

# Animal Science and Veterinary Biosciences

**NEWSLETTER 2016**

[www.aber.ac.uk/en/ibers](http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/ibers)



For the latest news from Aber in these subject areas follow us on twitter @IBERSbio

**IBERS** Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences

## Wales Veterinary Science Centre opens in Aberystwyth

The new Wales Veterinary Science Centre (WVSC) has been officially launched by Welsh Government Deputy Minister for Farming and Food, Rebecca Evans. WVSC has been established by Aberystwyth University, a consortium of independent veterinary practices and Welsh Lamb and Beef Producers Ltd. It will deliver expert post-mortem examinations of new and re-emerging diseases of animals. In addition, WVSC will also be working closely with the University to educate students. Jon King MRCVS of the WVSC said: "We are excited to be involved in delivering the new Veterinary Biosciences degree programme and also developing new research with IBERS staff and students on veterinary diagnostics."



Official opening of Wales Veterinary Science Centre; L to R: Professor April McMahon, Vice-Chancellor Aberystwyth University, Professor Christianne Glossop, Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales, Welsh Government Deputy Minister for Farming and Food Rebecca Evans AM, and Mr Phil Thomas, Director, Iechyd Da.

### List of Courses

**MSc**

Animal Science  
Equine Science  
Livestock Science

**BSc**

Animal Science  
Agriculture with Animal Science  
Equine Science  
Equine & Veterinary Biosciences  
Veterinary Biosciences

**Interested?**

Phone **Iain Chalmers** on **01970 628505**  
Email: **[iwc@aber.ac.uk](mailto:iwc@aber.ac.uk)**

## Zoo animal veterinary care event

Our 3rd year students recently enjoyed an afternoon learning about the unique challenges of veterinary care for exotic animals in Zoos. The tour of Borth Zoo was led by Vet Jon King and zookeeper Charlotte Foster and covered topics such as quarantine, zoonosis, surgery on exotic animals and the creation of the new lion enclosure. Students also got the chance to interact with reptiles and learn about their care and potential veterinary issues.

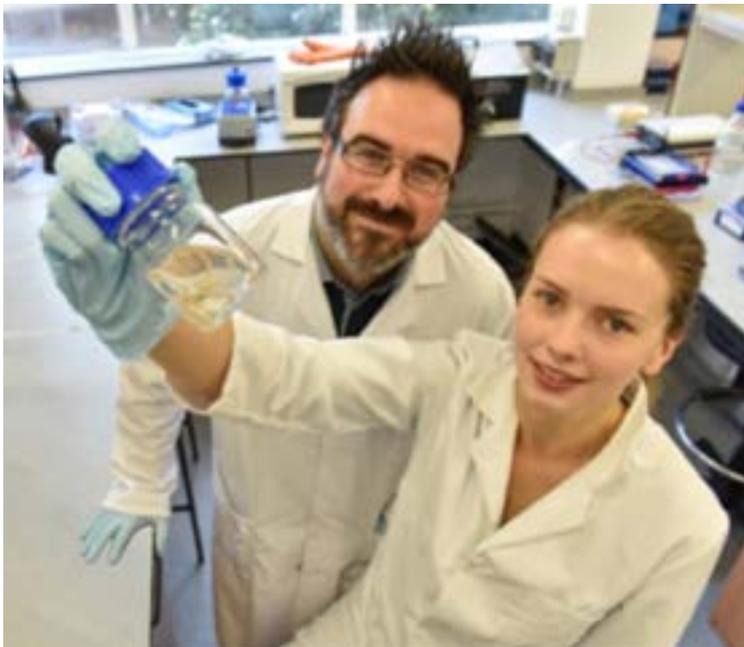


## Tackling zoonotic infectious diseases

Our students and staff were honoured to host a seminar by Professor Emeritus Paul Gibbs from University of Florida on the topic of "One Health". A fellow of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, Paul Gibbs has received multiple awards for his research on veterinary viruses and latterly in his career he has also helped establish new veterinary schools in the USA. In his talk, he discussed the overlap between veterinary diseases and human diseases such as the recent Ebola outbreak.

# Aberystwyth leading the way in veterinary parasite research

IBERS is excited to have seven new PhD students starting in the field of veterinary parasitology, including five recent Aberystwyth University graduates. The PhD positions, secured from a range of funding sources such as the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), will tackle many aspects of diagnosing and controlling parasitic worms that afflict a variety of animals. In particular, identifying new diagnostics and drugs for flat worms that infect agricultural ruminants is a key topic for many of the new PhD students. However, the veterinary parasitology group recognises the impact that parasitic worms can have outside of the agricultural environment and is translating much of its skills into new areas including domestic and wild captive animals. Dr Russ Morphew, one of the veterinary parasitology group leaders, has said 'this is a great opportunity for Aberystwyth to develop the next generation of veterinary parasitologists that will hopefully go on and develop the next suite of new anti-parasitic drugs and diagnostics for the veterinary sector'.



## Canine hip dysplasia

Animal Science degree scheme coordinator Dr. Neil McEwan has recently authored a study on canine hip dysplasia published in Veterinary Record. Examining the Tibetan terrier breed, this research performed by Dr. McEwan and Aberystwyth undergraduate students, examined the heritability of this disease that can cause pain and arthritis in a range of dog breeds. Research into the genetic basis of this abnormal formation of the hip socket will continue at Aberystwyth, with aim of reducing this condition.

## Horses Inside out

Our Animal Science and Veterinary Biosciences students were treated to a demonstration from the internationally-renowned "Horses Inside Out" organization. Hosted at Aberystwyth University's international-sized indoor riding arena within the Llust Equine Centre, our students received expert insight in equine locomotion by Gillian Higgins. Using live painted horses, the afternoon was filled with detailed anatomical insight that will benefit our students in their "Equine Anatomy and Physiology" module.



## Animal Cognition expert joins Aberystwyth staff



Dr. Sebastian McBride has joined IBERS from the University of Cambridge where he has worked for the last 4 years establishing cognitive tests in sheep as part of an ongoing research project on human Huntington's disease. Prior to that, Sebastian worked at the Aberystwyth's Computer Science Department on the REVERB (Reverse engineering of the vertebrate brain) project. This work stimulated his interest in the mechanics of brain systems and helped him gain an engineer's insight into how the brain can go wrong in response to both stress and disease. Tying these research areas together is a long-standing interest in abnormal repetitive behaviours (stereotypies) in animals. Sebastian's PhD at the University of Edinburgh was on equine stereotypy and he has continued this research developing neurophysiological and behavioural correlates of these abnormal behavioural conditions. Sebastian is extremely enthusiastic about joining IBERS which he says 'provides a fantastic opportunity to develop large animal cognition research at Aberystwyth'.

