



# Being part of Chester's **bigger picture**

### These are inspirational times for the University and the City of Chester.

The pandemic has brought lots of changes but also lots of opportunities to improve how we live, work and study. Here at the University we are determined to increase our contribution to the COVID recovery with activities and projects which will bring vitality to the city centre, with benefits for all Chester's residents.

We are thrilled to be part of the conversation about a refreshed 'One City Plan,' which challenges Chester to become a University City. In response, we are asking questions such as:

- What more could we achieve with other partners, such as the Cathedral and Storyhouse, to create cultural vibrancy?
- What could we do to bring even greater economic benefit into Chester city centre as part of the post-COVID recovery?
- Would there be a call for educational opportunities for all at the heart of the community, as we now have in Warrington?
- How could our knowledge and research help the city reach its Net Zero targets, through, for example, a sustainable strategy for public transport?

- Which spaces could create more informal connections between the University's 'Citizen Students' and Chester citizens?
- How could we provide more support to business start-ups and entrepreneurs?
- Why is it important to encourage more of Chester's talented young people to have the benefits of higher education – and stay locally once they've graduated?
- Where could our students and staff on professional programmes, such as those in healthcare, get more involved in improving the city's wellbeing?

As we focus on becoming more integrated with our community, we would like our 'Citizen Students' to be proud of being part of a Civic University in a place which is proud to be a University City.

We are thrilled to be part of the conversation about a refreshed 'One City Plan.'



Scan  
here!

Scan the QR code to go straight to our In the Community pages, where you can also sign up for future electronic editions of *CommUNITY Connected*.



# Welcome from our Vice-Chancellor

## Welcome to this Winter 2021 *CommUNITY Connected* newsletter from the University of Chester.

This is the first in a series of termly publications, designed to keep you updated with information about life both on and off Campus at our University – and perhaps some unexpected items, too.

In this taster printed edition (future information will be digital) we introduce you to some familiar faces from across our institution, share how our students and staff are involved in our wider community, and let you know about some of the ways that you could get involved with your city's University.

When I came to the University in January 2020, just before the pandemic hit, I was determined for us to open our doors more to our local communities. Now that we are able to operate more freely, I look forward to welcoming more of you to our sites.

Chester is famous for its history and heritage, picturesque ancient streets and river. The fact that it is also home to one of the oldest higher education institutions in the country can often be overlooked and many of you may not know we originated in 1839, as the country's first purpose-built teacher training college.

However, time does not stand still and our University certainly doesn't! Although still important, educating teachers is now only part of our curriculum and our Faculties span health; social care; arts; humanities; business; physical, biological and medical sciences; engineering; computing; law and social sciences. As we re-emerge from COVID-19, we have a huge role to play in helping our communities flourish.

Universities can bring incredible growth to regions through the 'student, staff and visitor pound' spent in shops and businesses; investment in research and development; employment and securing local suppliers for goods and services. In the North West alone, higher education contributes £10.9 billion to the economy and our most recent impact assessment in 2019 amounted to £150 million just in Cheshire West and Chester.

Universities lead on sustainable futures and tackling climate change through game-changing research, such as our pioneering work as the academic partner for HyNet North West (<https://hynet.co.uk/>) spearheading the region's ambition to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from industry and train the professionals to power homes, transport and businesses with hydrogen. The workforce of the future includes other faces you may see in your everyday lives.

Many of the county's teachers, nurses, midwives and police force are Chester's alumni, now numbering almost 100,000.

Here at Chester, we are committed to being part of the local community and sharing our expertise, whether that's supporting local businesses hoping to get off the ground, providing leading research insights to organisations, supporting our neighbours through volunteering programmes, or enriching the cultural life of our city with public events open to all to enjoy learning together.

Through the University community playing its part within the city, we hope to strengthen the economic and creative future in Chester, Cheshire and beyond.

If you're inspired by what you read and are curious to learn more about our teaching, research or events, as well as strategic developments, then please sign up receive future editions digitally by scanning the QR code or emailing [community@chester.ac.uk](mailto:community@chester.ac.uk)



*Eunice Simmons*

Professor Eunice Simmons,  
Vice-Chancellor

# Meet your student neighbours



**Chester Students' Union President Jack Rankin has called Chester home for the past five years.**

Originally from Bournemouth, Jack studied Law before being elected as Vice-President (Education) and now President. Here, he outlines what he loves about being part of the wider Chester community and explains why getting involved is so important.

"Being a part of a University founded on community values, means you become a part of your community, whether that's sharing the same streets, joining churches, clubs, or getting involved in local and wider community projects.

"Our students have played a key part in the heart of the community in many ways, especially over the past year. For example, third-year Nursing and Allied Health students graduated early, joining the front line against COVID to keep everyone safe and cared for. In fact, the pandemic has been a time where the University and wider

community have really come together, with many students supporting local COVID testing site initiatives and delivering food parcels to those most in need.

"Getting involved and giving back is a great way for our students to enrich their time at University and feel a sense of belonging, so if you, or someone you know, is running a community project that you feel students could get involved in, please reach out and get in touch."

For more information, contact our Volunteering and Mentoring team on [volunteering@chester.ac.uk](mailto:volunteering@chester.ac.uk)



# Shopping sustainably

**Did you know that you can stock up on groceries at our Exton Park site on Parkgate Road?**

Our new Reduce, Reuse, Recycle shop is commercial, but appeals to those with a conscience.

Bring your own containers (or buy them there) and fill or re-fill them with our selection of dried goods, such as rice, pasta, pulses, seeds, dried fruit and spices.

You can top up from a milk machine; pick up produce (including fresh flowers) from the University's sites; and buy home-made items from the University's kitchens, using home-grown fruit and vegetables as part of the Garden2Table initiative.

There is also a Clothing Swap and Drop scheme, where you can bring in unwanted garments and go home with a new outfit!

Open to all, this is opposite the dining rooms at our Exton Park site (accessible to the public via pedestrian entrances along Cheyney Road.)



# Breaking down barriers

**Helping the University and its students engage in a positive way with the wider community is all in a day's work for Community Liaison Manager, Louise Collins.**

As a member of the Proctor's Office – the team responsible for community liaison and also student safety and discipline – Louise helps the University community to enjoy positive engagement with our neighbours.

Whether it's linking our student volunteers to help older residents with their gardening, organising public events for students to meet their neighbours, or working in partnership with residents' associations and Cheshire Police, Louise is passionate about bringing people together.

"Our students are part of the fabric of the local community and have such a positive impact in terms of working, volunteering, charity events and enrichment of the

diversity and culture in the local area," she says.

"They are, after all, the nurses, social workers, teachers and police officers of the future."

However, there can sometimes be challenges associated with the integration of students into the local community, which informs another part of Louise's role.

"I work closely in partnership with local agencies to resolve any potential issues that may arise, and aim to break down barriers, wherever possible," she adds.

"I hope that through my work I can make a positive difference to relationships between the University and our neighbours. It's such a privilege to work in this beautiful city and I am very proud to play a part in Chester's community life."

If you would like to connect with Louise, email [community@chester.ac.uk](mailto:community@chester.ac.uk)

# Be a part of your city's University

Here are just five ways how:

## 1 Grow your business with us on campus

Access our commercial space and opportunities eg at the Riverside Innovation Centre, The Energy Centre and Thornton Science Park and NoWFOOD: [businessgrowth@chester.ac.uk](mailto:businessgrowth@chester.ac.uk)

## 2 Get involved

Choose one or more of our talented students for a five-week placement via [wbl@chester.ac.uk](mailto:wbl@chester.ac.uk) or host a student or graduate internship within your organisation: [careers@chester.ac.uk](mailto:careers@chester.ac.uk)

## 3 Work with us

As one of the largest employers in the City, with approximately 2,000 staff, we are committed to diversity and inclusion. View the latest vacancies: [chester.ac.uk/jobs](https://chester.ac.uk/jobs)

## 4 Access our research

Find out about our areas of specialism at [chester.ac.uk/our-research](https://chester.ac.uk/our-research) and partner with us on research: [researchoffice@chester.ac.uk](mailto:researchoffice@chester.ac.uk)

## 5 Learn with us

Enrol on one of our wide range of programmes, from Accounting and Finance to Zoology: <https://www1.chester.ac.uk>



## #CitizensOfChester

Each term, we'll introduce you to some of the familiar faces from across our city with links to the University in our #CitizensOfChester feature. In this edition, it's the turn of Councillor Martyn Delaney, Lord Mayor of Chester.

"My connection to the University may be a surprise to some, as it goes back to the mid-1960s when (as a schoolboy) I delivered the newspapers on behalf of the newsagents in Garden Lane. The delivery bag was incredibly heavy on supplement day. The connection continued over the 70s and early 80s, as the student social events organizer was very active in getting up and coming bands to perform in the University's Small Hall. Living locally, I made many friends with the students, who stayed in Chester after completing their studies and have become long standing friends.

"My other connection with the University is as one of its many alumni. I studied at the University as a mature student and graduated in 2007 with an honours degree in Applied



Social Science and Urban Studies, equipping me with all the skills I would need to perform the role of an elected councillor.

"My current connection with the University is as an elected local councillor, whose ward encompasses the Exton Park site on Parkgate Road. In that role, I also sit on the Student/Community Liaison Committee, which is a positive platform for the community to engage with the student body and the University in an atmosphere of information exchange.

"The City of Chester and the University have grown together and notwithstanding the financial benefits that the students bring to the city's economy, the intellectual input from the University has had a substantial impact on the way the city works today. It is equipping the future generations with the ability to improve all our lives; I am so glad that many of the students still choose Chester as a place to settle in after their studies."

If you'd like to nominate someone for a future #CitizensOfChester feature, email [community@chester.ac.uk](mailto:community@chester.ac.uk)

## Dates for your diary

From public lectures to art exhibitions, language courses to business focused events, there's always something to get involved in at the University of Chester. Below is just a taster of things we've got coming up in the next few months.

- **Sunday, November 7** is the launch of the **Cheshire Prize for Literature Anthology 2020**, published by the University of Chester Press (see all publications here: <https://www1.chester.ac.uk/university-press>) Taking place at our cultural partner, Storyhouse, as part of this year's **LitFest**, the event will also mark the launch of the 2021 Prize. Open to all aspiring poets and storytellers with links to Cheshire, including children and young people, this year's theme is 'sustainability'. See how to enter here: <https://www1.chester.ac.uk/press-office/cheshire-prize-literature-2020>

- Our **Languages and Cultures Department** has regular part-time evening classes in a whole host of languages including Mandarin Chinese, Portuguese, Japanese, Welsh, French Spanish and German. **Running throughout the year until w/c June 6, 2022**, why not sign up to learn something new? <https://www1.chester.ac.uk/modern-languages/part-time-language-classes/chester-part-time-language-courses>

- On **February 22, 2022**, the global gathering of ideas, **TEDx**, returns to the University of Chester. **TEDxUoChester: The Future Citizen** will host an array of talks from people exploring what might be on the horizon for us and highlighting the work citizens do to contribute to a global society. The event is licensed for student attendees, but all the recorded talks are made public and will be available shortly after the event, which features speakers discussing topics such as sustainability, mental health, pioneering inventions and visionary thought. Find out more at [tedxuochester.com](https://tedxuochester.com)

Visit [chester.ac.uk/events](https://chester.ac.uk/events) to find out what else is happening across the University.



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