
1 Introduction

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In common with its predecessors, *Section C* of volume 97 of *Annual Reports on the Progress of Chemistry* demonstrates the protean nature of physical chemistry and chemical physics. As is usual with this series of reports the topics covered are chosen to represent both core areas and some more specialised ones. It is a pleasure for me to thank all of the contributors for providing timely and interesting accounts of their chosen topics.

In the present volume nine areas of molecular science are covered: Matrix isolation by M. J. Almond and K. S. Wiltshire, Theoretical description of reaction mechanisms: reaction pathways and electronic structure rearrangements by P. B. Karadakov, Dispersive kinetics by A. Plonka, Gas-phase stabilities of small ions by J. Kalcher, Non-conventional soft matter by C. Tschierske, Nonelectrolyte solutions exhibiting structure on the nanoscale by A. Ciach and W. T. Gózdź, Muon spectroscopy by C. J. Rhodes, Dielectric relaxation in solutions by R. Buchner and J. Barthel and Chemical processes in intense optical fields by B. Sheehy.

Finally, I am very pleased to offer my gratitude to the Royal Society of Chemistry Reviews Staff for their assistance and cooperation in the production of this volume.