

The Institution of Agricultural Engineers

Founded 1938 – Incorporated 1960

Branch Meritorious Award

Dr John Stafford

CEng CEnv FIAgrE

John joined and has served on the Branch committee as Secretary since 2006, when he took over from John Neville. He was awarded the Branch Meritorious Award in 2011 for unstinting work to keep the Branch alive when no-one else was willing to take on the job.

Since then, he has maintained his commitment to the Branch, often having to go 'out and beyond' to keep things going. Thanks in part to John, the SEM Branch has maintained a full programme of winter technical meetings, requiring an almost constant stream of e-mails to send out and to respond to. The student competitions held as part of the Branch AGM are a challenge to the secretary and are particular to the SEM Branch. Four and sometimes five students have to be corresponded with and organised to give their presentations and three judges have to be found for the evening. John has also had the task of organising a meal for the students and organisers on the evening of the meeting. These are no mean tasks and John has fulfilled them reliably every year since he has been in office.

As secretary, John was automatically also treasurer and he managed our funds well, keeping an eye on spending and reining us in if our balance was getting low. Fortunately, in the latter few years, the Secretariat has taken over this role, relieving John of this job at least.

This past year has been particularly challenging with no in-person meetings of the Branch committee and the departure out of the area of the chairman (with no replacement) and another very active member of the committee also leaving the area. As a result, the winter programme has needed a lot of coercive input from John to get the programme together. This he did with a high level of success achieving an almost full programme of meetings, but only one of which, due to Covid restrictions, has been in person.

It is also gratifying that with the help of others on the committee, he has been able to organise the upcoming AGM and annual student competition meeting. This meeting has always been one of the highlights of the year but equally as mentioned above, is always a great challenge to organise.

In recognition of all the work John has put in over the intervening years, the Branch committee has no hesitation in putting him forward for the Branch Meritorious Award for the second time and to thank him for his unstinting input.

