

Annual review 2017

**Royal
Geographical
Society**
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning





The Society



Vision

A world-leading learned and professional body for geography, widely respected for its independence, quality, innovation, and for the breadth of its activities promoting and supporting geography as the means for everyone to discover, understand and respect the world's people, places and environments.

Mission

A world centre for geography and geographical learning dedicated to the development and promotion of knowledge together with its application to the challenges facing society and the environment.

The Society is a charity that exists for public benefit and which also has a broad-based membership that supports its mission and aims. The Society was independently recognised in 2013 as the leading scholarly geographical society in the world.

Registered Charity 208791

Society objectives

The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) exists for 'the advancement of geographical science'. For the current strategy, 2017-2021, this purpose has been expressed as six strategic objectives for the organisation. These focus the activities of the Society and ensure that the Society's operational development is planned, integrated and responsive to the needs of the discipline, its practitioners, the public at large and the membership. Three objectives concern first and foremost the discipline. These are to safeguard the discipline, to develop and share geographical knowledge and understanding, and to support practitioners and students. Three objectives concern the Society. These are to grow our reputation, enhance our membership and sustain the future.

The Society's work is organised into thematic departments, each of which contributes work to several objectives.

From the President



Nicholas Crane
President

In my final year as President, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our Fellows, members, donors and volunteers whose continuing support makes it possible for RGS-IBG to play a leading role in furthering geographical science.

The last year has reminded me in particular of the enormously valuable role played within the Society by the elected trustees, whose time and expertise makes it possible for the Society to remain a beacon among learned societies. Standing back – and down – from my role as President, I see a world-class organisation devoted to a subject at the heart of our shared future. That we have been able to achieve so much in recent years is due to the hard work and dedication of the Society's senior management team and the entire staff of RGS-IBG.

Many of you will know that Dr Rita Gardner, our Director of the last 22 years, is leaving the Society this year and I'm sure you'll join me in wishing Rita the very best in the next phase of her geographical journey. Rita's achievements during her time at the Society have been nothing short of extraordinary. For a flavour of those

achievements, do have a look at the April 2018 edition of *Geographical* magazine.

The search for Rita's successor began in June 2017 and has led to the appointment of Dr Joe Smith. Joe brings to the Society an exciting record of geographical engagement across many fields.

In the pages that follow, you will see the breadth of what was achieved during 2017, but in my last 'From the President' I would like to pick out just a few examples that illustrate the Society's ongoing work in both generating new geographical knowledge and improving access to it.

- The Society's collaborative field research project, *Migrants on the margins*, completed its first field season of data collection and analysis of the initial results has informed the second field season, which takes place in the first half of this year.
- Our grants programme continued to grow, with new grants for field research – including the Walters Kundert Awards – meaning that 47 projects were supported with over £200,000 of funding in total.

- There was a fantastic programme of engaging and inspiring events – Monday night lectures, Discovering People and Places in London; the regional programme across England, Wales and Northern Ireland; and the Annual International Conference and Research Group meetings.
- The existing programme of teacher continuing professional development was enhanced with new work with schools to support field teaching.
- The Society's moving film archive is now available to everyone through the BFI media player, after a programme of digitisation supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

My role over the past three years has been enjoyable and rewarding, and I thank all of you who have made it so.



From the Director



Dr Rita Gardner CBE
Director

2017 was a year of change and continuity. In terms of governance, we completed the planning and publication of the fourth successive strategy (2017-2021) of RGS-IBG and started its implementation. This strategic plan continues the Society's steady evolution as a learned society, professional body, charity and membership organisation, and builds firmly on the past 22 years of development of RGS-IBG and on the longer term histories of the two bodies.

The Society will continue to focus on promoting and safeguarding the discipline; advancing new knowledge and understanding of our world and sharing that widely; and supporting, training and accrediting professional and student geographers. The strategy retains our well-established breadth of activities for the wide range of audiences who value the RGS-IBG as a 'geographical home'. The plurality of the Society is a great strength and increasingly our activities join across the different communities of interest.

Considerable time this year was spent preparing for a handover in Society leadership at both Director and President levels. The Council established, in the usual way, a Presidential search group

tasked with inviting suggestions from the membership and the trustees as to possible candidates, and considering those in relation to the skills and experiences sought in the next President.

Stewardship of the Society's donors and members featured prominently in our development activities. A donor celebration event in July enabled us to thank again the c. 1,250 donors – individuals, trusts and foundations, companies and statutory bodies – who have supported the Society's development since 1995 with more than £35m. Honorary Fellow, John Williams, was commissioned to write a short overview of the RGS-IBG's first 22 years of development. This was published in autumn 2017.

Preparations were made during the year for a new legacy campaign to be launched in spring 2018. The intention is to enable the Society to grow, over the coming years, a £10m endowment to help pump-prime the Society's development in perpetuity. Pledges may also, of course, give to specific areas of interest or activities.

Meanwhile, there were many highlights across our work, as you can read in the following pages. The President has

mentioned some already and there are many more. For example, developing a new website, trebling use of *Discovering Britain* walks, new professional discussions, enhancing teachers' skills and confidence in data skills, and the appointment of the first ever cross-government Head of Geography in autumn 2017.

Finally, I cannot end my last 'From the Director' without extending warmest thanks to all those who have generously given their time, expertise, commitment, passion for geography, and moral and financial support to the Society since 1996. Our membership is a very broad and special community and I have had the pleasure of working with many outstanding people in leading the Society's work. In particular, I thank senior colleagues Steve Brace, Alasdair Macleod, David Riviere and Catherine Souch for many years of shared 'travels and endeavours' in the service of geography and the Society. The RGS-IBG and UK geography are in great strength and heart. I wish my successor, Joe Smith, a tenure as stimulating and enjoyable.

1 Geography

Promoting and sustaining a vibrant discipline

Objective Represent, promote and advocate for geography as a leading discipline, so that its contribution to understanding our changing world is appreciated by the public and it maintains a strong position in education, research, fieldwork and expeditions, in civic society and in informing policy and business.

Context Geography has an essential role in the 21st century in helping everyone to understand our world. 2012 to 2016 saw significant strengthening in the standing and study of geography. 2017 to 2021 has uncertainties in the face of UK political and economic change.

2017 was another good year for geography, with record numbers of GCSE, A Level and undergraduate students, and an increasing recognition of the value of the discipline by parents, employers and government. The Society continued to be an influential, widely sought out, and effective advocate for the discipline.

In particular

- A cross-government Head of Geography was appointed within the Government Science and Engineering profession, representing a formal recognition of the contribution geography makes to analysis, policy and delivery in government.
- The *International Review of UK Physical Geography* declared the sub-discipline's health and global influence to be excellent. The report highlighted its influence beyond traditional geography departments, high research funding success rate, increasing presence in schools, and highly regarded graduating students.
- The work that the Society has done to successfully improve the use and understanding of data skills in both secondary and higher education was recognised by two separate independent reports.

1.1 Making the case for geography

The Society continued to have strong links with networks of key influencers across the government, business, research, education, and learned society sectors. The Society, whether working independently or in partnership with others from across the geographical community, remains a powerful advocate and well placed to ensure that the voice of geography and of geographers is heard when and where it matters.

During 2017, the Society continued to support geography in schools, higher education and research, and across the professions by engaging in pro-active dialogue with government departments and agencies, the national academies, and other bodies ranging from the Satellite Applications Catapult to the Nuffield Foundation.

The Society extended the existing networks of senior geographers in government with its close involvement in the appointment of David Wood as cross-government Head of Geography within the Government Science and Engineering (GSE) profession. The initiative, advocated for by the Central

“The review shows that physical geography within the UK is a major international player in terms of any metric considered: it makes major contributions to the big scientific and applied societal questions, collaborates and leads international agendas, and punches above its weight in the delivery of research impacting on policy.”

Professor Olav Slaymaker, Chair of the International Review Panel



Government Geographers Group and the Society, has been warmly welcomed by other geographers in government. The GSE welcomed the Society's UK-wide role in the professionalism and accreditation agenda.

Considerable work continued to be done during the year on making the case for geography as a way of delivering data skills at both secondary and higher education levels. This valuable role of geography, and the Society's *Data skills in geography* project, were recognised in Sir Adrian Smith's *Review of Post16 Mathematics* (commissioned by HM Treasury and the Department for Education) and in the *Data Skills for the Future* (commissioned by the Data Skills Taskforce) reports. The Society's Director was a member of the steering group of the British Academy's strategic five-year skills and training programme.

A programme of public affairs activity relating to geographic information, in partnership with the Association for Geographic Information (AGI) commenced. The new Geospatial Commission announced by Government late in 2017 and the geospatial skills gap were identified as areas of opportunity for the two organisations.

In order to add a new dimension to the Society's networks in schools, an advisory group of head teachers and senior school leaders with geography backgrounds was established. The group will meet annually to review school geography from a senior leadership perspective and offer advice to the Society's advocacy role.

1.2 **Advising on geography**

The Society's position at the heart of the geography community enabled informed responses to be submitted to seven policy consultations during 2017 on topics including the Industrial Strategy, the Research Excellence Framework and the national transport strategy. The Society also maintained its ongoing contacts with Ministers and officials across a range of relevant government departments.

The Society worked closely with the heads of geography departments in higher education institutions to nominate suitable people for the Chair and membership of the Geography and Environmental Studies sub panel of the Research Excellence Framework.

In September, the Society-led *International Review of UK Physical*

Geography report was launched at the British Society for Geomorphology conference. The report, a companion to the *2013 International Benchmark Review of Human Geography*, found that the sub-discipline's health and global influence were excellent. The Society is leading a working group that is now implementing a series of initiatives that address the challenges identified in the report.

1.3 **Promoting geography to wider audiences**

The Society promotes the discipline of geography to a wide range of audiences, including the public, young people, parents and employers.

By the end of 2017, the Society's Geography Ambassadors scheme had provided around 900 sessions to pupil groups in schools across England, Northern Ireland and Wales. As in previous years, these activities successfully engaged, informed and inspired pupils with the opportunities that studying geography at university and geography careers can provide.

There was a welcome increase in interest from work-based Ambassadors in 2017. This was largely stimulated by Chartered Geographers working in

particular sectors and organisations, most notably the Environment Agency, having an interest in outreach to underrepresented communities, including those from black and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds.

2 Knowledge and understanding

Helping create a better informed world

Objective Advance, interpret and share geographical knowledge more fully, so that the world is better understood and more people benefit from using and enjoying geographical knowledge in their work, leisure and communities.

Context In a period of uncertainty and rapid change there is a greater need than ever to advance, and share, well-founded knowledge and understanding of the UK and the world. And to do so in ways that are meaningful to professional and public audiences today. We will bring our independence, convening power and inspiration to bear.

In 2017, the Society advanced knowledge through its grants and Field Research Programme, and shared knowledge and understanding with around 3.5 million people – engaging them in learning more about the world.

In particular

- The first fieldwork season of *Migrants on the margins*, the Society's collaborative international Field Research Programme, was completed.
- The Society's Annual International Conference enabled almost 2,000 geographers from across the world to share and learn about the latest developments in the discipline.
- *Discovering Britain*, with its national spread of geographical walks, and the *Britain from the Air* outdoor exhibition enabled more than a million members of the public to learn more about the social, environmental and economic changes in the UK.
- During 2017, the Society organised more than 450 live events – lectures, discussions, interviews, conferences, field visits and training courses – including those organised by the regional committees and Research Groups.
- The Society's training and online resources for UK teachers helped to support the implementation of the recent major curriculum changes.

2.1 Advancing knowledge

The Society's major Field Research Programme, *Migrants on the margins*, undertook its first fieldwork season focussing on the vulnerability and opportunities of migrants in four of the world's most pressured cities: Colombo (Sri Lanka), Dhaka (Bangladesh), Harare (Zimbabwe) and Hargeisa (Somaliland). The project partnership, between the Society and UK and international researchers, was expertly led by Professor Mike Collyer of the University of Sussex. The fieldwork consisted of surveys in over 2,000 households across the four cities, community mapping exercises and local capacity building. Initial analysis shows that many survey respondents are united by complex mobility histories and a high likelihood that they will move again in the future. Plans were also developed during the year for the second set of field surveys which will be carried out in spring 2018.

The Society's grants programme advances geographical knowledge and helps develop careers by supporting field research and scientific expeditions. In 2017, the Society awarded over £204,000 of funding to 66 projects that directly involved 134 students



and researchers. The projects funded ranged from urban forestry in Accra and ice loss on Annapurna South Glacier in Nepal, to gendered institutional change in 20th century Antarctic science. They were undertaken in 41 countries from Myanmar to Sweden.

The first Walters Kundert and Alexander Awards were awarded during 2017.

The Society continues to undertake research-based Collections initiatives, including the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funded Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDA). During 2017, three CDA students successfully defended their PhDs and one student was appointed to a new CDA project with the University of Glasgow looking at the historical geography of relief models.

2.2 Interpreting and sharing knowledge

During 2017, over 25,000 people attended more than 200 events as part of the Society's London programme. The Society's renowned series of Monday night lectures for Fellows, members and guests, regularly attracted audiences of over 600 to listen to talks on a wide range of topics including the causes and consequences of Brexit, Antarctica's

“A truly wonderful and inspiring exhibition detailing a remarkable tale of human endurance.”

Enduring Eye visitor

changing ice shelves, and tiger conservation. The majority of the year's lectures are professionally recorded and available for members to watch online. The Society also streamlined its approach to Monday night suppers with the introduction of online booking and, as agreed by Council, a more varied approach that enabled suppers for members and guests on around half the evenings, with more focused opportunities to engage prospective members and supporters.

The London programme of public events included the *Discovering People* series of interviews and the *Discovering Places* series of informed travel events. *Discovering Places* featured Papua New Guinea and Bolivia, providing potential visitors with practical information and cultural insights about these less-visited destinations. In July, a behind-the-scenes look at *Planet Earth II* featuring two of the producers was popular and led to the Children's lecture in December also being given by one of the series producers in order to allow more young people access to the content. Audiences for Collections events, including the *Be Inspired* series of afternoon talks, during the year were regularly at or near capacity.

The digitisation of the Society's film collection, held at the British Film Institute (BFI), was completed in March thanks to funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. A special programme of public events ran through the autumn to promote the film archive to wider audiences and to encourage research use of this new digital resource. The public events included a screening of the 1922 film *Climbing Mount Everest*, which included a discussion on the role of film within scientific expeditions.

The nine UK regional branches and the Regional Theatres Programme provided a range of popular geographical talks, lectures and field visits for both members and the public across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. In 2017, the Regional Theatres Programme attracted over 2,400 people to 20 events. The programme of activities organised by the volunteer-led regional committees was full and varied during 2017 with more than 150 events taking place. These included guided walks based on *Discovering Britain* activities, field visits to Babbacombe and Horsey Mere, and talks on topics ranging from the Silk Road and Myanmar to volcanoes and British landscapes.

The number of users of *Discovering Britain* activities more than trebled during 2017 due to improved online promotion. In addition to attracting a larger audience to the project website, walks were added to ViewRanger, a popular outdoor activity app that enables people to access the route information without a Wi-Fi or phone connection. Adding *Discovering Britain* content to it significantly increased the number of users of the featured activities.

The Society's *Britain from the Air* exhibition was on display in Nottingham from December 2016 to July 2017, before moving to Liverpool where it remained into early 2018. Public feedback was, as ever, positive and around one million people saw the exhibition during 2017. This completes the currently funded tour of the exhibition around the UK.

Artefacts from the Society's Antarctic collections were exhibited at the Library of Birmingham and at the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh as part of the UK tour of its *Enduring Eye* exhibition, which was seen by almost 100,000 people in 2017. Funded by the HLF, the associated work with local communities generated significant new exhibition content based on local

connections to members of the *Endurance* expedition.

Almost 2,000 geographers from across the world attended the 2017 Annual International Conference, which was held at the Society in London over four days. The Chair, Professor Sarah Radcliffe (University of Cambridge), chose 'Decolonising geographical knowledges' as the conference theme. The programme included field visits and exhibitions, sessions for postgraduate students and early career researchers, collaborative work by geographers and artists, meet-the-author sessions, and lectures sponsored by some of the leading geography academic journals. Media coverage of conference papers was at a lower level than recent years owing to staff changes (see Section 4 for details).

The Society's Research Groups are at the heart of the success of the Annual Conference, with the majority of sessions organised or supported by the Groups. During the year, the Research Groups also organised over a dozen other events, as well as publishing books and journals and awarding publishing prizes, as part of their work to support the research community.

Throughout 2017, the Society worked with publishing partners Wiley to transition to a 'digital first' model of publishing. When launched in early 2018, it will provide online readers with a better experience and allow the Society to showcase the breadth of its journals content in one place.

The 2017 Young Geographer of the Year competition gave geography pupils the opportunity to engage with contemporary geographical issues as they answered the question 'What is the geography of your favourite place?'. Over 2,000 entries from pupils aged 8-19 were received for final judging by the Society. Alongside the competition for pupils, the Society also presented the Rex Walford Award to Rhianne Quigley for the resources she developed linked to the competition question.

The Society's online resources for schools continued to be in high demand with the schools pages being viewed in excess of one million times over the course of the year. Alongside written case studies and expert interviews, the short podcasts and videos of geographers discussing contemporary issues that were introduced in 2016 proved to be a very successful way of

engaging pupils throughout 2017. The podcasts were recognised in October with an award from the Scottish Association for Geography Teachers. New resources published during 2017 include those linked to the Global Learning Programme funded by the Department for International Development (DfID), and those supporting the new A Level independent investigation as part of the *Data skills in geography* project funded by the Nuffield Foundation.

The *Discovering the Arctic* online resources for pupils and teachers were redeveloped during 2017 and the new site will be launched in 2018. It was produced jointly with The NERC Arctic Office, British Antarctic Survey, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and Scottish Association for Marine Science.

2.3 Extending our engagement with new audiences

The Society continued to facilitate the use of its Collections by diverse community groups. During 2017 two groups applied for funding from the HLF for Collections-related projects in which the Society was a collaborative partner. In addition, a series of workshops based in the Collections



for community groups was delivered as part of one of the CDA projects on community and family histories.

An A Level summer school, supported by the Alexander Awards, took place during August for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, building on the experiences of the *Learning and leading* programme of previous years.

As a result of a Department for Education (DfE) funded initiative to recruit more geography teachers, the Society awarded 111 Geography Teacher Training Scholarships in the 2016/17 academic year, exceeding the DfE target. In September, the DfE renewed the Society's funding for the scheme for the 2017/18 academic year. Support from the higher education, professional, teaching and wider community has been invaluable in helping to promote the scheme and is much appreciated.

3 Geography in practice

Enabling professional and student communities

Objective Help meet the needs of practising geographers and students, so that there are vibrant, well trained, accredited professional communities, and highly employable students.

Context Geographical knowledge and skills are increasingly recognised at work and sought out by employers. Professional development and accreditation is becoming more widely valued and rewarded by employers. It is timely to expand the Society's role as a professional body and its support for professional geographers.

The Society is the UK's professional body for geography and plays a vital role in helping to maintain standards in the discipline. In 2017 it continued to provide training, accreditation and networking for a wide range of audiences including geographers in both the private and public sectors, in higher education and schools, as well as with those undertaking independent fieldwork and expeditions.

In particular

- In 2017 the Society started a new programme of field training for teachers to enhance their ability in formulating and leading local fieldwork, supported by ERM.
- Undergraduate geography programmes in more than 50% of UK had been accredited by the end of 2017, providing independent recognition that quality standards, in line with the subject benchmark, are being met.
- The Chartered Geographer scheme continued to grow, supported by a mentoring programme and a new programme of events with organisations across the breadth of sectors employing geographers.
- More than 1,500 teachers attended CPD events organised by the Society.

3.1 Promoting the professionalism of geography and geographers

The Society's actions to raise its profile as a professional body were approached in 2017 through the ongoing work with ERM and the AGI, as well as new activities with the Ordnance Survey, the Central Government Geographers Group, the new Head of Geography in government and additional links with commercial sectors.

3.2 Developing substantially the programme of professional support and accreditation

The Society plans, in the 2017-2021 strategy, to enhance significantly its work as a professional body started well.

During 2017, the Society built on the initial success of the undergraduate course accreditation scheme introduced in 2016. This is one of the ways for a university to receive independent recognition that the knowledge, skills and other attributes expected of high quality geography graduates are being delivered. By the end of the year, courses in more than 50% of UK geography departments

“The Society’s mentoring programme for aspiring and current Chartered Geographers benefits both mentors and mentees by facilitating rewarding relationships that contribute to professional development and lifelong learning. I’d strongly encourage fellow CGeogs and those looking to follow this professional path to seek each other out through this programme.”

Ashley Parry Jones, CGeog FRGS, Director of Environment at WSP

had been accredited. Accreditation has also been recognised in the Unistats Key Information Sets, which can be used by prospective students to compare programmes and outcomes.

The number of Chartered Geographers (CGeogs), the professional accreditation offered by the Society, grew to 714 during 2017. The mentoring programme for prospective CGeogs was re-launched and new events in collaboration with British Cartographic Society and the AGI were launched.

The Society continued to share good practice in teaching and learning geography in higher education with a series of workshops on external examining, funded by the Higher Education Academy, and two workshops for postgraduates who teach.

The Society also hosted two Athena Swan meetings for university geography departments to discuss issues of equality and diversity, and profiled their outcomes at the Heads of Geography Departments meeting.

3.3 Sustaining a strong training function in schools, higher education and field science

Geography Outdoors, the Society’s centre for supporting field research, exploration and outdoor learning, provided training and advice to over 500 individuals during 2017. The 18 courses organised by Geography Outdoors ranged from emergency medicine and assessing tree canopy cover to off-site safety management and using technology in the field. In addition, 400 people attended the *Explore* expedition planning weekend in London and 75 people went to *Explore North West* in Cumbria.

October’s, *Explore North West* was organised in partnership with the University of Cumbria. This pilot event provided seminars, workshops, talks and opportunities for networking for many people who would not otherwise have been able to access the expert expedition advice on offer at *Explore* in London.

The Peter Smith lecture, held on the opening evening of *Explore*, was given by Sacha Dench and Julia Newth who described their project to help conserve Bewick’s swans.

The Society is a leading provider of continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers of geography at secondary level. In total, more than 1,500 teachers attended CPD events organised by the Society during 2017. A new series of teacher fieldwork CPD events was developed during the year and includes a training day on field techniques relevant to the new A Level curriculum content.

Funding for the *Data skills in geography* and *Geography – a subject hub for London* projects came to an end at the end of 2017. In total, over the course of the project lifetimes, they provided training opportunities for thousands of teachers, receiving much positive feedback.

2017 at a glance

Research and Higher Education



2,000 SURVEYS

- **2,000** households surveyed as part of the first field research season of *Migrants on the margins*, the Society's Field Research Programme.
- International Review of UK Physical Geography **published**.



53 COUNTRIES

- Geographers from **53** countries attended the Society's Annual International Conference.

Fieldwork and Expeditions



18 WORKSHOPS

- Geography Outdoors ran **18** workshops attended by over **500** individuals.

Geography remains in excellent health. In 2017 the number of pupils choosing geography at GCSE increased for the **sixth** consecutive year, A Level numbers were the highest for **17 years** and employment rates for geography graduates remained **high**.

Education



£200k

- Over **£200,000** was awarded for field research projects and expeditions across the world.
- **50th** Slawson Award for PhD students carrying out geographical field research overseas granted.

2,000 ENTRIES

- **2,000** entries to the Young Geographer of the Year competition.
- **1,500** teachers attended Society run CPD events across the UK.

111 SCHOLARS

- **111** scholars recruited for the Geography Teacher Training Scholarship scheme.

Policy, Governance and Fundraising



NEW APPOINTMENT

- **One** cross-government Head of Geography appointed.
- **£1.65m** was raised during the year in support of the Society's work in 2017 and beyond.



21 YEARS

- Past President, Michael Palin, spoke at an event in July to celebrate **21** years of development.
- **7** major government consultations were responded to.

Public Engagement



ONE MILLION

- Over **one million** people saw *Britain from the Air* while it was on display in Nottingham and Liverpool.
- **945,000** individual users of the Society's website.

Collections and Enterprises



400⁺
EVENTS

- Over **400** Society events took place across the UK.

£250k

- Three year, **£250,000** upgrade of Ondaatje Theatre AV, sound and lighting completed.

100,000
VISITORS

- **100,000** visitors to the *Enduring Eye* exhibition.

4 Growing our reputation

Building on tradition, independence and contemporary relevance

Objective Build further the Society's strong profile, reputation and presence, nationally and internationally, reinforcing and publicising its role as a leader among learned societies and a partner of choice.

Context The Society is well established and highly respected, UK-wide and internationally. It has a well-developed international reach in selected activities and an international membership in more than 100 countries. It is regularly consulted as a leading learned society. Geopolitical changes and technological developments offer incentives and opportunities to establish a stronger presence, and partnerships with sister societies, across the UK and internationally, for mutual benefit and that of geography.

During 2017, the breadth and depth of the Society's activities maintained its reputation as a leading learned society. This was greatly aided by working productively with partner bodies and the geographical community in general, and by raising awareness of key initiatives with both the membership and the public.

In particular

- The Society developed a new website during the year, focussing on improving the discoverability of content and showcasing the Society's breadth of work.
- The media launch of the Society's Field Research Project, *Migrants on the margins*, generated positive leads and new relationships with journalists.
- The Society's journals continued to perform very well, providing a valuable resource for the academic community across the world.

4.1 Developing and consolidating bilateral relationships

The Society continued to sustain strong relationships with the British Academy (BA) and the Academy of Social Sciences (AcSS), including through the Director's personal involvement as a member of the BA's new skills programme steering group, the BA's Higher Education Policy Development Group and on the Council of AcSS. The Society was also represented at the Strategic Forum for Social Science, which brought together leading institutions under the chair of Lord

Stern in 2017. The Society remains the UK representative body for the International Geographical Union. The development of closer links with the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) was postponed during 2017, awaiting the appointment of a new Chair. This activity will be resumed once she is established in her role.

The Society's alliance with the AGI commenced in 2017 with the appointment of a jointly-funded post to deliver public affairs activities and the development of a plan for future activity. The separate contractual agreement with the AGI to deliver services for their membership also progressed well during the year, with substantial documentation of processes being completed.

In relation to school geography the Society continued to liaise with the Geographical Association (GA) and the Council of British Geography (COBRIG), as well as to work closely with the Field Studies Council, the Ordnance Survey, Esri UK and the examining boards offering GCSE and A Level courses. Positive discussions about possible areas

“The chance to edit *The Geographical Journal* has been a great opportunity to help build the Society’s reputation for publishing the best of theoretically-informed and policy-relevant research from across geography.”

Professor Keith Richards, Journal Editor

of collaboration took place with the Royal Scottish Geographical Society.

4.2 **Enhancing our presence, online and across the UK**

During 2017, the Society’s website was visited by over 945,000 individual users, who looked at over three million pages of content. In April, the Society awarded a competitive tender to redevelop the website and produce a site that delivered a better user experience and had improved integration with the Society’s contact and membership database. The new site, which includes the facility to join the Society online, will go live in the first quarter of 2018.

The Society’s social media channels continued to grow and registered greater engagement. By the end of 2017, the Society’s social media followers (across all feeds) totalled 61,000.

Media coverage of the Society and its activities was reduced in 2017 compared to previous years due to staff changes. There were, however, some notable successes, including the media launch of *Migrants on the margins* in mid-February, which generated positive leads and new relationships for later on in the project. Several articles related to the Annual Conference were published

in national press, including the *Sunday Times*. A BBC News documentary called *Great Explorations* and allied BBC online, radio, TV and social media coverage took place in May focusing on the digitisation of the Society’s film collection. Four letters were printed in the *Times Educational Supplement* in response to articles about the geography curriculum and teacher recruitment. The opening of *Enduring Eye* in Birmingham and Edinburgh also generated coverage online and in local press, as did the opening of *Britain from the Air* in Liverpool.

4.3 **Extending the international dimension of current activities**

The Society’s reach and reputation are global. The Society’s scholarly journals (*Area*, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, *The Geographical Journal*, *WIREs Climate Change* and *Geo*) and books continued to disseminate new geographical research during 2017. Society journals are available in over 9,600 institutions worldwide, including more than 5,400 in the developing world via philanthropic initiatives. Two new books were published in the RGS-IBG Book Series in 2017.

The Society’s collaborative Field Research Project, *Migrants on the margins*, is being undertaken in partnership with the Centre for Migration Research and Development in Sri Lanka, the International Centre for Climate Change and Development in Bangladesh, the Development Governance Institute in Zimbabwe, and the Organisation for Conflict and Violence Prevention in Somaliland.

The longstanding Hong Kong branch of the Society continued to have a lively and well supported programme of events, with over 64 lectures and other events organised during 2017.

Items from the Antarctic collections were loaned to the Bowers Museum in California to support their version of the *Enduring Eye* exhibition, which opened in September. And the loan of Hurley lantern slides to the Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands was renewed.

5 Enhancing our membership

An important source of expertise, funding and enthusiasm

Objective Reach and engage new supporters and retain the enthusiasm and expertise of existing Fellows and members, across the UK and beyond, ensuring a strong and growing membership of both professionals and enthusiasts who support our activities.

Context The Society benefits from its Fellows' and members' knowledge, enthusiasm, time, contacts, and their subscriptions which provide around a quarter of the Society's gross income. The Society especially values its many loyal Fellows who are long term supporters. To continue to develop sustainably, the continuing high retention and good recruitment of Fellows and members is essential.

The breadth of the Society's membership is a core strength of the organisation. It encompasses academic geographers, teachers and students, professional geographers, expeditioners and independent travellers, and those with a general interest in understanding our changing world. Every Fellow and member contributes to the Society's influence; every subscription supports the Society's charitable work; and many members also volunteer time, expertise and/or advice.

In particular

- The number of Society Fellows was successfully sustained and the total number of Fellows and members remain at around 16,000.
- 3,000 Fellows, members and other volunteers gave their time and expertise to support the Society's work during 2017.
- The Society recognises, and greatly appreciates, the role of Fellows and members in extending the reach of the Society and encouraging new joiners.

5.1 Continuing to improve engagement and communication with members

Improvements in the flow of member messaging between the Communications and Membership teams were achieved during 2017. This has resulted in a better breadth and balance in the reporting of the Society's work and developments in geography across all strands of communication and more consistent 'join us' messages in communications aimed at non-members.

Throughout 2017, there was a focus on the development of a new website for the Society. Among the essential functionality identified early in the project was a better digital experience for members including intuitive online 'Monday night' lectures, joining and event booking. These functionalities were being tested at the end of 2017 and will be delivered to users as part of the new site in the first quarter of 2018.

The Society news pages of the current website remained a source of timely information about

“Geography means so much to me as a student. Being an Ambassador helps with my personal development, and spreads new ideas and geography love.”

Daisy Hunt, Geography Ambassador

the Society’s activities. In 2017, an average of two articles were published each week to enable the breadth of work being done by the Society to be profiled. All the articles were also shared on social media to extend their reach.

Geographical magazine, produced under licence by Syon Publishing for the Society, featured a wide range of geographical stories, including those on the Northwest Passage and global gender equality, as well on air pollution and the restoration of Florida’s Everglades. Each monthly issue also contained an article about Society activities and initiatives. *Geographical* is available in print and digital editions.

With the implementation in May 2018 of new data protection legislation (GDPR), the Society started an audit of the personal data it keeps, the reasons for keeping that data and the implications of the new legislation. Towards the end of 2017, a workplan to guide the Society in being compliant with GDPR by May 2018 was agreed by the Finance Committee.

5.2 **Enhancing recruitment and retention**

In line with recent years, in 2017 there was a good retention rate for Fellows (93%) and a total of 2,357 new joiners across all membership categories. After a slow start early in the year, all membership categories caught up with 2016 retention and recruitment rates. The exception was the number of Young Geographers, which was down 10% on recent years. The Geography Teacher Training Scholarships scheme brought in 111 new Postgraduate Fellows and School Membership remained steady at 550.

The most successful recruitment routes remained people coming to public events, members bringing guests to Monday night lectures, CGeog accreditation, and personal invitations to geographers in the public eye.

5.3 **Learning more about our members and their engagement with the Society**

The Society thanks its highly committed regional committees for organising events for members and the public during 2017. The volunteers who make up the regional committees are just a proportion of the 3,000 people who

gave their time and expertise during the year to support the aims and objectives of the Society. In total, an estimated 1,500 days of direct volunteer support was given by speakers at events, Geography Ambassadors, expert advisors, editors and editorial board members, peer reviewers, grant reviewers and committee members.

6 Securing the future

As one of the world's largest and most active scholarly geographical societies

Objective Enable a robust future for the Society, by increasing income sustainably, using technology effectively, and enhancing staff capabilities.

Context The Society is an independent body and, like other learned and professional societies, receives no core government funding. Annual income has more than doubled in real terms since 1996, and substantial external donations have been attracted. The current UK setting places greater uncertainty on growing income over 2017-2021. We are thus aiming for modest, sustainable growth in core funding from subscriptions, enterprise, operations, and corporate support; plus fundraising success for new projects and the endowment.

The Society was well positioned in 2017. A new, five-year strategy and business plan was finalised and approved, for 2017-2021. This builds on the success of the past three strategies in seeking to extend the Society's work and influence, including further development of our role as a professional body. It retains the Society's breadth of scope and broad balance of charitable activities. The Society also benefited from loyal staff, secure finances, sound governance, and a sustained base of volunteer support and expertise.

The Society ended the year in a strong position, with an operating surplus on the General Fund and the key income streams sustained, including the growth in recent years in enterprise income. The main income sources for the charity continued to be membership subscriptions, Enterprise Company net revenue, targeted fundraising and operating activities. The financial review (pages 24/25) sets out how the Society generated and spent its income in support of its charitable activities.

As usual at this point in the strategy cycle, 2017 was a transition year. Completion of a number of projects linked to the last strategy, sat alongside work to set up for the new one. The latter included planned expansion of staff capacity in the communications team, and a review of staff needs in support of professional and policy-related activities.

Fundraising focused more than usual on stewardship of Fellows, members, donors and other key stakeholders during the Director's

last full year in post. A major donor's event was held and a new publication, written by John Williams, celebrated the achievements of the RGS-IBG since its formation in 1995 and the role of donors in supporting it. Fundraising during the year generated new funds of £1.65m (2016: £1.9m). The formal linking of the Frederick Soddy Charitable Trust to the Society was also agreed in principle.

2017 saw completion of the three-year, £250,000, programme to upgrade the Ondaatje Theatre facilities, with a new sound system installed in 2017. The external security systems were also upgraded, and the automated plant monitoring equipment repaired to ensure real time, remote monitoring capabilities. All statutory reporting requirements were met.

The Society made progress in seeking efficiencies and developing internal data management and use to support improved decision making. Most notable was the development of a new website.



We thank everyone who has kindly donated in support of our work; those supporting activities in 2017 are listed below.

Corporate Benefactors in 2017

All are warmly thanked for their support and encouragement.

Environmental Resources Management (ERM)

supported the Society's core work with professional audiences, specifically to enhance teachers' fieldwork leadership skills and to enable a regional programme of cross sector networking and professional development.

Esri UK supported the Society's *Geography Ambassador* programme and brought GIS expertise to it and to the training of teachers in the classroom use of GIS. Ambassadors inspired more than 25,000 young people in 2017 with geography and GIS.

Land Rover supported our core scientific expedition and fieldwork training activities, including Land Rover driver training courses, the loan of a *Freelander* to facilitate UK-wide visits, and the Land Rover Bursary to support one major field expedition during the year.

Rolex supported our core work with and through the Society's large, unique and iconic collections of maps, photographs, books, documents and objects, helping to underpin public access, conservation and new uses for, and users of, the Collections.

Trailfinders supported the Society's core work with the public, to inspire and promote the wider relevance and enjoyment of geography and to foster a greater understanding of our world. This builds on a shared common interest in informed travel.

Corporate Business Member

Silversea engaged the Society in providing educative materials on their expedition cruise ships.

Other supporters

Owing to space limitations, not everyone can be mentioned but the Society thanks you all warmly as every donation matters. We also thank staff and others who have provided fundraising guidance and assistance.

Education

Arctic Office, NERC
British Antarctic Survey
British Antarctic Territory
Department for Education
Department for International Development
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Greater London Authority
Ordnance Survey
Pearson UK
Polar Regions Department
The Nuffield Foundation

Fieldwork, expeditions and grants

Named endowments in earlier years for grant-giving in perpetuity

Alexander Awards
Deutsche Post Foundation
Dudley Stamp Memorial Fund
Frederick Soddy Trust
Geographical Club
Hong Kong Branch
John and Anne Alexander
John Pilkington and the BBC
Land Rover Experience
Neil Proto
Neville Shulman
Paul and Mary Slawson
Walters Kundert Awards
Jeremy Willson Trust

Collections and Lowther Lodge

NADFAS
Sir Christopher Ondaatje

Legacies received

Estate of Lord Chorley
Estate of Mr Timothy R H Morgan

Membership services

Philip's Publishing
Stanfords Maps and Books

Public engagement

21st Century Challenges project supporter
British Film Institute
Discovering Britain project supporter
Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust
Heritage Lottery Fund
The Clothworkers' Company
Walter Scott

Research and higher education

Higher Education Academy

Financial review

The summarised financial statements for 2017 on the following page provide an overview of the Society's balance sheet assets, liabilities and funds, together with its sources of both income and expenditure by activity.

In 2017, the Society's annual operating result on the General Fund, after transfers between funds, but before investment and pension valuations gains/losses was a surplus of £0.19m (2016: £0.31m). This was on the total General Fund income of £5.06m (2016: £4.67m), and was ahead of the budget for the year. The total Society income was down 14% at £5.58m (2016: up 21% to £6.52m) largely owing to donations and legacy income being lower in 2017 (£0.26m) than in 2016 (£1.31m) which was unusually high. The expenditure on charitable activities decreased to £4.38m (2016: £4.58m), which equates to 79% of total expenditure.

The broad patterns of other income and expenditure in the General Fund remained similar in 2017 to 2016. Gross income and expenditure in Enterprises activities was up in 2017, to £1.93m (2016: £1.77m) and £0.89m (2016: £0.80m), respectively; net income rose by £0.07m, after contributions to building repairs and other costs. Membership income in 2017 rose by £0.06m to £1.68m and generated £0.93m net after costs of membership services in 2017. Income from charitable activities decreased by £0.18m to £1.16m. Proportional income is summarised in the first pie chart.

General Fund expenditure as a whole increased in 2017 by 6%, nearly half of the difference being the increase in expenditure on Enterprises activities noted above. 2017 total costs, at £5.54m, were hardly changed from 2016 (£5.58m). The Society's expenditure on charitable activities decreased in 2017 by £0.19m, down 4.2% on 2016, to £4.38m. Of the total, 15% was from restricted (donated project and grants) funds, with almost all the remainder from the General Fund. Expenditure across the main areas of charitable activity showed some year on year variations, resulting largely from varying levels of conference and project activity, with spend on research and higher education up and on policy and public engagement down, the latter due to reduced project expenditure on the 21st Century Challenges: policy forum and public discussions and *Discovering Britain* projects. Expenditure on education remained similar to 2016. The second pie chart shows total resources expended by activity (with the effects of depreciation removed).

The summary consolidated balance sheet shows net assets increasing by £0.50m (2016: £1.65m increase), excluding the change in the liability of the defined benefit pension scheme as calculated annually for FRS102. The decrease in this liability to £0.21m (2016: £1.03m.) increases the net assets movement to £1.33m. The Society's actual, legal, obligation to funding the scheme is determined by the triennial actuarial valuation, the last one being at

June 2017. The Society's calculated Free Reserves, which includes the FRS102 calculation of the pension deficit, at 31 December 2017 were £2.69m (2016: £1.63m).

Independent auditor's statement to the Trustees of the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers)

We have examined the summarised financial statements of the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) for the year ended 31 December 2017 set out on page 25.

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and the auditor The trustees are responsible for preparing the summarised financial statements.

Our responsibility is to report to you our opinion on the consistency of the summarised financial statements with the full annual financial statements and the Trustees' Annual Report.

We also read the other information contained in the summarised Annual Report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the summarised financial statements. The other information comprises only the Annual Review.

We conducted our work in accordance with our engagement letter dated 3 January 2018.

Opinion In our opinion the summarised financial statements are consistent with the full annual financial statements and the Trustees' Annual Report of the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) for the year ended 31 December 2017.

RSM UK Audit LLP Statutory Auditor, April 2018.

The Pinnacle, 170 Midsummer Boulevard, Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK9 1BP

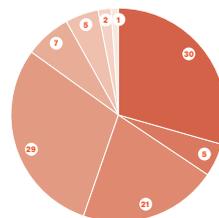
These summarised financial statements are extracted from the Society's full audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2017, which were approved by Council on 9 April 2018. The full Financial Statements and Trustees' Report will be submitted to the Charity Commission after the Society's AGM, and are available on the Society's website **W** www.rgs.org and the Charity Commission website **W** www.charity-commission.gov.uk.

Consolidated Balance Sheet

	RESTRICTED	DESIGNATED Research & New Initiatives	DESIGNATED Other	GENERAL	TOTALS 31.12.2017
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Fixed assets	4,476	•	177	1,227	5,880
Investments	3,879	2,279	1,847	2,297	10,302
Current assets	131	•	107	3,724	3,962
Current liabilities	•	•	•	-1,075	-1,075
Pension scheme liability	•	•	•	-208	-208
Inter-fund accounts	395	346	2,083	-2,824	•
Net assets	8,881	2,625	4,214	3,141	18,861
Funds balances 31.12.17	8,881	2,625	4,214	3,141	18,861
Funds balances 31.12.16	9,132	2,474	3,929	1,999	17,534
2017 net Funds movement	-251	151	285	1,142	1,327

Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities

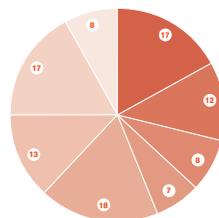
Incoming resources (see right for analysis by sources)	241	81	201	5,060	5,583
Resources expended (see right for analysis by activity)	-708	-35	-34	-4,759	-5,536
Net investment gain	180	109	40	96	425
Surplus before transfers	-287	155	207	397	472
Transfers between funds	36	-4	78	-110	•
Surplus after transfers	-251	151	285	287	472
Actuarial loss on pension scheme	•	•	•	855	855
	-251	151	285	1,142	1,327



£5.58m income by source

2016: £6.52m

- 30% Membership subscriptions
- 5% Donations and legacies
- 21% Income generated by charitable activities
- 29% RGS Enterprises turnover
- 7% Investment income
- 5% Corporate supporters
- 2% Tenants
- 1% Services provided



£5.19m resources expended by activity

Excluding depreciation of £0.35m. 2016: £5.23m (£0.35m)

- 17% Education, expeditions, fieldwork, grants
- 12% Engaging wider audiences
- 8% Information services & resources
- 7% Policy, communications, media
- 18% Research, higher education, grants
- 13% Membership services
- 17% RGS Enterprises costs
- 8% Other, including governance

Governance

The Society is governed by its Council which largely comprises Fellows elected from and by the Fellowship. They are drawn from the main areas of activity of the Society. Twenty one Council members are elected and up to four further Council members may be co-opted, including a postgraduate representative, to bring further breadth, expertise and contact networks.

In line with recommendations of good practice by the Charity Commission, the Council identifies the skills and expertise gaps that would be most helpful to fill in the elections to the Council each June. Fellows standing for election are encouraged to state how they met those identified gaps. However, this approach does not preclude any Fellow standing for election to positions relevant to their background. The Council is also cognisant of the value of diversity, while seeking to attract the most appropriately qualified people to guide the Society's governance.

Council positions are elected for a single term of three years at the Annual General Meeting, which includes a postal vote of the Fellowship. Elected Council members also serve on the appropriate Committee of Council to provide liaison between the two levels.

The Council met, as usual, three times in 2017 and attendance averaged 83% across all three meetings. The Executive Committee, which comprises the senior-most

Trustees, met in the intervening periods as the need arose.

The following Council members were in office at the end of 2017

President

Nicholas Crane

Immediate Past President

Professor Dame Judith Rees

Vice Presidents

Dr Michael Firth
(Education)

Professor Adrian Smith
(Research and Higher Education)

Professor Katie Willis
(Expeditions and Fieldwork)

Honorary Treasurer

Mark Humphreys

Chair of Annual Conference 2017

Professor Sarah Radcliffe

Honorary Secretaries

Dr Simon Carr
(Expeditions and Fieldwork)

Laura Stone
(Education)

Dr Nicola Thomas
(Research and Higher Education)

Ordinary Members of Council

Dr David Anderson
Felicity Aston MBE
Dr Jenny Balfour-Paul
Professor Joanna Bullard
Dan Casey

Dr Vanessa Lawrence CB
Professor Sarah Metcalfe
Professor Chris Philo
David Pyle

Clare Sladden
Chris Speight
Professor Jamie Woodward

The following also served as Council Members until June 2017:

Professor Phil Ashworth
Professor Peter Jackson
Dr Emma Mawdsley
Dr Kathryn Monk
Dr John Shears
Maddy Thompson

The Council is advised by specialist committees for Education; Expeditions and Fieldwork; Finance; and Research and Higher Education. Attendance at these committee meetings averaged 73% across the year. The Finance Committee met four times, as usual, and comprises a core membership of accounting, financial, legal and investment professionals. The other committees met twice, as usual, to advise on their areas of expertise. In addition, advice was provided by the Regions Committee, a small number of specialist Sub-Committees, including one for investments and, where appropriate, individual professional advisors. RGS Enterprises Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Society, is governed by its Enterprise Board.

Staff

The Director reports to the Council and has responsibility for coordinating the Society's strategy and running the Society and its activities, assisted by a senior team of five departmental heads and a staff that numbered 56 in December 2017. All staff members are based at the Society's headquarters in Kensington, London.

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Looking ahead

Over the coming years the Society's work will be guided by the 2017-2021 strategy, whose aims are briefly set out on the inside front cover of this Annual Review.

In the past 23 years, with much support and advice from our communities, we have created a modern learned society and professional body for geography in the RGS-IBG, and an effective champion for the discipline. Our ability to inspire young people and engage adults in learning about our world is stronger than ever. The breadth of audiences and user numbers has grown dramatically, and our reserves, revenues and facilities have been significantly enhanced. The strategy aims to build on this success.

A key challenge is to sustain in real terms the current high level of Society income in a period of considerable political and economic uncertainty. Our income sources are discretionary; we do not receive core government funding. Thus, we must rely on our track record, innovation and enterprise, and loyal supporters to fund our work across the UK and internationally.

Retaining the Society's strengths and broad balance in its work is vital to its

future and that of geography. We will continue to support research and higher education, schools, fieldwork and expeditions, engaging the public and policymakers, and professional practitioners. Our audiences will continue to range from enthusiast to professional and all career stages.

Continuing advocacy to sustain geography's current position of strength at school and university is essential, as is doing all that we can to help the government ensure a sufficient number of well-trained specialist geography teachers. A successful completion and evaluation of the Society's collaborative field research programme, *Migrants on the margins* is a high priority too.

Planned new developments include:

- Developing our work as a professional body, including accreditation, professional networking and discussions, and geographical skills and training.
- Working with schools on, and in, areas of greatest need to enhance geography teaching.
- Widening diversity in the discipline across all sectors.

- Developing further our support for fieldwork and expeditions.
- Ensuring geography, and its research and practitioner communities, features prominently in the challenges-led, interdisciplinary, and industrial strategy agendas.
- Enhancing our work in knowledge exchange to UK policy.

In the face of populism and the many 'geographical' challenges society faces, the strategy envisages a new series of topical public discussions and briefings. With more than 50% of Society events taking place outside London, it is timely to rethink how we present the Society's UK offer. An integrated digital strategy, starting with a new website, will be essential in making more of our work. The facilities will also receive attention, including a major appeal to conserve the south façade of Lowther Lodge.

And all the while we will also be seeking ways to sustain and improve our existing core activities to advance geographical science, including public access to and interpretation of the Collections.

Recognising excellence in 2017

The Society's Medals and Awards have recognised excellence in the breadth of geographical research, practice and public promotion since the foundation of the Society in 1830.

The two Royal Medals (The Founder's and Patron's Medals) are among the highest international accolades. They are awarded for 'the encouragement and promotion of geographical science and discovery'.

In 2017 Her Majesty the Queen approved the award of the Royal Medals as follows:

Founder's Medal

Sir Gordon Conway

'for the enhancement and promotion of agricultural development in Asia and Africa'

Patron's Medal

Lindsey Hilsum

'for promoting the understanding of global conflict and inequality'

The Society's Council made the following awards:

Victoria Medal

Professor Andrew Cliff

'for research excellence in spatial epidemiology'

Busk Medal

Professor David J A Evans

'for excellence and originality in the study of glacial landscapes and processes and empowering the next generation'

Cherry Kearton Medal & Award

Harry Hook

'for original documentation of Africa through photography'

Murchison Award

Professor Henry Wai-chung Yeung

'for pioneering publications in the field of globalisation'

Back Award

Professor Harriet Bulkeley

'for contributions to the shaping of international policy on climate change'

Cuthbert Peek Award

Dr James Cheshire

'for advancing geographical knowledge through the use of mappable Big Data'

Gill Memorial Award (two awards)

Dr Sarah Mills

'for outstanding early career research in cultural geography'

Ness Award

Professor Kathleen Jamie

'for outstanding creative writing at the confluence of travel, nature and culture'

Ordnance Survey Awards (two awards)

Claire Power and Paul Turner

'for excellence in the promotion and practice of teaching and learning of geography in higher education'

Taylor & Francis Award

Professor Ian Cook *et al*

'for excellence in the promotion and practice of teaching and learning of geography in higher education'

Alfred Steers Dissertation Prize

Alex Henry

'for the undergraduate geography dissertation judged to be the best in 2016'

Area Prize

Dr Brendon Blue

'for the best article in the journal by a new researcher'

Geographical Award

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

'for inspiring generations of young people through challenging expeditions'

Honorary Fellowship

David Riviere

'in recognition of outstanding commitment and contribution to the Society'

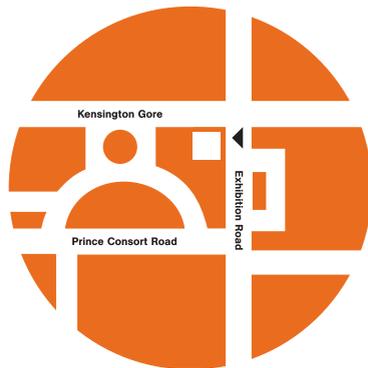
The Society further recognised excellence through the Young Geographer of the Year Awards, the Rex Walford Award to recognise newly qualified teachers, and the Excellence Awards made to pupils who achieved the highest marks in GCSE, A Level and International Baccalaureate examinations in Geography.

This report summarises the Society's charitable activities and finances in 2017 in pursuit of its objective to 'advance geographical science'. The Society's work is guided by its current strategy and benefits a wide range of professional and public audiences. The Society is a vibrant organisation that seeks to balance its stakeholders and activities for the benefit of all our users and of geography. The full annual accounts and report can be found on our website and that of the Charity Commission.

If you would like to receive a copy of this report in PDF so that it can be read in larger print or using Adobe Reader software, please visit

 www.rgs.org/annualreview

Registered Charity 208791



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Acknowledgements

Front cover

Annual International Conference © Rob Johns

Page 1

Nicholas Crane © RGS-IBG

Page 2

clockwise from top left

Ondaatje Theatre during Explore weekend © Nico Wills

Researcher performing Q interview in Dhaka © Chris Smith

Investigating glacial geomorphology in Iceland © Sasha Charles

Enduring Eye in Edinburgh © Callum Bennetts /National Library of Scotland

Page 3

Rita Gardner © RGS-IBG

Page 5

Knowledge exchange event © Debbie Castro

Page 8

Investigating Arctic glacial ecosystems © Dr Arwyn Edwards

Page 11

Teacher Training Scholarship residential fieldwork weekend © RGS-IBG

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Research and Higher Education

Researchers recording results of a Q sort © Chris Smith

Speaker at AC2017 © Panel 8

Fieldwork and Expeditions

Geography Outdoors workshop © RGS-IBG

Investigating lichen growth rate © Alex Ingle

Education

Young Geographer of the Year © Howard Sayer

Teacher Training Scholarship residential fieldwork weekend © RGS-IBG

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Policy, Governance and Fundraising

David Wood © David Wood

Michael Palin © Panel 8

Public Engagement

Terraced housing in Liverpool, *Britain from the Air* © Webb Aviation

Event audience © Panel 8

Collections and Enterprises

Ondaatje Theatre © Panel 8

Enduring Eye in Edinburgh © Callum Bennetts /National Library of Scotland