

SoBRA AGM – 12 DECEMBER 2023

CHAIR'S REPORT

Executive Committee 2023

Jo Wilding (Freelance)	Chair
Simon Cole (Hydrock)	Outgoing Chair
Kate Baker (Delta-Simons)	Vice Chair
Mel Evans (Soilfix)	Secretary
Rachel Dewhurst (Stantec)	Treasurer
Fiona Towney (RSK RAW)	Website and membership
Aliyssa Glen (WSP)	Stepped down early (maternity leave)
Tim Rolfe (YES Environmental)	Ordinary Member
Lawrence Bowden (Geosyntec)	Ordinary Member
Greg Gibson (Leeds CC)	Ordinary Member
Christopher Taylor (National Grid)	Ex-Officio Member (Accreditation)

- There have been a few changes to the Executive Committee this year. Aliyssa Glen stepped down early for maternity leave.
- Nomination invitations for the four seats on the EC for 2024 (for a three-year term) were advertised to members in September and were confirmed at the AGM. Six nominations were received – from Sarah Bannon, Stephanie Cox, Rachel Dewhurst (re-standing), Melanie Lyons, Tim Rolfe (re-standing), and Kirsty Tolley.
- Sarah Bannon, Rachel Dewhurst (re-standing), Melanie Lyons and Tim Rolfe (re-standing) were duly elected following the results of the membership vote in October/November.

Membership

We currently have 633 members, up from 611 the previous year.

Finances

According to the audited accounts for the financial year 2022-2023 the society's finances were as follows for our financial year ending 30 September 2023:

Bank £47,586.77

PayPal £6,210.31

Total **£53,797.08**

Outstanding liabilities – Research Grant remaining payments to University of Greenwich (£3682), Accreditation fees (£1000) and pending payments on Paypal (£75)

Future anticipated liabilities – cost of Winter Conference at Burlington House in partnership with RSC Toxicology Group TBC.

The outcome of the independent audit of the society's finances will be presented at the AGM. This year the audit has again been kindly carried out by Sarah Bannon of Ramboll.

Activities

Since January 2023 the SoBRA Executive Committee has:

- Held four committee meetings – January, April, July and September
- Held two Accreditation Scheme application windows (January and August). There were 24 applicants in total
- Organised the December 2023 conference jointly with the RSC Toxicology Group and held the SoBRA AGM
- Represented SoBRA at the National Brownfield Forum, NQMS steering group meetings and the recently reconvened Scottish Contaminated Land Advisory Group (SCLAG)
- Maintained collaborative working with other industry organisations by ongoing collaboration with RemSoc, and presenting at various events.
- The Early Careers sub-group has held six webinars in 2023 in association with the Scottish Contaminated Land Forum who provide use of the GoToWebinar platform. The webinars are free to members and non-members and the recordings of these webinars are freely available on the SoBRA website <https://sobra.org.uk/resources/early-careers-webinars/>.
 - Practical considerations in vapour intrusion risk assessment (John Andrews 16/11/23)
 - Water quality standards (Alex Lee 31/10/23)
 - Bioavailability & Bioaccessibility (Gareth Wills 26/7/23)
 - Background Concentrations (Simon Hay 17/5/23)
 - Interpretation of Continuous Ground Gas Data (Tom Parker 13/4/23)
 - Incorporating SoBRA Climate Change Guidance (Emma Evans 22/3/23)
- Continued to fund a small research project at the University of Greenwich on NAPL mobility to support the work of the NAPL sub-group, following an award in 2022
- Awarded two bursaries - Steve Forster to attend CEN TC351/WG5/TG51 Sampling and quantitative determination of asbestos in construction products – April 2023, and Bursary: Gemma Shaw to attend AquaConSoil (with poster) – September 2023
- SoBRA currently has the following sub-groups as detailed below.

Sub-group	Group Lead	EC Sponsor
Ground Gases	Steve Wilson (EPG)	Simon Cole (Greg Gibson from 2024)
NAPL	David Holme (Geosyntec)	Mel Evans
CSM and Statistics	Hannah White (NG)	Rachel Dewhurst
Early Careers	Kirsty Tolley (RSK Geoscience)	Kate Baker

Details of the sub-group activities can be found on the sub-group pages of the SoBRA website at <https://sobra.org.uk/about-us/sub-groups/>.

Society Publications & Events

- Early careers webinars (6 in 2023)
- Top Tips from the Ground Gas sub-group
- The Climate Emergency: Practical Considerations in Brownfield Risk Assessment – summer 2022 workshop report
- VI sub-group publication of 3 guidance notes
- NAPL sub-group – Document 2: Effective Solubility Tool and Document 3: LNAPL Mobility Screening Tool
- Top Tips on Conceptualising and Characterising Contaminant Distribution in Soil

All publications are available on the resources pages of the SoBRA website at <https://sobra.org.uk/resources/reports/>.

Acknowledgements

The SoBRA Executive Committee and sub-group members work entirely on a voluntary basis and it is largely thanks to their hard-work (and of their predecessors) that has made SoBRA the well respected and successful society that it is today. Much of the work related to SoBRA activities is done by our volunteers in their spare time, working in the evenings and weekends. On behalf of SoBRA, I would like to thank them all for their considerable efforts.

I would also like to extend particular thanks to our sub-group leaders, whose enthusiasm and encouragement have helped to harness the skill and energies of the sub-group members. I would also like to thank Chris and Marlene for continuing to administer the Accreditation Scheme and the scrutineers who volunteered this year. The scheme would not run without the dedication of these members.

Lastly, I would like to say a huge thank you to all our members for your continued support. As well as your loyalty and interest, your subscription and event fees have helped to build up funds that allow us to offer subsidised places at events, as well as offer bursaries, scholarships, and research grants to promote the furthering of risk assessment knowledge and practice.

Future Activities

The SoBRA programme of activities for next year will be determined by the newly constituted Executive Committee when it meets in early 2024. I expect the Committee will continue to develop a programme of workshops, webinars and end of year conference, and provide continued support to the sub-groups in their endeavours. SoBRA will also continue to progress the Accreditation Scheme since this underpins the objective to improve the quality of risk assessments, and I look forward to the outputs from the sub-groups in the coming year.

Closure

It is a huge privilege to have chaired this society for the past 12 months, and thanks to everyone's efforts I think that SoBRA is a society that we can all be proud of.

Jo Wilding

SoBRA Chair 2023-2024

14 December 2023