

Minutes for ACCU Committee meeting

19 January 2020, via Hangouts

Meeting started at 2:30 PM GMT. Hangouts link was as per usual - with some glitches for some users,

1. Attending

Felix Petriconi, Bob Schmidt, Patrick Martin, Matt Jones, Rob Pauer, Ralph McArdell

Apologies for absence

Jim Hague, Roger Orr, Phil Nash, Guy Davidson

2. Minutes from last meetings

The committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting

3. Actions in progress from previous meeting

Note: the Google Sheet for actions is here:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1RMTorasYR_A94VBjv-Dn6ghhTVWLbW0w1ekhN994qFI

Actions from previous meetings:

119	Nigel: GDPR to create steps to take on breach and similarly procedure to handle takedown notices - Patrick to confirm all is done
122	Bob: update the very old advertising card
139	Matt to pass on the Meetup admin role to Phil to help the local groups
140	Phil to write up and pass round his suggestions for local group affiliations
143	All: suggestions to define some central storage solution for ACCU documents. etc. consider GDPR
144	Roger: to investigate the implications on web based publications of receiving a takedown notice and ACCU's liability
146	Phil: Local groups: propose to add "affiliated groups" section underneath - Phil to send details to Bob
147	Felix: to contact Russel for ability to email Youtube authors.
148	Patrick: to investigate the use of Bloomberg auditorium
149	Roger: discuss the ideas of TLDs for each conference in person

Actions added by this meeting:

150	Patrick, Ralph: sort out rooms in London
151	Patrick: to send out regular emails for the current status of nominations: current status (to accu-members) and also chronically vacant (to accu-general), pointing out the benefits of volunteering
152	Matt to kill the currently created Paypal account as it has too many liabilities.
153	Rob: to investigate setting up the safety account for the Paypal payments

4. Reports

4.1 Advertising

New image to QBS - seems fine.

Contact with NoStarch publishing - Bob still pursuing them, waiting on the TOC in the PDF to be sorted out to show their book.

Matt mentioned he was not getting a response from NoStarch on a different matter - Bob to pass Matt's query on to them.

4.2 Conference

Felix: all proposals agreed - session to be made public very shortly. Remaining point to be made is the choice between the firebird web site or the prior ACCU web site.

4.3 Local Groups

No reporter.

ACCU London has issues due to the SkillsMatters collapse. Ralph has been contacted and has asked re: getting a room.

From Phil:

I don't have much to report, anyway, but I will say that (in response to some threads here, which I'm not fully caught up on yet), at least from C++ London's perspective I've been getting a lot of venue hosts (some who supply food and drink, too) approaching us. Those that I have used or spoken to at length I've also floated the idea of ACCU London using them, too, and they've been receptive. It's been on my list to talk more with Ralph about it (although we've had some partial chats).

I'm not sure I would say we're completely out of the woods - still

keeping my eyes open for more - but it looks like we should be ok for a while, at least. Oh, and I should say that all of the venues I've been using/ approached by are offering their spaces for free - so I don't think we need to think about paying for anything just yet.

I still have to get back to my meet-up plans, after my failed meet-up pro experiment. I think things should largely stay as they are, but we will likely need an extra account soon as I believe we are max-ed out, and at least Steve and Fran are plotting to start something 'op North.

And I have been putting off my plans for the affiliated groups prospectus. I'll try and get my act together on that soon.

Best regards,

Phil Nash

4.4 Membership

From Matt:

Nothing special to report. Membership numbers are ticking along basically flat.

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1_DBWE4ya54atjshMzA4qdWEa-bagJvc4A36u_YOpQ/edit#gid=11

The automatic daily update emails from the membership system tell me that in 2019 we got up to member number 19121, and on Christmas day of all things.

In the course of trying to add the 6 month trial membership to the website, I have been forced into the underworld of Xaraya, SQL, PHP and git, but at least this is a slight broadening of the knowledge of the existing website.

Membership figures are pretty flat: Matt working on the 6 month membership trail. Needs to work with Jim on the rollout.

The new membership should be issued for conference registrations and the concern is to avoid the membership overlapping to grant a new discount.

Need to ensure AYA are looped in on the content of the email.

4.5 Treasurer

Public liability insurance has been set up for ACCU. Confirmation to be sent around. Bank account is growing nicely. We will begin planning the details of the hand-over.

4.6 Publicity

No reporter.

4.7 Standards

From Guy:

I have nothing to report other than my continued authoring of the standards report for CVu. Steve seems pretty happy with it. I expect to turn it into an annual ACCU talk since I'm attending the standard meetings pretty regularly.

4.8 Website

Bob noted that the latest change which uses the HTML generates much better content.

From Jim:

= Hosting

I noted a site slowdown for a brief period recent when a traffic peak hit.

https://accu.org/munin/accu.org/dennis.accu.org/apache_volume.html. Casual investigation suggests that this is search engine activity plus readers when a new journal is released.

I mentioned some while back about Bytemark, our current hosting company, being taken over by IOMart, a company that I would characterise as less than geek-

led. One of their first actions on completing the takeover was to fire the entire developer team. We have recently run into the first effect of this. I built the server using a hosting framework of Bytemark's, Symbiosis. One of the functions Symbiosis performs is to automatically renew all site Let's Encrypt certificates as necessary.

The relevant Symbiosis tool works with v1 of the Let's Encrypt API. That API stopped working at the end of December. Luckily, the certificates for accu.org and conference are valid until March 20th, so I have time to sort this out.

There has been much grumbling about this, the future of Symbiosis and general non-communication from the new owners on the Bytemark forums over the last couple of months. This week the management responded by closing the forums.

Symbiosis, luckily, is open source, and a dedicated person has forked it as Sympl - inter alia, fixed the certificate updates - and gone on to score a job at Mythic Beasts (excellent geek-friendly hosters UK types here will probably know) as a consequence. So there is a path forward; I'm not sure one can upgrade directly from one to t'other, but I have 2 months to find out.

= New website

Shortly after the last meeting I changed the presentation of the journal articles on <https://newsite.accu.org> to using the existing HTML with the site theme. I've not had any feedback on this or experiences with logging in to see CVu articles.

The only activity on the new site that I've done since then is to update the theme. There were some unfortunate bugs on the theme I'd last updated to. We're now on the latest version of the theme, and normal service has been restored. One side-effect of this - apart from greatly improving the look of the front page - has been to pick up that the most recent articles on the site now are from CVu, and as a consequence the starting paragraph or two of each

can now be seen on the front page. One does still need to log in to read the full article. I hope nobody minds this.

Looking at the new site now, only the Book Reviews have no content. I think I'm finally at a point where I have to stop and fask whether this is all going in a promising direction. If so, I will be appeal for assistance in pushing it over the line on accu-members, and start making more serious noises about theme selection.

4.9 Social Media

Bob: added some tweets for Overload and CVu publications.

4.10 Publications

From Roger:

There's nothing unusual to report for the magazines: Steve and Fran continue to diligent do their usual sterling editorial job.

Bob to get the updated PDF in order to get the TOC with their publication to NoStarch publishing.

5. Any other business

5.1 From Patrick

Nominations and Proposals - brainstorm what ways can we get good coverage on nominations for posts *before* the AGM, if possible?

Bob suggested sending out regular updates on the status of those interested in and nominations to posts going up to the deadline.

Action 151: Patrick to send out regular emails for the current status of nominations: current status (to accu-members) and also chronically vacant (to accu-general), pointing out the benefits of volunteering.

5.2 From Matt

Could we add Paypal to the agenda?

As in, using it for membership payments & renewals.

From Rob: the issue is accounts can be used for credits and debits.

Suggestion from Bob: suggestion to create a separate account that gets regularly transferred to the main account.

Action 152: Matt to kill the currently created Paypal account as it has too many liabilities.

Action 153: Rob to investigate setting up the safety account for the Paypal payments

6. Date of next meeting

The date of the next committee meeting will (provisionally) be 8 March @ 2:30, via Hangouts.