



**15 Lanark Street, Glasgow G1 5PY**  
**www.royalphil.org**  
**info@royalphil.org**

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Dear Members and Friends

We have not been able to meet in person throughout the 219th session of the Society, but I hope that the virtual lectures have kept you entertained and have stimulated your minds. Last summer we hosted several lectures outwith the main programme, partly to test technology and arrangements for virtual lectures, and these proved to be very successful with good attendances and very positive feedback. Council has therefore arranged to do likewise this summer, with a series of lectures themed around the climate conference COP26, which will take place in Glasgow later this year.

We have been fortunate to attract high quality speakers for the 219th session and are currently putting in place the programme for our 220th season. As always, we are extremely grateful to all of our speakers who contribute their time and expertise.

We still do not know when we will be able to resume meetings in person, but it is Council's intention that when we do so, it will be in the new James McCune Smith building at the University of Glasgow. The new 500 seat lecture theatre is equipped with the latest audio/visual technologies, which should make it possible for us to record and stream lectures, and to ensure that there is an excellent experience for all those who are present. Whilst we are keen to meet in person, it has become evident that there are advantages for some members in being able to access lectures virtually. We also believe that this lecture theatre will be more accessible to members.

We are of course very grateful to the University of Strathclyde for providing the Society with a home for so long, as well as hosting our new archive of recordings so that our lectures may be preserved for posterity. The archive is updated annually and can be found at <https://atom.lib.strath.ac.uk/royal-philosophical-society-of-glasgow-lectures>

Membership fees have been static for several years. Council had intended to raise subscriptions slightly, but it was decided to maintain them at current levels while the pandemic lockdown continues, and at least for the coming year. It is anticipated that there will then be a modest increase in the year after physical lectures resume.

It has been a real honour to serve as President for the last three years. I am grateful for all the support and feedback that members have contributed, and hope that my successor, Pat Monaghan, enjoys it as much as I have.

As I pass the presidency to Pat, I would like to express my gratitude to all Council members, past and present, who have provided so much support and wise counsel during the last three years. On behalf of everyone, I would like to thank especially Jan McDonald and Felicity Grainger who have done so much for the Society over many years, providing such excellent leadership and guidance. I would also like to thank our administrator, George Rawlinson, for keeping everything ticking along so smoothly.

With very best wishes to you all,

Geraint Bevan  
President