

EARLY HISTORY OF THE UKIEG

The idea for a UK indoor air group was first aired during a ‘fun run’ at the 2002 ISIAQ Indoor Air Conference in Monterey, California.

ISIAQ (the International Society of Indoor Air Quality and Climate) was encouraging the establishment of local ‘chapters’ in different countries and Paul Harrison (currently Director of IEH Consulting Ltd) was chatting about this to Ken Parsons of Loughborough University as they were running along. They both agreed that rather than set something up that was part of an existing large organisation they should instead establish a smaller multidisciplinary group based in the UK, the purpose of which would be to foster links between all parties working in the field of indoor air quality to facilitate communication and the sharing of research ideas and opportunities. It soon became clear that the focus should be broader than just indoor air quality; hence the name the ‘UK Indoor Environments Group’.

The initial ‘management group’ was chaired by Paul, with Ken acting as Secretary. The UKIEG was officially launched in November 2003 with a conference held at the MRC Institute for Environment and Health in Leicester (where Paul was Acting Director). The main purpose of this meeting was to discuss the aims and objectives of the group and share members’ research interests; it included presentations on indoor pollution, exposure modelling, thermal comfort, ventilation, asthma and other health impacts of poor indoor air quality.

Since this first meeting the annual UKIEG conference has been an important event for indoor environment professionals, and the associated documents available on the web site give an insight into the evolution of knowledge in this field.

A formal committee was established in 2006 and a constitution produced. The principal purpose of the UKIEG at that time, which remains today, was to promulgate healthy indoor environments.

The members of the initial UKIEG Committee were Paul and Ken Parsons plus Dennis Loveday (also of Loughborough University), Isabella Myers (Imperial College), Sani Dimitroulopoulou (BRE), Marcella Ucci (UCL), John Stewart (Queen’s University, Belfast) and Ian Ward (Sheffield University). Other committee members in the early years included Derek Clements-Croome (University of Reading), Derrick Crump (BRE), Jon Ayres (University of Birmingham), Sean Semple (University of Stirling), Nic Carslaw (York University) and the late Anthony Frew (Southampton University).

Paul Harrison remained Chairman until 2007 when Ian Ward took on the mantle. However, within a year or so Ian had left Sheffield and relinquished the post. The Chairmanship then again reverted to Paul until 2009 when Professor Jon Ayres took on the role. The UKIEG has grown and become ever more influential under Jon’s leadership and subsequent Chairmen Marcella Ucci and Derrick Crump.