

COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

British Caving Association

Officers and Meets Secretary Reports for 9th March 2019 Annual General Meeting

Chairman's Report

This has been a very productive year for the CNCC with some significant achievements recorded in the following reports. Some of these have involved enormous personal effort over a long period.

An apparently simple task can take days or even weeks of repeated effort to bring to a successful conclusion. I would like to thank those people on behalf of all the cavers who are going to benefit from their skills and hard work.

The last year has seen some controversial and unilateral installations of fixed aids in caves which have managed without such things for half a century since their initial exploration. There seems to be a tolerance to the cumulative addition of various caving aids (fixed and "temporary") as technology advances and techniques develop. This is understandable. Open debate may provide a focus and a sustainable way forward. Unilateral action by individuals within caving is unlikely to produce the sustainable outcome caves deserve, and future cavers will demand. All our actions within all caves should be commensurate with the BCA Cave Conservation Code.

We accept that cavers sometimes misjudge things. The installers of these fixed aids have skills and enthusiasm that CNCC could benefit from should they wish to get involved with our work.

The CNCC has a simple Fixed Aids Policy which can be found on our website.

The CNCC has made efforts to be more outward looking and engage with "influencers" from other institutions outside of our caving world. An interesting development from this is a request from a charitable conservation body to assist them with the production of educational material pertaining to the geology and caves of the North Pennines. The charity is the brain child of the owner of Fairy Holes Cave. Since his first caving experience 18 months ago at FH Cave he has appreciated even more about how the geology underpins terrestrial ecology and why caves must be conserved for their intrinsic value and the scientific record they preserve. I look forward to being able to provide more details about this in the near future.

Finally, I would like to thank the individuals who undertake conservation work on their regular caving or surface ramblings. They just get on and do the right thing instead of leaving it to others. Removing litter does not require debate.

Andrew Hinde – CNCC Chairman

Secretary's Report

Membership:

At the last AGM the CNCC membership was discussed, due to us having many member clubs who could not be contacted and who had not participated in the CNCC for over my four years (at the time) as Secretary. After the AGM I contacted the following clubs:

Airedale Caving Club #
Bolton Speleo Club #
Bowland Pennine Mountain Rescue Team
CNCC Technical Group
Elysium Underground Group #
Flat Learning Curve Pothole Club #
Lancashire Caving and Climbing Club #
Morley Pothole Club #
North York Moors Caving Club
Pegasus Caving Club #
Pendle Caving Club
Swaledale Outdoor Club
St Helens Caving Club

Those clubs marked with # replied:

Pegasus Caving Club: Their Treasurer replied to confirm they were still active, requested that membership is retained, but made no commitment to attending any future meetings.

Flat Learning Curve Pothole Club: Replied to confirm that their membership exists as a 'historical anomaly'. They are still an active club but have no intention to attend any future CNCC meetings. They suggested that they are removed from our membership lists.

Lancashire Caving and Climbing Club: Confirmed that their club only ever really had a few active caving members, and caving activities have now ceased. The representative said he is now a member of RRCPC and is kept well informed by their representative.

Bolton Speleo Club: Their representative confirmed that they are still an active club. They would like to remain a part of the CNCC. Their representative used to attend meetings but became disillusioned and struggled for time to continue. He said that he would try to attend future meetings.

Elysium Underground Group: Their representative confirmed that they are still active and have eight members. Their usual representative has left the country, and they haven't had anyone who can make it to Hellifield. They aspire to remain involved but cannot make any commitment.

Morley Pothole Club: Are still an active club and said they would aim to participate more in future.

Airedale Caving Club: Confirmed they are still active with several caving trips per year. They are still keen but could not make any promises to attend any future CNCC meetings. They are supporting of the CNCC and its aims but would understand if we needed to remove their membership.

The outcome of this is that the following clubs have had their membership revoked, either due to not being contactable, or based on their request/advice:

Bowland Pennine Mountain Rescue Team
CNCC Technical Group
Flat Learning Curve Pothole Club
Lancashire Caving and Climbing Club
North York Moors Caving Club
Pendle Caving Club
Swaledale Outdoor Club
St Helens Caving Club

Furthermore, in February this year, I received an email from the **Northumbrian Speleo Group** confirming that after 32 years of activity (many of these as an active participant in the CNCC), their club has now closed. Their membership has been discontinued.

This leaves us with **30 full member clubs** who have either participated in the CNCC at some point over the past five years, or who have specifically asked to retain their membership. I am aware of two full member clubs who have not been involved much in the last five years, who may be making an appearance at this AGM, and I look forward to welcoming them back.

Historic documents:

In mid-2018 I completed the digitisation of all CNCC AGM documents dating back to 1964, which were amongst a large crate of old documents handed to me by Ric and Pat Halliwell at the start of that year. These have all be uploaded to the website meetings page. They make for some interesting reading. I have since acquired a large package of committee meeting minutes spanning a similar timeframe, which await some free time to digitise (they may be waiting a while).

Newsletters:

Two newsletters (7 and 8) have been published since the last AGM, the latter being a bumper issue comprising eight pages rather than the usual four, which really shows off the excellent work being done by the CNCC on behalf of northern cavers. Newsletter 9 is currently being prepared and if the amount of content I currently have drafted is anything to go by, it will be another eight pages! The modest costs of publishing and posting hard copies of these (~£80-100/issue) is very little for the amount of engagement we gain as a result, and represents excellent value for money.

Online Booking System:

Many of you will remember the presentation of the new online booking system from the last AGM. At the time it was in beta-testing. Following excellent efforts by Tim, Gary and Geoff, the system was officially launched at the start of November, covering the caves of Ingleborough Estate. Some initial teething issues were few and far between, and the system has worked extremely well indeed. It now provides an excellent compromise for cavers and the landowner alike, and has been well embraced by many cavers. Geoff and Gary have included statistics on usage in their reports.

Access:

Following a directive from the previous AGM, all caves on the CNCC website were updated to clarify whether they are on access land. In terms of access issues to address, it's certainly been a busy year,

including the issues with Langcliffe Hall Estate, which have ended in a most satisfactory situation via the new Memorandum of Understanding. Access issues at High Birkwith, Kingsdale and Barbondale have recently been dealt with. Tim covers all of these, and more, in his excellent report. The energy, enthusiasm and time Tim has given to this role since taking it on has been exemplary and the CNCC and northern caving is in a much better position now thanks to his hard work.

Anchors/E&T:

Simon continues to do a great job as Anchor coordinator. You will see from his report that in addition to the role, he has also been leading the way for identifying a new resin to address the 'shrinkage' issues encountered previously (which explains some of the wobbly anchors). It is a shame to see he is looking to step away from the role this year, and I hope that the CNCC can continue to benefit from his knowledge, passion and expertise in other capacities in the future.

Conservation:

Projects have continued at a great rate over the last year, and Kay covers these all in her report. I am also thankful to Andrew for taking up the matter of removing the Kingsdale Master Cave metal steps on behalf of the CNCC. Sadly, further such instances of unilateral cave modification have somewhat overshadowed proceedings lately and I look forward to a healthy discussion on this.

I was particularly impressed by the recent take-up for the Capstan winch training in February. The CNCC now owns this petrol winch and it can be borrowed for conservations works. The fact that so many people from different clubs wanted to be trained in its use, clearly shows the enthusiasm for conservation works not only within the CNCC, but within clubs across our region.

GDPR:

Yes, GDPR still exists, and is perhaps one of our least favourite phrases of 2018 (only second to 'Brexit'). To help break the confusion, the CNCC published our own GDPR guidelines document for caving clubs, compiled for us by Pete Hambly of the Northern Pennine Club. This was published in August and is available on our website publications page.

Cave descriptions:

Descriptions for the following routes have been uploaded to the CNCC website over the last year:

- Notts II (including route to Lost Johns' Cave) as part of the Leck Fell Master Cave guide
- Sunset Hole
- Hardrawkin Pot
- Roaring Hole
- Robinsons' Pot
- Caves of Scotland (an extensive compilation of the major Scottish caves, which have also been added to our CNCC website database; see Webmaster report).

Several other descriptions have also been extensively updated to improve their accuracy and clarity (mostly following my own trips to visit them). Numerous new topos have been added (see Simon's report for details of caves anchored over the last year) and several corrections to existing topos have been made, with thanks to various groups who have reported errors.

The download statistics in the Webmaster report make for fascinating reading!

Promoting the CNCC:

As discussed last year, work is underway to create a display for the CNCC to take to events such as Hidden Earth. Display boards will be borrowed from the YSS (with thanks) and work is underway on the layout and content. This will include two large free-standing banners. It is hoped that these will have uses at other events too. The workload in building this is high, but I am determined to get this in place for Hidden Earth 2019, with help from Gary and other CNCC Officers.

British Caving Association:

Many of you will know that several of the CNCC Officers and co-opted individuals have been involved in various capacities with the BCA for the last few years. Tim Allen has represented the CNCC at BCA meetings. It is fair to say that the appraisal of the BCA by myself, Tim and Andrew has been less than glowing, and we are in agreement that some serious reform is needed.

As part of this, the CNCC issued a series of proposals to see funding rules for Regional Councils overhauled; a small matter in the grand scheme of things, but one that has an immediate impact on what the CNCC can, and cannot claim money for, and how BCA funds are distributed across the five Regional Councils. These proposals were met with varying degrees of success, and discussion of the outcomes are something that goes beyond the remit of this AGM, but which need to be discussed in more detail with the 2019-2020 Committee to see if any further proposals are needed.

The CNCC Committee last year authorised those involved with both the CNCC and BCA to come up with some ideas for BCA reform and to see if these were something that should be pushed with the backing of the CNCC (or even as direct CNCC proposals). These are up for discussion at this AGM.

Since the AGM agenda was published, things have moved on slightly, and I have, against my better judgement, put myself forward to stand as Secretary of the BCA in June. As part of my application I will be submitting a series of personal proposals for reform, some of which are similar to those that are up for discussion at our AGM, including universal membership and BCA website overhaul. On a personal level it would be interesting to know if the CNCC would back such proposals.

All northern cavers are reminded that the BCA AGM is in our region this year; Sunday 9th June at Horton in Ribblesdale village hall, 10:30am. All BCA member individuals and clubs have a vote (bring your membership card and/or letter of authorisation from your club) to vote. Full details are on the BCA website. It would be good to get a strong northern contingent present to support change.

Finally:

I am happy to continue as CNCC Secretary for 2019-2020, as there are some initiatives that I am keen to see to fruition, including the Hidden Earth display and the online booking system in other regions (subject to a successful outcome in Tim's discussions with the landowners). Clearly however if I am elected BCA Secretary, the workload is going to have a serious impact on my free time. I am therefore seeking to take on an 'Assistant Secretary' to help ease the CNCC workload. Anyone willing to give up a little time to help with some CNCC Secretarial duties, please do get in touch.

Matt Ewles – CNCC Secretary

Treasurer's Report

Following the agreement by the CNCC committee that the accounts should be verified by a volunteer CNCC member club, rather than pay the cost of an accountant, Craven PC have once again volunteered to verify the 2018 accounts for the 2019 AGM. The attached letter from Pat and Ric Halliwell verifies this report as accurate. The process is a little different from that of an auditors' report, in that it verifies, by inspection of bank statements, invoices, receipts and working spreadsheet that this report for the 2018 financial year is correct.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE (Current account)

Balance from 2017 **£3644.84**

INCOME

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| 2017 BCA Annual Funding Grant | £480.90 |
| 2017 BCA Anchor Replacement Grant | £3900.00* |
| Mileage Expenses from Natural England re Foul Pot | £117.90 |
| Donation | £500.00 |
| Shuttleworth Pot Guide (x2) | £10.00 |
| Training 1 st Aid Course | £90.00 |
| TOTAL INCOME | £5098.80 |

EXPENSES

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Meetings (Room Hire) | £90.00 |
| Secretarial, postage & 'phone calls | £202.50 |
| Web Access (not BCA claimable) | £57.96 |
| A&C | £12.36 |
| A&C Purchase of Anchor Resin | £27.28 |
| A&C Purchase of 2x Northern Caves (CHECC prizes 2017/2018) | £60.00 |
| A&C Purchase of copies of Caves & Karst (re: donation) | £200.00 |
| A&C GG Track (Stories in Stone 2018) | £616.50 |
| A&C GG Track (Stories in Stone 2018) | £490.50 |
| A&C Smeagol Pot Capping (Stories in Stone 2018) | £164.25 |
| A&C Smeagol Pot Capping Lintels (Stories in Stone 2018) | £225.23 |
| A&C Foul Pot Fencing (Stories in Stone 2018) | £117.90 |
| A&C Southerscales Work (Stories in Stone 2018) | £64.35 |
| Training 1 st Aid Course | £350.00** |
| Transfer to Business Premium Account | £4000.00 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | £6678.83 |

Balance to 2019 **£2064.81**

*BCA Grant for replacement anchors.

**Claiming BCA grant towards this.

SIS has dropped CNCC funding contribution requirements for 2018 & 2019 (£1000 total).

Craven Pothole Club

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4 February 2019

CNCC Accounts 2018-19

Dear Pete

We have checked the bank statements, claims and receipts, summaries of cheques issued and payments received and after raising a small number of minor queries, which you have resolved entirely to our satisfaction, we are happy to state that all monies expended have been accurately accounted for. Similarly all income has been correctly recorded and the bank statements are in full agreement with the records of all transactions. A suggestion was made to make a slight change in wording but further discussion proved this to be impossible this year.

Although we are in no way involved with CNCC Finances, apart from checking that there are no mistakes in the accounts, we do believe that CNCC needs to seek a way of increasing its income in future years.

With all best wishes



Dr RA Halliwell, President Craven Pothole Club
Mrs PC Halliwell, Hon Librarian Craven Pothole Club

CNCC BUSINESS CURRENT (COMMUNITY) ACCOUNT:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Balance 1st January 2018: | £3644.84 |
| Interest received: | £0 |
| Balance 30th December 2018: | £2064.81 |

CNCC BUSINESS PREMIUM ACCOUNT

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Balance 31st December 2017: | £14503.23 |
| Interest received: | £30.03 |
| Transfer from Community Account: | £4000.00 |
| Balance 30th December 2016: | £18533.26 |

ASSETS: Makita DPC6430 12" cutter, value new (2013) £576.00

I am prepared to stand as Treasurer for the next 12 months.

Pete Bann – CNCC Treasurer

BCA Grant to Regional Councils: CNCC Claim 2018

The CNCC Treasurer will be submitting a claim to BCA for a total of **£507.14**, comprised of the following budget heads:

Sub Budget Head - **Meetings** (Covers - photocopy, postage, room hire, stationary, phone bills, travel expenses of officers to meetings. Does not cover - travel expenses of members)

Meetings: £292.50: comprising:

Room Hire: £90.00

Photocopying, Postage and 'phone calls: £202.50

CNCC officers do not claim mileage.

Sub Budget Head - **Conservation & Access** (Covers - Negotiating access to caves and mines, gating of entrances, stabilization (and opening up of alternative/safer) of entrances, working with landowner to maintain access, payment of "peppercorn" rents for access, other liaison and public relations work related to maintaining access and promoting conservation, travel expenses for meetings, photocopy, postage, stationary, phone bills. Does not cover - digging as part of new exploration)

Conservation & Access: £39.64 comprising:

£12.36: Annual access agreement for Fairy Holes/Mongo Gill.

£27.28: resin for installation of replacement bolts.

Sub Budget Head - **Insurance - No expenditure in 2018 under this budget head**

Sub Budget Head – **Publications & Information - No expenditure in 2018 under this budget head**

Sub Budget Head – **Website – No allowable expenditure in 2018 under this budget head**

Sub Budget Head – **Training** – Grants are available for all types of training events for “recreational” cavers from Training Committee.

Training: £175 (7 persons at £25 each) for:

Cavers First Aid Course (£260 net cost to CNCC).

Pete Bann – CNCC Treasurer

Conservation Officer's Report

Teams of CNCC Volunteers have been active during the year, with support from Natural England and from the Lottery Heritage-funded Stories in Stone project. During the year, project management of the Stories in Stone cave conservation work has passed from Natural England to CNCC.

Work on installing a post and rail fence around FOUL Pot, postponed from 2017, was completed at the end of March.

Several generations of cave digging and exploratory equipment was removed from several sites deep within Roaring Hole. This decomposing timber and plastic pipe were a danger to cave habitat and cavers alike. It was hauled to the surface up several vertical pitches. The material was removed from the fell and recycled wherever possible.

In May, CNCC volunteers undertook repair to the track at Gaping Gill.

In November, CNCC volunteers responded to a request from Yorkshire Wildlife Trust for assistance in clearing the pond on Southerscales of an overgrowth of reeds.

Planning is under way for a clean-up in Crackpot of mud that has been deliberately splattered across formations.

It is good to see the amount of independent conservation works being carried out by cavers in the region, for example replacing the shoring in Rift Pot. CNCC is always ready to try to assist cavers with conservation projects – please get in touch if you think we could be useful.

New volunteers are always welcome, for weekend or weekday working parties. No specific skills are necessary, but if you have them, we will do our best to make use of them. On the job training is given as needed. Occasionally there may be the opportunity to attend a training course. Tools will be provided, but you are responsible for providing your own protective clothing - stout footwear, preferably with steel toe caps, stout gloves, weatherproof clothing, helmet. You will also need to provide your own packed lunch and hot drinks.

This year CNCC volunteers have had the opportunity to be trained on the capstan winch that has been purchased for CNCC use.

Those CNCC volunteers who attended the First Aid course in 2016 now need to renew their certificates. I have received a very reasonable quotation of £65 per person from the supplier of the well received course that was held early in 2018. For 8 people, this works out as £520, slightly above the £500 limit that can be approved by the Treasurer, and I seek approval to go ahead with this course. First priority will be given to CNCC volunteers, but any spare places may be offered to the wider caving community.

If you'd like to be placed on the mailing list to be informed of future projects, please contact Kay Easton on conservation@cncc.org.uk, or use the link on the CNCC website.

Kay Easton – CNCC Conservation Officer

Access Officer's Report

Greetings to all at CNCC, northern cavers and beyond. I hope to see you all at the AGM this year. Fortunately, I am able to keep my report short as much of my efforts over the last year have been well recorded in reports and the excellent CNCC newsletter.

Access arrangements

This year the online cave booking system for Ingleborough was firstly trialled and then fully adopted replacing the tedious paper permit system which went before it. Full marks to Gary and Geoff for designing and administering the system respectively. Also credit to Matt for his role in promoting the new system to cavers including his 'on screen' Youtube appearance. It has been operating well since October and Gary is looking out some stats on usage for us. With the system running smoothly I have begun negotiations with the Leck and Casterton landowners. I have no progress yet to report but I am sure it will continue to be my main focus for this coming year.

This year we completed a new access arrangement with the Langcliffe Hall Estate. Having established better relations with the estate representatives several meetings and correspondences led us to finally sign a Memorandum of Understanding. This gave effective free access for all cavers to the caves on the estate's access land and gave free permissive access to the caves on private land. It was a very amicable and satisfying end to what had been a lengthy process for CNCC.

At last year's AGM we agreed to update our advice regarding access to caves on access land. The intention was for us to be informative and reflect honest advice on the issues regarding cave access under the CRow Act. Matt and Gary have updated the web site accordingly and promoted the effort in our media. Many thanks to them.

Access issues

I have responded to a number of access 'incidents' throughout the year. In Barbondale there was a conflict between the shoot syndicate and other users of the land (not particularly cavers I should say). The shoot takes place in September and October and we have agreed to send out an advice notice to cavers asking them to be aware of the issues. This should go out in the next newsletter and on the website later in the year. There was a small issue at Keld Head where the farmer wanted to change the traditional access route to the resurgence. This was passed onto the CDG who sorted the situation immediately. Braida Garth has been under new ownership for a couple of years now and it is good to report access in Kingsdale has improved if anything.

However good access arrangements may be with a particular landowner they are always vulnerable to changes in ownership. That is the main reason I have been such a supporter of a legal right of access to the countryside and caves in particular. High Birkwith Farm went on the market last year and new owners moved in at Christmas. The caves on this land, Calf Holes, Browgill, Birkwith etc are all important novice caves and a loss of access would be a serious knock to our sport. I tried to ensure that cavers were on their best behaviour so that the new owners gained a good first impression of our activity. CNCC have made some representation to the owners, but in the end they have made their own decisions. Access to the caves remains, but parking will be charged at a high cost to make people think carefully about how they visit the area. The owners will install an honesty box but do not want cavers calling at the house. Cavers are still free to access the area and caves on foot if they park sensibly elsewhere.

Last year I appealed to clubs to clean up unsightly abandoned digs. Untidy surface digs do attract negative attention from landowners, land managers, farmers and members of the public and it reflects poorly on our caving community. The CNCC conservation team do what they can and I am pleased to say a number of clubs responded to the appeal and made an excellent job of tidying up some digs. There is more that needs to be done. Please put at least one tidy up project onto your agenda for the coming year.

The National Park

I have continued to develop relations with the Yorkshire Dales National Park on behalf of CNCC. I've attended the annual Cave and Crag Access group meeting and the NP management plan forum and presentation. Mark Allum, the access and engagement officer retired and has been replaced by Rebecca Greenfield and I have also met with her. I was invited to give a talk to the entire NP staff at their annual forum which was very well received. Finally I reached agreement with Henry Bowring of the Whelprigg estate (Casterton) to erect a Three Counties Cave System interpretation board at Bull Pot Farm. This was designed in conjunction with the NP and CNCC made a contribution to the cost. This is credited on the board which is now in place. Generally speaking, the profile of caving has been raised at the NP and I hope to continue to work closely with them.

Public Relations and media

The initiative to present copies of the Caves & Karst of the Yorkshire Dales (volume two) to landowners has gone down very well. Nearly all of the first batch of twenty have been given away and another twenty ordered. Many thanks to BCRA and the authors for their generous help in supplying the books. Not only does it help in understanding the caves under their land but also makes a good foundation for discussion should any problems arise.

Although not necessarily on behalf of CNCC I continue to promote the positive side of caving where I can. This year I was again involved in the Kendal Mountain Festival and through that took Mike Bushell of BBC Breakfast caving. I've done interviews on the Weather Channel, Radio York and helped out the producers of InsideOut to make a programme on the Sir Francis Level Mine. Most recently I have been approached for advice by producers wishing to make a TV piece on the first complete through trip of the Three Counties System. My honest appraisal of their plans may well have dampened their enthusiasm. We shall see.

I am happy to stand again for another year and hope to see through further improvements to access. However, I don't see this as a lifetime work and would love to see the emergence of an assistant who could take over in a year or two.

Good caving!

Tim Allen – CNCC Access Officer

Training Officer's Report

No Training Officer in post at present.

Anchor Coordinator and Equipment and Techniques Representative Report

The number of anchor installations reported by the installers in the last year is 44. Projects have been completed in Roaring Hole, Marble Sink, Jockey Hole, Quaking Pot, County Pot and Aquamole. I have been attempting to carry out an audit of the anchors. The anchor records are not up-to-date because I have been having difficulty getting information from all installers and a number of anchors are unaccounted for.

A small number of loose anchors have been reported. Replacement of loose anchors had stopped because of doubt over the resin. Now that the new resin has been approved replacements can start again.

A meeting of the E&T Committee was held by Webex in April 2019. The minutes are not yet published. The availability of Hydrajaws testers was discussed and a Hydrajaws should be made available if it is needed by the CNCC. Reimbursement of the CNCC anchor installations was endorsed. The issue of loose anchors was discussed. I was preparing a report on loose anchors and a first draft has been made available to members of the E&T. My report on concrete screws was discussed and their use was welcomed. The selection and testing of another resin anchor was given support.

Much of my effort over the past year has been in selecting and testing the new resin^^. I have also been working on selecting and testing an anchor which is intended for use nationwide. This has been done in coordination with the BCA E&T Committee. A meeting of the E&T is being planned but a date has not been decided.

I am working towards stepping away from the role of Anchor Coordinator. I think it would be beneficial for a more active caver with more enthusiasm and better connections in the caving community to hold the position. I intend to resign in the coming year.

Simon Wilson – CNCC Anchor Coordinator and BCA E&T representative

^^ see Simon's report to the January 2019 Committee meeting for more details of this new resin.

Webmaster's Report

Google Analytics

Page views (per week) for 12 months from 1 March 2018 to 28 February 2019...



Previous 12 months for comparison...



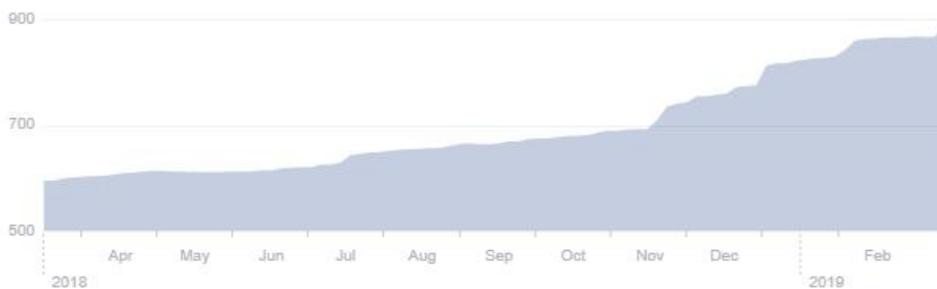
Total page views in the last 12 months: 105,660. Previous 12 months: 68,775 (42% increase).

| Mar 18 | Apr 18 | May 18 | Jun 18 | Jul 18 | Aug 18 | Sep 18 | Oct 18 | Nov 18 | Dec 18 | Jan 19 | Feb 19 |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 6322 | 8254 | 5334 | 8381 | 8940 | 7682 | 6850 | 8856 | 13082 | 12516 | 9605 | 9838 |
| -49% | +83% | +19% | +38% | +107% | +24% | +66% | +33% | +72% | +140% | +27% | +22% |

% is increase on same period in the previous year.

Facebook

As at 5 Mar 2018 we have 890 page likes (+296 since last AGM report) and 921 followers (+302 since last AGM report).



Page likes in the last 12 months.

Twitter

As at 5 March 2018 we have 367 followers (comparison data not recorded for last year).

Online Booking System

The online booking system was official launched on 1 November 2018. So far it has been very successful with only minimal bugs reported. It has been extremely well used with several very active and regular users since its launch.

Since the system was launched on 1 November 2018, there are 239 registered users and 311 individual bookings have been made.

The booking system was promoted online by a short video created by me and featuring Matt explaining the system. It can be seen on the CNCC YouTube channel, UK Caving and on Facebook.



The Facebook video has been boosted at a cost of £30 and as a result generated a great deal more views and traffic to the website. The advert was seen by anyone on Facebook with an interest in caving or similar outdoor activities. The video has had 10,200 views (with 3,319 of those coming from the paid advert) with a direct engagement of 1,700 people.

Feedback has been 100% positive with lots of people contacting me just to tell me how useful it is and thanking the CNCC for our great efforts in access.

I would like to also thank Geoff, Tim and Matt who have also put a great deal of work into this project.

Scottish Caves

Several of the more popular Scottish caves have been added to the CNCC database with the aim of better highlighting that we also represent Scotland. In addition, descriptions have also been added for most of them which have received. Thanks to Matt and Goon for putting together the content for this. **As at 5 March 2019 the descriptions document has been downloaded 367 times.**

Download Statistics

The website has been re-engineered to better record download statistics. The previous system could only report the total amount since its creation several years ago, however the new system now records the date of the download and can work out if it is a repeat download or a unique one.

It was implemented for publications on 16 September 2018 and on 20 November 2018 for descriptions and topos.

There are currently 73 topos and 50 descriptions on the CNCC website.

- From 16 September 2018:
 - 1866 publications downloads (1393 unique)
- From 20 November 2018:
 - 9,426 topo downloads (6,718 unique).
 - 5,721 descriptions downloads (4,249 unique).

Topo downloads (since 20 Nov 2018)

| Cave | Unique | Total |
|--------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Quaking Pot | 202 | 373 |
| Alum Pot | 228 | 343 |
| Bull Pot | 185 | 277 |
| Meregill Hole | 179 | 269 |
| Aquamole Pot | 172 | 260 |
| Jockey Hole | 187 | 257 |
| Sell Gill Holes | 165 | 244 |
| Lost Johns' Cave | 171 | 243 |
| Yordas Pot and Cave | 164 | 241 |
| Jingling Pot | 165 | 224 |
| Lancaster Hole and Cow Pot | 146 | 205 |
| Marble Steps Pot | 129 | 198 |
| Bull Pot of the Witches | 116 | 181 |
| Rowten Pot | 131 | 177 |
| Ireby Fell Cavern | 114 | 164 |
| Simpson's Pot | 112 | 163 |
| It's a Cracker | 117 | 160 |
| Bar Pot and Flood Entrance | 107 | 159 |
| Sunset Hole | 106 | 155 |
| Heron Pot | 97 | 148 |
| Swinsto Hole | 106 | 147 |
| Notts Pot | 105 | 144 |
| Boxhead Pot | 100 | 133 |
| Deaths Head and Big Meanie | 89 | 128 |
| Hall of the Mountain King | 92 | 127 |
| Foul Pot | 91 | 121 |
| Gaping Ghyll and Jib Tunnel | 94 | 121 |
| Gingling Hole | 94 | 119 |
| Calf Holes and Browgill Cave | 89 | 119 |
| Short Drop and Gavel | 88 | 117 |
| Juniper Gulf | 86 | 114 |
| Grange Rigg Pot /Christmas Pot | 80 | 114 |
| Penyghent Pot | 88 | 113 |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----|-----|
| Rift Pot | 75 | 105 |
| Hardrawkin Pot | 78 | 105 |
| Tatham Wife | 75 | 102 |
| Little Hull Pot | 70 | 101 |
| Cupcake | 71 | 99 |
| Shuttleworth Pot | 72 | 98 |
| Spectacle and Vesper Pot | 76 | 96 |
| Bar Pot and Small Mammal | 75 | 96 |
| Roaring Hole | 72 | 95 |
| Diccan Pot | 71 | 94 |
| Hunt Pot | 73 | 94 |
| Long Drop | 68 | 93 |
| Pippikin Pot | 67 | 92 |
| Large Pot | 69 | 92 |
| Disappointment Pot and Marilyn | 71 | 90 |
| Black Shiver Pot | 65 | 90 |
| Washfold Pot | 65 | 88 |
| Brown Hill Pot | 64 | 88 |
| New Rift Pot | 69 | 88 |
| Pillar Holes | 60 | 83 |
| Uamh nan Claig-ionn | 66 | 80 |
| New Goyden Pot | 58 | 80 |
| Rumbling Hole | 60 | 79 |
| Hurnel Moss Pot | 56 | 76 |
| Langcliffe and Oddmire | 53 | 75 |
| Nick Pot | 55 | 74 |
| Stream Passage Pot | 54 | 74 |
| Marble Sink | 52 | 72 |
| Long Kin West | 51 | 72 |
| Birks Fell Cave | 53 | 71 |
| Aygill Caverns | 59 | 70 |
| Magnetometer Pot | 53 | 67 |
| Rana Hole (Assynt) | 54 | 65 |
| Henslers Pot | 50 | 65 |
| Top Sink | 48 | 64 |
| Long Kin East Cave and Pot | 45 | 63 |
| Car Pot | 43 | 58 |
| Pool Sink | 43 | 58 |
| Rat Hole | 43 | 53 |
| Out Sleets Beck Pot | 39 | 48 |

Description totals (since 20 Nov 2018)

| Title | Unique | Total |
|----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Caves of Scotland | 241 | 367 |
| Ease Gill Cavern | 219 | 296 |
| The Leck Fell Master Cave System | 210 | 292 |
| Alum Pot and Long Churn Caves | 173 | 225 |
| Gaping Gill System | 121 | 174 |

| | | |
|--|-----|-----|
| Sunset Hole | 112 | 158 |
| Meregill Hole | 105 | 146 |
| FOUL Pot | 111 | 142 |
| Hardrawkin Pot | 112 | 135 |
| Yordas Cave and Pot | 99 | 132 |
| Great Douk and Middle Washfold | 106 | 129 |
| Notts Pot | 90 | 125 |
| Shuttleworth Pot (Witches Cave) Conservation Guide | 77 | 125 |
| Aquamole Pot | 97 | 124 |
| Jingling Pot | 91 | 122 |
| Lost Johns, Boxhead Pot and Deaths Head Hole | 77 | 117 |
| Bull Pot | 89 | 115 |
| Ireby Fell Caverns | 84 | 112 |
| Marble Steps Pot | 86 | 112 |
| Nick Pot | 57 | 112 |
| Sell Gill Holes | 85 | 112 |
| Robinsons' Pot | 88 | 110 |
| Calf Holes, Old Ing and Birkwith | 87 | 105 |
| Large Pot | 78 | 104 |
| Valley Entrance | 75 | 97 |
| Hagg Gill Pot | 72 | 97 |
| Simpsons Pot | 72 | 96 |
| Roaring Hole | 78 | 96 |
| Tatham Wife Hole | 67 | 92 |
| Rowten Pot | 71 | 89 |
| Short Drop Pot and Gavel Pot | 67 | 88 |
| Swinsto Hole | 67 | 86 |
| Heron Pot | 62 | 84 |
| Juniper Gulf | 67 | 84 |
| Little Hull Pot | 59 | 82 |
| Rumbling Hole | 61 | 80 |
| Penyghent Pot | 62 | 79 |
| Washfold Pot | 62 | 77 |
| Christmas Pot | 56 | 77 |
| Long Kin West and Pillar Holes | 61 | 76 |
| Vesper and Spectacle Pot | 58 | 73 |
| Grange Rigg Pot | 58 | 71 |
| Aygill Caverns | 53 | 70 |
| Black Shiver Pot | 52 | 65 |
| Ibbeth Peril 1 | 51 | 65 |
| Out Sleets Beck Pot | 47 | 64 |
| Hurnel Moss Pot | 46 | 63 |
| Big Meanie | 45 | 63 |
| Hunt Pot | 44 | 61 |
| Long Kin East and Rift Pot | 41 | 55 |

BCA Youth and Development Representative

The BCA Youth and Development Group was formed a couple of years ago, when Rostam Namaghi (the then and current BCA Y&D Officer) decided that a larger group could get more done than him alone in an officer position. It comprises the BCA Y&D Officer, as well as representatives from the student caving community and scout caving groups, as well as progressive minded council members and volunteers. Since it was changed from a Working Group to a Standing Committee at the last AGM, regional councils have been invited to send a representative to the group. At the request of the Secretary, I have taken on the role of representative for the CNCC (as well as representing CHECC). The Y&D Group runs quite informally, most discussion being through a Facebook group, or as and when we see each other at caving events. However, we felt that as a standing committee we should at least have a few meetings, and so we convened for our first meeting at the Orpheus over the weekend of the 9th-10th of February. Without any official guidance from the CNCC of positions etc, I have done what seemed correct, and I hope you are happy with my involvement.

In the past year, the Y&D Group have been an active force for change within the BCA. Supporting student clubs has always been quite central to our mission, as they are the main source of new blood to the caving world (though we are trying to expand beyond the old student-only vision). As such, we have brought in a kit loan for starting new university clubs. This has been used to great success with Lancaster University, as I'm sure you're aware, and has also been given out to a group at Swansea University. Birmingham University also has a budding caving group, and so is a strong candidate for the next recipient. These are all universities with good access to caving regions whose clubs have shut down, and so we're proud to be restarting the tradition. We're also looking into extending the loan scheme to existing university clubs who are struggling, as some clubs are criminally underfunded!

Our other big success was making BCA membership free for under 18s. This is part of our plan to encourage and facilitate young cavers to get involved and continue caving beyond their scout caving group/few experiences with a club. We've also published some guidelines for the running of university clubs, which can be shown to unions/guilds to give them a better understanding of how a student club runs (and how to keep things safe without extra bureaucracy/qualifications). These have already proved invaluable.

The Charterhouse negotiations are still ongoing, and will hopefully come to an agreement too. We are pushing for not just over 16s to be allowed in, but cavers of all ages. The BCA has received some legal advice on this that is very supportive, and so we hope all parties will be satisfied with this outcome.

We've got various things planned for the future. One of our initiatives is the 'Meet the Members' campaign, in which we'll be putting together an FAQ on youth caving, and going around the country to meet the clubs, put names to faces etc. We're not sure when this will be happening, so watch this space I suppose. We've also promised support to a project that's building an artificial cave in a scout campsite near London, in memorial of a caver involved with the scouts. If you want more info on this, just ask me.

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embryonic, but the Dales is a prime site for this, and will likely be the first trial location if this goes ahead.

We're also always looking for help starting new university clubs, so if you are/know a student in a deprived university that would like to start a club, we are always on hand to give advice, talk to unions, provide funding etc. This also extends to reaching out to mountaineering clubs who go caving, and bringing them into the fold. We've recently made contact with a keen group from the University of Cumbria, who will be at the Northern CHECC event at Bullpot Farm this weekend. So, if you know any cavers left out in the cold, don't hesitate to send them our way!

I hope you're all as excited for the future of these Y&D Projects as we are. I doubt I'll be able to be at the AGM, due to the clash with Northern CHECC. I'm very happy to keep representing the CNCC in this committee. If you have any requests, comments, or questions, please send them my way. You can reach me at davidsbotcherby@gmail.com

David Botcherby – CNCC rep to the BCA Y&D Standing Committee

Meets Secretary's Reports – Geoff Whittaker (Leck, Casterton, Ingleborough/Online)

Aygill Caverns

Aygill Cavern permit requests have remained similar to the previous years – see table below for a monthly breakdown.

Casterton Fell

Permit requests for Casterton Fell on a monthly basis are pretty constant, with the exception of June and July 2018 where very few were issued - see table below for a monthly breakdown.

Leck Fell

I can only report on permit requests since I took over as permit Secretary in September 2018, not being in possession of previous figures, however, permit request numbers are similar each month, and a breakdown of monthly figures since last September are issued in the table below.

Ingleborough Estate/Allotment and Newby Moss

Permit requests for Ingleborough are shown in the table below, and I've included 2 separate areas within the table for manually generated permits and online bookings. There may be a slight discrepancy with the online booking numbers because as the system was being tested, I didn't actually receive some confirmation bookings and registrations.

The online system is now operating smoothly, and since November last, I've had no manual requests by email. On 2 or 3 occasions, I've had separate emails from clubs requesting further bookings on top of the allocated 2 allowed by the online system. These were requested by larger clubs, with a large number of potholers on that particular day, and having had that email information I could grant the extra bookings.

There has been a flurry of registrations since November, and although people are not required to do so, a very large number are registering without BCA numbers or Clubs.

There have been no issues raised from the Ingleborough Estate/Ingham and Yorke as far as I'm aware.

Table showing permits issued: 2018/2019

| 2018 | Aygill Caverns | Casterton Fell | Leck Fell | Ingleborough Manual | Ingleborough online | Registrations |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| March | 5 | 33 | | 21 | | |
| April | 1 | 37 | | 17 | | |
| May | 1 | 34 | | 6 | | |
| June | 2 | 6 | | 4 | 1 | |
| July | | 7 | | 7 | 4 | |
| August | 2 | 15 | | 6 | 0 | |
| September | 1 | 27 | 13 | 9 | 0 | |
| October | 1 | 37 | 31 | 14 | 9 | 2 |
| November | 1 | 31 | 26 | 2 | 32 | 118 |
| December | | 44 | 30 | 0 | 25 | 28 |
| | | | | | | |
| 2019 | | | | | | |
| January | 1 | 20 | 23 | 0 | 29 | 20 |
| February | 2 | 23 | 36 | 0 | 13 | 10 |
| | | | | | | |
| Sub Totals | | | | 86 | 113 | |

| | | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|--|------------|
| Totals | 17 | 314 | 159 | 199 | | 178 |
|---------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|--|------------|

Whitewell Pot area – Tony Brown

Nothing to report

Excalibur Pot – Matt Ewles

Nothing to report

Birks Fell, Robinsons Pot, Ludwell Fairy Holes and Mongo Gill – Ric Halliwell

General

This is my 30th year as access controller and there have been no changes this year regarding access agreements relating to Birks Fell, Robinsons Pot, Ludwell Fairy Holes and Mongo Gill.

Birks Fell

I have received only 2 requests for permits for 2019, a marginal increase on the same time last year. In the whole of 2018 I only received 9 requests for permits, that is a third of the number issued 20 years ago. This is either a real shame as this is a great trip, or does it mean more people are going down without requesting a permit.

Robinson's Pot

The new access agreement which commenced in 2015 raised the number of available permits from 5 to 8 permits per year on fixed dates (See CNCC website for details). At the time of writing this report I have so far issued only 4 of the available 8 permits. I urge clubs to apply for the four remaining permits which I negotiated on the basis that there was a far larger demand than the 5 previously available.

Ludwell Fairy Holes

This is the sixth year of access to this cave. I issued a total of 10 out of the available 12 permits last year taken up by just seven clubs. I have received 11 requests for the available 2019 permits from 9 clubs. Permit holders are now asked to confirm with the gamekeeper, 2 days before their date, that they will be using their permit so that he remembers to open the bottom gate on the track. I have also asked each permit holder to pass the keys on to the next permit holder to save postage costs for CNCC. Thanks to Andrew Hinde for all his efforts in negotiating this agreement.

Mongo Gill

The access agreement is up for renewal but I have not yet discussed it with the owners as Richard Bowerman died in early February. I will take the matter up later in the year. I received only 4 requests for a permit in 2018 (compared with 28 twenty years ago) and have so far received only 2 for 2019. No permits were requested for Great Expectations last year probably because the connection with Stump Cross streamway remains well and truly blocked by a major collapse.

Stump Cross

There is no agreement regarding access to Stump Cross Caverns because the entrance to the cave is within the showcave/café building. I have however negotiated access for three groups this year and hope that eventually we will be able to gain access on a regular basis. However I envisage this being a long term process which could easily be derailed if there are any problems with any of the groups who are allowed access.

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