



# DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

## Information Circular 2009/2, February/May 2009

### NEXT DCA MEETING

**Open Council Meeting, 13th. June. 10am at Monyash Village Hall**

The hall will be open from about 9.30am with tea, coffee & biscuits available. The Old Smithy Café next to the Pub does an excellent breakfast from about 9am. (All meetings start at 10am. at Monyash Village Hall.)

**Following Meetings are: Council: 31st. October 2009; AGM 2010: 13th. February 2010**

### OFFICERS FOR 2009/10

**Chairman: Bob Dearman**, The Green Cottage, Main Street., Chelmorton, Buxton. SK17 9SL. 01298-85594,  
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**Secretary/Treasurer: Jenny Potts**, 3 Greenway, Hulland Ward, Ashbourne. DE6 3FE. 01335-370629.  
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**Conservation & Access Team:**

**Conservation Officer: David Webb**, 3 De Vere Gardens, Woodthorpe, Nottingham. NG 5 4PH. 0115-840-1109  
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**Access Officer: Iain Barker**, 56 Thornbridge Crescent, Birley, Sheffield. S12 3AE. 0114-264-7561, 07710-689704  
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**Legal & Insurance Officer: Peter Mellors**, 'Fairview', Station Rd., Edingley, Newark, Notts. NG22 8BX. 01623-882515,  
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**Projects Officer: Martyn Grayson**, 29 Hindle House Lane, Page Hall, Sheffield. S4 8GY. 07976-953089,  
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**Cave Registry Secretary: John Beck**, Glebe Cottage, The Hillock, Eyam, Derbyshire, S30 1RB. 01433-631732  
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**Asst. Sec. / Planning Liaison: Chris Broome**, 'Carpathian', Dale Close, Bonsall, Matlock, DE4 2AY. 01629-824512,  
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**Vice-Chairman: Terry Jackson**, New House Farm, Chapel-en-le-Frith, High Peak, Derbyshire. SK23 0QL. 01663-750647,  
[vice-chair@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:vice-chair@theDCA.org.uk)

### CONSERVATION & ACCESS

**If you have any queries or problems about Conservation or Access in the region, please contact the Conservation Officer: Dave Webb, Asst. Conservation Officer: Christine Wilson, or Access Officer: Iain Barker. Contact details as above.**

#### **James Halls' Over Engine Mine (J.H.)**

The area around the top of Bitch Pitch in James Halls' Over Engine Mine (J.H.) deteriorated significantly during February 2009. The angle iron and rock platform that used to aid progress to the Y-hang at the end has completely gone. Some of the rocks and the 6ft lengths of angle iron are sitting on the floor further back down the Cartgate. Reaching the first P-bolt of the traverse is more difficult than it used to be. Someone has installed a compression anchor (hanger currently in-situ) two or three metres back down the Cartgate to protect the move to the first P-bolt. This anchor has not been installed by DCA; use at your own risk. The wooden stemples that the angle iron and rocks sat on are still in place and can be used to make progress to the Y-hang at the end. Below these stemples is a fairly loose slope of wet mud and small rocks. Anything that falls down/off this slope will roll straight down the line of the ropes below. Care needed! Work is being planned to return the pitch head to its previous state and stop the slope below deteriorating.

#### **Jug Holes, Upper Entrance (climbable shaft)**

We have received a report that a large boulder has recently fallen in this shaft and there are other indications that the area has become unstable. It is perhaps prudent to give this site a wide berth for the time being until DCA / PICA have investigated and either given assurances or undertaken the necessary work to stabilise this problem

#### **Long Rake Mine, Youlgreave - Danger!**

Some cavers recently visited this mine and found it full of fumes, almost certainly from an engine working on the surface. Please note that this mine is part of a working site on private land and there is no agreed access while this is so. You are urged to ensure that all cavers are made aware of the situation.

## **Knotlow Work and Air Quality Records**

PICA members Simon Mee and Alan Brentnall along with Dave Webb and cavers Mick Biggin and Jim Alder spent a day working at Knotlow at the end of April. Mick did the walling with labouring help from the others and has finished the supporting pack for the large boulder in the roof.

The new "air quality" record book from Knotlow book is now in a waterproof box within the ammo box and Dave Webb has included all the records for 2008. The records revealed that the air continues to be of acceptable quality, although one recent visit (March 2009) has recorded an isolated and unexplained "strong smell of sulphur 1/3 way down climbing shaft - air seemed heavy". Dave notes his appreciation for your continued help in completing these records, which will provide valuable evidence should the pollution problem ever return.

Note: Following a number of reports of "bad air" a similar record book is now in place at the base of the shaft in Water Icicle.

Members of the Crewe Climbing and Pothole Club are conducting an ongoing sampling of oxygen/CO<sub>2</sub> levels at a number of popular sites in the Peak and the results will be published when sufficient data has been obtained.

## **Stoney Middleton Dale Caves Cleanup**

Mark Cope (Chesterfield CC) has organised a clean up of the Stoney Middleton caves over the last couple of weeks.

DCA have provided a skip which has almost been filled with litter and old digging kit from numerous Stoney caves including Carlswark. The skip is a short way up the path which leads from the main road to the Gin entrance, i.e. you walk past it when walking to the Gin entrance from the big layby on the edge of Stoney village. There are five bags full of debris currently at the bottom of Eyam Dale Shaft which need to be hauled out and put in the skip. There is also a load of wood piled up at the side of the passage where the eyehole squeeze is at the end of North West passage.

## **Gautries Hole Side Shaft**

DCA Projects Officer Martyn Grayson masterminded a major cleanup of the shaft alongside Gautries Hole in February. Those concerned battled horrendous weather and evil conditions to get the job done and extracted masses of old ironwork, fencing and other rubbish to be placed in a skip to be carted away. Thanks are due to all those involved.

## **Hungerhill Swallet entrance cleanup**

A team of Chesterfield C.C. cavers have carried out a cleanup of Hungerhill Swallet and removed many bags of oily sludge from the swallet entrance. DCA is negotiating with Natural England and the highway authorities to try to prevent runoff from the road, which is polluted with oil, diesel, grit, etc. from being discharged into the swallet.

## **P8 rock fall warning**

There has been a fall of rocks in the area of the Flats in P8. Some of the rocks were persuaded to carry on harmlessly down to the floor of the passage below. However one block, which is about a meter across and is similar to a large 4x4 tyre, made it a few meters down the rift and stuck. It currently sits solid in the rift but it is unsupported and pinned in by a small knobble of rock. It has potential to drop onto anyone below and would land in the stream on the bend just after the obstruction you have to climb over en route to the 1st pitch. DCA will be arranging to move this safely on its way down to the floor of the passage below - in the mean time, be wary in this area.

## **Aldery Cliff Cave gate**

Thanks to members of Orpheus C. C. who installed a gate on Aldery Cliff Cave. Entry requires an adjustable spanner.

## **Waterways Swallet gated**

At the request of the owners, Keyhole C. C. have gated Waterways Swallet and it now requires an adjustable spanner to open the lid. Reminder that a condition of access is that visiting cavers must be covered by BCA P.L. insurance and that the owner requests that novices are not taken down the cave.

## **Problem at the Delph, Eyam**

Persons unknown have recently diverted a stream which runs in the area and this has opened up a 40ft. deep hole in the Delph. The shaft has had to be fenced as the surround is unstable and the Parish Council have requested that no-one tries to enter the shaft for the present. The Environment Agency have become involved as it is illegal to "divert a watercourse" in this way and could result in a hefty fine for the perpetrators.

## **Long Rake Mine, Bradwell - danger of Carbon Monoxide**

Reminder that there is no access to this mine, or to the nearby Bird Mine and New Venture Mine, for the foreseeable future while there remains a possibility of poisonous Carbon Monoxide finding its way into the mines.

## **The Dreaded Arrow Painters**

A number of caves in the Peak have recently been disfigured by large painted arrows: Jugholes and Carleswark are the most recent to be targeted. We have no idea which idiots are responsible but others have had to clean the paint off.

These sites are SSSIs and such vandalism is illegal and likely to result in a hefty fine if those responsible are caught.

## **Hidden Earth 2009, Friday 25th. to Sunday 27th. September**

This will be at Churchill Community School, Churchill, North Somerset. Website is [www.hidden-earth.org.uk](http://www.hidden-earth.org.uk)

**FOR YOUR NEWSLETTER / NOTICEBOARD**

[www.theDCA.org.uk](http://www.theDCA.org.uk)    [dca@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:dca@theDCA.org.uk)

5 May 2009

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