

COUNCIL FOR THE NORTHERN CAVING COMMUNITY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
March 2026

OFFICER REPORTS

6.0 ELECTED OFFICERS

6.1	Chair	Todd Rye
6.2	Secretary	Jill Bolton
6.3	Treasurer	Kath Davis
6.4	Conservation Officer	Kay Easton
6.5	Access Officer	James Alderson
6.6	Training Officer	Ian Patrick

7.0 OTHER OFFICERS

7.1	Individual Caver Rep	Tim Allen
7.2	Anchor Co-ordinator	Ian Walker
7.3	Project Officer	Andrew Hinde
7.4	Archaeology Co-ordinator	Tony Brown
7.5	Access Co-ordinators	
	Bowland	Tony Brown
	Excalibur	Matt Ewles
	Robinsons' Pot / Fairy Holes	Dinny Davies
7.6	Inclusivity Co-ordinator	Josh White
7.7	PR & Communications	Matt Ewles
7.8	Web Administrator	Gary Douthwaite

8.0 BCA & WORKING GROUP REPS

8.1	BCA Council	Todd Rye
8.2	Training & Equipment	Mark Richards
8.3	Anchors	Ian Walker
8.4	Conservation & Access	Mike Appleton
8.5	Youth & Development	<i>vacant</i>

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 SRT KIT FOR CNCC WORKSHOPS

6.1 CHAIR'S REPORT

Todd Rye

A whole year since being elected into the role? It feels like less! An eventful year for myself, from leading the representation working group to representing the council at BCA meetings (more on these later).

A huge amount of the CNCC's work this year will be reported by the relevant officers, to whom I am hugely grateful for their continual hard work and dedication to the task of keeping northern caving going strong. A special thanks goes to Jill for her help in getting me settled into the role, and for her sterling work behind the scenes in the face of a tough year herself.

There are a few items I have been more involved in, including the wrangling (thankfully not literally, hats off to the members of RRCPC involved with burying the poor beast) of a dead cow which was found in a shakehole on Casterton Fell. There was murmurings of insurance and other things requiring paperwork, and though there is not currently a full conclusion (all is quiet on this front currently), the BCA, the RRCPC and myself are poised to sort the issues if they rear up again.

Another item I have been involved with (at least initially) was the moving of the popular Cavemaps site under the CNCC umbrella. Becka Lawson contacted me as the original owner of the site was going to be closing it down, and she thought it would be a crying shame to lose such an amazing resource. I wholeheartedly agreed, being a survey nerd myself. Gary is working on this currently, and I'm sure will be updating us with this in the future.

Rostam, the BCA chair, has recently put me on to a project being run by Mike Waterworth of the CSCC, for an online cave logbook system, which I have included to raise interest and possible users/contributors of information. The site is <https://subterra.world/>

I have stood again for the role of Chair, provided that the council will have me of course! I do enjoy the role, and being near the core of northern caving is certainly a positive part of my life. I have added the caveat that I am unlikely to run again for a third year, which is due to other responsibilities and projects filling my time, with even more responsibilities on the horizon as well.

6.2 SECRETARY'S REPORT

Jill Bolton

Another year of organising meetings, dealing with day-to-day correspondence and supporting my fellow officers.

As this is my final report as secretary, I'd like to point out that we are very heavily reliant on a small number of individuals (particularly Matt and Ian). We really need to think about "succession planning" and identify volunteers prepared to get involved in running the CNCC.

During the last three years, I have looked for ways to involve more people, including the creation of more co-opted officer roles. These roles are very flexible, and do not require standing for election (which can be off-putting). Alternatively, most officers would welcome an assistant (as already helping with Training and Access).

Although most most roles have been filled for 2026, we're still looking for an Assistant Secretary and a representative to the Youth & Development Working Group.

As previously reported, we have lost two member clubs (one dissolved, one no longer caving), but I'm pleased that the new Northern Irish club has applied to join us.

To conclude, here are a few events to look forward to:

May 23-29	Gaping Gill Winch Meet (Bradford)
June 5-14	Easegill Open House Week
June 19-22	NAMHO Conference, Swaledale
June 27-28	BCA AGM Weekend, Derbyshire
August 7-23	Gaping Gill Winch Meet (Craven)
September 13	International Day of Cave and Karst
September 25-27	Hidden Earth, Llangollen (BCRA Conference)

. . . and don't forget our superb programme of CNCC Workshops - which will soon be using shiny new SRT kit (albeit for very unfortunate reasons).

6.3 TREASURER'S REPORT

Kath Davis

SUMMARY 2025

Cash at bank	£
Start Balance 31 December 2024	12,518.55
Income	20,408.38
Expenditure	16,465.57
End Balance 31 December 2025	16,461.36

Income sources are Training Course fees, BCA Grant payment for 2024, bank account interest and on 28 July 2025 a grant from the YDMT for £2000 to be spent on Access and Conservation materials. Of the YDMT amount, £634.23 was spent by 31 December 2025.

The Training Course income totalled £11,489.24, some of which was prepaid in 2024. The fees paid to trainers, training kit purchases and venue hire for courses resulted in a deficit of £2,280.36 which can be claimed back from BCA.

The total amount which will be submitted to claim from BCA for 2025 totals £4991.75.

SUMMARY 2026 (to date)

By the end of 2025 training course fees of £3,157.98 had already been received for courses in 2026 and payments have continued to come in via Paypal in the first couple of months of the year.

Further Conservation & Access purchases set against the YDMT grant bring the total spent to £1,758.71 of the original £2,000.

I hope the presentation of the accounts makes them easy to understand and will also bring paper copies to the meeting along with the complete spreadsheet of payments. If anyone wants to ask anything please feel free.

Thank you to Pat Halliwell for being independent scrutineer.

SCRUTINEER'S REPORT

Pat Halliwell

In my opinion, the balance sheet and attached accounts give a true and fair record of the income and expenditure of the Council for the Northern Caving Community for the year ending 31st December 2025, according to the best of my information and the explanations given to me, and as shown by the accounts and receipts/expenditure of the Council.

I wish to make a recommendation to the next Treasurer that in future, when a formal change to matters such as remuneration of trainers and payments of grants is agreed at Committee the appropriate minute be appended to the invoice/request for payment so that if the Scrutineer did not attend the meeting nor has seen the minutes it will be immediately obvious why the actual sum has been paid.

PROFIT AND LOSS

	2025	2024
INCOME	£	£
Interest on Premium Account	162.82	173.33
Training Course fees paid 2025	8375.58	7513.46
TC fees paid 2025 for 2026	3157.98	2973.66
TC fees paid direct	140.00	30.00
YDMT Grant	2000.00	-
BCA Grant for 2024	6572.00	8691.09
	20408.38	19381.54
 Less EXPENDITURE		
TC Tuition	11 508.30	8 460.00
TC Venue hire 2025	690.00	1 070.00
TC Venue prepaid for 2025	-	990.00
TC Refund	65.00	60.00
C & A Mileage	395.55	598.80
Exploration Grant	187.00	155.81
C & A Materials	1 919.67	2 642.52
Meeting Mileage	355.70	543.60
Try Caving support	-	130.00
Training kit purchase	516.30	168.00
IT/Admin	828.05	1 112.11
	16 465.57	15 930.84
 NET Profit for year	£ 3 942.81	£ 3 450.70

CASH AT BANK

	£	£
Start balance 1/1/25	12 518.55	9 067.85
Plus Net Profit	3 942.81	3 450.70
End balance 31/12/25	16 461.36	12 518.55

BALANCE SHEET

CURRENT ASSETS	£	£	£	£
Cash at bank	16 461.36		12 518.55	
Training venue hire prepaid 2025			990.00	
Total			13 508.55	
Less CURRENT LIABILITIES				
TC fees received for 2026		3 157.98		2 973.66
 Net CURRENT ASSETS	£13 303.38		£10 534.89	

		2025		2024
		£		£
Training Summary 2025				
Course fees via PayPal 2024		2 973.66		439.57
Course fees via PayPal 2025		8 375.58		7 513.46
Direct Credit Course fees		140.00		30.00
Refund	65.00		60.00	
Course Tuition	11 508.30		8 460.00	
Venue Hire fees prepaid in 2024	990.00			
Venue Hire fees paid in 2025	690.00		1 070.00	
Try Caving support			130.00	
Training kit	516.30		168.00	
	13 769.60	11 489.24	9 888.00	7 983.03
	2 280.36		1 904.97	
BCA Grant Claim 2025				
IT/Admin	816.20		1 062.11	
C&A Mileage	395.55		598.80	
Meeting Mileage	214.20		363.60	
C&A Materials	1 086.54		2 642.52	
Resin/anchors	198.90			
Training Course Support	2 280.36		1 904.97	
Total	£ 4 991.75		£ 6 572.00	

NOTES

Mileage claims for travel to meetings all included in CNCC accounts but some not allowable in BCA Claim

C & A materials £634.23 spent of YDMT Grant

Resin/anchors taken out of C& A materials £198.90, put in own category

Sweets at Hidden Earth not in BCA claim £11.85

6.4 CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT

Kay Easton

Andrew Hinde was coopted as Projects Manager, to manage external funding and to act as site manager for projects. He successfully applied for a grant from the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust and received £2000. The work done under this is listed in the Project Officer's report. Other work includes: stabilising of a collapse in Shuttleworth, replacement of a rotten fence at Rumbling Hole, clearing of a boulder collapse blocking the entrance to Foxholes.

We commented on the Planning Application by Tarmac to extend Wensleydale Quarry towards Keldheads Cave, and had a productive meeting with Tarmac, including an undertaking to leave the cave, and a surrounding barrier zone, out of the quarried area. In addition, the planning application has attracted the attention of the Preston under Scar women's group, who are keen to find out more about Keldheads and about caving in general, and Chris Curry gave a well-received talk at their March meeting, with their fee to be donated to cave rescue.

Andrew Hinde gave a talk on cave conservation to the Upper Eden Cumbria Wildlife Trust Support Group in early February.

A list of equipment available for CNCC members to borrow for conservation projects is on the CNCC website <https://cncc.org.uk/about/> (It's under the "about" heading rather than "conservation" because the list also includes publicity and anchor placement items.)

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.

6.5 ACCESS OFFICERS' REPORTS

James Alderson / Mike Appleton

James and Mike have shared the duties of Access Officer throughout the year following the election of officers in March 2025. Mike was co-opted as assistant access officer following the meeting and has handled the majority of the queries coming into the access inbox after agreeing with James that he would be best placed to answer them in a timely manner. We have made progress on several access issues, but know there is still more to do in 2026/7.

At **Skirwith Cave**, it was agreed that CNCC would help manage access through the access inbox to save cavers from having to write to the landowner and wait for a timely answer. The original system was cumbersome, and it was agreed that taking this responsibility from the landowner could be the beginning of a more open access agreement. To date, three groups have accessed the cave in this way, and there have been no reported issues.

We also instigated an improved access offer to the **Yockenthwaite Caves** and **Strans Gill Pot**. After a brief discussion with Natural England's Ranger for the area, it was agreed that cavers could leave a message on their answerphone rather than writing for access, ahead of a visit. Cavers now wishing to gain landowner consent to visit simply need to call in advance with details of their party size and date so NE can monitor how many people are visiting this cave, which is on an SSSI. Having spoken to the farmer, it was also politely requested that any caver should call at Yockenthwaite Farm on their way to the cave.

Elsewhere, we are still working on an updated meeting with the Duchy over access at **Whitewell** in the Forest of Bowland, whilst in 2026/27 we are hoping to make sure things are progressing well with access at Ingleborough Estate, Selside (Churns) and Ribblehead. Mike has also made some tentative enquiries about access at **Birkwith** through a contact.

Mike is also hoping to review the new access arrangement at **Scoska Cave** following the breakdown of the former agreement. No reported issues have arisen through the altered agreement, and therefore, we are in a strong position to return to the landowner to discuss reinstating the more cave-friendly agreement.

At the time of writing, we had received details of the potential gating of **Hartley Quarry Cave**, but with a formal access agreement in place. We will update on that at the next committee meeting.

As ever, James and Mike are more than grateful for the support of not only the caving community, but everyone on the Committee.

6.6 TRAINING OFFICER'S REPORT

Ian Patrick

The CNCC training workshops have enjoyed another highly successful year. A wide range of topics and skill levels has been covered, and we have received consistently positive feedback from participants.

The 2:1 workshop format continues to prove very popular. This structure facilitates a more focused training day and enables us to deliver more specialised sessions, such as pull-through workshops in Swinsto and Simpsons.

We also delivered a couple of well-attended "New to Caving" events, facilitated by CNCC trainers. However, these events are ideally delivered by Northern caving clubs rather than centrally by CNCC trainers. I would encourage clubs to consider hosting one of these events in the coming year.

New Kit Store

With the generous support of the YSS, we now have our own dedicated kit store located in their heated cellar. This is a significant asset, particularly for drying wet equipment and for providing easier access to kit when running multiple workshops over the same day or weekend.

Spanset – Ropes

We are extremely grateful to Spanset for their generous donation of a substantial quantity of caving rope. Mark and I were pleased to spend a full day at Spanset HQ, where we were given a comprehensive tour of their facilities.

Acknowledgements

The continued success of our workshops is very much a team effort. My sincere thanks go to everyone who has contributed:

CNCC Committee – for their ongoing support

Gary Douthwaite – outstanding IT support

Matt Ewles – general support and effective PR

Kath Davis – managing payments

SRT Trainers:

Mark Richards (Assistant Training Officer)

Sam Litten

Helen Hooper

Jo White

Geology Specialists:

Dr John Helm ("The Rock Doctor")

John Cordingley

My thanks also to the YSS, CPC, and Yorkshire Dales Guides for the use of their premises.

7.1 INDIVIDUAL CAVER REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Tim Allen

It is my second year as IC Rep and I have managed to attend all CNCC meetings in this term. A primary focus has been to support the Representation Review and I have contributed discussion documentation and attended the review meeting organised by our Chair.

I also attended the Yorkshire Dales National Park "Cave and Crag Access Group" meeting in November and I remain a member of the BCA National Access Group. These both allow me to champion the cause of individual cavers (or caving outside the club and national organisation structure). To this end I have challenged, in the nicest way, both our committee and access officers over recent access agreements. It is important to me, and the IC role I think, that any CNCC approved access agreement permits access to those outside of the BCA membership and club structure.

I used my experience with the wider national access issues to assist with the CNCC's response to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Outdoor Recreation and Access to Nature.

If elected to serve another year, I would expect to continue the role in much the same way as I have done over the last two years.

7.2 ANCHOR CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

Ian Walker

Supply of anchors

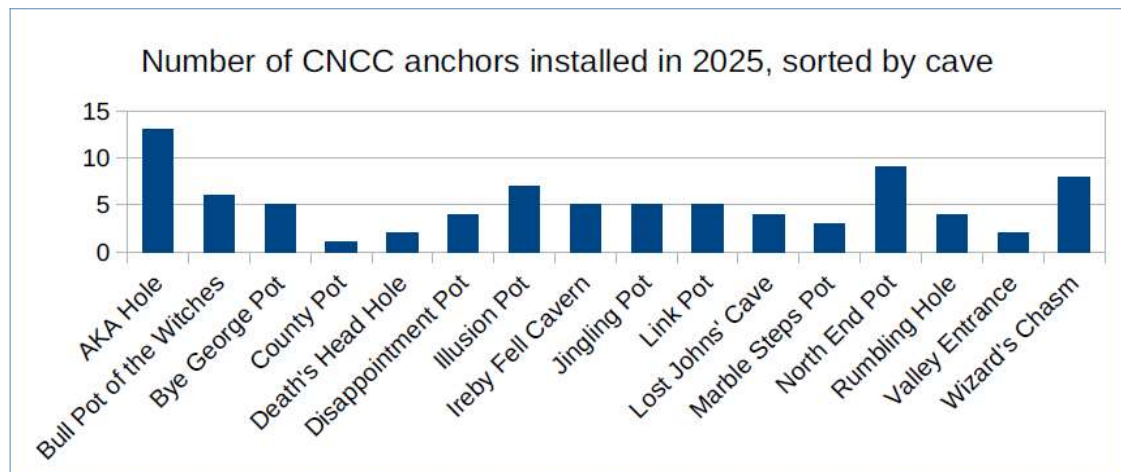
The anchors are BCA property, held by the CNCC and drawn on by the Regions as required. At the last AGM, I reported that we had about 8 years of supply based on about 550 anchors. This year, around 274 anchors were despatched to other regions.

The CNCC now holds around 240 in stock, equivalent to about three years' usage. As before, this depends on the other regions. It would appear prudent to begin the procurement of more anchors.

Alan Speight has been custodian of the anchor and resin stock this year; his assistance with this is appreciated. Alan would like to hand over this task and I have agreed to hold the stock in future.

Anchors installed in 2025

The anchor records show 83 anchors in 16 caves



Anchors decommissioned

A number of anchors have been removed following reports and/or inspections.

The locations include:-

- Jingling Pot; Lateral Cleft
- Lancaster Hole; entrance pitch
- Ireby Fell Caverns; Ding/Dong/Bell
- Lost Johns Cave; Dome and Centipede routes
- Valley Entrance; Roof Tunnel pitch and CRO Traverse.
- Also non-CNCC anchors in Bull Pot of the Witches (entrance), and Deaths Head (dig & pitch).

The majority of these relate to loose anchors (resin rotating in hole). However on investigation, we are finding some are loose in-out of the hole (ie axially) which is thought to be more serious. A small number of anchors have been reported due to resin not completely filling the hole (Lost Johns, Rowten, Valley Entrance) and some in Ireby appear to be proud of the rock surface as the rock erodes backwards.

Users are reminded to check closely for loose anchors before using. and to report any that appear to be unsatisfactory.

Defect reports

We received 20 reports of unsatisfactory anchors in 2025 (highest number for 5 years). This demonstrates increased engagement with/from the caving community, which is a good thing. When investigating a report, it is common to find multiple defective anchors requiring multiple work visits. So ticking off a single report can involve a lot of volunteer time.

Outstanding reports: 22 (oldest is from 2021). This shows that despite increased inspection and maintenance from a small number of volunteers, the CNCC is not reducing the backlog of reports.

Special report on loose anchors

The CNCC has committed to monitoring defect reports for trends. It appears we have a developing trend of loose anchors. This is not new (Simon Wilson reported the same issue a number of years ago) but it is important.

In my June report to the Committee I presented a special report on Jingling Pot, where one third of anchors inspected were loose. Work to correct this is nearly completed (one deviation anchor left).

Work in Ireby Fell Caverns has been ongoing, with multiple reports and work trips. Around half of inspected anchors were loose. Multiple anchors have been decommissioned and replaced, with still more to do.

We were recently alerted to loose anchors on the Flyover route of Rowten Pot. On investigation, half the anchors inspected were loose; some unmistakably so:- eg rotational movement of 8mm and/or in-out movement (any of which is a fail). Work to correct this is yet to begin.

As these caves are much-visited classics, it is clear that not all users inspect anchors closely, or do not report faults they find. The scheme relies on users submitting reports, and I acknowledge those that take the time to let us know of faults using the web reporting system.

In Lost Johns, we found that apparently-secure anchors could be tapped into the rock. In other words, they had pulled out (fail) until jammed. Tapping the head reveals the fault. The thinking is that probably pull-testing had occurred in the past, which partially extracts the anchor until it locks up. This is mentioned as pull-testing is not a panacea but can in fact deteriorate the anchor bond whilst at the same time hide faults. The working assumption is that installation deteriorate due to resin shrinkage, so that the resin rotates in the hole and/or moves in-out. This appears to be most noticeable in caves bolted in the early 1990s using HILTI HIT-50 resin; this would encompass over 600 anchors.

My conclusion at present is that resin-bonded anchors should be regarded as long-lasting but not everlasting. A 30-50 year life seems to be about all that we can expect. As such, across the CNCC region we can expect perhaps hundreds of anchors to be defective and more becoming so in the next decade. The CNCC as an organisation should expect and plan for a substantial increase in maintenance (inspection and replacement) workload in coming years.

The CNCC has created for itself a role as asset maintainer. We have a fabulous asset but it needs the maintenance to go with it, if we are to keep our excellent safety record.

Anchor wear

One of the loose DMM Eco anchors removed from Lost Johns' Centipede pitch was subsequently noticed to have wear in the eye, measured at 7.3mm minimum. This is just within the 10% diameter loss limit recommended by DMM for replacement (7.2mm).

This reinforces the message that anchor wear does occur in the Dales. Users are reminded to check for any visual or tactile wear on anchors before use, and to report any that are unsatisfactory.

PECO anchors

It has become apparent that the rejected "BCA01" anchors have not all been removed from service. It seems there are some at Roaring Hole entrance, Disappointment Pot, and I recently found one at Rowten Pot Eyehole entrance.

Users are reminded that whilst the BCA01 batch passed acceptance testing, confidence in the supplier was later lost, resulting in the decision to decommission the small number already installed in the Dales.

These remnants will be removed when volunteer resources allow. In the meantime they are available for use. They look like DMM Eco-anchors (P-shape, 8mm diameter round bar) but have "BCA01" laser etched in the side.

Installers

There are 10 installers in the anchor database, of whom 4 logged an installation in 2025. The majority of installations were performed by just one installer. The last new joiner was in 2021.

The installer workshop and revalidation is planned for May. After the current installers have been revalidated, I would like the CNCC to consider whether it needs to encourage more installers to take part in maintenance, and encourage new fresh applicants to come forward if needed.

Scheme admin

The June committee approved minor updates to the scheme wording. I have represented the CNCC at the newly formed BCA Anchor Working Group. We have established a coordinated system for defect reporting across the regions, and are working towards a coordinated set of user pre-use checks.

Topo updates

I continue to check and update existing rigging topos, with help from others. Users are encouraged to always download the latest revision, and to submit suggestions for improvement.

Standing for re-election

I feel to have made progress in my first year in the role, by improving record keeping, rebuilding links with the BCA, continuing detailed inspections and providing detailed reports to the Committee, who are responsible to the AGM for the running of the scheme. Nevertheless, as well as the ongoing work, there is more I would like to do with regard to installer training, and anchor maintenance. I am willing to stand again for the coming year if the meeting wishes. If not elected I will be happy to work with the successor while they settle in.

7.3 PROJECT OFFICER'S REPORT

Andrew Hinde

Since the last AGM, the following conservation projects have been completed with funding from the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust (YDMT).

- Graffiti cleaning at Yordas Cave ~6 volunteer days work
A conservation review and cleaning tests were followed by a day of gentle cleaning with soft brush and water.
- Fencing repairs at Long Churn 2 volunteer days work
Replacement of rotten fence posts and tensioning of external fencing wire.
Replacement of internal fencing to protect instructed group members (or anyone else) from falling into the eye hole.
- Pasture Gill Pot fence replacement ~12 volunteer days work
Replacement of perimeter fence to make cattle and sheep proof stock fence with timber rails and sheep netting.
Work undertaken by Craven Pothole Club volunteers led by John Helm.
- Sweetwater Hole fence replacement 2 volunteer days work
Replacement of sheep netting fence with timber post and rail fence to accommodate cattle grazing on the site.
- Ireby Cavern footpath ~10 volunteer days work
Resetting and levelling of stone flags and replacement of rotten boardwalk bridges. These were originally installed by CNCC volunteers in 2009.

There is £241.00 of the original £2000 YDMT grant remaining. The grant funding expires in July 2026.

Wolverine jaw bone unearthed in Stump Cross Caverns February 2026

Wolverine bones have been found in Stump Cross as far back as 1922 and on a number of occasions since. The recent find is exciting because Stump Cross is the main site for Wolverine in the UK and the new lower jaw bone is an excellent example with some teeth. The likelihood is that more bones will emerge as the CPC assist the cave management in creating a new circular route removing years of backfill to give unhampered access to the bone layer. They estimate they will eventually shift 300 tons of spoil to the surface which they are sifting but without knowing the precise provenance of anything found. The bones found previously in Stump Cross come from the Clastic Horizon which is extensive and includes wolf, fox, reindeer and bison bone as well as wolverine but this is the first find since 2011. Recent dating indicates an age of up to 90,000 years for bones in that horizon. Anything found will eventually end up in a display in the cave.

On 23 March, there is a hydrology and geology field event at Stump Cross which I understand will include an introduction to archaeology with an opportunity for children to do some sifting.

Farthest North: Human Remains from Heaning Wood Bone Cave, Cumbria and their European context

This report on the findings from Heaning Wood Bone Cave covers the finding of the oldest human remains in the North of England. Amateur archaeologist Martin Stables, working under supervision of Rick Peterson, said that he managed to get the 11,000 year old little girl named, which he felt was right to do as a rarity allowed, as there is only one other individual of the Mesolithic Period that has also been named, that being Cheddar Man.

The abstract of the research article reads,

"The results of research on the human remains and artefacts recently discovered at Heaning Wood Bone Cave, Cumbria, are reported. A programme of radiocarbon dating has established that the human remains include the earliest so far discovered in northern Britain, the 'Ossick Lass', which date between 9290 and 8925 cal BC. The cave was used for burial during three phases in prehistory: one individual dating to the Early Mesolithic, four to the Early Neolithic and two to the Early Bronze Age and is thus an important addition to our developing knowledge about the deposition of human remains in caves in north-west Europe at these dates. Genomic analysis has established that all but one of the sampled individuals were biologically female. Osteological and taphonomic analysis shows that, in each phase, the burial practice seems to have been successive inhumation of the recently deceased body into the vertical entrance of the cave. Artefacts associated with the burials include perforated periwinkle shell beads radiocarbon dated to the Early Mesolithic, a small assemblage of worked stone, including diagnostically Early Neolithic pieces, and sherds of Early Bronze Age Collared Urn pottery."

7.5 ACCESS CO-ORDINATORS'S REPORTS

Bowland

Verbal update to meeting on current developments

See also Access Officers' Report (Agenda item 6.5)

Tony Brown

Excalibur

Only a few permits for Excalibur Pot have been issued this last year. Very sadly the landowner for Excalibur Pot, James Holt, has recently passed away. He was always very supportive, and interested in the exploration, and thoroughly enjoyed chatting to visiting cavers. His hospitality to our work (on a private shooting estate) made the discovery possible. This does mean that the signed access agreement is defunct. I do not feel this is an urgent matter due to the very low number of cavers visiting, and the very relaxed nature of the access, with cavers being recognised and generally welcomed in the immediate area, so I can arrange access for anyone who contacts me. Nonetheless, in due course, and at a more respectful time, our group plans to discuss the access at Excalibur, especially as the land may potentially now be sold.

Matt Ewles

Robinsons' Pot / Fairy Holes

We had a couple of bookings for Robinsons' Pot last year but no bookings for Fairy Holes. This coming year, we currently have two bookings for each. There are still plenty of options for booking both caves, please get in touch if you are interested. If anyone else would like to take on the role, of Access Co-ordinator, I will be more than happy to hand it over.

Dinny Davies

7.6 INCLUSIVITY CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

Josh White

I have scaled back the size of the projects that I'm looking at completing within this role, due to personal time constraints. I continue to be available as a point of contact for inclusivity issues within caving, primarily within CNCC's region, but happy to help with other regions.

My main output within this role has been producing articles for the fantastic CNCC newsletters pulled together by Matt. I aim to continue to produce these articles and be available as I believe it's important to have someone within this role.

If there is anybody out there looking for an opportunity to get involved within regional caving politics, and who has an interest and experience within the inclusivity space, please do reach out, as with a suitable replacement, I'd be happy to support a handover.

7.7 PR & COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER'S REPORT

Matt Ewles

The last year has seen two more issues of our newsletter, which continue to be circulated in paper copies to all club huts nationwide, as well as several other local venues, and available to download on our website. As well as being a compilation of our work from the previous six months, it's been great to include some bespoke content. I'd like to thank everyone who has submitted content and helped make these newsletters possible.

Since our last AGM there have been about 25 news articles published on our website, which are also circulated by Facebook, X, UKCaving, and our various other social medias as appropriate including Instagram, Youtube, Bluesky, Threads, Mastodon. You are not alone if you have never heard of the last three. Thankfully, Gary is very on-the-ball with the latest social media platforms.

This means we are publishing roughly one news article every couple of weeks, which is similar to the previous year, and is about where we want to be. These news stories have spanned a pleasing mix of topics, including conservation, training, topos, descriptions, events, and other news.

Remember, a photo with a news story (ideally featuring people) speaks a thousand words... landscape format where possible please!

The use of videos to engage with cavers is something I'm keen to explore. Last May Ian Patrick produced a short video on anchor remedial work in Rumbling Hole which was extremely popular and helped emphasise the human side of the CNCC (things don't always go to plan). I know Ian has mentioned more training video resources in the future which would be a great inclusion, but I'd like to encourage anyone involved in a CNCC conservation, training or anchoring project to consider putting together a video to showcase your work; we can probably help if you have lots of good footage, but editing it together is not your strength.

We had a stall at Hidden Earth once again, this time made even more interactive by a display of anchoring kit. I'd like to thank Ian Patrick and Mark Richards who staffed the stall for a substantial amount of the conference, and anyone else who helped out. The stall attracted some very positive engagement with SpanSet UK, who were very impressed by the work that we do and have since sponsored us with free rope and use of their excellent facilities.

I have a stock of new-to-caving leaflets and posters available for people to hand out to anyone looking to try out caving as a potential hobby. I will bring these to the AGM and would really appreciate people taking some for distribution.

I have one remaining CNCC-owned copy of "Caves and Karst of the Yorkshire Dales #2" for gifting to landowners/farmers to support good relations.

Our mailing list has grown from 783 subscribers in my last AGM report to 879 at the time of writing this report. Although we get 4-5 people joining each month at random, we usually get a small flurry every time I do a PR push on the mailing list, particularly reminding people of the advanced notice they get of training workshops being posted. I expect that this number will start to plateau, but nonetheless, to have so many subscribers is excellent. I send out a roughly monthly mailshot of northern caving/ CNCC news, and additional mailshots for critical safety warnings, last minute workshop spaces, or when new workshops are added to our website.

The redevelopment and integration of CaveMaps into CNCC is an amazing opportunity for us to deliver another service to northern cavers, and I think we should be honoured to have been invited to take this on.

I continue to manage our cave descriptions, dealing with new documents (it has been great to add descriptions for caves outside the Three Peaks/Three Counties area this year), and reports of errors or updates to existing ones. I triage incoming safety warnings and publicise these according to their severity.

Finally, I'd welcome a volunteer to work with me on the PR/Comms role, specifically to explore opportunities to work with other organisations. For example, we have had opportunities to work more closely with the National Park in terms of web content and promoting caving, and a huge amount could be achieved by an enthusiastic volunteer. This is not something I have had time to pursue, much to my regret.

It is currently looking like I am going to take on the Secretary role again (with thanks to Jill for her offer of support). I'm disappointed that nobody new has come forward for that, so I will be juggling both roles over the coming year.

7.8 WEB ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Gary Douthwaite

Up to June 2025

Issue resolved	Issue with uploading of new files failing in the admin centre. Cause was found to be the software that is used to count the pages in PDF files and generate a first page thumbnail image. Due to a version change it is no longer compatible. Now using Poppler Utilities instead of ImageMagick.
Functionality improved	Updated the social media icons that appear at the bottom of CNCC emails. Replaced Twitter with X and added Threads, Bluesky, Instagram and UK Caving.
Functionality improved	Updated the group email system to allow adding of custom groups.
New feature	Added the ability to edit the Manual of Operations in the Admin Center and made the document public on the 'about' page.
Functionality improved	New anti-SPAM measures installed on the server. This should reduce the SPAM emails on CNCC accounts.
Issue resolved	Bug fixed relating to the recent addition of custom email groups. When sending a new group message, the email system showed as if it had not been sent when in fact it had resulting in multiple messages due to re-tries.
Functionality improved	Marked a cave as being updated if a new topo file is added/changed. Previously the cave was only marked as updated if the text was changed but not the topo file. On the cave list, it also shows a 'new topo' badge.

Up to October 2025

Functionality improved	Added the ability to upload multiple files to caves rather than just one topo and one description. It is now possible to add multiples of either as well as a generic 'document' file if required.
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Up to January 2026

Issue resolved	The cave map has been restored. Originally using Bing maps however, they have withdrawn the free tier of API access. Set up again using Google maps.
Functionality improved	Ability to download anchor reports to a CSV file added to the anchors website.
Functionality improved	Secretary Microsoft 365 account has been upgraded to allow additional data storage as well as the use of Teams to replace Zoom at meetings.
Functionality improved	Website data is now automatically backed up to the new Microsoft storage on the secretary account to ensure data is always available in the event of a system failure.
Functionality improved	Added OS Map (OpenData) as a selectable option on the Cave Map page. This provides a more caver friendly map view as viruses Google maps.

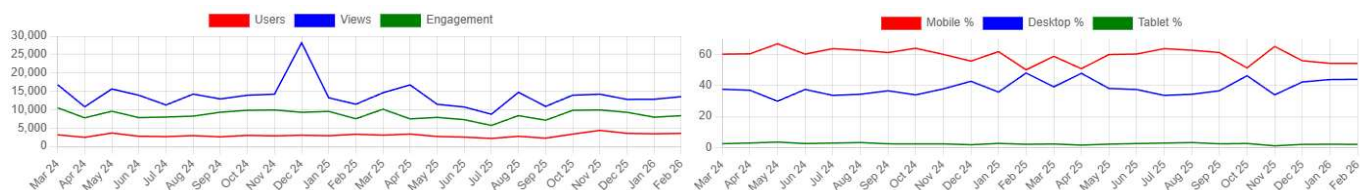
Recently and upcoming

- Following the approval of the CaveMaps website to be taken under the control of CNCC I have been working on transitioning the data to our own web server. The data has been successfully transferred and the front-end is almost complete. There is some work to finish on the back-end and some data to tidy up but I'm not far off making it available.
- CNCC is now also on Mastodon social media.
- A new web server is in the pipeline which will improve general speed and functionality of the website. This will provide both a hardware and software upgrades including a new updated operating system. The planned implantation will take place at some point during the next couple of months.

Analytics

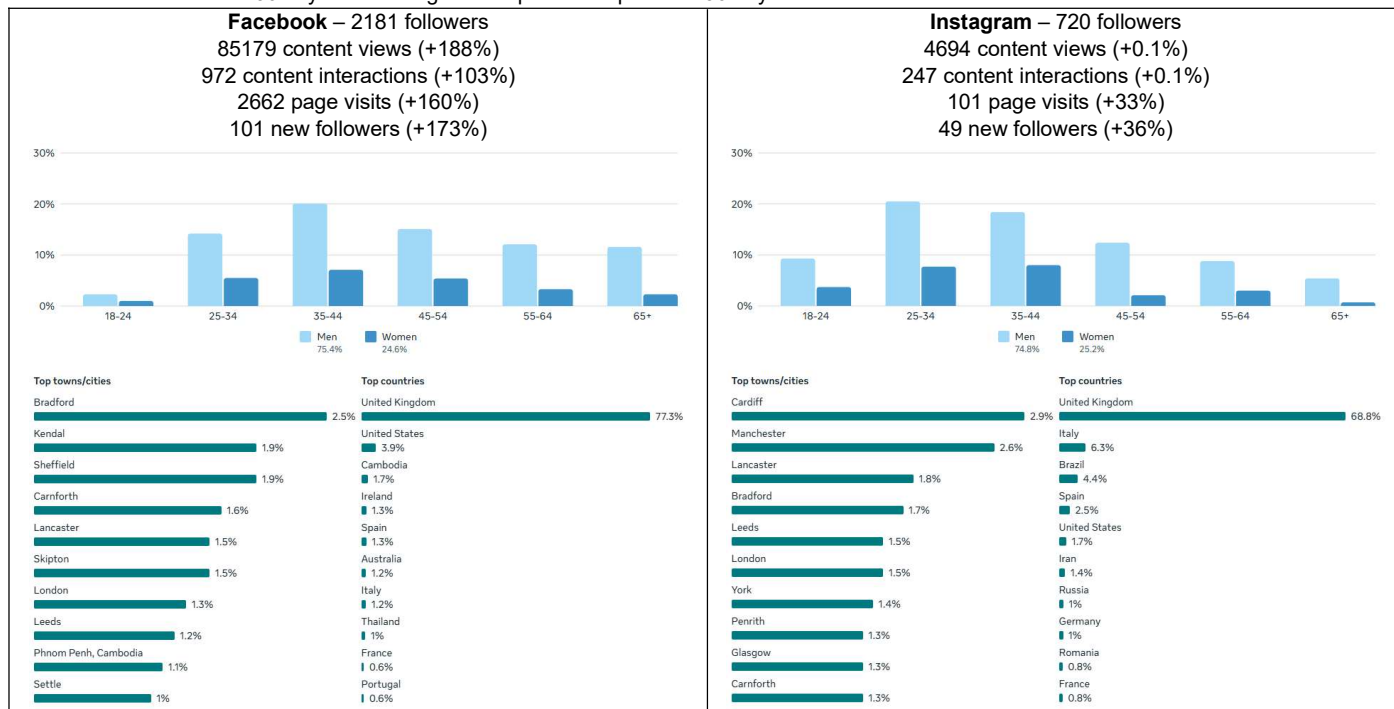
Site visitors

	Mar 25	Apr 25	May 25	Jun 25	Jul 25	Aug 25	Sep 25	Oct 25	Nov 25	Dec 25	Jan 26	Feb 26
Users	3,067	3,362	2,712	2,540	2,178	2,759	2,250	3,355	4,361	3,567	3,436	3,547
Views	14,605	16,742	11,465	10,723	8,764	14,730	10,896	13,940	14,219	12,803	12,841	13,533
Eng.	10,132	7,501	7,912	7,281	5,706	8,390	7,133	9,834	9,923	9,292	7,968	8,368



Social Media

Meta statistics for the last 90 days. Percentage is comparison to previous 90 days.



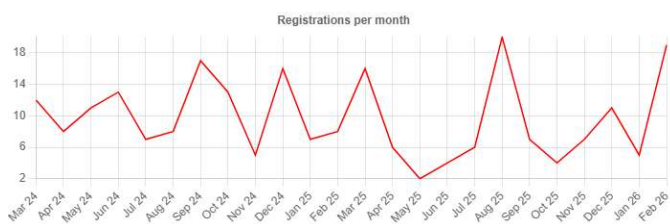
Social media followers comparison:

	CNCC	DCA	CSCC	CCC	DCUC	BCA	UK Caving
Facebook	2181	901	717*	--	--	3600	4300*
Instagram	720	--	--	--	--	--	1054
Bluesky	44	--	--	--	--	--	--
X	549*	561	--	--	--	241	--
Threads	81	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mastodon	1	--	--	--	--	--	--
YouTube	27	--	--	--	--	--	--

*Followers have gone down since the last committee meeting report.

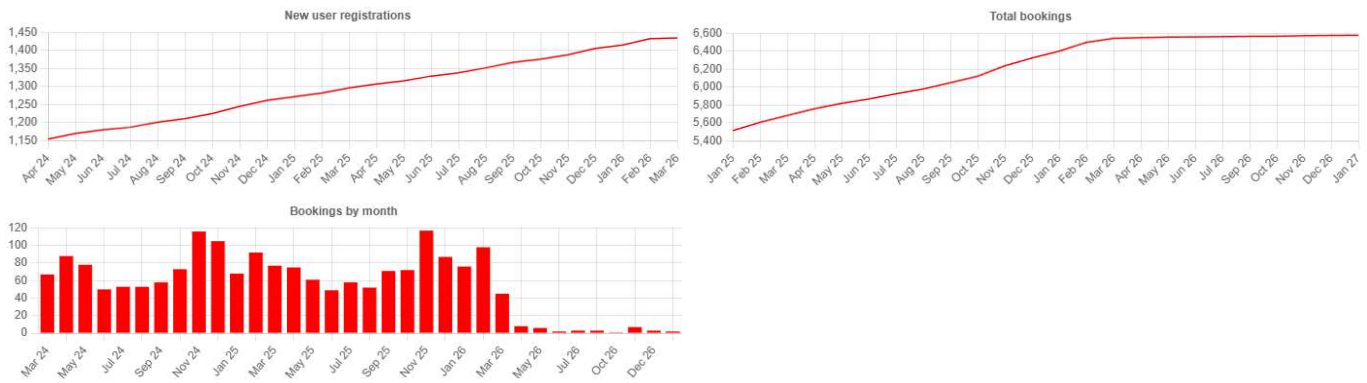
Mailing List

- The mailing list contains **880** people (**21** have requested to be unsubscribed).



Online Booking System

- 1435 registered users
- 7485 individual bookings have been made. This number includes 6579 approved bookings and 905 cancelled bookings.
- 325 (23%) made a positive statement that they are NOT BCA members.
- 979 (68%) said they are members of a club.
- Of the users who specified gender there are 261 female (18.9%), 1020 male (73.9%) and 5 other (0.4%).
- The average age is 51 with the youngest 18 and oldest 85.



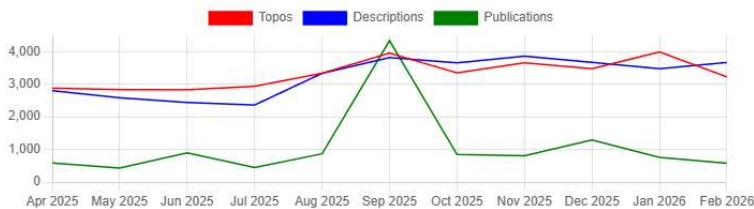
Workshops

- There have been **85** workshops in the last 12 months.



Media Downloads

	Topos	Descriptions	Publications
Feb 2026	3225	3666	578
Jan 2026	3990	3475	757
Dec 2025	3475	3670	1289
Nov 2025	3657	3859	805
Oct 2025	3348	3655	845
Sep 2025	3953	3816	4334
Aug 2025	3336	3334	868
Jul 2025	2936	2363	443
Jun 2025	2830	2440	901
May 2025	2836	2585	431
Apr 2025	2878	2802	587
12 Month Average	3039	2972	987



Top 10 media downloads (last 12 months)

Topos	Descriptions	Publications
1328 - Lost Johns' Cave	1926 - The Leck Fell Master Cave System	959 - CNCC Newsletter Issue 17 - June 2025
1000 - Alum Pot	1913 - Ease Gill Caverns	925 - Shuttleworth Pot (Witches Cave) Conservation Guide
901 - Sell Gill Holes	1584 - Gaping Gill	769 - Great Douk Cave - A Guide to Hidden Gems
847 - Bar Pot / Small Mammal / Flood Entrance	1180 - Alum Pot and Long Churn Caves	616 - CNCC Newsletter Issue 18 - December 2025
753 - Simpson Pot	920 - Caves of Scotland	574 - CNCC Newsletter Issue 16 - December 2024
735 - Short Drop and Gavel	719 - Valley Entrance	542 - New to Caving Leaflet
720 - Jingling Pot	717 - Great Douk and Middle Washfold	514 - GDPR for Caving Clubs - April 2018
717 - Lancaster Hole	710 - Short Drop Pot and Gavel Pot	510 - CNCC Newsletter Issue 15 - June 2024
717 - Rowten Pot	697 - Yordas Cave and Pot	463 - CNCC banner from Hidden Earth 2024
691 - Yordas Pot and Cave	677 - Little Hull Pot	459 - CNCC Newsletter Issue 13 - May 2023

Report data snapshots taken 13 March 2026.

8.1 BCA COUNCIL REP'S REPORT

Todd Rye

The BCA council meetings have been an interesting experience for me, being thrown into the deep end of British caving politics. Overall there has been little in the year that has raised contention, and all parties seem to be interested in moving forward as a community, leading to a good number of new projects, including the Conservation & Access working group which has been very active of late. The BCA is also moving to obtain Incorporated status.

There have been several reports from the BCA Youth & Development officer regarding an ongoing issue by a company known as Organised Fun, who will be publishing a report for the University Unions on activities and outdoor clubs, which could seriously affect the running of student caving clubs. While there is nothing confirmed on this yet, it is worth bearing in mind that a good proportion of cavers start their careers in student clubs. If there are threats to our student clubs, I feel it may be worth offering support to them to try and keep them afloat. The form this takes remains to be seen.

The BCA AGM will be held on 28 June in the Peak District.

8.2 BCA TRAINING & EQUIPMENT WORKING GROUP REP

Mark Richards

Main points from the Working Group, focusing on Equipment as Ian Patrick covers Training for CNCC.

- There have been two meetings this year of the new group (first meeting in August 2026) and a lot of progress has been made establishing the group, the new terms of reference and the group's direction. It was decided to separate anchors and equipment into two independent working groups. As a result there is now an Anchor Working Group of which Pete Knight is the group's convenor. Both Ian Patrick and myself sit on this anchor working group as interested members under CNCC. However, it is Ian Walker who represents CNCC directly.
- The group is looking to appoint a new convenor. Normally there are two or three meetings per year. Any person interested in this role or would like to find out more, please contact Aidan Kuhlmann. secretary@british-caving.org.uk
- On behalf of the CNCC, thanks must go to Steve Grey for all his work and contribution as previous convenor of this group.
- CNCC would like to remind cavers 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 who train others in clubs.

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

8.3 ANCHORS WORKING GROUP REP'S REPORT

Ian Walker

This new Working Group was split off from the Training & Equipment Working Group, and held its first meeting in September. Also see Anchor Co-ordinators report for further details (Agenda item 7.2)

<https://british-caving.org.uk/about-bca/working-groups/anchors/>

8.4 CONSERVATION & ACCESS WORKING GROUP REPORT **Mike Appleton**

This working group manages the budget for larger conservation projects.

Minutes for the meetings in June, September October are available here:

<https://british-caving.org.uk/about-bca/working-groups/conservation-access/>

8.5 YOUTH & DEVELOPMENT REP'S REPORT

vacant

Despite having an enthusiastic and very active Convener, there haven't been any Working Group meetings this year. However, it's worth reporting on a challenging development for student clubs.

Many clubs have been approached by their unions wanting to reduce their 'reputational liability'. This has been triggered by the consultancy 'Organised Fun' working on behalf of the National Union of Students and Howden (the BCA insurance broker). Essentially they are suggesting that formal qualifications should be a requirement to lead student trips, and do not appreciate the role of peer-to-peer training and alumni involvement. This ongoing issue is being dealt with by the BCA Chair and the Y&D Convenor.

JMB

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 SRT KIT FOR CNCC WORKSHOPS

JMB

Last month, all the SRT kit used for CNCC Workshops was unfortunately stolen, along with the van belonging to our Training Officer.

Despite our best efforts last November to include all CNCC assets in the BCA insurance policy, it's unclear whether this was carried out before the policy was renewed on January 1. But this is probably irrelevant, since apparently the policy does not cover items left in vehicles overnight, or sporting equipment.

The Secretary has carried out an online consultation with the elected officers, to authorise the Training Officer to replace the stolen kit, and this was unanimously approved.

We understand from the BCA Treasurer that the BCA will reimburse this expenditure.

We should like to thank Yorkshire Dales Guides for their free loan of kit for the "New to SRT" workshop in February.