



COUNCIL OF SOUTHERN CAVING CLUBS

A constituent member of the British Caving Association

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 7th May 2005

1. ATTENDANCE (14, 10 eligible to vote)

Alan Gray (CSCC Chairman, ACG), Steve King (CSCC Secretary, SBSS/SMCC Obs), Les Williams (CSCC Equipment Officer, Wessex CC), Chris Binding (CSCC C&A Officer, Cheddar CC), Dave Cooke (CSCC BCA/NCA Representative, Wessex CC Obs), Graham Price (Cerberus SS), Graham Mullan (UBSS), Alan Dempster (Avon Scouts), Andrew Atkinson (CSCC Bolting Coordinator, UBSS Obs), Tim Francis (MCG), Rob Norcross (Moles), Alan Butcher (SMCC), Frank Doherty (UBSS Obs), Christian Chonrot (UBSS Obs).

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (2)

Andy Sparrow (CSCC Training Officer, Cheddar CC Obs), Jonathan Roberts (MCG).

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

That they be a true and accurate record. Agreed. The Minutes were signed by the Chairman.

4. ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Item 4 – CSCC Handbook.

The Handbook had been produced and a copy distributed to Member Clubs, Representatives of other Regional Councils, and the BCA. A small surplus stock is available from Bat Products, or by post from DC. (Also see Item 5 in these Minutes).

Item 5 – Asbestos Regulations

LW said that he had taken advice from David Judson (the BCA Legal & Insurance Officer). Section 4 of the new HSE Regulations (relating to the management of asbestos on non-domestic premises) *is* applicable to all Clubs with property. The Regulations place a duty on the Committees of such Clubs to assess and record the whereabouts of any asbestos on their property, *and* to inform Club Members, Visitors *and* the Emergency Services (the local Fire Service) if any is present. There is no requirement for Clubs to pay for costly surveys; self-assessment is quite acceptable, and the assessment exercise needs only to consider those areas that are reasonably accessible. A Risk Assessment must be produced and retained for inspection.

DC said that he had placed links to the Regulations on the CSCC website.

5. OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

5.1 – Corrections to the CSCC Handbook

AG said that he had noted several errors in the Handbook:

Header on pages 1 to 36 – should read “Council of Southern Caving Clubs”.

Page 4 – CSCC Member Clubs – Axbridge Caving Group – amend name and address to:
Alan Gray. 42 Maynard Terrace, Clutton, Somerset BS39 5PW.

Page 10 – ACG is a member of the Mendip Cave Survey Scheme.

Page 14 – Only 10 member clubs in the CCC delete – MEG.

Page 25 – Shute Shelve Cavern - amend name and address to:
Alan Gray. 42 Maynard Terrace, Clutton, Somerset BS39 5PW.

Page 30 – Redcliffe Caves: delete “and is presently open for offers of redevelopment and possible use of the caves as a museum or café. Several schemes are under consideration, but none has the go ahead at present”. In address amend 41 to read 42.

Page 34 – Football Field Quarry and Quarry Dean (Merstham) – amend to: "All caving access rights have been removed by the landowners for Football Field also known as No4 and Quarry Dean Farm also known as No2 . Any person found on site will be prosecuted by the land agents".

6. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

“Once again I have enjoyed my year as Chairman of the CSCC. The two topics that have consistently appeared in the Minutes have now been completed:

P-Bolting – thanks to Andrew Atkinson for obtaining the necessary training, training Mendip bolters/inspectors and also bringing the inspection of existing bolts up to date.

CSCC Handbook – thanks to Dave Cooke, Rob Norcross, Graham Price and all those involved with the production and publication of the CSCC handbook.

I am happy to continue in this post and will stand again for election.”

7. HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT

“The past year has been quite eventful, both nationally and regionally. Call me sad, or mad (!), but I’ve also found it quite an interesting year. There was, once again, a lot of “politics” (though I tried to keep out of that as much as possible) but it has led, I think, to a national structure that has the potential to succeed. Whether it does or not is now down to the vigour of the new Council and the support they receive from the wider caving community. The immediate future of the CSCC is now tied to the future of the new structure and we have defined responsibilities (e.g. in negotiating, securing, protecting and granting access to caves) to cavers all over the country, not just to those in our Region. Another change is that Clubs and Individuals will now join the CSCC by joining the BCA.

On behalf of the CSCC, I was one of those who called for the dissolution of the NCA. A Special General Meeting was called for March 12 and the motion was carried. On the same day, a new National Council of the BCA was voted in. There are a lot of old faces but, refreshingly, there are also some new and younger ones. Amongst the changes: Jonathan Roberts is the new BCA Treasurer, Les Williams stays on as Publications & Information Officer, and Dave Cooke was elected as one of the new Club Representatives. BCA Council thus has people on it with an intimate knowledge of our Region.

Caving, like other sports, has also found itself facing the consequences of laws and directives that were never drafted with it in mind. We have no choice but to comply with issues like equality, discrimination, and child protection, and indeed we do where applicable. Issues like disability rights and asbestos management will affect some Clubs in our Region. On the issue that struck at the heart of our sport, the Working at Heights directive, caving has, aided by other outdoor organisations, gained an important exemption. In this a “national face” for caving was essential. Hopefully, in coming years, we can go on to convince the Government, the Courts and the insurance industry that huge public liability cover is also unnecessary. The groundswell of opinion seems to be shifting, it needs to be capitalised on.

Arguably the most prominent thing to have happened in our Region this year was the sale of Cuckoo Cleaves. This attracted, briefly, some considerable and generally positive attention, even making the national press. Of course, we still await the final outcome.

Less welcome were a number of changes in access conditions at some of the mines in our Region. Once again, for the most part, these have been forced on us due to the unwitting consequences of yet more legislation. However there is a flip side to every coin and the CSCC has been encouraged by the proactive engagement of bodies like the Avon Wildlife Trust and English Nature on these matters. We are confident that solutions can and will be found to the satisfaction of all parties.

Another “success” story is that all CSCC Eco-bolts on Mendip have been inspected and, where necessary, replaced in the last year. Andrew Atkinson, our Bolting Coordinator, deserves significant thanks for his work on this. Additional bolters have also been trained and this should help to prevent a repeat of the problems our Region has faced in recent years.

There are also “new” caves to report: The “Lost Cave of Loxton” has been found. The “open cast” dig that is Templeton Pot continues to attract new superlatives. The Gibbets Brow dig is showing the potential of that area. And in helping me to compile an inventory of CSCC-controlled caves for the BCA, Dave Cooke and Chris Binding rediscovered a cave that the CSCC had forgotten all about: Chardswell Cave.

I am willing to continue in post if that is the wish of the Members.”

7.1 - Publications received

Minutes of the NCA/BCA Council Meeting (Jan 2005), Minutes of the BCA Council Meeting (Mar 2005), Financial Statement of the BCA (year ending Dec 2004), Draft of the BCA Handbook 2005, DCA Information Circular (Jan-Mar 2005), Agenda for the DCA Council Meeting (Apr 2005), Derbyshire Caver #121, DCA Caver Training 2005.

7.2 - Correspondence

SK said that he was pleased to welcome Tim Francis back as the CSCC Representative for the MCG.

As of February 12th the BCA had still not had any communication from UK Sport regarding continuation (and transference to the BCA) of the NCA grant. DC interjected that there had in fact been a recent development and UK Sport was giving an *interim* grant of £11k to primarily keep the Training functions of the BCA afloat whilst it examined its financial support of non-Olympic sports. The omens for future support of caving are therefore not thought to be good, though approaches to Sport England may become possible.

The Outdoor Adventure sector has secured an important exemption from the HSE Working at Heights directive (i.e., the threat of “DRT” has been removed).

SK reported a very congenial exchange with a local volunteer and a national official at the Bat Conservation Trust following a speculative enquiry from them. All parties had resolved to keep one another informed of developments in the future. TF said that for the record he was also a member of the BCT.

7.3 – CSCC Subscription Rates

SK said that it was necessary for the Meeting to ratify the subscription rates for CSCC membership outlined in the previous Minutes. Specifically, these were the subscriptions for:

- a. BCA Member Clubs *not* affiliating to the CSCC as their Primary Regional Council, and

b. non-BCA Clubs.

SK said that as outlined previously he was proposing subscriptions of £3 and £15, respectively, and payment would confer the right to vote at CSCC meetings. Although it was not necessary for BCA Member Clubs to affiliate to the CSCC in order to gain access to CSCC-controlled caves, this being a benefit of membership, they would need to affiliate to the CSCC if they wished to have or retain “a voice” in the Region. Conversely, Clubs that decided not to join the BCA could affiliate to the CSCC in order to keep themselves apprised of regional policies and access changes.

(This item was actually deferred until the end of the Meeting in the hope that the Treasurer would materialise. He didn't, but SK said that he knew he had seen the Agenda. As the Treasurer had not found it necessary to pass any comment on the proposal prior to the Meeting, it was decided to proceed with ratification).

There was a suggestion that the subscription for all BCA Member Clubs should be zero. This did not find favour on two grounds. First, the CSCC only got an income from the BCA proportional to the number of Clubs stipulating it as their Primary Region. Secondly, if voting rights were extended to all BCA Member Clubs (which is what a subscription of zero would effectively entail) it was highly unlikely that any future CSCC meetings would be quorate! There were also concerns about the wishes of Clubs based in the Region being usurped by those from outside.

AB proposed that the subscription should be £5 and £15. This was seconded by GM. DC proposed an amendment changing the £5 subscription back to £3 (i.e. as previously minuted).

In a vote on AB's proposal the Meeting voted:

For: 3, Against: 3, Abstentions: 3. The Chairman therefore used his casting vote *in favour* of the proposal.

In a vote on DC's amendment the Meeting voted:

For: 4, Against: 3, Abstentions: 3. The subscriptions for 2005 were therefore set at £3 and £15.

7.4 – Future Membership of the CSCC

Following on from the previous item, SK reiterated as of January the membership of the CSCC was primarily drawn from those Clubs that had joined the BCA asking to be affiliated to the CSCC. SK said that he had asked the BCA Chairman for a list of those Clubs in the week running up to the Meeting. The BCA Chairman had responded that neither he nor the newly-installed BCA Secretary could provide the information, and had referred SK to the BCRA Membership Officer instead. At the time of the Meeting no response had been received. SK said that he did not think this was a terribly satisfactory situation. The Meeting concurred. *{Note added in proof: The CSCC membership figures were received subsequently and showed just 15 Clubs – compared to 37 in 2004/05. It is however possible that some Clubs, rather unhelpfully, returned their BCA Membership Applications without stipulating a primary allegiance! SK will work with the BCA and the BCRA Membership Officer to try and identify such cases from the CSCC region.}*

DC said that he had heard that the CNCC had expressed similar concerns and were even considering withdrawing permits for CNCC-administered caves because they had not yet received Landowner Certificates requested under the BCA PL Insurance Scheme.

DC also reminded the Meeting that the CSCC had previously agreed (see the Minutes of the CSCC Emergency Open Meeting held on September 26th 2004) to accept Individual Members but that it had not yet put any machinery into motion to this end. AG suggested that in view of the other business to be transacted it would be better to defer this discussion to the next Meeting. AG asked DC if he would produce a discussion paper on the matter *and* consider what changes might be necessary to the CSCC Constitution.

ACTION: DC to produce a discussion document on the admittance of Individual Members *and* to consider what changes may be necessary to the CSCC Constitution.

7.5 – CSCC Access Control Body Application

SK said that with help from CB and DC he had prepared the CSCC's formal application for Access Control Body status within the BCA. (The CSCC was in fact the *only* Regional Council to have done so by the BCA AGM on March 12th, which actually caused some consternation and meant the AGM had to circumvent its own Rules or else the CSCC would have been the only Regional Council eligible to vote!). The only matter outstanding in the Application was whether the CSCC needed any Landowner (insurance) Certificates. SK said that the advice he had been given from various quarters was that it would be sensible for the CSCC to hold Certificates where it had *written* access agreements with Landowners. Consultations with CB, GP and Martin Grass had concluded that the only such agreement was that with the Hobhouse Estate, however no one had been able to produce a copy of the agreement. GP said that the only reference he had found was to paperwork of the CSCC Company Ltd in 1980/81; however he did not have these files. GM said that it was possible that he had them.

ACTION: GM to check his archive for the Hobhouse Estate agreement and, if found, to forward to SK.

8. HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer was not present and had not sent a report.

The Meeting decided to defer this Item until later in the Agenda as SK said that the Treasurer had indicated to him that he would be attending. However, in the event the Treasurer did not materialise. The Meeting instructed the Secretary to minute its concern at the absence of any previously prepared and circulated financial statement. *{Note added in proof: The Treasurer was delayed by work commitments and subsequently offered his apologies. His report and financial statement are included with these Minutes as Annex I.}*

SK said that the Agenda item relating to the CSCC Financial Year could be ignored as the Treasurer had indicated that this was already aligned with the BCA FY.

DC said that the BCA Council had recently appointed a Regional Council Auditor. It was therefore going to be important that the Treasurer was “on the ball” and able to respond, for example to grants and requests for information, in a timely manner. This discussion raised the question of what format a Regional Council’s accounts should be presented in, since it was clearly going to be imperative that the finances of *all* Regional Council’s were open and transparent if the annual end-of-year “reckoning” process was going to work effectively. **The Meeting therefore decided to make the following request:**

“The BCA Treasurer should indicate what format Regional Council accounts should be presented in, and ensure that all Regional Council financial statements are audited and available for inspection by all [BCA] Members before any funding is agreed.”

CB asked what the mechanism was for recovering C&A expenditure. LW suggested that he contact Elsie Little (the BCA C&A Officer) for advice.

9. CONSERVATION & ACCESS OFFICER'S REPORT

“Thankfully towards the end of 2004 there was no re-run of the access problems experienced by the previous year’s insurance situation. 2004-05, all in all, was a year of generally good access and good conservation. Thefts from vehicles appear to have escalated with additions to the usual locations (GB & Manor Farm) including daylight robberies from the Charterhouse car parks and also Priddy Green.”

9.1 – Cuckoo Cleeves sale

This remains an ongoing non-event. The cave is not locked at present as the padlock is broken. Frome CG has a new lid ready for installation but this is being held over until the sale is agreed or rescinded.

9.2 – Box Mine

The gating has been postponed until September. So far 25 pages of feedback on this project has been collated and is due for submission to EN; a summary of feedback appears to concur that as long as access is easy and there is no closed season, the installed gates should avoid unwanted attention (this includes feedback from non-cavers as well). During the summer an access policy will be written and submitted.

9.3 – Browns Folly Mine

The Mine Inspector’s report has *still* not been submitted to the Wildlife Trust.

9.4 – Merstham Stone Mines & Chaldon Bottom Quarry

AG explained that an access situation had developed in East Surrey after the last CSCC Meeting. On March 5th DC received an urgent communication from the Acting Surrey Mines Agent (Wealden Cave & Mine Society) asking for the access pages of the CSCC website to be amended to show that all caving access rights to the Football Field (No.4) and Quarry Dean (No.2) entrances to the Merstham Stone Mines were to be removed by the landowners from April 15th and that any persons found on the site would be prosecuted. No explanation for the change of access was given. DC complied with this request. The Acting Mines Agent also asked for the NGR’s to these sites to be removed. DC did not comply with this on the grounds that the locations were a matter of public record and that their removal would set an unwelcome precedent. On March 17th AG received a tersely worded email from the landowner threatening legal action if the CSCC website details were not amended further. The email stated that access had *already* been revoked; it made no mention of the NGR’s. The website was amended immediately and AG sent a polite reply to the landowner who responded with thanks. CSCC Members were then alerted by email, and SK managed to get a warning inserted into the “Late News” section sent with Descent magazine #183. AG subsequently contacted the Chairman of the WCMS, who explained that the WCMS were mystified by the change. The matter was left to rest with the WCMS.

Then, on May 5th, DC received an email from the Mines Agent requesting an amendment to the entry for Chaldon Bottom Quarry (that whilst access was still possible the situation was sensitive because of the nearby changes in access at Merstham and as a result the WCMS was negotiating a more permanent agreement). DC complied with this request. However the Mines Agent this time also asked for the NGR’s of *all* the Surrey sites to be removed from the CSCC website. DC told the Mines Agent that he thought this was a matter for consideration by the Meeting.

In discussion the view was expressed by some present that the CSCC should be very wary of following the US policy of keeping the locations of caves/mines secret, particularly when they were already, or had been until recently, in the public domain. However it was also recognised that not to comply with the wishes of the WCMS would be unhelpful in the current climate and could jeopardise both future access and relations to the detriment of the WCMS *and* the CSCC. **It was therefore decided that the NGR’s to the Surrey sites would be removed from the website but that the need for this would be reviewed at the December CSCC Meeting.**

ACTION: DC to remove the NGR’s to Surrey sites from the CSCC Website until further notice.

9.5 – Abandoned dig near Waterwheel Swallet

The MCG have kindly taken over this site to the satisfaction of all the parties involved including the landowner, EN, previous diggers and the AONB Warden on the understanding that MCG assume digging rights to the site. CB said that thanks were due to the MCG, Tim Francis and John Cornwell for their assistance in the smooth hand-over of this site. SK concurred. TF said that the shaft was being capped at the present time.

9.6 – Found Cave of Loxton

No further information has been received from the BEC or Vince Simmonds.

9.7 – Other News

A new Caving Conservation Code leaflet is being drafted by the BCA.

A thesis study of the climate in **Shatter Cave** was completed earlier in the year by student Gina Moseley; copies are held by Dave Irwin & CB. It can be duplicated onto CD ROM and held on archive elsewhere on request. Assistance was also given to two other students with thesis topics involving cave conservation.

The EN SSSI Audit is on track for a 2006 completion (62% has been done so far). Further help is required from the BEC and the CDG with the “lesser caves” of Wookey Hole. The landowner at Lamb Leer has reiterated that the cave is not open and was unwilling to make an exception for the purposes of the Audit. EN will be notified accordingly.

The National Trust is expected to review its guidelines on caving & potholing shortly at a meeting in Birmingham as part of a 10 year review. CB said that the guidelines as they stood were fine apart from some out-of-date addresses, however CB added that he would prefer to see the references to trip leaders needing to hold NGB qualifications removed (except for those groups where NGB qualifications are a specific requirement; e.g. school groups, commercial groups etc). The caves/areas in the CSCC region known to be NT land are: Coral Cave, Shute Shelve Cavern, West Cheddar Gorge, and Leigh Woods (West side of the Avon Gorge).

CB is still in negotiation with Bristol Water over **West Twin Brook Adit**.

New padlocks have been fitted on **Stainsby's Shaft** and **Chardswell Cave**, and a new lid is to be fitted on Waterwheel Swallet following funding from the MCG, Cheddar Caving Club & Somerset County Council. Grateful thanks are due to all three bodies for this.

The entrance to **Coral Cave** is reported as being “rusted up” (but the padlock is ok); visitors are advised to give the lid a good wallop (or take a crowbar)!

Unstable boulders have been reported in **Wigmore Swallet** between the entrance and the first chamber.

SK had two items under C&A:

OFD – there is a new Permit Secretary for OFD, Elaine Owen, who can be contacted at ofdaccess@hotmail.co.uk.

Little Neath River Cave & Bridge Cave – there is currently **no access** to either cave. The situation is expected to be resolved quite soon.

10. TRAINING OFFICER'S REPORT

The Training Officer was not present but had sent a report:

“There has been only one training event during the last twelve months - a weekend first aid course at the Charterhouse Centre. Despite being run at extremely reasonable rates the course was not very well supported. I think this highlights the problem of disseminating information to the membership of CSCC Clubs.

Recently there has been considerable debate through the letters pages of Descent magazine about the use and safety record of the Stop descender. I would urge all clubs and cavers to reflect upon this discussion and consider what measures they might apply to prevent further accidents of this type.

I have not been able to attend any Training Committee meetings for some time. This is due to a general lack of free time at weekends when the meetings are held. I do, however, read the Minutes and express my view through email if I consider it necessary.

I am willing to stand again for the post of Training Officer. I am also willing to stand down and make way for anyone who feels strongly they would like to take on the position. I do feel that the Training Officer should be a caver with a foot in 'both camps' so to speak. That is someone involved with both activity centre caving and club caving. We should remember that in terms simply of numbers going underground club cavers are a minority compared to led groups. I find myself sometimes at the Outdoor Pursuits Liaison Group meetings held at Charterhouse as the only representative voice of 'club' caving and in something of a reverse situation on CSCC. I am not sure it is desirable for these two bodies to be such separate entities and to have such tenuous lines of communication.”

CB said that he would be attending the next OPLG Meeting on May 16th.

11. EQUIPMENT OFFICER'S REPORT

The Equipment Officer said that there had still not been a meeting of the National Equipment Committee and that he had raised this at the BCA Council Meeting. It was noted that subsequently Andy Pryke was reinstated as the BCA Equipment Officer.

12. NCA/BCA REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

“Since my last report I have attended the N(B)CA AGM, the NCA SGM, and BCA National Council Meeting on the 12th March – a very long day.

The most significant news is that the NCA finally dissolved itself, formally passing all its assets and responsibilities to the BCA. Another important step forward in the restructuring of British caving has been achieved. The last part of the restructuring is the

merger of BCA and BCRA. This is now well under way. A key step was made at the BCRA's SGM on 26th February when it was agreed that to be a member of the BCRA one must first join BCA.

The BCA has a new Secretary in the form of Paula Grgich-Warke and new Caving Reps. in the form of Emma Porter and yours truly. The only vacant BCA posts are the Equipment Officer [but see Item 11] and the four Individual Reps.

UK Sport has given the BCA an interim grant whilst it decides if it should support non-Olympic sports. There are seven other sports in the same situation as us. The noble concept of 'Sport for All' has been usurped by 'Sporting Excellence'. This will affect the Professional and Amateur Training Schemes and the Expedition Grants administered by GPF. If they decide not to, BCA will make a case to Sport England for greater funding.

The DCA's proposal to broaden Club Individual Members (CIMs) to clubs that are not part of the BCA insurance scheme was passed. I failed to formally remove its 'all the members of a club' or 'non-in' approach, but the AGM agreed that the proposal should not be taken too literally upon implementation.

The C&A Officer noted the growing tendency for landowners to suggest that health and safety responsibilities required them to limit access on their land. She had found the ability to refer to the BCA's insurance policy was one of the greatest assets in countering these arguments.

The CSCC's proposal the Hub should disband was passed.

DRT is no longer a threat. The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) sought to apply the Working at Heights Directive Regulations to caving and climbing. The regulations were designed for workmen and were completely inappropriate to adventure activities. For example two ropes were to be used on every pitch, a method dubbed DRT (double rope technique), a method that undermines the proven technique of SRT. The BCA along with other adventure activity bodies has lobbied the Government hard. That effort has finally paid off and the National Governing Bodies will continue to set the safety standards rather than the HSE. This is confirmed in a press release (copy on the CSCC website). Particular thanks should go to Tom Redfern who has represented the BCA in these tortuous negotiations.

Since I am now one of the four Club Reps. on BCA National Council I am not standing for re-election as CSCC's BCA Representative. If your club has any issues, as well as pursuing them through the CSCC you can bring them to me to raise at National Council."

GM proposed a vote of thanks to DC for all his work representing the CSCC. This was seconded by SK and carried by the Meeting.

13. BOLTING COORDINATOR'S REPORT

The Bolting Coordinator gave a brief recap of his work over the year. Four new bolters had been trained; Andy Sparrow (ChCC), Chris Binding (ChCC), Alison Moody (WCC), and Steve Tomalin from the Forest of Dean. Eight new Eco-bolts had been placed underground - four in Waterwheel Swallet (October 2004) and four in Swine Puke Rift (at the head of Shatter Pot) in Swildons Hole (February 5th 2005) – and a loose Eco-bolt at the Swildons Twenty had been replaced (November 4th 2004) and subsequently tested (December 3rd 2004). All authorised Eco-bolts on Mendip have been checked.

13.1 – Bolt Placement Details

AA said that he had still not received all the information on the placements made prior to his assuming office from LW.

ACTION: LW to give AA the placement details as soon as possible.

13.2 – Slither Pot

SK said that CB and he had received a request from a member of Frome CC asking for bolts to be placed at Slither Pot in Thrupe Lane Swallet. LW said that this placement had been authorised several years previously (when the rest of Thrupe was being bolted) but that it had never been done. It was agreed that this placement should be done as soon as practicable.

13.3 – Bolting "To Do" List

AA said that he wanted to initiate a "To Do" list so that placements and training could be carried out in a timely and efficient manner. The Meeting added Slither Pot to the list. GM said that the Charterhouse Caving Company AGM had agreed that Swing Pitch in Longwood Swallet could be Eco-bolted. This was also added to the list. *{Note added in proof: A bolt was placed at Swing Pitch later that afternoon}.*

14. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, C&A Officer, Equipment Officer and Bolting Coordinator all indicated that they were willing to stand again. As there were no other nominations they were re-elected unopposed. The Meeting noted the remarks that the Training Officer had made in his report, but as there was no other nomination he too was re-elected unopposed.

The BCA Representative had previously indicated that he wished to stand down (in any event he had been elected to the BCA Council as a Club Representative at the BCA AGM) and nominations had been sought, however none had been forthcoming. There was a trawl around those present but no one offered their services. **GP suggested that AG should be empowered to appoint a Representative on an ad hoc basis until such time as a more permanent candidate could be found. This was agreed.** AG thanked DC for all the time and effort he had devoted to the office of BCA Representative.

AB offered to attend the next meeting of BCA Council as the CSCC Representative if no other candidate was forthcoming.

ACTION: SK to advertise the vacancy for the BCA Representative among the CSCC Membership.

15. FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Forest 2005, June 17th – 19th 2005, www.forest2005.org.uk

2005 British Cave Rescue Conference, Friday-Sunday July 1st - 3rd 2005, Eastwater Farm, Priddy, Mendip, www.mendip-rescue.org

NAMHO 2005, Friday-Sunday, July 8th – 10th, Surrey, namho2005.wcms.org.uk

Hidden Earth 2005, Friday-Sunday September 23rd - 25th 2005, Churchill School, Churchill, Mendip, www.hidden-earth.org.uk

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

LW said that he was still on the lookout for more help with Hidden Earth. In particular he had need of Lecture Secretaries. DC said that he could supply the HE2005 poster in electronic format for inclusion in Club Newsletters.

CB said that the organiser of the SMCC Iceland Expedition taking place in the autumn had enquired if the CSCC Leica Laser Distance Meter could be borrowed to help with their surveying. CB said that he saw no real distinction between using the device in a cave on Mendip and using it in a cave anywhere else in the world. The meeting initially expressed the view that the device was given for regional use. However this view softened if insurance or an agreement to make good any damage to the device was given before it was loaned out – although it was noted that insurance cover for such a device being used in an underground environment was unlikely to be available at a reasonable premium. **The Meeting decided that if a group borrowing the device enter into a moral obligation to make good any damage or loss to the device this should be sufficient for it to be lent out on a case by case basis** (pursuant to the new user reading the manual and/or understanding how to use it!).

LW asked TF about access to Bone Hole. TF said that the cave was open, but that the access agreement the MCG had with the landowner really required visits to be made in the company of an MCG leader.

16. DATE OF NEXT SCHEDULED MEETINGS

(all at the Hunters Inn, Priddy, 10:30)

Saturday 10th September 2005

Saturday 3rd December 2005

Saturday 4th February 2006

Saturday 6th May 2006 (AGM)

ANNEX 1

Treasurers Report

Updated 23rd May 2005

1) General – The treasurer apologises for his leave of absence from general caving duties, recently, due to having just got married and also changing jobs.

2) CSCC Current account. Balance at 1st January 2005 £79.99.

Expenditure since

Steve King, £124 for envelopes and postage. Second cheque for £64 being sent forthwith, apologises to the Secretary.

Handbook - £142.00

Andrew Atkinson, Expenses 535 miles for return trip to Yorkshire and also 2 x 5.99 for bolt splitters. Cheque £92.23 to be sent forthwith and in hand

Income

£570 in BCA funding.

£24 mystery cheque received from BEC, no advice for reason.

Current balance

£469.99 (£315.76 taking into account an uncleared cheque).

Future Costs

The treasurer is unaware of any future agreed costs, but needs confirmation whether Andy Sparrow will require costs to cover First Aid Course.

Reserve Account Balance

£4020.45

General Notes

The accounting since January has been very quiet and based on expenditure so far we could be in surplus with regard to the BCA core funding at next January. I suggest that all officers of the CSCC try and predict expenditure for the remainder of the year and for the next meeting a prediction of the end of year balance be supplied. This year we have spent money on bolting, handbook and postage. There have to more things that we can be spending on (caving promotion, etc).

At previous meetings and in private discussions/email with several people from this region and others, there is always discussion about getting more funding for the region. The response from people who are then contacted is along the lines of “don’t bother; there is nothing in the pot for this year”. For want of a better term the system, if there is one appears somewhat “airy fairy”. I ask a couple of straight questions:

- 1) What do we want funding for and why? Taking into account we may have a surplus on BCA funding.
- 2) What exactly cannot be funded by the CSCC through the BCA money?
- 3) Why are we seeking funding for things like the First Aid when we have £4000 in reserve? Is it not a good thing for Mendip caving to have trained First Aiders all over the place?. Could we put a system in place where we part fund clubs to make sure the Aiders are spread all around? (just a thought). How can we get over the apparent problem.

These questions might be obvious and they have in parts been asked before, but the answer in my experience is never really straight on.

If there is money out there to be had, lets go and get it but at the same time can we spend it! That could be a strange thing for a treasurer to be saying.

Chris Whale
CSCC Treasurer
24th May 2005