



# DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

## Minutes of DCA Council Meeting, 30th. October 2010, Monyash Village Hall

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Officers:</b>	Bob Dearman [BD]	Chairman (Eldon P.C. & Ind. Memb.)
		Terry Jackson [TJ]	Vice Chairman (Ind. Memb.)
		Jenny Potts [JP]	Secretary/Treasurer (Orpheus C.C. & Ind. Memb.)
		David Webb [DW]	Conservation Officer (Masson C.G. & PDMHS)
		Christine Wilson [CW]	Asst. Conservation Officer (Masson C.G.)
		Peter Mellors [PM]	Legal & Insurance Officer (Ind. Memb.)
		Paul Lydon [PL]	N/L Editor/Publications Officer (Orpheus C.C.)
	<b>Club Reps:</b>	Karen Slatcher [KS]	Orpheus C. C. (& Ind. Member)
		Boyd Potts [BP]	Orpheus C. C.
	<b>Individual Members:</b>	B.Dearman, T.Jackson, J.Potts, P.Mellors, K.Slatcher.	

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE; ESTABLISH QUORUM:

- 1.1 Apologies received from: Iain Barker (Access Off.), Nigel Atkins (Training Off.), Frank Beasley (Chesterfield C.C.), Jess Eades (T.S.G.), Graham Marshment (B.V.T.), Mark Richardson (B.B.C.C.), Wayne Sheldon, Andy Eavis, Andy Tickle, Elaine Hill.
- 1.2 The meeting was quorate with 7 DCA Officers present.

### 2. APPROVE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING, 26 JUNE 2010: (*Previously circulated.*)

- 2.1.a Noted that the date on the printed copy should be amended to read 26th. June 2010.
- 2.1.b JP confirmed that the vote on item 5.2.1.b was correctly recorded as "Nem Con", i.e. no-one had voted against the proposal. She had not been asked to record the names of any who had abstained.
- 2.1.c *That, with the date amended to read 26th. June 2010, the Minutes be approved as a correct record.*  
Prop. B.Potts, Sec. P.Lydon. *Agreed unanimously.*

### 3. MATTERS ARISING:

- 3.1 3.3 **Manifold/Hamps publication:** JP would produce a poster advertising this for display at suitable sites. **ACTION: JP**
- 3.2 3.7 **Plate Hangers on Garlands Pot:** JP had received no response to queries to JB or NA as to the placement. PL confirmed that they had not been placed by D.C.R.O., who do not install bolts "in case of need".
- 3.3 5.1.2.b **Water Icicle Close Cavern, new extensions:** JP confirmed that information on WICC access had been circulated in DCA Information Circular 2010/2, as agreed.
- 3.4 5.2.1.c **UK Cave Conservation Emergency Fund:** JP had informed BCRA of D.Webb's nomination as DCA representative.
- 3.5 5.2.2.a **Water Icicle Close Cavern, CO<sub>2</sub> warning notices and lid repairs:** KS will put a new notice on the lid and it should be possible to adjust the lid to work properly. **ACTION: KS**
- 3.6 5.4.a **Holme Bank Chert Mine, check with PICA re. emergency exit:** See under IB's report, 5.4.
- 3.7 5.5.a **Snake Mine:** JP had advised members in DCA Information Circular 2010/2 of the owner's requirements re. access.
- 3.8 5.5.b **Club Projects, duty of care:** JP would put this information in the next DCA Information Circular. **ACTION: JP**
- 3.9 7.1.a **Caves of the Peak District, pre-publication offer:** See under JP's report, 5.1.
- 3.10 7.2.a **Peak District Access & Rigging Guide, check all sections ready for publication:** Final checks were being made; JP, TJ and PL would need to get together to compile finished booklet ready for publication as soon as possible after CoPD was published. **ACTION: JP, TJ, PL**

### 4. ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS:

- 4.1 **Club Member - Buttered Badger Caving Club:** BBCC were BCA members and had applied to DCA with a copy of their Constitution: *BBCC was unanimously accepted as a DCA Member Club.*
- 4.2 **Individual Member - Mark Fox:** MF has sent in an application form and was proposed by NA and JP. *MF was unanimously accepted as a DCA Individual Member.*

### 5. OFFICERS' REPORTS:

#### 5.1 HON. SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT: (*Written report tabled.*)

- 5.1.a **Artificial Speleological System (ASS):** JP explained that this had been built by Dennis Jump for DCA to use at Cliffhanger, where it had been a great success. An article on Cliffhanger, including photos, would appear in the next DCA Newsletter. The ASS would be made available for others to use at events return for a donation to DCA funds.
- 5.1.b **"Do You Dig Caves?":** JP noted the time and effort put in by DW and others in production of this leaflet, which had received a very positive response from other regions and from BCA and BCRA. There would be further expense in the production of the "DYDG" poster, which was in hand.
- 5.1.c **Caves of the Peak District:** JP explained that this was now in production with the final corrections being made to the text ready for proof-reading. Pre-publication orders were very encouraging. It was hoped that publication would be by the end of November but this depended on the printers.
- 5.1.d **New DCA Treasurer required:** JP reported that there had been no approaches from anyone willing to take on the post. She was willing to continue in office until a new Treasurer was found but wanted to hand over as soon as possible.

- 5.1.e **BCA Safety Cards:** JP produced a sample of a laminated "Safety Information Card" produced by BCA and intended to be freely available on shop counters and to be sent to all cavers signing up for the LCMLA. The BCA Training Officer was seeking £100 worth of sponsorship from DCA, in return for which the DCA logo and web address would appear on the cards, which could be made available for DCA members as well as to the general caving public. The information on the cards would be well known to most experienced cavers but not to many entering caving as a beginner so clubs could be encouraged to hand cards to new members joining as novices. Both JP and DW were in favour of DCA sponsoring the cards for up to £100, others felt the cards would be useful; no vote was taken but JP was authorised to go ahead with sponsorship. It was suggested that we ask permission to use the wording in the DCA Handbook. **ACTION: JP**

**5.2 CONSERVATION OFFICERS' REPORT:** (*Written report tabled.*)

Note: This is a combined report from the Conservation Officer and the Assistant Conservation Officer.

- 5.2.a **Future of Natural England:** It had been noted that the future of Natural England was being reconsidered under the new government initiatives; the present situation would change, though it was unclear what the future would hold. It was understood that responsibility for National Nature Reserves would no longer be with N.E.; SSSIs will continue to exist and there will still be a requirement to monitor them. The situation was still in a state of flux and DCA would need to maintain a watch on what would be happening and be able to react appropriately if necessary.

5.2.b **Water Icicle Close Cavern, access to new extensions:**

- i. JP had received a letter from Crewe C.P.C. reporting concerns expressed by their members at the restricted access; they had asked her to raise this at the meeting. CCPC members believed there was access for only 4 people per month (so only 48 cavers per year) and that access was only at weekends. It appears this is a misunderstanding of the current arrangements. KS, who managed the access on behalf of OCC/DCA, explained that the limit was of 4 people (plus leader) per party but that there could be more than one party per weekend and that midweek access could be arranged if requested. She would re-word the details re. access on the OCC website to make these points clear. She noted that only 5 groups altogether had asked for access since the on-line system was set up, that there were free dates on the list and that no-one from CCPC had contacted her to arrange a visit or to ask for clarification. (JP pointed out that no-one from CCPC was present at this meeting, nor had they been represented at DCA meetings for some years past and had thus deprived themselves of any input into discussions or decisions made.) It was agreed that, to relieve the pressure on the present 4 OCC leaders, OCC would ask for volunteer leaders from other DCA member clubs, on the understanding that the limit of 4 cavers plus leader on any one visit is adhered to. JP would respond to the CCPC letter. **ACTION: KS, JP**

- ii. There followed a wide-ranging discussion of the problems involved in maintaining a degree of access to WICC extensions whilst at the same time complying with the original request from the Underground Conservation Forum to ensure that the unique area was not damaged and that scientific work could take place. The following points were made:

Both IB and BD had received a number of adverse comments and complaints about the access arrangements for WICC and feared that DCA's standing was suffering.

In contrast, the OCC members present stated that they had put up a stand at Hidden Earth with information and photos of the new discoveries and had received only positive comments and no complaints; also visitors to the extensions had been very positive and had expressed understanding of the need for a leader system and limited visitor numbers.

JP pointed out that there were a number of sites in other regions where a leader system and a limit of 4 cavers + leader operated and this was acceptable; in Derbyshire, parts of Bagshaw Cavern currently had restricted access, organised by Eldon P.C.

KS pointed out that the existing calendar on the OCC website did not list the additional visits which had already taken place.

It was noted that when the new extensions were first open, some cavers had ignored requests to stay away for the time being, had cut the padlock which secured the access ladder out of the way and had left a scaffold bar unsecured in the route engineered through the boulder choke. Access currently depended upon the OCC fixed ladder remaining in place; once this was removed a major climb would be required to reach the crawl leading to the extensions.

BD pointed out that we had agreed that the access system would be under review at each DCA meeting, which is what we were now doing.

The following motion was drafted:

***That DCA encourages and supports plans by Orpheus Caving Club to extend their access arrangements for Water Icicle Close Cavern to include Guest Leaders from other DCA member clubs.***

Prop. P.Mellors, Sec. T.Jackson. **Agreed Unanimously.**

The meeting felt this would allow further flexibility on dates. A record should be kept of all Guest Leader visits, in the same way that all current visits with OCC leaders were recorded. Suggestions were made as to how best to set up such a Guest Leader system, bearing in mind similar systems in other regions and the requirement for leaders and visitors to be covered by BCA insurance; OCC would organise this and continue to maintain records. **ACTION: KS, OCC**

- iii. IB had expressed concern that the formalities and permissions required to collect scientific samples would result in the landowners, Chatsworth Estate, placing their own limits on visits and involve even more bureaucracy. It was noted that there is a legal requirement for the landowner to be informed by N.E. when scientific samples are collected from an SSSI. DCA had always had good relations with the Chatsworth Trust, which runs the Estate, and it was suggested that we should not anticipate problems but should continue to keep a watching brief.

- 5.2.c ***That the Conservation Officers' Report be accepted.*** Prop. P.Mellors, Sec. T.Jackson. **Agreed unanimously.**

**5.3 PROJECTS OFFICER'S REPORT:** (*Not present, no report sent.*)

- 5.3.a **Rowter Pot:** Noted that repair work was needed on the Rowter Pot lid and it was not known if this was going ahead.

- 5.3.b **Holme Bank Chert Mine:** It was not known whether the Projects Officer was dealing with the H.B.C.M. locks.

**5.4 ACCESS OFFICER'S REPORT:** *(Not present but written report tabled.)*

5.4.a **Garden Path:** Noted that there did not seem to be many requests for trips into Garden Path. The Projects Officer was removing the wooden platforms from the shaft in line with a previous decision.

5.4.b *That the Access Officer's Report be accepted.* Prop. P.Mellors, Sec. T.Jackson. *Agreed unanimously.*

**5.5 LEGAL & INSURANCE OFFICER'S REPORT:** *(Written report tabled.)*

5.5.a *That the Legal & Insurance Officer's Report be accepted.* Prop. T.Jackson, Sec. K.Slatcher. *Agreed unanimously.*

**5.6 EQUIPMENT OFFICER'S REPORT:** *(Not present, no report sent.)*

5.6.a **Cliff Cavern, Speedwell:** H.Rockliffe of S.U.S.S. had asked that P-anchors be placed on the climb up.

*That the bolt placements requested be approved.* Prop. J.Potts, Sec. B.Potts. *Agreed unanimously.*

5.6.b **Loose Bolt Report:** A suspected loose P-anchor had been reported to JP, who had referred it to JB for action if required. She had heard nothing further so assumed the bolt had been checked and found to be OK.

5.6.c **Shaft into Maury Sough:** It was reported that the lid on the shaft into Maury Sough had been vandalised. DW would query this with PDMHS.

**5.7 TRAINING OFFICER'S REPORT:** *(Not present, written report tabled.)*

5.7.a **BCA Training Officer's proposal re. doing away with the Training Committee:** DCA regarded it as extremely important that training for recreational cavers through clubs continued. A number of DCA member clubs have applied for and received Training Grants for Club events; the DCA Training Officer also provides training for recreational cavers using grant aid to subsidise the cost. It was suggested that there should be a note in the BCA Newsletter on the availability of grants for recreational caver training.

*That a BCA pot of money for recreational caver training should remain available for clubs.*

Prop. B.Potts, Sec. C.Wilson. *Agreed unanimously.*

It was felt that it was important to strengthen the relationship between recreational and professional cavers.

5.7.b *That the Training Officer's Report be accepted.* Prop. P.Lydon, Sec. C.Wilson. *Agreed unanimously.*

**5.8 PUBLICATIONS OFFICER'S / NEWSLETTER EDITOR'S REPORT:** *(Verbal report given.)*

5.8.a PL reported that he could not produce a Newsletter unless he received material to put in it - at present none was forthcoming.

It was suggested that extracts from Club newsletters might be included in the DCA Newsletter but PL said he did not want to plagiarise from Club Newsletters. There was a strong feeling that it would be good to have a "news from clubs" section in the DCA Newsletter.

It was agreed that JP would contact Clubs via the next DCA Information Circular to ask for information to be sent to PL and to ask clubs if they would consider appointing a "club correspondent". **ACTION: JP**

5.8.b *That the Publications Officer's Report be accepted.* Prop. T.Jackson, Sec. P.Mellors. *Agreed unanimously.*

**5.9 ASSISTANT SECRETARY (PLANNING LIAISON) REPORT:** *(Not present, no report sent.)*

5.9.a **Derbyshire County Council Contact:** JP noted that CB was DCA's contact with Derbyshire County Council and kept a watch on planning applications in case any might impact on caves. She was in regular contact with CB by email.

5.9.b **Glebe Mine Closure:** It was noted that Glebe Mine is now closing down. TJ suggested that we need to know what is happening to Sallet Hole Mine as this could be a useful training site.

**6. BCA REPORT:**

6.1 **BCA Council Report:** JP and BP had attended the BCA Council Meeting on 2 October. Both felt it had again been a very positive meeting. The BCA Insurance Manager had reported that there would be no rise in the insurance premium for 2011 and it had been agreed that there would therefore be no rise in any BCA subscriptions for Club or Individual Members.

6.2 **"Court-Ready Technical Experts":** BCA Council had recommended that RCCs and anybody else with a potential interest should ask for suitable people to be on the list of "Court-Ready Technical Experts".

6.3 **Safety Cards:** See under 5.1.e above.

**7. AGREE OFFICER POSTS FOR ELECTION AT THE DCA AGM IN 2011:**

JP reminded members of the Constitutional requirement for this Council Meeting to agree the Officer posts required for election at the following year's AGM.

*That the set of Elected Officer posts for the year 2011/2012 should be the same as for the current year.*

Prop. B.Potts, Sec. K.Slatcher. *Agreed unanimously.*

**8. CONFIRM DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING:**

8.1 **AGM 2011:** The next meeting would be the *AGM which had been agreed as Saturday, 26 February 2011*. This would be followed immediately by a brief Council Meeting to deal with Matters arising from the Council Meeting of 30 Oct. 2010.

**9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

9.1 **Timing of future Council Meetings:** BD suggested that we should not meet on a Saturday morning, when he felt many people would prefer to go caving rather than attend a meeting, but should try instead an evening meeting. There was a general feeling that members would prefer a mid-week evening, i.e. Mon.-Thurs., rather than a Friday or Saturday evening. It was felt that Monyash Village Hall should still be the preferred venue and JP was requested to ask which evenings might be available for us and to report back to the AGM, at which we would fix future dates. **ACTION: JP**

9.2 **UCF "Wish List" of SSSIs:** BD suggested that we should identify SSSIs where conservation projects were needed because the site is at risk. The following were suggested: Rowter Pot, Water Icicle Close Cavern, Maury Sough, Streaks Pot.

- 9.3 **Glass Fibre Rings for stabilising shafts, etc.:** DW reported that N.E. had funded glass fibre rings, originally for Titan, but these could now be used for other sites. There are 4 rings, of 1.4m diameter and 1m depth. Anyone interested should contact DW.
- 9.4 **Radon in Bagshawe Cavern:** It was noted that one single high level of radon had been recorded in Bagshawe at one point in time.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 2.42pm.

*J. E. Potts  
Recorder.*

**APPENDED TO THESE MINUTES AND FORMING PART OF THEM IS THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT:  
Officers' Reports to the DCA Council Meeting, 30 October 2010:**

- |    |          |                                     |
|----|----------|-------------------------------------|
| a. | Item 5.1 | Secretary/Treasurer's Report,       |
| b. | Item 5.2 | Conservation Officers' Report,      |
| c. | Item 5.4 | Access Officer's Report,            |
| d. | Item 5.5 | Legal & Insurance Officer's Report, |
| e. | Item 5.7 | Training Officer's Report.          |

**ITEM 5.1 - SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT**

**Communications**

Apologies for the late appearance of the Minutes of the 25 June Meeting, sent out with the Agenda for this meeting.

Posted out to all members on 19/20/21 October were:

- Agenda for Council Meeting 30 October 2010 (also emailed on 18 Oct.);
- Council Meeting Minutes of 26 June 2010 (also emailed on 18 Oct.);
- Information Circular 2010/2 (also emailed on 19 Oct.);
- Details of Caver Training Courses (supplied by DCA Training Officer);
- Flyer for Ralph Johnson's "Mid-Rope Rescue" DVD;
- Flyer for pre-publication orders for "Caves of the Peak District" (deadline extended to 4 November);
- "Do You Dig Caves" leaflet;
- Leaflet re. the British Caving Library.

In addition, the following items have been sent out to all, by email where possible, otherwise by post:

- Appeal for help re. DCA stand at Cliffhanger (29 June);
- Note re. access to new extensions in Water Icicle Close Cavern (5 August);
- Flyer for pre-publication orders for "Caves of the Peak District" (18 August);
- Note re. the ban on access to Eldon Quarry (28 August).

**Membership**

Current paid-up membership stands at:	Clubs	30
	Associate	9
	Individual	49 (Incl. 2 Hon. Members)

Pleasing to note that we have applications for both Club and Individual Membership of DCA at this meeting.

**Cliffhanger**

DCA's presence at Cliffhanger was a great success this year and included the first appearance of the DCA "Artificial Spelological System" (ASS) built by Dennis Jump, as well as the Dudley C. C. Squeeze Box, the 30ft. ladder climb and the DCA stand tent with caving videos running, information on caving and cave conservation displays. Thanks go to those who supplied equipment and to the 12 people who helped out over the weekend, some for the whole weekend and others for one day or even a few hours helping to set up Friday evening. Total cost to DCA was £869.44, of which £424.69 went on the construction of the ASS.

I presented a report on the event to the BCA Council Meeting on 2 October and it was agreed that BCA would cover £500 of these costs. A copy of this report plus photos of the event will appear in the next DCA Newsletter.

The ASS is already being made available for other outdoor activity events in Derbyshire, beginning with an appearance at an event on 6th. November run by Derbyshire County Council Adventurous Activity Team. We expect donations to DCA's funds from these loans.

**Finances**

Major payments into our accounts since 25 June are: £4285.00 (pre-publication orders for CoPD + advertising); £165.19 (donations from Ralph Johnson re. sales of his DVD). Bank interest on our deposit account for the quarter ending 15 Sept. was £13.68.

Major payments out since 25 June are: £209.93 (WICC gate); £69.04 (CDF grant to Orpheus C.C.); £869.44 (Cliffhanger payments); £210.00 (CoPD flyers); £1368.87 (Do You Dig Caves leaflet - funded by N.E. Grant received earlier in the year).

Current funds are:	Deposit a/c	£ 15,591.58
	Current a/c	£ 984.04
	Cheques to be presented	<u>£ 480.00</u>
	<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£ 17,055.62</u></b>

This amount includes £932.59 in the Cave Conservation Emergency Fund and £414.73 in the Cave Discovery Fund.

A reminder again that you will need a new Treasurer for next year.

*Jenny Potts, 29/10/10*

## ITEM 5.2 - CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT

1. **Hidden Earth 2010.** The Saturday afternoon conservation session at Hidden Earth (organised by John Gunn of BCRA) was a great success. The Derbyshire slot was presented jointly by Jo Poll (Natural England) and myself as a "partnership" project. Jo spoke of her involvement and passion for the SSSI caves under her care, and gratitude for the support she receives from cavers for the Monitoring Scheme; I followed with the financial benefits to DCA of the partnership, and illustrated some of the many projects facilitated by grant-aid. The room was packed and we are grateful for your support – it was the best attended slot of all.
2. **Conservation Roadshow.** Following some other recent caving/conservation presentations, Chris and myself are to put together a selection of slides, text and short video for showing at club evenings to show the value and extent of the work we do, and to promote the new Digging Guidelines. It won't eat too much into valuable drinking time so if you are interested would you please contact Chris or myself.
3. **New Cave Digging Leaflet.** 200 copies of the leaflet have already been distributed by Jenny with the latest Circular. A further 150 will be distributed by BCA Training Administrator Mary Wilde. A short explanatory note has been circulated to all DCA members.
4. **The Underground Conservation Forum (UCF) Meeting October 2010.** The meeting was well attended and many topics covered, including the cave entrance flora study undertaken by David Wall, Jim and Jess's bats underground sessions due to start again soon, and the excellent clean up by a PDMHS sub group of the mountain of rubbish in Dunsley Springs level.

**Water Icicle.** A considerable amount of time was taken up discussing the negative views expressed by some cavers to both DCA officers and Orpheus members regarding the gating and access arrangements for the new discoveries in Water Icicle. The meeting suggested that a planned visit to scientifically evaluate the deposits is brought forward to enable an earlier review of the position to take place.

**Statement from the meeting:**

*"We understand there are frustrations with access to this cave, but we need to record the value of it (the cave deposits) before we can allow the current access situation to change.*

*This cave, recently, has had a preliminary study taken by John Gunn and it has been classified as having value to warrant another more detailed study and collection of basalt and speleotherm samples.*

*There has always been access to this cave, however, presently numbers visiting it is monitored in order to help preserve its original state for sample collection/recording. i.e. you may need to 'book' yourself a slot to visit it. Your patience whilst this process of recording occurs is appreciated."*

### 5. **Water Icicle (WICC) Conservation Team view**

- a. WICC is an SSSI and Natural England (NE) have a statutory duty to protect this site and its scientifically important contents.
- b. Neither I nor Natural England routinely insist on the gating of SSSIs, in fact this is the first and as far as I am aware the only example.
- c. However WICC is considered to be of such exceptional value that this measure is supported by both NE and myself on behalf of DCA and backed unopposed by those attending the April meeting of the U.C.F. (DCA's Access Officer is routinely invited to attend and is sent minutes of proceedings.) Extract from minutes of April meeting below.
  - 5.3.1.6 *"...a cave of this quality is not found very often and it is necessary for Natural England to take an accurate record of it whilst it remains in pristine condition. Suggestions were made to gate the passage to restrict access to protect the formations until this survey was done and for future protection.*  
*"The discussion concluded with the view that the new passage needs gating ASAP with a polite notice stating why it is necessary."*  
*"....said that gating was a successful practice in **Bagshawe** where they gated off and locked the passage leading to Snake's Pyjamas....there were no problems issuing keys.*
- d. Among my duties as conservation officer is the need to protect and conserve our vulnerable and fragile natural environment.
- e. WICC is of exceptional value to both cave scientists and future generations of cavers, for whom it will be increasingly difficult to see a cave in such pristine condition. All sites with unrestricted access have been irreparably damaged to a greater or lesser degree.
- f. Contrary to the views being expressed in certain quarters I believe that the DCA enjoys an excellent reputation with the majority of cavers, statutory bodies, and within the BCA.
- g. I hope these issues can be sorted to the satisfaction of all, but would ask that all remain patient for the time being.
- h. **Suggested Action:**
  1. The OCC and Ian Barker be contacted to convey the conclusions of the October UCF meeting.
  2. NE to contact John Gunn with a view to bringing forward his scientific investigation.
  3. Once this is done we should "reconvene" to discuss the best way forward for all parties.

### 6. **The value of WICC** can best be expressed in the words of a recent visitor under the DCA/Orpheus access scheme;

*"I was a little sceptical of the arguments behind the gating of the new extensions to Water Icicle but ensured I was booked on an early trip. I went down this last Saturday with a couple of mates and have to admit I was very impressed - so much so that I've already booked a return visit for January. I've never been a digger, but at times like this feel so attracted to the thought of finding something so beautiful and being the first person ever to explore it.*

*On coming out of the gated boulder choke I was greeted by a large, pristine, phreatic passage. A narrow, taped route takes you safely past untouched splendour. The place is not wall to wall formations, but what there is, keeps you fully transfixed. The floor sediments are actually quite intriguing, there's a fair amount of calcification and a number of small crystallized pools..... In a number of spots you find sheets of calcite over a degrading basalt looking like pieces of rusty old corrugated iron. Our guides were excellent, pointing out all of the little things you'd miss by yourself such as a small area of coral along one wall and the most beautiful sea anemone formation, something more akin to Agen Allwedd. It really was an amazing trip, thank you to Karen and Paul - next time I'll bring a camera that works!*

*"Owd git" UK Caving 7.10.10*

*Dave Webb, June 2010*

## Item 5.4 - ACCESS OFFICERS' REPORT

### **Eldon Hill Quarry.**

Cavers are advised that there is no official access to this site. Due to an unfortunate incident the tenant farmer has closed the entire site and threatens to close Eldon Hole if cavers do not comply. Probably best to leave this place alone for a while.

### **Ashford Black Marble Mine.**

Quite a few applications for access which have been dealt with appropriately.

### **Holme Bank Chert Mine.**

As far as I am aware the locks still need replacing/re-designing.

### **Garden Path.**

The DCA Projects Officer currently has my key for this site as part of a project to remove the wooden platforms.

*Iain Barker, October 2010*

## ITEM 5.5 - LEGAL & INSURANCE OFFICER'S REPORT

### **PL Insurance**

I don't anticipate any changes to the BCA liability cover when the policy is renewed for 2011 (barring any claim being made, that is, before the current year is out!). As usual, I expect to be issuing Indemnity of Principals certificates to landowners who require them in the new year. With this in mind and to check for any hiccups with renewal, I shall be liaising with Nick Williams over the coming weeks.

### **Waterways Licence**

I don't foresee any problem with renewal of the annual licence from Okeover Estate. However, the usual reminder from their Estate office is overdue and I understand Iain Barker is chasing it up. He will notify me if a problem arises.

### **Cave Conservation Emergency Fund (UKCCEF)**

I understand that DCA's rep on this committee is now Dave Webb. I have held the post from the time when I was more in charge of Conservation and Access than I am now, and it therefore seems sensible for me to hand the job on to DCA's current Conservation Officer.

### **Formalisation of Access**

I note the continuing protests from some cavers about DCA's role in funding the gating of caving sites. These protests come at a time when DCA's reputation as a responsible voice for the conservation of sites ranks high among local landowners and conservationists who are so much more alert these days to citing caver negligence, over-use, and the law of damage as a means to restrict or formalise access. DCA has a tricky ring to hold here between often conflicting interests. I don't believe any of us wants to see caving made more bureaucratic than is necessary. At the same time I feel DCA has an obligation to its members not to be seen as in any way over-zealous in agreeing to fund restricted access, or to perpetuate restrictions that could sensibly be eased or lifted altogether.

*Peter Mellors  
Legal & Insurance Officer*

## ITEM 5.7 - TRAINING OFFICER'S REPORT

Bit of a tough year for everyone it seems.... There are some good people coming through the ranks at the moment and I will do everything I can to keep them busy next year. Next year I celebrate 25 years as an instructor... (blimey, and I'm only 38 years old!!!!!!)

### **Come and Try Caving days 2011'**

I had this idea on the last Sunday of every month of offering a caving opportunity to potential new comers. I guess this will be up and running in the new year now as people are busy. If you are a leader or you are thinking about becoming a leader, please get in touch as these days will be a perfect opportunity for you to gain experience of working with both new and 'not so new' cave leaders in the region. This is not an idea to generate income and I guess not much will be made, however any proceeds will be put back into DCA funds and any spin offs will be gladly directed to those who are involved... see it as a small return for invested time!

### **SRT Rescue**

The CIC scheme is at present reviewing the assessment for SRT Rescue. Indeed, we rarely have to rescue anyone, it's mainly a case of helping them, usually because they are tired or may have become stuck somehow. Some of these scenarios were looked at during the Orpheus rigging & rescue week end (see below). We are going to look at 'spare' rope and no available rope with regard to getting someone safely to the ground if they become incapacitated at the next CIC revalidation workshop this Sunday.

### **BCA Training committee**

At the last meeting, the BCA training officer proposed doing away with the training committee as it seems to be made up of professional cavers and with the exception of DCA (which I have always attended for the last 20 years) does not represent the regions and sport caving. The club scheme will be totally unaffected as this presently sits within DCA and is run by training officers or approved trainers and assessors of approved clubs.

### **SRT TRAINING COURSE**

There is a full blown 2 day SRT training course for those who may not be able to get training through their clubs. Includes all kit, ropes, instruction & insurance etc. There are follow up trips for those who are not able to make some club trips.

Date: **Saturday & Sunday March 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> 2011 - £80 per person**

### **Basic SRT and SRT Rigging and Rescue Workshop week end with Orpheus Caving Club**

We ran one of these a few weeks ago and it was brilliant fun. Thanks to Boyd and the Orpheus club members for their generous use of the club hut and many brews that kept the chill out. Day 1 was a basic SRT day based at the club and looked at many topics including equipment and techniques. It was good to knock some of the old rumours out of the way and get to grips with 'what is really needed'. I also had the opportunity to look at the way harnesses sit awkwardly on some people and get them to swap kit around etc.

Day 2 saw a very enthusiastic team head off to P8 with much rigging, swinging and tying each other up in knots! My thanks go to everyone who supported the event and to Matt Robbins who gave us a hand on the Sunday. See below for date of the next SRT workshop.

### **Basic SRT Workshop**

This Course is available only to anyone interested in SRT and is ideal for first timers or those with some experience wishing to progress.

Date: - **Sunday December 5<sup>th</sup> 2010 - £20 per person**

### **BCA Specialist SRT Rigging and Rescue Workshop**

This Course is available only to SRT proficient people and it has limited places so please book early. First come first served!

Date: - **Sunday November 21<sup>st</sup> 2010 - £20 per person**

Date: - **Sunday January 9<sup>th</sup> 2011 - £20 per person**

### **BCA Technical day at Lyon Equipment and/or DMM**

This day will be available to club training officers and I will inform them directly with a date. If you are a new training officer and wish to be on the list, please let me know.

### **DCA SRT Underground Master class**

This day will be of an informal nature with emphasis on personal techniques improvement. The trip will be run by a CIC holder and all of the ropes etc will be provided. I will sponsor these trips with insurance cover and lend any kit that you need. These trips are not an introduction to SRT, however they are perfect for newcomers or old hands wishing to pick up on techniques etc.

Date: **Sunday March 20<sup>th</sup> 2011 - £40 per person**

### **Cave Photography Workshop**

I am keen to set up another of these workshop type days in Cave Photography and am just waiting for Robbie Shone to get back to me with a date... so if you want to learn from one of the best in the business, get in touch.....

### **CAVING CLUB TRAINING SCHEME - Training Officers Workshop**

I have applied to the BCA training committee for a grant towards a 1 day training course for club training offers. If you are a club training officer, or thinking of becoming one, please get in touch.

The workshop will look at training and assessment procedures in the 'Caving Club Training Scheme' and techniques as well as personal development. A must for anyone thinking about teaching caving to others.

### **Cave Instructor Certificate Scheme**

Next CIC training course will be in April 2011 and run over 2 week ends, 1 in Wales and 1 in the Yorkshire Dales.

Good caving

Nige

*Nigel Atkins*  
*DCA. Training Officer.*

## **CAVER TRAINING EVENTS 2010/2011**

**Specialist SRT Rigging and Rescue Workshop** - Sunday November 21<sup>st</sup> 2010 - £20 & Sunday January 9<sup>th</sup> 2011 - £20

**SRT workshop** - Sunday December 5<sup>th</sup> - Derbyshire. £20 per person

**SRT Training Course** - Saturday & Sunday March 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> 2011 - £80 per person

**SRT Master class** - Sunday March 20<sup>th</sup> 2011 - Derbyshire. £40 per person

**Ladder & Lifeline** - Saturday & Sunday January 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011

**Cave Photography Workshop** - phone for details

**Training Officers Workshop** - phone for details

**Local Cave/Mine Leader Award Training (level 1)**

Thursday & Friday December 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> 2010

Saturday & Sunday January 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> 2011

Thursday & Friday January 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> 2011

**Local Cave/Mine Leader Award Training (level 1) Refresher Days**

Level 1 Thursday February 10<sup>th</sup> 2011 – Derbyshire

Level 1 Friday March 10<sup>th</sup> 2011 – Derbyshire

**Local Cave/Mine Leader Award Training (level 2)**

Level 2 Saturday & Sunday January 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> 2011 – Derbyshire

Level 2 Thursday & Friday February 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> 2011 – Derbyshire

Level 2 Saturday & Sunday April 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> 2011 – Yorkshire

**Local Cave/Mine Leader Award Training (level 2) Refresher Days**

Level 2 Sunday December 12<sup>th</sup> – Derbyshire

Level 2 Friday January 7<sup>th</sup> 2011 – Derbyshire

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**Local Cave/Mine Leader Award** Assessment (level 1, Module 1 cave core skills)

Level 1 Saturday December 11<sup>th</sup> – Derbyshire

*All LC/MLA group day assessments by arrangement*

**Local Cave/Mine Leader Award** Assessment (level 1, Module 1 mine transfer)

Level 1 Mine Thursday December 2<sup>nd</sup> – North Wales

Level 1 Mine Thursday December 9<sup>th</sup> – Derbyshire

*All LC/MLA group day assessments by arrangement*

**Cave Instructor Certificate Scheme**

**BCA Cave Instructor Training** (CIC) - January 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011

**BCA Cave Instructor Assessments** (CIC) - By arrangement only

Good caving

Nige

*Nigel Atkins*  
*DCA. Training officer.*