In the last edition of The Orbital I concluded by saying ‘... and may the wheels not come off before the summer holidays.’ That turned out to be prophetic: on holiday during the Easter break we hit a pothole and, while the wheel didn’t detach completely from the car, the tyre detached completely from the wheel and we were running on rims for a while. See picture, right, which is much more interesting than my face grinning at you.

The point of that rather lame introduction is to lead into the strategy renewal process, which is basically about making sure that we have wheels for the next 10 years. After a phase 1 presentation to ARC about the department’s plans and proposed future strategy, we are now doing the detailed financial planning and putting flesh on the bones of the outline plan.

We are applying for several new assistant professor posts for the short term to both mitigate recent losses and rebalance our age profile with some bright-eyed and enthusiastic young colleagues. (You remember that feeling - don’t you?) Numbers associated with increased UG and PGT student intakes, improved grant capture by the new academic staff, and associated administrative and technical staff, are being crunched by Ajay and Donna as I write. The ‘elephant in the room’ here of course is the state of the C-block building, which saw temperatures in labs of 5°C during the recent cold spell, and in parallel with the strategy renewal process we are doing what we can to develop a plan with Estates to keep our current infrastructure functioning until the long-promised new building arrives.

If all goes well we will have five new academic colleagues appointed over the next year or so, with the first appointment process already underway and the second and third imminent. Together with the three new colleagues who have started in the last year, this is the basis of a substantial rejuvenation of our staff. My thanks to everyone who has provided input into the strategy renewal process – which is still in progress – but we have developed a clear vision which I hope will attract the University’s support and will hopefully be the first step in a process which will keep us in the top handful of UK chemistry departments for REF2021 and beyond.

Professor Mike Ward, Head of Department

Dalton 2018

Congratulations to Caroline Storey (Chaplin group) and Richard Knighton (Wills group), winners of poster prizes at Dalton 2018. This was another very successful biannual joint meeting of the Dalton Division Interest Groups held at Warwick and expertly locally organised by Jon Rourke.

Outreach

On 28 March, the regional heat for the Royal Society of Chemistry’s Schools’ Analyst Competition 2018, was held in Chemistry. Although the competition has been running for over 20 years, this was the first time that a regional heat has been held in this area of the Midlands, allowing 10 schools from the local area to participate that had not had the chance previously. The competition is designed to give students the chance to undertake some practical analytical exercises based on problems relevant to industrial or social needs.

The winners, Heart of England School, will now go on to the national final, where up to 16 regional heat winners compete for the Challenge Shield and significant cash prizes for themselves and their schools.

Thank you to everyone who helped out on the day: it would not have been possible without you!

Zoe Ayres
Success Factors

SuccessFactors, the new self-service HR portal, will soon be launched and there are some preliminary roadshows organised by the Science Faculty that everyone is encouraged to attend.

If you are unable to attend your faculty/department’s roadshow you may be able to join another session elsewhere on campus, although priority will be given to managers and employees from within that team. The next roadshow for chemistry will be:

Thursday 17 May 10am - 12 noon for all users - professional Services (ie Support Staff only) – Cryfield Pavilion.

For information on booking your place, please email working@warwick.ac.uk with your name, department, email address, and the date and time of the roadshow you wish to attend, and you will receive a confirmation email.

Research Fellows news

A special Warwick Research Fellow Forum, the ‘Warwick Chemistry Research Fellows Lecture 2018’, took place on 15 March, organised by Matt Gibson, Adrian Chaplin, Mick Staniforth, Tom Wilks and Zoe Ayres, to celebrate the excellent work of postdoctoral researchers in the department. Talks were delivered by Dr Diana Catalina Lozano (Barrow Group) and Dr Luis Perdigão (Costantini Group) on their research into mass spectrometry and Scanning Tunneling Microscopy (STM) respectively.

Afterwards a wine and cheese mixer event was held in the chemistry common room to encourage staff, research fellows and fully-fledged academics to mingle and discuss their future research plans.

Then on Tuesday 3 April, the first Warwick Postdoctoral Science Symposium took place in Life Sciences. Run by postdocs for postdocs from across the Faculty of Science, as well as from WMG and WMS, they presented their research with talks and posters. A fantastic keynote speech was delivered by Nobel Laureate Professor Sir Fraser Stoddart, and the event was rounded off with a wine and pizza evening.

Both of these events act as a prelude to a great many future planned RFFs, workshops, summer schools etc, to help support and develop the postdocs and research fellows both in the chemistry department and beyond.

The next RFF will be on Wednesday 25 April at 1pm in C521. Dr Charoula Tzanakou from the politics department will be having a round table discussion about various initiatives for postdocs that she hopes to be running in the near future. This is your opportunity as a research fellow to have your say on what is being done for you within the university. We hope to see lots of you there.
Welcome to the new RIS team

Welcome to three new members of staff who have recently joined the RIS team in Chemistry: India Foster who is Research Impact Manager for Chemistry, Engineering, Physics, Computer Science and WMG, Dr Lesley Chikoore, Research Impact Co-ordinator, and Dr Josie Mckeown, Research Funding Officer.

India will be leading R&IS impact support to Chemistry, including identifying and supporting internal and external impact funding opportunities, including pathways to impact statements; and supporting departments to identify, develop and prepare REF impact case studies as part of their impact pipeline. India joined the team in April 2018 and has worked at the University since 2011 in various project administration and management roles across three Departments. India has experience in supporting academics and research, financial regulations, impact, public engagement, stakeholder engagement, events management and working with a variety of funding guidelines.

Prior to joining Warwick, India worked at Sheffield City Council on a number of local, regional and national projects. Whilst there she gained experience in HR, training development, change management, workforce planning, internal and external communications and public relations. India has a first class degree in Politics and Philosophy from the University of Sheffield and an MA in International Politics and Law with Distinction, also from Sheffield. India is a qualified Prince2 Practitioner. India can be contacted at: india.foster@warwick.ac.uk

Lesley will be providing support, guidance, and advice around delivering, recording, and reporting on research impact, including the development of robust REF impact case studies. Lesley joined Warwick in March 2018 from a Local Authority, working in a role that involved providing research evidence access and support to public health practitioners. Lesley is an alumnus of Loughborough University where he obtained his bachelor’s and doctorate degrees. His doctorate project focused on the research community’s perceptions, attitudes and behaviours towards the UK’s ‘research impact’ policy, taking a cross-disciplinary perspective. Lesley has also worked at Loughborough University and the University of Surrey in research support roles on open access to research outputs. Lesley can be contacted at: lesley.chikoore@warwick.ac.uk

India will be working on Tuesdays 1pm-5pm, and Lesley on Wednesdays 8am-4pm, and you can contact them both on extension 24881.

Dr Josie Mckeown, Research Funding Officer, joins Adrian Fowle, Research Development Officer, in providing assistance with proposals for research funding. Josie’s email is j.mckeown@warwick.ac.uk.

Adrian and Josie (for assistance with proposals for research funding) will be available from Monday to Thursday 9am–4pm.

The team are based in C509c on the fifth floor of chemistry.

News from Charlie, Senior Careers Consultant

There is a PhD Networking Event taking place on Tuesday 8 May 5pm-7pm in the Digilab Mezzanine. There will be a range of employers who recruit PhDs into high level roles and many interested in Chemistry PhDs. Please go to https://skillsforge.warwick.ac.uk and use ref RSSP4 to book a place.

There will also be an evening of talks from Science PhD alumni taking place in May/June where you can find out more about strategies for finding opportunities in industry after your PhD – more in the next issue of the Orbital and via email.

The Postgraduate Research Showcase will be on Wednesday 20 June from 12noon to 6.30pm in the Ramphal Building - #PGRShowcase18.

If you want to talk about decisions about what to do after your PhD or any aspect of applying for roles, you can book an appointment with Charlie at https://myadventure.warwick.ac.uk/ or contact Charlie direct – c.cunningham@warwick.ac.uk.

The Big Bang

Once again, Warwick participated in the annual Big Bang UK Young Scientists & Engineers Fair at the NEC, Birmingham.

For more information and to contribute to next year’s event (13-16 March 2019), please email here.

What’s happening?

For an update of all future Chemistry events, please see here.

Updated committee membership and meeting dates for 2017/18 are available on ChemIntra (for staff view only).
Arrivals  .....  
We extend a warm welcome to the following:

**Staff**

Angela Hurst – Administrative Co-ordinator  
Ross Jaggers – Research Assistant  
Colin Lambert – Health & Safety Officer  
Dr Anthony Lucio – Research Fellow  
Mina Monfared – Core Technician  
Kevin Murphy – Stores Technician  
Sam Walton – Admin Assistant  
Christopher Summers – Research Assistant  
Kimberley Williamson – Technical Assistant  

**Visitors**

Professor Laurent Blasco – Honorary Professor  
Elisa Bonandi – Visiting Research Fellow  
Clément Desvaux – Visiting Intern  
Dr Irina Khilyas – Visiting Assistant Professor  

Baby congratulations!

Welcome to Sebastian Yeung-Stavros who came into the world on Wednesday 28 February weighing 5.3 pounds.

Many congratulations to Vas and Denise.

We raised an amazing £363!

“Ed and I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone for baking, bringing and donating to the Bake Sale on 7 March in aid of Babies in Buscot Support (BIBS): clearly you are all very generous people and BIBS will be so grateful. Baby Henry has now been discharged after the best part of 4 months and is now at home.

If you would like to help premature babies like Ed’s son, Henry, please see his JustGiving page: https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ed-mansfield.

In addition, as Vas asked for any donation to celebrate the birth of his son Sebastian to be divided between Heartlands Hospital where Sebastian was born, and to BIBS on behalf of Henry, both charities will receive £40 each.

Once again: thank you all!”

Ed Mansfield and Andy Lunn  

.... and Departures

We say thank you and goodbye to:

Maria Arno – Research Fellow  
Phil Aston – Senior Technician  
Wendy Brown – Departmental Secretary  
Benoit Couturaud – Marie Curie Research Fellow  
Professor Andrew Dove  
Jeffrey Foster – Research Fellow  
Joseph Jones – Research Fellow  
Richard Knighton – Research Fellow  
Daniele Mantione – Research Fellow  
Professor Rachel O’Reilly  
Maria Perez Madrigal – Marie Curie Research Fellow  
Keith Phillips – Stores Technician  
Hannah Prydderch – Research Fellow  
R Rahman-Pour – Research Assistant  
Mathieu Tschann – Marie Curie Research Fellow  
Andrew Weems – Research Fellow  
Tom Wilks – Research Fellow  
Joshua Worch – Marie Curie Research Fellow  
Turgay Yildirim – Research Fellow  
Charlotte Zammit – Research Fellow  

Calling all cricketers!

The 2018 cricket season is almost upon us and we are currently in the process of compiling a list of players for this year’s Chemistry-WBS team; a team made up of staff and students from the department of Chemistry and WBS.

We play 20-20 matches in a small inter-departmental league, with matches typically held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings between the end of April and the beginning of July. We welcome players of all abilities, games are played in a friendly manner and all equipment will be provided.

This year Warwick Sport are asking for players to pay a small fee to play within the league: £5 for Warwick Sport members, or £30 for non-members. Further information can be found here: http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/chemistry/chemintra/social/cricket/.

If you are interested in playing or would like further information please email uwmccc@outlook.com.