent attacks against Jewish boys by Afrikaans boys during his childhood in the 1930s and 40s. Hers was a generation of what she calls ‘severe’ racial segregation between blacks and whites and some of the harshest racist laws of the South African apartheid regime. Today she is Oxford’s Rhodes Professor of the Laws of the British Commonwealth and the United States, and early memories of that very political time in South Africa imbue her commitment to social justice.

Both sets of grandparents were Jewish migrants from Lithuania. Education was central to the Jewish community in Johannesburg: her grandfather recounted how he and his brothers left school at a young age to work so that his youngest brother could train as a doctor. Sandy remembers that as a young girl she was aware of deep inequalities and oppression against black people. Many black children were schooled in farm buildings, which is why she became involved in a small organisation to build desks for them – until the security police told her father to stop his daughter ‘getting involved in politics’.

After school, she went to the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, where she was a student journalist ‘writing under the shadow of apartheid’. They reported on the terrible state of the black townships and the ‘pass laws’, which subjected black South Africans to the humiliation and indignity of carrying passes to prove their right to remain in the cities. In the 1970s she remembers the multi-racial marches sparked by the death of Hector Pieterson, a 13-year-old boy killed when police opened fire on protesting schoolchildren in Soweto.

Sandy became a journalist for a short spell, reporting on forced removals of black people in rural areas, before winning a scholarship to Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar. She started on the PPE course, but quickly realised that she was more attracted to law: ‘I saw law, as did student activists of my generation in South Africa, as being about human rights and justice. Law for me has always been an instrument of social change.’

After graduating from her BA and BCL law courses, she did her articles as a trainee solicitor at Lawfords, a trades union heavyweight in London, and within months found herself part of the team acting for the Council of Civil Service Unions in the huge ‘GCHQ case’. Margaret Thatcher’s government tried to ban union membership of the civil servants working in intelligence by relying on powers of royal prerogative. Sandy helped construct a legal argument centred on the principle that the unions ‘had a legitimate expectation to be consulted’ on major changes in terms and conditions of work. They won in the High Court, but lost at appeal on grounds of national security. However, they established the principle that the royal prerogative was reviewable – exactly the issue ruled upon in the recent Brexit case in the High Court.

Sandy became aware early on that she valued academic freedom. She is now not only a professor at Oxford and fellow of Pembroke College, but also an Honorary Professor of Law at the University of Cape Town. Her work on labour law, women’s rights, equal pay and anti-discrimination has been translated into many different languages and is cited in courts both in the UK and abroad, including the European Court of Human Rights and the House of Lords.

She has acted as an expert adviser on equality law and labour legislation in the EU, the UK, India, South Africa, Canada and the United Nations. She is also founder of the Oxford Human Rights Hub, a blogging forum that brings together academics, practitioners, and policymakers from across the globe and last month alone had over 60,000 Twitter impressions.

Sandy has continued to be involved in public interest litigation and human rights law in South Africa, especially in relation to the right to education, where she has worked closely with public interest law firm the Legal Resources Centre. On sabattical recently, she assisted the LRC in their litigation demanding that the ‘mud schools’ left over from the apartheid regime should be replaced by proper brick buildings and toilets. She argued that, without proper toilets, the girls felt unsafe. ‘The rights of women and the disadvantaged are central to what I do,’ she explains, ‘and South Africa is where it all started.’
Deep in the bowels of the Bodleian Library lies a cache of children's books, rarely disturbed by scholarly readers. Until, that is, the Weston Library opened its doors to the public.

Six months after the public opening of the Weston, the Bodleian's publishing programme, Bodleian Library Publishing, launched a new children's imprint. ‘Now that we welcome visitors of all ages, we realised there was a gap in our publishing list,’ says Dr Samuel Fanous, Head of Bodleian Library Publishing. ‘So after studying the market, we decided to publish books for children, drawn from or inspired by the collections.’

The Bodleian is home to the Iona and Peter Opie Collection of Children's Books, one of the largest and most important collections of children's literature in English. How does one sift through such a large collection to find suitable material for republication? ‘The story and images must appeal to children today and that eliminates many items,’ says Dr Fanous. ‘Essentially, we are looking for forgotten, timeless classics.’

The children's book market is price-sensitive and highly competitive. Rather than competing directly with the mainstream, Bodleian Library Publishing is concentrating on quality, with hardback books, cloth binding, quality paper and strong attention to colour fidelity and reproduction values. The result is beautiful gift books, with new releases every six months.

It's a formula that seems to be working. The five books published to date have been well received by the market, with buoyant sales and good reviews. The Bookseller, the publishing trade's leading magazine, covered the launch of the new imprint enthusiastically.

Children's book bloggers who wield tremendous influence in this area, have also responded positively. One of these, Jen Drake Morgan, wrote on her website of the first two books, *Whale's Way* and *Penguin’s Way*: ‘My two were transfixed throughout both. They would make perfect presents for any child interested in nature or these animals in particular – or if you want to get them something in between fact and fiction that you know they will read again and again.’

The latest releases, *Sleepy Book* and *What is Red?*, are published this month. *Sleepy Book*, by Charlotte Zolotow and illustrated by Vladimir Bobri, explores the different ways animals sleep – a book for bedtime. *What is Red?*, written by Suzanne Gottleib and also illustrated by Vladimir Bobri, follows a young boy who wonders the meaning of colours as he explores the landscape, featuring strong, vivid hues.

The children's books are part of a well-established list from Bodleian Library Publishing, with some 25 to 30 new titles each year. The books range from trade books (for sale primarily in bookshops and through online retailers), to scholarly publications, facsimiles, editions of out-of-print works, exhibition catalogues and gift books – all drawn from or related to the Bodleian's collections. They are distributed worldwide, with sales last year of over 80,000 units. The programme returns a surplus to the Bodleian annually, helping to fund the conservation, collection and care of the collections. It also fulfils an important outreach mission. ‘The books are the Bodleian’s ambassadors, taking its collections to readers around the world,’ says Dr Fanous.

Spring 2017 will see a clutch of new releases, with titles on the Russian Revolution, Jane Austen (both to commemorate anniversaries) and two new children's books: *The Rain Puddle*, a story about farmyard animals, and *The March Wind*, in which a boy finds a hat that leads him on a variety of adventures. Future children's books will include commissioned titles with relevance to the library and its work, as well as more newly found 'forgotten classics'. The emphasis, says Dr Fanous, will remain on quality of text, images and production values.

More information at www.bodleianshop.co.uk/books/books/childrens.html. The Bodleian shop is offering a 20% discount to staff in the run-up to Christmas (see p2).
Children’s classics revived – top left: *The March Wind* is coming soon; left: stories for small people; above: taking a snooze in *Sleepy Book*.
The field of tissue engineering first came to prominence in the 1990s through a series of skin replacement products for wound healing. Today it’s one of the most talked about interdisciplinary areas in science. Using living cells as engineering materials, experts can now create biological substitutes for bone, cartilage, muscle, organs, blood vessels and much more. Even synthetic meat – meat grown in laboratories that could provide a sustainable way of meeting global demand – makes use of the principles of tissue engineering.

This advancing technology has the potential to address huge healthcare challenges, such as the shortage of organs and tissues for transplant. Zhanfeng Cui, Donald Pollock Professor of Chemical Engineering, is Director of the Oxford Centre for Tissue Engineering and Bioprocessing (OCTEB) and a world leader in his field. He became interested in this emerging area in the late 1990s, spending a sabbatical period in Atlanta at one of the world’s major centres for tissue engineering. On his return to Oxford he immediately initiated a research programme focusing not on creating individual tissues or organs, but on developing the enabling tools necessary to make the most of this technology. These included the ‘scaffolds’ that provide the templates to guide the growth of new tissue and the bioreactors that simulate the body’s natural environment in the laboratory.

‘This initial strategy of focusing on the enabling technologies proved to be the correct one, and we are now benefiting greatly from the development of these tools,’ says Professor Cui, whose unit is based in the Institute of Biomedical Engineering (IBME) in Oxford’s Department of Engineering Science. ‘This type of work relies on interdisciplinary collaboration. When I started out, I couldn’t even tell the difference between human cells and yeast. I was dependent on collaborators in the life sciences and clinicians – in particular, Professor Jill Urban from the Department of Physiology, Anatomy and Genetics, who has worked with me from the very beginning on projects including cartilage physiology and tissue repairs.’

In 2005, Professor Cui established OCTEB, aiming to increase the external visibility of the University’s work in this growing area in the hope of encouraging greater collaboration and attracting major research funding. ‘Over the past decade tissue engineering at Oxford has really gained momentum,’ he says. ‘Apart from the work taking place in IBME and OCTEB, major research projects are being carried out in the Nuffield Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, where surgeons and scientists are creating synthetic tendons, and in the Department of Zoology, where spider silk fibres are being used as tissue engineering scaffolds. Researchers in the Department of Materials are building collagen scaffolds, and in the Department of Chemistry they are producing biomaterials for tissue engineering.’

Several spinout companies have been established in this area, including CN Bio Innovations (formerly Zyoxel), which develops ‘organ-on-chip’ technologies that enable the creation of miniature models of human organs in the lab, and Oxford Biomaterials, which harnesses the unique properties of spider silk for use in the medical device industry.

‘Tissue engineering addresses a host of unmet clinical needs,’ says Professor Cui. ‘Mainly, that’s the shortage of tissues and organs for transplant. For example, we can reasonably expect tissue engineering to provide real solutions for challenges such as heart repair, spine injury repair and diabetes.

Forerunner of a replacement organ? Bio-artificial tissue created by ‘printing’ a mixture of living cells and viscous polymer into a tissue scaffold.
organs for transplant. This need for organs and tissues could be down to disease, such as cancer, or to degeneration or accidents. There are no other cures and no alternatives. In combination with stem cell technology, which makes use of the body’s “blank” cells that can develop into more specific types such as skin cells or muscle cells, tissue engineering has the potential to produce either tailor-made or mass-produced implantable human tissues – and eventually organs – to repair, regenerate or replace deceased or lost tissues.

Among the advances in tissue engineering over the past two decades has been the development of at least five human skin products for the treatment of burns and chronic wounds, while breakthroughs are now being made in the production of bones, blood vessels and cartilage.

‘As well as the trend of combining tissue engineering with stem cell technology, there is a movement towards “in vivo” engineering – that is, assembling tissues or organs inside the body,’ says Professor Cui. ‘We can reasonably expect tissue engineering to provide real solutions for challenges such as heart repair, spine injury repair and diabetes, on top of individualised clinical cases like plastic surgery.’

One key aspect of Professor Cui’s work is the development of bioreactors for tissue engineering. ‘Bioreactors are devices in which well-controlled biological processes can occur,’ he says. ‘We can grow cells in bioreactors, and we can also remove cells from human or animal tissues in bioreactors. This second process, known as decellularisation, is crucial: while we remove the cells and other agents capable of providing an immune response from the tissues, we are able to preserve the extracellular structures as scaffolds for tissue reconstruction.

‘We have developed bioreactors specifically for cancer immunotherapy applications, and we are also working on the technology and materials for use in the regeneration of nerves. Our automatic bioreactors were used to help produce the world’s first bioengineered cornea – a procedure carried out by a company called China Regenerative Medicine International (CRMI).’

Just over 12 months ago Oxford announced a five-year, £7.5m collaboration with CRMI (formerly China Bio-Med Regeneration Technology) for the establishment of a new centre for engineering focusing on stem cell therapies and tissue regeneration, and to support 20 graduate studentships.

‘This collaboration is going to provide a lot of value to the University and will produce really important outcomes in the field of tissue engineering,’ says Professor Cui, who is also playing an integral role in the new Oxford Suzhou Centre for Advanced Research (OSCAR) in China, visited in September by the UK’s Science Minister, Jo Johnson. ‘As I’ve emphasised already, tissue engineering needs multidisciplinary effort and multiple research centres worldwide. Collaborations are essential, so working with Chinese scientists not only provides us with greater resources in terms of funding and manpower, it also gives us access to a pool of talented and enthusiastic students and young researchers in that part of the world.

‘China is also a huge market for tissue engineering products, has an excellent manufacturing base, and is a place where it is much easier to organise clinical trials because of the large population of patients. The products developed there will be cost effective and will eventually benefit patients.’

More information at www.ibme.ox.ac.uk/research/regenerative-medicine/tissue-engineering
Lecture hall, courtroom, meeting place and administrative centre: with a history at least as long as that of the University, the University Church of St Mary the Virgin on Oxford's High Street hasn't just been a place for worship and sermons but has always been at the heart of University life.

The creation of St Mary's as the University Church came about through simple necessity; the developing University needed somewhere to hold lectures and meetings. The church itself perhaps predates the University – there is a record of it in 1086, by which time it appears to have been well established – but in any case, its central location made it an obvious choice. For a while the University Treasury and Court were also based there.

As the University outgrew the church, the various academic and administrative functions were moved elsewhere. This was not always for practical reasons: Archbishop William Laud was so appalled by the events of rowdy degree ceremonies in a church meant, he felt, for worship alone that he began the process of constructing a new building for them in the 1630s. After several delays, including the small matter of the English Civil War, the project resulted in the Sheldonian Theatre.

The church – currently overseen by Co-Acting Priests-in-Charge Revd Alan Ramsey and Revd Charlotte Bannister-Parker – continues to have a place not only in providing pastoral and spiritual care to students and the wider community within Oxford, but also in stimulating and encouraging debate, hosting twice-termly University Sermons and the Bampton Lectures, and holding memorials for prominent members of colleges.

With a motto of Faith seeking understanding, the church aims to provide a bridge between the religious and secular spheres. One current series of lectures is exploring the creative process; another is focused on technology, its impacts and the ethical response to them.

These events simply continue a tradition of St Mary the Virgin being a venue for addressing contemporary issues. This has not always meant open discussion: in 1556 the protestant Archbishop Thomas Cranmer faced his heresy trial in the church before being removed to Broad Street to be burnt at the stake. In 1744 John Wesley, founder of Methodism, preached a sermon criticising senior members of the University and never returned to its pulpit.

In the early 1800s the Oxford Movement’s members preached several sermons calling for a greater connection between Anglicanism and the broader history and traditions of Christianity. The custom of thought-provoking sermons is also maintained, not just at the regular Sunday services but also in the University Sermons, a series which has run for hundreds of years.

Today, alongside the lectures and sermons, people can also attend the Moot, where a short introduction leads to an hour of discussion where nothing is off limits. Despite the name, the Moot is relatively new within the church’s long history, having been started in 1939 to discuss the impact of war. A second incarnation began in 1989, and the church is now hosting its third Moot, though still true to the practical concerns of the wartime original.

Practical Christianity is emphasised by the church. In the Second World War it hosted German–Jewish converts to Christianity who had fled the Nazi regime, and a German Lutheran service is still held monthly. In 1942, Oxfam, as it is now called, was founded at the church. More recently and much closer to home, the church has played a role in the creation of both the Gatehouse drop-in centre on Woodstock Road and the Community Emergency Foodbank.

St Mary’s also employs an education officer to support local schools free of charge. Using the history and architecture of the University Church, pupils can learn history, religious studies, English and even maths; the church also runs a programme of heritage events for adults. If all that seems to be enough for one church, it is not enough for the University Church! It also holds concerts, with international visiting musicians and its own choir included in the programme, and hosts the successful Vaults & Garden Café, based in a building once used for the University’s Congregation.

The central location that so suited the nascent University of Oxford is now an attraction to another group. Every year thousands of tourists climb the 127 steps of the church tower for a view of Oxford’s other dreaming spires – a reminder that the University Church still has a place at the heart of the collegiate University.

“We’re extremely lucky to have such a rich resource right here in the centre of Oxford,’ says Penny Bosall, the Education Officer. ‘It’s a beautiful building and has such a fascinating history. We welcome around 500 schoolchildren a year for tours, and a approximately 2,000 people a year to our events, not to mention the regular congregations for services; we think we see around 450,000 visitors a year. It’s an incredible, lively and engaged place to work and we feel privileged to be able to share the history of the church with a wide range of people.’

Visitors are welcome throughout the year from 9am until 5pm (6pm in July and August).

This year’s International Carol Service will take place at 6.30pm on Sunday 4 December. Details of all services and events can be found at www.universitychurch.ox.ac.uk
Oxford University Innovation, the new name for the University’s research commercialisation company, has hotdesks in a number of locations around the University. Our staff attend these locations to discuss intellectual property, technology licensing, software commercialisation, business ideas or academic consultancy opportunities with Oxford researchers, students and support staff.

See www.innovation.ox.ac.uk/hotdesks for a full list of locations, and details of when Oxford University Innovation staff will be available.

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What are the duties of the Merton porters?
We’re the face of the college and duties include directing visitors, raising flags above the Lodge and dealing with all the incoming and outgoing post. We’re also responsible for college security, locking and unlocking different parts at various times and patrolling the grounds.

Out of term time Merton hosts a lot of conferences and the porters deal with all the check-ins and check-outs. We also book the SCR/MCR and JCR guest rooms, and sign in and out keys for lecture rooms.

Merton is open to the public most days (depending on events in college) and the porters collect the entrance fee and explain where visitors can go.

As Lead Porter, I’m responsible for the day-to-day supervision of two lodges, one on the main site on Merton Street and the other on Holywell Street. Both are manned 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. We usually work three 12-hour shifts, 6.30am till 6.30pm or the other way around, then three days off. There are 10 porters in total: four on duty at night and six during the day.

What do you most enjoy and most dislike about the job?
I love meeting new people, answering their questions and solving problems. Questions I’ve been asked include: ‘Where is Merton College Lodge?’; ‘How do I get to Merton College?’ and my favourite, ‘Which college is that one?’ I still haven’t got to the bottom of that one. I dislike the early starts – I’m always in by 6am.

As a child, what did you want to be?
I wanted to be a chef – the result, I think, of years cooking in my Nan’s kitchen. My first job was as a trainee chef at a seafood restaurant in Essex.

So how did you get from there to here?
I worked back-of-house in restaurants and hotels, then moved to front-of-house and became a manager. I moved on to night clubs, then live music venues. At the age of 38, I went to university and did a history degree. I’ve been a porter for the last four years – 13 months at New College, then here at Merton.

OK, spill the beans. What are the best and worst student pranks you’ve seen?
The best was a two-foot-high pink plastic pig suspended above the gardens in New College, by a couple of finalists who wanted to leave their mark. The worst had to be when a student from another college was thrown in the Cherwell and landed on a broken bottle. I had to administer first aid. You could see the bone in his foot.

Are there any college traditions you particularly enjoy?
I enjoy the Time Ceremony in late October, when Merton students put on full academic dress and wait up till 2am British Summer Time. For the next hour, until 2am Greenwich Mean Time, they walk backwards round the Fellows’ Quad, linking arms and spinning at the corners. Port is the traditional accompaniment. The point of all this is, of course, to make sure the clocks go back successfully.

Which part of college do you like best?
I enjoy being in Mob Quad, said to be the oldest quadrangle in Oxford, and the Chapel because it’s so peaceful.

What do you always carry with you?
A master set of keys and a walkie-talkie radio. If you forget the keys it’s a long walk back to the Lodge. (Trust me, I’ve done it!)

What activities do you enjoy outside work?
I like most sports (watching now), wine tastings, bike riding and live music/festivals. I also run a bar at a couple of festivals – I’m mainly into Indie/American folk-style music.

What’s your most prized possession?
My road bike – my friends all chipped in to buy it for my 40th birthday.

If you could do anything on your day off, what would it be? And who would you take with you?
I’d watch England v France rugby at Twickenham with my oldest friend, Brian. I’ve known him for over 35 years – we grew up together – but even if a few years pass between our meetings, it always feels like it was yesterday.

And finally, what would your colleagues be surprised to learn about you?