

# LIVUNI PEOPLE

**4th Edition Autumn 2022**

**From LA to San Francisco:**

**Read about one colleague's incredible 545-mile cycling journey across California.**



# FOREWORD



Welcome to the fourth instalment of our LivUniPeople Magazine! I am delighted to introduce this edition, which has a “Community” focus, and showcases some of the impressive community achievements that University staff have supported, both locally and internationally. In this edition, we catch up with a number of colleagues from across the University who have taken on challenges to fundraise for fantastic causes. Kevin Hornblower and colleagues from Shaping Futures share

their experience of the Manchester Marathon for

local Liverpool charity “Kind”, who provide support to disadvantaged young people across Liverpool. What started as a way to keep fit and stay connected with colleagues during the pandemic turned into the challenge of running a marathon for a truly worthwhile cause.

Eli Saetnan from The Academy tells us about her extraordinary 545-mile journey cycling from San Francisco to Los Angeles over seven days to fundraise for California-based AIDS charities who offer vital support across their LGBTQ+ community. Eli shares some invaluable tips on how she managed to prepare for the journey, and how she coped with the searing Californian temperatures.

We also celebrate the hard work of our Veterinary and Equine nurses by chatting to Louise Dale and Jane Devaney, two of our Leahurst Veterinary Nurses, who tell us about their inspiring career journeys and share their passion for their profession and caring for animals within the local community.

I am always so pleased to read about the amazing things our staff do, often in their own time, to help our community. It’s truly inspiring to hear some of these amazing stories and learn about some of the really selfless things our colleagues do for such good causes. You will also notice that there are a number of stories about our wonderful Technical colleagues, which will now be a regular feature in LivUniPeople magazine. I thoroughly enjoyed learning more about some of the fascinating work our Technicians do, and I’m sure you will too.

I hope you all enjoy reading this edition as much as I did and I wish you all a positive start to the new academic year. Happy reading.

**Professor Dinah Birch**

Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Cultural Engagement

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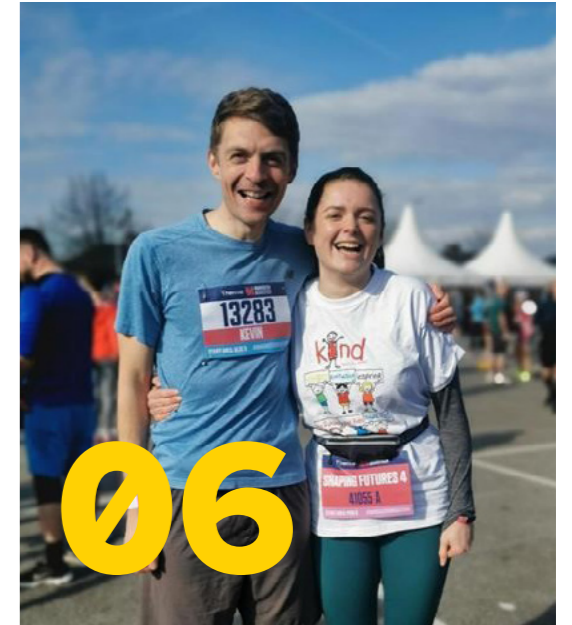
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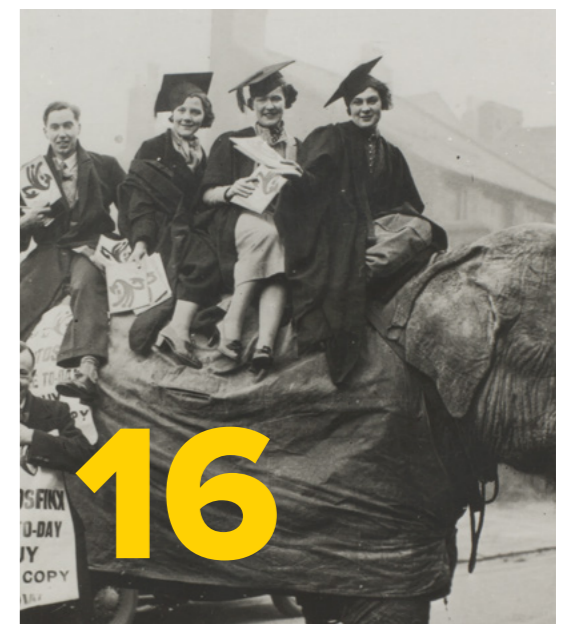
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# SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERING

## Christine Todd, Head of UK Recruitment, tells us about her role as a volunteer School Governor.

### Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and what you do at the University?

I'm Head of UK Recruitment and I've worked at the University for 17 and a half years. I'm responsible for working with academic departments and Professional Services to secure the intake targets for the University across undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes from UK students.

### Can you tell us about your volunteering role as School Governor?

I'm a School governor at two schools, Wirral Grammar School for Girls and North Liverpool Academy and I was first approached 10 years ago by Wirral Grammar School because myself and the team worked very closely with a number of target schools and colleges, and they could see potential from having somebody working at the University on their governing body. A successful governing body will look to have representatives from different sectors with different experience and skill sets, and they felt insight from a University perspective would be quite



Above: Christine Todd.

valuable. It also provides me and my team with insight back from the school as well. I can comment on their school improvement plan and how the school runs and you get to know what their priorities are, how they are financed and how they're structured. I'm also on their curriculum committee which has been really valuable, especially when there's any qualification reforms that the school will be thinking about. It's opened up that two-way conversation in terms of what experience I can offer the school but also what insight I can bring back to the University from how schools are run for undergraduate recruitment.

### How often do you do it?

I attend the main meetings four times per year, and in advance of that I'll make sure I'm abreast of all of the developments within the schools, so I'll go through the papers and ensure I've read and understood the matters of business being put forward, I'll review things like school development

University staff have really important skills to offer ...it can be a development opportunity but also it's a really good opportunity to contribute to the leadership and improvement of schools.

plans, financial reports and essentially reporting on all aspects of the running of the school, everything from attendance to attainment.

I also attend the curriculum committee meetings three times per year, and then there's the involvement in other aspects of the running of the school, which is based on how much time and capacity you have, it can be anything from celebratory events such as prize giving or a music concert, right through to and being involved with things like staff appeals. It's quite flexible and you can dictate what time you put in other than those committee times based on your availability and the school understands that because you are a volunteer.

### What's the most rewarding part?

I think it's a good development opportunity and you can learn new transferable skills because whilst you're there representing your area of expertise, there's a whole range of other elements of the running of the school which you can get involved in. This involves looking at their management accounts and learning about financial reports and building transferable skills and feeling part of the achievements of the school, especially where you know as a governing body, you have made decisions which have resulted in positive outcomes, you can feel part of those achievements and feel proud of what the school has been able to achieve. It's rewarding to celebrate their achievements with them.

### What do you enjoy the most about it?

I like hearing from the staff first-hand

about how they may implement the curriculum or if they're sharing any positive results from their academic department. I always think that's nice to hear and to learn about what they're doing to improve things within their department. I also enjoy observing the students themselves at an assembly or a special activity around Christmas time.

### Can anyone become a School Governor?

Yes absolutely. There's information on our [website](#) and a [link](#) on the volunteering section of the University's website on how to become a school governor. We work with an organisation called [Governors for Schools](#) and they do the matchmaking between the volunteer and the school vacancy. University staff have really important skills to offer and if it is an opportunity they think they'd be interested in, I'm more than happy to have an informal chat to talk more about what it involves. It can be a development opportunity but it's also a really good opportunity to contribute to the leadership and improvement of schools. Anybody can get involved and no prior knowledge is needed. The University also recognises this as volunteering so you can get a certain amount of time allocated to do it.

## Find out more

If you're interested in learning more about becoming a School Governor, visit the [website](#) or email [schgov@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:schgov@liverpool.ac.uk) for more information.

## FOCUS ON FUNDRAISING

Kevin Hornblower from Shaping Futures shares his experience of running with fellow team mates in the Manchester Marathon for Liverpool-based charity 'Kind'.



Left to right: David Maitland, Shannen Dabson, Michaela O'Connell, and Kevin Hornblower.

# TEAM WORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK.



Above: Kevin Hornblower.

### Can you tell us a bit about yourself and what you do the University?

I work for Shaping Futures which is part of the national UniConnect programme and we work on behalf of all higher education institutions within the city region to deliver outreach to schools, trying to get students into University who traditionally wouldn't go. I've been Head of Programme for 3 months and have been with the programme since 2017.

### What made you want to take part in the Manchester Marathon?

It was something we thought of to bring the team together. When we first started working from home, we set up a health and wellbeing channel on Teams and would set each other

challenges, sharing how far we'd ran or cycled or how many steps we'd done that week. Then we wanted to set a challenge across the whole team and we came up with this idea, and six of us signed up to do it: Myself, David Maitland, Rupert French, Victoria Brooks, Shannen Dabson and Michaela O'Connell.

We wanted something we could continue to do now that we're back on campus, and if we could do something for charity as well, that would be even better. We wanted something that everyone could get involved in and with the charity element, people who didn't want to run could still help fundraise.

### Had any of you ran a marathon before?

I'd ran a few before, but a few of the team hadn't so this was their first race,

so I knew what I was signing myself up for but I hadn't done one for a number of years so it was much tougher than I remember.

### Can you tell about the charity you were supporting and why you chose to support them?

We ran for **Kind**, it's a local charity working with young people across Liverpool who may be disadvantaged or need some additional support. We wanted to support a charity that linked in with the work we that we do. We work with lots of young people across the region and they're also one of the nominated University **charities**. When we approached them, Stephen Yip (Founder and CEO) himself got in touch and invited us down and we went to see the centre which isn't far from campus, it's just by the cathedral at the bottom of Hope Street and we were able to see some of the kids and get a real sense of the work that they

It was something we thought of to bring the team together. When we first started working from home, we set up a health and wellbeing channel on Teams and would set each other challenges, sharing how far we'd ran or cycled or how many steps we'd done that week.

do and the people that benefit, which was great. Stephen is a larger than life character so he was happy to show us around, he's a marathon runner himself so he set us the challenge of trying to beat his time, which unfortunately we didn't do.

### What training did you all do to prepare?

I didn't train much as I should have done but we tried to run together as much we could, it was difficult as we were working from home but we managed to do the campus 5K together at the beginning of the year, but it was so windy that day that all the bollards blew down, so we just created our own run around campus. Beyond that, I was just trying to build up to the distance over a period of months, so I'd start out with shorter runs and then slowly built up towards 20 miles or so before the end. We all ran once or twice together before that and we'd

...it's just that sense of achieving something that's quite hard and thinking back on all the work you put in to it, making sure you do actually do yourself justice on the day in terms of your performance and making all the hard work worthwhile.



Photo: Kevin Hornblower with colleague Michaela O'Connell.

meet up as smaller groups to run occasionally too.

#### **What was it like actually running it on the day?**

The day itself was great, it was a well organised, good run. There were lots of people out to support us lining the streets and it's the first time I've ever ran with any anyone else which was nice. Normally, I just go on my own, so it was nice to have company all the way around which made it a much more enjoyable experience and maybe not as difficult as it's been in the past. The atmosphere was like a carnival and because it was so well supported and we ran together, it also wasn't as painful as I'd anticipated.

#### **How did you keep yourself motivated running 26 miles?**

No one wanted to be that person who let the others down so we all pulled each other along. I had a time in mind that I wanted to beat which was under 4 hours so that kept me motivated to keep going, and I managed to do it just about. But beyond that, it's just that sense of achieving something that's quite hard and thinking back on all the work you put in to it, making sure you do actually do yourself justice on the day in terms of your performance and making all the hard work worthwhile.

#### **What was the most enjoyable part of it?**

For me it was actually running it with other people for once, which was a nice change for me and then obviously crossing the finish line, but also that you've actually done something is always nice for charity as well.

#### **How much did you raise for Kind?**

We raised over £1000 and that went to towards supporting their Easter appeal, so they were able to provide large family size food hampers that cost around £60.00 that they donated to families who required it over the Easter holidays.

### **Find out more.**

[Kind](#) is a Liverpool-based charity who work with thousands of children, young people and their families across Liverpool and the greater Merseyside area to help tackle disadvantage.

### **Did you know?**

Staff can use up to 3 paid days per academic year to participate in volunteering activities. Find out more on the Liv to Give webpages [here](#).

# FROM SAN FRANCISCO TO LOS ANGELES.

**Eli Saetnan tells us about her incredible journey cycling from San Francisco to Los Angeles for California-based AIDS charities.**

Eli with her bike next to the bus which took riders back to camp each day.



### **Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and what you do at the University?**

I'm an academic developer within the Academy and have worked at the University for 6 years. My primary role is supporting academic colleagues from across the institution in their own professional development, which includes teaching postgraduate programmes in academic practice and also supporting colleagues with scholarship development such as getting papers published in academic practice journals.

### **Can you tell us a little bit about what the California AIDS life cycle is and why you wanted to support this charity?**

The **California AIDS life cycle** is a fundraising charity bike ride for two California based charities. The cycle itself is a 545 mile ride from San Francisco to Los Angeles over seven days, which is an average of 77 miles a day for seven days.

The event has been running for around 20 years and the two charities who run the event are the San Francisco AIDS Foundation and the Los Angeles LGBT Centre. They're both completely funded by charitable donations and use those donations to support their community with HIV testing and medication, as well as providing support for people who have tested positive for HIV or who are living with AIDS.

There's also associated challenges that this community face in terms of risk of homelessness, and the charities provide support to avoid that or to get people back into housing and employment. They also provide wider STD screening services and work towards policy and campaigning for the LGBTQ+ community, as well as campaigning for resources for researching HIV and AIDS.

### **What made you want to get involved?**

I've done this ride twice before, but long enough ago that I'd forgotten how hard it was. I initially found out about it because my aunt did the ride about 15 years ago and she grew up in San Francisco in the midst of the AIDS pandemic and is part of that community herself. What motivates me to keep coming back is seeing the amount of hate and struggle that the LGBTQ+ community face, particularly in the states. You see all the anti-gay, anti-trans laws coming back again, and again, and I wanted to do something positive and this is a way for me to support to that community and to show that a way of being an ally is supporting people, fundraising, and raising awareness.

### **How did you prepare for the event?**

Well there's the fundraising side and then there's the actual cycling, and I try to keep in mind that the cycling is the reward for doing the fundraising. The distances are quite long, but the hardest bit is knowing you have to get up and do it again the next day, and the day after that. I'd just get out on my bike as much as I could including cycling to work seven or eight miles in a day, doing that on top of training gets your body used to sitting on the bike repeatedly. Then there's long distances and training to get stronger and faster because you have to finish before it gets dark. There's a little hill next to where I live that I just go up and down lots of times because

**"The cycle itself is a 545 mile ride from San Francisco to Los Angeles over seven days, which is an average of 77 miles a day for seven days."**



A selfie mid-ride with plenty of sun screen for the California sun.

the ride itself isn't flat, so you have to get stronger to get up the hill.

On the fundraising side of things, I've also been knitting lots of things like little Christmas baubles, and selling them through Etsy as a way of raising money. Everyone I knew bought some and I raised over \$2000 which was amazing. I've also knitted woolly hats and fingerless gloves.

### How often did you have to train?

I signed up for the ride at the end of last summer, and last Autumn I started gradually building the distances and getting out more regularly, and then from the start of this year I was more focused on prioritising training and not

just getting side-tracked with other things.

Some people have really strict regimes, I didn't. I did more when the weather was good or when I had the energy, but I'd probably get out three or four days a week, and one of those would be a long ride at the weekends so I planned these around cake stops and other things to keep me going.

### What was it like on the day?

It's an amazing experience. There's two and a half thousand cyclists that take part in the event, so it's like a moving festival of cycling going down the coast for seven days. You turn up full of nerves and excitement and then once you get

on the bike and get moving, the nerves disappear and you just have to get on with it and keep paddling for hours and hours every day and it's stunning landscape and scenery so it's a great way to see the country. But it's definitely not flat!

Then you get to camp at the end of the day, put your tent up and eat as much food as you can possibly eat and then try and get some sleep and get up very early the next morning and do it all again. It's exciting and amazing, but also exhausting at the same time.

### What was the route you cycled?

You start in San Francisco and then make your way down the coast of California and you finish off in West Hollywood in Los Angeles. It takes in a bit of the coast and a bit of the inland. It's essentially seven days of cycling through the California countryside.

### Was it as you expected it be?

It was as hard as I'd expected and I'm definitely glad I did the training for getting up the hills; but the one thing I couldn't train for here on the Wirral was the heat and the sunshine.

One day I had to just get the bus back to camp at lunchtime. I just couldn't cope with the heat anymore. It was 37 degrees, absolutely scorching and I just couldn't drink enough to stay hydrated, so I thought I'd just play it safe and get on the bus.

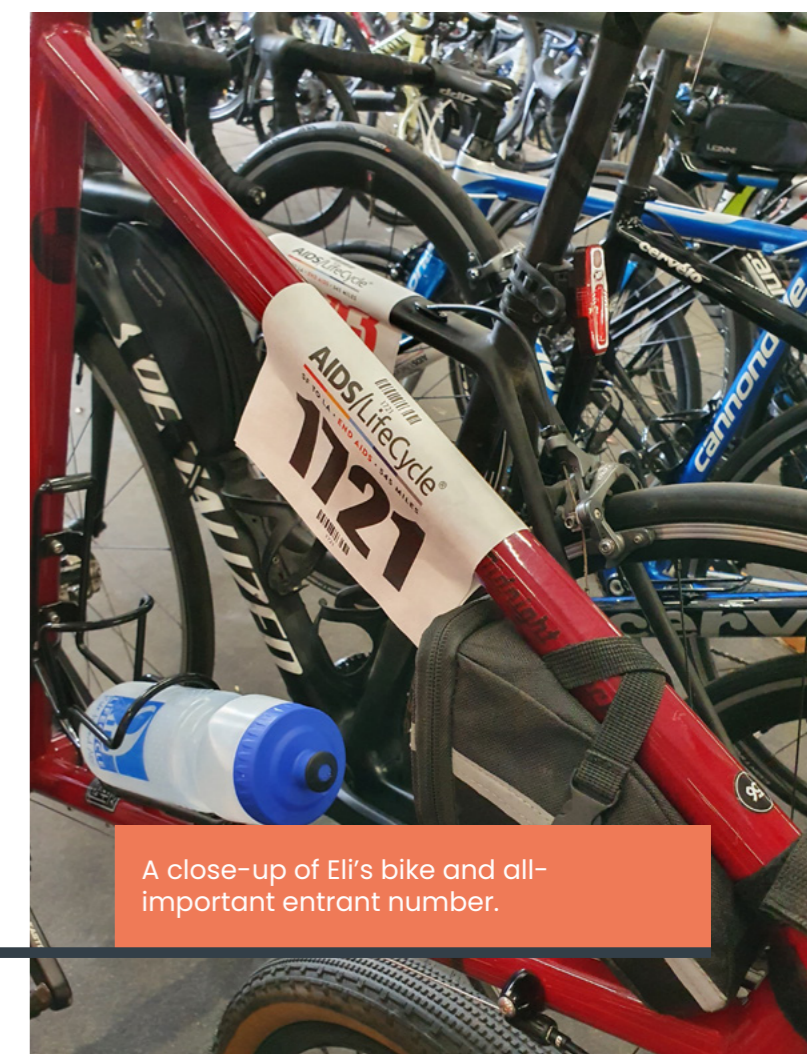
### How much did you raise overall?

I raised just over \$6500 in the end and the event as a whole and with everyone fundraising raised nearly \$18 million for the two charities. They do this every year, so if anyone would like to sign up, the online the registrations for next year are open [here](#).

**"What motivates me... is seeing the amount of hate and struggle that the LGBTQ+ community face, particularly in the states...I wanted to do something positive and this is a way for me to support that community and to show that a way of being an ally is supporting people, fundraising, and raising awareness."**



Time for a break: cyclists taking a well-earned rest.



A close-up of Eli's bike and all-important entrant number.



FOCUS ON HISTORY

# GRADUATIONS

# GONE

# BY

With graduation season over for another year, The Special Collections and Archives Team share with us some fascinating photographs from University of Liverpool graduations from times gone by.



Photo of honorary degree ceremony for James Winant, US Ambassador, 1941.  
(Ref: S82A/1)



**Top left:** Three female students on a motorcycle, wearing gowns and mortar board and holding copies of Pantosfinx. (14 January 1936). (Ref:D730/6).

**Middle left:** Graduates, wearing hoods and gowns, on the steps of St. George's Hall, Liverpool, on Degree Day. (1 July 1939). (Ref:D376/11/5).

**Middle right:** H.M. Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother, Chancellor of the University of London, conferring an honorary LL.D. upon Lord Cohen. - n.d. (1963). (Ref: D850/1/14).



**Above:** Group photograph of the B.A. Honours in Medieval and Modern History graduates and members of staff [taken outside the New Arts Building's entrance] - July 1925. (Ref: D732/1)



**Photograph:** Students and an elephant selling the Pantosfinx, 1936, Harris and Price, Special Collections and Archives, The University of Liverpool. (Ref: D730/7).



**"Graduation at the Philharmonic hall was an occasion. Wonderful to have that authorisation to enter the carpeted dignity of ravencroft and willis to be fitted in a gown. Women graduates wore their mortar boards. Men tucked theirs under the left arm. Consequently there was always the chance of an exchange with a male colleague if one's cap wouldn't balance or seemed to come down over one's ears. Afterwards there were the usual photo sessions, before repairing to the kardomah in Bold street with family and friends."**

Recollections of Jean Foulds, 1947-1951 (Ref: D716/1/6)

# DEVELOPING PEOPLE IS ALWAYS MONEY WELL SPENT.

**We caught up with the successful applicants to the Technicians Development Fund to find out what impact the funding has made.**

**Marc Bratley, Workshop Supervisor, School of Engineering.**  
**Title of development: Autodesk Powermill 3 day onsite training.**

The reason we applied to the Technicians Development Fund was to support and develop a number of Technicians from the School of Engineering (SoE) and the School of Physical Science to attend an Autodesk in-house 3-day training sessions.

This enabled us to train Technical staff to use new technology (Robot Machining Cell) within the SoE.

Applying for the Technicians development fund was straight forward and more importantly we received a response very quickly.

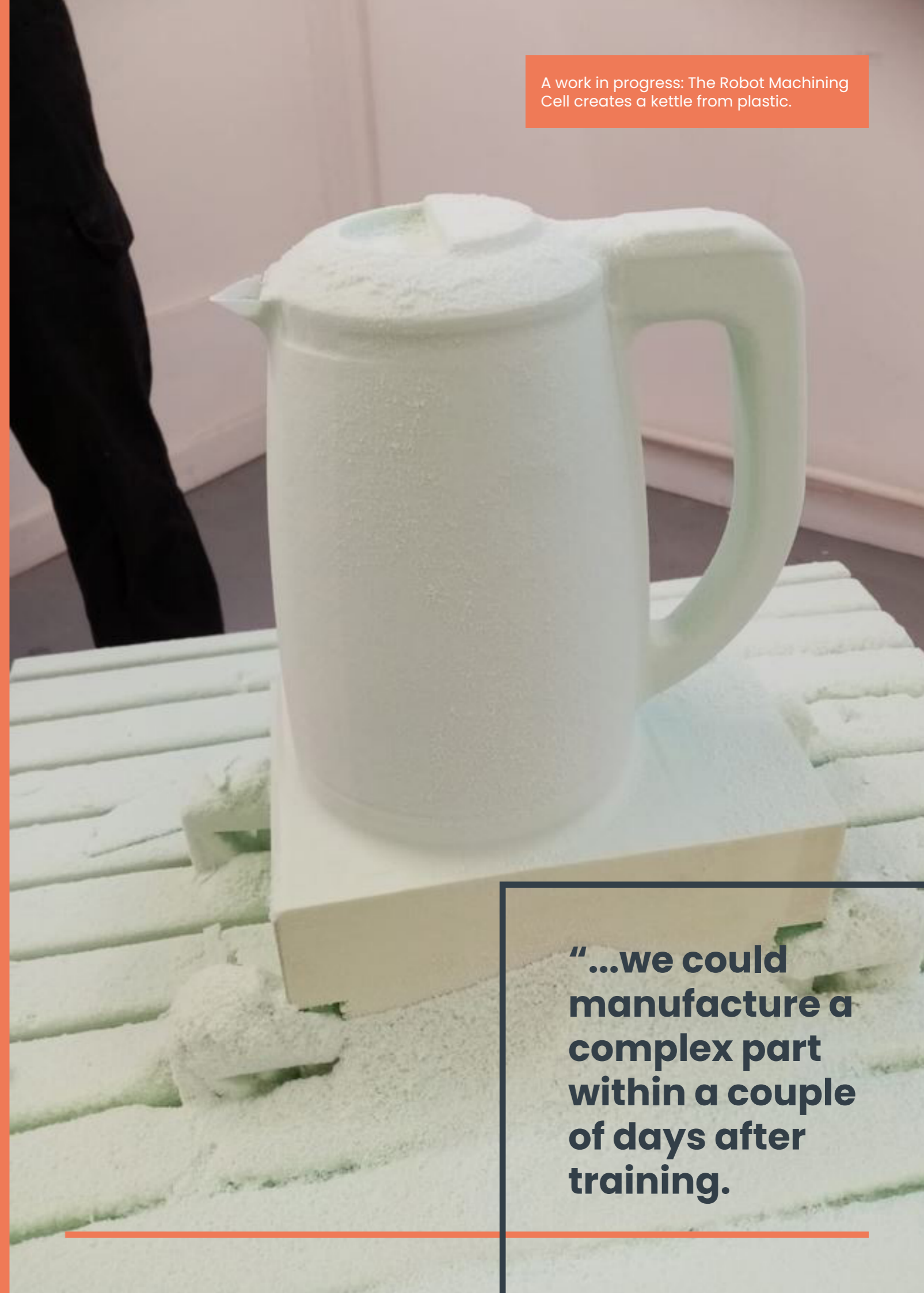
The immediate impact was training could go ahead promptly, which meant we could manufacture a complex part within a couple of days after training.

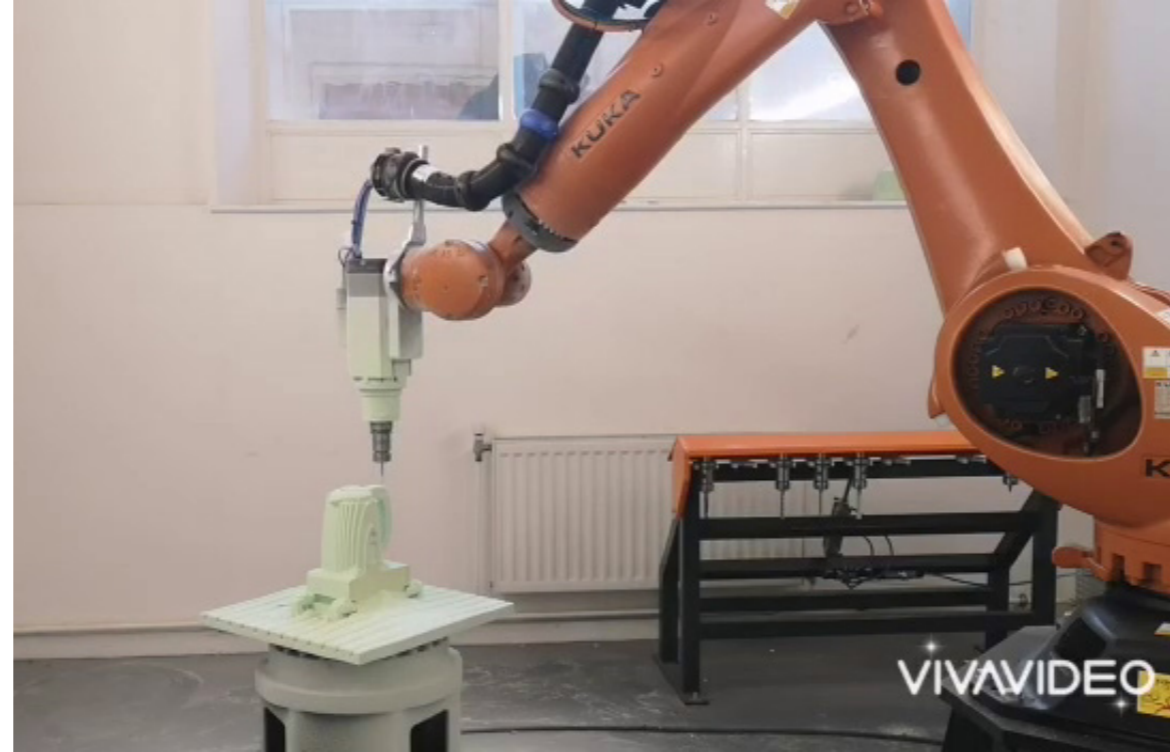
In the short term, this training course helped Technicians become very productive with the software and our Robot Machining Cell. This in turn sparked interest in others within and outside of the School in the potential use of such equipment. The Technicians Hub also provided a platform to promote awareness of this new robot technology.

In the longer-term we hope this development will provide access for other Technicians, students and third parties. As a School we will incorporate this new manufacturing technology into our Undergraduate programs to ensure students leave with relevant cutting-edge knowledge and experience.

A work in progress: The Robot Machining Cell creates a kettle from plastic.

**“...we could manufacture a complex part within a couple of days after training.**





**Photos:** Colleagues from Schools of Engineering and Physical Sciences working on the Autodesk Powemill project; and the Robot Machining Cell in action.



**Title of development: 3D Printing Training.**  
Stuart Carrol, Technical Services Co-Ordinator,  
School of the Arts.

The reason we applied to the Technicians Development Fund was to support and develop a number of Technicians from the School of Architecture to attend a two day 3-D printing training course.

We were able to train eight technicians in the use of Ultimaker and Formlab machines. A specialist 3-D printing engineer from Additive X carried out the training on-site, the training included written and oral instruction and certification was also included at the end of the course.

The school of Architecture has built a great working relationship with Additive X over the past five years and they are also on the Universities preferred supplier list.

The 3-D printer training course helped

Technicians become more productive with the machinery and also the associated CAD software. This should in turn promote interest from others within the School of Architecture and the wider University in the potential use of similar equipment.

In the longer term this development will provide access for other technicians, students and third parties. It has also helped us to further develop our own 'in-house' training program.

As a School we have incorporated the 3-D printing manufacturing process into our undergraduate programs to ensure students leave with the relevant knowledge and experience.



**Title of development: MRI in Practice.**  
Faith Der Haroutunian, Patient Care Veterinary Nurse,  
Institute of Veterinary Science.

The Funding has supported the development of my MRI skills by the completion of the PG certification. The main outcomes were; to enhance my professional practice and personal development as practitioner in radiography and develop autonomous planning & implementing of tasks at a professional level.

The course also provided opportunities for discussion and facilitated the sharing of experiences and best practice between myself and other practitioners. Professional teaching and resources were all then delivered back into my department for the benefit of others.

I was able to further my understanding of MRI physics and bridge the gap between practical and theory. My

confidence in my clinical abilities to teach and train others regarding the MRI environment/scanning has vastly improved.

Reflections formed part of my CPD and were fed back to management at my PDR. I am now able to provide practical clinical training at a higher professional standard to residents and interns. I can also create higher quality images at the request of radiologists to improve diagnostic quality for the benefit of patients and clients.

**“...My confidence in my clinical abilities to teach and train others regarding the MRI environment/scanning has vastly improved.”**

# CELEBRATING LIVERPOOL'S HERSCHEL LEADERS



Technicians from across the University of Liverpool joined more than 170 women technicians nationally to celebrate achievements gained from a national leadership programme which has been developed to tackle the workforce imbalance and equality gap within the UK's technical community. The celebration event took place at Church House, Westminster on 14 July.



THE HERSCHEL PROGRAMME FOR  
WOMEN IN TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP

#HerschelLeaders @MI\_TechTALENT



Participants of the Herschel Programme come from all over the UK.

The Herschel Programme for Women in Technical Leadership, named after Caroline Herschel – a pioneer in the discovery of comets and an early ‘technician’ – concluded its six-month pilot with a celebration event in London.

Rachael Bell, Gemma Charlesworth, Lara Gerrard, Iona Horner, Valentina Iorio, Sarah Northey, Sandra Pereira Cachinho, Ashleigh Thurston, Valerie Tilston, Eve Wilcock, Nicola White and Samantha Williams took part in the unique programme delivered by the University of Nottingham and the Research England funded Midlands Innovation TALENT programme.

Co-created with technical and organisational development experts to address topics specifically relevant to women in technical roles, the programme set out to elevate and advance career opportunities for current and aspiring leaders who identify as women.

Technicians reflected on the changes they had experienced as a result of completing the programme. Gemma Charlesworth from Liverpool Shared Research Facilities said: “I really enjoyed my time on the Herschel programme, I feel it has given me a



Above: Valerie Tilston. Below: 3rd from left our own Sarah Northey.



whole new range of skills that will help me both in my new role and outside of work”.

Rachael Bell, Technical Coordinator at The Tung Auditorium said: “The programme has really helped to develop my leadership skills and has made me feel more confident in myself, my skills and my role as a leader”.

Eve Wilcock, a research technician in IVEs said: “I feel more connected to others in the field and less alone. I now have a support group who will encourage and cheer me on. Loved doing this course!” Nicola White, a research technician in IVEs said: “This has been a wonderful opportunity and has shown skills in myself I didn’t know I had. To anyone considering enrolling, you definitely should”.

In an inspiring keynote talk from Professor Carole Mundell, President of the Science Council and Head of Astrophysics at the University of Bath said: “Diversity is critical within teams and experienced leaders help scientists answer fundamental questions. Technicians enrich and influence teams, open new ways of working and drive new discoveries, developments and impact.”

She shared personal career highlights and encouraged the group of leaders to be curious, say yes to new opportunities and experiences and be confident as visible leaders at the frontiers of knowledge.

The celebration event featured a special talk from Kelley Swain, author of Double the Stars, a book inspired by Caroline Herschel’s incredible story of endurance and adaptability. Kelley’s book and its themes have been central to the programme and all delegates were gifted their own copy of a dedicated Herschel Programme edition book on course completion.

Contributions were also made by Claire Cawthorne, Herschel Programme Director, University of Nottingham and Helen McNamara, Director of Organisational & People Development for the University of Nottingham chaired a panel discussion with facilitators Sandy Sparks, Denise McLean, Michelle Jackson, Emma Colley

and Lindsay Davies. Kelly Vere MBE, Director of Technical Skills and Strategy for University of Nottingham and TALENT Programme Lead added: “Thank you to all our participants for engaging in the programme, I am incredibly proud of this vibrant network of technical leaders who are already seeing the benefits personally and professionally. “These achievements are testament to the hard work of the delivery team including colleagues from MI TALENT, the University of Nottingham, University of Leicester and University of Keele. “When we launched this brand-new leadership pilot programme we were overwhelmed by the response and number of applications. This shows the value of tailored leadership and management training for the technical community. I hope our Herschel Leaders continue to share their new knowledge, experiences and skills within their institutions and with peers.”



Above: Left, Dr Shan Shen, and Right, Samantha Williams with their certificates.

# CELEBRATING OUR VETERINARY NURSES

May was Veterinary Nursing Awareness Month (VNAM), which aims to shine the spotlight on our dedicated and talented Equine and Veterinary Nurses. The purpose of VNAM is to spread the word to the veterinary profession and pet owners, about the importance of the role of the veterinary nurse.

The Leahurst Campus is home to a group of amazing nurses and a fabulous yard team, who both work incredibly hard to provide care to the patients they treat.

We spoke to two of Leahurst's Veterinary Nurses, Louise Dale, and Jane Devaney, about their career journey.



Above: a resident of the Philip Leverhulme Equine Hospital enjoying the sunshine.

# “Caring for animals is so rewarding, giving them love and care is the ultimate job satisfaction, especially when they get better and go home.”

## How did you get into veterinary nursing?

**L:** I started out as a receptionist at a local practice, I have always loved animals but finding a position without earlier experience was difficult, after 2 years they employed me as a nurse and supported my training.

**J:** I applied to be a bursary funded nurse at the PDSA, I was working at a gym but I wanted to use my brain more and I loved animals and science/biology so I thought why not combine the 2 and do a vet nursing qualification. I travelled 88 miles a day and got paid about £400 a month full time!

## Why do you think veterinary nursing is such as great profession to get into?

**L:** Its a fantastic career, its not just a job.

**J:** You can learn so much! If you like science and biology then it's fascinating. As a vet nurse you learn anatomy and physiology and how different species require different care, you learn about clinical disease and also anaesthesia, surgical nursing, medical nursing, the list is endless. Not only do you use your brain you also get to utilise and develop practical skills such as surgical nursing, bandaging, anaesthesia etc. Caring for animals is so rewarding, giving

them love and care is the ultimate job satisfaction, especially when they get better and go home. Preventative care is also lots of fun. Helping to vaccinate and treat puppies/kittens etc. is not only fun but rewarding in the sense that you know you are helping them to be as healthy as possible and educating owners on the most appropriate care. It's the same with horses just on a much larger scale.

## What do you love most about your current role?

**L:** No two days are the same, each patient is unique and so are the owners who care for them. You get to work alongside people who are passionate about developing the care and health of our patients, and this can directly improve outcomes, and feel like you have made a difference. You are recognised professionally by your peers and can be a support mechanism within the team.

**J:** The use of clinical skills and knowledge, for example carrying out anaesthesia, imaging, surgical nursing, medical nursing, all of these tasks can involve catheter placement, bandage care, surgical assisting, scrubbing up and assisting the vet with surgery, or setting up patients on intravenous fluids or giving medication as advised.



Vets and Technical staff busy in the operating theatre.



A vet nurse's job is incredibly varied.

## What do you find most challenging about working as a vet nurse?

**L:** Not every case has a happy ending and there will always be limitations in veterinary medicine to what we can achieve and that can sometimes be hard for us, and the owner.

**J:** Sometimes owners are limited to the treatment of the patient due to financial constraints, this can be very challenging if the option the owner chooses is PTS (put to sleep). We can only advise on

the treatment, it's the owners decision at the end of the day and we have to respect that even if it's not the decision we would have made.

## What is your greatest achievements to date?

**L:** Receiving the Veterinary Nursing Golden Jubilee Award in recognition of the teaching support I have given to students over the past twenty years. It's the highest award presented by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons



and being nominated by my peers was wonderful. Other than that, making a difference to patient welfare is something I am extremely proud of.

**J:** Achieving my VTS qualification in anaesthesia and analgesia took 2 years and I had to go to America to sit the exam. It is a specialist qualification regarded highly in America.

**What advice would you give to someone who wanted to take the same career path as you?**

**L:** Go for it. Don't give up applying to

**things are ahead of us?**

**L:** I would love to see the role of the nurse developing, and I know it's in the pipeline. More national publicity would be nice for the role, perhaps this would help the profile of nurses.

**J:** There is definitely more development opportunities and further qualification options for vet nurses and I believe this will only develop further over the next 5 years. I think the role will receive more recognition in the coming years. It definitely needs more publicity as a career.

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**“Receiving the Veterinary Nursing Golden Jubilee Award (was my greatest achievement)...It's the highest award presented by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and being nominated by my peers was wonderful.”**

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get into nursing because it's a small demographic, take it seriously because it's hard work and mentally stimulating, take pride in what you do.

**J:** Be prepared for rejection but don't give up, it's hard work but extremely rewarding. Aim high, there are many career options after veterinary nursing and these days much more opportunity to progress but you need to do your research and ask advice to appreciate the whole picture and know all of your options.

**Where do you see vet nursing heading in the next 5-10 years – what exciting**

**What would you say to a younger you if you had the opportunity?**

**L:** Use this career to travel, be a mentor and support others. Recognise that it's not always going to be a perfect outcome but believe in yourself.

**J:** Definitely wish I had used it to travel! Research your options if you feel stuck in a rut then explore options and never be afraid of taking that leap! Always face fear head on, think of every experience good or bad as a learning exercise don't let it knock your confidence but also never be complacent.



Veterinary Nurse Sue hard at work.

# TECHNICIANS PARTNERSHIP CONFERENCE 2022

Marianne Biro, Research and Teaching Laboratory Technician in the School of Environmental Sciences, shares with us her experience of attending the Technicians Partnership Conference.

One may wonder if it is worth the time and the associated costs to attend conferences aimed at technicians. To introduce myself: I am Mariann Biro, a Teaching and Research Support Technician from the School of Environmental Sciences. When I first heard of the Technician Partnership Conference 2022, I was intrigued and very keen to go, as the conference programme looked very relevant to technical staff.

**"The one-day conference did not disappoint, and brought together technicians from diverse areas to participate in sessions and discussions."**

The one-day conference did not disappoint, and brought together technicians from diverse areas to participate in sessions and discussions.

The conference had two keynote sessions, and three main themes: Research Culture, Carbon Net Zero and Technical Careers. These offered several parallel sessions that we could choose

from. I opted for the 'Building a Positive Research Culture' talk to start with. Candy Rowe from Newcastle University emphasised that the research culture belongs to everyone: researchers, professional staff, postgraduate students and management. It cannot be changed top-down and it must be defined by collaboration, not competition.

This thought-provoking talk was followed by Daniela Farina, who talked us through

the journey of the University of Exeter labs in a bid to minimise their negative environmental impacts. The Exeter labs became compliant with Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF) with the support of senior management but it is led by technicians. Technicians make the sustainability transition; however, technicians and laboratory users are not sustainability experts!





Above: one of the interactive demonstrations at the conference.

One of their key strategies was the creation of a knowledge sharing platform: lab sustainability webpage, Microsoft Teams page and other useful resources.

Career development is also an increasingly relevant topic for technicians. We often wonder about what might be the next best step and what opportunities are available. The last parallel session from Dr Clare Stevenson, for me, was something that I would describe as truly inspiring. Dr Stevenson is Head of the Directorate at the John Innes Centre, Norwich. Her journey from a technician to becoming a senior manager did not take the usual route, and her main message was that whilst technicians should take advantage of the schemes and development opportunities already available to them, such as professional registration, technicians are ultimately responsible for their career and skills development, and pushing yourself out of your comfort zone might lead to the greatest opportunities.

The conference finished with a thought-provoking keynote: The Big Repair Project – the vital role of technicians in the repair economy of the future by Mark Miodownik,

Materials Scientist and Engineer. What a great insight that was about the rise of disposability in the wider society, and its applicability in laboratory environments.

Overall, the conference felt like a really energetic day of interactions with technicians sharing their perspectives on a range of topics, and I would definitely encourage other technicians to go. Last, but not least, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Technical Steering Group, whose funding made it possible for me to attend this conference.

**"...technicians are ultimately responsible for their career and skills development, and pushing yourself out of your comfort zone might lead to the greatest opportunities."**



Above left: a close up of a poster presentation. Above right: some of Mariann's conference freebies.

# GOING FOR GOLD

You might remember in a previous edition, we spoke to Zoë Chapman about her hedgehog conservation work as part of the national Hedgehog Friendly Campus Scheme. Now, Zoë updates us on achieving Gold accreditation.



**Above:** This is Oak, who was found by a neighbour out in the day in July. Oak weighs only 123g and is too small to fend for himself, and being out in the day is also a concern.

An initial check at Jackson's Animal Rescue indicates that Oak is well, with a nice shape, however tests will be done and any parasites will be treated.

Hopefully it is simply a case of Oak gaining weight before he can be released.

staff and students to join Hedgehog Street as Hedgehog Champions, and presented our work to other Universities across the country. We also produced a campaign video to explain our work and how people can help hedgehogs at home. We have also raised over £100 for the BHPS via a raffle at Ness Botanic Gardens.

## Can you tell us about your recent award for Hedgehog friendly scheme, volunteer of the year?

I think I was nominated by some of my University of Liverpool colleagues. I felt really honoured to be nominated and to be awarded joint winner, as so much good work is being done by so many people across the Hedgehog Friendly Campus network.

## What's your favourite thing about working with hedgehogs?

It's good to be doing something so practical to help an endangered mammal. Hedgehogs are such gentle and characterful creatures and it would be an absolute travesty if they were lost in the UK. The work is also good for my mental health, particularly in terms of the work I do at [Jackson's Animal Rescue](#), being really hands on with the hedgehogs. In addition, I have recently joined the British Hedgehog Preservation Society as a trustee, offering the opportunity to help hedgehogs at a national level.

**“If you have a garden, it's really helpful to leave part of your garden wild as this encourages food sources as well as pollinators. Leaving water out each day benefits both birds, hedgehogs and other wildlife, especially during the summer months.”**



**Above:** Zoë Chapman.

## Can you tell us about yourself and your role at the University?

I am the Business Services Manager at Ness Botanic Gardens, where I look after a number of business service, commercial and public facing functions.

## Can you tell us about Hedgehog Friendly Campus Scheme and your recent gold accreditation?

The Hedgehog friendly Campus Scheme is a national scheme, supported by the [British Hedgehog Preservation Society \(BHPS\)](#). The scheme encourages Universities to support hedgehogs by undertaking various tasks and projects across their campuses. The scheme is currently piloting working with colleges and schools too.

The gold accreditation builds on the previous work undertaken under bronze and silver, with gold focussing on impact and legacy work.

To achieve this, we've undertaken a number of projects including conducting a survey in the local community, which took place at Auntie Jayne's House children's nursery. As well as a very successful survey with lots of hedgehogs spotted. We arranged for craft activities and information sheets to be shared with the children and arranged for Jackson's Animal Rescue to deliver a child-friendly talk on hedgehogs and how the children can help them at home. We also held a University-wide drive to encourage

## How can staff get involved with the Hedgehog Friendly Campus scheme?

There are lots of ways to get involved! We run regular (online) meetings and are currently looking at potential platinum projects, which is the next step after achieving the gold award. We are also continuing with a lot of the practical activity such as litter picks, fundraising and information sharing. Please get in touch with me if you are interested in joining us!

## What tips have you got for staff interested in helping wildlife?

There are a number of really easy wins at home, which benefit hedgehogs and other wildlife. If you have a garden, ensure you have a hedgehog highway. It's really helpful to leave part of your garden wild as this encourages food sources as well as pollinators. Leaving water out each day benefits both birds, hedgehogs and other wildlife, especially during the summer months. Finally, know what to do in an emergency – find out about the habits of the hedgehogs and wildlife in your local area and find out about your local rescue so that you have the information to hand should you need it. [Freshfields Animal Rescue](#) in Liverpool and [Jacksons Animal Rescue](#) on the Wirral are both excellent.

# SPORT LIVERPOOL: INVESTING IN OUR HEALTH.

**Andy Craig, Director of Sport, tells us about the new sports equipment recently installed on campus, exciting plans for future projects, and the importance of physical activity for our health and wellbeing. He also shares some tips on leading a healthy lifestyle.**

**Photo:** Recently installed exercise equipment near to the Sports Centre.

## **Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and what you do at the University?**

I'm Andy Craig and I'm the University Director of Sport. As Head of Sport Liverpool, I'm a member of the FRCS Senior Management Team (Facilities, Residential & Commercial Services), and lead on all sport and fitness related provision, staff wellness and the new Active Campus Strategy that was recently approved by Faculty Senior Leadership Team and Council.

Our experience of COVID has heightened awareness of the importance of physical activity to our health and wellbeing. In the context of University life, many of our students are balancing the excitement of their new-found independence with the academic, social, and financial pressures that seem more prevalent than ever before while our staff are also having to cope with unprecedented changes to the way they balance work and home life, which in turn can impact on their physical and mental health.

The University has a proud sporting heritage and provides a wide range of services including facilities on the main campus, at the University Sports Grounds on Mather Avenue, and at Greenbank Student Village. We also offer a thriving competitive sports programme through our Athletic Union, which comprises 53 sports clubs, over 200 teams and almost 5,000 members. We aim to cater for all, from the Elite Athlete Scheme that provides specific support to our highest performing students to an Exercise Referral Scheme that offers exercise and lifestyle advice as an alternative intervention to help manage physical and mental health issues.



**Above:** Andy Craig,

## **Can you tell us about the new Sports equipment that's been going up around campus? What's the purpose of it?**

The investment in recreational amenities on campus reflects the transformational impact we believe creating a more active campus environment can have on the lives of everyone who lives, works, or studies here. We have ambitious plans to engage 20,000 students and staff by 2026 and aspire to become the most active campus in the UK! To do this we need to encourage more students and staff who are currently inactive to get involved, by providing more 'free-to-access' amenities for informal, independent activity as well as more opportunities to take part in organised events and programmes.

### **What equipment is there to use?**

Over the past 12 months we have installed a range of new outdoor facilities including a running track along Central Teaching Avenue, a container gym and exercise area along

with table tennis and 2 basketball hoops outside the sports centre, callisthenic exercise equipment on Guild Walk, and a beach volleyball court adjacent to Oliver Lodge. We've also installed colour coded posts to indicate campus walk / run routes of varying distances.

### **Can anyone use it?**

Advance booking may be required for some organised activities, but most of the outdoor facilities are generally available for all students and staff to use, free of charge.

### **Where can staff find out how use it?**

Staff can find out more about Sport Liverpool facilities and activities by visiting our [website](#) and we will soon



**Above (top):** Andy with the UoL Volleyball team whom he coached for 12 years, having previously played in the national league for over 20 years himself.

Recently installed exercise equipment near to the Sport's Centre.

be launching our new Active Campus App so event information, updates and special offers will always be on hand.

### What else will be popping up soon as part of the Active Campus strategy?

Our long-term vision is to build a new, state-of-the-art 'Active Life and Wellness Centre' as part of an ambitious, mixed-use development of the Oxford Street corridor, providing sport, spa facilities, holistic therapies, and other lifestyle programmes, and to develop a 'Student Sports Village' at Wyncote.

In the short-term we will continue to improve our outdoor facilities at the University Sports Grounds with a new synthetic rugby pitch and upgraded spectator stand and we will also be developing much needed sports facilities on the Leahurst campus. On the main campus we will be developing more indoor and outdoor facilities and extending our campus events programme to encourage wider participation. We are currently considering the installation of a new climbing wall and seeking approval for a paddle tennis court on.

# 5 WAYS TO FEEL BETTER AND LIVE LONGER.

## 1. Diet

Eat healthy foods like vegetables, fruits, nuts, whole grains, healthy fats, and omega-3 fatty acids. Avoid or at least minimise unhealthy foods like red and processed meats, sugar-sweetened drinks, trans fat and sodium.

## 2. Physical Activity

The NHS recommends 150 minutes per week of moderate intensity physical activity. It will raise your heart rate, make you breathe faster and feel warmer. Just 75 minutes of 'vigorous' activity can have the same benefit and at this level you should be breathing hard and fast and won't be able to say more than a few words without pausing for breath. A combination of moderate and vigorous activity over 4 or 5 days with some basic muscle strengthening activity included twice a week, is ideal. Exercise helps release your body's 'feel good' chemicals that can help suppress stress and make you feel so much better.

## 3. Smoking

I'm afraid there is no healthy amount of smoking. If you smoke, consider getting some **support** to help you quit.

## 4. Alcohol

Most of us like a drink from time to time, and although the NHS says there is no 'safe' level of alcohol consumption the current advice is to drink no more than 14 units per week. This is equivalent to a bottle and a half of wine or 5 pints of lager. These guidelines however, were devised over 30 years ago, and the Chief Medical Officer is set to follow Australia and Canada in drastically cutting the suggested intake to reflect more recent research into the potential impact on our health.

## 5. Body Weight

Body weight is important because those of us who are overweight are prone to greater levels of ill health than those who are not. Though **body mass index** (BMI) as a tool for measuring overall health has its detractors, it is still a useful starting point to help assess if a person is within a healthy weight range.

### Did you know?

**Sport Liverpool** offers advice & support for staff and students, including a free health assessment and BMI check. Email Emma [evmcghie@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:evmcghie@liverpool.ac.uk)



**Above:** Andy taking part in the Campus 5k as part of Feel Good February.