

Council for British Archaeology

Minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting (148th Council Meeting)

The Annual General Meeting was held on Thursday 4 February at 11.30am via Zoom. The meeting was chaired by Mr Ken Smith, Chair of Trustees. The CBA Executive Director, Mr Neil Redfern and staff members were in attendance.

1. Confirmation of appointments to the Board of Trustees, Chair and Vice-Chair of Trustees

Members were asked to confirm the re-election Mr Ken Smith (Chair), Professor Carenza Lewis (Vice-Chair) Lady Sue Dormer, Dr Simon Elliott, Professor Keith Lilley, Dr Alison Spaul and Mr Jeremy Taylor. As the number of candidates for election did not exceed the number of available places no ballot was required.

A vacancy exists for a new Hon Treasurer/trustee and trustees will consider filling the important role via co-option at the earliest possible opportunity.

Members RATIFIED the re-election of the above Trustees.

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Friday 22nd November 2019

The Minutes of the 147th Council Meeting held on Friday 22nd November 2019 were APPROVED.

There were no matters arising.

3. Strategic overview from the Chair of the Trustees, Mr Ken Smith

Mr Smith reported on events of the last year, in particular the impact of Covid-19 on the heritage sector and the achievements of the CBA in new and challenging circumstances.

Watch Mr Smith's report in full on the CBA YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/reQVJLV37H4> or download the transcript here <https://new.archaeologyuk.org/news/cba-agm-for-2020>.

4. Annual Trustees' Report and Financial Statements

Members were provided with access to the Annual Trustees' Report and Financial Statements in advance of the AGM.

The charity has reported a net loss for the year of £111,166. The net current asset position at the year end was £41,035, down from £90,345 in the prior year.

During 2019-20, the organisation made a significant investment in new staffing which increased costs and had not immediately realised the benefits from this investment by the year end, in terms of increased income. Post year end, the charity has been able to secure four separate grant investments, worth £349,479, from funds designed to help the heritage sector recover from the Covid-19 pandemic. Of these, £175,000 is in the form of contribution to the CBA's core staffing and overhead costs, which will generate a surplus in 2020-21.

The Trustees' Annual Report for 2019-2020 was APPROVED.

The Annual Trustees' Report is available to read at <https://new.archaeologyuk.org/news/cba-agm-for-2020>.

5. Revised membership and subscription rates 2020-21

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic it was proposed to maintain membership fees at the current rate for the next financial year.

Maintaining membership fees at their current rate was APPROVED.

6. Vote of thanks to our President Mr Dan Snow

After 6 years as President Mr Snow has decided to stand down and the CBA is hugely grateful for all he has contributed in that time and would like the AGM to support a vote of thanks.

Members APPROVED the vote of thanks to Dan Snow.

7. Executive Director's report on current and future activities, with an opportunity to discuss issues of concern to members

Mr Neil Redfern gave an update on CBA activity in 2020, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the work of the organisation and the challenges faced by many. Mr Redfern highlighted work to refocus the CBA vision and mission so that we can better champion archaeology and public participation. Moving forward the CBA is developing a new business plan for 2021-24 that will focus on five key goals: demonstrating the public benefit the CBA delivers; enhancing and maximising public participation through our youth engagement; enhancing and maximising public engagement through our members, supporters and groups; investing in key infrastructure programmes to make the CBA more resilient and sustainable; and demonstrating the wider public and social value of archaeology.

Watch the full report on the CBA YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/MHaQjLxFoGA>. A copy of the presentation is also available to download here <https://new.archaeologyuk.org/news/cba-agm-for-2020>.

8. Appointment of auditors

Members were invited to approve the re-appointment of Armstrong Watson as auditors for the coming year.

The appointment of auditors Armstrong Watson for the coming year was APPROVED.

9. Any other business

There was no other business.

10. Dates of future meetings

The next Council for British Archaeology AGM will be held on Thursday 3 February 2022.

The CBA AGM was followed by the De Cardi lecture given by Raksha Dave. This is available to watch on the CBA YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/gEXH8WaZKKg>.

To celebrate our activity over the last year we put together a short film – The CBA in 2020. You can watch this here <https://youtu.be/4foLUODczVk>.

Questions from the audience

The first set of questions were answered during the AGM and written updates have been provided here:

Has there been an analysis of the current and future archaeology workforce? And likewise, any estimate of the likely demand, given the projected emphasis on infrastructure by government in the next few years? I.e. what is the size of the gap?

Work on this is currently being undertaken as part of the [Profiling the Profession](#) which is a survey of archaeological employment in the UK being carried out by Landward Research. A report detailing the results of the survey is due later in 2021. We will make the results available to members.

CBA South West regional group? What is happening?

We are working with several people in the South West who are interested in helping reignite CBA South West. If anyone would like further information, please contact [Claire Corkill](#) at the CBA.

Is the plan to have a blended Festival of Archaeology in future i.e. BOTH online and in person?

Yes, we are looking to have a blended or hybrid festival including both in-person/on-the-ground events and digital content. We are also exploring how we can develop more self-guided activities such as our Local Explorer bingo challenge.

Is there a new CBA President?

Not at this time, we are in the process of considering what focus we would like our President to have. This will be informed and shaped by our new business plan which is due for completion and presentation to Trustees at their April meeting. It is our ambition to announce our new President as part of the Festival of Archaeology.

As the AGM was delivered online this year the audience were invited to submit questions in advance of the meeting and via Zoom's chat function. It was not possible to answer all the questions during the event, instead, these questions are answered here:

The current legislative and economic environment has foregrounded delivering social value, which CBA and its members, functioning as charities, seek to do. This has created an operational context which challenges all charities to compete for influence and funding streams on behalf of their members in a social business environment. Can the committee see the benefit of reconfiguring CBA as a CIO in an environment like this, so that the members have clearer expectations of services delivered, and the management has a clearer responsibility for delivery?

We do not see any additional benefits in reconfiguring the CBA as a CIO beyond how we operate as a charity. We are working to clarify and expand on our membership offer and this will be a focused area of activity in our new business plan.

How and when will CBA make sure that its members and their organisations have access to up to date research on archaeological knowledge and practise, which is currently locked away in HE institutions, for their community based projects?

The CBA will be looking to refresh its website content over the next 12 months, this will include guidance of various areas of archaeological practice. We will not be looking to recreate material provided by others but will provide clear signposting and advice on how to use available resources.

How and when will the CBA national team provide professional services that will ensure that participation results in local and regional collaborations between groups and with professional community archaeologists which creates a combined 'voice', a critical mass, which maximises the impact and influence of archaeology on local and regional sectoral interests, decision makers and providers of funding?

The CBA is already undertaking this role in championing archaeology and public participation. Developing our work so that we become a stronger 'voice' of archaeology and the benefits/value archaeology brings will be key goals of the new CBA business plan.

How and when, particularly in its digital format, will British Archaeology prominently and regularly foreground the work of community groups, early career archaeologists and professional archaeologists working in CICs or Social Enterprises?

The CBA has already made changes to British Archaeology to reflect both community groups and early career archaeologists. We have converted the 'Briefing' pages in the magazine into two features, one representing the work and activity of groups 'Archaeology Active' and one featuring the work/activities of young archaeologists in 'Archaeology 8-25'. It is intended this approach will be continued in our work to refresh the CBA website and that Briefing will remain an on-line resource.

How and when will CBA National use the networks it intends to build to create/support/influence regional and local collaborations in a form and manner which will improve the profile and position of archaeology as an engine for meeting the social and economic priorities of rural Britain, particularly in the marginal and 'at risk' local economies of the upland rural North which rarely benefit from developed funded archaeology?

The CBA will be helping its regional network of groups to improve their profile and the role of archaeology locally. We agree archaeology can be a driver for social and economic wellbeing. However, we are unable to directly influence developer-funded archaeology.

How and when is CBA National going to use its networks and collaborations to build frameworks and systems which will ensure that young people and mature returners to learning in colleges and universities can promote and advertise their interests and specialist/generic skills to local community groups so those groups can offer them online or face to face opportunities to put those skills and interests in to practice?

In part we already do this via our YAC groups, work to celebrate YAC alumni and in our wider youth engagement. More needs to be done to broaden our youth work, and support for early career archaeologists and archaeological departments in universities will be key goals in our business plan.

How and when will the current YAC project make sure that members are regularly updated on progress and are invited to participate, make a contribution to the project in accordance with the CBA's commitment to inclusivity and an ethos of collaboration?

The YAC team, volunteers and participants already operate in an open and inclusive way as illustrated by the work we have showcased at the AGM, during the Festival of Archaeology and via the YAC website. We acknowledge more can be done and with our partners at Shout Out Loud, we have been delivering a series of Diversity and Equality workshops to volunteers, staff and CBA trustees.

How and when will Dig School make connections for participants and their families to the work and upcoming activities of local groups, YACs and fieldwork or other projects run by CBA partner organisations so that young people and their families can build on what they've learned and pursue their interests and enthusiasms?

Dig School was a one-off development to meet the needs of children and schools during the first lockdown in 2020. It was specifically aimed at the children of key workers who remained at school and their teachers. We were very pleased with its success and are looking at how it can be reworked, enhanced and extended into a more permanent feature and how it might support an approach to afterschool archaeology clubs.

Written responses provided by Neil Redfern, Executive Director of the CBA, February 2021.