



BCA Funding of Regional Councils
As updated and approved at the 29th of October 2024 Council Meeting

1) Introduction

This document describes BCA's funding of the Regional Councils as administered by the Finance Committee. It does not cover the grants that may be available from other BCA Committees or National Council that will be awarded according to their own criteria and rules.

2) Principles

(2.1) To ensure the funding is spent for the benefit of BCA members and is transparent.

(2.2) That the best value for money has been achieved.

(2.3) If a region expects its funding claim to be more than the total, across all spending heads, of the expected (100%) and possible (50%) amounts in the budget agreed by Council for the Region it should notify the BCA Treasurer as soon as this is known and the reason for the large increase. This will aid both the Region and BCA with its budgeting and cash flow management.

(2.4) Expenditure on any new initiatives, projects or aspects of Regional Council activity that have not been funded by BCA before and/or that will be more than £1,000 in any year should be notified to the BCA Treasurer as soon as this is being considered and before a commitment to the project is made. The BCA Treasurer reserves the right to take the new project to BCA Council for funding approval if he or she feels approval of the new expenditure would benefit from Council consideration to ensure agreement that it meets with the above principles.

(2.5) The funding process should be simple as it is administered entirely by volunteers.

3) Finance Committees Responsibilities

(3.1) To follow the above principles.

(3.2) To establish that the funding has been spent and has been spent as designated.

(3.3) To give clear and timely information as to what will be funded.

(3.4) To fairly allocate the available funds.

4) Regional Councils Responsibilities

(4.1) To follow the above principles.

(4.2) To produce externally scrutinised Accounts. NB scrutinisation is a less rigorous version of auditing. The scrutinisation must establish that the money has been spent and is allocated under the appropriate heading.

(4.3) To apply to the Finance Committee for funding, providing sufficient information to substantiate the claim.

(4.4) To administer payments to and claims from Clubs, Access Bodies and other third parties.

5) Process of Funding

(5.1) The Regional Councils present their claims, including scrutinised accounts, to the Finance Committee. These claims are to be submitted as soon as possible following the end of the year in which the expenditure is incurred. The deadline for submission is to be the BCA Council held in the Spring meeting; if final figures are incomplete at that point, an estimate is to be provided in order that the prior year's BCA Accounts can be finalised. All actual claims values are to be submitted by 31 December following the year of expenditure. BCA will be under no obligation to fund claims which are not submitted within this timescale.

(5.2) The Finance Committee review the claims as they occur.

(5.3) The BCA pays by Bacs to the Regional Councils for agreed amounts.

(5.4) The above process is in arrears. There is the facility to be paid a float if cashflow problems are anticipated.

(a) The Regional Council requests a float.

(b) The Finance Committee reviews and grants an appropriate float.

(c) Once the cashflow situation has improved the Regional Council should return the float.

6) Regional Council Accounts

(6.1) Each Regional Council can present the accounts in their own chosen format so long as they meet the requirements below.

(6.2) Accounts are to be scrutinised. The scrutinisation must establish that the money has been spent and is allocated under the appropriate heading.

(6.3) Accounts should set out so that expenditure under the various cost headings (Running Costs/ C&A, etc.) can be easily identified, possibly as notes to the main accounts.

(6.4) The Finance Committee reserves the right to request to see the supporting documentation to the scrutinised accounts (cash book, receipts etc.).

(6.5) An analysis of the expenditure reimbursed to each Funded Access Body (FAB) should be available so that expenditure under the various cost headings can be easily identified (see Access Body Section below).

(6.6) A link from the relevant section of the BCA website to the region's website should show the latest set of accounts available.

7) Implementation

(7.1) Funding is to be spent for benefit of BCA members.

(a) The running costs of a particular Regional Council (photocopying, postage, room hire, stationary, phone bills, and travel expenses of officers to meetings) is deemed to be to the benefit of all BCA members since there are councils for all regions providing similar benefits.

(b) The test for C&A funding is that as a minimum access is available to all BCA members.

(7.2) BCA pays Regional Council's for actual expenditure. Any money paid in advance will be taken into account once the scrutinised accounts are available.

(7.3) Where there are other external sources of funding, these should be used first (note this is funding from third parties e.g. Sports Council, etc and does not include retained reserves).

(7.4) Funding is paid once the work is done. Generally, this means that payment is in arrears. NB there is a procedure to avoid cash-flow problems.

(7.5) Generally, materials will be funded, volunteer labour will not.

(7.6) Competitive quotes are required for commercial work.

(7.7) Activities that make a profit will not be funded.

(7.8) Costs are paid according to the accounts, except for C&A.

(a) C&A expenditure up to the sum of the expected (100%) and possible (50%) amounts for routine C&A in the budget agreed by Council for the Region is paid according to the accounts. This removes the bureaucracy for day to day C&A work.

(b) C&A expenditure on a single project above £750 should be presented as projects to the C&A Committee for approval. Until approval is gained these project costs will not be paid by BCA in the regions' annual claim.

(c) The figure of £750 is to be reviewed annually.

(7.9) Clubs or Access Bodies that incur costs on behalf of the Regional Council will be paid by the Regional Council. The Regional Council can then claim allowable costs from BCA.

8) Projects

(8.1) A project is an identifiable parcel of work.

(8.2) If authorised in arrears the project might not be fully funded. For example, if it doesn't meet the Principles or BCA doesn't have the budget.

(8.3) To authorise a project it should be presented to the C&A Committee. The information will include a brief description and a detailed estimate or quote giving the costs.

(8.4) The C&A Committee will make a decision and inform the Regional Council.

(a) Since request for project authorisation can occur at any time a 'virtual meeting' via email might be required.

(b) If appropriate the C&A Committee will consult other relevant BCA Committees for advice.

(8.5) A progress report needs to be made to the C&A Committee annually.

(8.6) Incomplete projects need to be re-authorised annually. This is so that the C&A Committee can budget.

9) Access Body Funding

(9.1) An Access Body can apply to the Finance Committee for funded status via their Regional Council. The Finance Committee will judge each application on its merits.

(9.2) Access Body funding is via their respective Regional Council.

(9.3) Funded Access Body (FAB) expenditure is included with their respective Regional Council expenditure and processed in the same way using the same procedures.

(a) An analysis of the expenditure reimbursed to each FAB should be shown as a note to the Regional Council accounts, broken down by cost heading (Running Costs/ C&A, etc.).

(b) The FAB's C&A expenditure can be presented as a project or be counted towards the Regional Council's £750 allowance.

(c) FAB's travel expenses are not paid.

Appendix 1: Allowable funding by cost heading

1) Meetings/Running the Organisation

- (a) Payable on the scrutinised accounts.
- (b) Allowable: Photocopying, postage, room hire, stationary, phone bills, Officer travel expenses to meetings.
- (c) Not Allowable: anything that is NOT for the benefit of BCA members.

2) C&A

- (a) Up to £750 per Regional Council per year is paid for C&A according to the accounts.
- (b) C&A expenditure above £750 should be presented as projects (see above).
- (c) Allowable (note the following items are indicative and not exhaustive, ALL reasonable C&A expenses should be allowable): Negotiating access to caves and mines, gating of entrances (including fencing of open pots), stabilising entrances, underground conservation. Working with landowner to maintain access, Payment of "peppercorn" rents for access, Other liaison and public relations work related to maintaining access and promoting conservation. Travel expenses for volunteers at the agreed BCA mileage rate.
- (d) Not Allowable: Digging as part of a new exploration.

3) Publications & Information

- (a) Payable on the scrutinised accounts.
- (b) Allowable: Publications for all BCA Members. Access Information (Handbook/Guides or Newsletters), Cave Registry, Publications primarily for the Regional Council Members (Newsletter, Handbook), Participation in events to promote caving, Publicity
- (c) Newsletters if are of general interest and participation in events to promote caving would be funded via the P&I committee or Training committee if eligible under their criteria and would not come under the remit of Finance Committee.

4) Insurance

- (a) BCA provides Public Liability cover for all persons (including Officers, members, key holders, volunteers and land owners & their employees) involved in activities on behalf of the Regional Council and Funded Access Body activities, public liability cover for land owner access agreements.

5) Website

- (a) Payable on the scrutinised accounts.
- (b) Allowable: BCA provided basic web services (domain, hosting). Regional web services other than those provided by BCA. General web services not linked to BCA or Regional websites.

6) Training

- (a) Grants are available for all types of training events for "recreational" cavers from Training Committee.

7) Equipment

- (a) Allowable: Stainless steel resin bonded anchors and resin will be provided for free by the Equipment and Techniques Committee for sites where all BCA Member Clubs have access (note the costs of the above can also be claimed directly by regions etc.)
- (b) Grants are available to cover the costs of the instructor and consumables for training (including refresher training) in the placement of eco anchors from the Equipment and Techniques Committee.