

BRITISH CAVING ASSOCIATION



Meeting of the BCA National Council was held on Saturday 15 October 2005 at Hurst Farm Barn,
Cutler's Lane, Castlemorton Common, MALVERN WR13 6LF

Present –

Mick Day (MD) BCA Chairman
Paula Grgich-Warke (PGW) BCA Secretary
David Judson (DJ) BCA Legal & Insurance Officer, BCRA Representative
Sue Mabbett (SM) CCC Chairman
Jenny Potts (JP) DCA Representative to BCA
Steve King (SK) CSCC Secretary
Patrick Hall (PH) Club Representative, South Wales CC
Chris Broome (CB) Club Representative, Masson CG
Emma Porter (EP) Individual Member Representative

Apologies – Jonathan Roberts (JR), Elsie Little (EL), Idris Williams (IW), Les Williams (LW), Bob Mehew (BM), Nick Williams (NW), Owen Clarke, David Cooke (DC), Steve Holding (SH)

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME: 10:48
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – See above
3. APPLICATIONS FOR CLUB MEMBERSHIP – None received
4. MINUTES OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING OF 11 JUNE 2005 – Minutes were circulated and comments requested. An apology was made by the secretary that a final version was not made available sooner; however, with input from board members, this should no longer be a problem.
Minutes were amended as follows: *MD has hand noted David Cooke's comments as below:*
"The BCA Treasurer should indicate what format Regional Council accounts should be presented in, and ensure that all Regional Council financial statements are audited and available for inspection by all BCA Members before any funding is agreed.
Additionally, section 6.3 was corrected to read LIQUOR LICENSING, and does not refer to licensing issues in general.
The minutes were approved as amended.
5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING OF 11 JUNE 2005
Availability of minutes, including shared files on the web page was discussed. PGW will be formulating a procedure for producing agendas and minutes and will create downloadable templates for each, and will liaise with web master to add to web page.

OFFICERS REPORTS

6. CHAIRMAN – See notes at hand
 - 6.1 Funding issues – MDs circulated email of 23 September was discussed. MD is attending a meeting with other principals of non-olympic sports to discuss a common approach. A policy regarding future funding will need to be addressed by BCA due to expected changes. This represents a total review of BCA budget procedures to include a formal budgeting and accounting process for future grant returns.
 - 6.2 General difficulties of organisation were discussed including: membership dissatisfaction, renewal difficulties, communications problems (newsletter, web), financial implications of grant loss, providing "value for money" to members, lack of club memberships selecting regions, etc. MD suggested that NW look into the software issues to see if improvements can be made in

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the renewal process. PGW suggested that templates (downloadable from web site) be made available to ensure that Lynne receives info in a consistent format. **Action:** PGW to meet (via phone or otherwise) with Nick & Lynne to discuss renewal procedures.

- 6.3 2006 membership renewal rates were discussed. The price will be dependent upon insurance renewal figures. Via phone, a conversation with Nick resulted in a general consensus that rates cannot be set until we have this information. **Action:** Chairman, Insurance and treasurer will discuss how to address the setting of dues in the future. A formalized protocol is required. **Action:** Membership Secretary must send access permits and insurance info out as a priority upon receipt (landowner certificates and club access certificates). Membership cards will be given next priority
- 6.4 Working at height – HSE is setting up a complex hierarchy with BCA input. We will still, as ordinary cavers, not be included in the legislation.
- 6.5 AGM 25th March 2006 – The date and venue must be published by 31st December. If newsletter with this information can not be sent in time, a mail merge will be required. MD will discuss this with editor.
- 6.6 A regional treasurers meeting has not been conducted for some time. Action: JR to set up a meeting ASAP.

Motion: DIM fee (publications & membership fee) stays the same CIM kept as it is for 2005 2nd DCA (JP) Unanimous

7. SECRETARY – Communication issues were discussed. PGW will submit a letter or article and regular news items and announcements to Descent Magazine. **Action:** PGW to contact Descent.
8. TREASURER – See above discussion. BCA & NCA accounts are still running parallel. Bob Mehew continues to administer NCA account and is overseeing BCA accounts. **Action:** MD will contact bank to establish fund transfer between accounts. End of year accounting will be completed by JR – BCA and BM – NCA.
9. CONSERVATION OFFICER – EL provided electronic report. A Bat Conservation Trust publication was distributed to regions and other groups. Funding for conservation and access was discussed. An annual grant scheme as an incentive for installing bat friendly gates was also discussed. This will be considered in the future. The deteriorating access situation at Merstham Mines in Surrey was highlighted by SK. There is a new land owner who is now refusing all access and who does not seem well disposed towards cavers/mine explorers. The Wealden CMS, who have been the local liaison for many years, and the CSCC have already received threats of legal action (though none have yet materialised). DJ has spoken to the WCMS Mines Agent. Council agreed to keep a watching brief
10. TRAINING OFFICER – The training officer was not present and no report was received. The following items were discussed:

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- a. Possible loss of funding from the Sports Council. BM has been looking at funding options. MD will be meeting with other outdoor organisation reps with the same concerns, and will report separately.
 - b. Alternative Administration of Training Scheme (CIC/LCMLA) – The group discussed insurance coverage concerns for CICs. DJ will assess our policy for this coverage.
11. EQUIPMENT OFFICER – No report was received. The officer has not been in contact for some time, and does not appear to be available by current contact details. Locating a new equipment officer was discussed. The shortage of bolt inspectors was discussed. Wales is currently without a bolt inspector due to timing of CIC renewals. SM will contact LW to arrange for inspection.
12. EDITOR – Lack of newsletter publication was discussed. We are not providing editor with information needed to create satisfactory content. We need a formal set of dates and be able to supply content to the editor according to a set schedule to ensure publication dates targets are met. Publication dates of March 15, June 15, Sept 15 were suggested. Additional notification about the AGM agenda must go out in February via separate mailing. **Action:** MD will contact editor to establish time frames for publication and receipt of information deadlines. Apportionment of printing was discussed. Many excess copies have were sent to the newsletter editor, who does not need them. The question was raised as to whether these copies can be sent directly to training, admin, publication officer, secretary, etc. **Action:** Editor to contact Pagefast to establish if copies can be sent to several destinations.
13. PUBLICATIONS & INFORMATION OFFICER – The P&I Officer was not present and no report was received. Communications with members was discussed as **the** most immediate concern. A number of specific aspects were identified which were emphasised as requiring improvement including the Newsletter (see Minutes section 12), website (see Minutes section 18) and general communications (see Minutes sections 6.2 and 7).
14. LEGAL & INSURANCE OFFICER – See discussion under Chairman's report. DJ is renewing and updating the regulations which will be published as *Cave Studies #12 Underground Britain – Legal and Insurance Issues (BCRA Cave Studies Series 12)*. Pending details of travel insurance policy, the publication is otherwise ready for printing. DJ requested that funding for printing be allocated up front, with sales of the publication reimbursing this cost.
- Motion to allocate the required funding for publication made by PH 2nd by JP, unanimous**
15. INSURANCE MANAGER – The premium notice for 2006 is expected shortly. A decision on membership dues will be made when this figure is available.
16. CONVENOR, RADON WORKING PARTY – The current publication is being reviewed in light of new legislation.
17. NATIONAL CAVE REGISTRY CO-ORDINATOR – An electronic report was provided by DC. Copyright information regarding cave descriptions and details was discussed. It was agreed that this information is not an infringement of copyright and as such can be included in the registry.

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18. WEBMASTER – No report received. Concerns over the lack of updates and poor or dead links were discussed. MD is to contact webmaster for update.

19. INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE – No report received

OTHER

20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

20.1JP presented an updated version of the brochure “So You Want To Go Caving” and provided a copy of the old version for comparison and comment. **Action:** Comments should be sent to JP via email

20.2Hidden Earth – email comments by DC were discussed. For tax purposes, BCRA will remain the responsible body for HE in the future. Hidden Earth will be held in Derbyshire in 2006, although the actual venue has not yet been agreed.

20.3Matters arising from BCRA General Meeting 2005 - BCRA voted to merge with BCA as proposed.

20.4DC proposed that the club constitution guidelines be amended as follows: 1) The club has “a major aim or objective that is in support of the sport of caving, cave science, cave conservation or caver training” AND 2) pertinent to section 3.2 “To support the sport of caving, cave conservation, cave science, caver training and caving equipment safety, directly or indirectly”. At the moment this will only be a change to the informal guidelines as posted on the web site. **Action:** Webmaster to update guidelines as noted.

20.5Minutes of regional councils were discussed. Not all regions are circulating their minutes. Better circulation of minutes will be encouraged in the future

21. DATE, TIME & PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

14 January 2006 at Alvechurch Church Hall, Alvechurch

Meeting adjourned 5:10 pm

Recorded by: Paula Grgich-Warke, Rock House, Station Hill, Chudleigh DEVON TQ13 0EE
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