

CITY NEWS

News in brief

■ Public opinion in Bath has swung decisively against further large scale student accommodation developments in the city according to commercial property specialists at Bruton Knowles. Its team believe the decision to reject plans to convert the Wansdyke Business Centre could mark a significant change of attitude on the part of the public and planners. Paul Matthews from Bruton Knowles said: "Converting Bath's commercial and industrial stock into student accommodation has reached a point where many residents are saying 'enough is enough'. While we welcome the emergence of creative industries in the new waterside hotspots it seems the transformation of the city's commercial landscape is being delivered at the expense of traditional artisan and blue-collar businesses. New technologies have overtaken established businesses to such an extent they are diluting the employment mix." Paul said BANES' decision to reject plans for more student accommodation at the Wansdyke Business Centre reflected a wider view that the city had more than enough student accommodation. He said: "The physical geography of Bath is accentuating these effects – some businesses are being pushed out to the commercial estate at Peasedown St John – some six miles outside the city. Bath is crying out for business space and the land just isn't there now." Wansdyke Business Park in Oldfield Park is home to a mix of businesses, including gyms and training centres, a martial arts school, metalworkers and courier firms.

■ A new independent businesses' guide to Bath has been launched in a project between Visit Bath and Bath and North East Somerset Council. The guide, which includes a London Underground style map to encourage visitors to get out and about to explore more areas of the city, came about following a meeting of business people who were invited to come up with positive ideas to improve life in the city.

NEW CHAPTER AS LAW FIRMS MERGE

Law firm Withy King LLP and city of London practice Royds LLP have merged and will from now be known as Royds Withy King.

The newly-combined firm, Royds Withy King, employs around 450 people in London, Bath, Oxford, Swindon and Marlborough and is projected to generate revenues of around £33m in 2016 – 17.

Graham Street, managing partner, said: "The merger between Royds and Withy King signals the start of an exciting new chapter which will see Royds Withy King establish itself as a sustainable UK Top 100 law firm. While it will be very much business as usual for many of our clients, there are others who will be looking forward to accessing the enhanced services and new opportunities which the merger will bring. Royds and Withy King have complementary strengths and share a similar client ethos, vision and culture, making them a really good fit."

"By retaining the names of both firms, our aim is to protect and build on the goodwill which Royds and Withy King have built up



Partner Stewart Wilkinson and managing partner Graham Street of newly merged Royds Withy King

over many years, and through the combination, provide clients with an even better offering. This includes access to enhanced services, greater choice and a wider geographical reach."

Visit: roydswithyking.com.

GRANT BOOSTS PLANS FOR BATHS



STUDY CENTRE: image courtesy of Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios

Plans for a learning centre next to the Roman Baths have moved one step nearer fruition with a grant of £75,000 from the Garfield Weston Foundation, a major milestone in funding for the building which will allow visitors more space to study one of the country's most important Roman sites.

The Bath Archway project will be installed above the old spa laundry in Swallow Street. The new centre will increase the space dedicated to education at the Roman Baths by 400 per cent. Two new classrooms will enable the Roman Baths to develop learning programmes, for all kinds of visitors. The new centre will be connected to the Roman Baths by an undercroft under York Street.

PROFESSOR INVITED TO GIVE TV LECTURE

Professor Saiful Islam from the Department of Chemistry at the University of Bath will present the 2016 Christmas Lectures on BBC Four on the subject of energy. Prof Islam, who is Professor of Materials Chemistry at the university will be presenting the lectures in BBC television's 80th anniversary year.

His series, *Supercharged: Fuelling the Future*, will focus on energy as its scientific theme. The Christmas lectures are the world's oldest televised science series.

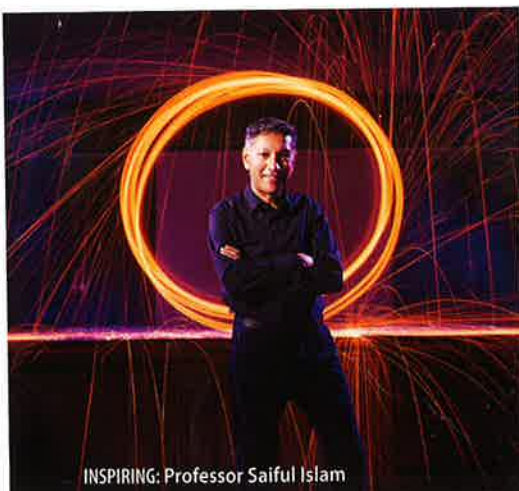
Prof Islam said: "I'm excited that our celebration of energy offers a wonderful opportunity to explain how current cutting-edge research on clean energy technologies is founded on the Royal Institution's rich heritage of discovery by greats such as Michael Faraday. And I'm also looking forward to recreating some memorable moments from previous

lectures with the help of some very special guests."

Demonstrations will be inspired by classic television moments from past lectures which include Sir David Attenborough's *The Language of Animals* in 1973, George Porter's *The Natural History of a Sunbeam* and Danielle George's *Sparks will Fly* from 2014.

Prof Islam will take viewers on a journey through scientific history, ending by exploring his area of expertise – the materials needed to create next-generation clean energy devices such as lithium batteries, solar cells and hydrogen fuel cells. The big question will be posed: how can we generate the vast amount of energy our modern society needs and still protect our planet for the benefit of future generations?

The 2016 Christmas Lectures will be filmed live on 10, 13 and 15 December.



INSPIRING: Professor Saiful Islam