



Annual General Meeting 2020 Interim Agenda

AGM originally scheduled for 14th June 2020: This date is cancelled due to Coronavirus.

Rescheduled for: Sunday 11th October, Priddy Village Hall, 10:30am

This is an **INTERIM** document to present the agenda as it would have looked for a June AGM, including all proposals and applications made prior to the 4th April submission deadline. The new date creates a new deadline for additional agenda items and applications to be added:

Revised deadline for additional agenda items/applications: Midnight, 1st August 2020

A revised agenda will be published after that date.

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- (1) Chair’s welcome.
- (2) Apologies for absence and verification of quorum.
- (3) Declaration of items to be covered under Any Other Business.
- (4) Acceptance of minutes from the June 2019 AGM (available on BCA website).

Minor changes to minutes requested by email:

- (a) Add Lyndon Easterbrook to attendee list as voting for ULSA.
- (b) Section 22.1 correct honorary president to one year term in line with constitution.

- (5) Action items from 2019 AGM **(with update in red where status known)**

Responsibility	Action
ME	Update 2018 AGM minutes with corrections and publish as final. DONE
HJ	Report on progress of instructor insurance to October Council meeting. This is not a BCA issue however HJ is still working with BCA Council and QMC to help facilitate a resolution if possible.
ME/HJ	Table personal accident insurance for discussion at October Council meeting and present budget with and without this. Personal Accident Insurance was ‘shelved’ following mixed opinions and a number of other ways being identified to better spend budget surplus.
ME	Table liability insurance value (i.e. raising to £10m, just for Minera or for entire policy) for discussion at the October Council Meeting. The Minera issue was solved without raising insurance, however, a BMC claim has since set precedent for needing £10 PLI value; BCA Council therefore voted to increase and HJ has identified and implemented a policy.
ME	Table a review of Manual of Operations with respect to procedures for applying for positions and submitting proposals for the October Council meeting. Manual of Operations has been extensively revisited this year and numerous sections updated with approval of all changes from Council.
ME/GD	Update BCA website with policies accepted at this meeting. Done.
ME/GD	Update BCA website with new BCA Council members. Done.
ME/GD	Update Manual of Operations with new Standing Committee terms of reference accepted at this meeting. Done
JA	Progress New to Caving leaflet to production and distribution. Done
GD	Finalise new logo and compile ‘press pack’ for new logo and distribute as quickly as possible and update on website. Done
Everyone	All who use logo anywhere to update to new logo. Mostly achieved.
ME/GD	Update Manual of Operations accordingly for removal of Publications and Information Standing Committee. Done along with other MoO changes.
Exec/DC/ WW/GD	Progress constitutional changes proposed by ME (regarding two house voting) to a ballot of all members. Done; vote conducted and motion passed in both houses. Constitution updated accordingly.

(6) Reports

Executive reports:

- 6.1 Chair (Les Williams)
- 6.2 Secretary (Matt Ewles)
- 6.3 Treasurer (Howard Jones)

Insurance and Membership:

- 6.4 Membership Administrator (Wendy Williams)
- 6.5 Insurance Manager (Howard Jones)

Conservation and Access:

- 6.6 Conservation and Access Officer (Claire Ross; acting capacity)
- 6.7 CRoW Working Party (David Rose)

Publications and Information:

- 6.8 Publications and Information Officer (Jane Allen)
- 6.9 Newsletter Editor (David Rose)
- 6.10 British Caving Library (Jenny Potts)
- 6.11 Media Liaison (Andy Eavis)
- 6.12 Cave Registry (David Cooke)

Information Technology:

- 6.13 Webmaster (Gary Douthwaite)
- 6.14 Web Services (David Cooke)
- 6.15 IT Working Party (Gary Douthwaite; acting capacity)

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 (Rostam Namaghi)
- 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)

(7) Election of BCA Council Members for vacancies arising in 2020

Position	Term of Office	Incumbent	Applications (by 4 th April)	Notes
Honorary President	One year (2020-2021)	Mick Day	N/A	Not previously advertised in error. Applicants needed
Secretary	Two years of three year term (2020-2022)	Matt Ewles (Resigning)	N/A	Resignation came after 4 th April. Applicants needed
Treasurer	Three years (2020-2023)	Howard Jones	N/A	Not previously advertised due to not realising Howard's appointment in 2019 was only to complete the one year balance of a three year term. Applicants needed
Conservation and Access	Two years of three year term (2020-2022)	Claire Ross	Claire Ross	Officer appointed 2019 resigned; Claire appointed by BCA Council in January in acting position only.
Publications and Information	Three years (2020-2023)	Jane Allen	N/A	Not previously advertised due to not realising Jane's appointment in 2019 was only to complete the one year balance of a three year term. Applicants needed
Group rep	Two years (2020-2022)	Idris Williams	Idris Williams	None
Group rep	Two years (2020-2022)	John Hine	Rostam Namaghi	None
Group rep	One year of two year term (2020-2021)	Gary Douthwaite (Resigning)	N/A	Resignation came after 4 th April. Applicants needed
Individual rep	Two years (2020-2022)	Andrew McLeod	Andrew McLeod	None
Individual rep	Two years (2020-2022)	Jenny Potts	None	Jenny appointed to vacant position on an acting basis by BCA Council in January. Applicants needed

Note; A preliminary application for Secretary has been received but after the 4th April. This will be published in the updated 'final' agenda which will be issued after the new deadline.

Election statements (where a statement was received):

Claire Ross standing for Conservation and Access Officer:

Hola everyone, my name is Claire Ross, I'm 40 and originally from Lincoln, now living in Hessle, East Yorkshire. I've asked the BCA and members if I can be considered for the position of Conservation and Access Officer. A strange request for a none caver I know!

I love all things cave related but sadly due to some issues I haven't caved other than the tourist venues, instead I followed my passion by joining groups following social media and reading. I live my hobby through every caver, every photo, video and post. One of these posts was an advert seeking a C and A officer, I admit to feeling slightly ridiculous asking Matt to consider my application and I was over the moon when it wasn't immediately vetoed. Having attended a BCA meeting I can see the absolute passion and love you all have for the sport, something we share. I can see this sometimes lead to disagreements and difficult decisions but they come from the right place. Having worked in business management in the NHS for most of my career, I feel I am well experienced in balancing the many issues which face all companies today, I hope my business management skills may serve the BCA well, should I be successful. I'm hoping my lack of specific caving experience can be overcome with your help and support.

From what I have seen I feel the BCA needs a little more work on the business front, purposeful policies and governance are needed, members need to be heard and any issues dealt with quickly and effectively. Personal differences of opinion should not affect the association. There are no easy options but I am sure the BCA will continue on its path of change with every success, if only passion was enough.

Every single person I have met through the BCA have been interesting, friendly and inclusive. What an amazing team. So much really good work is done, access, conservation works, science, discovery and quality training delivery to name a few. A shout out to the many selfless volunteers both cavers, non cavers and BCA officers alike. There are some truly gifted people in the caving world and I'd love the chance to be a part of it.

Rostam Namaghi standing for Group Representative:

Proposed; Will Burn, Seconded; Jack Dewison

I'd like to run for the position of group representative as I believe our clubs and societies are what make British caving strong and resilient. The challenge we are going to face over the next generation is mainly demographic. We have a fantastic array of huts, clubs and institutions, and if we don't have people to carry on the work of previous generations, we as a community stand to lose a lot. It's why during my time leading Youth and Development, we helped develop 4 new University clubs, we passed free membership for under 18s, lobbied for access for under 18s, and are laying the groundwork for a grassroots campaign to bring youth into clubs.

I have served on council for 5 years during what has been a tumultuous time for the council - CRoW and the quagmire that followed, many personnel changes as workloads proved excessive, not to mention constitutional reform. The BCA is changing and going forward, I would vote for slimming down the council and work to get more BCA work done outside of council so clubs and cavers get more from the BCA. For the sake of declaring biases; I am a member of the Wealden Cave and Mine Society, and a former member of SUSS.

Andrew McLeod standing as Individual Representative:

I am applying to stand again as an Individual Member Representative of the BCA, having just completed a 2-year post. I have attended all but one of the BCA Council meetings during my tenure. I have stood previously on a caving club committee and I am the Dachstein expedition treasurer. As well as expedition caving, I also have an interest in cave science and I am a BCRA member, have attended several of their field meetings and am keen to further support the BCRA at BCA Council.

As a Welsh caver who started caving while living in Devon, mostly caved in the Mendips, and now live in Yorkshire, I have in my brief caving career covered many regions of British caving and think of myself only as a British caver. Similarly, although I am a member of four clubs (EUSS, BEC, YSS and SWCC) I am a direct individual member of the BCA. I have always tried to bring this region-agnostic view to often fractious BCA Council meetings.

I would nonetheless consider myself a progressive member seeking to improve the relationship between the BCA and individual cavers, and it is through this that I hope to again represent individual members, and to bring to attention to Council the issues that affect everyday cavers who are trying to carry out their sport and science of caving. For this reason I joined the BCA Vision group seeking to develop a brighter future for BCA, which will (coronavirus permitting) produce a report at a subsequent AGM.

(8) Proposals from Matt Ewles

These proposals are not yet seconded.

Notes to accompany the following three proposals (from Matt Ewles):

Although I had anticipated to use this meeting as an opportunity to put forward modernising changes to multiple sections of the constitution, I have dropped most of these in light of (A) The number of proposals from CSCC/David Cooke that require discussion, and (B) My departure from the Secretary role prior to the AGM. The following are therefore limited only to essential changes.

Proposal 8.1

Amend Constitution section 8.4 to “Notice of any matters to be raised at a General Meeting of the Association, including all proposals and applications for elected Council positions, must reach the Secretary no later than midnight on the day ten weeks prior to the meeting”.

Reason: BCA Council recently agreed to replace the usual January and April Council meetings with a single meeting in February to reduce bureaucracy, encourage more work offline from meetings and limit BCA Officer workload. The BCA Constitution (section 8.4) currently sets the Council Meeting before the AGM (historically April) as the agenda and application deadline for the AGM. The new Council Meeting date of February is too early. I propose amending this section of the constitution to specify a deadline ten weeks ahead of the AGM instead of tying this to a Council meeting.

Proposal 8.2

Amend the BCA constitution as follows:

Section 9.6; Amend from three to two signatories.

Section 9.7; amend to (changes in red/underlined):

The accounts of the Association shall be made up annually to 31st December and shall be **independently examined and** certified by a suitably qualified person. Ideally a certified set of accounts shall be presented to the Annual General Meeting following the year end. If this is not possible draft accounts shall be presented. In such a case, certified accounts shall be presented to a subsequent meeting of the National Council together with a list identifying changes of greater than **£100** between the draft and certified accounts. The certified accounts shall be published, as well as, if produced, the draft accounts and the list of items identifying changes. The suitably qualified person shall be **approved** by the Annual General Meeting. In the case of a casual vacancy, the National Council shall have the power to appoint a suitably qualified person. Such a person so appointed shall remain in office until the next Annual General Meeting of the Association and shall be eligible for reappointment.

Reason: These are housekeeping changes requested by the current BCA Treasurer to bring the constitution in line with current practices.

(9) Proposals from Council of Southern Caving Clubs (submitted by Alan Butcher, CSCC Chairman)

These proposals are not yet seconded.

Proposal 9.1

That clause 6.2 of the BCA Constitution be amended to read: “The Association shall have a National Council comprised of the Officers of the Association, up to **eight** representatives from the class of Group Members (**two from each region**), up to four representatives from the class of Individual Members and one representative from each Regional Caving Council and National Body.”

Reason: the removal of the Group Vote reduces that representation for club clubs and other groups which needs to be addressed by additional representation on the BCA Council.

Proposal 9.2

That the P&I Standing Committee be reinstated.

Reason: the business formally conducted by the P&I Committee is now brought to the BCA National Council for discussion and agreement meaning that the National Council is, in effect, the P&I Committee. This extends National Council meetings by up to 60 minutes. The National Council meeting in January 2020 included a lengthy report from the P&I Officer requiring discussion and decision. This could be more effectively done by a Standing Committee.

Proposal 9.3

That the arbitrary limit of £750 for Regional Council Access projects administered by the C&A Committee is in direct contravention of clause 2.1 of the BCA Constitution: that the definition of the Association includes the words “all of whom have autonomy in their own field”.

Reason: when the BCA and the “One Stop Shop” were set up, there was a fundamental agreement that Regional Councils and other bodies would be fully funded in return for agreeing to centralisation of income and expenditure with the new national body. The imposition of the limit of £750 administered by the C&A Committee gives the opportunity for access projects to be “administered” other than by financial constraints and therefore is a direct contradiction of the BCA Constitution clause 2.1. Additionally, the Funding Proposal adopted by the National Council on 11th January 2020 appears to override the imposition of this arbitrary limit.

Proposal 9.4

That the principle of the “One Stop Shop” and the provision of services to cavers, clubs and organisations form a fundamental part of the BCA and should be safeguarded.

Reason: this was a fundamental principle in the setting up of the BCA as a representative federation of all those involved with caving. Attempts to change the association away from a representative association to a regulatory body for caving are entirely against the ethos and spirit of the association.

Proposal 9.5

That the IT Working Group be abolished in accordance with clause 6.10 of the BCA Constitution. That a new Standing Committee be formed in accordance with clause 7 of the BCA Constitution to be known as the “IT Committee”. Its terms of reference shall be

- to manage and coordinate BCA’s IT infrastructure.
- to commission and implement IT projects as deemed desirable for BCA.
- to provide a resource of expertise available to BCA.
- to provide Web Services to BCA members as seems desirable.

Reason: The existing IT Working Group's membership has expanded with time and those members now include four out of the five Regional Council webmasters. As such it better resembles the structure of a Standing Committee. A Standing Committee is more democratic in that it guarantees the Regional Councils and National bodies a voice, unlike a Working Group. BCA provides web services for many of the Regional Councils and National Bodies, so a guaranteed voice for them is appropriate. This change also reflects the increasing importance of IT in helping BCA deliver for its members.

Proposal 9.6

That the National Council posts of Webmaster and Web Services Manager be abolished with their responsibilities being passed to the IT Committee or IT Working Group.

Reason: A motion put to the 2019 AGM defined the role of Webmaster such that it overlapped the existing terms of reference of the IT Working Group. This confliction about who takes what part of the role has led to difficulties and confusion. This proposal seeks to remove that problem by setting a clear chain of responsibility.

Proposal 9.7

That the BCA National Council be instructed to ensure that all software whether bespoke or purchased commercially is properly licensed and registered to the British Caving Association.

Reason: There is a concern is that in the absence of a license that BCA could lose the right to use particular software possibly at short notice. This is particularly important with the mission critical software. It is likely to be costly and difficult, if not impossible, to replace at short notice.

Proposal 9.8

That the BCA National Council produces an appropriate Social Media Policy. To be completed by the 2021 AGM.

Reason: That in this age of increasing use of social media, BCA has an active Facebook page, it is increasingly important that the association has a social media policy. The policy should help to protect BCA's reputation and give clear guidance to its volunteers and staff.

(10) Proposals from David Cooke (Individual Member)

All proposals seconded by Faye Litherland

Proposal 10.1

Add to the BCA Constitution: 8.15 The BCA National Council shall specify named individuals responsible for running any ballot required by the Constitution. Those individuals shall not be BCA Council members.

Reason: Any ballots run by the BCA need to be beyond criticism. As such, no Council member should be involved in the running the ballot. I.e. neither the distribution nor collection of ballot papers nor the counting of votes. The ballot would be run by trusted individuals appointed by Council but who are not members of Council.

Proposal 10.2

That the BCA National Council should consider the effect of equalising subscriptions between DIM's and CIM's on member caving clubs.

Reason: The decision to equalise the CIM and DIM subscription rates may have several unintended consequences to the detriment of caving clubs.

Currently caving clubs carryout a significant part of BCA's membership administration for free. With the equalising of the CIM and DIM subscription rates there is no longer an incentive for clubs to do this. If clubs stop offering CIM membership then those members will have to join as DIMs who are more expensive and time consuming to process. Thus the hassle and costs will increase for all. The price difference was a small but a significant nudge to encourage club membership which is acknowledged as the best way to go caving.

The unintended consequences of this change seem anti-club. Council should quantify the impact and consider measures to mitigate any detrimental effects.

Proposal 10.3

That the BCA National Council seek assurances from BCA's insurers in respect of the FCA regulations governing the provision of insurance that the now non-voting caving cubs and other bodies remain sufficiently full members that they receive insurance as a member benefit whereas the non-voting associate group members are in a sufficiently different category of membership that they do not receive insurance as a member benefit.

Reason: Insurance is a non-optional member benefit. If a choice is given then that would be regarded as selling insurance which BCA is not allowed to do. Last year BCA removed the category of uninsured club member because it that meant insurance was a choice. This applied to some 25

uninsured member clubs. They were advised to becoming associate members, the significant difference being that this class doesn't have a vote and therefore is sufficiently non-member(ish) that insurance isn't required. Running that logic in the other direction, now that club membership no longer has a vote and is virtually indistinguishable from associate membership, how is it they receive insurance as a member benefit whereas associate members don't? The concern is that BCA is selling insurance. This proposal seeks to remove that concern.

Proposal 10.4

That this meeting agree with and endorses the decision by National Council to fund legal proceedings on behalf of the Cambrian Caving Council. That a cap of £50,000 of BCA's funds be placed upon expenditure. That expenditure above this figure would require a further ballot of members for approval.

Reason: A Judicial Review is potentially a very expensive undertaking and risks depleting BCA's reserves. As such it is desirable that the members' continuing approval is sought and that there is some control over expenditure.

Proposal 10.5

That the National Council implement the recording and live streaming (where possible) of future Annual General Meetings of the Association.

Reason: This proposal is aimed at improved engagement with the membership. The technology to do this is readily available, cheap and easy to use.

Proposal 10.6

That the National Council should consider the process by which proposals are put forward to the Annual General Meeting and hence to ballot and should be required to state its considered view on the merits and implications of any proposal being put to ballot.

Reason: The last ballot contained far reaching constitutional changes that were never debated by BCA Council, our elected representatives. Previous BCA ballots have not been accompanied by any information giving the pros and cons. This is because Council is afraid it would be accused of bias. This is a mistake. It fails to encourage the necessary level of debate.

BCA Council representatives are elected because we trust they'll do a good job. We give them the responsibility to do the research, gain the necessary knowledge and provide answers based on a full understanding of the issues. That essential part of the decision making process is currently missing in many cases. In any ballot Council should set out the case for and against and then go on to give clear advice to the members.

(11) Appointment of 'suitably qualified person' to certify BCA accounts

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

(12) Any other business