



2009/10
Annual Fund Report



Professor Noel Lloyd CBE
Vice-Chancellor of Aberystwyth University

Dear Alumni and Friends,

This year, Aberystwyth University launched its inaugural **Annual Fund** campaign. In asking for your financial support, we hoped you would think back to your time at University and recall the way in which your experiences as a student have influenced your intellectual and personal development, as well as your career, since then.

You rose to the challenge, and **thanks to your generosity and goodwill this year's Annual Fund has been a great success. During 2009/10, over £250,000 was raised.** This means we can now achieve the aims of all our Annual Fund initiatives.

The purpose of this year's campaign was to finance modest and achievable projects that will enhance the experience of our students. The four projects that have benefitted from your generosity this year are described in the following report. We are certain that funding

these areas will help sustain the quality and vitality of student life in Aberystwyth. Equally, we feel sure that donors will derive satisfaction from knowing that they have helped ensure future generations of students will continue to thrive at Aber.

We extend our thanks for your commitment and your enduring affection for the University. Your support is especially valuable at this difficult economic time. The University represents different things to different people, but above all else it represents a community. It is this spirit which has ensured the success of this year's Annual Fund, and that will ensure its success in the future.

Professor Noel Lloyd CBE, Vice-Chancellor

Exceeding Expectations

An Aber education is about **maximising the potential of our students**, and the **Annual Fund's** first year has shown that this strength continues well beyond graduation. A greater number of our alumni, staff, Council members and other friends supported the Annual Fund at Aber in 2009/10 than supported all Welsh Universities put together in 2008/9. The participation of our alumni, in particular, is already more than four times the UK average – truly a testament to the warmth with which our former students view the University.

Over a hundred of our current students joined the telephone calling team, and all of them reported enjoying friendly and highly entertaining conversations with alumni of all ages. Quite a few also benefited through these interactions, with advice on their careers – up to and including work experience and internships – being freely offered by those receiving our calls.

More than anything else, the callers reported on the shared enjoyment of being a student at Aber, the lifelong friendships (not to mention the extraordinary number of marriages!) that had begun whilst at the University, and how little that experience had changed whether talking to an alumnus/a from the 1950s or the 1990s.

As a result of this warmth felt towards the University, the projects we announced at the start of the academic year have not only been fully funded but also implemented. Our sponsored **PhD student** arrives in September, the **IT project** is nearing completion, the **Student Hardship Fund** is now a reality and the **improvements to the Piazza** will be completed over the summer.



Part of the telephone calling team

We take no particular credit for this: it is to our supporters, young and old, rich or poor, and from all over the world, that we offer our profound thanks and recognition by listing them within this report.

We are now looking to plan for 2010/11 and an even more ambitious target reflecting the enormous progress already made. We know it is going to be a difficult few years for the whole higher education sector, but we have a firm belief that Aber, with your continued support, will flourish.

Expanding Postgraduate Opportunities

The University's Department of International Politics is built on a tradition of excellence. In the most recent Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) in 2008, the quality of the department's research ensured that it achieved the highest rating in the UK. It is essential that we have the resources to provide postgraduate opportunities to continue this outstanding track record in research.

Thanks to the generosity of our alumni and friends, this year's Annual Fund campaign has successfully established a three year **PhD studentship** for research into Environmental Politics. Your support will fund crucial study into a matter of global relevance which will have a profound effect on us and future generations.

“ We have received a diverse range of research proposals from applicants keen to examine the increasingly significant field of Environmental Politics. Topics such as climate change adaptation, deforestation in Brazil, fisheries in West Africa, and environmental security, will be of interest to policymakers and academics alike, and have global significance. This Studentship is an excellent opportunity to conduct focussed research into an under-examined, but increasingly important, area of world politics, and to develop the Department of International Politics' expertise in this field. ”

Dr Carl Death
Department of International Politics

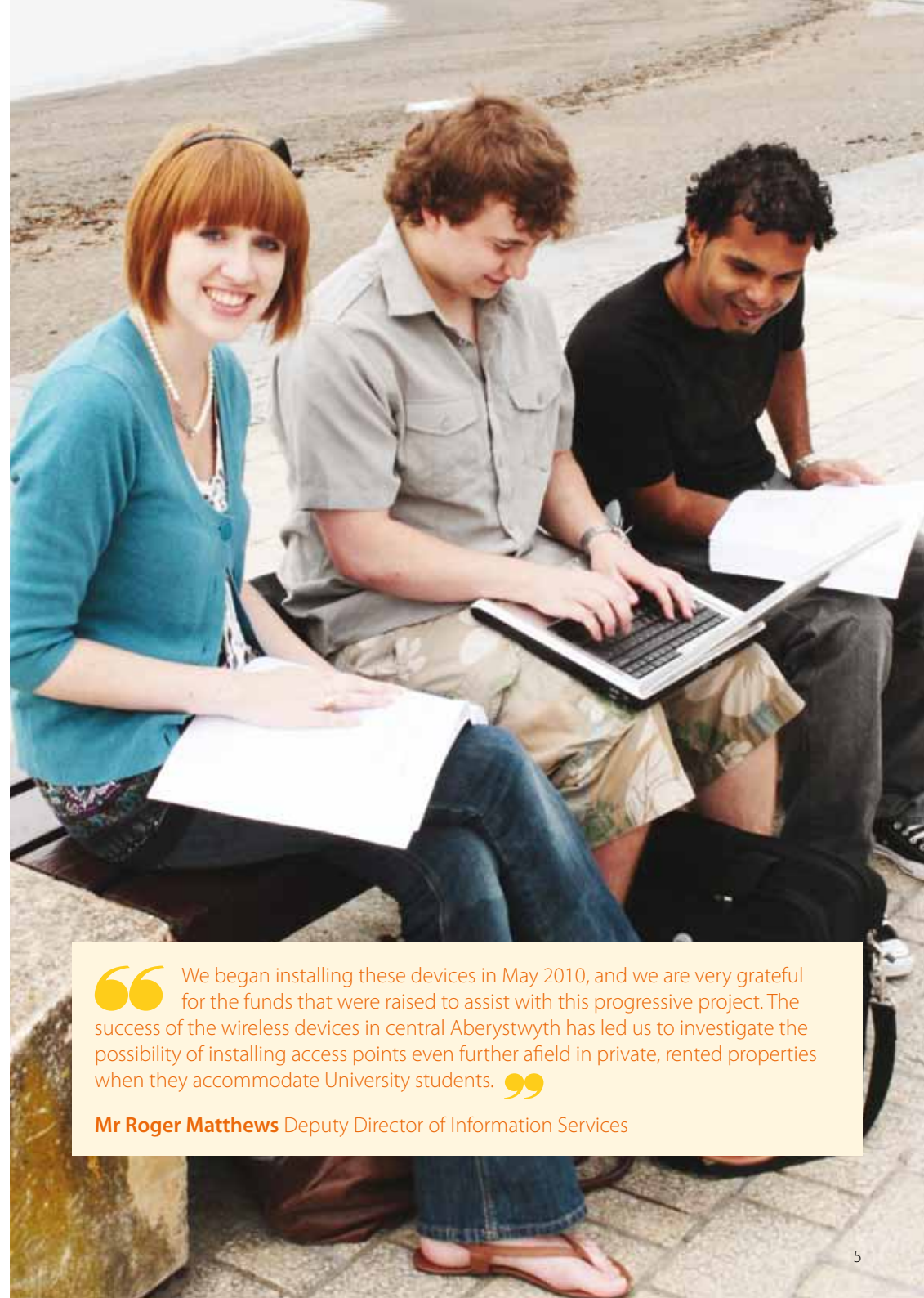
Investing in accessible technology

An increasing amount of research resources are being made available online by international establishments. Through the University's online wireless network (Eduroam), students can access these important collections, as well as all of the University's internet based resources. These include lecture capture and video streaming services. However, until now, this network has only been available on campus or via students' private internet service providers. To sustain the use of these resources, we need to ensure that it is free and accessible to the off-campus student community who live in Aberystwyth.

The support of our alumni and friends during this year's Annual Fund campaign means that we can now install **wireless networking devices** throughout Aberystwyth. These will provide off-campus access to the university's online network and its resources. 50% of our students, who live within a mile of the town centre, will now benefit from your contribution.

“ We began installing these devices in May 2010, and we are very grateful for the funds that were raised to assist with this progressive project. The success of the wireless devices in central Aberystwyth has led us to investigate the possibility of installing access points even further afield in private, rented properties when they accommodate University students. ”

Mr Roger Matthews Deputy Director of Information Services





Supporting our students

Aberystwyth University's commitment to personal and academic achievement means that **we welcome talented students from any social background.** As tuition fees rise and maintenance costs escalate during the economic downturn, financial strain on some students has been inevitable. Equally concerning is the negative effect this could have on potential applicants to the University. Therefore, it is essential that we can offer additional funds to assist in cases of genuine financial need.

The new **Student Hardship Fund** has now been established thanks to the tremendous generosity of the Annual Fund's supporters. This year we will be able to offer far greater support to struggling students and ensure that their studies at Aber are not curtailed.

“ The chance to study at British Universities has never been more accessible. Yet for many the means to do so has never been more difficult. A sudden change in circumstances, illness or a death within the family, the business failure of a sponsor – all of these create insurmountable barriers to learning. **The creation of a Hardship Fund** at Aberystwyth University, to provide a bridging loan, emergency relief or enabling services, **has been a godsend.** It has quite literally made the world of difference for many of our students. We are fortunate indeed to have a body of alumni and friends with happy memories of the University who have contributed to this Fund. It is deeply appreciated. ”

Dr John Powell
Director of Student Support Services

A view to inspire

The environment of the main Penglais campus at Aber, ever-changing and expanding, helps foster the community spirit of our students. As the student population continues to grow, however, **it is important that we ensure these spaces remain both functional and inspirational.**

The focus of this year's Annual Fund **environmental project** was to enhance the Piazza in front of the Arts Centre.



The Piazza in front of the Arts Centre

Overlooking Ceredigion Bay, this area is a central space for meeting, learning and the arts: its boundaries are set by the Students' Union, the Arts Centre and the Hugh Owen Library, and it contains Mark Pimlott's impressive La Scala sculpture. Thanks to the goodwill of our alumni and friends, this year's Annual Fund can finance additional seating, planting and shade in the area, ensuring that this large space remains a bustling hub of student life on campus.

This project will be completed by graduation in July 2010.



The Piazza Phase 1

“ The Piazza is the main public square at the heart of the campus. Plans to improve and enhance it, and to make it more attractive and welcoming received a boost thanks to the generosity of Aber alumni and friends.

Phase 1 of the improvements will provide eight combined seating and tree planters. This will encourage students and staff to socialize and enjoy the Piazza as the main outdoor meeting space for the campus, as well as for friends and family at events such as graduation. The addition of wi-fi access will also extend its use by student study groups.

Phase 2 will provide further additional seats and planters. ”

Mr Alan Hewson
Director of Aberystwyth Arts Centre