

Cambrian Caving Council

NEWSLETTER
DEC/JAN 2002-3

NO. 5/ 2002-3

CAVERS ONE STOP SHOP

The one-stop shop organisation is coming. The new organisation is to be called the British Caving Association (BCA). At the last NCA Council meeting I attended in mid-January there was a draft prospectus being circulated. A finalised version of this has been promised for the end of January so it can be circulated in time for the NCA and our AGM.

In all recent Cambrian Caving Council AGMs and GMs we have discussed the proposals for the “one stop shop” organisational structure. We have supported the concept in principle. We, as a regional caving council and the national organisation for Wales, now have to start considering what we have to change about our structure and our constitution. There is no immediate panic to raise amendments to our constitution as we now have the ability to amend our constitution at General Meetings and not just our AGM.

BUT there are things we must consider as a Council of Caving Clubs

- Subscription: Under the new organisational structure, Caving Clubs will pay a fee directly to BCA and a ‘tithe’ will be sent from those clubs who wish to be affiliated to Cambrian Caving Council, this obviously require changes to the finance and subscription section of our constitution.
- As a consequence of the above, new caving clubs wishing to join a caving organisation (regional or national) will join BCA via the BCA entry procedures. Then, by tithing the applicable bit of their subscription, they will automatically be members of CCC. Currently a new club joins a regional council by completing regional council entry procedures. Once a member of a regional council then they may join the national UK body, NCA with no further ‘entry procedures’ to be fulfilled. As long as the entry procedures to the BCA have similar requirements or safe guards as current regional council requirements then this should not be an issue.
- We will also need to consider individual members of CCC. The new organisation will have both Club members and Individual members. The subscription from the individual member will also have a tithe part, which the individual may assign to a regional council or special interest group. If an individual assigns their tithe to CCC then we need to consider what rights we will give to those individuals. As consequence of the two items immediately above, we will need to amend the membership section of our constitution quite significantly.

The current system of regional councils means that some clubs are members of one or more of the regional councils. Under the new system, Clubs are more likely to affiliate themselves with one regional council only. The new system will probably mean that our club membership will decrease. However, as the benefits of being a member of the new national UK organisation are realised then Caving Clubs, which are not currently members of NCA or a regional council, will join the BCA and some of those Clubs will join CCC.

The detailed prospectus will be circulated with the officer reports for the AGM so please discuss this with your club members and within your club committees. It will be cavers National UK Organisation, and as cavers, we all have responsibility to ensure we get it right. So, don’t hide your heads down a hole and ignore this as yet more caving politics. It is the national caving organisation that helps to ensure we can all continue to put our heads (and bodies) down a hole !

INSURANCE AND BCA – IMPLICATIONS ON CLUBS

The one-stop shop, BCA organisation is coming and so are changes to the insurance for individual cavers and caving clubs. Currently we are not sure if new insurance scheme will come first or together with the new British Caving Association however both individually will have an effect.

They will have effects on our Caving Clubs, their members, and possibly caving club constitutions. We have already seen the sudden jump in cavers liability insurance taken out by a lot of caving clubs for their members. Club subscription in those clubs, which take out liability insurance, is already increasing to cover the sudden jump.

The changes in insurance cost is a consequence of changes in the insurance market and being part of a more litigious society - in blunt terms we are becoming part of a society where somebody else must be to blame for every accident so we will sue somebody.

Possible and Potential Effects of New Insurance Schemes

New insurance schemes are currently being discussed with brokers but draft proposals suggest each caver will be insured as a named individual and each caver will have a card to verify they have public liability insurance. The current situation where cavers are insured as part of their club membership and therefore if you are a member of one or more club then you are “multiply insured” is to go.

As a consequence of these proposed changes to insurance Clubs will have to decide whether they continue to carry the responsibility of insuring all of their club members, which will have additional burden of having to provide names and addresses of the members they are insuring. The other option is for clubs to require their caving club members to take responsibility for their own public liability insurance; and to hold proof of that insurance to enable them to enter caves, which require each individual to have public liability insurance. Again, I suggest Caving Club committees or the membership need to start considering their options and keep an eye on the caving press for details of the new insurance schemes.

Possible and Potential Effects of Introduction of BCA

Caving clubs will be paying an annual membership fee to BCA and not to regional council(s) and the NCA. Clubs will have to decide which regional council they will tithe a portion of their subscription. Clubs will have an option to pay an additional sum to support other regional councils, BCRA or special interest groups. The draft proposal is that the Club subscription fee will provide each Club with a membership card, membership handbook, Speleoscene, caving magazine, access to caves, access to grants, voting rights and ‘professional indemnity insurance for the club committee members or club members who take action on behalf of their club e.g. provide permits or keys to caves. The club membership subscription will not include public liability insurance of individual club members (see above). More details and the effect on Caving Clubs will be in the proposal to be sent out with the AGM papers.

Again, please do not ignore this as more caving politics. If you and your club members wish to continue to put their heads and bodies down a hole then we must take notice of the changes.

Here endeth the lesson on caving organisational changes, now onto other things.

WEBSITES TO VIEW

From Glenn Jones, a Welsh man living in exile in northern England, he has sent me information on a website he has set up on the Gower Caving Society, which he was a member of as a young caver living in the Swansea area.

The link to the history of the Gower Caving Society on is Glenn's website:

<http://www.andromeda-park.demon.co.uk/andromeda-park.demon.co.uk/GCS.htm>

or you could go to:

<http://www.andromeda-park.demon.co.uk> then click on "who" and part way down that page is a link to Gower Caving Society.

Glenn is also building a site for caving in the Vercors: <http://speleo-vercors.org> and for those that saw Glenn audio visual presentation on the Vercor at the 2002 Hidden Earth conference then this will be worth viewing.

From SWCC member Peter Collins-Wells there is a good site on Ogof Ffynnon Ddu. For Virtual tours of Ogof Ffynnon Ddu go to www.ogof.net.

Please let us know of any other websites that maybe interesting to view, Club sites or others.

Useful Website Addresses

www.nca.org.uk - The National Caving Association Website with links to all regional councils and other NCA functions e.g. national cave registry.

www.caving.org.uk - National website with various links and reports.

Cambrian Caving Council AGM, 2003

An important event to attend as we have lots to discuss on the introduction British Caving Association and it's effects, see pages 1 and 2.

Date: - 9th March 2003

Time: - 3.00pm

Location: - Hobby Horse Pub, Brynmawr

The agenda, officer reports and BCA prospectus will be sent out within the next two weeks.

SWCRO AGM and EGM 2003

These will be important meetings for SWCRO and it's future. The proposal from the SWCRO committee for the EGM is " The executive committee of SWCRO recommends that SWCRO be dissolved and a means of liaison between GCRT and WBCRT is implemented in its place. The executive committee requests that the SWCRO membership gives it support in allowing the executive committee to make necessary arrangements to achieve these aims during 2003."

The meetings will be held at Copper Beech Pub, Abercraf, Swansea valley on Sunday, 23rd February 2003, starting at 10.00am. Therefore, if you are part of the cave rescue teams in South Wales your support and presence at these meetings would be appreciated.

Meetings and Events

23 rd February 2003	SWCRO AGM and EGM, Copper Beech Pub, Abercraf, Swansea.
9 th March 2003	Cambrian Caving Council AGM, Hobby Horse Pub, Brynmawr
22 nd March 2003	National Caving Association AGM, Alvechurch, West Midlands.
20 th April 2003	Columns Open Day at Ogof Ffynnon Ddu, must be there by 10.00 am to book a trip.
4 th May 2003	Columns Open Day at Ogof Ffynnon Ddu, must be there by 10.00 am to book a trip.

CAMBRIAN CAVING COUNCIL CONTACT DETAILS

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Sue Mabbett
1st February 03