

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held at Burlington House on 7 June 2017

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

1. APOLOGIES

Noted.

2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 8 JUNE 2016

These were agreed.

3. APPOINTMENT OF SCRUTINEERS

Edmund Nickless and Ted Nield were appointed as the scrutineers for the ballots for Council and Officers.

4. BALLOT FOR COUNCIL

The ballot for Council was declared open and Fellows were asked to vote for the new Council for 2017/18.

5. ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2016

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The President said 2016 was a busy year in a wide variety of ways.

The new strategy was launched with the changed strapline '*serving science, profession and society*'. It was developed with Council and staff with input from the Regional and Specialist Groups. A pocket version was sent to Fellows with May *Geoscientist* and the full version is on the website. Council, committees and staff are now looking forward to getting on with delivering it for which a plan is in preparation.

2016 was the Year of Water. It was also the year that saw the inauguration of two new Flagship meeting series – the Janet Watson meeting and the Bryan Lovell meeting.

The Geology Careers Pathways website was launched early in 2016 and continues to evolve and be promoted.

The Society was pleased to work increasingly closely with the other societies around the Burlington House Courtyard including collaborating on the Open House day and the first Courtyard Lates public outreach event. The shared Burlington House website was relaunched and highlights the collective value of the work done by all the Courtyard societies and the contribution this makes to society.

Financials were stable with membership and chartership numbers up and Publishing maintaining its steady income. There were 17 conferences and around 5000 people attended the 20 public lectures, one of the most successful outreach activities hosted by the Society. There were careers fairs in Edinburgh and Nottingham, and increases in social media interactions via Twitter, Facebook and blog hits.

The President welcomed Richard Hughes, the new Executive Secretary, who took up his post in May following a very comprehensive recruitment process. He thanked the ten candidates who stood for Council and the more than 2000 Fellows who voted for them, which was a record turnout and another sign of an engaged Fellowship and a vibrant Society.

There was much work done on communicating with the Specialist and Regional Groups more effectively. They play a vital role in the life of the Society with much of the Fellowship interacting with the Society primarily through these groups. It was good to see them playing such an active role in many Society initiatives.

Some say that the Society is too London-centric. There is truth to that and work to be done to engage better. The President has embarked on a schedule of visits to the Regional Groups, as far as Hong Kong, to give the public lecture he gave at Burlington House in January 2017. Plans are afoot to work with Regional Groups, universities and other possible host organisations to extend the public lecture programme outside London. This will be marked by renaming the 'Geological Society London Lectures' to the 'Geological Society Public Lectures' subject to ratification at the June meeting of Council.

Professor John Dewey generously offered to endow a new medal and this has been approved by Council. It recognises career achievement with a focus on field mapping and fills a gap in the current slate of medals.

Looking to the future, a key challenge is to secure the Society's tenure of Burlington House.

SECRETARIES' REPORTS

Professional

Liv Carroll, Secretary Professional Matters, said that Fellowship numbers have continued to grow steadily each year over the past decade through recessions and fluctuations in the industries in which the Society's members work. There were 12,289 Fellows in July 2016 (up 2.5% from July 2015).

The number of Chartered Geologists has also grown once again, and the title is gradually establishing a foothold in new sectors, notably oil and gas. There were 2,669 Chartered Geologists in July 2016 (up 3.0% from July 2015).

The Society offers the title of Chartered Scientist (under licence from the Science Council) and European Geologist and continued to admit by far the largest number of EurGeols of any National Association of the European Federation of Geologists (EFG).

When the Society signed up to the Science Council's Declaration on Diversity, Equality and Inclusion in October 2014, it knew it was setting out on a process of cultural change which would take some years. The Society is committed to this because ensuring that geoscience is accessible to all is the right thing to do, and because it makes sense for the geoscience workforce of the future to draw on the widest possible pool of talent.

During 2016, the Society was one of seven organisations to pilot a diversity progression framework, developed by the Science Council and the Royal Academy of Engineering. This will help to monitor progress across the Society, and to benchmark what we are doing against others.

The Society is currently participating, with other geoscience organisations, in an initiative led by the American Geosciences Institute (AGI), to develop guidance on addressing harassment and bullying. This includes sexual harassment, as well as other discriminatory behaviours.

In September 2017 there are plans to hold a workshop for the first time to help university departments applying for or renewing their Athena SWAN status, in response to requests for support in this area.

Liv Carroll said she will remain a member of Council until the end of her term but she has increased work commitments so is passing on responsibility for Professional Secretary to Katherine Royse. She thanked the Professional Committee for their commitment and Chris Eccles, Vice President Chartership, Keith Seymour, Vice President Regional Groups, and Bill Gaskarth, Chartership Officer. She wished her successor the best of luck.

External Relations

Michael Young, Secretary for Foreign & External Affairs, said the Society responded to 20 parliamentary inquiries and policy consultations during 2016. A number of these were on the risks and opportunities in policy areas expected to be affected by the decision to leave the EU. The Society is very grateful to those who contribute to these responses and Michael Young encouraged those who are able to do so to continue.

The Society's high reputation and strong links in Europe are more valuable than ever and it plays a leading role in the EFG. About 40% of those holding the EurGeol title are from the UK, and the Society continued to play an active part in the governance of the organisation. UK geoscientists are among the largest cohorts attending the annual European Geosciences Union (EGU) General Assembly, which this year attracted 14,500 people, and the Society played an increasingly active part in convening sessions.

On the global geoscience stage, the Society continued to play a leading role in the International Union for Geological Sciences (IUGS), the main international body for Earth sciences. Edmund Nickless was elected to the IUGS Executive Committee at the IGC in Cape Town, and he continues to chair the Resourcing Future Generations (RFG) initiative. Society Fellows fill many other leadership positions within the organisation, as well as in the International Geoscience Programme (IGCP). We were actively involved in convening sessions at the IGC, including those on professionalism and geo-ethics, and we will be equally closely involved in the RFG meeting in Vancouver in June 2018.

The Society continued to work closely with University Geoscience UK (formerly CHUGD), including on consultations on aspects of research and higher education policy such as the restructuring of the Research Councils and the introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework.

With University Geoscience UK, the British Geological Survey and the Royal Astronomical Society, the Society brought together a wide range of researchers in February to develop a 25-year vision for geoscience research, under the title 'Future Science', and to articulate this vision to funders and other decision makers. The meeting was very well received by the research community, and we are considering

with our partner organisations how best to continue these fruitful discussions. A report is currently in preparation.

In light of pressures on local museums and the decision of some local authorities to reduce or withdraw funding, the Society issued a statement setting out the value of museums and collections for research, education and public engagement. This was welcomed by those working in the hard-pressed museum sector as a useful document for them to draw on as they take on local battles.

The Society's support for those choosing A-levels, degree programmes and career options took a significant step forward in early 2016, with the launch of the Geology Career Pathways website. Promotion and development of this resource continues, and the Society is particularly keen to work with employers to develop audio-visual profiles of early career geoscientists. Contributions would be most welcome.

The Geoscience Education Academy was held for the sixth year last July, once again generously sponsored by BP, and the seventh edition this July is already fully booked. The Society is seeking further support for this very important initiative. The National Schools Geology Challenge and Early Career Awards finals, held at Burlington House a few weeks ago, attracted record levels of participation.

Earth Science Week, led in the UK and Ireland by the Society but involving a wide range of national and local organisations, goes from strength to strength. In 2016, its theme was 'Earth Science in Action', with an emphasis on geoscience careers. Over 50 events were held across the country.

The monthly public lectures continue to be highly successful and as the President has already said plans are afoot to work with Regional Groups, universities and other possible host organisations to extend our public lecture programme outside London.

Our social media presence continued to thrive, with 33,500 Twitter followers (+2300), 10,600 Facebook 'likes' (+400), 59,500 blog hits (+9100).

Michael Young said it had been a pleasure to lead the External Relations committee and its reporting committees and he thanked the members. He thanked Nic Bilham and his policy team for their energy and enthusiasm. He wished his successor, Sarah Gordon, good luck in the role.

Science

Marie Edmonds, Secretary Science, said the themed years, which were an idea from the 2014 Science Strategy, are working well and proving very popular. An excellent programme is underway for the 2017 Year of Risk, and planning has started for the Year of Resources in 2018. The 2019 theme will be decided very soon.

The themes are intended to be cross-cutting, and to embrace fundamental areas of research as well as economically and societally important applications. They inform both the scientific meetings programme and the wider education and outreach activities.

It is very pleasing that the Specialist Groups are so involved, both in identifying themes and in incorporating them in their activities. The annual meeting of Specialist Group chairs and representatives is now well established. There was an excellent day of discussions in May, bringing together members of the Science Committee with representatives of all but one of the 22 Specialist Groups.

2016 also saw the launch of two new Specialist Groups: the Contaminated Land Group, whose inaugural conference in March attracted a capacity audience in the lecture

theatre; and the Geological Society Discussion Group, successor to the former Dining Club, whose meetings now feature scientific discussion prompted by short presentations on a wide range of engaging topics.

The President has already referred to the inauguration of our two new flagship meeting series:

- the Bryan Lovell meetings, which focus on societal challenges and the range of geoscience that can be brought to bear on these, with other disciplines; and
- the Janet Watson meetings which focus on the work of early career scientists, and bringing them together with leading figures with longstanding experience.

Among the conferences held to mark the 2016 Year of Water were:

- Rain, Rivers and Reservoirs (held in Edinburgh);
- Groundwater in Fractured Bedrock Environments (organised by the Northern Ireland Regional Group, Hydrogeological Group and others in Belfast);
- Martian Gullies and their Earth Analogues;
- The William Smith meeting on Glaciated Margins.

The Arthur Holmes meeting for 2016 marked the 50th anniversary of the Wilson Cycle, setting the scene for the celebrations of 50 years of plate tectonics in 2017. This will be the subject of the William Smith meeting on 3-5 October, alongside the launch of Professor Dan McKenzie's archive online, a major new outreach initiative, and other activities during Earth Science Week under the title 'Our Restless Earth'.

Marie Edmonds thanked all the members of the Science Committee and its reporting committees for their contributions, the Specialist Groups and the staff.

Publications

Colin North, Secretary Publications, said the Society's publishing operation remains strong and stable, however the world of publishing is fast changing and has changed comprehensively from being linear to almost entirely digital and electronic where there are many strands.

The Lyell Collection continued to thrive, as the main online home of journals and books alongside GeoScienceWorld. The Lyell Collection is very important and one of the mainstays of Society revenue.

Among many fantastic volumes the Society published in 2016 were:

- The Atlas of Submarine Glacial Landforms (Memoir 46), which was celebrated with a launch event in January 2017 attended by the Chilean Ambassador to the UK;
- The Geology of Japan – the first state-of-the-art English language volume on this topic for 25 years, in collaboration with the Geological Society of Japan.

Andrew Carter (Birkbeck University of London) took up his role as Chief Editor of the Journal of the Geological Society, succeeding Quentin Crowley, who was thanked for his service.

The Society launched a new portal for data and other supplementary material with Figshare, making these materials easier to view and cite, and improving discoverability of published content.

Work has been underway for the last 18 months in preparation for moving the Lyell Collection to a new content platform which will be launched later in 2017.

The library resource is invaluable and continued to grow the resources available to Fellows online from their homes and workplaces, with over 100 e-journals and (at the last count) around 50 e-books offered, in addition to the physical and electronic resources in the library itself.

A new online library catalogue was launched in 2016, offering improved search capabilities as well as services including loan renewal, favourite lists, item requests and the facility to view loan history.

Work continued on a full audit of the Society's library holdings, including the condition of material.

The library hosted three further public outreach events in 2016:

- Siberia! Geological Adventures in 19th Century Imperial Russia
- Cross-Channel Invasion! Military Geology in 1940 and 1944
- Maps, Meteorites, Mary Anning and the Missing Link – our contribution to the first ever Burlington House Summer Lates – a collaboration between all five Courtyard Societies and the Royal Academy

Colin North said it was a very successful year and he thanked the staff in the Publishing House and the Library.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Graham Goffey said that income was £5.75m (£5.5m 2015, £5.4m 2014) with expenditure of £5.5m (£5.2m 2015, £4.8m 2014). There was an unprecedented net income surplus of £1.12m but 75% of this was from unrealised 'paper' changes – exchange rate movements and unrealised investment gains. Subsequent to the year-end some US Dollar holdings were sold to realise the gain.

Excluding 'paper' gains, there was a fairly typical net surplus income of £269k (£257k 2015), helped by £88k received from the Estate of Stephen Mills.

The Society's two main sources of income are from Fellowship fees and from Publishing. Fellowship numbers continued to rise and Publishing revenues remained strong.

The Society's annual budgetary aim is to generate a small surplus as a cushion against unexpected expenditure/loss in the year and it has to work harder each year to achieve this.

The Society's funds and reserves were reviewed during 2016 and 'free reserve' now stands at 96% of revised target (nine months core operating costs).

The Burlington House Courtyard Societies have been engaged in a process of arbitration with their landlord, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), to seek clarity on a number of disputed aspects of the terms of their lease. The arbitrator, ruling on a narrowly defined set of legal questions, has ruled in favour of the landlord.

The Societies are continuing to work together. The result of the arbitration process, disappointing though it is, marks the start of a new phase in the Societies' efforts, and wish, to remain in their purpose-built homes of over 140 years and thus preserve a unique cultural and scientific campus in the heart of London. Graham Goffey asked Fellows, however well intentioned, not to make individual representations with their local Members of Parliament or to make any attempts to lobby.

6. COMMENTS FROM FELLOWS

Joby Thompson asked about the situation with the Fellows Room. The President said the Royal Academy has used it during their major renovation work. The arrangement ends in September when the room will be returned for use as a multi-purpose space that will be available to Fellows when not in use as a meeting space or for conferences. There will need to be some practical changes made to the room. It will be used for the Plate Tectonics conference at the beginning of October. Comfortable seating and a coffee machine will be provided for Fellows to use in the Lower Library.

Peter Warren raised the importance of archiving information from the website. This includes information such as meetings held by the Specialist Groups and how many members they have. The Society needs to address how this information is held and preserved so that it is available for posterity. Nic Bilham said the Society's Archivist preserves a lot of information, which is not necessarily on the website. Kitty Hall, Chair of the Petroleum Group, said the PG is putting together a database and there will be a live search facility for previous events.

The President said there is a lot of information on the website that should be preserved and he asked Richard Hughes to take this matter forward.

After the recent IT failure experienced by British Airways, Alan Lord asked about the resilience of the Society's IT system and the support provided for it. The President said this has been one of Richard Hughes' early concerns and he will be looking into this.

The Accounts for 2016 were approved by Council on 5 April 2017 and the Budget for 2017 on 24 November 2016. The meeting RECEIVED these two items.

7. REPORT OF SCRUTINEERS ON THE BALLOT FOR COUNCIL

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

Mr John Booth, Mr Rick Brassington, Mr Malcolm Brown, Dr Jason Canning, Miss Liv Carroll, Ms Lesley Dunlop, Dr Marie Edmonds, Mr Graham Goffey, Dr Sarah Gordon, Mrs Tricia Henton, Ms Naomi Jordan, Dr Robert Larter, Dr Jennifer McKinley, Dr Colin North, Dr Sheila Peacock, Mr Nicholas Reynolds, Prof Nicholas Rogers, Dr Katherine Royse, Prof Christine Peirce, Mr Keith Seymour, Miss Jessica Smith, Mr John Talbot and Dr Alexander Whittaker

The ballot for Officers then took place.

8. FELLOWSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2018

Since 2015 the annual increase in Fellowship Fees has been set with reference to the prevailing annual rate of the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Over the past two years rates of inflation have been low and Fellowship fees have not been increased since 2015.

Inflation is starting to rise again. In February 2017 CPI stood at 2.3% and 2.6% in April. Looking ahead to 2018, the Finance & Planning Committee considers it is likely, with the effects of Brexit starting to be felt within the economy, that the rate of inflation will climb higher and that the costs of providing services to Fellows in 2018 will reflect this. It is an established principle that the fee should cover the cost of services provided.

At its meeting on 5 April 2017 Council agreed to recommend to the Fellowship subscription rates for 2018 which equate to an average increase of 2.9% (a maximum increase of £6 on 2017 rates). The rates for Junior Candidate Fellows and Candidate Fellows remain unchanged at £10 and £15 respectively.

A suggestion was made from the floor to include with the information presented the total number of Fellows within each age band. The President said this information would be included with the minutes and it is shown below.

A question was raised about the Science Council raising their chartership fees and whether the Fellowship will vote on this. Nic Bilham, Director of Policy & Communications, said that under the Society's governance structure approval at the Annual General Meeting is required for the Society's Fellowship fees but not for the Science Council's chartership fees which will be decided upon by Council.

The following subscriptions for 2018 were AGREED:

	2018	<i>Total members as at July 2017</i>
	£	
Junior Candidate Fellows	10.00	187
Candidate Fellows	15.00	520
Candidate Fellow full course fee	40.00	273
27 and under	72.00	1268
28-33	134.00	1354
34-59	204.00	4426
34-59 (Overseas)	156.00	874
60-64 (pre-2016)	102.00	539
60-64 (new)	134.00	393
65-69	102.00	742
70+	70.00	734
Concessions	72.00	95
Full time postgraduate MSc	29.00	138
Full time postgraduate PhD	42.00	250

9. DEATHS

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

10. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

The Society's Audit Committee undertook an audit tender process by delegated authority from Council. A number of firms were interviewed and the unanimous recommendation of the Audit Committee to Council was to adopt RSM UK as the Society's statutory auditor for the year ending 2017 onwards. The meeting APPROVED the appointment of RSM UK as the Society's Auditor.

11. REPORT OF SCRUTINEERS ON THE BALLOT FOR OFFICERS

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

President	Mr Malcolm Brown
Vice Presidents	Mr Keith Seymour
	Mr John Talbot
Treasurer	Mr Graham Goffey
Secretary, Foreign & External Affairs	Dr Sarah Gordon
Secretaries	Dr Marie Edmonds
	Dr Colin North
	Dr Katherine Royse

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

In light of the recent terrorist-related incidents in London, a question from the floor enquired if the Society's security processes are being reviewed. Richard Hughes confirmed they are. The Metropolitan Police carried out a site visit three years ago to review general security and have been asked to make a repeat visit to give more specific advice. The advice provided by the National Police Chiefs' Council of what to do in the event of a firearms and weapons attack (Run, Hide, Tell) has been displayed around the building and staff were sent a link by email to the accompanying film.

13. VOTE OF THANKS

The President welcomed Nick Rogers as the 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:

Dr Nigel Cassidy
Mr Chris Eccles
Mr David Hopkins
Prof David Norbury
Mr David Jones
Mr Michael Young

The President thanked the staff for their fantastic work.

14. DATE OF NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The provisional date for the next Annual General Meeting is 6 June 2018.

*Sydney Stuart Absolom
Christopher John Ayers-Morgan
Michael Bacon
Robert Ross Barr
David Murray Boyd
William Braham
James Brooks
Rudolf Geoffrey Waldemar Brunstrom
Peter Burri
Norman Edward Butcher
William Gilbert Chaloner
Reginald Stevenson Collins
Jon Paul Davidson
Grosvenor Rex Davis
Norman John D'Cruz
Geoffrey Eglinton
Colin Stewart Exley
Trevor David Ford
Roger Gardener
James Douglas Geddes
Geoffrey Philip Glasby
Rosalie Grainger
Andrew Grosse
James Robert Temple Hazell
Frank Travis Howell
John Desmond Jacobson
Hugh Clifford David Jenner-Clarke
Deryck James Colson Laming
James Leighton
John Robert Litten
John Marshall
Rodney Richard Maud
John Richard Mendum
Daniel Kenneth Morgan
Michael John O'Donoghue
Stephen John Palmer
Kenneth P Pipes
Hazel Margaret Prichard
Eric Rawcliffe
John Cole Roberts
David Robson
Sara Rosen
Tapan Roy Chowdhury
John Kenneth Shanklin
John Small
Robert Leland Smith
David Richard Stokes
John Telfer
Roy Whitlow
George Williams
Ernest Arthur Wright
Paul Ivor Young*