

DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

Minutes of Council Meeting, 10am, 22 October 2005, Monyash Village Hall

Present:	Secretary/Treasurer	Jenny Potts [JP]
	Conservation Officer	Dave Webb [DW]
	N/L Editor/Pubs. Off.	Paul Lydon [PL]
	Asst. Secretary	Chris Broome [CB]
	Project Officer	Wayne Sheldon [WS]
	Orpheus C. C.	Boyd Potts [BP], Heather Lomas [HL], (Dave Jones)
	Eldon P. C.	Mike Salt [MS]
	Individual Members:	Dave Jones [DJ], Terry Jackson [TJ], (Jenny Potts)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, ESTABLISH QUORUM:

1.1 Apologies recd. from: Officers: Bob Dearman (Chairman), Iain Barker (Access Officer), Pete Mellors (Legal & Insurance Officer), Nigel Atkins (Training Officer);

Individual Members: Karen Slatcher, Andy Tickle, John Cordingley; Prospective Individual Member: Bryan Hartshorne.

1.2 Quorum: The meeting was quorate with 4 elected officers present. In the absence of the DCA Chairman, T.Jackson, had been asked to chair the meeting but, as he was delayed, BP took the chair initially.

2. APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING: (16 July 2005, previously circulated and on website.)

That the Minutes of the previous meeting be approved. Prop. Dave Webb, Sec. C.Broome. **Agreed unanimously.**

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

None.

4. ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS:

Individual Member: Bryan Hartshorn: Prop. J.Potts, sec. D.Webb. **Elected by unanimous vote.**

T.Jackson arrived at this point and took over as Chairman.

5. OFFICERS' REPORTS:

5.1 SECRETARY/TREASURER: (Written report tabled.)

a. Problems with recent emails: JP said that a few members had reported being unable to read a recent document she had circulated by email. The reason for this was being investigated.

b. Replies to BCA/DCA membership checks: JP noted that she had not been able to access her emails for the last week and it was possible that some replies to her communications to non-BCA club and associate members awaited her. DCA had received its administrative grant from BCA at the beginning of 2005, based on the 2004 membership figures. TJ thanked JP for the extra work she was putting in to resolve the situation re. BCA membership. JP noted that she had already been informed of three clubs who had decided to drop out of membership of BCA/DCA. It appeared that other regions were experiencing similar difficulties in resolving their membership under the new BCA system.

That the Secretary/Treasurer's Report be accepted. Prop. H.Lomas, sec. B.Potts. **Agreed unanimously.**

5.2 CONSERVATION OFFICER: (Written report tabled.)

a. Hungerhill Swallet: DW thanked Crewe C.P.C. members for all their work on stabilising the Hungerhill Swallet entrance.

b. Knotlow problems: DW reported on silly and inappropriate comments left in the log book by a "Beavis Caving Club" – the first time this had ever happened. He also reported that some of the nuts on the shaft lids had been done up only finger-tight – the nuts must be tightened properly with a spanner to prevent children gaining access. JP would remind members of this in the next DCA Information Circular.

c. SSSI monitoring: DW reported that Chesterfield C. C. had offered to deal with the Stoney Middleton area. Volunteers were still needed for the Bagshawe area. W.Sheldon and A.Soulsby had offered to do Castleton area. WS noted that there had been a roof collapse at Mam Tor Swallet and that Windy Knoll Cave was now fenced off following the roof collapse there.

d. Possible SSSI extensions: JP pointed out that Owl Hole was outside the boundaries of the Dowell Dale SSSI, as was Dowell Dale Side Pot. Not felt worth attempting to extend the SSSI since Peak Park had taken an interest in Owl Hole and had the rubbish cleared so it ought to be protected from damage. Waterways was not an SSSI but it might be a RIGS.

e. E.N. Contract: WS suggested that we could use the remainder of the E.N. contract to clear rubbish from a number of surface sites and he would organise this.

f. Manifold/Hamps Conservation Audit: Noted that the publication of this has already had the effect of raising interest in the conservation of sites in the Valley. JP reported that Derbyshire County Council had already bought 7 copies of the publication.

g. Gas detectors: TJ had brought along brochures for small gas detectors available commercially for both CO₂ and carbon monoxide. He would discuss with DW whether it was worth getting one for use in Knotlow. Noted that multi-gas detectors are also available.

That the Conservation Officer's Report be accepted. Prop. C.Broome, sec. P.Lydon. **Agreed unanimously.**

5.3 ACCESS OFFICER: (Apologies sent. Written report tabled.)

a. Oxlow Mine: JP had received a query about paying for access as the farm appeared to be uninhabited. Confirmed that fees should be left in the porch as the farmhouse was visited regularly.

- b. Castern Wood: JP explained the situation with regard to the Castern Wood adits on land belonging to Staffs. Wildlife Trust. It appeared that SWT now wished to set up a formal access agreement with DCA instead of the arrangement agreed some years ago (and detailed in the DCA Handbook) whereby anyone wanting access simply wrote to SWT to ask for the key. She had discussed this with D.Wall, a regular attendee at DCA Underground Conservation Forum meetings who was also a Council Member of SWT, and it appeared unlikely that there would be a problem if a standard agreement could be set up for the Castern Wood adits and for the Thorswood mines, also on SWT land. The matter would be passed on to the DCA Access Officer to deal with.

That the Access Officer's Report be accepted. Prop. B.Potts, sec. W.Sheldon. ***Agreed unanimously.***

5.4 LEGAL & INSURANCE OFFICER: *(Apologies sent. Written report tabled.)*

- a. DCA PL Insurance: There was some discussion on the recommendation in P.Mellors' report that a decision be deferred on the continuation of the DCA PL Insurance for 2006 and that a final decision be taken at a meeting of the DCA Officers when further information was available.

That the Legal & Insurance Officer's recommendation be accepted: that a decision on DCA PL Insurance for 2006 be delayed to a DCA Officers' Meeting, to take place when further information is available.

Prop. D.Webb, sec. J.Potts. ***Agreed unanimously.***

JP would contact PM to ask him to call the meeting when he felt the time was right.

That the Legal & Insurance Officer's Report be accepted. Prop. H.Lomas, sec. J.Potts. ***Agreed unanimously.***

- b. DCA Individual Member Subscription for 2006: JP explained that, following the recommendation relating to PL insurance, she felt it was appropriate next year, if DCA dropped its own insurance in favour of the BCA insurance scheme, that DCA Individual Members who took out BCA Direct Individual Membership in order to obtain PL insurance be offered a discount on their DCA subscription. The meeting felt this was reasonable and suggested that the Officers' Meeting should set the discount level.

That the DCA Individual Member subscription for 2006 be set at £10 but that the Officers' Meeting be empowered to set the level of any discount for such members who were also BCA Direct Individual Members.

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

5.5 EQUIPMENT OFFICER: *(No apologies sent or report submitted.)*

- a. Bolt Installers Training Session: JP reported that Nigel Atkins was organising a training session.
- b. Giants Hole Rigging: JP reported that Bob Dearman had devised a possible alternative rigging system to avoid the problems currently caused by cavers who misused the Eco-anchors at the point of descent from the Upper Series down into the Crabwalk. A mock-up of the cable Y-hang was available and JP noted that it had previously been shown to PICA members at their recent meeting and they were in favour.

That a cable Y-hang be installed on the Eco- anchors at the point of descent from the Upper Series down into the Crabwalk.

Prop. B.Potts, sec. P.Lydon. ***Agreed unanimously.***

Bob Dearman had also suggested that there were too many Eco-anchors on the Traverse above Geology Pot and that cavers were leaving rope handlines attached to these which were not being checked and hence created a risk – he felt a better solution would be to remove some of the Eco-anchors and place a permanent wire cable handline to safeguard the Traverse. BP agreed that there were too many bolts but did not agree with placing a permanent cable. The view was expressed that this would be against the DCA "Fixed Aids Policy" which states that "... the aim of the Policy is to make caving safer, not to make it easier ...". There was a feeling that there were an excessive number of bolts on the Traverse but PL queried whether some had been placed to aid in the case of a cave rescue and it was felt this needed to be checked before any were removed.

1. That members were not in favour of a fixed traverse wire on the Geology Pot Traverse.

Prop. D.Webb, sec. P.Lydon. ***Agreed unanimously.***

2. That the placement and number of bolts on the Geology Pot Traverse be reviewed with consideration of need for rescue purposes.

Prop. B.Potts, sec. P.Lydon. ***Agreed unanimously.***

JP noted that DCA should publicise that it did not install fixed ropes and that any ropes found attached to Eco-anchors had been placed by persons unknown, were not known to have been checked regularly and should therefore be treated with suspicion.

5.6 TRAINING OFFICER: *(Apologies sent. Written report tabled.)*

Noted that the Training Officer had produced a very comprehensive set of events for 2006 and his hard work in setting up all these was appreciated. DW would contact Nigel Atkins direct re. including conservation training sessions in workshops.

That the Training Officer's Report be accepted. Prop. H.Lomas, sec. B.Potts. ***Agreed unanimously.***

5.7 EDITOR / PUBLICATIONS OFFICER: *(Verbal report.)*

PL reported that the next N/L was in hand but he was short of material. JP suggested that he contact the Bat Conservation Trust to see if they would allow him to include the text of their new leaflet "Bats Underground", which she felt was a useful and positive document. (JP had copies of the leaflet and other BCT leaflets to pass round.) PL agreed to liaise with BCT direct.

That the Editor's report be accepted. Prop. C.Broome, sec. B.Potts. ***Agreed unanimously.***

6. BCA MATTERS: *(JP tabled a written report on the BCA Council Meeting of 15 Oct. 2005.)*

- 6.1 BCA Council Meeting 15 Oct.: JP noted that CB had also been present at the meeting as a Club Representative. Both felt it had been a useful meeting with much ground covered and a number of problems identified. HL expressed concern at the failure of

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 communications with members – this was crucial if BCA was to gain the support of its members. JP said that this had been recognised by BCA Council and steps were being taken to improve matters
 HL also expressed concern at the failure of “joined up thinking” demonstrated by the proposal by UK Sport to remove all funding from non-Olympic bodies whilst at the same time the government white paper “Every Child Matters” pushed for an increasing number of children to be involved in outdoor sport and recreation. It was felt that some outside funding was vital if the CIC and LCMLA schemes were to continue to run since their primary benefit was not to BCA members and it was not appropriate for BCA itself to carry the major part of the burden of the expense involved.
 CB commented that all the Council members present at the meeting on 15 Oct. had agreed that, despite the best efforts of all involved, because of various unexpected outside factors (sudden resignation of Secretary in Jan. 2005, accident to Treasurer in May 2005, extra pressure on Membership Secretary, etc.) it had been a disastrous first year for BCA. All agreed that BCA must do better next year and it was noted that every effort was already being made to ensure that this would be so.
 Noted that the new BCA website had gone live on 16 Oct., the day after the Council meeting.
- 6.2 BCA Guidelines for Club Constitutions: JP reported that BCA Council had agreed an amendment to the published guidelines to make it clearer what was required in the “Aims” section. This would be posted on the BCA website.
7. **NEXT MEETING:**
 The next DCA meeting would be the 2006 AGM. This was already set for 25 February 2006 and Monyash Village Hall was booked.
8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**
Interpretation Boards for cave sites: DW had been asked to produce some interpretation boards for the Cresswell Craggs caves and he asked for ideas on what was appropriate. JP offered to help and suggested that the NCA/BCA leaflet “So, You Want To Go Caving?” might provide some ideas. She would liaise with DW as she was currently updating the SYWTGC leaflet for BCA.
- There being no further business the meeting closed at 1.30pm.

J. E. Potts, Recorder

APPENDED TO THESE MINUTES AND FORMING PART OF THEM IS THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT:

Officers’ Reports to the DCA Council Meeting, 22 October 2005:

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| a. Item 5.1 | Secretary/Treasurer’s Report |
| b. Item 5.2 | Conservation Officer’s Report |
| c. Item 5.3 | Access Officer’s Report |
| d. Item 5.4 | Legal & Insurance Officer’s Report |
| e. Item 5.6 | Training Officer’s Report |
| f. Item 6.1 | Report from BCA Council Meeting 15 Oct. 2005 |