

PHEE: PROFESSORS and HEADS of ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING
A sectoral group of the Engineering Professors Council

NEWSLETTER No. 14

October 2006

Foreword

Last year, as incoming Chairman, I wrote of the period of uncertainty that we faced with the introduction of the variable fees regime and the conflicting priorities of making up for a long period of under-funding of our discipline while attracting sufficient students for our departments to be viable. Well many of you are now reading this newsletter and contemplating its full impact on enrolment within your own department - I trust it is good news. I am sure that finance will continue to dominate our thinking in the year ahead and the move to full economic costing (of teaching as well as research) will concentrate our minds and no doubt initiate interesting discussions among university colleagues.

In seeking to promote and represent PHEE members within the wider education and engineering community, I am happy to report that the links between PHEE and EPC continue to strengthen. Both Dik Morling and I sit on the EPC Committee and are actively involved in their Mathematics and Admissions working groups. While EPC is becoming increasingly active in lobbying government ministers and the findings of its working parties are becoming influential and opinion forming documents, PHEE itself is attempting to do the same.

The IEE has been the spiritual home of PHEE for many years. Now that it has merged with the IIE to form the new IET it is important that IET is seen as a strong and effective institution that can speak with authority for the profession, provide valuable services to professionals and nurture the next generation of engineers. While the merger may not have been universally welcomed, it is the *de-facto* institution for our profession and does provide opportunities to rethink priorities. Your PHEE committee is currently reflecting on the various changes that have taken place over the past decade. We intend to formulate a submission to IET highlighting our current issues including the substantial decline in colloquia, and the disbanding of professional groups which were an important career development activity for many younger members of the academic staff.

This summer has seen a number of changes to the committee. Donard de Cogan, Phil Witting, Bob Williams and Ray Thomas have resigned and have been replaced by Stephanie Haywood (Hull) Roy Perryman (East London) and Roger Green (Warwick). In addition, Lee Jones (Glamorgan) has joined the committee and will take over responsibility as PHEE Secretary. The committee is still keen to bring in new blood and to ensure a vibrant committee and succession for its officers - please consider becoming involved yourself. We still hope to progress the concept of a 'corresponding member' from each institution in the coming session.

Our finances are reasonably healthy and as previously stated, our current balance is close to the target of one year's running costs. In the process of updating our Constitution, the Committee welcomes comments on the draft, posted on our website (www.phee.org). I close by highlighting the excellent support we have received from the IET in providing the facilities necessary for the running of our Annual Conference and Committee meetings. The Conference is the major Event in our calendar and I hope to see you all in January. I wish you every success in the 2006/7 academic session and look forward to receiving your comments and suggestions.

Roger Pollard (Chairman)

Annual Conference 2007

The next Annual Conference will be held on **Wednesday 10 January 2007** at the IET, Savoy Place, London the focus being on the challenges we face in the coming year.

The new academic year bring with it some key changes:

- a new undergraduate fee structure – how will top up fees impact upon recruitment?
- implementation of full economic costing - not only for research but for teaching as well
- the final countdown towards RAE2008.

All of these topics will feature in the event and your committee is seeking to secure knowledgeable and eminent speakers to inform you and provoke lively debate. Our traditional format will include adequate time for discussions. As ever the success of the conference depends on your active participation, so please make a note in your diary now. Registration and booking details have been sent separately and the final programme schedule will be circulated to all members.

PHEE Website: www.phee.org

As reported last year, PHEE website has been redesigned and updated. It contains all previous newsletters and information on previous conferences including copies of most of the presentations. If you have any comments on the new design or suggestions for additional features, do please forward them to me or to one of the committee. We hope that the website will be developed further in the near future and become a major channel for communication with our members.

Details of the January 2007 conference together with the registration forms are available on the website, although on-line booking is not possible. Please print out and return directly to the Secretary, Lee Jones.

If you have any comments on anything in this issue, or indeed on any other PHEE topic, please contact any of the PHEE committee. Committee membership for the current session is:

Ms Jane Black / Mr Dan Canty (IET)

Prof Brian Culshaw (Strathclyde)

Prof Roger Green (Warwick)

Prof Stephanie Haywood (Hull)

Prof Emmanuel Ifeakor (Plymouth)

Mr Jonathan Ling (IIE)

Prof Hugh McCann (Manchester)

Dr Dik Morling (Westminster)

Dr Lee Jones (Glamorgan) (*Secretary*) - email: dljones@glam.ac.uk

Prof Roy Perryman (East London)

Prof Roger Pollard FRENG (Leeds) (*Chair*)

Rev Stuart Poole (*Treasurer*)

Prof Ed Powner (Sussex)

Prof John Senior (Hertfordshire)

Prof Roy Perryman (East London)

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