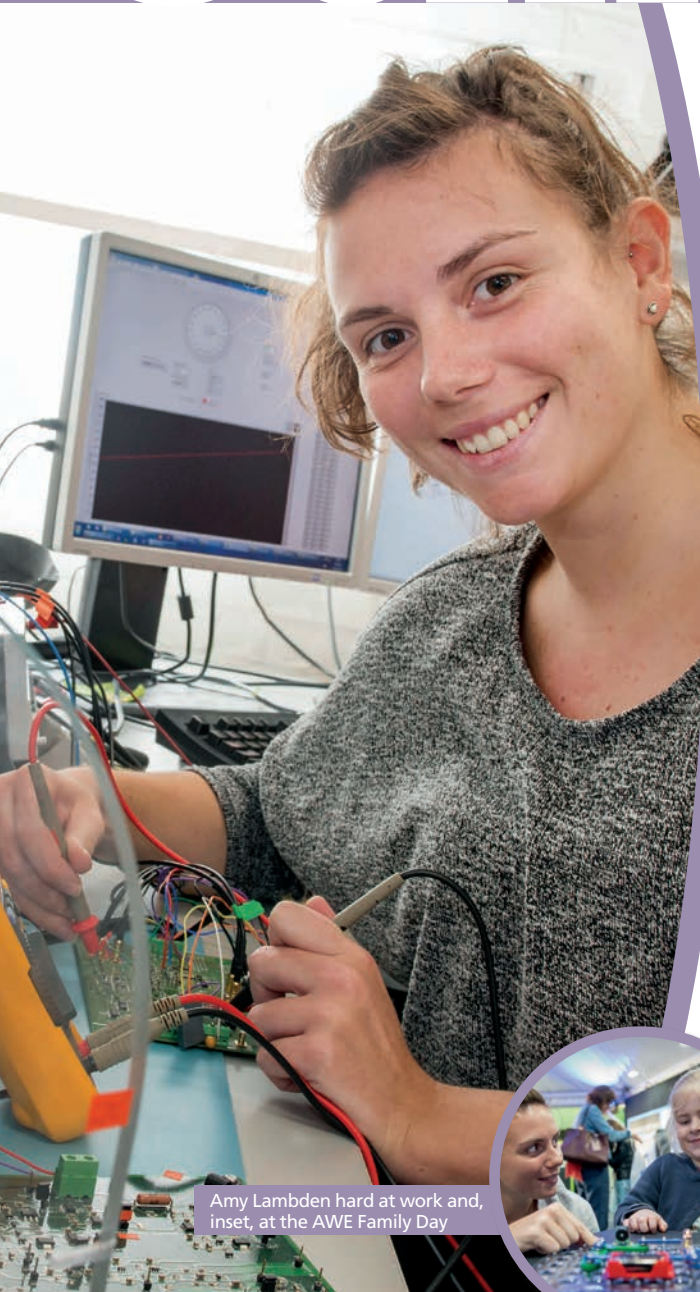


Connect



Amy named region's top apprentice

AWE technician Amy Lambden has won the south-east category in the regional final of the National Apprenticeship Awards 2017.

Amy, a keen sportswoman, is a graduate of the AWE Skills Academy and works in electronics. She said: "I am shocked that I won, but really pleased. It was a tough process and I was up against some amazing apprentices, so I'm still getting used to it!"

Amy was selected as one of the BBC's "100 Women" in 2016 for her role as a STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) pioneer and education work with young people in the community.

We asked her what it is about her work that she finds so inspiring?

"My apprenticeship has developed me immensely over the past four years. It's definitely made me the person I am today. Promoting engineering and apprenticeships at schools and colleges is really enjoyable and I've even done a live national radio interview on the BBC.

"I'm now concentrating on degree-level study and developing my professional career. I am a more confident and motivated person and lucky enough to love what I do."

www.awe.co.uk/2017/10/awe-apprentice-scoops-advanced-award

Amy Lambden hard at work and, inset, at the AWE Family Day



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AWE Team Challenge page 12



AWE Aldermaston lies under a blanket of snow

Another busy year draws to a close

Welcome to the final edition of *Connect* for 2017. As always, it's been a busy year at AWE, including the hugely popular Family Day – the first time that the gates of AWE have been opened to employees' families for many years (see facing page).

We're always looking at ways to improve how we communicate with you and our local communities; so, if you have any ideas, or items you'd like to see featured in *Connect*, please get in touch.

As 2017 draws to a close, we'd like, on behalf of everyone here at AWE, to wish you and your families a peaceful and happy festive season and a wonderful 2018.



Go on... tweet yourself!



AWE joined the social media universe when it launched its Twitter account earlier this year. In our last survey, 60 per cent of *Connect* readers said they'd like to see AWE on social media, so let us know what you think!

The tweets feature a wide variety of information and images about AWE, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), charity, school and community work. We're building a loyal following so, if you haven't seen it yet, go to @AWE_plc for bite-size updates and news.



Look who's blogging...

The business is now blogging on our website www.awe.co.uk. Go to www.awe.co.uk/2017/10/pushing-the-boundaries-of-science-engineering-and-technology/ to read the first blog from our CEO Iain Coucher which is about science, technology and engineering capabilities.

A new blog will be published each month from a different member of staff. Next month, we will hear about the importance of STEM outreach.



Iain Coucher

Family Day is a crowd pleaser

We opened our doors to family members of our employees for the first time in many years on Saturday, 23 September. This was an opportunity for us to showcase what we do here, and to help family members understand the complexity of the work done at AWE.

The event attracted more than 4,000 visitors, of all ages, who were spoilt for choice with a wide variety of exhibits. Youngsters had great fun with some of the science exhibits – jumping on the spot to learn

how seismology works, shaking fruit that had "miraculously" turned to gold, using a laser to burst a balloon and crashing remote control cars to demonstrate force and impact.

AWE's emergency services captivated the audience with their demonstrations. The police dogs gave a very waggly-tailed example of their work to protect our sites and people and the fire engine and firefighters also proved very popular.

One visitor said: "It was really well organised. The range of exhibits surprised us – we had expected a set of displays about nuclear physics, but loved learning about hedgehogs and bees just as much! Most of all, we appreciated the incredible enthusiasm of all the staff involved, who must have spent hours talking about what they do to countless

people morning and afternoon – but never ceased to show their passion for what they do."

Iain Coucher, AWE Chief Executive, commented: "This was an exceptional event and it was marvellous to see so many people enjoying themselves and getting a 'behind the scenes' view. It was a complex event to plan and stage, but was very successful and everyone involved in the day gets a great vote of thanks from me."



En route to a cranking good cause

A chance conversation between two AWE graduates two years ago culminated in an epic cycle ride of more than 1,000 miles.

The Route to Success team set out from Aldermaston on 3 October and visited five universities over two weeks to promote AWE and its graduate recruitment opportunities.

They also raised funds for AWE partner charity, Living Paintings (www.livingpaintings.org). This unique charity provides audio and sensory touch books for visually impaired children and adults. Route to Success team members and supporters have raised more than £3,000 for the charity so far, with more still to come.

The ride was both an endurance and a logistical challenge, which required a dedicated support crew to ensure the team had all the necessary food, drink, spares

and equipment. They had also been taking part in the training sessions, so could take over if a cyclist was injured or unwell.

Playing a starring role on the tour was a fully rideable road bike created on a 3D printer. As befits a pampered star, it travelled in the support vehicle and certainly proved

a hit at each of the universities. The idea behind the bike was to demonstrate a practical application of some of the advanced technology in use at AWE.

Tired but elated, the team returned to Aldermaston on 18 October. Jake, one of the organisers, said: "It has been

amazing watching the project unfold and seeing the team bond and pull each other through the tough times, while making the most of this unbelievable experience.

"On our penultimate day, our route took us through Richmond Park and on to Hampton Court. As we arrived, we had a few accidents, with one rider deciding to stop dead, due to cramp in the foot, causing another rider to fall off. This seemed to cause a domino effect and another team member then lost her balance and had a slow but graceful fall. She had so nearly completed the whole event without crashing!

"We had a great amount of interest at our university appearances. We split into two groups, one giving a presentation to students interested in a career at AWE and the other chatting informally to students, on a stand with the 3D bike and our famous smoothie bike, where the harder you pedal, the quicker your smoothie is made!

"We're very pleased so many people have supported us by donating to Living Paintings – one of the things that helped keep us going on the hilly sections was that we were suffering for a good cause!"



Great views out on the open road



Star turn – the 3D printed bicycle



Riders at their team briefing





Dressage duo are riding high

A charity horse and an AWE employee have bonded to become a prize-winning combination, qualifying for a national dressage competition.

Domino was bought for the Wellington and Dummer Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) group with a donation from the AWE Charity Fund. Ridden by Amy, who works at AWE and is a member of the group, the pair were narrowly beaten into second place at the RDA regional championships.

Amy has a condition that affects her mobility and uses a wheelchair.

She started riding four years ago to build her strength and flexibility: "My husband and I saw the Paralympic dressage and it looked amazing," she said.

"I have done competitions before, but this was the first time at this level. It is quite challenging because there are three riders in the arena at the same time, so you have to concentrate hard."

Domino's placid nature and comfortable paces make him much-loved by riders, staff and volunteers at the Wellington and Dummer RDA. Amy rides him often and enjoys the challenge of developing their partnership.

"It's all about getting a horse to understand you and also to be familiar with their characteristics," said Amy. "You are learning all the time and trying new things."

- If you'd like to know more about the work of the Riding for the Disabled Association, go to www.rda.org.uk

Amy and Domino have proved to be a prize-winning combination

AWE remembers the fallen

A sea of poppies adorned those attending the AWE ceremony to commemorate Remembrance Day.

Ceremonies were held at both Aldermaston and Burghfield, at 11:00 on Friday, 10 November. They included the laying of wreaths and the two-minute silence was observed across the sites.



[havanaman/123RF](#)

FOCUS ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT AWE

Creating an inclusive culture for all

Diversity and inclusion is a high-profile issue, spread all over the media and internet; but what does it actually mean and what are the implications for a large organisation like AWE?

Diversity is the mix of people who make AWE unique and inclusion is making the mix work. To attract the most talented people to work here, we need to recruit from the widest possible pool of people and make sure that, once here, individuals feel able to be themselves at work.

At AWE, this forms part of the way we do things. We are changing the way in which we attract candidates, how we interview and select them and also how we create a culture that is inclusive for all.

We are aiming for a 50:50 gender split, representing the national population, and 13 per cent Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) – which reflects the local population in Reading – across all our new employees by 2020.

But why is this so important? Resourcing the future skills needs of the UK is a hot topic at the moment and AWE apprentices and graduates are doing their bit to promote the attractions of careers in science, technology, engineering



From left, AWE's Tamsin, Sarah and Paul at a diversity event

and mathematics (STEM).

They are leading the way as STEM ambassadors, using their own stories and career progression to bring the STEM professions to life. It is vital that we not only have access to the most able people but that they are able to enjoy a vibrant and varied workplace culture.

This means employing people from wide-ranging age groups, people who are neurodiverse and lesbian, gay, bi and transgender (LGBT) people, as well as looking at gender and cultural representation.

It's an exciting time – we are open to doing things differently and have established a network of groups across the company to

generate ideas and support this work.

Like all organisations with more than 250 employees we have to publish our gender pay gap annually, starting this year. Our median gender pay gap is 16.7 per cent, just below the national average of 18.4 per cent. You can read the full report on our website.

If you'd like to know more or are interested in apprenticeship and graduate opportunities at AWE, go to www.awe.co.uk



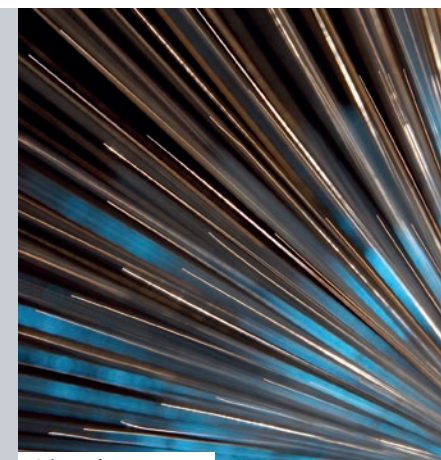
Showcase is a science success

Not everyone who works at AWE is a scientist, engineer or technologist, so an eye-opening SET Showcase event proved a popular attraction.

Hundreds of staff members visited the on-site exhibition over three days for a glimpse into this fascinating world. Many displays included hands-on demonstrations and opportunities to try out a skill or technique, which went down very well. There were opportunities to chat with scientists

acknowledged as world experts in their fields to find out more about their work.

One business colleague reported: "I really enjoyed the showcase. I don't have a scientific background, but the experts explained everything very effectively in everyday language. The 'have a go' demos were great fun and the sheer variety and scale of the amazing science extremely impressive."



Science becomes art



This young visitor was fascinated by the plasma globe

Interactive exhibits have wow factor

Thousands of visitors of all ages were wowed by our stand at The Royal Society Summer Science Exhibition and at New Scientist Live in London.

There were exciting interactive exhibits, including the chance to create a “shockwave” using an air vortex cannon made from a dustbin or use the power of plasma globes to conduct electricity with bare hands.

Visitors learned how giant lasers like Orion can actually recreate astrophysical phenomena like

supernovae in the laboratory. They also had an opportunity to chat to AWE scientists and engineers about their careers.

Director of the Oxford Centre for High Energy Density Science at the University of Oxford, Professor Justin Wark, said: “The Royal Society Exhibition provides an excellent platform to tell the public about the exciting research that is going on in the field of laboratory astrophysics – in particular, it is a great opportunity to enthuse young people, who will

be the next generation of scientists.”

Philippa Kent, of AWE’s community and schools team, who co-ordinated AWE’s participation in New Scientist Live, said: “The AWE team was amazing and included everyone from apprentices and graduates to distinguished scientists – engaging with members of the public of all ages.

“It was a fantastic opportunity to raise our profile and to inspire the future generation of STEM professionals.”

Go-kart challenge is food for thought...

Who needs steel or carbon fibre? Marshmallows and spaghetti were the construction tools of choice when AWE graduate engineers visited pupils at Dove House School Academy.

The five graduates joined 10 students at the academy to work alongside them on a go-kart design project. The fun foodie introduction to structural strength was one of the first of 10 hands-on sessions run by the engineers at the specialist secondary school in Basingstoke.

The AWE team wanted to offer STEM support to children with learning difficulties, as part of their graduate scheme development project. Engineer Ben explained that they had approached

AWE’s Community Engagement Manager Philippa Kent for help.

“Philippa had done some work with Dove House previously and suggested the school,” said Ben. “We designed a programme that takes the pupils from concept through to building and testing, in two competing teams.

“We’re doing activities that keep the students engaged and enjoying themselves, but also using ideas and skills that they can immediately relate to their go-kart designs. We’re helping them with these and in the new year, we’ll design a challenge event to see which one wins. The competition is hotting up already!”

Challenge floats pupils’ boat!

Secondary pupils from eight schools across Berkshire and Hampshire competed for AWE’s 2017 AWE Engineering Challenge.

The teams were each given the same items with which to build a boat. Each team’s boat was then tested in a drag race and carrying both liquid and solid cargo.

The annual event is organised by AWE graduates with a physics, chemistry and engineering background. Now in its 21st year, it involves students in hands-on challenges. The overall aim is to inspire the next generation to show the variety of opportunities in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

One teacher commented: “The Engineering Challenge gives students an opportunity to work outside the classroom, apply their ideas, expand their knowledge and work together in a team.”

AWE graduate Matt said: “We really enjoyed the chance to engage with the students and enthuse them in the subjects of science and engineering. We were very impressed by the ingenuity and teamwork with which the students approached the challenges and the range of designs which they produced.”

After a fierce but fun contest, St Bartholomew’s won the challenge collecting the prestigious Engineering Challenge Award, with the Little Heath team coming second.

The AWE graduate scheme is now open for applications with roles in engineering, science, electronics, human resources, information technology and more. Go to www.awe.co.uk/careers/graduate-opportunities to apply.





The AWE team renovating outdoor furniture in the community garden

Green-fingered volunteers dig in to help

A team of AWE senior managers swapped spreadsheets for forks and shovels when they spent a day volunteering with Basingstoke-based education charity Inspero.

Inspero promotes healthy eating and living, working with young people, including special needs children and adults, using gardening as “green therapy”.

One of the volunteers, Louise, said: “The day was great. There was seven of us giving up our own time to work in the charity’s community garden at Kempshott

village hall in Basingstoke.

“It gave us a sense of achievement and the satisfaction of supporting a worthy local cause. It was enjoyable working on the various projects and helped us get to know each other on an informal basis.

“Inspero’s approach is such a clever and simple idea. They achieve amazing results and really make a difference to people’s quality of life. They can come together to garden and enjoy each other’s company in a sociable environment.”

Green therapy helps all kinds of people: retired, the bereaved, those with disabilities and mental health issues, or people just looking for somewhere to socialise and garden. For some, it is an important part of their lives.

● If you’d like to know more about Inspero’s award-winning work, go to www.inspero.org.uk



Bakes make a big slice of charity cash

AWE employees raised £5,024 for Macmillan cancer support with a baking bonanza, in support of the charity’s 2017 World’s Biggest Coffee Morning.

The total included a £500 contribution from the AWE Charity Fund.

Eighteen teams swapped labs and computers for mixing bowls to roll up their sleeves and produce an amazing selection of posh patisserie. Colleagues were happy to donate in exchange for a variety of gut-busting treats – in the interests of charity of course.

The World’s Biggest Coffee Morning is Macmillan’s biggest fundraising event for people facing cancer. People and organisations all over the UK host their own coffee mornings and raise millions in donations for Macmillan.



Burghfield emergency planning zone change planned

In the previous edition of *Connect*, we updated you on changes to the emergency planning area (EPA; formerly known as the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone or DEPZ) around Aldermaston.

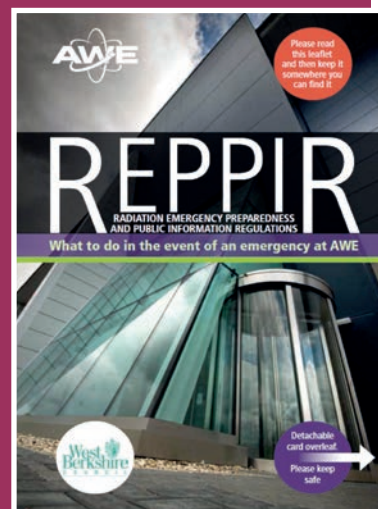
Similar changes relating to Burghfield are expected to be announced by the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) towards the end of this year and we will issue full details as soon as they are available.

In a similar vein, next year the government will be issuing new

legislation regarding off-site response planning for nuclear-licensed sites. Again, we will give you further information as soon as it is available.

Information about what to do in the unlikely event of a radiation emergency at AWE is laid out in the Radiation Emergency Preparedness and Public Information Regulations (REPPiR) leaflet, which is available on our website.

● To view a map of the new EPA around Aldermaston, go to www.onr.org.uk/documents/2016/aldermaston-map.pdf



SECURITY SPOTLIGHT

As you may have seen, Army personnel were on duty at AWE sites recently. This was part of Operation Temperer, when military personnel cover roles usually done by civilian armed police officers, if these officers are required elsewhere.

These were temporary arrangements and the soldiers were used only in roles for which they were already suitably trained.

The Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) project, Servator, continues. Officers are working with the local community to create a safe environment across Aldermaston and Burghfield and the surrounding

communities. This has meant an increase in police operational activity in and around the AWE sites.

You, as a local resident, are important as eyes and ears in the community, so if you or your family see any persons acting suspiciously in the area, then please report it, with as much detail as possible, either by ringing the MDP Control Room on **01189 826286** or speaking to any of the officers patrolling the area.

If it is an EMERGENCY, you should ALWAYS DIAL 999. Your call will be treated in strict confidence; and remember – no piece of information is considered too insignificant.



Resourceful teams make “crime” pay

With a theme of Cops and Robbers, teams in this year's AWE Team Challenge did their best to make “crime” pay, raising £11,066 for charity!

The format was inspired by the UK Challenge national event, with teams from the business competing in a gruelling series of physical and mental challenges.

Teams are also expected to raise both money and awareness of each year's sponsored charity and this year's total will go to AWE charity partner Living Paintings. A separate Fun Run was held before the challenge as part of the fundraising activity. This was open to all staff, with runners adopting a variety of startling costumes for the occasion.

Organised by a committee including several early

career graduates, the challenge takes a full day. The five-strong teams are directed to a “secret” location (Wasing Common this year) and tested on their communication, problem solving, initiative, leadership, strategic, time and risk management and teamwork skills.

Arriving at Wasing Park on Shanks's pony after an unexpected hike from Aldermaston, the “robbers” were despatched to undertake various nefarious tasks. They were then captured, jailed and their loot was seized. The next part of the challenge was to escape – yes, there was a river and a hand-built bridge – before solving puzzles, overcoming roadblocks and finally crossing the finish line.