changing policies and pressures within the higher education sector have led Birkbeck to refocus some activities and to embark on new areas over recent years.

For the first time in 2014 our new three-year undergraduate programmes recruited more students than our traditional four-year degrees. We have also intensified our work with corporate partners to finance scholarships and capital projects, and develop mentoring programmes. As the first wave of undergraduates to have studied under the post-2012 funding regime graduate in 2015 with significant tuition fee debt, Birkbeck is paying particular attention to ensuring that our postgraduate offering is made as accessible and as appealing as possible to this cohort.

**Development and alumni relations**

Our fundraising team continues to generate support to assist students in financial need and to facilitate cross-College projects. £1.1m was raised in 2013–2014 from over 1,800 donors, with gifts ranging from £5 to £148,000. The 1823 Circle, which was established in 2012, now has 23 donors each making annual gifts of between £5,000 and £25,000.

The College has developed new corporate partnerships with Santander, ArcelorMittal and PricewaterhouseCoopers (see also pp8–9). Their involvement brings rewards that go beyond the financial, and we anticipate this area continuing to grow as companies become increasingly interested in working with the College and our student body to further Birkbeck’s unique mission.

As ever, student support is the focus of many donors’ generosity, with a noticeable emphasis on postgraduate study, where there is very limited external funding available. The majority of donations come from alumni, who also contribute their time, knowledge and expertise.

The number of alumni involved in mentoring and volunteering programmes has nearly doubled in the last year. Over 300 prospective, current and international students have benefited from these initiatives with a tangible impact on student retention and recruitment (as seen on pp18-19).

**College finances**

The College’s total income was £101,463,000, an increase of 5.4% on the previous year, thanks to continuing strong growth of student numbers at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. A focus on strong financial management has resulted in a surplus of over 6.5%, which combined with the surplus from the previous three years leaves the College with an increase in cash and current investments of over £22.2m over the same period. The College now has a sound financial basis on which it can plan and build for the future.

**Green agenda**

We continue our partnership with other Bloomsbury colleges to improve environmental performance. A new Carbon Management Plan is now in place to help guide our carbon reduction efforts. The plan sets out initiatives that will reduce the environmental impact of our operations and planned growth, and will help deliver a 10% reduction in carbon emissions from the current levels by 2020–2021.

Via our environmental programme ‘the Greething’, we are mobilising the Birkbeck community to make small changes that together will make a big difference to reducing our carbon footprint.

In September 2014 we renewed our Fairtrade Accreditation for another two years.

**Outlook**

During the coming year we will continue to focus our attention on working with partners and donors, to ensure that we are able to offer our students the support they need to succeed in their education and to develop the skills that employers require, through our undergraduate and growing postgraduate scholarship provision, as well as opportunities to network with professionals and employers through networking and other programmes.

The College’s strong financial position, successful student recruitment strategies and forward-thinking leadership mean I am confident that we will be able to make the most of the opportunities that present themselves in this continuously changing environment.

The number of alumni involved in mentoring and volunteering programmes has nearly doubled in the last year.