

For Election as Secretary for 3 years (2024-2027)

Aidan Kuhlmann (20697)

Proposed by Rostam Namaghi (10644)

Seconded by Pete Knight (9362)

Election Statement

I'm standing for election as Secretary of the BCA against the incumbent Allan Richardson on a platform of transparency.

During his four years as Secretary Allan has consistently failed to publish agendas and minutes, a core element of the role. At the time of writing (beginning of April) the minutes of the 2023 AGM remain unpublished and not uploaded on the BCA website and no minutes have been published or uploaded for any General Meeting since February 2023.

This failure to publish these documents has unfortunately meant the BCA has an Executive Officer who has consistently failed to abide by the far from onerous requirement contained within the Manual of Operations to publish draft minutes "No later than eight weeks after" the meeting. Furthermore, the Manual of Operation clearly states, "the Secretary should: Upload them to the BCA website".

Additionally, in his reports at both General Meetings and AGMs Allan has consistently failed to even approach the necessary amount of detail such a report should contain, despite having previously acknowledged requests to remedy this, with the average word count for such reports of those publicly available being a mere 79.

Unfortunately, I believe such failings are a leading cause behind why so many Cavers & Mine Explorers feel the BCA is an opaque and inaccessible organisation that does little for them besides provide public liability insurance. This opacity means that it is very hard for those who don't have friends in high places to hold the organisation to account for its actions, decision-making processes, or to simply just have an idea about what's going on. It certainly cannot help the BCA when dealing with other organisations.

I myself am an active North Wales based (but far from limited) club caver and mine explorer with strong links to the student community, who some may know professionally through my work as a freelance outdoor instructor. I have been the chair, secretary, treasurer, and held various technical roles in several sporting clubs and societies in the past. I also work doing coding and databasing work for a well-known outdoor equipment retailer and if one were curious about any academic qualifications I hold relevant to the role, I have a degree in law.

I believe the BCA can do far better and I want to combat the democratic deficit this lack of publication has created so that it can become an open, accessible, and accountable organisation.