

UK Missing Persons Unit Newsletter

Positive News Story

On 1st July 2019, a nationwide Force Alert was circulated by the Unit on behalf of South Wales Police, for a 29 year old woman who had not been seen since 14th June. The woman was pregnant when last seen, due to give birth imminently, and was suspected to be in the company of a man believed to pose a risk of harm to her. It was believed that they could have travelled anywhere in the UK/Ireland, and previous history suggested that the woman may try to conceal the birth to prevent her child being taken into care. Subsequently, on 09/07/2019 South Wales Police advised that both parents and the baby had been located at St Pancras train station by British Transport Police, by virtue of the Force Alert that the UKMPU had circulated. The baby has now been safeguarded.

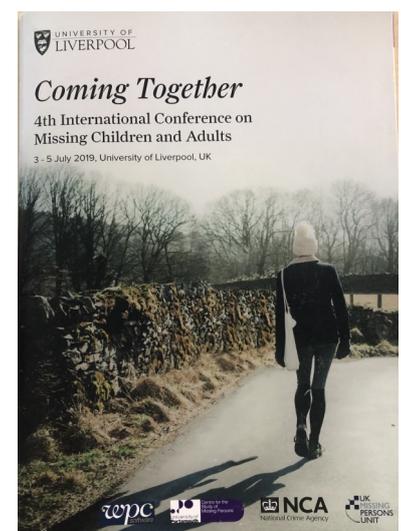
4th International Conference on Missing Children and Adults

Between the 3rd—5th July, several members of the UK Missing Persons Unit attended the 4th International Conference of Missing Children and Adults. Hosted at the University of Liverpool, the conference brought together researchers and practitioners from 11 different countries to explore and discuss a range of issues associated with missing.

Over the course of the three days, attendees were presented with an array of research, demonstrations and personal accounts of missing. These ranged from families' experiences of missing, coming to harm whilst missing, forensic identification, missing with dementia, international child abduction cases, search and rescue, and repeat missing cases. Throughout these, novel research findings were discussed, improvements needed in current practice were identified and implications for future investigations were highlighted.

Particularly moving were the personal accounts people delivered about their experiences of missing. These included a mother who discussed her personal experience of county lines, the huge impact this has had on her family and the on-going struggles they face today. Ju Blencowe opened the final day with her missing story, sharing the reasons behind her disappearance, her battle with emotions and suicidal thoughts during this time, and her eventual return home. She touched on the support she received since being reported as a missing person, and delivered key messages to police and other agencies about how to treat a missing person following a disappearance.

It was truly inspiring to see the passion and dedication people in the field have towards improving the area of missing, and to see people coming together from all over the world to support this event. Connections were also made with colleagues in other countries, which the Unit will follow up in the coming months to determine how we can best work together to improve practice.



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Follow the Unit on Twitter: @UKMissingPerson

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BAHID Conference

From the 5th—7th July, two members of the team attended the British Association of Human Identification (BAHID) conference, which was hosted at the Fire Service College in Moreton on the Marsh. The theme of the conference was Recovery to Repatriation: Using cases from the past to develop future techniques. The weekend consisted of a workshop which explored decomposition rates and was led by Dr Lorna Irish, a Forensic Scientist. This was supported by input from the Metropolitan Police Forensic Evidence Dog programme, who performed a demonstration of the role of Forensic evidence dogs and how they can be utilised in Police investigations.

The second day consisted of presentations from Howard Way, the Head of the UK Disaster Victim Identification unit, Jan Bikker – head of the Missing Migrant initiative and various student presentations, which looked at a range of topics from the different patterns of Cadaver decomposition, to the effect of fire and heat on human remains.

The final day consisted of a number of other interesting presentations, from Dr Carole Davenport who explored the varying roles of a forensic anthropologist in mass disaster incidents, Dr Julieta Garcia Donas, who discussed bone histology and what valuable information can be gleaned from a small piece of rib fragment, and a final presentation from Dr Rebecca Reid, who discussed her work identifying US Military personnel following the Battle of Tarawa. There was lots of opportunity for networking throughout the conference and some valuable contacts were made, which we will look to utilise during future work in the unit.

Upcoming Events

- **4th September:** PoLSA Marketplace, Ryton. An opportunity to meet representatives from organisations and services involved in missing person searches and investigations.
- **20th –21st November:** National Investigative Capabilities Conference, Wyboston. An opportunity for teams within NIC to discuss the work they do and example some of the successful outcomes they have had.

Can you help us identify this man?



We are seeking assistance to identify a man, believed to be aged 30-40, who was found deceased on 12 June 2019 in Osterley Gardens, Southall, London.

This is an image of the shawl he was wearing. For more details see the case on our [website](#).

Staffing Updates

Interviews for our available G5 positions have now finalised, with successful candidates being offered a post in our unit. We look forward to welcoming them all to the team.

July marks the end of the current students' placements in the unit, with both Meg Carter and Becky Kidd leaving to complete their final year at University. They leave by saying;

'We have thoroughly enjoyed working in the unit for the past 12 months and are extremely grateful for the opportunities we have had here. The team does some amazing work around missing, and we wish them all the best in the future.'

Two new students, Annabel Bean and Ryan Forster, will be beginning their placements in the unit in August and September.