



# DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

## DCA Annual Report, Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021, Section 7.1 and 7.2 Officers' Reports

### DCA Chairman's Report

It has been nearly a year now where we have been in some kind of lockdown or tier system due to the coronavirus pandemic. DCA like other organisations has moved with the times, we have been forced to change the way we run meetings, and I personally think it has been a good success. I don't want to go back to holding weekend meetings in Monyash, as these online midweek evening meetings, save us all time and allows Saturdays to be free for us to do other things, maybe I might get back caving, especially when we get through Covid19.

Thanks to all the officers who dealt / are currently dealing with the access issues caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Thanks to Pete Knight especially who put together the COVID statements, following input from all officers. The government keep updating the guidelines that cavers need to follow, it's pretty straightforward.

We welcomed Victoria into the fold this year and she as took to it like a duck to water, thanks for joining the team. Alan, our Access Officer, Cave Atmosphere Monitoring Officer (Gasman), Trustee and Minute Taker is retiring from his positions at this meeting and he is leaving the area. He has done a brilliant job over the years and will be missed within DCA.

Thanks to Angus, our new Peak District Caving Website should now be online, he has done a great job in developing this site and will be a great resource for Peak District caving. I am still working on the bibliography part of the site, the cave survey part of the site has had new surveys added to it, but in terms of the scanning of surveys from the BCA Library, Covid19 has put paid to that one as I have been to the office once since March and now, I am not allowed in for the time being.

I am still undertaking the role of acting secretary. I had a volunteer come forward a few months ago and I spent some time explaining the role to them, they were all for it. Despite getting in touch with them, they have not returned my emails or calls. I do need a replacement secretary as soon as really, but I can't find a volunteer anywhere. Another role I undertake is DCA representative on BCA Council.

I am willing to continue my role as chairman and DCA representative on BCA Council but would be very happy if a potential secretary come forward to undertake this key role.

Wayne Sheldon  
09/02/2021

### DCA Secretary Report

This year we had two online officers' meetings to run through BCA business, an online council meeting that was well attended and showed that online meetings work, a training meeting to discuss BCA Training. Agenda's, Officer Reports have been prepared for all meetings and minutes written up. An

information circular has been published and sent out to all members, which included information about our officer's meetings.

Wayne Sheldon  
08/02/2021

## **DCA Membership Secretary Report**

Individual membership of DCA currently stands at 44 members plus 2 honorary members, an increase of 6 since the last AGM. At the time of writing, 12 individual members are yet to pay their subscription for 2021. This is about the normal position for this time of year – I shall be chasing them up!

Associate members are static at 8 and club members stand at 32. There is 1 new individual member whose application will be considered at the AGM.

Since the last meeting I have circulated information to members on various issues, including the Agendas for this meeting and the following Council meeting, availability of BCA training, etc.

Since the last DCA Meeting on 28th September 2020 I have scanned 6 further issues of The DCA Newsletter (as it then was, prior to renaming as The Derbyshire Caver) and these have been uploaded to the DCA website by Angus.

Mike Higgins  
08/02/2021

## **Treasurer Report**

Annual accounts as provided. Income this year has been minimal with no projects from Natural England, and expenditure increased with the purchase of equipment for project work and anchor installation. Equipment material costs again higher than usual with the difficult nature of a major re-'bolting' project.

I am willing to stand as Treasurer for the new year.

Angus Sawyer  
6th February 2021

## **DCA Webmasters Report**

The DCA web site now has issues 108 to 152 of the Derbyshire Caver available

All but one of the conservation audits. Thanks to Mike Higgins for his continued work scanning old issues. The listings now include content details and publication dates.

### **Peak District Caving:**

The site has had little development this year, apart from continued registry updates and entrance photographs. In the coming year it is intended to refresh the site design.

Angus Sawyer  
6th February 2021

# Derbyshire Caving Association – Annual Accounts

## Income and Expenditure for the financial year ending 31st December 2020

Expenditure	2020	2019
<b>General Administration</b>		
Travel	0.00	51.30
Post	13.00	0.00
Phone / Email	0.00	0.00
Materials, printing, copying etc.	37.50	168.55
	<b>50.50</b>	<b>219.85</b>
<b>Conservation and Access</b>		
Travel	540.75	538.54
Post / phone / email / administration	0.00	0.00
Materials	3265.82 <b>1</b>	715.88
	<b>3,806.57</b>	<b>1,254.42</b>
<b>Cave Conservation Plans / UCF</b>		
Travel	0.00	9.00
Post / phone / email / paperwork	0.00	0.00
Materials	0.00	0.00
	<b>0.00</b>	<b>9.00</b>
<b>Equipment, Anchor installation etc</b>		
Travel	88.21	19.80
Post / phone / email / paperwork	0.00	0.00
Materials	1899.56 <b>2</b>	296.18
	<b>1,987.77</b>	<b>315.98</b>
<b>Publications</b>		
Newsletter	46.40	232.90
Conservation Audits	0.00	8.36
Caves of the Peak District	0.00	0.00
Other	0.00	0.00
Website expenses	19.19	38.38
	<b>65.59</b>	<b>279.64</b>
<b>Training, PICA Liaison, Youth Development</b>		
Travel	0.00	0.00
Post / phone / email / administration	0.00	0.00
Training Events, Instruction etc.	60.00	750.00
Youth Development: Cliffhanger etc.	0.00	0.00
	<b>60.00</b>	<b>750.00</b>
<b>SSSI Conservation work for Natural England</b>		
Projects funded in 2018/19	0.00	0.00
Projects funded in 2019/20	0.00	1206.87
	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,206.87</b>
<b>Cave Conservation Emergency Fund</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Cave Discovery Grants</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Donations to other organisations, causes etc.</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Bank Charges</b>	<b>10.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Exceptional Items</b>	<b>20.60</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>6,001.03</b>	<b>4,035.76</b>

Notes: 1. Includes Lyon Obelix (£2,574.31)  
2. Includes new Hilti drill and batteries (£1157.05)

## Income and Expenditure for the financial year ending 31st December 2020

Income	2020	2,019.00
<b>Subscriptions &amp; Entry Fees (ind. members)</b>	<b>407.00</b>	<b>350.00</b>
<b>Publication Sales</b>		
Newsletter "The Derbyshire Caver"	120.00	184.60
Conservation Audits		55.20
Caves of the Peak District	834.60	653.00
	<b>954.60</b>	<b>892.80</b>
<b>Donations</b>		
(from members)		
to General Fund	15.00	23.00
to Cave Discovery Fund	10.00	0.00
to Cave Conservation Emergency Fund	0.00	0.00
(from non-members)		
to Youth Development Fund	0.00	0.00
	<b>25.00</b>	<b>23.00</b>
<b>BCA Grants</b>		
Core Funding (admin and C & A )	1709.06	3605.05
Training	0.00	750.00
Youth Development	0.00	0.00
	<b>1,709.06</b>	<b>4,355.05</b>
<b>Awards and Grants from non-caving bodies</b>		
Natural England SSSI 2018/19		200.00
Natural England SSSI 2019/20	48.10	2281.90
	<b>48.10</b>	<b>2,481.90</b>
<b>Caver Training Course Fees</b>	0.00	<b>60.00</b>
<b>Other</b>	0.01	<b>5.80</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>3,143.77</b>	<b>8,168.55</b>
<b>Cash flow</b>		
Total cash assets brought forward	<b>27,245.85</b>	<b>23,337.60</b>
Income	<b>3,143.77</b>	<b>8,168.55</b>
Expenditure	<b>(6,001.03)</b>	<b>(4,260.30)</b>
Interest in deposit accounts	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Total cash assets carried forward</b>	<b>24,388.59</b>	<b>27,245.85</b>

<b>Balance Sheet for the financial year ending 31 December 2020</b>					
		<b>2020</b>		<b>2019</b>	
<b>Assets</b>					
	RBS current account	84.24		0.24	
	RBS deposit account	0.01		0.01	
	Lloyds current account	24,404.34		24,963.70	
	Cash	0.00		0.00	
	Accounts receivable	0.00		2,281.90	
	<b>Total assets</b>		<b>24,488.59</b>		<b>27,245.85</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>					
	Accounts payable		<b>0.00</b>		<b>0.00</b>
	Peak Hydrology Fund		<b>(100.00)</b>		
	<b>Total cash assets less liabilities</b>		<b>24,388.59</b>		<b>27,245.85</b>
<b>Note that the balance carried forward includes:</b>					
	Cave Discovery Fund	313.29		313.29	
	Cave Conservation Emergency Fund	1,002.66		1,002.66	
<b>Publications (valued at nominal trade prices)</b>					
	Cave Conservation publications	0.00		0.00	
	Caves of the Peak District	6,526.00		7,189.00	
			<b>6,526.00</b>		<b>7,189.00</b>
<b>Total Assets at 31 December</b>			<b>30,914.59</b>		<b>34,434.85</b>
<b>Notes</b>					

## Publication Sales

### Caves of the Peak District:

Despite having been printed in 2010, this continues to sell steadily, mostly now via 2 regular trade outlets, bringing in a total of £677 this year (compared to £693 last year). After the initial high returns for the first 3 years, sales have averaged 63 copies per year for the last 8 years and we have stock sufficient to cover a further 7+ years at the present sales rate. When DCA decides to print a new edition, bearing in mind the lead time for producing this, it would be possible to sell the existing copies, remaindered, at a reduced price and still cover our costs while the new edition is in production. (We would, of course, need to inform our trade outlets in advance when we decide to do this.)

### Cave Conservation Audits:

No printed copies of the 5 Conservation Audits published by DCA have been sold this year. I had two enquiries but both people decided they preferred to download their copy from the website rather than pay for a print-on-demand copy at cost. Stock of the printed publications is now down to just 2 copies of the Masson Audit. The information contained in these audits is important and as they are freely available to download I have no record of how many other copies may have been downloaded during the year. The exception is the Stoney Middleton Audit, which has not been placed as a pdf on the DCA website as this requires the permission of the author who I have not been able to contact, however this is still available as print-on-demand.

### **DCA Newsletter “The Derbyshire Caver”:**

This is now produced online and also as printed copies to maintain a profile for DCA in shops and Libraries. We had 14 paying subscribers for printed copies in 2020 (£10.00 for 4 issues posted); plus a further 15 printed copies sent free of charge to Libraries, including some club libraries, the British Caving Library and two local authority libraries.

Shop sales are on a trade sale-or-return basis and there have been no shop sales at all this year because of Covid-19 restrictions; however, being aware of the problem we did not print the usual 15 sales copies so saved on this cost.

I am willing to continue to deal with publications sales on behalf of DCA.

Jenny Potts  
03/02/2021

### **Conservation Officer Report:**

Conservation efforts during the trying time of the 2020/2021 Pandemic.

While we have all been severely affected by the pandemic and many of us have had very little opportunities to move forward with projects, I have had several opportunities between restrictions to get some work done in the name of conservation. Of course, I adhered to all guidelines from the government and took precautions to align with the ever-changing rules and regulations.

In May 2020 I went to check on Bateman’s Adit at Lathkill Dale, the gate had come up for monitoring. The gate is secure, went into the internal shaft and all looks good. Cleaned up some rubbish (a Desperado and a balloon) found a bottle near the mine opening at Mandale mine engine shaft ( found a Guinness bottle) . Inside Batemans adit, no signs of bats roosting.

In February, a lid was proposed to the dig at Cussey Pot by EPC. The lid would replace a few paver stones that had been supported by a nice concrete foundation. The area was measured, and a lid was constructed out of galvanized mild steel by Hal Debes of Portobello Engineering. The lid has two Derbyshire Keys. The lid was subsequently fitted and was a big success ensuring safety for those who might stumble upon it and those who depend on it for their safety.

In November another lid was made for Intake Dale made out of galvanized mild steel with an internal rope attachment crossbar. The lid has a pair of Derbyshire Keys. We supplied EPC with sections of rebar which they drilled and fastened into the ginging. Portobello Engineering turned up with a welding generator and a “ horseshoe” of metal which was welded to the aforementioned rebar .We then returned with the manufactured shaft closure plate and double hinging lid which was drilled and bolted the afore mentioned horseshoe.

December saw us out to look at fitting another lid for Snelslow Swallet Shaft. This was measured up and with some work on bolting could lead to a nice through trip. The design is in the works but again is not a rush due to the lockdown and restrictions.

Responded to a request for a clean-up of broken glass and bottles in Carlsark. Entering we found four or five broken bottles down in the oyster chamber. With a bit of care, we picked up all the broken glass and fragments.

Right before the third lockdown I had the chance to look at the Ashford Black Marble Mine Gate. The gate is loosely closed with a chain and the gate is in good working order. We are working up a lock and

key system to make it more secure. Looks like it will be on hold until we get the all clear to resume after lockdown.

In January we became aware of some individuals who sprayed graffiti inside Giants. The matter was referred to the police and a member of the caving community removed the graffiti and some litter. DCA discussed the idea of erecting a sign in the area that indicates the importance and legality of caving on SSSI areas as well as including the caving code and a link to DCA website. I have contacted several companies that deal in this area to get some quotes. Unfortunately, this is also a slower process due to the current lockdown regulations. I will continue to follow this matter up and put it forward to the other Officers at the DCA.

Victoria Kocher  
05/01/2021

## **Access Officer Report**

Covid-19 Restrictions. Most of the venues which were closed during the initial lockdown are open again now except access to Peak Speedwell via the Peak Cavern show cave, Titan or Speedwell, although cavers can still use JH subject to permission from Rowter Farm.

Rookery Mine (Ashford Black Marble Mine). No access currently. The shop has been sold and is back in business, but I am advised not to contact the new owner just yet as he has a lot to get used to. As there won't be any access to the mine until at least March this isn't a problem. Currently the keys are with Barry Marsden, a friend of Bob's in Ashford, and the gate is locked with a substantial chain and padlock. Victoria and Hal are planning to sort out the gate/lock. They'll need to let Barry have a key to the new lock once the work is complete.

Holme Bank Chert Mine. Situation unchanged. Access is allowed, but via the fan entrance with Holme Hall section of mine technically out-of-bounds. I've had reports of the top entrance being vandalised but haven't had a chance to check yet. I did visit Holme Bank with the intention of looking at the top entrance the last time I inspected Rookery, but I couldn't get parked.

Waterways Swallet. I've inspected the car park, and the signs are that the ground drains are doing their job, and the new gate looks good (without looking too obvious). Unfortunately, Crewe CPC had to cancel their planned gardening session because of tiers and lockdown, but a review and possibly some action may occur in the spring, depending on the Covid situation.

Redhurst Swallet. I'm told that my fix is still in place. After some emails with Paul Mortimer, I've been in touch with the lead NT ranger for the White Peak Estate, Paul Clemmett, who thanked us for the repair, but says that NT cannot currently commit funds for any replacement at the moment. Replacement is not currently necessary - it's probably OK for a few years yet, by which time NT may be in a better position to help financially.

Eldon Quarry. A caver reported that the box is now on the main Slitherstones Lane gate with no book, pens or survey. I have sourced replacements and replaced them into the box, and notified cavers of the new arrangements via UKCaving, Descent and Derbyshire Caver.

Thistle Pot. Phil Reports that the entrance is in danger of being buried in some new earthworks. He tells me that Sue Smith is aware of this and is investigating. Other than taking a look at it, I've done nothing, and await news from Sue via Phil.

Bincliffe Mine. Reports of sudden gating due to bat issues turn out to be very old news. The adit referred to is not gated, and the two adits which are gated have been locked for years. More importantly, bat folk are seriously worried that cavers might spread Covid to the bat population and have issued specific guidance for cavers. This has been passed on to the caving community by Pete K in UKCaving and will also go into Derbyshire Caver. See also next section.

Devonshire Estate Reports. These will be due in March 2021 – although this will almost certainly be delayed because of the current lockdown. Pete Wagstaff has agreed to carry out the Lathkill inspections (Lathkill head Upper Entrance and Garden Path). Rookery will be sorted either by me, or my successor. Ben Garstang, Devonshire's Estates Manager, has contacted me to say that our access agreements will need to be renewed this year. He has also been in touch about Bincliffe Mine and is proposing that there should be a formal access agreement for this venue. He is proposing a meeting with all stake holders (including DCA, Staffs Wildlife and Staffs Bat Group).

Long Rake Bradwell Moor. No current access to this site owing to a carbon monoxide poisoning incident in 2008. Following discussions with DCRO, the team are still intending to try to assess the atmosphere in the mine using some new equipment they now have which allows for remote sampling, but this will probably need to wait until pandemic measures allow. Any thoughts of re-opening access negotiations should be deferred until DCRO have concluded their work.

As previously stated, during the current pandemic, I am quite restricted as to what I can do practically with regard to access issues, and I owe thanks to several people for their assistance and work on my behalf, in particular Pete Knight and Nigel Atkins.

As you may be aware, I will be moving to Scotland fairly soon, but I have two people very interested in taking on the Access Officer role – Ann Soulsby and Roy Rodgers, with Ann taking on the formal position.

Alan Brentnall  
01<sup>st</sup> February 2021

## **Project Officer Report**

### **Batemans's Adit**

NE asked if DCA could arrange to have the Bateman's Adit gate checked as part of their annual audit of risk sites. Victoria kindly went over to look for me and reported that all was well with the gate we installed back in 2014.

### **Snelslow Swallet**

Pending quote for a lid and anchor installation in shaft. On hold due to lockdown 3.

### **Intake Dale Mine**

Pending completion of the front wall. On hold until warmer weather allows lime mortar to be used.

### **Odin Mine**

Phil and I have been working through the jobs list in Odin for the last 12 months. Progress has been slow due to poor rock and the pandemic. We needed to install 6 special 600mm long expansion anchors and a further 22 BP anchors to bring the rigging up to modern standards. We also installed a brand-new 10mm rope on the old climb, which is now a fixed 'up' pitch owing to the severity of a fall with the new hole directly beneath. Some surface work was also completed on the 2nd of Jan 2021.

We cleared a rock fall for the NT in the side gorge. Revised rigging topos and route descriptions will be produced ready for the mine access to be restored. Practical work is now on hold due to lockdown 3.

### **Oxlow Mine**

The pull through wire system had become damaged on the Pilgrims Way pitch. I spec'd and ordered new components for a stainless-steel chain and maillon replacement. Phil Wolstenholme and Lisa Wootton installed these in December 2020. At the time it was identified that the backup anchor for the pitch was loose and needed replacement. It is felt that 3 new anchors need to be installed here, 1 to replace the wobbler, and 2 further back up the tunnel to act as a properly spaced backup. It may be wise to leave a short length of rope attaching the pull through ring to the traverse anchors, so the first person ascending the pitch has somewhere to clip to as they get off the rope. I had a volunteer ready to do this work but have put it on hold due to lockdown 3.

### **Wapping Mine**

During a rescue in Dec 2020, DCRO had to remove some of the Wapping wall and the rock around it to fit a stretcher through. Although the entrance has not got any easier to negotiate, there is a larger gap here now. With the local publicity around this rescue, and the frequent visits to the mine by less experienced people, it is probably time we put a door on here. I am in discussion with Adam Russell and Nige Atkins who are speaking to the Parish Council who own the land.

### **Action Register Items**

48 – Container. Ongoing. 2 new options are being investigated currently. A recent issue with access to the container door at the current site was dealt with using a large excavator kindly piloted by one of the quarry workers. Tony Marsden has a meeting scheduled with the Hope Quarry management to discuss the container (amongst other things) on our behalf.

79 – HBCM. Ongoing.

80 – Long Rake Lead Mine. Ongoing.

### **Election**

I am willing to stand for election to this post again in 2021. Anyone else wishing to stand as either a replacement for me or assistant, would be welcomed.

Pete Knight

07/01/2021

## **Equipment Officer Report**

Nothing major to report from E&T perspective as unfortunately access for bolting has been understandably restricted. The E&T equipment has all been transferred to its permanent home at the TSG and access has proved better for all. Pete constructed a relatively secure cage area within an already locked cupboard so it's proving to be reasonably secure. We have in the last fortnight taken delivery of a brand new Hilti 36V drill with all the extras and recently had our Hydrajaws bolt testing kit refurbished and recalibrated. Pete has purchased new drill bits recently and so we are looking good to go when the situation permits!

Scott Bradley

08/02/2021

## Cave Atmosphere Monitoring Report.

1. Problems reported. As reported in September, there was an isolated report of bad air from a solo caver in Knotlow in August. Since then, there has been one report received from a different solo caver in Slaley Sough on 02/01/2021. This was in the Parsons Rake passage beyond Thunder Shaft (where previous reports have indicated pooled CO<sub>2</sub>). Initially detected burnt smell, later breathing became laboured and he turned back. Headaches continued after the trip. This is to be investigated.

2. Equipment. The GMI PS500 meter is effectively defunct and will need to be replaced. In the meantime, we can make use of DCRO's facilities.

3. Measurements. No measurements have been taken since the DCRO Treak Cliff exercise in August – largely due to covid-19. See table below.

4. Personnel. As you may be aware, I move to Scotland soon, but Pete Dell, DCRO's Equipment Officer who has been maintaining and calibrating our monitor, and who has worked with me on this matter for several years, has agreed to take over the monitoring of atmosphere statistics for Peak District caves and mines. To facilitate this, all measurements and previous reports have been moved to DCA's Google drive.

Cave/Mine	Date	Surface Oxygen	Oxygen	Carbon Dioxide	Location
Water Icicle	14/08/2020	20.90		0.02	Surface Reading
Water Icicle	14/08/2020		19.80	1.05	Shaft base
Water Icicle	14/08/2020		19.80	1.05	Foot of Ladder to Gate
Water Icicle	14/08/2020		19.70	1.12	Gate
Water Icicle	14/08/2020		19.70	1.13	Main Junction
Water Icicle	14/08/2020		19.70	1.13	Urchin Passage by Elevator
Water Icicle	14/08/2020		19.20	1.54	Alarm below gate on exit **
Treak Cliff	17/08/2020	20.90			Surface Reading
Treak Cliff	17/08/2020		20.90		All underground parts.

\*\* Alarm and higher CO<sub>2</sub> level probably due to my heavy breathing!!

Alan Brentnall  
01st February 2021

## Training Officer Report.

It has been a very difficult year for everyone and we live in strange times. New training officers have been in touch and It is encouraging to see that enthusiasm is out there for caver training. Derbyshire caving instructor Dave Baines has also just released his new book on weather and flooding for cavers.

### DCA Caver Workshops

I have been available as the DCA training officer to club cavers and training officers/coaches to help with their events and I have run a few workshops at my surface training area rather than underground practical.

Continuity in techniques is important so that cavers don't get confused with differing opinions about things. This is where the workshops are so valuable to be able to help keep techniques to a high and approved standard.

DCA has always been the flagship region for running lots of successful caver training workshops in various topics such as SRT training, SRT rigging, rescue and specialist subjects such as photography etc. Sometimes, individual cavers are not able to attend organised club events or clubs themselves do not have anyone at the appropriate level to run training in certain topics. The DCA training workshops for these people provide valuable opportunities and I encourage everyone to support them in any way they can.

Workshop dates to be arranged when we are allowed to run them.

### **Report from the BCA Training Committee**

There are now 4 regional training officers who will put on training events when they are able to. I have encouraged these officers to open up their workshops to BCA members from everywhere and I will advertise these as soon as I know when these are.

### **DCA Coaching Scheme**

#### Coaching Workshops

The coaching scheme has been reworked during lock down to try fit in with terms used all over the UK. There was an objection in BCA to the use of the word 'best' practice which seemed to put a halt to the work being done. In DCA I use the terms 'best, good and accepted' practice and I would be happy to receive any feedback from DCA members about this. The coaching workshops are designed to introduce the skills of coaching and look at the teaching of the training modules. These are essential workshops for experienced cavers considering registering for the Coaching Scheme. Please contact us for the criteria to attend this workshop.

- Coaching Workshop - (Level 1 of the Coaching Scheme)
- Vertical Cave Leader Workshop - Derbyshire (Level 2 of the Coaching Scheme). A practical workshop ideal for cavers already or are thinking about taking others on simple vertical (Non SRT) caving trips.
- SRT Coaching Workshop - Derbyshire (Level 3 of the Coaching Scheme). A practical workshop ideal for cavers already or are thinking about teaching others SRT.
- SRT Pitch Rigging Coaching Workshop - Derbyshire (Level 4 of the DCA Coaching Scheme). A practical workshop ideal for cavers already or are thinking about teaching others SRT Pitch Rigging.

Nigel Atkin  
09/02/2021

### **Newsletter Editor**

We've had another tough year for The Derbyshire Caver, with only two issues produced instead of four so far – 154 is almost ready for printing. This again is down to a total lack of content being submitted by local cavers, inevitably distracted by the bright lights and full-colour pages of Descent, but also due to the enormous drop in caving activity due to coronavirus. We have been working on DCA projects over the year, but as some still haven't been completed we can't really include them in our publicity yet. However, the Slitherstones capping job has been extensively documented in the upcoming issue. Given the lack of 'caving news' at the moment, I think if we want to continue with four issues a year, we will have to open it up to a wider subject matter, which may be a good thing. Hydrology and fieldwork ironically are technically less affected by lockdown restrictions, and historical and geological research could also be considered. But fundamentally I think we have to face facts that

most local cavers don't write articles or have any ideas for articles, so we need to come up with material ourselves really – and with the absence of 'other news', it's difficult to envisage this situation changing anytime soon.

The good news is the last issue post on UK Caving had well over 600 views, and given there was only a link to read, I hope that most people downloaded it and read it.

Phil Wolstenholme  
08/02/2021

## **Cave Registry Secretary**

The Cave Registry is up-to-date and working fine, with some new sites recently added. The current DB available to the public has now been locked to new entries, pending switchover to the new version, which will be fully integrated into the new Peak District Caving Info website. This will prove to be a drastic improvement over the previous version, both in terms of the breadth of information provided and the level of integration with the other elements of the site. In addition, 3D model display (where available) is more powerful, with dedicated output options for saving images and/or printing. Photo-handling has been improved substantially, with many images now includable apart from the entrance photo. An article explaining the changes and plans for future development is being created and will feature in the next edition of The Derbyshire Caver (see below), but we aim to release the new version in time for the AGM.

Several submissions and site updates have been received by cavers over the year, which is greatly appreciated. As COVID-19 regulations have severely hampered access for cavers generally over the last year, very little has been received in terms of new sites, but some have been clarified.

Several new entrance photos have also recently been submitted and these have been added to the Peak District Caving website. Further related micro-guides for various sites will be updated as time allows, but I'm only able to update sites I personally know about – if anyone can think of micro-guides that need updating, or of ones that don't exist and they would consider producing one, please let me know. We have had an offer from someone to produce the missing 'Giants Hole Part 3' microguide, which, it turns out, was never actually written! Which explains it.

Phil Wolstenholme  
08/02/2021

## **DCA Report on BCA Council Meetings**

Minutes, agendas and officer reports of the BCA council meetings and AGMs can be found at the following link: <https://british-caving.org.uk/about-bca/bca-council/official-documents/>

My points below are just a quick overview and anybody interested, should read my report in conjunction with the actual minutes.

### **11<sup>th</sup> October 2020, BCA AGM**

The AGM went really well, and voting was to be via the online ballot after the meeting. The meeting was mainly a discussion forum about the proposals so attendees could make up their mind and vote whichever way they wanted.

Phil Rowsell, Howard Jones and Russel Myers were voted in as the executive.

A proposal to remove the BCA president post was carried and ratified by the members vote.

The individual members representatives and group representatives each introduced themselves and give a brief overview of their intentions.

There were a number of proposals for changes to the AGM, these were discussed, pros and cons discussed. the decision was left to members to make their mind up

#### **4<sup>th</sup> November 2020, BCA Council meeting:**

The results of the AGM online ballot were discussed, that the executive were elected with a good majority.

Lydia Leather joined council as a club representative while Idris Williams was re-elected. Pete Knight joined council as individual member while Jenny Potts and Andrew McLeod were re-elected as individual member representatives.

The Equipment and techniques officer, Mark Sims was not elected at the AGM. The meeting agreed to co-opt Mark for the remaining period of his tenure.

Will Burn, following is election to Conservation and Access Officer, he indicated that he would stand down from his position of Individual Representative 2. Martin Hoff stood for a position at the recent AGM but lost out in the members vote. It was proposed and seconded by council to co-opt Martin into the role, that Will recently left.

All motions voted on were passed and have subsequently been worked on.

The chair has proposed a BCA UK weeklong caving event, also incorporating the AGM; and a BCA trip to the PSM. These events are aiming to bring the caving community together, but this will depend on the COVID19 situation.

It was decided that BCA Council, that the first choice is for Council and AGM meetings to be held online / electronically, as this reduces the carbon footprint and the payment of travel expenses to council members.

A draft report produced for training was discussed but it was decided to defer until the next meeting.

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021, BCA Council Meeting:**

A report regarding radon was discussed, this led to the formation of a working group to discuss the issues and report back to the council in time for the summer season.

An approval in principle was given for the Yorkshire event subject to a budget been agreed. The PSM event proposed was also agreed. COVID19 situation could still stop these events.

BCA are appealing the decision made at the Welsh Government Judicial Review, this is on a no time cost and but a £500 court admin fee is payable.

Training was a large item on the agenda. The executive report produced regarding training was to be discussed and voted on.

Cambrian CC proposed that to separate QMC from BCA and set up a self-regulating body comparable to other constituent bodies such as BCRA. A working group was formed to discuss this and report back to council / AGM.

The proposals were voted on, the actual report can be found on the website.

Proposal 1.1 forming a Training Oversight/Liaison Group. The name was changed to Training Liaison Support Group, this was carried by the majority.

Proposal 1.2 Equalization of groups. QMC is a Working Group established by Council and Training Committee is a full committee established by an AGM. A discussion ensued about the logistics of changing a Committee which would need approval by an AGM. It was agreed to defer a decision on this proposal to another meeting.

Proposal 1.3 Appointment of Convenors. the relevance of this to 1.2 it was agreed by a majority, to the methodology within the proposal for the appointment of Convenor/Officer within the respective group.

Proposal 1.4 Complaints and Concerns. The Chair recommended deferring action on this and referring the matter to the Constitution and Manual of Operations Working Party for consideration.

Proposal 1.5 Website Training Pages. The improved changes to the Website regarding Training were acknowledged and endorsed.

Proposal 1.6 Name changes - there is difficulties in changing the name of QMC. It was carried by the majority to defer action to change the name of QMC until a later date. The majority voted, that the name of Training Committee be changed to Recreational Training Committee.

Proposal 2.1 The BCA Coaching Scheme Convenor. This was deferred so the training committee could consider the effect of the change of name to Recreational Training Committee.

Proposal 2.2 BCA Coaching Scheme Working Group make-up - this proposal was withdrawn.

Proposal 2.3 BCA Coaching/Training Events. The Chair described the comparison between QMC with identified systems and procedures in place for how events take place and (Recreational) Training Committee with none, particularly with regard to payment. Following a detailed discussion when issues of conflict of interest and transparency were raised. A vote took place, and this was carried.

Proposal 3.1 BCA Qualification Scheme Working Group make up. Due to lateness of the meeting, proposals i.e. 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.1 and 4.2 were deferred to a later date.

The BCA training officer had submitted reports to the meeting but these wasn't looked at due to lack of time and were deferred to a further meeting.

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021, BCA Council Meeting:**

Philip (Mad Phil) Rowsell resigned in December from his position as Chairman for personal reasons. Russell Myers was co-opted as Chairman until the next BCA AGM, Allan Richardson is co-opted as Secretary until the next BCA AGM while Howard Jones remains as Treasurer.

Bob Mehew resigned as BCA Rope Testing Officer, he has been involved with BCA , and its predecessor NCA for many years.

The training discussion was deferred to a future / specially arranged meeting just to discuss training.

There is Metal Wellbeing document to be published on the BCA Website, to support cavers metal health.

There was a discussion about the conflict-of-interest policy, Howard Jones was going to take on the points raised and come back to a future meeting.

A vote was taken and was carried to move the AGM from June 2021 to Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

The BCA Demographic report is being published very shortly, keep an eye on the BCA website.

The Three Counties Ultimate Through Trip from Large Pot through to Top Sink was discussed, with a view to BCA branding the event and providing funding towards it. Council voted to approve the proposal in principle but a more detailed plan is required to council.

Wayne Sheldon

DCA Rep to, BCA Meetings.

04/02/2021