

Report from Publications & Information Officer January 2019

I am still finding my feet within my new role and would like to thank Les Williams for his help and advice.

THE PROMOTION OF BCA

As stated in my previous report:

'I believe the BCA needs to better promote itself as an organisation to the wider caving community. Ensure cavers know what it actually does and why BCA is relevant to them'.

Also:

'The BCA therefore needs (amongst other means of communication) a strong presence online, which includes a modern website and active social media pages'.

Hence....

BCA ADVERT & SOCIAL MEDIA

Many thanks to Gary Douthwaite for helping design the new BCA advert for use in Descent and elsewhere. This advert promotes many (though not all, space was limited) of the positive things BCA does. An improvement on the previous adverts, half of which were about disease. The advert will be updated and improved upon over time.



- The BCA advert has been pinned to the top of the BCA facebook page and shared round various facebook caving groups – CHECC, Cavers of Facebook etc.
- The above post has also been 'boosted' at a cost of £20 as I wanted to see the reach/engagement. Full results to be shown at meeting – briefly 'total reach' 6700+ of which 3300 paid for. 522 'engagement' of which 135 paid for, with £2 of budget to go.
- The advert was posted onto the ukcaving facebook page and reached 1,100+ people with an engagement of 73. There was no cost to BCA for this
- I am in the process of adding a modified version of the advert to the forum itself – for free - and a post has been 'stickied' to the top of the BCA board on UKC:
<https://ukcaving.com/board/index.php?topic=24531.0>

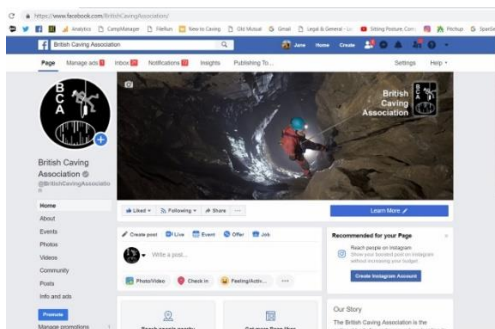
- The advert has been tweeted on the UKC twitter feed and posted on Instagram. I have help running the latter and am yet to look into a BCA Instagram account. Once I'm up to speed with UKC, BCA will be next. Thank you to those who have offered to help me with this.

For minimal cost a positive message about BCA has been spread widely on social media. The advert in the next edition of Descent will cost £500. Looking at it purely from a cost effectiveness point of view, the expenditure of £3000 a year on BCA advertising in Descent is poor value for money. BCA is reaching (I believe) an older demographic of caver with the Descent adverts – I base this on the CHECC questionnaire where not a single respondent mentioned Descent. Although I am not suggesting, BCA advertise itself as an association in the Duke of Edinburgh magazine, I have experience advertising in this publication and know a quarter page advert, which reaches 30,000 people, would cost £350 before any negotiated discount. I do not wish to give Descent's readership here, however it is below 30,000. My point is, BCA could reach many more cavers (especially younger ones) with adverts and other positive messages on social media for £3,000 than it does via Descent and it could promote caving to a wider audience (ie DofE) more cost effectively.

I am given to understand, BCA advertising in Descent is as much financial support of the magazine as it is to promote BCA itself. I have no problem with this, Descent is the last of its kind in the UK and has certainly been a part of my caving life for over 30 years. However, if BCA is to support Descent to the tune of £3000 annually, should BCA not be upfront and proud about this with its members? For too long, many cavers see BCA as just a 'provider of insurance' etc, the message in the new advert is a start in addressing this and BCA's generous support of Descent would be another positive message from BCA.

FACEBOOK

- Over the past weeks I have been posting onto the BCA facebook page (as has Cookie). The number of 'likes' is now over 930 and rising.
- A button, linking the facebook page to the website has been added where it says 'learn more' below.



- If other BCA groups 'tag' BCA in their facebook posts, I will see them and know to share. It's too time consuming looking at lots of groups every day. Use @BritishCavingAssociation also use @ukcaving and I will share on there too.

Logo

Logo design is coming on well. Queens University Caving Club came up with an excellent idea for their entry into the UKC CHECC Grand Prize and a thread on the forum has also been fruitful:

<https://ukcaving.com/board/index.php?topic=24341.0>



The Website

Please don't shoot the messenger. My comments in my last report regarding the BCA website were made following numerous comments to me about the website. Judging by the feedback given since the last meeting it appears the website could indeed do with updating.

An example of how a new website might look will be shown at the meeting.

How this is pursued further will be discussed at the planned P&I committee meeting in early Spring.

The BCA Newsletter.

I intend to conduct a social media campaign when the next newsletter is published to a) promote the latest edition and b) encourage people to sign up to receive it. This campaign will include boosting on facebook.

BCA Publications, Advice Notices and Information

Some of the notices listed on the current BCA website are outdated – I propose I go through them and suggest what could be removed/archived/updated. (Said this in my last report, apologies not had time to complete yet)

P&I Standing Committee

From my last report:

The P&I is a standing Committee though as I understand it hasn't met for a considerable time? Who would like to be a part of this committee as I would like to establish a group to help with the above work?

David Rose has kindly agreed to join the committee, as have Will Whalley, Lydia Leather & Corin Donne from Youth & Development. Anyone else? I plan a meeting in early Spring.

CHECC Questionnaire conclusions

Tim has written a detailed report on the results of the questionnaire. My main observations are the importance of fellow cavers and clubs to the respondents and the work BCA still has to do promoting itself as an organisation to CHECC members.

THE PROMOTION OF CAVING

In my last report I stated:

In order to encourage more people to caving, the BCA should improve its promotion of our sport to a wider audience, not just within the caving community itself – we know caving's great.

As BCA has already adopted www.newtocaving.com, it makes sense to promote NTC, thereby promoting caving itself. I realise some have an issue with NTC not 'belonging' to BCA, however until someone designs a website to replace NTC I suggest BCA get behind New to Caving.

A leaflet for beginners – an excellent way for BCA to reach out to potential new cavers

From my last report:

Design is well under way and I hope to have a mock up to show you at the meeting.

Caving on BBC Breakfast & on the BBC Get Inspired website

Please refer to this link on Mike Bushell of BBC Breakfast going caving:

<https://ukcaving.com/board/index.php?topic=24274.0>

The above prompted me to contact BBC Get Inspired, trying to get Caving listed here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/get-inspired/25416779>

My e-mails, tweets and phonecalls were ignored (how rude, BBC), so I wrote to my MP and he wrote to the Director General! However, due to 'resources and editorial focus' they said caving wouldn't be listed with an activity guide – pff, if shinty and luge are listed, surely caving should be?? I won't give up, my MP is coming to Ingleton in February – I'm planning to go see him.

The BBC Get Inspired Team did do this though: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/get-inspired/33148059>

Kendal Mountain Festival

The Underground Session at Kendal was well attended and New to Caving prominent on the screen during the interval. <https://ukcaving.com/board/index.php?topic=24310.0>

Preliminary discussions have taken place re BCA sponsoring the event next year.

CNCC Sign at Bull Pot Farm.

The new sign at Bull Pot Farm features the New to Caving website:



The Peak District National Park website

It was pointed out (on UKC) that the links on this website needed updating. I contacted the web manager and was able to do so. Unfortunately, it is not at all easy to follow the advice:

'For further information visit www.british-caving.org.uk and follow the link "New to Caving?" Here you can download British Caving Association's two leaflets: "Try Caving" and "So, You Want to Go Caving." '

I cannot find the link to New to Caving on the BCA website – surely, it should be prominent not hidden away?

<https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/visiting/getactive/caving>

Publications update

The CHECC guidelines have been approved and are on the BCA website.

Finalising the Local Cave & Mine Leader Level One Ropework document is underway – sorry for the delay Gethin.
