

# Introduction from the Chairman and Director

Another busy year for **SBS** has centred around three main themes. First, **SBS** has been taking a central role in high profile debates about the future of higher education in the UK. Second, we have increasingly been campaigning on the issue of science in schools, where substantial problems remain to be solved. Third, **SBS** has redoubled its efforts to influence the healthy relationship between the research base and the economic well-being of the country.

This *Annual Review*, covering the period between July 2002 and June 2003, sets out some of the activities that **SBS** has undertaken in these areas, as well

as giving details of our ongoing programme of meetings with ministers and civil servants. On pages 8 and 9, we also highlight our commitment to campaigning for science in the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Page 12 is about the people that make **SBS** the effective organisation that it is - including the membership, staff and Advisory Council. One of the highlights of the year was a dinner held in June to mark the retirement of **Professor Joe Lamb**, the Founding Chairman of **SBS**,

and a member of our Executive Committee for 17 years. Pictured below with some of the current committee members, Joe's work at **SBS** is an example of the persistent and committed campaigning that continues to make **SBS** a successful advocate of science in the UK.

The coming year offers many challenges and opportunities for **SBS**. Legislation on the Government's proposals for the universities is expected in the next



**Professor Joe Lamb and Executive Committee members**

Queen's Speech, another Spending Review will be published next summer, and the debate about the nation's schools is intensifying. Our programme of activities over

the coming twelve months is already set to be ambitious, and **SBS** will be making every effort to maintain and enhance the level of activity and influence described in this *Annual Review*.

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 our website: [www.savebritishscience.org.uk](http://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,  
Chairman of the Executive Committee

Dr Peter Cotgreave,  
Director

# SBS in Westminster and Whitehall

**For **SBS** to be successful, we must remain in constant dialogue with ministers, backbenchers and civil servants in the various parts of Parliament and Government that deal with science policy. Our record of direct and authoritative discussion ensures that we continue to enjoy constructive conversations with the key decision-makers.**

## Prime Minister's Office

Any campaigning organisation needs to be heard at the centre of Government, and **SBS** is proud of its record of debate with the Prime Minister's Policy Unit. During the past year, **SBS** enjoyed a discussion with two members of the Unit dealing with education, including university research, and with trade & industry matters, including science and technology.

## Treasury

The distribution of funds is a key element of modern Government, and **SBS** is always in dialogue with the Treasury. In December, an **SBS** delegation met with **Paul Boateng**, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, for a very fruitful discussion about Higher Education policy. Subsequently **Professor Michael Trevan**, of **SBS**'s Executive Committee, provided more detailed information for the Chief Secretary's team and the Treasury requested further opinion and evidence from the **SBS** office. Mr Boateng's Office has suggested that a further meeting with **SBS** would be useful, and we look forward to continuing interaction with the Treasury on issues of science policy.

## Department of Trade & Industry, and Office of Science & Technology

Responsibility for science policy is housed within the Trade & Industry Department, and in particular within the Office of Science & Technology, so it is imperative

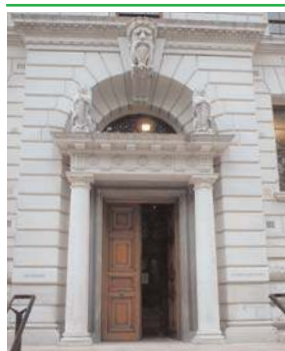
that **SBS** interacts regularly with ministers and civil servants from within this Department.

In June, a group of **SBS** members, together with representatives of the Advisory Council and Executive Committee met with Science Minister, **Lord Sainsbury**. At a meeting in March, an **SBS** delegation took part in a discussion about engineering policy with **Dr John Taylor**, Director General of the Research Councils. During the year, **SBS** representatives have also attended meetings that have allowed them to discuss current policy issues with **Professor John O'Reilly** and **Professor Julia Goodfellow**, Chief Executives of two of the Research Councils.

In December, members of **SBS**'s Executive Committee, together with some of our supporters from academia and industry, enjoyed a wide-ranging discussion with **Professor David King**, Chief Scientific Adviser to the UK Government.



**Professor Michael Trevan, a member of the **SBS** delegation that met Paul Boateng.**



## Department for Education & Skills

Some of SBS's work in relation to areas of responsibility of the Department for Education is highlighted on pages 4-5, and on pages 6-7, dealing with universities and schools respectively.

## Other Departments

Among SBS's many ongoing monitoring activities is the job of analysing and commenting on science in the various Government Departments. For example, in October we met with Professor Howard Dalton, the Chief Scientific Adviser at the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

In October, when the Culture Secretary, Tessa Jowell, referred disparagingly to "fat chemistry teachers" being inadequate alternatives to cover arts and humanities lessons in schools, SBS pointed out in the *Guardian* that the Department of Culture, Media & Sport should take a more positive attitude to science, given that it has responsibility for a number of scientific museums and libraries, and invests £12 million each year in research and development.

## PARLIAMENTARY SELECT COMMITTEES

Parliamentary Select Committees play a valuable role in highlighting issues that the Government needs to address, and SBS has a positive role in interacting with them, especially the Science & Technology Committee in the House of Commons.

For example, when SBS submitted written evidence to the Committee's inquiry into research funding in the European Union, we were invited to attend and give further oral evidence, which we did in February. In a series of rapid-fire questions, the MPs on the Committee were able to obtain a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of EU funding as perceived by SBS.

As well as formal evidence, SBS maintains informal contact with members and staff of the Committee. For example, in November, SBS met with the Chairman of the Committee, Dr Ian Gibson MP, for a discussion about issues the Committee might raise in the future, while in March, we met the Committee's Clerk and support staff.

Other inquiries to which SBS submitted evidence during the year included those on short-term contracts in science and engineering, and on the Medical Research Council.

SBS's views are taken seriously by the Committee and are frequently quoted in the published reports of inquiries. For example, in their document on short-term contracts, the MPs highlighted what we had identified as the key issue by saying: "*We are sympathetic to the view expressed by Save British Science that universities have too few unencumbered funds to allow them to manage their research with discretion*".

The press also continually reports the evidence and opinions that SBS feeds to Parliamentary Committees. Our views on short-term contracts were covered by the *Sunday Times*, and when we briefed Committee members for their report on science in schools, the *Guardian*, *Mail on Sunday* and *Financial Times* all reported what SBS had said.

Some of the doors through which SBS representatives have gained access to parts of Whitehall and Westminster in the last year. From left: Her Majesty's Treasury, MPs' offices at Portcullis House, the Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs, the Palace of Westminster, the Department of Trade & Industry, and Number 10 Downing Street.



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# SBS and the Universities

**The universities remain the single largest sector of the science and engineering research base, and the continued health of the higher education sector is one of the principal planks of SBS's activity. The past year has seen considerable discussion about the future of the universities, and SBS has been in the forefront of the debate.**

## White Paper

SBS was involved in a good many important discussions in the run-up to the long-delayed White Paper on the future of higher education. In July we corresponded with former Secretary of State [Estelle Morris](#) about the accuracy of the information being published by her Department, and in November we sent a memorandum to the new Secretary of State [Charles Clarke](#), outlining SBS's main concerns. A detailed response from his Department demonstrated that our views are taken seriously, and SBS submitted a long and closely-argued document to the formal consultation in advance of the White Paper's publication in January.

Although the final version of the White Paper identified a number of key problems for the higher education system in England and Wales, it failed to offer adequate solutions, and SBS published a detailed critique in April, debunking some of the Government's misleading and unhelpful statements and proposals.

## Research Assessment

The ways in which the quality of research is assessed have been the subject of considerable focus for several years. As a new round of consultations and proposals began in November, SBS set out the principles on which we believe research might be judged.

SBS also produced, for the first time, a compilation of the various definitions of the "dual support" system that have been used by different Government Departments. SBS's work showed that substantial ambiguity has led to funding decisions being made in the absence of clear criteria about which budget is supposed to pay for which aspects of university research.

In January, the leader of the review of research assessment, [Sir Gareth Roberts](#), gave the annual SBS Distinguished Lecture. Focusing on the development of his proposals for new methods of assessing research quality, Sir Gareth gave a wide-ranging and fascinating talk. It is a tribute to the place of SBS's Distinguished Lecture in the scientific calendar that not only was the talk covered by the press, but it was well-attended by Parliamentarians, journalists, civil servants, researchers and scientific administrators.

In October, SBS met with [Sir Howard Newby](#), Chief Executive of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, to discuss the future of research assessment and other issues, while at a meeting in November, we were able to discuss similar issues with the Chair of the Welsh Funding Council, [Professor Roger Williams](#).



## REMUNERATION AND RECOGNITION OF RESEARCH STAFF

Perhaps the single biggest problem facing the university system is the recruitment and retention of the best academic staff. SBS has been campaigning hard on the issue, hoping that, following several rounds of substantial support for university infrastructure, the Government will now focus harder on investing in the people who make research happen.

In September, SBS Director Peter Cotgreave spoke to delegates at the Trades Union Congress about the importance of recognizing and rewarding research staff in universities.

SBS prepared some detailed analysis for the House of Commons inquiry into the problems associated with short-term contracts in science and engineering, which was published in November. One of the questions the inquiry sought to answer was whether there was any evidence that the current situation was causing good researchers to leave British Science. SBS was able to offer three kinds of evidence: anecdotal evidence, statistical studies of recruitment and retention, and direct surveys of researchers' opinions.

In June, the *Sunday Times* highlighted the issue of short-term contracts in research, using quotes and material from members of SBS's Advisory Council, SBS staff, and individual members of SBS at the laboratory bench.

In November, SBS published a critique of the practice among some public funding bodies of making it hard or even impossible for individual researchers with innovative ideas to obtain seed-corn funding if they are not already part of a larger co-operative group of laboratories or institutions.

### Charity Funding

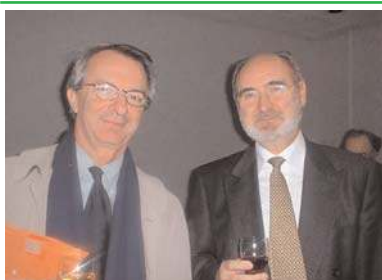
One of the great strengths of the UK's university research system is the amount of charitable funding that it receives to finance research projects. SBS was extremely surprised when the Cabinet Office and Home Office published new legislative proposals, offering a definition of charitable work that appeared to exclude scientific research. We submitted a robust document, pointing out that it was inappropriate to allow charitable status to organisations that promoted the advancement of the arts, while denying it to those that advanced science.

### Regulation of research

SBS took part in the Better Regulation Task Force's review of the regulation of research, and when the final report was

published in January, we welcomed the recognition of problems with a "back-door" control of science, through the mechanisms for funding universities, rather than necessarily through overt regulation.

In April and May, we raised the problems associated with a new Government code of practice aimed at regulating "research process" in many universities. Even laboratories that have a track record of producing the highest quality research will no longer be trusted, and will have to have their research processes regulated. SBS highlighted in the press the fact that this will not only place an additional barrier on institutions seeking to enter the research field, but will place extra costs on the university research system for little or no benefit.



Following his Annual Distinguished Lecture in January, Sir Gareth Roberts (left, third picture from left) talks with members and supporters of SBS. The event drew a wide audience, including Sir Howard Newby, Chief Executive of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (left, second picture from right) and Dr Ian Gibson MP, Chair of the House of Commons Science & Technology Committee (right, third picture from right).

# SBS in Schools

**SBS** believes that a healthy science base depends on a strong flow of school-leavers choosing to further their interest in science by studying it at university. Equally importantly, schools must prepare the majority of youngsters, who will not become scientists, to use scientific information to make sensible and informed choices and thus participate in a modern democracy.

## Parliamentary activity

When the House of Commons Science & Technology Committee held an inquiry into the school science curriculum from the ages of 14 to 19, **SBS** gave forthright evidence, concentrating on the desperate shortage of well-qualified science teachers.

The Committee, published its report in July, and **SBS** warmly welcomed it. Our views were highlighted by the *Independent*, the *Financial Times* and the *Birmingham Post*. The debate gathered momentum, and in January, BBC Radio 4's *PM* programme interviewed **SBS**'s Director about the outcomes of the report.

In April, the House of Commons debated the issue of science in schools, and, following our *Views from the Blackboard* meeting, **SBS** was able to brief MPs on the latest concerns of science teachers. **SBS** was mentioned by name in the debate, and a number of the points that we had highlighted were raised, requiring the relevant Minister to respond.

**SBS** has continued to urge the Government to take action to improve the recruitment and retention of well-qualified science teachers. About 40% of all unfilled teaching posts in England and Wales are in science, mathematics or technology, and a half of science teachers do not have "a lot of confidence" in their



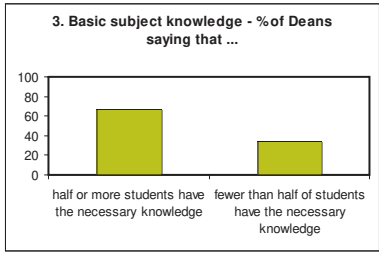
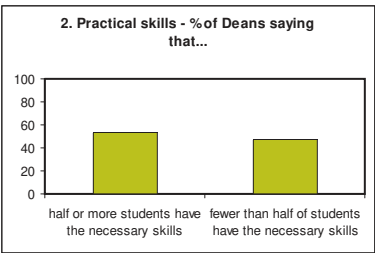
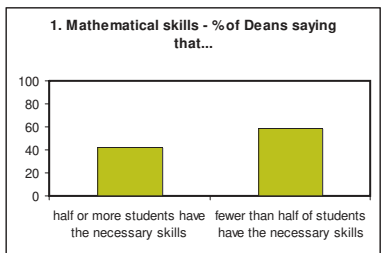
**SBS** researcher Rosemary Davies at 'Express Yourself', a conference for young scientists, at which she interacted with school students, participants in the Pupil Researcher Initiative, and others involved in science education.

ability to teach modern biology. Until this problem is reversed, science in schools will continue to be experience significant difficulties.

## Informing our work

In order to ensure that **SBS** fully understands the issues facing school science, we have undertaken a programme of visiting various groups and individuals with relevant expertise, and of carrying out quantitative research.

For example, in September **SBS** met with **Helen Arney** of Teach First, an organisation aiming to recruit hundreds of new teachers, including science teachers, at an early stage in their careers. In June, an **SBS** delegation visited Edu-Lab in Norfolk to learn more about the



## VIEWS FROM THE BLACKBOARD

In March, **SBS** held a meeting with a group of science and mathematics teachers from around England, to learn about their experiences first hand.

**SBS** called the meeting 'Views from the Blackboard', and invited representatives of every kind of school, from a comprehensive school in inner-city Birmingham to a specialist science college in rural Dorset, and including single sex and co-educational schools, and also a primary school. The teachers ranged from the newly qualified to experienced Heads of Department.

The group told **SBS** about two types of problems facing science teaching in schools today. First, time constraints, largely brought about because of a shortage of well-trained science teachers. Second, bureaucracy and game-playing, in which league tables distort classroom priorities. For example, many teachers felt that constantly having to make bids for small pots of money was a waste of time and resources.

The press took considerable interest in **SBS**'s findings, with the *Daily Mail*, the *Guardian* and the BBC, among others, focusing on the fact that some teachers were having to cancel practical classes because it was not possible to exclude disruptive and potentially dangerous pupils. Financial penalties and an uncooperative appeals procedure mean that head teachers are reluctant to expel pupils who cannot be trusted in science laboratories.

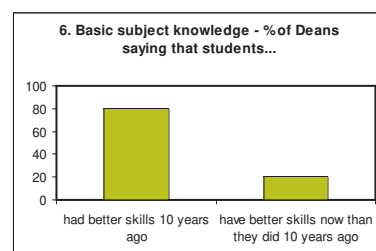
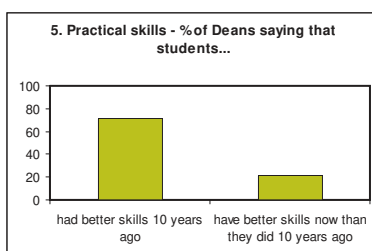
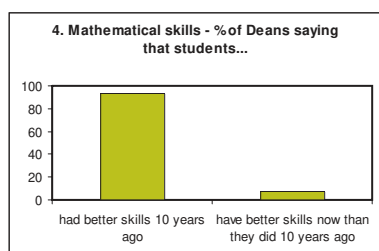


Teachers outside the **SBS** offices, after 'Views from the Blackboard'.  
From left: William Dixon, David Mitchell, Catherine Milnes,  
Julia Harley, Alan Cotgreave and Lydia Hendrikse

manufacture and supply of science equipment to schools, and in January several members of staff and Executive Committee members visited the Thomas Hardy School in Dorset. Here, **SBS** was able to see first hand the effects of becoming a specialist science college, and to discuss with the pupils what influences their views of science and scientists.

As part of our relevant research and analysis, **SBS** conducted a survey of the UK Deans of Science, to find out more about how schools and colleges prepare young people to study science at university. Most felt that undergraduates did not have the mathematical skills required and half felt that practical skills were lacking. Once again, the press chose to report **SBS**'s views in detail, with the *Times Higher Education Supplement* and the *Guardian* both covering the results of the study.

Results of **SBS**'s survey of the UK Deans of science, showing that there is a mismatch between what pupils learn about science and mathematics in schools and what universities expect them to have learned.





# SBS in the Devolved Administrations

Since devolution in 1999, **SBS** has been working to ensure that the science remains high on the agenda of the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales. In the past two years, we have also begun increasing our presence in Northern Ireland.

## Scotland

In November, **SBS** took part in the highly successful "*Science and the Parliament*" event. Organised in Edinburgh by the Royal Society of Chemistry, the event gave a chance for members of the Scottish scientific community to impress on Members of the Scottish Parliament just how important science is to the culture, environment and economy of Scotland.

All three Scottish-based members of **SBS**'s Executive Committee were present and were able to interact with **Alex Neill**, Chair of the Lifelong Learning Committee of the Parliament, **Professor Wilson Sibbert**, Chair of the Scottish Science Advisory Committee and **Iain Gray**, Minister with responsibility for science in the Executive. As part of the proceedings, there was a debate on the floor of the Scottish Parliament, in which **Dr Sylvia Jackson**, **MSP** for Stirling named **SBS** as one of the scientific organisations doing most to campaign for science in Scotland.

As the campaign for the Scottish Parliamentary elections got underway, **SBS** published an *Agenda for the Next Five Years* in Scotland, giving a detailed analysis of the scientific health of Scotland today, and suggestions for the actions necessary to enhance Scottish scientific research and its application. We also published responses of the political party's leaders to questions about science policy. When the new coalition Government published its programme for the coming

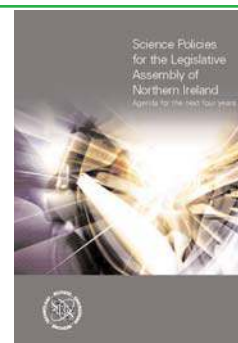
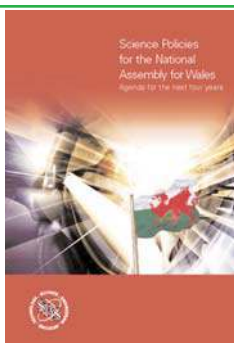
years, **SBS** welcomed a new programme of developing schools, a promise of "robust" funding for university research, the cutting of unnecessary tests for young children, and a commitment to boosting industrial research and development.

## Northern Ireland

Last autumn, the scientific community was stunned when the Northern Ireland Executive announced a draft budget in which university research in Ulster would have received no increase in funding. **SBS** immediately issued a statement in support of the universities and raised the issue with the press. For example, the *Coleraine Times* reported **SBS**'s comments that "Northern Ireland really cannot afford to be the only part of the UK not to take research seriously." **SBS** has previously shown how the science base in Northern Ireland receives just £26 per head of the population, compared with £39 in Wales, £56 in England and £80 in Scotland.

When the Executive was suspended, **SBS** wrote to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, **Paul Murphy**, pointing out that if investment in research fell further behind, then Northern Ireland would start to lose its ability to compete in the "knowledge economy" that the Prime Minister has accurately predicted will be the basis of future prosperity.

In November, the Government admitted that university research in Northern Ireland was underfunded, in both absolute





and relative terms, compared with the rest of the UK. Following our letter to the Secretary of State, the Department contacted **SBS** for more information, and we hope that, as a result of the pressure that we and others have generated, Northern Ireland's universities will soon start to see greater recognition of the importance their research to the economy of Ulster.

In January, we responded to the Ulster Government's request for evidence about the ways in which the economy can be stimulated by the science base. **SBS**

showed that with about 3% of the UK's population, Northern Ireland has just 0.2% of the country's most research intensive companies.

In May, we published our *Agenda for the Next Five Years* in Northern Ireland, pointing out that even though the elections to the Assembly have been postponed, science policy must be taken seriously. Northern Ireland has unique political problems, but it cannot afford to allow its science base to stand still while it sorts them out.

## WALES

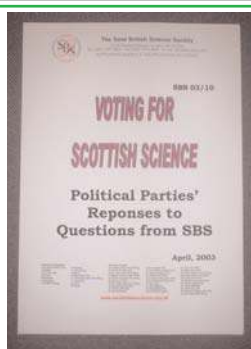
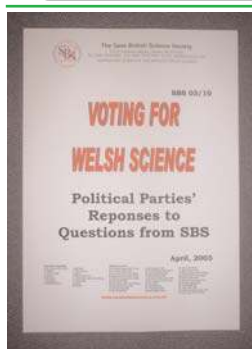
Although the Welsh Assembly does not have as much power as the Scottish Parliament, it is nevertheless crucial that **SBS** and other scientific organisations keep up the pressure, to ensure that Assembly Member and Ministers take every opportunity to enhance their science policies.

In November, **SBS** Director Peter Cotgreave appeared on BBC Radio Wales to press the case for funding of university teaching and research in Wales, as part of a dynamic economy in the future.

At around the same time, the Assembly was receiving a paper on its science and innovation policies, and **SBS** was asked to make some informal input. **SBS** stressed that, if science is to contribute to the long-term economic health of Wales, it is important to maintain a healthy research base, including curiosity-driven, "blue skies" research, not just applied work of obvious and immediate benefit. Without the strong base, Wales will not be in a position to take advantage of future developments, most of which cannot currently be foreseen.

At the beginning of 2003, the Welsh cabinet held a consultation on its policies for science and innovation, and **SBS** made a strong submission highlighting the need for more ambitious targets for private sector research investment in Wales, which is lower than it is in comparable small nations such as Ireland, Denmark or Norway.

When the Assembly elections occurred in May, as well as an *Agenda for the Next Five Years* in Wales, **SBS** published responses from the four main party leaders to a series of questions about the science base in Wales, science education, links between science and the economy, and the importance of science in society. Distributed to hundreds of scientists and engineers throughout Wales, it gave voters a chance to judge the scientific credentials of the political parties.



Some of **SBS**'s publications at the time of elections in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, including responses from Party Political Leaders to questions about science policy, and a separate policy Agenda for each devolved administration. Although the elections in Northern Ireland were postponed until the autumn, **SBS** published its Agenda in the spring because science policy remains important whether the Government is devolved or centrally administered.

# SBS and the Economy

**SBS** has always put its activities in the context of what science and engineering can deliver for the people of the UK. A healthy research base could deliver economic growth across all parts of the country, and **SBS** is keen to ensure that economic and regional development remain key parts of Britain's science policy.

## Interaction with business and industry

As the economy constantly evolves, **SBS** maintains contact with a wide variety of industrial and business contacts. For example, as well as senior business leaders who attended **SBS**'s meeting with a group of engineers, during the year **SBS** has also met with representatives of the London Business Network and the Industry Forum.

When **Gordon Brown**, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that he would be examining links between universities and business, **SBS**'s response was supported by both academia and industry. We focused on the need to produce research of the highest quality, whether it is industrially relevant or not, and the *Times Higher Education Supplement* reported in May that **SBS**'s submission dovetailed both with those of the Trades Unions and with those of big business.



**SBS** staff try to crack the mystery with a *Whodunnit?* kit from Edu-Lab in Norfolk. From left: Susan O'Dwyer, Dr Peter Cotgreave, Rosemary Davies and Alice Sharp Pierson

the year, representatives of **SBS** have visited a school in Dorset, a company in Norfolk, a conference in Lancashire and a public meeting in Yorkshire.

## Council for Science & Technology

The healthy relationship between science and the economy depends on strong science policies, taking advice from

academia and industry. The Council for Science & Technology received its regular five-yearly review, and **SBS** took part in the discussions about its future. We argued that as the highest level advisory body on science, the Council needed a stronger genuinely independent voice in influencing the Prime Minister and his

colleagues, a recommendation that was accepted. In addition, **SBS** argued for a more open and transparent process for the review itself, which resulted directly in changes to the relevant website.

## English regions

**SBS**'s commitment to campaigning throughout the UK includes not only events in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, but also an active programme of ensuring that we visit as many parts of England as possible. For example, during

## Science in government departments

Good economic management by the Government depends on a strong and vibrant source of expert science within Government. During the year, **SBS** met with **David Hughes**, newly-appointed Director of Innovation at the Department



of Trade & Industry, to discuss how scientific and technological research can help build a stronger economy. **SBS** members were able to bring first-hand knowledge of the benefits of tax credits for research and development, and also to discuss the place of British science in Europe. **SBS** will be taking the discussions further when the Department of Trade and Industry publishes its draft Innovation Review in the autumn.

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs also needs a strong scientific presence if the rural economy is to thrive, and **SBS** has continued to campaign for the Department to reverse the huge cuts in agricultural research. In April, we used a letter in *Research Fortnight* to highlight how DEFRA's annual research budget remains £50 million lower than announced a couple of years ago, and both the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Times Higher Education Supplement* covered **SBS**'s concerns about new bureaucracy that will bring extra costs to researchers carrying out agricultural research.

### Both sides of industry

**SBS**'s commitment to economic strength through rigorous application of the results of a healthy science base was highlighted in September, when **SBS** Committee member Michael Trevan gave a talk to the Academy of Chief Executives in London at the same time as **SBS** Director Peter

## ENGINEERING

Engineering is one of the key disciplines through which scientific research feeds into useful applications, and **SBS** has always included it in the definition of 'science'. Indeed, the word 'engineering' appears in our logo, as a recognition of its importance.

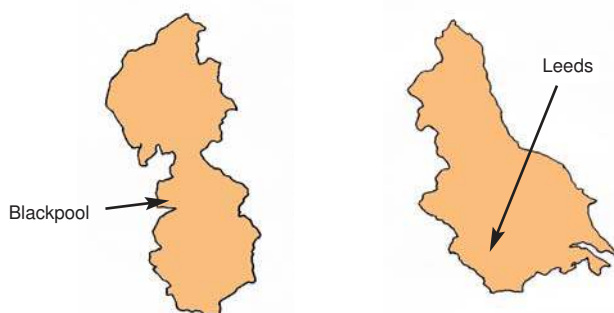
**SBS**'s Executive Committee includes electrical and mechanical engineers, and the Advisory Council includes several distinguished individuals who have contributed to the success of some of Britain's engineering companies.

Over the past year, **SBS** has interacted with a wide variety of engineering individuals and organisations. The highlight was a joint meeting with the Institution of Electrical Engineers held in March, at which the Director General of the Research Councils, Dr John Taylor, and the Chief Executive of the Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council, Professor John O'Reilly, joined with industrial and academic engineers to discuss with **SBS** the key issues that affect UK engineering policy.

In January, the Director of **SBS** met with the Engineering Professors' Council for a similarly productive discussion with senior figures from the engineering community, while in November, he met with undergraduate engineers, and spoke to them about engineering in the news. In May, **SBS** was represented at PolicyNet, a discussion group hosted by the Royal Academy of Engineering.

When the Chancellor presented evidence that a scheme of tax credits were stimulating more research activity, including in the engineering world, **SBS** immediately welcomed the news, having campaigned for such a scheme for many years.

Cotgreave was addressing a meeting of the Trades Union Congress in Blackpool. Michael's theme - that scientific industry requires a flow of well-trained scientists - was echoed by Peter's call for better recruitment and retention of the high-calibre teachers and lecturers who will train them. The link with the Academy of Chief Executives was strengthened in February, when **SBS** made two presentations to local members in Hertfordshire.



During the last year, **SBS**'s commitment to the importance of science throughout the country has led us to visit the Thomas Hardy School in Dorchester, give a student seminar in Windsor, tour the Edu-Lab company in East Anglia, publish comment in the *Birmingham Post* and *Leicester Mercury*, debate with Trades Union delegates in Blackpool, and give a public talk in Leeds.



# SBS People

## Members

Our members are one of **SBS**'s greatest assets. We represent a broad coalition of individual researchers, universities, companies and learned bodies, and this gives a strong voice to our campaigning work.

Since April, members have been receiving a new style of newsletter. As well as being a handier format and having a more attractive appearance than the old newsletter, our new system has a shorter production schedule. This

Front cover of the first of the new version of the newsletter

means that members are getting news about **SBS** that is more up to date than ever.

Individual membership continues to grow, and new institutional members during the year include the University of Brighton and Queen's University, Belfast.

## Staff

During the year, **SBS** has taken on a new research assistant, **Rosemary Davies**, to strengthen our activities, particularly in relation to science in schools. A graduate



Rosemary Davies, the most recently appointed SBS researcher

of Cambridge University, where she studied the History and Philosophy of Science, Rosemary had previously achieved A-levels in both arts and science. She commented on her new role, saying "it's great to find a job where my mixed-up educational background can actually prove an advantage".

## Executive Committee

The wide coalition of members that make up **SBS** need to be represented on our Executive Committee, which is the group that sets the overall framework within which the Director and staff work. During the year, **Professor Bill Banks** of Strathclyde University has joined the Committee.



Professor Bill Banks, new member of the **SBS** Executive Committee

As a mechanical engineer, Bill brings a different focus from many of the other Committee members, and as a former Chair of the Engineering Professors' Council, he has considerable experience of campaigning work. Bill also strengthens our presence in Scotland.

## Advisory Council

During the year, **Professor Joe Lamb**, Founding Chairman of **SBS**, retired from the Executive Committee (see picture on page 1). He joins the other distinguished scientists on our Advisory Council.

# SBS Press Coverage

When **SBS** was formed in 1986, some commentators believed that the media would quickly lose interest in our cause, and that **SBS** would not be able to keep issues of science policy on the public agenda. Once again this year, **SBS** has proved that they were wrong, and that the public remains interested in what we have to say.

## National media

Any campaigning organisation needs the oxygen of comment in the national media, especially the broadsheet press. This year, **SBS** has again featured strongly in the *Times*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Financial Times*, *Independent* and *Guardian*. As well as letters to the Editors on a wide variety of subjects, national papers continue to turn to **SBS** as a source of quick and authoritative comment about science policy issues. As just two examples, the *Financial Times* used **SBS** as a source of comment about the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget speech while the *Daily Telegraph* covered **SBS**'s analysis of European science funding.

The broadcast media is also important, and once again **SBS** has appeared on a variety of programmes, including BBC television's *Newsnight*, and both *You & Yours* and *PM* on Radio 4.

Other national and international media that have covered stories about **SBS** in the past year include the *Daily Mail*, the *Sunday Times*, the *Mail on Sunday*, the *New York Times*, and *BBC News Online*.

## Specialist media

Once again, the scientific, educational and business communities continue to value what **SBS** says. *Nature*, *Science*, *Laboratory News*, *Business AM*, *Electronics Weekly*, *Chemistry in Britain*,

the *Times Higher Education Supplement*, *Innovation Policy Review*, *Research Fortnight*, the *Scientist*, the *Biochemist*, *Science & Public Affairs*, *Electronic Engineering Times*, *Current Biology*, *Chemistry & Industry*, *Physics World*, *Electronics Times*, *Immunology News*, *ph7*, *British Medical Journal*, *British Journal of Neurosurgery*, and the *Times Educational Supplement* have all included stories involving **SBS** during the past year.

## Local and regional media

Because of our strong efforts to campaign for science and technology throughout the UK, **SBS** continues to attract coverage in the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish media. During the year, BBC Radio Wales invited **SBS** to take part in a debate about university funding, while other **SBS** comment has appeared in newspapers as diverse as the *Western Mail*, *Daily Post*, *Edinburgh Evening News*, *Belfast Telegraph*, *Scotsman*, *Edinburgh Herald &*

*Post*, *Corwen & Bala Press*, *Coleraine Times* and the *Wrexham Leader*.

Around the English regions, there is an appetite for **SBS**'s views just about everywhere, with our policies and statements being covered in a wide range of outlets, including the *Leicester Mercury*, *Oswestry & Border Counties Advertizer*, *Yorkshire Evening Post*, *Birmingham Post*, and the *Cumbria News & Star*.

Some of **SBS**'s letters to Editors in the last year

	Publication	Subject of letter
Jul-Sep 2002		
	<i>Business a.m.</i>	Science careers
	<i>Times Higher Education Supplement</i>	University finance
Oct-Dec 2002		
	<i>Guardian</i>	Science in Government Departments
	<i>Daily Telegraph</i>	British scientific genius
	<i>The Times</i>	University funding
	<i>Independent</i>	The role of universities
	<i>Daily Telegraph</i>	Agricultural research
Jan-Mar 2003		
	<i>The Times</i>	Government attitudes to scientists
	<i>Daily Telegraph</i>	Teaching and research
	<i>Guardian</i>	Peer review of scientific research
Apr-Jun 2003		
	<i>Daily Telegraph</i>	Blue skies research
	<i>Research Fortnight</i>	Science in the Department for Agriculture