

Places of Encounter.

A few days ago, I was at Roman Camp in Bangor. If you haven't been there, you must! It's a high point, a gem within walking distance of anyone who lives in or near the city. The views are exceptional, and it is a good reminder that we are living in one of the most beautiful places on earth. The 360 degree views are amazing, water, mountains, fields and sky, not to mention the pier and a glimpse of the island.

It is a place of encounter. A place of refreshment. A place of renewal.

Whether you are a person of faith or not, wild places like this take us outside of ourselves and allow us to think bigger thoughts, to consider bigger issues and simply to be grateful for our surroundings. We might want to say thank-you to God, to nature or to our parents for encouraging us to come to such an amazing place. We might just want to 'be'.

When times are hard, we are often oblivious to our surroundings and when we are fed up or despairing, our bodies naturally slump. We look down, often at our feet, more often, at gadgets that do little to lift our mood or cheer us up.

If only we looked up more!

If you're fairly new to Bangor, you'll still be discovering all the wonders it has to offer.

When we arrived, it felt like an assault on the senses. There was so much to see and experience, especially the natural beauty of the place.

Looking up, especially on a hilltop enables us to come out of ourselves, to experience something more than we are, and to dream dreams and hopes for the future. After all, that's what University is all about isn't it?

Education, the experience of being away from home, a long way from home for many of you, is all about widening horizons, is all about learning to breathe in a different way.

At the moment, much in life is uncertain.

We are still finding our way in what has become a new reality, a new way of being. We are trying to work out how to study safely and effectively, whilst also having a good time and making new friends. However intense or stressful your time in Bangor may get, always remember to look up, to climb a hill and to experience all that this place offers.