

THE COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

The Annual General Meeting of the Council will be held at the Ingleboro' Hotel, Ingleton, at 3.00 pm on Saturday 15th June 1974.

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of the 1972 AGM.
3. Chairman's Statement.
4. Secretary's Report.
5. Treasurer's Report.
6. Assistant Secretary.

The Committee feels that an additional Officer should be appointed, to deal primarily with minutes of Meetings. An Amendment to the Constitution, Clause 6.2, is proposed :-

"The Committee shall consist of eight elected members, plus a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Assistant Secretary, all of whom shall represent different Full Member Clubs."

(prop. Earby P.C.; sec. Red Rose C.P.C.)

If this Amendment is accepted, election of an Assistant Secretary will follow.

7. Membership requirements.

(i) Full Membership.

Proposed Amendment to Clause 4.4. of the Constitution, which states the requirements for Full Membership:-

Delete the words "... and are primarily based in the North of Britain."

(proposed Mendip Caving Group, Assoc. Members since 1964).

(ii) Associate Membership.

8. Access Agreements and Area Reports.
9. Any other business.

Members are reminded that voting will be restricted to one representative from each paid-up Full Member Club. Others are of course welcome to participate in discussion.

THE COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
held on Saturday 15th June 1974 at the
Ingleboro' Hotel, Ingleton.

The following clubs were represented:-

Bolton Speleo Club, Bradford Pothole Club, Burnley Caving Club, Craven Pothole Club, Earby Pothole Club, Gritsone Club, Headingley Caving Club, Kendal Caving Club, Northern Cavern & Mine Research Society, Red Rose Cave & Pothole Club, Rolls Royce Speleological Group, Sunderland Caving Club, British Aircraft Corp'n. Pothole Club, Buxton Speleo Group, Lancaster Univ. Speleological Society, Mendip Caving Group, Orpheus Caving Club, National Scout Caving Centre.

Observers:- Michelin Caving Club.

Item 1 Apologies for absence

Received from Barnsley Speleo. Society, Portsmouth Polytechnic Caving Club, Yorkshire Subterranean Society, and M. Hartland (Meets Secretary).

Item 2 Minutes of the 1973 AGM

Copies of the Minutes had been distributed and the Meeting agreed that they were a true record and should be accepted as read. There were no matters arising which would not be covered by the Agenda.

Item 3 Chairman's Statement

The Council's role as a forum for discussing issues of importance to Northern caving is obviously recognised by those clubs which attend General meetings. It appeared, however, that most Member Clubs regard CNCC as little more than an access service; we only seem to hear from them when they think the service is not good enough. Undoubtedly, the Council should provide a service for clubs but it can only do so efficiently if its Members co-operate by attending meetings, abiding by agreed procedures, and by helping with the work involved. The 28 clubs which are now Full Members represent a total of around 1500 cavers. It ought not to be difficult to find a dozen willing Committee members and Meets Secretaries out of that number. The officers and Meets Secretaries are having an increasing amount of time-consuming correspondence to deal with and this is why the appointment of an Assistant Secretary seems a necessary step. The Chairman concluded by saying that, when the election of officers and committee was due next year, he would have completed 10 years in office and he would not be prepared to stand again for re-election.

Item 4 Secretary's Report

Membership of the Council had increased by 12 during the year and now stood at 85 clubs. Most of the new applications were from clubs based outside the region.

Four Committee Meetings had taken place during the past 12 months and access problems occupied most of the time as usual. Four delegates attended the NCA AGM in November and had to face criticism over the rules concerning membership and permit for holes subject to access agreements, despite the lengthy statements previously made to the other Regional Councils explaining the reasons. On the whole, the access agreements were working reasonably well with few complaints from either clubs or the landowners, except in the

case of Birks Fell Cave where the position seemed to be deteriorating. Improved facilities could be reported under the Leck Fell Agreement and access had been restored to Washfold Pot. A threat of complete closure had been averted at Pikedaw Mine with the landowner accepting the Council's case for incorporating an access lid in the concrete slab to be placed over the shaft. The Yorkshire Subterranean Society are to carry out work on this project and there should be no restriction on access when completed.

Earlier this year, arrangements were finalised for a display point in Wharfedale for the special weekend weather forecast - outside the Youth Hostel in Kettlewell. Work is progressing on collecting information for the new edition of the 'Northern Cave Handbook' which it is hoped will get a wide circulation when published.

The Secretary expressed his appreciation of the valuable assistance given by the Chairman, the Meets Secretaries and the clerical staff of the Sports Council, N.W. Regional Office.

Item 5 Treasurer's Report

The Balance Sheet and Accounts (appended) show that the Council's finances are reasonably healthy despite considerable increases in clerical and stationery costs during the year. About £100 was earmarked for expenditure on the new Handbook very shortly. The income from subscriptions does not show an increase since last year because, in 1972-73, there was an influx of overdue payments. A grant instalment of £50 has been received from the National Caving Association and no increase in clubs subscription rates is called for at present.

Item 6 Assistant Secretary

An amendment to the Constitution was required to cover the appointment of an additional Officer, which the Committee felt was desirable in view of the increasing work load. The main duty of an Assistant Secretary would be to take the minutes of Committee Meetings.

The following amendment to clause 6.2 of the Constitution was proposed by Earby P.C., seconded by Red Rose C.P.C. and carried unanimously:

"The Committee shall consist of eight elected members, plus a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Assistant Secretary, all of whom shall represent different Full Member Clubs."

To permit the appointment of an Assistant Secretary for the interim period until the full Committee election takes place next year, the Chairman called for nominations for an additional club to be represented on the Committee. Headingley Caving Club was elected (prop. C.P.C., seconded R.R.C. & P.C.), there being no other nominations, and Mr David Webster (F.C.C.) was appointed as Assistant Secretary.

Item 7 Membership requirements

- i) Full Membership - A proposed Amendment to the Constitution had been submitted by Mendip Caving Group, an Associate Member clubs since 1964:- Delete the words, "and are primarily based in the North of Britain" from clause 4.4 which states:-

"Full Membership of the Council will only be granted to responsible and properly constituted clubs which are owned and controlled by their own members and are primarily based in the North of Britain."

P. Mathews (Mendip C.G.) said that his club, and probably others from the south, had been coming to Yorkshire for many years and were doing so increasingly. They believed that it was unreasonable for such clubs to be permanently excluded from having voting rights in CNCC, even though they were probably doing more caving in the region than some Northern clubs.

The Chairman explained the reason for the rule which had been expressed when the Constitution was drawn up. It had been agreed that Full Member Clubs should have an appreciable record of regular caving in the region so that their delegates could be conversant with past and present procedures and problems. They should also be willing to play their part in the work and decision-making of the Council. The Chairman added that his own interpretation of Clause 4.4 was that the words "based in the North" did not necessarily mean "domiciled in the North".

After discussion it was evident that the Meeting endorsed the principles embodied in the rule regarding Full Membership. No club was prepared to propose or second the M.C.G. motion and so it was not put to the vote.

In conclusion, the Chairman said that there was nothing to prevent any Associate Member club from applying for Full Membership if it thought that a case could be made out. The Committee would consider each one on its merits and decide whether the constitutional criteria were satisfied.

- ii) Associate Membership - The Meeting was asked to consider whether the Membership rules in the Constitution adequately catered for certain categories of caving groups which were increasingly enquiring about joining CNCC in order to get access to restricted areas. Outdoor pursuits centres, scouts, and school caving groups found it almost impossible to obtain the sponsorship of member clubs. Should the Council continue to insist on these applications being proposed and seconded or is there a case for having a further category of membership giving more limited access rights in controlled areas? The acceptability of such a group was largely dependent on the experience and capability of its leader on every trip.

M. K. Lyon (Whernside Manor) suggested that if club sponsors could not be obtained by an 'outdoor centre' then their caving leaders should at least be expected to have a Cave Leader's Certificate and they should be prepared to accept only midweek bookings for controlled caves.

After discussion, it was agreed (prop. Earby P.C., sec. Craven P.C.) that it should be left to the Committee to treat each application of this type as a special case for the time being, and to make recommendations after considering all the implications.

The question was also considered of whether the subscription rate for Associate Members should be made less than that for Full Member clubs. Most clubs were thought to join CNCC only so that they could obtain access permits and were not interested in attending meetings and having voting rights. It would not be desirable to discourage eligible clubs from becoming Full Members because of higher subscription. Full Members had no priorities as far as access was concerned. It was agreed that subscription rates should remain the same for the time being but the matter could be reconsidered if and when increased subscriptions became necessary because of rising costs.

Item 8 Access Agreements and Area Reports

- i) Leck and Casterton Fells - Meets Secretary, I. Jopson
This year has seen the Easegill system as popular as previously with a total of 333 permits being issued. The breakdown is as follows, with North defined as north of Derbyshire:

	<u>Casterton</u>	<u>Leck</u>
North	120	110
South	45	58

Good relations exist between the Council and the two landowners concerned, and it is up to us as members to maintain this relationship, which is in constant danger of being upset by pirating. Although a number of cases have been reported by clubs which have had permits no action can be taken unless the pirates are identified.

At a meeting held on 8th June with the landowners, agreement was reached to gain access to Pippikin all the year round. This is provided that during April, May and June (the grouse breeding season), the pot is approached from Bullpot Farm, and not from the Leck Fell road. From Bullpot Farm proceed via County Pot or Scales Barn, keeping to the paths to avoid damage to the grass and moorland grips.

Notification has been given by the landowner that shoots will be held this year on 24th August and 7th and 21st September. Consequently no permits can be issued for Leck Fell on these dates.

- ii) Penyghent, Fountains Fell and Washfold Pot - Meets Secretary M. Hartland
The most popular pot, Penyghent Pot and Gingling Hole, have both been about fully booked for the spring and summer seasons. The problems over the booking arrangements for Gingling Hole have been sorted out following an initial misunderstanding with the owner and a belated acceptance by him of the Meets List. Bookings for 1975 should be submitted as early as possible although no confirmation can be given till next year. Clubs are reminded of the importance of calling on the gamekeeper, George Perfect at Brackenbottom before going to Pots on Penyghent. The Magnetometer Pot entrance shaft is reported to be getting unsafe due to corrosion of the oil-drum lining.
- iii) Birks Fell Cave - Meets Secretary D. C. Mellor.
The situation regarding access to Birks Fell Cave is not good. Following a rescue incident after Christmas, the owner withdrew permission and suspended the Agreement. After considerable correspondence with the owner's agents, access was again granted from mid-May until the end of October 1974, when the situation will be reconsidered. Bookings received for later dates cannot therefore be confirmed for some time. A rumour that the owner has instructed his tenants at Yockenthwaite to stop cavers going to Strans Gill and Pasture Gill Pots has not yet been confirmed or denied.
- iv) Mongo Gill Hole - Meets Secretary D. C. Mellor.
Complaints have been received from the owner that parties are visiting the hole without permits, or without calling on Mr Gill at Stump Cross. The Council had not yet been able to comply with the owners request for a proper lid on the Mongo Gill entrance shaft because volunteers had not been found to do the work. Materials could be supplied if a club would provide a working party.

- v) Other areas - Pikedaw Mine - Yorkshire Subterranean Society to construct a lid and make the shaft top safe. CNCC would be making a grant towards the cost and the landowner had agreed to unrestricted access on completion of the work.

Cherry Tree Hole, Darnbrook - No progress can be reported here. The Upper Wharfedale Fell Rescue Association agreed to assist in negotiations but these have been delayed because of uncertainty about whether the farm tenancy was changing hands.

Item 9 Any Other Business

- i) Special Weather Forecasts - It was reported that the forecasts were not always getting displayed at Ingleton Police Station. The Committee were raising this with the National Park Warden who had distribution problems at present.
- ii) Grant Aid - A letter had been received from the West Yorkshire County Council confirming that "certain monies have been designated" in their budget to help voluntary organisations in sport. This means that grants may still be obtainable for facilities such as club hostels provided that any projected development is "of more than local significance." Clubs should contact CNCC if they have any plans which they think might qualify within this criterion. It was stated that the Cave Rescue Depot at Clapham was an obvious project for recommendation although CRO were approaching the County Council for aid via the National Park Committee.

COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

Balance Sheet as at 4th June 1974

	<u>This year</u>		<u>Last year</u>	
SOURCE OF CAPITAL	£	£	£	£
Accumulated Fund Balance at 19.5.73	175.74		23.40	
Excess of Income over expenditure	<u>(55.98)</u>		<u>152.34</u>	
		<u>119.76</u>		<u>175.74</u>
 EMPLOYMENT OF CAPITAL				
Current Assets				
Deposit Account	100.00		---	
	<u>100.00</u>		---	
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>119.76</u>		<u>175.74</u>

J. M. CLARKE
HON. TREASURER
7.6.74

COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 4th June 1974

	<u>This year</u>		<u>Last year</u>	
	£	£	£	£
Subscriptions		134.00		138.50
Sales of Access Booklet		12.10		17.80
Grant		50.00		85.00
Royalties		6.09		---
		-----		-----
		202.19		241.30
Less Expenses:-				
Bank Charges		---		1.60
Metecrological Office	40.58		36.90	
Room Hire	2.00		1.00	
Travel Expenses	13.00		---	
N.C.A. Subs.	15.00		10.00	
Lancs. Sports Federation	1.00		1.00	
Yorks. Sports Federation	1.00		50	
Printing & Stationery	63.48		27.06	
Secretary's Expenses	7.80		3.60	
Chairman's Expenses	2.81		2.40	
Meet Secretaries Expenses	7.25		3.50	
Treasurer's Expenses	4.25		1.00	
Access Agreement		---		40
Deposit Account	100.00		---	
		=====		=====
		258.17		88.96
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE:		(55.98)		152.34
		=====		=====