

UK CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENT USERS' GROUP

Trustees Annual Report 2008/9

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 Garry 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. The group organised a workshop at Dundee in September on the theme of 'Water and its measurement in Controlled Environments' Seventy seven people attended including some non-members. Our thanks must go to the seven lecturers whose lectures set the scene including one from the US and one from France, 13 demonstrators (representing eight manufacturers), many of whom who provided stimulating hands-on practical demonstrations of their equipment in SCRI's CE facilities, and nine SCRI staff who provided support. The workshop was a challenge for many, catching up with the latest concepts, techniques and equipment for measuring atmospheric water and soil water in CEs, but well worth the effort.
2. The website has been modified and updated further with more information being made available, especially proceedings and minutes of past meetings, conferences and workshops. Records of the group dating back to its inception in 1966 have now been digitised and are available on the website. Some pages are available in other European languages e.g. there are French, German and Spanish versions of the membership leaflet.
3. The JISCmail mailing list generated 20 postings on a diverse range of subjects, generating a wide range of replies from members able to assist e.g. 'sea water greenhouses, control of mildew in CE, hydropincs kits and IP ratings for lighting..
4. During the year the group membership grew to 187, a net increase of 10.
5. During the year, following last years publication of 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), the group sent the guidelines leaflets and posters to all members.
6. The Light Sensor Calibration Package was lent out 3 times during the year. The take up continues to be 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 again higher than normal due to the costs of the 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

Web site organisation, maintenance as well as addition of new content such as the digitisation of past records is undertaken by volunteers.

Julian Franklin

Secretary to the UK CEUG

13th September 2009