

UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

## School of Chemistry Community

Part of  
THE EPS COMMUNITY



Spring 2014

### Greetings,

Another busy term has come to an end in the School of Chemistry as our students are finishing assignments and dissertations ahead of the Easter break. Our numbers of prospective students and applicants continue to increase thanks to our "University of the Year" accolade and of course to the School's commanding league table position in the National Students Survey, which has seen us ranked number 1 amongst all of the 21 Russell Group Schools of Chemistry in the UK.

As you will see from this newsletter our academics have also made, and contributed to, significant scientific debates: including the [upgrading of the drug Ketamine](#) and [justifying our need to eat chocolate](#). This term also saw [Dr. Simon Cotton receiving a British Empire Medal](#) in the New Year's Honours; a well-deserved accolade for his services to education in chemistry!

I'd like to take this opportunity to remind you of your invitation to attend the first [EPS Reunion](#). Similar to that of the previous University Annual Alumni Reunion event, we are inviting all former students of the School to return to campus on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June to reminisce with us. It is set to be a very good day and I look forward to seeing many of you there.

With best wishes,

**Professor Jon Preece**  
Head of School  
Chemistry

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### News from the School of Chemistry



#### Hurry! Only 24 hours to secure your 'early bird' place at the EPS Reunion 2014!

Do you have fond memories of your time at the University of Birmingham? Do you still keep in touch with those classmates who you pulled all-night study sessions with, to get that last assignment finished? As a graduate of the School of Chemistry, we'd love for you to join us on

campus on Saturday 14 June 2014 for a Reunion. [Read more.](#)

## 10 ways the University of Birmingham has changed the world



Can you help us to celebrate the impact that staff, students, and alumni have had on society?

With eight Nobel Prize winners amongst former staff and students, and world-leading researchers on everything from the Big Bang to Shakespeare, Birmingham research continues to transform lives. The University needs your nominations for a new 'top ten' list of the alumni, staff, and students who have had profound impact through their research. Visit [www.birmingham.ac.uk/10ways](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/10ways) to cast your vote by Friday 4 April. Winners will be announced in May

## The potential upgrading of Ketamine from a Class C to a Class B drug



Ketamine has been in the news again; this time the reason is that the Government is being advised that it should be upgraded from its current status as a Class C drug (like Valium) to a Class B drug, like amphetamine or cannabis. Dr Simon Cotton comments on the debate in Chemistry World. [Read more.](#)

## Professor Sir Martin Sweeting delivers the inaugural EPS Distinguished Lecture



On Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March Professor Sir Martin Sweeting, Director of the Surrey Space Centre, delivered the first EPS Distinguished Lecture. Students Ceri Bradshaw, Rob Brennan-Craddock and Graham Kirkby summarise the event. [Read more.](#)

## How a square of chocolate really does make us smile!



March 20<sup>th</sup> marked International Day of Happiness, an apt time for it in the UK as we emerge from a wet and dreary winter. February saw Valentine's Day and World Chocolate Day, both reminding us of this feel-good substance. In the School of Chemistry we celebrated by indulging with chocolate and investigated why it makes us so happy. [Read more.](#)

## Chemistry academic recognised in New Year's Honours list



Congratulations to Dr Simon Cotton whose important work promoting Chemistry to students and the public has been recognised in the 2014 New Year's Honours List. Simon taught Chemistry for 30 years in schools across the country and is now an Honorary Senior Lecturer. Chemistry students across the UK will be familiar with his '[Soundbite Molecules](#)' column, which has appeared in the Royal Society of Chemistry magazine since 1996. [Read more.](#)

## Birmingham and the School of Chemistry launch new Centre in Physical Sciences for Health

The programme, Sci-Phy-4-Health, will train over 50 students from different scientific backgrounds in an innovative programme that combines chemistry, physics, engineering and computer science to address three key UK healthcare challenges: trauma - the major killer of under 40s in the UK and over 65s, cardiovascular disease - the major killer of over 65s in the UK, and aging, a UK healthcare grand challenge. [Read more.](#)

## National Women in Engineering Day



Monday 23 June marks the first National Women in Engineering Day launched by the Women's Engineering Society. It is intended as a day dedicated to raising the profile and celebrating the achievements of women in engineering. We are looking for women with a story to tell. Do you work in science or engineering and would like to get involved? The programme is being developed as we speak so if you would like more information or want to take part please [email us](#) or keep an eye on [our website](#).

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## New staff in 2013/14

The School of Chemistry has made two new appointments this term. [Read a summary of our new staff online here.](#)

## Your School needs you...

Would you be able to share some of your time, expertise or connections to help our students to succeed?

We're currently looking for help and support from alumni with the following:

- EPS Open Days, 26-27 June. Could you donate a couple of hours of your time to pop back to your old school and speak to our prospective students about your time at Birmingham? For more information and to get involved [email us](#)
- All women in science and engineering. As part of National Women in Engineering Day, 23 June, the EPS Community is hosting a number of activities, conversations and events designed to celebrate women in engineering and scientific careers. If you work in science or engineering and would like to sit on our panel, get involved in the conversation on twitter, or come along to our evening event, please get in touch by [emailing us](#)

There are many ways in which you can give a little back, from providing a career profile, to mentoring a student. **Details can be found [online](#) and [email us](#) if you would like to get involved.**

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## Events taking place shortly...

### School events

#### RSC Bioinorganic Award BSN Seminar by Prof. O'Halloran, Northwestern University

14/04/2014, 2pm

Lecture Theatre 101, Haworth Building (Y2), University of Birmingham

#### School Seminar by Prof. Martin Schroeder, University of Nottingham

06/05/2014 2pm

Lecture Theatre 101, Haworth Building (Y2), University of Birmingham

#### SSC Research Seminar by Dr Andrew Goodwin, University of Oxford

13/05/2014, 2pm

Lecture Theatre 203, Haworth Building (Y2), University of Birmingham

#### PTC Research Seminar by Dr Adam Kirrander, University of Edinburgh

27/05/2014, 2pm

Lecture Theatre 203, Haworth Building (Y2), University of Birmingham

**School Seminar by Prof. Veronique Gouverneur , University of Oxford**

**03/06/2014, 2pm**

Lecture Theatre 101, Haworth Building (Y2), University of Birmingham

**BSN Research Seminar by Prof. Christin Cardin, University of Reading**

**10/06/2014, 2pm**

Lecture Theatre G33, Mechanical & Civil Engineering Building (Y3), University of Birmingham

**Seminar by Prof. Eileen Ingham, University of Leeds**

**30/06/2014, 2pm**

Lecture Theatre 203, Haworth Building (Y2), University of Birmingham

**For all school events please see the events website online and feel free to attend any.**

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**College events**

**EPS Inaugural Lecture Series**

**[Professor James Tucker – “Going beyond the Molecule: The Chemistry of Connections”](#)**

**10/04/2014, 5:15-7:30pm**

Lecture Theatre 203, Haworth Building (Y2), University of Birmingham

The lecture will describe and focus on an area of science called supramolecular chemistry, which is often described as "chemistry beyond the molecule". Supramolecular chemistry goes beyond traditional molecular chemistry, which largely focuses on how individual molecules are made, to focus on what a molecule can do once it is made. In particular it concerns how molecules interact with one another and how an understanding of these so-called intermolecular interactions can lead to ordered assemblies, controllable functionality and the mimicry of biological systems.

**For more information on other lectures in the EPS Inaugural Lecture Series please visit [www.birmingham.ac.uk/eps/inaugural](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/eps/inaugural)**

**British Science Festival Event**

**Details to be confirmed**

Keep a look-out here as for more information on how we'll be celebrating the British Science Festival at the university. More information to follow soon!

### [National Women in Engineering Day](#)

23/06/2014

#### **Details to be confirmed**

On 23<sup>rd</sup> June the EPS Community will be celebrating the achievements of women in the field of engineering as part of the first National Women in Engineering Day (NWED). Keep a look-out here as for more information on our plans for the day!

### [EPS reunion](#)

14/06/2014

#### **College of Engineering & Physical Sciences, Edgbaston Campus**

As a graduate of one of the nine schools in the [College of Engineering & Physical Sciences](#) (EPS), you are invited back to campus on 14 June 2014 for a Summer Reunion to get together with your fellow alumni to celebrate your experiences, accomplishments and friendships at the University of Birmingham.

To book your place, please follow the online registration link below or download the appropriate booking form and return by post, fax or email. <http://bhamalumni.org/eventregistration>

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## **University events**

### [Hong Kong Alumni Gathering](#)

02/04/2014, 7-9pm

Shore 3rd Floor, The L Place, 137-141 Queens's Road, Central Hong Kong

### [Melbourne Alumni Gathering](#)

10/04/2014, 6:30-9pm

Seasons Botanic Gardens Hotel, Orient East Bar and Restaurant, 348 St Kilda Road, Melbourne VIC 3004

### [Fab 'n' Refresh](#)

26/04/2014, 10pm

Joe's Bar, Guild of Students, University of Birmingham

### [Sydney Alumni Gathering](#)

29/04/2014, 7-9pm

The Zeta Br, Level 4, 488 George Street, Hilton, Sydney, Australia

## [Brisbane Alumni Gathering](#)

Pig 'N' Whistle Riverside, 123 Eagle Street, Brisbane, Australia

## [Alumni Sports Day](#)

14/06/2014, 9am-5pm

University of Birmingham

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## Do we have the right details for you?

please visit [your.bham](#) or email [alumnioffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:alumnioffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk).

**You have received this email from the University of Birmingham because we believe that it is relevant and of interest to you.** If you would like to opt-out of receiving information from your College, School or Department by email, please opt-out by visiting [your.bham](#), emailing [alumnioffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:alumnioffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk), or telephoning +44 (0)121 414 2773 / 2744 / 4724. In order to further tailor the communication we send, all emails are tracked and processed; further information regarding our use of data, is available by looking at our [data protection statement](#)