

**Minutes of the Cambrian Caving Council General Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup>**  
**Sept '06 at The Rising Sun, Moseley Green, Forest of Dean:**

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Club/Organisation Representing:</b>	<b>CCC Position:</b>
Paul Taylor	(PT) GCRG, FODCCAG, GSS	
Maurice Febry	(MF) GSS	FODCCAG rep
Ian Healey	(IH)	CCC Sec
Sue Mabbett	(SM)	CCC Chair
Adrian Fawcett	(AF) Hades	
Greg Jones	(GJ) RFDCC	
Barry Hill	(BH)	Webmaster
Andy Clark	(AC) RFDCC	
Mike McCombe	(MM)	Treasurer
Richard Hill	(RH) Gagendor	Training Officer
Dave Ludlam	(DL)	Equipment Officer
Owen Clarke	(OC)	Insurance & Legal

**1 Chairperson's Opening Remarks:**

SM thanked everyone for attending and remarked on the relatively decent turn out.

**2 Apologies for Absence:**

Elsie Little, John Hine, Robin Weare, Gary Evans, Andy Lewington, Bernie Woodley, Joe Duxbury, SWCC.

**3 & 4 Minutes of the 2006 AGM & Matters Arising:**

The minutes which were sent out apparently lacked the conservation officer's report. SM proposed the minutes as a true record and this was seconded by MM.

**5 Applications for Membership:**

None received.

**6 Officers Reports – Mins + written reports below:**

**7a Chairperson (written report below)**

As chair I do report specifically but below are my reports for my other roles on the CC committee and reports I have received.

**7h Cambrian Cave Registry**

(Report taken verbally from Gary Evans)

Gary took three days off work last week to complete data entry for the final stage of the updated / electronic version of the Cambrian Registry. He has 1 -2 days worth of work remaining.

Assuming all goes well with the transfer data the complete Cambrian Cave Registry will be available on the web within a month.

#### 8b Sports Council for Wales (SCW)

The promised Outdoor Pursuits Group (OPG) Meeting has not gone ahead. This is due to lack of any promised funding to do anything with. The OPG chair is reluctant to plan a meeting to outline future OPG plans, activities and initiatives without the necessary funding being available.

The Welsh Sports Association (WSA) held its AGM in May only six months after the last AGM, this occurred to enable the WSA to become a limited company with limited liabilities. This status was advised by SCW legal advisors.

OPG representatives did meet to discuss support of Overseas Expeditions. There were good presentations from a Para glider with plans to paraglide new routes in Pakistan and Solo Rower with plans to row across the Atlantic. Unfortunately the caving expedition was not well presented. They were unable to state who specifically was attending the expedition or who were the members of the expedition were at 'leading edge' of the sport and who would be the expert cavers at the extreme of cave exploration and discovery. They also seemed to believe they had a right to funding rather than funding being a privilege. Neither of the two factors impressed the panel. The Expedition funding is intended to support outdoor pursuit's experts at the leading edge of their sport taking part in expeditions at the leading edge and extremes of their sport.

#### 8g Pwll Ddu CMG

No meeting, no report. No known issues with access to cave.

#### 11. Cave Rescue Organisations

GE reported that he and the other Rescue Teams in Wales had no received application forms for SCW Sport Safety funding and had expected the application forms by now.

Sue Mabbett  
9<sup>th</sup> Sept 2006

#### **7b Secretary (written report below)**

### **Secretary's Report to CCC General Meeting 9<sup>th</sup> September 06:**

The issue of membership continues to be my biggest concern as Secretary of CCC. With the formation of BCA individual caving clubs no longer had to subscribe separately to a Regional Council as well as be members of NCA. Instead, by being members of the BCA all they had to do was indicate their wishes to be affiliated to one or more Regional Council and this was at no extra cost. What could be simpler - the promised 'one-stop shop'.

*CAMBRIAN CAVING COUNCIL – CYNGOR OGOTFYDD CYMREIG*  
*Affiliated to the British Caving Association*

It seemed like an easier system for both the caving club and the Secretary of the CCC. Unfortunately it has not been a success. In 2005 only 19 of the previous 48 CCC member clubs managed to affiliate. The figures I have for 2006 suggest this has dropped to 14.

Some previous member clubs have slipped entirely through the BCA net and are not members of BCA when before they had subscribed to NCA when CCC collected the subscription. This accounts for about 16 clubs. The remainder have evidently been confused by the system of affiliating to a Regional Council. 9 previous CCC clubs are not affiliated to any council. A further 4 clubs have not affiliated to CCC, perhaps thinking they could only affiliate to one Regional Council and have only chosen their local one.

I have contacted all previous CCC member clubs several times in the last two years to remind them how easy it is to affiliate to CCC at no further cost. The matter has also been raised with the BCA. I can only hope that with the appointment of a new BCA membership secretary that the situation will improve. All previous members of CCC were sent an e-mail and invited to the Sept 06 General Meeting. Unfortunately some have changed e-mail addresses and won't have received it. I hope in the future to find up-to-date e-mail contacts for these clubs.

A stressful work load at work and recently becoming a father has meant I have not had more time to devote to CCC matters. If anyone feels they can be more committed and proactive in the role of CCC Secretary, as it clearly requires, please come along to the next AGM - I will be happy to pass the baton on to you. In the meantime I will keep things ticking along and if time permits try to restore our membership to its former glory, if I can gain the assistance of the BCA in the matter.

Other things presently in hand are the application for and administration of the Sports Council for Wales (SCW) Sports Safety Grant and the SCW National Governing Body Grant. With regard to the former I will once again be inviting the three Cave Rescue Organisations in the region to submit an application for the possible £2000 available.

A reminder that my address (which has changed rather a lot of times in the last 2 years) is now:

Cherry Tree  
Beech Way  
Bream                      Tel. 01594 560583  
Gloucestershire  
GL15 6NB

Ian Healey  
Sec CCC  
08.09.06

**7c Treasurer (inc. written report):**

MM remarked that the BCA financing system was completely broken. There has been no Hub meeting and after an interim £300 no further funding has been given to CCC despite rumour of a second payment due.

Problems with the reduced CCC membership figures (see also Sec's report) have led to difficulties with our SCW grant. We have until 27 Oct to submit this year's grant application.

MM will attempt to contact previous club members. IH will pass on last contact details.

RH to attempt to work out Local Cave Leader/CIC's no's in Region by contacting Pat Ramsden and AHOEC

**CAMBRIAN CAVING COUNCIL  
TREASURER'S REPORT  
9 SEPTEMBER 2006**

Since my appointment as Treasurer at the AGM in March, there has been very little financial activity.

- Other than an "interim" payment of £300, there has been no contact from BCA. The expected "hub" meeting to agree and distribute funds to the regional caving councils has not taken place. A second payment (amount unknown!) from BCA is rumoured to be on its way.
- Accurate figures for the numbers of member clubs and instructors are a pre-requisite for Development Grant support from SCW. The second half of the 2006 grant (£300) was eventually released against estimated figures but it was made clear that we have to provide correct figures in the next application which is due for submission by 27<sup>th</sup> October. If BCA are still unable to provide this we will have to contact clubs directly to gather membership data ourselves, **as a matter of urgency**.
- Work on the 2005 SCW Safety Grant was completed and application forms for the 2006 Safety Grant passed to the Secretary for distribution to the Cave Rescue teams.
- Donations of £100 each were sent to GCRG and FoDCCAG, as agreed at the AGM.

Assuming expenses are maintained at the same reasonable level as last year our finances remain in a healthy state. However, the continuing lack of information from BCA makes planning very difficult.

Current account balance (excluding the recent SCW payment) is £885.90. I still do not have access to the Reserve Account.

Mike McCombe  
5<sup>th</sup> September 2006

**7d Conservation Officer (written report below:)**

**Cambrian Caving Council  
Notes for meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> Sept 06**

**First** .. My apologies for not being able to be present... a prior commitment

**Also** may I extend apologies from my deputy Cons Officer as he was not on the mailing list and did not know of the meeting until a couple of days ago.

**Also** SWCC send their apologies. They too did not know of the meeting or would certainly have sent a representative.

Pressure of time is on me and so please could you slot these notes into the appropriate report places.....

**BBNP (ARAG)**... no meeting yet held

**WSA/OPG**... no meeting yet held. I feel we should be agitating for this to be reinstated as there are issues that we benefit from sharing with other groups.

**National Access Forum**... I attended the Joint meeting this year in Shrewsbury and was able to share problems and strengths with reps from other recreational areas and land management fields. I am sure it will help in future access negotiations.

David Judson attended a spin off meeting on my request to meet with canoists and cyclists who were considering Access to the Coast which is very much on the agenda currently. Good relationships are confirmed.

It is Access to the Coast which currently most concerns me. The Assembly has declared a circular route for walking, cycling and horse-riding to be created close to the coast, but there is no hint yet of access to the foreshore and cliffs being included. What is not included is often found to be excluded by public perception if not by legislation.... This should “worry” us and I am taking every opportunity to stress need for access to cliffs to be made available to us.

I have every hope that S.A.Moore will be able to continue this effort by attending the next meeting in lieu of myself as I will be out of the country at the time. If he cannot I shall be seeking another volunteer who will be able to confidently uphold our interests.

**DYOCAC**...This continues to function. Research is progressing and mostly considers the hydrological patterns of the area. Digs too progress well.

The next Wardens' Meeting will take place on the evening of the 25<sup>th</sup> November after field trips to the hill above or to dig sites in the cave.

**PYO CAG**... no meeting as it has been subsumed into the Waterfalls meeting. Both Bernie and myself usually attend. No vital information to report. Meeting due soon.

**Castlemartin**... Sadly very little progress, YET!

**Vandalism...** Reports of vandalism and stal collection have filtered in. Sites in question Llygad Lluchwr, White Lady, Bridge Cave.

Green chalk, scratching, the names Andy and Ian and removal and smashing of stal and curtains are all involved. Please would everyone be vigilant and report back any suspicions or certainties. I have advised the relevant authorities and will be alerting those who may be able to assist with security.

**Ogof Capel...** securely locked, very securely at present as there is only one person with a key. It has been promised that I shall have the copies of the key for dissemination by the end of the week-end. Keys are available from myself, Bernie or Arthur Millett who has kindly agreed to hold one nearby to the site.

Thanks to Gary for speedily furnishing snippets of the Registry when needed... IT will be great to see it in the public domain. Congratulations and thanks for his efforts.

Sept 2006 .... E.Little

#### **7e Training Officer:**

RH will try to put together a weekend training programme in the future.

#### **7f Equipment Officer:**

No requests made for new placements of P-hangers.

DL has received some correspondence regarding a discrepancy in the number of P-hangers in Pwll Dyfn. Apparently the topo on the website is right while the description listing number of hangers is wrong.

The maintenance routine is completely up to date.

No new placements in the Forest. Steve Tomlin and Dave Appling are qualified checkers/installers.

No latest news on CCC being given a portable P-bolt testing machine by BCA Equipment Committee.

RH suggested 2 P-bolts for Tunnel Cave – DL to write letter to SWCC seeking permission.

The meeting also discussed the benefit of P-bolts for the traverse in Edward's Short Cut, OFD II. The general feeling of the meeting was that a couple of well placed P-bolts would be a very sensible development to aid safe passage of this popular trade route and prevent future accidents. DL to contact OFD Management Committee & CC to Robin Weare (CCC rep.) and Gary Evans (WBCRT) re. this.

#### **7g Development (L&I) Officer (inc. written report below):**

OC again reported the problem of getting BCA cards late and the subsequent difficulty in the ability to show proof of insurance.

#### **Written Report:**

On the legal side there has again been no call on my services, which is fortunate since I can only act as a conduit to BCA.

The BCA 3rd party indemnity insurance has had major problems this year, which have hopefully been overcome since the beginning of September. Lynne Bailey's illness and the inevitable delays in selecting and putting into place a replacement BCA Membership and Insurance secretary have meant that it has been impossible to correct the problems with the issues of some 2006 insurance cards.

There is still a problem remaining in that Nick Williams appears to believe that it is not essential that insurance cards are issued to cavers before the first of January. While it may be true that in areas where cave access is controlled by cavers, and access can be gained by showing that one is a member of a reputable club. This is unfortunately not true in places like the Forest of Dean where access is controlled by the Forestry Commission, Here it is necessary to show one's insurance card to gain access to controlled caves. In this situation it is essential that cavers have their cards before the first of January so that they can cave on the first of January if they so wish.

The problem is caused by the attitude of the insurers, who are used to being able to set the insurance premium 3 or 4 weeks before the start of the policy. This is OK in the normal car or house insurance situation, but creates major problems in relation to the BCA third party liability insurance.

In my experience it is unreasonable to expect any amateur organisation to carry out an action in less than 2 weeks, since the responsible individual may be absent or too busy to respond more quickly.

From the receipt of the level of the insurance premium by the BCA it will take half a week to get that information to the secretaries of clubs. It will then take 2 weeks for that information to reach the members and another 2 weeks for the members to pay their subscriptions to the club and another two weeks for the club to reply to BCA, another two weeks for BCA to issue the insurance cards in block to the club, and another 2 weeks for the club to issue the cards to its members. This gives a total of 10 and a half weeks against an available 3 or 4 weeks.

For caving clubs whose members may need to have cards on the first of January a different approach needs to be used, and was used by Lynne last year. It is essential that the members of such clubs are prepared to pay their club subscription and BCA insurance cost on the basis of an estimated insurance cost, which can be corrected later. In this case the club secretary or treasurer can send a list of members for the next year to BCA at the beginning of November. Cards can then be printed out in readiness to be sent to the club before the first of December, which allows enough time for the club to send them to individual members, even allowing for the Christmas postal delays. Such a scheme was in operation last year for those who needed it, and must be in operation again in readiness for January 2007. The extra burden of repayment of an overestimated Insurance cost is carried by the clubs with the need for January cards, without any extra burden being placed on BCA.



Owen Clarke Cambrian Caving Council Legal and Insurance Officer 5th  
Sept. 06

### 7h Cambrian Cave Registry

This is almost ready to go live on the internet. It was suggested that the launch of this website would also be a good opportunity to promote CCC and build membership up again.

See also Chair's Report (7a)

### 7i Website (inc. written report below):

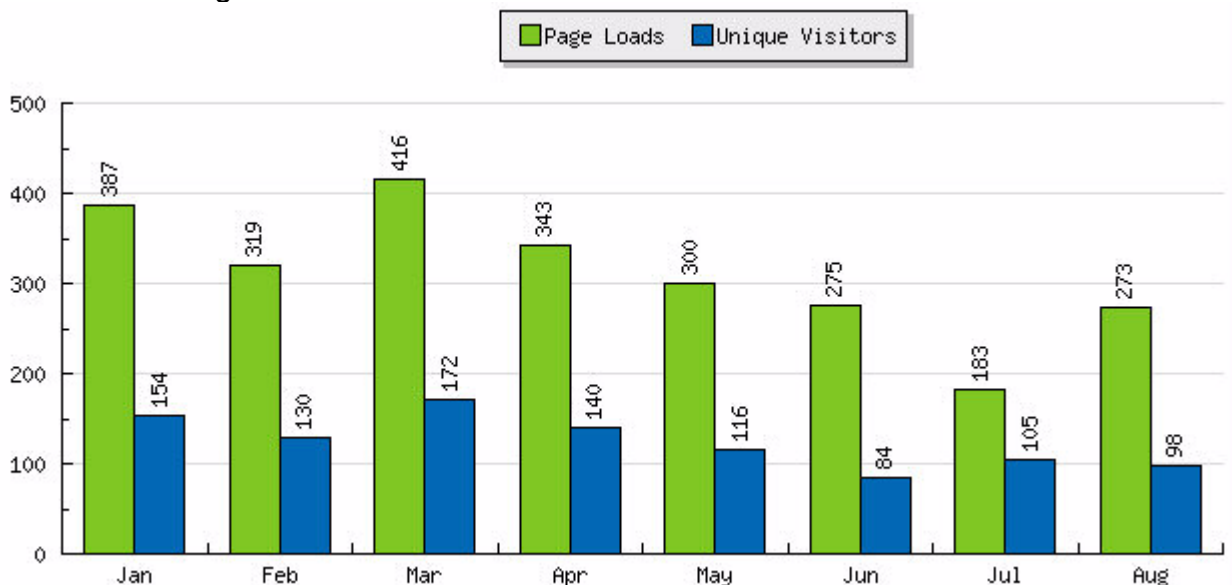
BH reported that CCC website is getting lots of hits particularly for pages to do with Registry and Topos.

## CCC Website Secretary Report 2006

The CCC Website is still receiving a lot of traffic (see statistics below), we have not experience any down time throughout the year. Updates have been very small so far this year, as I have not had many officers / public contact me with anything that needs updating. Also since we now use the interactive BCA diary I don't need to update this page regally.

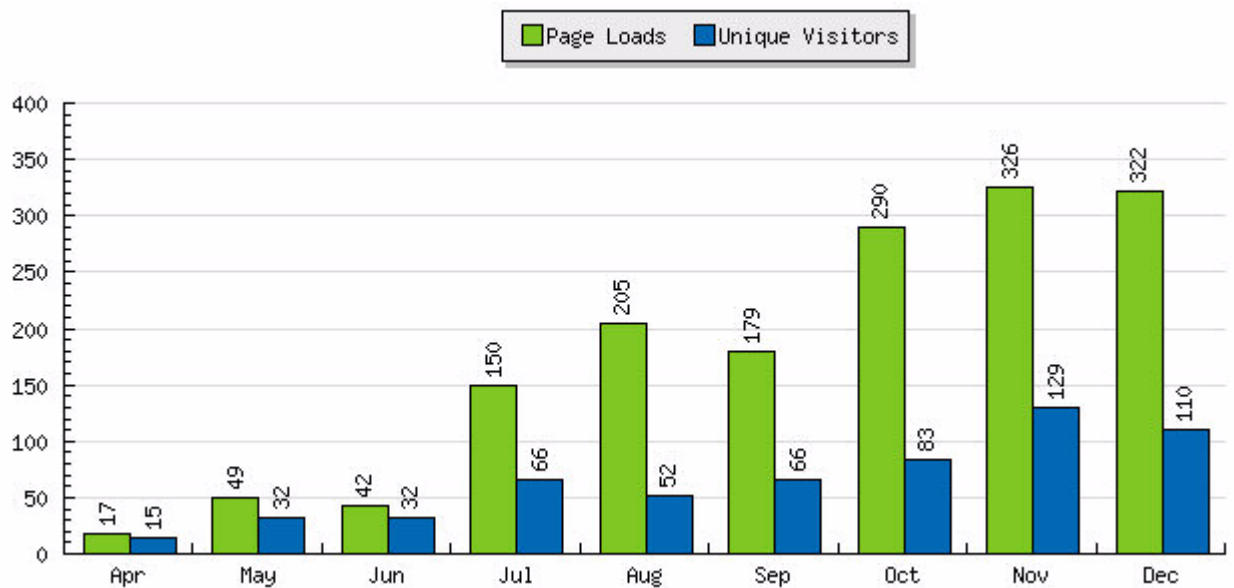
### Statistics of Cambrian Caving Council Website

Page load for first eight months of 2006.





Page load for 2005.



Barry Hill 6<sup>th</sup> September 2006

**8a OFD Management Committee:**

RW had previously reported that there was nothing to report.

**8b Sports Council for Wales & WSA/OPG: see Chair's report**

**8c BBNP ARAG:** see conservation officer report

**8d CCW Wales Access Forum:** see conservation officer report

**8e Mynydd Llangattock CMAC:**

AF reported that there had been no meetin since last year and nothing particular to report.

**8f Dan yr Ogof CAC:** see conservation officer report

**8g Pwll Ddu CMG:**

SM to get new lock that opens more easily. No plans to change combination.

**8h Porth yr Ogof Cave Advisory Group:** see conservation officer report

**8i Castlemartin Range:** see conservation officer report

**8j FODCCAG:**

MF reported that permit system with Forestry Commission is still working OK.  
Grilling work is still ongoing at a number of sites for FC. The one for the bat/otter site has been modified at cavers request and this has been approved by EN/EA.  
Underground bat monitoring programme will be continuing this winter.  
No BCA/BCT/EN meeting since last CCC meeting.  
Radon project on going.  
As of 1<sup>st</sup> Oct 06 English Nature will have name changed to Natural England. Their budget has been heavily curtailed and this has made it difficult to get any money from them for FODCCAG.

### **9 CCC Spending on Projects 2006-7:**

SM has received a letter from SWCC requesting retrospective funding for a First Aid Course. This is to be discussed by the CCC Committee.  
AF asked about funding for fixed ladders in caves and suggested maybe asking a professional co. such as DMM to manufacture. Some funding has already been allocated for such work to OC but there have been problems getting things made due to availability of equipment.  
AC requested possible funding towards replacing rescue equipment in Otter Hole. Previous gear had rusted away. AC to write to IH and request will be considered by CCC Committee.

### **10 BCA Matters:**

SM to talk to BCA about getting expenses paid to CCC officers who have not received payments due.

### **11 Cave Rescue Organisations: (see Chair's report)**

### **12 AOB**

None

### **13 Date and Location of 2006 CCC Annual General Meeting:**

Sun 11<sup>th</sup> March 2007, 3pm at The Hobby Horse Inn, Brynmawr