

CNCC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
March 2024
OFFICER REPORTS

CHAIR

Andrew Hinde

(Report not yet submitted)

SECRETARY

Jill Bolton

Well, it's been a very interesting year, and definitely a "steep learning curve". Mainly routine "housekeeping", of course, plus assisting the Treasurer with the two-step authorisation of payments.

Partly due to our superb website and extensive range of workshops, the CNCC has an excellent reputation throughout the country. I've made a particular effort to maintain this reputation, by responding to all emails promptly (wherever possible), and generally supporting my fellow officers. On a number of occasions, the need for good communication has been demonstrated.

Although CNCC Officers are not permitted to vote, or to propose motions, I have assisted committee members in drafting motions on their behalf, to present to committee meetings and to the AGM.

As I've mentioned before, the "power" lies with the CNCC committee, and your officers are mere "civil servants".

One major success was helping York University Caving & Potholing Club to obtain funding to restore their SRT training facility (with generous help from the Northern Pennine Club.) I understand that the BCA are now intending to reimburse the CNCC for our contribution.

I'm also pleased to have encouraged others to get involved in the work of the CNCC, with two new clubs applying to join CNCC. We also have a new role of Inclusivity Co-ordinator, with an excellent "volunteer" taking up the challenge.

Clapham Village Hall now have an online calendar, which shows when the room is available. I've provisionally booked June 22 and October 26 for the remaining 2024 meetings, and will book March 15 for next year's AGM.

Finally, I'd particularly like to thank Matt Ewles (a former CNCC and BCA secretary) for acting as a mentor, and Josh Young, the indispensable Minute Secretary.

It's good to be part of a team that works so well together, to support caving in the north.

TREASURER**Pete Bann****INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT**

	Period ending 6 March 2024		Year ending 31 December 2023	
	£	£	£	£
INCOME				
Training Course Fees (current year)	3 281.74		5 858.21	
Training Course Fees (paid in advance)	-		439.57	
Training Course Fees paid direct	-		135.00	
Interest	33.67		108.35	
BCA Grant for 2023	-		4 230.35	
TOTAL INCOME		3 315.41		10 771.48
Less: EXPENDITURE				
Training Course Tuition 2023	1 370.00		8 255.00	
Training Course Venue Hire 2023	330.00		2 335.00	
Training Course Venue Hire 2024	-		450.00	
Anchor Installation Course Venue Hire	-		300.00	
C&A Mileage	-		569.09	
Meeting Mileage	59.40		175.05	
C&A - Malham Pot Lid	-		500.00	
C&A - other C&A Materials	455.25		999.29	
York University Caving Club Support	1 000.00		-	
Horner Photo Collection Support	-		500.00	
Disabled Caving Weekend Support	-		100.00	
"Try Caving" Support	-		438.58	
Training Kit	-		278.35	
IT & Admin	156.59		1 306.94	
TOTAL EXPENSES		3 371.24		16 207.30
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)		£ (55.83)		£ (5 435.82)

BANK BALANCES

	As at 6 March 2024	As at 31 December 2023	As at 1 January 2023
	£	£	£
Premium Account	8 720.15	8 686.48	13 690.84
Community Account	291.87	381.37	812.83
TOTAL	£ 9 012.02	£ 9 067.85	£ 14 503.67
DECREASE	£ 55.83	£ 5 435.82	

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NOTE 1 TRAINING ACCOUNT

	Period to 6 March 2024		Year ended 31 December 2023	
	£	£	£	£
INCOME				
Course Fees (PayPal) current year	3 281.74		5 858.21	
Course Fees (PayPal) received previous year	439.57		923.00	
Course Fees (Direct credit)	-		135.00	
		3 721.31		6 916.21
less: EXPENSES				
Course Tuition 2023	1 370.00		8 255.00	
Venue Hire Fees 2023	330.00		2 335.00	
Venue Hire Fees 2024	-		450.00	
Training Kit	-		278.35	
Venue Hire Anchor Installation Course	-		300.00	
Try Caving Support	-		438.58	
		1 700.00		12 056.93
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)		£ 2 021.31		£ (5 140.72)

NOTE 2 BCA GRANT CLAIM

	2024	2023	2022
	£	£	£
IT & Admin		1 306.94	509.67
C&A Mileage		569.09	425.70
Meeting Mileage		175.05	-
C&A Materials		1 499.29	1 528.03
Training Course Support		5 140.72	1 766.95
TOTAL		£ 8 691.09	£ 4 230.35

NOTE 3

As agreed at the January meeting, the increased support of £1000 for York University Caving Club was paid. A sum of £700 was received from the Northern Pennine Club and also forwarded on to York University Caving Club.

A sum of £400 has been paid to 'The Angels of the North ' group, in relation to remedial work requested by the landowner at Stump Cross Caverns.

The price of a replacement tackle bag (£55.25, used exclusively for Anchor Installations) was given to Graham Coates.

After crediting the Training Course fees, all expenditure is reclaimed from the BCA, with the exception of:

	£
Horner Photo Collection Support	500.00
Disabled Caving Weekend Support	100.00

CONSERVATION OFFICER

Kay Easton

Again, we are pleased to see the move away from people merely asking for a team of CNCC volunteers to sort any problems. We now have groups reporting issues, and asking for support, either financial or by providing materials, to carry out the work themselves.

Examples of this include the remediation work carried out at Stump Cross, by Tom Thompson and “The Angels of the North”. Also the entrance installation at Malham Cove Rising, by John Cordingley and his team.

Other work has been carried out at Bull Pot (sheep removal), Beck Head Stream Cave (fallen tree removal), Wretched Rabbit (entrance restoration), Death’s Head Hole (tree planting) and a litter-pick at Buttertubs.

A list of equipment available for CNCC members to borrow for conservation projects is on the CNCC website:

<https://cncc.org.uk/resources/assets/>

Those who are planning conservation works are reminded that Sam Allshorn has money donated by Mike Cooper from sales of “Not for the Faint Hearted” which is available for conservation work on caves featured in the book.

ACCESS OFFICER

Adele Ward

(Report not yet submitted)

TRAINING OFFICER

Ian Patrick

The CNCC training workshops have continued to be well received, well attended and with lots of good feedback. With the support of the YSS, RRCPC and CPC, we have provided a number of “Try Caving” events.

A full list of all 2023 workshops are listed below.

We have just published our Spring/Summer training program and take up has been very positive to date.

Acknowledgements

The overall success of the workshops is down to a combination of people’s efforts. I would like once again to put my gratitude on record.

Gary Douthwaite	Top IT provision, ensuring a simple booking process
Matt Ewles	Thoughtful PR, and providing guidance
Peter Bann	Processing a lot of payments!

SRT Trainers:	Providing enthusiastic and professional training workshops
Mark Richards	(Assistant Training Officer)
Helen Hooper	
Sam Litten	
Jo White	

John Helm, for providing the extremely popular Geology Workshops

Nicky Credland – First Aid trainer

YSS, Craven Pothole Club and Yorkshire Dales Guides, for use of their premises

Course no	Date	Workshop	Bookings
133	Dec 16/17	SRT Refresher (indoor/underground)	5/6
132	Dec 10	SRT Rescue Advanced	6/7
131	Dec 9	SRT Rescue Intermediate	5/6
143	Dec 2/3	New to SRT (indoors)	4/6
130	Nov 19	SRT Rescue Foundation	Full
129	Nov 18/19	New to SRT (indoor/underground)	Full
128	Nov 12/13	New to SRT Rigging	Full
127	Nov 11	SRT Refresher (underground)	Full
119	Nov 4/5	"Try Caving" hosted by YSS	Full
140	Oct 28	Underground Geology tour (Rock Doctor)	Full
115	Oct 14/15	BCA Anchor Installers Technical Forum	14/20
126	Oct 14/15	First Aid Skills	7/8
112	Oct 7	Skills for Horizontal cave leaders	Full
125	Oct 7/8	New to SRT (indoors)	Full
142	Oct 7/8	New to SRT (indoor/underground)	Full
124	Sept 30	"Try Caving" hosted by RRCPC	9/10
121	Sept 9/10	First Aid Skills	Full
118	Sept 2/3	"Try Caving" hosted by YSS	Full
120	July 8/9	New to SRT Rigging	7/8
109	July 2	SRT Rigging Refresher (underground)	Full
108	July 1	SRT Refresher (underground)	Full
116	Jun 11	SRT Rigging Refresher (underground)	Full
107	Jun 10	SRT Refresher (underground)	Full
106	Jun 3/4	New to SRT (indoor/underground)	Full
105	May 20/21	SRT Refresher (indoor/underground)	Full
114	May 20	Underground Geology tour (Rock Doctor)	Full
104	May 7	SRT Rescue Intermediate	5/6
103	May 6	SRT Rescue Foundation	Full
102	Apr 29	New to SRT Rigging	Full
101	Apr 23	Skills for SRT cave leaders	Full
100	Apr 22	SRT Rigging Refresher (underground)	Full
99	Apr 8	SRT Refresher (underground)	3/4
98	Mar 18	SRT Refresher (underground)	Full
97	Mar 11/12	New to SRT (indoor/underground)	Full
78	Mar 4/5	New to SRT (indoor)	Full
79	Feb 18	Underground Geology tour (Rock Doctor)	Full
74	Feb 12	New to SRT Rigging	Full
75	Feb 12	"Ladder & Lifelines"	2/4
76	Feb 12	"Try Caving" hosted by CPC	Full
73	Jan 21/22	SRT Rescue	7/8
72	Jan 14/15	SRT Improvers	Full
TOTAL PLACES OFFERED			235
TOTAL BOOKINGS			222

PETZL HARNESSES

Reports have been received regarding buckles on the newest model of Petzl caving harnesses that have orange coloured webbing, ie both the Super Avanti and Aven. The buckles on harnesses tend to work loose and become undone. BCA officers flagged this in April 2022 and have been in contact with Petzl. Almost all the reports have been about leg loop buckles. We have had a very small number of reports regarding the belt buckle also loosening, though not coming undone.

The working group issued a safety alert statement in Jan 2024 regards the current Petzl Superavanti and Aven caving harnesses. This was posted on BCA website, UK Caving Forum and found its way onto a range of caving related social media pages.

Petzl have now designed and will supply free of charge a fix in order to stop this issue happening. These can be ordered free of charge via the Petzl UK contact page <https://www.petzl.com/GB/en/Sport/Contact> choosing the 'After-sales Service' option. You should mention 'anti-slip device for Superavanti (or Aven) harness' when you complete the form.

POSITIONING LANYARDS

The working group were asked to comment on the use of so-called positioning lanyards (such as Petzl Connect Adjust models) being used as cowstails. The group concluded that non professional cavers / mine explorers should refer to manufacturer's usage instructions and make their own decision.

In view of professional cavers and mine leaders, the Qualifications Management Committee (QMC) of the BCA who oversee the awards for professional cavers and mine leaders have informed professional leaders. They are advised not to use adjustable or stitched lanyards as main cowstails, unless the manufacture specifically approves their use in this context.

TRAINING RESOURCES

CNCC would like to remind cavers, or point them in the direction, of the training page on the BCA website. Even though these equipment and training resources are primarily aimed at professional leaders, much of the information is very relevant to any caver, in particular those that train others in clubs.

Go to and scroll down the page to section titled Resources for Candidates
<https://british-caving.org.uk/our-work/training/leadership-awards/lcmla/>

ANCHOR CO-ORDINATOR

Alan Speight

During 2023 the Anchor Team has managed to complete new installations in:
Death's Head Hole
Five Ways Pot,
F## Hopeless Hole
Disappointment Pot
Mayday Hole
along with the removal of bent anchors from Rowten Pot,
and the re-anchoring of Swinsto Hole, for better pull-through.

We have also assisted the Training Officer to run a very successful "Anchor Installers' Forum" in October 2023, attended by fifteen people.

Most reports of loose anchors have been attended to very quickly. If anyone would like to take over the role of Anchor Co-ordinator, I am willing to stand down (otherwise I am happy to continue).

INCLUSIVITY CO-ORDINATOR

Josh White

Following being co-opted as Inclusivity Co-ordinator earlier this year, I have pulled together a small team working out of a WhatsApp community, with various projects being proposed.

Our first major job, highlighted by the announcement of Inclusivity Co-ordinator role, is to start to tackle the misunderstanding of what inclusivity is.

Alongside this, we're starting to undertake a review of the CNCC website with our accessibility and inclusivity hats on, and look to recommend changes to the web team appropriately.

If anyone would like to join the working group, please reach out to Josh at inclusivity@cncc.org.uk

YOUTH & DEVELOPMENT REP

Aila Taylor

Fairly quiet on the Y&D front. I have supported a university club that experienced a rather long rescue and am helping CHECC to provide navigation training in Easegill later in the year, in an attempt to reduce rescues there. In the last year alone, five different university clubs have all been rescued from Easegill.

I am also helping Josh to organise a caving event for Mosaic Outdoors, a group which supports BAME individuals to access the outdoors.

Communication from CNCC with the wider caving world has continued proactively over the last year, including two formal newsletters (May 2023 and December 2023), as well as promotion of a wide range of CNCC initiatives and supported projects via UKCaving, Facebook and Twitter/X, as well as occasional use of Instagram.

The latest newsletter (December) took on a new name, of 'Northern Caving' and a slightly new, cleaner look, to modernise and appear less like a boring regional council publication. These newsletters cost around £100 per issue to print and post to all the usual locations.

Additionally, our own mailing list has continued to grow, from 519 subscribers at the AGM last year, to 669 at the time of writing (and that includes after removal of numerous obsolete email addresses last year).

We have had communication challenges, including Yahoo and AOL email addresses refusing to accept CNCC emails, but this has now been resolved. I send monthly emails to our mailing list with important updates, warnings or other relevant news, and our mailing list are always first to hear of new training workshops.

The selection of news stories over the last year has continued to please.

Conservation stories since the 2023 AGM include:

- Bull Pot - sheep removal
- Stump Cross - remediation work
- Beck Head Stream Cave - fallen tree removal
- Malham Cove Rising - entrance installation
- Wretched Rabbit - entrance restoration
- Death's Head Hole - tree planting and entrance works
- Buttertubs - litter-pick

For the latter, I was also able to get an article into the Craven Herald to promote the good work of cavers in our much-loved beauty spots.

These vary from projects run specifically by CNCC via our volunteers, to those run by clubs or enthusiastic individuals, either with CNCC support or sponsorship, or just with CNCC using our communications reach to promote the excellent work of others. We are happy to offer any of these services where conservation works are needed or are performed.

Anchor, description, topo and training stories since the 2023 AGM include:

- Death's Head Hole - new anchors
- The Mistral, Bull Pot of the Witches, Mayday Hole - new descriptions
- Cow Pot - addition of Sneaky and Devious routes to topo and description
- Swinsto Hole - re-anchoring for better pull-through
- Five Ways Pot - anchoring.
- Several updated topos following reports of errors or omissions

- Reports and future dates for various excellent training workshops
- Anchor installers' forum (October 2023)

Other stories since the 2023 AGM include:

- Stump Cross - new access arrangements
- Hidden Earth - CNCC attendance (more below)
- "New to Caving" events - promotion (more below)
- New Youth Development rep and Inclusivity Co-ordinator
- Exploration grants - launch of new scheme
- Caving photo display at The Folly in Settle

Therefore, as you can see, it has been quite a year, and I would like to credit all the contributors who have made all these things happen and have enabled a regular stream of news.

I arranged the CNCC stall at Hidden Earth near Bristol, and I would like to thank Andrew, and several others who helped staff the stall through the weekend and engage with people. The stall included a new custom-made banner showcasing all our work since the last Hidden Earth in 2019. This banner can be downloaded from the publications page of our website:

<https://cncc.org.uk/publications/>

For displaying this, we purchased free-standing display boards which are owned by CNCC, stored at my house (in York) but available for northern cavers to use for initiatives to promote caving.

The "New to Caving" initiative has gone from strength to strength this year, and I must give credit to Ian's awesome enthusiasm to make this a success. To support these, I designed an A3 tri-fold glossy flier (3000 copies printed) and a glossy A3 posted (50 copies) which promote the events and which everyone is welcome to help themselves to. In fact, I'd welcome anyone to have a small stock of these for recruitment events, to pass onto local venues (pubs, visitor centres, cafes around the area), or just to hand out to anyone you meet who might be interested in trying caving, but for who you are unable to directly offer an introduction. This has paired nicely with Gary's work to introduce the "New to Caving" section on our website, where the leaflet can also be viewed digitally, and all upcoming new-to-caving events are listed.

<https://cncc.org.uk/training/new-to-caving/>

In addition to the above PR and Comms activities, I also keep our route descriptions and, with help from Gary, our rigging topos up to date, responding to reports of errors or issues. I am thankful to Ian Walker who has volunteered this year to look into topo reports on my behalf. This year has actually been quieter than usual for these, but I have no doubt Ian's services will be called on regularly. He did an outstanding job auditing Cow Pot including all three routes.

I also post and circulate safety warnings, of which there have been a few this year including County Pot (Battle of Britain Chamber), Curtain Pot, Swan Dike Pot, Frog Pot,

Coal Hole, and Tatham Wife Hole, as ones that fall into the 'immediate danger' category, and numerous others which fall into the 'be aware' category. I seldom receive any feedback on any of these, so I will periodically review and expire warnings where I haven't heard of any further issues.

If anyone would like to volunteer to take on the role of managing our warnings, that would be lovely. It could definitely be an entire role in itself, to check and follow up on warnings.

I still have copies of "Caves and Karst of the Yorkshire Dales" (Vol 2), available for anyone who has a situation where a caving literature gift to a landowner could help promote goodwill, or general awareness of caving. These are gathering a lot of dust in my house and so if anyone has a use for them to benefit northern caving, please let me know.

I currently have an open dialogue with the Yorkshire Dales National Park's Digital Communications Officer, regarding opportunities to promote caving in future publications including The Visitor magazine. There is a lot that could be gained by proactive collaboration here, but sadly the day-to-day PR and Comms work detailed above occupies all the time that I am currently able to give to the CNCC, so I would really love to hear from any volunteers who would like to work with me to help explore this (and other) opportunities.

Overall, I would very much like to build a small team of volunteers to work under the PR and Comms umbrella to enable more to be achieved, so if you are interested, please let me know.

ACCESS CO-ORDINATORS

Bowland

Tony Brown

I have nothing to report beyond one permit application for December 2023. The access agreement is working well when needed

Excalibur

Matt Ewles

To my best recollection I have issued no permits for Excalibur since the last AGM. It is a long drive for most cavers.

However, I can strongly recommend a summer weekend in the North York Moors, walking one day, caving the other, camping behind The New Inn at Cropton. I am happy to recommend some good walks and to advise on the caving and offer a guided tour of the caves if I am free.

Robinson's Pot / Fairy Holes

Dinny Davies

There was not a great deal of interest in permits for Robinson's Pot or for Fairy Holes in 2023. The YSS and Kendal have both made bookings for 2024, all others are reminded that permits are still available.

In addition to general maintenance and housekeeping, the following more significant changes have been made in the last year.

July - October 2023

Updates made to the 'New to Caving' area - the recently produced leaflet has been added as a download.

New options added to the training booking process to allow for further information to be gathered at the time of booking. This is particularly helpful for new to caving events to get people clothing size etc. The organising club for "New to Caving" events now also receives the booking confirmation emails automatically to make organisation smoother.

Twitter branding updated to 'X' and CNCC now also have a Threads account cos we're down wiv the kids.

October 2023 - January 2024

Some cosmetic and layout changes to the website such as the news articles and conservation projects design. This is part of an ongoing process to keep the site fresh and up to current standards.

The menus have also been adjusted to better communicate the changes to some content. "About" has now become "Resources" with a simplified resources "home" page clearly listing what functions and services CNCC offer and should better describe further additions in the future. Similarly, the "Fixed Aids" section has become "Equipment" with a view to adding other sections soon.

As agreed at the last meeting, the new Exploration Grants page has been added to the Resources section including a description and online application form.

The usual Christmas logo and banner was applied on the site and across social media.

January - March 2024

Further modifications to the appearance of the site have been made including a re-designed menu system which offers a better user experience, particularly on mobile devices.

A new 'dark theme' has been implemented allowing users to switch between the standard site or a colour scheme with darker backgrounds and other colours which is better for low light use. The theme is automatically applied if the user's system settings are in dark mode but it can be overridden from a button on the footer.

Planned work for the coming year

Due to the now very high site usage, some software in use is exceeding its fair (and free) use policy so premium versions will need to be purchased. Not huge costs but required to keep things running smoothly.

Some re-development work on the Cave Booking site to update it in various ways to the latest standards.

Looking at possible changes to the payment system for training workshops.

Discussions about expanding the email service to a more advanced and secure system.

Website Analytics

Please see separate document (with coloured charts and diagrams)

AGENDA ITEM 4 – INDIVIDUAL CAVER REP

LETTER FROM CRAVEN CPC

Dear Secretary,

The CPC Committee considered the proposal at the AGM Agenda item 4 regarding an amendment to the requirements for the Individual Caver Representative to remove the requirement for the holder of that position to hold BCA membership.

The CPC Committee feel this would be a detrimental move and undermines the rationale of a Regional Council largely funded by BCA but creating a voting position for someone with no allegiance to the parent body. The position is influential in determining how that funding (amongst other matters) is spent yet has made no contribution.

To this extent, the CPC Representative has been instructed to vote against the proposal and additionally, since the proposal has been submitted, wish to table an amendment to remove the voting right of the Individual Caver Representative within the existing wording.

CPC feel that there is a significant imbalance in giving an individual one vote when the CPC also has one vote yet represents 250+ members (all of whom are BCA members).

This amendment retains the proposal wording but removes the voting right viz:

From:

The Committee may, only if there is an eligible applicant at the election, also include one additional member whose role it is to represent individual cavers undertaking trips outside of a club structure (known herein as the individual Caver (IC) representative). The IC representative must be an individual member of the BCA and has one vote on the Committee.

To:

The Committee may, only if there is an eligible applicant at the election, also include one additional member whose role it is to represent individual cavers undertaking trips outside of a club structure (known herein as the individual Caver (IC) representative). The IC representative has no vote on the Committee.

CPC Secretary
Michael Tighgeal