

The coming months promise to be an exciting year for the AGI, and I am pleased to say we approach on a good footing. We have a strong and growing AGI team, who performed admirably in 2003, running an increased number of events in a highly professional manner and although extremely busy, also played a more active role in formulating this year's strategy. We also have a number of new Council members to bring fresh ideas and thinking into the organisation.

The AGI's EGM in December 2003 approved a new structure for the AGI and one of the AGI's key objectives for this year is to ensure the transition from the old to new structure takes place smoothly and the benefits of the new organisation are realised. The new structure is intended to benefit AGI members in a number of ways in that it will speed up the decision making process, remove duplicate activity, improve communication to members and make it easier for members to volunteer and contribute in their areas of interest. This year we will be actively seeking new volunteers to help the AGI in its endeavours so if this interests you then please come forward.

October 2004 presents a particularly exciting and unique opportunity with AGI2004, to integrate the GI industry's premier conference and exhibition and run it on behalf of the industry. Responding to the wishes of a number of our members we are running the event between the 18th and 20th of October at Chelsea Village. Initial response has been overwhelming and it promises to be the GI event of the year.

We recognise that the needs of our members are constantly evolving, and with over 1,400 members, representing almost every facet of the GI community, it is an important, ongoing challenge, to ensure that the AGI acts in tune with members needs and that time and effort is channelled appropriately. This year we will be reviewing our membership strategy and conducting a membership survey (concise and focussed!) to help with this process. If you receive a questionnaire, I would appreciate you spending a few minutes to respond, as it will provide us with invaluable information to ensure that member i.e. your needs continue to be met.

With the value of GI being increasingly recognised in the public and private sectors comes the challenge of communicating these benefits to policy and decision makers, increasingly outside the "core GI" community. As a consequence, the AGI will be taking a close look at how it portrays itself to the outside world and look at ways it can communicate the GI message more effectively.

The AGI already has good working relationships with a number of partner organisations. A partner round table held in 2003 showed the potential benefits of engaging more broadly with organisations that have an aligned GI interest and this year we will develop a more formalised plan. As many of the AGI's members already belong to a number of other associations I

Introduction from the AGI Chairman

would welcome thoughts on those organisations with whom you believe the AGI should be more actively engaged.

Following on from good work already undertaken in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the AGI will continue to work closely with IGGI, IDEa and the private sector in developing a GI strategy for England. A working group has already been established and a consultation process will commence later in the year.

I hope this gives you a flavour of some of the AGI's main activities for the coming months, and indeed it stimulates your interest to become more involved. If you are interested in participating in any of the AGI's programme of work, any of the special interest groups, regional groups, or indeed in any area, please get in touch. Contact either Sallie at the AGI (sallie@agi.org.uk) or myself (john.alderson@informed.com). We look forward to hearing from you.



Dr John Alderson
AGI Chair 2004