Annual General Meeting – BCS Belfast Branch
Chairman's Report
8th December 2014

Dear Colleagues,

I took up office as Chairman of the Belfast Branch of the BCS at the start of 2014 and would like to formally put on record my thanks to my predecessor, Paul Hanna from Cisco, who's commitment, drive and enthusiasm on behalf of the BCS here in Northern Ireland was outstanding.   I'd also like to personally thank all my colleagues on the Committee here in Belfast and to the team from BCS Headquarters who have provided support over the past year.

This year has been a year of 3 themes. First, serving our membership by running a very active branch with a series of successful events throughout the year; second, maintaining and growing the BCS's local relevance with the Devolved Administration and sister organisations like MomentumNI in the development of policies on STEM and the ICT/Digital profession; third, planning for the future.

In terms of events, I'd like to thank a broad range of people who have given up their time to arrange a disparate range of events throughout the year. I do not intend to cover every event but there have been some notable successes. The CV and Interview Skills event proved popular at the start of the year and we plan to run this event again in January. We supported the Farset Gathering of Lightning events throughout the year. The 'Introduction to the MOOC Phenomenon' event held at the Ulster University attracted a large audience to hear Eleanor Dewar from Ocelot Education Research explain the size and reach of MOOCs. Prior to the Giro d'Italia event in May we held a special event with Chain Reaction and it proved very successful. This year's BCS 7-a-side football tournament in June was also a success and thanks must go to Stephen Whelan and the volunteers who every year help to make this event so enjoyable.

The winner of this year's BCS Prize for Computing at Queen's University was Alan Foster who achieved the highest average marks in the final Honours examination.

The annual BCS Golf Day was once again held at Malone Golf Club and John McCloy arranged both the event and the superb weather. CME laid on a very topical event in early November on the subject of 'Agile in Practice – Tools and Implementation' presented by Cathal King which was very well attended. Finally, the IT Professional of the Year event at Ten Square attracted just under 60 people and we heard from the President of the BCS, Professor Liz Bacon, and Peter Campbell the CTO at Kainos. The IT Professional of the Year Award for 2014 went to Rob McConnell from SQS and I'd like to thank both Bob McLaughlin and

Ron Perrott for providing their services as a judging panel, and Brightwater Recruitment for their generous sponsorship.

Finally, it is with great pleasure that I record a major success for the BCS Branch here in Northern Ireland. For some time my predecessor, Paul Hanna, has been campaigning for the annual Turing Lecture to depart from tradition and leave Great Britain and come to Northern Ireland. Following a significant amount of lobbying by members of the BCS branch here in Belfast along with colleagues from the IET, the Institute of Physics and Belfast City Council, we will see the Turing Lecture for the first time here in Belfast as part of the forthcoming Northern Ireland Science Festival on 26th February 2015.

It has been a pleasure serving as Chair of the Belfast Branch of the BCS during 2014 and I look forward to another successful year of events, lobbying and planning during 2015.

Bill McCluggage

Chair of the Belfast Branch of the BCS
8th December 2015