



Council of Southern Caving Clubs

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

Annual General Meeting 10/05/14 Hunters Lodge Inn, Priddy

PRESENT	APOLOGIES
VOTING Graham Price (Chair/Cerberus Rep) GP Hayley Clark (Secretary/MCG Obs) HC Alan Gray (ACG Rep) AG Alan Dempster (Avon Scouts Rep) AD Keith Batten (SMCC Rep) KB David G Cooke (Webmaster/ ChCC Rep) DGC Dave Cundy (Treasurer/SBSS Rep) DC Geoff Dommett (BCG Rep) GD Barry Wilkinson (Wessex rep) BW Hannah Bennett (BEC rep)HB Dave King (MNRC) DK Martin Grass (BEC) MG (only voting from treasurer report when he realised Ashford were CSCC member club and he then took their vote)	Idris Williams (Shropshire Scouts Caving Team) Faye Litherland (Equipment Officer/BEC) FL Ashford Speleological Society (apologies withdrawn at treasurer report stage by MG) Les Williams (C&A Officer and WCC) LW Frank Tully (WCC) FT Hampshire Scouts
NON VOTING Mark Williams (BCA Officer) MW Douglas Parker (BCG) DP Aubrey Newport (WCC) AN James Begley (SMCC)JB Alan Butcher (SMCC) AB Dany Bradshaw (BEC) DB Kate Lawrence (BEC) KL	

Meeting started at 10.10 am.

At the start of the meeting only 9 clubs were represented, the current membership of the CSCC is 40 clubs, and as such the meeting was not quorate (The constitution requires 25% of clubs, i.e. 10 at present, to form a quorum). GP stated that unless 1 other turned up then no voting could take place. AB disagreed and said that the meeting did not need to be quorate in order for decisions to be made and voting to be undertaken. GP pointed out that unlike a general meeting, where no quorum is required, the constitution clearly states that a 25% quorum is required for an AGM. However as this discussion was taking place 2 more club reps turned up late, thus making the meeting quorate with 11 clubs present.



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1) Minutes of the previous meeting (01/02/14)

Add new point 6.3 to say “DGC raised an issue with the 2012 accounts where agreed corrections had not been amended and a corrected version had not been issued. Treasurer to check

Add new point 11.2 “HC to forward to webmaster an up-to-date list of member clubs with contact emails so the website can be updated. HC said she would after receiving the latest membership list at the end of March”.

Minutes accepted as amended proposed DGC seconded AD, 1 abstention (HB had not been present at previous meeting)

2) Actions from previous meeting: -

2.1 Update to CSCC handbook LW and DGC. DGC said that as the content of the handbook would come from the website database, work was ongoing to keep the web up-to-date. Discussions were had as to whether a hard copy of the handbook was really necessary now as everything else seems to be electronic, it was agreed that it was not necessary. Meeting agreed that a PDF copy of the handbook would be available on the CSCC website so if anyone wanted to print their own they could, otherwise it would be electronic only. HB offered to collate all information to create the PDF, she will work together with AG, LW and DGC.

2.2 LW to write promotional text for CSCC ongoing

3) Other Matters arising from the previous meeting

3.1 10.1 of previous minutes regarding the proposed landowner’s access leaflet. CSCC concerns were conveyed to the BCA at last BCA meeting.

3.2 Digfest – CSCC website now has a page dedicated to the Digfest event. 13 digs have so far been offered for people to visit/help with that weekend with more being offered. Almost at the point of having too many digs. The plan for the weekend is the Friday night in the Hunters being a matchmaker session where digs and people to go down them are sorted so everyone knows what they are doing the next day. Saturday will start with bacon butties, then as well as digging there will be an art workshop, capping workshop and surveying workshop. At 5.30 on the Saturday the Wild West Wessex Sofa Challenge will take place at Priddy Village Hall, this is for teams of max 5 people carrying a minimum of a 2 seat sofa around an obstacle course. Following this will be a BBQ and stomp. The Sunday will again start with bacon butties and have more digging and then a get together to update on the weekends activities.

DGC to check publicity on UKCaving, Facebook and posters around club huts and pubs such as Queen Vic in Priddy. AB suggested putting posters on Priddy Green pointing people to the village hall. The weekend is also sheep racing in Priddy so there will be many non-cavers around who may well go to the hall for beer and BBQ and the stomp. AB took 3 posters to put up on the green.

DGC to contact organisers of sheep racing to offer publishing their event if they could publicise the stomp/BBQ.

It has been noted that publicity has been late on this event and not great, lessons to be learnt for future events.



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3.3 Wells Big Day Out, this event is meant to be publicity for caving, so clubs can advertise themselves and promote caving in general, The Wessex will be putting up display boards. AN booked the artificial cave for this weekend, only issues are around transporting it from up North to Wells. To hire a vehicle will be very expensive, it needs someone with a good 4 x 4 to tow it. AN asked DC if the BCA would fund the transportation costs for an event like this. DC nor any other person present at the meeting knew if this would be possible. Treasurer to contact BCA to find out. KB proposed that CSCC covered the cost of the transportation and agreed it at the AGM so if BCA would not cover it the event could still go ahead. DC confirmed there was enough money in the bank to cover it. Nick Williams had offered to transport it if there was no one else so costs would just be fuel.

4) Chairman's Report

See attached documents

In addition GP again thanked HC for her work as Secretary and producing accurate minutes, AG seconded.

5) Secretary's Report.

5.1 HC had nothing official but commented on how amazed, shocked and delighted she was that so many people had turned up for this CSCC meeting. She stated that her decision to stand down as Secretary was due to the lack of interest from member clubs and the fact that no one ever bothered to reply to any emails. Example for this was in February when HC sent email to reps to ask them to confirm if they were still a CSCC club, that this was the correct email address and that that person was still the contact. Only 9 out of 40 clubs replied, very few of these were from the major clubs. HC received an email from HB (BEC) at beginning of May to say that she had not received any correspondence despite having taken over as BEC rep in October 2013, this was a prime example of not updating the relevant people. HC asked that clubs did actually reply to the new Secretary's emails and keep them updated on any changes. She also said she hoped the sudden surge of interest and enthusiasm for CSCC was not just for this AGM but would continue to future meetings, stating that she was almost considering re-standing due to the new enthusiasm of cavers.

6) Treasurer's Report.

6.1 2013-2014 Accounts were circulated. GP commented that the treasurer and anyone writing reports etc. to make sure all copies are referenced so it is clear if amendments are made which is the latest copy. DC said not easy to get a clear break down of what CSCC has been paid for by BCA and what is yet to be refunded as contact with the BCA treasurer is not always positive and can't always get the answers you need. DGC suggested to email the BCA executive in order to get results if can't get answers from the Treasurer.

6.2 The accounts are gradually diminishing and it seems impossible to bolster up income. Don't seem to get all money back from BCA, have to keep chasing. There is income from Officers travel expenses which are donated to CSCC.

Digfest is an event to raise money for CSCC. CSCC are running the bar and keeping profit. All profit from the bacon butties and BBQ will be going to CSCC. MG suggested making it an annual thing to coincide with sheep racing so everyone knew on a set weekend each year that it would be happening and therefore be in



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peoples diaries. GP said the Wessex Challenge is a bi-annual event and due to lack of interest/support from CSCC member clubs in organising it/running the event trying to do it yearly is unlikely to be possible.

As said before CSCC need all member clubs to look at ways of raising money

6.3 HC handed over annual subs from Ashford Speleological Society (MG who is a member of Ashford Speleological Society did not know they were a CSCC member club and from this point in the meeting voted on their behalf)

6.4 HC said she had reminded Avon and Somerset Police that their subs were due and had asked them to send payment direct to DC.

6.5 DC said he would not be standing again this year as Treasurer as over the last year due to breaking his back had not been able to give as much time as he should to the role and not attend many meetings and with keen people around who wanted to take on the job thought it would be better for CSCC. GP thanked DC for his work over the last few years, AG seconded.

6.6 Question was raised, should CSCC be charging a subscription from member clubs. Mixed views in the room, some saying yes as is a source of income but others saying CSCC would lose the smaller clubs as they couldn't afford subscriptions. No other regional Councils charge subscriptions. Can CSCC actually do this as if a club is a member of BCA they pay BCA so technically is this not already a subscription.

CSCC could ask its member clubs to donate a small sum of money if extra were needed for an important job.

Some clubs do not realise they can be members of more than one regional council. The form to join BCA is not clear, HC has had requests from clubs to join CSCC and what they had to do, turns out they were BCA members but hadn't realised they just had to tick a box to join CSCC. However it was raised that CSCC did not necessarily want all clubs to tick all boxes and be members of all regional councils as clubs from the North etc. could join but never attend meetings, CSCC already struggles to be quorate at an AGM with only 40 member clubs.

6.7 AB asked if the accounts could be presented with a 4 or 5 year summary so it was clear what the changes were over this time. Treasurer to look into this.

7) Conservation & Access Officer's Report

7.1 Hilliers Lock was reported as not working and needing replacement. GP gave out a new lock to replace the old one on behalf of LW as LW was out of the country. MG said that the Fairy Cave management committee had not been informed and should be for anything like this. LW to be made aware in future to keep the management committee informed.

7.2 With no report provided by LW the meeting assumed that the situation with gates at White Pit, Viaduct Sink, and Compton Martin Ochre Mine are all ongoing. HC to request from LW a post meeting report to circulate. **POST MEETING NOTE HC REQUESTED REPORT FROM LW**

7.3 Thrupe Lane Swallet gate has now been remounted and secured, there is access to the cave but the passage is blocked just a couple of metres in with flood debris so people are advised to stay away until further notice. ATLAS will gradually dig this out as and when the stream subsides.



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7.4 MG raised issues with Sludge Pit where there has been a collapse just inside the entrance under the ladder, it seems to be one big rock/hanging death. GD and DP offered to go and have a look, GP and DGC to go with them due to their experience in stabilising caves. Webmaster to put note on website to warn people to be careful around this area until such time as it has been stabilised.

7.5 Axbridge Hill Cavern gate still to be looked at by AG and LW

7.6 Windsor Hill Flood Sink 1 entrance needs securing. AG requested CSCC to fund these works and then a CSCC lock could be put on the gate. Costs will be approx £150, meeting agreed to fund this

7.7 Vallis Vale cave, DGC had received correspondence to say that due to the bats in the cave there would be no access for cavers

8) Training Officer's Report

8.1 Position still vacant. Very important that we get someone to take on this role. Even if they don't want to organise training but just to go to the Training Committee Meetings. JB asked why the meetings had to be on week days when the majority of people were working. HC said that every other Training meeting was held on a weekend day as many of those on the Committee were commercial cavers and worked most weekends so could not make weekend meetings. Therefore meetings were held on Saturdays and weekdays so people could attend a couple a year when not working. HC said she gets sent the minutes and reads through to raise anything of any importance however with no background in the Training Committee the minutes are virtually impossible to understand and interpret. Therefore raising anything of importance doesn't happen as she has no idea what is. GP said if someone would take on the role, even if they didn't go to the meetings they could correspond by email and therefore the voice of CSCC would be represented.

9) Equipment Officer's Report.

9.1 Firstly please accept my apologies that I cannot be at the meeting in person due to other commitments.

Work on the bolting program is continuing both at a regional council and national level. We now have anchors, resin, trained installers and anchors being placed. A huge leap forward considering the frustrations of previous years!

Anchors are now placed in Sludge Pit Hole, Swildons Hole Shatter Pot and Black Hole Series, Rod's Pot/Bath Swallet and other caves will follow soon until we have caught up on all of the requests of the last few years.

Unfortunately CNCC and DCA continue to not take an active part in the BCA E&T Committee. However, we continue to make progress and hope that this situation will eventually be resolved.

10) BCA Rep's Report

10.1 MW said he had not been to any meetings and that due to health reasons would be unlikely to attend many if any of the next year, he would stand again as



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BCA rep but only so the position wasn't vacant but would rather someone would take on the role who could make all the meetings.

10.2 DGC who had been to the BCA meetings said the BCA were reviewing their membership structure to make it simpler. They want to get rid of the difference between CIM's and DIM's then people could buy a copy of Speleology if they wanted it.

10.3 CROW Act is causing issues that could have impact on Mendip, cavers could possibly have access to caves in the future that they do not have now under the CROW

10.4 BCA have a new revamped website.

10.5 CSCC need a BCA rep to attend the BCA AGM in June. JB volunteered, HC to write to BCA Secretary to formally let them know that JB is the official CSCC Rep.
POST MEETING NOTE BCA CONTACTED AND ACCEPTED JB AS CSCC REP

11) Webmaster's Report

11.1 The website has worked reliably all year. It has been steadily been updated with the Minutes and news items. A tranche of updates have been made to the Access pages/database as a result of the review of access agreements by the authors of the new Mendip Underground. There remains a further tranche of updates still to be added.

In this Internet age the website in many ways is the face of our organisation. Much of the website could do with a dusting down and review. I urge the Officers to do that for their respective areas.

The CSCC mailing lists continues to be underused. More could be made of this to keep the cavers in our area informed of what is going. It just might help to improve the attendance at the meetings

12) Regional Registry Officer's report

12.1 The Mendip Cave Registry and Archive (www.mcra.org.uk) continues to go from strength to strength. It is an amazing and vast resource for the caves and the history of caving in Mendip and surrounding areas. The MCRA became a registered charity this year and I urge all cavers to make use of the website and support their work.

12.2 The BCA's Cave Registry and Archive (www.cave-registry.org.uk) also deserves mentioning again. Here the emphasis is on permanently archiving survey data for posterity. If you hold any survey data this is the natural home for it or at least a place for a backup copy. The site also provides effective tools to help you manage any on-going projects, particularly if it is a multi-person endeavour.

13) Election of Officers for year 2014/2015

13.1 HC wanted to comment on situation with nominations. The last few years there has been a real struggle to get people interested in CSCC let alone stand for Officer roles. As of Thursday afternoon (less than 48 hours before the meeting) there had been no proposals put forward, However Thursday evening through until gone Midnight on the Friday night before the meeting so less than 24 hours HC had received more emails as CSCC secretary then she had in probably the last 5 years. The situation was getting out of hand with people being seconded before being proposed, with people being suggested for various roles, then changing their mind,



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then going for another role. This last minute flurry led to lots of confusion, several clubs are unhappy as there was no way their clubs could discuss these last minute proposals and mandate their rep on who to choose. Thus at least one club felt it could not provide a vote. The situation was almost unique for CSCC with 3 positions being contested yet still vacant positions with no interest. BW agreed that his club had not had time to discuss properly.

HC requested that before any voting began that the meeting went through all positions to see who was now standing as the whole thing had got very confusing and no one in the room really knew who was going for what. The reason for suggesting this was so that with so much enthusiasm in the room for people to be on the committee that rather than standing against others, some people may choose to take on one of the vacant roles. DK said just start with Chair, do one at a time and take it from there which the meeting decided to do.

HC proposed and BW seconded that the constitution needed amending to stop this recent fiasco with nominations happening in future. It was also decided that the constitution needed updating on other matters such as membership. HC, AN and Chair to update constitution with HC taking the lead. Anyone to email suggestions to HC. HC and AN will produce a draft to discuss at the next meeting

Chairman KL was asked why she was standing for the role of Chair, she said she had been on Mendip since 1992 and been an active caver and digger and is a member of the BEC. She said in her former job with Somerset Wildlife Trust she couldn't get involved. She feels that its time for a change. She also feels that no Officer should hold a position for more than 2 years

GP incumbent votes for 5

KL proposed BEC seconded MNRC votes for 6

*Abstention 1 GD. **KL now Chair***

Secretary FT Votes for 6

JB proposed BEC seconded MNRC Votes for 5

*Abstention 1 DC, **FT now Secretary***

Treasurer DGC proposed Cheddar Cave Club seconded AG Votes for 9

AN Votes for 2

*Abstention 1 DC, **DGC now Treasurer***

C & A LW Votes for 11 (1 abstention BEC)

Equipment FL Votes for 12

BCA Rep JB Votes for 12

Webmaster AN Votes for 12

Regional Registry Officer AG Votes for 12

Training Officer AB Votes for 12

HC proposed a vote of thanks to GP for all his hard work as Chair and the invaluable support he provided to her as Secretary and all the other Officers, saying he would be missed as Chair

14) Forthcoming Events.

June 6-8 Digfest

June 13-15 BCA AGM party



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June 21 Wells Big Day Out
September 13 MVR Stomp
September 26-28 Hidden Earth

15) AOB

POST MEETING NOTE, it was realised that all 3 signatories were no longer in post and that unless something is minuted, nothing could be done until the next meeting. DGC requested the following to be added to the minutes and published

It was agreed that the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer (i.e. Kate Lawrence, Frank Tully and David Cooke) be the signatories on the bank account in accordance to the bank mandate. Any two of the three signatories are required to sign cheques.

DATES FOR THE MEETINGS FOR THE NEXT YEAR

Saturday 2nd August 2014
Saturday 8th November 2014
Saturday 31st January 2015
Saturday 9th May 2015 (AGM)