

**THE
RED ROSE
CAVE AND POTHOLE CLUB**

**HEALTH AND SAFETY
POLICY**

CONTENTS

Item:	Description:	Page:
0.00	Introduction	3
Section One:		
1.00	Policy Statement	4
Section Two:		
2.00	Policy Organisation and Responsibilities	5
2.10	All Members and Guests	5
2.20	All Committee Members	6
2.30	Club Trip, Club Expedition Co-ordinators	6
2.40	Tackle Masters	7
2.50	Training and Safety Officers	7
2.60	Hut Warden and Engineer	8
Section Three:		
3.00	General Policy Safety Procedures	8
3.10	Training and Validation of Members	8
3.20	Club Equipment	10
3.30	Members Personal Equipment	11
3.40	Accident and Emergency Procedures	11
3.50	First Aid Equipment	12
3.60	Insurance and Duty of Care	13
Appendices:		
A.	Club Officers: - Duties and Responsibilities	14

INTRODUCTION:

0.0 Introduction:

0.10 Preface:

This document, The Red Rose Cave and Pothole Club (hereinafter referred to as "The Club") Health & Safety Policy, consists of three main sections.

a). **The Statement of General Policy on Safety:-**

The purpose of which is to state The Club commitment to Health & Safety and to define the policy adopted to achieve it.

b). **The Organisation and Responsibilities for carrying out the Policy:-**

The purpose of which is to define the duties and responsibilities for Health and Safety, and to define the 'lines of communication' for all matters that relate to Health and Safety.

c). **The Arrangements for carrying out the Policy:-**

The purpose of which is to provide information and guidance for the establishment of safe caving and potholing, and to ensure compliance with Sections One, Two and Three of this Health & Safety Policy.

0.20 Scope of Policy:

This Policy applies to all Club Members, including Probationary Members (and members' guests or visitors where applicable).

0.30 Authorisation:

Bill Sherrington

AUTHORISED BY:

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23rd. February 2009

DATE:

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POLICY STATEMENT

1.0 Policy Statement:

1.10

Declaration of Intent and Policy Statement

It is the stated intention of The Club, to provide so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and healthy caving and potholing for all members, (and guests and visitors where applicable), and to ensure that our operations do not inadvertently affect the Health and Safety of any other cavers and potholers or members of the public.

In order to comply with this primary objective we will, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- a) **Comply** with all official guidance, and the requirements of this policy.
- b) **Consult** with our members in all matters concerning Health & Safety generally, and in particular regarding individual responsibilities. To request the support and co-operation of all our members (and guests and visitors) in order to achieve the objectives of this policy.
- c) Ensure that all relevant **general and/or specific training** is provided, offered or undertaken by our members (and any guests or visitors) where applicable.
- d) Ensure that all equipment provided by the club is safe for use by our members (and any guests or visitors where applicable).
- e) Ensure that all **information** necessary to undertake caving & potholing safely is provided to our members (and guests and visitors where applicable).
- f) Ensure that adequate **financial and human resources** are made available wherever practicable to implement this policy.

- g) **Co-operate** fully with, and request the full co-operation of other cavers/potholers and clubs/organisations as necessary to ensure Health and Safety.
- h) **Assess any risks** to our members, and to any other cavers/potholers affected by our activities.
- i) All three sections of this policy will be **reviewed** and **amended** as necessary, and any revisions will be notified to any member who may be affected by the changes.

2.00 POLICY ORGANISATION & RESPONSIBILITIES

2.10 All Members and Guests:

- a) All members have a duty to co-operate with the Club and its members in all matters of Health and Safety.
- b) All Members are expected to cave and pothole safely, and to comply with all rules in force for any particular cave or pothole they are visiting, and to exercise all reasonable care for the health and safety of all other cavers and potholers who may be affected by their acts or omissions in caving and potholing.
- c) Behaviour detrimental to the Health and Safety of others, dangerous practices or incapacity to cave or pothole safely, through alcohol consumption or abuse of any other drug will not be tolerated.
- d) Members have a responsibility to wear items of protective clothing or any other equipment required, to enable them and others to cave and pothole safely.

- e) Members must not misuse any item of equipment, nor intentionally or recklessly interfere with any equipment provided in the interests of Health & Safety.
- f) Any defects in Club or **other** cavers/potholers equipment must be reported to the appropriate committee member (or Club Trip Co-ordinator if caving equipment is in use).
- g) All accidents involving personal injury, no matter how minor, must be reported to the Club Trip Co-ordinator or an appropriate Committee Member, and entered into the club accident book at the earliest opportunity.
- h) Members (and guests or visitors where applicable) must not take any unnecessary risks, and avoid improvisation which entails risks to themselves or others.

2.20 All Committee Members:

In addition to all items in **Section 2.10 All Members and Guests:**

- **Committee members** have an additional duty to: -

- a). Bring to the notice of the full Committee any members behaviour which he or she feels may be detrimental to the Health and Safety of others.
- c) Any defective equipment made known by a Committee member shall be removed from use immediately by that Committee Member, and must be reported to the Tackle Master as soon as possible.

2.30 Club Trip and Club Expedition Co-ordinators:

In addition to all items in **Section 2.10 All Members and Guests:**

- **Club Trip, and Club Expedition Co-ordinators** have an additional duty to: -

- a) Co-ordinate cavers into suitable groups capable of caving/potholing safely either as individuals or as a group.
- b) Ensure sufficient equipment is available to provide for the group's Health and Safety.

- c) Ensure all equipment is transported safely to the cave/pothole, used safely and then returned to the Tackle Store as soon as is practicable.
- d) Co-ordinate route finding above and below ground and ensure that any rigging of equipment is carried out to enable the group to cave safely.
- e) Ensure all equipment is correctly booked out and back into the Tackle Store and is returned in a clean and safe condition.
- f) Ensure all participants are either competent with their caving or are suitably guided by an experienced member to ensure their Health and Safety.

2.40 Tackle Masters:

In addition to all items in **Section 2.10 All Members and Guests:**

- **Tackle Masters** have an additional duty to: -

- a) Ensure all aspects of **Section Three: Club Equipment** are complied with.
- b) Ensure in conjunction with the Tackle Masters that all equipment which may be deemed a safety risk is removed from the Tackle Store and either repaired or replaced.

2.50 Training and Safety Officer:

In addition to all items in **Section 2.10 All Members and Guests:**

- **Training and Safety Officers** have an additional duty to: -

- a) Report to the full Committee on a regular basis on the safety and use of all club equipment.
- b) Ensure in conjunction with the Tackle Masters that all equipment which may be deemed a safety risk is removed from the Tackle Store and either repaired or replaced.

- c) Ensure that safety training in the use of club equipment is offered on a regular basis where applicable.
- d) Ensure all aspects of **Section Three: Club Equipment** are complied with.

2.51 Hut Warden / Engineer:

In addition to all items in **Section 2.10 All Members and Guests:**

- **Hut Warden / Engineer** have an additional duty to: -
- e) Report to the full Committee on a regular basis on the safety and use of the Headquarters building.
- f) Ensure in conjunction with the Committee that all equipment which may be deemed a safety risk is removed from the building and either repaired or replaced.
- g) Ensure that all relevant information is available to ensure any installed equipment can be operated safely.
- h) Ensure all aspects of **Section Three: Club Equipment** are complied with.

3.0 General Policy Safety Procedures:

3.10 Training & Validating Members:

- a) The Club shall ensure all "Caving" members are trained to a proficient standard in all aspects of caving and potholing, in order that they can cave/pothole with other members of the club safely without causing any danger to the Health & Safety of themselves, other members or other cavers/potholers who might be affected by their acts or omissions.

- b) All Caving members are to ensure they are self-competent to cave to the **specific** standard that a cave or pothole may require. If they, or another member believes that they are not to the standard required to enter a particular cave/pothole, or part of it, they should inform the Club Trip Co-ordinator beforehand.
- c) All members shall familiarise themselves with a particular cave or pothole, and the dangers to Health & Safety, which are known to exist within that system.
- d) Any members requesting specific training shall inform the Training Officer of their specific needs.
- e) The Training Officer and/or other suitably appointed members shall organise training events when the need becomes apparent. This will be dependent on individual member's needs.
- f) Members who wish to rig caves and potholes, using either Ladders, or SRT Ropes, shall be trained & validated by the Training Officer, SRT Tackle Master, or other suitably appointed members.
- g) The Training Officer, SRT Tackle Master and/or other suitably appointed members shall organise validation training and tests when the need becomes apparent. This will be dependent on individual member's needs.
- h) All inexperienced members shall, by communicating with established and experienced members who are validated by the club, familiarise themselves with a particular cave or pothole and its dangers before entering the system.
- i) Non validated members may only rig a cave or pothole under the supervision of a validated member.

3.20 Club Equipment:

- a) The Club shall ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that all its equipment used in the headquarters, or in any aspect of caving is in a safe usable order.
- b) All members have a duty of care, to check equipment before using, or when booking it out for a particular cave and pothole, to check the equipment at suitable times when caving/potholing, and to clean & check the equipment used before booking it back into the respective tackle store.
- c) All members have a duty of care, to report to either, the specific Tackle Master, Training & Safety Officer, Hut Warden / Engineer or other suitably appointed members of any defect with an item of equipment, which is or may become hazardous to the health safety of other members, or fellow cavers/potholers. All such equipment shall be suitably identified.
- d) Tackle Masters shall ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable that all equipment in the tackle stores is in good safe usable order. Tackle Masters have a duty of care, to check by way of an audit at least once every year that equipment is in good order and to produce a written report annually to the full committee or Annual General Meeting.
- e) Tackle Masters have a duty of care, to investigate every report made to them of any defect with any item of equipment, which is or may become hazardous to the health & safety of members, or fellow cavers/potholers.
- f) The Training & Safety Officer has a duty of care, to check that a caving equipment audit is carried out by the Tackle Masters, at least once every year.
- g) All items of equipment, which are or may become hazardous to the Health & Safety of other members, or fellow cavers/potholers, shall be repaired to a suitable standard, withdrawn from its current use, or destroyed, in order to prevent dangers to the health & safety of members, or fellow cavers/potholers.

3.30 Members Personal Equipment:

- a) The Club shall ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that all their members' equipment used in any aspect of caving is in good safe usable order.
- b) All members have a duty of care, to check their own equipment and any guests equipment when preparing for a particular cave/pothole and to check this equipment at suitable times when caving/potholing and to clean and **check** the equipment used before re-use.
- c) All members have a duty of care, to report to either the Tackle Master, Training & Safety Officer or Meets Co-ordinator any defect with an item of equipment being used by themselves or other members, and to report any equipment which is, or may become hazardous to the Health & Safety of themselves or others.
- d) The Training & Safety Officer shall ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable that all members' equipment is in good safe usable order.
- e) The Training & Safety Officer has a duty of care, to investigate every report made to him, the Tackle Masters or other members of any defect with an item of a members equipment, which is or may become hazardous to the health and safety of others.

3.40 Accidents & Emergency Procedures:

Despite taking all reasonable precautions accidents can still occur during caving and potholing, so these guidelines are designed to protect members, (and guests or visitors) their relatives and others if an accident does occur.

Cases have been reported where relatives have been contacted by the media rather than the police following serious accidents. This is obviously an unacceptable situation, which should not be allowed to develop. Unofficial statements may also affect proceedings if any legal action occurs against a member or fellow caver or potholer.

In the event of a death or serious injury the following procedure must be adopted concerning the disclosure of information:

- a) Immediate First Aid should be undertaken to establish where possible the extent of any injuries and appropriate steps taken to safeguard the immediate health and welfare of the casualty until professional medical help can attend the casualty.
- b) Ensure the victim is in a safe and comfortable position as far as reasonably practicable, before a fellow member or caver or potholer exits the cave to call the Emergency Services.
- c) At the earliest opportunity contact the person in charge of the Cave Rescue Organisation and inform him of the casualty's name, and if possible the address and next of kin.
- d) At the earliest opportunity contact the Club Press Officer, or ask the person in charge of the Cave Rescue Organisation to contact him, to brief him of the casualty's name, and the circumstances of the incident.
- e) On no account should any member speak to, or brief the press without first contacting the Club Press Officer, or if he is unavailable another senior Committee Member.
- f) All members present at an incident should endeavour to offer any assistance required to the Emergency Services.

3.50 First Aid Equipment.

The Club, shall ensure as far as is reasonably practicable, that every member shall carry at least a survival bag, spare light and whistle on both official and non official club trips and expeditions, where necessary.

The Club, shall ensure as far as is reasonably practicable, that at least one suitably equipped first aid kit is part of the equipment taken for every official and non official club trip or expedition.

3.60 Insurance & Duty of Care

- a) The Club shall ensure that every member has been registered under the clubs Public Liability Insurance scheme as a "Caver" or as a "Non-Caver" and has paid the appropriate premium. This will be a condition of membership.
- b) The Club shall encourage every member to ensure they have suitable personal accident insurance to cover them for caving and potholing.
- c) The Club shall ensure that their own specific insurance as required by LAW is adequate and valid.
- d) The Club shall ensure their own Public Liability insurance is adequate and valid.
- e) The Club shall ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable that every member has knowledge of and accepts the dangers to their own Health & Safety whilst partaking in caving/potholing whilst on an official or non-official club meet or expedition.
- f) The Club shall ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable that every member has knowledge of their own Duty of Care to other members and fellow cavers/potholers.

APPENDICES:

A. Club Officers:

- **Duties and Responsibilities relating to Health and Safety.**

President:

Liaison with landlord.
Liaison with legal representatives.

Chairman:

Health and Safety Policy
Equal Opportunities Policy.

Secretary:

Minutes of meetings.
Annual General Meeting.
Correspondence

Membership Secretary:

Club and Members Public Liability Insurance.

Treasurer:

Insurance payments

Tackle Masters:

Care of all caving equipment
Safety inspections of caving equipment
Purchase of new caving equipment
Health and Safety Policy - Care of Club equipment.

Training and Safety Officers:

Use of all caving equipment
Safety inspections of caving equipment
Health and Safety Policy - Use of Club equipment.

Meets Secretary:

Club Trips - Safety aspects:

Club Trips - Appointment of co-ordinators

H.Q. Warden / Engineer:

Health and Safety issues at Bullpot Farmhouse

H.Q. Booking Secretary:

Headquarters bookings - liaison with visitors and safety issues

Conservation Officer:

Ease Gill Caverns conservation and safety co-ordination

Bullpot Farm - surrounding conservation and safety issues

C.N.C.C. Representative:

C.N.C.C. issues relating to safe caving

First issued:

1st. March 1996

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23rd. February 2009