

COUNCIL FOR THE NORTHERN CAVING COMMUNITY

British Caving Association

AGENDA FOR COMMITTEE MEETING

21 June 2025 at 9:30am

Clapham Village Hall (LA2 8DZ)

- 1.0 Apologies for absence, and verification of quorum
[Quorum: seven committee members, plus one officer]
- 2.0 Declaration of conflicts of interest
- 3.0 Acceptance of minutes from January Committee Meeting
(already reviewed for one month, before publication on website)
- 4.0 Matters arising (and updates) from January Committee Meeting

OFFICER	ACTION	UPDATE
Jill B	Finalise October committee minutes	Done
Jill B	Prepare and circulate January committee minutes	Done
Matt E/ Ray B	To discuss hosting topos and surveys for Northern Ireland caves	Done
Andrew H	To obtain indicative price for a batch of IC Anchors	

5.0 OFFICER REPORTS

(Available one week prior to meeting)

- 5.1 Chair Todd Rye
- 5.2 Secretary Jill Bolton
- 5.3 Treasurer Kath Davis
- 5.4 Conservation Officer Kay Easton
- 5.5 Access Officer James Alderson
- 5.6 Training Officer Ian Patrick
- 5.7 Other reports *(optional)* Co-opted officers

6.0 CONFIRMATION OF CO-OPTED POSITIONS

(vote required for approval)

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

7.0 CONFIRMATION OF BCA REPRESENTATIVES

(vote required for approval)

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

OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

8.0 Amended 2024 Accounts (Appendix 1)

9.0 Review of Procedures for CNCC Expenditure (Appendix 2)

10.0 Exploration Grant Application (Appendix 3)

11.0 CNCC Anchor Policy (Appendix 4)

12.0 Review of Representation & Democracy (Appendix 5)

12.0 Any other business

13.0 Details of next meeting
Committee Meeting to be held on 25 October at 9:30am
Venue: Clapham Village Hall (Postcode LA2 8DZ)

APPENDIX 1
AGENDA ITEM 8.0
AMENDED 2024 ACCOUNTS

(for approval)

The 2024 Accounts were approved at the AGM, subject to certain amendments which relate to expenses not eligible to be reclaimed from the BCA.

The full signed and scrutinized Accounts are shown on the next page.

The Training Summary and BCA Claim are shown below:

Council for the Northern Caving Community
31 December 2024

TRAINING SUMMARY 2024

	£	£
Course fees via Paypal 2023		439.57
Course fees via Paypal 2024		7 513.46
Direct Credit Course fees		30.00
Refund	60.00	
Course Tuition	8 460.00	
Venue Hire fees	1 070.00	
Try Caving support	130.00	
Training Kit Hire	168.00	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	9 888.00	7 983.03
Support claimed	£ 1 904.97	

BCA GRANT CLAIM 2024

	£
IT / Admin	1 062.11
C&A Materials	2 642.52
C&A Mileage	598.80
Meeting Mileage	363.60
Training Course Support	1 904.97
TOTAL CLAIM	<hr/>
	£ 6 572.00

Council for the Northern Caving Community
ACCOUNTS 31st December 2024

PROFIT AND LOSS

<u>INCOME</u>	£	£
Interest on Premium Account		173.33
Training Course fees paid 2024		7513.46
TC fees paid 2024 for 2025		2973.66
TC fees paid direct		30.00
BCA Grant for 2023		<u>8691.09</u>
		19381.54
<u>Less EXPENDITURE</u>		
TC Tuition	8460.00	
TC Venue hire 2024	1070.00	
TC Venue prepaid for 2025	990.00	
TC Refund	60.00	
C & A Mileage	598.80	
Exploration Grant	155.81	
C & A Materials	2642.52	
Meeting Mileage	543.60	
Try Caving support	130.00	
Training kit hire	168.00	
IT/Admin	<u>1112.11</u>	
	15930.84	
<u>NET Profit for year</u>		<u>3450.70</u>

<u>CASH AT BANK</u>	
Start balance 1/1/24	9067.85
Plus Net Profit	3450.70
End balance 31/12/24	12518.55

BALANCE SHEET

<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>	
Cash at bank	12518.55
Training venue hire prepaid 2025	<u>990.00</u>
Total	13508.55
<u>Less CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>	
TC fees received for 2025	2973.66

Net CURRENT ASSETS 10534.89

PETE BANN TREASURER

PJBann

04/04/2025

KATH DAVIS INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

KADavis

4/4/2025

APPENDIX 2

AGENDA ITEM 9.0

(for discussion)

REVIEW OF PROCEDURES FOR CNCC EXPENDITURE

This is an opportunity to resolve a discrepancy between a Committee decision and the Manual of Operations.

According to the June 2022 minutes, *“it was agreed that the BCA’s policy should be used to decide which attendees are eligible to claim refund”*. (See pages 7-8 for BCA policy)

This is not reflected in the Manual of Operations:

Volunteers can claim mileage for any “approved CNCC business” at the HMRC rate (currently, October 2022, 45p per mile). This includes conservation works, anchor installation or other work. This is the wording used by the BCA, and individuals are left to interpret this and judge if they were travelling solely for CNCC business.

As of the June 2022 meeting, it was agreed that individuals can also claim mileage for attending meetings. It is suggested that this is limited to Officers, co-opted Officers and one representative for each Committee member, and common sense be encouraged to ensure claims are reasonable and fair.

A representative of a northern club claiming travel from South Wales, for example, might not be considered reasonable, when the club probably had numerous members much closer who could have attended. A club representative who has travelled to the area partly to attend the CNCC meeting, but also to enjoy a few nights of socialising and a caving trip, may not feel it altogether fair to claim travel expenses. Online attendance can be encouraged for any attendees particularly those who only have a small participation.

QUESTION 1

Does the committee wish to follow the decision of the June 2022 meeting?

Or do we wish to allow club reps to also claim mileage, which would be paid from CNCC funds, and not reclaimed?

The authorisation of expenditure is another situation which lacks clarity. Again, from the Manual of Operations:

The constitution assigns a default position that the Treasurer can authorise any payments up to £500 without any further permissions, however, the constitution allows the Committee to adjust this default.

At the present time, there is an agreement (from the January 2021 Committee meeting) that £500 is the limit for the Treasurer to authorise autonomously, however, amounts above that can be authorised providing FOUR of the SIX elected Officers agree, and the other elected Officers raise no objection.

This privilege is only to be used where the expense needs to be authorised urgently, is non-contentious, and there is insufficient time to consult and ballot the Committee. Wherever time allows, expenses above the £500 threshold should still be voted upon by the Committee. The constitution allows for this to be done electronically providing all responses are presented at the next Committee meeting as a record.

This process gives a reasonable level of control over most spending, particularly now that the CNCC Treasurer has agreed an annual budget with the BCA. However, is it adequate for non-reclaimable expenditure?

BUDGET for 2025	£
Admin & IT	1 800
Conservation & Access	1 500
C&A Projects	0
Caver Training	<u>2 500</u>
	£ 5 800

QUESTION 2

Should we distinguish between expenditure reclaimable from the BCA, and other expenditure which will be met from CNCC funds?

Do we need tighter controls on other possible payments?
(Exploration Grants already require Committee approval)

BRITISH CAVING ASSOCIATION

FUNDING OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

(Updated October 2024)

ALLOWABLE FUNDING BY COST HEADING

1) Meetings/Running the Organisation

(a) Payable on the scrutinised accounts.

(b) Allowable: Photocopying, postage, room hire, stationary, phone bills, Officer travel expenses to meetings.

(c) Not Allowable: anything that is NOT for the benefit of BCA members.

2) C&A

(a) Up to £750 per Regional Council per year is paid for C&A according to the accounts.

(b) C&A expenditure above £750 should be presented as projects (see above).

(c) Allowable (note the following items are indicative and not exhaustive, ALL reasonable C&A expenses should be allowable):

Negotiating access to caves and mines, gating of entrances (including fencing of open pots), stabilising entrances, underground conservation.

Working with landowner to maintain access,

Payment of "peppercorn" rents for access,

Other liaison and public relations work related to maintaining access and promoting conservation.

Travel expenses for volunteers at the agreed BCA mileage rate.

(d) Not Allowable: Digging as part of a new exploration.

3) Publications & Information

(a) Payable on the scrutinised accounts.

(b) Allowable: Publications for all BCA Members. Access Information (Handbook/Guides or Newsletters), Cave Registry, Publications primarily for the Regional Council Members (Newsletter, Handbook), Participation in events to promote caving, Publicity

(c) Newsletters if are of general interest and participation in events to promote caving would be funded via the P&I committee or Training committee if eligible under their criteria and would not come under the remit of Finance Committee.

4) Insurance

(a) BCA provides Public Liability cover for all persons (including Officers, members, key holders, volunteers and land owners & their employees) involved in activities on behalf of the Regional Council and Funded Access Body activities, public liability cover for land owner access agreements.

5) Website

(a) Payable on the scrutinised accounts.

(b) Allowable: BCA provided basic web services (domain, hosting). Regional web services other than those provided by BCA. General web services not linked to BCA or Regional websites.

6) Training

(a) Grants are available for all types of training events for "recreational" cavers from Training Committee.

7) Equipment

(a) Allowable: Stainless steel resin bonded anchors and resin will be provided for free by the Equipment and Techniques Committee for sites where all BCA Member Clubs have access (note the costs of the above can also be claimed directly by regions etc.)

(b) Grants are available to cover the costs of the instructor and consumables for training (including refresher training) in the placement of eco anchors from the Equipment and Techniques Committee.

APPENDIX 3
AGENDA ITEM 10.0
EXPLORATION GRANT APPLICATION

(for approval)

Name of applicant

James Alderson

Relevant club affiliation

CDG

Summary of the project and it's potential

Thunder Hole in East Kingsdale, a project to open up an alternate entrance to Brown Hill Pot to enable easier access for long term diving and aid climbing project beyond the upstream sump in the "Starlight Series" which it is believed is connected with other East Kingsdale caves and potentially others on Scales Moor.

Nature of your proposed work

Replacement of drill battery to allow better progress
Provision of aid climbing equipment (etriers, bolts and hangers)

Costed breakdown	£
Battery	98
10x Raumer self drilling anchors	44
10x Petzl hangers	45
Total	£187

Conservation considerations

Landscaping of entrance following completion of works, and spoil from digging to be retained within shakehole as much as practicable or otherwise tidied and used to create wildlife habit.

Permissions required

NE and landowner permission both obtained.

Estimated timeframe

Up to 2 years ideally.

Any other information

The potential for major links to be found is quite large in a system which remains relatively unexplored considering its location in a main caving area. So far the dig has been self-funded into around £300 on timbering, drills and other costs.

APPENDIX 4
AGENDA ITEM 11.0
CNCC ANCHOR POLICY

(for discussion)
Matt Ewles

The current CNCC Anchor Scheme document (Version 2, October 2019)
<https://cncc.org.uk/equipment/documents/>
was put together to provide a framework for anchor installation by the CNCC, particularly with the expansion of the IC anchor scheme and more installers coming onboard. It has been a largely successful document, which aims to ensure compliance with the BCA's anchor policy.

Section 4 specifies that the CNCC Committee will approve all anchor placements except for anchors being replaced on safety grounds, prior to work being carried out. A few installers have fallen foul of this a few times, adding an additional anchor where there has been a perceived deficiency in existing placements. For example about 4-5 years ago, we identified that the anchoring at the top of Centre Route of Notts Pot resulted in some rope rub and an almost 90-degree deviation with a very serious consequence in the event of a failure. We think that the ideal anchor placement (in the roof) was not done in the 1990s due to issues with early resins staying in roof-holes. We addressed this by re-anchoring the pitch head, under the remit of improving the safety of the rigging to meet modern day standards and expectations. However, as this was not a like-for-like anchor replacement, the work fell foul of the policy and we were duly reprimanded by one of our fellow installers.

During the establishment of this policy, I recall that the clear intention of CNCC approval was for full new anchoring projects or extensive re-anchoring projects. I recall it being joked that the aim was just to stop people putting CNCC-sponsored Via Ferrata down Lancaster Hole or yet another route down Jingling Pot. I don't believe, at the time, there was any intention to stop our approved installers rectifying sub-standard anchoring in discrete locations or bringing historic anchoring up to modern standards (eg by changing single-point hangs to Y-hangs to avoid large single point of failure Fall Factors, or adding an additional traverse anchor where Fall Factors are deemed a concern via the existing anchors).

My feeling is that we have an awesome installer team who should be entrusted to make such relatively minor anchor improvements. I believe the wording of our anchor policy could benefit from a review, in particular to specify that Committee approval is needed only for anchoring of caves currently without CNCC anchors, or entirely new routes in caves already with anchors, or anchor replacements/changes which would be deemed 'extensive' (for example, spanning multiple sites within the cave), eg the permission that was granted for the large scale re-anchoring of Diccan, Simpson and Swinsto. However, CNCC approval is not needed for replacements or remedial actions on safety grounds, or limited amendments to existing anchor placements in the interests of improving rigging safety.

I'd be interested in the Committee's thoughts, and whether we would prefer keeping the current fairly tight control on all new anchor placements. If a review of the policy is felt sensible, a volunteer to lead this will be needed.

APPENDIX 5
AGENDA ITEM 12.0
REVIEW OF REPRESENTATION & DEMOCRACY

(for discussion)

Tim Allen

The March CNCC AGM passed the following proposal:

“A working group should be established to consider representation and associated constitutional matters over the next 12 months. It should report regularly to the committee for further discussion and ultimately bring any recommendations or proposals to a future AGM.”

The first action then should be to establish the working group. The June committee meeting should give this careful consideration to ensure the group is well balanced, although it will report regularly to the committee and can be further directed.

The principal issue at stake is that over the last decade the CNCC has moved from being a council representing clubs to a council representing the northern caving community. However, constitutionally, with the exception of the IC Rep, the only representation is made through clubs. Assessing the need for greater representation and how this might be achieved is fundamentally the matter under consideration.

During this process the importance of the clubs should not be underestimated. The clubs have been the backbone of the CNCC since inauguration and have been fully on board with the drive for modernisation and change. Any future CNCC will rely on the significant involvement of the northern clubs.

Constitutionally the stumbling block to wider representation may concern membership. Only clubs can be members and only members can vote. The committee consists of up to 14 club representatives and one IC Rep. Who can be members, who can vote and how the committee is made up should all be considered by the working group.

The day-to-day business of the CNCC is managed by both elected and co-opted officers. Many officers dedicate considerable volunteer time to making the CNCC ‘happen’. Officers do not have a vote on the committee although may have influence on decision making. Officers do not need to be [club] members in order to hold officer positions and although most are, both elected and co-opted positions, do potentially allow a route for greater representation of any wider interests.

The working group will need to consider just who else CNCC should be representing. It may be worth consulting the wider northern caving community for ideas, both through CNCC social media channels and by direct targeting of certain groups CNCC might wish to be more representative of.

In previous discussions on this question representation of the following has been mentioned:

- instructed sector
- non-member groups
- CDG
- rescue services
- National Park
- visiting cavers
- other individuals and independents

It is interesting to note from our webmaster's statistics that 22% of users of the online booking system make a positive statement that they are not BCA members. 69% state they are members of a club.

The working group must be realistic with any new proposals. Any new positions should have a high likelihood of being filled and any new proposals working out well for CNCC. It is worth keeping in mind that the position of the IC Rep remained unfilled for many years.

Lastly, with any new proposals or recommendations consideration must be given as to how they will be administered. The burden of work, particularly on the secretary, is already considerable.

I look forward to assisting the group.

VACANCY - ASSISTANT SECRETARY CAN YOU HELP?

There is currently a vacancy for Assistant Secretary, which would provide an excellent "apprenticeship" for anyone interested in becoming CNCC Secretary at the next AGM in March 2026.

Being involved with the CNCC is an extremely rewarding experience. As well as working with people from all caving backgrounds and many different clubs, it gives you a chance to see other aspects and perspectives on caving. It is also a chance to make a real, positive difference to northern caving, something our volunteers will agree gives them immense pride.

If you might be interested in helping, please contact the current Secretary for more details of what the role involves.