

THE BRITISH DAM SOCIETY
Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2016
REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE YEAR
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT for 2016

1. General

As I come to the end of my second term as Chairman of BDS it is a time to reflect on the state of BDS and what we have achieved. In reality it is a very strong organisation with direction and purpose.

The BDS continues to move from strength to strength with a number of new initiatives in support of our strategy.

As a learned society we are an active part of the Institution and we have re-established contact with officials in Defra to try to influence the implementation of legislation and perhaps even changes in legislation!

We continue to arrange well attended meetings in London and the regions and our competitions are well supported.

Our finances remain strong which enables us to fund a number of new initiatives. We continue to meet the conditions put on us by the Charities Commission to maintain our charitable status.

We started a new initiative last year – the Young Engineer's Forum – one of the first groups to be formed within the ICOLD family to encourage the young in our society. Under the Chairmanship of Sam Tudor, the group has expanded with more than 90 'members' and is organising visits, social events and annual dinners. Future initiatives will include a mentoring system, lectures specifically for the young engineers and training sessions

2. Membership

There has been a further increase in membership during the year both of individual and corporate membership. At the end of 2016 we had 567 individual members and 30 corporate members.

The individual membership comprises 377 full members, 104 members who are 35 years of age or under, 67 retired members, 12 student members and 7 lifetime honorary members

We support the initiatives that the ICE are following in respect to diversity but in reality there is little that we can do other than encourage the young in civil engineering. We have a lady Vice Chairperson and a significant number of ladies on the committee. So we have had some success and we had 34 ladies at the BDS Conference in Lancaster.

3. BDS Committee

The BDS Committee continues to perform its function with all of the membership playing an active part. It is a particularly active group of people who carry out their duties with enthusiasm.

The Finance and General Purposes Sub Committee chaired by Tracey Williamson, ably supported by the Technical Secretary, Andy Pepper continues to manage our finances and our main initiatives

We have brought all the sub committees back together into the main committee to improve communication and efficiency and now have ad hoc working groups for particular initiatives.

The Events Committee ensures we have a full programme of evening lectures both in London and the regions, as well as site visits whilst the Educational Committee continues to identify, drive and deliver initiatives in schools, both primary and secondary and universities with several of our members delivering lectures.

Our website has been remodelled and made so that the society can edit and maintain it so we can continuously add to and improve its content. I am indebted to Matthew Atyeo as webmaster and to the 'web group' for their hard work.

Anthea Peters continues the essential role of Editor of 'Dams & Reservoirs' and has done an excellent job in overcoming the backlog that existed. We are now up to date with having enough material to produce two editions ahead and we are back on track to produce four issues a year. I would still request that all members offer papers for publication from time to time.

4. Events

We had a full events programme in 2016. The London meetings were well attended and each time they were made available via the internet. The ICE have improved the hardware to enable us to 'stream' the meetings live and so we did not seem to suffer the problems experienced in 2015.

The 19th Biennial Conference was held at Lancaster University with pre and post conference visits made to dams in Lancashire and Cumbria. There was the usual programme involving lectures, exhibitions, Geoffrey Binnie Lecture and formal dinner.

We were addressed by a senior person from the WWF and he was welcomed by the membership and I believe was a valuable contribution to our knowledge.

The feedback from the conference was very complimentary and this was our most successful conference to date with more than 260 delegates, 9 accompanying persons and 12 exhibitors. It was also particularly pleasing to see a high proportion of young engineers and ladies at the conference.

5. Communications and Influencing

Richard Cox, during the year has continued to help and co-ordinate the delivery of a number of lectures to universities. This is part of our strategy to encourage the young into dam engineering.

Our educational package to schools continues to increase in popularity and we are making improvements to that package.

Our competitions are also increasing in popularity. I hope that we will get interest from many more universities in the future. Our photographic competition and young engineers' competition are very popular.

One of the other educational initiatives that I am particularly proud of is the sponsorship of 5 Arkwright Scholarships – awarded to students in their final 2 years at school, giving them money to pursue some engineering interests but also the school to assist with other pupils and their interest in engineering in the following years.

We sponsored a student at Bristol University to do some research for us that could help 'spawn' or initiate some research being arranged by RSAG. This year the topic was sedimentation and reservoirs

BDS also supported an application by Imperial and Sheffield Universities for monies to do further research into internal erosion. This application was successful and so BDS will assist in this further research

In 2012 I suggested the new category of BDS Honorary member to recognise individual BDS members who have made a significant contribution to the society and dam engineering in general. In 2016 we honoured Jonathan Hinks in this way. We have now honoured 7 of our members.

We had a further meeting with Defra to ask about progress of the Act into Phase 2 and to try to establish how we could help Defra and the Minister make progress and a decision. We were told Defra still need evidence to bring in the reservoir with a capacity of 10,000 to 20,000 cubic metres and they actually said in watching what Scotland and Ireland are doing may lead to changes in primary legislation!

We continue to chair RSAG and RSCG when required and have representation on the Reservoirs Committee. We also have representation on the ICE's Water Panel

A new initiative will be to drive closer links with organisations such as CIRIA – watch this space!

6. ICOLD and the European Club

Turkey was the venue for European Club of ICOLD in 2016.

The ICOLD Annual Meeting was in Johannesburg in May 2016. We had a good turnout of our representatives on the various committees and BDS members presented a number of papers and contributed to the sessions.

There was a good UK representation at Hydro 2016 in Montreux, again a conference where BDS members wrote and presented papers to an audience of more than 1500 people and where I and Peter Mason chaired sessions.

7. Acknowledgements

It is with great pleasure I acknowledge the work of the whole of the BDS Committee and in particular those not mentioned above – the BDS continues to achieve its objectives as a result.

I would also like to thank Tim Fuller, our Secretary, for all of his hard work and organisation and to Sean Cross of the ICE Finance Department for his help with the day to day finances and also the accounts in general

I would also like to thank Tracey Williamson for her support as Vice Chairperson

On a sad note, Andy Pepper our Technical Secretary, has informed BDS that he wants to retire in the not too distant future. Andy does a tremendous amount of work, particularly behind the scenes for BDS and its membership, and has been a great help to me as Chairman. Although he is not going to stop work immediately, I would like to personally thank him for his support and hard work as I step down from my role.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy Hughes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a small flourish at the end.

Dr Andy Hughes

Chairman, British Dam Society, 1 January 2017