

COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

BRITISH CAVING ASSOCIATION

Committee meeting

To be held at Hellifield Village hall on 24 June 2011

Starting at 20:00

AGENDA

1. Apologise for absence
2. Minutes of the last meeting (September 2010)
3. Matter arising from the minutes
4. Officers reports
 - Chairman's report (09/2010 and 01/2011)
 - Secretary's report
 - Treasurer's report (09/2010 and 01/2011)
 - Conservation officer's report (09/2010 and 01/2011)
 - Training officer report
 - Technical group report
5. Meets secretaries reports
 - Leck Fell (09/2010 and 01/2011)
 - Casterton Fell (09/2010 and 01/2011)
 - Birks Fell (01/2011)
 - Penyghent & Fountains Fell (01/2011)
 - Other areas (01/2011)
6. BCA report
7. Any other business
8. Date and place of next meeting

To be held at Hellifield Village hall on 16 September 2011

Starting at 20:00



Council of Northern Caving Clubs

Secretaries reports 24 June 2011

Secretary's report

From the Secretary's perspective this period has been very busy; however, this is not generally secretarial work but a combination of the other roles that he does.

The CNCC has published the book 'Shuttleworth Pot into Witches Cave II' on behalf of the authors, if anyone want a copy please email Glenn and bring £8 to the meeting.

Access Officers' report

There are a small number of clubs who are continually flouting the access procedure. We know some of them and some of them have been contacted. If breaches of access continue then BCA will have to become involved as an incident will ultimately affect access for all cavers.

After the annual Casterton Fell walk (to ensure compliance with our access agreement) the following points were note:

- the stile to Lancaster Hole needs replacing
- the signs (2) 'cavers keep to the wall' also need replacing on the approach to Lancaster Hole
- a new stile at Bull Pot of the Witches

I have spoken the landowner who has agreed that the work can be carried out.

The issue of the military using the Easegill system has been resolved and the leaders/instructors involved have been told by CNCC and Halton Training camp that they are not insured and that they have no agreement to use the system.

The entrance to Excalibur Pot has been replaced and the entrance rebuilt after what appears to be a deliberate act to enter the cave, many thanks to York Caving Club for undertaking the work.

Shuttleworth Pot and The Cupcake; all conservation work will be completed by the start of the new permit season on 01 July. Many thanks are due to the small army of volunteers who have been involved with these projects and to the Estate office for allowing access during the closed season.

Whitewell Pot area; the proposed clean up of Tip Wood has been temporarily halted until the insurance officer finalises the words for the insurance document after some asbestos sheets were uncovered.

There is a small issue that has developed with Ireby Fell Cavern, which I must admit was augmented by the fact that the BCA chairman sat on the initial email for over two months. However, Andrew and I will be meeting with the person in dispute to resolve the issues.

CNCC Technical Group

The anchor shortage is coming to an end. On 14 June 2011 a test bed was placed in Horseshoe quarry in Derbyshire, these will be tested on 22 June 2011.

All the topos for the new CNCC Rigging Guide volume two have been drawn. We are currently in the process of checking them for accuracy and putting the descriptions and general information together. I had originally hoped that it would be finished by this time and on sale, but as with everything it always takes longer than you expect.

BCA Equipment & Techniques Committee

In November 2008 both myself and Bob Dearman (DCA) were tasked with a review of the anchor installation guidelines. This was completed in March 2009 and agreed by the BCA Equipment & Techniques Committee. However, all but one regional council accepted the document (CSCC). The fact that CSCC continue to be obstructive with regard to anchor placement and the guidelines is causing a great deal of frustration and concern, especially now that they have taken themselves out of the national anchor replacement program yet believe they can still take part in the debates surrounding the anchor program.

Training Officers report

Currently I have done nothing on this and again I can only apologise. However, Nigel Ball has contacted me regarding training and the regional council and I have also been in communication with G. Mollard (BCA training convenor) to discuss regional training, so hopefully, something will happen soon. We still need to set the date for the dry stone walling course.

Les Sykes

CNCC secretary

CNCC Training Officer

CNCC Access Officer

CNCC co-representative BCA Equipment & Techniques Committee

CNCC Council Meeting: June 24th 2011 Treasurers Report

Financial Status as of 23rd June 2011:

Current Account: £1,167.37

High Interest Account: £20,179.67

Major expenditure this period has been:

- Printing of 200 copies of the Shuttleworth Pot book (£896.00) which was funded by Natural England
- Replacement of Technical Group rucksacs (£307.34)
- Temperature Logger (David Hodgeson - £366.00) which was funded by Natural England

Income consists of the sale of Rigging Guides, Shuttleworth Pot books and NE grants.

Cave Rescue Manual: There are 9 remaining from the original 50 purchased.

Glenn Jones – CNCC Treasurer

BCA Report:

Two things to report following the recent BCA AGM. The first, from Nick Williams, is below, and the second is attached as a further pdf.

To: All regional Councils, access controlling bodies and other interested parties.

I am writing to draw to your attention that at the October BCA Council meeting we will, as usual, be discussing the budget for the following year and setting the annual subscriptions.

An important factor in setting the budget will be the annual PL insurance premium and so this is the appropriate time for us to review the costs of the policy and, particularly, the limit of indemnity.

In previous years we have always concluded that the £2m limit is adequate and the additional premium which would result from increasing the limit of indemnity (in the region of 25%, or equivalent to about £1 per BCA member for an increase to £5m) outweighs any benefit that might come from the increase in indemnity. Nevertheless, Council recognises that the pressure for an increase in limit is inexorable and sooner or later we will need to go for the higher limit.

In order that we should have a properly informed discussion at the BCA Council meeting in October, please can I request that you discuss this at your next committee meeting, or executive discussion, and reply to me following that discussion with answers to the following questions:

1. Would you like the limit of indemnity to remain at £2m or be raised to £5m?
2. Do you have strong arguments in favour or against an increase in the indemnity?

Obviously, in the latter case, I would also like to know what these arguments are.

I would be grateful if you would respond to me, preferably by e-mail, by 30 September 2011.
Please feel free to contact me by e-mail or telephone if you wish to discuss this matter.

Regards

Nick.

Nick Williams.
BCA PL scheme manager
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01298 873800

Discussion Paper for the 2011 AGM on Possible Changes to BCA's Structure

The fact that the structures and procedures put in place when BCA was set up in 2004 have generally stood the test of time, is due in no small part to the incredible hard work and foresight of a small number of people at the time. As a result of this the UK's Governing Body for Underground Exploration has become financially secure for the future with a strong membership and active, hard-working volunteers beavering away in the background.

However, it was probably inevitable that in the fullness of time some aspects of BCA's structure would need to be tweaked. In our view one possible area is our subscription situation, which is often criticised as being ridiculously complex with something in excess of 20 different categories of membership. This may well be one of the reasons why more than 90% of BCA members choose to join as Club Individual Members (CIMs), opting out in the process of most BCA communications and publications, as well as the chance to contribute to BCRA's scientific work.

It is probably also the case that some aspects of our work involve unnecessary duplication of effort. Two examples of this might be Conservation & Publications, where more than one similar Committee is working to the same end goal, but duplicating much of their effort in the process.

A further, obvious issue is that a lot of work is currently done by a small number of people, an even smaller number of whom are at the younger end of the age profile. This cannot be sustainable into the future.

Finally some have suggested that BCA might be better off as a charity, allowing for greater simplification of the finances and minimising the duplication of effort in the process.

We feel that now is a good time to begin a consultation process, with a view to putting any firm proposals for change to the 2012 Annual General Meeting.

Some Questions we think are worth considering:

- 1) Could we simplify our subscription structure?
- 2) Are there ways we could more fairly distribute our subscription income?
- 3) How can we increase the number of people who contribute to (and read) our publications?
- 4) Do we think there are areas of our work where we are duplicating effort? If so, could we streamline these?
- 5) Could it be beneficial for BCA in its entirety to become a charity?
- 6) How can we alter our Annual General Meetings (and possibly Council Meetings too) so they are more widely attended by the membership, and hopefully encourage more younger people to become involved in BCA, its Constituent Bodies and Regional Councils in the process?

We would like to consult as widely as possible on these points over the next year with a view to bringing any subsequent proposals to the 2012 Annual General Meeting.

Andy Eavis	&	Damian Weare
BCA Chairman		BCA Secretary

Casterton Fell Report

Requests for permits are still very low, despite making the process much easier.

I still have people reminding me that lots of trips are posted on the internet and even a clean up “Easter Grotto weekend” but no permit request. Still it makes my life much easier

The following permits issued

March – 7 permits issued (4 of these to MUSC) (1 to Les Sykes for BBC filming)

April - 12 permits issued (7 of these to education in the outdoors caving club)

May - 12 permits issued (shared out among the clubs)

June - 13 permits issued (between 7 clubs)

No problems reported

Cheers

Alan

Report to CNCC CCTTEE 24th June 2011

So far for 2011/12 - 30 clubs have been issued with permits for the current year. At the same point last year the figure was 25 clubs for the previous year, so demand has been fairly buoyant since the AGM.

Demand for access to the new finds has been steady with 7 (mainly local) clubs issued with permits to Shuttleworth Pot. Thus far however there have been no requests for access to The Cupcake.

There has been nothing else of particular significance to report since the AGM.

Jim Sloane (CNCC Meets Sec – Leck Fell)