



Mike and his wife, Barbara at the FIG working week in Stockholm.

I'M NOW INTO MY 10TH MONTH OF PRESIDENCY

and it seems there is still plenty I want to do. I've mentioned in my president's columns a few of the activities I have been involved with during the year. These have mainly focused on my trips to Dublin, Bombay and Stockholm. Currently there is a huge potential for membership growth outside the UK and I have been heartened to find that there is wide recognition of ICES within civil engineering circles far from our UK base. There is, of course, also plenty going on closer to the UK.

During the last few years, the Institution has been identifying ways to raise our profile and, notably, at the forefront of this is the charter application to the Privy Council. On its own that will greatly increase our status in all sorts of fields. The opportunity to spread that news will have most impact if we have the Institution presence and awareness at a high level and later in this article I will come back to how our profile is being raised.

The closing date for the membership ballot has just passed as I'm writing this. I hope that everyone entitled to vote has actually used that vote. This will be the most significant change of status for ICES since its origins 39 years ago. We should all be part of that transition. It would be unthinkable that our membership would vote against it (but not impossible). We will relate the ballot result to the Privy Council and expect to hear the eventual result within four months or so.

There has been considerable work put into the wording of the petition and the associated documents, mostly by Bert Palmer, our honorary secretary, John Rushton, our legal advisor, and Ed Danson, during whose presidency much of the work was done. Many others also had input, not least John Bacon, who over two years ago laid the 'planks' for commencing the project; getting the committed support of the then president of ICE, the director general of the Ordnance Survey GB and several other influential people. We were also greatly helped by Francesca Berryman, the CEO of the Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists (CIAT). CIAT had recently been through its own charter application and gave excellent advice about the process.

Our mutual friends

Although I have been involved in our petition preparation during the whole of that time, it is mostly other people's efforts that have taken us this far. I do though have the accolade of having the draft petition laid before the Privy Council during my presidency earlier on this year. Ed Danson, while president, reckoned that we would have the result during my presidency, however these procedures do take considerable time and my successor Steve Jackson will undoubtedly be the president to receive the vellum scroll and maybe that highest of accolades – tea at the Queen's garden party.

Commissioning FIG

But there is more, about eight years ago we joined the International Federation of Surveyors [FIG] in our own right. ICES has given FIG continued support since then and is now on the brink of chairing two of its 10 commissions. Within the Institution, FIG was initially viewed as benefiting mainly our geospatial membership. However, considerable effort has been made to make the Construction Economics and Management commission (Commission 10) a much more viable vehicle. It is worth noting that it is widely recognised internationally that the organisation that chairs a FIG commission is also considered to be the worldwide centre of excellence in that subject.

Now that ICES has Andrew Morley currently chairing Commission 10 and with Commission 6 (Engineering Surveys) very soon to be chaired by Dr Gethin Roberts MInstCES, the name of ICES is firmly established internationally.

Meet ICEC

Our commercial management members have seen their role gradually widening in its influence towards such areas as construction economics and project management. The international group that has a more direct focus to that area is the International Cost Engineering Council. The ICEC describes itself as:

"A non-political and non-profit organisation which was founded in 1976 with the object of promoting co-operation between national and multinational cost engineering, quantity surveying and project management organisations worldwide for their mutual wellbeing and that of their individual members."

ICEC has a similar standing as FIG in its association with the United Nations and has a very close and established relationship with FIG. Clearly, also being a member of that body will further ICES' influence in the same way that FIG has undoubtedly done already.