



Mineralogical Society of Great Britain and Ireland

www.minersoc.org

WHAT MIGHT BREXIT MEAN FOR UK SCIENCE – FROM THE PRESIDENT



Hilary Downes,
President

The result of the so-called “Brexit” (“British exit” of the European Union) referendum on June 23rd means that the UK will leave the European Union (EU). This result has stunned the 48% of voters who voted to remain in the EU. Like me, most UK scientists voted for the “Remain” option – I have not yet found any fellow scientist who wished the UK to leave the EU. Friends and colleagues from EU countries, some of whom have lived and worked in the UK for decades, have told me that they are horrified at the decision. It had all the shock of a major earthquake; overnight the familiar world became unrecognizable. The UK’s new Prime Minister, Theresa May, has tried to reassure the scientific community that the new government’s continued commitment to science and research is “steadfast”. Some find such comments reassuring; others are less convinced. So what might Brexit mean for our science and, more specifically, for the Mineralogical Society of Great Britain and Ireland (MSGBI)?



Theresa May, the
new British Prime
Minister

For science in general, I have heard anecdotally of EU scientists refusing offers of employment in the UK, EU students not taking-up their places at UK universities, and of UK scientists suddenly being left out of EU research grant applications. I trust that this knee-jerk reaction will dissipate over the coming months. The UK still intends to participate in all aspects of European science (“ensuring a positive outcome for science in the Brexit negotiations”, as Sir Venki Ramakrishnan, the President of the Royal Society, put it). The Brits realise how vitally important international collaborations are for science, and we will continue to engage with both EU and non-EU colleagues. We are aware that 11% of UK science funding comes from the EU, mainly through the prestigious European Research Council grants. However, we will have to make the UK an attractive place again for EU colleagues to live and work. European Union students studying in the UK currently outnumber UK students studying in EU countries by about 8:1.

Of course, our society’s very name emphasises that we belong to two sovereign countries: Great Britain *and* Ireland. Ireland, of course, has no plans to leave the EU. Our society predates the establishment of the Republic of Ireland and has weathered all of the political upheaval which that involved, so we can probably weather the Brexit storm too. In fact, we are currently benefitting from the exchange rate between the British pound and the European euro (also the currency in Ireland), since the value of sterling fell after the Brexit announcement. This makes our books and journals more attractive to EU and overseas buyers. Now would be a good time to recommend our journals (*Mineralogical Magazine* and *Clay Minerals*) to librarians and personal subscribers around the world. We also benefit from the favourable conditions of EU VAT on electronic goods, which helps our e-journal to be viable. So the situation for MSGBI can be described as somewhere between “Situation Normal” and “Don’t Panic!”. Maybe still having one foot in the EU via our relationship with Ireland will prove to be advantageous!

H. Downes

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM REOPENS THE LAPWORTH MUSEUM OF GEOLOGY

After several years of sustained effort – and a lot of hard work by many, many people – the University of Birmingham’s Lapworth Museum of Geology has reopened following the successful completion of a £2.7m refurbishment.

Visitors will be able to enjoy a state-of-the-art museum experience showcasing one of the UK’s most outstanding rock, fossil and mineral collections, through a range of innovative and interactive exhibits – all completely free of charge.

Exploring life over the past 3.5 billion years, from rocks and fossils to volcanoes, earthquakes and even dinosaurs, the museum will capture the imagination of all ages.



The redevelopment has been made possible thanks to a transformative Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £1.5m, the generous support of University of Birmingham alumni, and a number of grant awarding bodies, trusts and foundations. The museum will provide a mineralogical and geological focal point for the West Midlands of the UK by which to fuel public interest in, and understanding of, the Earth sciences.

Full details of how to find the Lapworth Museum of Geology, plus opening hours and information on the collections can be found here <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/facilities/lapworth-museum/index.aspx>

Further information and photographs are available at: <http://www.mindat.org/article.php/2372/Lapworth+Museum+of+Geology+reopens+after+an+extensive+%C2%A32.7+million+redevelopment>

JOURNAL IMPACT FACTORS FOR 2015

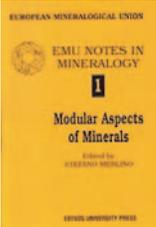
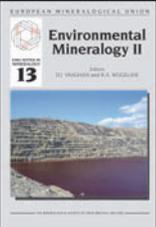
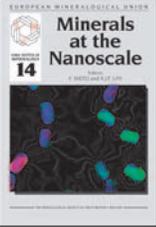
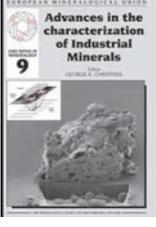
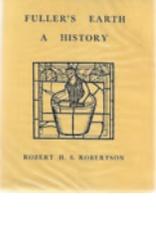
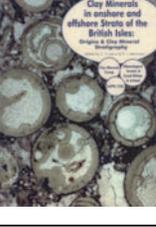
The latest Thomson-Reuters impact factors (for 2015) were released in June 2016. *Mineralogical Magazine* has increased its impact factor (from 2014) to 2.212, an increase of 9% over last year. The increased rates of citation per article over the past couple of years has continued. As ever, we are working at improving this rating. One of the side-effects of our success has been increased waiting times. To help alleviate this, we have created an open-access pre-publication server in which accepted papers are published prior to copy editing and typesetting (visit it at <http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/minsoc/mag/pre-prints>).

The impact factor for *Clay Minerals* has dropped back slightly to 0.874. We continue to work on improving this rating. As before, we are pushing hard for high-impact reviews and were successful in securing a number of excellent special issues arising out of last year’s Euroclay meeting. This journal also has a preprint server, available at <http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/minsoc/cm/pre-prints>.



**SOCIETY
BOOK
SALE**

From now until early 2017, many MSGBI books are being sold at a reduced price. This, coupled with the recent fall in the value of the £ sterling, will make these books an even better investment than ever!

 <p>Vol. 1: <i>Modular Aspects of Minerals</i> (448 pages) Edited by S. Merlino £10</p>	 <p>Vol. 13: <i>Environmental Mineralogy II</i> Edited by D.J. Vaughan and R.A. Wogelius, editors £15</p>	
 <p>Vol. 2: <i>Environmental Mineralogy</i> (434 pages) Edited by D.J. Vaughan and R. Wogelius £10</p>	 <p>Vol. 14: <i>Minerals at the Nanoscale</i> Edited by F. Nieto and K.J.T. Livi, editors £15</p>	 <p><i>Environmental Mineralogy: microbial interactions, anthropogenic influences, contaminated land and waste management</i> Edited by J. D. Cotter-Howells, L.S. Campbell, E. Valsami-Jones and M. Batchelder. £10</p>
 <p>Vol. 8: <i>Nanoscope Approaches in Earth and Planetary Sciences</i> Edited by F. Brenker and G. Jordan £15</p>	 <p>Landmark Papers Volume 1: <i>Volcanic Petrology</i> (I.S.E. Carmichael) £10</p>	 <p>Monograph No. 5: <i>Crystal Structures of Clay Minerals and their X-ray Identification</i> Edited by G.W. Brindley and G. Brown £10</p>
 <p>Vol. 9: <i>Advances in the characterization of Industrial Minerals</i> Edited by G. Christidis, editor £15</p>	 <p>Landmark Papers Volume 2: <i>Structure Topology</i> (F.C. Hawthorne) £10</p>	 <p><i>Fuller's Earth: A History</i> R.H.S. Robertson £8</p>
 <p>Vol. 10: <i>Ion partitioning in ambient-temperature aqueous systems</i> Edited by M. Prieto and H. Stoll, editors £15</p>	 <p>Landmark Papers Volume 3: <i>Metamorphic Petrology</i> (B.W. Evans) £10</p>	 <p><i>Clay minerals in onshore and offshore Strata of the British Isles: origins & clay mineral stratigraphy</i> C.V. Jeans and R.J. Merriman £10</p>
 <p>Vol. 11: <i>Layered Mineral Structures and their Application in Advanced Technologies</i> Edited by M.F. Brigatti and A. Mottana, editors £15</p>	 <p><i>Phoscorites and Carbonatites from Mantle to Mine: the Key example of the Kola Alkaline Province</i> Edited by F. Wall and A.N. Zaitsev £20</p>	