

Richard Pettifer



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

I am an active member and currently Chair of London #1 Branch. I have no commercial interests in diving and no real or potential conflicts of interest.

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

There are three specific challenges that I wish to highlight: the challenge to the amateur club model, the challenge from other agencies, and the need to continually refresh the membership.

BSAC is a member led, not for profit organisation. This is becoming more difficult to sustain, the 'pay to play' approach is becoming more popular in society generally as it requires less commitment and provides greater flexibility for people who are prepared to pay. However, the amateur club model is more encompassing and has many benefits. Key to success is explaining these and encouraging members to participate fully and contribute to their club. This is a never-ending task and therefore should be at the heart of everything BSAC does.

Secondly, there are challenges from other diving organisations, and PADI in particular is becoming both dominant and assertive. BSAC, though has a very clear place in this crowded arena. BSAC will not be the agency of choice for occasional holiday divers, but it should be for those wanting to be part of a wider community, develop their diving skills and undertake more serious diving, in particular in UK waters. But BSAC must work hard to continue to be able to differentiate and to explain the 'BSAC way.' BSAC also needs to be open and welcoming to divers who may have started to dive with other agencies but now want to take their diving to a different level.

Finally, BSAC needs to replace members who retire from diving, so being attractive to younger members is crucial. Among other things this means having a younger mindset, for example social issues such as climate change, conservation, the cost-of-living crisis, and diversity & inclusion may affect everyone but are often more important to younger people. BSAC must be engaged in the diving related aspects of issues such as these.

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

I started diving in 2006, initially training with PADI and mostly diving in warm water locations. I joined BSAC in 2021 because I wanted to develop my diving skills and undertake more UK diving. I am now a BSAC Dive Leader and diver coxswain, and I am currently working to becoming an open water instructor. I am also chair of BSAC London no.1 club.

Professionally I am a Chartered Accountant. I qualified in 1987 and worked initially in audit and accounting with a large accounting firm (E&Y). I then spent about 16 years with another large firm, (KPMG) as a consultant, working mainly with banks and investment companies. This included 2 years living in the UAE and several other assignments abroad. After leaving KPMG I spent a further 10 years working directly for banks investment firms and my final job was in a management role for a specialist investment company. During my career I gained significant experienced of working on accounting, finance, risk, people, IT, and operational matters at senior levels.

I retired at the end of 2023 and now feel I have the enthusiasm, the time, and the skills to take on this position. I am well aware that BSAC is very different to many of the companies for which I have worked in my professional career, but I understand what BSAC is about, and I feel confident that I can adjust to this.

Apart from being a member of BSAC I am also a member of the RYA, two sailing clubs and two motorcycle clubs. I also have a season ticket for a lower division football team. I am a qualified RYA Yachtmaster, I was Treasurer for two years and then Commodore for three years, of a large sailing club. I live in Kilburn, London. I am married and have four grown-up children.

I feel very well placed to engage and contribute in many of the areas you have identified, in particular the finance related areas such as governance, financial management and fund raising but also other sports bodies, other diving training agencies and international business development.

Personal statement

I started diving in 2006 and I have loved the sport ever since. Diving can bring a sense of wonder and of discovery as well as excitement and challenge. It is also a social activity, through diving I have met people from all walks of life, made new friends and visited new places. I am passionate about diving, and I want the sport to be secure but also and to grow and thrive so that more people can enjoy it and the way of life that comes with it.

I also believe very strongly, in the club structure and amateur model that BSAC operates. Whilst there is a place for commercial operators, I fundamentally believe that activities like diving are better managed and provided by people whose primary motivation is the love of their sport rather than the generation of a profit. Not only does this keep help the costs down and so keep the sport accessible but it also creates ambassadors for the sport.

I have 40 years of working as a chartered accountant and I retired at the end of 2023. I now have the time to further develop my diving but also to actively engage, give something back and hopefully help the sport to grow and thrive. I am already trying to do this at club level, but I believe that I can do more and I am very pleased to be able to offer my professional skills and experience to BSAC as Honorary Treasurer. I would be very grateful for your support.