

COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

British Caving Association

Officers and Meet's Secretary Reports for 16th January 2016 Committee Meeting

Chairman's Report

I have had the yearly communication from SABIC UK Petrochemicals pipeline managers to remind clubs and individuals that no digging is permitted 50 metres either side of their pipelines. There are maps on the CNCC website, however as far as I can see the only potential problem could be near Grassington. If you are at all unsure please look at the website (these pipelines run at very high pressure).

A new agreement has been negotiated by our access officer and Natural England for access to Birks Fell Cave, which I have duly signed and returned. I will not elaborate but leave it to our access officer to explain. Thank you for your effort Johnny.

Other than the above nothing much has happened other than rain and more rain.

I wish everyone a happy new year and plenty of new discoveries, if it ever stops raining

Roy Holmes – CNCC Chairman

Secretary's Report

It should once again be a productive and eventful meeting!

We have constitutional changes to discuss in this meeting, which will go some way towards addressing our lack of voting representation for non-club cavers (many thanks to Kay, Ric and Pat for working to put these together). Plus we have an opportunity to take advantage of the enthusiasm of one of our non-club caver (Tim Allen) to pursue better access. Sometimes putting differences in approach aside, and working together towards the common goal (in this case, greater access) is what is necessary. The current stalemate at Langcliffe Estate as an example of where it has been made clear that no further progress will be made unless such collaborations are made.

On advice from Ric/Johnny I have written to the Yorkshire Dales Local Access Forum to officially request their involvement in helping improve access in any way they can, with particular reference to the Langcliffe Estate situation. Separately, I have yet to receive any response to my letter to the land agents requesting consideration of access improvements on Casterton Fell.

I have been pleased to hear that the Coates family are happy to continue the permit-free arrangement on Fountains Fell this year. Many thanks to Alan Speight for continuing to act as an ambassador of the CNCC in this. I am equally pleased to see an extension to the open season at Birks Fell and an increase in permit availability at Robinson's Pot. My thanks to Johnny for his work here.

The December newsletter was put on hold due to a slight lack of content to fill the four pages (we are about half a page short). It is packed (almost) full of interesting news with the Heritage Lottery Fund award as one of the headlines, but we just need a little extra content. Hopefully by the end of January more content will come to light and we will get this finalised.

I have (as instructed at the last meeting) written a letter to the instructed caving community (sent to the BCA Training Committee and the ACI). Both acknowledged this, and I am, at some point going to be meeting with a representative from the ACI to discuss ways that the CNCC could potentially work with the instructed caving community in the future. Either way, there is an open dialogue and the realisation now that the CNCC are keen to work with them, which is good.

I was contacted in early November to ask if the CNCC would sponsor a small prize for the CHECC event (a copy of Les and Glenn's excellent new book, Northern Caving). We did this, and as a result the CNCC logo appears on their merchandise for the event; a small step towards helping to dispel the myth amongst many younger cavers (a one which I have heard first hand on more than one occasion) that the CNCC is somehow opposed to supporting student cavers.

Matt Ewles – CNCC Secretary

Treasurer's Report

Financial Status as of 30th December 2015:

Business Current Account: £2760.07

Business Saver Account: £18891.43

The new signatories for both accounts were in place by early October 2015 and outstanding invoices (as listed in the September report) settled.

There has been no contact from CRO's Swaledale, UWFRA and CRO, re the agreed funding to enhance communication equipment.

The Corporation Tax bill of £65.20 has been paid to HMRC.

As the Committee will already be aware, we have agreed and committed to paying the £2000 contribution to the Heritage Lottery fund over 4 years. No money has been requested/issued yet. £23.30 (includes postage) has been spent on a Northern Cave Rigging Guide as sponsorship for the CHECC event.

It has been agreed that some financial support (<£100 - tbc) can be given to purchase cleaning equipment for graffiti removal in Katnot Cave. This work is due to be carried out at the end of January 2016.

The only other foreseeable transactions before March are payment for printing the next newsletter and any room booking fees.

An application has been made to Barclays, to access the CNCC Business Current Account online. This is been described as 'Dual Authority', whereby both read access and payments will be possible. It will still require both signatories to sign digitally before a payment can be made.

Pete Bann, CNCC Treasurer, 12th January 2016

Conservation Officer's Report

Natural England's (Andrew Hinde) proposal for funding for Conservation projects through the Heritage Lottery-funded Ingleborough Dales Landscape Partnership has been successful. This means that in return for agreeing to funded £500 of volunteer travel expenses over the next 4 years, we have access to over £30,000 of funding, allowing us to take on some larger projects that have been beyond our means and resources up to now.

CNCC is supporting BPC in a project to clean up graffiti in Katnot Cave. This cave is used by youngsters on outside education courses, and consensus is that it would be helpful if their first experience of the underground world did not give them the message that graffiti is acceptable and normal part of caving. Advice has been sought widely as to how to clean modern graffiti without inadvertently damaging any historic engravings. A full photographic survey has been carried out, and a method statement drawn up. Work is provisionally scheduled for the weekend of 29-31 January. Liverpool and York University clubs have expressed interest in being involved in conservation work, and they have been invited to join in the BPC Katnot project.

Other commitments have meant that the Northern Caves Monitoring database has been in abeyance over the summer, but work is expected to resume shortly.

Kay Easton – CNCC Conservation Officer

No reports received from Access Officer or Training Officer or any other representatives. However, a verbal report from our BCA representative on the recent BCA meeting will be delivered.

Meet's Secretary Reports

Ingleborough Estate and Aygill Caverns – Geoff Whittaker

Aygill Caverns

During 2015, permit requests for Aygill Caverns have been very quiet, and only 10 permits have been issued to clubs. Looking into 2016, only one permit has been issued so far for Aygill Caverns. There have been no issues raised by the Estate Office.

Ingleborough Estate/Allotment and Newby Moss

During 2015, there has been a lot of activity in permit requests for caves and potholes on the Ingleborough, Allotment and Newby Moss areas, the majority coming from BCA member clubs with quite a few BCA DIM's and CIM's also requesting permits.

A total of 43 BCA member clubs have requested permits with a further 6 requests coming from BCA CIM's and 9 from BCA DIM's. In total, 235 permits have been issued during 2015, 171 were for BCA member clubs, 40 for BCA CIM's and 24 for BCA DIMs.

Looking ahead into 2016, 10 BCA member clubs and 1 BCA DIM have requested permits, with a total of 33 permits issued so far, 29 to BCA member clubs and 4 to BCA DIMs.

The most popular requests have been for entrances into the Gaping Gill system, Long Kin East, Long Kin West, Rift Pot, Juniper Gulf and Hurnell Moss, although all areas have had a good selection. A lot of the permit requests have been short notice, and most have had their permits electronically returned within the day.

There have been no issues raised from the Ingleborough Estate/Ingham and Yorke.

All other areas: Nothing to report