



The Institution of
Engineering and Technology

Lancashire and Cumbria Network



Programme

January 2026

Free to attend - all welcome

Professional Home for Life® for Engineers and Technicians

Website: <https://engx.theiet.org/local-networks/nw1>

Chairman's Introduction

Welcome to the newsletter of the Lancashire and Cumbria local network of the IET for the Winter / Spring season of 2026.

For the Autumn season just passed there has been the usual variety of lectures, many thanks to the organisers and presenters! We have also held the usual Present Around The Network (see separate feature) with our young engineers.

The forthcoming season offers our usual set of interesting lectures which 'detonates' with 'Explosive Investigations' in January and closes with our usual space themed lecture 'The Sun and Climate Change' in September delivered, as usual, by Dr. Robin Catchpole.

In March we will be holding our annual Networking Social Event, with this year's theme '**Measuring the Physical World**' which will be a light-hearted look at sensors and instrumentation.

There has been a few changes in the committee:

- Rachel Gleaves is now West Cumbria Convener taking over from Artur Majchrowski.
- We also welcome David Gibson as our new Carlisle Convener; David is currently looking into holding IET lectures in the Carlisle area and generally promoting the IET.
- Mike Bell our secretary is also now our new Chair of the Retired Members Section, and thanks go to the out-going Chair, Suzanne Flynn.

On behalf of the Local Network Committee we hope to see you at our events.

Thanks,

Nigel Whitaker – Chairman

Retired Members

The Retired Members section has four lectures proposed for this year. Our next two talks are on the attack on Tirpitz and the Titanic. The talks are held in a variety of locations in Lancashire and Cumbria. They begin at 11am and are followed by an optional lunch. We would love to see new faces at the talks. They are not just for retirees!

Michael Bell – Retired Members' Chairman

News Around The Network

IET Award

Congratulations to Charlotte McNamara on winning an IET Award for her work on her engineering course. Charlotte is a second year T level student at Preston College. Charlotte was presented with her award by Network Chairman Nigel Whitaker.

L to R: Steve Clash (Lecturer), Charlotte McNamara, Nigel Whitaker (IET LN Chairman), Simon Nixon (Preston College Principal).



Carlisle

Following the success of the first IET lecture held in Carlisle in 2025, we are delighted to announce that four additional engineering lectures will take place in Carlisle during 2026.

Thanks to the generous support of the University of Cumbria, these lectures will be hosted at the impressive Fusehill campus, located in the heart of Carlisle, within its state-of-the-art Learning Gateway building.

While final details are still being confirmed, we are excited to welcome four distinguished engineers from both industry and academia. They will present on topics including the future of AI in engineering, as well as the engineering challenges faced by submarines and aircraft.

Details for the first lecture of the year will be finalised in early January. Please follow IET socials for the latest updates and information about our events in Carlisle.

David Gibson

Lancashire

Present Around the Network



Grace receiving her winner's certificate from Network Treasurer Anne Morris.

This is the annual competition which is open to young people who give a 10 minute presentation on a technical subject. They are judged on their presentation skills by a panel consisting of members of the Network Committee.

The 2025 PATN winner was Grace Nicol who is an Engineering Degree Apprentice from BAE Systems. Grace provided a fascinating talk on the Pratt and Whitney J58 Engine famous for its high-speed performance in the SR-71 Lockheed Blackbird. The well organised and delivered talk engaged the audience at the EIC at the University of Lancashire. Grace's passion for Engineering was clearly shown throughout and hopes to be back for another opportunity next year. Our fantastic runner up Shay Fong, an Aeronautics Degree Apprentice from the University of Lancashire, delivered a fabulous talk in the

benefits of participating in Rocket competitions such as Mach 25. Shay's positivity and enjoyment was clearly executed and gave the audience an entertaining and informative talk.

The Judges and I wish to express our gratitude for a great evening and for the hospitality at the University of Lancashire. Next year's event is to be held at the University of Cumbria at its Barrow Campus, I hope to see you and our participants there in November 2026!

Fred Eastham

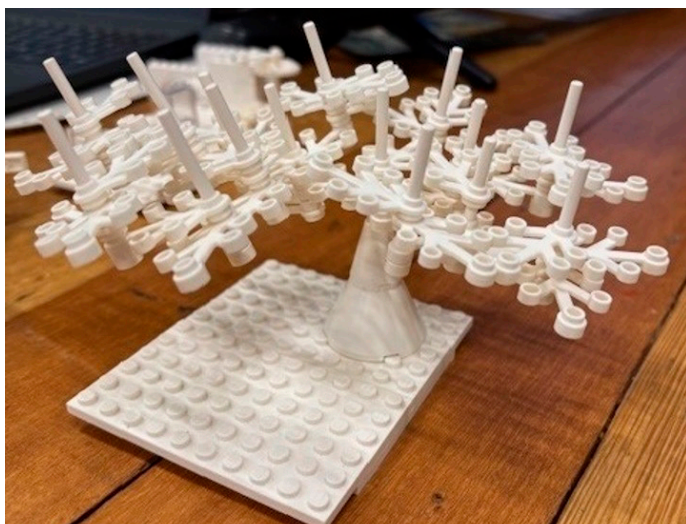
Cumbria

UlverSTEM

Last year's UlverSTEM festival was again a great success giving young people a practical insight into local opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths.

UlverSTEM is a collaborative local event in Ulverston created to encourage young people across South Cumbria to explore the STEM opportunities available close to home. Families attending were able to take part in a wide range of interactive demonstrations, hands-on activities and themed challenges designed to spark curiosity in science and technology. Aimed at young people aged six to sixteen, the festival is designed to highlight the range of STEM pathways available in South Cumbria, both in further education and future employment.

The event covered a wide range of activities from building Lego® structures of possible future buildings, to learning about DNA and cyber security, there was a lot on offer across the UVHS areas.



IET again attended the event in collaboration with Barrow & District Association of Engineers, encouraging potential engineers with the IET Lego®, challenging individuals to “Build something they would see in the future” whilst discussing with them how engineers may play a part in our future, what interesting things engineers get involved in and how exciting engineering can be.

Models were then placed on the Stage of Fame – see photos. Feedback was very positive, thanks to Kath, Ian, TJ and Denis from BDAE, for their help on the day and to all the attendees for their impressive imaginative future views!

Anne Morris



The Institution of Engineering and Technology - Lancashire and Cumbria Network

Date/Time	Event Title:	Venue	Organised by & Contact	Speaker	Synopsis
Wednesday 14th January 19:30	Explosive Investigations	Barrow Town Hall Duke St Barrow-in-Furness LA14 2LD	Organised by: IET/PESC Contact: Anne Morris (anne.morris@ietvolunteer.org)	Isobel Colclough Forensic Investigator	Explosions present forensic investigators with some of the most challenging incident scenes encountered. This short presentation will provide an overview of the forensic processes involved in recording, recovery, analysis and interpretation of evidence associated with explosion scenes and devices. The evaluation of explosion scenes to determine the nature and composition of explosive devices will be considered alongside the technical and forensic exploitation of improvised explosive devices and indicators of involvement in device manufacture.
Thursday 15th January 19:15	Major Deep Water Oil and Gas Developments Offshore West Africa	Kendal Suite Castle Green Hotel Castle Green Lane Kendal LA9 6RG	Organised by: IET/KDES Contact: John Doffegnies (john.doffegnies@ietvolunteer.org)	Tony Oldfield	The talk will cover several 'Mega Projects' over the last 20 years, each costing 6 to 10 billion USD. The focus will be on the specifics of one project in order to highlight elements of the challenges and technologies.
Thursday 22nd January 19:30	The Edwardian Steamboat: SL Shamrock – Messing about in Boats or Working Under Pressure?	Barrow Town Hall Duke St Barrow-in-Furness LA14 2LD	Organised by: IET/BDAE Contact: Anne Morris (anne.morris@ietvolunteer.org)	Roger Calvert & Helen Steeple The Shamrock Trust	This is the story of SL Shamrock – where she came from and where she is now, and the issues of restoring, maintaining and operating her. In particular, the talk will follow the various propulsion systems she has had over the years.
Thursday 29th January 18:30	What Are The Causes of Rail Accidents?	University of Lancashire Engineering Innovation Centre Room EIC317 24 Fylde Road Preston PR1 2XS	Organised by: IET Contact: Bill Wilcock (bill.wilcock@ietvolunteer.org)	Neil Gove MEng HM Inspector of Rail Accidents	Following on from his previous talk into what the RAIB does, Neil will start with a brief resume and then delve into actual investigations. These will include: Freight Derailment at Petteril Bridge Carlisle Grosmont Station Collision Edinburgh Waverley Sleeper Train Runaway
Thursday 5th February 18:30	Wind Tunnel Capability in Lancashire	University of Lancashire Engineering Innovation Centre Room EIC317 24 Fylde Road Preston PR1 2XS	Organised by: IET Contact: Matthew Wylie (Matthew.Wylie@ietvolunteer.org)	Craig F Eckersley CEng MRAeS	Join experienced wind-tunnel engineer Craig Eckersley for an inside look at Lancashire's aerodynamic testing facilities. The talk showcases the region's unique contributions to engineering innovation, highlighting how wind-tunnel testing drives product development — from concept to certification. Expect real examples, engineering insights, and a glimpse into the future of experimental aerodynamics.
Wednesday 11th February 18:30	My Journey with Raspberry Pi - From Cardboard to Space	University of Lancashire Engineering Innovation Centre Room EIC317 24 Fylde Road Preston PR1 2XS	Organised by: IET Contact: Bill Wilcock (bill.wilcock@ietvolunteer.org)	Pete Lomas BSc MSc DSc (HC) Raspberry Pi Computer Creator	Ever wondered how and why the Raspberry Pi computer was created. This seminar will provide the 'inside track' on origins, motivations, design agony, manufacturing challenges and how an off-chance conversation propelled us to Space.
Thursday 19th February 11:00	Pigs, Small Fish and Hitler's Beast	Crooklands Hotel Crooklands Milnthorpe LA7 7NW	Organised by: IET Retired Members Contact: Mike Bell (michael.bell@ietvolunteer.org)	Commander Bernie Thomson RN Retired	A talk to mark the 80th anniversary of Operation Source - the attack by X-craft midget submarines on the battleship Tirpitz. The talk is followed by an optional lunch.
Thursday 19th February 19:30	Power System Monitoring in Critical Applications	Barrow Town Hall Duke St Barrow-in-Furness LA14 2LD	Organised by: IET/BDAE Contact: Anne Morris (anne.morris@ietvolunteer.org)	Gareth Brunton Managing Director Bender UK Ltd	The talk will highlight the importance of resilient power monitoring in sectors where operational availability is vital, with real-world examples from healthcare, rail, E-mobility, and maritime environments.
Wednesday 25th February 19:30	Airbus Wings	Barrow Town Hall Duke St Barrow-in-Furness LA14 2LD	Organised by: IET/PESC Contact: Anne Morris (anne.morris@ietvolunteer.org)	Chris Bennion Head of New Airbus Wing Design IP Project	This talk dives into the Wing Industrial System of the Future and will provide an overview on how Airbus is partnering with various UK organisations to push the boundaries of innovation, rigorously testing and developing advanced wing technologies for the future. Learn how Airbus is harnessing automation and cutting-edge solutions to shape the next era of Industrial Systems.

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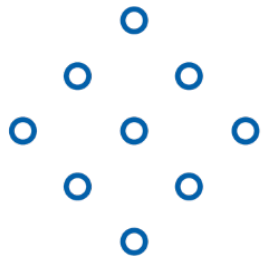
Date/Time	Event Title:	Venue	Organised by & Contact	Speaker	Synopsis
Thursday 26th February 10.30	60 years of Land Air & Sea Projects	The Well Community Centre 92 St Albans Road Lytham St Annes FY8 1UZ	Organised by: IET/St Annes PROBUS Contact: Mike Bell (Michael.Bell@ietvolunteer.org)	George Seyfang BSc Retired Aerodynamicist BAE Systems	The talk will cover a wide range of Air projects that have been worked on during 42 years at British Aerospace / BAE Systems. These include the 6 well-known military jet aircraft ranging from Canberra to Typhoon, plus Concorde, Spaceplanes and also several unpublished projects. Following retirement, and the construction of a small wind tunnel in the home garage, a variety of Land projects have been explored, from the Greenbird land yacht which achieved a world speed record of 126mph, to fuel economy cars and streamlined bicycles. More recently there have been Sea projects including the Sairdron uncrewed marine research vessel that has circumnavigated the world and production has expanded to over 100 units which are at sea for months at a time. There have also been projects aimed at improving the efficiency of water-borne craft, from racing rowing boats and ferry boats to giant container ships.
Wednesday 4th March 10.30	Dangerous Waters	Wesley Hall Westby Street Lytham FY8 5LU	Organised by: IET/Lytham PROBUS Contact: Mike Bell (Michael.Bell@ietvolunteer.org)	Bernard Thompson	'Dangerous Waters' is a talk about Maritime operations during the liberation of Kuwait 1990-1991, including his personal experiences of diving to clear the largest minefield laid since WW2.
Thursday 5th March 18:30	Networking Event - Sensors and Instrumentation	University of Lancashire Engineering Innovation Centre Room EIC317 24 Fylde Road Preston PR1 2XS	Organised by: IET Contact: Nigel Whitaker (nigel.whitaker@ietvolunteer.org)	Nigel Whitaker Matthew Wylie	This evening will provide an opportunity over a drink and light bites for members, partners and friends, plus guests from local industry and academia, to meet and chat about the many activities and opportunities in the region. The initial meet and greet, will be followed by an entertaining half-hour talk on 'Measuring the Physical World' - a brief overview of physical and virtual sensors, data acquisition systems and data mining techniques.
Wednesday 11th March 19:30	Latest Design & Building Of Three Rolls Royce Small Modular Reactors	Barrow Town Hall Duke St Barrow-in-Furness LA14 2LD	Organised by: IET/PESC Contact: Anne Morris (anne.morris@ietvolunteer.org)	Prof Tim Abrams	An overview of the advances in the field of small modular reactors, potential applications and advantages over traditional approaches to nuclear power.
Thursday 12th March 19:00	Can Beer be Sustainable?	Castle Green Hotel Castle Green Lane Kendal LA9 6RG	Organised by: IET/KDES Contact: John Doffegnies (john.doffegnies@ietvolunteer.org)	Tim Bloomer Director and co-founder of Fell Brewery	Tim is now focused on decarbonising Fell's operations and making them an exemplar in small scale, sustainable brewing. Join him to learn more about the practicalities of this work and whether we can have hope for a better future, still with plenty of locally brewed ale.
Thursday 19th March 19:30	Sulzer Diesel engines for British Railways Modernisation "Barrow's Golden Mile"	Barrow Town Hall Duke St Barrow-in-Furness LA14 2LD	Organised by: IET/BDAE Contact: Anne Morris (anne.morris@ietvolunteer.org)	John Sykes Former BAE Systems Design Engineer	The talk will provide the background and build details of the Sulzer engines. It will also explain the subsequent guarantee and support activities. The talk will include drawings, photographs and video clips to illustrate the project.
Wednesday 2nd April 19:30	The Surprise Japanese Attack on Pearl Harbor	Barrow Town Hall Duke St Barrow-in-Furness LA14 2LD	Organised by: IET/PESC Contact: Anne Morris (anne.morris@ietvolunteer.org)	Dr Scott M Lindgren Naval Historian	On 7 December 1941, units of the Japanese 1st Air Fleet launched a massed surprise attack on the US Pacific Fleet based at Pearl Harbor, drawing the United States of America into World War II. Preceded by many months of negotiations and detailed planning, the attack was a partial tactical success, sinking four capital ships, severely damaging many other vessels, and causing heavy casualties. Japan would declare war on the United States later that day; the US and Great Britain would declare war on Japan on 8 December. This talk provides a background to the attack, an overview of the action itself at strategic and tactical levels, and the immediate consequences involved.
Wednesday 15th April 18:30	Cracking the Lorenz Cipher: Tutte, Flowers and the Birth of Colossus	University of Lancashire Engineering Innovation Centre Room EIC317 24 Fylde Road Preston PR1 2XS	Organised by: IET Contact: Matthew Wylie (Matthew.Wylie@ietvolunteer.org)	Matthew Wylie	This talk tells the story of how engineers and mathematicians at Bletchley Park overcame the formidable Lorenz cipher. You'll discover how Bill Tutte deduced the machine design, how Max Newman and Tommy Flowers turned a problem into an engineering challenge, and how their creation – Colossus, the first programmable electronic computer – transformed codebreaking. The session offers insights into the blend of mathematics, ingenuity, and technology that not only shortened the war but also shaped the dawn of computing.
Thursday 14th May 11:00	Titanic – Seaman's Perspective	Glendower Hotel 32-36 North Promenade Lytham Saint Annes FY8 2NQ	Organised by: IET Retired Members Contact: Suzanne Flynn (suzanne.flynn@ietvolunteer.org)	Captain Julian Blatchley	A life-time seaman's view of what caused the World's most famous shipwreck, which uses an experienced and professional eye to eliminate the misunderstandings and focus on what really happened. The talk is followed by an optional lunch.

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Tuesday 8th September 18:30	The Sun and Climate Change	University of Lancashire Engineering Innovation Centre Room EIC317 24 Fylde Road Preston PR1 2XS	Organised by: IET Contact: Mike Bell (michael.bell@ietvolunteer.org)	Dr Robin Catchpole Institute of Astronomy Cambridge University	Our Earth has shown wild variations in climate over the last few hundred million years. The ultimate driver of climate is the Sun, which has increased in luminosity by 30% over it's 4,500 million year current life. We will see how the sun works and how it influences the Earth and our climate on ever shorter time scales, including the 11 year sunspot cycle. Finally, we will see how recently CO2 has become increasingly important and look at the most likely future.
Wednesday 9th September 10.30		Wesley Hall Westby Street Lytham FY8 5LU	Organised by: IET/Lytham PROBUS Contact: Mike Bell (michael.bell@ietvolunteer.org)		
Wednesday 9th September 19.30		Barrow Town Hall Duke St Barrow-in-Furness LA14 2LD	Organised by: IET/PESC Contact: Anne Morris (anne.morris@ietvolunteer.org)		
Thursday 10th September		Lakes College Lillyhall Business Park Hallwood Road Workington CA14 4JN	Organised by: IET Contact: Artur Majchrowski (artur.majchrowski@ietvolunteer.org)		
Thursday 3rd December 11:00	Wings Over Windermere - A Story of Two Seaplanes at Windermere	The Netherwood Hotel and Spa Lindale Road Grange-over-Sands Cumbria LA11 6ET	Organised by: IET Retired Members Contact: Suzanne Flynn (suzanne.flynn@ietvolunteer.org)	Ian Gee	This illustrated talk will detail the technical development of the Waterbird 'hydro-aeroplane' which first flew at Windermere in 1911 and of the replica which first flew at Windermere in 2022.
Thursday 8th October 18:30	The Rise and Rise of the Cameraphone	University of Lancashire Engineering Innovation Centre Room EIC317 24 Fylde Road Preston PR1 2XS	Organised by: IET Contact: David Gonzales (david.gonzales@ietvolunteer.org)	Professor Emeritus Nigel Linge	More and more photographs are taken each year yet the vast majority of those are snapped using a smartphone and not a traditional dedicated camera. It is amazing how the camera has become such an essential feature of the mobile phone. Even more remarkable considering that when it was first proposed, mobile operators were extremely sceptical if not totally antagonistic about putting a camera in a mobile phone – why would anyone want that! However, those early doubts soon evaporated when the first camera phone proved to be an instant hit. Thereafter all the major handset manufactures followed suit, resulting in a consequential phenomenal improvement in both the quality of the camera and the capabilities of software used to manipulate the images taken. Perhaps not surprisingly, the camera has become one of the most important features that customers look for when buying a new smartphone. This talk will explore how the camera phone works, the many technical challenges that must be overcome, and the importance of megapixels when defining the resolution of the images produced. Finally, the talk will consider the many societal impacts, for the camera phone has found uses that go way beyond basic photography and the selfie.

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Foothold

Supporting engineers

Foothold is the IET Benevolent Fund, a charity that has supported engineers since 1890.

We offer free, online resources to improve the well-being of engineers and their families, such as [legal and financial fact sheets](#), our [Neurodiversity hub](#) and our [Mental Health Check-In Tool](#), to help you understand how you're feeling right now and find ways to improve your mental health, designed in collaboration with experts.

Join our free, monthly webinars

Our expert speakers cover a range of subjects, from mental and physical health to personal finance and planning for the future, such as good gut health, imposter syndrome, ageing well and money tips.

Reserve your space for our January webinar 'Managing Uncertainty' [through this link](#).

Get involved with Foothold's work

Our work is powered by engineers like you. Here are some ways you can [support our work](#), so we can support those who need it most:

Spread the word

Tell your colleagues and networks about the support that Foothold can offer.

Donate

Set up a regular direct debit, take on a challenge event, play the lottery, or leave a gift in your will.

Volunteer

We have a range of ways you can get involved, such as presenting videos and writing guest blogs.

Contacts

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The Institution of Engineering and Technology

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Social Media

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Local Network Affiliated Organisations

The Lancashire & Cumbria network covers a vast area with diverse interests. We attempt to include the majority of talks organised by the organisations listed below in our IET and LinkedIn pages; however some events are posted only to the local organisation's events pages.

Below is a selection of the local subgroups and contacts:

Barrow and District Association of Engineers - www.bdae.org.uk

IMechE North-West - <https://nearyou.imeche.org/near-you/UK/North-Western>

Kendal and District Engineering Society -

www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=584696080327998&set=gm.550713739774041

Professional Engineers South Cumbria - <https://pesc.org.uk>