SGR staff and National Co-ordinating Committee

STAFF

Executive Director
Dr Stuart Parkinson

Principal Researcher
Dr Chris Langley¹

Office Manager
Kate Maloney

Membership Development Officer
Jane Wilson²

NATIONAL CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE (NCC)

Chair
Dr Philip Webber

Vice Chair
Kate Macintosh MBE Dip Arch

Treasurer
Dr Patrick Nicholson

Secretary
Dr Harry Tsoumpas

Committee Members
Martin Bassant³
Alasdair Beal CEng
Prof Roy Butterfield CEng
Hilary Chivall⁴
Dr Tim Foxon
Dr David Hookes
Patricia Hughes
Rachel Marshall
Martin Quick CEng⁴
Sean Rose⁴

¹ retired August 2009
² resigned November 2009
³ elected October 2009
⁴ stepped down October 2009

Some of the NCC and staff (from left to right): David Hookes, Philip Webber, Alasdair Beal, Tim Foxon, Roy Butterfield, Stuart Parkinson, Patrick Nicholson, Harry Tsoumpas, Kate Macintosh.
Introduction

The year March 2009 – February 2010 was marked by key successes, but our resources were again under strain. We published an impressive book-length report on the problems related to corporate science and technology, received high-profile media coverage, and recorded our busiest month ever on the web. Our membership also grew to its highest level in SGR’s history. However, financial pressures were significant, and we had to say goodbye to two valued staff members due to retirement and ill-health.

The very wide range of SGR’s activities described in more detail in this review indicates how relevant we remain and, despite the financial and personnel constraints, how our influence actually increased and our profile strengthened over this year. This is because SGR has built a reputation as a very good source of important ideas and accurate information, and has the ability to present often complex topics in an understandable way. We have a good basis to build upon, and our priorities must continue to be securing trust funding for influential project work and recruiting additional members to further improve our core funding.

Dr Philip Webber, Chair
Dr Stuart Parkinson, Executive Director

Many of the publications, presentations and other material mentioned in this report are available to download from SGR’s website: http://www.sgr.org.uk/

Projects

CORPORATE INFLUENCE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. We published a new 80-page report, Science and the Corporate Agenda (SATCA), in October 2009 – written by Chris Langley and Stuart Parkinson. This outlined the detrimental effects caused by an over-emphasis on short-term economic goals within science and technology. It examined the problems in five sectors – pharmaceuticals, tobacco, military/defence, oil and gas, and biotechnology – and also made recommendations for reform in the UK. Media coverage was very positive with numerous articles in the national, technical and green press (see p.3). Approximately 900 copies of the report were disseminated in the following five months to policy-makers, academics and campaigners.

MILITARY INFLUENCE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. A chapter of the SATCA report (see above) included an update on developments in the militarisation of science. We also gave several presentations on this issue (see p.2). Furthermore, about 2,500 copies of our three previous reports in this area were disseminated during the year to a range of audiences. We also provided information and support to an SGR member conscientiously objecting to taking part in military-related science projects at their place of work.

ETHICAL CAREERS IN SCIENCE, DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY. External interest in our work in this area continued to be high, despite only minimal resources being available. Our ethical careers material was given out at seven events at universities across the UK during the year. In total, we distributed nearly 3,500 copies of our ten publications in this area – mainly downloads from our website.
Events

SGR CONFERENCE. This year’s event was entitled Building a Low Carbon Economy: the Pathway from Recession. The event included three keynote speakers – Tim Foxon (Leeds University) critically examining the UK’s low carbon strategy; David Webb (Leeds Metropolitan University) on arms conversion for a low carbon economy; and Gareth Dale (Brunel University) on creating one million climate jobs. The conference also included a poster session with eight contributions from members and non-members, covering issues such as biofuels, zero carbon building and an economic system using income limits. SGR’s Annual General Meeting took place during the day, with reports and discussions on the organisation’s activities. About 70 people attended, and feedback was very positive.

INVITED LECTURES. 11 invited lectures were given by senior SGR staff and members during the year. Most notable was a keynote lecture at the annual conference of the German Institute of Physics, held at Hamburg University in March 2009. Other events included: an academic conference, Power and the Academy, in Manchester; two workshops at a conference organised by the Student Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament; a national climate campaigners’ conference in London; a lecture for over 100 sixth-formers in Bath; a city planners’ seminar in Winchester; and events at Birmingham, Cambridge, Kingston, and Strathclyde universities. The most popular themes for the lectures were militarisation of science, climate change, and ethical careers. Our main speakers were executive director, Stuart Parkinson, and our principal researcher, Chris Langley.

Advocacy and campaigning

We continued to be active across our main issues (see Box below) during the year. For example, we wrote letters or co-signed statements to policymakers arguing for: cancellation of Trident replacement; a strong international agreement at the Copenhagen climate negotiations; more UK government support for renewable energy; greater controls on corporate involvement in universities; cuts in funding for weapons technologies; more scrutiny of nuclear power; and more restrictions on GM crop technology. In these activities, we collaborated with umbrella organisations such as Rethink Trident, the Renewable Energy Tariff coalition, the Nuclear Consultation Group and the International Network for Engineers and Scientists for Global Responsibility (INES). We also provided information and advice to several campaign groups including Campaign Against Arms Trade, Campaign Against Climate Change, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, New Economics Foundation, Media Lens, the World Disarmament Campaign and Network for Peace.

SGR’s main issues

Security and disarmament
Climate change and energy
Who controls science and technology?
Emerging technologies
Built environment and sustainable development
Communications

MEDIA. SGR achieved an especially high level of media coverage this year due to the launch of our report, *Science and the Corporate Agenda* (see p.1) which received wide coverage, including in *The Guardian, New Scientist, The Independent, Times Higher Education*, and *New Statesman*. We also received a range of other notable coverage. Stuart Parkinson took part in a live radio debate on nuclear power and nuclear proliferation on BBC World Service. SGR was quoted in several publications in the run-up to the Copenhagen climate negotiations, including *The Independent, The Times* (website) and *Professional Engineering*. Stuart also gave an in-depth interview on local radio on the opening day of the negotiations.

SGR NEWSLETTER. This high-quality publication continued to be popular with members, journalists and others. Two issues (nos. 37 and 38) were published during the reporting period, including feature articles on global nuclear disarmament, ethics in university research, sustainability in the housing sector, international climate policy, the militarisation of space, the transition to a low carbon economy, sustainable population levels, and several other topics/subjects. Feedback from readers generally was very positive. The two issues were edited by Stuart Parkinson, Vanessa Spedding, Kate Maloney and Jane Wilson.

SGR WEBSITE. The website continued to be a key way of promoting SGR’s concerns to the outside world, in particular being the main platform for the distribution of our publications and other outputs. We recorded our busiest month ever in November 2009, thanks to a combination of the launch of the SATCA report (see p.1), and interest in climate-related material in the run-up to the Copenhagen climate negotiations. Visits averaged nearly 12,000 per month over the reporting period, up 16% on the previous year.

SGR EMAIL LISTS. We continued to maintain two email-lists for supporting SGR’s work, a discussion list for members (sgrforum) and an announcements-only list for both members and non-members (sgrupdate). Total membership of the lists expanded significantly during the year to over 1,250 people. We also set up a Facebook group this year.

Membership recruitment

In order to boost our recruitment, we redesigned our membership leaflet to give it more visual impact. During the reporting year, we distributed nearly 32,400 copies of this leaflet. The largest share went out as inserts in magazines, including *Clean Slate, Thin Ice, The Friend, GreenWorld, Conscience* and *Red Pepper*. We also carried out a limited amount of recruitment via electronic means. Together, this activity led to us gaining 83 new members during the year. At the end of February 2010, we had a total of 1,057 members, including 184 associate members. This was the highest level in SGR’s history!
Staffing SGR stalls (especially at careers events):
Martin Bassant, Alan Cottey, Tim Foxon, Richard Jennings, Kate Macintosh, Rachel Marshall, Martin Quick, Richard Tregear, Max Wallis, David Webb, and Tony White

Office volunteers: Brenda Dutton, Victoria Reynolds and Rachel Marshall

SGR Newsletter (article authors): Amanda Baker, Barbara Barrett, Alasdair Beal, Phil Chamberlain, Philip Chapman, Margaret Clotworthy, Alan Cottey, Gareth Dale, Andrew Ferguson, Tim Foxon, Sandy Halliday, Richard Jennings, Gavin Killip, David Krieger, Roger Levett, Kate Macintosh, Amyan Macfadyen, Jim McCluskey, Paul Marchant, Nicholas Maxwell, Alice Moncaster, Patrick Nicholson, Mario Petrucci, Martin Quick, Nick Reeves, Nick Ritchie, Martin Sahlen, Dimitris Sarantaridis, David Webb, and Philip Webber
Financial review

The reporting year was difficult financially. On the plus side, our income rose to its highest ever level – nearly £80,000. However, this was partially due to income from a loan to help us through cash-flow problems early in the reporting period, as we dealt with shortfalls in key income areas. Most notably, a projected increase in trust income did not materialise, while income from our annual membership appeal also did not hit its target. The wider problems in the economy were thought to have had a significant effect on both of these. We were able, however, to begin paying off the loan in the later part of the reporting year.

A more detailed breakdown of our income and expenditure is shown in the tables and figures.

Income (£) 2008-9 2009-10
Membership Subscriptions 20,171 18,581
Membership Appeal – 5,940
Grants 47,229 38,695
Donations for Reserve Fund – 3,200
Other Donations 2,802 1,122
Conference Fees 1,068 1,364
Sales of Publications 274 158
Miscellaneous 230 1,113
Loan – 9,800
Total 71,774 79,973

In terms of expenditure, the wages of core staff continued to be the main cost (35%). We also had to pay a deferred bill for tax and national insurance. Recruitment activities, as part of the three-year development plan (see pp.3 & 4), and expenditure on the corporate influence project (see p.1) were also especially significant.

Over the year, income exceeded expenditure by £3,717, leading to a balance of £4,297 at the year end.

Income from membership subscriptions fell slightly from the previous year, despite our membership level hitting an all-time high by the end of February 2010. External economic factors were again thought to play a part. Senior SGR members provided the loan (see earlier), together with donations to set up a ‘reserve fund’ to help provide greater financial stability to the organisation. We are very appreciative of this support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure (£)</th>
<th>2008-9</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core wages &amp; NI</td>
<td>29,210</td>
<td>26,402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>5,329</td>
<td>5,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>6,401</td>
<td>6,193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletter</td>
<td>6,473</td>
<td>4,317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>4,069</td>
<td>4,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website Development</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Core Costs</td>
<td>7,544</td>
<td>5,993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Influence Project</td>
<td>8,108</td>
<td>4,987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Influence Project</td>
<td>5,927</td>
<td>1,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Careers Project</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred tax &amp; NI</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>14,504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loan repayments</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>2,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>73,297</td>
<td>76,256</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grants from trusts continued to be our main source of funding – 48% of this year’s total. These were from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (just over £16k for core funding), Polden Puckham Charitable Foundation (just over £11k for the corporate influence project), Marmot Charitable Trust (£5k for core funding), the Network for Social Change (just over £4.5k for future website development), and 1970 Trust (£2k for core funding). We are very grateful to these trusts for their support.
Income 2009-10

- Membership subscriptions: 23%
- Membership appeal: 8%
- Grants: 48%
- Reserve Fund: 4%
- Loan: 12%
- Other: 5%

Expenditure 2009-10

- Core wages & NI: 35%
- Loan repayments: 3%
- Deferred tax & NI payments: 19%
- Ethical Careers Project: <1%
- Military Influence Project: 2%
- Corporate Influence Project: 6%
- Other Core Costs: 8%
- Web Development: <1%
- Conference: 6%
- Recruitment: 8%
- Newsletter: 6%
- Rent: 7%