

British Cave Rescue Council

Charity registration number: 1137252



Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts

1 February 2018 to 31 January 2019



Photo by G Thomas

Objectives and Activities

The objectives of the British Cave Rescue Council (BCRC) are to relieve suffering and distress amongst persons and animals endangered by accidents or natural hazards, by co-ordinating and providing support for member underground search and rescue organisations in the British Isles, with the support and recognition of police, fire and all other relevant authorities.

The BCRC is the co-ordinating body for 15 cave rescue member teams operating in the UK and Ireland. It represents and supports its members at national and international level and promotes cave rescue and the exchange of information between member rescue organisations, providing a common voice.

We bring teams and team members together to share training and best practice, co-ordinate grant claims and administer the national 'peer-review' process. We help teams to maintain the core capabilities required of a BCRC member team in order to meet the operational needs required by the calling authorities (Police, Fire & Rescue services) and the general public.

The benefit to the public of a wholly voluntary search and rescue service is that we and our member teams are able to provide trained and equipped personnel to respond to a call out, any day or time of the year. These teams are able to operate underground and in other inhospitable locations to help save lives. The trustees continue to have regard to the Charity Commission guidance on 'Public Benefit', which informs what we do and how we do it.

Officers of the council represent member teams' interests at external meetings, events and conferences. Cave rescue is represented at the United Kingdom Search and Rescue (UKSAR) forum and we maintain a close relationship with Mountain Rescue England and Wales (MREW) and with other European cave rescue teams through our European Cave Rescue Association (ECRA) membership.

The BCRC also works on national equipment procurement deals for its member teams. We have continued to assist in the development of the NICOLA (surface to underground communication system) and have supported several of our teams to purchase specialist equipment (through officer time rather than financial support).

Volunteers

The BCRC is administered by 14 volunteer officers with support from additional co-opted support officers. Volunteers make a significant contribution to the BCRC and the cave rescue teams. The contribution made by the BCRC officers during the year ended 31 January 2019 increased significantly, due to potential risks to teams and due to the unusual and prolonged overseas rescue in Thailand.

However, it should be noted that the bulk of physical cave rescue work is undertaken by our member teams, and the volunteers that operate in those teams. The 15 teams across the British Isles are made up of approximately 1,000 volunteer rescuers.

During the incident reporting year ended December 2018, these teams and their members responded to 31 call outs and 2,665 man-hours (2017 - 34 call outs, 1,475 man-hours) were put in to these searches, rescues and call outs. Many more hours are spent on training, fundraising and administering the organisations. All BCRC officers are active members of their local cave rescue teams.

During 2018, the sudden major increase required in BCRC volunteer hours due to the Thai rescue, was supplemented by teams and the larger caving and cave diving community as a whole. The result was an impressive, co-ordinated UK and Irish effort that raised the profile of the professionalism of cave rescue in the UK and Ireland around the world.

The BCRC and its member teams in England and Wales are also members of MREW. BCRC officers represent cave rescue interests within MREW and support MREW work, such as national fundraising, ICT (SARCALL), the CasCare co-ordination and equipment safety training.

Achievements and Performance

Very rarely the BCRC is called upon to organise and co-ordinate teams and team members from the British Isles in international rescue operations and one of those extraordinary occasions occurred this year. The BCRC, through its volunteer officers, co-ordinated the British rescue teams' involvement in the successful rescue of the Moo Pa football team and its coach from Tham Luang cave in Thailand. Seventeen people including twelve young footballers and their coach were found and rescued. BCRC support was critical for management logistics, travel, diplomatic relationships, media management and insurance negotiations.

The regular BCRC work continued too. A casualty care strategy weekend was organised in December, to discuss best practice and to see how the BCRC and teams can continue to improve the care given to casualties and identify improvements in equipment available. This was well attended and feedback given has been excellent, with a view to this becoming a more regular supported training session. Work has begun on supporting the UK's Biennial national Cave Rescue conference (ResCon) that will take place during 2019.

BCRC officers attend many meetings and conferences, to network, to raise the profile of cave rescue and to contribute to the national discussion and planning of search and rescue (SAR) services. During the year, this included the UKSAR conference and meetings, MREW meetings, the Emergency Services Show, Hidden Earth, the EUROTek diving conference and EuroSpeleo (the European caving conference).

In addition to pure BCRC work, officers, using their own funds, travelled to Morocco to contribute to the development of the first Moroccan Cave Rescue Team. The BCRC has also supported a couple of international exchanges of specific cave rescue technology (including cave radio communications) to be shared among the cave rescue community. Details of existing technology (hardware & software) have been shared with other international teams looking to bolster their equipment portfolio and in some cases 'surplus' equipment from teams and team members has been donated as far afield as Canada.

Fundraising Performance

Our Fundraising objectives are to cover the expected annual core running costs of the BCRC, in the region of £5k a year, so that we can fulfil our objects without impinging on public funds that might otherwise be directly donated to our member teams.

A Paypal Donate button was added to our website <http://www.caverescue.org.uk> in 2017, in the hope of attracting one-off donations. Due to the global media and public interest a 'windfall' of donations was received during the Thai rescue, mainly via the Paypal button.

We continue to promote the idea of a standing order / direct debit option for those that wish to contribute regularly to our work and have added other ways of giving such as AmazonSmile.

Financial Review

2018/2019 was an extremely unusual year. The unrestricted income for the year-ended 31 January 2019, on a receipts and payments basis, was £54,777 and the expenditure was £6,089, (2018 £5,704 income and £3,028 expenditure). The main reason for such a material change were the donations related to the rescue in Thailand. The spending plan was under review at the year end.

Reserves

Prior to 2018, the BCRC reserves policy was to hold approximately one year's operating costs (£5,000) and £5,000 emergency operating costs, to cover the potential need to help to fund a large, protracted rescue or to support a team after catastrophic event. The policy was in line with the small amount of funds raised, held and used each year.

Due to the unexpected increase in income during 2018, the BCRC is in a position to consider increasing its designated reserves. We are in the process of reviewing relevant risks and adjusting the reserves accordingly. Some of the donations received, were specified to be spent on equipment and these have been placed in a restricted reserve.

Principal Sources of Funds

The principal source of regular income is normally the annual subscription levied on our fifteen member teams, this is in the region £100 per member team.

Grants are occasionally available for BCRC and teams, although these are not guaranteed. Currently, the UKSAR 'Libor' fund administered by CAF is a temporary source of grant funding for training, both centrally and for member teams.

In addition BCRC receives donations from individuals, trusts and companies and ad hoc support from caving, diving and rescue organisations and events. 2019 was an unusual year for donations and this is unlikely to occur again in the foreseeable future.

Risks and Uncertainties

One of the main risks facing the BCRC is ongoing funding. As a co-ordinating body, the BCRC is not as attractive to donors as the cave rescue teams themselves. As a National body, it does not attract local support. In line with many charities, a year's running costs are included in the core Reserve Policy, this allows a little time to find extra funding or cut services and spending should donations or other sources contract. Teams provide the main funding and without outside sources, teams would decide and fund the level of activity required from BCRC.

Other risks come from the success of last year's rescue in Thailand. It has raised our profile and brought in extra funds. However, it has created a much larger workload and also means that we are more likely to be called upon in other large rescues in the future. This could place a significant burden on the BCRC, teams and volunteers running the charity.

The BCRC and its member teams are also members of Mountain Rescue England & Wales (MREW), a much larger charity, which has provided support and funded some of the ongoing costs of its member teams. These include fundamental services such as medical insurance, the licence to administer prescription and controlled drugs, public liability insurance, top-up accident insurance and vehicle insurance. MREW is currently moving its governance to a new charitable incorporated organisation (CIO). This is expected to result in some member teams being reclassified as associate members. The ramifications of this are currently unclear.

Lack of volunteers and the time that they can contribute to the running of the charity is often an issue, as it is for many small charities.

Structure, Governance and Management

The BCRC is an unincorporated charity, governed by its constitution and charity law. It was originally formed as the Cave Rescue Council in 1967 and was reconstituted as the British Cave Rescue Council in 1981. It became a registered charity in April 2003 and the constitution was last updated in 2008. The constitution is due for a review and proposed changes are being collated and discussed during 2019, ready for the 2020 AGM.

Trustee selection

The members at the annual general meeting (AGM) elect the Chairman, the Secretary and the Treasurer. They can also elect extra officers as President, Vice Chairman, Training Officer, Equipment Officer, Conference Secretary, Communications Officer, Medical Advisor, Diving Advisor and Legal Advisor, if they wish.

The Executive Committee can co-opt members as the extra officers if the positions remain vacant at the end of the AGM. The Executive Committee may in addition appoint not more than 3 further co-opted members to the limit of one third co-opted members on the committee.

The wider network

The BCRC is a member of Mountain Rescue England and Wales (MREW) and affiliated to UK Search & Rescue (UKSAR). Internationally the BCRC is a member of the European Cave Rescue Association (ECRA).

Administrative details

British Cave Rescue Council (BCRC)

Registered charity number: 1137252

Old Forge House
Hampton Loade
Bridgnorth
WV15 6HD

Email: secretary@caverescue.org.uk
Website: www.caverescue.org.uk

The charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustees
1	Peter Dennis	Chair	From April 2018	Members at the AGM
2	Emma Porter	Secretary		Members at the AGM
3	Heather Simpson	Treasurer		Members at the AGM
4	Richard Whitehouse	Acting Chair Vice Chair	Until April 2018	Members at the AGM /Executive committee
5	Gary Mitchell	Assistant Chair	From April 2018	Members at the AGM/Executive committee
6	James Davis	Training Officer		Members at the AGM/Executive committee
7	Michael Clayton	Equipment Officer		Members at the AGM/Executive committee
8	Toby Hamnett	Legal Advisor?		Members at the AGM/Executive committee
9	Brendan Sloan	Medical officer		Members at the AGM/Executive committee
10	Christopher Jewel	Diving Officer		Members at the AGM/Executive committee
11	Anthony Haigh	Communications Officer		Members at the AGM/Executive committee
12	Roger King	Information Officer		Members at the AGM/Executive committee
13	Gary Evans	UKSAR Medical Rep.	From April 2018	Members at the AGM/Executive committee
14	James Begley	Conference Secretary	From April 2018	Members at the AGM/Executive committee



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name
BRITISH CAVE RESCUE COUNCIL

No (if any)
1137252

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end date
	01/02/2018		31/01/2019

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Levies	1,840	-	-	1,840	1,670
Donations	50,551	2,225	-	52,776	1,365
Gift-Aid	2,331	-	-	2,331	-
Grants	-	-	-	-	1,259
Conference loan returned	-	-	-	-	1,000
Hidden Earth	45	-	-	45	320
Badge sales	10	-	-	10	90
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	54,777	2,225	-	57,002	5,704
A2 Asset and investment sales					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	54,777	2,225	-	57,002	5,704
A3 Payments					
Travel	2,609	-	-	2,609	712
Rescue costs	622	-	-	622	-
Training	232	-	-	232	52
Team training grants	-	-	-	-	1,113
Unspent grant returned	-	-	-	-	2,489
Equipment development	100	-	-	100	-
Fundraising costs	873	-	-	873	2
Conference loan	-	-	-	-	1,000
AGM	101	-	-	101	101
Uniforms	599	-	-	599	-
Printing, postage & stationery	22	-	-	22	-
Subscriptions	571	-	-	571	100
Sub total	5,729	-	-	5,729	5,569
A4 Asset and investment purchases.					
Exhibition stands x 3	353	-	-	353	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	353	-	-	353	-
Total payments	6,082	-	-	6,082	5,569
Net of receipts/(payments)	48,695	2,225	-	50,920	135
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	14,382	675	-	15,057	14,922
Cash funds this year end	63,077	2,900	-	65,977	15,057

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Lloyds current account	61,053	2,900	-
	Paypal account	2,024	-	-
	<i>Total cash funds</i> <small>(agree balances with receipts and payments)</small>	63,077	2,900	-
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
	Details			
B2 Other monetary assets	Levy debtors	100	-	-
	Eurotek raffle online tickets debtor	2,000	-	-
	Reclaimable VAT	159	-	-
	Rescue Expenses - Thailand	622	-	-
	ECRA fees prepaid for 2019 & 2020	247	-	-
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Four exhibition stands	unrestricted	-	-
			-	-
	Details	Fund to which	Amount due	When due
B5 Liabilities	None		-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name		Date of approval



Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of Charity name

On accounts for the year ended **Charity no (if any)**

Set out on pages (remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets) †

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/01/2019

Responsibilities and basis of report As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (~~other than that disclosed below~~ *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed: **Date:**

Name:

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):

Address: