

F&S May 2021

Our **SAMI Cohort** continued with its 5th session this week. One of the attendees reported that *“the sessions were full of insights and provided me a lot of food for thought and further considerations.”* We are now recruiting for a second cohort where in a small group with other professionals you can explore the issues surrounding your foresight work. Cohort members choose the topics for discussion. Contact Jane.Dowsett@samiconsulting.co.uk if you are interested.

Jonathan Blanchard Smith received a very positive response to his talk on **“Britain in 2030 - Four Post-Brexit Scenarios Revisited”** to the Greater Manchester branch of the Chartered Quality Institute with a score of 9/10. Taking our “Four post-Brexit Scenarios” publication as his starting point, he re-examined the scenarios in the light of the withdrawal agreement. Comments included:

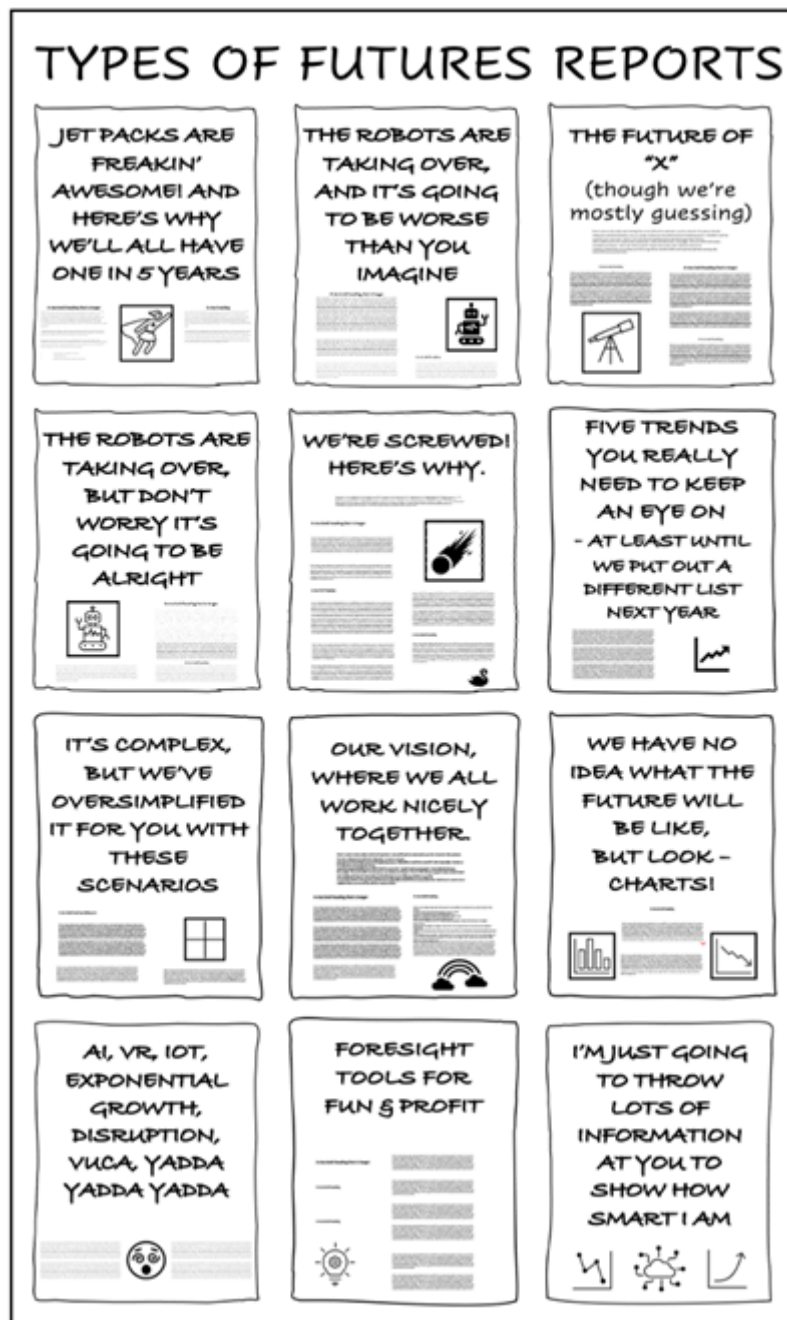
- *“the most thorough and thoughtful discussion of Brexit I've yet heard”;*
- *“insightful”;*
- *“thoughtful and interesting”.*
- *“This was a high-quality, well thought-through and thought-provoking presentation - as interesting for its precise and methodical exposition of the method, as for its conclusions. Well worth attending.”*

The [Institute of Leadership and Management](#) is publishing today an article by Huw Williams on scenario planning, called **“Expect the Unexpected”**. Using an example from SAMI’s work for the EU’s Health and Safety Agency (EU-OSHA), the article goes through each of the steps of a scenario planning project, from identifying key drivers, through creating scenarios to testing policies against each of them (“wind-tunnelling”).

Emeritus Fellow Gill Ringland gave [a keynote address to the Association for Strategic Planning’s Virtual conference](#) on the role of **ethics in strategy**. The keynote starts by

asking why organisations need ethics – why is keeping to the law not enough? Using several examples of how the world is changing, Gill illustrates that ethical behaviour in business reduces risk and contributes to performance – that ethics is absolutely a central part of strategy.

On a lighter note, [Robert Hickson](#) on [Sciblogs](#) came up with a **characterisation of futures reports**.



We'll take care to examine which of these we might be guilty of doing!

Executive Education

Our online course "Understanding the Future" will be run again on 24th to 28th May 2021. The course fee is £490 + VAT, and discounts may be available for self-funded individuals. For more information, please email us at training@samiconsulting.co.uk.

A range of information on various [futures techniques](#) – our version of the GOS Futures Toolkit - is available on our website.

Futures Issues

10% of Generation Z said [they're considering not having children](#) so they can afford to retire early, compared to just 4% of Millennials, with the percentage being higher amongst those that lived in London with an average to higher paid job. This is on top of already falling fertility rates and the onset of a declining population.

In recognition of the inevitable, the [United Mine Workers of America](#), the country's largest union representing coal miners, announced that it supported a renewable energy future — provided that miners get "good-paying jobs" in return. A good signal of societal change.

Carbon capture and production is pushing its way onto the agenda. [An exhibition at the Science Museum](#) demonstrated how a range of products – vodka, toothpaste etc – can be made from captured carbon. And a Finnish company is developing a process to use airborne carbon to produce a [healthy ingredient that](#) looks like wheat flour and contains 50% protein

Hydrogen could be used to power electric vehicles more easily using a ["liquid organic hydrogen carrier"](#) which converts hydrogen into a liquid. The EVs could be refuelled like a petrol car with the liquid being re-converted on board, providing a simpler and cheaper alternative to onboard storage of compressed hydrogen.

In Uganda, [drones](#) are being tested as a way of delivering HIV drugs to 78 community groups and health facilities across the widely scattered Ssesse islands. This could be an example of the Hype Cycle, with delivery drones finding a much narrower niche than originally touted.

Field trials of a [robot weeding system](#) will begin on October. A scout robot identifies broadleaf weeds, passes the information via an AI system to the killer robot, which uses electrodes to destroy the roots, meaning there is no need for herbicide. This is one of a number of Smart Agriculture developments now emerging.

A [3D-printed house now houses paying tenants](#). A robotic nozzle that squirts out a specially formulated cement, "printing" 24 concrete elements according to an architect's design, adding layer upon layer to create a wall to increase its strength. These were transported to the building site and placed on a foundation; roof and window frames were then fitted. The process will cut costs and environmental damage by reducing the amount of cement that is used. It also provides an alternative at a time when there is a shortage of skilled bricklayers.

Our Blogs

Since our last newsletter we have posted some more blogs looking at the US National Intelligence Center's Global Trends report: [one looking at the structural forces they identified](#) and another [looking at the emerging dynamics as they see them](#). We have also posted about the [MIT review and list of technologies for 2021](#) and returned to the topic of AI as the [EU published its proposals on the values and ethics](#) in this field.