

COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

Important safety information about using CNCC descriptions and rigging topos

This MUST be read and understood by anyone using a CNCC-provided cave description or rigging topo

These descriptions and rigging topos are provided by the CNCC for use by experienced cavers only in assisting with trip planning and route-finding on some of the popular sporting routes in our region. They are not exhaustive, they do not cover every passage or feature, and details may have been greatly simplified to try to keep them concise and clear.

Great efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the information. Nonetheless, there are likely to be errors and (over time) an increasing number of inaccuracies due to changes in the caves and the replacement of resin anchors. The descriptions may also contain subjective viewpoints which could be open to misinterpretation. It is entirely incumbent upon all cavers to exercise appropriate care and caution when going underground using these topos and descriptions, and to have researched the trip from several other sources. Never make any safety critical decisions based on the information in these descriptions or topos.

Pull through trips must only ever be undertaken by cavers who are confident in finding the lower route out of the cave without a description, and who understand the extra precautions demanded of such trips (e.g. carrying multiple ropes).

The rope lengths stated in the rigging topos are considered the minimum length required based on average rigging. There may be errors, or your rigging may use more rope than anticipated. Therefore, it is critical that all ropes that are deployed for use have two tightened knots in both ends, to mitigate against the risks associated with the ropes not reaching the bottom of pitches.

Difficulty ratings, or 'grades' have been omitted from these descriptions. All cavers must make their own informed judgements of whether the cave is suitable for their capabilities, backed up by thorough research into the nature of the cave from numerous sources and an understanding of the capabilities of others in your group.

Many in-site ropes and ladders are mentioned throughout the descriptions. These should only ever be considered navigational markers and not safety critical belays. The CNCC does not install or maintain any fixed aids in caves other than the resin anchors shown on the topos. Never trust your safety to a rope or ladder which is left in a cave. For resin anchors you must understand the importance of belaying your rope to multiple anchors, including full traverse ropes leading to pitches, and always performing a pre-use inspection on every anchor. If any resin anchor shows movement, or fracturing in the nearby rock, it must not be used.

Rigging must always be performed to avoid any rub points or other hazards. Rigging exactly as depicted in the rigging topos does not guarantee a rub-free descent; this must be assessed and ensured by each individual caver on each pitch in every cave.

Many caves which are susceptible to danger from flooding have been highlighted in the descriptions. However, all caves, even typically dry ones, can flood in various circumstances, and it is therefore critical that the experienced caver using these descriptions makes their own judgement based on experience, extensive research and weather forecasts. Decisions to descend any cave after or during wet weather, or when wet weather is forecast, should be made based on an informed judgement backed up by thorough research from multiple sources. The critical moto which should be adhered to is "If in doubt, stay out!"

Although warnings are provided where there are some specific known hazards, the absence of a warning does not indicate that there are no hazards. Caves can (and do) change over time. Furthermore, the CNCC does not perform routine inspections or surveys of caves to look for specific hazards (e.g. loose rocks). All cavers are strongly advised to view the webpage on the CNCC website for their chosen cave to check for any warnings that have come to our attention. Experienced cavers using these descriptions must make their own evaluations for hazards throughout the duration of their trip and act appropriately to mitigate any risks.

Neither the author of the descriptions/topos or the CNCC will accept any responsibility for any damage, injury or loss (however caused) resulting from the use, misuse or misinterpretation of information in these cave descriptions or rigging topos.

BOGGARTS ROARING HOLES

May 2020

Social distancing on Dowlass Moss is guaranteed! This infrequently visited pothole is a physically demanding trip including squeezes, long crawls and awkward pitch heads. It will be accessible in moderate to damp water conditions, but not in very wet weather.

Parking:

Park in a small dirt layby (space for two cars) 50m east of the Cold Cotes junction on the upper Ingleton to Clapham road. A gate with convenient climbing rungs leads up onto the open access fell. A vague path starts a gentle ascent, bearing right after 1km, forking another 300m on (keep left) and passing through a line of shakeholes 250m later (one of which, Bridge Pot, is an open pothole immediately on the right of the track). Depart the path here on the left (aim for about 45° right of the line of shakeholes) and walk north, passing an enormous shakehole after 150m with it on your left side. Boggarts Roaring Holes are an elongated (50 x 20m) notable grouping of multiple holes 300m from the track.

Location: Grid reference SD 72853 72835

Dowlass Moss is a featureless fell with hundreds of shakeholes and often low visibility. Locating the cave (or your way off the fell), might be tricky, therefore take a map/compass or GPS. Use the grid reference above as the one in the old 'Northern Caves' is 1km too far north!

Rigging: The rigging topo is available on the CNCC website.

Navigation:

The first pitch is directly beneath a small tree roughly in the middle of the group of shakehole. A multitude of natural surface belays enable a traverse line to protect the approach to a Y-hang on opposing walls above the pitch. This gives a free hanging drop to the bottom.

From the bottom of the entrance pitch, the most obvious way on leads to the original route of the cave. However, the way on for the 2001 extensions (the most regularly visited route today) is the least obvious way. A drilled thread just prior to a squeeze through a narrow gap provides a rope belay, as the squeeze immediately bells out onto Bone Pitch with a Y-hang on opposing walls. This allows a short descent of a shored-up excavated shaft. At the bottom of Bone Pitch, an anchor will be found to commence the rope for the next pitch, which is then approached by a blasted crawl to the head of the pitch with a Y-hang across opposing walls. There is a Petzl Longlife deviation approximately 3m down.

At the bottom of the pitch the route descends a narrow section. A 5m handline from a spike will be useful to climb down and especially back up! Then, another section of blasted passageway leads to a Y-hang and the start of the next pitch (Fever Pitch). This pitch is awkward. A short traverse leads to an anchor on a 90° left bend. You are immediately over the pitch head with Y-hang bolts on opposing walls. Slings are useful here as extra footholds.

At the bottom of Fever Pitch, the way on is a flat-out section which immediately crosses two blind pits. There is a drilled thread to belay a rope to protect this and a natural thread in the roof above the second pit. This leads immediately into the start of the next pitch which includes another drilled thread, anchor and Y-hang on opposing walls. This pitch drops into Penguin Hall.

The way onwards now to Blind Man's Bluff is mainly crawling. The main passage lowers to flat out crawl and soon leads to a small drop. Half-way down the drop on the far side there is a squeeze to a junction. Turn right here and crawl flat out to another small drop of a couple metres. Down this and you are in the streamway, and the way on is a blasted crawl, Punani Passage. Along this and around couple of bends (getting progressively more flat out) arrives suddenly at Blind Man's Bluff Pitch. This is tricky and will require some awkward manoeuvres at the pitch head.

Blind Man's Bluff Pitch lands on a ledge with a continuing blind hole. Ignore this continuation hole and instead take a short flat out squeeze on the left into a tiny chamber. Beware, as you exit the squeeze immediately over the next shaft. The first anchor is on the left and a sling may be useful to exit the squeeze safely. This pitch (Loose Tooth Pitch) starts with a Y-hang on opposing walls and halfway down there is a rebelay.

At the bottom there is more blasted passageway which leads to the start of the next pitch (Frank's Pitch). This is very awkward at the top but soon bells out to land on a large ledge with rebelay. The shaft continues with a Petzl Longlife deviation approximately 5m down to another rebelay. The pitch ends on a pile of stacked rocks.

A short section of heavily blasted hading rift passage arrives at the final pitch (Terminator Pitch) with two anchors on opposing walls enabling the final descent. There is a very small amount of exploration to be enjoyed at the bottom before you commence the long climb back out.

