COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DEPTH

BACK TO OUR ROOTS IN 1865

To celebrate 150 years since its foundation in 1865, Oxford Brookes University had its LiveFriday event at the Ashmolean Museum in March. Over 5,600 visitors had the opportunity to see performances, workshops and exhibitions from students, staff and alumni. A sensorial experience called “Wisdom, Wonders and Widgets” allowed participants to talk to humanoid robots, listen to unsigned singing stars of the future and see a mountain bike made from bamboo.

Find out what’s going on at the 150 years website.

STUDENT COMMUNITY WARDEN SCHEME

This year, Bookes has a team of 16 student Community Wardens who are involved in providing advice and guidance to students living within the local community and the implementation of the House Champion Scheme. Wardens actively participated in numerous University events from the 150 years celebrations to the Oxclean initiative.

THE HOUSE CHAMPION SCHEME

The House Champion Scheme is a joint initiative with Oxford Brookes, Oxford University, the City Council and Thames Valley Police which has recently improved its communications, launching a Bulletin to improve partner engagement and reinforce the programme’s mission.

PLACEMENT OF THE YEAR AWARD

Over 1,800 students take health and social care subjects at Brookes. Many of these students go on placements and in 2014, 62 placement partners were nominated for awards in the 2nd edition of the Placement of the Year Award Ceremony. The winner was Katharine House Hospice’s In Patient Care Unit, which offers short-term inpatient care for people grappling with the challenges of terminal illness.

BROOKES SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR AWARDS

The Arts Excite project was awarded a £12,000 Built it Award in the Dragon’s Den pitch event last year, part of the Oxford Brookes Social Entrepreneur Awards. The project runs as a platform for talented, disadvantaged young people to express themselves and bring about positive change in their communities, giving young people the chance to earn a nationally recognised Arts Award qualification. Jordon Maynard-Daley, Project Founder, commented: ‘I’m just over the moon. With this funding we can start to run as an organisation and deliver more projects regularly - so it’s a really big win for us!’
BROOKES BRIDGES UPDATES

Brookes Bridges continues to promote work in the community to raise the aspirations of mature learners and provide them with the right set of skills and confidence for Higher Education courses and personal development progress. In the current academic year, the project has led 16 courses in personal development targeting 300 adult learners from disadvantaged and under-represented communities in Oxfordshire and the surrounding areas.

Having been nominated for the Guardian Award in 2013, the project now wants to strengthen its courses and community development programmes. The awards recognise universities which have taken exceptional steps to address the difference in take-up of higher education opportunities across different social groups.

EIE – ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

EIE has performed many outstanding initiatives in 2014.

- Over 100 energy site assessments and reports to Oxfordshire community buildings with potential annual savings of over 460 tons of CO$_2$e
- EIE is the delivery partner organisation for the EU funded FoodWISE project providing food reduction and sustainability support to small and medium sized businesses
- Launched a vibrant volunteer programme to encourage energy and waste management skills development
- Conducting a series of pioneering workshops on on-line energy and waste training for UK primary and secondary schools

See more at www.brookes.ac.uk/eie

ECO-BICESTER LIVING LAB

The Eco-Bicester Living Lab aims to combine a number of innovation, research and development projects into one virtual home. The project was launched as a joint collaboration between the Bioregional Development Group and Oxford Institute for Sustainable Development (OISD) at Brookes. It will cover 393 high performance homes being constructed on site in 2015, with plans for a further 6,400 new homes by 2026.

STUDENTS’ UNION

Brookes Union was awarded a Green Impact Bronze Award. The accreditation was launched in 2006 and promotes environmental good-practices among Student Unions.

Want to get involved in a society, or start a new one? Contact Brookes Union’s Activities Coordinator at: su.societies@brookes.ac.uk

SUSTAINABLE CITIES

Jake Piper, Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Planning at Brookes, has been actively participating as a member of the technical expert panel for the annual European Green Capital Award (EGCA) for the last 3 years. The award recognizes cities that are making efforts to improve the urban environment and move towards healthier and more sustainable city management. Dr Piper’s responsibilities on the panel are related to two indicators: Nature and Biodiversity and Green Urban Areas incorporating Sustainable Land Use. “This year’s award holder is Bristol; Ljubljana (Slovenia) has the title next year. The winner is chosen on the basis of twelve criteria, including air and water quality, transport, environmental management, as well as climate change responses and several others”, she explains. The EGCA is an accolade similar to the European Capital of Culture that began 30 years ago. Find out more about the Award at the EGCA Website.

VOLUNTEERING AT BROOKES

The Brookes Accommodation Bureau develops various community-related activities with local charities and the last initiative took place at the Sobell House Hospice where staff worked to improve its grounds and garden. According to Pete Toomer, Head of the Accommodation Bureau, the participants have enjoyed the team building atmosphere created by the experience, especially with new staff members being able to enjoy the day and see the wonderful work that the Hospice undertakes.

Other local charities that have benefited from the Bureau’s support include: Downs Syndrome Oxford, Bardwell School Bicester and the ACE Advisory Trust.