

Council of Southern Caving Clubs

A constituent member of the British Caving Association

www.csccl.org.uk

Minutes of General Meeting –

Monday 18 August 2025 - Approved

Recording of the meeting

The meeting is being recorded for the purpose of minute taking

1 Attendance

Voting Attendees

12 Voting reps

Adam Fletcher	GSS	AF	
Alan Dempster	Avon Scouts	AD	
Alan Gray	Axbridge CG	AG	
Andrea Roberts	WCMS	AR	
Dave Cooke	Cheddar CC	DC	Chair/Webmaster
Dave L King	MNRC	DLK	
Frank Tully	WCC	FT	Secretary
Judi Durber	EECC	JD	
Linda Wilson	UBSS	LW	BCA Rep
Matt Doolan	Shepton Mallet CC	MD	
Tom Harrison	MCG	TH	Treasurer
Meeting is quorate (Requiring more than 8 members)			

Non Voting Attendees (Observers)

Andrew Atkinson	UBSS	AA	Equipment
Bob Cork			
Graham Mullan	UBSS	GM	CCC Ltd rep
Peter Burgess	Wealden CMS	PB	CSCC Comms
Wayne Starsmore	BEC	WS	C&A

2 Apologies for Absence

Ruth Revell B&DCC

3 Approval of minutes

3.1 AGM 9 May 2025

Minutes approved with correction of typo,
Vote passed Unanimous

3.2 EGM 7 July 2024

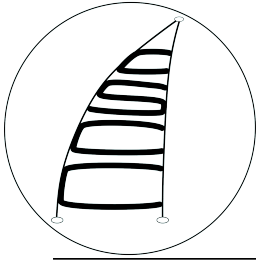
DC We need to ratify the decision made at the EGM, because the EGM was called at shorter notice than required in the constitution.

DC Vote to accept, the 'Proposal to Accept the Cheddar Caves Access Agreement', passed at the Extraordinary General Meeting, which took place on Monday 7 July 2025.

Minutes published on the website <https://csccl.org.uk/wiki/documents/start>

Vote passed Unanimous

Passed Unanimous



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3.3 Matters Arising from the Minutes

None

4 Membership and New Members

None

5 Chair's report

16:00

Report published on website, <https://csccl.org.uk/wiki/documents/start>

5.1 Cave the Sun

The cave the sun was reasonably successful but we did not get the numbers we hoped for, we got 25 attendees and needed 35 to break even, so we made a small loss of £80. We have pretty much all the expenses in, so this very close to the the final figure.

DC I think this is the sort of thing we should be doing but of course we cannot repeatedly loose money. The question is can we do something different which makes it work of have people just got out of the habit of this kind of thing

LW I think one of the problems we had was the format of the was a bit complicated. This put people off.

DC I agree, However I feel doing an activity in the day gets people together and they then are more likely to stay for the evening.

AR The date aligned with half term so I was not available, I imagine others had the same issue.

DC Another issue was it was advertised at first with a price of £17, this initially put people off. Later we reduced this to £5 but people had made up their minds. Could we structure it so we do not charge anything on the door.

FT We had non of the people who live locally turn up, so perhaps this was an issue.

DLK Having to commit and book in advance would probably have put people off too.

AF The announcement and advertising of the event was too close to the event. We need to announce these things at the start of the year so they get locked into peoples diaries.

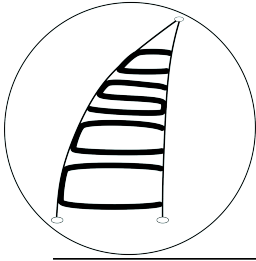
PB Cancelling the day event caused a lot of people to believe that the evening event had been cancelled. The Hunters had a fair number of cavers in it, who thought the event had been cancelled.

DC Could the reps have a think about this along with their clubs and bring their ideas back to the next meeting

5.2 BCA Financial Risk Assessment

LW The financial risk assessment was sent out at short notice with CSCC only gave a week to read and digest it. BCA have taken this on board. As it happens I voted how I felt CSCC would have wanted me to vote, which in this case was a positive vote because abstaining is a bit of a cop-out. There is a full voting record of every vote.

DC Fundamentally this is a good idea because it leads to calculating the reserves based on logic.



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6 Treasurer

34m

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The Accounts have been examined and signed off. This has instigated some debate on how we record certain aspects of the accounts in the future.

Vote to accept the accounts, Vote passed Nem Con

7 Secretary's report

From the secretaries perspective the last year has been without incident, agendas and minutes have been produced and published on the website. Nothing much more interesting than this to report on.

Frank Tully Secretary CSCC

8 C&A Report

Report published on website, <https://csccl.org.uk/wiki/documents/start>

8.1 Longleat

I attended a meeting with DC on the 8th August to sign the agreement but this was delayed by the solicitors. We have had another round of changes and hopefully we will be signing the agreement soon.

I arrange a visit to Lloyd hall in Gough's cave, mostly because no one has visited for a few years. The platforms need some work which has been organised.

8.2 Stock Hill Main Cave

WS The diggers have requested that CSCC take on the management of the cave. The gate fitted is fine but the gate cannot be opened from the inside, so cavers can be locked in.

Proposal for CSCC to take over the access management of Stock Hill Mine Cave.

Vote passed Unanimous

8.3 Cow Hole

TH I have been notified that the lid is useable, but it is on my list of lids to repair

TH Can we look at gaining access to Ubley hill pot. The associated house was sold a few years ago, however the new owners have recently landscaped their garden, in which the cave resides.

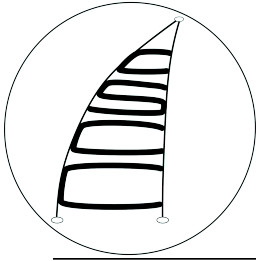
WS I will put this on my list of caves to look at.

9 Equipment and Techniques

Report published on website, <https://csccl.org.uk/wiki/documents/start>

9.1 Anchors

Hunters Hole The P hanger on Sago pot in Hunters Hole was reported as loose again, but it is within the acceptable limits



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LVS is turning into an SRT playground

Eastwater I have made a few visits to Gladman's and Lolly Pot to replace the anchors. There were lots of oddly sized anchors in various states of repair. New anchors have now been installed and the pitches are available for use.

10 Communications Officer

Report published on website, <https://csccl.org.uk/wiki/documents/start>

PB If anyone wants to shadow my role please get in touch.

11 Training Officer

No report, No training officer in post.

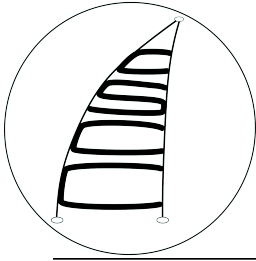
12 BCA Representative

LW CSCC BCA REPRESENTATIVES REPORT TO THE 2025 AGM

Since our last meeting, the BCA AGM has taken place. I was unable to attend due to a domestic crisis (looking after a dog recovering from a broken leg). I gather that attendance was poor, despite attempts to return to an in person event but with hybrid attendance via zoom. In total I think there were 15 present, with about a 50:50 split between in person and zoom. Set against the number of members BCA has, that is a minuscule number and disappointing for the officers who worked hard to make it a success. Low attendance can be read in different ways. One possibility is that cavers are simply not interested enough to attend a meeting of their national body and that the national body is somehow at fault for not engaging them enough. Another possibility is that as cavers are still able to go caving, there aren't enough burning issues to bring them out to a meeting. In other words, there's nothing that they want to complain enough about to do it in person. I've been in or around national and regional 'politics' for more years than I care to remember, and based on that experience, the latter explanation is the most likely one. I chaired CSCC for around 12 years and we only had packed meetings when, for whatever reason, a cave was closed or there was a significant perceived or actual threat (even the suggested installation of a spiral staircase to turn Bar Pot into a show cave was enough to pack a meeting in the Hunters!). Experience across a range of organisations I belong to shows that this holds true whatever the subject matter, so I certainly don't feel that BCA are in any way to blame for low engagement at the AGM.

The two motions put the membership by electronic vote after the meeting both passed, with about 250 people engaging in the voting process.

At the last BCA Council meeting, Council had to consider two matters of particular and linked importance, namely the Business Risk Assessment and the proposed fee increase. I was one of the small group who worked with Chris Bolton, BCA Treasurer to read and comment on the drafts. I did this on two occasions and thought this was an excellent document and I agreed with the assessments and the conclusions. Tied to this was the question of the level of reserves BCA needs to hold, which is also inextricably linked to the question of the membership fees. BCA appreciates that our member clubs had very little time to digest these documents when I was cleared to send these out, as Chris wanted Council to have seen them first. In future, the executive will aim to send out major papers out in advance of the formal meeting agendas to allow time for more consideration by the clubs.



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I received a query from one member club (the BEC) in advance of the meeting, which I passed on. I also received a request from our chair to seek deferral of the decisions on the Risk Assessment the level of reserves and, by extension, the fee increase. I raised these points, as requested. The short answer was that the Risk Assessment, once adopted, could always be revised by later discussion and agreement, but the one thing Chris as Treasurer was unwilling to compromise on was the level of reserves as BCA can't keep high reserves without a further increase beyond the one already proposed. He also stated that it would not be possible to offer discounted rates to club members as on that basis, the rates for direct individual members would need to increase further. On that basis, I voted in favour of accepting the Business Risk Assessment and the proposed fee increase.

Chris commented that he intended to make it clearer that clubs receive more benefits through BCA than simply insurance and he was putting together information for further comms in that regard.

Following the meeting, Chris sent me, as promised, a longer reply to the points raised by the BEC regarding fees, and in particular the fees relating to the 'non-caving' members. I circulated this to all clubs as all clubs had seen the initial comments. Following this, I had further dialogue with the BEC regarding Chris' reply and I have passed all the comments on to him as he was keen to have the feedback. He is still considering several of the points that I passed on.

The only other feedback I received was from a member club (White Rabbit) who are not a member of BCA and felt that Chris' response in some way implied that membership of BCA for clubs was a necessity. I confirmed that this was not the case and that Chris' reply was in the context of members, not non members. I accepted their comments that an effective insurance monopoly is not necessarily healthy but this has always been the case apart from a brief period many years ago when DCA had it's own insurance scheme and unless someone is able to set up another viable scheme, the insurance monopoly will remain with the national body, which is not dissimilar to the situation for other outdoor sports.

Following the last CSCC meeting, Joshitha Shivkumar came forward and offered to shadow me in the BCA role. I was delighted by the offer and this was accepted by the officers. Joshitha has now been added to the mailing lists for CSCC officers and BCA council. She attended the last BCA Council meeting as well. BCA are also keen to bring in some form of officer shadowing or 'deputy' roles and are watching how this works out for CSCC with interest.

The length of time it has taken to deal with both this report and the correspondence before and after the meeting have made the comment in my last report that 'the job is not onerous' something of an underestimate! I hope Joshitha hasn't been put off by this, but honestly, the job isn't usually this time-consuming ...

As ever, if you have any questions or issues relating to BCA, please contact me and I'll do my best to respond/help where I can.

Linda Wilson

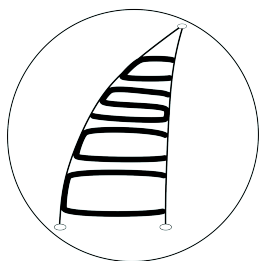
Joshitha Shivkumar

BCA Representative(s)

13.08.25

13 IT Officer's Report

Webmasters report is in the newsletter. <https://csccl.org.uk/wiki/documents/start>



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DC The website has finally been moved off the BCA Server onto our new server. The provider chosen is Hetzner.

14 Forthcoming events

26-28 Sept 2025 Hidden Earth, Llangollen

11-12 Oct 2025 BCRA Cave Science Symposium, Department of geographical sciences in Bristol, Lots of short talks on Saturday and various field trips on Sunday.

15 AOB

None

16 CSCC Significant dates

Note. This is a list of important dates around the current CSCC year, which runs AGM to AGM. The dates of the AGM, notifications and deadlines are defined in the constitution, this is a reminder. Dates of meetings are initially decided at the AGM however they can be changed. Please consult the latest copy of the minutes or the agenda on the website.

Please note Meetings have been spaced evenly throughout the year, following the AGM which is fixed in the constitution and is traditionally the second Saturday in May.

Meeting Dates

Monday	18 August 2025	19:00	GM	Zoom
Monday	10 Nov 2025	19:00	GM	Zoom
Monday	02 Feb 2026	23:59	Notification to of AGM, <u>This is the notification.</u>	
Monday	9 Feb 2026	19:00	GM	Zoom
Friday	13 March 2026	23:59	Deadline for AGM nominations	
Friday	13 March 2026	19:00	Deadline for AGM constitutional amendments	
Tuesday	1 April 2026	23:59	Notification to members of AGM nominations	
Friday	8 May 2026	19:00	AGM	Zoom

Corrections

Minor typo correction when being approved