

COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

British Caving Association

Reports for 18th January 2020 Committee Meeting

Chairman's Report

Since our last meeting I have attended a couple of external meetings and conferences on behalf of CNCC. This is to make sure that we are acknowledged by policy and decision makers in areas where caves and caving may be affected.

The first conference was hosted by the BMC in central Manchester. It was entitled "Changing behaviours: caring for the places we love". This workshop event had 51 delegates representing environmental NGOs, National Parks, Sporting Governing Bodies etc. A couple of take home messages:

- a) Codes of Conduct must be regionally and nationally consistent (rarely happens).
- b) Good behaviour requires various forms of psychological coercion to be successful. Provided by role models and cleverly thought out signage on site.
- c) The British public have few redeeming features when it comes to engagement with the outdoors (personal observation).
- d) There are only 3 sources of wildfires in the UK. They are :
 - 1) Men
 - 2) Women
 - 3) Children
- e) The corporate sector are better at partnering the voluntary sector than the public sector. If you want to start a successful campaign with your caving club, the Co-op is probably a better bet than NE.
- f) Check out *hubhub.com* for inspiring environmental projects that change entrenched attitudes.

The other meeting was a YDNP Management Plan Forum meeting in December. Just there to let YDNP know that there is more to recreation in the Dales than rambling.

Check out YDNP website for some startling statistics on socioeconomic trends in the Dales:

<https://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/powerful-message-revealed-by-park-wide-studies/>

We need to continue to make the case for the economic value that caving brings to the Dales.

I am currently awaiting the renewal of the Fairy Holes Cave access agreement. Bookings can go ahead in the meantime.

I shall attend the BCA meeting on 11th Jan and report back on the sunlit uplands of national caving administration.

Finally, I would like to welcome Ian and Ben to their CNCC officer post inductions.

It will be such fun for them. They can then hit the ground running/crawling/SRT-ing after the AGM in March.

Happy New Year and Cave with Care in 2020.

Andrew Hinde - CNCC Chairman

Secretary's Report

The last three months has seen some very encouraging progress indeed.

I am delighted that Alan has embraced his new role as Anchor Coordinator. He has been getting on top of the whereabouts of all anchors, chasing down missing records, ensuring existing installers are aware of the new requirements and has purchased a stock of resin which can be handed out to installers. We are now in a very good position now to try to get more people involved in anchor installation and training more installers. The next step in my opinion is to get some more trainers approved by BCA E&A, arrange an annual (at least) training session involving all trainers, which can be widely advertised, and get more people trained to install anchors so we are better equipped to tackle some of the outstanding (and typically more challenging) projects, as well as to be able to deal with anchor replacements in areas that we receive regular reports. I feel it is very important that we create a clear and publicised pathway for people to get involved in anchor installation; it has always bugged me that this has never been the case.

The new BCA funding rules, which you will be updated on at this meeting, follow a couple of years of hard work, particularly driven by Tim as our BCA rep, but with CNCC backing. These help to break down restrictions on what Regional Council activities can be covered by BCA funding, enabling things such as our newsletter, website costs, conservation volunteer travel expenses, activities to promote caving amongst others to now be reclaimable from BCA. This should end the concerns about our future financial sustainability, and encourage more proactive spending on worthy initiatives in the knowledge that no unreasonable expenditure is going to be refused.

The online booking system has been extremely popular on Leck, and at the time of writing Tim is doing a fine job at bringing the last major fell, Casterton, onto the system. Fingers crossed for news on this before the March AGM; it will be a landmark moment.

I've been heartened to see candidates come forward for the Treasurer, Secretary and Training Officer roles, the latter of which we were due to erase from the constitution in March following several unsuccessful years of getting a candidate with the time. We will press ahead with these measures in the event that things don't work out with the new candidate, but hopefully he will stand and we can cancel these constitutional changes that were otherwise set to remove the role.

I'm delighted to see, for the first time in years, an application for membership... from a club who discontinued their membership last year but are now seeking to revitalise their caving 'division'.

Most of my routine CNCC workload has now been taken over by Josh, who has done an excellent job with the October minutes and the January meeting organisation. It is daunting, and difficult to step into such a role, particularly when you are relatively unfamiliar with people involved and the various ongoing initiatives, but he has done a fine job so far as Assistant Secretary, and will hopefully continue to do so as Secretary after the AGM. My time has been mostly focused on my new BCA role which is proving a challenge to say the least.

There will be another issue of the CNCC newsletter around March (probably just after the AGM) so please do send me any items for inclusion.

Matt Ewles - CNCC Secretary

Treasurer's Report

Financial Status as of 7th January 2020:

Business Community Account: £1870.58
Business Saver Account: £12967.42

Since the October 2019 meeting, the following payments/receipts made:

£1639.55 Received in total from SIS re mileage claims.
£30.00 to Hellifield Institute for Meeting Room hire (BCA).
£256.69 paid re 'Hidden Earth' Purchases & Newsletter postage.
£245.66 paid for cave cleaning kit.
£205.00 donation received from A Hind.
£3600 paid for trailer to Tunstall Tractors.
(£3600 transferred Across from the Business Saver Account to cover this purchase).
£110.27 to A Speight for the purchase of Anchor Resin
£8.18 interest paid on the Business Saver Account

Pete Bann - CNCC Treasurer

Conservation Officer's Report

Conservation funding is currently through the Heritage Lottery funded Stories in Stone project, now in its final year.

On 19th January, CNCC volunteers will be helping CPC replace the fencing around Sell Gill Holes. Other volunteers have been asked to help with the remediation works at Lancaster Hole.

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.

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. Unfortunately I am unable to attend the meeting as I am away over Christmas and into the New Year. My report is quite brief as I have concentrated on a single objective since our last meeting.

Casterton Fell

I have had regular correspondence with Mr Henry Bowring in the last few months regarding the inclusion of the caves of Casterton Fell into the on-line booking system. All is looking very positive as I write and I expect us to be able to complete this on my return from abroad. Mr Bowring had a number of questions which we needed to satisfy and I thank the Red Rose CPC for helping out with this. Casterton is a little different from Leck and Ingleborough as most of the caving interest is on through trips of one sort or another and it is quite common for several groups to use the same entrance. This has required some careful thought on how the system will be set up. The new system will be available to all who register as with the other fells but several bookings will be available for the popular entrances such as Lancaster Hole (as they are now in effect).

Leck Fell and Ingleborough

All appears to be working well on these Fells. The landowners seem to be happy with the system and cavers generally have very positive comments to make. I think it has been a real success. Many thanks to all involved, particularly Geoff who manages the system on a day to day basis.

Caves and Karst books

I have handed out four more of these books to cavers wishing to present them to landowners in the Nidderdale area. We still have copies in stock if anyone has a caving landowner/manager they'd like to present them to.

BCA Meeting

I attended the October BCA meeting which followed our own meeting. I have asked that the regional funding issues are placed on the agenda where Matt will be able to give you all an update as the January BCA meeting will have taken place the week before our January meeting.

Good Caving

Tim Allen - CNCC Access Officer

Anchor Coordinator's Report - Alan Speight

I have now received all the new anchors from Simon and copies of the installation records on Google sheets, but do not have any topos.

I have also been in touch with all the anchor installers. Most of the installers still have anchors in their possession awaiting placement.

Simon did not want to sell his own anchor extractor so in consultation with Matt Ewles and Johnny Lattimer I have ordered two new anchor extractor tools and they will belong to the CNCC. Additionally I have purchased 6 tubes of the new Fischer resin at a cost of £110.27, so this can be given out to any installer and they can get on with the job without messing around locating the correct resin, paying for it and then claiming money back.

I need approval for the anchor coordinator to keep a small stock of resin along with the anchors

Webmaster's Report - Gary Douthwaite

There have been no specific changes to the website since the last meeting, just on-going housekeeping. The online booking system continues to perform well even with the additional load of now having Leck Fell included. I have received no reports of problems.

Site and social media statistics to date are as follows. Pretty steady flow of website visitors with a higher than average October and November but with a slight tail-off during December. This is probably attributed to no specific news or changes being published during this period.

Google Analytics

Page views for (per week) from 1 Jan 2019 to 31 Dec 2019.



Total page views in the last 12 months: 118,012. Previous 12 months: 83,778 (41% increase).

Jan 19	Feb 19	Mar 19	Apr 19	May 19	Jun 19	Jul 19	Aug 19	Sep 19	Oct 19	Nov 19	Dec 19
9605	9838	11966	9211	7827	10150	8059	10052	9024	10405	10352	8566
+31%	+25%	+90%	+12%	+47%	+22%	-10%	+31%	+32%	+18%	-21%	-32%

% is increase on same period in the previous year.

Facebook

As at 7 Jan 2020 we have 1036 page likes (+73 since last report on 9 Sep 2019) and 1105 followers (+59 since last report).

Page likes in the last 12 months.



Twitter

As at 7 Jan 2020 we have 412 followers (+20 since last report on 9 Sep 2019).

Online Booking System

- To date, there are **462 registered users** (+108 since last report) and **959 individual bookings** have been made. This number includes 814 approved bookings and 145 cancelled bookings.
- Of the users who specified gender there are **61 female** and **335 male**.
- 395 users have given their birth year. The average age is **43.6** (43.5 in last report) with the **youngest 17** and **oldest 78**.

Below: approved bookings since the system started in Feb 2018.

	By booked date
Feb 2018	26
Mar 2018	24
Apr 2018	21
May 2018	7
Jun 2018	6
Jul 2018	15
Aug 2018	5
Sep 2018	14
Oct 2018	18
Nov 2018	22
Dec 2018	30
Jan 2019	20
Feb 2019	11
Mar 2019	35
Apr 2019	22
May 2019	11
Jun 2019	31
Jul 2019	7
Aug 2019	2
Sep 2019	74
Oct 2019	94
Nov 2019	97
Dec 2019	109
Jan 2020	30
Feb 2020	20

Download Statistics (to 7 Jan 2020)

- Publications (since 16/09/2018) **4,965** (3,409 unique)
- Topos (since 20/11/2018) **33,473** (22,052 unique)
- Cave descriptions (since 20/11/2018) **24,484** (16,834 unique)

Meets Secretary's Reports - Geoff Whittaker (Aygill, Ingleborough, Leck, Casterton)

Aygill Caverns

There have been no permit requests for Aygill Caverns since last October.

Casterton Fell

Conventional Permit requests for Casterton Fell on a monthly basis have relaxed since last October possibly since Leck Fell went onto the online booking system - see table below for a monthly breakdown.

Leck Fell

Since last October, online bookings for Leck Fell have become rampant, and on one occasion, 9 entrances were booked for the same day. There has also been an increase in mid week bookings compared to when the original permit system was in place - see table below for a monthly breakdown.

There have been no issues raised from the Estate as far as I'm aware.

Ingleborough Estate/Allotment and Newby Moss

The online system bookings continue to operate smoothly, although there has been a slight decrease in bookings compared to previous months - see table below for a monthly breakdown. There have been no issues raised from the Ingleborough Estate/Ingham and Yorke as far as I'm aware.

2019/20	Aygill Caverns	Casterton Fell	Leck Fell	Ingleborough
October	0	31	70	28
November	0	28	75	28
December	0	34	76	41
January	0	11	25	3
Totals	0	104	246	100

Meets Secretary's Reports - Matt Ewles (Excalibur)

Nothing noteworthy to report for Excalibur Pot or Jenga Pot, relations with the landowner are good and the caves still continue to receive a visitor once every three months or so.