

CONSULTANCY GROUP

Report of the Committee for 2012/2013

The RSC Consultancy Group has been in operation for over two decades, since its establishment as the Chemical Consultancy Forum in 1990, as a professional group open to all members of the Society upon application and payment of an annual subscription. It became the Consultancy Group in 2005. The objectives of the Group include promoting and representing the field of chemical consultancy as well as providing CPD and networking opportunities through meetings, and other means. Networking is especially important to consultants and the introduction of MyRSC offers effective networking opportunities. The Group Committee uses it for sharing information and also works towards encouraging its wider use amongst Group members.

In May 2012 the Consultancy Group AGM took place during an ordinary meeting of the Forum on the topic of 'Networking'. This meeting involved attendees in a 'Speed Networking' session which encouraged contacts between members of the Consultancy Group and gave opportunities for members to identify other consultants with expertise that complements or supplements their own.

Reflecting the other common route to consultancy the RSC offers a Retirement Workshop for members and the Committee understands that the benefits of CG membership are raised whenever participants mention consultancy and they are encouraged to join the Group. Committee members have offered mentoring in the past as appropriate. The Committee is pleased that from 2011 when the revisions to membership subscription arrangements whereby there is no additional charge for group membership has encouraged an increase in members. Certainly the early signs are encouraging with an increase in membership in the current year.

Committee members have participated in the 'Chemcareers' forum organised by the RSC and the Committee have suggested that the Consultancy Group build on the 'Chemcareers' initiative with a retirement workshop. It would be timely in view of the predictions about changes in the job markets following the economic constraints.

There is much common ground between the Consultancy Group and the Law Group and the Consultancy Group Committee believes that reciprocal membership would be of mutual benefit. Details of Law Group events are sent to Consultancy Group members by email and Law Group meetings are also included in email alerts to members. While there is no formal liaison these links should be of interest to CG members. The Committee is grateful to the members of the Law Group who have given presentations of topics of direct interest to CG members in recent CG meetings arranged around the annual AGM.

The Committee has regularly pointed out to members the benefits of membership of the Consultancy Group and of inclusion in the Directory of Consulting Practices (DCP). The Committee regrets that many members of the CG are not listed in it despite the benefit of free listing through membership of the CG, but they also recognise that quantified benefits of inclusion in the DCP are not evident. Further details may be found at http://www.rsc.org/chemsoc/dcp/dcp_index.htm.

The committee lost two stalwarts to retirement in recent years, Rod Barratt who held the position of Hon. Secretary for 20 years and Tim Cox who had been a committee member for 20 years with 15 years as Hon. Treasurer. Stephen Bounds was voted in as Hon. Treasurer at the 2012 AGM and Lorna Wren has acted as Hon. Secretary during the year and will stand for the position at the 2013 AGM. Colin Hewlett announced his retirement as Hon. Chairman earlier in the year but we are fortunate that Bill Edwards stepped in to carry out the Chairman's role for the remainder of the year and has agreed to stand for the position at the 2013 AGM