



DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

Open Council Meeting, 21 June 2021, 19:30, Online Meeting

MINUTES

Present:	Officers:	Chair / Secretary / BCA Rep	Wayne Sheldon [WS]
		Vice Chair / Membership Sec	Mike Higgins [MH]
		Treasurer	Angus Sawyer (AS)
		Access Officer	Ann Soulsby [ASo]
		Conservation Officer	Victoria Kocher (VK)
		Projects Officer	Pete Knight [PK]
		Equipment Officer	Scott Bradley (SB)
		Cave Registry / Newsletter	Phil Wolstenholme [PW]
		Publication Sales	Jenny Potts [JP]
		Training Officer	Nigel Atkins (NA)
Clubs:		DCMC	(Pete Knight)
		Crewe C.P.C.	Alan Brentnall (AB)
		T.S.G.	(Phil Wolstenholme)
		PDHMS	Shirley Burtonshaw {SBu}
		Nottingham University	Benedict Clacton Stevens (BCS)
		Orpheus Caving Club	(Jenny Potts)
Individual Members:			Martin Long (ML)
			Karen Slatcher (KS)
			(Shirley Burtonshaw, Alan Brentnall, Jenny Potts, Pete Knight, Phil Wolstenholme, Angus Sawyer, Mike Higgins, Scott Bradley, Wayne Sheldon)
Guests/Observers:			

1. Chair's Welcome:

Meeting began at 19:35 via Go to Meeting Platform. WS welcomed those still present.

2. Apologies for absence:

2.1 **Apologies received from:** Charley Cooley and John Gunn.

2.2 **Quorum:** Quorate with 9 officers present plus Chairman.

3. To Approve Minutes of the previous Council Meeting: (22 February 2021, previously circulated).

3.1 **That the Minutes of the Council Meeting of 22 February 2021 be approved.**

Prop. J. Potts, Sec. P. Knight. **Agreed**

4. Matters Arising Therefrom: (Note that some of these issues may be dealt within the DCA Annual Report.)

		From Council 30-06-18	
4.1	042	MH to scan earlier newsletters for website. See 6.2.b. Ongoing. More newsletter has been scanned and uploaded to website.	MH
		From Council 27-10-18	
4.2	048	DCA Store move. See 6.6. Ongoing. We are still looking to move the container.	PK
		From Council 23-02-19	
4.3	059	Great Masson. See 6.5. Ongoing. Still no contact yet with owner.	ASo / WS
4.4	060	Old Jant Mine. See 6.5. Considering reopening shafts for access. Ongoing.	PW, ASo
		From Council 22-02-20	
4.5	071	Scanning of surveys. See 6.1. Scanning has now started again.	WS
4.6	075	Eldon Hole Dig Site. See 6.1 and 6.5. Date is scheduled for 11 th July 2021.	WS / John Gunn
4.7	078	Rookery Mine Issue. See 6.5. Completed	
4.8	079	Holme Bank Chert Mine. See 6.6. Ongoing.	ASo / PK
4.9	080	Long Rake Mine. See 6.5 and 6.6. An approach needs to be made.	ASo / RR / PK
4.10	081	Two Tier System for the registry. Now completed.	
4.11	082	Cascade Cavern. NE are using another contractor. Closed.	
4.12	083	Advertise Secretary Post. Closed	
4.13	084	Giants Hole Traverse. See AOB. 8.1.	

4.14	085	Devonshire Cavern. Private Land Notices put up. Completed	
4.15	086	Wapping Mine. Confirm ownership. See 6.6. Ongoing.	NA
4.16	087	Giants Hole. Private Land Notices. Approach made to landowner but no response to date. Ongoing.	NA
4.17	088	Giants Hole Interpretation Board. See 6.4. Ongoing.	VK
4.18	089	COVID Announcement. Completed	
4.19	090	Cave Discovery Fund amendments. See AOB. 8.3	

5. Election of New Members

- 5.1 **Club Membership.** Shropshire Caving and Mining Club.
- 5.2 **Club Membership.** Peak Caving Club
- 5.3 **Individual Membership.** Nigel Atkins
- 5.4 **Individual Membership.** Pete Dell
- 5.5 **Individual Membership.** Ann Soulsby
- 5.6 **Individual Membership.** Victoria Kocher
- 5.7 **Club Membership.** Southsea Spelæological Society
- 5.8 **Individual Membership.** Alun Thomas (Ind)

All proposed on block by M. Higgins, seconded by J. Potts. All accepted.

6. Officers' Reports.

6.1 Chairman. *(See report circulated prior to the meeting.)*

- 6.1.1 JP wanted to highlight that Shirley Burtonshaw and Martin Long have done a great job in cataloging the John Beck surveys and they are still on with them. The meeting acknowledged the work they are doing.
- 6.1.2 AS asked if the surveys were included in the library catalogue. JP said that Martin Laverty hasn't sorted out the information he wants, because what we've got is far more information than he needs, and he wants me to cut down the information.

That the Chairman's Report be accepted. Prop M. Higgins, Sec. P. Knight. **Agreed**

6.2.a Secretary *(See report- written by W.Sheldon in the absence of a secretary - circulated prior to the meeting.)*

That the Secretary's Report be accepted. Prop J. Potts, Sec. P. Knight. **Agreed**

6.2.b Membership Secretary / Vice Chair. *(See report circulated prior to the meeting.)*

That the Membership / Vice Chair Report be accepted. Prop K. Slatcher, Sec. P. Wolstenholme. **Agreed**

6.3.a Treasurer / Webmaster. *(See report circulated prior to the meeting.)*

That the Treasurer's Report be accepted. Prop. P. Knight, Sec. V. Kocher. **Agreed.**

6.3.b Publication Sales. *(See report circulated prior to the meeting.)*

6.3.b.1JP explained the COPD proposal that is within her report. Existing printed copies could continue to be sold and there might even be a boost in sales if it were apparent that there would be no completely new edition for the moment. (If new discoveries were to be made, we could simply produce an updated supplement.) We could continue this until sufficient of the remaining copies have been sold and we then begin the process of creating a completely new edition of COPD while remaindering the rest of the existing copies.

6.3.b.2PK added that if its going to be a companion for a while, A5 size is the ideal/

6.3.b.3PW suggested talking to Peter Miles, to get the all the fonts and various styles that was used in the original COPD. PW to speak to Peter Miles.

Action PW

That the Publication Sales Report be accepted. Prop. P. Knight, Sec. S.H. Burtonshaw. **Agreed.**

6.4 Conservation Officer. *(See report circulated prior to the meeting.)*

6.4.1 **Cave Monitoring Scheme.** It has been proposed that for each cave monitoring form that comes in, the name gets entered into a prize draw. The winner drawn out at the end of the year, would win a voucher. The proposal being a £50 Starless River Voucher.

6.4.1.1PK asked how easy it was to update the website to target the forms that we require back, so we don't get multiple forms back for the same sites. WS added that a process can be developed for this and that we can't tell cavers to go and monitor, they need to do the monitoring on a routine trip.

6.4.1.2MH added that the forms still need updating to match the CNCC format, based on a numbering system. BCS added that he CNCC format is a good way to get students to look at cave features and learn conservation.

£50 Starless River Voucher for winner of the prize draw, one entry per person. Prop. M. Higgins, Sec P. Knight.

Agreed.

6.4.1.3 The terms and conditions need writing and this needs advertising in all the available caving press, online platforms. It's important that we get the forms updated. KS added that she doesn't mind copy typing and can undertake some of the updating.

Action VK

6.4.2 **Cave Passage Discovered Competition.** Hitch N Hike used to run a competition, where the group / individual who discovered the most cave passage, won 200 metres of rope. DCA are proposing that we re-introduce this competition and the meeting was in agreement. The terms and conditions need writing and bringing to the next meeting.

Action MH / WS

6.4.2 **SSSI Interpretation Board for Giant's Hole.** PK proposed, MH seconded that A3 size board for the entrance to Giant's Hole be produced, with the proviso that the landowner's permission is agreed. PK added that we have put notices up previously and these were subsequently removed by the landowner. NA to get permission from landowner.

Action: VK / NA

6.4.3 PK wanted to thank VK for sorting out the nuts on the Knotlow Climbing Shaft.

6.4.4 The Lid to James Hall is going to be modified by the project and access team.

That the Conservation Officer Report be accepted. Prop. J. Potts, Sec. P. Wolstenholme. **Agreed.**

6.5 Access Officer. (See report circulated prior to the meeting.)

6.5.1 **Bincliffe Mines.** We have been approached by Chatsworth Estates to enter an agreement in terms of access and possibly installing lids. The general consensus is that they are of no interest so do we want to be involved in an agreement. We also, don't know much about them, ASu has been in touch with Nigel Cooper who will contact Len Kirkham. ML may have information, will discuss with ASu separate to this meeting. More research is certainly required by us before we go back to Chatsworth.

Action: ASo

6.5.2 **Locks for mines.** The key for Garden Path is one that can be copied and there was a discussion whether this should be a key where copying was only allowed by us on showing of a card. The meeting agreed that this was not required, as the current process as worked well for years.

6.5.3 **Key Distribution.** Traditionally for a couple of sites, the police have had a key for emergency purposes but they have lost the keys so it has been decided that they no longer require keys, emergency keys to be provided to DCRO. The plaques on the entrances are also out of date but what to put on new plaques is still under discussion, and won't be agreed until the new agreements with Chatsworth are updated and are in place.

That the Access Officer Report be accepted. Prop. P. Knight, Sec. M. Long. **Agreed.**

6.6 Projects Officer. (See report circulated prior to the meeting.)

6.6.1 **Snelsnow Swallet:** PK confirmed that we are still awaiting the quote for the lid.

6.6.2 **Cumberland Cavern:** NA raised the issue of re-opening this mine and believes he has located the landowner who lives in Nottingham from information provided by the locals.

6.6.3 **Wapping Entrance:** PK is ready to go on this entrance, just awaiting go ahead from Adam Russell, as long as the permission has been gained. NA added that the locals are happy.

That the Projects Officer's Report be accepted. Prop. V. Kocher, Sec. N. Atkins. **Agreed**

6.7.a Equipment Officer. (See report circulated prior to the meeting.)

6.7.a.1 **BP Anchors:** PK raised that DCA need more anchors to complete outstanding jobs in the region, as we only have 12 to 14 anchors left that we are keeping for emergency jobs. It appears that BCA don't have any available so we may need to approach BAT products for a quote and order them ourselves. Claiming the money back from BCA. PK to speak to SBr (who had lost signal at this point in the meeting).

6.7.a.2 **Hungerhill Swallet:** AB raised the Deep Space route in this mine, as it was agreed to bolt this three years ago and he had provide the diagram to the previous equipment officer but this had dropped off the bolting list. This will be added back on and diagram provided to SBr.

Action SBr

That the Equipment Officer's Report be accepted. Prop. M. Higgins, Sec. P. Knight. **Agreed.**

6.7.b DCA Cave Atmosphere Monitoring report. (No report circulated prior to the meeting.)

6.8 Training Officer. (Apologies sent but see report circulated prior to the meeting.)

6.8.1 There was a general discussion about training and University Training that NA is hoping to improve coaching within some of the universities.

That the Training Officer's Report be accepted. Prop. J. Potts, Sec. M. Higgins. **Agreed.**

6.9 Newsletter Editor. (See report circulated prior to the meeting.)

6.9.1 **That the Newsletter Editor's Report be accepted.** Prop. P. Knight, Sec. V. Kocher. **Agreed.**

6.10 Cave Registry Secretary. (See report circulated prior to the meeting.)

That the Cave Registry Secretary's Report be accepted. Prop. A. Soulsby, Sec. K. Slatcher. **Agreed.**

7.1 BCA Matters

7.1.1 JP is part of the BCA constitution and operation working group where a number of options have been discussed. Several suggestions are the potential merging of the Equipment Committee, with the Training Committee; and the scrapping of standing committees and creation of working groups instead. The meeting was in agreement that these are a bad idea, they are different jobs and each will get little attention. NA added that they need people who have experience of the areas involved. Scrapping of standing committees will reduce the number of people who have a vote on council as well, is this wise.

8. Date & Venue for next Council Meeting

8.1 The next council meeting will be online, on Monday 27th Sept 2021, at 19.30.

9. Any Other Business

9.1 Giants Hole Traverse Proposal

9.1.1 The proposal was sent out with the agenda and was taken as read. There was a brief discussion about the proposal, no changes were made. Prop J. Potts, Sec. N. Atkins that we accept the traverse proposal. Agreed.

9.2 DCA Fixed Ropes Policy

9.2.1 The proposal was sent out with the agenda and was taken as read. Prop. P. Knight, Sec. N. Atkins that we accept the DCA Fixed Ropes Policy. Agreed.

9.3 Cave Discovery Fund Constitution

9.3.1 MH explained to the meeting, the revised constitution has been issued prior to the meeting, it was taken as read. Prop. M. Higgins, Sec. J. Potts that it will be added to the agenda for the Feb 2022 AGM. Agreed.

9.4 Eldon Hole Bones – DCA Donation to DCRO

9.4.1 This event has been arranged for Sunday 11th July. DCRO will be lowering archaeologists and scientists down the hole to assess the bones. A donation of £250 to be made to DCRO following the event. Prop W. Sheldon, Sec. J. Potts. All agreed except PK and AS who abstained from the vote due to a conflict of interest.

9.5 Ash Dieback (ADB)

9.5.1 Ash Dieback has been reported near various cave entrances across the UK and care needs to be taken as affected trees can become brittle and suddenly collapse so think about those trees you use for belays and anchor points! Ash Trees are native to British Limestone environments and with 80% projected to succumb to the disease so it may only be a matter of time before someone has an unpleasant surprise at a top of a pitch. It was suggested that we put a news item on the DCA website, an article in the DCA newsletter and we aim to get the local cavers in the area to check the entrances and report back to DCA.

Action: **WS**

9.6 DCA Rep to BCA Council

9.6.1 WS is stepping down as DCA Rep to BCA Council. MH has agreed to stand as the new rep. Prop P. Knight, Sec. J. Potts that Mike is now the rep on BCA Council. Agreed.

There being no other business the meeting finished at 21.33.

W.Sheldon.
Recorder