

00.25 A. Thank you for showing us around the facility. What do we need to get started?

B. Put on a pink gown and some over shoes.

00.43 A. Why are we putting on these over shoes?

B. Mainly to protect yourself. If you touch animals you can get fur and mess on you. We need to keep our floors clean. In many other units you are required to dress up completely with a cap, gown, gloves and mask because we are trying to keep bugs out from affecting the animals. We are not as clean a unit as some units, so therefore this is just a precursory cover that we ask you to put on.

A. It's a very nice colour.

B. The boys don't think so.

A. I bet.

01.36 A. And where to next?

B. We need to go in to the unit. It's this way.

02.32 A. I keep getting distracted by watching the. They are little bit hypnotic, especially the climbing ones. Do they do that a lot?

B. Yes

02.54 A. How many Mice do we have here?

B. In this room we have roughly 400 Mice and we have got 2 rooms like that, so 800 Mice in this unit at the moment.

A. That's a lot. What do you use them for?

03.07 B. They are used for various things; Diabetes work, we have got some cardiac work going on and we have got some age related work going on. Any diseases that affect old people like Alzheimer's and Dementia, the study and things to do with that.

03.20 A. So you use Mice for those?

B. Yes

03.47 A. Do you breed the Mice here?

B. We do breed Mice but we also get them in from outside. We get in from commercial breeders where they are bred solely for this sort of purpose, but we do breed them as well, yes.

04.16 A. What is the everyday routine for looking after them?

B. We have to give them a nice clean cage. Twice a week they are cleaned out and they are given new bedding. As you can see, they have got some nesting material in these cages and they have got cardboard tunnels which they play in. We always make sure that they have got something to hide in and play with. We give them fresh water 2 or 3 times a week and we top up their food 2 or 3 times a week. All their food is commercially bought food, it's got all of the right minerals in, all the Calcium and all the Vitamins that they need in it. That's how we look after them.

04.53 A. And you have got these little notes here.

B. That's the label on the box which tells us exactly what is in the box. It tells you the number of animals in the box, it tells you the sex of the animal in the box, and it also tells you the strain of animal in the box. There are different types of Mice; we have got white Mice, black Mice, and they have all got different sorts of names.

Also, it tells us what work has been done on the Mice, so if someone has come and injected them we know what they have done, it's all written on the label.

05.18 A. You have got here check for Litter.

B. That is part of the breeding, there are some breeding animals on this rack. We have got an animal in there which is paired up with a mouse and so we assume that she is obviously pregnant. We have put a little sign on there to remind us that we must check it every day to see if she has had the babies or not. And I assume by that, she hasn't had them yet.

06.57 A. Do you have any problems with keeping this many Mice? Are there any difficulties?

B. There are problems as we can get disease amongst the Mice. Sometimes they pick up little bugs and things so we have to keep our eye on them. Sometimes they develop tumours, so we have to keep our eye on that as well. Sometimes we get escapees, which could be problem. If someone hasn't put the lid back on properly, we could get an escapee mouse that could be a problem. Sometimes we have had

problems with the environment, if the air conditioning goes down or we have lost the heating. We have to be careful that the Mice are ok as they have to be kept at a certain temperature all the time. So yes, there are small problems like that but nothing that's insurmountable, no big major issues really.

07.39 A. Do you get attached to them?

B. Not so much the Mice because we have got 400, 800 mice so it's very difficult to get attached to all of them. We do find individuals, sometimes you get a little favourite like anything else because people do keep Mice as pets, so they have got their little appeal.

Some staff do get attached to them, sometimes we find a little box labelled up with someone's name on it; 'Hebert' or something, and that becomes a little side-line pet. We don't encourage that because obviously that's not the reason why they are here. They are not pets, they are here for a purpose but yes we do get attached to them. Especially the higher animals as well you get attached to, it can't be helped really.

08.20 A. What are we going to see next?

B. We will pop along to the next higher up rodent, the Rat.

09.18 A. Who are these fellows?

B. This is our Rat room. These are a couple of friendly Rats which we use for training purposes. We run courses for the home office license training course, and other courses for training students who want to work in medical research. We use the animals quite a bit, so they are friendly. I thought they might like to say hello to you today if you are not too frightened to handle them.

A. That's fine

B. Are you happy for that? Jolly good.

09.40 B. They are up for it. There you go.

A. Hello.

B. Number 2 wants to come out as well.

A. Both of them, not sure if I can handle this.

09.57 A. These are Lister Hooded Rats. They have got a black hood that's why they are called Lister Hooded, just another strain of a typical laboratory animal that we use here.

A. They are very friendly. They seem very calm with being held.

B. A lot of people give rats a bad press, a lot of people don't like these tails. *(It's going go on your hair. If you just move to the cage she will jump in. Well trained)*

A. Amazing. They are very well trained.

10.31 B. They are also looking for food because we sometime treat them to little treats like chocolate biscuits that they are not supposed to have.

A. They are really worrying me that they are going to fall out now.

B. They are pretty good Rats. Back you go. You have to mind their heads and their little feet. In, in, in, everyone is in, good. Ok, shut the door. That's it.

11.05 A. What are the differences between looking after Rats and looking after Mice?

B. Not a great difference really, Rats are bigger than Mice so that is the main difference. They need bigger cages because they are bigger animals and therefore, we can't keep so many animals in a cage. We can keep 5 or 6 Mice in a small cage, obviously we wouldn't keep that many Rats in that cage, we have bigger cages to keep them in. These are old cages that we have got them in here, these aren't the standard Rat cages. These are old Rabbit cages that we are using for these two guys, only because they are our handling animals. The actual laboratory research animals are kept in these types of cages.

11.44 B. Here we have Guinea Pigs, these are obviously bigger than Rats. *(If you would just like to help me pull that side out. Squeaky cage)* As you can see Guinea Pigs have a similar sort of food and water.

12.28. A. What kind of animals do we have in here then?

B. Here Anna we have got some Guinea Pigs, which are obviously bigger than the Rats. *(If you would just like to give me a hand with the cage, lift it out)* As you can see they are kept very similar to the Rats and Mice you have seen, except these have Hay, Guinea Pigs have to have Hay. They have got food, special food for themselves and obviously their water. They have got a little shelter in here as well because Guinea Pigs like to hide, it's similar to the tunnels you have seen with the Mice and

Rats but these are obviously bigger covers from as they are a bigger Animal. If we lift this off, you might see a big fat Guinea Pig.

A. I'm scared to hurt them.

B. It's all right just lift it off. There you go. If I can catch one of these for you..., squeak, squeak, and squeak. He is only squeaking because he is happy. Hold it towards you.

13.29 B. Once they settle they are very easy to handle Guinea Pigs.

A. Docile

13.35 A. What do you use these for?

B. These are being used for respiratory work. They are studying Asthma and all sorts of diseases – upper respiratory tract. They get taken away and given different sort of compounds that causes them to show signs of respiratory problems and they are trying to find a cure for that.

13.58 A. You keep them in a very similar way to the Rats and Mice?

B. Kept in fairly the same way but obviously much bigger caging and we give them extras, like they have Carrots and Cabbage in their cage which we don't give to the Rodents; the Rats and Mice.

Guinea Pigs require Vitamin C, so we often give them Cabbage and Carrots to give them the Vitamin C they require. That is why we also give them Hay, with Guinea Pigs they have to have Hay as well because there is a certain fibre in the Hay that they have to have to keep them healthy. If we didn't give them Hay, they would start losing their fur and they would get sick. Even your pet Guinea Pig at home has to be given nice fresh good quality Hay.

14.40 A. It's important to keep them healthy for the experiments.

B. Yes, it's no good doing any experiments on animals that are not healthy as you are going to get false results. It's like if you have got a cold yourself, there is no point in me trying to do any test on you because you are sneezing, I won't know if you are sneezing because of the test or not.

15.04 A. He is very cute.

B. They are cute.

A. Very inquisitive now that he has settled down.

B. I think you might have ..., have you got a boy or a girl?

A. I think this might have been a girl...

B. What does it say on the label? There is a sign on the label.

A. These are girls.

B. You have got girls, big fat girls. We use both boys and girls because Asthma affects both sexes.

15.29 A. You have got a lot fewer in here.

B. Simply again because they are a larger animal and the cage has to be a lot bigger for them. So we only keep 2 or 3 Guinea Pigs in a cage this size, mustn't overcrowd them.

15.43 A. It must be very hard not to get attached to these. I don't want to let this one go.

B. You do get attached to Guinea Pigs. Guinea Pigs are very endearing because they are stupid really. Guinea Pigs are stupid animals but that is what makes them endearing. You can have a cage like this without any lid on it, all the other cages in the unit has to have lids on to keep the animals in otherwise they escape. You don't have to worry about Guinea Pigs because they don't try to get out. All the years we have had Guinea Pigs, we have had one escape and it spent all its time sitting in the food upper, it didn't go anywhere at all. So they are not the brightest of animals but nevertheless they do us a favour again because they are good for research.

16.27 A. This is about the same size as if you kept pet Guinea Pigs at home, similar size cage.

B. Yes, you would keep them in something like this but ideally, it would be nice to keep them outside if you have got a garden. They like to have fresh air and sunshine. It's not essential because obviously these don't get that and they still survive happily here.

A. It's harder to control their environment if you do that.

B. That's right, with research you have to have everything uniform, you have to have a controlled environment. Therefore, we couldn't treat them like you would do a pet.

They still get looked after better than some of us do, their food, all the vegetables comes from the Borough market, so it's all fresh stuff.

A. Only the best.

B. Only the best, yes. The staff eat most of it though, that's the trouble.

17.43 A. Where to next?

B. To the next biggest Animal which will be the Rabbits.

17.59 A. We have a Rabbit just in his house there.

B. I thought you might like to say hello to this Rabbit. It's not very friendly I'm afraid, it's being used for Research and therefore it has been taken out a few times. It has had blood taken out and things like that so when he sees someone now in a Pink coat, he thinks you are going to do the same to him. He has run to the back of the cage but he is still quite relaxed, he is not too frightened, and in a little while he may come to say hello to you or he may not. That is the issue with Rabbits, sometimes they are friendly or they are not.

B. Someone unfamiliar.

A. He is quite happy he is eating his Hay, his is munching his Hay so he is not too worried.

18.34 A. It's quite a big cage as well.

B. Again, bigger animal, bigger cage. We would only keep one in a cage this size. If you look next door you will see there is a middle panel, that plastic panel there. We can slide that out and make that another cage so that the cage is extended. We can do the same this way, so we can have 3 or 4 cages for 1 Rabbit if need be. We have got scope to expand the cages, but these animals at the moment because they are under research, we want to keep them individually housed and in smaller cages for the time being. That's why they are in a closed cage at the moment, still none-the-less it's a big cage and they have an extra shelf that they can sit on which increases the overall room of the cage, and they do use them as well.

19.19 A. What sort of research are these being used for?

B. These guys are being used for heart work. They are looking at making them as if they have got heart trouble. They are on a high fat diet at the moment. Their diet is a normal diet but it has got high cholesterol mixed in it. That is to make their arteries **firm** up like it would do for us if we had too much fatty food. They also have an operation done on one of the veins in their leg; they close the veins down so that it reduces the blood flow. Again, simulating what it would be if we had heart problems.

They take them away to have an MRI scan, which is a human MRI scan in a hospital. They scan the body and they are trying to see if they can pick up this bad closed up vein. If they can pick that up on the MRI scan then it becomes a non-invasive procedure. At the moment, humans have to have an injection into the groin, it's an invasive internal procedure. If they can find out that they can pick it all up by doing a scan, then we needn't have all that done to us in the future. So that is what these Rabbits are having done.

They live quite a normal life here as you can see. They are on a fat diet, it's showing no signs of it at the moment but it's affected internally, it's affecting their arteries. If they were left too long they would get similar things that we would get, they could get renal failure, have a heart attack even. We don't let them get that far as that is not what we are looking for. They will get taken away in a few weeks' time to the scan. They don't come back after that I'm afraid, that is the end of the experiment. If it is successful, that would be good news for us in the future.

20.59 A. That would make it easier to scan humans for heart disease.

B. That is what we are hoping.

21.06 A. They don't look like they have been particularly affected by ...,

B. No not at all, and he has had an operation done on one of it's hinds legs and recovered the next day as good as new, as you see him now, eating, quite happy. Again, they have a similar thing to the Guinea Pigs, they have Carrots and Cabbage and things like that as well, so well looked after and as you can see he is quite relaxed, he is eating away.

21.32 A. Yes, they seem very happy.

21.40 A. Shall I close this cage up now?

B. Yes if you would, that would be very good. Thanks very much. I don't want him falling out.

21.48. A. What are going to see next?

B. Fish

22.40 A. What made you want to go into this kind of work then?

B. Initially I didn't really, I wanted to work in a Zoo or for a Vet. First part of my career I was working for a Vet, as a Veterinary nurse. Unfortunately, out of all the animal jobs at that time, (*I'm going back a few years*) all the animal jobs then were very poorly paid. I couldn't continue to be a nurse, because I was at the age where I

was setting out, leaving home and I needed money. I looked in the paper and I found this job advertised, and I thought it is the most highly paid of all the animal jobs so I thought I will give a go for the time being, and that is how I got here.

- 23.15 After I started here, the first few weeks, I didn't think I would stay here because I love animals. I thought I'm not quite sure whether I can survive this, animals being ..., because obviously they are killed unfortunately at the end of the experiments. It was a little bit difficult for me to get used to.
- 23.33 And then one day what clinched it for me really, we used to have some dogs and there was a chap that looked after the dogs and he never bothered cleaning them up and they were in their own muck, and mess and I said to him, 'Why don't you clean these dogs out?'. His answer to me was, 'Why bother, they are going to die anyway'. I thought that was a very terrible thing to say. I thought I can't abandon these animals now. They need people here unlike him. They need people here that are going to care for these animals and I've stayed here ever since doing that very job, looking after these animals.
- 24.05 A. That is why you have stayed, it must be very rewarding to keep them well.
- 24.06 B. I feel as if I'm doing my bit for these animals. If I was really pushed to answer do I believe in Animal Research? No I don't. I don't like it. I understand why it has to be done, I accept why it has been done. I'm hoping in the years and years to come there will be no research and animals won't have to be used and that would be great.
- 24.32 All the time they are being used let's have people in charge of them who care, because at the end of the day all of these animals are doing us a big favour. Any of us could have a disease tomorrow, and if we have got good drugs that are going to help us, it's a result from these animals being researched on, so they deserve our respect.
- 24.50 We are not silly with them, we don't treat them like pets. They are not pets but we do get attached to them. We do understand that they are animals and they do need to be treated with respect. That is what myself and the staff are here for.
- 25.03 A. You have been quite highly trained to do that, what do you have to go through to become an animal technologist?
- 25.08 B. We are highly trained. We didn't used to be, years ago there was no training for the staff, and it was just a very cheap cleaning out job. In fact that's all we were, cleaners. Gradually, over the years they brought in a career structure for staff, they go to college. There are several years of college. It used to be physically going to college, now they do distance learning. It's all good, they learn all the husbandry of the animals, and they can get a degree at the end. It's a good career now to follow.

25.58 A. What would you advise young people who are looking to go into this line of work?

26.03 B. If they are interested in animals they should consider it, or if they are interested in Science they should consider it. Hopefully, they would be interested in both because that is what it really requires. You need to understand why the animals are being used, and you need to have an interest in the animals. If you have got both of those qualities then you would make a good Animal Technician. I think people should go into this field. We need people like that in this field because there are a lot of anti-viv people out there, people that don't agree with animal research. ..