

COUNCIL FOR THE NORTHERN CAVING COMMUNITY

British Caving Association

AGENDA FOR COMMITTEE MEETING

26 October 2024 at 9:30am

Clapham Village Hall (LA2 8DZ)

- 1.0 Apologies for absence, and verification of quorum
- 2.0 Declaration of conflicts of interest
- 3.0 Acceptance of minutes from June Committee Meeting
(already reviewed for one month, before publication on website)
- 4.0 Matters arising (and updates) from June Committee Meeting

OFFICER	ACTION	UPDATE
Jill B	Finalise January committee minutes	Done
Jill B	Prepare and circulate June committee minutes	Done
Matt E	Update website with approved anchoring projects (in admin area)	Done
Jill B	Set up Constitution Working Group	Done
Kai T / Tim A	Contact Langcliffe Hall Estate, re amending Memorandum of Understanding.	Ongoing
Kai T/ Tony B	Contact Duchy of Lancaster re access to Bowland caves	Ongoing
Josh W & working group	Review website content for clarity for all users, particularly relating to the CNCC workshops	Ongoing
Matt E / Gary D	Hidden Earth - new publicity materials - stand at exhibition	Done

5.0 OFFICER REPORTS

(Available one week prior to meeting)

- 5.1 Chair Andrew Hinde
- 5.2 Secretary Jill Bolton
- 5.3 Treasurer Pete Bann
- 5.4 Conservation Officer Kay Easton
- 5.5 Access Officer Kai Trusson
- 5.6 Training Officer Ian Patrick
- 5.7 Other reports *(optional)*, including:
Access Co-ordinators, Web Admin, Anchors, PR, Inclusivity,
Y&D, E&T, BCA report

OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

- 6.0 ONLINE BOOKING SYSTEM (Appendix 1)
- 7.0 CAVE SURVEYS (Appendix 2)
- 8.0 ANCHORING PROJECTS (Appendix 3)
- 9.0 CONSTITUTION (Appendix 4)
- 10.0 OFFICER VACANCIES (Appendix 5)

- 10.0 Any other business

- 11.0 Details of next meeting
Committee Meeting to be held on 18 January at 9:30am
Venue: Clapham Village Hall (Postcode LA2 8DZ)

APPENDIX 1
AGENDA ITEM 6.0
REVIEW OF ONLINE BOOKING SYSTEM

ME
(for discussion)

Several years ago now, the CNCC set up the Online Booking System as a compromise to keep landowners happy during the transition from permits on Leck, Ingleborough and Casterton Fell, to what was, essentially, open access.

We pitched use of this system as optional, but strongly encouraged its use out of respect to the landowners. It has a secondary beneficial effect of helping cavers manage their traffic and avoid congestion. For some caves (such as F'ing Hopeless) this also has conservation benefits.

Matters have moved on a lot since then, and for most caves, the permit system is a distant memory. This is presumably also the case for the landowners. The landowners receive no updates/news/stats from the CNCC, so they would probably never notice if we stepped back from the system.

So why are we continuing to support the online booking system? Is it still needed to maintain good relations with the three big estates? Or are we simply sustaining it as a tool for cavers to help spread their own traffic? The latter is fine, but this was always pitched as a useful by-product of the system, and not its primary objective.

The CNCC should be cautious of enacting a system that nominally limits attendance at potholes, as this could be perceived in the future as creating restrictions. We are not the cave police!

The questions for discussion are therefore:

- Is the Online Booking System still needed?
- A worthwhile “caver traffic management tool” or an unnecessary inconvenience?
- Is it useful in future access negotiations with landowners?

APPENDIX 2
AGENDA ITEM 7.0
CAVES SURVEYS

ME
(for information)

Clubs are reminded that some years ago, our Web Administrator (Gary) introduced the ability for the CNCC website to host surveys, downloadable from the cave information page, similar to descriptions and topos now.

This was never really pushed much at the time, but we'd like to encourage clubs with digital surveys, and who would be happy to make them freely available, to please send them to us for inclusion (as well as perhaps sending to cavemaps.org who are another excellent resource for online surveys).

APPENDIX 3
AGENDA ITEM 8.0
ANCHORING PROJECT

IP
(for approval)

Ian Patrick has requested approval to install anchors at High Hull Pot. The CNCC recently received a report via the "Report a Problem" page:
<https://cncc.org.uk/caving/report/>

***Cave:** High Hull Pot
Anchor Site: Re-belay anchor on first pitch
Went to descend high hull pot a couple of weeks ago
and there are two of the old type of Petzl perm anchors
at the entrance which are in good nick.
But just beyond the entrance an essential re-belay anchor
has pull from the wall.*

The reporting system has the benefit of directly reaching the appropriate officers, in this case the entire Anchor Team. Ian has kindly offered to install the new anchors himself, if approved.

High Hull Pot is not currently fitted with any CNCC anchors, so the Petzl anchors referred to are probably quite old and of unknown integrity and provenance.

We are grateful to the caver for reporting this to CNCC, rather than to go ahead and install their own anchors, which they did kindly offer to do. We explained that it would be a much more ideal situation for the anchors to be CNCC-installed and endorsed so we can publish a topo.

High Hull Pot seems to be a moderately significant pothole and one that might attract a little sporting attention, if fitted with approved anchors, and with a published topo.

APPENDIX 4
AGENDA ITEM 9.0
CNCC CONSTITUTION

ME/ JMB
(for discussion)

The June committee meeting agreed to set up an informal working group to review and update the constitution.

Most of the constitution is still relevant, although the section on Access does not reflect current procedures. Also, "Associate Membership" may no longer be necessary or useful.

As a general principle, we need to ensure that the constitution only sets out "the WHAT" but not "the HOW".

Along with a more streamlined constitution, we could expand the "Manual of Operations" to describe current protocols and roles. This would be invaluable in the future, to assist new officers.

We intend to present a draft of the updated constitution to the January committee meeting, along with a separate commentary on the changes. If accepted, it can then go forward to the AGM in March for final approval.

Please note that it's important to get the wording right in January, as amendments cannot be made at the AGM.

Although several people have volunteered to join the working group, we would appreciate some wider input.

The CNCC Committee are therefore urged to review our Constitution and bring to the October meeting any ideas for improvements, or any areas where you feel the current document fails to deliver. More widely, any suggestions on where the CNCC should be changing the way we operate would be welcomed.

<https://cncc.org.uk/resources/about/> "2024 CNCC Constitution"

APPENDIX 5
AGENDA ITEM 10.0
OFFICER VACANCIES

ME
(for information)

Our chair, treasurer and access officer have indicated that they intend to step down at the AGM next March, so the CNCC will need new volunteers.

<https://cncc.org.uk/get-involved/>

Chair

Andrew Hinde has served as our chair since 2017, having helped navigate CNCC through a phenomenal period of change, keeping meetings friendly and productive. Behind the scenes, he has represented us to several other local organisations and has also been our representative to the BCA for most of his tenure, including through some difficult times. He is, rightfully, hugely respected within the northern caving community, not only as our chair but also for his conservation efforts too (which we hope will continue). We are therefore looking for a new chair to help guide us through the coming years.

Treasurer

Pete Bann has been our treasurer since 2015, with one short break. He has expertly kept track of our finances, produced reports, and ensured our money has been well managed. This is perhaps the least glamorous of all our officer positions, receiving far less credit than the role deserves. However, without a good treasurer, the work of the CNCC would quickly falter. We thank Pete for his years of excellent service.

Access Officer

Kai Trusson has been our access officer since March this year (having stepped in last-minute when no other volunteers came forward and it was looking like the post would remain vacant). Since then, he has impressed us with his enthusiasm and dedication. He has dealt with many enquiries and progressed several complex local issues. It is a shame he is unable to continue, but he's been "poached" to help in other roles. We are extremely thankful for his stepping in at short notice. Now that we facilitate very few permit systems, it would be tempting to assume that the access officer role is a quiet one. However, as we have seen with recent issues at High Birkwith, serious issues can arise at any time.

***Please** - spread the word amongst your club members and fellow cavers. Tell them that the CNCC team is an extremely friendly and supportive group. You are never on your own, and will be supported by existing officers. Informal discussions, ideas and assistance are always just a phone call or email away. This is a great opportunity to make a massive difference to northern caving.*