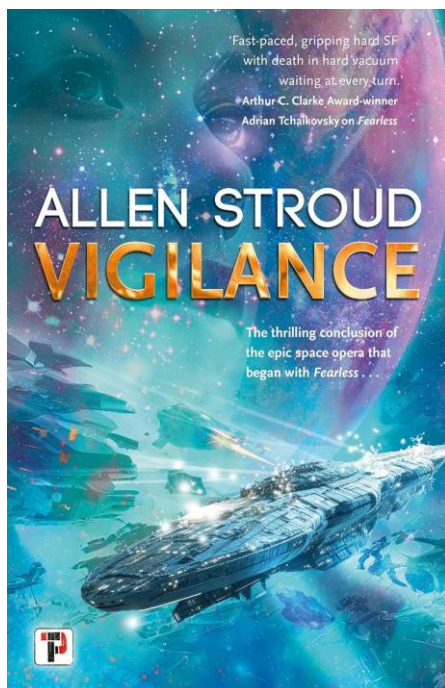


NOVACON ⁵³

PROGRESS REPORT 3



Guest of Honour

Allen Stroud

8th – 10th November 2024

Palace Hotel Buxton

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A WORD FROM OUR CHAIRS



A typical Novacon planning discussion!

Welcome to PR3 – and time seems to speed up the nearer we get. The committee have been working hard and we hope you'll find plenty to enjoy at Novacon 53. We're looking forward to seeing and hearing people – especially from our great Guest of Honour, **Allen Stroud**.

The Programme is nearly finalised and will be full of serious and fun panels, of which there is more information below.

We will also have the usual Art and Dealers' Rooms, Please do pop along and see what is on offer – there are always some incredibly talented exhibits and we need to appreciate and support the excellent creative members of our SFF community.

Sunday night will feature the usual Beer Tasting and Banquet. The food (chosen by our Guest of Honour) this year will be a carvery and there will also be a vegetarian option.

There will also be raffle tickets for charity available across the weekend, so please contribute to this good cause. The Novacon charity is the RNIB Talking Books. This wonderful

group has been providing this valuable service for people with sight and other reading difficulties since 1935.

Please be advised that the hotel have told us that due to safety concerns Mobility Scooters are not permitted in the lift. Please make sure that the hotel is aware if you plan to bring a scooter.

Looking forward to seeing you in November. *Claire & Carol*

HOTEL & CONVENTION INFORMATION

Palace Hotel Buxton
Palace Road
Buxton
SK17 6AG

Please take note that since last year there have been some changes to the hotel and some of their policies which we have detailed below.

Food and Drink: The Rippon Bar has been refurbished and looks lovely and has a fair amount of comfy seating.



There is now lots of seating outside the bar area that will be useful if the weather permits.

There is a real ale pump on the bar that currently has Deepdale gluten-free ale. They will also have a variety of cans and bottles. During our visit the choice included Black Sheep, Greene King's IPA and London Pride. The prices ranged from £4.40 to £5. Bottles of wine will be available at £17.

Baps/Butties will be available from the Rippon bar at £5.50. There will be Sausage, Bacon, Veggie Sausage or chips.

Disabled Access:

The main entrance has a few steps. Alternatively, there is ramp access at the rear of the hotel for those with difficulty with steps. This is on the left-hand side of the hotel as you face it, near the Leisure Centre. If arriving by car, there are car parking spaces near to that entrance.

NB The door pictured with the arrow next to the entrance to the bar can be used as the disabled access and takes people along the corridor rather than through the kitchen area which was the previous route.



Reminder or for those who haven't been before, the hotel has a lift, but as it is an old hotel some of the rooms are on "mezzanine" levels and still involve a few steps, so if this will cause you difficulties, please let the hotel know in advance and they'll do their best to accommodate you. Also the hotel has indicated that due to safety concerns, they do not permit Mobility Scooters in the lift. Please make sure that the hotel is aware if you plan to bring a scooter.



The town centre with shops and restaurants is a short distance. There is a set of shallow steps down or alternatively there is a step-

free route by turning left as you leave the hotel and follow the road down the hill and bear right.

General Things to Note:

The pool has been redone and there is now a cost for the leisure area. However, the hotel has agreed that this will be complementary for Novacon guests. Please check at Reception for details.

Room cleaning needs to be requested the night before. We have requested towels be available at reception for people who just need towels replacing.

VERY IMPORTANT - NO CASH PAYMENTS IN THE HOTEL - CARD ONLY. (This does not apply to convention sales eg Dealers Room or Art Show etc.)

Breakfast time is 7:30 to 9:30 am Friday and Monday, and 8:00 to 10:30 am on Saturday and Sunday.

Checkout is 11:00 am.

Parking is free though you must register your vehicle on the machines at Reception.

Wi-Fi is free in public areas but not in bedrooms.

Dogs will not be permitted in the bar or restaurant. They are allowed in the Conservatory.

As usual, there will be the usual Sunday evening Banquet and Beer Tasting. The hot buffet meal is chosen by our Guest of Honour and you **MUST** buy a ticket for it by 12 noon on Sunday. If you just want to drink the beer, you can either bring 3 bottles/cans of interesting beer to registration to get your beer badge or just buy one for **£8 (NB This is an increase since last year)**. A selection of soft drinks will be available to everyone free of charge. **Important**, if anyone has any particular **dietary requirements**, they must tell us before the convention.

For those who didn't attend last year, the town centre is only a short walk away. There are plenty of cafes, restaurants and pubs to choose from. There are also banking facilities, pharmacies and supermarkets nearby. More information can be found at www.visitbuxton.co.uk.

Finally, if you haven't booked your hotel room you don't have long left. Details of convention rates and booking system are reprinted below and are on the website (www.novacon.uk)

Convention room rates and Booking

The **Room Rates** (given below) are per room per night. Convention room rates: Rooms with Breakfast are: £110 per night for a Standard Double or Twin room (i.e. £55 per person with two people sharing). Single rooms are £70pp.

To reserve a room call **Central Booking 0333 323 1574** and use the code **NOVA080224** to get our rates. This number is available 8am - 8:30pm, Monday - Friday, 9am - 5:30pm Saturday.

Anyone with **mobility requirements** should call the hotel on **01298 767000** and use the option 4. This number is not available evenings and weekends.

If you have a problem getting through please email Sarah Shilcock with your contact details and she will call you back sarah.shilcock@theelitevenueselection.co.uk

MEMBERSHIPS AND DAY MEMBERSHIPS

we will not be selling memberships at the door. If you wish to attend, you need to purchase a membership in advance (see www.novacon.uk)

In advance of the convention, we will also be offering Day Rate Memberships. These will be:

Friday: £10, Saturday: £25, Sunday: £20

If you wish to purchase these, they can be found on the Memberships Tab on the Novacon website (www.novacon.uk/memberships). Once you have completed your details you will be taken through to pay for your memberships via PayPal.

NICK MILLS RIP

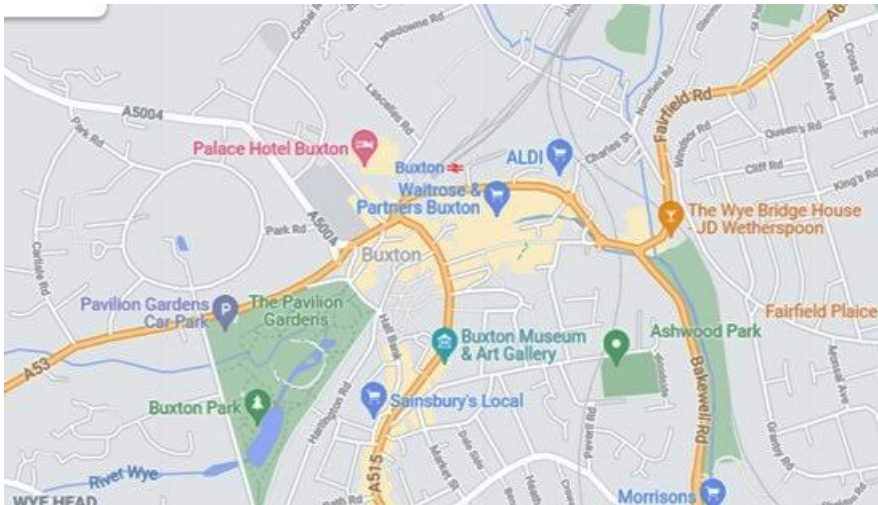
We are sorry to say that Novacon lost one of its own this year. Nick Mills not only attended Novacon, but he was also on a few of the committees and chaired Novacon 21. He had many interests and was always in demand for quiz teams. He will be missed.

HOW TO GET THERE

The Palace Hotel Buxton is in the centre of Buxton, just off the A53. For those travelling by car, the hotel address is Palace Road, Buxton, [SK17 9AG](https://www.gov.uk/road-addresses/sk17-9ag).

From Birmingham it is about a 2-hour drive by car, about 1 hour 15 minutes from central Manchester, and around 1 hour from Sheffield, Stoke or Derby.

If you are travelling by car the hotel has an on-site car park, which is normally chargeable but we have negotiated free parking. There are 180 parking spaces and 10 disabled.



If you are travelling by public transport, the hotel was the original railway hotel, so it is a short 3-minute walk from Buxton Train Station to the hotel.

From Birmingham, rail travel usually involves two changes, Cross Country line to Stockport then Northern Line to Buxton. Alternatively, you can change at Macclesfield, then catch the 58 bus to Buxton. There are bus stops located on the A53. There is a direct trainline (Northern Line) from Manchester to Buxton. From Sheffield, it appears that a bus service may be the quickest public transport option but please check for your individual circumstances, as the best options/route will vary depending on time of day and delays between connections.

PROGRAMME BIT

As I write it's only a few weeks until Novacon 53, and the programme is coming together well. It's traditional, here in Progress Report Three, for us to give you a foretaste of the Novacon Programme, by describing how Friday evening is going to play out, and with a few teasers for the remainder of the weekend.

FRIDAY

Opening ceremony – 7pm

In which the committee hold forth and introduce the GoH

Desert Island Books – 8 pm

Our Guest of Honour, **Allen Stroud** in conversation with author **Anna Smith Spark** discusses six of his favourite books (and one piece of music) that he would take with him to a desert island – and the reasons he chose them.



Book Launch of Allen Stroud's latest book, VIGILANCE –
9:30 pm

Following on from Desert Island books - Come and hear a short reading, watch a laser light show and listen to some of Allen's own music. Feel free to ask some questions, hear some answers, buy some books and enjoy our modest supply of wine. **Kindly sponsored by Flame Tree Publishing.**

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY

There will be the customary science talks, discussion panels and of course a Guest of Honour interview with **Allen Stroud**.

Saturday night will feature an interesting discussion where we have our own "next generation" of members encountering some "Vintage S F" for the first time. Will old favourites stand the test of time or not?

Saturday evening will also have the now traditional poetry reading session which is open to all. All those members who would like to participate are encouraged to bring poems, written by themselves.. All poets will be very welcome.

Following on from last year, the Art Auction will again have an option for instant sales, and a Silent Auction. There won't be a physical in-programme auction. Instead we are very pleased that **Margaret Walty** will be talking about their artwork in conversation with Chris Morgan.

Off-Piste Rooms

As a reminder, Off-Piste rooms are available on request (subject to availability) and free to anyone who wishes to present something they deem of interest to members. Items in the past have included Book Launches, Workshops, Podcasts and even Drink Tastings. If you wish to present something in an Off-Piste room, you can request a booking by emailing Programme@novacon.uk or asking at registration when at the

convention. Reservations are made on a first-come, first-serve basis and we already have a number of time slots reserved.

Please note this is offered as a service to members. Off-Piste is not part of the Main Programme, and it is the responsibility of the person with the reservation to organise it. NB Presenters are not entitled to free drinks. If you wish to have drinks at an item, you must arrange this with the hotel staff.

Book Auction

If there is sufficient interest there will be a Book Auction, so why not have pre-Christmas clear-out and bring your unwanted SFF books along to Novacon.

NOVACON ART SHOW

The Novacon Art Show will be returning and once again we are in the lovely light-filled room on the Ground Floor.

As a reminder, we now have direct access from the car park to the room which will make things much easier (right hand side of hotel as you face it). As last year, the Art Show will be located in the Chatsworth Room which is beside the Dealers' room.

We will be offering our usual mixture of originals, limited editions and prints and other interesting items. As we did last year, we will not be holding an auction in the Main Programme. Instead, there will be an option for instant sales and a Silent Auction for artists who prefer an auction.



We hope that this will allow attendees who are not around all weekend the opportunity to purchase a piece and take it away. In addition, this frees up programme space on Sunday afternoon and gives more time for the art show to be open.

ART SHOW

If you want to show your art it is free to convention members, but you will need to reserve space. So, contact us to discuss what you need and so that we can do a little planning. If you have any questions related to the art show, please contact Serena or Tony.

OUR 2024 DISEASE MITIGATION POLICY

It has become increasingly clear that even though things have improved since the height of the pandemic, an awareness of the potential for the spread of infectious disease in convention spaces needs to be always considered.

At this point in time, as a minimum, we would ask that:

- All attending members are **fully vaccinated** against Covid where possible.
- We request members to **take a lateral flow** test prior to attending convention and not to attend if this is positive.
- If you have any symptoms of an infectious respiratory infection, **please do not attend the convention**. If you take ill during the convention, please consider isolating yourself from other attendees.
- Masks will NOT be mandatory and will be the personal choice of individuals. We will NOT be asking people to wear them in programme items.
- Please do not host or attend room parties.

Other specific measures may be announced nearer the convention, and the committee will continue to monitor things. We will keep members up to date with any other proposed restrictions.

We are looking forward to seeing you all in November.

The Novacon committee.

CONVENTION TABLES

These are free to anyone who is running a convention. Contact Tony for reservations.

CODE OF CONDUCT

A Convention is a private event and, as such, the Committee has always had the right and the ability to remove any attendee for antisocial behaviour. Over recent years, it has become standard practice for such events to publish a Code of Conduct providing guidelines as to what that antisocial behaviour may include.

The Code of Conduct is a living document. It evolves, intending always to reflect current best practice. The version in use at each Novacon is fixed in advance of the convention, and

DEALERS' TABLES

Dealers' tables (6 ft) are available at £20. Dealers normally have to be a member of the convention but we are happy to talk about this. Also, we are open to discussion if you wish to only come for one day. Contact Tony at the email address on Page 2

the version for Novacon 53 will be available on the website (www.novacon.uk/n53/) and will be printed in the convention Programme book. It should be noted that the Code of Conduct governs not only behaviour at Novacon, but also in certain

spaces elsewhere, including but not limited to activity online, such as in messages or replies to Novacon accounts on social media, and posts in Novacon pages and groups.

The Novacon Code of Conduct team receives complete information from preceding Novacon Code of Conduct teams, and passes complete information to future Novacon Code of Conduct teams. It also maintains an awareness of activity which has been of concern to other conventions. For most people, the simple principle of, “Behave like a decent human being,” is enough of a guideline. However, if in any doubt, please consult the Novacon website or contact the team at CodeOfConduct@novacon.uk



MEMBERSHIP LIST OCTOBER 2024

1 Allen Stroud	17 Vanessa May
2 Jen Williams	18 Pete Randall
3 Carol Goodwin	19 Sue Jones
4 Claire Cartwright	20 Jamie Scott
5 Tony Berry	21 Dave Hicks
6 Helena Bowles	22 Peter Hicks
7 Alice Lawson	23 Cat Coast
8 Steve Lawson	24 Pauline Morgan
9 Helena McCallum	25 Chris Morgan
10 Magdalen Standage-Bowles	26 William Goodall
11 Richard Standage	27 Chris Bell
12 Alex Storer	28 ½r
13 Serena Culfeather	29 Gwen Funnell
14 John Wilson	30 Peter Wareham
15 Noel Collyer	31 Stephen Cooper
16 Martin Smart	33 Tommy Ferguson

34 Caroline Mullan
35 Brian Ameringen
36 Emjay Ameringen
37 Harry Payne
38 Hal Payne
39 Jodie Payne
40 Omega
41 Bridget Wilkinson
42 Claire Brialey
43 Mark Plummer
44 Chris Stocks
45 Tim Kirk
46 Steve Dunn
47 Anne Woodford
48 Alan Woodford
49 Marcus Rowland
50 Christine Davidson
51 Michael Davidson
53 Roger Robinson
54 Morag O'Neill
55 Tim Stannard
56 Paul Dormer
57 Flick
58 Ian Sorensen
59 Yvonne Rowse
60 Sally Rowse
61 Hazel Ashworth West
62 Jackie Burns
63 Jean Thompson
64 David Langford
65 Alexander Clarke
66 Kevan Grayson
67 Kate Solomon
68 Malcolm Davies
69 Niall Gordon
70 Adrian Snowdon
71 Alan Fleming
72 David Bamford
73 Kevin Mortimer
74 Neil Simpson
75 Ian Maughan
76 Andy Sawyer
77 Peter Newman
78 Karen Fishwick
79 Henry Eggleton
80 Roberta Roe
81 Peter Buck
82 Alison Buck
83 Jeffrey Wasserman
84 Melania Ion
85 Dominika Klimczak
86 Phil Nanson
87 Kari
88 David Cartwright
89 David Hodson
90 Ian Warner
91 Fran Dowd
92 John Dowd
93 Angela Rosin
94 Tobes Valois
95 Ian Stewart
97 Susan Peak
98 Chris Jones
99 Colin M. Taylor
100 Ben Loryman
101 Jasper Loryman
102 Margaret Walty
103 Roy Harling
104 Sandra Bond
105 Michael Meara
106 Patricia Meara
107 Alison Tomkinson
108 Neil Tomkinson
109 Alison Scott
110 Steven Cain
111 Esther MacCallum-Stewart
112 Laura Wheatly
113 Chris Baker
114 Rosie Oliver
115 Felicity Brown
116 Ben Brown
118 Morpho Duval

119 Richard Edwards
120 Dave Brzeski
121 Jilly Paddock
122 Anna Smith Spark
123 Richard Stephenson
124 Rob Jackson
125 Robert Sneddon
126 Vernon Brown
127 Pat Brown
128 Jim Walker
129 Peter Thompson
130 Els van Ooijen
131 Douglas Spencer
132 Cheryl Baker
133 Simon Beresford
134 Sue Edwards

135 Dave Lally
136 Mike Scott
137 Peter Wilkinson
138 Mark Slater
139 Elaine Coates
140 David Cooper
141 Jane Cooper
142 Steve Lockley
143 Paul Lewis
145 Robert Day
146 Virginia Preston
147 Phil Dyson
148 Jackie Duckworth
149 Tim Duckworth
150 Helen Gould
153 Nick Wells