

COUNCIL FOR THE NORTHERN CAVING COMMUNITY

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

VILLAGE HALL, CLAPHAM

22 March 2025

ATTENDEES

CLUB REPRESENTATIVES (VOTING)

CLUB		NAME		
Bradford Pothole Club	BPC	Ian Cross	IC	
Burnley Caving Club	BCC	Ben Blackburn	BB	Zoom
Cave Diving Group	CDG	Sam Allshorn	SA	
Craven Pothole Club	CPC	Pat Halliwell	PCH	
Earby Pothole Club	EPC	Stuart Whitmey	SW	
Elysium Underground Group	EUG	Alison Fuller-Shapcott	AFS	Zoom
Grampian Speleological Group	GSG	Alan Jeffreys	AJ	
Kendal Caving Club	KCC	Andy Gordon	AG	
Morley Potholing Club	MPC	Robin Lawrence	RL	
Northern Boggarts	NB	Pete Monk	PM	
Northern Pennine Club	NPC	Peter Hambly	PH	Zoom
Red Rose Cave & Pothole Club	RRCPC	Sam Lieberman	SL	
Ulster Speleological Society & Caving Club	USSCC	Chris Craig	CC	
Univ of Leeds Speleological Association	ULSA	Rob Watson	RW	Zoom
White Rose Pothole Club	WRPC	Phil Parker	PP	
York Caving Club	YCC	Matt Ewles	ME	
York Univ Cave & Pothole Club	YUCPC	Adrian Turner	AT	
Yorkshire Ramblers Club	YRC	Pete Bann	PB	
Yorkshire Subterranean Society	YSS	Aaron Smith	ASm	

OFFICERS (outgoing)

Chair	Andrew Hinde	AH	
Secretary	Jill Bolton	JMB	
Treasurer	Pete Bann	PB	
Conservation Officer	Kay Easton	KE	Zoom
Training Officer	Ian Patrick	IP	
Anchor Co-ordinator	Alan Speight	AS	
PR & Communications	Matt Ewles	ME	
Web Administrator	Gary Douthwaite	GD	
Minute Secretary	Josh Young	JY	
Individual Caver Rep	Tim Allen	TA	
Access Co-ordinator - Bowland	Tony Brown	AB	Zoom
Access Co-ordinator - Excalibur	Matt Ewles	ME	

OBSERVERS

BCA Treasurer / Craven PC	BCA	Chris Bolton	CJB
-	-	Todd Rye	TR
-	-	Jon Beavan	JJB
-	-	Jane Allen	JA
Accounts Scrutineer	-	Kath Davis	KD
Craven Pothole Club	CPC	Ric Halliwell	RAH
Craven Pothole Club	CPC	Russell Myers	RM
Craven Pothole Club	CPC	Tim Pickering	TP
Red Rose Cave & Pothole Club	RRCPC	Mike Appleton	MA
Red Rose Cave & Pothole Club	RRCPC	Ray Duffy	RD
Ulster Speleological Society & Caving Club	USSCC	Liam McCarthy	LM
Ulster Speleological Society & Caving Club	USSCC	Mark Sleator	MS
White Rose Pothole Club	WRPC	Lynnette Cadamarteri	LC

The meeting opened at 10:01 am.

1.1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

James Alderson Raymond Bell Les Brown Tony Brown Dinny Davies
Harvey Lomas Mark Richards Aila Taylor Kai Trusson

1.2 VERIFICATION OF QUORUM.

With nineteen full member clubs present, including four online, the AGM was declared to be quorate. (The constitution requires a minimum of ten clubs).

2.0 DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

AH - employed by Natural England, with implications re conservation and access
JMB - husband is BCA Treasurer
GD - runs IT business, supplier to CNCC

3.0 APPLICATIONS FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP

There were no applications for CNCC membership this year.

4.0 PROPOSALS FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

4.1 UPDATED CNCC CONSTITUTION

AH and JMB explained the need for the update although it's still a work in progress. Volunteers are invited to carry out a further review, to add missing sections, or to transfer other sections to the Manual of Operations (which also requires updating). The Chair thanked all those involved in producing the current update.

VOTE to accept the 2025 Constitution

Proposed SA (CDG)

17 votes in favour / 0 against / 2 abstentions

Abstentions: PP (WRPC), PB (YRC)

Seconded PM (NB)

Carried

Note: TA can now vote on behalf of independent cavers.

5.0 ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES FROM 2024 AGM

VOTE to accept the minutes

Proposed ME (YCC)

20 votes in favour (unanimous)

Seconded IC (BPC)

Carried

5.1 MATTERS ARISING (and updates) from 2024 AGM

OFFICER	ACTION	UPDATE
Josh Y	Finalise 2023 AGM minutes	Done
Jill	Prepare draft 2024 minutes and circulate to clubs	Done
Gary & Matt	Update constitution re Individual Caver Representative	Done
Gary & Matt	Update constitution re name change Update website re name change	Done
Gary & Matt	Update website with new Officers/Clubs/Committee	Done
Gary & Matt	Re-brand all forms of social media	Done
Matt	Publish a PR/Comms piece about AGM outcomes	Done
Gary	Publish "Dye tracing database" link	Done
Jill	Prepare letter for Barclays Bank re name change	Done
Jill	Email committee re approval of new anchors	Done
Ian & Mark	Discuss BCA subsidy for training courses	Done

MATTERS ARISING

Training subsidy - Consensus is that the current model works, so the status quo should be maintained. AH added that if BCA funding rules change, this will need to be reconsidered.

ME reported that re-branding is mostly completed. Some topos and leaflets still have the old name until they are updated or reprinted.

After a very long process, PB has almost finished getting the name changed with the bank.

6.0 OFFICER REPORTS

6.1 Chair (AH)

Now that he is stepping down, ME thanked AH for all his years in the role of CNCC Chair.

6.2 Secretary (JMB)

JMB apologised for an IT error which caused two pages of the June minutes to disappear from the website, and also affected the current Officer Reports. These have been amended, and in future will be checked at the pdf stage.

JMB asked for volunteers to take minutes now that JY is stepping down. There was a discussion about using technology to record meetings and produce a transcript, which may be trialled at future committee meetings.

6.3 Treasurer (PB)

PB said that certain expenses are not eligible to be reclaimed from BCA (eg mileage allowance for club reps, or Expedition Fund grants). The claim will be amended.

AH noted an issue with bookings of the Yorkshire Dales Guides training facility being paid six months in advance of the workshops. KD suggested clarifying terms and conditions, and discussing the situation with IP, before approaching YDG.

After some debate, it was concluded that the accounts (subject to certain amendments) needed to be approved at the AGM, in order to submit the BCA claim.

ME thanked PB for his years of work as CNCC Treasurer.

6.4 Conservation Officer (KE)

KE appealed for additional volunteers for an upcoming project at Foxholes near Gaping Gill on April 8/9. ME offered to advertise this via social media.

6.5 Access Officer (KT)

AH thanked KT for taking on this role for the last year.

6.6 Training Officer (IP)

TA congratulated IP for his accomplishments with the training workshops. TA also suggested that, as the CNCC is offering training for cavers nationwide, the BCA should not be concerned about the amount of regional funding coming to the CNCC for workshops.

CJB said the BCA is aware the courses are offered to all, and that they don't want to change what is being delivered. The only request is that all regions explore ways of reducing their annual claim, but this is just a request, not a demand. Minimising costs may help to avoid an increase in BCA membership fees.

6.7.1 Training & Equipment Rep (MR)

Nothing raised

6.7.2 Anchor Co-ordinator (AS)

AS said that Ian Walker has agreed to share this role to reduce the workload.

6.7.3 Inclusivity Co-ordinator (JW)

Nothing raised

6.7.4 Youth & Development Rep (AMT)

Nothing raised

6.7.5 Individual Caver Rep (TA)

Nothing raised

6.7.6 BCA Council Rep (AH)

Nothing raised

6.7.7 PR & Communications (ME)

ME plans to publish another newsletter this summer, if anyone has any news, projects, or anything else that might be an interesting article, please send it to ME. IP plans to take some anchoring paraphernalia to Hidden Earth to help inform cavers about our IC anchors.

6.7.8 Access Co-ordinators

Robinsons & Fairy Holes (DD)

Nothing raised

Excalibur (ME)

Nothing raised

Bowland (AB)

Route descriptions for the Bowland caves have been added to the website, although AB noted that updates are required, following digging to remove a blockage. Work is ongoing to change the access agreement to allow individual cavers to get permits.

6.7.9 **Web Administrator** (GD)

JJB and IP expressed thanks to GD for his work on the website.

VOTE to accept all the Officer Reports, subject to minor amendments to the Treasurer's report which will be confirmed at the June committee meeting.

Proposed AJ (GSG)

Seconded ME (YCC)

18 votes in favour, 1 against SA (CDG) 1 abstention PB (YRC) **Carried**

7.0 **ELECTION OF CNCC COMMITTEE**

7.1 **Election of clubs**

The fourteen clubs standing for the fourteen places all received a minimum of three votes, and were therefore all elected to the committee.

7.2 **Election of Individual Caver Rep**

The one candidate for the role of IC Rep received the minimum of three votes, and was duly elected.

The committee for 2025-2026 is therefore:

Clubs: Bradford Pothole Club Ltd
 Craven Pothole Club
 Earby Pothole Club
 Grampian Speleological Group
 Kendal Caving Club
 Northern Boggarts
 Northern Pennine Club
 Red Rose Cave and Pothole Club
 Uni of Leeds Speleological Association
 White Rose Pothole Club
 York Caving Club
 York Uni Cave and Pothole Club
 Yorkshire Subterranean Society
 Ulster Speleological Society & Caving Club

IC Rep: Tim Allen

8.0 ELECTION OF CNCC OFFICERS

All candidates received a minimum of three votes, and were therefore eligible. Five posts were elected unopposed, and James Alderson was successful in the election for Access Officer.

The officers for 2025-2026 are therefore:

Chair	Todd Rye
Secretary	Jill Bolton
Treasurer	Kath Davis
Conservation Officer	Kay Easton
Access Officer	James Alderson
Training Officer	Ian Patrick

JMB welcomed the new officers, and hoped that MA would still be willing to contribute his time to the CNCC in some capacity, as he was clearly a very strong candidate.

9.0 CO-OPTED OFFICERS AND REPRESENTATIVES

The co-opted positions will be presented to the June committee meeting for confirmation. For information, these will be:

CO-OPTED OFFICERS

Web Administrator	Gary Douthwaite
PR & Communications Officer	Matt Ewles
Assistant Training Officer	Mark Richards
Minute Secretary	<i>Vacant</i>
Inclusivity Co-ordinator	Josh White
Anchor Co-ordinator	Alan Speight / Ian Walker
Access Co-ordinators	
- Bowland	Anthony Brown
- Excalibur	Matt Ewles
- Robinsons & Fairy Holes	Dinny Davies
Archaeology Co-ordinator	Tony Brown

BCA WORKING GROUP REPRESENTATIVES

Conservation & Access	James Alderson
Training & Equipment	Ian Patrick (Training Rep) Mark Richards (Equipment Rep)
Youth & Development	Aila Taylor
BCA Council	Todd Rye

10.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 EXPLORATION FUND

JMB gave an update on application to the fund:

One successful application from Ray Duffy (RRCPC) for work connecting Rollerball (Kirtle Pot) to the Precambrian Series in Aygill (£155.81 paid in May 2024)

An application in the previous year at Stump Cross (£400) was eligible for conservation funding rather than exploration

An application from Kevin Dixon (CUCC, BPC) was withdrawn as it primarily related to survey work in Austria, with only a marginal potential benefit to northern caving (£988)

There will shortly be an application from James Alderson at Thunder Hole in East Kingsdale, a project to open up an alternative entrance to Brown Hill Pot

SL asked the Treasurer whether the fund was still sustainable. PB replied that it depends on how much it grows, considering there is no income to support this. ME said that despite heavy PR, there have been only these three requests over three years and so far we have only paid for two batteries,

VOTE To continue to support the scheme

Proposed IC (BPC)

18 votes in favour, 1 abstention

(One club lost the Zoom connection at this point, so was unable to vote)

Seconded SL (RRCPC)

Carried

10.2 REVIEW OF CNCC MEMBERSHIP

TA explained the need for a review of the CNCC membership criteria, so that we properly represent the whole caving community, and not just clubs. He suggested that anyone interested in taking part in a working group should get in touch before the June committee meeting. TR (new CNCC Chair) agreed to act as group coordinator.

Proposed TA (IC Rep)

18 votes in favour, 1 abstention PB (YRC)

Seconded PP (WRPC)

Carried

11.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11.1 GAPING GILL

Pat Halliwell (Craven PC)

PCH read out a prepared statement from CPC regarding the Winch Meet. The issue also affects the BPC. This was for information only, and discussions should be left to the two clubs and the Ingleborough Estate.

A viral internet post significantly increased the popularity of the Winch Meet, which caused problems in Clapham village. This has caused the estate to make new requests regarding the operation of the winch meets.

11.2 MARBLE STEPS POT

Phil Parker (White Rose PC)

PP requested permission for IC Anchors to be installed in Marble Steps Pot, at the Lost Inlet and Steps Pot area. This is a new route entering Branch Inlet. Rather than wait for the next committee meeting in June, the Secretary circulated this request to the committee, receiving ten replies (by 22 March), all in favour. The anchoring project is therefore approved.

PH commented that it's difficult for some clubs to respond quickly to such requests. JMB agreed to bear this in mind in the future.

For the record, the ten clubs replying were:

BPC CPC EPC GSG KCC NPC RRCPC WRPC YCC YUCPC

11.0 FUTURE MEETINGS

The following dates for the 2025-26 meetings were confirmed:

21 June	9:30	Committee meeting
25 October	9:30	Committee meeting
17 January	9:30	Committee meeting
21 March	10:00	Annual General Meeting

The meeting closed at 12:07 pm

SUMMARY OF SPECIFIC ACTION ITEMS

OFFICER	ACTION	UPDATE
Jill	Finalise 2024 AGM minutes	Done
Jill	Prepare draft 2025 minutes and circulate to clubs	Done
Kath	Finalise 2024 accounts	
Matt	Publish a PR/Comms piece about AGM outcomes	
Matt	Publicise appeal for volunteers re Foxholes (GG)	Done
Gary	Update website with new Officers/Clubs/Committee	Done
Jill	Constitution review - set up Working Group	
Todd	Representation/Membership - set up Working Group	
Jill & Officers	Manual of Operations - review by Officers	