

# **The Newcomen Society for the Study of the History of Engineering and Technology**

## **Trustees' Annual Report for the session ended 30 September 2022**

This report should be read in association with the Annual Report and  
Financial Statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2022.

The Newcomen Society for the Study of the History of Engineering and Technology is a company limited by  
guarantee, registered in England No 00691545, and registered in England and Wales as a Charity No. 215410  
VAT Reg. No – GB 242 7979 28

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

This report covers a year when normality was expected to return but actually it is taking some time to arrive and, in reality, the Newcomen Society is operating in a very different space than it had been prior to the arrival of Covid-19 during 2020, although the fundamental objects of the Society remain unchanged.

During this year our President, Dr John Suter, stood down in November 2021 but he had already set in place a recovery plan for delivering our meeting programmes around the country. His contribution to establishing online meetings for Council and the committees of Council and for delivering lectures online has been extremely valuable and the changes have enabled the Society to transition to a post-Covid way of working. After Dr Suter's resignation, Council invited the immediate Past-President, Dr Jonathan Ayles, to assume the role of Acting President until the next AGM which would be held in February 2022. The Society is indebted to the contribution of both Dr Suter and Dr Ayles to navigating the Society through the restrictions of the pandemic, most notably by initiating regular digital newsletters and the use of digital technology for meetings which have kept the membership engaged.

Council decided that it would be timely, given the changes over the recent months, to carry out a survey of members and this was skilfully conducted by Graham Orchard. The response rate was very high with 332 completed submissions, and I am grateful that so many members took the time to complete the survey. Whilst generally showing a high level of satisfaction the survey results are being used by Council to inform the strategic choices that will be made in the coming months, not least with the form of communications and the way that lectures are delivered in a changing post-Covid world.

The transition from a digital world forced on the Society by an unforeseen pandemic to a more normal time when people can meet to hear lectures and to visit places of interest is taking longer than we might have anticipated. Whilst the survey of members indicates a desire to meet with like-minded individuals the evidence during this year is that there is still a reluctance to attend meetings, whilst noting that members who cannot easily attend meetings are enjoying the benefit of streaming where this is practicable. It is clearly going to take some while to determine which is the best way forward for the Society but it does feel as if opening up is now becoming more certain. Despite the constraints placed on the operations of the Society the membership is holding up and subject to the details below the publications have been maintained. The meetings of Council moved online and remain so at this time. The office has been closed and our administrator now works at home. A great deal seems to have happened during the period under report!

The pandemic has been a shock to everyone, and the strength of the Society has ensured that it continues to deliver its charitable objects through the dedicated commitment of many individuals, and I am very grateful to all of those who have played a part in keeping the Society going through a very difficult period. The Society remains in a strong position to deliver the declared benefits to its members and the wider community, keeping alive the interest in and recording research into the history of engineering and technology in a world which sometimes seems to only be interested in the present.

## CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES AND PUBLIC BENEFIT

The Society's charitable object is to promote, encourage and co-ordinate the study of the history of engineering, industry and technology. The object is delivered by

- holding lectures, workshops and conferences on relevant subjects,
- arranging visits to sites of interest, including an extended summer meeting,
- publishing the *International Journal for the History of Engineering and Technology* and the newsletter, *Newcomen Links*,
- promoting the subject by attending meetings and conferences,
- collaborating with related organisations,
- encouraging and facilitating the preservation of archives and objects of appropriate historical interest, and
- making available material of interest on the Society's web site.

The Society provides public benefit by making knowledge of the history of engineering and technology available to the public and educational institutions by:

- publishing containing original research papers on the history of engineering and technology in the *International Journal for the History of Engineering and Technology*, which is freely available in various public and university libraries;
- permitting public access to a comprehensive website;
- maintaining an extensive online archive of papers on the history of engineering and technology;
- holding regular public lectures across the country at which scholars present the results of their research on the history of engineering and technology;
- organising workshops and conferences on engineering and technology history;
- supporting exhibitions and displays related to the Society's mission;
- through the above activities, fostering and maintaining historical investigation and research.

## MEMBERSHIP

At the end of June 2022 the Society had 608 members. This was an increase of 14 on the previous year but significantly lower than the figures of 640 at June 2020 and 677 at June 2017. Although the membership has held up reasonably well during the pandemic and some encouraging trends are emerging, such as the growth in international membership which may follow from a greater online presence, Council continues to look for new ways to promote membership, and as always seeks the help of all existing members in encouraging new people to join.

A particular concern remains the general ageing of the membership with relatively few younger people electing to join. To address this Council has agreed to promote a student membership at reduced cost but with full electronic access to the Journal for the period of membership, to encourage bona fide students to join the Society during their studies.

## ACTIVITIES

A key strength of the Society is the varied programme of lectures and other activities offered in at various locations which cover a wide range of topics delivered by authoritative speakers.

### Newcomen London

During the 2021-22 session the meetings were held at The Gallery at Alan Baxter, near to Farringdon station. We are grateful to Alan Baxter for providing the venue. The London meetings programme was again affected by restrictions on social gatherings and travel caused by the pandemic. The January 2022 lecture on Metrology by Dr Terry Quinn had to be cancelled because of restrictions on international travel at the time. Four lectures took place as “hybrid” events, with both in-person and online attendance, and three as online only events. Online attendance was good but in person attendance has not returned to pre-pandemic levels. Where copyright permits, we continue to make recording of the lectures, but not the discussion, available on YouTube.

13 October 2021 *A curator at the height of his powers: HW Dickinson, James Watt, and the Newcomen Society, 1919-1930\** Dr Ben Russell

10 November 2021 *Industry before the industrial revolution+* Justine Bayley

8 December 2021 *Industrial steam power in London, 1780 – 1805\** John Kanefsky

12 January 2022 Lecture cancelled because of Covid-19 travel restrictions

9 February 2022 *An illustrated history of high speed rail+* Felix Schmid

9 March 2022 *Edward Snell: the life and times of a young West Country engineer in the 1840s+* John Cattell

13 April 2022 *Cleveland's innovative engineers\** Sue Parker

11 May 2022 Dickinson Memorial Lecture *The call to ARMS\** Professor Steve Furber

\* lecture delivered in a hybrid format, +lecture delivered online only

### Newcomen Midlands

#### Agreement with Thinktank

The Society is grateful for the continued support from Birmingham Museums Trust in providing access to Thinktank, Birmingham Science Museum. The Society benefits from use of the Lecture Theatre, with technical and administrative support, and in return, provides a varied lecture programme which the public are invited to attend, free of charge. Despite some concerns at one stage about the continuation of this partnership, Birmingham Museums Trust took the opportunity granted by the closure during lockdown to spend a considerable sum on upgrading the technology installed in the Thinktank Theatre, which proved extremely useful when monthly lectures resumed.

#### Lecture Programme 2021/2022

With the national restrictions to control the spread of Covid being eased, monthly lectures at Thinktank resumed in October 2021. Although audiences were inevitably thin at first, most of those attending welcomed the return to live meetings. With the exception of one last-

minute substitution, due to the speaker testing positive for Covid, all the planned lectures were given. From the January 2022 meeting, lectures were 'hybrid', being streamed live for those unable to attend in person. We are grateful for the Thinktank technician for making this all work so successfully. A members' visit to the Claymills Victorian Pumping Station at Burton upon Trent was also arranged during the summer.

6 October 2021 *History and Conservation of "City of Birmingham* Jim Andrew

3 November 2021 *Sandfields Pumping Station: the Story of Clean Water in the Black Country* David Moore

1 December 2021 *Claymills – the building of an integrated Victorian industrial site and its later restoration* John Freeman

5 January 2022 *Lady Charlotte Guest at Dowlais 1833-1855* Victoria Owens

2 February 2022 *Identifying Antiques and Bygones from Marks and Inscriptions* Jim Andrew  
(This was a last-minute substitute lecture, after the booked speaker contracted Covid-19)

2 March 2022 *Sulphuric Acid, Cement and Detergent Products from Anhydrite by the Müller-Kühne Process* Tom Elliott

6 April 2022 *Boxing clever – a brief history of corrugated containers and the ingenuity of their design and manufacture\** Nigel Jopson

### Lecture Programme 2022/2023

A full programme of monthly lectures is planned for 2022/2023, and a provisional list has been published and distributed. Two lectures in early 2023 have still to be finalised. All lectures will continue to be given in 'hybrid' format, streamed live on Zoom as well as being given to the live audience.

### Midlands Region Committee

The deferred AGM was held on 6th October 2021, when a new committee was elected to replace the temporary one that had remained in position in the absence of a 2020 AGM. Jim Ranahan announced that he would be standing down as Honorary Secretary with effect from the end of the 2021/2022 lecture season in April 2022, but would endeavour to put together a lecture programme for 2022/2023 before he went. The chairman and other members of the committee are extremely grateful to Jim Ranahan for having carried out the duties of Hon. Sec. in such a professional manner for several years (he was appointed assistant secretary in 2012, before taking over the full role a year or so later). At the moment no replacement for him has been identified, and the chairman and other members of the committee will endeavour to cover the duties for the time being.

### Twitter

The Twitter account @Newcomen\_Mid, has been used to publicise the Society and related events in new ways, in conjunction with Newcomen Links, the Newcomen website, and other Newcomen social media accounts. This was looked after by Jim Ranahan, and a new 'operator' needs to be recruited.

### **Newcomen North West**

In February 2022 talks resumed in-person at our new venue, The International Anthony Burgess Foundation. We have found the venue staff very helpful and will continue to use

the venue for 2022/3. We have been able to resume our pre-talk meals at Pizza Express Tony Wilson Place nearby. Attendance has not yet returned to pre-Covid levels but we have had around 25 people in the audience at the two in-person talks and around 10 people at the pre-talk dinner. Those who have attended have been very happy with the new venue. Covid meant that we had to cancel our January 2022 talk, but this has been rescheduled. The 2022/3 programme is in place and the Committee will be meeting shortly to plan for 2023/4.

22 February 2022 *From Time Balls to Time Lights* Roger Kinns

22 March 2022 *Float Glass Development and Process History – A Revolution* Gerry Miller

27 September 2022 *RAF Planes that won the Battle of Britain were built on German Machinery* Dr Jonathan Aylen

### **Newcomen Southern**

No developments have taken place to re-establish a regular meetings programme in the Solent area.

### **Newcomen North East**

Occasional meetings are being arranged to be held at Discovery in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and efforts are progressing with the aim of developing a more active programme. It is hoped that following the loss of some of the people who previously were instrumental in driving the programme of lectures and events the situation can be taken forward. During the year a single lecture has been held:

19 October *It's not just about the robot! - the development of automated welding* Bob Bowden

### **Newcomen Western**

Western Region meets at BAWA Healthcare and Leisure, Filton, Bristol, usually every third Thursday in October, November, January, February, March, April, and May. Meetings resumed in October 2021 after the break caused by the pandemic. A full programme of meetings was held, although attendances were understandably reduced from earlier years and it did not prove possible to hold a joint meeting with BIAS. Highlights included a talk by Christian Wolmar on Crossrail

The current Committee, who took up office in the year, comprises:

Chairman - David Hardwick

Programme Secretary / Secretary / Editor - John Kanefsky

Treasurer - John Anning

Librarian - Don Hillman

Committee Member - Stephen Jones.

The Committee meets several times a year, usually before programme meetings. John Kanefsky also represents Western Region on the Activities Committee. He and David Hardwick are members of the Newcomen Society Council.

## Western Region Programme

The Programme in 2021-22 comprised the following presentations:

21 Oct 2021 *Thomas Pearson, Engine Erector* Ian Broom  
18 Nov 2021 *Transport without Petrol: a Pictorial History* Robert Everett  
17 Feb 2022 *Stroud's Other Industries* Ray Wilson  
17 Mar 2022 *Crossrail* Christian Wolmar  
21 Apr 2022 *South Wales Colliery Winding Engines* Brian Davies  
19 May 2022 *Henry Ford's Holiday in 1928* David Perrett

As well as its usual programme of talks in 2022-23, the Region is planning to explore whether joint meetings with other interested groups in different parts of the Region can be arranged.

## Other events

Two other events included participation by members:

A visit to "Steam Punk Sunday" at Coldharbour Mill, Uffculme on Sunday 25th September

Cardiff Bay – Walking in the Footsteps of the Engineers, organised by the Institution of Civil Engineers Wales Cymru, on Thursday 29th September, led by Stephen Jones.

## Newsletter and Library

During the year our newsletter, *Western Courier*, continued to be published and distributed to about 100 members and friends by email. Bryan Lawton resigned as Editor and John Kanefsky took over.

Don Hillman produced an updated stock list for the Region's Library, which was enhanced by a number of volumes from the Society's now-closed London Office and books are available for loan by members.

## Exhibitions and Shows

The region held a stand at *The Ship Show*, for the sale of books and dissemination of advertising material, following its resumption in April 2022.

## **Newcomen South Yorkshire**

Although the 2021/22 series of events were again disrupted by the on-going Covid pandemic it proved possible to hold a series of eight meetings, and only one event, the one-day Symposium in October 2021 on Learning from Failure, had to be cancelled due to lack of interest. The meetings varied from in-person only, which were supported by an average audience of 25 to 30, to hybrid which attracted the largest audiences of up to 85, and online only which attracted audiences of about 30.

As in previous years two joint meetings were held with the South Yorkshire Industrial History Society, and one with the Sheffield Metallurgical and Engineers Association. The

December 2021 meeting with the SYIHS being particularly poignant as it was on the 81<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Sheffield Blitz and Phil Judkins outlined the technology that made the raid so devastating and its impact on the City.

Meetings continue to be well supported by the local membership and just over half the audience at all meetings have been Newcomen Society members. The branch AGM was held on the 21<sup>st</sup> February and was attended by some 18 members. A list of meetings held is shown below:-

- 20 September 2021, *Stalinism, espionage and Marshall Aid*, Dr Jonathan Aylen
- 26 October 2021, *One Day Symposium Learning Lessons from Engineering Failures*, (Cancelled)
- 22 November 2021, *The History of Water*, Dr Jenny Stephenson
- 13 December 2021, *The Sheffield Blitzes: First and Second World Wars*, Phil Judkins (joint with SYIHS)
- 24 January 2022, *History of the RSA*, Susan Bennett
- 21 February 2022, *How Alloy Steels came to serve the Engineer*, Dr Peter Morgan as Dr David Dulieu was ill
- 15 March 2022 Ken Barraclough Memorial Lecture, *Women of Steel*, Dr Michelle Rawlings (joint with SMEA and SYIHS)
- 11 April 2022, *A history of Dowty*, Ally McConnell on-line only
- 23 May 2022, *Gun making by machinery - the 1853 Enfield Rifle*, Peter Smithurst

In the spring of 2021, the Newcomen Society through a Kenneth Yeoman Award of £2,000 supported an exhibition at Kelham Island Museum on Sheffield magnets and the history of magnetrons. The grant went towards the purchase of a new display case. In the spring of 2022 the Newcomen Society has also supported financially the creation of a display on the history of file cutting in Sheffield.

Whilst in the coming 2022/23 session we will continue to hold most meetings as hybrid events the focus post Covid will be on rebuilding the active community of members in Sheffield. The first planned event planned is a free half day symposium on the History and Development of Parsons Turbines in October 2022.

Newcomen South Yorkshire would like to extend its warm thanks to the Directors and Staff of Kelham Island Museum and the Hawley Tool Collection Trust for their hospitality and support throughout the season.

### **Newcomen Scotland**

No developments have taken place to re-establish a regular meetings programme in Scotland.

## **Summer Meeting**

With the onset of Covid restrictions in 2020 the plans surrounding the Centenary of the Society, which would have included a form of Summer Meeting, were postponed and the shelved. Although Council has given some thought to organising a Summer Meeting it has been decided that we need to monitor attendance at regular meetings to determine the willingness of people to undertake activities with others. No Summer Meeting has been held during the year now being reported and there is no active planning for a classic Summer Meeting ongoing.

## **Centenary**

With great regret, and gratitude for all the work that had been put into planning, Council decided in January 2022 that the moment for centenary celebrations had passed and that centenary celebratory events should not be reinstated.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

### **The International Journal for the History of Engineering and Technology**

The Society manages an academic journal, the *International Journal for the History of Engineering and Technology*, which is published bi-annually by Taylor and Francis on behalf of the Society. During the year the editor, Dr Brian Price, resigned and Council agreed to appoint Prof Felix Schmid and Julia Elton to act as Joint Editors of the journal. There is a reasonable flow of material in the pipeline and the editors are making great efforts to bring the publication of issues of the journal back onto the agreed schedule. Volume 91, 2021, has been published both online and in print along with the second issue of Volume 90, 2020.

It has been proposed that a wider group of associate editors could be established who would work with the Joint Editors to shepherd papers through the peer review and amendment processes.

Our publishers provide a variety of metrics which allow monitoring of the perception of the Journal. During 2022 the data indicates that 15764 downloads were achieved, compared with 15095 in 2019, 19341 in 2020 and 19498 in 2021. Council considers that these figures demonstrate that the Journal and the associated archive continue to deliver societal benefit through dissemination of information on research related to the history of engineering and technology. It seems probable that the higher number of downloads recorded for 2020 and 2020 are a direct consequence of lockdowns and restricted access to libraries.

## **Newcomen Links**

The members' magazine was published throughout the most restricted days of the pandemic but Issue 257, published in Autumn 2021, was the last that would be prepared under the editorship of Deborah Jaffé. She has provided the Society with a high-quality magazine that is greatly appreciated by all members. During her ten years in post the functional role of

Links has evolved. Information concerning meetings, for example, becoming more dynamic and more suitable for the website to keep members informed.

Council reviewed the role for the editor for Links and placed advertisements in suitable media to seek applications for a new appointment. The outcome was a good response in terms of both number and quality. Shortlisted candidates were invited to an interview with a sub-committee appointed by Council and Belinda Curwen was selected and appointed in October 2022 on a freelance basis. After a gap of one year it is anticipated that a new issue of Links will be distributed early in 2023.

### **The e-newsletter**

Six issues of an electronic newsletter were published by the Society on the website during the early days of Covid restrictions to enhance the engagement with members and anyone else who visited the website during that very strange period of time. Subsequently Council has reviewed the situation and has decided that the series will not be continued beyond the current six editions although those will remain freely available on the website. The potential of greater use of electronic communication remains an active topic of discussion.

### **Website**

It has become clear that the importance of the website in providing information of events and news has increased over the last few years, and this has become more critical during the period when the members' magazine *Links* has not been published. Council has considered the state of the current website and concluded that, in the first instance, more attention must be paid to maintaining the basic information for members, and others, on meetings and events correct and current.

## **THE SOCIETY'S SUPPORT FOR AND LIAISON WITH OTHER BODIES**

The Society from time to time supports relevant campaigns concerned with historical artefacts and sites that fall within its charitable objectives, both in the UK and overseas. During the year letters of support were provided for a number of projects, notably the conference on Early Steam Engines in Central European Mining organised in Slovakia to mark the three hundredth anniversary of Isaac Potter erecting a steam engine at Nova Bana and the campaign to retain the PowerHouse Museum in Sydney in its current form and on its present historic site.

### **The Society's representatives on other bodies**

Dr Jonathan Aylen (Acting President) and Professor David Perrett (Past President) represented the Society on the Maudslay Scholarship Foundation Trust. Dr Aylen stood down in summer 2022 and has been replaced by Dr David Eaton.

During the year, Dr Aylen continued to represent the Newcomen Society on the Government's "Research Excellence Framework" which assesses the quality of University research. He contributed to Sub-Panel 28 History. The exercise reported in May 2022.

## GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

### Constitution and Governing Document

The Newcomen Society for the study of the history of engineering and technology is a registered charity (no. 215410) and a company limited by guarantee (registered in England and Wales with no. 00691545). The Society's governing document is its Memorandum and Articles of Association (as revised on 10 April 2013). The Society's affairs are managed by its Council. The day-to-day administration of the Society is undertaken by the Administrator, who is the only employee (part-time) of the Society.

There were two committees of Council active during the period of this report:

- Activities Committee
- Papers Committee.

At the AGM held in 2021 Dr John Suter was elected President with effect from 1st March 2021. In November 2021 Dr Suter resigned and Dr Jonathan Aylen, Immediate Past President, was invited by Council to take over as Acting President until the 2022 AGM when Vaughan Pomeroy was elected taking office with effect from 1st March 2022.

Council has continued to review the Society's governance. A Working Party was established under the Chairmanship of the current President and, with advice and guidance from solicitors, has been preparing an amended governing document based on the current recommended standard form published by the Charity Commission for consideration by members at a forthcoming General Meeting.

The Society's active Regions have their own committees and honorary officers.

### Directors and Trustees

Members of the Council, (directors for the purpose of company law and trustees for the purpose of charity law), who served during the year are listed below:

Dr J Aylen *immediate past President/President*

*November 2021-February 2022*

R Bowden *retired February 2022, co-opted February 2022*

Dr O Carpenter *co-opted February 2022*

Dr C Casson

Dr M Dick *retired February 2022*

Dr D Eaton

J M H Elton

P F G Filcek

F Gerali *elected February 2022*

D Hardwick *elected February 2022*

D Hayton *co-opted February 2022*

Prof F A J L James *elected February 2022*

S Jump *elected February 2022*

Dr P Judkins *resigned May 2022*

Dr J Kanefsky

G Orchard

R V Pomeroy *co-opted February 2021, elected President February 2022*

Prof F Schmid

Dr J Suter *President, resigned November 2021*

## **Recruitment and appointment of Trustees**

The trustees are elected by members of the Society at an Annual General Meeting (normally held in February each year). The Articles of Association make provision for Council to co-opt additional trustees to fill skills or other gaps, and these are normally advised to the members during the AGM. Dan Hayton and Dr Oliver Carpenter were co-opted to avail Council of their expertise and experience specifically on managing the membership records and in maintaining a personal contact with the Science Museum. Bob Bowden was co-opted to chair the Activities Committee and to work with the Regions to co-ordinate meeting arrangements and to seek to develop best practice.

The President serves for no longer than two years. Honorary Officers are nominated by Council and elected by members of the Society at the Annual General Meeting. Members of the Society are invited in the autumn of each year to make nominations for elected members of Council. Elections take place at the Annual General Meeting. Elected members serve for no longer than three years and are then required to have a break of at least one year before standing for re-election.

In 2022, because of the pandemic, elections to Council were conducted by online ballot for the second time. Members who did not have access to email had the opportunity to submit a postal vote. This form of election increased participation compared with the previous arrangements and Council determined to make this arrangement the general practice.

## **Council and Committee meetings**

The Council met ten times, in October, November (twice) and December 2021 and January, February, March, May, July and September 2022. All meetings were held online. Other Committees met online as necessary for the conduct of business.

## **Annual General Meeting**

The Annual General Meeting was held online on 9 February 2022 and was chaired by the Acting President, Dr J Aylen. The Annual Report and Financial Statement for the financial year ended 30 June 2021 and the Trustees Annual Report for the year ended 30 September 2021 were approved, and the appointment of Honorary Officers was confirmed as follows:

President:	Mr Vaughan Pomeroy
Vice-president:	Prof Felix Schmid
Honorary Secretary:	Miss Julia Elton
Honorary Treasurer:	Mr Peter Filcek
Immediate Past President:	Dr Jonathan Aylen

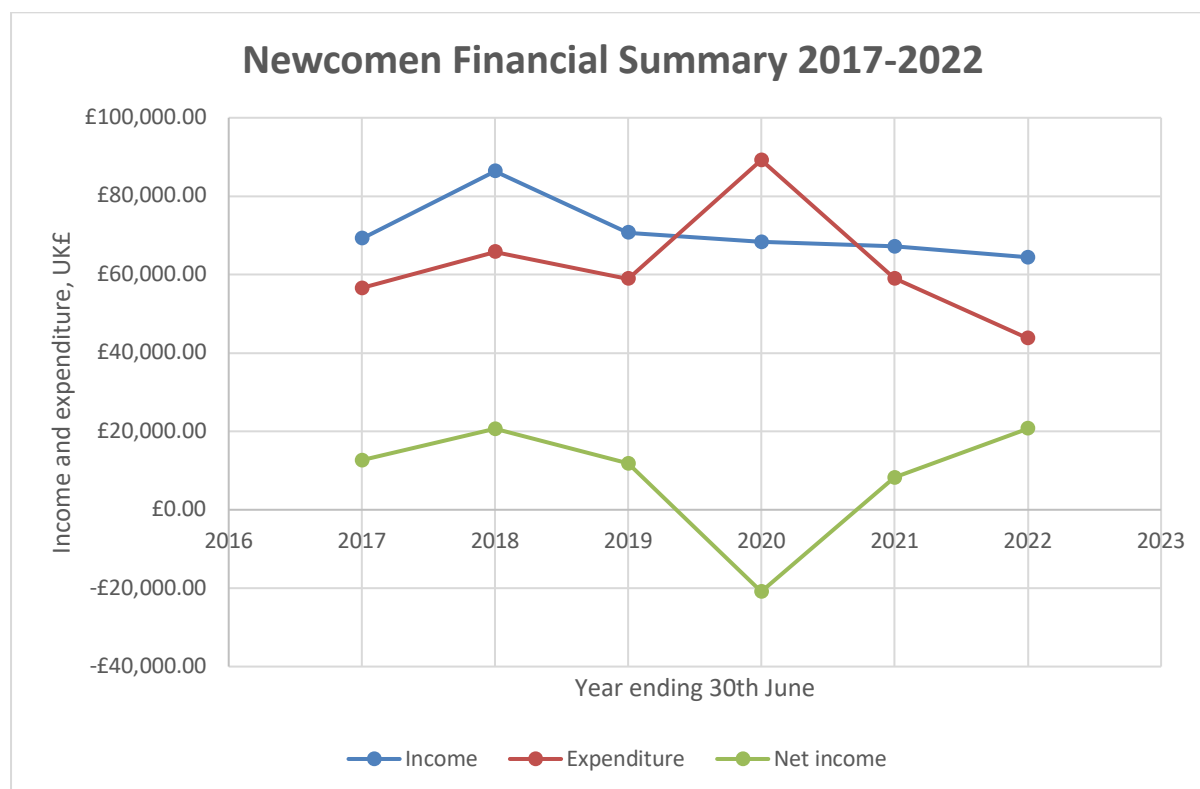
Francesco Gerali, David Hardwick, Prof Frank James and Simon Jump were elected as members of Council.

Butt Miller, Chartered Accountants, were appointed to act as the Society's Independent Examiners, and the Council was authorised to fix their remuneration.

At the end of the AGM, the transfer of Presidency from Dr Ayles to Mr Pomeroy was formally effected.

## Financial Report

For the financial report see the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2022. The summary of the key figures for income, expenditure and net income for the last five years are shown graphically for ease of comparison.



The Trustees are encouraged that the outcome for the year 2021-2, despite the impact of the pandemic, showed that income was maintained close to the level of the previous year, although a majority of UK charities have noticed a distinct fall in revenues. The figures presented in the Annual Report and Financial Statements show that at an operating level income from all sources exceeded expenditure by £20,685 compared with £8,198 for the preceding year. This performance has to be treated with some caution because the period included fewer issues of Links and some reduction in venue hire for lectures, counteracted by increased costs for web site activity. Nevertheless, it leaves the Society in a healthy position.

## Legacies and Donations

The Society was notified of an unrestricted legacy from the late Daphne White (former member). At the time of writing the distribution of the estate has been announced and Council is considering how to make use of this generosity.

An unrestricted donation was received from Richard Maudslay.

The Society also received a donation of cine films and slides from the family of the late Robert Edwin Morgan (member) They are mainly from the 1960s and 70s, showing visits arranged for members by the Society and of sites of engineering interest. Council is considering how these might best be conserved and presented to maximise benefit to members and the wider audience. Meanwhile these artefacts are stored.

### **Reserves Policy**

On 1 July 2002 the Council set up the Designated Development Fund (DDF). The DDF is intended to be used only for future developments that cannot be funded by the annual subscription alone. At 1 July 2002 the DDF stood at £40,000. The legacy received in 2012 from Dr R T Smith, which realised the sum of £430,000, was allocated to the DDF. In accordance with the Society's stated investment policy, the income from the Society's investments is currently transferred to the DDF for reinvestment. The investment policy is reviewed periodically by Council and the investment managers advised accordingly.

The DDF is intended to support projects that enhance the standing and reach of the Society. It has previously been used to fund the development of the online archive which forms part of the society's extensive website. In 2013-14 the Council agreed that money from the DDF could be used on a project to begin assessing and cataloguing the Society's archives. The work was begun in the summer of 2014. As part of the Society's move out of Blythe House, the Society's archive has been transferred to the Brotherton Library at the University of Leeds. An annual contribution of £500 will be made towards cataloguing costs.

At the end of the 2021-22 year, the value of the DDF stood at £434,868. the Unrestricted General Reserve stood at £75739 and the fair value reserve stood at £209667.

### **Support for Preservation and Conservation**

The Society's main activities relate to the promotion of the history of engineering and technology. Wherever possible, the Society also encourages and facilitates the preservation of archives and objects of historical interest. Since the Society does not have conservation and storage facilities of its own, our emphasis is on providing support for the preservation efforts of others.

### **Future Strategy**

The Society has a formal strategy for the development of the Society. Some aspects of the agreed strategy were implemented sooner than anticipated due to the **pandemic**, for example strengthening our online presence and development of the web site. We look forward to implementing other features of the strategy, such as enhanced use of social media, in the future.

Given the changing operating environment following the disruption caused by the Covid pandemic Council intends to review and revise the strategy to reflect the current position and to set a pathway for the next period.

## **Risk Management**

The trustees have carefully considered the major risks to which the charity is potentially exposed and have determined the necessary risk control measures that are required to ensure that the risks can be managed. The trustees review the controls, and the risk register, periodically to satisfy themselves that risk control measures are in place to mitigate those risks and that these are effective. Where it is considered necessary insurance cover is procured.

The trustees ensure that sufficient unrestricted reserves are maintained to deal with the risks identified.

## **Voluntary Support**

As a small charity, the Society relies to a very large extent on the voluntary support and work of its members and others and places on record its warm thanks for the immense effort put in by volunteers.

## **Staff**

The Society has one part-time employee (the Administrator).

## **Office**

A considerable part of 2021-22 was spent on planning and organizing the closure of the Society's Blythe House office. Archive material was sent to the Brotherton Library at the University of Leeds. Working files have been re-located to a storage unit. The Administrator now works from home. The Blythe House office was vacated in August 2022, a sad moment marking the end of a century of being located in Science Museum premises, but we hope that the connection will remain strong despite the separation. Council would again like to thank Sir Ian Blatchford, Director of the Science Museum Group, for providing the Society with a home for over 100 years

## **Meeting Venues**

During 2022-22 meetings were held at:

- the Gallery at Alan Baxter, London
- the lecture theatre at Thinktank, Birmingham Science Museum
- BAWA Health and Leisure Centre, Bristol
- Kelham Island Museum, Sheffield
- International Anthony Burges Foundation, Manchester
- Discovery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

The Society is grateful to the owners and operators of these venues for their support.

## **Thanks for all other assistance**

Council thanks all the Honorary Officers of the Society and those of all our Regions. It is very grateful to the Chairman and members of the Editorial Board, Papers Committee, and Activities Committee for their invaluable work on the Society's behalf. We also thank Malcolm Dick, who retired at the end of his term of office, and Phil Judkins who stood down during the year, for all their support and hard work on the Society's behalf.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees/Directors

Vaughan Pomeroy, President/Trustee

Miss J M H Elton, Company Secretary/Trustee

26th January 2023

Registered address: The Newcomen Society, 92 Park Street, Camberley, Surrey GU15 3NY

Bank: The Co-operative Bank, Delf House, Southway, Skelmersdale WN8 6WT

Independent Examiner: Butt Miller, 92 Park Street, Camberley Surrey GU15 3NY

Investment Manager: Rathbones Investment Management Ltd, 1 Curzon Street, London W1J 5FB

Trustees report 2021-22