



DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

Cave Discovery Fund Constitution

1. AIMS

1.1 To encourage the discovery of new caves and cave passages in the Peak District and associated areas. Mines which may be of interest to cavers shall qualify for grant in the same way and under the same conditions as caves.

1.2 To offer financial aid to Derbyshire Caving Association individual members and member clubs to help offset expenses incurred in the discovery of new caves and cave passages in the region.

1.3 Under exceptional circumstances to offer formal endorsement of a project to DCA Individual Members and Members Clubs where such recognition may aid the furtherance of that project in accordance with Aim 1.1.

1.4 To ensure that conservation and access interests are properly considered in the exploitation of such discoveries.

1.5 To ensure that discoveries are fully documented and recorded.

2. FUNDING

2.1 The Fund shall be financed annually by a figure to be recommended in December each year at a meeting of the Cave Discovery Fund Grants Panel. The full amount due shall be available from the Fund at the beginning of each calendar year without waiting for the collection of subscriptions.

2.2 The number of grants accepted per calendar year shall be a maximum of 5. No grant shall exceed 15% of the total amount in the Fund at the beginning of the year.

2.3 The Fund may accept donations.

2.4 The Fund shall be under the control of the Association's Treasurer, who shall make awards from the Fund as from time to time directed by the Cave Discovery Fund Grants Panel (subject to the provisions of Section 5 below).

2.5 All donations received after 1 March in any year, together with any money left unallocated at the end of the year, shall be transferred to January of the following year.

3. ELIGIBILITY

3.1 Applications may be made for recognition or grant from the Fund by Individual Members of the Association or by Member Clubs. Such applicants must be of not less than 12 months standing in the Association. An application from a Member Club must be supported by the signatures of two officers of that Club, neither of whom must be the principal applicant.

3.2 The grant is intended to aid in reimbursing money spent on the purchase or hire of materials, technical equipment or supplies necessary for the progress of the work, to assist in the conservation of or access to the discovery or to document the discovery. Grant is not available for the purchase or hire of caving equipment or for travel expenses.

3.3 Grant will be given only for legitimate work which makes a significant new section of cave or mine accessible, either by an extension of an existing cave or mine, the opening of a new cave or the re-opening of a mine.

4. THE GRANTS PANEL

4.1 The Grants Panel shall consist of the Association's Chair (or their nominee), the Association's Conservation & Access Officers (or their nominees) and three Individual Members elected at the Association's Annual General Meeting. It is expected that the Individual Members will each have a special interest in a different area of the Peak District.

4.2 The Association's Treasurer (or their nominee) shall be ex-officio a member of the Grants Panel but shall have no vote.

4.3 In the event that any member of the Grants Panel wishes to apply for grant or endorsement, they shall stand down from the Panel for that year. If any member of the Grants Panel is considered to have a financial interest in an application they shall stand down from the Panel for that year.

5. PROCEDURE

5.1 Application forms may be requested from the Association's Treasurer at any time or may be downloaded from the Association's website.

5.2 In all cases, where documentation is required electronic copies and/or emails are acceptable.

5.3 The Grants Panel shall convene to consider applications as and when they are received. Such meetings shall be arranged by the Association's Treasurer and will normally take place online. Applicants shall be advised of the Grants Panel's decision in writing. A letter of endorsement signed by the Chair and Secretary of the Association shall be supplied where the Grants Panel consider this appropriate. On completion of the grant-aided work the applicant shall submit receipts to the Association's Treasurer who will reimburse the applicant accordingly.

5.4 Where considered appropriate by the Association's Treasurer, stage payments may be made prior to completion of the grant-aided work subject to submission of receipts.

5.5 The Treasurer shall make available copies of the completed applications to all Grants Panel Members as soon as possible after receipt of applications, the cost of this to be borne by the Association.

5.6 The applicant shall have the option to appear in person at an online Grants Panel meeting to present their application. Where an applicant so appears they are to leave the meeting after their presentation.

6. CONDITIONS

6.1 In order for grant to be awarded or recognition given, access arrangements made by the applicants should, as far as practicable, allow all cavers access to the new discoveries (subject to conditions imposed by the owners or lessees, considerations of conservation, etc.)

6.2 In order for grant to be awarded or recognition given, the applicant must indicate how conservation of the new discovery may be achieved, having reference to the Minimal Impact Caving Guidelines devised by the BCA, BCRA and Natural England (downloadable from the Association's website or from the BCA website). Where the new discovery is within an SSSI, the Cave Discovery Fund Grants Panel will give particular consideration to conservation and/or science issues in making their decision and will require evidence that Natural England has given their consent to the Landowner to give approval to the proposed dig (information leaflet "Cave Digging on SSSIs" downloadable from the Association's website).

6.3 A description of the discovery must be submitted to the Association's Editor of *The Derbyshire Caver* and to the Derbyshire Cave Registry Secretary as soon as is practicable (this does not preclude more detailed publication elsewhere).

6.4 All applicants shall have a duty to:

- i) make safe any entrances to the satisfaction of the owners or lessees to prevent risk to farm stock or passers-by,
- ii) make safe, as far as is reasonable and practicable, any work done inside the cave to prevent risk to other cavers.

6.5 Endorsement will be awarded only for the specific project for which application has been received and may be revoked by DCA Council at their discretion.

6.6 The Constitution of this fund may be amended only at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting of the Association under the rules which apply to amendments to the Constitution of the Association itself.

Originally accepted at the Council Meeting of 12th November 1994. Amendments incorporated subsequently in 1996, 1997, 2020 and 2022.