



**Minutes of BCA Council Meeting held on Saturday, 5th October 2013
at My Big Meeting Room, Pinvin, Worcestershire**

Present:

Andy Eavis (AE)	BCA Chairman
Paul Ibberson (PI)	BCA Treasurer
Nigel Ball (NB)	BCA Training Officer
Nick Williams (NW)	BCA Equipment & Techniques Officer
David Judson (DJu)	BCA Legal & Insurance Officer
Les Williams (LW)	BCA Publications & Information Officer / Webmaster / 2016 Convenor
Robin Weare (RW)	Cambrian Rep.
Jenny Potts (JP)	DCA Rep.
David Jean (DJe)	DCUC Rep.
Alan Finch (AF)	WPCST Rep.
Stephan Nantynczuk (SN)	ACI Rep.
Idris Williams (IW)	ASCT Rep.
David Checkley (DCh)	BCRA Chairman
Emma Porter (EP)	BCRC Rep. / Club Rep. 2
Boyd Potts (BP)	Club Rep. 3
Owen Clarke (OC)	Club Rep. 4
Bernie Woodley (BW)	Individual Member Rep. 1
Matt Wire (MW)	Individual Member Rep. 3
David Cooke (DC)	BCA Cave-Registry / IT Working Group / Club Rep. 1
Mick Day (MD)	BCA President
Andrew Hinde (AH)	Co-opted as BCA Conservation & Access Officer

The meeting commenced at 10:58am.

1. Chairman's Welcome

AE welcomed everyone to the meeting. He explained that the Secretary, Damian Weare, was not able to attend this meeting as he was collecting his wife from hospital after the birth of their son. Jenny Potts had agreed to take the Minutes.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from: Clark Friend, Henry Rockliff, Steve Holding, Chris Jewell, Ged Campion, Damian Weare, Glenn Jones, Bob Mehew, Ruth Allan and Ben Heaney.

3. Applications for Club Membership

The Nidderdale Caving Club has provided the correct paperwork and payment to become a BCA Member Club.

Proposal: *to accept the Nidderdale Caving Club as a Member Club.*

Prop: NW, Sec: LW *agreed unanimously.*

4. Minutes of the last Council Meeting on 16th June 2013 (previously circulated)

DW: The meeting actually took place at The Rotary Centre, Castleton. Amendment noted.

Signed with amendments agreed.

Proposal: *to accept the amended Minutes from 16th June 2013 as a true record*

Prop: NW, Sec: JP. *agreed unanimously*

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the last Council Meeting

Review of Action Log

Action 36 (Manual of Operations): *deferred*

Action 54 (Liaise with SUI): *In progress.*

Action 83 (Produce Asset Register): *In progress - nearly complete, ready for next meeting.*

Action 97 (T/As working as Individuals): Ongoing.

Action 104 (Ask at TC for Potential CP Officer): Ongoing – to be discussed at the next meeting.

Action 109 (Review of Subscription Structure): Ongoing & progress being made - report to next meeting.

Action 112 (Costed Proposal for Try Caving Lights): Superseded.

Action 113 (Adopt a Club Scheme) Ongoing.

Action 115 (Summary of Landowner Insurance Benefits) Ongoing.

Action 124 (Access & Commercial Caving Statement) see Secretary's Report.

Action 127 (Write to Independent Examiner) Complete.

Action 128 (AGM Reporting Year) see Secretary's Report.

Action 129 (Proposal on C&A Travel) see Treasurer's Report.

Action 130 (Report on Direct Electronic Communication) see Appendix 2

Officers' Reports

6. Chairman (written report previously circulated)

As I am just back from a month of 3D laser scanning in China, this report is going to be rather short.

Since the last Council Meeting and AGM in Derbyshire there have been a number of caving events, particularly the International Congress in Brno. Here British caving had a large and excellent stand, which had representation from a number of British organisations, including BCA and BCRA. Many thanks to the personnel involved with manning that stand and thanks to the 70 plus British delegates who went to Brno. I know a good time was had by all.

The magazine Speleology is being revamped under David Gibson, the new Senior Editor, with a number of sub-editors. They are hoping to publish their first edition in December, so we look forward very much to that.

We are missing Elsie Little's input into BCA but it is hoped that the vacancy for an Access & Conservation Officer will be filled very shortly.

There are on-going discussions on a number of matters which will no doubt come up at the various reports at this Council Meeting, including access for professional cavers.

As I said in my report to the 2014 Handbook, I should like to apologise for being unable to sort out the misunderstanding within the E&T Committee. I didn't fully appreciate the misunderstanding that had taken place and therefore was slow at sorting it out. I apologise for this. I hope the situation is now fully understood and we can work together to make British caving safer.

I look forward to full representation from the Regions on our BCA Council.

I am writing this report just before Hidden Earth. I am sure it's going to be another successful event, I am looking forward to it immensely and I am sure I will meet many enthusiastic British cavers.

As ever, if anybody has any particular item they think I can help with as Chairman of the British Caving Association, I am always available for people to contact me.

Many thanks to the Council for their help and a warm welcome to our new Council Members. I hope to see you all on 5th October 2013.

Andy Eavis

AE: Andrew Hinde is proposed as the person to be co-opted to the post of BCA C&A Officer until the AGM 2014.

JP: As some of those present did not know Andrew, JP explained that he was CNCC's Conservation Officer and was well known to DCA Conservation Officers with whom he had worked in the past. He was also well known to members of BCRA Council. He had been involved in restoring access to Fairy Hole in Weardale after it had been closed for many years due to quarrying. After some discussion this co-option was accepted.

AE: Noted that AH was travelling to the meeting with DCh but they had been delayed by traffic holdups and would be arriving shortly.

The remainder of the Chairman's Report was accepted without discussion.

7. Secretary (written report previously circulated)

Possible Apologies: *At the time of writing I do not know whether or not I will be able to make the meeting on Saturday. My second child is due any day soon, and if my wife has still not given birth by the end of next week, then I cannot really justify being 200 miles away from home and will have to send my apologies.*

AGM Weekend: *Although the AGM weekend seems like a long while ago, this is actually our first meeting since then and I think it is worth reflecting. I have received a fair quantity of positive feedback following the weekend and I think we can safely*

conclude the event was a success. Thanks for this are due to a large number of people, most of whom I think I have now managed to thank personally. Inevitably for a first attempt, though, there were a few mistakes, the most notable of which was probably having both a band and a disco. With hindsight this was overkill and, as good as the band were, we could have done without them and saved some money. The hog was also a lot of hard work and we could probably have made do with a much simpler BBQ. Finally we failed to plan for any post-event news articles and probably should, at the very least, have put someone in charge of taking some usable photographs. Any further thoughts for next year will be much appreciated. It is clear following this year's success that next year's event is likely to attract greater numbers and that planning, therefore, needs to be tightened up. Unfortunately we are not able to confirm the location of next year's event yet, but we hope to do so soon. Again, many thanks to the large number of people who made this year's event such a success and we are now very much looking for volunteers to help with next year's.

Access & Commercial Caving: At January's meeting Council asked Executive to investigate the access difficulties facing commercial cavers. After widespread consultation we pulled together a draft document included in Appendix 1, which was circulated fairly widely in June with a view to interested parties feeding back to their various reps on Council before this meeting. I have also received two written submissions which are included here for Council's information. We need to decide how we should proceed.

After some reflection I think it would be wise to add a further paragraph expressing our general thanks to landowners, telling them how we are responsible, insured, take their interests into account and generally enjoy excellent relations with landowners as a result. It is, after all, quite possible that any leaflet we do produce may be the only direct communication between BCA and a landowner and we should, therefore, not necessarily assume anything.

AGM Reporting Year: There was considerable discussion at the AGM this year about whether reports to the meeting should be for the calendar year (i.e. for the 2014 AGM 1st January 2013-31st December 2013) or for the period since the last AGM (i.e. June 2013-May 2014). This resulted in an action on me to consider the issue and report to Council. While there is no real doubt that "officially" we should be reporting for the calendar year, it does seem a little odd that we do not also take the opportunity to inform the membership about any more recent developments. I am, therefore, minded to suggest that reports should always be written to cover the previous calendar year, but should also generally end with a couple of paragraphs reflecting on more recent developments and also looking forward to the year ahead. That way discussion at the meeting has current relevance, while also allowing for important retrospective scrutiny.

Damian Weare

The Secretary's Report was accepted without discussion at this point but we returned to it later under item 24.1.

8. Treasurer (written report previously circulated)

The period since the June Council meeting has coincided with the busiest period of the year in the day job, plus the summer holiday period, which has unfortunately not lent itself to making a great deal of forward progress. However, I have been able to get up to date on a few things, especially the latest position on the current year accounts, and this has led in neatly to the preparation of the 2014 Budget. A draft of the latter will be available for consideration by Council. Other day to day matters have been dealt with, including the timely payment of our tax bill for 2012. The accompanying tax return will be submitted shortly. By the time of the meeting, an Asset Register will be complete in readiness for discussions on renewal of insurance arrangements for 2014; the question of premium is currently the main imponderable for the 2014 Budget.

One other significant action outstanding has been the issue of travel expenses for volunteers on C&A work. This has been batted around between various interested parties, but remains a fairly vexed issue. Whilst we have a general consensus that we should try to ensure volunteers are not financially disadvantaged, I can only conclude that it is potentially a liability of such unknown magnitude that I feel unable to recommend anything other than providing for travel expenses to be allowable within the annual "self-certified" limit (currently £500). There is a slight problem in that some C&A travel has already been paid (or recommended to be paid) in excess of that level, but I take the view that this commitment should be honoured and a line drawn thereafter. I would, however, leave the option for any Regional Council which feels it has a specific, significant C&A volunteer travel situation to approach the Finance Committee with a project funding request as with normal RCC arrangements. There is no guarantee that further funding will be forthcoming, but at least this will give the possibility of support in line with the general aim. I will be asking that Council endorse this position.

Other than the above, I have no other major issues to report. The plan for the next couple of months will be to keep things on an even keel in the run-up to the end of the year and to look to move things forward as time permits.

Paul Ibberson

- PI: Introduced his Budget for 2014. He has arranged for payment of the tax bill in good time. He has drawn up a budget for 2014 and sees no reason to increase the subscriptions. He went through the projected budget in detail and explained all the issues.
- NW: Noted that Insurance payment will remain the same for the coming year but re-negotiations would take place later in 2014 for the next 3-year period, which would start in 2015.
- PI: Agreed that some C&A travel expenses would be allowable within the overall C&A self-certified limit of £500 for

the region.

RW: Would prefer the status quo to stand as this could lead to considerable excess C&A expenditure.

PI: Agreed that excess over and above the £500 would have to be notified in advance and be subject to agreement before it was paid.

RW: Very concerned and CCC will continue not to pay travel expenses.

DC: Feels if we are prepared to pay travel for Officers to attend meetings, we should be prepared to pay working volunteers their travel expenses.

JP: DCA will continue to pay C&A travel expenses.

NW: Queried whether there needed to be an increase in insurance for equipment (i.e. Hidden Earth gear) and mobile kit. We need to ensure that the Asset Register is up to date and this would be checked by DC and LW.

AE: Confirmed that, as there is no increase in P.L. insurance payments required for 2014, subscriptions would not be increased.

The remainder of the Treasurer's Report was accepted without discussion.

9. Conservation & Access

No report.

10. Equipment & Techniques (written report previously circulated)

I am grateful to Bob Mehew for a significant effort over the summer to try to quantify the risk associated with the use of 304/A2 stainless 'P' anchors as opposed to 316/A4 anchors. This has been necessary due to a supplier error in the delivery of the anchors from Bolt Products. Specialist advice we have received, and our own investigations, indicate that 304 anchors will be safe for use in almost all locations but the work has been overtaken by decisions by CNCC and DCA to accept only 316/A4 anchors. It has yet to be seen exactly how the supplier will react to a request to replace all the 304 anchors already supplied.

Nick Williams

NW: Thanks to Bob Mehew for work done over the summer re. bolts. He is in the process of checking that the bolts supplied are actually what they are supposed to be, i.e. 316 stainless steel.

CNCC Report - Appendix 3: The comments re. using only 316SS in northern caves were noted.

Rope-Testing

Nothing to report.

Bob Mehew

The remainder of the Equipment & Techniques Officer's Report was accepted without discussion.

11. Training (written report previously circulated)

The Local Cave Leader and Cave Instructor Scheme are continuing to develop with new enrolments, assessments and revalidations. The following figures outline activity within the schemes since the last Council OGM:

Local Cave & Mine Leader

35 enrolments, 19 level 1 assessments, 2 level 2 assessments, 16 level 1 revalidations and 3 level 2 revalidations

Cave Instructor Certificate

6 enrolments, 1 assessment, 6 revalidations, 1 retirement

The revalidations processes for both the local schemes and CIC show the following profits:

LCML: £1187.43

CIC: £40

Much discussion time has been spent at Training Committee regarding the Duty of Care an award holder may have if they observe what they consider to be bad practice by other cavers whilst underground. Advice has been sought from Health and Safety Exec and based on that, a statement has been released to all award holders explaining that they do have a Duty of Care and as such they are obliged to make comment. Once they have done this they have discharged their Duty of Care.

It has been decided that the previous decision made by Training Committee to hold copies of all Trainer / Assessors insurance documents, be over-turned. As Trainer / Assessors are sub-contracting for BCA and they are not employees of, it is the responsibility of the Trainer / Assessor to be adequately insured.

The topic of access to cave systems for commercial caving has once again been discussed. It is still very strongly felt that BCA needs to take action to ensure that training and assessment courses can be run in suitable venues within the U.K. It has been voiced by one Local Panel, that the lack of access to suitable venues could potentially make the scheme untenable in its area. An application for training grants has been received from CSCC but unfortunately one was for the previous financial year and therefore could not be considered, but the other was agreed. An application has also been received from DCUC and this has been approved by the Training Officer.

It has been formally agreed that the Training Committee should administer the appointment of new Trainer / Assessors for the LCML Scheme as it does for the CIC Scheme. Training Committee has also agreed that a moderation process be introduced into its schemes to ensure standardisation throughout the UK. The finer details of this will be discussed at the next Training Committee in November 2013.

In order to reduce the amount of travelling, and therefore expenses, the CIC Panel have been trialling the use of video conferencing from a southern and northern meeting point, when holding its meetings. The initial meeting appears to have worked well.

As stated in a previous Training Officer's report, a number of workshops will be planned for recreational cavers. The first one will hopefully be delivered in the first quarter of 2014, to caving club training officers, on the methodology of caver training. It is intended to make this two day work shop free of charge.

Nigel Ball, October 2013

NB: Noted that people come forward for assessment in groups so income is not smooth. He is looking at caver training for club training officers - aiming to provide this as a free option. Training grants for CSCC and Devon were supported but he noted that the Training Committee cannot support retrospective claims. Web conferencing has been tried for Training Committee meetings with some success.

The remainder of the Training Officer's Report was accepted without discussion.

12. Publications & Information

Not much to say here. A Newsletter was published, which is excellent, thanks to our new Editor. I believe there is a copy of Speleology due towards the end of the year. It will be good to see this on track. I have received correspondence from the new Editor concerning various contractual issues. I presume this is being sorted, or that it will be dealt with elsewhere.

Les Williams, October 2013

Speleology: *I have now taken over as editor; with Hugh Penney, Nigel Ball and Erin Lynch as commissioning and sub-editors. The next issue (number 19) is planned for December. Unfortunately, there were no contributions received from any BCA officer by the deadline that Damian circulated. It is important that the magazine must generally reflect the wishes of both BCA and BCRA Councils, but for this I need input from BCA. Arrangements for paying the editors have not been finalised, with the result that none of the team yet know how much they will be paid, nor what the contractual arrangements will be. This needs to be sorted out as soon as possible.*

David Gibson

a. Webmaster

The website continues to be updated by Damian and Mary, many thanks to them for doing so. I know that Cookie is working on the new site and assume it will be ready in the fullness of time.

Les Williams, October 2013

b. Web Services

The webserver continues to run reliably. I'm not aware of any unscheduled outages in the last period. As well as the invoicing there is a steady stream of questions and enquires which I deal with.

Now that we are no longer paying for two severs it is time to revise the pricing structure. When the original prices were set we had no idea what the uptake would be, now we do. With that in mind I will be studying the costs carefully and hope to be able to significantly reduce the costs of additional hard disk space. I have had enquires from some existing multi-gigabyte websites that cannot move at our existing prices. Hopefully this will help them. Our domain costs will be going up a little since the cost of them to us has gone up.

David Cooke

DC: The new website is coming along and hopefully should be ready for the next meeting. Content is important and this is being addressed, particularly the new training section. He noted the reasons for the reduced costs, existing additional space is overpriced.

MW: Suggests sending an email to BCA officers who may want to use the website explaining how to use it and log in.

c. Newsletter

Pagefast usually prints and mails our newsletters. Their quotation for newsletter 17 was too expensive, so I arranged for printing via a company in Germany, which I have also used for BCRA and Hidden Earth jobs this year. We had to manually stuff the envelopes and mail the items ourselves, a task which Ben Heaney and I shared between us.

David Gibson

LW: Newsletter has been produced and circulated. Items wanted a.s.a.p. as another N/L is in production.

d. Handbook (written report previously circulated)

The 2014 Handbook was distributed shortly before the end of July. Typically some of the information was almost instantly out of date and updates are available from the website.

Damian Weare

The remainder of the Publications & Information Reports were accepted without discussion.

13. Legal & Insurance

DJu: Nothing to report.

a. Insurance Manager

I am grateful to Dave Cooke for drawing to my attention the potential savings to be gained from purchasing a new membership card printer which should be quicker and more reliable than the existing unit (which is nearly 10 years old now). This will require an investment of the region of £1200 by the time all the relevant associated software and spares have also been included. Indications are that by printing cards on both sides ourselves the savings over the current system whereby one side is printed by the card vendor, will pay for the new printer in less than a year. I therefore seek Council's approval for this spend, subject to the usual oversight by the Treasurer.

Nick Williams

NW: Notes that the card printer may cost a little more than the £1,200 initially suggested but the expenditure will be worthwhile. He noted that he wishes to hand over the Insurance Manager's job to a replacement and there is one suggested person in the frame. We need to review the market for renewal at the next of next year and also whether the insurance is entirely suitable. We need to involve the Regions in discussions as to whether the insurance is still entirely suitable.

Other Reports

14. Youth & Development No report received.

15. Membership Administrator (written report previously circulated)

Membership to 27th September 2013

DIMs: 401 (Caving), 48 (Non-Caving), 7 (CIM Plus), 7 (BCRA Honorary), 1 (BCA Honorary) (including 252 BCRA members and 17 student members) (Total DIMs = 464)

CIMs: 3894 (caving), 991 (non-caving), 496 student / U18) (Total CIM's = 5381)

Clubs: 164

Associates: 9

Access Bodies: 8

New Clubs: *The following clubs have supplied the correct paperwork and payment in order to become BCA member clubs: Nidderdale Caving Club.*

Admin: *In response to the following query presented at the January meeting - DC: Could we please have the BCA logo on the membership card? I understand that NW will be presenting a proposal to this meeting.*

CIC award holders and BCA membership: *I have been asked to check the list of current CIC award holders in respect of their BCA membership. Of the 344 CIC's on the list, 158 have at some time been a member of BCA, and 106 are currently members in 2013.*

Membership Processes: *I have been working closely with David Gibson on trialling major enhancements to the online membership system, which will hopefully go live at the end of this year. The enhancements are designed to streamline operations at Great Hucklow and to integrate all membership classes (apart from CIMs) into one online database.*

Glenn Jones

The Membership Administrator's Report was accepted without discussion.

16. Radon Information

Nothing to report.

Clark Friend

17. 2016 Working Party

I attended the ICS at Brno and took the opportunity to pigeonhole a few people to encourage attendance at the 2016 event. I also peppered the place with promotional posters and took the opportunity to show a promotional film at the

awards ceremony, it went down very well. I have had lots of interest from a large and diverse number of people, including traders, European delegates and also further afield, including Australia and the USA and Canada.

Henk Goutier, Bureau member has taken the promo film and some flyers to Cassola in Italy in November and a copy of the film and flyers will be at SUICRO this year as well.

The search for a venue continues with two possible locations. Lots of planning is occurring but until firm dates and a location it is difficult to finalise anything.

Les Williams, October 2013

AE: Had a meeting with JJ at the Dalesbridge Centre yesterday and he has agreed to host the 2014 BCA AGM. JJ is definitely interested in hosting the 2016 event.

LW: Hosting of 2016 at JJ's needs to be followed up a.s.a.p. as there are other partners involved as we have not yet confirmed venue and date.

NB: Have we considered Ingleborough Hall as a venue - close to Dalesbridge - AE and LW will follow this up.

The 2016 Report was accepted.

18. Cave Registry

The Cave Registry Data Archive (www.cave-registry.org.uk) continues to grow at a pace. It currently uses 2GB of data and I regularly receive requests to increase the space allocated. It is important to realise that the archive is more than a simple repository of data but is also a tool to actively manage and help coordinate the work of current projects.

David Cooke, October 2013

LW: People need to be putting their data into the Registry now as time is being wasted re-surveying.

The Cave Registry Report was accepted without further discussion.

19. IT Working Party

The new BCA's website is taking shape. The prototype can be seen at www.british-caving.org.uk/wiki3. I'm using some free open-source software which effectively provides a container for the website. It needed some extra functionality with respect to the menus and background image. Being open-source, with some programming effort, I have been able to add those features which I will pass back to the development community for the benefit of all. Now the container is ready to be filled with the website pages. I have made a start but I need help to copy the rest of the existing BCA site over within a reasonable timescale. After a small amount of training it is easy for anyone to add or amend pages so please get involved, particularly with the pages that relate to your area of responsibility.

The last meeting allocated £500 to be spent on enhancing the try caving website. After the meeting I communicated with the Youth & Development Officer and also took a good look at the website. She has not convinced me that it needs any expensive enhancements. What it needs is a keen volunteer to keep the content of the site up to date. It is not a technically demanding roll. I recommend we advertise for a volunteer in the Newsletter or on the ukCaving forum.

As a trial I set up a Facebook group to discuss BCA Communication with its members. I invited the younger members of this Council. I felt it was useful but it didn't generate as much discussion as I expected. I would be interested to know if the others felt this was a useful way of working.

Electronic Communication with our members and for that matter any other digital services that we might deliver in the future all start with and revolve around collecting our members' email addresses. In order to make significant progress we should pro-actively collecting them via the membership renewal process. For the CIM's that would entail an extra column containing the email address on the spreadsheet that the Clubs return. The Club should seek their members' permission to pass on the email address to the BCA just as they should already be doing so with the address.

Once we have collected a member's email address we need to provide a system that will allow them to update it and any associated information such as permission to include them on a BCA mailing list. This is best done via the website by giving the member a secure account where they can login to update their details. A key feature must be that the members will manage their own details. The only additional work for the Membership Administrator would be to pass on a spreadsheet containing the membership numbers, name and email address. I can provide such a contact management system since I wrote a remarkably similar one for work.

I believe that Council should resolve to pro-actively collect our members' email addresses via the membership renewal process. The detail of the implementation can be worked out within the appropriate committees and working groups.

David Cooke

DC: The Try Caving website needs someone to take charge of it and keep it updated.

MW: It is currently running with out-of-date software and this needs to be updated for security reasons.

DC: Noted it is not running on the BCA server.

MW: Refers to his report (Appendix 2) on communication with members. E-mail communication preferred for the moment: Handbook, update, urgent alerts & information, etc. Collecting e-mail addresses has to be done as part of collecting general membership information. There was general agreement that e-mail communication with members is a good idea. MW has given 4 possible ways of doing this. 1. Feeling that people tend not to sign up to mailing lists. 2. Use email addresses collected via clubs.

LW: Some people will resist this and will find they miss out. Noted that going via Club Secretaries is not effective for some clubs. There is increasing use of e-mail on a national basis

MW: We need to decide on how we might implement the new system using collected e-mail addresses.

BP: Important to persuade Club Secretaries of the need for this type of communication and get their support.

NW: Work with a stand-alone e-mail database rather than integrating databases towards a unified national database because that requires a rationalisation of the membership structure, which is a much bigger issue.

DC: For the present it requires a stand-alone structure to do this but could possibly be integrated later with the membership function.

DC: We need to collect information via club spreadsheets which would have new column - needs formalisation of our Data Protection Policy.

PI: Need to ensure that members are reassured that the list will never be sold on to 3rd. party organisations.

NW: We can begin collecting data now and we also need to tell Club Secretaries why we need this new data at the same time.

PI: Can we draft a statement to go in coming BCA Newsletter as to why we want the information on e-mail addresses and why and how we want to use it.

DC: Note that DIMs are not a problem as they can be asked to provide this information "for the administration of membership functions".

BP: Feels we can start collecting and using now even though we may not be able to get the full system running for another year.

NW: Need to provide a way for people to opt out.

NB: Needs help of IT working party so that the Training Database can be updated.

Proposal: that Council should resolve to pro-actively collect our members' email addresses via the membership renewal process. The detail of the implementation can be worked out within the appropriate committees and working groups.

Prop: NW, Sec: DC agreed unanimously

The IT Report was accepted without further discussion.

20. CRoW Working Party (written report previously circulated)

We have had a slow start due to holidays, expeditions, etc. but I now have offers of help from cavers in the North and the Peak District and I have also kept the CSCC C&A Officer up to date with progress. Following discussion by email, we have agreed on a preliminary database structure for our work, so each region/area can work independently and we can combine results in due course, with the intention that more data can be added later as seems appropriate. I have consulted with cave scientists and an archaeologist re. the identification of sensitive sites as well as recording SSSIs, SAMs, NNRs, etc. in relation to CRoW areas using freely available software, such as www.magic.gov.uk and www.pastscape.org.

It is apparent that in order to have a complete and comprehensive survey we shall need up-to-date lists of cave sites and locations in each region. The Northern cavers have already carried out some preliminary analysis based on their work carried out with a view to replacing the out-of-print "Northern Caves" series - they have produced some interesting results for their region. Peak District cavers will be basing their work on the 2010 "Caves of the Peak District".

Cavers should appreciate that this is a long-term project and it is important that we are fully informed and the matter is aired at national level before any decisions are made as to whether it is desirable or even necessary to take matters further. We have also been told on good authority that NE were planning to revise the CROW maps, but this has now been deferred to at least 2019 due to austerity measures.

Jenny Potts

JP: Explained what information was being collected and why, and emphasised that we have not decided whether or if there is any need for a change in the legislation but it needs full and informed discussion at national level, which cannot take place until we have all the relevant information on which such a discussion can be based.

AH: Stated that, for the moment, CRoW does not apply to access to caves. The projected 2019 Natural England review will consider the mapping. He was asked whether he could give a documented response to query whether CRoW

overrides NNR designation - the answer is no. Noted that it is not within the gift of NE to change designation.

LW: Noted it might need a change in the law if we later decided that we did wish CRoW legislation to include caves.

The CRoW Report was accepted without further discussion.

21. International Representative

Since the last Council Meeting there has been the Brno International Congress. This was very well attended by British delegates being the third largest country group after the USA and Czech Republic. In addition, British caving had an excellent stand with representation of several British organisations including BCA and BCRA. I think quite a lot of interesting business took place on this stand and a lot of old publications disposed of. Many thanks to everybody who was involved in looking after the stand. On a personal level, I had to finish as President of the International Union of Speleology since my two terms were complete. I was however made an Honorary President which was a very great surprise to me and quite an honour. I remember the last time we talked about Honorary Presidents I was not particularly in favour of it, and now I find myself being one of the only three Honorary Presidents. The others are Hubert Trimmel of Austria who has been involved with UIS from its inception and Arrigo Cigna who had two terms as President. I look forward to my retirement from very active UIS business to spend more time looking after British Caving Association affairs.

The next International Union of Speleology Congress will be in Australia in 2017 one year after the European event in Britain. There is now four years for everybody to save up to attend this event, if people put £1 a day into a money box between now and then there should be plenty to pay for the trip. Being in Australia with field trips in New Zealand and possibly New Guinea it will be an excellent opportunity to visit Australasia and its caves.

I seem still to be very much on the email list of the UIS so will undoubtedly keep up to date with what is going on and will almost certainly continue to attend the Annual Bureau Meetings. The next one is likely to be in Sydney Australia in November 2014.

Andy Eavis

a. FSE

The last gathering of the FSE took place at Millau near Montpellier on 20th was organised by the French Federation of Speleology (FFS) to celebrate their 13th anniversary.

European countries were requested to provide brief history of the development of speleology in their respective countries. The BCA provided 'history of UK caving' which was formatted on to a poster.

In July a number of FSE delegates attended the UIS congress in Brno although the Czech Republic still remains outside of the FSE despite many attempts to persuade them to join!

The General Assembly Meeting of the FSE this year will be held in Casola Italy on 2nd incumbent president Juan Carlos Lopez is standing down so a new president will be elected. Also re-election for secretary will take place.

Organisation of EuroSpeleo events over next 3 years

- *ES Forum 2014 will be in Romania. Details will follow*
- *ES Forum 2015 Applications will be invited. Bulgaria has expressed an interest.*
- *European Congress 2016 will be in the UK*

Ged Campion

The remainder of the International Reports was accepted without discussion.

22. Media-Liaison

Since my last report to council I have not received any calls or requests made to the BCA media-liaison officer from the press. I have however been dealing with the press who've been contacting me regarding the San Agustin Expedition and I think the press coverage received has generally been positive for caving.

We had print coverage in the Metro and the Mirror as well as online coverage with the Daily Mail online and Yahoo (a rather light hearted look at it!). There was also even a short mention of the expedition on the Radio 6 Music breakfast show.

I have also expressed my views on the importance of holding members email addresses for the purpose of communication regarding their membership e.g. not simply a 'spam' list but our ability to email all our members with important information (e.g. changes affecting membership, insurance or constitution) rather than posting letters at great expense. I took the opportunity to canvas opinion on this at Hidden Earth and the people I spoke to were shocked that BCA had to spend £3,000 sending out letters as we don't ask for CIM's email addresses.

Chris Jewell

NW: Reported that, following caving photos in a paper, he had received a call re. the dangers of people going into caves.

The remainder of the Media-Liaison Report was accepted without discussion.

23. British Caving Library Report

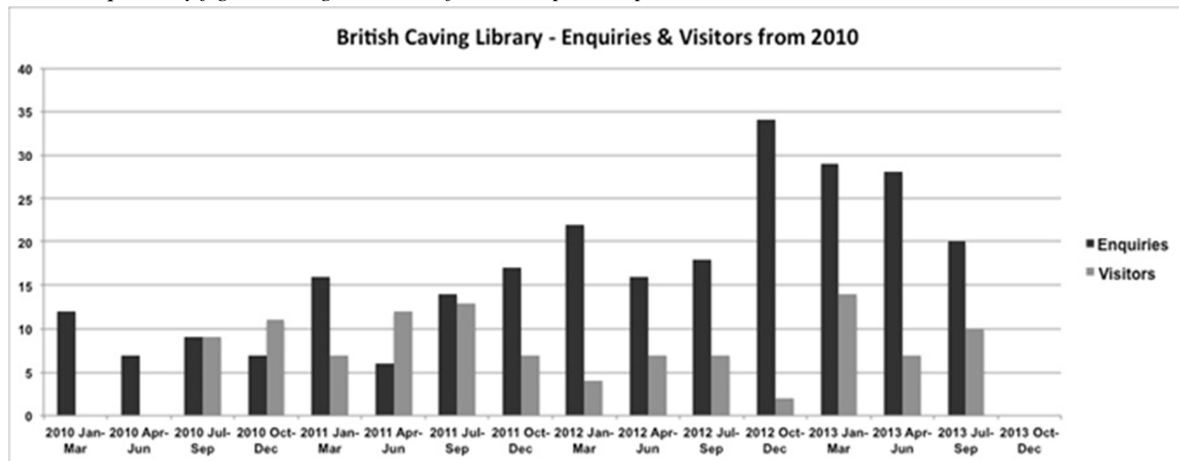
During 2008 and 2009 the Library was operating on two sites: the old BCRA Library remained at Derbyshire County Council's Local Studies Library at Matlock, while from July 2008 the then Librarian, Janet Nash, began work at the Glutton Bridge site to sort and catalogue the items collected from Roy Paulson's house in 2007. Apart from 2 researchers in September 2009 working at Glutton Bridge on the Simpson Records before they were taken to BGS, all visitors went to Matlock to consult the Library; Janet dealt with some phone, email and postal enquiries from Glutton Bridge while the Local Studies Librarian also dealt with enquiries relating to the BCRA Library.

In January 2010 Mary Wilde took over as Librarian and in May 2010 we were asked to move the BCRA Library from Matlock because the Local Studies Library no longer had room to house it. During the following 3 months we reorganised completely, installed new shelving, map chests, cupboards, etc. at Glutton Bridge and by September 2010 the entire collection forming the British Caving Library was housed at the Glutton Bridge site and we were open for business.

Prior to moving to Glutton Bridge, the number of visitors to the Library at Matlock was in single figures per year; this has increased considerably since then. In addition we have hosted a BCA Council Meeting in October 2010, a BCRA Survey Group Meeting in April 2011, a BCRA Publications sub-committee in January 2013 and, since 2009, 3 or 4 BCRA Council meetings per year. Mary Wilde handles most of the enquiries, which arrive by post, email and phone from both the UK and abroad; I also deal with some enquiries, particularly those relating to the BCRA archives at BGS. The time taken to deal with enquiries varies considerably: from 15 minutes for a request to scan or copy a single item from a journal, to many hours of work for more complicated enquiries and literature searches.

The following comment on the service we provide was received from an Australian researcher a few weeks ago: "Thank you for the scanned pages, they printed exceptionally well. The report itself along with the map will be very helpful, so it has been a very worthwhile request for me. I have also forwarded your website link to our president, as your library and search engine is really something to be envied."

Detailed quarterly figures are given below for 2010 up to the present.



Jenny Potts

JP: Reported that an informal meeting of Club Librarians had been held at Hidden Earth and it had been agreed that closer co-operation between Librarians would be helpful. It was intended to continue the informal meetings each year at Hidden Earth.

The remainder of the Library Report was accepted without discussion.

24. Any Other Business

24.1 Back to Secretary's report:

AE: It was agreed that the 2014 BCA AGM would be held at Dalesbridge in a similar way to the 2013 AGM but with slight changes.

AE: Access and commercial caving – DW and AE to consider letters in Appendices.

LW: Notes with approval CNCC's approach to access and commercial caving as detailed in their report in Appendix 3.

AE: Reporting year - noted DW's views.

24.2 Geocaching:

DCh: Raised points of concern that this was still involving caches being placed in caves with attendant risks to non-cavers in unsuitable sites and conservation issues.

LW: Notes there is geocaching in Box Stone Mines.

JP: Notes she has already followed this up following an incident in Peak District and had approached various people to publicise the problems. There appears to be no central governing body and this is now an internationally recognised pastime. Suggested that something needs to be put on geocaching web sites and she is willing to follow this up.

DCh: Will supply JP with the contacts he has found.

24.3 Bat Roosts in Caves:

AF: Raised concerns about a site in a Devon cave which is also an SSSI - comments on draft legislation which appear to suggest that cavers will need Level 1 Licences to go into a cave with a bat roost. AF is trying to find out possible implications and has asked for a meeting with relevant NE advisors.

AH: Problems in NE is that most of legislators know nothing about caves - he is attempting to advise and indicate that cavers are not a problem, as believed by many Bat Conservation Groups.

24.3 Conservation & Access:

LW: Asks if AH is intending to get together with regional C&A officers. He also noted that it is accepted that there is no conflict with cavers in relation to WNS.

JP: Reported cavers from the USA at Brno saying they had problems due to cavers in the USA being banned from caving because of WNS and also that non-caver vandalism was occurring because no cavers were now monitoring caves.

25. Date, Time & Place of next meeting

The next Council Meeting will take place on Saturday, 11th January 2014 at My Big Meeting Room, Pinvin, Worcestershire.

AH: Asked if there was any possibility of connecting via video conferencing to avoid lengthy travel.

The meeting closed at 1.30pm.

Action Log (as at October 2013)

No.	Action by ...	Details of Action
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36	DW	Put together a Manual of Operations
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54	NW & DJu	Liaise with SUI with a view to helping them streamline their insurance situation.
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October 2011

83	PI	Produce an Asset Register and liaise with NW/EP over the total replacement value of our insured equipment.
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March 2012

97	NB	Liaise with NW and Training Committee with a view to implementing Council's wish that T/As work for BCA as individuals.
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June 2012

104	DJu & NB	NB to ask TC for potential Child-Protection Officer. DJu to consider other offers.
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October 2012

109	AE, PI and DW	Review our current subscription structure in conjunction with other key personnel and report to Council.
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112	HB	Produce a costed proposal for the new 'Try Caving' lights.
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113	HB	Produce a formal proposal to send to Clubs about the 'Adopt a Club' scheme.
-----	----	---

115	DJu	Put together a summary for landowners of the insurance benefits relating to BCA access agreements.
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January 2013

121	PI	Revise Regional Funding document to clarify our approach to C&A travel expenses
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Appendix 1a: Access & Commercial Caving - Response by Executive to Council

Background

Concerns have recently been expressed about the limited access available to commercial caving groups in some of our more extensive cave systems. Although the extent of the problem varies from Region to Region, the Training Committee has now become concerned about its ability to effectively train and assess future cave leaders and instructors under BCA's Award Schemes.

Consequently BCA Council asked BCA Executive to investigate the issue to see whether there is anything BCA can usefully do to support its Award Schemes. An e-mail consultation was carried out and replies totaling more than 12,000 words were received.

Taking all the views into account, BCA Executive suggest Council considers adopting the following:

Statement on Negotiating Access to Caves

It is enshrined in BCA's Constitution (Section 4.6) that:

[...] the owners and tenants of property containing caves have the right to grant or withhold access. Where caving bodies have control of access delegated to them by the owners, such access should be obtained and granted as freely as possible for all responsible cavers, within the terms of those agreements. When obliged to make new agreements, the appropriate body should endeavour to ensure that this freedom is maintained or improved.

Clearly the most important principle in any access discussions is that the landowner and tenants must have the ultimate say. However, it is also clear that bodies negotiating access should always aim for the greatest freedom possible for responsible cavers. Currently commercial cavers seem to suffer disproportionately and this is now having an impact on BCA's Award Schemes.

BCA believes that there may be situations where landowners choose a blanket ban on all commercial caving, when in fact with careful negotiation it may be possible to secure access for some aspects. There is, after all, a huge difference between multiple visits per day by novice groups and an occasional one-on-one assessment of the Cave Instructor Award.

However part of the difficulty is that - understandably - even cavers find the different types of commercial caving hard to fathom. It stands to reason, therefore, that without assistance landowners are also going to be confused and may automatically opt for the default "no commercial caving".

For this reason BCA has produced a leaflet entitled "Landowner Guidance on Commercial Caving". It is hoped that anyone entering into access negotiations may be able to use this to prevent blanket bans on all "commercial caving". Ideally, of course, this will result in access for all, but realistically even a few concessions will benefit our Award Schemes.

For further guidance or support in negotiating access, in the first instance contact should be made with the appropriate Regional Access Officer or, if they are not available, the BCA's Conservation & Access Officer. Queries relating specifically to commercial caving are best addressed to BCA's Training Officer.

Commercial Caving - Guidance for Landowners

The British Caving Association (BCA) is the Governing Body for underground exploration in the United Kingdom.

BCA recognise that, as the landowner, you have the absolute right to grant or deny access as you see fit. Sometimes in the past this has led to a blanket ban on all “commercial caving”. Such bans are now making it very difficult for our own training schemes to operate, as we need a variety of caves to be available to ensure effective training and assessment of future leaders and instructors.

In many cases allowing some types of commercial caving will result in very little additional footfall (maybe one trip per year), but will bring significant benefits to BCA and British Caving in general. For this reason we have compiled a guide to the different types of “commercial caving” in the hope that you feel better able to decide what you do and do not want on your land. At the very least we would ask that you give serious consideration to allowing type 6 in your cave.

Types of Commercial Caving

1. **Novice Taster Trips:** The vast majority of commercial trips fall under this heading, often involving groups of young people from a wide range of Outdoor Centres and uniformed groups. These trips tend to take place in a fairly small number of caves which are often monitored by the Centres involved and with remedial works undertaken by the leaders in conjunction with landowners. Although in a very small number of the most suitable caves, there can be as many as 10 (or maybe more) of this sort of trip daily, in the vast majority there are none. Any experienced caver will be able to advise on whether your cave is likely to be of interest for commercial novice trips.
2. **More Advanced Group Instruction:** This will generally involve greater duration or technical difficulty and will be led almost exclusively by more advanced BCA Award Holders*. Skills will be developed as an integral part of the instructional input, including hazard awareness, conservation, cave genesis and practical skills, such as safe and effective rigging. There are far fewer of this sort of trip taking place than type 1.
3. **Individual Skills Instruction:** Such sessions will be led by our highest Award Holders* and usually involve recreational cavers wanting to develop an aspect of their technique to make them safer underground. There is probably an average of one of these sessions taking place every month across the whole of the UK.
4. **Guiding:** This is a traditional non-professional caving trip, but the cavers concerned may wish to extend their skills to a wider range of caves and/or techniques. This type of trip will be very similar to a non-professional trip but will be expertly led. There is probably an average of one of these sessions taking place every month across the whole of the UK.
5. **Workshops for Club Cavers:** BCA has a fund to promote the training of club cavers. Much of this takes place above ground, but some necessarily takes place underground. This sort of trip will generally involve experienced club cavers plus a CIC* holder. There are probably fewer than half a dozen taking place across the UK each year.
6. **BCA Award Scheme training courses, revalidations and assessments:** BCA's Awards Holders are assessed against strict criteria. As part of this, all potential Award Holders attend a Training Course where they learn about important topics such as effective cave conservation, group management and modern rope work. They then progress to assessment. This is an extremely important part of ensuring we have suitably experienced and qualified instructors in the future. Nationally there are around 40 assessments at Level 1* each year, 20 at Level 2* and 2 at CIC* level.

* There are 3 main categories of BCA Award Holder

1) Level 1 Local Cave (or Mine) Leader Award: Basic, non-vertical trips may be led by Level 1 qualified leaders. These leaders will have demonstrated more than adequate knowledge and experience to lead groups competently in their chosen caves. This qualification is cave specific in that it qualifies the holder to operate only in the caves listed on their form.

2) Level 2 Local Cave (or Mine) Leader Award: This allows the holder to lead groups in more involved caves with vertical sections of up to 18m in depth. Again leaders will have demonstrated more than adequate knowledge and experience to do so. Generally Award Holders at this level will have an on-going and lasting interest in caving and the cave environment.

3) Cave Instructor Certificate: This is the highest award and demands a high degree of competence in all areas. A CIC holder is qualified to instruct all aspects of caving at any level.

Plus

a) Local Cave (or Mine) Leader Award Trainer-Assessors: Some of the more experienced CIC holders are allowed to train and assess candidates for the Local Cave (or Mine) Leader Award.

b) Cave Instructor Certificate Trainer-Assessors: A small number of the most experienced CIC holders are allowed to train and assess candidates for the Cave Instructor Certificate.

Appendix 1b: Response from South Wales CC



SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB

CLWB OGOFYDD DEHEUDIR CYMRU



1-10, POWELL STREET, PENWYLLT, PEN-Y-CAE, SWANSEA, SA9 1GQ
TEL: 01639 730613

F.A.O. Damian Weare
Hon Secretary BCA

20th September 2013

Rosemary Cottage
419 Wimborne Road East,
Ferndown
Dorset BH22 9LZ
Tel 01865 762546

Dear Damian

RE: Commercial Caving – Guidance for Landowners

Thank you for providing a draft copy of the document entitled 'Commercial Caving – Guidance for Landowners'. I appreciate that you would sooner we pass our views on to our local representative but in view of the seriousness of this matter the club believes that it is better that the views expressed below are tendered formally on letter headed paper.

The following views and opinions are the collective views of The South Wales Caving Club as decided by resolution of the club committee at its September meeting.

1. The South Wales Caving Club was unaware of a UK wide problem with commercial caving access. The club is of course aware of the issues with respect to the caves of the Swansea valley and wonder if this document had been specifically targeted at a particular area of the country as opposed to a UK wide problem.
2. With respect to the title of the document, The South Wales Caving Club is of the opinion that the subject matter is too narrow and does not cater for the vast majority of British cavers. It is the view of the Club that the interests of British caving could be better served by producing a document dealing with cave access in general rather than focusing on a minority component of the sport. Concerns have also been expressed that a Landowner may find the title patronising.
3. The South Wales Caving Club is uncomfortable with the thrust of the document. Rightly or wrongly the document seems to suggest that commercially minded cavers serving on the BCA training committee have taken advantage of their positions to promote a self-serving document which would influence or direct BCA policy to their advantage.
4. The Club also considers the thrust of the document to be skewed towards or hinting at a future British caving culture strongly influenced or underpinned by the award system. Currently British caving is free of such encumbrance save for the commercial sector. This document does not differentiate between the two cultures. The document may suggest to the reader that the culture of British caving is underpinned by the award system.

5. Finally, The South Wales Caving Club believes that the document is detrimental to root and branch cavers across the UK as it suggests or hints that the award system is the national system of caver regulation. Such a document in the hands of a landowner could well influence the stipulation of a level of award as a condition of access. The Club believes that such a result would be extremely detrimental to the sport and would create a division within the ranks of British cavers. This could ultimately lead to the division of club caving away from the BCA.

I'm sorry to burden you with the above but I believe the views of The South Wales Caving Club warrant due consideration by any interested parties. If there are any points of clarification that I can help you with please do not hesitate to contact me via secretary@swcc.org.uk or via my postal address at the head of this letter

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gary Vaughan', written in a cursive style.

Gary Vaughan
Hon Secretary
The South Wales Caving Club

Appendix 1c: Response from Charterhouse CC Ltd.

We are grateful for the opportunity to respond to this document while it is still in draft as it, sadly, seems to us to be very one-sided, not really addressing the concerns that many landowners and access bodies have with commercial caving at all.

We should like to address the issue under a number of headings:

Breaching of access agreements:

We are disappointed that the concerns that this Company has with 'qualified' leaders and the breaching of access agreements in the recent past have not even been touched on by this document. There is no assurance in here that the wishes of landowners will be any more than briefly acknowledged by BCA and that such incidents will be treated with any degree of seriousness by BCA. In particular it saddens us that one name on the covering email of someone who is shown as assisting in compiling returns to this draft is already under a ban from the caves under our administration following a flagrant and knowing breach. This incident was witnessed by a representative of the landowner and could have led to serious problems for us. We wish to see a serious statement in this document that acknowledges that such incidents will, in the future, be subject to firm discipline. If BCA cannot demonstrate that it can apply policy to its members then it cannot expect outside bodies to treat its requests with respect.

Paying clients and novices:

The document sensibly divides up the various types of paid trips that can occur, however, the distinctions that it draws are not in line with those drawn elsewhere and this should be noted. Category one, 'taster trips' is the only category that makes any mention of novices as such. However, Category 4, 'guiding' is also of relevance here. As is well-known, many British caves do require leaders, but this is almost always owing to the need to protect the cave rather than for the benefit of the visitors and these people – who give their time and experience without charge – are better described as Wardens rather than leaders, this is explicitly the case at Dan yr Ogof, for example. In the case of CCC Ltd, such wardens are provided – without any charge – for Charterhouse Cave. With respect with the remainder of the caves that we administer, this topic has been discussed by the Company many times and the conclusion is that cavers who require such a leader are axiomatically lacking in confidence in their own abilities and are thus regarded by us as novices. Therefore this category of trip, as with the first, fails to meet two of our access criteria, not just that of commerciality.

It is worth noting, in this regard, that we are not aware of any BCA training schemes or awards specifically for 'guides' so it is difficult to see quite why this category has even been included here.

Underground Workshops:

In passing I should wish to point out that the Company has regularly allowed the use of G.B. Cavern for rescue training. However, this has been strictly monitored to ensure that no breach of access conditions takes place and it is worth noting that it has been agreed between us and the MCR that this cave is not suitable for certain training exercises. The use of the cave for any commercially run scheme is not allowed as it will breach our access conditions.

Award assessment and revalidation:

The document asks for special consideration to be given to this type of trip. This seems to us to be somewhat nonsensical as, if access to a cave is not to be permitted for any of the other types of trip then specific knowledge of that cave cannot, surely, be necessary and such trips would thus be pointless.

Negotiation and renegotiation of access agreements:

We are concerned by the tone of this document. As it can be read to imply that the inclusion of 'commercial caving' within access negotiations is becoming a priority within BCA, we are concerned as to whether it will be followed up by a concerted push to both penalise in some way those who do not succeed in pushing this through in any new negotiations and to attempt to require the renegotiation of current agreements. This would, of itself, be wholly unacceptable and a breach of the spirit of the BCA Constitution. In this regard please note that the lease for G.B. is not due to be revised for another 120 years; though informal discussions with the landowner have, in the recent past, clearly shown that they have no intention of relaxing the prohibition against any type of commercial use.

Insurance

The BCA's PI insurance scheme has a specific provision for indemnifying landowners against the actions of BCA members and this has proven of great use in negotiating caving access. We feel, therefore, that it is misleading in the extreme that this document for landowners makes no mention of this scheme at all, given that the scheme itself specifically excludes 'professional caving'.

In conclusion, CCC Ltd urgently requests confirmation that the BCA fully respects its stance on this matter as both a landowner and an access/conservation body and that it will continue to receive the full support of BCA in seeking compliance with the terms of our existing lease and licence.

Graham Mullan

On behalf of CCC Ltd.

Appendix 2: Report on Electronic Communication

At the BCA AGM on the 16th June a concern was raised about the lack of electronic communication by BCA to its members and it was felt that BCA could be more effective if it could reach more members.

Comments from members can be summarised as “BCA needs to improve its communication.”

What information does BCA communicate?

The BCA could use electronic communication methods to send members the newsletter, alerts (such as the bowline on the bight matter), notices of general meetings, the BCA handbook and perhaps other matters. There is no need for BCA to directly get in contact with a CIM on insurance matters or renewal of membership of BCA since the club secretary does it all on the CIM's behalf. Based on that, it is likely that BCA would send electronic communications about once a quarter, with a maximum of once a month.

Communication by other organisations

Professional Contractors Guild (PCG): This is a trade association which looks after the interests of freelance contractors. They provide a login on their website which allows for management of contact details, payments and a checkbox to receive mailings by post. An email is received less than once a month advertising seminars and offering relevant information. They also provide a Twitter feed.

CAMRA: Provide a login on their website using membership number and password. Occasional emails are received as well as paper mailings. They maintain a twitter feed and a Facebook page with latest news and events.

Methods of electronic communication

Information can be communicated using websites, forums, email lists, social networks such as Facebook/Twitter, SMS text message. I'm sure there are many others...

Maintaining a single route of electronic communication provides a consistent message whilst minimising overhead for the volunteers that maintain it. Websites and forums both require user interaction to view the information, email and social networks send the information directly to the user and can be used to direct the user to a website/forum for more information.

Based on figures from DCA and some caving clubs a figure of around 85-90% of members have access to and use email to receive communications. No figures are available for social networks but it is believed to be somewhat lower and there are multiple ones to choose from. As a result, this report proposes that only email is considered at this stage, and social networks/SMS could be considered in future if desired.

Email

Email addresses are easy to obtain from DIM but would need to rely on clubs to get CIM email addresses. Many clubs already hold email addresses for most of their members so this shouldn't be a problem as long as the reasons for collecting email addresses and data protection status is clarified to them. A statement could be prepared by BCA for them to forward to their members explaining what is happening and making them aware that they can opt out if they wish.

The BCA would need to ensure compliance with data protection. A statement needs to be produced on what data will be used for, how it will be stored and who will have access to it. BCRA already has something for the DIM/CIM Plus form which could be modified and used. DCA also has suitable statements since it already uses email to communicate with its members.

Based on the current BCA membership an email list could potentially contain 6000 addresses so specialised mailing list software would definitely be required (some examples are mailman (used by BCRA) and Mailchimp).

Implementation

The following options are proposed for discussion at a BCA council meeting.

Option 1: A mailing list which BCA members can sign up to.

For: Very simple to implement. Minimal admin overhead.

Against: Difficult to get members to sign up to it.

Option 2: A mailing list which is populated using email addresses collected during the membership renewal process.

Note that you can't just subscribe people but an invite to join with a confirm would probably be acceptable (this is how many organisations do it).

For: Makes sure most members are on the lists. Members can administer themselves once they are registered.

Against: Risk of upsetting people by subscribing them. Additional work for membership administrator (but could probably be automated to a certain degree).

Option 3: An online membership system to manage CIM data

Implement a system that can be used by club secretaries, the BCA membership administrator and club members to maintain and update membership details (including address, email, mailing preferences etc). Integrated with mailing list software.

For: One set of data to maintain. No duplication of data and can be kept up to date easily. Allows BCA to generate membership statistics for CIMs and gain a better understanding of it.

Against: More work to implement. Need to learn a new system.

Option 4: An online membership system to manage ALL membership types within the BCA

As option 3, but encompassing DIMs and organisations as well. Would need to integrate with or replace existing systems for managing these membership types. Could be implemented at a later date if option 3 was selected.

For: Centralises all BCA membership information. No duplication of data. Consistent management of membership. Allows BCA to generate membership statistics for its membership and gain a better understanding of it.

Against: Lots of work to implement. Needs to handle things that are specific to BCA/BCRA.

Matt Wire, October 2013

Appendix 3: CNCC Report

Leck and Casterton Fell; access for commercial organisations

During 2013 CNCC has been negotiating with the representatives of the Kay Shuttleworth and Whelprigg Estates (Leck and Casterton Fells) for access for commercial groups and organisations. At the CNCC meeting on 21 September 2013 the CNCC committee voted to accept the proposal submitted by the Access Officer (proposal appended to this report). The CNCC Access Officer's proposal has now been accepted by both the Estates representatives and the CNCC committee. It should be noted that access to the 'commercial' permit will be open to any organisation in the UK that joins CNCC as a Commercial member.

Action required by BCA Council

The CNCC committee requested reassurance from the BCA that it would discipline any award holder that was in breach of this negotiated access agreement.

There is still some negotiating to conclude, however I am hopeful that the system will be fully functioning after the CNCC AGM 2014. Interested parties can download the Access Officer's reports of the negotiating from the CNCC website, or they can contact the CNCC secretary/Access Officer.

The problem of unauthorised access by commercial groups has continued to roll on relentlessly and I do not see any let up for the near future. Although a large proportion of the commercial sector are aware of the problems that have been caused, there is a minority who are either unaware or are ignoring the problem. I cannot stress enough that this is hampering negotiations and it may lead to court action if the landowners witness the unauthorised access.

Bolt Products anchors use in Northern Pennines

At the CNCC meeting 21 September 2013 the two types of stainless steel and anchors was discussed at length. The discussion included:

- That when CNCC initially researched the Resin Bonded Anchor scheme (in 1989), Hilti, DMM and Lyon all recommended 316, CNCC cannot see any justification to use a different grade of steel.
- The process for installing 304 anchors described in the Chloride Stress Corrosion Cracking (CSCC) document is unnecessarily onerous given that those processes are not required for 316.
- Much of the catchment area for the caves of the Northern Pennines is regularly grazed by sheep and cows which precludes the use of 304.
- CNCC have a reputation for installing unquestionably sound, maintenance free anchors. There could be a perception that using 304 (given the conditions described in the Chloride Stress Corrosion Cracking (CSCC) document) negate that perception.

A proposal was presented to the meeting and the meeting agreed unanimously that only anchors manufactured from 316 stainless steel will be placed in the caves of the Northern Pennines.

Nidderdale

Yorkshire Water have finally agreed in writing to erect a sign at the start of the water board road leading up to Manchester Hole, Goyden Pot and New Goyden Pot informing cavers as to when they will open the scouring valves. This has taken nearly twelve months to achieve with a great deal of help from HSE. This should ensure that

nobody gets caught out by a flash flood as nearly happened last year.

CNCC Technical Group

One new long term test bed has been installed in Yordas gorge, test bed two has BP (304 stainless steel) anchors installed using KMR RES a full report is on the CNCC web site.

The anchors installed in Yordas stream bed above the fell gate have been tested, these anchors were installed in March 1998 a full report is on the CNCC web site.

On 10 August 2013 CNCC ran an anchor installers course for CCC, North Wales and Forest of Dean anchor installers. The names of the 5 attendees have been sent to the BCA anchor scheme administrator who has issued BCA installer cards. All 5 attendees received training in accordance with the IPTD as agreed by the 2010 BCA AGM. On 14 September 2013 CNCC TG tested four BP anchors; these anchors were pulled at a range of angles to ascertain the ratio between the angle of load and any deformation of the anchor during the test. The angles that were tested were 0 degrees to the placement (axial load), 60, 45 and 30 degrees. The only test that we did not complete was the 30 degree pull; this was because the anchors that had been installed to hold the test rig were destroyed (bent by 90 degrees) by the force of the base plate of the test rig. A full report will be on the CNCC web site (10 days).

Les Sykes

Proposal for access to lands owned by Whelprigg Estate & Kay Shuttleworth Estate for commercial gain.

CNCC proposal on the use of Leck and Casterton Fells by commercial groups; this proposal will comply with the existing access agreements and will be under the strict control of the CNCC on behalf of the landholders.

Through a constitutional amendment the CNCC can create a new class of membership, Commercial member. The commercial member will pay CNCC an administration fee (£20 per year); this is necessary because the CNCC is run by volunteers and they may object to arranging permits for leaders to make financial gain from.

Using the existing structure within the CNCC, the CNCC will administer the additional commercial permits. The procedure will be; commercial group requests from the Access Officer a permit and states the intended group use of that permit using the definitions 'types of commercial caving' appendix A.

The Access Officer checks the availability of the cave entrance with the relevant CNCC meets secretary, if there is availability the Access Officer issues a permit to the commercial member with an invoice for the amount agreed by the landowners. The commercial member will send the appropriate fee to the CNCC Treasurer who will then arrange (after a defined period) to forward the permit fees to the respective landowners.

The CNCC will agree with the landowners which caves on their land can be used for a defined category of commercial course and the permit will state that the cave can only be used for a specific category of group (see appendix A); for example County Pot categories 3, 5, 6. If a commercial group does not abide by the category then their membership of CNCC is suspended. The landowner will also be able to make a formal complaint to BCA and that award holder could lose their award and their ability to lead groups.

In addition to the monthly meets list sent to the Estates, the Access Officer will send a copy of every commercial permit issued to the respective Estate manager.

Les Sykes

Appendix A

Classifications of instructed/commercial caving Taken from draft BCA document 'Access & Commercial Caving - Response by BCA Executive to BCA Council'.

Types of Commercial Caving

1. Novice Taster Trips: The vast majority of commercial trips fall under this heading, often involving groups of young people from a wide range of Outdoor Centres and uniformed groups. These trips tend to take place in a fairly small number of caves which are often monitored by the Centres involved and with remedial works undertaken by the leaders in conjunction with landowners. Although in a very small number of the most suitable caves, there can be as many as 10 (or maybe more) of this sort of trip daily, in the vast majority there are none. Any experienced caver will be able to advise on whether your cave is likely to be of interest for commercial novice trips.

2. More Advanced Group Instruction: This will generally involve greater duration or technical difficulty and will be led almost exclusively by more advanced BCA Award Holders. Skills will be developed as an integral part of the

instructional input, including hazard awareness, conservation, cave genesis and practical skills, such as safe and effective rigging. There are far fewer of this sort of trip taking place than type 1.

3. Individual Skills Instruction: Such sessions will be led by our highest Award Holders and usually involve recreational cavers wanting to develop an aspect of their technique to make them safer underground.

4. Guiding: This is a traditional non-professional caving trip, but the cavers concerned may wish to extend their skills to a wider range of caves and/or techniques. This type of trip will be very similar to a non-professional trip but will be expertly led.

5. Workshops for Club Cavers: BCA has a fund to promote the training of club cavers. Much of this takes place above ground, but some necessarily takes place underground. This sort of trip will generally involve experienced club cavers plus a CIC holder.

6. BCA Award Scheme training courses, revalidations and assessments: BCA's Awards Holders are assessed against strict criteria. As part of this, all potential Award Holders attend a Training Please note: what follows is the proposed text, rather than the layout, of the landowner leaflet. Course where they learn about important topics such as effective cave conservation, group management and modern rope work. They then progress to assessment. This is an extremely important part of ensuring we have suitably experienced and qualified instructors in the future.