

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held at Burlington House on 3 June 2015

The President confirmed that the Bye-laws in Section 9 relating to meetings had been observed. Under Paragraph 9.10, non-Fellows could be present but may not vote.

1. APOLOGIES

Noted.

2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 4 JUNE 2014

These were agreed.

3. APPOINTMENT OF SCRUTINEERS

Two scrutineers were appointed for the ballots for Council and Officers, and Fellows were asked to vote for the new Council for 2015/16.

4. BALLOT FOR COUNCIL

The Ballot for Council was declared open.

5. ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2014

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The President said that since it was founded the purpose of the Society has been to bring together the practitioners of our science, academic and non-academic, and to foster progress both in our understanding of the Earth and the application of that knowledge for the benefit of society as a whole. The context in which the Society operates has changed and our tactics have evolved to ensure that the Society stays relevant to the needs of society and the Fellowship.

Fellows join a Society such as ours for more than professional and personal reasons; they join because by speaking in a single voice more can be achieved and because acting together can influence more people. While this does not absolve Fellows from personal responsibility it offers the hope that there is greater strength in numbers. This is especially important because of the way in which society has changed. During the Industrial Revolution there was no doubt that minerals, energy and construction underpinned everything and that understanding the subsurface was the key to unlocking its hidden riches for everyone's benefit. That remains true but in a post-industrial society it is much more difficult for people to grasp intuitively. Our understanding of 'whatever is under the Earth' is important for resources and a lot of work is needed to ensure that message is put across.

The President was pleased to report that the Society signed the Science Council's Declaration on Diversity, Equality and Inclusion and the challenge is to put the principles at the heart of all the Society does although it is recognised this will take some years.

The Associated Societies scheme was announced at last year's Annual General Meeting. Most overseas societies with which we have existing Memoranda of Understanding and Mutual Reciprocity Agreements have accepted the invitation to become Associated Societies. We will soon start to approach selected organisations with which we wish to build new relationships.

Much has been achieved in terms of the communication of geosciences relevant to contested issues. Shale gas and carbon capture and storage, together with radioactive waste management, were the focus for a conference on 'Communicating Contested Geoscience'. A major new report 'Geology for Society' was launched early in 2014 and sets out many of the ways in which geology matters to society.

The President concluded by saying that new audiences have been reached, for example through the very successful 100 Great Geosites initiative.

Report of Council's Diversity Champion

Tricia Henton said that the Society becoming a signatory to the Science Council's Declaration on Diversity, Equality and Inclusion was a very important part of taking the Society forward. One of the first tasks is monitoring the diversity of the Fellowship to gain an understanding of its nature. The completion of the form is voluntary.

There has been a review by an external consultant of how the Society communicates, particularly the website. Her feedback was encouraging but there is work to be done.

There is a seminar on 26 June 2015 '*Confronting barriers to inclusion: opening the gate to accessible fieldwork*'.

SECRETARIES' REPORTS

External Relations

Alan Lord, Secretary Foreign & External Affairs, said that the Society is often invited to comment on a variety of matters and concerns and it has been found to be more effective if we collaborate with other organisations. The Society has previously commented on the National Curriculum and in the last week it was announced that Geology will be retained as a GCSE subject.

Another example of the important role that the Society plays is that it was recently approached by the Department of the Environment & Climate Change to set up an Independent Review Panel to advise on radioactive waste management. Professor Christopher Hawkesworth will chair.

Geology for Society was launched early in 2014 at the Society's first event at the National Assembly for Wales. It is aimed at parliamentarians, officials and other decision-makers and sets out some of the ways our science matters to

society. It builds on five years of nurturing relationships with policy-makers, raising their awareness of our science, and understanding what they want from us. The European edition was launched on 2 June 2015 at the European Parliament in Brussels, in 13 languages including English and Welsh. It will soon appear in a 14th language and more may follow.

The Society worked with the Institute of Geologists of Ireland and other partner bodies in the search for 100 Great Geosites in the UK and Ireland. It engaged a wide and varied public audience and a list was developed which encompassed stunning landscapes, sites of great economic and social importance and those of great educational value, as well as the cornerstones of our science. The initiative was enormously successful. There were over 400 nominated sites and 1400 votes for 'people's favourite' in each category. The list was launched during Earth Science Week in October 2014 and received extensive media coverage. The Society partnered with Esri UK to produce an interactive online map of the sites, and an 'app' for smartphones and tablets will be launched, again working with Esri.

At the end of his tenure, Alan Lord thanked Nick Rogers, chair of the Education Committee and Rob Butler, chair of the Geoconservation Committee. He also thanked the staff at Burlington House and the Publishing House, in particular Judi Lakin, Liz Pedley, Jo Mears, Sarah Day and Flo Bullough and especially Nic Bilham. He wished his successor, Michael Young, well.

Science

Alastair Fraser, Secretary Science, said that over the last year the Science Committee has been reshaped to make it fit for the purpose of delivering the Science Strategy and an essential part has been to build a stronger relationship with the Specialist Groups. The Science Strategy cannot be delivered without them and the Regional Groups. There are now 'families' of Specialist Groups with a member of Council acting as an intermediary.

To continue to improve the Society's engagement with students and early career scientists, Jonathan Tennant and Elizabeth Sykes joined the Science Committee as student member and early career member respectively.

The Society will continue to hold exciting Flagship meetings and two new ones have been added: Bryan Lovell meetings focusing on the application of our science to societal challenges; and the Janet Watson meeting, an early career symposia building on our 'Frontiers' meetings.

The first conferences were held in Asia, both dependent on partnership with others. '*Sustainable Resource Development in the Himalaya*' with the University of Jammu and others; and a symposium on tsunami deposits and risks, the first event resulting from the Society's Memorandum of Understanding with the Geological Society of Japan. There is a return match in the UK in September 2015.

The primary vehicle for delivering the new 'proactive' aspects of the Society's science programme is the themed years. The themes are intended to be cross-cutting, and to embrace fundamental areas of research as well as economically and societally important applications. 2015 is the Year of Mud and there is an excellent programme of scientific meetings and wider outreach and education

activities underway, launched in January with the President's London Lecture on the Glories of Mud. The Lyell meeting theme was 'Mud, Glorious Mud and why it is important for the fossil record'. There was also an event in Belfast for schoolchildren where the properties of mud were used for a 'whodunit' with the museum.

2016 is the Year of Water and good ideas are already coming forward. It is not decided what the theme for 2017 will be and the Specialist Groups have been encouraged to work with the office on ideas.

Professional

Natalyn Ala, Secretary Professional Matters, said that it has been a very busy year. There was a wish to be more proactive in attracting new members and the Fellowship Development Strategy was approved by Council in April 2014.

The Northern Ireland Regional Group was launched. It has an active meetings programme and welcomes Fellows from south of the border as well as those from other geosciences organisations.

The Society's Mining Club met for the first time in 2014. Its aim is to broaden support provided for Fellows working in that area and to provide opportunities for networking.

A new model of joint working with University Geoscience UK was agreed and builds on the close working relationship that has developed between that organisation (previously known as the Committee of Heads of University Geosciences Departments) and the Society, to improve support to students and academics in the university sector.

Fellowship at July 2014 stood at 11,606, an increase of 5.8% compared to 2013. The number of Chartered Geologists was 2,495, an increase of 2.5%. This follows a similar trend to the last five years. There was an upward trend in the number of female Fellows and Chartered Geologists.

The extension of the accreditation scheme from university degree programmes to company training schemes was a great success. Already there are 12 company training schemes that have been accredited. Work is underway to enhance the CPD course endorsement scheme and to consider how it might be linked to accreditation structures. Sultan Qaboos University in Oman is the third university in the Middle East to have a degree programme accredited by the Society.

The Society celebrates 25 years of Chartership this year and there will be a celebratory event in September.

Publications

Colin North, Secretary Publications, said the Society's Publishing House continued to be successful in particular by having well-resourced, professional staff to keep abreast of the fast-changing world of publishing; and the provision of material for Special Publications which comes from the strong science programme.

Geofacets-GSL Millennium Edition was launched in 2014 and enables Fellows to explore for map content not only within Society publications but also within those published on behalf of Year 2k. Another important development was the GeoScienceWorld eBook collection which included 247 Society books.

The Society's Code of Publishing Ethics was revised to encourage sustainable sampling and data collection. It sends a clear message that the Society will not accept for publication anything not responsibly collected. In doing so, the Society is leading the way in setting best practice among other geosciences publishers globally.

An important resource is the Library and in 2014 Council agreed a new strategy and collection development policy. Colin North commended the Library staff for their professionalism. A number of new initiatives are underway to broaden access to the library. An open day for Corporate Affiliates provided an introduction to the physical and digital collections, and to the services offered.

The Library marked the centenary of the start of the First World War with a restaging of Lt Col Tannatt Edgeworth David's 1919 lecture on 'Geology at the Western Front', the 2014 version being delivered by Colonel Edward Rose. An equally popular event resurrected the 'Ghosts of the Museum', returning what is now the Upper Library to its original purpose for one evening, with a fossil drawing class delivered by Ted Nield.

An event planned for 9 July 'Geologist's House' will be an opportunity to see some of the William Smith map material. It has attracted a lot of public interest beyond the Fellowship.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Adam Law reported on a good year with the achievement of a financial surplus of over £540k, a slight increase on last year's surplus of £535k. With provisions for Library purchases, reserves and other commitments this figure is reduced to £48k, an admirable achievement.

Much of this result was led by Neal Marriott, Director of Publishing, Library & Information Services, and his team in Bath, which returned an overall surplus of around £400k, well ahead of budget. Adam Law thanked Neal Marriott and his team.

The financial performance enables the Society to continue to support all of those activities that ensure everyone knows geology matters. This includes the provision of research grants, the funds for which Council agreed to increase year on year, and the continuation of the London Lecture Series despite the withdrawal of sponsorship.

The outcome of the lease renewal on the Burlington House Apartments is far from certain and it is important to make adequate provision for this.

The reorganisation of the senior management and its structure was completed during 2014 and the Society welcomed Jonathan Silk, Director of Finance and

Operations, who is transforming the financial reporting and operational support. The completion of this reorganisation was timely because Edmund Nickless announced his retirement as Executive Secretary. He is irreplaceable but his successor will find the role of Executive Secretary is supported by a strong management team.

In his last report, Adam Law thanked the staff for their support and in particular Edmund Nickless, the senior management team and Stephanie Jones. He also thanked all those who work in the background and sit on the committees that steer the Society's finances, investments and sponsorship. He wished his successor, Graham Goffey, every success in what is a challenging but very enjoyable role.

6. COMMENTS FROM FELLOWS

Paul Henderson asked about the sustainability of the London Lecture Series. Edmund Nickless replied that the Society is funding that activity as part of its outreach role, the climate for obtaining sponsorship currently being very difficult. The continuation of the initiative does not depend on external sponsors.

Bernard Leake asked about the current situation with the lease on Burlington House. Edmund Nickless said the lease expired at the end of January 2015 and it has been held over. The methodology for the calculation of the rent is obscure and for the past two years the Courtyard societies have been seeking clarity about the method and terms of renewal of the lease. This has not been forthcoming so the five Courtyard societies agreed to work together and asked for arbitration. Edmund Nickless outlined the current situation and said that the matter is likely to go on for some time. In particular, the arbitrator has to decide whether he has jurisdiction. The matter is of active concern and the President and Council are being kept informed. In all this, it has been assumed that the Fellowship would wish the position to be questioned.

John Ludden said that a lot of science is funded by NERC. He asked if the Society is working with NERC on its 50th anniversary in 2015. Edmund Nickless said the Society would look forward to working with NERC and over the last decade there have been attempts to do that. A further offer has been made and it is hoped that a more positive response will be forthcoming. Alastair Fraser said that it is hoped that a meeting can be arranged with them but this has not yet been possible.

Sheila Peacock, Royal Astronomical Society, said they are arranging a meeting of the Solid Earth Forum at which they would like Duncan Wingham to be present. Edmund Nickless or his successor was also welcome.

Colin North was asked if the ethical sampling policy is deterring authors from publishing with the Society particularly if they are using legacy samples. Is an attempt being made to monitor? Colin North said it is always difficult to monitor something that is not happening; the effect will not be seen if it is working. The plan is that the message will be picked up by other organisations to try to make sure that as many organisations as possible take on this policy so it is made harder to find an outlet. It is hoped that responsible authors will want to publish and it also sends a message to the next generation. Edmund Nickless said

that AGI has just revised its guidelines of ethical behaviours and in that there is a provision about responsible collecting. This will be circulated to their members. The Society is working with other societies and that is a way to begin to make changes.

7. REPORT OF SCRUTINEERS ON THE BALLOT FOR COUNCIL

The President called upon the Scrutineers to read their report on the ballot for Council. Twenty-eight votes were cast with no abstentions or spoilt papers. The following Fellows were duly elected to Council:

Mrs Natalyn Ala, Mr Rick Brassington, Mr Malcolm Brown, Miss Liv Carroll, Dr Nigel Cassidy, Dr Angela Coe, Mr Jim Coppard, Mrs Jane Dottridge, Mr Chris Eccles, Dr Marie Edmonds, Mr Graham Goffey, Mrs Tricia Henton, Mr David Hopkins, Mr David Jones, Dr Jennifer McKinley, Prof David Manning, Prof David Norbury, Dr Colin North, Dr Katherine Royse, Prof Christine Peirce, Mr Keith Seymour, Dr Lucy Slater and Mr Michael Young

The ballot for Officers then took place.

8. ACCEPTANCE OF THE ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2014 AND APPROVAL OF THE BUDGET FOR 2015

Robin Cocks proposed acceptance of the accounts for 2014 and the budget for 2015. Richard Hardman seconded the motion, which was passed *nem con*.

9. FELLOWSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2016

The Finance and Planning Committee (FPC) was asked by Council to consider how Fellowship fees might more fairly reflect changes in the membership profile of the Society, sensitivities over fee rises, and the underlying principle that fees should cover the costs of services provided. FPC recommended to Council a model which addresses a current disparity in fee bands, defers a general rate rise for one year, and establishes a transparent mechanism for future fee increases. At its meeting on 8 April Council agreed to recommend to the Fellowship a new discounted fee band for the 60 – 64 age range, a one-year freeze on general fee increases and a mechanism for future fee increases which links to the Consumer Price Index in February of the preceding year as the default measure. Consequently fees for 2016 will rise by 0.0% and in subsequent years by CPI unless FPC advises Council that there is reason to doubt it provides a reasonable basis for the coming year's fee increase.

Fellows entering the new 60 – 64 age band from 1 January 2016, will pay £130, a discount of 33% on the 34 to 59 age rate, instead of 50% to £99 as has previously been the case. Those already in the band will continue to pay the lower rate. These changes are being introduced to reflect changes in working practices and retirement laws that see increasing numbers of Fellows continuing to work in senior positions and / or consultancy roles beyond the age of 60.

As previously reported, Chartership validation and annual registration fees no longer cover the full cost of providing those services and it was agreed at the Annual General Meeting in 2013 to raise the validation fee incrementally over a

three-year period to £85 (2014), £95 (2015) and £100 (2016) and the annual registration fee to £35 (2014), £42 (2015) and £48 (2016).

Helen Scholes asked if there might be further plans to alter the bands. Jonathan Silk said it will be kept under the review. The idea was to establish a few basics around which there can be more certainty but with advances in retirement age this is a possibility. Richard Hardman said it would be helpful to see the numbers involved and, particularly for 34 – 59, that it is not detrimental to Fellowship numbers. It could be difficult for academics in particular.

David Manning assured the meeting that there is a lot of discussion in Council about Fellowship fees and their impact on academics in particular.

The following subscriptions for 2016 were agreed *nem con*:

	2016 £
Junior Candidate Fellows	10.00
Candidate Fellows	15.00
Candidate Fellow full course fee	40.00
27 and under	70.00
28-33	130.00
34-59	198.00
34-59 (Overseas)	152.00
60-64 (existing)	99.00
60-64 (new)	130.00
70+	68.00
Concessions	70.00
Full time postgraduate MSc	28.00
Full time postgraduate PhD	41.00

10. DEATHS

Fellows received a list read by the President of those Honorary Fellows and Fellows whose deaths had been reported since the last Annual General Meeting. These names are attached at Annex A.

11. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

BDO Stoy Hayward was re-appointed as the Society's auditors for the coming year.

12. REPORT OF SCRUTINEERS ON THE BALLOT FOR OFFICERS

The President called upon the Scrutineers to read their report on the ballot for Officers. Thirty-three votes were cast, with no abstentions or spoilt papers. The following were duly elected:

President
Vice Presidents

Prof David Manning
Mr Chris Eccles

Treasurer
Secretary, Foreign & External Affairs
Secretaries

Mr David Jones
Mr Graham Goffey
Mr Michael Young
Mrs Natalyn Ala
Dr Marie Edmonds
Dr Colin North

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Bernard Leake said he was concerned about archiving. It is possible to retain printed records but information on the website, which is constantly changing, will disappear. Colin North said this is an important matter which has been recognised. It is important to distinguish between that which is ephemeral and that which needs to be archived.

14. VOTE OF THANKS

David Manning welcomed Malcolm Brown as President designate. He also welcomed the new members of Council and thanked the continuing members of Council.

He thanked the Officers for the enormous amount of work they do.

He thanked the Committees, Specialist Groups, Regional Groups and Joint Associations for their sterling work during the year. He also thanked the Corporate Affiliates, the sponsors of Society events and the organisations who allowed their staff to participate in the committees and activities of the Society.

He thanked the retiring members of Council for their diligence and hard work during their terms of office. Retiring members of Council were:

Dr Mike Armitage
Prof Neil Chapman
Mr David Cragg
Prof Al Fraser
Dr Adam Law
Prof Alan Lord
Dr Brian Marker OBE
Dr Gary Nichols

The President thanked the Executive Secretary for his leadership of the staff and through him conveyed his thanks to all the staff.

15. DATE OF NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

A provisional date for the next Annual General Meeting of 8 June 2016 was agreed.

Ruth H **A**datia
David Robert Mark **A**rmstrong
Robert William Noel **B**arker
Joseph Albert **B**org-Costanzi
Martin David **B**rasier
Maxwell Clinton **C**ater
Simon Toby **C**ochrane
Michael Robert **C**ooper
Gordon Younger **C**raig
John Russell **E**vans
Peter Michael John **F**agiano
Yves Oscar **F**ortier
Michael **F**oster
Thomas **F**othergill
Robert **F**reer
William Sefton **F**yfe
David **G**rinly
Martyn Richard **H**eeley
Peter Lawley **H**ooper
Julia Anne Elizabeth Bruce **H**ubbard
Roy Favell **K**ing
Christopher **K**ing
Jan **K**osler
Robert Leon **L**affitte
Alan Wilfrid **L**ane
Bernard Arthur **L**each
Leonard John Marcus **M**cSweeney
Terence George **M**iller
John Alfred **M**ills
Richard Oliver **M**orris
Joao Cotelos **N**eiva
Robin **N**icholson
Desmond H **O**swald
Robert **P**ayne
David Huw **Q**uick
Michael William Henry **R**ainbow
John Blackett **R**ivington
Barry **S**cott
John Albert **S**eymour
Boris Sergeevich **S**okolov
Ronald Pearson **T**ripp
John Staveley **W**atson
Gavin John **W**ayte
John Bernard **W**illiams
Martin Elliott **W**right