

SCIENCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on 20 November 2007 at 2pm in Burlington House.

PRESENT: A B Watts (Chair), E Nickless, E Valsami-Jones, R Wood & G Worrall and representatives of the following Specialist Groups:

EIGG:	John Arthur
Engineering Group:	Jim Griffiths
Forensic Geoscience:	Kym Jarvis
Gaia:	Crispin Tickell
Geochemistry Group:	Kym Jarvis
HOGG:	Alan Bowden
Hydrogeological Group:	William Burgess
Mineral Deposits Studies Group:	Martin Smith

APOLOGIES: G Cayley, A Hills, R Strachan, B Vining & J Zalasiewicz. Apologies were also received from those Specialist Groups unable to send a representative.

Action

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Jim Griffiths noted that in the previous minutes it stated 'the Glossop Lecture will become an annual event linked to one of the Engineering Group's Forum meetings', but it should read: 'the Glossop Lecture will become an annual event linked to one of the Engineering Group's Forum meetings, every other year'.

Otherwise the minutes from the June meeting were approved.

2 MATTERS ARISING

4.4 *Geoscientist* article on flagship meetings

Georgina & Edmund will draft an article for the *Geoscientist*, which Tony Watts will approve before it is published. Once this text has been approved, than it will be included on the website as well.

GW/EN

6.1 Specialist Groups contacting Fellows with an interest in their group

Edmund reported that it might be possible to do an annual survey, but that the exact data wanted from these surveys would have to be specified and approved beforehand.

6.2 Regions hosting the Shell public lectures

Georgina reported that any Regional Group would be welcome to put itself forward as a host of a lecture. The Regional Group Chair would be responsible for locating the venue beforehand, and would then need to write to the Society requesting its interest in hosting a lecture.

3.3.2 William Smith Meeting 2008

This matter will be addressed in Item 3.

5.1 Carbon Capture

Tony Watts contacted John Ludden after the last Science Committee meeting expressing the Committee's interest in a meeting on this topic, but as yet, Tony has not received any further information on the status of this meeting.

It was noted that the Royal Society of Chemistry, together with other societies is

looking to run a joint meeting on this theme.

Willy Burgess reported that the Hydrogeological Group will be running a lecture in Summer 2008 on this topic.

5.2 **Lyell 2009**

This will be addressed under Item 5.

5.3 **William Smith 2009**

Crispin Tickell reported that he had looked into the possibility of putting on a conference celebrating Darwin's bicentenary, but he found out that a number of other societies are already planning events on Darwin, that there is probably little need to run yet another event on this topic.

The Committee still felt that it would be good to do something on Darwin 'the geologist', as most societies will probably not focus on this aspect of his life. It was suggested that one of the public lectures in 2009, might cover this topic.

Alan Bowden reported that HOGG is considering putting on a fieldtrip related to Darwin's work.

7.1 **Science Strategy Document**

This matter will be addressed in Item 5.

9.2 **Environment Group**

Willy Burgess reported to the Committee that he had contacted the Chair of the Environment Group to discuss jointly hosting some of the Hydrogeological Group's events.

The Hydrogeological Groups' forthcoming Ground Water event will be linked with both Group's and their forthcoming 'Landfill' event will be used to promote the Environment Group.

3 MEETINGS

3a **Calendar**

This was noted.

3b **Work Programme of the Conference Office**

This was noted.

3c **Flagship meetings**

Lyell Meeting 2008

The 2008 Lyell meeting is entitled 'Marine climate change - past and future' and will be held on 20 February. The organisation of this meeting is underway. The convenors have secured sponsorship and have some confirmed speakers.

William Smith Meeting 2008

This meeting is entitled 'Studying past and present sea-level changes to make more confident future predictions of future changes' and will be held on 1-2 September 2008.

The William Smith Lecture will be given by Jerry Mitrovica, University of Toronto.

A poster for this event is currently being put together to advert this conference.

4 CONTINUATION OF THE SHELL LONDON PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES

Edmund reported to the Committee that new equipment is currently being installed in the Lecture Theatre, so that the lectures can be web cast.

The lecture on 20 November will trial this equipment to ensure it all works properly.

The previous lectures in the series require some further work before they are in a format ready for the web.

Regarding the 2008 lecture series, which have now been funded by Shell, it is proposed that there will be a series of 10 lectures, two of which will be given by Shell-based speakers.

Due to the popularity of Richard Fortey lecture this year, Richard will repeat this lecture ('History of Life') on 10 January 2008.

As there were no female speakers in the 2007 series, the Committee was encouraged to consider both female and young engaging speakers for the 2008 series.

Below are some proposed speakers for the topics put forward in the Science Committee papers:-

Extra Terrestrial Volcanoes

Lionel Wilson

Dave Rothery

How the Solar System was born

Sara Russell

Matthew Genge

Origin of Life on Earth

Eaun Nisbet

Greening of the Planet

David Beerling

Rise of Vertebrates

Jenny Clack

Life beyond Earth

Monica Grady

Dan Condon

Exploring the geology of the deep ocean

David Long, BGS

Dinosaurs

Phil Manning, Manchester

Paul Uppchurch

Emily Rayfield, Bristol

Earth mantle

Gill Forger, Leeds

Antarctic

Chris Rapley, Science Museum

Forensic Geology

Kym Jarvis to put forward a name

Exploration techniques

Tim Coleman, BGS

Jeremy Richards

Mountains

Mike Searle

Hi-tech fossils

Phil Donovan

Plate tectonics

David Dobson, UCL

The following lectures were decided for the beginning part of the year:-

10 January - Richard Fortey - History of Life

14 February - Mike Searle - Making mountains (title to be confirmed)

25 March - Jane Francis - Geology and botany of the poles (title to be confirmed)

30 April - Shell speaker

Tony Watts has emailed Mike & Jane and they have confirmed their availability. Georgina has emailed Shell and is currently awaiting a reply.

5 CONFERENCE PROPOSALS**Lyell Meeting 2009 - Palaeobotany**

The Committee approved the draft proposal submitted by Chris Cleal for this conference.

Carbon and pasts and future ecologies

The Committee agreed that this proposal was too focused on CIE and shouldn't just contain one case study. The Committee felt that all environmental indicators need to be covered in the programme.

TW/GW

The Committee also felt that there was only content for a one day meeting rather than a two day meeting.

Non-actualistic carbonates

The Committee agreed that this was a very hot topic, but that there were already conferences on this topic in place (e.g. by the AAPG). They felt it might be best to hold this conference in 2010, once the outcome from the other related events is known.

TW/GW

If this was to be considered as a Lyell meeting, than it would need to be a one day event.

The Geological Record of Climate Change & its Implications for our Future

The Committee agreed that there was potential in a conference on this topic. However, the Committee was concerned by the suggestion that 'the vast majority of speakers and the audience would be invited'. The Committee agreed that any Society conference has to be open to everyone, but that it is possible to invite a small number of people to any conference, for example as keynote speakers.

TW/GW

The Committee also agreed that there needs to be a convenor on the planning of the event, not connected to Neftex to ensure that the meeting was not used as a promotional event for Neftex.

Health hazards on Earth

The Committee agreed that this conference would be a good William Smith meeting.

The Committee felt that the title needed to incorporate more of an Earth science feel to it, and that the indirect effects of organism decay needs to be covered in the programme.

The following specialist groups said they would be happy to assist with putting the programme together: Forensic Geoscience, Gaia, Hydrogeological & Mineral Deposits.

TW/GW

Fermor Meeting 2009

Martin Smith raised the Committee's attention to the fact that a Fermor Meeting needs to be run in 2009.

MS

- 6 Tony proposed that the Mineral Deposits Study Group would be best placed to suggest a suitable topic for this meeting.

SCIENCE COMMITTEE DRAFT STRATEGY

A couple of changes were proposed to the Science Committee strategy; otherwise the Committee approved the document.

- 7 The document will be submitted to Council for their approval.

PUBLICATIONS

- 8 There was no publications report submitted for this meeting

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Marine biogeochemistry conference

A potential convenor to assist Wiley-Blackwell with putting together a suitable scientific programme on this topic is needed.

KJ

Kym Jarvis agreed to look into finding a suitable candidate and forwarding their name onto Georgina.

Society books for sale

Previously, it was possible to browse (and then purchase) Society publications at Reception. Since the main reception has been moved, this facility is now unavailable. The Committee agreed that a place should be found that can accommodate the browsing of Society publications, especially field guides and recently published books.

GW

Georgina agreed to put this point forward to Edmund for consideration.

EIGG

John Arthur reported to the Committee that the EIGG will be hosting a postgraduate symposium in August/September 2008 at BGS and that they require university presentations, so would like the members of the Committee to spread the word about this event to anyone who might be interested in presenting.

Engineering Group

Jim Griffiths reported that next year's Glossop Lecture will be given by Michael de Freitas at Imperial College London.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING**10**

Tuesday 19 February 2008