

BCS South Yorkshire Branch Chair's Annual Report 2007/2008

We have continued our policy to deliver all our communications to members by e-mail and through our website: <http://sy.bcs.org>. The only paper materials distributed will be for those attending the 2007 AGM itself. As a whole the BCS now runs most of its activities electronically and so I would encourage you to ensure that the BCS has an active email address for you.

I would like to thank our sponsor - 'The IT Foundry' for their significant support throughout the year. It has been their support that has enabled us to hold our meetings in their building.

Our annual Eliot Chiat student prize, named after our long serving branch Secretary who died in January 2003, continues to be awarded at the University of Sheffield. The prize is awarded to the best second year single honours student performance in the Department of Computer Science at the University of Sheffield.

We are also awarding a prize to Hallam University and to colleges in the South Yorkshire area.

British Computer Society Membership

Following the change in the membership rules in 2004 the Society continues to go from strength to strength. The BCS continues to promote membership using 'Trusted Sources'. This is a method by which new members can be introduced to the BCS using an accelerated process - it should take less than five working days for a new membership to be processed once it has been received. Many BCS members will have received a 'Trusted Source' form and they are encouraged to identify two people who they think would benefit from becoming a BCS member. The branch is also a 'Trusted Source' and so can recommend people for membership via the accelerated route.

We have also had many trusted source applications for Fellowship status accepted. This is the accelerated route for IT professionals who are deemed to be leaders in their field.

The Committee

This is my first year as branch Chair. I would like to extend my genuine thanks to the Executive committee for its support and effort during the past year – without their help and support none of the events we have held would have been possible. I would also like to thank the previous chair Dr Louise Webb for her help and guidance this year, she has also been very productive in her new PR role

I would like to especially thank Colin Smythe for his excellent work keeping members informed of all events, Nick Dibben for his consistent minute taking and invaluable suggestions and organising of speakers and Dave Rotherham for organising the rooms and the buffet and generally keeping us all on our toes. I would also like to thank Anna Smallwood, Matt Green, Steve Hartley and Colin Brookes (our Quiz maestro). I can honestly say that without these guys the branch would not be the success it has been this year.

Special mention should also be given to Gavin Whitelaw and Chris Gray for volunteering to take on the task of keeping the website up to date and look into future development opportunities.

Web site

The location of the South Yorkshire BCS website is :

<http://sy.bcs.org>

It continues to be the source of information regarding upcoming events, and where you can register to attend meetings.

Next Year's Programme

We will continue to provide a mixture of technical and business orientated talks next year. The events will all be held in the Sheffield Hallam University Stoddart Building apart from the December 2007 event which we tend to organise in a licensed venue. We are looking for a suitable venue at the moment – any members who know of a good place please let us know.

Anyone who has an idea for a talk please let me or one of the committee members know.

You can put the dates in your diary now - the third Thursday in the month, starting with Thursday 16th October 2008 and finishing on 21st May 2009.

Once again the presentations will begin at 6:30pm with the buffet being available from 5:30pm. We are currently looking for additional sponsorship to enable us to continue to supply a finger buffet before the start of each seminar. Any ideas for sponsorship would be very welcome.

All details of the programme will be available through the branch web-site: <http://sy.bcs.org> and via email to the branch list. Once again we will be requesting that people register for each event so that we can ensure the right amount of catering. Please register as soon as possible so we can get the right amount of food.

Thank you for supporting the BCS and coming to the meetings. We look forward to seeing you in the autumn - don't forget we start on Thursday the 16th October 2008.

Best wishes for the summer.

Neil Bizzell