



DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

Open Council Meeting, 25 June 2016, 10am, Monyash Village Hall

MINUTES

Present:	Chairman:	Wayne Sheldon [WS]	(TSG & Ind.)
	Vice Chairman:	Terry Jackson [TJ]	(Ind.)
	Secretary:	Jenny Potts [JP]	(OCC & Ind.)
	Conservation Officer:	Christine Wilson [CW]	(TSG)
	Projects Officer:	Pete Knight [PK]	(DPCC & Ind.)
	Newsletter Editor:	Mike Higgins [MH]	(Ind.)
	Club Representatives:	Orpheus C. C.	Boyd Potts [BP]
		PDMHS	Adam Russell [AR]

1. Chairman's Welcome:

1.1 WS welcomed members.

2. Apologies for absence: Establish Quorum.

2.1 **Apologies Received from:** Treasurer, Angus Sawyer [AS]; L&I Officer, Pete Mellors [PM]; Equipment Officer, Bob Dearman [BD]; Access Officer, Gary Noble [GN].

Shropshire Scouts Caving Team, Idris Williams; Derbyshire Pennine Club & Ind. Member, Andy Tickle; Karen Slatcher, Alan Brentnall.

2.2 **Quorum:** The meeting was quorate with 4 elected officers present plus the Chairman.

3. To Approve Minutes of the previous Council Meeting: (27 February 2016, previously circulated).

3.1 **That the Minutes of 27 Feb. 2016 be approved as a correct record.**
Prop. P.Knight, Sec. B.Potts. **Agreed unanimously.**

4. Matters Arising Therefrom: (Note that some of these issues may be dealt with in Officers' Reports.)

4.1 4.1 **Review DCA Fixed Aids Policy:** JP and BD are liaising. BCA does not now intend to produce a general Fixed Aids Policy so JP and BD will now use the existing BCA draft as a basis for reviewing the DCA Policy.

ACTION: JP, BD

4.2 4.2 **Magpie Mine / River Lathkill proposal:** AR and CW are liaising. It was reported at the UCF meeting that there is little action at present. The consortium now have consultants working for them and may be seeking a Heritage Lottery Fund grant so matters are going very slowly.

ACTION: CW, AR

4.3 4.3 **Level behind Bateman's Shaft - P-bolts required:** Drill repairs awaited. See item 6.7.1.

4.4 4.4 **Devonshire, shafts in the wood:** Possible shaft capping needed. Nothing further heard. Ongoing.

ACTION: PK, GN

4.5 4.5 **Manifold bolts required:** Progress. See under 6.7.1.

4.6 4.6 **Odin Mine, progress towards re-opening:** Phil Wolstenholme would be meeting with with NT re. Longcliff Mine and offered to raise the subject of Odin Mine.

ACTION: AR, PW

4.7 4.7 **JH Leviathan Pitch:** Awaiting drill repairs. See item 6.7.1.

4.8 4.8 **Eyam Dale House Cave access:** Progress with new keyholder. WS says Ian Smith has offered to hold keys so he now needs to approach the new owners as building work in the grounds of the house is now finished.

ACTION: WS

4.9 4.9 **Eldon Hole - Ground anchors renewal:** Progress. See items 6.6 & 6.7.1.

4.10 4.10 **Titan shaft re-opening:** Donation from DCA had been agreed. See Item 6.2.

4.11 4.11 **Christmas Swallet & Snelslow Swallet:** Progress towards access. See item 6.5.

4.12 4.13 **Bolt Installation** - Progress re. new bolting approved 20/6/15 (Rowter, Peak Cavern Assault Course, etc.); recalibration of Hydrajaws, etc. See item 6.7.1.

4.13 4.14 **Eldon Hole:** - Funding to support work to stabilise route to Main Chamber had been agreed. See item 6.2.

4.14 4.15 **EuroSpeleo2016:** Derbyshire "camp" progress. Dates 20-27 Aug. BP so far has 15 signed up (all either German or Dutch). Has sent questionnaire out asking what they want to do and has begun to get replies. Nigel Ball has Speedwell organised for 2 night trips, Peak Cavern is set up for the whole week. There will be an OCC stand at ES2016 to act as a focus for queries. BP needs people who are free during the week to volunteer to help with trips. CW suggests sending out appeal for help to all DCA Clubs and Individual Members, even those only available for single days would be welcome.

ACTION: BP, JP

JP stated that, as part of the ES2016 Derbyshire events the British Caving Library will be open every day from Sun. 21 through Fri. 26 Aug. from 10.30am to 4.00pm.

4.15 4.16 **Hazelbadge Cave:** Access progress report: See item 6.5.

4.16 4.17 **EuroSpeleo2016 stand for DCA:** JP will not be free to do this as well as the BCL stand so will make use of the OCC stand to sell DCA publications. **ACTION: JP**

4.17 4.18 **Bank Account changes:** Recommendations. See item 6.2.

5. Election of New Members

No applications this time.

TJ arrived at this point.

6. Officers' Reports:

6.1 Secretary: *(Written report tabled.)*

6.1.1 **That the Secretary's report be approved.** Prop. P.Knight, Sec. C.Wilson. **Agreed unanimously.**

6.2 Treasurer: *(Apologies received; written report tabled.)*

6.2.1 **Eldon Hole stabilisation:** Work has re-started but no request for funding has been received yet.

6.2.2 **Lloyds Banking for clubs.** The Treasurer is checking this but it appears to be what DCA wants.

6.2.2.a **That the Treasurer be authorised to open a Lloyds Bank Treasurers' Account (or similar), subject to the appropriate controls (2 signatures, internet access, etc.), being in place for the account to be opened.** Prop. J.Potts, Sec. M.Higgins. **Agreed unanimously.**

6.2.2.b **That any account opened must be subject to the same signatures as already agreed for the Unity Trust Bank mandate, as per DCA Council Meeting, 27 Feb. 2016, Minute 5.1.a, 5.1.b, 5.1.c and 5.1.d.** Prop. J.Potts, Sec. C.Wilson. **Agreed unanimously.**

6.2.3 **That the Treasurer's report be approved.** Prop. B.Potts, Sec. T.Jackson. **Agreed unanimously.**

AR arrived at this point.

6.3 Conservation Officer: *(Written report tabled.)*

6.3.1 **Thanks:** JP thanked CW for her very comprehensive report.

6.3.2 **UCF Minutes on DCA website:** Query whether UCF Minutes appear on the DCA website or are limited to invitees. They are not currently on the DCA website so it was suggested a brief report on UCF meetings should appear. CW will take this forward. **ACTION: CW, AS**

6.3.3 **Past sets of UCF Minutes:** Noted that J.Gunn has a complete set of past UCF Minutes and will make these available to CW. JP noted that all DCA-hosted UCF minutes are in the DCA Minute Book. Agreed that CW should keep a Conservation Officer's set of UCF Minutes to be passed on to future Conservation Officers. Agreed also to put them on hidden section of DCA website, accessible to registered users and to DCA officers logging in. **ACTION: JP, CW, AS**

6.3.4 **Bradwell Catchment Symposium:** MH noted that the next DCA NL will carry a report on the Bradwell Catchment Symposium.

6.3.5 **That the Conservation Officer's report be approved.** Prop. J.Potts, Sec. P.Knight. **Agreed unanimously.**

6.4.1 Access Officer:

6.4.1.a GN was not present due to urgent work-related issues and he had sent apologies via PK. No report tabled.

6.4.2 Online Access Guide - Special report by Wayne Sheldon. *(Written report tabled.)*

6.4.2.a WS explained that he could demonstrate the online system after the meeting, either at the Pub or the Old Smithy café, which both have internet access.

All the data from CoPD in this system is now online apart from the Hamps/Manifold section. CW noted WS has had offers from people willing to help update the online system but need to be sure that they are sufficiently savvy re. the website software. The system will use "area registrars" to update the website and cavers will be encouraged to provide information to these area registrars. Note that the system does record any changes made so it is possible to backtrack if needed. For sensitive sites there is a need to have a non-public section of the website, i.e. not available to the general caving public but which would be accessible to the area registrar. WS would contact the website designer to implement this. Agreed any new cave/mine site should be first made known to the area registrar to be put to the DCA C&A team to decide whether it should be on the public part of the site. Noted that photos of each actual cave entrance should be added as well as the 10 figure grid reference plus relevant photos of parts of the cave.

Noted the DCA Cave Registry Secretary post is still vacant but we should be looking for someone suitable to take on this post who will be the one having overall responsibility for the DCA Cave Registry and Online Access Guide.

That, in the medium to long term, the Derbyshire Cave Registry and the Peak District section of the National Cave Database be merged with the online access data.

Prop. B.Potts, Sec. C.Wilson. **Agreed unanimously.**

6.4.2.a contd.

WS suggested that the end of June is too soon for this to go live as there are some alterations to be made but he aims to have it live a.s.a.p. The meeting is happy for WS to make the decision on when to go live. We will want to publicise this in any way we can.

ACTION: WS, JP

- 6.4.2.b ***That Wayne Sheldon be thanked for his work on this and for producing the report for the meeting.***
Prop. J.Potts, Sec. C.Wilson. **Agreed unanimously.**

6.5 Legal & Insurance Officer: *(Apologies received; written report tabled.)*

- 6.5.1 **Holme Bank Chert Mine** - see also 6.6.1

6.5.2 **Derby Lane & Water Icicle:** JP reported that there are consultation references on the Peak Park website (type in "Derby Lane TRO") and she had printed these pages out to pass round the meeting. It appears that a decision on whether to make a Traffic Restriction Order will be taken in Autumn 2016 after consultation. **ACTION: PM**

6.5.3 **Hazelbadge:** CW has tried to negotiate with the farmer but so far had no luck. The situation has deteriorated since the designation of CRoW land close to the farm and the SSSI designation. Suggested that GN and PK might have more luck in approaching the farmer. **ACTION: CW, GN, PK**

6.5.4 **Snelslow Swallet & Christmas Swallet:** Noted it appears that Mr. Baldacci does not want to have anything to do with cavers. The tenant farmer, Mr. Gregory, is unofficially quite willing to allow access but does not have the right to grant it. Noted that Mr. Baldacci's agent for the farm has not been approached. CW suggests Mr. Baldacci might be contactable by email or phone and is willing to try. Suggested PM should email Gary Noble to ask him to take this over if CW's approach does not work.

That the Legal & Insurance Officer's report be accepted.
Prop. P.Knight, Sec. A.Russell. **Agreed unanimously.**

6.6 Projects Officer: *(Written report tabled.)*

6.6.1 **Holme Bank / Holme Hall Chert Mine:** Work being done for Chatsworth Estates is detailed in his report and it was noted that Chatsworth are funding this work. The "Lower Entrance", which is accessible for wheelchairs, is possibly on Holme Hall land, has 2 locks on it and access is currently uncertain. PK has spoken to the new owner of Holme Hall - he is worried about his liability but might be willing to allow access if people ask him for permission. (The Smithy entrance is on land leased by Jo Oldfield, who does still permit access.)

6.6.2 **DCA Container:** AR had a suggestion about another site for the container if it has to be moved from Cavendish Mill. PK and PM are contacting the management of Cavendish Mill to try to sort out an arrangement to keep the container there. PK now has new padlock keys (JP to hold the spare set) but noted that the notice on the container giving DCA details has now disappeared. PK will arrange for an official notice be put on the Container to identify it as DCA property and giving DCA contact details.

AR left at this point.

6.6.3 **Eldon Hole ground anchors:** Replacement of the old anchors is in hand but PK is waiting for Dan Hibberts to go ahead. **ACTION: PK**

6.6.4 **Material:** CW has a section of rigid plastic pipe available, which may be of use to DCA - it can be collected in return for a donation. PK would arrange to collect this. **ACTION: CW, PK**

6.6.5 **Project Officer post:** PK suggested someone else might be better in the post as he has little time due to work and is currently spending a lot of time in Wales. CW thanked PK for all the work he has done and mentions the large number of his contacts who are willing to help. PK is willing to continue to organise and it was suggested he should look to putting together a "Projects Team".

6.6.6 **Slump at Peakshole Sough:** Dry-stone walling at the sough entrance needs attention. Possibly someone from TSG might be willing to help. The site is part of an SSSI so needs to be done sensitively and NE might be able to do the surface work or pay for it to be done. CW will look into this as it may be responsibility of Peak Cavern owners.

ACTION: CW

- 6.6.7 ***That the Projects Officer's report be accepted.*** Prop. B.Potts, Sec. T.Jackson. **Agreed unanimously.**

6.7 Equipment Officer: *(Apologies received; written report tabled.)*

6.7.1.a **Current situation:** JP explained that Bob Dearman was not able to be present but had sent a brief report to her. Noted the drill had needed repairs - not sure if this has been done yet. Also noted people able to install bolts are not currently available. JP needs to have a list of current qualified installers and would ask BD for this. **ACTION: JP, BD**

6.7.1.b **Peak Cavern:** WS noted that one urgent new placement for P-bolts at the top of Calcite Aven is required to avoid rub point using existing bolts. **ACTION: BD**

6.7.1.c **P.8:** CW mentioned that a bolt is needed in Eldon Series. A new dig has been proposed but permission will be required from NE because P.8 is an SSSI. The site need not necessarily require DCA P-bolts but needs good quality stainless Goujons, which could easily be replaced by DCA P-bolts if required.

- 6.7.1.d ***That the Equipment Officer's report be accepted.***
Prop. P.Knight, Sec. T.Jackson. **Agreed unanimously.**

6.7.2 Cave Atmosphere Monitoring Report: *(Apologies received; written report tabled.)*

- 6.7.2.a **Replacement of Crowcon Gasman CO₂ meter:** The Secretary would ask for Alan Brentnall's recommendations on this and the meeting agreed that a suitable replacement be bought which should be compatible with DCRO systems. **ACTION: JP, AB**
- 6.7.2.b Alan Brentnall's report was noted - JP thanked him for his work on this. CW would contact Paul Thorne of KURG to ask to exchange data on atmosphere monitoring. **ACTION: CW**
- 6.7.2.c ***That the Cave Atmosphere Monitoring Report be accepted.***
Prop. M.Higgins, Sec, B.Potts. **Agreed unanimously.**

6.8 Training Officer:

- 6.8.1 Not present no report sent.
- 6.8.2 **Cliffhanger 2016:** BP explained why there is no involvement of DCA this year. No instructor cover was available for either of the two days so there could be no insurance cover for ladder climbing. Also the venue had been changed from the park to several sites in the centre of Sheffield so there would be other problems re. the erection of DCA's stand tent and DCA "cave", parking for volunteers, etc. He had contacted the organiser to explain that DCA could not take part this year.

6.9 Newsletter Editor: *(Written report tabled.)*

- 6.9.1 **Derbyshire Caver No 141 is in progress:** MH said it was almost finished and would be sent to JP for printing by the end of next week. CW noted there would be a report re. the Bradwell Symposium and suggested it could be in cavers' interest to co-operate with Hope Cement Works re. exploration of local sites.
- 6.9.2 ***That the Newsletter Editor's Report be accepted.*** Prop. P.Knight, Sec. B.Potts. **Agreed unanimously.**

7. Report from the BCA AGM & following Council Meeting, 5 June 2016: *(Written report tabled.)*

- 7.1 **Conservation - Minimum Impact Caving Guidelines leaflet:** JP introduced this, which had been tabled at the BCA AGM by the BCA C&A Officer, Andrew Hinde, and received very well. Its importance was emphasised and JP would arrange to circulate it to all DCA members and caving shops with the next *Derbyshire Caver*. She also had some A4 and A3 sized posters which could go to clubs, outdoor centres, shops, show caves, etc.
- 7.2 **ABIS Letter re. CRoW published in Descent:** JP said this was hardly mentioned at the BCA AGM - most people felt that it gave the wrong impression, that it had misunderstood the situation and was irrelevant. The decision to bar cavers from exploring beyond the publicly accessible part of show caves for the one day was felt to be unhelpful.
- 7.3 **Proxy voting:** JP explained the proposal re. the introduction of proxy voting. It would require an amendment to the BCA constitution and the voting at the AGM this year did not reach the required 67% majority in favour of introducing it but it had been agreed that BCA Council would consider the question during the next year. The general feeling of this DCA meeting was not in favour as it is felt that it is open to misuse and would not work in an organisation such as BCA, particularly where proposals to the BCA AGM are often amended from the floor.
- 7.4 **BCA changes:** JP noted the various changes in BCA Officers and Council Members.

8. Date & Venue for next Council Meeting

- 8.1 Date 22nd. October 2016, Monyash Village Hall is booked from 9.30am.
- 8.2 The DCA AGM is booked for 10am. on Saturday, 25 February 2017 at Monyash Village Hall.)

9. Any Other Business

- 9.1 **UCF 30th. Anniversary bash:** John Gunn had suggested having a celebratory meeting on 26th. Sept. to include people from EN and its predecessor organisations who had been involved in setting up the SSSI system for caves. CW suggested instead we stick to the agreed date of the normal UCF business meeting Wed. 19th. October, and look at possibly having a separate celebratory event to which we can invite people. Another possibility would be to shorten the business part of the UCF meeting and combine this with a celebration. There was support in principle for some kind of celebration so CW would go back to John Gunn to seek further ideas. **ACTION: CW**
- 9.2 **Website domain names:** WS reported that Mel Milner had the DCA website domain names registered to herself through her company. The registrations run out in November 2016 and we need to have new names registered for DCA itself by Nominet. Mel's company has now been dissolved but there would be a charge to transfer the original names to a new owner. WS and AS will look into this and follow up possible alternatives. **ACTION: WS, AS**

The meeting closed at 14.40.

J.Potts, Recorder.

The following documents are appended to these Minutes and form part of them:

- Item 6.1 - Secretary's Report
- Item 6.2 - Treasurer's Report
- Item 6.3.1 - Conservation Officer's Report
- Item 6.4.2 - Report on DCA Cave Registry and Online Access Guide
- Item 6.5 - Legal & Insurance Officer's Report
- Item 6.6 - Projects Officer's Report
- Item 6.7.1 - Equipment Officer's Report
- Item 6.7.2 - Cave Atmosphere Monitoring Report
- Item 6.9 - Newsletter Editor/Publications Officer's Report
- Item 7 - Report from BCA AGM, Mendip, 5th. June 2016

Item 6.1 - Secretary's Report

Communications

Since the AGM in February I have emailed to everyone for whom I have contact details the the AGM Minutes, the Minutes of the Council Meeting which followed as well as Details of coming Training Events and Information Circulars 2016/2 in March and 2016/3 in May. I have also circulated the Agenda for this meeting by email. (These items have been posted to those for whom I have no email address.) I also posted out to members "The Derbyshire Caver": No. 140 in April and delivered these to shop outlets.

There have been a couple of brief information emails during the period since February but I have kept a watch on UKcaving, as have other Officers. I will send out Information Circular 2016/4 after this meeting along with the Minutes.

I maintain updated lists of Individual, Club and Associate Members and these are sent to the Treasurer each time there is an amendment.

Publications Sales

I continue to deal with sales of *Caves of the Peak District*, which sells steadily at an average of 13 copies per month (£462 so far this year) - mainly trade sales now - total out is nearly 1300 copies. I also deal with sales of DCA's Cave Conservation Audits, which continue to sell slowly and steadily.

Jenny Potts, 24 June 2016

Item 6.2 - Treasurer's Report 22 June 2016

Since the AGM, the accounts for 2015 have been scrutinised by Lorraine Bartrop, and I have now have access to manage the Unity Trust accounts online and otherwise. I still need to arrange access to the RBS accounts.

Agenda Items

4.10. Titan entrance work donation

The donation of £500 approved at the last Council Meeting has been made as agreed.

4.13. Eldon Hole stabilisation work

I have not received any requests for funding for the stabilisation of the route into the Main Chamber of Eldon Hole.

4.17 Bank Charges

Unity Trust Bank have announced that they will be charging for current accounts at the rate of £6.00 a month. I believe we should make arrangements to move to fee free account if possible. It appears that Lloyds Bank's "Treasurer's Account", offers the facilities we require. The Lloyds online banking service provides dual authorisation for payments (among other options) and I hope to confirm whether this is offered with this account before the meeting. This is referred as "Online Payment Control" in the Lloyds literature.

Attached are details of the DCA account balances and cash flow to date.

Angus Sawyer, 22-6-16

Account Balances

RBS Current Account	£1.00
RBS Deposit Account	£1.01
Unity Trust Current Account	£216.02
Unity Trust Deposit Account	£19,677.85

Cash Flow 31/12/2015 to 22/06/2016

Income	£
BCA Grants: Youth Development	200.00
Bank Interest	4.85
Caver Training	40.00
Publications: CoPD	501.06
Publications: Handbook	3.50
Publications: News Letters	284.00
Subscriptions & Entry Fees	173.00
Total Income	1206.41
Expenses	
Donations (Titan entrance restoration)	500.00
Conservation, Access etc.:Admin	38.45
Conservation, Access etc.:Other	145.25
Equipment: Materials	77.60
Equipment: Travel	37.75
General Admin: Materials, printing, copying etc	166.78
General Admin: Post	162.00
Publications: Caves of the Peak District	6.93
Publications: Newsletter	482.75
SSSI Conservation Work: Projects 2014/2015:Materials	157.10
Training: Post, telephone, email etc.	0.80
Total Expenditure	1,775.41
Income less Expenditure	(569.00)

Item 6.3 - Conservation Officer's report

Meetings attended:

BCA Conservation and Access Committee 19th February

Various advisory documents are being drafted by the BCA on Bats and Cavers, CRoW and cave access, conservation, signage and caving codes. As a consequence of the above, we have contributed to the draft document on 'Advice and information for Access Controlling bodies and landowners with regard to applying for a Direction under section 26 of the CRoW Act'; re-established contact with Derbyshire and Staffordshire Bat groups and we now have Jess Eades involved in giving professional advice and guidance to the BCA on Bats, caves and cavers. Regarding cave conservation signage, it was felt that if signage was ever needed in our area then a positive interpretation-type signage would be the most effective. An example was sent to the BCA of such signage by Jenny Potts. A potential source of funding for conservation projects in various caving regions was suggested by Andrew Hinde. By working with NE and the Yorkshire Dales Millenium Trust, the CNCC have secured funding for cave projects via the Ingleborough Dales Landscape Partnership, a heritage lottery funded project. The above project has been flagged up by Dan Abrahams, from NE, to a group of partners that are starting to talk about a potential Landscape partnership project in the White Peak.

Bradwell Catchment Symposium 3rd April

A very successful information exchange on the potential leads for digs in the area organised by T pot. Information was supplied that there may be an application in future to extend the Hope Cement works Limestone Quarry. A full report will be made available by Mike Higgins via the DCA newsletter.

Underground Conservation Forum meeting 20th April 2016 Anchor Inn, Tideswell.

Natural England funding: It may be harder in the future, to receive funding for conservation projects via this route but NE has put in a bid for £3,000 and Dan Abrahams from NE will inform the DCA when he receives news. Future funding may need to be sought via Partnership projects as mentioned above.

PICA wish to add Masson Mine to its inspection scheme. They are aware of its conservation and archaeological importance and will seek advice on route choice and other conservation issues. Its use by PICA will also be subject to landowner permission (landowner is still not known), interested parties being informed (BMC, scouts etc.), parking arrangements being acceptable and final approval by the inspector.

The new owner of Devonshire mine is worried about the shafts found in the wood. PICA are going to check their status.

Derbyshire Bat group are still running bat awareness courses for cavers. They also have an ongoing project on Autumn Swarming and it would be helpful if cavers could give the DBG the grid reference, time and number of bats seen in any cave. The DCA circular could be used for this information.

Cave conservation Plans: John Gunn is arranging to make some LRG Cave Conservation Plans available electronically. Water Icicle CC plan is underway, however, the survey is incorrect. Simon Brooks will redo an accurate survey and John Gunn will help to finish the report with Karen Slatcher.

John Gunn is willing to act as warden for Bubble Springs in Lathkill. JG will let folk know, via DCA circulars, when the cave is dry enough and thereby can be accessed.

Rob Thorne and Peter Ray (ex Darfar) attended the UCF meeting and kindly passed documentation from Mel Milner to the British Caving Library and myself. MM had 2 digs that she was pursuing and Rob and Peter can be contacted via the DCA circular if anyone wishes to dig at these sites. Entrances of caves found by Mel will need to be found and recorded.

White Rake dig cap at Stoney Middleton is being put on by Glyn Roberts. Carlswark timberwork is going to be inspected by D.P.C. Ian Smith is willing to key hold for Eyam Dale House but the parking needs to be sorted before access can resume. The new owner of Little Waterfall Swallet has been in touch with Dan from NE and access is being discussed.

Bradwell Parish Quarry Piece (SSSI) containing Bradwell Parish Cave is up for Auction pending resolving the position of the southern boundary which is near Burton Pingles Pipe.

Dirtlow rake (SM) is continuing to be damaged by 4x4 vehicles and no action to prosecute is taking place.

Updating of various documents:

'Do you dig caves leaflet' needs updating with regard to contact information, the SSSI map and scheduled monuments. It has been suggested that there could be too much information on the one leaflet.

The DCA website needs updating so that the Conservation monitoring details appear on the DCA website. Both the DCA Cave/mine Conservation Plans Production Method and DCA UCF Constitution need updating. It is also hoped that the CRoW Database file, started by Jenny Potts, can be completed at some date but the information that is within it presently, is being included in the new On line Access Guide that Wayne Sheldon is launching very soon.

Dave Baines has been asked to submit an access and conservation document for the BCA's LCMLA 'code for instructors'. He has asked for feedback on this document before it is submitted.

Christine Wilson

Item 6.4.2 - Report on DCA Cave Registry and Online Access Guide

For the past year I have been working on an online access guide for Derbyshire Caving Association, over the last few months along with Angus Sawyer and Matt Voysey, we have been putting the data online. Matt made available his software that he wrote for the Mendip Cave Registry & Archive to other caving regions around the country and DCA took him up on this offer so he adapted his software for us to use.

(The site is available online to view but because there is no wifi here. I have printed off two examples but we can go to the café or pub after this meeting to view it all and look at the backend of the site.)

The way the database has been set up is for registrars to be allocated to the online data and these registrars can update the data. As an organisation we need to decide who will be the registrars for the site?

Note: The good thing about the site is that it records the changes so we can revert back if something is wrongly changed.

DCA Co Mins 160625

We also need to come up with the site protocol, who decides what new sites are added into the registry? Anyone of our registrars could add a new site.

I am proposing that the site goes live at the end of June if the meeting signs this off.

The online access guide also has a photograph archive which will be incorporated and eventually turned on. There is also a bibliography references section, this will also be incorporated in the long run. (See Swildon's Hole example)

Derbyshire Cave Registry:

The late John Beck maintained the Derbyshire Cave Registry as a database for many years, this data is available to us currently in a spreadsheet format but we need to decide what we are to do with this data.

National Caves Database:

John Gunn and Paul Hardwick compiled the national caves database in the 1980's for NCA and he has been in touch with myself, as he wants to update this database. John has also been in touch with Dave Cooke, the National Registry Coordinator who wants to support distributed registries, made public via websites. He has plans for a central index using the power of the internet to effectively link the regional registries in a searchable way. Cookie is putting John onto other regional cave registrars.

The future of the registry:

This has given me an idea so I met up with John Gunn earlier this week to look at the data and look at the options. John and myself agree that the Derbyshire part of his national caves database should be incorporated into the Derbyshire Cave Registry, and it will be in one place. Both of these could be incorporated into the online access guide. This can be set up so its hidden from public view and only viewed by registered users.

I did discuss this idea with Matt several months ago on how we can get this online, and he advises that he can adapt the database behind the DCA Online Access Guide in incorporate extra fields so we can add the registry data and national caves database data into it. A long term aim can be for Cookie to incorporate it into his national registry.

What does the meeting think? If the meeting is okay with this idea, I would like to progress this.

Cave Registry Secretary:

This also brings up the subject of the cave registry secretary, John Beck obviously will be very difficult to replace and we do need to find the right person to do this job. It is a very important job for somebody to do, who does it with the best interests of DCA and the Derbyshire Caving scene. I would suggest that the ideal would be to have one main person and a number of assistants.

I am undertaking quite a lot of work on this project but don't have time in the long term to take on the position of Cave Registry Secretary as well. I don't mind, along with Angus and Matt, sorting out the database side etc but really need somebody for the updating and merging of data.

Wayne Sheldon (Chairman)

Item 6.5 - Legal & Insurance Officer's Report

Holme Bank Chert Mine

The dispute over ownership of the bottom entrance remains unresolved. Meanwhile cavers continue to be given access via Smiths Level subject to the usual permission from Joe Oldfield. Higher up the bridle road in the Top Quarry progress is underway to weld up the door on the metal drum and wall off and eventually obliterate Entrance No. 8. Chatsworth have sanctioned this work in the interests of public safety and will cover DCA expenses.

Derby Lane & Water Icicle Close

The proposal by the Peak District National Park Authority to close Derby Lane at Monyash to vehicular traffic was brought to my attention and I have submitted an Objection on DCA's behalf. I cited the importance to cavers of keeping the lane open as far as WICC. Beyond this point the lane's course towards the Long Rake road is blocked anyway by massive boulders and crash barriers (!), presumably to deny use of the lane to through traffic.

Access to Hazlebadge & Snelslow

After consultation within DCA and with NE over the best way to approach the Rowarth family and Steve Baldacci at Peakshill Farm, I have concluded that this matter is more the remit of the new Access Officer than a legal and insurance issue. However, I am happy to continue to advise if my help should be needed.

DCA Container

I have written to the Works Manager at Cavendish Mill asking for clarification of where DCA stands with regard to the container there. I am indebted to Derek Stables for his help in the matter; he thinks we'll be lucky to get an answer from British Fluorspar. An approach was made to Joe Oldfield at Holme Bank to see if he would find room for it on spare land there but it looks doubtful.

*Peter Mellors
Legal & Insurance Officer*

Item 6.6 - Projects Officer's Report

Since the last report very little has happened in the projects department.

Holme Bank Chert Mine

A couple of visits have been made to Holmebank Chert mine. Organised by Pete Mellors and at the behest of the Chatsworth Estate, DCA volunteers have started the process of sealing the old pipe entrance to the mine in the top quarry. Kids break in here regularly. We have so far sealed up the holes in the wall enabling the pipe to be bypassed. The next step is to wait for some welding to be done to seal the pipe itself, kindly volunteered to be done by Nick Williams. Finally, in a large push, the whole face of the entrance portal will be walled up with lime mortar and stone from the quarry to seal and re-naturalise the adit. Other legitimate locked entrances are nearby so access will not be affected. Chatsworth are funding the work so all DCA has to do is claim from them when it is completed.

Eldon Hole Ground Anchors

No progress has yet been made to complete the installation of the new ground anchors at Eldon Hole. Dan Hibberts is on standby for a free day and dry weather to be able to drive a vehicle up to the hole and complete the task. The specifications of the ground anchors have changed from the original proposal but Bob Dearman has been dealing with that aspect as would be right for his role as Equipment Officer. It seems we can only wait for the right conditions and hope the work is completed in the near future.

The DCA Container

The DCA container was cut into by a staff member at Cavendish Mill. The chap was instructed to do so by a manager in order to identify what was in the container. The signage had recently been removed or had fallen off. T-Pot was on site when I visited and was able to procure both an apology from the worker and some padlocks to make the container secure. Nothing was taken or disturbed inside and the locks are still in place. We were promised a weld but as of last week, the container still has a hole in the front the size of an A5 sheet of paper. Pete Mellors has undertaken to contact the Mill and get some answers about the damage and also the uncertainty of the container's future at this location.

White Rake

DCA has donated a few metres of plastic pipe to cap John Beck's old dig at White Rake. Glyn Roberts came to collect the pipe section and it should be installed by now.

Longcliffe Mine

I was able to see the inside of the Longcliffe Mine dig recently and have nothing but admiration for the work done at this location. DCA should continue to offer support to the digging team.

The Projects Officer post

As usual I am finding myself very busy with work and am mindful that the post at DCA would be better served by someone with more time or by a small group as opposed to one individual. I shall continue to react to jobs that crop up as and when I can. Now that the other Officer posts have been filled I'd like the DCA to look into finding a new Projects Officer. I have no desire to leave the post empty but I'd be happy to step aside and aid a new officer with more time for the role. Ideally I'd like to hand over at the next AGM.

Once again, the volunteers who have been propping me up are greatly appreciated and a credit to the local caving scene. Help from both club, individual and professional cavers are forthcoming in equal and very valuable measure.

Pete Knight
15/6/16

Item 6.7.1 - Equipment Officer's Report

On the bolting front little has happened, it's the usual problem of the installers being involved in summer activities and they have no time. As the year wears on the demands on them reduce and we can get the programme up and running again. I've phoned Dan Hibberts and he says he hasn't been able to get up to Eldon Hole through pressure of work but he'll make an attempt this or next week.

Bob Dearman

Item 6.7.2 - Cave Atmosphere Monitoring Report

1. Problems reported.

There are still very few reported problems this year. Parties visiting some of the usual suspects (Knotlow, Hillocks, Robins Shaft, Lathkill Upper Entrance) have consistently been reporting good quality air.

2. Measurements.

Nettle Pot has been measured with the Crowcon meter, and CO2 levels were found to be around 2%, and similar recordings were made at Water Icicle - both these figures are low for the venues and time of year (May), and presumably reflect the atmospheric conditions at the time - unseasonably cold. All readings have been added to the database.

3. Equipment.

The two DCA meters have been calibrated free of charge on a regular basis by DCRO and Able Safety. The GasAlertClip Extreme O₂ meter is still functioning well, but the Crowcon Gasman CO₂ meter has just been returned from recalibration with a report that its cell has expired and the meter needs replacing. This unit was purchased long before I took over the gas monitoring, so it has well exceeded its normal life expectancy of 2-3 years. A replacement meter of this type will cost between £200 and £450.

4. Equipment Usage.

As reported at the February meeting, John Gunn asked to borrow the CO₂ meter for a visit with the Environment Agency to Cromford Sough. This visit has now taken place and Prof. Gunn also used a multigas QRAE meter (belonging to Pete Dell), which records values for H₂S, CO, O₂ and LEL (lower explosive level for CH₄). No figures were recorded, unfortunately, but there was a report that the decrease in O₂ atmosphere percentage was greater than the increase in CO₂ atmosphere percentage. This phenomenon is something which has been experienced before, and it may be significant that both instances have been in soughs.

5. Correspondence with Other Areas.

Earlier this year, Jenny Potts passed an email to me from Paul Thorne, a member of Orpheus Caving Club, and also Chairman of Kent Underground Research Group, who has been studying atmospheres in other areas of the country, and we are comparing notes and findings. This corroborative exchange is interesting, and should prove productive in the future.

Alan Brentnall

Item 6.9 - Newsletter Editor/Publications Officer's Report

Publication of *The Derbyshire Caver* has continued with four issues per year and the content has still been sufficient to fill the maximum sixteen pages per issue that postage costs allow. However, this has sometimes only been due to the editor writing something to fill the space, although nobody has complained about this! Seriously though, more articles would be welcome – DCA members, please consider putting metaphorical pen to paper.

The Summer 2016 issue is in course of preparation and should be ready for printing and distribution early in July.

Work continues on the production of the index of the Newsletter from the first issue in 1962 up to the present time. Progress over the last few months has been much slower than I had hoped due to other commitments but I keep plugging away when I can.

My sincere thanks to everyone who has submitted articles or photographs for publication over the last 12 months – please keep material coming for the rest of 2016!

Mike Higgins

DCA Newsletter Editor/Publications Officer

Item 7 - Report from BCA AGM, Mendip, 5th. June 2016

The Meeting

The meeting seemed to be rather poorly attended with few cavers from outside Mendip and not many Mendip cavers either - not sure of the exact number present but voting numbers would indicate less than 25 in all.

As expected there was lengthy discussion on the CRoW issue and Tim Allen had produced a very detailed report on progress and his actions. Also, as expected, there were a few vociferous opponents present from Mendip clubs but also several Mendip cavers present who made it clear they did not go along with the CSCC's "anti" line. On the whole the discussion was civilised and the proposal to amend the BCA Constitution 4.6, relating to the rights of owners, was not passed but is instead to be discussed in BCA Council during the coming year with a view to coming up with more appropriate wording for the 2017 AGM. There was general agreement that it was important for BCA to focus on Conservation as well as Access; in fact the BCA Conservation Officer, Andrew Hinde, had tabled the new "BCA Minimal Impact Caving Guidelines" at the meeting - to general approval.

There was also a proposal to introduce "proxy voting" for BCA AGMs, which drew considerable discussion. The BCA Chairman reported that he had encountered the mis-use of this facility in international meetings and had reservations about how it could work in BCA. A non-binding vote was taken on the principle and this was passed by 11 votes to 8 (2 abstentions) by the Individual Members present and by 6 votes to 5 (3 abstentions) by the Groups present - note that neither vote reached the 67% required to amend the BCA Constitution. Based on past experience of a similar type of "proxy voting" in DCA, which was removed by a change in our DCA constitution after mis-use, I voted against this. It was agreed that this would be discussed by BCA Council during the coming year with the possibility of an amendment to the BCA constitution to be put to the 2017 AGM. DCA members need to decide how they feel about this so that I can take these views to BCA Council.

It has been noted that any proposal passed at a BCA AGM to amend the constitution must be ratified by a postal vote. So the potential cost could be around £6,000 a pop - so it's not a good idea to come up with constitutional amendments every year.

Note that all the BCA Officers Reports were posted on the BCA website before the meeting and the Minutes will appear in due course.

BCA Officers for the coming Year

Robin Weare has taken over as BCA Treasurer, Bob Mehew is now BCA Legal & Insurance Officer and Simon Brooks is now BCA Secretary. (It had been agreed earlier in the year that, owing to the demands of the post, there needed to be administrative support for the BCA Secretary and advertisements have already gone out with a deadline of 30th. June. Note that this will be a paid post in addition to the BCA Membership Secretary and the BCA Training Administrator.) Andy Eavis stays on as Chairman and Andrew Hinde as Conservation & Access Officer.

Idris Williams and John Hine (aka Mole) are the new Club representatives on BCA Council, (Idris is Secretary of Shropshire Scouts Caving Team, a DCA member Club). Boyd Potts (of Orpheus Caving Club), has now stood down as a Club Rep. to BCA. Peter Hall (of Cheddar Caving Club) was elected as a new Individual Member rep.

Jenny Potts, 24 June 2016