

RESEARCH

July 2023

@worc



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Cover image: 'From farm to fork' by Dr Alan Dixon

"Our research in Malawi explores how people adapt and sustain their livelihoods in response to external shocks and pressures, such as climate change and market trends. One key adaptation is rural to urban migration, especially among young people who often struggle to gain access to good quality farmland, or have little desire to emulate the subsistence farming lifestyle of their parents and grandparents.

During our recent fieldwork in Kankhulukulu, farmers told us that as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic almost a third of their community had migrated to the nearby town of Mzuzu in search of employment opportunities. They'd had enough of farming."

WELCOME

In this second edition of *Research @ Worc*, we highlight the rich programme of public and community engagement that our researchers, staff and student, have been involved in across the city of Worcester and the surrounding region over the Spring and Summer. A recurring theme of many of these events is the issue of climate change and its effect on our eco-systems in particular oceans and rivers and the effort of researchers to highlight and address these environmental impacts. Thus our *Pint of Science* event showcased public lectures challenging climate change and presenting innovations in natural flood management. *Sea Change* is an exhibition that presents the responses of illustrators from across the world to environmental impacts on our oceans in the form of over 450 postcards. For *Worcester Open* and *Watermark*, the University partnered with arts and other organisations across the city to highlight the impact of flooding, rising sea levels and habitat loss across the world.

This issue also highlights the University's commitment to research which brings positive benefits for people's health and wellbeing. Thus, we get an update on our Association for Dementia Studies' important programme of research focused on community-based support systems for people diagnosed with dementia and their families and carers. Specifically, we present a report on the two-year, NIHR-funded "Get Real" project, which looks at how Meeting Centres, a particular model of community-based support, can be sustained. As we went to press, the team have been awarded a further NIHR grant to look at the effectiveness of food interventions in community-based support systems. Elsewhere, we hear about the work of Interpersonal Relationships and Wellbeing Research Group, whose research is focused on how relationships across a variety of personal and professional settings can shape our wellbeing.

This edition ends with the very sad news of the untimely death of four of our researchers. Their colleagues and peers highlight the significant contribution each have made to the University's positive research culture as well as to the development and extension of their own disciplines, and remind us of the importance of the individual to the collective research endeavour.



Professor John-Paul Wilson

Pro Vice Chancellor Research

IN BRIEF

The following pages give an overview of the some of the research and knowledge exchange activity that has taken place November 2022—June 2023.

If you have a good news story that you would like to be featured in the next issue, please email Esther Dobson at e.dobson@worc.ac.uk.

MAKING PUBLIC BUILDINGS ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL

Teresa Atkinson; Senior Research Fellow in the Association for Dementia Studies, has been involved in the production of a new Publicly Accessible Specification from the British Standards Institution, to help guide professionals designing buildings to embed full accessibility.

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION RESEARCH CONFERENCE

In May, the Institute of Education held their inaugural research conference. It provided colleagues with the opportunity to disseminate and discuss key research outcomes.

The day was structured into four symposia, under the following themes:

- Educational issues pertaining to wellbeing and supporting children and teachers in a post pandemic educational era.
- Primary teachers relationships across their careers
- Enabling learner voice and the responses of educators to changing student needs
- Pedagogy

Keynote presentations were delivered by Dr Carla Solvason and Prof. Geoffrey Elliott.

HOW TO RESPOND TO A STUDENT SUICIDE: SUICIDE SAFER GUIDANCE ON POSTVENTION

Prof. Jo Smith; Professor of Early Intervention and Psychosis, and former University of Worcester PhD Student, Dr Hilary Causer, have contributed to a new guide developed and published by Universities UK, PAPYRUS, Samaritans, and over 50 HEI & postvention experts, parents and students.

"This guidance on postvention provides practical advice on how to give compassionate, confident and timely support when a student death by suspected suicide takes place."

SMALL BUSINESS CHARTER AWARD

In December, Worcester Business School was awarded the Small Business Charter accreditation by the Chartered Association of Business Schools.

Those given the accreditation benefit from being part of a network of business schools focused on enterprise and small business support, knowledge-sharing workshops with other business school award holders throughout the UK, networking for Business School Entrepreneurs-in-Residence, engagement with governments across the UK to inform and influence, and opportunities to conduct research to inform best practice.

THE USE OF SIMULATION IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY EDUCATION

Current PhD student and Senior Lecturer; Terri Grant, was recognised as having the top cited paper in the Australian Occupational Therapy Journal for 2021-2022.

SHAKESPEARE SHELTER

In February, staff were invited to join a 'Shakespeare Shelter', an online gathering of Shakespeare scholars and friends from diverse backgrounds in support of colleagues in Ukraine, one year on from the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The online exchange was co-hosted by Professor Nicoleta Cinpoes, from the University's School of Humanities, and Dr Imke Lichterfeld, from the University of Bonn. It was part of an ongoing series of events in support of and solidarity with Ukrainian colleagues and their efforts to continue educating in times of war.

PROFESSOR APPOINTED AS HONORARY MEMBER OF THE BSPP



Professor of Biological Sciences, Mahmut Tör, in the School of Science and the Environment, has been made a New Honorary Member of the British Society for Plant Pathology (BSPP).

This was in recognition of his outstanding contribution to plant pathology. The BSPP is an organisation that promotes advancing education and research in plant pathology to improve plant health at the national and international level.

DBA PARTNER RECOGNISED AS BEST BUSINESS SCHOOL IN GERMANY

The University of Worcester's collaborative partner in the delivery of the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) programme; Fachhochschule des Mittelstands (FHM), has been recognised as the best business school in Germany. This was determined by a survey commissioned by 'Deutschland Test' and was based on a total of 32,805 customer opinions on 256 training providers.



Current DBA students pictures with Prof. Lynn Nichol & Dr Catharine Ross from Worcester Business School.

NEW OCCULT BREAST CANCER RESEARCH

New research from Dr Béré Mahoney, Dr Charlotte Taylor, and Mr Ben Wild (Consultant Breast Surgeon, Worcestershire Acute NHS Trust) will explore a rare form of Breast Cancer. Often referred to as Occult Breast Cancer (OBC), this cancer is diagnosed in the absence of any breast symptom or imaging abnormality. When imaging is undertaken using mammography, ultrasound scanning and magnetic resonance – no breast lesion is identified. "We want to find out more about this uncertain cancer and how people with OBC experience diagnosis, treatment, and life after treatment."

FORMER MINISTER DELIVERS UNIVERSITY RESEARCH GROUP'S INAUGURAL LECTURE

Sir Robert Buckland KC MP, who served as Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice between 2019 and 2021, gave the University's [Constitutions, Rights and Justice research group](#)'s inaugural Annual Lecture on Wednesday, March 15.

The free online talk, open to the public, was entitled 'Artificial Intelligence and Digitalisation: A new hope for justice or a new threat?'

Sir Robert said: "The reason for this topic is that whilst AI represents a huge opportunity for legal research and increased access to justice, there are risks in that, if unregulated, the very essence of human justice itself could change almost without us realising it."



Sir Robert Buckland KC MP

FRONTIERS IN PSYCHOLOGY

Dr Sajad Rezaei, Senior Lecturer in Digital Marketing, has joined the editorial team of the journal *Frontiers in Psychology*.

As a new Associate Editor, Dr Rezaei handles submissions of research articles related to digital marketing, consumer psychology and sustainable marketing.

DEMENTIA RESEARCHERS PRESENT PROJECT FINDINGS AT HOUSE OF LORDS

Staff from the Association for Dementia Studies have been working on a project exploring different models of Extra Care Housing.

Extra Care Housing is a type of 'housing with care' which means you retain independence while you're offered assistance with daily living tasks such as washing, dressing, meal preparation or taking medication if required.

The project found that people with dementia can live well in ECH but this is very much based on the individual being in the right place, at the right time and with the right level of support.

The project findings were shared at the House of Lords with guests representing the funders, Alzheimer's Society, Dementia Carers Count, Platform Housing, local authority commissioners, local government, Housing Learning & Improvement Network, Order of St John's Care Trust, Methodist Homes Association, Housing 21, and most importantly people living with dementia who were part of the project advisory board.



SENIOR LECTURER PRESENTS WORK AT NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CONFERENCE

In March, Beverley Gilbert, Senior Lecturer in Domestic and Sexual Violence presented her practice work and PhD subject area to an audience of invited commissioners, academics, service leads and survivor support organisation representatives, at a national Festival of Practice in Manchester. The event was hosted by Nicole Jacobs, the national Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales.



In addition to her role at the University, Beverley is the Founding Director, Operations and Risk Manager for a women's peer support organisation called [Cohort 4](#) in North Warwickshire.



WELLBEING OF EDUCATION PRACTITIONERS

Over the past year staff from the Institute of Education (Angela Hodgkins, Carla Solvason and Michelle Malomo) joined forces with Rebecca Weston from the School of Allied Health and Community, to tackle the issue of the poor physical and mental health of education professionals. This project developed from a local Multi-Academy Trusts' concerns about the wellbeing of their staff following COVID-19, and was funded by them. Prior to implementing a series of workshops, the research team sent out a survey to assess the current health and wellbeing landscape of professionals in primary school settings. This was completed by 244 staff. The picture was a concerning one, of general dissatisfaction and exhaustion, and pointed towards the vital role that leaders play in creating an open and supportive working culture. The workshops are due to continue over the coming years.



In parallel with this project, Niki Stobbs and Samantha Sutton-Tsang from the Department of Children and Families, joined with Carla Solvason as they used the opportunity to seek the views of early years staff through a comparable, health and wellbeing survey. They used the detailed views of 59 early years professionals as a basis to discuss the future direction of the Early Childhood sector in England with the local MP, Robin Walker. During this meeting, which happened in April this year, the research team shared an extremely similar picture of exhaustion and underappreciation that those working in the early years sector were experiencing and called for urgent change.

BUSINESS SCHOOL GRADUATE WINS AWARD

A graduate of the University's Business School has received international acclaim at a recent conference.

Annica Lau was awarded best presentation at the 2023 Human Resources Division International Conference (HRIC) in South Africa for her paper based on her research for her Doctor of Business Administration degree.

Annica's research explored the formation of the psychological contract, with a particular emphasis on the experiences of young talents. Her study provides evidence of the shortcomings of previous research by presenting the contextual environmental influences, such as historic events (like Covid-19), the university, and friends and family, on the formation of relationships between young talents and organisations.

As such, her contemporary work is one of the first studies to help both HR departments and managers understand the psychological contract expectations of today's newcomers. Annica recommends a toolbox that helps the organisation and its agents to understand the role of newcomers and support the integration beyond the probationary period to retain young talents.

Annica plans to continue her work bridging the gap between academic theory and practical application in the field of Human Resource Management.

CHAGOS ISLANDS CONFERENCE

On the 26th May, the Constitutions, Rights and Justice Research Group hosted a conference called 'Challenges and Prospects for the Chagos Archipelago'.



"The Chagos Islands has been the subject matter of litigation before the UK Supreme Courts, the House of Lords, the US federal courts, the European Court of Human Rights, the Permanent Court of Arbitration and the International Court of Justice. Since 2010 Mauritius has used both the United Nations and international law to seek to recover the Chagos Islands from the UK. In 2019, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution demanding the UK return the Chagos Islands and fully decolonise Mauritius."

The conference brought together scholars, members of the Chagossian community, diplomats, artists, and lawyers.

ANTI-DOPING EXPERT PANEL

On 22nd May, Charlotte Beaman-Evans, Senior Lecturer in Physical Education, sat on an expert panel at an event entitled 'Teamwork in Clean Sport'. This was organised as part of a week of events organised by UK anti-doping (UKAD).

STUDENT SPEAKS TO ABC NEWS ABOUT MUSCLE DYSMORPHIA

In April, George Mycock (PhD student in the School of Sport and Exercise Science) was interviewed for [ABC News](#) on the subject of muscle dysmorphia. Invited to do the interview by the Body Dysmorphic Disorder Foundation, George discussed his own personal experience of the condition.



Having started his PhD earlier this year, George is hoping his research will lead to greater understanding of muscle dysmorphia, particularly how healthcare services and organisations can develop to improve care for the underrepresented group.

George is the found of [MyoMinds](#); a platform that aims to improve understanding and awareness of mental health in exercisers .

ACADEMIC FEATURED ON BBC GARDENERS' WORLD



Dr Duncan Westbury, Course Leader for the University's BSc Environmental Management and Sustainability degree, was featured on BBC Gardeners' World on 28 April.

Dr Westbury gave viewers a tour of his garden which he has been transformed to support local wildlife through its rich biodiversity. "I have always wanted to share what I do with as many people as possible, and this has provided a wonderful platform to do this," he said. "If I inspire one more person to do more in their garden for wildlife then that is one more garden that is doing their bit, but hopefully with 2.5m+ viewers, I'll encourage a few more!"

Dr Westbury's research is focussed on how we can utilise the benefits of species which are supported by wildflower strips in the farmed landscape. This has included studies in UK apple and cherry orchards, and orange orchards in southern Spain.

VOICE AND INFLUENCE OF PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE

A [special issue](#) of the British Journal of Social Work (BJSW) has been published with contributions from the University's School of Allied Health and Community's IMPACT service user and carer group.

This is a radical milestone in academic publishing and was initiated by Dr Peter Unwin, Principal Lecturer in Social Work, who guest edited the journal issue.

The issue celebrates the expertise and insights of people with lived experience who have submitted academic papers, reflective pieces, book reviews and a wide range of creative artefacts including short films, original music, photography, poetry and artwork.

Members of the School of Allied Health and Community's IMPACT service user and carer group have contributed significantly to this special issue with articles, artefacts and reflective pieces about their experiences of discrimination, domestic abuse, mental illness and being carers.

ADVANCED PRACTICE RESEARCH TOOLKIT

Associate Professor of Nursing, Dr Kerry Gaskin, has developed a toolkit to facilitate the research capability of Health and Care Professionals. The toolkit aims to:

- Support advanced practitioners to 'get started' with the research pillar
- Encourage advanced practice teams to consider their research priorities
- Enable individual and team research objective setting
- Aid appraisal discussions

In England, the foundation of advanced level practice is underpinned by the four pillars: clinical, leadership, research and education in the multi-professional framework (HEE, 2017). This framework outlines the required capabilities of all health and care professionals working at the level of advanced clinical practice. Research is an important pillar within the role, however, anecdotally through discussions with advanced practitioners this pillar is more difficult to engage in due to a number of perceived barriers including: impact of operational pressures on the clinical pillar, lack of dedicated time and not knowing how to get started.

The toolkit was piloted in March 2023 within the region and the concept has gained interest from Advanced Practitioners across the South West region and beyond.

RESEARCHERS RECOGNISED WITH ROYAL HONOURS

Liz Fenton and Prof. Jo Smith has recently been awarded with OBEs from King Charles III.

Liz Fenton; University of Worcester PhD student and Health Education England's Deputy Chief Nurse, collected an OBE from Windsor Castle on the 14th February 2023. Presented by King Charles III, this honour was in recognition of her services to nursing throughout her 40-year career in the sector.

"Liz has played an integral part in many innovations across health and care including the blended learning nursing programme, the implementation of the Nursing and Midwifery Council's training standards for nurses and midwives as well as the expansion of the postgraduate routes into nursing."
- Health Education England

"I feel very honoured and humbled to receive this award and owe my gratitude to my team and all those that have supported me throughout my career and continue to do so." - Liz Fenton OBE RN, QN

In her research Liz's seeks to explore the core work needs that support professional values, role satisfaction and the intention to continue to practice.

Liz is interested in gaining a deeper understanding of what encourages experienced nurses to remain in their roles and consider how such knowledge could inform the thinking around strategy and national policy to support retention.



Professor Jo Smith; Professor of Early Intervention and Psychosis, was awarded an OBE in the King's first Birthday Honours, for services to Higher Education and her contributions to student suicide prevention and response.

Jo's campaigning and awareness raising work has helped to tackle stigma and signpost to available support, while her education and training work has improved staff and student mental health literacy and skills, embedding mental health training into teaching curricula.

On being appointed an OBE, she said: *"I was shocked and touched to have been nominated and awarded an OBE. I have worked for 34 years in the NHS and 10 years in Higher Education, and this marks a stage in my career that I never imagined I would achieve. This OBE reflects many years of collaborative teamwork and support from many colleagues locally and nationally to achieve the progress that has been made around both Early Intervention in Psychosis services and student suicide prevention."*

She has led on a number of national and international projects to help universities and other educational settings take a targeted and inclusive approach to student suicide prevention. She was the lead on the University of Worcester's successful 'Suicide Safer' multi-agency initiative, bringing together University colleagues with local statutory and third sector organisations in a co-ordinated approach to student suicide prevention. Since its inception, the initiative has delivered extensive training opportunities, awareness raising, and research, leading to improved student support at Worcester and beyond.

Professor David Green CBE DL, the University's Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive said: *"Professor Jo Smith has conducted and led high impact, deeply insightful leadership and research in the field of suicide prevention for many years. The early intervention approach she championed in Worcestershire saved many lives. Over the past decade her work in suicide student prevention led to the publication of the first ever book in this field, the development of a new national strategy and has saved many more young lives in particular. This national honour for Jo is truly deserved."*



POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENT CONFERENCE & DBA COLLOQUIUM

29 - 30 June 2023, The Charles Hastings Building

Under the theme of ICE – Ignite - Connect - Engage - this year’s conference, organised by the Research School on 29-30 June, brought together postgraduate researchers from all disciplines and stages of research, providing them with the opportunity to present and discuss research to a supportive audience.

This year marked the biggest postgraduate research conference to date, and the first time the PGR Conference has been combined with the Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) Colloquium. Over the two-day event, we welcomed over 100 delegates from the University of Worcester, University of Gloucestershire, and students from partner university: Fachhochschule des Mittelstands (FHM), in Germany.

The conference was opened by Dr Scott Andrews, Head of Worcester Business School followed by an inspiring keynote address from Professor Eleanor Bradley, College Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange, on how to thrive during doctoral study. Professor Volker Wittberg, Pro Rector for Research and Development at Fachhochschule des Mittelstands closed the first day of the conference with his keynote address reflecting on the history and value of the doctorate. Over the course of the two days, 56 postgraduate researchers shared their research in the form of 15 minute presentations or 5 minute ignite sessions. The final day began with a panel session aiming to demystify the viva voce with contributions from PhD graduate, Dr Emma Tickle, Professor Eleanor Bradley, and Professor Lynn Nichol.

The PGR Conference is an important event to bring together and celebrate our vibrant PGR community, a sentiment shared by many delegates.

Plans are already in place for the 2024 conference, likely to take place in June. For updates follow the Research School on Twitter @WorcesterRS.



Prof. Eleanor Bradley



Prof. Volker Wittberg



DBA students from FHM, Germany, with University of Worcester staff

PGR SUCCESS

Since November 2022, the following postgraduate research students have completed their studies.

DOCTORAL

Dr Walid Abou El Dahab

"The Impact of Innovative Mobile Customer Relationship Management (mCRM) Processes on Customer Satisfaction of Samsung, Dubai, UAE"

Supervisory Team: Dr Helen Watts, Dr Richard Nicholls, Prof. Jan Francis-Smyth

Dr Musab Al Hinai

"Ethical leadership practices in the Omani public sector"

Supervisory Team: Dr Scott Andrews, Dr Sa'ad Ali, Dr Catharine Ross

Dr Mégane Coulon

"Experiences of emancipation in the British and French Caribbeans: Barbados, Trinidad, Guadeloupe and Martinique (c. 1830- c. 1860)"

Supervisory Team: Prof. Suzanne Schwarz, Prof. Paul Lovejoy

Dr Angela Doughty

"Monitoring markers of oxidative stress in acute coronary syndrome"

Supervisory Team: Dr Steve Coles and Dr Amy Cherry

Dr Fabian Grupe

"How consultancies evolve agile mindsets and cultivate their own agile transformation"

Supervisory Team: Dr Cedric Nkiko, Prof. John Sparrow

Dr Ellen Joyce

"The combined effects of plant polyphenols and fatty acids on protective cellular mechanisms associated with molecular perturbations of obesity and neurotoxicity"

Supervisory Team: Dr Allain Bueno, Dr Steve Coles, Dr Amy Cherry

Dr Inga Knoche

"Exploring Digital Transformation in German Mittelstand to Identify and Advance Future Key Competencies from a strategic Human Resource Management Perspective – A Grounded Delphi Study"

Supervisory Team: Dr Vessela Warren, Prof. John Sparrow, Dr Holly Andrews

Dr Annica Lau

"Investigating young professionals' psychological contracts to advance human-centred human resources management strategies: A multi-method qualitative research"

Supervisory Team: Anne-Marie McTavish, Dr May Bratby

Dr Christian Nordoff

"Consumer behaviour towards emerging smart technologies and its consequences for business environments"

Supervisory Team: Dr Sajad Rezaei, Dr Helen Watts

Dr Christopher Norman

"Deciphering the inter kingdom RNA exchanges in plant diseases"

Supervisory Team: Prof. Mahmut Tor, Prof. Yiguo Hong

Dr Sophie Pearce

"An evaluation of Uncrewed Aerial Systems for river flow measurements"

Supervisory Team: Prof. Ian Maddock, Dr Mark Corbett, Nick Everard

Dr Stephen Raven

"The (un)learning of whiteness and its relationship with being-white and developing social justice projects in Physical Education"

Supervisory Team: Prof. Gyozo Molnar, Dr Geoff Kohe, Dr Rachel Bullingham

Dr Justin Tipke

"Strategic Business-to-Business Marketing Communications in the German industry sector"

Supervisory Team: Dr Ria Wiid, Dr Paulo Mora-Avila

Dr Christopher Thomas

"Promoting Team Resilience within the Healthcare Setting: A Mixed Methods Approach to Develop & Test the Feasibility of an Online Team Reflective Journal Intervention"

Supervisory Team: Dr Helen Scott, Dr Daniel Farrelly, Dr Paul Snelling

Dr Andrew Wedgbury

"Fishing for Likes: Towards an Understanding of the Social Media Culture of Anglers"

Supervisory Team: Prof. Gyozo Molnar, Dr Geoff Kohe, Dr David Harte



Congratulations

MRES/MPHIL

Andrew Black

MPhil

"Triaging the Academy – Torch Bearing for European Horror in a Spontaneous Generation"

Director of Studies: Dr Mikel Koven

Thomas Howard

MRes Socio-Cultural Studies of Sport and Exercise

"Walking sports effect on active ageing"

Director of Studies: Prof Gyozo Molnar

Casey Maeve

MRes Sociology

"Merciful rage and violent desire': Sapphic discourses in Amy Levy's 'Xantippe' and Charles Swinburne's 'Anactoria'"

Director of Studies: Dr Luke Devine

Elizabeth Powell

MRes History

"The Lives of British Army Schoolmistresses, 1900-1925"

Director of Studies: Dr Wendy Toon

Georgie Sherrard

MRes Biology

"An investigation into the SPH family of proteins in the moss Physcomitrella (PhyschoSPHs)"

Director of Studies: Dr Mike Wheeler

We are proud of your hard work and dedication, and excited to see where this will take you next.

See you at Graduation!



POSTHUMOUS DOCTORAL AWARDS

Following the sad passing of Angela Coss and Lesley Spiers, they will be awarded posthumous doctoral awards at the 2023 graduation ceremonies. This is in recognition of their hard work and dedication to completing their studies.

Dr Lesley Spiers

"From the Private to Public Realms: Six Women's journeys from suffrage campaigns to citizenship in the early decades of the twentieth century, in rural Worcestershire"

Supervisory Team: Prof. Maggie Andrews, Prof. Claire Cochrane, Dr Heather Barrett

Dr Angela Coss

"The British Press, Public Opinion and Policy towards Soviet Russia, 1937-1942"

Supervisory Team: Prof. Neil Fleming, Dr Paddy McNally, Dr James Ryan

FUNDING HIGHLIGHTS

HAUNTING ISSUES: CHILDREN, SPECTRALITY AND CULTURE

AHRC Research Networking Scheme

Principal Investigator: Dr Lucy Arnold, School of Humanities

Value: £34,714

PROVISION OF THE EVALUATION OF THE IMPACT OF THE INVICTUS GAMES PROGRAMME: DÜSSELDORF 2023

The Royal British Legion

Project Team: Dr Don Vinson (Principal Investigator), Prof. Győző Molnár, Dr Gabriela Misca, Dr Emma Richardson, School of Sport and Exercise Science & School of Psychology

Value: £59,891

DEMENTIA EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Principal Investigator: Mary Bruce, ADS, School of Allied Health & Community

The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust *Walsall NHS Trust*

Value: £33,750

Value: £33,750

POLLEN FORECAST SERVICE

Met Office

Principal Investigator: Dr Beverley Adams-Groom, School of Science and the Environment

Value: £26,677

GEORGE EGERTON, TERRA INCOGNITAS: CRITICAL ESSAYS

British Academy/Leverhulme Trust

Principal Investigator: Dr Whitney Standlee, School of Humanities

Value: £8,205

DEMENTIA EDUCATION PROGRAMME

KYN Luxury Care Homes

Principal Investigator: Nicola Jacobson-Wright, ADS, School of Allied Health & Community

Value: £42,164

PROMOTING RESEARCH TO GRADUATE MEDICAL STUDENTS

The Academy of Medical Sciences

Principal Investigator: Prof. Lisa Jones, Three Counties Medical School

Value: £10,000

DEVELOPMENT OF NEW OPTICAL REMOTE SENSING TECHNOLOGY FOR HIGH ALTITUDE PSEUDO SATELLITES

- PARTNERED WITH QINETIQ

UKRI High Altitude Intelligence: Cross Sector Innovation Challenge

Principal Investigator: Prof. Ian Maddock, School of Science and the Environment

Value: £39,473

PHASE 2 OF IDENTIFYING NFM SITES IN THE RIVER LYD CATCHMENT

Gloucestershire County Council

Principal Investigator: Prof. Ian Maddock, School of Science and the Environment

Value: £10,955

SMALL INTERFERING RNA FOR DOWNY MILDEW CONTROL (siRNA4DM)

- PARTNERED WITH VIRGINIA TECH UNIVERSITY

UKRI/BBSRC

Principal Investigator: Prof. Mahmut Tör, School of Science and the Environment

Value: £49,750

MICROBIAL BIOLOGICAL CONTROL AGENTS FOR DOWNY MILDEW DISEASES (MBCA4DM)

- PARTNERED WITH TUBITAK TURKEY

UKRI/BBSRC

Principal Investigator: Prof. Mahmut Tör, School of Science and the Environment

Value: £29,700

MEETING CENTRES UK NETWORK

Shaw Foundation

Principal Investigator: Dr Shirley Evans, ADS, School of Allied Health & Community

Value: £34,917

VIDEO AND INFOGRAPHIC - DEMECH PROJECT DISSEMINATION AND IMPACT

NIHR School of Social Care Research - Added Value Fund

Principal Investigator: Dr Julie Barrett, Association for Dementia Studies, School of Allied Health and Community

Value: £13,856

SPOTLIGHT ON...



A SPOTLIGHT ON...

Interpersonal Relationships and Wellbeing Research Group

Research Blog:

irwbresearch.wp.worc.ac.uk

If your interest has been piqued by what you have read, do come along to one of our virtual research café talks to find out more about the research we are working on. Details of forthcoming café talks will be advertised via our [Eventbrite page](#) and the staff daily update – watch this space! We also have a [blog](#), and a social media presence ([Twitter account](#)) and you can subscribe/follow us for news and updates.

Who are we?

The Interpersonal Relationships and Wellbeing Research Group (IRWB RG) is a cross-school, multidisciplinary research group that began in 2020, and is led by Dr Sarah Davis, Principal Lecturer in Psychology. The group was initially set up to facilitate collaborative research and knowledge transfer activity across academics from the fields of Criminology, Psychology and Business. The Group has since expanded and we now have members from Nursing, Policing, Humanities, as well as affiliate members from external organisations (e.g., NHS, College of Policing) and academics from other UK and overseas Universities. To find out more about our membership, please visit our [web pages](#).



Dr Sarah Davis

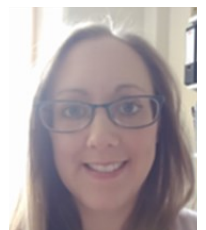
What do we do?

Our research explores how individual, social, and environmental factors influence relationships and wellbeing within different contexts, such as in workplaces, schools, and online spaces. We are interested in understanding how interpersonal relationships contribute to mental health (construed as both trauma/mental ill-health, and as positive wellbeing) and how they shape individual and team behaviour in consumer and organizational settings. In doing so, we explore both the 'dark' and 'light' side of relationships and human behaviour more broadly. We have four major themes of activity that explore different aspects of this remit.

Wellbeing for Life - The *Wellbeing for Life* theme, led by Dr Blaire Morgan (Senior Lecturer, School of Psychology) brings together researchers with a common interest in studying aspects of wellbeing across the lifespan. Here, wellbeing is considered as a broad concept and includes emotional, social, psychological, and physical wellbeing at an individual, collective and/or societal level. Members are involved in a number of projects:



- The design, delivery and evaluation of wellbeing programmes (e.g., [Flourish-HE](#))
- Explorations of risk and protective factors that influence wellbeing in applied contexts, such as within education and workplaces (e.g., our Wellbeing@Work project)
- Societal influences and impacts of wellbeing, such as prosocial behaviour and pro-environmentalism ([for example, recycling and mate choice](#))



Dr Blaire Morgan

Much of our research examines the role that psychological factors play in countering adversity and/or in promoting wellbeing e.g., emotional intelligence, mindfulness, self-compassion, gratitude, authenticity and empathy. You can follow this [link](#) to find out more about the theme, and to register for mailing list updates.

Trauma & Violence Prevention - *The Trauma & Violence Prevention* theme led by Dr Claire McLoone-Richards (Senior Lecturer, School of Psychology) focusses on the prevention of all forms of violence, abuse, and trauma, inclusive of culture, gender, sexuality, age, black minority and ethnic group, and social status. Work within this theme spans the experiences of victim/survivors, bystanders, perpetrators, and practitioners. Theme members have research interests that encompass all aspects of violent crime and trauma, looking at the impact of violence, the response to violence and abuse, and strengthening the evidence base to influence policy and practice, with the overall aim of preventing violence and reducing harm. Members have been involved in various projects including:



Dr Claire
McLoone-Richards

- Implementation and evaluation of interventions and programmes aimed at domestic abuse perpetrators
- Helpline services for male victims of domestic abuse
- Understanding support needs of military and veteran families in coping with visible and nonvisible traumas
- Implementation and evaluation of an active [bystander programme](#) to respond to domestic violence, coercive and controlling behaviour and sexual violence
- Understanding police decision making around domestic abuse, particularly in relation to risk assessment and coercive control
- Peer mentoring and peer support workers with [lived experience](#)
- Policing and vulnerability – blog post on [rebuilding trust in the police](#)

People & Work - The *People & Work* theme, led by Professor Lynn Nichol (Worcester Business School) brings together individuals who are interested in understanding the nature of work and careers, and the role of workplace relationships in this context. Members of this theme are engaged in research which aims to understand the dynamics of these relationships from an interpersonal and organisational perspective. For example, exploring issues such as the changing nature of work, the relationship between machine learning and people, and diversity within the workplace. Individual and organisational development is a key focus. Theme members are engaged in work on coaching, mentoring and pedagogy for business and management education, to create knowledge to enhance leadership and the work-based practice of existing and future employees and influence organisational policy.



Prof. Lynn Nichol

Customer Interactions- The *Customer Interactions* theme is led by Dr Richard Nicholls (Worcester Business School) and brings together researchers who aim to advance understandings of customer behaviours and interactions in the marketplace, through conceptual and applied research, driven by marketing and management problems and challenges. As Richard explains in his recent blog post '[Customer interactions](#)' are studied variously, and as different types, including, interactions between employees and customers (E2C); interactions between customers (C2C); and interactions between customers and self-service technology (C2SST). The team's activities are directed at providing excellent research that contributes to the wider community of customers, business, and the public. Current projects include rebranding advice to several charities and service evaluation advice to a national membership organisation.



Dr Richard Nicholls

Recent IRWB RG events - Our group members have conducted a piece of longitudinal research exploring how professionals working during the COVID-19 pandemic navigated adversity and unforeseen challenges. In collaboration with colleagues at the University of Leicester, this work involved examining the aspects of working life that supported professional resilience and employee wellbeing using a mixed methods approach. Based on the findings from the study, the team drafted a series of recommendations for practice, which provide suggestions for how individuals, managers/leaders, and organisations can support wellbeing in the workplace. They shared these findings with a group of local business professionals at a networking event and workshop hosted by the Hive and the Business and IP Centre Worcestershire on 8th June 2023.

As part of the workshop, attendees reflected on their experiences of wellbeing at work and considered whether/how the wellbeing recommendations provided would work for them/their organisation. The event was well attended, and prompted some great discussion! The team hope to incorporate the feedback from attendees into a publication from the project and plan to deliver a follow up session focussing on employee wellbeing.



A SPOTLIGHT ON...

Eya Meddeb

PhD Student,
Worcester Business School
(Studentship funded by the
University of Worcester)

“Analysing Employee Turnover using causal Bayesian networks and machine learning: Mixed evidence synthesis for causal knowledge discovery”

mede1_20@uni.worc.ac.uk

What is your research area?

My research area is about analysing employee Turnover using causal inference (causal Bayesian networks) and machine learning. This topic concerns examining the practicalities of applying causal structure learning to employee turnover using domain experts' and data knowledge, to test the outcome of different scenarios and improve decision making.

Why did you decide to undertake PGR study at the University?

I will say I applied mostly for the research topic, I have been always fascinated by research in causal inference and this topic seems to fit in with my research interests and future goals. I would also say, one of the biggest advantages with the University of Worcester is having a funded PhD programme open to all students worldwide, which was not the case with other PhD funding.

What opportunities have you had during your time at Worcester?

Doing a PhD is a great opportunity to improve your knowledge, test your limits and meet researchers from different disciplines. My research is a cross disciplinary topic between Human Resources management and computer science which allowed me to work with people from different backgrounds including my supervisors. At first, it was challenging since both research areas are quite different, but this difference allowed to have multiple perspectives of the research outcome which led to find an interesting research gap to fill.

What has been the highlight of your PGR study so far?

I would say being able to present and discuss my research in multiple conference and events, having a publication and collaborating with other researchers from different backgrounds (hoping for a new publication soon).

Where do you see yourself after you have completed your course?

Hopefully being more involved in research and academia.



Eya presenting at the 2022 PGR Conference

Supervisory Team:

Dr Chris Bowers (DoS)
Prof. Lynn Nichol

What is your professional background?

I have a BSc in Electrical engineering and a MSc in Economics and management, from the National Engineering School of Tunis, Tunisia. For research, I had a research placement with the Fraunhofer Institute for International Economics and Knowledge Management in Leipzig, Germany for one year (In collaboration with the University of Leipzig). For work experience, I worked in the private sector for three years, I worked as an artificial intelligence consultant with an American-Tunisian company called YaiGlobal for one year and as an electronic engineer with TELNET technologies, Tunisian company, for almost two years.



What is your biggest achievement to date?

I would say, getting to the end of a PhD itself is an achievement. PhDs can be challenging not only from a workload point of view, but also from a mental point of view. Having perseverance to keep the work going, knowing when you might need a break and when to gear up is the most important skill that you can learn in a PhD (in my opinion). I would recommend keeping a track of your work (a list of tasks done) to see your progress and a to do list every 2 – 3 weeks.

What would be your one piece of advice to students wanting to study for a PhD?

My one piece of advice to students wanting to study for a PhD is to choose a topic that truly excites and motivates you. Pursuing a PhD is a long and challenging journey, and your passion for the research area will be crucial in keeping you engaged and persevering through the ups and downs of research. Select a topic that aligns with your interests and long-term career goals. This will not only make your PhD experience more enjoyable but also increase your chances of making meaningful contributions to your field of study. Remember, a PhD is a significant commitment, so it is important to embark on it with genuine enthusiasm and curiosity.

What do you enjoy doing outside of study?

I enjoy playing Tennis (still a beginner though) and travelling. If you like collecting vintage things, Worcester is the place for you, it has ones of the greatest charity shops selling different vintage items for a reasonable price.



A SPOTLIGHT ON...

Dr Chris Russell

Senior Lecturer & Programme Lead
PG Cert in Dementia Studies,
Association for Dementia Studies,
School of Allied Health & Community

c.russell@worc.ac.uk

What was the subject of your PhD?

My study explored the influence regular engagement in physical activity had upon the identity of participants living with dementia. The locations for the research were the leisure and fitness centres close to where participants lived. So the study was about place, community, choice and everyday life, as much as the actual activities themselves (although these were important too!).

What is your current area of research?

The main focus of my work is dementia and everyday life with dementia. So, over the years I have been involved in research exploring how people living with dementia spend their time. This has included leisure and physical activity, as I mentioned above, but also the involvement of people with dementia teaching students at university, and time spent in more formalised contexts – such as experiences of attending Meeting Centres through the week.

How long have you worked at the University of Worcester?

I taught my first class at the University in 2008. I was a social worker in practice then, and I came in to teach classes on the new master's in social work course. Before long I was offered a module on a social welfare undergraduate degree. I used to teach in the evenings after work. I remember it not just because it was enjoyable and the students were very good, but because the venue was a portacabin parked outside the Student Union. Those are long gone. Probably a good thing.

What is your professional background?

Social work. It is a good discipline because social workers engage right across the multi-disciplinary field. As the name suggests the emphasis is upon the social, so it is about getting to know people and working alongside them to seek solutions to difficulties.

Which courses do you teach on at the University of Worcester?

I am the Programme Lead for the Post Graduate Certificate in Dementia Studies. It is a fully online course. I also lead on the delivery of courses for certain social care providers. Since 2022 we have been offering a course – Championing Physical Activity for People Affected by Dementia – I lead that too (more detail below!).

What are you currently working on?

I am preparing a bid for funding a project exploring what is good facilitation of physical activity for people living with dementia. It builds on the PhD research. It is a collaborative bid with colleagues from the universities of Lincoln and Cardiff. I am also the stakeholder lead for a research project led by the Association for Dementia Studies at the University of Worcester – Get Real With Meeting Centres.

What advice would you give to those finishing their PhDs and are looking at moving into an ECR role?

Make the most of the connections and relationships you build whilst completing your PhD. If people know you do good work and have a professional approach that will count for a great deal as the future unfolds.

What is your biggest achievement to date?

Personally, my family. I am proud to have a daughter about to qualify as a nurse and a son who is following his passion for a career in sport. Professionally, it is the Championing Physical Activity for People Affected by Dementia course. Being able to turn PhD research into a programme that people from care, health, housing, leisure and sports organisations enrol on, and then offer very encouraging feedback is a dream come true.

Who has influenced you the most in your career so far?

Every member of my PhD supervisory team. Professor Dawn Brooker, Dr Shirley Evans and Dr Geoff Kohe. Each person brought something valuable but different. I am a great believer in the power of a supervisory team.

How do you enjoy unwinding from teaching/research?

I am a volunteer at Cheltenham Town Football Club, with their supporter's liaison team. I have no responsibility beyond helping people on matchdays and watching the football. I also listen to radio stations across the world. It is pretty easy to unwind in the evenings listening to the Breakfast Show live from Honolulu for example.



A 'go along interview' in progress on a badminton court during PhD research



A walk organised from one of the leisure centres in the PhD



A SPOTLIGHT ON...

Katy Wareham-Morris

PhD Student,
School of Humanities
(part-time; self-funded)

"How might the subversive potential of play liberate hypermedia users to negotiate embodied posthuman potentialities?"

k.wareham.morris@worc.ac.uk

Supervisory Team:

Dr Simon Hardy (DoS)
Dr Sharon Young
Dr Steve Hollyman (External)

Why did you decide to undertake PGR study at the University of Worcester?

I have a long history with Worcester. I completed both my undergrad and Masters Degrees here. I felt that I had a really good relationship with the team in the Humanities and that they would be able to understand what I was trying to achieve by proposing a critical creative hybrid project with many interdisciplinary elements. I also work full time at the university, so studying here made the project more achievable.

What opportunities have you had during your time at Worcester?

I have the opportunity to be involved in symposia and conferences and, to be introduced to international colleagues. The research expertise of my supervisors and colleagues is also a huge benefit.

What has been the highlight of your PGR study so far?

Delivering a keynote presentation in March of this year at the University of Warsaw.

What is your professional background?

I work full time as Senior Lecturer and Course Leader for the BA Hons Degree in Media & Culture. I am currently writing a brand new degree for a September 2024 launch, Media & Film Studies.

What is your biggest achievement to date?

My biggest personal achievement are seeing that my children are happy, healthy and curious. My biggest professional achievement is having my poetry published, particularly my latest pamphlet, *Violent Existence* as those poems were written when I was newly diagnosed with Crohn's Disease and then when I entered the Shielding category during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Where do you see yourself after you have completed your course?

I would like to continue to pursue my academic career and publish some of my PhD research as an academic monograph.

What would be your one piece of advice to students wanting to study for a PhD?

You can do it! Yes, it's hard work and yes, you will feel like you're going crazy, but it can be done. If you have an idea niggling in your head, don't be afraid to talk to someone about it.

What do you enjoy doing outside of study?

I love to go for walks with my family and, I also enjoy visiting art galleries. This gives me inspiration for my creative practice. Of course, I read a lot because reading makes for good writing!



Katy delivering a lecture to students during a recent trip to Halmstad University, Sweden

RESEARCH ON TOUR

VENETIAN VOGUE

PhD student; Niamh Dolly Fitzpatrick, gives us an insight into her recent visit to Venice, Italy, with the School of Humanities.

Niamh Dolly Fitzpatrick, *PhD Student, School of Humanities*

“My research examines female authored tragedies of the period to explore women’s response to the contempt which they received from their male colleagues, investigating how their characterisations of villainy were influenced by the societal prejudice which they received.”



Venice, a city consumed by culture, mystery, and stories. As a literature student, the thought of moving to Venice to attend a Literature and Cultures: International Explorations Research School filled me with delight. Even arriving in the midst of a storm, the city instantly lived up to my expectations; serene waterscapes, phenomenal architecture, and tasty cuisine around every corner. One thing however I did not expect to see in Venice, proved the most intriguing: Vogue. Held in the Palazzo Grassi, the ‘Chronorama. Photographic Treasures from the 20th Century’ exhibition presents over 400 Vogue images spanning from 1910 to the early 1980s.



1911. A misty bordered backdrop feature 6 faceless beauties, their backs to the audience. Each lady is draped in exquisite, monochrome gowns, holding spectacles, canes or bags. Whilst each is as glamorous as their companion, each fashionista dons a different style. From the demur and graceful lady to the fantastic flapper girl ready to attend her next party, what better way for Vogue to announce their new ‘Spring & Summer Fashions’ collection. The earlier drawn covers mirrored my preconceptions of the magazine, this being a strong focus on beauty and fashion presented solely through their target audience – women. However, the faceless silhouettes lack empathy, and the focus on the beauty centred in each dress ultimately creates distance between the audience and the magazine.



1929. The covers are darker, the themes have changed; fashion, which as once at the forefront of the magazine, now is simply a co-character. The focus takes a more psychologically intriguing and politically centred approach, and the shift in cultural practice using photography, collage, and props, draw the audience in. English artist and stage designer Oliver Messel lies on the floor surrounded by numerous soulless masks of his own. Messel’s piercing gaze is an oxymoron; a man pleading with the audience to save him, yet he looks invigorated, willing to be further consumed by his own creations. A childlike mask in his hand with a single finger over it’s mouth, clutching at his innocence. The staged artistic direction and expressionistic style of the cover simply draws you in.



1977. Perfectly curled blonde hair. Manicured hands draped in jewellery and a frilled cuffed shirt rest her perfectly white smile. Eyes filled with joy and laughter gaze back at you as the Country Queen invites you – and only you – to her next performance. Concerned predominantly with status and symbols, the move away from performative artistic direction in the magazine's later decades not only calls attention to the growing capitalisation of wider society, but it also demonstrates Vogue's desire to fulfil popular trending demands through cultural iconology.



Why Venetian Vogue? **1969.** Italian journalist and feminist Benedetta Barzini sits, legs wide open. Not in a skirt or dress, but in trousers and a large, draped poncho. She is the face of the first cover of Vogue Italia, and her position in the magazine not only challenged the cultural preconceptions of Italian beauty, but also the wider preconceptions surrounding feminine beauty as a cultural stereotype. Barzini's Vogue demonstrates that beauty does not have to be demur and delicate as seen in the earlier editions of Vogue, or sexualised showing excessive amounts of skin, but rather true beauty is strength, individuality, and an acknowledgment of self-worth. A lesson which still rings true 54 years later.

1660-1700 was a period of immense societal change for English commercial theatre; the formation of two licensed performing companies, significant advances in staging technology, an influx of Italian Opera and women's introduction to commercialised theatre.

Although the changes made to theatre in the English Restoration were considerable developments for the evolution of English theatre, in comparison to its European neighbour Italy, England's structural developments fell behind in their advancements.

My research conducted in Venice intends to examine the work of Italian Renaissance drama by female dramatists Isabella Andreini and Margherita Costa, investigating their texts as proto feminist texts intended to undermine Italian patriarchal prejudicial belief.

PROJECT FOCUS

'HAUNTING ISSUES: CHILDREN, SPECTRALITY AND CULTURE' AHRC RESEARCH NETWORK

49,000 children vanished from British school rolls without explanation in 2019, according to an Education Policy Institute Report. 2020 saw media attention return to the unsolved disappearance of toddler Madeleine McCann as new information relating to the case emerged. In 2021, 46 charities wrote to UK health minister Nadine Dorries after 11 unaccompanied teenage asylum seekers took their lives while in the care of the state. Meanwhile, in 2017, authors Jesmyn Ward and George Saunders published critically acclaimed novels, each with the ghost of a child at its heart. These child spectres join those found in the films of J.A Bayona and Guillermo del Toro, and the occluded infants present in Kimberly Campanello's poetry collection *MOTHERBABYHOME* (2019), to illustrate how the present absence of the lost child insistently registers as a haunting presence in contemporary culture. The AHRC-funded 'Haunting Issues: Children, Spectrality and Culture' Research Network holds these real and imagined children in mind, operating at the point where the historical child and their cultural counterparts collide.

'Haunting Issues' launched on 1st April 2023. Led by primary investigator Dr Lucy Arnold, and co-investigator Professor Katy Shaw (Northumbria University), the network will bring together academics across fifteen international universities to undertake research on the motif of the spectral child in culture. The network will explore how analysing figure of the spectral child, as they manifest in fiction, film, art and culture, can shed new light on how various cohorts of children are marginalised, forgotten, silenced or occluded.

The network's first workshop will take place on June 26th, with sessions around the theme of 'the spectral child at the border' exploring the ways in which various national and domestic boundaries serve to generate phantom existences for various children and young people. Future workshops, around the themes of 'mourning the spectral child' (in association with the Northern School of Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy) and 'the spectral child in the anthropocene' are planned for January and June 2024. Alongside the academic partnerships inaugurated by the network, 'Haunting Issues' will also be working with a range of non-academic partners to deliver a programme of outreach events across the country. These include Brushstrokes Community Project and the New Art Gallery, Walsall, who will be working with local artist Naziah Angel to co-ordinate a visual arts project for refugee and asylum-seeking children in the West Midlands, the Hyde Park Picture House, Leeds, who will be collaborating with the network membership on the 'Spectral Child on Screen' film festival, and New Writing North, who will be co-ordinating a creative writing initiative with children in hard to reach communities in Newcastle.

The first AHRC-funded project to have been led by the University of Worcester, 'Haunting Issues' seeks to generate a nuanced critical understanding of the relationship between ghost and child across historical periods, geographical boundaries, and modes of cultural production. Through its interdisciplinary cultural analyses of the spectral child, the network aims to address what the factors which generate such precarious and spectral childhoods (war, illness, crime) mean to the children and families they effect, going beyond the biomedical and socio-legal frames which conventionally define them. By fostering links between professionals, including paediatric clinicians, legal practitioners working with refugee and asylum-seeking children, social care providers, and academic researchers, through its workshops and engagement events, the network aims to ensure that the new approaches and concepts generated to have the potential to inform policy and practice within those fields. The network will generate innovative intellectual and methodological approaches to thinking the cultural motif of the ghostly child and its ability to communicate shifting attitudes towards children, their paradoxical vulnerability and menace, their evocation of taboos, traumas and lost futures.

2023 DÜSSELDORF INVICTUS GAMES: RECOVERY THROUGH SPORT



Written by: Prof. Győző Molnar & Dr Emma Richardson

While the international sporting significance of the Invictus Games has been exponentially growing, the actual event has a relatively short history in comparison to similar multinational and global sporting events such as the Olympics Games. The Invictus Games were first hosted in London in 2014 to support injured, wounded and sick veteran and active service personnel in their recovery. The multi-sport event was established by Prince Harry, who had been inspired by the American Warrior Games and wished to create a similar multisport event in Britain. The name 'Invictus' was given to the Games to symbolise the 'undefeated' spirit of the participants and the potential road for rehabilitation via sport.

The 2023 Games will include ten sports, which are archery, cycling, swimming, athletics, power lifting, sitting volleyball, wheelchair rugby, wheelchair basketball and table tennis – to be introduced the first time. These adapted sport activities offer excellent opportunities for wounded, injured and sick ex and still serving military personnel to engage with the Games on multiple levels and compete with other athletes with similar background and experience from different countries. In addition to competitors, the Invictus Games also consider and include relatives and friends.

Currently, the [British Royal Legion](#) is leading the British Team's selection and preparation. In December 2022 they released a tender for the evaluation of the 2023 Düsseldorf Invictus Games to gather hard evidence regarding the impact the Games have on the recovery and rehabilitation of wounded, injured and sick ex and still serving military personnel and their families and friends. The Inclusive Sport and Physical Activity Research Group teamed up with the [Coaching and Performance Research Groups](#) and [Dr Gabriela Misca](#) from the School of Psychology to bid for the tender to evaluate the 2023 Düsseldorf Games. After multiple rounds, the team effort was successful and our team of researchers have secured an excellent opportunity to make a significant contribution to our understanding of the connections between sport, Invictus Games and recovery.

The research will focus on the British team which for Düsseldorf Games will comprise of 59 competitors, 6 reserves, 11 lead coaches and a number of support staff, assistant coaches, ambassadors and medical personnel. More specifically, the project will centre on the Invictus Game and related recovery experiences of three key groups:

- **Competitors** – exploring how the competitors' mental health and wellbeing will have been impacted by their Invictus Games experience and how their identity will have been shaped;
- **Families** – understanding how families are impacted by the competitors' injury and their recovery journey; and-how they support the recovery journey of the competitors;
- **Coaches** – investigating how coaches are supported to facilitate the most valuable recovery environments possible and how they balance their roles supporting performance and aiding recovery.

As the evaluation's timeframe goes beyond the Düsseldorf Games in September, the project will continue for a further 18 months to help understand the longer-term impact of involvement with the Invictus Games programme as a whole.

We are very excited to be part of the British Team's Invictus Game preparation journey and to be leading this evaluation project to further explore the specifics of the complex relationship between sport, Invictus Games and wounded, injured and sick ex and still serving military personnel's recovery.

RAIL TRAILS PROJECT PROGRESS

Since being featured in the last issue of *Research@Worc*, the 'Rail Trails: Worcestershire' project (a joint venture between the School of Arts, Worcestershire Community Rail Partnership, and the Worcestershire Ramblers) has mapped 10 regional free station to station walks in Worcestershire and also delivered a free taster walk event for the public in a further community engagement session at the Hive Library in Worcester.



The project is developing 95 miles of new 'active travel' walking trails in the county using a mix of paper, interactive .pdf and app-based guide materials for devices to help recreational walkers best utilise these newly-created free trails.

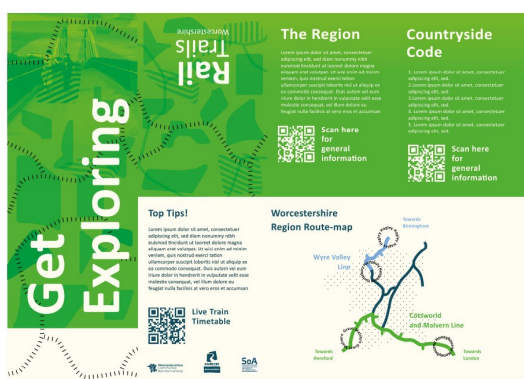
Andy Stevenson, University Project Lead, went into further depth about the project's aims at a session delivered as part of the School of Arts Public Seminar Series too entitled 'The Journey not the Destination' on the 19th April at the Art House. In addition to the Rail Trails project, Andy discussed research carried out as part of his p/t PhD studies, examining how recreational walkers engage with the various kinds of assistive navigational materials available today and how these might evolve in the future.

"The collaboration between Worcestershire Ramblers, the University of Worcester's School of Arts and WCRP has been ground-breaking in producing a set of entirely new linear walks that can be used to promote healthy, sustainable active travel for the local and wider community – potentially improving the wellbeing of a wide range of users.

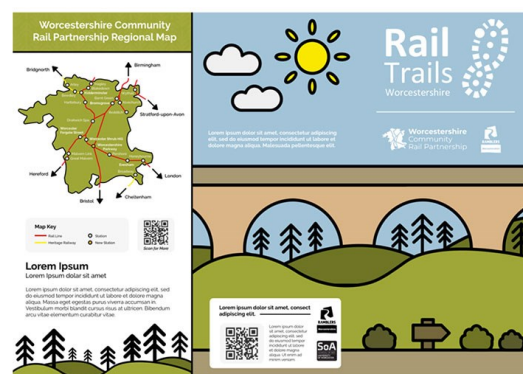
With two out of the four railway lines in the county now completed at this interim point in the project we have already published and started to market the first in the series – the Cotswold & Malvern Line. This has generated interest from local walkers and, to my knowledge, from as far afield as London. The collaborative aspect of the project raised curiosity by the media in the early stages when we were successful in being featured on local radio."

- Fiona Saxon, Partnership Officer, Worcestershire Community Rail Partnership

In addition to the main project collaboration, Year 2 Graphic Design students on the 'Graphic Information Design' module were set a 'live' infographics design brief in early February by Rail Trails project team members Lyndon Bracewell (instigator of the project and representing Worcestershire Ramblers) and Andy Stevenson in his role as the University of Worcester's Senior Lecturer in Graphic Design. The aim was to give students experience of working to a 'live' design brief of this nature along with the pace, interaction and steer of real clients including Lyndon Bracewell and WCRP's Partnership Officer Fiona Saxon. Once a final design(s) has been chosen this will then be created in full for commercial print and used to help promote and explain the project to both tourists and visitors locally and regionally.



James Edwards



Harvey Stamenkovic



Julia Gener Altimiras



"Time is running out to persuade those in power that a monumental sea change is needed if we are to turn the tide on ocean destruction. Getting the change we need on the water is as much about government and corporate policy, as it is about the stories we tell that inspire people to get behind these policies. Sea Change is a stunning book telling the story of ocean beauty, and of its destruction in a way that cannot help but inspire people everywhere to join the campaign to protect the oceans."

- Will McCallum, Head of Oceans at Greenpeace UK

SEA CHANGE is the latest project of the International Centre for the Picture Book in Society based at the University of Worcester's Illustration department, and the sequel to the previous **MIGRATIONS** project.

SEA CHANGE, as **MIGRATIONS**, is based upon an international call out to artists from around the world in response to a social, environmental or political issue. Over 450 postcards have been received from Europe, Asia, Oceania, Australia, South America, Africa and North America from artists responding to the threat our ocean and seas face, to form a collection of ideas, concerns, hopes and imagination.

SEA CHANGE is aligned to the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration -a rallying call for the protection and revival of ecosystems all around the world, for the benefit of people and nature. It aims to halt the degradation of ecosystems, and restore them to achieve global goals. The UN Decade runs from 2021 through 2030, which is also the deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals and the timeline scientists have identified as the last chance to prevent catastrophic climate change.

Contained within the **SEA CHANGE** collection is an illustrated postcard from Peter Thomson, United Nations Special Envoy for the Ocean, a position dedicated to the implementation of sustainable Development Goal 14- Life Below Water.

SEA CHANGE hopes to be an agent of ocean literacy, a vital component in the successful implementation of SDG14. This exhibition will tour the world and also be the basis for inter-generational arts -based workshops provided to schools, colleges and communities.

INSPIRATION

In addition to the UN Decade and Sustainable Development Goals, the project was in part inspired by the environmental disaster unfolding in Fairbourne.

Rising sea levels have led to the village being the 'first community in the UK to be de-commissioned as a result of climate change'.

This will affect over 400 homes as well as local independent businesses, and resettlement plans are 'unclear'.

EXHIBITIONS

The postcards have formed an international touring exhibition which opened at Nami Island, South Korea in 2022 and were shown at The Hive in Worcester from April 1st – 20th before moving to BIB (Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava), a UNESCO sponsored event.

The project is also due to be exhibited at *CONFIA 10th International Conference on Illustration and Animation* in July 2023 in Portugal.

PUBLISHED WORK

SEA CHANGE Save the Ocean, a book featuring over 50 of the postcards received, will be published by Otter-Barry Books in June 2023, including work by Axel Scheffler, Jackie Morris, Roger Mello and Nicola Davies. A foreword to the book has been contributed by Peter Thomson, UN Special Envoy for the Ocean, and proceeds will be given to Greenpeace International and IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People).

As well as being an agent of change, this projects seeks to highlight illustration as a form of journalism and strength links with external partners in the local community. *SEA CHANGE* has involved collaboration with:

- Unlocking the Severn
- The Hive
- Worcester Museums
- Ocean Recovery Project
- River Action



The fishing nets featured in the exhibition have been provided by the Ocean Recovery Project, based in Brixham, Devon, concerned with salvaging discarded fishing equipment and recycling to recover and recycle litter collected by volunteers on our beach cleans.

SUSTAINING COMMUNITY- BASED SUPPORT GROUPS FOR PEOPLE AFFECTED BY DEMENTIA

It is widely accepted that the number of people living with dementia is only going to grow as people live longer – yet early support for people adjusting to life with the symptoms of this devastating disease is often poor. There is no standard model for what is on offer to help people after they are diagnosed: in some parts of the country there is next to nothing for those with mild to moderate dementia living in the community, except for occasional contact with a GP. Even if new medications making headlines recently live up to their promise, it will mean people will be able to live well for longer while managing symptoms – meaning it is more important than ever that people are diagnosed early and have support once they are. Yet much of the community support for dementia is still provided piecemeal by grass-roots community groups and third sector organisations with no stable, ongoing funding.



FUNDED BY

NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

The University of Worcester's Association for Dementia Studies (ADS) has been looking into the challenges that face one form of community-based support – Meeting Centres for people affected by dementia – in a bid to learn how they might maximise their chances of keeping going successfully in such challenging conditions. The two-year Get Real with Meeting Centres project completed this spring, after the £350,000 research study was green-lit by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR)'s Research for Social Care Programme in 2020. The project was co-led by Professor Dawn Brooker (former ADS director) and Dr Shirley Evans (current ADS director), and project managed by research associate Thomas Morton, heading up a team that included multiple members of ADS and collaborators from Oxford University, London School of Economics, the 3 Nations Dementia Working Group and Worcestershire County Council.

ADS pioneered the introduction of Meeting Centres – a social club for people and families affected by dementia where people can get help, make friends and stay connected in their communities – in the UK. Meeting Centres began in the Netherlands but are now spreading across towns and communities with more than 50 in the England, Scotland and Wales thanks to the leadership of the University of Worcester.

The project involved talking with dozens of people – public and professionals – attending, running, and supporting case-study Meeting Centres to find out how things work and what the challenges are, as well as a UK-wide survey to help understand what elements of Meeting Centres people most value. From this, advice videos and booklets, outlining what might help or hinder community groups in keeping going, have been created for unveiling at an end-of-project event at the University of Worcester Arena on July 12 – with a discussion with attendees from across the UK on how this might inform next steps for the Meeting Centre network in this country.

RESEARCH WITH GYPSY, ROMA AND TRAVELLER COMMUNITIES

In common with the majority of the population, most academics will hold traditional images of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller life, which might typically include a brightly painted bow-topped wagon, cooking on an open fire, women making pegs or weaving baskets and children playing happily in a meadow. This romanticised idyll, however, is a far cry from the reality of coping with subsistence living and continual persecution and discrimination, the latter of which continues to the present day. Contemporary images held regarding and Traveller life are likely to be influenced by TV programmes such as *'My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding'* (Channel 4, 2010) or *'60 Days with the Gypsies'* (Channel 4, 2022, with their flamboyant and dysfunctional presentations of Traveller culture, which are just not recognised by most members of these communities.

June was Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Celebration month but despite these populations representing Worcestershire's largest ethnic minority, there is very little celebration of this ethnic status. Many members of these communities, including the small number who make it through to professional roles, are more likely to hide their ethnicity than to celebrate it, for fear of discrimination.

In keeping with the University's commitment to social inclusion and anti-discrimination, much of Dr Peter Unwin's recent research work has challenged the exclusion of Gypsy, Roma and Travellers from health and social care services and questioned why so many children and young people are being taken into care. In partnership with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller organisations and Worcestershire County Council, Peter has just led a project- *'Gypsy, Roma and Traveller e-learning'* - which has produced an interactive training package to raise awareness among social workers, but which will resonate with many other professions. Peter's Lottery funded project *'The Missing Voices of Disabled Gypsies and Travellers'* [The missing voices of disabled Gypsies and Travellers - YouTube](#) was the first known study of what had previously been a taboo topic and the NHS Race and Health Observatory have just funded research into *'Inequalities in Mental Health Care for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities'*. Peter works in co-production with people with lived experience and recently recruited two Romany people, Stacey Hodgkins and Chris Smith, into 'IMPACT', the University's service user and carer group who are intrinsic to much teaching and learning across the Schools of Allied Health and Community, the School of Nursing and Midwifery and the Medical School.

Peter has developed extensive Gypsy, Roma and Traveller networks across the UK and Ireland and is currently developing a bid with community groups and colleagues from Sport and Exercise Science, The Medical School and the School of Arts, which is designed to introduce women from Worcestershire's Gypsy, Roma and Traveller populations to community assets to which have not previously been accessed, with a view to improving their mental and physical health. The health of these population is the poorest of any other ethnic group in the UK, life expectancy is very low and the suicide rate very high. The sustainability of this proposed research is intended to include the establishment of a community-led Gypsy, Roma and Traveller organisation in Worcestershire.



Dr Peter Unwin with Roma and Irish Travellers in Dublin

"Daniel Somerville is the gateway drug to opera" | "The show was absolutely amazing, honestly the best piece of art I've experienced in years"



ADMIRING LA STUPENDA

3rd June 2023

Dr Daniel Somerville's practice research performance *Admiring La Stupenda* was performed in Prague as part of the Wild Festival of queer performance at Venuše ve Švehlovce

The research concerns the description and analysis of the 'operatic' in the performance of the body. Having studied the movement of opera singers and analysing it through the lens of contemporary Japanese movement practice of Butoh, Dr Somerville was able to create a choreographic vocabulary for non-singers based on the particular embodiment of music and corporeal restrictions of singers - transferring the movement of opera singers into the bodies of actors and dancers. Observing and sketching singers in rehearsal and performance was the basis of a methodology that allowed the researcher to move from the position of the spectator to the position of the performer in an embodied sense.

This performance was accompanied by workshops and masterclasses for performing artists in Prague and was part of a series of performances and masterclasses by international artists whose work is informed by Butoh curated by Beautiful Confusion Collective. This performance and workshop created a platform for Knowledge Exchange and forms part of the international dissemination of the research through performance.

Admiring La Stupenda oscillates between lecture format, direct address, theatricalization and dance. This Performance Lecture not only explores and illustrates the research but also, by adopting the persona of the opera queen, allows for a deeper understanding of the adoration of coloratura soprano Joan Sutherland in the context of queer sensibility. The title of the work is an homage to Kazuo Ohno's seminal Butoh performance *Admiring L'Argentina* which fused memories of a famous tango dancer with memories of his mother. Similarly, *Admiring La Stupenda*, draws parallels between the researcher-as-opera queen's encounters with Sutherland and the story of Somerville's mother, including her mental illness and the onset of dementia. On one level the work is an operatic treatment of her life story and in doing so the classic 'mad scene', for which Sutherland was particularly admired, is employed.



Photos: Michaela Škvrňáková

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

A selection of research outputs published since September 2022.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

JOURNAL ARTICLE: Farrell, Derek, Moran, Johnny, Zat, Zeynep, Miller, Paul W., Knibbs, Lorraine, Papanikolopoulos, Penny, Prattos, Tessa, McGowan, Iain, McLaughlin, Derek, Barron, Ian, Mattheß, Cordula and Kiernan, Matthew D. (2023) **GROUP EARLY INTERVENTION EYE MOVEMENT DESENSITIZATION AND REPROCESSING THERAPY AS A VIDEO-CONFERENCE PSYCHOTHERAPY WITH FRONTLINE/EMERGENCY WORKERS IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN THE TREATMENT OF POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AND MORAL INJURY—AN RCT STUDY.** *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14. p. 1129912.

Objective: Frontline mental health, emergency, law enforcement, and social workers have faced unprecedented psychological distress in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of the RCT (Randomized Controls Trial) study was to investigate the effectiveness of a Group EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing) therapy (Group Traumatic Episode Protocol—GTEP) in the treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Moral Injury. The treatment focus is an early intervention, group trauma treatment, delivered remotely as video-conference psychotherapy (VCP). This early intervention used an intensive treatment delivery of 4x2h sessions over 1-week. Additionally, the group EMDR intervention utilized therapist rotation in treatment delivery. Methods: The study's design comprised a delayed (1-month) treatment intervention (control) versus an active group. Measurements included the International Trauma Questionnaire (ITQ), Generalized Anxiety Disorder Assessment (GAD-7), Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9), Moral Injury Events Scale (MIES), and a Quality-of-Life psychometric (EQ-5D), tested at T0, T1: pre—treatment, T2: post-treatment, T3: 1-month follow-up (FU), T4: 3-month FU, and T5: 6-month FU. The Adverse Childhood Experiences – International version (ACEs), Benevolent Childhood Experience (BCEs) was ascertained at pre-treatment only. N = 85 completed the study. Results: Results highlight a significant treatment effect within both active and control groups. Post Hoc comparisons of the ITQ demonstrated a significant difference between T1 pre (mean 36.8, SD 14.8) and T2 post (21.2, 15.1) ($t_{11.58} = 15.68, p < 0.001$). Further

changes were also seen related to co-morbid factors. Post Hoc comparisons of the GAD-7 demonstrated significant difference between T1 pre (11.2, 4.91) and T2 post (6.49, 4.73) ($t = 6.22 = 4.41, p < 0.001$); with significant difference also with the PHQ-9 between T1 pre (11.7, 5.68) and T2 post (6.64, 5.79) ($t = 6.30 = 3.95, p < 0.001, d = 0.71$). The treatment effect occurred irrespective of either ACEs/BCEs during childhood. However, regarding Moral Injury, the MIES demonstrated no treatment effect between T1 pre and T5 6-month FU. The study's findings discuss the impact of Group EMDR therapy delivered remotely as video-conference psychotherapy (VCP) and the benefits of including a therapist/rotation model as a means of treatment delivery. However, despite promising results suggesting a large treatment effect in the treatment of trauma and adverse memories, including co-morbid symptoms, research results yielded no treatment effect in frontline/emergency workers in addressing moral injury related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conclusion: The NICE (2018) guidance on PTSD highlighted the paucity of EMDR therapy research used as an early intervention. The primary rationale for this study was to address this critical issue. In summary, treatment results for group EMDR, delivered virtually, intensively, using therapist rotation are tentatively promising, however, the moral dimensions of trauma need consideration for future research, intervention development, and potential for further scalability. The data contributes to the emerging literature on early trauma interventions. Clinical Trial Registration: [Clinicaltrials.gov](https://clinicaltrials.gov), ISRCTN16933691.

JOURNAL ARTICLE: *Lea, Rosanna, Davis, Sarah K., Mahoney, Berenice and Qualter, Pamela (2022)* **DO EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT ADOLESCENTS FLOURISH OR FLOUNDER UNDER PRESSURE? LINKING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE TO STRESS REGULATION MECHANISMS.** *Personality and Individual Differences*, 201 (111943)
doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2022.111943

Everyday stressors are a normal part of adolescence, yet young people differ markedly in their responses. Emotional intelligence (EI), a set of emotion-related adaptive traits and skills, is thought to be an important individual difference that acts as a 'stress buffer' to safeguard adolescent well-being. EI correlates with reduced perceived life stress levels, but, to date, there is no attempt to understand how EI might underpin young people's responses to acute, situational stress. This paper explores how EI, measured as both an ability (AEI) and trait (TEI), regulates induced acute stress, using a novel, potent social stressor. Across two studies, we tested the extent to which EI moderated attention allocation to

emotion (eye movements), psychological reactivity (mood), and physiological reactivity (heart rate) in older adolescents (study 1 n = 58; study 2 n = 60; age 16–18 years). Findings suggest that higher TEI (but not AEI) can 'dampen' the physiological stress response (study 1), facilitating protection against allostatic overload. However, being better at perceiving emotion (but not TEI) predicted attention towards happy stimuli when stressed (study 2). Preliminary findings suggest that, while TEI and AEI contribute differentially to stress regulation mechanisms, higher AEI may not necessarily be adaptive for young people facing social stressors.

JOURNAL ARTICLE: *Santos, H.O., May, Theresa and Bueno, Allain (2023)* **EATING MORE SARDINES INSTEAD OF FISH OIL SUPPLEMENTATION: BEYOND OMEGA-3 POLYUNSATURATED FATTY ACIDS, A MATRIX OF NUTRIENTS WITH CARDIOVASCULAR BENEFITS.** *Frontiers in Nutrition*.
doi.org/10.3389/fnut.2023.1107475

Omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids (n-3 PUFA) play a significant role in the prevention and management of cardiometabolic diseases associated with a mild chronic pro-inflammatory background, including type 2 diabetes, hypertension, hypertriglyceridaemia, and fatty liver disease. The effects of n-3 PUFA supplements specifically, remain controversial regarding reducing risks of cardiovascular events. n-3 PUFA supplements come at a cost for the consumer and can result in polypharmacy for patients on pharmacotherapy. Sardines are a well-known, inexpensive source of n-3 PUFA and their consumption could reduce the need for n-3 PUFA supplementation. Moreover, sardines contain other cardioprotective nutrients, although further insights are crucial to translate a recommendation for sardine consumption into clinical practice. The present review discusses the matrix of nutrients contained in sardines which confer health benefits for cardiometabolism, beyond

n-3 PUFA. Sardines contain calcium, potassium, magnesium, zinc, iron, taurine, arginine and other nutrients which together modulate mild inflammation and exacerbated oxidative stress observed in cardiovascular disease and in haemodynamic dysfunction. In a common serving of sardines, calcium, potassium, and magnesium are the minerals at higher amounts to elicit clinical benefits, whilst other nutrients are present in lower but valuable amounts. A pragmatic approach towards the consumption of such nutrients in the clinical scenario should be adopted to consider the dose–response relationship effects on physiological interactions. As most recommendations currently available are based on an indirect rationale of the physiological actions of the nutrients found in sardines, randomised clinical trials are warranted to expand the evidence on the benefits of sardine consumption.

JOURNAL ARTICLE: *Maestroni, L., Turner, A., Papadopoulos, Konstantinos, Padley, J., Sideris, V. and Read, P. (2023)* **SINGLE LEG DROP JUMP IS AFFECTED BY PHYSICAL CAPACITIES IN MALE SOCCER PLAYERS FOLLOWING ACL RECONSTRUCTION.** Science and Medicine in Football.

doi.org/10.1080/24733938.2023.2225481

Single leg drop jump (SLDJ) assessment is commonly used during the later stages of rehabilitation to identify residual deficits in reactive strength but the effects of physical capacity on kinetic and kinematic variables in male soccer players following ACL reconstruction remains unknown. Isokinetic knee extension strength, kinematics from an inertial measurement unit 3D system and SLDJ performance variables and mechanics derived from a force plate were measured in 64 professional soccer players (24.7 ± 3.4 years) prior to return to sport (RTS). SLDJ between-limb differences were measured (part 1) and players were divided into tertiles based on isokinetic knee extension strength (weak, moderate and strong) and reactive strength index (RSI) (low, medium and high) (part 2). Moderate to large significant differences between the ACL

reconstructed and uninjured limb in SLDJ performance ($d = 0.92- 1.05$), kinetic ($d = 0.62- 0.71$) and kinematic variables ($d = 0.56$) were evident. Stronger athletes jumped higher ($p = 0.002$; $d = 0.85$), produced greater concentric ($p = 0.001$; $d = 0.85$) and eccentric power ($p = 0.002$; $d = 0.84$). Similar findings were present for RSI, but the effects were larger ($d = 1.52- 3.84$). Weaker players, and in particular those who had lower RSI, displayed landing mechanics indicative of a 'stiff' knee movement strategy. SLDJ performance, kinetic and kinematic differences were identified between-limbs in soccer players at the end of their rehabilitation following ACL reconstruction. Players with lower knee extension strength and RSI displayed reduced performance and kinetic strategies associated with increased injury risk.

JOURNAL ARTICLE: *Martin, H., Bullich, S., Martinat, M., Chataigner, M., Di Miceli, Mathieu, Simon, V., Clark, S., Butler, J., Schell, M., Chopra, S., Chaouloff, F., Kleinridders, A., Cota, D., De Deurwaerdere, P., Pénicaud, L., Layé, S., Guiard, B. and Fioramonti, X. (2022)* **INSULIN MODULATES EMOTIONAL BEHAVIOR THROUGH A SEROTONIN-DEPENDENT MECHANISM.** Molecular Psychiatry.

doi.org/10.1038/s41380-022-01812-3

Type-2 Diabetes (T2D) is characterized by insulin resistance and accompanied by psychiatric comorbidities including major depressive disorders (MDD). Patients with T2D are twice more likely to suffer from MDD and clinical studies have shown that insulin resistance is positively correlated with the severity of depressive symptoms. However, the potential contribution of central insulin signaling in MDD in patients with T2D remains elusive. Here we hypothesized that insulin modulates the serotonergic (5-HT) system to control emotional behavior and that insulin resistance in 5-HT neurons contributes to the development of mood disorders in T2D. Our results show that insulin directly modulates the activity of dorsal raphe (DR) 5-HT

neurons to dampen 5-HT neurotransmission through a 5-HT_{1A} receptor-mediated inhibitory feedback. In addition, insulin-induced 5-HT neuromodulation is necessary to promote anxiolytic-like effect in response to intranasal insulin delivery. Interestingly, such an anxiolytic effect of intranasal insulin as well as the response of DR 5-HT neurons to insulin are both blunted in high-fat diet-fed T2D animals. Altogether, these findings point to a novel mechanism by which insulin directly modulates the activity of DR 5-HT neurons to dampen 5-HT neurotransmission and control emotional behaviors, and emphasize the idea that impaired insulin-sensitivity in these neurons is critical for the development of T2D-associated mood disorders.

JOURNAL ARTICLE: *Atkinson, Teresa, Bray, Jennifer and Williamson, Tracey (2022)* **'YOU'RE IN A NEW GAME AND YOU DON'T KNOW THE RULES: PREPARING CARERS TO CARE'.**

Dementia, 21 (7). pp. 2128-2143.

doi.org/10.1177/14713012221112242

Aim: Being an informal carer for a person living with dementia can be a demanding role which can have detrimental effects on personal well-being and affect a person's ability to provide care for their loved one. This evaluation of support courses, offered by a leading UK charity dedicated to dementia family carers, highlights the impact of training to support the caring role.

Setting: Participants completed booklets at the training venue and subsequently online or by post. Interviews with participants took place by telephone. Participants: 84 participants completed booklets containing measures which generated quantitative data whilst 19 family carers participated in qualitative telephone interviews.

Design: A mixed methods approach was taken using booklets of validated measures to capture quantitative data, including capture of demographic information, together with semi-structured

interviews conducted by telephone which were recorded, transcribed and subsequently analysed using thematic analysis.

Results: Overall, both the quantitative and qualitative analysis demonstrate that attending the carers support courses had a positive impact on carers with improvements being maintained over time. Outcomes indicated that carers generally remained in a better physical, mental and emotional situation than that experienced before the course.

Conclusion: Being prepared for the trajectory of the caring role when providing care for a person living with dementia can help informal carers to be better prepared, better supported and better informed. Evidence gained from this evaluation demonstrates the impact of the courses and adds to the current weak evidence base relating to dementia courses aimed at preparing carers to care.

JOURNAL ARTICLE: *Bold, Justine and Diamantopoulou, Dimitra (2022)* **VIEWS AND EXPERIENCES OF INFERTILE WOMEN REGARDING THE ROLE OF GLUTEN IN THEIR INFERTILITY.**

Obstetrics and Gynecology Research, 5 (4). pp. 296-310

Background: Prevalence rates for infertility have increased globally. Untreated coeliac disease (CD) and gluten sensitivity can affect fertility. Guidelines encourage testing of women with unexplained infertility for CD and case studies demonstrate pregnancies after introducing a gluten-free diet (GFD).

Aims: To understand the experiences of women diagnosed with infertility, investigating the potential role of gluten, including testing and implementation of a GFD.

Methods: Participants completed an online survey that included open and closed questions which were coded inductively and analysed using thematic and content analysis.

Findings: 29 UK based women completed the survey. The majority identified as White, with one Asian/Asian British, one Mixed, and one Arab participant. Only four had not undergone fertility treatment. Twelve had unexplained infertility, while

seven had no diagnosis. Five had primary infertility and five had a secondary infertility diagnosis. TA identified six themes: (1) Experience with gluten in infertility, (2) Experiences with testing for CD, (3) Health beliefs/concerns regarding gluten, (4) Other interventions to help with infertility, (5) Nutritional support for women with infertility, (6) Infertility experience. A GFD alleviated symptoms for those with both intestinal and extra-intestinal symptoms. Participants felt unprepared for CD testing and that healthcare personnel did not treat symptoms seriously.

Conclusion: Awareness of extraintestinal manifestations of CD, including unexplained infertility, should be increased amongst healthcare professionals. Women with unexplained infertility should be screened for CD, even without the presence of intestinal symptoms. Women with infertility choosing to implement a GFD need to be better supported.

SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

JOURNAL ARTICLE: Apangu, Godfrey, Frisk, Carl, Adams-Groom, Beverley, Petch, Geoffrey, Hanson, Mary and Skjøth, C. (2023) **USING QPCR AND MICROSCOPY TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF HARVESTING AND WEATHER CONDITIONS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ALTERNARIA ALTERNATA AND ALTERNARIA SPP. SPORES IN RURAL AND URBAN ATMOSPHERES.** International Journal of Biometeorology.

doi.org/10.1007/s00484-023-02480-w

Alternaria is a plant pathogen and human allergen. *Alternaria alternata* is one of the most abundant fungal spores in the air. The purpose of this study was to examine whether *Alternaria* spp. spore concentrations can be used to predict the abundance and spatio-temporal pattern of *A. alternata* spores in the air. This was investigated by testing the hypothesis that *A. alternata* dominates airborne *Alternaria* spp. spores and varies spatio-temporally. Secondly, we aimed at investigating the relationship between airborne *Alternaria* spp. spores and the DNA profile of *A. alternata* spores between two proximate (~ 7 km apart) sites. These were examined by sampling *Alternaria* spp. spores using Burkard 7-day and cyclone samplers for the period 2016-2018 at Worcester and Lakeside campuses of the University of Worcester, UK. Daily *Alternaria* spp. spores from the Burkard traps were identified using

optical microscopy whilst *A. alternata* from the cyclone samples was detected and quantified using quantitative polymerase chain reaction (qPCR). The results showed that either *A. alternata* or other *Alternaria* species spores dominate the airborne *Alternaria* spore concentrations, generally depending on weather conditions. Furthermore, although *Alternaria* spp. spore concentrations were similar for the two proximate sites, *A. alternata* spore concentrations significantly varied for those sites and it is highly likely that the airborne samples contained large amounts of small fragments of *A. alternata*. Overall, the study shows that there is a higher abundance of airborne *Alternaria* allergen than reported by aerobiological networks and the majority is likely to be from spore and hyphal fragments.

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JOURNAL ARTICLE: Tör, M., Wood, T., Webb, A., Göl, D. and McDowell, J. M. (2023)

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN PLANT-DOWNY MILDEW INTERACTIONS.

Seminars in Cell & Developmental Biology. pp. 42-50.

doi.org/10.1016/j.semcdb.2023.01.010

Downy mildews are obligate oomycete pathogens that attack a wide range of plants and can cause significant economic impacts on commercial crops and ornamental plants. Traditionally, downy mildew disease control relied on an integrated strategies, that incorporate cultural practices, deployment of resistant cultivars, crop rotation, application of contact and systemic pesticides, and biopesticides. Recent advances in genomics provided data that significantly advanced understanding of downy mildew evolution, taxonomy and classification. In addition, downy mildew genomics also revealed that these obligate oomycetes have reduced numbers of virulence factor genes in comparison to hemibiotrophic and necrotrophic oomycetes. However, downy mildews do deploy significant arrays of virulence proteins, including so-called RXLR proteins that promote virulence or are recognized as avirulence factors. Pathogenomics are being applied

to downy mildew population studies to determine the genetic diversity within the downy mildew populations and manage disease by selection of appropriate varieties and management strategies. Genome editing technologies have been used to manipulate host disease susceptibility genes in different plants including grapevine and sweet basil and thereby provide new sources of resistance genes against downy mildews. Previously, it has proved difficult to transform and manipulate downy mildews because of their obligate lifestyle. However, recent exploitation of RNA interference machinery through Host-Induced Gene Silencing (HIGS) and Spray-Induced Gene Silencing (SIGS) indicate that functional genomics in downy mildews is now possible. Altogether, these breakthrough technologies and attendant fundamental understanding will advance our ability to mitigate downy mildew diseases.

JOURNAL ARTICLE: *Mateos Fierro, Zeus, Garratt, Michael P. D., Fountain, Michelle T., Ashbrook, Kate and Westbury, Duncan (2023)* **THE POTENTIAL OF WILDFLOWER STRIPS TO ENHANCE POLLINATION SERVICES IN SWEET CHERRY ORCHARDS GROWN UNDER POLYTUNNELS** *Journal of Applied Ecology.*
doi.org/10.1111/1365-2664.14394

Sweet cherry production benefits from insect pollination, but the extent to which wildflower strips can boost pollinator visitation under polytunnels is unknown. Wildflowers were established in alleyways between tree rows under polytunnels in 10 commercial cherry orchards. Their management involved either a single cut in September (Standard Wildflower Strips (SWS)) or being actively maintained to 20 cm with regular cutting (Actively Managed Wildflower Strips (AMWS)), compared with unsown Control Strips (CS). Flower visitors of cherry and wildflowers were recorded by visual observations for 3 years (2017–2019), while cherry production (quantity and quality) was assessed in 2019. In total, 67 visitor species were identified; managed commercial species (*Apis mellifera* and *Bombus terrestris*) made up ~74% of all records. During the cherry blossom period (anthesis), AMWS had the highest visitor density to cherry blossoms compared with CS and SWS but no significant difference in harvestable fruit was recorded. After

anthesis, greater visitor density, diversity and richness were observed in both wildflower treatments compared with CS, being greatest in SWS, which was consistent with differences in floral communities between treatments. Although visitor density was not correlated with fruit set, pollinating insects were key for fruit yields and quality. Fruit set was ~17% from blossoms exposed to visitors compared with <1% when excluded. Furthermore, hand pollination resulted in ~32% fruit set, indicating greatest pollination deficits in CS (~50%) compared with AMWS (~28%) and SWS (~35%). Synthesis and applications. Sweet cherry is highly dependent on pollinators to underpin commercial yields, and pollination deficits exist under polytunnels. Growers should, therefore, reconsider their pollination strategies and look to combine effective pollinator management with polytunnel use to mitigate deficits; establishing and actively managing wildflowers in alleyways could enhance wild visitors and pollination.

JOURNAL ARTICLE: *Hanson, Mary, Petch, Geoffrey, Ottosen, Thor Bjørn and Skjøth, C. (2022)* **SUMMER POLLEN FLORA IN RURAL AND URBAN CENTRAL ENGLAND DOMINATED BY NETTLE, RYEGRASS AND OTHER POLLEN MISSED BY THE NATIONAL AEROBIOLOGICAL NETWORK** *Aerobiologia.*
doi.org/10.1007/s10453-022-09759-2

Abundance and diversity of airborne pollen are important to human health and biodiversity. The UK operational network collects airborne pollen from 8 flowering trees, grasses and three weeds using Hirst traps and microscopic identification from urban areas. Knowledge of total pollen diversity and differences between rural and urban zones is limited. We collect environmental DNA (eDNA) from air during summer and autumn over 3 years with mini cyclones from one urban and one rural site. Data are analysed using next generation sequencing and metabarcoding. We find the most common genus, *Urtica* (57%), is also identified by the national network. The grasses *Lolium* (10%), *Agrostis* (2%) and *Holcus* (1%) are in the national network grouped at family level, while *Brassica* (2%), *Chenopodium* (1%), *Impatiens* (2%), *Plantago* (4%) and *Tilia* (7%)

are not part of the UK operational network. DNA from 138 genera was identified, where 2% of the sample could not be associated with specific genera. 40% of the sample was classified better using eDNA methods at the genus level, than by optical methods. We calculate Bray–Curtis dissimilarity for the rural and urban zones and find a systematic difference in biodiversity. Overall, this shows airborne DNA reveals more information than methods based on morphological differences. The results also suggest data from sites located in large urban areas will be less representative for less populated rural areas. This presents a dilemma in balancing a network and the associated costs delivering health relevant information to the most populated areas vs. a nation-wide approach.

SOCIAL EXCLUSION, CULTURE AND IDENTITY

BOOK SECTION: *Dhillon, Jaswinder (2023) DIASPORA.* In: Narrative Inquiry of Displacement: Stories of Challenge, Change and Resilience. Routledge, Abingdon, Oxon.

Displacement brought about by immigration often leads to enduring loss and nostalgia for an imagined homeland. The search for physical and psychological space and a sense of belonging is continually negotiated by diaspora communities. This chapter explores the experience of an immigrant in the transnational Sikh diaspora. It uses an innovative methodology, bilingual-bicultural life history, to narrate the story from an insider perspective. The

features of the methodology are explained and the findings use both Panjabi and English words to capture the nuances in meaning which can be lost through monolingual narrative. The findings focus on the overarching theme of diaspora as 'unbelonging' and how this is experienced through living parallel lives, moving between multiple identities and facing racism.

JOURNAL ARTICLE: *Skilton, Annabel and Farrelly, Daniel (2022) EXAMINING THE INTERACTION BETWEEN ALTRUISM AND RESOURCE POTENTIAL IN HETEROSEXUAL WOMEN'S MATE PREFERENCES.* Evolutionary Behavioral Sciences.

doi.org/10.1037/ebs0000315

Previous research has shown that altruism is an important trait in romantic relationships, particularly in longer relationships, where it can signal the underlying characteristics (e.g., kindness) that are valued in good partners/parents. Further evidence of this has been observed when comparing the interaction between altruism and other traits (e.g., physical attractiveness) that may signal other qualities (e.g., good genes), where altruism was preferred by heterosexual women in long-term partners. To further explore the role of altruism in relationships and its interaction with other mate choice traits, the current study examined

heterosexual women's preferences for altruism and a trait signaling good investment, that of resource potential. Here we found that, as predicted, women preferred altruistic male partners for long-term relationships, and that altruism was a more desired trait than resource potential in potential long-term partners. These findings support the view that altruism is a highly valued trait in relationship formation due to its signaling good partner/parent indicators, and is more important than resource potential when women choose long-term partners. (PsycInfo Database Record (c) 2022 APA, all rights reserved)

JOURNAL ARTICLE: *Molnár, Győző (2023) NATIONALISM AND SPORT INTERSECTION IN HUNGARY: BUILDING FENCES, EXPANDING NATIONHOOD.* National Identities.

doi.org/10.1080/14608944.2023.2188584

Since the coming-to-power of the Fidesz-led coalition government, right-wing populism has worked to establish an illiberal democracy and to protect national sovereignty in Hungary. Building an illiberal state has been through, in part, some of the mechanics that are associated with necropolitics. Within this context, the government has deployed strategies, including the use of sport, related

infrastructure development and national sporting success, to (re)establish criteria for what they imagine Hungarian citizenship to be within and outside the current geographic borders of the state. This article examines the deployment of sport relating to intersecting narratives around right-wing populism and nationhood.

BOOK SECTION: Cox, Howard (2022) **AN EXAMINATION OF THE ROLE OF MAGAZINES IN HISTORICAL RESEARCH.** In: Handbuch Zeitschriftenforschung. transcript Verlag, Bielefeld, pp. 249-260

This chapter looks at the role played by consumer magazines in a variety of areas of historical research with particular reference to the UK publishing industry. Two broad areas are considered. First it considers how the production and distribution of these periodicals has constituted an important form

of activity in the development of Britain's cultural industries. Second it provides examples of how the magazines have generated a valuable legacy of documentation that has been exploited by a wide range of specialists within the academic discipline of history.

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

JOURNAL ARTICLE: Andrews, Scott (2023) **STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP, CHANGE AND GROWTH IN NOT-FOR-PROFIT, MEMBERSHIP-BASED, VALUE-DRIVEN ORGANISATIONS.** Journal of Organizational Change Management.

doi.org/10.1108/JOCM-08-2021-0252

Purpose – This research paper takes an interdisciplinary approach, drawing from empirical data, to explore the relationship between organisational change management and strategic leadership to promote growth in value-driven, membership-based organisations through a qualitative multi-case-based analysis and to provide a discussion on the philosophies and practices of leadership teams which underpin successful organisational change within such not-for-profit organisations.

Design/methodology/approach – Each participating organisation had 700p members, had previously experienced prolonged periods of auditable membership growth and employed distinctly different organisational models to facilitate growth. A qualitative multi-case study approach was adopted informed by 32 interviews with eight leadership teams. A thematic analysis provided a comparative review of responses.

Findings – All case study organisations emphasised the significance of strategic leadership teams and clearly communicated vision and flexible organisational structures as central to their strategic planning and subsequent growth. This builds on previous research which has explored organisational change in not-for-profit organisations and strategic leadership in not-for-profit organisations, which explores the strong linkages between the roles and functions of strategic leadership, organisational structures designed with the adaptive capacity to manage continuous and convergent change and their impact on sustained growth. Such linkages are more

specifically supported by extended tenure of office for those in senior leadership roles, clear delineation of roles and responsibilities, the adoption of an outward growth-oriented focus and adaptable structures that encourage wider participation in leadership and management functions for the fulfilment of the organisation's mission. Most significantly, these organisations plan with change and growth in mind.

Practical implications – The findings of this research have transferable value to other not-for-profit, membership-based, value-driven organisations as well as other faith-based organisations, which will help to provide future linkages between leadership structures, decision-making and organisational design and its impact on the not-for-profit organisations' capacity for sustained growth.

Originality/value – This research challenges previous conceptions on UK church growth trends and observes that all the case organisations presented different organisational structures which were intentionally designed, context specific and developed by leadership teams with sustained growth in mind. Results from psychometric testing of participants confirmed that senior leaders of large value-driven organisations that have demonstrated a capacity for sustained growth are consistently likely to exhibit leadership characteristics which demonstrate a balanced capacity for personal humility and a committed resolve or professional will, which is also reflected in a pragmatic-type leadership style, building on previous psychometric testing research in this context.

JOURNAL ARTICLE: Bromley, Harriet, Davis, Sarah K., Morgan, Blaire and Taylor-Dunn, Holly (2023)

THE PROFESSIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE OF DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE ADVOCATES: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF POSSIBLE RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS. Trauma, Violence, & Abuse.

doi.org/10.1177/1524838023117118

Professionals employed within the field of domestic and sexual violence (DV/SV) are known to experience both positive and negative psychological impacts because of the nature of their work. This review aims to establish which factors influence the professional quality of life (ProQOL) of DV/SV advocates. This group is known to face challenges that are specific to their working practices including scarce resources and frequent exposure to traumatic material. The systematic review protocol was designed based upon Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 guidance. Following a mixed-methods convergent segregated approach, a systematic search for qualitative and quantitative research within PsycINFO, Academic Search Complete, CINAHL, MEDLINE, Sage, Taylor & Francis, Wiley Online Library, and BASE was undertaken.

Peer-reviewed empirical research and relevant gray literature, published in English, were considered for inclusion. Thirty articles were identified (16 quantitative, 13 qualitative, and 1 mixed-methods study), and assessed for methodological quality and risk of bias using established quality appraisal tools. An array of risk and protective factors emerged including communication competence, support from co-workers, office resources, and occupational stigma. A gap in the current evidence base was identified regarding the role that personal strengths may play in the well-being of those employed within the DV/SV sector. The ProQOL of DV/SV advocates is complex and dependent upon a variety of factors specific to their situation at the time. However, the findings of this review provide an important evidence base for future research avenues as well as policies and procedures for this workforce specifically.

JOURNAL ARTICLE: Kirkpatrick, C. and Nyatanga, Brian (2023) **EXPLORING PERCEPTIONS AND APPROACHES OF REGISTERED MANAGERS REGARDING CLINICAL SAFETY IN CARE HOMES IN THE UK.** Journal of Long Term Care. pp. 45-53.

doi.org/10.31389/jltc.122

Context: Around 400,000 people currently live in care homes with increasing complexity of care needs and comorbidities. Despite this, there is a paucity of research that asks questions about how the care and clinical safety of this vulnerable population are managed.

Objective: The aim of this research was to understand how registered care home managers approach clinical safety and what they feel helps or hinders them in this.

Methods: The research took a Heideggerian interpretative phenomenological approach, embracing the closeness of the researcher to the participants and the subject matter to uncover rich and detailed findings. Five registered managers of care homes owned by one provider participated in semi-structured interviews between March and May 2020. Three of the interviews took place in the managers' care homes, and, due to coronavirus restrictions, two were undertaken via video

conferencing software.

Findings: Thematic analysis of the data generated unexpected findings demonstrating the significant impact on clinical safety in care homes caused not by the managers themselves, but by external forces, including regulation, shortcomings in the structure of the health and social care system in the UK and complex relationships between care homes and other agencies.

Limitations: The strengths (e.g., in-depth data) and limitations (e.g., only including care homes in one area) of this phenomenological qualitative study are discussed.

Implications: The findings led to recommendations that further research and reviews should be undertaken urgently to understand these factors in more detail. This would provide valuable guidance to inform system-wide reform to ensure better clinical safety for care home residents.

JOURNAL ARTICLE: *Boullosa, D, Patrocinio, E, Renfree, Andrew, Casado, A, Hanley, B and Foster, C (2023)*
SHORT-TERM SPEED VARIABILITY AS AN INDEX OF PACING STOCHASTICITY IN ATHLETIC RUNNING EVENTS. *Journal of Functional Morphology and Kinesiology*, 8 (2). p. 86.
doi.org/10.3390/jfmk8020086

We aimed to compare differences in performance and pacing variability indices between 5000 m heats and finals during major championships in men and women. Data with 100 m time resolution were used to compare overall pacing variability (standard deviation of 100 m section times, SD; and coefficient of variation, CV%) and short-term pacing variability (root mean square of successive differences between 100 m section times, RMSSD). The changes in performance and pacing indices differed between races and competitions. For instance, the men's final

in Beijing 2008 was quicker than the heat ($p < 0.01$) while the CV% was reduced ($p = 0.03$) and RMSSD increased ($p < 0.01$). For women, the heats and the final exhibited a similar mean time in London 2017 ($p = 0.33$) but with CV% ($p < 0.001$) and RMSSD ($p < 0.001$) showing opposite trends. Individual analyses of men's and women's champions revealed highly individual variability metrics. The use of RMSSD can complement overall variability indices for better characterization of pacing stochasticity.

BOOK SECTION: *Emblen-Perry, Kay (2023)* **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REDUCTION MICRO-PLACEMENTS: AN OPPORTUNITY TO OVERCOME BUSINESS MANAGEMENT STUDENTS' RELUCTANCE TO UNDERTAKE A LONG-TERM WORK EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT WHILST STIMULATING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS IN BUSINESSES?** In: *Sustainability in Business Education, Research and Practices*. Springer.

Work placements are generally accepted as a valuable route into work experience, which provide personal, professional, and academic benefits to the placement student and resource benefits to the placement employer. These placements have traditionally been with larger organisations for 12 months; often termed 'a year in industry'. However, this year in industry is now becoming less attractive for students and a challenge for employers. In response, a micro-placement programme designed around environmental impact improvements within SMEs was established for business management students; the Student-led Consultancy Programme. The environmental and SME foci were chosen as SMEs dominate the Business School's regional

economy, environmental management is a skills gap and employers expect environmental management skills in graduate recruits. Micro-placements were designed to provide a less challenging route into work experience for students, and provide businesses with affordable, skilled resource to complete an environmental improvement project. Consequently, the Student-led Environmental Consultancy Programme contributes to the achievement of SDGs 4, 8, 9 and 13. This paper presents an example of a student-led consultancy project and explores the benefits it gave the placement student and the placement employer. This paper will be of interest to educators and placement coordinators seeking to develop work experience opportunities in Higher Education.

JOURNAL ARTICLE: *Smith, Emma, Carter, Melody, Walklet, Elaine and Hazell, Paul (2022)*

INVESTIGATING RECOVERY FROM PROBLEM SUBSTANCE USE USING DIGITAL PHOTOVOICE. Journal of Community Psychology.

doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22957

This study investigates the complex process of recovery from problem substance use using a visual research method known as 'Photovoice'. Seven service users from a harm reduction drug service were given digital cameras and asked to photograph 'people, places, and things' meaningful to them in their recovery. These photographs were then used as a catalyst for discussion during two in-depth interviews. This study demonstrates the nuanced experiences of recovery as some participants

expressed feeling isolated while others reflected upon their access to various forms of social capital. These findings recognise the link between social capital and recovery outcomes, while also reflecting upon how services might imbed the need for relationship quality within artificial recovery networks. The use of photographs is a novel way of providing voice to the lived experience of service users and adds to the discussion and debate concerning how recovery services may develop.

JOURNAL ARTICLE: *Neal, W. N., Richardson, Emma and Motl, R. W. (2022)*

INFORMING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MOBILE APPLICATION FOR THE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES IN MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS: A QUALITATIVE, PLURALISTIC

APPROACH. Disability and Rehabilitation: Assistive Technology.

doi.org/10.1080/17483107.2022.2153937

Purpose: The uptake of Physical Activity Guidelines (PAGs) for adults with multiple sclerosis (MS) may be facilitated through mHealth solutions such as a mobile app. To date, there is limited information regarding preferred features of an app for people with MS. We explored desired features for an app that supports physical activity behaviour among persons with MS.

Materials and Methods: Using a pluralistic analytical approach, we conducted a secondary qualitative analysis on a portion of data collected from an earlier study to explore (i) what persons with MS wanted in an app based on the PAGs and (ii) how the PAG-based app should facilitate behaviour change. The data were subjected to deductive, content analysis to identify populous mentions of desired PAG-based app elements. We then used inductive, semantic reflexive thematic analysis to further

explore the opinions and evaluations of participants.

Results: Participants (n = 16) perceived features such as activity tracking, incentives for completing milestones, and customization as both triggers for doing PA and supporting engagement with the app. Participants desired a personalized PA prescription based on mobility and fitness level, expert feedback based on data entered in the app, and an exercise library with a range of evidence-based content. Participants insisted the app be backed by a solid scientific foundation and that accessibility of personal data be controlled by the user.

Conclusions: This study identifies several design considerations for an app based on the PAGs. The results suggest a simple, trustworthy, and evidence-based app that focuses on helping persons with MS reach the PAGs.

JOURNAL ARTICLE: *Bell, Robin (2022)* **INNOVATING TO SURVIVE IN COMPETITIVE MARKETS: BUSINESS MODEL INNOVATION OF CHINESE DIGITAL BUSINESSES.**

International Journal of Innovation Science.

doi.org/10.1108/IJIS-09-2022-0189

Purpose: Business model innovation (BMI) has been posited as essential for both new and existing digital business, as they commonly operate in competitive and fast-moving markets with limited entry barriers. However, it is highlighted within the literature that the understanding of how BMI contributes to business success and how new digital ventures develop competitive advantage is still unclear. This study aims to address this lacuna by exploring how young Chinese digital businesses develop and innovate their business models to survive in fast-moving and competitive markets.

Design/methodology/approach: This research adopted a multiple case study design, with qualitative data being collected from the founders of five Chinese digital businesses, to develop an

understanding of the evolution of their business models and BMI from their inception.

Findings: The findings add support for the contention that BMI can play an important role and is beneficial in the success of such new digital ventures in highly competitive environments. The founders attribute their success to a willingness for continued BMI, an openness to new opportunities, developing customer relationships and continuous iteration.

Originality/value: This research addresses calls to further the authors' understanding of how BMI contributes to business success and how new digital ventures develop competitive advantage by exploring the BMI of five highly successful digital businesses from their inception.

JOURNAL ARTICLE: *Gordon-Smith, Katherine, Saunders, K. E. A., Morton, Thomas, Savage, J., South, M., Geddes, J., Craddock, N., Jones, I. and Jones, Lisa (2023)* **USER PERSPECTIVES ON LONG-TERM REMOTE ACTIVE ELECTRONIC SELF-MONITORING OF MOOD SYMPTOMS IN**

BIPOLAR SPECTRUM DISORDERS. The Journal of Affective Disorders, 324. pp. 325-333.

doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2022.12.090

Background: User feedback is crucial in the development of electronic self-monitoring tools for bipolar spectrum disorders (BSD). Previous studies have examined user experiences in small samples self-monitoring over relatively short time periods. We aimed to explore the experiences of a large sample of individuals with BSD engaged in long-term remote active electronic self-monitoring.

Methods: An online survey, containing closed and open questions, was sent to participants with BSD enrolled on the Bipolar Disorder Research Network (BDRN) True Colours mood-monitoring system. Questions related to experiences of using True Colours, including viewing mood graphs, and sharing data with healthcare professionals (HCPs) and/or family/friends.

Results: Response rate was 62.7 % (n = 362). 88.4 % reported finding using True Colours helpful. Commonly reported benefits were having a visual record of mood changes, patterns/triggers and

identifying early warning signs. Limitations included questions not being comprehensive or revealing anything new. One third had shared their graphs, with 89.9 % finding it helpful to share with HCPs and 78.7 % helpful to share with family/friends. Perceived benefits included aiding communication and limitations included lack of interest/understanding from others.

Limitations: Responder bias may be present. Findings may not be generalisable to all research cohorts.

Conclusions: The majority of participants valued long-term self-monitoring. Personalisation and ease of use were important. A potential challenge is continued use when mood is long-term stable, highlighting the need for measures to be sensitive to small changes. Sharing self-monitoring data with HCPs may enhance communication of the lived experience of those with BSD. Future research should examine HCPs' perspectives.

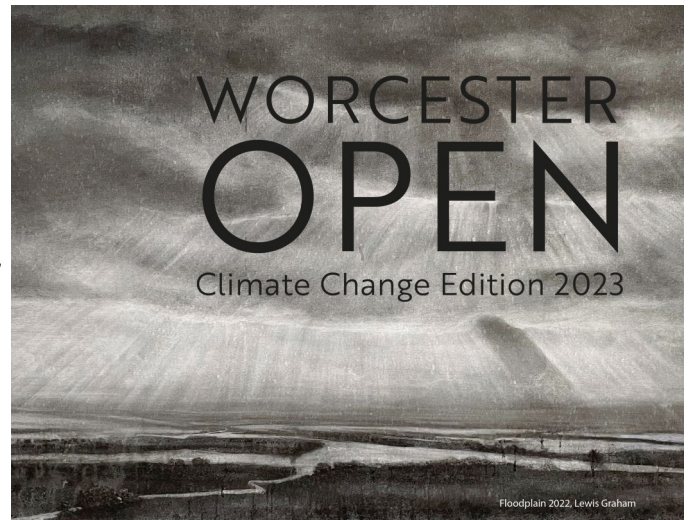
PUBLIC & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

WORCESTER OPEN: CLIMATE CHANGE EDITION 2023

12th January – 22nd February 2023

The University of Worcester worked collaboratively with Pitt Studio to showcase a multi-venue project (Sponsored by Meadow Arts) on water and flooding as environmental markers of climate change.

Exhibiting artists: *Helen Cass, Joe Black Ardy, Isabella Draper, Jamie Banks, Rebecca George, Maria Cristina Gardiner, Dan Holden, Vicky Harvey, Paul Powis, Sara Hayward, Paul Newman, Jain McKay, Lewis Graham, Sarah Jones, Melanie Woodhead, Maureen Heaney-Sykes, Frans Wesselman, Lois Karen Meiklejohn, Andrew Woodhead, Joanne Henderson, Issie Martin, Kurt Hickson, Ella Buchanan, Chris M. Allton, Marta Pedzik, Conrad Judge, Caitlin Carpenter, Tegen Kimbley, Richard Nicholls, Ian Pennell, Jim O'Raw, Jonathan Oakes, Matt Greenhill, Sylvia Wadsley, Shaun Morris, Shona Davies & David Monaghan & Jon Klein, Andrew Howe, Monica Perez Vega, Jeff Orgee, Cameron Scott, Sophy King, Jane Walker, Sharon Baker, Alice Watkins, Lorsen Camps, Jenny Pope, Nick St George, Elaina Arkeooll, Clare Wratten.*



WATERMARK

28th January - 3 June 2023

The University's City Campus, Art House and the Hive hosted artworks as part of the 'Watermark' exhibition; dedicated to those around the world affected by flooding, rising sea levels and loss of habitat. The exhibition was held at five locations across the city from January 2023 through to June.

Watermark revealed how artists have responded to the element of water, how they have picked the urgent concerns of rising levels, flooding, drought, and invited visitors to reflect on their own relationship with the element.

In collaboration with Meadow Arts, the university's Fine Art department hosted a number of talks with many of the exhibiting artists during this period.

Exhibiting Artists: *Suky Best, Carolyn Black, Emma Critchley, Simona Faithfull, Gabriella Hirst, Hilary Jack, Naiza Khan, Tania Kovats, Sally Payen, Daniel Pryde-Jarman.*



KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT FAIR

25th January 2023, The Hive

In January, the School of Humanities held a public engagement and knowledge exchange fair in the Glass Rooms of the Hive. The fair, organised by Dr Lucy Arnold, was attended by a number of organisations in the Worcester area with an interest in finding new opportunities to work with academics and researchers to develop public facing events, platforms and outputs. Attendees included representatives from Severn Arts, Worcester Cathedral, the Tudor House Museum, the Infirmary Medical Museum and Worcester City Council's archives and archaeology division.



THE TREE RINGS PERFORMANCE

6th February 2023

As part of the University's Sustainability Week, Strange Futures Theatre Company gave a performance on The Tree Rings on Monday 6th February. Strange Futures brought their unique brand of quirky humour and physical theatre, plus live music, to tell the story of a boy's relationship with a tree, decade by decade from the 1950s to the present day, combining a childlike delight for magic and myths, with glimpses into the growth of the environmental movement over the last 70 years.

Trees hold stories, in more ways than one. They hold memories and myths. The rings within a tree's trunk are also story archives of changes and events in our environment. What if they could tell you those stories? What if a tree could ring you?

Strange Futures is a theatre company supported by Dr Jane George; Principle Lecturer in Theatre & Performance, and run by two graduates from the MTheatre Touring Theatre course. The show has been researched and written through a series of community-based participatory workshops, and is performed by Strange Futures with a cast of graduate and student performers, and features tree animations especially created by University of Worcester Animation students for the show.



DO WE STILL NEED THE DEVIL?

9th February 2023

On the 9th February, Prof Darren Oldridge delivered a talk to the Progressive Christianity Network in Malvern entitled 'Do We Still Need the Devil?', drawing upon his ongoing work on Tudor and Stuart demonology, and relating this to contemporary concerns.

PERSPECTIVES OF PLAGUE

28 April 2023, The Hive

During this talk Professor Darren Oldridge and Dr Emma Edwards reflected on the history and science of epidemic disease in the west. Professor Oldridge focussed on perceptions of plague in Tudor and Stuart England and related these to the recent experience of the Covid pandemic. Dr Edwards discussed more recent developments in our understanding of epidemics in the context of biological science.

THE ROYAL MARTYR IN THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION

29 April 2023, The Commandery

Members of the public had the opportunity to find out more about the execution of Charles I and how it was depicted by contemporary writers, in a session delivered by Prof. Darren Oldridge entitled 'The Royal Martyr in the English Revolution' at The Commandery in Worcester.

"It is easy to forget that Britain was once a republic, but in 1649 the first King Charles was executed for allegedly overthrowing 'the rights and liberties of the people'. For the next eleven years the nation was governed without a king. The sensational death of Charles I produced a whirlwind of news and comment at the time. Royalists lauded the king's heroic bearing on the scaffold, while John Milton condemned him as a 'pseudo-martyr'".



WELLBEING FOR LIFE 'LIVING WELL' EXHIBITION

June 2023, The Hive

As part of The Hive's Cultural programme and the theme of 'Living Well', staff members in Psychology, Dr Blaire Morgan, Dr Sarah Davis and Dr Laura Simmons from the University's Interpersonal Relationships and Wellbeing research group, created a public exhibition on the ground floor of The Hive that was available throughout June.

The display introduced the public to the work of their 'Wellbeing for Life' research theme, outlining different aspects of wellbeing, and providing ideas for practical exercises that might help to boost wellbeing. It included a collection of objects donated by the community that represents 'wellbeing' for different people.



WHILE IN UKRAINE Prof. Nicoleta Cinpoes, Professor of Shakespeare Studies , School of Humanities

The last lap of my ULAM-NAWA Visiting Professor at the University of Warsaw, brought about an unmissable opportunity: to visit Ukraine in person. Carefully choreographed by academics and friends Prof. Maiia Harbuziuk and Prof. Nataliya Torkut, my six-day round trip included Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk and Ternopil – some 500 km into Ukraine. The only means of transport which still had a few tickets available was a coach.

So my 12-hour journey began on the eve of May 10th: an emotional night, surrounded by women of all ages (and the odd grandfather helping with the grandkids) – tired, quiet, fretting at every mobile alert (received through the national app that marks – 24/7 – red dots on the map of Ukraine for areas under shelling), but excited to be going home. Invisible to the eye, the state of war was palpable as everyone was operating on a heightened frequency, measurable in kind, supportive, protective, silent attention.

Scheduled to reach Lviv at 7.30 am, my coach arrived in Lviv Central Station just as the sun was rising. The fresh light and silence enveloped the city, and fellow travellers made their way to the next coach or train or car lift to their final destination. I found the only place open to be a welcoming café, whose tea and wifi recharged me. There was a lot to take in: the excitement, the beauty of the location, the wonderful burst of spring – yes, in the heat of last year's bombing, Ukrainians were planting 2023's thousands of tulips and narcissi, tending to the many parks and gardens.

In Lviv, I was hosted at the University house, in the old town whose centuries of history I explored on foot that day. Early that afternoon I delivered a public lecture – “Who is there?": *Hamlet* in post-communism – attended in person by staff, students, journalists, and online by Ukrainian students and staff from several other universities and cities spanning from Lviv to Zaporizhzhia. After a short interview for a local paper, we went to the theatre: on stage that evening was *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* – a Shakespeare play so rarely performed that it usually takes a “complete works” festival to come across it! This cypher-play in which snippets of all Shakespeare's subsequent plays fight for attention – comedies, tragedies, romances – was intensely lived by the audience.

The interactions between actors and spectators were both psychologically rich and accommodating of the phones ringing throughout the show: these calls were a matter of life and death, so every single one was taken. The post-show drink and walk revealed more layers of intense living: parks full, buskers singing, ice-cream and candyfloss, flowers and balloons, on offer were go carts for kids and riffle shooting at a Putin portrait for adults, laughter and music.

This veritable festival atmosphere was engulfed by complete silence and darkness at 23.00 sharp – curfew.

The following day we took the train to Ivano Frankivsk; on the parallel platform a train from Kharkiv was announced and before it pulled in, a dozen volunteers lined up the platform to welcome the arrivals from eastern Ukraine – the graffiti on the carriages and their long journey echoed the uncanny “arrivals and departures board” in the main concourse that listed freed cities in white, yet to be freed ones in green.

The train wound its way through peaceful hills and quiet villages, we passed houses fronted by gardens in bloom and allotments tended carefully by the hands of the elderly who stayed behind. The visit to Ivano-Frankivsk was theatre focused, or so I thought. Granted, it included meetings with Rostislav Derzhypilsky, artistic and managing director of Ivan Franco National Theatre and the current ensemble who are performing Shakespeare and other plays; he insisted on giving us full tour of the building, from his office to the main stage, backstage, foyer, studios – all disused spaces since the full-scale invasion.

The sold-out schedule of productions was taking place literally underground: in the theatre basement, doubling as the designated bomb shelter in the area, in the carpentry workshop, in the workshop where the set and props were made. I saw

ІНФОРМАЦІЯ / INFORMATION		
LVIV - PEREMOHА		20:23
LVIV - MARIUPOЛ		00:20
LVIV - LYSYCHANSK		03:26
LVIV - MYKOLAIV		19:15
LVIV - NOVODLEKSIIVKA		10:57
LVIV - KHERSON		16:12
LVIV - DONETSK		22:50



Romeo and Juliet in the bomb shelter and an adaptation of Lesya Ukrainka's work in the theatre basement newly fitted with air circulation to withstand long hours of raids and shelling. When the air raid alarm woke up the city before dawn, we all knew we'll find shelter in the theatre.

The setting for *Mavka: The Forest Song* was the Garden of Getsemani, its wedding tables became the communion table, the theatre basement – the sanctuary for this community.

This was to be Derzhypilsky's swan song, or so he thought when he began working on this production. Instead, it gave new purpose to the profession: guardians of the community, helpers of the distressed, actors and creatives are home front-line workers entrusted with the



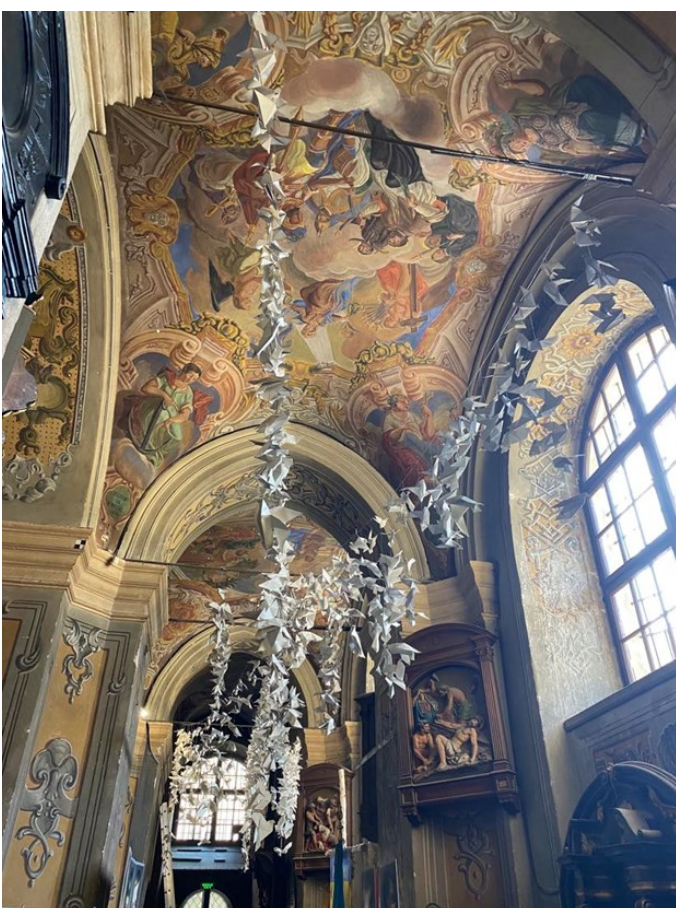
safety – physical and emotional – of Ukrainian civilians who in turn continue to support the war effort. The audience at *Mavka* that night had young locals and people who travelled from far away oblasts – the head of fire safety from XXX, the manager of the transport network for YYY, the coordinator for water supply for region ZZZ; all defied the distance and the dangers to partake in the unmissable event that, in their words, wasn't just of cultural importance but a matter of survival. We were all safely held in its Ukrainian spell – just as the world was held in the Ukrainian spell at the Eurovision Contest that night; there, we were also held safe – as the sirens blasted, as Ternopil (the hometown of the Eurovision contestants from Ukraine) and Kyiv were heavily shelled that night.

My final destination was Ternopil and its university, twinned with Worcester since the full-scale invasion. Dubbed the city of fountains, Ternopil was buzzing with volunteering and fundraising activities that Sunday: kids from schools around the city performed in the main square, volunteers sold hand-made jewellery, cookies, embroidered souvenirs, so medical supplies could be purchased and delivered to the frontline.

We joined the team and prepped supplies for three different locations on the eastern front, barely making the coach departure time in the rush hour. The day simply went: we talked to journalists, met academics who ran different volunteering branches (from medical to camouflage net-making, from food preparation to saving Ukrainian dogs and other pets), the guide and the student who was eager to practise their translation skills so we got the most out of the guided tour of the city.

At the university, activity was in full swing, with full agendas and classes. I was welcomed by Iryna Zadorozhna, Vice-Rector for Research and International Cooperation, whose enthusiasm and energy were contagious. The meeting with the Rector Bohdan Bohdanovyc Buiak was fruitful and encouraging – English studies had just been declared a key national priority, with the present and future of Ukraine riding on it; we discussed and prioritised directions for collaborations. My two public lectures raised a lot of interest from the academic community at Ternopil and beyond – they were also broadcast live across Ukraine – and they led to an extraordinary meeting with all staff in the Faculty to work on changing critical paradigms in teaching Humanities and English Literature in particular.

Later that week, upon my return to Warsaw, I spoke about Festivals and their role in national survival and healing at the event on the Commemoration of the Crimean Tatar Genocide, organised by the VN Karazin Kharkiv National University, School of Modern Languages – this was an event in the series The Days of Europe, held online,



like all the activities of Kharkiv University whose physical footprint has been bombed to the ground.

A rich, humbling and emotional experience! To my visitor's eye, it was business as usual – busy traffic, offices and shops packed, people rushing to work, tourist agencies open, theatre productions and other entertainment advertised on billboards. Lviv, Ivano Frankivsk, Ternopil – each a city like any other in Europe.

Save for the groups of soldiers in full military gear guarding key locations (post offices, banks, guild halls), and the power cut in one café swiftly addressed by switching on the local generator. It took some adjusting to register differences: the stark absence of civilian men between 18 and 60, monuments and statues wrapped in layers of scaffolding not in readiness for restoration but sheltered from shelling, sandbags protecting the semi-basements of buildings, blacked out windows, passers-by stopping at roundabouts where banners in the national colours asked 'Pray for Ukraine'; the murmuration of origami birds in a local church not (just) a stunning installation but a painful memorial of every local soldier who fell since 2022.

Life, spring, work, love, art, duty, family, death, were all lived at a higher intensity – this is how I will remember my first visit to Ukraine this May, all enveloped in intense scent of lilac blossom.

PINT OF SCIENCE

22-24 May 2023

"Pint of Science is a grassroots non-profit organisation that has grown astronomically over the few years since two people decided to share their research in the pub. Although our mission has expanded, our core values remain the same: to provide a space for researchers and members of the public alike to come together, be curious, and chat about research in a relaxed environment outside of mysterious laboratories or daunting dark lecture theatres. We believe that everyone has a place at the table to discuss the research going on both on our doorsteps and far beyond. Our missions and visions are based around the people that matter most: our audience, volunteers, speakers, and our wider research community."



The Pint of Science festival returned to Worcester for the first time since 2019. Run at two local pubs (The Arch Rivals and the Paul Pry), the events provided the public with the opportunity to hear academics talk on a wide variety of topics, covering everything from climate change to counselling psychology, at City venues.

Organised by Dr Charlotte Taylor, Esther Dobson and Robyn Platt from the Research School, talks included a behind the scenes insight into crime scenes and forensic work, using drones to help prevent flooding and how blackcurrants can be used as a supplement in sport nutrition.

The events proved to be a great success with engaging questions from the audience and subsequent positive feedback, with many attendees enquiring about future events.



"Very inclusive, technical enough but not dumbfounding with jargon. A very positive and entertaining evening. Will look out for this again"

"Great, friendly vibe - great talks, accessible, informative"

"Talk very well presented...could have listened for much longer"

"Arrived knowing very little. Learnt lots—thank you!"

"(The presenter) was great, really funny, made a serious subject accessible! Thanks really enjoyed it"





L-R: Dr Charlotte Taylor, Dr Béré Mahoney, Robyn Platt, Dr Mathieu Di Miceli, Esther Dobson & Baes Banerjee

The Research School would like to thank the speakers for their participation (especially the doctoral researchers!), and the Paul Pry and the Arch Rivals for their help in facilitating these events. Over the 3 nights, we welcomed 88 people into our venues!

See you for Pint 24...?

PRESENTERS

School of Psychology

- Dr Tanya Carpenter
- Dr Daniel Farrelly
- Dr Béré Mahoney

School of Science and the Environment

- Dr Allain Bueno
- Beas Banerjee
- Dr Alan Dixon
- Josie Lynch
- Prof. Ian Maddock
- Dr Mathieu Di Miceli
- Amritha Nair
- Andrea Tapia-Arenas
- Kate Unwin
- Dr Fleur Visser

School of Sport and Exercise Science

- Dr Matthew Cook

Three Counties Medical School

- Dr Russell Peek



The Arch Rivals
4 Netherton Court, Worcester, WR1 3AU, United Kingdom

22 May

Challenging Climate Change >

23 May

Innovations in Natural Flood Management >

24 May

Psychology, Social Science and Medical Education >



The Paul Pry
6 The Butts, Worcester, WR1 3PA, United Kingdom

22 May

Freud and Cannabis >

23 May

A Pint-Sized Dose of Strength and Nutrition >

24 May

20+ years in Forensic Science >

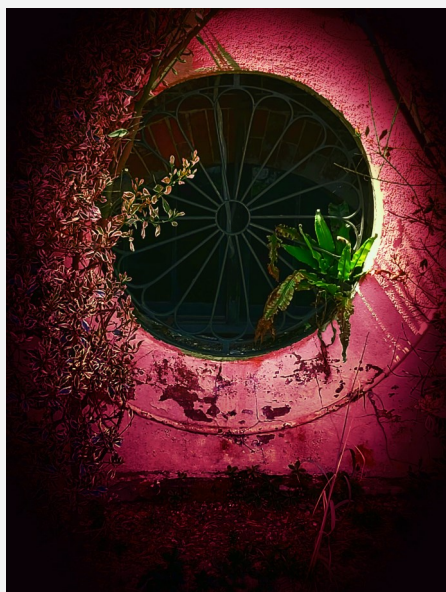
IMAGES OF RESEARCH 19-25 June, The Hive

The Images of Research Exhibition was held on 17-25th June at The Hive. Researchers were invited to submit an image that captures their research, accompanied by a short supporting text written for a non-specialist audience. A total of 30* submissions were received: 16 from members of staff, and 15 from Postgraduate Research Students.

Entries have been organised around the University's Areas of Challenge: Human Health and Wellbeing, Sustainable Futures, Professional Education, and Culture, Identity and Social Exclusion. The Images of Research online catalogue can be viewed here: <https://sway.office.com/bv28FyVEleTWwYHh?ref=Link>

*Number totals 31 as one submission is from staff in 2 different schools

Public Choice Award



Winner

Dr Béré Mahoney, Dr Charlotte Taylor
and Mr Ben Wild,

School of Psychology, Research School and
Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

*"My test was normal therefore, I'm well? But... I'm not..."
Patients' psychological experiences of Occult Breast
Cancer*

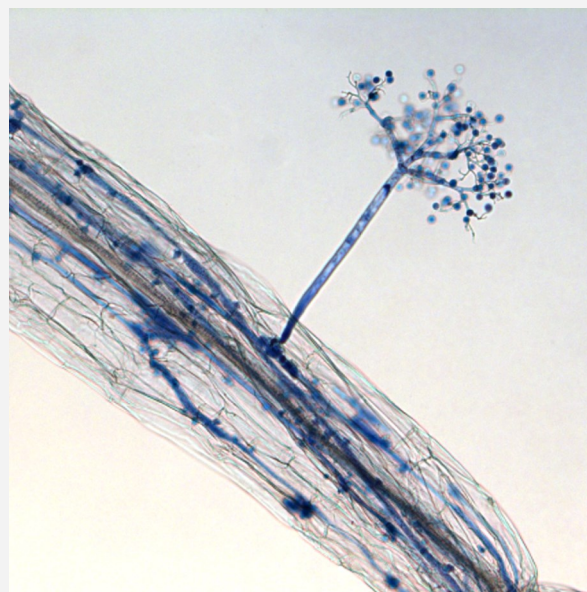
1st Runner Up

Esther Dobson, Research School
'Hidden Threads'

2nd Runner Up

Niamh Dolly Fitzpatrick, School of Humanities
'Female Authored Theatrical Villainy 1660-1714'

Judges Choice Award



Winner

Dr Rachel Osborn,
School of Science and the Environment
'Downy Mildew'

1st Runner Up

Gilda Davis,
Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery
'Places of Farewell'

2nd Runner Up

Dr Amy Perry,
School of Allied Health and Community
*"People who say they sleep like a baby, usually don't have
one" Quote by Leo. J. Burke*

STARTING POINTS EXHIBITION

June-July 2023, Worcester Art Gallery and Museum

An exhibition was launched at Worcester Art Gallery and Museum in June, featuring the work of children from 11 different local primary and middle schools. The exhibition was facilitated by Kaytie Holdstock and Simon Huson, from the Institute of Education, who recently set up an art teacher networking group called WRAPT (Worcester Region Art Party for Teachers).

The exhibition, entitled *Starting Points*, came about through encouraging children to visit galleries and engage with the work of famous artists, culminating in the children having their own work displayed alongside a famous artwork within the gallery itself.

Using the painting *Chadding at Mounts Bay* by Stanhope Forbes as inspiration, children were encouraged to ask questions and then create their own artistic responses, which are showcased at the gallery.



IN MEMORIAM

In recent months, we have lost several friends, colleagues and students at the University of Worcester - Anne-Marie McTavish, Lesley Spiers, Angela Coss and Prof. John Parham. We send our deepest condolences to their loved ones. It was a joy and a privilege to have them as part of the University of Worcester research community.



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of **Anne-Marie McTavish**. Her passing has left a void in the hearts of many, as she was not only an exceptional former Head of the Worcester Business School, colleague and supervisor, but also a beloved mother, grandmother, and friend. Anne-Marie was a renowned expert in Location Independent Working (LIW) and Technology Enhanced Flexible Working.

Anne-Marie had an impressive career that spanned many years in academia and practice, where she was highly respected for her extensive knowledge and expertise in her field. She worked with major commercial and public sector organizations, advising them on the introduction of LIW and maximizing its potential benefits. Her work on a national and European government level was instrumental in shaping policies and strategies in this area.

As a supervisor, Anne-Marie was an inspiration to many, including the person writing this tribute. She guided her students on a personal level, providing invaluable career advice, and encouraging them to believe in themselves. Anne-Marie was always busy, but she never hesitated to make time to support her students and colleagues when they needed her most. One of the best moments with Anne-Marie was when she said to me, "You don't know what you're capable of, do you?". Her directness and strategic thinking were especially appreciated, as she always saw the bigger picture even when her students were only seeing a part of it. Her words made me rethink my personal perception, and I am forever grateful for her guidance.

As a cat lover, Anne-Marie had a special place in her heart for these furry companions, and she always made sure to make time to care for them. Her love for music was also evident, as she was an accomplished pianist. Anne-Marie and I recently discovered that we both enjoyed crafts as a way to relax our minds. This shared interest allowed us to connect on a more personal level and added to the special bond we shared.

Anne-Marie's contributions to the academic community and beyond were significant and will be greatly missed. Her legacy will continue to inspire and guide many students, colleagues, and organisations that she worked with throughout her career. Our deepest sympathies go out to her family and loved ones during this difficult time.

- Dr Annica Lau, Doctor of Business Administration Graduate



Much loved PhD student and former colleague, **Lesley Spiers**, sadly passed away in February. Having started her journey at Worcester in 1988 as a student on the undergraduate degree in English Literature and Sociology, Lesley was an integral part of the University of Worcester community. She began lecturing in sociology in 1992 and throughout her time at the university mentored many members of staff, as well as successfully supporting numerous colleagues through HEA applications.

Supervised by Prof. Maggie Andrews, Prof. Claire Cochrane and Dr Heather Barrett, Lesley's thesis explored the legacy of the First World War for women through an interrogation of the lives of five middle and upper-class women in the under-researched county of Worcestershire. Their involvement in wartime organisations and charities illuminated the roles then opening up for women, before and after enfranchisement in 1918. Her thesis contributes to a growing body of research on how domestically orientated women entered the public sphere, seeking to shape, organise and influence both women's lives and the town or region in which they lived. The chronological scope of her study, across the early twentieth century, enabled her to assess continuity and change over a critical period for the British women's movement and, specifically, the impact of the First World War.

Her gentle, humorous, and professional approach will be fondly remembered by dozens of colleagues and hundreds of former students.

- Prof. Maggie Andrews and Dr Simon Hardy

In March, we were saddened to hear the news that current PhD student, **Angela Coss**, had passed away. Described by her Director of Studies as “conscientious, intellectually curious and open-minded, and humorous”, Angela’s doctoral research was on ‘The British Press and the Soviet Union, 1937-1945’.

Angela’s interest in Russian history was informed by many years teaching the subject at A-Level. She visited Russia on several occasions, both before and after Communist rule. She learnt how to speak and read Russian, gaining an A grade at GCSE level in 2000.

Angela was supervised at Worcester by Professor Neil Fleming and Dr Paddy McNally, with external input from Dr James Ryan at Cardiff University. She is survived by her husband, Peter Coss.



“We met Ang on the first day of induction to study for a PhD some six years ago and became firm friends from that day. Over the years we have met regularly for coffee to discuss our respective PhDs, our lives in general, world affairs and everything in between! Ang always had a positive perspective on life and would offer wise counsel when needed. Ang would often share interesting and funny tales about her considerable years of teaching and we loved listening to her recount details of her life with Pete and their many interesting and exciting travels both in pursuit of academia and adventure. Ang was fiercely intelligent, with a wonderful sense of humour and just the sweetest person you could hope to meet. Despite her ailing health she worked vigilantly and tirelessly towards her PhD. We think it is a fitting and lovely gesture by UW to award Ang a posthumous PhD that she so rightly deserves. We will miss Ang terribly and very proud to call her our friend”.

- Dr Jo Johnson and Dr Alex Kay

Colleague, supervisor and friend, **Prof. John Parham**, passed away in June after a short illness. John joined the University in 2009 as a Senior Lecturer, after periods at the Universities of West London and East London, becoming a Professor in 2018. He was an excellent teacher, excellent researcher, successful doctoral supervisor and an active and generous mentor and supporter of younger and less experienced colleagues. He was also a deeply likeable man who always had time and a kind word for those he worked with.



As a supervisor, he was that rare blend of compassionate and effective, always steering his students to timely completion but doing so in a caring and considerate manner which recognised the challenges of each individual. The subsequent successes of his former doctoral students reveal his effectiveness: for example, Dr Anna Stenning is now a Wellcome Research Fellow at the University of Leeds and Dr Pippa Marland a Lecturer at the University of Bristol.

John will be greatly missed across the University and in the wider world but in particular by colleagues in the School of Humanities, the School of Arts and the Research School and by his current and past students.

He leaves behind his partner Elaine and his son Isaac and our thoughts are with them at this very sad time.

“I was lucky enough to work closely with John in two capacities: in my role as Course Leader for Media & Culture, helping to facilitate both undergraduate Media & Culture and the MRes programmes; and also being one of his PhD students. John always treated me as equal and was always so reassuring in a calm and understated way. This meant so much to me and was key to helping me combat my imposter syndrome. John showed everyone respect and he had so much integrity, as such he was a fabulous mentor. I will miss John greatly; yes, his knowledge and insight, but also his generous spirit and his friendly smile. John taught me so much about how to actually be an ‘academic’ and I shall take his lessons into my future, honouring his memory.”

- Katy Wareham-Morris, Senior Lecturer & Course Leader Media and Culture, PhD Student

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