

Design Group Archive

BCS Design Group 7th May 2004

The last BCS Design Group meeting to be held at Oxford Brookes University took place on 7th May and was attended by a wide variety of cartographically related people, including academics, freelancers, students and a wide range of commercial cartographers and GIS users. The day comprised of presentations, practical exercises and discussions.



After introductions and coffee the Design Group kicked off with a presentation from Alan Collinson on the latest available relief data for public use in, and of, the United Kingdom and how this has been used by GeoInnovations to create their new mapping.

The next session saw everyone heading outside to undertake a GPS paper trail. This involved small groups obtaining coordinates using hand held GPS units. After a very pleasant lunch we all met back at the OCCGIS studio to plot the GPS coordinates and see how accurately they related to the same area extracted from OS DigiMap at a scale of 1:10,000. The results were surprisingly accurate and along with a talk from Terry Crump on his use of GPS to gather base data, it was concluded that this method of data acquisition and ground truthing was fast becoming an affordable and easy to use tool.

The afternoon then progressed with a discussion on 'Bridging the gap between GIS and Cartography' which highlighted a number of interesting points before considering how we, the cartographic profession, could enhance the links between the two disciplines.

It was agreed by all present that the cartographer now has to be involved in a multitude of disciplines and that skills from within related fields, for example graphic design, publishing, animation, web design and GIS are a necessary part of working within the map production industry today.

The session concluded with the point that Cartographers are experts in the communication of spatial data and as such are invaluable in a world which demands faster and faster transmittance of information.

After a cup of coffee and a more informal chat about GIS and Cartography, everyone sat down to consider the BCS and the benefits which are available to its membership. Several interesting points were made in relation to membership.

The final session of the day was a small practical exercise where people were asked to draw a map which linked reality with fiction. The idea was to design an imaginative map which breached the border between fictional lands and the reality of time and space in which they were based. The majority of people chose to draw the journey from 'Platform nine and three quarters to Hogwarts Castle, with an interesting discussion of people's interpretation of where Hogwarts sits geographically.

At the end of the day everyone was in agreement that this had been a very successful meeting and thanks were given to OCCGIS and Oxford Brookes University for hosting so many Design Group meetings over the past seven years.

Finally, to round the meeting off, we all retired to the White Horse public house for the legendary DG Carto-Quiz. Well done to everyone and we hoped you liked the prizes!

Full details of the day's events can be seen in the August Edition of Maplines. Coming very soon.

Susie Jones (Hart)