August is a traditional time in academic circles to take stock of the year, and also coincides with the end of my first year here. It has been an interesting ride. The single biggest job has been the strategy renewal which is now done and we are just awaiting final sign-off from the university executive committee. This should give us a lot of what we hoped for in terms of academic posts (three currently in progress, two more to come) and also improved clerical and technical support with a range of posts to expand the core tech team, improve support for teaching in the UG office and support research. The chemistry lab tutor posts - a one year experiment - have been so successful and widely appreciated that those are being made permanent. So next year should see a period of strong consolidation and bringing the department’s academic staff levels - plus the associated support - back up to where they were a few years ago, which I’m sure will be a relief to all after a period of being stretched very thin. After that it’s up to us to do good things with the new investments, and if we can do that, we will get more posts after the REF. There is also, finally, a clear understanding that C-block needs some urgent attention to keep it functional for the years until a new building appears.

My two main impressions of the department after my first year are (i) the genuinely remarkable quality and quantity of its research output, with internationally excellent/leading activity in many areas; and (ii) the dedication, hard work and quality of support provided by the technical, clerical and administrative staff. It became apparent during the strategy renewal preparations how under-staffed we have been in key support areas: despite this things get done and keep working. It has been good to see the number of quiet comments/emails I regularly get from academic staff about what a good job someone from the support staff has done in a difficult situation, whether it is managing a lab-based emergency, repairing expensive equipment, looking after a visiting school group, or covering at no notice for a sick colleague.

Given what we have coped with this year in terms of under-staffing in all areas and serious estates issues, both of which hopefully are going to be remedied, we should be through the worst and 2018/19 will see the start of the new investment arising from the strategy renewal making a difference to everyone. So there are reasons to be cheerful - happy summer holidays!

Congratulations

Congratulations to Sam Lawton who recently won the 2018 Young Persons’ Lecture Competition.

Sponsored by the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining, with support from The Worshipful Company of Armourers & Brasiers, the Young Persons’ Lecture Competition invites students and professionals up to the age of 28 to deliver a short lecture on a materials, minerals, mining, packaging, clay technology and wood science related subject.

There were three rounds to the competition: the regional heats, regional finals, and the national finals which took place on 25 April, and Sam won a prize of £750 and a trip to South Africa to compete in the world finals. Sam is a final year PhD student under the supervision of Prof Dave Haddleton, and is currently working on developing new materials for the next generation of solar cells.

Grant Award for Education

Congratulations to Dr Russ Kitson and Dr Paolo Coppo who have been awarded £20K of research funding in collaboration with Professor Tina Overton from Monash University, as part of the Alliance Education Fund.

The project aims to enhance transferrable skills in the Higher Education curriculum.

WATE Winners

Congratulations to our two winners of the WATE awards: from the staff, Dr Russ Kitson, and from the PhD student body, Nat Das Neves Rodrigues (from Vas Stavros’ group).

These awards were established to recognise the commitment, dedication and innovation of our academic staff – and also our more junior colleagues from the PhD student body – in supporting learning and teaching in the department. A few staff in the department have had these in recent years but it is great to see two awards in one go, including both an academic colleague and a PhD student.

Very many congratulations to both.
Summer Graduation 2018

Many congratulations to all of our Graduands this summer:

BSc in Chemistry

BSc in Chemistry with Management

BSc in Chemistry with Medicinal Chemistry
Weilun Bo, Zena Choi, Rishi Chudasama, Laurence Crimble*, Bangji Hu, Emily Rose Kneller*, Melissa MoSeley, Prem Kaur Nandhra, Polona TUsar, Puja Unadkat*, Yingjie Yuan, JinXia Zheng, Ho Leung Ng

MChem

MChem (with Professional Experience)

MChem (with Industrial Training)
Thomas James Donnithorne, Natasha Louise Marchant*, Ben Westwood, Daniel Wicks*

MChem (with Medicinal Chemistry)
Rebecca Jane Gilchrist*, John Mclaughlin, Shradda Vadodaria, Naomi Aramide Gooden (with Professional Experience)

MSc in Polymer Chemistry
Ellis Robert Paul Archer*

MSc in Scientific Research and Communication
Miles Samson Capper

MSc (by Research) in Chemistry
Lisa Igel, Andrés Nicolas Richards Gonzales

* Indicates graduates with Distinction or First Class Honours

PhD in Analytical Science
Daniela Patricia Costa Andrezo Lobo, Erick Martins Ratamero, Carl Osster, Alvin Chen Kuang TEO, Claudio Valotto, Grzegorz Piotr Walkowiak, Miri Zilka

PhD in Chemistry

PhD in Chemistry (with Industrial Collaboration)
Alexander Cook, Faduma Mohammed Maddar, Robert Adrian Young

PhD in Mathematical Biology and Biophysical Chemistry
Don Praveen Amarasingshe, Sharon Collier, Glen Dorrington, Katherine Louise Lloyd, Christine Lockey, Daniel Simpson, Christopher William Thoroughgood, Denise Vlachou
Many congratulations to all of our Graduands and Prizewinners this summer:

2018 Awards and Prizewinners

**Professor Julie Macpherson:** The Andrew McCamley Award for Excellence in Teaching 2017-18

**Daniel Lester:** The University of Warwick Highly Commended Research Contribution Award in 2018

**Richard Coldham, Luke Scott and Georgia Thornton:** The Infineum Prize for Outstanding Overall Performance by a final year MChem Student 2017-18

**Adam Foxall:** The Department of Chemistry BSc Prize for Outstanding Overall Performance by a final year BSc Student 2017-18

**Scarlet Hawkins and Madeleine Perrett (not pictured):** The Lubrizol Prize for Outstanding Laboratory Performance by a final year BSc Student 2017-18

**Natasha Marchant:** The Enterprise Prize for Outstanding Performance by a Year 3 MChem Industrial or International Placement Student 2016-17

**Joshua Parkin and Ellis Hancox:** The Andrew McCamley Award for Outstanding MChem Research Project 2017-18
Congratulations to our University Awards winners 2018

All 570 nominated University staff were invited to an Awards Evening at the Butterworth Hall on Friday 18 May, and Chemistry’s winners were….

Research Contribution

Winner: Interface Polymers team (Chemistry and Warwick Ventures)

Team members: Peter Scott, Chris Kay, Shaun Morris, Paul Goring, Connah Burnett, Kevin Marks, Phil Smith

Starting from scratch, this team have created a world-leading piece of laboratory research, used as the basis for a new award-winning Warwick spin-out company, have been awarded £1.5m in grant funding, raised £2.7m in private equity, created 10 new jobs, and produced a new type of material that is enabling more sustainable use of plastics. Researchers and professional staff have been propelled in new and exciting career directions, and the way that Warwick promotes innovation by researchers is, as a result, being revolutionised.

The team have used new Warwick research to make a real difference in the way the world will use plastics, as well as new and exciting careers for the members. It is creating local jobs and international impact."

Highly commended: Dr Daniel Lester (Polymer Characterisation RTP)

Dr Daniel Lester, Manager of the Polymer Characterisation Research Technology Platform (RTP), is certainly an individual who deserves to be recognised for his essential contribution to underpinning the University’s research in both polymers and the wider materials characterisation. The RTP that Daniel manages facilitates the research of 20+ groups across five departments, in addition to a considerable portfolio of external clients.

“Dan is the most talented analytical scientist I have met, due to the breadth of his knowledge, the quality of his work and the ‘can do’ approach he has to challenges.”

Public Engagement Contribution

Winner: Nick Barker (Chemistry)

Nick is a professional, kind and engaging young man who obviously has high scientific knowledge but also the intelligence to realise that young people need to be inspired as soon as possible.

Nick Barker’s outreach work has achieved semi-legendary status both within the University and amongst all the schools who are fortunate enough to have had him visit. He is deeply committed to encouraging the aspirations of, and furthering the educational opportunities available to, young people in the region - many of whom perceive that, given their background, studying at the University of Warwick is an unattainable goal."

Guizhou at the Guildhall

In April, Prof Peter Sadler attended a UK-China Trade and Economic Cooperation Conference at the Guildhall in London hosted by Ms Shen Yiqin, Governor of Guizhou Province.

The famous Moutai (Maotai) liquor is made in Guizhou, and the director of the company was there (but no samples were handed out!).

Andy’s Inaugural Lecture

Professor Andy Clark gave his Inaugural Professorial Lecture entitled ‘The Life and Times of a Radical Chemist’ on 9 May in the Oculus. The event was open to the public and was attended by family, friends, students and colleagues from all over the University. His lecture was introduced by the Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor (Professor David Lamburn), his new immediate boss (Andy recently took up the role of the University Academic Director for Undergraduate Programmes, although he still has a 40% role in the Chemistry Department).

In his talk Andy highlighted the people that had influenced his career, and summarised his research (ranging from areas as diverse as the development of new synthetic methodology in radical chemistry, renewable polymers and the running of a spin out company). He even found time to give his thoughts on what makes a good lecturer and his views on the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).

RSC News

Dr Ruth Patchett did a sterling job for a year as maternity cover for the RSC Education Coordinator role. She has now left the department to join Birmingham University where she will be working in the chemistry department as a Research Fellow on communication, outreach and impact. Selina Kermode has returned from her maternity leave to take the role and now works 3 days a week, Wednesday to Friday.
**A full pint of science**

In May, the first three-day *Pint of Science* festival took place in Coventry, featuring leading lights from Chemistry, associated group and alumni, including Neil Cole-Filiapiak, Prof Pete O’Connor and Gabriele Sosso.

For more information, see here.

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**Molecules and Materials: Teachers’ University Day**

On Monday 16 July the department hosted a Teachers’ University day in partnership with the Science Learning Partnership. This day included curriculum linked talks on research by Sébastien Perrier, David Fox and Dr Monica Ciomaga Hatnean as well as time in the lab making nylon rope and completing the 1st year undergraduate Aldol experiment (on a microscale), classroom activities and a tour of the facilities in MAS.

Thank you to everyone who helped to make this day possible. It was a lovely day which teachers will be able to draw on in their classrooms in the autumn term.

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**Fellowship Success for Fabrizio**

For the last three years Dr Fabrizio Alberti has worked as a postdoctoral research fellow with a joint appointment between the School of Life Science and the Department of Chemistry, under supervision of Dr Christophe Corre. He has now been competitively awarded two fellowships that will enable him to start an independent career in Natural Product research.

First, Fabrizio was awarded a UKRI Innovation Fellowship – Flexible Talent Mobility Account scheme (fEC £34k; Academic Mentor: Dr Christophe Corre; Industry Mentor: Dr Vincent Poon). This short fellowship will allow him to establish strong links with an industrial collaborator. He will spend 3 months at Hypha Discovery Ltd, a microbial biotechnology company involved in scalable production of microbial and mammalian metabolites. The project will run from August until October 2018, and will focus on developing an engineered yeast strain that will have the ability to convert drug leads into dihydrodiol analogues.

Then more recently, Fabrizio was awarded a Leverhulme Trust Early Career Fellowship (fEC £407k). He will take on this 3-year fellowship starting from November 2018, holding a joint appointment between the School of Life Sciences and the Department of Chemistry. The project will focus on establishing baker’s yeast as a host for refactoring biosynthetic pathways for bioactive meroterpenoids. His research will greatly benefit from collaboration with scientists at Hypha, as well as from the interaction with colleagues from both the Warwick Integrative Synthetic Biology (WISB) Centre in the School of Life Sciences, and the Chemical Biology Research Facility (CBRF) in the Department of Chemistry.

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**CoreTech update**

A new Core technicians’ webpage has now been created, please keep looking for updates on https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/chemistry/chemintra/techservices/coretech/

It gives overview of what we do and how can we help. Most importantly, please use the links provided for:

- recording requests for H&S Induction (all new starters)
- reporting technical faults (link was moved from its original place)
- furniture requests

There is also a sub-page about planned work/maintenance organised for the next 4 weeks in calendar format.

One specific reminder from Core techs – we have a **departmental freezer** ready to be used in emergencies or temporarily only while you defrost your own freezer, if needed. It is located in C407 in the side room and set to -20°C. There is a sheet stuck on the door – please write what you put in and who the owner is.

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**A word from Nick**

“This year, I managed to talk to, invite to the labs, visit the schools, or otherwise work with, just over 10,000 young people aged 4 - 18 in mainstream and special education. And it was my pleasure to do so!

Thank you very much to those of you who have somehow found time to help with outreach events at Warwick despite all of the other demands upon your time.

This coming academic year I will continue to do Chemistry Outreach work but I am going to try being based in a primary school and visiting lots of other schools from there. So, I anticipate being around the Department a little less frequently. Do please get in touch if I can help you with any outreach related ideas or if you would like to visit.”

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**Awards and winners**

The following were joint winners of the Faculty Thesis Prize for Chemistry:

**Lewis Baker** – jointly supervised by **Vas Stavros** and **Scott Habershon**:

“Understanding electronic energy transport in biologically-relevant systems: The photochemistry of sunscreens and the photophysics of photosynthesis”

**Minkyoung Kang** – supervisor **Pat Unwin**:

“Single Nanoparticle Electrochemistry”.

Many congratulations to both.

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**What’s happening?**

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

Updated committee membership and meeting dates for 2018/19 are available on ChemIntra (for staff view only).
Arrivals ….

We extend a warm welcome to the following:

Staff

Dr Thomas Congdon – Research Fellow
Cinzia Imberti – Wellcome Trust Fellow
Dr Ian McPherson – Research Fellow
Dr Gabriel Meloni – Marie Curie Research Fellow
Jim Morrey – Senior Mass Spec Technician
Dr Jerico Piper – Research Fellow
Dr Slava Shkirskiy – Marie Curie Research Fellow
Monika Zeliszak – Accounts Assistant

Visitors

Visiting Professor Steven Tait
Honorary Professorial Fellow Ezat Khoshdel

Thinking about an Industrial Placement year or Studying Abroad?

We now have our very own Placements and Apprenticeships Officer, Harminder Kaur (h.kaur.1@warwick.ac.uk).

If you are looking to get support on: What option to take, CVs, Covering Letters, Application Forms, Interviews, Employer based tests or Assessments Centres, then email to find out how to book an 1-2-1 appointment today!

Congratulations to Emily

Emily Holt, a MAS CDT student in the Stavros group, recently won a prestigious award at the 50th Annual Conference of the Australian Society of Cosmetic Chemists, which took place in Canberra in May. Emily presented a 30-minute talk on her paper on “Laser Spectroscopy for Suncare Applications: Tracking the Photostability of Avobenzone in Real-time” and was awarded the Lester Conrad Award, which is awarded for the best paper presented at the conference. Emily, who is in the first year of her PhD, was pleasantly surprised and delighted to receive the award.

The Summer Do (“Phew, what a scorcher!”)

The now well-established annual Rounders match took place on an appropriately hot day in the middle of July, with eight teams competing in the tournament. The overall winners with a somewhat improbable total of 35½ rounders were The Un-Winners, followed by Abi & Co (The Rivals) with 32, Haddleton’s Heroes (30½), Ship Chap (30), Perrier Pandas (28½), Boston Red Cox (26½), 5th Floor Fliers (25), and finally the Spare Parts with 14.

After all that excitement, everyone settled down to a hearty barbecue outside the Pavilion, only running from the shade of the trees to Eddie the Ice-cream van man who popped by in between his busy Graduation-day circuit on campus.

A select few turned up later with picnics and listened to the bands warming up inside and rehearsing with sound-checks until they were ready to wow the audience with a mixture of rock and pop, acoustic guitars and singing from the 70’s to present day. The evening ended with some outrageous dancing, but nobody actually got hurt and according to the bartenders, it was the best staff party they had ever been to.

Paolo conquers Wales (twice)

An astonishing achievement was accomplished by Paolo Coppo when he cycled from London to Wales and then the scenic route in Wales in May: “perché è lì”.

Please email your items for the next Orbital newsletter to: chem-sec@warwick.ac.uk