



Quaternary Research Association

CIRCULAR HIGHLIGHTS

OCTOBER 2016

1. QRA Annual Discussion Meeting 2017

Quaternary Engineering Geology: Implications for Glaciated & Periglacial Terrains

The QRA Annual Discussion Meeting 2017 will be held between Wednesday 4th and Saturday 7th January 2017 at the University of Durham. The meeting aims to bring together a broad range of academics from the earth sciences and geography and practicing engineering geologists working in Quaternary cold climate landscapes in an attempt to communicate recent developments and professional practices across the various disciplines. The meeting is co-sponsored by the Engineering Group of the Geological Society, the British Permafrost & Periglacial Association and the Glacial Landsystems Working Group.

Organisers

David J A Evans (Durham), Julian Murton (Sussex), David Giles (Portsmouth) and Chris Martin (BP).

Registration and accommodation

The registration fee includes all lunches and other refreshments during the meeting, including an ice-breaker reception.

Early bird (until 31 October 2016): **£150.00** (full); **£100.00** (students/unwaged).

Late booking (from 1 November 2016): **£180.00** (full); **£130.00** (students/unwaged).

Accommodation has been arranged at Collingwood College at £40 per night for a single, en-suite room on a B&B basis; participants are also free to make their own arrangements. A conference dinner will be held at Durham Castle on the evening of 6th January (an additional £50 per person).

Register for the ADM, book accommodation and submit dietary preferences via the conference registration page – please follow the link from the QRA website (qra.org.uk/adm/).

Abstract submission

To submit an abstract, simply download the template from the conference website and e-mail your completed version to David Evans (d.j.a.evans@durham.ac.uk) by **11 November, 2016**. Delegates are allowed to submit only one oral presentation, but can submit more than one poster. Further details (including poster formats, etc.) are available from the conference website.

2. QRA Executive Committee Nominations

Three members of the QRA Executive Committee complete their terms of office in January 2017. Following the call in the last Circular, one nomination was received for each post. There being no other candidates, a ballot is unnecessary; the nominees will therefore begin their terms of office in January 2017.

President: Neil Glasser (Aberystwyth)
Ordinary Member: Julie Durcan (Oxford)

Treasurer: Jack Lacey (BGS)

3. Quaternary Newsletter

The Executive Committee are grateful to members for their participation in the consultation exercise earlier this summer concerning the future distribution model for *Quaternary Newsletter*. The results have now been published on the QRA website along with the response of the Executive Committee. Copies of these documents accompany this Circular.

4. QRA Awards: qra.org.uk/grants-awards-prizes/

The next deadline for Awards applications is 15 January 2017. In this round we welcome applications for: **New Research Workers' Award**; **Quaternary Conference Fund**; **Quaternary Research Fund**; the **Bill Bishop Award**; **Radiocarbon Dating Short Course Bursaries**; and the **QRA-14CHRONO Centre Radiocarbon Dating Awards**. Please consult the QRA website for eligibility criteria and application procedures. For further details, please contact the Awards Officer, Adrian Palmer (awards@qra.org.uk).

5. QRA Outreach Fund: qra.org.uk/outreach/

The QRA encourages its members and others to promote and foster engagement between Quaternary Science and a wide and diverse audience. In support, we operate an Outreach Fund from which grants of up to £750 are awarded annually. Please contact the Outreach Officer, Barbara Silva (outreach@qra.org.uk) for more details. The next deadline is **1 March 2017**.

6. Calendar of QRA Meetings: qra.org.uk/meetings

Further details about all forthcoming meetings are available from the QRA website.

Jan 2017 Annual Discussion Meeting: Quaternary Engineering Geology – Implications for Glaciated and Periglaciated Terrains

Details: 4–7 January 2017. See front page of this Circular. *Registration now open.*

May 2017 Field Meeting: The Quaternary of the North Pennines

Venue: Middleton-in-Teesdale
Contact: David Evans (d.j.a.evans@durham.ac.uk)
Details: 11–14 May 2017. *Registration now open.*

Sept 2017 Field Meeting: The Quaternary of the Vale of Pickering and environs

Venue: Scarborough
Contact: Adrian Palmer (a.palmer@rhul.ac.uk)
Details: 8–11 September 2017

Sept 2017 Overseas Field Meeting: The Quaternary of the Yellow River and its environs

Venue: Lanzhou University, China
Contact: David Bridgland (d.r.bridgland@durham.ac.uk)
Details: ~10–18 September 2017. *Expressions of interest invited.*

7. Publications: qra.org.uk/publications/

Two new Field Guides are now available from the online bookstore:

- *The Quaternary of Skye* (Ballantyne & Lowe) **£16.00** for members (incl. P&P)
- *The Quaternary Periglaciation of Kent* (Murton & Giles) **£13.60** for members (incl. P&P)

This flier identifies key upcoming activities within the QRA. Further details can be found on the QRA website. For any enquiries regarding QRA activities please consult qra.org.uk or contact the Honorary Secretary: Mick Frogley (secretary@qra.org.uk), Department of Geography, Chichester 1 Building, University of Sussex, Brighton, BN1 9QJ.

Quaternary Newsletter Consultation Response from the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is extremely grateful to members for responding so enthusiastically to the consultation exercise held earlier this year about the future distribution model for *Quaternary Newsletter (QN)*. Almost 20 % of the total membership (excluding institutional members) made their views known, either via the online questionnaire or personally to the President and Secretary. A separate report (compiled by the Publicity Officer) detailing the results of the consultation accompanies this note.

The implications of the consultation exercise were discussed at length by the Executive Committee at their meeting in May 2016. Whilst it was abundantly clear that *QN* is highly valued by the membership, the steer towards an electronic distribution model was unmistakable. Nevertheless, the Exec did not wish to deny those members for whom a hard copy version was important and so agreed the following:

- *QN* will be available routinely to members as an electronic copy from 2017.
- Downloadable copies will be made available in the Members' Area of the website, embargoed for one year, after which they will be made freely available on a publically accessible page.
- Members will be notified of the availability of new issues via email (which will include a table of contents). Access to the new issue will be either via a direct link contained within the notification email, or by logging in separately to the Members' Area.
- Those members still wishing to receive a hard copy will still be able to do so, subject to payment of a subscription surcharge, levied to contribute towards printing and postage costs. The surcharge will initially be set at £10 per annum across all levels of membership, but will be reviewed annually.
- The Circular will also be made available electronically, but from a public part of the website so that QRA news and forthcoming activities can be advertised widely. The notification email for *QN* will also include a link to the Circular.
- The October 2016 issues of *QN* and the Circular will be distributed to members via post (as normal) and will also be made available electronically.
- Funds saved from printing and postage will not be allocated for a specific purpose, although the Executive Committee envisage that most monies will be utilized to increase the level of support available to members (and particularly student members) through our awards schemes.

In order for these changes to be actioned, several changes to the website have been put in hand; these will become apparent over the next few weeks. The Executive Committee also intends to make the entire run of back issues of *QN* available for download. This will occur in phases, as copyright / IPR matters have to be dealt with before issues can be posted online.

Although the demise of a routinely printed copy of *QN* is regrettable, it is hoped that the transfer to an electronic version will not only improve the quality and reach of articles, but also enable increased support across the Association's many activities. We thank the membership once again for their input to this consultation and hope that this new model of receiving *Quaternary Newsletter* will become second nature very quickly.

QRA Executive Committee
September 2016



Quaternary Research Association

Quaternary Newsletter: Membership consultation on electronic distribution

The QRA recently asked members' opinions regarding a move to an electronic distribution of the *Quaternary Newsletter (QN)*. The proposal was outlined in full in a blog on the QRA website, as well as in *QN*. The rationale for this move was largely financial, with printing and distribution of *QN* being a large part of the QRA's annual outgoings. Electronic distribution of *QN* would also allow longer-format articles, colour printing and ease of access to archived issues.

The QRA Exec therefore petitioned members to participate in a Members' Consultation. The chief methods involved an electronic survey via Survey Monkey and solicitation of emails and letters sent directly to Secretary and President of the QRA. The details of the consultation were announced in the Circular, in QRA mailshot emails and on the QRA website.

Brief summary of responses

The online survey received 231 responses. An additional 14 email/letter responses were received by Peter and Mick. This issue is something that has clearly galvanised and enthused the QRA membership.

Overall, the responses were overwhelmingly (84.4%) in favour of moving to an electronic distribution of *QN*. Some of the membership, however, enjoy reading a physical copy of *QN* and see this as a key benefit of their membership. A small minority even threatened to withdraw their membership if they were no longer to receive a hard copy of *QN*. However, most (70.5%) of those who would prefer a hard copy would be prepared to pay a small additional opt-in surcharge (£5–£10 seems a figure that most people would be prepared to pay).

With regard to the distribution of an electronic version of *QN*, 68.7% would prefer it to be fully open access, and 31.3% would prefer it to be restricted access (i.e. restricted to a Members' Area of the website). Common concerns include:

- Seeing *QN* as a key benefit of membership to the QRA; making *QN* open access will negate this benefit and may lead to a drop in subscriptions;
- Reports for recipients of QRA awards being released publicly ahead of full peer-reviewed publication.

Many members suggested making back issues of *QN* publically accessible one year after publication to circumvent these issues.

Some members were also concerned that they would not read *QN* if they had to navigate through to the Members' Area of the website to obtain it. They would prefer to be emailed a PDF attachment of the newsletter (or for it to be fully open access).

In terms of the funds released by electronic distribution of *QN*, most members were happy for the funds to be used at the discretion of the committee, or to support awards and in particular postgraduate activities.

The survey responses are detailed overleaf. Data take into account both the online and the emailed/written responses.

Bethan Davies
QRA Publicity Officer
September 2016

Qu 1. Are you broadly in favour of QN being distributed electronically?				
	Online respondents	Email respondents	Total respondents	Percentage
Yes	199	7	206	84.43%
No	32	6	38	15.57%
Total	231	13	244	

Qu 2. If your answer to Qu. 1 was "no", would you be prepared to pay a small additional premium over and above your normal annual subscription to receive hard copies of QN?				
	Online respondents	Email respondents	Total respondents	Percentage
Yes	28	3	31	70.5%
No	13		13	29.5%
Total	41	3	44	
Skipped	190			

Qu 3. If your answer to Qu. 1 was "Yes", then how would you prefer new issues to be made available?				
	Online respondents	Email respondents	Total respondents	Percentage
Open access	137	1	138	68.7%
Restricted to Members' Area	63		63	31.3%
Total	200	1	201	
Skipped	31			

Qu. 4. How would you prefer past issues to be made available?				
	Online respondents	Email respondents	Total respondents	Percentage
Open access	175	1	176	77.9%
Restricted to Members' Area	50		50	22.1%
Total	225	1	226	
Skipped	6			

Qu. 5. If most members chose to take QN electronically, there could be significant financial savings for the Association. How would you like those funds to be spent?				
	Online respondents	Email respondents	Total respondents	Percentage
Awards	85	3	88	22.9%
Outreach	41		41	10.6%
Geoconservation	27		27	7.0%
Support for postgraduate activities	84		84	21.8%
INQUA travel fund	45		45	11.7%
I don't mind, whatever the Executive consider appropriate	99	1	100	26.0%
Total	381	4	385	