BCS Member Group Chair's Report

Member Group Name:	South Yorkshire BCS
Year:	2020
Report Completed By:	Andy Shaw

Group Chair:	Andy Shaw
Group Treasurer:	Martin Beer
Group Secretary:	Eve Barabas
Group Inclusion Officer:	Shahrzad Sargari
Other Committee Members:	Colin Smythe Neil Bizzell Gavin Whitelaw Gavin Callingham Lucian Tipi

The Chair's Report is a vital communication tool for the BCS Community Team to understand and support your activity as a group. The Programme, Practice, and Policy (PPP) Committee will review your submitted report, and suitable action points fed into the Community Board for strategic planning. As one of the critical communication points with our members, your completion of this report supports not only your group but ongoing support and development of other member groups and the BCS itself

Successes

Please list the top three successes the group has achieved in the past year.

Success	Additional Comments
1. Delivered a series of webinars to the BCS community and the general public	Delivered some really interesting webinars in the previous academic year, including a couple of mental health webinars in May 2020, as well as a webinar on software testing in June 2020. These events have encouraged other BCS professionals and the public to attend, including BCS members in Wales and Scotland.
2.Organised a joint visit to Bletchley Park, with computing students from Sheffield Hallam University	A trip to Bletchley Park was organised jointly with computing students from Sheffield Hallam University in November 2019. Positive feedback was provided from the BCS members who attended the trip
3. Our annual Raspberry Pi event, in March before the lockdown, attracted a diverse audience and encouraged more children and young people to take an interest in coding and Raspberry Pis	Despite the lower number of attendees to our Raspberry Pi event in March 2020, due partially due to early COVID-19 concerns, we managed to attract a diverse audience of people, including children and young people, to take an interest in coding and developing projects using a Raspberry Pi.

Plans

Please list the top three activities the group is planning for next year.

Planned Activity	Additional Comments
1. Establishing and maintaining a BCS Student Chapter at Sheffield Hallam University	Establishing a BCS Student Chapter will help the South Yorkshire BCS branch develop a working relationship with the students, as well as encouraging them to develop their careers alongside the BCS, with access to the South Yorkshire BCS branch, as well as specialist groups like the Information Security specialist group to help mentor and guide them. A discussion about setting up the BCS Student Chapter has already taken place.
2. Supporting local and regional events, and sponsoring some events (where possible), to promote the activities of the BCS, as well as the development of the Tech community	Once face to face events resume, we will continue to support and sponsor events that take place in the South Yorkshire region, like Steelcon, Startup Weekend Sheffield, as well as other regional activities to support the wider community, as well as raise the profile of the BCS.
3. Working alongside various BCS branches and specialist groups, including the newly formed Early Careers group (replacing the defunct Young Professionals Group) to help guide Tech professionals in all stages of their careers, with the BCS to guide them.	We are continuing to develop and strengthen our links with other BCS branches and specialist groups, as well as the newly formed Early Careers group, which will bridge the gap between students and Tech professionals in the early stages of their careers. This provides an opportunity to reach out to other professionals, including apprentices and professionals in the early stages of their careers (including those who have retrained, as well as those not necessarily at university).

Impediments

Please list and describe the top three impediments stopping you from succeeding in your group's ambition and support the BCS vision of "Making IT Good for Society."

Impediment	Description
1. Physical events cancelled due to COVID-19	Since the lockdown, due to the COVID-19 pandemic took place, we have cancelled our face to face events and arranged webinars instead. Before the lockdown took place, we have seen a reduced number of attendees at our face to face events in 2020 which was understandably due to the concern of the pandemic.

2. This year, not all committee members were involved with the planning of the branch activities	Not all committee members were involved with the planning of events and activities within the branch, due to different circumstances. This has made it difficult to plan some activities, and contributed to the number of attendees to our events, both face to face and online to be lower.
3. BCS Membership benefits / allure	The membership model doesn't seem as popular as it was a few years ago. We are happy to continue putting on events and raise the profile but more work centrally is needed to retain membership.

Additional Facts and Figures

Please provide any facts and figures you think would be useful to the Community Team for further analysis and future activity planning.

In the last academic year, 2019 to 2020, we hosted 7 events with an average attendance of 27 people, both online and face to face. We had to cancel a face to face event in April 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, however when the pandemic is over, we plan to host both online and face to face events. We saw an opportunity to deliver our events online during the pandemic, including a joint event with the Specialist Interest Group in Software Testing (SIGiST) BCS group. The online events (with 2 mental health webinars and the joint event with SIGiST), attracted an average attendance of 29 people per event.

The online events we have hosted so far have been very well received, with positive feedback from all events, the mental health webinars in particular, which paves the way for more online events and to help promote mental health and wellbeing within the Tech community.

Further Comments

If you have any further comments you wish to provide the Community Team; please give them below.

Nationwide, there has been a decline in BCS membership which has impacted many branches. I shall be speaking to BCS HQ in due course, about which type of members, and demographics are contributing to the decline. The membership has been declining over the last few years. The BCS is currently looking to update their service offering to members, which is being communicated to branch and specialist group chairs, and I am interested in hearing how the South Yorkshire BCS community and the public would like to see how the BCS can develop their service offering.

We at the South Yorkshire BCS branch are planning to increase membership and our involvement within the wider community within the South Yorkshire region. One example is by establishing the BCS Student Chapter at Sheffield Hallam University, and working alongside (where possible) the students within the University of Sheffield BCS Student Chapter. Another way is to encourage more involvement form members that are offered corporate membership through their work.

We are continuing to increase diversity and inclusion within the Tech industry by encouraging people from all backgrounds to develop their careers within the Tech industry, opportunities for education are inclusive to everyone and people from all backgrounds have access to IT facilities that can help them, reducing isolation within the wider community. Examples of how we can achieve this include, supporting and sponsoring (where possible) local and regional events to promote diversity and inclusion, organising events to promote diversity and encourage inclusion and encouraging people to attend our events online (who may not be able to attend face to face otherwise). We will collaborate with other BCS branches and specialist groups, as well as local organisations (where possible) to help us achieve this.

Nominations for Awards and Recognition

It is important that the BCS recognise deserving voluntary service. If you are aware of someone who warrants one of these awards, then please nominate them. It is easy to nominate someone, but, if you are unsure about completing the form, the Community team and your liaison in the Programme, Practice and Policy Committee can help. Please email groups@bcs.uk.

There are three levels of Recognition of Appreciation award:
- Certificate of Appreciation – going beyond the normal expectations of a single voluntary role by directly contributing to significant involvements, achievements or benefits to BCS.
- Meritorious Certificate – going beyond the normal expectations of two or more voluntary roles in different areas of BCS by directly contributing to tangible involvements, achievements or benefits to BCS.
- John Ivinson Award – significantly furthering the BCS's strategic aims and mission on a wide scope of BCS's areas of endeavour by directly contributing significant achievements and benefits to BCS. Typically, the BCS will present this prestigious award to 1-3 volunteers per year.

There are long-service awards for 5, 10, 25, and 30 years of contribution to the BCS.

Volunteer Recognition

Please complete the table below and indicate if you wish to nominate a member of your team for an award of recognition. A member of the Community Team will get in touch to help you complete the process.

Group/Branch Member	Years of BCS Volunteering	Nomination
Martin Beer	15	Meritorious Certificate

Honorary Fellowship

Nominees will have made an outstanding contribution to the charitable objectives of the BCS over an extended period.

The BCS award Honorary Fellowship under Byelaw 8 of the BCS's Royal Charter and Trustee Board Regulation 1.3 specifies that the BCS award may also make the award to non-members who may not be eligible for any other class of membership.

Community Board and Trustee Board will consider a candidate for Honorary Fellowship against the following criteria:

- At any time, both the contribution to BCS's work and the stature of the individual nominated should be commensurate with the standards set by previous recipients. There is no overall limit to the number of Honorary Fellows although it is unlikely that there will be more than two Honorary Fellows elected in any one year.
- To be elected, the nomination must be on the Trustee Board Agenda, and at least 3/4 of those present must resolve in favour.

If you are aware of a nominee for Honorary Fellowship; please add their details below and a member of the Community Team will raise this at the next appropriate meeting of the Community Board.