

Professor Alan Thorpe  
Chief Executive Officer  
Natural Environment Research Council  
Polaris House  
North Star Avenue  
Swindon, SN2 1EU

23 February 2010

Dear Alan,

The Future of the BGS Core Store, Edinburgh

I write to you on behalf of the members of the PESGB on the basis that we encompass the vast majority of users of the BGS Core Store at Gilmerton, Edinburgh, despite being excluded from the consultation process in 2009. Today we are publishing on our website the results of a survey of members' views on the proposed closure of the Edinburgh facility which you can see at [www.pesgb.org.uk](http://www.pesgb.org.uk).

In summary 77% believed the core store should remain in Edinburgh and 89% of active users thought so. You will also see that in the March PESGB Newsletter I have stated my own analysis of the situation and what should be done to resolve it.

I met with Professor Ludden of the BGS last week to share these results and propose that a Steering Group of the real stakeholders should be set up to reconsider the way forward. Professor Ludden appeared to reject this on the basis that the decision was in the hands of higher authorities.

In view of this, I am offering my advice that NERC, DECC, and the BGS should recognise that the only politically acceptable way forward is to form the Steering Group with a remit to consider;

- What is the purpose of the Edinburgh Core Store – a passive academic archive or a practical working facility or something else?
- What are the true economics of the current operation, what are the future economic constraints, and what are the financial numbers behind alternative ways forward?
- What is the most optimal, viable solution to meet the agreed purpose within the defined economic constraints?

Please note that I am writing similarly to Simon Toole at DECC, and also Jon Gluyas, as Chairman of BGS formally asking that the Board of the BGS reconsider their position at the next meeting.

I note the determination of these three organisations not to change their stance, treating the initial decision as final and irreversible. I urge you not to give me the same response.

Yours sincerely,



Henry Allen  
President PESGB

Cc: Professor Anne Glover, University of Aberdeen