



DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

Information Circular 2009/4, November/December 2009

NEXT DCA MEETING

Annual General Meeting: 13th. February 2010, 10am at Monyash Village Hall.

This will be followed immediately by a short open Council Meeting.

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.)

Dates of remaining Council Meetings for 2010 and the AGM for 2011 will be agreed at the AGM.

ELECTION OF DCA OFFICERS TO SERVE FOR 2010-2011

In accordance with the DCA Constitution it was agreed at the October Council Meeting that, in addition to the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Vice-Chairman, the following officers would be elected at the AGM to serve for 2010-2011:

Conservation Officer, Assistant Conservation Officer, Projects Officer, Access Officer, Legal & Insurance Officer, Equipment Officer, Training Officer, Newsletter Editor / Publications Officer, Assistant Secretary Planning Liaison, Cave Registry Secretary.

Nominations are welcome in advance of the AGM and should be sent to the DCA Secretary. The permission of the nominee should be obtained beforehand.

CONSERVATION & ACCESS

If you have any queries or problems about Conservation or Access in the region, please contact the Conservation Officer: Dave Webb, 0115-840-1109, or Asst. Conservation Officer: Christine Wilson, 01433-621149, 07713-416455, both on conservation-off@theDCA.org.uk. Alternatively, contact the Access Officer: Iain Barker, 0114-264-7561, 07710-689704, access@theDCA.org.uk.

YOUDS LEVEL CLEAR AT LAST

At the last UCF meeting the Environment Agency announced that Youd's Level can now be considered clear of the pollution/sewage leakage that has dogged this site for almost two decades.

A great deal of effort and money (over £15,000) has gone into solving the problem which has involved myself, the EA, and Severn Trent Water who have picked up the bills. It has been one of the least pleasant jobs that any of us have had to deal with!

Thanks are due to all those involved for a successful outcome and especially Dave Ottewell (EA) who never gave up and who collected many water samples from a drippy smelly roof for analysis. (This job was especially interesting when the flow suddenly increased indicating that someone had flushed the lo!)

Please continue to take care as there is an amount of residual pollution and lots of rat droppings so be aware of the risk of Weil's disease.

Dave Webb. 26 November 2009

POLLUTION INCIDENT, MANDALE MINE 28-9-09

Follow-up information from John Beck, 9 Oct. 2009.

We investigated Mandale yesterday. Slitting the suspicious poly bags and large sheets of black plastic revealed that they had probably been there for some time and all were empty. The (very) nasty smell came from a rabbit floating in the sump, and a weasel on the bank.

The air is a bit stale beyond the forefield shaft. This is worthy of caution but we went almost to the end. The dark deposit on the floor of the stream beyond the shaft is being investigated, but the water did not appear to smell.

A REMINDER OF ACCESS CONDITIONS - ASHFORD MARBLE MINE

DCA indemnifies Chatsworth and processes all applications to enter the Mine; all visitors to have PL insurance cover and abide by the access procedures in force at the time of their visit; emergencies and/or damage to be reported as soon as possible to DCA. The cave is gated and for access you should apply in advance to DCA's Access Officer:

Iain Barker, 56 Thornbridge Crescent, Birley, Sheffield. S12 3AE. Tel. 0114-264-7561, Mob. 07710-689704, Em. access@theDCA.org.uk.

A REMINDER OF ACCESS CONDITIONS - WATERWAYS SWALLET

No need to apply in advance for access but all visitors to be BCA-affiliated members or guests and to be either competent cavers or under supervision; visitors to understand they enter at their own risk; parking to be only in designated area. Adjustable spanner required for bolted lid; please re-fasten this when you leave.

DEVONSHIRE GATE

Some people appear to be having trouble with the gate on Devonshire Mine - it may be difficult to close it behind you when you go in, as you need to do to prevent anyone entering after you and getting inadvertently locked in. Mike Pilling kindly did a clear up of leaf litter and sludge from in front of the gate and WD40'd the bolt and hinges in November. He reports that the door is slightly sprained and you have to exert a bit of "pulling towards you pressure" from the inside (possibly a rope looped through the top corner would help) to get the bolt to slide properly. This isn't a problem from outside as you can put your knee on it and exert pressure that way. The bolt is worn a bit and only goes into the slot for about 1 cm but it will still close OK.

CARBON DIOXIDE MONITORING IN PEAK DISTRICT CAVES

For a number of months now Christine Wilson, Ralph Johnson and others have been using meters to monitor CO₂ levels in a number of caves and mines in the region - this has involved regular daily trips to a number of sites within each cave so it's no small task! Weather and barometric levels are also recorded and even the number of cavers at each site within the cave, because that also is known to have an effect.

There has been steady level of increase in reports of excess CO₂ in caves/mines in the region over the past decade; although, as is normal, the levels generally have dropped just at present as the outside air temperature falls below the underground temperature in winter. However, there is considerable variation between caves/mines, from site to site within the same cave/mine and also for different times at the same site. This has now developed into a full-scale scientific investigation, which may well have relevance to other regions and also to wider problems of global warming. So watch this space!

DAVE WEBB IS BACK IN ACTION

We're delighted to hear that Dave Webb is back in action after surgery on his knee. Expect to see him zipping up and down pitches at a rate of knots in the near future!

WINNATS HEAD CAVE NOW HAS ECO-ANCHORS INSTALLED

DCA Equipment Officer, Jules Barrett, reports that the **Downstream pitches in Winnats Head Cave** are now equipped with eco anchors:

Immediately after The Sewer is a short 'up' pitch with a couple of rebelay which is permanently rigged with fixed ropes. These fixed ropes are attached to Spits. Arriving at the top of this pitch a short crawl leads to cascading water and the start of the three Downstream pitches. The following equipment is required:

Pitch 1 Rope: 35m

Rigging: 6 eco anchors, 3 tapes, 1 bolt and hanger for 8mm Spit

Notes: Easy traverse to pitch-head. Descend past two deviations (second one from 8mm Spit) to rebelay and the floor.

Pitch 2 Rope: 30m

Rigging: 3 eco anchors, 1 tape

Notes: Easy traverse to pitch-head. Descend past a deviation to floor.

Pitch 3 Rope: 30m

Rigging: 4 eco anchors, 1 tape

Notes: Traverse to pitch-head. Descend past a deviation to floor.

A good trip but those boulder chokes need care and the downstream pitches are wet so best avoided if it's very wet!

FOR YOUR NEWSLETTER / NOTICEBOARD

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31 December 2009

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