



# British Geophysical Association

## Executive Committee Meeting

**School of Earth and  
Environment  
University of Leeds  
5<sup>th</sup> September 2012**

### Draft Minutes

#### Apologies and introductions

Apologies were received from absent members.

#### Present:

Prof. Mike Kendall (MK) – President and Chair  
 Prof. Christine Peirce (CP) – Secretary  
 Prof. Peter Clarke (PC) – Treasurer  
 Mr Paul Denton (PD) – Schools Liaison and Outreach Officer  
 Dr Ian Stimpson (IS) – Member without portfolio – Acting Newsletter Officer

#### Absent with apologies:

Prof Gillian Foulger (GF) – Website Officer  
 Dr Mimi Hill (MH) – Newsletter Officer  
 Prof. Andreas Rietbrock (AR) – Meetings Officer  
 Dr George Tuckwell (GT) – Industry Representative – Co-opted member  
 Dr Lyndsay Fletcher (LF) – Parent Society Representative – Royal Astronomical Society  
 Prof. John Brodholt (JB) – Outreach Representative – Co-opted member  
 Prof Dave Waltham (DW) – Member without portfolio – Co-opted member

#### 1 Minutes of the BGA Committee Meeting 9<sup>th</sup> February 2012

The minutes of this meeting were agreed as a true record.

**Document 050912\_BGA/01  
Filed with minutes.**

#### 2 Matters arising from the minutes

**Document 050912\_BGA/02  
Filed with minutes.**

The Chair summarised the matters arising from the minutes as follows:

#### **Carry over from 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2011 meeting - Item 2.4) International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG) subscription**

No progress has been made on resolving the subscription to IUGG and the RAS is continuing to pay these in the interim. It was also noted that the status of the IAGA UK representative is also unknown. Alan Roger (BAS) is believed to still be the UK representative. The Chair offered to consult Pamela Mortimer (the new Chief Executive) and Barbara Mason from the RAS, and Ruth Cooper at the Royal Society to clarify the nomination process and the payment of the subscriptions.

#### **ACTION**

**Chair to contact RAS and RS for clarification of IAGA representative nomination and, in addition, the RAS to clarify the status of the subscription to IUGG.**

#### **Carry over from 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2011 meeting - Item 6) Updating the Khan report**

The Chair has approached Prof Khan to see if he is willing to undertake an update of the “Geophysics in the UK” report. Prof Khan has indicated that he is willing to undertake this on behalf of the BGA.

#### **ACTION**

**Chair to contact Prof Khan and report at the next meeting.**

### Carry over from 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2011 meeting - Item 8) Website updating

The Chair reported that Jenny Caddick had contacted the RAS regarding an update to the BGA web site that is hosted there but has been unable to make any progress, as the matter appears stalled within the RAS. The Secretary reported that the BGA Website Officer (GF) had undertaken an editorial review of the information posted on the current version of the web site, to make sure that it was at least up-to-date. It was also noted that finding the BGA page was almost impossible if the direct address was not known, since it is buried many layers down. It was suggested that the RAS' Web Officer be contacted, although this had already been done on previous occasions without success to date, and that we ask for a button to be added to the home page, e.g. *Associated and Specialist Societies and Affiliated Bodies*, and that this is linked to a page listing them clearly and with each linked to its page within the RAS web site as a whole. The Chair asked that he be CC'd into this request. It was also suggested that if we have no success at this attempt, that the BGA deliver the web site independently from the RAS.

#### ACTION

**Web Officer to contact Miss Caddick to progress the website overhaul.**

**Web Officer to undertake normal post-meeting editorial update for minutes, committee membership, reports from meetings, upcoming meetings, newsletter etc.**

**Web Officer to contact the RAS Web Officer to request an appropriately linked "societies" button on the RAS home page.**

### Item 5) Committee Membership and terms of office

The Chair reported that Professor David Waltham's nomination to the Executive Committee had been approved at the AGM but that, as yet, no Postgraduate Representative had been found. The Secretary suggested that the Chair announce this vacancy at the Postgraduate Research in Progress meeting the following day asking for a volunteer.

#### ACTION

**Chair to announce the Postgraduate Representative vacancy at the Postgraduate Research in Progress meeting and seek a volunteer or nominee.**

### Item 12) Briefing document for organisers of BGA supported meetings

The Secretary report that Dr Sheila Peacock had been approached to draft such a document, which she duly did, and that the final version, edited by the Secretary, has been posted on the BGA web site.

## 3 Chair's Report

- i) **BGA Profile** – the Chair reported that the increase in the meeting financial support initiated at the end of the last financial year is starting to have a very positive affect in terms of raising the profile of the BGA.
- ii) **Geophysical awards** – the Chair reported that, despite the increase in publicity by BGA officers, that the numbers of nominations of geophysicists for the RAS and similar national awards was still very low, as was the number of nominations for the Bullerwell Lecturer for 2013. The deadline for the latter is 30<sup>th</sup> September and the Secretary suggested one last call for nominations via the BGA email list. In addition, the Secretary suggested that perhaps the BGA should take on the responsibility for managing the nominations process on behalf of the community and even suggesting and making nominations itself. As such the Secretary suggested that DW (Co-opted member without portfolio) be asked if he would be willing to act as "Nominations Officer" to manage and encourage the process of nominations of members of the UK geophysical community.
- iii) **Jeffries Lecture of the RAS** – the Chair reported that no nominations had been received by the RAS for the Jeffries Lecturer for 2013. A number of names were suggested by the Committee and, as the Chair is on the RAS selection panel, he asked the Secretary to send in a nomination to him for one of the names suggested.
- iv) **Geophysicist(s) on RAS Council** – the Chair reported that Prof Barry Parsons (Oxford) had now replaced him as Vice-President Geophysics and that Dr Sheila Peacock (Blacknest) had been elected to Council. Unfortunately neither Prof Richard Holmes nor Prof Stuart Crampin were elected, although Prof Holmes retains a role as a member of one of the RAS sub-committees.
- v) **Fees** – the Chair asked members present how the introduction of university fees had affected their Departments and if there had been any notable change in application numbers. The consensus in the room was that application numbers were holding but that there had a been a genera drift away from environmental-themed degrees to more traditional subjects like geology and geophysics.

- vi) **RAS Geophysics forum** – the Chair reported that the RAS were still keen to progress a Geophysics Forum along the same lines as their Astronomy Forum, where a representative for each Department with geophysical interests is represented together with research councils, research centres and relevant stakeholders. A provisional brain storming session has already taken place, organised by Prof David Southwood (RAS President), which concluded that a Solid Earth forum would be more appropriate, since the scope of “geophysics” was difficult to define. The Chair and Prof Parsons have agreed to write to all interested parties and ask for nominations for attendees. Prof David Wigham (NERC CEO) is also keen to be involved. The Chair reported that a letter had been drafted and that once approved by the President of the RAS, it would be dispatched.
- vii) **NAG meeting 2013** – the Chair reported that he, Prof Andrew Curtis and Dr Doug Anderson were organising this meeting with the working title “Geophysics and future energy challenges”. The Secretary reported that the Geol Soc had already been booked for the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> February for this meeting and that the next BGA Executive Committee meeting would normally be scheduled for the evening of the 14<sup>th</sup> February for which the small meeting room on the ground floor had also already been booked. This may need to be arranged given the Chair’s organisational role for NAG 2013 and a potential clash with the conference dinner. The Secretary also advised the Chair to consult the “Briefing document for organisers of BGA supported meetings” posted on the BGA web site for up-to-date information on organising catering, projection and other similar facilities within the Geol Soc.

#### **ACTION**

**Secretary to send a last call for the Bullerwell lecturer nomination via BGA email list.**

#### **ACTION**

**Secretary to submit a nomination for the Jeffries Lecturer.**

#### **ACTION**

**Secretary to check the 2013 room bookings with the Geol Soc, including the possibility of moving the next Executive Committee meeting to the evening of the 13<sup>th</sup> February.**

#### **ACTION**

**Chair to firm up details for the NAG 2013 meeting and forward these to the Meetings Officer.**

### **4 Treasurer’s Report**

#### **i) Annual budgets and recurrent expenditure**

The Treasurer reported that, to date £5.5K against at £13K annual budget had been spent. This was slightly up on last year due to higher than predicted committee travel expenses resulting from an increased membership turn-out for meetings, and that attendance at the last Executive and AGM meetings required an overnight stay in London. The Treasurer also reported that the NAG 2012 meeting also made a healthy surplus such that the convenors only invoiced for £250 out of the £3500 allocation. Four other meetings had been supported: i) Magnetic Exchanges (£400), SEDI in Leeds (£500), IEGG Mathematical Geophysics (£500) and the Afar meeting in Ethiopia (£500) – all of which had used the BGA logo on publicity and conference documents. The NAG 2012 meeting has also resulted in a special edition of the Annals of Glaciology. The Treasurer also reported that the contents of the current account were adequate to fulfil all FY 2012 commitments, and that the reserve account required draw-down to meet the requirements of the parent societies. £2K has already been committed to this year’s outreach activities and it was noted that a further £2.5K could be made available to the “Teachers Meeting” in planning by the Outreach and Schools Officer. See item 7 of the main agenda. In addition, prizes for the Postgraduate in Research meeting (£100 for best post and best talk), the BGA Image Competition and “Best Undergraduate in Geophysics” competition have been budgeted (c. £2-3K).

#### **ii) Strategic spending and funding review**

There were no matters to report.

#### **iii) Gray-Milne Fund**

The Trustees of the Gray-Milne Fund were in favour of the planned drawn-down of the fund to support the schools outreach programme and are awaiting concrete proposals for how the money might be spent prior to giving final approval. All funding requests should first be presented to the BGA Executive. The Treasurer also noted that he had not yet formally approached the Gray-Milne Fund Trustees as budgeting is normally done biannually.

**iv) Other**

The Treasurer noted that as funds were currently buoyant, this would be a good time to receive suggestions for other activities that the BGA might sponsor, especially if these could be received prior to the annual budgeting and finance statement submission to the parent societies.

**5 PESGB / BGA School Seismology grant and BGA outreach programme****i) Physics Teachers meeting**

The Outreach and Schools Officer reported that he had contacted the IOP who seemed receptive to the BGA outreach plans and that a MOU was in development to embed it within the IOP Teachers Programme. The IOP have also offered to take on organisational responsibilities for the proposed BGA-IOP-BGS Physics Teachers Workshop, with details as follows:

**Dates** - Fri 31<sup>st</sup> May (pm) to Sun 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2013 (lunch)

**Location** - BGS headquarters Keyworth

**Accommodation** - Hilton hotel Nottingham city centre (also venue for conference meal)

**Finances** - the IOP usually charge teachers £140 to attend these events, including all accommodation and food. An attendance by 80 delegates is being aimed for. The BGS have offered use of their rooms for free and a good deal has been negotiated at the hotel (£50 per night B&B). Based on the provisional budget, sponsorship of £3000-4000 will be required for the event to break even. The proposal is that the BGA contribute £2000 to this amount.

**Programme -**

5 or 6 one hour lecture slots (2 x Friday, 3 x Saturday, 1 x Sunday)

4 x 90 minute practical workshop sessions in small groups of 20 teachers (could be as 4 or 5 workshops repeated 4 times)

Tour of site /welcome speeches/ bring and share

The Outreach and Schools Officer reported that he is happy to volunteer to try and put together the practical sessions, but that he would like the committee's help in recruiting suitable people for the lecture slots, as the aim of the lectures is to give physics teachers an insight into what researchers are currently working on. This conference will have a distinctly geophysics/seismology theme so the proposal is to start by trying to get speakers from a seismology background. However, it was viewed as more important to have inspirational speakers talking about something that they are passionate about than to rigidly stick to a theme. In light of the John Milne Centenary celebrations in 2013, the proposal is to have one speaker talking about his work and legacy. Dr Roger Musson from the BGS has been approached.

The Chair thanked the Outreach and Schools Officer for his efforts thus far and a number of names of potential speakers were suggested. Committee members also volunteered to give talks if needed or assist with the practical demonstrations.

**ACTION**

**Outreach and Schools Officer to contact talk nominees and formulate a schedule of activities.**

**ii) Seismology in schools**

The Outreach and Schools Officer reported that no further money was being requested from the PESGB for this programme for 2013 and that instead, emphasis would be placed on making best use of the available installations and of the data being acquired. As part of this it would be good to get more Universities involved.

**iii) Geophysics in the media**

The Outreach and Schools Officer suggested that the BGA might fund a similar process in the UK to that operated by IRIS whereby an individual or group is contracted to make a bulletin, for public, teacher or media consumption, containing information about each large reported earthquake. For example, the bulletin might comprise 5-6 Powerpoint slides to be issued within a set number of hours of each large earthquake report. Data from seismographs housed in schools could also be incorporated. The Chair noted that he could think of several groups in the UK that might be interested in providing these bulletins. In addition, it was also suggested that the BGA might fund the production of YouTube video clips on "Geophysical topic of the month" or videos which explain how geophysics relates to current items in the news, like James Verdon's "What is fracking?". These video clips could be linked to the BGA web site, YouTube, Twitter and other social media portals. It was proposed that a competition for the best video series proposal be held along the same lines as the image competition. It was agreed that the BGA should seek bids to provide the bulletin service and run the video clip production as a competition with prizes; with both only eligible for UK-based researchers.

**ACTION**

**Chair to draft an advert for the video clip series proposal competition.**

**Chair to draft an advert for the provision of bulletins.**

## 6 Nominations for the Bullerwell Lecturer 2013 – deadline 31st September 2012

The Chair reported that as of the date of this meeting no nominations for the 2013 Bullerwell Lecturer had been received. The Secretary offered to circulate a last call for nominations immediately after the meeting. In the event that no nominations are received a number of names were suggested, and it was agreed that the Executive Committee would, in future in the absence of nominations, approach an individual agreed by the Committee.

### **ACTION**

**Secretary to circulate a last call for nominations via the BGA email list.**

## 7 Consultation on careers guidance for schools, sixth form colleges and further education

The Secretary reported, for the record, that the BGA had agreed to be a signatory to the Geol Soc's response to the Department of Business Innovation and Skills "Consultation on careers guidance for schools, sixth form colleges and further education institutes" and the Geol Soc's submission to the House of Commons Education Committee inquiry "Careers guidance for young people". Both items were taken by Chair's action as the deadlines were short and preceded this meeting.

**Document 050912\_BGA/03 and Tabled.  
Filed with minutes.**

## 8 Report from the Ground Forum (MSc funding)

IS explained that the Ground Forum is a group of organisations with interests in ground engineering. IS attends these meetings and is the only representative from a higher education institution. IS reported that at the May meeting there were on-going discussions on the provision of training of ground engineers that included near-surface geophysics. This had led to a Parliamentary Committee meeting taking on-board the necessity to have a training mechanism for the next generation of ground engineers and that the lack of any MSc funding to provide such training was already having a significant impact on UK-based projects such as the High Speed 2 rail link. IS will be attending the next meeting of the Ground Forum on the 6<sup>th</sup> September and will report to the BGA Executive Committee at its next meeting.

### **ACTION**

**IS to continue to attend Ground Forum meetings and report to the BGA Executive Committee.**

## 9 Upcoming meetings

Noted for the record:

- a) Deep-Water Continental Margins – 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> October 2012, Geological Society – no funding request has been received.
- b) BGA Postgraduate Research in Progress Meeting – 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> September 2012, University of Leeds.

### **POST MEETING ADDITION:**

**Best student talk award – Tom Garth – University of Liverpool.**

**Best student poster award – Megan Thomas – University of Liverpool.**

### **ACTION**

**Web Officer to add these prize winners to the BGA Web site.**

- c) BGA Postgraduate Research in Progress Meeting – September 2013, University of Cambridge

### **ACTION**

**Chair to ask at the Postgraduate Research in Progress Meeting for volunteers to run the 2014 meeting.**

**Web Officer to add a list of previous hosts of the Postgraduate Research in Progress Meeting to the BGA web site.**

- d) In review by the Geological Society for 2013 onwards
  - i) None.
- d) Others requesting sponsorship
  - i) IASPEI – PD suggested that, for this meeting, a Glasgow-based sound sculpture artist be approached to make an installation based on seismic signals recorded by seismographs installed in schools as part of the BGA outreach programme. Dr Roger Mussion will be giving a keynote lecture and a reception and exhibition will be held as part of the Milne Centenary celebrations. The BGA have agreed to contribute to the sponsorship of these activities.

**ACTION**

**Outreach and Schools Liaison Officer to acquire a quotation for the sound sculpture for discussion at the next meeting and to liaise with the Treasurer regarding the Milne Centenary celebration sponsorship.**

- ii) Milne – Isle of Wight – proposal still pending

**ACTION**

**Outreach and Schools Liaison Officer to approach the Milne Group to investigate options and opportunities for activities that the BGA might support.**

- e) NAG 2013 – 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> February Geological Society

**ACTION**

**MK to submit proposal and funding request for NAG 2013 meeting for approval at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.**

- f) Rutherford's Geophysicists – April 2013, Cambridge – a proposal has been received from Prof Aftab Khan requesting funding. The committee agreed to offer £500.

**ACTION**

**Secretary to inform Prof Khan of the funding award.**

**10 Reports from completed meetings**

There are only two meetings with outstanding reports:

- i) Mathematical Geophysics meeting in Edinburgh 18<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> June,
- ii) NAG 2012 meeting for which an accompanying A&G article is also outstanding.

**ACTION**

**Chair to contact the meeting convenors to remind them that these reports are due.**

**11 BGA Newsletter**

The Acting Newsletter Officer reported that the summer edition of the newsletter was in progress and a draft would be circulated shortly. Suggestions for content were welcome.

**ACTION**

**Acting Newsletter Officer to complete the newsletter and circulate for comment.**

**Web Officer to post this newsletter on the BGA web site once approved.**

**12 BGA image competition**

In total 26 images were received for this competition and judging was completed during the meeting. From a short-list of eight images, majority voting resulted in the winner being Will Hutchinson, a PhD student at the University of Oxford, for his high-resolution spatial resolution thermal image overlay on a digital photograph acquired from a light aircraft flight over the Volcan de Colima lava dome, and Philippa Demonte, an MRes student at the University of Leeds, for her photograph of micro-gravity surveying across a ridge at El Cuchillo, Lanzarote.

**ACTION**

**Chair to announce the winners at the Postgraduate Research in Progress day and at the AGM.**

**Treasurer to arrange delivery of the prizes.**

**Web Officer to post the names of the winners and their images on the BGA web site.**

**13 BGA brochure and mission statement**

The Chair reported that, to date, no progress had been made on the RAS “geophysics” brochure since meeting with Dr Sue Bowler at the AGM to discuss content. The Committee discussed approaches to bringing the publication of the brochure to completion in a timely manner and it was suggested that, as Dr Sheila Peacock has recently been elected to the Council of the RAS, that she might like to act as the driver.

**ACTION**

**Secretary to approach Dr Peacock.**

**14 BGA prize for best undergraduate in geophysics**

The Chair reported that he is yet to progress this by contacting Heads of UK Earth Sciences departments to seek expressions of interest in participating in the “best geophysics undergraduate” BGA prize scheme, seeking outlines from each interested department as to what they would like to offer such a prize for. The Chair reported that he had, however, reviewed which department’s offered geophysics degrees or modules. The Chair also noted that he would be writing to the Heads of these departments shortly after the start of the academic year, such that the scheme can be rolled out in June 2013.

**ACTION**

**Chair to advertise prize scheme to Heads of Department, seeking expressions of interest for the current examinations cycle.**

**15 Any other business**

There were only two items:

**a) Dr Ian Barstow’s report on BGA funded outreach activities at the University of Bristol**

The report was tabled and received.

**b) Energy and Climate Change Subcommittee consultation of the “Impact of shale gas on energy markets”.**

The BGA has received a request from the Geological Society for input into its response to this consultation. The Committee agreed to wait for the draft document to be circulated and then to provide comment on that.

**ACTION**

**Secretary to circulate draft response once received.**

**16 Date of next meeting**

Executive Committee meeting – c. 17:00 TBC on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2013 at the Geological Society.

Annual General Meeting – c. 12:30 TBC 15<sup>th</sup> February 2013 at the Geological Society.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 17:10.

**For information:****Committee Membership and terms of office**

The constitution requires there to be:

- 8 members who are fellows of one of the parent societies
- 4 (up to) co-opted members who need not be fellows
- 2 representatives, one each from the parent societies.

The current committee membership is as follows:

**Fellow members:**

- Prof. Mike Kendall – President – term: Feb 2012-Feb 2015
- Prof. Christine Peirce – Secretary – term: Feb 2010-Feb 2013
- Prof. Peter Clarke – Treasurer – term: Feb 2012-Feb 2015
- Dr Mimi Hill – Newsletter Officer – term: Feb 2012-Feb 2015
- Prof Gillian Foulger – Web Officer – term: Feb 2011-Feb 2014
- Prof. Andreas Rietbrock – Meetings Officer – term: Feb 2012-Feb 2015
- Dr Ian Stimpson – Member without Portfolio – term: Feb 2012-Feb 2015
- Mr Paul Denton – Schools Liaison and Outreach Officer – term: Feb 2012-Feb 2015

**Co-opted members:**

- Prof. John Brodholt – Outreach Representative – term: Feb 2011-Feb 2014
- Dr George Tuckwell – Industry Representative – term: Feb 2011-Feb 2014
- Vacant – Postgraduate Representative – term:
- Prof David Waltham – Without portfolio – term: Feb 2012-Feb 2015

**Parent society members:**

- Dr Lyndsay Fletcher – Royal Astronomical Society – term: Feb 2011-Feb 2014
- Vacant – Geological Society – term: