

Introduction from the Chairman & Director



As the significance of science in our daily lives intensifies, it becomes increasingly important to optimise the policies the nation uses to organise and fund scientific education and research.

And it is progressively more important that there is an independent campaign pressing the case for effective science policies. SBS continues to fulfil that role. As this *Annual Review* demonstrates, we continue to have a significant impact.

One of the most serious problems facing society in the UK today is the state of scientific education in our schools and colleges. A shortage of well-qualified teachers, unwieldy exams, poor laboratories and red tape all contribute to a sense that we must do much better if we are to prepare our young people for the challenges of life in a modern democracy, dominated by science and technology. Pages 4 and 5 highlight some of the growing body of work SBS has been doing in this field during the year.

To have an impact on public debates, SBS needs to ensure that it is constantly in touch with the executive branch of Government, and pages 2 and 3 outline some of our contacts with Government ministers, civil servants and agencies during the past year. The legislature is also important, and SBS regularly interacts with backbench members of Parliament, as we detail on pages 6 and 7.

But in a democracy, it is also important that groups seeking to influence public policy engage with a wider audience, through various channels, including the press and broadcast media. On pages 10-11, we highlight a few of the activities we have undertaken in this field, including commenting in the media, publishing documents and giving talks and presentations to a wide variety of audiences. Pages 8 and 9 also detail some of the ways in which we engage with scientists and engineers, to guarantee that our interactions with Government, Parliament and the media are fully informed about the aspirations, achievements and potential of the scientific community.

This *Annual Review* inevitably describes only a selection of what SBS has achieved in the last year, and you can find out more about our activities at www.savebritishscience.org.uk. We look forward to continuing to press the case for science and engineering, and we would welcome your comments on our work.



Professor Richard Joyner, Chair of the Executive Committee and Dr Peter Cotgreave, Director of SBS.



Members of the SBS Executive Committee. clockwise from top left: Dr Vicki Stone, Steve Robinson, Prof Peter Saunders; Prof Michael Trevan, Ursula Martin, Rod Dowler.



Staff at SBS: from left: Rosemary Davison, Researcher; Susan O'Dwyer, Director's PA; and Sarah Sharp Pierson, Researcher.

Professor Richard Joyner
Executive Committee Chair

Dr Peter Cotgreave
Director

SBS & Government

SBS has always prided itself on its interactions with Government. Although our job is to focus attention on areas where Government policy requires change and improvement, our clear argument and authoritative information mean that ministers and civil servants continue to listen to what we are saying on behalf of the scientific community.

The Prime Minister's Office and the Treasury

Anyone wishing to influence Government thinking must win the support of the Prime Minister, and SBS was once again welcomed to the Prime Minister's Office to discuss the most important current concerns about science policy. Tony Blair used video technology to address a meeting of scientists in June, at which the Director of SBS, Dr Peter Cotgreave, had set out our view of some important science policy issues. Organised by the Royal Society of Chemistry, this Parliamentary event proves that the scientific community's messages are clearly reaching the Prime Minister.

Making things happen in Government depends on convincing the Treasury that policies deserve investment, so it is crucial for SBS to interact with the Treasury. Among other contacts, senior Treasury officials attended a meeting on the subject of taking risks in funding research, organised by SBS Committee Member Professor Don Braben and addressed by Sir James Black, who sits on SBS's Advisory Council, and by SBS's Director.

SBS was also among the small group of institutions represented at a breakfast meeting with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and others to discuss the Government's plans for the future of science policy (see box opposite).

The Department for Education & Skills

As the department responsible for the universities, and for science in schools and colleges, the DfES is an important target for SBS. During the year, we enjoyed an extremely useful meeting with the Higher Education Minister, Alan Johnson MP, who also has overall departmental responsibility for science. As well as discussing the Government's plans for the financing of universities, we also raised concerns about the recruitment of science teachers, and about the remuneration of scientific staff in the universities. Both Mr Johnson and Sir Alan Wilson, the Director General of Higher Education, offered their support for SBS's Symposium on recruiting and retaining world-class staff in universities (see p. 9).

It is also vital that SBS interacts with the Higher Education Funding Council for England, as the Department's agency responsible for funding the universities. In October, we had a very positive meeting with Sir Howard Newby, the Chief Executive of HEFCE, to discuss proposals to change the ways in which both teaching and research are financed.



The Director of SBS addresses a Parliamentary audience at the Royal Society of Chemistry's Parliamentary Links Day [photo: RSC].



Sir Howard Newby, chief executive of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, interacts with an SBS member.



Participants in a meeting on risk taking in funding decisions: L-R: SBS Director Dr Peter Cotgreave; SBS Committee member Prof Don Braben, Pat Heslop-Harrison.

The Government's ten-year framework for investment in science

In March, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, invited SBS to take part in a meeting at Number 11 Downing Street, with a handful of other representatives of the scientific community. The meeting launched the discussions that informed the Government's ten-year framework for investing in science and innovation.

As well as the Chancellor, three other Cabinet Ministers were present - the Education Secretary, Charles Clarke; the Trade Secretary, Patricia Hewitt; and the Treasury's Chief Secretary, Paul Boateng. In addition, the Science Minister, Lord Sainsbury, and senior officials including Sir Keith O'Nions, Director General of the Research Councils and Daniel Storey, Head of Innovation at the Treasury, were also present. The meeting gave SBS another chance to make sure that our views were heard in all parts of the Government.

It is a mark of SBS's success that, through our constant campaigning and connections with the wider scientific community, our views are sought directly by ministers and officials.

SBS also submitted a detailed written response to the ten-year plan, and held meetings with officials involved in drafting the final document. We had already submitted evidence to several of the previous consultations that fed into the ten-year framework, including reviews of research assessment, research funding, the supply of scientists and links between universities and industry.

The Office of Science & Technology

The Minister of Science and the Chief Scientific Adviser remain key points of contact for SBS. During the year, SBS has enjoyed a number of interactions with both Lord Sainsbury and Sir David King, and in June, two senior officials from the Department participated in SBS's Symposium on academic staff, which is described on page 9.

Other Departments

One of the year's highlights of interactions with other Departments was in November, when SBS's Annual Distinguished Lecture was given by Professor Howard Dalton, the Chief Scientific Adviser at the Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs. In an interesting and wide ranging presentation, covering everything from tuberculosis in badgers to global climate change, Professor Dalton gave considerable insight into the way in which his Department obtains and interprets scientific advice. Members and supporters of SBS were able to interact directly with Howard Dalton at the reception that followed his Distinguished Lecture.

At a meeting of people interested in science policy in December, we were also able to interact with Dr Angela Wilson, who is leading the science reviews of individual Government Departments, starting with the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.



Dr Peter Cotgreave on his way into No 11 Downing Street to meet with senior officials to discuss science policy [photo: S Benn].



Professor Howard Dalton, gives the Distinguished Lecture, providing an insight into science policy at DEFRA.

SBS & Schools

Among the most serious concerns of the scientific community is the difficulty of maintaining and enhancing first rate science education in schools, and consequently in interesting young people in science, engineering and technology. SBS has built strong links with the educational community, and now plays an important role in campaigning on the issue of science in schools.

Practical classes

SBS carried out a major survey of science teachers in England, and found that some 77% of schools are cancelling practical classes. The most common reason is behavioural problems, where teachers feel that the difficulties caused by disruptive children make it impossible to conduct some experiments. Other reasons include a lack of equipment, and class sizes that are so large that carrying out experiments is not a practicable option.

Equipment

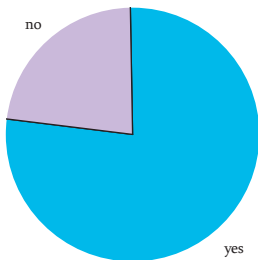
SBS's survey also revealed the extent to which schools lack the equipment they need to teach science. Although the heads of science in most schools feel they are adequately funded for consumables, most feel substantially underfunded when it comes to larger items of laboratory equipment and computers.

Three out of five teachers believe that poor laboratory equipment affects schools' ability to attract good staff, and positive effects on recruitment were noticed in schools where facilities had recently been upgraded.



Scottish Science Teachers at an SBS meeting: from left: Stuart Farmer, Sandy McLennan, Sandra Buchan, Louise Guy, Sue Crosson, with Rosemary Davies from SBS.

Are your students ever unable to carry out a practical which would otherwise form part of the course?



Pie chart showing the proportion of teachers whose students are sometimes unable to carry out practical classes.



Science laboratory at the Thomas Hardy School, as specialist science college, where new Executive Committee Member Julia Harley teaches.

CONSULTING SCOTTISH TEACHERS

Following a highly successful discussion with a focus group of science teachers in England last year, SBS carried out a similar exercise in Scotland. In April, a group of science teachers from a variety of schools told us about their concerns. The group was particularly enthusiastic that SBS should take forward these issues, following the changes which have been implemented regarding the old inspection system and *Learning & Teaching Scotland*, which they feel has left them without adequate communication between the classroom and higher authorities. Where funding for equipment is concerned, the problems raised revolved around administration systems as much as the quantities available, where the Scottish Executive Education Department, local authority and school-level allocation procedures can have a detrimental effect on school facilities. The availability of cover staff, particularly in physics, was also raised as a significant issue affecting the recruitment and retention of full time staff. The teachers were looking for a substantial curriculum development in science, and felt positive about the prospect of a 'science for citizenship' type course in Scotland, as has been introduced in England.

Assessment

Problems with the assessment of science were also a strong element of SBS's survey. Nine out of every ten teachers believe that there are problems with the current methods of assessing practical and investigative skills. Teaching staff highlighted an emphasis on formulaic prescriptive projects, rather than creative experimentation.

As well as a substantial report and discussion on BBC Radio Cymru, the survey also prompted stories in a range of media, from *The Independent* to *Professional Engineering*.

The supply of teachers

Possibly the most important problem facing science in schools at the moment is the supply of well-qualified science teachers. In our survey of schools, we found that over a third of science teachers believe they are currently spending too much time teaching mathematics, partly because their schools' mathematics departments are significantly under-staffed. So SBS strongly supported the findings of the review of mathematics teachers in February, appearing on a variety of media outlets to argue the case for ensuring that all pupils have the chance of being taught by specialist teachers in mathematics and the core sciences.

Reform of the curriculum

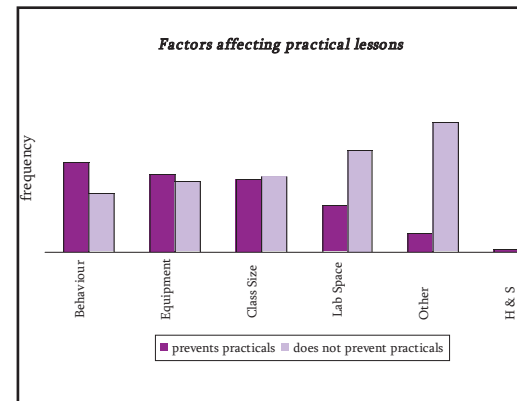
During the year, there has been a great deal of discussion about the reform of the curriculum for children aged 14-19. SBS submitted evidence to the inquiry, and raised a number of important issues about the subject in the *Times Educational Supplement* and elsewhere. The current proposals are far too weak, and will need very significant strengthening, particularly in terms of the technical vocational training that the nation will need to offer young people if we are to have a workforce able to take full advantage of the opportunities offered in a knowledge economy.

Contact with teachers and schools

It is crucial that SBS's campaigning activity is informed by up-to-date contact with pupils and teachers throughout the educational system.

As well as an in-depth focus group (see box opposite), SBS has interacted with a wide range of students and staff in various schools and colleges. In September, we visited Cheltenham College, and gave a talk about science in society. In June, SBS attended the finals of the Teach First Challenge, which concentrates on the ideas of young graduates about how to engage children about science in ways that excite and interest the pupils.

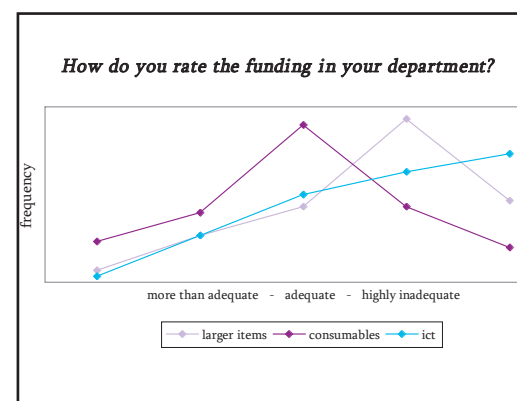
During the year, we have also welcomed Julia Harley onto SBS's Executive Committee. Head of Science at the Thomas Hardy School in Dorset, Julia brings to the Committee first-hand knowledge of the state of science in modern secondary schools.



Bar chart showing teachers' opinions of the factors that affect the teaching of practical lessons.



Julia Harley, new Executive Committee member and science teacher.



Graph showing teachers' opinions on the adequacy of funding for different types of equipment.

SBS & Parliament

As well influencing the Government, it is important for SBS to continue to interact with Parliament. Backbench debates, select committee inquiries and parliamentary questions are all important ways of influencing policy. SBS is constantly seeking ways of interacting with Parliamentarians to assist them in holding the Government to account for its science policies.

Backbench activity

SBS is keen to work with backbenchers of all parties and we have been pleased to assist them in a variety of ways. When the House of Lords debated links between science and politics in December, SBS helped several members prepare their speeches, and we have also assisted members of the House of Commons with articles and speeches on subjects as diverse as tax policy for high-technology companies and the shortage of science teachers in schools.

In May, SBS was mentioned on the floor of the House of Commons in connection with the research work described on page 8, and in June, both SBS and its Director were named in an Early Day Motion congratulating the scientific community on its activities in influencing parliament.

SBS was also able to address a meeting of MPs and peers in June, at Parliamentary Links Day, an annual event coordinated by the Royal Society of Chemistry. SBS Director Peter Cotgreave spoke about our hopes for the Government's ten-year framework for science, and answered questions from parliamentarians and scientists.

Parliamentary Questions

During the year, SBS assisted various MPs and peers in drafting parliamentary questions. Significant among these were two important series of questions that Dr Brian Iddon MP asked, after consulting with SBS.

The first series sought information about the number of scientists brought in to assist regular civil servants, following a recommendation from the Council for Science & Technology that more were needed. Some of the answers made depressing reading,



Dr Hefin Jones, of Cardiff University, a Welsh voice on the SBS Executive Committee.

No. 100	Notices of Motions: 15th June 2004	6061
1382 ROYAL SOCIETY OF CHEMISTRY PARLIAMENTARY LINKS DAY 15:604		
Dr Brian Iddon [R]	Dr Andrew Harrison [R]	
Bob Spink		
Dr Ian Gibson		
Mr Tam Dalyell		
Mr David Heath		
Mr Gordon Prosser	David Wright	Rob Marris
Clara McCafferty	Mr Michael Clapham	Mr Tom Clarke
Richard Burden	Jan Sheridan	Jim Dobbin
Mr Mark Lazarowicz	Mr Andrew Love	Mrs Ann Cryer
Mr Kevia Hopkins	Mr Bill Tynan	Dr Deng Naysmith
Helen Jones	Mr John Lyons	Mr Terry Lewis
Syd Rapson	John Robertson	
Audy King	Mr Lindsay Hoyle	
<p>That this House congratulates The Royal Society of Chemistry on holding its Parliamentary Links Day at the House on Tuesday 22nd June and on its continuing commitment to serve the public interest by seeking to improve the access to all honourable Members to scientific information and a better understanding of science; notes that among those contributing to this year's event are senior figures drawn from all the core science disciplines and from engineering, including Professor Julia Goodfellow of the Institute of Biology, Lord Broers of the Royal Academy of Engineering, Dr Peter Cotgreave from Save British Science, Dr Julia King from the Institute of Physics, and Dr Simon Campbell from the Royal Society of Chemistry; notes that Parliamentary Links Day is now an established and respected event on the annual parliamentary calendar; applauds the co-operative involvement in this event of the Royal Society of Chemistry, the Institute of Physics, the Institute of Biology and its affiliated bodies, and many others.</p>		

Parliamentary Early Day Motion from the Royal Society of Chemistry's Parliamentary Links Day, naming SBS and Peter Cotgreave.



Professor Hugh Pennington, SBS Advisory Council Member, with Jim Wallace MSP, Deputy First Minister of Scotland and Minister for Science.

SELECT

Parliamentary select committees are important issues and ensure that the particular areas of policy.

SBS has a long tradition of taking full Select Committee inquiries, particularly Science & Technology Committee of t

In the past year, we have given evidence on issues such as the Research Assessment

We know that SBS's opinions help shape ways. First, and most directly, we are. For example, the Chairman of SBS, Peter Cotgreave, spoke about the Research Assessment Exercise changes in the way the exercise will be

Second, members of the Committees of Inquiry ask their questions to other individuals and organisations. In December, Tony McWalter MP used his year in support of his arguments when

The third way in which we can see that our views and opinions seriously is the frequency of Committee reports. When the Science and Technology Committee report on whether the UK is getting value in the European Union, it made extensive use of our opinions on Networks of Excellence, a key agenda of the European Framework

with the Department for Education claiming it has had no secondaries with a scientific background in the past five years, and the Department of Trade & Industry unable to answer the question.

The second series of questions was aimed at elucidating what each Government Department has done to enhance science since the publication of the Government's strategy for science in 2002. The published answers form a fascinating snapshot of science in Government.

Advisors

SBS's Advisory Council has always included parliamentarians of all parties. At a dinner for the Council in May (see page 8), all three major parties were represented. Dr Ian Gibson MP from the Labour Party and Conservative Ian Taylor MP were joined by Liberal Democrat Baroness Sharp to help inform SBS's parliamentary activities.

Other Parliaments and Assemblies

As well as the UK's Parliament in Westminster, SBS interacts with members of the Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly and Northern Ireland Assembly.

COMMITTEES

cial part of our democracy. They raise
Government is paying proper attention to

antage of the opportunities offered by
those undertaken by the influential
House of Commons.

to the committee on issues including
t Exercise and scientific publishing.

the committee's reports in a number of
sometimes invited to give oral evidence.
essor Richard Joyner, was questioned
e as part of the committee's inquiry into
un.

en quote SBS's material when framing
rganisations. For example, at a session
ures published by SBS earlier in the
ramining Government officials.

roof that Select Committees take SBS's
ency with which we are quoted in Select
Technology Committee published its
for money out of its scientific investment
e use of SBS's evidence, quoting our
all levels of funding, the socio-policial
gramme, and basic research.

A highlight of the year's activities was a meeting in Edinburgh in November, at which SBS representatives met with a number of Members of the Scottish Parliament, including Deputy First Minister Jim Wallace MSP, who is also Minister for Science. Organised by the Royal Society of Chemistry in conjunction with SBS and others, this event is now a regular fixture in the parliamentary calendar.

SBS's activities in Wales and Northern Ireland have been strengthened by the addition of two new members to the Executive Committee. Dr Hefin Jones of Cardiff University and Dr Chris Hardacre of Queen's University Belfast will bring specialist knowledge of their parts of the UK, so that SBS can continue to be an effective voice for science throughout the UK.



Interactions in Scotland: SBS Director Dr F Cotgreave meets the Scottish Science Minister and two representatives from the Society of General Microbiology.

“An effect of the RAE is to drive people toward good but relatively safe science.”

Richard Joyner, being questioned by
House of Commons
Science & Technology Committee



New Executive Committee member, Dr Chris Hardacre, of Queen's University Belfast.

Research & Networking

One of the crucial elements of any campaign is ensuring that information and opinions are up-to-date. SBS has a very active programme of research and networking to guarantee that we are focusing on issues of current concern, and that we are using relevant and authoritative facts in our arguments.

SYMPOSIUM

From time to time, SBS brings together businesspeople, academics, civil servants and others to discuss and debate topical issues where existing policies need fresh impetus.

In early June, we held a Symposium entitled *Attracting the Best* on the subject of ensuring that universities in the UK can continue to recruit and retain excellent researchers in the global competition for the best talent. British universities are now routinely experiencing difficulties in attracting researchers of the highest calibre, and 57% in a national survey said that they have either returned grants or left posts unfilled because of the impossibility of attracting truly outstanding candidates.

Made possible by the sponsorship of the Wellcome Trust, the event was attended by representatives of Government, market analysts, researchers, university administrators, representatives of the charity sector and industrialists.

Over two days, the team worked on the specific issue of the remuneration of academic staff, putting firm estimates on the salaries needed to compete with business and overseas universities.

The final report presents a compelling case for changes in the remuneration of university staff in science, engineering and technology, estimating that the UK Government would need to release an extra £250 million per year to make a serious impression on the current difficulties. Importantly, the report gives a clear outline of how that money should be targeted to ensure that it goes towards correcting the current failure of the market in academic talent.

Networking

There is a huge variety among the events and meetings in which SBS has participated in the past year. Industrial links have been strengthened by attendance at meetings of the R&D Society, interaction with the FTSE4Good organisation, a meeting with the Industry Forum, and attendance at the *Laboratory News* Industry Awards ceremony.

A meeting with the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry in May led directly to new links with the Regional Development Agencies, which will be becoming important players in the funding of scientific research. Our work on science education has been informed by visiting schools, engaging with TeachFirst and holding

a focus group for science teachers. SBS's understanding of issues affecting the science base has been enhanced by visits to universities and participation in events as far apart as Windsor, Edinburgh, Brighton, Norwich and Manchester.



The *Laboratory News* Industry Awards ceremony: from left: Bob McGuinness of NPL, Alice Sharp Pierson of SBS, Brian Harrison of Johnson Matthey and the UK Analytical Partnership.

"SBS hits the parts that other organisations can't reach."

Dr Ian Gibson MP, Chairman of the House of Commons Science & Technology Committee, at a Dinner for SBS's Advisory Council



Advisory Council members: from left: Jane Cannon, Dr Tom Inch, Dr Simon Campbell, Sir Harry Kroto, Prof Joe Lamb, Baroness Sharp, Dr Ian Gibson MP, Sir Martin Rees, Ian Taylor MP, Sir Ian Lloyd, Sir Chris Llewellyn Smith, Prof Bob Michell, Sir Eric Ash, Sir Brian Follett.

Our knowledge of science in government has been enhanced by attendance at meetings of PolicyNet, which encourages people working in the field of science policy to meet those responsible for implementing the Government's agenda. SBS representatives sit on the Science Policy Board of the Institute of Biology and the Parliamentary Affairs Committee of the Royal Society of Chemistry. SBS has made presentations to parliamentarians, to university staff and students, to charities and to schools.

SBS continues to see the charity sector as an important part of the funding landscape for British science, and we enjoyed a very positive meeting with the Director of the Wellcome Trust in February. SBS was also among the organisations that fought the Government's plans to remove scientific work from the definition of charitable activity in its new legislation on charities. Our response to the proposal argued strongly that science should not be excluded when arts and culture were included. We were delighted when, in August, the Government backed down, and reinstated science in its proposals.

The list goes on, and these are just a handful of the many types of interaction that SBS undertakes in its efforts to keep fully conversant with the thinking of different individuals and groups with an interest in the scientific health of the UK.

Advisory Council

SBS's Advisory Council is made up of eminent scientists, engineers, parliamentarians and businesspeople whose skills, knowledge and experience help to ensure that SBS is well informed and effective. The individual members of the Advisory Council assist SBS in various ways, and occasionally they get together for discussion over dinner. In May, fourteen members of the Council met with SBS staff and members of the Executive Committee.

Members of the Council offered strong support for SBS's campaign. "I support SBS," said Prof Bob Michell "because few countries which have contributed so much to science, and benefited so much from it, cherish it so little, and support it so grudgingly".

Research and analysis

SBS continues to perform research and analysis in the field of science policy. A major piece of work this year was the survey of science teachers, which is described on page 4. In addition, our responses to various Government consultations have included detailed analysis of official statistics and other information.

SBS's attention to detailed analysis allowed us to calculate that Government proposals for changes in the funding of universities would have resulted in a £22 million annual cut in funding for science and engineering. This figure was then widely used in Parliament and elsewhere. It contributed to the campaign that led to the Government changing its mind about the proposals.



Participants at SBS's symposium: from left: Prof Haines, Rosemary Davies, Dr Sarah Harris, Peter Cotgreave, Christian Carter, Dr A McFarlane, Michael Carr, Dr Tony Whitehead, Sean McWhinnie, Prof Richard Joyner, Alice Sharp Pierson, Prof Peter Saunders, Dr Peter Knox.

**"Numbers, graphs,
statistics advanced by
SBS are correct!"**

Sir Eric AshFRS FR



At the Advisory Council Dinner: from left: Alice Sharp Pierson, Prof Joe Lamb, and Dr Ian Gibb

Spreading our Message

From its inception, SBS has always interacted with the media to ensure that the scientific community's views about public policy can be heard in as wide a variety of outlets as possible. We pride ourselves on being the first port of call for many journalists looking for information or opinion on science policy.

The SBS Newsletter

SBS's quarterly newsletter continues to be a source of informed comment about developments in science, technology and education policy.

Articles in the last year included subjects such as university admission, science and the budget, mathematics teaching in primary schools, science in the devolved administrations, the career structures of technical staff and of course, the Government's ten-year strategy for science.

Broadcast media

Journalists from the broadcast media regularly seek SBS's opinions about many areas of current interest. During the past year, BBC Radio 4's *The Material World* programme held a discussion with SBS Executive Committee member Professor Don Braben on the subject of funding for venture research, while BBC Radio 5 Live has interviewed the Director of SBS several times on a variety of issues, including children's images of scientists and careers for young scientists.

Local and regional stations have also sought our views, including Radio Shropshire, Radio Essex, Greater Manchester Radio, Radio Gloucestershire and Radio Berkshire.

National newspapers

The broadsheet newspapers continue to publish SBS's comments and opinions on a regular basis. As well as commenting on stories as they occur, SBS has written articles and letters in a variety of national newspapers, including *The Times*, *The Financial Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, *The Times Educational Supplement* and *The Times Higher Education Supplement*.

Substantial pieces about issues such as Government investment plans and science education have quoted extensively from SBS publications. Other newspapers that have included comment from SBS include *The Observer* and *The Independent*.

Specialist, regional and local publications

Articles and letters have appeared in specialist scientific publications such as *Research Fortnight*, *Science & Public Affairs*, *Nature*, *Microbiology Today*, *Laboratory News* and *Immunology News*.



Some of the press coverage received by SBS over the past year. You can find a full list in the supplement to this *Annual Review*.

Comment and analysis from SBS has also appeared in a variety of business and innovation publications, including *Innovation Policy Review*, *Making Money*, *Process Engineering*, *Chemistry and Industry*, *Electronics Weekly* and *Horticulture Week*.

Local publications, and those based in the devolved parts of the UK are also important vehicles for promoting SBS's messages. As well as newspapers such as the *Scotsman*, *Herald* and *Western Mail*, SBS uses regional papers in England, such as the *Birmingham Post* to reach as wide an audience as possible.

Talks and presentations

SBS regularly gives talks and makes presentations to audiences from schoolchildren to parliamentarians. During the year, we have spoken about *Science in Society* to sixth form students, about *The Decline of Blue Skies Research* to researchers at the University of Sussex, about *The Government's Plans for Science* to scientists and parliamentarians, about *Government Science Policy* to the policy committee of the Royal Society of Chemistry and about *The Importance of Blue Skies Research* at the British Association Festival of Science in Salford

A RETURN ON SCIENTIFIC INVESTMENT

In May, SBS published a supplement to its newsletter, setting out some of what the scientific community has done with the investment it received in previous Government spending reviews.

Highlighting the successes of science education, research in universities, and the economic returns of science and engineering, it aims to give a snapshot of the superb value for money offered by the scientific community.

For example, an article by Professor Robbie Burch from Queen's University Belfast explains how funding from the Science Research Investment Fund has not only revolutionised what chemists in his institution are able to do, but is helping to create local jobs, with an spin-out company now a major employer.

Other examples include the benefits that microbiologists have delivered in recent years, including rapid work in the development of vaccines for novel viruses such as the strain of 'bird flu' that first appeared in Vietnam in the early part of 2004.

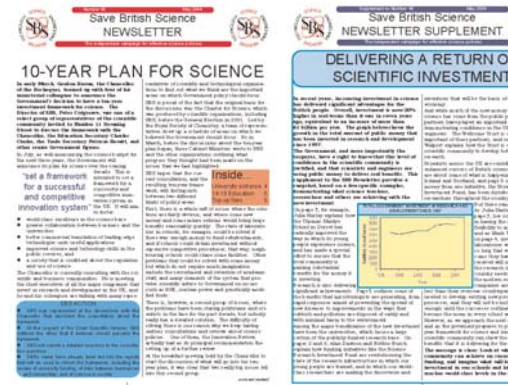
The supplement also includes an article from the Director of the Wellcome Trust, Dr Mark Walport, who describes how the Government's partners are enabling the scientific community to develop both research and education.

Direct involvement by the community is involved both in the projects described by the University of East Anglia and in developments taking place in specialist science colleges.

All in all, the supplement presents a powerful case that scientists are delivering significant returns for the investment that taxpayers have awarded them, and the message is clear: Look at what the scientific community can achieve on current levels of funding, and imagine what will be achieved as investment in our schools and laboratories research world-class levels in the coming years.



SBS Director, Dr Peter Cotgreave, speaks at Institute of Biology Affiliated Societies Forum (photo: IoB)



SBS newsletter and the recent supplement, which detailed how previous scientific investment is making a difference.



Dr Peter Cotgreave, on Newsnight, BBC2.

SBS People

Members

SBS's membership base continues to widen, and we have also introduced a new category of registered supporter. Our activities in relating to science in schools have caught the attention of many teachers, a significant number of whom have joined during the year.

The institutional members now include a wide variety of universities, public and private bodies, large and small industrial companies, publishers, venture capitalists and others, all of which recognise the importance of a strong and healthy science base for the economy of the UK. New supporters during the year included the British Library.



Julia Harley, a new Executive Committee member at her school in Dorset.

Advisory Council

The Advisory Council has again been enhanced this year, as Sir James Black OM FRS joins the other distinguished scientists and engineers who support SBS's important campaigning work. Jim Black won a share of the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine in 1988 for his important discoveries in drug treatments; among many other significant achievements, he developed the first successful beta-blocker. His distinguished status does not prevent his speaking out on behalf of science, and we were delighted when Sir James took part in a conference on the importance of risk-taking in science, organised by SBS Committee member Don Braben in September.



Richard Joyner welcoming Dr Hefin Jones onto the Executive Committee.

Executive Committee

As the governing body of the Society, it is essential that the Committee represents a wide range of different scientific interests. This year, we have taken steps to strengthen the committee with three new members from different backgrounds.

Julia Harley is the Head of Science at the Thomas Hardy School, a specialist science school in Dorset. Having an active teacher on the committee is an excellent way of enhancing our strengths in the field of science in schools and colleges. Julia has already made a significant contribution to SBS's document about what science is delivering for the investment it receives, described on page 11.

Dr Hefin Jones is an ecologist from Cardiff University, and he brings an excellent knowledge of Welsh affairs. Hefin's scientific experience and contacts in Cardiff are already paying dividends, and he was interviewed for a lengthy radio discussion about science in Wales.



New Executive Committee member Dr Chris Hardacre at CenTACat, a world-class centre for the theory and application of catalysis at Queen's University Belfast.

We have never before had committee member from Northern Ireland. However, Dr Chris Hardacre, a chemist from Queen's University Belfast, recently joined the committee, and SBS will be able to undertake more campaigning in Ulster.