bcs The Chartered Institute for IT

BCS Digital Accessibility Specialist Group

Minutes Committee Meeting 16/07/15

1 Attendance

Present:

- David Rippon (chairman)
- Peter Abrahams (secretary)
- Graham Collins
- E. A. Draffan
- Peter Dudley
- Mark Evely
- Jean Irvine
- Suzette Keith
- Howard Leicester
- Claire Milne
- Robert Streeter
- Sue Shoesmith
- Ray Waddington-Jones

Apologies:

- Dan Ballinn
- Rob Barrett
- Peter Bayley
- Howard Bryan
- Jay Doyle
- Jon Buttriss
- Catherine Catton
- Ricci Downard

- Jeff Hughes
- Alasdair King
- Nigel Lewis
- Joe Manock
- Geoff McMullen
- Gill Whitney

2 Minutes of last meeting

Minutes accepted.

3 How to influence the BCS – D. Evans

David Evans, BCS Director, Policy & Community, joined at 2:15 by tele conference.

He had been invited following correspondence between him and DR which was discussed at the DASG meeting 15 April 2015.

DE started by stating his views:

- Specialist Groups normally spend their time organising events and papers about their specialist interest.
- DASG is unique in spending time trying to influence how the BCS is run.
- DASG would be more successful in influencing the BCS if it did more external facing work.
- He recognised the passion of the people involved in accessibility.

The DASG members at the meeting then expressed their views:

- DASG is now organising external events including: the PARN Conference, Digital Accessibility in Higher and Further Education Conference and the Unconscious Bias Concerning People with Disabilities Position Paper (all discussed below).
- DASG includes members with disabilities so it is impossible for the issues they have with the BCS to be ignored by the committee.
- DASG is aware of other members of the BCS with disabilities who are unable to to fully participate because of accessibility issues.
- Issues with accessibility at the BCS include the website, publications and SFIA.
- Some Committee members said they were ashamed to be a member of a professional body with such a poor stance on accessibility.
- Members of the committee, especially those in education, are keen to promote the BCS as an organisation but they are reluctant to promote it to people with

disabilities as they know that the BCS will not be accessible for such people.

- The BCS is the Institute for IT and should be an exemplar of good practise.
- There is a legal obligation on the BCS to be accessible and therefore there is a real reputational risk.
- The DASG is running two accessibility events and it is an embarrassment that the events may not be accessible. For example the enrolment process has been tested by AbilityNet and found not to be fully accessible.
- SFIA should have accessibility integrated into the syllabus and its implementation.

DE responded by saying:

- He was aware of the issue with enrolment and understands that it is being investigated.
- Robin Christopherson, from AbilityNet, has presented to the BCS staff about accessibility.
- He encouraged DASG to highlight accessibility issues in other professional bodies but felt that it is counter-productive for us to raise similar concerns within the BCS.
- BCS Membership are developing four campaigns which will be announced in September. When these are announced there is an open invitation for DASG to be involved.
- Accessibility issues should be reported to customer care.
- DASG should contact Justin Robin, Head of BCS Healthcare, and offer our help.
- Thanked us for our time and input and is happy to follow up in the future.

4 PARN Conference – Update – J. Irvine

The conference: IT Accessibility in Professional Bodies; in conjunction with the Professional Association Research Network

Date: Wednesday 23 September 2015

Time: 2.00pm - 5.00pm

Venue: BCS Southampton Street, London

Full details on the BCS website: http://www.bcs.org/content/ConWebDoc/54603

The agenda has been finalised.

A set of questions about disabilities of members has been sent to the 150 PARN Organisations.

The conference accommodate 60 pax

BCS attendees: JI, DR, trustees, staff, any DASG member.

It will be advertise to BCS members but the emphasis will be to get PARN Organisations to attend.

A Special Interest Group will be set up to allow further follow up from the conference.

5   HE/FE Conference – Update – G. Whitney

The conference: Digital Accessibility in Higher and Further Education

Date: 7 April 2016

Venue: BCS Southampton Street, London

Details at http://www.bcs.org/content/ConWebDoc/54605 .

SK deputised for GW and said: the committee has created a new agenda and asked for it to be distributed to the DASG membership for comment

The conference will be able accommodate 170.

They are considering a small charge of £50.

They are interested in finding further high profile speakers.

NL by email:

My only comment would be that it might be worthwhile thinking of how the new IAAP certification programme would/could fit into this agenda.

GMc by email:

You may recall that I tried a couple of times last year to engage with the BCS Academy, but failed. I think this conference could work to our advantage in one way, and maybe not help internal relations in another.

It could help because sharing this plan with the Academy board could excite some collaboration; and it might not work to our advantage if they find out about it late and see us as invading their academic territory.

If DASG decides to go ahead, I think we should share the news of the plan with Dr Mitchell, director for the academy, and Professor Jeff Magee , Dean of Engineering at Imperial, who is the V-P for the Academy. I'll be happy to provide the channel of communication in each case, if needed.

Action PA: Distribute new agenda (done).

Action GMc: contact Mitchell and Magee.

6   Unconscious Bias – P. Abrahams

DR, GMc and PA developed a paper on 'Unconscious bias concerning people with disabilities'. It has been accepted as a BCS position statement. It is available on the BCS website in HTML and in accessible PDF format at http://policy.bcs.org/position_statements/unconscious-bias-concerning-people-disabilities .

It will be included in the Unconscious Bias training being carried out at the BCS. Judith Taylor runs the training and sent her thanks for the statement.

Action PA: arrange for links

7 Women in IT campaign – can we learn from it? – P. Abrahams

PA: The BCS ran a successful Women in IT campaign see http://www.bcs.org/category/18380 .

Should we set up a similar 'BCS Accessibility in IT campaign'? To include interviews with people who: benefit from accessible IT, create and promote digital by default and accessibility, are IT professionals and have a disability.

We could use the PARN and the FE conference as sources of interviewees.

The meeting was broadly in favour but needs to find out more about the practicalities and process to set it up.

Action PA: to investigate how to do it.

8 LonDIN – P. Abrahams

(https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/londin/londin-londons-digital-inclusion-network?utm_content=buffere21f7&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer)

London Digital Inclusion Network. Getting all kids involved with Digital. Though the name include inclusion it does not seem to have much to do with disability. Could we help. ITCH etc.

This was not discussed and was postponed to next meeting.

9 BCS web site and document accessibility – P. Abrahams

Based on last meeting decision that we should try and do things rather than complain about the BCS we have not followed up on any website accessibility. This was discussed with David Evans (see above).

It was noted that:

- There were entries in the BCS Newsletters about Healthcare Accessible Information Standard (AIS) (8 July), and Accessibility for ICT Professionals Linkedin Group (15 July).

- The position paper will be mentioned in a future newsletter.

- Abilitynet tested the enrolment procedure for the HE/FE Conference and David Evans said that the concerns were being investigated.

10 Representation on Membership Board Committees – P. Abrahams

PA is now a member of the Best Practice Committee and will attend the first meeting 20 August.

11 BCS Academy – G. McMullen

GMc sent his apologies and the item was postponed to next meeting.

12 Turing Lecture – G. McMullen

GMc sent his apologies and the item was postponed to next meeting.

13 Road Shows – Creation of Accessible Documents – P. Abrahams

There has been no take up of PA's offer to run a roadshow on this subject. He will raise it at the Best Practice Committee.

As a first step he has written a short article on the issue on his business website http://www.bloorresearch.com/blog/accessibility/2015/6/stylish-documents-are-best-a-rant/ . He will offer to write a similar article to be published in IT Now.

Action PA: Raise at best practice and offer for ITNow article.

14 Alliance for Digital Accessibility – P. Abrahams

This was not discussed at the meeting.

PA reported by email: I attended last meeting as an individual but not as an official representative of BCS. Kevin Carey is the chair. It is supported by Dept Culture media and sport. It has incorporated Onevoice.

The website is being developed by Digital Accessibility Centre and should be ready soon. The Onevoice website will close when the ADA website is operating.

It would be better if the BCS had an official representative.

Action PA: Will investigate how the BCS can be officially represented.

15 Support for IT Professionals with disabilities – P. Abrahams

Linkedin Group up and running and announced in BCS NL 15 July.

16 Finances – N. Lewis

NL sent his apologies and the item was postponed to next meeting.

17 AOB

JI: We should consider creating an event based around the Thought Leadership event we ran 5 years ago.

HL: Dan Jellinek, of Headstar, has announced that the EAccessibility newsletter will not be published by Headstar any longer. They are looking for an organisation to take it over.

HL: DASG should be looking at:

- NHS Accessible Information Standard see http://www.bcs.org/content/conWebDoc/54932
- DASG input to WAI working groups.
- Links, or otherwise, with organisations like IAAP.
- Support for the NHS Accessible Information Standard.

These will be discussed at a future meeting.

18 Date of next meeting

15th October at 2 pm at Southampton St.