



**Minutes of BCA Council Meeting held on Saturday, 9th June 2012
at Alvechurch Church Hall, Alvechurch**

Present:

Andy Eavis (AE)	Chairman / UIS Rep.
Paul Ibberson (PI)	Treasurer
Damian Weare (DW)	Secretary / Handbook Editor
David Judson (DJu)	Legal & Insurance Officer
Elsie Little (EL)	Conservation & Access Officer
Les Williams (LW)	Publications & Information Officer / Webmaster
Nigel Ball (GM)	Training Officer
Nick Williams (NW)	Equipment & Techniques Officer / Insurance Manager
Clark Friend (CF)	Radon Working-Party Convenor
David Cooke (DC)	IT Working Party / Cave-Registry / Web Services
Jenny Potts (JP)	Publication Sales / DCA Rep.
Bob Mehew (BM)	Rope-Test Officer
Dave Checkley (DCh)	BCRA Rep.
Mark Williams (MW)	CSCC Rep.
Steve Holding (SH)	NAMHO Rep.
Emma Porter (EP)	BCRC Rep. / Club Rep.
Helen Brooke (HB)	CHECC Rep.
Mike McCombe (MM)	Cambrian Rep.
Stephan Natynczuk (SN)	ACI Rep.
Faye Litherland (FLi)	Individual Member Rep.
Mick Day (MD)	Individual Member Rep.
Bernie Woodley (BW)	Club Rep.
Owen Clarke (OC)	Club Rep.
Chris Gibbs (CG)	Observer
Dave Gough (DG)	Observer

The meeting commenced at 13:50.

1. Chairman's Welcome

AE welcomed members to this Council Meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from: Chris Jewell, Ged Campion, Mike Clayton, David Jean, Alan Finch, Glenn Jones and Boyd Potts.

3. Minutes of the last Council Meeting on 21st March 2012 (previously circulated)

PI: Felt we had accepted the Library & Expedition Funding section of the Budget, but it is not clearly stated.

Proposal: *to accept Library & Expedition Funding budgets for 2012, as put forward by PI.*

Prop: DJu Sec: DC *agreed unanimously*

Proposal: *to accept the Minutes from 21st March 2012 as a true record*

Prop: JP, Sec: FL *agreed unanimously*

4. Matters Arising for the Minutes of the last Council Meeting

None

Review of Action Log

Action Log 6 (*Bank Mandates*): Ongoing

Action Log 36 (*Manual of Operations*): Ongoing – Part 1 accepted by Annual General Meeting.

Action Log 54 (*Liaise with SUI*): Ongoing. NW is waiting for an opportunity to arrange a face-to-face meeting.

Action Log 83 (*Produce Asset Register*): Ongoing

Action Log 84 (*Speleology Funding*): Ongoing. NW: There are a number of potential candidates.

Action Log 93 (*in May GJ to send letter to non-joiners*): DW: David Gibson has recently contacted BCRA non-joiners and GJ will complete his action once the late-renewing BCRA members have renewed (or not).

Action Log 95 (*Student Member Discount*): Ongoing

Action Log 97 (*T/As working for BCA as individuals*): Ongoing NB: Raised it at Training Committee and now needs to liaise with NW.

Action Log 98 (*Amend Group Membership Forms*): Completed

Action Log 99 (*Write about AALS*): Completed

Action Log 100 (*Update CIC Handbook and Publish*): Ongoing NB: All complete and will be published once the Radon Booklet is published so it can be included on the CD.

Action Log 101 (*Radon Booklet*): to be taken under Item 6.

Action Log 102 (*Implementation of all Award Holders being BCA Members*): NB: Has liaised with NW and more meetings are needed before this can be implemented.

Action Log 103 (*2016 Working Party*): Ongoing. AE, LW, DC and DW to arrange a meeting shortly.

5. Appointment of non-elected Positions:

a. Working Group Convenors:

BM: Does the Radon Working Party really need to continue?

AE: Assuming Item 6 is passed at this meeting, there will be little work.

MD: The original purpose was to ensure a reliable point of contact.

CF: The Working Party was originally set up to liaise on the production of the first Radon Booklet. Arguably we should have reconvened it for this rewrite. Would agree that to an extent we do not need a Working Party as such, but we may need designated people who meet when required.

AE: It would seem a good idea to have a nominated person, and we can then reconvene the Working Party if we need it in the future.

CF: Holds a compendium of data from a number of caves. Some of this was felt to be unpublishable in the past but wonders if we could put this data on the internet somewhere. Has always noted that requests for information follow from things being published, and the question is always whether we should seek to raise the profile of radon or not.

Proposal: ***that the Radon Working Party be disbanded and replaced with a Council-appointed Radon Information Officer.***

Prop: FL Sec: LW *agreed unanimously*

Proposal: ***That the Youth & Development Working Party be disbanded and replaced with a Council-appointed Youth & Development Officer.***

Prop: LW Sec: FL *agreed unanimously*

PI: Has been asked where we stand with the Finance Committee. Currently there is a formal approval of RCC finances by the Finance Committee, but this does not seem to be a formal Committee as such. Is it necessary or desirable to continue this?

JP: Feels it is useful to have a group to field queries.

DC: The Finance Committee was set up by DC while he was Treasurer.

BM: The other value is that other Regions have the opportunity to look at each other's expenditure and then claim on a like-for-like basis. This has to be of benefit to the individual Regions.

JP: There is no cost and it is all done by e-mail. This has changed over the years but is an arrangement DCA are happy with.

LW: The Finance Committee seems to be made up of the RCCs, but not the Constituent Bodies. This is different from the Standing Committees.

AE: We have something that works, so why change it? We have a Committee convened by the Treasurer that consists of the Regional Treasurers plus anyone else they wish to include. Suggests it remains this way.

Proposal: *that Les Williams be appointed as 2016 Working Group Convenor and David Cooke as IT and Cave Registry Convenor.*

Prop: DCh Sec: PI *agreed unanimously*

b. Council Appointments

Proposal: *That the following annual appointments be made for 2012:*

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| i. Media-Liaison | Chris Jewell |
| ii. UIS Rep. | Andy Eavis |
| iii. FSE Rep. | Ged Champion |
| iv. British Caving Library Rep. | Jenny Potts |
| v. Radon Information | Clark Friend |
| vi. Youth & Development | Helen Brooke |

Prop: LW Sec: FL *agreed unanimously*

Committee Appointments

DJu: Would rather the role of Child-Protection Officer went to someone younger.

BM: The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 introduced radical changes and BCA's Child Protection Policy is out of date as a result. However the new government will mean that potentially more radical changes are afoot. We need to ensure our guidance to Clubs is accurate.

CF: Could we approach CHECC to find someone new and interested?

HB: Young students are probably not the best solution. People with a training background might be the better option, as they have often taken part in formal Child-Protection training.

LW: Can we ask NB to take this to the TC and see if there is any interest to consider at a future meeting?

DW: When we advertised this role in the past, we had a number of offers of help from well-qualified and potentially very useful people. We should consider these offers once more.

Action 104: NB to ask TC for potential Child-Protection Officer. DJu to consider other offers.

Action 105: DJu and L&I Committee to look at current legislation and review BCA's existing Child Protection Guidance.

Proposal: *That the following Committee Appointments be ratified by Council:*

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| i. Acting Child Protection Officer | David Judson |
| ii. Handbook Editor | Damian Weare |
| iii. Newsletter | Position Vacant |
| iv. Publications | Jenny Potts |
| v. Webmaster | Les Williams |
| vi. Web Services | David Cooke |
| vii. Rope-Test Officer | Bob Mehew |

Prop: MW Sec: HB *agreed unanimously*

Action 106: HB to ask CHECC for a potential Newsletter Editor. Suggestions to LW.

6. Radon Underground Booklet

Proposal: *to accept the Radon Underground booklet for publication.*

Prop: JP Sec: NW *agreed unanimously*

7. Dates for BCA Council Meetings for 2012-2013

The following dates and venues were agreed for meetings in 2012-13: 6th October 2012 (Alvechurch); 12th January 2013; 16th March 2013 (Alvechurch); 16th June 2013 (Rotary Centre, Castleton)

8. AOB

Hidden Earth

LW: A Czech delegation wants to come to Hidden Earth to promote Brno 2013. Hidden Earth has agreed to provide a stand at no cost. Is BCA willing to pay for their admission tickets?

Proposal: *that BCA sponsors up to 3 admissions to Hidden Earth for a Czech delegation to promote Brno 2013.*

Prop: NW Sec: EP *agreed unanimously*

Advice Notes on Public Rights of Way Used for Access to Caves

- DJu: EL and DJu have jointly drafted advice notes on public rights of way used for access to caves. (see Appendix 1)
- EL: Unless local people do something to register these Rights of Way they will be lost. This needs to be done at a very local level.
- JP: It is areas that are not National Parks where we probably have the greatest concerns.
- DJu: This is likely to depend on the National Park. Some will be more pro-active than others.
- BM: If this is accepted as a formal document, then it should be sent to RCC Secretaries, Newsletter, on the website and Descent.
- NW: Can request that GJ send it to all the Access Bodies too.
- EL: Lots of people believe Rights of Way no longer matter following CRoW. However, they do matter as they are the only things that cannot be revoked. They need to be maintained even if they are on CRoW land.
- AE: Are they all on OS Maps?
- DJu: No. There has never been a definitive map, but in 2026 we will have a definitive map because anything not on it will no longer be a Right of Way. It is for this reason that we need to be careful, as Rights of Way are likely to be lost.
- BM: Can we amend Grampian Caving Club is Grampian Speleological Group?

Proposal: ***to accept the amended Advice Notes.***

Prop: EL Sec: DJu *agreed unanimously*

Action 107: DW to distribute amended "Advice Notes on Public Rights of Way Used for Access to Caves" document to RCC Secretaries, publish on the website, send to Descent and ask GJ to send it to all the Access Bodies.

Bank Mandates

PI: We need to change the Bank Mandates for the Training Account in light of NB's appointment.

Proposal: ***that the signatories to the BCA Training Accounts be AE, DW, PI and NB with GM to be removed.***

Prop: PI Sec: DW *agreed unanimously*

PI: We also need a new mandate for the Standard Life Account following its takeover by Barclays.

Proposal: ***that the signatories to the BCA Standard Life Deposit Account be NW, PI and DW.***

Prop: PI Sec: DW *agreed unanimously*

RCC Funding

PI: Would like Council's approval to pay the outstanding CSCC claims referred to in the 2012 AGM providing suitable justification is forthcoming.

Proposal: ***that CSCC's outstanding claims be paid this year providing suitable justification is forthcoming from CSCC.***

Prop: PI Sec: DW *agreed unanimously*

Youth & Development

HB: We seem to lose a lot of people in the transition between University and non-University caving clubs. When this was discussed recently at a gathering of ex-students, we identified the main problem as being that people often find it intimidating to get involved in non-University clubs because they don't necessarily know anyone. This is in stark contrast to University clubs when they know everyone. HB suggests having an "Adopt-a-Club" approach so that there is a natural feed between University and non-University Clubs. Would like to launch this at Hidden Earth.

JP: It depends on which club you approach. There are only 2 clubs in Derbyshire with huts, so we could potentially be adopting a lot of clubs.

LW: Why do they need to have a club hut to adopt a club?

FL: This is a good idea. What is envisaged as being part of the relationship?

HB: It could be inviting them to club events, providing advice, access to caves etc.

BM: Likes the idea. We could consider funding this. An example might be allowing the reduced Student rate to be carried through for a year after graduation.

HB: Doesn't feel the problem is one of money.

DW: CJ originally launched his Try Caving idea by writing to the Clubs. It might be worth doing the same here.

CF: SWCC has had links in the past. The problem is that Uni club membership is very transitory.

DW: This is something DW has done for years and it brings real benefits to both clubs. However, it does require a lot of time and effort on the part of the non-University club.

DCh: Anything that can be suggested to encourage younger members to join BCRA would be appreciated.

FL: Do Clubs promote themselves at CHECC?

HB: Not generally.

The meeting closed at 15:20

Action Log – March 2012

No. Action by ... Details of Action

- | | | |
|----|---------------------|---|
| 6 | PI | Update Bank Mandates. |
| 36 | DW | Put together a Manual of Operations |
| 54 | NW & DJu | Liaise with SUI with a view to helping them streamline their insurance situation. |

October 2011

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|--|
| 83 | PI | Produce an Asset Register and liaise with NW/EP over the total replacement value of our insured equipment. |
| 84 | AE, PI and DW | Consider David Gibson's proposals on the funding of Speleology. |

January 2012

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|--|
| 93 | GJ | In May send a letter to 80 random people who have not rejoined in 2012 asking for their reasons. |
| 95 | GJ, NW and PI | Work out the details of implementing a student-member discount. |

March 2012

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------------|---|
| 97 | NB | Liaise with NW and Training Committee with a view to implementing Council's wish that T/As work for BCA as individuals. |
| 102 | NB, NW, PI and GJ | Liaise to find a way to implement Council's wish that all BCA Award Holders need to be BCA members. |
| 103 | LW | Bring a formal proposal for a 2016 Working Party to the next meeting. |

June 2012

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------|---|
| 104 | DJu & NB | NB to ask TC for potential Child-Protection Officer. DJu to consider other offers. |
| 105 | DJu | L&I Committee to look at current legislation and review BCA's existing Child Protection Guidance. |
| 106 | HB | Ask CHECC for a potential Newsletter Editor. Suggestions to LW. |
| 107 | DW | Distribute amended "Advice Notes on Public Rights of Way Used to Access Caves" document to RCC Secretaries, publish on the website, send to Descent and request that GJ send it to all the Access Bodies. |

British Caving Association

Conservation+Access Officer: Elsie Little
Hennoyadd Villa, Abercrave, Swansea SA9 1UR

Legal+Insurance Officer: David Judson
Hurst Barn, Castlemorton, Malvern WR13 6LS

D R A F T

ADVICE NOTE on PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY (PROW) USED for ACCESS to CAVES

The government has decided to act, possibly through changes to primary legislation in England and/or associated activities upon the recommendations of the *Stepping Out Report – recommendations to DEFRA of the Stakeholders Working Party, March 2010*.

In simple terms *Stepping Out* deals with the possible problem that might well arise in January 2026 when the cut-off date for unregistered PROW, as embodied in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW) comes into force.

Without further primary legislation or more efficient activities in the updating of the Definitive Map and Statement and/or The List of Streets, and/or the Registration of unsurfaced Public Highways in the run-up to 2026 then those public rights of way that had existed before 1949 and have not by then appeared on the Definitive Map, List of Streets or record of unsurfaced public highways will be deemed lost for eternity. That is to say no public access rights over them will be valid or claimable after that date.

This concern does of course not take in the great bulk of PROW that have already been recorded, as above, and should be shown on the current 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey map, nor does it take in private rights of way (over the land of others) that have been recorded in legal documents associated with property ownership.

There is, in our belief, a very small risk that some PROW (mostly Public Footpaths and/or Public Bridleways) that are commonly used by cavers to gain access to caves, or perhaps **the most convenient access to caves** might be lost if local action by those in the know is not taken. Since this is very much a matter associated with local activity and local knowledge we feel that responsibility must in the first instance fall upon Regional Caving Councils (RCCs) and their active member clubs.

We suggest therefore that the RCCs in England and Wales should check with their records (public records) to see if access to any of their caves might be in jeopardy. If there are any such concerns then these should be taken up with the relevant Highway Authority (or PROW Officer if there is one). Where access is by agreement with the landowner, as is often the case, then there is no reason for any concern or likelihood of change. In Scotland the law is very different and we trust that the Grampian Caving Club will advise us, and seek our help if needed.

If, contrary to our expectations, a considerable number of access problems appear likely to arise then these should be reported to us by the appropriate RCC's Officer so that action at the national level can be taken if necessary.

Elsie Little

David Judson

4th June 2012