

# **COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS**

## **British Caving Association**

### **Reports for 11th June 2022 Committee Meeting**

#### **Chairman's Report**

##### **Long Service to CNCC**

Ric Halliwell has announced that he is retiring as a Meets Secretary after 40 year's service, in this and other capacities, for CNCC. Ric has lived through some turbulent times at CNCC but his work output has never wavered. He has been a doer, always providing a first class service to northern cavers and visitors. He is anxious that his current health issues are preventing him from maintaining this high standard that he has set.

Ric has been an ambassador for northern caving at a national and international level for a generation. He is a member of a caving club in most BCA regions and well known to European clubs and cavers. These personal links are incredibly important for CNCC.

On a personal note, I owe Ric a debt of gratitude for all the advice he has offered freely to me in the areas of cave science and cave conservation over the years. It has been invaluable to me. I hope we will still see him at CNCC meetings and events. A well-deserved retirement awaits.

##### **BCA**

1. The BCA Conservation and Access working Group is to convene a meeting organised by Jenny Potts with the intension of reinvigorating the group and selecting a working group convenor after a long absence.
2. A Blue Plaque has been placed at Crag Dale /Settle to mark the work of Eli Simpson and the formation of the National Speleological Association. This was officially opened by Russell Myers, BCA Chairman.
3. The BCA Secretary received a letter from CNCC committee asking for more detailed minutes of Council Meetings. He agreed to look into this.
4. The legal battle between BCA and Welsh Government / NRW has ended with the WG refusing to change any of its positions regarding cave access under CRoW. The CRoW working group are discussing with their solicitors the option of a further Judicial Review of Welsh Government on the substantive issue of whether or not CRoW applies to caving.

**Andrew Hinde - CNCC Chairman**

### **Secretary's Report**

I have had a relatively quiet inbox for the past few months, so I have little to report beyond the usual secretarial duties.

I am very pleased to once again have a reports document filled once again by a full complement of 6 officers. As a voluntary organisation it can sometimes be difficult to maintain a full cohort of volunteers, but it now seems that the CNCC is on a strong footing going forward as we continue with the organisation's fantastic work in conserving and maintaining caves, negotiating access for all, and providing training to help all cavers, whether old hands or new to the sport, can get the most out of our fantastic sport.

**Josh Young - CNCC Secretary**

### **Treasurer's Report**

Financial Status as of 5th June 2022:

Business Community Account: £1232.59

Business Saver Account: £12,682.28

Since the March meeting, the following payments/receipts made:

Sam Litten Training Inv0322 £290 (SRT Rigging 12/03/2022 + SRT Improver 13/03/2022)

Ian Patrick Training Inv3161 £290 (New to SRT 26/03/2022 + SRT Rescue 27/03/2022)

A Hinde Twin Wall Pipe £450

Gary Douthwaite Audio Eqt for Meetings £148.06

Transfer from Paypal of £1015.97 (Course fees received).

Mileage payments of £81 for GT Douk work (1 payment outstanding).

**Pete Bann - CNCC Treasurer**

## **Conservation Officer's Report**

CNCC continues to support cavers in conservation work, including removing old signal wire from Meregill, providing tape and pins for use in F'ing Hopeless Pot, clearing and stabilising the entrance of Chanterelle Pot, and stabilising the collapse at Great Douk.

Those who are planning conservation works are reminded that Sam Allshorn has money donated by Mike Cooper from sales of "Not for the Faint Hearted" which is available for conservation work on caves featured in the book.

A list of equipment available for CNCC members to borrow for conservation projects is on the CNCC website <https://cncc.org.uk/about/> (It's under the "about" heading rather than "conservation" because the list also includes publicity and anchor placement items.)

Further new volunteers are always welcome, for weekend or weekday working parties. No specific skills are necessary, but if you have them, we will do our best to make use of them. On the job training is given as needed. Occasionally there may be the opportunity to attend a training course. Tools will be provided, but you are responsible for providing your own protective clothing - stout footwear, preferably with steel toe caps, stout gloves, weatherproof clothing, helmet. You will also need to provide your own packed lunch and hot drinks.

If you'd like to be placed on the mailing list to be informed of future projects, please contact the Conservation Officer on [conservation@cncc.org.uk](mailto:conservation@cncc.org.uk), or use the link on the CNCC website.

**Kay Easton - CNCC Conservation Officer**

## Training Officer's Report



30th May 2022

### **Training officer report**

#### **New Training workshops added**

We have just added new training workshops for the Spring and Summer period. I had intended not to put so many on in Spring / Summer as the barn hire has a higher rate during these times but the demand was there.

Helen (one of the new trainers) suggested a "Pull Through" skills workshop based in a cave. We put a couple on the website and all the places had gone within a couple of days. This is an area we will look to develop as there appears to be interest in it.

#### **Shadowing opportunities**

We continue to offer "shadowing" opportunities on the technical workshops. Primarily aimed at club training officers who want to develop their own training knowledge (and pass on their own knowledge) but also to trainee instructors working towards a qualification.

**Opportunities here:** [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/11pL2xYE4gRUUxq2dqRBG8PMgRJ\\_U0iYDtZP2H4nNL1g/edit](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/11pL2xYE4gRUUxq2dqRBG8PMgRJ_U0iYDtZP2H4nNL1g/edit)

#### **Current Trainers:**

Mark Richards (SRT)  
Ian Patrick (SRT)  
Helen Hooper (SRT)  
Sam Litten (SRT)  
Dr John Helm (Geology)  
Mark Burkey (Photography)  
Nick Bairstow (Cave Survey workshop coordinator)  
Lin Patrick (FOC assistant)  
Laura Patrick (FOC assistant)  
Airy Pilling (FOC assistant)

To give extra information to people booking workshops and also as part of our "Openness and Transparency" The trainers name will be included on the workshop details on the public side of the website.

#### **First Aid training**

I have been approached by a club member about the possibility of putting on a caver focused first aid training course. I am going to make some enquiries and see if it something we can sort out.

## Post AGM invite to visit a CNCC training workshop

An invite went out to all persons to come for a look around at the training barn whilst a “New to SRT” workshop was in progress and to see the CNCC equipment. I can only assume everyone has trust in me as No one came for a look 😊

## Approaches by clubs for specific club training workshops.

We have been approached by a couple of clubs about running training specifically for that club.

This is an area that I need to work out how best to accommodate the requests.

One limiting factor is trainer availability. Currently there is an unprecedented demand for instructors.

Ian Patrick  
CNCC Training Officer

Screenshot of workshops: 30-5-22

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from you.

June 4th	SRT Underground Refresher	✓ 2 places available
June 11th	An underground geology tour with the "Rock Doctor"	✗ FULL
July 2nd	New to SRT rigging / refresher workshop	✓ 1 places available
July 3rd	SRT rescue workshop (1 day)	✓ 3 places available
July 24th	Caving “Pull Through” workshop (Cave Based)	✗ FULL
August 21st	New to SRT one day workshop (Indoors)	✓ 1 places available
August 27th	SRT improver and refresher workshop (Indoors)	✓ 5 places available
August 28th	New to SRT rigging / refresher workshop	✗ FULL
September 3rd - 4th	SRT rescue workshop (2 Day)	✗ FULL
September 11th	Caving “Pull Through” workshop (Cave Based)	✗ FULL
September 24th	New to SRT one day workshop (Indoors)	✗ FULL
September 25th	SRT improver and refresher workshop (Indoors)	✓ 4 places available

Ian Patrick - CNCC Training Officer

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

Birkwith Problem remains the same - Adele and Andrew too Visit in due course.

Neals farm now up for sale previously friendly caver farmer - Andrew spotted.

Nothing further to report.

**Adele Ward - CNCC Access Officer**

### **BCA Equipment Representative's Report - Mark Richards**

The newly formed BCA joint Training and Equipment Working Group continues to make good progress having just held its second meeting.

The group is overseen by Steve Gray (whose title is training officer).

Current items on the agenda

- Writing up a terms of reference for the group
- A settling down period of who is part of group and representation
- Training matters
- Anchors and associated test pulling equipment
- BCA Rope Testing Equipment

### **PR and Communications Officer's Report - Matt Ewles**

Since the January Committee meeting there has been a pleasing diversity of positive news, spanning all facets of the CNCC. This includes new cave descriptions (Greensett Cave, Cherry Tree Hole, and Link Pot to The Mistral), all submitted by volunteers from outside of the core CNCC team. It is really nice to use these to encourage visitors to some less-well known caves.

The access changes at Birks Fell were widely welcomed. Despite receiving an email from the National Trust shortly after the AGM in March, saying they were looking to reply soon, I have not yet received anything. They seem to have have accepted the new position, although perhaps doing so unofficially, through lack of objection rather than positive acceptance, is a preferred approach for them. Once again, I must thank them for engaging with us on the situation, and doing so positively and understanding our position.

In April I circulated via all media (albeit last minute) a survey from the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust about the new Lune Valley/Three Counties initiative. Judging from the reaction on UKCaving, several people there filled it in, including specific mention of caving, and hopefully a number of our mailing list recipients did so too. I have given our contact details ([pr@cncc.org.uk](mailto:pr@cncc.org.uk) and [access@cncc.org.uk](mailto:access@cncc.org.uk)) as primary points of contact if they wish to discuss anything caving-related in future.

There have been some great conservation initiatives to promote, including ongoing fallen tree removals at Gaping Gill and Rumbling Hole, making safe the shakehole collapse at Great Douk, and wire removal at Meregill Hole. A loose boulder has been dealt with at Bull Pot of the Witches. These make great short stories, showing CNCC and the wider caving community taking a proactive involvement in such things.

I contacted the Grassington Mines team, following our financial contribution last year, and they obliged with a very nice summary of their work for our media channels, showing this to be money well spent.

I was very pleased to see an excellent selection of new training workshops for the Spring/Summer; These were advertised to our mailing list one day ahead of via UKCaving/Facebook. Several were booked up within a few days.

Between Adele and I, we have a number of copies of Caves and Karst of the Yorkshire Dales Volume 2; Demand for these has slowed, but if anyone has any landowners or agents where you feel local relations with cavers could be benefitted through a caving literature-gift then these are available (I will bring some copies to this meeting).

Likewise, I still have several framed caving photos for which demand seems to have declined. In the interests of getting these out of my house (where they are getting scuffed on the floor of my study), if any of our clubs with huts would like them for display (or even better, if you know a local venue that would take one), I will have them at the meeting for collection.

Since [1st January](#) there have been 62 more people sign up to our mailing list; one every 2-3 days on average. I continue to use this to send out monthly 'general' updates, as well as more specific news (e.g. dates for training workshops being advertised).

I will look to put together a physical newsletter very soon. It is arguable whether this is necessary these days, but it does create a nicely presented summary of all our work over the last year, and helps engagement with those not on our mailing list, and who do not follow us on social media.

There should be plenty of good news to come; I am waiting to hear a definitive report on the imminent reopening of White Scar Cave, and of course work on Wretched Rabbit is due to commence this summer.

I feel that the CNCC needs to maintain a stream of information regarding the situation at High Birkwith. While it might not necessarily be possible to resolve the situation there, I think it is important to provide periodic reminders that the CNCC has not forgotten about this, and is keeping our 'ear to the ground' on the matter, even if this means communicating the challenges. I would welcome any snippets any of our Officers have on this on a periodic basis.

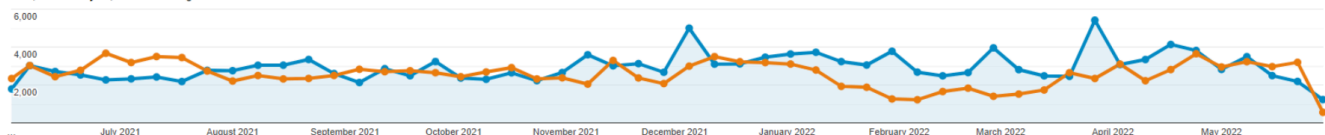
## Webmaster's Report - Gary Douthwaite

### Webmaster Report – June 2022

I have been quite busy with other commitments recently however everything running well with the website and social media, nothing specific to report. The new website is complete, and I expect the transfer to happen in the next couple of weeks.

#### Google Analytics (1 Jun 2021 – 31 May 2022)

Jun 1, 2021 - May 31, 2022: ● Pageviews  
Jun 1, 2020 - May 31, 2021: ● Pageviews



#### Gender:

Male Female

This period 66.50% 33.50%

Previous 12 months 68.68% 31.32%

#### Age:

18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65+

This period 14.16% 23.87% 20.26% 18.37% 13.35% 9.99%

Previous 12 months 12.94% 25.47% 17.71% 18.57% 13.62% 11.69%

#### Facebook

As of 6 Jun 2022 we have 1438 page likes (+88 since Jan report) and 1596 followers (+108 since Jan report).

#### Twitter

As at 6 Jun 2022 we have 523 followers (+30 since Jan report). 305 tweets have been made by CNCC.

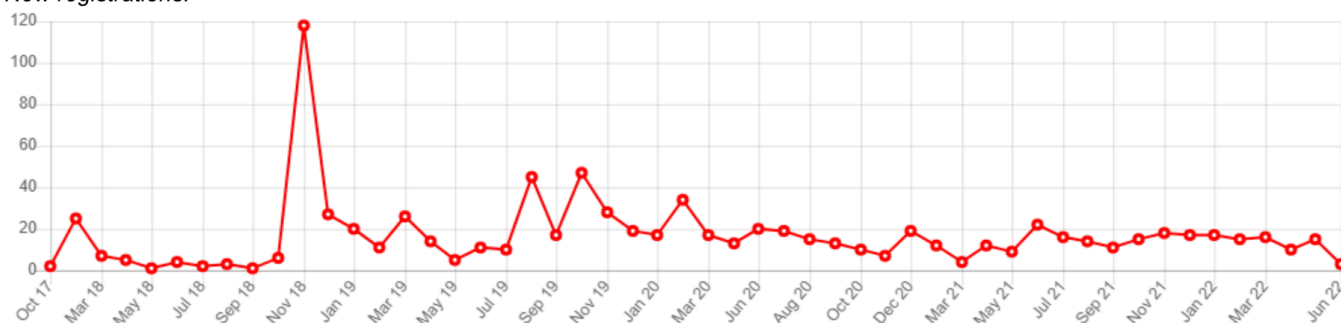
#### Instagram

As at 6 Jun 2022 we have 402 followers (+19 since Jan report).

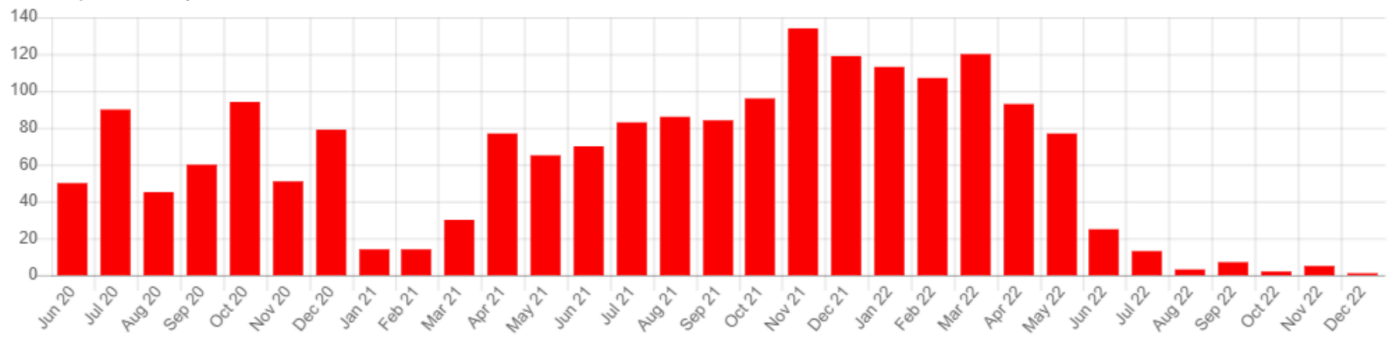
#### Online Booking System (to 6 Jun 2022)

- 867 registered users.
- 3473 individual bookings have been made. This number includes 2980 approved bookings and 492 cancelled bookings.
- 167 (19%) made a positive statement that they are NOT BCA members.
- 601 (69%) said they are members of a club.
- Of the users who specified gender there are 133 female (15.7%), 628 male (74.3%) and 0 other (0%).
- The average age is 49 with the youngest 19 and oldest 81.□

#### New registrations:



#### Bookings count by month:



#### Mailing List

The mailing list contains 374 people (+49 since Oct report). 1 person has requested to be unsubscribed.

#### Media Download Statistics (to 31 May 2022)

	Total	Average / month	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22
<b>Publications</b>	12862	274	420	202	165	121	182	125
<b>Topos</b>	112055	2547	4665	3404	2422	2893	2314	2204
<b>Cave descriptions</b>	93521	2125	4214	2662	2116	2395	2132	1813

#### Top 5 media downloads (six months to 31 May 2022)

##### Topos

Scanty Lardos Pot - 803 (4.3%)  
 Alum Pot - 683 (3.7%)  
 Curtain Pot - 558 (3%)  
 Lost Johns' Cave - 515 (2.8%)  
 Lancaster Hole and Cow Pot - 510 (2.8%)  
 Sell Gill Holes - 443 (2.5%)

##### Descriptions

Ease Gill Caverns - 851 (5.4%)  
 Scanty Lardos Pot - 750 (4.7%)  
 The Leck Fell Master Cave System - 728 (4.6%)  
 Alum Pot and Long Churn Caves - 637 (4%)  
 Gaping Gill - 629 (4%)  
 Gaping Gill - 641 (4.1%)

#### **Matt Ewles - Excalibur Access Coordinator**

Demand for access to Excalibur Pot remains understandably quiet, given it's location some miles from usual caving territory. I have issued three permits so far for 2022. Due to changes to BCA insurance, these can now only be issued to groups/individuals who meet the BCA's requirements to ensure the landowner is indemnified, which is a requirement of the access agreement; This has not yet necessitated refusing access to anyone, and if it ever did, I would explore options to get around the issues.