

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!"

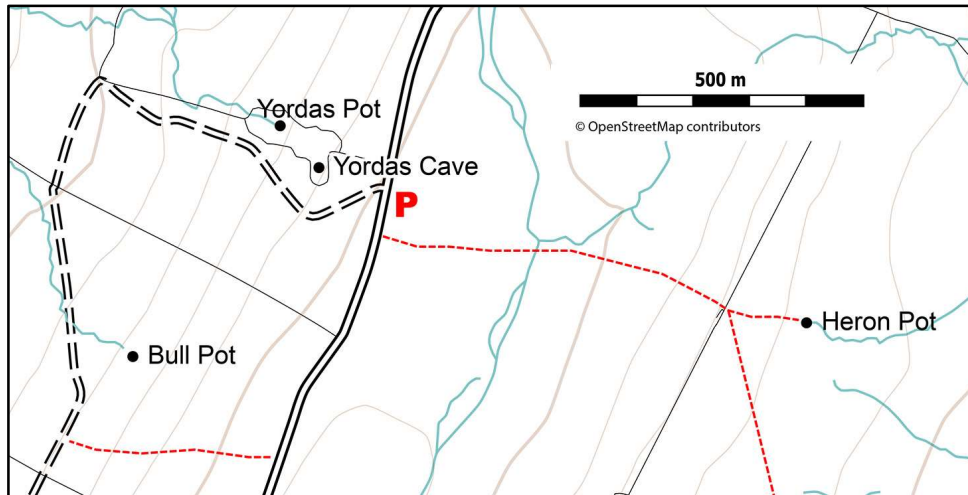
Although warnings are provided where there are some specific known hazards, the absence of a warning does not indicate that there are no hazards. Caves can (and do) change over time. Furthermore, the CNCC does not perform routine inspections or surveys of caves to look for specific hazards (e.g. loose 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.

This description covers the huge Yordas Cave (which can be explored with just wellies and a helmet and torch) and the middle and top entrances of Yordas Pot which provides a short but very dramatic and technical SRT route dropping into the north end of Yordas Cave.

Yordas Cave is generally fine in wet conditions; however, in extreme flood the water pools in the chamber (and can even flow out of the entrance). Neither Yordas Pot nor Cave should be entered under these conditions.

Yordas Pot is an active pothole, but it can be explored with care by experienced groups under slightly wet conditions. In these conditions the top entrance must be avoided, and the middle entrance used instead, which may have a lot of water entering but can still be passed. Assess the water levels carefully as you progress and rig the full Chapter House traverse to avoid the water on the pitch.



Parking:

Park in some laybys on the side of the Kingsdale Road near the gates below Yordas wood (a walled, wooded area on the left as you approach the head of the valley) (grid reference SD 7070 7913). This can become a busy spot so please park tightly and with consideration for others.

Location:

The walk-in entrance to Yordas Cave is found only 100m from the road in the wooded gully. This can be reached through either of the gates next to the parking area. Then 50m from the road, another gate leads into a deep limestone valley with the cave entrance on the left.

The middle entrance of Yordas Pot is easiest to find by ignoring the enclosure with the entrance to Yordas Cave and following the wall up the field on the north (right) side of the enclosure. About 50m further up the hill, pass through a gate on the left and go straight ahead to reach the (usually) dry streambed. Climb up the streambed for 20m to reach the middle entrance; it is the second slot down on the left of the streambed. There is an eco-anchor on the opposite side of the streambed to the entrance to commence the traverse. The top entrance can be found by continuing through trees to the top of the hill near where all the water is sinking (it is a fenced shaft).

Rigging:

The rigging topo is available on the CNCC website.

Navigation for Yordas Cave:

The walk-in entrance of Yordas Cave leads into an enormous and impressive river chamber. Downstream can be followed for a short distance, becoming a crawl in the stream, which in non-flood conditions can be followed for approximately 20m to a resurgence exit. Upstream leads to a waterfall where the Chapter House pitch from Yordas Pot enters from above.

Navigation for Yordas Pot:

Top entrance: The top entrance is an open shaft starting with a traverse line from a low anchor in the streambed to a Y-hang at the top of the pitch. A natural deviation a short distance down avoids the water. The pitch lands at the start of a low wet crawl following the water. After 40m the middle entrance comes in on the left and after 80m the main pitch (the Chapter House) is reached.

Middle entrance: The middle entrance involves a short traverse to a 5m pitch leading almost immediately to another 5m pitch with an awkward traverse to reach the anchor on the right-hand wall. At the bottom follow the passage and turn left to a 1m step down into a pool. The water from the top entrance is then met at a T-junction. Go left (downstream) and the passage enlarges until reaching the main pitch (the Chapter House).

Main pitch (The Chapter House): This is a surprisingly technical but short section of SRT, providing all possible situations and manoeuvres including two very challenging traverses. The route starts as an exposed high traverse along the left wall, the further section of which has very few footholds. At the end, a 5m descent reaches a 2m long hanging traverse along the wall, leading away from the water to the final descent of the pitch. There are two possible deviations on this final hang (-2m and -6m) to help avoid the falling water, both of which are tight and technical to pass.

The Chapter House Pitch can be creatively rigged as a pull-through. However, under anything except drought condition, this will result in an extremely aquatic and potentially very hazardous descent.