[MUSIC PLAYING]

KAREN FOLEY: Hello, and welcome back. Well, it wouldn't be a Student Hub Live event without something to do with planetary sciences. And I'm joined by Jo Jarvis, who is an astrophysicist. And we're going to be talking about the School of Physical Sciences' Open day on Thursday. So what we need to know is, is it going to be as good as this? And will you have cake and biscuits?

JOHANNA JARVIS: It will be far better than this, of course.

[LAUGHTER]

KAREN FOLEY: Only because you are going to just do science.

JOHANNA JARVIS: Well, yes, that's true. It could be argued I'm slightly biassed. But yeah, we've got a whole afternoon of activities lined up, a good portion of which will be broadcast online, so those of you that can't make it here, don't panic. But it would be fantastic if you can come and join us.

KAREN FOLEY: So what's the programme? What's the plan?

JOHANNA JARVIS: OK. What we've got is we're starting at 1:00, so plenty of time to get here. And we've got lab tours going around four different sets of our labs, so focusing on the different discipline areas within physical sciences, so that's physics, astronomy, planetary science, and space instrumentation, so you'll get a little bit of everything.

We've also got a whole series of ongoing activities, allowing you to explore particularly the planetary science and astronomy side of things, which will feature our little friend here that we'll come on to later.

KAREN FOLEY: I guess.

JOHANNA JARVIS: We've got a whole series of lectures going on as well. But throughout all of this, we'll be broadcasting live on Facebook via the STEM pages. So come find us on there.

And then in the middle of the day, again broadcast live, we've got the inauguration of the COAST and PIRATE telescopes.

KAREN FOLEY: Wow. Now, where are these? They're somewhere very exciting, aren't they?

JOHANNA JARVIS: Oh, yes. Absolutely. Again, highly biassed, given I'm an astrophysicist. But yes, we have COAST and PIRATE based on the island of Tenerife, so we're way up on Mount Teide. PIRATE was originally established as a bit of a test bed on the island of Majorca-- again, tough work-- but has now moved to Tenerife. And we've got its partner facility, COAST.

And so these are two sort of half-meter-class optical telescopes, which we are using primarily in the case of PIRATE for research and undergraduate and postgraduate teaching. So students get the chance to use these facilities as part of their studies. And then COAST is a very similar facility, but offered on a subscription service. So absolutely anybody can access COAST and make use of-- I'm going to anthropomorphise now-- can make use of her for whatever they want to do.

But they are truly fantastic facilities. They really are.

KAREN FOLEY: So what other events are on, other than this launch, on your Open day? Can you talk about the lectures and the lab tours and things like that?

JOHANNA JARVIS: Yes. We've got the observatory here onsite, The George Abell Observatory. That's open for visitors. Hopefully, if the weather holds out, we'll have some solar observing going on.

But it's very much a day geared towards both current and prospective students. So it's a chance for people to meet the academics behind all of these fantastic textbooks that we have, some of the associate lecturers and staff tutors, again behind the modules, to actually interact with those people. And we'll have sessions set up in the Beryll Cafe, where you can possibly get cake and biscuits, but where you can also have a chat one-to-one or small group chat with staff tutors, with academics, and decide on what your next step might be, or indeed if you're considering studying with us, your first step might be. So it's a great opportunity to actually get face to face and touch some of the stuff that you deal with remotely so often.

KAREN FOLEY: Well, Stuart says if there are biscuits, he's in, so that's one for you.

JOHANNA JARVIS: Excellent. Good. Good. Good.

KAREN FOLEY: How many people can come? How do they register? And also, I want you to tell me about this online thing that people-- how they can sort of participate if they can't get here.

JOHANNA JARVIS: Absolutely. First of all, how you physically get involved, we've got an Eventbrite page set up, on which you can register for whichever sessions of the Open day you want. Unfortunately, the telescope inauguration has proved extremely popular, so that's already booked out. But that could only take 100 anyway.

The rest of the Open day is open to many, many more. I think we've capped at about 500, so there's still plenty of places left. So if you're in the Milton Keynes area, do please come along. It's going to be a fantastic day.

KAREN FOLEY: And can they just turn up, or do they have to register using this Eventbrite page?

JOHANNA JARVIS: Ideally, please do register. It helps us keep track of numbers. But worst-case scenario, just come along anyway. You'll be welcomed with open arms.

KAREN FOLEY: Brilliant. And then the online sort of side?

JOHANNA JARVIS: Online side of things, as I say, with the telescope inauguration already sold out, you can't be there personally. However, that is going to be broadcast live via the STEM web pages. As part of that session, we're linking up live with the director of the Institute of the Canaries, who are hosting the telescopes. So we're connecting with him on La Palma.

And then we're connecting with our associate dean of academic excellence, Nick Braithwaite, and the School of Physical Sciences director of teaching, Ulrich Kolb, who is also the PI of the telescopes, actually up on the top of Mount Teide. Fingers crossed. So we're a little bit nervous about this. But it should be absolutely fantastic. So you can certainly connect to that live, so that's 3:00 until 4 o'clock.

And then, as I say, we've got the Facebook Live streaming sort of 1:00 until 3:00 that will give everyone online a snapshot of the activities going on, so all the lab tours and so forth, if you can't get here personally.

KAREN FOLEY: Excellent. And of course, Nick is a common guest at Student Hub Live events, with his live and fabulous experiments, my favourite involving a microwave. But you're telling us about all of these exciting things, and yet you bring the Philae lander miniature model here today. So what is the plan with this? And why is this so exciting, other than the people who've been regularly watching Student Hub Live and Monica Grady may know about? But for people who don't know what we do at the OU and how involved we are in planetary sciences, what did you want

to mention?

JOHANNA JARVIS: I've brought Philae along today, because Philae is quite a major part of the planetary sciences and space instrumentation disciplines of the School of Physical Sciences. She will feature quite heavily in the Open day, because in the foyer of the Robert Hooke building here in Milton Keynes, we've got a quarter-scale model. The real thing was about a metre or so.

We've got the quarter-scale model that, in fact, you can pull to bits and have a look at the insides. So there'll be some of the scientists that were and indeed still are directly involved in that mission there to talk to people, because, of course, it's influenced our curriculum quite a lot. There's been a huge amount of interest from students.

But I've brought it along not only because of that, but also because of my role within the School of Physical Sciences. I'm essentially the public engagement officer, which is a very grand title for someone who likes to go out, talk to other people until she's blue in the face, and bounce up and down about everything that the School of Physical Sciences does.

KAREN FOLEY: Which is a lot, so you've got a big job.

JOHANNA JARVIS: Which is a lot, yes. Absolutely. So of course, we think up interesting ways of putting across everything that we do. And there'll be some examples of those available on the Open day, particularly on the spectroscopy side of things, so breaking up the white light spectrum to give us the signature of the objects that we're looking at.

But what I've brought along, I'm going to try you out on this one.

KAREN FOLEY: OK. We're good.

JOHANNA JARVIS: One of the instruments on Philae is an instrument called Ptolemy. And it was built by the team here at the OU. And essentially, it sniffed the comet. Now this belittles a little bit the hard science behind all of this.

But the amazing thing is that this is normally piece of instrumentation that's easily the size of a room. And we've packed it down into something about the size of a shoebox, sent it off to this comet. And despite all the bouncing around that Philae managed to do when it landed, it still managed to sniff the comet.

And we thought, well, OK. Great. We can put across chemical formulae to people. But what

does that tell anyone? So we came up with a bit of a. Plan

KAREN FOLEY: What was your plan?

JOHANNA JARVIS: Our plan are these things. Now, this is a little postcard. We've got an artist's impression of the comet nucleus on the front here, and lots of interesting information on the back. But the point is, give that a sniff.

KAREN FOLEY: Do you have to scratch it?

JOHANNA JARVIS: No.

KAREN FOLEY: Hmm.

JOHANNA JARVIS: It's a bit of a Marmite smell. People either love it or hate it.

KAREN FOLEY: I'm not sure. That sounds like-- it smells like aftershave. What is it?

JOHANNA JARVIS: You've got all sorts of interesting things in there.

KAREN FOLEY: Public toilets.

JOHANNA JARVIS: The main smell that comes across to most people is ammonia.

KAREN FOLEY: Right.

JOHANNA JARVIS: So for those people at home that have had the unfortunate effects of smelling urine, for example, or--

KAREN FOLEY: Oh, yeah. Now you say that--

JOHANNA JARVIS: Ammonia tends to be a fixative in sort of hair colours and things like that. So that really strong sort of gets right up your nose and into your sinuses smell is one of the components that comes across in there.

KAREN FOLEY: Have you got some of these we can send out to people?

JOHANNA JARVIS: Absolutely.

KAREN FOLEY: OK. So if you want to experience this, send us an email with your name and address and we'll post it out to you, studenthub@open.ac.uk. I That's studenthub@open.ac.uk. So it's better to email than put it on anything else like the chat or Twitter.

And we'll get one of these out you. Maybe not that one. Have you got some more?

JOHANNA JARVIS: Oh, yes. We have hundreds of them.

KAREN FOLEY: OK. Brilliant.

JOHANNA JARVIS: Trust me. My little outreach cupboard smells of those things quite horrendously. And I very quickly learnt, as I will guide everyone else, don't put one in your pocket, because your trousers will smell of it for a very long time.

KAREN FOLEY: Well, I've never smelt a comet. But you know, I clearly have-- is that what it smelt like, then?

JOHANNA JARVIS: Yes. As close an approximation as we can get. And indeed, because we've got scientists involved in studying Mercury and Mars and various other bodies within the solar system, we're looking to expand this series, actually. So we may end up with the smell of all the objects in the solar system at some point, which, of course, does start to beg the question, what smell do you want for the Earth?

KAREN FOLEY: That is a good question.

JOHANNA JARVIS: I was pondering fresh-cut grass. But I'd be interested to know what else is--

KAREN FOLEY: I think fresh-cut grass is one of the happiest smells currently, isn't it?

JOHANNA JARVIS: Yeah.

KAREN FOLEY: OK. So again, if you've got a suggestion about what smell you think the Earth should be-- I don't maybe salt water with the ocean. That could be another good one.

JOHANNA Yeah. That one's been floated as well. Ha, floated.

JARVIS:

KAREN FOLEY: Oh, dear. Oh, dear.

JOHANNA JARVIS: Sorry. The corny jokes are out.

KAREN FOLEY: OK. I think we're going to have to send you home, Jo.

JOHANNA JARVIS: Sorry. Sorry. I'll go back in my box now.

[LAUGHTER]

KAREN FOLEY: Well, Jo, thank you so much for coming along and showing us these things. And don't forget, you are so welcome. If you want to come up on campus on Thursday from 1 o'clock, come to the School of Physical Sciences Open day. You don't have to be a registered student, but you can come and see lectures, meet the academics, and they're a fabulous, fabulous bunch. You will be very, very welcome there.

So you can also connect with them on Facebook. The STEM account, just Google STEM on-- well, not Google STEM. I hear you've been Google Scholaring a lot of things actually this afternoon. But yeah, if you just look on Facebook, STEM, and then you can connect with them. And that will give you more information as well. And there are some links on our Resources page of the Student Hub Live website.

So that is all we've got time for today. I hope you've had a really good Open day. I hope we've introduced to you some of the wonderful, friendly people. And it's been great to see so many of you who've come to Student Hub Live events. I hope you've liked connecting with us.

Like I said before, we are going to have another event on the 31st of July. That's going to be thinking ahead, so we're going to look at transitioning from Level 1 to Level, Year 1 to Level 2. What happens if you need to reset one of your exams, et cetera, or end of module assessments? And we're going to have some really, really good advice to get you starting to think about your studies.

And then in September, we're back. We're boot-camping. We're getting you all ready. And then we're going to have our freshers induction event as well. So there's lots of opportunity to

connect with us. But do click on the Count Me In button if you haven't already, and we'll fill you in on our next events.

You can also tell us what you think, or if there's a session you'd particularly like us to run, fill in that feedback form, which again is on the Student Hub Live website. We'll hopefully be back with our brand spanking new website very, very soon, which be a lot slicker and cleaner and have lots of catch-up. And if you've missed any of today's sessions, they'll be available on the catch-up very soon, so you can look back and see some of the really, really good advice and experience that we've covered today.

In particular, if you're a current student, check out the session we did on online rooms. That'll be really useful for you to have a sneak preview about how your online tuition may look this coming autumn.

So HJ, some final thoughts from you?

HJ: Ooh.

KAREN FOLEY: You're on the spot now.

HJ: Sorry. I was just talking to Stuart and he said the smell of bread, which I like the smell of bread. But--

JOHANNA JARVIS: Ooh. Yeah. That's' a good one.

KAREN FOLEY: Yeah.

HJ: Yeah. It depends how representative we think that it is. But no, we've just had a good time chatting to everyone, connecting with everyone. We've had a few new students pop by, which is really good, so hopefully you feel a bit more prepared and maybe can look up some of those Open Room materials. But yeah, if there's anything we missed, just email us, studenthub@open.ac.uk.

And pop by to our next event. It's always nice chatting to people and catching up and seeing how everyone is progressing and some people are writing their dissertations now or having some time off for the summer. But yeah, it would be good to see everyone again.

KAREN FOLEY: Ah. Well, thank you and Sophie. You've done a fabulous job. And thank you to all the guests

who've come and sat on the lawn and talked to us and hopefully given you a different insight into the OU.

It's been really fun being outside. The weather's held off. It's been fabulous. Thank you all for participating today and for taking the time to come along and especially for sharing your advice with other students. It really does make this a lovely academic community.

And I hope to see you on the events on the 31st of July. But make sure you click on that email address if you haven't already. Right. That's all from us here at the Student Hub live for today. We hope to see you again very soon.

[MUSIC PLAYING]