

# Constitution of the York University Cave and Pothole Club

The Constitution of the York University Cave and Pothole Club should be read in conjunction with the Code of Practice and Risk Assessment set out by the Club. These documents should be interpreted in the spirit intended, as to benefit the York University Cave and Pothole Club. All actions of the club governed by these documents are to be carried out in the best interests of the club.

## 1. The Club Name and Status

- 1.1 The name of the Club shall be the York University Cave and Pothole Club, also known as YUCPC. Hereinafter referred to as “the Club”.
- 1.2 The Club requires a minimum of 4 members to exist.
- 1.3 The Club is affiliated to the University of York - York Sport (Athletic Union) and therefore must meet the criteria set out in the York Sport Constitution.
- 1.4 The Club is affiliated to the British Caving Association, The Council of Northern Caving Clubs (CNCC) and The Council of Higher Education Caving Clubs (CHECC)

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 In this constitution, the expression “cave” shall take the meaning as covering cave, pothole, mine or any other underground cavity and related terms shall be similarly construed.
- 2.2 In this constitution, the expression “AU” shall take the meaning of The University of York - York Sport (Athletic Union).
- 2.3 In this constitution, the expression “BCA” shall take the meaning of The British Caving Association.
- 2.4 In this constitution, the expression “CNCC” shall take the meaning of The Council of Northern Caving Clubs.
- 2.5 In this constitution, the expression “CHECC” shall take the meaning of The Council of Higher Education Caving Clubs.

## 3. Objectives of the Club

- 3.1 To promote the interests of caving amongst members of the Club.
- 3.2 To promote the sport of caving within The University of York.
- 3.3 To provide an opportunity to undertake the sport of caving for members of the University of York, which they otherwise might not have.
- 3.4 To provide an opportunity for members of the Club to meet and participate in caving activities together.
- 3.5 To act on behalf of and in the interests of Club members.
- 3.6 To promote awareness of the need to maintain access, conservation and protection of the cave environment
- 3.7 To provide training for members of the Club in a safe environment.

- 3.8 To maintain the good safety reputation of the Club in the caving world.
- 3.9 Keep good relations with older members, for their knowledge and experience is essential to the safety and progression of the Club.
- 3.10 Promote and encourage relations with other caving Clubs.

#### **4. Management of the Club**

- 4.1 The management of the Club shall be entrusted to the Club Committee, composed of the elected officers, hereinafter referred to as "The Committee".
- 4.2 The Committee is elected from the membership by the membership at the Clubs Annual General Meeting.
- 4.3 The Committee will make the membership aware of its meetings in order that anybody within the membership who has an issue to be raised can put it forward to the Secretary for inclusion in the agenda.
- 4.4 Minutes from the Committee Meetings shall be made available to the membership, excluding any material of a confidential or sensitive nature.
- 4.5 The minutes should contain reports from the officers and keep an accurate record of the meetings proceedings. The minutes will be an official record of health and safety checks with in the Club on gear.

#### **5. Membership of the Club**

- 5.1 Membership of the Club shall be open to any member of the University and/or AU.
- 5.2 In addition to 5.1 above, membership of the Club shall only be open to individuals who recognise that caving is an activity with a danger of personal injury or death. Members shall be aware of and accept these risks and agree to be responsible for their own actions and involvement.
- 5.3 The membership fee is subject to revision by the Committee.
- 5.4 Membership is to be paid in full at the start of the academic year.
  - 5.4.1 New members may pay a reduced rate in October followed by the remainder in December if they wish to extend their membership to the remainder of the academic year.
- 5.5 The Club reserves the right to deny or revoke membership of any person at any time at the discretion of the Committee.
- 5.6 All members of the Club must obey the rules of the AU and abide by any rulings.
- 5.7 Full membership gives the holder:
  - 5.7.1 Public Liability Insurance arranged through the BCA Insurance Scheme
  - 5.7.2 Eligibility for Club trips and permits
  - 5.7.3 Access to Club gear with permission from The Committee
  - 5.7.4 Access to the Club website

## **6. Equal Opportunities**

- 6.1 The Club shall be an equal opportunities organisation though decisions on whether to take novices underground must be subject to:
  - 6.1.1 Their physical fitness
  - 6.1.2 Their training experience above ground to ensure the safety of the novices and cave leaders.

However, final decision to take people underground will remain at the discretion of the trip leader.

- 6.2 For high demand trips a team of suitably experienced members will be chosen at random.
- 6.3 Any member requesting a specific club permit should do so through the Secretary, members may apply for club permits only with prior knowledge and approval from the Secretary.
- 6.4 The Club is primarily a student Club therefore consideration should be given to student member's priorities and requirements.

## **7. Officers of the Club**

- 7.1 The elected officers of the Club shall be and hereinafter referred to as "The Officers":
  - 7.1.1 The President
  - 7.1.2 The Secretary
  - 7.1.3 The Treasurer
  - 7.1.4 The Meetings Secretary
  - 7.1.5 The Social Secretary
  - 7.1.6 The Training Officer
  - 7.1.7 The Equipment Officer
  - 7.1.9 The Non-Undergraduate Representative
- 7.2 Voting for the election of Officers shall take place at the AGM
- 7.3 Officers are elected for one year but may be re-elected
- 7.4 Should an Officer resign their post or be deemed unfit to continue their post; the members of the Club can call an Extraordinary General Meeting to discuss a no confidence vote and/or election of a new member to post.

## **8. Committee of the Club**

- 8.1 The Committee shall be responsible for all the business and day-to-day running of the Club. This business shall include, but not be limited to, setting Club subscriptions, purchase of equipment, training of novices, planning suitable caving trips taking into account the experience of all members of the Club, discipline of members.
- 8.2 The President of the Club will normally chair all meetings of the Committee (or Club) and shall be responsible for reporting to the membership at the Club's AGM.
- 8.3 The Committee shall be composed of the Officers of the Club (plus a number of elected members from the Club membership if desired) as elected by members of the Club at a quorate Annual General Meeting

- 8.4 The Committee shall be composed of at least four students of the University of York.
- 8.5 The Committee must provide full contact details of its officers to the AU.
- 8.6 The Committee members must uphold any ruling/decisions made by the AU.
- 8.7 The Committee will produce a detailed budget plan with provision for the future continuation and improvement of the Club's resources.
- 8.8 The Committee shall have the power to co-opt additional members of the Committee as the Committee feels necessary. Co-opted members shall not be entitled to a vote on the Committee, unless they have been co-opted to replace a member who has died or has resigned. They shall hold office until the next AGM.
- 8.9 A quorum for the meeting of the Committee shall consist of two thirds of the elected voting members of the Committee.
- 8.10 The Committee shall make decisions based on simple majority vote.

## **9. Duties of the Officers**

- 9.1 The President is responsible for:
  - 9.1.1 Ensuring that Club policies are adhered to
  - 9.1.2 Ensuring the Club Committee contains officers named in 7.1
  - 9.1.3 Attending Club Officer Training and the Club AGM
  - 9.1.4 Calling and chairing meetings of the Committee
  - 9.1.5 Delegating tasks
  - 9.1.6 Being a spokesperson/figurehead of the Club
  - 9.1.7 Maintaining Committee enthusiasm
  - 9.1.8 Publicising the Club
  - 9.1.9 Jointly organising the Club budget with the Treasurer
  - 9.1.10 Organising Club trips and ensuring that the required Health and Safety requirements are fulfilled.
  - 9.1.11 Arranging First Aid courses and obtaining subsidies as well as ensuring that the transport needs of the Club are met.
- 9.2 The Secretary is responsible for:
  - 9.2.1 Taking care of Club admin
  - 9.2.2 Keeping the Club's back-pages up-to-date, including signatories and memberships
  - 9.2.3 Arranging meetings and booking facilities
  - 9.2.4 Creating agendas and keeping minutes of meetings as necessary and distributing
  - 9.2.5 Communicating regularly with members
  - 9.2.6 Reading Club emails
  - 9.2.7 Organising the AGM
  - 9.2.8 Organising the insurance of Club members
  - 9.2.9 Organising Club merchandise
  - 9.2.10 Aiding the President wherever necessary
  - 9.2.11 Organising Permits for caving trips where necessary and communicating these with the Membership.
- 9.3 The Treasurer is responsible for:

- 9.3.1 Administering the Club's finances in accordance with the Constitution, Laws and Bylaws of YUSU
- 9.3.2 Apply for the annual grant and any extra funding where necessary
- 9.3.3 Keeping track of income and expenditure
- 9.3.4 Keeping the membership and Committee aware of the Club's financial situation
- 9.3.5 Collecting money owed to the Club by members and arranging refunds for members owed money from the Club.
- 9.4 The Meetings Secretary is responsible for:
  - 9.4.1 Booking of weekends away and other trips such as the Wales week away and Christmas Meal
  - 9.4.2 Working with the Social Secretary to enable organisation of events, such as organising transport, food and gear.
  - 9.4.3 The meets Secretary role may be combined with the social Secretary role thus creating a combined role known as Meets and Social Secretary where the roles of each post shall be combined into one
- 9.5 The Social Secretary is responsible for:
  - 9.5.1 Organising socials through the year
  - 9.5.2 Working with the Meetings Secretary to enable organisation of events such as arranging food, transport, gear and publicising events.
  - 9.5.3 The social Secretary role may be combined with the meets Secretary role thus creating a combined role known as Meets and Social Secretary where the roles of each post shall be combined into one
- 9.6 The Training officer is responsible for:
  - 9.6.1 Training and motivating members
  - 9.6.2 Attending all term time training sessions for the full duration or in his/her absence arrange for a responsible person to cover
  - 9.6.3 Keep the training log for each member up to date and where necessary report this to trip leaders
  - 9.6.4 Arranging gear needed for each training session
  - 9.6.5 Ensuring the training session begins and ends in a timely fashion to maximise use of time.
- 9.7 The Equipment officer is responsible for:
  - 9.7.1 Conducting an inventory of the Club's equipment once a year. This also includes an inspection of ALL safety critical gear including the sports hall training ropes. The results of the inspection must be reported to the Committee and recorded.
  - 9.7.2 Keeping the Club gear store in a tidy condition and organise the repair/replacement of gear during the year
- 9.9 The Non-undergraduate representative:
  - 9.9.1 Must have been a member of the Club for at least 3 years
  - 9.9.2 Is responsible for keeping good relations between the student members and the more experienced members of the Club
  - 9.9.3 Offering support to any member of the Committee that requires support

## **10. General Meetings**

- 10.1 The AU and Club members shall be given at least 14 days clear notice of such a meeting and its agenda
- 10.2 Any items for inclusion should be submitted at least 7 days in advance of the meeting to the Secretary
- 10.3 30% of the membership shall form a quorum, each member shall have one vote
- 10.4 A General Meeting need not be quorate for decisions to be taken, but such decisions shall not be binding over any meeting or future Committee.
- 10.5 In a General Meeting Club officers will give a report to the Club membership and any constitutional amendments or ordinary motions will be voted on.
- 10.6 Any member may require an Extraordinary General Meeting to be held provided s/he has the support, in writing, of ten other members.

## **11. Annual General Meeting**

- 11.1 The Club will hold an Annual General Meeting every spring term.
- 11.2 The AGM will follow the guidelines set out for general meetings
- 11.3 The AGM will deal with any business requiring the input of the general membership (e.g. constitution amendments). It will include elections to the Committee for the forthcoming year.

## **12. Election of Committee Members**

- 12.1 A returning officer (normally the exiting President unless standing for re-election) who can act as an unbiased adjudicator must be nominated and agreed by those present
- 12.2 Members may be nominated or may volunteer for positions on the Committee. Members must have the support of a second person to stand for a position.
- 12.3 Only students of the University of York may hold the following positions:
  - 12.3.1 President
  - 12.3.2 Secretary
  - 12.3.3 Treasurer
- 12.4 All nominees will be offered the floor before voting begins to give a brief spiel if they so choose.
- 12.5 All the Committee positions shall be decided by a simple majority vote by those present and voting.
- 12.6 Only fully paid up members of the Club have a right to stand and to vote.
- 12.7 Any member can call a vote of no confidence against a member of the Committee providing their call is supported by ten other people and has good reason. They can then call a general meeting where a simple quorate majority vote is required to remove the Officer from his/her post. Elections for the post will then take place within two weeks if not at the same meeting.
- 12.8 Under exceptional circumstances agreed by the Committee prior to the AGM, members can apply to vote by proxy. Applications must be made to the Secretary.

### **13. Handover**

- 13.1 The handover of Committee positions will take place after the Easter holidays. The outgoing Committee will be required to provide support to their counterparts in the incoming Committee for the first four weeks of the summer term after which the incoming Committee will be encouraged to stand alone.
- 13.2 The more experienced members of the Club will act in a pastoral/advisory role at the discretion of the Committee. The Committee will not underestimate the value of consulting older members of the Club with more experience.

### **14. Rules of the Club**

- 14.1 The Committee shall have the power to set Club rules. Such rules shall be in accordance with the articles of the Club's Constitution and the policies of the BCA. (Such rules might include for example: Club Members shall sign for Club Equipment which they undertake to use entirely at their own risk)
- 14.2 The Committee can alter, by majority vote of the Committee, associated paperwork such as the code of practice, call out procedure and any other documents relevant to the running of the Club in the light of experience or new information. However these changes must be made known clearly to the membership. Members unsatisfied with documentation can raise their concerns with the Committee and/or take the matter to a general meeting or the AGM.

### **15. Amendments to the Constitution**

- 15.1 This Constitution may be amended by a quorate vote at an annual general meeting. Notice of any amendment must be delivered at least 7 days prior to the AGM.
- 15.2 The Constitution shall be reviewed at least every 5 years from the date of it coming into effect.

### **16. Dissolution of the Club**

- 16.1 If at any General Meeting of the Club, a resolution be passed calling for the dissolution of the Club, the Secretary shall immediately convene an Emergency General Meeting of the Club to be held not earlier than one month and not later than two months after the General Meeting of the Club to discuss and vote on the resolution.
- 16.2 If at that Emergency General Meeting, the resolution is carried by the entire Membership of the Club, the Club Committee shall thereupon, or at such a date as shall have been specified in the resolution, proceed to realise the assets of the Club and discharge all debts and liabilities of the Club
- 16.3 Should the Club be dissolved, after discharging all debts and liabilities of the Club, the remaining assets shall be distributed to the Cave Rescue Organisation.