

Chemistry is a mature discipline but retains its position as the central core science. The nature of its interactions with the analytical, biological and medicinal sciences continues to develop rapidly. Equally important are the developments which take place at the interface with atmospheric and materials science, where the benefits of working in harmony with applied physicists and chemical and electronic engineers ought to have a major impact in the development of responsive materials or new miniaturised sensory systems. Of course, chemists must also seek to deepen their knowledge of the core issues upon which the subject is based—structure, theory, synthesis, equilibria and dynamics—to help to understand at the molecular level the nature and function of each of the key chemical processes involved in such work.

Many of us might recall a *Chemical Society Reviews* (CSR) article that inspired us to set out on a new research venture, or provided us with such a clear exposition of a topic that we refer back to the article time and time again. Over the past 5 years CSR has seen that measure ‘the impact factor’ rise from a steady state of around 6 to being consistently above 9, and is the third most highly cited general chemistry journal in the ISI rankings. This dramatic improvement is a testament to the work of my predecessor as Chair, Jeremy Sanders, and the diligence of the Editorial Board and the RSC Cambridge staff over this period. Jeremy has overseen the development of CSR with great distinction, providing wisdom and exercising his powers of

persuasion to gain the commitment of a string of important new authors. In this task he has been aided by several members who are also stepping down from the Board this year. They are Jan Bäckvall, Kevin Booker-Milburn, Jim Feast, Ernest Giralt, Zdenek Herman, John Maier, Frans de Schryver, and Gert Billing. Sadly, Gert Billing passed away towards the end of 2002; his numerous important contributions to Chemistry live on (and an obituary follows this editorial). May I thank this distinguished list of scientists for their sterling work for the journal over the past few years. It is an equal pleasure to welcome to the Board their replacements providing coverage for much of modern Chemistry: Carsten Bolm (modern synthesis and synthetic methodology), Luisa de Cola (excited state chemistry), Anne Dell (chemical biology and biochemical spectroscopy), Steve Haswell (analytical science and miniaturisation), Wilhelm Huck (advanced materials and polymers), George Marston (physical and atmospheric chemistry), and Chris Orvig (coordination chemistry in action). Working together with the continuing members of the Board, Odile Eisenstein, Chris Elschenbroich, Kenneth Harris and AP de Silva, they will ensure that CSR continues to provide distinctive reviews that will engage the attention, inspire new research activity and remain in the memory of the reader.

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**Chair, *Chemical Society Reviews* Editorial Board**