



Council of Southern Caving Clubs

A constituent member of the British Caving Association
www.csccl.org.uk

General Meeting 31 July 2010, Hunters Lodge Inn, Priddy

PRESENT	APOLOGIES
Graham Price (Chair/Cerberus Obs) GP	Dave Cundy (Treasurer/SBSS Rep) DC
Hayley Clark (Secretary/MCG Obs) HC	Alan Butcher (SMCC Rep) AB
Alan Gray (ACG Rep) AG	Stu Gardiner (BEC Rep)
Alan Dempster (Avon Scouts Rep) AD	
Chrissy Price (Cerberus Rep) CP	
Les Williams (C&A Officer/WCC Rep) LW	
Mark Williams (BCA Officer/MCG Rep) MW	
David G Cooke (Webmaster/ ChCC Rep) DGC	
Faye Litherland (Equipment Officer/BEC Rep) FL	
Aubrey Newport (WCC Obs) AN	
Darrel Instrell (MNRC Rep) DI	
Mike Richardson (MCG rep) MR	

Meeting started at 10.10am.

1) Minutes of the previous meeting (08.05.10)

No comments received, Minutes proposed by FL and seconded by AD accepted Nem Com.

2) Actions from previous meeting: -

4.2 Update on Geopark GP (taken under point 4)

4.3 GP to speak to planning officers regarding the planning application at Cooks Wood Quarry (taken under point 4)

4.5 Update on pollution in Swildons LW (taken under point 4)

4.6 CSCC to make representations to AONB partnership regarding positions on the committee for both local business and user groups (taken under point 4)

4.7 GP to coordinate a formal CSCC response to Somerset County Council's review of their minerals policy (taken under point 4)

5.2 HC to update contacts by correlating existing contacts list and up-to-date list as emailed by Glenn Jones. (taken under point 5)

6.1/6.2 Update on Natwest and change of signatories and missing bank statements everything has now been sorted, the signatories have been completed. **Done**

6.4 DC to look for missing paperwork (receipts etc) from 2005-2008. Ongoing

7.2 Compton Martin Ochre Mine LW to measure up for new gate (taken under point 7)

9.1 FL to add comments to the draft guidance for anchor installation (taken under point 9)

FL to get BCA formal permission to use their anchor installation document as the basis for ours (taken under point 9)

FL to circulate updated version of anchor installation guide to reps for further consideration (taken under point 9)

9.3 Item 9.5 of previous minutes, FL to create form to be added to CSCC website. for applications by clubs to apply for bolt placement in a cave. **DONE**

11.2 DI to put information on the website regarding training grants. **ONGOING**



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3) Other Matters arising from the previous meeting

Point 5.2 of previous minutes, Glenn Jones contacted HC to say that the only reason for the delay in replying to the email requesting list of member clubs was because the email from HC had gone to his french email address and not to his BCA email address as he normally replies to correspondence straight away.

4) Chairman's Report

4.1. Geopark (item 4.2 of previous minutes): - have spoken to NFU and CLA. They will have no objection to Geopark status providing designation does not mean there are additional planning restrictions that would affect their normal activities. Geopark status may bring opportunities that otherwise do not exist and enable more opportunity for diversification.

Enquiries are being made to obtain definitive answers to the other questions raised at the last meeting.

4.2 Cooks Wood Quarry (item 4.3 of previous minutes): - the application was considered at the Planning Board meeting on 23rd July with a recommendation for approval. The application was agreed with a number of conditions. Due to being outside the permitted development zone the proposals have now to be referred to the Secretary of State.

4.3 Swildons Pollution (item 4.5 of previous minutes): - Alison Moody collected further samples of the white deposits and GP passed these to Natural England who identified them as a type of fungus that has been known to occur underground for a number of unidentified reasons. They could not identify the exact sub species due to the high cost of analysis however it thought that it is unlikely to be dangerous to most people, however some people may be affected by fungus spores in general and appropriate warnings should be issued. It was considered that it was unlikely to be associated with the oil/diesel pollution. It was also considered that although draughts may be a contributing factor spreading of the fungus was more likely to be caused by caver movement, and indeed this is how it may have been introduced in the first instance.

The source of the pollution was identified as a leakage of heating oil. Unfortunately the source was only identified after there had been a further spillage of an additional 1000ltrs. Measures have been taken to prevent a reoccurrence. Due to the particularly dry weather it may take sometime for the oil to fully dissipate and there may continue to be problems underground for some time.

This information was passed to the C&A Officer who issued a statement on behalf of the CSCC.

4.4 Representation on AONB Partnership (item 4.6 of previous minutes): - Background information, a list of members of the Partnership Committee and a draft letter was circulated to all clubs with a request to make appropriate representations. I made formal representations on behalf of CSCC but believe that the only club that sent anything was Cerberus. I also approached the climbing and walking community for help and representations were made by the BMC and the Ramblers Association.

The AONB Partnership met on 1st July and the subject, even though it was a 'matter arising' from the previous meeting, was not on the agenda. Before the meeting a new Terms of Reference had been drawn up and was placed before the meeting for approval. This did not include any representation for either business interest or user groups and smacked of a 'stitch-up'. Fortunately the representations we had made had been noted by a number of members present and the importance of user groups was raised. It was clear that as the new Terms of Reference had been agreed by certain parties outside the meeting and there was no likelihood of these being changed. Recognising the importance of user groups it was proposed that they could be represented by the Mendip Society and this was agreed. It



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was noted at the meeting that CSCC is the only user group that is an Associate Member of the AONB Partnership.

GP will be acting as the Mendip Society contact for user groups that wish to raise matters at AONB meetings.

4.5 Minerals Core Strategy (item 4.7 of previous minutes): - no comments were received on the consultation paper. As GP was preparing a submission on behalf of the Mendip Society a combined response was made to Somerset County Council. Copies are available for information.

5) **Secretary's Report**

5.1 Item 5.2 of previous meeting minutes. Have been through the list of member Clubs who are in both BCA and CSCC as emailed to me by Glenn Jones and have added some missing contacts. Still have a few where the emails bounce back thus need to try to establish a contact for these clubs. HC to try to make contact with the remaining clubs whose emails bounce back.

5.2 Have contacted Mary Wilde regarding the Training Committee and have asked her to forward any future correspondence to Darrel and she has changed him as the CSCC contact on their website.

5.3 Have received a cheque from Ashford Speleological Society for their membership to CSCC as discussed at the last meeting.

5.4 Received correspondence regarding the bolts/anchors in the Black Hole Series, Swildons that I was asked to raise at the next meeting this has also subsequently been brought to my attention by Alan Butcher. Please see below for an up-to-date report on the situation.

"I visited Black Hole Series in Swildons Hole on 8th May 2010 and have the following observations about the bolts for the descent / crossing of the Black Hole. There are a number (about half a dozen) of 8mm spits, which are in a varying state of decay and a large ringbolt. The latter is thought to be attached to a Rawl Bolt of some sort, probably about 12mm in diameter.

Several of the spits are either stripped or not fully inserted, but at least three of them are useable at present. Using these spits, the rawl bolt and a chock stone back from the edge it is possible to rig the descent safely at present. However, it can only be a matter of time before these bolts finally reach their sell by date. On the far side of the Black Hole is another rawl bolt with an angle iron hanger. This appears to be solid at present, and is tied into a length of old rope, which in turn is tied to a boulder further up the passage. There is at present no fixed rope on the descent / crossing of the hole itself, contrary to some reports. Not only would a fixed line present a danger as the rope aged, but it would also make rigging the pitch extremely difficult if bringing your own gear due to the danger of tangling.

The 11ft overhang now has no fixed rope, and has been provided with a sound scaffold bar belay. I would suggest that this is sufficient, and no bolts are required here. This allows for the first in the party to climb the overhang (using combined tactics if necessary) and fix a hand line for everyone else. It also allows a retrievable abseil / hand line for the descent which is more difficult than the ascent.

In conclusion I would suggest that the CSCC should give some thought to replacing the bolts on both sides of the Black Hole. In my opinion this should include careful thought as to the positioning to allow life lining which prevents the possibility of a long swing in the event of a fall."



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FL said that she had recently been to Black Hole Series and thought that you could safely rig from what was there as the rawl bolt and chock stone were fine. DGC disagreed and thought that work needed doing and the bolts possibly replacing. It was agreed that FL have another look specifically after the above report. FL again reiterated that cavers are responsible for their own safety and if rigging should check each anchor before using and if they think it is not ok, to use an alternative.

5.5 HC received correspondence regarding the bolts and rigging topo for Rhino Rift, stating that there is some confusion on the CSCC website caused by the bolt numbers not being shown on the survey. By stating that bolts 5 and 6 have been removed and bolt 8 is defective it would be useful for these numbers to be shown on the topo. It was agreed that FL would revise the topo and add bolt numbers to it to be reviewed at the November CSCC meeting before being published on the web.

The correspondence also stated that the CSCC said they would install a chain at the end of the traverse but haven't. This is correct but it was decided that the chain was not needed and that the website would be updated to say take a sling or several maillons for the traverse.

DGC asked if anyone was under taking an SRT trip on Mendip to do a rigging topo, as there are still many trips without them. DGC to email HC a list of caves still requiring a rigging topo to email out to club reps.

5.6 Priddy Green Sink, AB raised the issue over the need to organise works to the entrance ASAP as a body sized hole has appeared and I have fenced off around the gate to prevent children, etc falling in. The Parish Council is happy for cavers to do the work. LW to organise.

5.7 The Parish Council has asked cavers not to park cars on the grass, if possible. Recently cars have parked on the village green when they could easily park on the gravelled areas instead. Also there is a perfectly good changing barn, cavers should use this and not strip off and change by their cars. LW to add note on website and reps are asked to remind their clubs and put a note up on the club huts to remind visiting clubs.

6) Treasurer's Report.

No report received

7) Update on accounts from 2005-2008

7.1 AN has been through the accounts and DGC has published them. Seem to be straightforward; only comment is that the treasurer had been making donations as he paid for any overdrawn bank charges out of his own pocket. 2006-2008 accounts were proposed by CP and seconded by LW. AD proposed thanks to DGC and AN for their hard work in sorting out the accounts. **7.2** DC to progress claims to BCA for the years of 2006-2008 ASAP as CSCC owed £2244.78.

7.3 Account is taxed at source, this need changing ASAP **ACTION DC**

8) Conservation & Access Officer's Report

8.1 Cuckoo Cleaves signs regarding the CO2 are still in the process of being made. LW to chase as urgent. AN reported that at present the entrance is fairly clear of CO2 but is bad at the top of the Canyon, AN to continue monitoring the levels. LW to add note to the website as a general reminder about the possibility of CO2 being present in any cave on Mendip.

8.2 Compton Martin Ochre Mine (item 7.2 of previous minutes), LW has organised for a temporary repair to the broken bar in the gate. LW to measure up for replacement gate in near future. **ACTION LW ONGOING.**

8.3 Access to Ariel/Blacknor Hole on Portland is being monitored as the land has been sold and developed. LW to continue monitoring the situation.



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8.4 Big thanks to Darkplaces who have been working hard on cleaning up the Well/Cathedral in Box Mines. The Well has been completely emptied now down to water.

8.5 Access has changed at Fairy Cave Quarry; there is now a combination lock on the gate. The number is available to cavers and BMC member climbers only.

8.6 Bolt on the back door to Box Mines has dropped and therefore not being shut by people allowing access to anyone again. LW to have a look and possibly ask Darkplaces to organise fixing it.

8.7 FL reported that on a recent trip to Brownes Folly that she removed a couple of bags of rubbish and that she was very concerned over some very enthusiastic cleaning of graffiti as by cleaning off some modern graffiti the old miners drawings underneath had also been removed. Not sure who has been doing this but it is better to leave alone then to trash the historic drawings. LW to put note on the website advising people to be careful if removing graffiti.

8.8 AG reported that the entrance to the Winter Head Shaft in Shipham is unstable and as there is another entrance nearby may be best being capped. He has asked for any assistance in sourcing materials to do the capping and shoring work. CSCC to look at funding the project when AG returns with details of cost.

9) Training Officer's Report

9.1 Nothing to report.

10) Equipment Officer's Report.

10.1 (Item 9.1 of previous minutes) FL to add comments to the draft guidance for anchor installation **DONE**. FL to get BCA formal permission to use their anchor installation document as the basis for ours. FL has spoken to Nick Williams whose has advised her on a course of action therefore **DONE**. **FL** to circulate updated version of anchor installation guide to reps for further consideration, not done as the changes were very minor and mainly phraseology and semantics.

10.2 Further changes to the CSCC anchor installation guide can be made at any point but it was agreed that FL should collate changes and ratify them at the next General Meeting.

10.3 The CSCC anchor installation document was proposed by MR and seconded by LW as a formal document and accepted nem com.

10.4 FL cannot attend the next BCA meeting in October where the CSCC anchor installation guide may arise for discussion. MW to talk to FL before hand for any up-to-date information so he is prepared for the meeting.

10.5 Handover from Andrew Atkinson to FL is still on going

10.6 FL has spoken to various people regarding the dodgy bolts in Rhino Rift and the general consensus is to stitch drill at the resin/rock interface and insert more resin rather than try to remove and replace the bolt. This case will act as a test bed for a method that could be used more widely in the future. More research needs to be done before it can take place such as size of hole that needs to be drilled, method of cutting off old bolt.

10.7 Need to get a list of people who will be the anchor installers for Mendip who can then have an anchor placement demonstration with Andrew Atkinson. The names put forward are LW, DGC, MW, GP, DI and MR. LW has volunteered to do the anchor placement in Rhino with GP.

10.8 A request was verbally received to place two anchors at Parfits Hole but FL has advised them to fill in the form now available on the website and follow the procedure.

10.9 The Equipment and Techniques Committee scheduled for the 17th July didn't take place due to a catalogue of mishaps.



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11) **BCA Rep's Report**

11.1 Nothing to report except the voting for the BCA constitutional amendments as sent out with the recent BCA newsletter. These were mainly procedural changes. During discussion, noone had a problem with any of the items except number 2 regarding the dates for the agendas. AN thought that this could cause a few issues. and that maybe it could be worded better. LW proposed that the meeting took a vote on yes for all items except number 2, seconded by FL, accepted nem com. The meeting then had a vote on voting for/against point 2, proposed DGC seconded FL, voting was 4 in favour and 4 abstentions therefore vote was carried and CSCC minuted to vote yes for all items concerned with the constitutional amendments. (Post meeting note, ballot sent to Damian Weare on 5th August)

12) **Webmaster's Report**

12.1 Nothing to report other than some Officers have requested training on how they can update the site. They should contact DGC to arrange a suitable date. The venue will probably be the Wessex HQ, which has wi-fi access

13) **Forthcoming Events.**

September 8th Cave Biology Field Meeting Scoska Cave Yorkshire
September 24th – 26th Hidden Earth Leek Staffordshire

14) Date of the next meeting to be held at 10 am at the Hunters Lodge Inn, Priddy.
Saturday 06 November 2010

15) **A O B**

15.1 AG asked if the CSCC would like the MCRA to add on their website that they are funded by the CSCC. All in favour, AG to ACTION

15.2 Mendip Cave Registry Archive, DGC asked if CSCC will continue to support this.
Agreed Nem Com.

Meeting Closed: 12:20