

## 2015 Local Ambassador Day and Thudichum Medal Lecture

### Rowena Mitchell

(Membership Manager, Biochemical Society)

On 9 October, we were delighted to welcome our Local Ambassadors (LAs) to the Royal Society of Edinburgh for the 6th annual Local Ambassador Day. Lunch was followed by presentations from Professor Nicola Gray, Honorary Membership Secretary, and key members of Society Staff. During the day, LAs were updated on publishing developments by Director of Publishing Niamh O'Connor, public engagement opportunities by Education and Public Engagement Officer Rachel Burnett, and *The Biochemist* and the external face of the Biochemical Society from the new Community and Press Editor, Helen Albert.

Discussions later in the day focused on how the Society can better engage with members working in industry. LAs were asked to provide insight into how the Society could grow the representation of those working in industry within the membership and better foster collaboration between academia and industry. The plan to introduce industry LAs was also outlined to the group. Then, current LAs were invited to give their input on what materials they would have found useful when starting out as an LA, to share their experiences of collaborating with industry and to think about how industry and academic LAs could work together.

Local Ambassadors are a key group of Members who help us to deliver our goal of supporting the advancement of biochemistry and molecular biology. Among other duties, Local Ambassadors are the first point of contact for the Society and promote its activities, grants and journals to colleagues, as well as arranging an event or seminar each year, with the aim of recruiting new members. Further information can be found on our website <http://www.biochemistry.org/Membership/LocalAmbassadors.aspx>

We are always looking for enthusiastic people to get involved, and if you feel that you could help, please contact Rowena Mitchell, Membership Manager ([rowena.mitchell@biochemistry.org](mailto:rowena.mitchell@biochemistry.org)) to discuss further.

Following the discussion sessions, members were invited to join LAs for the 2015 Thudichum Medal Lecture. Awardee, Professor John Hardy, gave his medal lecture entitled 'Amyloid and Alzheimer's Disease' to a capacity theatre. The highly engaging lecture was followed by a host of thought-provoking questions, and the lively discussion continued at a drinks reception, where LAs networked with the other attendees.

The LAs then went on to the Scotch Malt Whisky Society for dinner and whisky tasting, which was enjoyed by all, even the non-whisky drinkers! ■



Helen Albert, the new Community and Press Editor, speaking at the LA Day



Professor John Hardy receiving his medal from Honorary Membership Secretary, Nicola Gray