

BCA Sets a Budget for 2007

As part of the spirit of getting BCA moving (again) a budget for 2007 was discussed at the last meeting of BCA's Council on 7 October. Perhaps I should make clear from the outset that a budget is much more than just finances. At its simplest, it is a statement of what BCA intends to do and the money required to achieve those objectives. Hence I thought it would be a good idea to write an article on what BCA intend to do in 2007. But before I get to that point; first a brief review of where BCA is at this point in time.

With Paula Grgich-Warke's resignation owing to ill health, Jenny Potts (secretary@british-caving.org.uk) has stepped into the breach to become acting secretary to help BCA out in the run up to its AGM next March. Although this may sound a long way off, Jenny's analysis of the steps to be taken which are required by the constitution means that work is required now to prepare the notice of the meeting, which will have to go into this Newsletter, which then has to be sent to the printers, who then have to fit it into a work slot, so it can be posted to you, so you can read it before the due date of 12 weeks prior to the date of the AGM.

Jonathan Roberts has also indicated that changes at work (he has been promoted) as well as getting married, that he would appreciate being relieved of his duties as Treasurer. Dave (Cookie) Cooke has volunteered to step in to become Treasurer (treasurer@british-caving.org.uk) from the next AGM and has agreed to take over much of the role from Jonathon in the mean time. Being the (almost ex) Treasurer of NCA and having been in on the birth of BCA, I was acutely aware of the financial position of BCA

and how contrary to my concerns of BCA limping along financially, it has actually been quite healthy owing in part to a number of conservative decisions and it has to be said, in part due to the lack of activity which has meant that money had not had to spent. So independently of Cookie taking over the role of Treasurer, I decided to try to organise a budget for 2007 to help get BCA moving again.

If any of you have looked at BCA's finances, then you will recognise that the work of BCA is listed under 11 headings, which in alphabetical order are: *Administration, Conservation & Access, Equipment & Techniques, Expedition Programme, Insurance, International, Legal & Insurance, Meetings & Conferences, Publications & Information, Regional Caving Council Expenditures and Training.* The intent of this article is to describe what is planned to be done in 2007 under these headings.

The **Administration** heading covers the work of the Secretary, Treasurer, Council meetings and alike. It is therefore routine spending to keep BCA going and has to be funded what ever else. And despite the various difficulties that BCA's officers have run into ticks over year on year. The table overleaf (*Table 1*) shows the anticipated income without the subscription income and the expenditure (I will deal with subscriptions at the end).

The **Conservation and Access** heading covers the work of the Conservation and Access Committee which is chaired by Elsie Little (conservation@british-caving.org.uk). Elsie envisages that there is a need for an updated Cave Conservation pamphlet. And some money is required to support the work of recording Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This work arose from a requirement laid down by the Government some while ago that there should be a statement of the state of each SSSI and a

programme of work to monitor any changes which might occur to that state. Cavers in all regions have taken on some of the work load of doing this recording in caves and have produced a range of excellent reports to date. But by far is the money required to support Regional Caving Councils in their Conservation and Access work. Elsie was aware of forthcoming work scheduled for 2007 in one region and a sum of over £2,000 has been allocated for that work in the budget.

Account Headings	Expenditure	Income
Admin	£300	£2350
C & A		£3356
Equip		£2600
Insurance		£51150
International	£1000	£1000
L & I		£500
Meetings		£4500
P & I	£500	£17350
RCC		£3420
Training	£13000	£18600

Table 1; Expenditure

At this point I should emphasise that the budget was underpinned by one prime assumption, namely that given the lack of notice to people in my preparation of the budget, any further expenditure ideas will be considered during 2007 by BCA's Executive. So if your region has necessary conservation and access work which you have not communicated with your Conservation and Access Officer (or Elsie), get on the telephone, E Mail or any other means to ensure they are made ware of it so plans can be made accordingly. I am not Treasurer, so I can't make any promises, but BCA's assets stand at a healthy position and Council accepted that there was a need to undertake a level of spend in part to catch up on the failure to do work in previous years. I expect that Cookie's clutch on the purse strings will be quite

strong, so although the money will not flow like water, hopefully some money will be spent catching up on necessary works in the regions.

The **Equipment & Techniques** heading covers work undertaken by the Equipment & Techniques Committee which is chaired by Andy Pryke (equipment@british-caving.org.uk) By the time you read this Newsletter, a meeting will have taken place in mid November on the topic of anchors. BCA is facing several problems; most notable being that BCA no longer has a stock of the Eco Anchors used in the BCA Eco Anchor scheme. Given a new batch is estimated to cost £6,000, Equipment & Techniques Committee is looking at alternative anchors. In doing so, the question of standards has been brought up which have moved on since NCA set up the Eco Anchor scheme. In addition, Dave Cowley and Bob Dearman have been undertaking a large programme of inspection of over 300 Eco Anchors placed under the scheme. This is indicating that the anchors have been very successful in withstanding the usage over a life time which has now exceeded 15 years. So Equipment & Techniques Committee is doing some research on new standards, the needs of the inspection programme and related matters.

The committee will then go out with its ideas to consult widely before coming to a decision on which way the anchor programme will go. The consultation will also include the British Mountaineering Council who have an even larger set of anchors to worry about than BCA. One of the consequences of a decision to change the anchor will be the need to undertake test on the newly chosen anchor. Indeed there an argument that more tests are required on the existing anchor type to confirm it will meet modern day standards. The aim is that before the end of 2007 a decision will have been taken on the type of anchor.

In addition the Equipment & Techniques Committee is aware that some of the drill batteries used in the programme are now pretty well exhausted and need replacing. Advancements in technology are such that it looks as if it is a cheaper and more effective solution to purchase a new drill and battery

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Note: The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the formal view of the British Caving Association.

rather than just replace the older designed battery. A small sum of money has also been allocated to work on improving the rope test rig.

The **Expedition Programme** heading covered the money funded by grant until a few years ago and which was onward transferred to the Ghar Parau Foundation (GPF) for them to allocate to expeditions. In recognising the value of encouraging expeditions, BCA decided early on this year to give £3,000 to GPF for them to use to grant aid expeditions in 2006. In discussing the topic again this October, Council decided that it should give a further £2,000 to GPF for their use in 2007 rather than allocate any money from the 2007 budget to GPF at this point in time.

The **Insurance** heading was created in 2004 to cover the work done in obtaining the public liability insurance cover and the costs of employing a membership secretary, providing membership cards etc. After some discussions with Nick Williams, BCA's volunteer Insurance Manager (insurance@british-caving.org.uk), it has been assumed that BCA will be offered insurance in 2007 for a similar premium as for previous years. This step has only been taken because of the 3 years worth of experience which BCA has accumulated. And there in lies the most significant assumption in setting the budget, namely that BCA will be offered insurance cover in 2007.

The **International** heading covers the remaining area of grant aid given to BCA from government, namely to help those who represent BCA Internationally. The grant does not cover anywhere near the amounts required for representatives to undertake these duties and BCA is grateful to its international representatives for finding the difference from their own pockets.

Although the heading **Legal & Insurance** might on the surface appear to overlap with Insurance, it covers the activities of the Legal & Insurance Committee which is chaired by Dave Judson (landi@british-caving.org.uk). Although Dave supports Nick Williams in negotiating with our brokers over the provision of public liability insurance; Legal & Insurance also covers monitoring developments in the law created by both new acts of parliament and by court decisions and ensuring the provision of travel insurance to cavers via a broker. It is a sad reflection that the Legal & Insurance booklet (produced by BCRA in conjunction with BCA) is now being updated for its third edition in the space

of three years due to the number of recent changes in law covering matters such as fire regulations, and duty of care.

Meetings & Conferences covers the "Try Caving" work that Chris Jewell (youth@british-caving.org.uk) is leading for BCA. He has some exciting developments planned for 2007. Funds have been allocated to enable BCA to take stands at a few of the outdoor conferences organised during 2007 to expose the delights of caving to a wider world. In addition, Chris is starting to plan a "National Go Caving day / weekend where clubs provide the resource of cavers to take anybody who turns up, down a simple cave. Much work is required to make this event successful but already from the responses by clubs to the www.trycaving.co.uk web site it would appear that the concept should be successful. And of course this is in addition to the plans to provide support to universities who may or may not have caving clubs.

The **Publications & Information** heading covers the work of the Publications & Information Committee which is chaired by Les Williams (webmaster@british-caving.org.uk). This heading covers the work of producing the BCA Newsletter by the Newsletter Editor Jim Cochrane (newsletter@british-caving.org.uk), the Annual Handbook by its new editor Damian Weare (handbook@british-caving.org.uk), the three previous Handbooks being produced by David Judson, and hosting the web site by Les Williams. In addition, BCA has accepted that from 2007 it will take over the financial responsibility of running Speleology from BCRA, though the details of this transfer are still to be worked out. In addition, Council decided that next year BCA will publish an Annual Report covering the work of BCA during 2006 following the AGM.

A fundamental part of the formation of BCA was the funding of the **Regional Caving Councils** (RCCs) through a central mechanism. Although the mechanism still has some minor problems, Cookie has agreed to hold a meeting at the very beginning of 2007 with all RCC Treasurers to ensure that these are ironed out. A central tenant of setting BCA's budget is that all allowable expenditure by RCCs is refunded by BCA.

The last but not least account heading of **Training** has seen severe changes over the past few years with the withering away of the grants from Government. Idris Williams (training.officer)

@british-caving.org.uk) as chair of the Training Committee has managed to cope with these challenges but is standing down in 2007. In 2006 £5,000 was received from UK Sport and £2,500 from Sport England and was used to offset the running costs of the two BCA Training award schemes (namely the Local Cave and Mine Leader Award and Cave Instructor Certificate). This has ceased for 2007 and Council has does not expect further support from Government. In the past the training scheme was a net contributor to BCA's accounts but with imminent the loss of the Government grants the training scheme is in danger of running at a loss. The draft budget suggested that this would leave the Training award schemes around £2,500 in deficit. But the planned increase in registration fees in 2007 is expected reduce this deficit to near zero. Council specifically accepted that some support might be required for the next year or two to help the Training award schemes find their financial feet.

The Training Committee has made a significant proposal for 2007 in providing a grant to persons who seek the BCA Training awards to facilitate their work in the voluntary youth sector. The overall estimated cost of obtaining the LCMLA award is £755 which is a substantial cost for an individual wishing to purely take young persons underground. As part of its youth development program the Council allocated £1,000 to be used by the Training Committee as bursaries to increase the number of youth sector volunteers who hold BCA Training Awards.

Although the major part of the Training heading covers the running of the two schemes, there are other aspects of work carried out by the Training Committee of which the other notable feature is recreational caver training grants. Council agreed that a sum of £2,000 should be allocated for recreational caver training grants in 2007. Details of the grant scheme can be found on BCA's web site at <http://british-caving.org.uk/?page=36>.

It has to be said that in previous years the concern has been that the subscription income might not cover all of the expenditures of BCA, of which

by far the largest single figure is that for the insurance premium. Indeed, in 2004 and 2005 there was an agreement between BCA and BCRA where by BCRA would help BCA in case of a deficit. Council decided that in the light of the bank balance and the under-spending of budgets in the recent past, it was reasonable to set a budget with a deficit. Having come to a conclusion on this, setting the subscription became a simple calculation and decision based on how much deficit was acceptable. In the end Council decided that the subscriptions should remain at the 2006 level. Council noted that this would result in a significant deficit for 2007 (of some £13,000) but decided that the deficit was worth incurring to help get BCA properly moving in carrying out its functions.

The costs of subscriptions in 2007 are listed below. It must be emphasised that if insurance cover is not forthcoming or that there is a substantial change in the premium, then BCA will have to look again at the costs of subscriptions.

		Subscription	+ BCRA
DIM	caving	£30	£40
	non caving	£20	£30
CIM	caving	£15	£25
	non caving	£5	£15
Joint DIMs	Both caving	£45	£55
Joint DIMs	One caving other non caving	£35	£45
Joint DIMs	Both non caving	£25	£35

Table 2; Subscriptions

DIMs are entitled to receive the BCA Handbook, issues of BCA Newsletters and Speleology during the year, receive cover from BCA's Public Liability Insurance policy during the year and participate in all activities of BCA, including a vote at General meetings and postal ballots. **CIMs** receive cover from BCA's Public Liability Insurance policy during the year and participate in all activities of BCA, including a vote at General meetings and postal ballots. (NB CIMs can only apply via their club.)

Joint DIMs is for co-habiting couples without restriction. They are entitled to the same benefits as DIMs except they only receive one copy of the pub-

lications. **EUG and CDG** members should contact their secretaries for information on their inclusive subscription.

For individual members (not clubs) the cost is reduced pro-rata by quarters for members joining after 31st March and later in the year.

Discount By Joining Date			
1 Jan–31 Mar	1 Apr–30 Jun	1 Jul–30 Sep	1 Oct–31 Dec
0%	25%	50%	75%

Table 3; Discounts by Date

Groups (caving or mining clubs and similar organisations) can join BCA at a basic level for a subscription dependent upon their size and also that the Group meets BCA's criterion for acceptance (see <http://british-caving.org.uk/?page=121> for informa-

Subscription			
size	basic	+ Speleology	+BCRA
4 - 10	£20	£25	£35
11 - 20	£30	£35	£45
21 - 30	£40	£45	£55
31 - 40	£45	£50	£60
> 40	£50	£55	£65

Table 4; Subscription

tion). The basic subscription entitles a Group to receive the BCA Handbook, issues of BCA Newsletters during the year and participate in all activities of BCA, including a vote at General meetings and postal ballots. For an extra £5, Groups may also receive issues of Speleology during the year.

If a Group wishes to insure itself, then BCA requires that the Group insures all of its membership. The sum payable for each member is as for CIMs above, but where the Group can show that one of its members is already a member of BCA, then the Group does not need to pay a CIM subscription for that individual.

If a Group who wishes to insure itself has a hut, then there is an excess of £50.

Groups who are Access Bodies have a subscription of £50. Groups who have both a hut and are an Access Body only pay once.

Associates

Associate membership is intended for outdoor activity service providers, commercial organisations and other corporate bodies. The subscription for Associate members is £45. The basic subscription entitles an Associate member to receive the

BCA Handbook, issues of BCA Newsletters during the year and participate in all activities of BCA. However Associate members do not have any voting rights.

BCRA

I am informed by Julian Griffiths, BCRA's Treasurer, that BCRA intend to set a subscription of £10 for 2007. For those that wish to obtain joint membership of BCA and BCRA, please add £10 to the appropriate BCA subscription.

Afterword

It is not sufficient to just make a budget. Hard work is required by many people and not just the chair persons of each committee, to undertake the work and deliver the commitments that have been set in the budget. I must emphasise that it is not just down to the chair persons to do all the work, rather it is for them to manage the work being done and facilitate you to get it done. So please help. I have written this article in part so that every member of BCA knows what work BCA is anticipating doing during 2007. So at the AGM in 2008 you can ask "What have you achieved?" of the various chair persons and expect a good answer. But perhaps if you give a helping hand, you will know the answer before 2008.

Bob Mehew

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membership@british-caving.org.uk

BCA Annual General Meeting 2007

The BCA AGM 2007 will take place on Saturday, 24th. March 2007, at the Baptist Church Hall, Alvechurch, starting at 10.30am. An agenda will be sent to all Group and Direct Individual Members of BCA to reach them by 10th. February 2007. *Items for the Agenda and nominations for posts on BCA Council must reach the BCA Secretary not later than midnight on Saturday, 20th. January.* Clubs are asked to ensure that their members are aware of these arrangements.

Nominations for Officer/Representative Posts required:

- Secretary to serve for 3 years
- Treasurer to serve remaining year of 2-year term
- Training Officer to serve remaining 2 years of 3-year term
- Conservation & Access Officer to serve for 3 years
- Legal & Insurance Officer to Serve for 3 years
- 2 Club Reps. to serve for 2 years
- 2 Individual Member reps. to serve for 2 Years
- 2 Individual Member reps. to serve for remaining year of 2-year term

(The following remain in post for 2007: Chairman to serve remaining 2 years of 3-year term; Publications & Information Officer to serve remaining 1 year of 3-year term; Equipment Officer to serve remaining 1 year of 3-year term; 2 Club reps. to serve remaining year of a 2-year term.)

Notes: (See BCA Constitution section 6.)

- The BCA Constitution requires that all officers be elected for a 3-year term, 1/3 officers retiring each year; and that 4 Club and 4 Individual member representatives be elected to serve for a 2-year term, ½ reps. retiring each year.
- If an officer or rep. retires before their term is up, a person may be elected to serve the remainder of that term.
- Officers and reps. are eligible for re-election at the end of their term
- Regional councils and nationally representative bodies appoint their own reps. each year.

The Letter of Nomination must contain the following:

- *A note of the BCA Council Post Candidate wishes to stand for;*
- *the Name of the Candidate and their BCA Membership No.;*
- *the Signature of candidate;*
- *the address of Candidate / phone /email;*
- *the Signature of the Proposer;*
- *a brief profile/election statement, maximum 300 words in length (½ side of A4).*

The cost of reproducing and circulating the profile/election statement will be borne by BCA. A candidate will not be considered until the BCA Hon. Secretary receives both the appropriate Nomination Letter and a profile/election statement. All candidates will be acknowledged by the Hon. Secretary. *The completed Nomination Letter, etc. must arrive not later than midnight of 20th. January 2007 to,*

Acting Hon. Secretary, British Caving Association,
Jenny Potts, 3 Greenway, Hulland Ward, Ashbourne, Derbyshire. DE6 3FE.



BCA's Youth and Development Campaign

www.trycaving.co.uk

Is a new website for anyone who is interested in getting into the sport. The concept is that it will provide a single place for all prospective cavers and current cavers to meet. Here are some suggestions:

- Register your club and contact details
- Write a short description/advert for your club
- Advertise novice events (trips and training sessions) on the calendar
- Talk to prospective cavers in the forum (hosted by UKcaving.com)
- Put a link to www.trycaving.co.uk on your club website.
- Have any questions about this campaign – find out more on the website

University Caving Clubs need your help!!

University clubs introduce large numbers of people to caving every year because:

- The club is actively looking for new members so people feel welcomed.
- A group of novice cavers can all join together so they know they won't be the only new one.
- The trips will be suitable and equipment and training will be provided.
- There are no hoops to jump through prior to joining.

Help University clubs by:

- Sharing skills, experience and knowledge.
- Giving them opportunities to take part in projects and trips.
- Providing membership after University.
- Remove barriers to someone joining. E.g. don't expect them to attend a committee meeting at a time they can't possibly make or be proposed by a group of cavers who will never take students caving.
- Create a university liaison officer
- Invite them on trips and expeditions
- Is there a University club in your home town? Then go along and meet them. If you drive to a caving region they will always appreciate an extra car.
- Contact a university club who stays at your hut regularly and suggest you adopt the club!
- Offer a discount rate for membership for current students
- Contact CHECC (Council of Higher Education Caving clubs) www.checc.org

How does someone start caving?

- If they contacted your club and said they had "been caving once and wanted to join the club" or had "never been at all but wanted to try caving" – how would you respond?
- Do you have novice trips and weekends?
- Would it be intimidating for someone new to come to your hut for a weekend if they didn't know anyone?

Regular clubs may not be able to replicate all of the above conditions but they can probably learn something

The campaign is about removing all the obstacles to starting caving and continuing to cave, not about 'selling' caving to people and simply recruiting more cavers. We want to help people who are interested in caving. Along the way we hope the publicity generated will also benefit caving by making the general public more aware of what caving is about.

Regional News & Access

Mendip

Regional Council - COUNCIL OF SOUTHERN CAVING CLUBS

For information on CSCC, send S.A.E to: Hon. Secretary: Steve King, 33 Ottery Way, Didcot, Oxon. OX11 7UG.

E-m: secretary@csccl.org.uk

Website: www.csccl.org.uk

Gates Fitted to Box Mine

Specially-fabricated bat grilles have been installed at Box Mine SSSI, funded by English Nature, in order to help protect rare bat species that use the sites for roosting. The increasing disturbance of hibernating bats by people passing through the mine systems has necessitated the installation of the grilles. In particular, the risk of a one-off catastrophic event caused by lighting fires or spraying canned paint has increased, and this could wipe out the entire bat population.

English Nature's Conservation Officer, Katie Lloyd said "It has taken two years to come up with proposals and consult with all the known users of the mines in order to work out the best approach to installing the grilles. We are delighted that the work is finally coming to fruition and that the bats will be better protected in future."

Back Door and Jack's Workings entrances have been gated, accessible by allen key. The Lady Hamilton's entrance has

been permanently grilled for safety reasons and access is no longer possible. Keys are held by the major Mendip Clubs.

Derbyshire

Regional Council - DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

For information on DCA, send S.A.E to: Hon. Secretary, Jenny Potts, 3 Greenway, Hulland Ward, Ashbourne, Derbys. DE6 3FE. Tel: 01335-370629, E-m: dca@theDCA.org.uk Website: www.theDCA.org.uk



New Car Park for P8

After a few reminders, the Derbyshire County Council have finally completed the new Car Park for cavers visiting P8. The previous lay-by was removed after work was carried out to route the Pennine Bridle way past the location.

Dowse Hole Cave Clean up

Dowse Hole is located in the small village of Grindlow, near Great Hucklow. It's a swallet cave that takes a fair amount of water in flood conditions and is one of the feeders to the Bradwell catchment area. Conservation work was highlighted and has been required following the English Nature SSSI Cave Monitoring Scheme.

The cave has been attacked by many digging teams over the decades; teams from the British Speleological Association, Rotherham CC, Pegasus, Orpheus and TSG have all spent time digging here. Remnants from these digging activities were very evident in the cave, the generations of digging clutter included: paint tins, bullhead rails, old trucks, timber, pipes, metal, polythene, bags of cement, sheets of wood used to board the floor for dragging buckets, power cables, bang cables, ventilation pipes, digging tools, digging buckets and an old kitchen mangle used as a capstan winch.

On Saturday 17th June, a small team of EPC and TSG members joined forces to tidy up the rubbish and fill a skip that had been hired. The team involved were John Beck, Dave Cowley, Bob Dearman, Keith Joule, Wayne Sheldon and Sam Townsend. Two of the original diggers were involved so it was a trip down memory lane for them as they recognised various items from years gone by. Six hours of hard effort brought the mix of items to the surface placed in a skip. The skip was paid for

by English Nature as part of the SSSI Cave Monitoring Project that has been carried out over the last three years.

Cavers wanting access to this cave should visit Dowse Farm, Grindlow and ask for permission. Can people please park in a manner that doesn't obstruct the roads or entrances.

Wayne Sheldon, DCA

North

Regional Council - COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

For information on CNCC, send S.A.E to:

Hon. Secretary, Les Sykes, 49 Manfield, Ashurst, Skelmersdale, Lancs. WN8 6SU
Tel/Fax. 01695-728673

E-m: les@speleoadventure.wanadoo.co.uk

Bull Pot Farm

Despite a huge amount of work by the Red Rose CPC Committee, the grant application for funds to make major improvements to Bull Pot Farm has failed. The application was returned with the comment that it was the best proposal received, but unfortunately the application was deemed ineligible because the club is not 'community based'.

The club now finds itself in a catch-22 situation - a new lease with the landlord cannot be agreed without the improvements being funded, but it is difficult to finance the improvements without secure tenure of the property. Nevertheless, work continues to try to resolve this situation and secure the club's future at the farm.

The Red Rose's conservation and access work on Casterton Fell is of great importance and the loss of the farm would be of wider significance than just for the club itself - it would affect caving on Casterton in general. Any help, financial or otherwise, that can be offered towards the cause will be greatly appreciated. Donations should be made out to the Red Rose Cave and Pothole Club Appeal and sent to: The Gift Aid Co-ordinator, 7 Broadacre, Caton, Lancaster LA2 9NF.

Report; Ray Duffy

Wales

Regional Council - CAMBRIAN CAVING COUNCIL

For Information on CCC send S.A.E to:

Hon. Chairman, Sue Mabbett, 2 Garth Close, Morganstown, Cardiff, CF15 8LF.

Tel: 02920 -844558,

E-m: chair@cambriancavingcouncil.org.uk

Forest Of Dean

Regional Contact - FOREST OF DEAN CAVE CONSERVATION AND ACCESS GROUP

Hon. Secretary, John W Hine, The Grottage, 2 Cullis Lane, Mile End, Coleford, Glos, GL16 7QF. Tel: 01594 833217

E-m: mole@grottage.fsworld.co.uk

Devon

Pridhamsleigh Cavern

Cost of access to Pridhamsleigh Cavern at Buckfastleigh has risen to £1.50 per person from 1st November. The farmer is fed up with groups (including commercial outdoor organizations) visiting the cave without paying an access fee. He is planning to put in a CCTV he has got so concerned. This could put pressure on other sites that have been recovering from caver abuse. If you go there please pay and you meet people underground find out who they are and check if they have paid. We may have to resort to name and shame. Thank you.

Peter Glanvill, Chairman DCUC

www.british-caving.org.uk

www.trycaving.co.uk

www.checc.org

Log on!

Changes in Tax Rules may hit Clubs

Many Club Treasurers may not follow the budget to check for any changes that may affect their club. On 1st April 2006 the Chancellor decided to do away with the nil rate band on Corporation Tax. Previously, if an organisation made less than £10,000 trading profit, then it did not need to pay tax. This removal of the nil rate band means that all clubs will have to give possible taxation some consideration.

Inland Revenue (HM Revenue and Customs) subsequently admitted to a long standing internal practice where by clubs which are unlikely to exceed a tax liability of £100 in a year would be regarded as dormant and no tax will be owed. But before you stop reading this article, beware, you do need to comply with some conditions.

HMRC's statement (which can be found at <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/ctsa/small-tax-liabilities.htm>), requires that:

- * The annual corporation tax liability of a club is not expected to exceed £100, and
- * The club is run exclusively for the benefit of its own members, then HMRC will
- * prevent the issue of a notice to file returns and
- * treat the club as dormant, subject to review at least every 5 years.

So the line is if your club is not contacted by HMRC, do nothing if your tax liability is less than £100 in any one year. **Corporation Tax liability** arises when a club has income or chargeable gains. HMRC provide some guidance on what this means at <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/pdfs/ir46.htm>. Income can arise, for example, from: bank and building society accounts, local or central government securities, and other similar investments; trading activities and property lettings. What they do make clear is that membership subscriptions are exempt as well as other 'contributions' made by members.

Unfortunately **interest from bank and other accounts** is liable but note Building Society interest is normally paid net of tax. So it could pay you around 20% of your interest to check if your Building Society is paying interest net of tax. You can get them to pay the interest at gross rate (you will need to complete a form for your Building Society) or you could shift your club account to a bank where corporation tax is not directly deducted.

Expenses are an allowable offset to income. HMRC state that "the day-to-day running expenses of your club are usually met from members' subscriptions and these are not taken into account in working out any corporation tax liability". But they go onto to state "if your club incurs expenses in earning a profit from trading, these are usually allowed as a deduction in working out the trading profit". A simple example of publications can be given to provide some guidance on the difference between these two statements. The cost of the newsletter which is sent to members as part of their membership benefits is not an allowable expense. But if your club produces a publication which is then placed on sale, the expense of its production is allowable. But the down side is that the income from the sale of that publication is treated as a trading activity.

The term "**trading activities**" is deliberately vague so as to cover a wide range of activities which generate income. A club hut will clearly involve substantial income and expenditure and it is probable that clubs with huts should seriously consider their position. It is not possible to give detailed guidance on what can be considered as trading and what can be omitted, so the best advice is to consult with an accountant who has some expertise in dealing with charities, clubs etc. Try asking your local Voluntary Services Council if they have the names of any such persons or approach a larger club on your locality.

One way to avoid Corporation Tax is for your club to become a Community Amateur Sports Club or CASC. The CASC scheme is a half way house between being and not being a charity for recognised activities such as caving. So far only four caving clubs are listed as having taken the opportunity to register under the scheme (Craven Pothole Club, Grampian Speleological Group, Red Rose Cave and Pothole Club and Technical Speleological Group). It is notable that these four clubs also have club huts.

Being a CASC entitles the club to limited exemption from Corporation Tax on trading gains, the limit being currently set at £30,000 and also on all bank interest. Also, CASC status enables a club to claim Gift Aid on "non subscription" donations. This can be used to good effect by ensuring that all donations in kind are transformed into cash equivalents, so the club can then reclaim Gift Aid on it. An additional substantial benefit for clubs with huts is that a CASC can obtain mandatory relief on rates from their local Council.

So far no down sides have been identified with registering as a CASC. There are certain requirements which the club will have to demonstrate, perhaps the most onerous being the need for an acceptable constitu-

tion. The constitution has to be accepted by HMRC and must include a specific reference to what happens to the assets of the club if it is wound up. This requirement also has an influence on the apparent only way of de-registering. Although there is no mechanism to de-register, a club could do so by simply winding up and transferring their assets to another body. However, the requirements of the constitution mean that the new body would either have to be a CASC or a charity.

Other potential problems arise with payments made to members for services. This is permissible provided "the terms are approved by the governing body of the club without the member concerned being present and are agreed with the member on an arm's length basis".

Before applying to be a CASC, members of the club really need to be agreed that what they really want is to maintain the club for the continuing use of the community. Further details on the CASC scheme can be found at <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/casc/index.htm>. The other alternative is for a club to become a charity which appears to have more onerous conditions though the tax liability position is far more favourable (especially in relation to bequests).

Report; Bob Mehew

EVENTS DETAILS



BCRA

**Cave Science Symposium
10 Mar 2007, Huddersfield**

Presentations of short papers on Cave & Karst Science topics. Abstracts are required by 12 January 2007

The meeting will be hosted by Professor John Gunn, Director of the Limestone Research Group and joint editor of BCRA's science journal, Cave & Karst Science. Dr Trevor Faulkner will act as Lecture Secretary, to whom any further enquiries should be made (see below).

Contributions are invited on any aspect of cave or karst science or caving technology (see BCRA's cave science policy). Poster papers, displays or preliminary presentations by postgraduate students are especially welcome. Those wishing to give a presentation should contact the lecture secretary, Trevor Faulkner, giving the provisional title of your paper and the type of presentation (oral or poster). OHP, 35 mm slide, and data projection facilities will be available. Oral presentations will be 15-20 minutes in length. Poster boards are 850mm x 1200mm and you may request two panels if required.

Admission charges (payable on door) will be £5 (BCRA members £4, undergraduate students £3). This charge includes tea/coffee in

the morning and afternoon. The cost of lunch is not included but there are suitable venues within walking distance of the venue. We encourage all potential delegates and speakers to subscribe to the 'meetings' mailing list (caves.org.uk/lists/meetings.html) so that they can be kept up to date with arrangements.

Further details about the programme can be obtained from the Lecture Secretary: Dr Trevor Faulkner +44 (0)1625 531558, t.faulkner@bcra.org.uk

Hidden Earth 2007

21-23 September

Upton upon Severn, Worcestershire.

Following on from the success of this year's Annual Caving Conference, the organisers announce their location for 2007...

The annual caving conference and weekend convention. Field trips, trade and club stands, competitions, talks, discussion groups, entertainment ...

For 2007 the conference returns to Hanley Castle High School near Upton upon Severn, Worcestershire. See hidden-earth.org.uk for information; subscribe to the UK caving meetings list to receive brief notices; or visit BCA's Hidden Earth Forum to read the latest discussion or announcements.

**BCRA Cave Technology Symposium
(Provisional) April 2007, Derbyshire**

Presentations on cave surveying, electronics, computing, cave radio and radio-location.

This one-day symposium is currently being planned by members of BCRA's special interest groups, the Cave Radio & Electronics Group, and the Cave Surveying Group. A date will be announced as soon as possible. This event will be run along similar lines to the Cave Science Symposium with pre-submitted papers (theory and practice) and poster sessions. Refreshments, including a buffet lunch will be provided.

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

**36th Annual 2007 Kentucky Speleofest
May 25th-28th, (Fri-Mon)**

"Underground Heaven", Lone Star Preserve, Upton, KY-USA, Hosted by The Louisville Grotto. Pre-registration online starting Jan 1st, 2007 and ending May 10th, 2007. Contact Sue Milburn, Email: CountryCaver@yahoo.com, Tel: 270-300-8800 days or messages or Sherry Gowens Tel: 256-310-4522, Email: runnerzgrl33333@bellsouth.net
<http://www.caves.org/grotto/louisvillegrotto/>

**Baltic Speleological Congress 2007
Visby, Gotland, Sweden
13-15 August 2007
www.speleo.se/bsc**

Gotland is a karst island east of the Swedish mainland. Visby, the main city on Gotland, is an old medieval Hansa city. It has been chosen by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. The congress venue will be at Wisby Strand. Detailed information on catering facilities, meeting facilities, stand facilities, etc. can be found at: www.wisbystrand.se.
Registration forms for on-line registration will be on the website www.speleo.se/bsc by the end of 2006. Early registration fee will be offered until the end of May 2007.

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Publications

CAVE STUDIES SERIES

The following Titles are now available:

- 1 Caves and Karst of the Yorkshire Dales (1991) Tony Waltham/Martin Davies
 - * 3 Caves and Karst of the Peak District (1992) Trevor Ford/John Gunn
 - 4 An Introduction to Cave Photography (1994) Sheena Stoddard
 - 5 Introduction to British Karst Environments (1994) John Gunn
 - * 7 Caves and Karst of the Brecon Beacons National Park (1998) Mike Simms
 - 8 Walks Around the Caves and Karst of the Mendip Hills (1999) Andy Farrant
 - 9 Sediments in Caves (2001) Trevor Ford
 - 10 Dictionary of Karst & Caves (2002) David Lowe/Tony Waltham
 - 11 Cave Surveying (2002) Anthony Day (with J M Eyre, P R Deakin and D Judson)
 - 12 Underground Britain: Legal and Insurance Issues (2003) David Judson
 - 13 Exploring the Limestone Landscapes of Upper Wharfedale (2003) Phillip Murphy
 - 14 Swildon's 2 and 3 (2004) David Irwin
 - 15 Exploring the Limestone Landscapes of The Three Peaks & Malham (2005) Phillip Murphy
 - 16 Essential Sources in Cave Science: A Guide to the Literature of Cave Science (2006) Graham Proudlove (ed)
- * Numbers 2 and 6 are out of print, but have been updated by 11 and 10 respectively.

Offers and suggestions for further titles are always welcome:

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BCRA

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Contact the webmaster for details and prices:

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Publications

BCA/NCA PUBLICATIONS ON TRAINING / SAFETY, CONSERVATION, ETC.

From: BCA PUBLICATIONS, The Old Methodist Chapel, Great Hucklow, Buxton, Derbyshire. SK17 8RG. www.british-caving.org.uk

For queries, contact:- Tel. 01335-370629, E-mail: publication.sales@british-caving.org.uk

All cheques etc. should be made payable to B.C.A

For "free" items, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope as appropriate.
(C5 envelope with 1st. or 2nd. class stamp for DL or A5 items.)

- British Caving Association Handbook, 2005-2006** (£6.00 incl. p&p)
Report of Technical Advisors Seminar (40pp) (£2.00 incl. p&p)
NCA Training Committee Report
- Guidelines for University and College Caving Clubs.** (8pp) (£2.00 incl. p&p)
(The 'Guidelines' includes the leaflet **Caving Notes for Beginners** which is NOT available separately)
- NCA Cave Conservation Handbook**
The definitive Cave Conservation Publication, supported by English Nature, Countryside Council for Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage and other conservation bodies. 174 pages, fully illustrated, with sections detailing threats, initiatives, policies, legal points, etc. plus regional sections and appendices.
(Sold unbound - you provide your own file cover.) (£1 + £3.50 p&p)
(Sold complete with file cover.) (£10 + £5.50 p&p)
- Cave Conservation Policy** (32pp) (£3.00 incl. p&p)
Lost Caves of Britain (Cave conservation video) (£10 + £1 p&p)
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- Underground Britain - Legal & Insurance Issues** (2005 Edition) (£3.50 incl. p&p)
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Cave Conservation Policy - Summary (DL)
Protect Our Caves (DL)
Bats Underground - A Conservation Code (A4)
Weil's Disease leaflet (DL)
So, You Want To Go Caving (information leaflet for beginners / non-cavers) (DL)
Syllabuses for LCMLA and CIC can be obtained from BCA Training Administration (see below) or downloaded from the BCA Training website at www.british-caving.org.uk
Almost all of these publications can be bought at a special discounted price from BCA stands at caving events such as Hidden Earth, Cavers Fairs, etc.

Training publications may also be obtained direct from: BCA Training Administration, RAM Business Services, Sun Lea, Joss Lane, Sedbergh, Cumbria, LA10 5AS.
Tel/Fax: 015396-22040, E-mail: trainadmin@british-caving.org.uk

DEADLINES FOR FUNDING APPLICATIONS

Ghar Parau Expedition Grants: 31 August. Contact the Secretary, Hurst Barn, Castlemorton, Malvern, Worcs, WR13 6LF. Tel/Fax 01684- 311057. E-mail: d.judson@bcra.org.uk

BCRA Research Fund: 1 April, 1 August, 1 December. E-mail: research-fund@bcra.org.uk

Dates for your Diary

COURSES, CONFERENCES, EVENTS, ETC. 2007

MEETINGS 2007

Jan 13, (Sat) **BCA National Council Meeting**, 10:30 AM, Baptist Hall, Alvechurch, Worcs.
Jan 19, (Fri) CNCC meeting, 8:00 PM, Hellifield village institute
Feb 3, (Sat) CSCC General Meeting, 10:30 AM, Hunters Lodge, Priddy.
Feb 24, (Sat) DCA Annual General Meeting, 10:00 AM, Monyash Village Hall
Mar 10, (Sat) BCRA Cave Science Symposium, 10:00 AM, University of Huddersfield
Mar 10-11, (Sat) DCA / BCA Cavers Workshop, Upper Limits Climbing Centre, Longnor, nr Buxton
Mar 11, (Sun) Cambrian Caving Council AGM, 3:00 PM, Venue to be confirmed
Mar 17, (Sat) CNCC AGM, 10:00 AM, Hellifield village institute
Mar 24, (Sat) **BCA Annual General Meeting**, 10:30 AM, Baptist Hall, Alvechurch, Worcs.
Apr 7, (Sat) Charterhouse Caving Company Ltd AGM, 10:30 AM, Hunters Lodge, Priddy.
May 5, (Sat) CSCC Annual General Meeting, 10:30 AM, Hunters Lodge, Priddy.
Jun 15-17, (Fri-Sun) NAMHO. The Annual Mining History Conference, Morwellham Quay, Devon.
Sep 21-23, (Fri-Sun) **Hidden Earth 2007**. The National Caving Conference. Upton-upon-Severn, Worcestershire. www.hidden-earth.org.uk

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS 2007

Check for details of these and other international events on the UIS Speleo Calendar at:

<http://www.uis-speleo.org/calendar/events.html> and www.ijs-speleo.it

May 15-18, 11th International Cave Rescue Conference, Aggtelek, Hungary
May 25-28, (Fri-Mon) 36th Annual 2007 Kentucky Speleofest "Underground Heaven", Lone Star Preserve, Upton, KY-USA (**page 13**)
Aug 13-15, (Mon-Wed) Baltic Speleological Congress 2007, Visby, Gotland, Sweden (**page 13**)
Aug 23-31, **2008** (Sat) IVth European Speleological Congress, Lans-en-Vercors, Isère, France
Jul 19-26, **2009** (Sun) 15th International Congress of Speleology, Kerrville, Texas, USA.
www.ics2009.us

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