



### A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The final talk in our 2004–5 series was given by David Morriss, President of the BCS. His talk reminded me of a few things that I had forgotten about the BCS. In particular, the BCS is a registered charity and most of its work is done by volunteers.

As a charity we must comply with the rigorous regulations set down by the Charity Commission, including a regular audit. Notably, we have to show that we are, in fact, doing charitable work. This brings me nicely to the subject of volunteering.

All of the committee members offer their time freely and do not receive any financial remuneration. The only expenses we claim are those associated with running the Branch, such as posting this newsletter and providing refreshments at meetings. I mention this because I'd like to thank all my committee for the help they have given over the years and continue to provide.

Special thanks go to Roy Newell who received a Branch Service Award this year. Roy is a founder member of the BCS and has been on our Branch committee since 1967. He should surely be nominated for an entry in the Guinness Book of Records!

I would also like to thank Norman Sansom who retires as Treasurer after many years. Adrian Thomas, who has kindly arranged our meetings at Sussex University for as long as I can remember, has now taken over Norman's role.

In addition to branch work, there are numerous Special Interest Groups, Forums and the Branches Congress which are also run by volunteers. Although I am not involved with these, I know that other members of our Branch do participate. These other groups hold meetings, publish papers and so on. Further information can be found at [www.bcs.org](http://www.bcs.org).

Much of the work that the BCS is able to do is thanks to funding from subscriptions and, increasingly, from programmes like the European Computer Driving Licence. The ECDL was created by volunteers in the first instance, but it is now run by full-time staff at BCS HQ.

I would like to wrap up this message with a plea. The BCS depends on its members being active within the Society. In particular, our Branch relies on the involvement of its local members. So please come along to our meetings. If you have any spare time to help on the committee, this will be appreciated. By getting involved, you will have an opportunity to enhance the running of the Branch. Indeed I'd like to thank Steven Ward for joining the committee this year.

Dr. Peter Lappo

*You can email Peter Lappo at [peter.lappo@smr.co.uk](mailto:peter.lappo@smr.co.uk) or call him on 07767 784452*

#### 2005 – 2006

**19<sup>th</sup> October**  
Agile Development  
for Solo Projects

**16<sup>th</sup> November**  
The E-Citizen  
Challenge

**15<sup>th</sup> February**  
The Insider Threat

**15<sup>th</sup> March**  
Understanding IT  
Complexity

**12<sup>th</sup> April**  
Information Hiding

**17<sup>th</sup> May**  
Professionalism in  
IT and Branch AGM

Meetings held at:

School of Engineering  
& Information  
Technology,  
ENGG Stage 1,  
University of Sussex,  
Falmer, Brighton.

7:00pm for 7:30pm

Free admission  
Drinks & light  
refreshments provided

## EDITOR'S LETTER

Last year I knew almost nothing about the BCS, despite having a long-established career in software engineering. I had decided to turn a period of unemployment to my advantage, and undertook the ECDL course. It was time well spent. My complacency about being a software 'expert' soon proved to be mistaken! Yes, I knew enough IT to get by in a job, or to impress my family and friends when they needed help with their PCs. But to score 100% at ECDL meant having to push the limits of what I understood; learning in-depth the nuances of MS Office for example.

On completion of the ECDL, my tutor suggested that I check out the BCS website. Until then, I had not known that the BCS was responsible for overseeing the ECDL. Within a few weeks I had become a professional member of the BCS, attending my first meeting of the Sussex Branch in April 2005. I was delighted to be warmly welcomed by other members at the Sussex University campus. The opportunity to hear a lecture whilst also enjoying a glass of wine was a far cry from my days at college!

The next meeting in May was an informative presentation about the BCS given by its president, David Morriss. Being the final talk of the 2004–5 programme, our Branch chairman, Peter Lappo, concluded the evening by asking for volunteers to join the committee. With uncharacteristic enthusiasm (probably induced by the wine) I stepped forward. Thus, as an unforeseen consequence of my decision to do the ECDL, I am now a committee member responsible for editing this newsletter.

My experience illustrates that Continuing Professional Development is not the same as on-the-job training. What we learn and achieve outside of the workplace can benefit our careers in unexpected ways. As professionals working in this fast-paced industry, we should always strive to improve our technical competence. CPD is a personal aid to career development which should be managed by you as an individual, not your employer.

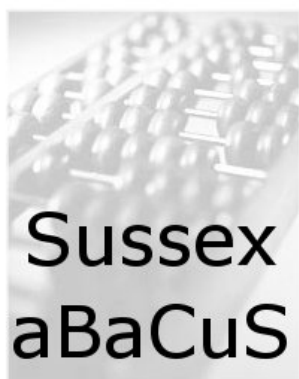
Therefore, I urge all our members to come along to our Branch meetings. Listening to how other professionals approach their work encourages analytical thinking; about the way you do your job, the tasks you do and how you do them, thereby improving your performance. Hearing about the methods of other people prompts you to consider alternative solutions. Interacting with your peers promotes creative thinking. This is CPD in action; it has the potential to enrich your working life.

Steven Ward

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## NEWSGROUP

To improve communication between the committee and its members we have created a newsgroup which is open to members and non-members at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group>. You can join by visiting this website or by sending an email to [sussexbcs-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:sussexbcs-subscribe@yahoogroups.com). This group can only be joined with our approval and anyone that does not behave reasonably will be barred.



We email aBaCuS to BCS Sussex members using details from membership records. This mailing is occasional, read-only, and details are not shared. If we have your email details on record, you will be reading this newsletter online as an email, otherwise you will be reading the standard paper-based newsletter. If you would like to change this, or if you would like to receive both versions, please email [peter.lappo@smr.co.uk](mailto:peter.lappo@smr.co.uk) with your preference. Alternatively you are able to download print-ready copy in PDF format from our website at <http://www.sussex.bcs.org.uk>.

# Notice is Hereby Given - *BCS Sussex AGM 2006*

“Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the British Computer Society Sussex Branch will be held at **7.30pm on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2006** in Engineering 1, Lecture Theatre 2, University of Sussex”

## Agenda

- Apologies
- Minutes of previous AGM
- Chairman’s report
- Treasurer’s report
- Election of Branch Officers

There is no provision for Any Other Business in the Rules, but any further items of business for the agenda should be notified to the Hon. Secretary. Nominations for Chairman, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and Committee Members should be sent, in writing, signed by a Proposer and Seconder who are members of the Society and the Branch, to the Hon. Secretary. The nominee should agree to his/her nomination. A suitable form on which to nominate Officers/Committee Members is provided here.

### British Computer Society Sussex Branch Election of Officers and Committee Members

We hereby nominate (print name) ..... as  
Sussex Branch: [Chairman/Hon] [Secretary/Hon] [Treasurer/Committee Member] at the election  
to take place at: The Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2006.

Proposer (print name) ..... Mem number .....

Signed .....

Seconder (print name) ..... Mem number .....

Signed .....

Completed form to be sent to **David Braund, BCS Sussex Branch Hon. Secretary, 17 Coopers Close, Burgess Hill, RH15 8AN.**

## BCS SUSSEX BRANCH 2005–2006 PROGRAMME

7.00pm for 7.30pm at ENGG Stage 1 lecture theatre, University of Sussex, Brighton • Free admission to members and non-members • Drinks and light refreshments are provided • Friendly and informal presentations that last about an hour • Opportunities for networking • Each meeting earns ½ point towards your Continuing Professional Development • Further details from the Meetings Coordinator Updates listed at <http://www.sussex.bcs.org.uk>

### **19<sup>th</sup> October: Agile Development for Solo Projects** **DR PETER LAPPO, DIRECTOR, SYSTEMATIC METHODS RESEARCH, BRIGHTON**

Agile development and in particular Extreme Programming is a proven method that focuses projects on delivering business value through working code. Normally it is practised in small teams and is highly interactive. Peter will talk about the XP practises he uses when working on solo projects to achieve similar benefits to those achieved in teams.

**Audience:** Students with software projects. Developers working in non agile teams. General interest.

### **16<sup>th</sup> November: The E-Citizen Challenge** **DAVID BRAUND / ROY NEWELL, BCS SUSSEX**

E-Citizen is a government initiative to bring democracy online to a wider community than is possible by traditional means. David and Roy will talk about what this initiative is trying to achieve, how it is affecting or will affect our interaction with government whether local or national and how you can join in.

**Audience:** General interest.

### **15<sup>th</sup> February: The Insider Threat** **PETER WOOD, CHIEF OF OPERATIONS, FIRST BASE TECHNOLOGIES**

Hackers are becoming more organised and professional, and their results more successful. Their methods and tool sets have been available for study for some time. Peter Wood has developed a set of methodologies to simulate hacker attacks, both external and internal. He shares his experiences in perpetrating licensed attacks against a variety of clients over the last year, as well as the results of criminal investigations. His methods and recommendations should prove invaluable to any business.

**Audience:** Security Specialists. General interest.

### **15<sup>th</sup> March: Understanding IT complexity** **DAVID CUTHBERTSON, SQUARE MILE SYSTEMS LIMITED**

David will talk about the techniques you can use to understand IT complexity. Often systems go live without proper analysis of dependencies and have to be rolled back, much to the embarrassment of the IT department and business sponsor. This talk will help you avoid major system crashes during upgrades.

**Audience:** Project Managers. Configuration Managers. Developers. General interest.

## 12<sup>th</sup> April: Information Hiding DERRICK GROVER, CONSULTANT

Steganography, the stuff of espionage and secret writing, is recorded from early history. Whilst cryptography is visible and declares itself to be a secret, steganography is hidden so that a censor does not even know it is there. Numerous methods have been devised and the challenge is to modify data in such a way that the method is not detectable. In addition to secret communication the methods impinge on computer security; proof of authorship; copyright protection and plausible deniability of secret data held on a system.

**Audience:** Security Specialists. General interest.

## 17<sup>th</sup> May: Professionalism in IT and Branch AGM CHARLES HUGHES, PRESIDENT OF THE BCS

The BCS intends to make IT THE profession of the 21st Century. To achieve this goal the Society has launched an industry-wide programme to define and significantly raise the level of professionalism in users, suppliers and contractors - indeed everyone who works in IT. Charles, as sponsor of the programme, will describe its objectives and its importance and relevance to everyone in the BCS

**Audience:** BCS Professionals. General interest.

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## CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

As you can see, we have a full programme this year. However, we always need to plan ahead into the next year. One of our most time consuming jobs is that of organising a series of talks for the year. Finding interesting and informative speakers is not always easy. If you have any suggestions for topics (or would like to speak yourself) then please do not hesitate to let us know.

The rules are simple. The committee will consider anything that we think is appropriate for a branch meeting of the Society. For example, areas of popular interest include:

- ▶ Computers and education
- ▶ Health and safety in computing
- ▶ Management case studies
- ▶ Research topics
- ▶ Socio-political aspects of computing
- ▶ Software engineering and design
- ▶ Software methods and practices
- ▶ Technical talks on emerging technologies
- ▶ Technology case studies

The list could go on, so do not feel constrained by these suggestions.

All speakers at the Sussex University venue receive a fixed fee of £50 for travel expenses irrespective of where they live. Of course we provide food and drinks at the talk. A note to vendors. We will consider talks by vendors but blatant sales pitch is unacceptable unless you are prepared to pay for the room (which helps the University) and make a donation to a local charity. By the way, we will definitely consider "edutainment" events like trips to breweries or wineries even if they may require payment by members.

# THE CHAIR'S REPORT

## Branch Services Award 2005

Roy Newell receives a Branch Services Award for 2005. A founder member of BCS, of PITCOM, of Sussex Microcomputer Group and of the BCS Sussex Branch (in 1967) Roy has been a Sussex Branch Committee Member for 37 years.

Roy has held significant roles in JAPONITE, QCA, AGI, PMG, RTC, BETT and IMIS, where he has promoted BCS interests and activities.

Roy's special contributions are in the area of personal networking within the BCS and its associated professional circles as well as within the wider political and educational communities. These have enabled Roy to develop and promote branch and national BCS interests responsibly through personal contacts and journalism.

Roy has been Council Regional Representative for four 3-year terms and has represented Sussex Branch on Branches Board for 37 years. During that time for extensive periods he represented the Board on Specialist Groups Board, Professional Development Committee, Publications Committee, Conference Committee and also made contributions from time to time to Education Committee.

In addition to his work on national committees and boards, Roy has been a member of London Branch Committee, Disabled SG Committee, Developing Countries SG Committee, GIS SG Committee. For a number of years now he has been a Referee for BCS Awards and was previously a BCS Systems Analysis Examiner.

As a member of BCS Sussex Branch, Roy has been sometime Chairman, Secretary and probably all the other committee roles. Currently he has special responsibility for Branches Conference, University liaison and Education and schools and community liaison. He is currently involved in the local Community Voluntary Sector Forum, The Sussex Community Internet Project, the Local Learning Partnership, et al.

For many years Roy represented the Sussex Branch on the SE Engineering Council Forum, Neighbourhood Engineers bodies and the SE Professional Council

Coordinating Committee. He played a major part in significant local BCS conferences for the Disabled, Data Protection, Electronic Commerce, etc. Through his very wide contacts he has been extensively responsible for most of the Branch annual programmes. He has written prolifically for the Branch Newsletter, aBaCuS, together with a number of national computer associated publications.

Roy has extensively assisted a local secondary school to become involved with ECDL. Informally he has mentored many members of the Branch and encouraged local BCS membership. Recently he has promoted BCS interest in Climate Prediction initiatives.

## Continuing Professional Development

I am pleased to say that there has been a relatively enthusiastic response to the introduction of CPD (Continuing Professional Development) certificates. Members can gain CPD points by attending our Branch meetings, in recognition of their efforts to keep up-to-date with current affairs in the computer industry. I estimate that approximately 30% of our lecture attendees request a CPD certificate.

I believe it is an important function for the Society to promote CPD. After all, as an organisation that represents a dynamic industry, we should encourage an environment in which our members are actively seeking to learn about the latest ideas, trends and advances in technology. Of course, our Branch meetings already foster such an environment.

It is a pity then that BCS members are not required to provide evidence of CPD each year in order to remain eligible for membership. Other professions make this a requirement of membership but for some reason we at the BCS don't.

I accept there may be a case for two streams of membership, one that requires CPD and another that does not. Of course the stream that requires CPD would be more 'valuable' in the market place. People who undertake CPD have improved career prospects, a greater chance of promotion and a better claim for a pay rise compared with those who don't bother.

## 2004–2005 Programme Summary

We started the yearly programme with a talk by Dave Phelan on Community Wireless LANs. This was a description of how a community wireless network had been setup between the piers in Brighton using open source software and inexpensive hardware. The network gained sufficient interest to be featured in the Guardian as it allowed the reporter to send his report from Brighton beach.

Sallyann Bryant then followed with “Pair programming under the microscope”, an interesting review of the benefits and drawbacks of pair programming. In essence the jury is still out regarding productivity but the quality gains are now well documented.

The most popular talk was “Programming at BBC Radio” by Mark Carter. This was actually a visit to the radio station where Mark talked and toured us round the station where we discovered how much computers are used in delivering radio broadcasts. In essence if the computers go down the station has to revert to old fashioned technology like tapes, CDs or just talking. Moving away from the University lecture theatre was another for this year.

In March Rachel Davies gave us an “Introduction to XP Stories” which proved to be most enlightening to the “traditionalists” in the audience. The talk explained what a story is, where the analysis activities that lead up to writing them fit in the process and how stories differ from use cases. We also learnt how acceptance

tests for stories should be written prior to planning out development and how to involve testers to support the customer.

From a technical perspective the talk by John Halloran on “eSPACE: A Novel Interactional Workspace to Support Sales Transactions” was, in my opinion, the most interesting. In this talk we learnt how to apply ethnography (a psychological method involving observation of people in their environments using in this case hidden cameras) to design a new kind of workstation for travel agents. The resulting design was significantly different to the normal ‘across the desk’ approach. This technique could have many uses in designing productive environments that involve technology.

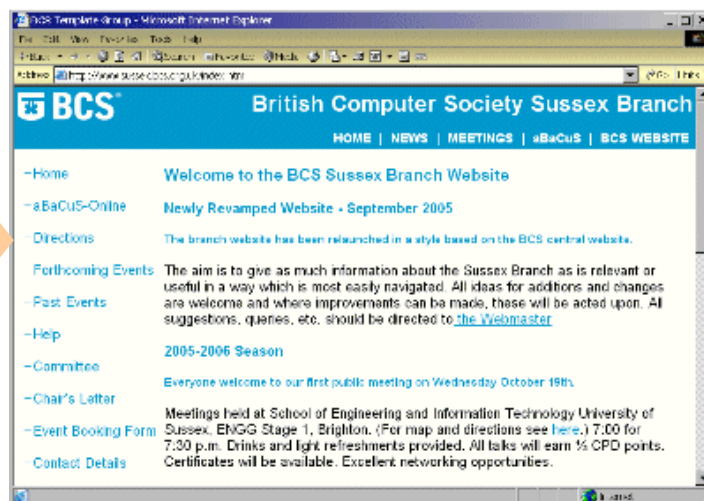
The final talk by David Morriss, the current President of the BCS, focused on the BCS itself. David gave us, again in my opinion, a most enlightening talk about the BCS and where it is heading strategically. This was an honest and frank appraisal of the BCS and even the most argumentative of our members were lost for questions at the end. I learnt, for instance, that the BCS is a charity (why I didn’t already know this escapes me) and consequently most of its work is done by volunteers, even at head office. In fact the Society is deeply dependent on volunteer help. I also learnt about the new HQ—which can be booked by members for free—and about its conference facilities. The talk was so good we signed up a new member and gained a new committee member in the process!

## NEW WEBSITE

We have a great new website which conforms to BCS templates and guidelines. Have a look at [www.sussex.bcs.org.uk](http://www.sussex.bcs.org.uk).



This has been put together by David Braund, secretary of the Sussex Branch, in his own time of course. We thank him for a job well done.



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