

COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

BRITISH CAVING ASSOCIATION

2013 Annual General Meeting Reports

This document contains the following reports;

- Agenda
- Draft Minutes
- Secretary's Report
- Conservation Officer's Report
- Access Officer's Report
- Training Officer's Report
- CNCC Technical Group Report
- Leck Fell Report
- Casterton Fell Report
- Birks Fell Report
- BCA Report

Next Meetings;

June 1st 2013 in Hellifield at 9:30

September 21st at 9.30am or 28th 2013 in Hellifield 9:30am – date dependent on confirmation of Hidden Earth date

January 11th 2014 in Hellifield 9:30

AGM

March 01st 2014 in Hellifield 9:30

COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

BRITISH CAVING ASSOCIATION

AGM

To be held at Hellifield Village hall on 02 March 2013

Starting at 10:00

AGENDA

1. Apologise for absence
2. Minutes of the last meeting
3. Matter arising from the minutes
4. Officers reports
 - Chairman's report
 - Secretary's report
 - Treasurer's report
 - Conservation officer's report
 - Access officer's report
 - Training officer's report
 - Technical group report
5. Meets secretaries reports
 - Leck Fell
 - Casterton Fell
 - Birks Fell
 - Penyghent & Fountains Fell
 - Other areas
6. BCA report
7. Constitutional amendments
8. Election of officers and committee
9. Any other business
10. Date and place of next meeting and committee meetings

(DRAFT) MINUTES OF THE CNCC AGM

HELD ON 2 March 2013 AT HELLIFIELD VILLAGE INSTITUTE

The Meeting commenced at 10.00.

PRESENT: G. Jones (Treasurer), L Sykes (Secretary (EUG.)), B. Bond (BCC), R. Holmes (Chairman), J. Sloane (LUG), S. Lieberman (RRCP), A. Hinde (GC/NE), M. Hughes (BPC), P.Halliwell (CPC), R.Halliwell (CPC), I. Lloyd (NSG), T. Brown (NB), , Harvey Lomas (YRC), Alan Speight (YSS) C Jones (LUC), P Monk (NB - minutes), G Douthwaite (York CC), M Ewles (York CC),D Leonard ULSA, J. Latimer (Earby PC),

1. APOLOGIES:

Ray Duffy (RRCP), Kay Easton Minutes Secretary, Andy Whitney, Pete Allwright (DHSS),Mike Clayton, Victor Wain

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (2012 AGM):

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MINUTES:

Tony Brown offered to act as the correspondent/ collator for clubs affiliated to CNCC and pass on news for inclusion in the BCA Newsletter. The appearance of this newsletter has been erratic of late.

4. CHAIRPERSONS REPORT:

A verbal report was given to the meeting

SECRETARYS REPORT:

Written report appended to these minutes. Accepted by the meeting.

TREASURERS REPORT:

A vote of thanks was recorded for Pat and Ric Halliwell for scrutinising the Treasurer's Report. The report was accepted by the meeting. Alan Speight queried the £100 per year paid for access to Boreham Cave. Glenn said this should be refunded by BCA. It covers three diving trips per year.

CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT:

Written report appended to these minutes and accepted by meeting.

Queries were raised about the conservation work carried out at Victoria Cave following some adverse comments raised on the UK Caving website. Andrew H. spent some time outlining the consultation process that took place before work went ahead on this National

Monument. The work done by the volunteers organised by Kay Easton and Andrew was exemplary and they decommissioned the existing footpath which lead to sensitive areas of the cave and built a new footpath routing traffic away from these areas.

The erection of the current barriers was organised by Robert White of the National Park Authority. There have been comments about their suitability and effectiveness. Tony Brown raised issues about more serious damage being done by burrowing rabbits. Andrew said this had been raised before and the Park authorities have been asked to present a plan for dealing with this problem. Tony Brown offered to monitor the damage being done by the rabbits which is considerable.

The unfinished work at Tip Wood in the Forest of Bowland Area was briefly discussed. Les agreed to give the estate office a call to see if we can get permission to remove the remaining items on the surface.

A further discussion took place about the work done by Andrew's Conservation volunteers. Glenn was keen to see that this work was recorded in full for the caving fraternity to know what was being achieved. Tony Brown mentioned that he was planning an article for Speleology which would summarise all of the projects undertaken up to date. Pete Monk also suggested that all of the projects could be recorded on the CNCC website. It was agreed that this would be a good idea.

A short discussion took place regarding the dumping of animal carcasses in shakeholes. Andrew felt that the current economic climate was encouraging some farmers to take short cuts and dispose of dead animals illegally. He mentioned that progress has been made in developing a non-attributable complaints procedure to warn farmers that this practice is completely unacceptable.

Andrew was thanked for his report. His written report has been appended to these minutes.

ACCESS OFFICERS REPORT:

Report accepted by the meeting and appended to these minutes.

TRAINING OFFICERS REPORT:

Report accepted by the meeting and appended to these minutes.

The cave surveying course planned for January had to be cancelled. It is hoped that money will be forthcoming from BCA Training Committee to fund another course later in the year.

CNCC did fund a very successful first aid course on the 23rd January for all the cave conservation volunteers. The course was tailor made for emergencies underground. Further courses on risk assessment are planned for later in the year.

TECHNICAL GROUP:

Written report appended to these minutes.

Alan Speight proposed a vote of thanks for the very comprehensive and informative

technical report.

5. MEETS SECRETARYS REPORTS:

Leck Fell:

Written report appended to these minutes. Accepted by the meeting.

A discussion took place about recent digging activity on Leck Fell. It appears that two surface digs took place last year apparently without permission from the estate office. Although this hasn't caused a problem Andrew H. repeated that he can easily negotiate permission for any clubs wishing to dig and thereby keep the landowners content.

It was agreed that Andrew H. might like to liaise with the Estate Manager, Charles Lang to see if he is happy to deposit some limestone chippings by the new cattle grid. This would avoid the grass verge being destroyed.

Casterton Fell:

Written report appended to these minutes. Accepted by the meeting

Birks Fell:

Written report appended to these minutes. Accepted by the meeting

Penyghent and Fountains Fell:

A verbal report was given to the meeting

Bowland

A verbal report was given to the meeting.

Other Areas:

G. Douthwaite, York C.C. reported that the access arrangements for Excalibur were working well and there were no issues to report.

Andrew Hinde reported that two years of delicate negotiations with quarry owners Lafarge regarding access to Fairy Holes in Weardale have finally come to fruition and permits are now being offered. There will be a limited number of trips per year (12) with a maximum of three cars allowed to park at the quarry entrance. The cave is heavily gated and a key system is in operation. The first permit is for 6th April and it was agreed that Andrew would select a team to photograph and assess the scientific aspects of the cave. Ric Halliwell agreed to manage the access arrangements.

Manchester Hole: Graham Mollard is currently liaising with Yorkshire Water to get some agreement on letting cavers know when the periodic release of water takes place to avoid any possible accidents.

9. BCA REPORTS:

Glenn expressed his continuing concern that BCA Council still have refused to address the continuing concerns of the CNCC and DCA over the admitted deception by the E&T Convenor. There was a general feeling in the meeting that CNCC should bring closure to the dispute and should do so at the next BCA AGM in July via a paper or proposal putting CNCC concerns on record. CNCC reps were invited to put forward suggested means of closure to Les/Glenn before the next CNCC committee meeting on the 1st June. These suggestions could then either be shaped up into a proposal to be put to a vote or Les/Glenn could put forward a proposal for adoption.

Tony Brown agreed to act as an intermediary to provide access related material to BCA newsletter editor proactively rather than anticipating deadlines. CNCC representatives to email Tony Brown with information as it arises. abrown.boggarts@gmail.com

10. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE:

All committee members re-elected.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Les Sykes proposed that all committee meetings and the AGM should be moved to Saturday mornings with a 9.30am start. This motion was carried.

It was proposed that all CNCC records and reports should be put on Cloud storage to provide a more secure method of preserving these for posterity. Gary Douthwaite who is currently re-designing the CNCC website agreed that he would facilitate this. The records would be stored on UK servers and a limited number of CNCC members would have training and permissions to amend and update records. A notional sum of £50.00 was put aside to purchase the domain name and any other costs in setting up the new website. The motion was carried.

The 2016 International Caving Symposium is being held in the Yorkshire Dales. It was agreed that Ian Lloyd would be our representative in any future planning.

Andrew Hinde proposed that the CNCC should be made into a legal entity so that any possible litigation would not be directed at an individual but at the organisation itself. Some caving clubs ie. Craven and Bradford have already gone down this road. Les agreed to look into this before the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 12.45

12. DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETINGS:

Committee meetings:

June 1st 2013 in Hellifield at 9:30

September 21st at 9.30am or 28th 201 in Hellifield 9:30am

– date dependent on confirmation of Hidden Earth date

January 11th 2014 in Hellifield 9:30

AGM

March 01st 2014 in Hellifield 9:30

REPORTS

Secretary's report

The item below (*italics*) is taken from the BCA secretaries report. It is included in this report because after discussion we decided the matter was closed.

Item 7 from BCA reports: Both clubs co-operated fully in the investigation, apologised, assured us it will not happen again and removed the offending trip reports from their websites. Full details of their responses are included in Appendix 1. We need to decide today how we should react in accordance with BCA's disciplinary Procedure.

I have discussed this item with CNCC Chairman who agrees that as far as CNCC are concerned the matter is closed as was stated to the BCA secretary in October 2012.

The past year has been an exceptionally busy year for the roles of secretary and Access Officer. Some weeks have been completely consumed with CNCC related work and problems with the bulk of November, December and January being devoted to the access issues on Leck and Casterton Fells.

Les Sykes

CNCC secretary, CNCC Training Officer, CNCC Access Officer

Conservation Officer Report

March 2013

Since the last report in September the CNCC cave conservation volunteers have completed the stabilisation of the entrance to Brown Hill Pot – Kingsdale. This was a major undertaking which ran to 5 days work in mid winter conditions. This was, I believe, the first time an original degraded steel drum (mid 80s) has been removed and replaced with a 600mm twin wall plastic pipe. The project was every bit as difficult as sinking a new shaft. The same principals of scaffold frame and wooden shoring were adopted to protect the workforce and allow the introduction of a 3m length of TW Pipe. The experienced crew managed to withdraw most of the scaff and shoring during the back filling phase. This is now available for similar projects elsewhere. We are indebted to all those who volunteered under some gruelling conditions, and Ged Benn in particular for acting as project manager and gang master. The volunteers and I would also like to acknowledge the essential administrative work done by Kay Easton (as well as her on site contribution).

Ten of the conservation vols have now completed a specially procured Outdoor First Aid training course. This was aimed at situations where longer than normal casualty care would be required with limited resources, both above and below ground.

The work of the volunteers has been written up for articles in Descent and Speleology by the vols themselves. It is vital that the wider caving community understands who, why and how this work is undertaken on their behalf.

Projects that remain outstanding include the cleaning and re taping of Curry Inlet and clearing the site at Whitewell – Bowland.

Public funding from Natural England for cave SSSI projects has been applied for. In the current economic climate and the ongoing tri annual review of NE it will be difficult to guarantee any funding in the immediate future.

Andrew Hinde
15/2/2013

Access Officer's report Leck and Casterton Fells

Notes from the meeting with the land agents for Leck Fell and Casterton Fell, regarding the unauthorised use of their land for commercial gain 19/01/2013.

There is a new cattle grid being installed at the Fell gate on Leck Fell, CNCC has agreed to provide 2-3 tonne of limestone chippings to improve the parking for cavers when the installation is complete.

BCA member clubs are reminded that permits MUST be obtained for the private land where access agreements are in place. Failure to comply with the access requirements will eventually lead to possible loss of access to the land. Unauthorised access also makes negotiating the renewal of the agreements more complex. It is worth noting that the landholders and their agents do look at web sites, read Descent and other cave related material, they have a very good understanding of what is happening on their land. We all have a responsibility to gain the necessary permissions and respect the SSSI status of the caves we are exploring.

Over the coming months the access pages on the web site will also be changing and the access information will be in a downloadable pdf. file format for each area with the more popular caves have entrance photos and a more defined approach description.

At the meeting the landowner's agents issued a statement on behalf of the landowners.

Statement issued by the landowner's agents for The Whelprigg Estate and the Kay-Shuttleworth Estate on 10 January 2013

This statement concerns the use of the Leck Beck head SSSI which includes Leck Fell and Casterton Fell and the cave systems thereon.

The landowners of Leck Fell and Casterton Fell are increasingly concerned that the existing access agreement between them and the Council of Northern Caving Clubs (CNCC) and the implication of the SSSI status are being abused and in some instances for commercial gain by parties with no ownership interests or agreements.

The parties above are establishing a protocol forbidding the use of their lands for commercial exploitation.

All existing agreements for recreational caving are not affected by this statement which will take immediate effect 10 January 2013. For further information contact the CNCC access Officer L. Sykes secretary@cncc.org or les@speleoadventure.wanadoo.co.uk END OF STATEMENT

After the incident at Manchester Hole when it flooded due to North Yorkshire water undertaking scouring operations at the reservoir without prior notice, Graham Mollard has attended more meetings and still trying to resolve the problems that exist.

Les Sykes
CNCC secretary, CNCC Training Officer, CNCC Access Officer

Training Officers report

No BCA training committee report received from Graham Mollard.

The CNCC will throughout 2013 be running a series of courses for the CNCC volunteers; these courses will enhance their capability and improve the safe systems of work.

In January 2013 the CNCC volunteers attended a First Aid Course which was funded by CNCC.

Les Sykes
CNCC secretary, CNCC Training Officer, CNCC Access Officer

CNCC Technical Group

Since the last meeting the weather has played an important factor with very little progress on anything. We are anticipating testing a batch of maillons in the next couple of months; this follows a failure of a maillon during the testing of anchors. In October 2012 we tested to destruction all the anchors in the Yordas test bed the report is appended to this report (***see CNCC web site***). After removing the anchors and all debris from the test site the holes were thoroughly cleaned and a new test bed was installed. The report of the placements is appended to this report (***see CNCC web site***).

Rigging guides

During the summer of 2013 Glenn and myself will be publishing the book Northern Caving this will be one publication that will replace the two rigging guides. Northern Caving is the culmination of 23 years working on the anchor replacement program and will also cover SRT equipment and techniques, rigging techniques and rescue and a number of other caver related training information. The publication is primarily an attempt for us to try and recoup some of the personal finance that we have put into the scheme over the 23 years; CNCC will receive a percentage of the ongoing profits from the publication.

Les Sykes
CNCC secretary, CNCC Training Officer, CNCC Access Officer

Report to CNCC AGM on 2nd March 2013 – Leck Fell Access Agreement.

During the last twelve months 725 permits have been issued to a total of 56 clubs. The figures for previous years were as follows;

YEAR	NUMBER OF PERMITS	NUMBER OF CLUBS
03/04	197	63
04/05	191	58
05/06	181	48
06/07	187	41
07/08	354	46
08/09	367	51
09/10	363	40
10/11	317	47
11/12	465	48
12/13	725	56

Since the last AGM demand for access has grown significantly. It is estimated that about two thirds or thereabouts of the increase has resulted from regular access for digging purposes and the remainder has been due to requests for sporting trips, both during the week and more especially at weekends. It has been noticeable this year that clubs from further afield have been making more regular requests for permits. It has been quite a bit harder to provide clubs with first choice of dates for their trips. While no club has been turned away without some access, difficulties were encountered where one or two clubs wanted specific dates.

In relation to the remainder of 2013 March is now more or less fully booked at weekends. After the closed season availability is reasonable although during the first two weekends of July there is now only one permit remaining for each of the days, as is the case also for Sat 3rd August. So far for 13/14, 27 member clubs have now been issued with permits for the coming year which is 8 more than for the same time last year going forward. There have been a couple of complaints about unauthorised access. One in particular involved a private school and resulted in staff being reprimanded/disciplined by the school in question.

Clubs are asked to emphasise to their members that for all caving visits to Leck Fell, for whatever reason, a permit must be obtained. The access agreement issued is clear and cites no exceptions. Transgressions here will only adversely affect the good working relationships that have been built up with the landowner and his agents, in relation to our activities on the fell.

Jim Sloane (CNCC Meets Secretary – Leck Fell)

Casterton Fell Report for 2012

A total of 47 clubs were issued with permits for the whole of 2012- (9 more than in 2011) this added up to 209 permits issued in total, a increase from the 179 permits issued for the whole of 2011 (105 of these in the last 3 months of the year) and came after the landowners agent complained about cavers using the fell without permits.

We still have quite a number of clubs who are not BCA members making requests but these are refused and passed on for Glenn Jones to deal with.

Permits can now be requested and issued by email make everyone's life much easier, They can also be turned around in less than a week (provided I am not on holiday) and the CNCC web site has been altered to reflect this. A growing problem is Clubs sending emails very late Friday night asking for permits the following day especially if it has been very wet that week.

Les Sykes, has and is dealing with problems – especially with reports of commercial caving and no doubt will update us with progress on that matter
There are plenty of permits available but some weekends are full booked up already.

Alan Speight (CNCC Meets Sec – Casterton Fell)

Council of Northern Caving Clubs Meets Secretary's report for Birks Fell, Robinsons Pot and Mongo Gill

General

This is my 24th year as access controller and I know of no problems regarding access to Birks Fell, Robinsons Pot or Mongo Gill.

Birks Fell

We now have a more formal agreement drawn up in a similar way to Robinsons Pot although the conditions of access remain the same as before. I have received 8 requests for permits for 2013, one more than 2012 at this time.

1977 22	1978 35	1979 40	1980 41	1981 50
1982 47	1983 52	1984 63	1985 46	1986 55
1987 44	1988 28	1989 32	1990 25	1991 41
1992 49	1993 35	1994 41	1995 39	1996 34
1997 35	1998 28	1999 32	2000 15	2001 0
2002 21	2003 27	2004 10	2005 12	2006 15
2007 17	2008 15	2009 10	2010 13	2011 12
2012 10				

Average number of permits per year for the last 10 years is 14 (15)

Robinson's Pot

The access agreement allows a maximum of 5 permits per year on the second Saturday of each month, June to October inclusive. Four requests for permits have been received, 2 from Clubs who have never had a permit and two from clubs who have previously held a permit. I would ask that we come up with a fifth name (or ballot for 5th place) from the floor.

Mongo Gill

The new access agreement with no closed season but no access on Bank Holiday Weekends appears to be causing no problems. There was one problem with a solo caver turned up with a photocopy of the permit and was refused permission to descend. Since then the owner has requested that the agreement be changed to specify no solo caving trips and I have agreed to this. I have issued 5(4) permits for 2013 so far. No permits have been requested for Great Expectations, nor were any issued last year. The connection with Stump Cross stream way remains well and truly blocked by a major collapse.

1981 28	1982 39	1983 39	1984 44	1985 24
1986 28	1987 29	1988 36	1989 38	1990 38
1991 36	1992 43	1993 34	1994 36	1995 20
1996 26	1997 0	1998 0	1999 22	2000 22
2001 5	2002 5	2003 3	2004 9	2005 6
2006 10	2007 6	2008 8	2009 10	2010 3
2011 8	2012 4			

Average number of permits per year for the last 10 years is 7(7)

Ric Halliwell
13 February 2013

BCA Report to 2013 CNCC AGM Discussion Document

Background;

It is now 12 months since BCA's E&T Convenor admitted deceiving CNCC and DCA. Whilst the details have been previously documented and circulated to the CNCC Committee, the key facts are as follows:

- **October 8th 2011 E&T meeting;** an agreement was reached between CSCC, CNCC and DCA over accepting the IPTD
- **March 17th 2012 E&T meeting;** the E&T Convenor admitted to agreeing something with CSCC that he did not make clear to DCA and CNCC. That admission was witnessed by all who attended the meeting and was recorded as such in the minutes of the meeting (although those minutes are not yet on the BCA web site....)
- **March 24th 2012;** the BCA National Council meeting were informed of the deceit and were not interested in the fact that one of their officers had deceived two Regional Councils
- **October 2nd 2012;** BCA's Chairman (Andy Eavis) met with DCA and CNCC and agreed to look into the dispute and prepare a full report
- **January 12th 2013 BCA Council Meeting;** BCA's Chairman reports simply that there was ***categorically no deceit.***

The last statement from BCA's Chairman is extraordinary as the minutes of the March 17th 2012 E&T meeting record the admission of the deceit.

It would seem from the above, that BCA National Council have no intention of taking CNCC's (and DCA's) grievance seriously, even though CNCC is a Constituent Body of BCA and CNCC supported the creation of BCA and the concept of the "one stop shop" for membership to BCA by changing it's (CNCC's) constitution to allow BCA member clubs to be considered as CNCC Associate Member clubs in order that permits could be provided to those BCA clubs. Whilst this dispute is not about money, it is worth noting that CNCC's relationship (with BCA) has resulted in a negative financial impact on CNCC in as much as CNCC receives on average £550.00 per year grant funding (from BCA), whereas when CNCC had Associate Member clubs, the incoming would have been closer to £1,000.00 per year.

During this time, there has been no CNCC representation on BCA National Council. (Given that most BCA Officer reports are not circulated {if at all} in a timely manner prior to BCA

meetings, there is no opportunity to discuss and consider the business of the meeting beforehand in order to make a useful contribution – so no real problem in not having representation).

Since 12 months have elapsed and there has been absolutely no progress in this dispute, it is suggested that during the next 6 months CNCC discuss how it sees its relationship with BCA, with an aim (if no resolution to the dispute has been reached in that time) to presenting a proposal to the CNCC 2014 AGM to re-negotiate the CNCC membership of BCA.

Glenn Jones