



Annual Report: 2020

1. Administrative Details

1.1 - Name of National Committee: United Kingdom National Committee of the Blue Shield

1.2 - Date Report Completed: 22/03/2021

1.3 - Reporting period covered: January 2020-December 2020

1.4 - Names, positions and emails

Chair: Professor Peter Stone (January – September 2020) – Peter.stone@ncl.ac.uk

Fionnuala Rogers (September 2020 – ongoing) - Fionnuala@canvasartlaw.art

Other Trustees:

James Ratcliffe james.ratcliffe@artloss.com

Ian Barnes ian.barnes@nationaltrust.org.uk

Suzanna Joy Suzanna.Joy@arup.com

Secretary:

Emma Cunliffe Emma.cunliffe@ncl.ac.uk

1.5 - Address of the main office:

School of Arts and Cultures, Armstrong Building, Newcastle University, Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK

1.6 - Website and social media (if applicable):

Website: <http://ukblueshield.org.uk/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ukblueshield>

Twitter: @UKBlueShield

1.7 – Email the Blue Shield email should forward to:

Emma.cunliffe@ncl.ac.uk

2. Income:

What is the total income of your committee? What are the primary sources? (Donations, grants, etc?)

£0

3. Report of Activities: Achievements & Performance

Explain the activities & projects carried out over the year under the Areas of Activity

The annual report should tell the story of the organisation and put into context what was achieved in the reporting year against the achievement of its longer-term strategy. The annual report under this section should Provide a clear review of the organisation's performance for the relevant year as well showing how the current year's strategic performance links to the achievement of the longer-term strategy of the organisation.

These could include: grants applied for; talks given; conferences held; training courses run; work to support new legislation; working groups attended, etc.

Please provide as much detail as possible – for example, length of event, audience, and so on.

3.1 - Law, policy development and implementation:

This was the highest priority for the committee in 2020.

Strategic Plan 1.4] Encourage & support better UK implementation of the 1954HC

- This was realised primarily through PGS's attendance at the Cross-Government CPP Working Group and links with the Civil Service and politicians.
- UK Blue Shield submitted a paper to a UK government Call for Evidence for an 'Integrated Review of foreign policy, defence, security and development' on the importance of the Hague Convention. The government's final report, and Submission, are available here: <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/225/the-fco-and-the-integrated-review/publications/>

1.5] Act as a source of advice and support in the UK re. illicit trafficking

- UK Blue Shield submitted a paper to a Call for Evidence for the UK government consultation on opening freeports in the UK: <http://ukblueshield.org.uk/ukbs-responds-to-freeports-call-for-evidence/>. Given the UK government seem determined to implement freeports, the submission assumed they would go ahead, and advised on how to mitigate the risks (such as creating havens for illicit trafficking), and on key legislation that UK freeports would need to comply with. It also referred to key reports by other organisations, such as UNESCO. UKBS

also offered training and guidance in these key areas if required. The Government consultation response indicated it does not intend to take any additional measures.

UKBS

- assisted the Metropolitan Police in investigations: this work is confidential, but UKBS continue to be recognised as a credible authority and source of information related to the illicit trafficking of CP from conflict zones.
- contributed to a BBC investigation about Gaza: BBC. (2020). The Hunt for Gaza's Lost Treasure: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000f3l4>
- supported the BBC in an investigation by BBC News Arabic, which found that Russian oligarch, Roman Abramovich, controls companies that have donated \$100m to an Israeli settler organisation. Our involvement related to advising on international law on the legality of excavations and use of cultural property during conflict/under occupation. See here for the full story: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-middle-east-54237970>
- The Chair of UKBS, Fionnuala Rogers, and member Neil Brodie, agreed to be on the BSI Illicit Trafficking Working Group (initial mandate 1 year).

Other

- Jan 2020: UKBS issued a statement on potential specific targeting of cultural sites in Iran: <http://ukblueshield.org.uk/ukbs-statement-on-potential-specific-targeting-of-cultural-sites-in-iran/>

3.2 - Education, training, and capacity building:

Strategic Plan 2.1] Support the MoD in the development of the UK's CPP capability

- UKBS has continued to develop strong links with the British Army Cultural Property Protection Unit, who attend UKBS meetings. UKBS members also attend British Army CPP meetings.

2.2] Host/co-host at least one conference/workshop/event per annum with identified key partner/s

- Planning was underway for possible events with ICOM-UK, and with the British Army, but these were not possible due to Covid. Planning is now underway for an event in 2021, in partnership with the MoD.

2.3] Investigate potential of on-line peer-reviewed publications

- No progress made; ongoing

2.4] Deliver at least 6 public/student lectures

- Members of the committee gave two public lectures, and several members of the Committee lectured student courses (Sotheby's Summer School, and MA courses at Durham and Newcastle Universities)

3.3 - Proactive protection and risk preparedness:

See [2.2 Host/co-host at least one conference/workshop/event] above

3.1] Support BSI's work developing and delivering training and educational materials for the heritage sector and armed forces

- No work was undertaken in this area due to Covid.

Other

- The committee created a climate change group, but they were unable to meet in the latter half of the year due to Covid. However, the COP 26 climate change event (to be held in the UK in 2020) was postponed to 2021, so it is hoped work will resume to link to that event in November 2021.

3.4 - Emergency response in disaster, domestic emergencies, and armed conflict:

This is considered a low priority activity for UKBS.

Strategic Plan 6.1] Consider building a relationship with Team Rubicon [a disaster response organisation]

- On hold due to Covid.

3.5 - Stabilisation, post-disaster recovery, and long-term/ongoing support:

This is considered a low priority activity for UKBS.

Strategic Plan 5.1] Encourage HMG & Historic England better to support Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies

- See 1.4

Other

- UKBS supported the British Army Cultural Property Protection Unit in sourcing cultural property data for a stabilisation deployment; ultimately no additional data was available.

3.6 - Co-ordination (of Blue Shield and with other relevant organisations):

Strategic Plan 4.1] Establish UKBS as a Charity

4.2] Continue to review and implement corporate / charitable legal compliance

- The key goal for UKBS in 2020 was the attainment of charitable status. UKBS agreed its charitable principles, and began the paperwork, which will be submitted in 2021.

4.3] Develop fundraising strategy

- UKBS began development of a fundraising strategy to achieve its longer-term goals.

4.3] Maintain quarterly meetings of UKBS and partner organisation guest speaker programme

- Only three meetings were held in 2020 due to Covid; the guest speaker programme was suspended, but will resume in 2021.

4.4] Attend 2020 Blue Shield General Assembly, and other Blue Shield events as the opportunity arises

- Two members of UKBS attended the virtual General Assembly

4.5] Continue to build relationships with the National Trust, and other partners as opportunities arise

- Ongoing, but largely on hold due to Covid.

4.4] Review UKBS membership to cover all aspects of heritage

- Ongoing

4.5] Widen UKBS representation from Scotland, N Ireland, Wales and the Channel Islands**4.6] Support better coordination regarding CPP in Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies**

- These were put on hold due to Covid.

4. Main issues faced:

COVID proved a significant barrier, preventing numerous meetings, and preventing the events with the British Army and ICOM UK.

In addition, the committee struggles with a lack of funding.

5. Future goals

The key goals for the committee are

- to achieve charitable status; paperwork is expected to be submitted in 2021.
- To develop and implement a fundraising strategy.
- To host at least one event with the British Army, and others if the opportunity arises.
- To continue to provide advice and support regarding implementation of the 1954 Hague Convention and prevention of illicit trafficking.

6. Other

Through its connection to Newcastle University, BSI is sometimes able to access funding that can be shared with research institutions to further the work of Blue Shield. Does your national

committee have any connections with research institutions interested in its work (e.g. in risk management, heritage protection, etc.). If yes, please supply the names and contact details here.

Professor Peter Stone and Dr Emma Cunliffe, Newcastle University