

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2006

The AGM of the Society will be held on **Thursday 30 March 2006 during the Annual Conference** (4.10pm–5.10pm) in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Cardiff.

The Open Meeting will commence immediately after the AGM. (Please see special notes below.)

Professor Ann Colley, Honorary General Secretary

OPEN MEETING and COMMUNICATING WITH YOU – THE MEMBERS

Members are actively encouraged to attend the Open Meeting. This year it will be held on Thursday 30 March 2006 immediately following the AGM (see above).

The Open Meeting is one of the opportunities for members to ask questions, raise issues and stimulate topics for discussion with and for consideration by the Trustees.

Informal notes of last year's meeting are available from the Chief Executive's office.

In order for the meeting to be structured, all questions must be submitted in advance. The deadline for questions to be received is 3pm Wednesday 29 March 2006. Please send your questions to me by e-mail: aoc@leicester.ac.uk, or in writing, or by completing slips provided around the Annual Conference venue. I look forward to hearing from you and seeing you at the meeting.

Professor Ann Colley, Honorary General Secretary

VACATION SCHOLARSHIP AWARD 2006

The Standing Advisory Committee on the Welfare of Animals in Psychology invites proposals for psychology projects to enhance animal welfare

The Research Board's Standing Advisory Committee on the Welfare of Animals in Psychology was established in October 1979. A primary responsibility of the Committee is to advance the welfare of animals in psychology. In furtherance of this aim, the Committee established a Vacation Scholarship Award.

The winner will receive £125 subsistence and £20 department expenses per week for up to a maximum of eight weeks (£1160). He or she may be requested to give a poster presentation at the Society's Annual Conference at the discretion of the Standing Conference Committee.

See the December 2005 issue of *The Psychologist* (p.752) for full details.

Applications should be sent for the attention of the Chair of the Committee, c/o Lisa Morrison Coulthard at the Society's Leicester office, by 31 March 2006.

AWARD FOR PROMOTING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY 2006

Call for nominations

Do you know a member of the Society who has made a significant contribution to challenging social inequalities in the UK in relation to gender, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, disability or age?

Someone who has made

- a personal commitment to equality issues
- an impact on the psychology profession
- an impact on other professionals/service providers
- a positive difference to the lives of people from marginalised and oppressed social groups?

If so, could they be the next winner?

Contact the Secretary to the Standing Committee for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities (SCPEO) for further details about the award and how to nominate someone (felhec@bps.org.uk or tel 0116 252 9507).

Closing date for receipt of nominations is **31 July 2006**.



Graham Powell

Contact Graham Powell via the Society's Leicester office, or e-mail: president@bps.org.uk.

As we approach the Annual General Meeting and a change of President, I want first and foremost to wish Ray Miller the very best for the year ahead. It is a pleasure for me to look back over a pretty dynamic year for the Society. We have faced significant challenges but remain focused on positive, proactive growth, and a lot has taken place to move the Society forward to meet the demands of its charter and the membership.

The Strategic Plan has been very useful in providing a sense of direction and a reminder of priorities. For example, the Trustees have addressed the issue of the governance/management interface by emphasising their own policy-making and strategic functions and by focusing less on operational matters. Transparency in the way the Society operates has continued to improve, consolidating the move to having the Senior Management Team at Trustees' meetings. The Trustees and SMT have been better able to act in unison, promptly and effectively, for example in property matters and in response to new initiatives. There have been meetings reviewing progress on other elements of the Strategic Plan. For example, attention to risk management now properly underpins developments, and the Trustees and Representative Council have set up a formal review of the balance between the autonomy of subsystems and their corporate responsibility to the Society, a review that will be informed by the planned reorganisation of the Clinical Division.

As for membership services, not all members of the Society have a regional Branch, so it is gratifying to see the extension of our geographical coverage. A London and Home Counties Branch has been approved; the Wessex and Wight Branch may well extend its boundaries; and a new Eastern Branch is under consideration. A new Policy Support Unit helps influence national policies that relate directly to the work of our members. The Annual Conference is a crisper, more intense event, in response to member needs. The new continuing professional development system is in place and online, essential for the individual practitioner as we move to statutory regulation. The Student Members Group website and office support for the group is significantly improved so as to attract and retain younger members. The Trustees have agreed to apply to become a Licensed Member Body of the Science Council so that we can confer the title 'Chartered Scientist'. We are also selecting and appointing new Trustees for the BPS Welfare Fund, set up to provide assistance to members in difficult circumstances.

As ever, members' needs and expectations for

services increase at a pace likely to outstrip resources. The management team's latest business plan – the first since Tim Cornford's welcome arrival as our new chief executive – concerns the development of new income streams and improved budgetary and expenditure control as the fundamental basis for sustaining growth.

One major move in membership services has been to provide for the first time the Society's own conference facility. In October 2005 we purchased 30 Tabernacle Street – twice the square footage of John Street and disability-compliant. Its refurbishment to a high standard is well under way, with a conference centre and rooms able to accommodate our Representative Council meetings, all designed to meet our needs for years to come. Our sale of John Street has been timely, on a rising market, providing a good financial return on our investment.

As this column over the year has described, the Society has had significant input into the passage of the Mental Capacity Act and into the ongoing passage of the Mental Health Bill. The new Policy Support Unit coordinates many responses to consultations, from emergency planning to child workforce strategy to reform of the Research Assessment Exercise. A new Public Relations Unit helps the Society engage more effectively with its audiences and stakeholders. We have set up a Science Strategy Forum to defend psychology as a science and help it retain its place as the second most popular degree subject behind law. Regional offices continue to have an input to government in the devolved nations, and we continue to fund a secondment to the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology.

And I can't finish this column without further reference to statutory regulation. The Society is united in its request to government that a new regulatory body be created and is confident in this view. In last month's *Psychologist* there was a thoughtful letter expressing concern that ultimately we will simply go along passively with whatever the government suggests. We just will not do this. We have a track record now of standing up for our views, and we will continue to do so if the government's next proposal continues to fail to regulate all psychologists who need regulating, fails to protect standards, and fails to recognise and meet the needs of academic and research psychology.

I am looking forward enormously to next year – my year as Vice President. The closer I have been involved with the Society the greater has been my respect for its mission, its members and its staff.

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