

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**2022**

Time: 18:30 Tuesday 20 September 2022, doors open 18:15

Venue: Conway Hall

25 Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL

Chair: Nicholas Jarrold

Present: A signing in sheet will be provided at the meeting

Apologies Nicholas Auger

Attachments BCS Annual Report 2021.

**AGENDA**

Item	Action
1. To endorse AGMs 2020 & 2021: Covid Regulations prohibited physical AGMs in 2020 and 2021. Both were conducted by email assent where an opportunity was provided for comments and objections to the AGM business. There being no objections by the due date the business of both AGMs was deemed approved by Society members. The papers for these AGMs are on the web pages.	
2. Report on the year 2021 and 2022 first half	
3. Membership Report	
4. Accounts	
5. Appointment of Trustees and Committee Members	
6. AOB	

The persons named below were re-appointed by email assent through the 2021 virtual AGM. New committee members are always welcome.

**Trustee Committee Members**

Boris Marelić	Peter Elborn
David Davison	Robert Dolata
Flora Turner	Suzanna Dolata
Nicholas Jarrold	Tony Brand
Paul Jenc	Željka Tomljenović (based in Zagreb)

**Committee Members**

Alan Wilding  
Nicholas Auger  
Snježana Maclean  
Tihana Borovčak  
Lana Đurđa  
Joined Committee in February 2022:  
Chelsea Ljutić

There will be an informal Social meeting after the AGM.

## ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021 AND 2022 first half

The following are links to BCS policies, Rules, Memorandum and Articles of Association:

- [Cttee Roles, Policies & Risk Mgmt](#)
- [Mem Articles & Rules](#)
- [Action between Committee meetings](#)

This report for the AGM 2022 covers 2021 and 2022 up to September. Any updates to this report will be available before the AGM.

### 1. BRITISH-CROATIAN SOCIETY 2021

*Peter Elborn Events organiser reports:*

For all of us 2021 was another unusual year. The British-Croatian Society, like every organisation, has had to adapt to the restrictions imposed. We reminded ourselves of the mission statement to guide us through the difficult times:

*The British-Croatian Society is an apolitical, independent registered charity whose objectives are to foster the development of good and friendly relations between the peoples of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Croatia and in particular to promote a better understanding and appreciation of Croatia in Britain.*

At the beginning of 2021 we held a number of meetings through zoom. The first featured Helen Maling with the extraordinary story of her rediscovery of the journey made by her father during the Second World War. Her father was in the RAF. When he was shot down over Yugoslavia, he was rescued by partisans. Heather researched the journey he then made leading to an area where RAF planes could land and take him back to the UK. In her talk **From Klanjec to Vocin**. Heather described the route she had followed that had been taken by her father and made friends with people along the way.

Aurelia Young's talk on zoom, **More Garbage Your Ladyship**, delighted us with stories from her time as the wife of the prominent MP George Young. The title came from her time as a councillor on Lambeth Council. During a strike by dustmen, Aurelia and her husband went out and helped move the rubbish.

Bojan Bujić also spoke on zoom with a talk entitled **Rudjer Bosković, Dinko Ranjina and a book of poetry in the Bodleian Library in Oxford**. This was a fascinating account of a book of poetry by Dinko Ranjina, who was born and died in Dubrovnik. He travelled to Florence where he wrote extensively in both Croatian (about 450 poems) and Italian (about 30 sonnets) including *Pjesni razlike*, the book in the library in Oxford that was the subject of Dr Bujic's talk. Surprisingly the Oxford copy of the book was also seen by Rudjer Bosković.

Exploring British-Croatian was another way of keeping the Society active during lockdown with a collection of short videos featuring different aspects of what it means to be both British Croatian. The videos have been made accessible through the news section of our website.

We returned to life events in November 2021 when Igor Pokaz, the Croatian Ambassador in London, talked about his time so far in the UK. It was not, of course, a normal year for a diplomat anywhere, but he believed the Croatia-UK relationship was in good health. Although the Ambassador was pleased that British tourists started to return to Croatia in 2021, a disappointment was the continuing low level of trade between the two countries.

The launch of *calendarCroatia* 2022 at the embassy brought a party spirit back to our programme of events. The calendar features 25 beautiful and varied photographs from the many photographs submitted. The calendar, together with a wider selection of photographs, can be seen on our website.

As usual, the British-Croatian Society promoted events taking place in the UK that would be of interest to members of the Society and worked closely with AMAC.

## **2. 2022 FIRST HALF**

When restrictions were lifted in February 2022 events resumed with larger numbers present, though this was too late for an intended Social gathering to start 2022.

In March we held an interesting panel discussion about what it means to be “British Croatian” in the context of a video presentation made in 2021. Then in May there was a rescheduled talk about the operation of the British Council office in Zagreb from the early 1950s until modern times.

## **3. COMMITTEE**

*Robert Dolata Secretary reports:*

We are always looking for new committee members.

Our AGM and outdoor social event booked for 24 June 2021 was cancelled at short notice when the government road map out of Covid was extended. There followed a brief return to physical events with reduced numbers in November and December 2021. When Omicron arrived for Christmas, events were halted again.

As in 2020, our 2021 AGM proceeded by email exchange, with the Committee names rolled forward. During 2021 the Committee met by Zoom in March, May and September. Our process for urgent and important decisions to be made by the Chair in email consultation with Committee members helped the Society’s business to continue.

Besides the events programme described by Peter Elborn, the Committee approved £500 from BCS funds towards earthquake repairs at the Zagreb Archaeological Museum plus a wider appeal to the membership. Immediately after the earthquake BCS circulated and encouraged, especially through social media, humanitarian aid donations to organisations established and operating on the ground. The earthquake concert raised £1,000.

During 2022 the Committee met by Zoom in February. A physical Committee meeting planned for May / June was deferred because of commitments. Nevertheless our events programme continued and we allocated provisional funds for a Vesna Hardy event (£500), a

summer translation school at the University of East Anglia (£500) and a historic map print gift to the Cultural Attaché Tomislav Vlahutin who leaves in July for a new assignment after giving us 6 years of invaluable support from the Embassy.

#### 4. CONTINUITY DURING THE COVID EMERGENCY

During the Covid emergency we moved our programme on line from March 2020 and continued with on line events and information. In November 2021 meetings resumed cautiously with restricted numbers when permissible. Despite this membership held up and the financial position remains good. We supported earthquake repairs in Croatia.

The AGM scheduled for Thursday 24 June 2021 at 18:30 was cancelled following government announcements extending Covid Restrictions until no earlier than 19 July 2021, in particular limits on meetings: indoors 6 persons, outdoors 30 persons.

AGM 2021 papers are available on the web:

- [Agenda](#)
- [Accs 2020 draft](#)
- [Annual Report 2020 draft](#)

An opportunity was given for comments on the AGM Agenda by Wednesday 14 July 2021

Since no objections by that date the business of the AGM: Minutes, Accounts and Annual Report were deemed agreed the virtual Society and that the Committee Members named on the Agenda were rolled forward for 2021 with new Committee members most welcome to put their names forward.

In 2020 the BCS Committee announced cancellation of the AGM scheduled on 11 March 2020 ahead of lockdown which started on 23 March 2020. An opportunity was given for comments AGM business by 25 March 2020. As no comments were received the AGM: Minutes of AGM 2019, Accounts and Annual Report were deemed agreed by the Society.

#### 5. MEMBERSHIP

Our numbers are static, with 184 subscriptions representing 241 members. In last period 20 renewed and 11 lapsed. There is a core membership, and those who join for a year or two, and are replaced. Membership includes couples, and family groups. There are members in Canada.

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	22	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15
Number of subscriptions:		184	184	180	173	125	123	114	97
Number of individuals:		241	244	239	224	168	165	148	128

## **6. FINANCE**

Finance: £2,800 Bank, £3,500 pay pal. Our Commitments are £935.

Our subscription rates remain unchanged. Details are on the web page

The accounting year runs from 1 April to 31 March. Our accounts are registered with Companies House, and available on the BCS web site.

## **7. POLICIES**

Policies on: Funding Decision Making, Risk Management, Data Protection, Safeguarding vulnerable persons and children and Decisions between Committee meetings were rolled forward in 2021 and are available on the web pages.

## **8. SAFEGUARDING**

Sanja Huković replaces Stefania Grbčić who moved to Croatia, as our qualified safeguarding officer. This is a named responsibility for protecting young and vulnerable people in contact with the Society, to whom any concerns should be reported.

## **9. COMMUNICATIONS**

Our website has entries under the Cultural Croatia programme of virtual events held under Covid restrictions. It also carries announcements, details for charity giving, and formal information such as reports, our Objectives, Policies, Rules and much more.

Events are available on line. We considered hybrid events combining live and streamed but these require skilled input such as camera operators to present successfully.

Social media – Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram reaches over 2,400 followers with announcements about our events and matters of interest to Croatians. It proved especially important for immediate information about the Earthquake in December 2020 including details for donations.

## **10. PATRONS**

Robin Harris, Andrija Kojaković, Sir John Ramsden, Sir Nicholas and Lady Jackson.

## 11. TRUSTEES & COMMITTEE

New committee members are always welcome.

### Trustee Committee Members

Boris Marelić	Peter Elborn
David Davison	Robert Dolata
Flora Turner	Suzanna Dolata
Nicholas Jarrold	Tony Brand
Paul Jenc	Željka Tomljenović (based in Zagreb)

### Committee Members

Alan Wilding  
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Tihana Borovčak  
Lana Đurđa

Joining the Committee in February  
2022:  
Chelsea Ljutić

## 12. CONCLUSION

The Committee is pleased to report that the Society maintained a presence during the pandemic, though mainly on line. Our charitable activities continued through donations for earthquake relief, and cultural support

Now Coronavirus has abated we are returning to a physical programme of events. The committee watches the health situation and will call on our professional epidemiological contact for advice as we did in March 2020.

As we move into the second half of 2022 we cannot predict yet the impact of Inflation on our activities. It is a new challenge and we will need to consider how we retain and grow our membership, run attractive events while providing value for money as costs increase.

As always we welcome new members to the British Croatian Society, and volunteers to the committee. Information about roles and committee activities is on the web site. Our events are mainly free of charge to those attending, so please come along, introduce yourself, and find out more about the Society.

For further information, please go to: [www.britishcroatiansociety.com](http://www.britishcroatiansociety.com)