Chemistry Newsletter

University of Southampton

Winter 2021

Inside your Newsletter:

Important Dates

End of Term:
Friday 17th December 2021

Bank Holiday/Closure Days:
Christmas:
23rd Dec 2021 – 3rd Jan 2022
Easter: 15th – 18th April 2022

Semester 1 exam period:
17th to 29th January 2022

Semester 2:
Mon 31st January 2022 to
Fri 20th June 2022

Term dates:
Mon 31st Jan - Fri 25th March 2022
Mon 25th April to Sat 18th June 2022

Semester 2 exam period:
23rd May – 11th June 2022

Athena SWAN Silver Award

2015 Silver Award Winners - Chemistry at Southampton

Welcome to the Winter 2021 Newsletter, we hope everyone is keeping well and looking forward to the end of term and having some time to relax over the festive break.

Chemistry school appointments

There have been a number of changes to school roles within Chemistry where a number of staff have left the School, or reduced their FTE, together with both Deputy Heads of School changing, this process was a challenge this year.

First, I would like to thank our colleagues who are stepping out of roles for their hard work and dedication. It is essential for the smooth running of our School that these administrative and leadership roles are performed well, and often this entails a significant time commitment. I would also like to thank those of you who have stepped into new positions. Here are a few of the staff that have taken up new roles.

Prof Jonathan Essex
Head of School

Prof Robert Raja
Deputy Head of School Research

Dr Paul Duckmanton
Deputy Head of School Education

Julie Herniman
Joint lead on Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity; and Staff Engagement

Do you have an article you wish to contribute to a future edition?
Please email Lynda Brown L.J.Brown@soton.ac.uk or Dawn Dunlop D.Dunlop@soton.ac.uk

Prof Jeremy Frey
Head of Physical Teaching

Prof Gill Reid
Head of Functional Inorganic Materials and Supramolecular Chemistry

Dr Darren Bradshaw
Head of Inorganic Teaching

Dr Ramon Rios Torres
Head of Organic Teaching

Graduations and Awards

Congratulations to all our Undergraduate students who graduated in the Summer of 2021, and further congratulations to the prize winners below:

Alicia Gray, John Mellor Prize
Outstanding project in Organic Chemistry or related field for a Y4 MChem project completed in Southampton

Reanne Beaird, Alan Carrington Prize
Outstanding project in Physical Chemistry or a related field for a Y4 MChem project completed in Southampton

Aysha Riaz, Judith Corker Prize
Outstanding project in Inorganic Chemistry or related field for a Y4 MChem project completed in Southampton

Rhianna Jobson, *Outstanding Research Placement Project*

Thomas Allam, R E Parker Project
Best BSc Project

Daisy Hunter, Progression Award
Academic development award across contributory part of degree

Rhianna Jobson, David Runciman Boyd
Outstanding performance by a student graduating from a MChem degree

Charlotte Elsey, A E Clarence Smith
Outstanding performance by a student graduating from a BSc degree

Charlotte Elsey, Roger Parsons Prize
Highest level of academic achievement in the graduating cohort

Congratulations to the following students on their PhD awards since our last newsletter:

Hang Cheng, *Nitrides or carbides coated on hard carbon for sodium ion batteries*

Shu Zhang, *New macrocycles for the synthesis of rotaxanes and catenanes*

Andrew Heard, *The synthesis of mechanically planar chiral rotaxanes and their application to enantioselective catalysis*

John Maynard, *Synthesis and applications of functional interlocked molecules: anion-π catalysis and mechanically chiral structures*

Eilish McBurnie, *Molecular dynamics simulations of complex bacterial membranes*

Rachel Blackmore, *Understanding the mechanochemical synthesis of manganite perovskites and their catalytic behaviour*

Jose Recatala Gomez, *Descriptor guided design and rapid synthetic routes of thermoelectrics materials*

Alister Boags, *Simulation studies of the bacterial periplasm*

George Bacanu, *Spectroscopic investigations of C_{60} fullerene and its endohedral derivatives*

Tammy Nimmo, *The role of water in the electrochemical response of platinum*

Tom Ellaby, *Towards improved catalyst design via realistic modelling and atomistic simulations*

Samuel Fitch, *Evaluation of metal nitrides as negative electrode in sodium-ion batteries and protective coating in lithium metal batteries*

Jai Balachandra, *Investigating dynamics in biomolecular solids by solid-state NMR of natural abundance isotopes*

Christina Xyrafaki, *Determining surface oriented SRCD signatures of proteins on DNA nanostructures*

Alexander Teuten, *Electrosynthesis in flow reactors. Part 1: Anodic deprotection of nitrogen containing compounds; Part 2: Cathodic cyclisation of aryl halides*

Morgan Manning, *Reagentless photochemical transformations of dihydrofuropyridinones to azocines*

Niall Hanrahan, *Label-free light sheet microscopy for 3D Imaging of biological specimens*

Gilles Moehl, *Electrochemical dynamics investigated by small angle scattering*

Adam Lister, *Development of raman-based techniques for enhanced bacterial detection*

Mohamed Sabba, *Generalized methodology for control of long-lived nuclear spin order in magnetic resonance*

Celebrations and Congratulations

Congratulations to Prof John Langley who has been awarded The British Mass Spectrometry Society Medal becoming only the seventh recipient of the prestigious honour that recognises outstanding and sustained contributions to the promotion of mass spectrometry.

The accolade's nominations from across academia and industry praise him as "an advocate, a champion and a leader of British mass spectrometry", highlighting the influence of his nearly 40 years' experience in the field.


The British Mass Spectrometry Society
The BMSS Medal
Awarded to
Professor G. John Langley
8th July 2021
In recognition of outstanding and sustained contributions to the British Mass Spectrometry Society in the promotion of mass spectrometry.
BMSS

John says *"This award came completely out of the blue. I had no idea, even as they discussed the 37 plus years membership of the recipient. It is a fantastic honour, one of which I am extremely proud. It is testament to the research of many students and collaborations with industry and also working with BMSS for many decades."*

Congratulations to Prof Malcolm Levitt who has been honoured by the Royal Society with the Davy Medal for outstanding chemistry. The prestigious honour recognises his ground-breaking contributions to the theory and methodology of nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR), which is best known in the form of magnetic resonance imaging, or MRI.

Malcolm says *"It is an enormous honour to be awarded this prize by the Royal Society. My principal research field of nuclear magnetic resonance is a bit of an oddball topic, sitting at the intersection of many areas of science while being mainstream in none of them. So, it is particularly gratifying to receive such a prestigious prize in Chemistry for my research. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the prize committee, and also my research group and collaborators for making it possible."*

Professor Levitt has built an international reputation across a distinguished career including research posts in Switzerland, Sweden and the USA. He has been based in Southampton's School of Chemistry for over 20 years.

A collaborative response during the pandemic to enhance the use of chemical information has been recognised with an Inspirational Committee Award by the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC).

The RSC Chemical Information and Computer Applications Group (CICAG), supported by the University of Southampton's Professor Jeremy Frey, launched an Open Chemistry series and transitioned to virtual meetings in the growth of the COVID-19 pandemic.

All areas of chemistry, from drug discovery to the development of novel materials, require access to chemical information, chemical data and the methods and technologies to build models from this data to predict and rationalise chemical discovery. Such discoveries would not be of much use without the dissemination of these ideas and community involvement.

At short notice, CICAG transitioned from physical to online meetings, developing a series of virtual events and workshops that explored the benefits, risks and likely future developments associated with open chemistry.

Papin Prize for Technicians Shortlisted

Congratulations to Jing Lu who was shortlisted for this year's Papin Prize. This Prize recognises the achievements and impact of technicians in higher education and research and is the only ceremony of its kind in the UK.

Jing Lu was nominated alongside her colleagues Thomas Ogden and Diana Dias Fernandes, who have now left the University. Jing works as a Teaching Laboratory Technician at the School of Chemistry. Her background is in Applied Chemistry and Environmental science and she previously worked within the School of Engineering, researching biobutanol production via bioelectrochemical reduction systems. In her current role, Jing provides support to undergraduate students' practical teaching activities. Jing said "I am very pleased and honoured to be nominated for the 2021 Papin prizes! I am enjoying my work of supporting students and will keep working hard! It is such a good feeling that our hard work is recognised."

Dr Thomas Logothetis, as Jing's line manager, said "The technical team always show an excellent engagement level dealing with very difficult and disruptive projects. The Chemistry Teaching labs at Southampton have recently undergone a full refurbishment and during this time the technical team have taken on substantial roles in addition to their day-to-day activities, working in less-than-ideal environments and to an extremely tight timeframe. Their efforts cannot be over-stated; they have been instrumental in determining new equipment, in trialling and overseeing installation and in the training and maintenance of this new equipment. They also have a direct input to teaching as well as their background contributions to teaching and laboratory readiness. These technicians have made an outstanding contribution to the experience of our students in 2020/21 and the undergraduate cohort has commented very positively on their ability to come back to campus for live lab classes this year; they have highly commended the teaching support from the technical team. We, that is colleagues and I, feel that the technical team have gone way beyond normal expectations and their contribution to the success of the Chemistry labs stands out."

Southampton climbed 27 places to be ranked 11th for the subject in the national guide, underpinned by strong scores for student satisfaction.

Chemistry at Southampton came first in the Russell Group for satisfaction with course and satisfaction with teaching. It also placed joint fifth in the UK for value added score, which compares degree results with entry qualifications to show how well students are taught. The significant rise follows a £12m investment in Chemistry facilities which is enabling students to study in outstanding laboratories, using high-tech equipment which mirrors what they'll work with in industry.

Dr Paul Duckmanton, Deputy Head of School (Education), says: *"We're delighted by the dramatic rise we've seen in the league table this year. It shows that the effort of staff across the School in supporting the experience and attainment of our students has been recognised. I'm incredibly happy to see how well we have ranked for student satisfaction with the course and with teaching. This demonstrates the excellent learning experience that our students have throughout their degree, something we're immensely proud of."*

Long Service Awards

This year we celebrate the dedication of several colleagues whose contributions span many different areas of activity across the School. We hope to have an in-person staff meeting on 27th January in the Main Lecture Theatre, a place where these colleagues have all spent a lot of time, for a long service award presentation.

These co-workers, coming from Millennial and Generation Z genres, representing a combined commitment to our department of over 120 years. They have bought a wealth of skills and understanding from times when teaching was delivered on (actual) blackboards, presentations were given on acetates, papers were read in magazine-like things in the tearoom or library and our valuable data was backed up on floppy disks and CD's! Each of them has bought this experience to bear in moving our department forward scientifically, educationally, technologically and as a community over the last 2-3 decades – we have a lot to thank them for.

Gill Reid arrived in the balmy south to take up a lectureship in Dec 1991 following a 2-year PDRA position in Edinburgh. Her research interests are in synthetic/molecular inorganic and coordination chemistry, along with a love of structural chemistry. These, she combines to reveal new chemistry and, increasingly over the years, in applications of these new molecules for materials growth either by chemical vapour deposition or electrodeposition of thin film semiconductor materials and for the development of new scaffolds for fluorine-18 based radiotracers for medical imaging.

Gill is dedicated to her family and skilfully managed both these demanding aspects of life, with children arriving in 1997 and 2000 – many of you will have memories of meeting and working with them! She has always enjoyed working with young people both in teaching and research and collaborating with colleagues in chemistry, more widely in the University (mainly ECS and Physics) and externally in academia and industry – finding this both great fun and very productive.

Gill would like to thank the ~35 PhD students she has supervised, all the talented PDRAs that have worked with her group and her Southampton colleagues for their great contributions, hard work and friendship! Gill is the incoming president of the Royal Society of Chemistry.

Neil Wells arrived in Southampton in October 1993 as a fresh-faced undergraduate student. Despite current evidence, student Neil possessed a full head of hair that has mysteriously disappeared over the years.

Neil completed his BSc and then started MRes and PhD degrees with Prof. Mark Bradley, looking at various aspects of solid-phase organic synthesis. He soon felt that solving structures using NMR spectroscopy was more aligned with his interests. In December 2001, he joined the School of Chemistry as a member of staff working in the NMR facility. Back in those days, the facility was managed by Joan Street and they both worked together (alternating the roles of "good cop" and "bad cop" to keep users guessing) until her retirement in 2009. Neil has taught many PhD students about NMR spectroscopy and, to his knowledge, only one has fallen visibly asleep in a lecture. Neil has enjoyed working with many colleagues in Southampton and beyond and enjoys the weirder NMR-related requests and tasks: recording NMR spectra of drunk microscopic worms was a particular highlight!

Peter Horton is

His PhD work used the interplay of synthesis and structural chemistry and led to a love of crystallography. Peter is an ideal fit for the National Crystallography Service, where he began working in 2001. During this time, he has helped the NCS through too many renewal cycles to count and gained exceptional technical

crystallographic skills. His willingness and ability to pass these skills on to the next generation is exceptional and teaching/training activities with our undergraduates and research community, as well as nationally, are a testament to him and always remembered by those attending. Through this exceptional dedication, Peter has published over 850 crystal structures and is widely recognised in the national crystallography community. He is equally well known in the department, particularly as an active member of the Early Career Researcher community helping in numerous roles and committees.

Malcolm Levitt, an internationally renowned researcher on nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR), came to the department from Stockholm in 2001.

He is the main programmer of the SpinDynamica software for magnetic resonance theory and simulations (http://www.spindynamica.soton.ac.uk/) and the author of 'Spin Dynamics', a primary textbook for teaching and learning the fundamentals of NMR. Two major strands of his research were funded by Advanced Grants from the European Research Council while at Southampton. Malcolm has been the recipient of many awards during his career.

The Günther Laukien Prize and Russell Varian Award, amongst others, illustrate his standing in the Magnetic Resonance community. Malcolm was elected as FRS while at Southampton and recently awarded the Davy Medal from the Royal Society (thanks to Phil Bartlett for the nomination). Very recently he was awarded the Erwin-Schrödinger prize of the Helmholtz Association for the hyperpolarization of the metabolite fumarate using parahydrogen, and its application to MRI. This is shared with 10 other researchers, including Southampton postdoc Laurynas Dagys and has its origins as an undergraduate research project performed by James Eills. James continued on to a PhD with Malcolm and brought the project to real fruition during his postdoc career (mainly in Mainz) together with many other groups, including in Italy and the USA.

Malcolm has particularly enjoyed, and thrived in, the good collaborative research atmosphere in Southampton. In particular, very productive collaborations have been forged with Richard and Lynda Brown, and with Richard Whitby and co-workers on the physical science of molecular endofullerenes, which has evolved into an international consortium involving groups working on terahertz spectroscopy, inelastic neutron scattering, and quantum chemistry, as well as magnetic resonance. He wishes to thank his colleagues (Marcel, Peppe, Marina) in the MagRes research section and the department for long-lasting support and patience without which the research would have been impossible.

Guy Denuault has in fact been associated with Chemistry at Southampton for somewhat longer than his 30 years service in formal employment.

He came here in 1986 for a 1-year project placement as part of his degree at Bordeaux where within days of finishing military service he called Prof Pat Hendra, who instantly accepted him at short notice. However, immediately on arrival Pat said he didn't have space for him anymore, but Martin Fleischmann would take him on. From that point forward Guy was to be an electrochemist! Guy did most of his research work with Prof Derek Pletcher, who at the end persuaded him not to write his report in French, but rather in English - so that he could immediately transfer to a UK PhD, which he did. After sending out letters to 5 top electrochemists around the world, Allen Bard quickly invited him to undertake a Postdoc at the University of Texas at Austin. A year later Guy saw an advert for a lectureship in Southampton and immediately contacted the department - the position wasn't a good fit, but Derek urged him to apply for an EPSRC Advanced Research Fellowship while he did some Postdoc work for him as a stop gap. Guy started his postdoc with Derek on 1st Jan 1991 and the fellowship on 1st October and the rest of the story is well known...

Being enthusiastic to learn academic life, Guy quickly stepped up to the Education Committee - and he wasn't let off until very recently, having served almost 30 years! One of the things Guy is most proud of is the Southampton Electrochemistry Summer School which he started demonstrating on as a student and where he learnt a massive amount about his future subject. He has been involved ever since - particularly as the main organiser since 1998. Guy has supervised 27 PhD students and followed numerous research paths in his time here, particularly micro and nano electrochemistry as well as modelling and simulations of electrochemical processes. Guy notes further: "I have been blessed to work with exceptional students and remarkable colleagues. In particular, the electrochemistry section has proved to be a stimulating and caring environment to study and work. When I joined the electrochemistry group in early Oct. 1986, I could not have envisaged ever becoming one of its future electrochemists".

Advance HE: Inclusive learning and teaching workshop series

One of our Senior Research Fellow's; Dr Matt Potter has been attending the Advance HE's ten workshop series on ways to promote Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment in higher education, in preparation for leading his first module next Semester. The course itself has covered a range of topics such as how the curriculum can be more equitable, and how feedback can be made more inclusive, with the aim of making courses more accessible to a wider audience. However, the course has also branched out into more challenging topics such as how groups of students are disadvantaged, subconsciously, by specific teaching practices, and shared experiences of unintentional discrimination and bias.

AdvanceHE

Inclusive learning and teaching workshop series

On the course so far, Matt said: "It's been really useful, though also quite challenging at times as it requires a lot of self-reflection. It's so easy to think that what we experienced and felt as students is the norm for all other students. But, there are many groups who will collectively have had very different experiences. The main take-home message for me from this course so far is that teaching, content creation and module design needs to be more of a two-way street between staff and students. Greater communication almost always leads to better understanding of each other's points of view, often with a positive resolution, that helps grow a greater sense of community within a department."

More information on the course can be found on Advance HE's website at: https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/programmes-events/events/inclusive-learning-and-teaching-workshop-series, or feel free to contact Matt at: M.E.Potter@soton.ac.uk

Staff Q&A with Genni

When did you start working in Chemistry?

I started working in the tea-room in March 2016, initially on the temp bank and then on a fixed term contract from January 2018. I worked most afternoons and covered for Ann when she was on holiday. When Chemistry was closed due to COVID-19, I was on furlough for 8 months and then Sally Dady contacted me to ask if I would like to work in Stores as the tea-room was going to stay closed for much longer than expected. I jumped at the chance as I was keen to get back to work. I am currently working 3 hours a day in stores but also hope to get back to the tea-room when it opens again.

How did you come to work in Chemistry?

I am originally from Romania and lived in Italy for 16 years, I moved to the UK in 2015 with my husband for greater employment opportunities and a better life and education for my daughter. I had previously worked in the University of Rome in Italy so knew that the University would be a great place to work.

The department is a friendly place I enjoy working with Keith and Mark in Stores. I enjoy meeting and talking to people and especially meeting people from other countries.

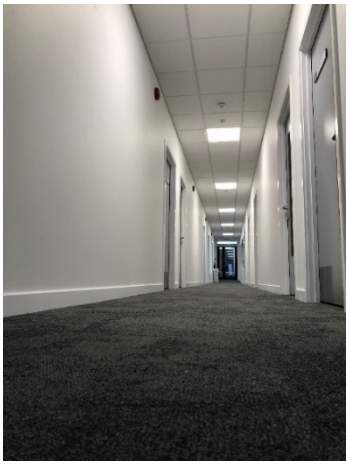
What do you do when you are not working?

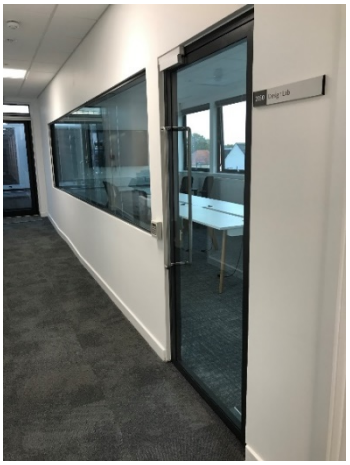
I enjoy spending time with my daughter and hunting for bargains in charity shops. I love to walk especially in the New Forest, and I am a member of a local gym and spa. I also attend a local church.

Chemical Engineering Building 27 Project
A magical combination of old and new

The East side of Building 27 is quickly becoming a real head-turner thanks to its unique façade, interior and position within the University. As construction works progress, the building continues to take shape and come alive.

Building 27 sits next to the majestic Building 29 where ‘old meets new’; clean, uninterrupted smooth lines throughout corridors with this added mixture of old and new, giving the interior a real lift.





The interior design also provides a wonderful, light and airy workspace with carefully selected furniture, a great asset to the department. Here the windows are far more than mere openings for the purpose of ushering in light and fresh air. Whilst they enhance the insulation and energy efficiency, they are incorporated within the fabric of the building to become a real interface between interior and exterior, bringing the inside space into contact with the outside environment and vice versa. With larger and higher windows fresh air can flow unrestrained into the rooms.

These windows provide the benefit of having first-class views, especially with the breath-taking view of winter sunrise as a backdrop, as well as interior spaces basking in delicious natural lighting.

This snapshot is a result of Brymor construction’s activities, and I personally can’t wait for the finished product, which will provide a safer environment and a better student experience.

Mansoor D’Lavar

Enterprise in Chemistry
Update on Data Revivals activities and our new SPACE initiative: Sam Munday

It's been 6 months since we last wrote into the Chemistry newsletter about ***Data Revival*** and thought the time was right for an update, especially given that we're launching the SPACE initiative (Sustainable Paperless Accessible ChEmistry) within the Chemistry department in Southampton.

Data Revival is the name of the platform we are working towards commercialising. Our aim is to close the gap between scientists and the knowledge they need by extracting reliable and reusable information automatically from archaic information stores, creating an efficiently accessible and query-able resource for anyone who needs it.

Since finishing the ICURe program (Innovation to Commercialisation of University Research), ***Data Revival*** has been going from strength to strength. We've joined the future worlds ecosystem and have applied for the Future Founders 2022 cohort. We are also working with several commercial and academic partners, having successfully finished the initial stages of a trial with a large European partner and are halfway through a big project with Bristol University.

As part of the development of ***Data Revival*** we are starting the SPACE initiative working with Chemistry and the Library (and of course Mansoor!) to digitise the COSHH lab books/paper records that are clogging up the Chemistry building. Doing this will be excellent to clear space, save money and improve the general ease with which data, and more importantly knowledge, can be shared/used/accessed by those who are required to use it.

The first phase will involve the digitisation of all the COSHH notebooks so PLEASE GET IN CONTACT IF YOU HAVE ANY RECORDS THAT NEED DIGITISING. This project is now fully costed and funded; therefore, this will cost you nothing!

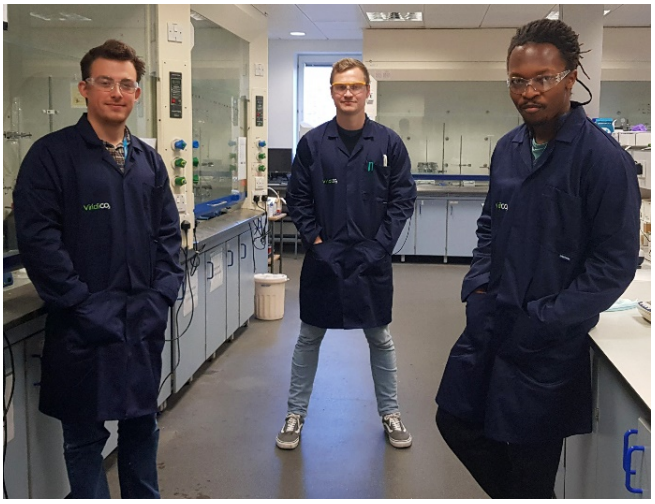
The second phase will come later and will involve ***Data Revival*** using the training data to improve our knowledge extraction technology, and hopefully return a lot more to Chemistry than just a set of digitised documents.

If you would like to hear more or get involved, please contact Samuel Munday at s.a.munday@soton.ac.uk, Jeremy Frey at J.G.Frey@soton.ac.uk or come and visit the office at 30/1069.

ViridiCO2 update: Dan Stewart

The past couple of months have been an exciting time for ViridiCO2 as we officially closed our first funding round and spun-out from the University. The closing of the funding round secures a total of £860K, split between £300K of Innovate UK grant funding and £560K of private investment, which will support scaling of the ViridiCO2 technology and development of new CO_2-based materials.

To the ViridiCO2 team we welcome Josh Le Brocq and Panashe Mhembere, both of whom have recently completed their PhD studies in Prof Raja's lab, and embark on not only working full-time for ViridiCO2, but juggling the writing of their theses at the same time! Further, we welcome Isabelle Sumner (Janice's daughter) who supports us on the administrative side.



Looking into 2022, we are looking forward to rapidly expanding the team, bringing in both technical and commercial expertise, in order to engage with the rising commercial interest we have been receiving since our conception.

The RSC produced a video about ViridiCO2 that portrays the potential impact of the company's research and how it aligns with the goal to achieve net zero by 2050. The video was shared ahead of the COP26 conference with the intention of influencing world leaders and demonstrating what this novel technology can make possible. You can watch the video here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_WWyTe2yzA

ChemSoc Winter Ball 2021

The chemistry society hosted the highly awaited Winter Ball on Sunday the 12th of December at the Leonardo Grand Harbour Hotel. It was a phenomenal evening, filled with dancing, karaoke and delicious food. Everyone was dressed to impress. Awards were handed out for being “most likely to be a disaster in labs” and “most likely to skip lectures” as well as the best from each year. “Biggest name on campus” went to our social sec with Ilya Kuprov being a very close runner up. All in all, it was a fantastic evening !

Chemistry Society Committee (pictured right) have worked tirelessly to revive socials, academic events and support all students in the department. A massive thank you to Tej Shah, Harrison Bayliss, Katherine Marris, Nathan Page, Lewis Patrick and Matthew Russell for all of their hard work this term. Can’t wait to see what’s in store for next term! *Amee Kanegaonkar*

Chemistry Publications: UG contributions to research papers

Important research outcomes are the result of work carried out by undergraduate project students and summer placement students. Recent examples include:

Tom S. Crickmore; Haamidah Begum Sana, Hannah Mitchell, Molly Clark; Darren Bradshaw.
Toward sustainable syntheses of Ca-based MOFs.
Chem. Commun., 2021 ,57, 10592-10595. doi.org/10.1039/D1CC04032D

Peer-2-Peer Mentoring

As a university we recognise that transitioning from college to university is a big step and that for our students feeling supported is extremely important. In response to this we have introduced a peer-2-peer mentoring programme where our second, third year students act as mentors for our first years. This allows new students to access to support and information through a larger friendship group.

Peer mentoring was introduced in the previous academic year but due to Covid-19 lockdowns and restrictions, only a few events could be held. However, when asked if the peer mentoring scheme was helpful, 75% of our students responded positively, with almost all the students saying that a peer mentoring scheme is a good idea, pointing out the benefits to all students (mentors and mentees) in terms of mental health. The students were also asked what could be done to improve the mentor scheme, students responded with various ideas including regular in person sessions and more large group events.

Peer mentoring has many benefits to both mentors and mentees. For mentors it offers an opportunity to help others by sharing experience and self-reflection and can improve confidence and communication with others from different backgrounds. For mentees a chance to talk to experienced students around academic and personal issues and get advice on their student life, studies and future careers.

Commencing in September, the programme for this academic year has enrolled many mentors who have been provided with initial training by Solent Mind. The mentors are now supporting our entire first-year cohort and there have been a number of successful group events including a scavenger hunt and a trip for ice cream at Sprinkles. After Christmas, a bowling trip and pub quiz are planned.

The programme has been supported by the Royal Society of Chemistry. Prof. Andrea Russell and Dr Lynda Brown would like to thank Amee Kanegaonkar and Noor Ahmad for all their work on this programme.

Wellbeing & Mental Health Support

We recognise that this is a challenging time for all staff in our School and sometimes might we may need help and support with our wellbeing and mental health. There are many resources and places to either help you or for you to help your colleagues are described below.
For any further help, please contact Lynda Brown (L.J.Brown@soton.ac.uk) or Sally Dady (sjd1@soton.ac.uk)
University Information/Guidance: https://www.southampton.ac.uk/news/statements/coronavirus.page

The Student Support Hub is your first point of contact when it comes to seeking support
Telephone: +44(0)23 8059 9599 and select option 2 for wellbeing related queries or option 3 for Enabling Services.
Our advisors are available to talk to 24/7 through our online chat service.

Students can contact Enabling Services in the usual way via enable@soton.ac.uk
Students facing significant difficulties or dealing with a crisis, should email firstsupport@soton.ac.uk

Students

Student Life:
University Halls-based support service for all students.
Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
Email: studentlife@soton.ac.uk
Tel: 02380 598 180

University Harassment Contacts Network
The University has a committed team of volunteer Harassment Contacts. They are trained to provide confidential support to students who feel bullied or harassed. They also support those who have been accused of harassment.
https://www.southampton.ac.uk/diversity/let-us-know/report-support.page#students

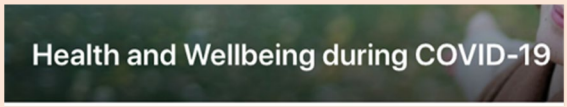
Staff

togetherall

From 2020 University employees can access a safe place to talk about wellbeing and mental health which is run by professional counsellors and available 24/7 free of charge.

University of Southampton Health & Wellbeing
Health & Wellbeing Home

University SharePoint Pages
These pages have a wealth of information and resources on many topics including mental and physical health, stress and occupational health services offered by the University to staff.



There are also specific pages for
Wellbeing during COVID-19

health assured

Employee Assistance Programme
This is an provided by Legal & General and Health Assured offering staff support online or by telephone.

Online Log in: User Name = worklife; Password = worklife

Telephone
A confidential telephone service with a qualified counsellor for support and advice. This is offered 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This is completely separate from University services and is confidential.
Freephone number **0800 316 9337**

mind for better mental health

Solent Mind is providing training to UoS staff who work closely with students, including senior tutors, personal academic tutors, professional, operational and technical staff. This training not only helps you to support students with mental health concerns but to know how to set your own boundaries to maintain your own positive wellbeing. It will also help you signpost to resources within the University and local and national resources.
For more information and to register click on links below. (Multiple dates are offered through to June)
Part 1 Register on Eventbrite
Part 2 Register on Eventbrite

Beyond Chemistry

Juliet Collins: Playing music to unwind

I often tell people if I wasn't a scientist, I would be a musician. My hobby (and for a few years career plan) is playing music. As a child, I played competitively and was part of every school band going. I played piano and cello from a young age, and later learned to sing and play bass guitar.

Since starting my degree (and deciding science was the way to go) I have kept music up as a hobby in the background and, in recent years, have had the privilege of playing in the band at my local church. This has allowed and encourage me to keep up music not only privately, but as part of a group. The social aspect, as well as the time spent rehearsing alone, has been a real blessing to me, especially when work has been more stressful or busy.

Being a full-time working mother, time is limited, but being part of a band that requires only a small time commitment, generally at the weekend, and not every week means that I can keep my music up without becoming bogged down. I spend around an hour preparing and rehearsing at home (a little more for the piano) and 3-4 hours at church per week for rehearsals and service. And, as I mentioned, this is not even *every* week.

I am currently preparing to play in three services over Christmas. I will play the cello for the carol service (something I have done for many years) and Midnight Mass, and the bass guitar on Boxing Day. I love playing carols on piano and cello, and it's a great way to unwind and get into the festive spirit. And to make practice more fun, my 2-year-old daughter is joining in with 'playing' the piano.

Nicola Knight: Once Upon A Fairy Door

Hi, I'm Nicola and outside of my work as a research fellow I'm a little bit of a prolific hobbyist. I love to make and create things in a whole range of different mediums, whether that's cooking in the kitchen, sewing, crocheting, I'll try my hand at most crafts. I find it a great way to get away from my computer screen and really enjoy creating the end product, which in this case is some miniature decorations.

Last year when the COVID lockdown hit, some of the families where I live decided to make a fairy house trail in the gardens of our neighbourhood houses. These are little wooden doors that people paint and decorate and then place somewhere in their front garden. I was asked to take part as my garden has some concrete mushrooms that are the perfect habitat for some fairies to move in. Helpfully my partner is also a keen hobbyist and has a large collection of painting and modelling supplies that I could dip into to have a really great time creating them.

I started off with just creating a set of doors for the mushrooms, but I also decided to make them a little more homely with a coordinating window for each mushroom and a little rope ladder for one of them. But I really enjoyed making and painting the doors so I decided that maybe they could have a bit of seasonal decoration throughout the year. This started with easter; a mini egg display in the fairy garden, and was followed later in the year by autumnal / Halloween decorations; miniature hay bales, pumpkins, mushrooms and the obligatory cobwebs of course.

Most recently it has been decorated as part of our Christmas Elf on the Street with miniature Xmas trees (both real and fake), candy canes and lights.

Hopefully it brings a smile to everyone's faces as they see it. I've certainly enjoyed creating them, and hopefully I'll have lots of ideas for other seasonal decorations!

Chemistry Sustainability Group

Do you want to improve sustainability in our School?

The Chemistry Sustainability Group is actively involved with innovations in reducing energy consumption, lowering water use, increasing recycling and waste management. If you'd like more information on our current activities, are interested in sustainable working or have ideas on how we can make our school greener, we'd love to hear from you!

We're looking to expand our membership in the new year, particularly we'd like to grow the undergrad, postgrad and ECR voice amongst our group.

Please get in touch with Prof. Simon Coles at: S.J.Coles@soton.ac.uk

Do you have an article you wish to contribute to a future edition?
Please email Lynda Brown L.J.Brown@soton.ac.uk
or Dawn Dunlop D.Dunlop@soton.ac.uk

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

ED&I is central to the ethos in Chemistry and we have a committed team that works hard to build a positive environment for all members of our School to be able to develop and succeed. As a school we have been involved in the Athena SWAN charter for the advancement and career progression of women in science for many years and its principles run through all we do.

Chemistry holds a Silver Athena SWAN Award, the first department at the University of Southampton to achieve this status twice.

If you would like to know more about our work there is lots of useful information on our website
https://www.southampton.ac.uk/chemistry/about/Equality/index.page

which also includes our Early Career Support Hub.

For more information about the ED&I or to raise any issues or concerns please contact Dr Lynda Brown (L.J.Brown@soton.ac.uk)