



DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

Information Circular 2014/5, November-December 2014

NEXT DCA MEETINGS

**Next meeting: Annual General Meeting - Saturday, 28th. February 2015
10am at Monyash Village Hall, followed by immediately by an open Council Meeting**

NEW DCA CHAIRMAN

Terry Jackson was formally elected DCA Chairman at the SGM on 1st. November. Terry wishes it to be known that he regards himself as a “caretaker” chairman as he feels is unable to spare the time to do the job as he thinks it should be done. He would welcome an approach from any caver who is interested in taking on the role of DCA Chairman so if you want to discuss this with Terry, contact him on chairman@theDCA.org.uk or phone him on 01663-750647.

COUNTRYSIDE & RIGHTS OF WAY (CRoW) ACT AS IT AFFECTS CAVING BALLOT OF ALL MEMBERS OF BCA

By now all BCA Member Clubs and Constituent Bodies (i.e. the regional councils, BCRA, Pengelly, NAMHO, ACI, etc.) and all Individual Cavers who are members of BCA, either direct or via their club, should have received a ballot paper asking you to vote on whether you feel BCA should, on your behalf, campaign for the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act to apply to going underground. (Note that it appears this would apply only to natural caves as abandoned mines are covered by different legislation.)

The matter has been discussed by your officers and at DCA Council meetings this year and there has also been considerable discussion in the caving press and on-line. BCA Council has decided that the matter is sufficiently important to ask for the views of **ALL** its members - hence the ballot. DCA members decided at the Council Meeting on 1st. November that, as DCA Secretary, I should vote YES on behalf of DCA itself in the ballot. **But all of you have a vote as well!** Please don't ignore the ballot paper but consider it carefully and ensure that it is returned by the deadline of noon on 18th. December. It is important that BCA Council are made aware of the views of **ALL** BCA members so they have a clear mandate on which to act.

CONSERVATION & ACCESS

If you have any queries or problems about Conservation or Access in the region, please email Mel Milner on conservation-off@theDCA.org.uk or Ewan Cameron on access-off@theDCA.org.uk or tel. 07966-184308.

Collapse at the Giants Hole track junction with the B6061 road

It was reported on 24th. November that there had been a serious collapse affecting the junction of the track to Peakshill Farm (for Giants Hole) with the B6061 road. It seems the collapse (believed to be into a shaft on Fawcett Rake), at the edge of the bend in the track has partly undermined the road and the Sparrowpit to Winnats Head road was reported closed to general through traffic until March 2015. It appears that it is still possible to drive along the road at present to reach Eldon Quarry, Oxlow Farm, etc. and even the track to Peakshill farm may be negotiable with care. Updates from local cavers are appearing online on UKcaving.com so you can always check the current situation.

Log Book for recording access to Eldon Quarry caves

A replacement box has been fitted by Pete Mellors and this time he has bolted it to the gate into the quarry instead of to the wall. The box is identical to the previous one and contains a new survey, logbook and pens. The key is on a chain again but you have to lift the letterbox flap to reach it and the gate must be re-locked after the box has been accessed.

Pete also reports that, at the farmer's insistence, the gate is now secured by a combination padlock as he's had trouble with off-roaders and wants cavers to report any unauthorised/suspicious visitors to him without delay (Maurice Gregory on 07778 750878). At least Mr. Gregory realises the bad guys are not the ones in helmets and oversuits. Code for the lock is 1.2.3.4 (not my idea of high security either but there you go!). Please remember no cavers' vehicles are allowed through the gate but you are welcome to park in the lane as long as you don't cause an obstruction.

Any damage or problems with the new box or lock should be reported promptly to DCA.

Eyam Dale House Cave

John Beck has met up with the new owner of Eyam Dale House and reports that he seems a nice guy, and is happy for the present access arrangement to continue. John holds the key at Glebe Cottage.

The only change is that he would like an email when a group is coming so that he knows that the people milling about in the lower car park are cavers and not intruders. Fair enough. Groups should contact John at least a day in advance (which they normally do anyway to make sure he will be around) and John will let him know. Any queries, please contact DCA for further information.

New lid fitted to Credit Crunch Shaft

Many thanks to Gordon Wordsworth and Pete Knight who have fitted the new lid on the Credit Crunch Shaft. There was not time to fit the hinge bolts and catch. These can be drilled into the stone surround if needed so they have been left handy ready for this to be done.

EQUIPMENT AND SAFETY

If you have any queries or problems about Equipment or Safety in the region, please contact the DCA

Equipment Officer: Bob Dearman equipment@theDCA.org.uk or T. 01298-85594, or DCA Projects Officer: Pete Knight, projects@theDCA.org.uk or M. 07812 038233.

Checking P-bolts

All regional councils and others who install P-bolts under the BCA scheme rely on people letting us know if there is a problem with any bolts so that they can be checked and, if necessary, properly tested to ensure they are OK. However we have had a recent problem in the Peak District where the team were unable to locate the alleged suspect bolt and wasted quite a lot of time and effort checking what were subsequently found to be the wrong bolts. In the event no problems were found with any of the bolts in the cave, which was P8.

We have also had cavers reporting suspect bolts which turned out to be not P-bolts (Eco- or BP-anchors) installed by DCA but other resin-mounted bolts or even spits installed by unknown cavers. In the interests of caver safety, DCA is quite prepared to check these as well as our own installations. It is useful if you can identify the attachment as one of the DCA-installed anchors - all are shown in the rigging topos in the "Peak District Access and Rigging Guide" produced by DCA. (Available for download from the DCA website or printed copy, price £2.50 incl. postage, from the DCA Secretary.) PLEASE, if you do report a suspect anchor in the Peak District, make direct contact with the DCA Equipment Officer and be prepared to explain exactly where it is so that it can be checked efficiently and quickly. Currently the Equipment Officer is Bob Dearman (contact details above) and you'll also find contact details on the DCA website - in particular in all DCA Information Circulars which are on the website at www.theDCA.org.uk.

Suspect Bolts reported on a pitch in P.8

Suspect bolts have again been reported at the head of the **2nd. pitch** in P.8. (All six bolts on the alternative hang for the **1st. pitch** have now been tested with the Hydrajaws to 6kN for 15 secs and showed no movement.) The bolts on the 2nd. pitch were checked (but not tested with the Hydrajaws) at the time and were believed to be OK so this report will need to be followed up.

Suspected CO₂ in Lathkill Head Cave Upper Entrance

On 21 November DCA received a brief report of excess CO₂ in Lathkill Head Cave Upper Entrance. Our contact reported that he felt the effects in the lower part of the Upper Entrance series, coming back from the second chamber through the boulder choke. He says it got a bit better up the slope in Waiting Room at base of pitch. Just be aware and be prepared to head out if necessary.

The Projects Officer needs YOUR help!

Many thanks to all those who have already responded to Pete Knight's request for offers of help in tackling the multitude of jobs to be done. Pete would welcome a call from you if you can spare some time or if you have any special expertise in building, construction, metalworking, etc. which would be useful.

DCA NEWSLETTER, "THE DERBYSHIRE CAVER" No. 136

Issue no. 135 has been sent out to all members and no. 136 is in preparation. Editor Mike would welcome articles, snippets of information, pictures, surveys, etc. from anyone who would like to contribute. In particular he would like to hear of new explorations and discoveries by local clubs. So make Mike happy by emailing your items to him or he'll also accept items posted or even phoned in to:

Mike Higgins, newsletter@theDCA.org.uk, T. 01302 882874, M. 07971 482045
56 Robin Hood Crescent, Edenthorpe, Doncaster, S. Yorks. DN3 2JJ

STONEY MIDDLETON DALE SSSI CAVE AUDIT & CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

This 64-page fully illustrated publication, produced by Mark Cope for DCA, has now been printed and is on sale from the DCA Secretary for £10.00 plus £1.00 postage. It is an excellent publication with surveys, maps, plentiful colour photos and detailed descriptions of all the caves in Stoney Middleton Dale. If you would like a copy send a cheque for £11.00, payable to DCA, to Jenny at the address below or, if you prefer to pay by BACS, email Jenny for details of how to do this. We will also have copies on sale, along with other DCA publications, at the AGM so you can reserve your copy with Jenny and pick it up and pay only £10.00 for it then.

FOR YOUR NEWSLETTER / NOTICEBOARD

www.theDCA.org.uk

30 November 2014

<p><i>Hon. Secretary: Jenny Potts,</i> <i>3 Greenway, Hulland Ward, Ashbourne, DE6 3FE</i> <i>Tel. 01335-370629</i> <i>Email. secretary@theDCA.org.uk</i></p>
--