

Minutes of IfA GeoSIG committee meeting

20th July 2012

Present: Peter Barker (PB), Paul Baggaley (PAB), Chris Leech (CL), Amanda Foster (AF), Paul Linford (PL)

1. **Apologies:** George Tuckwell, Jimmy Adcock, Chris Gaffney, Tim Howard, Alastair Ruffell
2. The minutes of the last executive committee meeting were accepted.
3. **Matters arising** – none.
4. **IfA housekeeping for SIG** – AF is now responsible for managing the SIG for the IfA as Kathryn W has recently left the IfA. AF will soon be assisted by two new members of staff at the IfA who will be working as Member Services Co-ordinators – Leanne Birney and Camilla Massara.
5. **Feedback from IfA conference** – Feedback from the conference was all very positive. The committee would like to express its thanks to all of the presenters and especially to Jimmy Adcock for organising the event and chairing the session.

JA emailed the following summary “Really enjoyed the conference session that we laid on and was very impressed with the content supplied by Neil & Paul Linford, Ken Hamilton, Claire Graham and Ben Urmston; there were consistent themes running through all the talks and it stimulated some interesting questions/discussion at the end. If we could officially minute thanks for their contribution I'd appreciate that. On the day, a number of people came up and said that they found it very useful and thought that we got a good balance of taking it right back to basics and then building up the levels of information through the afternoon; I hope these views were reflected by the wider audience... By a show of hands there was a mix of 'digging' archaeologists, curators and academic types as well as a couple of people involved with geophysics - though it wasn't really aimed at them! One contact was Paul Logue of NIEA, who was keen to liaise with GeoSIG regarding specifications for arch geophysics in Northern Ireland. At present, I believe I'm right in saying, they have adopted specs from Eire but are unsure as to the suitability of what they have. He implied that there may be some 'political' issues with just directing people to EH guidelines, however if they did this as a result of official recommendation by IfA it would make this easier. I saw him again recently whilst on survey in NI and he thinks that there is certainly scope for a similar session to the ALGAO: Scotland and IfA conference workshops over there. I have said that I will contact him directly to discuss this.”

Following on from the success of the geophysics workshop this year the committee discussed organising another session for next year's conference, which is expected to be held in Birmingham. AF suggested that this was a good idea and that although the theme for next year's conference had yet to be decided there may be some benefit in trying to organise a session which would be of interest to one of the other SIG's or maybe hold a joint session.

Possible themes:

- Marine and coastal geophysics – link to MAG;
- Large area surveys/landscape investigation;
- Large data sets / data archiving – Possible links to archiving SIG and Information Management SIG .

Call for Sessions due in September.

6 & 8. Feedback on CAA 2012 and Data Archiving –

9. Standardisation of Reporting – PB raised the issue that not all archaeological geophysical contractors are interpreting the data to the same level of detail and that some contractors do not add an archaeological interpretation at all, but effectively provide highlights of main features from the greyscale as positive or negative anomalies. Difficult for the industry to impose a minimum standard but everyone agreed that the GeoSIG could be used to help set a standard so that clients/curators know what they should be reasonably able to expect.

10. IfA Guidance – IfA technical paper no.6 has fallen out of common reference despite being one of the three main guidance documents for archaeological geophysics (along with the EH guidance and IfA standards). Re-writing/updating this technical paper can be linked to the above and is an opportunity for the GeoSIG to make progress in setting standards. PB to discuss with JA and John Gater.

PAB added that there is no equivalent IfA technical paper for marine archaeological geophysics but that there is a need for such a document. PAB to approach other marine geophysics contractors to discuss writing a technical paper for the IfA.

11. Marine Geophysics update – PAB asked PL if there is a due date for the publication of the EH guidelines for Marine Geophysics as PAB has seen it already referenced in response to a scoping study. PL said that publication is due before the end of this year and would check progress of this document.

12 Forensic geophysics update – PB is on the expert panel for the Forensic SIG and there is an acknowledgment from both SIG's that there should be some level of co-operation, most likely in the form of a joint meeting.

13. AGM 2012 – Date for next AGM is 16th Nov, to be held at RSK Stats offices in Hemel Hempstead. PB will stand down as Chair of GeoSIG at this meeting and a new Chair will need to be selected. PAB and CL will stay on as Secretary and Treasurer.

14. AOB – Note from JA

“At the last EuroGPR meeting I brought up the concern that Peter mentioned regarding interpretation of GPR data from radargrams vs timeslices and the potential issues of dealing with large multi-channel high density datasets. EuroGPR is due to draw up its own guidance note on the use of GPR for Archaeology and would be happy to do this jointly with IfA GeoSIG. This document could be on both group's websites and would address such issues. I am liaising with Erica Utsi with regard this.”