

REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE YEAR

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2019

1 COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND ACTIVITIES

In June 2019, at the AGM, Kelvin Higgins became Chairman of the Association after Martin Preene completed his term of office. At the same time Professor David Toll, an elected member of the Executive Committee, took up the role of Vice Chairman. Martin remains a member of the Committee as the Honorary Communications Officer. I would like to thank Martin for all his hard work and leadership as Chairman particularly for developing the website, making it functional and informative. Martin's enthusiasm as Chairman was infectious and he led the Committee by example with great attention to detail. Thank you, Martin.

Nick Armstrong and Yvonne Ainsworth continued in their roles of Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, respectively. Fleur Loveridge gave up her role as Honorary Publicity Officer to the BGA. We would like to thank her for all her hard work over many years. We changed the name of this role to Honorary Communications Officer. Martin Preene now fulfils this role. These roles are key to the continuity and smooth running of the BGA and importantly provide continuity as Chairmen serve for just two years.

For the Executive Committee, the terms of office for the following elected members came to an end: Patrick Cox, Ray Hobbs and Sergio Solera. They were all very active supporters of the BGA, and we would like to thank them for their service.

Rob Talby continued as a co-opted member of the Committee with the task of organising the Annual Conference which was a celebration of the BGA's 70th year. Sergio was co-opted onto the Committee to organise the Cooling Prize and to lead discussions on how the competition might be reorganised to attract a broader range of entries.

James Lawrence continued as a co-opted member of the committee with responsibility for organising the Rankine lecture and associated events. Susan Pollard took on responsibility for young geotechnical engineer's events and Vincent Nyambayo has acted as a member of Ground Engineering's editorial panel. Matthew Coop co-ordinated judging for prizes and awards and Peter Reading continued his work on developing programmes for technicians or, as they have now become known, technologists. Hugo Wood took responsibility for organising the evening meetings and Francesca Waldron and Tony Bowerman represented the Early Career Group (ECG). The BGA have a representative who is responsible for liaison with the BSI. Graham Taylor continues to act in this role.

2 MEETINGS

The BGA, and the ECG, hosted a total of 21 events during 2019. These were as follows:

- The 59th Rankine Lecture, entitled "Benefits of Unconventional Seismic Design", was given by Professor George Gazetas of the National Technical University in Athens. This was preceded by the half day seminar at Imperial College on the theme of Engineering Resilient Infrastructure.
- The Touring Lecture was given in Glasgow, Leeds and Manchester by Lisa Coyne (Practical implications of subsurface uncertainty: lessons from 25 years of "dirt engineering"). The host bodies were the Scottish Geotechnical Group, the Yorkshire Geotechnical Group and the Northern Geotechnical Group.
- The Cooling Prize competition. This was the 50th competition which was held at OGGs. It was the last time that Christine Cooling (daughter of Dr Leonard Cooling) will be present at the event.
- The ECG organised 4 talks one of which was to do with preparing for the ICE's professional reviews, one was to do with Drift Filled Hollows, one covered the use of Finite Element Analysis and one was to do with Sustainability in Geotechnics.
- David Hartwell, who was awarded the Skempton Medal in 2018, gave a lecture entitled "Water and Tunnelling – Lessons from 40 years of interesting problems".

2 MEETINGS (continued)

- There was one meeting jointly held with the EGGS (Innovative Geotechnical Slope Repair Techniques) and one joint meeting with the IGS (A new climate for geo-composite design). There were another 4 evening talks, one related to monitoring (Monitoring to Answer the Requirements of SPERWall), one to do with ground anchors (Ground Anchors: An overview of grouted anchor technology with particular reference to UK practice), one related to earthworks (BS EN 16907 – Europe’s first earthworks standard: enabling a common approach to the future) and one talk on offshore engineering (Geotechnical observations from suction buckets supporting offshore wind turbines).
- The day long BGA Annual Conference celebrated the 70 years of the BGA with talks looking back at the history of geotechnical engineering in the UK and talks looking forward to the future.
- The John Mitchell Lecture given by Clif Kettle entitled “Ground treatment: 40 years from black art to fully engineered solution”.
- The 2019 Fleming Award. A Keynote Lecture was given by Rachel Monteith entitled "Viable sustainability".
- The Géotechnique Lecture was given by Professor David White of Southampton University. His talk was entitled “Designing infrastructure for an evolving seabed”.

3 PRIZES

The following awards and nominations were made during 2019:

- The BGA Medal: De Bono, J.P. & McDowell, G.R. “Micro mechanics of drained and undrained shearing of compacted and overconsolidated crushable sand” Géotechnique.
- The 50th Cooling Prize: Dr Harry Postill.
- The Fleming Award: A team from TfL, Arup, the Worshipful Company of Grocers, Dragados UK and Dr Sauer & Partners won the award for the project “Tunnelling through under ream piles for Bank Underground Station upgrade”.
- MSc dissertation Prize: Isabel von Celsing (Oxford University) “Offshore Wind Turbine Foundation Design Using 3D Finite Element Limit Analysis”.
- The John Mitchell Award: Stuart Marchand (Wentworth House Partnership).

4 BGA HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

2019 was the 70th year of the BGA and its predecessor the British Geotechnical Society. It was also the 50th Cooling Prize. Both are notable landmarks in the development of geotechnical engineering in the UK. The BGA’s anniversary was celebrated at the Annual Conference. For the Cooling Prize all the previous winners were invited to attend and more than half of them did. A keynote lecture was given by the first winner, Howard Roscoe.

The Annual Conference was once again very successful and there was very positive feedback. We had talks which covered the history of geotechnical engineering in the UK, in particular the early research at BRE, but the majority of speakers focussed on the future. There were talks on innovation in the future and digital ground modelling. We also heard from speakers who described the basis of modern earthworks practice, developments in piling, future trends in numerical analysis and recent advances in the construction of deep excavations. I would like to thank the speakers, sponsors and exhibitors who all contributed to this event and made it the success that it was.

The 17th European Conference on Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering was held in Reykjavik during September. There was a strong representation from the UK at the event.

Planning for Piling 2020 continued, and we received around 150 abstracts which were reviewed by the organising committee.

During 2019 we started to address the issue of geotechnical technicians and technologists by exploring how we could create a community that would provide talks aimed at their particular interests. Following talks with employers it was apparent that there was a great deal of enthusiasm and a committee has been formed under the chairmanship of Peter Reading, to develop this further. We await developments.

4 BGA HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR (continued)

The ECG continues to organise talks and social events and there has been talk of establishing a group in the South West, based in Bristol. We continue to want to support this group and welcome their views on how the BGA should remain relevant to its members.

At the start of 2019 we had around 1,345 individual members and 36 corporate members. Our membership has remained relatively static. In the coming year we want to see how we can reach individuals who have an interest in geotechnical engineering and entice them to become involved in the community by joining the BGA.

Kelvin Higgins