

## The BCS Report - 2007

Through its [special interest groups](#), [publications](#), [awards programme](#), workshops, symposia and [Better Mapping Campaign Seminars](#), The British Cartographic Society offers its members the best possible support and invaluable opportunities for extending their professional knowledge.

Founded in 1963, the British Cartographic Society (BCS) offers a unique forum for the exchange of ideas and the sharing of knowledge on all aspects of maps and mapmaking. Membership is open to professional cartographers, map curators, the GIS community and anyone with an interest in any aspect of cartography.

The United Kingdom Cartography Committee (UKCC) represents the UK cartographic community through the BCS on the world stage at the International Cartographic Association (ICA). The UKCC organises exhibits of UK mapping at ICA conferences and publishes a biannual national report on the status of cartography in the UK.

As a member of UK GEOforum, the Society is at the forefront of influencing strategies on all aspects of the geospatial information industry, with the forum's collective representation of members' interests at Governmental and international level.

### **Special Interest Groups**

[The Map Curators' Group \(MCG\)](#) caters for librarians, archivists, curators, map historians and map collectors. The principal aim of the group is to promote and maintain the highest of standards in, and professional development of, map care through training events, inter-library contact and communication in the form of its newsletter, *Cartographiti*. An annual workshop and specialist visit is arranged immediately prior to the Society's Annual Symposium.

[The Map Design Group \(MDG\)](#) provides a the forum for discussion and exchange of ideas on the principles of good cartographic design. Meetings take the form of dynamic roadshows, which cover every facet of design for the mapping process - visualisation, perception, expert systems, web design, copyright, orientation and software.

[The Historical Military Mapping Group \(HMMG\)](#) became part of BCS in 2003 and its activities include liaison, day visits, seminars and the promotion of the study of the history of British military mapping and survey in any part of the globe. A newsletter called *Maps and Surveys* is published periodically to share information and promote research findings.

[The Education Committee](#) has the advancement and development of education for prospective mapmakers as one of its principal objectives but its role has changed somewhat in recent times since the teaching of Cartography as an independent subject has all but vanished in the UK. The current rationale is to investigate possibilities to enhance the training of the subject outwith the traditional formal academic or vocational qualification and to campaign for the introduction of cartographic training in affiliated disciplines.

### **Publications**

[The Cartographic Journal](#) is the official journal of the British Cartographic Society, circulated free to members and on subscription to others in more than 50 countries. An established journal of record and comment containing authoritative articles and international papers on all aspects of cartography, the journal has four volumes per year with refereed papers including one or two special issues covering topical subjects. The science and technology of presenting, communicating and analysing spatial relationships by means of maps and other geographical representations of the Earth's surface are covered, including related technologies such as remote sensing, geographical information systems (GIS), the internet and global positioning systems.

[Maplines](#) is the Newsletter of the British Cartographic Society and is issued free to all members in Spring, Summer and Winter. [Maplines](#) contains news, views and information on activities, lecture programmes and professional opportunities. It encourages product news with a special page for corporate members to take advantage of this. Most of all, the editors encourage ordinary members to share their cartographic opinions and experiences with other readers.

[Cartographiti](#) is the newsletter of the [Map Curators' Group](#). Published up to three times per year, it covers all aspects of the profession and is distributed free of charge to members of the British Cartographic Society who join the [Map Curators'](#)

[Group](#) but it is also available to non-members on payment of a small subscription.

*Maps and Surveys* is an occasional newsletter from the [History of Military Mapping Group](#) in which information about the groups activities are promoted and research projects published.

[A Directory of UK Map Collections](#) is in its 4th Edition and details the major map collections in the UK including National Libraries, University Map Collections, National Mapping Agencies, Government Libraries and Archives, London Museums, Societies, Institutions, Businesses, etc. It is a [web publication](#) only and is freely available subject to the [Society's Terms and Restrictions](#).

### **Better Mapping Campaign**

During 2006 the Society sponsored a series of free educational seminars to encourage the production of better maps. Speakers were drawn from BCS membership, academia and the wider geographic information industry with presentations on all aspects of cartographic production and representation. Topics included the importance of good mapping, quality issues related to data acquisition and maintenance and the basics of map design with practical demonstrations on how to make mapping more effective.

The seminars offered a valuable training experience for data users and provided an excellent opportunity to learn from specialist cartographers. Following the success of the seminars it is clear that there is a demand for such information and the Society is planning further events in the future to include a training element in specific aspects of preparing better maps from GIS data.

### **Awards for Excellence**

In association with commercial sponsors, the Society promotes a series of awards for excellence in cartographic works and writing. Presentations are made during the Awards Dinner at the annual symposium in September. The awards categories comprise:

- [The John Bartholomew Award](#) for small scale thematic mapping.
- [The Ordnance Survey MasterMap Award](#) for map product derived from, and composed mainly of, Ordnance Survey's MasterMap data.
- [The Stanfords Printed Map Award](#) for a printed map, poster, atlas or page from a book.

- [The Avenza Electronic Map Award](#) for mapping created in electronic format.
- [The BCS Award](#) for the best entry from the four categories above.
- [The National Geographic Society New MapMaker Award](#) for students, trainees and new employees.
- The Junior MapMaker Award, a bi-annual award for children at school years 4 to 11.
- [The Henry Johns Award](#) to the author of the most outstanding article published in *The Cartographic Journal* during that year.
- [The Society Medal](#) an occasional award to persons who have made a distinguished contribution to Cartography.

### **Summary 2007**

There have been huge changes in the map making industry in recent years with more people than ever making maps. Many of these mapmakers have no cartographic training. The British Cartographic Society has recognised this and has introduced an outreach strategy to communicate with different disciplines within the industry, in particular with the GIS community. The success of our Better Mapping Seminars has proved that there is an interest in cartography within that community and we must continue to help all mapmakers to appreciate the qualities and benefits of good mapping by raising awareness of what can be done to make maps more effective through applying cartographic principles. There will be more educational seminars and new training days. The Society's premier event, the Annual Symposium, will be structured to accommodate such activities so that our Society fulfills the demands of both our current membership and the wider mapmaking community we hope to attract.