

## How the new company will work

When, in January 2011, we announced the formation of the company we had unqualified support from members, suggesting that it was both timely and desired. The company members are Barry and eleven of the Geograph contributors that he invited to lend a hand. We have focused on re-establishing a secure foundation for Geograph's future. Four of us volunteered to kickstart the company by signing up as directors alongside Barry. So we are a rather arbitrary group that is still getting its feet under the boardroom table.

Since New Year the five of us have established mutual trust and a shared concern to take Geograph forward. A task for the near future is to agree how to extend membership of Geograph Project Ltd so that a larger group can elect the directors at an AGM in some form. The company members and the board represent all the Geograph roles: developers, moderators and contributors. The moderator team is a formative influence within Geograph, but it is important for users to know that the board has a mixed membership. Governance will not be neglected.

Barry is using both groups for a quick response to ideas, thus avoiding public forums that drift and occasionally lapse into dispute. Most proposals have then had a public airing. The initial private discussion has helped to quickly clarify issues. Now we are all flagging up ideas and questions.

After this meeting we can decide longer-term priorities and direction in consultation with OS and our users. Topics that have already demanded cursory discussion include day-to-day operation, resources for software development, the structure of the website, branching out into other media, links with other organisations, relating to mobile devices, charitable status, refining search, curating content, rating photos, attracting more contributors, knowing our users and what they want.

In a short time the original group has proved its worth as a closed forum, resulting in the formation of the company. Most of us take part in public discussions though it is mostly the five of us who are continuing the private conversation. The board is evolving from an advisory group to an executive in which the directors have particular areas of interest but share responsibility. A wider company membership will be our judge.