

COMMUNITY

The Super Connect Club

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ABOUT THE CRICK

The Francis Crick Institute (formerly UKCMRI), is a new medical research institute being built at Brill Place, Somers Town.

It's named after one of the UK's greatest scientists, who co-discovered the structure of DNA.

The institute is a partnership between the Medical Research Council, Cancer Research UK, the Wellcome Trust, UCL (University College London), Imperial College London and King's College London.

Discoveries made in the laboratories will speed up the development of treatments for major diseases such as cancer, heart disease and stroke.

The Francis Crick Institute will bring new jobs, community facilities and other benefits to Somers Town.



Above: Mayor of Camden, Cllr Lazzaro Pietragnoli, with members of the 'Super Connect' Club
© Kings Cross Brunswick Neighbourhood Association.

On a cold, blustery Wednesday in early January, the Marchmont Street Community Centre hosted a very warm welcome for all the new members of the new Super Connect Club. Seventeen members of the Older People's group and several younger volunteers attended the grand opening of the club, which was endorsed by the Mayor of Camden, Councillor Lazzaro Pietragnoli. Vanda Carter, Camden's Intergenerational Development Officer, Nasim Ali, Executive Director of the King's Cross Brunswick Neighbourhood Association and Deputy Director and Youth Team Leader Abdul Hai also attended to offer their support.

Diane Fisher, Community Worker with Older People at the Marchmont Centre explains: "We're living in a very digitalised world, which is leaving some older people behind and making them feel isolated. The Super Connect Club aims to encourage and empower older people

to learn to use computers and connect with loved ones using lightweight tablet computers, in order to reduce loneliness and social isolation, improve their health and wellbeing and increase their access to online services. It also aims to be an intergenerational project, bringing together local young and older people in a friendly, creative and safe environment. The young people will support the older people as they learn to use the tablets."

Cllr Pietragnoli made a point of mentioning the Francis Crick Institute's Community Chest scheme, which provided funding for the tablets and helped the project get off the ground, saying, "I would like to extend my special thanks to the Francis Crick Institute, a prestigious organisation with its headquarters right here in Camden. Their commitment to community engagement and to helping to fund small projects seeking to improve local health and wellbeing has made this innovative Super Connect Club possible".

For more information about the Super Connect Club call 020 7278 5635 or email info@kcbna.org.uk

PETER BRAYSHAW

30th August 1947 –
18th December 2014

Councillor Peter Brayshaw who sadly died in December will be hugely missed, not least by the Crick. A long-serving councillor, Peter made a great contribution to the area over many years. He garnered a huge amount of respect for his generosity of spirit and knowledge. As chair of the Crick's Living Centre working group, his wise counsel was greatly valued.



Crick Community Update

A cold evening in January saw the fourth of the Crick's Community Updates. Held in the warm atmosphere of the Barn at New Horizon Youth Centre on Chalton Street, residents came along to hear about the Crick's progress and ask any questions they had.

The Crick's Projects Director, John Cooper, talked about the institute's plans in general. He highlighted that 2015 was an important year for the Crick, as staff will start moving in from November. A busy year lies ahead and the Crick is planning a programme of opening activities for summer 2016 when the institute opens properly – there'll be lots of opportunities to come in and have a look. Watch this space.

Neil Smith, Laing O'Rourke's Project Director, gave an update on the building work (see the Construction Update on the back page), and Hannah Camm, the Crick's Community Engagement Manager, gave the latest on the Living Centre (see the article below for more about this project). Hannah also talked about the Crick's educational activities, which include new Discover Science Kits - available free to all the state primary schools in Camden to borrow. The kits were developed by the Crick, local primary school teachers and the Royal Vet College to support teaching of science to 7-8 year olds, and include lots of bones and teeth, including a whole human skeleton (plastic!), model organs, stethoscopes and some 50-million-year-old fossil fish.

To finish the update, Anthony Richards from KCA London led a small workshop on 'the Story of the Crick' (see the article to the right for a summary). Councillor Samata Khatoon led the question and answer session, where questions ranged from adding more trees to the land surrounding the Crick, to access routes through local estates and jobs when the Crick opens. If you would like more information about jobs, please contact jobs@crick.ac.uk

Thank you to everyone who came along – the next update will be in summer 2015. To add yourself to the mailing list for the Crick Community Updates, please email info@crick.ac.uk



Above: Cllr Samata Khatoon, who chaired the Community Update
© Wellcome Images.

'THE STORY OF THE CRICK' WORKSHOP

Thanks to everyone who participated at the workshop on 'the Story of the Crick' - a project to explore the heritage of the Crick's founding institutes (the London Research Institute and the National Institute for Medical Research), its partners, and the local St Pancras and Somers Town community. KCA London are an agency who are working with the Crick to develop an exhibition and activities for the Junction, a public space in the Crick that will be open from 2016.

We have gathered up all the ideas about what heritage means to you, to help us kick start the project.

The St Pancras and Somers Town ward already has a very strong historical background with figures such as Dickens, George Bernard Shaw and Boudica being linked to the area. Social housing, public health and infectious diseases are also strong local stories. We would like to help showcase this history and help make the heritage of the community accessible to everybody.

Workshop attendees hope that engaging with the local history will bring the community together further. Watch this space for details of how the project progresses.

Living Centre update

Hannah Camm, Community Engagement Manager for the Crick, gave an update on the Living Centre.

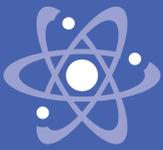
From the Crick's inception, being a good neighbour has been a priority. To help have a positive impact locally, we are developing plans for an exciting new community space in the Crick, purpose-built and independent from the institute.

Since 2013 and the community consultation with Well London, the Living Centre working group has been building on the ideas and priorities of local people, developing a vision for the Living Centre.

The formal procurement process, to find an organisation or group of organisations to run the Living Centre, has now begun. We're determined that the Living Centre will make a real contribution to community health and wellbeing – and not duplicate the wide range of excellent services already in the area.

At the lively question and answer session, a resident asked why the Crick wasn't going to run the Living Centre itself. The Crick's expertise is science and to ensure we create an innovative and really useful community facility that lasts, we need to work with an expert in that field.

The Living Centre will open when the institute does in summer 2016; however, if you want to have a sneak peek, our visitor centre will be moving into the Living Centre space in the summer.



Schnurri: a protective protein

A recent study of the Schnurri protein in fruit flies could pave the way for targeted research into human diseases – including cancer - that are caused by failure to eliminate defective cells.

Did you know that carcinomas are the most common cancers in the UK? They account for about 85 out of every one hundred cases and they all start in epithelial tissues.

Epithelial cells come in different shapes and sizes and perform a variety of jobs. For example, our skin is made up of millions of flat epithelial cells that create a protective barrier; another type lines internal organs such as the digestive system.

All cells receive instructions on what to do and how to behave from DNA. If the DNA is damaged in some way, for example from exposure to poisonous substances, the cell doesn't work properly. In most cases, these faulty cells are destroyed.

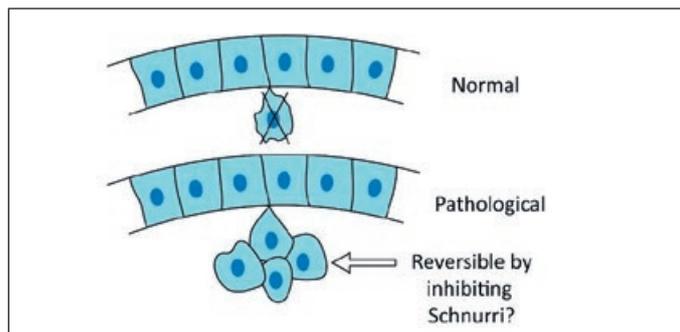
However, sometimes damaged cells remain undetected and go on to multiply uncontrollably and form a cancerous tumour.

Recent research by a team of scientists indicates that a protein called Schnurri could be protecting these damaged cells and preventing them from being destroyed.

The team comprised researchers from the Medical Research Council's National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR), the University of Freiburg and the European Laboratory of Molecular Biology in Heidelberg.

Dr Jean-Paul Vincent of NIMR explained: "Most tissues are made of epithelia – sheets of cells that stick to each other. When cells become detached from these sheets they activate a process called a JNK stress pathway, which leads to a type of ordered cell suicide (apoptosis).

"The same stress pathway is activated when epithelial cells need to migrate, for example, when two epithelia



Above: Under normal circumstances (top), cells that become detached from epithelial sheets are eliminated by apoptosis, or cell suicide. The protein identified in this study, Schnurri, can stop this apoptosis when it's not wanted. Inhibiting Schnurri may offer a target for some cancers, in which normal apoptosis doesn't occur as it should (bottom).



Above: Dr Jean-Paul Vincent, National Institute for Medical Research.

need to be brought together in an embryo to allow it to develop its shape.

"So, in one situation the JNK pathway leads to cell death, in the other it does not. This suggests that there is a protective mechanism at work."

This study showed that, in the fruit fly embryo, this protective mechanism involves a protein called Schnurri, which is also found in humans.

To start, the researchers used a combination of genetic and molecular techniques to find out more about how the workings of reaper, a key gene involved in cell death in the fruit fly.

They then used cutting edge 3D imaging technology to study fruit flies that did not have the Schnurri protein. This process showed a larger than expected level of cell death at the edge of migrating epithelial layers. Without Schnurri, the protective mechanism was less effective.

Dr Vincent said: "Since Schnurri is present in humans, our findings could provide a starting point for studying its role in human diseases that are caused by failure to eliminate defective cells – including cancer. It is conceivable for example that excessive activity of Schnurri might protect cells that should otherwise die.

"Our study illustrates how organisms such as the fruit fly that are simple and relatively easily manipulated genetically can be used to decipher complex gene interactions and thus pave the way for targeted investigation in higher organisms."

Dr Jean-Paul Vincent leads a research group at the NIMR. The group's general approach is to use fruit flies as a model system to study basic cell biological mechanisms that are relevant to human cancers.

The full research paper, *The Dpp/TGF β -Dependent Corepressor Schnurri Protects Epithelial Cells from JNK-Induced Apoptosis in Drosophila Embryos*, is published in *Developmental Cell*. You can download it at www.sciencedirect.com

For information about cancer – including what it is, symptoms, tests and treatments – visit the Cancer Research UK website www.cancerresearchuk.org

Thanks for your feedback

A huge thank you to all of you who took the time to return your feedback forms. The winners have now all been picked and notified.

We'll seek to address all suggestions over the next few issues. A few key topics are highlighted below:

Tours of the Crick

We've started planning a programme of opening activities for summer 2016 when the institute is fully up and running. Did you know that a large part of the ground floor at the east end of the building will be open to the public and residents?

There'll be lots of opportunities to come in and take part in activities in the Junction (our public exhibition and events space), do experiments in the Discovery Lab (for school children) or listen to lectures and talks in our public auditorium. All of these spaces will be open to local residents, and we will have a public coffee bar too. We are also hoping to host full tours of the building for local residents who are interested. More information to follow.

Job opportunities for residents when the Crick opens

All vacancies are advertised on www.crick.ac.uk/about-us/jobs and we're planning to work with local employment organisations to advertise available roles. If you would like more information about jobs, please contact jobs@crick.ac.uk

Chimneys – what is coming out of them?

The chimneys are connected to the building's heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems. The air leaving the chimneys is filtered and will be very clean. The air from labs is filtered using High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filters - the most efficient air filters available, which will be constantly monitored to ensure all air is clean.

Some of the chimneys are connected to steam boilers. We will be testing these over the coming months and there will be a series of short periods when there will be large volumes of steam discharged at roof level opposite the British Library and St Pancras Station. This is only for testing; when the building is up and running there will be considerably less steam emitted from these chimneys.

Interior photos and progress

We'll include a special feature on the construction in our summer issue, showing lots of photos of the progress that's been made inside and out – and what's left to do.

Weaving buddies

Redhanded, a temporary art space on Cromer Street south of the Euston Road, has been bringing the art of weaving to life.

Curated by artists Sally Hampson and Esther Caplin, Redhanded sought to engage people from local communities, schools and colleges, and an open door policy has meant that hundreds of people have visited.

Throughout the year there has been a continuous programme of exhibitions, workshops and events, from basket and book making, to weaving. Over the winter, 60 children aged 7-8 years from Argyle Primary School and 30 children aged 8-9 years from Edith Neville Primary School took part in weaving workshops. The children had the opportunity to work with artists in a studio and to learn the basics of weaving using professional equipment and high-quality yarns. Results were spectacular.

"I liked when we were weaving. I was having fun pulling the levers up and down", said one of the children.

The workshops were supported by a grant from the Wellcome Trust, one of the Crick's partners.

Redhanded has now left Cromer Street but is carrying on its creative activities. For more information email redhanded.artspace@gmail.com



Above: Children from Edith Neville Primary School attending the workshop at Redhanded © Redhanded.

BANK OF MICROBES: SCIENCE, ART AND ANIMATION

Check out our 'Bank of Microbes'! A video of the microscopic creatures created by everyone who got involved in the Crick's recent Winter Workshops, inspired by the beautiful and bizarre world of bacteria, fungi and viruses.

Watch the 'Bank of Microbes' video at www.youtube.com/CrickInstitute



Above: A microbe made at one of the Winter Workshop sessions © Wellcome Images.

CRICK COMMUNITY CHEST

We're pleased to announce that the Crick's Community Chest scheme will be running again this year.

The scheme provides small grants to local community organisations and groups for projects that help improve health and wellbeing in the local area. If you have a great idea for a community project but are struggling to find the money to make it happen then we may be able to help.

For more information about the Community Chest, call 0800 028 6731 or email info@crick.ac.uk

London Marathon 2015



Above: The Crick's Ruth Attenborough, HR Business Partner, who will be running this year's London Marathon.

As the race looms next month, how are you feeling, Ruth?

Nervous! My training is going really well and although I've followed my training schedule almost to the letter and put in the hours, the thought of doing the full 26.2 miles is a little daunting.

What's the longest distance you've run so far?

Around 20 miles. It's strange but you're advised not to run the full distance beforehand. You do lots of long runs but leave the 26.2 miles until the event, so it's a real leap of faith. It's different on the day of course. The crowds, the cheers and support – and the other runners – will I'm sure help me get to the finish line. As I've said before I feel extremely lucky to have a place and I can't wait.

Good luck, Ruth!

The 2015 marathon is special for the Crick as our partner Cancer Research UK is the official charity – meaning that every penny of the £2.5 million that the marathon team is hoping to raise will go towards building the Crick.

St Pancras Community Association: on the move

Did you know St Pancras Community Association (SPCA) is moving from Camden Street to a fresh new building on Plender Street, NW1?

Planned for November this year, the move will mean smart new premises, sports pitches that residents can use, lots of activities from a pensioners' yoga group to a supplementary schools programme – and a café.

The team behind SPCA think the café has lots of potential – and will be looking for someone to run it. The bustling location and links with SPCA mean it'll be a great opportunity for a local person or organisation with an entrepreneurial spirit, who wants to support the local community.

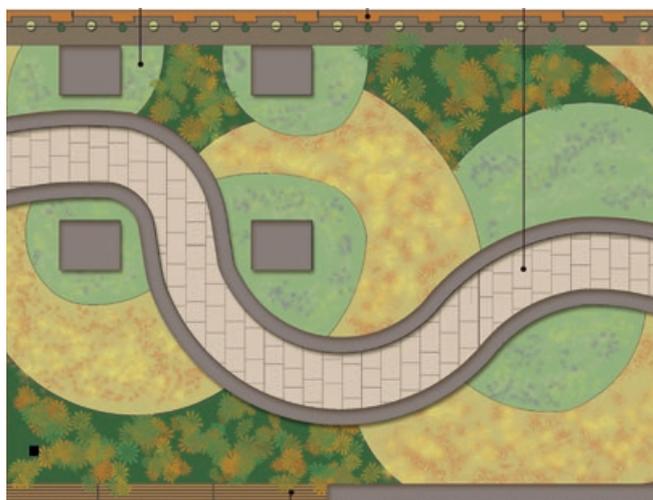
If you're interested in running the café or getting involved with community centre, email info@sPCA.org.uk or call Elaine Taylor on 020 7380 1501.

Gardening project

We've been working with London Wildlife Trust's team in Camley Street to create a wildlife-friendly garden area on the corner of Ossulston Street and Brill Place. When the hoardings come down towards the end of the year, we're planning for the garden to be ready for use with plenty of seating and a range of planting themes.

The garden design has a sequence of rounded planting beds, with a dense and dramatic outside edge, a bed of softer and sensory plants through the centre, and low-level flowering ground cover. The colours will echo and complement the terracotta colour of the building and the plants will be wildlife friendly with plenty to enjoy all year round.

The Crick and London Wildlife Trust will be setting up a community gardening group later in the year, if you're interested email info@crick.ac.uk



Above: The new design for the garden area on the corner of Ossulston Street and Brill Place © London Wildlife Trust.

WHAT'S ON?

A Crick Chat on...

The next Crick Chats will take place from Monday 18 May to Wednesday 20 May at the Somers Town Coffee House as part of the Pint of Science festival. They're free and open to all, and you don't need any scientific knowledge. For details call 0800 028 6731 or email info@crick.ac.uk

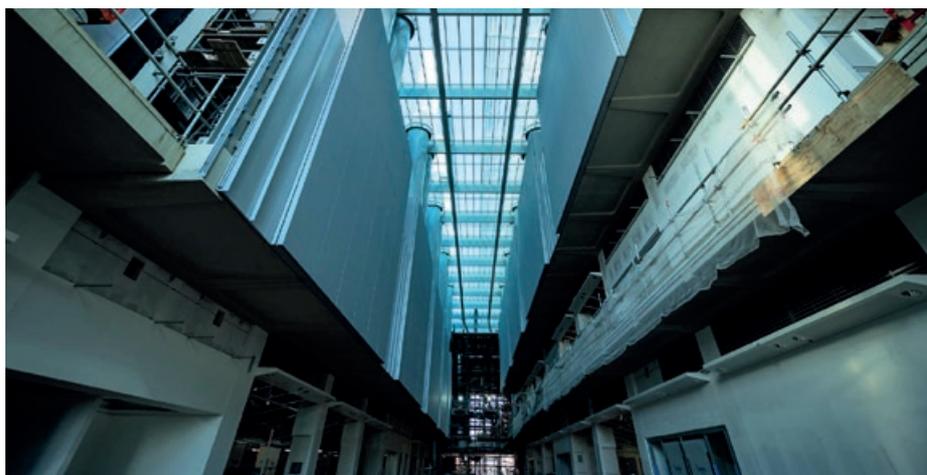
On Light

'On Light' is a weekend of dazzling free events hosted by the Wellcome Collection and UCL to explore our relationship with light – how it feeds us, fascinates us and influences our health and happiness.

Come down to the Wellcome Collection on Euston Road to enjoy a host of free events from Friday 1 May to Monday 4 May. For tickets and information visit www.wellcomecollection.org/events



CONSTRUCTION UPDATE



2015 is the year construction finishes, so the focus is on checking all the building systems and finishing the internal fit-out.

The glazing that faces St Pancras Station has now been installed, along with coloured vertical glass fins that run floor to ceiling up the atrium windows. The web of scaffolding that filled the central atrium has now been removed, exposing the glass roof and allowing daylight into the centre of building again – and allowing us to see the full size and scale of the atrium.

Outside, the footpaths and kerbs that surround the Crick are being laid (the hard landscaping), to the north along Brill Place as well as next to the Living Centre on Ossulston Street.

Meanwhile inside, the rooms are taking shape. There is now lab furniture, benching and fixed equipment across the second, third and fourth floors of labs – and fit-out is gradually moving up to the fifth and final floor of labs.

The huge task of checking of all the building services – a process called ‘commissioning’ – continues. All systems from the boilers, which are now operational, to the chilled water systems and air-handling systems are being checked, and will take up to August to complete.



OUTLINE TIMETABLE

Early Summer 2011

Building work started.

Autumn 2013

Major external work completed, internal fit-out continues.

Winter 2015

Internal works completed. The building is ready for use and staff move in.

Construction questions? Call the construction hotline free on 0808 165 0180, or email projectinfo@laingorourke.com

GET IN TOUCH

If you have any questions, please contact us.

Email: info@crick.ac.uk

Web: www.crick.ac.uk

Phone: 0800 028 6731

Facebook: facebook.com/theFrancisCrickInstitute

Twitter: @thecrick

Post: The Francis Crick Institute
Gibbs Building
215 Euston Road
London, NW1 2BE

Visit: The Crick Visitor Centre, Ossulston Street (opposite Hadstock House), NW1 1HG

Staff will be on hand to answer your questions and you will be able to see the latest designs and plans for the building.

OPENING TIMES

Thursdays: 14.00-18.30

We can also open the Visitor Centre for groups on request.

This newsletter tells you about the Francis Crick Institute and its plans to build a medical research centre on Brill Place, Somers Town. If you would like a copy in Bengali, please send your name and address to The Francis Crick Institute, Gibbs Building, 215 Euston Road, London, NW1 2BE or email info@crick.ac.uk.

এই সংবাদপত্রিকাটি আপনাদের দ্য ফ্রান্সিস ক্রিক ইন্সটিটিউট এবং ব্রিল প্লেস, সমারস টাউনে তাদের দ্বারা একটি মেডিক্যাল গবেষণা কেন্দ্র তৈরি করার পরিকল্পনার বিষয়ে আপনাকে জানায়। যদি আপনি বাংলায় একটি অনুলিপি চান, অনুগ্রহ করে The Francis Crick Institute, Gibbs Building, 215 Euston Road, London, NW1 2BE ঠিকানায় বা info@crick.ac.uk-তে ইমেইল করে আপনার নাম আর ঠিকানা পাঠান।