

NEWSLETTER

Issue 2 June 2015

Editorial

Welcome to the second in the new series of CNCC newsletters. We were delighted by the positive response to the last newsletter, and so this is something we hope to continue with, on a roughly six-monthly basis (depending on the availability of content). Once again, we have news on training, bolting, conservation, access improvements and CNCC administration, so hopefully something of interest to everyone. We are keen to involve cavers in the CNCC, be that as a conservation volunteer, as part of a bolting project, as an officer or committee representative, or simply by hearing your suggestions, comments and questions. Therefore, please use the contact details below and let us know what the CNCC can be doing to help you.

Matt Ewles (Editor)

Next General Meeting:
Saturday 26th March 2016,
Hellifield Village Institute, Hellifield.

Your CNCC

www.cncc.org.uk

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Your new CNCC team

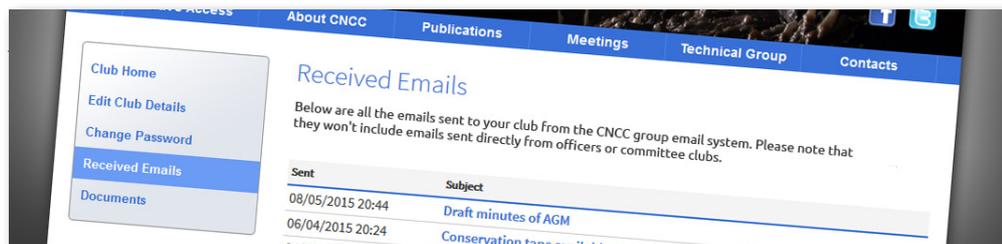
Following the AGM on 7th March 2015, we are pleased to welcome three new officers to the CNCC team; Dan Irving as Training Officer, Pete Bann as Treasurer and Kay Easton as Conservation Officer. We would also like to extend our thanks to the outgoing officers from these positions, Les Sykes, Glenn Jones and Andrew Hinde, for years of excellent work. We are also very pleased to welcome our second student club to the Committee, York University Cave and Pothole Club.

Additionally, we now have CNCC representatives attending various external groups, including the BCA (including the Equipment and Techniques, Conservation and Access, and Training committees of the BCA) as well as the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum, amongst other organisations, to try to broaden our capacity to benefit Northern Cavers.

New constitution approved

At the AGM, the attending full member clubs of the CNCC voted unanimously to accept a new constitution document. We hope that the new document more clearly defines how we work and makes the democratic process of the CNCC more transparent. We also hope that it makes it easier for individuals and clubs to get involved. For example, our constitution now requires a club applying for full membership to have a significant involvement in northern caving, rather than, as before, a northern geographic base. This is reflective of the fact that many clubs who are passionate about northern caving and keen to make a significant contribution are based outside our region.

CNCC website members' area



The CNCC website now features a members' area. This provides an area to which we can post meeting minutes for review, and where delegated representatives from our full member clubs can view documents such as our access agreements and all historic email communication that the club has been sent. We plan to create additional functionalities here in due course, including a way to (informally) poll members on topical matters, and for full members to make suggestions. For now though, we hope that simply having all documents and communications in one place will make it even easier to stay involved and up to date with the CNCC for our members.

All full members were issued with login details via their contact details on the CNCC

database. If you have lost this or are having any issues then please contact our webmaster (webmaster@cncc.org.uk)

Reminder; Ethylene Pipeline

We have been asked to remind all cavers of the SABIC Trans-Pennine Ethylene pipeline which runs across the Yorkshire Dales from west of Bedale to just north of Skipton, thus cutting across areas of Nidderdale and Grassington. Any cavers involved in digging in these areas should make themselves aware of this, and contact SABIC if you plan to undertake any works which you believe may lie in the vicinity of this pipeline. Further details can be found at www.cncc.org.uk/doc/59

Access for Individual Cavers

In January, the first CNCC access agreement to allow permits to be issued to individual BCA insured cavers (CIMs and DIMs) was launched on Ingleborough Estate, in response to landowner wishes and to honour the level of access previously enjoyed here. Subsequently, the question was asked at our AGM whether the CNCC should actively promote access for DIMs/CIMs when future agreements are established elsewhere or existing agreements are renegotiated. The outcome of this discussion was 'yes'. This is a timely decision, as our Access Officer is now embarking on a mission to revisit many of our access agreements to see if these still reflect current landowner wishes and requirements, and to see if access can be improved, and potentially opened up to cover individual cavers as well as clubs.



ber 2015. Better late than never! This is in the form of a "Licence to Occupy on a Short Term Basis" between Lafarge /Tarmac and "Andrew Hinde as an Officer of CNCC".

This agreement was delayed by the upheaval caused by the announcement in January 2015 that Lafarge /Tarmac was to be bought out by a Swiss multi-national company. Lafarge and Tarmac had merged only one year earlier, which caused problems and delays in issuing last year's agreement. However, the National Planning Officer at Lafarge, Lloyd McInally, worked hard to ensure we had an access agreement in place before the sale went through. He clearly had bigger issues to deal with at the time but he has also invested a lot of time and effort to restore caver access to this site over many years. He sent me this quote prior to the new access agreement being signed.

"As part of the consequences of the impending sale of Lafarge Tarmac, our current shareholders, Lafarge Group and Anglo American, have reconsidered the future of some of our lands and development sites that would have otherwise have been sold with Lafarge Tarmac. As part of this examination, a number of sites have been put up for sale at very short notice by the shareholders. This includes Lafarge Tarmac's interest in Weardale."

The latest that I have heard is that a buyer for the Eastgate Quarry site has come forward and a decision on their offer will be made in mid May 2015. Lloyd has said that he will reassure a new owner of the benefits of a partnership with CNCC for caver access. I would expect the new owners to make contact with us eventually. In the meantime our access agreement continues to function in the same way as normal. I will prepare, along with our Access Officer, Johnny Latimer, for a renewal of the agreement for 2016.

Whatever happens to caver access to this site under new ownership, it remains a Site of Special Scientific Interest which must remain accessible for statutory condition assessment by Natural England.

Andrew Hinde

Note; At the time of writing, permits for October, November and December are still available, contact Ric Halliwell via the details on the CNCC website to enquire and apply.

Fountains Fell



Gingling Hole area

This may come as old news to many (it having been announced only days after the last newsletter went to print), but we would like to remind readers that access to Fountains Fell no longer requires a CNCC permit. For caves on land belonging to Rainscar House (Gingling Hole and Sink, Hammer Pot, Strangle Pot, and others in the vicinity to the north/east of the wall) please call at Rainscar House just before your trip, but if nobody is around it is fine to proceed. There are no closed seasons. This arrangement is a one year trial so please make every effort to call at Rainscar House to help us ensure that this can become a more permanent arrangement.

Magnetometer area

For caves across the wall to the south/west of the Gingling area (Magnetometer, Echo Pot, FOUL Pot, Antler Hole, Fornagh Gill), these are on the land of Neals Ing Farm, and, as before, a call at the farm is required for these caves. All closed seasons for these have been removed.

Little Hull and Hull Pot area

Since January, there has been no requirement for a CNCC permit to access Little Hull Pot or Hunt



Pot. For access to these caves please call at Mr Sutcliffe at Holme Farm in Horten in Ribblesdale or phone him at any reasonable time (address and phone number on the CNCC website).

We have received confirmation that no permission at all need be sought for access to Hull Pot or Red Moss Pot (although note that access to other more northern parts of the Birkwith system including Old Ing, Dismal Hill and Birkwith Cave, should still entail a courtesy call at High Birkwith Farm).

Many thanks to Alan Speight who has managed to negotiate this additional access. All the details on the CNCC website are up to date with these new arrangements.

New contact for Penyghent Pot and Dale Head Pot

Work is ongoing to improve access to Penyghent Pot and Dale Head pot (and elsewhere, also Birks Fell Cave) and we hope to bring you news in the future. Until then, please help us maintain good relations in these areas by continued compliance with the permit systems. Sam Allshorn has now taken on the role of permit secretary for Penyghent Pot and Dale Head, replacing Malcolm Hughes, who we would like to thank for looking after this role for many years. Permit applications can now be done by email. Details and an online booking diary are on the CNCC website.

Contacts for Ingleborough Estate and Leck Fell

For all permit applications on Ingleborough Estate your contact is Geoff Whittaker. With Geoff stepping into this role from being acting Leck Fell permit secretary, your new contact for Leck Fell permits is Andrew Farrow. All details for both areas are on the CNCC website.

Current access situation for Fairy Holes, Weardale

An access agreement was signed on 24th March 2015 which permits access to Fairy Holes Cave on the first Saturday of each month until Decem-

Replacing marker tape in Shuttleworth Pot/Witches II



Following reports of broken and tattered tape in Witches II, Andrew Farrow, Dave Matthews, Ged Campion and Tony (Bog) Brown completed the necessary conservation work. The team found the tape in poor condition but fortunately there were no obvious signs of damage since the monitoring exercise conducted shortly after the cave was opened up to the non-diving community.



The biggest difficulty was making the pins secure as they usually grounded on rock before any depth had been attained, a situation that had proved problematic during the original taping exercise. We overcame the problem by drilling small holes to a suitable depth. We lost count of how many pins we used. Out of the original 40 or so many were shortened to make two or three out of one. Bending the end of the new short pins was achieved by drilling a hole in a stone

and using the stone rather than pliers to exert sufficient leverage on the end of the pin to bend it to shape.

The task was bigger than expected and extended over two days but the sediments and formations are now much better protected and all old tape was removed. The finished job looks good and the pins are much more secure than they were, plus of course there are quite a lot more of them.

More photos on the CNCC Facebook page.

Tony Brown

Conservation tape

The CNCC now has a supply of orange conservation tape (about 10 reels of 25m), and pegs. This stock will be maintained courtesy of the CNCC, and is available for use by any cavers undertaking exploration or conservation works e.g. to help preserve delicate features. If you would like some, please contact Kay Easton, our Conservation Officer (conservation@cncc.org.uk). The tape can be collected from Colt Park Barn, LA6 3JF (near Chapel-le-Dale), but it may be possible to make alternative arrangements.

Winch training for Natural England/CNCC volunteers

Following the success of caving volunteers removing rubbish from a few cave entrances including Daimler Hole (see last newsletter) it was decided to get some winch training for future projects to ensure safe and efficient working practices. Several volunteers including Andy Farrow, Pete Bann, Edward Easton, Kay Easton and Chris Fox attended a day's winch training ran by Lowe Maintenance on April 28th 2015. After the usual start of quick introduction, form filling and



cup of tea the group went outside to view the winches they were going to work with. The kit was laid out in a barn which was good because the weather was cold with sleet. What is it about volunteering for Natural England tasks to invite poor weather? All the previous week had been dry and warm but not on this day! But it did not demotivate the group who enjoyed working with several types of winches including Tirfor, Capstan and vehicle winch with synthetic rope. The course explored different winching systems that were well suited to the work of cavers clearing debris from holes and moving blocks underground. Certificates were provided for all those attending. Thanks must go to the CNCC for funding the training and for Andrew Hinde of Natural England organising it and allowing it to take place at their venue near Ingleton.

More photos on the CNCC Facebook page.

Chris Fox

Interested in conservation?

Anyone wanting support or advice for a cave conservation project, or who would be willing to join a group undertaking conservation work, please get in touch (conservation@cncc.org.uk)

Kay Easton, CNCC Conservation Officer

Bolting News

Installations of the new IC Anchors in Rift Pot, Washfold Pot and It's a Cracker

At the January committee meeting the CNCC approved the installation of IC resin anchors. In March the BCA E&T Committee designated the IC anchor as an approved anchor and approved Simon Wilson as a trainer of installers.

The new anchor is of an innovative design and quite unlike any other resin anchor. It has been tested to conform to BS EN 959 and the more stringent UIAA standard which are both standards for mountaineering anchors. Those stand-

ards only require one single anchor to be tested but the BCA have set a sample size of 32 anchors in order to be able to use statistical tests. The testing of the IC anchor has therefore been more rigorous than that required by the UIAA.

The IC anchor requires a smaller hole than anchors previously approved (49% less by volume), meaning less drill battery usage, particularly useful if installing anchors in some of the more challenging caves. The IC anchor can be removed without damaging the rock and a tool to do so is available.

There are now six approved installers of IC resin anchors. The installers group have a number of caves targeted for anchor installation. Rift Pot on the Allotment, It's a Cracker on Leck Fell and Washfold Pot have been equipped with IC resin anchors and work is taking place in several other caves.

Simon Wilson



Anyone who is interested in installing anchors is invited to make contact via the IC website: www.resinanchor.co.uk The IC website contains more information about the development and testing of the anchor.

Editor's note: The rigging topos for Rift Pot and It's a Cracker are also available on this website.



Installed IC anchor

Ease Gill: The Magic Roundabout, Lancaster Hole

Over the last few months, volunteers have completed anchor installation and in-situ rope replacement in The Magic Roundabout, Lancaster Hole. CNCC resin bonded anchors and stainless steel maillions, with new in-situ ropes allow for an interesting and most un-Lancaster like round trip and provides a fun and quirky alternative SRT route to the Main Drain.

The Magic Roundabout Series starts as a hole in the south wall of the high level route in Lancaster Hole, between Bob's Boss and Stake Pot, and takes-off (literally) onto the impressive 43m Arson Shaft, approximately 17m from the floor (in-situ rope rigged). Arson Shaft can be ascend-

ed, past a rebelay, to a narrow exit a few metres above the floor of a blind pit. The rope then continues up a further 5m to a short section of rift passage. Round the corner a final 10m pitch ascends to a traverse leading to a junction.

The route onwards is the inlet passage entering from the left, which starts slightly small and grabby but soon becomes more comfortable and leads into Old Kent Road. This is followed to an 11m pitch down (in situ-rope rigged) with inlets entering at the base. Following the water through a phreatic tube, soon developing a vadose trench, leads onto Aquarius Pot (23m deep, 60m rope needed for pull-through). Aquarius Pot is not vertical and the line of descent follows the water so prepare for a much needed wash of your oversuit, or a hasty retreat depending on the weather (hence the reason for the fixed rope on the previous pitch).

Be confident that the Main Drain is passable before committing to the pull-through!

Below Aquarius, a slither down two cascades reaches a hands and knees crawl in a shale bed. This starts to cut down when it turns a corner and hits a joint, to become walking size (Brass Monkey Passage). After forty metres or so, the water disappears down a narrow rift in the floor, and it is necessary to climb back up into the roof bedding and traverse forward until a couple of anchors allow a final pull-through descent of a 9m pitch. The water is re-joined at the bottom, and five minutes of awkward going arrives at the Main Drain just upstream of the Stake Pot boulder pile, only around 20m vertically and 20m horizontally of where you started!

Thank you to the team involved in performing this work and for allowing this adaptation of the description for this newsletter.

SRT coaching and rescue workshops



For those of you who don't know my name is Dan and I have recently stepped into the role of CNCC Training Officer, so as yet I have little to report; However a few ideas are in the pipeline and some developments to watch out for over coming months which may be of interest to folk.

There are plans to run a SRT coaching and rescue workshop later in the year. As some of you know, I work as a CIC, and this has enabled me to forge links with the BCA and aspirant CICs who are willing to coach for free in order to gain valuable high end coaching hours that are needed before assessment. I currently have two instructors plus myself lined up to run this course at no cost to the CNCC, and I have spoken with the BCA training committee who have informed me that as the coaches are working voluntarily they are covered by their BCA public liability insurance. We are currently just sorting dates and a location before we advertise this course.

Look out for more news later in the year and in the meantime please feel free to get in touch; training@cncc.org.uk

Dan Irving, CNCC Training Officer

Want to get involved?

Being involved in the CNCC can take many forms.

Full membership:

Full member clubs of the CNCC can vote at our AGM, and receive email notifications of any matters that the CNCC becomes aware of that may affect northern caving (and log into the CNCC website). If your club is not already a full member (you can find a list on our website), you can contact our Secretary for information on how to apply.

Officer:

Our officers work hard to perform the day to day functions of the CNCC, advise, and carry out the wishes of the Committee. This is a real chance to make a big difference to northern caving, and anyone interested should contact our Secretary for more information.

Committee:

Each year up to fourteen of our full member clubs are elected to the Committee, who then meet at least three times a year to work in the best interests of our member clubs and northern cavers. If your club is already a full member and you are interested in standing for the Committee, please contact our Secretary for more information.

Contact: secretary@cncc.org.uk



The buzz of excitement has already started! On the 13th-20th August 2016, the European Speleological Federation meeting ('Eurospeleo') is coming to the Yorkshire Dales. The event is being jointly organised by the BCA, and the Hidden Earth team, and will actually replace Hidden Earth for

that year. The event will be a week-long festival of caving, hosted at the Dalesbridge Centre near Austwick in the Yorkshire Dales, and may be attended by as many as 1000 cavers over the course of the week from the UK and overseas. This is undoubtedly one of the biggest events in the UK caving calendar, and we are keen to encourage everyone to get this date in your diary, promote it within your club or caving circles, and attend for as much of the week as possible.

The event will include a daily lecture program, bar, on-site catering and entertainment, training courses, a trade hall and conference banquet. Camping will be available on site. Around 30 of the Dales most popular caves will be rigged all week to allow them to be enjoyed without encumbrance of the dreaded tacklesack, and the winch will be in operation all week at Gaping Gill.

Several individuals from the CNCC are helping with the organisation of this event (including our webmaster, who has set up the event website). This is still early days, and the website content is still being added, and booking for the event is not yet available. However, we would like to encourage all cavers to keep an eye on the website, and the event Facebook page, and follow us on Twitter (details below) to hear about all developments as the arrangements progress.