

.....

Annual Conference 1998

Welcome from the local secretary

.....

**Royal
Geographical
Society**

with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

The more 'geographically aware' delegates planning to attend the 1998 Annual Conference of the RGS-IBG will no doubt have noticed that the conference venue is not in fact Kingston University (either in the United Kingdom, Jamaica or Ontario) but the University of Surrey. Despite this somewhat unsubtle adherence to the **Changing Places** theme, everyone in the Kingston School of Geography looks forward to welcoming you to the 1998 Annual Conference. The Conference has two further themes: **The Information Society** and **Understanding the Environment**, reflecting the breadth of the discipline. We hope that you will find this Conference Handbook useful when navigating your way through the academic and social programme. You will find on facing pages inside the back cover a map of all the conference venues and a summary of the sessions, events and venues.

...

The main components of the academic and social programme for the Conference were published in the Research Newsletter. The three full days of the Conference offer 48 sessions and over 420 papers. The majority of these sessions are convened by the Research/Study Groups of the RGS-IBG, either individually or as joint ventures, while some are organized by the Fellows of the Society, Professor Ian Reid the Vice President and Chair of Conference, the School of Geography at Kingston University or external organizations. Submitted papers have been placed in themed sessions where possible. Many of the sessions have been linked to the main Conference themes, while others demonstrate an independence of spirit in their focus, which testifies to the vitality and vigour of the discipline. We have tried to avoid obvious clashes of activities, but there **will** inevitably be occasions when you will wish to be in more than one place at the same time.

Geography as a degree-level subject has a fifty-year history at Kingston University. It was first taught at Kingston Technical College as part of the University of London External Degree Programme. Subsequently, when the institution had been renamed as Kingston Polytechnic, CNAAs degrees in Geography were awarded, taught by a rapidly expanding School of Geography. Today the School has 21 academic staff and degrees are offered in Geography, Environmental Science, Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and a wide range of joint honours degrees. There is also a taught Masters degree in Environmental and Earth Resources Management together with short course and distance-learning programmes in GIS. The School has over 500 full-time equivalent students. An inaugural Chair of Geography was established in 1994, emphasising a commitment to research in the School. Nine new appointments in recent years have injected a youthful vigour and forward-looking attitude which we trust will be reflected in the conference programme.

We would like to thank Karen Madgwick and her colleagues in the Conference Office at the University of Surrey for their assistance. We are also grateful to Susan Robinson for acting as Secretarial Assistant.