

# Alistair Henderson

After graduating with a PhD in Organic Chemistry and Toxicology from Newcastle University, Alistair joined what is now Sterling's Newcastle Biosphere facility as a Research Chemist. Today, as Site Director at Newcastle facility, Alistair oversees a team of chemists who deliver a range of chemistry services.

## Can you tell me about your background?

I completed my master's degree in Medicinal Chemistry at Newcastle University, and then went on to obtain my PhD in Organic Chemistry with Toxicology.

After this, I studied at Chapel Hill University in North Carolina for two years as part of my post-doctoral studies. Here, I worked on preparing isotopically labelled compounds for an environmental research group. This was a challenge for me, as I was the only chemist within this project group, and so I had a very different background to the rest of the team. It was a great opportunity to learn from those with alternative perspectives and different experiences.

When I returned to the North East, I started working at NewChem Technologies as a Research Chemist. At the time, the team consisted of only three of us, and so I had the chance to experience a lot of different areas. As the team grew, I moved out of the labs and into a managerial role, however I was always available to help when required.

At the time, the company resided within Newcastle University's lab space which was hired out to start-ups. Then in 2019, we moved to our new premises within the Newcastle Helix, and I assumed the position as the site's manager, reporting to our two directors.

In 2023, NewChem Technologies was acquired, and we joined the Sterling network.



## Fast Facts

### ROLE

Site Director

### STARTED AT STERLING

October 2004

### EDUCATION

PhD in Organic Chemistry with Toxicology, Newcastle University

MPhil in Medicinal Chemistry, Newcastle University

## Can you tell us about your history of working with Sterling, prior to the facility being acquired?

We have had an ongoing collaboration with Sterling since 2017. We have worked together on API route development and production, as well as isolating and identifying batch impurities, which is something we continue to do to this day.

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The culture at Sterling is great, and I think our team's values at the Newcastle facility and those across Sterling really complement each other.

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Now colleagues, we enjoy working more closely with those individuals from Sterling who we have collaborated with over the years. This has made the integration process easier to navigate, as we already had a good working relationship with those involved, the culture, and how Sterling operates.

The Newcastle Biosphere site and team bring further early phase research and development capabilities and capacity to Sterling, in order to support its customers in the discovery stage.

The main areas we have been working to integrate are how we report and aligning the systems we use. Being involved in multi-site projects is a very exciting part of the integration too, and the team are looking forward to more of this.

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## As the integration process progresses, what are employees based at the Newcastle facility most excited about?

The experience of working within a global company; working with, supporting, and benefiting from Sterling's network of sites.

For example, Sterling offers regular opportunities to interact as a global team to learn from one another and share best practices. Everyone is excited to be a part of this and the development opportunities that come with it.

## What have you enjoyed most about being part of the Sterling network?

As mentioned, it's great to be part of a larger company and have access to the opportunities and support that comes with that.

Everyone at Sterling works well together, no matter which site they are from, and this has made the transition very smooth.

The culture is great, and I think our team's values at the Newcastle facility and those across Sterling really complement each other. Strong relationships between employees is key to ensuring success, and this is something Sterling nurtures well, so it's exciting to be a part of a company like this.