IES News Bulletin
The Institution of Engineers in Scotland A Multi-disciplinary Engineering Institution
September 2026

Welcome to our September Bulletin



As we approach the end of my term in office I am very happy to welcome our new President, Dr Malcolm Robb to the role. Malcolm will be inaugurated formally on 22nd September before delivering his Presidential Address.

Malcolm's address will be part of a super programme of lectures - we are very pleased to be able to bring such a variety of topics and speakers to our members - I do hope you will be able to join, in person or online, for some of these.

I am honoured to have been President and have thoroughly enjoyed my time in the role. I would like to thank Laura and members of Council for their support over my tenure. There has been many highlights, with one of the nicest aspects being getting the chance to meet and know members. I look forward to many continuing friendships!

I am pleased to let you know that Malcolm will continue with our tradition of a great lecture programme, James Watt Dinner and, due to such a positive response from members we will seek to increase the number of members' visits, and a few more planned for you already! The Cuppa and Chat will start up again, GroupsIO has been more active recently – keep it up!



Perhaps the biggest piece of news is that we hope to publish our energy statement soon. I must thank those who have dedicated a lot of time and (pardon the pun) energy to this project! I hope you will be supportive of the result and we can make people take note.



Member Visits

Members have recently enjoyed visits to 'Behind the scenes' visit to the Mitchell Library (no photos!) and to the new campus development at the University of Glasgow.

Members enjoyed exploring the Mitchell library and were amused to open a door and find they were looking down on the reading room! Interesting to hear about the modern day difficulties in managing an old building on a restricted site.

We were the second ever group to be on the engineering themed tour of Glasgow University! It is a very new tour. The tour took us around areas of engineering historical interest and finished up in front of the Keystone Building which will be renamed once it is complete around 2027/8. We will organise a tour around the building once it is complete. There were many mentions of IES leading figures Rankine and Thomson, emphasising our long and shared history.

The photos below are the (temporary) Mathematics and Statistics Building and the new engineering building – under construction, and a photo from St Mungo's Square looking at the construction. When finished it will be the second biggest building on campus





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Orkney International Science Festival

Members Visit



Once again Council Member Jemma Quin has flown the flag for IES at the Orkney International Science Festival!

The Institution is very pleased to have a presence there.

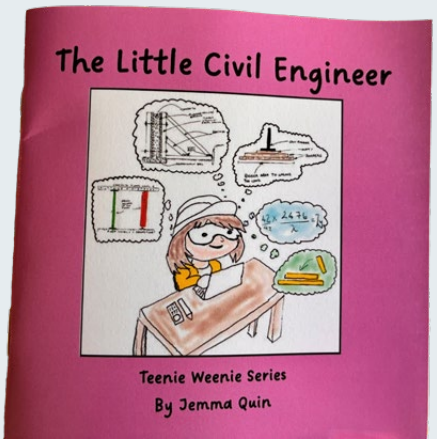
This year Jemma concentrated on working with schools: she ran 7 sessions on the Thursday with the high school students and two sessions on the Friday with 2 primary schools.

Overall, about 200 students reached. Each received a copy of my book and carried out the building challenge.

The Primary schools also carried out a paper plane activity based on my new book – the girl who touched a cloud.

If anyone would like a copy of Jemma's books they are available by clicking here

Jemma has also, very generously, offered to help with STEM events – if you would like Jemma to help please contact secretary@engineers.scot and we will pass your details on to Jemma



Wave at the Waverley! Renfrew Swing Bridge & Control Room



Image cropped from 'Renfrew Bridge from the air' by Thomas Nugent, Wikimedia CC BY-SA 2.0

9.45am, Saturday 17th October 2026

We have arranged for a visit and short talk at the control room of the new Renfrew Swing Bridge, which will coincide with an opening for the Waverley to pass through!

The 184m long Renfrew Bridge is the first opening road bridge over the River Clyde. It has a twin-leaf design, with each leaf opening and closing horizontally, supported by a cable stay system (similar to the Queensferry Crossing). The design echoes historical and heritage features from along the local riverside. As the bridge opens and closes, the silhouettes of the tilted masts and cables resemble the ship building cranes that once lined the River Clyde.

The tour will take approximately 1.0-1.5 hours.

Numbers are restricted and parking is very limited, and will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis. Members who wish to attend must register as soon as possible.

Please contact Laura to register for this event: secretary@engineers.scot



Our cuppa and chat meetings are an informal meeting of members, online, just for an hour. Conversation usually starts with the latest lecture and then goes in any direction!

Lecture Programme for 2026-2027

Full details for all of our events can be found at www.engineers.scot/events/ies-events

New members are welcome, if you are an Engineer or have an interest in Engineering, if you want to learn about current topics, discuss current topics or give something back we are the Institution for you. Find out more here

Presidential Address Realising design - From concept to completion

Dr Malcolm Robb

Dr Robb will take us on a journey from concept design to finish, highlighting pitfalls and opportunities along the way.

Tuesday 22nd September 2026
In-person at 6.30pm - Registration for In Person
Online at 6.30pm – Registration for Online

Biomedical Engineering:- Digital Integration of Medical Diagnostics into Connected Healthcare

Prof Jon Cooper

Prof Cooper will show how technologies enable real-time integration of community-generated health data into regional and national surveillance systems, strengthening both local care delivery and broader epidemic preparedness.

Tuesday 20th October 2026
In-person at 6.30pm - Registration for In-person
Online at 6.30pm - Registration for Online

The Rankine Memorial Lecture Joint Lecture with IMechE The challenges & opportunities at ScotRail Engineering

Barbara McIntyre

This talk will cover the engineering challenges associated with delivering trains into service in Scotland and what ScotRail's engineering team is doing to improve performance, reliability and customer experience.

Tuesday 10th November 2026
In-person at 6.30pm Registration for In-person
Online at 6.30pm – Registration for Online

Joint meeting with RINA To be confirmed

Monday 7th December 2026
Please register via the RINA Website

CPD certificates will be available on application

Come along to our very interesting lectures; register for in-person or online attendance and get access to lecture recordings. Better still, join us and be kept informed!

Joint meeting with IMarEST Thermotank, Fairfield and Sir Iain Maxwell Stewart

Ian Johnston

Ian will explain how air conditioning was invented in 1898 in Clydebank and led to the creation of the Thermotank Ventilation Company. Ian will also include the history of the Fairfield yard particularly the 'Fairfield Experiment'

Tuesday 12th January 2027
In-person at 6.30pm - Registration for In-person
Online at 6.30pm – Registration for Online

How paint works: the Forth Bridge and other stories

Prof Stuart Lyon

This talk will explain how paints work, why they sometimes don't work, and why modern corrosion protective organic coatings are smart, sustainable materials, critical in the protection of engineering and infrastructure assets and for extending their useful lifetimes.

Tuesday 9th February 2027
In-person at 6.30pm - Registration for In-person
Online at 6.30pm – Registration for Online

Are we alone in the universe? How do we Search for the Signature of Energy Intensive Extra Terrestrial Civilisations?

Prof Michael Garrett

Professor Garrett will discuss the latest developments in the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI) and how recent technical advances – particularly Artificial Intelligence – are transforming our ability to detect potential "Technosignatures" from distant civilisations.

Tuesday 9th March 2027
In-person at 6.30pm - Registration for In-person
Online at 6.30pm – Registration for Online

What if Systems Transition Engineering is the sustainability revolution that the world is hoping for?

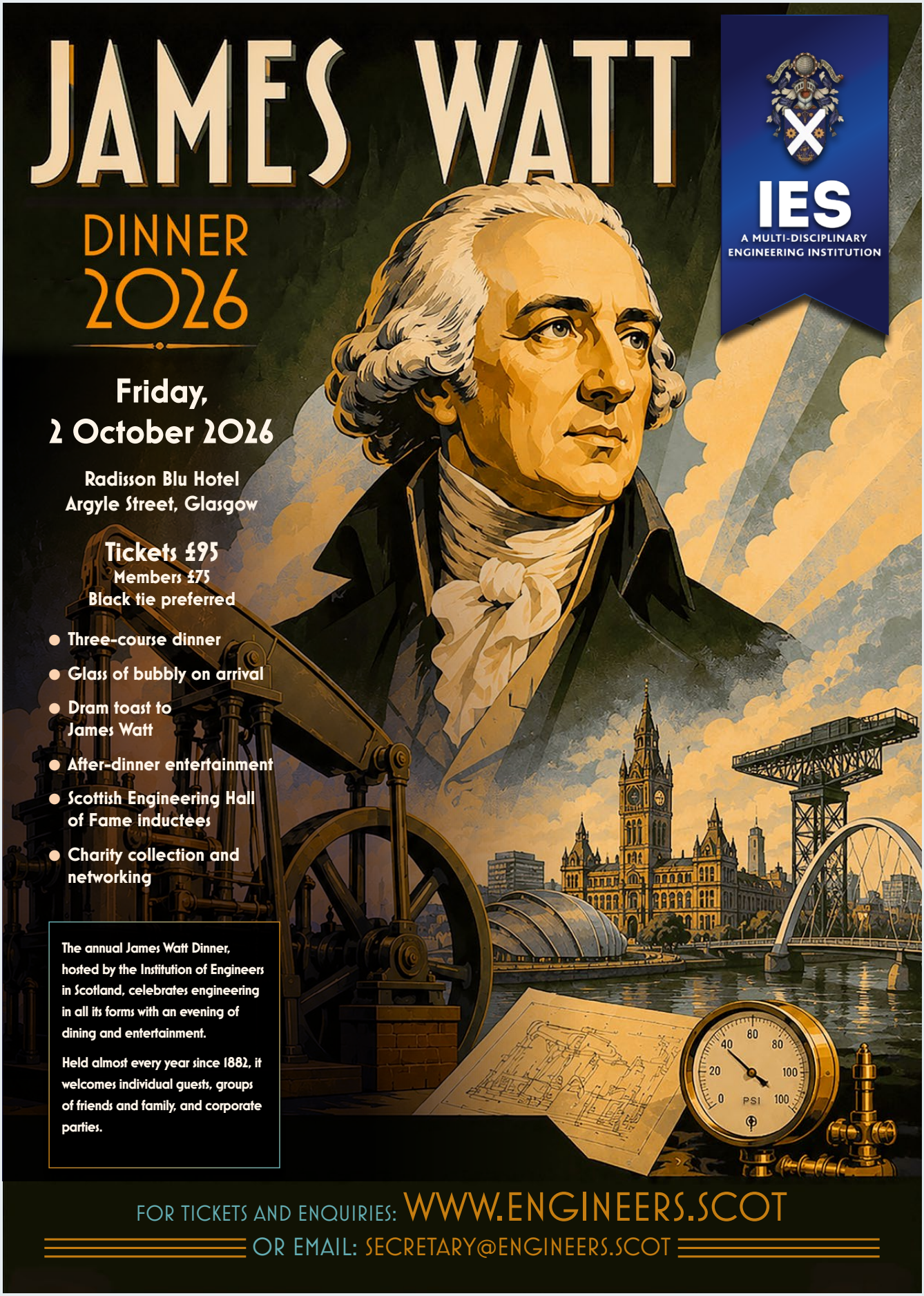
Prof Susan Krumdieck

This presentation will make the argument for an evolution in engineering that will change the trajectory of the 21st Century.

Tuesday 20th April 2027
In-person at 6.30pm - Registration for In-person
Online at 6.30pm – Registration for Online

AGM

April 2027 – full details will be confirmed in due course



I am delighted to announce details for this year's James Watt Dinner! We are now taking bookings.

Once again we have tried to reward our members with an attractive discount for their tickets – I hope you will not only take up the offer but will introduce friends, family and colleagues to the dinner.