

# Newsletter - Science and Engineering group 2024

## The coming meeting – Friday 19<sup>th</sup> January

### Crossrail – the Elizabeth line.

**Clive Kessell** – Retired signalling expert from whatever they now call British Railways – a professional engineer and a copious rail journalist – is coming to give us another of his great talks.



If you ever have a chance to travel on a train with Clive you will find that he makes it a fascinating experience. Clive has a wealth of knowledge on all matters to do with rail systems; motive transport; electrification; passenger vehicles and signalling – where he has been acknowledged as the “go to” expert on signalling matters. Clive is a close contemporary of mine, hailing from the same town (Luton) and attending the same school (Luton Grammar) in the same Science 6<sup>th</sup> form within a year of each other. Our Science 6<sup>th</sup> was so large that it was no surprise that we never met, despite having the same teachers!

Clive knows literally all about the development and management of rail communication systems. On Friday he will be regaling us about Crossrail – aka The Elizabeth Line. Crossrail was Europe’s largest civil engineering project, and the undertaking was completed, snaking right through central London, without most of us even knowing a thing about it. The undertaking was absolutely massive. The project took 15 years and cost £18.9 billion - £4 billion over budget and 4 years later than hoped for. Total length is 73 miles starting at the west at Heathrow and ending at Shenfield or Abbey Wood, with 26 miles in tunnels. Excavation through the centre of London meant carefully boring tunnels within centimetres of existing structures. And there were the listed building which could not be allowed to move, settle, crack or shake.....

Clive’s main interest is signalling. I remember a few years ago he was shaking his head as he told me that they were going to have to integrate four different systems for the driver.

If we run out of questions, try asking Clive about HS2 !

## **A review of the Autumn term**

There are some interesting issues. You will remember that we had agreed to set a nominal £10 membership fee at the start of the Autumn term, based on the expected number of members; the proportion that we thought likely to support the group each month, and the cost of our current venue – St John's Felbridge Church hall.

**There is good news and some indifferent news**, and we also elected to postpone our December meeting, due to COVID infections (and sagging numbers due to the “Seasonal” effect.)

Once we broadcast the news that we were dropping the monthly attendance charge in favour of a prepaid £10 joining fee for the term we lost a handful of members. At the start of September we had 59 registered members – so we were looking for £590. We are charged £60 per meeting, so an average of 10 or 11 meetings through the year meant that we needed to collect an average of \$600-£660. Not all the 59 attended in the end, and so we collected some £472 – (not sure where the £2 came from!). 11 members have not paid up (yet) and 10 of the 59 have not yet attended a meeting.

We always ask everyone of the 59 to either confirm they are coming or to send an apology if they are not.

**Sadly a disappointingly high proportion do not communicate at all.** We do know what a number of members are otherwise committed. Ignoring those we will be striking off those members whose names really shouldn't be on the list.

**The good news is that we have a healthy surplus of £292 on account at the end of 2023, so there will be NO TERMLY payment for the spring term**

I am attaching the statistics at the back of this letter.

### **Seasonal delights!**

We had decided to run our seasonal quiz this month. But only when I was chatting to Clive did I realise that we had booked him for Friday, and that he is committed elsewhere for the next three Sci & Eng. So the quiz is abandoned – but not the seasonal delights! We will have the German equivalent of mulled wine (Gluwein) and mince pies – if they aren't consumed at this meeting their “best by” date will have slipped by in a week or two.

### **February and beyond**

By the time we meet up on Friday – it would be really great if members could dig out the brainstormed list which I have now (twice) circulated and given some thought to the way forward programme-wise. It is oh so disappointing when an appeal for programme ideas falls on barren ground!.

My personal wish is to study much more about the history of engineering – the famous scientists, engineers and physicist that have literally built the world that we live in. And I am quite prepared to take us down that track if need be. But there is so much more where we have yet to even scratch the surface – or even perhaps to realise that a surface even exists to scratch!

Well I reminded you about the brainstormed ideas list so I will attach another copy for you to mull over. There are over 250 ideas on the list, so if you are short of imagination – think of a number between 1 and 252 and look it up – your idea created before your very eyes. Who needs AI??

**NEXT. RSVP: Yes or No to attendance**

John Wells

**PTO for statistics → → →**

## Meeting statistics

### Science & Engineering - Autumn Term Financials 2023-24

#### Quick facts:

1. Half of signed-up members are not attending. Do they really want to be in the group?
2. Almost 20% of registered members do not reply to emails and do not attend meetings
3. The 10 who have never attended a meeting are not necessarily the 10 (of 11) who have not paid up the September 2023 £10 subscription fee

Number of signed up members	59
Never attended a meeting	10
Members who did not paid £10	11
Number of meetings SEP-DEC	3
Venue Charges - 3 meetings	£180.00
£10 Autumn Payments received	£472.00
<b>Balance on account at 31/12/2023</b>	£292.00
Number of meetings JAN- APR	4
Venue Charges - 4 meetings	£240.00
No payments required for Spring term	£0.00
<b>Forecast balance at 30/04/2024</b>	£52.00

Meeting dates	15/09/23	20/10/23	10/11/23	15/12/23
<b>Present</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	Postponed
<b>Apologies</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	Postponed
<b>No contact</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>	Postponed
<b>Members registered</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>59</b>	
<b>TOTAL (59 MEMBERS)</b>				
<b>Present %</b>	54.24%	42.37%	38.98%	
<b>Apologies %</b>	28.81%	25.42%	30.51%	
<b>No contact %</b>	20.34%	30.51%	28.81%	