

## Athene Donald University Professor

I am a Professor in the Cavendish Laboratory, Department of Physics at The University of Cambridge and a Fellow of the Royal Society. I have been at the Cavendish Laboratory since 1983, where I became Professor in 1998. My activity sits within the sector of Biological and Soft Systems and focuses on using the ideas of soft matter physics to study a wide range of systems of both synthetic and biological origin.



I am proud of the fact that I was appointed the first female Professor of Physics in the University back in 1998, and elected to the Royal Society in 1999. My research is interdisciplinary in nature, dealing with 'soft matter' such as plastics and food and increasingly with problems of biological relevance. This is a growing field and it is exciting to see our undergraduates respond to its attractions. It has everyday relevance but also raises deep questions.

As a female Professor I get asked to sit on many committees, locally, nationally and internationally. This gives me an opportunity to have a voice in many different spheres. I have also recently become Director of the Physics of Medicine initiative in West Cambridge and, in 2007, Director of the Women in Science, Engineering and Technology Initiative within the University. In this latter role I am working closely with Personnel to try to look at ways to enable the University to be a more attractive place for women to work and to provide appropriate support for young researchers.

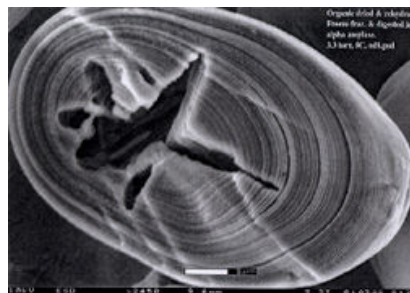


Image of a fractured starch granule imaged using environmental scanning electron microscopy, a novel form of electron microscopy we are developing for the study of hydrated samples, including those of biological origin.



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