

COUNCIL OF SOUTHERN CAVING CLUBS

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2022



Mud formations in Charterhouse Cave. Credit: Peter Hall

A note from the Chair

Recently my activities have been concentrated on two subjects, namely organising CSCC's representation at the Mendip Rocks festival and making arrangements for the workshop to canvas opinions on how we might better represent southern cavers who do not belong to CSCC member clubs and future access policy. These events are covered in separate articles in this newsletter.

I like to think that real progress has been made in the culture of the CSCC over the past few years, and this is a real testament to the efforts of officers and club representatives along with the small cohort of observers who attend the general meetings. I have been in the role of Chair for the last three challenging years, during which time I have gradually drifted away from being an active caver, and with my work moving from Bristol to the south coast I cannot see this changing in the foreseeable future. I feel that the CSCC Chair needs to have their finger on the pulse of the community, and this requires someone who is actively caving. As such I will not be seeking re-election at the AGM in May, which hopefully will give anyone interested in the role sufficient time to come forward. I will of course be delighted to answer any questions to any potential candidates.

Ed Waters

Upcoming General Meeting

11 November 2022 from 19:00 via Zoom

Minutes from the last meeting are available on the [CSCC website](#) along with the agenda for the upcoming meeting.

Please follow the below link to join the meeting on Zoom:

<https://bristol-ac-uk.zoom.us/j/97855991912>

Remember that only nominated club representatives may vote, but anyone can attend as an observer and join the discussion. As ever, please follow the usual online meeting etiquette and ensure your microphone is muted when you are not speaking.

J-Rat Digging Award

Saturday 19th November from 19:30hrs in the Long Room, Hunters Lodge Inn.

J-Rat Digging Award 2022

Annual competition for the longest new discovery
under Mendip or Scotland between Nov 1 2021 and 31 Oct 2022.

Presentations on the latest finds and digs that haven't gone . . . yet!

Submissions over 50m in length by 4th November to:
m.grass@btinternet.com

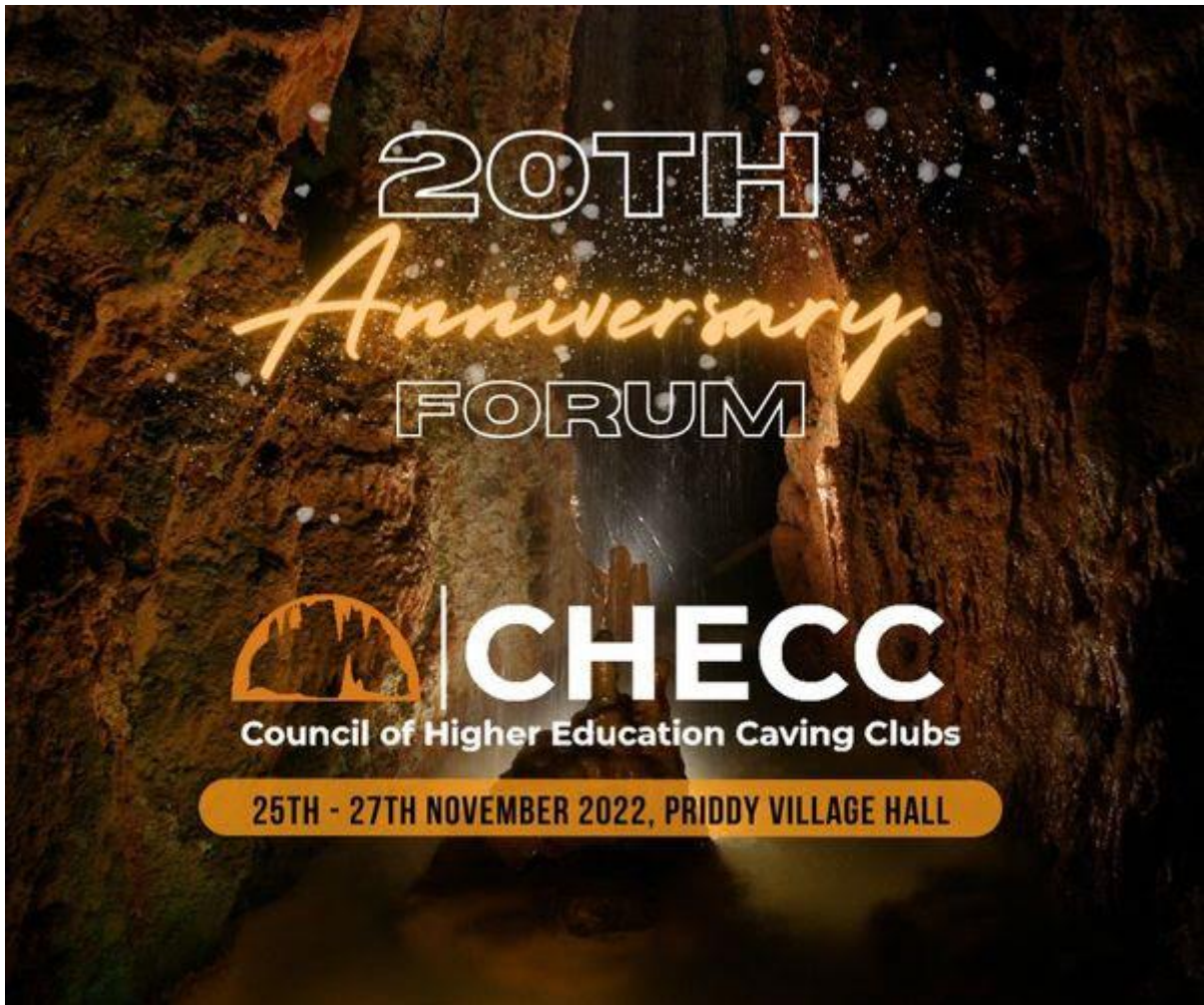
Saturday
19th
November
From
19.30hrs

Long
Room
Hunters
Lodge
Inn

13th
Year!

Keep on diggin'

CHECC Forum



Local cavers should expect a higher level of traffic underground during the CHECC Forum and clubs are requested only to issue permits via the CHECC organisers (and not to individual student clubs) to assist with the management and call-out system for the event.

CSCC Workshop Day, Saturday 12th November

Saturday 12 November 10am - 4pm

at the Mendip Caving Group's Nordrach Cottage BS40 7XW

Agenda for the day:

10:00 - 10:30 Arrive, welcome, tea and coffee.

10:30 - 12:00 Workshop 1. How should the CSCC represent those who cave in the south, but are not members of a CSCC affiliated club?

12:00 - 13:30 Lunch (provided)

13:30 - 15:30 Workshop 2. Does the CSCC need an access policy, and if so what should it include?

15:30 - 16:00 Wrap up.

The aim of this event is to garner opinions from as wide a base as possible, and I am really keen to hear the views of those who do not normally attend CSCC meetings. As such the workshop will be very informal and is intended to gather ideas that can be collated into potential proposals for a future CSCC general meeting.

This is very much your chance to shape the future on two extremely important issues. If you don't get involved don't complain later if you don't like the solution!

Given the commitment to hold the event, and in order to make arrangements for lunch, I really need people to indicate that they are attending. A notice was circulated at the start of this month, and so far I have been somewhat disappointed that only one person has messaged me to confirm that they will be attending. I am aware of a few others who have indicated interest in the event, but unless I receive sufficient firm commitments from enough people (more than 10) in the next week then the event will be cancelled.

You can let me know if you are intending to attend, or give me your thoughts on the two subjects if you are unable to attend by email at chair@csc.org.uk

Ed Waters

CavefestUK 2023

7th to 10th April



As the year draws to its close, CavefestUK are already planning the 2023 Easter holiday festival.

Returning to the Mendip Hills, it promises to be a cracking event. With cave trips to suit all abilities and styles, access to many of the locked caves with warden led trips available, onsite catering and bar, evening entertainment and so much more.

There will be workshops running and guest speakers to enlighten you with their experiences. Starless River will be joining us also to feed the caver magpies, and even the Mendip AONB will be onsite for the weekend offering activities. All this, and we've not even mentioned the competitions.

Oh yes, one more little surprise.

CavefestUK are collecting for charity this year and have chosen to donate to Mendip Cave Rescue once again; just people like us, saving people like us when it all goes wrong, and we thank them for that.

To raise funds for this CavefestUK are throwing one of their members out of an aeroplane at 15k feet. This will take place at Honiton on the 26th March at 12pm.

This really is setting up to be an experience you don't want to miss out on.

More details at www.cavefestuk.co.uk

Neil Jackson – CavefestUK

Conservation and Access News

Singing River Mine

After negotiation with the landowner and a much simplified access arrangement has been agreed. In return, a new lid needs to be manufactured and fitted before the agreement can commence. Further details will be circulated ahead of the upcoming CSCC meeting. Please avoid accessing this site in the meantime.

Swildon's Changing Barn

A professional report was commissioned to scope the work required to replace the floor in the Swildon's changing barn. As a result, the material budget has increased and BCA funding is being applied for.

Longleat

Unfortunately, no progress has been made with Longleat since the meeting in June, due to their "busy season". Progress is now expected as things quieten down over autumn and winter.

Holly Bush Shaft

CSCC member club Gloucester Speleological Society, have been in touch requesting access details for Holly Bush shaft in Shipham. It is some time since the site was last dug and unfortunately the diggers were unable to provide current contact information. Following a Land Registry search to identify the owners, CSCC will be making contact to enquire about possible access.

Waterwheel Swallet

A CSCC Key was requested and has been delivered to the Charterhouse Centre staff.

Stoke Lane Swallet

Subsequent to the theft of the new lid installed at Stoke Lane, the lid frame has now been removed and the entrance generally tidied up. It is hoped that the frame can be used at Singing River Mine.

CHECC

Arrangements have been made to accommodate the CHECC event at the end of November. This includes loaning them a large number of CSCC Keys, negotiating pre-payments for Eastwater and Swildons Hole, agreeing special permit and key arrangements with Charterhouse Caving Company, etc. Hopefully they will have an enjoyable time on Mendip.

Wayne Starsmore

BCA News

Things have been relatively quiet over the summer period. I attended the BCA Council meeting in September, and it was very nice to see an acknowledgement of all the work Dave Cooke has put in for BCA in the past. The following extract is taken from the report to the meeting from BCA Chair, Russell Myers:

BCA functions with considerable voluntary help to a large extent and I am always keen to recognise the contribution individuals have made in providing that help by recording in Council minutes, their contribution for posterity and by way of saying thank you on behalf of the Association. To this extent, I have been made aware of an omission in this record for the contribution Dave Cooke has made to BCA primarily for the IT work he provided over a number of years from setting up the original BCA systems to a number of roles he held during this period including:

- BCA Treasurer*
- IT Working Group Convenor*
- Webmaster*
- Web Services Co-ordinator*
- Cave Registry Co-ordinator*

Whilst events have occurred changing all those roles since 2020, not least of which Dave Cooke's departure as a volunteer helping to run and develop them, he did provide a level of voluntary input for which he should be recognised and that fact placed on record.

Howard Jones, currently BCA Treasurer and Insurance Manager will not be standing again at the next AGM. Howard said in his report: I retire from BCA Council in June 2023 and Josh White has agreed to take over as Insurance Manager from January 2023 following policy renewal. He will shadow me till then. In addition, BCA will need a new treasurer, so if you know anyone who can fill this vital role, please put them in contact with Howard for a discussion on what the job entails.

The BCA Conservation and Access Committee has been moribund for a while, but thanks to the efforts of Jenny Potts and Victoria Kocher from Derbyshire the working group has been re-vitalised and they have each convened a meeting. As a result, the funding claims from regions, including CSCC, have been approved, which is a good step forwards. A sub-group is also looking at the monitoring of cave SSSIs. The next meeting of the group will be in January.

I've attended all meetings of the Constitution and Operations Working group convened by Andrew McLeod, with Russell Myers and Jenny Potts. There's a big job ahead bringing the Manual of Operations up to date and in line with constitutional amendments over the past few years and also looking at how BCA might be able to work more efficiently. This work is ongoing. Jenny Potts stood for Council at the last AGM as a group representative with the aim of bringing clubs together when needed to discuss matters of mutual interest/concern and facilitating communication when needed. If any CSCC clubs have any matters they would like to discuss, please let me know and I will liaise with Jenny.

Linda Wilson

CSCC Diary

11 Nov 2022	19:00	General Meeting - Zoom
12 Nov 2022	10:00	CSCC Workshop day - MCG Cottage BS40 7XW
19 Nov 2022	19:30	J-Rat Digging Award - Hunters Lodge Inn
25-27 Nov 2022		CHECC Forum - Priddy Village Hall
01 Feb 2023	23:59	Notification to members of upcoming AGM
13 Feb 2023	10:30	General Meeting - Zoom
15 Mar 2023	23:59	Deadline for AGM nominations
17 Mar 2023	19:00	Deadline for AGM constitutional amendments
01 Apr 2023	23:59	Notification to members of AGM nominations
07-10 Apr 2023		CavefestUK Festival
12 May 2023	19:00	Annual General Meeting - Zoom