

**DEVA Canoe Club**  
**Annual Report for the period**  
**1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016**



Welcome to the Deva CC Annual Report for 2015-2016.

Compiled by Keith Brocklehurst, Deva CC Secretary (March 2016)

This report also contains the minutes of our AGM held in June 2015 and the Treasurer's financial report for the year.

The club started back in the last century (May 1999 to be precise), we survived the Millennium bug, and have now been going for 17 years and hope to do so for many more years to come. Every year we gain more enthusiastic newbies but lose a few members to less exciting time consuming activities.

DEVA's age range is still +18yrs to 80+ yrs. with everything in between and our membership for this year was 111, made up of 88 males and 23 females. We constantly need to think of new ideas to attract a higher percentage of both the younger generation and women. Any sensible suggestions would be always be considered by the committee.

Our members range in ability from complete beginners who've barely been in a boat to fully-fledged mad heads addicted to the adrenaline rush of throwing themselves and their boats off waterfalls.

We have members from many paddling disciplines and with a variety of craft preferences. They include play boaters, surf kayakers, open canoeists, scenic flatwater paddlers, sit-on-top paddlers, scary top end white water paddlers, sea kayakers and basic white-water paddlers.

A reminder – when you first joined the club you advised us of any current health issues. If your health has changed in a way that it may now affect your paddling ability then it is your responsibility to inform the leader of every Deva trip/event that you participate in. The Membership Secretary should also be informed so that your personal details can be updated. Email Simon at [devacanoeclub@gmail.com](mailto:devacanoeclub@gmail.com)

Personal information given to us on the club's membership and health declaration forms is solely for the purpose to help with the administration of the club and communicating directly with members. It will be treated in confidence and will not be shared with anyone. Members can request to view their own personal data held by the club by emailing Simon at [devacanoeclub@gmail.com](mailto:devacanoeclub@gmail.com)

The committee for the year comprised:

Honorary President - Peter Cook  
Honorary Chairperson- Kerry Arnold\*  
Honorary Secretary - Keith Brocklehurst  
Honorary Treasurer - Simon Carver  
Honorary Membership Secretary - Simon Carver  
Welfare Officer - Alan Reay  
Co-opted members - Mike Evans, Tim Gibbs, Rachael Hagan, John Lewis\*,  
Ian McMullen, Phil Proctor, Helen Williams

\*In September, Kerry Arnold said she would be standing down as 'Chair' at the next AGM in April 2016 but asked to remain a co-opted committee member. John Lewis was approached and asked if he would be prepared to act as Vice-Chairman currently, with a view to taking over as Chairman officially in April. He willingly accepted. Kerry has been thanked, on behalf of the committee, for all the help and guidance she has given the club over the last few years.

The Club's constitution was last published in 2012 and Deva's officers felt it appropriate for another review and update to reflect our current practice. The revised document will be circulated to all members in early April 2016.

Most of the above committee are available to chat to at the Riverside Centre on Thursday evenings during the summer months and at our Sunday afternoon sessions during the winter. Some will also be at the Northgate Arena Canoeing sessions on Mondays and Tuesdays during term time. You can also contact any of the club's officers by e-mailing [devacanoeclub@gmail.com](mailto:devacanoeclub@gmail.com). If you want to contact a particular officer then please include their first name in the subject line. Please be aware that not all of Deva's officers use Facebook and therefore will not be able to see any comments or posts on the club's own Facebook page.

Due to the increase in the Riverside centre's nightly rental and annual storage fees (as we were advised to expect) the membership fee for 2015-2016 was raised for the first time in 16 years by £5. However, to offset this increase we decided not to increase the Thursday evening fee for members' (still £3) and to abolish their evening equipment hire fee too.

Membership	£15
Additional family member	£5
Thursday evenings (Contribution to the night's rental fee and refreshments)	
Members	£3
Non-members	£5
Equipment hire	
Thursday eve non-members	£2
Members	£0 (free)
Club approved trip	£5 per day (i.e. £10 per weekend) members only

For this fantastic membership fee members benefit from:

Take advantage of regular club away-day and weekend trips on canal, lake, river & sea (usually free except for any car park / launching charges). If you are free on a Monday evening or Tuesday morning, and have already experienced the weir in Chester, why not come along to Llangollen for a couple of hours? Send us an email for further information.

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Participate in our annual 'Lakes Weekend' in November (A charge is made for the bunk-house style accommodation and meals)

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Attend our Thursday evening sessions (April to September) on the River Dee and weir in Chester (A reduced rate of £3 per night to cover building hire charge).

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Benefit from a Deva member's rate for the Chester Northgate Arena canoe lessons where our coaches organise and staff these twice weekly term time sessions. If you purchase an annual BRIO Club Concession card from Northgate Arena for £5 then you pay only £6 per session instead of the normal £9. Another option is by signing up for Northgate's Brio Leisure Card (Free) to obtain a £1 discount making a session charge £8. Don't forget to bring your membership card along to prove you are a Deva member. So if you attend once a week, that's a saving of approximately £100 per year!

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Some local canoe/kayak retailers (\*) give club discount (typically 10-15%) on production of your Deva membership card.

Manchester Canoes (Warrington)

[www.manchester-canoes-and-kayaks.co.uk/](http://www.manchester-canoes-and-kayaks.co.uk/)

Go Kayaking North West (Runcorn)

[www.go-kayaking.com/](http://www.go-kayaking.com/)

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Free tuition (\*\*) by our own experienced members in whatever craft you wish, and at whatever ability level you are at or to which you wish to aspire.

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And remember, owning your own kit is not essential. You can use ours free on Thursday evenings before you decide to buy, or borrow for a nominal daily charge (£5) for our away-days! We have a wide range of craft: Kayaks, Sea Kayaks, Open Canoes (Canadian type) and Sit on Tops.

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You'll be one of a friendly bunch of folk, keen to help others and introduce them to the joy of our sport. We all have one thing in common which is we all paddle for fun and enjoyment and, apart from water safety, don't take anything too seriously.

(\*) Deva Canoe Club does not endorse any equipment suppliers or manufacturers and therefore any related advice from its members is solely their own opinion.

(\*\*) One of the main benefits of becoming members of Deva Canoe Club is that all of our coaching, help, advice and time are given for free. Even on non-club trips you will find that our members will give up their time to coach and help to the best of their ability anyone new to kayaking. Please note that members are welcome to seek private coaching or courses external to the club if they so wish but this would be at a cost funded by them. Deva Canoe Club does not endorse any coaching business and therefore any related advice from its members is solely their own opinion.

This year's new purchases were...

- Selection of wet suits
- Two sit on top kayaks
- One Stand-up Paddle board
- One 13 foot Open (Canadian)
- One 14 foot Open (Canadian)
- New paddles for Opens
- Miscellaneous bits and pieces and enough floating rope to tie up the QE2

Recycling...

The club donated one glass fibre C1 Kayak to MEM, Llangollen in July 2015 (for their decorative purposes).

Donations to the club...

The club wishes to acknowledge the kind generosity of Manchester Metropolitan University's Crewe Campus for their donation of a number of kayaks to us in December 2015.

Many thanks go to everyone who organised and supported the year's Deva trips and events that included:

- Occasional SunDee paddles
- Sunday crew to Llangollen
- Monday evening group to Llangollen
- Tuesday morning group (aka Deva OFs) outings to:
  - River Dee – MEM, Llangollen
  - River Dee - Farndon to Sandy Lane
  - River Dee - Bangor on Dee to Farndon
  - River Weaver upstream from Winsford into Cheshire's wilderness
  - River Weaver downstream from the Flashes to Vale Royal locks
  - Liverpool Albert dock
- Thursday evening summer time riverside sessions in Chester
- Sunday afternoon winter time riverside sessions in Chester

Boxing Day paddle by kind invitation of Ian McMullen's Chester Riverside Canoe Club (Unfortunately this year's event had to be cancelled at the last minute due to high water conditions)

For those who loved paddling in warm chlorinated water, the twice weekly term time pool sessions in Northgate Arena.

Club trips further afield...

April 2015

Rosie Diver River Weaver

May 2015

Simon Carver Training Deva's new volunteer coaches - Chester  
Alan Reay Sea Kayak Handling Skills – Colwyn Bay  
Simon Carver Introduction to simple White Water - Llangollen  
Rosie Diver River Mersey

June 2015

Rosie Diver Ladies only Canoe Camp – Lancaster Canal

July 2015

Peter Cook Sea Kayak paddle – Menai Straits  
Rosie Diver River Severn

August 2015

Rosie Diver River Ribble  
Alan Reay Dudley Tunnels  
Peter Cook Sea Kayaking Safety Day

September 2015

Rosie Diver Camping Weekend – Bala Lake  
Simon Carver River Severn - Bridgnorth to Upper Arley

October 2015

Alan Reay Sea Paddle – Llandudno  
John Lewis)  
Keith Brocklehurst) Introduction to White Water- MEM  
Peter Steel)  
Rosie Diver Night Paddle – Peak Forest Canal, Disley

November 2015

Simon Carver Annual Lakes Weekend

December 2015

Alan Reay Llangollen Canal and Pontcysyllte Aqueduct

January 2016

Alan Reay)  
Richard Bingham) River Dee - Glyndffrwy to Llangollen

February 2016

None

March 2016

Alan Reay Dee Bore – Chester  
Alan Reay Sea Paddle - Hilbre Island

Don't forget to check the calendar on the Deva Canoe Club website for future trips

[www.devacanooclub.co.uk](http://www.devacanooclub.co.uk)

Plus some additional activities:

Deva OFs gave up one of their Tuesday Llangollen paddles in September to re-organise and tidy up the Riverside Centre storage facilities.

Thanks to Simon Carver who again organised the club's annual lakes trip and to Chef Peter Steel for a great weekend that all 30-35 participants thoroughly enjoyed. Those of us who opted not to go definitely missed out. This event remains the only one on the DEVA calendar where your "Library Books" can give you a hangover!

One comment posted on Facebook said....

Thanks especially to Simon for his organising and leading the week-end, to MasterChef Peter S for catering, and to all who led on rivers and lakes, and those who helped out in the hostel. Home earlier than expected as Keswick was cut off from the rest of the known world (due to flooding). Hope the other groups had a successful day. Thanks you all for your company and good humour.

Only one incident occurred this year:

In October, a sea paddling group led by Alan Reay entered the tidal race near the Little Orme but unfortunately the group were split up due to issues with one of the rear paddler's kayaks and later a capsized by his colleague. Sensibly, the two turned around and paddled back to the initial launch spot but then, because of the Orme rock blocking the line-of-sight VHF signal, became out of radio contact with the others. The group leader called out the Inshore Rescue Boat as a precaution and thankfully, after a short time, the search was called off. The Coastguard later met Alan Reay and complemented him on the way in which everyone was properly equipped for the occasion.

Promoting DEVA:

Peter Cook and Keith Brocklehurst were invited to attend the Chester Riverside Canoe Club's 'Try-it' day on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June to promote Deva Canoe Club to their junior members and, of course, their parents.

'Llangollen Outdoors' and 'Manchester Canoes and Kayaks' kindly offered to put up DEVA advertising posters.

The club is always asked by local charities and organisations to help with their events. We see this as an important part of our 'paddling life' and this year we are delighted to be part of the following:

The Dee Mile Swim  
The Big Brutal Swim  
The Brutal Triathlons

Hospice of the Good Shepherd "Light Up A Life" remembrance ceremony, however this year's 'Lily' event had to be cancelled at the last minute due to gale force winds.

And of course, a big thanks to everyone in Deva who gave up their spare time to help.

We received a number of messages from the organisers and participants of the Dee Mile:

....I just wanted to say a really big THANK YOU for your support and care during the Dee Mile yesterday. While I had a group of supporters on the bank cheering me on, it was actually your reassuring comments and watchfulness that got me through it. I hadn't trained to race rather to complete the course but I hadn't quite anticipated how far back I'd be. It could have been a bit lonely. You stopped it from being so. I managed to raise £400 (and more is still coming in) for a charity that helps people with very rare blood cancers. Well done you for supporting me in that goal.

....We've had some amazing feedback already, both via email and also on Facebook, so thank you for helping to make the event such a success.

....Having just warmed up after finishing last in the 2 Km swim this evening (no 382) I'm emailing to thank you for putting on such a great event, but also to thank very sincerely the kayakers and rescue boat who stayed with me at the back of the race. I would like to especially thank the lovely gent in a rescue kayak, whose name I didn't get but was an ex maths teacher/merchant navy, who kept nattering to me and encouraging me the whole way.

The riverside season opened on 9 April 2015 and closed on 24 September 2015.

The Riverside centre, the building that we and three other local canoe clubs rent from the Queen's Park High School, is the home to our seasonal Thursday evening River Dee and Weir sessions which included the all-important socialisation, hot drink and, for those fortunate to be off the water before Derek, chocolate biscuits.

You may not be aware that, to ensure your safety, we inspect our kit and test all buoyancy aids before the start of each season. We must acknowledge the help and assistance of our seldom seen member, R Waite. Without his long association to Deva CC we wouldn't have been able to do this onerous task in such a short time, and without anyone getting too wet.

Huge thanks go to everyone who has helped with the riverside opening / closing rota during the summer season. The quantity of volunteers meant each person only had to do the odd few nights, but without them the riverside sessions could not have run. If you wish Deva to continue, which it can't without help, why not offer a few minutes of your spare time to occasionally help but don't worry, we'll show you how to use a mop and bucket!

Similarly, thank you to all those who acted as canoe/kayak coaches to make sure newbies and the less experienced always had someone to look after them and eventually introduce them to the weir. Without these experienced paddlers volunteering their time we wouldn't be able to offer all our leading, coaching, advice etc. free of charge as we always have done and intend to continue to do so.

This year two members, John Lewis and Keith Brocklehurst, were deemed proficient to become assistant coaches for Deva's new members. Their area of expertise covers kayaking at the Riverside area (including weir), Mile End Mill at Llangollen (up to water level 3) and the Monday evening canoe sessions at Northgate Arena.

If you are a confident paddler on flat water and grade 2-3 white water (Kayak, Canoe or both) and would like to help then why not put your name forward, just like John and Keith did.

As for last year, we held riverside sessions on the first Sunday of each month (October 2015 to March 2016) from 13:00 to 15:30. These were well attended (approx. 15 per session) and enjoyed by all who participated. It is hoped that these will continue again in 2016/2017.

On the social side of things, and for something completely different, Alan Reay organised a Christmas trip along the Llangollen Canal and, for those with a head for heights, an opportunity to paddle over the Pontcysyllte aqueduct finishing with lunch at the Sun Trevor pub. This was very much enjoyed by the 17 members who attended. Thanks to Alan Reay for arranging.

The club has a Facebook page, Deva Kayakers + friends of' (administered by John Lewis) <https://www.facebook.com/groups/133213266263/>, which is going from strength to strength with approximately 190 registered followers with an estimated 50 of them viewing new posts within the first week. Existing members have been out in force posting ad-hoc friendship trips on our Facebook wall and newer members are learning it's always worth asking if you can join in even if you are unsure if you meet the required ability level, as long as you are honest about your own ability. After all none of our regular members will purposely put you at risk or on water that you won't cope with, so the worst that can happen is they reply with "not this time due to your ability level or the current water level". Often (water level allowing) you will find that they will willingly take you and look after you if it is at the top end of your ability, so thank you to all members who have been doing this and as such helping less experienced paddlers to improve their skills. If you wish to access our Facebook page then please email John Lewis at [devacanoclub@gmail.com](mailto:devacanoclub@gmail.com) and he'll send you instructions on what to do.

But please remember, anyone wishing to organise a trip on Facebook should ensure they make it clear that it is a peer group paddle and not a club organised trip as well as indicating what standard of paddler the trip is suitable for (e.g. Grade 2/3 must be competent paddling the Lower Tryweryn).

Approval for a club trip can be obtained by contacting Alan Reay via the club E-mail and any 'Approved club Trip' will then be advertised to the membership through the club E-Mail. Full details of an approved trip will not be advertised through Facebook. A club trip can be organised by any club member but must have a 'committee approved' leader within the group responsible for leading on the water. If you have any questions please contact us by email.



DEVA has become well recognised at MEM, Llangollen. If you are there, why not introduce yourself to Rosie, Josh and Fletch (Llangollen Outdoors) as DEVA members. Don't forget to also look out for Linda and possibly Dee too!

Terry Hudson continues to capture Deva's most photogenic moments. This year he discovered (or perhaps he read the manual!) that his camera had the capability of taking videos. I'm sure that every one of his video victims will thank Terry for now having the opportunity to relive, and learn from, their particular 'moment' frame by frame in the comfort and warmth of their own home.....or perhaps not! Carry on clicking Terry, we all appreciate your company and pictures.

Pictures are posted on our Facebook page, "Deva Kayakers + friends of".

Not everyone in Deva uses Facebook and to enable club photos to be shared with all members we also have a Flickr account. The secretary will send out an email reminder on how to access this account and upload photos.



Deva CC has club clothing with its logo on it (on front with or without your name and on the back too). There is a choice of polo shirts £12.50, tee-shirts £8 and hoodies £20, plus postage. There's a selection of colours too. Products are being supplied by Sportsform in Bedford. We are listed on the front of their front Website page, <http://sportsform.biz/90-deva-canoe-club>. You need to order from and pay them directly, and if several of you want to join

together to form an order to see if it saves postage then feel free (the website states postage at checkout) but you need to sort it out among yourselves!

The county's Watersports Hub development plan is still, albeit very slowly, progressing and we are continuing to fight to ensure that it does not seriously impact on our wish to maintain a low cost, friendly and local Adult canoeing club on the river Dee. We are still some time away from the end of these negotiations but at least are maintaining our high level input position in the Riverside site's re-development stage. Keep your paddles crossed for a successful outcome to this project. As usual, thanks go to Peter Cook for representing Deva CC at all the meetings and to club members Alan Reay (representing the Scouts Canoeing group) and Ian McMullen (representing the Chester Riverside Canoe Club) for their joint support too.

The new Thursday evening Riverside season will start on 7 April 2016.

And finally, please remember that your annual Deva membership subscription (£15) becomes due on 1 April 2016. Please make the treasurer's life easier by paying on-time, and that means in early April and not late November!

Last year's non-payers will shortly be removed from the club's email circulation list by the Membership Secretary, whose decision is final!

Useful websites:

Deva Canoe Club [www.devacanoecclub.co.uk](http://www.devacanoecclub.co.uk)

Llangollen Outdoors (Mile End Mill) [www.llangollenoutdoors.co.uk](http://www.llangollenoutdoors.co.uk)

Dee Cam, MEM [www.welshdeepartnershipltd.co.uk/webcam?w=mile-end-mill](http://www.welshdeepartnershipltd.co.uk/webcam?w=mile-end-mill)

UK Rivers Guidebook [www.ukriversguidebook.co.uk](http://www.ukriversguidebook.co.uk)

Welsh Rivers [www.welsh-rivers.co.uk](http://www.welsh-rivers.co.uk)

Environmental Agency  
[www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/riverlevels/default.aspx](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/riverlevels/default.aspx)

Rainchasers [www.rainchasers.com/river-levels](http://www.rainchasers.com/river-levels)

British Canoe Union [www.bcu.org.uk](http://www.bcu.org.uk)

Welsh Canoe Association [www.canoewales.com](http://www.canoewales.com)

Manchester Canoes and Kayaks, Warrington  
[www.manchester-canoes-and-kayaks.co.uk](http://www.manchester-canoes-and-kayaks.co.uk)

Go Kayaking North West, Runcorn [www.go-kayaking.com/](http://www.go-kayaking.com/)

Dee Sports, Chester [www.watersportschester.co.uk](http://www.watersportschester.co.uk)

The financial position of the club continues to remain healthy thanks to the efforts of our Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Membership Secretary Simon Carver. The year-end accounts are given below.

**Deva Canoe Club**  
**Annual financial statement 31 March 2016**

	Credit	Debit
Cash in hand	£124.30	
Balance at bank	£9,146.02	
Membership	£1,475.00	
Riverside centre	£2,284.84	£1,699.50
BCU		£293.40
Boats		£2,898.81
Other capital		£430.28
Lakes trip	£1,950.00	£1,846.35
Training		
Miscellaneous	£159.50	£387.21
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>£15,139.66</b>	<b>£7,555.55</b>
Balance c/f	£7,584.11	
<u>Made up of</u>		
Balance at bank	£7,387.13	
Cash in hand	£196.98	
	£7,584.11	
NOTES		
Outstanding invoices expected for Riverside centre £99		

**Minutes of DEVA Canoe Club AGM**  
**at The Riverside Centre 6.30pm on Thursday 11th June 2015**

Total number of members present: 19 (incl. 8 committee)

The Chairperson (Kerry Arnold) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Agenda:

1. Apologies for absence:

Received from: Alan Reay, Pete Pryce, Peter Walters, Helen Williams, John Goggin, Andy Wrigley and Brian Sanderson

2. Matters arising from the 2014 AGM minutes:

Circulated to members in advance of the AGM.

None arising.

Attendees were asked to accept the minutes as a true and correct record of the 2014 AGM. Proposed by: Ian McMullen Seconded by: Peter Cook

3. Financial Accounts:

A summary of these were displayed on the noticeboard by the Honorary Treasurer (Simon Carver) before the start of the AGM.

No questions raised.

Attendees were asked to endorse these as a true and correct record.

Proposed by: Peter Cook

Seconded by: Ian McMullen

4. Membership:

2014-2015 (Total) = 116 members. (14 Female, 102 Male)

Those attending were reminded that if subscriptions were not paid by the end of July they would be removed from the Deva CC Email circulation list and would not be invited to participate in future Deva events.

5. Committee Officers and Co-opted Members for 2015 – 2016:

Circulated to members in advance of the AGM

No other offer of helper(s) had been received.

Committee for 2015/16 will be:

Honorary President - Peter Cook  
Honorary Chairperson- Kerry Arnold  
Honorary Secretary - Keith Brocklehurst  
Honorary Treasurer - Simon Carver  
Honorary Membership Secretary - Simon Carver  
Welfare Officer - Alan Reay  
Co-opted members - Mike Evans, Tim Gibbs, Rachael Hagan, John Lewis, Ian McMullen, Phil Proctor, Helen Williams

Attendees were asked to accept this committee.

Proposed by: John Lewis                      Seconded by: Clive Herbert

As usual, if anyone ever wants to volunteer themselves to join or help the committee then please do let the committee know.

The committee wishes to acknowledge the help of Helen Williams as Honorary Secretary over the last few years. Helen resigned from the post in February 2015 due to pressure of work but remains a co-opted committee member.

6. Deva Trips:

a. Lake District 13-15 November 2015

Those wishing to attend the lakes trip can now register their interest. It is open to all from beginners to advanced and club kit hire can be arranged. To take part, write your name on the list at the Riverside Centre on Thursday nights or email Simon Carver via [devacanoeclub@gmail.com](mailto:devacanoeclub@gmail.com). Payments will be taken from the beginning of August and must be in by the end of the Thursday night sessions in September otherwise you will be removed from the trip.

b. Rosie's Regular Paddles

A list of the next paddles were read out from the Deva calendar and will be advertised by email approximately 2 weeks before each event.

c. Others: Ecclestone - 27 June 2015 – Leaders: John Lewis / Keith Brocklehurst  
Email to be circulated shortly

Those attending were reminded about the difference between 'official DEVA trips' and the 'Peer Group events'.

The secretary will send email to all members reminding them of the difference between Peer Group events and Deva trips.

7. Any Other Business:

1. Pete Pryce asked (via the Secretary) if Deva would be willing to organise another 'Play Boat' training day with Lowri? - The Deva committee said they would consider this.
2. Peter Cook reminded the club about the survey being carried out by Active Cheshire into watersports participation in the area, which is linked to the proposed Chester Community Water Sports Hub, and asked members to consider completing the survey.

A link to a survey is included below and will take no longer than 2 minutes of your time to complete.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/chesterwatersportshubindividual>

Keith Brocklehurst, DEVA CC Secretary  
12 June 2015