



Council of Southern Caving Clubs

A constituent member of the British Caving Association

www.csccl.org.uk

Minutes of General Meeting - Saturday 18 May 2019

Draft –Published 12 June 2019

1 Attendance

Voting Attendees

Alan Dempster	Avon Scouts	AD	
Alan Gray	ACG	AG	
Aubrey Newport	White Rabbit CC	AN	
Dave Cooke	Cheddar CC	DC	Treasurer/Webmaster
Dave King	MNRC	DK	
Graham Price	Cerberus SS	GP	Assistant C&A Officer
Les Williams	WCC	LW	C&A Officer
Linda Wilson	UBSS	LiW	
Tim Ball	Shepton CC	TB	

Non Voting

Alan Butcher	Shepton CC	AB	Chairman
Frank Tully	WCC	FT	Secretary

2 Apologies for Absence

Andrew Atkinson	UBSS	AA	
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3 Approval of minutes from GM 24th Nov 2018

Minutes approved.

Proposed LW, Seconded GM, Passed Unanimous

4 Chairman's report

Alan Butcher

4.1 Longleat Estates Update

No further progress. Caves continue to be accessible using the waiver system.

AB to find latest version of waiver and DC to put on website so people can easily download it.

5 Honorary secretary's report

Frank Tully

Nothing to report

6 Conservation & access officer's report

Les Williams / Graham Price

Conservation & Access Report to CSCC AGM 18 May 2019 - Graham Price

I have dealt with / am dealing with the following (numbers refer to agenda items)

6.2 Stoke Lane / Brownes Hole Access

I am still trying to determine land ownership boundaries. No recent reports of cavers having problems with security people but there have been reports of walker/locals being challenged when parking above Brownes' Hole. In meantime it is still advised to refrain from visiting Brownes' Hole.

6.3 Maesbury Swallet

Cerberus Spelaeological Society have fitted the new gate. There is some surface work remaining to seal a hole that opened near the entrance causing a collapse, which occurred due to the old gate being blocked and not permitting the stream to enter the pipes. Although the owner remains the same, the woodland is now being managed by a forestry company and a number of 'private - no access' signs have been erected with new fencing. Contact is being made to confirm the route



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to cave and other sites remains unchanged.

6.4 Loxton Cavern

Good progress has been made with reconstructing and cementing the boulder slope below the new entrance pipe, and both passages at the bottom are now accessible. It is expected that one, or possibly two more days should see all the work completed. Thanks need to be extended to members of Cerberus Spelaeological Society who have put in many hours of work reopening and stabilising the entrance. In preparation for reopening all the clubs with leaders will be contacted soon and access arrangements published in due course.

6.5 Ubley Warren

Stabilisation work in Foot & Crutch Series has been completed. Work on the roof of the main chamber is pending confirmation from the Treasurer that the £400 approved at the February meeting is available from the BCA. Materials can then be purchased and the work progressed.

6.7 Cow Hole

Hazel Manor Estate has been purchased by Yeo Valley. I have been in contact with the new landowners and access to the cave has been agreed subject to a safety inspection. A visit a while ago reported that the top of the first pitch was unstable and dangerous. As previously discussed and agreed I will install bolts as necessary on the pitches when the cave is reopened.

6.9 Elm Cave

As requested I have talked to Paul Stillman about this. The existing gate on the cave has been forced open and is completely rusted. They are planning to clear the cave of abandoned digging equipment and then construct a new gate. Paul was unable to confirm who the landowner is but it is likely to be Hanson and it may well be that if contact with them is made access may be denied. I offered CSCC assistance if necessary and to provide a CSCC lock when the gate has been reinstated.

6.10 CSCC Locks

The new locks have now been fitted to a large proportion of the listed 'CSCC caves', however I recently ran out and an additional batch of 20 locks had to be ordered at a cost of £313.80. I need to check on a couple of sites where locks have been supplied but I am told they have not been fitted. Standard locks have been fitted on some caves not on the list where there are specific access restrictions. I have also discovered or been made aware of a number of other sites which have had CSCC locks fitted in the past, some of which were not even updated to the last key change. It seems it has previously been the case that locks have been supplied for a number of sites that have not been recorded. If the system is properly administered and all sites recorded properly it is advantageous to supply standard locks for restricted access sites or digs etc so that in the future it should still be possible to gain access, even if those administering the sites have lost interest or where owners may have changed..

6.13 Contact Natural England representative & AONB representative

Contact has been made with the AONB (see below) and approaches made to put us in contact with the new NE officer.

Heale Farm Cave

A party recently visiting the cave could not get in due to the key not fitting the lock. The landowner had not changed the lock and was unaware of the problem. It is unknown who removed the lock and fitted one of their own but this doesn't give a good impression to the landowners. A new lock



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has been fitted and the access procedure remains as previously published.

Ubley Warren Reserve

I received a report that some of the mines fitted with a CSCC lock on the Ubley Warren Nature Reserve were inaccessible. On investigation I found three sites with CSCC locks and a number with locks that had been fitted by MCG. None of the locks were operational and some had completely rusted. I have been going round all the entrances and removing the locks - in some cases with great difficulty and modification to some of the gates was necessary. So far eight entrances have new CSCC locks fitted and there are probably another four to do, although the total number is confused as some are difficult to find. I have informed SWT. For information, MCG recently relocated, and are currently digging Charnel Shaft which was discovered in 1963 and subsequently 'lost'.

Blackmoor Reserve

The reserve is owned by Somerset County Council and leased to the South West Heritage Trust which was set up in 2014 to look after all Somerset Museums, the Records Centre and the various County Nature Reserves. They have concentrated on the museums and Records Centre and rather neglected the nature reserves, presumably as these don't provide an income. Conveniently, as the AONB Unit is based at Charterhouse the Trust is contracting them to take over management of the reserve and delivery of the Countryside Stewardship agreement. The past situation where CSCC locks were fitted to Stainsby's Shaft and Waterwheel Swallet was unofficial. I have been in discussion with the AONB Unit and this is now an official arrangement. They have been supplied with a CSCC key. There will be unrestricted access to both sites. A meeting is planned to discuss future maintenance of entrances etc. The Outdoor Centre has not had any interest or involvement with the Reserve for many years and they do not want to be a key holder, although I have provided them with a copy as the current edition of Mendip Underground says they control access however they are likely to say it is nothing to do with them if approached.

Access Database

I have been going through the access database updating entries as necessary. Many sites had inaccurate information and were considerably out of date. Many caves are missing altogether and need to be added. Now I have access to the database I will endeavor to keep it up to date so that it is a useful resource. Currently I do not have database permissions to add additional caves to the database and I need this facility.

A number of access entries in the current Mendip Underground are out of date and I would suggest that MCRA is asked not to include access information in the next edition.

The availability of the CSCC access database needs to be more widely publicised.

Graham Price May 2019

Report by LW

- 6.1 Longleat Estates discussed in chairman's report
- 6.6 Hunters Lodge Inn Sink - Ongoing
- 6.8 Viaduct Sink - Awaiting invoice for gate, awaiting invoice for additional costs.
- 6.10 Locks - Approval of the purchase of 20 additional locks up to £300, Passed Nem Con
- 6.11 Pigtail Risers, additional pigtail risers have been produced using the offcuts from the extra tall risers made for CNCC. Meeting approves purchase of the additional risers, passed Nem Con
- 6.12 Natural England draft consultation, Mells Valley SAC, Fussell's Iron Works site– No news



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6. Access Database DC to update GP's permissions to add new caves to the database.

7 Honorary treasurer's report

Dave Cooke

Accounts presented to the meeting.

Scrutinized by Aubrey Newport and approved by the meeting, Passed Nem Con

8 Acting Training officer's report

Alan Butcher

AB has been involved in developing the 'terms of reference and operating procedures' for the 'training committee' and QMC (Qualifications Management Committee). BCA council have now approved this for the training committee, however the QMC as a BCA standing committee this must pass a vote at the next BCA AGM in June.

9 Equipment officer's report

Andrew Atkinson

Eventually the anchor tester got to me in calibration and the anchors placed at Fairy Quarry have been tested, I'm still compiling the full results, however they look fine, I will send the result to the CSCC when they are finished. Which means that we can place anchors, which is fortunate, as I have had the attached request. I see no reason not to, subject to being able to find suitable places on the day. If it is approved I will find a team and get on with it.

We also have the list of outstanding placements which were agreed in the distant past.

Eastwater.

Charterhouse Warren Farm Swallet.

There has been a little activity on the BCA E+T, with some testing being done by the QMC on some techniques apparently used for belaying, the E+T was asked to comment on a draft report, I assume the final report will be published shortly

Andrew 17/5/19

Post meeting Note, CSCC has enough suitable anchors available for the above caves.



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10 BCA rep report

BCA AGM will be on Sunday 9th June 2019 at 10:30 Horton in Ribblesdale Village Hall, Chapel La.

The meeting instructs our representative to vote for the following:-

25.3 BCA officers are normally appointed by national council, BCA does not instruct national council as to whom it appoints. If BCA were to do this what is the point of council. CSCC do not believe that this motion should be passed for that reason.

26.1 The 'Publications and Information standing committee' should not be abolished, this is a standing committee which represents the constituent regions of BCA. Replacing this with an individual in an executive position moves too much power away from the regions to an individual in an executive position.

6.1 The 'Publications and Information Officer' should not become an executive position of BCA

6.14 The 'Publications and Information Officer' should not become an executive position of BCA

CSCC are concerned in the directions that the above motions are taking us. CSCC are against any motions which diminish the representation of regional constituent bodies on BCA and allows individual people to operate without reference back to the regions. The regional bodies have been shown historically to be an effective way that the clubs can be represented on council, CSCC do not believe that this should be changed.

CSCC have been made aware and are concerned that the Vision group is considering issues which are the remit of the Conservation and Access committee.

CSCC have been made aware and are concerned that BCA are becoming a regulatory body which dictates to the regions and potentially applies sanctions when the regions do not comply.

11 Webmasters report

Dave Cooke

Website discussed earlier.

12 Regional registry officer's report

Alan Gray

No news



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13 Amendment to CSCC Constitution

No amendments to the CSCC constitution.

14 Election of Officers

	Nominee	Proposed	Seconded	
• Chairman	AB	LiW	LW	Passed Nem Con
• Honorary secretary	FT	LW	DC	Passed Nem Con
• Honorary treasurer	TB	LW	LiW	Passed Nem Con
• Conservation and access	LW	AB	LiW	Passed Nem Con
	GP	AB	LiW	Passed Nem Con
• Training officer	None			
• Equipment officer	AA	LW	LiW	Passed Nem Con
• BCA Rep	None			
• Webmaster	DC	LiW	AG	Passed Nem Con
• Regional Registry Officer	AG	LiW	TB	Passed Nem Con
• Scrutineer of the accounts	AN	DC	LW	Passed Nem Con

15 Upcoming events

- BCA AGM YSS, Sunday 9th June. 2019
- NAMHO conference June Cwmystwyth Thursday 4th July until Monday 8th July
- BCRC Rescue Conference, 6-8th Sept 2019, Eborways Farm
- UBSS 100 years commemorative conference, 9-10 Nov 2019, Geography Dept Bristol

16 Dates of next meetings

- Saturday 14th September 2019 (GM) 10:30 Hunters
- Saturday 23th November 2019 (GM) 10:30 Hunters
- Saturday 15th February 2020 (GM) 10:30 Hunters
- Saturday 18th May 2020 (AGM) 10:30 Hunters

17 Any other business

DC There is a proposal to invite views on adding personal accident insurance to BCA membership. Please forward your views. See BCA website.

Meeting duration 2h00m