



British Geophysical Association

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British Geophysical Association Committee

Meeting, Wednesday 10th November 2004, 11 am.

Geological Society, Burlington House, London.

Present: Peter Maguire (chair), Tine Thomas, Lucy Mathers, Sheila Peacock, Anthony Morris, Aftab Khan, Peter Morris.

Apologies: Philippa Berry, Jane Stimpson, Nigel Cassidy, John McCloskey, Wyn Williams, Peter Styles.

1. The Committee welcomed Aftab Khan (Leicester) co-opted member until Summer 2005.
2. Minutes of the last meeting.
These were accepted and signed.
3. Matters arising
 - (a) Affiliated Groups
BGA nominated Philippa Berry as the IAG National Correspondent. Peter Maguire will follow up progress with the secretary of the UK IUGG committee. **ACTION PKHM.**
 - (b) Structure of the BGA committee
Peter Maguire documented a list of members, including dates for re-

election of positions. This document (attached) was agreed by the committee. Committee members not present will be asked to confirm the dates of their terms of office.

Professor Tony Watts will be the Geological Society's representative on the BGA committee.

Peter Maguire left the RAS Council and there is currently no RAS Council member on the BGA committee. Mike Hapgood, the geophysical secretary of the RAS discussed this matter at a recent RAS council meeting. There is currently no solid earth geophysicist on RAS council. The current solution is that, after council meetings Mike Hapgood will inform BGA (PKHM/PAMB) of relevant points arisen, and vice versa. Once a year the BGA president should will a RAS Council meeting. Peter Maguire suggested this be the meeting following the submission of the annual report. It was further suggested that the same action be taken with respect to the Geological Society, in order to further strengthen the links between the committees. **ACTION PKHM**

(c) Expansion of BGA to include Republic of Ireland geophysicists. Aftab Khan reported that the Republic of Ireland is currently establishing an Irish Geophysical Association. The postgraduate meeting taking place in Galway in 2005 (see below) will be used to retain an informal link between the two geophysical communities. Future joint action between the Irish and UK geophysical communities should be discussed at that meeting.

(d) Support for the Association of Environmental and Earth Sciences
At the meeting an AEES meeting on the 17th May it was agreed that the association would be developed. Peter Morris had attended this meeting and commented on behalf of the BGA. He stated at that meeting that the BGA (being a joint association of its parent bodies (and not charging a fee of its members) was not in a position to provide funding.

(e) BGA Constitution

The constitution has been updated and is attached. Peter Maguire mentioned that there have been further slight modifications since the AGM. These modifications have been made in order to include the correct procedures regarding the Royal Society and IUGG. Peter Maguire will e-mail the document to Sheila Peacock who offered to update the BGA website. **ACTION PKHM, SP.**

(f) UCAS documents

The Foreword to the 2004 / 5 UCAS guide to the Physical Sciences has been written by Peter Maguire. The BGA Geophysics advert was prominently displayed on the first page of the Geology and Geophysics section. The section included the word Geophysics for the first time. A student article by Chris Birt of the University of Leicester "Why I wanted to study geophysics" was also included in the document. The advert will appear for the following two years.

(g) RAE

BGA put forward 3 nominations: Mary Fowler was nominated for Panel Chair of the Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences panel. She was also nominated as a panel member. Kathy Whaler and John McCloskey were also recommended as panel members.

4. Finance

Tony Morris reported that the finances are currently in stasis. In May, John Bull provided the £4000 lump sum cheque in order for Tony Morris to set up a new account. After talking to NatWest, it was advised that only the bank mandate needed to be changed. The forms are currently with Philippa Berry, who is to sort out with NatWest and pass onto Sheila Peacock as soon as possible. Paperwork at the bank is ready to be processed once forms are returned. Tony Morris mentioned that he will be away on a cruise from Tuesday 16/11/04 until next January and that Liverpool Postgraduate meeting and UCAS advert expenses are still to be paid. Tony Morris suggested that part of the lump sum could be used to pay these bills, and the remainder can go straight into the account in January, once the paperwork is sorted out. The committee gave sanction for this action to occur. **ACTION PAMB** (organise forms).

5. Geophysics Education Review

This item arose since the last meeting. RAS instigated a review of undergraduate astronomy education. It was agreed that this would be a sensible time to undertake a review of geophysics education, and that this should be coordinated by the BGA. Prof. Aftab Khan has agreed to take on the review. Expenses of up to £5000 from both the RAS and the Geological Society will be paid.

Aftab Khan presented a document containing details of motivation for the review, the issues covered by the review, a summary of activities to

9/11/04 and details of forthcoming activities.

The forthcoming steering committee meeting takes place on 30/11/04. After this meeting the main request to departments will be distributed. It is anticipated that each department now expects the questionnaires and they will be completed during the Christmas vacation period.

A meeting scheduled for 22/4/05 is intended as an open forum. The results of the enquiry will be discussed at this forum. In order to get as many people from university departments (staff and students), school teachers and industry representatives to attend the forum the details for the advert and names of panel members are to be decided shortly. Aftab Khan requested input from the committee. A number of potential panel members were suggested. Peter Maguire suggested that specific timetable be set documenting the actions to be undertaken for advertising the open forum. **ACTION AK, TT.**

Sheila Peacock offered to put the details on the website and distribute via the UK Geophysics mail list? **ACTION, SP.**

It was acknowledged that as many people as possible had to become involved to make this a success. Peter Maguire mentioned that the BGA committee should encourage colleagues and students to become involved. Sheila Peacock mentioned that there is a body involved in bespoke training for lecturers, this includes geophysics. Tony Morris mentioned this could be the Learning and Teaching Support Network that is based in Plymouth, contact Helen King. **ACTION TM, SP to provide AK with details.**

Tony Morris mentioned that it may be possible to obtain information on recruitment from the HEFCE website, he will pass details to Aftab Khan. **ACTION, TM.**

Sheila Peacock noted that there was an article on the first destinations of graduates in “Geoscience”, compiled by the careers officer at either Birmingham or Reading. Sheila Peacock will pass any information on this to Aftab Khan. **ACTION, SP.**

Once the forum has taken place the results will be collated and it is intended that a draft report be produced by the BGA May meeting for review from council members.

Finally, Aftab Khan noted that the questionnaire(s) would require testing and feedback prior to distribution. The BGA committee would be notified once these are ready. **ACTION AK.**

6. UCAS documents and other publicity

UCAS documents covered in item 3 (f). Peter Maguire noted that there was an outstanding action to update the website. This action should now be put on hold until the results of the geophysics education review report are available.

7. RAE

This was covered in item 3 (g).

8. Meetings

(a) Past:

i. Report on Liverpool Postgraduate meeting.

Tine Thomas reported on the Liverpool Postgraduate meeting that took place in September. It was attended by over 40 students, the external speaker from Arizona, Professor Ed Garnera, and BGA members. It was noted that the presentations were of very high standard. Peter Maguire thanked Tine for organising the meeting, and that the external speaker provided an invaluable contribution. The feedback from students obtained was that the opportunity to talk to an established researcher was well received.

(b) Future.

i. EGU and Bullerwell 2005 (and 2006)

Peter Maguire asked Tine Thomas to ask George Helffrich to provide details. The RAS is now providing the details of the Bullerwell Lecture to the EGU (the lecture taking place immediately after the RAS reception) and it will be advertised in the programme this year. **ACTION, TT.**

ii. New Advances in Geophysics Feb 2005.

Peter Maguire noted that this is going ahead all according to plan. The meeting is being organised by Barry Parsons and the theme is “Continental Deformation – impact of satellite techniques on observations and modelling”.

iii. AGM Feb 2005

Peter Maguire noted that the AGM will take place at lunchtime on Friday at the New Advances in Geophysics meeting. A committee meeting will also take place, most likely 1 hour prior to the AGM.

iv. Postgraduate meeting 2005 (Galway)

Peter Maguire noted that Colin Brown has agreed to arrange this meeting which is going ahead according to plan. Peter Maguire will ask Colin for meeting dates so that advertisement can take place well in advance. It is planned to take place around the same time as last year (September). Tine Thomas mentioned that documents and web page information could be provided to Colin. Peter Maguire will get in touch with Colin regarding finances. There will be £500 expenses for the external speaker and £100 each for the two prizes. It is expected that the meeting registration fees will cover all other expenses. **ACTION, TT, PKHM.**

v. New Advances in Geophysics Feb 2006

Peter Maguire mentioned that the current theme idea is 'Scale invariance in Geophysics'. Peter will contact Ian Main to ask if he would be interested in organizing this meeting. Tine Thomas mentioned that John McCloskey was keen and also Art Jonkurs. Peter Maguire requested that any thoughts on the meeting be sent to him. £2000 funding will be available from the Gray Milne fund along with RAS meeting funding. It would be expected that of the order of about £4000 to £5000 is expected. The room should be provided by the Geological Society. **ACTION All committee members.**

9. AOB

(a) BGA Committee Membership

Peter Maguire noted that the constitution allows for up to 18 members. There is room for two more representatives. It would be useful to include a further school representative, since their teaching commitments often make it difficult for them to attend meetings. An industry representative would also be useful. Peter suggested that if suitable people become involved with the Geophysics Education Review, they might be invited to join the committee in the coming year.

(b) Note from RAS education committee meeting July (Mike Hapgood)

The RAS are prepared to provide £5000 for the Geophysics Education review. Peter Maguire mentioned that the link between RAS and BGA was reasonable at present. It was suggested and agreed that Tine Thomas, as the BGA education representative, act as corresponding (co-

opted) member to the RAS Education committee. Peter Maguire would propose this to the RAS. **ACTION PKHM**

(c) Group Activities

Peter Maguire mentioned it would be useful to have a short report from group secretaries for the annual report. In January, Peter Maguire and Philippa Berry will contact group secretaries for a paragraph on “activities within year”. **ACTION PKHM/PAMB.**

(d) UNESCO links

Peter Maguire received a note from Joe Cann concerning UNESCO. The Government is interested in re-establishing links with UNESCO regarding the natural sciences programme. There is a chance to nominate for the UNESCO UK liaison committee. Peter Maguire suggested that a coordinated nomination from the BGA would carry more weight than individual nominations. Peter Maguire will contact Joe before this be distributed to the Geophysics community. **ACTION, PKHM.**

(e) Royal Society affiliations

The Royal Society is in the process of off-loading its funding of the various bodies of the International Council for Scientific Union (ICSU), of which IUGG, and sub-organisations IASPEI, IAG and IAGA belong. RAS and the Geological Society are in the process of deciding if they will support these organisations instead. Comments have been invited by the RAS. Peter Maguire noted that the BGA committee must send a short response, believing that UK science must not become disassociated from the ICSU organisations. It was requested from the committee that any links with the organisations must be provided to Peter Maguire this month, including scientific meetings of value, publications of IUGG and sub-organisations, scientific services, data services, etc. **ACTION All committee members, PKHM.**

10. Date of next two meetings

Friday February 11th and Wednesday May 4th, 2005.

The meeting closed at 1:20 pm.

Lucy Mathers
Acting Secretary