

# **Institute of Biomedical Science**

## **Annual General Meeting**

**Saturday 13 June 2026**

IBMS  
12 Coldbath Square  
London, EC1R 5HL and via MS Teams

9.30 - 10:00	Registration & Coffee
10:00 - 11:00	Lecture – details to follow
11:00 - 11:30	Tea Break and Annual General Meeting Registration
11.30 - 13.00	Annual General Meeting and awards presentation
13.00 - 13:30	Lunch and close

**Chair speech - Annual General Meeting on Saturday 15 June 2024**

Thank you for joining us this morning and welcome to the eighty-second Annual General Meeting of the Institute of Biomedical Science. Welcome also to those of you who are joining us virtually on this Saturday morning.

As the President and Chair, I will be hosting this meeting.

Before the meeting starts, I would like to go over some guidelines on how today's meeting will run, both for members present but also for those joining us virtually.

First of all for those of you here in person today, I would like to confirm the following:

Tea/coffees and the lunch will be served in the reception area.

The bathrooms are situated in the reception area (*point to your left*)

We are not expecting any fire alarms to be tested today so in case the fire alarms do go off, please evacuate the building quickly and calmly. The meeting point is just across the road, on the corner of the car park, opposite the office.

Could I also please ask you to put your phones on silent for the duration of the morning.

For those of you joining us virtually, the meeting is taking place using the MS Teams Meeting platform. You can view the proceedings and switch your camera on and off, but you cannot switch on your microphone unless invited to do so by our colleagues at Mi-Voice, who are hosting the online meeting. The chat function can be used if you wish to contact us about matters related to the AGM. We can only answer questions that relate directly to the matters being discussed as part of the AGM. If your question does not relate to that, the Chair will ask that your query is picked up outside this meeting by a member of the IBMS team.

This counts for both virtual and in person attendees.

Please direct your comments on chat to David Wells, our Chief Executive. We will try our best to monitor the chat function and if we are unable to deal with your query straightaway, we will be in touch as soon as possible. If you have any technical issues, please contact Tony Slater from Mi-Voice, also using the Chat Function or by email to [support@mi-voice.com](mailto:support@mi-voice.com).

I am sure that most of you have used Teams before and are used to the following recommendations:

- Should you have questions during the meeting, please use the 'raise hand' facility so that we can identify you, and the Chief Executive will then call out your name to confirm that you can ask your question. Once your name has been called out, Mi-Voice will invite you to speak and you will be able to unmute yourself. Please remember to lower your hand once you have been acknowledged.
- When we come to voting on the resolutions, I will ask for a member to support each resolution. Please use the 'raise hand' facility on Teams and the Chief Executive will call your name to confirm that you are in support of that resolution.
- If I call for general support for a resolution and you are in support, again please use the 'raise hand' facility on Teams.
- Please remember to lower your hand once the voting is complete.

- Once the business of the AGM is finished and the awards presentations completed, the Teams meeting will be closed.

I do apologise for this lengthy introduction but in order for the meeting to run smoothly, I think that it is important to establish some basic ground rules.

Please feel free to tweet about this morning's meeting using the hashtag: **#IBMSAGM24**.

A CPD activity has been created for this meeting which you can search for and add to your current CPD diploma once you are logged into the IBMS website.

## THE LECTURE

Before we carry out the formal business of the Annual General Meeting, it gives me great pleasure to introduce our guest speaker:

### **Dr Daniel Du Plessis**

Dr du Plessis is a consultant neuropathologist based at Salford Royal Hospital with honorary appointments at Alder Hey Children's Hospital and the Department of Forensic Pathology, Royal Liverpool University Hospital. He holds postgraduate qualifications in molecular biology, anatomical pathology (general) and neuropathology. He acts as an expert witness in Crown, Family and Appeal Court proceedings in the UK and abroad. He is co-editor and author of the 2nd edition of Whitwell's 'Forensic Neuropathology' published in 2021 and is contributing to the next edition of Keeling's 'Paediatric Forensic Medicine and Pathology'. He was an invited participant at the Closed Experts Meeting on the Pathology of Traumatic Head Injury in Children held under the chairmanship of the President of the Royal College of Pathologists (2009) and was instructed by HM Special Coroner for the Hillsborough Disaster (2014-16) to act as inquest neuropathology expert.

Daniel's presentation is titled : *'The Lundy Murders – proving brain is brain'*

I now hand you over to Daniel.

*The lecturer will speak for 45 mins and will answer questions for 15 minutes, so when they finish their talk, please ask the audience if they have any questions for them.*

*Daniel to give his lecture*

Thank you Daniel for a fascinating and instructive presentation that I am sure our audience enjoyed immensely. *Start clapping and then ask if anybody has any questions.*

*After the Q&A, please close the lecture session by shaking hand with Daniel and presenting him with his gift. (David will bring it along). Pose for picture.*

## **COFFEE BREAK AND REGISTRATION FOR THE AGM**

We now have a short break before we resume here at 11.30 for the AGM. If you are an IBMS member, and have not already signed the attendance sheets, those can be found just outside the theatre so please go to sign the attendance register before the start of the AGM.

If you are not a member of the Institute, you are of course welcome to stay for the AGM but please note that you cannot ask any questions or vote on any of the resolutions. If you are not already a member of the Institute and would like to join, please do email the Membership team at [Subs@ibms.org](mailto:Subs@ibms.org) to find out more and join our wonderful organisation,

There is fresh tea and coffee in reception area outside the theatre, so please help yourselves and I look forward to seeing you again shortly.

## **AGM TABLE TO RESUME SEATS BY 11.25.**

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

As the President and Chair, I will be hosting this Annual General Meeting. Supporting me this morning are: the Past President, Debra Padgett, the Treasurer, Nigel Coles, the Chief Executive, David Wells. As you know we recently appointed a new Head of Finance, Debbie Buggs. Welcome Debbie. Our past Executive Head of Finance Mark Finnie is also joining us this morning to assist Nigel and Debbie as it is their first Annual General Meeting in their new roles.

I now formally open the eighty-second Annual General Meeting of the Institute of Biomedical Science, and I would ask the Chief Executive to confirm that we are quorate. *(David will confirm if we are. Please note that the Quorum for Annual General Meetings is 25 corporate members personally present. With the meeting taking place online too, we will be quorate) Tony will confirm the numbers present online to David, using Chat.*

Do we have any apologies from Council members?

*David will list them. (David Eccleston and Angela Jean-Francois*

## **MINUTES**

The copy of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting that took place on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2023 were made available to members on the IBMS Website and on the AGM registration page. A copy of the minutes can be found in your packs.

Could I take that these minutes are accepted as a true record of the meeting? If you are in agreement, please raise your hand, in the room and also online using the raise hand function on Teams.

*Tony will drop David a note on Chat for the virtual members and David will confirm verbally that a majority supported the acceptance of the minutes.*

Thank you. Those minutes can now be signed as a correct record and you can now lower your hands. – sign and date the copy of your minutes and give to David

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

The notice of this meeting, together with the agenda, was published in our magazine, the IBMS Website and the AGM registration page. I therefore invite the meeting to take the notice as read.

### **Agenda Item 1**

#### **TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INSTITUTE FOR 2023 AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023, TOGETHER WITH THE REPORT OF THE AUDITORS.**

The Annual Report, which includes the summary of the audited accounts of the Institute, was made available to all members on the website this month and will be circulated to key internal stakeholders over the next few weeks.

The annual report focuses on how the IBMS helped to support, progress and promote the work of our members throughout 2023 and it looks at the achievements of the profession. I am proud to share some of the highlights of our work in 2023.

- We assessed 1,273 registration training portfolios and issued 1,341 Certificates of Competence to biomedical scientists so they could register with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).
- We launched an Advanced Specialist Diploma (ASD) in Bowel Screening Histopathology Reporting and ASD one in Cervical Histopathology Reporting qualifications. This will help Biomedical scientists to take on these roles after qualifying and will help to reduce the waiting times for cancer diagnosis.
- We published the Long Term Biomedical Scientist Workforce Plan. It sets out our commitment to making sure biomedical scientists will be a key part of successfully delivering on the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan.
- Grants totalling over £350,000 were given to employers in England to support candidates taking the IBMS Histopathology, Cytology, HSD and CEP qualifications. The grants were provided by Health Education England and paid through the IBMS.
- Giving patients direct access to pathology results could overburden primary care with queries. This was a concern we highlighted in a letter to the health secretary and shadow health secretary. We issued the joint letter of concern with the Royal College of Pathology (RCPATH) and the Association for Laboratory Medicine (ALM).
- We issued a statement to highlight our disappointment that the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) will increase their annual registration fee by 20%. We had expressed our members' concern about the rise in our previous response to the HCPC's consultation about the increase.

- Our national guidance on point of care testing has been shared widely across the UK government. We produced the guidance with RCPATH and the ALM. It explains why it's essential that laboratory experts help design, assess, and deliver diagnostic services outside the traditional laboratory.
- Our Biomedical Science Day Activity Fund supported 40 members with over £15,000 to use for events promoting biomedical science on the day. It is the world's largest biomedical science awareness campaign.
- MPs, All-Party Parliamentary Groups and Lords, plus a range of scientists and IBMS staff, came to our Biomedical Science Day event at the House of Lords. It highlighted how the biomedical science profession presents a ready-made resource for the UK government to address the challenges facing healthcare. The event also celebrated the launch of new point of care testing guidance.

As indicated, this is just a small sample of our activity for 2023, a fuller update can be found in the Annual Report. Copies of the Annual Report are available today.

## THE ACCOUNTS

I now propose to ask Mr Nigel Coles, the Honorary Treasurer, to present the accounts. We will then invite questions, which Nigel will do his best to answer. Should you have a question, please raise your hand and, once you have been identified, please introduce yourself by name, and confirm that you are a member of the Institute. If you have joined us this morning virtually, please use the raise hand facility and once your request has been acknowledged by the Chief Executive and your name called out, you will be able to unmute yourself to ask your question. Once you have been acknowledged, please lower your hand. Again please introduce yourself and confirm that you are a member. I would be grateful if you could restrict your questions to the report and accounts for the 12 months ended 31 December 2023.

**Presentation by Nigel** – it will be displayed on the screen

Many thanks Nigel, do we have any questions regarding the report and accounts for the 12 months ended 31 December 2023?

I invite a member to formally propose that the Accounts for the twelve months ended 31 December 2023 together with the report of the auditors be accepted.

David to identify the member and confirm their name

I invite another member to second the resolution.

David to identify the member and confirm their name

May I ask for a show of hands in support? Please raise your hand to indicate your support.  
Tony to confirm via Whatsapp support from online members too. David to confirm that this resolution is carried.

The proposal is carried.

## THE AUDITORS

### Agenda Item 2

#### TO APPOINT THE AUDITORS FOR THE ENSUING YEAR.

We are required each year to appoint auditors. Following the recommendation of the Audit Committee and the endorsement of Council, I invite a member formally to propose that Haysmacintyre LLP, Chartered Accountants, be re-appointed to serve as the Institute's auditors for the ensuing year.

I invite a member to support this resolution?

David to identify the member and confirm their name

May I have a seconder for the resolution?

David to identify the member and confirm their name

May I ask for a show of hands in support in the room and for our members who have joined one line? Please raise your hand to indicate your support.

Tony to confirm via Whatsapp support from online members too. David to confirm that this resolution is carried.

The proposal is carried. You can now all lower your hands.

## THE ELECTIONS

### Agenda Item 3

#### TO ANNOUNCE THE RESULT OF THE ELECTION FOR NATIONAL AND REGIONAL MEMBERS FOR COUNCIL

Two national Council members are due to retire from Council at the close of the AGM, namely Mrs Tahmina Hussain and Dr Sarah Pitt. This has resulted in two seats for Council falling vacant, to be filled in 2024.

One nomination for national member was received by the due date for these vacancies from Dr Sarah Pitt. As this was the only nomination received, Dr Sarah Pitt will take office from the conclusion of the meeting for a term of three years without the requirement for a ballot.

Congratulations Sarah. I look forward to continuing to work with you.

We now move on to the regional vacancies. Five regional members are due to retire at the close of the AGM:

For East Anglia, Mr Matthew Smith  
For East Midlands, Mr Colin Mudd  
For London, Mrs Angela Jean-François  
For the North East, Mrs Jennifer Collins  
For the North West, Mr David Eccleston

Nominations for the regional vacancies have been received from the following corporate members:

For East Midlands, Mrs Nicola Rouse  
For London, Mrs Angela Jean-François  
For the North East, Mrs Jennifer Collins  
For the North West, Mrs Tahmina Hussain

I can confirm that Nicola Rouse, Angela Jean-Francois, Jennifer Collins and Tahmina Hussain are deemed duly elected regional members of Council, without the requirement for a ballot, to take office from the conclusion of the meeting for a term of three years.

No nominations were received for East Anglia.

Congratulations to all our newly appointed and returning Council members and I look very much forward to working with you.

We are sorry to say goodbye to David Eccleston, Colin Mudd and Matt Smith and I would like to thank them all and particularly Colin and Matt who are here today, for their time on Council and the work that they have done and will carry on to do for the Institute. I am sure that our paths will cross again at some point in the not too distant future.

## **SPECIAL RESOLUTION**

### **Agenda Item 4**

#### **TO CONSIDER AND, IF THOUGHT FIT, TO PASS THE FOLLOWING SPECIAL RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE COUNCIL:**

THAT Ms Sarah May be elected Vice-President of the Institute.

Our AGM is more than simply a legal requirement, it is also an opportunity for us to formally recognise the successes and achievements of some of our members. This year, the Institute is making an award that is given to very few, and only to those who have made the greatest contribution; the award of Vice President. At this 2024 AGM I am both proud and honoured to be able to recommend to members to bestow the Council award of Vice President to Sarah May.

Sarah's legacy at the Institute demonstrates her tireless work ethic and her lifelong commitment to advancing the field of biomedical science.

Sarah's career exemplifies leadership, innovation, and a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing our profession. From her early days as a laboratory manager, where she demonstrated exceptional skill in optimising resources and shaping teams, to her pivotal role on the London Region Cervical Cytology Quality Assurance Team, she has consistently elevated the standards of our field.

As Executive Head of Strategy, she became a guiding force, shaping IBMS policies and initiatives that resonated with the evolving needs of biomedical scientists. Her ascent to the position of Deputy Chief Executive was a natural progression, embodying the strategic vision, operational acumen, and collaborative spirit essential for driving progress.

Sarah was appointed Acting Chief Executive during the transition between the previous CEO and our current one. This was a pivotal time for the Institute and we will forever be grateful to Sarah for providing the staff, the Institute and its members, an experienced and calm leadership as well as supporting the President of the time, Professor Allan Wilson during the tumultuous Covid and post COVID times and assisting him with the process of recruiting a new CEO.

Sarah's contributions extend far beyond her roles within the IBMS. She has been a beacon of light within the Science Council, shaping the standards that define our profession and ensuring that the voice of biomedical scientists is heard at the highest levels.

One of Sarah's most enduring legacies is her championing of professional development. Time and again, she has lent her expertise and insights to support and nurture the next generation of biomedical scientists. Whether through mentoring, lectures, or her seminal work on advanced qualifications, she inspires us all to strive for excellence.

But perhaps Sarah's greatest legacy is her work on IBMS Congress, the crown jewel of biomedical science events in the UK - providing scientists and industry professionals a platform to learn from world-leading experts, discover cutting-edge technologies, and celebrate the vital role of our work in healthcare. It's a testament to Sarah's vision and meticulous execution that the IBMS Congress consistently attracts thousands of attendees, offering an unparalleled opportunity to network with colleagues and explore the dynamic field of biomedical science.

I can think of no more fitting tribute than to give Sarah the award of Vice President of the IBMS and I would like now to invite one member to support the resolution. Please raise your hand to indicate your support.

David to identify the member and confirm their name

May I have a seconder for the resolution?

David to identify the member and confirm their name

I shall now call a poll on the Special Resolution.

For our members in attendance here at Coldbath Square and those attending the meeting virtually.

May I ask for a show of hands in support of this resolution. David to count the hands and confirm the numbers to you. Tony to confirm the numbers from virtual voting

You can now all lower your hands.

Anybody not in support of this resolution, please raise your hand.

David to count the hands and confirm the numbers to you. Tony to confirm the numbers from virtual voting You can now lower your hands (hopefully you won't need to say that)

Are there any abstentions?

David to count the hands and confirm the numbers to you Tony to confirm the numbers from virtual voting

David to send Tony figures in the room on Chat. Tony will add online votes and confirm that 75% are in favour of the Special Resolution to David, also using Chat.

For info, ? sent in a proxy form to appoint the Chairman of the meeting as his proxy and voting in favour of the resolution. (in case we get any proxy (I left this in in case we do get a proxy)

The Special Resolution has been approved unanimously (or by the required majority).

Joanna, at this stage, stand up and move to the lectern

It is with immense pride and gratitude that I stand before you to present our remarkable colleague, Sarah May, with the well-deserved honour of Vice Presidency of the IBMS.

Sarah, as you embark on this new chapter as Vice President, please know that the entire IBMS community stands behind you. Your wisdom, your passion, and your unwavering belief in the power of biomedical science will continue to shape our Institute for years to come. We are deeply honoured to have you as our Vice President and to be able to add your name to the illustrious list of our Vice Presidents.

Please join me in a round of applause for Sarah May!

Dear Sarah, many congratulations and I am delighted to present you with this shield to mark this memorable occasion.

*Invite Sarah to the stage to give her the shield. Pose for picture. Sarah might say a few words.*

**There being no further business (as no other business is permitted at the AGM unless notice has been received and no such notice has been received), I declare the annual general meeting closed.**

## PRESENTATIONS

Joanna, please stay standing up by the lectern?

Having concluded the formal part of the meeting, it is now my pleasure to make the Institute's annual awards and I will start with those awarded for success in Institute examinations.

### **Firstly the Company Members Prize**

The Company Members prize was established in 2007 at the suggestion of the Institute Company Members as an expression of their support of the Institute and its qualifications. This was very welcomed by Council.

The Institute and its Company Members enjoy a strong working relationship and a long history of collaboration. We have always valued our relationship with our Company Members and are extremely grateful for the wide-ranging support received, from their immense contribution to the continuing success of Congress, sponsoring local and national events and developing our members' knowledge of the latest technology.

The links forged between individual pathology laboratories, the commercial sector, the Institute, and its membership continue to be of vital importance. This relationship remains central to biomedical science practice. I am confident that Company Members will continue to be key in sustaining and developing this vital collaborative relationship.

We are united in our pursuit of quality and excellence. These awards are made in recognition of individual achievement.

The prize (a payment of £250 and a certificate) is awarded annually to the candidate who, at the first attempt, receives the highest pass mark in each discipline of the Higher Specialist Diploma examination. (the certificate for each candidate will be displayed on the table by the side of the lectern in the order below)

Please read out the name and details for each candidate and invite them to the 'stage' to give them their certificate. For info the £250 will be transferred to their bank account). Then please pose with them for official picture each time. We will also have a group picture with you and all of the candidates right before the lunch)

**The 2023 awards go to:**

**Cátia Alexandra Alberto Candido** based at Northwick Park Hospital for the Higher Specialist Diploma Company Members Prize in Cellular Pathology.

**Nathan Timbrell** based at Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital for the Higher Specialist Diploma Company Members Prize in Clinical Chemistry.

**Laura Wright** based at Norfolk and Norwich Hospital for the Higher Specialist Diploma Company Members Prize in Leadership and Management

**Justina Spyrka** based at Calderdale Hospital, Halifax for the Higher Specialist Diploma Company Members Prize in Medical Microbiology.

**Cassandra Hemmings** based at Ysbyty Gwynedd Hospital, Gwynedd for the Higher Specialist Diploma Company Members Prize in Transfusion Science.

We also award a Company Members' Prize for the candidate who achieved the highest mark across all the Diploma of Expert Practice qualifications and this year this will be awarded to **Deborah Craddock** for her marks in the DEP in Histological Dissection –. Deborah works at the Royal Berkshire.

We now move to another very special prize: the **R J Lavington Prize**.

The R J Lavington prize was established in 1977 in memory of the man who was General Secretary of the Institute for 22 years, from 1948 to 1970. Richard Lavington, who took the post after 28 years at the laboratory bench, was already a member of the Executive Committee at the age of 26. He had exceptional ability and character and was described as having "the finest art of a secretary concealing notable efficiency behind a sunshine of consideration, kindness and infectious happiness".

Since 2003, this prize, which consists of a payment of £500 and a silver medal, has been awarded annually to the candidate who, at the first attempt, receives the highest mark in the Higher Specialist Diploma examination across all disciplines and this year it is my pleasure to present this award to Cassandra Hemmings who undertook the Higher Specialist Diploma in Transfusion Science.

*Invite Cassandra to come up again and hand her the prizes. another picture to be taken.*

Well done to the all the candidates.

*APPLAUSE*

## AWARDS

We then move to honorary and life membership awards.

*As for the exams, the prizes will be displayed on the table by the lectern, so once you have read the info on the awardee, please invite them to the stage to present them with their award and then pose for pictures. They will probably say a few words. We will try to get a picture of you and all the awardees at the end of the AGM.*

As you are aware, Council have the gift to award special membership to exceptional individuals who have given long and invaluable support to the Institute.

And this morning, we celebrate the extraordinary career and inspiring contributions of Dr. Rachael Liebmann OBE. It is with great admiration that we award her an IBMS Honorary Fellowship for her remarkable contributions to the field of pathology, her enduring support for biomedical science, and her unwavering dedication to improving patient care transcend traditional boundaries.

As a distinguished breast pathologist at the Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, past Vice President of the Royal College of Pathologists, and the current Chief Medical Officer at The Doctors Laboratory and Health Services Laboratories, Rachael impact reverberates throughout the healthcare landscape.

It is within the field of workforce development that Rachael has truly left an indelible mark. With foresight and determination, she has championed the advancement of scientific roles for Biomedical Scientists. Recognising the immense potential within our profession, she has been a powerful advocate for expanding our scope, ensuring that we remain equipped to face the ever-evolving challenges of modern medicine.

Her leadership sparked a crucial shift in histopathology diagnosis. Rachael's visionary support for biomedical scientists taking on increased reporting responsibilities resulted in a groundbreaking pilot program. This multidisciplinary approach not only optimised workforce capabilities but ultimately became the new standard of care, a testament to her innovative thinking and perseverance.

This dedication to cross-professional development extends to the establishment of RCPATH Consulting. Recognising the unique advantages of a collaborative approach, Rachael ensured the inclusion of senior IBMS Fellows, enriching the team and ultimately enhancing patient outcomes.

In every role and across each initiative, Rachael embodies a profound commitment to patient care. Her insights have proven invaluable for IBMS Council. She consistently offers fresh perspectives, rooted in her extensive experience.

Rachael, your unwavering support for biomedical science, your dedication to improving patient care, and your visionary leadership make you an inspiration to us all. The IBMS is honoured to award you Honorary Fellowship, in recognition of your exceptional contributions and your enduring commitment to our profession's advancement.

## LIFE MEMBERSHIP

### I now move on to the awards of life membership.

Life membership is one of the most distinguished honours that may be bestowed on a member of the Institute.

Those chosen members need to have contributed outstanding service to the Institute and their profession, with the criteria for the awards being defined by article 25 of the Institute's Articles of Association which states: "The Council may elect any members to be Life Members if in the opinion of the Council such members have given long and valuable service in the interests of the Institute; provided that not more than four Life Members shall be elected in any one calendar year'.

Our first award goes to **Neil Bentley OBE**. We commend his exceptional career and inspiring commitment and are grateful to award him Life Membership. Neil was awarded this prestigious award last year but was unable to join us in Newcastle to receive his award so we are delighted that he is here with us today.

Neil's remarkable journey with the IBMS began over three decades ago. Throughout his illustrious career, he has been a true pioneer, breaking barriers and advocating tirelessly for our profession. His steadfast commitment to education and training is evident in his early years with the Royal Army Medical Corps and his integral role in developing programmes at Anglia Ruskin University. Neil's dedication to continuous learning and his work as a Registration Portfolio Verifier have helped shape the next generation of biomedical scientists.

Neil's leadership shines through his transformative work streamlining the operations and modernising Public Health England laboratories. This provided the foundation for the vital work he would undertake during the Ebolavirus crisis. As the scientific and operational lead in Sierra Leone, Neil's strategic vision, operational acumen, and commitment to public health enabled the rapid establishment of field diagnostic containment level-4 laboratories – a critical turning point in stemming the outbreak. This selfless service justly earned him the prestigious honour of an OBE.

His impact continued within the COVID-19 pandemic. Neil's pivotal role in implementing SARS-CoV-2 diagnostics and his leadership within the COVID-19 Genomics UK Consortium (COG-UK) were essential in the nation's rapid response. Neil's ability to collaborate across numerous agencies was critical in streamlining our nation's genomic surveillance, a vital resource in identifying and responding to emerging variants of the virus.

Even now, Neil's passion remains unwavering. His consultancy work extends his influence across public health, academia, and healthcare, and his tireless support for medical charities highlights his deep-rooted commitment to improving lives.

Neil, your remarkable achievements and unwavering dedication to public health are a source of inspiration. Your transformative contributions to our field have improved countless lives. On behalf of the IBMS, we extend our gratitude and offer congratulations with this Lifetime Membership Award.

*Call Neil to the stage and thank him after this speech.*

Today, we also acknowledge the remarkable career and enduring commitment of **Dr Jane Needham**. It is with great respect and appreciation that we award her Life Membership.

Jane's remarkable journey with the Institute began over four decades ago. Throughout her illustrious career, she has been a true pioneer, breaking barriers and advocating tirelessly for our profession. As one of the first Biomedical Scientists to attain the prestigious Consultant Biomedical Scientist position, Jane has not only treated patients with expertise but has also shaped the future of the field.

Her leadership as Clinical Lead for Haemophilia, Thrombosis, and Haemostasis has been transformative. Jane's commitment to accessible and equitable healthcare is reflected in her pivotal role in establishing the Southern Haemophilia Network, ensuring patient care extends far beyond her Trust's borders.

Jane's impact on national initiatives is profound. Her instrumental role in securing recognition for IBMS qualifications within the HSST program removed barriers and paved the way for countless Biomedical Scientists to advance. Her dedication to crafting Patient Group directives and advocating for prescribing rights for Biomedical Scientists will leave a lasting positive impact on countless patients.

As a dedicated Council member within the South East region, Jane has been a consistent voice for progress, promoting the Institute's values and objectives across her tenure. Her service on the Haematology Scientific Advisory Panel as Specialist Advisor and Deputy, demonstrates her commitment to upholding the highest standards in her discipline.

Jane's leadership in Education and Training, Health and Safety, and Research and Development has solidified her position as an indispensable asset to her Trust and to the scientific community.

Jane Needham, your decades of service, your pioneering spirit, and your unwavering commitment to patient care make you a true inspiration. Your membership for over 25 years and your significant national contributions make you a worthy recipient of Life Membership. On behalf of the IBMS, we extend our gratitude and congratulations.

I am now delighted to be able to recognise the distinguished career and unwavering commitment of **Gordon McNair**. It is with immense pride and gratitude that we award him Life Membership.

Gordon's journey with the IBMS spans over four decades, a testament to his enduring dedication to the field. His early leadership within the Northern Ireland branch and his service on Council as our Irish representative are hallmarks of his commitment to shaping our profession.

For the past fifteen years, Gordon has been a tireless advocate for biomedical science on every level. His development of advanced dissection training and qualifications, along with his leadership on the conjoint board, demonstrate his unwavering dedication to professional growth.

As Chair of the NI Pathology Managers Forum and a key member of the NI Pathology Network Board, Gordon successfully secured a seat for the IBMS, giving our profession a powerful voice in critical conversations. Even in retirement, Gordon remains tirelessly committed, shaping the future workforce through advanced training in cellular pathology.

His expertise positioned him uniquely for the role of Institute Treasurer. His stewardship of our finances, coupled with a strategic vision, has been invaluable. Gordon's dedication has ensured the IBMS remains on a sound financial footing, allowing us to make bold decisions for the future.

Gordon McNair, your contributions to the Institute and to the advancement of biomedical science are truly exceptional. Your 25 years of membership and a decade of national and international service make you incredibly deserving of Life Membership. On behalf of the IBMS, we extend our gratitude and celebrate your remarkable achievements.

Life membership was also awarded to **Sean Conlan** to recognise his exceptional career and steadfast dedication.

Sean's journey with the IBMS began nearly four decades ago, a testament to his enduring dedication to our profession. Throughout his career, he has been a tireless champion of biomedical science at both local and national levels. His contributions to the Immunology Scientific Advisory Panel, spanning over two decades as both Deputy Specialist Advisor and Specialist Advisor, exemplify his expertise and leadership.

Sean's service on the IBMS National Council for six years, and his work on the Education Committee, demonstrates his commitment to shaping the future of biomedical science. His contributions to Congress as a presenter, chair of Immunology sessions, and developer of the scientific program have been invaluable.

Beyond his national roles, Sean is an inspiration within the Northern Ireland Branch. His service on the committee, including his tenure as Secretary, has strengthened our regional presence. A true advocate for future generations, Sean has been a vital link between the Belfast HSC Trust laboratories and both Ulster University and Queens University for over 15 years. His lectures and leadership in the Employer Liaison Groups have undoubtedly inspired countless aspiring biomedical scientists.

We are further indebted to Sean for his profound impact on the accreditation of the Queens University Biomedical Science degree program, ensuring its alignment with IBMS standards. His tireless efforts as Training Co-ordinator for the BHSCT laboratories speak volumes about his commitment to professional development.

Sean Conlan, your embodiment of the IBMS's core values throughout your 25 years of membership and a decade of national service is undeniable. You are an exceptional member, and your unwavering support for others has left a profound impact. It is with gratitude that we welcome you as a Life Member of the IBMS.

Finally, we will end today's life membership presentations with the celebration of a truly remarkable career, one marked by incredible dedication to the Institute of Biomedical Science. It's with so much pride and gratitude that we award Alison Geddis the prestigious honour of Life Membership.

Alison's journey with the IBMS began over four decades ago. As a young scientist, her passion for the field shone brightly, laying the foundation for a career that would not only elevate her but also inspire countless others. Her distinguished service spans disciplines within biomedical science, from cytology and haematology to stem cell banking and quality management. Alison's knowledge and expertise enriched Ulster University, where she shared her insights with future generations.

However, her true impact extends far beyond the laboratory. Alison's leadership within the IBMS is a testament to her commitment. For over two decades, she was the driving force behind the Northern Ireland branch, ensuring it flourished as one of the UK's most active. Her service on IBMS Council across numerous vital committees exemplifies her dedication to shaping the profession's future.

Alison's presidency stands as a beacon of progress. It was during her tenure that the visionary IBMS Leadership in Science Programme was born, empowering biomedical scientists to become leaders in their own right. Her determination led to the creation of distance learning qualifications, opening doors for professional development throughout the UK.

Closer to home, Alison's advocacy secured essential funding for Ulster University placement students – a legacy that continues to benefit the next generation. Her tireless lobbying efforts brought about the IBMS accreditation of the Queen's University Biomedical Science Degree program, cementing a pathway for future excellence.

Beyond her official roles, Alison is a true mentor, particularly through her work with WISE. Her unwavering belief in the potential of young women in STEM fields has undoubtedly transformed countless lives and careers.

Alison Geddis, your embodiment of the IBMS's core values is undeniable. With over 25 years of continuous membership and a decade of national and international service, you are undoubtedly a most deserving recipient of Life Membership.

Alison, on behalf of the entire Institute, we thank you for your boundless energy, unwavering commitment, and the lasting impact you have made on biomedical science.

We will close this morning session with a final award of a medal which commemorates fifty years as an Institute member.

The work of the Institute is made possible by the dedication and activities of its members whose collective past and present knowledge and experience of practice in biomedical science are an intrinsic part of the profession and important for its future development.

I know that this might come as a shock to you due to this youthful looks, but yes, I can confirm that **Gordon Sutehall**, IBMS Vice President, has been a member of the Institute for 50 years. It is with immense pride that we celebrate this extraordinary milestone in his distinguished career by presenting him with this commemorative medal to honour his remarkable 50 years of dedicated membership and unwavering service to the Institute of Biomedical Science.

Gordon's journey with the IBMS began at a time when our understanding of microbiology was evolving rapidly. Since those formative years, he has been a steadfast force within the Clinical Microbiology and Public Health Laboratory, rising through the ranks to become a respected Governance Manager. It's a testament to his enduring commitment to the highest standards within our profession.

Gordon's influence extends far beyond his laboratory roles. Through tireless work as a Quality Manager, Health and Safety Manager, and trusted advisor to Public Health England, he has safeguarded the well-being of countless patients and colleagues. His dedication exemplifies the profound impact that biomedical scientists have on public health.

In a career marked by relentless change and adaptation, Gordon has embraced challenges as opportunities. From navigating organisational shifts and new quality standards to overseeing multi-site operations and implementing transformative information systems, he has led with both expertise and unwavering resolve. The landscape of the microbiology services in the East of England bears the positive imprint of his contributions.

However, Gordon's legacy transcends technical proficiency. His commitment to mentorship and knowledge-sharing is woven into the fabric of the IBMS. As a Specialist Portfolio Examiner, he has guided countless biomedical scientists on their paths to professional development. His service on the HCPC Fitness to Practice Panels and the Institute's Audit Committee underscores his steadfast belief in upholding the values and ethics of our profession. His tenure as IBMS President was marked by a focus on professional development and collaboration, with initiatives that continue to benefit members today.

Gordon's passion for continuous learning is an inspiration. His attendance at conferences, seminars, and countless training sessions reflects a deep understanding that the pursuit of knowledge never truly ends. This dedication to growth ensures that he, and the teams he leads, remain at the forefront of innovation.

Gordon, in recognition of your exceptional 50-year journey with the IBMS, your transformative leadership, and your unwavering dedication to safeguarding the quality and integrity of biomedical science, it is our profound honour to award you this medal. May it serve as a symbol of our gratitude and admiration for your remarkable contributions.

## **CONCLUSION AND LUNCH**

Well this concludes our Saturday morning. Thank you so much for joining us today and a huge thank you to our members for their continuing support of the Institute. A thank you as well to Institute staff for organising this morning's programme and to Tony Slater from Mi-Voice, for ensuring that our online platform ran smoothly.

For those attending the meeting in person today, lunch is now being served.

Enjoy the rest of your weekend and have a safe journey home.