



## Welcome to your 2021 Civil Engineering Alumni Newsletter



### Dear Alumni,

It's incredible to think that a whole year has passed since our last alumni newsletter, and I can report that it has once again been a challenging year. Both academic and professional services colleagues in the Department have worked tirelessly to get us to this point in the year. That means, off the back of having moved all of our teaching and examinations online last year, having to do the same again, except this time swapping between face-to-face, virtual, and back again as we cycled through national restrictions. It has undoubtedly been incredibly tough for our students, but I much again commend the dedication and hard-working staff in the Department.

[Read more from Karl Dearn](#)



## School of Engineering presented with keys to new building

Building work was completed in February on the new £46.5m School of Engineering thanks to national contractor, Willmott Dixon. The state-of-the-art 12,000 sqm facility spans five floors and features a double-height atrium. The development aims to not only bring together many of the institution's engineering disciplines, but also provide opportunities for successful collaboration between academia and industry.

[Find out more about the new School of Engineering Building](#)



### **Hydrogen-fuelled train to be showcased at COP26**

Experts at the University of Birmingham have welcomed the announcement by Network Rail that it will be showcasing the hydrogen-powered HydroFLEX train at the COP26 Climate Change Conference.

[Find out more](#)



### **Low carbon smart pipes will contribute to decarbonisation**

Low carbon smart pipes for use in large-scale buried infrastructure projects are to be developed in a new partnership between the University and specialist manufacturing company Aquaspira Ltd.

[Find out more](#)



### **New phenomena will explain uncertainties in spider webs**

Birmingham engineers discover new phenomena that explain when and how networked structures such as spider webs, soft tissues, and membranes start to behave unusually.

[Find out more](#)



### **Heritage railway looks to build a locomotive for the future**

The Severn Valley Railway has teamed up with the University to work on a ground-breaking scheme. The project will see the UK's first-ever conversion of a diesel locomotive to run on hydrogen power.

[Find out more](#)



## New hardship grants for engineering students funded by Birmingham graduate, Emeritus Professor Barry P Hughes

We are delighted to announce a new bursary to support students in the School of Engineering who are experiencing financial difficulty. Thanks to the generosity of Emeritus Professor Barry Peter Hughes and his family, the Professor BP Hughes Bursary will support Engineering students experiencing hardship and facing unexpected financial challenges. This Bursary will provide comfort, security and peace of mind for cohorts of engineering students across the next decade.

[Find out more about the Professor BP Hughes Bursary](#)



### A virtual year with CivSoc

It's been a strange 18 months for everyone and a challenge for CivSoc to adapt to the new situations the year has brought. Throughout it they have continued to offer a sense of community with their industrial events, socials and sporting activities.

[Read what CivSoc have been up to](#)



### The Engineering Societies

There are now 23 student groups associated with the School of Engineering, each working towards a different project but all with the same aim – to offer something unique for their members and students.

[Learn more about our societies](#)



### Success for our students at the annual Societies' Awards

For the second year running we took the EPS Societies' Awards online to celebrate our remarkable student groups. The celebrations were not halted and watch parties were held across our societies and Schools! We're proud to announce our very own CivSoc President Rohan Hornsby was named Role Model of the Year, and the School of Engineering RFC won Sports Team of the Year for the third time! Congratulations also to the Women in Science and Engineering Society who were named Society of the Year, and well done to all the nominees, shortlisted students and worthy winners!

[Watch the 2021 Virtual Societies' Awards](#)



## From student to construction manager

Jackson Turner moved to England from the USA with the intention of beginning a career in the construction industry. In 2021, he came full circle and was part of the team who handed over the keys to our new School of Engineering Building.

[Watch Jackson's interview](#)



## Innovative 'EPS Futures Foundation Year' programme

Through the generous support of donors such as Martin-Baker Aircraft, EPS Futures will provide life-changing opportunities for students. Together we will help unearth future engineers who otherwise may not have the chance to fulfil their potential.

[Find out more about EPS Futures](#)

# WE ARE BIRMINGHAM ALUMNI

## Help inspire our students

From recent graduates to industry leaders, you are making important things happen. You can inspire young people and offer an insight into the opportunities awaiting them. What will you share?

[Share your Birmingham story](#)

# MENTORING

## Could you be a mentor?

We all know the benefits of having someone to bounce ideas off, especially when it comes to our careers. Your advice is invaluable. If you'd like to be that person, we'd love to hear from you.

[Email Grace to become a mentor](#)



## Seventy graduates take part in 'Meet your alumni' series

In March 2021, the EPS Community launched the first event series aimed at introducing students to Engineering and Physical Science alumni from a broad range of sectors. More than 70 graduates and professionals took part in 'Meet your alumni', each with a different experience to share. In Civil Engineering we held a speed-networking event where students met six recent graduates and grilled them on their careers so far.

[Find out more about the Series](#)

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## News roundup

The University of Birmingham is [launching the new National College for Advanced Transport and Infrastructure](#) in a special collaboration between higher and further education.

Andrew Stephenson, UK Minister of State for Transport, has formally opened a [new purpose-built centre designed to deliver specialist research in railway engineering](#).

[Supporting students into engineering](#) and physical sciences at Birmingham.

The School of Engineering is delighted to announce that academics have received the [James Hill and Richard Trevithick Fund Prizes](#) for outstanding research papers.

Civil Engineering graduate Xilin Dai named [Birmingham Alumni's Volunteer of the Month](#) for February 2021.

Birmingham researchers confirm [speed, simplicity and sensitivity for new COVID-19 test](#).

Dr Dsilva Winfred Rufuss Devanesan has been awarded the highly [prestigious Newton International Fellowship award](#).

Professor of Water Technology elected to the Board of Directors of the [European Desalination Society](#).

Dr Sakdirat Kaewunruen has been awarded the [Rail Winner of TRA VISIONS 2020 Senior Researcher Competitions](#).

Rail experts on board with the [2021 Transport Decarbonisation Plan](#).

Hydrogen set to do the [heavy lifting](#).

Birmingham Centre for Railway Research and Education welcomes [new Professor in Rail Strategy, Professor Paul Plummer](#).

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**Do we have the correct contact details for you?**

Make sure you update your details to ensure you receive the latest news and information about events in your area. [Update now](#)



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