Last month we welcomed our new students to Royal Holloway. During our annual Welcome Week we ran a wide range of events and activities to help our students make new friends and settle in, including tours of campus and the local area, trips to nearby attractions, sport events and a range of social activities ranging from quiz nights and stand-up comedy to live music.

Community Action volunteers were on hand to raise awareness about their work and to recruit new volunteers. Community Action will be running a number of activities this term including tea parties for older members of the community and English language tutoring for young refugees.

The Students’ Union also ran workshops, encouraging students to act as considerate neighbours and informing them of the Sshh Bus service. This bus drops students off directly at home, ensuring they have a safe journey back and that noise late at night is minimised.

Jack Kilker, Co-President Welfare & Diversity, is one of four Sabbatical Officers elected to run the Students’ Union. He said: “We are always looking for feedback, so if local residents feel that we can and should be doing more, I’d really like to hear from them. Across the College we’re looking at ways to improve communication between us and our neighbours so please do get in touch.”

Royal Holloway launches its Women Inspire campaign

This October we launched our Women Inspire campaign, celebrating inspirational women and their achievements. The campaign continues the legacy of our Victorian founders who created two of the first colleges for women.

The campaign coincides with the newly released film *Suffragette*, which tells the story of women who fought for equality and the right to vote. A number of suffrage campaigners were alumnae of our College.

Principal, Professor Paul Layzell, said: “We want to celebrate our pioneering history and the leading role our founders played in the advancement of women in higher education. As well as recognising our history we want to look to the future and champion inspirational women here at Royal Holloway and across the globe, and the role they play in inspiring others.”

Visit our Women Inspire webpages for more information on the campaign.

royalholloway.ac.uk/womeninspire
Earlier this year we shared with our neighbours in the Spring Rise area our plans to begin work on a new fence at the so-called ‘back gate’ entrance to the College. Our plans were based on discussions with local residents and reflected the concerns they raised. The fence has therefore been designed to provide an entrance to campus at Spring Rise that is secure and safe for our students and which minimises the impact the gate has on people living in the area.

Our goal was to have the fence installed over the summer. Unfortunately this has not been possible. With planning permission now in place, we expect work to start over the autumn. Once we have more detailed timings on when work will begin, we will be in touch with the residents most likely to be affected. We appreciate that making these improvements will cause inconvenience and we are committed to doing as much as we can to minimise the disruption.

Over the summer we extended the car park on our North Campus, near to the Nursery.

Increasing campus parking was a condition when the overall plan for our College estate, a so-called ‘Master Plan’, was approved in January 2015. Car Park 14, as it’s known, was extended over the summer and now has 172 parking spaces which can be used by students or staff with a College Parking Permit.

A planning condition attached to the extension of Car Park 14 was that the College carry out road works to make a section of Harvest Road two-way. This is to encourage cars to come out of the car park onto the A30 rather than driving through the village. The work to create the two-way road will involve temporarily closing Harvest Road, most likely in early 2016.

We recognise that this will be disruptive for people living in the immediate area. While we cannot avoid the disruption, we will do everything we can to keep you updated on what to expect and when. To ensure everyone affected receives the information, we will post updates through the letterboxes of local residents, share information via posters and put regular updates onto our website.

To keep up to date on our plans around the campus estate, please visit royalholloway.ac.uk/estateplan
Royal Holloway Swimming Club makes history with English Channel swim

Nine students from Royal Holloway’s Swimming Club made history this summer by completing the cross-channel swim as the largest ever relay team to accomplish the challenge. The team took just 12 hours and 28 minutes to reach France and raised an incredible £3,000 for their chosen charities; Swimobility, Help for Heroes and Centrepoint.

The team spent seven months preparing for the swim, taking cold showers and baths to help acclimatise to bitter water temperatures and battling the physical and mental challenges of open water training.

President of Royal Holloway Swimming Club, Isaac Kenyon, said: “It was the most difficult swim any of us has ever done, exhausting us all to moments almost touching failure. However, what is most memorable is the heart-warming team spirit demonstrated by all team members – each one standing at the side of the boat chanting, singing praises and shouting words of encouragement to whoever was in the water.”

New Lectureship will help fight life-limiting genetic condition

Dr Linda Popplewell, a Research Officer within the School of Biological Sciences at Royal Holloway, has been awarded a prestigious five year Lectureship to develop research into Duchenne muscular dystrophy – a life-limiting, muscle-wasting condition. Supported by the charity Muscular Dystrophy UK, the appointment to the Lectureship was made possible following a £250,000 grant to Muscular Dystrophy UK from the Montague Thompson Coon Charitable Trust. Their donation was matched by the College.

With the help of two PhD students initially, the aim is to grow the team longer term. Dr Popplewell will work to develop a genetic therapy for Duchenne muscular dystrophy. Duchenne muscular dystrophy affects around 2,500 children and young people in the UK. If successful, Dr Popplewell’s therapy could help up to 85 percent of people living with the condition in the future. The role also marks a substantial increase in the College’s potential to carry out further research to tackle the condition.

Duchenne muscular dystrophy is caused by genetic mutations which prevent the body from producing a vital muscle protein called dystrophin, meaning muscles weaken and waste. It leads to increasingly severe disability and eventually affects the heart and breathing muscles. Few with the condition currently live to see the age of 30.

Dr Popplewell’s potential therapy uses ‘molecular scissors’ to cut out many of the mutations in genetic code that prevents dystrophin being produced, to provide a near universal permanent therapy for Duchenne muscular dystrophy. Using ‘DNA patches’ similar to the ones currently in clinical trial for Duchenne muscular dystrophy, she also aims to develop a combination therapy that would simultaneously help build up weakening muscles and reduce scar tissue, which can limit the effectiveness of treatments.

The award reflects the strength of Royal Holloway’s research and its position as a leading, research intensive university. In the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014, Royal Holloway was placed within the top 25% of universities in the UK for research which is rated ‘world-leading’ or ‘internationally excellent’.
Improving how we communicate

There are many ways that we try to listen to your views and share information about what’s happening on campus and our plans for our estate. However, we recognise that we could do more and that some of the forums for discussion aren’t working as well as they could.

In September, Cllr Marissa Heath chaired a community meeting where both the College and The Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP, Member of Parliament for Runnymede and Weybridge spoke about the importance of good communication. The focus of the meeting was the College’s plan for its estate. Over 100 local people attended, together with local councillors, a highways officer from Surrey County Council and members of local residents associations. You can read more information about the meeting in the News section on our website.

Although there was a good turnout for the meeting, when asked by speakers about attending similar meetings in the future, only a small number said they would prefer information to be shared via meetings. In feedback provided via a questionnaire, most people said they would prefer to receive information by email.

We would really like to know how you would prefer to receive information about College events, activities and estate developments. To get in touch, please see the ‘Contact us’ information below.

Listening to your feedback about students

In the last four years the number of issues reported to the College by residents has significantly decreased, falling from 493 in 2010/11 to 188 in 2014/15.

This reduction has largely been achieved by listening to your concerns and engaging with students around their responsibility to be a good neighbour. Information available to students includes an updated ‘Be a Good Neighbour Guide’, which is given to students living in Egham and Englefield Green. It includes information on managing noise, Council refuse and recycling collections and encourages students to get involved in the community.

To help us understand the wider concerns within the area our Community Wellbeing Team regularly takes part in local police panel meetings and attends local councillors’ surgeries. We also work alongside Runnymede Borough Council and Surrey Police on any issues which may need their involvement.

If you have any concerns about student behaviour, please contact us at: community@royalholloway.ac.uk

Village Sons Remembered – An evening of Commemoration and Celebration

Wednesday 11 November, Chapel, 6.30pm
A fundraiser for a community-led project to give dignity, identity and a legacy to the war dead of Englefield Green.
£15 adults, £7 students. Book at royalholloway.ac.uk/events.
For further information please email: emma.peagam@royalholloway.ac.uk

Mozart: The Prodigy

Concert: Thursday 12 November, Boilerhouse Auditorium, 7.30pm
Anna Cashell, violin, Simon Watterton, Simon Watterton (piano). Admission: free

How is Antarctica changing and why should we care?

Lecture: Monday 16 November, Moore Building Lecture Theatre, 6.15pm
Professor Martin Siegert, Co-Director, Grantham Institute for Climate Change and Environment, Imperial College

St Cecilia’s Evening

Concert and Reception: Saturday 21 November, 6-7.30pm
Chapel and Picture Gallery
Rupert Gough, Director, Choir of Royal Holloway, Orchestra Nova, Lucy Wakeford (harp), Rachel Gough (violin) £15 (free to Royal Holloway students)

Going to the ends of the Earth as a woman in Science

Lecture: Thursday 26 November, Windsor Building Auditorium, 6.15pm
Professor Jane Francis, Director, British Antarctic Survey

The Business of Business Ethics and the ethics of Business

Inaugural Lecture: Tuesday 24 November, Windsor Building Auditorium, 6.15pm
Professor Laura Spence, School of Management. Admission: free

Whats on: College events

We hold a number of events in the College each year which are open to the public. Details of our events and how to book can be found at:
royalholloway.ac.uk/aboutus/events
If you would like to join our events mailing list, please see ‘Contact us’

Contact us

If you would like to speak to a member of the Community Matters team please call 01784 276612 or 01784 443394, email community@royalholloway.ac.uk or write to Community Matters, FE20, Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey, TW20 0EX.

If you would prefer to write to us and deliver your letter in person, please bring your letter to Founder’s Reception. Reception is open 9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday.

If you would prefer to receive a digital copy of Community Matters please email us at: community@royalholloway.ac.uk.