

**MINUTES OF THE CNCC COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON  
24 June 2011  
AT HELLIFIELD VILLAGE INSTITUTE**

The Meeting commenced at 20.00.

**PRESENT:** R. Holmes (Chairperson), Glenn Jones (Treasurer), Les Sykes (Secretary), Fay Hartley (BCC), S. Lieberman (RRCPC), M. Hughes (BPC), Tony Brown (NB), Pete Monk (NB), Harvey Lomas (YRC), Michael Hale (BSC/CRO), Ric Halliwell (CPC), Pat Halliwell (CPC), Ian Lloyd (NSG), Nigel Steel (YSS), Pete Allwright (DHSS), Nigel Ball (O&USS), Kay Easton (Minutes Secretary)

**1. APOLOGIES.** A. Speight (YSS), J. Sloane (LUG), Berni Bond, Ray Duffy, Andy Whitney

**2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:** Minutes accepted and signed as a true record.

**3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MINUTES:** No matters arising.

**4. OFFICERS' REPORTS:**

**CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:** Nothing to report.

**SECRETARY'S REPORT:** Written report appended to the Minutes

**TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Receipts for work on Excalibur have been received. Natural England have given £1000 for printing of Shuttleworth report; after complimentary copies for those involved in the dig, this print run will break even.

**ACCESS OFFICER'S REPORT:**

Appended to the minutes.

**CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT:**

No report received. FH reported the new stone stile to Browgill has broken. LS to report to Andrew Hinde. RH (Roy) reported work was in hand to replace Ibbeth Peril gate with a new metal one.

**TRAINING OFFICER'S REPORT:**

Written report appended to Minutes. SL and MH to discuss arranging dry stone walling course at Bull Pot Farm

**TECHNICAL GROUP REPORT:**

Written report appended to Minutes. Substrate for test bed in Horseshoe Quarry has proved unsatisfactory, so anchor tests are ongoing. MH queried the anchors in Dale Head and undertook to investigate. FH reported the 3<sup>rd</sup>

bolt (deviation) on the final pitch of Little Hull Pot was missing; MH undertook to ask his Club to investigate during their scheduled trip on 2 July.

## **5. MEETS SECRETARIES REPORTS:**

**Leck Fell:** Written report appended to the minutes.

**Casterton Fell:** Written report appended to the minutes. SL mentioned a block fall at the entrance to Wretched Rabbit; and that the BBC wished to film - LS stressed the need to apply for permissions at the earliest opportunity.

**Birks Fell:** A new agreement has been signed, with no restriction on the number of permits which may be issued.

**Penyghent and Fountains Fell:** Nothing to report. M.H. has changed his address.

**Other Areas:** LS reported the lid on Excalibur has a new lock following damage to the previous one. PM said police had warned of break-ins (via smashed windows) into cars parked in Chapel-le-Dale and Kingsdale, and advised that nothing should be left visible in cars.

**6. BCA REPORTS:** GJ mentioned a discussion paper (appended to minutes) on possible changes to BCA's structure, and that Nick Williams would be circulating all clubs with a questionnaire on whether to raise the insurance indemnity limit from £2m to £5m

## **7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

MH asked about via ferrata in Jingling. LS said it was not going ahead. In response to GJ, TB explained rubbish was being cleared from Tip Wood because it was a large shakehole in a dry valley directly over a probable major watercourse, i.e. it was of considerable speleological interest.

Meeting closed at 20:57.

**DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING:** 16<sup>th</sup> September 2011, Hellifield Village Institute, Hellifield. Starting at 20:00



## Council of Northern Caving Clubs

### Secretaries reports 24 June 2011

#### **Secretary's report**

From a secretarial perspective the period has been very busy; however, this is not generally secretarial work but a combination of the roles that he does.

The CNCC has published the book 'Shuttleworth Pot into Witches Cave II' on behalf of the authors, if anyone want a copy please email Glenn and bring £8 to the meeting.

#### **Access Officers' report**

There is a small number of clubs who are continually flouting the access procedure. We know some of them and some of them have been contacted. If breaches of access continue then BCA will have to become involved as an incident will ultimately affect access for all cavers.

After the annual Casterton Fell walk to ensure compliance with our access agreement the following points were noted. Stile to Lancaster Hole needs replacing. The signs (2) 'cavers keep to the wall' also need replacing on the approach to Lancaster Hole. A new stile at Bull Pot of the Witches. I have spoken the landowner who has agreed the work can be carried out.

The issue of the military using the Easegill system has been resolved and the leaders/instructors involved have been told by CNCC and Halton Training camp that they are not insured and that they have no agreement to use the system.

The entrance to Excalibur Pot has been replaced and the entrance rebuilt after what appears to be a deliberate act to enter the cave, many thanks to York Caving Club for undertaking the work.

Shuttleworth Pot and The Cupcake, all conservation work will be completed by the start of the new permit season on 01 July, many thanks to the small army of volunteers who have been involved with these projects and to the Estate office for allowing access during the closed season.

Whitewell Pot area, the proposed clean up of Tip Wood has been temporary halted until the insurance officer finalises the words for the insurance document after some asbestos sheets were uncovered.

There is a small issue that has developed with Ireby Fell Cavern, which I must admit was augmented by the fact that the BCA chairman sat on the initial

email for over two months. However, myself and Andrew will be meeting with the person in dispute to resolve the issues.

### **CNCC Technical Group**

The anchor shortage is coming to an end. On 14 June 2011 a test bed was placed in Horseshoe quarry in Derbyshire, these will be tested on 22 June 2011, a full verbal updated report at the meeting.

All the topos for the new volume two has been drawn. We are currently in the process of checking them for accuracy and putting the descriptions and general information together. I had originally hoped that it would be finished by this time and on sale, but as with everything it always takes longer than you expect.

### **BCA Equipment & Techniques Committee**

In November 2008 both myself and Bob Dearman (DCA) were tasked with a review of the anchor installation guidelines. This was completed in March 2009 and agreed by the BCA Equipment & Techniques Committee. However, all but one regional council accepted the document (CSCC). The fact that CSCC continue to be obstructive with regard to anchor placement and the guidelines is causing a great deal of frustration and concern, especially now that they have taken themselves out of the national anchor replacement program yet believe they can still take part in the debates surrounding the anchor program.

### **Training Officers report**

Currently I have done nothing on this and again I can only apologise. However, Nigel Ball has contacted me regarding training and the regional council and I have also been in communication with G. Mollard (BCA training convenor) to discuss regional training, so hopefully, something will happen soon. We still need to set the date for the dry stone walling course.

Les Sykes

CNCC secretary

CNCC Training Officer

CNCC Access Officer

CNCC co-representative BCA Equipment & Techniques Committee

## **Report to Leck Fell**

So far for 2011/12 - 30 clubs have been issued with permits for the current year. At the same point last year the figure was 25 clubs for the previous year, so demand has been fairly buoyant since the AGM.

Demand for access to the new finds has been steady with 7 (mainly local) clubs issued with permits to Shuttleworth Pot. Thus far however there have been no requests for access to The Cupcake.

There has been nothing else of particular significance to report since the AGM.

Jim Sloane (CNCC Meets Sec – Leck Fell)

## **Casterton Fell Report**

Requests for permits are still very low, despite making the process much easier.

I still have people reminding me that lots of trips are posted on the internet and even a cleanup "Easter Grotto weekend" but no permit request. Still it makes my life much easier.

The following permits issued

March – 7 permits issued (4 of these to MUSC) (1 to Les Sykes for BBC filming)

April - 12 permits issued (7 of these to education in the outdoors caving club)

May - 12 permits issued (shared out among the clubs)

June - 13 permits issued (between 7 clubs)

No problems reported

Alan Speight

### **Discussion Paper for the 2011 AGM on Possible Changes to BCA's Structure**

The fact that the structures and procedures put in place when BCA was set up in 2004 have generally stood the test of time, is due in no small part to the incredible hard work and foresight of a small number of people at the time. As a result of this the UK's Governing Body for Underground Exploration has become financially secure for the future with a strong membership and active, hard-working volunteers beavering away in the background.

However, it was probably inevitable that in the fullness of time some aspects of BCA's structure would need to be tweaked. In our view one possible area is our subscription situation, which is often criticised as being ridiculously complex with something in excess of 20 different categories of membership. This may well be one of the reasons why more than 90% of BCA members choose to join as Club Individual Members (CIMs), opting out in the process of most BCA communications and publications, as well as the chance to contribute to BCRA's scientific work.

It is probably also the case that some aspects of our work involve unnecessary duplication of effort. Two examples of this might be Conservation & Publications, where more than one similar Committee is working to the same end goal, but duplicating much of their effort in the process.

A further, obvious issue is that a lot of work is currently done by a small number of people, an even smaller number of whom are at the younger end of the age profile. This cannot be sustainable into the future.

Finally some have suggested that BCA might be better off as a charity, allowing for greater simplification of the finances and minimising the duplication of effort in the process.

We feel that now is a good time to begin a consultation process, with a view to putting any firm proposals for change to the 2012 Annual General Meeting.

#### **Some Questions we think are worth considering:**

- 1) Could we simplify our subscription structure?
- 2) Are there ways we could more fairly distribute our subscription income?
- 3) How can we increase the number of people who contribute to (and read) our publications?
- 4) Do we think there are areas of our work where we are duplicating effort? If so, could we streamline these?
- 5) Could it be beneficial for BCA in its entirety to become a charity?
- 6) How can we alter our Annual General Meetings (and possibly Council Meetings too) so they are more widely attended by the membership, and hopefully encourage more younger people to become involved in BCA, its Constituent Bodies and Regional Councils in the process?

We would like to consult as widely as possible on these points over the next year with a view to bringing any subsequent proposals to the 2012 Annual General Meeting.

Andy Eavis  
BCA Chairman

&

Damian Weare  
BCA Secretary