



Under strict embargo until: 10.30am, Monday 16 October 2006

New UK science think tank launched

***UK's position as a world leader in science is under threat warns new think tank,
Newton's Apple***

Urgent change is needed if the UK is to remain a world leader in tackling 21st century problems in medicine, the environment, infrastructure, food and energy supply. According to Newton's Apple, a new think tank focused on scientific issues, four areas need to be addressed:

- More young people must be encouraged to take up science education
- The funding and careers structures supporting the UK's science base need urgent reform
- Non-scientists who communicate science to society need to do so accurately
- Scientists of all age-groups at the cutting-edge of their fields need to be brought into the policy-making process

'The current framework in which UK science operates needs to undergo a radical change if the UK is to succeed,' said the Founding Member, Dr Ian Gibson MP. 'There are barriers between those who practise and think science, and those policy makers who, despite recognising the need for science, fail to fully appreciate its value in the policy making process,' he continued.

These points are all discussed in the think tank's first publication "*A Scientific Vision for the 21st Century*", to be launched today at the Science Media Centre. The publication contains essays by authors from widely different fields of expertise, age groups and perspectives sharing a passion for science and a belief in the central role that it can play in society, including Professor Colin Pillinger, Sir Crispin Tickell, Dr Ben Goldacre and Sir Richard Sykes.

Media Briefing and Questions

10.30 - 11.15am

The Science Media Centre

19 Albemarle Street

London W1S 4BS

Speakers: Dr Ian Gibson MP, Sir Crispin Tickell, Dr Frances Balkwill (Translational Oncology Laboratory Barts and The London Queen Mary's School of Medicine & Dentistry), Branwen Hide (Brasenose College, Oxford) and Dr Ben Goldacre (Guardian 'Bad Science' columnist)

Drinks and Canapé Reception

11.30 - 1.00pm

Dartmouth House

37 Charles Street

London W1J 5ED

Speakers: Dr Ian Gibson MP and Sir Richard Sykes

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To obtain a copy of "A Scientific Vision for the 21st Century", arrange media interviews or RSVP for the Drinks Reception please contact Mia Nybrant (Director) on 07890 864 361, mian@newtons-apple.org.uk or Sarah Beyrath on 07958 672 239, sarah.beyrath@ralearning.com

Notes for editors

Newton's Apple (www.newtons-apple.org.uk) is a new science think-tank. Its objective is to bring a greater appreciation of the vital role that science, technology and engineering contribute to the wealth of the UK and the health of its people. By engaging professional scientists of all age groups and from different fields in the policy process, the organisation aims to offer robust solutions to some of the challenges we are facing in the 21st century and beyond.

Patron: Baroness Kennedy. **Founding Members:** Wendy Barnaby, Sarah Beyrath, Professor Derek Burke, Aisling Burnand, Professor S J Bell Burnell, Dr Monica Darnbrough, Professor Ann Dowling, Sarah Doyle, Dr Emma East, Professor Michael Elves, Scott Fleming, Richard Foxton, Dr Ian Gibson MP, Dr Ben Goldacre, Michael Gove MP, Branwen Hide, Dr Brian Iddon MP, Dr Frances MacGuire, Professor John Masters, Dame Bridget Ogilvie, Vivienne Parry, Willie Rennie MP, Dr Alun Roberts, Sir Richard Sykes, Sir Crispin Tickell, Dr Desmond Turner MP, Lord Winston