UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

Online Media for Research Groups

College of Social Science Online Media Project

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Contents

Websites on WordPress

What is WordPress anyway?

In the words of WordPress themselves: “WordPress is web software you can use to create a beautiful website or blog”. It is a simple-to-use and powerful content management system (CMS) to allow the creation and maintenance of websites and is used professionally across the world. It is a valuable, yet free, tool to help promote your research to the world.

The Centre for Educational Research and Development (CERD) provides a WordPress system hosted on the University’s servers which allows them to offer WordPress to create blogs and websites to every student and staff member in the University. This is the system that the College of Social Science Online Media Project has used to create and maintain the websites for the College’s research groups

It is recommended to use a modern, powerful web browser with WordPress, such as Google Chrome, rather than old versions of Internet Explorer.

Chrome is available on all University desktops (by double clicking on ‘Run Advertised Programs’ on your desktop, selecting Google Chrome and clicking *Run*. The program will then install in the background and appear on your Start menu) or from the Google Chrome website (www.google.com/chrome).

Why use the University’s blogs system?

Although websites and blogs can be created in a number of other ways, there are huge benefits to using the University’s blogs system:

- Since they are hosted by the University, it reduces overheads often needed to host websites on other servers
- The blogs link with your student or staff login details, allowing easy collaboration across the institution
- Since it is staff at CERD that offer the service, they are available for close-contact support if anything goes wrong and offer their skills to develop a solution to any additional service you might want.

The University Blogs System: blogs.lincoln.ac.uk

To access the blogs system, simply log on to http://blogs.lincoln.ac.uk using your normal staff details. Primarily, this site is a sort of social network between students and staff at the University of Lincoln. It is also the base of where you can access your websites and blogs on the University system using the black navigation bar at the top of the screen.

Though you will use this website for editing your website, you don’t need to log in if you simply want to view your website; this can be accessed through it’s URL (web address).

Websites, blogs; what's the difference?

A website is a collection of pages of information on the internet. Websites are usually based around a single topic, providing useful information to the reader and offering more details on that topic. Often, a single page on a website is dedicated to a blog.

The word 'blog' is short for 'web log' and is a series of posts, or articles, displayed in chronological order and organised into categories; literally a log of opinions or events, held on the web. The two terms are not mutually exclusive and in fact work wonderfully together to complement and raise search engine visibility. Many websites you see may in fact be based on a blog.

Creating a Website

Websites on the University blog system

As soon as you log on to the blogs system, using blogs.lincoln.ac.uk, you will notice the black navigation bar at the top of the screen (fig.1). This is your entrance to all the websites that you are involved with.

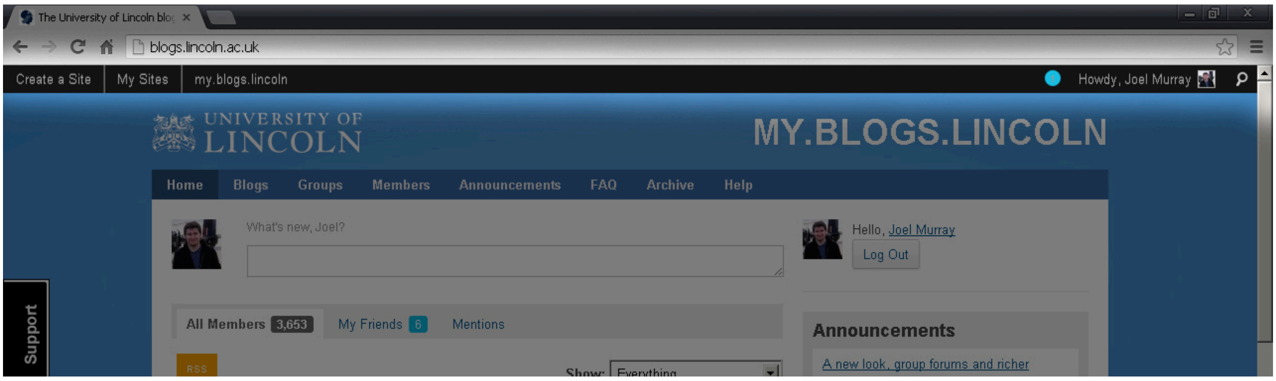

fig.1: The black navigation bar.

To create a new website, simply click on *Create a Site* where you must complete three options:

- **Site Domain**
  The URL, or address, of the website which will be suffixed by '.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk'. It must be informative to describe the website but also memorable. This option **cannot** be changed once the site is created but it can be replaced by a paid for domain later on (see page 28). For example, communityandhealth.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk has been changed to cahru.org.uk which is more professional, easier to read and more memorable.
- **Site Title**
  The name of the website. It must describe exactly what the website is and will be shown whenever a user wants to know what the website is (ie. in search results, at the top of the browser window). This can be changed once the website is created. For example, the site title of cahru.org.uk is 'CaHRU – Community and Health Research Unit'.
- **Privacy**
  When first working on a website, to stop others from finding your website as it is incomplete, set this setting to 'No'. If you would like the site to be found by search engines, leave this as 'Yes'. The privacy setting of a website can be changed once the site is created (see page 24).

Once a website is created, you can access it, and any other websites you have access to, by hovering over *My Sites* and clicking on the relevant site from the drop-down menu. This will ask you to log into the WordPress software for your site and take you to the site's *Dashboard* (fig. 2).

Posts or Pages?

The left hand menu on the *Dashboard* is where you can find the options to edit every aspect of your site (fig. 2.1). The two options that will be used the most are *Posts* and *Pages*:

- **Pages**
  The static pages of information that make up the majority of your website can be found here. The pages also make up the content of the menus on the website.
- **Posts**
  Posts are the entries to a blog that may appear on your website. They all appear on one page (which must be created as a blank *Page* and designated as such under *Reading* (see page 24)) in chronological order with the latest at the top. In essence, this page of posts becomes a news feed of articles.

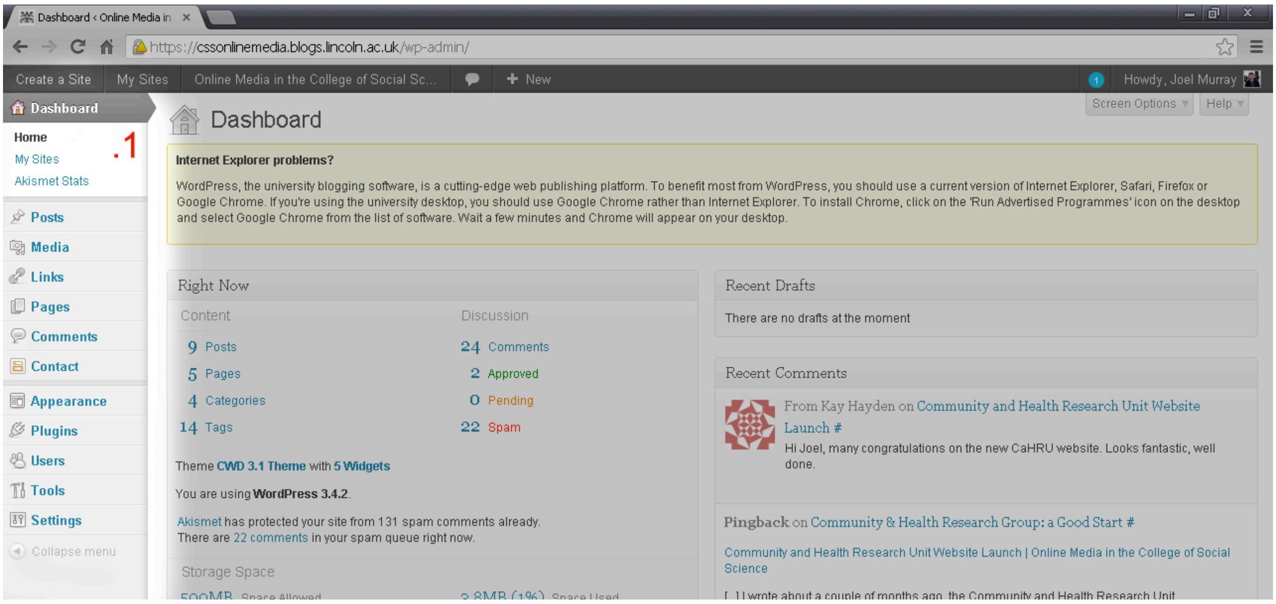

fig. 2: The Dashboard and left hand menu.

Pages

It is important to plan what pages you want for your website and to create Pages from this plan (including one blank page for your blog posts). Log in to blogs.lincoln.ac.uk using your normal staff details, and click on your website under *My Sites*. Log in here and you will see the website Dashboard.

By clicking on *Pages* on the left hand menu, you will see a list of all the Pages currently on your website. You can create a new page by clicking on *Add New* under *Pages* and you can edit a Page by either clicking on its name or on *Edit* under its name.

When creating or editing a page, there are some options to bear in mind (fig. 3):

- **Content**
  As well as the main body of the page, fill in the title of the page to give an idea of what its content is. Be aware of the *Show/Hide Kitchen Sink* button in the editor to reveal more options and the tabs giving the *Visual* and *HTML* views. You can add extra content here, also, such as a Google Calendar (see page 29).
- **Attributes**
  If the website is structured with multiple levels, be sure to select a page's *Parent* in the *Attributes* box (fig. 3.1). This not only puts the page in a practical order for the editor on the *Pages* page) but creates a URL in the correct format (ie. Research is the parent of Research Project: example.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/research/researchproject).
- **Discussion**
  As a static page, you must remove the option to add comments (useful for blog posts, not pages). Do this by unchecking the *Allow comments* box under *Discussion* (3.2). If the *Discussion* option is not visible, select it through the *Screen Options* button (fig. 3.3).

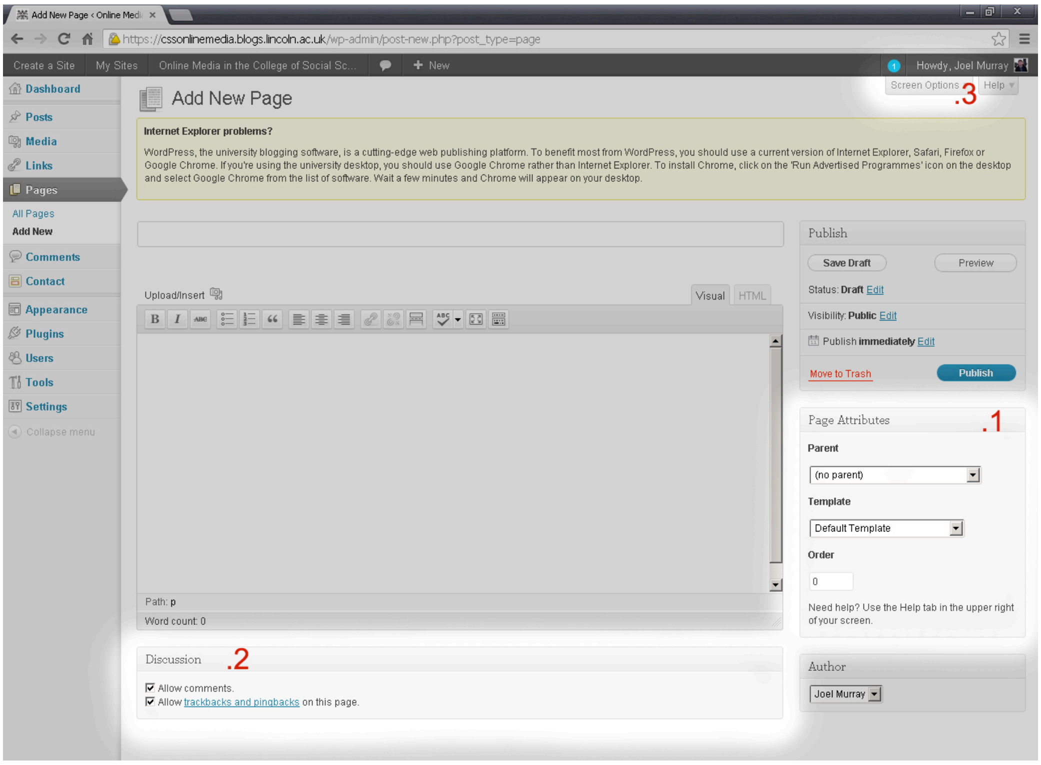

fig. 3: Creating a page

Once you have filled in the necessary information for your page, click *Publish*, if it's a new page to make the page live, or *Update*, if it's a current page to save the changes.

An option called *Permalink* will appear under the space to enter the page title, where you must enter the text that will make up the page's URL. It must be descriptive of the page but also as short as possible to allow easy remembrance.

Deleting a Page

If you have created a page but want to delete it, you can click on *Move to Trash* next to the *Publish* button. Alternatively, on the *Pages* page, you can click on *Trash* under the page you want to remove.

Posts

To add or edit a post, log in on blogs.lincoln.ac.uk, using your normal staff details, and click on the website under *My Sites* in the black bar at the top. Log into the dashboard and click on *Posts* on the left hand menu.

The process of creating and editing a post is similar to that of creating and editing a page (see page 5) in adding content, but the extra information is different.

Once you have finished your post, it is important to include the options for Categories and Tags (fig. 4):

- **Categories**
  Adding a category for each post is a useful way of organising your posts, not only for yourself but also to help users group posts together. These can also be isolated on a separate page to the blog itself (see page 19).
- **Tags**
  Tags are keywords to describe your post to others and help users search for a theme or topic in your posts.

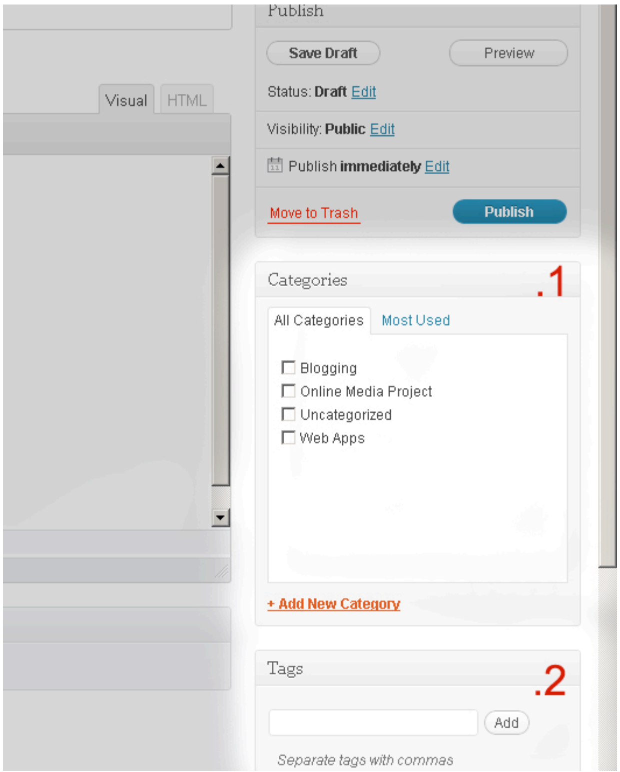

fig. 4: post extras

Deleting a Post

If you have created a post but want to delete it, you can click on *Move to Trash* next to the *Publish* button. Alternatively, on the *Posts* page, you can click on *Trash* under the post you want to remove.

Adding Content to a Page or Post

When creating or editing your page or post, you can use the WordPress editor to add content to your website. The WordPress editor works very similarly to any other word processing software. However, there are some other options specific to the online nature of WordPress (fig. 5).

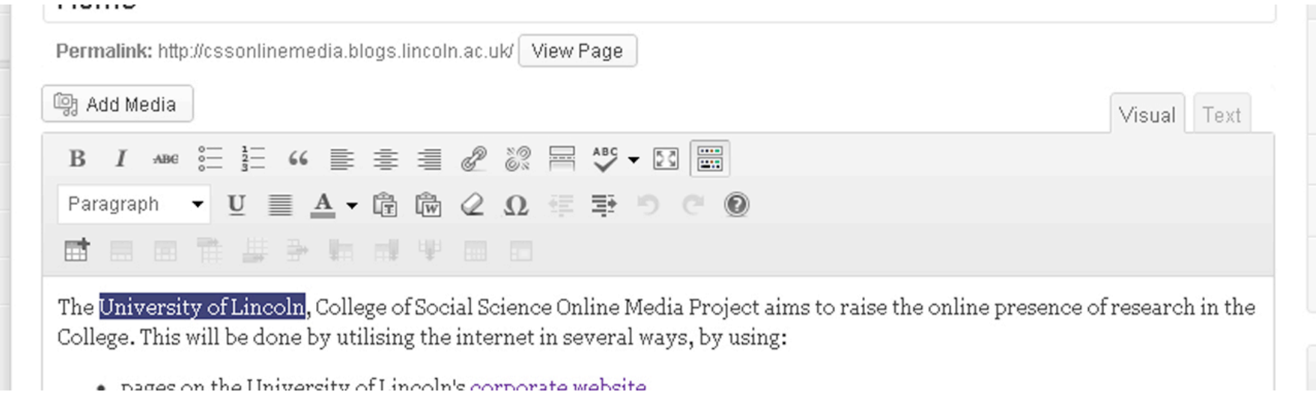

fig. 5: the WordPress editor

- **Bold, Italic**
  Use these buttons to add a bold or italic style to your text.
- **Strikethrough**
  Use this button to draw a line through your text.
- **Unordered, Ordered List**
  Use these buttons to set up a bullet point or a numbered list.
- **Blockquote**
  Use this button to style your text as a quote.
- **Alignment**
  Use these buttons to align your text to the left, the centre or the right.
- **Link/Unlink**
  After highlighting text you want to link, use the link button to create a hyperlink with that text. A pop-up window will appear in which you must enter the URL to link to, enter a title for the link, choose whether the link will open in a new tab/window or not or choose to link to another section in your website.
- **Insert More tag**
  Used specifically in posts to produce a link to reveal more of a post in it’s own page.
- **Spellchecker**
  Your text is spellchecked automatically but you can change the language here.
- **Distraction Free Writing Mode**
  Move your work into fullscreen mode.
- **Show/Hide Kitchen Sink**
  Reveal two more lines of editing options.
- **Format**
  Choose to style your text in different formats, ie. Paragraph, Heading 1, Heading 5.
- **Underline**
  Use this button to underline your text. This is not advised as it may confuse your reader with links which are also underlined.

- **Align Full**
  Use this button to align your text to it's full space.
- **Text Colour**
  Change the colour of your text.
- **Paste Buttons**
  Use these buttons to paste text on your clipboard unformatted or as formatted in Word.
- **Remove Formatting**
  Removes formatting, for example bold, colours or bullet points.
- **Insert Custom Characters**
  Insert a character which isn't usually available on keyboards.
- **Indent/Outdent**
  Move a list forward or back one step.
- **Undo/Redo**
  Undo or redo the last change.
- **Help**
  See help on the WordPress editor from WordPress.
- **Table**
  Add a table and edit, add and remove parts of it.

As you are editing your page or post, you can click on *Preview Changes* (on the right of the editor) to see how your page or post will look like as it is on your website. When you have finished your editing, click *Update* (on the right of the editor) to save the changes live on the website.

Editing a Page

Select *Pages* on the left hand menu and you will see a list of all the pages in your website. You can edit some details by clicking on Quick Edit (fig. 6).

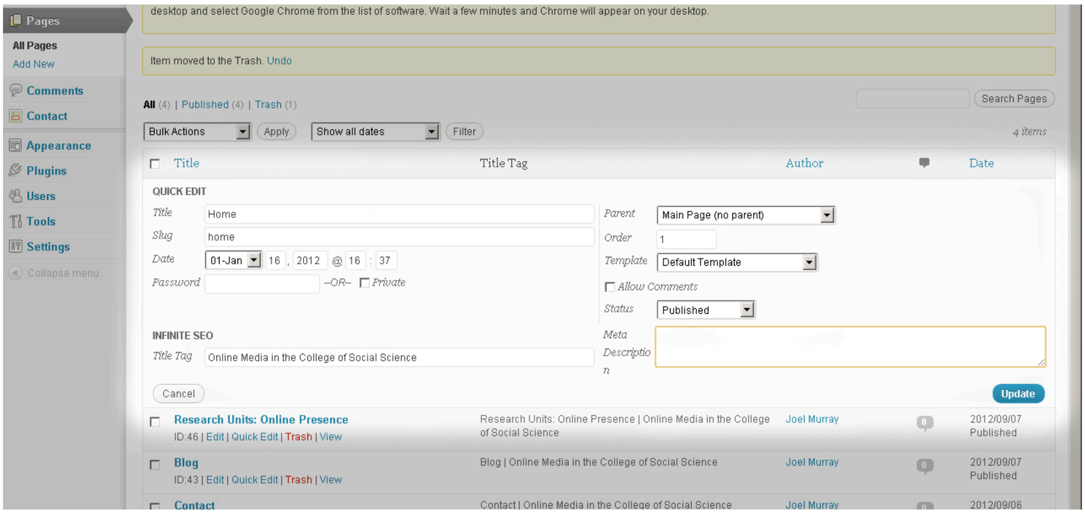

fig. 6: Quick Edit a page

- **Title and Parent**
  You can quickly change the name of the page here and put it into an order on the site by changing its parent page.
- **Password**
  By adding a password here, you can password protect the page so users must enter the password added to access the page. You can also choose to hide this page from anyone but you by checking the Private box.
- **Title Tag and Description**
  The Title Tag allows you to over-ride the title of the page with whatever text you like. You can also enter a description of the page. These pieces of information will be used in search engine results and when linked to on content driven sites such as Facebook.

Click *Update* to save your changes.

By clicking on *Edit*, or the page title, you can edit the content of the page more fully. The screen you edit with is the same as when you first created the page and the same process is valid. However, there is now the option to look back at previous versions of your page in the Revisions box (fig. 7) which you can compare and restore if needed.

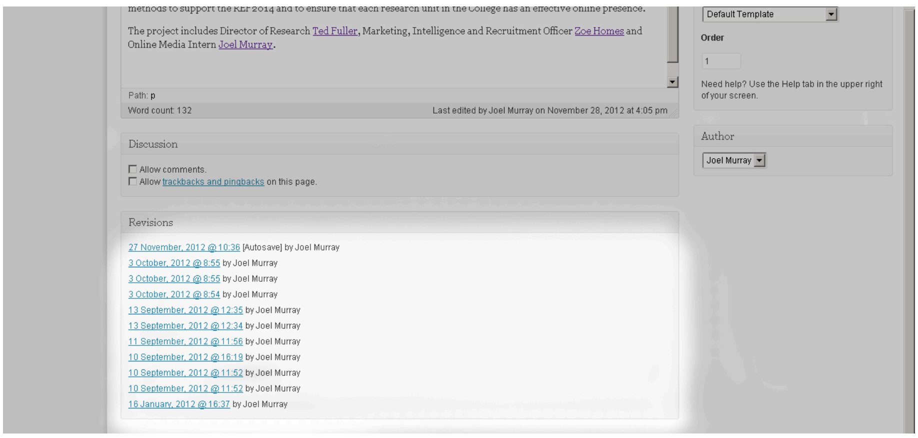

fig. 7: Revisions of a page.

Editing a Post

Editing a post takes the same process as when editing a page.

Under *Quick Edit* (fig. 8), there is an extra option:

- **Categories and Tags**
  You can quickly change the category a post is listed under and the tags attached to the post by checking the boxes and adding/removing tags.

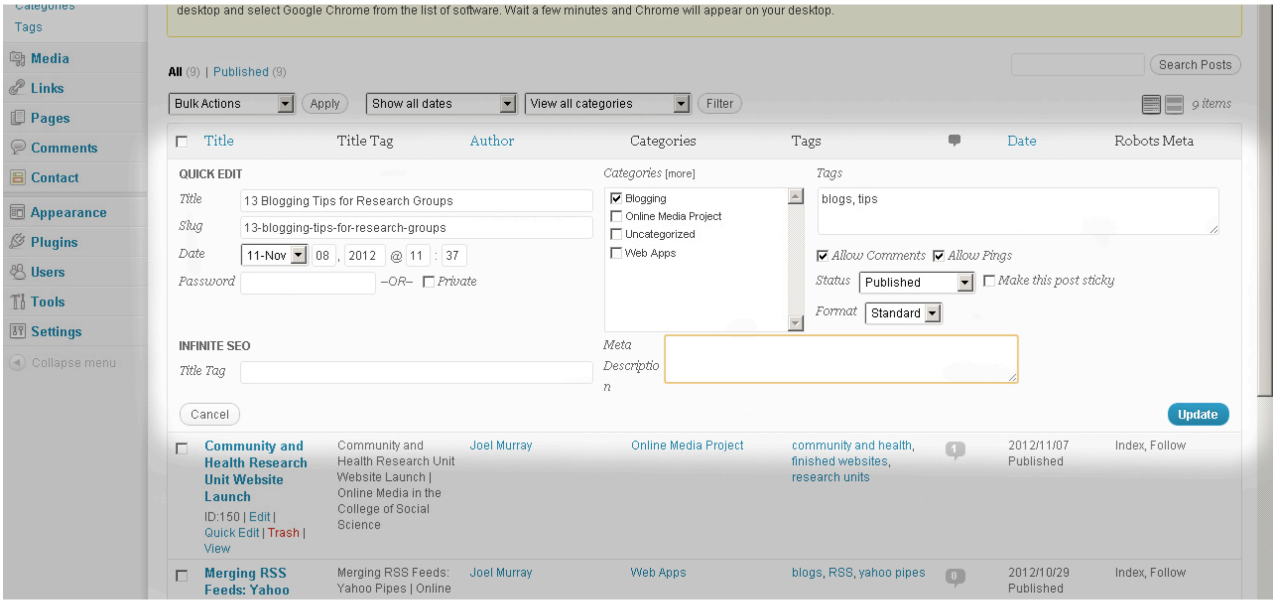

fig. 8: Quick Edit a Post

Similarly to when editing a Page, you can access past versions to restore.

Media Library

Each website on the University WordPress server has 500MB to host media online (from audio/visual media to documentation); the Media Library. The media library can be accessed through *Media* in the left hand menu or by the *Add Media* button on the page/post editor.

Inserting Media into Pages or Posts

To insert media into a page or post, you must first add the file to the media library. You can add media to the Library in two ways:

- **Through the Media Library itself (fig. 9)**
  By selecting *Media* on the left hand menu and then *Add New*, you can select the file on your hard drive to upload to the Library.

  Next, click on *Edit* and fill in the options (fig. 9.1) before clicking *Update* (fig. 9.3).

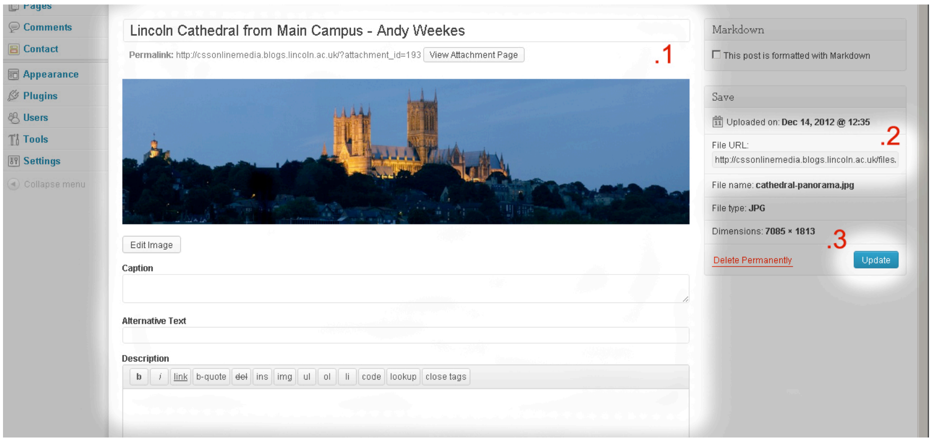

fig. 9: Adding a file to the Media Library

The File URL (fig. 9.2) gives you the URL of the image which can be used elsewhere.

- **From within a Page or Post (fig. 10)**
  When clicking on *Add Media* whilst editing a page or post, you can upload a file but must fill in the same options on a different screen (fig. 10).

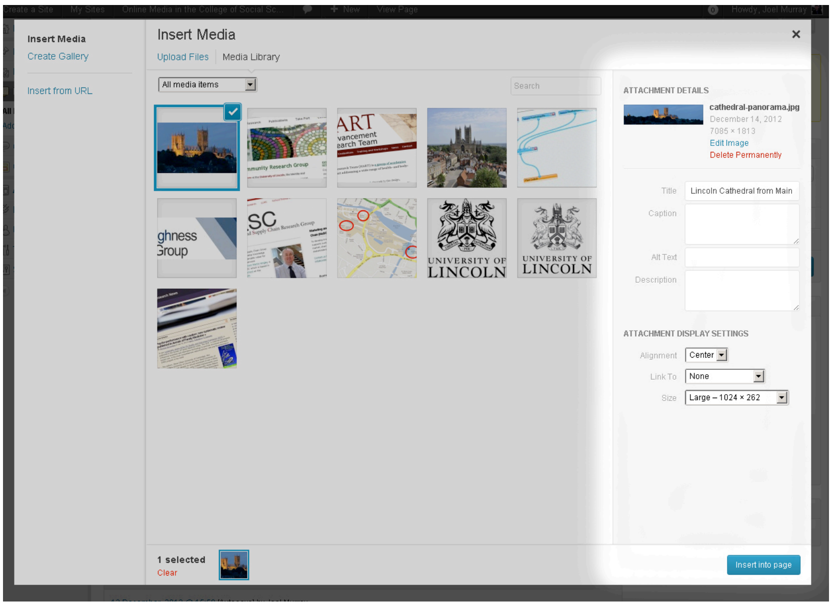

fig. 10: Adding a file to the Media Library via the *Add Media* button

The options to fill in for each file are as follows:

- **Title**
  This text helps you to identify the media for use in the future. If you are uploading a document (PDF, Word), this will be the text used when linking to it.
- **Caption**
  There is the option to caption the image.
- **Alternate Text (alt tag)**
  The alternate text is used specifically for images and is useful for two reasons: when an image cannot be displayed, this text will take its place to tell the user what image should be there; partially sighted or blind users who may use screen readers may not be able to tell what an image is and this text tells them what it is. Therefore, the alternate text should be an exact description of the image.
- **Description**
  A more detailed description of the image which will become a part of the file's information. You could credit the artist of an image here. This has no effect on the presentation of the image.
- **Alignment**
  Choose to align the image to the left or right with text wrapping around it or in the centre in between two paragraphs of text.
- **Size**
  Often, the original size of an image may be unsuitable. Either, you can prepare the image to be a suitable size before uploading or you can resize the image in the website. WordPress gives you several options depending on the original size of the file uploaded: Thumbnail, Medium, Large or Full-Size
- **Link URL**
  By default, the image on the webpage will hyperlink to the file location (which will be the image isolated on a browser page). This can either be left, removed or you can add an external URL to link to through the image.

Once the file has been added, it will then live in the Library and be available for use in future pages and posts through the *Add Media* button above the WordPress editor. To add the image to the page or post, simply click on *Insert into Post* (fig. 10).

Editing an Image Inside a Page or Post

Once an image is in the page or post, its size, name, alt text and more can be edited again by clicking on the image and selecting the *Edit Image* icon (fig. 11).

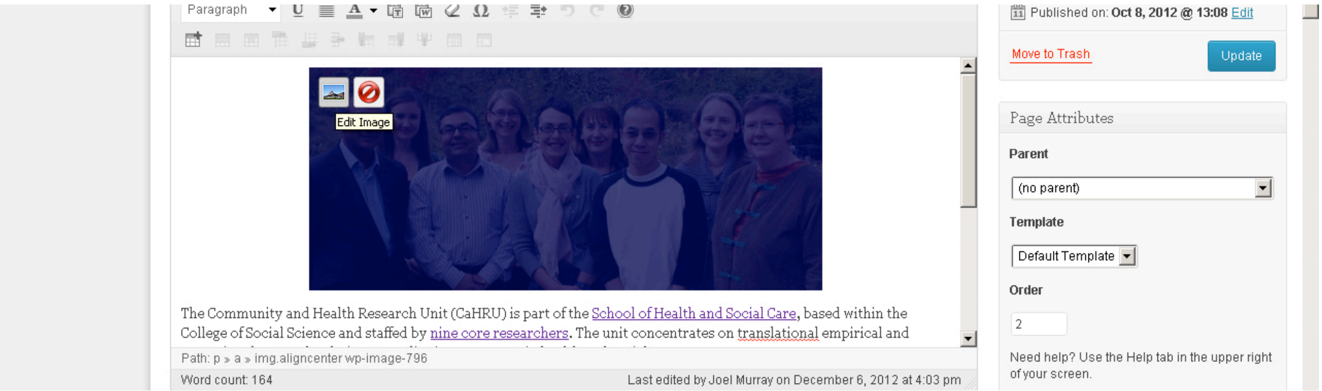

fig. 11: The *Edit Image* icon in a page/post.

You will then see a screen with several options to edit the image inside the page or post (fig. 12):

- **Size**
  The image can be resized to be smaller than the original in percentages. Having reduced the size of the image, you can increase its size again but not further than the original size.
- **Alignment, Title, Alternative Text, Caption, Link URL**
  You can change the alignment, Title, Alternative Text, Caption or Link URL of the image or set it if you forgot to do so earlier.

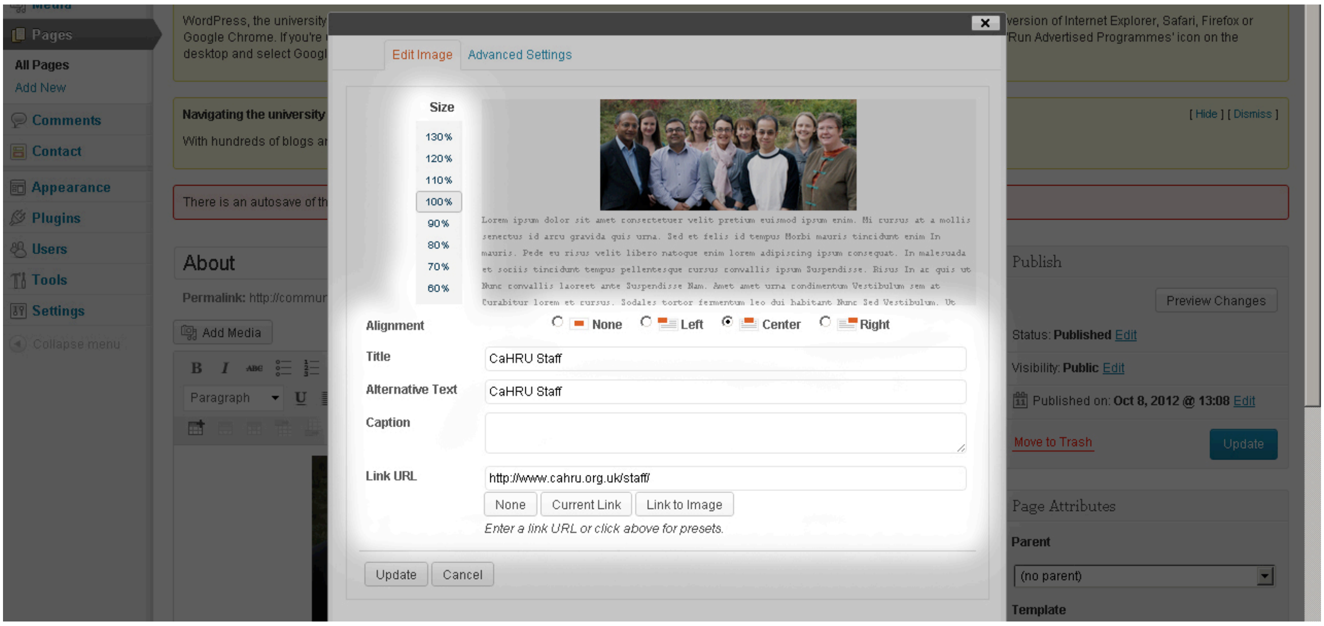

fig. 12: Editing an image from inside a page/post.

13 Blogging Tips for Research Groups

Keeping an up to date blog is important as it's the primary way of getting a message out to the public in an effective and accessible way. Blogs can be shared across the internet and posts on blogs can be used to engage with your audience.

As research groups, we want to show the research activity that goes on in groups and to encourage engagement with our research and raise the impact of the research.

The posts in your blog will be listed at the side of each page on the website to be accessed easily and can be fed to other web pages across the internet, if suitable (on corporate, university web pages, on a personal website etc.).

Blog posts need to be interesting and full of useful information but also easy to read. Below are some tips to help make the most of your research group's blog:

1. When you first start, it will seem like no one is reading. Don't give up; at the very worst it will give you a valuable log of the activity of the group and show activity to those who visit the website

2. Good examples of blog topics for research groups include:
    - Publications in journals, recently published books
    - Updates on work being done towards publications
    - Attendance at events
    - Reviews of events
    - Review of speeches/lectures/talks given
    - Comment on current affairs related to the group's research activities
    - New/leaving members
    - Opportunities to be involved in research
    - Opportunities to participate in studies

3. As well as writing about your group, write about what's important in your field to position the group as experts in that field; this will help develop the readership and encourage engagement

4. See what others are talking about in your area of research and comment on those topics; this gets your posts spread around and alerts more people, relevant to your field, to your existence

5. As a guideline, a blog post should be 500 words maximum; readers don't want to read an essay

6. Think about what tone of voice you will use for your blog and keep it consistent; first or third person, relational or corporate?

7. Links are the currency of the internet so use them when you can, to a point. Only use links to a website once on a page, however

8. Since pictures say a thousand words, use at least one image in your post; they brighten up the post and make it more readable. Using your own images is even better as other may link to the post to use it (remember to include an alt tag and

captions (see page 13!)

9. Remember to organise your posts clearly: create informative titles, add your posts to categories (useful for readers to find all posts related to a certain theme, for example ‘events’ or ‘publications’) and add tags to your posts too (useful to give a gist of what the post is about in the form of keywords which are also searchable)

10. Use the Insert More Tag after the first paragraph or so. This makes the news page more readable/scan-able and readers can then click through to the post’s page to read on further. Bear this in mind; you will need to persuade the reader to read on in the first paragraph (would your post suit an introduction maybe?)

11. If you use an acronym, always spell out the full organisation name first, with acronym in parentheses, and then use acronym from then on; this helps readers know who you are talking about.

eg. ‘The Policy Studies Research Centre (PSRC) conducts research in policy studies. Members of the PSRC include…’

12. Keep it up. If a blog isn’t going to be updated at least once a fortnight, there’s no point it being there; it will look outdated and make your group look inactive

13. Tell people about it! This can be done through email subscriptions or, most effectively, through sharing on social media (Twitter and Facebook); use plugins or services like Twitterfeed (twitterfeed.com) to do this for you.

Members Pages

Pages that have been set up to show the staff members that are involved with research groups, often called Members, Staff or People, use a table for the layout (fig. 13). The table has been given the attributes `cellspacing` (the space between each cell) and `cellpadding` (the space between the content in the cell and the edge of the cell) to help style the layout which can be easily edited in the HTML view of the page.

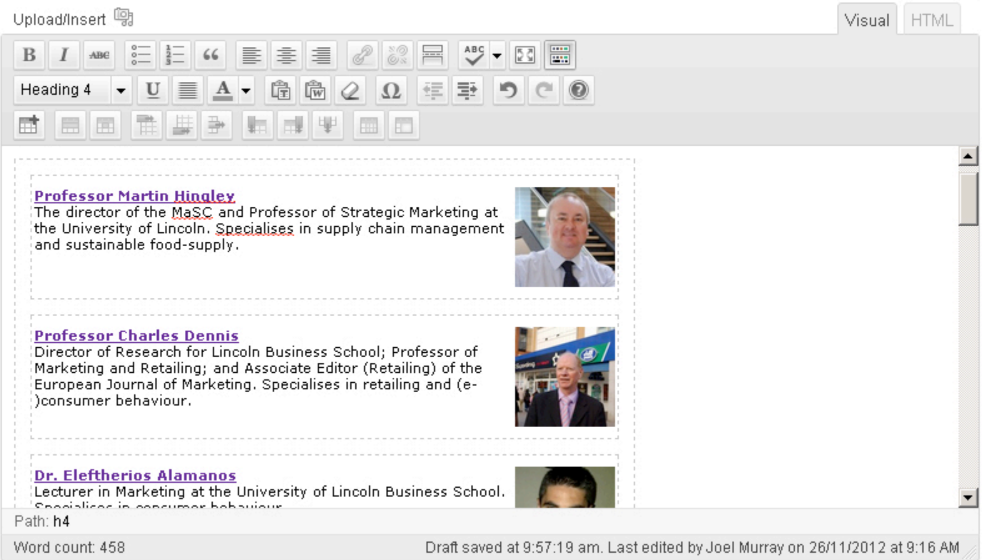

fig. 13: The table in the members page.

The table can also be edited by clicking on the *Show/Hide Kitchen Sink* icon and using the icons on the bottom row of the editor.

The images on these pages are sourced from the staff profile of the relevant staff member. To add an image from a staff profile, go to the relevant staff profile on staff.lincoln.ac.uk and right click on the image, selecting *Copy image URL*. Then, having clicked the *Upload/Insert* button, copy the URL into the box under the From URL tab and treat the image as any other image. Usually, this URL will take the form of 'http://photo.online.lincoln.ac.uk/*staffusername*'.

Research Project Pages

Some pages include examples of research projects which are styled as follows:

Networks in Socially Embedded Local Food Supply
Hingley, M.
Opportunity is seen to lie in niche (for example, local) markets and a social/ethical orientation. This research investigates network development in food retailing, in order to evaluate the role of retailer consumer co-operatives.

To style the title of the projects as it is (with a bigger font size and bold), you must enter Text mode in the page (by clicking on the *Text* tab next to the *Visual* tab). You will see that the content you have already inputted to the *Visual* mode of the editor will have automatically been entered here; all you need to do is surround the text with `<span id=”project”>` and `</span>`. For example:

```
<span id="project"><a title="Networks in Socially Embedded Local
Food Supply" href="http://eprints.lincoln.ac.uk/4240/"
target="_blank">Networks in Socially Embedded Local Food
Supply</a></span>
<strong><em><a title="Martin Hingley Profile"
href="http://phone.online.lincoln.ac.uk/mhingley"
target="_blank">Hingley, M.</a></em></strong>
Opportunity is seen to lie in niche (for example, local) markets and
a social/ethical orientation. This research investigates network
development in food retailing, in order to evaluate the role of
retailer consumer co-operatives.
```

The code that allows this style to work, which should be found in the Custom Headers and Footers plugin, is:

```
/* styling research projects lists */
span#project {font-size: 120%; font-weight: bold; }
```

Menus

The menu is one of the most important parts of a website as it is the primary way that a user gets around the site. Usually, the menu is located at the top of a website with dropdown menus to help navigate around the site easily. Menus can be very flexible, linking to other pages on the website, to pages away from the website or to different representations of your blog posts.

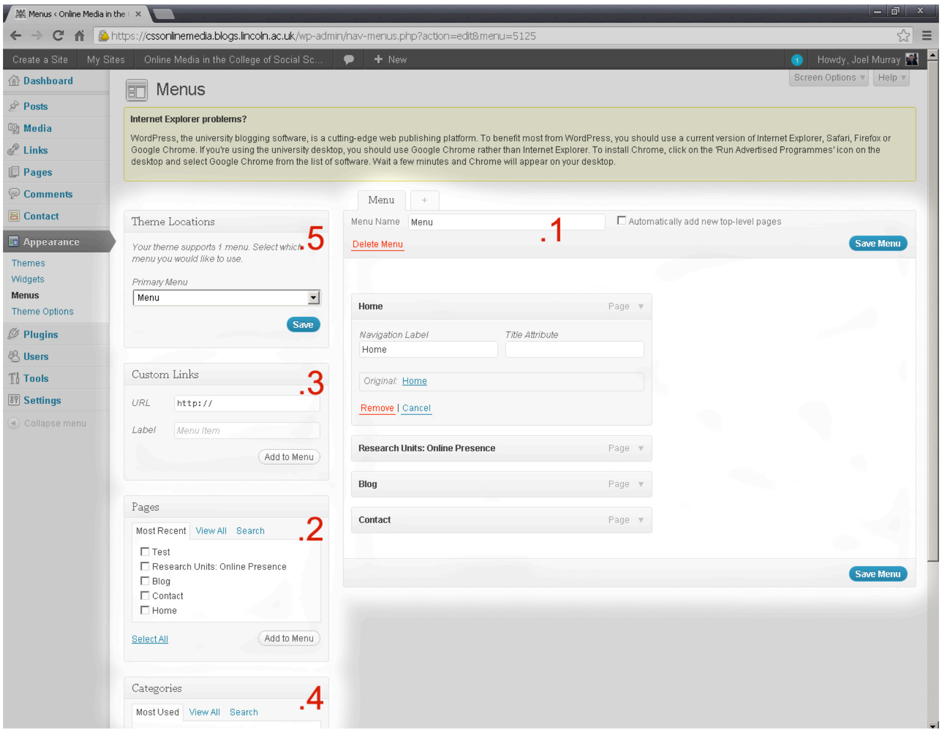

fig. 14: Menu Options

To create your menu, select *Appearance* on the left hand menu and click on *Menus*.

1. Give your menu a name (fig. 14.1). This is just for your reference in case you create multiple menu options. Each entry in the menu box can be expanded and the label can be changed; therefore the text that appears on the menu doesn't have to match the title of the page.
2. Add the pages that you want on the menu using the Pages box (fig. 14.2) by checking the relevant boxes and clicking 'Add to Menu'. They can then be dragged into order in the Menu box (fig. 14.1) and cascaded to create submenus.
3. You can add a link to an external website by inserting the relevant URL in the Custom Links box (fig. 14.3) and giving it a label (the text you want to appear in the menu for that link). This then must be dragged into order in the Menu box (fig. 14.1).
4. In addition to a standard blog page, you can create a page on your menu that shows blog posts from only one category. Do this by selecting your category from the Categories box (fig. 14.4) and again, drag it into order.
5. Finally, when your menu is ready, you can activate it on your site by selecting it in the Theme Locations box (fig. 14.5).

Website Appearance

Templates

By selecting *Appearance* and clicking on *Themes* you can see the host of templates that are available for websites on the University blog system. Some are custom made for the University but most are made by other web designers for WordPress users to utilise.

You can scroll through the templates or filter them to see what is available and you can preview what your website will look like if using that template by clicking on *Live Preview*. This will take you to the Manage Themes page (fig. 15) where you can change a certain amount of the options for the theme from the left menu. If you are happy with the changes, you can click *Save & Activate*.

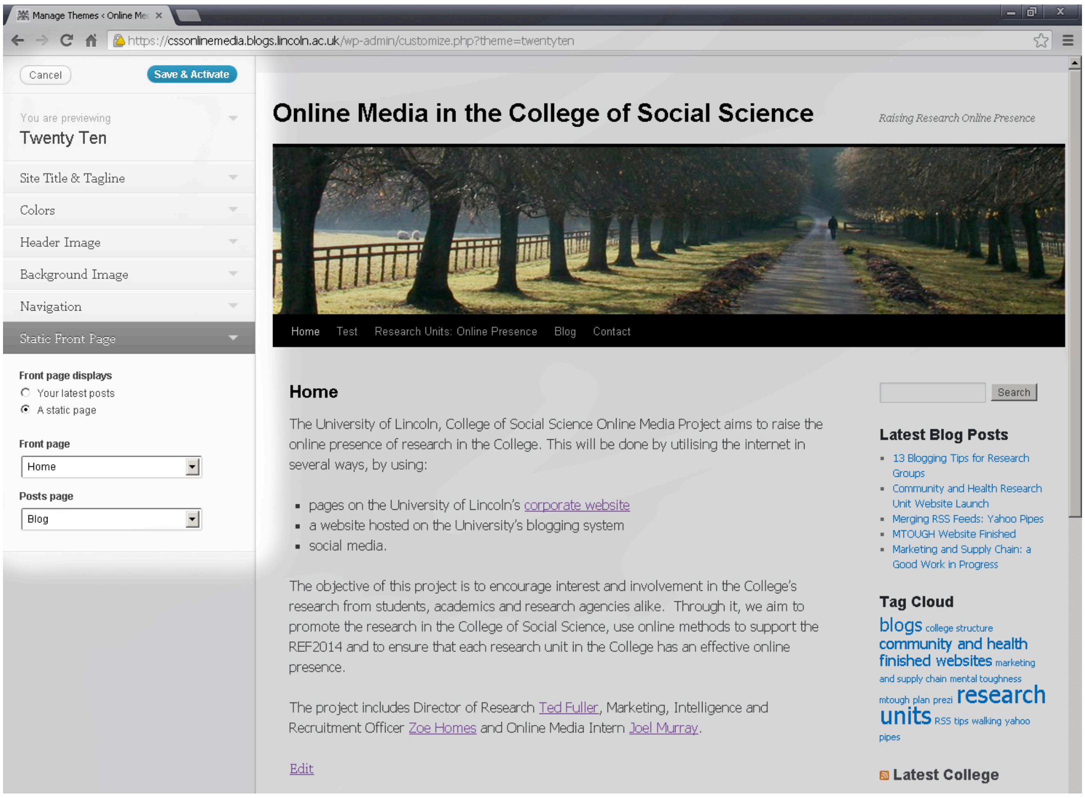

fig.15: The Manage Themes page

An important option to change is the 'Static Front Page' option. This designates whether the home page of the website will be a page that has been created or the blog posts or, if a page is designated as homepage, which page will host the blog posts. Therefore, it is important to create a blank page to host your blog posts if necessary to be designated here. This can also be changed under *Reading* in *Settings* (see page 24).

Other options available under *Appearance* include the option to change the website header (only available on certain themes) and other theme-specific options.

More changes can be made to the appearance of your website (for example fonts, colours etc.) using the Custom Headers and Footers plugin. However, this takes extra web skills and knowledge than needed for the most of WordPress. See page 22 for more information.

Sidebar Widgets

For most themes there is the option of a sidebar. This is an area on the website that is consistent throughout the site on every page. It is useful for information that is often changing or is most important for users to always be reminded of.

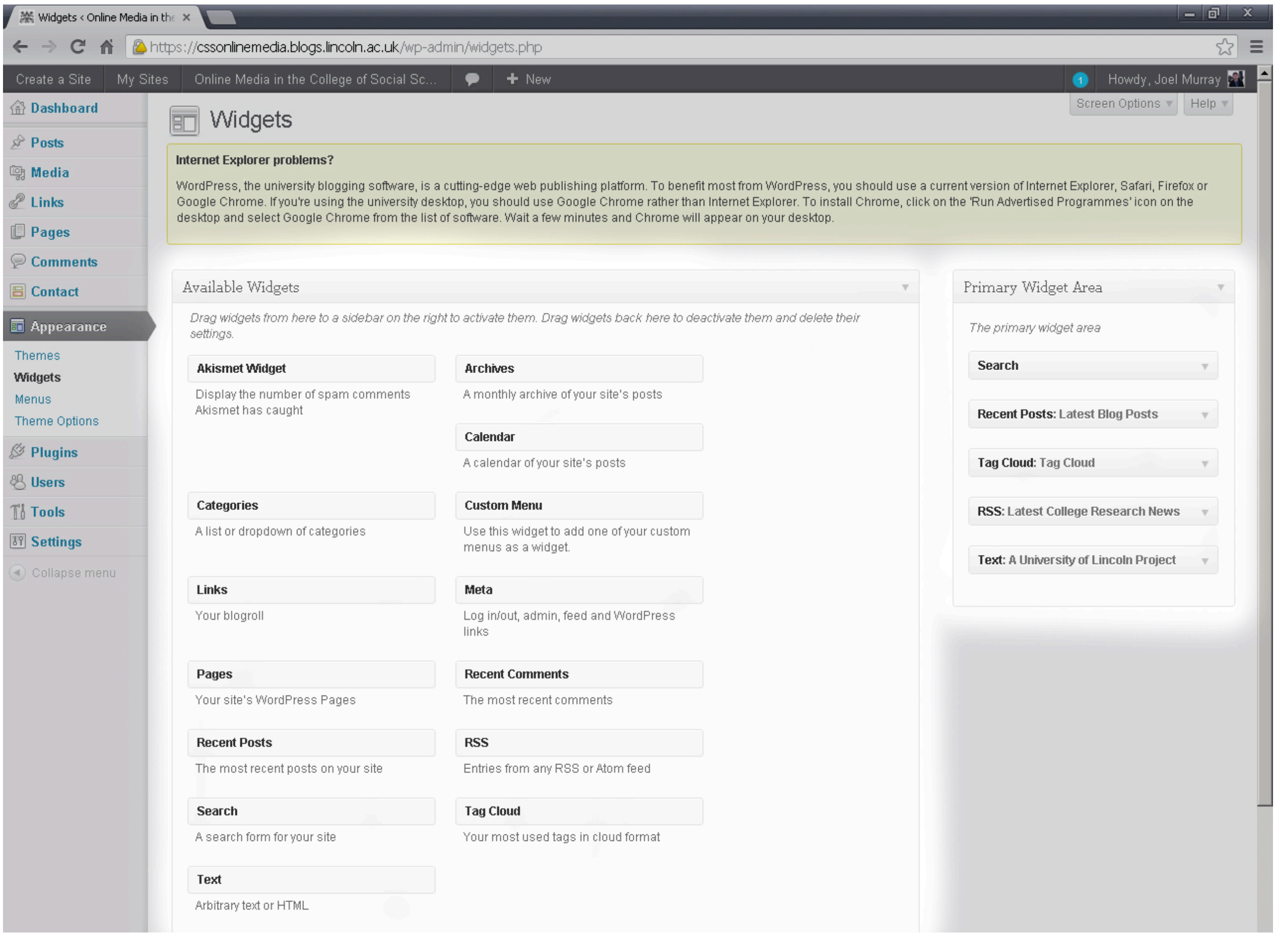

fig. 16: Widgets screen

Select *Appearance* and click on *Widgets* to see the Widgets screen (fig. 16). Sidebars are made up of 'widgets' which act like pieces of the puzzle that is the sidebar. They can be dragged from the 'Available Widgets' box to the 'Widget Area' and then into order to appear on the website's sidebar. The order auto-saves so all changes are made live on the website.

Widgets to take note of include:

- **Search**
  A text-box that users can use to search the whole website.
- **Recent Posts**
  Automatically lists the latest blog posts in order which users can click through to.
- **Text**
  Gives the ability to add any text possible, including HTML mark up (the ability to include images, videos or Facebook/Twitter widgets)

Plugins

Plugins give extra options to websites that often address a very specific task. There are hundreds of plugins in existence but only a certain amount available on the blog system currently (others can be added by request to CERD). To use a plugin, simply click on *Activate*.

Plugins of note include:

- **Contact Form 7**
  This plugin gives the option of a contact form to be included on a page. This can be adapted to any sort of form to be filled in and sent to an email address.
  To set-up your form, click the new Contact option in the left hand menu and edit a form. Fill in the content of the form in the Form box and the extra email details in the Mail box. You can use the *Generate Tag* option to add further fields to the form. When the form is finished, simply copy the code at the top of the page into the page you want the form on.

- **Floating Social**
  This plugin adds social media sharing options to each blog post's page, floating on the left of the content.
  Select *Settings* and then *Floating Social* to edit the plugin. Select which platforms you want to offer and fill in the further options below. Choose the same colour for the plugin background as the website background and select no border to have the social media buttons float without a box.

- **Custom Headers and Footers**
  This plugin gives the option to add text to the `<head>` section of the website, to the website footer and to the top and bottom of blog posts.
  The Meta Headers option gives the opportunity to add a `<style>` tag to the website and add further CSS to style the website template.
  For advice or tutorials for using CSS, see Codecademy (www.codecademy.com) or W3Schools (www.w3schools.com).

Users

WordPress is very collaborative software and it is easy to work with other staff members on a website. It is also possible to collaborate with external colleagues, but for these to be added to the University blog system, an extra request to CERD must be made.

To add a user:

1. Select *Users* and click on *Add User*. Enter the normal staff log on username(s) (ie. Karen Windle = kwindle) of those that you would like to join the website users list and choose which role each will have:
    - **Administrator** - Somebody who has access to all the administration features
    - **Editor** - Somebody who can publish and manage posts and pages as well as manage other users' posts, etc.
    - **Author** - Somebody who can publish and manage their own posts
    - **Contributor** - Somebody who can write and manage their posts but not publish them
    - **Subscriber** - Somebody who can only manage their profile
2. Click the *Add User* button and they will be added as a user immediately.

By clicking on *All Users*, you will see a list of all those included as a part of the website. Here you can remove users or change their roles.

Tools and Settings

There are a host of tools and settings to use for your website that can be accessed from the left hand menu. Not all need to be looked at but some to note are:

- **Import, Export and Delete Site (in Tools)**
  If for some reason, you would like to delete your website, here is the option to do so. There is also the option to export the current content of a site (posts, pages and media) and then import it again if you need to move it to another website.
- **Domain Mapping (in Tools)**
  Any domain that you own can be joined to your site (see page 28), taking the place of the example.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk web address. Choose which address you would like to use for your website and set that as the Primary Domain. The others listed will then redirect to this domain.
- **General (in Settings)**
  Some standard settings can be changed here. You can change the name of the whole website in the Site Title box.
- **Writing (in Settings)**
  Options specifically for writing blog posts. You can set the default category for a post to go in here.
- **Reading (in Settings)**
  Here you can select whether the homepage of your website will be the posts page or a static page. You can also choose how private your site will be here; from visible to only administrators of the site to visible to the whole world.
- **Discussion (in Settings)**
  There are plenty of options to select how comments are made and moderated on your blog posts here. You can also choose how comments are displayed.
- **Google Analytics (in Settings)**
  Here you can enter your Google Analytics tracking code (see page 26) to set up analytics on your website through your Google account.

Online Media Extras

A website is the best way to build a foundation for your online presence and there are plenty of other opportunities online to build on this foundation.

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

Unless a user is given the URL of a website or clicks to it from another place online, they must use a search engine if they are to find your website. Although there are many different search engines available, Google currently shares over 90% of the market[1] when it comes to searching in the UK.

The way that Google orders its searches is always changing but revolves mostly around keywords in a website's domain name and title and wording in the content of a page, starting at the top. It also considers how well a website is performing in relation to links into it from other websites; the theory being that the more other websites link into your website, the more useful and relevant it must be.

Here are some tips to follow in order to increase the SEO for your website:

- **Think about your domain name and site title**
  Using the right text for your domain name and site title means that people searching for those terms will be more likely to find your website.
- **Include the most important keywords at the beginning of your text**
  Use keywords that your audience will search for at the beginning of your content so that they will be found quickly by the search engine.
- **Add titles to links and images**
  Giving links and images helpful title attributes not only tells the user more about what they are seeing but gives you another opportunity to include text to be found by search engines. Use them wisely and don't just fill them with keywords. Also, add alternative text to images to tell users what the image is if it cannot be displayed or if the user is partially sighted.
- **Fill your website with useful content**
  If your website or blog has useful and interesting content, others will link to it from their websites or blog posts. This will, in turn, help to establish your website or blog as one that it worthy of linking to.
- **Tell others about your website**
  The more people see your website, the more popular it will get and the better optimised it will be for search engines. Include links to your website from your staff profile, from your personal website, from your email signature, and get people to know about your website!
- **Don't expect your website to be top of the search page automatically**
  SEO is a long-term investment and isn't a quick fix to getting your website out there. It takes time to establish a website and needs careful attention to optimise the content on your website.

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[1] The E Word, 2012: http://theeword.co.uk/info/search_engine_market.html

Analytics

Google provides a great, free tool to help see how your website is doing called Google Analytics (fig. 17). There is a huge variety of statistics available which can help you to understand what part of your website is doing well and which isn't.

How to Add a Website to Analytics

- Go to www.google.com/analytics and sign in using your Google Account
- Under the *Admin* tab, click the + *New Account* button
- Add the name of the website, the URL of the website, the industry and time zone
- Add a name to the account you will create (you can add multiple websites to one account)
- Click *Get Tracking ID*
- Enter the tracking ID into the box provided under *Google Analytics* (see page 24) on your website
- Analytics will begin to track statistics from the moment you save this tracking ID to your website
- To add another website to this account, click on the account name under the *Admin* tab and click + *Add New Property*
- To view your website, click on *All Accounts* on the left of the orange bar, and select the website from the account you have created. You can view customised Dashboards and services under *Home* or use the various features of Analytics from *Standard Reporting*.

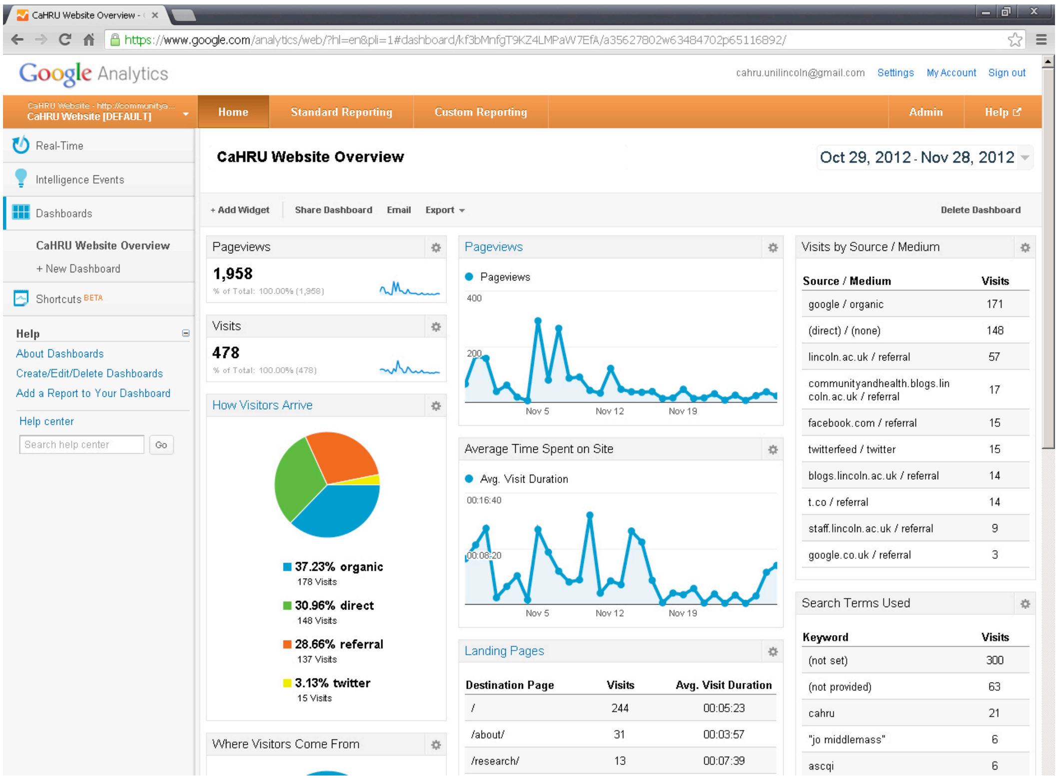

fig. 17: Google Analytics

Analytics Features

Google provides support with guidance on how to use Analytics here: http://support.google.com/analytics/. Some features to note, however, are:

- **Pageviews and Visits**
  ‘Pageviews’ tells you the number of individual pages that were accessed in the given time. ‘Visits’ tells you the number of times someone has visited the website as a whole (they may have visited on two occasions and may have viewed multiple pages during a visit). These features are important to see how much traffic is coming to your website overall.
- **Average Time Spent on Site**
  Self-explanatory; this tells you the average time that a user has spent on your website across all pages.
- **Visits by Source**
  This feature tells you how users came to the website; be it through a search engine (organic), directly by entering the URL into the address bar or by clicking on a link from another website (referral).
- **Landing Pages**
  ‘Destination Page’ is the page that a user first arrived at during their visit to the site.
- **Keywords**
  Lists which search terms lead a user to your website.

Domain Names

By default, every website on the University blog system will have a URL that ends in '.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk'. It is possible to buy a domain name to replace this and 'map' it to your website. Domain names are relatively cheap to buy and add a great deal of professionalism to your website, let alone helping to raise your search engine optimisation and making your website easier to remember.

There are many service providers who you can host domain names with and a recommended one is gandi.net. On the home page of gandi.net, you can search for the domain of your choice to see which suffixes are available and see the price next to them.

When you have chosen your domain name, create an account and pay. Once you have bought your domain, log in on gandi.net and click on your domain name. Then:

- Click on *Create a copy* under *Zone files* (you can name it what you like).
- Click on *Edit the zone* under *Zone files*.
- Click on *Create a new version* on the next screen.
- Now, change the value under @, type A, to 195.195.10.15 (this is the University blog server address) and click Submit.
- Next, change the value under www, type CNAME, to the address of your blog (with .blogs.lincoln.ac.uk after it) without the http:// and including a . at the end. Click *Submit*.
- Then click on *Activate this version*. This is the end of the work needed on gandi.net.
- On the blog dashboard, under *Tools* on the left hand menu, click on *Domain Mapping*.
- Under *Add new domain*, type in the domain name you now own and click *Add*. Add the domain name again, this time with www. before it, and click *Add* again but also check the box next to *Primary domain for this blog*.
- It may take some time to activate but then, the addresses on this screen (both your old blog address and your domain without the www.) will now redirect to the address selected as the primary domain. Your website will now be viewable from your domain.

Google Account

Google offers a host of free tools online for you to utilise and creating a Google account for your research group to use them is easy (https://accounts.google.com/SignUp). Tools of note include:

- **Gmail**
  Google offers 10GB of free email storage to every Google Account which could be used as a shared email account for your group. Alternatively, you can set your Gmail account to forward to a University based email address.
    - To create a University based email address (*name*@lincoln.ac.uk), contact the support desk (support.lincoln.ac.uk).
- **YouTube**
  Your Google account can link to an easy-to-set-up YouTube account. This will allow you to host video content for free and embed this video on your website. This is a powerful tool but remember that YouTube is often censored in certain countries[2] and therefore may not reach an international audience.
- **Calendar**
  Google Calendar is a really useful way to keep an online calendar that can sync to multiple devices: mobile phones, tablets, your personal Google account wherever you are in the world. They can also be added and shared to other accounts and even embedded on a website where users can click on an event to get more information. This will also update automatically as you edit the calendar on Google.

Google Calendar

You can create multiple calendars that can serve different purposes and be shared between Google accounts. On calendar.google.com, use the triangle next to *My calendars* to create a new calendar.

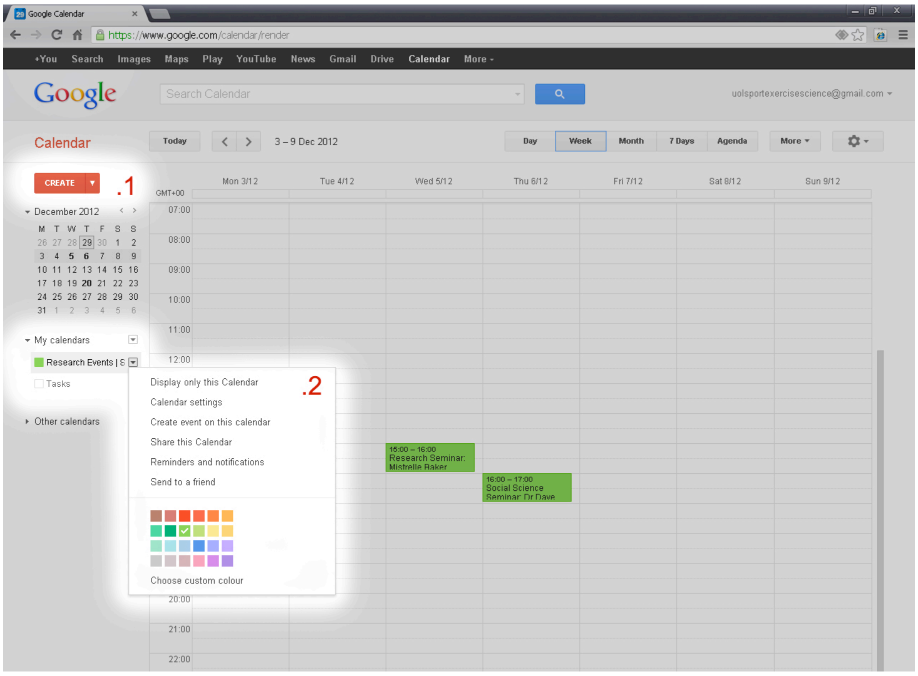

fig. 18: Google Calendar

[2] OpenNet Initiative, 2012: http://opennet.net/youtube-censored-a-recent-history

You can add an event to any of your calendars simply by clicking on *Create* (fig. 18.1) and filling in the correct details. You can select which calendars to show by clicking on the coloured box next the relevant calendar under *My calendars*. By clicking on the triangle next to the relevant calendar here (fig. 18.2), you can choose more options to do with this calendar.

To embed a calendar on your website:

- Click on *Share this Calendar* on the triangle menu next to the calendar you would like to share
- Next to *Embed This Calendar* , click *Customise the colour, size and other options*
- You can edit the visual options on this screen (fig. 19.1), choosing: which elements to show, which view to be default, which day the week starts on and which calendars to display.
- It is important to edit the width and height to match the webpage you would like to embed the calendar on. As you edit these options, you will receive a preview on the same screen.
- When you have finished with your customisation, copy the code at the top of the screen (fig. 19.2)
- Paste this in the Text section of the page you would like it to appear on, on the WordPress *Dashboard*. It will now update on this page whenever you update the calendar through Google.

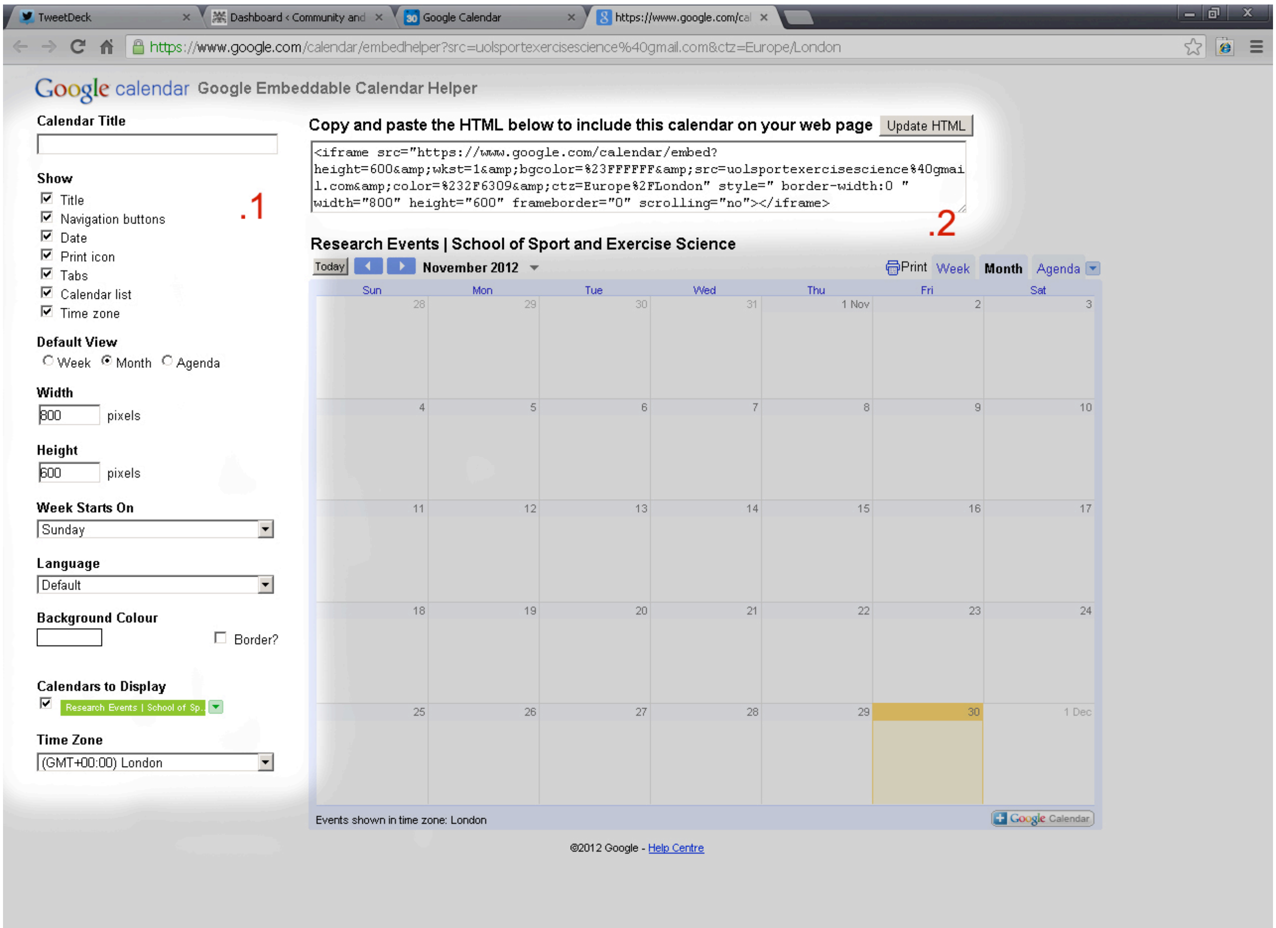

fig. 19: Customising your embeddable Google Calendar

MailChimp

MailChimp is an online service which allows you to send attractive and engaging email to a large number of recipients. Having set up an account, you can create a 'list' of recipients and a 'campaign' of an email to send out. The editor is an easy drag-and-drop feature and the service is free to send up to 12,000 emails to up to 2,000 people per month.

If you think that this could be something your group could use, as an email newsletter or a sort of press release, MailChimp have put together a useful guide to getting started with their software (http://mailchimp.com/resources/guides/getting-started-with-mailchimp/).

Social Media

Social media is a powerful online tool which utilises the social networks in each person's life to broadcast a message to them. Starting with content online, this is shared to others online who, if they like it, will then share with the people they know online. Therefore, social media gives the opportunity to reach an exponential amount of people that may have been previously unavailable.

Although there are a huge number of social media platforms available, each has a different purpose and is useful to achieve different objectives. For example:

- Facebook pages are useful for organisations with a big fan base that want to share their support with their friends
- Pinterest and Instagram are useful for organisations that are very visual and use imagery for their messages
- YouTube is useful for organisations that use audio-visual content for their messages
- LinkedIn is useful for reaching professionals on a professional level but doesn't really have a presence for organisations
- Foursquare is useful for an organisation that has a specific location and product to sell

For research groups, none of these may be suitable for promoting the work that goes on. However, a social media platform that is ideal for research groups' online presence, especially those who keep a blog feed, is Twitter.

Twitter

If your research group has the time to invest, Twitter may be a worthwhile tool to take advantage of. Here are some tips for research groups that want to use Twitter:

- Twitter allows you to update others with what you're doing in real-time
- Twitter also allows you to search for certain terms in order to see what people are saying on a certain topic
    - People can use a common term to collate their thoughts on a topic using hashtags which use a # sign followed by that common term (ie. including #vote in tweets about voting at an election)
- Photos, videos and webpages can be shared on Twitter and tweets can be 'retweeted' to forward their information and affirm what they are saying
- Twitter, in essence, is a marketing channel to let the public know you exist and to let the public know what is happening
    - The more you can engage and others engage with you, the more marketing collateral you can get

    - Because of this, it is ***essential*** that it is keep up to date, active and accessible to people who may contact you through Twitter

Accounts

- A Twitter account is represented by a Twitter handle (a name following an @ sign) with a general name, a profile image, a profile header and a description and website link
    - These are important to use wisely, as a Twitter account is often the first impression someone might get of your brand so they need to be eyecatching, recognisable and memorable
- Blogs can be linked to a Twitter account to post automatically when a blog post is published, using services such as Twitterfeed (www.twitterfeed.com)
- Following accounts lets you see all their posts, which appear on your 'Timeline'
- You can have notifications of follows, mentions, direct messages and more sent to apps on mobile devices and/or to an email account
- Buttons to follow accounts and widgets to show recent tweets can be embedded on websites to promote your Twitter account. Find these at https://dev.twitter.com/

Engagement

- Twitter posts, or Tweets, can be a maximum of 140 characters, which includes spaces and links
- All your tweets are posted on the Timelines of those who follow you and can be found through public searches
- Posts should be interesting, engaging and fun
    - Tweet about relevant and current things to the area you're interested in (see what others are talking about in that area and join the conversation)
    - Images and videos are the best to engage and share with others
    - Use tweets to spread news and back it up with a blog that includes more information on the topic
- Replying to other accounts acts as a public message to that account (it is possible to message privately with a 'Direct Message') in which the @ symbol will be the first character of the tweet
    - These tweets can only be seen by those who follow both accounts
- It is good practice to mention accounts in tweets
    - Eg. 'We're going to the @RCGP conference this weekend.'
      'Out latest research can be found at www.example.com/research by @nirosiriwardena.'
    - The more you do this, the more others will do the same for you

Other uses

- Following news producers can help you keep up to date with current affairs
    - The nature of Twitter means this news is up to the minute
    - Twitter is used thoroughly by journalists, so those journalists in your area are good accounts to follow (they often break news on Twitter before anywhere else)
    - Making relationships with these news providers can benefit you in that they may share news that you later produce
- Make 'Twitter lists' to organise the accounts you follow into categories and get the relevant information you need when you need it

Further Support

WordPress

If you're stuck with WordPress or the University blogs, there are a few ways that you can find help and support away from this guide:

1. Browse the official documentation for WordPress.com. In most cases, it will apply to your site, too
2. There is a contextual 'Help' button in the top-right corner of every WordPress administration page
3. Read First Steps With WordPress
4. For a good overview of how to understand and use the WordPress Dashboard, watch these short video tutorials
5. Read the WordPress community documentation about each of the administration panels.
6. Watch WordPressTV
7. Ask Google
8. Ask Joss Winn to join your class, team or department meeting or faculty away day. He can provide training in an hour or just an overview in 20 minutes
9. Book onto a WordPress workshop (staff) via the Portal
10. Log a support request

The University blog system was set-up and is maintained by Joss and his team in CERD and they are more than willing to help you out if you get stuck or need support.

Corporate Website and Staff Profiles

It is important to link the pages on the corporate website (www.lincoln.ac.uk) to your group's website but these pages are maintained in a different process. Each school has a staff member designated to be able to make changes on these pages and the Webteam in the Communications, Development and Marketing department are also available to help.

For help and advice on these pages, contact the Webteam at webteam@lincoln.ac.uk.

Staff profiles are edited by logging in to http://staff.lincoln.ac.uk.

If the details that you cannot change are incorrect or out-of-date (name, title, contact details) then you can email employeeupdate@lincoln.ac.uk to have them changed.

For anything else to do with the staff profile system, contact the Webteam at webteam@lincoln.ac.uk.