1. Group membership

Membership of the Construction Materials Group (CMG) has remained relatively constant throughout the year at around 20 people. Sue Halliwell stood down from the group at the end of December as she was leaving NetComposites for another role. Peter Hastings (with a background in cements, float glass and foam insulation) joined the group in October. Matthew Thornton from IOM3 stepped in as Secretary following Jackie Butterfield’s departure, and his support was greatly appreciated. Geoff Hale, who joined IOM3 in January, has now taken on this role for the CMG.

2. Group meetings

Three meetings were held during the year at Bridon International, Doncaster on 27 January (this included a plant tour) with 13 members present, 9 May at IOM3 (Carlton House Terrace, London (11 present), and 5 October at IOM3 (The Boilerhouse, Grantham (10 present). Participation rates ranged from 50-70%, which is acceptable but efforts are need to encourage more members to attend on a regular basis.

3. Activities during 2012

The CMG was anticipating a major role in Materials Congress 2012, as it was closely involved in organising a Construction Materials and Infrastructure day and had assembled a strong programme. Following the decision to cancel the event, it is hoped that the speakers will be prepared to contribute to a future IOM3 event.

3.1. Technical programme (details in appendix below)

The CMG had a presence at the EcoBuild 2012 exhibition and conference, held from 20-22 March, taking part of a stand with BRE, Technology Strategy Board and UK Trade and Investment. This provided an opportunity to promote the activities of the group and IOM3 membership in general. The support provided by Deborah Pullen from BRE (a CMG member) in setting up this opportunity for the CMG was greatly appreciated.

3.2. Web-site developments

Richard Cooper (Web and New Media Development Manager at IOM3) has created a new microsite for the CMG. This needs final approval by the group before going live.

3.3. Engagement with technical community and/or local societies

As one of three cross-functional groups within IOM3, the CMG has members who also are active in other technical groups such as the Ceramics, Polymers, Sustainable Development and Wood
Science. These links need to be strengthened in the coming year and opportunities explored to foster collaborative activities.

3.4. Contributions to IOM3 house journals

Mike Driver wrote “The future’s green - education in low-carbon design” for Clay Technology, October/November 2012, which summarised a report entitled Centres of Excellence in Integrated Sustainable Design for Construction that was prepared for the Royal Academy of Engineering (RAE).

3.5. Other (eg sustainability initiatives)

Andy Rotherham from Proskills (the employer-led organisation which encourages the development of skills and standards for industries in the process and manufacturing sector) is a member of the Construction Materials Group and has kept the group aware of the continuing restructuring within the organisation. It is hoped that as a revised remit for Proskills is defined, it will be possible to build a closer dialogue with them.

4. Strategy and Objectives for 2013 and beyond

4.1. Opportunities and constraints

The overall mix of members on the CMG needs to be re-examined to ensure that it reflects the major classes of construction materials – clay products, glass, plastics and steel. The potential to build and foster closer links with other technical communities within IOM3 and externally if necessary needs to be explored proactively.

To enhance the knowledge and awareness of members, the CMG will when appropriate continue to hold some of its meetings at an organisation/facility which has links to one of the sectors covered by the CMG’s remit.

4.2. Specific targets

Identify an appropriate event and develop a programme in collaboration with the Sustainable Development Group on the topic of ‘Trends in Sustainable Construction Materials’.

Build closer links with a number of Knowledge Transfer networks (KTNs), which are likely to include Built Environment, Chemistry Innovations, Environmental Sustainability and Materials.

To conduct a ‘roadmap’ exercise (probably in collaboration with a relevant KTN group), which will demonstrate how certain construction materials are more effective in some application areas than others. Possible comparisons could be made by looking at various sizes of building, and assessing the relative merits of materials for structural elements, glazing and insulation

5. Other matters

None