

BCRA

BRITISH CAVE RESEARCH ASSOCIATION



Newsletter 8, August 2007

Circulation list: BCA DIMs, Clubs & Associates as well as BCRA

If you are not a BCRA member and you are wondering why you are receiving this newsletter, it is because it was decided that during the 'consolidation' period of BCRA and NCA, each organisation's newsletters should be distributed as widely as possible.

Now that BCA is 'up and running' this situation need no longer continue but, for the time being, BCRA newsletters are being distributed according to the BCA newsletter circulation list.

In this newsletter, ...

- **BCRA Chairman's Report**
- **BCRA AGM 2007**
- **UK Cave Conservation Fund – Proposed New Constitution**
- **BCRA Library: Vacancies**
- **Cave Science and Technology Research Initiative (CSTRI)**
- **Notice: Cave & Karst Science Subscriptions**

BCRA Chairman's Report

Approaching my second Hidden Earth Conference and my second AGM as BCRA Chairman, I thought it about time I updated the membership. Since the formation of BCA the UK caving scene has changed significantly. Now firmly in the driving seat, BCA has fully taken over the duties of the national governing body. BCRA continues to support BCA's position as the caving "one-stop shop". Released from the wrangling of Insurance and Access issues BCRA has had the opportunity to concentrate on what it was

founded to do, i.e. to support cave science. The contemporary challenge the Association now faces is fourfold, ...

i) Support for Cave

Science: BCRA was founded to support cave science. The Association has had a number of recent successes that would indicate that we have enjoyed some success in this area, namely...

The **Cave Science and Technology Research Initiative (CSTRI)** was unveiled two years ago and has seen considerable interest. The Association is on track to meet its target of delivering £25,000 support over a five-year period. A variety of interesting projects have begun to deliver some excellent results.

Caves and Karst Science

continues to be a well-regarded medium for the promotion of excellence in cave science. With on-line publication planned for 2008, C&KS will continue to reach a world-wide audience of cave scientists.

ii) Promotion of Member-

ship: In the turmoil surrounding the formation of BCA it was inevitable that our membership level would decrease in the short term. Although it is a little early to see any real trend, Council will continue to monitor the membership numbers and to act in the best interests of the Association. It is essential that our processes are

suitably streamlined in order to deliver the best value-for-money to our membership.

This will include, for example, on-line application and payment and an on-line shop for BCRA publications and back-issues.

iii) Protection of Heritage:

BCRA manages the national caving library and makes available, at Matlock, a large quantity of library material from various caving collections. The material available in the library represents only a small part of a much larger collection that is currently in storage and therefore not readily accessible. BCRA is working to catalogue this material and is seeking methods of making this valuable resource available.

iv) Streamlining of

Processes: In order to be able to deliver the best possible service to its membership it is essential that BCRA is able to streamline its own business processes and to modernise. As Chairman I have undertaken to review how Council manages the Association on behalf of the membership.

BCRA Council Structure

Having received some feedback to some of the questions I posed the members last year I would like to propose a more

streamlined Council where the Council members will represent what may be considered to be the core functions of BCRA. I have produced the following indicative functions that may be delivered by a maximum of eight Council members as shown in the diagram below. (The current full complement is 23 although the Association currently has only 12 Council members). Please note that job titles are purely indicative at the present time. The Council job-titles will be...

Chairman

- Ensures smooth running of Council
- Liases with the trustees
- Represents the view of Council to BCA and outside agencies
- Actively pursues funding avenues
- Is a member of the grants committee

Secretary

- Normal duties of an organisation's secretary including the production of minutes and calling of meetings

Treasurer

- Normal duties of a treasurer

Grants

- Administrator of Grant applications, advising applicants on procedures and preparing paperwork for the Grants Committee

Publications

- Oversees BCRA publications
- Oversees operation of library

Publicity

- Oversees external communications

Special Interest Groups

- Responsible for representing the views of the SIGs to Council.

Science

- Oversees science policy
- Co-ordinates scientific advice on grant applications
- Member of grants committee
- Responsible for managing a Subject Matter Expert (SME) database to provide advice for cave scientists

With further input from Council members and our members I would hope to finalise this new structure in time for the 2008 AGM at which stage I hope to formalise a number of proposals designed to ratify a new streamlined Council.

The process is still in its early stages and I would urge the membership to become involved in this process. After all, Council is there to support the activities of the members.

The Way Forward, ...

In order to make progress with these initiatives I propose the following timetable.

AGM 2007. Modification of some aspects of the constitution; essentially some 'housekeeping' in order to address some issues that arose during the formation of BCA. (See AGM notice on p3).

Jan 2008. Voluntary resignation of some Council members in order to streamline to the new shape.

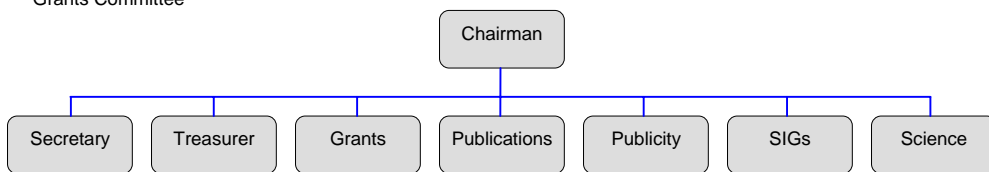
AGM 2008. Modernisation of constitution in order to properly support the streamlined Council and its business processes.

Jan 2008. New Council formed.

Membership Involvement

I would urge any BCRA member who has some time and enthusiasm to offer to get involved. As Chairman I have never ceased to be impressed by what is achieved by only a very few volunteers. The Association continues to owe these individuals our thanks.

**Steve Whitlock,
BCRA Chairman**



A suggestion for a streamlined structure for BCRA Council, comprising eight Council members with responsibilities as shown.

Speleology

Issue 10 will be published in September
If you are missing a copy of a recent issue go to
caves.org.uk / payments / speleology
to request a free copy.

Cave & Karst Science

Volume 33(2) is currently being printed
If you are missing a copy of a recent issue please
contact the BCRA membership secretary (see p12).
Please also read the important notice on page 10

BCRA Annual General Meeting 2007

Notice is hereby given that the 2007 Annual General Meeting of the British Cave Research Association will be held on **Saturday 22 September 2007** at 17:00 during the National Caving Conference at Tewksbury School, Gloucester. Members shall be required to show their membership cards or provide proof of identity if requested. For information on travelling to the venue see **hidden-earth.org.uk**.

Agenda

The Chairman shall first establish a quorum.

1. Appointment of Recorder
2. Apologies for Absence
3. To approve the Minutes of the AGM held on Saturday 23 September 2006 at Leek High School, Leek, Staffordshire
4. Matters arising from those Minutes
5. Council Report for 2006/2007, published at **bcra.org.uk**, and available on paper at the meeting
6. Income and Expenditure Accounts and Balance Sheet for 2006/2007, published at **bcra.org.uk**, and available on paper at the meeting.
7. To amend the Constitution in the way set out in the attached Schedule.
8. To discuss further amendments to the Constitution intended to be put in place at the 2008 AGM.
9. Any motions received by the Hon. Secretary by 3 September 2007.
10. Any other business accepted by the Chair.

Members should note that the Council Report for 2006/2007, and Income and Expenditure Accounts and Balance Sheet for 2006/2007 are to be published at **bcra.org.uk** and will also be available on paper at the AGM. Any member may request a paper copy to be sent by post in advance of the meeting.

Ursula Collie,
Hon Secretary BCRA

Motions to be proposed at AGM 2007

Notices for motions to be proposed at the 2007 AGM must be in the hands of the Hon. Secretary, **Ursula Collie, Greencroft, Hospital Road, Scorton, RICHMOND, DL10 6DT** in writing no later than 3 September 2007. Motions must be proposed and seconded by voting members of the Association and the notice must be signed by both.

Nominations for Officers and Members of Council for 2008

Nominations for all position on the Council for 2008 must be made in writing to the Hon. Secretary to reach her no later than 30 September 2007. All such nominations must be proposed and seconded by voting members (as defined in sub-clause E.4 of the Constitution). The nominations must be signed by the proposer and seconder and be accompanied by the nominee's signed consent. All nominations and acceptances made on behalf of Member Clubs should be signed by two officers of that Member Club.

Schedule: Proposed Amendments to Constitution

| Clause | Amendment | Effect |
|--------|---|--|
| J3 | Replace "8" by "4" | To reduce the number of Council Members needed for Council Meetings to be quorate. |
| M2 | Replace "31st March" by "31st December" | To bring the financial year of the Association into line with the calendar year. |