

SCIENCE IN THE NEWS

January 2019 – Monthly Report



Dear Members

Firstly, can I thank **John Blakesley** for his excellent presentation and discussion on Bees. From the multitude of questions raised both during and after the session, it is clear that he provided us with a host of interesting facts and figures. There was also a “honey tasting” from a sample jar from his own hives - DELICIOUS. Thankyou John.

We followed this with a short **Science in the News** session at which amongst other items of discussion the following attracted several follow-up questions :-

Jon Roots brought our attention to a completely new methodology for the definition of the kilogram

Dave Rethon reported upon a proposal for the disposal of nuclear waste in the UK , underground. This has been followed in the press with a similar proposition to bury it beneath the Lake District.


Richard W raised the topic of the recent volcanic eruption and resulting devastating tsunami in Indonesia. He included a reference to a prediction of this event being made some eight years prior but ignored by the authorities.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, we have set up a Steering Group to share the load of running our group. This is now in place and plan to meet regularly to review the programme and activities using your feedback and input. One immediate result is that for the next couple of meetings **Jon Roots** will take over setting up and chairing our meetings. One other immediate result is that we are looking at ways in which we can make our meetings more interactive for all attendees. We will be trying out new meeting formats, which will be trialled and if successful, by which we mean useful and enjoyable, will be adopted later in the year. Jon will expand upon this at the next meeting.

Looking ahead, on Thursday **7th February 2019**, **Alec Hillier** is due to be talking on ‘**Oil and Gas**’. To limit the enormous scope of this subject he plans to focus this time on **fracking**, a contentious subject if ever there was one. This will be limited to the first half of our time, following which we will have another “open” session of your **Science in the News**. Bring along your items of interest and we will endeavour to include as many as possible in the time available. Just let me know before the meeting or at the door on your arrival. In this way we can try to prioritise the time and avoid any disappointment.

On **7th March** we plan to have a full two-hour session of **Science in the News**, perhaps in a slightly different format. Jon will explain at our next meeting.

For the **4th April** meeting Peter Langford has been able to invite **Dr Martin Parry** to speak. Dr Parry is **Visiting Professor at The Centre for Environmental Policy, Imperial College London**,



and also Visiting Research Fellow at The Grantham Institute at the same university. Until September 2008 he was Co-Chair of Working Group II (Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability), of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) based at the Hadley Centre for Climate Prediction and Research, U.K. Meteorological Office. Need I say more – this should be very interesting and informative.

For the future, we have proposals in hand for sessions focussing on Garbage disposal, Coastal geology, Developments in farming and farm equipment, Sizewell 'C', and possibly some Philosophical and Scientific aspects of AI developments in today's world – think of developing the future autonomous vehicles !!! We are also trying to plan, hopefully with your prompting and support, one or more external visits to nearby East Anglian facilities which could include UEA, the John Innes Research Centre and others.

At the last meeting it was commented by several attendees that it would be useful to include a microphone for speakers and for individuals as they speak "from the floor". We will look into the options for this; perhaps a member can contribute some ideas and/or equipment to facilitate this.

Just to remind you, our **Meetings** take place **2pm to 4pm** on the **first Thursday of the Month**, in the **St Michael's Undercroft** (unless otherwise arranged in this monthly newsletter).

We look forward to seeing you all next month.

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