

Profile of Council Members



What kind of people join Council and what they do give to Council and gain from it?

Have you ever thought about becoming a Council member? It is a very rewarding commitment and Council members get a lot out of it, as well as learning about and being involved with the workings of the Society.

Below we have spotlighted three RMetS members who have either been a member of Council or are a member currently. These are Ellie Highwood, Professor of Climate Physics at the University of Reading, Jenny Rourke, Senior Operational Meteorologist and Weather Impact Scientist at the Met Office and Baden Hall, Deputy Chief Forecaster, based at the Met Office Operations Centre.

Ellie Highwood



What is your job?

I did a degree in Physics at the University of Manchester and then moved to the University of Reading to complete a PhD supervised by Sir Brian Hoskins. I stayed on as a postdoctoral researcher, although changed more towards climate and climate change. In 1998 I won a NERC research fellowship to look at the role of absorbing aerosols in climate, and then went on to become a lecturer in 2001 at the University of Reading. In 2011 I became Professor of Climate Physics, and I now lead a group looking at the impact of aerosols on climate, climate variability and climate change.

What made you join Council?

I've actually been on Council twice (so far). The first time I was a postdoc, and saw it as a way to be involved in "my" learned Society and also to make contacts. I think I was asked to be on Council as I had just played a role on the organising committee of the 150th Anniversary conference. I spent 3 years on Council, and a little longer on the Education Committee. I've been back on Council since October 2012 as Vice-President, and Chair of the Strategic Programme Committee. I accepted this nomination as I think it's important to give back to the community and help develop the next generation of meteorologists.

What do you feel you gain from being a Council Member?

The first time around, I gained an understanding of the Society, and many contacts (particularly senior figures in the field). Both times I have gained a lot of skills, including meetings chairing and participation, communication skills, financial understanding etc.

What do you think the most important functions of Council are?

I think Council has an important function in linking the community to the work of the Society. This is why it is important for the Council to be drawn from across the membership, so that each group has a spokesperson. Additionally, members of Council often have expertise and experience in diverse organisations, and therefore can use these in helping the Society to deliver their aims. There are many things that the Society could be doing - Council, and its

committees, can help prioritise these.

Jenny Rourke

jenny

What is your job?

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I am a Senior Operational Meteorologist at the UK Met Office. I also currently work 50% of my time as a Weather Impact Scientist in the 'Weather Science' section of the Met Office.

What made you join Council?

I was invited to join Council due to my experience organising two of the RMetS Student Conferences. Having attended and thoroughly enjoyed the conference in 2007 I volunteered to help the Organising Committee for the conference in 2008 and was elected Chair of the Committee for the 2009 conference. I was therefore asked to represent the student community on Council from 2010 to 2013. As an Operational Meteorologist I also represented the Operational Forecaster community on Council and acted to ensure that the views of shift workers were represented.

What do you feel you gained from being a Council Member?

Being a Council member has given me an excellent overview of the workings of the Society: from the activities of the Special Interest Groups to the hard work that goes on by the dedicated Head Quarters staff to arrange the Conferences, meetings, education outreach and keeping the paperwork and finances in order. The Council meetings gave me an opportunity to meet a great variety of interesting people from across the meteorological community and opened my eyes to the wide range of people that the Society serves. My time on Council made me appreciate all the hard work that goes on 'behind the scenes' and gave me a new appreciation for the Society and its aims.

What do you think the most important functions of Council are?

The Council are a group of volunteers who provide a broad cross-section of perspectives from across the RMetS membership group. Their most important function is to ensure that the Society is working hard to achieve its main aims and making sure that everything is being done properly, from scrutinising the accounts to maintaining an overview of all of the activities that go on throughout the year. This ensures that the Society runs smoothly in its mission to “to promote meteorology as a science, profession and interest”.

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