

UK CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENT USERS' GROUP
MINUTES OF THE 2004 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The annual general meeting of the Controlled Environment Users' Group was held on Monday 14th September 2004 at Beaumont Hall, University of Leicester, Leicester.

The Convenor, L.D. Incoll opened the meeting at 19:17 hours.

Present: J. Aldous, J. Chicken, R. Darby, J. Franklin, C. Fryars, E.M. Fryars, M. Fuller, P. Gill, F. Gilzean, L. Hansen, G. Holmes-Henderson, G.H. Holroyd, L.D. Incoll, M.G. Lappage, N. Macrae, W. Meredith, R. Natt, I. Pearman, R. Parkinson, N. Paul, G. Pitkin, S. Pot, M. Pratt, O. Ravel, B. Robertson, S. Robertson, K. Sawford, N. Shariff, A. Sim, D. Skelton, M. Stenning, I. Southworth, G. Taylor, D. Wildman,

Apologies: O. Atkin, M. Crawley, T.J. Flowers, P. Goode, M. Harrison, G. Kerstiens, D. MacBain, A. Murdoch, M. Penrose, J. Porter, R. Price, R. Randall, J. Roy, J. Toler, B. Wilson.

1. The meeting agreed to appoint to G. Taylor as chairman for the rest of the meeting.
2. **Minutes of the previous meeting at Lancaster University, Lancaster, on the 14th September 2003**

The minutes of the previous meeting, which had been distributed to members earlier in the year, were approved as a true record of the proceedings (proposed: G. Holroyd, Lancaster University; seconded: B. Robertson, John Innes Institute.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising that would not be dealt with in the rest of the Agenda.

4. Chairman's report (L.D.Incoll, University of Leeds)

I am pleased to report that the last twelve months have seen much activity of the Group both nationally and internationally. It has included three firsts this year; sending a delegation of 11 members to an International CE meeting in Australia, organising a workshop on measurement of light and being joint authors of an internationally available publication.

The workshop tests the demand for training of people using, selling and managing CEs. One result is already evident from the attendance at the workshop - more than half of our CE manufacturer-members are not interested in knowing more about CEs than their customers.

International Controlled Environment Conference, Brisbane 2004

Eleven members attended the International Controlled Environment Meeting, "The Power to Control", in Brisbane in March this year. Nine of the contingent were supported by £750 travel bursaries awarded by the Bursary sub-committee and enabled by a £2500 award from The New Phytologist Trust and by £5000 from the UK Controlled Environment Users' Group. It is notable that many of the delegation were support staff of Universities and Institutes who, because of their perceived status in the UK's scientific class system, usually have no chance of getting financial support to attend international scientific meetings like this. In this respect the vision of member Professor T. Mansfield in recognising this and encouraging the Group to apply to the Trust, should be singled out for particular thanks. No doubt the award of bursaries influenced the recipients' employers to award matching funds.

The meeting was very successful and of great value to the UK delegation. The bursary awardees "did the UK proud" by actively participating as speakers, poster presenters, chairs of sessions or discussants. M. Stenning of the University of Sussex has written a report on behalf of and with the help of the other 8 awardees which he has sent to members. It will be mounted on the web site soon and a shortened version may be published in the New Phytologist.

The Executive Committee have discussed the idea of a proposed future international meeting in North America. It was felt that 3-years between meetings was just too close (as for example Norwich 2001 followed by Brisbane 2004) and that 4 to 5 years would be better, especially to allow time for changes and developments to build up to a mass large enough to justify a meeting. Of course an east coast location was favoured for easier travel and more cheap flights but that mightn't make the Pacific Rim people happy. The cheaper for us, the more people that we can send. McGill University, Montreal might be the place and I have written to NCR-101 proposing this. The committee endorsed the feeling of BBSRC employees that the BBSRC should be asked again to sponsor delegates to the meeting when it was organised. They refused to do so for the Norwich meeting

Charitable status

After almost 40 years the UK CEUG is moving in a new direction. At Lancaster last September members supported the Executive Committee's proposal that the Group should apply to register as a charity. This has required the Executive Committee to explain to the whole membership the rationale behind the proposal, to prepare a constitution as an unincorporated association and to prepare an application to the Charity Commissioners to register as a charity. The three documents, rationale, new constitution and application, were publicised in May this year to the membership via our JISCmail mailing list. Disappointingly there was absolutely no response from members to what has been a major commitment for me. This means one of two things, the membership couldn't care less or it believes that the committee is doing the right thing but can't be bothered to say so. I hope that it is the latter. We will find out at this AGM when the constitution and application are put to the vote. A vote in favour of the constitution should put the future organisation of the Group on a firmer basis as we have never had a constitution. Registration as a charity will make the Executive

Committee members trustees, with responsibility for achieving the objects of the Group and for ensuring that its success in raising funds to support its activities does not diminish.

Communications

1. 'UK-CEUG' JISCmail List.

This list seems to be fulfilling its purpose well apart from some careless usage by some members. Regrettably the list has proved to be beyond the understanding of the latter. Some of the messages sent to it should not have been viz. messages intended for one person, not for the whole 170-odd membership. As a result there have been calls from irate members for "Reply to List" to be changed to "Reply to sender". I have resisted this because it would subvert the principle of the list of allowing correspondence between members to be participated in and enjoyed by the whole membership. I have also resisted the alternative of moderating all messages because of the extra work involved for me.

2. Website.

The Group's web site has been improved considerably since the last AGM with the addition of new pages: (i) a page identifying the officers and members of the Executive Committee; and (ii) a "membership" page with the benefits of membership listed and a link to a down-loadable MS Word application form. The membership form had been used successfully and six new members have been recruited since it was mounted on the web site including one from Queensland. The "Members by organisation" page had also been improved.

Membership

Since September 2003

Category	Number
New members	10
Members resigned	7
Net change	+3
Current total	147
Email contact – <uk-ceug> JISCmail group	134
Attending the 2004 meeting	34
<i>Overseas recruitment:</i>	
Australia – joined	1
Canada - joined	1

Again we have a small net increase in membership because new members are almost balanced by resignations. I hope that the new membership page on the web site will help recruitment e.g. of people browsing the web. However we cannot afford to relax about recruiting members. Consequently Executive Committee member, G. Holroyd, has prepared a draft pamphlet (*2-sided, one A4 folded to A5, in colour*) with the help

of the Executive Committee, which is intended to be used as an aid to recruitment of new members outside the present circle. It was agreed that, for distribution, it should await the registration of the Group as a charity when a charity registration number could be added for completeness. However it was made available for inspection by the manufacturer-members, as it was they who had suggested the idea. Their response was almost nil which is depressing as they are the members who can most assist us with recruiting. We will also ask members for their opinions on the pamphlet.

Publications

1. Minimum Guidelines for Measuring and Reporting Environmental Parameters for Experiments on Plants in Growth Rooms and Chambers

The International CE-Minimum Guidelines committee, which was formed at the 2001 Norwich meeting, published a leaflet on 'Minimum Guidelines for Measuring and Reporting Environmental Parameters for Experiments on Plants in Growth Rooms and Chambers' at the ICEC Meeting in Brisbane. The UK CEUG purchased 5000 copies for members and their colleagues and for free distribution at scientific meetings of other societies. UK CEUG members had been asked via the UK CEUG JISCmail list to tell us how many copies they would like. J. Franklin reported that 950 copies had been requested. There had been 49 responses from a mailing list of 150 but disappointingly only 15 people requested more than 10 copies. The implication was that the rest had no user base. The responses from the manufacturers, except for Sanyo and Percival, were most disappointing but unsurprising, implying that they would not be distributing the pamphlet even to their existing customers.

With the assistance of the committee, Paul Austin (HortResearch, NZ) has designed two posters based on the Minimum Guidelines leaflet. The first, a full sized poster, was designed for use at poster sessions of scientific meetings and would have a pocket attached and loaded with free copies of the leaflet for the taking. One of these posters would be supplied to each of the three national groups; UK CEUG, NCR-101 and ACEWG. The second and smaller poster was designed for posting in CE facilities and we have ordered one copy for each of our member institutions/organisations and departments. The posters were designed to advertise the leaflet, not to replace it. We will be looking for ideas of which societies we should display the large poster at, and for volunteers to put up and take down the poster.

At Brisbane the International Committee on Controlled Environment Guidelines agreed to set up a sub-committee on 'CE Guidelines for tissue culture facilities' with G. Holroyd as chairman - another 'feather in the cap' for the Group. Geoff had persuaded the committee that there was an evident need for such guidelines. New members with expertise in CEs for tissue culture have been co-opted to the committee from the US, France and Australia.

2. Book chapter on quality assurance: Editors K. Ingram, A.J. Both and T. Tibbitts

I received an invitation to write a chapter about quality assurance for this book. Being unqualified to do so, I asked J. Franklin and G. Holroyd to be co-authors with G. Holroyd as the senior author. They agreed. It is good for the Group to be involved in such activities and reflects its maturity and expertise.

Future meetings

The closure e.g. of the Long Ashton Research Institute, or emasculation e.g. of the HRI East Malling and Wellesbourne, of research institutes continues apace. The consequence is that the traditional venues for our annual meetings are becoming fewer and fewer. We need those remaining venues to keep offering their services as organisers of meetings but we also need new sites lest the task of hosting meetings becomes restricted to too small a group. The frequency of returning was once every 11 years. Assistance is provided to organisers through the Groups' Executive Committee supported by documents setting out how to organise a meeting. Volunteers please. Next year we visit Plymouth University where M. Fuller will be host and the Eden Project. Remoteness means a slightly longer meeting though we hope that the prospect of a visit behind the scenes at the Eden Project will encourage you to support Mick.

The report was approved (proposer: B. Robertson, John Innes Institute, seconder: K. Sawford, Brooms Barn).

5. Secretary's report (J. Franklin, Rothamsted Research)

The secretary reported that he had nothing to add to the Chairman's Report. His report was approved (proposer: J. Aldous, John Innes Institute, seconder: G. Pitkin, Scottish Crop Research Institute).

6. Treasurer's report (P. Gill, Scottish Crops Research)

The treasurer reported that the statement of the previous treasurer for 2002-2003 had to be revised (see Annexe A) because the old Barclays Bank account had remained active in Norfolk after his election as treasurer and an item of expenditure (Convenor's expenses - £220.38) had been found to be assigned to the wrong financial year. The balance brought forward from 2001-2002 remained at £10,613.35, but the final balance was increased to £13,020.49 from £12,800.11.

The accounts for 2003-2004 are shown in Annexe B. The Barclays Bank account was finally closed on the 14th June 2004 with the balance of £12,800.11 being transferred to the new Royal Bank of Scotland account. Other income was the surplus from last year's meeting held at the University of Lancaster (£951.76) and sponsorship of two mailings (£280) by Conviron and Cambridge Scientific. Nine travel bursaries, each of £750, were awarded to members to attend the Australian conference in March. These were partly funded by a New Phytologist Trust grant to the UK CEUG of £2,500. As agreed at last year's AGM, the convenor's costs to attend the conference (£962.56) were paid by the group. A pamphlet on the 'Minimum guidelines for measuring and reporting environmental parameters' was produced by the group in co-operation with NCR-101 and the Australasian Controlled Environment Working Group. It was printed in New Zealand at a cost £340.57 for 5000 copies.

The report was approved (proposer: B. Robertson, John Innes Institute, seconder: K. Sawford, Brooms Barn).

7. New constitution

L. Incoll introduced the new constitution. He highlighted the fact that it was based on the Charity Commission's "Model Constitution for a Charitable Unincorporated Association (GD3)". Several amendments had been incorporated regarding Executive membership and the chairmanship of the AGM.

The motion proposed by L.D. Incoll: **"That the UK CEUG adopts the new constitution described in the document 'UK_CEUG_Constitution.doc' which has been made available to members."** was seconded by P. Gill, Scottish Crops Research Institute. The motion was carried unanimously on a show of hands.

8. Application for charitable status

L. Incoll introduced the proposal to apply for charitable status referring to the information that had been placed on the group's JISCmail site.

L.D. Incoll proposed the motion: **"That the UK CEUG applies to the Charity Commission to register as a charity following the 'governance as an unincorporated association' model."** The motion was seconded by I. Pearman. The motion was carried unanimously on a show of hands.

9. Election of the committee

The following nominations were received:

Position	Person	Proposed	Seconded
Chairman	L.D. Incoll (Leeds University)	M. Lappage	H. Martin
Treasurer	P. Gill (SCRI, Dundee)	G. Pitkin	S. Petrie
Secretary	J. Franklin (Rothamsted Research)	I. Pearman	R. Parkinson
Members	J. Aldous (John Innes Institute)	B. Robertson	J. Franklin
	G.H. Holroyd (Lancaster University)	N. Paul	J. Theobald
	A. Morgan (Warwick HRI)	D. Hart	S. Robertson
	G. Pitkin (SCRI, Dundee)	P. Gill	S. Petrie
	G. Taylor (SANYO Gallenkamp)	M. Pratt	J. Franklin

All candidates were elected unopposed. The chairman-elect called for more members to take an active role on the committee.

10. Future meetings

L. Incoll outlined:

- a) Details of the proposed meeting in 2005 at the Eden project.
- b) A proposal to hold the 2006 meeting at Silwood Park, hosted by D. Wildman with possible themes of quality assurance or a workshop on measuring water.
- c) Possible future venues for meetings after 2006 as shown on the following timetable:

Date	Venue	Comments
2005	Eden Project, Cornwall	New site Theme: "Large scale CEs – engineering and plant growth" Contacts: Mick Fuller & Julian Franklin
2006	Imperial College at Silwood Park	New site Theme: "Quality assurance - the effect of EU regulations" Contact: Dennis Wildman
2007	Warwick HRI or IGER / University of Wales, Aberystwyth	(will be 12 years since last visit) (will be 13 years since last visit)
2008	SCRI, Dundee	(will be 11 years since last visit)
2009	IACR Rothamsted	(will be 11 years since last visit)
2010	York University / CSL	(will be 11 years since last visit)
2011	?	New site?
2012	John Innes Centre, Norwich	(will be 11 years since last visit)

Possible future workshops involving quality assurance, temperature and water relations were also discussed.

There being no other matters, the meeting closed at 9.40 p.m.

Recorder: J. Franklin
8/10/04

Annexe A

UK Controlled Environment Users' Group
REVISED Accounts for the financial year 5th September 2002 to
4th September 2003

*Barclays account, Watton, Norfolk (10899011)***INCOME**

Balance b/f	£10,613.35	
2002 meeting (Syngenta)	£2,593.98	
Mailing Sponsorship (Unigro)	£140.00	
Bank interest	£9.86	
		£13,357.29

EXPENDITURE

2002 speaker expenses	£272.80	
2002 speaker costs	£64.00	
		£336.80

Balance at 31st July 2003 is £13,020.49

P. Gill & G.Pitkin
7th September 2004

Annexe B

UK Controlled Environment Users' Group
Accounts for the financial year 5th September 2003 to 31st July 2004

Barclays account, Watton, Norfolk (10899011)*Closed 14th June 2004***INCOME**

Balance b/f	£13,020.49	£13,020.49
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EXPENDITURE

Postage, stationery, printing (Leeds University)	£220.38	
Transfer to Royal Bank of Scotland account	£12,800.11	
		£13,020.49

Balance at 15th June 2004 is £0.00***Royal Bank of Scotland account, Dundee (10081698)****Opened 21st November 2003***INCOME**

Balance b/f	£0.00	
Transfer from Barclays bank	£12,800.11	
New Phytologist Trust grant	£2,500.00	
2003 conference surplus (Lancaster University)	£951.76	
Mailing sponsorship	£280.00	
Bank interest	£4.75	
		£16,536.62

EXPENDITURE

Australian travel bursaries (9)	£6,750.00	
Convenor's Australian Bursary	£962.56	
Secretary's expenses (2005 conference)	£44.40	
Executive Committee meeting expenses	£565.74	
Printing pamphlets	£340.57	
Postage, stationery, printing (Leeds University)	£220.38	
Secretary & Treasurer (Stationery)	£8.98	
		£9,015.07

Balance at 15th June 2004 is £7,521.55

P. Gill & G.Pitkin
 31st August 2004