

# COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

## British Caving Association

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Agenda for Annual General Meeting, 11<sup>th</sup> March 2017, Hellifield Village Institute, 10:00am

**Reminder: All voting representatives of full member clubs must bring a letter of authentication. This should identify the bearer as the accepted voting representative of the club and should be signed by a club officer. This letter may be provided electronically to the Secretary in advance.**

- (1) Apologies for absence
- (2) Applications for full membership: No applications received this year.
- (3) Acceptance of minutes from the 2016 AGM: Draft available on CNCC website meetings page.
- (4) Any matters arising from 2016 AGM?
- (5) Officer reports (to be online approx one week before the meeting)
  - a. Chairman's report
  - b. Secretary's report
  - c. Treasurer's report
  - d. Conservation Officer's report
  - e. Access Officer's report
  - f. Other reports
- (6) Discussion on BCA constitutional amendments

See separate document on the CNCC website meetings page for full details of this agenda item.  
See also **Appendix A** for some additional information that has come to light more recently.

- (7) Agenda item added 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2017: CNCC and anchor installation.

A statement and suggestion for a proposal can be found overleaf, which has been submitted by Simon Wilson. This suggests substantial expenditure by the CNCC for the purposes of continuing anchor installation (and replacement) in our region. This would also involve transitioning anchor installation into more of a CNCC funded and co-ordinated initiative rather than an independent initiative. Please review this suggestion carefully and be prepared to ask questions and decide on whether this suggestion should be advanced to a proposal and a vote.

Resin anchors started to be installed in the CNCC region in 1991 and up to 2010 approximately 1500 anchors were installed. The majority of these were DMM Eco Hangers. In 2004 DMM stopped making their anchor and since then there have been small numbers of several different types of anchors installed as different types were tried but no replacement for the DMM was found that fully satisfied every criterion. During a period of about a decade when the anchor programme was not operating effectively cavers were frustrated and I estimate that several hundred unapproved anchors have been installed anonymously.

I saw the need for a new design of anchor and in 2014 I designed and tested the IC anchor. The anchor was presented to the CNCC in January 2015 and it was approved for installation. Since then approximately 300 have been installed.

I entirely funded the development and production of the IC anchor, I funded the installations that I made and the costs incurred in training installers. I claimed £2000 from the BCA which covered about half of these costs. Sam Allshorn has made more than half of the installations. He claimed the cost of some resin from the CNCC which will be a small proportion of what he must have invested himself.

As well as new installations anchors are also used for replacing defective anchors. The most common defect is anchors becoming loose. Over the past two years I have been researching loose anchors and I think it wise to replace an estimate of about thirty anchors in the near future.

We are requesting funding for the purchase of a batch of about 650 anchors. The size of the batch is an optimum to be able to negotiate a good price and provide a supply of anchors for several years. The cost is £6 per anchor and the number of 650 is an estimate of the number that can be cut from a single sheet of steel.

The anchors will be the property of the CNCC. People directly involved in the CNCC will be responsible for the production and quality control of the anchors, the training of installers and the installing. I think it beneficial that the installers are able to choose where anchors are installed and that they should report to the committee in the way that it has been done for the last two years.

Installing the anchors will incur costs for resin and other consumables which I ask the CNCC to agree to pay for. The cost of resin is about £14 per tube and a tube will do about 20 anchors.

The installers team has operated effectively over the past two years and I see no reason to make any changes to how it operates. Most of the team regularly attend CNCC meetings. I ask the CNCC to create a co-opted post of Anchor Coordinator.

There is no difficulty at present in recruiting installers and we have a list of good candidates waiting to be trained as soon as funding is secured.

I request that the following suggested proposal is put to the AGM by a full member club.

***"The CNCC agree to the expenditure of up to £3900 to be granted for the purchase of approximately 650 IC anchors which will be owned by the CNCC and used to benefit anchor installation and replacement projects. A co-opted position within the CNCC of 'anchor coordinator' will be created. The anchor co-ordinator will work on behalf of the CNCC to oversee anchor installation and replacement in accordance with requirements of the BCA Anchor Policy."***

Submitted by Simon Wilson

(8) Election of CNCC Committee for the year 2017-2018

The CNCC requires between 10-14 clubs to comprise the Committee.

All full member clubs were asked in Autumn to consider whether they would be interested in standing for CNCC committee, and encouraged to provide notification of their intention to do so by the deadline of 14<sup>th</sup> January (this is a requirement of the constitution). Notifications received within this time (14 in total) are shown in **Appendix B** along with supporting statements.

No application has been received for the new position of Individual Caver (IC) Representative so this position will remain vacant for the following year.

(9) Election of CNCC Officers for the year 2017-2018

- a. Chairman
- b. Secretary
- c. Treasurer
- d. Conservation Officer
- e. Access Officer
- f. Training Officer

Notifications of intentions to stand (by the 14<sup>th</sup> January deadline), are shown in **Appendix C** along with supporting statements. There is one applicant for each position.

(10) Dates for the coming year

Suggested dates for 2017-2018 meetings are presented below for discussion (and if necessary, revision). Please consider if you feel these are likely to clash with any events that could significantly affect attendance.

Committee meetings:      Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2017, 9:30am  
                                     Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2017, 9:30am  
                                     Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2018, 9:30am

Annual General Meeting:      Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2018

(11) Any other business?

## **Appendix A: Extra details regarding BCA constitution changes**

See separate document on the CNCC website meetings page for background to this agenda item.

Since this document was produced we have been made aware of two motions which may be proposed at the BCA AGM in June by Tim Allen. The details, as supplied by Tim, are shown below. This is a personal motion, put forward by Tim, however, if these are seconded they will proceed to a vote in which the CNCC will be able to participate. We should therefore consider carefully whether, if these motions do come to a vote, the CNCC should support them.

Two motions for the BCA AGM on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2017:

Section 4.6 of the constitution states:

*“That the owners and tenants of property containing caves have the right to grant or withhold access. Where caving bodies have control of access delegated to them by the owners, such access should be obtained and granted as freely as possible for all responsible cavers, within the terms of those agreements. When obliged to make new agreements, the appropriate body should endeavour to ensure that this freedom is maintained or improved.”*

The first sentence of this section has been cited as a barrier to BCA running a campaign to recognise that caving falls within the scope of the CRoW Act. This, together with proposed amendments which suggest BCA must ‘respect any rights held’, has highlighted a deeper problem with this part of the BCA constitution. This type of wording can be manipulated to prevent the BCA pursuing its own interests or carrying out the will of its members. BCA must have free will to campaign or protest as it sees fit. Landowners are well represented by powerful organisations and lobbyists, they do not need more help from cavers. To ensure that the BCA can represent cavers I propose the following;

**“This motion proposes that the first sentence of Section 4.6 of the BCA constitution be removed.”**

Notwithstanding the outcome of the first motion I propose a second motion for absolute clarity.

**“This general meeting confirms that there is no impediment in the constitution to prevent the BCA campaigning for the Countryside and Rights of Way Act to apply to caving.”**

Proposed; T Allen.

Seconded; To be confirmed

## **Appendix B: Committee Elections**

The 2016 Committee and their figures for Committee meeting attendance:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Meetings with voting reps present (out of 3)</u>
Bradford Pothole Club	3
Burnley Caving Club	None
Craven Pothole Club	3
Earby Pothole Club	2
Gritstone Club	3
Northern Boggarts	3
Northern Pennine Club	2
Over and Under Caving Club	None
Red Rose Cave and Pothole Club	3
University of Leeds Speleological Society	3
White Rose Pothole Club	2
York University Cave and Pothole Club	3
Yorkshire Subterranean Society	3

Clubs which have provided notification of intention to stand for CNCC Committee in 2017

(Listed in chronological order of notification receipt, earliest to latest, total =14)

Re-standing:	Burnley Caving Club
Re-standing:	Craven Pothole Club
Re-standing:	Bradford Pothole Club
Re-standing:	Northern Pennine Club
Re-standing:	University of Leeds Speleological Association
Re-standing:	Northern Boggarts
Re-standing:	York University Cave and Pothole Club
Re-standing:	Red Rose Cave and Pothole Club
Re-standing:	Yorkshire Subterranean Society
New applicant:	Kendal Caving Club
Re-standing:	Earby Pothole Club
New applicant:	Rubber Duck Caving Club
New applicant:	Grampian Speleological Group
Re-standing:	White Rose Pothole Club

No applicant has come forward for the Committee position of Individual Caver (IC) representative.

Sheffield University Speleological Society (SUSS) submitted an application for a Committee position, however, this came one day after the 14<sup>th</sup> January deadline, and as 14 applications had already been received within the deadline period, their application could not be accepted. They will not appear on the ballot paper. However, in the event of an applicant stepping down, or failing to achieve enough votes to be eligible (three votes), SUSS may be able to stand on the day for the vacant position.

## Statements from Clubs standing for Committee

### Burnley Caving Club



#### BURNLEY CAVING CLUB

President Raymond Haffner. Chairman Peter Wilson. Secretary Ben Blackburn.  
Treasurer Barbara Taylor.

Peter Wilson  
Chairman Burnley Caving Club  
140 Halifax Road,  
Nelson, Lancs. BB9 0EL.

Matt Ewles  
Secretary Council of Northern Caving Clubs.

31 October 2016

Dear Matt,  
Burnley Caving Club wish to stand for the CNCC committee, our club rep. would be  
Bernard Bond.  
Best Regards,  
Peter Wilson

### Craven Pothole Club

The Craven Pothole Club is keen to continue its long standing contribution to CNCC by again standing for election to the CNCC Committee at the AGM on 11 March 2017.

We are a long established and active Dales club with a wealth of local knowledge which we are happy to share with CNCC for the benefit of all.

Our long and active association with the CNCC means we know the people and systems to make things happen. The club has always played an active role providing access controllers and a past Chairman. We have negotiated access agreements on behalf of CNCC on several occasions. We have been voluntary auditors for the past decade or so and have taken an active part in all the rewrites of the constitution.

Yours sincerely

Dave Robertson  
Hon Secretary  
Craven Pothole Club Ltd

### **University of Leeds Speleological Association**

Statement received from John Holloway:

ULSA would like to stand for election to the CNCC committee at the AGM this year. We have played an active role on the committee for three years, supporting improved access to caves for all cavers, and improving representation for DIMs. We ensure that the interests of student cavers are represented.

In the Dales, our members are active in sports trips, digging, surveying, conservation and bolting. As a University club, we introduce many new people to caving. New cavers are the future of caving, and we would like to help ensure that the CNCC's good work will continue.

### **Kendal Caving Club**

Further to your call for club representatives for the committee of the Council of Northern Caving Clubs, we, Kendal Caving Club would like to put ourselves forward for one of the positions.

Kendal Caving Club is a relatively small but active club and in recent years have been mainly focused on sport caving although we are still pursuing a few digs to add to the significant list of past KCC discoveries. We continue to introduce new comers to caving and provide equipment and training to those who need it. We feel we would bring a positive and proactive voice to the CNCC and are committed to conservation and opening up access where ever possible. This year, 2017, is our sixtieth year and we still have some original members so we have a lot of history to draw on.

Please advise if you require any further information and if we need to do anything further prior to the AGM.

Thanks and regards

Chris Hunter  
Secretary  
Kendal Caving Club

### **Grampian Speleological Group**

Hi Matt,

I have been mulling over your appeal, and now offer the Grampian Speleological Group as a committee member, represented by myself.

We have been full members since the early 1970s (following a struggle to get CNCC to cover 'North Britain' rather than merely The Dales!), and have enjoyed use of the permit system ever since. Geographically, we have not been in a position to directly participate in much regular work in the Dales, but the club caves there very frequently and I feel it is time we 'put something back in' as it were.

As to the GSG itself: it was founded in 1961 and currently has some 150 members located all over the UK, but mainly in Scotland. We find ourselves de facto as almost a national club north of the border, and much of our sporting - as opposed to exploratory or scientific - activity is centred on the Yorkshire Dales. Personally, I am very supportive of CNCC's role in stabilising, renovating and preserving cave entrances and access paths even though I have no time to participate physically, and for the future would like to see an expansion of landowners' appreciation of the serious scientific and geographical importance of Yorkshire's underworld and our role in its exploration and conservation.

Hope that is enough info!

Best wishes  
Alan Jeffreys (Goon)

### **Rubber Duck Caving Club**



**RUBBER DUCK CAVING CLUB**  
Est. 1975

**BREDBURY CONSERVATIVE CLUB, GEORGE LANE,  
BREDBURY, STOCKPORT**  
[www.rubberduckcavingclub.co.uk](http://www.rubberduckcavingclub.co.uk)

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**Chairman**  
Bill Nix  
Springfields House,  
The Croft, Audley,  
Stoke on Trent,  
Staffordshire, ST7 8JW

**Secretary**  
Paul Stead  
15 Taylor Street  
Whitworth, Rochdale  
Lancashire, OL12 8PT

**Treasurer**  
Mark Johnson  
23 Peacock Hill Close  
Grimsargh, Preston,  
Lancashire, PR2 5BU

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Dear Mr Ewles

Please consider this letter as Rubber Duck Caving Club's application to join the Council of Northern Caving Club's committee.

The club was formed in 1975 and has always maintained a small, but active, membership with regular trips undertaken in all of the major UK caving regions with an emphasis on the Yorkshire Dales and the Peak District. We undertake annual clean-up trips in Lost Johns' as part of Descent's "Adopt a Cave" scheme and have members in the Dales most weekends.

We wish to apply to join the committee because, as a club, we feel that the protection and development of caving in the north is of importance and is something we feel passionate about. In comparison to the well-established and sizeable clubs currently on the committee, we feel our position as a small, sporting club with an emphasis on getting people into caving, will provide an alternate view to be represented within CNCC.

Best regards

Paul Stead  
Secretary



### **All other Committee applicants**

No statements from other applicants.

### **Additional information: Sheffield University Speleological Society**

Sheffield University Speleological Society (SUSS) submitted an application for a Committee position, however, this came one day after the 14<sup>th</sup> January deadline, and as 14 applications had already been received within the deadline period, their application could not be accepted. They will not appear on the ballot paper. However, in the event of an applicant stepping down, or failing to achieve enough votes to be eligible (three votes), SUSS may be able to stand on the day for a vacant position.

Please find their application statement below:

Hi Matt,

Apologies I didn't get this to you yesterday, an issue came up that I had to attend to and completely forgot to send the email.

As club chairman, I would like to put forward Sheffield University Speleological Society to stand on the committee. It has been discussed as a committee and it is in not only my own best interests, but also with other members that we do so.

We are most likely the most Southern club you have had to stand for committee, and although we are mainly situated in the Peak District, we are often to be found in the Yorkshire Dales as well. For this reason, we would like to be a part of a movement that will make a difference to caving for the greater good and in a way that will serve everyone's needs. As we are a student club, I feel our input is just as valuable.

Thanks  
Samuel Snowdon  
SUSS chairman

## **Appendix C: Officer Elections**

The following individuals have provided notification of their intention to stand:

**Chairman:** Andrew Hinde (new applicant)

**Secretary:** Matt Ewles (re-standing)

**Treasurer:** Pete Bann (re-standing)

**Conservation Officer:** Kay Easton (re-standing)

**Access Officer:** Tim Allen (new applicant)

**Training Officer:** Marion (Maz) Holloway (new applicant)

### **Statements from Officer applicants**

#### **Chairman application from Andrew Hinde**

I would like to put my name forward for the role of CNCC Chairman.

I am a member of The Gritstone Club (42 years membership) and the Cave Diving Group (non-swimmer). I have a long history of unremarkable caving experience. I have also developed a keen interest in a sustainable future for caves and caving in the Dales area.

I feel that I have been even-handed with all individuals and club members of CNCC since I first attended meetings as a club representative in 2008. I believe that my strongest attribute is the ability to negotiate and arbitrate with conflicting interests through the use of pragmatism and a rejection of dogma. I would like to see the progress of recent years continued with an open and welcoming CNCC which is prepared to extend its services to all cavers.

I was honoured to have served the CNCC Committee as the Conservation Officer for about 7 years. During this period a group of dedicated CNCC volunteers worked tirelessly on a variety of conservation projects which has raised the profile of cavers with statutory conservation bodies and landowners. This group continues to explore new techniques and “sets the bar” nationally for Regional Caving Council supported Conservation Projects. I am also currently serving as BCA Conservation and Access Officer. This is a role that I intend to stand down from at the end of my current term.

I work for Natural England as Reserve Manager at Ingleborough National Nature Reserve where I also have responsibility as the Cave Conservation Adviser for the Dales Region. In this capacity I have had incredible support from the caving community. I hope that this relationship will continue to grow and prosper if I am elected as CNCC Chairman.

Yours Sincerely

Andrew Hinde

### **Secretary application from Matt Ewles**

I would like to put myself forward to continue in the role of CNCC Secretary.

If appointed, this would be my fourth year in the role, having first took over from Les Sykes in 2013. My reasons for doing so back then were partly Les' powers of persuasion, but also because I had a strong belief that the CNCC had so much to offer northern cavers, but was being hampered from doing so by a lack of new people coming forward for Officer roles.

As Secretary, I have been very involved in the rewriting of our constitution to create better democracy and engagement between the CNCC and the caving community, and have worked with our webmaster to introduce better email and social media communication and regular newsletters. I have always worked to try to steer the CNCC into becoming a better resource for northern cavers in various ways, most recently though working with our Webmaster on the various website changes and authoring many of the cave descriptions that are now online.

I am excited about some of the potential changes that are on the cards for the CNCC this year, including working with a new Training Officer to help better develop the role, and seeing the CNCC take a more proactive involvement in anchors. Both of these are areas where the CNCC could offer much greater value to northern cavers than it currently does.

There is also considerable momentum in access and conservation, which our respective Officers have under full control, but which I am very keen to continue to support as required.

Therefore, the opportunity to continue to support the CNCC for another year would be an honour.

Outside of the CNCC, I am Chairman of York Caving Club, a full member of the Northern Pennine Club, and I am also still involved with first club, York University Cave and Pothole Club (albeit in the capacity of one of their "old fart" members). I am a very enthusiastic Yorkshire Dales caver, and North York Moors digger.

### **Treasurer application from Pete Bann**

No statement, but Pete has indicated he is happy to continue as Treasurer.

### **Conservation Officer application from Kay Easton**

I have been Conservation Officer for the last two years, and in the last year have organised or facilitated various projects including (with Bradford PC) cleaning graffiti from Catnot Cave, restoration of the stockproof lid of Slab Cave and of Blood Cave, clearing of a large quantity of rubbish from Gauber Pot. I am a member of the Bradford PC and Northern Boggarts. I see my role as facilitative, helping people access the support and information they need to carry out the conservation projects that they are interested in. If I am elected, I will continue to work closely with Andrew Hinde of Natural England on projects funded by the Stories in Stone project, to maintain a list of conservation volunteers, and to try to increase the number of cavers involved in conservation work.

## **Access Officer application from Tim Allen**

Our present Access Officer, Johnny Latimer, wishes to stand down from the position due to the pressures of a young family, work and life in general. I have worked with Johnny on access matters since he took on the job and have decided to put myself forward for the role of Access Officer in his place.

For those who do not know me I live near Ingleton just within the National Park and go caving a couple of times a week. I have been a member of three northern caving clubs in the past but now tend to cave independently with friends. I have been involved with many exploration successes in the Dales including the final link of the Three Counties jigsaw. I have caved abroad extensively and I am still involved in some foreign projects. I am the CRoW Liaison Officer for the BCA tasked with ensuring that the interpretation of the Act favours caving. Together with my wife, I run Ukcaving.com and supporting social media which gives cavers from across the country a platform to discuss and report caving matters.

I have attended most CNCC meetings over the last three years and am presently co-opted as Access Representative. I have a good understanding of how CNCC works and where it wants to go. I hope I have contributed towards some of the improvements and positivity in the way the CNCC is now perceived. I have developed good relations with the National Park Authority, Local Access Forums, Julian Smith MP, local media and others to both promote caving and to achieve a more positive outcome for our sport. With these contacts I have managed to establish a dialogue with some of the more elusive landowners, something which has proved increasing difficult in recent years. At present I am negotiating with three of the major estates for improved access to some of our most popular caves.

Naturally as the BCA CRoW Officer I believe in open access to our fells. The legal debate over this matter is far from being settled as the Act may, or may not, apply to caving. We need to make the current position more transparent and continue to prepare for a positive outcome in the Dales.

Where access arrangements are necessary I believe they should include all cavers which is more in line with the CNCC (and BCA) constitution. Where there is a need for restrictions these should be justified and understood by all. Where we must administer access we need to minimise CNCC liabilities and recognise our limited resources. Most of all we must remember that we represent cavers and not landowners, as some current arrangements seem very out of balance in this respect. Within the bigger picture I think the CNCC undervalues itself in the wider Dales community. We have a lot more to offer in welcoming visiting cavers, promoting caving in the region, educating in best practice, supporting the clubs and groups who are based, visit and work in the Dales, and generally being *the* go to body for anything to do with caving in the region. I look forward to being part of that.

If elected, I hope my time in office will see all of these things especially, improved access, greater recognition of caving as a normal activity and better education in cave conservation.

Thank you

Tim Allen – 015242 41022

January 2017

# Marion (Maz) Holloway

marionholloway@outlook.com

## Statement of Application for CNCC Training Officer

I would like to put myself forward again for the role of Training Officer with the CNCC for election at the AGM in 2017. I previously stood for this role in 2015, under my maiden name.



### Key Aims for the Role

I am currently writing a more detailed strategy for developing the CNCC training offerings which will support this statement. This will include further details of these aims, how they intersect and a general timeline for what I would hope to achieve in the space of 12 months. Below is a brief summary of my ideas:

Conduct an open survey of member clubs, individuals, rescue teams and other caving related organisations in Northern England to better understand member's priorities and provide a forum for suggestions and opinions on the future of the CNCC's training offering.

Arrange a minimum of three training weekends at locations in the Dales where practical skills can be taught and shared. These could cover areas such as SRT skills, first aid underground, surveying, bolting, photography etc. Topics and levels of courses would be chosen based on preferences in the open survey.

Develop an online knowledge base with the aim of hosting this on the CNCC website. Topics that could suit this kind of training include: geology, photography (theory), using surveying software, widening participation, running a university club, how to get more involved with the caving community etc. I would develop these with knowledgeable and interested parties using a range of media as appropriate to the topic covered.

Begin to develop a training bank which would encourage an exchange of experience and resources. For example, more experienced and established clubs could "put in" informal training hours or availability of resources in return for man hours to use for digging/ exploration, assistance with hut maintenance etc.

Advertise and promote all training activities as widely as possible and endeavour to make them accessible practically and financially to all interested parties. This includes researching and developing avenues of funding and resources that could support training activities as well as engaging with the BCA training committee to develop connections and represent northern caver's interests.

Act as an accessible point of contact for member clubs looking to organise training for a group of their members as well as anyone with new ideas, advice and feedback.

### **About Me**

I am a member of ULSA and previously a member of YUCPC. With YUCPC, I was Archives Officer for two years, producing two journals for the club and cataloguing donations to the club library. I took over as Meets and Social Secretary for around 9 months, organising weekends away as well as the annual week in Wales for around 20 people.

I'm currently not able to cave due to my health, so I signed up as a volunteer at EuroSpeleo this year and really enjoyed the chance to get involved with the caving community again. I helped out with general site maintenance and manning the caving tent.

In the non-caving world, I work as a Support Worker in higher education and am studying for a Masters in Psychology.

### **Other Notes**

I would be more than happy to share the role with another individual who has similar or overlapping aims for it. I think there's a huge scope for development and working in partnership would provide the potential to achieve more in a shorter space of time.

### **Summary**

My main aim would be to develop a sustainable training offering for the CNCC which covers a breadth of topics of relevance to northern cavers. A focus on sustainability will mean that subsequent years can build on my efforts, with minimal difficulty.

Training is an avenue in which the CNCC can have a direct and valuable impact on its members. Between us, we have a wealth of experience regarding all aspects of caving in the north of England and I believe this is a valuable and underused resource. The CNCC is in the perfect position to harness this, and each of my ideas above focuses on providing relevant, sustainable training which can capitalise on our collective experience.

If you have any questions, please drop me an email.