

British Computer Society, Manchester Branch, Chairman's Report, May 2006.

The purpose of this report is to reflect on the year just gone and to layout the aims of the year ahead. In addition to informing the powers that be, that we still exist.

So let me reflect. Has it been a successful year?

Well, defining success by the ability to run a range of monthly meetings, on a variety of IT related topics. Then yes, as the Branch's programme booklet lists, our meetings have ranged from touching ones bum whilst discovering the Alexander Technique, to protesting OAPs in sex orgies, as mentioned in the Turing Lecture.

Defining success by the ability to communicate with the Branch's members. Then this year has only been a partial success. We have started a quarterly newsletter, with its third edition currently being put together. We also had a BCS in Greater Manchester programme booklet. However, a majority of our members continue not to engage with their Branch.

So where do we go from here?

The newsletter will hopefully continue and start to make a difference in the number of members who participate in their Branch. It is also hoped that by further co-operation with other membership groups in the area, we can present the BCS as one body that represents a diverse set of IT interests, and through this encourage further participation by our members and the general public in our activities.

The new programme is packed full of goodies, like carry-on follow that bus with GPS, to who stole my identity, and a lot of other things in between. The full list of events will be announced in the next newsletter.

The ID Card! I just had to mention it. Simply because I have not yet met anyone who sees a need for it, let alone feels the need to spend £15 billion on creating one. But, I ask, what is the view of this Branch? Does the Branch want an ID Card? Does this Branch believe the implementation of it will bring shame upon the IT Profession and the BCS? And if so, for what reasons?

As a body, representing the IT Profession in Greater Manchester, I believe we must stimulate debate and be asking those awkward questions on all IT matters of public interest. However all this can only succeed through the support and participation of our members.

This is where the Branch is heading. Yes, the series of talks will continue, but we need to go out there and impress upon the Branch's members, the general public, students and businesses of Greater Manchester that they should come along and participate in the spread of IT knowledge and best practice.

In summary, and going back to my original thoughts for this report: We are still here. Is that enough? Well, find out next year!

Andrew Mohan,
Chairman,
BCS Manchester Branch.