

# Summer 2023 Newsletter

Cumbria Members Group

**IChemE** ADVANCING  
CHEMICAL  
ENGINEERING  
WORLDWIDE

*Welcome to the summer 2023 edition of the Cumbria Members Group newsletter.*

*Our aim is to support the professional development of chemical engineers in our area, for all ages and levels of experience. In this issue we review previous events.*

## Tractor Shed Brewery Tour Review

Thank you to all that attended the IChemE's April Event – a tour of the Tractor Shed Brewery – a small independent brewery in Workington. The brewery tour was successful and a little different to previous tours considering the small scale.

The owner Gareth gave a great presentation covering the development of his business as well as the more technical aspects to his brewing process, such as selection of ingredients and operating conditions of fermentation tanks to vary the flavour and strength of his product. Highlighting the passion that went into perfecting his process and continually improving both to remain competitive, particularly considering factors such as the pandemic as well as the difficulties in the greatly monopolised brewing industry as a whole - whilst maintaining the local, authentic spirit which led Gareth to start his company in the first place. The small farm that houses the brewery, adjacent to the river Derwent, was a great setting for members to converse in an informal setting. Some members may remember the previous visit to the Tractor Shed Brewery, and it is likely that we will visit again.  
– Oliver Richards



## McVitie's Technical Talk Review



In July, Cumbria Members Group organised a technical webinar on biscuit making that was presented by Sarah Conley, a Process Development Manager at Pladis in Carlisle (the company behind brands such as Carr's, Jacob's and McVitie's). Sarah gave an insight into her role at Pladis followed by a detailed description of each step to making a biscuit, highlighting the chemical engineering principles applied. This included topics such as heat flux, heat recovery, chemistry of the biscuits, recycling, and videos of how the various types of equipment and machinery work. Sarah also explained the difficulties they face, such as increased pressure to produce healthier options and the challenges with making a gluten free biscuit.

Sarah shared with us that the McVitie's factory in Carlisle was the first biscuit factory in the world and suggested watching a programme on channel 5 which shows a lot of the processes at the factory: [My5 - Secrets Of The Factories - Season 1 - Episode 2 / Secrets of the McVitie's Factory.](#)

The presentation finished with Sarah informing us that Jaffa Cakes are in fact officially classified as a cake rather than a biscuit.  
– Milly Szymborska

## Women in Engineering Day

The Cumbria Members Group had a stall at the 'International Women in Engineering Day' at Energus organised by the Women's Engineering Society. The stall supported the day, having conversations with different engineers at the event, discussing what difference we can make for the gender gap in engineering.

The event theme was safety and security and had talks on the Authority Gap, the Insider Threat, an Assertiveness Workshop, and a career talk from Dawn Watson.

The Authority Gap discussed how the gender balance culture is embedded from a young age through social and societal norms. Mary Ann Sieghart's book, 'The Authority Gap', was discussed with how this may affect day-to-day work and micro-actions possible by all to embed gender balance culture.

The CNC Insider Threat identified the different types of insider threat and how some actions are accidental. Examples of threats, including terrorism, were discussed with pointers of what to be aware of.

Catherine Eve, from the Centre for Leadership Performance, held an Assertiveness Workshop. She explained how you can phrase conversations to be assertive without coming across as aggressive, passive or passive-aggressive, by expressing your feelings, thoughts and rights.

Dawn Watson talked through her career and how incidents from school had made her the person she was today. She stated that although she is currently working in technical, she has previous experience within project management so reminded everyone that you are not just your last job but have all your previous experiences.

The event was well attended and had good feedback from all involved. – Sarah McKay



### Your Committee

Charlotte Ransom – Chair

Sarah McKay – Secretary/Events

Paul Sutton – Treasurer

Dan Pocock – Communications

Sophie Watson – STEM

John Smallman – Mentor  
coordination

### Upcoming Events

Get Chartered

October TBC