

Isaac Newton Institute for Mathematical Sciences

Management Committee: 10 June 2014

Report on Correspondents' Day 2014

The 2014 INI Correspondents' Day was held at INI on Tuesday 20 May.

In response to the fact that INI's current grant (the new grant period started in March 2014) comes from the Research Councils collectively rather than from EPSRC alone, it was decided that the theme for Correspondents' Day 2014 should be the ubiquity of mathematics. This theme was reflected by John Barrow's lecture *Mathematics is Everywhere*, by the Cross Council Panel Session, and by the identified discussion topics.

The decision to shift the meeting from early June to late May was taken as a direct result of feedback given by Correspondents during the Group Discussion sessions at the 2013 meeting and in subsequent questionnaires. Following this shift in timing there was a significant increase in numbers attending: there were 48 attendees this year as opposed to the 28 attendees the previous year.

John Barrow's talk was excellent and there was an overall feeling was that this was a very successful Correspondents' Day. This was, in no small part, due to the engagement of the Research Councils. The agenda for the day was as follows:

12:00	Lunch
12:45	Director's Update on Developments at INI: Professor John Toland
13:00	Correspondents' Day Lecture: <i>Mathematics is Everywhere</i> , Professor John Barrow (Cambridge)
14.00	Research Council Panel Session <i>Forthcoming priorities of the Research Councils and how they link with the Mathematical Sciences.</i>
14.40	Tea Break
15:00	Chair of Correspondents' Update and Introduction to Topics for Discussion: Professor Michael Singer
15:15	Discussion Groups
16.15	Feedback from Group Leaders
16:55	Closing Remarks

Embracing Technology to Encourage Remote Participation

All parts of Correspondents' Day, excluding the break out Discussion Groups, were streamed live.

Correspondents' Day was publicised on Facebook and Twitter and there was significant interest on Twitter about John Barrow's lecture with many re-tweets. INI requested questions for John Barrow following his talk via Twitter but none were forthcoming.

A couple of Correspondents from further afield said that they were unable to attend due to the disproportionate amount of traveling time required. In order to involve these participants, INI decided to trial hosting a "Virtual Discussion Group". This Virtual Group discussion was held via Google+ Hangout and was chaired by Frank Neumann who was present at INI. He was then able to provide feedback from the

virtual group in the Feedback Session. It was hoped that there would be four virtual attendees but, for technical reasons, only two managed to join in the Virtual discussion. The conclusion at the end of the discussion was that the technology was certainly not perfect but that it was good enough and preferable to being excluded from the meeting. The two remote participants said that they would like to take part virtually again next year.

Feedback

The topics for discussion were: the timing of Correspondents' Day; the relationship between INI, TGM and the UK mathematical sciences community; INI's role in supporting and nurturing links between the mathematical sciences community and other disciplines; and INI's role in supporting and nurturing the mathematical sciences in the UK.

As far as timing for Correspondents' Day is concerned, there was a general consensus that the shift in timing to late May was a good decision. However, it was agreed that Correspondents' Day 2015 would be timed to coincide with the BMC/BAMC meeting to be held in Cambridge from 30 March to 2 April 2015.

Despite the presentation on the Turing Gateway to Mathematics at the previous Correspondents' Day, it was apparent that most Correspondents had only the broadest understanding of the remit and responsibilities of the TGM. It was agreed that there would be another presentation about the TGM either at BMC/BAMC 2015 or at Correspondents' Day 2016 and that Correspondents would receive regular updates on TGM activity.

Correspondents' welcomed the recognition that mathematics is an integral part of many other disciplines. They indicated that they thought that the current balance of pure, applied and statistical programmes was about right and felt strongly (as did the Research Council representatives) that there should be no set quota for programmes from each area. However, a number of Correspondents requested that INI continues to monitor the number of programmes in pure mathematics so that INI didn't get a reputation for being an applied mathematics research institute.

Other topics raised included the continued concern about gender balance and the difficulties of getting female participants staying for INI for long periods of time.

List of Attendees and their Home Institutions

Avril Allman	NERC
Chris Athorne	University of Glasgow
Claude Baesens	University of Warwick
Keith Ball	ICMS
Roger Behrend	Institute of Physics; Cardiff University
Gavin Brown	Loughborough University
Thomas Brzezinski	University of Wales (Swansea)
Andrew Burbanks	University of Portsmouth
Peter Burlinson	BBSRC
Brian Burrows	Staffordshire University
Peter Alan Clarkson	University of Kent
Robert Douglas	Aberystwyth University
Brent Everitt	The University of York
Paul Flavell	University of Birmingham
Victor Goryunov	University of Liverpool

Jan Gutowski	University of Surrey
Paul Hammond	Schlumberger Cambridge Research
Matthew Hartley	John Innes Centre
Richard Hibbs	OR Society
Antal Jarai	University of Bath
Henrik Jensen	Imperial College London
R Murray Lark	British Geological Survey
Shahn Majid	Queen Mary University of London
Christie Marr	Isaac Newton Institute
Mark McCartney	The University of Ulster
Samantha McGregor	ESRC
Ben Mestel	Open University
Paul Mitchener	University of Sheffield
Andrea Moiola	University of Reading
Frank Neumann	University of Leicester
Nigel Peake	IMA
David Penman	University of Essex
Ron Reid-Edwards	Hull University
Konstanze Rietsch	King's College
Daniel Robertz	Plymouth University
Alexey Sevastyanov	University of Aberdeen
Michael Singer	Chair of Correspondents
Shaun Stevens	University of East Anglia
Ali Taheri	University of Sussex
Claire Tansley	EPSRC
Ulrike Tillmann	University of Oxford
John Toland	Isaac Newton Institute
Geoffrey Vallis	Exeter
Djoko Wirosoetisno	University of Durham

Virtual attendees were:

Arend Bayer	University of Edinburgh
James Cruise	Heriot-Watt University

Christie Marr
June 2014