



 *terra nostra*

Issue 2  
Semester 1 - 2017/18

*the magazine of the*  
**School of Geography**  
&  
**Sustainable Development**



University of  
St Andrews | FOUNDED  
1413

# Welcome from the Head of School

## Professor Bill Austin



**W**elcome to the second issue of the School of Geography & Sustainable Development's magazine *Terra Nostra*, which translates as 'Our Earth' and was suggested as the new title by our long-term friend and alumnus, Tony Edwards.

How appropriate then that this issue should highlight the work of our staff and students who are engaged in Sustainable Development.

This year we are celebrating ten years of the interdisciplinary degree in Sustainable Development. Over the past decade the University has graduated 435 successful alumni in Sustainable Development (263 undergraduates, 167 taught postgraduates and five PhD research students) and our recent growth as a School has reflected a growing number of international students who are drawn to study sustainability here at St Andrews; please do take a moment to read the piece 'Changing the World' by Dr Rehema White and Dr Charles Warren in this issue.



*Rector (and alumna) Catherine Stihler MEP cutting the Sustainable Development 10th anniversary cake*

Next semester, coinciding with the University's Annual Alumni Festival Weekend (13–15 April, 2018), staff and students from the School will be arranging a series of scheduled events. This includes a staff table at the formal dinner in Lower College Hall, preceded by a pre-dinner drinks reception hosted by the School.

We also hope to arrange a tree-planting event in collaboration with our Transition group on the Sunday, with a picnic lunch, and an event to celebrate the further development of our Woodland Project. We would be delighted to welcome any alumni, friends and family to this special tenth anniversary for Sustainable Development and to help celebrate our first, successful year as a new School.

St Andrews alumni continue to shape our past, present and future. At the start of this semester, we were delighted to welcome 'home' alumni to our careers event – they came, as alumni before have done for many years, to inspire and encourage our own students as they contemplate the transition from University to the wider world beyond St Andrews. Please let us know if this is something you might support yourself in the future – we would be very pleased to hear from you.

As we approach the end of the first semester, the School has been contributing to the University's strategic plan for the next five years, a process which will continue well into the New Year. Our student numbers continue to grow, particularly in our highly-successful and expanding portfolio of taught postgraduate degrees, and we remain committed to delivering research that is visible on the global stage. At the same time, our academic staff continue to provide research-led teaching that creates transformative experiences for our students. Successfully launched this academic year, our offer to provide core elements of student fieldwork at no additional cost beyond tuition fees remains a key part of our support to students. We will also continue to develop computing and laboratory facilities with help from the University, our alumni and a growing portfolio of highly competitive external research grant funding.

Finally, I would like to take the opportunity to thank my colleagues for their outstanding work and their support of our students. This year our School Cartographer and alumnus, Mr Graeme Sandeman celebrated 40 years of service within Geography; Graeme's cartographic contribution to research and teaching is exemplary. Approaching the end of a highly compressed semester one (Martinmas) 2017, we recently celebrated Winter graduation with many of our postgraduate students returning to St Andrews from across the globe – how wonderful to hear last year's MSc student class representative acknowledge that St Andrews really is the best University in the world!

**Professor Bill Austin**  
Head of School



## Why Geography? Michael Palin



**O**n 23 June 2017 author, broadcaster and comedian Michael Palin was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the University of St Andrews. The third Python to receive such an accolade – following former Rector John Cleese and Honorary Doctor of Letters Terry Jones – Palin is first to be lauded by the SGSD. Here we reflect on the unique appeal of a man who has inspired millions to learn more about the world through his books and television programmes – and made us smile whilst he did it.



**Michael Palin** first caught the public eye as a writer and comedian with *Monty Python*, author and performer of such timeless classics as ‘The Lumberjack Song’. With a degree in History and an aptitude for ‘prattling about’, he wasn’t perhaps the

obvious choice as a presenter for travel programmes – or for an honorary degree in Geography. But in the late 1970s a BBC producer, hearing Palin wax lyrical about trains, wooed him into presenting *Great Railway Journeys* with the promise of breath-taking trips through the Rockies, Brazil and Russia. Palin wound up presenting the London to Kyle of Lochalsh segment of the programme, but seven years later the BBC came calling again, this time with the promise of ‘a new kind of documentary’: to recreate Jules Verne’s epic *Around the World in 80 Days*. Although Palin remarks that he was really ‘making it up as we went along’, the programme was wildly popular and really excited people with its mix of travel, ‘strange meals and dreadful toilets’.



It was when Palin was aboard a Gujarati fishing boat taking him from Dubai to Bombay, that his particular brand of exploration and presenting crystallised into a life-changing ethos. Here Palin suffered from the vicissitudes of ‘traveller’s tummy’, necessitating numerous trips to the makeshift toilet at the ship’s stern. It was at this point that Palin had to address question at the heart of his presenting: who was he supposed to be? An actor, a Phileas Fogg character, a comedian?



The answer is, he realises, simply ‘himself’: ‘there is no point in pretending to be someone else – ask stupid questions, and don’t worry about being a fool’. It’s a good motto for any geographer: be yourself and don’t be afraid to tackle the questions that no-one else has thought to ask.

Thus began a career that would see him visit every continent in the world and at least 96 countries. Little Diomed Island in the Bering Straights, the Khyber Pass, the South Pole, Djenné’s Great Mosque – Palin has trotted the globe and taken us with him. At 74, Palin is still writing and exploring, and is currently working on a book about HMS Erebus. Whilst best-known as one of the vessels on the ill-fated Franklin expedition, Palin wants to tell the story of the ship’s tremendously successful four-year trip to the Antarctic which saw the discovery of the Ross Ice Shelf and Mount Erebus by James Clark Ross and facilitated Joseph Hooker’s first botanical expedition.

The night before receiving his doctorate, Palin defended Geography against the mockers to a packed Younger Hall. Geography isn’t just ‘a weird specialisation for people who put their shoes on the wrong feet’: it is for everyone, ‘because it affects every aspect of our lives from food to transport and water to weather’. **‘Geography is the subject that holds the key to our future’** said Palin – and here in the SGSD we couldn’t agree more.

*To read Professor Austin’s laureation address and Michael Palin’s response, visit*

[www.st-andrews.ac.uk/graduation/previous-graduation/graduation-2017/laureation-addresses/michael-palin/](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/graduation/previous-graduation/graduation-2017/laureation-addresses/michael-palin/)



# Changing the World the Sustainable Development honours degree

**C**limate change, declining biodiversity, energy use, social justice, natural resource depletion – these issues affect us today more than ever. The pressure to develop sustainable ways of living have never been more acute, and for the last ten years Sustainable Development students at St Andrews have been at the forefront of studying how this might be done. 2017/18 marks a decade since the first graduating cohort of SD students went through the School's doors, and here Dr Rehema White and Dr Charles Warren look back on a decade of Sustainable Development in St Andrews.

In 2005 the UN decreed that the following ten years would be a Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, and in 2006 the SD Honours course was set up as the University of St Andrews' first truly interdisciplinary undergraduate degree. Eleven schools from Geography and Geosciences to Divinity joined together to create a programme that was ground-breaking, not just here but globally – only a handful of universities worldwide then offered undergraduate SD degrees.

Although the University was committed to developing sustainably as an institution, with an Environment Team in Estates already implementing a Sustainability Strategy, the SD degree programme was set up partly in response to student demand. In the early days there was just one module in Sustainability offered in First Year; it was very popular, and students clamoured for more. Subsequently BSc and MA Honours undergraduate programmes were developed and the SD Masters courses started in 2008/9.

The unique feature of all SD programmes is the core interdisciplinary modules. Being student- and interest-led is a cornerstone of SD studies: learning is tailored to each student and their individual situation. From the beginning, SD courses have had a truly international appeal, drawing students from all over the world from Canada to Malaysia, Sierra Leone to Germany. Bringing these cultures together to explore different perspectives on SD and the world is a key strength of the programme.

SD courses have always focussed on real-world learning, both local and global – it's not just about what you learn, but how you learn it. From working with willow to understand material sustainability, to visiting Howe of Fife's Doorstep Bakery to explore ideas of community cohesion through pizza-making, studying SD has always been about more than sitting in a lecture hall. Raising eyebrows and expectations, SD staff and students embraced immersive people-focussed education, seen at the time in opposition to the more traditional learning methods associated with a 600-year old university like St Andrews.



*Willow-weaving on  
Falkland Estate*



*SD Masters students making pizza*

St Andrews has been Scotland's flagship Higher Education SD programme throughout the UN's Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

One question that has always cropped up is 'What do SD graduates do?' Our answer is that the broad range of skills that our students have gained equips them for any job associated with building a better future. But we can now also give examples from our alumni: SD graduates work in small and large businesses, in the third sector, in small specialist charities, and in global NGOs. They also work in local and national government – and we are gradually infiltrating the UN! Here in the SGSD we take great pride in knowing that this generation of SD students will continue to pursue their aspirations to make the world a better place and to contribute practically to ensuring that this happens.



*It's not just about tree-hugging  
– but sometimes it is!*

*With thanks to Dr Rehema White and Dr Charles Warren.*

## Transition and the SGSD

**T**ransition University of St Andrews (UStA) is now a thriving hub for sustainability activity in St Andrews, supporting the community in low-carbon living and practical activities for sustainable development. But did you know that it all started with a group of undergraduate SD students who wanted to make a difference? We talk to Dr Ellsworth-Krebs, one of the founding members of Transition UStA and now a Lecturer in the SGSD, about how it all began.



**transition**  
university of st andrews

**The Transition movement** started in Totnes in 2006 as a grass-roots initiative to enable communities to live sustainably and build resilience through smarter travel, zero waste, local food, and developing knowledge and skills for better living. Three years later the movement had

spread across the UK, creating a network of Transition Towns and Universities from Exeter to Edinburgh. But it was a second-year SD lecture on Transition Towns by Dr Rehema White which got the ball rolling here: students were so inspired by what they heard that they determined to bring Transition to St Andrews.

Katherine Ellsworth-Krebs was one of those students. Together a team of eight gradually built a business case for Transition in St Andrews, and in 2010, with support from Dr Rehema White, David Stutchfield in Estates and Professor Jan Bebbington in Management, they put together a grant application to the Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund, an initiative for communities to lower their carbon footprint. In 2011 the group was awarded £90,000 to develop Transition UStA.



What began as a student dream had become a hard-cash reality – to date, the group has brought in nearly £1 million of investment into the community for sustainability projects. Katherine and her team set up a steering group of both university staff and students, and began to interview and appoint staff to work for Transition UStA. Many are still involved today – for example, Alistair Macleod began work as Manager of Transition in 2012, and continues to work tirelessly to support its projects.



Many of Transition UStA's hallmark programmes in St Andrews have been going since the project's inception. Some even predate it: St AndRe-Use, where freshers can pick up useful items donated by other students, was set up in 2009. The scheme proved popular and continues to this day, now supported by Transition. During the Big Give Away event in Orientation Week this year, 2864 kg of stuff was saved from landfill and overall these items were considered to be worth £26, 236.

Another popular and long-running scheme has been the Community Gardens, first set up at the Observatory by just one student. Now there is a network of fourteen edible gardens across St Andrews, which produce everything from beans to kale and strawberries to apples, grown by volunteers and available for free to local residents. Transition also runs its own Shop, The Tree, a not-for-profit project that sells local food readily available at affordable prices.

Transition UStA only came about through the creativity, perseverance and hard work of students, many from the SGSD, supported by staff across the university. The School is incredibly proud of what Transition UStA has achieved.

*To get involved in Transition St Andrews  
as a gardener, cyclist, shopper, or volunteer visit*

[www.transitionsta.org](http://www.transitionsta.org)



## Chevening Award for Transition Volunteer

**I**n June 2017 SD student Benjamin Ong was awarded the prestigious ‘Green Volunteer of the Year Award’ at an awards ceremony at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. In 2016/17 Cheveners contributed more than 3,000 hours of volunteering in the UK; Benjamin used his time to volunteer for Transition St Andrews, having previously been involved in the sustainability movement at the University of Malaya.

Benjamin was Transition’s first Mycorrhizae (pronounced “my-co-RYE-zee”), a position created to improve communication between Transition’s many sub-projects and to stimulate volunteer participation. Benjamin coordinated a weekly newsletter and acted as a point of contact for new volunteers. Named after the relationship between tree roots and fungi that helps to improve nutrient absorption by the tree, the Mycorrhizae helps “nourish” Transition from the grassroots up.

We catch up with Benjamin to find out more.



### What difference does volunteering make?

Volunteering challenges the power systems of the world because it requires a giving of yourself, of your time and energy, without the usual promises of worldly compensation. We scholars often think of what we can get out of our time here, which is all well and fine, but I believe it is also worth thinking about what we can give back. The value of our time here lies not only in what we take with us, but also in what we leave behind.



### How did your environmental volunteering fit with your SD studies?

In a world where sustainability is the new buzzword, I believe we need to look beyond the ‘greenwash’ and media slogans. Transition was a key factor in my decision to study Sustainable Development here in St Andrews, as it seemed a good opportunity to mix theory with practice. The University of St Andrews aspires to become the first carbon-neutral university in the UK, and Transition is, to my mind, a solid step in that direction.

### What did you learn from the experience?

I share Transition’s view that addressing the world’s challenges calls for concerted effort and collaboration at a local scale. Transition is a small organisation, and we volunteers are small people. But this is the big idea: that change can only happen across the globe if we first look in our own backyards.

*This article is a shortened version of a longer piece which appeared here:*

[www.chevening.org/scholars/blog/2017/scholar-in-the-spotlight-benjamin-ong](http://www.chevening.org/scholars/blog/2017/scholar-in-the-spotlight-benjamin-ong)



## School News

### SGSD recruiting overseas

**T**he School is actively involved in recruiting high-calibre international students and cultivating alumni networks overseas. Dr Charles Warren, the School's Admissions Officer, has travelled to South Africa and India this year, representing the university at recruitment fairs, doing presentations at schools, collaborating with college counsellors, and meeting with alumni. Sustainable Development has been a particular emphasis, and our efforts seem to be bearing fruit; this year's intake of 30 SD freshers includes no fewer than 18 from countries outside Europe. For the first time this year, SGSD is offering five scholarships for international students, and Charles will be trialling Skype interviews with well-qualified SD applicants from overseas in an effort to enhance conversion rates.

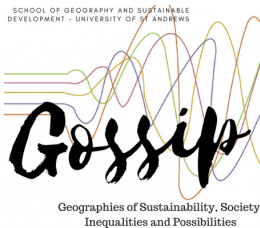
*To find out more about Sustainable Development programmes and scholarships on offer visit our subject web page:*

[www.st-andrews.ac.uk/subjects/sustainable-development/](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/subjects/sustainable-development/)

*Charles in a rickshaw accompanied by Linda Gibson of the Admissions Office.*



### Gossip research group



**2**017 saw the foundation of a new research group within the School – **GOSSIP**. Formed from staff and students with compatible interests outside the SGSD's existing research group focus areas, the name 'Gossip' is an acronym for Geographies of Sustainability, Society, Inequalities and Possibilities. Expressing the interdisciplinary composition of the group and our concerns for issues of social equity, activism, justice and positive change, the deliberately playful name is a way to unsettle knowingly-sophisticated and inaccessible traditions in academic knowledge-making, reflecting the group's commitment to co-producing new understandings with groups outside the University. It is also a homage to the feminist strategy of 're-claiming' language and playing on possibilities for multiple interpretations. Meanwhile the 'possibilities'

indicates an aspiration to cross boundaries and continually explore new ways of thinking and doing, both inside and outside the academy. The group's logo of the five coloured waves symbolises the ethic of listening to different frequencies and voices, attending to harmonies and discords between them.

**GOSSIP** has an action packed set of activities lined up for 2017/18. A new seminar series was launched in October with an IPower presentation by Canadian feminist Geographer Audrey Kobayashi, former President of the Association of American Geographers and leading anti-racist advocate. 'Data club', an opportunity for early career staff and postgraduate to experiment in analysing qualitative data collectively, will be joined by 'Theory Club' for bite-size conversations for everyone on the 'hows, whys and wherefores' of different ways of thinking. The School's Writer in Residence, Esther Rutter, and artist-academic Emilia Ferraro, will also be bringing new agendas around geography, sustainable development and creative practice to the group. It looks set to be an exciting year for GOSSIPers and their friends.



*With thanks to Dr Benet Reid and Professor Nina Laurie.*

*Having a GOSSIP..*





**T**he School is pleased to welcome several new colleagues joining us for the new academic year in 2017 and bid farewell to some who are leaving for pastures new.

**Dr Carola Braun**



Carola is an Environmental Economist, with research interests in Climate Policy and Climate Economics. Her post as Associate Lecturer is split between the School of Geography & Sustainable Development and School of Economics & Finance. She came to St Andrews in 2016 after completing her PhD in Kiel, Germany.

**Dr Hannah Fitzpatrick**



Hannah comes to the SGSD from the University of Aberdeen, where she taught in the Department of Geography and Environment. A historical and political geographer with a background in South Asian studies and anthropology in addition to geography, Hannah also enjoys baking, collecting antique maps, and taking photographs.

**Dr Laura Prazeres**

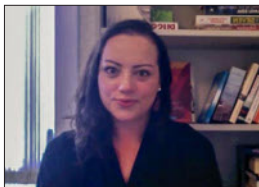


Laura returns to the School as an Associate Lecturer. She was previously a postdoctoral researcher at Dundee working on a DFID-funded project that looks at youth transitions in protracted crisis. Laura's research and teaching focuses on migration, mobility, international study, and home and belonging.

**Farewell and thank you**

This semester we bid farewell to Associate Lecturer Dr Joe Crawford and Professor Nick Hanley. Joe leaves St Andrews for the University of Sheffield, and Nick is moving to the University of Glasgow's Institute of Biodiversity, Animal Health and Comparative Medicine. We also say a fond farewell to Dr Alan Marshall, who heads over the Firth of Forth to work at the University of Edinburgh, and thank all of them for their work here in the SGSD.

**Super-star Sharon**



Congratulations to **Dr Sharon Leahy**, head of Fourth Year Geography and the School's Ethics Chair, on her appointment as Pro-Dean (Science Curriculum). This welcome news comes hot on the heels of her recent teaching excellence award; Sharon won the Students Association's Outstanding Teacher Award in April 2017. Nominated by students, the award recognises Sharon's commitment and dedication in supporting St Andrews students through their studies. Double congratulations and thanks to Sharon for her continuing fantastic work.

**Colin Ballantyne elected FBSG and FGS**

**Emeritus Professor Colin Ballantyne** has been elected Fellow of the British Society for Geomorphology (FBSG) in recognition of an outstanding contribution to geomorphological research. He received Fellowship formally at the annual dinner of the Society at the University of Hull in September, and joins a very select group of fewer than fifty geomorphologists who have received this accolade. As recipient of the Lyell Medal of the Geological Society in 2015, he has also been elected Fellow of that Society (FGS). Colin's latest book *Periglacial Geomorphology* (Wiley-Blackwell) will be published later this year.





## Lecturer at Length

### Dr Katherine Keenan



**I**n August 2017 Dr Katherine Keenan joined the SGSD as a Lecturer in Population Geography/Demography from the London School of Economics. With a background in Social Anthropology and Epidemiology, Katy's work combines qualitative and quantitative methods to place studies within their broader social and historical context. Katy also supports the work of Marie Stopes International, helping to shape the charity's policy on reproductive rights. We catch up with Katy to find out more about what inspires her work and what she hopes to work on here in St Andrews.

**Katy, much of your research is on the impact of alcohol on communities. What drew you to this area of study?**

Growing up as part of an Irish-heritage community, heavy drinking was an accepted part of family life – as a child, my parents thought nothing of taking me to the pub. It's less socially acceptable to do that now. I wanted to understand why this relationship with the bottle was so important in some cultures, and spent some of my PhD in the Urals (*pictured below*), gathering data on drinking to excess. Russian men drink heavily, much more than women – and that's completely socially acceptable. There is also a pretty striking correlation between heavy drinking and early mortality: I wanted to understand why society doesn't make this type of dangerous health behaviour taboo when it claims the lives of so many.

**You also work as a consultant for Marie Stopes International – tell us more about that.**

My work is to analyse data on maternal health in countries where effective contraception is difficult to access. These findings directly inform the charity's activities, helping women in Bangladesh and sub-Saharan Africa to access safe family planning. It brings me tremendous satisfaction: this work has a real, direct and positive impact on the lives of some of the world's poorest women.

**What are you looking forward to about being part of the St Andrews community?**

One interest I have is in studying the impact parental drinking has on family processes and children's development, and I am keen to work with colleagues in the Medical School who are already conducting research in similar fields. Having a better quality of life was another important motivation for moving to St Andrews. My husband and I have a young son – in fact, we met climbing Ben Nevis. So our move to Scotland has brought our life full-circle!



## Just for Fun

**Thank you** to everyone who sent in suggestions for the SGSD's magazine. The name *Terra Nostra*, Latin for 'Our Earth', was the brainchild of long-term friend of the School, Tony Edwards.

Congratulations to everyone who correctly identified the inspiration for HoS Professor Bill Austin and Dr Richard Streeter's photograph in last semester's issue. They were recreating the famous Reykjavik Summit meeting between U.S. President Ronald Reagan and General Secretary of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev, on the steps of the former French Consulate in Reykjavik in 1986.

The connection between the Lake District and the journal *Nature* is through its name. Lakeland poet William Wordsworth was the author of many poems about the relationship between man and the natural world, and was the first person to publically call for the creation of what we now call national parks. *Nature's* founding editor Norman Lockyear used Wordsworth's line 'To the solid ground of nature trusts the Mind that builds for aye' on the journal's first masthead in November 1869.



## Alumni News

### Maya receives the Principal's Medal

**I**n June 2017 Maya Beit-Arie received not only a First Class Master of Arts degree in Geography and Social Anthropology, but also the Principal's Medal. The Medal recognises students who display exceptional endeavour and achievement during their time at St Andrews. The award is open to final-year undergraduates, and to postgraduates in any discipline.

As many of you may know, Maya made an outstanding academic and personal impact throughout her four years in the SGSD. Maya's dedication to developing and honing her research skills along with her gift for well-argued and impassioned debate have made her an inspiration to her peers and a valued member of this School. Alongside her studies she has given many hours in service to the University community. Maya has a truly international outlook, able to converse in Hebrew and Spanish, and get by in Arabic and Kiswahili. She has volunteered in Tanzania, carried out ethnographic fieldwork in Israel for her dissertation, and served on the communications team of the St Andrews Africa Summit, a student-led initiative promoting understanding of the trends shaping African affairs. Congratulations Maya and very best wishes for what will no doubt be an exciting and international future.



*Maya receiving the Principal's Medal from Principal and Vice-Chancellor Professor Sally Mapstone during the graduation ceremony this summer.*



### Summer of Success for Alice

**J**une 2017 also saw Alice Watson awarded both the Royal Scottish Geographical Society Medal and the Miller Prize at Graduation. The RSGS Medal is awarded annually to the student with the best Honours Degree in Geography; the Miller Prize is awarded to the most distinguished student in the Faculties of Arts and Science for that year. Alice has had a truly stellar time at St Andrews, winning the MacIver Class Medal for Distinction in Geography classes for four years, along with making the Deans' List each year, and winning The Faculty of Arts Ede & Ravenscroft Prize for academic excellence in 2015. She also received the Principal's Scholarship for Academic Excellence, awarded to the fifty final year students from across the University whose grades to date are highest in their faculties. We wish Alice all the best for her MSc in Migration Studies at the University of Oxford from October 2017.





## Alumni News

### Alumni Support

**T**he wonderful generosity of our alumni continues to benefit the whole School, reflecting the strong ties between the University and its students which endure, sometimes decades after graduation from St Andrews. This giving back helps us in immeasurable ways; here we share news of two relatively recent endowments:

#### The Robertson Postgraduate Scholarship

Established in 2014 through the generosity of alumnus Cornelius (Neil) Robertson, the School now offers an annual postgraduate scholarship in Geography. Neil graduated from the Department of Geography in 1976 and through his extraordinary generosity an endowed fund was established to support postgraduate work – the very “life-blood” of our academic research culture. In its first year, for example, the fund supported Robert Macpherson through the final year of his PhD work. More recently, the Robertson Postgraduate Scholarship recipients have included Megan Carras (2015/16 start) and James Luger (2016/17 start), each receiving an annual scholarship over the three years of typical study.

#### The Elizabeth Edmead Award

Established in 2017 in memory of his late mother, Geography alumnus Nigel D.J. Edmead (1985) has very generously endowed funds to enable us to establish an annual award in support of undergraduate final-year dissertation research. Nigel said “I hope this grant will go some way to instil your continued and undoubted passion for things geographical that will, speaking from my own experience, take you off the beaten track both physically and metaphorically and challenge you technically and intellectually. I am sure my mother, a traveller herself in her younger days, would appreciate helping others achieve the same”.

This year the award has been made jointly to Georgina Paxman, for the dissertation proposed title of ‘Reconstructing the Loch Lomond Stadial Glaciers in the Kyleakin Hills, Isle of Skye’, and to Rachael Povey for her dissertation ‘Evaluating the reforestation programme in the Monteverde Region of Costa Rica, and its impacts on local communities and biodiversity.’ They both share the Elizabeth Edmead Award for 2017.

---

### Alumni Festival Weekend 2018

**J**oin us in St Andrews on 13 – 15 April for a fantastic weekend of events, including music, theatre, sports matches, an alumni debate, and a special Alumni Dinner.

The Alumni Festival Weekend gives all alumni the chance to relive their student days, meet up with old friends and make some new ones. Staff and students from the SGSD will be arranging a series of scheduled events, including a drinks reception, tree-planting event in collaboration with Transition, and time to reconnect with staff and former students at the Alumni Dinner in Lower College Hall.

Please call +44 (0)1334 467194 or email [alumni@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@st-andrews.ac.uk) to find out more and book your place.

*Details of the events to be held over the weekend are also available online:*  
[www.st-andrews.ac.uk/develop-2/alumni-festival-weekend/](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/develop-2/alumni-festival-weekend/)

**We look forward to welcoming you back to St Andrews!**



## The Final Say

### Professor Tim Jackson



**T**im Jackson is Professor of Sustainable Development at the University of Surrey and Director of the Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity – and also finds the time to be an award-winning playwright. In April he returned to St Andrews, having finished his PhD in Physics here in 1986, to give a talk on the topic of his 2009 book, *Prosperity without Growth*. Sustainable Development student Nathan Jones has a few questions for him.

#### What, for you, is Sustainable Development?

For me, SD is it is the art of living well, within the limits of a finite planet. The idea that it is an art is quite important. It's not just about technology, it's about human learning, understanding ourselves, and about being creative in solutions that will deliver a sense of living well within limits.

#### In your book you criticise economic growth as the objective that most countries strive for. Why so?

For the last 60 years, increasing GDP has been the world's primary policy goal, for good or ill. The good reasons are better life chances and more flexibility (travel choices, home and lifestyle). The economics of that is interesting; income is a proxy for utility, and utility is a proxy for happiness. The thinking is that as the GDP goes up, we should all be getting happier and happier.

But research shows us that this isn't the case – in fact, quite the opposite. As you increase GDP, you increase the amount of goods and services going through the economy, and as you increase resource use, you put more and more pressure on the planet. The idea that you can keep doing that forever is flawed – and isn't making people happier.

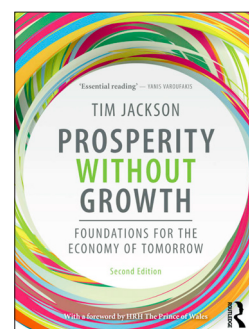
#### Could you tell us more about the economic possibilities for achieving prosperity without growth?

I propose a model where it is possible to consume less, to have less, and to live better at the same time. To have more fun with less stuff, in essence. Although it goes totally against conventional wisdom, the real challenge is to have a better life with fewer things.

#### How do you think this shift might come about, in terms of institutions and actors that might drive this change?

There's no one silver bullet. Change has to be happening everywhere, starting at the grassroots. Just as Transition St Andrews is doing here, people are changing the way they live, the way they grow their food, the way they invest. But there are limits to that strategy – often people come up against bigger institutional structures. To really effect change we need three things: grassroots investment, institutional commitment, and a sensible government that's laying down conditions for these other things to happen. And that, to me, is a realistic picture of change – there's no one thing that will magically make it happen.

If you weren't able to catch Tim's talk, you can view it here: <http://timjackson.org.uk/st-andrews>



## Contact Us

Terra Nostra is the magazine for the School of Geography & Sustainable Development, published each year. We'd love to hear from our alumni, friends and former colleagues around the world, so please get in touch using the following details:

**Head of School**, School of Geography & Sustainable Development,  
Irvine Building, University of St Andrews, North Street, St Andrews, KY16 9AL, Scotland, UK

**Email:** [gsd@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:gsd@st-andrews.ac.uk) • **Tel:** 01334 462894 • **Web:** [www.st-andrews.ac.uk/gsd](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/gsd) • **Facebook:** @StAndrewsDGSD

If you would like to **make a donation** to support the School's work then please visit: <https://sparc.st-andrews.ac.uk/giving>

To receive a digital copy of the magazine, and to save postage costs, please update your email address here:

[www.st-andrews.ac.uk/development/alumni/](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/development/alumni/)

**Editor:** Esther Rutter • **Design:** GF Sandeman

Cover photo courtesy of Lauren Sandeman (Admissions). All other images supplied by SGSD staff, the University of St Andrews and featured contributors.

The University of St Andrews is a charity registered in Scotland: No SC013532