



VOLUNTEER INFORMATION HANDBOOK

WELCOME ON BOARD

May 2020

“Without our volunteers there is no BCS, they are our lifeblood and without them and their volunteering support, we are nothing” – Michael Grant, BCS Immediate Past President

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Firstly, we would like to thank you for volunteering with BCS. Your time and effort is greatly appreciated by us, our members and IT professionals. You are contributing towards our charitable objective of making it good for society and we hope you find it an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

The content in this handbook covers a few basics to help you get started in your role. Refer to this as needed and if you're unsure of anything feel free to contact us, or other volunteers in your network.

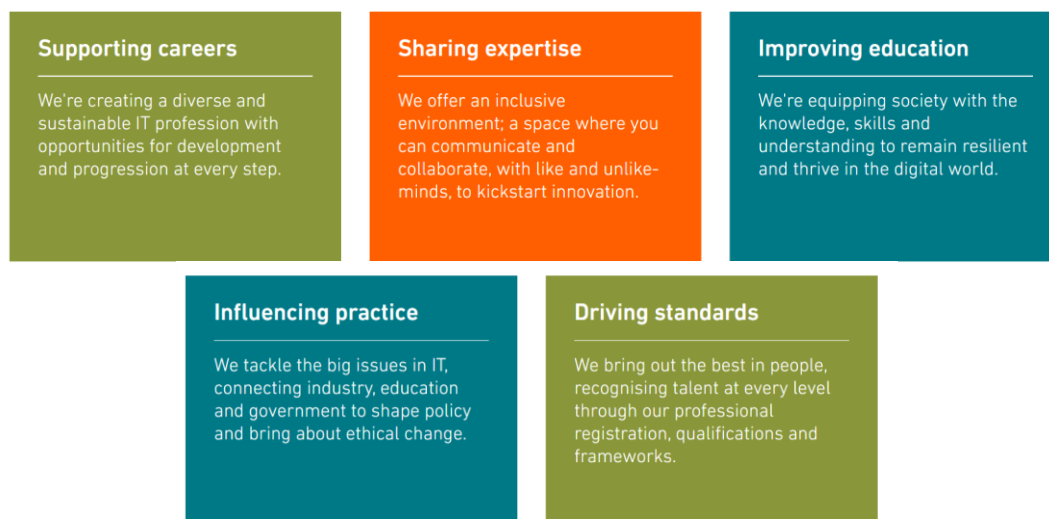
1. Overview of BCS

BCS is a professional membership organisation with a Royal Chartered obligation to **make IT good for society**. The work of our volunteers plays a huge part in helping us with this aim.

At BCS, we aim to ensure everyone's experience with technology is positive. It's something we've been committed to since 1957. Today we have over 60, 000 members in 150 countries, and a wider community of business leaders, educators, practitioners and policy-makers. They are all committed to our mission to lead the IT industry through its ethical challenges, to support the people who work in the industry, and ensure the digital journey is safe and positive for everyone.

1.1 Five Pillars

Everything we do at BCS is built on our five strategic pillars, which make it possible for us to raise standards and realise greater potential in the technology industry.



2. Benefits of Volunteering with BCS

In volunteering with BCS you are part of a wide network of people you can collaborate and share learning with. Your volunteering role will enable you to meet people outside of your current network and be part of a wider community. Whichever role you take on, you will be learning new skills which are applicable not just to BCS volunteering but to your wider professional life. We asked some of our volunteers for advice they would give to newcomers...

2.1 Member profiles

[Read Kylie's full profile here](#)



Kylie Fowler

Kylie Fowler is a volunteer with a passion for events and community. She works as an independent consultant and event organiser for the Service Management & IT Asset Management Group.

What would you say to a new volunteer who asks you how to be successful?

'Make sure you have a clear sense of what you want to do and what you want to get out of BCS. Don't wait for other people to tell you what to do. Think of BCS as a platform and come here with ideas of your own and ask BCS to support you with them.

'We will then do what we can to facilitate those ideas, but you have to be the driving force behind them. In time, you'll need less and less help from BCS and be able to run things on your own and help others.'



Carol Long

Carol Long is part of the corporate governance structure at BCS and sits on the Risk Audit and Finance Committee. She is completing a year as Vice Chair of Council and also Chairs the Quality Specialist Group. She tells her BCS story.

[Read Carol's full profile here](#)

What would you say to a new volunteer who asks you how to be successful?

'Take the opportunities that you are interested in and fully engage with them. Don't focus on what value you will get from the activity because payback will come in unexpected ways and may be more valuable than any trade-off you might have made. Don't take on something just because it will be good for your CV: your heart won't be in it and the rewards will be poor.'



Anthony Parker

Anthony Parker is Chair of BCS Berkshire Branch, a career long technologist and passionate volunteer. He explains his motivations and explores the increasing relevance of BCS.

[Read Anthony's full profile here](#)

What would you say to a new volunteer who asks you how to be successful?

'Do what you love. When passion and enthusiasm come out, they're very contagious. You have to also consider what other parties want to achieve and where they are coming from to create a win-win scenario.

'Don't worry about what other people think about you, it's your life and you have to treat yourself right. Do this by getting enough sleep, managing your energy levels and considering what you eat - the odd vegan meal won't go a miss. If you consider all of those things, then you're doing pretty well!'

3. Community Values

These community values have been developed by our volunteers and highlight the importance of working together as a unified team. The values were an output from the 2019/20 community programme '[new beginnings](#)'. The purpose of the programme was to put a spotlight on why people volunteer, our collective purpose and how BCS can support development of the volunteers.

The 6 Community Values

We Are One team

We believe that strong relationships between governance, staff and member groups can directly benefit members, IT professionals and wider society.

Nurturing a New Generation of IT professional

We believe that working with universities, students, employers and apprentices will help to nurture a generation of ethical professionals that will continue to provide a safe, inclusive and progressive society enabled by technology.

Building an Inclusive Profession

We believe that the IT profession is stronger when it is inclusive and engaging.

Making IT Better for Society

We believe that we can play a positive role in ensuring IT is good for society. Working with our communities and sharing our expertise will help to make IT better for society.

Supporting Volunteer Development

We believe that developing ourselves and other volunteers will further our profession and advance our purpose.

Growing our Membership and Community

We believe that as member groups we have a critical role in growing our membership and influence by advocating BCS and professionalism to the wider profession.

3.1 Code of Conduct

In addition to these values we also have the [BCS Code of Conduct](#) for all members to uphold. This defines the characteristics we share as practitioners who are serious about building a responsible computing profession. Adhering to the BCS code of conduct means you show your commitment to working in the public interest - it's the very foundation of our profession.

4 Community

Our community encompasses a wide range of volunteers, people from a diverse range of backgrounds, locations and expertise. From students to retirees, there's something for everyone.

4.1 Branches and Specialist Groups

Our community groups fall into two categories – [local branches and specialist groups](#). Local branches are based in a specific geographical area, they meet and hold events with local IT professionals. As representatives of BCS in their local area they raise awareness of what we do and extend their network through collaboration. Specialist groups are focused on a particular IT specialism. They aim to project our expertise beyond the boundaries of BCS and into the wider IT community. Branches and specialist groups work together in a number of ways, whether that be sharing ideas and expertise or running a joint event. Our Basecamp platform ([see section 6.4](#)) is a great tool to facilitate this collaboration.

Each branch and specialist group committee will be comprised of different roles depending on their needs and focus. However, the following positions are mandatory on all our committees and must be filled by BCS professional members (MBCS):

Chair - Ensures that there is full participation during meetings, that all relevant matters are discussed and that effective decisions are made and carried out.

Treasurer – Has responsibility for the finances of the committee. Keeps track of all the expenditure and completes budgets.

Diversity and inclusion officer – Ensures the committee is run in a way which is inclusive, as well as working on initiatives to diversify the group. This position can be taken on by an existing member of the committee or it can be a separate role.

There are also recommended roles including secretary, early careers representative, education liaison officer, industry liaison, and events co-ordinator.

We do not restrict people to a single role, if you want to hold a position on more than committee *or* take on multiple roles within the same committee, this is permitted.

4.2 Student Chapters

[Student chapters](#) are groups of university students, usually part of a computing (or related subject) society who have chosen to form an association with BCS. We facilitate links with other BCS volunteers and members to find speakers, build their network, run CV workshops and other employability or subject related activities. If your committee want to reach out to a local student chapter just let your co-ordinator know.

4.3 Organisational Members

BCS have a growing number of [Organisational Members](#) (OM) – this is a corporate membership where organisations buy membership for their staff. They do this to inspire self-development, encouraging staff to be part of the professional body delivers engaged individuals who have signed up to the code of conduct. They access standards which is an accreditation of skill to a framework – members in OM’s regularly engage in workshops for [Registered IT technician](#) (RITTech) or [Chartered IT Professional](#) (CITP) and for the Health community – [Federation of Informatics Professionals](#) (FEDIP). Encouraging staff to validate their skills not only raises the bar on what good looks like within the IT industry but encourage CPD and a wider interest in developing their skills.

The difference in being an Individual member and a member through an OM scheme is the motivation for joining. As an individual you’ve already decided how BCS can support your career, however through an OM, your organisation has made this decision and it then becomes our job to help these individuals understand the ways in which BCS can be a valuable part of their career journey. The branch network, our specialist groups and our boards and committees play a vital role in bringing this to life. Offering events, communities and networking that caters for all is crucial to the success. Many of our OM members are young graduates, working parents and senior managers. Life is busy, they can’t always afford the time to visit branch meetings so offering them options on how they reach content is key, as is the type of content on offer. Our OM’s are normally very happy to get involved with the local branch, whether it be to host and event, share knowledge of local events or inspire ideas that would interest their staff. At BCS we feel privileged to be working with some wonderful corporate clients and our BCS Key Account Managers owning these relationships would be more than happy to work with any of our branch networks or volunteers to include our corporate clients in your plans. If your committee want to find out more about OM’s in your area just let your co-ordinator know.

4.4 Collaboration

We encourage partnerships of all kinds, not just with our organisational members. Here are some inspirational ways our volunteers have partnered with other organisations.

- [The Cybercrime Cup](#) an e-sports style hacking tournament for students, is a collaboration between volunteers and staff, run in partnership with BT.

- London North branch held a [discussion with Age UK](#) focused on how technology can support and aging population
- Berkshire Branch [get involved in their community](#) by supporting Teen Tech events and working with the national employment charity, Shaw Trust.

5. Helping you get started

To equip you with the skills and knowledge required for your role on the committee we provide you with some induction information. In addition to this handbook, we have provided [video content and e-learning](#) to help you get started on your volunteering journey with BCS. We recommend that you view the video content as soon as possible and complete the e-learning within the first month of taking on your role.

5.1 Video clips

The [video content](#) gives you an overview of our community and how volunteers help to further the work of BCS. You'll hear from our President, the chair of our Community Board, and members of staff who will be supporting you.

Rebecca George is the BCS President for the year 2020-2021. Her role includes assisting in leading strategy and direction of the Institute by working alongside our CEO and consulting with the Council. The President will be one of the public faces of the Institute speaking on its behalf in public and the media. In her video, Rebecca speaks about:

- The purpose and aims of BCS
- Why volunteers are crucial in helping us to achieve our aims
- Why I volunteer for BCS
- What you can gain from volunteering

Jon Jeffrey is Head of Communities at BCS. Jon works with community board to set the overall strategic direction for our communities and supports the integration of volunteers and members in all BCS activity. In video he covers:

- How BCS staff work with members
- Community spirit in volunteering
- How volunteers support the development of members
- How volunteers contribute to the membership experience
- BCS community values

Alastair Revell chairs the BCS Community Board and works in partnership with our Head of Communities to define the vision for our communities and ensure that community activity is aligned to the BCS strategy. In his video he speaks about:

- Branches, SG's, committees and governance structure
- The role of governance (trustees, council, community board) and how community fit in
- The community strategy

- Why does he volunteer?
- What support they can expect from Alastair and Community Board

Kerry Wear is part of our team of Community Coordinators who support volunteer community activity with all their day-to-day operational work such as funding, event organisation and web updates. In her video she covers:

- The role of a community coordinator
- How we support you
- Who can contact us and how you can get in touch

You will also see two clips from our volunteers to explain why they enjoy volunteering with BCS and some examples of the work they have done.

5.2 E-Learning

General Data Protection Act (GDPR)

This training is an interactive multi-media session which will take you around 30 minutes to complete. Completing this training is essential since we need to ensure the possibility of a data breach is minimised. It will help raise your awareness of the key points of GDPR and the risks you may come across as a volunteer.

The topics covered include:

- What is GDPR
- The key components
- The principles
- The law
- Individual rights
- Security
- Governance

Unconscious Bias

This training is crucial as it helps us to identify any bias which may exist within us, and how to overcome these to increase diversity in the workplace. We want to operate in an inclusive way so that nobody is unintentionally left out of our work.

The topics covered include:

- What is unconscious bias
- Why does it matter
- How are biases formed
- How could unconscious bias show up at work and within BCS
- Identifying your attitudes to diversity differences
- The impact of unconscious bias on BCS
- How can each of us personally make a difference?

5.3 Conventions

We hold member conventions twice a year to bring volunteers together (physically and/or virtually). This is a chance to share ideas about activities for your members, gain updates from BCS and find out how you can align your activities to BCS' strategy. Each committee is allocated two spaces at the event, it is always great to see new faces so if you're interested in attending the next convention then speak to the rest of your committee.

If you are taking on the role of Treasurer, we also hold a 'Treasurer's Day' which covers points including budgeting and completing the key documents for your group. If this applies to you, speak to the rest of your committee or your co-ordinator to find out when the next one is taking place.

6. Tools Used

This section outlines the main tools which will help you in your volunteering role.

6.1 Volunteer Portal

We have a dedicated area hosting many resources for volunteers, known as the [volunteer portal](#). There is a search function on the top right-hand side where you can look up topics of interest. This website is the 'go-to' place to find information related to volunteering with BCS.

6.2 Events

We use [EventBrite](#) for all our community events, including webinars and other virtual events. To get your event set up just provide all the necessary details to your co-ordinators who will create the EventBrite page for you. When they do this, the event will also automatically be added to the [BCS events calendar](#) too.

6.3 Webpages

Each group has a webpage to advertise themselves and their work. These are managed by BCS staff so if any information needs updating please make a request to your co-ordinator.

6.4 Collaboration and document hosting

We also offer [Basecamp](#) for collaborative discussion and document hosting. Features include message boards, to-do lists and a campfire chat so people from other groups can all communicate with each other (and staff join in as well), please feel free to introduce yourself on here. It's a great place to get to know other volunteers, ask questions, share ideas and promote what you've got going on. A video user guide can be found [here](#). As before, if you need further guidance other members of your committee may be able to help, otherwise please contact your group co-ordinator in Swindon.

Some committees use other communication and collaboration tools which meet their needs, there are many platforms available so if there is something which works better for you then feel free to use it.

6.5 Email List Server

We have a list of email addresses for inter-committee communications and email lists for communicating with your members so that you can, for example, advertise events and provide updates on the work of the group. BCS also have generic mailing lists that are used internally for specific roles. If you want to send emails out using these lists speak to the rest of your committee or to your co-ordinator.

6.6 Filming and streaming

A good way to provide increased access to your events is to live stream or record them to be watched later. We have a [YouTube channel](#) which we can upload your content to, and a subscription to [GoToWebinar](#) which will allow you to stream and/or record the event. You can find a GoToWebinar video tutorial, plus tips and further guidance on running an online event or committee meeting [here](#).

6.7 Social Media and Brand Guidelines

Many groups already have social media accounts set up. Facebook and Twitter are the most frequently used. Check with your committee to find out if you already have an account set up and if not, you are welcome to create an account. LinkedIn is also popular with some groups, but if you wish to set up a LinkedIn group please ask your co-ordinator to do this - they will create the group and set the committee up as managers.

You can share social media responsibilities between the committee or allocate this activity to one person, however, please ensure more than one person has the log-in credentials to limit the risk of being locked/stagnant, and please notify your co-ordinator of any accounts which you do set up. When posting on social media and creating advertising material please be aware of the [brand guidelines](#). Promotion of the group is a core group effort so re-tweeting things from your own accounts will also help with publicity.

Remember when taking photographs at events, some people may not wish to appear in these. If anyone does not wish to appear in photographs, then you can either take the photograph from another angle or you can edit the picture to blur them.

6.8 Promotional Materials

As a member and volunteer, you are representing BCS and may come across people who you believe could benefit from BCS membership. The resources below can be used to promote BCS among your networks.

- [About BCS membership](#) slide deck
- [Community flyer \(A5\)](#)

- [An overview of BCS](#) slide deck
- [Community flyer \(A3\)](#)
- [Join BCS leaflet](#)

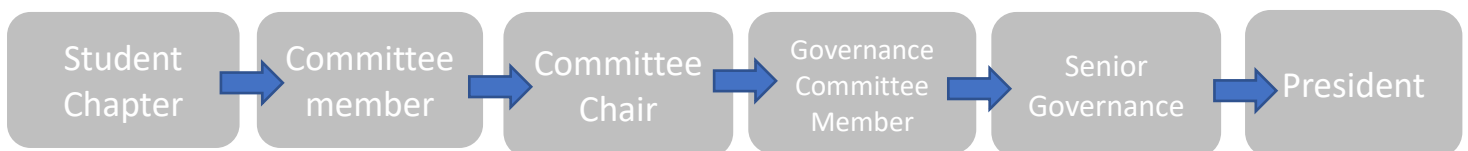
You will meet people at all different stages of life. Existing volunteers have worked with us to create some [persona cards](#). These will help you think about how BCS can support people at different stages of their career journey, and what you can do to help them.

7. Volunteer Progression Pathway

This graphic below shows an example of how you can continue your BCS volunteering journey within the community space. We do not expect our volunteers to necessarily follow this path but, should you wish to, there are opportunities for you to move across into new roles.

We have a variety of volunteering opportunities, from getting involved with a branch or specialist group committee, to [assessing levels of membership](#), or [running workshops](#) with primary school teachers to help them embed the computing curriculum.

As many of our volunteers will say, you get back as much as you give. The more activity you undertake in your volunteering role, the more skills and knowledge you will gain, and the more opportunities you will find. As volunteers contribute their time and effort to BCS, we would like to invest back into our volunteers as well. Therefore, we are also working on building an offering of personal development resources which volunteers would benefit from not only in their role with BCS but also in their wider professional life.



The graphic above illustrates an example of a volunteering journey. It begins with student chapters (see [section 4.2](#)). The next step could be becoming a committee member to support the running of a branch or specialist group and includes roles such as treasurer, secretary, diversity and inclusion officer and education liaison (see [section 4.1](#)). Once a role such as this has been fulfilled, the next step could be leading a group by becoming a chairperson. Following this, there are opportunities on [governance committees](#), contributing to the running of BCS. [Senior governance](#) includes our Trustees and Council. Council acts as the conscience of the Institute, advising and guiding our Trustee Board and holding it accountable against our royal charter, charitable objectives and values. These trustees are elected by BCS Council and are our top-level strategy team. They make decisions on our business plan, budget and chairs of subordinate boards. The President is a Trustee and Chairs the Trustee Board (similar to a non-executive Chair of a company board). The President assists the CEO in leading strategy and direction of the Institute and consulting with the Council.

8. Top Tips

Here are some pointers which you may find useful during your time as a community volunteer.

Accessibility:

When arranging a venue for meetings and events you should consider whether the venue is accessible, ensure parking is adequate and wheelchair access is available. Make sure it has enough space, and furniture, to comfortably accommodate all invitees. Consider whether the venue suitable for confidential discussion if necessary.

Vulnerable Adults, and Children and Young People:

If you plan any work with children and young people, safeguarding is a priority. If you're visiting an educational institution, then check whether they require a DBS check to be carried out. Schools are usually able to run these free of charge for those carrying out volunteer work with their students. If a DBS check is not required, then ensure a member of staff or a parent/carer is always present. Our full children and vulnerable adults protection policy can be found [here](#). If you have any further queries around safeguarding, please contact your group co-ordinator in Swindon.

Mental Health

The health and wellbeing of our volunteers is of utmost importance to us. If you are struggling at any point with a mental health issue and feel able to discuss it with another committee member, they will help you to make arrangements whether that be giving you some extra support or enabling you to temporarily take a break from your duties or giving you some extra support. The mental health charity [Mind](#) has some great resources if you or someone you know is struggling.

Stepping Down:

In the unfortunate circumstance that you find yourself stepping down from the role we ask that you make sure all necessary documents are made available to your committee and that you handover any ongoing work to them. You will also be asked to complete an exit survey at the end of your role which will help us make continuous improvements to our volunteers' experience.

9. Handy Links

Volunteers are extremely important to the functioning of BCS and our [data policy](#) reduces the amount of risk that our volunteers take on during the day-to-day running of their groups.

[Event organisation guidance](#) including a non-disclosure agreement template and details of our London office (room layouts and capacities)

Check our [Finance Guidance](#) which details how to claim expenses

Our [New Beginnings webpage](#) is where you can keep up with the latest activity across the community

Community principles [slide deck](#)

Our [Eventbrite account](#) page shows you the entire range of events we have coming up

10. Contact List

Kerry Wear – Community Co-ordinator – kerry.wear@bcs.uk

Sallyann Cossey - Community Co-ordinator – Sallyann.cossey@bcs.uk

Marie Setterfield - Community Co-ordinator – marie.setterfield@bcs.uk

Mandy Bauer – Events Executive – mandy.bauer@bcs.uk

Community co-ordinators team (this address will contact all the staff named above) - groups@hq.bcs.uk and the team can also be reached at 01793 417 478 and someone will be available between 08:00 and 17:15

Jon Jeffrey – Head of Community – jon.jeffrey@bcs.uk

For matters involving expenses contact the finance Team at ap.finance@bcs.uk

If you would like authors of [our books](#) to speak at your one of your events contact the publishing team at publishing@bcs.uk

11. Testimonials

We hope you find volunteering with BCS a valuable experience. Remember that you get what you give. We asked some of our longer standing volunteers why they got involved and why they continue to contribute to BCS...

“I volunteer with BCS to help the IT community in different ways. I believe in BCS’s mission and consider it my second home”, Soheir Ghallab, IT Consultant, Business Change Specialist Group

“I believe our profession needs people with experience and vision about what ‘good IT’ could be, from professional development and the contribution to society perspective”, Elena Beratarbide, Programme Director of Digital Health and Care Strategy for Scottish Government, BCS Health and Care, Scotland

"I volunteer with BCS to make better links between BCS and higher education, and to encourage more young people into computing careers via STEM and branch events", Jonathan Westlake, Senior Lecturer, Staffordshire University, North Staffordshire Branch

"I volunteer to give back to the community: I've never failed to be surprised at the sheer breadth of our industry and the depth of knowledge and experience in some outstanding applicants. It's also been a pleasure to work closely with some very professional and experienced peers. For anyone considering becoming an assessor, I would recommend it wholeheartedly as an excellent way of giving back to the community and developing personal skills", Roger Fowler, Membership Assessor

"It's easily the best thing I've ever been involved with in terms of challenge, skills and feeling good", Ian Clapshaw, Barefoot Volunteer

"I want to help the industry maintain best practice and ethical standards in what and how we deliver IT for the community", Phil Hopkins, South Wales Branch