



Council of Northern Caving Clubs

Committee meeting 28 September 2012

Secretary's report

Despite the holidays the last three months have been extremely busy. However, this has not been due to the secretarial work load but other functions that I perform as seen below.

Access Officer's report

Andrew Hinde has been busy negotiating with Lafarge over access to Fairy Caves in Weardale, this is now nearing its completion and CNCC should be administering access in the near future.

As mentioned in my last report I had negotiated access for speleological exploration of land owned by the Duchy of Lancaster in the North of the region. It is an area where there are currently no known caves. The exploration has now concluded and there is no evidence of speleological development in the area.

The committee will be aware of the recent upsurge in unauthorised access by cavers on Casterton Fell especially during August. I took the unprecedented step of involving BCA at an early stage, my reasons for this were that all CNCC associate member clubs are BCA members and that I felt BCA should issue notice to its membership regarding the access arrangements and the implications of not applying those access arrangements. It was decided to post a notice on the caving forum as a quick and effective method of getting the message out quickly. However, as usual this did provoke the usual keyboard thumping antagonists into action. I do feel that the message has been understood and that now Alan will be a little busier. I have discussed the issues with the land agent on a number of occasions and they appear to be content with the action that has been taken.

Another problem that has arisen on Leck and Casterton Fells is that of commercial groups. This was brought to my attention by the Estate Office after two web sites had been browsed where caving on Leck and Casterton Fells was advertised. I have spoken to the organisation concerned and outlined the position of the CNCC and that of the land owner as the land owners are not happy with commercial enterprises earning money from using their land.

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 a meeting with the water authority and CNCC is to pay for some lockable signage that can be changed when there is a planned release of water, this will be managed by Graham Mollard.

CNCC Technical Group

Due to summer holidays etc. Very little has happened during the summer. In addition to Rowten Pot the anchors in Marylyn have now been decommissioned. Over the next months we would like to make a start on testing the Eco anchors in Yordas Gorge that were installed at the start of the program which form part of the long term testing programme. After these anchors have been tested we will be installing a long term test bed with the Bolt Products anchor for testing from 2032 onwards (well it won't be me because I will either be drooling while propped up in an armchair or have been scattered on some remote hillside by then).

BCA Equipment & Techniques Committee

I can confirm that we have formed a new committee with Derbyshire Caving Association called 'The Equipment Committee' an initial meeting has been held and the minutes are on the CNCC website. The intention is that we carry on as we were doing with installation and testing, but that we will not be attending BCA equipment & techniques committee meetings.

To date there has not been any communication with the BCA Equipment & Techniques Committee convenor, it had been hoped that he may contact us in an attempt to resolve the issues.

CNCC and DCA representatives will be meeting with the BCA Chairman early October in an attempt to try and resolve the issues surrounding his involvement and hopefully move forward.

On the 30/07/2012 the BCA Executive issued a statement of which this was printed *'The Committee is currently developing a new general policy on the placement of resin bonded anchors which outlines the key principles, but leaves Regions and Constituent Bodies free to use their own detailed procedures if they wish to. This is nearly complete and it is hoped that in the fullness of time this document will allow all Regions to come back "under one roof" and avoid the unnecessary duplication of effort, not to mention the ill-feeling that will potentially result from having two Committees doing what is effectively the same thing.'* To date I have not received any communication regarding this or been asked to be involved.

The only other point I will make on the issue because I know it will be covered at length, is that the BCA secretary suggested in an email that Glenn, Roy and myself had cancelled the last meeting because we did not want to discuss the BCA issues?

Training Officers report

I have been asked by Graham Mollard if he can attend BCA Training meetings on my behalf, I have agreed to this.

Les Sykes

CNCC secretary, CNCC Training Officer, CNCC Access Officer



Council of Northern Caving Clubs

Report for BCA council meeting 06/10/2012

As the CNCC representative has declined to attend all BCA meetings until the current dispute is resolved, I have prepared a brief report for the meeting.

The committee will be aware of the recent upsurge in unauthorised access by cavers on Casterton Fell especially during August. I took the unprecedented step of involving BCA at an early stage, my reasons for this were that all CNCC associate member clubs are BCA members and that I felt BCA should issue notice to its membership regarding the access arrangements and the implications of not applying those access arrangements. It was decided to post a notice on the caving forum as a quick and effective method of getting the message out quickly. However, as usual this did provoke the usual keyboard thumping antagonists into action. I do feel that the message has been understood and that now Alan Speight will be a little busier. I have discussed the issues with the land agents on a number of occasions and they appear to be content with the action that has been taken.

It is now up to the member clubs to play their part and request permits for access to the Fells where there is an agreed access agreement.

Another problem that has arisen on Leck and Casterton Fells is that of commercial groups. This was brought to my attention by the Estate Office after two web sites had been browsed where caving on Leck and Casterton Fells was advertised. I have spoken to the organisation concerned and outlined the position of the CNCC and that of the land owners; the land owners are not happy with commercial enterprises earning money from using their land.

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 a meeting with the water authority and CNCC is to pay for some lockable signage that can be changed when there is a planned release of water, this will be managed by Graham Mollard.

I have been asked by Graham Mollard if he can attend BCA Training meetings on behalf of the CNCC training Officer, I have agreed to this.

The CNCC Council meeting on the 28 September 2012 passed the following resolution.

CNCC regrets that matters have come to a head in the way they have, especially considering the valuable work all parties to the dispute do on a voluntary basis.

CNCC believes that the only way out of this impasse is for a compromise even though this will be distasteful to both sides. With these considerations in mind CNCC recommends that:

1. All CNCC representatives who have resigned from the E&T and other BCA Committees should rejoin those committees
2. Nick Williams should formally apologise and step down as convener of the BCA E&T Committee but should remain a member of that Committee so as to retain his expertise in technical matters
3. Andy Eavis should act as Convener of BCA E&T Committee until the next BCA AGM when a new Convener will be elected
4. All bolts around pitches, whether for SRT or Ladder and Lifeline, should be installed and maintained in accordance with the full protocol including the need for SRT competence of the installer
5. Bolts solely to be used for fixed aids, e.g. chains, hand-lines etc, i.e. those which could not in any circumstances be mistaken for SRT rigging bolts, could be installed by persons without SRT competence but meeting all other requirements of the protocol

All the above to take immediate effect.

Les Sykes
CNCC secretary
CNCC Training Officer
CNCC Access Officer