

# maths INSPIRATION

LHS students head to the Royal Northern College of Music for annual Maths Inspiration lectures. Year 11 and 12 students from Lymm High School took part in a series of lectures recently aimed to inspire students by presenting mathematics in the context of exciting, real-world applications.

Held at the Royal Northern College of Music, and hosted by professional mathematician, Matt Parker, students listened to a number of engaging speakers talk about how they use maths in their working lives.

Rob Eastway, the puzzle adviser for New Scientist magazine and bestselling author of 'Why Do Buses Come In Threes?' and 'Maths On the Back of an Envelope', spoke about how some think maths is about getting a precise answer. Often appearing on BBC Radio 4 and 5 Live to talk about the maths of everyday, he explained:

"There's a vital type of maths - 'impure maths' - which is done on the back of an envelope, where the answer is only a rough approximation. His talk demonstrated how back-of-envelope maths can help with anything from landing a top job to working out the chance of Earth being invaded by aliens.

Aoife Hunt, who works for Movement Strategies, a consultancy that specialises in analysing the movements of people, also spoke at the event. Her talk demonstrated how professional consultants use GCSE and AS Level maths to understand the movement of crowds – whether at Wembley Stadium, Glastonbury or Heathrow Airport.

Students discovered the unlikely connection between crowd flow and quadratic equations, and how computer games are being built to predict what you will do in an emergency.

Reader in Engineering at Cambridge University, Hugh Hunt, was the third and final speaker.

Awarded the prestigious Rooke Award for public promotion of engineering, Hugh is famous for his documentaries on Channel 4, including Dambusters - Building the Bouncing Bomb and Attack of the Zeppelins.

His research is in Climate Engineering and his talk addressed the mechanics of spin e.g. how spinning things such as gyroscopes actually work!

He gave insight into questions such as: 'Why does a spinning top stand up?' And, 'Why doesn't a rolling wheel fall over?'

The Maths Inspiration Lectures had a lot to live up to in name but they did truly inspire our students and staff about some very exciting and boundary pushing applications of maths in the real world.

We are looking forward to an equally exciting return visit next year!