



Buxton Civic Association
buxtoncivicasociation.org.uk



Tel: 01298 26978
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Buxton Civic Association Ltd,
Poole's Cavern Visitor Centre,
Green Lane,
Buxton,
Derbyshire,
SK17 9DH

Consultant Brief - Governance/Leadership/Organisational Review

**Buxton Civic Association - Future growth of Buxton Civic Association -
Engaging our community in heritage conservation for a further 60 years:
*A project supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund
(Resilience & Recovery)***

Type of contract: Consultancy / Self Employed

Remuneration: Up to £17,500 (+ VAT) inclusive of travel and other incidental expenses, paid periodically by arrangement.

Background

BCA was formed in 1967 as an environmental charity (Registered Charity 258163), caring about the natural and built environment of Buxton and the local area. The organisation is very much part of Buxton's community; volunteer led, with many successes as part of its proud heritage.

BCA operates Poole's Cavern, Buxton's most popular paying visitor attraction; a SSSI listed cave containing many unique and fascinating features, which has been open to the public since Victorian times. The cave was purchased for the purpose of providing revenue to support the management of the nine historic woodlands which encircle the town, and were gifted to BCA by the Duke of Devonshire for the purpose of enjoyment by the town's residents. Our largest wood, Grinlow Wood, is managed as Buxton Country Park and contains important glades which are SSSI listed. In addition to being a leading visitor attraction, Poole's Cavern is the British Cave Research Centre.

BCA has c750 members, but recognises that maintaining this number faces significant challenges as the supporter base ages. Membership not only provides an engagement opportunity, but also an income stream, although this is relatively minor in comparison to cave admission fees, café income earned via our visitor centre and retail income. BCA has a Trading Company that is limited by guarantee (94439).



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BCA has grown considerably in recent years to the position where we are now a significant landowner and manager with a turnover of over £1 million a staff of c45.

In March 2023, BCA appointed its first Chief Executive, recognising that the leadership of the organisation and the institution's responsibilities was becoming too complex for volunteer trustees to manage alone. Trustees recognise that the post-Covid economic and social environment presents many challenges, a scenario made more concerning because the organisation spent significant amounts of reserves during the pandemic due to receiving no financial support during the enforced closures, unlike many heritage organisations. Changes in volunteering demographics are a concern, as is the cost of living crisis which impacts the leisure pound, however, more positively Buxton is a growing town which values BCA's role and the opportunities it presents its residents for employment and environmental and wellbeing-focused activities.

This is a crucial time of change for BCA as we transition from a relatively small, volunteer led charity to a larger organisation led by a professional team responsible for operational management, working alongside the Board of Trustees. We are looking to expand our membership and greatly increase levels of volunteer engagement. We are conscious that some of our governance structures and working methods are in need of review and modernisation.

We currently have a structure of 6 BCA Groups (previously called Committees) covering the key interests and activities of BCA. These all report to and are ultimately responsible to the Board of Trustees. [The groups are Corporate Affairs, Membership & Communities, Planning, Spaces & Places, Biodiversity and Woodlands,]. Some of these Groups are now too large to be effective decision making bodies, whilst others have dwindled in membership and activity following the problems caused by Covid.

We are looking to enable and encourage the engagement of larger numbers of members and volunteers in the various activities of BCA and revitalise this crucial aspect of our organisation.

The Task

Working closely with the Chair and Chief Executive, supported by our wider board of Trustees, Volunteers, and Employees, the Review Consultant will assess:

- governance
- leadership
- strategy
- organisational structure
- policies and practices.



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The consultant will explore options for improving these, drawing on proven good practice in other voluntary organisations and the current legal obligations for charities.

A key task for the consultant will be to facilitate a workshop to help the Board devise a new strategy to guide the organisations work through the next 15-20 years.

We envisage that the main recommendations on how we work will be explored with the Board through a series of workshops designed to ensure they have fully engaged with the proposals and their implementation. Discussions should have an emphasis on realistic and practical approaches ensuring Buxton Civic Association's robust sustainability.

Particular thought should be given to Board recruitment, succession planning and benchmarking, and accreditation which the organisation may consider to strengthen its status and recognition of its work

In their submissions consultants should specify how many 'In person' facilitated workshops will be delivered as part of the work. All Workshops will be held in Buxton and BCA will arrange and pay for the venue. The consultant will be responsible for writing up the outputs of these workshops.

Detailed recommendations for improvements should be made in an in person presentation to the Board of Trustees in Buxton with an accompanying draft report. BCA will provide comment on these recommendations both in the meeting and subsequently in writing. The consultant will produce a final written report in the light of these comments.

The details of the approach and current challenges will be discussed in detail between the Consultant and the Chair/Director at the interview stage, with further information made available upon appointment.

Our requirements

We are looking for a skilled and experienced heritage consultant to critically analyse the current leadership/organisational model. The consultant must demonstrate in depth experience of working on the organisation and functioning of voluntary and charitable organisations (including the heritage or environmental sectors). The gravitas to speak with authority to longstanding members and volunteers will be a key influence in our appointment. Excellent facilitation skills, combined with sensitivity, empathy, and strict confidentiality will be important character traits in helping our team of Trustees, staff and volunteers make the most of this process and to be able to pursue informed, proactive, practical recommendations which we can then implement, potentially with the future support of the Consultant.

Location and Timings

In order to support close working relationships we anticipate much of this work will take place on site in Buxton, but with other remote contact via Zoom/telephone as appropriate throughout the work.



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Due to the nature of working with volunteers it may be that from time to time some work is needed in the evening, in order to recognise and maximise their availability.

Contacts

The Review Consultant will work most closely with the Chair (Peter Phillipson) and Chief Executive (Dave Green).

In addition, there will be contact with:

The Board of Trustees (up to 15 individuals), and supporting groups (committees which include trustees and BCA members). Committees are currently 'Corporate Affairs Group', 'Membership', 'Planning', 'Woodlands', 'Biodiversity' and 'Spaces and Places'.

Key staff including Business Development Manager, Woodlands Manager, Community Engagement Manager, Visitor Centre Manager, Café Manager, Finance Manager.

Remuneration for the Contract

The total fee will be up to £17,500 plus VAT. Payment will be paid in instalments to be agreed upon appointment.

The Review Consultant will be registered self-employed/employed by their consultancy company and responsible for their own National Insurance and Tax payments as required by HMRC.

Insurance: The Review Consultant will be required to have their own professional indemnity and public liability insurance of £10 Million. We will require proof of these policies and their cover before appointment.

Appointment Process and Timescale

We intend to appoint in March 2024 and anticipate that the work will take approximately 6 months, with the exact timescale and approach to be agreed as part of the appointment process.

Application will be based upon expressions of interest and interview. The expression of interest should include:

- A statement of the strengths and evidence of relevant experience that you will bring to the project
- Details of similar projects completed since 2015 and their relevance to this contract. We would also like to see examples of similar reports produced by the consultants at interview.
- Your proposed methodology including a list of deliverables
- Your proposed timetable for carrying out the work



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- A breakdown of your budget which must include all costs and travel and subsistence and VAT if charged.
- Details of who will carry out the work, their background and experience
- Time allocation and day rates
- If working as part of a team, the details of the lead consultant, who will remain available as the main point of contact throughout the project and who must lead the workshops.

Expressions of interest should be submitted via email to dave.green@buxtoncivicasociation.org.uk in a format of the consultant's choice.

Submissions must be received by 5pm on 22 February 2023.

Invitations to interview will be circulated week beginning 6 March 2023.

Interviews will take place in Buxton week beginning 18 March 2023.

BCA are grateful for the support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund and National Lottery players in funding this work.