

UK CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENT USERS' GROUP

Trustees Annual Report 2007/8

Administrative Information

UK Controlled Environment Users' Group

Charity number 1108721

Contact Address:

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Trustees: Dr. Lynton Incoll, Dr Geoffrey Holroyd, Mr Alan Morgan, Mr Peter Gill, Mr Julian Franklin, Mr Gary Taylor, Mr Graham Pitkin, Mr Malcolm Pratt, Professor Mick Fuller.

The UK Controlled Environment Users Group is a charitable unincorporated association first registered in 2005.

The above trustees, forming the executive committee for the group, meet twice a year. Each year there is an annual general meeting of the group held at the group's annual scientific conference or workshop. Trustees are elected at the AGM from the membership to serve for three years. The executive committee organises the annual meetings as well as coordinating the activities of the group, the latter notably involving the various international committees involved with issuance of the guidelines on aspects of controlled environment use and the issuance, maintenance and calibration of a light sensor calibration package which is available on loan to controlled environment users and managers.

The trustees continue to promote the activities of the group with due regard to the stated aims and objectives of the group, complying with the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity commission.

Objectives and activities

The aims of the charity are:

- To provide travel awards for attendance at International CE meetings.
- Provide a pool of experts on controlled environment construction, use and management for organisations and individuals who request it.
- Loan out an instrument package for calibrating light sensors,
- Provide workshops and conferences on CE operations.

The organisation of the above activities is carried out on a voluntary basis by the members of the executive committee (trustees) and by members of the group. The group continues to increase its membership in the UK and overseas as it promotes and encourages interest in its activities. Membership of the group is open to all with an interest in controlled environments and is free. Workshops and conferences are open to all and are advertised on the WWW at

<http://www.ceug.ac.uk/index.htm> as well as promoted by individual members in their workplaces.

Those attending conferences and workshops have improved their skill base, learning about aspects of controlled environment usage and management not available in a conventional learning environment, such as at a university or college. The travel bursaries have provided the opportunity for individuals working with controlled environments, or with an interest in them, to meet other individuals at conferences and workshops in Europe and the USA with like minded interests and skills, thereby promoting learning as well as a sense of community. Many of the individuals of the group work as individuals, with a specialised skill set and job not related to those of colleagues in their workplace. The group therefore provides an opportunity to share knowledge, with like minded individuals and organisations.

Achievements and performance during the last year.

1. During the year the group provided seven bursaries of £350 each to attend an International controlled environment meeting in the United States. Although 11 bursaries were awarded by competition, in the final event only seven were taken up. The bursaries were advertised on the group's web site. Bursary awardees were asked to contribute to a summary of the meeting which was published on the website of our fraternal organisation (NCERA-101) in the USA at http://ncr101.montana.edu/minutes/2008/BURSARY_AWARDEES_Reports-NCERA-101_2008.pdf.
2. The group organised a three-day meeting at Aberystwyth in September on the theme of 'Cutting the Costs: Towards Energy efficient Controlled Environments' Fifty six people attended including some non-members.
3. The website has been modified and updated further with more information being made available, especially proceedings of past meetings, conferences and workshops. Currently proceedings go back to 1997 but the intention is to provide proceedings back to the inception of the group in 1966. Some pages are available in other European languages e.g. there is a French version of the membership leaflet.
4. The JISCmail mailing list generated 16 posts, some for discussion e.g. 'squirrel proofing CE', some requests for information e.g. 'sugarcane plants for schools'.
5. During the year the group membership grew to 177, net increase of 7.
6. During the year, at the meeting in 1. above, the group jointly published, through the ICCEG, the 'Guidelines for Measuring and Reporting Environmental Parameters for Experiments in Plant Tissue Culture Facilities' with our North American colleagues (NCERA-101) and Australasian colleagues (ACEWG). Leaflets and posters on these guidelines have been displayed, the poster being displayed at an international meeting of *Arabidopsis* practitioners at Sutton Bonington in June.
7. The Light Sensor Calibration Package was launched during the year and lent out twice within the year. The take up was disappointing.

Finances

The group continues to maintain a balance of at least £4,000 in the bank, all of which is unrestricted funds, sufficient to operate the group. The turnover of the group varies considerably and this year is higher than normal due to the costs of the impending 3-day workshop on 'Water and its measurement in Controlled Environments' in September 2008.

The largest expenditure is incurred with the operation of the annual conference and workshops. The income, from sponsored mail shots to members, funds the operation of the group, largely its executive committee, group mailings and cost of the website. Income from trade exhibitors at conferences funds guest speakers as well as funds bursaries to attend meetings and workshops. Those attending the conferences/workshops do so at cost i.e. no profit is made on the cost of transport, accommodation or meals. Administration costs charged are solely to cover local conference costs (local administration, mailing, conference organiser). During the year seven bursaries of £350 were awarded.

Web site organisation, maintenance as well as addition of new content is undertaken by volunteers.

Julian Franklin

Secretary to the UK CEUG

27th May 2009