

2007 user surveys: IS doing OK, striving to do better

Three user surveys were carried out during Semester 2:

- **Libqual:** online survey, 457 responses, library questions only, third time survey run;
- **IS user satisfaction:** online survey, 468 responses, on a range of IS services, second time survey run;
- **Main Library:** ‘airport style’ survey, 647 responses, library questions only, first time survey run.

The three surveys obtained a total of 1,573 responses from separate individuals (64% students, 36% staff). IS now has a considerable amount of data to analyse, with a large number of comments – some of them quite lengthy.

The split between staff and students varied between the surveys. The Main Library survey was virtually all students, while the other surveys had higher percentages of staff responses. One of the surveys was only undertaken in the Main Library and in the other two, over half of the respondents said that the Main Library was their main site.

There is considerable consistency in the surveys’ results.

Services

There was a high level of satisfaction with services, and a significant number of positive comments were made about the helpfulness of IS staff.

Levels of satisfaction are generally up on previous years. Critical comments were again made about the “cumbersome” nature of the Inter-Library Loan service, and this issue is being addressed.

In the Main Library, one of the main concerns is the absence of

staff on the upper floors to provide assistance, and the need to improve signage.

Longer opening hours for the Main Library continue to be requested, with a significant proportion of students wanting opening till midnight during the week and longer hours at the weekends. Some extension of hours in some of the sites and at particular times of the year is requested. Training in the use of the library and its collections by staff is an area where attention needs to be focused.

Accommodation

Given the high number of respondents who use the Main Library as their main site it is no surprise that many of the concerns relate to this building, and these are of course being tackled as part of MLRP. Problems with noise predominate in the Main Library, but are also reported at the Darwin and Moray House libraries.

Collections

There are clearly significant concerns about the quality of both print and digital collections. Many of the comments, especially from postgraduates and academic staff, concern the perceived poor range of books and journals, and often make unfavourable comparisons with other universities.

In addition, there are some concerns about the ease of access to digital collections. Problems with finding print materials in the Main Library remain a key issue, with requests made for fewer sequences, better signage, and also concerns about books simply not being on the shelves.

Richard Battersby (IS)

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Clue: this is history, and the crane is shifting a computer with about – oh – 1% of the power of a modern laptop... (see Computer History Project on page 7) More hi-tech removals on page 2.

One sixtieth of HECToR arrives

The new national high-performance computing service, HECToR, will open in October 2007. In preparation for this, we are carrying out extensive building work, and installing new power supplies and cooling equipment, at the HECToR site on the outskirts of Edinburgh.

An important milestone was passed on 30th April when a single IBM XT4 unit was delivered. This will be used to explore the way the system works, to finalise operations procedures, and for staff training. The single unit includes 80 dual-core Opteron processors and directly-attached disk storage. The installation went smoothly: by 2nd May the unit was already powered up and running diagnostics.

The Phase 1 HECToR system will include 60 similar units.

John Fisher (EPCC)



Photo: Peter Turffy

New Research Computing facility delivered

The Edinburgh Compute and Data Facility has taken delivery of the first phase of its new compute cluster. Along with the existing Research SAN, this facility is now known as 'Eddie'.

Eddie's purpose is to provide advanced computing for researchers at Edinburgh University and its associated institutions, and there are already plans to use it to work on a wide variety of problems including brain imaging, modelling of the atmosphere for climate change, analysing data from the Large Hadron Collider at Cern, and gene therapy research.

Eddie initially consists of over 500 cpu cores and 160Tb of storage, with a second phase increasing this to over 1,500 cpu cores and 230Tb of storage. Backup and archiving facilities for researchers' data are also available. The first Beta users are currently testing Eddie, and a full service is expected to be launched in late June.

If you think Eddie could help you with your research, please have a look at Eddie's full details, along with costings and up-to-date news, at <http://www.is.ed.ac.uk/ECDF/>

Mike Baker (NeSC)

edikt2 workshop

The edikt2 project supports the community around the University of Edinburgh that uses research computing, and facilitates technical discussion amongst users. It spans a diverse range of organisations within the University from the School of Chemistry to the Brain Imaging Research Centre at the Western General Hospital. In order to support the computational research community, edikt2 hosts a series of quarterly workshops. The next workshop will be held from 1:30pm on 13th June in the Rutherford Building (Room G26/ Lecture theatre 2), and will focus on data management and the Edinburgh Compute and Data Facility – ECDF.

The first session of the meeting will cover data management. George Beckett of EPCC will present DiGS, Distributed Grid Storage, a data management system that combines the distributed resources of the collaborators into a robust facility called the UKQCD Grid. However, DiGS may be applied to other branches of research, such as bioinformatics. The session will finish with an open discussion of data usage in the University, where you can describe how data are used in your research. This issue is common between all of the participants of the edikt2 project. For example Cell Biology was keeping data archives on DVD, but has recently moved to a more stable storage system. You are keenly encouraged to bring a short (no more than five minutes, please) PowerPoint presentation on the day on either a CD or USB stick. This will be a unique chance to get together with other researchers around the University to find common ground on handling the massive amount of data that can be generated doing research.

The second half of the workshop will be dedicated to the new ECDF – a purpose-built 512-core computer, tightly coupled to the University's Storage Area Network. Each core has the equivalent of 2GB of memory with four cores on each server. This session will be run by Information Services, the people behind ECDF, and will describe the hardware, its costs and how to gain access.

For more information on the edikt2 project see <http://www.edikt.org/>

There is more information about the workshop on the edikt2 website, or email J.Hill@epcc.ed.ac.uk.

Jon Hill (EPCC)

edikt 
e-science data information
& knowledge transformation

UK research goes to The Depot

Open access to scholarly research is increasingly desirable and indeed required, for example by funding bodies. JISC – which funds the UK’s academic computing – is making sure that researchers at universities which do not have their own repository can still present their work in the open marketplace, through a project known as **The Depot**.

The general intention is that every UK university should eventually have its own repository, making up a national ‘RepositoryNet’. Edinburgh already has, in the form of the Edinburgh Research Archive. Until everyone else catches up, the JISC Repository and Preservation Programme will be running The Depot as a national repository.

The Depot will be launched in early June, with links to institutions which already have their own repositories, to avoid duplication. It will be searchable through the Intute Repository Search project, at <http://www.intute.ac.uk/>

You can find out about The Depot, and access it, at <http://edina.ac.uk/news/newsline12-1/depot.html>

The Edinburgh Research Archive – whose software and hardware have recently been upgraded to improve the service – is at <http://www.era.lib.ed.ac.uk/>

Peter Burnhill (IS)

Protecting copyright

The University has received over a hundred complaints since October about our networks being used to share copyright-protected material, and that number is growing steadily. Every complaint has to be investigated by IS staff, at considerable cost in time and effort. To avoid this distraction from other more productive tasks, IS proposes to block the main P2P networking protocols on the central EdLAN VPN service for a trial period of three months, starting on 3rd July. If this intervention is successful, it could be made permanent.

Please let me know (email B.Gilmore@ed.ac.uk) if this block would cause you significant problems.

Brian Gilmore (IS)

Protecting your Mailbox

The IS mail service has started using the Spamhaus PBL blocklist to prevent mail entering the University network from listed end-user IP addresses. This should filter out another 15–20% of the spam ocean which is constantly pounding at the University’s shores, and mean less unwanted clutter in your mailbox. An explanation of what this means, our expectations, potential problems, and mitigating procedures, is at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/fmd/unix/docs/mail/junk/spamhaus-pbl.html>

Scott Larnach (IS)

After the Upgrade: MyEd moving forward

The new version of MyEd, released in April, allows more specific tabs and channels for each user, resulting in more personalised default layouts and more control of your own display – so your layout can be as busy or as simple as you like. We decided to give you lots of channels by default, as it is easier for you to delete them from your layout than have to find and add them yourself.

The latest version lets us deliver channels directly to your layout automatically as they become available, so you will be kept up to date with all the latest content. Another benefit of the upgrade is the ability to use any channel immediately, by selecting the ‘Use Now’ link in the Channel Catalogue; this is useful for channels that you don’t wish to add permanently to your layout.

The upgrade improves integration with other projects. We will be able to align MyEd’s look-and-feel with the new University Website, and any web page will be able to target specific channels in MyEd. You can use one of the four currently available ‘skins’ until the new look-and-feel is ready. MyEd can also now support the EUCLID project, the first phase of which will go live this Autumn for applicants and enquirers.

Thanks to all who have submitted feedback since the upgrade; it is extremely useful in determining the way forward. If you have any comments on MyEd, or the upgrade, please do use the feedback form on the pre-login pages of MyEd.

We have had a lot of feedback regarding the amount of screen space taken up by individual RSS news feeds, so we have removed each individual feed with the aim of replacing them with a new RSS News Reader, combining your news feeds into a single channel, freeing up more screen space, and also allowing you to add your own favourite feeds. This will be available shortly.

You can find out about MyEd developments through MyEd Announcements at <https://www.myed.ed.ac.uk/>

We will be presenting future plans for MyEd at a series of roadshows over the coming weeks, and would welcome the opportunity to hear any comments or queries you may have. You can book a place through the Events Booking channel in MyEd once dates have been finalised. Alternatively, if you would like us to arrange a tailored roadshow for your specific area, please let us know.

There are MyEd Beginner Training courses on 11th and 28th June; check the Events Booking channel in MyEd for further details.

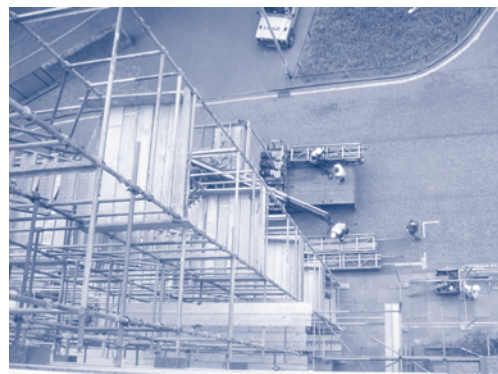
Remember you can get *BITs* headlines in MyEd by adding its channel to your layout!

Liza Zamboglou (IS)

Main Library Transformation: and so it begins

After months of detailed planning, the project to transform the University's Main Library Building in George Square is under way. Interserve has been appointed as contractor, and participated in a very successful 'partnership meeting' in May at which all those most directly involved with the project met each other and established a positive working relationship. The first task is to remove some 150 tons of shelving from the fifth and sixth floors, and to prepare these floors for a complete transformation over the coming year. A communication group has been set up to ensure that everyone affected by the work will know what is going on, as they need to.

Sheila Cannell (IS)



Convenor sought for eLearning Forum

The newly-formed eLearning Professionals and Practitioners Forum is seeking nominations for the role of Convenor. All candidates should have a substantial engagement with eLearning as part of their work in the University of Edinburgh.

Nominations should be made to the Returning Officer, Katherine Novosel, by 5pm on Friday 22nd June. Further information about the election and the Forum itself is available at <http://www.elearn.malts.ed.ac.uk/elpp/>

eLPP working group

IT Professionals' Forum

The Forum is putting the finishing touches to its committee, which will shortly take over from the interim working group to carry forward the full range of planned activities.

Meanwhile, there are meetings this month about secure filesystems and email headers, and with the Knowledge Strategy Committee.

All details are on the Forum's website at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/ucsinfo/ctees/itforum/>

James Jarvis (IS)

Cultural Nourishment: Lunchtime Lecture Series

The gorgeous, the grotesque, and the gilded! Want to find out more about the University's cultural treasures? Come along to the Cultural Nourishment Lecture Series!

The lectures are an informal introduction to the diverse collections of the University of Edinburgh – from snakes to saxophones through intriguing, strange, and thought-provoking topics. Presentations will be given by a range of curators, archivists, librarians, academics, postgraduates, and enthusiasts from all areas of the University. The lectures are open to everyone, and last only 30 minutes, so enough time to grab a sandwich and a bit of cultural nourishment at the same time!

The lunchtime lectures are scheduled for the last Thursday of every month at 1:10pm, and are spread across the year over three locations: the Central campus, King's Buildings campus, and Little France. There is further information on the Cultural Audit website, at <http://tweed.lib.ed.ac.uk/audit/Web/lunchtimelectures.html>

Emily Peppers (IS)

Librarian turns author

Graham Pryor's *Preferred Lies* is a fast-moving tale of guilt and deceit that threads its way dramatically across three episodes of cultural upheaval – through the struggle and aftermath of two world wars until its denouement during the social revolution of the 1960s.

In keeping with the *modus operandi* of the University's Digital Library

team, this book has been published online, with printing on demand. You can order a copy from Amazon or direct from the publisher via

<http://www.lulu.com/content/731003>



Graham Pryor (IS)

Next-generation VLE for Edinburgh?

A review of online learning systems within the University has been carried out to assist in planning for the future provision of an integrated virtual learning environment for the University.

The drivers for the review included finding new ways for the University to meet its aspirations to provide excellence in teaching and learning, and meet students' changing expectations for access to electronic resources and interactive online opportunities.

There is also a demand from staff for increased direct user support (training and information provision, support for creation of online resources/activities and for exploring innovations) for those wishing to use online systems for teaching. There is growing interest in, and uptake of, third-party tools and services such as Web 2.0 applications.

Moving to an online learning system acceptable to the widest possible community of users could significantly reduce duplication, and would improve opportunities for teaching and support staff to share expertise and resources. It would provide a community of practice with an improved capacity for responding to innovations in teaching and learning online.

The review group considered the general online learning context and the specific circumstances in the University of Edinburgh, and carried out interviews and surveys of staff and students to create an overview of the current context and use of online learning environments. The group also considered the range of commercial and open-source environments available.

Possible options for future central provision were narrowed down to:

- 1) continue to use WebCT Vista – which might exclude an important section of the University community;
- 2) move to an open-source environment – for example SAKAI or Moodle which were considered the 'front-runners'. This would require significant ongoing investment in developing tools and services;
- 3) create and support an in-house environment sufficiently flexible to meet user needs across the entire institution. This would require both significant investment in software developers and in-depth analysis of user requirements in order to design detailed specifications.

The review group has recommended that the next phase of the project should examine Option 2 and explore whether an Open Source system (specifically SAKAI) will meet the needs of the University as a whole, better than existing provision. A decision will need to be taken within the coming financial year, to have a system ready to fulfil the University's requirements by 2010.

The full Phase One report and recommendations are available (to Edinburgh University staff only) at <http://www.elearn.malts.ed.ac.uk/appse/mlereview/>

The report has been submitted to the Knowledge Strategy Committee who will set in train Phase Two of the review process. Information about this project as it develops will be available from the University's projects website at <http://www.projects.ed.ac.uk/>

Wilma Alexander (IS)



ISIS

ISIS – Information Skills and IT Skills – is a project led by Information Services and funded by the Principal's e-Learning Fund. ISIS aims to foster the transferable skills which underpin successful academic and post-university life, and to integrate directly with the developing institutional strategy on Personal Development Portfolios (PDP). The end product will be a suite of short, online, self-study units delivered through WebCT. The project moved to a testing phase at the end of May, and is on course for its pilot launch in late September 2007.

Much of the material which forms the core of each ISIS topic already exists in various forms across the University and externally. Where possible, proven existing materials are reused, or adapted for use in an online context, in preference to creating new materials.

Undergraduates will be able to browse ISIS for self-help, but it is hoped that as teaching staff find their way around the materials they will extract units from ISIS to use in their own courses, and contribute their own material or suggestions.

If you would like to become involved in ISIS in the lead-up to its launch, please contact Charlie Mansfield (email Charlie.Mansfield@ed.ac.uk) or Caroline Stirling (email Caroline.Stirling@ed.ac.uk). The project website is at <http://www.elearn.malts.ed.ac.uk/isis/>

Charlie Mansfield (IS)

Website Development Project update

Work on the delivery of the new system is progressing well. Our recent focus has been on working with the staff whose contributions are vital to the successful launch of the new site. We are building a comprehensive list of all staff involved in the maintenance of contact details, and the first web publishers have been trained in the use of the content management system.

University Contacts Directory

The new University Contacts Directory will be launched this Summer as part of the ongoing Website Development Project. We have been contacting all colleagues with responsibility for managing staff contact information.

Anyone involved in this activity will need to take action to ensure that their unit is correctly represented in the new website's search facility. Several checks need to take place over the Summer, and *it is vital that all relevant staff make contact with us now* so that we can keep them informed of progress.

Read more at <http://tinyurl.com/2cb98z>

Phase 1 web publishers try out new system

Pilot training sessions in the use of the new web publishing system were held in late April. Web publishers working towards the initial launch of the new University Website took part.

The half-day sessions were led by the Project's Technical Manager, Charlotte Moon, who was very pleased with how the pilot sessions went, and with the positive feedback from participants.

All users of the new web publishing system will be required to attend editorial and system training sessions before they are granted access. However, during these initial rollout phases, training is by invitation only.

More information

For more information and latest news on the Website Development Project, see <http://www.ed.ac.uk/websiteproject/>

Contact

If you would like to discuss any issues regarding the development of the University Website, or contribute your views, please contact Dawn Ellis (tel 506379, email website.project@ed.ac.uk).

Neil Allison (CAM)

Web 2.0 consultation report available

Following on from an earlier report on Collaborative Tools and Web 2.0, Information Services has conducted a wider consultation on Web 2.0 issues within the University. The objectives of the consultation were:

- to ensure that IS has a good understanding of the Web 2.0 requirements and expectations of researchers and teaching staff;
- to identify existing areas of expertise and good practice, and to develop ideas for leveraging that experience more widely; and thus
- to inform the development of IS services in the Web 2.0 space.

The consultation process, carried out by Çuna Ekmekcioglu, included two focus groups on learning and teaching use of Web 2.0 and one on research use. These were followed up by a number of semi-structured interviews.

The final report on the consultation process is now available at <http://www.is.ed.ac.uk/pub/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=290&a=1196>

The revised IS Action Plan is at http://www.is.ed.ac.uk/Web_2.0_Initiative

Chris Adie (IS)

More Web 2.0

Mojiti is a kind of meta-portal for video content – not a hosting service like YouTube, but enabling you to bring together diverse content that interests you, from a whole range of portals, into one online front end. It's like an online bookmarking service for video, but with the content virtually 'present'. See <http://mojiti.com/>

Listio is a community-based directory of Web 2.0 applications and services, where you get to vote for your favourites, leave comments for other members to read, build your own list of applications, and share them with friends and colleagues. See <http://www.listio.com/>

Is Education 1.0 Ready for Web 2.0 Students? This article explores the meaning and application of Web 2.0, and evaluates how Net Generation students will reshape institutions and their practices. See <http://innovateonline.info/index.php?view=article&id=393>
Teaching and Learning with the Net Generation. Students and teachers must increasingly consider innovative ways of teaching and learning. This article evaluates ways in which educators are adapting teaching in order to guarantee effective learning by a generation of digital natives. See <http://innovateonline.info/index.php?view=login&id=382>

*Hugh Dailly, Caroline Porteous
(JISC Regional Support Centres)*

The Web has definitely arrived...

Women in the 18–34 age group have become the biggest users of the Internet, according to new research. The BBC story is at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/6662469.stm>

(Editor)

IT training in June and July

The following IT courses are free to most staff and postgraduates at Edinburgh University. Course synopses and later dates are on our website, where you can also book online: <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/cts/courses/>

Date	Course	Venue*
June Mon 4	SQL	GS
Mon 4	PhotoShop	GS
Tue 5	Dreamweaver	GS
Tue 5	WebCT Vista Fundamentals	GS
Wed 6	Access Introduction	GS
Thu 7	EndNote	GS
Tue 12	Minitab	GS
Tue 12	Video Editing	GS
Thu 14	Producing a Thesis	GS
Thu 14	WebCT Vista Fundamentals	GS
Thu 14	Thunderbird	GS
Tue 19	FileMaker	GS
Thu 21	Excel Introduction	GS
Thu 21	Editing Web Pages with Contribute	GS
Tue 26	HTML and Web Authoring	GS
Wed 27	PowerPoint	GS
Thu 28	Intermediate SPSS	GS
July Tue 3	Excel Advanced	GS
Tue 3	Outlook 2003 for Windows	GS
Wed 4	EndNote	GS
Wed 4	Dreamweaver	GS
Thu 5	Word Introduction	GS
Mon 9	Access Introduction	KB
Mon 9	Access Application Development 2	GS
Tue 10	Unix 1: Introduction	GS
Tue 10	PhotoShop	GS
Wed 11	Reference Manager	GS
Thu 12	Scanning Tutorial	KB
Tue 17	Database Design	GS
Tue 17	Word Intermediate	GS
Wed 18	Excel Introduction Part 1	GS
Thu 19	Unix 2	GS
Thu 19	Introduction to InDesign	GS
Mon 23	Unix 3: Shell Programming	GS
Tue 24	Excel Introduction Part 2	GS
Tue 24	Introduction to Mac OS X Part 1	GS
Tue 24	Thunderbird	GS
Wed 25	Access Intermediate	GS
Wed 25	Creating Accessible Websites	GS
Thu 26	SQL	GS
Thu 26	Word Mail Merge	GS
Thu 26	Introduction to Mac OS X Part 2	GS
Tue 31	Video Editing	GS
Tue 31	Editing Web Pages with Contribute	GS

* Venues: GS, George Square area; KB, King's Buildings

Jenni Reeves (IS)

ALT-C 2007: Learning Object competition

Intrallect – an eLearning company spun out from the University in June 2000 – is sponsoring a Learning Object competition to be held in conjunction with this year's ALT-C exhibition in Nottingham. The panel of judges will be looking for exciting, innovative Learning Objects to showcase at the exhibition, and the overall winners will be presented with their prize at the ALT-C dinner on 5th September. The closing date for entries is **30th June**. There are full details at http://www.intrallect.com/ALT-C_LO_Comp_Info.pdf

Nora Mogeys (IS)

Do you use Questionmark Perception?

If you use this method of eAssessment in any of your courses you might be interested in a meeting in Loughborough on 9th July at which you will be able to meet Questionmark senior management and technical staff at the 2007 Questionmark Academic Symposium. Details are provided at <http://www.questionmark.com/uk/events/symposium/>

Wilma Alexander (IS)

Informatics Jamboree 2007

This year's event takes place on 28th June, with the annual Milner Lecture as its centrepiece. There will be talks and posters until 4pm, then the Lecture followed by a reception. There will be a Graduation Reception and prizegiving in Surgeons Hall on the 26th. The Computer History Conference opens on the 27th, and continues on the 29th along with an alumni reunion and the traditional ceilidh in the Appleton Tower Concourse. It is hoped to include tours of the new Informatics Forum, due for completion this Autumn. Jamboree information is at <http://www.inf.ed.ac.uk/events/jamboree/2007/>

You can find out about the Edinburgh Computer History Project at <http://history.dcs.ed.ac.uk/>

The 2007 Milner Lecture

The Laboratory for Foundations of Computer Science presents the 2007 Milner Lecture: Ronald Fagin, IBM (Almaden) will give a talk entitled "Finite Model Theory – How It All Began", at 4pm on 28th June 2007, in Lecture Theatre 5, Appleton Tower. This is a public lecture, open to all.

Full details are provided at <http://www.lfcs.informatics.ed.ac.uk/milner/>

Julian Bradfield (Informatics)

Tasters of Summer

Information Services is running several of its popular one-hour 'taster' sessions for staff and postgraduates in June and July, focusing on specific aspects of the software we use in order to help increase our productivity.

Forthcoming topics include:

- Creating a table of contents in Word 19th June
- Excellent formatting: making your Excel spreadsheets look good 27th June
- Signing up: creating a tutorial sign-up sheet in WebCT 5th July
- Using wikis and blogs in education 17th July
- Where did I put that file: filenames, folders and drives 23rd July
- Getting it together with Word, PowerPoint and Excel 31st July

All sessions take place from 1pm to 2pm in the Wolfson Teaching Room in the Main Library, George Square. Sessions are in demonstration format; no booking required.

For more information about the taster sessions, and the content covered by each, see <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/cts/courses/coursesanddates.html>

Shona Matchett (IS)



Stargazing videoseminar

A recording of May's 'ITfutures' videoseminar on issues around mobile computing is now available.

June's videoseminar, on 'semantic markup and structured information', takes place on the 13th.

Details of both events are on the ITfutures website, at

<http://www.itfutures.ed.ac.uk/>

Jessie Paterson (CHSS)



BITs and pieces

Chatbots go head-to-head

The competition is hotting up to pass Alan Turing's test for artificial intelligence: whether a human being can tell the difference between a human being and a computer through typed conversation. You can try two of the world's most successful 'chatbots' for yourself:



Alice

Alice: <http://www.alicebot.org/> ('chat' link at top left)

Jabberwacky:

<http://www.jabberwacky.com/>

These two have recently been pitted against each other, and have produced 'conversations' like this:

A: Do you dream?

J: Yes, I dream.

A: It goes without saying. Do you remember your dreams?

J: I remember them vividly.

A: What do you remember about it?

J: I think I shouldn't flirt with a robot.

There are more examples at

<http://discovermagazine.com/2007/brain/i-chat-therefore-i-am>

Encyclopedia of Life launched

The Encyclopedia of Life is a global project to collect information about every living species, to create an ecosystem of websites that makes key information about life on Earth accessible to anyone, anywhere in the world. It will operate along the lines of Wikipedia. The potential of collecting written descriptions, photographs, video, audio, maps and more is demonstrated at <http://www.eol.org/home.html>

Technology speeding up the pace of life

A study sponsored by the British Council has shown that walking speed in 32 cities around the world is increasing, and the reason is thought to be the impact of technology on modern life. Singapore showed a 30% increase to become the planet's fastest city. London took 12th place, Edinburgh being nearly 10% slower (and 2.5% slower than Belfast).

The BBC's story is at

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/6614643.stm>

Nick Stroud (IS)

EDINBURGH BITs

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Nick Stroud, Information Services.

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<http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/ucinfo/acronyms.html>

NB: if you fail to access a URL shown in BITs, please email BITs@ed.ac.uk.

Contributions to BITs are welcomed.

Copy deadline for July BITs:

Friday 15th June