



## The Council of Northern Caving Clubs; meeting of Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2013

This document contains the following reports;

- Draft minutes of the above meeting
- Agenda
- Conservation Officer's report
- Leck Fell Meet Secretary's report
- D. Morrison letter

## **COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS**

### **BRITISH CAVING ASSOCIATION**

Committee meeting

To be held at Hellifield Village hall on Saturday 1st June 2013  
Starting at 09.30

#### **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the last meeting
3. Matters arising from the minutes
4. Officers reports
  - Chairman's report
  - Secretary's report
  - Treasurer's report
  - Access Officer's report
  - Conservation officer's report
  - Training officer's report
  - Technical group report
5. Meets secretaries reports
  - Leck Fell
  - Casterton
  - Fell Birks Fell
  - Penyghent & Fountains Fell
  - Other areas
6. BCA report
7. 2016 International Caving Symposium
8. Any other business
9. Date and place of next meeting

# **MINUTES of the CNCC COMMITTEE MEETING held on 1 June 2013 at HELLIFIELD VILLAGE INSTITUTE**

The Meeting commenced at 09.30.

**PRESENT:** R. Holmes (Chairperson), Les Sykes (Secretary), Glenn Jones (Treasurer), Fay Hartley (BCC), S. Lieberman (RRCPC), Johnny Latimer (Earby), Andrew Hinde (Gritstone Club/Natural England), Pete Monk (Northern Boggarts), Tony Brown (NB), Malcolm Hughes (BPC), Tim Allen, Edward Easton, Pete Jones (Craven), Matt Ewles (YCC), Gary Douthwaite (website manager), Kay Easton (Minutes Secretary)

**1. APOLOGIES.** Jim Sloane, Ric Halliwell, Pat Halliwell, Ian Lloyd, Alan Speight (YSS), Harvey Lomas (YRC), Bernard Bond (BCC), Ray Duffy (RRCPC), Victor Wain (WRPC),

**2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:** The last meeting was September 2012, as the January meeting had been cancelled because of bad weather and the March meeting was the AGM. Minutes of the September 2012 meeting were accepted and signed as a true record.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MINUTES:**

Glenn raised two actions from the AGM: proposal for BCA, which will be dealt with under item 6, and the suggestion that CNCC should become a legal entity.

Andrew Hinde said that securing an access agreement for Fairy Holes had been hampered by the fact that Lafarge wished the agreement to be with a legal entity which could be pursued in the event of problems (eg a charity or a company with limited liabilities).

It was not reasonable, because of the administration load, to ask a legal entity club to be the party to the agreement. Although BCRA is a charity, access is outside its terms of reference.

The Lafarge agreement had been achieved by an agreement with Andrew as a private individual, backed by BCA insurance. No other access agreement appears likely to be affected. The Lafarge agreement is to be renegotiated in December, and it may well be that, if there have been no problems, the current arrangements can continue.

It was agreed that any decision should be deferred and that Les should look at again the possibility of CNCC seeking charitable status.

**ACTION: Les Sykes**

## 4 OFFICERS' REPORTS

**Chairman's report:** As a result of the new website, Roy has received enquiries about CNCC.

**Secretary's report:** Les has received a copy of a letter from a commercial cave leader Mr Morrison to his MP complaining of the lack of access for commercial caving on Casterton Fell and incidentally alleging that he had been ill-advised by representatives of CNCC. A copy of the letter is appended to the Minutes.

Les said that the landowner had discovered that his land was being used for commercial caving, and had issued a statement that commercial caving was not allowed. Les has no record of CNCC officers advising that it was allowed. He has asked Mr Morrison to substantiate his complaint, but he has refused to comment.

There are no problems with access for recreational or exploratory caving. Commercial caving carries legal implications as the cave becomes a place of work.

Les gave his opinion that commercial cavers should be negotiating separately with landowners, perhaps via the Association of Cave Instructors (ACI).

Andrew Hinde commented that the CNCC was discharging correctly its remit to negotiate access on behalf of caving clubs. He pointed out that CNCC was meeting the needs of clubs, but not the needs of individuals, for example Direct Individual Members (DIMs) of BCA who were not club members. He felt this would not be a viable position for the future.

A lengthy discussion followed, with the main points below.

Allowing permits to DIMs would adversely affect clubs, in that DIMs would no longer need to join a club to get access to permit-controlled caves; although it was for the clubs to ensure they met the needs of their members, rather than for CNCC to act to maintain high numbers of members.

Allowing permits to DIMs might place pressure on more popular caves and reduce access for clubs.

Other Regions allow access to individuals, but no-one in the meeting was able to say how this worked in practice, eg checking that all individuals on the trip were covered by BCA insurance.

Many younger cavers were organizing meets via social networks. They were passionate about caving, but being a member of a club was less important to them.

Discussion on ukcaving.com about CROW showed there was a groundswell - it may be that CNCC would be forced to change its position.

Pete Monk said that the permit system for club members was really easy and allowed ready and easy access to permit controlled caves.

Les pointed out that any change would require a change to the Constitution of CNCC, and that change could happen only with the agreement of the landowners.

Glenn proposed that representatives should consult with their clubs as to whether they wished CNCC to change its Constitution to include access for individual members.

### **ACTION: All Club representatives**

Returning to the letter from Mr Morrison, the Committee agreed to take no further action, and to wait for feedback from the meeting between Mr Morrison and the Estate.

**Treasurer's report;** Written report appended to the Minutes

Sam Lieberman said Red Rose wish to improve the approach to the farm – would CNCC pay for gravel. Glenn asked him to submit a quote, and then a decision would be made.

### **Access Officer's Report**

Access issues were covered under the Secretary's report.

Andrew Hinde mentioned that guards patrol Fairy Holes, and follow discussions on ukcaving.com. Ill-judged comment on Lafarge would not help renegotiation of the access agreement, and he asked club representatives to make their members aware of this.

### **ACTION: All Club representatives**

**Conservation Officer's report:** Written report appended to Minutes

There has been a request that debris be removed from Homeshaw and Daimler Caves, and Andrew has added this to the list of future projects. He is content that H&S and Insurance documentation is on record.

Les said he had not had the opportunity to consider the waste removal policy paper but would do so as soon as possible.

Roy drew attention to the Scouts forthcoming clear-up in Ibbeth Peril.

Sam said another session at Barbon Pot had seen 12 bags of rubbish removed. One more trip would finish the work.

**Training Officer's report:** Nothing to report.

Glenn ascertained that Sam was planning another surveying course and explained that funding needed to be sought in advance from the Training Committee, who would not consider a retrospective application for funding.

### **Technical Group report**

After extensive testing, it is now clear that the anchors purchased from Bolt Products (BP) are not 316(A4) stainless steel. 304 steel has less resistance to chlorine ions. Nick Williams the E&T Convenor is writing to Mt Titt to resolve the issue; in the meantime there are to be no placements of BP anchors and BCA should be issuing a notice of use or other intent. Les does not yet know BCA's proposed course of action.

The only BP anchors so far placed are in Rowten big gulley, Bull Pot of the Witches and Marilyn.

There is a long-term test bed for anchors in the gulley outside Yordas.

### **5 MEETS SECRETARIES' REPORTS**

**Leck Fell** Written report appended to Minutes. Tim Allen asked why York University Cave and Pothole Club had been acted upon by BCA when they were not the only one to have used Casterton Fell caves without a permit. Les responded that YUCPC had already apologized for their actions, which rose out of a misunderstanding, and that he had requested BCA not to take action.

Les is currently in the early stages of negotiation over the Close season

**Casterton** Sam said the proposed footpath repair had not yet happened. He would rearrange in conjunction with Andrew Hinde, who would obtain the necessary consents.

**Birks Fell** Nothing to report regarding Mongo, Birks Fell or Robinsons Pot.

**Penyghent and Fountains Fell** Washfold Pot no longer requires a permit.

### **Other Areas**

***Fairy Holes*** (Weardale): Ric Halliwell reported by email that arrangements for Fairy Caves (Weardale) are still being finalised – he has several requests for permits to process when he gets back to England - There are only 12 permits per year so requests for 3 permits from one club (already received) are not going to be met.

***Bowland*** Samuel Waller is amenable to access to all caves in the area, both sides of the Hodder, coming under CNCC – there is a need to draw up an agreement

**ACTION: Les Sykes, Anthony Brown**

He is also agreeable to removal of rubbish in Tip Wood, on the surface and in the shakehole. Les commented that guidelines were being issued by BCA on asbestos removal. He still had to comment on Andrew Hinde's paper on rubbish removal.

***Excalibur Pot:*** For January-June this year four permits for Excalibur Pot have been issued (Morley PC, Chesterfield CC, Burnley CC and Orpheus CC). The new entrance has withstood winter floods well, and there are no problems to report.

## **6 BCA REPORT**

At the September 2012 meeting, the CNCC reps agreed a proposal drafted by Craven PC should be put to the BCA meeting, and at the AGM the CNCC reps expressed a desire for closure by a paper for the July BCA AGM. Glenn said no comments had been received from CNCC reps. Andrew Hinde suggested the message should be an expression of support by CNCC reps for the CNCC Officers' position, with a statement that it was now time to move on.

The meeting proposed that Glenn should rework the discussion document as a letter for circulation; that Andrew should email a suitable closing statement; and the paper should be signed by the Chairman or by CNCC. Les commented that the paper should be tabled as a report, to ensure that it was put to the BCA meeting and appears in the Minutes.

The proposal was proposed by Les Sykes and seconded by Pete Monk, and was passed unanimously.

**7 2016 INTERNATIONAL CAVING SYMPOSIUM** No information has been forthcoming from BCA

## **8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

An enquiry had been received as to where CNCC was based from John Cordingley, in connection with published references to the Shuttleworth Guides and the Rigging Guides. It was agreed that the address should be c/o BCA

Library.

Gary Douthwaite said the new website was working and had received positive feedback. He was finishing the admin function to allow access by officers, Emails to officers official CNCC addresses would be archived for future incumbents.

## **9 DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING**

09:30 21 September 2013, Hellifield Institute.

The meeting closed at 11.30

### **Conservation Officers Report June 2013**

The restoration of the Brown Hill Pot entrance has now been completed with the fixing of a belay bar across the entrance pipe.

A large group of CNCC volunteers completed 15 metres of dry stone walling at Long Churns Cave enclosure and made improvements to the pathway. As usual the weather was encouraging to start with but atrocious long before the task was completed.

There have been 2 CNCC trips into Fairy Holes Cave –Weardale. The cave was found to be in reasonably stable condition. The second trip saw two of the party complete a 5 hour round trip to the terminal sump. A third trip will concentrate on removing all the refuse accumulated during the 1950s and 1960s and some final taping.

Equipment has been transported to Clapham Bottoms Pot ready for remedial works on the collapsed shaft to commence this summer.

Andrew Hinde  
21.05.2013

### **Report to CNCC CCTTEE 1st June 2013 ☞ Leck Fell Access Agreement**

So far for the year 2013/14 30 member clubs have now been issued permits under the access agreement. This is two more than at the same time last year.

Since the AGM I have not had any complaints from the landowners regarding unauthorised access or other matters, but I am aware that trips have been made during the closed season. If anybody wants details please contact me.



July is now quite heavily booked although some weekend permits remain free, should clubs wish to make a booking. There is plenty of availability throughout the remainder of 2013/14.

Jim Sloane ☐ CNCC Meets Secretary Leck Fell  
22/05/2013

**JULIAN SMITH MP**  
Skipton & Ripon



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

18/4 TGB - discuss  
with Henry  
please

Mr Henry Bowring  
Whelprigg Estate  
Whelprigg House  
Kirkby Lonsdale Cumbria LA6 2LF

Our ref: GS  
MM6110

26 March 2013

Dear Mr Bowring

**Mr Duncan A Morrison of Greenstead, Newby, Clapham, Lancaster, LA2 8HR**

My constituent Mr Morrison is a caving instructor and he has contacted me to ask me to make representations to the Estate about access to caves on Casterton Fell.

I attach a note Mr Morrison sent to me following our discussions in which he sets out the situation as he sees it and I would be grateful if someone from the Estate could make contact with him and have a discussion with him so that he can make his case.

Thank you for your assistance.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

**JULIAN SMITH MP**