

# British Society for Research into Learning Mathematics



## **Chair**

Hilary Povey, Sheffield Hallam University

## **Secretary**

Heather Mendick, freelance

## **Treasurer**

Sue Forsythe, University of Leicester

## **Membership**

Rachel Marks, University of Brighton

## **Publications**

Gill Adams, Sheffield Hallam University

Patrick Barmby, University of the Witwatersrand

## **BERA SIG co-ordinator**

Alison Clark-Wilson, Institute of Education

## **Day conference organiser**

Natthapoj Vincent Trakulphadetkrai, University of Reading

<http://www.bsrlm.org.uk>

## **Chair's Report**

**November 2015**

### **BSRLM Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee has met three times during the year, as well as doing a great deal of work by e-mail to ensure the smooth running of the society.

We have experienced some difficulties in the internal organisation and workings of the Committee, mostly around the membership data base. We discussed these matters at length and in more than one Committee meeting. The Chair, supported by current members of the Executive, took extensive remedial action and we believe that most of the problematic issues have now been resolved. The Executive decided, in part as a consequence of these discussions, to commission a new website, reported below.

BSRLM has been extremely fortunate to have Dr Alison Clark-Wilson as BERA-SIG co-ordinator, not least because she has been willing to extend this role to liaison with, for example, the NCETM and the Maths Hubs. The Executive proposes that this role be formalised and the constitution amended accordingly. See agenda item 7.

At the AGM 2013, the question of whether or not the existing Publications Officer role should be split was discussed and this was met with general agreement. The Executive has now operated on this basis for the best part of two years and would like to propose that this arrangement be formally adopted. See agenda item 7.

Assuming that the constitution is amended in 2016 and reflecting current practice, the periods of office (see table below) follow the long standing and sensible agreement to have some stability within the Executive Committee in any given year. It is to be noted that appointments are for 3 years 4 months in order for the retiring officer to work with the new officer during the period January to April.

The following summarises anticipated positions and periods of office:

	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Chair</b>	Hilary Povey	Hilary Povey	<i>New Chair</i>	<i>New Chair</i>
<b>Secretary</b>	Heather Mendick	Heather Mendick	Heather Mendick	<i>New Secretary</i>
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	Rachel Marks	Rachel Marks	Rachel Marks	<i>New Membership Secretary</i>
<b>Treasurer</b>	Sue Forsythe	<i>New Treasurer</i>	<i>New Treasurer</i>	<i>New Treasurer</i>
<b>IP Editor</b>	Gill Adams (co-opted)	Gill Adams	<i>New IP Editor (elected)</i>	<i>New IP Editor</i>
<b>Online Communications Co-ordinator</b>	Patrick Barmby	Patrick Barmby	<i>New Online Communications Co-ordinator</i>	<i>New Online Communications Co-ordinator</i>
<b>BERA-SIG and Outreach Co-ordinator</b>	Alison Clark-Wilson	<i>New BERA-SIG and Outreach Co-ordinator</i>	<i>New BERA-SIG and Outreach Co-ordinator</i>	<i>New BERA-SIG and Outreach Co-ordinator</i>
<b>Day Conference Organiser</b>	Natthapoj Vincent Trakulphadetkrai	Natthapoj Vincent Trakulphadetkrai	Natthapoj Vincent Trakulphadetkrai	<i>New Day Conference Organiser</i>

We are also losing Dr Sue Forsythe as Treasurer. Sue has given absolutely invaluable service to the Society and we are very grateful to her for her unfailing competence and sensible and well-thought through contributions to all our debates. Both Alison and Sue have given unstintingly and generously of their time during their periods of office to the significant benefit of the Society.

### **The new website and electronic media**

The Executive has felt for some time that the commissioning of a new website was overdue. We are very grateful to ATM colleagues who were willing to share their experiences with us. After a great deal of discussion, the Executive decided to go for the relatively simple option of a Word Press site with Officers able to upload material themselves in the future.

There are two key aspects to the design of the new website. First, it has far greater functionality than the existing one. For example, members are able to update their membership details online, to pay online to join/renew their membership and for all this to feed straight into the database; and more of the day conference checking and administration can take place automatically. Second, we decided that it would be appropriate for the website to be more "lively"; to link to our Twitter account (and other social media as appropriate); and to contain, for example, conference announcements and reports of SIG and RME news. We could also, for example, invite people who have papers in RME to write a blog to publicise their paper.

The Society's use of Twitter was discussed at the Open Forum in June 2015. The Executive is continuing to discuss this.

### **Research in Mathematics Education**

The Executive remains extremely grateful to the Journal Editors for developing the journal into one of international standing of which the Society can be proud. The Executive had an extended and productive discussion with the Journal Editors in their May meeting. From the setting up of the new format journal with Taylor and Francis in 2008 until now, much had been learnt and some decisions taken by the then Executive needed to be reviewed. In some cases, the arrangements foreseen by

the then Executive had lapsed. The meeting decided that in some cases these changes should simply be ratified; in some cases the original arrangements needed to be implemented; and in some cases, the membership needed to be consulted about proposed changes.

Although the original arrangements for appointing journal editors had envisaged a complete change of the editorial team every three years, it was agreed that the current practice of a rolling programme of editorial change with editors in place for longer was much better suited to the comparative youth of the journal. It was agreed that the initial period of office should be four years with an expectation of an extension of one or two years.

The restructuring of the Editorial Board was also discussed. It was agreed that the Editorial Board and the International Advisory Board should be amalgamated into a combined Board of about 25 members. Membership will be for three years; such appointments may be renewed for a second term; and the editors may recommend further exceptional extensions if required to maintain the balance of expertise and effectiveness on the board. There would thus be some new appointments to the Editorial Board each year. All members of the existing Boards were contacted terms of office agreed. A call has gone out inviting applications to join the Board.

The Editors raised the issue of the Current Reports section of the journal. Current Reports can have value in drawing attention to the work of early career researchers and they are also intended to be a key link between the journal and the day conferences of the Society. However, it was felt by the Editors and by the Current Reports Editor that, despite strategies put in place by the Current Reports Editor to strengthen it, this section of the journal was still not really fulfilling its aim of effectively supporting early career researchers, an aim which remains central to the Society and its journal. They asked the Executive to consider whether this aim might be better served by an alternative arrangement.

On the basis of this discussion, the Executive propose the following:

*That the Day Conferences move to offering three different types of session rather than the current two (there is anyway some current confusion amongst those submitting about the nature of working groups). These will be*

- *Research papers (RPs) – a research presentation followed by questions from the audience;*
- *Research workshops (RWs) – a format whereby presenters engage their audience in intensive discussion (e.g. a debate about research methodologies) or activity (e.g. interview data analysis verification) on a particular subject or project;*
- *Working groups (WGs) – a continuing longer term subgroup with a topic focussed agenda.*

*(We have experimented with this part of the proposal for the current conference.)*

*Those running a session would be invited to write for the IP as now. In the case of those submitting a paper, more attention than perhaps to date would be focussed on the abstract. The abstracts from the IP papers would then be published in RME.*

If this is agreed, the details of how it is operationalised will be discussed by the current IP and Current Reports Editors.

### **Joint Mathematical Council**

I have attended all three JMC meetings since the last AGM and have been on the Executive Council for much of this time. The main items of direct relevance to members have been ICME13 and BCME9. I am the JMC representative on the ICME13 Bursary Committee; Dr Natthapoj Vincent

Trakulphadetkrai is the BSRLM representative on the BCME9 organising committee; and Dr Alison Clark-Wilson is the BSRLM representative on the BCME9 reference group and on the programme committee. The outline timetable and conference theme for BCME9 should be available by December and suggestions for keynote speakers will be sought in February.

BSRLM will again be responsible for the organisation and refereeing of research papers for BCME9 and the review process is currently being discussed by the Executive.

### **Janet Duffin Award**

The Janet Duffin Award, based for the first time on a vote open to the whole BSRLM membership, was awarded to Dr Rachel Marks from the University of Brighton. We were delighted that we were finally able to make contact again with Janet Duffin's family and were able to invite Janet's daughter, Amanda Hobson, to be our guest at the June conference in Durham when Rachel gave her lecture. The interests and concerns of Rachel and Amanda overlap considerably and Amanda found the lecture surprising, stimulating and relevant. We intend to invite Janet's family to future Janet Duffin lectures.

### **Publicity leaflet**

We have produced a publicity leaflet about the Society. Members having an opportunity to use copies of the leaflets should contact the Executive.

### **Honorary members**

We currently have two living honorary members - Professor Susan Pirie and Professor Jill Adler - both appointed some time ago. In response to an initiative from Professor Tim Rowland and with his help, the Executive proposes to reactivate and formalise this process.

*A BSRLM Honorary Award is proposed in order to recognise, from time to time, BSRLM members who have provided decades of consistent and outstanding service to research in mathematics education in the UK, and also consistent support for BSRLM.*

*Such service might typically include:*

- *Attendance and presentation at BSRLM conferences, with related publications.*
- *Serving on the BSRLM Executive Committee.*
- *Leadership of influential research projects/groups in mathematics education.*
- *Nurturing of early career researchers in mathematics education.*
- *A strong international reputation.*
- *Influence on UK policy and/or practice in mathematics education.*

*The Award will be made from time to time following a decision of the BSRLM Executive Committee. The Award will normally be presented to the recipient at the November Day Conference.*

The BSRLM Honorary Award does not affect membership status.

Hilary Povey

November 2015