

SoBRA AGM – 10 DECEMBER 2024

CHAIR'S REPORT

Executive Committee 2023

Jo Wilding (Freelance)	Chair
Kate Baker (Antea Group)	Vice Chair
Mel Evans (Soilfix)	Secretary
Rachel Dewhurst (Stantec)	Treasurer
Fiona Towney (RSK RAW)	Website and membership
Tim Rolfe (YES Environmental)	Ordinary Member
Lawrence Bowden (Geosyntec)	Ordinary Member
Greg Gibson (Leeds CC)	Ordinary Member
Sarah Bannon (Ramboll)	Ordinary Member
Melanie Lyons (Shell)	Ordinary Member
Christopher Taylor (National Grid)	Ex-Officio Member (Accreditation)

- Nomination invitations for the two seats on the EC for 2025 (for a three-year term) were advertised to members in September and were confirmed at the AGM. Two nominations were received – from Fiona Towney (re-standing) and Sarah Poulton.
- Both were invited to join the Committee.

Membership

We currently have 603 members.

Finances

According to the audited accounts for the financial year 2023-2024 the society's finances were as follows for our financial year ending 30 September 2024:

Bank (current account) £19,019.62

Bank (savings account) £40,322.94

PayPal £3,873.09

Total **£62, 215.65**

Outstanding liabilities –Accreditation fees (£1200)

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 Tim Cawood of TJC Environmental Ltd.

Activities

Since January 2024 the SoBRA Executive Committee has:

- Held four committee meetings – January, April, July and September
- Held two Accreditation Scheme application windows (February and August). There were 12 applicants in total
- Organised the December 2024 conference jointly with the RSC Toxicology Group and held the SoBRA AGM
- Represented SoBRA at the National Brownfield Forum, NQMS steering group meetings and as an associate member of the Scottish Contaminated Land Advisory Group (SCLAG)
- Maintained collaborative working with other industry organisations by ongoing collaboration with RemSoc
- Expanded the Early Careers sub-group to provide additional senior mentoring support
- The Early Careers sub-group has held four webinars in 2024. 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/>.
 - Tools to support NAPL risk assessment (Anna Hitchmough & Caroline Walker 6/8/24)
 - The importance of the ground model (Chris Everitt 24/10/24)
 - Newcastle Allotments Lead Biomonitoring Study (Lindsay Bramwell 14/11/24)
 - Part 2A investigation of vapour intrusion from chlorinated solvents (Simon Burr 3/12/24)
- 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, making the final payment in relation to the grant award
- There were no applications for any bursaries or scholarships during 2024
- SoBRA currently has the following sub-groups as detailed below.

Sub-group	Group Lead	EC Sponsor
Ground Gases (with radon working group)	Steve Wilson (EPG)	Greg Gibson
NAPL	David Holme (Geosyntec)	Mel Evans

Early Careers	Kirsty Tolley (RSK Geoscience) & Alyssa Glen (WSP)	Kate Baker
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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 (4 in 2024)
- Updates to the Practical Tips documents (human health, controlled waters, vapour intrusion, field to desk)
- Updates to the Groundwater vapour generic assessment criteria report

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 2025. 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. I would like to welcome Kate Baker as the incoming Chair from January 2025.

Jo Wilding

SoBRA Chair 2023-2024

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