

Conservation & Access Report - CSCC Meeting 8th May 2026

Please find below the Conservation & Access Officer's Report. This covers the period since the last meeting in February 2026.

AGM Report

It has been yet another busy year for C&A activities. The highlight of the year has been the finalisation and implementation of the Longleat Access Agreement. The agreement was signed at the end of September 2025 and, after an intense period of Warden training, recreational visits started in November.

This AGM marks the start of my fourth year in the role and I'm afraid it must also be my last. I originally took on the position to secure the Longleat agreement and I'm pleased that this has now been achieved. I would like to dedicate more of my time to other activities within the caving community, including serving on the committee of my caving club and my role as an MCR Officer.

It would be great if someone were willing to volunteer to take on the C&A role, sooner rather than later, allowing us to work together over the coming year to hand over the outstanding projects.

Longleat

The access agreement has now been in operation for 8 months. To date 17 Wardens have completed the training and assessment program. Recreational visitor numbers are as follows:-

| Year | Reservoir Hole | | Gough's Cave | | Spider Hole | | Totals | | Notes |
|------|----------------|--------|--------------|--------|-------------|--------|--------|--------|---|
| | Trips | Cavers | Trips | Cavers | Trips | Cavers | Trips | Cavers | |
| 2025 | 11 | 35 | 4 | 13 | 5 | 13 | 20 | 61 | Started Oct, includes 13 training trips |
| 2026 | 10 | 36 | 3 | 12 | 4 | 11 | 17 | 59 | Year to date, includes 4 training trips |
| | 21 | 71 | 7 | 25 | 9 | 24 | 37 | 120 | |

Other notable points are:-

- A re-survey of the cave shrimp population in Gough's Cave was conducted as part of the Hypogean Crustacean Recording Scheme and we await the results.
- The repair of the conservation tape in Reservoir Hole is ongoing with some work outstanding in the Frozen Deep and Hard Times.
- By the time of this AGM meeting, the Cave Diving Group should have performed their first dive in Lloyd Hall for many years.
- The digging application for Spider has progressed and is now awaiting sign-off by the Longleat Estates Director.
- The top of Nut Pitch in Spider has been re-bolted.
- The Reservoir Hole padlock key has been swapped as the original one was difficult to remove from the lock.

Singing River Mine

The Singing River Mine access agreement has been in place since October 2023 and is running smoothly. Visitor numbers are as follows:-

| Year | Trips | No Cavers | Notes |
|-------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|
| 2023 | 8 | 37 | Started in Oct |
| 2024 | 11 | 72 | |
| 2025 | 6 | 42 | |
| 2026 | 2 | 13 | Year to date |
| | 27 | 164 | |

Wookey Hole Cave

The access agreement with Wookey has run mostly without issue over the past three months, having been started in December 2022. Visitor numbers are as follows:-

| Year | Trips | No Cavers | Notes |
|-------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|
| 2022 | 3 | 18 | Started in Dec |
| 2023 | 39 | 190 | |
| 2024 | 28 | 153 | |
| 2025 | 21 | 103 | |
| 2026 | 11 | 57 | Year to date |
| | 102 | 521 | |

The fixed aids (krabs, maillons and handlines) on the dry route to Wookey 24 are all showing signs of wear and really need to be replaced. The approximate cost for this (covering 12 x Stainless Maillons and 75m of 10mm rope) is £300. Is this something the council would fund?

Sludge Pit

The collection bucket in Sludge Pit has been emptied and the proceeds have been sent to the landowner. I would kindly remind people that there is a £2 per person access fee and this should be placed in the slot in the white bucket, secured in the chamber on the right of the entrance passage.

Pressure Washers

The pressure washers have been returned by the Wealden Cave and Mine Society. They have been serviced and ready to be borrowed for any clean-up projects you may have.

CSCC Access Guide

Many minor updates have been made to the CSCC Access Guide. The only major change was:-

- The Pinetree Pot entry has been updated to align it with the upcoming edition of Mendip Underground.

Home Close

The new lid for Home Close is still in the design stage. Hopefully, now the warden training for Longleat has been mostly completed, I will have time to progress this project. Please note that funding for the lid has been provisionally approved by the BCA.

Stock Hill Mine Cave

The lid modifications for Stock Hill Mine Cave as also still in the design phase and I would hope to make progress with this in the coming months. Again, the BCA C&A Working Group have approved the provisional budget for the modifications.

Hunter's Lodge Inn Sink

The area around the loose boulder, that was cemented in place back in January, has been inspected and there are no signs of any further movement.

Future Priorities

In the coming months I will be concentrating on the following priorities:-

- 1) Progress the Spider Hole digging application with Longleat
- 2) Complete the conversation and bolting work in Reservoir Hole
- 3) Finalise the access arrangements (on-line facilities) for Harridge Woods
- 4) Progress the new lids for Home Close and Stock Hill Mine Cave

If anyone has anything else they would like progressing then please let me know.

Wayne Starsmore
C&A Officer
CSCC

Treasurer's Report 2025

2025's Accounts appear below. These have only been sent to our Honorary Scrutineer for checking recently so may not be audited before the AGM, therefore please consider these draft accounts.

Notes from the accounts:

The prior year's BCA claim of £187.81 was paid in full.

CSCC Event: The CSCC held its event in May 2025, generating income of £683.00 against total expenditure of £874.74 — a net cost of £191.74. However, this figure includes cups bought in bulk for use at future events as well, which should be recouped as the cups are sold in future. Excluding that stock purchase, the direct cost of the event itself was £80.32,

The **2024 BCA grant** included £74.75 for officer travel expenses, which had been shown as Accounts Payable at the end of 2024. This was received from BCA in 2025 and the officer kindly waived payment, donating the sum to CSCC.

Core expenditure for 2025 includes the web server, resin and drill bits for conservation work, and contributions to access at Cheddar Locks, Harridge Wood, and Thrupe Lane. The 2025 BCA claim will be £476.92.

Key sales income increased to £83.30, compared with £30.75 in the prior year.

The year ended with a deficit of £321.00. Funds available at 31st December 2025 stand at £5,191.81.

At the year end, membership was 40 clubs, of which all 40 were also BCA members — compared 41 in 2024, when one member club was not a BCA member.

Finance Group Meeting

I will be attending the Finance Group Meeting in the 2nd week of May.

2026 Spending

So far in 2026, no significant expenditure has been committed.

We are reimbursing Matty Dredge for bolt extraction tooling equipment he has purchased, this totals £63.25 and will be claimable from the BCA.

Our spending is expected to remain well within the budget proposed to the BCA. For planning purposes, please let me know of any anticipated CSCC spending in the short to medium term.

New Clubs Admitted in 2025

The following clubs were admitted to CSCC membership during 2025:

Brighton Explorers Club

Cambridge University Caving Club

Yorkshire Subterranean Society

Tom Harrison May 2026

DRAFT CSCC Accounts Summary 2025

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 31st December 2025

| | | 2025 | 2024 |
|----------------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | | £ | £ |
| Income | | | |
| Subs | | - | 30.00 |
| Donations | note 1 | 74.75 | - |
| Net Interest | | 1.80 | 2.28 |
| BCA Funding | note 2 | 187.81 | 836.00 |
| CSCC Event | | 683.00 | - |
| Key Sales | | 83.30 | 30.75 |
| Total income | | 1,030.66 | 899.03 |
| Expenditure | | | |
| | Core | | |
| Web Server | 124.24 | 124.24 | 23.07 |
| Resin | 57.28 | 57.28 | 64.99 |
| Drill Bits | 34.92 | 34.92 | - |
| CSCC Event | - | 874.74 | - |
| C&A - Cheddar Locks | 185.28 | 185.28 | - |
| C&A - Harridge Wood | 25.00 | 25.00 | 25.00 |
| C&A - Thrupe Lane | 50.20 | 50.20 | - |
| Total Expenditure | 476.92 | 1,351.66 | 113.06 |
| Surplus / (Deficit) | | (321.00) | 785.97 |

Statement of Funds Available as at 31st December 2025

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Balance brought forwards from previous year | | |
| Current account | 5,427.11 | 4,654.17 |
| Reserve account | 160.45 | 147.42 |
| Cash | - | - |
| Accounts Payable | (74.75) | - |
| | 5,512.81 | 4,801.59 |
| Surplus / (Deficit) | (321.00) | 785.97 |
| | 5,191.81 | 5,587.56 |
| Balance carried forwards to next year | 5,191.81 | 5,587.56 |
| At 31st December | | |
| Current account | 5,029.56 | 5,427.11 |
| Reserve account | 162.25 | 160.45 |
| Cash | - | - |
| Accounts Payable | - | (74.75) |
| Funds Available | 5,191.81 | 5,512.81 |

Notes

1. The 2024 BCA grant included £74.75 for officer travel expenses (shown as Accounts Payable in 2024). This was received from BCA in 2025 and the officer waived payment, donating the sum to CSCC.

2. Prior year's BCA claim paid in full.

3. Core expenditure is claimable from BCA. The 2025 claim will be £476.92.

At the year end, membership was 40 clubs of which all 40 were also BCA members.

Equipment and Techniques Officer

Anchors placed in Spider, with two out of three of the through bolts successfully removed. The other snapped, probably due to the amount of corrosion.

On the 4th pitch of Rhino. The remaining spit had been removed and an anchor placed.

More IC anchors are on the way.

We will be training and helping the FoDCCAG on the placement of anchors on the 17th May.

The website continues to be updated and improved mainly with rigging diagrams.

I am happy to stand for another year, no idea how I missed the call, politics is not my strong point, I just give up at the least difficulty.

Andrew

May 2026

Communications Officer's Report: Peter Burgess

I have had no significant issues with Comms in the past year, and have no reason to change things significantly.

Regular channels for communications are as follows:

- CSCC newsletter
- CSCC email subscribers by MailChimp
- CSCC Club Rep email list.
- CSCC Facebook page
- UKCaving website

I am happy to continue in the role of Comms Officer for a further year.

Peter Burgess
CSCC Communications Officer
May 2026