



# DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

Open Council Meeting, 10:00am. 24 June 2017, Monyash Village Hall

## MINUTES

**Present:** **Officers:** Wayne Sheldon [WS] Chairman (Ind.)  
 Jenny Potts [JP] Secretary (Ind.)  
 Peter Mellors [PM] Legal & Insurance Officer  
 Mike Higgins [MH] N/L Editor & Publications Officer  
 Phil Wolstenholme [PW] Cave Registry Secretary

**Clubs:** Masson C. C.: Jim Borrington [JB]  
 Orpheus C.C.: (Jenny Potts)  
 PDMHS: Adam Russell [AR] (arrived late)  
 TSG: (Wayne Sheldon, Phil Wolstenholme)

**Individual Members:** (Wayne Sheldon, Jenny Potts, Mike Higgins, Phil Wolstenholme, Peter Mellors)

### 1. Chairman's Welcome:

WS welcomed members. Noted 7 officers had sent apologies.

### 2. Apologies for absence: Establish Quorum.

2.1 **Apologies received from:** Alan Brentnall (Vice Chair.), Angus Sawyer (Treas.), Christine Wilson (Cons. Off.), Gary Noble (Access Off.), Pete Knight (Projects Off.), Bob Dearman (Equipment Off.), Nigel Atkins (Training Off.), Boyd Potts (Orpheus C.C.)

2.2 **Quorum:** Quorate with 4 officers plus Chairman.

### 3. To Approve Minutes of the previous Council Meeting: (25 February 2017, previously circulated).

3.1 **That the Minutes of the Council Meeting of 25 Feb. 2017 be accepted as a correct record.**

Prop. M.Higgins, Sec. P. Wolstenholme. **Agreed unanimously.**

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

See Register of Actions attached.

#### From Council 22-10-16

- 4.1 **001 Odin Mine, progress on re-opening:** Adam Russell dealing with this. Paul Mortimer of NT was checking the legal position with their solicitors and would liaise with AR. **ACTION: AR**
- 4.2 **002 New multiple use meter required to test for gases:** See item 6.8b
- 4.3 **003 Buy website domain names for SSSI Monitoring:** See item 6.3
- 4.4 **004 Open new Lloyds bank account:** See item 6.3
- 4.5 **005 UCF Report on open section of DCA website, Minutes on Officers' section:** See item 6.3
- 4.6 **007 P-bolts required in Level behind Batemans Shaft:** See item 6.7
- 4.7 **009 Review DCA Fixed Aids Policy:** Ongoing. **ACTION: JP, BD**
- 4.8 **010 Manifold bolts required. MH to enquire of Peter Ray:** MH has spoken to PR, who is doing a survey of various identified sites where bolts for hand-lines need replacing and the list will be emailed to BD. **ACTION: MH, PR, BD**
- 4.9 **011 Suicide Cave problems: suggested notice board:** See item 6.4
- 4.10 **012 Identify volunteers to deal with SSSI monitoring:** Ongoing. **ACTION: CW**
- 4.11 **014 Devonshire shaft in the wood, capping required:** See Items 6.5 & 6.7
- 4.12 **015 Eldon Hole ground anchors needed:** See item 6.7. Ongoing. Action now with BD to contact D.Hibberts **ACTION: BD.**
- 4.13 **016 Derby Lane traffic restriction. Progress:** See item 6.5
- 4.14 **017 Hazelbadge Cave, progress on Access:** See item 6.5
- 4.15 **018 Holme Bank. Re-open Entrance no 1:** See item 6.5 & 6.6
- 4.16 **019 Christmas Pot & Snelslow Swallet access:** See item 6.5

#### From AGM 25-2-17

- 4.17 **020 New batteries needed for angle grinder:** Ongoing. **BD**
- 4.18 **021 Container contents need checking for Asset Register:** See items 6.3 & 6.7
- 4.19 **022 Items for use with ASS need checking for Asset Register:** Ongoing. **ACTION: JP, AS**
- 4.20 **023 Check replacement of materials used for gate on Bateman's Adit:** Ongoing. **ACTION: BD, CW**
- 4.21 **024 Update Devonshire topo with new bolts and upload to website:** Ongoing. **ACTION: NA, AS**

### 5. Election of New Members

Individual Member: **Glyn Telling-Jones.** Prop. J.Potts. Sec. M.Higgins. **Accepted unanimously.**

Associate Member: **Endeavour, (Endeavour Centre, Fir Vale, Sheffield.)** Prop. J.Potts. **Accepted unanimously.**

## 6. Officers' Reports

### 6.1 Chairman: *(Verbal report)*

WS will report as part of Registry discussion.

### 6.2 Secretary / BCA Rep. *(Written report tabled)*

6.2.1 **Newsletter:** PM noted JP's comments that DCA is making large loss on Newsletter. Agreed to deal with NL in MH's report, item 6.10.

6.2.2 ***That the Secretary's Report be accepted.*** Prop. P.Wolstenholme, Sec. P.Mellors. ***Agreed unanimously.***

### 6.3 Treasurer / Webmaster. *(Absent but written report and accounts tabled.)*

6.3.1 **Action 004, open new Lloyd Bank account.** in hand. **ACTION: AS**

6.3.2 **Holme Bank work:** PM queried where the money from Chatsworth towards work at Holme Bank appears in the accounts - noted it appears as "Other" covering expenses.

6.3.3 **Action 003, Buy website domain names for SSSI monitoring** - AS had reported the loss of the website.

6.3.4 **Action 005, UCF Minutes to be on website in password protected "officers Section"** - JP will send the October 2016 UCF minutes now updated. She will also send him draft April 2017 Minutes when CW's amendments are incorporated. AS will set up officers' section of website for UCF minutes, with summary on main website.

**ACTION AS, JP**

6.3.5 ***That the Treasurer's Report be accepted.*** Prop. J.Potts, Sec. P.Wolstenholme. ***Agreed unanimously.***

### 6.4 Conservation Officer. *(Absent but written report tabled.)*

6.4.1 **Action 011, Suicide Cave problems.** covered in report. CW awaiting reply from NT.

**ACTION: CW**

6.4.2 **Action 017, Hazelbadge Cave.** No progress. PM has heard nothing from CW and EN do not seem to have pressed on this. Ongoing.

**ACTION: PM, GN**

6.4.3 ***That the Conservation Officer's Report be accepted.*** Prop. M.Higgins, Sec. P.Mellors. ***Agreed unanimously.***

### 6.5 Access Officer. *(Absent but written report tabled.)*

6.5.1 **Actions 014, 024. Work on Devonshire shafts.** Now completed and access is being sorted for the shaft in the garden as this will be through the Access Officer by email. AR is dealing with the other shaft in the woods as this is part of Heights of Abraham land. JP had made available to NA a detailed survey of Devonshire done by John Barnatt.

**ACTION: NA, GN**

6.5.2 **Action 019. Snelslow and Christmas Pot.** No progress on access. Mr. Gregory, who leases the lands for grazing, is content for access to take place but cannot himself give permission. Noted that bolts need replacing but DCA cannot replace them with approved BP bolts where there is no official access agreement so must rely on someone interested to replace bolts themselves.

6.5.3 ***That the Access Officer's Report be accepted.*** Prop. J.Potts, Sec. P.Wolstenholme. ***Agreed unanimously.***

### 6.6 Legal & Insurance Officer *(Written report tabled)*

6.6.1 **Action 018. Holme Hall/Bank Mine.** PM had produced a detailed report. JP noted that problems started when, in 2015-16, Mr. Stansfield re-opened a former entrance to the drive to Holme Hall (which comes out next to Smiths Runners), became aware that people were visiting the mine and objected. PM tabled a detailed plan of the mine complex showing the 4 entrances and the areas owned by Mr. Stansfield and also the Land Registry documents showing land ownership. Bottom Entrance, now securely locked by Mr. Stansfield, was the favoured entrance for outdoor pursuits groups and cave divers; Smith's Level entrance had been controlled by Joe Oldfield; Day Hole is currently blocked but could be re-opened. Noted that Fan Entrance is open and leads straight into Holme Bank Mine but there would be a problem for divers carrying equipment right through to the diving sites. (Noted that the "back entrance" in the north east of the area in an old quarry was blocked and landscaped, with permission from Chatsworth, by PK and PM.) PM has written two letters to Mr. Stansfield asking to discuss the issues but has had no reply to either; PM gave details of his letters. Vandalism to mine artefacts on 17 June happened without any reported damage to the entrance now kept locked by Mr. Stansfield. Noted that Joe Oldfield is a tenant of Chatsworth, who own the land on which the works buildings are situated. There followed a lengthy discussion about the various possibilities and the 4 options suggested in PM's report.

Generally felt that PM's option (1) is the most appropriate. ***Agreed that*** PM would to speak to Mr. Oldfield to confirm exact wording to be used for access advice so that something suitable can be posted on the DCA access website.

**ACTION: PM**

6.6.2 **Action 016. Derby Lane TRO.** PM felt that DCA could not usefully be involved in the organisation of exemptions. Noted that Orpheus C. C. diggers appear to have no problems with the way the TRO is being organised by the Peak Park.

6.6.3 ***That the Legal & Insurance Officer's Report be accepted.*** Prop. M.Higgins, Sec. J.Potts. ***Agreed unanimously.***

AR arrived at this point.

### 6.7 Projects Officer. *(Absent but written report tabled.)*

6.7.1 **Action 007, P-Bolts in Bateman's Shaft.** Agreed to drop this so no further action required from DCA.

- 6.7.2 **Action 014, Devonshire shaft in the wood** - Noted this was on Heights of Abraham land and AR suggested PDMHS would take responsibility for this.
- 6.7.3 **Action 015, Eldon Hole Ground Anchors** - Bob Dearman had offered to contact Dan Hibberts to ask for his help.  
**ACTION: PK, BD**
- 6.7.4 **Action 021, Container contents** - now checked and list supplied to AS.
- 6.7.5 **Volunteer contribution charge.** PK had explained his idea to WS, who reported on his behalf. Although DCA was able to claim for materials used there appeared to be no way of refunding the expenses of the volunteers carrying out the various access/conservation works on behalf of DCA. It was noted that many of the volunteers were caving instructors and some had turned down paid work in order to be able to help with DCA projects. It seemed unreasonable that volunteers should be out of pocket because they assisted non-cavers by tackling major building and restoration projects. It was suggested that a charge could be made for work carried out on private land and that this be used to refund the volunteers' expenses.  
General approval of the idea in principle but DCA needs to look into how this to be administered on a case by case basis.  
**Agreed.** **ACTION: WS, CW, PK, AS**
- 6.7.3 **That the Projects Officer's Report be accepted.** Prop. A.Russell, Sec. P.Mellors. **Agreed unanimously.**
- 6.8.a Equipment Officer.** *(Absent but written report tabled.)*
- 6.8.a.1 **Masson bolts.** JP notes new BP bolts in Masson have been installed by Orpheus C.C. installers working with Jules Barratt. These are for hand-line anchors.
- 6.8.a.2 **That the Equipment Officer's Report be accepted.** Prop. M.Higgins, Sec. P.Wolstenholme.  
**Agreed unanimously.**
- 6.8.b DCA Cave Atmosphere Monitoring report.** *(AB absent but written report tabled.)*
- 6.8.b.1 **Noted Action 002, new multiple use meter** - dealt with in section 3 of AB's report.
- 6.8.b.2 **Oddity of CO readings in Elton shaft** - these readings are a puzzle. No question of cavers wanting access to this shaft. AR said the area is part of a Scheduled Monument. Shaft needs to be capped but there is no public access and it is not near a public footpath so it is the responsibility of the farmer.
- 6.8.b.3 **That the Cave Atmosphere Monitoring Report be accepted.** Prop P.Wolstenholme, Sec. A.Russell.  
**Agreed unanimously.**
- 6.9 Training Officer.** *(Absent, no written report tabled.)*
- 6.10 Newsletter Editor/Publications Officer** *(Written report tabled)*
- 6.10.1 **Newsletter costs.** JP's report had mentioned rising costs for producing DCA Newsletters and the lack of grant aid from BCA for any kind of regional news publication. There was a general feeling that we wanted to keep the Newsletter going and maintain its high quality but we needed to look at possible options which might help to keep the cost down or make more money from sales/subscriptions. Suggestions included: reduce to A5 size to reduce postal costs; produce the whole NL in B/W instead of some colour pages; increase sale and subscription prices to increase income; make it an online publication for downloading for free to members. JP pointed out that clubs with Libraries, the British Caving Library and a few County Council Libraries we send to would probably want to continue to receive printed copies.  
**Agreed** to investigate views and options further and bring back to the October meeting suggestions with numbers, prices, etc. **ACTION: MH, JP, AS**
- 6.10.2 **Index to Newsletters.** MH reported that Index is going well but slowly.
- 6.10.3 **That the Newsletter Editor/ Publications Officer's Report be accepted.** Prop P.Wolstenholme, Sec. J.Potts.  
**Agreed unanimously.**
- 6.11 Cave Registry Secretary** *(Verbal report)*
- 6.11.1 PW reported that specialist cave registry software is in development. Noted that CoPD is produced from registry records and we would want this to continue. (CNCC are developing a website version of cave descriptions based on Eurospeleo2016.) WS said that database software has been updated by Matt Voysey. Awaiting AS to update the data from the spreadsheet upload template that I have collated from the original cave registry data. Bibliography information has been collated ready for uploading but need database table to house this, maybe AS could write something that will run alongside the main registry data. There will be the necessity for "secret sites" and this will encourage people to make this information available to the registry.
- 6.11.2 **That the Cave Registry Secretary's Report be accepted.** Prop. M.Higgins, Sec. A.Russell.  
**Agreed unanimously.**
- 7.1 BCA Matters**
- 7.1 Report from BCA Council Meeting, Sat. 25 March 2017.** *(Draft minutes are on the BCA website, written report tabled)*  
JP had produced a brief summary of the most important points from the Council Meeting. The draft Minutes are on the BCA website.

**7.2 Report from BCA AGM, (Sun. 11 June 2017) & following Council Meeting (Written reports tabled)**

JP had attended the BCA AGM in Castleton as DCA representative and other DCA officers and members had been present as individual members of BCA. Both WS and MH had been present at the AGM and felt that JP's report gave a fair summary. (JP is also DCA's representative to BCA Council.) It was noted that the draft BCA AGM Minutes and the draft Council Minutes should be on the BCA website in early July and the arrangements for the ballot were now in hand.

AR left at this point.

**8. Date & Venue for next Council Meeting**

8.1 **Council:** Date 28th. October 2017, 10am. Monyash V. H. is booked.

8.2 **AGM** is booked for Sat. 24 Feb. 2018, 10am. Monyash Village Hall.

**9. Any Other Business**

9.1 **Mouldridge Mine.** Gary Noble had reported the wooden door frame on Mouldridge mine is loose. AR, who had installed the new door, had been informed.

9.2 **Reports to Chatsworth on two Lathkill Dale sites are overdue.** PM queried the situation. JP reported that Pete Wagstaff of Orpheus C. C. is doing these and has done Lathkill Head U.E. but not known if he has done Garden Path yet. JP confirms that he has all necessary paperwork. PM will contact PW direct.

9.3 **Eldon Hill Quarry survey.** The (laminated copy) left in the log-book box has disappeared. Noted that Alistair Gott has been signed in and he may have information as to when the survey went missing. WS would contact him to enquire.

13:22 meeting closed.

*J.E.Potts, Recorder*

**Appended to these minutes and forming part of them are the documents listed below:**

- Item 6.2 Secretary's Report
- Item 6.3.a Treasurer's / Webmaster's Report
- Item 6.4 Conservation Officer's Report
- Item 6.5 Access Officer's report
- Item 6.6 Legal & Insurance Officer's Report
- Item 6.7 Project Officer's Report
- Item 6.8.a Equipment Officer's Report
- Item 6.8.b DCA Cave Atmosphere Monitoring Report
- Item 6.10 Newsletter Editor / Publications Officer's Report
- Item 7.1 Report on BCA Council Meeting 25 March 2017
- Item 7.2 Report on BCA AGM, 11 June 2017 and Subsequent Council Meeting
- Item 6.3.b DCA Profit & Loss for period covering 1/1/17 to 20/6/17

## Item 6.2 - Secretary's Report

### Communications

Since the AGM in February I have sent out two information circulars to members in March, (2017/2, Jan to March) and April (2017/3, March/April) in addition to the one sent out on 14th. January. These cover mainly access and conservation issues and include the various goings on at Holme Bank, the Derby Lane Traffic Regulation Order, the problems at Herne Hill Caves, Mouldridge Mine door, Rowter Rigging, Devonshire Shafts, etc.

I have also sent out 7 other specific circulars to members on issues of interest re. access, etc. I have continued to post on UKcaving.com on behalf of DCA where I felt it worth while make some issues known more widely than just among DCA members. Other DCA Officers have also made use of UKcaving.com.

My thanks to all the officers and members who regularly supply information to me as the "hub" of the system so it can usefully be passed on.

I have also, as always, dealt with the organisation of DCA AGMs and Council Meetings, including acting as recorder, collecting and collating Officers' reports, circulating Minutes and Agendas (which requires easy access to copying/duplicating since not everything is sent out by email), and also booking and organising payment to Monyash Village Hall. I also maintain the various address lists, including email addresses, for members, officers and subscribers to the Newsletter so that I can print labels for posting and also email information to members.

### Publications Sales

Since the beginning of this year we have sold 21 copies of Caves of the Peak District, all but 2 at trade price to shops/retailers, plus one complimentary copy given out. (We have a current stock of 680 remaining for sale out of 2000 originally printed.) I have also sent out 4 of DCA's Cave Conservation Audits as postal sales but only part of the postage cost is included in the price charged.

This year I have so far delivered 50 copies of The Derbyshire Caver Nos. 143 and 144 in batches to 3 shops for them to sell and have taken £41.60 in payment, although some monies are still to come since the magazine goes out to retailers on a "sale or return" basis. As Mike Higgins says in his report, the cost of the DCA Newsletter is of some concern because we do not now receive any BCA grant for it. Costs for 2015, 2016 and so far for 2017 (printing around 145 copies with the outside cover in colour) are:

Year	No. Issues	Cost of printing	Cost of Circln.	Total Cost	Sales Takings
2015	3 issues	£710.78	£210.31	£ 921.09	£175.40
2016	4 issues	£940.45	£281.39	£1221.84	£228.00
2017 (so far)	2 issues	£557.42	£197.42	£ 754.84	£200 ?

(Costs for 2017 projected to be £1079.81 for the whole year.)

Around 115 are sent out free to members and we currently make a small loss of 16p per annum on the 12 subscriber copies (£9.00 sub. for 4 x 16 page issues). The special 20-page conservation issue in January 2017, No. 143, cost £1.65 per copy to print and 86p to post (total £2.51) but had a sale price of £2.00 in shops (so it even lost 5p per copy at the trade price of £1.60). Part of the problem is the rocketing cost of postage, now 76p. per copy plus 11p for the C4 envelope. As Mike suggests, we need a re-think on this, particularly as the DCA Newsletter is unique among regional councils and is always well worth reading under Mike's editorship and we would like to keep it going.

Strictly speaking, publications sales are not part of the Secretary's "job spec." but I have been doing it for many years. I have also organised all the printing and posting of Newsletters - maybe, if we decide we still want at least some printed copies, it is time for someone to take on the organisation of printing and sale of Newsletters as a specific task?

Note that I am happy to continue to deal with sales of Caves of the Peak District as we almost always use "caver post" to get them to retailers and they know to order from me.

**Jenny Potts,**  
**22 June 2017**

## Item 6.3.a - DCA Treasurer's / Webmaster's Report

The current account balances and income and expenditure to date have been submitted with this report. The previously agreed funding for stabilisation work in Eldon Hole has been recorded as a donation. Significant expenditure has been incurred for the bolting work in Rowter Hole. We have received funding from Chatsworth Estate for work on the entrances to Holme Bank Chert Mine.

I require details of the landowner of the Devonshire Mine entrances, to allow me to invoice them for the work carried out earlier this year. I also require details of the funding amount agreed with Natural England.

### Action 004

The DCA now has an account with Lloyds, and I eventually have received all the material required to operate the account. Failures by Lloyds have delayed setting up online access for Wayne Sheldon and Jenny Potts, however that is now underway.

### Account Summary 31/12/17

Account title		Balance
<b>Assets</b>		
Current Assets		
RBS Current Account	£1.00	
RBS Deposit Account	£1.01	
Unity Trust Current Account	£476.83	
Unity Trust Deposit Account	£19,225.06	
Total Current Assets	-----	£19,703.90
Total Assets	-----	<b>£19,703.90</b>

## **DCA Webmaster Report**

### **Action 003**

The domain name for the SSSI monitoring site was unfortunately captured by an individual who appears to be operating a very dubious clothing sale site (similarly the Yorkshire SSSI site was also captured). I suspect that these may be opportunistic automated operations, which highlight the need to ensure continuity of ownership of the DCA main domain name and others the DCA acquires in the future.

### **Action 005**

I have not yet received any UCF material to place in the web site.

### **Action 021**

No progress

### **Action 022**

No progress

*Angus Sawyer,  
20<sup>th</sup> June*

## **Item 6.4 - Conservation Officer's Report**

Please send my apologies I am working this weekend. I do not have much to report on. I have contacted Shane Bates about the suicide sign and awaiting a reply.

I am overnight-ing with a cement mixer in Lathkill probably tonight ... doing the work on Vixen Shaft now.

*Christine Wilson, 21 June 2017*

## **Item 6.5 - Access Officer's report**

### **The shafts around Devonshire Mine**

Thanks are due to Pete Knight arranging staffing and supplies to do the job. Having spoken to the owners they would like access to the Garden shaft to be directed through the Access Officer via the access-off@...dca... email address so their email addresses are not published and the quantity of uses can be monitored and controlled if necessary.

### **Hazelbadge**

No progress from me not known if Christine has any news.

### **Holme Bank Chert Mine**

I believe Pete has more info on this

### **Christmas Pot and Snelslow Swallet**

No progress on either.

*Gary Noble, 22 June 2017*

## **Item 6.6 - Legal & Insurance Officer's Report**

### **Holme Chert Mine**

Following discussions with Chatsworth and the Barmaster, I have established that Chatsworth have never owned the rights to Holme Hall Mine. The fact that occupiers of Holme Hall have not raised objections in the past to cavers entering the Mine does not alter the ownership status. Strictly speaking, permission from Oldfield Design must be considered as permission granted exclusively for exploration of the Holme *Bank* Mine. However, the way the two mines interconnect below ground means cavers may not be aware of straying from one mine into the other, and it has become accepted practice for the entire complex of passages to go by the name of Holme Bank Chert Mine and be accessed as such.

To my mind DCA has a number of options: (1) We can leave matters as they are. (2) We can try for a lease or licence to access Holme Hall Mine and thereby absolve the owner of all legal liability. (3) We can exercise so-called "prescriptive rights" of access on the grounds that cavers have enjoyed unrestricted access to the Holme Hall passages, including the flooded levels used by divers, for more than twenty years; or (4) We can attempt to restrict visits to the one mine and not the other by posting signs at points where the two mines intersect, though I suspect this solution would encourage divers, wheelchair users and others to seek their own access agreement.

I wrote again to the Holme Hall owner at the end of April asking for a meeting but again got no acknowledgment or reply. Like me, Joe Oldfield has never met the man or been contacted by him. In the event of his continued failure to respond or engage, Option 1 may be the most practical step to take, combined with a look at ways of exercising our prescriptive rights if he steps up the level of confrontation.

### **Derby Lane Traffic Regulation Order (TRO)**

At the end of April, after an exchange of email correspondence, I withdrew DCA's offer to the National Park Rights of Way Team to help administer their scheme exempting cavers from the TRO. This was because the Park Authority would not compromise on demands for advance details from cavers which I considered were needlessly rigorous and bureaucratic. In short, I felt we were being asked to shoulder a not inconsiderable administrative burden with no perceivable corresponding benefit to cavers wishing to take vehicles along Derby Lane to access Water Icicle Close caverns.

*Peter Mellors  
Legal & Insurance Officer*

## Item 6.7 - Project Officer's Report

Apologies for my absence, work was already in the diary.

### Action Register item:

**007** – Bateman's Shaft P bolts. Not my job technically but I think we agreed to drop this as it was a very infrequently visited site and Bob & co. have more pressing jobs. There are older anchors in place for explorers currently.

**014** – Devonshire Shaft. Many thanks to Phil Lilley who spearheaded the work and organised a good crowd of volunteers for the working days. The shaft top was successfully walled up and pointed in places, before a steel angle frame cap was installed. The cap contains a removable section of grill that allows access. There is no lock or bolt currently. The landowners were very happy with the job and accommodating throughout. In dealing with this shaft, we have cemented good relations with the new owners and opened up access to a whole stretch of woodland that has previously been off limits. All that remains is for the DCA Access Officer to confirm the access arrangements with the owner for this specific shaft, seeing as it is in their garden. Too many in the team to thank individually but, as well as Phil, Ric the builder was a star and made the day go very smoothly.

**015** – Eldon anchors. Job passed to Equipment team and no longer on my list.

**021** – Container stock check. Completed. We've had a lot more stuff placed in there since this check but have a few big jobs to use it up.

*P.Knight 09-06-2017*

### Quick update to the Projects report, 22 June 2017.

We completed the major work on the Vixen shaft cap in Lathkill Dale today. It was the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of work this week on the job and maybe the 10<sup>th</sup> in total. Thanks go to Roy Rogers, Phil Wolstenholme, Adam Russell, Jess Stirrups, Beth Knight and of course Christine Wilson for putting in most of the effort behind the scenes and on the ground. We had a good gaggle of occasional helpers over the last 18 months too.

I'll need to return when the concrete is set to bolt the frame down and tidy up the odd bit of steel with the grinder, other than that, we're all done.

Photos to follow from myself and Phil for the Derbyshire Caver.

*Pete*

P.S. Is it time to discuss the introduction of a 'volunteer contribution' charge for these kind of big jobs? It's a huge number of man hours DCA have provided FOC here. It's been a good job but I know we've all turned paid work down at least once for this.

## Item 6.8a - Equipment Officer's Report

Sorry but I haven't the time to write a full report. I'm still chasing the topos for various jobs off the installers, particularly Rowter but really have nothing else to report except the completion of works at Devonshire and some Hydrajaws testing which is outstanding. My apologies to the meeting, I should have a little more time after about two weeks.

*Bob Dearman*

## Item 6.8b - DCA Cave Atmosphere Monitoring Report for 24/06/2017

**1. Problems reported.** No problems have been reported so far this year.

**2. Measurements.** Again measurements have only been taken using borrowed kit from other cavers, or from DCRO. Some air quality measurements were taken, however, at Slaley Sough, Water Icicle Close Cavern and at Robin's Shaft. These used borrowed instruments for measurement and the findings, indicating the presence of carbon dioxide, are given in the table in section 5 of this report.

**3. Equipment.** Currently DCA have no meters, as reported at the AGM. However, should readings need to be taken of specific venues reported, I can borrow equipment and make the necessary measurements. Negotiations for replacing the DCA monitors with a single 5-gas meter are still continuing.

**4. Air Quality in Other areas.** Notes and readings from Cotterdale Colliery, Long Meg Anhydrite Mine and Rampgill Lead Mine (all Northern Pennine locations) have been received from Paul Thorne.

**5. Non-caver-related air-pollution incident.** On 31 May 2017, I was called by the Police to look into the possibility that a cow might have fallen down a newly opened mine shaft a mile or so south of Elton. This shaft is on private land, and, because of the fairly recent collapse of the cap, it is doubtful whether it has seen much exploration since it ceased operation.

After an initial examination of the site, I collected a small team from DCRO and set about installing ropework to descend the shaft. However, the operation had to be aborted due to gas (CO<sub>2</sub> and CO) being detected within the shaft. The CO<sub>2</sub> readings were between 2.5% and 3.5%, and CO levels between 200ppm and 550ppm, with one odd reading of at least 1000ppm.

The source of the CO is not known, but we were informed that, following the disappearance of the cow, sheets of newspaper were set on fire and dropped into the shaft, and it is likely that these actions could have resulted in the presence of CO, especially if there was any flammable material already at the foot of the shaft.

A final reading was taken with a meter lowered to the bottom of the shaft, and the rope used was quite blood-stained on retrieval, evidence that something had fallen down the shaft.

Vertex, a company who have done robotic and aerial surveys of Wharf Engine Shaft and Longcliffe Mine are considering visiting the shaft to provide a video of the entire shaft and gas readings, and I have contacted the farmer for permission for this to take place.

**Late News:** Vertex visited the site yesterday (14/06/17) and managed to get their Minion robot to descend the shaft after some difficult manual manoeuvring past a slight constriction at the ginging level. They found and photographed several horizontal passages on the way down the shaft, and photographed the corpse of the cow where it had landed at a depth short of 30m. During the proceedings, they took carbon monoxide measurements and these are worse than anticipated, bearing in mind that it is now two weeks since the original assay of the shaft by DCRO. Just below the surface, the reading was approximately 400ppm, at around 10-

15m, this rose to about 700ppm and below that it passed the monitor's maximum value of 2000ppm. The source of the carbon monoxide is not known, but is unlikely to be burning paper alone, and is a worrying development.

## 5. Readings

Cave	Date	Surface O2	Cave O2	CO2	Location & Comments	
Slaley Sough	28/02/2017	20.90			Surface reading	
	28/02/2017		19.80		Most of the trammig level.	
	28/02/2017		19.70		The very end of the level.	
Water Icicle	18/03/2017	20.90			Surface reading	
	18/03/2017		20.00		Foot of Shaft	
	18/03/2017		19.80		Top of ladder (North West Aven)	
	18/03/2017		19.50		Three Way Aven	
	18/03/2017		18.90		Elevator Junction	
	18/03/2017		18.70		End of Urchin Passage	
	18/03/2017		19.10		Cherty 2 Choke	
	18/03/2017		18.50		End of Cherty 2 Extensions	
	Robin's Shaft	02/05/2017	20.90			Surface reading
		02/05/2017		18.70		3rd rebelay
02/05/2017			18.40		6th rebelay	
02/05/2017			18.20		7th rebelay	
02/05/2017			18.20		Foot of Shaft	
02/05/2017			18.20		Lord's Chamber	
02/05/2017			18.00		Lower part of Lord's Chamber	

**Alan Brentnall**

## Item 6.10 - Newsletter Editor/Publications Officer's Report

Publication of *The Derbyshire Caver* through 2017 is continuing on course to achieve four issues for the year and sufficient content is being received to fill the maximum sixteen pages per issue that postage costs normally allow. In fact, I might even have to hold over some items for the Summer issue to the Autumn which is pretty encouraging! However, articles on any Peak District caving-related subject are always welcome – DCA members, please help out by writing something up, it's not difficult! If stringing words together isn't your thing, a set of themed photographs is just as good.

Work on the production of the index of the Newsletter from the first issue in 1962 up to the present time is proceeding (slowly but surely) but now that summer is here it is more slowly than surely!

All is not good news though. Now that the funding received by DCA from the British Caving Association is reduced, the cost of producing the newsletter as an A4 part-colour publication distributed by post to all members has become unsustainable. Steps need to be taken to resolve this situation and various options have been mooted. I would welcome the comments of DCA members with a view to putting a comprehensive review of the ways forward to the October meeting.

As always, my sincere thanks to everyone who has submitted articles or photographs for publication – please help me (and DCA) out by keeping that material coming.

**Mike Higgins DCA Newsletter Editor/Publications Officer 16/6/2017**

## Item 7.1 - Report on BCA Council Meeting 25 March 2017

The Council Meeting went on for an extraordinarily long time - 10.30am to 6.30pm. The draft Minutes are now on the BCA website. The main points discussed were:

### Caver Training

- a. The suggested split of the working of the BCA Training Committee into two parts:
  - One dealing only with Qualifications for Professional Caver Training: Qualifications Management Committee (QMC) under a Chairman appointed by BCA and with representatives from BCA Council on the Committee
  - The second headed by the BCA Training Officer to deal solely with recreational caver training.
- b. The choice of a suitable software package to enable the running of the Professional Caver Training setup with all its many ramifications: keeping track of participants and their qualifications; recording training updates and enabling courses; electronic log books and certificates, etc. Currently this is done by 3 separate databases which require extensive and lengthy management by the Training Administrator; a more efficient and cost-effective system is sought which will enable the whole Professional Caver Training setup to pay for itself.



**Constitutional Amendments to be put to the BCA AGM**

It had been hoped that BCA Executive and BCA Council would be able to sort out a set of conflicting and near-duplicated proposals to enable a coherent set of proposals to be put to the AGM. This was not possible.

**BCA's IT systems**

A lengthy report by an individual member of BCA's IT Working Party, who had not consulted with his ITWP colleagues, on various issues including: the choice of software for the Professional Caver Training setup; the software used by BCA to run its websites; whether BCA should be hosting club websites; etc. This was overly technical for a general Council meeting and it was clear that other members of the ITWP disagreed with many of the comments made. As this report item did not start until nearly 5.30pm, many members of Council had had enough and simply left the meeting to go home (including me). The final conclusion apparently was to remit the whole business to the ITWP for discussion - which was what should have happened in the first place.

*J.E.Potts, DCA Rep. to BCA Council*

**Item 7.2 - Report on BCA AGM, 11 June 2017 & Subsequent Council Meeting**

The AGM took place at the Rotary Centre, Castleton during the BCA Party Weekend, and was very well attended with 46 Individual Members attending and voting and 20 Groups (clubs and constituent bodies) also represented and voting, although not all members were present for all votes.

The AGM Reports by various Officers, Special Committees and others were printed in advance, taken as read and accepted unanimously almost without comment. These will all be printed eventually as part of the Minutes of the meeting.

Two new **Individual Caver Representatives** to BCA Council were elected: **Will Burn (SUSS)** and **Mark Richardson (Buttered Badger C.C.)**

The assorted Constitutional amendments had been sent out in various versions, each differing slightly from the last one, and a final version had been agreed only a few days before the meeting with only 30 copies printed for the meeting. Hence there was some need for clarification at various points as to which version was being voted on. However, the discussion was managed sensibly and the members present were able to have their say before the final vote was taken on each amendment. The distinction between "**Constitutional Proposals**", requiring a **70% majority in both "houses"** to pass, and "Other proposals", requiring only a simple majority in both "houses" to pass, was made clear throughout - rather complicated but those present understood the difference and the reasons for it. In some cases, the passing of one proposal automatically removed a second conflicting proposal. Some motions were withdrawn by the proposer before they could be voted upon.

Final results of the most important votes were:

**Establish QMC (Procedural Proposal):**

***This meeting instructs National Council to establish a working party called "the BCA Qualifications Management Committee" to develop the BCA training awards and changes the terms of reference of the current Training Committee to be henceforth solely responsible for recreational training.***

**Passed unanimously** by both houses.

**CRoW Act (Other Proposal - Simple Majority):**

***That this general meeting confirms there is no impediment in the constitution to prevent the BCA campaigning for the Countryside and Rights of Way Act to apply to caving.***

Proposed by Tim Allen. Seconded by DCA

**Passed by both houses:**

Indiv. Votes -	34 for	1 ag.	1 abst.
Group votes -	16 for	3 ag.	1 abst.

**CRoW Act (Constnl. Proposal - 70%):**

There were two proposals, one to remove the 1st. sentence of 4.6 of the Constitution altogether ("That the owners and tenants of property containing caves have the right to grant or withhold access."), proposed by Tim Allen, and one to amend the wording of the sentence. Proposed Bob Mehew. A procedural motion was put as to which proposal should be taken first and by 38 votes to 8 it was agreed vote on Tim's motion first.

***This motion proposes that the first sentence of Section 4.6 of the BCA constitution be removed.***

Proposed by Tim Allen, Seconded by DCA.

**Passed by both houses:**

Indiv. Votes -	42 for	3 ag.	0 abst.	(93%)
Group votes -	17 for	3 ag.	0 abst.	(85%)

It was noted by the Chairman that this would now go to a postal ballot.

**Proxy Voting (Constnl. Proposal - 70%):**

***An individual or Honorary member (the 'voter') who is eligible to vote at a General Meeting may choose to appoint a proxy to vote for them. This proxy (the 'nominee') must be another individual or Honorary member who is also eligible to vote. The form of proxy, determined by National Council, will be provided with the notice of the meeting. The voter must provide the completed form of proxy to the Recorder at least 7 days before the relevant meeting for any General Meeting excepting an Emergency General Meeting where 48 hours shall be sufficient. Voters may indicate how they wish their nominee to vote or allow their nominee discretion. The maximum number of voters who may be represented by each individual nominee is two. Proxy voting is not available to Group Members.***

Proposed and Seconded by BCA Executive

**Not Passed:**

Indiv. Votes -	32 for	11 ag.	1 abst.	(73% for)
Group votes -	10 for	7 ag.	3 abst.	(50% for) (Requires 70% in both houses)

**Electronic Ballots (Constnl. Proposal - 70%):**

***That sub-section 9.2 of the constitution be amended to read***

***“The General Meeting may refer any other successful motion that it deems appropriate, for ratification by a ballot. The General Meeting shall instruct the Executive to arrange such a ballot and shall specify any wording for the ratification of the motion and associated material, as the General Meeting considers necessary. The Executive may add additional associated material as it thinks fit. The ballot shall be held as soon as is reasonably practicable after the General Meeting. The ballot will normally be conducted as an online ballot and if so shall be issued to all members entitled to vote with whom BCA may legitimately communicate by e-mail or any other appropriate means. National Council shall ensure sufficient time is given from the dispatch of the information before the closing date, normally one month or more, for receipt of returns. The counting of the votes shall be conducted as for a General Meeting”.***

Proposed and seconded by BCA Executive.

***“And that the definition of postal ballot contained in sub-section 13.3 be deleted.”*** Proposed and seconded by BCA Executive.

<b>Passed:</b>	Indiv. Votes -	44 for	0 ag.	0 abst.	(100% for)
	Group votes -	18 for	1 ag.	0 abst.	(95% for)

(I.e. Electronic voting is permitted but, if a member is unable to take part in an electronic ballot or BCA does not have a valid email address, then a postal ballot will be allowed.)

It was noted by the Chairman that this would now go to a postal ballot.

Other proposals relating to the Constitution are relatively minor “tidying up” items but with the passing of the important constitutional amendments there will now be a ballot of members under the existing (i.e. postal ballot) arrangements to ratify the motions passed. It was also agreed that it would be helpful to make use of electronic communications to allow members more say in decisions made by BCA.

### **The subsequent BCA Council Meeting**

Main points to note were:

#### **Training Committee etc.**

***Creation of a working group to manage the professional training scheme, provisionally designated Qualifications Management Committee, and setting the membership and terms of reference of that working group.***

Proposed by BCA Exec. **Passed** unanimously. Graham Mollard will be the Chairman of the QMC.

**Nigel Atkins was appointed as Acting BCA Training Officer.**

It is expected that he will come forward to the BCA Council Meeting on 7th. October with suitable Terms of Reference for Recreational Caver Training.

#### **Training database specification:**

Final approval of the system to be used for Professional Caver Training will take a few more days. Unanimous approval of the Executive will be required before payment can be authorised.

#### **Election of Officers**

**Secretary:** Simon Brooks stood down as Secretary after only one year and Nick Williams will take over as Acting Secretary until a new one can be appointed.

**Treasurer:** Robin Weare has agreed to continue as Acting Treasurer for a further 6 months but a replacement is sought.

**Co-option to Executive:** Bob Mehew has been co-opted as a member of the BCA Executive.

It was also agreed that there was a need to consider whether the BCA Constitution needed to be completely re-vamped and updated; Tim Allen was willing to lead a Working Party on this.

These are my personal notes on the BCA AGM and Council Meeting I attended and should not be confused with the official minutes, which will appear in due course. In particular, my thanks to Bob Mehew for confirming the correct voting figures.

*J.E.Potts, DCA Rep. to BCA AGM and Council  
22 June 2017*

# Derbyshire Caving Association Profit & Loss For Period Covering 01/01/2017 to 20/06/2017

			# [unknown]
<b>Revenues</b>			
Income			
Subscriptions & Entry Fees	£181.00		
Publications			
CoPD	£290.20		
Conservation Audits & Reports	£40.70		
News Letters	£123.80		
Total Publications		£454.70	
BCA Grants			
Core Funding	£899.42		
Total BCA Grants		£899.42	
Awards and Grants (non caving)			
Other	£223.50		
Total Awards and Grants (non caving)		£223.50	
Bank Interest	£2.42		
Total Income			£1,761.04
<b>Total Revenue</b>			<b>£1,761.04</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Expenses			
General Admin			
Post	£128.00		
Materials, printing, copying etc	£129.97		
Total General Admin		£257.97	
Conservation, Access etc.			
Travel	£136.45		
Post, telephone, email etc.	£3.35		
Admin	£0.28		
Other	£233.61		
Total Conservation, Access etc.		£373.69	
Equipment			
Travel	£297.50		
Total Equipment		£297.50	
Publications			
Newsletter	£554.32		
Printing, postage etc Conservation audits	£1.20		
Caves of the Peak District	£6.32		
Total Publications		£561.84	
Bank Charges		£18.00	
SSSI Conservation Work			
Projects 2014/2015	£194.82		
Total SSSI Conservation Work		£194.82	
Donations		£500.00	
Total Expenses			£2,203.82
<b>Total Expenses</b>			<b>£2,203.82</b>
Net loss for Period			£442.78