



## **Minutes of Council Meeting Wednesday 8th February 2023**

The meeting was held via Zoom

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### **Next Meeting Important Agenda Items**

<b>BCA Council Diary 2022/2023</b>	
	Date

Council	Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> February 2023
AGM Notification posted no later than:	Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> February 2023
AGM deadline for receipt of nominations, proposals etc.	Midnight 19 <sup>th</sup> March 2023
Council	Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> March 2023
AGM Agenda posted no later than:	30 <sup>th</sup> April 2023
Council	Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> May 2023
AGM	Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 1030
AGM deadline for receipt of reports:	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2023
AGM deadline for posting reports:	4 <sup>th</sup> June 2023
Council following the AGM	27 <sup>th</sup> June (Approve WG's and Convenors)
AGM on-line voting until:	Midnight 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2023

#### Council Positions

Voting Position	Name	Initials
<b>BCA Executive</b>		
Chair 21-24 (3 years)	Russell Myers	RM
Secretary 21-24 (3 years)	Allan Richardson	AR
Treasurer 20-23 (3years)	Howard Jones	HJJ
<b>Group/Club Reps</b>		
Position 1, 21-23 (2 years)	Josh White	JW
Position 2, 22-24 (2 years)	Jenny Potts	JP
<b>Individual Member Reps</b>		
Position 1, 21-23 (2 years)	Nigel Atkins	NA
Position 2, 20-22 (2 years)	Andy Eavis	AE
<b>Regional Council Reps</b>		
CCC		
CNCC	Andrew Hinde	AH
CSCC	Linda Wilson	LW
DCA	Mike Higgins	MH
DCUC	David Jean	DJ
<b>Constituent Body Reps</b>		
William Pengelly CST	Richard Vooght	RV
Assoc. Cave Instructors	Stephan Natynczuk	SN
National Caving Scout Active Support Unit	Tony Radmall	TR

BCRA	John Gunn	JG
NAMHO	Steve Holding	SH
CHECC	Jennifer Ryder	JR
CDG	Claire Cohen	CC
BCRC	Emma Porter	EP

Non Voting Positions	Name	Initials
<b>Working Group Convenors</b>		
Training and Equipment	Steve Gray	SG
Conservation and Access	Richard Vooght	RV
Information Technology	Ari Cooper-Davis	ACD
Youth and Development	Josh White	JW
QMC	George Plant	GP
CoG	Andrew McLeod	AM
Radon	Vacant	
P & I	Vacant	
<b>Additional BCA Appointments</b>		
Insurance Manager	Josh White	JW
Membership Administrator	Katie Eavis	KE
Safeguarding Officer	Chris Boardman	CB
Training Administrator	Mary Wild	MW
Library Representative	Jenny Potts	JP
Newsletter Editor	Vacant	
UIS Representative	Andy Eavis	AE
FSE Representative	Ged Campion	GC
Artificial Cave	Katie Eavis	KE
QMC Representative 1 (observer)	BCA Chair	RM
QMC Representative 2 (observer)	Chris Boardman	CB

## **Present**

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

Ari Cooper-Davis, John Gunn, Steve Gray, George Plant, Richard Vooght,

### **Agenda item 2: Acceptance of the 22nd November 2022 Meeting Minutes**

Proposed JP

Second LW

All in favour passed nem con

### **Agenda item 4: Matters arising/Action Plan**

The Conservation and Access Working Group has a volunteer to be the convener.

Richard Vooght has volunteered to take on the role.  
Proposed AR  
Second JP  
All in favour passed nem con

Issue	Who	By when	Signed off

### **Agenda item 5: Vacancies**

A Convener is still sought for the P&I working group.  
The Radon group remains dormant.

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

Of immediate concern, is news that Linda Wilson, CSCC representative, has been admitted to hospital recently with quite serious health problems; I have passed on my best wishes for a speedy recovery to Linda on behalf of Council.

The Council Meeting scheduled for January was postponed due to not much in the way of decision making business to consider albeit the day to day work of BCA continues unabated. I'm not in favour of holding meetings for the sake of meetings hence the deferred date.

John Gunn as BCRA representative has tendered his apologies for being absent from the forthcoming Council meeting and with the absence of Linda Wilson as BCRA Publicity Officer, I thought I would step into the breach and "plug" the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the formation of BCRA and its monthly seminar programme; online presentations with a link here <http://bcra.org.uk/seminars> for details. The next is on 13<sup>th</sup> February and for the March seminar, Dr. Alexander Klimchouk of Ukraine Speleological Association will deliver a presentation on the hypogene origins of cave formation.

Steve Gray, BCA Training Officer and convenor of the Training and Equipment WG has sent his apologies and asked me to report to Council that the Group is active and currently involved with addressing the issue of Petzl Aven and SuperAvanti harnesses slipping open when new, (a locking mechanism is currently being trialled). Tests have also been undertaken on the use of caving belts in semi-load bearing situations, the results of which are to be posted on the BCA website. Steve also notes the availability of the Liaison Group by which issues of common interest can be addressed between QMC and T&E WG.

I am greatly encouraged that a volunteer has come forward to act as convenor for the Conservation and Access Group and welcome Richard Vooght into the role.

Finally, on the issue of volunteers we are still in need of a Publicity and Information Officer and we are grateful to Imogen Campion for her contribution in publicising a number of matters. More importantly, we have had a red flag from our current Treasurer, Howard Jones in his report to this meeting about his intention to stand down at the forthcoming AGM; something of mounting concern as the clock is ticking to find a replacement.

Russell Myers  
Chair  
BCA  
7<sup>th</sup> February 2023

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

AGM notification has been posted.

Request by the BADASS caving club to join BCA, they are mostly involved with the stone mines in Wiltshire and surrounding areas. They are helping conserve the mines and act as first point of contact with MCRO re callouts to the mines.

Club Statement.

We are a group of friends who have been caving together for nearly a decade now; we all live in or around Wiltshire and spend the majority of our time there, We also branch out to the Mendips, Forest of Dean, South and North Wales for regular caving trips.

We feel particularly passionate about the Wiltshire stone mines and are active in trying to preserve them and their history for future generations. The majority of the members are also members of MCRO Stone Mine Team and are first response call out for Box, Browns and Swan.

We would like to be able to do more for caving in general for the local area and to facilitate this we would like to legitimise what we do by forming a proper caving club with all the responsibilities thereof.

Becoming an official BCA caving club will help greatly in arranging access agreements with land owners and providing other services like surveying and linking up with other clubs.

We are committed to furthering the sport of caving in general and actively encourage new prospectives cavers along on trips to give them a taste of the underground and teach them how to be responsible cavers.

Therefore we would like to submit our application for joining the BCA.

Regards

Alex Moule

Chairman (prospective)

Query from AH re what info do we have about them, HJJ replied that Katie Eavis had received all the necessary information about them.

Proposed MH

Second HJJ

All in favour passed nem con

## **Agenda item 8: BCA Treasurer Report**

### **BCA Treasurer Report to BCA Council February 2023**

**Current bank balances:** as at 5/1/2023 was £218,000. Of which £88,000 is in medium term interest bearing accounts and £77,000 is in short term deposit accounts.

**Bank accounts:**

We now have a deposit account with HSBC for short term deposits. The rate is low but better than nothing and transfer to and from current account is easy. United Trust will be sent out renewal terms for our £88k investment with them. We chose a 2 year deal at 3.5%. Our savings rates with Mansfield Building Society and Redwood bank have increased in autumn 2022. For organisations such as BCA that have cash savings, rising interest rates are good news.

#### Unusual spend since last Council:

Y&D expenses for various activities £1,975, CCC regional claim at £181, CNCC regional claim at £4,566, BCRA 4<sup>th</sup> quarter donation £3,000, DCA regional claim £1,321. FES affiliation 2023 £650. CCC claim included £121 C&A costs.

CNCC claim included £2,377 C&A costs, large project being Grassington mine approved by BCA C&A committee. And £947 training costs.

DCA claim included £374 C&A costs and £700 training costs. It was noted that the DCA claim was unreviewed so the claim was paid on the basis that if the reviewer does not approve any of the items claimed then DCA will repay that element to BCA accordingly. The claim was received in late December.

#### BCA Region claims for 2021 paid in 2022

All of them eventually. BCA finance committee has been busy in the last 2 months reviewing claims.

#### BCA Financial year end

Our year end is 31<sup>st</sup> December so I have been doing the necessary. I will begin the year end accounts at the end of January 2023.

#### Membership rate increase 2024

Inflation has run at in excess of 10% in the last year, and the days of low inflation are behind us for the medium term. Our two main costs (insurance and staff) are affected by inflation, as are regional claim costs. If I was Treasurer beyond next AGM (which I won't be) I would be proposing a fee increase of 10% as at 1/1/2024.

#### Time commitment since last Council

I have been involved in the following since last Council meeting: Staff reviews, BCA pension scheme automatic enrolment renewal, Insurance policy renewals, membership renewals, BCA financial year end. In total I have spent in excess of 75 hours on BCA business. I suggest that we need to separate the Treasurer role from the Insurance manager role as there will be few volunteers who want that level of commitment.

HJJ February 2023.

HJJ had nothing to add.

Report accepted.

AH asked about the rise in membership costs, as inflation was hopefully going to fall. HJJ replied that the rise was to cover the existing rise in costs.

AR asked what was the plan to replace HJJ?

LW said we need a practical plan to deal with the situation.

## **Agenda Item 9: BCA Insurance Manager's report**

### Claims

We have no outstanding claims. Hence we have received a no claims bonus of £1,200 for 2021. The 2 claims we received in 2020 have both been vigorously defended and have gone away.

Interestingly the land repair claim we received at £2,000 would cost £3,500 to complete at January 2023 prices due to inflationary increases in fuel, materials and labour.

### Public Liability Policy renewal as at 1/1/2023

Our main insurance policy (third party liability at £2m cover) was part of a 2 year deal and hence we were expecting a large price increase but in fact we renewed at below half RPI increase in price for the period. Bearing in mind the uncertainty with inflation in the next few years and the time commitment for the BCA insurance manager at renewal we agreed to a 3 year deal whereby the price of the main policy will increase by 5% in each of the next 2 years.

**Broker's comments:** *The BCA were in the final year of their Long Term Agreement with primary insurers Hiscox. From reviewing other markets we have spoken to about similar outdoor risks, we are unaware of other underwriters who would wish to underwrite this risk. In addition, there is an on-going claim relating to outdoor activities in the region of £10m, which has further reduced the appetite in the market.*

*As part of our renewal negotiations with Hiscox, we pushed them for a new Long Term Agreement to provide the BCA with pricing stability in an uncertain time where we are seeing rates increase from insurers due to an increase in the cost of handling claims, claims payments etc. Hiscox's proposal is a 3 year agreement with a built in 5% increase year on year. Whilst this proposal is a change to the previous agreement, we are seeing other insurers doing similar proposals to this.*

The excess layer cover (taking cover from £2m to £10m) has increased in line with RPI in the period at 15% cost. This is impacted by a reduction in providers for this cover which has been noted at the last 2 renewals, partly due to the BMC £10m settlement of their third party liability claim.

**Broker's comments:** *The excess layer markets have remained with the same insurers. We have had significant conversations over the years with a number of insurers and there is very little appetite to attach below £10m. We did speak with an alternative insurer at this renewal (QBE) to understand whether there was changes in the market. Those discussions showed us that there was appetite to provide an excess layer but only above £10m, which wouldn't change anything for the BCA at this stage.*

Smaller policies have increased in price by 10% ( property and Directors and officers cover ) and the property insured has increased in value mainly due to increasing the library contents value to £100k.

All necessary notifications have been posted on the BCA website (policy cover and TWIMC letter)

### BCA travel Insurance policy managed by P J Hayman:

We have recently concluded renewal of the policy. New terms will apply from the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2023.

Key changes as follows:

- **Inflationary Rating Increase** – 6% (see additional note below)

- **Group Discount** – now available for 10 or more in an organised expedition/event
- **Claims Handling** – this will move in-house to P J Hayman

Returning now to the premiums. PJH were embarrassed to discover when sorting out the renewal of the scheme that the increase in premiums that should have applied from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2021 of 15% had not been applied by the deadline. The downside is that new quotations and renewals from the 1<sup>st</sup> of February will also have to include the 15% rating increase. Cavers who took out the policy during that period made a windfall gain.

#### Detail:

There are a number of factors that drive insurance costs and they include

- Increase in national living wage inflates loss of earning claims costs
- The Judicial College Guidelines have assessed a 10% increase in claims payment, especially significant large losses [https://www.lawgazette.co.uk/legal-updates/judicial-college-guidelines-update\\_Supply\\_claim\\_issues\\_and\\_shortage\\_of\\_labour\\_have\\_affected\\_the\\_costs\\_associated\\_with\\_property\\_claims](https://www.lawgazette.co.uk/legal-updates/judicial-college-guidelines-update_Supply_claim_issues_and_shortage_of_labour_have_affected_the_costs_associated_with_property_claims)
- in 2024 the Government are to review the Ogden Rate (the calculation used to assess damages in respect of life changing injuries) and it is expected insurers are reviewing rating to factor in this change.

HJJ BCA retiring Insurance Manager

Josh White has been involved in this year's renewal and I am delighted that he is standing as BCA Insurance Manager.

Proposal to elect JW as BCA Insurance Manager.

Proposed HJJ

Second TR

One abstention, rest in favour, passed

JW thanked HJJ for his work as Insurance manager, this was agreed by all.

### **Agenda Item 10: Membership Report**

#### **BCA Club membership**

Katie Eavis – club membership administrator

#### **2022 Club Membership**

#### **2020 vs 2021 vs 2022 Membership levels**

	<b>2020 (up until the 31<sup>st</sup> December)</b>	<b>2021 (up until the 31<sup>st</sup> December)</b>	<b>2022 (up until the 31<sup>th</sup> December)</b>
<b>Groups (including Member Clubs, Associates and Access Controlling Bodies)</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>169</b>



<b>CIMs (including Cavers, Non-Cavers, Students, Under 18s and CDG)</b>	<b>5308</b>	<b>5049</b>	<b>5629</b>
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Less than £50 membership fees from all clubs currently still owe for 2022 and I am confident these will be paid soon.

## 2023 Club Membership

Renewal paperwork for clubs was sent out earlier than usual last year – in mid-November 2022.

This has worked well as it has spread out the rush of organised clubs who renew early.

To date 127 clubs and access bodies renewals have been processed for 2023. This includes just over 4000 club cavers and of these all but 50 have had their membership cards printed and posted. Club renewals are coming in everyday and all of these are processed within a week of being received. Membership cards are all posted within 2 weeks.

## DIM membership report

### DIM Membership

It is difficult to get a true picture of DIM membership during the renewals period but simple figures that pop straight out of the system are

Current DIM members 596

overdue DIM members 480

lapsed DIM members 0

stale DIM members 272

Overdue members are those who have not yet renewed.

Lapsed members are those who have been overdue for 3 months (clearly zero at the present date)

Stale members are those who were last a member in 2021. This figure represents the DIM turnover and is typically several hundred.

The overdue members will be sent a reminder email, hopefully by 6 Feb.

We are seeing a slow increase in the number of people paying by bank transfer. At some point we can start to advertise this a bit more prominently, and suggest that people set up a recurring payment via their bank. However, I would like to put an automated system in place before we get that far. A small number of applicants seem to struggle enormously with computers and it takes a lot of time to deal with these people, who either cannot pay, or pay the wrong amount or are just completely baffled. Their experiences will guide me when I re-write the application form later this year, as this exercise is now long overdue.

### Additional DIM information from Katie

David continues to do all the work collecting and processing the DIM information. He regularly sends me the list of recent renewals, at which point I print and post the membership cards. David keeps track of all the PayPal payments and I log all BACs and cheque payments. Between us DIM renewals seem to be going smoothly.

Kate Eavis Membership administrator February 2023.

HJJ reported that a number of members who join as DIM's, then the following year having joined a club, rejoin as CIM's.

## **Agenda Item 11: Other Reports**

### **FSE delegate report**

Not much to report since the last BCA council meeting.

The FSE has 30 member countries in Europe and beyond. All pay their fees regularly, however, exception has been made for Ukraine for obvious reasons.

The FSE last General Assembly Meeting (GAM) was held at the **International Congress of Speleology (ICS between 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> July this year in Bourget Du Lac, Savoie, France.**

Countries and members of the bureau have remained the same with no new additions this time. Details of the meeting can be found in the minutes of the GAM.

Considerable work continues to be invested in maintaining the system of sponsoring European projects, through the EuroSpeleo Projects (ESP), the EuroSpeleo Forums (ESF).

Members countries of the FSE will have received an invitation to apply for the annual European Cave Protection Label Prize. The winner receives 800 euros and 400 euros worth of sponsor items. The UIS also offer the Habe Prize for cave protection projects, which is 300 euros.

The new FSE (more sophisticated) website is now operational.

The next GAM of the FSE will be held in Germany in May 2023. More details will be available soon.

Ged Campion.

BCA delegate to FSE

GC had nothing to add to his report.

### **UIS Report**

After the International Congress in France a new UIS bureau was formed, and they are now getting to grips with running the organisation.

Ged Campion currently President of the European Federation was voted in as an adjunct Secretary of UIS. When Ged retires as President of the European Federation it is sensible for him to take over my role as UK representative.

In my capacity as past President and Honorary President I will still be very much involved with UIS, and Ged and I will be able to share the reporting as necessary into the future.

As ever, I will be self-funded in my attending UIS meetings. Ged as the official Great Britain representative will officially be eligible for any funding available.

The next International Congress will be in Brazil from 20<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> July 2025 in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil. There will be a visit by the bureau this summer 2023 which I may well try to attend.

There have been a couple of bureau meetings since the summer.

The high spot for UIS was its inclusion in the ground water summit of 2022 which is an important UNESCO initiative and was hosted at the headquarters in Paris where the year of caves and karst was introduced some years ago. This is an important milestone in UIS history and gives it more credibility.

Nivaldo Colzato UIS Vice President for operations continues to edit the bulletin. When I first met Nivaldo probably about 20 years ago he could barely speak any English, now he is editing the UIS bulletin in English. I might add he has had a considerable amount of help from our own Ged Campion and a couple of Americans Patricia Seiser and past President George Veni. The latest bulletin runs to 107 pages and is available on the website. There are some very good articles in this bulletin, the next one will be out in 6 months' time. Nivaldo certainly does a good job.

Finally, George Veni has announced that he will be finishing with American National Caves and Karst Institute. George has now been the Director of NCKRI for about 15 years. I guess George is getting to retirement age, but certainly American cave science will miss George Veni in that position.

I will attend the next BCA council meeting, but I am then away between 23<sup>rd</sup> February and 13<sup>th</sup> May probably with no internet, although emergency messages will get through to me.

AE reported at the meeting that GC is actively looking for his replacement as President of European Federation.

**Andy Eavis**

### **Conservation and Access Working Group**

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of January, the Conservation and Access Working Party (C&A Working Party) held a meeting via Zoom. During the meeting I was appointed as the new convener.

At the meeting, the following projects were asked for funding. These are...

DCUC – £3,000 for amending gates at Great Rock Mine in Devon.

CSCC – £2,000, to replace the floor of Swildon's Hole Barn.

CSCC – £700, for replacing the gate at Singing River Mine.

In the future there will be funding asked for from the Forest of Dean / Cambrian. In regards of Wet Sink (Slaughter Stream Cave). How much and what for isn't known at the moment.

Also during the meeting, a long discussion was held about Ash Die Back in terms of accessing caves. As this is now becoming widespread throughout all the regions, care must be taken in and around areas of woodland where there are trees with Ash Die Back. Particular difficulties were in the Dale's as well as on the Mendips.

On the Mendips, there were issues in regards to the caves in the Longwood Valley. Where known paths to the caves were closed due to trees having Ash Die Back. Long negotiations with the landowner and the Charterhouse Caves Company Ltd (CCC Ltd), have made it possible for cavers to still enter the caves in the valley, by the aid of cutting trees with Ash Die Back and having a detailed agreement on accessing the caves (please read the C&A Working Party minutes Jan'23 for more details). **It was asked by the committee to ask the council whether any other regions have had issues with Ash Die Back and how they have dealt with it.**

Richard Vooght  
C&A Working Party Convener

JP reported few if any problems with Ash trees at cave entrances in Derbyshire.

LW reported a lot of problems on Mendip, not for rigging but access to caves through areas of Ash trees.

DJ reported problems in Devon, with Pengelly Higher Kiln Quarry closed along with its caves.

AH said that Regional Councils need to investigate and report on the problem.

## CROW

### Countryside and Rights of Way Working Group

In June 2022 a private member's bill was introduced to parliament entitled the "Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (Amendment) Bill" by Caroline Lucas, the Green MP for Brighton Pavilion. The bill sought to permit both water activities and camping. Whilst the bill has almost no chance of becoming law, it does provide a useful focus to identify MPs who are sympathetic to expanding the provisions of CRoW. A second reading took place in October but was suspended until March 2023. Contact has been made with Ms Green and a request that if the bill does pass its second stage, could an amendment be made to make it explicit that caving is covered by CRoW.

The recent judgement on the topic of wild camping on Dartmoor National Park has been studied to see what may be learnt from it. The first major point was that the judge found that there had been no right to wild camp prior to the Dartmoor Commons 1985 Act under which wild camping was subsequently authorised. (This was based on evidence including submissions made in the run up to drafting the bill which became the 1985 act, seeking a right to camp be included.) That created a major weakness in the Dartmoor National Park Authority's argument. The judge did quote several pieces of the CRoW Act but then made no further comment on them. So at a simple level, the judgement does not provide any immediate boost to the policy of BCA that caving is covered by CRoW. A brief comment has been passed to Descent for publishing.

However it is noteworthy that one small part of the Judge's discussion did parallel an argument used by Dinah Rose in her opinion. This related to one of the parliamentary reports produced as part of the preparation for the 1949 National Parks Act. That report (known as the first Hobhouse report in 1947 of the National Parks Committee) included a range of activities which it thought were suitable for inclusion in access rights and which explicitly included both caving and potholing.

As a consequence of the judgement, it is noted that Labour's shadow Environment minister Alex Sobel MP tweeted "*Our National Parks should be open to all and access to Dartmoor is integral to that. Labour will expand the right to roam as part of our programme for Government.*" This offers a potential route forward, albeit only if the Labour Party wins power at the next election.

Bob Mehew

AH reported that the Dartmoor case was complex, the result was unlikely to have any bearing in other areas.

JP reported that from 1949 when it was first set up, it was standard for the Peak National Park to pay a small amount to landowners to allow access. This stopped when the CRow Act came in.

## Youth and Development

### **2022 Round up**

#### **CHECC**

University caving looks to be in a surprisingly strong position considering the amount of time spent unable to cave combined with senior members graduating, which without serious commitment from CHECC and some particularly keen freshers could have resulted in a potential crisis for caving in this sector.

This year was CHECC's 20th, and in November the national CHECC event happened. Fantastic connections were made, some superb training offered and the committee has undergone its annual refresh of new members who I met with in December to discuss plans for the coming year and how BCA can assist.

Through huge efforts from a couple of individuals and the generosity of the Wessex, BCA were able to support the creation of a suitable SRT training venue at CHECC.

Over the pandemic several universities highlighted that they were struggling with replacing kit that had deteriorated during covid, but had not had the income to balance this. Three regional stores have been created containing kit to be borrowed by university clubs. Suitable systems are being put in place to ensure this kit is looked after. My thanks go to the Red Rose Caving and Potholing Club, Wessex Caving Club and Bangor Student Caving Club for accommodating these stores.

In total Y&D spent £5,456 on university caving including £1,598 on kit loan schemes, £1,053 on training events and £2,805 on the regional caving stores

#### **Website Development**

The Youth & Development group continue to look to generate content for the BCA website, however discussions have been had about the need to be able to raise the profile further through proper social media management in order to be able to expand the breadth of people that caving can reach.

The Newtocaving website is now managed by someone within Youth & Development, and we're looking to use this to act as a hub for 'experience caving' weekends. It's refreshing

#### **Y&D 2022 AGM REPORT**

It is good to see clubs utilising CNCC's website, and I hope that the group can look to get involved with these to ensure these are as accessible as possible.

#### **International Congress of Speleology Grants**

Two grants of £500 were offered to university clubs to attend this congress. Our intention is to have the grants running again for the next congress.

#### **Scout Caving**

Scout caving is now up and running across the UK, and the chair of the National Caving Scout Activity Support Unit is an active member of this group.

### **Charterhouse Caving Age Restrictions**

This year, there was finally movement on Charterhouse Caving Clubs age restrictions, albeit with restrictions remaining in place for some obscure reasons. The group is encouraged by the efforts from many in this region to come to this win, and are aware that this is an ongoing process.

### **Diversity & Inclusion**

The group continue to be the instigators for change within BCA for diversity and inclusion issues, with further proposals and recommendations coming from this group to BCA around membership forms.

With the previous Publications and Information officer leaving his role during 2022, this group believes that steps should be taken to ensure that the work that was being done regarding regular demographic surveys continues.

### **The Future**

The convener of this group intends to stand down from this role with effect from the 2023 AGM, but intends to remain a member of the group. He is preparing adequate handover notes and prep for the predecessor.

Some members of this group are in discussions with counterparts around Europe to discuss a European Youth Caving Event. Updates will be provided to council as and when they are relevant.

Plans are underway for this group to assist CHECC in the training at the Northern and Southern CHECC conferences and other training events.

JW reported to the meeting that he was looking for a replacement convener for the Youth and Development Group.

### **Agenda Item 12: Any Other Business**

1)AH CNCC have been approached by a local Heritage Trust, re the Horner Photographic collection, this contains a number of early caving related pictures. The group are looking for Co-funding to go with the grant application to fund the digitization of the collection, CNCC have become a registered donor. Donors will have full access to the images and be able to use them in publications.

CNCC plan to contribute £500 from their funds, and will be asking in the future if BCA would be willing to match it.

HJJ asked whether BCRA will be able to access and use the images, and will they need to be a sponsor.

LW asked about the future storage of the archive material, AH replied that the low resolution scans would be publicly available on a commons license. LW also asked about high resolution images being available and potential costs involved, this needed to be arranged beforehand. AH replied that being a registered donor should hopefully avoid this.

RM said that BCRA might be interested in contributing to enable it to become a donor.

2)JW queried about the Yorkshire Dales Guides Adventure Academy report, he was surprised there was no summary in the Agenda.

HJJ said that a report has only just been received in the past few days, after asking for it for over a year, he and RM are going to discuss this and report to the next meeting. The problem is that some of the report is commercially confidential, the report to council will not include the confidential information.

HJJ and RM reported that the exec are not concerned by the contents of the report.

HJJ asked AR about reminding people re the deadline for nominations, proposals etc, AR pointed out that it was in the Agenda and that everyone was duly reminded.

### **Agenda Item 13: Date of next Council meeting**

Next meeting Wed 29 March 2023