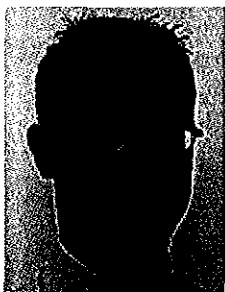


# CIEH NORTHERN IRELAND REGION

## Welcome



It is a tremendous privilege to take on the role of chairperson especially when I consider those who have held the position in the last five years. Namely Sam Knox, Lorraine Crawford and John Corkey.

### Looking Back

Thanks must go to John Corkey who led the Interim Management Board through the last two years of transition.

### Looking Forward

It was with great enthusiasm and anticipation that we held our first meeting in January 2008. It was particularly pleasing to welcome six new centre councillor members: Barny Heywood, David Allen, Roisin McDaid, Susann Vance, Joanne Corey and Leo Rodrigues. Each one will bring a range of fresh ideas, experience, expertise and insight, which will be invaluable as we move forward. As a management board we are also considering how we can provide a greater role for our retired members within the operation of the centre as many have so much to contribute and perhaps now have more time to do so! This would also complement the approach from the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health outlined in a recent edition of EHP that future publications would dedicate information to the retired members.

### APD Briefing

There will be an APD briefing on 9 April 2008. Venue: 123 York Street, Belfast

The briefing will last for approximately three hours and there will be a morning session and another in the afternoon.

Each session will be run by Gary Telfer, Principal Education Officer, CIEH London.

As this venue sits fourteen people maximum places will be offered first come, first serve basis.

If you are interested in attending either briefing please contact Donna Drummond on 02890243884 to register your interest or email

Another area, which the centre council international sub committee are considering is how to increase and strengthen the links with our Tanzanian colleagues and perhaps provide greater opportunities to our members for short term work.

### Looking Outward

I think as we go forward we should also be enquiring about and identifying the elements of best practice from the many professional bodies which exist within Northern Ireland to enable the CIEH to be recognised as one of those leading professional bodies.

Finally, I look forward to the support of members, centre councillors and in particular the assistance of Jennifer Parkinson, Vice Chairperson, Steve Cooper, Secretary and Sean Martin, Treasurer as we continue to work on your behalf.

As a centre we meet and operate for the benefit of you.

Please feel free to contact our office on 123 York Street and speak to Donna (02890243884) and she will pass your concerns onto council which will enable us to meet your professional development needs.

**Philip Thompson**  
Chairperson  
CIEH NIR

### Fancy a field trip?

The Northern Ireland Regional Board are planning a one day field trip over the summertime. We are proposing two different destinations, the north coast which will include a visit to the world famous Bushmills Distillery, a walk along the Giants Causeway and a meal at the Bushmills Inn. Or the south east coast with a visit to Tayto, a walk through Kilbroney Forest Park to the Cloughmore Stone and a meal in the Whistledown, Warrenpoint.

The choice of the trip and month is in your hands, let us know which destination is your favourite and when would you like it to happen. Please reply by email to Catherine Treche at [trehec@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:trehec@belfastcity.gov.uk) before 18 April

## Members' Meetings

CIEH NIR values your opinions

Is there a venue, time or place that you would like to see a meeting for members taking place. Are there topics you would like to hear about and share with other members.

What way would you like to see information about the centre delivered to you? Is there anything you would like to advertise in this newsletter. Your feedback helps us to respond to your concerns and needs...  
email us on  
[ciehnorthernireland@cieh.org](mailto:ciehnorthernireland@cieh.org)

## Make your APD Part 1 Application soon.

On 30 January the CIEH's EPD committee agreed to refund the application fees of the first 50 successful APD1 applications received in 2008.

For more details contact  
Gary Telfer  
[g.telfer@cieh.org](mailto:g.telfer@cieh.org)

## In confidence

Steve Cooper is your Secretary— should you need to speak to him in confidence you can do by

Dear Member

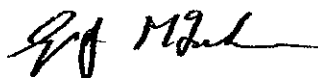
The recent announcement by Minister Arlene Foster (DOE) on the future shape of local government in Northern Ireland will, I suspect, come as somewhat of a relief to many colleagues working within the local government insomuch as at least the waiting is over. The Review of Public Administration (RPA) has, to date, been a long drawn out affair that has so far (to quote our former president Brain Hanna at the recent NILGA Conference) *"already taken longer than the second world war"*. I believe that this in turn has led to a growing sense of frustration and perhaps even despondency within the local government workforce as a whole which is, under the circumstances, hardly surprising.

In 2002 CIEH worked with the then Health Development Agency (HDA) in developing a future vision for environmental health (often quoted as EH2012). The evidence from that work clearly indicated that environmental health staff employed within the local government sector had aspirations to contribute to the broader agendas (i.e. the public health and sustainable development agendas) but felt constrained by existing local and national agendas.

Whilst the detail on local government functions has yet to follow from Arlene Foster there are, I believe, significant and exciting new potential opportunities within these new arrangements for environmental health practitioners (EHPs) to demonstrate their unique value. In particular the new community planning role and a statutory power of wellbeing, coupled with the proposals from Michael McGimpsey on future health structures (in which he clearly acknowledges and recognises the significant role that local government does and can make towards health protection and improvement) should create a new and much more tangible public health ethos in local government. EHPs in local government should seize this opportunity, not just in linking the work that they do directly to improved health and wellbeing, but also in working alongside other local authority colleagues to assist in ensuring that they see the equally important contribution that they can make to improving the wellbeing of communities. In addition there could also potentially be new employment opportunities for environmental health practitioners (EHPs) within the new public health structures that are likely to emerge as a result of Minister McGimpsey's proposals.

In order to fully realise the opportunities and potential outlined above it will be vital in my view that EHPs ensure that they practice real, value added, public health orientated, environmental health: in other words their ability to think holistically and in a joined up way, in the design of interventions and solutions at whatever level and within whatever discipline they work in.

Over the coming months we will be working on your behalf, as we have been doing for several years in relation to RPA and future public health arrangements, to ensure that the maximum opportunities are afforded within the new and emerging arrangements for EHPs to make this vital and unique contribution and in so doing play their part in both protecting and improving the health, wellbeing and quality of life of the people in Northern Ireland.



Gary McFarlane, Director CIEH Northern Ireland  
March 08  
Issue 3



# A New Environmental Health Course for Ulster

The staff at University of Ulster are currently working on a significantly revised BSc (Hons) Environmental Health Programme and would welcome views from practising EHP's and beyond. The evolving roles of EHP's such as increasing emphasis on EHP's' preventive role and their role in partnership working, was one of the drivers to update the programme. The other major of the driver for this new revision was the introduction by the CIEH, of a new core curriculum in 2007. This provided an opportunity to examine the programme having regard to the changing demands in the outside world and the environmental health profession. The new programme aims to ensure that the students develop appropriate knowledge and experience to enable them to be flexibly deployed in the public, private and non-profit sectors and can meet the evolving requirements of their customers and stakeholders. Changes in the programme's ethos, the changes presented in this consultation document suggest an evolution of the programme to satisfy the current demands while building on the commendable qualities of the existing programme. The enhancement of students' experience is the primary concern for the Course Planning Committee and will remain a dominant focus when revising the programme. The other challenge is to design a course that will deliver the essential skills, knowledge for the environmental health profession and experiences and also satisfy academic standards. The Course Planning Committee adopted the following rationale for the changes:

- Introducing the core environmental health areas at level 1
- Introducing a progression in those core environmental health areas: from level one through to final year
- Ensuring that the science content is targeted and relevant. This will enable the inclusion of social sciences such as psychology, sociology
- Ensuring a cognitive progression in the learning outcomes from level 1 to level 3. Initially the development of 'knowledge' and 'understanding', leading to development of skills relating to 'application' and 'analysis' and, finally, the ability to 'synthesise' and 'evaluate' or 'critically evaluate'.
- Creating a structure delivering Environmental Health Underpinning Skills and Knowledge and "EHness" in years 1 and 2, and the generalist option in final year (CIEH curriculum, 2007).

## Overriding themes

In light of the evolving environmental health profession and the new CIEH curriculum, some issues have arisen that either do not form a self-standing discipline or would benefit from being delivered in conjunction with others. It is suggested that several overriding themes should be delivered across some, or all, modules.

The inclusion of these themes in the relevant module rationale, content and assessment will be necessary to ensure that they are delivered appropriately. These themes are as follows:

- Sustainability,
- Health improvement, quality of life, well being
- Inequalities,
- Holistic approaches

## Operational skills

In addition to the overriding themes, operational skills are essential for any Environmental Health Practitioner. The current programme has great strengths in delivering those. The Course Planning Committee will build on these strengths and focus on the particular areas:

- Environmental health communication,
- Research skills,
- Managerial skills,
- Team work.

## Integrative studies-studies in depth

It is important to find a balance between delivering the five core areas of environmental health and ensuring the holistic and integrative nature of environmental health.

The Course Planning Committee recognised the importance of integration throughout the course of the Programme. Integration and in depth studies will then be reinforced in year two of the programme through two modules. Finally Environmental Health Integrative Studies will continue to deliver integration in final year in a 20 pts module.

Recognising the success of the 'residential' event held in November 2007, an integrative conference including year 1, 2 and final, will be organised as an integral part of the programme.

## Module changes

The changes in the Programme's ethos required the Course Planning Committee to review the whole structure of the Programme. At this stage it is important to reinforce that the current Programme's strength and commendable qualities will be built upon. It is suggested that some modules should undergo minimal adjustments, some modules should be revised and some modules should be entirely restructured.

## Placement Issue

The Course Planning Committee recognises the financial and other issues surrounding the placement year. However there is a broad agreement that there is a real benefit to the students' experience and the development of work experience attributable to placement. The conclusions from the discussion are that the placement module should remain largely unchanged.

## Your views

The school of the Built Environment would welcome the views, opinions and suggestions from the Northern Ireland's Environmental Health Practitioners and managers regarding the above proposal. Please contact Ursula Walsh, Course Director for BSc Environmental Health at the University of Ulster at Jordanstown, e mail [u.walsh@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:u.walsh@ulster.ac.uk) or telephone 028 90 368395



## Gala Reunion Dinner

As part of our ongoing work to raise the profile of environmental health we are considering the possibility of a gala dinner at the University of Ulster to "celebrate" the achievements of Environmental Health Practitioners graduates from the Environmental Health Undergraduate Programme and its predecessors.

The EH Undergraduate Programme is now 25 years old!!

Whilst this would be an excellent platform to invite selected VIPs and guests it is also an excellent opportunity for a "reunion" of colleagues and as such would be a social event also. However, its success is dependant on getting sufficient support from you.

Would you attend a Gala Reunion dinner... why don't you email us with your thoughts to [d.drummond@cieh.org](mailto:d.drummond@cieh.org).

The Gala dinner will be a black tie affair and the venue the main assembly hall at the university, we would hope to have the dinner in October with a cost of £35 -£45 per person

## Michael Cole Award

The 2007 Michael Cole Award was presented to the Smoke-free Environments Team and the CEHOG Tobacco Task Group in December 2007 for their contribution towards smoke-free Northern Ireland. The award is presented annually to a group, person or organisation whose work has made a significant contribution to Environmental Health knowledge and practice, in memory of the late Michael Cole who was a principal EHO with Northern Group Environmental Health and was a member of the Northern Ireland region of CIEH

**Sssh... don't tell anyone but could you use this space to tell 630 members something really interesting and useful?**

**We will be publishing again in June 2008 and if you want to use this space you'll need to let us know by May 2008. In the meantime we'll keep it hush hush**

## Environmental Health Profession update at ECOS

The environmentally friendly ECOS Centre in Ballymena was a very appropriate venue for the recent Northern Ireland Centre for Environmental Health Practitioners meeting as the topics included a presentation from Gary McFarlane, Director CIEH NI on climate change and the need to take local action to minimise the impact on public health. Other speakers included Dr. Ian Leitch, *safe food*, on his research into food allergies and his current work on raising the profile of this issue among the catering industry and Environmental Health Professionals; Ursula Walsh, UUJ, on the new revised curriculum for undergraduate environmental health professionals which will incorporate sustainable development, health impact assessment, health inequalities, partnership working and a community development approach to the role of the EHP and finally Gavin Marshall, Banbridge council, on the current pilot which publishes the food safety rating of food premises on the website [www.scoresonthedoors.co.uk](http://www.scoresonthedoors.co.uk) and allows consumers to vote with their feet and avoid premises where standards are low. Philip Thompson, regional Management Board for the Environmental Health Practitioners stated, "the meeting was a very informative exchange of information which allowed EHPs to be updated on issues of interest and allows for continued professional development."



L-R Steve Cooper, Gavin Marshall, Ian Leitch, Gary McFarlane, Philip Thompson

## Connecting Agenda

### EHOA and CIEH

All Ireland Environmental Health Conference

**24 – 25 April 2008**

For further details check out the programme/book your place go to ...

[cieh-nireland.org/events.asp](http://cieh-nireland.org/events.asp)

### Calls for assistance

The CIEH NI website has a page for members where they can put requests for assistance from other members.

This can range from putting a questionnaire online for members to complete or articles/topics for discussion etc

Why not go to the CIEH NI website and check it out!

### CIEH NI

We are now offering the facility of the boardroom at York Street, Belfast for meetings etc.

The offer is for **member meetings only** and there is no cost for the room hire and is subject to availability.

CIEH offices is conveniently located less than 10 minutes walk from Belfast city centre and there is sufficient parking close to the building.

The venue seats 14 board room style and is equipped with modern facilities including:

- Wireless internet access
- Data projector
- Tele-conferencing
- Video-conferencing