

MANCHESTER
1824

The University of Manchester

The University of Manchester in the news

Ben Robinson
News and Media Relations Manager

Communications team

Directorate of Communications, Marketing and Student Recruitment



Alistair Beech
Interim Head of
Communications



Ben Robinson
News and Media
Relations Manager



Lynda McIntosh
Research
Communications
Manager



Josh Patmore
Interim Social Media
Manager

We protect and enhance our reputation across external media, digital and social spaces, creating content that resonates with audiences and makes them feel connected to the University.



Lucy Occleston
Social Media and
Digital Comms
Coordinator



Ruby Lowe
Social Media and
Digital Comms
Coordinator



Joe Stafford
News and Media
Relations Officer
(HUMS)



Jessica Marsh
News and Media
Relations Officer
(FSE)



Mike Addelman
News and Media
Relations Officer
(FBMH)



Katie Sewell
News and Media
Relations Officer



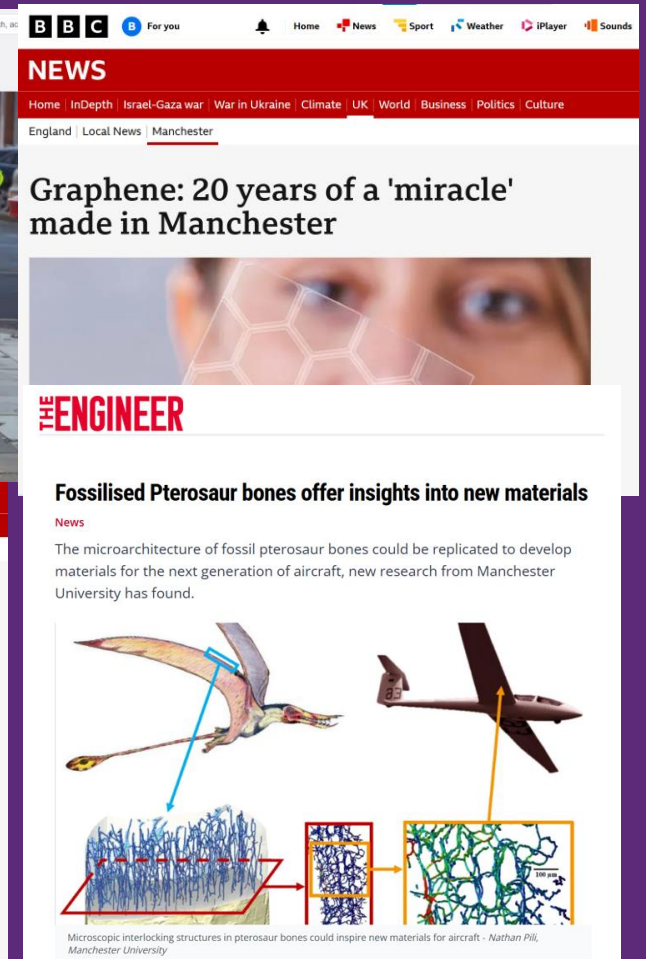
Romy Nicholson
Communications
Assistant (Intern)

We communicate the impact and excellence of our research to key audiences to demonstrate the benefits of our research to society, enhancing our reputation as a globally influential university.

Media Relations at The University of Manchester

2024 News Reach:

- 184 individual press releases sent to media
- Appeared in 6193 pieces 'top tier' coverage



The benefits of promoting your research

- Increase interest
- Increase visibility and impact
- Improve citations
- Policymaker attention
- Industry engagement
- Interest from other researchers

The benefits of promoting your research

- “The press release has been picked up by the UK Parliament and it provided the basis for a set of questions to the FDCO Select Committee on Disinformation.”
- “The press release has raised the profile of our work and has appeared on social media. The Altmetric score is currently around 60 and online views around 3000. These figures are well above average for our discipline.”
- “The key thing is that it is not just public who we engage but other academics and industrialists pay attention to news on our webpages and through social media, which they might not see if it is just us sharing our papers.”
- “The paper has been downloaded over 8000 times in two-and-a-half months. In my field, that is unprecedented and is surely a consequence of public interest generated through media coverage.”

What we do (and don't do)

- Publicise research
- Promote teaching and learning stories
- Arrange interviews
- Provide 'expert comment'
- Respond to media enquiries
- Pitch stories and opinion pieces
- Lead reputational comms
- Award stories
- Funding announcements
- Advertise events
- Staff appointments
- Project updates

Communications Network





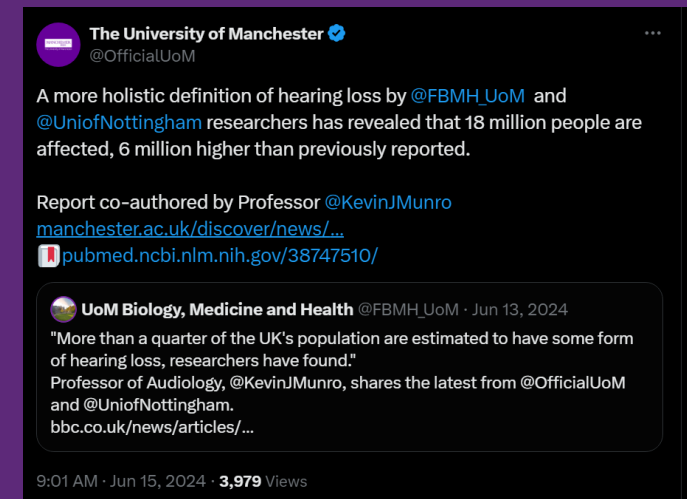
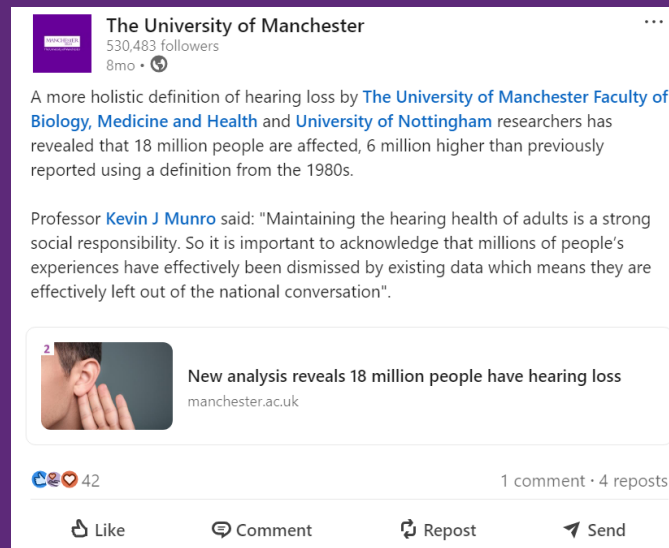
The University of Manchester

FBMH

Research story on
hearing loss in UK

Press coverage:
Story covered in 18
top tier outlets

Social
engagements:
LinkedIn - 9505
X - 3979





Nasa delivers 'teaspoonful of asteroid' Benu to UK



Osiris-Rex: NASA returns sample from asteroid Benu to Earth



Bennu asteroid sample from Osiris-Rex mission arrives in Texas



INDEPENDENT



Nasa lands Bennu asteroid samples back on Earth

NASA's OSIRIS-REx mission collected asteroid samples which attracted a lot of media interest.

"Jessica Marsh was very helpful, liaising with the NASA media teams to publish a press release about our involvement with the mission to coincide with the sample return."

"I did 10-12 different interviews, I don't think I'd have known whether I was coming or going without Jessica organising everything and telling me who I would be talking to at what time!"

Acute riverine microplastic contamination due to avoidable releases of untreated wastewater

Jamie Woodward ¹✉, Jiawei Li¹, James Rothwell¹ and Rachel Hurley ^{1,2}

Wastewater discharge to rivers is a controversial practice that compromises water quality, aquatic habitats and human health worldwide. Here we show how untreated wastewater laced with microplastics and raw sewage is routinely discharged into UK river flows that are too low to disperse the microplastics downstream. These 'dry weather' spills lead to acute microplastic contamination of river bed habitats. Many aquatic fauna feed in the benthic zone, the quality of which affects the entire riverine ecosystem. All microplastic types accumulate to high concentrations on the channel bed until flushed downstream by floods. These findings pose fundamental questions about the sustainable management of urban wastewater. Treating the wastewater would shut down the major source of microplastic fragments and microbeads in such rivers and prevent their transport to the ocean. Riverine microplastic transport is primarily partitioned between: (1) continuous transport at low concentrations of synthetic fibres from treated wastewater effluent; and (2) episodic flood-driven transport of the full microplastic assemblage entrained from contaminated channel beds. Focusing only on the buoyant non-flood microplastic load can produce highly unrepresentative assessments of riverine microplastic contamination. Climate warming and urban population growth will intensify the microplastic burden on many river ecosystems as summer baseflows decline and wastewater fluxes increase.

The paper published by Jamie Woodward was the first to link microplastic pollution with wastewater releases



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UoM News

@UoMNews · Nov 29



As the [#Census2021](#) data today reveals that [#England](#) and [#Wales](#) are among the least [#religious](#) countries in the world, it seems an appropriate time to revisit previous research on this subject by [@SocialStatsMan](#)

Staff @SocialStatsMan · Nov 29

Research by the University of Manchester has highlighted the range



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13 May 2021

Water companies are main cause of microplastic pollution in UK's rivers

New research by experts from The University of Manchester has found that the poor management of untreated wastewater and raw sewage by water companies is the main source of microplastic pollution in the UK's rivers

Joe Stafford in Media Relations rewrote the story to emphasise the role of the water companies, and pitched this to news organisations before the paper was published...



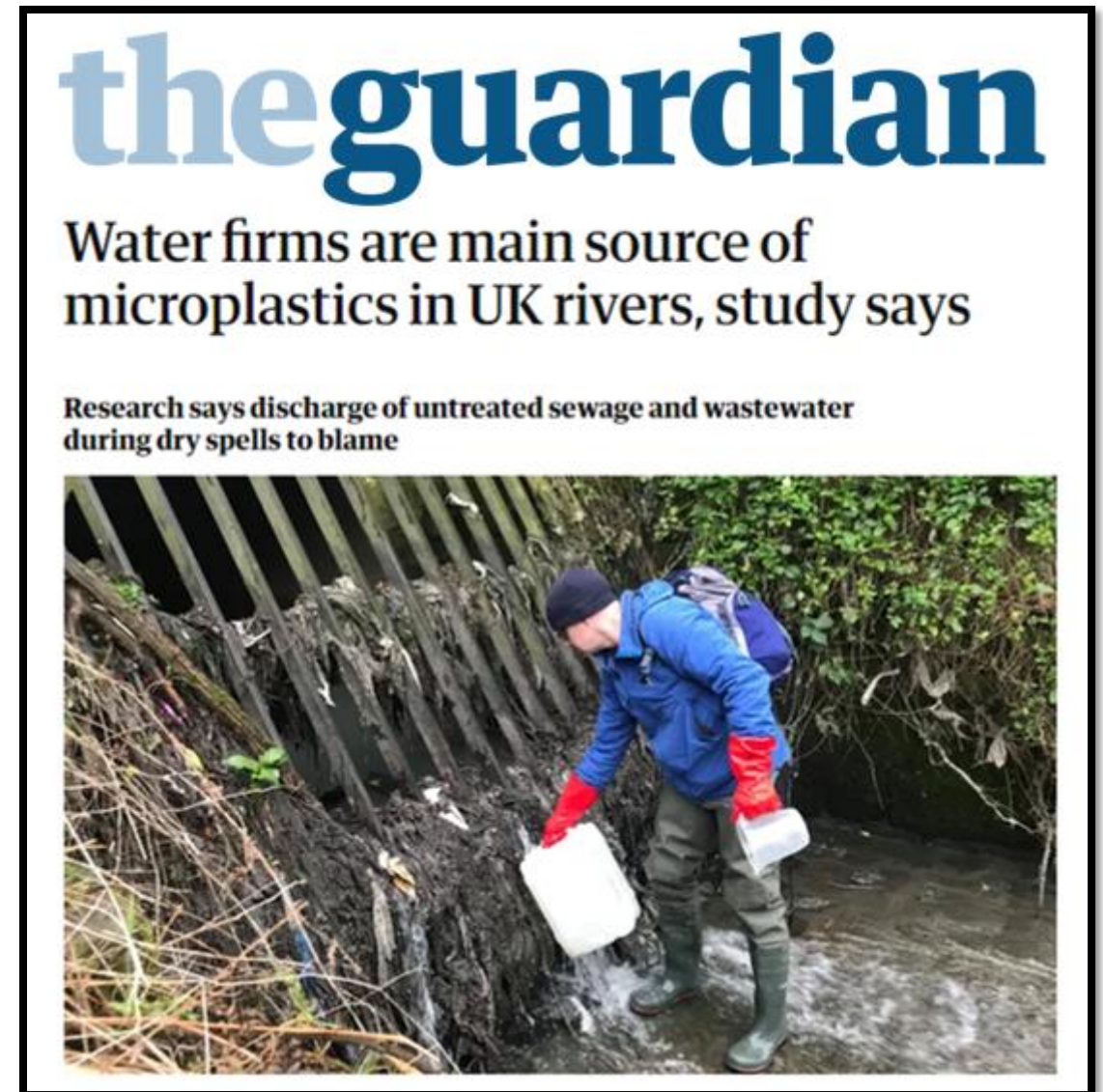
Wastewater is 'polluting rivers with microplastic'

By Victoria Gill
Science correspondent, BBC News

© 13 May



...which resulted in widespread coverage from BBC News, The Guardian, Channel 4 News, BBC Inside Science and others



The HOC Environmental Audit Committee then wrote a hard-hitting report after contacting Jamie Woodward and meeting him at a research site

Rt Hon Philip Dunne MP
Chair of Environmental
Audit Committee



House of Commons
Environmental Audit Committee

Water quality in rivers

Fourth Report of Session 2021–22

8th July 2021
Environmental Audit Committee
River Windrush catchment



18 November
2021

The Environment Agency and Ofwat then announced a major criminal investigation into the activities of the water companies...

Press release

Water companies could face legal action after investigation launched into sewage treatment works

Major investigation announced by the Environment Agency and Ofwat into sewage treatment works

From: [Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs](#), [Environment Agency](#), [The Water Services Regulation Authority](#), and [Rebecca Pow MP](#)

Published 18 November 2021



12 May 2022

...which found that 'there may have been widespread and serious non-compliance with the relevant regulations'

The entire investigation is expected to take at least two years to complete.

Update on Environment Agency Investigation

[Environment Agency](#), 12 May 2022 - [Ofwat](#), [Water](#)





Reacting to the news agenda

Media relations: Professor Olga Onuch was featured heavily in The Guardian's coverage of President Trump's plan to end war in Ukraine. On Thursday, she contributed to a homepage story on the site.

Olga's research into Ukraine polling was also covered by CNN, The Independent, Newsweek, MEN, The Telegraph, MSN and other international media.

She has used Bluesky and X to drive awareness of the news story on the University website, contributing to over 5,000 visits, one of our most popular in recent months.



Media Training



- Essential media skills – *Broadcast TV and Radio interview practice*
- Storytelling – *Bring your research to life*
- Message testing – *How to grab attention*
- Thought leadership/profile raising – *Become a trusted subject matter spokesperson*
- Social media – *How to harness socials*


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Tanzania's Maasai are being forced off their ancestral land – the tactics the government uses

Published: January 16, 2025 2.03pm GMT

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Tanzania has a long and troubling history of evicting communities from their lands. This has happened under the guise of expanding protected conservation areas, which make up over 40% of its territory.

In recent years, the Maasai of the Ngorongoro district – a region renowned for abundant wildlife and the iconic Ngorongoro Crater – have been the target of these evictions. They've faced threats to their nomadic lifestyle, centred on cattle herding.

The government claims the evictions are necessary to protect the environment from a large Maasai population. Currently, around 100,000 Maasai reside within the protected area.

The reality, however, is that the right of the Maasai to use that land is being taken away by the government. The land is then leased to expand lucrative wildlife tourism and elite hunting grounds. Tourism, mostly driven by wildlife, constitutes over 17% of the country's GDP.

Author




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Lecturer in Environment and Development, University of Manchester

Disclosure statement

Teklehaymanot G. Weldemichel does not work for, consult, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organisation that would benefit from this article, and has disclosed no relevant affiliations beyond their academic appointment.

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The UK is no longer offering COVID vaccines to pregnant women – here's why that might be a bad idea

Published: November 20, 2024 3.49pm GMT

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Until now, COVID vaccines have been available to pregnant women as part of the twice-yearly booster programme, but this offer is being withdrawn.


The UK's vaccine body, the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), has recommended that from spring 2023, pregnant women will no longer be eligible for free COVID vaccines. This is a concern for several reasons.

First, there is the direct vaccine benefit of reducing the chance of COVID infection and the consequences of infection in pregnancy. Pregnant women are at higher risk of severe COVID infection than women who are not pregnant, which can be significantly reduced by vaccination.

Severe COVID infection in pregnancy also carries risks for the unborn baby, including miscarriage and stillbirth. Although the risk with the currently circulating virus variants is lower, the risk remains to both mother and baby from COVID. The good news is that vaccination not only protects the mother should she be infected, but also reduces the risk of both very preterm birth and stillbirth for her baby.


Second, there is the indirect benefit of vaccination in pregnancy in protecting newborns in those vital early months. Infants do not have fully developed

Authors



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Professor of Operational Research, Director of the UCL Clinical Operational Research Unit, UCL

Disclosure statement


Sheena Cruickshank is affiliated with independent SAGE

Christina Pagel is a member of Independent SAGE and vice president of the UK Operational Research Society.

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University College London provides funding as a founding partner of The Conversation UK.

Get in touch



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Any questions?