

# **COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS**

## **British Caving Association**

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### **Officers and Meet's Secretary Reports for 5<sup>th</sup> March 2016 Annual General Meeting**

#### **Chairman's Report**

The previous year has been very productive for CNCC, our officers and council have been very busy working at various projects.

Access to more caves is now easier than ever due to the hard work of those involved in not very easy negotiations.

Conservation work continues at a good pace with funding being obtained through the auspices of Natural England.

The CNCC newsletter is now a feature of northern caving with regular editions.

Training has continued to be offered and taken up.

All in all a very good year, I have not named individual as I am sure to miss some out and that wouldn't be fair, I will leave it to the officers and council members concerned to give their reports without me stealing their thunder.

I must however give a big thank you to all those involved and look forward to another productive year, keep up the good work. Also thanks to everyone attending this meeting and giving up valuable caving time, remember this is your council not ours and if you want to get involved you will be welcomed with open arms.

**Roy Holmes – CNCC Chairman**

## Secretary's Report

On starting to write this AGM report I found myself floundering, wondering what I should write. It seems to have been a busy year, but what specifically has been achieved? I found it useful to look back over the previous Committee meeting and AGM minutes to remind myself.

Two years ago we successfully established a new, easier, and more greatly encompassing access agreement for Ingleborough Estate as well as bringing several of the caves on Penyghent and on Fountains Fell out of the permit system altogether, thanks to work by Johnny Latimer and Alan Speight. This year, Johnny and Ric Halliwell have managed to improve access to Birks Fell and Robinson's Pot (and hopefully draws attention to these two excellent caves in the process).

It would be very easy to conclude, on face value, that this year has been less productive regarding access improvements; however, this would be a misconception.

The groundwork for further improvements to access (including to some of the larger areas such as Leck and Casterton Fells) has been performed over the last year. Our constitution has been amended to remove restrictions to issuing permits to named individual cavers. The CNCC Committee has voted to endorse the BCA's CRow campaign, which ensures our position on this matter is in no doubt. We have also co-opted Tim Allen as an Access Representative to work with our Access Officer to help negotiate the required changes. Furthermore, the CNCC now has contacts with other like-minded organisations, including local access forums, which should help us in our goal of improving access while maintaining good landowner relations.

A quick read of Johnny's report emphasises the progress that is being made in all areas.

This year sees our constitution once again up for discussion and revision. I suspect you may all be quite fed up of reading it by now (I think I could probably recite it without notes, which is quite sad). The proposed changes this year are discussed in the agenda; however, they broadly aim to ensure that the CNCC is able to better represent an even greater number of cavers, and not just those who are active within a traditional club structure.

Conservation remains a massive role for us, and last year we welcomed Kay as our Conservation Officer (after serving as Assistant Conservation Officer in previous years). Again, the opportunities that we are now presented with for conservation following the recent Heritage Lottery Fund award are excellent and this puts us in a strong position for the coming four years. The ongoing work of Andrew Hinde from Natural England should definitely also be recognised here.

Bolting has of course always been a big part of the CNCC, and this year we have endorsed the new IC anchors as the preferred choice of anchor for future bolting projects. The IC anchor team have been prolific in their work and several caves have already benefitted from new resin anchors. Although the IC anchor team are independent from the CNCC, there is a good working relationship here.

The new-style CNCC newsletter is proving popular, and the third in this roughly six-monthly publication has just been released. Anyone with any suggested content is strongly encouraged to get

in touch. We issue the newsletter online, and we also have approximately 80x hard copies printed. Copies are posted to all club huts across the UK. Having visited several huts in Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Wales and Mendip over the last it has been good to see this newsletter on notice boards for their members and visiting clubs to read. Several copies also go to Bernies and Inglesport, and to other individuals who request a hard copy. The total cost of printing and posting is typically £50-60 per edition, meaning an annual cost of approximately £100-120 for two editions. This seems like a very small price to pay to ensure the work of the CNCC and our representatives and member clubs are publicised and promoted and that people are kept informed.

This year we have applications for full membership from two clubs; and an application to join the Committee from one of the large northern clubs who have not served on the CNCC Committee for quite a while. Attendance at meetings is generally up too. However, it is disappointing that for the 14 places available on the Committee; we have only 13 applications (as two of our long-serving Committee members are stepping down). This means we will be operating this year with a slightly reduced size Committee. All full member clubs please take note for next year!

In summary, a lot has changed; we have new and enthusiastic people in the various roles; we have considerable momentum towards achieving massive improvements to access and conservation. We have engagement with various other bodies, including the BCA and its various sub committees, local access groups, the National Park, and other groups of cavers outside of the traditional club structure. Also, importantly, I believe the caving community now sees that the CNCC is not an organisation with the aim of restricting access to caves (it never was but this is a view I have heard expressed a number of times). Instead I hope the caving community can see the value the CNCC brings to northern caving, and feel inspired to get more involved.

I am aware of a few agenda items for the new Committee to address including possible connections for cave archaeology and discussions about how the CNCC can help to maintain the many fixed aids throughout Ease Gill Caverns and possibly beyond, which present more opportunity for us to work for the greater good of northern caving in even more areas than ever before.

Despite my tendency to write very long reports (is anyone actually still reading this?), I would like to emphasise that my role throughout this has been mostly secretarial, facilitative and communicative. The real hands-on work is done by our other Officers, representatives, meets secs, and conservation volunteers, as well as our Committee and members, who give up their time to make these things actually happen for real (and not just on paper) and that opportunities are not missed.

There is still a lot more to do; we are still far from our desirable end point (something that will never exist in many of the areas) but things seem to be on the right tracks.

**Matt Ewles – CNCC Secretary**

**COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS**  
**AGM – March 5th 2016**

**TREASURERS REPORT**

Following the agreement by the CNCC committee that the accounts should be verified by a volunteer CNCC member club, rather than pay the increasingly expensive costs of an accountant, Craven PC have once again volunteered to verify the 2015 accounts for the 2016 AGM. The attached letter from Pat and Ric Halliwell verifies this report as accurate. The process is a little different from that of an auditors report, in that it verifies, by inspection of bank statements, invoices, receipts and working spreadsheet that this report for the 2015 financial year is correct.

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE**

**INCOME**

<b>Balance c/f from 2014</b>	<b>£3091.40</b>
Rigging Guides	£1,308.80
2013 BCA Paperless Surveying Course	£330.00*
2014 BCA Annual Funding Grant	£390.19**
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£2028.99</b>

**EXPENSES**

Meetings (Room Hire)	£120.00
Secretarial, postage & 'phone calls	£156.16
A&C	£45.08
A&C Providence Pot (Materials)	£271.88
A&C Providence Pot (Accommodation)	£150.00
A&C Providence Pot (Travel)	£208.50
A&C Keld Head Wall	£380.00
A&C Yordas	£43.00
Training (Winching Course)	£325.00
Easegill Re-rigging Gear	£349.50
John Greenhall Accountants	£246.00
HMRC Corporation Tax	£65.20
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>£2360.32</b>

\*Payment by BCA following claim of £660 submitted (received in January 2015)

\*\*Claim to BCA covering 2014 (received December 2015)

<b>Balance c/f to 2016</b>	<b>£2,760.07</b>
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**CNCC BUSINESS CURRENT (COMMUNITY) ACCOUNT:**

Balance 1st January 2015 **£3,091.40**

Interest received: £0

Balance 30th December 2015 **£2,760.07**

**CNCC BUSINESS SAVINGS ACCOUNT**

Balance 31st December 2014 **£18,882.02**

Interest received: £9.41

Balance 30th December 2015 **£18,891.43**

**ASSETS:** Makita DPC6430 12" cutter, value new (2013) £576.00

I am prepared to stand as Treasurer for the next 12 months.

Pete Bann

Treasurer CNCC

## Craven Pothole Club

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16 February 2016

### CNCC Accounts 2014-15

Dear Pete

We have checked the bank statements, claims and receipts, summaries of cheques issued and payments received and after raising a small number of minor queries, which you have resolved entirely to our satisfaction, we are happy to state that all monies expended have been accurately accounted for. Similarly all income has been correctly recorded and the bank statements are in full agreement with the records of all transaction.

With all best wishes

R Halliwell



Dr RA Halliwell, Committee Member Craven Pothole Club  
Mrs PC Halliwell, Hon Librarian Craven Pothole Club

## BCA Grant to Regional Councils: CNCC Claim 2015

The CNCC Treasurer will be submitting a claim to BCA for a total of **£973.12** comprised of the following budget heads:

Sub Budget Head - **Meetings** (Covers - photocopy, postage, room hire, stationary, phone bills, travel expenses of officers to meetings. Does not cover - travel expenses of members)

**Meetings: £276.16:** comprising:

Room Hire: £120.00

Photocopying, Postage and 'phone calls: £156.16

CNCC officers do not claim mileage.

Sub Budget Head - **Conservation & Access** (Covers - Negotiating access to caves and mines, gating of entrances, stabilising (and opening up of alternative safer) of entrances, working with landowner to maintain access, payment of "peppercorn" rents for access, other liaison and public relations work related to maintaining access and promoting conservation, travel expenses for meetings, photocopy, postage, stationary, phone bills. Does not cover - digging as part of new exploration)

**Conservation & Access: £696.96:** comprising:

£380.00: Keld Head Wall rebuild

£271.88: Providence Pot restoration (materials only)

£22.08: Annual access agreement for Fairy Holes/Mongo Gill

£23.00: Annual access agreement for Fountains Fell

Sub Budget Head - **Insurance** (Covers - Provision of Public Liability cover for all persons (including officers, members, volunteers and land owners & their employees) involved in activities on behalf of the RCC activities, public liability cover for land owner access agreements. Does not cover - insurance for clubs or individuals not undertaking authorised work on behalf of the RCC)

**No expenditure in 2015 under this budget head**

Sub Budget Head - **Provision of Information** (Covers - Production of "Regional" Circulars (regular or spasmodic) on access, Production of "Regional" Access Handbook (regular or spasmodic. ***Does not cover*** - Production of a "Regional" newsletter (regular or spasmodic), Production of Handbook (regular or spasmodic), Production or sponsoring of "Regional" (Area) Guide Book, Topo sheet, Bolting Guide etc, Participation in events to promote caving)

**No expenditure in 2015 under this budget head**

Pete Bann

Treasurer CNCC

### **Conservation Officer's Report**

The CNCC have joined forces with Natural England and the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust to undertake cave conservation tasks as part of the Ingleborough Dales Landscape Partnership (A Heritage Lottery Funded project with a budget of £2million). In effect, the CNCC contributed £2000 and secured total funding equivalent to £30 000 for cave conservation projects (£11000 contribution from HLF). The CNCC can now tackle jobs that had previously been too costly, such as those requiring the removal of hazardous materials by specialist contractors. Most of the “match funding” required by HLF has come from CNCC conservation volunteers ‘man hours’ converted to a cash equivalent. Over 4 years this is a considerable amount.

CNCC assisted Duncan Jones in disposal of rubbish of rubbish removed from Cove Hole, and have given funding to CDG for the repair of the wall above Keld Head.

BPC in conjunction with Andrew Hinde, NE held a “Reducing the cavers’ footprint” day, scything thistles on Ingleborough NNR followed by a meal at Brackenbottom. Following reports of graffiti in Katnot Cave, advice was taken on how to remove modern graffiti without damaging marks of historical interest, and a second “Reducing the caver’s footprint” day was held during which BPC removed the extensive graffiti coving all the walls of the entrance chamber.

A total of 8 volunteers have been trained in safe operating procedures for a variety of winches, which will be helpful in future shakehole clearance like the recent exercises at Daimler Hole and Homeshaw Cave. A First Aid course has being arranged for 31st March.

Liverpool and York University clubs have expressed interest in being involved in conservation work.

The CNCC now has a supply of cleaning equipment, orange conservation tape (about 10 reels of 25m), and pegs. This stock will be maintained courtesy of the CNCC, and is available for use by any cavers undertaking exploration or conservation works e.g. to help preserve delicate features. If you would like some, please contact Kay Easton. The tape can be collected from Colt Park Barn, LA6 3JF (near Chapel-le-Dale), but it may be possible to make alternative arrangements.

Tim Allen has been raising the profile of conservation, and it has been pleasing to see the amount of discussion on ukcaving that has ensued, and the reports of other people’s work.

Other commitments have meant that the Northern Caves Monitoring database has been in abeyance, but work is expected to resume shortly.

**Kay Easton – CNCC Conservation Officer**

### Access Officer's Report

**Ingleborough** - nothing to report.

**Casterton & Leck** - CNCC have been attempting to start a dialogue with both sets of land agents but progress has been slow. I expect that there are more important issues for them than cavers & cave access. However, I'm hopeful that we will make progress quite soon and we are currently arranging a face to face meeting with both land owners / agents. Tim Allen has played an important part in bringing this proposed meeting together.

**Langcliffe Hall Estate** - As discussed at the last meeting we are awaiting the outcome of efforts by the YDNP to speak with the land owner regarding access.

**Bowland Area** - Tony Brown has met the new land agents for this area. They have concerns about cavers and the land owners liability. I'm currently awaiting the 2016 BCA insurance policy document which Tony will take to the land agent and discuss any issues.

**Fountains Fell** - Alan Speight and I visited the Coates Family over the Christmas Holidays. There are no problems here, they are very happy with cavers visiting caves after calling at the farm beforehand. This is an excellent example of how positive caver and land owner relations can be.

**Raisgill Area** - Phil Ryder emailed us regarding concerns from the tenant at the farm and their liability towards cavers. After a few discussions with CNCC Phil has spoken to them on our behalf and explained the BCA insurance scheme which has reassured them.

CNCC has come a long way in the last few years. People I speak to regularly make positive comments about what we are doing. The newsletters and website have done us a lot of good too, long may it continue.

**Johnny Latimer – CNCC Access Officer**



### **Training Officer's Report**

A steady but productive 12 months after stepping into the training officer's role last year. I have attended the BCA Training committee meetings representing the CNCC and have successfully managed to forge and improve links with the instructed caving community. I now have a small team of CIC and aspirant CIC Instructors who are willing to volunteer their time to run 1 or 2 SRT workshops each year on behalf of the CNCC.

The first workshop was run on Sat 20<sup>th</sup> Feb and overall we feel was a successful event. The morning workshop concentrated on advanced rigging and rescue techniques, with participants being of a very competent SRT ability. The afternoon workshop had to change direction as most of the attendees had overestimated their abilities; it focused mainly on safe rigging practice, SRT techniques and touched briefly on improvised self-rescue with some of the participants. There was however a relatively large dropout rate at the absolute last minute. 4 out of the 12 people who reserved places E mailed Thu or Fri night to say they would not be attending. This is always likely to be a problem as people are very quick to sign up for free events, but as it has no impact on them financially, very quick to drop out at short notice.

I hope to begin planning a similar type of event for some time in the Autumn; possibly aiming more towards new club members who are just getting into SRT type trips. So that the 2 workshops throughout the year cater for experienced and inexperienced cavers. Any further suggestions for training workshops for clubs are welcomed.

**Dan Irving – CNCC Training officer**

### **Additional report: Eurospeleo 2016**

I'm sure everyone reading this is now familiar with Eurospeleo 2016. This massive European caving conference is coming to Yorkshire from 13-20<sup>th</sup> August this year and promises to be the biggest event in the UK Caving calendar for some time. The informal term 'Hidden Earth on Steroids' has been waved about, although we stopped short of using this as the official slogan!

The event will take place at the Dalesbridge Centre just outside of Clapham/Austwick, although several of the surrounding fields will also be hired to erect marques, and for on-site camping for the anticipated 1000+ delegates who are coming from all over the world.

The week-long conference will entail all the regular features of Hidden Earth; Critically, a cheap bar with real ales, competitions, lectures, excursions, a trade hall, and other special events too. As part of the conference however, we have arranged for most of Yorkshire's classic potholes to be rigged for the entire week for the benefit of Eurospeleo delegates! We have secured sponsorship from SpanSet which has seen, in the last few weeks, handover of 6km of rope free of charge for use on the event! This is an outstanding level of sponsorship and we are extremely thankful!

The list of all caves rigged for the week is here:

<http://eurospeleo.uk/about/clubs.php>

The Craven Pothole Club is sponsoring the event by running their winch for the duration of the congress, for use by delegates only, and for a heavily reduced price (£5). Of course, all the usual Gaping Gill entrances will be rigged too.

The usual Hidden Earth team are running the show, so we can be confident the bar won't run dry! Several individuals from the CNCC are also very involved. The event website, as well as all the social media presence for the event is being run by our webmaster, Gary Douthwaite. Johnny Latimer has ensured bespoke permission for access to these caves for congress delegates for the full week of the event. Tim Allen has been instrumental in helping to arrange the SpanSet sponsorship deal and promoting the event on UK Caving.

The actual distribution of the rope to the rigging clubs and coordinating/planning the cutting of the rope is being looked after by Ian Lloyd who has done a marvellous job.

Gary and I have written descriptions for each of the caves, which will be available online, in the congress guide, and also as laminated cards to take underground. These will be published soon to allow people, particularly overseas cavers who are unfamiliar with our caves, to plan what trips they want to do. We are also organising the congress guidebook over coming months.

Tickets are still available but they are selling fast!

**Matt Ewles – Eurospeleo Guide Coordinator**

## **Meet's Secretary Reports**

### **Ingleborough Estate and Aygill Caverns**

#### **Aygill Caverns:**

Nothing to report for Aygill Caverns.

#### **Ingleborough Estate/Allotment and Newby Moss:**

So far this year a total of 23 BCA member clubs have requested permits with a further 5 requests coming from BCA DIM's.

To date, 62 permits have been requested, 50 were for BCA member clubs and 12 for BCA DIM's.

Looking ahead into 2016, 10 BCA member clubs and 1 BCA DIM have requested permits, with a total of 33 permits issued so far, 29 to BCA member clubs and 4 to BCA DIM's.

There have been no issues raised from the Ingleborough Estate/Ingham and Yorke.

#### **Geoff Whittaker – Ingleborough/Aygill Meets Secretary**

### **Penyghent area (Dale Head Pot, Penyghent Pot)**

32 permits have been issued for Dalehead and Penyghent Pot. A number of these have been issued for both days on weekends to try to help with problems with weather.

I have received only one postal request.

There have been no issues to report and Coates family are happy to continue the current arrangements for Fountains Fell.

#### **Sam Allshorn – Penyghent Meets Secretary**

### **Other Areas (Bowland, Leck, Excalibur Pot)**

Nothing to report

## Casterton Fell

### **Council of Northern Caving Clubs**

#### **Casterton Fell Meets Secretary's Report to the AGM**

**5<sup>th</sup> March 2016**

There are no issues to report.

Between January 2015 and December 2015 (inclusive), 283 permits were issued to 59 clubs.

Between March 2015 and February 2016 (inclusive), 283 permits were issued to 62 clubs.

Table 1. Number of Casterton Fell permits issued to clubs between January 2015 and February 2016.

<b>Month</b>	<b>Number of CNCC permits</b>	<b>Number of clubs</b>
January 2015	22	13
February	32	16
March	21	14
April	28	17
May	25	15
June	21	12
July	12	8
August	6	4
September	18	10
October	22	12
November	38	18
December	38	16
January 2016	32	12
February	22	11

Continued overleaf...

Table 2. Number of permits issued for entrances on Casterton Fell between January 2015 and February 2016. A single permit can be issued for multiple entrances, so the total number of entrances exceeds the total number of permits.

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	Subtotal
Lancaster Hole	13	17	9	17	11	15	4	1	12	11	16	19	15	8	168
County Pot	4	8	9	8	7	12	7	1	12	10	9	12	9	4	112
Wretched Rabbit	3	9	4	9	11	8	4	1	3	5	9	7	7	2	82
Cow Pot	5	2	2	3	4	8	2	4	1	3	3	5	7	5	54
Top Sink	2	4	2	5	6	4	1	0	2	7	3	7	6	3	52
Pool Sink	2	4	5	3	3	5	1	0	2	2	3	5	3	2	40
Sylvester Pot	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>Total 512</b>

Hannah Walker

[casterton.permits@cncc.org.uk](mailto:casterton.permits@cncc.org.uk)

29/02/2016

# **Council of Northern Caving Clubs – AGM 2016**

## **Meets Secretary's report for Birks Fell, Robinsons Pot, Ludwell Fairy Holes and Mongo Gill**

### **General**

This is my 27th year as access controller and there have been several changes this year regarding access to Birks Fell, Robinsons Pot, Ludwell Fairy Holes and Mongo Gill

### **Birks Fell**

Johnny Latimer has negotiated a new agreement in which the closed season has been reduced from the winter months to only March and April (lambing time). I have received only 4 requests for permits for 2016, that is half the number of permits requested at this time in 2015. In the whole of 2015 I only received 12 requests for permits, that is a third of the number 20 years ago.

### **Robinson's Pot**

I have negotiated a new access agreement which allows 8 permits per year on fixed dates (See CNCC website for details). Because this is more than the number of requests received in any one of the 19 years since access was secured we agreed at Council that permits would be issued on a first come first served basis rather than by ballot at the AGM as has been the case in the past. I have so far issued only 5 of the available 8 permits. I urge clubs to apply for the three remaining permits which I negotiated on the basis that there was a large demand.

### **Ludwell Fairy Holes**

This is the third year of access to this cave but the access agreement of 1 permit per month was only signed in February and has only been agreed until the end of June. I have received two requests for the available permits compared with a total of 5 requests last years. Thanks to Andrew Hinde for all his efforts in negotiating this agreement

### **Mongo Gill**

When the access agreement was up for renewal I asked the owner if he would permit me to issue permits to DIMs. He said he was not prepared to do that at the moment but would renew the agreement for just two years rather than the usual five in order to review the situation at a sooner time than would otherwise have been the case. I only received three requests for permits in 2015 (a tenth of the figure 20 years ago) and have so far received none for 2016. 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.

***Ric Halliwell***  
***27 February 2016***