

**Alison Barden-Jones, Clinician
Steam Museum, Swindon**

“Before the pandemic, I was a full-time practice nurse at Ridge Green Medical Practice, but now I split my time between the surgery and the vaccination programme at Steam.

“As a nurse, I’ve always seen it as an honour and a privilege to be able to support people from my local community, and I feel that even more so now.

“Many patients arrive for their vaccination appointment feeling a bit apprehensive, which is totally understandable, and I make sure I do all I can to reassure them and to put them at ease.

“Whether it’s just listening to their concerns and explaining the facts, or having a laugh and a joke to help ease their nerves, I see my role as more than just a vaccinator.

“For the few minutes we are with our patients, we need to be their friend, as well as someone they can turn to for support, and I still get a lump in my throat when I see a person who was particularly nervous leave feeling relieved and reassured, and with a smile on their face.

“In the last few weeks, it’s been incredibly moving to help vaccinate children and teenagers, especially as many arrive feeling very anxious, but we do our best to put them at ease.

“And just like the adults, it’s lovely to see them leave feeling happy, and that’s what makes it all worthwhile.”

