



SGR responsible
science

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY 6 OCTOBER 2021
ONLINE ZOOM MEETING**

6.15 – 7.00 PM

AGENDA

- 1. Opening Remarks**
 - Dr Phil Webber, Chair
- 2. Minutes of SGR AGM 2020 and Matters Arising**
- 3. Annual Report and Accounts 2020 – 2021**
 - Dr Stuart Parkinson, Executive Director
 - Dr Emily Heath, Office Manager
- 4. Election of National Co-ordinating Committee**
- 5. Update on Recent/Current Activities**
 - Dr Stuart Parkinson, Executive Director
- 6. SGR's legal status: discussion paper**
 - Dr Phil Webber, Chair
- 7. Any Other Business**

Agenda item 2

SGR Annual General Meeting 7th November 2020 Online Zoom Webinar Minutes

Present:	Phil Webber	Jan Maskell	David Hookes
	Paul Marchant	Simon Reed	Steve Ballard
	Gillian Smith		
	Stuart Parkinson	Andrew Simms	Vanessa Moss
	Aart Heestermann	Alan Cottey	Andrew Lohmann
	Caroline Whitehead	Cedric Gilson	Christine Green
	Denis Hall	Eva Novotny	Fiona McOwan
	Frank Jackson	Henry Adams	James Dougherty
	Jane Wernick	Lara Lewington	Laurence Kenney
	Martin Bassant	Mariette Labelle	Martin Levy
	Martin Peck	Michael Corcoran	Michael Weller
	Sudha Fatima	Tim Foxon	Tony Goodchild
	Vernon Griffiths	Veronica Kelly	Wiebina Heestermann
	David Somervell		

Apologies: Alasdair Beal

1. Opening Remarks

Dr Jan Maskell, Vice Chair, opened the SGR 2020 Annual General Meeting by welcoming all the webinar attendees, and thanked the speakers for their very interesting presentations at the two webinar conference events. This is the first online conference and presented technological challenges and a steep learning curve. Stuart Parkinson, Andrew Simms and Vanessa Moss were thanked for their hard work to ensure that the webinars were successful. This year has been another busy year for SGR against a backdrop of major changes for society.

2. Minutes of SGR AGM 2019 and Matters Arising

The minutes were unanimously accepted without correction. This was proposed by Christine Green and seconded by Lara Lewington. There were no matters arising.

3. Annual Report and Accounts March 2019 – February 2020

• Report from Stuart Parkinson, Executive Director

Key during the year were two new publications:

- *Irresponsible Science? How the fossil fuel and arms industries finance professional engineering and science organisations* This report was based on the research of our Peacemaker, Philip Wood, revealing a pattern of funding for organisations like the Royal Academy of Engineering, the Energy Institute and even the Royal Society by the fossil fuel and arms industries. The report received good coverage by the media.
- *Scientists behaving responsibly? Should science walk the talk on climate breakdown?* This report by Andrew Simms was launched at the SGR Conference 2019 and was based on a survey of scientists looking at their interest in, and activity around, the adoption of more climate friendly lifestyles.

Another large project was *One Planet, One Life* run by Dr Jan Maskell, who gave 29 workshops to 900 students in schools in NW England. The workshops included the topics of climate change, carbon footprint and sustainable living, based on materials such as the Food Trump cards, which were developed by Dr Jan Maskell. This material is now being adapted for online delivery.

SGR received much media coverage. The Sunday Times covered the *Irresponsible Science?* Report. SGR's work on campaigning against the European Defence Fund was featured in Nature. The

Irresponsible Science report led to Bill McGuire resigning from the Geological Society and this was covered by BBC News. An article on nuclear weapons written by Dr Phil Webber was published on the Metro website.

A range of other SGR activities included the start of a new research project on UK military climate/environmental impacts and a sell-out SGR annual conference held in London in November 2019.

For a full review of the year please see the Annual Report

- **Annual Accounts Report**

Our Treasurer, Alasdair Beal, is unfortunately unwell, and sent his apologies. SGR sends best wishes for a speedy recovery to Alasdair and thanks him for his work during the year. Stuart Parkinson gave the report in his place.

Income over the year rose to £53,422, due to an increase in grant income. There was a slight drop in money raised through the SGR annual appeal and donations.

Expenditure for the year rose to £59,538 in line with the income increase, particularly with the project work. Stuart highlighted that SGR's project work was very efficient, leveraging high output from a low financial input. Other costs were broadly similar, with slightly more spent on core wages during the year.

The balance went down from £28,768 to £22,652. SGR have made some adjustments in the current year so that the balance is improving again, with a good financial base given the damage to the economy from the pandemic and the potential damage due to Brexit.

The reasons for the office move were given although the move occurred after the year being reported on. The main reasons are that the new office is in central Lancaster near the train station giving easier access for all staff, volunteers and NCC members. A second reason is that the new office is more environmentally efficient than the old office which was in a renovated mill with poor energy efficiency.

Andrew Lohmann proposed that the accounts be accepted. Christine Green seconded the proposal and the accounts were accepted unanimously.

4. **Election of National Co-ordinating Committee (NCC)**

There were 7 members who were standing for re-election:

- Dr Phil Webber (Chair)
- Dr Jan Maskell (Vice-chair)
- Alasdair Beal (Treasurer)
- David Hookes
- Steve Ballard
- Simon Reed
- Gillian Smith

There was no competition for posts on the committee and no election was therefore necessary. There were no objections to this process and all nominations were accepted. Paul Marchant is standing down from the committee and SGR thanked him for his long years of service.

5. **Update on Recent/Current Activities**

Stuart Parkinson reported on recent and current activities from March 2020, which included:

- A new report, *The Environmental Impacts of the UK Military Sector*, published in collaboration with the media organisation, Declassified UK. This led to a further research project reporting on the environmental impact of the military in the European Union.
- SGR published a series of blogs on the Covid-19 pandemic, assessing economic, social, environmental and technological elements of rapid transition.
- Phil Webber has been continuing to lead SGR's campaigning on nuclear weapons. The UN Treaty for the prohibition of nuclear weapons (TPNW) has received its 50th ratification and will enter into legal force in January 2021. This will also affect the investment world as the financial sector in countries that have ratified the treaty will no longer be able to invest in companies involved in nuclear weapons in other countries. This will affect the funding opportunities of companies like BAE Systems and Raytheon.

- S4SW was affected by Covid-19, but the competition went ahead and the S4SW online teaching materials were promoted.
- SGR helped to set up the UK branch of the Global Campaign on Military Spending (GCOMS UK), and helped with campaigning on the theme of healthcare not war, highlighting the imbalance of spending on the military in comparison to the spending on the preparedness for a pandemic.
- SGR received funding for two other new projects:
 - Globally Responsible Careers, co-ordinated by Dr Jan Maskell
 - Responsible Science project based on the two new reports, *Irresponsible Science* and *Scientists Behaving Responsibly*

Liz Kalaugher, SGR's new Responsible Science Campaigner, introduced the Science Oath for the Climate, launched on 7th November 2020. There are 26 academics, mainly based in the UK, as launch signatories. As of 7th November, the oath is open for all engineers and academics working on climate change (<https://www.sgr.org.uk/projects/science-oath-climate>). The oath is based on three commitments to:

- Explain the scientific evidence
- Speak out on actions needed to meet 1.5°C and 2.0°C climate goals
- Align personal behaviour with Paris goals as far as possible.

6. Any Other Business

Vanessa Moss, SGR's Office Manager, will be retiring at the end of 2020. Vanessa has been in post for 6 years, and was thanked for her contribution to SGR.

Dr Phil Webber gave the closing comments. SGR have expanded in capacity. Phil welcomed Liz Kalaugher to the SGR team, and thanked Dr Jan Maskell for her contribution in running projects, especially the school work which will be continued after the pandemic. Phil thanked Dr Stuart Parkinson for his enormous contribution. SGR will be sad to lose Vanessa, and will be recruiting for a replacement. The Martin Ryle Trust are recruiting a new administrator. This has been a difficult year, especially for our mental health. One highlight is that Joe Biden has won the election in the USA, and the implications for SGR are that he pledged to support the Paris climate accord and will rejuvenate the Iran nuclear deal. SGR's project funding has expanded and makes a tremendous difference as the project work that SGR is developing cannot be done on a voluntary basis. The online format for meetings, conferences and the AGM enable greater participation by members who were unable to attend in person.

Dr Jan Maskell thanked Dr Stuart Parkinson for his contributions to the meeting, Dr Phil Webber for his closing comments, Liz Kalaugher for work on the new project, Andrew Simms for organising the conference and Vanessa for setting up webinars and her work with SGR.

Dr Jan Maskell also thanked all the attendees. The SGR Annual General Meeting was declared closed.

Agenda item 3

2020/21 Annual Report and Accounts

The 2020/21 Annual Report was sent to all members and supporters in August 2021, and a pdf can be viewed at <https://www.sgr.org.uk/pages/annual-reports>. The overall statement of accounts plus a breakdown of income and expenditure over the last two financial years are reproduced below.

OVERALL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Balance on 01.03.20	£22,652
Income	£86,077
Expenditure	£56,037
Income minus expenditure	£30,040
Balance on 28.02.21	£52,693

NB All figures rounded to nearest pound

Income (£)	2019-20	2020-21
Membership subscriptions	£19,681	£18,700
Membership appeal	£7,711	£3,907
Grants	£22,452	£61,771
Donations	£757	£1,625
Conference income	£2,668	£0
Sales of publications	£119	£36
Interest	£34	£38
Total	£53,422	£86,077

Expenditure (£)	2019-20	2020-21
Core wages and NI	£32,844	£30,555
Rent, insurance and utilities	£3,380	£2,664
Recruitment	£814	£490
<i>Responsible Science Journal</i>	£2,585	£1,044
Conference, AGM and annual report	£3,252	£1,422
Other core costs	£5,783	£3,789
One Planet – One Life project	£7,348	£3,360
Website redesign/ upgrade project	£956	£0
Globally Responsible Careers project*	£750	£1,125
Responsible Science campaign*	£1,585	£5,596
Climate Change and the Military project	£242	£5,992
Total	£59,538	£56,037

NB All figures rounded to the nearest pound; totals may not sum exactly due to rounding

* These activities were titled differently in the 2019-20 annual report.

Agenda item 4

Election of SGR's National Coordinating Committee 2021/22

Five SGR members have been nominated for committee positions by at least two other members in accordance with SGR's constitution.

Position	Nominee & personal statement	Nominated by
Chair	<p>Philip Webber BSc PhD</p> <p>I am a retired physicist & local government officer. My chief focus is to support our staff and this year, to work on plans to work with NCC to transition SGR to a recognised status as a company ltd by guarantee. I regularly write articles and give talks raising awareness of the nuclear weapons threat and the climate emergency. My grass-roots activity includes local air pollution and road safety.</p>	<p>Jan Maskell Gillian Smith Simon Reed Richard Erskine</p>
Vice chair	<p>Jan Maskell PhD MSc MA</p> <p>I am an Occupational Psychologist and Environmentalist with over 20 years' experience of working with public, private and not-for-profit organisations as a practitioner and academic. I have delivered qualification programmes at all levels and my early career was in building design. My main concerns are climate change and the role of psychology in behaviour change at a personal and organisational level. My current roles in SGR are as Vice Chair and Education Director. I manage the Science4Society programme, website and activities and deliver One Planet One Life carbon foot-printing workshops for schools.</p>	<p>Phil Webber Gillian Smith Simon Reed</p>
Committee member	<p>Simon Reed BA Hons MA FIAP FRGS CITP</p> <p>My professional background is in IT and change management. My knowledge areas include business organisation and decades of volunteering in small organisations that are trying to improve the world for others. I have interests in efficient energy use, improving home construction, free information provision, environmental issues in general and human rights. I believe science and technology should be used to improve the lives of people foremost. I see SGR as having a key role in evidencing social harms from technological and government policies and in promoting viable alternatives.</p>	<p>Jan Maskell Phil Webber</p>
Committee member	<p>Nico Edwards BA Hons, MSc</p> <p>I have a substantive background in international humanitarian law, political economy and interdisciplinary peace and security studies, focusing on how military-industrial interests shape development, security and peace policies (inter)nationally. For my postgraduate research on the Arms Trade Treaty's promotion of war profiteering I was awarded the department-wide Best Dissertation Prize. After graduating in 2020 I undertook a placement with Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament whilst volunteering for Action on Armed Violence and Campaign Against Arms Trade, carrying out research, outreach and advocacy around arms control, disarmament, sustainable development and climate action.</p>	<p>Jan Maskell Phil Webber</p>

	<p>Currently, I volunteer as PNND and Youth Fusion Program Officer where I coordinate intergenerational cooperation in various disarmament fields, whilst preparing a PhD project on the MoD Climate Change and Sustainability Strategic Approach (2021) supervised by Professor Anna Stavrianakis (SGR Patron). I would be happy to assist in various SGR projects, including: climate change and the military; nuclear weapons threat; military influence on S&T.</p> <p>BA (Hons) International Relations and Social Anthropology (First Class), SOAS University of London MSc International Politics (Distinction), SOAS University of London</p>	
Committee member	<p>Liam Killeen I am currently studying for an MA in International Political Economy at the University of Manchester and plan on continuing at the PhD level. In my research, I am particularly interested in political ecology and hope to learn about this practically within my research and campaigning for SGR. As a member of the NCC, I would be interested in assisting with event organisation and improving engagement with students across the UK.</p>	<p>Jan Maskell Phil Webber</p>

Agenda item 6

SGR's legal status: discussion paper

Following extensive discussion with similar progressive campaign organisations and obtaining legal advice, the NCC (National Co-ordinating Committee) has decided that SGR should plan to transition to a clearly recognised legal status: a company limited by guarantee (this status has no shareholders and would be not for profit in our case). This status would create legal protection for the management committee – the NCC – and maintain SGR's independent promotion of responsible science and technology.

Reasons and background

Since its formation in 1992, SGR has been an 'unincorporated association'. This is the same category as small membership organisations such as sports clubs etc and means that SGR does not have a widely recognised legal status.

Since 1992, SGR has developed considerably and now employs several staff with permanent and temporary contracts of employment.

As SGR is unincorporated, SGR's management committee, particularly the NCC Officers, are potentially personally liable for breaches of employment law, claims of unfair dismissal, discrimination, health and safety, libel etc all of which create a significant financial risk. While we have taken out insurance policies to help minimise these risks, the situation remains unsatisfactory.

Also, by being unincorporated, SGR's status is not recognised by some important funding bodies and international organisations.

Outline plan of action

SGR has just commenced working with a recommended legal firm with experience of the peace and non-profit sectors called VWV who have offices in Birmingham and Bristol.

Currently VWV are tasked with translating our existing constitution into draft 'articles of association', with wording consistent with company law, but nevertheless maintaining our existing objectives regarding responsible science and technology.

Once we are happy with this, and we will consult members during the process, VWV would draft a transfer agreement and appropriate resolutions for SGR's members to authorise the transfer of SGR's assets, staff and liabilities to the agreed company structure at a general meeting called to discuss this. With member agreement, 'SGR Ltd' would then be registered at Companies House.

Some other key points

SGR would need to appoint a board of 3 to 5 'Company Directors'. Directors would mirror current NCC Officer roles (Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary – although these titles are not required) and possibly include a member of staff. They would have clear legally-defined roles as Directors: to work towards SGR's objectives and to file annual accounts/reports to Companies House.

Routine day-to-day management would remain with the current Executive Director Dr Stuart Parkinson and Office Manager Dr Emily Heath. They and other employees would become employees of SGR Ltd via the transfer agreement.

An 'executive committee' would meet regularly, as the NCC does now, comprising the Company Directors, staff and some 'ordinary' SGR members. The executive committee would present inspected accounts/ activity reports for membership scrutiny at AGMs.

Phil Webber 29.09.21