



DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

Open Council Meeting, 01 June 2019, Officers' Reports

6.1. DCA Chairman's Report

I attended the last BCA Council meeting as an observer, as Jenny is the DCA representative. It was interesting to say the least, but I believe BCA are heading in the right direction. There are some proposals at the AGM next week that will be voted on by the membership, the agenda and associated appendices have been shared with the DCA membership prior to this meeting, and we will be discussing / voting on these items, so Jenny knows how to vote on behalf of DCA. I intend to be there as an individual member and ask that other individual members attend to vote how they see fit.

Pete has touched upon this in his report that he is covering the roles of Access & Conservation, along with Nige with regards access. I am acting secretary at the moment. DCA really needs to fill these roles whether it's multiple volunteers who can split the workload down between themselves, more hands will make lighter work.

Wayne Sheldon
22/05/2019

6.2.a. DCA Secretary Report

I am currently acting secretary. Thanks to Alan Brentnall who did minutes at the last meeting.

Mike Higgins has been circulating the information to all members on my behalf; the following has been sent out during the last four months, see report 6.2.b below.

Wayne Sheldon
22/05/2019

6.2.b DCA Membership Secretary Report

Individual membership of DCA currently remains at 39 members plus 2 honorary members. However, there are 3 individual members who have not yet renewed their subscription for 2019 despite reminders and who in accordance with paragraph 4.5 of the Constitution will be deemed to have resigned if payment is not received by 30th June 2019.

Associate members are static at 8, as are club members at 32. There is 1 prospective club member whose application is on the agenda for today's meeting.

Over the last 3 months I have circulated information to members regarding the availability of agendas and minutes on the DCA website, BCA's proposals for personal accident insurance and the BCRA event at Poole's Cavern.

Mike Higgins
22/05/2019

6.3. Treasurer / Webmaster Report

The income and expenditure to date attached. Current balance in Lloyds Account is £24,730.09, including the £440 transferred from the old RBS accounts pending final closure.

I have completed the mandates required to add Pete Knight and Alan Brentnall as signatories to the Lloyds bank account and removing Jenny Potts. I will submit these after this meeting after obtaining the final authorisations.

Since the last meeting I took part in the BCA P&I meeting, discussing terms of reference of the group, which were taken to the BCA meeting.

Angus Sawyer
01st June 2019

Publications Sales so far for 2019

Caves of the Peak District

Total of 30 sold so far this year: 29 at Trade Price and 1 at Full Price; total takings for this year up to 22 May amount to £397.00 (For comparison, total sales for 2018 were 61, amounting to £807.00 altogether.)

DCA Newsletter "The Derbyshire Caver"

Print run is now around 50 copies. 14 current Individual Subscriptions; plus 8 free Club copies and 6 Library copies of each issue are posted out. Shop sales for issues 145-150 (since the closure of Hitch 'n' Hike) average 9 copies out of 15 going out on sale-or-return; (before that the average was 18 out of 25).

Jenny Potts
22/05/2019

DCA Webmaster Report

The main DCA web site has been modified to make it more mobile device friendly.

I have been in contact with Shaun Puckering regarding payment for and transfer of the peak district caving web site domain name to the DCA and will be following this up soon.

Angus Sawyer
01st June 2019

6.4. Conservation Officer Report

Position vacant, no report.

6.4.b. DCA Underground Conservation Forum Report

The UCF meeting on 24 April was not as well attended as it could have been, in particular Dan Abrahams (Natural England) did not attend or send a report. Phil Wolstenholme contacted him after the meeting to ask whether we will get the monitoring funding this year; Dan was unable to secure any but might be able to get some money towards the end of the year. Future access for Longcliffe

Mine was discussed, Paul Mortimer and Phil Wostenholme will liaise to agree how it will be managed in future. The lack of progress on the Eldon Hole was raised and to try and get this unblocked, Adam Russell agreed to contact Historic England and Natural England, and involve John Gunn and Andrew Chamberlain in this discussion. The meeting felt that it was important for the statutory bodies not to be seen by the wider caving community as an impediment to digging, as this would prejudice future cooperation, hence the importance of getting the dig restarted.

Water Icicle Mine is going to be studied as part of a PhD project looking at cryogenic calcite, while the BCRA's cave monitoring centre at Poole's Cavern is getting more interest from academics. Paul Mortimer is still looking to move forward on Odin Mine access, but he has been having trouble arranging an inspection visit with Les Riley, he hopes to get this sorted out in the near future. Approaches to the owner of Masson Quarry have not yielded any response, Adam Russell is intending to ask the Heights of Abraham about the possibility of reopening Gentlewoman's Engine Shaft as a means of access.

Adam Russell
19/05/2019

6.5. Access Officer Report

Position vacant, no report.

6.6. Project Officer Report

Since my last report to council, I have been working with Nige Atkins and Adam Russell to cover the roles currently vacant at DCA (Access & Conservation). Between us we have managed to keep everything moving but the Association would greatly benefit from filling these roles, even with a co-opted member, as soon as possible. The workload is increasing but it is that time of year where my free time is very limited.

Mandale Mine

All 3 access points secured with Derbyshire Key systems. Natural England are happy with this but maintain that if the adits are left unsecure again, they may consider permanent closure of the mines on grounds of public safety. All 3 levels have had the new DCA plaques installed pointing people to report problems or get access details from the DCA website.

Adit behind the old pump engine house: Large adjustable spanner required.

Aqueduct Adit: Adjustable spanner required. Captive chain round gate held on end of M10 stud with nylock nut. Spare nut on stud if original lost.

Upper entrance under grill 'trapdoor': Adjustable spanner required. Nut on an M10 stud with spare nut on stud and spare washer if originals are lost.

Holmebank Chert Mine

Upper quarry adit padlock replaced. Fan Entrance checked, and all is well. Same combination here as the top entrance now. All access points (on HB land) had new DCA plaques installed.

Parking area by Adit no.1 has had a bit of gardening to create more parking space and remove the trees that were becoming a hazard to the paint on cars.

Bateman's Adit

Secure. Adjustable spanner required. New DCA plaque installed.

Wardlow Sough

Adam Russel and I will be trying to work together to get the required permissions to get this job done by end of summer 2019. We may need to consider looking into ways to accept payment from NE for this job as it has been offered and this will require a great deal of time to complete during the busy period where I could be working.

Snelslow Swallet

Nige Atkins and I took a visit down here. Before opening up access to cavers again, the whole mine will need new resin anchors installing and a skip's worth of digging detritus removed. I estimate 12-14 anchors will be needed. I have already drafted an access route map for here and Christmas Swallet. A new alloy ladder would be useful to replace the failing steel one on the entrance. Officially this cave should remain off limits until the work is done.

Christmas Swallet

We could not descend this cave as we did not have kit or anchors for the surface pitch. The lid is usable but will need replacing by DCA. There are 4 pitches, and each will require new anchors I expect. If we use 2 back-ups and 2 pitch head anchors, I estimate 16 will be required in all. Officially this cave should remain off limits until the work is done.

Giant's Signs

Would someone be prepared to contact Christine and see where she got to with the gate signs for Peakshill Farm before her departure? We need to ascertain if their wording was agreed on and if the Tennant and Landowner were informed / asked.

Pete Knight

12/05/2018

6.7.A. Equipment Officer Report

The job on Bateman's Shaft is now complete with two resin set BP anchors installed for the shaft top Y hang. Also, a Peco anchor was installed to protect the traverse to the Y hang and a further three used as deviations in the shaft. All the Peco anchors will only be subject to static loads. I have received a topo of the shaft but with no consistency in the symbols. This issue is on the agenda for this meeting.

Most of the kit has been out at Longcliffe for about two months and 24 BP anchors installed. I have, yet, not received a topo but it seems the job is now complete apart from the final topo and information for entry into the database.

Following the return and re-issue of the kit from Longcliffe I have now issued it out with all the necessary equipment for the work at Snelslow.

A report came in about a loose Eco anchor at Garlands Pot. Pete Knight has investigated this and sent me photos and a short video. Whilst this anchor is not in a critical condition, it withstood a 10kN extraction test, I think it should be replaced to avoid any further future reports from cavers.

The two outstanding jobs will be Hungerhill and Christmas Pot. Also, it is also proposed to replace the piton I placed as a deviation in Lathkill Top Entrance years ago with a Peco anchor.

I have now nearly exhausted the BP anchors and resin I had in stock and will be making moves to obtain more from the BCA E&T Convenor.

Bob Dearman
22/05/2019

6.7.B. Cave Atmosphere Monitoring Report.

1. Problems reported. Again, no problems of high CO₂ have been reported, which isn't too surprising considering the cold weather and that recent sunny weather has been accompanied by high pressure.

2. Measurements. Measurements have been taken at Knotlow Cavern, Mandale Sough, Poole's Cavern (public section) and Ecton Mine (Deep Ecton and Salt's Level) but all venues were showing almost completely fresh air, with negligible quantities of CO₂.

3. Equipment. The PS500 is proving very useful in its ability to detect, measure and record five gases, and the fact that it logs readings automatically every minute (these can be read later with equipment which DCRO has at its base at Staden Lane).

4. Measurements.

Cave/Mine	Date	O ₂	CO ₂	Location at Site
Knotlow	19/02/2019	20.90	0.00	Surface Reading
Knotlow	19/02/2019	20.50	0.25	Foot of Entrance Shaft
Knotlow	19/02/2019	20.50	0.25	Pearl Chamber
Knotlow	19/02/2019	20.70	0.30	Chain Passage junction
Knotlow	19/02/2019	20.70	0.30	Bung Series Chamber
Knotlow	19/02/2019	20.50	0.35	Head of Waterfall
Mandale	26/02/2019	20.90	0.00	Surface Reading
Mandale	26/02/2019	20.70	0.20	First section of sough
Mandale	26/02/2019	20.50	0.20	Water Chamber
Mandale	26/02/2019	20.70	0.20	Foot of Forefield Shaft
Poole's Cavern	27/04/2019	20.90	0.04	Surface Reading
	27/04/2019	20.90	0.04	Throughout the trip
Deep Ecton / Salt's	30/04/2019	20.90	0.04	Surface Reading
	30/04/2019	20.90	0.08	Throughout the trip

6.9. Training Officer Report.

6.10. Newsletter Editor

The first issue of The Derbyshire Caver under my editorship was a relief to release – after initial worries about not having enough content, we managed to fill every page with interesting material. I have some content for the next issue, but not enough to fill it, so please let me know if you can think of anything that might be suitable. One side-issue that came up was an offer of cheap steel fabrication from a local caver after reading the article about the Longcliffe lid – I can pass on his details to the Projects Officer should we need any further work doing of this nature.

Phil Wolstenholme
22/05/2019

6.11. Cave Registry Secretary

The Cave Registry is up-to-date and working fine, though I've only had a few submissions from Simon Brooks (published in spring's The Derbyshire Caver) since the last meeting. I guess new discoveries are a little thin on the ground at the moment. I've updated some existing entries recently (adding missing detail flags mostly) and added a couple of new sites that weren't listed. As far as I know, all entries that are 'No Access' are marked as such, though I would appreciate updates if anyone finds any that aren't.

Action 52: The Peak-Speedwell micro-guides were reviewed by Mark Gration (thanks Mark) and have all now been re-published on the Peak District Caving.

Phil Wolstenholme
22/05/2019

7.1.DCA Report on BCA Meeting 13 April 2019

Note that this is not a full report on all the decisions taken and views expressed during this lengthy meeting; it is my take on the issues I felt likely to be of most importance to DCA members.

The Minutes of this meeting are in draft form on the BCA website although there is at least one query re. their accuracy. **The Reports** to the meeting are also published in full and give a detailed picture of what the various parts of BCA have been doing.

The early part of the meeting was taken up with organisational matters, during which it became clear that BCA needs an up to date Manual of Operations (effectively Standing Orders), to regulate how it deals with its business. All the Standing Committees have now put forward Terms of Reference for agreement by the AGM but there were differences of opinion on how formal proposals/nominations to the AGM should be dealt with and this needs to be resolved.

The Treasurer, who is also the Insurance Manager, put forward some important suggestions in his report: he sought views on a possible personal accident policy for cavers included with their current PL Insurance at no extra cost. He is also looking at possible Expedition Insurance specifically tailored for cavers. He also suggested it might be possible to invest BCA savings so as to produce higher interest without risk.

BCA now has a Safeguarding Officer, Chris Boardman, and he has set out a series of policies which will need to be ratified at the AGM. Also clarified at this meeting was the situation of cavers under the age of 18, who at one time were banned from certain caves on Mendip. It is now clarified that BCA does not advocate banning Under-18s and that there appears to be no legal reason why this

should be done. The Safeguarding Policies clarify how under-16s and 'vulnerable adults' should be treated.

The Publications & Information Committee had met by video-link during April but it is clear that there is some disagreement as to the nature of the website and this was not resolved at this meeting. Note that there is a proposal to the AGM for the P&I Officer to be a member of the Executive; this proposal (detailed in AGM Appendix 8), appears to have been made at the last Minute before the deadline and was not made known in advance to all members of Council. (It is proposed by Jane Allen, who took the post of P&I Officer at the 2018 AGM but resigned after the January Council Meeting of BCA and who has now been nominated at P&I Officer again this year.) The BCA AGM Appendices 7 and 8 relate specifically to the workings of the P&I Committee and the proposals made have the potential to influence profoundly the way BCA is perceived by its members.

Jenny Potts

DCA Rep to, BCA Meetings.

26/05/2019