

Overview Newsletter

The newsletter for all staff

May 2010



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

[Home>](#)

University News



University Helps Write a New Chapter in Sheffield's Story

By engaging with citizens and communities within the city, students and Sheffielders are using an exciting blend of techniques and media to give a voice to people whose stories are rarely heard. The result, to be showcased in a public exhibition in June, will be a collection or web of fragments, stories, and representations, or, to use a phrase from the philosopher Paul Ricoeur, "a cloth woven of stories told".

The idea for Storying Sheffield was developed in the School of English in response to the work of the University's [Inclusive Learning and Teaching Project](#) (ILT). Brendan Stone, a teacher in the School of English, devised the initial basis of the project and has worked closely on its development with Juliet Storey (ILT & LeTS).

Half of the participants on Storying Sheffield are second-year undergraduates studying for a degree in English Literature. Storying Sheffield is an optional module which they can take as part of their degree. The rest of the participants are people from the city who generally have no background in HE, and who come from groups which have tended to be socially excluded. Partly because Brendan Stone is a Governor to the Sheffield Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust (SHSC) and has research and other interests in the field of mental health, it was decided that Storying Sheffield would work with long-term users of mental health services. There has been a very enthusiastic response to the project both from individuals and from clinicians on behalf of clients. Requests for involvement have been received from a large number of people to the extent that the project has not been able to accommodate all those who have applied to join.

The course, which has been running throughout the Spring Semester, centres on the creation of new narrative artefacts about everyday life in Sheffield. It has comprised a mixture of academic sessions and workshops in which participants work together on creating representations of contemporary life in Sheffield. These include video, digital art, text, sound files, images, and objects. As well as creating their own narrative representations, undergraduates work as facilitators and organisers and staff working on the project report that they have excelled in these roles.

A public exhibition of creative work from the project is being held on Friday 11 June from 10am in the Jessop West Exhibition Space. This will be a unique opportunity to observe and interact with the creative work of participants, and to appreciate a wide range of unique artefacts and stories drawn from the rich and diverse experiences of Sheffield people. At 2pm a formal showcase event will present the work from the project and tell the story of its genesis and development.

To find out more about the project you can check out [the website](#).

In this issue

■ University News

[First Ever Bob Boucher Scholarships Awarded](#)

[Educators Awarded by Students](#)

[Driving Down Emissions on Campus](#)

[HR's Marathon Man](#)

[University Awards the Enterprising Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow](#)

[University Media Stars Shine](#)

[Not Even Volcanic Ash Can Stop AV and CICS](#)

[Sheffield SIFE Goes Global](#)

[University Helps Write a New Chapter in Sheffield's Story](#)

[Simcyp Wins Queens Award](#)

[New UOffers and Discounts for staff](#)

■ Features

[Department Focus](#)

[The Third Degree](#)

[How Did I Get Here?](#)

[Where Are They Now?](#)

■ Events & Announcements

[Introduction to uSpace Courses](#)

[Theo's Games](#)

■ Adverts

[Small Adverts](#)

■ About Overview

[It's Amazing How Wrong people Can Be](#)

Useful links

[Pass on to a Colleague>](#)

[Submit Item>](#)

[Give Feedback>](#)

[Contacts>](#)

[Print all>](#)

Archive

[Overview May 2009](#)

[Overview June 2009](#)

	<p><u>Overview August 2009</u></p> <p><u>Overview September 2009</u></p> <p><u>Overview October 2009</u></p> <p><u>Overview November 2009</u></p> <p><u>Overview December 2009</u></p> <p><u>Overview January 2010</u></p> <p><u>Overview February 2010</u></p> <p><u>Overview March 2010</u></p> <p><u>Overview April 2010</u></p>
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