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SUBMISSION DETAILS

If you would like to submit an article, or tell us about some news, please email: **BITS@ed.ac.uk**

The deadline for submissions for the next issue of **BITS** is **5 September 2014**.

To keep up to date with IS news:
www.ed.ac.uk/is/news

FSC LOGO

Editorial

Change, change and more change. IS has a new division and two new directors for the new academic year 2014 –15. Find out more on our news page. And we say goodbye to John Scally. But he's only going down the road and he reassures us that we shall all still work together in some capacity. And that's just it. Edinburgh casts its spell. People come and go and many come back, to share their experience or ideas.

And meanwhile, colleagues in IS continue to deliver innovation and support across the University, be it in the form of clever data management and discovery in the DCC (see page 5) or the widening of access to key resources such as the University's rare and unique collections (see page 7). Freshers should have a warmer, more inclusive welcome this year too, with yet more social media platforms being used to keep in touch (see page 10), and improvements to their web pages.

And I can't close this editorial without mentioning how near we are to the beginning of the rollout of a new content management tool for the University's website (pages 2 and 3). Colleagues across IS and Communications and Marketing have been working hard to develop a tool which will eventually replace Polopoly as the core content management system and which, in turn, will deliver responsive web pages. Yes, content which you will be able to read easily on your mobile phone or tablet. The whole new 70,000 page site to be complete and migrated by the end of next year.

Last year we won an International Standard of Excellence Award for our website. We can't let standards slip and we must keep driving forward. So by next year our digital presence will have to be even better.

But of course, we all know that seeking to be the best is what we do here, which is why we come and go and come back again, or simply stay to do more, and better. Would it be fair to say that the University has most of us inescapably in its thrall?

Dawn Ellis
Director, University Website Programme

IS people in the news

Back **to the future**

John Scally

> Thank you to all of the staff and students who have made my time at the University the highlight of my career – so far.

It was with a mix of happiness and a heavy heart that I signed a contract a few weeks ago to become the next National Librarian and CEO of the National Library of Scotland (the institution where I learned my trade as a young curator). Having been caught up in a very searching recruitment process, I had not fully appreciated what a wrench it would be to leave the University, a place that I have been immersed in for over a decade.

In that time, the Main Library has been transformed, the Murray Library built, a slew of research and learning projects funded and delivered, and annual library collections expenditure on digital content has exceeded 85% of budget. The pace of change and the challenges that we faced has been thrilling and the next period looks just as absorbing, with Open Access, Research Data Management services rolling out, and an increasing focus in the Library and Museums on adding real and measurable value to the research and teaching activity of the University.

My ambition for the National Library is to bring that sense of excitement and sheer pleasure in delivering excellent services to a diverse audience. It is a good time to be going to the National Library since there are so many opportunities to develop the digital and physical collections, deliver an outstanding research portfolio and build on an already accomplished public engagement programme. The relationship between the National Library and Higher Education is an area to which I will be paying particular attention, so it is likely that I will continue to be seen around the University. Thank you to all of the staff and students who have made my time at the University the highlight of my career – so far.

New Division in IS, Learning Teaching and Web Services

Melissa Highton joins us as the Director of the newly created Learning, Teaching and Web Services Division.

Melissa says: "It is an exciting time to be working in IS, with a lot of change going on at various levels. Over the coming year I will be reviewing our service portfolio and identifying opportunities for improvements and new initiatives to support academic practice within the institution, working closely with the other IS directors and the support teams to put our plans in place."

Details of the new Division will feature in the next issue of BITS. Read the 60 second interview with Melissa on page 13.

Tony Weir New Director of IT Infrastructure

Tony Weir, a long-serving member of IT Infrastructure, now takes on the role of Director.

Tony says: "With the pace of technology change and the reliance the University places on its IT infrastructure both increasing, it's an exciting time to take this post.

It's apparent to me that despite having worked in IT Infrastructure at the University from a time when my hair was a different shade, I have a lot to learn both about the function of the division and of our wider relationship across the University. I'm looking forward to those 'getting to know you' chats and to learning what we do well and what we need to improve on."

Full steam ahead with the new University CMS

Rachel Bhandari

It's an exciting time for those of us working to replace the University's current Polopoly content management system (CMS) with a new Drupal-based system. The project continues to make good progress, with the project team close to rolling out the system in the first phase launch.

What's new?

- A new web CMS to replace the current Polopoly service.
- New navigation and content structures, optimised for popular screen sizes and web browsing devices.
- A design framework intended to shape a more consistent user experience across the University's whole online estate.

Options

The new system will offer a range of choices for schools and units within the new system framework from:

- **Central CMS service** - the fully supported, consistent, centrally managed CMS.
- **UoE Drupal CMS distribution** - a locally installed version, customised to meet specific business requirements.

Schools and units wishing to use the UoE Drupal CMS distribution will be able to access a copy in August 2014, when the University Website Programme (UWP) website launches. The distribution will also include a roadmap for feature enhancements that will be delivered through 2014/15.

Migration and timescales

Development of the system began last September and will continue to the end of the academic year 2014/15. At the same time, the project, (delivered by a team of staff from UWP, IS Applications and Communications and Marketing), is now at the stage of testing migration processes and planning for rollout.

It is a huge task, with around 300 websites to move from the current Polopoly CMS to the new system between October 2014 and the end of December 2015, when we aim to have all Polopoly websites published in Drupal.

The new CMS will be improved throughout the academic year 2014/15, with new features and enhancements released at regular intervals. This will influence the timescale for migrating sites.

> "
>
> Dawn Ellis,
> UWP Director
>
> **We're working to make the migration process as automated as possible. However, because there will be changes to the information architecture and content structures some editorial work will be needed. But the Drupal team will be there to support web publishers and site managers throughout the process.**

How to stay in touch

UWP provides updates on the CMS project at the Web Publishers Community sessions: **http://bit.ly/UoE-WPC**

The UWP website has news about the project: **www.ed.ac.uk/ website-programme**

Migration and distribution timeline: **June 2014 – June 2015**

June 2014
System and migration process testing with UWP website.

August 2014
UWP website launch.
September 2014
Distribution copy of CMS available.

November 2014
First early adopters' websites launch.

Provisional future releases of CMS enhancements
January 2015
April 2015
June 2015

What can I do to prepare?

Polopoly site?

Don't worry if you have not heard from us directly yet. We will give you plenty of notice before your site is migrated. Phased releases based on available functionality in the system will be communicated from September 2014.

Meanwhile, to see what you can do to get your site in the best shape for migration, see the advice on the UWP website:
http://bit.ly/Drupal-migration-timescales

Non-Polopoly site?

Once an outline plan for migrating Polopoly-driven websites is available, those outside of the Polopoly service may consider moving to the Drupal-based system.

The new system will be available to schools and units not using Polopoly, but the automated migration service will not.

UWP operates a drop-in Website Clinic, which can help you prepare your website for a move to the new system.
Book a session at: **http://bit.ly/uwp-website-clinics**

During June 2014 the project team ran migration workshops for technical and non-technical website owners and stakeholders. The workshop presentations are available on the Drupal development wiki: **http://bit.ly/drupal-comms-log**

Responding
to a mobile world

Neil Allison

A quick search on when internet usage on mobile devices will overtake desktops turns up a lot of graphs. But they all say pretty much the same thing: it's about to happen, if indeed it hasn't happened already.

Smaller, touch screen devices are going to dominate for the foreseeable future and our website needs to accommodate this trend in user behaviour.

With the arrival of Drupal from this summer onwards comes a shift in our website design. The challenge for us now is to plan a harmonious migration.

The big change will be in how the website works for small screen devices. The new design is responsive. This means that all the elements on the page – the navigation, the words, the images, everything – adjust automatically depending on the device you're using.

The new design represents collaboration across a team pulling in a range of skills, and it's going to grow and evolve as time goes on. New developments, new website content structures and most importantly changing website visitor behaviours make this inevitable.

More about how and why the website design is evolving:

http://website-programme-blog.is.ed.ac.uk/evolving-website-design-navigation/

Project focus

Launched this Summer: TREE (Technology Resources for Educational Enhancement)

Susie Greig

Over the last year I've been working with my colleague, Steph Hay, on a project to deliver an interactive educational resource discovery tool. The tool will act as a bridge between the technology enhanced learning (TEL) services offered in Information Services and those who want to use them. The drivers for this project were the need to:

- raise awareness of TEL services
- provide information 24/7
- provide information that people can find for themselves
- communicate the versatility of our tools.

We have been using an agile methodology for this project, keeping users at the centre of development throughout, from user stories for gathering requirements to frequent user testing. The tool has been built in Drupal, with four build iterations to reach this first live version. TREE is currently in its 'beta' phase which means that, while fully functional and ready for use, there are further improvements coming and we would welcome feedback and comments on the website.

We hope that this tool will provide the 'go to' place for any staff member interested in TEL related services.

To access the TREE tool: **http://www.tree.is.ed.ac.uk/**

For more information on the project:
https://www.projects.ed.ac.uk/project/tel008

Student activity in **Virtual Learning Environments**

Wilma Alexander

Information Services are working on a project to make the most of the data about student activity collected by our central Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs), Learn and Moodle.

Empowering students by providing information about their engagement in online activities relative to their peers supports the University's intentions for self-directed learning. Providing actionable data to staff and students aids understanding of how they are managing their time and helps staff identify content and activities which best meet student needs. This project forms part of a wider University interest in Learning Analytics.

Staff and students will continue to be consulted on the type of information and presentation formats they would like. We hope to take this project forward in 2014 –15 by piloting some tools in Moodle with a group of Online Distance Learning staff and students, and specifying and building a tool in Learn for possible piloting later in the academic year.

Interested staff and students can contribute to discussions on the Learning Analytics Forum:

https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/LAD

MyEd upgrade

Martin Morrey

The MyEd portal was upgraded on 28th May. It now has a new look, with a layout which has been designed to suit tablets and desktop computers.

The 'dashboard' on the left of the page offers quick links to commonly used services and channels. Extra content can be found under the 'customise' menu.

The May upgrade was also the first step to providing a mobile interface for MyEd, which will be available in the autumn. Mobile MyEd will include University maps, email preview, student timetables, library search, PC availability and departures of the KB shuttle bus.

The layout and content of MyEd are informed by research and consultation about user needs. IS will continue actively developing MyEd, and all comments and suggestions from users are very welcome.

Resource Lists @ Edinburgh using Talis Aspire

Angela Laurins
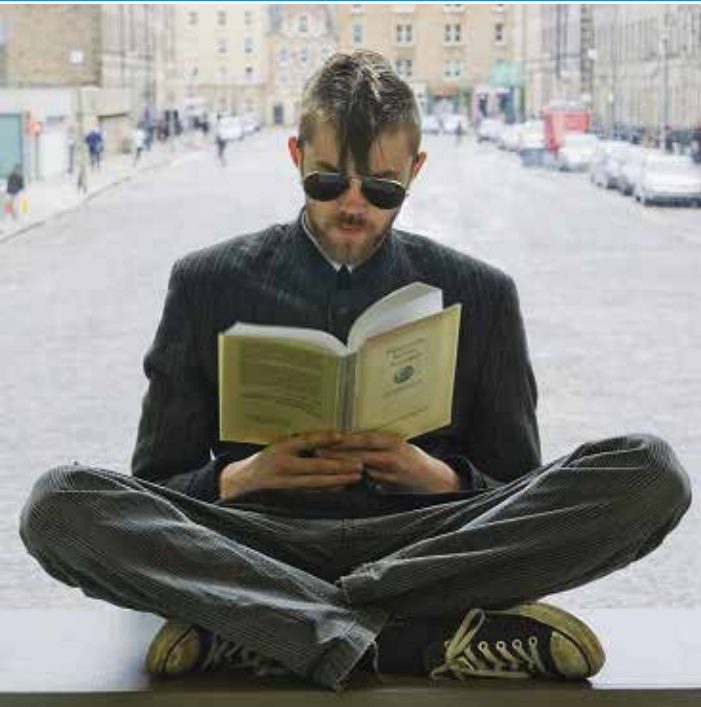
Resource Lists @ Edinburgh using Talis Aspire is a dynamic way for teaching staff to manage reading lists and provide students with easy access to key resources.

- Flexible list structure
- Easy to update
- Gather usage data
- Improve the student experience

Interested?

Contact the IS Helpline (**IS.Helpline@ed.ac.uk**) to request access or to arrange a training session.

Don't have time? Give us your list - we'll do it for you!

Library staff are available to create your Resource List. Once the list has been created it will be handed over to you for maintenance and publication.
Contact **Library.Learning@ed.ac.uk** to find out how.

More information

A series of short guides is available on the IS website and on our blog: **http://libraryblogs.is.ed.ac.uk/resourcelists/**

Follow us on Twitter **@ResourceListsEd**

http://resourcelists.ed.ac.uk

Research Data Management (RDM) update

Stuart Lewis

The Research Data Management Programme continues to roll out the DataStore service, which provides 0.5TB of active data store for all researchers. The majority of allocations are complete. Computer Officers in each school are now able to pass on these allocations to local staff.

The first wave of training is underway, with courses covering a range of RDM-related subjects. New RDM services being investigated include a Data Asset Register (to record the data created in the University) and a Data Vault (to securely store data for long periods of time). Two workshops were held in May to investigate the requirements for a Data Asset Register.

The Principal will formally launch the Programme on 26th August. This will be accompanied by a mini conference, 'Dealing with Data'.

For more information, see **http://www.ed.ac.uk/is/data-management** and **http://datablog.is.ed.ac.uk/**

Jisc Research Data Registry and Discovery Service – an update

Lorna Brown

The Digital Curation Centre (DCC) through Jisc is piloting approaches to a UK Research Data Registry and Discovery Service (RDRDS) to help increase the discoverability of research datasets and maximise re-use. Following an initial six month project, which saw significant progress, a workshop was held in June to gather feedback for future activity.

UK research datasets find homes in a variety of managed and unmanaged storage, but there can still be difficulties discovering whether data on a certain subject exists and exactly where it is kept. The RDRDS project aims to revolutionise the discoverability of datasets within the UK and the project team is keen to deliver a service which meets the needs of the community.

Libraries focus

ECA Library book **artist in residence**

Jane Furness

Book artist and Scottish Poetry Library librarian Julie Johnstone took up post at the start of May as the inaugural artist in residence at Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) Library. Julie was awarded a research residency bursary funded jointly by the ECA School of Art and IS Library & University Collections division.

During her 1 month research residency, Julie explored the ECA Library artists' books collection and curated a display of her favourite books from the collection, alongside a selection of her own works from Essence Press. She also hosted two reading groups for students and staff. The idea of the residency came from ECA School of Art Chancellor's Fellow Maria Fusco, with the aim of 'ventilating' the artists' books collection and helping to make it better known as a collection available for tutors, researchers and curators. The outcome of Julie's residency will be the creation of a new artist's book which will be added to the ECA collection. Julie has been tweeting about her experience of the residency at #eca_artistsbks. We hope that this will be the first of a series of book artist residencies at ECA Library.

38% longer opening hours for the Main Library in Summer 2014

The Main Library building is open 7:30am to 00:00 midnight every day of the week in July and August 2014. This represents an increase in opening hours of 38% compared with last Summer. All users of the Main Library will hopefully benefit from this improved access, and also from having a clear and consistent set of opening hours.

This improvement is in response to library user feedback, EUSA representation, and the Library's desire to extend and simplify the pattern of opening hours. Semester opening hours resume on 1 September.

www.ed.ac.uk/is/main-library-opening

LibQUAL+® 2013 survey

Richard Battersby

Every two years, Information Services takes part in the LibQUAL+ survey, which is an online survey focussing on library services and collections. The survey gives us the opportunity to compare user perceptions of service delivery against expectations, and identify where we need to improve our service delivery.

The full report and list of specific actions being taken by the library as a result has now been published online. Many thanks to all staff and students who took part.

http://edin.ac/1qKq2mL
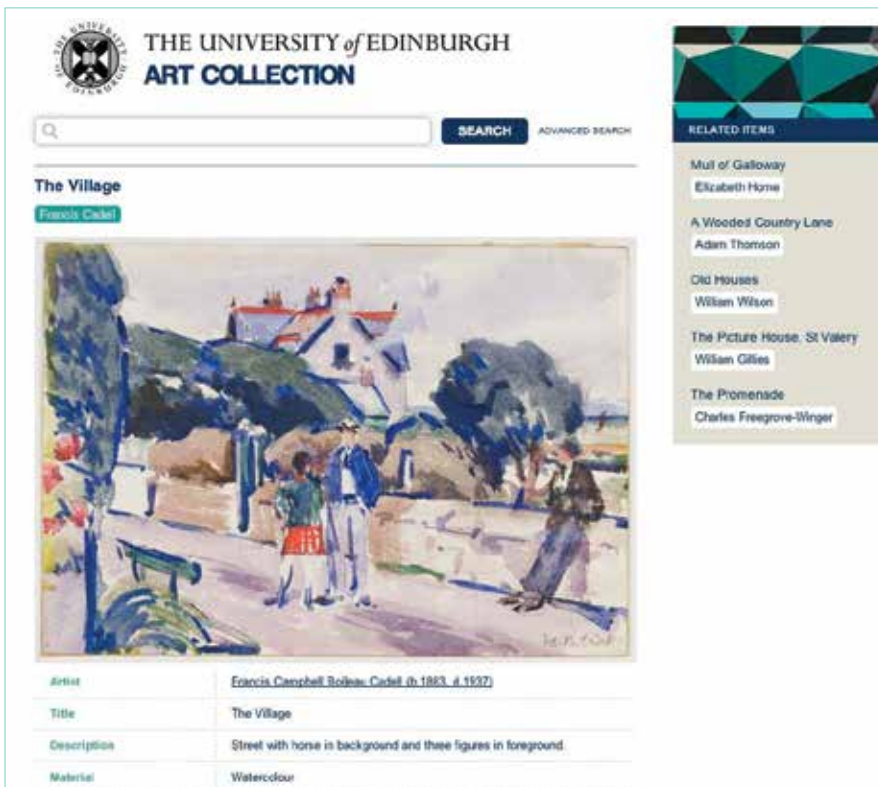
University Collections Online
launches

Claire Knowles

At the end of May the Library Digital Development Team launched a new service, University Collections Online which allows staff, students and the wider public to search the University's rare and unique collections. Item records include images, when available, and some item records are accompanied by audio and video.

Four collections are currently available to search:

- A catalogue of the University's rare and unique collections.

- Mimed (Musical Instruments Museums in Edinburgh), a recognised collection of national significance, with over 4500 items including images and some video and audio.

- The Art Collection is available online for the first time, with over 500 images and more being added over the coming weeks.

- A collection showing the images selected for the University calendar since 2006 which showcase the diverse range of material held in the University Collections.

Over time, more collections will be made available. This project has involved close collaboration with teams across Library and University Collections and the ITI Unix Team.

http://collections.ed.ac.uk

Pop-up Library

Angela Laurins

The Library is preparing to trial the use of an informal engagement space on the first floor of the Main Library. Branded 'Pop-up Library', a programme of sessions for students and staff is being planned between 8 September and 7 November which will give us the chance to promote Library and Museums services and Collections in a way that is informal, creative and fun.

We'll also being using the 'Pop-up Library' brand to gather informal and spontaneous feedback and to provide sessions such as, Pop-up and Consult (subject focused with Academic Support Librarians), Pop-up Museum (a chance to get closer to the fantastic objects in our collections) and Pop-up sessions focusing on how to use Searcher and other Library services.

Keep an eye on the Library blog and #librarypop for more information:
http://libraryblogs.is.ed.ac.uk

New **information portal**

Siobhan Macinnes

As part of the Business Intelligence/Management Information project an Information Portal is being developed for use throughout the university. This portal will become a one-stop shop for access to Management Information and act as a central space for information users and owners to 'meet' and communicate.

The portal is under development right now, with the aim of being live from the end of August 2014. The portal will help users find what is out there and who is responsible for it, eventually allowing for better access to information and improved decision making. As part of this we are also developing better data definitions to ensure people can better understand the information they access.

Visit the Business Information Portal
(currently under development):
https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/IP/ Information+Portal+Home

If you have any comments or suggestions for the development of the portal while it is still under construction please contact Governance and Strategic Planning. Please also get in touch if you are interested in joining the online focus group to help develop the portal further.

New focus for website support

Duncan MacGruer

As part of a larger reorganisation of support services at the University Website Programme (UWP), we have revamped our popular one-to-one sessions for web publishers.

Anyone can attend our Website Support Clinics for expert help with developing and appraising content, using analytics and to get answers to Polopoly – and soon Drupal – questions.

To enable colleagues to find quick and relevant answers to queries we've also created separate wikis and mailing lists focused on: general web publishing support; Polopoly; and Drupal.

Full details of the changes and links to the wikis are on the UWP blog: **http://edin.ac/1hl3tPF**

Our new email address for support queries is:
website.support@ed.ac.uk

Learning & development update

Ruth Miller

It's that time of year again when most of us are preparing for our annual review and thinking about the development needs for ourselves and our teams. So how familiar are you with the Learning and Development (L&D) opportunities section of the University HR website?

The A-Z list of courses and workshops and staff development eBrochure outline the majority of soft skills/non-technical development opportunities which are available.

People Managers should also regularly check the Support Groups People Managers Forum wiki L&D section, which highlights the most popular workshops.

We can also offer advice on more specific development needs such as team building, psychometric questionnaires or change management.

If you have any L&D queries requests or suggestions, please contact Ruth Miller, L&D Specialist:
Ruth.Miller@ed.ac.uk

A-Z list of courses and workshops:
http://edin.ac/13ndmsQ

Staff development eBrochure: **http://edin.ac/16vaAWI**

Learning & Development wiki:
https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/9yZOCQ

time to LEARN

IT systems – what's new for Student and Academic Services Group

Sheila Fraser

IS Applications run a rolling three year planning process to identify and prioritise the IT systems development needs of the University community. Strategic projects are currently underway to improve the IT systems and services delivered by SASG, including:

The **Online Registration for New Students** project supports students through the steps required for registration and enables them to take control of their personal data.

The **Student Self-service** project has given students access to their records online and they can now update their personal details any time, any place and on any device.

A new **External Examiner Online Reporting System** is being developed to improve the experience of students and External Examiners and reduce the administration effort from Colleges and Schools.

The **Student Disability Service** and **IS Applications** are working to improve the waiting lists tools and simplify the process for repeat applications for the Disabled Student Allowance.

The **Timetabling systems** have been upgraded and enhanced, integrating with Learn group data. Students and Personal Tutors will benefit from the new Course Timetable Browser via MyEd to highlight timetable clashes before making course selections.

The SASG projects have a direct positive impact on students at the University of Edinburgh, improving their experience and supporting their knowledge, learning and future careers.

Information on current SASG projects is available on the Projects Website:
https://www.projects.ed.ac.uk/portfolio/sasg/13-14

If you have any questions please contact Sheila Fraser (SASG Portfolio Manager):
Sheila.Fraser@ed.ac.uk

Nicola Osborne, Social Media Officer, looks at what is happening in the social media space

New platforms offer Freshers warm welcome

Rory Penman

Each September thousands of students are welcomed to Edinburgh through 700 events at Freshers' Week. New for 2014, EUSA have partnered with the University to develop an app on the Guidebook platform for smartphones.

EUSA is also expanding its social media offering in September, empowering our Freshers' Week Volunteers and new Sabbatical Officers to 'takeover' Instagram feeds and test content on Snapchat.

Across those channels, EUSA will be sharing their updated Survival Guide. This 'ultimate handbook' for students is posted out to UK residents, and is available online and on campus during Freshers' Week. We'll also use the channels to reach out to International Students.

The award-winning EUSA Global department are hosting dinners, networking nights and their celebrated Buddies system - partnering incoming students with existing ones to ensure they settle comfortably. Lastly, EUSA is creating a brand new Postgraduate Guide, focusing on developing networks and social life at the University. This will be available online over summer, and is being messaged in the run-up to Freshers' Week 2014.

All of this content is available for Edinburgh University departments and Schools to share and build into their content. Simply contact Rory Penman at EUSA for more information.

www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/freshers2014
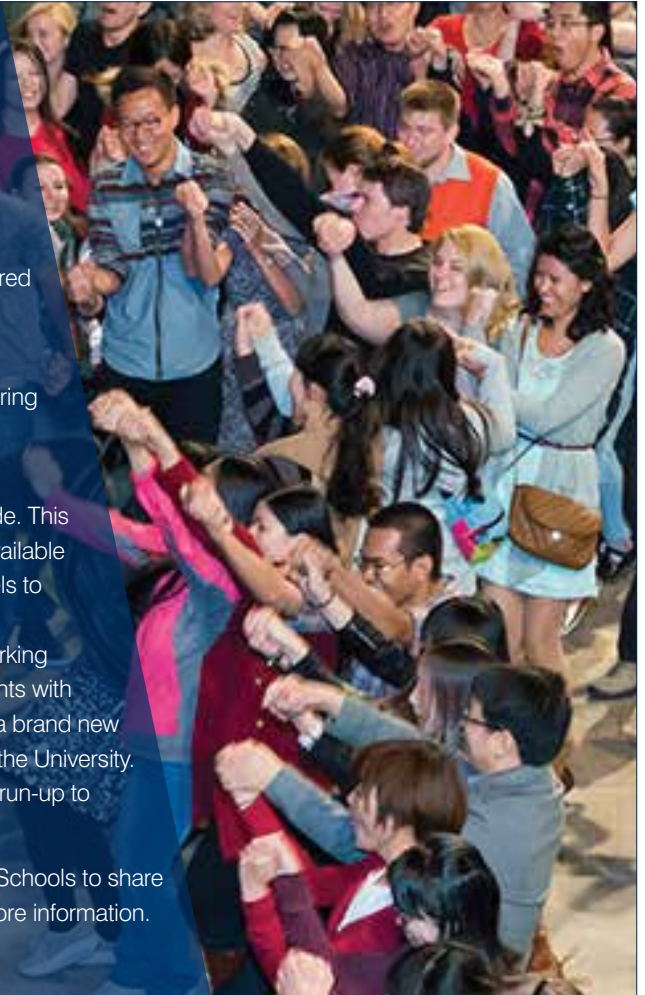
Orchestrating the student experience with **social media tools**

Dr Jessie Paterson

This small Principal's Teaching Award Scheme (PTAS) funded project set out to investigate the extent to which the use of social media tools are used to "engineer" specific "interaction models" and pedagogic aims. Using semi-structured interviews, eleven staff across the University were interviewed to determine their social media usage. While most demonstrated strong pedagogic drivers there was little evidence of staff considering the types of interactions they wanted to achieve as strong motivators in making their choices. Staff also commented on issues around data protection, privacy, accessibility, inclusivity and in particular time being the major barriers to take up. With this in mind, we propose that encouraging staff to think in terms of interaction models may provide a simpler entry point.

http://homepages.inf.ed.ac.uk/dcspaul/ptas

Managing your DIGITAL FOOTPRINT campaign

Louise Connelly

The Institute for Academic Development (IAD) in collaboration with other University departments will launch the 'Managing Your Digital Footprint' campaign in October 2014. The campaign targets all student cohorts and aims to raise awareness and provide practical advice about how to manage your digital footprint.

www.ed.ac.uk/iad/digitalfootprint

Conferences

COBWEB take a FieldTrip to the Science Communications Conference 2014

Nicola Osborne

This May a team from EDINA's Geodata services (Addy Pope) and the EU-funded COBWEB project (Nicola Osborne, EDINA and Barry Evans, University of Aberystwyth) collaborated with the Open University's nQuire and Sense-it projects (Prof. Mike Sharples, Eloy Villasclaras-Fernandez) on a "Citizen Science" session for the British Science Association's Science Communication Conference 2014, held at the University of Surrey, Guildford.

The Citizen Science workshop aimed to demonstrate how easy it is to create interesting and engaging participatory science missions. A hands-on test mission was followed by useful discussion on the opportunities and challenges of using citizen science or crowdsourcing.

http://bit.ly/RgECGN

" The discussion provided really helpful feedback for the developers and raised some interesting scenarios where these types of tools could be used in participatory science.

Repository Fringe 2014

Lorna Brown

Open access was a key theme at this year's annual 'un-conference'. Keynote speaker, Yvonne Budden from the University of Warwick, gave some interesting insight into the current state of open access in the UK. There were also numerous contributions from staff at EDINA, DCC and L&UC over the two day event – visit the Repository Fringe website to catch up on all the videos, live blogs and speaker slides:

http://rfringe14.blogs.edina.ac.uk/

Spreading the benefits of digital participation

Nicola Osborne

The Final Report from the Royal Society of Edinburgh's "Spreading the Benefits of Digital Participation" Inquiry was published in April. The Inquiry explored how digital technologies and the internet are used by the public, businesses, government and charities on a day to day basis, alongside the opportunities that digital technologies can offer to people and businesses online. It also looked at why many remain offline at a time when digital exclusion is likely to lead to increasing exclusion from society and the economy.

www.royalsoced.org.uk/1136_FinalReport.html

Networked Learning Conference

Christine Sinclair

Given its own current expansion of networked learning, the University of Edinburgh was the ideal host for the ninth international Networked Learning Conference. The gathering is an acclaimed source of ideas, books, and extensive dialogues around the meanings and challenges of networked learning in universities, workplaces and other communities.

One of the stars of the conference – Steve Fuller – made a plea for the University lecture (a medium in which he clearly excels: **http://vimeo.com/96572953**), whilst the other keynote speaker, Neil Selwyn, was equally provocative in taking up the conference's theme of criticality regarding claims made in and around networked learning.

www.networkedlearningconference.org.uk

Six of our interns (L-R): Nik, Gemma, Troy, Jamie, John, and Erika

Bumper crop of interns!

Serena Fredrick

We've had seven interns working with us over the summer and they've all done a fantastic job. They have been working on a variety of projects including work in the Conservation Studio, in the Digital Imaging Unit, on exhibitions related research, cataloguing, marketing and social media and on our archive collections. Thanks to Erika, Neasa, John, Jamie, Troy, Gemma and Nik!

IS staff cycling adventures

Stuart Lewis

On the morning of 7 June, over 300 cyclists headed out to Lasswade to join the Bethany Sportive – a charity bike ride in support of the Bethany Christian Trust. Amongst this group were three staff from Information Services. Robert Gormley from User Services Division completed the Challenge Route (72 miles), whilst Stuart Lewis and Theo Andrew from Library and University Collections rode the Super Challenge route (102 miles).

Thankfully, the weather was good for most of the day, however, heavy downpours at the end meant they were soaking wet when crossing the finish line, which just helped add to the feeling of accomplishment at the end!

Secret lives of IS staff

Staff in Information Services have lots of hidden talents… can you guess who lead the following 'secret lives'?

Fire starter

I recently climbed up a hill in the middle of Edinburgh and lit a fire on top of The National Monument. The fire spread around the hill igniting several structures, starting a blazing inferno and consuming 50 gallons of paraffin. Despite being observed by Police officers and several thousand witnesses I was not arrested.

Globe trotter

During my time at the University, I have seen my fair share of re-structures and hopped around into several different locations. The University calls on my time twenty four hours a day, 7 days a week, but I think it would be fair to say I still do get around the globe quite frequently!

All will be revealed in the next edition of **BITS**.

If you have a secret life you would like to share, email your teaser (maximum 80 words) to **BITS@ed.ac.uk**

Last issue's secret lives:
Dog crazy: Lorna Brown
An expert house builder: Nicola Osborne

Marathon runner raises £470 for the Beating Bowel Cancer charity

Sarah Gormley

Amy O'Brien, who is based in the Vice-Principal's Office of Information Services, completed her first marathon in May. Running the Edinburgh marathon, Amy survived extreme blisters, calf cramps, and unexpected isolation at Longniddry but powered through to complete the race.

Amy ran to raise money for the Beating Bowel Cancer charity. This charity is close to her heart as her uncle was diagnosed with bowel cancer last year. So far, Amy has raised £470. If you would like to contribute then Amy has a Just Giving page:

https://www.justgiving.com/Amy-O-Brien1

60 seconds with:
Melissa Highton

Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services

> " Edinburgh has a great reputation for digital innovation, it's an exciting place at an exciting time, there's a lot of talent here.

Tell us a bit about your role

It is a new role created to lead the new Learning, Teaching and Web Services division in Information Services.

The University has ambitious strategic goals for the use of technology in education, the new division will work to support those.

What is the purpose of the new division?

It is important that the institution gets good support from central services. Learning, Teaching and Web Services (LTW) is bringing together the services in Information Services that directly support learning and teaching. This gives us the opportunity to innovate, enhance or expand services to support an improved digital student experience and public engagement. The learning and teaching technologies such as Learn and MyEd are absolutely key to the experience of our students, as are the distance learning courses, our online media, the university website and the technology which enhances our teaching spaces. We will also work closely with colleagues in the IS Skills teams and support for research data management.

What brought you to Edinburgh?

Edinburgh has a great reputation for digital innovation, it's an exciting place to be at an exciting time. There's a lot of talent here, and an appetite to take risks and innovate with bold moves.

Before accepting this post I worked at University of Oxford for six years as Director of Academic IT. I'm an Edinburgh alumna and I have kept in touch with the University. Recently, I have been an external trustee of EUSA helping them meet their strategic goals. I've kept my eye on what's going on in IS so I know I'm returning at a good time; I see this institution doing exciting digital things.

So you have an insight into the student experience?

It was fun to be involved with EUSA. It's an interesting and complex organization, but a really great students' union. The sabbatical officers at EUSA are so enthusiastic about the people and the place; that helped to shape my decision to return.

Tell us a bit more about your professional background

I have worked in a range of professional services in higher education and for a range of institutions. I have been working in technology innovation for student skills support, learning and teaching, public engagement and academic development. The connection between all of these is my belief that technology will change – and is changing - the business of how we deliver and support learning, teaching and knowledge creation.

And what do you like doing outside work?

I'm been looking forward to enjoying the many festivals and festival events Edinburgh has to offer. I've already taken advantage of the opportunity to go to the School of Art degree show and to enjoy the sunny beer garden in George Square. I'd be happy to hear suggestions as to what's good to see - theatre, shows or art – in Edinburgh at any time of the year not just in the festivals. If you have recommendations, please get in touch.