

MINUTES of the CNCC COMMITTEE MEETING held on 16 September 2011 at HELLIFIELD VILLAGE INSTITUTE

The Meeting commenced at 20.05.

PRESENT: R. Holmes (Chairperson), Glenn Jones (Treasurer), Les Sykes (Secretary), Fay Hartley (BCC), S. Lieberman (RRCPC), Alan Speight (YSS), Tony Brown (NB), Harvey Lomas (YRC), Michael Hale (BSC/CRO), Andrew Hinde (Gritstone Club/Natural England), Bernard Bond (BCC), Don Mellor (CPC), Ian Walker (DUSA/YSS), Kay Easton (Minutes Secretary)

1. APOLOGIES. J. Sloane (LUG), Ric Halliwell, Pat Halliwell, Ian Lloyd, Pete Monk, Pete Allwright, Victor Wain, Ray Duffy, Andy Whitney

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING: Minutes accepted and signed as a true record.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MINUTES: No matters arising.

4 OFFICERS' REPORTS

Chairman's report Nothing to report

Secretary's report Written report appended to Minutes

Treasurer's report Written report appended to the Minutes

Alan Speight requested that CNCC should contribute to dating of bones from Shuttleworth and Cupcake. 6 bones were to be dated: two human bones, and four animal bones chosen because their position in the sediments was established, and dating of the bones would cast light on the sediments and the formation of the caves.

The cost of dating was £508 per bone (inc VAT). BCRA was funding 3 bones, and Natural England had contributed £400, leaving a shortfall of £1124.

There was general discussion; the main points arising were as follows:

The bones are owned by the landowner, Lord Shuttleworth. Half are currently with Tom Lord and half with John Thorpe (Lugger). Lord Shuttleworth's desire is that they should be on public exhibition. Andrew Hinde (Natural England) is funding a portable display cabinet and associated explanatory display material to facilitate this. He felt that this would be of benefit and interest to the average caver as cave

archaeology is becoming of increasing interest; and that this would enable the Shuttleworth/Cupcake dig to stand as an example of good digging practice.

Dating of the bones would allow publication of the exploration in the scientific archaeological press. The Wild Boar (from Cupcake) is the largest ever found in the UK, and proves that the shafts were still open at a later date than hitherto thought.

The bones had been removed according to good archaeological practice; John Thorpe had taken photographs of the bones in situ and prepared detailed sections of their locations.

Andrew Hinde offered Natural England funding for a second bone. It was felt that further funding could be sought eg from local archaeological groups.

Glenn proposed that CNCC should make up the shortfall, after other funding sources had been explored. Alan Speight seconded and the motion was passed with no-one dissenting.

Conservation Officer's report Written report appended to Minutes

i) In response to Glenn, Andrew confirmed that the long straw in Shuttleworth had been broken, despite taping.

Tony asked about the preparation of a conservation plan for Shuttleworth. There was general discussion, the main points being as follows:

Andrew Hinde commented that the conservation survey carried out by John Gardner and published in the Shuttleworth book gave the essence of a conservation plan, with the addition of a few appendices. The cave should be broken down into areas of vulnerability, using the BCA Cave Conservation Handbook as a template.

Measures were suggested (including fewer permits, taping, leadership system), but it was accepted that one could reduce damage but not prevent it.

Andrew undertook to lead the production of a conservation plan, supported by the exploration team, and also to publicise in Descent and elsewhere the delicacy of the cave and need for special care.

ii) Sam said he had received information (from Ian Walker, DUSA) that shoring in the entrance series of Crescent Pot needed replacement. Ian said that DUSA would undertake the work, but needed advice.

Training Officer's report Written report appended to the Minutes

Sam had arranged a dry stone walling course for 15th October, and said that Andy Chapman had arranged a workshop at Bull Pot Farm on newer electronic methods of surveying, 2-3 December (limited numbers). Les reminded him of the need to apply for a permit.

Technical Group report Written report appended to the Minutes.
Waiting for the anchor manufacturer to test the resin.

5 MEETS SECRETARIES' REPORTS

Leck Fell Written report appended to Minutes

Casterton Nothing to report.

Birks Fell Nothing to report other than that the number of permit requests remains low. Fay had seen a group entering Hagg Gill who had closed the lid while they were in the cave, and wanted to know whether this was necessary; Les said no – lid should be left open while cavers were inside.

Penyghent and Fountains Fell No report received

Other Areas No report received

6 BCA REPORT Glenn said the AGM was held in June and the Council Minutes were on the website; there was nothing of substance to report from the meeting.

7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

7 i) Les said a recent permit request from CHECC had been approved. However, CHECC is a constituent body, not a member, of BCA, and as such not eligible for permits. Most of the CHECC clubs were not BCA clubs, despite considerable efforts to encourage them to join BCA.

Glenn said this should be raised at BCA Council to establish policy, which could be that non BCA clubs within CHECC would be refused permits.

7 ii) Andrew said the Victoria Cave Consultation report, due February 2012, had not yet been received. Les undertook to write to the National Park asking when the report would be received. Andrew said the recommendations were likely to be to build a wall to encourage access at one side only, and to carry out work on sediments at the earliest opportunity. He would like the walling to be completed before the BCRA Field meeting in June 2012.

The Access Officer's report is appended to the Minutes

8 DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETINGS

Ordinary meeting 27 January 2012, Hellifield Institute, at 8pm.
AGM 3rd March 2012, Hellifield Institute.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm



Council of Northern Caving Clubs

Secretaries reports 16 September 2011

Secretary's report

The summer period has been very quiet as it usually is and there is nothing to report.

Access Officers' report

CHECC have requested permits for Casterton Fell for their meet in North Yorkshire. This request has been granted; however as CHECC is a constituent of BCA the permits will be request through the BCA member clubs attending. They have also been informed that all the access requirements must be enforced.

Shuttleworth Pot and The Cupcake, all conservation work has now been completed.

Whitewell Pot area, the proposed clean up of Tip Wood has been temporary halted we are still waiting for the insurance officer to finalise the words for the insurance document after some asbestos sheets were uncovered.

The issues surrounding Ireby Fell Cavern are still active. I have now sent two emails to the landowner requesting a meeting with no reply.

CNCC Technical Group

The problem surrounding the replacement anchor has now been resolved. However, the recommended resin is no longer available, so we are waiting for the manufacturer to undertake some tests prior to recommendation.

BCA Equipment & Techniques Committee

There has not been a meeting since the last CNCC meeting so there is nothing to report.

Training Officers report

Nigel Ball and I have had a brief conversation on the future of training I will be preparing a questionnaire for distribution to all northern clubs.

Les Sykes
CNCC secretary
CNCC Training Officer
CNCC Access Officer
CNCC co-representative BCA Equipment & Techniques Committee

Conservation Officers Report

CNCC volunteers have been active on the following projects in 2011.

1. Repair of broken through at Browgill – Birkwith.
2. Capping of abandoned shafts at Gaping Gill.
3. Walling and Fencing at Yordas Wood.
4. Tree Planting at Yordas.
5. Thistle control at Yordas.
6. Clearance of Tip Wood – Bowland. (on going)
7. Stock Fencing at Little Pot- Large Pot. Kingsdale.
8. Stabilisation of Craftsman Pot – Kingsdale (Mike Bottomley et al)

Shuttleworth Pot.

A comprehensive re taping of the sensitive areas using stainless steel pins was completed prior to open season.

A sign warning cavers of the sensitivity of the floor formations was placed at the foot of the Divers Pitch.

John Gardner has undertaken an audit of features of interest after the first 6 weeks of permitted access. A small amount of extra taping was introduced to the My newt Passage area. No damage has been reported or discovered as yet (apart from the deterioration of the dog bones, due to inquisitive handling, which is in itself a very disappointing).

The landscaping around the entrance has been successful in restoring the vegetation cover.

Cupcake Pot.

A major pre-emptive conservation and protection job has been completed. This involved a huge personnel commitment from Northern Boggarts, which will hopefully protect the unique formations close to the entrance. The work was described in an excellent article in Descent 221.

Gaping Gill

Conservation taping with SS pins has been introduced to Old East Passage. More pins still required to complete the task to a satisfactory standard.

Report to CNCC committee meeting 16th September 2011. Leck Fell Access Agreement.

Since the AGM 38 clubs have been issued with permits for the year 2011/12, which is about two more than the same time during 2010/11. As such demand for permits appears to be more or less stable.

For the rest of the year there are only 2 weekends fully booked (5th/6th Nov & 10th/11th Dec) and 2 Saturdays also (17th Sept & 26th Nov), so there is plenty of weekend availability for permits remaining.

There is not a great deal else to report, and since the last meeting there have been no matters or issues that have required particular attention.

Jim Sloane (CNCC Meets Sec – Leck Fell)

03/09/12