

## FESTIVE NAIL ART



## MERRY CHRISTMAS



## 'WHAT I CALL' XMAS



# Loan Time for Postgrads



by AMY BLACKWELL

You might have heard by now that George Osborne, in his Autumn Statement announced that student loans of up to £10,000 are to be offered to postgraduate students. This decision offers poorer students the opportunity to further their studies past undergrad. Osborne's announcement is supported by NUS vice president Megan Dunn, who has commented that the loan is a "major step in the right direction" as most postgrads fund their studies through methods such as credit cards and personal loans which could end in disas-

ter.

This all sounds fantastic right? Especially to third years thinking about doing an MA, like myself. But! Don't get too excited (like I did). The loan won't come in until the year 2016/2017, will only be available to students under 30 and could be charged at a higher rate than undergrad loans. At least it's something though right? Nicola Dandridge, chief executive of Universities UK has said that they support the Government's recognition of the problem and the benefits of postgraduate education for all who wish to go further academically.

Lecturers' union UCU said, that the

ideas were a step in the right direction but they don't condone encouraging students to rack up more debt and that more radical methods of encouragement are needed. Their suggestions were: "restoring proper grants or writing off part of a student's undergraduate debt when they complete a postgraduate course." Nick Hillman, director of the Higher Education Policy Institute said about the age limit:

"It will open up postgrad study to more people. The age limit will be frustrating to those who miss out and people will doubtless lobby against it. But it is a preferable starting point to many alternatives, like restricting the

loans to certain subjects."

And, Don Nutbeam, Vice Chancellor of Southampton University said:

"For many professions, a postgraduate degree is essential. Without affordable access to postgraduate education, many professions were simply out of reach of those who could not afford to pay."

The chair of Bangor's own Postgraduate Society, Jez Harvey commented:

"It's a real step forward to have the student loan system opened up to taught postgraduate students and we hope to see the Welsh Government follow the lead and do the same for Welsh students. At the same time

though, universities have been starved of funding whilst students are paying more and more every year to study. Whilst these loans will be of real help to many students looking to improve their learning and skills, the Governments throughout the UK must do more to help universities and students alike"

There's no doubt that the new loan scheme will open up doors for a lot of students and save a lot of funding stress but it is far from a perfect solution. For now though we should be happy that the Government are working in favour of students for once!

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AMY  
BLACKWELL

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I can't believe it's December already! This means I'm halfway through my last year as an undergrad here in Bangor. For some of you it'll be the halfway point of your first year and to some your whole degree! It's scary how fast time flies; I'm not ready to grow up! As my last editorial of 2014 I want to say a huge thank you to everyone that's made this year special. To last year's Seren team for being awesome and for this year for doing so well in their first four issues. To my wonderful housemates and coursemates and everyone in-between.

This issue of Seren has been a blast, as usual! We have some crazy times up here in the Seren office in the early hours of the morning. It's been a very musical experience this issue. Huge thanks to Ida for supplying the coffee and the Finnish sarcasm, Steph for her colourful annotations, Joe for his grumpiness and Kate for her hilarious laugh!

Things you should look out for in this issue: if you want to catch up on this year's politics check out page 8, Steph, Scott and Iona visited the Coca-Cola truck in Caernarvon on page 17, on pages 20-23 we have all you need to know about finding a house for next year, page 25 explores our favourite Christmas TV specials and on page 33 we go adventuring around some Christmas markets.

I wish my sub-editors, my readers and everyone else a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and a big good luck in your January exams!

*The views presented hereinafter do not represent the views of Seren Bangor, Bangor Students' Union or Bangor University.*

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## In Brief

### Police injured in crash

TWO police officers have been injured following a car crash in Pen-y-groes, near Caernarfon.

The two officers, who have not been named, have been treated in hospital for minor injuries following the incident. During the accident their patrol car collided with a wall and a street lamp.

The incident happened at 5:30 AM on 6th December. Police are currently asking any members of the public with information regarding the incident to get in touch.

### Man arrested on suspicion of manslaughter

A MAN has been arrested following the death of 58-year-old Susan Roberts. Who died at Maelor Hospital, Wrexham on December 2nd.

North Wales Police released a statement saying: "A 61-year-old man is currently on police bail after being arrested on suspicion of manslaughter following the death of a woman."

"Officers investigating the death arrested the man, who is also from Rhos-on-Sea, on 3rd December and he has since been released on police bail while inquiries continue."

An inquest was held following the death during which John Gittins, the coroner for North Wales East and Central, said that the hearing would be suspended until it is known whether or not criminal charges will be brought against the arrested individual. He also said that "there may have been a delay in assistance being called."

Cause of death has not yet been determined.

### Ex-councillor accused of endangering RAF jets

AN ex-councillor has been accused of recklessly endangering RAF jets after shining a bright light in the sky during a night training exercise.

John Arthur Jones, 64, is alleged to have carried out multiple offenses between November 2013 and September 2014, at the Mona airstrip in Anglesey.

It is alleged that he committed the offences while Hawk jets carried out touch-down and lift off exercises.

The former county councillor and housing director appeared at a brief preliminary hearing at Caernarfon Crown Court on December 8th. Judge Merfyn Hughes QC preceded over the hearing.

Jones has been released on bail and will next appear in court on 16th February, when he will be asked to answer for thirteen charges.

# Investment bolsters Penrhyn archive efforts



## ■ Investment totals £46, 487

## ■ Remaining documents need to be archived within the next twenty months



by JOE KEEP  
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Bangor University's work to archive documents concerning Penrhyn Castle, from the 12th Century to present day, has been bolstered by a £46,487 investment. The investment will allow the university

to employ another archivist to solely work on the remaining documents, which need to be archived over the next twenty months.

The documents have been under the care of Bangor University for over 25 years, and the completion of the archive - titled Sugar and Slate: The Penrhyn Castle Further Additional Papers collection - will mean the preservation of information that could be the basis of much more in-depth research in years to come. This is backed by the collection attracting readers to 1187 of its documents in the last academic year, making it one of the most con-

sulted University archives.

Elen Simpson, one of Bangor University's archivists said, that it is the "public demand for this important collection [that] has made it a top priority for cataloguing hence our decision to apply for a grant from the National Cataloguing Grants Programme."

"It is high time that this important collection is fully catalogued, and the hope is that anyone with an interest in Pennant family history can have access to all documents in the collection very soon."

The documents themselves outline Penrhyn's history, with details sur-

rounding the 1900 to 1903 slate mine strike, whilst also drawing attention to influential families of the area, such as the Pennant family and their involvement with the Jamaican sugar trade industry.

Einion Thomas, an archivist for Bangor University believes that: "the completion of a multi-level catalogue of an unbroken estate collection dating from the 12th century to the present day will provide vast scope for research."

# Elton John to play North Wales gig



by STEPHANIE YEABSLEY  
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Saturday, 6th June 2015 will see Elton John play his first concert ever in North Wales. Eirias Park Stadium in Colwyn Bay will play home to the pop legend.

Elton John said: "While this will be my first show in North Wales, I have always been knocked out by the reception I have received in Wales ever

since my first show there in June of 1976, and I am certain this will be just as memorable."

John will be following on from the explosive Access All Erias show in Colwyn Bay last June, when Welshman Tom Jones hit the stage for his first North Wales performance in a 50-year career. The 74-year old performed a set of fan favourites to the 14,000 strong crowd, a feat no doubt to be replicated by John this coming year.

Before the show in Colwyn Bay John will be touring Europe as well as performing in Las Vegas, coming to North Wales as one of only six venues. Tickets are on sale, and prices start at £40.





# In Brief

## Further arrests made in Operation Scorpion

FOUR arrests for drug-related offences were made in Gwynedd on 12th December, as part of Operation Scorpion, bringing the total number of arrests related to the operation to eighteen.

The most recent arrests came following raids made at several properties in Bleanau Ffestiniog, Pwll-leli, and Porthmadog. A 27-year-old woman, 18-year-old man, 19-year-old man and 23-year-old man were all charged with conspiracy to supply class A and class B controlled drugs.

DI Arwyn Jones, leader of the investigation, said: "Those charged under this latest phase of Operation Scorpion now stands at eighteen and this is by no means the end.

"We will continue whilst there are those in our communities who inflict this level of criminality particularly when we get such encouragement and support from those very communities.

"Further arrests will follow, the investigation will continue and I'd like to reiterate that anyone with information regarding the production and supply of controlled drugs or anyone they believe is involved in organised crime contact North Wales Police on 101 or alternatively via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111."

## Three arrested following Caernarfon pub fight

THREE men aged 29, 27, and 23, have been arrested following a fight in a Caernarfon pub.

The three men were arrested on suspicion of wounding and criminal damage after the brawl at the Eagles Pub on 7th December. The three were held for questioning.

Officers are currently appealing for witnesses to contact them on 101.

## Bangor lecturer appointed to Inner Temple

A BANGOR University law lecturer has been appointed as an Academic Fellow at the *Inner Temple*.

Dr Yvonne McDermott Rees, the recipient of the honour, is one of only four academics to be appointed this year.

Speaking about her appointment, McDermott Rees said: "I am delighted and honoured to have been selected from such a distinguished group of scholars."

# Bangor study links cannabis and lung disease



by EMILY HOULSTON-JONES  
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Bangor University researchers have discovered a link between cannabis and emphysema, a lung disorder which damages the air sacs of the lungs and leads to a shortness of breath and decreased quality of life.

The link between emphysema and tobacco use is a long-standing one but, a majority of cases have occurred later in life. However, a study conducted by Bangor University researchers, using patients at Ysbyty Gwynedd, has found that the effects of emphysema

may be accelerated by smoking tobacco mixed with cannabis. The study found that some patients with emphysema were in their early-thirties, and had smoked at least five joints of cannabis a day for a decade.

The researchers believe that these results demonstrate that modern strains of cannabis, which are stronger than those previously grown and distributed, can cause a rise in lung-related diseases among users.

Dr Damian McKeon, a consultant in respiratory medicine at Ysbyty

Gwynedd and honorary senior lecturer at Bangor University, said: "Our study was in a rural region of North Wales but we believe these cases may represent the tip of the iceberg."

Dr. Bernard Higgins, chairman of the British Thoracic Society's executive committee added to Dr. McKeon's comments, saying: "This study is yet another small but persuasive piece of a jigsaw pointing to a real danger of regularly smoking joints."

The findings have been presented to the Society.

## Quick facts

### WHAT IS Emphysema?

EMPHYSEMA IS A LUNG DISORDER WHICH GRADUALLY DAMAGES THE AIR SACS IN THE LUNGS (THE ALVEOLI)

### WHERE WAS the study held?

YSBYTY GWYNEDD, IN BANGOR, ONE OF TWO MAJOR HOSPITALS IN NORTH WALES

### WHAT IS the link?

SOME OF THOSE WHO SMOKE CANNABIS AND TOBACCO HAVE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH EMPHYSEMA AT A YOUNG AGE

# 25,000

DEATHS ARE CAUSED BY CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE - WHICH EMPHYSEMA IS A SUBSET OF - EACH YEAR IN THE UK



## In Brief

### USC store to open in Bangor

FASHION retailer USC are due to open a shop on Bangor High Street on 20th December, a week later than originally planned.

The shop will open in the recently vacated Sports Direct space.

A spokesman for USC said: "Set to inject a new range of must-have outfits for Bangor's clued-up urban trendsetters, the new fashion destination, located on Bangor's buzzing High Street, will be a welcome and refreshing addition, giving customers even more choice in informing their fashion decisions."

The spokesman did not comment on how many new jobs the store would create but, has assured current Sports Direct staff will keep their roles.

### Zip World owner receives award

SEAN Taylor, the entrepreneur who established several outdoor adventure locations throughout North Wales, received a Business person of the Year award during a ceremony held at Bangor University's PJ Hall.

The award was handed out during the Daily Post Business awards, which recognises and awards outstanding entrepreneurial spirit in the local area.

The ceremony was also sponsored by Bangor University and the Welsh Government.

Sean dedicated the award to the local community, saying: "This is dedicated to people at Bethesda and Blaenau Ffestiniog, the fantastic communities we are working in. Our success is their success."

"We have 140 staff now and 90% are local, they are amazing ambassadors for our business."

### Student Christmas Market to be held in PJ Hall

PJ Hall, in Main Arts, will play host to a student-held Christmas market on 17th December, between 12 and 5pm.

Stalls are run by students, for students and will sell a variety of products, from arts and crafts to decorations and jewellery. Attendants can also have their photo taken with Santa and his elves, who will be present all day. Bangor University Music society will be providing music.

A portion of proceeds from the event will go to several local and national charities.

# Welsh railways to become publicly owned



by EMILY HOULSTON-JONES

Welsh Transport Minister Edwina Hart has spoken of tentative plans to transfer Welsh rail services to a not-for-profit company: effectively bringing the services into public ownership.

Welsh and Borders train routes are currently operated by Arriva Trains, but the contract which allows them to run the service ends in 2018. Welsh ministers have the power to decide who will then be chosen to operate the rail services.

Hart, who is a representative of the current Labour party, which holds the majority in the Senedd, has said that

the replacement company would be established by the Welsh Government and work on a not-for-profit basis, and that they are currently in the process of establishing the company.

The company would initially work with the Government and new contractors in an advisory capacity, focusing on electrification, the rail franchise and plans for a South Wales metro transport network, before perhaps expanding its operations in the future.

In a released written statement, Hart said the following regarding future plans for Welsh railways: "While, in its first iteration, the company will concentrate on providing advice, its remit and role will be able to be extended, as

appropriate, to take on the delivery of key aspects of transport delivery and is therefore in line with the commitment to examine the feasibility of the Wales & Border rail franchise being run on a not-for-dividend basis."

This is not the first time that the Welsh Government has transferred a privately-owned service into a publicly owned one. Dŵr Cymru (Welsh Water) operates in the same fashion and Cardiff Airport was purchased last year by the government.

Labour's Assembly opponents commented on the plans, with Plaid Cymru transport spokesman Rhun ap Iwerth speaking of his support for the measures: "We've long believed

that rail has to work for the people of Wales, and that putting the next franchise in public hands is the way to do that."

"The minister was clear that there are pitfalls ahead, but having called for this in the last election Plaid Cymru fully supports this option."

However, Shadow Transport Minister Byron Davis, speaking on behalf of the Conservative Party, called the plans "Marxist" and went on to say: "Preventing private businesses from running Welsh railways is another example of Labour's ideological aversion to the private sector and inability to create wealth and prosperity in the Welsh economy."

## Shark found on beach

by EMILY HOULSTON-JONES

A dead shark has been found washed up on Barmouth Beach, a popular holiday spot in Gwynedd.

The Mako shark, which is the fastest known shark, was discovered on the beach by fishermen on 5th December and has yet to be removed at the time of the issue going to print.

The Mako shark is a threatened species and usually found in the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea. It is currently unknown how it arrived on the beach, nor is it known or how when it died.

The shark was photographed by Gwion Liggett and the image posted

on his Facebook page, where he referred to the shark as "beautiful dead or alive."

He later spoke to the MailOnline, saying: "When I arrived at the beach around sunset there was a huge crowd gathering around it, I was surprised it wasn't just a fisherman's tale. I was taken aback not just by how long it was but also how wide - it is a serious shark."

He added: "A lot of people will be hesitant to get back in the water after this. Maybe it is fortunate it has happened at this time of year so people can have some time to get over it."

"If it had happened in summer then I think a lot less people and holiday-makers would be in the water."





# First year student scholarships awarded



by EMILY HOULSTON-JONES

Several first year students at Bangor University have been awarded at the Bangor University Entrance Scholarship Presentation. Sixty five entrance awards were presented and £138,000 awarded to students who showed particular aptitude in their studies, prior to attending Bangor University. Among these

awards were Excellence Scholarships, which were awarded to thirteen students who achieved excellent results in their A-level exam or equivalents. The Excellence Scholarships were awarded by the University's Pro Vice-Chancellor Professor Oliver Turnbull, and ranged from £3000 - £4000. Kelly Baldwin, a Sports Science student who received an Excellence Scholarship, spoke of her surprise at

receiving the scholarship: "I feel extremely privileged and shocked to have won this award, and to have received recognition for my efforts throughout academic study. I received a generous award that will enable me to purchase more books to aid me in future study. The scholarship also gives me motivation to continue working hard in order to achieve my goals."

Sara Stockwell, a student studying Chemistry also received the scholarship. She said: "I was overwhelmed to win the scholarship and it really made coming to study at Bangor worth it! "I am thankful to Bangor University for this as it has given me the motivation work hard to succeed throughout my time at Bangor. The money will come in handy as I need a new laptop for my work."



# Science park plans submitted



by IDA VÄISÄNEN  
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Plans have been submitted for a £10 million science park in Gaerwen. Organisers behind the proposed Menai Science Park, or M-SParc, have submitted plans to the county council with the aim of opening the first part of the 20-acre park by 2017. Menai Science Park Ltd, a wholly

owned subsidiary of Bangor University, aims to develop a Science Park to drive growth in knowledge based science in North West Wales, with an early focus on sustainable energy and technology. Park director and former island MP and AM Ieuan Wyn Jones argues the park will bring high-skilled, well-paid private sector jobs to Anglesey "for the first time." Jones said: "M-SParc would be the first dedicated science park in Wales, drawing on best practice from immensely successful science park projects over the border in England, such as the Durham Science Park. "Importantly, M-SParc will provide

the first space in the region for businesses to be able to grow from a small business to a large enterprise, without having to relocate the business. "This means that valuable jobs would not be lost from this area once the company has grown to that crucial stage of development." The science park, based just off the A55, would bring companies together and offer high-specification offices and laboratories as well as support, advice and invaluable links with institutions like Bangor University, with the aim of helping the businesses grow and create high quality jobs. These jobs would be in sectors including energy, IT, environmental

services, clean technology enterprises and natural products including life sciences. The park will be funded by Welsh Government and EU Structural funds. Welcoming the proposals, Anglesey businessman James Ingram, technical director of low carbon at Xodus Group, said: "Like many people I had to leave Anglesey as a youngster in search of professional employment and it took several years before I had the confidence and experience to return home and set up my own company. "This is a really exciting opportunity for new employment on the island and it should increase spending in the local community as a result."

# In Brief

## Does exercise weaken the immune system?

NEW research from Bangor University's School of Sport, Exercise and Health Science suggests that certain types of exercise may weaken the immune system. Studies conducted by the school show that longer, less intensive workouts may be detrimental to the immune system. Participants in the study were tested by running on a treadmill at varying intensities, for varying times. It was found that exercising intensively for short periods of time had no effect on immune response, while long, low-intensity exercise sessions weakened immune response. Professor Neil Walsh, Director of the Extremes Research Group and lead author of the paper which set-out the new findings, said: "The good news is that our findings actually sit well with current thinking on endurance training, which also suggests that shorter intense bouts of exercise are important for improving performance. So it's not at odds with an optimal endurance athlete's training programme."

## Elvis Costello to play North Wales gig

IT has been announced that Elvis Costello is to play a gig in Llandudno this coming summer. The show will take place on Sunday 7th June at Venue Cymru. Pablo Janczur, event organizer and director at Orchard Entertainment speaking about the gig, said: "Elvis Costello has global musical appeal, so we are excited that he has chosen to play Venue Cymru, where audiences can experience just Elvis and his guitar running through his long catalogue of hits. It should be a special night."

## Locals against Peep noise

LOCAL residents have called for nightclub Peep to close earlier, following claims of early morning disruption. Dean Street residents Brian and Elaine Hughes have complained about the noise levels, saying: "All we want is a night's sleep, which I think everyone deserves." Currently, Bangor nightclubs are licensed to sell alcohol until 3am. District Inspector Neil Thomas, of North Wales Police: "We work closely with colleagues from Gwynedd Licensing Department to address any issues relating to licensed premises to ensure that activities at these locations have a minimal impact on our communities."



# 2014 in review

## Immigrants from Bulgaria and Romania



BRITAIN saw in the new year with a change to its immigration policies. This year as of the 1st of January, the work-ban in place since 2007 came to an end. This left residents of Bulgaria and Romania free to both live and work in the UK. National reactions to this have been split two ways, with some warmly welcoming the newcomers for what they can bring to our workforce, and others concerned over the financial strain this new influx of immigration could put on the country.

## Same-sex marriage legalised



IT has been much discussed in recent years, but this March finally saw same-sex marriage made legal. From midnight on the 28th, civil partnership was no longer the only option for same-sex couples, who can now wed. In celebration of this, many weddings took place in the early hours of that same morning.

Same-sex marriage is also now legal in some states in the USA and in other European countries such as France and Denmark.

## Israel-Gaza Conflict



IN June of this year, Israel launched "Operation Protective Edge", in hope of cracking down on Gazan rapid-fire of rockets against them, and seven weeks of conflict followed. During which over 2,200 people - the overwhelming majority of them Gazans - were killed. While the USA voiced support for Israel throughout, the UK took a more neutral stance; condemning the violent actions of both sides.

## Scots say "NO"



AFTER much debating and speculating from all sides, September saw Scotland finally come to a decision on their potential independence from Britain. Uncertainties over finances and national identity won out as a vote against independence was ultimately reached, but with only a 53.80% majority, not everyone was happy. Riots in Glasgow and across Scotland were to follow, but the fat, as they say, is well and truly in the fryer now and Scotland is still very much a part of the UK.

## Rise of UKIP



WHETHER or not you are planning to vote for them in next year's General Election, you cannot deny that UKIP have certainly made an impression this year. Led by Nigel Farage, the party have courted controversy with their views and politics, both as individuals and as a whole, on immigration, same-sex marriage, and women's rights. Farage has made certain that everyone knows his name and many are now considering UKIP one of the "big three" to watch in the elections next year.

## EU migrants: it works the other way around too

560,000

The number of people who immigrated to Britain this year

265,000

of these are not from the EU

No benefits

are available for people with limited visas/work permits



30

The number of countries in the EEA (European Economic Area)

JSA

immigrants from the EEA can claim Jobseekers Allowance

No housing

People from EEA countries cannot claim housing benefits

### Cameron announces immigration plans

by IDA VÄISÄNEN

David Cameron recently announced his plans to cut down immigration rates by banning EU migrants from claiming benefits for four years after moving to the UK, alongside many other restrictions. According to former minister Owen Paterson, Cameron was forced to drop his plans after facing resistance from the German chancellor Angela Merkel.

Still, this inspired me to conduct an experiment. I decided to check what would happen if it was the other way around; a British person moving to my country, which is also an EU member.

*Kela* is an independent social security institution supervised by the Finnish Parliament and is in charge of any type of benefits. The first piece of information on their immigration site is that anyone entitled to permanent residency is also eligible for benefits. As EU citizens don't need to apply for a visa or a job permit, the residency requirement is likely to be met. After creating a fictional married couple with five children, I checked from *Kela's* calculators how much in benefits this family could claim as a minimum in a case of unemployment. It's not much, but it's more than what David Cameron would be willing to give if this family

was to immigrate to the UK. What's important is that there is no set time-limit or other restrictions to applying for this benefit; permanent residency would be enough. This is made possible by the EU.

Last week Nigel Mills, one of the Conservative backbenchers demanding a tough limit on EU migrants, said: 'Free movement is about the right to work, not the right to claim benefits. The EU should accept that our rules are the will of the British people and Parliament.'

I half-agree with this. Free movement is about the right to work, but it's also about the right to live your life

in your new chosen home country. If I decide to stay in UK after my degree, I expect myself to be participating to the commonwealth by having a job. People claiming unnecessary benefits is different, but if for whatever reason I can't work; whether it be a case of not finding a job, starting a family, a sudden illness or being made redundant, I expect myself to be on the same level as the people who were born in this country.

As a member of the European Union, The United Kingdom needs to follow the same rules as all other member countries. This is what being a union is all about. Mr. Mills, the EU will not

be forced to accept your rules if they are in contradiction with the agreed union policies. If a UK citizen decides to immigrate to Finland, or any other EU country for that matter, that would make them one of these much despised EU migrants. Under the set immigration policies they have and should have the same rights; in every one of the member countries.

Former Environment Secretary Owen Paterson was quoted saying: 'We cannot go into long, rambling negotiations with the European Union, particularly if they're not going to play ball.' With all due respect, it might not be the EU who's not playing.



# All about that Anaconda



Ida is an international student working in liasion with the international office. Every issue she'll write about her experiences in Bangor.

by IDA VÄISÄNEN

PREPARE FOR TAKE-OFF

One thing about studying abroad, which I'm sure everyone will agree on, is that you really get used to airports. Even though I'm scared of flying, I love airports. If I travel anywhere, the airport is definitely a part of the experience.

Compared to any other place of communal traffic, like a bus or train station, an airport has its very own atmosphere. People are generally happier, as being at the airport means they are making a specific trip instead of an everyday drag to school or work; a long-awaited family trip or maybe a lads' holiday. People are fussing and chatting about what they are going to do once they get to their destination. You never get that anywhere else other than an airport. Nobody plans out their shopping spree on a train platform on the way to Llandudno Junction.

I have to admit I'm right with them, but instead I plan what I will do once I get through customs. At the queue I'm already mapping out how much time I have for each shop like a strategist. Even when I'm returning to the UK after a holiday at home, which is always a bit sad, the airport is quite a comforting place. I can go shopping in duty free or get a manicure, and I feel better by the time I board the plane. I'm sure people would feel better about communal traffic in general if any of these were available on any coach or train station.

Still my love for airports runs deeper than that. I think it's quite a poetic place. All those millions of excited people travelling through it, regardless of their destination or any other status, all share a same goal for a few hours. They are all going somewhere, and the airport is where they all start from. Everybody is equal at the airport. If your flight is late, it doesn't matter which VIP hall you sit in. Where else is that really possible? An airport is a still point between leaving and arrival, something stationary in the otherwise hectic world. When you start thinking about it, it's really quite beautiful.

If you're staying in Bangor this Christmas, St John's Methodist Church invite you and your family to a traditional British Christmas Day Dinner on 25th December. It will be at St John's Methodist Church Hall (next to Lidl) on Wednesday 25th December at 1.00pm. There will be no charge, but you must book your place by emailing Stephen Roe at: [stephen.roe@methodist.org.uk](mailto:stephen.roe@methodist.org.uk) by Wednesday 17th December. Please tell Stephen how many places you would like to book, and any dietary requirements you have (vegetarian, allergies etc).

by IDA VÄISÄNEN

Lately there has been a trend in pop song lyrics concentrating on plus-size women celebrating their shape. Examples of this have been recent hits such as Nicki Minaj's *Anaconda* and Meghan Trainor's *All About That Bass*. Both of these songs have been referred to as 'empowering' and 'feminist' by music critics and the general audience, with a strong message of 'body acceptance'.

This is true, both of the mentioned songs have lyrics that feature women who are very confident about their size, stating that 'he can tell I ain't missing no meals' and 'every inch of you is perfect from the bottom to the top'. Being plus-size is unified with confidence, awareness of sex appeal and popularity with (in case of both of

these songs) men. This type of confidence and self-acceptance can indeed be seen as a very positive change in pop music. I'm all for standing up to general constricted beauty standards, but I still find this type of empower-

“ **Body-shaming is not okay, no matter which “positive” headline it’s done under...** ”

ment extremely worrying. While both Nicki and Meghan praise their own size in their songs, they end up putting down other people over their weight. Both of these songs worryingly refer to skinny people as 'skinny bitches', a name that is in no way empowering nor acceptable. I

have always been slim and come from a family of skinny people. I was born with my body type and even though I have never worried about my size, I know from other people that being skinny can be just as difficult and

upsetting as being overweight. Body-shaming is not okay, no matter which “positive” headline it’s done under. Also once you start analysing the content of both of these songs, the positive body-image expressed in them does not really originate from confidence as much as from insecur-

ity. An especially worrying example can be found in *All About That Bass*, where the lyrics state, hidden between the catchy chorus, that everyone remembers: 'I'm bringing booty back/ Go ahead and tell skinny bitches that/ No, I'm just playing / I know you think you're fat'. Gaining your confidence from someone's assumed insecurities is not exactly empowering. That makes the positive message they carry even emptier than it already was. This is not confidence. It's insecurity.

Why can't we have songs that are actually empowering, celebrating ALL the shapes and sizes; without putting down others in the process? Empowerment built on bullying is not empowerment at all, it's just bullying.

# Steaming over rail prices

by IONA PINCHES

With only one week of term left it's time to jump for joy at the prospect of going home for Christmas to a house with central heating, a full fridge and being surrounded by your nearest and dearest. But actually getting home, is however, one many people are far less enthusiastic about.

The news broke last week of a rise of rail fares by 2.5% as of 4th January 2015. British rail fares are already higher than any other country in Europe, maybe even the world. Not to mention, with quality of travel actually being poorer in the UK, it is difficult not to feel enraged.

Currently, with a 16-25 railcard, to travel home at my desired times and dates during the Christmas period it will cost me approximately £50 return,

which for me is a full weeks living costs. Not only does it mean I would have to live off bread and water for a week it also means that what is by car a three-hour journey becomes a five and a half-hour journey. This is just ridiculous. I probably could handle the fees but, hanging around on train platforms in the freezing cold for hours on end and having to pay for the privilege just doesn't make sense to me. Especially when there are countries demonstrating a far smoother system for a fraction of the price.

Over previous years there has been such a government-driven push on using public transport as a means of reducing carbon dioxide emissions. However, in an attempt to create a more environmentally friendly commute a wallet-crippling problem is on the rise. This affects both students and commuters throughout the UK!





# In Brief

## Sophie the Stegosaurus

THE Stegosaurus is one of the most recognisable dinosaurs, the gigantic plates on its back being the most recognisable feature. However there are many unknown questions about this creature. The main questions being how did this animal move and what were the main function of the scales down the creatures back.

One reason for the lack of information is due to the lack of preserved skeletons. There are only six partial skeletons of the creature worldwide, with the most complete specimen being only 80% complete. A UK team hopes to answer these questions and has already started, by scanning the most complete specimen named "Sophie". By scanning Sophie's 360 bones, computer modelling aims to digitally reconstruct the skeleton and will allow the reconstruction of the animals muscles, demonstrating how the animal moved and lived. It is hoped that Sophie will allow the important questions to be answered.



## Three year drought: not climate change induced

by RICHARD DALLISON

A federal report issued by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) this week has put the three year drought that has been affecting California down to natural variations such as the La Niña weather oscillation. The study's lead author, Richard Seager (Columbia University) and NOAA's Martin Hoerling issued a statement, with Hoerling saying, "The conditions of the last three winters are not the expected conditions that climate change models said would happen." Hoerling did go on to say how-

ever, that La Niña can only be blamed for about one third of the drought, the rest being due to random variation.

Deke Arndt, head of climate monitoring for NOAA's National Climatic Data Center, said the current California drought, "is slightly more intense than, but still comparable to, the late 1970s episode. I'd put them at 1a and 1b on the list of historical multi-year drought episodes affecting California in modern times."

The report has come in for criticism by some outside climatologists, who say that the report has not taken into account the record warmth in California, and how this has made the drought worse. According to the National Climatic Data Center and based

on the first 11 months of the year, California has been having its hottest year on record, 4.1 degrees warmer than the 20th century average.

Further criticism has also come from the National Center for Atmospheric Research; Kevin Trenberth, head of climate analysis at the organisation stated: "This study completely fails to consider what climate change is doing to water in California." He continued by saying that the work had "completely missed" the part that hot air had to play in increasing drying, by evaporating more moisture from the ground. In a drought, additional heat from global warming enhances drying, in a feedback effect according to Trenberth, this however has been dis-

missed by the report, Hoerling stating that in California this isn't a factor due to the proximity to the ocean.

This report is part of a long list of papers that have studied the extensive drought in California. Previous peer reviewed studies have pointed towards changes in pressure of the Pacific, which has blocked rain getting to California, Hoerling and Seager dismiss these. Opinion on the cause of the drought is still split among the scientific community, what is clear is that this drought continues to effect more people every day and end to the dry spell cannot come quick enough to the residents of California.

## Ancient ancestors artwork

A RECENT report published in the journal *Nature* has told of a fossilised shell showing the earliest evidence of engraving seen by a human ancestor. The fossilised shell, found in Indonesia, is reported to be at least 430,000 years old. These engravings outdate the previous oldest markings which are only 130,000 years old and means that the possible candidate are the long-extinct *Homo erectus*.

The shell was part of a collection that was stored in boxes in the 1890's, where they remained purely as fossilised shells until 2007 when a PhD student, Mr Munro, started photographing them for research and immediately noticed the distinct markings. The markings were made before fossilisation between 430,000 and 540,000 years ago. The discovery may confirm theories that *Homo erectus* had significant manual dexterity and greater cognitive abilities than previously thought and it proves that they are more like humans than previously thought. Mr Munro said that, "this symbolic behaviour by *Homo erectus*, is the only evidence of this behaviour we've got for a species that lived for 1.5 million years on three continents".



## UK's lunar moon base

by CHRIS GLASS

Earlier this month detailed scientific goals of the proposed Lunar One mission were laid out. The UK led mission aims to develop the knowledge of the origin of the moon and also aims to investigate the potential of creating a permanent base on the moon.

The funds behind the mission are hoped to be primarily raised by public donations. Donors in return will be able to send messages, pictures and even samples of hair to the moon which are to be buried underground in a time capsule. The novel idea is hop-

ing to raise a target of £500 million, creating an archive of human history which could last up to 1 billion years, and preserving a legacy even if our species become extinct.

The mission also aims to have a scientific bearing. Despite the moon being our nearest celestial object, little is known about the moon besides orbital photographs and a few rock samples. The mission hopes to land a lander on the Moon's South Pole (which is also the deepest known impact crater in the solar system). The 12km deep crater is thought to have been formed during a period of asteroid bombardment known as the Late Heavy Bom-

bardment around 4 billion years ago. The mission plans to drill to a depth of 100 metres which is believed to contain rocks from tens of km below the surface that were thrown up 4 billion years previous.

The mission hopes to provide answers about the Late Heavy Bombardment as the moon has preserved such evidence, unlike the earth which has undergone geological change. Studies have also suggested that water may be present in polar surface soils. The drilling should determine whether water is found deeper. If it is then there is the possibility of the water supporting a human base.

The mission will also test the suitability of a permanently manned base, providing cheaper space exploration along with a radio observatory allowing signals from the oldest galaxies to be detected. The possibility of a space base is particularly relevant as Physicist Stephen Hawking recently stated that life on earth is at an ever increasing risk of being wiped out by changes in climate, nuclear wars or the risk of a genetically modified virus, stating that "If the human race is to continue for another million years, we will have to go where no one has gone before."





## Bears return to Chernobyl

by LAURA SUTTON

It's been 100 years since humans forced bears out of Chernobyl and now, almost 30 years after the explosion at the nuclear power plant, they have returned to the area.

Scientists have been using camera traps to record what wildlife is living in the exclusion zone after evidence of bear activity had been seen in recent years, however this is the first time they have been captured on camera. The Brown Bear is one in a long line of animals returning to the area, along with animals such as the Lynx and Eagle Owl, which hadn't occupied

Chernobyl for decades previous to the explosion.

The experiment has divided the exclusion zone into three areas, that of high, medium and low contamination, the zones contain eighty four cameras and will focus on accounting for the larger mammals in the exclusion zone. Looking to the future, the team aims to gather a comprehensive understanding of species density, in order to select a species to trap and fit with GPS collar, so as to calculate the exact amount of radiation they are exposed to throughout the year.

Over the years there has been a lot of debate over whether wildlife in the 30km radius exclusion zone struggles

or thrives. It is agreed that the absence of the 120,000 humans who previously inhabited the area, the lack of industry, hunting, pesticide and herbicide has benefited most species and since marshlands are no longer being drained, there are more habitats for animals to occupy. However it has been documented that over the years, radiation has caused the DNA of mice to mutate, however none of these mutations have been found to have hampered the mice's chances of survival. The fact that the wildlife is still present and animals are breeding successfully does point towards a thriving wildlife, however other scientists argue that the damage isn't always visible. There

has been a significant impact on the biodiversity and abundance of species, which is directly proportional to the amount of radiation exposure, which in some areas is still 2,000 times higher than background levels.

The final debate regarding Chernobyl is that of what should be done with the site after it is deemed safe for humans again. This could be in hundreds of years yet. There are calls for it to be given a protected status and not to be built on, used as an education tool, or as an open space and a site of remembrance.

## In Brief

### Seals caught in the act

IN a study conducted since 2006, researchers have recorded several occasions of fur seals trying to have their way with king penguins. At first this behaviour was put down to a sexually inexperienced seal who was yet to learn that it couldn't reproduce with a penguin, others later hypothesised that this was an aggressive act, the seal was showing the whole penguin colony its dominance. In all recorded cases, the seals were males and the penguins were of an unknown gender. On most occasions once the seal was finished the penguin was released, however on one occasion the seal killed and ate the penguin. Further research is needed into the exact reasoning behind this activity.

### First recorded tiger clawing death

A ROYAL Bengal Tiger has killed a woman in India by clawing her to death, as opposed to their usual method of using their teeth, biting the neck and suffocating prey. The 34 year old woman was in the forest collecting leaves when the tiger attacked, another woman threw rocks at the tiger to scare it away, but by the time it retreated the woman had died. The autopsy revealed that the tiger's claws had punctured 2cm into her body damaging organs and severing blood vessels. The tiger was found dead the next day. It had no functioning teeth which may explain the nature of the attack; it was probably starving and seeking prey.

### Second garden city planned

Bicester in Oxfordshire has been chosen for the coalition government's second garden city scheme. The city, along with the first site in Ebbsfleet, Kent and a third, yet to be announced, will share a £2.4 billion fund. The project does not define what a garden city should be, but rather encourages developers to integrate green space and access to local amenities into the building plans. This project is part of the coalition's plan to deal with housing shortages across the UK. As one of the chosen sites, Bicester will benefit from a considerable upgrade to infrastructure and amenities including a new railway station.



## Rare pygmy whale stranding

by GEMMA SIMMONS

On 20th November, rescuers were called to Newborough beach, Anglesey following reports of a stranded whale. To their surprise, upon arrival they discovered it was a rare species known as a Pygmy Sperm Whale (*Kogia breviceps*) which is extremely rare in Welsh waters.

The local coastguard, the RSPCA and British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR) were among rescuers attending the rare scene. The 6 foot

long animal was still alive and successfully refloated however, most cetacean strandings occur because the animal is unwell or injured so many rescuers were still concerned about the animal's welfare and survival. Dr Peter Evans, director of Anglesey-based Sea Watch Foundation expressed concerns about the animal re-stranding. Phil Lewis who is the Wales coordinator for BDMLR said: "The animal was successfully re-floated and was last seen heading out into deeper waters in the Irish Sea, this species is certainly a rare sight off Anglesey."

Pygmy Sperm Whales are more common in warmer Southern waters such as that of West Africa but they have been spotted further North over the past few years with some scientists theorising that their range shift is an adverse effect of global warming. The last time one was spotted in UK waters was in 2011 off the coast of Cornwall.

Despite a successful refloating, less than a week later Kathy James, who is the sightings officer with the Sea Watch Foundation, received news from two local bird watchers that the body of a whale had washed up on a

nearby beach at Dinas Dinlle. It was later confirmed that this was the same whale from Newborough. The Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme (CSIP) attended to the dead animal and performed a field necropsy in order to discover the cause of the animal's death. Although sad, it is also a rare opportunity for marine scientists to study this mammal as very little is known about it. Investigators are currently awaiting the results of field tests and samples taken to gain a definitive cause of death.



## Free tea and coffee during exams

LOOK out for the Students' Union during exam period at Main Arts and Deiniol Libraries where you can get free tea and coffee for just answering some simple questions to help us make the lives of students at Bangor better.

You can find information on special circumstances, personal tutors, plagiarism, and the General Election and walk away with a hot drink – what more do you want during exams?!

## UCU strike action

UCU announced, nationally, on the 20th of November that strike action has been postponed following negotiations in January. A meeting will be held on the 15th of January where plans will be drawn for the future of USS pension scheme for University staff. Future action will be decided at this meeting. Bangor University has put measures in place to ensure that strike action does not affect students' ability to progress or graduate.

The Students' Union will keep everyone updated on the situation with UCU industrial action.

## Postgraduate vision in Bangor

BANGOR Students' Union is campaigning to improve postgraduate education at Bangor University. The Students' Union has spent the last year lobbying the University on its employment practices for postgraduates who teach, and have taken proposed plans for postgraduates who teach back to the drawing board.

On the 26th of January 7pm in Wheldon teaching space 5 Bangor Students' Union's Postgrad Society will be hosting a consultation event that all postgraduate students at Bangor are welcome to join. This will be your opportunity to shape a manifesto for Bangor's postgraduate students that maps out our vision for postgraduate education and experience at Bangor University.

There will be refreshments available, and the more people who attend, the easier it makes it to achieve whatever the vision looks like.

# Improvement to sexual health services needed

Bangor Students' Union lobbies for improved Sexual Health Services in Bangor

Last year, alongside Unity Bangor, our LGBTQ+ Society, we ran a short survey looking at student's knowledge of local GUM (sexual health services) in Bangor. We asked a range of questions about GUM services, family planning services, their location and a question about how much students pay for contraception.

We know, from evidence across the UK, that young people's knowledge of local services and the number of young people accessing sexual health services is low. According to the Health Protection Agency new diagnoses of sexually transmitted infections seen at genito-urinary medicine (GUM) clinics rose by 60 per cent between 1996 and 2005. Total GUM clinic workload increased by 268 per cent in the same period. In 2005 almost 11,000 people were diagnosed with the most common STI, chlamydia, with the chlamydia screening project reporting that around one in ten young people have the condition.

VP Education and Welfare, Lydia Richardson said, "In 2013-14 Bangor University worked with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to

place a Student Health Nurse in Student Services, which unfortunately never properly came to fruition. We've recommended to the University that they continue to pursue this service, and make funding available for this."

Rhys Taylor, Students' Union President, has been co-opted onto the North Wales Community Health Council representing Gwynedd and presented the report to the Gwynedd Community Council Committee on the 8th December. Rhys has recommended that 'Gwynedd Community Health Council put pressure on Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to further investigate young people's knowledge of local GUM services in Bangor, and address the issues presented in our report.'

The Students' Union has also emphasised the need for proper consultation with the University and Students' Union on changes to local services, such as sexual health services and mental health services.

If you have any experiences of accessing sexual health services or family planning services in Gwynedd, please get in touch with Lydia on [lydia.richardson@bangorstudents.com](mailto:lydia.richardson@bangorstudents.com)

## Love Bangor

As part of the Students' Union's Love Bangor Community Partnership two living wage student interns have been appointed to work with the SU, groups of students and local community groups to meet the aims of the Partnership.

Simone Eubanks, a first year Medical Biology student and will work alongside the Students' Union in developing the Love Bangor Hub, which will host easy to access information on rubbish collections, housing standards, tenants' rights and responsibilities, volunteering opportunities, information on personal and housing safety and more. Simone will also be communicating what the Students' Union's Community Wardens are doing, what's happening with the Union's campaign on student housing, and communicating the power of students in our communities to make a difference.

Adam Milligan is a second year Philosophy and Religion student and will work alongside the Students' Union, Community Wardens, and other community groups to develop campaigns, built on community organisation, to achieve tangible wins on housing and waste problems in Bangor. Adam will also work alongside VP Education and Welfare, Lydia Richardson, to get the SU's Tenants' Forum established. Student Volunteering Bangor are also recruiting volunteers to take part in two exciting new projects centred on com-

munity engagement as part of Love Bangor.

We are looking to recruit a small team of Community Wardens to work within their communities to promote the work of the Love Bangor Partnership and put themselves at the heart of community action.

We are also looking to recruit volunteers to support students in finding accommodation as part of the new SVB Housing Hand project. The purpose of this project is to support students in their house hunting activity in line with the Students' Union housing campaign which aims to support students to find good quality and affordable accommodation and to not be influenced into signing contracts early, paying over the odds in rent or renting poor quality accommodation.

The Community Wardens will initially work within the areas of Menai, Garth and Hiraal councils, therefore it would be ideal if wardens were also residents within these areas. If you are unsure as to where these areas cover, please get in touch as we would be happy to clarify.

If you are interested in applying for this role, please email [svb@bangorstudents.com](mailto:svb@bangorstudents.com) with your name and contact details. More information can be found on the Students' Union website.



## The BIG Election

For the first time in many years, the Students' Union will be electing Officer Trustees, Student Trustees and Senator positions at the same time. In February 2015 you will have the opportunity to lead your Students' Union and help make sure that your fellow students have the best experience, support and advice here at Bangor.

Officer Trustees roles are full-time, fixed term positions (often referred to as sabbatical officers, or 'sabbs') and successful candidates work in the Students' Union and receive a living allowance (currently £17,528 a year) for the duration of their 12 months in office.

The Student Trustees are volunteers, serving on the board, which exists to ensure that the SU is run effectively for the benefit of students here at Ban-

gor University.

Senators are volunteers who sit on our Senate as representatives of the student body. Senate scrutinises the work of the Officer Trustees, and debate ideas and create projects to work on with the Officer Trustees.

Full training and support is provided for all roles and no previous experience is required. You will need to supply ideas, creativity, energy and enthusiasm to be successful in any of the roles outlined above.

More information on the specific roles can be found on the SU website at: [www.bangorstudents.com/elections](http://www.bangorstudents.com/elections)

Nominations are open now and close at 2PM on 2nd of February. The online nomination form can be found here: [www.bangorstudents.com/elections/nominations](http://www.bangorstudents.com/elections/nominations)



# General Election 2015

## Semester One by the AU

by RHYS TAYLOR

**W**e live in interesting times, or so some of us think. In May 2015 we have what some are calling the most important election in a generation. The General Election is just 9 months away, and at the time of writing this there are just over 200 days left.

On 7th May millions will head to the ballot box to determine who will govern Britain for the next five years, decide the future of Britain. Yet on the 7th May 2015, young people up and down the country won't turn out to vote. Our voices will go unheard by a system that continues to let us down. We'll continue to be let down by politicians who fail to speak on our behalf at a time when the odds are already against us. Continually let down by a system that makes decisions to the

detriment of our generation and generations to come.

In 2010 just 44% of people under the age of 25 voted. In 2015, just 1 in 8 under 25 year olds intend on voting.

What that means is that we get governments we don't want, making decisions that we don't agree with, and decisions that affect our lives and the lives of generations to come. Decisions are made, promises are broken, and all because politicians can comfortably ignore a whole demographic, confident in the knowledge that we have no influence at the ballot box.

But rather than challenge the system and holding our elected representatives to account, we disengage, an entire generation left disenfranchised. This has to change, and we have to take responsibility for realising that change. We can't ignore the system and hope it changes, we challenge it

now or accept what comes.

Our generation is distinctive. We are the first generation in modern history to face the possibility of being worse off than our parents. The future of the next generation will be decided at this election, and it's our responsibility to make sure that it's us that shapes that future. It's our collective responsibility to get young people registered to vote and mobilised to vote, building a stake in political system.

And we'll win for young people by organising our communities - supporting people to recognise and use the power they have. NUS is focusing on Community Organising, and we'll take this agenda forward as part of our General Election campaign and beyond.

My priority for our Union is developing activists and leaders within our communities, ensuring that our

Union equips students with the tools necessary to influence change and take responsibility. To win. Our elected Officers work for students, acting on behalf and speaking on behalf of students, but I want to change this. We should challenge concepts of leadership to build a Union that brings people together with shared interests, enabling them to win using the power that they already have.

We will win the General Election for young people through organising, we will win the 2016 Welsh Assembly Elections and 2017 Local Government Elections through organising. But most importantly we'll transform our communities and our Union through organising, by empowering leaders, activists and people in our communities to use their collective power to achieve change.

AN exciting start with over 3000 people at our annual Serendipity. Standing to be the best one yet, with more sign ups and visitors than before. A healthy £2524.57 raised for Movember, and £1604.19 for the local Beaumaris RNLI. Currently 4 points up sitting 64th in BUCS, with Womens basketball competing strongly in their division 1 promotion this year, could they make it to the premiership? A lot of training for our club committees, including water safety, first aid and disability inclusivity training. We have 2 new clubs, golf and water polo slowly developing, with golf reaching the quarters in the cup round of BUCS. Campus Sport has been busier and busier each week, with over 100 being involved in either football or netball weekly. A very big thank you goes out to all of our 56 volunteer club captains and committees that work hard over this semester. Well done to you all, have a rest and see you in January.

**Whats coming up....**

**13th Dec – AU super-teams**

**19th Dec – AU club training stops for Christmas**

**12th Jan – AU club training starts**

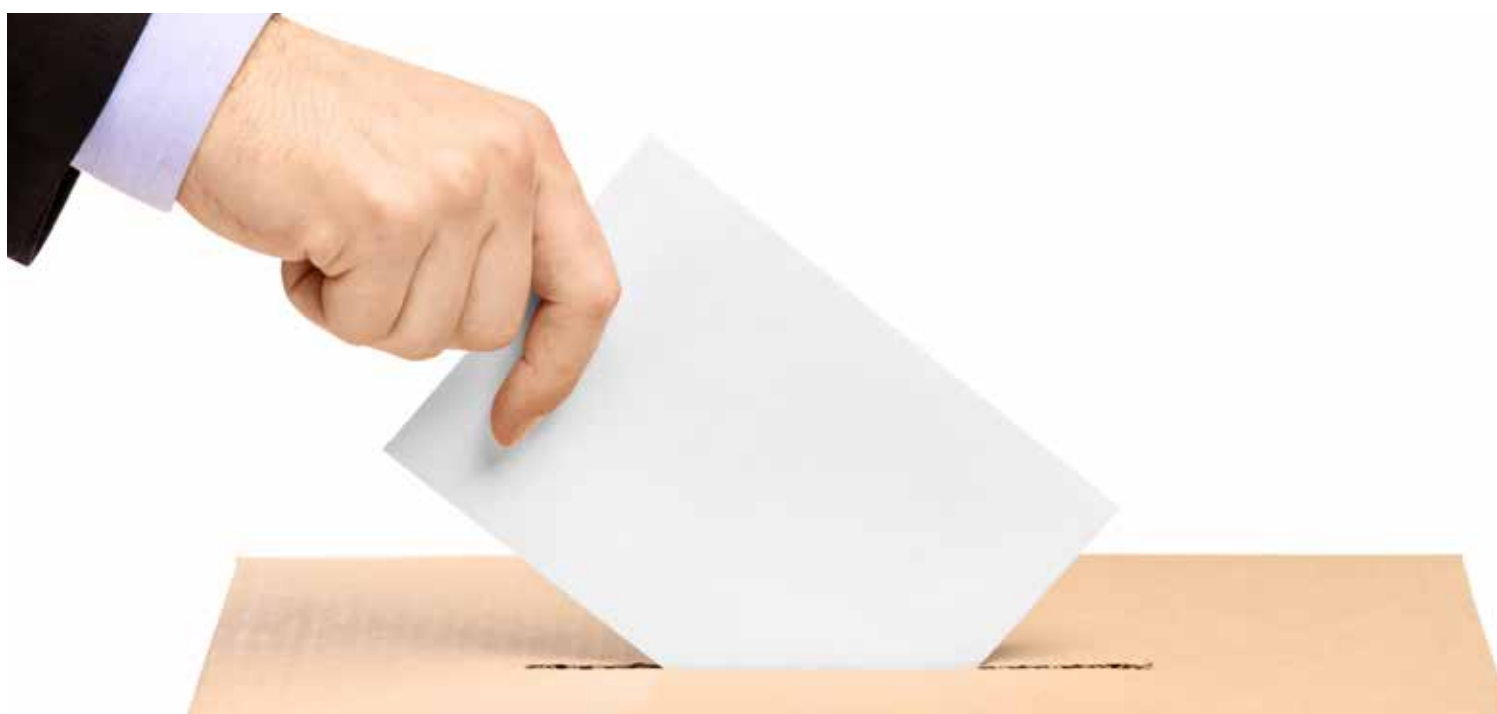
**24th and 25th January – AU club photos**

**9th February – Start of healthy living week**

**14th February – 'Find your perfect match' SERENDIPITY 2.**

**18th April – VARSITY 2015.**

**Have a wonderful Christmas and all the very best for 2015!**



## Make sure you're in; the majority aren't

**E**lectoral registration has changed in the UK – before now you would be automatically registered to vote if you lived in halls, and you could register everyone in a household to vote. Now you have to register as an individual to vote, and many people are beginning to fall off the electoral register, leaving them without a voice in their communities.

In the Upper Bangor (Menai) Ward, where more than 2,500 people live, including around 2,000 student rooms on Ffriddoedd Site, only 800 people have registered to vote ahead of the 2015 General Election. It's not just a problem for us in Bangor. There are already around 6 million people eligible to vote who aren't on the register, with huge disparities between different demographic groups. Around half

of 18-24 years olds are not registered, compared to six per cent of those aged over 65. Fewer people from BME communities are on the register compared to white people. Fifty six percent of people living in private rented homes are counted, compared to nearly 90 per cent of homeowners. In Liverpool, a large student city, nearly 20,000 people have dropped off the electoral register since the change to individual electoral registration.

Bangor Students' Union will be running a larger campaign in 2015 to get Bangor students on the register and ready to vote. SU President, Rhys Taylor, said;

"If the same number of students voted in the General Election, as the number that vote in SU elections for our Officers, students could change

the outcome of the General Election here in Arfon. The difference between the current MP and the runner up in 2010 was just 5.58%, and the total number of students living in Arfon comes to nearly 20% of the electorate – a figure high enough to totally overhaul the political environment this end of North Wales."

"Our generation is distinctive in that we are the first generation in modern history to face the possibility of being worse off than our parents. The future of the next generation will be decided at this election, and it's our responsibility to make sure that it's us that shapes that future."

Bonnie Greer put it perfectly when she said: "We have to put young people in positions where they are not just spectators, they're not just fodder for

people to fret over, they have to make policy, they have to shape the world that we're living in because they're doing that anyway."

At an NUS event this summer, Bonnie Greer also said that anybody who tells you not to vote, is not your friend, in response to Russell Brand's campaign to stop Britain's electorate from participating in democracy.

Bangor Students' Union is looking for General Election Ambassadors, societies, and individuals who want to get involved with the General Election campaign to make the voice of students too loud for any politician to ignore.



# Books, glorious books



by ELEANOR HIRST

Since Welcome Week, Bangor Books & Quills have grown and grown. The society has recently established a bi-weekly book club, for all students (not just literature ones!) across the university. The book club

attracts many different individuals and has successfully helped to maintain people's love for literature, beyond their A-Levels. Our book club is a casual affair and it is not essential for students to have read the entire book assigned that month, emphasising how anybody can read and engage with literary works despite their degree. We

both read sections of the text and also discuss it after.

Thus far, the book club has tackled the *Rebecca*, a text that haunts the reader to the last page. The text has many elements of Gothic literature that our book club readers found especially haunting. We found it best to come back to this text three times over

the course of a month, as the text had so much to offer in terms of discussion. The literary work that we are currently discussing is F. Scott Fitzgerald's *Tales of the Jazz Age*.

One of the most famous tales from this work is *The Curious case of Benjamin Button*, which is one of the films we may be watching in the Greek

Room on Thursday 18th from 6pm, as part of our film nights.

The book club meets twice a month in The Harp Inn, Bangor at half 6, details can be found on our Facebook page every few weeks.

## Busy times for MUSOC



by HEPHZIBAH LEAFE

Bangor University Music Society (MuSoc) consists of a choir and an orchestra who rehearse weekly. The choir took part in the RAG Harry Potter event and will be featuring in the University Christmas Market with some fun seasonal tunes

such as *The Snowman* and *Santa Claus is Coming to Town*.

We are gearing up towards our first major concert of the year to be held in PJ Hall on 14th December at 7:30pm. As well as the separate performance by the choir and orchestra, they will be joining forces to play Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia* on Christmas Carols.

But we're not just about our music. We recently held a charity week for Children in Need where we had a range of 'fun' activities; from our male leg waxing session, cake sales, film night, sponsored run etc, raising £160.

2015 is already set to be filled with Music Society events! We're having a 'tour month' in February with the choir per-

forming in Beaumaris on 25th February and going all the way to The Wirral on 21st February for a performance in St Andrew's Church, Meols. For these tour-concerts, we will also have a range of small music groups (duos, trios, folk bands) who will perform as well as the choir. This will mean that more people in the society can get up

and play under the MuSoc banner, using whatever instrument combination takes their fancy!

It has been a fun, busy and hectic few months for the society, and we're looking forward to more of the same in the New Year!

**Part of a society? Want to be featured in Seren? Maybe you have a big event coming up? Maybe the event has already happened? Whatever your society news you should definitely get in touch!**

**All you have to do is send us an email: [content@seren.bangor.ac.uk](mailto:content@seren.bangor.ac.uk)**





# What's been happening in BEDS?

by PORTIA DODDS

Well, it has been a rather busy semester for BEDS (Bangor English Dramatics Society)! We have put on our first play of the academic year; *Journey's End*, which was a huge success. At the be-

ginning of the semester we also put on our first 48 hour Project; a real cramming of ideas with the writers amongst our society to produce three ten minute plays after having only two days to produce them. Our annual trips to Beaumaris have also begun with our Christmas Victorian Day where a group of us dressed in Victorian cos-

tumes and interacted with the public to create a rather intriguing tale ending in an exciting court case, a promotion for one of the street urchins and a marriage for two of the servants of the Lord and Lady. Also, two of our members read out poems at the Remembrance Day commemoration. As well as these performing activities, we have

also had our first 'staying in' social which was an after Halloween/before Bonfire Night Movie Night, as well as our outings to Cheese Night, somewhat a tradition amongst us bedsians! We have a lot more exciting things to come, such as our Winter Ball, which our members are looking forward to as well as two more plays after Christ-

mas and three more plays to be performed in the second semester. One of our big events of the year is also the exciting return to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival! Keep your eyes peeled for more of our events next semester!

## Bronies just want to be friends

by ZOEYY YOUNG

Bangor Bronies are Bangor's first friendship society and despite its name doesn't just focus on My Little Pony. The show's morals are about meeting new people, doing new things, making friends and appreciating what makes you unique and special. Bangor Bronies helps all this happen.

It wasn't easy, there was a lot of stigma that came with creating such a society, posters were torn down and met with a negative reception. It wasn't until the society got up and running that people realised what the society was

about. Bangor Bronies is about helping people get together, forming new friendships and appreciating the talent within by trying new things. Last year they ran a disability evening, raising awareness for the blind and partially sighted and the struggles that they can face. Having to rely on hearing, taste and smell there were numerous tasks, involving blind taste tests and locating keys based on the sound they made. They also learned to rely on each other, trying to make biscuit faces whilst blindfolded and listening to the instructions of others!

Charity is a big part of the Bangor Bronies, who are currently trying to help the homeless in Bangor.

Previously, they ran an anti-bullying campaign in the name of Michael Morones, a young boy who was hospitalised just because he liked My Little Pony. There is a strong belief in the society that no one deserves to be given a rough time for challenging gender 'norms', especially at the age of 11. In the future they aim to run workshops in local schools about tolerance and provide community talks from people from all walks of life.

It's not all serious though, friendly activities, movie nights, fun and games are all a big part of what they do. From playing Radio One's Innuendo Bingo, to a Batman film night, to decorating glasses, there is something

for everyone to do together. The Bangor Bronies inter society trip to Wrexham comicon was the largest event they have organised to date, dressing up in cosplay and meeting many fan favourites such as Peter Davidson and Chris Barrie. Two of the society's cosplayers, masquerading as a Tardis and Arkham Asylum's Scarecrow were stopped continually throughout the day for photographs, and managed to bag themselves unscheduled chats with the fifth doctor himself, throughout the day.

Sadly, as a small portion of the Bangor Bronies are Erasmus students, there are a few goodbyes to be said, and bon voyage parties to host. While

it is sad that good friends are leaving, long term relationships have been forged, ready for new ones, as new members arrive. This really brings home what the society is about. On Thursday 11th December a goodbye party will be hosted for Viola Gerosa, an Italian Erasmus student and firm favourite of everybody in the society. In the end, this is what Bangor Bronies are about, having fun, making new friends and making everyone's time at University a good one.



## Christmas Day Bucket List

- 1** Have alcohol for breakfast - preferably a glass of bubbly!
- 2** Refuse to help with Christmas dinner at all - except the eating part.
- 3** Undo a button on your trousers after Christmas dinner is finished due to over-eating.
- 4** Sneak your own brussel sprouts onto another family members plate. Does anyone like them?
- 5** Immediately try and start playing/wearing/doing your new Christmas gift whatever it may be.
- 6** Settle down at 2pm to watch the Queen's Speech.
- 7** Boast about your new gifts on facebook/Instagram a picture of them all.
- 8** Play a family board game.
- 9** Inevitably someone in the family will fall asleep/everyone will start to drop off...
- 10** Watch a Christmas film.
- 11** Get frustrated with extended family members asking you the same mundane questions over and over...
- 12** Someone will get far too drunk...
- 13** Your mum will come out at some point in the evening with loads more food ready that no one wants to eat.
- 14** Everyone despite being full will keep dipping into the tin of Celebrations/Quality Street etc...
- 15** Go to bed in new Christmas pyjamas.

# Seren's Gift Guide

*Whether it's for your mum, best mate, secret santa or that uncle you only see once a year, we've got you covered*



Bubble Wrap Costume  
prezzybox.com  
£12.95



Smartphone Projector  
notonthehighstreet.com  
£15.95



Yankee Candle  
Asda/Various in store and online retailers  
from £19.99



Christmas t-shirt  
New Look  
£7.99



World Scratch Map  
Amazon.co.uk  
£15.65



Personalised Family Charm Necklace  
notonthehighstreet.com, from £49



Eggspress Heart  
thegreatgiftcompany.co.uk  
£5.00



# Christmas cheer in Caernarfon



by STEPHANIE YEABSLEY

It's no secret that many people consider the Coca-Cola advert playing on TV the start of Christmas. If you've been nowhere near a TV in the past twenty years then the advert features a fleet of twinkling Coca Cola trucks making their way across a snowy landscape and lighting up the country as part of Coca-Cola's 'Holidays are Coming' ad.

Since launching in 1995 the vehicles have become global advertising icons despite falling into disuse in 2001. In 2007 the company brought back the campaign after many consumers apparently rang to complain, wanting the iconic advert back on TV to signal the start of their Christmas.

Whether you are a fan of the Christmas truck or see it as just yet another money making ad campaign, it has to

be said that there is something exciting about it. Coca-Cola now take the truck on tour, stopping at destinations all around Great Britain this year included: Caernarfon, Wrexham and Newton in North and Mid Wales. These events promise the chance to have your photo taken with the truck to share with friends and family, soak up the festive spirit with seasonal music and drink free Coca-Cola!

“You know Christmas is just around the corner when the Coca-Cola truck comes.”

On Thursday 4th December the truck rolled into Caernarfon and parked on Y Maes in the centre of town and was 'lit-up' between 12pm and 8pm giving visitors plenty of chance to visit the truck for themselves. In what became a double celebration for the citizens of Caernarfon the Christmas lights were also switched on, at 6pm the same day. Roads in and out of Caernarfon were shut in preparation for the in-

flux of people here to see the truck for themselves. Coach trips from Anglesey and further afield were booked up especially for the event. Fans had the chance to take pictures with the truck and have a professional shot done by the company – surprisingly all for free.

Council clerk for Caernarfon town Katherine Owen said: “The Coca-Cola truck coming to Caernarfon can only be seen as a good thing for the town. It will be great to see thousands of people from across North Wales descend on to the square. It's what Christmas is all about. You know it's only just around the corner when the Coca-Cola truck comes.”

Third-year international student Bethany went to visit the truck and said: “I really enjoyed the experience of seeing the truck in front of me. It's so iconic to Christmas and really got me in the festive mood.”

The trucks visit has had a positive effect on Caernarfon and been a great boost for the town and local businesses.





# DECK THE HALLS

Seren find the best Christmas bargains just for you!

**TESCO** **50p**



**STAR TREE DECORATIONS**



**Poundland**

**£1**

**TINSEL SNOWMAN**

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**The Range**  
Home, Leisure & Garden

**GREEN TREE STRING LIGHTS**

**TESCO**

**£3**



**MINI REAL XMAS TREE**



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Neuadd Kyffin

WELL, THIS IS

**FRESH**  
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# Take time to sign




## TAKE YOUR TIME TO SIGN X.....

Making a decision about where you want to live is important! Make sure you Take Your Time to Sign.

### HOUSING CAMPAIGN TIMELINE!

2014	2015
<b>THROUGHOUT OCTOBER &amp; NOVEMBER</b> <b>TAKE YOUR TIME TO SIGN CAMPAIGN</b> (Check out our facebook for details!)	<b>TUESDAY 27TH JANUARY</b> <b>TENANTS FORUM</b> LR4 6pm till 9pm
<b>MONDAY 1ST DECEMBER</b> <b>HOUSING WEEK</b> ■ <b>STUDENT HOUSING OFFICE LIST RELEASE.</b> Take a look at the student pad! ■ <b>ACCOMMODATION ADVICE SESSION 1</b> MALT 6pm till 9pm ■ <b>LANDLORD AWARD NOMINATIONS OPEN</b> (See our website!)	<b>WEDNESDAY 28TH JANUARY</b> <b>ACCOMMODATION ADVICE SESSION</b> MALT 1pm till 4pm
<b>TUESDAY 2ND DECEMBER</b> <b>HOUSING FAIR</b> Bar Uno 9am till 5pm	<b>THURSDAY 19TH FEBRUARY</b> <b>LANDLORD AWARDS</b> TCR3 6pm till 9pm
<b>WEDNESDAY 3RD DECEMBER</b> <b>ACCOMMODATION ADVICE SESSION 2</b> MALT 1pm till 4pm	<b>MONDAY 9TH MARCH</b> <b>HOUSING FAIR</b> Bar Uno 10am till 4pm
<b>SUNDAY 7TH DECEMBER</b> <b>BIG FAT QUIZ OF THE YEAR</b> (Win a trolley of food!), Bar Uno 7pm till 9pm	<b>TUESDAY 10TH MARCH</b> <b>TENANTS FORUM</b> LR4 6pm till 9pm

**#DontRentYet**

[www.bangorstudents.com](http://www.bangorstudents.com)  
 @bangorstudents  
 Bangor Students' Union

**BAR UNO**  
[www.bangorstudentpad.co.uk](http://www.bangorstudentpad.co.uk)

**PRIFFYSGOL BANGOR UNIVERSITY**

## SU Top Tips

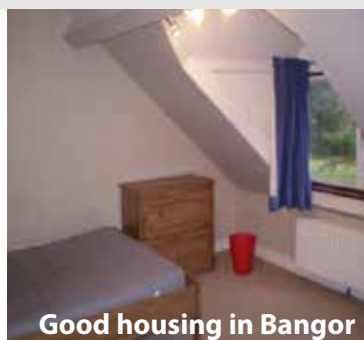
Here are some top tips for house hunting:

- Have a look at the Bangor Student Pad Website (all landlords registered have to agree to the student friendly t&c's)
- Think about whom you are living with (e.g. do they wash up?)
- Make sure you look at a number of houses
- When visiting a house, take your coat off. Is it cold?
- Check that everything is in once piece. If it isn't – ask when it will be fixed!
- Ask about any hidden costs or bills (e.g. letting fees; council tax)
- Speak to current tenants
- Don't decide there and then - go along to the housing office to get your tenancy agreement checked before signing
- Choose an affordable, livable property
- Enjoy yourself – looking for a house is exciting!

In the meantime, check out our housing calendar what we have going on in 2015!



by LYDIA RICHARDSON



Good housing in Bangor

The culture of Bangor housing is very different to other Universities, in that we have a surplus of housing. This means that there are plenty of houses to go around and, when you and your housemates decide to look for a place to rent next year, you can shop around, get a feel for each place you visit and go for affordable places! As students, you have the power to choose what standard of living you live in!

It is really important that you take

this opportunity to look round as sometimes students don't realise what can happen when renting a below standard property.

Don't get me wrong, the majority of Bangor houses are not like this and there are plenty of fantastic houses to choose from that are still available for students through outlets such as the Bangor Student Pad, the most student friendly housing site you can use [www.bangorstudentpad.co.uk](http://www.bangorstudentpad.co.uk). The SU campaign this year is to make sure that you have all of the facts and that you get the best house

you can!

So no matter whether you are looking for a 2, 3, 6 or 10 bed house there is plenty of opportunity (and time) for you to look around. Do not be pressured by landlords, letting agencies or future housemates into thinking that 'all the good ones will be gone' as that is not the case! Get all the information you want before signing your legally binding tenancy agreement, as it will dictate where you live for the next 9 to 12 months!



# Live the village life



by AMY BLACKWELL

In August, Bangor University was named in the top 10 universities in the UK and the best in Wales for student experience according to last year's NSS results, something everyone at Bangor should be proud of. From here the only way is up, right? Well, that's the plan anyway. After the news last year that Normal Site, the residential halls on the grounds of the old Normal College, would have to be closed due to the unsuitable and irreparable condition of its buildings the university set out to plan and construct St Mary's Village.

Back before most of Bangor's current student body were even thinking about going to university St Mary's was a residential site and before that St Mary's College, an educational college for women. In its previous days as university accommodation it was home to undergrads, postgrads

and families alike. The last of which moved out five years ago and the site has been closed ever since. Now the site is being developed into new student accommodation for (but not limited to) returning, international and postgraduate students.

If you ask any previous resident of Normal Site what it was like to live down there, they will most likely sing its praises, not for its facilities or stunning architecture, no one is kidding themselves there (it's cheaper for a reason), but for its close-knit community. All corridors on Normal are accessible to residents and the smaller number of students that live there means that they generally all become good friends. A previous Normal resident commented: "Normal Site is a community, not just halls. We have our own society, the Normal JCR." Quite accidentally

Normal site has a stronger sense of community than any other of the university's halls could hope to have. In the wake of Normal's closure those behind the development of St Mary's hope to create this atmosphere at the new residential site.

The village will have a total of 602 bedrooms and accommodation will range from shared facility halls to group townhouses and ensuite halls. As well as this there will be numerous communal areas such as: a gym, a café bar, a PC room with printer, common rooms with table tennis and pool tables as well as TV's and comfy couches, an outdoor multi-sports field, a shop and a large cinema room. Even the way the en-suite halls are designed promotes social living; the entrance to a flat will be through the kitchen rather than having the communal area at the end of

the corridor as is the case on Ffridd and there will be communal living rooms for each floor. The developers are really keen to promote the village vibe even down to the minor details, for example there will even be a village clock in the centre of the quad.

Recently, the university has been doing research into student experience and have discovered that before and after Christmas are the times of the year students are most likely to consider dropping out. According to this research being a part of a club or society, being part of a community, makes all the difference to the student experience, meaning if they feel like they belong to a group students are more likely to continue with their studies. The university is really working to promote a Bangor-wide community spirit, helped along by projects such as St Mary's and schemes

such as Campus Life; which offers fun, safe and inclusive activities for students living in halls.

Many returning Bangor students currently feel that they have to go into private housing after first year. St Mary's will provide another option to students and a bigger chance for students to move back into a halls environment. St Mary's has townhouses available for groups of friends and has its own separate postgrad halls too.

Construction of St Mary's will be completed before the start of the next academic year and the building works is currently on schedule. The halls office are receiving weekly updates from the contractors and have done their research in order to offer students an all inclusive deal at the best possible price (and all contracts come with free gym membership!)

## Moving back to halls



by JOE KEEP

To many people, moving out of halls is that final step to proving you are fully independent. However, what happens if you find yourself wanting to move back because you fall out with house mates, you go on a study abroad course and your housemates graduate, or maybe you just enjoyed living in halls?

I'm here to tell you that, despite halls appearing to not be as independent, or as cosy as living in a house might be, it trumps that in a

lot of other ways. The main reason is a constant, stable stream of all the utilities you need.

When I moved out in my second year, I was faced with a lack of heating towards the end of the week and constant power outages, halls have none of these problems. If one arises, halls offices sort it out A.S.A.P. and it isn't at the discretion of the landlord. Living in halls also means that all rent payments are lined up to your student finance whilst also being within

your student budget.

You also get to meet an entirely new bunch of people. This is especially good if you have come back from a year abroad or taken time out and need to make new friends quick. Despite you seeming like an oracle of all things Bangor, you'll also be able to get involved with some pretty crazy things you would only have dared of doing in first year; I'm looking at you hall jousting. Keep in mind you might not live with that type of flat,

you could get a quiet flat that would rather just stay in, which can also suit your needs sometimes.

There are, however some drawbacks. You are still going to end up living with first years and regardless of how much you envy first years and want to go out like you did in your first year, workloads make it just that little bit too difficult to achieve no matter how hard you try. This will mean those late nights and loud parties could become tiresome and

something you begin to loathe rather than love like you used to.

Over all, I love being back in halls. It has everything I need with the added benefit of if anything goes wrong, it'll be sorted in a very timely manner. It also beats the standards of some housing in and around Bangor, so, don't write it off because it's the done thing to move out, it could be the best decision you make.



# The Good and Bad of Student Housing

Seren take a look at the good, bad and just plain ugly of Bangor's student housing!

## Good



by BECKI WATSON

Finding somewhere to live after you move out of halls is one of the most stressful experiences that students have to go through. From finding somewhere everyone likes, to contracts and legal agreements that the majority of students have never had to deal with before, and the fact that most student properties don't match up to the picture you have in your head after you've viewed it, it's a real minefield. But luckily, there are many times when everything works out just fine, and that's thankfully what happened for

me and my housemates.

The search for our third year house wasn't easy; we had to wait a week to find out whether the group before us was going to take the house before eventually finding out the house was ours. But when we finally got to move in, the house was everything we could have wanted; 4 good sized bedrooms (2 upstairs, 2 down), 2 bathrooms (great in a house with four girls), outhouse with washer and dryer, and a communal kitchen and living area. Not having a living room was a bit of a bummer for a little while, but having the one communal area meant that we were able to spend more time together,

and our rooms were so nicely done up that it was easy to go back there if you needed private time to study or to just be alone for a while.

Our landlord was also fantastic. He gave us all the information we needed regarding safety, gave us advice on setting up our gas and electricity bills, and any time we had a problem, he was round as soon as possible. One time when we thought our boiler had gone, he was round within 20 minutes and had the boiler fixed that afternoon. Even better, when the washing machine broke and destroyed my housemate's laundry, he got us a new machine and gave her a check for the ruined clothes.



The only issue we had was when he charged us for cleaning at the end of the year after we'd spent an entire day scrubbing the house from top to bottom, but we've tried not to let it spoil our memories of the house when he was such a good landlord all year.

The effect of a good house and living situation on your overall university experience can't be overstated. In second year, I was in the grottiest, dampest house you could imagine, and I spent the whole time miserable just being in there, and it was all because we got the house in a panic. But with the third year house, it was such a massive difference. I was clos-

er to my friends, I enjoyed having people round for parties, and crucially, because I spent a lot of time in third year in the house writing my dissertation, I actually enjoyed living and spending time there.

You hear a lot of horror stories about student houses, and there are some real dives and terrible landlords out there. But if you do your research and make sure you're prepared, there's no reason why, like my housemates and I, you can't get a great student house to make memories you'll treasure.

## Bad



by IONA PINCHES

Student housing is a complete minefield, especially when you're moving out of halls and into a house for the first time. I didn't really know the right questions to ask or the tell tale signs of bad housing to look out for. My parents gave me lots of advice, which I stupidly didn't take seriously enough, I naively went looking for a house with two basic checkpoints: I wanted a double bed and a washing machine. Rookie Error.

Upon moving in I very quickly discovered just what I'd let myself in for.

The entire house reeked of damp after a summer of being empty, the sofas were collapsed and there were holes in the carpets. This however, was nothing compared to the horrors that awaited me in my chosen room. I ended up with a downstairs room – a common feature in many student houses. I thought it would be so cosy and homely it had a feature fireplace and even wooden beams, with the added bonus of not having to walk up any stairs I was convinced I'd hit the jackpot.

Within days my rose tinted spectacles had come off. My room was absolutely gross. I couldn't walk on the floor without something on my feet

because the carpet was so damp, if I left any books on the floor by my bed they actually went wrinkly like when you read a magazine in the bath. It was the perfect home for all kinds of creepy crawlies; woodlice becoming my new room mates wasn't uncommon at all. The walls were often wet to touch, three of the four walls were external walls and so very quickly damp and black mould became a big problem, to the extent that I actually began to feel ill if I spent long periods of time in my room.

When I raised these issues with my landlord he told me he'd sort it and that I wasn't to try to deal with it myself. I then came home from lec-



tures that day to walk into my room and get the fright of my life at my landlord crouched behind my bed bleaching the walls. Not only had he not given me any notice that he would be in the house, he entered my room without my consent and to top it all off ended up getting bleach all down my wardrobe door and consequently on some of my clothes. I also later discovered that whilst bleach is not only a corrosive chemical, and bad to breathe in (which I had to do as he came late afternoon and I had no-where else to sleep that night), it doesn't even kill mould but simply gets rid of the black colouring on the walls. This then meant that it

didn't get rid of the problem and I was also concerned to contact him when mould kept coming back for fear of him damaging my property further.

We later found out that our landlord at the time had been previously blacklisted multiple times and his property deemed unsafe to live in. If we had known this at the time we'd never have signed any contracts. The Bangor Landlord awards are a fantastic way of recognising good landlords but I can't help but feel that students should also be made aware of landlords to avoid.



# SEREN'S HOUSE HUNTING CHECKLIST



SHOP AROUND

☐

LISTEN TO YOUR PARENTS

☐

CHECK CONTRACT WITH THE UNI

☐

SPEAK TO THE TENANTS

☐

TOUCH THE WALLPAPER (CHECK FOR DAMP)

☐

QUESTION THE LANDLORD

☐

USE BANGOR STUDENTPAD

☐

ALWAYS LOOK IN THE CORNERS

☐

TAKE YOUR COAT OFF

☐

CHECK THE PLUG SOCKETS

☐

HAVE A LOOK AT THE WINDOWS

☐



## MARVEL MAKES AL PACINO AN OFFER HE CAN'T REFUSE

by LIAM SHIPTON

film@seren.bangor.ac.uk  
@serenfilm

LEGEND of the screen Al Pacino - famous for his roles in the *Godfather* trilogy, *Scarface*, *Serpico*, *Scent of a Woman* and many more - has met with Marvel Studios to discuss joining the franchise's already star-studded cast. This is following his glowing review of *Guardians of the Galaxy*:

"It was not something I would readily go see, but my kids got me to go, and one has to draw the line at where prejudice starts and where it ends - that was good stuff," he said. "I recognized the ingenious stuff they were doing; the invention, the attractiveness of the way they were performing it. It had Shakespearean feeling to it at times."

Pacino is the most recent in a long line of stars to join the franchise, including Benedict Cumberbatch who it was recently announced will be playing the role of Dr. Strange.

It is not yet known which role Pacino will be taking on; not personally being a fan of the Marvel franchise, I can't even make an educated guess. But I will say that Al Pacino is one of the finest actors to ever grace the screen, so whether he is cast as a hero or a villain, it doesn't matter; I can say without any doubt whatsoever that he will prove to be an asset, and that Marvel have made a smart move in approaching him.

## MOCKINGJAY PART 1: GIRL ON FIRE HEATS UP AN OTHERWISE LUKEWARM PLOT

by KATE BENN

Hordes of teenage girls filled cinemas this November with the release of *Mockingjay* - Part 1, but the third instalment in the Hunger Games franchise is anything but what you'd expect from another teen movie. Moodier and more reflective than its predecessors, *Mockingjay* feels adult in tone, and is certainly a shift for director Francis Lawrence.

The film kicks off with protagonist and revolutionary figurehead Katniss Everdeen (Jennifer Lawrence) huddled in the darkness, knees clutched to her chest, in the throes of full-blown panic after a nightmare (If you're looking for something to get you into the Christmas spirit, need I say that this film isn't it). This first scene - tense and claustrophobic - sets the tone well for the rest of the film. We know right from the off that, surprise surprise, all is not well with our young heroine.

Lawrence puts in a solidly believable - and at times downright shiver-inducing - performance as the emotionally-annihilated Katniss, and it's fair to say that she carries the story. Josh Hutcherson as Peeta (love-interest number one, for those of you who aren't familiar with the story) makes an impact with his brief but increasingly harrowing appearances throughout, but love-interest number two, Gale (Liam Hemsworth) succeeds only in providing us with that nauseating dose of teen angst we all needed so much. The franchise's supporting cast expands in *Mockingjay* as we're introduced to the inhabitants of District Thirteen, and Natalie Dormer puts in a brief but gratifying appearance as gutsy rebel and budding film-director Cressida. The scene-stealers, though, are Woody Harrelson and Elizabeth Banks, who return in their roles as alcoholic Haymitch and hilariously proper Effie Trinket respectively, and add some much-needed humour to the gloom of District Thirteen.

The problem, though, is that when

you get down to it, not too much happens in *Mockingjay* - Part 1. Sure, Katniss and her new camera crew potter around the country filming riot-inciting 'promos', and sure, there are a few grenades let off here and there, but the film has no real conclusion. Being adapted from only the first half of the book trilogy's concluding novel, it just doesn't, well, conclude. The pacing feels drawn out, the action a piecemeal hotchpotch of small events with no main attraction to draw it all together. You keep watching, but you do it because of the acting and the characters, and not because you're ever on the edge of your seat.

*Mockingjay* - Part 1 feels at times more like an exploration into the post-traumatic stress-ravaged psyche of a teenage girl, than it does an action-packed blockbuster. Character development is something this film does very well, but its plot doesn't so much explode onto our screens as simmer quietly, leaving you wondering only: where's the rest?



## HORRIBLE BOSSES 2: HERE WE GO AGAIN

by EMILY RIMMER

IF you have seen the first installment, you can pretty much guess the format of the second film. All the same characters are back, Nick, Dale, Kurt, Jamie Foxx and Jennifer Aniston also make small cameos now and then, and thank God they do. The film was an hour and forty minutes worth of predictable and childish humour.

The story starts with our three stooges going and demonstrating on live TV, an invention of a wash-and-shampoo contraption called the Shower Buddy, which a ruthless investor called Bert Hanson (Christopher Waltz) and his sharkish son Rex (Chris Pine) agree to buy up in bulk. NickKurtDale, (their corporate name) hire employees, get the production line up and running and then Waltz then cancels the order, leaving them \$500K in debt and vulnerable to a hostile takeover.

This of course leads them straight into suspecting murder and other extreme, outlandish solutions to their problems. They decide to keep it simple though and think of kidnapping - of course, what else? The film is really just a sad excuse like most sequels to make more money because we know and they know we know that we are going to go and see it anyway.

Christmas is coming, so just like when your Dad or Uncle has had too much to drink and starts thinking they are a fully fledged comedian, you may as well see this film because that's exactly what this film is: three middle-aged guys carrying each other through the film with their uninspiring one liners, come backs and immature themes.

## CLASSIC FILM OF THE MONTH IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE

by LIAM SHIPTON

Ever since I was a little boy, every night after dinner on Christmas Eve my family and I would turn the lights down, gather around the television and watch *It's A Wonderful Life*. The grown-ups would always be in tears at the end and I never understood why, but I always found it remarkable that this one film could make them cry every time they watched it. And now I'm a grown-up (sort of) myself, I too of course have no powers of resistance when it comes to this holiday classic to define all holiday classics: the story of George Bailey, and manly tears are wept whenever I watch this film.

The film follows the life of George Bailey (played by James Stewart), who has given up on his own goals, ambitions and dreams to help those

around him who he believes are more in need.

Instead of following his life's dream of travelling around the world, he instead replaces his brother Harry as head of the family business (the Bailey Building and Loan Association) when Harry is offered a much better job.

During this time he meets and marries Mary (Donna Reed); on their way to the airport for their honeymoon, George learns that there is an angry mob at the Building and Loan of people who desperately need their money; not having their cash to hand, George takes the \$2000 he had put aside for his honeymoon and distributes it to the people of the town, seeing that nobody should go hungry.

All the while this is going on, the vile slumlord 'Mr. Potter' (Lionel Barrymore) is plotting against George,

the only businessman in town not to tell out to him. Mr. Potter is the ultimate symbol of corporate greed - a man who rather than helping the homeless would wait for them to die so he could steal their coat. He pushes his greed to the limit when he steals \$8000 of cash from the Bailey Building and Loan. Without this money, George is doomed to be sent away from his wife and family to prison. He then realises that his life insurance makes him "better off dead than alive", and while his wife is putting the Christmas decorations up, he decides to kill himself.

Desperate and broken, George is about to throw himself in the river when he is saved by Clarence (Henry Travers), his Guardian Angel. When George confides to Clarence that he wishes he had never been born, the angel uses his powers to show

George just what the world would be like if that were the case. At first George is sceptical, not even believing that Clarence is who he says he is, but when he goes around the town he has lived in throughout his whole life and not a single person recognises him, he soon realises how much of an effect just one man can have on those around him.

I'll tell you no more, because I don't want to ruin any of the magic for you if you haven't seen it. But I will tell you this: in my opinion this is one of the best films to have ever been made, and certainly the very best Christmas film. It is the ultimate feel-good film (once you get past the suicide attempt) and I defy you to watch it all the way through without once getting a tear in your eye.







## How should we watch TV?

**W**ith the introduction of streaming sites such as Netflix and BBC iPlayer, families have been torn from their usual living room experience and are instead opting to watch television alone through their computer. We will debate this issue and whether watching TV is best in a group or by yourself:

### Watching in a group by IDA VÄISÄNEN

Watching TV with my family is one of the things I miss the most while in university. It's just not that though, I prefer watching programmes together in general. Of course watching things alone has its advantages, like if

you want to watch the highlights of the bingo final of 1988 for the tenth time this week, you can do so.

Still I have to say I prefer watching programmes with company. There are not that many moments in everyday life when you can say that a number of people (even members of the same family) are all in the same place, concentrating on the same thing at the same time. There is also a lovely relaxed atmosphere, which you don't really get during any other activity. Usually the counterargument is that you could be doing something more outdoorsy instead of passively sitting in front of television, but even in a company of just one person watching TV is definitely

an active social event.

If you have any notions about the show, like when there is a plot twist you didn't see coming or to wonder who that new guy is, the people on the couch are right there to experience it with you and share your reaction. That's not possible while watching alone. Of course your Facebook friends are just a few clicks away, but you have to admit that sometimes real life company eating your crisps and hogging the best seat is actually pretty great.

### Watching alone by RYAN JONES

We all have the image of Christmas Day where the whole fam-

ily is sitting cosy around the fire, watching their favourite TV shows, but I believe this to be an unrealistic image. With Grandpa snoring, the children laughing and arguments brewing whether we should be watching the Queen's speech or the other Royle family, it becomes impossible to hear the television. This is not a criticism though. Christmas is for engaging with the family rather than sitting quietly in front of the television screen.

By watching TV through my laptop instead, I don't need to worry about being unable to hear what is being said on screen, especially with the power of rewinding. By having a one on one relationship with the laptop, I personally believe it to be a more immersive

experience. There's nobody asking "who's she?" or proudly exclaiming "I've guessed the ending". No longer do you have to be tied to a TV schedule either, being able to watch your favourite TV shows any time you want.

The introduction of streaming websites has left a huge dent in the living room experience, but I argue this to be a good thing. No longer are television shows encouraged to be family friendly. We now have more adult content, such as Game of Thrones, Breaking Bad and The Walking Dead, which are arguably some of the best dramas in recent years. This point alone proves that the transition of television from the living room to our laptop is a great one!

## What's on this Christmas?



### Top Gear

by FAITH ELSEGOOD

THE Top Gear trio have been everywhere from America to India and everywhere inbetween. This year they're in Argentina, embarking on a 1600-mile trek to the southernmost city in the world. All for a game of car football against Argentina. Why should you tune in? Not for the cars or the exotic locations, but to see how many times Jeremy Clarkson causes offense; how often Richard Hammond breaks down, and how far James May lags behind. This special, airing Saturday 27th December at 8.30pm and Sunday 28th at 8pm, is the perfect way to relieve evening boredom between Christmas and New Year!



### Come Dine with Me

by EMILY RIMMER

COME Dine with Me is back with a bang this Christmas and that's not just because of the crackers. They are bringing in celebrities to host a Christmas special with each celebrity trying their hand at cooking up a 3-course meal with all the trimmings. As always, each celebrity will be scored and the winner will get £1000 to give to a charity of his or her choice. With the tension between celebs, the cooking disasters and the odd one who has a few too many, the special is bound to give you a good laugh and make you feel better about your own Christmas cooking disasters.



### Doctor Who

by STEPHANIE YEABSLEY

LOOK Moffatt, I have stuck up for you despite the sometimes questionable plots you give us. But a Christmas episode of Doctor Who with Santa Claus in? You've gone one step too far this time. "Last Christmas" will see the Doctor and Clara trapped on an Arctic base under attack from monster-like creatures as they call on Father Christmas for help. Sounds err, thrilling... As much as I speculate I know come Christmas Day my eyes will be eagerly waiting. According to Capaldi this episode will be "one of the scariest" but also "one of the happiest." Only time will tell.



### Downton Abbey

by KATE BENN

IT'S the series that everyone's talking about and this Christmas' two-hour-long special looks set to dazzle. The show will take place at Almswick Castle this Christmas, as the Crawleys and co. visit new bride Lady Rose's in-laws for the holiday season. We'll be introduced to some new faces, including guest star Matthew Goode, and the ill-fated Bateses will face more trouble after Anna's arrest for the murder of Mr. Green. In short, suspicion and scandal will abound this Christmas, but you can bet your last shilling that it will all, in true Downton fashion, be in very good taste.



### Miranda

by IONA PINCHES

TIS the "What I Call" festive season, which naturally calls for a bit o' Christmas frivolity from the nation's favourite comedienne. It is, however, with bittersweet feelings that I look forward to the two episodes of Miranda, due to air over the Christmas period. The British Comedy Award Winning sitcom, two long years after it last aired, is due to conclude with its finale airing on New Years Day on BBC1 at 8pm. The show that brought us galloping, vegetapals and random outbursts of singing will grace our television sets only twice more, but the real question is who will she pick? Gary or Mike?



# GAMES AND GADGETS

## WHAT'S COMING UP



DYING light is Techland's latest first person zombie survival game. With Techland being creators of *Dead Island* and *Dead Island Riptide*, expect to see a lot of features make their way into this game. However, with this title only coming to the latest generation of consoles, expect a much more in depth environment with attention being paid specifically to time of day. This title is set to launch on 30 January following delays and is available on PC, PS4 and Xbox One.



Wii U's only title launch in January follows Toad and his adventures through various puzzle stages. The integration of the Wii U gamepad and a focus on the perspective of the map to complete stages are what make this stand out from the crowd. Expect this title to be more in the vein of *Super Mario World* with an emphasis on what a normal person can do with just a backpack, torch and determination. Releases on 2 January for Wii U only.



PC FANS can get ready to hail Rockstar as GTA V finally has a PC release date. With this being the last version of the game to be released, hopefully Rockstar will be able to avoid another shaky launch of this title, especially with the online elements which have proven to be lacklustre and a bad taste on an otherwise fabulous game. Pick it up on 27 Jan for PC or on PS3, PS4, Xbox One or Xbox 360 now.



## IF ASSASSINS COME ONCE A YEAR, WON'T THEY BECOME PREDICTABLE?

by JESSE YOUNG

It is no secret that in this modern economy, franchises are often necessary to the ultimate profit of larger developers. More and more, when a new intellectual property is introduced, it is done so with the understanding that it is the first in a series – unless, it flops, in which case the studio responsible will likely close its doors. A grim picture of AAA publishing, to say the least, but one that has been supported many times over in recent years.

It is unsurprising, then, that even giants of the gaming industry such as Ubisoft, Activision and EA choose to play it safe to a large extent, milking several successful franchises for all they're worth. Still unsurprising, yet more concerning, is the practice of annualisation; that is, of releasing a new iteration in said franchises every year. This is not new, in fact it is beginning to get old, and that's the

problem.

The release of *Assassin's Creed: Unity* last month is a remarkable showcase of the problem. Not only is this the sixth 'main line' entry in the franchise in as many years (*ACII*, *AC: Brotherhood*, *AC: Revelations*, *ACIII*, *ACIV*), it came out day-and-date alongside *Assassin's Creed: Rogue* – a full game churned out to cater to the massive install base that still exists on the Xbox 360 and PS3.

When *Brotherhood* came out a mere year after the fantastic *Assassin's Creed II*, it was a sleeper hit. Until the couple of weeks before release, any fan could be forgiven for expecting it to be a glorified multiplayer mode for *ACII*. Then out it came, a full-length sequel and all-round better game than its predecessor – plus a unique, excellent multiplayer mode. The general critical sentiment towards *Unity*, on

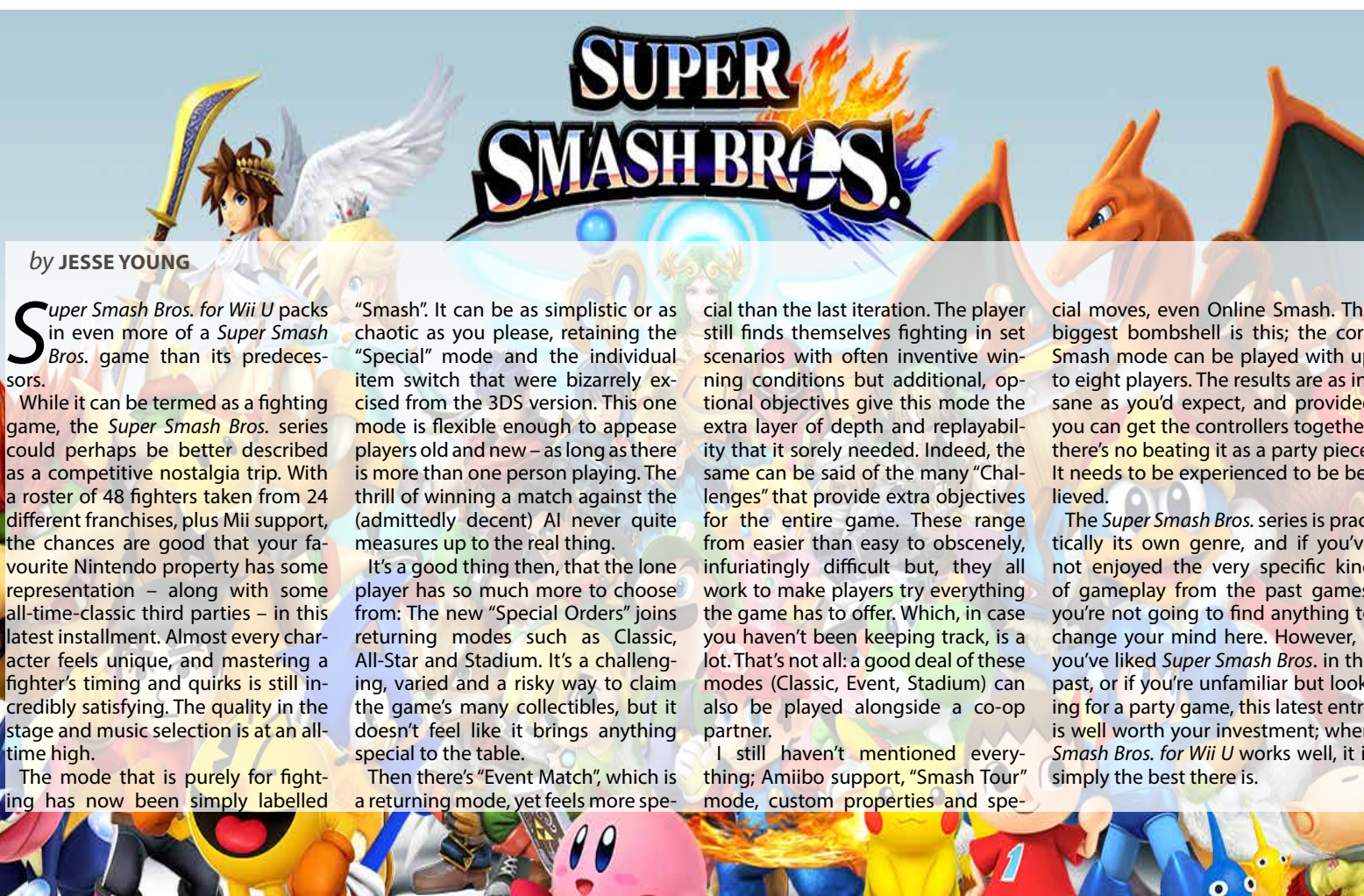
the other hand, can be summarised with a resounding 'meh'. The Metacritic score stands at 73 (XBOX ONE version), contrasted with the series peak of 90. What game does this 90 belong to? Not *Brotherhood* but *ACII* (XBOX 360 version). Whatever my own personal opinion may be, *Brotherhood* scored one point less.

This is perfectly understandable. Sequels are, in general, judged more harshly than their predecessors. That can be chalked up to the lack of originality implied in the very concept of the sequel. With annualisation, another factor is greatly enhanced – fatigue. Even when the games are great, a lack of innovation will lead to the critics checking out and the audience dropping off. Remember *Guitar Hero*? The franchise that was driven far enough into the ground to become completely unsalvageable? Yeah, we don't talk about *Guitar*

*Hero* anymore.

It certainly doesn't help the matter that *Unity* is laden with crippling bug and performance issues, which after a whole month still aren't fully fixed. This trend of rushing games out the door is tragically far from unique to *Unity*, especially over the past couple of months, but it stems from the same prioritization of immediate monetary gain.

It feels like in addition to the loss of the overarching narrative (don't even get me started), *Assassin's Creed* has lost its soul. Throwing money and studios at the franchise for the sake of the yearly release is hurting the games, and the well of goodwill is going to dry up eventually. Dial it back, Ubisoft. Activision should cool it on the *Call of Duty* releases too, of course, but I'll bet you my mountain of old plastic instruments that they won't.



by JESSE YOUNG

*Super Smash Bros. for Wii U* packs in even more of a *Super Smash Bros.* game than its predecessors.

While it can be termed as a fighting game, the *Super Smash Bros.* series could perhaps be better described as a competitive nostalgia trip. With a roster of 48 fighters taken from 24 different franchises, plus Mii support, the chances are good that your favourite Nintendo property has some representation – along with some all-time-classic third parties – in this latest installment. Almost every character feels unique, and mastering a fighter's timing and quirks is still incredibly satisfying. The quality in the stage and music selection is at an all-time high.

The mode that is purely for fighting has now been simply labelled

"Smash". It can be as simplistic or as chaotic as you please, retaining the "Special" mode and the individual item switch that were bizarrely excised from the 3DS version. This one mode is flexible enough to appease players old and new – as long as there is more than one person playing. The thrill of winning a match against the (admittedly decent) AI never quite measures up to the real thing.

It's a good thing then, that the lone player has so much more to choose from: The new "Special Orders" joins returning modes such as Classic, All-Star and Stadium. It's a challenging, varied and a risky way to claim the game's many collectibles, but it doesn't feel like it brings anything special to the table.

Then there's "Event Match", which is a returning mode, yet feels more spe-

cial than the last iteration. The player still finds themselves fighting in set scenarios with often inventive winning conditions but additional, optional objectives give this mode the extra layer of depth and replayability that it sorely needed. Indeed, the same can be said of the many "Challenges" that provide extra objectives for the entire game. These range from easier than easy to obscenely, infuriatingly difficult but, they all work to make players try everything the game has to offer. Which, in case you haven't been keeping track, is a lot. That's not all: a good deal of these modes (Classic, Event, Stadium) can also be played alongside a co-op partner.

I still haven't mentioned everything; Amiibo support, "Smash Tour" mode, custom properties and spe-

cial moves, even Online Smash. The biggest bombshell is this; the core Smash mode can be played with up to eight players. The results are as insane as you'd expect, and provided you can get the controllers together, there's no beating it as a party piece. It needs to be experienced to be believed.

The *Super Smash Bros.* series is practically its own genre, and if you've not enjoyed the very specific kind of gameplay from the past games, you're not going to find anything to change your mind here. However, if you've liked *Super Smash Bros.* in the past, or if you're unfamiliar but looking for a party game, this latest entry is well worth your investment; when *Smash Bros. for Wii U* works well, it is simply the best there is.





Franz Welser-Möst conducting the Vienna Philharmonic at their annual New Year's Concert in 2012. Photo by Richard Schuster

## 2015: Why I'll welcome it with a waltz

by HEDD THOMAS

New Year's Eve is a musical time. For some it's a night for unrestrained camp and cheese at a house party, for others, big beat and DJs at the best club in town. I've even crossed the midnight mark with some merengue and salsa.

That's New Year's Eve. But what about New Year's Day? While many stay in bed to sleep off the previous night's festivities, others will be forgiving themselves for having missed that first post-resolution morning run, but will nonetheless be rolling out from under the covers, making a mug of delicious hot chocolate and plonking themselves in front of the radio or television in preparation for part two of the celebrations.

It's called the Vienna New Year Concert. And, as the name suggests, is a concert that takes place in Vienna on New Year's Day. But it's much more than that. It's a live, glittering spectacle of Old World gaiety and panache. It's one of the world's greatest orchestras, the Vienna Philharmonic, performing in one of the world's greatest concert halls, the Musikverein, golden and royal red, filled with flowers gifted each year by the city of Sanremo. It's where the audience is invited at the end to take the flowers home with them. And it's the music! Two wonderful hours of waltzes and more, all written by Johann Strauss Sr. and his three children.

Part of the appeal is its exclusivity. Demand for tickets is so high that only a ballot system will do. Cost is also an issue, with the best seats in the house selling for £855. And that's only the ones that are on sale. Many aren't, but are reserved for certain members of the Austrian nobility and elite, who are allowed to attend each and every year before passing down their special seats in the Musikverein to their children. Fortunately for all of us, then, the whole thing is broadcast live around the world to over seventy countries and an estimated 50 million people.

But it wasn't always the embracing cheeriness that it is today. The first performance took place only months after the start of the Second

World War, when Vienna and the rest of Austria had been amalgamated into the Third Reich. It was a fundraising event for a Nazi party campaign. The concerts continued throughout the War, and while some interpreted them as an expression of Viennese individuality and defiance, for others they were merely Nazi propaganda. The conductor, Clemens Krauss, was given a two-year ban by the Allies following Liberation, but later returned to conduct every New Year concert until his death in 1954.

The orchestra itself isn't without controversy either. A bastion of male conservatism, it wasn't until 1997, following intense national and international pressure, that the Vienna Philharmonic accepted its first full-time female member, harpist Anna Lelkes. Older members of the orchestra worried that even this would be "gambling with the emotional unity that this organism currently has." The proportion of female members today is a sorry six percent.

In every other respect, the traditions of the concert are well worth keeping. Take, for example, its practice of rolling conductors, which gives each year's event an added element of intrigue. I remember watching an 85-year-old Georges Prêtre a few years ago conduct his way through some pieces with barely a beat from his baton. He could control the entire orchestra with just a smile and a wink. Given the complexity and changeability of the Straussian waltz, this was no mean feat. Compare this with 2012's Franz Welser-Möst, a youngster by comparison whose energised renditions I found inspiring but are not to everyone's taste, earning him in some circles the nickname 'Franz Worst-than-Most'.

This year the conductor will be Zubin Mehta. Born in Bombay, it'll be his fifth New Year Concert, a record unsurpassed by any other conductor.

Then there's the ballet dancing, pre-filmed by the Vienna State Ballet and broadcast with the live music in the background. One is usually traditional with costumes to match, while the other is more daring and increasingly risqué. Two years ago it

featured a man stuck headfirst in a hedge maze while his lady partner humped him from behind. Last year they wore Vivienne Westwood-designed Scottish attire, which ended with one dancer trying to peek up the kilt of her male counterpart. What will this year's have in store?

Without a doubt the most important tradition of all are the encores. There are three of them, in fact, and this format hardly ever changes. The first is a fast polka, a different one each year. The second is 'The Blue Danube', a sweeping, swinging, lyrical waltz that oozes romance. It was made famous, if it wasn't already, by its use in 2001: *A Space Odyssey*. Finally, there's the rousing Radetzky March, a celebratory work with audience participation. In the mid-18th century, officers from the Austrian army were returning victorious from battle against the Italians. Johann Strauss Sr. composed this march and dedicated it to their Field Marshal Joseph Radetzky von Radetz. The officers attended its premier and, in their good spirits, spontaneously clapped along to the beat - quiet claps in the quiet sections, loud claps in the loud sections. A century-and-a-half later, the New Year Concert audience do the same.

For me, New Year's Eve, the partying, the dancing, the countdown from ten - that's all part of saying goodbye to 2014. But there'll be a moment, as in every year gone by, when the Vienna Philharmonic play the first note of 'The Blue Danube' and the audience interrupt with applause, prompting the conductor to put down his baton, turn to face the full Musikverein and declare, in German, "The Vienna Philharmonic and I wish you a happy new year!" before turning back to his orchestra and striking up the first note of the waltz once again. And at that memorable moment, all will feel good in the world, and the year 2015 will begin.

**The Vienna New Year Concert is broadcasted live on BBC Two and BBC Radio 3 on New Year's Day at 11:15 a.m. Highlights are shown on BBC Four at 7 p.m.**

## Band Aid 30; Do They Know It's Christmas?

by JOE KEEP

It's that time of year again when a new Band Aid single is released. With this year's targeting Ebola and its effects upon Western Africa, Sir Geldof made the decision to alter two lines of the song, tailoring them to better suit the situation. 'Where the only water flowing is the bitter sting of tears' has been replaced with 'Where a kiss of love can kill you and there's death in every tear', and 'Well tonight thank God it's them instead of you' with 'Well tonight we're reaching out and touching you'.

Regarding the decision of whom to include and what sections to give them, it feels like some odd decisions were made. The main one for me was to give Paloma Faith a subdued line, not allowing her to show off her powerful voice, while giving Ellie Goulding one that allowed for flamboyant and powerful vocals, something she doesn't do as much justice to as Paloma Faith would have. Also, the inclusion of Elbow singer, Guy Garvey, and Seal comes as a surprise, with many people unaware of their

music on the whole.

Geldof also involves British vloggers, a move that, despite increasing the reach of Band Aid, is bizarre and can't be properly explained, especially as they are only involved in the main group sections.

Overall, I feel that Band Aid 30 and their version of *Do They Know It's Christmas?* isn't the greatest. Instead, it may well fall by the wayside in years to come with the original single and those by Band Aid II and Band Aid 20 remaining the more iconic versions.



## Idina Menzel, Christmas Wishes

by STEPHANIE YEABSLEY

*Christmas Wishes* (released as *Holiday Wishes* in the U.S.) is the Christmas album by Broadway star Idina Menzel, or for those who don't know her from musical theatre, then "the annoying one who sings that song in *Frozen*." As a massive fan of Idina from her days in *Rent* and *Wicked* I was sceptical to listen to her Christmas album, believing it to be a gimmick above her talents. I was pleasantly wrong.

Many songs featured on this al-

bum will already be familiar to you and may already form a part of your music collection. The album contains classics expected from a Christmas album such as *All I Want for Christmas is You* and *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas*. However, the arrangements of these songs are different from what you might expect, a difference I found myself being surprised by and enjoying. The songs are adapted fittingly to Menzel's powerful Broadway voice. The vocal arrangements are full of her own flair, but not to the point where the songs become unrecognisable from the original version.

The album also includes a duet of *Baby it's Cold Outside* with Michael Buble, arguably the ultimate Christmas crooner. (It also comes with the most adorable video - watch it!) Overall whilst not the most original and ground-breaking album from a talent such as Menzel, it is ultimately a success. Buy it, play it in the background and put up your Christmas tree. I dare you not to feel in the Christmas spirit.



## Dates for your diary

CHORAL

**Bangor University  
Chamber Choir and Chorus  
Christmas Concert**

Saturday 13th December, 7.30 p.m.  
at Prichard-Jones Hall, £3 for students

JAZZ

**Tryfan Jazz Band  
Christmas Tonic**

Thursday 18th December, 2.30 p.m.  
at Galerí, Caernarfon, £5 normal price

ORCHESTRAL

**Bangor University Music Society  
Christmas Concert**

Sunday 14th December, 7.30 p.m.  
at Prichard-Jones Hall, £3 for students

CHORAL

**Bangor Cathedral Choir  
Carols by 1000 Candles**

Wednesday 17th December, 7.30 p.m.  
at Bangor Cathedral, £5 for students





WRITER'S  
COLUMNWhining Like a Poet  
*Anonymous*

Maybe there's too many of us.  
Maybe we are saturated.  
All we actually do is talk and  
talk and talk and eat and sleep.  
Together.  
And burn.  
Like billion-strong flame.

Self-awareness is overrated.

But then there's a moment  
when life lives.  
All the little niggling nuisances  
wane away and what's left is  
raw.

Baby Got Back  
*Peter CLARKE*

baby got back  
and front  
but no sides  
(2 dimensional baby)

Shakespeare  
*Peter CLARKE*

because eventually  
the monkeys will evolve into  
humans  
and one of them is bound to  
be  
Shakespeare



If you want to see your work  
in Seren's 'Books' Pages, feel  
free to send any short po-  
ems, short stories or creative  
pieces of any kind to:

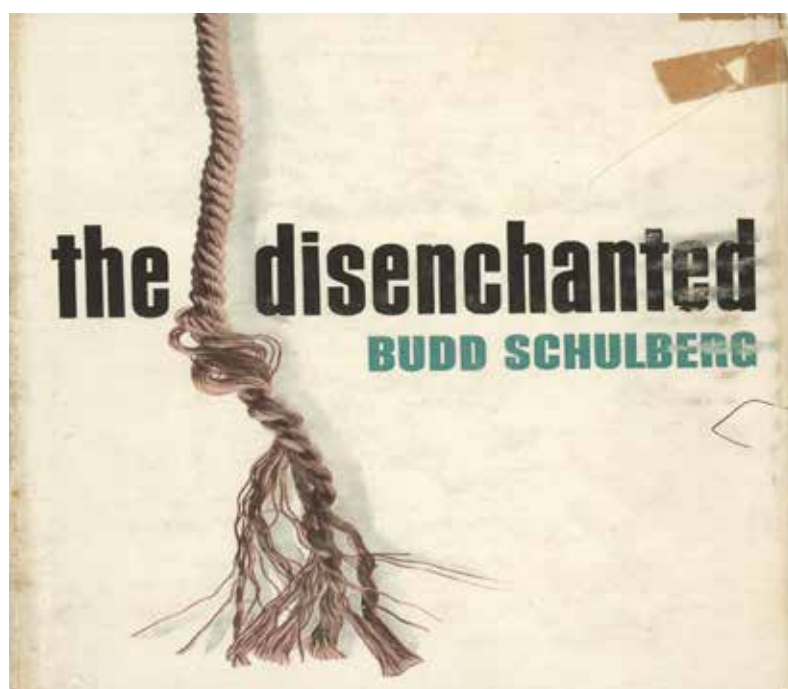
[books@seren.bangor.ac.uk](mailto:books@seren.bangor.ac.uk)

I'm looking for budding  
writer's out there to spread  
their talents. Even if you  
don't want your work to fea-  
ture in the paper, feel free to  
send me a copy of your work  
labelled "Read Only" and I'd  
be happy read and edit it.

- Jack H. Upton  
Books Editor

## PRESENCE OF MASTERY

A book which inspired "A Clockwork Orange" and reigned from F. Scott Fitzgerald



by Phillip Sutcliffe-Mott

THE Disenchanted follows a Hollywood journeyman's writing partnership with his literary-old-guard hero with cool prose that leaves you in awe. Every line brims with the sort of vision authors create across novels, and the novel's omniscient narrator commands plot, milieu, and character with delicacy that impels the 470-odd pages with grace.

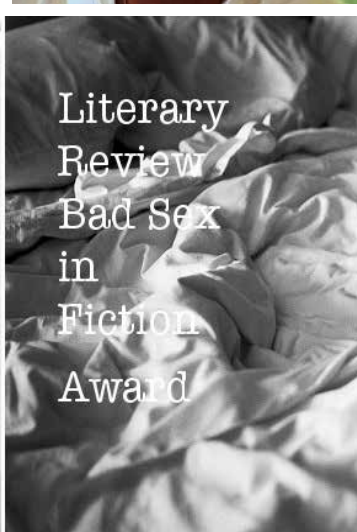
This is a fitting canvas for the subject of the delusions, neuroses, and excuses of writers. A metafictional construction of knowing craft: you sit up and listen, bouncing between narrator and protagonist with the feeling of being in on the joke. It's self-aware but delicate fiction that dwarfs the extra-fictional novels that punctuate bookstore sales

charts today.

There is at first a sense of reading under Hollywood's shadow, but this quickly becomes the novel's greatest power. It's not stereotypical. It's archetypal. Schulberg's written voice is that which sang out On The Waterfront and A Face In The Crowd, which makes Schulberg an ostensible signifier of the silver screen.

Anthony Burgess of A Clockwork Orange fame reads The Disenchanted every other year, and it's no struggle to find his reason. "Based on the last drunken days of F. Scott Fitzgerald", Schulberg's novel echoes Fitzgerald's ability to capture the jubilation and cynicism of the capitalist dreamscape, and it leaves the reader with one certainty: the presence of mastery.

## Bad sex in fiction



by JACK H. UPTON

BEN Okri, author of 'The Age of Magic', had been enjoying all the successes of publishing an award winning book: attending and speaking at various literary events, various book signings and winning several awards including the Booker Prize, the Commonwealth Writers' Prize, the Aga Khan Prize for Fiction and the Guardian Fiction Prize. It seems 'The Age of Magic' was a triumph. However, I'm sure it'll come as no shock to you that someone had to come along and burst Okri's bubble.

Literary Review 2014 surprised all Okri's fans when they awarded him "The Bad Sex in Fiction Award" at their awards show. The infamous award has sent authors running for years and I'm sure came as quite a surprise to Okri and his fans.

On the plus side, despite some very strong competition, Okri managed to create perhaps the worst sex scene of 2014 which I suppose is an impressive feat to add to the long list of his accomplishments. Though I'm sure writing a successful sex scene will be a matter of perpetual torture for the author for years to come! Thanks Literary Review!

Poem of the  
Month

## A LITERARY MESSAGE TO A YOUNGER ME

by Draco Bayle

FROM Oliver Twist to Artemis Fowl, children have always been the more interesting protagonists for stories. The quick wit and comradery between Peter and his lost boys, the tested nature to build Alex Rider, Jim Hawkins' curiosity and Digory Kirke's honesty; all values all little boys should cling to as they inevitably climb the ladder of age, each rung with its own struggle. One wrong foot and you fall.

Life may seem a far lesser story than fighting off pirates and swinging from trees, but within your ruby red heart is a flame of inspiration to do anything. And it is only when you are truly young at heart can you access and fully energize that inspiration and blast adventurous traits into everything you do.

Your shadow is your best friend, even if they wish to take a gander by themselves once in a while. Like that shadow, life can be your friend, also, if you let it. It may pelt you with struggles and turmoil to try and make you lose your footing, but if you find that sweet spot and leap, head first, you'll unleash a fountainous waterfall of adventure, mystery and all the toppings that keep you alive in all it is that you do.

Strive to grow old but never grow up.





# Towards China!



by IDA VÄISÄNEN & KAYLA JONES

The tension was palpable on 3rd of December as Julian Kisselevits (Estonia), Alexandra Wuergler (Switzerland), Hong Yang (China) and Jake Sallaway-Costello (UK) were announced as the winning team of the latest Culture Challenge. The competition was tough and full of excitement, with 19 different nationalities competing for the coveted first prize; a free 10-day trip to China. In one of the largest International Student events of the year the teams, all consisting of one Chinese member, one British member and

two members of any other nationality, competed against the other teams with six-minute presentations. The only prerequisite for the presentations was that they had to represent the countries of the team members in some way. The openness of the challenge offered a chance for creativity. The audience and the judges, consisting of members of staff from SENRGy, the International Education Centre, the Student's Union, Student Services and the Confucius Institute, enjoyed a various kind of creative presentations, including comedy skits, short plays and videos. The teams also approached their cultures from various viewpoints, including the shared

history of their home countries, local folk tales and celebrations, stereotypes and how affection is shown in their home country. The winning team charmed the judges with their enlightening sketch of Bangor students of various nationalities coming together in their halls of residence and sharing stories about their home countries, culminating with a serving of their various national treats. When the judging panel was asked about how they reached their decision, the reply was unanimous; the winning team had emphasised how people of different nationalities add to the university. The teams that came second and third place, did not

leave empty-handed either, winning Amazon vouchers worth £100 and £50 per team member. While waiting for the judges to reach a decision, the audience also got to participate in the event by taking part in a quiz about various international topics. The two most knowledgeable winners also went home with Amazon vouchers. The audience also enjoyed entertainment of beautiful Chinese music organised by the Confucius Institute. What started off as a quiz evolved to be an entertaining event full of new-found knowledge, awareness and celebration of Bangor University's wonderful variety of different nationalities. It is certain that no-one

who attended the event left without new, interesting information about a culture which might have been so far unknown. When the happy winning team members were asked what they were excited about most for their trip, the answer represented very well the spirit of the entire event: Experiencing a different culture! After winning the challenge Hong Yang decided not to go on the China trip so another Chinese student - Xin Zhang - was selected instead.



# Christmas UK vs. Finland

by AMY BLACKWELL & IDA VÄISÄNEN



### The Big day

Everyone knows that we celebrate Christmas on Christmas Day (the clue is in the name), we get up really early after a night of barely sleeping because of the excitement, open our presents before breakfast and then spend the rest of the day getting merrily drunk. A big dinner is consumed at around 1pm and then if you're anything like my family its followed by a mid afternoon nap. Games and more drinking happen in the evening.

### Traditions

The three T's; turkey, tree and all the trimmings! We love an excuse to cover our houses in shiny things. We decorate weeks before Christmas and don't take them down for weeks after. Different families have different traditions but the general ones include: crackers, setting fire to crimbo puddings and drinking a lot of babycham. Some people go to midnight mass on Christmas Eve for a special religious service. Caroling and the Queens speech are important events for a British Christmas.

### Christmas Dinner

Usually three courses, popular starters include: melon, prawn cocktail and soup. Then the traditional turkey dinner complete with sprouts! Followed by the christmas

pudding, mince pies and maybe even yule log. Beware, if you don't like raisins (like me) best avoid most Christmassy desserts. We all pull crackers somewhere between the starter and the main course, then wear funny hats for the rest of the meal.

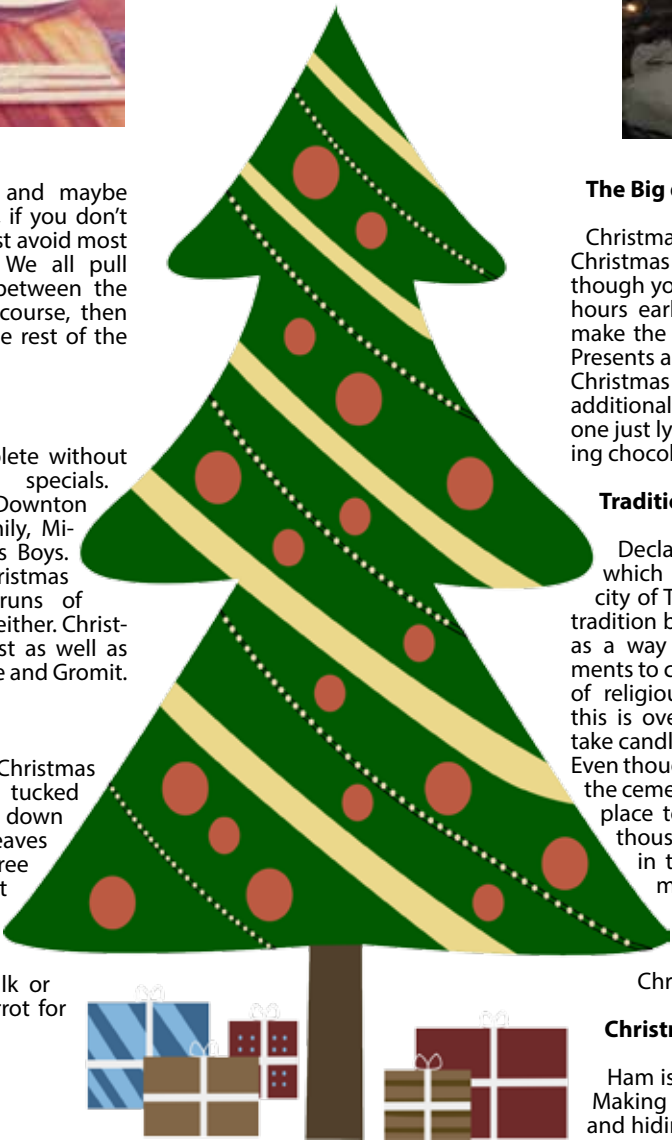
### TV programmes

Christmas isn't complete without numerous Christmas specials. Namely: Doctor Who, Downton Abbey, The Royle Family, Miranda and Mrs Browns Boys. I can't go through Christmas without watching reruns of Only Fools and Horses either. Christmas movies are a must as well as silly amounts of Wallace and Gromit.

### Santa

Santa comes on Christmas Eve, when you're all tucked up in bed! He comes down the chimney and leaves presents under your tree and in the stockings at the foot of your bed. You will usually leave Santa a mince pie and either a glass of milk or some sherry and a carrot for Rudolph.

### Merry Christmas!



### The Big day

Christmas Eve is official day of Christmas celebrations but even though you get your presents a few hours earlier in Finland, it doesn't make the waiting any less anxious! Presents are opened in the evening. Christmas Day in Finland is like an additional Boxing Day, with everyone just lying on the couch and eating chocolates.

### Traditions

Declaration of Christmas Peace, which you either attend in the city of Turku or watch on TV. The tradition begun in the 13th century as a way to give harsher punishments to criminals offending during of religious holiday season. Once this is over, many families go and take candles to their local cemetery. Even though this might sound eerie, the cemetery is a very atmospheric place to visit at Christmas, with thousands of candles glowing in the darkness. Also Christmas sauna either before or after opening presents is a vital and probably the most uniquely Nordic Christmas tradition.

### Christmas Dinner

Ham is served instead of turkey. Making a batch of rice porridge and hiding a single almond in it is

an old Finnish Christmas tradition. Whoever gets the almond will have luck the following year.

### TV programmes

Santa's Hotline, where children call Santa to tell him what they'd like for a present when he comes over, broadcasted from Santa's grotto in Lapland. An another classic is Raymond Briggs' The Snowman, which has been broadcasted in Finnish TV consecutively on every Christmas since 1983, Lutheran Christmas masses and popular music concerts.

### Santa

Instead coming out from the chimney to creep around your house while you sleep, in Finland Santa comes in through the front door. Santa's visit is the highpoint of Christmas, which children pester their parents about throughout the day. The entire family is present for this event. (Except your dad for some strange reason, he always seems to pop out to change the oils in the car before Santa comes in.) After the Santa has handed out the presents, the children sing a song or recite a poem to him before he leaves to visit the next family.

### Hyvää joulua!



## And the award for the best comeback goes to...



by KELLY NORMAN

JOHN Galliano. The previously celebrated designer who managed to unwittingly design himself as an outcast of fashion industry after his anti-Semitic rant in a Parisian café in 2011. Galliano has now made a recent return to the limelight as he presented, in London, the prestigious BFC Outstanding Achievement award to American Vogue editor-in-chief Anna Wintour; welcoming the black sheep back into the family fold.

Overall, the theme of loyalty understandably ran high as it was repeated throughout both Wintour and Galliano speeches as they praised the loyalty of their friends.

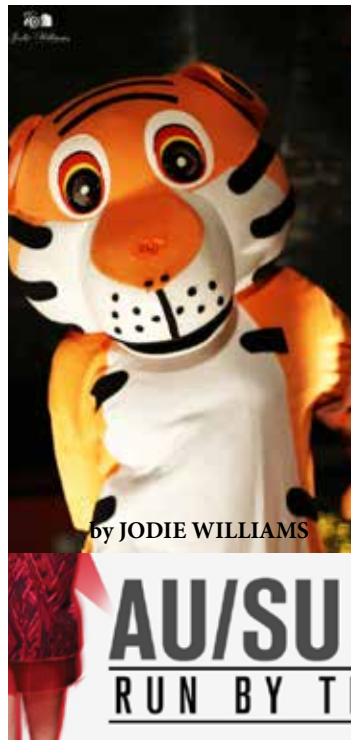
Otherwise, London is a fitting stage to host the beginning of his comeback into fashion as it is a city that he considers his own.

## Bangor Dragons' Fashion Show

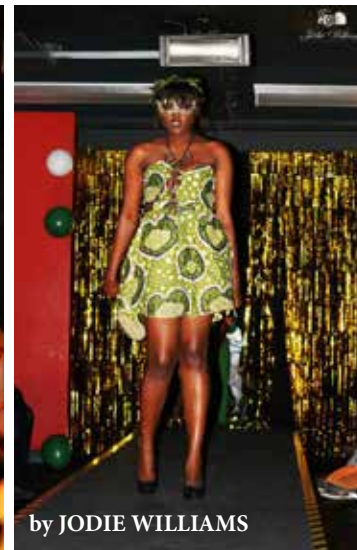


by KRIS HUMPHREYS

by JOE KEEP



by JODIE WILLIAMS



by JODIE WILLIAMS



Whizz-Kidz  
move a life forward

AU/SU CHARITY CATWALK  
RUN BY THE DRAGONS CHEERLEADERS

The 27th November saw Bangor's clubs and societies don their most creative and fetching outfits, ranging from superheroes and medieval knights to suave ladies and gentlemen. As Seren's entry, I had a lot riding on me, with the prestige of the society on my shoulders, as well as not making a fool out of myself.

A sense of doubt in why I had volunteered myself began to trump my ability to do anything, regardless of how it made me look. However,

a fantastic effort from Eleanor Hirst, Seren's fashion editor, in creating the costume pulled out that quality again. Seren Girl had been made a reality, and as a team we had to show her off, the only problem being, a male was our model.

All of the money collected is going to the charity 'Whizz Kids'. Abigail Rose, the treasurer of Bangor Dragons, described how the charity is an inspiration for her and motivated her when organising the event. She hopes that the event will become

an annual event and that next year's treasurer will push through the stress of organising these events as it proved to be truly rewarding.

Looking at the other clubs' and societies' efforts for the event showed that each had been as committed to an idea as we had and also made it a reality, especially as cycling brought out the tyre diaper. This commitment was further shown through the performance each put out on the catwalk with each society planning out the exact way it should

work, rather than adopting the winging it style. Coordinated and stylish are but a few words that can describe the event.

Bangor Dragons, the event organisers, pulled off an incredible show, raising funds for Whizz-Kidz from donations and ticket sales for the night. The event attracted lots of people, mainly to cheer on their fellow society or club members, but also to see some of the creations the societies and clubs conjured up.

## British Fashion Awards: London is taken over by the fashion elite



by EMILY RIMMER

On the 1st December, The London Coliseum played host to the 2014 British Fashion Awards, welcoming a guest list packed with the country's most prominent designers, glamorous celebs and up and coming designers, along with editors of only the top fashion magazines ready to collect the 'gong' awards. The once passé ceremony that only fashion elite insiders were allowed to attend, has now become one of the hottest nights in fashion with a red carpet sprinkled with not only 12kg of Swarovski crystals but also models and celebrities of all kinds.

The night belonged to Victoria



Beckham as she took home the award for 'Brand of the year', just after recently opening up her first stand-alone store on London's Dover Street. Victoria reportedly got emotional in her acceptance speech, thanking her family and her husband David. But the biggest award of the night, 'Designer of the year' went to Erdem, the Montreal born, London-based designer who is known to regularly design for the Duchess of Cambridge.

Probably the least shocking winner was Cara Delevigne. Cara took home 'Model of the year' and there is no surprise there after her unstoppable year, with campaigns for Burberry,



being one of Chanel's current leading ladies and heading campaigns for Fendi and H&M.

Rumours of George Clooney's new wife, Amal Clooney taking the award for 'Best British Style' were soon put to rest after feminisms new face, Emma Watson took home the award for Britain's most stylish, with over 3000 votes cast by members of the public.

Two names, not very well known to the general public will be Chris Moore and Edward Enninful. Both these men won prestigious awards with Chris Moore, widely known as the 'nicest guy in fashion', collecting the 'Special recognition' award for



his nine decades in photography, snapping catwalks since 1967. Whilst Anna Wintour is probably the most powerful woman in Fashion, Edward Enninful would have to be the most powerful man. He scooped up the 'Fashion creator' award for his extraordinary achievements. He became the youngest ever person at 18 to have a major international style title, he is also style director of W magazine and was the man behind Vogue Italia's best selling July issue which featured only black models.

Red carpet designer went to Alexander McQueen, emerging women's wear designer due Marques'



Almeida and emerging men's wear designer went to Craig Green and of course the 'Special recognition' award went to Anna Wintour OBE for her outstanding year of contributing to the world of fashion during which the Metropolitan Museum of Art named its fashion halls after her, she hosted the met gala which raised \$12 million in one night and to top it off none other than John Galliano presented her with her award at the ceremony. In her speech she urged people to "use fashion as a medium to inspire and affect good in the world".



# Show me your... makeup bag

Every issue I will take a look inside friends and readers makeup bags to see what stories lie within and what they look for when buying their makeup. To continue the feature I will take you inside my best friend Harriet's makeup bag and tell you all its secrets.

**Show me your... favourite make up brand**

My favourite make up brand would be Benefit if I had enough money. I bought my first benefit product when I was in America because it was on offer and it turned out to be the best one I've ever had.

**Show me your... everyday makeup**

My everyday makeup is mascara to make me look more awake, cover up stick to get rid of the bags under my eyes, powder because it makes my

skin feel soft and blusher to give me a bit of colour.

**Show me your... night out makeup**

My night out makeup is different mascara, eyeliner, eye shadow palette, powder, blusher, shiny bronzer, foundation & a lip balm. I don't use lipstick because I can never seem to do it right or makes me look like a drag queen.

**Show me your... favorite piece**

My favourite piece is an eyebrow pencil I bought recently to try out. I quickly came to realise I definitely don't suit draw on eyebrows, but on the other end it is a small brush which I use because I have quite unruly eyebrows.

**Show me your... essentials**

My essentials are mascara; cover up

stick, concealer and Carmex. Mascara is a must because I feel weird when I don't have it on, concealer because there is always at least one sly spot and I always have bags under my eyes. Carmex mainly because it's cherry.

**Show me your... one off piece**

My one off piece is the shiny bronzer. It came in a boots box set off my nana for Christmas years ago; I like it because it can be used as a shimmery bronzer or eye shadow. It's a one off because I've not seen it boots again, so hopefully I don't smash it!

**Show me your... Christmas wish**

My Christmas wish would be a voucher for Boots because I hate other people buying me make up and as a student, gift cards and money are greatly received.



## Christmas beauty gifts... for him and for her



WITH Christmas just around the corner, that pending doom of Christmas shopping for family and friends is approaching sooner than you think. If you are having a mind block about what to get someone this year, I have come up with a few beauty product ideas that will make great stocking fillers!

### For her:



**Urban Decay Naked 2 eye shadow palette**  
£37.00

**Marc Jacobs Daisy Dream 50ml**  
£51.50  
**The Perfume Shop**



**Cath Kidston Rose Hand Trio 3x30ml**  
£6.00

### For him:

**Paca Rabanne 1 Million 50 ml**  
£39.50  
**The Perfume Shop**



**Old Spice Swagger Body Spray and Shower Gel set**  
£4.00  
**Superdrug**

**FCUK Man on the Go Toiletries and Bag**  
£32.00  
**Boots**



## Festive Nails



TO get into the Christmas spirit in a creative way, why not try out these festive nail art designs; perfect for a snowed in sort of day?





# It's a raw Christmas



by IONA PINCHES

After walking past Teras Lounge many times during my time at university, I recently had the experience of eating there at a pre-booked Christmas party. The restaurant rates four and half stars on Tripadvisor and I was really looking forward to an evening of good company and good food in an elegant setting. Upon first impression the restaurant presented a fantastic atmosphere, with a perfect selection of lounge music creating exactly the ambience I expected. As this was a three course package costing me

£21.50, just under half of my weekly budget, I was expecting good things.

For my starter I chose the pork and apple pie with a pea puree and red-currant jus. I am a Northern girl so as far as I'm concerned you can't go wrong with pie. I loved the pork pie and the fact that it was hot gave it a nice twist. I didn't really feel the red-currant jus added much to the dish, but that's personal opinion and all in all it was an enjoyable starter.

Now onto my main, which unfortunately is where I was most disappointed. The menu advertised a traditional turkey dinner with "all the trimmings", this however was not

what I was presented. My meat was extremely dry and vegetables sparse with only a couple of roast potatoes, some basically raw parsnips and some over cooked carrots. The only green on the plate was brussel sprouts, which were served late, by which point, some of my party had already finished. Whilst I understand individuals have their own expectations of Christmas dinner, it is after all the most iconic meal of the year, I don't feel I am being harsh in my assessment of the food I was presented. By standards of pub chains such as Wetherspoons or Yates' it was still well below par. For my dessert

I chose the Irish Cream Cheesecake, which I enjoyed.

In a restaurant offering a 'fine dining' experience it is often said that the "devil is in the detail" and little aspects are what make a mediocre meal good. These, I feel, were forgotten. There was an order mix up which was entirely the fault of our party but I feel like the service we received, on the night and in response to our mistake, didn't meet my expectations. I did voice my complaints at the end of the meal, but these weren't resolved to my satisfaction. These opinions are down to my individual experience and may not represent

the quality of the service always offered that the restaurant.

Upon discussion with my fellow diners it appears that many of the other options, especially for the main were extremely enjoyable with special commendations to the grilled sea bass. So perhaps on this occasion I just ordered the wrong thing. Would I go back again? For the food, yes, I reiterate my starter and dessert were good, perfectly portioned and very reasonable dishes for the price I was paying; despite the lacking main course.

## Unbelievably easy mince pies

by STEPHANIE YEABSLEY

No rolling required! Press the raw, crumbly pastry directly into your tin for a short, biscuity finish. The easiest mince pie recipe I've found, great for students and brilliant for a way to impress your family!

### Ingredients:

225g cold butter, diced  
350g plain flour  
100g golden caster sugar  
280g mincemeat  
1 small egg  
icing sugar, to dust

### Method:

1. To make the pastry, rub 225g cold, diced butter into 350g plain flour, then mix in 100g golden caster sugar and a pinch of salt. Combine the pastry into a ball – don't add liquid – and knead it briefly. The dough will be fairly firm, like shortbread dough. You can use the dough immediately, or chill for later.

2. Preheat the oven to 200C/gas 6/fan 180C. Line 18 holes of two 12-hole patty tins, by pressing small walnut-sized balls of pastry into each hole. Spoon 280g mincemeat into the pies.

3. Take slightly smaller balls of pas-

try than before and pat them out between your hands to make round lids, big enough to cover the pies. Top the pies with their lids, pressing the edges gently together to seal – you don't need to seal them with milk or egg as they will stick on their own. (The pies may now be frozen for up to 1 month).

4. Beat 1 small egg and brush the

tops of the pies. Bake for 20 minutes until golden. Leave to cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then remove to a wire rack. To serve, lightly dust with icing sugar. They will keep for 3 to 4 days in an airtight container.



## Drink of the Month - Mulled wine cocktail

### Ingredients

100g/4oz light muscovado sugar  
1 star anise  
1 cinnamon stick  
4 cloves  
150ml water  
1 lemon  
2 clementines  
150ml Cointreau  
750ml/ 1 1/2 pint bottle light red wine  
Twist of orange zest and a star anise, to serve

### Method

1. Put 100g light muscovado sugar in a pan with 1 star anise, 1 cinnamon stick, 4 cloves and 150ml water. Bring slowly to the boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar.

2. Simmer for 2 mins, then pour into a large jug and leave to cool. Add 1 lemon and 2 clementines, both thinly sliced, to the jug along with 150ml Cointreau and a 750ml bottle light red wine. Stir well, then cover and chill for at least 2 hrs or overnight if you can.

3. Serve chilled or over ice, with a twist of orange zest and a star anise. If you'd like to serve a traditional warm mulled wine, there's no need

to chill – simply warm through without boiling and serve in heatproof glasses.





# A Very Asheville Christmas



by KAYLA JONES

Christmas in the States sadly, is as commercialized as you would think it would be. Go big or go home when it comes to Christmas, but in some ways, the magic of the season, even though it is big and loud can sometimes be exactly what you need to get into the Christmas season and stop being so worried about those exams in January! I can't speak for the entire country of the US, but from someone who lives in the mountains of North Carolina, we have all of these traditions that make the holidays special, and the idea of

enjoying a Christmas in a cabin in the woods not just a dream, but a reality. Every year my family likes to head to The Biltmore House, the largest privately owned home in the States. Though it resembles a French Chateau, the Biltmore house is the closet things we Americans have to your European castles. Inside the house there is a Christmas tree brought in to the dining hall that people come from all over the states to see and to experience the Candlelight Christmas Evenings. The Grove Park Inn in Asheville holds the National Gingerbread Competition where people send in

their Gingerbread houses and other completely edible creations for people to come from all over the world to look at their authenticity. Every Christmas my family comes to look at the scrumptious works as well as sitting by the huge fire and seeing the rows and rows of different decorated trees. Jazz bands play funky Christmas music as we sit in rocking chairs overlooking the Blue Ridge Mountains. Yes Americans are big on their fast foods, but did you know we're that way about our Christmas lights as well? People pile up in their cars to go through huge light displays in na-

tional parks and big neighborhoods. The lights are programmed to match Christmas music that you can stream through your radio, and many of the lights will have a Christmas story to drive through. My family likes to go to Hollywild every year where you can drive through a light display with buffalos, deer, oxen and ostriches! Along with going to see attractions, people get together for Christmas parties, white elephant Christmas games and cookie swaps where everyone bakes a dozen cookies and then brings a huge plastic bag to try out everyone else's. A big tradition for many families, is once the

presents are open and the food has been gobbled up, to get over the let down of all the presents being opened people go to a movie on Christmas night. Once the Christmas season is over, everyone rests for a moment until New Year's Day comes about. Though in some places, you don't have to wait a full year for Christmas to come again, some places celebrate Christmas in July with songs on the radio, events and parties to celebrate the holiday during the summer.

## Prepare to fly

by PHILIP SEABROOK

The sign above the train station read -14 degrees. Pacing back and forth on the platform, Kayla and I braced ourselves for a good twenty minute wait in the blowy Chicago winter. After a week of visiting my girlfriend's sister and brother-in-law in Chicago, the travel back to the airport started out seamlessly. Then there was the 45 minute train ride to Midway Airport. Like the responsible adults that we now are, we left for our journey at 8am. The flight was at 11, so we got gone in reasonable timing. Despite tales of a strict TSA, we got through customs fairly quickly, and found our gate with plenty of time to spare. Now that were in the airport, it's smooth sailing back to home. Or an almost four hour delay on our flight because of the weather. We had prepared for the snowy weather, packed lightly to board the trains, got up early to get to the

- airport in time and gotten rid of our liquids and metals before going through a pat-down. What we hadn't prepared for, was waiting in the airport. If you're flying anywhere during winter break, here's ways to avoid what we've done.
1. Charge all electronics items before you head out into waiting world of gates and terminals.
  2. If you're in groups, bring games. If alone, bring a book, or download a movie on your PRECHARGED electronic device.
  3. Airport floors are disgusting. Be prepared to be uncomfortable.
  4. Bring coinage for refreshments. Eat before if possible.
  5. Have a backup plan.

## Christmas markets galore



MANCHESTER  
NICOLE BARTON

THE International office has a trip to the Manchester Christmas market every year for 17 pounds. Reported to be the biggest Christmas markets in the UK, the city is transformed into a Christmas hub as it holds events such as a boys' choir, Reindeer Parade, a craft and design market and a live screening of The Snowman with an orchestra performing the score. During this time of year different different restaurants and tea rooms have deals on Christmas tea and scones in Manchester, so be sure to search on line for the perfect deal on lunch or dinner! The Christmas market is set up all over the town displaying expensive handmade crafts, while orchestras perform in Tatton Park on the weekends. If you fancy a famous bit of entertainment when the day dies down, the play Aladdin is showing until December for you to go and see before you head back to Bangor!



CHESTER  
KATIE MIDDLETON

CHESTER utilizes its racecourse in the winter by turning it into a winter wonderland! More than just food and special gifts, the Winter Wonderland has ice skating, Christmas rides, a reindeer petting zoo, and Christmas shows. Though some of the attractions are aimed at children, there is plenty of things to do for university students such as the Vodka Ice Bar and Alpine Bar that has specialty Christmas drinks and the atmosphere of an authentic ski lodge. For an all day price of 5 pounds in advance, you can spend the day eating, shopping and making a fool out of yourself in ice skates. The town of Chester just a few minutes away from the racetrack also has its own Christmas market with specialty food and holiday trinkets that is free for admission. Make a day of it and go to both!



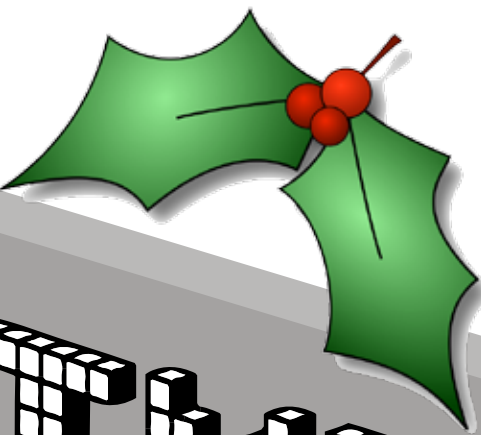
DUBLIN  
KAYLA JONES

THIS is a little far off, but it is doable in a day, I have done it! I went to Dublin on a ferry on a Saturday morning and were back by 7 in the morning on Sunday. Once we got into Dublin we ventured around the normal shopping where street vendors sold all sorts of Christmas and Frozen toys and gifts. Once in line for the actual Christmas market, it is only a few minutes until you get into the entrance to traditional wooden chalets which sells speciality cheeses, homemade popcorn, handmade crafts and specialty jewelry. If you're a big kid at heart you can go visit santa or take a horse and carriage ride. While Dublin is one of the most popular places to visit it is also one of the busiest this time a year. Do be aware if you go on the weekend, there is a ton of things to see and do, but also a multitude of people who have the same exact idea as you for Christmas.

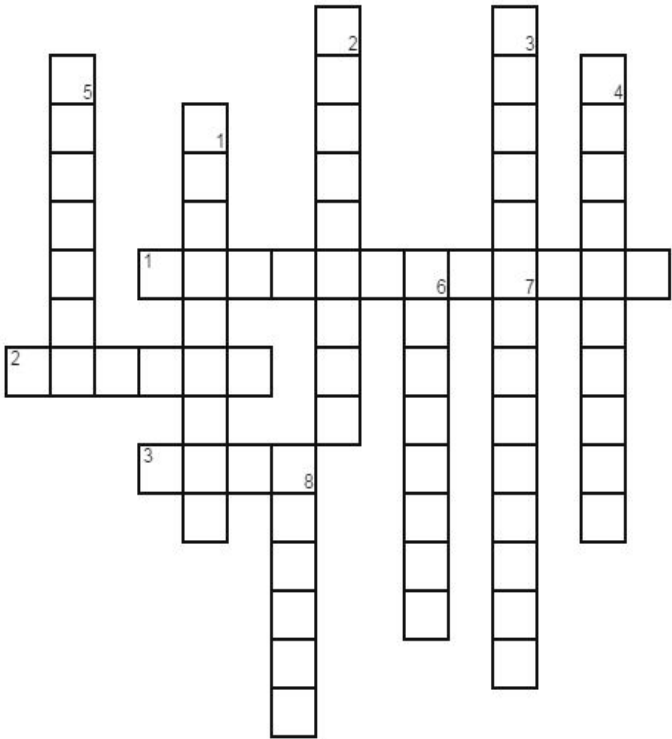




# BREAKTIME



THE **SEREN** CROSSWORD



- Across
- 1. Budd Schulberg’s novel, The \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2. How \_\_\_\_\_ impacts society
  - 3. All about that \_\_\_\_\_
- Down
- 1. The long-awaited approaching holiday
  - 2. The newest addition to Hunger Games movie series, \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3. Elton John will be performing in \_\_\_\_\_ Bay in 2015
  - 4. Men’s \_\_\_\_\_ recently won a game against University of Liverpool
  - 5. Winners of the \_\_\_\_\_ Challenge won a trip to China!
  - 6. Check out the review for \_\_\_\_\_ Bosses 2!
  - 7. Housing can be a real \_\_\_\_\_
  - 8. Remember to also solve the \_\_\_\_\_ on this page!

**SPOT THE DIFFERENCE**

BEFORE



AFTER



**SUDOKU!**  
EASY

			8	3	5			1
7						5	4	8
				7				
2		7			9	1		
	8	1				2	6	
		3	1			8		7
				4				
1	4	6						5
3			5	2	7			

HARD

	7	4		8				3
								6
6			1				8	
	2		4	7	8			
	4	8	5	6	9	3	7	
			3	2	1			9
		5			3			7
	9							
	8			4		6	5	

Look at the ‘identical’ photos of our team at Christmas, can you find the five differences?



JANUARY  
2015

SEREN

	1					
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12 EXAMS AU CLUB TRAINING STARTS STUDENT LOANS	13 EXAMS	14 EXAMS	15 EXAMS
16 EXAMS	17 EXAMS	18 EXAMS	19 EXAMS	20 EXAMS	21 EXAMS	22 EXAMS
23 EXAMS	24 EXAMS AU CLUB PHOTOS	25 EXAMS AU CLUB PHOTOS	26 CLASSES START!	27	28	29
30	WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR					
	Your essay deadlines!		The light at the end of the tunnel (i.e. February!)		The first Seren of 2015!	

LIVED IT, LOVED IT,  
COME BACK TO IT

Halls, not just  
for Freshers!

LIVE IN ONE OF OUR MODERN STUDENT  
VILLAGES NEXT YEAR. BOOK NOW!

SIGN BEFORE 31ST MARCH 2015  
FOR YOU CHANCE TO WIN  
£500 OFF YOUR RENT\*

\*T&C'S APPLY SEE OUR WEBSITE



  
FFRIDDUEDD VILLAGE

COME AND SEE US  
HALLS OFFICE  
FFRIDDUEDD VILLAGE  
MONDAY - FRIDAY  
9-5PM



# PAID INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

## IN BANGOR UNIVERSITY

During semester 2 and early summer 2015, paid graduate-level internships will be exclusively available to Bangor University undergraduate students

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# Women's Basketball take 1A by storm



Photo by Jodie Williams

by EMILY DUNN

Last season a last minute victory against Liverpool University, saw Bangor University Women's Basketball team promoted to BUCS Division 1A. This came as a shock, as suddenly Bangor needed to prepare for a tough season ahead, now finding themselves entering the second highest basketball tier in BUCS, and also the highest division of any regular BUCS team with Bangor University.

Unfazed, Bangor rose to the challenge with style, winning their first home game comfortably 67-49 over

Lancaster University 1st's. Encouraged by the win, the team then faced Leeds University 1st's. It was a close game with both teams fighting to gain the upper hand. However, Bangor remained cool and took home the victory (Qtr 1: 7-7, Qtr2: 15-18, Qtr 3: 20-29, FT: 32-40). With the team on a roll, Bangor soon snatched three wins from a possible three by beating Bradford University 1st's 33-50 away from home.

However, Bangor's biggest challenge of the season came when they faced a very strong and also undefeated Newcastle University 1st's. The atmosphere was clear from the beginning, both

teams were there to win. An exciting opening first few minutes saw both teams exchanging with Bangor leading 12-9 come the end of the quarter. However Newcastle responded well in the second quarter, clawing the lead back to just 2 points at half time. Determined, Bangor held their ground and stretched their lead to 8 come the end of the third quarter. Tension was still high for both teams entering the final quarter, and this was by no means a comfortable lead for Bangor. Fighting hard to maintain their lead; Bangor won 43-35 to secure maximum points after four games.

Elated with the win, the team head-

ed towards their fifth game undefeated – in what would be an emotional final game for three of the Bangor players: Shelbi Stimpson, Tess Seddon and Madeline Stokes, who return home after a semester studying abroad here in Bangor. After a shaky start, Bangor regained their composure beating Lancaster University 1st's 44-55, doing the double over them and accomplishing five wins from five games in the season so far - an outstanding achievement. Women's Basketball Club Captain Emily Dunn told Seren "I could not be more proud of our team this semester, everyone has bonded so well and we all aimed to

just try and stay in this division; I never imagined we'd actually be competing for the title!" She added "I would just like to thank all those supporting our club tirelessly behind the scenes, with particular thanks to all the hard work of our coach Vicky Gottwald, who is ever driving us to become the best players that we can be."

Bangor University Women's Basketball Club are the highest performing team representing Bangor University, in the regular BUCS leagues, and are looking forward to continue their hard work in the next half of the season, with their sights now firmly set on winning the league.

## Men's Basketball maintain home unbeaten record in league



By SCOTT WILLEY

Men's Basketball bounced back from their triple-over-time cup knock-out with a 68 - 63 win over University of Liverpool 1st's last week. Despite the loss in the cup, Bangor were undefeated at home in the league and were looking to give their international students leaving at Christmas a good send off.

Leading from the start, Bangor looked comfortable, increasing their early lead to 10 points. Liverpool's shooting was well below par, and despite their good play they simply couldn't close the gap. The gap remained at 10 points as Liverpool missed an extraordinary 10 shots in succession, giving the home team some relief in defence. The first quarter ended 22 - 7 to the hosts, with Andrew Gilbert collecting two rebounds before adding the final points of the quarter.

Bangor scored the first points of the second quarter using a well worked

training ground move, as Liverpool carried on in the same vein, that is, missing vital chances. Despite this, the away side seemed content to shoot from anywhere, which just resulted in more misses. Bangor pulled away in the remaining minutes, bringing the score to 37 - 19 at half-time.

Despite the scoreline, the mood was tense as Bangor gave up a similar lead against Leeds Beckett the week prior. Fortunately for the home side, Liverpool continued their poor shooting, missing a long-range attempt seconds into the third quarter. Increasing drawn into Liverpool's counter attacking game, Bangor failed to control the game as they did in the first half and allowed the gap to close. This was all but epitomised by Gilbert as he held the ball and motioned with his hand to tell his teammates to calm down. Liverpool's shooting improved in the third quarter - there was presumably something to be said by continuous half-time shooting and the lack of team talk.

Some great work by Jordan Lamb

added 5 points for the Badgers to make it 50 - 38, before Lewis Organ scored 3 points to end the third quarter 53 - 43.

In the final quarter and Bangor needed to keep themselves ahead of the improving away team. A silly mistake from Bangor allowed Liverpool a three point free throw, as the home side fouled outside the 3 point line with only seconds left on the shot clock. It seemed Liverpool might be the second team in two weeks to snatch a victory from Bangor, as their counter attacked to reduce the lead to only 6 points. Tom Bate collected two of his own rebounds before finally scoring two points, keeping some daylight between the sides. As the lead was reduced to only 5 points, Liverpool looked for 3 points, only to have it smacked away by Bate - Bangor were not going to give up this win easily.

With only a minute left on the clock, Bangor added points from a free throw to win 68 - 63, putting them fourth in BUCS Northern 2A.



## In Brief



### AU Night

AU Night is the chance to celebrate your BUCS Wednesday wins, or to move on from your defeats. All money raised from the door goes back to your clubs - AU Night is the only event that does this!

Every Wednesday at Academi

Free entry before 11pm, £2 tickets, £3 on the door.



### Campus Sport

5-a-side football on  
Tuesday nights 7:30 - 10pm  
@ Canolfan Brailsford

Simply turn up and play, as an individual or a team

Free to all students!

Sponsored by Bar Uno - the winning team receives a pitcher!



### Movember

The Athletic Union again raised money for Movember this year

Events such as Movember AU Night, quizzes, charity matches and t-shirt sales, as well as online sponsorship raised a grand total of

**£2524.57**

# Trampoline club bounce to success in Manchester



by GEORGIA MITCHELL

Bangor University Trampoline Club bounced to new heights at their first competition of year in Manchester on the 29th and 30th November. Showing off their new kit, they brought home 7 medals ranging from the Novice to Elite categories.

The individual trampolining events took place on the Saturday. Morgan Gregory and Martin Parry kicked off the competition in the Advanced Men's category winning the club's first medals: gold and silver respectively. Also that morn-

ing was the Elite Ladies category in which Georgia Mitchell finished in 3rd place against some tough competition.

The afternoon began with Sophie Gunter narrowly missing out on a medal in the Intervanced Ladies category by 1/10th of a point. Jason Crockett proved his ability among the Intervanced Men, finishing in 1st place. Bethan Williams and Luke Malam had to wait until the end of the day for their events, in which they both took bronze medals; Bethan in Advanced Ladies and Luke in Novice Men.

The Sunday events were Double Mini Trampoline and Syn-

chronised Trampoline. Natalie Caughtry took the bronze medal in Advanced Double Mini Trampoline after making some fantastic landings. In the Higher Synchronised Trampoline category, Shaun Preston and Alice Spiller finished 4th, just missing out on a medal, after only being paired together 2 days earlier.

The club took twenty competitors to the event which is more than in previous years. As a whole, the club performed incredibly well, with eleven competitors being new this academic year. The success has to be credited, in part, to Natalie Caughtry who is the club's

voluntary coach. This was a great start to the season, putting the club in good stead for BUCS Nationals and the Irish Student Trampoline Open.

Trampolining is a great way to get fit whilst also having fun. Trampoline Club train on Fridays 6.30-8.30pm and Sundays 2.30-5.30pm in Canolfan Brailsford, Hall 2. All abilities are welcome. The club will also be hosting their annual 12 hour bounce on 7th February to raise money for the club and for Coppafeel, the breast cancer awareness charity. This will be open anyone to come along and give trampolining a go.

# Bangor predicted second highest BUCS ranking in university history

by SCOTT WILLEY

Bangor currently sit a predicted 64th place in the BUCS league tables, only one place and 14.5 points behind Varsity rivals Aberystwyth.

In the last two years Bangor finished 68th, 4 places behind the current position. This marks a stark improvement on previous years, in which Bangor finished in the high 70's to low 80's, and staggeringly ten years ago when they were outside the top 100 universities.

Bangor's improvement has surely been helped by the continued development of sporting facilities within the university, such as the multi-million pound redevelopment Canolfan Brailsford, and the joint development of Nant-

porth 3G pitches with Bangor City FC.

Another factor which could be attributed to Bangor's performances is the free clubs and societies the Students' Union offers. Bangor is one of only two universities in the United Kingdom to offer this. Free clubs and societies allows students to take part and try out new sports free of charge, allowing smaller clubs to increase their membership and attract new players, in theory advancing the level of sport.

Bangor's current leading points scorers are Women's Basketball, who are in the highest division of any regular BUCS league. After promotion last year, the team have gone undefeated over five games. Men's basketball currently sit in fourth in Northern 2A, making the combined total for basketball the highest points of any sport at

Bangor.

Men's Badminton 1st's also sit atop their league, level on points with Manchester.

Women's Hockey 2nd's are currently in 2nd in Northern 5A, only one point behind the leaders LJMU, with a home match against them to come in February.

Men's Fencing 1st's and Men's Table Tennis 1st's also sit in second in their prospective leagues, meaning a number of teams could win the title or promotion come the end of the season.

The Athletic Union have entered 43 teams in the leagues this season, and currently have a win ratio of 44%, winning 178 games and drawing 32.

Currently 64th

Highest finish 63rd in 2011/12

One place behind Varsity rivals Aberystwyth



# Quidditch prove their prowess in Christmas Cup

by JAY LOUIS HOLMES

Bangor University Quidditch Club recently took twelve of their players to participate in the Christmas Cup.

The Christmas Cup is a fantasy Quidditch tournament held in Oxford, with twelve teams of seventeen players all eager to compete and take home the title of champion.

The teams were decided through a snake draft style, meaning twelve captains were selected and then took it in turns picking a player from the pool of 192 until they had a full team. Of the 204 spaces, 84 were allocated to players who started playing this year.

While obviously the tournament was there to be won, the main aim was to encourage growth and development within the Quidditch community. As Quidditch is still an up and coming sport it was excellent to see old and new players working together on the pitch with more experienced players teaching the younger players the more intricate parts of the game, as well as sharing skills and tips.

The tournament started off with a special Varsity match between Oxford and Cambridge where Oxford domi-

nated 210\* - 0 (the \* indicating a snitch catch, worth 30 points). However Oxford are the best team in Europe and Cambridge are a new team, meaning the scoreline was expected.

After this curtain raiser, players had the chance to meet their team and discuss their first games, this was hard for the Bangor players as we'd traveled for five and a half hours only to be split up amongst six different teams. However Bangor love some inter-team rivalry so this gave everyone even more of an excuse to show off and show why Bangor are the 2nd best team in the country.

Two groups of six teams battled it out for quarter-final places, with four teams involving Bangor players reaching the last eight. Unfortunately, due to time constraints the final could not go ahead, so two teams were announced as joint-winners. Of the twelve Bangor players in attendance, three went on to be crowned champions.

Bangor University Quidditch Club lost three key players last year, and while this was nothing that could not be compensated for, the UK Quidditch community assumed this would lead to a drop in standards and a fall down the league ladder. The Christmas Cup proved that Bangor players are still up there with the best in the country and

will be challenging for the top spot at the British Quidditch Cup.

If you are interested in joining Bangor University Quidditch Club you

can search for them on Facebook, or follow them on Twitter @bangorquidditch.

Photo by Tom Heynes



# Medals galore for Judo

by OLA FINNIGAN

It has been a very busy semester for Bangor Judo. Since the success of the AU Dinner in April, where three of the club's members recieved colours awards, and the massive medal count of 2013/14, we wondered how on earth we were going to top it, but so far, with fresh talent from new members, continued improvement from

experienced members and the amazing coaching skills of Steve Clarke, we look set.

So far this year we have produced two Welsh National Champions, Sara Lyon and club captain Ola Finnigan, each fighting for a gold medal at the Welsh Closed. A very well earned silver medal went to club secretary Sam Hemming and ex captain Thomas Martin, all on the same day. Four medals in the bag and the semester was yet

to begin.

Over the summer there were three more successes as the club earnt three new black belts: Sam Hemming, Ola Finnigan and Steve Davidson. In Judo's socring system, individuals score a number of points after each fight won, either at competition or at an official Dan grading. Once the player has accumulated one hundred points and completed a theory test, a black belt is awarded. This years' treasurer Tom

Curtis also got ten points towards his Dan grade.

Now we get onto this academic years achievements. First we start with Serendipity, which is always a busy, exciting time for all clubs and societies. This year was no different with well over one hundred sign ups. This year saw the club host its busiest taster session with thirty six people on the mat! Admittedly a few of these have dropped away, as they do in every club, albeit leaving us with an excellent core team of new members all enthusiastic to train and compete.

They have not let the club down at competition either. Our first new members competition was the Sheffield Kyu Grade Cup. For the most part it was everyone's first competition. Despite the nerves and tense atmosphere, everyone gave a really big effort to come away with some medals. Our medalists were Kit Burden and Simone Bianche who both won bronze in the mens <73kgs category, and Beth Parish who also took bronze for the ladies <56kgs. A fourth bronze went to Sam Stephens who was fighting in the mens <66kgs category for the first time. And our last medal, a gold, went to Sam Hemming in the ladies >56kgs.

So far, we have had an epic year and we hope to continue this way into the New Year with all our events including BUCS, the Malta International Open and our annual Exmouth training course. Right now we are looking forward to our own Dan grading on the 14th Dec held at Normal Site Gym 2, 2-5pm, feel free to come down, watch and cheer on some of our players as they fight for their black belts.



## BUCS Scores 3/12

### Basketball

Women's 1st's 55 - 44 Lancaster 1st's  
Men's 1st's 68 - 63 Liverpool 1st's

### Netball

Women's 2nd's 25 - 54 Chester 2nd's

### Fencing

Men's 1st's 135 - 79 UCLAN 1st's

### Hockey

Women's 1st's 1 - 3 Liverpool 1st's  
Women's 2nd's 5 - 2 Hope 1st's  
Men's 1st's 3 - 4 Cumbria 1st's  
Men's 2nd's  
Men's 3rd's 0 - 0 Lancaster 3rd's

### Football

Women's 1st's 0 - 4 Man Met 2nd's  
Men's 1st's 2 - 5 LJMU 2nd's  
Men's 2nd's 1 - 3 Salford 2nd's

### Lacrosse

Men's 1st's 12 - 13 Man Met 1st's  
Women's 1st's 14 - 13 Chester 1st's

### Squash

Men's 1st's 0 - 5 Manchester 2nd's  
Women's 1st's 3 - 1 Liverpool 1st's

### Badminton

Men's 1st's 6 - 2 LJMU 1st's  
Men's 2nd's 1 - 7 Liverpool 2nd's  
Men's 3rd's 4 - 4 Glyndwr 1st's  
Women's 1st's 3 - 5 Liverpool 1st's

### Rugby Union

Women's 1st's 10 - 68 Lancaster 1st's  
Men's 1st's 15 - 13 Liverpool 3rd's

### Table Tennis

Men's 1st's 17 - 0 Sunderland 1st's

### Tennis

Men's 1st's 2 - 10 Liverpool 2nd's  
Men's 2nd's 6 - 6 UCLAN 2nd's  
Women's 1st's 8 - 4 Manchester 2nd's

### Volleyball

Men's 1st's 1 - 2 Manchester 2nd's  
Men's 1st's 2 - 0 Edge Hill 1st's  
Women's 1st's 1 - 2 Salford 1st's  
Women's 1st's 2 - 0 Keele 1st's

### American Football

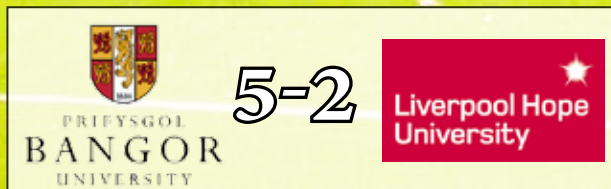
Mixed 1st's 0 - 34 Staffordshire  
Mixed 1st's

### Golf

Mixed 1st's 4 - 2 Manchester 1st's



## Women's Hockey 2nd's single point off top spot



Main: Rachel Faragher scores for Bangor  
Inset: Delyth Jones cause problems all game  
Photos by Scott Willey

by SCOTT WILLEY

Bangor University Women's Hockey 2nd's closed the gap on 1st placed LJMU 2nd's to only one point last week, following a 5 - 2 victory over Liverpool Hope 1st's.

Hope started the brighter, keeping Bangor in their own half for much of the first ten minutes and forcing a short corner. The shot was well blocked by Club Captain Jess Byrne, and Bangor cleared the danger - albeit briefly. Bangor made vital interceptions in their own half, but often cleared only as far as the Hope midfield, putting the pressure back on the home side.

The first clear chance of the game came from Bangor's Delyth Jones, whose pace allowed her to get in be-

hind the Hope defence, although she was unable to get her shot away.

Minutes later, Hope were on the attack again as a Bangor defender missed her chance to clear, allowing a Hope player to shoot twice, producing two brilliant saves from goalkeeper Jenny Parsons.

Bangor needed to get possession and start controlling the game, with them so far sitting off and allowing Hope to come close to opening the scoring. A second short corner for Hope saw them shoot wide, giving another warning to the home side. They took their warnings and started to pressure Hope's defence, team captain Llio Jones making a smart turn on halfway to play in D. Jones, who shot wide. Minutes later and D. Jones was involved again, her pace allowing her

to beat a defender and round the goalkeeper, although she couldn't quite put the ball away as it ran away from her.

Despite Hope's superior possession, Bangor's centre midfield duo of L. Jones and Rachel Faragher produced some nice touches to launch Bangor forward- this time Faragher shaking off two defenders before spreading the play into space on the wide right which lead to another shot.

The breakthrough came at the end of the first half, D. Jones finally getting on the scoresheet as her pace got her free from the defenders again to slide the ball past the goalkeeper.

Hope responded immediately however, the ball sent into the box from deep, hoping for a touch to send it in. Goalkeeper Parsons dived low to her right but it was just beyond her reach

as a Hope player tapped the ball in at the far post.

Going into the second half, Bangor started the brighter of the two sides, scoring swiftly. Faragher chipped the ball over her opponent's stick before storming into the area to put a powerful shot past the Hope goalkeeper. Faragher was again involved in Bangor's third, her strong running producing the home side's first short corner of the match. A well worked short corner routine paid dividends, as captain L. Jones played a one-two, before crossing for her player to score at the back post.

With momentum behind them now, Bangor pushed on and played in D. Jones, who with a lot of work still to do, rounded two defenders and the goalkeeper to score into an empty

goal. Hope pulled one back minutes later, launching the ball into the area for it to be trapped by an attacker, who neatly turned and shot to make it 4 - 2 to the hosts.

With only minutes left in the match, D. Jones took on her opposite number once again, drawing the keeper before squaring the ball to Gemma Wrench who tapped in to secure the victory. The scoreline meant Bangor have now scored ten goals in their last two matches and only conceding twice, piling the pressure on first placed LJMU 2nd's, who are currently ahead of Bangor by a single point. With a title decider against the current leaders at home in February, can Bangor win the league?