



# DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

Information Circular 2016/2, Feb./Mar. 2016

## DCA MEETINGS

**Next meeting: OPEN COUNCIL MEETING, JUNE 25TH. 2016**

**Council Meetings start at 10am at Monyash Village Hall.**

**Other Open Council Meetings: 22nd. Oct. 2016 and after the AGM on 25 Feb. 2017**

**A.G.M. 2017: Saturday, 27th. February, 10am. Monyash Village Hall**

**Underground Conservation Forum: Wed. 20th. April 2016, 7pm. Anchor Inn, Tideswell.**

## DCA OFFICERS ELECTED AT THE AGM

**Chairman: Wayne Sheldon**, 57 Toll Bar Road, Sheffield, S12 2QZ. [chairman@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:chairman@theDCA.org.uk), T. 07941 211209

**Vice-Chairman: Terry Jackson**, New House Farm, Chapel-en-le-Friith, SK23 0QL, [vice-chair@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:vice-chair@theDCA.org.uk), T. 01663 750647, M. 07966 219997

**Secretary: Jenny Potts**, 3 Greenway, Hulland Ward, Ashbourne. DE6 3FE. [secretary@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:secretary@theDCA.org.uk), T. 01335 370629

**Treasurer: Angus Sawyer**, 143 Willsthorpe Road, Long Eaton, Nottingham, NG10 3LJ. [finance@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:finance@theDCA.org.uk), T. 0115 973 1177, M. 07547 153715

### **Conservation & Access Team:**

**Conservation Officer: Christine Wilson**, Kingfisher Cottage, Far Hill, Bradwell, S33 9HR. [conservation-off@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:conservation-off@theDCA.org.uk), T. 01433 621149, M. 07713 416455

**Access Officer: Gary Noble**, DCC Adventur Mobile Activities Team, Peter Webster Centre, Sheffield Rd, Whittington Moor, S41 8LQ. [access-off@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:access-off@theDCA.org.uk), M. 07791 625370

**Legal & Insurance Officer: Pete Mellors**, Fairview, Edingley, Newark, Notts, NG22 8BX. [legal.insurance@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:legal.insurance@theDCA.org.uk), T. 01623 882515

**Projects Officer: Pete Knight**, 12 Bowden Cres., New Mills, Derbyshire. SK22 4LN. [projects@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:projects@theDCA.org.uk), T. 07812 038233

**Equipment Officer: Bob Dearman**, The Green Cottage, Main St, Chelmsorton, Buxton, SK17 9SL. [equipment@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:equipment@theDCA.org.uk), T. 01298 85594

**Training Officer: Nigel Atkins**, Wharfedale House, Springfield Cl, Midway, S. Derbyshire, DE11 0DB. [training@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:training@theDCA.org.uk), T. 01283 210666, M. 07831 449919

**Newsletter Editor: Mike Higgins**, 56 Robin Hood Cres, Edenthorpe, Doncaster, DN3 2JJ. [newsletter@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@theDCA.org.uk), T. 01302 882874, M. 07971 482045

## CONSERVATION & ACCESS

**If you have any queries or problems about Conservation or Access in the region, please contact Christine Wilson on [conservation-off@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:conservation-off@theDCA.org.uk), T. 01433 621149, M. 07713 416455 or Gary Noble on [access-off@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:access-off@theDCA.org.uk), T. 07791 625370.**

### **Help keep the "Derbyshire Key" system going**

The "Derbyshire Key" system (aka a large adjustable spanner), popularised by DCA, is widely used throughout the Peak District; generally farmers and landowners are happy that it prevents accidents to livestock and people in areas where there are open shafts and cave entrances, whilst cavers are happy that it allows hassle-free access without requiring permits or paperwork in advance.

However, just a reminder that at sites where DCA has set up this system to maintain access, it is really important that the nuts on lids and gates are tightened up with the spanner when you leave so that they cannot be undone by fingers alone.

We have recently had some nuts go missing from the top of Knotlow Climbing Shaft - many thanks to Adam Russell for replacing these promptly. It is suggested that, to avoid losing the nuts or dropping them down the shaft once you have opened the lid, you replace them on the bolts and spanner them tight straight away, i.e. before you go down, so the lid can't be accidentally bolted down to prevent you exiting and the nuts don't go astray. After your trip it's important to make sure that the lid is closed securely with the nuts spannered up tight so they can't be undone by just fingers.

This is particularly important where the system is used for an adit or shaft close to a popular footpath, e.g. Mandale Mine in Lathkill Dale. We have been warned by N.E. that recently the bolts were found to be missing on the shaft and gate on the Mandale mines. This is an area which is heavily visited all year round by lots of families with children and there is a real health and safety issue if the mines are accidentally left accessible. We'd hate to have to put a lock on these sites so please make sure that the Derbyshire Key system can continue to operate by taking care always to spanner up the nuts tight after visiting.

DCA hopes gradually to work through the various sites and replace the existing separate nuts with a system which allows a spanner to loosen a captive nut above a short swinging arm - so nothing to lose, drop, etc. and the Derbyshire Key system will work as before. It will be quite a job to complete the change for all the many sites in the Peak District as, for each one, a hole will need to be drilled in the frame outside the lid to take a threaded bar, which will then need to be resined in, to take the swinging arm and the nut.

Meanwhile, if you do come across a site which is missing its nuts, please contact DCA a.s.a.p. so they can be replaced:

[secretary@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:secretary@theDCA.org.uk), [access-off@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:access-off@theDCA.org.uk) or [projects@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:projects@theDCA.org.uk)

Thanks for your co-operation.

## **Eyam Dale House Cave**

There is still building work going on in the vicinity of the cave and a new access arrangement is in the process of being sorted. We have a volunteer keyholder so we'll let you know access details as soon as possible.

## **Titan Shaft**

Work to stabilise the shaft and restore access has now been completed so access is open again as from 13th. March. For full details of access arrangements for Titan, Peak Cavern, Speedwell and J.H. check [www.peakspeedwell.info](http://www.peakspeedwell.info).

## **Access to Holme Bank Mine is still in doubt**

The owner of Holme Hall has recently placed an extra padlock on the usual (No. 1) entrance to Holme Bank Mine, Bakewell to prevent people accessing it using Mr. Oldfield's key.

Mr. Oldfield has been happy to allow access to the mine, asking only for a donation to a charity by people who use the key he continues to provide, and is happy for people to visit the mine using No. 2 entrance - arrangements for permission as before.

The mine is popular with instructed groups (who were able to use No. 1 entrance for wheelchair access), and also with cave divers, who use it as a training site. DCA is tackling this as a matter of urgency and is in contact with Chatsworth Estates to try to resolve the problem. If you do visit, please ensure that you park carefully and make sure you do not obstruct access to the bridle way or the drive to Home Hall.

## **Garden Path Access Improvements**

A reminder that the new arrangements for access to Garden Path entrance to Lathkill Head Cave are now in place; email Pete Mellors on [legal.insurance@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:legal.insurance@theDCA.org.uk). Full details were given in DCA Information Circular 2016/1.

## **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](mailto:equipment@theDCA.org.uk) or T. 01298-85594, or **DCA Projects Officer: Pete Knight,** [projects@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:projects@theDCA.org.uk) or M. 07812 038233.

## **Bolt Testing**

DCA bolt installers earlier this year used a Hydrajaws tester on a number of bolts which have been in place for some years. The following sites were tested: **Devonshire Cavern** - the 4 bolts on Hells Well pitch and the 4 bolts on the pitch on the opposite side of the chamber; **Jug Holes** - the plate hanger above the climb down at the entrance chamber and the 3 bolts on the traverse.

All bolts were subjected to the standard (EN959) 6kN pull for 15 seconds and all passed. Thanks to Nigel Atkins, who was assisted by Jonathon Reeves.

## **Volunteers needed to help with DCA Projects**

The DCA are seeking help with some projects over the coming months. If you think you can offer assistance please get in touch with the DCA Projects Officer, Pete Knight, [projects@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:projects@theDCA.org.uk). Ideally we'd like to hear from anyone who could manage the project with our support or from anyone with the specialist skills needed; however, all offers of help are welcome as Pete can get things going himself at some point.

## **Eldon Hole ground anchors for East and West routes**

The ground anchors for the east and west routes are being replaced and it has taken longer than anticipated to come up with a solution and we have had to wait for replacement drills to be available as our old ones were U.S. The proposed new anchors should remain in place safely for far longer than the former ones, which only lasted for 25 years. Thanks to Pete Knight and his helpers for taking on this task and thanks for offers of mechanical assistance in getting materials up to the site now the weather and ground conditions are improving.

The anchors for the north and south routes should be OK to use.

## **Eldon Hole parking**

The parking arrangements for Eldon Hole need clarifying/reinforcing. The large layby on the left up the top of the lane is currently full of hardcore for the farm and parking here does not seem to be a problem as long as you leave any gates clear. Please do not park outside the private house lower down the lane, even if you do keep the gate and lane perfectly clear, and stay off the grass!

## **EuroSpeleo16**

The website for this major European caving event in Yorkshire in 2016 is <http://www.eurospeleo.eu/en>

From the home page, scroll down and click on the Newsletter logo and on the **EuroSpeleo2016** logo for the latest news on the **EuroSpeleo2016** event happening from 13th to 20th. August in Yorkshire.

## **FOR YOUR NEWSLETTER / NOTICEBOARD**

<http://www.theDCA.org.uk>

26th. March 2016

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