



DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

Information Circular 2012/4, September/October 2012

NEXT DCA MEETING

Open Council Meeting, Saturday, 3rd. November 2012, 10am, Monyash Village Hall..

Further Meetings: AGM 2013: Saturday, 23rd. February 2013 followed by Council Meeting.

PEAK DISTRICT ACCESS AND RIGGING GUIDE, 2012 EDITION

Copies of the new **Peak District Access and Rigging Guide, 2012 Edition** (a.k.a. **The DCA Handbook**) went out to all DCA Individual Members, Member Clubs and Associate Members, free of charge, in September. Copies are available from the DCA Secretary, price £3.50 (incl. p&p.). Send a cheque payable to DCA to the usual 3 Greenway address. We would welcome bulk orders from clubs to sell on to their members, so contact Jenny on secretary@theDCA.org.uk to organise this. The Handbook is also on the website if you want to download it but, be warned, it is a 27.4Mb file.

Updates to the Handbook

The text of the Handbook is being updated as amendments are notified so that, when we come to print the next edition, it will be up to date – at least on the day it's printed. In the meantime, updates are on the DCA website for you to make your own notes. If you do spot anything in the Handbook needing amendment or update, please contact Jenny a.s.a.p. Updates noted so far are:

P.1:6, James Hall Over Engine Mine. (29-9-12)

No need to contact Dave Nixon in advance now so omit completely the sentence: "In the first instance call or write to Dave Nixon ... & requests for survey."

P.1:14 - 1:16, Manifold Valley (16-10-12)

Limepits (West Ecton) Mine. The lower adit entrance is situated just above river level about 50m north of the car park near Swainsley Tunnel. Landowner unknown. No access restrictions at present. The upper adit entrance is reached by following the nearby stream up the hill, then bearing off to the right (North) as it nears the hill top. The main shaft can be descended via a window part way down and accessed via the upper adit. There are good bolts in place and a 50m rope would be fine. Landowner unknown. No known access restrictions.

Darfar Pot. The river entrance has been left to 'naturalise' and would probably now be impassible due to silting. Use the upper entrance. The first 3 pitch lengths are wrong, they are all 25ft, (as it says in CoPD). They are all equipped with ringbolt belays. The sloping 2nd pitch has a knotted handline on it and the 3rd pitch can now be bypassed via a 3m climb down on the right just before the pitch head. Access needs confirming with N.T.

Riverside Swallet. Now has a bolted down grille on it, please replace after any visit. Upper entrance is reached via a gully about 20m downstream equipped with a knotted handline. 20m rope required for descent of Tumbledown Aven. Several routes down into main cave exist, all equipped with ringbolts. Adjustable spanner required for both entrances. Access needs confirming with N.T.

Hoo Valley Mines. There is not just one mine here, there are 3. Hoo Valley Mine (North, possibly one end of Botstone Mine) next to the public footpath, Hoo Valley Trial Level and Perserverance Mine. (Both on the South side of the stream, over a fence.) The first and last mine need an adjustable spanner to gain entry. Access needs confirming.

Ladyside Pot, T-Pot and Wednesday Pot are **not** on National Trust land! Other details OK. The latter two need an adjustable spanner to open.

Dukes Deep Level. Despite being just inside the Northern boundary of Castern Wood Nature Reserve, there is no gate on the entrance and no known access restrictions. BCA Insurance is probably a requirement though.

P.1:20, Jacob's Dream Mine, Via Gellia. (5-10-12)

Persons wishing to visit should phone the landowner in advance: Steve Dunn, on 01629 824647. (He's the guy with the skip hire business on the V.G., on the left just past the transport cafe opposite the turning to Bonsall.)

P.1:20, Groaning Tor Level, Via Gellia. (9-10-12)

No known access restrictions.

P.1:22, Waterfall Hole (Including Crock Pot). (11-10-12)

Cavers covered by the BCA insurance scheme are welcome to visit the cave at any time, but cars must not be parked on the track at any time. (It is just possible to tuck a couple of cars in on the left at the top of the hill towards Foolow).

The land on which the cave sits will probably be sold next year but until then the access agreement stands.

The owner has also asked if visiting parties will email Mark Noble at eyam_explorers@talk21.com so he can let them know that cavers will be on their land.

P.3:9, Cavers' Accommodation. (29-9-12)

Web address for Pindale Farm is now www.pindalefarm.co.uk; web address for Hollowford Centre is now www.hollowford.org.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE DCA TREASURER

Wayne Sheldon, the DCA Treasurer, is now settled at his new address in Sheffield: 83 Seagrave Crescent, Gleadless, Sheffield. S12 2JL. If need be, contact him on Mob. 07941-211209 or Em. finance@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, on conservation-off@theDCA.org.uk.

Asst. Conservation Officer

The post is currently vacant and Dave Webb would welcome offers of help from someone willing to take on the post of Asst. Conservation Officer.

Reporting Excess Carbon Dioxide levels

Alan Brentnall has agreed to maintain a record of CO₂ and O₂ meter readings within an Excel spreadsheet for various cave and mine sites within the Peak District. You can email Alan at gasman@theDCA.org.uk with readings. You can also notify him if you come across a site where you suspect there is a high level of CO₂ but you don't yourself have a meter; that will give an opportunity for meter readings to be taken in the area. More cavers are taking readings on a general caving trip, so rather than these go to waste, it was suggested that these are sent in so they can be recorded and may be used at some point in the future. Dave Webb is very busy, as you are aware, and is more than happy for Alan to do this for him. Alan will do a very good job.

CO₂ in Nettle Pot

The serious CO₂ problems reported in Nettle Pot in mid-September are now reported to have abated. Still worth being aware that there may be a problem and, if you do encounter it, please report it to Alan as above.

Waterfall Swallet

Thanks to Mark Noble for investigating the position at Waterfall Swallet – the new details are given in the Handbook updates above. Please note that the current arrangements may change if and when the farm is sold.

Vandalism in Masson Cavern

We received a report after visitors to Masson on about 12th. September observed fresh survey marks and a painted route way. This is particularly disappointing as efforts had been made by a DCA conservation team to remove paint marks left the year before. Information on who might be responsible for this would be welcome.

Vandalism in Carlswark Cavern

On Wednesday (26th. September) an instructor with a group came across a trail of fake blood as well as an area where it had been smeared all around the walls and floor in South Crawl, the tube of fake blood was also discovered. Obviously there is the conservation aspect to this but also the possible distress it could cause if an organised trip containing children were to come across it. The instructor who reported it commented, "Hopefully if we (cavers and instructors) are aware of it and are showing our disgust at this and other such actions we can dissuade further instances of it occurring."

Herne Hill Cave No. 1

Members of Chesterfield C.C. visited Herne Hill Cave, Maltby, on 8th. October and found the bolt was completely rusted and unopenable, so they removed it and replaced it with a completely new bolt and nut. They removed a fair amount of rubbish from the cave and have also fixed wire mesh to the inside of the gate to prevent rubbish falling/blowing/being chucked into it. Opening is exactly as before, with 2 adjustable spanners.

EQUIPMENT AND SAFETY

If you have any queries or problems about Equipment or Safety in the region, please contact the DCA Acting Equipment Officer: Bob Dearman Tel. 01298-85594, Mob. 07855-920087, Em. equipment@theDCA.org.uk or DCA Projects Officer: Dan Hibberts projects@theDCA.org.uk, Mob. 07846-526463.

New Access Lid on Son of Nettle

Thanks to Dan and Bob for installing a new lid on Son of Nettle. The lid had to be solid metal (our usual mesh lid was not acceptable to the landowner because of fears of lambs getting their feet caught) so this one was constructed to a new design to satisfy the landowner but still maintain ventilation and leave access for bats.

JH Update from Wayne Sheldon

Bitch Pitch was fully inspected on the 11th of September 2012. We found that nothing has changed since the last inspection and remedial work undertaken about one month ago. We descended to the bottom of the pitch, checking the p-hangers on the way down which we found to be okay. The pitch is pretty clear of debris, a large pile of collapsed material is now at the bottom of Bitch Pitch, but entry to the Workshop isn't a problem. We now consider the work on removing unstable material from Bitch Pitch to be complete, although there will never be a time when it can be regarded as completely safe, and it will be up to individual cavers to use their judgement when descending JH. It is certainly no place for novices.

FOR YOUR NEWSLETTER / NOTICEBOARD

www.theDCA.org.uk
27th October 2012

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