DRAFT Minutes for the 2026 Annual General Meeting

Sunday the 28th of June 2026

Held in a multi-modal format via Zoom and in person at Monyash Village Hall, Church Street, Monyash, Bakewell, DE45 1JH, starting at 10:00 am.

Agenda Item No.	Agenda Item Name
1	Apologies for Absence
2	Persons present & Verification of Quorum
3	Current Composition of the BCA Council
4	Acceptance of the 2025 AGM's Minutes
5	Officers' Reports
6	Accounts
7	Election of BCA Council Members
8	Candidate Election Statements
9	Matters arising from the previous Annual General meeting
10	Proposals
11	Any Other Business
12	Chair's Closing Remarks

1.0 Apologies for Absence

Linda Wilson, John Gunn, Mike Higgins, Les Brown, Pete Knight, Beth Knight, Martyn Grayson, Tom Phillips, Tim Nichols, Ioan Roberts

2.0 Persons present & Verification of Quorum

"The quorum for any General Meeting shall be 10 individual members who are eligible to vote." – Article 7.6 of the Constitution of the British Caving Association. Meeting quorate.

In Person:
Rostam Namaghi – ME013513, Chris Bolton – ME013294, Zac Woodford – ME010769, Alex Johnson – ME008242, Aidan Kuhlmann – ME007193, Jenny Potts – ME012972, Adam Fletcher – ME012930, Judi Durber – ME008487, Katie Eavis – ME007647, Victoria Kocher – ME009729, Rachel Turnbull – ME012115, Jessica Eades – ME013025, Alastair Gott – ME013487, Russel Myers - ME013092, , Piper Cusmano – ME010724, Elin West – ME007874, Ben Marks – ME007227, Oscar Doyle – ME007941, Isaac Neale – ME013516, Eve Chaddock - ME012846, Sam Lee, Violet Astle

Online:
Alan Brentnall – ME013016, Mart McGowan – ME010640, Graham Mullan – ME013009, Tony Radmall – ME001578, Orson Gee – ME015833, Jill Bolton – ME013295, Phil Wolstenholme – ME012997, Ian Patrick – ME006476, Peter Jackson – ME011763, Redmi Noteb (Not a BCA member)

N.B. the number of online attendees fluctuated throughout the meeting.

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3.0 Current Composition of the BCA Council

	Position	Name	Initials	Vote
BCA Executive	Chair (2024-27)	Rostam Namaghi	RN	N
	Treasurer (2024-27)	Chris Bolton	CJB	Y
	Secretary (2024-27)	Aidan Kuhlmann	AK	Y
Individual Members Representatives	Position 1 (2025-2027)	*Vacant*		
	Position 2 (2024-2026)	Andy Eavis	AE	Y
Group Member Representatives	Position 1 (2025-2027)	*Vacant*		
	Position 2 (2024-2026)	Jenny Potts	JP	Y
Regional Council Representatives	CNCC	Todd Rye	TRY	Y
	CSCC	Linda Wilson	LJW	Y
	DCA	Mike Higgins	MH	Y
	DCUC	David Jean	DJ	Y
	FoDCCAG	Ian Healey	IH	Y
	Ogofa Cymru / Caving Wales	Allan Richardson	AR	Y
Constituent Body Representnatives	Assoc. Caving Instructors	Sam Lee	SL	Y
	BCRA	John Gunn	JG	Y
	BCRC	Emma Porter	EP	Y
	CDG	Simon Perkins	SP	Y
	CHECC	Tom Phillips	TP	Y
	NAMHO	Peter Jackson	PJ	Y
	National Scout Caving Team	Tony Radmall	TR	Y
	William Pengelly CST	Richard Vooght	RV	Y
Working Group Convenors	Anchor	Pete Knight	PK	N
	Conservation & Access	Victoria Kocher	VK	N
	Finance	Chris Bolton	CJB	N
	Incorporation	Chris Bolton	CJB	N
	National Access	Rostam Namaghi	RN	N
	Publications & Information	Zac Woodford	ZW	N
	Qualification Management Committee	Stephan Natynczuk	SN	N
	Radon	*Dormant*		N
	Training & Equipment	Aidan Kuhlmann	AK	N
	Youth & Development	Isaac Neale	IN	N
Other Positions	BCL Representative	Jenny Potts	JP	N
	FSE Rep	Tom Phillips	TP	N
	Safeguarding Officer	Chris Boardman	CBD	N
	UIS Rep	John Gunn	JG	N
BCA Staff	Artificial Cave	Katie Eavis	KE	N
	Bookkeeper	Karen Lydon	KL	N
	Membership Admin	Katie Eavis	KE	N
	Training Admin	Mary Wilde	MW	N

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4.0 Acceptance of the 2025 AGM's Minutes

Motion: To Accept the minutes of the 2025 AGM

Proposer: Aidan Kuhlmann **Seconder:** Rostam Namaghi

For: 22 in person and 7 online

Against: None received

Abstentions: None N.B. the online attendees fluctuated throughout the meeting).

5.0 Officer Reports'

5.1 Executive

5.1.1 Chair (Rostam Namaghi)

The BCA has had a very busy and very successful year – we have managed to turn the budget around, have continued to professionalise administration within the organisation and have renegotiated the terms of the public liability insurance, widening coverage and at much lower cost.

All of this in addition to helping set up the Forest of Dean as a Regional Caving Council, successfully heading off certification in the University sector (a body representing 17 Unions, covering over 25% of our Student Clubs), producing a BCA annual report, engaging with the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Access, as well as working with the SUI over various issues from Northern Ireland. It really has been eventful (demanding at times) and our volunteers and staff have really done a great job.

One consequence of this load is choosing to bring a vote on incorporation to the 2027 AGM. There are a few reasons for this but ultimately the main nub of the issue is significant constitutional change is needed. As much as I have emphasised professionalism over this last year, I want to ensure that we don't lose our soul – this cannot be a Climb Britain scenario. I can't stress how reassuring it was when, during my rescue in Providence Pot in October that I knew almost every face. The community turned out without hesitation and what the BCA is here for is to do the boring work in the background to keep this community going.

I think incorporation is an opportunity to protect our volunteers, protect our employees, become an entity that is recognisable to banks, can buy property and limit liability. I think we can afford to pay people to do the work for services that are needed, and that that can help volunteers put their efforts into going above and beyond.

I think that it is an opportunity to look at representation, voting and how we interact with the membership – we should do things like reducing the size of council by removing the empty posts, examine the voting power of

constituent bodies and make representation matter. Personally, I think it is an opportunity to formally reinforce Speleological Union of Ireland's governance over the island of Ireland, as recognised by the Sport Northern Ireland. One of the most thorny issues is who to make a director of the company and how to keep the Executive accountable to Council.

It is a lot of thinking, and the aim is to start the conversation. We need to talk to the membership, make the case for change and most importantly listen to the feedback. Then we bring it to a vote next year.

I am incredibly proud of the work achieved this year, and I could have written a much longer report – it is all excellently covered in other Officer's reports and in the BCA Annual Report.

I eagerly await your thoughts and discussion.

RN states he has deliberately written a different report to the one in the Annual report. RN adds the Annual Report is an excellent publication and he urges all members to read it. It showcases just how much has been going in BCA in the last year and he thanks everyone involved for their efforts.

He has received feedback from members who had no idea how much BCA was involved in, which highlights a to improve BCA communication with members going forward.

RN apologises for the lateness of the agenda and reports for this AGM.

RN asks comments on incorporation and also Northern Ireland are saved for discussion at the end.

5.1.2 **Treasurer** (Chris Bolton)

This report mainly covers BCA finances during 2025, for which the accounts are complete, and also considers 2026 to date.

To understand how 2025 went, we need to go back to mid-2024, when the membership fees for 2025 were set. In 2023, BCA made a loss of just over £4,000. A bigger loss was expected in 2024. Membership fees had been kept low to use up surplus funds. This had been so successful that there was a risk of being unable to cope with unexpected events. Council agreed an increase to bring income and expenditure more closely into balance, to be followed by a detailed review of reserves.

The annual accounts for 2024 recorded a deficit of over £21,000, leaving reserves within £2,000 of the minimum. This prompted the need for a tight budget for 2025, despite the increase in fees. The purpose of the budget was to enable best use of the limited funds, giving licence to spend up to the budget but minimising the risk of running the reserves too low. I appreciate

that some people found my budget rules complicated and I thank them for their patience in trying to follow them!

During 2025, I instigated a review of business risk. The target for reserves to cope with a large increase in insurance premium and as a general reserve were, in total, equal to BCA's annual turnover. The review recommended combining these into a single reserve of 75% of turnover. Despite reducing the target, our reserves were still low, and Council agreed to a further increase in membership fees for 2026. This took the fees back to roughly where they would have been had they not been reduced when the reserves were high. My expectation is that further large increases will not be required. Automatically following the rate of inflation, but making changes only every 2 or 3 years, would give predictability for both BCA and our member clubs.

Two significant expenditure differences in 2025 are membership administration and the British Caving Library. This is a change in presentation rather than actual expenditure. One of BCA's part time staff also works as Librarian, and this cost is now correctly allocated to the Library, in addition to the £12,000 donation to cover the rent of the building.

Other differences between 2024 and 2025 were lower expenditure by Regional Caving Councils (RCCs), particularly as there were no major Conservation and Access projects, and a net loss on professional instructor training. The number of instructors whose qualifications expire in a given year varies, so some revalidation courses were poorly attended, resulting in lower income. Significant effort is being made to avoid this on future courses.

The annual accounts for 2024 were finalised based on estimated expenditure by the RCCs, as grants are paid retrospectively. The estimates turned out to have been high and the 2025 accounts include a prior year adjustment for 2024 of nearly £6,000, reducing the effective deficit to less than £15,000.

The annual accounts for 2025 show a surplus for the year of £2500 compared with a budgeted deficit of £6,000. The trend in both 2024 and 2025 has been that final expenditure has been lower than was budgeted for, and was actually lower in 2025 than 2024. There are two reasons for this. A recognition that funds were tight would have inhibited more ambitious spending, and new officers in number of key roles were settling in and not starting new initiatives. I don't expect that this trend will continue, and I hope it won't. The purpose of BCA is not to accumulate money, it's to get things done for cavers.

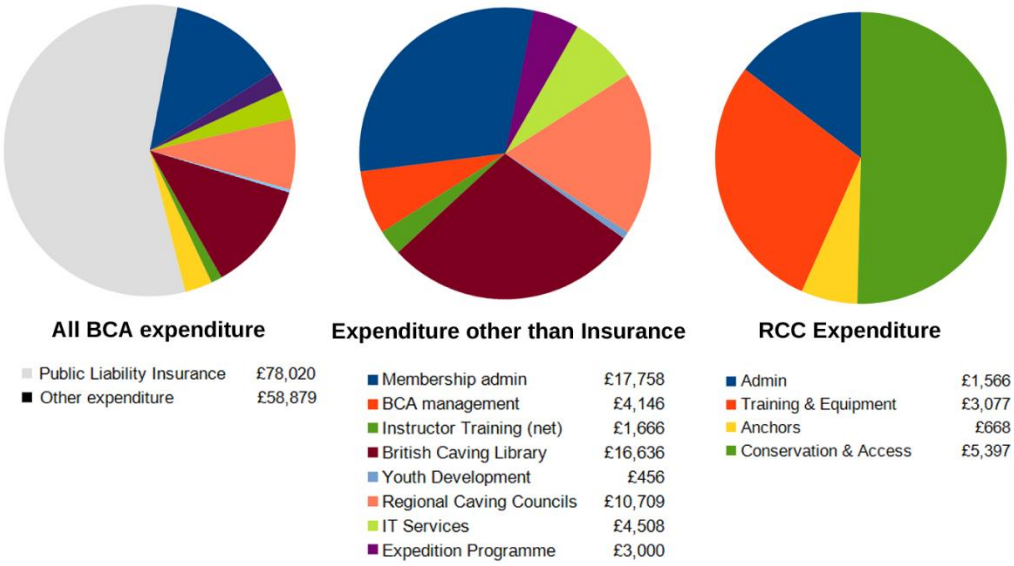
The financial position in 2026 is looking good. At the end of 2025 we were able to negotiate a reduction in our insurance brokerage fee. The budget for 2026 was set without allowing for the reduced expenditure in 2025, the prior year correction for 2024 or the RCC's reduced grant claims for 2025. As a result

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there is scope for more flexibility in expenditure, including the production of the Annual Report.

My message to Working Group Conveners and RRCs is that the budget is not to stop you spending. It's so that I know how much you expect to spend and can make sure we have enough left. If you need more money, please ask!

The graphic below is a simplified account of expenditure in 2025. The full scrutinised and approved accounts are included as an appendix.



I'm grateful to John Sheehy for his scrutiny of the accounts. He is willing to continue in that role. By acceptance of this report, the AGM will be deemed to have approved his appointment, as required by the Constitution.

CJB states his report differs from that in the Annual report as that needed to set out more context. Generally, things are fairly similar to last year.

CJB urges budget holders not to worry if they need to spend more money that council has approved – there will probably be some available so they should ask.

RN encourages people to look at the pie charts which give a useful idea of what BCA spends funds on.

RN thanks CJB for his work on improving the BCA financial situation and adds that overall, the organisation has coped well with membership fee increases.

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5.1.3 Secretary (Aidan Kuhlmann)

The last year has been incredibly varied in what I have done and has involved me being involved in many different areas of BCA work, but with very little of it being work solely of my own.

One of the largest portions of my time has been spent on the various issues revolving around the BCA's role in Northern Ireland as the primary point of contact for the BCA. The BCA's role in Northern Ireland is complicated and confusing with the BCA constitution stating the interests of the organisation include Northern Ireland and yet we are not the NGB for the region and to add to the confusion the Speleological Union of Ireland who are the National Governing Body are a member of the BCA. This has created a grey area which has led to several issues in many different aspects of caving – from a case of fraud to uncertainty over qualifications to hampering the general advancement of caving in the region. Each of these issues have been slow to unpick, find internal consensus on, before a response can be sent to the enquirer and then the process to repeat on a response. It is clear that the current situation does not benefit anyone and as part of this and following conversations with, and on the request of the SUI we will be looking to amend the constitution at next year's AGM to clarify this situation so that the governance and representation of caving in Ireland is done by the SUI, which has been situation in-practice for a while.

I have also been well involved in managing the BCA's insurance scheme this year, which I am proud to say that due to Chris' management now represents less than half of the BCA's expenditure. This has partly been achieved by the renegotiating of our insurance contract which has secured us significant cost savings and should deliver us further benefits – lots of time has been spent by Katie, Chris, and I over clarifying previous agreements which weren't recorded to ensure members with unique situations are covered as they believe to be, but also handling a potential claim by a landowner, and the setting up of a micro website run by the insurer to explain what the scheme is and what it covers – making it easier to understand for members and landowners; and removing the liability of giving insurance advice away from the BCA and our website to our insurance broker.

I have also been well involved in managing the caving community's response to the Safer Adventures Report produced by Organised Fun, of which more can be read about in Isaac's report. My work here has involved combing a BCA perspective, with the knowledge from industry as an outdoor instructor, knowing where proposals from the report will likely lead us to, while also thinking in terms of liability and the consequences of all of this. I am confident in the team that is primarily, but not limited to, Rostam, Isaac, Tom Phillips, now Sam Lee, and I as we're working to ensure the vital student sector is able to

adapt and hopefully thrive in the new environment that students' clubs will likely soon be operating in.

Continuing working on the professional image of the organisation has also been a large area of work for me, with work ranging from managing the email system and updating parts of the website to trying to create a more professional image for the BCA to aid us when working with external-to-caving-bodies. Part of this has involved working with Zac Woodford to create some materials to help better promote the organisation which hopefully will be ready in time for Hidden Earth.

Additionally, I have been continuing to be involved in some of the Working Groups, primarily the anchor working group where significant updates to its documents and resources are being made, making all cavers safer. But I have also been involved with Training and Equipment, of which a report can be read below, and while not being directly involved, I have kept abreast updates within the National Access group, though we are all waiting to see how a likely new cabinet in government might change things.

Finally, I have been involved with the joint executive project of looking to incorporate the BCA into a Company Limited by Guarantee. A more detailed report on this by Chris can be found below alongside an Item for Discussion but I wish to say here that this is something with clear benefits to the organisation – taking payments is becoming increasingly harder without the organisation having a distinct legal identity, alongside the benefits of the organisation being able to own land (opening up opportunities for the future), and limit the liability of any actions of the organisation to the benefit of both the membership and the organisation's officers. While it will mean a significant constitutional change for the organisation, the benefits are certain and it will normalise our structure in comparison to other adventure activity National Governing Bodies.

AK has also done a different report to the one in the Annual Report.
AK has been involved in lots of different areas within the BCA this last year.

AK apologises for the delay in getting the AGM agenda out but notes there is nothing contentious to vote on so it shouldn't cause an issue.

RN thanks AK for the large amount of work he has done and emphasizes how reliant BCA is on volunteers giving up their time. However, RN suggests looking at ways to make BCA processes more robust and resilient and potentially transferring more of the routine operations to paid staff.

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5.2 Regional Council & Representative Body Reports (Optional)

5.2.1 FodCCAG (Tim Nichols)

We extend sincere thanks Paul Taylor, who has been Chair of FoDCCAG for 25 years. His tireless enthusiasm has been instrumental in the development of caving in the Forest of Dean, Otter Hole catchment, and the Cotswolds, and in the special relationships formed with Forestry England and landowners.

We would like to thank Caving Wales for their support over the many years when were an access body, and to them and Rostam, for their positive assistance in helping us become a Regional Council.

Again, with the thanks to the BCA Committee, we have progressed on many fronts apace.

We elected an Equipment Officer, Matt Rees, who has instigated training and implementation of resin anchor placement. We are extremely grateful to Andrew Atkinson who has volunteered his own time to train 4 people in FoDCCAG and helping on trips into Redhouse to remove the exploration through-bolts and to replace with new IC anchors.

We elected a Training Officer, Jon Holden, who has already organised several sessions for Summer/Autum 2026 including: Cave Surveying; Cave Photography; Basic and Intermediate SRT; and Underground Rigging.

On Finance, we are grateful for Chris Bolton's assistance and also to Victoria Kocher and the BCA C&A group for allowing us to reallocate some funds to enable ongoing C&A, anchor placement, training and IT expenditure.

Again thanks to Rostam's and BCA's assistance, we are progressing rapidly on the IT front. Expect to see an enhanced website, data availability and an on-line visible booking system soon.

We are grateful to the many, many individuals from BCA member clubs - in Mendip, South Wales and Midlands for their support in conservation, surveying, photography and scientific work in Redhouse Lane. Once the resign anchor and entrance safety works are complete, all being well early in July, we will be opening the cave for visitor trips. In the meantime, all are welcome to assist.

A warm welcome awaits to all that wish to visit this special part of the country.

Adam Fletcher, secretary of Glocester Speleo, is here representing FoDCCAG. FoDCCAG are grateful for the opportunity to become a regional council and thank BCA and CW for their support. They are looking forward to being more involved in BCA going forward.

RN suggests it would be good to have the BCA AGM in the Forest in 2027, and maybe FoDCCAG can discuss if they would be willing to host?

5.2.2 **NAMHO** (Peter Jackson)

Our annual conference for 2026 will be held at Grinton in Swaledale over the weekend of 20-21 June. We have a programme of lectures, surface field trips and underground tours of local mines. More information is on the NAMHO Conference website at:
https://www.namho.org/conf2026/confpages/conf_home.php

We are reviewing our governance and have agreed that we should change our charity to a CIO. We hope to have this accomplished during 2026.

Our Conference in 2027 will be held in the North Pennines for which we have agreed to work with the Land of Lead of Silver project.
https://northpennines.org.uk/what_we_do/historic-environment/land-of-lead-and-silver/

The current officers are always looking for new volunteers to take over the management of the charity. If you are interested in helping us, please email secretary@namho.org

No representative from NAMHO present at the AGM, but AK adds several people at the AGM were at the NAMHO conference the previous weekend and the conference was a great success, with some very interesting talks. The conference in 2027 will be held at Nenthead on the same weekend next year. (19th/ 20th June)

5.2.3 **Caving Wales** (Allan Richardson)

The main thing that has happened over the last year is the splitting off of the Forest of Dean caving area to form a new regional body. This has been entirely amicable on both sides and CW wishes the new body well.

Whilst the MOD have renewed the Ogof Gofan access system for another 10 years, there are other areas of discord

The new farmer at Ogof y Ci has withdrawn all cave access following a dispute with their local outdoor pursuits centre, though on the NRW front things are a little more fraught, with NRW officers still showing overt legal hostility to caving and Caving Wales, given this overt legal hostility towards caving and Caving Wales, no further contact with NRW is contemplated, though on our part the door remains open for sensible dialogue.

The new Plaid Cymru government in Wales has announced having a new nature quango for Wales which implies that NRW will lose its statutory conservation body role and in the circumstances may be good news, we shall see what transpires.

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RN adds how positive and helpful CW were in getting FoDCCAG up and running as an RCC.

5.2.4 Council of Southern Caving Clubs (Linda Wilson and Joshitha Shivkumar)

The past year has been another busy one for CSCC. The long-drawn out access discussions with Longleat estates regarding the caves in Cheddar Gorge finally came to fruition and an access agreement is now in place. Warden training has taken time but the system is now up and running. The agreement with Somerset Wildlife Trust for several sites in Harridge Wood is now in place and simply awaits the online permit system.

CSCC meetings, held on Zoom have been well-attended.

Anchors continue to be placed and replaced under the BCA scheme, as and when needed.

CSCC supported the formation of the new Forest of Dean regional council and wishes them well.

Nothing raised at the meeting.

5.3 Working Group Convenor Reports

5.3.1 Anchor (Pete Knight)

<u>From the Annual Report:</u> The Anchor Working Group formally came together for the first time in late summer 2025. It comprises representatives from all the Regional Caving Councils as well as individuals with an interest or technical expertise in the BCA Anchor Scheme. Due to the late start in the year for the group, our work in 2025 centred around planning for 2026 and initiating discussions on several topics. The hope is that during 2026 we'll be able to produce new guidance for regions on conducting test beds for the use of new resins, extend the use of BCA anchors to non-karst rock types, review and update the guidance for cavers and installers on inspecting anchors, and to create installer guidance for the removal of old anchors and hopefully the reuse of the placement location for a new one. So, we've not a lot to report for 2025, however we have big aspirations for 2026.

AK adds that yesterday members of the Anchor WG met to look at removing different kinds of bolts and it was a successful, productive day.
The group are doing great work updating various documents including how cavers should use bolts, inspecting bolts, expanding the scheme to other rock types and having standard procedures for testing. A very positive area of BCA work at present.

5.3.2 Conservation & Access (Victoria Kocher)

Thank you to everyone who attended and provided updates from their regions. These contributions are invaluable in helping us maintain an overview

of the conservation and access issues affecting caves across the country. The exchange of information, experiences, and good practice between regions continues to play an important role in supporting and protecting our underground environments.

BCA Conservation & Access Working Group – Key Points Report

Meeting: 6 May 2026

CNCC

- *Several historic access arrangements have been modernised, including Skirwith Cave, Yockenthwaite and Stransgill Pot.*
- *Ongoing negotiations are taking place regarding access at Whitewell and Birkwith Cave.*
- *Access to Scoska Cave is currently suspended due to landowner concerns over conservation work.*
- *A £2,000 conservation grant supported six projects including graffiti removal, path improvements and infrastructure repairs.*

CSCC

- *The Longleat access agreement continues to operate successfully, with over 120 caver visits recorded since implementation.*
- *Conservation work is ongoing in Reservoir Hole, including tape repairs and bolting projects.*
- *Wookey Hole fixed aids require replacement, with an estimated cost of £300.*
- *Future priorities include progressing Spider Hole access arrangements and completing conservation work at Reservoir Hole.*

DCA

- *Concerns were raised about increased traffic from organised groups causing impacts on sensitive cave formations.*
- *New educational signage has been developed for Bagshawe Cavern to highlight its SSSI status and encourage responsible access.*
- *The SSSI cave monitoring competition continues to promote conservation monitoring.*
- *Planning is underway for a cave clean-up event linked to the International Day of Cave and Karst in September.*

DCUC

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- *Formal access agreements have been secured for Penn Recca Slate Mine.*
- *Work is ongoing with the Duchy of Cornwall to establish access arrangements at additional sites.*
- *Conservation maintenance, including re-taping, is planned for Bunkers Hole.*

FoDCCAG

- *Forestry England access agreement has been renewed and now includes requirements for reporting archaeological discoveries.*
- *Redhouse Lane Swallet is expected to open for permit access around July 2026 following stabilisation and conservation works.*
- *Highly sensitive areas within Redhouse Lane (Marble River and Pâques Passage) will remain closed to protect unique formations and sediments.*
- *Monitoring cameras have been installed to support conservation management.*
- *Slaughter Stream Cave remains accessible despite temporary pumping station issues.*

Conservation & Access Issues

- *Bob Mehew highlighted the importance of avoiding damage to SSSI cave sites and plans to produce guidance for publication.*
- *Members were reminded that photographic surveys should be completed before cave-cleaning projects commence.*
- *Interest was expressed in developing a wider project to record and reserve historic cave graffiti, potentially involving multiple regions.*

Major Projects

- *Significant conservation and access projects are in consideration in the Forest of Dean, with BCA funding confirmed for several initiatives.*

Next Meeting

- *16 September 2026, 7:30 pm (Zoom).*

Points most relevant to BCA Conservation & Access:

1. *Modernisation of access agreements continues across several regions.*
2. *Increased focus on protecting sensitive SSSI sites through education, monitoring and restricted access.*

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3. *Growing interest in documenting and conserving historic cave graffiti.*

4. *Major conservation projects in the Forest of Dean are still in planning stages with BCA support.*

5. *Several regions reported ongoing conservation infrastructure work (taping, bolting, path repairs and access improvements).*

VK adds meetings have been well attended. She thanks CJB for help with budgets.

RN adds it is good to see a detailed report, and how productive the C&A WG is being.

5.3.3 National Access (Rostam Namaghi)

See Chair's report.

RN suspects Access will be quiet for a while due to the changing political situation in Westminster. He will be keeping an eye on the situation though.

5.3.4 Publications & Information (Zac Woodford)

This year saw moderate productivity.

While I went, I did go to Brazil not in any official capacity, while there I did help represent the British bid to host the next UIS congress in 2029. Despite being unsuccessful in our bid, the exercise helped elevate Britain's standing on the international stage by highlighting some of our most recent and impressive discoveries, namely Redhouse Lane Swallet.

Domestically, another demographics report was compiled by Eve Chaddock, whom I would like to thank for their incredible work on said report and previous reports. I have also pushed ahead with compiling a student caving handbook. Unfortunately, certain elements of such a document are currently subject to a lot of uncertainty given the ongoing events in the student caving sector.

Looking to the future, I am still attempting to organise events for the International Day of Cave and Karst. It is my sincere hope that with more community involvement and volunteers, we could make it a memorable day for both cavers and the public.

ZW highlights the International Day of Cave and Karst (13th Sept) and asks cavers to make a note of the date. He would like events all over the country to engage people who aren't members of the caving community.
RN suggests cavers with interesting Hidden Earth talks planned should get in touch and these could be modified for non-cavers.

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RN is pleased to see a new demographics report but would love to see more information and interaction with the community in the future.

5.3.5 Incorporation (Chris Bolton)

Work has continued in the background to develop the plan to make BCA a Company Limited by Guarantee. This is necessary in order to give us a legal identity, which is becoming essential in the regulatory environment with rules to prevent things like money laundering. It will also mean that if we were faced with a huge expense and forced to go bankrupt, none of our members or officers would have to pay out more than £1. There are two main areas of work, which have some overlap.

We need to understand what is necessary to set up the company and transfer the existing BCA assets and membership into it. Secondly, to comply with company law, there will have to be some changes in the structure of Council and the Executive. We want retain the current ethos of BCA as a volunteer-controlled association, run by cavers for cavers, and that means finding the best way to meet the rules, some of which were set up for more commercial organisations.

The plan is to set up the company now, with a fairly standard constitution, the current Executive as directors and members and no assets. This will enable us to put things in place like new bank accounts. Once we have discussed and agreed informally on the new constitution, that will be brought to a General Meeting (we're aiming for the 2027 AGM) for approval, it will be adopted by the company, and the transfer will take place.

Some of the arrangements for forming the company are in place. Nick Williams has kindly agreed that we can continue to use his offices as our official address. For technical reasons, it's better to have four directors rather than three, and Andy Eavis has agreed to be the fourth. Naming the company "British Caving Association" requires two special permissions. We think we can be exempted from having to use "Limited" in the name, and we should be able to justify using "British", but neither is automatic. It also means we can't use the very cheap 'instant company' package suppliers, but we actually want to use somebody who can review of proposed constitution and check that its legal, which those suppliers would only do as an extra, which is where they make their money. Finding an accountant who can offer that service has been difficult, and we're considering whether to form the company ourselves, directly with Companies House, and bring in an advisor later.

For any company, the directors must have ultimate authority to manage the company, which means our current Council structure wouldn't work unless all the Council members were directors, which would create further issues. There

are also rules on how AGM motions and elections can be held, which will mean some of our current rules for considering motions at the AGM and then voting electronically afterwards will need changing. There's a separate discussion paper on these constitutional issues.

CJB gives more detail about the reasons BCA needs to be incorporated. This year the organisation has struggled to make international payments and be recognised by payment companies used for taking membership payments. It would also limit the liability which would be safer for council and members, plus might mean smaller reserves could be kept in the future.

CJB states whilst becoming incorporated is not up for discussion – BCA need to do it - everything else is.

RN adds lots of sporting bodies became limited companies in the 80s.
CJB states all equivalent sporting organisations to BCA he has researched are limited.

There will be more opportunity to discuss the details on this further on in the meeting.

5.3.6 Qualification Management Committee (Stephan Natynczuk)

No report received.

Secretary's Note: Stephan Natynczuk has stepped into the role of QMC Chair, taking over George Plant, at the Council Meeting preceding the AGM. Consequently, their efforts have been spent on managing the handover. Reports made to BCA Council can be found at: https://british-caving.org.uk/about-bca/bca-council/official-documents/

And minutes of the group's meetings can be found at: https://british-caving.org.uk/about-bca/working-groups/qualifications-management-committee/

AK and RN thank George Plant for his years of service to QMC, during what has been a busy and challenging period.

5.3.7 Training & Equipment (Aidan Kuhlmann)

The Training and Equipment working group has struggled due to lacking a dedicated convenor, but it has managed well and its meetings have become more productive with the removal of Anchors from its remit with the creation of the Anchor working group. When meetings are held the group has been productive and it is clear the volunteer members are passionate. Unfortunately, due to other pressures on my time as BCA executive member I have been unable to schedule meetings as frequently as I would have liked to. Consequently, a dedicated convenor is being sought to organise meetings and guide discussions for the group.

Nevertheless, a few successes include appointing Pete Ward as the BCA's new representative to the British Standards Institute, the investigation and the beginning of the creation of a space on the BCA website where region's training events can be centrally advertised; and several discussions regarding the development of new pieces of equipment and updates in advice from manufacturers of which the group is aspiring to produce guidance on.

AK reports Training and Equipment have held two meetings in the last year, which is an improvement. Unfortunately time constraints on AK, due to him also filling the Secretary role, have meant meetings haven't been as regular as he would like.

AK appeals for an individual to take over the convenor role for this working group. He points out the convenor doesn't need to be very technical – it would suit a person who is a good communicator and can facilitate translating the groups ideas and expertise into a form most cavers can read and understand.

Current projects for the T and E WG include updating the pulley jammer document, belaying with toothed devices, and looking at setting up a centralised way for RCCs to advertise their training.

AK notes there are developments going on within the British Standards Institute – notably those affecting helmets. Pete Ward is keeping tabs on these on BCA's behalf.

RN adds the T and E WG could have a varied scope to include sourcing equipment beneficial to cavers in a centralised way and maybe even helping develop future caving tech.

5.3.8 Youth & Development (Isaac Neale)

In June 2025 the Y&D and the BCA were alerted to what would become the main focus of Y&D activity for the following year: Organised Fun and their "Safe Adventures" report. Organised Fun were a consultancy group who, alongside the NUS, and with the backing of Howden (who happens to be one of the BCA's insurers), were investigating so-called 'best practice' in a wide range of outdoor activities which included caving.

Awareness was first raised when the BCA was contacted by ICCC, asking for assistance when their students union had withdrawn support for their upcoming Slovenia expedition. An official letter from Rostam, as BCA Chair, to the Imperial student's union resolved the matter for them at that time.

With Organised Fun still in the data gathering stage of their report writing, we arranged a meeting between the BCA and Organised Fun to voice our concerns with the report and present the caving point of view. In the meeting we questioned the inclusion of caving in their list of targeted activities and

strongly presented the BCA's point of view. This included assertively pushing back against the use of qualifications in recreational student caving, and the merits and successes of the peer-to-peer training environment present in university clubs.

In the meantime, with Organised Funs work continuing and similar meetings being held between Organised Fun and the student's unions, it was prompting many Students Unions to review their own risk assessment procedures. Y&D was contacted by clubs including York (YUCPC), Bristol (UBSS), Manchester (MUSC) and the newly forming Staffordshire (more on that later), with their Students Unions asking for more detail in their risk assessments about what constituted a 'student leader'. Working together with the students involved and taking words from both the BCA guidelines for University and College Caving Clubs, and the BCA Statement on Peer to Peer Training, these matters were resolved for the clubs in question.

The next stage for Organised Fun was focus groups made up of the student clubs relevant to the activities that were in their scope. Y&D contacted all the relevant student clubs involved making them aware of the meeting and providing a briefing document on the main talking points and the BCA's position on them. This was beneficial for a couple of primary reasons. Firstly, not all the relevant Students Unions had made their caving clubs aware of the planned meeting, Y&D involvement therefore allowed more student voices to be heard in the report planning stage. Secondly, after the meeting it was later mentioned by Organised Fun how knowledgeable all the caving clubs were and how similarly they thought about the different issues. Having so many similar voices and opinions amongst the caving community no doubt made our talking points more heard, and allowed us to have greater influence on the later report.

BCA Y&D attended the launch event of the report in London, where networking was able to be done with the other NGB's involved in the report, hopefully better connections between the NGB's will allow for a faster and more efficient response to such matters in the future. Whilst not ideal, the BCA is not displeased with the initial recommendations of the report. We managed to avoid a requirement for both qualifications in recreational caving, and the recommended use of third-party instructors for student caving trips. Both would have not been sustainable for student clubs, and without our input they could easily have been recommendations from Organised Fun.

The Organised Fun matter is certainly not over and now Y&D, and the BCA are going to be involved in the subsequent meetings aiming to define what Organised Fun outlined in their report.

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Organised Fun aside Y&D has some very good news for this year and that is a new student caving club! Staffordshire University Caving Club (STUCC) have been formed with the aid of both the BCA and CHECC. Advice was offered on risk assessments, other club documents, and the processes of setting up a club and subsequently getting underground. The Y&D budget was also put to good use purchasing additional kit for the club, alongside the donations they received from the caving community. They are now successfully running trips unassisted.

Finally, the Y&D budget was also used to support the SUSS Swaledale expedition. This allowed them to get a confirmed booking for the accommodation for their expedition, which then ended up as an incredibly successful affair both in terms of surveyed passage and training and up skilling of other student cavers.

Going into this next year for the BCA, Y&D would still like to take on more proactive projects rather than reactive ones (such as the Organised Fun work). We would welcome anyone getting in touch with their ideas. Even if they are not sure the BCA could help, it would be good to see what we could put together.

IN praises the Annual Report and suggests the addition of a cartoon next year.

More has happened in 2026 with organised fun so his report for this AGM has more detail than the one in the Annual Report.

IN would like some small, fun projects that Y and D could get involved in this year. In asks that if anyone has any ideas to please get in touch.

RN extends this to say BCA is well set up to support ideas. Anyone with project ideas should get in touch and BCA can help with logistics, funding etc.

RN adds that 17 BCA student clubs were affected by the organised fun issue. He praises the handling by Y and D, CHECC and the student clubs involved.

EC raises the current case of Nottingham Uni CC, who are unable to cave due to a HSE investigation sparked by a death in a different Nottingham Uni sports club. She asks if BCA and Y and D are aware and supporting them?
IN replies BCA are aware and involved, however it will be a slow process that needs to take its course.

JE adds that TSG have been helping NUCC with training in the last few years and are happy to continue that.

RN encourages cavers having issues with officialdom to get in touch – BCA are good at supporting in situation such as these.

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TR wants it noted how impressed he is with Y&D and CHECC in terms of improving training, experience, and how they operate. They are doing a really good job.

JE states how impressed friends in other sports have been when they hear about CHECC. Others are now keen to adopt a similar model to CHECC within their sports.

IN attended the launch event for Safe Adventures report and met NGB people in his role there. He now has more connections and contacts in this area which will be helpful if similar comes up again.

5.4 Additional Reports by Appointed Officers

5.4.1 **British Caving Library** (Jenny Potts)

NB: A detailed report on the library may be found in the BCA 2025 Annual Report.

JP highlights the change the library has undergone in 18 years. From using space in a local studies library that was only open one morning per month, to the facilities of today.

In recent years the BCL has benefitted from several collections donated by the families of deceased cavers, which has led to a collection of an amazing archive of material.

JP also praises the online presence of archive materials including diaries, photographs, audio archive etc. She thanks the volunteers who manage this.

The library is also used to host meetings, such as BCRA and DCA ones.

JP thanks BCA for supporting the library.

RN thanks JP for all the work she does. He recognises the importance of the BCL, and adds incorporation may be helpful here, in the future, if the BCL ever needs a new home as BCA would be able to own property.

5.4.2 **FSE Representative** (Tom Phillips)

No report received.

RN mentions that TP attended the FSE AGM representing BCA.

AK states it has been a quiet year on the FSE front.

5.4.3 **Safeguarding Officer** (Chris Boardman)

The past year has been the busiest of my time as the BCA Safeguarding Officer. The work that I've been involved with is as follows.

A caving club had been a part of the Scout Association, and the local leadership of the Scouts decided they were no longer happy to support

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caving. As a result, that club's adult members have all obtained DBS certificates through BCA so that they can continue to offer caving to young people in their region as a BCA member club. As safeguarding officer, I am able to obtain DBS certificates for members when they will be volunteering unsupervised with young people.

A club has been in touch with me with regard to the arrangements needed to keep young people safe whilst also maintaining the enjoyment and tradition of the club for adults. This has led to several discussions.

Another club has been in touch to ask whether BCA could set up some safeguarding training for some of their members to undertake. I have not yet been able to set this up, but it is something I am looking into.

From time to time, a concern is raised about a BCA member. This happened both last year and this year (about different members), leading to conversations with the BCA executive as to the best way forward.

As a member of BCA's National Council, I was nominated by the Council some time ago to be in the Qualifications and Management Committee, which I continue to attend regularly.

RN thanks CBD for his hard work this year.

CJB adds that BCA will pay for DBS checks needed by BCA clubs. Please get in touch with CBD to arrange.

5.4.4 **IT** (Chris Bolton)

BCA's IT systems have been consolidated during the last year. We continue to use Google Workspace for email and document management and have extended our use of shared drives to co-ordinate our Working Groups. We've rationalised the usernames and moved from a monthly to an annual subscription, which minimises costs. All users must now use multi-factor authentication, and we have a stand-alone daily backup in place. The backup cannot be overwritten, which protects against ransomware. These security improvements have enabled us to reinstate our cyber insurance.

We have expanded our 'reseller' hosting capacity and now host the website for the Ghar Parau Foundation among other constituent and associated bodies. There are still some legacy sites on the server we shared with BCRA, and we are working with them to get them moved and close it down.

All our membership and professional training data is managed through JustGo, and we continue to work with them to get the best out of their systems.

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CJB explains he has overview of IT as no-one stood for the voluntary role of IT coordinator. If anyone is keen to know more about the role please get in touch with CJB.

Currently the BCA pays Simon, a caving instructor with good IT skills and knowledge, to support BCA. This is on very good rates.

CJB states in the last year BCA has been working to make the IT more secure, functional and cheaper.

5.4.5 UIS Representative (John Gunn)

A detailed report was submitted in the BCA Annual which has been adapted for use here by the BCA Secretary:

During the 2025 UIS Congress which was held in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, from 20 - 27 July, there were two GA, one on the first day and one on the last. Andy Eavis acted as UK delegate during the first GA and presented the GB bid for the 2029 UIS Congress.

During the Congress over 450 lectures were delivered, including six by three British cavers: a Keynote Lecture by Andy Eavis ("The Largest Caves in the World"); three lectures by Trevor Faulkner (Quaternary Deglacial Speleogenesis On The Gower Peninsula, South Wales, UK; Speleogenesis of the calcareous littoral caves on the Island of Lismore, Scotland; and More exotic tufa deposits on the island of Lismore, Argyll, Scotland) and two by John Gunn (Contrasts between British Carbonate Karst Areas and Project MIKAS (Most Important Karst Aquifers Springs): progress and request for information).

In addition to the lecturers three British cavers picked up prizes and congratulations are due to Andy Farrant who received the Giovanni Badino Award for the paper Pervasive speleogenetic modification of cave passages by nitrification of biogenic ammonia, to Chris Howes who received several awards including the Sami Karkabi Photo Award, and to Mark Tringham who was second in the Cave Survey competition. A full report on the Congress can be seen in UIS Bulletin 67-2 and there is a list of the many prizes awarded https://uis-speleo.org/index.php/uis-prizes-2/.

At the 2nd GA John Gunn was UK delegate, and he was also elected as an Adjunct Secretary of the UIS receiving votes from 33 of the 35 voting countries.

Unfortunately, the GB bid for the 2029 Congress was unsuccessful and the Congress will be held at the Babe- Bolyai University in Cluj-Napolca, Romania.

The main UIS initiative with implications for BCA is the UNESCO International Day of Caves and Karst (IDCK) to be celebrated on 13th September. This was officially proclaimed on 12th November 2025 at the 43rd Session of the UNESCO General Conference, meeting in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. The

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proposal, which was submitted by the Slovenian Government, was developed, and involved a large amount of work by, the UIS under the leadership of former President Nadja Zupan Hajna. BCRA and BCA sent a joint letter of support for the proposal. The first IDCK will be celebrated on 13th September 2026 with events in Britain and many other countries and a major event in Slovenia commencing on 10th September and held under the honorary patronage of the President of the Republic of Slovenia and the Director-General of UNESCO.

RN reiterates JG and ZWs pleas to get involved with the International Day of Caves and Karst.

Reports by BCA Staff

5.4.6 Membership Administrator & Artificial Cave (Katie Eavis)

Membership:

Membership services are all running smoothly via Justgo.

Whilst the system can't do absolutely everything the BCA would like it to be able to do it is vast improvement on the old system and allows members and clubs to have much more control over their own data.

Currently BCA has 163 group members and 6240 individual members.

1286 of these individual members have joined BCA directly and the rest have joined via caving clubs.

2026 Group Renewals

Six 2025 member groups didn't renew this year (one access controlling body, one associate, 4 member clubs). This is fewer then the 7 we lost last year, but higher than the usual 3 or 4 per year.

The largest of these clubs had 8 members in 2025.

Reasons given include aging membership, active members joining via other clubs or as DIMs, issues with the Welsh government and issues with changing scout rules.

Since the last AGM BCA has gained 6 member groups that are new or returning to BCA membership after a gap of a few years.

<u>New since the last AGM:</u>

- *HIS Caving Club*
- *Staffordshire University CC*
- *Labyrinths Cave and Mine exploration*
- *Bristol Caving*

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Returning after a gap of several years:

- *Newcastle University CC*
- *North Wales Mine/ Cave Explorers*

Additionally:

- *Ulster SSCC disbanded, but re-formed as the Combined Caving and Diving Group*
- *Welsh Mine Society restructured and a smaller, subgroup of the main society joined BCA -Welsh Mines Society Underground Group.*

Artificial Cave:

In 2025 the cave went to 14 events. It has been to 4 events so far in 2026, with another 9 booked. The storage cost for the trailer is paid up until August 2026. The trailer was serviced last in May 2026.

Insurance:

Insurance work has been busy since the last AGM. The main items were:

- *Negotiating a better payment deal with Howden, after an unsolicited approach by a rival insurance broker.*
- *Getting confirmation working mines can be included in the policy cover under certain circumstances.*
- *Confirming cover for tours for members of the public run by our group members, as long as they meet certain guidelines.*
- *A claim by a farmer for a deceased cow found in a long-abandoned cave dig. The claim was handled by our insurers with Hiscox ultimately denying liability in this case.*
- *Negotiating cover for the clubs and club members who run the GG winch meets in the event of a claim by a member of the public.*
- *Clarifying the cover for Regional Councils running paid for training courses, where the trainer is being paid.*
- *Adding equipment held by regional caving councils to the BCA contents cover.*

Communications including social media:

In 2025 I sent brief membership news sheets to the clubs in Feb, May, Sep and Dec.

This year I have only sent one in March so far. I am aiming for 4 again this year.

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This year I have produced the first BCA annual report for 2025 for the BCA. It is hoped this will become a regular annual production. The report summarises some of the activities of BCA and its constituent parts in 2025. All group members will receive a free printed copy. Members will receive an electronic copy via email.

I aim to post on the BCA Facebook, UKCaving and Buddlepit regularly to update our members about the BCA and what we do. This mostly relates to the areas I know about - membership, the cave or caving related events. However, it would be great to hear more about the rest of the work BCA do, such as conservation, access, equipment etc.

So, if you ever have any news/ items that would interest BCA members please feel free to email me and I can help.

Minutes

Since the last AGM I have taken over producing minutes for BCA and some of its working groups. This includes AGMs, Council meetings, Conservation and Access WG, Anchor WG and Training and equipment WG.

Nothing raised at the meeting

5.5 Acceptance of Reports

Motion: To accept the reports given by the BCA Officers to the 2026 AGM

Proposer: Chris Bolton **Seconder**: Rostam Namaghi

For: 22 in person and 7 online

Against: None received

Abstentions: None N.B. the online attendees fluctuated throughout the meeting).

6.0 Accounts

CJB highlights one change that has been made, just make the accounts more transparent. There is quite a big change between 2024, and 2025 membership admin. In 2024 all BCA staff salaries were put under membership admin, whereas one staff member does all her work for the library. In 2025 this amount was transferred to show in the library section.

Apart from this, amounts are roughly similar year on year.

Motion: To accept the 2025 accounts

Proposer: Chris Bolton **Seconder:** Rostam Namaghi

For: 22 in person and 6 online

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Against: None received

Abstentions: None N.B. the online attendees fluctuated throughout the meeting).

7.0 Election of BCA Council Members

Roles and Vacancies up for Election	Incumbent	Nominee	Proposer	Seconder
Roles and Vacancies up for Election	**Incumbent**	**Nominee**	**Proposer**	**Seconder**
Individual Members Representative - Position 1 (2025-2027)		No nominations received.		
Individual Members Representative - Position 2 (2026-2028)	Andy Eavis	No nominations received.		
Group Members Representative - Position 1 (2025-2027)		No nominations received.		
Group Members Representative - Position 2 (2026-2028)	Jenny Potts	No nominations received.		

N.B.: Vacant Roles approved by Council are included to provide continuity and a record for the AGM, though volunteers for these roles should make themselves known to Council.

RN asks if anyone in the room/ online wants to stand for any of these positions? RN ads there will be a lot of elections next year as the entire exec are up for election.

8.0 Candidate Election Statements

No candidate election statements have been received t the time of publication.

Nothing raised at the meeting.

9.0 Matters arising from the previous Annual General Meeting

No proposals were brought forward, and neither were any discussions undertaken.

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Nothing raised at the meeting.

10.0 Proposals

Nothing raised at the meeting.

11.0 Any Other Business

11.1 Constitutional changes for Incorporation

There are two main reasons for changing BCA into a Company Limited by Guarantee. The first is that it gives the Association a legal identity, and it's becoming increasingly difficult to operate without one. The second is that it will limit our liability, removing the risk to the personal assets of Council members and perhaps individual members too.

There is no intention to make BCA a more commercial or culturally different organisation, but there are some changes we must make to comply with company law.

Directors:

The Directors are legally required to be responsible for the management of a limited company. It's not practical to make every Council member a Director, and many might not want the responsibility. We propose to expand the current Executive to five, who will be the Directors, all unpaid. Council will continue to exist, and its role will be to advise the Directors. Legally, they cannot be forced to follow Council's advice, but we will have a provision to call a General Meeting if they decide not to do so and Council or the membership are aggrieved by that.

The five Directors would be the three current Exec roles, with a new post of Vice Chair, all elected by the membership, and a Technical Director elected by Council. The Technical Director would have oversight of the processes for running BCA, including administration and IT.

Council:

We propose to keep Council much as it is, albeit with a few changes. The elected member and club representative roles have been difficult to fill, perhaps because they have little involvement other than going to Council meetings. We intend to drop these, but the new role of Vice Chair will be elected by members. We also want to redefine constituent bodies as those which support BCA in its work nationally, regionally or within particular demographies. Working Groups and Regional Councils would continue as now.

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General meetings and elections:

Company law allows for resolutions, which can included elections, to be voted on at an AGM or as written resolutions sent to members. Our electronic voting system can meet the requirements for written resolutions. There is not, however, any way to propose a motion to an AGM and then convert it to an electronic vote, so we cannot retain the 'filtering' of motions in the present constitution. Resolutions must be passed if there is a majority in favour; we cannot legally require a different percentage except for what are called Special Resolutions, for things like changing the constitution, which require 75% and must be voted on at a meeting.

There are options for how we vote on elections and motions. We could decide them at the AGM, and only those present could vote, or we could have people make their case to the AGM with an all-member electronic vote afterwards.

Restrictions on membership:

A Company Limited by Guarantee does not have shareholders. Instead, it has members, who must each guarantee to pay up to £1 if it is wound up with outstanding debts. Nobody can be asked to pay more than £1. Members of a company must either be individuals or corporate organisations, meaning that clubs which are not incorporated cannot be members of the company. We will write into the constitution that member clubs that are not incorporated will have all the benefits of membership except being able to vote (and being liable to their £1). Similarly, members must be over 16, so we will write in a similar rule for U16s.

At this point there was a lot of discussion over various aspects of the plan to incorporate BCA. As the plan is in early stages BCA are mostly looking for feedback and ideas at this stage, therefore whilst the discussion was very useful it didn't lead to any firm actions.

Some of the main points discussed were as follows:

- The current structure of the BCA, including who the executive are, who makes up the council, and current voting rights.
- How many directors an incorporated BCA should have. The incorporation document above suggested 5, but some meeting attendees felt it might be simpler to have less. Also discussed was how these directors should be elected – by a vote of all members or elected by council.
- The situation for un-incorporated clubs who wouldn't be able to be members of an incorporated BCA. It was explained that things shouldn't

change the BCA set up, as clubs don't currently vote. But also acknowledged that the wording might worry clubs so would need to be carefully considered.
- There was discussion about how much of the constitution/ manual of operations needed to be included in the official company registration and whether this could be kept to a minimum with most of this done outside of the official limited body.
- The voting percentages are discussed, and this will involve a change from how BCA currently does things.
- Timescales were discussed. RN stated he would like most of the work towards incorporation done by Hidden Earth to give BCA time to clearly communicate with its membership about any proposed changes. It would need to be finalised for March 2027 to be ready to have a vote at the 2027 AGM.

As well as the discussions above there were some areas specific to attendees at the meeting.

- Adam Fletcher and Graham Mullan both offered to join the incorporation WG.
- CJB has already said he plans to stand down as treasurer at the next AGM. RN and AK are asked if they will stand again next year, as driving forces behind the incorporation. Both RN and AK imply they will stand again next year.
- There is talk about how to make some BCA roles more manageable, and that having a larger executive could be used to share out the work load.

11.2 Ireland

The discussion above concerning incorporation expanded to include discussion over Ireland and the BCA going forward.

RN explains that the situation with Ireland and BCA is complicated as SUI have always been the NGB for the whole island of Ireland, as recognised by Sport Irelands and Sport Northern Ireland. However, for membership purposes SUI are a member club of the BCA, whose constitution states it represents the interests of these associations covering the United Kingdom and Great Britain and Northern Ireland, together with the Channel Islands and Isle of Man.

SUI have recently expressed interest in sourcing their own insurance policy and no longer joining BCA as a member club.

As BCA move towards incorporation the constitution will need to be altered and whether, or not, to remove 'Northern Ireland' is likely to need some

discussion. This has been suggested by SUI if they do decide to separate from BCA membership.

EC asks how they might affect individual cavers caving in Northern Ireland? AK confirms it will not change the PL insurance cover which is valid worldwide. RN adds that cavers from Northern Ireland would still get the same service from BCA that they currently get – as do our international members.

AF asks about financial implications. CJB states there would be none for not being the representative body for Northern Ireland, as in practice BCA hasn't been.

In terms of membership BCA would loose a number of members which impact income, but hopefully some Irish cavers would continue to join BCA.
KE adds currently SUI membership of BCA is around the 200-member mark.

RM asks if BCA has had any communication from Northern Irish members about this? RN replies he has had emails from a few. But SUI is planning to have more formal discussion with Irish cavers about this at an event soon.

It is important to note this isn't a done deal – SUI are considering their options and have just made BCA aware if what they may decide to do. BCA is raising this now to increase awareness in case it does come about.

12.0 Chair's Closing Remarks

RN mentions as well as donating his volunteer time to British Caving he has been a beneficiary of voluntary time as he was rescued from Dowbergill passage last year. He thinks the amount of volunteering people do within the caving community is fantastic.

RN thanks the DCA for hosting the AGM. He is pleased to see it so well attended this year. Thanks to everyone for attending.

RN thanks Ben Marks for helping with the audio.

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BRITISH CAVING ASSOCIATION
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

	2025	2024
	£	£
INCOME		
Membership fees	132,962	113,856
Other income	5,693	6,082
Conservation & Access	0	0
Training Services	18,610	21,015
Publications & Information	0	0
Equipment & Techniques	0	0
Artificial Cave	540	(not itemised in 2024)
Meetings & Conferences	0	0
Web Services	0	0
Expedition Programme	0	0
International	0	0
TOTAL INCOME	**157,804.68**	**140,953**
EXPENDITURE		
Membership administration	17,529	23,043
Public Liability Insurance	78,020	75,703
BCA management	3,720	3,702
Conservation & Access	0	0
Instructor Training Services	20,276	21,181
Publications & Information	67	0
Caver Training	0	454
Artificial Cave	359	205
Training and Equipment	0	0
Youth Development	456	1,383
Radon Expenditure	0	0
IT Services	4,508	4,453
Regional Caving Councils	10,709	16,598
International	0	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**135,644**	**146,723**
CHARITABLE DONATIONS		
British Cave Research Association for British Caving Library	16,636	12,000
Ghar Parau Foundation for Expedition Programme	3,000	3,004
SURPLUS/ (Loss) FOR THE YEAR	**2,524**	**(20,773)**
TAX	**0**	**0**
SURPLUS/ (loss) FOR THE YEAR AFTER TAX	**2,524**	**(20,773)**

BRITISH CAVING ASSOCIATION

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025

	2025	2024
	£	£
FIXED ASSETS		
IT equipment	449	
CURRENT ASSETS		
Stocks	0	0
Debtors and Prepayments	2,268	14,569
Balances at Bank and cash in hand	231,270	189,925
	233,987	204,494
LESS: CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors and Accruals payable within one year	81,741	60,737
NET ASSETS	152,246	143,757
REPRESENTED BY :		
Balance brought forward	63,757	84,808
Surplus/(loss) for year	2,524	(20,773)
Prior year corrections	5964	(277)
	72,246	63,757
less transfer to Reserve	38,300	0
	33,946	63,757
Reserve	118,300	80,000
TOTAL	152,246	143,757

Approved on behalf of the Executive Committee

R Namaghi, Chairman

31 May 2026
Date

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

1 Accounting Policies

a) Basis of Accounting
The accounts have been prepared under historical cost accounting rules

b) Equipment
Equipment is charged in the accounts in the year of purchase.

2 General Reserve
The Reserve is held at a level which allows a minimum of 75% of annual turnover (income)

3 Result for the year
There is a surplus for the year of £2524 compared with a budgeted deficit of £5,930
This compares with a declared deficit for 2024 of £20773 (reduced by prior year corrections of £5964)

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE BRITISH CAVING ASSOCIATION

I report on the accounts of the association for the year ended 31 December 2025.

Respective responsibilities of executive committee and examiner

As members of the association's executive committee you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; it is my responsibility to examine the accounts and state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

The examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the association and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as executive committee members concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep proper accounting records or to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Name: **John Sheehy ACMA**

Address: **Epsom**

Signed 

Dated: **14 May 2026**