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## Sensational centenary dinner

A sensational centenary dinner brought the year long celebrations to a close with an impressive tribute to home grown produce and talent.

A unique mix of local dignitaries, industry partners, governors, alumni and former and present staff and students enjoyed a multi course dinner featuring Reaseheath produce and prepared by our own catering team supported by food technology and bakery students.

Guests were impressed with the spectacular floral arrangements created by our floristry department and the amazing atmosphere in our marquee, which was set up by our Estates Team.

A centenary cake made by Bakery and Patisserie Course Manager Sam Copeland was cut by Principal and CEO Marcus Clinton and past Principals Meredydd David and Vic Croxson. Entertainers included former student Twm Tegid Brunton, an aspiring opera singer.

Watch at <https://bit.ly/RH100-Centenary-Dinner>



Watch at <https://bit.ly/RH100-DukeOfGloucester>

## Royal visit concludes centenary year

Reaseheath's 100th birthday gave us a fantastic opportunity to celebrate with our stakeholders, local and business communities and former and present students, staff and supporters.

A packed programme of events, described in the last edition of Grass Roots, illustrated our rich history and underlined how land based industries have developed over the century.

Our celebrations concluded when His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester officially opened our Heritage Trail and Centenary Bridge and our state-of-the-art Vertical Farm. The Heritage Trail has been restored by students and staff from our Countryside department as part of a sustainability project aimed at increasing biodiversity on campus. Taking in historic buildings and sites of horticultural interest, it can be enjoyed by students, staff, visitors and by the public.

His Royal Highness also inspected some of the 100 trees we planted as part of the Queen's Green Canopy, and planted a tree himself as a lasting reminder of his visit.

He also opened Reaseheath's Vertical Farm - the UK's largest training and research centre for vertical farming. This facility grows a range of tiered crops in temperature and light controlled environments and showcases technical innovation within this specialised sector. It is part of the Institute of Sustainability and Food Innovation, a joint venture between Reaseheath and our academic partner, the University of Chester.

## Royal recognition for RDA volunteer

The dedicated head of a Reaseheath based charity group was among 500 outstanding volunteers to be honoured as part of the Coronation celebrations.

Sheila Saner, Chair of Nantwich & District Riding for the Disabled (RDA) Group, was recognised as a Coronation Champion for her 40 years of service to the charity at local, regional and national levels. She received a commemorative badge, a certificate signed by Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla and an invitation to

attend the Coronation Concert at Windsor Castle.

Catering for all disabilities, Nantwich RDA offers sessions for 50 riders aged from four years to sixty-plus supported by over 50 volunteers. The group has dedicated facilities with six horses at our Equestrian Centre.



Learn more at [www.nantwichrda.org](http://www.nantwichrda.org)

## Flowers fit for a King

Open College Network floristry student Alex Pickles proved she can grow flowers fit for a King by providing blooms for the coronation ceremony in Westminster Abbey.

Alex, who began her artisan business Mountain Gate Farm and Flowers in 2022, was among members of 'Flowers from the Farm' to supply native blooms and foliage to decorate the abbey. The organisation was approached to invite members to gift plant material which complemented the colour scheme selected by the Royal Household.



Shane Connolly, Florist by Royal Appointment to the late Queen Elizabeth II and now to King Charles III, led the design team in creating seasonal, sustainable arrangements, with Alex's flowers forming part of the decoration of the Grave of the Unknown Warrior and Quire area.

## Tree planting marks Coronation

Horticulture students planted a cherry blossom tree outside St Mary's Church, Nantwich, to mark the coronation of Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla.



The Prunus incisa 'Mikinori' is a small Fuji tree with bee-friendly pink flowers in Spring and colourful foliage in the Autumn. Selected and donated by Reaseheath as part of our community commitment, the tree has been planted in front of the Parish Hall opposite the west end of the church and replaces a mulberry tree destroyed in Storm Arwen in 2021. A commemorative plaque will be erected nearby.

The tree was planted by Level 3 Diploma students supported by Assistant Principal Iain Clarke and by The Revd Mark Hart, Rector of St Mary's Church.

# Graduation of Class of 2022

Over 250 graduands who completed degrees at University Centre Reaseheath in the last academic year joined peers from the University of Chester, our strategic alliance partner, for a spectacular graduation ceremony held in Chester's historic cathedral.



The graduands were awarded degrees in agricultural science, animal management, canine clinical behaviour, equine science, zoo management, wildlife conservation and ecology, landscape architecture, adventure sports and coaching, rural events management, dairy technology and food science.

While many studied full time, others chose a part-time route while continuing to work or were degree level apprentices on study release from their workplace.



Watch at  
<https://bit.ly/UCR-Graduation2022>



BSc (Hons) and FdSc Zoo Management



BSc (Hons) Landscape Architecture



BSc (Hons) Wildlife Conservation and Ecology



FdSc Dairy Technology (Eden)

## Dean's Awards for outstanding graduates

A higher level apprentice whose research project is saving her employer thousands of pounds, a mother of four who balanced her own full time study with home schooling throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and a mother of six who got to grips with new learning techniques and software, had a baby and launched two businesses during her degree study were the recipients of special awards at the graduation ceremony for UCR's Class of 2022.

They were **Carla Lindsay**, a Foundation Degree in Dairy Technology apprentice on our Eden programme (**Meredydd David Award for Academic and Technical Excellence**), **Selina Royle**, a BSc (Hons) Wildlife Conservation and Ecology (First Class) graduate (**Dean's Award for Outstanding Achievement in Undergraduate Research**) and **Rachael Cardus**, a BSc (Hons) Equine Science and Sports Performance (First Class) graduate (**Dean's Award for Outstanding Achievement and Personal Progression**).

**Carla**, the first female cheesemaker at Arla Foods' Lockerbie site, used her final year dissertation project to investigate the microbiological contamination of whey protein concentrate during its transfer from Lockerbie to Denmark for use in food products including baby formula.

Her research established the source of the contamination and enabled her to develop a long term solution. This has increased customer satisfaction, reduced the environmental impact of product disposal and has saved her employers £400,000 to date.



Carla Lindsay

**Selina** was selected for the consistent high standards of her academic work despite home schooling her four children during Covid.

For her final research project and dissertation, Selina looked at the health benefits of spending time out of doors during the pandemic, whether this increased peoples' connection to nature and what the implications for conservation might be.

Her key finding was that people will connect with nature provided they are given the time and resources to do so, for instance through the creation of accessible outdoor spaces with interpretation boards at work places and public spaces.

**Rachael**, a mother of six, used her newly acquired knowledge to launch two holistic equine businesses - a riding school and an equine academy - both aimed at improving overall welfare horse welfare through a combination of riding tuition, horsemanship and horse care.

She also successfully achieved the local council licensing requirements for her riding school.



Selina Royle



Rachael Cardus

## Undergraduates present at ZSL

Three UCR Animal Science undergraduates shared their research at the BIAZA (British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquaria) Research Conference.

This was held at the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) and allowed the undergraduates to share research from their dissertation projects, learn about new research and network with professionals.

Katie Sparks (BSc Animal Management) spoke about the concept of flow in cotton-top tamarins using cognitive enrichment, Tom Briggs (BSc Zoo Management) gave a poster presentation on how the presence of keepers impacts on captive Californian sea lion behaviour and Megan Brindley (BSc Animal Management) gave a poster presentation on how selected herbs affect the behaviour of serval, raccoon dogs and African civets.

The undergraduates were supported through our Higher Education Scholarly Activity Fund.



## Florist Gabrielle is top of the tree

**Level 5 Master Diploma in Professional Floristry student Gabrielle Williams achieved the highest marks in the country and a distinction for the theory section of her final exam.**

The Level 5 Master Diploma is the highest qualification offered through City and Guilds and is held by an elite 5% of professional florists. Gabrielle, who owns successful business Rosa Gabriella, also achieved a highly respected merit in her practical exam.

Originally studying floristry as a leisure interest at Level 3, Gabrielle was inspired to become a professional florist after being a member of our medal winning team at RHS Chelsea Flower Show in 2017. She has continued to study with us to grow her skills to the highest level possible.

## Surveys support conservation

**UCR Conservation Science and Animal Science undergraduates developed their species identification and ecological survey skills during an action packed field course which supported conservation in Somerset and Cornwall.**

The undergraduates identified over 200 species of fauna and flora by carrying out reptile, small mammal, freshwater and rocky shore surveys and also observed the behaviour of captive beavers.

These significant surveys allowed the undergraduates to practice skills learned during studies and also to contribute to a species inventory that will inform management of the areas. Top activities included collecting DNA samples from European adders, hand netting brook lamprey,

brown trout and European eel and setting out camera traps to gauge nocturnal behaviour of beavers intended for reintroduction.



## Unrivalled conservation experience

**UCR Animal Science undergraduates experienced real-world conservation during a study tour to one of Africa's top conservancies.**

The group enjoyed spectacular wildlife viewing and learned about ground breaking conservation at Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya. Regarded as an international role model, the conservancy has the largest black rhino sanctuary in East Africa and is home to the world's two last remaining northern white rhinos.

The undergraduates had an unrivalled opportunity to better

understand the complex human, animal and political considerations required for any successful conservation model. Highlights included learning about the use of embryo harvesting and transfer to preserve endangered species, and spending time with security and anti-poaching teams. The group also explored sustainable community initiatives including micro farming and stove manufacturing.

## World famous floral designer

**Higher Level floristry students and alumni were privileged to learn from world famous floral designer and author Gregor Lersch when he chose to visit Reaseheath during his busy international schedule.**

Our students and alumni were among 300 professional and leisure florists who attended a lecture demonstration by Gregor run in conjunction with Group 2000, a local NAFAS affiliated club.

Gregor is a Master of Master Florists and has presented demonstrations and tutored in more than 32 countries. Celebrated for his

Watch at <https://bit.ly/RHC-GregorLersch>



trend setting design styles, his demonstration offered an insight into contemporary design and technical craftsmanship with an emphasis on sustainability. He also spent a further three days at Reaseheath sharing his expertise in workshops.

## Undergraduates share research

**Three UCR undergraduates shared their academic research at the prestigious 2023 British Conference for Undergraduate Research at the University of Warwick.**

Connor Butler (BSc Zoo Management), Lauren Dowdeswell (BSc Canine Clinical Behaviour) and Hannah Maudsley (BSc Zoo Management) used our mini zoo and other facilities for practical research to support their final dissertation theses.

Connor presented his findings on the effect of taxonomic bias when zoos engage with followers via social media. He feels that zoos should aid the conservation of all species, not just the cute and charismatic but also the less appealing, as they will often be in greater conservation need.

Lauren, who was accompanied by assistance dog Tucker, shared the results of her research into the impact of harness design on canine forelimb biomechanics while Hannah revealed how the lunar cycle affects the behaviour of Cape porcupines. She hopes that her research will help zoos to provide these nocturnal animals with the best possible care.



## Annual awards celebrate success

Our annual awards celebrated the success of over 1200 Further Education students who had achieved focused technical qualifications and skills.

The vast majority find a rewarding career in their chosen industry or progress into Higher Education, with many opting to study at University Centre Reaseheath.

Addressing packed audiences over two days, our Principal and CEO, Marcus Clinton emphasised that Reaseheath remains one of the top UK providers of land based training and offers programmes including T Levels which are supported by many key employers. Reaseheath continues to embrace new technologies and to invest in many new resources and facilities.

### Cross college award winners were:

#### E C COLLINS TROPHY

Student making the best contribution to college life

- **Grace Robinson** (Level 3 Advanced Technical Extended Diploma in Equine Management)

#### NATIONAL WESTMINSTER BANK CUP

Student making the best all round contribution

- **Kalliopi Angelakopoulos** (FdSc Animal Management (Behaviour and Welfare))

#### JK LAMBERTON TROPHY For personal qualities

- **Alice Warmisham** (C&G Level 3 Advanced Technical Extended Diploma in Land and Wildlife Management)

#### GJ ENGLAND TROPHY

Student who contributed most to sporting activities

- **Liam Buckley** (Level 3 National Diploma in Sports Coaching and Development)

### SPECIAL RECOGNITION FOR CONTRIBUTION TO STUDENT WELLBEING

- **Rebecca Thornton** (FdSc Canine Behaviour and Training)

### REASEHEATH100 AWARD FOR CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABILITY

- **Ross Fuller** (FdSc Zoo Management)



## Reaseheath benefits from T Level funding

Reaseheath College is among leading educational institutions benefitting from a government funding boost to support the roll out of T Levels.

Around £30 million in the 2023-24 academic year is being shared by selected training providers in recognition of the extra costs which they face during the changeover to T Level programmes.

The money will support Reaseheath as it expands its T Level offer and will ensure that students gain the essential skills and industry experience they need to progress in key sectors. This year Reaseheath successfully launched T Levels in Onsite Construction, Design and Surveying and Business Management. This will extend from September 2023 to include Food Science, Landbased Engineering, Tree Management and Livestock and Crop Production.

On offer to 16-19 year olds, T Levels are the equivalent of three A levels and include a significant industry placement which allows young people to gain the specific skills and experience they need to successfully progress into their chosen profession. There is also a significant benefit to employers, as being a supporting partner allows them to help shape the curriculum and ensure it delivers required skills.



Reaseheath Construction is already recognised as being a model provider of T Levels, having previously received £1.9 million in government support to provide a T Level Innovation Hub within its department. The new hub has a purpose built workshop and three dedicated classrooms which include a state of the art IT suite. An additional £290,000 is being spent on specialist equipment including 3D imaging.

T Level Business Management students at Reaseheath have benefitted from an £80,000 refurbishment of dedicated classrooms which provide additional collaborative working space and top of the range IT equipment.

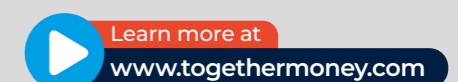
## Together sponsors bungalow build

Reaseheath's T Level construction students have gained real life skills by building a bungalow on campus, thanks to funding from specialist lender Together.

The company, which provides property loans for individuals and businesses, has donated £110K to us as part of its local commitment to ensuring the continuing development of the construction industry.

The donation is being used to supply materials for a timber frame bungalow built by joinery, bricklaying and plastering students. The building will be dismantled and rebuilt each year for five years, enabling hundreds of students to develop highly relevant skills and knowledge.

Together's funding will also enable 100 students to gain their Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) Card annually. CSCS is the leading skills certification scheme within the UK construction industry and is proof that potential employees have received appropriate skills training to uphold standards and safety on construction sites.





Advanced Construction Training showcased

The latest digital technology used in the construction industry was showcased at an event we hosted in our new Construction T Level Hub.

High aiming bricklayer wins national award

Jack Boffey, a talented student bricklayer, won a commendation at Youthbuild UK's Young Builder of the Year awards for the exceptional standards of his work and his determination to aim high within his trade.

Jack received his award at a prestigious ceremony at the House of Commons in Westminster which was attended by Andy Gould, Curriculum Area Manager for Construction, and his parents. He was nominated for the award by Andy and his team and was selected as a national finalist in the 14 - 18 years category.

Jack has completed his Level 1 Diploma and Level 2 Diplomas in Bricklaying with us and will progress to our Level 3 Diploma in Bricklaying or move into employment.



HOYS support praised

Our student arena party again provided an essential service at the world's most famous equine event - the Horse of the Year Show.

For the 11th year our team of students and staff assisted the show jumping course designers and builders in the international arena and also supported the Dressage Championship, the Pony Club mounted games and the harness scurry.

Their efforts helped to provide a seamless spectacle for thousands of visitors and were much

appreciated by the organisers, who value the team's enthusiasm, high standards and work ethic.

In addition to gaining a unique perspective on the backstage elements of a major show and meeting elite riders and trainers, the students received unique event management training - a superb addition to their CVs.

Students impress with stockmanship skills

Agriculture students proved they were more than up for the challenge of the college calf show by producing and showing youngstock from Reaseheath's dairy herd.

Our students demonstrated their handling ability in a showing on campus, impressing prominent cattle judge Ray Brown, who farms the renowned Bidlea dairy herd.

Ray had the difficult task of choosing the winners of the four classes and in particular the overall champion, but eventually Level 3 Technical Baccalaureate student Jack Harding took the championship with Level 2 Diploma

student Conley Martin as reserve champion. Leo Bradbury, who is studying for his Level 3 Diploma, was third and Level 2 Diploma student Katie Dunbar was fourth.

The calf show was sponsored this year by Bidlea Dairies.



Safer nesting for ducks

Our game and wildlife management students joined a British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC) project to build and install nesting tubes for mallard ducks.

Historically the mallard has been very common but its numbers are decreasing due to nest predation, habitat loss and climate change. Level 3 Diploma students stepped in to help by constructing the

specially designed nesting tubes and installing them on poles in the college's lake, where they are protected from predation and disturbance.

The students learned about the problem from Gavin Howe, BASC's North West Regional Officer, who spent a day on campus showing them how to construct the nests and where best to site them. The students installed the nests they had built, with the activity forming part of their course assessment.



Watch at <https://bit.ly/RHC-ACT>

Bakery students in WorldSkills bid

Four talented young pastry chefs showed off their creativity in a bid to qualify for the WorldSkills UK 2023 national finals.

Level 3 Diploma in Bakery students John Samson, Jack Owen, Orion Johnson and Aaron Newall contested the WorldSkills UK Confectionery and Patisserie qualifier in Cardiff.

If successful, our students will be given a chance to compete in the national finals in November. Success there could potentially lead to a place on the UK Squad and the opportunity to compete in



France in 2024 for the international pastry title.

For the qualifier, contestants had to create a highly decorated six-portion Roulade with a 'Black Forest' theme. They also had to produce two plated portions fit for restaurant service - all within four hours.

The event shone the spotlight on the Advanced Construction Training (ACT) project, an initiative funded by Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership to develop and promote digital technologies and skills training across the region. Participating colleges such as Reaseheath have received funding to buy specialist equipment, enabling them to develop into centres of excellence for advanced construction, digital and manufacturing skills.

The event gave partner colleges, potential employers and suppliers the chance to showcase the advanced technical equipment on offer. It attracted over 150 students plus department heads and tutors, all eager to gain hands-on experience with the latest kit.

## Butcher represents GB in world challenge

Former Reaseheath butchery apprentice Jason Edwards represented Team GB in the 'Young Butcher' category at the World Butchers Challenge in California, USA.

Jason was selected after winning a gold medal at the 2021 WorldSkills UK Butchery finals, which were held at Reaseheath - but this was his first competition experience at international level. Although he was unplaced, he thoroughly enjoyed appearing on a global stage and held his own against competitors from 14 other countries.

Jason completed his FDQ Diploma in Professional Butchery Level 2 with us and manages high street shop Littlers Butchers. Our Master Butcher Gary Evans signed him up for WorldSkillsUK and he won a bronze medal at his first attempt in 2019.



Watch at  
<https://bit.ly/RHC-ApprenticeshipAwards23>

Joanna Moonan,  
Jessica Birtwistle,  
Sharlene Harrison,  
Iwona Cawa,  
Marcus Clinton

## Reaseheath celebrates apprentice 'stars'

A high flying dairy apprentice who plays a leading role in training a UK wide team took top honours at our annual Apprenticeship Awards ceremony.

Sharlene Harrison, Technical and Development Officer for Muller UK & Ireland Group, was crowned **Outstanding Apprentice of the Year** at the glittering event. She was also selected as **Higher Level Apprentice of the Year** for successfully combining her studies with a full-time role which involves training colleagues and customers of the leading dairy brand.

Runners up for the Higher Level Apprentice of the Year award were Mark White, a dairy technologist with Saputo, and Sophie Ridgway, a learning skills tutor at Reaseheath

**Level 3 Apprentice of the Year** was Iwona Cawa, a Crop Supervisor with APS Salads. The company is the UK's leading supplier of British tomatoes to the high street.

Level 3 finalists were Nadine Brooks, a veterinary nurse with Congleton Vets, and Oliver Capel, a crop technician with APS Salads.

**Level 2 Apprentice of the Year** award went to Jessica Birtwistle, youngstock manager at Free Green Farm, Knutsford.

Finalists were horticulturist Daniel Traynor who works for Carden Hall near Chester, and Tia Williams, a stockperson at Hayrack Church Farm, Chester.

**Functional Skills Apprentice of the Year** was Bradley Lowe, a gardener with Grappenhall and Thelwall Parish Council.

Guest speaker was Joanna Moonan, Deputy Director at the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, who commented that Reaseheath was well known for providing high quality education and training and that our apprentices were shining examples of excellence.

Reaseheath currently trains 970 land-based apprentices and works in partnership with hundreds of large, medium and small employers.



First Bus



AT Oliver and Sons

## Industry partnerships celebrated

As well as celebrating the success of outstanding apprentices, our Apprenticeship Awards also featured a presentation to industry partners judged to have 'gone the extra mile' in support of their apprenticeship programme.

### Employer of the Year - Large organisations

(Sponsored by Krone)

#### Winner: First Bus

One of the UK's leading UK bus operators, First Bus was recognised for achieving excellence in providing a nationally recognised apprenticeship training programme. The judges also felt that the company showed real focus on Continuing Professional Development and quality of care.

#### Runner up: Alstom

A highly respected employer across the rail network with significant plans for growth, Alstom was felt to be an attentive company where apprentice progression and development is paramount.

#### Runner up: AT Oliver and Sons

The service arm of Olivers, a major company supplying agricultural equipment and machinery, AT Oliver and Sons was selected for the genuine care the company demonstrates for the technical progression and wellbeing of its apprentices.

### Employer of the Year - SME organisations

(Sponsored by First Bus)

#### Winner: A P Webb Plant Hire

Rail maintenance specialist A P Webb Plant Hire provides maintenance solutions for Network Rail and other principal contractors. The company was selected as an award winner for ensuring that

its apprentices complete their programme to a high standard and represent both their company and their industry with pride.

#### Runner up: Grants Butchers

Grants Butchers was one of the first butchers to subscribe to the new apprenticeship training standards and enrolled a female apprentice who was one of the first in the country to achieve excellence at this new benchmark.

#### Runner up: Total Tools

Total Tools offers an extensive service across the hire, sales and repair of construction tools, equipment and accessories. This expanding business uses its apprenticeship programme to attract and retain talented employees, in turn ensuring a seamless service for its customers.



Total Tools

## Apprentice Mentoring Excellence Award

(Sponsored by Arla)

#### Winner: AT Oliver & Sons

**Runners up:** Vets 4 Pets Chester and Platinum Construction

## Roads Minister visits engineering academy

Reaseheath welcomed Roads and Local Transport Minister Richard Holden MP onto campus during National Apprenticeship Week to see the progress of the UK's first dedicated Bus and Coach Engineering Academy.

The academy is the result of an innovative partnership between Reaseheath and transport company First Bus which delivers in-demand skills training in green technology to the company's apprentices.

The apprentice engineering technicians receive tailored training on current and next generation zero emission vehicles at Reaseheath's bespoke Engineering Apprentice Academy. Eighty-two apprentices are currently on the programme.

Richard Holden toured the academy with First Bus Chief Operating Officer Andrew Jarvis, First Bus Head of Engineering Excellence Tony Cockcroft and Reaseheath's Principal and Chief Executive Marcus Clinton.



Seminar tackles equine safeguarding

Ways of creating a more positive public image of horses in sport were explored at a groundbreaking seminar on Equine Performance and Safeguarding which began its national tour at Reaseheath.

Presented by acknowledged equine performance consultant Dr Anne Bondi and by Dr Sue Dyson, a world-renowned expert in equine orthopaedics, the seminar suggested that the negative impact of perceived poor practice could be improved through the use of a Ridden Horse Performance Checklist which enables early identification and solving of potential issues. This would help to protect equestrian sport's social licence to operate, an area which is increasingly under the spotlight during the run-up to the 2024 Olympics.

The event attracted professional practitioners, competitive riders, equine vets, physiotherapists, business owners and equine students and staff.



Fifth industry accolade for Food Centre

**Our outstanding Food Processing Halls team has again achieved the highest standards of Food Safety and Hygiene within a food production facility.**

Following a rigorous audit against BRCGS (British Retail Consortium Global Standard) Version 8, the team has been awarded the prestigious AA standard for the fifth consecutive year. This is the highest possible benchmark for best practice in food manufacture

and proof that our Food Centre operates under highly controlled conditions and to the highest industry standards.

Grade AA certification is aimed at suppliers of major retailers. Although Reaseheath does not need this standard to operate, the college's ethos is to ensure students are trained under strict industry conditions and the auditor was extremely complimentary about our quality management system.

T-Level students to build a new wellbeing garden

**Our construction T Level students are gaining relevant industry skills thanks to our partner Ibstock, the UK's leading manufacturer of clay and concrete building products and solutions.**

The students, who are studying Design, Surveying and Planning or On-Site Construction, benefit from substantial industry experience to prepare for progression into employment. Ibstock has offered them the chance to build a wellbeing garden for employees



at the company's factory. Design students will create a work proposal, bricklayers will build flower beds and seating and joiners will build a gazebo and benches.

As well as delivering excellent work experience, the project also fulfills Ibstock's ESG strategy by enhancing green spaces and biodiversity, enhancing the health and wellbeing of employees and prioritising zero waste.



Milking Equipment Association conference

**The value of professional accreditation for specialist milking equipment engineers and an expansion of the industry's accreditation scheme came under the spotlight at a high profile conference held at Reaseheath.**

Members of the Milking Equipment Association travelled UK-wide to attend the conference, where they heard key speakers share their knowledge and expertise. They also learned about the rebrand and expansion of the Milking Systems Technician Accreditation scheme to cover all brands and types of milking

systems, from traditional and semi automated to fully automated robotics.

Reaseheath works closely with the agricultural engineering and dairy industries and is the only college to deliver Category 3 and the new Category 4 (Master Technician), which is the highest professional level achievable.

Healthy treats for dogs

**Canine Behaviour undergraduates are using naturally nutritious treats during dog training sessions thanks to a donation from dog food supplier 'Gentle'.**

The treats have a high meat content and are cold pressed to preserve the nutritional level of the ingredients. They are used as rewards by our undergraduates as they learn how to correctly train dogs for a variety of purposes and activities.

As well as being popular with the dogs, the treats are also benefitting studies on nutrition and health care. Some dog treats have high levels of fat and sugar, so we are encouraging our undergraduates

to consider the type of food they use in the future when conducting their own training classes.



Networking event for veterinary practices

**Professionals from over 20 registered veterinary practices attended a networking event which we held during Veterinary Nursing Awareness Month.**

This was a partnered event with the British Veterinary Nursing Association and gave delegates the opportunity to discuss topical industry challenges such as recruitment, skills gaps and staff wellbeing.

Headline speaker was Stephanie Sorrell, a European Specialist in Internal Medicine and RCVS specialist in Feline Medicine, who is passionate about improving wellbeing within the veterinary profession. Subjects for discussion included the clinical coach support we offer and the importance of mentors and strong leadership. Delegates also toured our specialist Centre of Veterinary Nursing, many leaving excellent feedback.

Over 80 training practices have apprentices with us or take our students on work experience.



Plough Sunday shines a light on mental health in farming

A packed congregation of local parishioners and members of the agricultural community celebrated the new farming year at a Plough Sunday service held at Reaseheath.



The event supported the Cheshire Agricultural Chaplaincy, a leading charity that supports people across all areas of agriculture going through challenging times. Representing the charity, Assistant Chaplain Helen Rutter spoke about the acute need to provide mental health support to farmers.

The service was conducted by Rev Anne Lawson, Vicar of the Cross Country parishes of Acton, Church Minshull, Worleston and Wettehall. Reaseheath students opened the service by wheeling in a horse-drawn plough and welcoming the congregation.

The Bishop of Chester, Rt Revd Mark Tanner blessed the plough and those who work in agriculture.

Major trophy at Royal Cheshire Show

Reaseheath's action packed stand won the Best Speciality Stand in the Rural Life Area at the Royal Cheshire Show.

Our range of educative and interactive displays impressed judge Richard Blackburn, NFU Council Representative, who felt we showcased the best aspects of modern agriculture and rural life with activities which were widely appealing to families.

Visitors watched sausage making and cookery demonstrations from guest chefs using locally sourced

ingredients, learnt tree climbing techniques, met animals from our mini zoo, tested their tractor and car driving skills on simulators and admired the skills of floristry students. They could also drive a digger and take part in fun challenges with our vet nursing and maths & English teams.

We also caught up with many alumni and industry partners.



Wildlife festival inspires families

Our Environmental Conservation lecturers helped families to get closer to nature by sharing skills at Chester Zoo's Wildlife Connections Festival. The two day event, held in the zoo's 14 acre nature reserve, offered a packed programme of creative and inspiring activities.

Supported by the zoo's rangers, our team ran hands-on activities introducing visitors to the unseen lives of creatures who live in our ponds and waterways. Over 900 visitors were attracted to our stand and left with a greater knowledge of the habitats and life cycles of pond invertebrates and amphibians. Some families were even inspired to construct their own garden ponds at home.

Other wildlife partners taking part included The National

Trust, Cheshire Wildlife Trust and RECORD, Cheshire's Biological Records Centre.



Reaseheath is new home for Nantwich Show

We were delighted to offer the Nantwich Show a new home when Nantwich Agricultural Society decided it was time for a relaunch.

The hugely popular agricultural event had been held at nearby Dorfold Park for more than 70 years but was forced to cancel in 2019 due to heavy rain and

for a further two years due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Its eagerly awaited return, on fields used by our training and commercial farm, was particularly apt because the show was celebrating its 125th anniversary during Reaseheath's centenary year. Its programme turned the spotlight on farming and rural life and offered a spectacular range of animals, technologies, innovative businesses and family entertainment.

The Nantwich Show returns to Reaseheath on Wednesday 26 July 2023.

Nantwich Food Festival sponsored

Reaseheath was a major sponsor of the hugely successful Nantwich Food Festival, a three-day event which attracted a 40,000-plus record crowd, raised the profile of local businesses and delivered a substantial boost to the local economy.

The Reaseheath Food Theatre drew capacity audiences to demonstrations by celebrities

including TV chef Dean Edwards, Chester Grosvenor's Executive Chef Elliot Hill and our own highly talented Bakery and Patisserie Course Manager Sam Copeland, who impressed visitors with a stunning cake decorating display.

Sam demonstrated how to decorate an Autumn themed cake and also judged the Festival's Victoria Sponge competition alongside Lizzie Acker (Great British Bake-Off) and Jill Weatherburn (food stylist and home economist). Our Crop Innovation Manager Peter Gould was also popular, selling produce grown in our glasshouses.



Generous donations help local communities

Generous staff and students donated an impressive 256 presents to bring Christmas cheer to young people spending the festive season in nearby Leighton Hospital.



The collection was organised by our Wellbeing Team and donated to a toy appeal organised by the Dabbers Scooter Club, who collected the presents. All departments donated new toys suitable for an age range from babies to young teenagers. This is the first time the college has supported the Dabbers Scooter Club's appeal, although we have previously made individual donations of toys to Leighton Hospital.

We also pulled together to help local people in need over the festive period by collecting non perishable food, household items, toiletries and festive treats to make up a welcome delivery for Nantwich Foodbank.

Sustainability  
champion  
Ross honoured

A UCR graduate who made a significant impact on our sustainability journey was honoured with a prestigious national award.

Ross Fuller, the inspirational former Chair of Reaseheath's Conservation Society, was awarded Runner up 'Student Green Commitment Award', a category within the Association of Colleges 'Student of the Year' awards. The award recognises Ross's pioneering work and the outstanding way he has led the college-wide student voice on climate change and sustainability.



Ross, who also received the Reaseheath100 Award for Contribution to Sustainability at our Annual Awards, introduced sustainability projects including a move to reduce paper and plastic waste on campus. He also encouraged students to contribute to biodiversity projects such as creating a wildflower meadow, building wildlife habitats and by joining mammal, bird and plant surveys.



Watch at  
<https://bit.ly/RHC-FieldToFork>

'Field to Fork' project wins  
Green Gown award

Our 'Field to Fork' project with a local school has been recognised as an exceptional collaborative initiative delivering both environmental and social benefits.

The project, which involved our food technology and horticulture students, pupils from Wrenbury Primary School and a former Michelin star chef, won the Next Generation Learning and Skills category at the Green Gown Awards UK and Ireland 2022.

We are automatically a finalist in this year's International Green Gown Awards which is endorsed by the United Nations Environment Programme.

Our 'Field to Fork' project enabled the pupils to learn first hand about sustainable food production and healthy eating by growing vegetables as ingredients for nutritious meals which they helped to cook and shared with their families. It has since been expanded to involve more schools and chefs from different cultures.

Hydroelectric scheme could  
benefit Equestrian Centre

Reaseheath's Equestrian Centre could benefit from a proposal to generate clean, green energy from a hydroelectric scheme on the nearby River Weaver.

Nantwich Mill Community Energy Company, a not-for-profit community benefit organisation, has been awarded £100,000 by the North West Energy Hub's Rural Community Energy Fund and plans to deliver hydroelectric generation schemes at Beambridge sluice and at the Mill Island in central Nantwich.

Reaseheath hopes to tap into Beambridge sluice and will use

the energy to power facilities at our Equestrian Centre. Renewable energy development experts Locogen and Derwent Hydro are developing detailed plans and Sharenergy will manage a community share issue. The project has support in principal from Nantwich Town Council and Cheshire East Council.



Watch at  
<https://bit.ly/RHC-NetZeroConference23>

Conference shows way to  
sustainable future

Action which local businesses, organisations and individuals can take for a more sustainable future were highlighted at a conference run jointly by Reaseheath College and Cheshire East Council.

The conference illustrated how the borough can achieve its net zero target - currently set for 2045 - through a collaborative commitment to lowering carbon emissions and driving sustainability while still maintaining growth. The sell out event attracted over 100 delegates including leaders of significant multi-international companies, small and medium businesses and community groups.

Messages for positive change were put forward by an inspirational panel including Sarah Mukherjee MBE, CEO of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment; Councillor Sam Corcoran, Leader of Cheshire East Council; Iain Clarke, Reaseheath's Assistant Principal (Land based and Sustainability) and Jeremy Herbert, Community Co-ordinator for Sustainable Nantwich.

World Congress offers  
research opportunity

UCR Programme Leader for Agriculture Tom Furness attended the 22nd World Congress of Soil Science as part of his research into regenerative agriculture, particularly the role livestock can play in creating healthy soil.

The three day congress, held at the Scottish Event Campus in Glasgow, attracted 1,200 international delegates with many more attending virtually. Speakers included His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester and prominent scientists such as Professor Ismahane Elouafi, Chief Scientist of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.

A key message was that 33% of land has suffered soil degradation with an estimated global cost of \$8billion annually. Without preventative action it is predicted that over 90% of land will be affected by



2050, with an increasing impact on climate, water quality and biodiversity.

Tom's project was funded through The Farmers Club Charitable Trust's Agricultural Educators Award.

Reaseheath is  
BBC location

Cheshire champion Sir Phil Redmond CBE chose Reaseheath as the location for a BBC interview on why he's so passionate about devolution for the county.

His interview, conducted in our Centre for Horticulture, the Environment and Sustainable Technology by journalist Kaleigh Watterson, was broadcast as part of the Politics North West weekly roundup.



Sir Phil said that he felt Cheshire would benefit hugely from a transfer of power to local authorities as the region had a green sustainable circular economy and many entrepreneurial, forward looking businesses.

He had asked to stage the interview at Reaseheath because he was particularly keen to showcase the quality of our technical skills training and the use of new green technologies in facilities such as our Vertical Farm.

Reaseheath joins WorldSkills UK's Centre of Excellence

Reaseheath has raised its standards of education still further by joining the WorldSkills UK's Centre of Excellence and benefitting from its world class teacher training programme.

The pioneering initiative, which is partnered and co-funded by educational charity and awarding body NCFE, aims to raise standards in technical education and training through shared international best practice.

The Centre of Excellence programme delivers skills development workshops and exclusive Continual Professional Development. It aims to empower educators to gain a fresh perspective on their teaching practice and to return to academic and practical sessions with new skills and a renewed sense of passion and purpose. Reaseheath was one of 11 educational institutions to join the programme in 2022.



Industry honour for Mike

The outstanding contribution which our Processing Halls Manager Mike Bennett makes to the dairy industry, in particular in his training of our Eden apprentices, was honoured at the Society of Dairy Technology's annual awards.

Mike received the Brian Peacock Award as testament to the many Eden apprentices who have progressed their careers under his guidance, many rising to senior management. His passion for passing on his knowledge was praised - and the award was even sweeter because the nominations came from the students themselves.

Mike is Course Manager and Lead Lecturer for our Eden programme, a higher level apprenticeship for dairy technologists selected by their companies for degree level training. This unique educational initiative is supported by leading dairy brands and is also accessible to smaller dairy businesses.



Exceptional dyslexia coach recognised

An exceptional Reaseheath coach was recognised at a glittering awards evening to celebrate dyslexic people and those who support them.

Teaching and Learning Coach Katie Frimston received the Exceptional Educator trophy at the national Dyslexia Awards, where she was commended by judges for her positive influence in helping students to fulfil their goals and ambitions. The judges commented: "The support for Katie from her students shows what an exceptional educator she is. She has clearly been a positive influence, helping students to achieve things which previously they believed were impossible."



Katie was originally nominated by a member of staff who she had been supporting. Receiving her award, she explained that being dyslexic herself made it easier to understand the daily challenges her students faced.



Eli Bradley - Entrepreneur

As owner of SOLESTOCKUK, online shoe sales, entrepreneur Eli sells different styles of shoes over a range of internet platforms.

He's invested and built up his stock, and gained lots of good feedback and return business.

He chose to study on our Level 3 Extended Diploma in Business with Events and Tourism in 2022 because he felt that the course is diverse and covers the skills he needed in the business world like finance and marketing.

“The shoes market offers a lot of potential and I'm very happy with the way my business has developed. There's been a big cultural shift and shoes have become the way people express themselves.

Alex Dromgoole - Superyacht sailor

Former Level 3 Extended Diploma in Adventure Sports student Alex Dromgoole travels the world with his job as second officer on a superyacht, often to exotic locations such as the Maldives, the Caribbean, the Seychelles, the Bahamas, Bermuda, Malta and the Mediterranean.

Alex studied nautical science after completing his course in 2012, then entered the yacht industry as a deck hand and worked his way up. He's qualified to Chief Officer so could technically command a containership or commercial ship but remains very happy working in the yachting industry.

“My adventure sports course stretched me and encouraged me to develop academically. I realised that I could aim higher so I have a lot to thank Reaseheath for.



Stay connected!

We love to keep in touch with former students through our growing alumni community.

Whether you're continuing with studies, entering employment or progressing in your career, please let us know how you're getting on.

Find out more at: [www.reaseheath.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.reaseheath.ac.uk/alumni)

Sarah Harry and Zoe Hall - Artisan florists

Sarah and Zoe opened their own artisan floristry shop Bramble & Blooms in 2019 while studying for their Level 3 Advanced Technical Diploma in Floristry. They met at college and discovered that they both wanted to create rustic floral designs for weddings and events.

Their business has flourished beyond all expectations and they've already employed another former student. The business won third in the British Florist Association's 'Retail Shop of the Year 2021', followed by an invitation to join the Good Florist Guide. Both are very prestigious and are awarded for high standards and excellent designs.

“Learning specific business skills, such as how to prepare a wedding contract and consult with clients, are as important as the practical elements.



Praise for RAG fundraising

Representatives from our Student Association (SA) earned praise after handing over a cheque for £17,206 to this year's chosen charity, The Children's Adventure Farm Trust (CAFT).

The impressive amount was raised through RAG (Raising and Giving) activities including a daring sky dive by 14 staff and students, a sponsored walk of the 34 mile (55 kilometre) Sandstone Trail and a spooktacular Scarefest at Halloween.

SA members also organised numerous fund raising events during Reaseheath's RAG month while our mascot Gareth the Sheep collected donations from visitors to our Family Festival, Lambing Weekends and award winning stand at the Cheshire Show. We also took a stand at Nantwich Farmers Market to spread the word throughout our local community.

CAFT provides a variety of free programmes for terminally ill, disabled and disadvantaged children from all over the north west, allowing them to make memories and enjoy some fun.

Our students are now selecting their charity for the academic year 2023-24. We welcome applications from local charities which would like to be considered for this year or in the future.

Email [studentlife@reaseheath.ac.uk](mailto:studentlife@reaseheath.ac.uk)

The cheque handover was made at our end of year student dinner in a marquee on the college lawn.

Fundraiser Hannah Grahame said: "Huge thanks to Reaseheath's RAG team and everyone else involved for their incredible efforts to raise funds for CAFT. Our work here at the charity simply can't happen without the support of groups like yourselves.

“You are making a huge difference to children who are facing challenging lives and for that we are hugely grateful. It has been such a pleasure working with young people who have such fabulous energy and have taken the time to really understand the aims of our charity.



## Travel beckons for ambitious agriculturists

Two ambitious young agriculturists are looking forward to global travel thanks to a scholarship run by Reaseheath College and the Cheshire Agricultural Society.

Niamh McGrath, an undergraduate agricultural co-ordinator, and Emma Cook, co-manager of a calf rearing unit, have each been awarded £2000 John Platt Travel Scholarships to fund international research which will improve profitability within Cheshire's farming community. They received their scholarships at the Royal Cheshire County Show and will share their findings with fellow farmers, Young Farmers Clubs and agricultural students on their return.

Niamh, 23, who is currently on a year's placement with the Co-op Farming and Fisheries team, is planning a trip to the USA to investigate the impact of marketing dairy products regionally through the successful "checkoff" scheme and whether it would be viable to introduce a similar approach in the UK.

Niamh is a former Reaseheath student who is studying for a

BSc (Hons) Degree in Agri Food Marketing with Business at Harper Adams University.

Emma, 22, who works for Delamere Logs, a logging and contract calf rearing business, wants to travel throughout New Zealand to study the health and welfare of dairy-beef calves, pre-weaning to post-weaning. In particular she plans to take an in depth look at disease management with the aim of helping Cheshire farmers to lower mortality, decrease medication and maximise profits within the first 12 weeks of life.

The John Platt scholarship is in memory of John Platt, a former Chair of Reaseheath Governors and former Chairman, President and Honorary Life Warden of the Cheshire Agricultural Society.

Learn more at [www.reaseheath.ac.uk/john-platt-scholarship](http://www.reaseheath.ac.uk/john-platt-scholarship)

Reaseheath at a glance...

SUBJECT AREAS

Further and Higher Education and Apprenticeships

- Adventure Sports
- Agriculture
- Agricultural Engineering
- Animal Management
- Business and Events Management
- Construction
- Environmental Conservation, Arboriculture, Fish Management, Game and Wildlife Management
- Entry and Foundation Learning
- Equine
- Floristry
- Horticulture
- Food Technology
- Motor Vehicle
- Public Services
- Sport

STUDENTS

Further Education: **2,804**  
Higher Education: **692**  
Apprenticeships: **980**  
Residential students: **704**  
Students using college transport: **600**  
Students supported with bursaries: **593**

STAFF

Total Staff: **663**

ESTATE

College grounds: **21 hectares**  
Owned and rented farm land: **252.52 hectares**  
Land leased to Crewe Alexandra Football Club: **6 hectares**

INCOME

Academic year 2021/22: **£35.5 million**

FACILITIES

Onsite accommodation for up to 1,000; seven catering outlets; student lounge/bar; learning resource centre/library; dedicated HE classrooms, lecture theatres and study pods; HE lounge and bar; two sports halls; sports pitches; multi gym; equestrian centre; campus farm; mini zoo; licensed food factory; vertical farm.

# Come and see us!

The carnival atmosphere of our **Family Festival**, the thrill of meeting newborns at our **Lambing Weekends** and the chance to learn more about the friendly residents of our **mini zoo** are just some of the reasons visitors pour onto campus each year.

Our mini zoo is open to the public during most school holidays and at weekends, and our animals are always pleased to see visitors! We have a **zoo school** for young people and we run fun **birthday parties** and '**Keeper for the Day**'. There are also competitions at our Equestrian Centre most weekends, and we hire out our sports facilities.

We hold regular **open days** for potential students and undergraduates, and **taster sessions** for specific subjects like our new T Level courses. We also offer an extensive range of courses for adults, from hobby tuition to professional qualifications, and we have a **Forest College**, designed to re-engage young people with learning.

To find out more visit

[www.reaseheath.ac.uk](http://www.reaseheath.ac.uk)  
(College)

[www.ucreaseheath.ac.uk](http://www.ucreaseheath.ac.uk)  
(University Centre)

[www.reaseheath.ac.uk/zoo](http://www.reaseheath.ac.uk/zoo)

[www.reaseheath.ac.uk/adult-learners](http://www.reaseheath.ac.uk/adult-learners)

# grassroots



Watch at

<https://bit.ly/RHC-FamilyFestival23>



[www.reaseheath.ac.uk](http://www.reaseheath.ac.uk)

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University Centre  
**Reaseheath**



Reaseheath  
College

