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## Editorial: splitting the seams

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We know that the robe of knowledge is seamless, but for practical purposes (especially teaching) it has long been divided into discrete sectors. For example, in the field of interest to readers of this Journal, inorganic, organic and physical chemistry have traditionally held sway. Nevertheless, the very existence of a *Journal of Materials Chemistry*, and its substantial success over a 12 year period, provides an indication that new groupings of interest are constantly arising as the horizons of our knowledge broaden: 'Materials Chemistry' embraces not only chemistry (though that is central to its concerns) but other condensed matter sciences like those of materials and physics. As the professional body publishing this journal, the Royal Society of Chemistry has also recognised these shifting frontiers and reconstituted its own structure so that 'interest groupings' like materials chemistry can exist alongside the traditional Divisions and with equal status. It is a pleasure for me as a firm advocate of materials chemistry, in addition to Scientific Advisory Editor of this Journal, to appraise you of this development and to introduce Paul O'Brien as the new Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Forum. These developments will be of interest not only to current Members of the Royal Society of Chemistry, but all those interested in the subject. Information about the Materials Chemistry Forum is being sent out to current Members of the RSC, who will be able to join at no extra charge.

It is to be hoped, though, that the new emphasis on such multi-disciplinary fields as this may encourage new members into the Society. It is also noteworthy that boundaries with other subjects contiguous with chemistry are also being broken down within the Society. Many of the most exciting developments are taking place across the borders between chemistry and biology, so in addition to the Materials Chemistry Forum, another Forum for Chemical Biology has been set up. In Materials Chemistry too, we are conscious of the importance of learning from biology, and a special issue of this journal devoted to bio-materials is being planned.

Accompanying the new measures encouraging inter-disciplinarity are new methods of communicating research results, of which the initiative for a new Chemical Biology Virtual Journal (<http://www.rsc.org/chembiol>) is an important recent example. The virtual journal contains relevant articles originating from all RSC journals, including *Journal of Materials Chemistry*, and the primary literature may be accessed free of charge for one month following publication. Underlying all these developments, however, is the Society's desire to create the most effective means possible to initiate and disseminate novel science based on chemistry, at the same time pressing the highest standards. As knowledge's seamless robe expands and evolves, publications such as ours will continue to serve the changing community.



**Peter Day, FRS**  
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## Materials Chemistry Forum of the RSC

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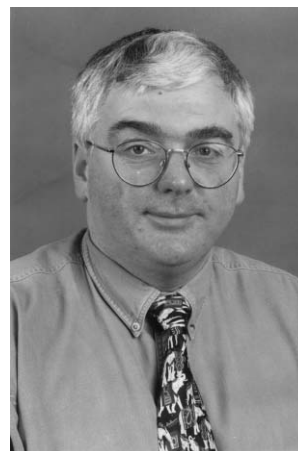
The Royal Society of Chemistry has undergone considerable changes in the last year or so. One exciting outcome of the new structure is the improved recognition and status of interest groups such as Materials Chemistry and Chemical Biology. I am delighted to have been invited to take on the Chairmanship of The Materials Chemistry Forum at this exciting time. There will be many changes, and in the autumn of this year members of the RSC will be invited to join the Forum in a way analogous to that used for the Divisions of

the Society. This membership will lead to a formal elected and representative structure for the Executive Committee of the Forum. Representative members on the executive committee of the Forum will reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the group and include: members from industry, the other divisions of the Society, The Solid State Group, UK Macro Group and the British Liquid Crystal Society. Standing invitations to attend committee meetings are made to other bodies including the Institute of Physics, Institute of Materials and the EPSRC.

The newly constituted forum is keen to develop a good working relationship with its membership. Meeting of various kinds are one activity we are keen to foster, these include the successful Materials Discussion Series (MD) and the Materials Chemistry Conference. The so-called 'Car-Boot Sale' technology transfer events, organised in conjunction with the RSC Industrial Affairs Division, provide a forum for interactions between industry and academia. One will be held in Leeds on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2003 and further details are available from the RSC. In addition to meetings the Forum is keen to represent the community in other ways and would particularly welcome imaginative ideas for new activities from materials chemists.

Thanks are due to Professor Tony West for his work in establishing the Materials Chemistry Forum. The activities of the Forum, and Materials Chemistry in general are now ably supported by Rachel Brazil who may be contacted at [brazilr@rsc.org](mailto:brazilr@rsc.org) for information on any Forum activities and suggestions for future activities. The Forum will also bring out its first newsletter in September which will include highlights of papers from the *Journal of Materials Chemistry* as well as features of general interest to materials chemists and information on relevant RSC meetings.

I hope those interested in materials chemistry will help us to develop the Forum so as to best represent and further the interests of this increasingly important aspect of our discipline.



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Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Materials Chemistry Forum