

Yohanna Weber



Please give details of all diving industry related interests, whether remunerated or not, and any other potential conflicts of interest

I am currently a co-opted Council member of BSAC, having been appointed in November 2022. I have no potential conflicts of interest.

What do you think are the key challenges facing BSAC, and what should we be doing to address them?

In my previous application I identified BSAC's challenges as continued growth of the organisation, and the difficulties posed by the perception of diving as an expensive activity that wealthy people do in exotic locations. I remain of the view that growing and sustaining membership in times of economic uncertainty will continue to be a challenge for the foreseeable future, and it is essential that BSAC continues to relentlessly disrupt the common perception of diving as a 'bucket list activity'. We are totally unique as a broad church organisation providing a community of divers and snorkellers who can still enjoy their sport without getting in the water. Diving must be seen as an inclusive, accessible, affordable and perennial pursuit.

My experience with BSAC since joining in late 2022 has confirmed that this is indeed a key challenge – but moreso that the bigger challenge is winning and retaining members long-term, and achieving the financial security that is vital to facilitate future growth and innovation.

My view is that the approach to this issue, of raising profile but in the right places and to the right audiences, requires looking at the issue in several different ways. Obviously, segmenting potential audiences into youth, BAME, women etc and targeting marketing at groups such as GirlsthatScuba is essential. However, we also need 'sticky' members, and the corporate/private sector offers great opportunities to reach captive new audiences. For example, partnering with providers of corporate benefits in the private sector (law firms, banks, financial firms

etc) to offer discounted membership or salary sacrifice through employee benefits programmes in the same way as gym memberships. BSAC could also offer 'try dive/snorkel' days as corporate team-building exercises. As well as being a 'health and wellbeing' benefit for employers and employees, this angle unlocks a more affluent pool of potential members for BSAC and would help to generate new income that could support brand development in more niche areas such as international partnering. This is simply one example - I believe that BSAC has the people and the skills to meet these challenges in novel ways and turn them into opportunities.

Please describe how you would contribute to any / all of these areas

As a solicitor specialising in planning and environmental law for 20 years I have a proven track record in strategic planning and risk management. I am required to maintain a clear and consistent focus on day-to-day matters such as subject matter and industry developments, commercial risk and governance, while maintaining a strategic picture of clients' long-term objectives and developmental goals. My experience in delivering accurate and high-quality legal advice and strategy translates into excellent problem-solving abilities, a well-balanced approach to risk management, and highly-developed communication skills, with the ability to weigh diametrically opposed viewpoints and broker deals whilst also having the confidence to make judgment calls where required. For the past year I have also been acting as a non-executive director for a clean energy start-up, assisting them with insights into market contexts and stakeholder management to build their business case and profile. This has given me experience in governance matters, brand development for the new business and inputting into business case proposals to prospective lenders.

I should also add that I bring an international perspective to my outlook, having emigrated to London from Australia in 2008. My brother is a member of BSAC Brisbane and I travel extensively as part of my job and for leisure. I regularly dive overseas. I am passionate about expanding the international reach of BSAC overseas as I believe it is unique and unrivalled in offering more than just diving – it is a truly holistic community with a sense of belonging, and I believe there are fantastic opportunities to export this.

Personal statement

I completed my open water diving certification many years ago in my native Australia, before moving to the UK. I have only recently returned to diving and joined BSAC after befriending an instructor at my club at Holborn; but I have enjoyed it so much that I am going to obtain my Sports Diver qualification (hopefully!) at the Pharoah Dive Club in Egypt in May 2023. Being a Council

member for BSAC gives me the opportunity to indulge in two things I am passionate about - the great outdoors, and building successful businesses. I have also mentioned in this application that BSAC needs to continue to raise its profile - despite being in the UK since 2008 it was only late last year that I returned to diving. Having re-discovered it and been deeply awed by the amazing BSAC community, I am excited about the possibilities for expanding the reach and profile of BSAC - continuously improving on its user experiences, and innovating new ways to promote the fun, fascinating, safe and environmentally-friendly sport of diving in the UK and overseas. I am keen to 'give back', to help BSAC share that message with others, and I believe that I have a skillset that can help to shape and deliver the growth of BSAC in a financially sustainable way. I very much hope that I can continue on the Council and build on the knowledge and experience I have gained so far.