



Council of Southern Caving Clubs

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

General Meeting 12.02.11, Hunters Lodge Inn, Priddy

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

Meeting started at 10.06am.

1) Minutes of the previous meeting (06.11.10)

Proposed FL seconded AG accepted nem com

2) Actions from previous meeting: -

5.4 (from minutes 31.07.10) Update on bolts in Black Hole Swildons. FL & DGC **ONGOING**

8.7 (from minutes 31.07.10) Note to be put on the web advising people to be careful if removing graffiti from caves. LW **DONE**

3.1 Need for comprehensive contact list for CSCC members. HC **ONGOING**

4.1 Update on Geopark, future of AONB and Natural England.GP **TAKE UNDER ITEM 4**

4.2 Note to be put on website regarding the barriers at Blackdown and lack of parking for caves in this area.GP **DONE**

6.1 Accounts for 2009-2010 are now ready for scrutinising. **AN ONGOING**

6.3 DC to go to bank to sort out tax as account currently taxed at source and needs to be changed (item 7.3 of previous meeting) **DC ONGOING**

7.4 Updating descriptions for access for Cuckoo Cleeves and other caves for the new Mendip Underground. **LW and AN TAKE UNDER ITEM 7**

7.5 Compton Martin Ochre Mine (8.2 of previous minutes), gate has been made but yet to be fitted. **ONGOING**

7.7 Update on Viaduct Sink LW. **ONGOING**

9.5 Need to get costs and ideas on new drill. FL **TAKE UNDER ITEM 10**

10.4 BCA need a list of "Court ready technical experts", these are cavers with specialist technical caving expertise who could be trained to be witnesses in court if ever needed. However the meeting decided further clarification was needed on this as two people who attended the meeting had a different impression of exactly what this means. DGC **TAKE UNDER ITEM 11**



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3) Other Matters arising from the previous meeting

3.1 AB raised concerns from Priddy Parish Council that an amount of red clay has been placed around the entrance to Priddy Green Sink; this is not a local clay and needs to be removed. LW commented that although the CSCC carried out works to the entrance to make it safe after a hole appeared they had no knowledge of, nor were responsible for the red clay. No action needed.

4) Chairman's Report

4.1 (Item 4.1 of previous minutes) No further news on the Geopark or Natural England, however the update on AONB show cutbacks don't appear to be as bad as first thought although still await further details.

4.2 GP has negotiated a key for the barriers on Blackdown for MCR use only but a key can be requested for special occasions such as rescue practices.

Many people are concerned about the situation with the barriers and the lack of public consultation and the use of public funds without this consultation. There are also concerns that this will set a precedent to close other areas to public access.

Parking is a big problem in this area now, particularly on a Wednesday night (digging night) due to and several cave digging parties needing to park. Any major issues cavers should contact GP with specific times when the parking is bad so he can pass on to the relevant people. At the next AONB meeting GP will ask the Mendip Society (who represent user groups) to raise the issues of parking on Blackdown on behalf of the caving community

4.3 GP was contacted by BEC rep FL regarding a planning application for stables at Underbarrow Farm, Priddy. The BEC were concerned about possible pollution of ground water and the affects of this pollution on the local caves. GP wrote to the Planning Department at Mendip District Council to raise their awareness of this.

5) Secretary's Report.

5.1 Email received from Avon & Somerset Constabulary Caving Section, asking about how to rejoin the CSCC since their membership had lapsed a few years ago, who the best people to contact were and how to get a CSCC key. HC to reply to this email with details. **(Post meeting note DONE 16.02.11)**

5.2 Email received from MCG asking for Battery Swallet to be added to the CSCC access database on the website. This was agreed and in the absence of DGC, HC to email details to LW to put on web. **(Post meeting note DONE 21.02.11)**

6) Treasurer's Report.

6.1 2009/2010 accounts now ready for AN to scrutinise GP thanked DC for getting the accounts in order **ACTION AN**

6.2 DC to put in claim to BCA treasurer for monies owed. **ACTION DC**

7) Conservation & Access Officer's Report

7.1 An issue has arisen over access to the 3 Loxton Caves (Loxton Cave, Loxton Cavern and Loxton Quarry Cave). Recently the Parish Council realised they didn't have a key to the caves and changed the locks. The problem with this action is that Loxton Cavern is a leader only trip and needs a different key to the other 2 caves but under the Parish Council system, one key fits all. The meeting concluded that



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the locks are left as they are but LW to talk to Parish Council about putting a different lock on Loxton Cavern. **ACTION LW**

7.2 Darkplaces are working hard to keep gates to Box Mines secure as they regularly need work doing to them

7.3 It has been brought to the attention of the CSCC that land and mines adjacent to Brownes Folly Mine (Monkton Farleigh Quarry) have changed ownership. Some employees of the new owner - Restore (secure document management company) have been acting in an intimidating manner towards cavers/people parking on the road and accessing the land adjacent to them, including shouting and leaving notes on cars.

People/cavers can park legally on the public highway and have a legitimate access to Brownes Folly Mine and should not be intimidated so as not to visit. People are asked to stay away from Restores property (Monkton Farleigh Quarry), but if threatened or intimidated in any way by Restore to report any incidents to the police and/or to CSCC C&A Officer. Although no action may initially be taken by the police, by building up a log of incidents/evidence eventually something will have to be done. LW to put note to this effect on the website. **ACTION LW**

7.4 Stainsbys shaft has been vandalised again. LW suggests putting a clear sign up on entrance telling people how to get access. LW asked HC to let MCG diggers know that costs incurred for mending entrance can be claimed back from BCA. **(Post meeting note Stainsbys diggers emailed)**

7.5 Any new gates to be fitted to cave/mine entrances will in the future be galvanised as although more expensive will last longer, existing gates will not be galvanised.

7.6 Gate to Priddy Green Sink either needs repairing or replacing as currently it can't be locked from the inside. This means that the gate is either left unlocked during a trip or someone on the outside needs to lock cavers in when they go underground which poses the scenario of a group being locked in if their trip needs to be aborted. **ACTION LW**

7.7 Gate on entrance to White Pit is causing problems such as not being open able from the inside, access is currently only through BEC diggers. LW asked if CSCC would fund new gate, meeting agreed this was acceptable, AN pointed out need for new gate to allow for ventilation as high levels of CO2 come out of the entrance in the summer

7.8 (7.4 of previous minutes) LW and AN have completed amended description for Cuckoo Cleeves for the new Mendip Underground, access descriptions for other caves still to do. LW to speak to Richard Witcombe to ask that access descriptions are kept loose in the publication, AG said that access procedures will be correct at time of publication but the advice will be that where possible people should check the CSCC website for the latest information

7.9 Meeting was held on 20 January 2011 at the National Trust Office at Burton The National Trust (NT) was interested in the caves on their land especially those that are locked which are Shute Shelve Cavern (SSC), Bone Hole (BH) and Coral Cave. It seems as though the NT have not had or have lost the official written permission to explore these caves although the only two that are being dug at this point in time are SSC and BH. Thus the NT wish to obtain agreement with caving clubs who control access to caves and will be drafting an agreement for the clubs to sign (Shute Shelve Cavern [ACG], Bone Hole [MCG] and Coral Cave [CSCC]) and



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this should be available in the next week or so. AG was given a copy of the NT guidelines [Guidance Note No. RAG 2/2008] for Caving and Mine Exploration on their land and they are very flexible and sensible. To quote one paragraph – “Ensure there is adequate consultation prior to digging or the use of explosives for exploration, research and rescue purposes.”

AG will pass this draft agreement to CSCC, MCG and ACG for comment before returning the marked up copy to the NT.

CSCC will accept responsibility for all cave gates/caves on NT land in our region and if need be CSCC will sort out access to any site in our region. It would be useful for NT to consult CSCC on any cave/mine related issues.

7.10 AN update on Charterhouse tunnel to bypass Frozen Cascade. At time of meeting, only 5 bangs have occurred and not much progress made therefore will take a lot longer than first thought, will also cost more in bang then first estimated. As Conservation and Access Committee have already agreed that the project is for conservation, DC to talk to treasurer of BCA to decide if BCA can fund all the bang, allowing the £200 donated each by CSCC and CCCLtd to be put towards other projects. Action DC.

Some concerns about Charterhouse not being open to cavers as early as expected but conservation must come first.

9) Training Officer's Report

9.1 Surveying weekend 19/20th Feb has been well advertised, at time of meeting still had 3 places available. Course will be paperless using distos and mapping on computers (Charterhouse has been surveyed this way). CSCC has applied to Training Committee for £100 to cover costs for this course.

9.2 Email received from Royal Geographic Society regarding joining a trip to somewhere remote, it was unclear from the email exactly what they wanted and it was thought that it was probably better for them to contact Ghar Parau for expeditions abroad. **ACTION DI TO REPLY**

9.3 Next meeting is 15.02.11 but no one can go, meeting is 10am on Tuesday morning, very inconvenient for workers. It is important for someone to attend however the next meeting is the same day as the CSCC AGM on 14 May 2011.

9.4 Minutes of Training Committee meeting to be emailed to AB to do short summary for inclusion in minutes. **ACTION HC (DONE) and AB.**

10) Equipment Officer's Report.

10.1 Bolting demonstration on 20 November 2010 was well attended. Morning session at quarry went well followed by lunch at the Hunters and then the afternoon down Rhino Rift thanks to Andrew Atkinson (AA) for his time and excellent demonstration.

10.2 Next E&T committee on 12th March, before then need to reply to letter from Nick Williams regarding the return of the drill and hangers. HC to write brief letter saying “given that the equipment and materials held by the CSCC for the purpose of bolting was funded by the BCA, the CSCC will only respond to a specific request for its transfer to the E&T committee from the BCA National Council.” **ACTION HC (Post meeting note DONE)**



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10.3 FL asked if it is possible for AA to claim for mileage for the demonstration on 20th November, meeting confirmed that anyone who attended the session could claim mileage.

10.4 GB pitch up to ladder dig, FL wants to ask CCC Ltd if pitch can be rigged differently as she finds it hard to rig the ladder from the bottom and it is exposed as not possible to life line while rigging, The meeting concluded that it was not a CSCC matter and that FL as an individual could make the suggestion to CCC Ltd.

10.5 (Item 9.5 of previous minutes) FL has researched various drills and there is little difference between them, good and bad points with them all. Meeting authorised FL to purchase a suitable drill and liaise with DC to get payment.

ACTION FL

11) BCA Rep's Report

11.1 (item 10.4 of previous minutes) Court ready experts are not practical as it is impossible to know who will need to be called and for what reason, impossible to predict the scenario, could train several people in specific areas but may never be needed, it will always depend on incident.

11.2 BCA is producing a guide on radon for sport caves.

12) Webmaster's Report

12.1 DGC spent some time over the Christmas break enhancing the On-line Access Guide. From the users point of view it is slightly easier to use and looks prettier. From an administrative point of view DGC can now make updates to the database in real time rather than by a long-winded export then import procedure.

DGC has updated the outstanding access changes that I know of. If anyone knows of other changes or errors please let DGC know.

13) Forthcoming Events.

13.1 Hidden Earth Monmouth Sept 23-25 2011 (TBC)

13.2 SMCC sponsored prusik June 2011

14) 14.1 Date of the next meeting to be held at 10 am at the Hunters Lodge Inn, Priddy. Saturday 14 May 2011. HC requested written Officer reports before the meeting.

15) AOB

15.1 FL wanted clarification about voting at the AGM, GP confirmed that only club reps could vote.

15.2 AB asked if date of AGM could be changed as he could not make it as it clashed with the SMCC AGM. HC explained the difficulties in changing dates as people put them in their diaries when set at the AGM and arrange other things around them. Last time a meeting date was changed, even less people could make it than on the original date

Meeting Closed: 12:30