



Youth & Development Report

2022 AGM

CHECC

After a couple of troubling years, thanks to COVID, university caving clubs have come out fighting, and CHECC organised two fantastic events, the northern and southern CHECC forum. The cohesion between university clubs is obvious, even cross region, and will be key to keeping this momentum going.

Further kit loan agreements are in the process of being agreed to help university clubs who are unable to get the required level of funding from their universities/unions cave using safe equipment.

Recently the Youth & Development group and CHECC have been able to agree a store in the mendips, where certain caving kit will be stored, with the aim of reducing the amount of kit required to be transported on weekends, making them easier to arrange, and increasing their frequency. Our thanks goes to the Wessex Cave Club for arranging this. Over the next 18 months, the aim is to set up a similar store in each of the major caving regions in the UK.

Website Development

Several very popular articles have been posted on the BCA website by Y&D, that has raised the profile of the group, but also has raised the profile of important issues such as diversity and inclusion and youth related caving issues.

Recently a member of the Y&D working group has been introduced to the newtocaving website. We intend on utilising this website better, that due to various issues has been mostly left since it's acquisition by the BCA.

International Congress of Speleology Grants

An idea was brought forwards by the representative for CSCC to provide grants to young people from the UK to support them going to ICS. Upon discussion within the Y&D working group, the proposal was accepted, but based upon applications coming in from groups of young people or those in full time education.

After putting together some fantastic applications two £500 grants have now been provided to groups associated with Reading University and University of Bristol. We look forwards to hearing reports back from the congress.

Youth & Development worked alongside other members of council to put this scheme together, and as a group we look forward to being able to work alongside other parts of the BCA to help provide services to our members.

Experience Caving

In light of a big return to caving happening for most, this project, described in the May 2021 report to council has taken a bit of a backseat. I intend on having a big push before the end of 2022 with regards to upping the inclusion of young people within caving clubs. This will start with providing and rolling out a full guide to all clubs with recommendations about how they can open their clubs up to young people. For this I am working alongside Chris Boardman, BCA Safeguarding Officer.

Scout Caving

Scout caving has restarted in some regions but not others since lockdown. It is anticipated that the covid break will result in fewer scout cave leaders. Discussions between Y&D and Scout cavers are ongoing as to what support the BCA can provide with regards to this.

Charterhouse Caving Age Restrictions

It is good to see that Charterhouse Caving Club have reduced their age limit from 16 to 12 (via 18), and we see this as progress, but not the end goal. It has been noted that the most recent “reasoning” for the age restrictions, around young people having a ‘greater tendency to shine lights at anything of interest, including bats’ was not previously cited, but also seems fairly baseless.

Diversity & Inclusion

A proposal from the convener of the Youth & Development working group was accepted at the last AGM, as well as a proposal to ensure gender neutral wording in the constitution wording and council roles. These are solid steps forward, and I hope to continue off the back of these in the coming year to ensure that these solid steps become great strides by utilising information learned at a national outdoors conference to provide recommendations to clubs, regional bodies and the BCA itself as to how we can become more inclusive as organisations.