

Annual Report from the Chair, July 2014

Welcome to our 2014 National Training Event! With personal changes aside (I reverted to my maiden name, and will become a very proud [and of course, young!] Grandma in September), PMG has had another busy and successful year.

Update for 2013-2014

National Training Event

Most unexpectedly, our post-event debrief with the University of the West of England yielded the information that they would be unable to host the NTE in 2014. Disappointing and alarming as that was, the Executive Committee and NTE Committee (under the strong leadership of Jo McConnell) pulled together extraordinarily well, not only making alternative arrangements for this year in Cardiff, but also securing Leeds for 2015!

Both venues will ensure that we can continue to advance education, as well as spreading the travel burden for our members.

Jo has had a baptism of fire as NTE chairperson – however, her calm demeanour and practical approach, along with the dedicated assistance of the rest of her committee have meant things have progressed smoothly, despite the uncertainties at the beginning. We trust you enjoy their efforts.

Event Co-ordinator

Due to the success of our part-time temporary events post (previously held by Ffion Lane), we created a full-time events and marketing co-ordinator post, and welcomed Nick Hunt to PMG in February 2014. Nick has already proved invaluable to the management team and, once NTE is complete, his attention will turn to marketing activities, working more closely with the Publications and Marketing Committee. Please make Nick welcome when you see him at the registration desk.

PMG Office

As many of you may be aware, PMG has operated for many years out of a shed (no, really) in Olwen's garden.

However, to facilitate PMG's growth, we have rented modest office premises in the centre of Exeter – which Olwen assures me are truly luxurious compared to the shed!

Membership Fee and Journal Format

The Executive Committee's role is to maintain the long-term strategic view of PMG and, as such, has considered ways to modernise PMG, ensuring that we become more accessible and can continue to grow. We'll discuss this at the AGM, but the proposal is to remove our membership fee, and change the journal format to a regular online resource. We recognise that many people are paying mandatory professional subscriptions, plus we'd like to welcome service users to our membership. After all, what we do is ultimately about enhancing their lives, so it makes sense to have them part of the process. The journal has long since been a very time consuming and costly item to produce and, although a quality production, it is surprisingly little read.

This year we've also removed the book tokens (which were largely unused by NTE-goers) and, instead, have doubled the bursaries available for people to attend NTE. We look forward to hearing your opinions at the AGM.

Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

Existing members should already be aware through our online poll, that PMG's Executive Committee has recommended the change of PMG's status from "Charity" to "CIO". However at the time of writing, there was not a big enough vote for a majority. We will finalise the vote at the AGM if a majority is not reached before then. Either way, we'll let you know the outcome.

Strategy and Policy

Things have been relatively quiet on the political agenda, but Henry Lumley, Linda Marks and David Porter have continued to ensure that PMG's voice is heard at senior levels. A Wheelchair Summit was held in February 2014, with six themes identified for development. A review is scheduled for October 2014, and progress in this area will be reported by Henry at NTE.

Education and Training

The Mary Massery tour was a resounding success (despite horrific weather) at the end of 2013, with 133 delegates attending in Edinburgh, London and Manchester. The Education and Training Committee are now working with the National Wheelchair Managers' Forum (NWMF) to match training provision with the competency framework document already completed by NWMF. You can read more about this on our website at <http://www.pmguk.co.uk/education-a-training-resources.html>

National External Advisor

Linda Marks (who is also to become a proud Grandma in November) has decided to step down from her role as the first ever National External Advisor of PMG, at NTE. We are very grateful to Linda, who has provided support on all levels to PMG throughout her four year term. We wish her all the best, and hope that as she can now fully enjoy retirement and grand-parenting, leaving work a distant memory!

We are however, privileged and delighted to welcome Ros Ham into the role of National External Advisor, and look forward to working with her in the coming months and years.

Finance

Pam Harper, as PMG Treasurer, will present a finance report separately, but our financial affairs are healthy.

I am, however, delighted to report that the outstanding VAT issues from the 2010 International Conference have now been settled to the satisfaction of all parties concerned.

Constitution

Should the changes to membership fees and CIO status be ratified, there will need to be some minor changes to the constitution to reflect these. These will be notified to the Charity Commission and Office for Scottish Charity Regulator in due course.

PMG will, in time, also be registered as a Charity/CIO in Northern Ireland, but the regulator

has only just begun registration, and is prioritising NI charities first.

PMG Administration

Olwen Ellis, our administrative manager, continues to work as PMG's only permanent employee. Her contract was renewed this year, and is likely to be made full-time and permanent in August to streamline the general and NTE components of her role. We hope that the co-ordinator post will also be made permanent, so that PMG can continue to flourish with consistent management.

We once again thank Barend ter Haar and BES Rehab, who continue to provide the payroll facilities for PMG.

Publications and Marketing

Things never stand still for long in the world of Publications and Marketing, and so once again we are faced with updating the website in the next year. This is because the behind-the-scenes framework holding it up is now obsolete, meaning bug fixes or additions are time-consuming and costly. This update at the "back-end" may not be overtly visible to users, but will ensure the functionality is secured for the next few years.

Iain McConnell, who provides our valued IT support, is currently drawing up the specification with James Foy so that quotes can be obtained.

Research

The research team continues to support applications for funding, and there are 14 completed studies (3 being presented at NTE), 4 currently on-going and 2 new applications so far this year.

Commissioned Research

Last year at NTE, we heard from John Warrington about the Department of Health's difficulties in gaining user views of wheelchair services, so we decided to find out for ourselves. Jo Goodship is leading this consumer view scoping exercise and will present the findings at NTE.

Executive Committee changes

Quite a few changes to the membership of the Executive Committee this year, but a solid core of experience still remains.

I wish to thank all those who are departing and welcome the new faces.

Leaving the Executive are:

Jane Chantry

We wish her well with the second addition to the family this summer!

Craig Egglestone

Although leaving the executive, Craig may decide to continue on the NTE committee.

James Foy

Fortunately for PMG, James will remain involved with PaM, in particular with the development of the website. Diane Hargrove is replacing him as chair of PaM.

James Hollington

Standing down a year early, with his role as Scotland representative being taken over by Susan Gold.

David Porter

Having recently decided to bow out of the Research committee, David will be joining NTE Committee for the 2015 event, and continues his involvement with the Strategy & Policy team. His executive place as representative of the Research committee is taken by new chair, David Punt.

Monica Young

Although leaving the executive, Monica will be staying with both the E&T and NTE committees.

FOR RATIFICATION BY AGM

New members

Susan Gold – Scotland representative

Diane Hargrove – chair of Publications & Marketing

Henry Lumley – chair of Strategy & Policy

David Punt – chair of Research

Standing for a second term

Helen Rourke: Nominated by Pam Harper

Seconded by Diane Hargrove

Gail Russell: Nominated by Alison Johnston

(Chair of E&T) Seconded by Pam Harper

New nominees

Rasheed Ahamed: Nominated by Dave Long
Seconded by David Porter

Lisa Ledger: Nominated by Richard Earl
Seconded by Gail Russell

Continuing members of the executive:

Clare Canale (Chair), Kirsty-Ann Cutler (E&T/NTE), Paul Dryer (NTE), Richard Earl (Vice chair)
Pam Harper (Treasurer), Alison Johnston (Research), Joanne McConnell (Chair NTE).

In addition, Paul Harrington has recently been co-opted onto the Executive in his new role as PMG's representative on BSI working group CH/173.

I am once again privileged to continue as your Chair, advancing into my 5th year! It's a role which I love, so thanks to my employer, Leckey, for their support.

And finally...

PMG cannot exist without our members, sponsors, exhibitors, volunteers, employees and employers. To you all, a hearty and heartfelt thanks.

Enjoy your conference!

Clare

Clare Canale

PMG Chair, July 2014