Belfast Branch

Chairman's Report 2012-2013

It has been a tremendous privilege to be Chair of the Belfast Branch for the last year and this has been a very successful year for the Branch, with a full programme of events delivered across a wide range of topics. The attendance at the events has been encouraging and we hope to continue to expand the programme through the coming year. CPD certificates are now awarded to attendees of events to help support individuals with professional development. Many thanks to all our speakers throughout the year for their support of the branch.

Membership has dropped by roughly 60 members over the last year but it is great to see that younger member group continue to make up nearly 1/3 of our membership which bodes well for the future of the branch. We continue to be challenged by not having any local assessors for CITP within our region and we will continue to address this through HQ. This however should not hinder any member from seeking CITP status as interviews are currently carried out via Skype and can I encourage all members to consider upgrading to the next level. We ran an event this year to explain the process and provide support for those looking to further their membership and will look to repeat again this year. As a result we have several new Fellows, Chartered and members.

From a financial point we have targeted our annual allocation at events and have applied for exceptional funding for projects outside the norm. Such funding applications have in the past been received positively by HQ and the increasing activity within the Branch will provide an even stronger case.

I would like to congratulate Bill McCluggage on becoming the IT Professional of the Year and William McGorman being awarded BCS Student of the Year in Queens. The University of Ulster student was Philip Hartin and we have also recognised David Fee, Mark Stuart and Jamie Doyle all students at Belfast Met College. It is also a pleasure to have Bill present the Chairman's invitation lecture and many thanks to him. Congratulations to Malcolm Calvert on winning the Annual BCS Golf and Allstate for their success in the 7 a side football.

It is a personal crusade of mine to champion volunteering and giving back to our communities. Last year we as BCS supported Habitat for Humanity and this year Mike King and myself slept out as part of Byte Night in support of Action for Children. I continue to promote a cohort of BCS members as STEM ambassadors who could evangelise IT and Computing in schools and would ask for your continued support with this worthy initiative.

We have added Facebook, Linkedin and Twitter to our Branch communications and would encourage everyone to join the groups and contribute to the conversations. The Branch is keen to engage with members and this provides a simple platform for members to express opinions and make requests. As a branch we have used it as a means of gathering feedback from members and can I encourage everyone to respond good and bad with your opinions. We are always looking for speakers and suggestions for event and would welcome volunteers and recommendations.

As I step down from my post as Chair can I take this opportunity to thank in particular my fellow committee members for their support. I know the Branch is in good standing with the calibre of members in the committee and wish them every success moving forward and my continued support.

Paul Hanna
Branch Chairman
7 November 2013