In this Issue:

New conference/hospitality system
Wireless networking
New staff courses
e:Vision
From the Editor

The photos on the cover show the newly refurbished study areas in Langwith College (L/050) and the Morrell Library (R/113). As announced in the last issue of Keynotes, the work took place over the Easter vacation, and both rooms now offer Pentium 4 PCs with 3Ghz CPU, 512Mb memory, LCD TFT screens, CD writers and accessible USB ports.

The YIMS programme continues to introduce new tools to the University. On page 2, Geoff Houlton introduces Kinetics, the new conference and hospitality management system, while on page 3 Jenny Smailes writes about the launch of e:Vision, which gives students access to their own student record.

Provision of networking facilities continues to expand, with the planned installation of SNS connections in Fairfax House, and the creation of wireless access points in a number of locations across campus. Turn to page 1 for more details.

Joanne Casey

Contents

News in Brief
- Expansion of SNS to Fairfax House 1
- Wireless networking 1
- New staff training courses 1
- Air conditioning 1
- May bank holidays 1
- Iliad for University 1

News
- Kinetics: new conference/hospitality system 2
- e:Vision goes live 3
- Connection to UKLight approved 3
- Review of the University web site 4
- Classroom availability 4
- Sophos Anti-Virus updates 4

Keynotes on the web

Back copies of Keynotes can be found at:
www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/offdocs/keynotes/
New staff training courses

Susanne Hodges

Computing Service is piloting three short, themed, lunchtime training courses. The first of these, 'Migrating to Office XP' took place on Thursday, 21 April. 'Using Outlook Effectively' and 'Creating and Managing Adobe .pdf Files' will run on Monday 17 May and Friday 16 June respectively, from 12.30 - 1.15pm in Wentworth Staff Training Room, W/218.

The pilots will be monitored and evaluated and, if successful, will be integrated into our training schedule, which can be accessed from: www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/training/course.htm.

Further lunchtime themes are being considered for development. Please remember to look at our web pages for updates.

Air conditioning

Brian Souter

Additional air conditioning equipment has been installed in the Computer Room over Easter. The new plant offers much needed redundancy working alongside the old air conditioning system that was installed in 1986; it also provides the opportunity to turn off the old system for longer periods of maintenance.

May bank holidays

The Computing Service building will be closed on both of the two May bank holidays: May Day (2 May) and the Spring Bank Holiday (30 May). All services will be available as usual outside normal hours, but access to the PC rooms will be subject to College opening hours. The Information Desk will be closed and no staff will be on duty to attend to faults.

Expansion of SNS to Fairfax House

Robert Demaine

Information Committee has given its approval to proceed with the connection to the campus network of Fairfax House, the University residence located at 99 Heslington Road. Subject to the necessary permission being granted by the landlord a total of 92 bedrooms will be cabled, giving students resident in Fairfax House the opportunity to sign up to the Student Network Service (SNS) on the same basis as those living on campus.

IIiad for University

Susanne Hodges

A proposal that IIiad for University should be provided free of charge at the point of delivery was recently put before the University’s Information Committee. The proposal was accepted and, from the start of the academic year 2005/06, all incoming students will be able to participate in the programme free of charge.

Wireless networking via the Network Access Service

Ben Thompson

Wireless networking on campus is now available in many areas as part of the redesigned Network Access Service (NAS). The NAS allows any member of the university to access selected network resources via a wireless or wired connection, as well as from off site. More information can be found on the NAS web pages at: www.nas.york.ac.uk.

We are continuing to steadily roll out wireless access points across campus, giving network coverage in many bars and open areas as well as in departments. Wireless NAS can now be used in the following open locations:

- The JBM Library (1st Floor)
- The Roger Kirk Centre
- Langwith Library
- Goodricke Dining Hall
- Goodricke Bar
- Physics Concourse
- Halifax Bar (JJ’s)
- Alcuin Bar (B Henry’s)
- Vanbrugh Bar
- Vanbrugh Dining Hall
- Wentworth Bar and Dining area

Wired connections are currently available at:

- The JBM Library (1st Floor)
- Wentworth (W/202)
- Derwent (D/016)

The NAS currently has 278 registered users.

All NAS service passwords are now synchronised with Computing Service user accounts. Any user wishing to update their Computing Service password will find that their NAS password is now changed automatically. The Computing Service password management page can be found on the Electronic InfoDesk at: www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/edesk/.
A new Conference Booking, or “Hospitality Management” system has recently been introduced. Called “Kinetics”, this software package is firmly established in the H.E. sector, and is used to run the conference business at a number of other institutions e.g. University of Warwick and University of Kent. It replaces in-house software reliant on the Alpha servers and Cobol/Powerhouse technologies which are being decommissioned later this year.

Introduced as part of the YIMS Programme, the system enables the wide range of DoFM staff involved in running conferences to access a comprehensive central database. These staff include: conference office, porters, catering, environmental services, audio-visual etc and a key strength of the new system is its logical and straight-forward graphical user interface.

For the technically minded, Kinetics is based on a Sql Server database, with a Delphi client and BDE/ODBC connectivity. Registered users are able to install the client over the Windows 2000 network and a checksum algorithm ensures that only up-to-date client versions can access the central database.

In addition to running the conference business through the Easter and Summer conference seasons, the system will also support guest room bookings, bed & breakfast bookings, summer holiday lets, student summer lets and the internal catering operation known as ‘Cucina’.

Although the system is initially running ‘stand-alone’, over the coming months a range of interfaces will be developed with the Agresso finance system and new Facilities Management system ‘Planon’ (due to go live in the summer). One benefit of this integration will be the ability for staff involved in conference booking, room booking, timetabling and student accommodation booking to view a single database of all usage of University space – thereby ensuring the optimum use of facilities.
On 17 March e:Vision was made available to all registered students.

What is e:Vision?

The e:Vision system provides limited access to the SITS student record system. SITS holds details of the University’s current and former students and of applications for study. e:Vision is intended to broaden access to the information in the student record system in an easy-to-use manner, initially for current students. e:Vision allows the user to interact directly with the database, so changes made there will be recorded in the main student records system. The system is available to all registered students at the University, for whom the following functions are available:

- view e:Vision messages
- view own basic details held on the student record
- view own module choices for the current academic year (taught course students only)
- view thesis details (research students only)
- change own address records

During the course of 2005, further functions will become available. It is intended that returning students registering in April, July and October 2005 will be able to do this via e:Vision. Access to student information for academic staff, on-line application for study and other developments will follow afterwards.

Initial usage has been encouraging with over 3,300 hits in the first week, over 25% of all undergraduates logging on. The ability to amend address details is proving popular. Student feedback has been positive: “this is a great idea and I’m pleased someone’s finally given us access to our personal information” and “I think the fact that you have introduced internet-based access to student information is an excellent idea! Great work on the e-Vision initiative so far!!"

Connection to UKLight approved

Rob Fletcher

An application to JISC for a connection to the next generation of networking (UKLight) has been approved. Applications were sought which would make novel use of and stress the network facilities. In part this is to enable the network designers and engineers to provide such facilities when this new network infrastructure becomes SuperJANET-5.

The proposal was to connect systems in the Music Department with peer group researchers similarly linked on a point-to-point basis, in order to facilitate collaborate composition, near real-time data processing and transfer of multiple media. The initial connections would be at 1Gb/s.

The initial connections are proposed to be between researchers in York, Birmingham University (BEAST) and Northwestern (Chicago).

UKLight is connected to the other “light” networks, e.g. STARLight in the USA, NetherLight in Europe and so on. See [www.uklight.ac.uk/](http://www.uklight.ac.uk/) for more details and [www.startap.net/starlight/NETWORKS/](http://www.startap.net/starlight/NETWORKS/) for the connection possibilities.

Now we have approval to use this network, other departments will be allowed to connect (subject to project approval from the UKLight TAG).

We are now seeking the funds to bring two 1Gb/s UKLight channels to York. (Approximately 15k for equipment on YHMAN, 2k in the Computing Service and around 2k per user department which requires connectivity).
Implementation has commenced of the infrastructure and testing arrangements for the “next generation” 4.5 and 5.0 Versions of Sophos for Windows and Mac OS X 10.2+. These platforms’ 3.9x versions will not be maintained and supported by Sophos after 28 February 2006.

The new versions can only be updated from a Central Installation Directory (CID) updated by Sophos’s Enterprise Manager. This will replace local administrators’ monthly downloads of the files containing the new program versions, and local scripts to add the individual virus identities, released daily to detect newly discovered viruses, to CIDs.

Other features of the new versions include:-

- **Genotype virus detection technology** protecting against “unidentified fast-moving viruses”
- **End-user quarantine management** to ease virus disinfection
- **Decision Caching technology** to optimise virus scanning performance and for the administrator via the new Enterprise Console
- Application of virus policies to groups of PCs and management by exception of, for example, unprotected PCs

Full implementation locally should allow remote and home users to update easily from a new separate CID with a local web address or possibly from Sophos directly.

Users of other platform versions (UNIX, Netware and Mac OS 8 and 9) are not directly affected, but administrators may choose to take advantage of the new arrangements to update systems from a new CID for their platform version which is updated by Enterprise Manager.

More details will be given as soon as further practical implications of arrangements are worked out and full testing has been completed.
Contacting the Computing Service

Computing Service
University of York
Heslington
YORK YO10 5DD

Telephone: (01904) 433800
Direct dial: (01904) 43 followed by ext no.
Fax: (01904) 433740
Email: infodesk@york.ac.uk

www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/

Information Desk

The Information Desk is your first point of contact with the Computing Service
Telephone: ext 3838
Email: infodesk
Open from 9am to 5.15pm Monday to Thursday, and 9am to 4.15pm Friday (may be closed for training Wednesdays 2pm-3pm), for problem solving, advice and information, fault reporting, network connections, file restoration, sales, course bookings and user registration.

Computing Service Staff

Director: Mike Jinks 3801 kmj1
Departmental Secretary: Lorraine Moor 3801 lsm1
Head of Infrastructure: Robert Demaine 3808 rdl1
Head of Information Systems: Kay Mills-Hicks 2101 kmh8
Head of Support Services: David Surtees 3803 dps4
Operations Manager: Brian Souter 3814 bs1
Information Officer: Joanne Casey 3805 jmc8

Kashif Amin 3817 ka14
Gavin Atkinson 3738 ga9
Amanda Bacon 3802 agb12
Sue Bolton 2102 sbj28
David Broom 3229 db10
Mike Bruenell 3811 pmb1
John Byrne 3812 jcb1
Michael Clark 3745 mpc3
Arthur Clune 3129 acj22
Steve Downes 3741 sd21
Ken Finch 4452 kf1
Rob Fletcher 3816 rfp1
Iain Ford 3894 ig500
Kevin Gardner 3739 pkg4
Chris Gowland 3823 cg1
Dan Granville 3819 dsg2
Sarah Hall 3827 seh11
Peter Hall 3806 pjh1
John Hawes 4347 jeh11
Susanne Hodges 3839 sh32
Matt Holmes 3820 mjh25
Geoff Houlton 2100 gph2
John Hutchinson 3898 jh57
Gavin Jones 3597 gj500

Chris Kilgour 4454 crhk1
Fergus McGlynn 3822 fam6
John Marsden 3832 jpm1
John Mason 3813 jrm13
Darren Miller 3815 dm26
Eleanor Morrison 3742 emm502
Darren Munday 3821 dam6
Colin Noble 1747 cdn1
Nicola Normandale 4695 ncn1
Phil O’Connell 3825 pao1
Heather Payne 3800 hp501
Aimee Phillips 3897 amp11
Tamsyn Quormby 4346 tq1
Chris Reece 3807 car7
Sam Scott 3817 svs2
Daniel Shelton 4349 ds23
Jenny Smiales 4455 jj5
Philip Smiales 3833 pjs1
Andrew Smith 3809 abs4
Ben Thompson 3230 bt4
Pete Turnbull 3804 pnt1
Sam Vines 3749 sccv1
Jonathan Wheeler 3818 jdw5