



The Association of Teachers of Mathematics
for mathematics educators
primary, secondary and higher



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Further to my web notice of 12th March, and Peter Lacey's comments in MT 214, please find linked to this paper the General Council's view of what the Association might look like in 2014. As mentioned earlier, all members are invited to add paragraphs or pages.

Please send any contributions to 2014@atm.org.uk before June 30th.

A 'membership' picture of the future of ATM will steer GC's work over the next five years and help us align our relationships with other bodies.

George Knights
Honorary Secretary



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Meeting of the General Council

Saturday January 18th 2014

Room C17 Institute of Education, University of Durham

Present:

GC members	10
Durham branch members	8
Representatives from other branches	5
Representatives from working groups	5
HQ staff	3

In the morning session, GC members approved four publications submitted by different branches and a further two publications submitted by two of the working groups. It was agreed that all six publications should be digitally mastered, with the three non-interactive publications being marketed in both paper and digital forms. The HQ publications manager reported on sales from the ATM digital archive (which had replaced the warehouse storage in 2011). In the last 12 months, 80% had been shipped in digital form, whilst 20% had been printed off in house and shipped in paper form.

Representatives from the primary working group reported on their joint activity with the MA and other subject associations on the quinquennial primary curriculum review for which subject associations have the national lead responsibility. ATM members should be asked to express their views on the current proposals, particularly as they relate to mathematics.

Representatives from the secondary working group reported on their joint activity with other mathematics subject associations on the development of assessment approaches which helped students to chart and navigate their own learning pathways. There were signs that these approaches were improving the quality of learning experiences, motivating students and achieving more secure learner progress. With the government looking to subject associations to lead on the development of qualifications and offer alternative methods of assessment, this project is looking particularly promising.

Representatives from branches submitted their annual plans and budgets were agreed to support their work. The branches CPD plan was approved at the November Exec meeting and details were now on the website.

The afternoon session was led by the host branch, Durham. They had organised a mathematics lesson with twelve students whose age ranged between 8 and 18. The branch members had designed three 'rich mathematical activities' and coached a couple of the older students in how these activities might be worked with the whole group. ATM has been given the lead responsibility for the national "researching mathematics mentoring project" (RMMP) and four of the branches have decided to stimulate some teacher-researcher groups to take the project forward. One of the activities of this afternoon, which involved identifying from eight identically shaped objects, one which was lighter or heavier, in three weighings, proved challenging for students, teachers and GC members! It was decided that the digital recording of this afternoon session should be posted on the web-site so that all members could comment.



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The local activity champion reported on current activity in the 160 branches and groups now active across the country and the 50 groups (all of whom work in conjunction with their local ATM equivalents) elsewhere in the world.

The new email groups are working well. New members are automatically added to their local group and the local mentor contacts them to welcome them and invite them to local activities.

We have been really successful in challenging and supporting members in working together. Members of branches have put together case studies and models of how they have organised activities, short conferences and support groups. We now have a whole raft of opportunities for members to meet, share ideas and support each other. As well as the main conferences these include local day and weekend conferences, activity mornings, local (and online) support groups, coffee shop discussion groups and “maths down the pub sessions”. The office have been hugely supportive in working with individuals to enable them to facilitate groups.

The website continues to be a hub for lots of on line activities with live “chat” as well as active forums and shared whiteboard maths sessions.

The development, four years ago, of 'branch' starter packs (containing case studies, guidelines on ranges of activities that have been successful elsewhere and a list of members willing to lead both formal and informal sessions) has empowered many who previously had been uncertain about forming groups.



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Report from the Communications Group

150 people attended the 2013 ATM conference in Lincoln. Three sessions were presented remotely by the Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers and one was presented from Japan. These had proved popular sessions where two-way real-time video-conferencing had allowed a lively discussion on home education as it relates to mathematics with a live link with the parents and tutors involved with 'School of the Air' in Alice Springs. 2 500 people attended the conference through the multi-channel VC link.

Additional notes regarding communications:

- We are well advanced on developing :
 - Ways on which web can support devolved membership control
 - More promotion of specialist representatives to media
 - Greater social networking with/for/around maths education teachers
 - Video conferencing used for meetings.
- Branch meetings addressed by video conference workshop are proving successful.
- Local branch meetings for higher level teaching assistants have shown mixed success.
- Recently, the Home Educators Member Group provided more webcasts on ideas for using the new e-resources on 'Getting to Grips with the Number System' and 'Exploring and Questioning and Investigating'.
- Initial teething problems with the digital printing on demand system seem to have been ironed out and are now achieving the savings originally predicted.
- John from Kampala had trained as a teacher at Homerton, Cambridge and, as a trainee, had joined the Cambridge ATM branch. Back in Kampala he continued his membership and continues to 'attend' Cambridge ATM branch meetings through a video-conferencing link. Not surprisingly, John is now establishing a Kampala ATM branch which will meet in the Nakasero Primary School - synchronised with the Cambridge meeting to share ideas and resources.
- We are adding value to existing resources on website and developing a new resources central professional thing like Skolecom.
- Mary, a member in Canada, had found some interesting moving images when browsing her Flickr web account and wondered how she might use them in her

maths lessons. She reports that after a matched search she found the same resources linked from the ATM website and was delighted with the additional video notes, questioning ideas and teacher prompts provided alongside. She has now added her own video and notes illustrating how she she used the resources. = "Webs that work for us"

Tie-ins with other organisations:

- Following the successful project with the British Olympics where ATM hosted sports data and interpretations which were packaged and interpreted for primary and secondary schools to use in creative ways, ATM has since established links with a number of other organisations
- Eden Project, Cornwall – we created a mathematics trail for the Eden Project site incorporating global statistics and data interpretation, a separate trail focusing on two and three dimensional shapes including polyhedra, Fibonacci and other number series.
- ATM is currently negotiating with English Heritage to provide mathematical input to a pilot series of trails and guides focussing on a wide range of mathematical topics in five of their properties. These, it is expected, will be funded by English Heritage and other sponsors.

Office:

- The transition to a distributed home/tele-working office staff has been very successful and cost effective. With digital printing on demand and the use of contracted out storage and distribution the office requirements have been readily accommodated in employees homes.
- The concomitant costs of providing equipment, alterations and networking facilities have been saved within the 24 month period anticipated.
- Occasional physical meetings for administrative staff, general council and others have been accommodated in schools, local authority facilities and hotels.

Data Handling:

- All membership management, accounting, reporting and administrative computing functions are now either managed online by our web data manager or through use of 'cloud computing' based on Google Apps. All documents can now be collaboratively shared (selectively where necessary) and response time from creating, through drafting, editing and amending through to final publication is faster by a factor of five than it was, say, five years ago.
- Members are able to handle all membership issues online.

Online advertising revenue:

- Following the great improvement in the ability to apply appropriate filters to adverts placed on our website, blogs, social networking and other online interactive tools, the revenue from this stream has significantly increased and now makes up 20% of annual revenue.



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With earmarked funding devolved to teachers to cover costs of membership of Subject Associations now well established, we are pleased that we have been able to reduce our subscription fee to £35 for personal membership. Mathematics subject associations agreed last year to discount membership fees for those who have multiple memberships of their associations. A fee of £50 for personal membership of both ATM and MA falls well within the £100 devolved to each teacher for subject association membership.

As ATM finances have increased, it has been possible to fund a much wider range of training and professional development activity. Further funding to support this work has been accessed by bids to central government for major curriculum and training initiatives. As a result, ATM has been able to send members on visits to work alongside colleagues in other parts of the developed world and to provide support for initiatives to promote the development of mathematics education in the developing world. Recently, colleagues have returned with up-beat reports of their work in Zimbabwe and the Sudan.

In addition to these international projects, ATM has, as part of its professional development programme, enabled members to take time out of their classrooms to work on projects furthering the development mathematics education in the UK. These releases have been for periods of time from six weeks to two terms. Many members who have availed themselves of these opportunities have, by so-doing, gained credits toward higher degree qualifications.



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Report from Primary Working Group

What does primary membership offer?

There is one port of call for primary teachers who wish to be a member of one or more mathematics subject associations. The 2013 national teacher survey showed that every primary teacher who has a responsibility for, or interest in, mathematics regards being a member of the ATM/MA primary group as an essential part of their professional life. This includes those working in the early years foundation stage. Every primary member has an equal voice and opportunity to contribute to decision-making about all aspects of the association to which they belong. Primary working group members are represented on the councils of all mathematics subject associations.

CPD

The primary CPD group is now the first place primary teachers look to for quality relevant engaging accredited CPD. We are working in partnership with HEI, local authorities and individual school federations. The primary CPD group quality mark/kite mark is recognised nationally.

Regional teams work with teachers and schools in developing and empowering their professional practice as teachers and learners. Teachers have an entitlement to quality CPD and space to reflect and this is written into their conditions of service.

The annual conference became obsolete when too many members wanted to attend to make it practically possible. Large regional conferences now take place during term time and have great breadth and variety of sessions. This enables primary delegates to have a good range of sessions to pick from and they also enjoy networking with teachers in other sectors. In addition, this year is the biennial huge primary annual conference in the Dome, which has taken on a high national profile, is on the news and has a TV programme dedicated to it. The booking for this is already full six months in advance.

Representation

The primary membership is recognised as **the** representative group for consultation by governmental and other decision making bodies. Mathematics subject associations who are members of JMC have strived to ensure that the voice of primary and early years teachers is represented.

Resources

All primary schools are now fully aware of the resources and publications developed and published by the primary group.

Communication

Please send any contributions to 2014@atm-mail.org.uk before 30 Jun 09

A survey of all primary practitioners last year showed that the ATM website is the first port of call for primary teachers for news, opinions and resources.

Please send any contributions to 2014@atm-mail.org.uk before 30 Jun 09



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Letter to the Chair from PR

I've just got back from an amazing weekend in Plymouth and had to let you know all about it.

As this year we are having a joint conference at Easter, the ATM branches are running weekend and day conferences throughout the country spread over the year. So I've had two days of fun, sharing ideas and being creative in the workshop. We had sessions from some of the old favourites but I really enjoyed the one called 'Back to basics – Maths with just a pencil and paper'. Really interesting problems and ideas, all the more exciting because it was run by two NQT's from last year's conference.

Workshop has changed since I first knew it. Instead of the old trolleys we have boxes, each focused on a theme. At weekends like this the workshop is slimmed down but there are still plenty of resources to allow delegates to investigate the ideas that inspire them. This weekend we had the collection of strategy games and a seemingly endless supply of plastic pieces for constructing 3d models. You wouldn't believe some of the things we made – someone had a great time on the internet trying to find names for some of our creations. We posted some of them on the forum and soon got some interesting classifications from members all over the world.

We left some of our smaller models in the boxes so others can see them. The workshop resources no longer live all year in Derby but travel around the country being used by schools and branches. I've booked 3 of the boxes for my school in May. We'll use them in lessons and have arranged an Inset day for local primary schools on investigations. Some of our students have agreed to help with a maths fair in the town hall. I've found someone to cut large paper squares accurately so we're going to do some giant modular origami.

Do you remember Becky? She came to her first conference in Swansea when she was a student 5 years ago. I saw her again this weekend. She's been hosting termly support meetings for NQTs from her local schools. They are putting together an e-book on surviving your first year as a maths teacher. I've seen some of their ideas and I'm really impressed. There are lots of links to the online resources on our website with original ideas on how to use them.

Anyway, I must go now. Jenny is running tonight's on line problem solving session and I don't want to be late. Have you done any of these? There's usually about half a dozen members working together on a shared 'virtual' whiteboard trying to solve some fiendish problem. Great for keeping the brain cells working. If too many people turn up to work sensibly together we just split into groups then compare our results at the end.

Please send any contributions to 2014@atm-mail.org.uk before 30 Jun 09

See you at the Education Show next month. Have you finished planning the world record attempt for our stand?

Cheers

PR

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Letter to Chair from AN

1. This opportunity to report back on the seeds sown by your administration, and so regularly 'manured' by your erstwhile hon. sec., is strongly appreciated.
2. What follows deals specifically with 5 central aspects of our current programme and they are dealt with in alphabetical order:
 - a. **Conference** – the timely end of the traditional format (of 3 days at some remote campus trying to make financial ends meet) coincided with the Association's 50th anniversary (and DSF's lament) and encouraged the team of organisers to be brave and boldly go where no conference-member had been before. These organisers have responded imaginatively and for three years now have successfully networked our ever-expanding membership both nationally and internationally. (pls. see item e below.)

The one day 'conference roadshow' continues to move across the length and breadth of the UK. Now no longer confined to England – members in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales have had opportunities to familiarise themselves with current issues in mathematics education. The additional ones in Paris and Bruxelles were a complete sell out! Using carefully chosen keynote speakers and dynamic seminar leaders, the 'conference roadshow', complete with its own workshop bus and games trailer, has this year alone visited 20 localities during the conference season. Each one has differed as local attitudes and interests are reflected – this is a constant feature that appears to attract new members.

It is the intention of the present organising team to extend the conference season accordingly to every half term as well as the more traditional Easter window as our 'courses' - not conferences (old notions die hard) - are credit bearing, ultimately leading to Master's degree programmes.

- b. **CPD** – this is without doubt our biggest success to date. Back in 2009 – 2010 there was a slow start to this initiative, but by Easter 2010 a 10 day course was not only designed but accredited by the University of Humberside(UH). The course closely mirrored the ambitions established by both the Rose and William's reports. Every primary school has been targeted and the intention to

have a mathematics consultant in every school is still being hotly pursued. By the end of the academic year 2011 our 8 regional course teams had worked in all the local authorities at least once. This meant 5% of all primary staff had been accredited, their course points likewise leading to Master's programmes. By the end of 2012 – 18% of eligible primary staff; by 2013 - 34%; by 2014 - 54% and hopefully if order book figures are to be believed, we should meet a target of 78%.

The perceived wisdom behind this success can be bullet pointed thus:

- ❖ Very early and reliable accreditation
- ❖ Melded into the wider Master's degree accreditation programme for teachers
- ❖ Utilising the wisdom and experience of older ATM members (ex advisers and inspectors) to design, organise and run the course.
- ❖ Heavy sponsorship from www. advertisers within MTi, employment agencies and local authorities
- ❖ Government's stamp of approval in recognising the integrity of our course aim *'to mathematically empower both staff and children'*.

The only regret is that this course does not have a younger sister working to accredit staff involved with lower secondary children. Though recruitment agencies have suggested a scholarship package for overseas teachers from darkest Peru and the recently 'opened' areas of the Sino – Soviet pact of satellite countries! Note communication with the recently formed state of PaliSreal is slow but sure and their teachers are actively engaged in every exchange.

- c. **Internationally** – following the economic downturn of 2009 – 2010 and the inevitable 33.3% cutback in education, JMC, working with our business partners YouTube_(TM), BeBo_(TM) and Skype_(TM), over which we permanently preside, had, by 2012-13, forged the following permanent VC links with:
- Scandinavia (working practically)
 - Poland (working geometrically)
 - Italy (working with dynamical geometry)
 - France (axiomatic approaches)
 - Spain and Portugal (working historically)

In 2013 – 14, links were forged with all major pan-African associations and within the Mediterranean countries.

This year, following on from strong links with Latin America, the USA will decide whether or not to join our Federation of international teachers of mathematics (FITm). Their usual late arrival is expected! n.b. There has been some reluctance on Germany's behalf to take part but perhaps after talks with the Czech and Slovenia who knows.

Work is updated on a pan-European portal on a weekly basis between contributing partnership schools – actively supported by local members of an association – be it here or in another country!

d. **Journals – please note the plural.**

Following the success of one **MTi** journal in 2009, this was followed by 2 in 2010 and all 6 which were published interactively in 2011. The European economic downturn helped to swing this change of emphasis, with print, distribution and storage costs rising. A handful of older members who wanted ‘hard copy’ were easily accommodated by docu-technology and digi-printing – a facility whose capital costs we share with other subject associations. Though economics originally ignited this paradigm shift, it was the daily newspapers that presaged our change. Like the Grauniad, Times and Independent, we had to go online or go under.

Now, in 2014, **MTi** is online for 24/7! We now bring you the latest news and views of most aspects of mathematical life as we now know it. With a constant stream of challenging ideas and provocative resource materials in a wide range of learning formats to suit the subscriber, **MTi** has gone from strength to strength. Finally across the web we are able support teachers as they strive independently to maximise enjoyment and enthusiasm for any mathematical endeavour across the entire age spectrum, be they a junior subscriber or graduate one.

Such progress is NOW recognised by a series of bursaries and scholarships from the Lacey foundation which guarantees access to that dwindling number of reputed institutes of learning who appear to be staving off closure.

MTR is the real success story. Following their example MT, the widely loved journal of the ATM, at long last returned to its natural position as a quality journal dedicated to work at the interface of teachers and researchers. It is now published three times a year and contains an ongoing dialogue between those trying to advance our curriculum thinking and extend the boundaries of what constitutes ‘the empowering of mathematicians’. It has brought the research community and classroom practitioners back together again without the interference by legislators and others.

e. **Membership** – following on from the award to all teachers of funding to enable them to join subject associations, membership has grown dramatically. The key issues that helped format this subsequent growth have been:

- Cheaper access to one or two of **our** local (credit awarding) courses per year

- 'on line' personal membership at a nominal fee with corresponding lower costs for pdfs of resources and allied video downloads and other images
- Access to **MTR** on an issue by issue basis with the same lower costs for pdfs etc.
- Full range of personal web devices for any teacher and their family – web portals, email addresses, conferencing facilities (very much like Skolekom_(TM) in Denmark).
- Choice of cheaper materials and publications from other sister associations
- Enhanced video conferencing capabilities across the globe at substantially reduced rates

n.b. The biggest surprise has been the sharp increase in membership coming from the primary sector in the UK, with access to ATM's 10 day courses carrying with it free individual membership for a semester.

3. Thank you again for this opportunity to report back and there is just time for a reminder that the UK have teams in the international Kappel – Abel_(TM) mathematics competition. Teams from Cleethorpes (with Grimsby) and Leicester are taking part alongside teams from Norway, Denmark and Sweden. Both teams having the advantage of two OFs who have been training them - hopefully we shall do better this year.



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Chair's Valedictory

Being the last GC before the AGM at conference, all attendees were invited to an evening meal after which the outgoing Chair of the General Council reflected on her period of office. As this describes a significant phase in the history of ATM, the notes of her observations are set out below:

Whilst we should make decisions today that help us sculpt and reach a better future we should be mindful of where we come from and what we stand for. I am sharing these observations with you this evening so that those of you here who are about to come onto GC, or to take up new office on GC might take the association forwards on the next phase of its journey.

Back in 2010, teachers of mathematics had argued that if a government body, such as NCETM, was actively promoting the joining of a professional mathematics subject association, then teachers' salaries should be increased with an earmarked amount in a similar fashion to the GTC subscription. NCETM took this compelling argument to the government who, in response, phased out their grant to NCETM and paid it directly into a "teacher subject association subscription fund" (TSASF).

Negotiations through JMC meant that £120 per annum was set aside for each teacher for subject association subscription costs. In return each mathematics subject association agreed to cap their individual membership subscriptions at £60 per annum. An agreement to cap at 50% of the allocation was struck.

The TSASF was disbursed and made available to each teacher as a grant – the TSASG, which could be used for no other purpose than paying subscription fees to subject associations. Each year, each teacher filled in an on-line form nominating the subject associations(s) they wished to join. No nomination meant no disbursed grant. Unlike GTC membership there was no further government subsidy to subject associations.

Though these new arrangements started in the mathematics community, they quickly applied across all the different subject interest groups. In this way teachers could join two different subject associations, either within or across disciplines.

Interestingly, the subject associations' response to these new funding arrangements was to reduce their membership fees. Whilst HQ central costs always have to be met from total subscription receipts, increased membership numbers meant these fixed central costs could be met from a lower subscription rate.

It is unknown which minister or senior civil servant authorised the switch of funding to the TSASF, but its effects have been significant. Released from their pre-occupation of making ends meet, subject associations have switched their attention to curriculum and pedagogical innovation. Though subject associations were still competing for members (which ensured value for money), new collaborations emerged which began to transform practice in the classroom. The Science-Mathematics-Technology (son of STEM) collaborative was invited by government to lead on the reform of assessment in secondary schools.

JMC had co-ordinated the first subject collaborative across all the mathematics subject associations and, as you know, it is now leading mathematics curriculum and assessment development across the UK.

Through 2011 the shift of power was moving away from the QUANGOs and into the heart of the profession. Government appeared to be delighted with this new arrangement because they were spending less money, whilst at the same time:

- *Gaining from a more professionalised workforce;*
- *Seeing curriculum development that was establishing itself as world leading;*
- *Seeing higher take-up and regeneration within the STEM subject family.*

2012 saw many of the QUANGOs phasing out and a government confident in being able to listen and talk to a teaching profession through its thriving subject associations. With its newly rediscovered confidence, the teaching profession initiated and sustained, through its subject associations, research and development. It was towards the end of 2012 that all 38 professional subject associations formed a co-operative that, although known as the General Teaching Council, completely replaced the former GTC. The journey of workforce professionalization had reached a significant milestone. From this point, the identity and independence of ATM was secure. Though the membership numbers were not in the 'top five', ATM was able to work in ways true to its aims and principles. In practical terms the ATM branches and working groups were made up from members of ATM and MA as well as members from other subject associations. The IT working group turned out to have the most hybrid membership.

2013 brought a new coherence to the educational landscape. There was ATM. ATM sat with other mathematics subject associations in the JMC. ATM sat with all other subject associations in the GTC. And that is it. National policy continues to emerge through debate between government and GTC and practices are researched, developed, evaluated and improved through constituent subject association members. A wider remit for GTC, agreed last September, to include all educational professionals has proved popular with initial teacher trainers, researchers and consultants.

But, let me take you back to the dark days of 2009. Well-meaning but misguided intentions of NCETM, along with misguided interpretations of those intentions, were suggesting closer

relationships between the different mathematics subject associations. Notions of “speaking with one voice is more authoritative than speaking with many”, and “choice of mathematics subject association is confusing for teachers”, were not challenged but created frenzy around exploring patterns of merger or federation. Preoccupation with the present occluded visions of a possibly more promising future. Obvious solutions for today’s circumstances did not look so rosy when seen in the possible contexts of the medium and longer run.

It was pretty clear that the increasing number of QUANGOs and other organisations between teacher and learner would soon break under its own weight. Think about it: QCA, NAA, OFSTED, OFQUAL and NCETM were funded by government. OCR (albeit a Charity), AQA, EdExcel were funded from budgets devolved to schools. CfSA was an umbrella organisation for all subject associations, JMC was an umbrella organisation for all mathematics subject associations, while MMSA, formerly AMSA, was an umbrella organisation for some mathematics subject associations. All umbrellas were paid for from the funds of the constituent subject associations. With all these umbrellas, no wonder there was a drought at ground level. At the next level ‘down’, in the mathematics education community we had the different mathematics subject associations: ATM and MA as the universal ‘learner-facing’ association; NANAMIC, AMET, HoDoMS and NAMA as the specific ‘learner-facing’ associations; BSRLM for researchers; BSHM, MEI, GAMA and RSS as specific interest groups; IMA as an applied mathematics society, and LMS with EMS as national capital-based learned societies.

ACME did not fit easily into any of these groups. With independent grant funding it was conceived by some of the members of the constituent societies of JMC, blessed by government and delivered by RS. However, it was not a representative body, it was not an umbrella organisation and its relationship with NCETM (though itself conceived by ACME) and subject associations was unclear.

All this last group of subject associations existed because mathematics educationalists wanted them to. They paid for them through subscription. JMC existed because the constituent mathematics subject associations wanted it to. Beyond that the territory was different. Either directly or indirectly they were all funded by all of us as tax payers – no choice. Perversely most of these ‘up line’ organisations purported to be promoting the best interests of learners. Arguably, few added to the professionalism of teachers – they simply created bureaucratic barriers between teachers and learners.

Discussion in 2009 about federations was put on hold by the argument that a federation across one or more mathematics subject organisations would create yet another umbrella layer distancing further teacher from learner. GC concluded that if the organisational overgrowth were to be pruned then the LAST place to start should be those vulnerable parts that teachers themselves had constructed. Better to hack back those parts which had rich arteries of funding and divert those resources into the parts constructed by teachers. Doing the opposite would render void the government rhetoric of professionalising the educational workforce. It was at the January 2010 GC that the resolution to lobby government to fund teachers’ membership of subject associations was passed. This cause was taken up by all mathematics subject associations and JMC proved themselves as effective government lobbyists.

Early in 2009 we were unaware of what the future held – though we did try to form a view on what we wished it to look like. To deal with the immediate issues we resolved to hunker

down, deal with today and work tirelessly to make the tomorrow we wanted to happen, happen.

Hunkering down, stripping back to the essence of what we, ATM were and are about, was not, in itself, a bad thing. It is said that fasting is good for the soul as well as the body. It pushed us to reminding ourselves what our essence was, and is; and, in doing so describing our unique identity and purpose.

So what were the invariants in this transformation of stripping back? Our beliefs, values and principles. What were the variants? Everything else. Just as a reminder, those beliefs and principles, articulated by the founder-members of ATM are declared on our website and in the front cover of every journal.

In practical terms, what emerged as the most important characteristic of ATM was the provision of opportunities for groups of teachers to come together:

- i. to share, discuss and evaluate practice;*
- ii. to propose changes to practice that may have beneficial effects on learner attitudes to and confidence in mathematics;*
- iii. to encourage each other to trial such changes in their classrooms*
- iv. back to (i)*

We agreed that this could and should happen through branches, and working groups that may be focused on specific learning stages or on particular areas of mathematics or on the development and use of particular resources – or on any combination of these.

From this focus on the essence of ATM's work we proposed three core functions for each part of our organisation.

For GC this meant:

- i. Enabling the pattern of activity described above;*
- ii. Establishing the future and steering the association towards it;*
- iii. Ensuring HQ is fit for the purpose of supporting the association's journey from its present position towards its declared future.*

For HQ this meant:

- i. Facilitating internal communications across branches, working groups and GC;*
- ii. Supporting GC in navigating the association's journey from the present to its declared future;*
- iii. Facilitating external communications between ATM and the wider educational community.*

For branches this meant:

- i. Making ATM's existence known by being invitational and inclusive and collaborating with MA and other mathematics subject associations wherever this brings direct benefits to teachers.*
- ii. Encouraging the sharing of current practices and the research and development of new ones;*
- iii. Sharing what is happening in their branch with other branches and working groups, including the provision of CPD and the production of publications and materials.*

It was agreed that branches may be joint with MA. Because the vast majority of teachers were not members of any mathematics subject association any notions of 'territory' would

be misplaced. We now know that there is more than enough space for two universal mathematics subject associations.

Working groups worked to a brief similar to that for branches.

This shift of emphasis remains to this day – where, as you will be aware, we are all meeting together with the Durham branch. How did we arrive at where we are now? Well, we described where we are now, back in 2009. It was the first exercise of GC after the 2009 conference – and then we did everything in our power to bring that description into reality. Every decision we made as GC, we checked to make sure it was moving us towards that articulated vision of the association's future.

It's now your job to refresh that vision and move the association along the next leg of its journey. Thank you Durham for being our hosts today – and thank you GC for your hard work.

Time to replenish our drinks at the bar!