



TECHNICALLY SPEAKING

Technically Speaking Issue 4

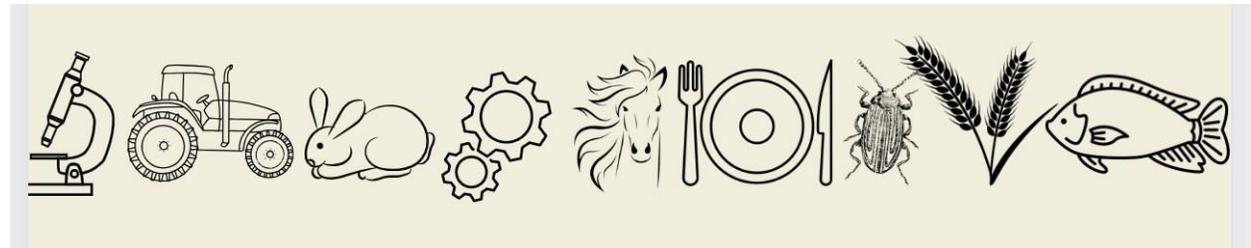
Here you will find news & updates from members of the Harper Adams Technical Community. This is a fun, informal newsletter aimed at showcasing our skills & the hard work that is shared by many across campus!

Please contact us if you would like to add anything to the next edition- it really can be anything!

Many Thanks,

The 'Technically Speaking' Team (Jane Cooper, Eleanor Clowes, Ashlea Hoang)

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Guest Editor Note-



Hello Everyone,

It's a pleasure to guest-edit this summer edition of *Technically Speaking* and to have the opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Katy Eardley and I joined the Bamford Library team at the start of this academic year, bringing almost two decades of teaching experience with me.

As an Assistant Teaching Librarian, I collaborate with colleagues to deliver and develop information literacy sessions, aiming to integrate these essential skills more widely across campus. We aim to equip students with the knowledge to effectively navigate both the physical and digital library, as well as our vast array of academic and industry databases. From developing strong research strategies to mastering referencing techniques, we help students with all their academic enquiry needs, offering dedicated one-on-one sessions for personalised support.

On a more personal note, I'm an advocate for self-care and I continue to find inspiration in the latest research, especially in female health, alongside the re-appraised wisdom found in ancient contemplative texts. Away from the library, you'll often find me in the gym or practicing yoga. This particular passion makes me enthusiastic about the library's growing collection of wellbeing literature and reading for pleasure books. Did you know many of these are available for free as audiobooks through the Libby app?

The library is a welcoming space for everyone, my colleagues and I are always pleased to see new faces. Whether you're looking for professional support, a new read or just a place to relax, pop in and say hello. We love getting your recommendations for new books and resources too.

For the latest updates, news, and even some wellbeing tips, please consider following the Bamford Library on social media. We can't wait to connect with you and share behind-the-scenes glimpses!

Harper Adams Library Instagram¹

Harper Adams Library Facebook²

Bamford Library Viva Engage Community³

¹<https://www.instagram.com/libraryharperadams/>

²<https://www.facebook.com/HarperAdamsLibrary/>

³<https://engage.cloud.microsoft/main/org/live.harper.ac.uk/groups/eyJfdHlwZSI6Ikdyb3VwIiwiaWQiOiJyMjY2MzkzODg2NzlfQ>



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Welcome to the newest member of the laboratory team



The labs have extended a warm welcome this week to our new administrator, Ashlea Hoang.

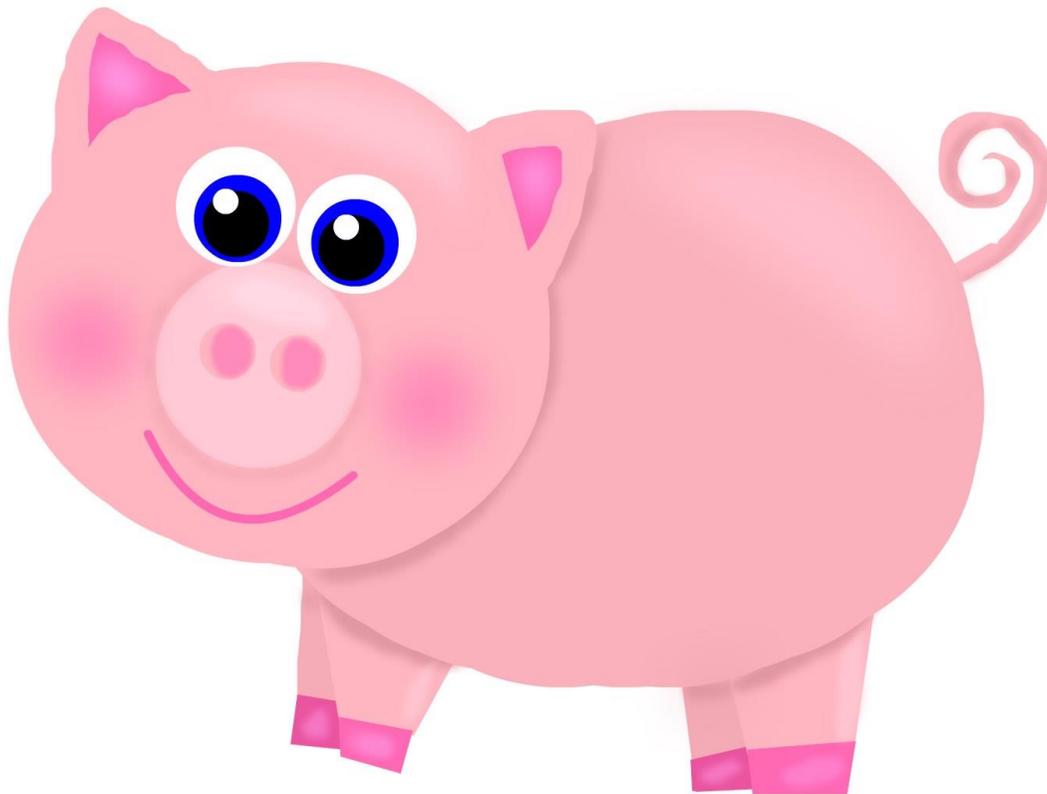
Ashlea is based in S1 in the Princess Margaret Labs and will be taking over where Gina left off, providing all aspects of professional laboratory administration: lab timetabling, procurement

support; record keeping; minute-taking and inventory management as well as admin support for the Facilities Group and Technician Commitment Steering Group. In fact, everything you would expect in a busy laboratory department! As well as this, Ashlea has also kindly agreed to assist in the production of this Newsletter, so please feel free to send her any bits which you think might be worth including!

Ashlea comes to us with over 20 years administrative experience working in busy offices, most recently as a project coordinator at Protolabs in Telford, and has a degree in Business Studies and Japanese language from Cardiff University.

Do make her feel very welcome and pop in and say "hello"!

News from the Pig Unit





The pig unit have had a new milk system installed which is now up and running. This is used to help rear piglets in big litters, and ensures that they constantly have access to supplementary milk. This system has a new design of bowl, which is much more accessible for small piglets. It also mixes milk on demand and records how much is mixed, reducing the need for staff to monitor and mix the milk.

News from the Companion Animal House



1 - Gordon the python relaxing in the companion animal house

As we enter the exam period and teaching winds down the CAH staff are planning ahead for the next academic year. Summer is the ideal time for us to introduce new animals into the collection, give them chance to acclimatise to life with us and prepare them for the busy year ahead.

In the same way we will be welcoming a new full time technician, bidding farewell to Senyo and Ellie our current placement students and welcoming Alex to that post for next year, and I'll be disappearing to the retirement home.

And in the meantime, CAH will host summer school and RCVS exams, support Open and Clearing days and no doubt welcome many other visitors, never a dull moment in CAH!

University's Commitment to Technicians secures Impact Award



A drive to champion Technicians and their contributions at Harper Adams University has been recognised with an award for the impact it has made.

This work has seen action taken across the institution over the last three years to boost the recognition, visibility and sustainability of technical skills – as well as to the career development of Technicians.

As we marked eight years of the Technician Commitment last weekend, Head of Technical Development and Laboratory Manager Dr Victoria Talbot looks back at some recent achievements in this guest blog.

It was great to pick up the award on behalf of everyone at Harper Adams!

We submitted our self-assessment and new Technician Commitment Action Plan (2025-2028) in January and received some great feedback from the assessors.

The feedback particularly commended us for our seven years blog post and our Technicians' Conference, which they loved, as well as providing lots of helpful advice for our work over the next period.

As part of our improvements in our commitment to technicians, I have a new title and role – Head of Technical Development and Laboratory Manager. The 'Head of Technical Development' part is a real first for Harper Adams as it is a strategically important position.

It requires me to do some of the things I was already doing, such as chairing the Facilities Group, organising the Technicians Conference, and sitting on the University's Academic Leadership Group, as well as some new things.

New aspects of the role include being the Technician Commitment Lead for Harper Adams and chairing the new Technician Commitment Steering and Planning Group.

I am also tasked with developing and implementing a new technical development strategy across the University which supports the Technician Commitment's pillars of visibility, recognition, career development, and sustainability - something Harper Adams has not had before.

Victoria Head of Technical Development and Laboratory Manager.

Launch of new TechEx award for Outstanding Contribution to HRP/MRP support

The TechEx Awards first ran last year with awards for Outstanding Contributions in the areas of teaching, research, knowledge exchange and sustainability. <https://www.harper-adams.ac.uk/blog/post/3156/technicians-work-celebrated-at-second-annual-conference>

This year we are introducing a new award - that of **Outstanding Contribution to HRP/MRP support** and it is a student only nomination category with members of the SU invited to the judging panel.

Students have been asked to nominate any technician who have given them outstanding support in their HRP/MRP for this award by submitting their nomination here:

<https://forms.office.com/e/zgb170UiYP4>

Prizes will be announced at the 2025 Technicians Conference in December which students are very welcome to attend to see if their nominee wins!

Posters are being drawn up as we speak so once available, please circulate these within your areas to promote this award.

⁴<https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fforms.office.com%2Ffe%2Fzgb170UiYP&data=05|02|vtabot%40harper-adams.ac.uk|f04fd9b3f02f46c94bb108dda29d3443|4a79890da206476e9a2f8c152c12b223|0|0|638845518247505499|Unknown|TWfPbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUslYiOilwLjAuMDAwMClslAioiJXaW4zMilslkFOljoitWfPbClslldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D|0||&sdata=BUMQOrLnrPxEX3YvvtAQ1mL%2BeDQat4XEWK0cs0QgKq0%3D&reserved=0>

Insect survey tower installed at Harper Adams University to boost nationwide research project



A new tower has been installed at Harper Adams University as part of a nationwide research project which can use tiny insects to study the effects of climate change.

The 12-metre tall tower is designed to collect insects as they pass over its top – with information about the various species being sent on to Rothamsted Research to be identified and counted.

Professor of Applied Entomology at Harper Adams, Tom Pope⁵, said: “Primarily the tower collects aphids - between March and November aphids are collected every day.

“Outside of this period samples are collected each week. Identification is a huge task as there are more than 600 species of aphid found in the UK!”

The information collected by the new tower, and similar structures around the country, is hugely valuable as it feeds into the long-running work of the Rothamsted Insect Survey⁶.

The resulting data can be used to help farmers know about possible pest movements as well as to examine seasonal changes in insect populations and movement which can, in turn, tell us more about our climate and how it is changing.

⁵<https://www.harper-adams.ac.uk/general/staff/profile/201196/Tom-Pope/>

⁶<https://www.rothamsted.ac.uk/national-capability/the-insect-survey>

Professor Pope added: “Most species of aphid are not pests of crops and so data on the timing of migrations and numbers of aphids provides a valuable resource in studying effects of climate change.

“The dataset is so valuable as the towers have been in continuous operation since 1964.

“A small number of these aphid species are agriculturally important and so numbers of these aphid species released each week as a bulletin to alert farmers to the arrival of these species in crops.



“In addition, by using data collected over such a long period of time it is possible to make forecasts of when the first flights of agriculturally important aphid species will be - and how big these migrations are likely to be in terms of numbers of aphids.

“Aphid samples have also been collected and used in studies of insecticide resistance by using molecular approaches to look for the genetic changes that confers resistance to some insecticides.”

The tower is the latest of a series of new installations gathering data about the insects on the Harper Adams campus – with a moth trap⁷ installed in February 2024 which also feeds into a Rothamstead Research programme, and an apiary which collects a wealth of information on the bees in its hives⁸.

With the tower now installed and collecting data, Nikoletta Foskolou⁹ from the University’s Entomology Group¹⁰ is preparing to collect samples to be sent for identification.

She said: "Several of the species of aphid collected in the tower are already maintained as continuous populations in the Jean Jackson Entomology Laboratory."

Tech-A-Break



Join fellow technical support staff every other Thursday in the staff common room.

It is a chance to connect with those you wouldn't normally!

Bring a mug, a pack of biscuits & enjoy a free brew.

⁷<https://www.harper-adams.ac.uk/news/211131/new-moth-trap-to-add-data-to-crossbritain-recording-network>

⁸<https://www.harper-adams.ac.uk/blog/post/3076/a-hive-of-activity-new-sensors-detect-campus-bee-data>

⁹<https://www.harper-adams.ac.uk/general/staff/profile/203824/Nikoletta-Foskolou/>

¹⁰<https://www.harper-adams.ac.uk/research/966/research-centre/entomology-group/>

Would you like to add some news?

Contact us on teams -

HAU Technical Network | General | Microsoft Teams¹¹

or email-

- Jane - jcooper@harper-adams.ac.uk
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- Ashlea - ahoang@harper-adams.ac.uk
- Katy - keardley@harper-adams.ac.uk
- Sarah- sicely@harper-adams.ac.uk

¹¹<https://teams.microsoft.com/l/channel/19%3Aj5CXP-wKybzqwxlgAbIVUteQMigvqzyLZeFDbITU8Os1%40thread.tacv2/General?groupId=a21e3842-8b5a-437e-a9cb-9c630b6d4dd5&tenantId=>