

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025 Minutes

Tuesday 18th September

12.45 – 13.15 pm,

Cloth Hall Court, Leeds

Attendees 65 in person, 4 online



Registered Charity Number 1179467

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND MINUTES APPROVAL

BSG Executive Committee Chair Annie Ockelford (Annie) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Richard Boothroyd (Executive Committee Treasurer)

The 2024 AGM minutes ([Paper 2](#)) were approved by Chris Hackney.

2. APPOINTMENTS

Appointments (no elections necessary this year)

- i. Standing for Junior Vice Chair (2025-2026):
 - *Dr Robert Bryant (Reader in Earth Observations - University of Sheffield)*
 - *Nominated: David Thomas, Seconded: Stephen Tooth*
- ii. Standing for Vice Chair of Education and Outreach Sub-Committee (2025-2028)
 - *Dr Kathryn Adamson (Senior Lecturer in Physical Geography - Manchester Metropolitan University)*
 - *Nominated: Emma Shuttlesworth, Seconded: Chris Hackney*
- iii. Standing for Vice Chair of Professional Geomorphology Sub-Committee (2025-2028)
 - *Matthew Hemsworth (Deputy Head of Environment and Sustainability/ Geomorphology Technical Director - JBA Consulting)*
 - *Nominated: Stephen Rice, Seconded: Matilda Biddulph*
- iv. Standing for Secretary, Communications and Publication Sub-Committee (2025-2028)
 - *Dr Robert Houseago (Vice-Chancellor Independent Research Fellow, Loughborough University)*
 - *Nominated: Josh Ahmed, Seconded: Catherine Sanders*

3. CHAIR'S UPDATE

Annie introduced the Society's Strategy Implementation Plan which aims to clarify the Society's purpose and activities and will be available on the website for members to review in due course. Annie explained how the strategy implementation plan was developed, including the use of baseline and stretch targets, all aimed at strengthening connections between other relevant organisations and promoting geomorphology beyond the immediate community. The plan has been ratified by the Executive Committee, but Annie said the committee would welcome further engagement and feedback from the wider membership. She is happy to discuss the strategy with anyone interested in contributing.

Highlights from the Year:

- A wide range of events were delivered, including webinars from both professionals and postgraduates' sub-committees.
- A BSG-led session at the RGS conference, organised by Hywel Griffiths and Catherine Souch, which was well received.
- Grant funding was allocated to support the delivery of lots of exciting new research projects.
- The Society responded to a government consultation, advocating for the inclusion of geomorphology in curriculum assessments in England.
- The Fi Rhodes Fellowship Scheme will continue for another three years. Annie the valuable and success of this initiative.
- Improvements in fellowship engagement.
- The Society was successfully in receiving a NERC EDI grant in collaboration with the RGS, further strengthening our links with them. A key focus will be improving mobility between academia and the professional sector, addressing barriers through initiatives such as ECR workshops (running until March). There is potential to bid for a larger grant in January, though this will require broader collaboration beyond geomorphology.
- The Lynne Frostick Award was introduced to recognise outstanding outreach and efforts to promote geomorphology beyond academia. Lynne was unanimously as the namesake for the award due to her exceptional contributions to the field and her support for early-career professionals. She will present the award next year. Nominations are now open, and the award will include a medal lecture.
- Annie emphasised the diversity of activities the Society is involved in.
- Annie encouraged members to complete the current survey to help shape future activities.

The current risks to the BSG were outlined and included resolving issues with the back office working of the website, pausing of investments due to market volatility and changes within the academic sector due to funding. These risks are being monitored and are not currently considered major concerns.

Annie thanked Stuart Grieves for his work on resolving website issues.

4. PRESIDENT UPDATE

Stephen Rice provided an update on his work to date with the fellowship of the society which included:

- Establishment of Fellow Working Group to explore key themes and identify how Fellows can best support the Society. Key focus areas were:
 - Strengthening professional networks
 - Enhancing communication around geomorphology (including who we want to engage with, how best to do this and role the fellowship can play in supporting these effort).
 - Developing realistic and achievable engagement strategies
- Creation of Meet the Fellows event at Annual Conference which was well received and will continue at the University of Lincoln.
- A mentoring scheme has also been discussed, though it requires further development.
- Diversity within the Fellowship remains a concern, as it does not currently reflect the wider geomorphology community. This is recognised as a short- to medium-term issue. This could potentially be address by the creation of mid-career fellowship opportunities, for example for former winners of the Gordon Warwick Award.
- The editing the fellowship criteria currently under review.
- Fellowship nominations are now open, and Stephen encouraged members to nominate individuals who are making valuable contributions to the discipline.

Stephen thanked the fellows who have responded to his requests this year and stated that going forward it is important that the fellows who are willing and able to contribute understand how they can be most helpful to the Society.

5. FINANCE UPDATE

Annie provided the update on the society financial situation in Richard Boothroyd's absence ([Paper 4](#)). Highlights:

- Society is above target reserve levels.
- Membership income is similar to previous years.
- Plan to increase investments has been paused until markets stabilise.

6. MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Josh Ahmed provided an update on BSG's membership. Full details are in [Paper 5](#). Highlights:

- Membership stable – 415 members which is 38 members down on last year, due to memberships lapses and people not being aware of this. Best way to check if you are member is to check your bank statements.
- Steps are being made to try and increase teacher membership
- Sliding scale membership has increased membership numbers. Eligibility is checked.

Brian Whalley commented that 9 years ago we had 781 members and then it dropped to 589 members and now it has dropped again and suggested that maybe we need to go back to a scheme where all physical geographers need to be a member of the society. Brian also suggested that teachers should be given a reduced rate as they need more support and that the BSG next year should make a big effort to engage with this sector more.

Annie agreed that we need to engage more the teaching sector and work to increase membership, but we also need to be aware of the increased financial pressure that many people are under. Current feedback from teachers on membership is that they feel it is a fair price.

Paul Carling raised concerns about falling membership numbers and asked if he had figures on the number of overseas members. Josh confirmed that he could get this figure. Paul suggested the Society tries to encourage more non-British people to join and suggested that being called the BRITISH Society for Geomorphology is maybe a barrier. Suggested having more of a presence as conference like AGU or 5-year memberships rather than 1-year memberships. Increasing overseas membership could offset the falling UK numbers. Paul encourages the executive committee to look into this more.

Chris Hackney and Stephen Rice to take this suggestion forward.

David Thomas comments that 400 members seemed like a realist number for the current climate, as there are less people employed as geomorphologist and now people call themselves other things so often join different and newer emerging societies.

Stephen Tooth suggested that people could publish more articles in media that teachers would engage with like the geographical magazine. This provides a means of introducing the term geomorphology and you can get £200 an article so also provides an income.

Catherine Sanders echo David Thomas's comments on membership numbers and diversity the committee activities to engage with different sectors. Thanks to committee and for putting on such a wide variety of the activities.

Lisa Moj – a high number of teachers join the South West Geography Society so going to their conference could be a good way to engage with the sector.

Annie asked for everyone to please contact the executive committee if you have ideas of networks we can engage with to increase membership.

7. COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS UPDATE

Stuart Grieve provided an update on the BSG's communications and publications activities. Full details are in [Paper 6](#). Highlights:

- Stuart thanks the Publications Sub-Committee for all their hard work this year.
- The BSG LinkedIn page is now active, and Stuart encouraged members follow and engage with the page to help expand the Society's reach.
- The BSG is also active on BlueSky, Facebook, and Instagram.
- Members are encouraged to use hashtags to share their ESPL publications and activities.

- If you haven't received BSG emails in recent years, please contact Stuart and check that your email address is correctly listed in your account.
- There are ongoing issues with the website backend, which the team is working to resolve.
- Stuart thanked Wiley for their continued support and celebration of BSG publications.

Annie said a special thanks to Stuart for his extensive contributions to the committee and the Society to date and highlighted that his work has been invaluable.

8. RESEARCH SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATE (PAPER 7)

Emma Shuttleworth provided an update on the BSG's awards and research grant activities. Full details are in [Paper 7](#). Highlights:

- Reported total value of the grant funding for 2024/2025 and the number of applications supported (see Paper).
- The 2024 Linton Award winner, Sanjeev Gupta, kindly donated their award money to the RSC to support ECRs – this was used to support an extra PGR conference attendance (awarded to the highest ranked application). Emma thanked Sanjeev Gupta for this donation.
- The deadline for the next round of grant applications is 30th September 2025.
- The committee is seeking a new grant reviewer—please contact Emma if you are interested, especially if your background is in glacial or quaternary geomorphology.
- Nominations for next year's awards are now open. Please nominate individuals who are doing outstanding work in the field.
- There has been a change in personnel on the committee (see Paper for details).

9. OUTREACH SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATE (Paper 8)

Hywel Griffiths provided an update on the BSG's outreach activities. Full details in [Paper 8](#). Highlights:

- Marjorie Sweeting Award – the prize for the runner-up with now include conference attendance to encourage further with BSG and the annual conference.
- Resources including video produced from this year's outreach grants have been well received with viewing numbers ranging from several hundred to over 20,000 views for some of the field-based films.
- Good engagement with activities created for International Geomorphology week.
- Continue to sponsor the photo competition at the GA physical geography conference and support for Time for Geography.
- RGS representatives on the committee has left and is being covered by Simon Pinfield and Catherine Souch until a replacement is found. Thank you to Simon and Catherine for stepping in and support the committee.
- The subcommittee is looking for new Education Officer so please get in touch if interested. Thank you to Sam Humble for service in this role over the last 2 years.

- Windsor Workshop was successful held again last year. A big thank you to Lucy Clark for organising this.

Annie thanked Hywell for all this work with the Outreach Committee over the last four years.

10. PROFESSIONAL SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATE (Paper 10)

Matilda (Mattie) Biddulph provided an update on the BSG's outreach activities. Full details in [Paper 10](#). Highlights:

- Webinar series continues to be popular and getting good engagement with between 50 to 80 people attending.
- Workshop at this year's BSG conference was well received.
- Focus for 2026 is organising another CPD event and projects that working in the applied geomorphology sector and promoting the work of geomorphologists in this sector.
- Mattie wishes Matt Hemsworth and the committee the best of luck doing forward.

Annie said a huge thank you to Mattie for 5 years of service to the committee and acknowledged the committee has gone from strength to strength under her leadership.

11. Postgraduate Forum Update ([Paper 11](#))

A slide from Jayesh Mukherjee was presented. Full details in Paper 11. Highlights

- Thank you for Lucy Clark for organising a fantastic Windsor Workshop
- Created PGR webinar series which focuses on methodology approaches in geomorphology

12. EDI UPDATE (VERBAL)

Ian Candy provided an update on BSG's EDI activities:

- Committee meets twice a year and discussed EDI activities and feeds back
- Ian provided a summary of the results of last year's Membership Survey.
- Ian encouraged people to complete this year's Membership Survey.

13. OUTGOING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Annie thanked Dr Matilda Biddulph Vice-Chair, Professional Geomorphology Sub-Committee), Dr Hywel Griffiths (Vice-Chair, Education and Outreach Sub-Committee), and Dr Lizzie Dingle (Secretary, Communications and Publication Sub-Committee) for their commitment and work for the Society while in post.

14. WELCOME FROM NEW CHAIR

Chris Hackney (Chris) thanked Annie for her role as Chair and for her excellent leadership, particularly in drafting and implementing the strategy.

Chris expressed gratitude to all committee and co-opted members for their hard work to date and welcomed the newly appointed individuals.

Looking ahead, Chris noted that this would be a significant year for BSG as we open contract discussions with Wiley and look to start the next 50 years off on a strong footing. He acknowledged the changing landscape in universities and the growing demand for geomorphologists in industry and the need to encourage greater engagement from the applied sector to ensure that geography and geomorphology are more widely recognised and heard.

Chris invited members to reach out with ideas and suggestions and concluded by saying he was honoured to take on the role as BSG Chair.

AOB

None