

Chair's Report

Assistant Officers. When I became the Chairman I proposed that it would be a good idea to shadow each officer roles with an assistant. In part to share the workload and in part to develop the next generation of officers. Progress has been made. We have assistant BCA Officer and an assistant Equipment Officer. I'm pleased to announce that Ruth Revel has offered to be the assistant Comms. Officer. Ruth is the rep for the Bristol and District Caving Club. She has a long running and popular topic on ukCaving.com called "Which (Mendip) cave have you visited this week?"

I would like to shadow the remaining roles as well. We are also on the lookout for a new C&A Officer and Treasurer next year. If you know any likely candidates please cajole them.

UKCCEF Panel Member. There is some business regarding the UK Cave Conservation Emergency Fund (UKCCEF). This is charitable fund administered by the BCRA that can provide funds to protect caves. See <https://bcra.org.uk/ukccef/>. By their constitution the panel members for UKCCEF are elected by the Regional Councils. Les Williams is the current panel member from the CSCC region. He is willing to stand again. Currently I'm not aware of anyone standing against Les. This meeting should elect a new panel member.

FoDCCAG Constitution. I have received an approved copy of the Constitution for the UK's newest regional council. I'll attach it to the officer reports for your perusal.

David Cooke
May 2026

Treasurer's Report Aug 2026

Proposed New Clubs

None

Income and Expenditure Since Apr 2026

Payments received for Keys and BCA claim.

Expenditure

£63.25 – Bolting Equipment

£89.46 – Padlocks

£25 - SWT Harridge Woods C&A

£318 – Wookey 24 C&A

£18.80 – Bolting Equipment

2025 Accounts

2025 Accounts have been examined and signed off. Many thanks to Graham for this Audit.
The claimed sum of £476.92 has been reimbursed by the BCA.

Tom Harrison Aug 2026

Conservation & Access Report - CSCC Meeting 17th August 2026

Please find below the Conservation & Access Officer's Report. This covers the period since the last meeting in May 2026.

Harridge Woods Caves

The access arrangements for Harridge Woods has been finalised. This included:-

- Implementing an online permit system
- Updating the CSCC Access Guide
- Fitting CSCC padlocks to the locked caves (Harridge Wood Hole and EMMC)
- Updating the trip report to include any Bat sightings

Many thanks to Cookie for helping install the padlocks.

Pressure Washers

The pressure washers have been returned by the Wealden Cave and Mine Society. They have been serviced and ready to be borrowed for any clean-up projects you may have.

CSCC Access Guide

Many minor updates have been made to the CSCC Access Guide, including:-

- The bookings calendar for the Cheddar caves is now displayed on the Cheddar Caves South page.
- Added a Harridge Woods Area page with links to an area map, the permit system and trip report page.
- Transferred a number of files onto the CSCC web site and updated the links.
- Transferred a number of Google forms from my personal account to the CSCC account.

Wookey Hole

All of the handlines in the rift down to Wookey 24 have been replaced, along with the associated mailons. A traverse line has been installed to guide cavers over the floor holes where a recent rescue occurred. Many thanks for Duncan Price, Pete Hellier and Chris George for their help with this.

Reservoir Hole

The new SRT route, Ceiling Good, upto High Country has been rigged. The conservation tape at the base of the pitch has been modified to accommodate the pitch and the Conservation and Training Guide has also been updated. A new email group for the Cheddar Wardens has been created and used to inform them of the new Ceiling Good pitch and how it should be used.

Stock Hill Woods

I have had some initial conversations with the Forestry England ranger, Mark Maynard, concerning the caves within Stock Hill Woods. They are investigating how the entrance to Stocks House Mine can be made more secure but still permit access for bonafide cavers. I will continue the dialogue with them and, at present, there are no changes to the access arrangements.

Future Priorities

In the coming months I will be concentrating on the following priorities:-

- 1) Progress the Spider Hole digging application with Longleat
- 2) Complete the conversation work in Reservoir Hole
- 3) Progress the new lids for Home Close and Stock Hill Mine Cave

If anyone has anything else they would like progressing then please let me know.

Wayne Starsmore
C&A Officer
CSCC

Equipment and Techniques Report – CSCC Meeting 17th August 2026

(Written by Deputy Equipment Officer)

Progress Since Last Meeting

Andrew held a training session with the Forest of Dean on 17th May covering removal of expansion bolts and fitment of glue in anchors. This was well received. I was unfortunately unavailable to assist. This included 100% success for removal of expansion bolts.

A few purchases have been made, some more resin, some more anchors, some more nozzles and some tube for holes with poor access. We will likely need to buy a different size tube in the near future.

Longwood Valley Sink

Work is progressing on fitting/replacing anchors ahead of tourist trips. This included more success in removal of expansion bolts but with one failure.

Reservoir Hole

The new SRT route, Ceiling Good, has been completed and the rigging has since been completed by Wayne.

G.B. Cave

The anchor which was reported to be worn has been replaced. The chain was left not connected to the new anchor so curing could be successful and communication was distributed. I don't have any word as to if this has since been reconnected. Does anyone know?

Thanks to Holly and Hayden for their assistance with various bolting trips.

Future Work Required

Thrupe Lane Swallet

The request to place 9 anchors at Bridge Rift and Avalanche Pot in Thrupe Lane Swallet is pending. This request will be reviewed in due course and, if appropriate, actioned in more agreeable conditions.

Hunters Hole

One anchor at Sago's Pot in Hunters Hole remains on the non-urgent replacement list.

Eastwater Cavern

Futher work is still required to replace the snapped anchors for Lolly Pot

Longwood Valley Sink

Plenty more to do!

Communications Officer's Report: Peter Burgess

I have contacted Ruth Revell of Bristol District Caving Club who has kindly offered to act as Comms Officer second. Our first task will be to work on the August newsletter in the coming days. I am very pleased to have Ruth on board.

Peter Burgess
CSCC Communications Officer

Aug 2026

BCA Rep's Report to the CSCC August General Meeting

After the last BCA Council meeting, I circulated a report and some information to the CSCC rep's email list on 22 July 2026. Nothing has really happened since then, but for the record, I'll repeat that here.

I wasn't able to attend the CSCC AGM, as I was staying at the Orpheus hut in Derbyshire (not enough signal for a Zoom call) for a BCRA Cave Archaeology Group field meeting that I was co-organising, however, I gather I was re-elected.

Since then I have attended two BCA Meetings but I was unable to attend the AGM due to a prior commitment but I understand this was a civilized affair with a productive discussion. Judi Durberm who did attend, has kindly written this up for the next CSCC Newsletter. I'll forward the AGM minutes when I have them.

With my email on 22 July, I attached:

- The draft minutes of the Council meeting on 19th May which I attended
- The agenda for the meeting on 21 July meeting which I also attended

Individual members of BCA were sent the link for the AGM papers but in case anyone has not seen these, they can be found here: <https://british-caving.org.uk/about-bca/bca-council/official-documents/>

The following points arose from the last council meeting:

- The subs will remain the same for 2027, however it is likely that these will rise in line with inflation in 2028.
- Chris Bolton, BCA's treasurer will not be standing for re-election in 2027 as he will be then have completed the three year term he committed to. He would like to identify a likely successor as soon as possible to avoid a gap in any handover. My view is that Chris has done a huge amount for BCA in this time on the Executive and as Treasurer and he will be a very hard act to follow.
- The 2027 AGM will be hosted by the newly formed Forest of Dean regional council (FoDCCAG) and organisation for this is already underway.
- The posts of Group and Individual reps were left vacant at the AGM as no nominations were received. Council co-opted Jenny Potts as the Group Rep and Andy Eavis as the Individual Rep.
- Violet Astle was co-opted as Convenor of the Training and Equipment Committee.
- The terms of reference of the various other working groups and their convenors were confirmed.
- The inaugural International Day of Caves and Karst is taking place on Sunday 13th September. The BCA would like to encourage as much positive profile raising as possible for caving. The strapline for the day is EXPLORE, UNDERSTAND, PROTECT. It would be nice if CSCC and its members could find some way to mark the day eg would members be willing to promote some Try Caving trips or put on a talk aimed at non-cavers? If you would like to get involved, please contact Zac Woodford, BCA's Information Officer at pandi@british-caving.org.uk
- Incorporation continues to be explored. It is hoped there will be a further discussion about this at Hidden Earth.

- As previously reported, the spectre of 'Organised Fun' continues to loom over student caving clubs. BCA continues to take a proactive role in the discussions and once again highlights the need for a strong national body to represent caver interests when needed.

If there are any questions or concerns arising from anything above or the papers I sent out, please let me know and I will do my best to answer these or make further enquiries so that I can do so.

[Time spent on BCA matters since the AGM approx. 5 hours, including attendance at meetings, reading papers and reporting.]

Linda Wilson
CSCC's BCA Rep
7.8.26

IT Officer's Report

I have moved the reps and officials mailing list from the old BCA server to the new CSCC server. The software has changed from Mailman2 to Sympa. Mailman 2 has long been out of support thus required replacing with new software. Sympa does the same job but has a far better web interface.

Having setup Sympa it was relatively easy to create a new mailing list for the Cheddar Gorge Caves Wardens, which I have done.

The final step to complete moving servers is to move the email across which I hope to complete before the next meeting. This should also address the intermittent reports of CSCC email going to spam.

The website page listing the club members has been updated with thanks to Tom.

David Cooke
Aug 2026

REVISED CONSTITUTION of the Forest of Dean Cave Conservation and Access Group adopted at the Annual General meeting held on 18th March 2026

1. DEFINITIONS

1.1. The name of the Group shall be the Forest of Dean Cave Conservation and Access Group, otherwise referred to as the 'Group'.

1.2. The area of interest for the Group comprises the Forest of Dean and the immediately surrounding areas in Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Monmouthshire which contain Caves, hereinafter referred to as the 'Area'.

1.3. Where the term 'Cave' or its derivatives is used in this constitution it shall mean caves and all sites of speleological interest such as swallets, resurgences, tunnels and mines, but excluding coal mines.

1.4 The Royal Forest of Dean Caving Club, Gloucester Speleological Society and Hades Caving Club, are the founding member clubs. As founding members they will have all the rights of Full Member Clubs plus any further rights conferred on them by access agreements with Forestry England and other landowners.

1.5 Forest of Dean Cave Conservation and Access Group Limited is a company registered in England (registration number 14518298), hereinafter referred to as the 'Company'. The Company owns the land in which the Wet Sink and Dry Sink entrances to the Slaughter Stream Cave are situated, hereafter referred to as the 'Land'. The sole member of the Company is the Group, who shall advise the Company on any matters arising, and from whom the Directors shall be elected. Save in the circumstances set out in clause 9, the Group shall remain the sole member of the Company and shall ensure that the Company retains ownership of the Land.

2. MEMBERSHIP

2.1 There are two categories of membership, Full and Associate.

2.2 All paid-up member clubs of the British Caving Association (BCA) and properly constituted cave rescue associations, unless already full members, may become Associate Members.

2.3 Full Membership of the Group is open to properly constituted Caving Clubs who are considered by the Group to be responsible and who have demonstrated and continue to demonstrate a significant input or involvement in caving in the Area.

2.4 Applications for Full Membership must be made in writing by an officer of the applicant club and the application shall be considered at a General Meeting. The applicant club shall be represented at the General Meeting considering the application and acceptance of applications will be decided by a majority vote at the General Meeting.

2.5 Full Membership shall be deemed to have lapsed when a full member club is persistently unrepresented at Committee or General Meetings without due cause or reason, or whose members no longer contribute to the workings of the Region.

2.5.1 Any proposal to lapse the membership of a full member club shall be deemed valid only if accompanied by a letter from the proposing or seconding club's secretary which confirms that the proposal has been discussed and agreed at a general meeting of the club's members and gives full details of the reasons for making the proposal.

2.5.2 The club shall be notified of the proposal and, if the proposal is passed, may appeal against the decision. Such appeal would be heard within three months by those members of the General Management Committee (as defined in 5.4) who are not also Club Representatives. The outcome of the appeal shall be notified to the appellant club and to the Group within fourteen days and shall be final and binding on both parties.

2.6 No member of any Member Club shall enter into any correspondence or agreement using the name of the Group without the approval from a Committee or General Meeting, nor shall they commit any act likely to bring the Group into disrepute.

3. OBJECTIVES

The Objectives of the Group shall be:

3.1 To manage and promote the conservation and scientific study of the Caves.

3.2 To secure, maintain and where appropriate, enhance access to the Caves by negotiation and agreement with landowners, tenants, mineral owners and local authorities.

3.3 To secure, coordinate and maintain good relations between cavers, farmers, landowners, local residents and any other interested parties.

3.4 To encourage and educate cavers to respect and conserve the Caves and countryside in the Area.

3.5 To encourage a free exchange of information about the Caves between interested parties.

3.6 To manage the Caves where access control is required.

3.7 To represent the general interests of member clubs with other caving bodies and other authorities.

4. POWERS

The Group shall have the power to raise funds and invite contributions from any person or organisation by way of donations and otherwise in support of its objectives, providing that the Group shall not undertake any permanent trading activities.

5. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

5.1 The Group shall maintain written records of the appointment of all Club Representatives and Committee Members and the names of all those attending each meeting.

5.2 One or two Club Representatives will be delegated by each of the full member clubs, with their names and any changes notified to the Group's Secretary in writing by the club's Chair or Secretary. On important matters, if the committee of the group requests that representatives obtain a mandate from their own club committees or memberships, then the representatives must comply.

5.3 The Group shall record minutes of each General and Committee Meeting; to include all officer reports, resolutions and proceedings and these shall be made available to anyone with a valid reason on request to the Secretary.

5.4 The general management and operations of the Group shall be in the hands of a committee comprising of the Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Conservation & Access Officer, Equipment Officer, Training Co-ordinator, Information Officer, and Permit Secretary. Each Committee Member shall be a member of one or more of the Full Member clubs and elected at the Annual General Meeting. Committee Members shall serve for one year and shall be eligible to apply for re-election.

6. THE COMMITTEE & COMMITTEE MEETINGS

6.1 The Committee of the Group, hereinafter referred to as the 'Committee', shall consist of the above Committee Members and the Representatives of the Full Member Clubs, hereinafter referred to as the 'Club Representatives'. A Club Representative may also be a Committee Member although no person shall have more than one vote.

6.2 Committee meetings shall be held at least twice per year according to levels of activity. Meetings shall in general be held in person, but in unusual circumstances Committee Meetings may be held virtually using electronic means or as a hybrid of both methods.

6.3 Committee Members and Club Representatives and any other invited persons shall be notified of the time and place of Committee Meetings in advance, along with the agenda. Non-receipt of the required notice by any member of the Committee shall not invalidate the proceedings of the meeting.

6.4 Items for inclusion on the agenda of a Committee Meeting shall be submitted to the Secretary prior to the meeting.

6.5 The quorum for a Committee Meeting shall be five, including at least two Committee Members and two voting Club Representatives who may also be a Committee Member.

6.6 Committee Members shall be entitled to one vote each at Committee Meetings and each full member club shall be entitled to one vote cast by that Club's Representative or Representatives.

6.7 Committee decisions shall be made according to a simple majority, but in the event of a tie the Chair shall have an additional casting vote.

6.8 The Committee may co-opt person(s) with specialist experience or knowledge to advise the Group or fulfil particular tasks. Such appointments will not carry voting rights.

6.9 The Committee is permitted to deal with any matters not provided for in the Constitution, providing they are consistent with the Group's objectives and powers.

6.10 The Committee shall have the right to expel or suspend any Club Representative or Committee Member whose actions are contrary to the terms of this Constitution or who is persistently absent from meetings without due cause or reason. The individual shall be notified and an appeal against the decision may be made at the next meeting.

6.11 The Chair or Secretary may also contact Committee Members and Club Representatives by telephone, mail or e-mail to obtain majority decisions on less important matters that require attention between Committee meetings.

7. PROCEDURE FOR GENERAL MEETINGS

7.1 An Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held in person in March of each year for the following purposes:

- To receive and approve the accounts of the Group for the past financial year.

- To elect the Committee Members.

- To confirm the Club Representatives.

- To discuss and decide upon any proposals or motions received from Committee Members or Club Representatives at least four weeks before the meeting.

- To alter the Group Constitution.

- To transact any other business notified in the circulated agenda for the meeting.

7.2 Extraordinary General Meetings (EGMs) may be called to consider any important matters normally decided at the AGM, but which cannot wait for an AGM and which cannot be resolved by a Committee Meeting. An EGM may be held in person at any time and must be requested in writing to the Secretary with details of any proposed motion(s) by at least one Club Representative from each of two Full Member Clubs. The meeting must be held as soon as possible and would be limited to discussion and any decisions concerning the proposed motion only.

7.3 Committee Members and Club Representatives and other invited persons shall be notified of the time and place and agenda for General Meetings at least one month in advance. Non-receipt of the required notice by any member shall not invalidate the proceedings of the meeting.

7.4 Only one nominated member from each of the Full Member Clubs shall be entitled to vote at General Meetings, not the Committee Members, except as shown in Clause 7.5 below. No person is entitled to more than one vote.

7.5 Decisions at General Meetings shall be reached by a simple majority vote when a quorum of Club Representatives from at least three Full Member Clubs and two other Committee Members are present. In the event of a tie the Chair shall have a casting vote.

7.6 A Committee Member shall be deemed to have immediately vacated their post if they submit their resignation in writing or if they are removed from office by a resolution approved at the Annual General Meeting.

7.7 Bona fide interested observers shall be permitted to attend General Meetings at the discretion of the Committee but may not speak unless invited to do so.

7.8 Cave landowners or their representatives will be given the opportunity to attend Committee or General Meetings in an ex-officio capacity at the discretion of the Committee. Any request by a Landowner to attend the AGM must be granted.

8. FINANCES

8.1 The Group shall keep proper accounts to be maintained by the Treasurer and these are to be made available for inspection at any reasonable time by any Committee Member or Club Representative.

8.2 The Group shall hold a bank account, the signatories for which shall be decided by the Committee.

8.3 An annual income and expenditure account, together with a balance sheet shall be prepared by the Treasurer.

8.4 There shall be no annual subscription for Associate Member Clubs.

8.5 Funding required for conservation materials and other costs related to the caves of the Area shall be subject to approval by the Committee.

9. DISSOLUTION

The Group may be dissolved only by a unanimous vote of the Full Member Club Representatives present at a General Meeting. If the Group is dissolved its assets if any shall pass either to a similar successor organisation or to an appropriate regional or national caving body, according to the decision of that Meeting.

10. LIMITATIONS AND LIABILITIES

10.1 The Group, Committee Members, Club Representatives, the constituent clubs, landowners and tenants shall neither be held liable for the personal safety of visitors to the Caves, nor for any damage or accident sustained by visitors resulting from the use of any physical aids installed in the Caves.

10.2 The Secretary shall ensure that the Group's BCA insurance cover remains in place or is replaced by equivalent cover if it ceases to be available.

11. AFFILIATIONS

The Group shall affiliate to the British Caving Association or a successor organisation and to any other organisations at the discretion of the Committee.

12. INTERPRETATION

The Group shall be responsible for the interpretation of the terms of this constitution.

