



DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

Minutes of DCA Council Meeting, 7pm. 11th. November 2011 Monyash Village Hall

Present:	Officers: Chairman	Bob Dearman [BD]
	Secretary	Jenny Potts [JP]
	Treasurer	Wayne Sheldon [WS]
	Conservation Officer	Dave Webb [DW]
	Asst. Conservation Officer	Christine Wilson [CW]
	Legal & Insurance Officer	Peter Mellors [PM]
	Projects Officer	Martyn Grayson [MG]
	Clubs: Eldon P. C.	(Bob Dearman)
	Masson C.G.	Robin Stiffin [RS]
	Orpheus C. C.	Boyd Potts [BP], (Jenny Potts)
T. S. G.	Jess Eades [JE], Ridhard Tooley [RT], Lisa Wooton [LW], (Martyn Grayson)	
Individual Members:	(Bob Dearman, Peter Mellors, Jenny Potts, Wayne Sheldon)	

1. QUORUM & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

1.1 **Apologies received from:** Vice Chairman, Terry Jackson; Access Officer, Iain Barker; Training Officer, Nigel Atkins; N/L Editor, Paul Lydon; Asst. Secretary, Chris Broome. Karen Slatcher (Ind. Memb.); Graham Marshment (B.V.T.)

1.2 **Quorum:** The meeting was quorate with 7 officers present.

2. APPROVE MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING 17 JUNE 2011: *(Previously circulated & on website.)*

That the Minutes be approved as a correct record. Prop. B.Potts, Sec. M.Grayson. **Agreed unanimously.**

3. MATTERS ARISING THEREFROM:

- 3.1 3.1 **Poster advertising Manifold/Hamps publication:** JP reported this was in hand. **ACTION: JP**
- 3.2 3.2 **Water Icicle Lid Repairs:** No repairs had yet been done but this was not a safety issue. **ACTION: KS, PL**
- 3.3 3.3 **Peak District Access & Rigging Guide, Progress Report:** JP reported main text complete but some rope lengths required to complete rigging section: Bagshawe Dungeon, Layby Pot, Old Tor Mine, J.H. Traverses. Members present supplied some of the answers and the rest would be followed up. **ACTION: JP, TJ**
- 3.4 5.2.e **Caves of the Peak District Sales:** See Treasurer's report below.
- 3.5 5.3.c **Odin Mine Progress:** CW reported that an inspection was being arranged.
- 3.6 5.3.d **Boulder Piles piping cost estimate:** See Conservation Officer's report below.
- 3.7 5.3.e **Storage of conservation materials:** See Conservation Officer's report below.
- 3.8 5.4.b **Rowter Pot lid repairs:** MG had the new lid ready and it would be installed a.s.a.p. **ACTION: MG**
- 3.9 9.2 **Report for Chatsworth Estate re. Water Icicle Extensions:** PM had this and would forward it to Chatsworth. (See 5.6.b below.)
- 3.10 5.6.c **Safety Inspection Reports:** PM said that so far no-one has offered to do any of these reports, which are required for sites on Chatsworth land. He would ask around for help. **ACTION: PM**

4. ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS:

No applications received.

5. OFFICERS' REPORTS:

5.1 Secretary's Report: *(Written report tabled.)*

5.1.a **Events Organiser:** Someone had offered to act as Events Organiser before Cliffhanger but was unable to organise that particular event. JP would draft a "job spec." for a DCA Events Organiser and we could then sound out people at the AGM. **ACTION: JP**

5.1.b *That the Secretary's Report be accepted.* Prop. C.Wilson, Sec. D.Webb. **Agreed unanimously.**

5.2 Treasurer's Report: *(Written report tabled.)*

5.2.a **Funding:** WS was happy with the current state of DCA funds.

5.2.b **Caves of the Peak District:** Sales were going well and we were in profit. Decision on reprint to be taken at the AGM.

5.2.c **Container for storage of conservation materials:** Agreed that we needed to obtain something urgently.

That DCA allocates up to £1,000 to put a suitable container in place. Prop. J.Potts, Sec. M.Grayson. **Agreed unanimously.**

5.2.d **Printer:** Agreed to try to retain the use of the specialist printer for DCA and, if necessary, DCA could purchase it. WS and JP would negotiate.

5.2.e **Assets:** BCA required a list of DCA assets for insurance purposes. This was now sorted.

5.2.f *That the Treasurer's Report be accepted.* Prop. J.Potts, Sec. M.Grayson. **Agreed unanimously.**

5.3 Conservation Officer's Report: *(Written report tabled.)*

5.3.a **Paper Pulp:** The workshop on the paper pulp problem had produced a sensible outcome.

- 5.3.b **Natural England:** Noted that Dan Abrahams is taking on the work previously carried out by Jo Poll.
- 5.3.c **Grant Subcommittee:** There is a tight timeframe to buy the materials and store them. The notes on the Grant Committee meeting, including the list of items agreed for expenditure, were tabled.
That the Grant Subcommittee Report and spend details be approved. Prop. B.Potts, Sec. W.Sheldon.
Agreed unanimously.
- 5.3.d **Cave Conservation Audits to be placed on the Cave SSSI Monitoring website:** The meeting agreed, subject to copyright, to place the 4 existing Cave Conservation Audits on the Cave SSSI Monitoring website where they could be downloaded by workers who needed them for reference. JP said she did not think this would affect the general sales of these publications.
- 5.3.e **Outlands Head Quarry Cave:** It appears that Outlands Head cave is now definitely lost although we do have a survey which relates this to Bagshawe Cavern and to the surface features.
- 5.3.f *That the Conservation Officer's Report be accepted.* Prop. W.Sheldon, Sec. B.Potts. *Agreed unanimously.*

Originally taken out of order following item 5.9

- 5.4 **Projects Officer's Report.** (*Verbal report.*)
- 5.4.a MG reported that he had had a very busy time.
- 5.4.b **Big Dig:** MG is putting in Accro props as temporary stabilisation.
- 5.4.c **Suicide Cave:** MG noted that some loose rock has fallen.
- 5.4.d **Boulder Piles in J.H.:** MG reported that Ralph Johnson and the Coffin Dodgers have done a good job on stabilising the area.
- 5.4.e **Garden Path:** MG reported that the wooden staging still seems to be stable but he will check every year on the usual monitoring visit. JP noted that the reason for wanting to remove this staging altogether at some time is because it introduces foreign organic matter into the cave environment.
- 5.4.f **Merlins Mine - damage to sediment layers.** The damage had been noticed by Mark Cope, who has written to those concerned.
- 5.4.g **P.8 access:** MG reminded everyone that the access agreement requires that a "trespass fee" be paid to the farmer. JP would mention this in the next Information Circular. **ACTION: JP**
- 5.4.h **Odin Mine:** MG noted that inspection will involve some experts but the National Trust is the body responsible for any progress as they are the owners of the site. Noted also that it will need re-bolting if access is permitted again as parts of the original bolted routes have disappeared after the rock fall.
PM referred to the NAMHO guidelines re. mine safety. DW will make these available to CW and MG and bring them to PM's attention. It is likely that a complete reassessment of the route through and the rigging would be needed.
ACTION: DW, CW, MG, PM
- 5.4.i *That the Projects Officer's Report be accepted.* Prop. B.Potts, Sec. C.Wilson. *Agreed unanimously.*
- 5.5 **Access Officer's Report.** (*Not present but written report received.*)
- 5.5.a **Okeover Licence:** WS confirmed that this had now been paid.
- 5.5.b PM commented that he had some queries for the Access Officer but, as he was not present, would have to contact him outside the meeting.
- 5.5.c *That the Access Officer's Report be accepted.* Prop. J.Potts, Sec. W.Sheldon. *Agreed unanimously.*
- 5.6 **Legal & Insurance Officer's Report:** (*Written report tabled.*)
- 5.6.a **BCA Liability Insurance:** PM felt the rise to £5m cover was timely and the cost to cavers reasonable.
- 5.6.b **Water Icicle Report:** PM has liaised with Karen Slatcher to obtain a report. The whole cave is being re-surveyed and there are plenty of photos.
- 5.6.c **Holme Bank Chert Mine:** PM was concerned about the legal implications of Mr. Oldfield's proposal to ask for a donation to charity for access to the mine.
That PM should approach Mr. Oldfield re. the matter of access to Holme Bank Chert Mine and report back to the next meeting. Prop. B.Potts, Sec. J.Potts. *Agreed unanimously.*
- 5.6.d **Boulder Pot:** There is an ongoing problem as it is believed to have been buried under landscaping carried out in the dale. It is believed to be outside the boundary of the Lathkill Dale SSSI. PM and DW would follow up the matter. **ACTION: DW, PM**
- 5.6.e *That the Legal & Insurance Officer's Report be accepted.* Prop. W.Sheldon, Sec. B.Potts. *Agreed unanimously.*
- 5.7 **Equipment Officer's Report:** (*Not present and no report received.*)
- 5.7.a **Representation on BCA Equipment and Techniques Committee:** As JB was unable to attend weekend meetings, it had been agreed between JB and BD that BD would take over as DCA's official representative at BCA E&T meetings. JP had informed the relevant officers of BCA.
- 5.7.b **Giants Bolt:** An Eco-hanger above the climb down into the Crabwalk had recently been reported as loose. This would need to be checked. **ACTION: JB**
- 5.8 **Training Officer's Report.** (*Not present but written report received.*)
- 5.8.a **Caver Training Courses for 2012:** JP noted that the Training Officer had presented a detailed programme of courses for the coming year and she would circulate this programme with the Minutes of the meeting.
- 5.8.b **Drystone Walling workshop:** A workshop for people wanting to do drystone walling is being arranged for 28/29 April 2012 as two separate days with 8 people on each day.
- 5.8.c *That the Training Officer's Report be accepted.* Prop. C.Wilson, Sec. D.Webb. *Agreed unanimously.*
- 5.9 **Newsletter Editor's Report:** (*Not present and no report received.*)
- 5.9 Noted that there had not been a Newsletter for over a year.

5.10 Asst. Secretary/Planning Liaison Officer's Report. *(Not present but written report received.)*
That the Asst. Secretary's Report be accepted. Prop. P.Mellors, Sec. J.Potts. *Agreed unanimously.*

6. B.C.A. REPORT:

- 6.1 **Insurance Cover Rise:** This had been agreed, as mentioned by the L&I Officer. (See 5.6.a above.)
- 6.2 **New BCA Training Officer:** BCA Training Officer Graham Mollard has resigned. Nigel Ball has accepted the role of acting Training Officer until the 2012 BCA AGM. JP paid tribute to the immense amount of work done by Graham Mollard during his tenure of the post.
- 6.3 **BD's Report from BCA Equipment & Techniques Committee:** BD explained that Chinese-made anchors were initially being considered as a replacement for the DMM Eco-anchors, which were no longer being made. 32 had been installed in a test bed at Stoney Middleton - 2 broke on extraction. 32 had been installed in a quarry at Ingleton - 2 broke on extraction. It was agreed that the quality control was not good enough for these to be used as a replacement for DMMs so all of these which had been bought after the initial tests were being scrapped. None of the Chinese-made bolts had been installed in Derbyshire caves and those which had been installed in some Yorkshire caves would now be replaced.
- New German-made bolts had been tested: these were a different configuration to DMMs, having a twisted double stem. 32 had been installed in the test bed at Ingleton Quarry, using the non-styrene resin originally intended for use with these bolts, and the results had been good. More had been installed using British-approved styrene resin and these performed way over specification; in addition, the failure mode is that the rock itself breaks, rather than resin/anchor or resin/rock bond failing. These new bolts, made by Bolt Products and called BP Bolts, appear to be even better than the P-anchors and require a smaller hole to be drilled: 16mm instead of 18mm, so hole-drilling is easier.

7. AGREE OFFICER POSTS FOR ELECTION AT THE 2012 AGM:

- 7.1 Noted that Clare Harley has been co-opted to the Conservation Team.
- 7.2 Agreed that existing Officer Posts, as per the list in the agenda for this meeting, should be up for election and that we should add Events Officer to the list.

8. CONFIRM DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be the DCA AGM at **10am. on Saturday, 25th. February 2012** at Monyash Village Hall.
This will be followed immediately by a brief Council Meeting to deal with Matters arising from the Council Meeting of 11 Nov. 2011.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- 9.1 **Cave Conservation Plans:** PM noted that volunteers were needed to draw up 2 Cave Conservation Plans. Karen Slatcher would deal with Water Icicle. Jess Eades agreed to deal with Peak Cavern. DW noted that expenses can be paid for this work. JP asked if the Cave Conservation Plans could be made available to all members and it was suggested they be put on the DCA website.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.40pm.

J. E. Potts, Recorder

**APPENDED TO THESE MINUTES AND FORMING PART OF THEM IS THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT:
Officers' Reports to the DCA Council Meeting, 11 November 2011:**

a.	Item 5.1	Secretary's Report,
b.	Item 5.2	Treasurer's Report,
c.	Item 5.3	Conservation Officers' Report,
d.	Item 5.5	Access Officer's Report,
e.	Item 5.6	Legal & Insurance Officer's Report,
f.	Item 5.8	Training Officer's Report
g.	Item 5.9	Assistant Secretary's Report

Item 5.1 - Hon. Secretary's report

Communications

Since 17th. June I have circulated the following items to all members, by email where possible:

- Minutes of the Council Meeting, 17 June 2011
- Agenda for the Council Meeting, 11 November 2011
- Information Circulars 2011/2 (23 August) and 2011/3 (4 November)
- Update notes on Clatterway Sough access (6 July),
- 2 Offers from the DCA Training Officer for a free SRT course (11 October)
- Details of planned Training Events from DCA Training Officer (4 November)

Email circulation has been somewhat hampered by my computer system refusing to send attachments when used at home - though, unaccountably, it does when I use my laptop at the British Caving Library. This has been partly overcome by my being able to forward attachments sent by from another computer.

Publications Sales

I have continued to deal with sales of DCA publications: "Caves of the Peak District" and the 4 conservation audits as it is easier for me to bank cheques than for Wayne to do it for the present. Many traders now pay by BACS but all publications sales income goes straight into the DCA deposit account. Regular updates on income and sales go to Wayne.

Cliffhanger 2011

I did the organising for this event but others did the actual hard work of dealing with the punters, setting up equipment, etc. The DCA Artificial Cave was, once again a huge success and the ladder climbing attracted hundreds of children. I have reported on this in Information Circular 2011/3 and a more detailed report with photos has been sent to the DCA Newsletter Editor. I also sent in a report for the BCA Council Meeting in October and am pleased that BCA have once again given us a hefty grant towards the expenses of this.

We received an offer from Ewan Cameron to take on the post of Events Organiser and he did put in some hours at Cliffhanger on the Sunday. However, I have not had a chance yet to discuss with him what the job entails when working with DCA.

*Jenny Potts, Hon. Sec.
10 November 2011*

Item 5.2 - DCA Treasurer's Report

Current funds are: Deposit a/c: £16,462.83
 Current a/c: £1,011.99
 Total: £17,474.82

Major payments into our accounts since June 2011 are: a grant from BCA for Youth Development of £416.85, this is towards the costs of last year's Cliffhanger event. £2810.00 in CoPD sales.

Major payments out since June are: Cliffhanger expenses of £380.29, £115.43 of costs for the cave monitoring website, £62.19 for conservation audit printing; and £48.00 of expenses for the Bateman's Shaft project. We will be claiming back £100.00 from Natural England for this work, £10 for materials and £90.00 for a half day working party.

Major payments in are: £931.50 for publication sales; and a £50 donation for use of the artificial cave by National Trust.

The total cost of Cliffhanger was £380.29, which is going to be refunded in total from BCA under training / youth development. Thanks to Jenny for putting on a very successful event, and keeping all the paperwork in order.

The electronic expenses form that I produced hasn't been issued due to some technical problems and due to lack of time, not managed to sort this out yet.

Caves of the Peak District:

Jenny is still handling the sales of CoPD so thanks to her for this report.

Expenditure so far is: £8829.52. We have sold £12,787.35 so that is: £3957.83 profit.

There were 1005 copies printed, we have accounted for 823 of them. Out of these, 22 complimentary copies were given out in the first couple of months and we have 20 with duff bindings and 3 lost in the post. This leaves us with 182 copies, worth approx £2,366 at trade prices. We have been averaging steady sales of between 25 and 30 per month at present so we still have roughly 5-6 months supply.

In terms of reprinting the book, we will get 20 copies for free if we give back the 20 duff ones. The lead time for printing will be around a month so we can let the stocks run well down before we go for a reprint. I'm not sure what we'd be charged per copy to reprint (i.e. as is, without any alterations or updates) if we ask for less than 1000; we paid £7.71 per copy on a run of 1000 (£7710 in total). The printer may charge more per copy for a shorter run but we'd not want to print another 1000 and have all that cash tied up in stock. In the meantime I have asked Peter Miles to check on costs for us and have the information now.

I suggest that we wait until the AGM in February to make a decision on when to go for a reprint and how many.

Container:

The cost of the container (20ft x 8ft) has gone up in price from £500 earlier in the year to £750 (including VAT and delivery now). Delivery is costing £100. Talking to somebody unconnected with this sale, he says that it's due to the cost of scrap metal, that scrapping these containers, they can get up to £500 for them so it will be a hassle to sell one to us in the Peak District. They still haven't looked at accessing the site yet.

The container that I looked and asked them to save for us; on a rainy day, it was dry inside, there were no leaks visible to me at the time.

Looking on the www.containercabins.co.uk website, you are looking at £1500 + VAT for a used shipping container. Delivery is free; it depends on the container that you purchase. Do we need a 20ft by 8 ft container?

Printer:

Mel Milner is possibly selling her or putting into storage her HP Business Inkjet 3000. We currently pay for the services of Mel Milner and the use of her printer to print off DCA conservation audits. It has been suggested by Mel Milner that DCA purchase this printer so that we can print our own conservation audits and possibly the new DCA handbook (yet to be published). Otherwise we may have to temporarily store it for her but get to use it for printing these audits and the handbook. Jenny has been liaising with Mel on what this printer can do and I have got some costs together that I will bring to the meeting.

DCA Assets:

It was raised at the BCA Council Meeting in October for all regional bodies to submit a list of assets to the BCA Treasurer for insurance purposes. This has just about been completed and will be available to view by council at the meeting.

*Wayne Sheldon, DCA Hon. Treasurer
09/11/11*

Item 5.3 - CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT, June – November 2011

1. PAPER PULP.

The spreading and stockpiling of paper pulp. The workshop referred to in June's conservation officer's report took place in May. The aim of the workshop was an information gathering session and to open up dialogue about concerns over paper pulp in limestone karst areas.

- There were around 20 attendees including the two spreading companies (Blue Star and Envar), the Environment Agency, PDNPA and Natural England including a geologist and hydrogeologist. John Gunn did a presentation on the potential impact upon caves and pointed out that there had been only one major incident involving paper pulp in 2008 (Hazard Mine-Peak Cavern). Jo Poll reported that the tone of the meeting was very positive and the main outcomes were:
- identifying stockpiles as an issue and suggesting risk assessments of selected sites;
- a plan to supply a map of the hydrological systems and catchments to all parties concerned;
- the spreading companies will provide papers detailing the benefits of spreading.

Communication: Any pollution underground and reports of surface stockpiling needs reporting promptly to DW so it can be followed up quickly, as any delay may mean that the evidence has gone. It's also useful to have updates for places that haven't been visited for a while. Note: Cavers have requested that they are given feedback on their reports, even if it's just to say that someone from one of the agencies has visited the site. DW will then be able to feed this information back to cavers.

2. UCF Meeting, October 17th 2011.

The first meeting at the new venue of the Miners' Standard was attended by 12 cavers and agency representatives. It was generally felt that the venue was satisfactory.

It was also the first meeting at which the 6 monthly SSSI Cave Conservation Monitoring meetings was incorporated, and this proved to be a useful way of cutting down on meetings with a similar agenda since reports would normally be given by each SSSI area representative at both the UCF and CCM meetings.

1. The NE grant to DCA £7500. DW and Chris Wilson both stressed the lack of response from cavers and clubs when a request for ideas on what to spend the grant was circulated in the early summer and mentioned in my report for the June council meeting. Without a list there would in all likelihood be no grant. This led to DW providing his own estimates for materials and projects which led to the award of a grant 3 times the usual amount! This list has been known as the "wish list"
2. A subcommittee was set up by DW of Dan Abrahams (NE) Martyn Grayson, and Chris Wilson (DCA) and Clare Harley (seconded to DCA conservation team) to deal with the list and to ensure that purchases of materials and projects undertaken were prioritised. Wayne Sheldon (DCA treasurer) sent his apologies as he was unable to attend.
3. BD reported that he had reached an agreement with a majority of the owners land at Bagshawe for storage of a secure container.
4. It was agreed that two new Conservation Plans would be undertaken, one for Water Icicle Close Cavern and the other for Peak Cavern.
5. A full account of the meeting will be available in due course when the minutes are published.

Next meeting May 14th 2012 at Miners' Standard.

3. NE Grant Subcommittee Meeting October 31st 2011 at the PDMHS Museum.

A separate spreadsheet of materials and projects, and notes of the meeting of the NE Grant Subcommittee will be made available at this meeting for discussion as an agenda item. The Sub committee felt it important, in view of the large sum involved, to present their suggestions to Council.

4. DCA Handbook.

I have completed and submitted a condensed and updated section on conservation.

5. Bateman's Shaft.

The securing bolt of the gate at the head of Bateman's Shaft was found to be missing with potentially dire consequences for any member of the public visiting the site. A small team of Len Kirkham, Ralph Johnson, and myself went up and fitted a replacement including a chain-retained bolt. Spanner size 22mm. It would be appreciated if visitors would let Jo Alsop, reserve warden (07827 307531), know in advance of your visit. Note: The Dale is closed on Wednesdays during certain months of the year for shooting.

6. Countryfile.

Several cavers and myself recently supported a team from Countryfile who were investigating the reasons for the disappearance of the river in Lathkilldale during the summer months. John Gunn was the interviewee and the charming Ellie was the presenter. Their efforts on the surface and underground will be broadcast on Sunday November 13th.

7. Outlands Head cave and Boulder Pot

I have recently been involved in discussions on both **Outlands Head** cave and **Boulder Pot**, both of which have become "lost" due to differing activities of a commercial nature. I have been unable to make much progress with Outlands Head which is buried beneath 20m of limestone rubble, and both Pete Mellors and Iain Barker are involved with the issue of the apparent infilling and loss of Boulder Pot.

*Dave Webb, Conservation Officer
8 Nov. 2011*

Item 5.5 - Access Officer's Report

Fairly quiet.

Okeover Estate sent their bill in for payment (Waterways Swallet Licence). This was passed on to the Treasurer to deal with.

Holme Bank Chert Mine.

I'm still pondering this one. I have no problem with Mr. Oldfield REQUESTING a small charge which is destined for charity, however if the request is refused then he can't deny access on that basis. Also, even though the money is for charity, this means that the site is being used to raise capital and for that reason the venture is classed as a "commercial enterprise" and Chatsworth MUST be informed if they aren't already aware. For the same reason, Mr. Oldfield should be aware that he may incur certain responsibilities toward visitors, health & safety etc. We don't want to alienate Mr. Oldfield as he does us a useful service in running access to this site; the last thing we need is another Chatsworth licence situation. I myself would be prepared to let this be between Mr. Oldfield and Chatsworth.

Boulder Pot.

Pete Mellors has been instrumental in raising the issue of this site which the farmer has effectively obliterated. I am in the process of discovering whether the farmer is a tenant or owner of the land, if he is a tenant of Chatsworth, we have some leverage; if not we can still hit him with some heavy artillery with the assistance of N.E. and the PDNP authority. As Boulder Pot undoubtedly is part of the Lathkill

Head/Upper Lathkill Cave System it is much more important than one might first assume and in my opinion should be reclaimed from the hillside.

I would like to offer my thanks to Ralph Johnson and Len Kirkham for sorting out Bateman's gate for us; cheers lads.

*Iain Barker, DCA Access Officer
8th November 2011*

Item 5.6 - Legal & Insurance Officer's Report

Liability Insurance

I am informed the Sum Insured under the BCA cover will rise from £2M to £5M starting 1st January 2012. For DCA this opens up the prospect of renewed negotiations with, for example, the Staffs Wildlife Trust over access to sites on their land. The move will give us added negotiating power generally. The flip side of the higher indemnity will be an increased annual premium – £1 extra per caver, so I understand.

Report on Water Icicle Close Cavern

I haven't compiled anything yet but am happy to go ahead. I envisage a report produced for publication by DCA with copies to Chatsworth and Natural England. Photographs and an up-to-date survey would be welcome additions.

Holme Bank Chert Mine

I feel unhappy with the situation here inasmuch as DCA appears to be abdicating its access negotiating role. My understanding is that Joe Oldfield leases the Holme Bank site from Chatsworth and as tenant has control of access to the Mine. The recent proposal of his (raised with PICA) to charge for access would be likely to increase his own liability for visitors' safety. I imagine PICA members already indemnify owner and tenant alike, and DCA could offer to do the same on the understanding that all caving groups applying to enter the Mine carry evidence of BCA PL insurance cover. Both DCA and PICA should discourage any attempt to impose a charge for access.

Boulder Pot

I am currently liaising with Dave Webb and Iain Barker (and through them with Natural England and the National Park Authority) to ascertain what has been happening in Ricklow Dale. The rocky outcrop containing the entrance to Boulder Pot appears to have been bulldozed, walls have been taken out, and the dale "landscaped" into a smoother-contoured grazing area. I am concerned as to whether there has been a breach of any legal charge on the land or a breach of planning law. Not least, of course, I am concerned to see the entrance disinterred and the site restored and protected as part of the Lathkill SSSI.

*Peter Mellors, Legal & Insurance Officer
9 Nov. 2011*

Item 5.8 - DCA TRAINING OFFICER'S REPORT, NOV. 2011

A big thank you to everyone who has encouraged me to get back into all things caving. It's been a while and I really have got the bug back. I hope the following opportunities help you and your clubs in the future.

DCA Caver Workshops

We have run many workshops in various topics over the last 20 years, some directly linked to caver training are BCA funded, some of the more specialist ones are not such as photography etc. These non funded courses need to cover the venue, trainer, materials, expenses etc. and are sometimes run at a loss if the numbers are short. If we make any money, the proceeds go back into the pot to cover shortfalls later on. As training officer, it falls in my duties to respond to demand of the clubs and individual cavers to provide provision for training in many aspects of caving. My main focus is to encourage and support clubs to run their own training to a high standard, as you know, I am a big believer that training should be provided by caving clubs for their members. This is achieved by either running a workshop directly for the club, setting up a workshop with a specialist trainer or training up their own training officer. Some of these training officers are now going through the BCA leader and instructor schemes which goes to show that enthusiasm is still very much out there. Now and again, individual cavers for some reason are either not able to attend these organised club events or clubs themselves do not have anyone at the appropriate level to run them. The DCA has provided valuable training opportunities for these such people for many years and I encourage everyone to support them in any way they can.

Specialist SRT Rigging and Rescue Workshop - Sunday January 22nd 2012 - £40

We ran one of these last October hosted by the Orpheus Caving Club and it was brilliant fun.

This workshop is not an introduction to SRT, however there will be plenty of opportunity to pick up on techniques etc. People attending will be expected to demonstrate basic S.R.T. The day will be of an informal nature with emphasis on personal techniques improvement.

Taken directly from the CIC scheme - *A candidate must be skilled and fluent in Single Rope Technique (SRT) and pull-through abseiling and be competent to use and coach all these techniques in a safe and effective fashion to others. The skills required include the ability to rig pitches, traverses and climbs to best and safe advantage. Above all the candidate should have clear judgement on the appropriateness of different vertical caving techniques to suit the skills, nature and size of his / her groups.*

Ladders, Lifelines and Self Rescue Workshop - Sunday January 15th 2012 - Derbyshire £40

A practical workshop essential for cavers who may now or in the future be responsible for the rigging of pitches and the lifelining of other cavers climbing electron ladders. The ladder and line courses are designed for experienced cavers, keen individuals, club leaders and potential caving instructors.

Digital Cave Photography Workshop with Rob Eavis - Sunday February 19th - £40. places available.

This is a NON SLR workshop and is designed for cavers who want to take better shots on trips using compact digital cameras.

Caving Club Training Officers Workshop - Sunday Feb 19th - Derbyshire SOLD OUT - Sunday March 18th - Derbyshire £12.50

Many clubs already have a CTO to whom it usually falls to organise and supervise training for newly joined novice cavers. This is **THE** workshop for 'training the Trainers'. The February date was set up in demand for University club cavers wishing to undertake a specialist training day for passing skills on to their club members. This workshop, limited to 6 people was self funding and has sold out. I now have a BCA grant for DCA and the new date is March 18th. This workshop is very similar to the SRT 'coaching' day on our CIC training course.

DCA_Co_Min_11111

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 techniques to others.

Cave Leader Workshop - Sunday February 12th 2012 - Derbyshire £40

A practical workshop is ideal for cavers already or are thinking about leading others underground. This specialist, low cost day looks at the leadership skills and knowledge required for leading parties underground.

Taken directly from the LC/MLA scheme - *Candidates will have to demonstrate that their caving knowledge and experience is more than adequate to lead and give guidance to others in their charge. Candidates should however be able to move fluently and competently in the caves and mines in which they intend to lead novices.*

Dry Stone Walling Workshop - Derbyshire March/April 2012 - TBC

This is something that Dave Webb introduced to me and we have had a positive response to run it. I mentioned this at training committee with much approval and the result is that we now have a BCA grant towards this. The original date we were hoping for was early November, however the date now looks like being in March/April 2012. Please get in touch if you are interested in this.

SRT Introduction Workshop - Saturday February 11th 2012 - Derbyshire £15

There is a special 1 day SRT introduction 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. I now have a BCA grant for DCA which was provisionally for November but the new date will now be February 11th.

SRT Underground Master class - Sunday February 5th 2012

This day will be of an informal nature with emphasis on personal techniques improvement. The trip will be run by a CIC holder (TBC) 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.

SRT Surface Master class - Saturday March 31st 2012

(Free of charge to DCA members)

This workshop is not an introduction to SRT, however there will be plenty of opportunity to pick up on techniques etc. People attending will be expected to demonstrate basic S.R.T. The day will be of an informal nature with emphasis on personal techniques improvement.

BCA Training committee

The BCA training officer is standing down. Graham Mollard has been a very active training officer and has put many thankless hours into the position. I have known Graham for over 25 years and met him when I moved to Grassington in the Yorkshire Dales in 1986. I would like to on behalf of all at DCA, thank him for his support as always for approving funding to our caver training workshops, his time and efforts in keeping us all in line with the BCA schemes and on a more personal note, thank him for his support over the years in my development as a caving instructor.

Good caving

Nige

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Item 5.10 - Asst. Secretary / Planning Liaison Report

Re the Asst Sec and Planning Liaison Officers report, I have nothing to report to the meeting, everything seems quiet at the moment on the planning front.

Chris Broome, 11 Nov. 2011