



## **BCA Annual General Meeting 2021**

### **Agenda**

**This will be held by Zoom** on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> October, via Tele-conferencing 10:30am with an electronic vote on appointments and motions to follow.

Electronic voting is strongly requested. Any member who requires a paper vote should post a request (enclosing an S.A.E) to the BCA Secretary, BCA Registered Office, The Old Methodist Chapel, Great Hucklow, Buxton, Derbyshire, SK17 8RG for receipt before the 10th Oct 2021 (i.e. the AGM).

### **Agenda Contents:**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Agenda item summary</b>
1	2	Welcome from the Chair
2	2	Apologies for absence and verification of quorum
3	2	Accounts for year ending 31/12/2020
4	2	Declaration of items to be covered under Any Other Business
5	2	Acceptance of minutes from the 2020 AGM
6	2	Action items and Proposals from the 2020 AGM
7	2-3	Reports
8	3-5	Election of BCA Council Members for vacancies arising in 2021
9	6 - 10	Proposals

10	10	Appointment of “suitably qualified person” to certify BCA Accounts
11	10	Any other business

(1) Welcome from the Chair.

(2) Apologies for absence and verification of quorum.

(3) To note the attached accounts for the year ending 31/12/2020 as accepted by Council Spring 2021

(4) Declaration of items to be covered under Any Other Business.

(5) Acceptance of minutes from the October 2020 AGM (available on BCA website).

(6a) **Action items from 2020 AGM**

All the action items from 2020 have been achieved.

b) **Proposals from 2020 AGM**

All proposals at the 2020 AGM were passed.

**(7) Reports**

**Executive reports:**

- 6.1 Acting Chair (Russell Myers)
- 6.2 Acting Secretary (Allan Richardson)
- 6.3 Treasurer (Howard Jones)

**Insurance and Membership:**

- 6.4 Membership Administrator (Katie Eavis)
- 6.5 Insurance Manager (Howard Jones)

**Conservation and Access:**

- 6.6 Acting Conservation and Access Officer (Will Burns)
- 6.7 CRoW Working Party (David Rose)

**Publications and Information:**

- 6.8 Publications and Information Officer (Rostam Namaghi)
- 6.9 Newsletter Editor (David Rose)
- 6.10 British Caving Library (Jenny Potts)

**Information Technology:**

- 6.15 IT Working Party (Ari Cooper Davies)

**Training and Qualifications:**

- 6.16 Training Officer (Nigel Atkins)

6.17 Qualifications Management Committee (Juliet Parker-Smith)

**Equipment and Techniques:**

6.18 Equipment and Techniques Officer (Mark Sims)

6.19 Rope Testing (Bob Mehew)

**Youth Development and Vision:**

6.20 Youth and Development Officer (Josh White)

6.21 Vision Working Party (Hellie Adams)

**Safeguarding and Safety:**

6.22 Safeguarding (Chris Boardman)

6.23 Radon Working Party (Gethin Thomas)

**Representatives to other bodies:**

6.24 UIS Representative (Andy Eavis)

6.25 FSE Representative (Ged Campion)

**(8) Election of BCA Council Members for vacancies arising in 2021**

<b>Roles and Nominations 2020 AGM</b>					
<b>Role (as at 02/08/2020)</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Nomination</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b><u>BCA Executive</u></b>					
<b><u>Chairman</u> <u>2018 – 2021</u></b>	Russell Myers	Incumbent	Allan Richardson	Howard Jones	Seeking endorsement Tenure 2021-2023
		Rostam Namaghi	David Botcherby	Josh White	Seeking election Tenure 2021-2023
<b><u>Secretary (Acting)</u> 2021 - Date</b>	Allan Richardson	Incumbent	Howard Jones	Les Williams	Seeking endorsement Tenure 2021-2023
<b><u>Equipment and Techniques Officer</u></b> (see note below)					Tenure 2021-2023
<b><u>QMC Chair</u></b>					
<b><u>QMC Vice Chair</u></b>					
<b><u>Training Officer</u></b> (see note below)	Steve Gray	Steve Gray	Sam Lieberman	Rowena Magdan	Tenure 2021-2023
<b><u>Group Representatives</u></b>					There are no candidates for 2 positions

<b>Position 1 2021-2023</b>					
<b>Position 2 2021-2023</b>					
<b><u>Individual Member Representatives</u></b>					There is 1 candidate for 2 positions
<b>Position 1 2021-2023</b>	Josh White	Josh White	Rostam Namaghi	Will Burn	
<b>Position 2 2021-2023</b>	Vacant				

#### Notes

AGM proposals to change the structure of Training and Equipment & Techniques Committees, if carried in the subsequent vote will affect the positions of the Training and the Equipment and Training Officers.

#### **Election statements:**

Election statement of Russell Myers standing for BCA Chair

BCA has been through a number of tumultuous years lately and not least this last one compounded by the Covid pandemic. I volunteered to join the Executive Committee of BCA in April 2020 to help the incumbent Secretary, Matt Ewles, who subsequently stood down the following month and I found myself co-opted as Acting Secretary at the Council Meeting in July. Shortly after that meeting, the incumbent Chair, Les Williams, stood down and Council found itself co-opting a new Acting Chair, Phil Rowsell at its August meeting.

The situation settled down but there was plenty to do, catching up with almost 6 months of stagnation when Council had not been able to meet in its normal format due to covid restrictions but Zoom meetings opened the way forward.

The Executive Committee formed a strong team driving business forward but for personal reasons, Phil stood down shortly after the December meeting and out of the permutations to solve the dilemma, Allan Richardson came forward as Acting Secretary and I moved into Acting Chair; both of us being co-opted by Council at the subsequent February Meeting but both positions subject to election at this 2021 AGM.

The attritional rate of change in the Executive Committee of three Chairs and three Secretaries in 6 months during this last year or so, is not sustainable for the good governance of BCA. I know that I have made mistakes, fortunately of no great consequence but brought about essentially from learning the ropes through this turbulent period. What is required is a sustained period of stability, which I am prepared to establish if elected.

On this basis, I pledge to uphold the core values of BCA and reinforce its objectives by:

- Ensuring the Public Liability Insurance scheme continues to benefit to all BCA members.
- Ensuring the continued funding of Regional Councils in conservation, access and other important work.
- Providing training workshops and a training and certification scheme for cavers.

- Ensuring funding for the anchor placement programme.
- Ensuring continued funding to the Ghar Parau Foundation for expeditions.
- Continuing to work to improve cave access.
- Driving support for the development and support of youth caving.
- Publicising advice on matters affecting caving.
- Ensuring the continued funding of the British Caving Library.
- Maintaining links with International Caving Federations and Organisations.
- Continuing the modernisation of BCA.

I look forward to receiving your support and vote in the forthcoming election to secure the position of Chair; in return I promise to do my best for British Caving and all the cavers who form its community.

Russell Myers

August 2021.

#### Election statement of Rostam Namaghi standing for BCA Chair

#### Election statement of Allan Richardson standing for BCA Secretary

I was co-opted as Acting Secretary at the beginning of 2021. I wish to continue in this role to the end of the current Tenure in 2023.

I have been exploring caves and mines for about 50 years at home and abroad and have been underground in most parts of the UK.

I have been involved in caving expeditions and run my own. Now that I am semi-retired, I have more time to devote to assisting the various organisations I am involved with.

#### Election statement of Josh White standing for Individual Representative

#### Election statement of Steve Gray standing for Training Officer

## **Proposals to BCA AGM 2021**

### **Proposal 1**

I would like to propose the following change to Section 5 of the BCA Anchor Policy on behalf of the members of the E&T committee. The proposal is to replace the paragraph,

*“Regional Councils shall take responsibility for the training of persons who will be authorized to place designated anchors on their behalf. The delivery of training and assessment will be undertaken by individuals authorized by the E&T committee.”*

with,

*"Regional Councils shall take responsibility for the training of persons who will be authorized to place designated anchors on their behalf. The delivery of training and assessment will be undertaken by individuals authorized by the appropriate Regional Council, who are already authorised to place anchors under the scheme. The Regional Council will pay particular attention to the ability of the proposed trainer to not only instruct candidates to install anchors but also to assess the candidate's competence for judging the location of new anchors and their ability to safely install anchors on location."*

The reason for this proposal is that authorization of installer trainers by the E&T committee usually seems like an unnecessarily bureaucratic step – individuals are often not known by most of the E&T committee, so the committee just take the recommendation from the regional council on the basis that they wouldn't recommend somebody unsuitable, and the process just ends up as a formality. The proposed change will eliminate this step. The proposal was agreed by all members of the E&T committee in November 2020.

Proposed Mark Sims

### **Proposal 2**

#### **Section 10.1**

The following group of proposals address a requirement from the 2020 BCA AGM that the BCA approve a 'new form of words' for Section 10.1 of the BCA Constitution. A consultation of BCA members was carried out, and a report written (available on the BCA website in the COG section) explaining how there are a wide range of opinions and concerns relating to Section 10.1. You can vote for or against each individual proposal. As usual for constitutional amendments, no proposal will take effect unless it receives 70% in favour in the online ballot. However, if more than one proposal receives more than 70% in favour, only the proposal with the greatest majority will take effect.

For reference, the current Section 10.1 of the BCA Constitution reads:

*“The Association shall not interfere in the affairs of a Member unless specifically requested to do so by that Member. The Association shall not mediate between Members unless requested by them in writing to do so.”*

#### **Proposal 2A:**

This AGM proposes that:

- section 10.1 of the BCA Constitution be deleted entirely;
- the text 'Notwithstanding Sub Section 10.1' be removed from Sections 10.2 and 10.3;
- the other parts of Section 10 be renumbered accordingly;

UNLESS Proposal B or C receive a greater majority in the post-AGM online ballot than this proposal, in which case no part of this proposal takes effect.

**Proposal 2B:**

This AGM proposes that section 10.1 of the BCA Constitution is amended to:

- The Association shall not mediate between Members unless requested by them to do so.

UNLESS Proposal A or C receive a greater majority in the post-AGM online ballot than this proposal, in which case no part of this proposal takes effect.

**Proposal 2C:**

This AGM proposes that section 10.1 of the BCA Constitution is amended to:

- The Association shall not interfere in the affairs of a Member unless it is necessary to do so to investigate a complaint raised by another Member (the Complainant). Any action taken by the BCA should be the minimum possible to balance the competing rights and freedoms of the Member and the Complainant.

Note: Such rights would include those granted under the BCA Constitution and the principle of autonomy.

UNLESS Proposal A or B receive a greater majority in the post-AGM online ballot than this proposal, in which case no part of this proposal takes effect.

Proposer: On behalf of the Constitution and Operations working group (COG) Andrew McLeod (15876) (Convenor). Seconder: Josh White (14859) and the COG group

**Proposal 3**

**Reorganization of BCA committees and working groups**

The BCA currently has a number of standing committees and working groups, together with a number of special-case situations such as the elected P&I Officer (with no committee). The Constitution and Manual of Operations working group proposes the following changes as a single proposal. They will simplify the structure of BCA groups by removing Standing Committees from the BCA Constitution. Current standing committees will be replaced by Working Groups with terms of reference to be written by BCA Council (in accordance with the AGM motions).

**AGM Proposal:**

*Replace the Training Committee and Equipment and Techniques Standing Committee with the Equipment and Training Working Group.*

This group is to have national body and regional council representation in its Terms of Reference. It will co-ordinate and facilitate recreational training, manage the anchor programme and be responsible for strategic planning.

*Simplify the structure of BCA groups by removing Standing Committees and removing the vote of the P&I Officer.*

*Constitutional changes to remove Standing Committees.*

- Replace 'Secretary, Treasurer together with Chairman of the Standing Committees (Section 7) with 'Secretary, and Treasurer' in section 6.1.
- Delete 'and Chairmen of Standing Committees' from section 8.12b.

- Replace 'Standing Committees and others' with 'those' in section 9.8.
  - Replace 'Sections 7 and 8' with 'Section 8' in section 12.3.
  - Delete Section 7 of the constitution and renumber subsequent sections and references.
- Note: if due to amendment of proposals E&T and Training were not to be combined, then they should be reformed as working groups.

#### Justification:

This is an effort to simplify working groups and reduce the number of people on council. The differences between working groups and standing committees can be summarised as:

- Standing Committees can only be formed and altered at an AGM (including their terms of reference)
- Standing Committee Chairs have to be elected at the AGM
- Standing Committee Chairs have a vote at council.

They have different but similar requirements to working groups in the manual of operations.

This, combined with a general confusion of who is due for election and who has a vote at a meeting (the P&I Officer being a working group convenor but also having vote for instance) makes the BCA bureaucracy impenetrable, less transparent and makes accountability harder.

Working groups terms of reference can specify regional and national body representation.

It can be helpful when groups become dysfunctional for council to appoint someone apolitical to run the group, as if it were part of the civil service, which helps if they do not have a vote.

Proposer: On behalf of the Constitution and Operations working group (COG) Andrew McLeod 15876 (Convenor). Seconder: Rostam Namaghi 10644 and the COG group

## **Proposal 4**

### **Section 8**

Section 8 of the constitution describes how General Meetings of the BCA are called and carried out. Covid has forced our AGMs online, and these changes aim to ensure that our constitution fully supports the option of an online general meeting. The Constitution and Manual of Operations WG have also taken the opportunity to tidy up a few parts of this section, and fix some issues with the timeline of notices for General Meetings. We also make a change in section 6.1 which changes the constitution to match the current interpretation of the current constitution (for clarity only).

A document showing the changes made to Section 8, and another document of notes, will be made available on the BCA Website in the COG section. The proposed changes were approved unanimously by the COG group.

### **AGM Proposal:**

- A subheading 'GENERAL MEETINGS' to be added to Section 8.
- Insert ', whether physical or teleconferencing' after 'General Meetings' in section 8.1.
- Replace 'place' with 'venue, whether physical or teleconferencing,' and 'General Meeting' with 'an Annual or Special General Meeting' in section 8.3.
- Replace 'on the day of the National Council meeting preceding the AGM' with 'of the 84<sup>th</sup> day (12 weeks) before the AGM' in section 8.4.
- Replace 'place' with 'venue' in section 8.5.



- Replace 'to members on request' with 'to all members not later than six weeks after the date of the meeting' in section 8.8.
- Add a subtitle 'VOTING AT GENERAL MEETINGS' to section 8.9.
- Replace 'lowest' with 'lower', and 'online vote' with 'online ballot of all individual members eligible to vote', and delete 'arising from a General Meeting' in section 8.9.
- Add a subtitle 'ONLINE BALLOT FOLLOWING GENERAL MEETINGS' to section 8.10.
- Replace 'approximately 30 days' with '14 days', and '>=70%' with 'not less than 70%' in section 8.10.
- Add a subtitle 'ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS' to section 8.11, and renumber to 8.11.a.
- Renumber section 8.12 to 8.11.b, and number the bulleted list i), ii), iii) and iv).
- Add a subtitle heading '8.12 SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS'.
- Renumber the first three sentences of section 8.13 to 8.12.a, and the latter two sentences to 8.12.b.
- Replace 'not less than 12 weeks' with 'not less than 84 days (12 weeks)', and 'place' with 'venue, whether physical or teleconferencing' in the new section 8.21.a.
- Add a subtitle heading '8.13 EMERGENCY GENERAL MEETINGS'.
- Renumber the first sentence of 8.14 as 8.13.a, and the latter sentences as 8.13.b.
- Add ', or by one member of the Executive and three other voting Council members' at the end of the new 8.13.a.
- Replace 'not less than 2 weeks' with 'not less than 14 days (2 weeks)' in the new section 8.13.b.
- Replace 'elected' with 'subject to a vote of approval by the individual membership' in section 6.1.

This link shows the proposed changes in detail

<https://cloud.british-caving.org.uk/index.php/s/pM5WwAcXz8eKjnx>

Proposer: On behalf of the Constitution and Operations working group (COG) Andrew McLeod 15876 (Convenor). Seconded: Jenny Potts 00062 and the COG group

## **Proposal 5**

Change Chairman/Chairmen to Chair

That 'Chairman' and 'Chairmen' in the Constitution be changed to Chair. This would affect the stated 12 words in clauses 6.1, 6.7, 6.14, 8.2, 8.7, 8.9, 8.12 and 8.13

Proposed by Rostam Namaghi (10644), Seconded by Jennifer Ryder (18311)  
Argument in favour: this updates an unnecessarily gendered role.

## **Proposals NOT affecting the constitution**

### **Proposal 6: Update to the Equality and Diversity Policy**

To update the equality and inclusion policy and align it with the policies and set up of the association.

Under purpose insert the following wording: For the purpose of this document members refers to any individual, club, access control body, constituent body or employee.

Under equality and diversity section add the following wording: There are seven types of discrimination set out in the Equality Act 2010 and this policy covers all of them (in conjunction with the association's bullying and harassment policy).

Direct discrimination – where someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic.

Associative discrimination – this is direct discrimination against someone because they are associated with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by perception – this is direct discrimination against someone because others think that they possess a particular protected characteristic. They do not necessarily have to possess the characteristic, just be perceived to.

Indirect discrimination – this can occur when you have a rule or policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages a person with a particular protected characteristic.

Harassment – this is behaviour that is deemed offensive by the recipient. Employees can now complain of the behaviour they find offensive even if it is not directed at them. Victimisation – this occurs when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or grievance under this legislation.

Point 9 needs to be bulleted points as part of point 8, as it's just listing the protected characteristics. Point 10 should change employees to members. Point 11 should read 'No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. If you believe that you or anyone else may have suffered discrimination because of any of the protected characteristics, you should consider following the complaints procedure of the association'. Point 13: replace employees with members.

Proposed by Josh White (14859), seconded by Rostam Namaghi (10644)

Arguments for:

The existing equality and diversity policy was a great base for a policy, but needed slight tweaks to line this up with the association, and to set out clearly exactly what is covered under the policy for avoidance of doubt.

#### **(10) Appointment of 'suitably qualified person' to certify BCA accounts**

Agenda item required in accordance with section 9.7 of the constitution.

#### **(11) Any other business**

A) Note the accounts for the year ending 31/12/2020, as accepted by Council in Spring 2021.

## NOTES

**2020 accounts for the British Caving Association show the following:**

Income for the year is similar to previous year, slightly more members but lower fees for CIMS.

Interest is slightly lower as the base rate tumbled, next year will be worse as some investments expire

Employment costs increase due to pay award in January 2020 plus increased hours in support of the library as agreed by Council.

**The overall training result was a loss with reduced income , costs were also lower despite the introduction of the new gomembership system.**

Council agreed the following cost increases in the year: all unbudgeted

CRoW Legal fees £35k, Increase in Public Liability cover (£5m to £10m) cost £10k, Y&D Adventure academy project £5k.  
The legal fee invoices are all fully paid and we have paid £7,200 against future invoices.

**These have led to BCA reporting its first deficit in its history, with a deficit of £47k and a reduction in net assets to £215k.**

We continued the radon project with a similar cost to last year at £3k. Y&D expenditure was an all time high at £8k.

Support for the regions was slightly higher than last year .

**The end result was a deficit of £47k compared to a surplus of £8k in 2019.**

Cash balances were £56k lower at year end compared to previously year at £242k. Still a liquid position for the organisation.

Accruals were lower than prior year due to a payment to BCRA to bring the account up to date.

Net assets were £215k, compared to £262k prior year

**Howard Jones BCA Treasurer**

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**BRITISH CAVING ASSOCIATION**  
**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

	2020	2019
	£	£
<b>INCOME</b>		
Subscriptions	101,647	100,886
Association	2,931	3,284
Training Services	13,769	22,471
Publications & Information	0	0
Meetings & Conferences	0	0
Web Services	929	732
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>119,276</b>	<b>127,373</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Subscription	66,105	54,995
Association	5,348	8,853
Conservation & Access	35,007	0
Training Services	17,060	22,318
Caver Training	2,189	827
Publications & Information	242	247
Equipment & Techniques	0	0
Youth Development	7,845	1,650
Radon Expenditure	3,150	3,967
Web Services	3,565	2,856
Regional Caving Councils	6,002	5,582
International	400	400
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>146,913</b>	<b>101,695</b>
<b>CHARITABLE DONATIONS</b>		
British Cave Research Association for British Caving Library	12,000	12,000
Ghar Parau Foundation for Expedition Programme	7,000	6,000
<b>(LOSS)/SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>-46,637</b>	<b>7,678</b>
<b>TAX</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b><u>SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR AFTER TAX</u></b>	<b><u>-46,637</u></b>	<b><u>7,678</u></b>

I report on the accounts of the association for the year ended 31 December 2020 which are set out on pages 2 & 3.

Respective  
responsibilities of  
executive committee  
and examiner

As members of the association's executive committee you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; it is my responsibility to examine the accounts and state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent  
examiner's report

The examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the association and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as executive committee members concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent  
examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep proper accounting records or to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Name:

Alastair Gott

Address:

62 Brackenwood Mews, Wilmslow, SK9 2QQ

Dated:

February 2021




BRITISH CAVING ASSOCIATION

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020

	2020	2019
	£	£
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Debtors and Prepayments	463	388
Balances at Bank and cash in hand	242,948	298,477
	<u>243,411</u>	<u>298,865</u>
<b>LESS: CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Creditors and Accruals payable within one year	28,034	36,851
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<u>215,377</u>	<u>262,014</u>
<b>REPRESENTED BY RESERVES :</b>		
General Reserve		
Balance brought forward	182,014	174,336
(Loss)/Surplus for year	<u>-46,637</u>	<u>7,678</u>
	135,377	182,014
less transfer to Insurance Reserve	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	135,377	182,014
Insurance Reserve	80,000	80,000
<b>TOTAL RESERVES</b>	<u>215,377</u>	<u>262,014</u>

Approved on behalf of the Executive Committee

  
R Myers, Chairman

31<sup>st</sup> January 2021  
Date

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

1 Accounting Policies

a) Basis of Accounting

The accounts have been prepared under historical cost accounting rules

b) Equipment

Equipment is charged in the accounts in the year of purchase.

2 Insurance Reserve

The Insurance Reserve is held at a level which allows a minimum of two years premiums

3 Insurance no claim rebates (2020)

As we have 2 ongoing claims from 2020, no low claims rebate has been received.