

# Exeter

The magazine for alumni and supporters | 2025 issue

Years of  
making  
the grade



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# Welcome



Welcome to your latest Alumni Magazine. This edition features some fantastic stories from the past 12 months, including how our University is celebrating women in STEM subjects; the excellent work our research teams are doing to diagnose cancer sooner; and the opening of our new Multifaith Centre on the Streatham Campus.

We have had an extraordinary year, and there is much to celebrate as our University marks the 70th anniversary of its Royal Charter. Such a moment reminds us of our purpose, and our strategic mission to change the world through our greener, healthier and fairer themes.

Our research is doing just that. In October, we launched our *Parliamentarians' Guide to Climate Change* in the House of Commons, to help political leaders make informed decisions that deliver Net Zero goals and stimulate clean economic growth. This guide now sits on the desk of every British MP and diplomat mission around the world, and has been translated into several languages.

We were also thrilled that in June, our University was ranked tenth in the world for our commitment to addressing the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals, in the latest THE Impact Rankings. Furthermore, we retained our top spot globally for commitment towards Clean Water and Sanitation, a truly fantastic achievement.

As we drive towards a low carbon future, we were thrilled to launch a new *Critical Minerals Accelerating the Green Economy Centre* on our Penryn Campus, with £4.5m of government funding. Building on the work of our Camborne School of Mines, experts will explore the sustainable extraction of minerals in our region, whilst potentially creating more than 2,000 jobs.

In our quest for a healthier future, this year we took the lead in an externally-funded £10m Cancer Data-Driven Detection programme, which will develop models to accurately predict who is likely to develop cancer, using powerful AI tools.

Our European Centre for Environment and Human Health also received £10m of UKRI funding to establish the *Centre for Net Positive Health and Climate Solutions*, so we can find answers to the health impacts of climate change, in areas such as heatstroke, the link between pollution and heart disease, and the likelihood of new pandemics arising from environmental breakdown.

As we seek to create a fairer society, this year Exeter researchers have been exploring the aftermath of global health emergencies in the UK, Sierra Leone, Brazil and China. The project, entitled *After the End*, is rethinking responses to health crises, so we can find out who gets left behind and what gets lost, when emergencies such as Covid-19 or Ebola come to an end.

Exeter is a global institution, with ambitious goals that extend around the world. Earlier this year we announced a transformative partnership with Ain Shams University in Cairo, which will see us become the first Russell Group university to set up a teaching presence in Africa. By doing this, we will offer

globally accredited degree programmes in Cairo, preparing students for key sectors in Egypt and across the continent.

Our partnership with the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, is also breaking new ground in sport, fitness and rehabilitation, and together we are exploring new educational initiatives, and working with industry to meet the needs of the sporting sector.

As we look ahead, we cannot ignore that our sector is facing uncertain times. The home tuition fee continues to fall in real terms, and inflationary pressures continue to bite, so our University must continue finding ways to become more financially sustainable, whilst still providing a top-class learning experience and conducting world-changing research.

Financial pressures, and the ongoing cost of living, also impact our students. Research has shown that the average student in the UK lives below the poverty line, with one in five considering dropping out of university for financial reasons. We have a duty to tackle this issue and ensure every student can thrive, but the current financial environment makes this very challenging.

There is no easy way to fix this, but together we can find solutions. Our *Success For All* Fund enables students to live the full University of Exeter experience, and with the help and generosity of our alumni and other friends, in the last 12 months we have eased the financial pressures of more than 1,700 students. If you feel able to make a donation to this fund, it really would make an enormous and lasting difference to our talented students.

Over the last year, I have been privileged to meet many wonderful members of our alumni community at events across the world, including Sydney, New York, Malaysia, Singapore and China. We are so proud of our alumni, and it is always wonderful to meet friends, supporters and advocates, hear your brilliant stories, and share the progress of your University.

I hope I can meet many more of you at one of our global events over the next 12 months, but in the meantime, I hope you enjoy catching up on the latest news from Exeter.

Best wishes,

Lisa

**Professor Lisa Roberts FRSB FRSA**  
President and Vice-Chancellor



# The history of the University of Exeter

Did you know that 2025 is a special year for the University? It marks our 70-year celebration, after having achieved full university status in 1955 upon receiving our Royal Charter.

## PRE 1955

The University of Exeter was slowly becoming established from the University College of the South West. Long before it received its charter in 1955, the institution had already built up more than 100 years of academic history.



## 1960

The 1960s were a golden age for the University. Applications grew faster than places, and many major buildings were completed.



## 1955

The University receives its Charter and achieves full university status. At this point the University is organised into four faculties: Arts, Science, Social Studies and Law.

## 1967



The purpose-built Northcott Theatre opened on the University's Streatham Campus as a replacement for the old Theatre Royal in 1967. The theatre opened with a production of *The Merchant of Venice* on 2 November 1967.



## 1978



Exeter becomes a two campus University, as St Luke's College of Education joins the institution. St Luke's was arguably the oldest of the Church of England Colleges with just 19 students in its first intake in 1840. Expansion followed the move from the former house of the Archdeacon of Totnes in Cathedral Close to its present site in 1854. Co-education arrived in 1966 and the merger with the University followed later.

## 1993

Camborne School of Mines merged with the University.

In 1876, Mr G L Basset, a mining entrepreneur, opened a laboratory at Camborne for the use of the pupils of the Miners' Association. By 1888, Camborne Mining School was established, meeting the demands of local people and mining engineers from across the world.



## 1980

Student numbers continued to increase and by the end of the decade had gone from 3,400 to nearly 5,200. Exeter's reputation as an alternative to Oxbridge continued to develop.



## 2000

The Peninsula Medical School was established on 1 August 2000 in partnership with the University of Plymouth and the NHS in Devon and Cornwall. Its creation followed a successful bid to the Government, as part of a national expansion of medical student numbers in the UK.





# 2012

By 2012, Exeter was firmly established as a Top 10 UK university and joined the Russell Group of leading research-led universities.



# 2015

The University's performance in the UK higher education league tables was also consolidated in 2015 when, for the first time in the University's history, it was ranked in the top 10 in all UK higher education league tables.



# TODAY

To date, we're working on Strategy 2030 and our greener, healthier, fairer objectives. All our campuses, Streatham, St Luke's, Truro and Penryn, are buzzing with enthusiastic staff and students, and we're leading in many impactful research areas. We also currently have 185,000 alumni in over 183 countries around the world!

# 2004

The year 2004 marked the opening of our Cornwall Campus, located in Penryn. It cost £69 million and was an exciting development for the University of Exeter.

# 2009

Following a £130 million investment in student accommodation to provide 2,600 new places, work began on the University's £300 million capital investment programme which saw the building of the INTO centre, Building:One at the Business School, and improvements to Geoffrey Pope. Work also began on the largest part of the programme, the Forum on Streatham Campus which was opened by Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 2 May 2012.



# 2005

By 2005, the University had more than 13,500 students! A growth of over 13,000 since 1955. By this point, it had an annual turnover of £121 million and employed around 2,500 staff.



# 2013

Exeter was named as The Times University of the Year in 2013! What's more, the Environment and Sustainability Institute (ESI) on our Penryn Campus also opened in this year.



# 2022

This year 99% of our research was rated of international quality in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021.

We were the winner of Business School of the Year in the Times Higher Education (THE) Awards 2022.





# Love at Exeter

University can be life changing in many ways, for some alumni it's also the place where they meet their love!



## William and Ann Braddick

**William** (Geography, 1952 and Cert Ed, 1953)

**Ann** (English, 1952 and Cert Ed, 1953)

Bill shared: "Ann and I first met at the opening 'hop' of the academic year at the Washington Singer building in 1949. I came straight from my first game for the University 1st XV and snatched her from the clutches of a friend. We both graduated in 1952 and followed it with teaching diplomas."

"We married in 1954 when I was an education officer in the Royal Air Force and Ann was teaching at a girls' boarding school. We moved several times in our early years before settling in Hertfordshire. We have four children and one followed us to Exeter as did one of our seven grandchildren. In 2024 we celebrated 70 years together!"



## Phil and Clare Chapple

**Phil** (LLB Law, 1996)

**Clare** (LLB Law, 1996)

Clare shares: "Phil and I met while studying Law together. We were both in Jessie Montgomery halls at the time and were friends throughout our studies but started dating after we left University. We got married in 1999 and have just celebrated our silver wedding anniversary. We have two daughters, and we were so lucky to both find each other at Exeter and get a fantastic degree!"



## Dan and Emma Richter

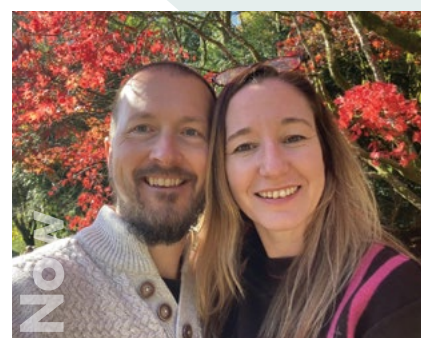
**Dan** (BA History, 2000 and MA History, 2001)

**Emma** (History and German, 2001)

Emma shares: "We were both in Birks halls and met early in our first year. We became friends and discovered a shared love of history, humour and football, and enjoyed deep conversations as well as me walking many times to shout up at Dan's window to invite him for a cup of tea - another shared passion!"

"We got together in 2000, engaged in 2001 and were married in 2002. Our best man was another Exeter alum, Mr Ian Wray (BA Accounting and Financial Studies, 2000). We have been married 22 years, and have four children, two dogs, six chickens and about 26,000 bees."

"Dan has been back to Exeter, as he also fell in love with Exeter City Football Club and enjoys the fact he can now combine this with a visit to our son Caleb, who is studying Spanish and Politics at Exeter."



## Steve and Alice McGeown

**Steve** (Accounting and Finance, 2007)

**Alice** (European Film and World Cinema, 2007)

Alice shares: "Steve and I met on the very first day of university. We were both in Nash Grove, and when I saw him coming up the steps to halls I immediately liked the look of him. Our rooms were across the corridor and he was indeed lovely!"

"Our degrees were very different, but we have lots in common and our friendship quickly grew. After graduating, we moved to London, then five years later we came back to Devon for our wedding in 2012. Both being alumni, we married in the Mary Harris Memorial Chapel on Streatham Campus, which was special."

"Our time at Exeter was wonderful because of one another, but I also owe a lot to my dear university friend, Lydia, who passed away in March 2023. I am grateful for my university friendships and whenever I return to Streatham Campus, I am reminded both of her and when life was full of joy, learning and deep connections. Steve and I live in Exeter now and we have two children - who I hope will one day go to university, because if their experience is anything like ours, they'll remember it fondly forever."



## Carl and Melanie Howes

**Carl** (PGCE, 1992)

**Melanie** (Education and Chemistry, 1992)

Mel shares their love story: "Carl and I first met at St Luke's School of Education where I was in my final year of teacher training and he was completing his PGCE. We got engaged at my graduation and were married two years later in 1994 after travelling between our respective teaching jobs. Now, 32 years on from our Exeter days, we have just celebrated our 30th wedding anniversary. We have two lovely children, neither of whom have gone into teaching!"



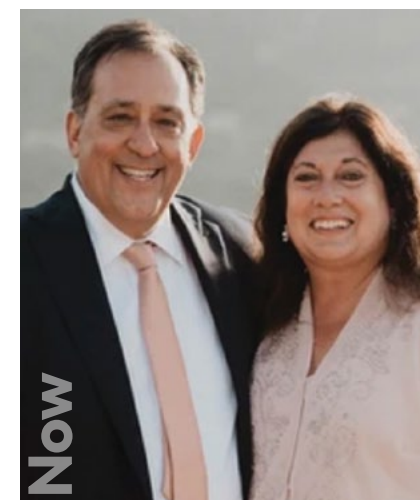
## Mike and Melanie Fink

**Mike** (Economics year abroad, 1981-82)

**Melanie** (Modern Languages, 1985)

Melanie: "When I left home, my mum said it was exciting because I would meet students from all over. Little did she know that I would fall in love with a California hippy and settle down in the U.S. I quickly knew there was something special about Mike, the second time I met him I mentioned to my friend Jo, "I think it's his eyes!"

Mike: "The summer before I left for Exeter, I had a dream that I would meet my future wife there. The first time I saw Melanie in the Hope Hall dining room, I knew she was the one! I didn't see her again until Guy Fawkes night. We ended up running away from the burning tar barrels together in Ottery St. Mary and that was the start of our relationship. After graduation, we married and started our life in Boston. It has definitely been a great adventure, including raising two daughters (and we're excited to celebrate our 40th anniversary in 2025)!"





# Making musical memories



*A place for students to have fun and create memories.*

Whilst our Streatham Campus has seen many changes over the years, one of the buildings known to current students, remembered fondly by alumni, and shown to prospective students remains a key social space to this day: The Lemon Grove.

The 'Lemmy' – as it is affectionately known – started its life as 'The Pit' formed by co-founders alumni Andrew Botterill (Geography, 1988) and Simon Newman (Chemistry, 1988). During their university days, a group of rugby players would meet every lunchtime for a pre-match get together. This unofficial grouping then morphed into the Jif Society, the objective of which was to officially promote lemons (and limes) as the number one citrus fruit on Streatham Campus. However, Andrew shared that *“the real objective of Jif Society was for students to get together, have some fun and create shared experiences and memories.”*

In the autumn term of 1987, the society's application was approved, and they became the



largest non-sporting society on Streatham Campus. They were also officially recognised by Reckitt and Colman, the manufacturers of Jif lemons, who regularly provided the group with loads of merch, and a frying pan to make pancakes on Shrove Tuesday.

The Pit was very busy and full of bustle, however Andrew recalls it as *“a soulless space architecturally as the walls were 1980's bare brick.”* There was a bar on the left as you entered Cornwall House, a common room where the stage is now, and a cafeteria at the rear. In the centre of the common room was a large sunken floor with two or three steps down from the floor

bordering it along the walls – hence the name – The Pit. However, even in the 1980's health and safety recognised that this format was a considerable hazard, so The Pit was boarded over.

Following these structural changes, a change of name was in order too, and in February 1987, the Student's Union decided to rename the space. A meeting was convened to put forward suggested names and put it to a vote. Andrew recalls: *“We (Jif Society) thought that this was the perfect opportunity to promote our cause and put lemons and limes at the forefront of the University's citrus fruit consciousness. Several names were put forward with*

Despite the Great Hall being the larger venue on Streatham Campus, Cornwall House/ The Pit/The Lemmy has also played host to a variety of iconic acts over the years. Holding a much smaller crowd of 800, the venue has an intimate, no frills feel to it. Here are a few highlights from the last four decades.

07/11/1980  
**U2**  
**Midnight & the Lemonboys**  
The Pit, Cornwall House

02/11/1987  
**The Damned**  
**The Crows**  
Lemon Grove

18/02/1992  
**Manic Street Preachers**  
Lemon Grove

06/10/1994  
**Radiohead\***  
**The Julie Dolphin**  
Lemon Grove

20/11/1997  
**Muse**  
Lemon Grove

08/06/2004  
**Killswitch Engage**  
**Chimaira**  
**Shadows Fall**  
Lemon Grove

04/11/2009  
**Chase & Status**  
Lemon Grove

03/12/2010  
**Terror Danja**  
Lemon Grove

02/12/2019  
**Scouting for Girls**  
Lemon Grove

21/02/2020  
**Professor Green**  
Lemon Grove

28/11/2024  
**Sleaford Mods**  
Lemon Grove

*\* Featuring alumnus Thom Yorke (English and Fine Art, 1991)*

*feisty debates taking place, and we had bussed over lots of PE B.Ed. students from the St Luke's Campus, who did not have lectures that afternoon to help with the vote. At 2.15pm, the Student Union realising that no one else was going to leave, put it to the vote and The Lemon Grove was passed and came to be.”*

Jif Society also held several events at The Lemmy from their Christmas lunch in June and summer party in December. Andrew shares that *“the latter included an enforced one hour of outside sunbathing - whatever the elements - on the lawn which was then situated at the back of Cornwall House.”*

As Andrew remembers, the first gig after The Lemon Grove was named, was an unknown band from California called The Bangles, which was their first gig in the UK. Tickets were 50 pence on a Friday, the next week they were number one in the charts with 'Walk Like an Egyptian'.

Whilst the Jif Society objective of promoting lemons and limes as the number one citrus fruit in the UK may not have stood the test of time, creating a place for students to get together, have some fun, and create shared memories has certainly endured.



## Interested in more musical memories?

Take a look at our gig listing online which was started by alumni Alan Cottee (Geography, 1979) and Paul O'Carroll (BA General Honours, 1983) who shared their memories and diaries from their Exeter days:





# University news



## The Forum wins building resilience award

**In October 2024, The Forum on our Streatham Campus won an award for building resilience at the national Education Estates Awards.**

This prestigious prize celebrates buildings that have stood the test of time and continue to enrich the student experience. James Hutchinson, Director of Estates,

and Robin Holloway, Assistant Director of Estates – Capital Projects, collected the award from comedian Hugh Dennis at an awards ceremony in Manchester.

Built over ten years ago and opened by Queen Elizabeth II at the beginning of her Diamond Jubilee celebrations, The Forum offers a valuable space at the very heart of the social and academic life of

our university. Essential support and education services are located in one place and the Forum Street continues to be a focal point for celebrations and events.

## Penryn Campus celebrates 20th anniversary in 2024

**In the two decades since it opened, Penryn has been home to thousands of University of Exeter students, studying degrees across arts, engineering and business.**

Many have stayed in the Duchy, validating the vision of higher education improving opportunities for young people to build careers in the peninsula. Others have used it as a springboard to life-changing experiences around the world.



## Exeter secures global top 10 position in the THE rankings

The University of Exeter has been ranked 1st in the world for the second year running in the Clean Water and Sanitation category of The Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2024 for its pivotal research, actions and commitment towards clean water and better sanitation.

The University also ranked 10th overall, and 2nd in the UK, in recognition of its steadfast commitment to sustainability, improving health and tackling inequality.

Exeter also secured 6th in the world for SDG14 Life Below Water, and 7th in the world for SDG12 Consumption and Production, and achieved top 40 positions in four further SDGs. Exeter achieved an overall score of 96 out of 100 to secure its position in the global top 10.

Stay up to date with the latest developments at the University of Exeter. From groundbreaking research to campus news and alumni achievements, explore the stories shaping our community. Discover more at [news.exeter.ac.uk/category/university](https://news.exeter.ac.uk/category/university)

## Steve Edge, 1950-2025

**We are sad to announce that our alumnus and Honorary Graduate, Steve Edge (Law, 1972 and LLD, 2012), passed away on Wednesday 16 April.**

Steve was co-Chair of the University's Advancement Board, heading up our current efforts to secure £150m in philanthropic donations and 150k in volunteering hours. A member of our Alumni Network Group since its inception in 2006, he became Chair in 2013. Steve's leadership was instrumental in the University exceeding the ambitions for our earlier 'Making the Exceptional Happen' campaign. After graduating from Exeter in

1972, Steve joined Slaughter and May in 1973 becoming a Partner of the firm in 1982 before retiring as a Senior Partner in 2023. In 2008, *The Times* described Steve as 'the UK's leading authority on corporate tax law.'

Steve's support for Exeter was tireless. Many colleagues, especially those in the Law School, would have met Steve over many years – a true friend of, and advocate



for, the University. Our deepest condolences go to Steve's family and friends.

## Relaunch of Mining Engineering at Camborne School of Mines

**The next cohort of undergraduate Mining Engineering students are due to be welcomed to the University in the 2025/26 academic year. The programme, delivered by experts from the world-famous Camborne School of Mines, is being reintroduced after a five-year hiatus at the University's Penryn Campus in Cornwall.**

The degree programme will be part of the University's Engineering 2030 Strategy that will see an increased portfolio of engineering programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate level. Students on all existing and new programmes, will study a common first year and will be able to convert to the dedicated Mining Engineering programme in their second year of study. The relaunch was announced at the CSM Association Gala Dinner in Perth, Australia.







## Penryn Campus celebrates Green Flag Award

**Exeter's Penryn Campus has been honoured with the coveted Green Flag Award for the seventh year in a row!**

The Green Flag Award, administered by Keep Britain Tidy under license from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, is a benchmark of excellence for well-managed green spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world.

Set in 100 acres of countryside, the Penryn Campus grounds and gardens boast a unique collection of herbaceous beds, subtropical

planting and a fruit producing orchard. The site also features outside spaces with historic relevance, such as the Tremough Grotto and Star Pond which was built in 1944 by US forces based at the campus prior to the D-Day landings, and historically rare rhododendrons which were cultivated in the Victorian era.

One of the many green initiatives that contributed to this year's

award is the Wildflower Planting Project, which recently celebrated the planting of more than 1,200 wildflower plugs between January and June 2024. Now in its second year, the project is helping to support biodiversity, encourage pollinators, and create habitats for local wildlife. The Penryn Campus continues to act as a vital green space for the local community to socialise, enjoy nature, and improve their physical and mental health.

## Medical student wins international racial justice award

In June 2024, Naabil Khan, an Exeter medical student was awarded the Racial Justice in Medicine Award by the American Medical Student Association (AMSA), for supporting aspiring medical students and tackling inequality in teaching materials.

She was presented the award at the Future Physicians for Change conference in Washington DC. It is the first time a British student has won the award, which recognises exceptional individuals who have done unparalleled work and seek to mitigate health disparities.

This accolade joined Naabil's collection as she is also the winner of the Rising Star Award in Healthcare with WeAreTheCity, for her work around diversifying the medical curriculum, public involvement in medicine, and continuing the conversation surrounding representation and diversity in medicine.



## Exeter wins Gold Award

**The University of Exeter has been awarded the prestigious Gold award in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme.**

The scheme recognises support and ongoing commitment to the Armed Forces community.

The University's AFC Advocacy Group and Community Network leads work to welcome service people to the university community. The network is working to extend this support throughout the South West.

In 2019, the University signed the Armed Forces Covenant (AFC), a promise to ensure those who serve or who have served in the armed forces, and their families, are treated with fairness and respect in the communities, economy and society they serve with their lives. The AFC relies on the people, communities, and businesses of the UK to actively support it to make a difference.

The winners have all been powerful advocates for the Armed Forces Covenant by actively engaging with their peers, encouraging them to employ armed forces personnel, veterans, and their families, and providing robust and sustained support for reservists.



Gold status is also awarded to those who implement HR policies that accommodate the needs of the Armed Forces Community,

while continuously promoting this advocacy within their own networks and industry.

## Exeter part of £11 million national funding to improve mental health of young people

**A new NIHR Mental Health Research Group involving the University of Exeter will work with young people to provide timely support in key stages of development.**

The significant funding from the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) brings together researchers from the University of Bath in partnership with experts from the University of Exeter and the University of Bristol with a focus on tackling mental health challenges in children and young people in the region.

The study will actively collaborate with children and young people who will be invited to shape integral aspects of the research, designing research activities and participate in the studies.

The research will cover four key areas, one of which is improving mental health treatment for young people who have additional needs such as autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).





# Honorary graduates 2024



## Tom Chapman

Tom's degree was in recognition of his creation of The Lions Barber Collective, an international network of barbers who have come together to help raise awareness about mental health.

He has also created an innovative education programme which trains hair and beauty professionals, and now anybody, to recognise, ask, listen and help those around them. It aims to bridge the gap between communities and mental health resources. He is an author, educator, ambassador, and TEDx speaker.

When receiving his degree, Tom encouraged new graduates to devote themselves to a mission and purpose. He said: "Purpose has enabled me to save lives, travel the world, make change and even write four books. Purpose is truly one of the secrets of life. Finding it has given me the drive to continue. This mission has been tough, but things like today reassure me that I'm on the right path."



## Dr Alex George

Former A&E doctor, former UK Youth Mental Health Ambassador and Exeter alum (Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery, 2015), Dr Alex George, received his award in recognition of his campaign for extra psychological support for young people.

Alex began bringing the nation accessible and reassuring advice directly from the medical frontline throughout the pandemic. He is now also a presenter, best-selling author and the co-founder of Mettle, the mental fitness app for men. He also has a hugely successful podcast, *Stompcast*, which promotes the importance of walking in nature for mental and physical wellbeing.

In a moving speech on the day, he spoke about how the death by suicide of his brother Liŷr spurs on his campaigning work, as he wants others to "see there is always a better day".



## Cush Jumbo OBE

Cush Jumbo is a three-time Olivier nominated actress and well known for starring in US series *The Good Wife* and the Netflix series *Stay Close*. She was appointed an OBE in the 2019 Birthday Honours for services to drama. We were delighted to award her an honorary degree in 2024 to mark her astonishing career in film, television and theatre, during which she's taken control by writing her own roles alongside supporting the next generation of performers.

After reading Shakespeare's Sonnet 29 as part of her speech she told the new graduates: "I massively congratulate you on what you've achieved so far and what you will no doubt achieve in the future. But don't think about that too much just yet. Because in this wonderful moment there is nowhere more important than right here. This space right now is the centre of the universe and you are exactly where you are meant to be."

As well as welcoming the Class of 2024 graduands to the alumni community, we were delighted to celebrate, and recognise, several individuals who were awarded an honorary degree in our summer and winter graduation ceremonies.



## Josh Widdicombe

Comedian, author, presenter and actor Josh Widdicombe shared inspiring advice for new graduates and memories from his youth in Devon when he received his honorary degree.

Josh, is known for his multiple appearances on shows such as *Hypothetical*, *QI*, *Live at the Apollo*, and *Taskmaster*. As well as co-hosting two popular podcasts, *Parenting Hell* with Rob Beckett and *Quickly Kevin will he score? The 90s Football Show*. Josh also grew up on Dartmoor and attended South Dartmoor Community College and Exeter College.

He told the new graduates: "I can speak from experience that this is a great city to be a student. You've been spoiled. For the rest of your life you will never live in a city with a better Wetherspoons than the Imperial. Enjoy it while you can."



## Will Young

Musical superstar, mental health champion and Exeter alumnus (Politics, 2001), Will Young, returned to Exeter to receive his honorary degree. Will was the first Pop Idol winner in 2001 and during his career has released six chart topping albums and earned two BRIT Awards, as well as acting and presenting TV and radio programmes. His podcast *The Wellbeing Lab* has run for two seasons, and he has published two books: *To Be A Gay Man* and *Be Yourself And Happier*.

On the day, Will encouraged the audience to be kind and empathetic but also to have strong boundaries and not to follow the crowd. He also told them to remember perfection doesn't exist and not to compare themselves to others. Reminding listeners to "Always think of generosity. It's a quality much undervalued and underexplored but when we receive it, we never forget it."

We had 14 honorary graduates in total accepting awards and the list of other individuals who received honorary degrees from the University of Exeter in 2024 is included below. Many congratulations to all our recipients and a warm welcome to the alumni community.

- Rachel Skinner CBE FREng FICE
- Damon Albarn OBE
- General Sir Patrick Sanders KCB CBE DSO ADC
- Dougie Scarfe OBE DL
- Professor Sir Tony Watson CMG FRS
- Stephen Catlin
- Emeritus Professor Desmond Walling
- Art Rooney II
- Gerry Brown (Economics, 1966)

You can watch their speeches via our ceremonies link:



You can listen to several interviews online:





# Alumni news



## Claudia directed documentary on Sven-Göran Eriksson

**Claudia Corbisiero (Classics with Politics, 2012) directed a documentary on former England football manager Sven-Göran Eriksson - *SVEN* - which was released on Amazon Prime Video in August 2024.**

The film features many figures from his career including David Beckham, Wayne Rooney, Kasper Schmeichel and Sven's family. She shared: "It was a real privilege to be able to spend the last year with Sven and to tell his story in this film. The success in a film like this depends on the openness of the characters and the trust they have in you - and I'm very grateful to the whole Eriksson family for letting us into their lives and trusting us during an especially difficult time given Sven's terminal diagnosis. It was an incredibly unique opportunity to document someone

*coming to terms with the end of their life, and trying to make sense of their legacy in the face of this."*



## Art Rooney II honoured by the University

Globally acclaimed sport and business luminary, Art Rooney II, was awarded an Honorary Degree from the University of Exeter in a special ceremony, held in Pittsburgh on 23 September 2024.

The ceremony was presided over by our Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Lisa Roberts. Art is Team President of the hugely successful Pittsburgh Steelers NFL team and the degree was bestowed in recognition of his achievements in the sporting and business worlds, as well as the impact his philanthropy has had, particularly on the community of Pittsburgh.

Art's connection to the University dates back to 1981 when he spent the summer studying at Exeter as part of his Law degree from Duquesne University's School of Law.

His philanthropic work includes funding research into concussion in sport through the Chuck Noll Foundation, and he has established the Art Rooney Scholarship Fund, which provides an annual grant to North Catholic High School students.



## Alumni couple gain world record for cycling and complete Arctic Challenge

**Congratulations to Exeter alumni, Adam Baker and Charlie Fleury (Masters in Extreme Medicine, 2020), also known as Emergensea Duo, who have completed the longest static cycling class, which took 31 hours and 34 minutes.**

This incredible charity challenge placed the married couple in the book of Guinness World Records. They then, in autumn 2024, swam an official 'Ice Kilometre' in the frigid waters of both the Arctic Circle and Antarctica in nothing more than a standard swimming costume. This feat cemented them both as part of only a handful of people to hold this accolade! In addition to this, Charlie's Antarctica swim is also currently the coldest EVER official International Ice Swimming Association swim at -1.4°C.

## Elliott Hasler's British-cult film, *Vindication Swim*, shone at the Cannes Film Festival

Alumnus Elliott Hasler (History, 2022) became the first writer and director born this century to debut in the Cannes Film Festival with his new British-cult film, *Vindication Swim* in 2024. The award-winning biopic dives into the life of Mercedes Gleitze, a pioneer in the world of open-water swimming, who in 1927 became the first British woman to swim the English Channel. For an independent film, what *Vindication Swim* has achieved, playing in more than 300 cinemas and breaking top 20 at the box office, is extraordinary.



## Success at Study UK Alumni Awards 2025

We were delighted that several Exeter alumni shone in the British Council's Study UK Alumni Awards 2024/25 which recognise outstanding international alumni, who studied in the UK for all, or part of, their degree.

Many congratulations to:

- **Yu-Chin Hsiao** (MA Applied Drama, 2009) Social Action Award (Taiwan) – WINNER
- **Ana Núñez-Lagos Wodnik** (Politics & International Relations, 2019)– Social Action Award (USA) – WINNER
- **Igazeuma Okoroba** (MSc Sustainable Development, 2009) – Science and Sustainability Award (Nigeria) – WINNER
- **Dr Grisana Punpeng** (PhD in Performance Practice (Drama), 2012) – Culture and Creativity Award (Thailand) – WINNER

Well done also to Dr Anna Tzakou (PhD in Performance Practice (Drama), 2017) and Dr Dong OK Lee (PhD in Politics, 2009) who were shortlisted for the Culture and Creativity Award (Greece) and the Business and Innovation Award (Korea) respectively. Exeter is very proud of you all!





## Alumni mark graduation anniversaries

In July 2024 we welcomed back four of our alumni – Frank Gardner OBE (Arabic and Islamic studies, 1984), Paul Hammersley (Politics and Economics, 1984) Oussama Kardi (Politics and International Studies, 2016), and Sarah Dusek (LLB, Law, 1998) – to celebrate the anniversary of their graduations.

As part of our graduation ceremonies, we hosted Frank, Paul, Oussama, and Sarah in Exeter and Cornwall to mark the years since their respective graduations. During their visits, they reminisced about their studies, shared stories from their careers, and passed on words of encouragement for the graduating students from the Class of 2024.

Scan the QR code to view their career highlights and memories:



## Rhod Gilbert takes comedy tour on the road covering his cancer diagnosis and recovery

In 2024, alumnus Rhod Gilbert (French, 1991) took to the road again with his latest live tour: **Rhod Gilbert & The Giant Grapefruit**.

Candid, hilarious and uplifting, the show is about navigating the dark bits and turning life's giant grapefruits into something approaching lemonade. In October 2024 he also won a BAFTA for his candid documentary, *A Pain in the Neck*. Rhod was named 'Best Presenter' at the 2024 BAFTA Cymru Awards for the documentary which followed him during his diagnosis and treatment for head and neck cancer.



## Ayesha and Simon win at Royal Meteorological Society awards

Congratulations to alumni Ayesha Tandon (MSci Natural Sciences, 2019) and Dr Simon Clark (PhD in Maths, 2018) who were recognised for their passion and knowledge in driving science forward and engaging with new audiences in innovative ways to help find solutions to addressing climate change. They jointly won the Royal Meteorological Society's 2023 Emerging Communicator award, presented in May 2024. The annual Awards of the Royal Meteorological Society (RMetS) are considered one of the most prestigious accolades in meteorology, with a history dating back to 1901.



## Alumnus embarks on epic around the world cycle tour for mental health charity



Since January 2024, Ben Clark (Management with Marketing, 2021) has been undertaking a remarkable 35,000km solo cycling expedition around the world to raise funds for **ANDYSMANCLUB**, a UK-based men's mental health charity and support group.

Named 'worldbybike', the ambitious journey showcases Ben's drive to push boundaries and explore the world's diverse landscapes, cultures, and challenges.

Driven by a passion for meaningful experiences making true lasting memories, Ben has used this adventure as a unique and cost-effective way to connect with the world.

The first leg of his journey spanned from Wrexham to Istanbul, followed by a demanding route across Turkey, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan, before

tackling India and Nepal. His final stretch will take him across Canada and the USA, finishing in Boston. Ben is also sharing Instagram reel vlogs of his trip in an effort to inspire others to do similar trips.

Ben's goal is to complete the expedition within 36 months, before returning to the wearable and sports tech industry with a fresh perspective inspired by his transformative journey!

Follow Ben's journey on Instagram via **@worldbybike\_uk**





# Celebrating women in STEM

Although there has been progress towards gender equality, women still only make up 16% of all people working in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) careers in the UK. We recently caught up with three alumnae from the University of Exeter who have gone on to have successful careers within STEM subjects to find out how they got where they are today, and what inspired them to be leaders in their fields.

## Supporting STEM Subjects

Project Accelerating Data Science and Artificial Intelligence (ADA) is a central component of Exeter's Strategy 2030, positioning the University as a leader in Data Science and Artificial Intelligence (AI) research and education, which is run by Professor Aline Villavicencio. The project taps into an expanding market for both national and international students and supports groundbreaking research with applications across numerous STEM fields.

To support ADA's growth, the Innovation Centre buildings on the Streatham Campus have been upgraded, with further renovations planned for summer 2025. Highlights include larger, flexible teaching labs, expanded research space to support the increased ADA workforce and research activities, and enhanced Professional Services work environments, offering greater flexibility and more opportunities for staff.

The University of Exeter is proud to hold an institutional Athena Swan Silver Award and all our STEM departments currently hold awards at Bronze or Silver level.

In line with ADA's mission, for Ada Lovelace Day, we celebrated women in STEM by highlighting inspiring female contributors, as nominated by senior team members.



Find out more:



## Dr Roni Savage (MSc Environmental Management, 2009)

Dr Roni Savage FREng is the CEO and Founder of Jomas Associates, an engineering and environmental consultancy serving the construction industry since 2009. A highly accomplished professional, she is a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering, an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects, a Chartered Engineer, a Fellow of the Institution of Civil Engineers, a Chartered Geologist, and a SiLC (Specialist in Land Condition).

Beyond her leadership at Jomas, Roni serves as a Non-Executive Director for the UK Government Department of Business and Trade (DBT), contributes to the DBT SME Business Growth Forum, and is a member of the Prime Minister's Advisory Committee for the King's Awards for Enterprise. Under her guidance, Jomas provides geotechnical and environmental engineering services that support land development and sustainable construction.

Named 'Most Influential Woman in Construction 2022,' Roni is a passionate advocate for diversity in business, engineering, and construction. As the founder of the largest engineering company led by a Black woman in the UK, she has advised No. 10 and prime ministers on women in business and industry growth.

Roni reflects, "My fascination with numbers, problem-solving, and the outdoors led me to engineering. I love challenging the status quo and creating sustainable solutions. Engineering allows me to make an impact and inspire others to pursue their dreams."



## Holly Allday (BEng Mining Engineering, 2007)

Holly Allday is the Managing Director and Founder of Illumine Ops, a mining consultancy dedicated to providing practical solutions that help industry teams focus on what truly matters. Holly is passionate about shaping the future of our planet by supporting mining professionals and organisations in making decisions that prioritise effective leadership, safety, and sustainability to drive high performance.

Her approach is grounded in simplifying operations, fostering environments where people thrive, teams excel, and leaders emerge. Holly has led large-scale operations, including teams of more than a thousand people, in diverse and challenging settings - from the icy landscapes of Alaska to the remote Australian outback.

"I never planned to become a Mining Engineer," Holly shares. "It was a quick pivot in my life after the University of Exeter introduced me to the resources sector and led me to Camborne School of Mines. I've always loved solving problems, being part of solutions, and contributing to something bigger than myself. As a Mining Engineer, I get to do all that and more through an industry that shapes the world's future."

"Leadership, to me, is both a privilege and a responsibility to make a meaningful difference. Mining isn't just about extracting resources - it's about empowering people, driving progress, and tackling global challenges. There's no other industry as vital to humanity's progress, and I'm honoured to play a role in its transformation."



## Dr Yasmin Meeda (PhD Biological Sciences, 2024)

Dr Yasmin Meeda completed her PhD at the University of Exeter in 2024, where her research focused on the fascinating world of microalgae, which are microscopic algae invisible to the naked eye typically found in freshwater and marine systems, and their responses to environmental changes in the ocean.

Yasmin is now a postdoctoral researcher at Cranfield University, where she is continuing her work on ocean conservation, but with a new focus. She is now exploring how biotechnology can be used to address pollution in drinking and wastewater systems, with a goal to reduce pollutants entering our oceans, contributing to cleaner water and healthier ecosystems.

Alongside her research, Yasmin also uses social media (@marinebiologywithyaz) to promote ocean science, STEM, and diversity in science more broadly. Her passion for science communication also led to her co-hosting a podcast about science and technology. Through these platforms, Yasmin aims to make science more accessible and inspire others to get involved in ocean conservation and STEM fields.

Yasmin says, "I got into STEM because of my love for the natural world, and the curiosity that has me always asking why. STEM is crucial because it helps us understand the world around us and drives innovation, especially for tackling global problems such as climate change. I also want to inspire others by showing that science is for everyone, no matter who you are."





## In conversation with: **Juliet Barratt** Co-Founder of Grenade

Juliet Barratt (PGCE, 1996) is the co-founder of Grenade, a leading global sports nutrition brand, and a trailblazer in the business world. Juliet developed Grenade from a small startup into a multimillion-pound company, renowned for its innovative protein bars and sports nutrition products. Her expertise in marketing and branding, combined with a passion for health and fitness, helped the brand achieve rapid growth, securing its position as a household name internationally.



**We always knew from the beginning that we wanted to be a global brand and we definitely ticked that box.**

Juliet has received numerous accolades, including recognition as one of the UK's most successful entrepreneurs. Since exiting Grenade in 2021, Juliet has mentored a number of aspiring business leaders and supported the development of numerous emerging businesses across different sectors. We sat down with Juliet to learn more about her journey from Exeter to global business success.

### **What was your main goal for Grenade and did you meet that goal?**

*"Our goal was to be the Red Bull of sports nutrition. When we started Grenade, we set out to create one product that was iconic and actually worked, which could then be trusted and recognised by people all over the world. We always knew from the beginning that we wanted to be a global brand and we definitely ticked that box. When we launched in 2010, weight loss products were all the same and we wanted something that really stood out. The personality of the brand was really important to us."*

### **What inspired you to become an entrepreneur?**

*"I get ideas all the time. I can walk into a supermarket and think 'I could do this, I could do that' and I'm always thinking about new things to do. Doing my PGCE at Exeter and then going on to teach, my life became ruled by routine, and I hated it. It was almost like everything was just getting mapped out for me. I'm a bit of a risk taker and I like challenges, so I knew it was time for something different."*

### **What was the biggest challenge you faced in starting Grenade?**

*"I think everyone always thinks you're starting a business on day one when you launch it, but actually it's the years of experience before that gets you to that point. I think getting a product that we were happy with was our first big challenge because it took us so many different varieties and so much time to get the right product. We weren't happy to launch with a product we didn't love."*

### **What are the biggest mistakes you've made, and what did you learn from them?**

*"Every day we made mistakes, but we always learnt from them. One of the biggest mistakes we made was in 2011, we got approached by a health food store in the US and they wanted to us to go over there. We were thinking 'yeah, brilliant! Let do it!'. We got ingredients made over there, had products shipped over, but it was far too early for us to go into the US. As an entrepreneur, every opportunity you say yes to. So we went to the US, with no team and no plan. We were almost a bit naive, but we learnt from it, and when I look back now, I'm still glad we did it."*

### **Why do you think Grenade was so successful?**

*"I think success means different things to different people. For me, I think it was a combination of everything. We did the marketing, we worked ridiculous hours because we were just so passionate about it, we didn't have a day off for four years, we didn't take a salary, so everything we had financially, physically, and emotionally, went into the business. Even though we took the business seriously, we always had fun doing*

*it. It was also down to the timing. People were starting to think about healthier options, social media was starting to take off, and there wasn't anything else on the market like Grenade."*

### **What's the most rewarding part of being an entrepreneur?**

*"Everyone thinks it's about the money and it's not. Don't get me wrong, money gives you choices, but I genuinely feel proud with what we achieved at Grenade and the brand that it's become. I still go into shops now and I'm just so thrilled seeing our products on the shelves and I feel in many ways that we changed consumer behaviour by shaping younger generations to make healthier choices. We've met some phenomenal people as well and had some amazing opportunities that we would never have done without the business."*

### **What are you doing now?**

*"I'm a bit of a workaholic and I love business. Since we sold Grenade I've done some non-exec chair roles for other food and consumer brands, and I aid them with that growth journey. I enjoy helping take away some of the pain of growing a business because it is tough!"*

### **What advice would you give aspiring entrepreneurs?**

*"I think the first thing is to make sure that your product is a mass market product. Just because you want something, it doesn't necessarily mean that other people will. Research the category carefully and do something that you're passionate about. I think the best businesses come out of a genuine love for the brand. My other piece of advice is to always follow your gut feeling. You're always going to question things, but ultimately following your gut means if you know that you've done what you think is right, then you can live with your decision."*







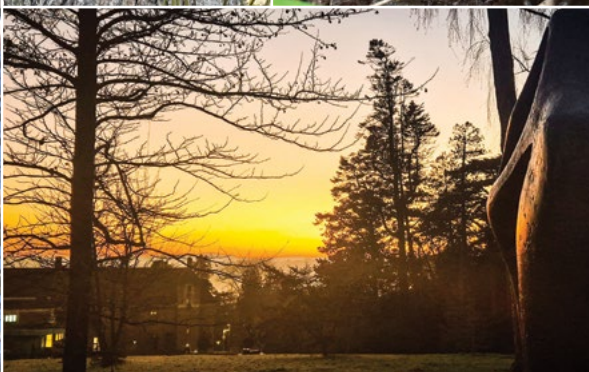
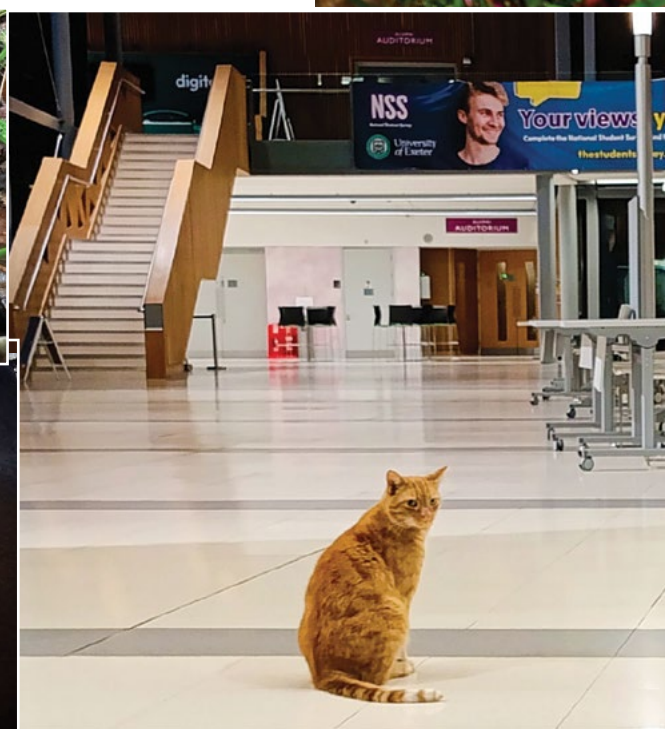
# University snapshots

Our University Snapshot is a feature of the University of Exeter's weekly staff newsletter – The Weekly Bulletin – which offers a glimpse into the daily lives of staff across our campuses.

These photos capture hidden moments that bring a smile to our faces – whether it's a breathtaking campus sunset, a secret space, beautiful blossoms, or an animal visitor.

For this year's alumni magazine we've shone the spotlight on a few of the snaps from our St Luke's, Penryn and Streatham campuses. We hope you enjoy taking a look at the backdrop of our students' experience in Devon and Cornwall.

Don't forget you're always welcome to visit our campuses and see such stunning scenes yourself. You can even book a guided tour via our website: [exeter.ac.uk/alumnisupporters/contactus](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/alumnisupporters/contactus)





# Politics and prizes



**Being involved in these surveys and living there was a powerful and formative experience.**

In 2024, Professor Gareth Stansfield, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean for the Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Exeter was awarded an OBE in the New Year's Honours List for 'Services to UK interests in Iraq.'

Whilst Gareth is now one of the world's foremost experts on Middle Eastern politics, it was during his student days at Durham University that his interest was honed. The academic connections he made there also meant he chose to add to his studies with a master's degree in Middle Eastern politics. And, as serendipity would have it, when Gareth was graduating in the mid-90s, his connections at Durham facilitated his working with the UN in Iraq as part of an HMG (Her Majesty's Government) funded programme.

Packing his bags, Gareth began working with UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) in Iraq but following Operation Desert Strike in 1996, the Iraq government stopped Britons and Americans from working for the UN in Iraq. So, this meant a change of plans. When the UK government directly tasked him with working with the political parties of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq in terms of the building of their government, humanitarian programme and distribution plan, Gareth was excited. But to do so he had to enter Kurdish-held Iraq, which was outside the control of Saddam's government in Baghdad.



Gareth recalls: *"I travelled through Damascus, negotiating my way across Syria into Kurdish-held Iraq which involved crossing the Tigris on a motorboat in the middle of the night. I was 23 at the time and it was exciting; I think I was too young to be afraid. This was also a time where Middle East politics could be dangerous, but we hadn't yet had the exposure to organisations such as Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. It's bizarre to recall that then I had newspaper articles being written about me in Baghdad, describing my journey and putting a price on my head as I was entering."*

During the five years he spent there, Gareth also completed his PhD on Kurdish politics in Iraq which was enhanced by knowing many Kurdish political figures. It provided rich material for his thesis in terms of exploring de facto state formation whilst also trying to place that theoretically within international relations theory. A challenge in itself, as the theory has no place within it for non-state nations that remain under the sovereignty of the established, internationally-recognised, state.

Gareth's career – and what led him to receive his OBE – has been defined by this mix of in-country research and unique expertise that he brings to the rooms he enters. It has been a journey rich with both rewards and challenges.

For instance, one of the difficult aspects of his time in Iraq was supporting the Kurdish leaders transitioning from being militia chiefs to government administrators, as after 1991 they suddenly found themselves in control of this territory and four million people.

Remembering this time, Gareth shares: *"They didn't really have any information on what to base their policies on. I had to manage the first comprehensive survey of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (which involved approx. 4,500 villages). This was a huge task as in the 1980s ethnic cleansing took place which destroyed many villages and there was no knowledge of what had happened to many of them. It was particularly challenging seeing what had happened in the rural areas, in terms of the systematic destruction of settlements, the forced resettlement of people, and the summary executions which had taken place."*

He goes on to say: *"During the 1980s, some 180,000 men were eliminated, and women and children taken into 'collective settlements' (purpose-built towns) to make them easier for the state security apparatus to control. These settlements had never been surveyed. With very high proportions of female-headed households and often living on the*

*margins of society, the conditions in these settlements displayed very high levels of poverty and deprivation. As such, at a young age I gained very deep insights into facets of life in the region, and in a way that you don't necessarily do if you study it purely from an academic viewpoint. Being involved in these surveys and living there was a powerful and formative experience."*

Gareth has continued his work with the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defence, and remains a deployable civilian expert in the former, but made the University of Exeter his home in 2002. Since then, he has worked in various roles, and his career grew and developed alongside Exeter's Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies. During these positions, Gareth has been part of the process of growing Middle East studies at Exeter, and he was involved in the expansion of its subject areas.

He shares some of his highlights from the last two decades: *"At Exeter I've had lots of joy. I've supervised nearly 50 PhD students to completion – which is a great honour in itself – and taught many great students on our courses. Exeter has always been a big name in Middle Eastern studies, and it's been great to see it consolidate and be recognised as one of the world's leading places that you can do Middle East studies across the board. Looking to the future, I'm excited for it to embark on its next chapter as we put up the new Al-Qasimi building next to the current Institute to expand the interdisciplinary study space."*

So, with all that weight of personal, academic, institutional and international history behind him how did it feel for Gareth to find out he'd been awarded an OBE?

He explains: *"I was truly honoured by the recommendation coming through via the diplomatic and international list which means that it was the Foreign Office staff themselves that put me forward. It's great to have a national honour but to be recognised by the people I'd been working closely with meant even more."*



# Insights from industry legends

Last year we were delighted to have held two events focused on the arts and creative industries, and as part of them we welcomed back some very special guests...

## The relaunch of the Creative Dialogues series

In November, award-winning producer and Exeter alumna Marigo Kehoe (American and Commonwealth Arts, 1984) returned to the Streatham Campus for the first time in 40 years as our special guest in the re-launch of the Creative Dialogues series, orchestrated by the Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, which brings high-profile speakers from the arts and creative industries to Exeter.

Before the event, Marigo was given a tour of the Bill Douglas Cinema Museum, and heard from film academics about Screen Devon, the county's new screen agency. Marigo then met with TV and Film students and alumni to share her invaluable advice and insights.

In the evening, Marigo was welcomed to the stage by our President and Vice-Chancellor Professor Lisa Roberts. Marigo reflected upon her incredible career journey in conversation with film critic Mark Kermode, and Professor of Film, Linda Williams before taking questions from the audience. Beginning her career in commercials, Marigo moved to television and managed the production of the award-winning *Shackleton*. As Head of Production at Tiger Aspect she oversaw the likes of *Cracker*, *The Royle Family*, *Cold Feet* and *The Deal*, as well as *The Queen*, before co-founding Left Bank Pictures in 2007. There, she helped to oversee the creation of *The Crown* for Netflix, as well as other multiple award-winning drama and comedy series including three series of the seven times BAFTA award-winning *Wallander*; three series of *Strike Back*; five series of *Inspector Banks* and five series of *Outlander*.

Professor Lisa Roberts said: "We were thrilled to welcome executive producer Marigo Kehoe to the first event of this new series, and we are all very grateful that she gave so much of her time to meet our brilliant students and alumni, as well as joining us for a fascinating conversation."



## An audience with award-winning theatre legends

Award-winning composer and lyricist duo George Stiles (Music, 1983) and Anthony Drewe (Zoology, 1983) returned to Exeter with fellow alumnus and award-winning theatre producer Nick Allott OBE (Economic History and Economics, 1973) to give their time and expertise to current students hoping to carve out a career in theatre. All three special guests were also treated to a tour of the Northcott Theatre, which was a poignant experience for them as the theatre helped to launch their careers 30 years ago.

Ten undergraduates performed a number from one of Stiles and Drewe's musicals as part of a musical theatre masterclass and were given the unique opportunity to have it critiqued by the pair. Meanwhile, Nick hosted an open discussion with students, covering relevant industry topics including the role of a producer; how to start in the industry; how to find and work with creative personnel; and budgeting and raising money.

In the evening, we hosted the three alumni in our brand-new cinema style space in Thornlea for a conversation filled with incredible anecdotes and insights. Professor Jane Milling opened the event before handing over to Dr Evelyn O'Malley, Senior Lecturer in Drama who guided the conversation and moderated audience questions. Amongst the audience were Exeter alumni who had been in Stiles and Drewe's first ever show, *Tutankhamun*, which played at the Northcott in 1984: a real full circle moment!

Stiles and Drewe's acclaimed shows such as *Mary Poppins* have attracted audiences in the millions – *Honk!* has been seen by more than six million people in more than 8,000 productions in 20 languages. Their recent West End productions include *Half A Sixpence* and *The Wind in the Willows*. Nick spent 40 years working for Cameron Mackintosh and was Executive Producer on the original London productions of *Cats*, *Les Misérables*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Hamilton* and many others. He is currently Director of the Roundhouse Trust and the Soho Theatre.

"We are enormously grateful to Stiles and Drewe and to Nick Allott, for making time in their schedules to come and share with our students some incredibly valuable insights into their art, craft and working practice, as well as their experiences in the industry," said Professor Jane Milling, Head of Department for Communications, Drama and Film. "And for those students who performed for them, the personal feedback and appraisal they received will be something that remains with them for life."

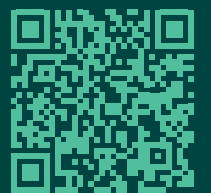
You can watch the conversation with Marigo and catch up on previous Creative Dialogues events online:



You can watch 'An Audience with Award-Winning Theatre Legends' online:



We host a wide range of events throughout the year, and we'd love to see you at one soon. You can see a full list of upcoming events on our website:





# Paw-fect health

Like many of us, Dr Xavier Harrison is a passionate pet owner. As a Senior Lecturer at the University of Exeter's Ecology and Conservation Centre, Xavier is an Animal Ecologist studying the impact of microbes on human and animal health. He has a particular interest in how microbes can protect us and animals from disease and influence health through diet and nutrition.

Recent work by the Dogs Trust, in collaboration with the University of Exeter, estimated that there were roughly 13 million dogs in the UK in 2019. This doesn't account for the subsequent lockdown boom of pet owners, and dogs that aren't registered with vets, pet insurance companies, rehoming charities, or The Kennel Club – so the number is now likely much higher.

Now Xavier is continuing to work with researchers at the Dogs Trust to ask questions about dog health, and how we keep our canine companions healthy throughout their lives. Project Generation Pup is the first study to follow dogs of all breeds throughout their lives, focussing on their health and behaviour as they age. The Dogs Trust are asking owners of UK and

Republic of Ireland puppies under 16 weeks of age, of any breed or cross breed, to sign up and become part of the Generation Pup community. Xavier's research sits within the Generation Pup project and focusses particularly on dogs' gut 'microbiomes' – the communities of bacteria and other microorganisms living within their digestive tracts.



**Helping our pets live long and healthy lives is important.**

Gut microbiomes have enormous power to shape the health of their human and animal hosts, for example by protecting against invasion by pathogens. There is now enormous interest in how microbiomes impact dog health and keep them healthy throughout life.

Xavier is especially interested in the impact of canine diet on the microbiome and downstream health (Figure 1). Raw food diets are increasingly popular and may promote a balanced microbiome but may also increase the risk that dogs and their owners are exposed to harmful bacteria resistant to antibiotic treatment. Dogs also frequently scavenge when out on walks, and the impact of this behaviour on the microbiome and health are unknown.

Using groups of dogs from a range of breeds fed different diets, and that vary in scavenging behaviour, the aim of the project is to understand what the potential risks are of what we feed our dogs and their impact on health, but at the same time acknowledging the pros and cons to different approaches to pet ownership. Xavier is keen to find out what is best for dogs and help pet owners make decisions that are best for both pet owners and dogs. Xavier will be using cutting edge gene sequencing technology to study the composition of these complex microbial communities in fine detail. Combined with long-term data on dog behaviour and health

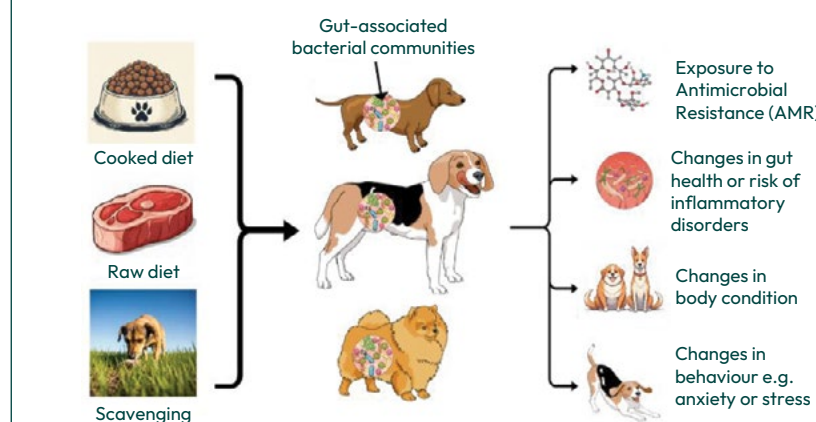
collected by Generation Pup, this project has strong potential to reveal previously unknown links between diet, gut microbiome and wellbeing in pet dogs. The ultimate goal of the project is to understand whether certain diets or lifestyles can impact their health and what we as pet owners can do to maintain it.

There are multiple people in our team of researchers at Exeter doing work on companion animals, including dogs, cats, and even horses. Much of this research focuses on fundamental questions like how we can estimate the population size of cats and dogs in the UK, or design obstacles for racehorses that they can more easily see. But Exeter researchers are also tackling vital applied

issues, like how diet may alter cat hunting behaviour and minimise predation of wildlife.

Speaking to Xavier, he says *"Companion animals like dogs play a fundamental part in our lives, and are important for our own wellbeing. Helping our pets live long and healthy lives is important, and our research will shed new light on how we can use changes in diet to improve and maintain health. As with many things in life I suspect there won't be a one-size fits all solution, and of course health is about more than just having the 'right' microbiome. But hopefully we can make some recommendations about simple steps owners can take to support the wellbeing of their canine companions."*

Figure 1. The impact of diet on the microbiome and downstream health of dogs.



1. Variation in diet (raw vs cooked food) or scavenging behaviour may shape the composition of the gut microbiome in breed-specific ways
2. Differences in gut bacteria may affect downstream pet health, e.g. by altering body condition, behaviour, or risk of developing disorders like inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)



# Driving forward a diagnosis

One in two of us will get cancer in our lifetime. Worse, the UK has had poor cancer survival statistics for the last 25 years when compared with other European countries, due largely to diagnosing cancer too late. Here at Exeter, our researchers are producing high-quality evidence to improve this.



We spoke to Professor Willie Hamilton and Associate Professor Sarah Bailey about the work they're doing to speed up cancer diagnosis in the UK and internationally.



The DISCO (Diagnosis of Symptomatic Cancer Optimally) research team, under Willie's leadership, informs national guidelines for GPs, helping them identify and investigate patients who may be harbouring cancer. Willie and his team have identified all the important symptoms of cancer commonly presented by patients to their GP and have estimated the percentage risk of cancer attached to each symptom. This process has now been automated within the GPs' computers, prompting them when the risk of cancer is above 2%.

The team has produced charts on cancer risk for the main 18 adult cancers in UK GP surgeries, which are also used in parts of Australia, Denmark and Sweden. A major randomised control trial of these began in 2019, reporting in late 2025, supported by a £2 million philanthropic donation from the Dennis and Mireille Gillings Foundation.



## Earlier detection really matters.

Willie's research has had a major impact on improving diagnosis of cancer. Of the 210 National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommendations, 100 can be traced back in part, or wholly, to his publications. These new guidelines have contributed to meeting the target of reducing the number of avoidable cancer deaths in the UK by 10,000. The battle is not yet won, but patients are being diagnosed earlier and cancer survival rates are improving.

Willie says, "It's really exciting that the cancer survival figures in this country are starting to improve. This may well be because of the work we're doing - in part at least. Our research has meant that thousands of people are alive who otherwise wouldn't be. When I first started this research, I hadn't realised how much needed to be done."

Sarah joined the DISCO project team in 2014, and her programme of research includes new strategies for earlier cancer detection, and personalised approaches to testing in primary care.

Sarah's PhD studied thrombocytosis (raised platelet count) occurring before cancer diagnosis. She found that thrombocytosis is an important marker of undiagnosed cancer: adult men with thrombocytosis had an over 11% chance of cancer; for women, this was over 6%. This work has significantly impacted clinical practice since publication in 2017, and in 2023, Sarah won the Outstanding Early Career Researcher Award 2023 for her work, awarded by the Society of Academic Primary Care and Royal College of General Practitioners.

One exciting new finding is that thrombocytosis may occur long before cancer is diagnosed. This opens up many research questions: why is this happening? Can we use this as a test or even a cancer screening tool? Is there also a higher risk of cancer in patients whose platelet count is at the upper end of normal?

Sarah says, "When patients are diagnosed at an early stage, they generally have better outcomes, so earlier detection really matters. Earlier cancer diagnosis is a challenge as many of the features of early cancer are vague and much more likely represent something that isn't cancer. We want to find better ways to identify people who may benefit from investigation for possible cancer. Our work is funded by government organisations such as the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), charities such as Cancer Research UK, and philanthropy. Philanthropic funding is important

for us as it allows us to react more quickly to the needs of the NHS, and to undertake the crucial work to ensure our research outputs result in changes in practice."

An example of a philanthropically funded project with significant impact is the HELP Flag (High or Elevated Level of Platelets Flag) project. This innovation is currently being implemented in the NHS to help general practitioners to investigate patients with thrombocytosis in a routine blood test. HELP Flag uses a routine blood test more effectively to spot the very earliest signs of cancer, meaning it costs the NHS very little to implement. HELP Flag was only possible with the support of philanthropist David Walton. His gift meant that the team could respond quickly to the need for more advice on how to investigate patients with unexpected thrombocytosis.

A philanthropic gift for the cancer team from David and Kirsten Higgins has funded a study of genetic risk scores for prostate cancer in the assessment of men with urinary symptoms, the first to establish the clinical value of genetic risk in this setting. Philanthropic support was crucial here for this 'proof of principle' work. The DISCO team are now expanding this work to other cancers with further support from the Higgins family. This could completely change how GPs investigate patients for cancer risk.

Key parts of this work in early cancer diagnosis would not have happened without the generosity of donors. We're extremely thankful to the Dennis and Mireille Gillings Foundation, David and Kirsten Higgins, and David Walton for their support of Willie and Sarah's work.

If you're interested in finding out more about funding towards this work, please contact **Simon Tyson, Head of Development: [s.tyson@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:s.tyson@exeter.ac.uk)**





## In conversation with: **Tom Abell** Ten years on...

2025 marks ten years since cricketer Tom Abell graduated from Exeter with a degree in Sports Science and French in 2015. He made his professional debut for Somerset while still studying, scoring 95 against Warwickshire, starting a fantastic career which, to date, has seen him score more than 7,000 runs and take upwards of 50 wickets. To top this off, 18 months after graduation he was appointed captain of Somerset, aged just 23.



**Without a doubt, my time at Exeter and the support I received has had a huge impact on shaping me and my career.**

In 2019, Tom led Somerset to their first silverware in 14 years, securing victory over Hampshire in the Royal London One-Day Cup final. He has represented England Lions numerous times over the years and occasionally captained the side too. In early 2023, he earned a first full call-up for England's white-ball tour to Bangladesh, before unluckily missing out due to injury. We caught up with Tom to get his reflections on the role Exeter has played in his success and to hear about his hopes for the future.

**How did your experience at Exeter help you in your professional career? Particularly in terms of assuming the captaincy of Somerset so early?**

"Without a doubt, my time at Exeter and the support I received has had a huge impact on shaping me and my career. The University and the High Performance Programme always ensured that I had everything I needed to succeed, both in the sporting and academic fields. The University and the sports teams I was involved with allowed me to grow and develop my game, and the training and the facilities were of such a high standard that I could really push myself and commit to the career that I wanted to follow, whilst also studying for my degree.

"I was fortunate enough to be part of some great hockey and cricket teams, and some of the people and friends that I made had a big influence on me and my leadership. You obviously have different experiences throughout the three years, being a new player to an environment in the first year, and then moving on to being more of a leader in your 2nd and 3rd years. I think Exeter gave me a professional environment and set up, which helped with moving into the squad at Somerset after my time at university."

**What impact did being a sports scholar at Exeter have on you?**

"I think being a sports scholar first allowed me to always have the support of Nick Beasant, Former Assistant Director of Sport and the High Performance Programme. There were always clashes between my studies, hockey, cricket etc. but they always prioritised my needs and wishes. On top of this, I was able to train as much as I wanted to around my studies, with unlimited access to the high performance centres, the gym, coaching and support staff.

"It also gave a slightly added responsibility to lead in the respective hockey and cricket teams and go about things in a way that was befitting of a sports scholar."

**What do you think the benefit is of choosing your pathway into professional cricket - via university - versus going straight in at 18?**

"I would say it is a very individual decision and there is no right or wrong. It certainly gave me three years to grow and develop. I probably wasn't ready for a professional environment when I left school, however I certainly felt ready for the step up after my three years at university.

"I have always thought that sport can be a very short career with no guarantees, and it is hugely beneficial to develop away from your respective sport. I continually felt Exeter had my best interests in allowing me to get a degree and also earn myself a contract within professional cricket."

**What is your favourite memory of Exeter and your favourite place on Streatham Campus?**

"My favourite memory would be the pre-season hockey weekend prior to starting my first year. Naturally, there was a fair bit of anticipation to start my university career and meet everyone from the hockey club. However, I was immediately taken by the sporting culture at Exeter and the drive to be the top hockey university in the country. The standard and the level of training was a step up from what I had previously experienced, but we had a lot of fun that weekend. My favourite place on campus was definitely the Sports Park, it had everything I could have needed or wanted!"

**What do you think your greatest achievement is so far? What do you still hope to achieve in your career?**

"For me, I would have to say my greatest achievement would be leading Somerset to the Royal London One-Day Cup trophy in 2019. It had been a while without a trophy at the club, so to be part of that team that won a 50 over final at Lords was incredibly special!"

"Moving forward, my dream is to play, and play well, for England. I got a call up for a 1-day tour of Bangladesh but was ruled out through injury, so I would like to get myself back to that point where I am competing to get into that setup."

**What do you want to do when you retire as a professional cricketer?**

"I am still not totally decided on my next move when I finish my career. My degree was in Sports Science and French, but I am trying to use my time in the off season to learn about what I might like to do when that time comes. I like to think that possibly my leadership skills and things I have learnt from being in team environments might be beneficial, but I don't have a definite set plan at this stage. Hopefully I still have a few more years playing yet!"

We wish Tom the best of luck for the rest of the 2025 season and look forward to following his career.



# Accelerating action

Accelerated action is needed to address climate change and nature loss. In 2024, the world reached the threshold of +1.5°C of warming, and the business sector is retreating from its climate and biodiversity commitments. The University of Exeter's Nature and Climate Impact Team, led by Professor Gail Whiteman, will use innovative communication techniques and cutting-edge science to create effective impact pathways and push for systemic change.

During New York Climate Week in 2024, Exeter honorary graduates (DSc, 2022) André and Rosalie Hoffmann (BA Geography, 1982) generously announced a £3.3 million gift to ensure that Exeter's interdisciplinary research on climate risks and solutions was translated into real-world impact. The Hoffmans said: "we believe that the combination of academic excellence and collaborative action will drive the practical, systemic changes needed to protect our planet for future generations. We trust that this initiative will inspire business leaders and policymakers to take decisive action for the wellbeing of nature and humanity."

Leading this team is Professor Gail Whiteman, the inaugural Hoffmann Impact Professor for Accelerating Action on Nature and Climate. As well as her work as a Professor of Sustainability at Exeter, Gail is also the founder

of Arctic Basecamp and Climate Basecamp, registered not-for-profit science outreach platforms. Arctic Basecamp hosts an annual event alongside the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos to raise awareness of polar climate change and its impact beyond the poles.

An 'Impact Professor' is a unique role with a primary focus on mobilising action and engagement in addition to undertaking academic research. Reflecting on the opportunities ahead for the team, Professor Gail says: "Our team of scientists, communication experts and researchers are on a mission to unlock climate and nature-positive action across sectors. We are using diverse expertise and evidence-based strategy to reach new audiences and influence decision makers to take action. Together, we can unleash impact."



André and Rosalie Hoffmann

The Nature and Climate Impact Team is unique and includes Research Impact Fellows and Communications Impact Fellows, coordinated by Senior Research Project Manager, Katie Cooke, alongside Gail.

So, with such a broad scope, where will the team start?

Katie explains: "By focusing on key industry sectors such as food, consumer packaged goods/ electronics, and digital technologies in the first two years, the team will be able to bridge the gap between the scientific understanding of systemic change and the practical methods of delivery. There are currently insufficient tools available for business leaders to understand their impacts on nature and our climate; to be able to commit to change at Board level; or to measure progress against their ambitions to be nature and climate net-positive."

Crucially, the team will also share knowledge broadly to ensure there are opportunities for others to learn from best practice.

The team will start by identifying key collaborators then develop effective communication tactics and impact pathways across sectors which can accelerate action on nature and climate. The overall aim is that this will be a rolling programme over the next five years, where the team can build momentum and create real impact where we need it most.

For more information about the team or funding opportunities, please contact:  
[hoffmannimpactteam@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:hoffmannimpactteam@exeter.ac.uk)



## Meet the team



**Professor Gail Whiteman**  
Director

An award-winning science communicator and social science expert who focuses on how decision-makers interpret and respond to systemic global risks.



**Katie Cooke**  
Senior Project Manager

An experienced Higher Education research programme manager, who excels in managing complex, large-scale research initiatives and fostering partnerships.



**Frances Kendall**  
Senior Communications Impact Fellow

Frances combines an academic background and a focus on food systems with extensive experience in storytelling, film, strategy, and foresight including roles at the BBC and Oatly.



**Josh Ayers**  
Research Impact Fellow

Josh has a PhD in Environmental and Climate Justice and brings nearly 20 years of international experience as a climate professional rooted in systems thinking and nature-positive approaches.



**Cora Taylor**  
Research Impact Fellow

Cora has a background in chemistry and environmental science and policy. Recently she has worked with start-up Volta Greentech, tackling climate change by reducing methane emissions from cows.



**Marcos Antonio de Oliveira**  
Research Impact Fellow

Marcos has experience in innovation, entrepreneurship and startups as well as a PHD in Computer Science; his primary interest is applying data science to climate change.



**Anna Wych**  
Project Coordinator

Anna brings over 15 years of experience in live sports broadcasting, where she delivered high-profile projects and built a reputation for operational excellence.



# Treasured pages

The University of Exeter Library's Heritage Collections team oversees the Special Collections and the Bill Douglas Cinema Museum. We interviewed Interim Head of Heritage Collections, Caroline Walter, to learn about the origins of the Special Collections.

Many dates could be suggested for the establishment of Special Collections at the University. However, looking back to its origins Caroline shares: *"The Special Collections department as we know it today may be considered as having come into being with the completion of a dedicated reading room and strong room on the Streatham Campus in 2003 to provide specialist care for the Rare Books and Archives that had been donated to the University."*

The current Reading Rooms are located in the Old Library on our Streatham Campus, and in the Exchange (Level 0) on our Penryn Campus. The Streatham Reading Room is named after Ronald Duncan, a prolific West Country author.

The first recorded archival deposit to the University was the papers of novelist RD Blackmore in 1956 which includes drafts, manuscripts, early editions and other literary fragments. A small,



EUL MS 294 – The Royal Charter of the University of Exeter, 21 December 1955.

typed catalogue of the manuscript collections produced in 1972 lists 16 archival collections. Five decades later, the University now holds more than 500! Reflecting on the gathering of these materials, Caroline explains that they have been shaped and built up by many guardians over time saying that: *"Such material has been acquired throughout the history of the University and by its predecessor organisations, and decades of library staff have cared for these collections."*

Our collections are open to everyone (including alumni), not just staff and students at the University. They are also widely used in teaching and seminars for modules in English, Drama, History, Communications, Visual Culture, Modern Languages, Film Studies, Geography, and many other subjects, as well as routinely



Dodderidge Library (Parish Library of Barnstaple, Devon) housed in our Special Collections.

**We help inspire the next generation of heritage professionals by offering internships, work experience and volunteering placements.**

forming part of research projects, PhDs, and master's theses and dissertations. The team also has strong links with other regional, national and international institutions, engaging in outreach and collaborative projects which benefit both the University and the wider community.

Caroline shares: *"We help inspire the next generation of heritage professionals by offering internships, work experience and volunteering placements, and we entice future University students through school and college visits. In the summer when other University areas fall silent, we remain busy, supporting researchers from other universities who have often travelled internationally to visit our unique collections. Increasingly we are also seeing visits to the collections for creative purposes, or for pure curiosity."*

But within these collections and stacks what can the studious scholar, aspiring archivist or browsing bibliophile hope to find?

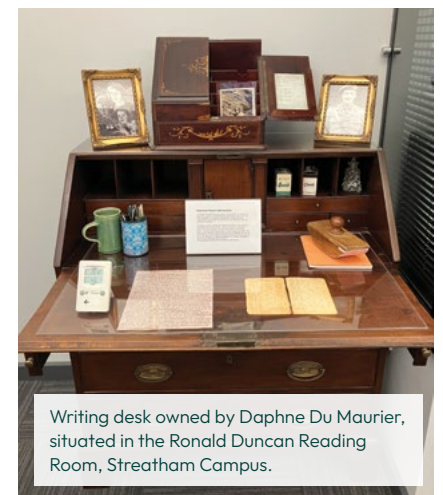
Well, the Special Collections is home to items from as early as the 13th Century on media ranging from vellum to digital files. These unique and irreplaceable records span a wide range of

topics including literary papers, South West historical and cultural organisations, the Middle East, mining and Cornish politics.

Perhaps one of the most significant early deposits came in 1965 when local Devon writer, Henry Williamson, donated his literary papers to the University. His gift was made expressly in the hope it would encourage other writers to do likewise at a time when many were being offered large sums by U.S. universities for their papers.

This aim was met with success and the collection's early focus on South West literary papers has continued to be one of our collecting specialisms. Our holdings now include archives from some of the region's best known 20th century writers, including Ted Hughes, Charles Causley, Agatha Christie, Daphne Du Maurier, and William Golding.

This notoriety has stretched outwards, and the city of Exeter was awarded a UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) City of Literature designation in 2019 in recognition of *"outstanding contributions to culture and creativity"* and the wealth of literary heritage in the city.



Writing desk owned by Daphne Du Maurier, situated in the Ronald Duncan Reading Room, Streatham Campus.

Just last year the University was involved in events to mark the 70th anniversary of the publication of *Lord of the Flies*, and the legacy of its author: William Golding. The University holds the *Lord of the Flies* manuscript as part of the William Golding Literary Archive in its Special Collections. Written in a school exercise book with the cover torn off, its beginning surprisingly differs significantly from the published version.

So, if like Du Maurier you *"like simple things, books, being alone, or with somebody who understands"*, taking a visit to our Special Collections is a chapter to add to your story this year.

You can read more about the Special Collections online:



Why not book a visit to reserve a desk in our Reading Room and request materials both from the collections and the Bill Douglas Cinema Museum, and discover the treasures for yourself? Any enquiries regarding donation can be directed to [libspc@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:libspc@exeter.ac.uk)



Rare Books B 1590/SAX/XX – Atlas of the Counties of England and Wales by Christopher Saxton, 1590.





Professor Lisa Roberts (right) and Sarah Turvill planting an olive tree as part of the opening ceremony.

# An island of calm

The use of space and natural light, create an island of calm at the heart of our Streatham Campus in the form of our latest new building. It's a space conducive to prayer and contemplation, a place that encourages respect, community and inclusivity across all faiths and beliefs and connects us to the natural environment.



***This Multifaith Centre started as a dream, then became a plan, and is now at last a reality!***



The new Sarah Turvill Multifaith Centre was built by contractor Willmott Dixon following a generous donation from Sarah Turvill, an alumna of the University's School of Law and Chair of Council for a decade from 2012-2022. Sarah has generously provided transformational philanthropic support and played a key role in advocating for the Multifaith Centre, from the initial planning stages through to its completion. In recognition of this, the new building has been named in her honour.

The building houses a new 50 person Muslim prayer space alongside dedicated washing facilities which provide much needed room for prayer preparation: an important cleansing step for many faiths. There is also a multifaith space which provides the opportunity for quiet reflection, as well as being used for various services and events. Communal meeting spaces and facilities for use by the Multifaith Chaplaincy team, afford the opportunity for quiet contemplation, but also encourages inclusive collaboration, which is at the heart of this project. This extends out on to the external terrace, where planting will blend the Multifaith Centre into its surroundings and offers staff and students the opportunity to sit and reflect on topics that matter to them most, host exciting events, or simply enjoy a quiet sanctuary at the heart of Streatham Campus.

Our University embodies a culture of respect and diversity and the Multifaith Chaplaincy team cares for the entire University community, creating a sense of belonging and an environment in which everybody is valued. Our chaplains provide a safe space to talk, and offer a confidential and non-judgmental listening ear, as well as supporting a range of faith activities and events. The Students' Guild, local faith leaders and the Chaplaincy team have all contributed to the plans and design of the new building and are thrilled to welcome you all to the new space.

Ramona Nash, Multifaith Chaplaincy Coordinator at the University of Exeter said: *"We are excited to have this new building on Streatham Campus for students and colleagues of all faiths and worldviews, religious or not, to grow spaces of community and belonging together. The Multifaith Chaplaincy team look forward to welcoming our university community through food and hospitality, opportunities for quiet reflection and prayer, conversation and activities. This Multifaith Centre started as a dream, then became a plan, and is now at last a reality!"*

Sustainability and reducing carbon emissions have been fundamental both to the design and the construction of the building, with Passivhaus principles in effect. This certification, literally 'passive house' in English, refers to buildings created to rigorous energy efficient

design standards, alongside carbon reduction, better air quality and even building comfort.

It begins with the striking expanse of copper coloured tile cladding, covering the clay blocks that make up the skin of this building. The clay porotherm blocks use around 95% less water than traditional construction materials, are lighter than concrete and therefore less carbon intensive for transport, and materially pose no threat to the environment. These remarkable blocks reduce heat loss to increase performance and efficiency, and can even be recycled, should the need arise. Air source heat pumps reduce carbon emissions from the building even further and a series of roof mounted PV panels take advantage of the building's sunny location next to the Forum.

That same location places the building at the very centre of life at the University, complementing the facilities in the Forum to create a centre dedicated to our student community, and placing respect and inclusion at the heart of our campus, as part of our Strategy 2030 values. Next time you're on our Streatham Campus, why not stop by to say hello to the team and explore this exciting new space?

You can find out more about the Multifaith Chaplaincy team and the support they offer, on our website: [exeter.ac.uk/students/chaplaincy/events/multifaith](https://exeter.ac.uk/students/chaplaincy/events/multifaith)



# Thank you for your support



of the driving force for positive outcomes in cancer, diabetes and dementia research which makes real, tangible change to our health landscape; and they are passionate about creating a level playing field in education, supporting our students to experience everything Exeter has to offer without being limited by financial constraints.

There is a strong ethos of learning and personal development at Exeter and, most importantly, our supporters continue to help accelerate Exeter forward. We would be unable to build upon our excellence and reputation without this vital support from our valued networks and communities.

Our motto, *Lucem Sequimur* means 'we follow the light' but in truth we often also 'create' that light; this is what makes Exeter a truly special place.

Your generous support enables us to create, harness and forge real change. Whether your gift is your valuable time and talent within our volunteering and mentoring programmes, or gifts of any size supporting areas which resonate with you personally, your philanthropic input and influence in Exeter makes such a difference. We are incredibly grateful for your support.

Find out more about making a gift online:



[donate.exeter.ac.uk](https://donate.exeter.ac.uk)

Thank you

In 2025, as we reach our 70th anniversary year as a University, we look backwards and forwards simultaneously; thankful for the foundations and building blocks of our institution upon which we stand firm, and hopeful for continued support to build upon our successes in the future.

As we move forward in challenging times, we are incredibly grateful to have a fantastic tradition of support within a wide network. Our alumni community boasts more than 185,000 members in 183 countries offering us a rich landscape of culture, experience, and expertise. You are all a vitally important part of the history of our wonderful institution.

Every individual who has crossed the threshold of one of our campuses is part of the rich history and exciting future of our University, which boasts exceptional standards both in academia and in our award-winning international research with its real-time global impact.

Our alumni are motivated in a variety of ways to support the University, responding to our commitment to create a greener, healthier and fairer society. Many are inspired to support the climate crisis, aiding our innovative work with novel technologies to create positive change globally; they are inspired by the developments in our medical advances, being part



**Brian J Greeves**  
Engineering Science, 1972  
Director Aviation Solutions Pty Ltd

*"I support the Exeter Leaders Community Giving Initiative at the University. I encourage alumni to donate this relatively small sum, which can have a massive collective impact."*

*"As someone who was funded through Exeter, I support a fairer focus that enables people to benefit from an amazing experience leading to a first degree or higher."*



**Melody Dougan**  
History, 1958  
University Board member, Legacy Pledger, and regular donor

*"Exeter was a very happy and privileged experience for me, as I was the first of my family to go to university, and at a time when education effectively was free. It gave me my career, and friends of now 66 years, but also a commitment to the importance of education and to widening participation."*

*"Like so many alumni, my affection for Exeter kept me in touch and has given me an awareness and enormous pride in so much of the fabulous, world leading research taking place there. How could I not wish to support the University, to the extent that I am able?"*



**Martin Stoolman**  
General Honours, 1977  
Regular donor

*"I had a fabulous learning experience at Exeter, and I want to help give that opportunity to others, especially those otherwise unable to afford it."*



# Gifts in Wills

Legacy gifts are at the heart of nurturing academic excellence, the student experience, world-class research and wellbeing. Gifts in Wills are a way for alumni to live on through Exeter and ensure it always remains the University you love and remember. We are incredibly grateful for every gift we receive. We've spoken with some of our legacy supporters about the inspiration behind their gift, as well as with students whose lives have been impacted by gifts in Wills.



## Christine Dodd (History, 1967)

Christine's gift to the History department will have a lasting impact on future generations of students.

*"My time at Exeter was both formative and enriching, giving me a lifelong love of my subject and preparing me for my career in Teaching. I have many happy memories of the Department where I was part of Professor Barlow's tutor group, I studied Prehistory under Lady Fox and had the opportunity to visit archaeological sites throughout the South West. I enjoyed singing in the Choral Society, exploring Dartmoor, playing hockey and tennis for Lopes, watching avant-garde films with the cinema society, spending hours in the Roborough Library and acquiring a taste for cider along the way! Leaving a legacy to Exeter is for me paying a personal debt of gratitude and a way of supporting future students."*

## Ollie Battye (BMBS, Connie Fozzard Scholar)

Thanks to generous gifts in Wills from our alumni and supporters, we are able to offer scholarships from undergraduate to PhD programmes.

*"The Connie Fozzard Scholarship has empowered me to complete my first year of medicine to a standard I'm proud of and provided me with the independence to explore my options at this critical stage in my career development. I am incredibly grateful for this support and excited for what the future holds."*

## Michael Devine (LLM Law International Business, 1988)

Thanks to a gift in Michael's Will students will be able to access LLM Scholarships.

*"Originally from Des Moines, Iowa, USA, the best investment I made in my professional career was to earn my LLM degree from Exeter. My LLM enabled me to practice as an attorney in a boutique international law firm in Manhattan, New York City; to obtain barrister pupillages in London and Brussels; and to practice international law as a barrister in London. I have had a worthwhile and fulfilling career, thanks to my LLM degree."*

## Sarah Legacy Supporter

Sarah's generous gift in her Will to the Exeter Forever Endowment Fund will continue to make a meaningful and lasting impact indefinitely for future generations.

*"I was delighted to take up the offer of a Free Will writing service provided by the University of Exeter. I decided to leave a pledge in my Will as I value the University's mission to support its staff to thrive, be fulfilled and reach their potential. I am proud to work for an organisation which puts into practice its aims for a sustainable, healthy and socially just future."*



**I am proud to work for an organisation which puts into practice its aims for a sustainable, healthy and socially just future.**



We have partnered with the Will specialists Farewill and the National Free Wills Network to offer free Will writing services to anyone over the age of 18. You can write a standard single or couples Will from the comfort of your home or visit a local Solicitor to write your Will in person. Please contact [legacies@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:legacies@exeter.ac.uk) for more information.





# Supporting your success



On completing your studies, you join a supportive global community of alumni, willing to help you achieve your full potential. The careers support you received whilst studying also continues after you graduate. Take a look below at what's on offer to you as an alum and visit our website for more information.

## Careers services

The Career Zone helps prepare you for life and work after university, offering support that continues after graduation. As an Exeter alum, you can access Career Zone resources for three years after leaving, with some online support available indefinitely.

## Events and webinars

Alumni are invited to various in-person and virtual events throughout the year. Previous topics include 'Building Your Personal Brand' and 'Job Hunting in a Difficult Economic Climate'.

Find upcoming events online: [exeter.ac.uk/alumnisupporters/events](https://exeter.ac.uk/alumnisupporters/events) as well as past event recordings on this webpage: [exeter.ac.uk/alumnisupporters/events/eventrecordings](https://exeter.ac.uk/alumnisupporters/events/eventrecordings)

## Postgraduate/ Further study

The University of Exeter invests heavily in scholarships for talented prospective postgraduate students. We offer a 20% discount as part of our Alumni Scholarship Award to any alumni who wish to continue their studies with the University of Exeter. The UK government also offers postgraduate loans and other funding opportunities.

Learn more about the Alumni Scholarship Award and how to apply on our website: [exeter.ac.uk/study/funding](https://exeter.ac.uk/study/funding)

## Job opportunities for graduates through Handshake

The Career Zone has partnered with Handshake, connecting students and graduates with employers. Handshake helps you discover opportunities, submit applications, and attend career events. Visit the site for more information: [exeter.joinhandshake.co.uk/login](https://exeter.joinhandshake.co.uk/login)

You also have access to Exeter's Graduate Business Partnership scheme, which promotes early-career roles at the University and with recommended employers. Stay up to date by joining their weekly bulletin.

Graduate access to Career Zone systems can be located online: [exeter.ac.uk/alumnisupporters/benefits/careerssupport](https://exeter.ac.uk/alumnisupporters/benefits/careerssupport)

## Student Circus

The University partners with Student Circus, a job-readiness platform for international students. It helps alumni find pre-filtered UK-sponsored jobs, check visa guides, and attend career webinars.

Alumni are invited to sign up online to receive two years of free access: [studentcircus.com/login](https://studentcircus.com/login)

More details on international graduate support are available on our website: [exeter.ac.uk/students/careers/jobsandworkplacements/internationalstudents](https://exeter.ac.uk/students/careers/jobsandworkplacements/internationalstudents)

## Mentoring & Ask an Alum

Exeter's Career Mentor Scheme is one of the UK's largest employability programmes. You can be matched with a professional for six months to gain sector insights and career guidance. Learn more: [exeter.ac.uk/students/careers/employability-schemes/careermentorscheme](https://exeter.ac.uk/students/careers/employability-schemes/careermentorscheme)

### Who can take part?

- Current UK and international students at Exeter.
- Exeter graduates up to three years post-graduation.
- Graduates from other UK universities in the Graduate Business Partnership (GBP) scheme.

For shorter support, use Ask An Alum to connect with a former Exeter graduate via email (available up to three years post-graduation): [exeter.ac.uk/students/careers/employability-schemes/aaa](https://exeter.ac.uk/students/careers/employability-schemes/aaa)



# Alumni on socials



We love creating this magazine and sharing the latest Exeter news, research and memories. But since it only reaches you once a year, follow us on Instagram, LinkedIn and Facebook to stay connected – no matter when you graduated!

Follow us on [Instagram](#) for alumni news, exclusive discounts, and updates on what your fellow graduates are up to—from award wins to TV appearances (and maybe even a photo of you from a recent event!).

Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) to grow your career, connect with alumni, access exclusive opportunities, and stay updated on events and resources for your next step.

Join us on [Facebook](#) to relive Exeter memories, celebrate friendships and love stories, and explore moments from across the years.

We love celebrating your achievements – tag us in your posts, share your news via DM, or email us at [alumni@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@exeter.ac.uk)

**Moved abroad after graduation?** Join your local alumni group on social media to connect, get Exeter news, and hear about nearby events. Scan the QR code to learn more.



**Based in China?** Connect with the Exeter China Alumni Association on WeChat – search "ExeterAlumni" or scan the QR code to join.



## Why?

We love to hear from our alumni.

Let us know your contact details so that we can:

- Keep you informed of what's happening at Exeter
- Invite you to our events
- Let you know about your alumni benefits, such as discounts, access to journals and careers support

## How?

There are lots of ways to contact us:

- @exeter\_alumni
- University of Exeter Alumni
- /exeteralumni
- [alumni@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@exeter.ac.uk)
- +44 (0)1392 723141
- [exeter.ac.uk/alumni](https://exeter.ac.uk/alumni)
- Global Advancement, Northcote House, The Queen's Drive, Exeter EX4 4QJ

#Exeter Forever







Thanks to the generosity of our alumni and supporters, the University of Exeter continues to push boundaries in teaching and research – empowering exceptional minds and shaping the discoveries of tomorrow. From life-changing bursaries and scholarships to pioneering academic posts, transformative initiatives, and state-of-the-art facilities, your support makes it all possible.

We are profoundly grateful—not just for this generosity of time and support, but for the passion and commitment of our community. Thank you.