

# 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.

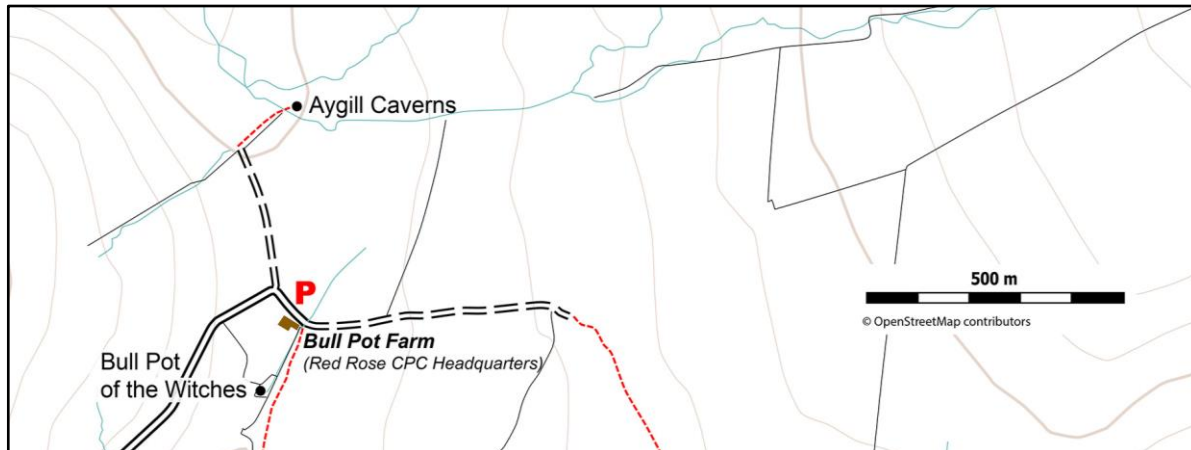
Rigging must always be performed to avoid any rub points or other hazards. Rigging exactly as depicted in the rigging topos does not guarantee a rub-free descent; this must be assessed and ensured by each individual caver on each pitch in every cave.

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.

Aygill Caverns lies in a section of usually dry streambed; after heavy rain the entrance and cascades becomes hazardous. Despite the short length, the lower passages of the cave beyond the cascades are complex and maze-like and additional navigational guides and ideally the survey are required. Take great care in the boulders within the entrance as frequent movement has been reported in the past.



## Parking:

Park at the end of the public road near Bull Pot Farm or at Bull Pot Farm itself (with permission of Red Rose members)

## How to find:

Grid reference: SD 66345 81870

Follow the track leading north (left on the approach to Bull Pot Farm) for 300m. After a gate, go right and follow the wall down into a stream valley. Go upstream (right) for a short distance (approximately 100m) to locate the entrance surrounded by blocks on the left under a small cliff.

## Rigging:

The rigging topo from 'Northern Caving' is available on the CNCC website (courtesy of CNCC Technical Group).

## Navigation:

Climb down through the boulders to reach a crawl. Only a short distance into the crawl, on the left, is a 2.5m climb up a polished chimney into another crawl leading to First Chamber. At the far side of the chamber, Traverse Pitch can be located behind a large boulder. An exposed traverse over boulders is required to reach the pitch head where a single anchor provides a suitable hang.

At the bottom of the pitch a stream is met and the way on is down a damp slot/rift leading down into a descending crawl which reaches a small chamber and Cascade Pitch. A natural thread provides a belay for the traverse and a single-anchor hang completes the descent.

There are various routes from the bottom of Cascade pitch.

Upstream can be explored for several minutes but soon degenerates into tight cobbled inlets.

The most inviting route is to follow the main streamway water downstream via some very sporting cascade climbs (these can be particularly challenging in higher water conditions). At the bottom, the water disappears into an impenetrable passage, however, there is an extensive amount of cave with numerous oxbows spanning various levels still to explore. A trip to the New Year Series and the sump is particularly rewarding, but a description is extremely challenging to write. Anyone seeking to explore beyond the cascades is advised to consult the Braemoor description: [www.braemoor.co.uk/caving/route23.shtml](http://www.braemoor.co.uk/caving/route23.shtml) or the RRCPC description: [www.rrcpc.org.uk/easegill/text/aygill.htm](http://www.rrcpc.org.uk/easegill/text/aygill.htm)

Go carefully and keep a close eye on your route back!