



## **Council Meeting Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021 Minutes**

via Zoom

19.00 pm to 21:00 pm

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## Council Positions, Attendance and Report Status Table

### Voting Positions

Position	Name	Initials	Attn	Report	
			(y/n)	Last	New
<b>BCA Executive</b>					
Chair (2021-2024) 3 years	Russell Myers	RM	y	27/07/2021	y
Secretary (Acting) (2019-2022) 3 years	Allan Richardson	AR	y	15/07/21	n
Treasurer (2020 - 2023) 3 years	Howard Jones	HJJ	y	15/07/2021	y
<b>Group/Club Representatives</b>					
Position 1 2021-2023 2 years	Vacant				
Position 2 2021 – 2023 2 years)	Vacant				
Position 3 - (2020-2022 - 2 years)	Lydia Leather	LL	n		
Position 4 - (2020-2022 - 2 years)	Idris Williams	IW	y		
<b>Individual Member Representatives</b>					
Position 1 - (2021 - 2023 2 years)	Josh White	JW	y		
Position 2 - (2021-2023 - 2 years)	Nigel Atkins	NA	n		

Position 3 - (2020-2022 - 2 years)	Jenny Potts	JP	y	15/07/21	n
Position 4 - (2020-2022 - 2 years)	Andrew McLeod	AM	n		
<b>Regional Council Representatives</b>					
Cambrian Caving Council	Stuart France	SF	y		
Council of Northern Caving Clubs	Andrew Hinde	AH	y		
Council of Southern Caving Clubs	Linda Wilson	LW	y		
Derbyshire Caving Association	Mike Higgins	MH	y		
Devon and Cornwall Underground Council	David Jean	DJ	y		
<b>Constituent Body Representatives</b>					
William Pengelly Cave Studies Trust	Richard Vooght	RV	n		
Association of Caving Instructors	Stephan Natynczuk	SN	y		
National Caving Scout Active Support Unit	Tony Radmall	TR	y		
British Cave Research Association	John Gunn	JG	n		
National Association of Mining History Organisations	Steve Holding	SH	y		
Council of Higher Education	Jennifer Ryder	JR	y		

Caving Clubs					
Cave Diving Group	Claire Cohen	CC	n		
British Cave Rescue Council	Emma Porter	EP	n		

## Non -Voting Positions

Position	Name	Initials	Atn	Report	
			(y/n)	Last	New
<b>Working Group Convenors</b>					
Training and Equipment	Steve Gray		y		
Conservation and Access	Vacant				
Information Technology	Ari Cooper-Davis	ACD	n	18/08/2020	n
Youth and Development	Josh White	JW	y	25/05/2021	n
CRoW	David Rose	DR	n	25/05/2021	n
Qualifications Management Committee (QMC)	George Plant	GP	y		
Vision Recommend removing this group and replacing it with COG.	Andrew McLeod		n		
Radon	Vacant				
<b>Additional BCA Appointments</b>					
Insurance Manager	Howard Jones	HJJ	y	15/07/2021	y
Membership Administrator	Wendy Williams	WW	n	15/07/2021	y
Safeguarding Officer	Chris Boardman	CB	y		
Training	Mary Wild	MW	n		

Administrator					
Library Representative	Jenny Potts	JP	y	15/07/2021	y
Newsletter Editor	David Rose	DR	n		
UIS Representative	Andy Eavis	AE	y	15/07/2021	n
FSE Representative	Ged Campion	GC	n	2025/05/21	n
Rope Testing	Vacant	Recommendation to merge with Training & Equipment WG			
Artificial Cave	Katie Eavis	KE	n		
QMC Representative 1	BCA Chair				
QMC Representative 2	Chris Boardman	CB	y		
Observers					

### **Agenda item 1: Apologies for absence.**

Ged Campion, John Gunn, Gethin Thomas, Richard Vooght.

### **Agenda item 2: Acceptance of the 27<sup>th</sup> July 2021 Meeting Minutes**

“Prop JP, 2<sup>nd</sup> LW, majority in favour, passed”

### **Agenda item 3: Matters arising/Action Plan**

#### **Action plan**

Issue	Who	By when	Signed off
Contribution to Mick Day Memorial	Secretary	As required	

### **Agenda item 4: Vacancies**

“JW resigned as an Individual Representative and elected as a Group Representative  
Proposed Tony Radmall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Linda Wilson, majority in favour, elected”

“There was a query from JW re names of voters, RM is working on it”

“RN has resigned from Council, he was thanked for his work by RM”

“Thanks were also expressed by RM to all those who have left Council at the AGM”

“Nobody is interested in the position of Radon Working Group convenor. JW made the suggestion that we don’t have a convenor, review the position every 12/18 months and to keep it as a vacant position, GP to keep an eye on Radon Issues. This wasn’t voted on but appeared to be generally accepted”

### **Agenda item 5: Approval of Working Groups**

Proposal from the Executive Committee to approve the following working groups en bloc:

Information Technology WG and Convenor Ari Cooper-Davis

Youth and Development WG and Convenor Josh White

CRoW WG and Convenor David Rose

QMC WG and Convenor George Plant

Radon WG but note the need for a Convenor

Constitution and Operations WG Convenor Andrew McLeod

“Proposed by JP 2<sup>nd</sup> LW, majority in favour, passed”

The newly formed working groups as a result of the 2021 AGM voting for their establishment are:

Training and Equipment WG and Convenor Steve Gray holding the title of Training officer. Draft Terms of Reference for this Group are currently out to consultation with the Group and will be circulated to Council ahead of the meeting.

“Proposed JP, 2<sup>nd</sup> RN, majority in favour, passed”

Conservation and Access WG – no terms of reference have been drafted to date and as the Convenor’s position is vacant, the Executive Committee recommend recruiting for this position and leave the development of the ToRs and subsequent adoption by Council to the successful candidate.

“There is no convenor for C&A, the meeting felt that it was important to have one”

The Vision WG has been superseded by the Constitution and Operations WG and the Executive Committee recommend Council absorb the Vision WG into COG.

“Proposed JP 2<sup>nd</sup> Mike Higgins, majority in favour, Passed”

An amendment to the Publications and Information WG Terms of Reference is proposed by the Executive Committee to add a new line in section iii Accountability:

*“i The Executive Committee and National Council will be notified in advance of any proposed postings on any media.”*

The full Terms of Reference for the Publications and Information WG are attached at Appendix 1.

“After some discussion the proposal in the Agenda was withdrawn”

New Proposal, to confirm the existing ToR's for P&I, minus the withdrawn section.

“Proposed JP, 2<sup>nd</sup> LW all in favour, passed”

The following individual positions are proposed by the Executive for renewal en bloc:

Insurance Manager Howard Jones

Safeguarding Officer Chris Boardman

Library Representative Jenny Potts

Newsletter Editor David Rose

UIS Representative Andy Eavis

FSE Representative Ged Champion

Artificial Cave Katie Eavis

QMC Council Representative 1 BCA Chair Russell Myers

QMC Council Representative 2 Chris Boardman

“Proposed JW, 2<sup>nd</sup> AR, all in favour, passed”

**The Rope Testing** position has been vacant since Bob Mehew resigned and the Executive Committee propose that the work of this group is taken up by the newly formed Training and Equipment WG.

“Proposed AH, 2<sup>nd</sup> MH all in favour, passed”

## **Agenda item 6: Chair's Report**

My commiserations to Rostam as the losing contender for the position of Chair; I will continue to work as BCA Chair for the benefit of the British caving community in its entirety with the conviction to apply my style of chairing.

I disagree with Rostam's assertion in a post elsewhere, that the vote reflects how divided caving is at the moment, I think it came down to a straightforward question of how many cavers did I, or my friends and acquaintances know, to influence the vote rather than the politics of the day; the personal touch! Dave Rose in summarising the “hustings” podcasts commented on how similar the two of us came across with our replies to the questions put to us.

I feel it is important to recognise the difference between “division” and “opinion”. We are not going to agree with one another all the time but must have the good grace and respect to recognise that and agree to disagree but not fall out about it to the extent where these issues become personal and create division; the case for my way or no way is not how we can progress. I feel that to date, this has been my style in diplomatically negotiating the way through the issues of the day ably supported by my fellow Executive Committee colleagues and my supporting mentors. This job is not one to undertaken in isolation.

So, I would like to lay to rest the idea that British Caving is divided, it ain't but a bit like “fake” news, keep repeating it often enough and some of it will stick. My advice is to ignore it and any of the “muck raking” from the past, the future is bright, the past is behind us; there is a great wide world of positives out there which we need to embrace.

At the end of the day, it is all about caving which is our common thread and a very strong one at that; once a caver, always a caver with all the attributes that bestows on an individual, resilience, fortitude, stoicism and a whole lot more creating a strong sense of adventure. We all share these traits, there are no divisions in caving.

You need look no further than the recent Three Counties Grand Traverse, what an achievement; not a dissenting voice amongst 50 or so cavers on the day plus all those involved in the run up to the attempt beforehand, all united in a common goal, a potent “tour de force” demonstrating the best of British caving and what we can achieve united.

To eclipse that, has been the recent remarkable rescue, over a protracted period, of an injured caver from OFD which demonstrated even more strongly how united cavers are when the chips are down. BCRC estimate that about one third of the UK cave rescue personnel turned out, cavers rescue cavers; it reinforces my argument that British caving is not divided.

I wish Rostam well in the future and having resigned his position as Publications and Information Officer, thank him for his service to BCA and the caving community at large. Additionally, Will Burn has stood down as Conservation and Access Officer and Hellie Adams did not seek re-election for one of the Group Representative positions and record our thanks to both for their service to the Association.

This does, of course, leave us with a number of vacancies on Council to consider.

Russell Myers  
Chair  
British Caving Association  
14<sup>th</sup> November 2021

“No Comments”

### **Agenda item 7: BCA Secretaries Report**

“No Comments”

### **Agenda item 8: BCA Treasurer Report** **BCA Treasurer Report to BCA Council November 2021**

Current bank balances: as at 30/11/2021 was £210,000. Of which £87,000 is in medium term interest bearing accounts and £76,000 is in a short term deposit account. I am holding more in the current account than usual due to potential CRoW legal fees.

#### Unusual spend since last Council (AGM):

BCRA cross charge 2020 settled at £2,500. Crow legal cost paid at £20,000. Bolts bought at £5,000. CCC claim £1,200

#### Forecast 2021:

November 2020 Council meeting approved a budget for 2021 which had a deficit of £20,000. It had no allowance for any CRoW legal costs in 2021 beyond the £30k spent in 2020. Since then Council agreed to increase the legal budget from £60k to £90k. If therefore the case goes the distance and we lose, the deficit for 2021 would be £70k. If we win then up to £35k of our costs could be refunded. If our income does not recover the deficit could be closer to £100k for the year, which would leave BCA with net assets of around £100k, a £150k reduction in 2 years.

#### BCA accounts result for 2020

These were noted at the October AGM so no further action needed.

#### Regional accounts:

CNCC, CSCC, CCC and DCUC claims for 2020 have been received to date.



### CRoW financial situation.

A previous Council meeting agreed we could spend up to £90k pursuing this claim on the basis of its details and likely impact for UK caving as a whole. To date we have paid £55k in the legal proceedings. Should we win the case some of the costs we have incurred to date will be refunded. At present the case and its costs and its outcome are uncertain.

### BCA Budget 2022.

Has been prepared, discussed with the BCA Executive and is enclosed for review. It assumes the following:

Income increases due to the increase in annual fee from £17 to £20, but allows for some loss of member numbers

QMC training activity breaks even

No CRoW legal fees incurred in the year (all fees to be paid or accrued in 2021)

No cost increase for PL insurance policy

Increased training support for University clubs

Increased C&A activity in the regions

The outcome is a small surplus

HJJ November 2021.

## **Agenda Item 9: BCA Insurance Manager's report** **BCA Insurance Managers report to BCA Council November 2021**

### Liability policy Renewal 2022:

This is underway. There are few underwriters that undertake this cover and another of them has left the market which is a concern.

As the main policy (first £2m cover) remains within the Long Term Agreement and the claims figures are nominal, rating will remain unchanged.

As a previous provider has left the market 2<sup>nd</sup> excess layer policy (£5m to £10m) is needed to go to market. A number have been approached and we await further updates from them.

### Claims

We have had two potential claims which we are discussing with the underwriters. BCA will pay the excess on the first claim by agreement and can decide whether to pay the second excess or not.

Excess is £2,500.

One claim had been rejected many months ago and we heard nothing for almost twelve months. The property has been repaired by the landowner. We have recently had renewed correspondence and so the claim file has been reopened.

The second claim file has been closed.

### Landowner indemnity

BCA member clubs or regional bodies or access control groups from time to time make arrangements with landowners for cavers to access their land. Once granted those cavers will undertake various caving activities on the land, from digging new entrances in the hope of finding new unexplored cave passage to sporting trips in known systems.

The landowner will have concerns that the risk of his ownership has just increased as more people will be crossing his land and indeed undertaking an activity that he has no knowledge or control

over. Hence the landowner will ask what Public Liability (PL) policy is in place to cover the activity and will respond in the event of a claim. Clearly he does not want that policy cost and cover and maintenance to be his responsibility. The caving club can provide cover information i.e. the BCA PL policy. If satisfied the landowner then gives permission, either verbally or in writing for cavers to access his land.

The vast majority of active cavers in the UK are BCA members (estimate 95%); however it's impossible to guarantee that all are current members. BCA is NOT looking for their policy to substitute for the landowner's own PL policy in any regard other than as explained above. A member of public claiming against a landowner due to a dodgy gate will never be covered by the BCA policy extension. It's only a claim that arises as a result of the access agreement that BCA expect their policy to step in for the Landowner's policy, as promised when the access agreement was negotiated on day one with the landowner.

For the landowner to have full comfort the access agreement must cover all cavers, the BCA policy only covers BCA members, hence there is a potential gap.

BCA consulted with the BMC and BCU but it was discovered that their PL cover was not as good as the one the BCA currently enjoys.

Underwriters were obviously **NOT** keen to extend the policy to an unknown number of cavers of unknown competence who were not paying for the cover. After months of negotiation with the underwriters it is agreed the policy will be extended to non-members who are caving under an access agreement if either they are accompanied by a BCA member or they have more than 2 years of caving experience. Hence in the event of a PL incident caused by cavers on land covered by an access agreement the following are covered (extract from the policy wording)

### **Landowner**

Any owner of land **you** have an agreement with in respect of access on their land for the purpose of access to a private cave.

### **Non BCA member**

Any party who:

1. has been granted permission to access a private cave; and
2. is accompanied by a BCA registered club or a current member of (CIM or DIM), or;
3. has a minimum of 2 years caving experience.

It goes without saying that the best way of ensuring PL cover is to join the BCA either directly or via a club and hence get the significant member benefit of £10m Public liability cover

A new TWIMC letter for landowners is now available of the BCA website.

HJJ November 2021

“HJ gave a brief update to the meeting

“JW expressed his thanks for HJ's work”

## **Agenda Item 10: Membership**

### **BCA Membership report for BCA Council November 2021**

In February 2021 Wendy Williams BCA Membership administrator had a stroke. She had been in an acute stroke ward but is now back home. We expect she will be off work for the foreseeable future. I have liaised between Les and BCA payroll accordingly.

As previously reported the role has been divided between a number of us. You can see separate reports from Katie Eavis covering clubs and CIMs and one from David Gibson covering DIMs.

Following Council decision to increase membership fee from £17 to £20 for 2022 this has been actioned and any person renewing membership now pays at the higher rate.

BCA IT Manager (Ari) and others have developed the new membership system and this is imminent.

HJJ 10112021

## **BCA club membership report.**

**Katie Eavis – acting club membership administrator**

**10<sup>th</sup> Nov 2021**

### **2021 Club Membership work**

Regular emails are received with updates to club membership and a few renewals are still coming in. The majority of these can be dealt with swiftly. Cards are printed and posted within two weeks of emails being received.

Other enquiries also come in about the insurance cover, membership numbers, how to join etc. I frequently check details of the insurance scheme with Howard, to ensure I am giving clubs the correct answer. Howard is very helpful and always replies quickly.

David Gibson sends me regular DIM membership updates. These cards are being printed and posted within 3 weeks of the application date.

### **2020 vs 2021 Membership levels**

	<b>2020 (up until 31<sup>st</sup> December)</b>	<b>2021 (up until 7<sup>th</sup> May)</b>	<b>2021 (up until 4<sup>th</sup> July)</b>	<b>2021 (up until 10<sup>th</sup> Nov)</b>
<b>Groups (including Member Clubs, Associates and Access Controlling Bodies</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>161</b>
<b>CIMs (including Cavers, Non- Cavers, Students, Under 18s and CDG)</b>	<b>5308</b>	<b>4622</b>	<b>4797</b>	<b>5002</b>

### **2022 Club Renewals**

I have already emailed all clubs to inform them of the rate change for caving members from 2022.

I plan to start sending club renewal emails from the start of December.

Before I do I plan to update the accompanying documents to clarify a few points which I have noticed a few clubs have been unsure of, or confused by in 2021.

**BCA DIM Membership Report David Gibson** The report I made to the AGM is still "current" and should be read in conjunction with the notes below. (799 members at 10/10/2021 RM) The DIM process is running smoothly, and I send DIM membership data regularly to Katie and Ari. Katie runs a mail merge on this data from which membership cards are printed. Attention is paid to the security of the data, which is sent and received via a direct and secure connection to the BCA web server. The master data is no longer held in a spreadsheet, which has streamlined some processes. Further work is needed to bring the Groups data into the new system. Overall, there is still a lot of work remaining to be done in order to build a system that meets requirements. In particular, I need to start writing documentation on how to use the new system. The planned upgrade of the customer-facing pages (mentioned in my AGM report) is delayed, but will happen as soon as possible. At the time of writing, I cannot report the exact DIM membership figures because they are "obscured" by the fact that some people have renewed early for 2022. However the figures are fairly close to those reported to the AGM. (i.e. there will not have been a huge amount of new members since then!). Without going into too much technical detail, it's a question of my simply coding a "report" to properly count the data, whilst allowing for people who have made multiple transactions in a single year. This is in progress now. As this is the first year of the new "non-spreadsheet" system, various complications to do with some required end-of-year processes will surely come to light in the next few months. All DIM members will be sent a renewal notice by email "in due course", unless they have refused permission for us to use their email, in which case they will be sent a paper notice. **BCA club membership report.**

**Katie Eavis – temporary club membership administrator**

#### **2020 vs 2021 Membership levels**

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“HJ gave an update, he also proposed a vote of thanks to all those involved in the membership work”

### **Agenda Item 11**

BCRC request for £1500 funding to support the production of cas-bags.

“Query was it still needed, need to contact BCRC”

action RM

### **Agenda Item 12: Other Reports**

#### **Library Report to BCA Council, 7 2021**

Brief report for information:

The British Caving Library (BCL) is now functioning fully once again with necessary Covid precautions being used. Visitors are welcome again, meetings are taking place and enquiries are being dealt with.

Katie Eavis, our Library Assistant, has had to take on the role of Acting BCA Club Membership Administrator and is no longer able to work regularly for BCL, though we do still see her from time to time. I am pleased to report that Karen Slatcher has been offered the post of Library Assistant and will be working one day a week with us, starting from 1st. Dec. Karen is an active Derbyshire Caver, is currently BCRA's Minuting Secretary and was Mary Wilde's predecessor as BCA Training Administrator.

Jenny Potts  
BCRA Library Co-ordinator  
26-11-21

### **QMC report to Council – December 2021**

- As residential Outdoor Centres continue to resume some normality in the way that they function, more leaders and instructors are re-engaging with the award schemes. QMC is financed by fees collected from registrations, update workshops and trainer/assessor annual contracts, thus this slow return to a pre-pandemic situation is vital to our financial viability. We do also recognise that we need to continually reassess funding options.
- Dates have been set for update workshops for 2022 and for much of 2023, to give award holders maximum time to ensure that they can update before their award becomes invalid.
- Contracts and terms of reference have been sent out to trainer/assessors for 2022 – most have been returned along with the appropriate fee. Sadly, we have lost a few TAs over the year; I have passed on thanks for their contribution over the years and have wished them well for the future. We are currently recruiting for a new CIC trainer/assessor, who once appointed will begin an apprenticeship which involves a series of observations and days working alongside existing TAs.

- I have now completed my three year term of office as QMC Chair and find that I need to stand down due to personal circumstances. I would like to offer my thanks to those on Council who have been helpful and supportive during my time in office; particularly Russell who has been so positive about the work we do and how we function and to Howard with his assistance in 'all things financial'. It has been a pleasure working with you both.

I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce George Plant. George, who is with us this evening, has been appointed to take over as QMC chair. I thank him for his enthusiasm and involvement and wish him well.

**Juliet Parker-Smith**

### **FSE delegate report to BCA Council December 2021.**

Not much to add since the BCA AGM report in October.

Planning the FSE's part in the International Year of the Caves and Karst (IYCK) and the International Congress of Speleology (ICS) in France continues to be particularly challenging with all the uncertainties caused by the unpredictable nature of the pandemic.

The General Assembly Meeting (GAM) in October was held as a virtual meeting. The human contact and the networking that always plays a major part of a Eurospeleo Forum or European get togethers has been sorely missed. There will not be a Eurospeleo Forum at the International Congress of Speleology (ICS) next year because of issues around French sponsorship though the GAM of the FSE will be held during the ICS.

Bureau meetings have given us the opportunity to reflect upon the structure of the bureau, our roles and responsibilities in a changing world and the statutes that support our federation. A small working group will be established to look at this in more detail.

Opportunities to offer ESP project money recently has been seriously limited due to travel restrictions and expeditions being postponed.

However, considerable work continues to be invested in maintaining the system of sponsoring European projects, through the EuroSpeleo Projects (ESP), the EuroSpeleo Forums (ESF), as well as the EuroSpeleo Protection Label (ESPL). Our strongest commission, the European Cave Protection Commission (ECPC) continues to effectively engage in issues that are vital to protect our caves and karst. The 6th EuroSpeleo Protection Symposium "Assessing, monitoring and protecting cave biotopes and geotopes through Natura 2000" was held in Germany from 26.10.21. to 30.10.21. This was a very successful event.

Communication to our members is crucial especially during these difficult times. The FSE Facebook page, updated regularly by Henk Goutier, is continuously visited by thousands of cavers and non-cavers thus representing an excellent outreach for European speleology. URL: <https://www.facebook.com/eurospeleo> and since the beginning of 2020 the FSE also has an Instagram page: @eurospeleo\_fse. Also, with the help of our partners of the WikiCaves organization we are able to update the FSE website on a regular basis.

**Ged Campion.**

## **BCA delegate to FSE**

## **Y & D**

### **CHECC**

Lots of universities have been reporting strong freshers intakes. This was followed up by a very successful CHECC event, hosted at Yorkshire Dales Guides Barn, despite Storm Arwen doing its' best to stop the show. The Y&D group are in discussions with the CHECC committee as to how best the BCA can support the learning from this event going forwards.

As convener of this group I'd like to take this opportunity to thank and praise the CHECC committee for all their work and support over the last 18 months. They've come out the other side of several lockdowns calmly and competently being a point of contact for many universities, whilst managing their own studies.

### Website Development

Further articles are being prepared for the website highlighting Youth, Development and Diversity & Inclusivity issues, and what the average caver can do about them.

If you have any topics you would like to see covered please contact the convener of this working group.

### Experience Caving

In the last report from this group, earlier in 2021, plans were laid out for improving accessibility to caving for young people, through creating an 'experience caving' program of weekends aimed at under 18s run by clubs. Prior to these weekends becoming viable work needs to be done to ensure that as many clubs as possible are set up to allow young people to join them with minimal barriers. This piece of work would be best left until clubs have had a chance to get up to their normal levels of caving, before we look to encourage them to do caving voluntarily leading groups.

Some clubs have reached out to the working group looking for advice for amending their constitutions to allow for younger members. A new document and process is available through Chris Boardman, the safeguarding officer, that assists in the vetting of members for the purpose of taking young people caving. This process will be published in greater depth shortly, and provided to clubs.

### Diversity & Inclusion

At the BCA AGM this year, a proposal by the convener of the Y&D group amended the equality and diversity policy, to add clarity as to who is covered by this policy, and to clarify the recommended actions in case of a BCA member breaching this policy. The convener believes that this being passed overwhelmingly shows the association's commitment to ensuring the sport is inclusive as possible leading to greater diversity.

### Girlguiding

A member of this group now works for Girlguiding, and has offered his assistance to any discussions that occur with Girlguiding around caving. The existing issues centre around insurance. The working group hopes to be able to get Girlguiding to recognise the scout caving permits as opposed to requiring commercial caving tickets. This will make caving much more accessible for a massive organisation of young adventurous people.

## School Reach Out

Discussions have occurred within the group to create some free materials for school, teaching elements of speleology and directing towards the BCA website and the new to caving website.

## Scout Caving

Many areas are now running scout caving events again, however the pandemic has affected the number of volunteer resources. If you have been a previous scout permit holder, or have benefited from scout caving yourself, the convener of this working group would love to hear from you, and can look to put you in touch with the relevant caving team.

Josh White

## UIS Report

The UIS International Year of Caves and Karst continues. There are various activities going on in countries around the world. In Britain BCRA continues its Monday night lectures in the name of International Year of Caves and Karst, the latest was on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> November when Jenny Potts did a presentation on the British Caving library. The next Monday night meeting is on Monday December 13<sup>th</sup> when the BCRA AGM will be followed by the IYCK lecture. The theme of this talk will be “Searching for Early Prehistory in British Caves – Recent Work and New Promise” In addition, work is progressing towards the International Congress in France this coming July, all the details for this are on the website <https://uis2021.speleos.fr/> with a newsletter [https://depots.ffspeleo.fr/uploads/Newsletter\\_UIS\\_4En.pdf](https://depots.ffspeleo.fr/uploads/Newsletter_UIS_4En.pdf) which has now been published. As ever, there is always information on the UIS website which is interesting to look at.

**Andy Eavis 3rd December 2021**

## **Agenda Item 13:**

AGM 2022 will be on the 12 June by Zoom.

### Timeline

Notification no later than 6/2/22

Agenda posted no later than 1/5/22

Deadline for receipt of nominations, proposals etc midnight of 20/3/22

Deadline for reports 29/5/22

Deadline for posting reports 5/6/22

voting until midnight 26/6/22

“Prop HJ, 2<sup>nd</sup> TR all in favour, passed”

“JW offered to update the relevant parts of the website re the next AGM, this was gratefully accepted, he also offered to talk to ACD re access to other pages which need updating”

## **Agenda Item 14: CRoW**

After many twists and turns, the BCA’s judicial review over the Crow Act is, for the time being, settled. We have won a partial victory, and we are hoping we will be awarded at least a portion of



our costs, although this remains to be determined by the judge – not as a result of a hearing, but on the basis of written submissions.

- Despite efforts we have made to simplify it, the ‘consent order’ settling the case is written in somewhat complex, legal language. I am attaching it to this report. It is not yet ‘sealed’, and this is not expected to happen for a week or so. The clock on its various deadlines doesn’t start ticking until it is.
- So how did we get to here? The case has always had two distinct, though related, elements. The first was the decision made by the Welsh Government (WG) in January 2020 to exclude cavers, specifically the CCC access officer, Stuart France, from its Access Reform Advisory Group. The second was the reason it gave for doing so: that caving is not covered by the Crow Act’s ‘right to roam’ provisions on mountains and moorland. We, of course, argue that it does. Winning acceptance for this would benefit cavers across the country. Under the Act’s s.26, vulnerable caves on Crow land (such as St Cuthbert’s Swallet and Upper Flood Swallet in the Mendips) could continue to have restricted access, with gates and leader systems. Elsewhere, recognition that Crow applies to caves would open up important areas that are currently closed, especially in the northern Pennines, and remove uncertainty from others that do allow access, but where this could be removed at the whim of a landowner. Campaigning for this right has been BCA policy for many years.
- At an early stage, the case became bogged down in legal technicalities. The WG (with Defra and Natural Resources Wales added as ‘interested parties’) argued that there was no scope for a judicial review because the decision to exclude cavers from ARAG was not ‘justiciable’. That means they claimed it wasn’t a decision by an administrative body that could be examined by a court. At first, our application for legal permission to bring the case was rejected by two successive High Court judges on this ground, but we appealed and won. That meant the Court of Appeal had determined there was an arguable case, both in relation to the first element and the second. Of course, the second element, the actual meaning of the law, is the one we care about.
- Since we won the appeal, the WG has continued to argue about everything. It has also been quite contradictory in its approach. It offered a settlement in July 2021, but said it couldn’t discuss the details until September because its lawyers were on holiday. Then it changed its mind, saying it wanted to fight the case after all, and it filed a formal defence to our claim. This defence continued to maintain we were wrong on both elements.
- The problem for us was, that if we lost on the first element – and there was, for various technical reasons, a risk that we might, despite the Appeal ruling – we would never get to the second element of the case, the bit we cared about. The court just wouldn’t ever get to making a decision over it. A few weeks ago, we instructed a QC, Gwion Lewis. He felt the odds this might happen were high. On the other hand, he also said that if we could get the second element in front of a court without any complications over the first, we would have a strong chance of winning. He thinks the law DOES mean what we say it does – that Crow covers caving.
- A few weeks ago, it looked as if the WG was going to agree that both sides should ask the court not to bother with the first element of the case at all, and just focus on the second. Then, after a few days’ thought, it said no: it wanted to fight on both fronts.

- However, it then made a further proposal. It suggested a settlement, which means we would not, for the time being, go to court. Under the terms of this settlement, within 56 days of the order being sealed, we must submit written representations saying how we think cave access should be reformed, and why. We must also address the question of whether ARAG or something similar should be convened to consider the issue. (The original ARAG has been wound up, having finished its work.) We won't need lawyers to do this. I will write and edit the submission, with the help of the rest of the BCA Crow working group.
- Then, within another two months, the WG must say whether it intends to reform cave access, and whether it intends to convene a review body. It has to give reasons – including its view of caving and Crow. This amounts to a significant victory. It means the WG is effectively admitting we should have been part of ARAG.
- If, after we make our representations, the WG responds by saying: 'we don't want to reform cave access or even consider it, and we don't think Crow covers caving either', we could launch a new judicial review. This would have the virtue of being much simpler, and only cover the second element of the current case. There would be no technicalities to get in the way. Because we have done all the preparatory work already, it would also be much cheaper. So this is also progress.
- If the WG does decide to set up a new review body like ARAG to consider caving, obviously we will try to persuade it of our case. It must report with 12 months of it being established. The WG would then have to tell us what it proposed to do about its report within another two months. That would also give us an opportunity to launch a fresh, much simpler, judicial review.
- I'm sorry this is so complicated. I have to miss the BCA council meeting this week for family reasons but if anyone wishes to ask me questions, please email me at david@davidroseuk.com
- At this stage, we do not have to take any decisions. I just need to get on with the representations.

David Rose, BCA CROW working group convenor  
December 3, 2021

### **Agenda Item 15: Any Other Business**

JW reported that RN created an example thank you letter, to be sent to Will Burn, a similar letter should be sent to RN. RM reported that he normally does this.

AH, he has a stock of IC anchors at home, they need to get to the new Convenor of the E&T Working Group.

### **Agenda Item 16: Date of next Council meeting**

“1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2022”

## **Appendices.**

### **• Publications and Information revised Terms of Reference**

#### **Revised terms of reference for Publications & Information Working Group:**

These terms of reference were drafted on the 08/05/2018; revised 05/10/2021 and comply to both the BCA Constitution and its Manual of Operations.

#### **i Purpose**

- The aim of the group is to assist the BCA in; its self-promotion, engagement with its members and developing a clear media strategy.

#### **ii Membership**

- Members are to be invited by the P&I Officer
- The convenor of the group will be the P&I Officer.
- Membership should be reviewed on an annual basis and its members re-invited
- There will not be any restrictions on numbers in these terms of reference, to allow it to reach an organic operable size.

#### **iii Accountability**

- The Executive Committee and National Council will be notified in advance of any proposed postings on any media.
- The P&I Officer will report back to Council at meetings.
- There will be an annual budget presented to the Association
- There will be an annual report detailing the working group's activities and general strategic plan.
- Complaints are to follow BCA procedure and brought to Council.

#### **iv Review**

- This will be done annually and presented at the BCA AGM under the relevant subsection report.

#### **v Methods**

- Official meetings will occur at least once yearly with regular discussions between members of the working group occurring in between.
- The minutes will be published on the BCA website promptly.
- The convenor of the group will prepare the agenda

## **2 Proposed Terms of Reference for Training and Equipment Working Group**

To be added following consultation with the Group.

Minutes of Council Meeting 27<sup>th</sup> July 2021



## **BCA Council Meeting Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2021 Minutes**

via Zoom

19.15 pm to 20.20 pm

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## Next Meeting Important Agenda Items

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## Council Positions, Attendance and Report Status Table

### Voting Positions

Position	Name	Initials	Atn	Report	
			(y/n)	Last	New
<b>BCA Executive</b>					
Chairman (Acting) (2018-2021) 3 years	Russell Myers	RM	y	15/07/2021	y
Secretary (Acting) (2019-2022) 3 years	Allan Richardson	AR	y	15/07/21	n
Treasurer (2020 - 2023) 3 years	Howard Jones	HJJ	y	15/07/2021	y
<b>Group/Club Representatives</b>					
Position 1 - (2019-2021 - 2 years)	Hellie Adams	HA	n		
Position 2 - (2019-2021 2 years)	Josh White	JW	y	25/05/21	n
Position 3 - (2020-2022 - 2 years)	Lydia Leather	LL	n		
Position 4 - (2020-2022 - 2 years)	Idris Williams	IW	y		
<b>Individual Member Representatives</b>					
Position 1 - (2019-2021 - 2 years)	Pete Knight	PK	y		
Position 2 - (2019-2021 - 2 years)	Martin Hoff (See notes)	MF	y		
Position 3 - (2020-2022 - 2 years)	Jenny Potts	JP	y	15/07/21	n
Position 4 - (2020-2022 - 2 years)	Andrew McLeod	AM	y	15/07/21	n
<b>Chairs of Standing Committees</b>					
Training Officer (2021 – 2024 3 years)	Steve Gray	SG	y		

Equipment and Techniques Officer (2020-2023 -3 years) Co-opted	Mark Sims	MS	n		
Conservation & Access Officer (2019 – 2022 - 3 years)	Will Burn	WB	n	30/03/2021	n
Publications & Information Officer	Rostam Namaghi	RN	y	15/07/2021	y
<b>Regional Council Representatives</b>					
Cambrian Caving Council	Stuart France	SF	y		
Council of Northern Caving Clubs	Andrew Hinde	AH	y		
Council of Southern Caving Clubs	Linda Wilson	LW	n		
Derbyshire Caving Association	Mike Higgins	MH	n		
Devon and Cornwall Underground Council	David Jean	DJ	y		
<b>Constituent Body Representatives</b>					
William Pengelly Cave Studies Trust	Richard Vooght	RV	n		
Association of Caving Instructors	Stephan Natynczuk	SN	n		
National Caving Scout Active Support Unit	Tony Radmall	TR	n		
British Cave Research Association	John Gunn	JG	y		
National Association of Mining History Organisations	Steve Holding	SH	y		
Council of Higher Education Caving Clubs	Jennifer Ryder	JR	n		
Cave Diving Group	Claire Cohen	CC	n		
British Cave Rescue Council	Emma Porter	EP	n		

## Non -Voting Positions

Position	Name	Initials	Atn	Report	
			(y/n)	Last	New
<b>Working Group Convenors</b>					
Information Technology	Ari Cooper-Davis	ACD	n	18/08/2020	n
Youth and Development	Josh White	JW	y	25/05/2021	n
CRoW Annual	David Rose	DR	y	27/07/2021	y
Qualifications Management Committee (QMC)	Juliet Parker-Smith	JPS	n	15/07/2021	y
Vision	Hellie Adams	HA	n		
Radon	Gethin Thomas	GT	y		
<b>Additional BCA Appointments</b>					
Insurance Manager	Howard Jones	HJJ	y	15/07/2021	y
Membership Administrator	Wendy Williams	WW	n	15/07/2021	y
Safeguarding Officer	Chris Boardman	CB	n		
Training Administrator	Mary Wild	MW	n		
Library Representative	Jenny Potts	JP	y	15/07/2021	y
Newsletter Editor	David Rose	DR	y		
UIS Representative	Andy Eavis	AE	y	25/05/21	n
FSE Representative	Ged Champion	GC	n	2025/05/21	n
Rope Testing	Vacant				
Artificial Cave	Katie Eavis	KE	n		
QMC Representative	Vacant				



1					
QMC Representative 2	Chris Boardman	CB	n		
Observers					

### **Agenda item 1: Apologies for absence.**

Richard Vooght, Chris Boardman

### **Agenda item 2: Acceptance of the 15th July 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Prop. Russell Myers

2<sup>nd</sup> Howard Jones

4 abs, rest in favour, carried.

### **Agenda item 3: Matters arising/Action Plan**

#### **Action plan**

Issue	Who	By when	Signed off
Radon group – formation of a Working Group to consider further survey work.	GT	Summer Season	
Contribution to Mick Day Memorial	Secretary	As required	
Formation of Working Group to Review QMC	SF	Before the AGM	Drop

### **Agenda item 4: Chair's Report**

Russell Myers

BCA Chair

7<sup>th</sup> July 2021

No questions to the Chairman.

## **Agenda item 5: BCA Secretaries Report**

Still awaiting action from RN from Mar 30<sup>th</sup> meeting

No questions to the Secretary

## **Agenda item 6: BCA Treasurer Report**

Action Chair/Secretary

## **Agenda Item 7: BCA Insurance Manager's report** **BCA Insurance Managers report to BCA Council May 2021**

HJJ July 2021

No questions to the Insurance Manager

## **Agenda Item 8 Membership**

### **BCA Membership report for BCA Council July 2021**

In February 2021 Wendy Williams BCA Membership administrator had a stroke. She had been in an acute stroke ward but is now back home. We expect she will be off work for the foreseeable future. I have liaised between Les and BCA payroll accordingly.

As previously reported the role has been divided between a number of us. You can see separate reports from Katie Eavis covering clubs and CIMs and one from David Gibson covering DIMs.

As can be seen we are around 15% down on membership numbers compared to 2020. Since lockdowns have eased there has been a steady trickle of members re-joining.

Katie has picked up the role well and between the 3 of us we are dealing with all queries in a timely manner.

We have transferred the BCA Franking machine and card printing machine to Derbyshire and Katie is now catching up on the back log that had developed. David has tweaked the card and member letter printing system which appears to be working well.

HJJ 05072021

## **BCA club membership report.**

**Katie Eavis – temporary club membership administrator**

**4<sup>th</sup> Jul 2021**

### **Club Membership work**

Regular emails are received with updates to club membership and a few renewals are still coming in. The majority of these can be dealt with swiftly.

Other enquiries also come in about the insurance cover, membership numbers, how to join etc.

A couple of weeks ago I collected the card printer, franking machine and printing supplies from Wendy and Les. Since then David Gibson has been most helpful in designing new card templates. [SEP] I have printed over 900 CIM caving and non caving cards for a total of 74 clubs. These have been posted to about 50 clubs so far. I am hoping to post the remainder this week. [SEP] Once all the club cards have been posted I will start on the DIMs cards. Again this will be possible thanks to the work David Gibson has put in to keeping track of DIM membership and helping with all the templates and admin.

### 2020 vs 2021 Membership levels

	2020 (up until 31 <sup>st</sup> December)	2021 (up until 7 <sup>th</sup> May)	2021 (up until 4 <sup>th</sup> July)
<b>Groups (including Member Clubs, Associates and Access Controlling Bodies)</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>158</b>
<b>CIMs (including Cavers, Non-Cavers, Students, Under 18s and CDG)</b>	<b>5308</b>	<b>4622</b>	<b>4797</b>

### 2021 Clubs who have not renewed.

At the beginning of June I chased the 2020 clubs who had not renewed in 2021 again. A few have now renewed and others have started the process. These will have all been contacted by Wendy in December and have been chased by me in April and again in June. So I do not plan to chase them again.

A couple of other clubs that have been members before but not for a few years have also renewed recently.

### Things still to do

- Finish printing and posting the remainder of the club card back log. Hopefully after that I should be able to print and post each week as updates come in.
- Print and post the DIM cards back log (all those received since Wendy was taken ill)
- Chase up payments.
- Keep working with Ari and Angus on a new online system for tracking membership.

### BCA DIM Membership Report

At the time of writing, all DIM membership applications received by 28 June 2021 have been 'processed'. That essentially means that the transaction log has been checked and the applications confirmed by email 'where possible'. DIM cards have not yet been issued, but that is in hand. I have redesigned the templates for all classes of cards, in order to streamline the card printing process.

The original 'master spreadsheet' for DIM members no longer exists, and has been replaced by an online system. Periodically, I compile an 'output' from this system, in the form of a tab-separated data file that can be read into a spreadsheet when required (spreadsheets are still useful for mail-merges, e.g. card printing and sending letters). For data security, I will not email these outputs to anybody unless you pick up your email directly from the BCA server. The alternative method of access is for authorised people to use webmail to access a special 'archive' mailbox – which I call the 'ledgers' mailbox. Katie and I regularly email data to that mail box that requires archiving. Live DIM Membership figures are now available from the web server, for authorised people to access.

The headline membership figure is that BCA currently has **676 DIMs**. This compares with **784** as of 31-Dec-2020.

There are 27 membership applications 'pending'. These are a 'bulk' application from Vietnam, who were late renewing from last year. These have not been processed yet because they require an adjustment to the system to allow bulk applications to be handled in a more efficient manner.

Selective list of items still to do

Continue to work on the M1 software.

With Katie: Check that members claiming to have paid insurance via their club really have done so. (and the converse:) check that CIMs claiming to be DIMs really are.

Work on developing the membership number database with Katie

Work on developing an online version of the banking spreadsheet, with Katie

Work on an online form M2 and M3

Longer term: recode the online form M1 so it is using up-to-date concepts and will work better on mobile devices.

Add a column to the DIM data that represents 'donations' or, 'payment miscompares', so that the sum of money listed in the DIM data outputs agrees with the sums of money collected via Paypal etc.

*David Gibson, 05-July-2021*

No questions to the Treasurer on the membership report.

On behalf of the Council, the Chairman expressed his thanks to the group who are sorting out the membership issues.

## **Agenda Item 9**

### **Convenor's Report to Council for the Constitution Working Group**

**Andrew McLeod, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

The COG group has been working on three sets of proposals for the next BCA. All the proposals presented below have the approval of the COG group, and following the support of Council will be proposed by members of the COG group with a recommendation written by the COG group.

#### **Section 10.1**

The first group of proposals address a requirement from the 2020 BCA AGM that the BCA approve a 'new form of words' for Section 10.1 of the BCA Constitution. A consultation of BCA members was carried out, and a report written (available on the BCA website in the COG section) explaining how there are a wide range of opinions and concerns relating to Section 10.1.

For reference, the current Section 10.1 of the BCA Constitution reads:

"The Association shall not interfere in the affairs of a Member unless specifically requested to do so by that Member. The Association shall not mediate between Members unless requested by them in writing to do so."

Many consultees feel that Section 10.1 is important to preserve the autonomy of member bodies of the BCA. The principle of autonomy is an important one, and should not be disregarded, nor should the legitimate concerns of members. There is certainly no intention by the the group to encourage 'interfere[nce] in the affairs of members'; the COG group would stress that autonomy is guaranteed in the BCA Constitution in section 2.1, and do not believe removing/amending Section 10.1 will change this.

Equally, many consultees believed Section 10.1 prevented the BCA from carrying out the work the membership expects. We believe the practical effect of Section 10.1 is small; autonomy is already a core part of the BCA Constitution, and it is not possible for anybody to provide mediation unless both parties agree (or it is not mediation). However, its vague nature can have a chilling effect on BCA work.

The report also includes three proposals for the AGM.

Our proposals give the following options for the membership at the 2021 AGM:

- 1) The voters may reject all the proposals (no proposal reaches the 70% threshold), and the status quo will remain.
- 2) The proposal to completely remove Section 10.1 may be successful.
- 3) One of the two proposals to amend Section 10.1 may be successful.

We therefore present three proposals. Proposals A and B were passed unanimously; proposal C was passed with less support.

### **AGM Proposals:**

Proposal A:

This AGM proposes that:

- section 10.1 of the BCA Constitution be deleted entirely;
  - the text ‘Notwithstanding Sub Section 10.1’ be removed from Sections 10.2 and 10.3;
  - the other parts of Section 10 be renumbered accordingly;
- UNLESS Proposal B or C receive a greater majority in the post-AGM online ballot than this proposal, in which case no part of this proposal takes effect.

Proposal B:

This AGM proposes that section 10.1 of the BCA Constitution is amended to:

- The Association shall not mediate between Members unless requested by them to do so.
- UNLESS Proposal A or C receive a greater majority in the post-AGM online ballot than this proposal, in which case no part of this proposal takes effect.

Proposal C:

This AGM proposes that section 10.1 of the BCA Constitution is amended to:

- The Association shall not interfere in the affairs of a Member unless it is necessary to do so to investigate a complaint raised by another Member (the Complainant). Any action taken by the BCA should be the minimum possible to balance the competing rights and freedoms of the Member and the Complainant.

Note: Such rights would include those granted under the BCA Constitution and the principle of autonomy.

UNLESS Proposal A or B receive a greater majority in the post-AGM online ballot than this proposal, in which case no part of this proposal takes effect.

### **End proposals**

To comply with the 2020 BCA AGM motion which required this work, we submit these proposals to Council for approval by a majority vote prior to proposal at the 2021 BCA AGM.

### **Reorganization of BCA committees and working groups**

The BCA currently has a number of standing committees and working groups, together with a number of special-case situations such as the elected P&I Officer (with no committee). The COG

group proposes the following changes as a single proposal. They will simplify the structure of BCA groups by removing Standing Committees from the BCA Constitution. Current standing committees will be replaced by Working Groups with terms of reference to be written by BCA Council (in accordance with the AGM motions).

### **AGM Proposal:**

*Replace the Training Committee and Equipment and Techniques Standing Committee with the Equipment and Training Working Group.*

This group is to have national body and regional council representation in its Terms of Reference. It will co-ordinate and facilitate recreational training, manage the anchor programme and be responsible for strategic planning.

*Simplify the structure of BCA groups by removing Standing Committees.* <sup>[1]</sup><sub>SEP</sub> Re-form Conservation and Access as a working group with national body and regional council representation.

*Constitutional changes to remove Standing Committees.*

- Replace ‘Secretary, Treasurer together with Chairman of the Standing Committees (Section 7) with ‘Secretary, and Treasurer’ in section 6.1.
- Delete ‘and Chairmen of Standing Committees’ from section 8.12b.
- Replace ‘Standing Committees and others’ with ‘those’ in section 9.8.
- Replace ‘Sections 7 and 8’ with ‘Section 8’ in section 12.3.
- Delete Section 7 of the constitution and renumber subsequent sections and references.

### **End proposal**

Note: if due to amendment of proposals E&T and Training were not to be combined, then they should be reformed as working groups.

### **Justification:**

This is an effort to simplify working groups and reduce the number of people on council.

The differences between working groups and standing committees can be summarised as:

- Standing Committees can only be formed and altered at an AGM (including their terms of reference)
- Standing Committee Chairs have to be elected at the AGM
- Standing Committee Chairs have a vote at council.

They have different but similar requirements to working groups in the manual of operations. This, combined with a general confusion of who is due for election and who has a vote at a meeting (the P&I Officer being a working group convenor but also having vote for instance) makes the BCA bureaucracy impenetrable, less transparent and makes accountability harder.

Working groups terms of reference can specify regional and national body representation.

It can be helpful when groups become dysfunctional for council to appoint someone apolitical to run the group, as if it were part of the civil service, which helps if they do not have a vote.

### **Section 8**

Section 8 of the constitution describes how General Meetings of the BCA are called and carried out. Covid has forced our AGMs online, and these changes aim to ensure that our constitution fully supports the option of an online general meeting. We have also taken the opportunity to tidy up a few parts of this section, and fix some issues with the timeline of notices for General Meetings. We also make a change in section 6.1 which changes the constitution to match the current interpretation of the current constitution (for clarity only).

A document showing the changes made to Section 8, and another document of notes, will be made available on the BCA Website in the COG section. The proposed changes were approved unanimously by the COG group.

**AGM Proposal:**

- A subheading 'GENERAL MEETINGS' to be added to Section 8.
- Insert ', whether physical or teleconferencing' after 'General Meetings' in section 8.1.
- Replace 'place' with 'venue, whether physical or teleconferencing,' and 'General Meeting' with 'an Annual or Special General Meeting' in section 8.3.
- Replace 'on the day of the National Council meeting preceding the AGM' with 'of the 84<sup>th</sup> day (12 weeks) before the AGM' in section 8.4.
- Replace 'place' with 'venue' in section 8.5.
- Replace 'to members on request' with 'to all members not later than six weeks after the date of the meeting' in section 8.8.
- Add a subtitle 'VOTING AT GENERAL MEETINGS' to section 8.9.
- Replace 'lowest' with 'lower', and 'online vote' with 'online ballot of all individual members eligible to vote', and delete 'arising from a General Meeting' in section 8.9.
- Add a subtitle 'ONLINE BALLOT FOLLOWING GENERAL MEETINGS' to section 8.10.
- Replace 'approximately 30 days' with '14 days', and '>=70%' with 'not less than 70%' in section 8.10.
- Add a subtitle 'ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS' to section 8.11, and renumber to 8.11.a.
- Renumber section 8.12 to 8.11.b, and number the bulleted list i), ii), iii) and iv).
- Add a subtitle heading '8.12 SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS'.
- Renumber the first three sentences of section 8.13 to 8.12.a, and the latter two sentences to 8.12.b.
- Replace 'not less than 12 weeks' with 'not less than 84 days (12 weeks)', and 'place' with 'venue, whether physical or teleconferencing' in the new section 8.21.a.
- Add a subtitle heading '8.13 EMERGENCY GENERAL MEETINGS'.
- Renumber the first sentence of 8.14 as 8.13.a, and the latter sentences as 8.13.b.
- Add ', or by one member of the Executive and three other voting Council members' at the end of the new 8.13.a.
- Replace 'not less than 2 weeks' with 'not less than 14 days (2 weeks)' in the new section 8.13.b.
- Replace 'elected' with 'subject to a vote of approval by the individual membership' in section 6.1.

**End proposal**

No questions to the "COG"

**Proposals for Council:**

**Proposal 1: Council supports submitting AGM Proposals A, B and C relating to Section 10.1 to the 2021 BCA AGM.**

Proposers the "COG"  
abs 2 rest in favour, carried.

**Proposal 2: Council supports submitting the AGM Proposal relating to BCA Reorganization to the 2021 BCA AGM.**

Proposers the "COG"  
abs 2 rest in favour, carried.

### **Proposal 3: Council supports submitting the AGM Proposal relating to Section 8 to the 2021 BCA AGM.**

Proposers the “COG”

4 abs rest in favour, carried.

A vote of thanks was recorded to the “COG”

Prop Andrew Hind

2<sup>nd</sup> Allan Richardson, 2 abs rest in favour, carried.

Action: Chair/Secretary

### **Agenda Item 10: Other Reports**

#### **Publications and Information (Rostam Namaghi)**

Apologies – this is as brief as I could make it!

##### **News Posts**

Since the last meeting we have had 5 news stories, these have each had a reach of approximately 400 people on Facebook and 600-1000 views on UK Caving. A meeting and further discussion is needed with the ITWG to develop metrics for the website. An analysis of our Facebook posting times show that the most effective time to post is 09:00 to 13:00. Effective distribution and reach relies on regular content that is engaging and so careful co-ordination is needed for our surveys/important content.

Our autopost to UKC function is still broken but the ITWG is extremely busy with the membership database.

##### **Services**

I am delighted to announce our proof reading service has gone live on the website and is ready for advertising. There is no charge for this service but we do ask for two printed copies be made available to us once the work is finished (one for the British Caving library and one for the proof reader/s). An advert for the book will also be placed via BCA website and its social media. The BCA has a Flickr account with appropriate permissions to use for news stories – please see the link on the website if developing a document/resource that needs images.

Training on how to use BCA cloud, the mail system and the website is available if needed for council members. I have been waiting to tack it onto a planned physical meeting to start it.

##### **Podcasts**

The coming back to caving podcast found a very small audience (30 people) who left very positive feedback. There appears to be an appetite to learn about how caving functions in the UK. Somewhat bizarrely 60% of our listeners were in the United States with the UK coming after Switzerland. There are 3 podcasts recorded and ready to be distributed, this time with an organised campaign to generate further reach and engagement.

##### **Information**

The Club and Membership survey will go out once posts are reaching the numbers we had back in February (600-800 on Facebook and 600-1000 on UK Caving). Once the club consultation is back the club handbook document will be developed for publication.

##### **The future**

I am happy to announce that 11 of 13 aims of the working group have been fulfilled this year, with the remaining two in progress and hopefully done before the AGM. A formal meeting of P&I is due to be held within the next two months. This will establish the sustainability of various projects, write a full roundup and future plans for the AGM, and identify a suitable person to replace me as P&I officer (should it become a council appointment: this is subject to changes at the AGM). Please note that a full Covid update report will be submitted for the next council meeting.



No Questions to Publications.

### **Radon WG Report (Gethin Thomas)**

Data from the final round of radon sampling is starting to be received. Once all this data has been compiled, the data on the BCA website as well as various tables within the Radon Underground document will be updated. Work is ongoing to create an accessible summary info-graphic to explain and qualify the radon hazard in a meaningful way to cavers.

In addition the questions regarding potential concerns for Access Controlling Bodies and radon has been presented to a suitably qualified solicitor, at this stage enquiring to the potential costs related to seeking a legal interpretation of the concerns. Both these being actions from the meeting proposed at a previous BCA Council meeting. We're awaiting a response from the solicitor, this may be available for the next council meeting. I'm also hopeful that we'll have the basis for the info-graphic available within the next 3-4 weeks.

Given the proposal earlier on in the year for a fund accessible to cavers and clubs for further sampling is, in part, reliant on the two outstanding jobs noted above I'd suggest a decision on funding is postponed until early next year with the view of potentially supporting an initial round of sampling in the Summer of 2022.

On a personal note my workload is looking to increase significantly from the Autumn. I would be keen to look for another to take over the stewardship of the Radon Working Group from that point as I'm unlikely to be able to commit much time to the group. I'm happy to continue to work within the group should someone be willing to step up to the role of convener (if they feel that's appropriate) and so somewhat optimistically invite interest.

No Questions on the Radon report.

### **Library Report to BCA Council (Jenny Potts)**

The end of most coronavirus-related restrictions has allowed us to use "caver post" to send 22 boxes of publications to re-stock a Mendip club library damaged by fire. Other duplicate materials will be on their way soon to clubs in other parts of the country and collections of archive materials are beginning to arrive in the Library once again.

The Peter Binns collection of caving photos from 1934 to the 1960s is now online in the BCRA Archives section of the Library website-material of historic importance to British caving, soon to be the subject of an article in Descent. An allied collection of material from Frank Butterfield, a relative of Binns by marriage, has thrown yet more light on the period and on the history of BSA and CRG immediately post-war.

Cataloguing of the John Beck legacy of Peak District surveys is nearly complete, thanks to two enthusiastic volunteers, who have so far dealt with over 670 items, some of which are now online and available to all cavers via the DCA website. Enquiries have continued to arrive by email: 32 so far this year to the end of June, on course to match previous years. 42% of enquiries require research, sometimes taking several hours, as opposed to simple requests for scans which can be dealt with in minutes. As dealing with enquiries has to take priority, cataloguing of publications has slowed since Katie Eavis transferred to working on BCA Membership.

No questions to the Library.

### **UIS report (Andy Eavis)**

As the world is coming out of lock-down international caving and international caving politics is beginning to happen. The International Congress for 2021 was postponed till July 2022, however the International Year of Caves and Karst has carried on, it is now over 18 months long rather than 12 months, so it will finish at the international Congress in France in July 2022.

A virtual vote by the country delegates of UIS decided unanimously for Brazil to host the International Congress in 2025. They did host a very successful congress in Brasilia in 2001. It will be in Belo Horizonte 27th July – 2nd August 2025. A preliminary video is available on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gwjhHEKEDUQ>

This September 14th there is a UNESCO reception for the International Union of Speleology in Paris at the UNESCO headquarters, I will attend, and I hope that Ged Campion as President of the European Federation will also be able to go, we do not know what the travel restrictions will be like at that time.

There are various International Year of Caves and Karst events going on around the world. Our BCRA Monday evening lecture series continues with the second Monday in the month, so far, they have all been very good, many are available online and more will be available in the future. Sad news that and Adolfo Eraso, Christian Dodelin, two senior UIS people have both died recently. Christian from France was very involved with French and International Cave Rescue and a particularly nice guy. Adolfo Eraso from Spain was UIS Secretary 1977-1981, President 81-86 and an honorary bureau member. It is a great shame both of them have passed away.

To look at the past events of the International Year of Caves and Karst, please see:

[www.iyck2021.org](http://www.iyck2021.org) The UIS bulletin is due to be published online shortly so please watch the UIS website [www.uis-speleo.org](http://www.uis-speleo.org) As ever, keep an eye on these websites, I look forward to seeing people at the Zoom meeting on 15th July,

No questions on the UIS report.

**QMC report to Council - July 2021** <sup>[L][T][SEP]</sup>As government covid restrictions are relaxed, we are seeing the gradual reopening of outdoor education facilities. Correspondingly, BCA award holders are steadily re-engaging with our award schemes. We have scheduled LCMLA update workshops in each region in September, to draw as many award holders back into the system, post lockdown, as we can. <sup>[L][T][SEP]</sup>The three year term in office for both chair and deputy chair of QMC come to an end this November. Details of both positions have been sent out to all Trainer/Assessors for the award schemes and we hope to short list and appoint in September. Having been in position as chair for the past 3 years, I will not be reapplying for the position, but wish my successor well. <sup>[L][T][SEP]</sup>

Juliet Parker-Smith (QMC chair)

No questions to QMC

### **Agenda Item 11:**

The AGM update will be covered at the next meeting on the 27/07/21, where it is planned to be the only item of business.

No reports are required for this meeting.

Action: Chair

### **Agenda Item 12: CRoW**

David Rose reported that the next court date is now in September 2021, nothing else to report.

### **Agenda Item 13: Any Other Business**

1) Steve Gray has volunteered to be the Training Officer up to the AGM.

This is a co-option

prop Howard Jones

2<sup>nd</sup> Rostam Namaghi unanimous, carried.

2)Andrew Hinde reported that the Government Initiative “Farming in a Protected Landscape” had possible benefits for caving access.

Secretary to contact C&A Convener to ask Conservation and Access Group who should be looking into this and to involve the Regional Councils, whilst emphasising its potential.

**Action: Secretary to contact C&A**

#### **Agenda Item 14: Date of next Council meeting**

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> July at 19.15

#### **Appendices**