



**THE ENGINEERING GROUP  
OF THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**



**REPORT TO THE 2010 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
OF THE ENGINEERING GROUP**

**By the Chair - Ivan Hodgson, Scott Wilson Ltd**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Tonight marks the end of my two year term as chair of the Engineering Group and David Entwisle will take up the reigns at the close of this meeting. At last year's AGM I reported progress related to three aims:

- Maintaining and raising the profile of engineering geology
- Serving the engineering geology community in the UK
- Making the Group the focus for information, advice and initiatives in engineering geology.

1.2 In this my report on the 2009/2011 year's activities I will attempt to demonstrate the ways in which we have continued in these aims.

**2. THE COMMITTEE**

2.1 I would like to thank David Entwisle for his support as Vice Chair and wish him all the best for the next two years. David and I have been on the committee together for more than 10 years and it has been particularly good to have worked with him these last two years. Simon Wheeler stands down tonight after completing 3 years as treasurer and his efforts are much appreciated. David Waring has been a most efficient and conscientious secretary and he will continue for another year in that role.

2.2 My thanks are due to all the committee members for their hard work this year. Richard Mellor has done a fine job on publicity and the website. Anna Morley chaired the meetings subcommittee and Patrick Cox returned to assist with this role when Anna relocated to Hong Kong. Ursula Lawrence represented us on the London Basin Forum and assisted Darren Page with the newsletter. Ursula completes her three years as an elected member tonight and we are delighted that she has agreed to take over as treasurer next year. Once again Chris Martin did an excellent job with the Glossop Lecture and Malcolm Whitworth arranged a high quality programme for the Forum. David Giles again produced a field trip that provided interest and enjoyment in equal measure and maintained the Training Guide.

2.3 We lost a number of members during the year. Guy Cassidy, after taking care of the logistical arrangements for the Forum and Glossop left for New Zealand, Andrew Doe followed him as far as Australia and Anna Morley spent the first half of 2010 in Hong Kong and is standing down during her maternity leave. Patrick Cox was the treasurer elect, but he too is now bound for the Antipodes. We wish them all the best and thank them for their valued service. Paul Bailey and Paul Emerson joined the committee as co-opted members in the course of the year.

2.4 In 1999 the then Chair, Ruth Allington, held the first strategy review. The second was carried out in 2006 by Ian Duncan and this year Tracey Radford agreed to carry out the third review, the aim of which is to assess the Committee's performance against its aims and the members' requirements and, where appropriate, to set new goals.

2.5 Tracey Radford has also taken responsibility for the initial stages of planning for the Group's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2014.

2.6 Our outreach initiatives are in the hands of Lee Jones for schools and Alex Kidd for universities.

2.7 Our thanks are also due to those who represent us on various external bodies: Ian Jefferson (IAEG), Paul Maliphant (Geological Society Council), Adrian Collings (Hazards Forum), John Harris (Site Investigation Steering Group) and David Norbury and David Entwisle on various British Standards sub-committees.

### **3. LINKS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

3.1 The Engineering Group is the UK branch of the IAEG and in this country. It enjoys a close relationship with the British Geotechnical Association (BGA) and is represented on the editorial board of Ground Engineering.

3.2 The Group represents the Geological Society on the Ground Forum and as of this year also on the UK Register of Ground Engineering Professionals, the UK Location Data User Group and the Land Drilling Sector Accreditation Scheme.

3.3 The Group maintains contacts with a number of other organisations including the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining (IoM<sup>3</sup>), the British Tunnelling Association (BTA), the UK Chapter of the International Geosynthetics Society (IGS), CIRIA and with other Specialist and Regional Groups of the Geological Society.

### **4. THE GLOSSOP LECTURE AND AWARD**

4.1 In 2009 the Glossop Lecture moved to the Royal Geographical Society where it proved as popular as ever and we hope that this will become its home for the foreseeable future. The event lived up to its reputation as the premier engineering geology event in the this country and Prof Paul Nathanail's lecture *Engineering geology of sustainable risk based land quality management* was very well received and was the first Glossop Lecture on the subject of contaminated land.

4.2 The Glossop Award was won by Stacy English for her presentation on *Rockfall Protection of Jamestown Wharf, St Helena*.

4.3 The event was honoured by the presence of Rudolf Glossop's daughters Lady Susan Chitty and Mrs Emma Slack. We very much appreciate the continued support of the Glossop family.

### **5. MEETINGS**

5.1 This year your committee has arranged 13 technical meetings which on the whole have been well received with generally good attendance, particularly in 2010.

5.2 We started in June last year with our annual field weekend which was centred on Grenoble in the French Alps. Our first meeting in Burlington House was in September on *Site Investigation: where are we now and what is the future?* In October we looked at *Global Engineering Geology* in an evening meeting and the *London Basin Forum* also held an open meeting in November. On 25th November we had the Engineering Group Forum and the 10<sup>th</sup> Glossop Lecture and Award. Also in November, we held a joint meeting with the ICE branch in

New York with a talk by Dr Ursula Lawrence on the *Cross Rail Project*, a reciprocation for the New York subway talk at our AGM last year. In December we held an evening meeting on *Basal Reinforced Platforms for Piled Embankments* jointly with the IGS here at Burlington House. We started 2010 with *Groundwater management in London Tunnelling Projects*. Our annual joint meeting with the BGA was entitled *The Forth Replacement Crossing Ground Investigation*. In March we had another of our infrequent meetings with the Hazards Forum, this one dealing with *Carbon Capture*. After many years at Leamington Spa the annual joint meeting with the CIHT moved to the Technocentre in Coventry and was entitled *Transport Engineering in a Carbon Critical World*. Our evening meeting in May took the form of a feedback session from our mini-working party on the *Use of Baseline Reports in UK Ground Engineering* and in June *Rock Engineering and Engineering Geology what about EC7 and DIANE?*

5.3 I am sure you will agree that this constitutes another impressive programme of meetings which were generally well attended. I would like to thank Anna Morley who set up the programme and Patrick Cox for taking over the co-ordination when Anna moved to Hong Kong. Thanks too to Richard Mellor for publicising the events and to all our excellent speakers and all who supported these meetings.

5.4 As reported last year, it is the Group's view that there are a number of organisations offering training and the Group is not currently organising its own training courses. We assist the Society in accrediting courses for CPD and we maintain our Training Guide for Engineering Geologists which this year was revised to accord with the new chartership process and with the addition of further specialist categories.

5.5 The Group was once again represented at the Geological Society's Careers day held at the BGS in Nottingham in November.

## **6. UK REGISTER OF GROUND ENGINEERING PROFESSIONALS**

6.1 The Register is a Ground Forum initiative, which is being set up by the BGA and underwritten by the IoM<sup>3</sup>, ICE and the Geological Society.

6.2 This year has seen the finalisation of the documents which are being prepared for a launch this year. The Engineering Group represents the Society on the Register Panel in the persons of Jim Griffiths and Ivan Hodgson.

## **7. INTERNATIONAL AWARENESS**

7.1 The Committee continues to seek to foster relations overseas through individuals and by contacts with similar groups. Mark Dawson, Jim Gelder and Alison Littlejohn keep us informed of developments in Australasia, the Middle East and New York respectively.

7.2 Guy Cassidy who moved to New Zealand this year is looking to promoting the Society's charter status among local geologists who have no equivalent professional membership.

## **8. ENGINEERING GROUP FORUM**

8.1 The Forum is held every two years to provide an opportunity for technical debate and networking. In 2009 for the first time the Forum was held on the day of the Glossop Lecture. Despite a well planned programme of high profile speakers, the attendance at the event on *Planning and Engineering Geology* was disappointing.

## **9. PUBLICATIONS AND WORKING PARTIES**

9.1 The report of the Working Party on Hot Deserts is complete and being prepared for publication.

9.2 A steering group is in place under John Charman to establish a new working party on the engineering geology of relict glacial and periglacial conditions.

9.3 The Working Party on Geohazards continues under David Giles. This year has seen good progress on populating the website with information on a range of geohazards.

9.4 The Group is also progressing a mini working party on the Use of Baseline Conditions in Engineering Geology under Darren Page which is due to publish this year.

9.5 Richard Fox continues to chair the Applied Petrography Group which meets regularly and has its own website. The Group is establishing contacts in Europe.

9.6 The Quarterly Journal of Engineering Geology and Hydrogeology maintains its high standard and continues to attract a large number of papers. Our congratulations to Mike Winter and his editorial board.

9.7 Selected papers from the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Seminar on Earthworks in Europe are being prepared for publication as a Special Publication.

## **10. SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES**

10.1 The teaching of geology and applied geology continues to decline and the ground engineering professions remain concerned about skills shortages in the UK. The Group is actively involved in Ground Forum initiatives to keep our skills on the shortage list for immigration, but it is more important that something is done to encourage young people towards science subjects and specifically earth sciences.

10.2 The Engineering Group's outreach to schools continued with the election of Lee Jones of the BGS to the committee as a replacement for Chloe French who initiated the programme.

10.3 In November Victoria Sword-Daniels and Catherine Taylor 'volunteered' to represent the Group in a cross-institution 'Balloon Debate' organised for A-level students by the Graduate and Student Committee of the ICE.

10.4 This year the Committee, in the person of Alex Kidd has started to look for ways in which the Group can work with universities who offer geology or engineering geology, to encourage students to consider careers in our disciplines. This initiative is in line with others by the BGA IoM<sup>3</sup> and the ICE. In parallel with the Ground Forum the Group is also keen to foster links between industry and universities, to mutual benefit.

## **11. CONCLUSION**

11.1 In the present economic conditions it is not surprising that this has been a somewhat mixed year for the Engineering Group. The numbers at some events were disappointing but the Glossop event continues to thrive and there are positive signs in the last few months.

11.2 The Group continues to play its part in UK engineering geology. We represent our members and the Society on a number of committees, we contribute to public consultations of important draft documents and we continue to seek ways of spreading our influence.

11.3 I would like to thank the Executive Secretary, the Conference Office and all the staff at Burlington House for their support over the last two years.

11.3 Finally I would like to wish David Entwisle and his committee all the very best for the future, and urge you to play your part, come to our meetings, bring your ideas to the committee, join the committee, help us to serve you.