



# DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

## Minutes of DCA Annual General Meeting

10am. 23rd February 2013, Monyash Village Hall

- Present:**
- Clubs:** Crewe C.P.C. Alan Brentnall [AB]  
 Masson C. G. Colum Walsh [CW], (Dave Webb)  
 Orpheus C. C. Boyd Potts [BP], Paul Lydon [PL] (Jenny Potts, Karen Slatcher)  
 P.D.M.H.S. Dave Webb [DW]  
 T.S.G. (Alan Brentnall)
- Individual Members:** Bob Dearman [BD], Terry Jackson [TJ], Peter Mellors [PM],  
 Jenny Potts [JP], K.Slatcher [KS],
- Others/Officers:** Nigel Atkins [NA] DCA Training Officer,

**1. CHAIRMAN’S WELCOME; QUORUM:**

The Chairman welcomed members and confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Apologies had been received from: Wayne Sheldon (DCA Treasurer), Dan Hibberts (DCA Projects Officer), Chris Broome (DCA Asst. Sec. Planning Liaison), Adam Russell (PDMHS), Elaine Hill, Burton Venture Trust.

**3. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (25 Feb. 2012):**

*(These had been previously circulated and were on the DCA website.)*

3.1 **Minute 6.7.d:** PM asked that the wording be amended to “... PM intended to open negotiations with S.W.T. ...”.

3.2 *That, with the above amendment included, the Minutes of the 2012 AGM be accepted as a correct record.*  
 Prop. P.Lydon, Sec. K.Slatcher. *Agreed unanimously.*

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE 2012 AGM:**

None.

**5. ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS:**

Individual Member **Dennis Jump:** Prop. J.Potts, Sec. N.Atkins. *Agreed unanimously.*

**6. TO APPROVE THE DCA ANNUAL REPORT:** *(Written Annual Report tabled)*

The Officers’ Reports were taken individually.

**6.1 Chairman’s Report:** *(Written report tabled.)*

*That the Chairman’s Report be accepted.* Prop. B.Potts, Sec. T.Jackson. *Agreed unanimously.*

**6.2 Secretary’s Report:** *(Written report tabled.)*

6.2.a **Posting on UKcaving.com:** JP reported that this was proving useful. DCA Officers signed with their official title when posting formally on behalf of DCA.

6.2.b **Printing arrangements for “Caves of the Peak District” and “The Peak District Access & Rigging Guide”:** JP detailed the arrangements for printing the second run of CoPD after the first 1000 copies had been sold. She passed round a graph showing how CoPD sales were going at present - now steady at between 20 and 25 per month, mostly through trade sales. It had been decided to print 300 copies of the PDAAaRG (a.k.a. DCA Handbook) as it was not known how sales would go, given that it was available in downloadable form from the DCA website and all DCA members had been sent a copy on its publication. *Agreed that it did not matter if DCA did not make a profit on sales of the Handbook, it was more important that the information was in the public domain.*

6.2.c *That the Secretary’s Report be accepted.* Prop. P.Lydon, Sec. N.Atkins. *Agreed unanimously.*

**6.3 Treasurer’s Report and Accounts:** *(Written report tabled.)*

6.3.a **Treasurer’s Apologies:** JP reported that the Treasurer was unable to attend as his Mother was very ill.

- 6.3.b **Auditing of Accounts:** JP noted that, although the Accounts as printed were given as “Provisional”, in fact since being printed they had now been passed by our auditor.
- 6.3.c **Interest on Savings:** Noted that the Treasurer had attempted, unsuccessfully, to obtain better interest rates through RBS. BP suggested that an amount up to a total of £10,000 could be set aside in the form of Savings Bonds through other banks or Building Societies; these would obtain better interest; we could take out a 1-year and a 2-year bond initially, converting the 1-year bond into a 2-year bond at the end of the first year; we would always be able to withdraw the money if required but would lose some interest if we did so. He had done something similar with an organisation for which he had responsibilities and offered to liaise with the Treasurer as to the best way to do this.
- 6.3.d **Updated figures for the first part of 2013:** JP reported that during the first part of 2013 a total of £333 had been banked as Individual Member Subscriptions; £116 as donations from members; and £165 as publications sales.
- 6.3.e **Further Updates re. Grants:** DW reported that, from memory, approximately £600 had been claimed before the end of 2012, and a further £800 from the end of 2012 until the grant cut-off date at the end of February 2013 - a total of £1400. Thanks were due to DW for his work in obtaining these grants.
- 6.3.f **BCA Grants:** JP noted that DCA continued to receive around £1200+ in Administration and Conservation & Access grants from BCA.
- 6.3.g **Treasurer willing to stand again:** JP reported that WS has said he was willing to stand as Treasurer for another year.
- 6.3.h ***That the Treasurer’s Report and Accounts be accepted.***  
Prop. P.Lydon, Sec. N.Atkins. ***Agreed unanimously.***
- 6.4 Conservation Officer’s Report:** *(Written report tabled.)*
- 6.4.a **Thanks:** BD thanked Dave Webb for the tremendous amount of work he had done during his time in the post of Conservation Officer.  
***A vote of thanks to Dave Webb was passed unanimously.***
- 6.4.b **Water Icicle Cave Conservation Plan:** KS reported that she was still waiting for Prof. John Gunn to send her the results from the dating samples taken so the plan was still only partly written. PM also needs the report so that he can send it to Chatsworth. KS will follow up the matter with Prof. Gunn and ask if he is able to provide at least an interim report.
- 6.4.c **Underground Conservation Forum meeting:** As DW was retiring from the post of Conservation Officer, someone else would need to take on the task of convening the next meeting of the UCF, due May 17th. If a new Conservation Officer is appointed at the meeting there is no problem but otherwise someone else will need to act as convenor.
- 6.4.d ***That the Conservation Officer’s Report be accepted.*** Prop. P.Lydon, Sec. N.Atkins. ***Agreed unanimously.***
- 6.5 Access Officer’s Report:** *(Written report tabled.)*
- 6.5.a **Access Requests:** KS emphasised that she was not doing the complete ‘Access Officer’ job but was dealing with the paperwork for access to Ashford Black Marble Mine and Lathkill Head Garden Path and was also dealing with access arrangements for Water Icicle Close Cavern. She was content to continue with this part of the job but felt a proactive Access Officer was needed.
- 6.5.b **Waterfall Swallet:** Noted that Mark Noble had dealt with the negotiations which had enabled access to be restored to Waterfall Swallet.
- 6.5.c **Christmas Pot and Snelslow Swallet:** BD noted that there was interest in re-opening access to Christmas Pot and Snelslow Swallet, both of which are on Peakshill Farm land. Noted that the landowner, Mr. Baldacci, does not live at the farm; the land is farmed by Mr. Gregory. It appears that the person who looks after the farm for the owner is willing to allow access to the two sites. It was suggested that negotiations be opened with both the landowner and the tenant farmer and a BCA insurance certificate could be offered.
- 6.5.d ***That the Access Officer’s Report be accepted.*** Prop. P.Mellors, Sec. N.Atkins. ***Agreed unanimously.***
- 6.6 Legal & Insurance Officer’s Report:** *(Written report tabled.)*
- 6.6.a **N.F.U. problem at Northern Dale:** PM highlighted the problem of apparently incorrect legal advice given by the NFU to Mr. Greatorex, the landowner at Northern Dale Mines. After discussion with PM, Mr. Greatorex was now satisfied that he was not legally liable for the activities of cavers on his land and he had been provided with a BCA insurance certificate. PM was now dealing with the NFU on a national basis over the matter but had not yet received a satisfactory reply from them. TJ suggested that it could be a matter of the NFU wanting to persuade the owner to take out insurance over and above that required of any landowner who has a public footpath crossing his land. PM referred to the very useful leaflet published by the BMC in conjunction with the Country Landowners Association which clarified the position. JP would obtain a copy of this leaflet for herself direct from the BMC. PM would

continue dealing with this on a national basis and would copy the correspondence to the BCA Legal & Insurance Officer. JP asked to be kept advised of such correspondence so that she could follow the matter up at BCA Council.

6.6.b **Eldon Hill Quarry Survey:** PM provided a copy of the report on Eldon Hill Quarry survey which he had written for Chatsworth Estates and asked that this be kept for reference in the British Caving Library, together with the survey produced by Ron Hammond for DCA. JP took charge of these copies for BCL.

6.6.c ***That the Legal & Insurance Officer's Report be accepted.***

Prop. B.Potts, Sec. K.Slatcher. *Agreed unanimously.*

## **6.7 Equipment Officer's Report:** *(Written report tabled.)*

6.7.a **The issue of Bolt Installers not required to be competent at rigging SRT:** NA commented that the SRT training workshops which he had run during the past year included participants from all regions and those attending from areas covered by CSCC were not happy with CSCC Council's view that installers did not have to be competent at SRT rigging. JP pointed out that this was not a matter for DCA; it was for those from the CSCC area to take the issue up directly at CSCC meetings. JP also pointed out that the BCA Constitution did not allow BCA Council or the BCA AGM to direct any regional council how it should work within its own area - thus CNCC and DCA were able to continue to use the IPTD they had initially drawn up. JP noted that it was a requirement of the BCA Document: "Association scheme for the placement of resin bonded anchors" agreed by CSCC in October 2012 (and by DCA in November 2012) that records of all resin-mounted anchor placements, including the identity of the installer responsible, should be provided to the BCA Equipment & Techniques Committee.

6.7.b **Testing of bolt installation in slate substrate:** JP noted that there may be a request for assistance in testing bolt installation in slate in North Wales. If such a request comes to CNCC/DCA direct they would be willing to help, noting that the funding would come from BCA.

6.7.c **Problems with Maillons:** NA noted that instructors are now advising that karabiners, rather than maillons, should be used for linkages in rigging.

6.7.d ***That the Equipment Officer's Report be accepted.*** Prop. B.Potts, Sec. N.Atkins. *Agreed unanimously.*

## **6.8 Training Officer's Report:** *(Written report tabled.)*

6.8.a **The Training situation in Derbyshire:** It was generally agreed that this was going really well. NA pointed out the need to drip-feed correct information to new cavers to prevent bad practice being passed on.

6.8.b **Training Events for 2013:** JP said that she would put out a circular to all DCA members containing the 2013 Training Events and this would also go on the website.

6.8.c **Cliffhanger:** The unavoidable cancellation of Cliffhanger 2012 was a great pity but DCA would be interested in taking part in a 2013 event.

6.8.d **Devonshire Ladder:** Noted that fixing the ladder in Devonshire appears to have warped the frame because the frame had not been bolted into the surround. It would need to be sorted and this was in hand.

6.8.e ***That the Training Officer's Report be accepted.*** Prop. K.Slatcher, Sec. J.Potts. *Agreed unanimously*

## **6.9 Projects Officer:**

6.9.a **Project Officer's Report:** JP noted that, due to pressure of work, the Project Officer had not had time to produce a written report for the AGM. However, it was noted that Dan Hibberts had done a great deal of work since he took office partway through the year and this was detailed in the reports from the Chairman, Conservation Officer and Legal & Insurance Officer.

6.9.b **DCA Plaque:** It was suggested and agreed that a suitable 'DCA plaque' should be put on all lids installed by DCA.

6.9.c ***That a vote of thanks be accorded to Dan Hibberts for his work as Projects Officer.***

Prop. J.Potts, Sec. P.Lydon. *Agreed unanimously.*

## **6.10 Newsletter Editor's Report:** *(Verbal report given.)*

6.10.a **Future Newsletters:** PL reminded people that he needed articles sent to him if he was to be able to produce a Newsletter.

6.10.b **DCA Newsletter on the website:** It was agreed that it would be appropriate to wait for about 2 months after publication and circulation to members of the paper version before putting the Newsletter on the website.

**7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**

7.1 **SSSI Monitoring:** DW noted that it is essential that SSSI Monitoring in the region continues to be done by cavers from DCA or it may be put out to commercial tender. He was also concerned that we maintained our liaison with Natural England so he would continue to do this for the time being but does want to hand over to a new Conservation Officer as soon as possible. DW emphasised that he was not 'walking away' completely but would be available to give advice or answer questions pending the appointment of his successor.

7.2. **The following Officers, were elected unopposed:**

<b>Chairman:</b>	<b>Bob Dearman.</b>	Prop. K.Slatcher, Sec. J.Potts.
<b>Vice-Chairman:</b>	<b>Terry Jackson.</b>	Prop. J.Potts, Sec. P.Mellors.
<b>Secretary:</b>	<b>Jenny Potts.</b>	Prop. K.Slatcher, Sec. P.Lydon.
<b>Treasurer:</b>	<b>Wayne Sheldon.</b>	Prop. J.Potts, Sec. D.Webb.
<b>Conservation Officer:</b>		Post vacant.
<b>Asst. Conservation Officer:</b>		Post vacant.
<b>Access Officer:</b>		Post vacant.
<b>Asst. Access Officer:</b>	<b>Karen Slatcher.</b>	Prop. J.Potts, Sec. N.Atkins.
<b>Projects Officer:</b>	<b>Dan Hibberts.</b>	Prop. N.Atkins, Sec. J.Potts.
<b>Legal &amp; Insurance Officer:</b>	<b>Pete Mellors.</b>	Prop. J.Potts, Sec. N.Atkins.
<b>Equipment Officer:</b>	<b>Bob Dearman.</b>	Prop. P.Lydon, Sec. K. Slatcher.
<b>Training Officer:</b>	<b>Nigel Atkins.</b>	Prop. J.Potts, Sec. K.Slatcher.
<b>Newsletter Editor:</b>	<b>Paul Lydon.</b>	Prop. J.Potts, Sec. K.Slatcher.
<b>Asst. Sec./Planning Liaison:</b>	<b>Chris Broome.</b>	Prop. J.Potts, Sec. B.Potts.
<b>Cave Registry Secretary:</b>	<b>John Beck.</b>	Prop. J.Potts, Sec. K.Slatcher.

7.3 **Other posts appointed:** Events Organiser for Cliffhanger 2013, Boyd Potts.

**8. ELECT 3 ORDINARY MEMBERS TO THE GRANTS PANEL OF THE CAVE DISCOVERY FUND:**

The following were elected: Terry Jackson, Boyd Potts, Dave Webb.

Noted that the Chairman and Conservation Officer were automatically Panel Members and the Treasurer was an ex-officio panel member.

**9. BCA AGM 2013:**

JP explained that this was being held on Sunday, 16th. June, at the Rotary Club, Castleton. The agenda was not yet available. The intention was for there to be BCRA Field trips and an open day at the British Caving Library on Saturday 15th; a party on Saturday evening and the AGM on Sunday morning. Accommodation and camping were available at the Rotary Club and it was hoped to encourage a large attendance. Details are already on the BCA website. Noted that **all** BCA members are welcome to attend and to vote at the BCA AGM, including Club representatives and Direct and Club Individual Members,

**10. APPOINTMENT OF DELEGATES/REPRESENTATIVES TO BCA AGM AND BCA COMMITTEES:**

10.1 **Delegate to BCA AGM:** Jenny Potts. Prop. N.Atkins.

10.2 **DCA Representative on BCA Council:** Jenny Potts. Prop. P.Lydon.

10.3 **DCA Representatives to BCA Committees:**

BCA Conservation & Access:	DCA Conservation Officer
BCA Training:	Nigel Atkins.
BCA Equipment & Techniques:	Observer - B.Potts.
BCA Legal & Insurance:	P.Mellors.

10.4 **Other BCA working groups, etc.:**

Radon working group:	P.Mellors.
National Cave Registry:	John Beck.

**11. APPOINTMENT OF DELEGATES/REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS:**

11.1 **SSSI Liaison:** (Meetings are convened by Natural England.) Conservation Officer and Bob Dearman.

11.2 **Underground Conservation Forum/SSSI Monitoring:** (Convened by DCA Conservation Officer.) Area representatives attend.

11.3 **P.I.C.A.:** Jenny Potts, Bob Dearman, Nigel Atkins.

11.4 **Derbyshire Sport:** Jenny Potts would continue to liaise although this had become increasingly irrelevant to outdoor activities.

11.5 **U.K.C.C.E.F.:** Dave Webb.

**12. DATE, TIME AND VENUES FOR MEETINGS FOR THE COMING YEAR:**

12.1 **AGM 2014:** 22 February, 2014 at Monyash Village Hall, 10am.

12.2 **Council Meetings:** At 10am, Monyash Village Hall on 29th. June 2013 and 2nd. November 2013 and immediately after the AGM on 22 February 2014.

**13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

13.1 **Access for commercial caving:** NA raised the matter, which was under discussion at national level: access to certain caves is restricted for commercial cavers, i.e. instructed or other groups led as part of a commercial operation.

JP explained that it appeared that some landowners who did not charge for access were concerned that guides/instructors were charging clients to be taken down caves on their land - this matter had recently been raised by the Shuttleworth Estate in relation to caves on Leck and Casterton Fells. In other cases, the access agreement drawn up with the landowner or other body (such as Countryside Council for Wales in the case of O.F.D.) does not permit 'commercial caving'. There was a grey area regarding instructors working for local authority or other outdoor centres and taking people caving in a 'not for profit' situation where the instructor was paid by the centre.

NA made the point that BCA-appointed Cave Instructors dealing with Cave Instructors or LCMLA candidates undergoing assessment ought not to be considered 'commercial caving' as these people were likely to be most aware of safety and conservation considerations to the benefit of cavers and landowners alike. The meeting agreed with this view.

Noted that DCA's agreement with N.E. and Chatsworth did not allow commercial trips into Garden Path - visits were for scientific purposes only and a report should be sent to Chatsworth after a visit. It was assumed that the agreement for access to Peak Cavern, administered by the key-holders, did not allow visits for 'commercial caving'. As far as were known there were no other restrictions in the Peak region.

There was felt to be a potential risk that, if landowners were to make arrangements for commercial groups to cave on their land in return for a fee, they might prefer to take this as an income and refuse to allow non-paying groups access.

BCA had requested views on the subject, including how 'commercial caving' should be defined, and would be attempting to draw up an acceptable policy. Any such policy would be subject to approval by the BCA AGM.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 1.28pm.

*Recorder, J.Potts*