



IES News Bulletin

The Institution of Engineers in Scotland A Multi-disciplinary Engineering Institution

June 2026



Have you thought about inviting some of your friends and colleagues to join IES?

The art and practice of engineering is becoming increasingly complex and multidisciplinary. IES includes members from all sectors of engineering as well as welcoming professionals from other backgrounds to our membership.

The multidisciplinary nature of our activities is one of our unique features; in a world of complex uncertainties, our belief is that engineers and others can gain inspiration through learning about developments and activities across the widest possible range of disciplines

Objectives

IES aims to serve society by:

Providing a forum to debate and discuss engineering issues of key importance to the economy, with the wider public and with influencers;

Supporting and encouraging best practice in engineering education and training at all levels;

Promoting professional engineering as a career to young people;

Celebrating engineering achievements and explaining the key role of engineering as fundamental to our quality of life;

Providing high quality advice to government and other bodies on matters of public policy that would benefit from an engineering perspective

IES activities include:

We have an exciting programme of lectures and webinars. We have gained a reputation for having excellent speakers on a wide range of topics. Meetings are open to the public.

We maintain a Resources section on our website that links to sources that support our objectives.

We support, via the Education Fund, a range of educational projects.

We host the Scottish Engineering Hall of Fame which celebrates great engineers.

The IES Profeng Group promotes professional engineering to young people.

The IES Energy Strategy Group promotes the use of engineering principles in energy planning.

We host the James Watt Dinner - this prestigious dinner is one of the social highlights in the engineering calendar.

We organise visits to sites and works of engineering interest (members only).

Benefits include:

Opportunities to take an active part in Institution affairs, contribute to IES objectives, raise issues, join groups, to have a voice;

Opportunities to meet and network with engineers from all disciplines in a professional, sociable environment;

Use of the post-nominals MIES or FIES as appropriate;

Receipt of regular publications; Transactions/Journals and bulletins;

Free access - by a pass obtained from the IES office - to Glasgow University library;

Broadening one's outlook on multi disciplinary engineering matters, via evening presentations, etc.;

Reduced price tickets for the annual James Watt Dinner, one of the most important events in the Scottish engineering calendar, at which the new inductees to the Scottish Engineering Hall of Fame are announced;

Having first refusal on ticketed events;

Opportunities to visit sites or works of engineering interest;

Modest subscription fees.

Please note the use of post nominals is restricted to periods of paid up membership

Welcome to our June Bulletin

I am happy to report on the success of this session's lectures, finishing up with an excellent Marlow Lecture delivered by Prof Sir Jim McDonald.

Sir Jim certainly made us think about the challenges facing our journey to achieving net zero however his talk also illustrated the many opportunities that are possible.



As we wind down the 2025-2026 session we have organised a 'behind the bookshelves' tour of the Mitchell Library in Glasgow.

Demand has been such that we are organising a second visit – look out for an email with details!

New Members of Council

I am pleased to introduce you to three new members of Council, voted in at our AGM in April. I wish them all well and hope they enjoy their time on IES Council:



Prof. Selda Oterkus

Prof. Selda Oterkus is a Professor in the Department of Naval Architecture, Ocean and Marine Engineering at the University of Strathclyde. She also serves as the Director of the Ocean Energy Research Unit (OERU) and the PeriDynamics Research Centre (PDRC). She received her PhD from the University of Arizona, USA. Her research addresses the integrity, safety and resilience of engineering structures, with a focus on structural degradation, failure mechanisms and reliability assessment, supported by structural health monitoring and digitaltwinbased approaches. Her work contributes to the development of safer, more reliable and sustainable structural systems across a range of engineering applications.

Professor Oterkus was a visiting professor at Stanford University (USA), University of Padova (Italy) and Otto von Guericke University (Germany). She served as a Special Issue Editor for Computational Material Science (Elsevier) and Journal of Mechanics (Cambridge). She is an associate editor of Frontiers in Materials (Frontiers). She is a member of the editorial boards of Scientific Reports (Nature), Journal of Peridynamics and Nonlocal Modeling (Springer), Journal of Marine Science and Engineering (MDPI), and Sustainable Marine Structures (NASS). Additionally, she has served as Chair of ASME UK Section.



Ms Ruth Mcintosh

Ruth is a Chartered Civil Engineer and Technical Director at WSP UK, with over 28 years of experience in port planning and maritime engineering. A First-Class honours graduate of the University of Strathclyde, she specialises in maritime infrastructure, asset management and the delivery of associated multidisciplinary programmes.

Ruth has extensive experience across the UK and internationally, working in challenging operational and stakeholder environments. Prior to joining WSP in 2024, Ruth spent 16 years with Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd, in a variety of client roles including long-term asset planning and project delivery across a network of 27 harbour facilities around the west coast of Scotland. Earlier in her career with Halcrow, she delivered design and project management services on maritime projects in the UK and overseas. In her spare time, Ruth enjoys spending time with her young family.



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!



Robin McLaren

Robin MacLaren has spent a lifetime in engineering, as the fourth generation of engineers in his family. He has worked in Scotland, the US, and various countries around the world, including the Middle East.

An Electrical Power Engineer, and innovator, he has variously been Chief Engineer and Managing Director of

ScottishPower's networks business, a Vice President of Pacificorp in the US, and Chairman of Psymetrix, where he helped grow a successful Scottish small business, providing engineering solutions for monitoring stability and managing power oscillations.. He remains closely involved in dealing with the engineering challenges posed by transition to a low-carbon economy to maintain a reliable and sustainable electricity system, working with innovative startups providing business and engineering advice.

He is a former Vice President of the Institution of Engineering and Technology, a past Visiting Professor in Energy and the Environment at the University of Strathclyde and was the Founder-Chairman of the Energy Networks Association.

His other interests include sailing, skiing, playing bridge and the piano (though not at the same time!)

Hello from Botswana!



We are writing to update you on the successful start to the Botswana international project 2026, which wouldn't have been possible without your generous support.

After a long but smooth 24 hours of travel, we arrived in Gaborone and enjoyed an evening with the British High Commissioner at the embassy, where we discussed our project with the Commissioner and his deputy. There were also Glasgow University alumnus from Botswana in attendance who we got to speak to about their experiences and understand the education system here.

The next day we travelled to Palapye and had an incredible experience at a rhino sanctuary before meeting the student volunteers and professors from Botswana International University of Science & Technology (BIUST). We ate dinner together and ran through the workshops for the next day. We had productive conversations with the volunteers, with talks of future collaboration to create workshops and student opportunities together, the volunteers are keen to set up a FemEng society here in Botswana.

The next day was our first school day where we visited Mabogo Junior Secondary School in Palapye with the BIUST

volunteers and received a warm welcome from the teaching staff. We completed 4 workshops with the different classes which involved: building a paper rocket which was launched with a straw; creating a prosthetic hand with paper, straws and string which allowed each finger to move; making a stethoscope using paper cups, tubes and balloons; learning how to use coding commands to code each other out of a maze.

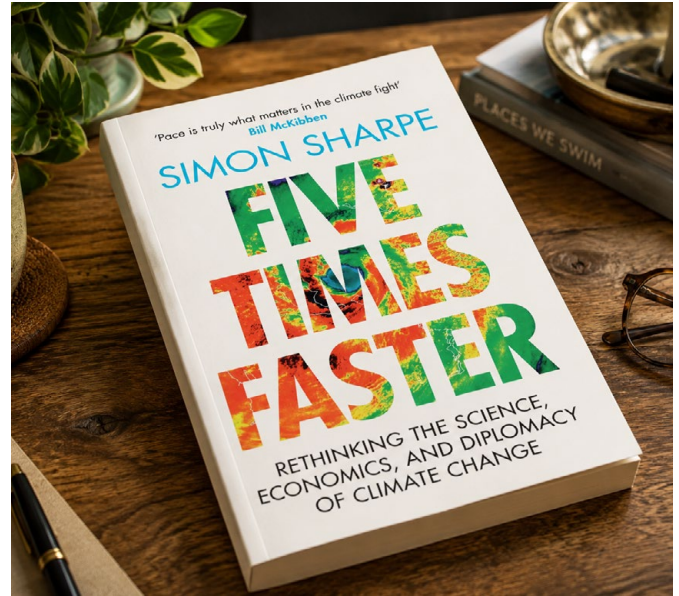
The engagement with the workshops was better than we ever could have expected! All 370 children were so excited and focused on the workshops, problem solving their way through each one whilst following the instruction sheets. The team went round the groups and had conversations about what subjects the students like, if they were considering university and what they thought about engineering. The responses were overwhelmingly positive with many children being interested in STEM and also realising how varied engineering can be.

After this brilliant start to the project, we are now going to travel to Francistown and work with a further four schools there.

Thank you so much again for your partnership,

The FemEng Botswana team.

Book Review *by Andy Pearson*



Five times faster: Rethinking the Science, Economics, and Diplomacy of Climate Change *by Simon Sharpe*

If, like me, you are a bit baffled by the apparent lack of common sense displayed by successive governments in addressing the problems associated with the effects of human activity on our environment, particularly the substantial and likely long term changes to our climate, this is the book for you. Simon Sharpe worked in the UK's Civil Service for a decade, advising ministers and policy makers in the Department of Energy and Climate Change on appropriate action to be taken to address this problem. He explains, in clear English with humour and relatable examples, why scientists, economists and politicians regularly and consistently failed to understand each other's point of view and consequently failed to deliver the necessary action plan. The title of the book refers to the fact that we would need to be addressing the emission of carbon dioxide from industrial processes at a rate five times faster than current practice if we were

to have any chance of meeting the targets set in the Paris Agreement. The middle section of the book is particularly valuable in explaining how economists have been speaking a different language to the politicians and the scientists. To explain why a carbon tax, proposed by many renowned economists as all that would be required to address the problem, is not sufficient he looks back to the early 20th century and writes "In the shift from horses to cars, while the businessmen invested in factories and the mechanics worked on their motors, governments wrote the Highway Code and built the roads. They did not just put a tax on horseshit and hope for the best." The book is well-researched and peppered with academic references, but it is eminently readable and can be broken down into sections for easier digestion. Perhaps the most important message is that we cannot be ambivalent or half-hearted about these issues.

JAMES WATT

DINNER 2026

Friday,
2 October 2026

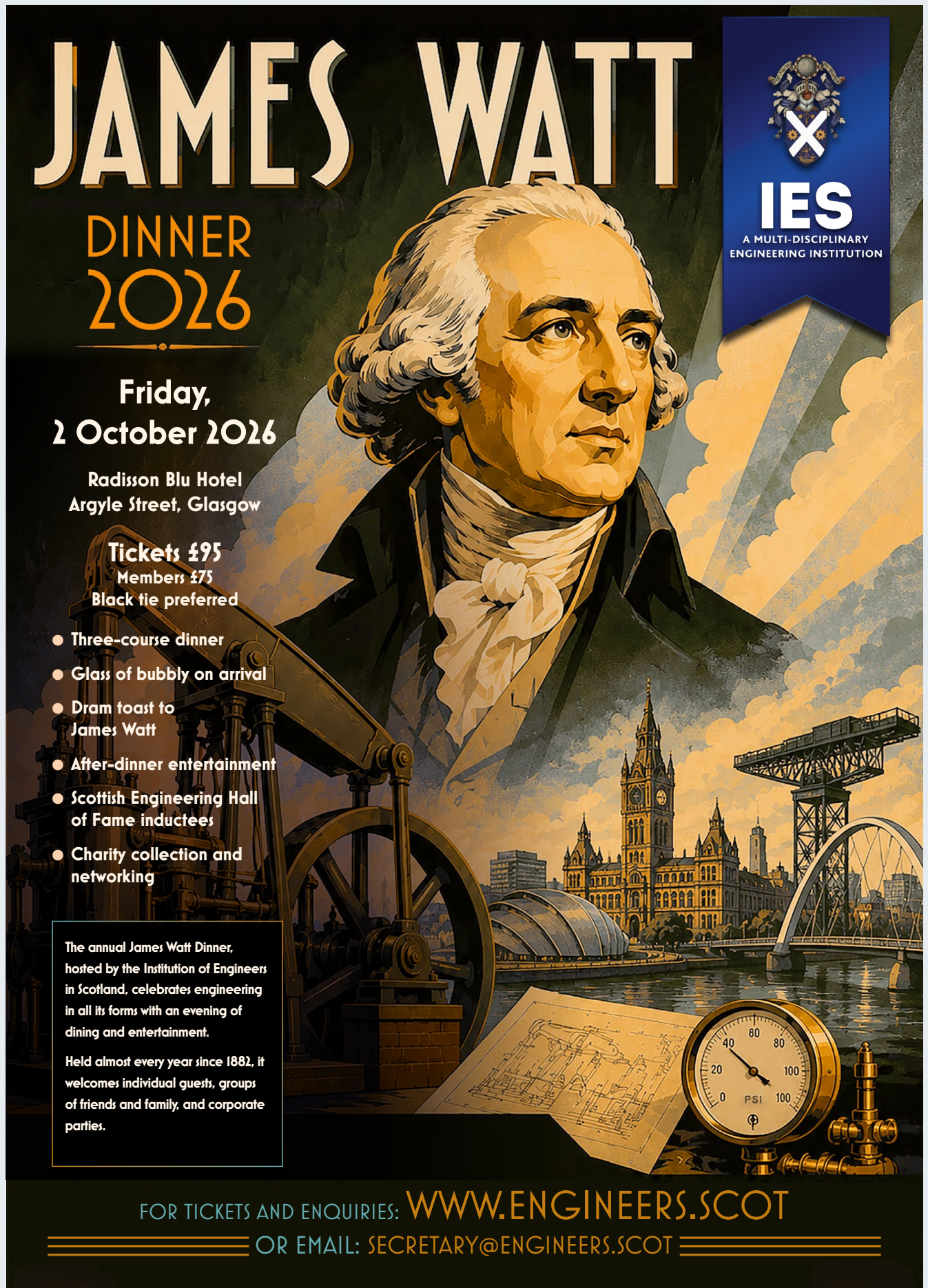
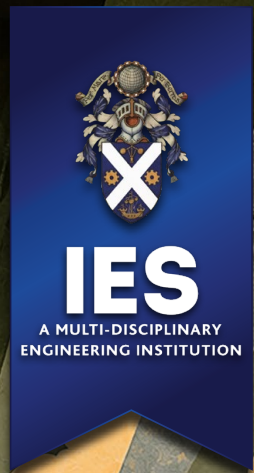
Radisson Blu Hotel
Argyle Street, Glasgow

Tickets £95
Members £75
Black tie preferred

- Three-course dinner
- Glass of bubbly on arrival
- Dram toast to James Watt
- After-dinner entertainment
- Scottish Engineering Hall of Fame inductees
- Charity collection and networking

The annual James Watt Dinner, hosted by the Institution of Engineers in Scotland, celebrates engineering in all its forms with an evening of dining and entertainment.

Held almost every year since 1882, it welcomes individual guests, groups of friends and family, and corporate parties.



FOR TICKETS AND ENQUIRIES: WWW.ENGINEERS.SCOT

OR EMAIL: SECRETARY@ENGINEERS.SCOT

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.