



# DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

## Minutes of DCA Council Meeting

10am. 23rd June 2012, Monyash Village Hall

- Present:**
- Officers:** Chairman Bob Dearman [BD]  
 Secretary Jenny Potts [JP]  
 Treasurer Wayne Sheldon [WS]  
 Conservation Officer David Webb [DW]  
 Legal & Insurance Officer Peter Mellors [PM]  
 Newsletter Editor Paul Lydon
- Club Reps:** Eldon P. C. Dan Hibberts [DH]  
 Orpheus C.C. Boyd Potts [BP]
- Individual Members:** K.Slatcher [KS] (Acting Access Officer), (Bob Dearman, Jenny Potts, Wayne Sheldon, Peter Mellors)

**1. CHAIRMAN’S WELCOME; QUORUM:**

The meeting was quorate with 6 officers present.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

**Apologies had been received from:** T.Jackson (Vice Chairman), Chris Broome (Asst. Sec.), Martyn Grayson (Projects Officer), Christine Wilson (Asst. Cons. Officer), David Wall.

**3. APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING, 25 FEB. 2012: (Previously circulated.)**

*That the Minute of the Council Meeting of 25 Feb. 2012 be approved as a correct record.*

Prop. B.Potts, Sec. P.Lydon *Agreed unanimously.*

**4. MATTERS ARISING THEREFROM:**

4.1 **Water Icicle Lid Repairs:** KS reported the new lid had been fitted by OCC Members but still needed the bolt fitting to enable it to be fastened down. BP produced photos of the new lid. DH has produced a new design for the bolt fitting which has a captive bolt and a swinging arm which swivels over the edge of the lid to hold it down. It was agreed this system was an improvement on the previous one and would be installed on this lid. Noted that it requires a 30mm spanner (or large adjustable) and DH had already advised of this via [UKcaving.com](http://UKcaving.com). JP would also mention this in the next Information Circular. **ACTION: OCC & DH**

Noted, in passing, that **Nettle Pot** needed a new lid.

4.2 **Rowter Pot Lid:** The new lid had now been installed by BD and DH and included the new-style bolt closure.

4.3 **Odin Mine:** DW stated he had received no information from the National Trust as to the ongoing situation but would write to Paul Mortimer of N.T. to ask that cavers be included in any inspection teams on the site. It was believed that Adam Russell (who has taken over from John Barnatt as Conservation Officer for PDMHS) was involved in giving advice and it would be useful if contact could be made with him. JP reported that she had no email contact with PDMHS as their current secretary did not have internet access. KS would supply email contact details to DW and JP. **ACTION: KS, DW, JP**

4.4 **Suspect Giants Bolt:** BD reported that the “suspect” bolt had been checked and was OK. It was one of the two at the top of the climb down from the Upper Series into the Crabwalk. It seemed the normal slight flexing of the bolt had been misinterpreted but the resin was secure when checked.

4.5 **Water Icicle Report for Chatsworth:** KS is waiting on Prof. John Gunn for the details of the scientific investigations but it appears that he is still waiting for the test results on the samples. Agreed that KS and BP would draft a basic report on the working of the Leader System for PM who would incorporate it in a report to Chatsworth. **ACTION: KS, BP**

**5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE AGM:**

JP reminded members that the AGM had been unable to appoint a new Projects Officer or Access Officer and asked if we were in a position to do so today.

5.1.a **Projects Officer:** Noted that Martyn Grayson had expressed a wish at the AGM to stand down, although he had sent in a report for this meeting. Dan Hibberts was willing to take on the post.

*That Dan Hibberts be appointed the DCA Projects Officer.*

Prop. P.Mellors, Sec. J.Potts. *Agreed unanimously.*

**Contd. >>>**

DH would meet with DW to discuss work which needed to be done.

**ACTION: DW, DH**

- 5.1.b **Access Officer:** KS was continuing to deal with access requests for Lathkill Head Garden Path and Ashford Black Marble Mine. It was left in the hands of the present officers to try to find a volunteer. **ACTION: DW, PM**
- 5.1.c **Assistant Conservation Officer:** Noted that Christine Wilson had advised that she no longer had time to carry out the job of Asst. Conservation Officer and had advised DW that she wished to stand down, although she would try to help where possible. Someone was needed urgently to take her place to assist DW and he would seek a volunteer. **ACTION: DW**
- 5.2 **Peak District Access & Rigging Guide – Progress:** TJ was not able to be present but JP passed round a nearly complete draft of the book. The Rigging Guide section was now complete; the Access Section required a few queries to be checked; the Appendices were complete except for the page listing the DCA Officers; the Index was virtually complete but would need a final check. TJ had set up a “Drop Box” system on the internet which allowed himself and JP to comment on the draft and, if necessary to amend it. It was suggested that BD, DW and PM might also wish to have a look at the draft. Mel Milner had offered to print the booklet at cost using the DCA printing machine which she now housed. The intention was to complete this project a.s.a.p. and get the book out to members and into the market. **ACTION: JP, TJ, BD, DW, PM**
- 5.3 **Cliffhanger:** BP reported that he is still looking for more volunteers to help at the event. Nigel Atkins will be running the Ladder and Line activity and providing insurance. BP would be in overall charge and would be running activities at the two artificial caves (the BCA Entrepise cave and the DCA A.S.S.) and also the stand tent. Currently he has about 8 – 10 volunteers but needs more so that people are able to take a break at intervals during the day. Noted also that NA is having DCA T-shirts produced for the volunteers to wear. **ACTION: BP, NA, ALL**
- 6. ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS:**  
None had applied.
- 7. OFFICERS’ REPORTS:**  
The Projects Officer’s and Conservation Officer’s reports were taken first, out of order, as both DH and DW needed to leave early.
- 7.4 Projects Officer: (Report from Martyn Grayson was tabled.)**
- 7.4.a **MG Report:** Noted Martyn Grayson’s report received – it would be printed with the Minutes.
- 7.4.b **Son of Nettle:** DH reported that Eldon members have cleared the top of “Son of Nettle” but it now needs a stock-proof lid and a final tidy of the surroundings. This is on Oxlow Farm land so usual access arrangements will apply. **ACTION: DH & Co.**
- 7.4.c **Sites on Oxlow Farm land:** A new site is being cleared during the “Credit Crunch Expedition” and a check will be made to see whether there is viable passage below the surface depression. The site had been filled with rubbish by previous farmers so this will need to be dug out and removed. DW noted that funding is available from Natural England for capping Mountbatten and other shafts on SSSIs. There is another hole on the same rift which also needs covering. **ACTION: DH & Co.**
- 7.4.d **Fawcett Rake shafts:** There are 5 open shafts on Fawcett Rake which will need to be checked and possibly capped. **ACTION: DH & Co.**
- 7.4.e **Nettle Pot:** The actual lid on the Nettle Pot entrance needs repairing. (The entrance top was completely rebuilt by DCA some years ago.) **ACTION: DH & Co.**
- 7.3 Conservation Officer’s Report: (Written report tabled.)**
- 7.3.a **CO<sub>2</sub> meters:** BD expressed his concern at the reported loss of the CO<sub>2</sub> meters. DW explained the circumstances and confirmed that the Sperion meter was being repaired and would be back in use once this was done. The two cheaper meters had a limited life in any case and the remaining one could not be repaired so we had no other meters available for use at present. Both DH and PL have contacts so would investigate possible replacements but it was noted that the meters have to be calibrated and there is a cost attached. It should be possible to buy two of the cheaper type of meters as we have funding for this but the money needs to be spent before Christmas. **ACTION: DW, DH, PL**
- 7.3.b **Spending on Projects:** DW noted that we needed to make good use of the N.E. funding on projects this year as we had already bought supplies of materials.
- 7.3.c **Publicity for DCA Projects:** It was noted that [UKcaving.com](http://UKcaving.com) could be used to publicise DCA projects and it was suggested that DCA officers could identify themselves as DCA officers when posting on the site in connection with DCA projects or information. JP noted that she already did this when posting access/conservation information.
- 7.3.d **Hungerhill Swallet:** DW is in contact with the Environment Agency to try to persuade them to arrange for the diversion of road runoff into a drain which takes the water away from the area instead of, as at present, discharging into the cave.

- 7.3.e **Devonshire Mine repairs:** DW said he was hoping that P.I.C.A. members would take on this work as they were regular users of the mine and would have advice from the mine inspectors who had identified the need for the repairs.
- 7.3.f **Carleswark Caverns:** The conservation team were investigating ways of preventing damage to the calcite floor which was already suffering.
- 7.3.g **White River Series:** It was noted that damage was being done by cavers who were ignoring tapes but the re-taping was waiting for dry conditions to complete the job. The Series was now a through route, cavers were ignoring the conservation plan and the area was being destroyed. It was suggested that “before” and “after” pictures could be posted on [UKcaving.com](http://UKcaving.com) to remind cavers of the need for care. Noted that the Peak keyholders were ultimately responsible for the protection of sites in Peak Cavern.
- 7.3.h **Water Icicle Cave Conservation Plan:** KS reported that the CCP was in hand but progressing slowly because of lack of time on her part. Noted that the cave is now over 1km long. **ACTION: KS**
- 7.3.i **Waterways Swallet:** Mel Milner is doing a conservation plan. **ACTION: MM**
- 7.3.j **Wetton Hill dig:** DH reported that there had been unauthorised digs in shafts on the hill and this was likely to create problems with the National Trust. It was not known who was responsible but he would try to find out.

*That the Conservation Officer’s Report be accepted.* Prop. P.Mellors, Sec. J.Potts. *Agreed unanimously.*

At this point DH and DW left the meeting.

## **7.1 Secretary’s Report: (Written report tabled.)**

- 7.1.a **DCA Website:** Following JP’s contacts with the webmaster, Paul Johnson, it was agreed to set up a small working group consisting of JP, WS, Mel Milner and PJ who would look at the existing website, identify out-of-date material, arrange to include new material and information re. bolting and agree what improvements might need to be made. Agreed DCA did not require anything “fancy” but a more “modern” look would be good.

**ACTION: JP, PJ, MM, WS**

It was noted that DCA information could usefully be put on [UKcaving.com](http://UKcaving.com) as well.

- 7.1.b **Pre-paid envelopes:** In answer to a query about postal costs, JP reported that, although the pre-1st.April-rise stamps which were the correct colour and simply said either 1st. class or 2nd. class were still valid for appropriate postage, the older type of self-seal pre-stamped envelopes (brought out originally by Royal Mail in 1993) were not. The envelopes could still be used but a current postage stamp needed to be put on.
- 7.1.c **Potential new clubs:** JP had identified some clubs and associate members of BCA who had given the Peak District as their area of interest but were not currently DCA members. It would not cost these organisations anything to join DCA in addition to BCA so JP would approach them to invite them to become DCA members.

*That the Secretary’s Report be accepted.* Prop. K.Slatcher, Sec. W.Sheldon. *Agreed unanimously.*

## **7.2 Treasurer’s Report: (Written report tabled.)**

- 7.2.a **Current balances:** Members noted with satisfaction the size of the balances in DCA’s accounts, even after paying for the reprint of 1000 copies of Caves of the Peak District (CoPD).
- 7.2.b **CoPD sales and other income:** Noted that sales of CoPD were going well. We had also received a grant from Natural England towards work on SSSIs.

*That the Treasurer’s Report be accepted.* Prop. P.Mellors, Sec. P.Lydon. *Agreed unanimously.*

## **7.6 Legal & Insurance Officer’s Report: (Written report tabled.)**

- 7.6.a **Boulder Pot:** It was generally agreed that the re-opening of Boulder Pot had been a great success. Thanks to all those involved.
- 7.6.b **Garden Path:** Re-taping is needed in places. KS and BP offered to do this. BD reported that he has used the Hydrajaws tester on the P-bolts in situ and confirmed all are sound.  
**ACTION: KS, BP**
- 7.6.c **Lathkill Head Top Entrance:** The waterproof box which holds the Log Book needs repairing. PL offered to do this.  
**ACTION: PL**
- 7.6.d **Holme Bank Chert Mine:** PM would check the lock on the Quarry Entrance and paint the door. **ACTION: PM**  
There was concern that the emergency exit needed to be dealt with to prevent continual vandalism. It was suggested that PM contact DH so see if a solution could be found. **ACTION: PM, DH**
- 7.6.e **Eldon Hill Quarry:** Progress was being made towards re-establishing access. Noted that the land actually belongs to Chatsworth Estates but is rented out.

*That the Legal & Insurance Officer’s Report be accepted.* Prop. J.Potts Sec. K.Slatcher.  
*Agreed unanimously.*

**7.7 Equipment Report: (The Equipment Officer was not present and had sent no report.)**

7.7.a **P-Bolt Installation and the current national situation with regard to BCA:** BD reported on recent events:

The “**Installation Procedure, Training & Documentation, Issue 4**” (IPTD), drawn up by BD and Les Sykes (CNCC), had been accepted by both the BCA Equipment & Techniques Committee and the 2010 BCA AGM as the national standard for placing P-bolts. (BD and CNCC have researched new bolts called BP-anchors, to replace the Eco-anchors which are no longer available and will amend the IPTD to take account of this.) Following their understanding that the IPTD had been accepted by everyone at the October 2011 meeting of the BCA E & T Committee, BD and LS had transferred the copyright of the IPTD to BCA. However, CSCC admitted at the March 2012 meeting of the Committee that they would **only** accept the requirement for SRT rigging competence for cavers installing bolts for SRT and **not** for those installing bolts for ladder & line. Following this: the copyright of the IPTD has now been returned to BD and LS; CNCC has withdrawn from the BCA E & T Committee; BD is no longer prepared attend the BCA E & T Committee on behalf of DCA.

CNCC and DCA will now set up their own Northern Equipment Committee to run P-bolt installation in their regions and to continue with other testing related to equipment and safety. It was noted that, as DCA itself remains a member of BCA, installers in the Peak area working on behalf of DCA will still be covered by DCA’s own BCA P.L. insurance. CNCC may be holding an Emergency Meeting to discuss the situation.

It was also noted that one area of testing for CNCC/DCA would be maillons rapide; recently a 12mm steel maillon used in a bolt testing situation had failed at only half its stated load.

JP drew attention to her written report to this DCA Council meeting (under item 8.1): in which she had reported on the discussion at the March 2012 BCA Council meeting on this subject; the Convenor of the BCA E & T Committee had offered his resignation, which the meeting had voted not to accept. In particular she had quoted the view expressed by the former BCA Training Officer about modern rigging for a ladder & line situation. She noted also that the BCA Council Minutes for March 2012 are available on the BCA website and contain a complete summary of the discussion which took place. Following discussion, at which it was clear that DCA agreed with the view of the BCA Training Officer re. rigging for ladder & line, a motion was put:

***That DCA requires that all cavers installing P-bolts for either SRT or ladder & line in our region should be experienced and competent in SRT rigging in line with the IPTD.***

Proposal by J.Potts, seconded by P.Lydon: ***Agreed unanimously.***

There was some discussion on the insurance situation of cavers who placed P-bolts not in compliance with the IPTD. Noted that BCA has no power to force CSCC (or any other regional council) to comply with the IPTD.

BD reported that a number of the new BP-anchors have been placed in test beds where they can be tested at intervals over a number of years to confirm that there is no deterioration with age.

JP noted that the DCA Rigging Guide gives details of how to check anchors before using them, as all cavers placing rigging should do.

7.7.b **BCA Hand-line in JH:** The new hand-line, which was being supplied by BCA to be rigged on the traverses in the JH Cartgate, had been lost in the post on its way to the installer. The rope was to be part of a test series of lengths from the same rope placed in different caves, so it could not be replaced and the BCA trial involving JH could not now happen.

7.7.c **New Bolt in JH:** It had been reported that an individual caver had placed a new bolt in JH. As this was not an installation approved by DCA and it had not been placed by a DCA-trained installer in compliance with the IPTD, any insurance liability falls on the individual who placed it.

7.7.d **DCA Equipment Officer:** BD reported that Jules Barrett was difficult to contact at present and is not active as DCA Equipment Officer. It was known that he was now fully occupied with his professional job and is therefore unlikely to have time to continue with the DCA Equipment Officer post. BD noted that we need to train a new team of bolt installers for DCA.

7.7.e **DCA Fixed Aids Policy:** The Policy had been drawn up in 1998 and JP suggested that it needed to be revised. BD and JP would take this in hand.

**ACTION: BD, JP**

7.7.f **Equipment Officer post:** BD agreed to take on the role of Acting Equipment Officer until a new one could be appointed.

***That Bob Dearman be appointed as Acting Equipment Officer for DCA.***

Prop. J.Potts, Sec. P.Lydon. ***Agreed unanimously.***

**7.9 Newsletter Editor’s Report:**

PL gave a verbal report and said he already has some material for the next DCA Newsletter and hoped to be able to issue one before too long.

**7.10 Assistant Secretary/Planning Liaison:**

JP reported that CB had phoned her with apologies for the meeting and said that he continued to keep a watch for planning applications which might affect caves and/or mines but nothing had appeared recently.

**8. BCA REPORTS: (Written reports tabled.)**

8.1 **BCA Council Meeting, 24th. March:** JP had already drawn attention to parts of this report. She had nothing more to add.

8.2 **BCA AGM, 9th. June:** JP reminded members that all BCA Minutes were available on their website.

**9. CONFIRM DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT DCA MEETINGS:**

9.1 **DCA Council, 3rd. November, 10 am Monyash Village Hall:** Confirmed as booked.

9.2 **DCA AGM 2013 and Council meeting to follow immediately, 10 am Monyash Village Hall:** Confirmed as booked.

**10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

None.

The meeting closed at 1.58pm.

*J.E.Potts, Recorder*

**APPENDED TO THESE MINUTES AND FORMING PART OF THEM ARE:**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| a. Item 7.3 Secretary's Report;            | d. Item 7.4 Projects Officer's Report;          |
| b. Item 7.2 Treasurer's Report;            | e. Item 7.6 Legal & Insurance Officer's Report; |
| c. Item 7.3 Conservation Officer's Report; | f. Item 8 BCA Reports.                          |

**Item 7.1 – Secretary's Report**

**Communications:**

On 3rd. May I posted out to all members a package containing:

DCA Newsletter "The Derbyshire Caver" no. 132

Minutes of the 2012 AGM on 25 Feb. 2012

Minutes of the Council Meeting 25 Feb. 2012

DCA Annual Report 2011 booklet

Information Circular 2012/2

British Caving Library Leaflet

On 23rd, March I emailed to members for whom I have internet addresses:

Information on rigging in Nettle Pot (Failure of pull-thro's) and J.H. (proposal to place BCA handline on the

traverse). These items will go into the next Information Circular which will be posted to those with no internet access as well as being emailed.

On 14th. June I emailed or posted:

Agenda for the Council Meeting on 23rd. June.

In anticipation of the hike of over 56% in postal charges due on 1st. April I bought 200 x 2nd. Class stamps at the old rate as we are able to continue to use these.

**Membership:**

I have posted or emailed subscription reminders to all Club and Associate members who had not paid their BCA subscription and to Individual members who have not paid DCA. Only a very few have not responded and their membership will lapse on 30th June if they have not paid by then.

I have noted that there are some new BCA club and associate members who indicate that their area of interest is Derbyshire but who have not joined DCA. I would suggest that we contact these groups to see if they would like to formally join DCA, given that it will cost them nothing to do so.

**DCA Website:**

Following on from Martyn Grayson's comments at the AGM that we need more positive publicity for DCA and comments from others that it would be good to showcase DCA's project work (e.g. the opening up of Boulder Pot) I have been in contact with DCA's webmaster, Paul Johnson. I would suggest that we set up a small working group to discuss with Paul the best way to implement these ideas.

*Jenny Potts, DCA Secretary, 22 June 2012*

## Item 7.2 - DCA Treasurers Report

|                           |              |            |
|---------------------------|--------------|------------|
| <b>Current funds are:</b> | Deposit a/c: | £12,498.02 |
|                           | Current a/c: | £ 1862.27  |
|                           | Total:       | £14,360.29 |

Major payments into our accounts since February 2012 are: payments of £2446.68 from Natural England for the Container, Container Set-up costs, Dry Stone Walling workshop, Duchy Quarry Work, and Batemans Shaft work. There has been £706 received from publication sales (this includes CoPD sales).

Major payments out since February are: Payment for the reprint of the caves of the Peak District of £7030.00. There has been £909.52 spent on the Boulder Pot Expenses and Duchy Quarry Expenses, the latter has been paid for by Natural England grant.

### Internet Banking:

This has been set-up for the four account signatures to access the DCA Bank Accounts. Internet Banking guidelines will be written over the next few weeks and issued to all four account signatures.

*Wayne Sheldon, DCA Hon. Treasurer  
17/06/12*

## Item 7.3 - Conservation Officer's Report, February – June 2012

### 1. DCA Container

I completed spending last years grant of £7500 with a shortfall of 98p! Most of it was on materials and equipment that is now in store in the container at Cavendish Mill. An inventory is attached to this report which Clare Harley is maintaining so we know what we have got and where it is going. Current key holders are myself, Bob Dearman (emergency), Dan Hibberts (proposed new projects officer) and Clare Harley.

### 2. CO2 Meters.

Chris collected our faulty Sperion gas meter from John Gunn last month and has sent it back to the manufacturers for repair. This may incur a charge since it is out of warranty, but it was expensive in the first place and when repaired will be the only one we possess. Of the other two we purchased for general use, both the Gasman type, one was lost and the second became U/S and un-repairable after considerable usage.

### 3. 2012/13 Grant aid from N.E.

We have once again secured a generous grant of £5000 from Natural England which they have requested is spent *before the end of the year* (normally end March) This still gives us nearly 6 months.

I did have some help with last year's spend for which I am grateful, but still ended up being responsible for allocating the majority myself. This is a heavy workload and one I cannot sustain.

This year I have suggested that we spend the money on projects and SSSI Cave Monitoring, not materials, and believe we should encourage individual clubs to "own" and manage conservation projects with funding from the grant. I am willing to continue to advise and act as co-ordinator/ link with Natural England but wish to greatly reduce the time I spend on paperwork etc.

### 4. Conservation Team: replacement Assistant Conservation Officer needed.

Chris, my assistant, has resigned due to her increased work commitments, but has agreed to carry on until the AGM to give us time to search for a replacement.

I am grateful to Chris for her hard work, especially in the early days when she spent many hours in Bagshawe taking CO2 readings, and on behalf of DCA we wish her all the best for the future.

Clare Harley is seconded to the team (but does not wish to become an officer) and has proved to be an invaluable help, taking UCF minutes and keeping an inventory of stock in the DCA container.

Martyn Grayson also resigned at the last AGM but agreed to stay on until we found a replacement Projects Officer. Dan Hibberts is being proposed at this next Council meeting as his replacement, and I look forward to working with him if his appointment is ratified.

Pete, Karen and I are working together on access issues until a replacement for Iain is found.

### 5. Dry Stone Walling workshops.

Two fully-booked workshops were held at the end of April offering cavers a chance to learn the art of walling which could be of use both above and below ground.

Despite the weather (especially on Sunday) both Mick Biggin and Andy Norman successfully enthused their teams in the art of building a length of wall from scratch.

**Contd. >>>**

Courses were booked through Nigel and paid for with grants from Natural England (£200) and BCA (£150 pledged). I am grateful to both Andy and Mick for making the weekend a great success.

## **6. Boulder Pot.**

This was a DCA initiative, suggested by Pete Mellors, and supported by myself and Bob Dearman with additional help from Dan Hibberts and Ron Hammond.

A fuller account will appear in Pete Mellor's report.

I submitted a detailed illustrated report to Descent, which has already been published, and Pete had done a similar one for Derbyshire Caver. Several cavers have already made the difficult and hazardous descent!

## **7. Other projects I am currently working on/involved with include**

- i) Hungerhill Swallet. Negotiations with DCC and EA regarding diversion of road run off into swallet.
- ii) Devonshire Cavern. Restoration work with PICA
- iii) Methods of conserving calcite false floor surrounding pools in Carleswark.
- iv) Conservation Taping of vulnerable and badly damaged areas in the White River Series (practical work undertaken by Lisa Wooton and her team)
- v) Support for production of Conservation Plans at Water Icicle (Karen) and Waterways Swallets

*Dave Webb June 19<sup>th</sup> 2012.*

## **Item 7.4 - Projects Officer's Report**

The only job carried out from last meeting is the pull through's in Nettle pot have been taken out and rigged with fixed ropes. The pull through's need replacing with the ring type set-up that are in Giants Hole.

As you know I don't have the time anymore to continue with DCA.

I wish Dan all the best in the new role. Dan is a real driving force that will push DCA.

All the best for the future.

*Martyn Grayson, (Former Project Officer)  
16 June 2012*

## **Item 7.6 – Legal & Insurance Officer's Report**

### **Boulder Pot**

DCA's good relations with Natural England, coupled with the offer of liability indemnity to the landowner, proved crucial here in getting the go-ahead to reopen the site. The actual work and cost involved in physically reopening it turned out to be more daunting than initially expected, as the entrance last used in the 1990's lay buried under several metres of earth and stones. A marathon effort by a dedicated team using materials and equipment supplied both by DCA and individual team members, plus the services of a hired JCB and operator, eventually brought the project to a successful conclusion by early April. My thanks to all concerned.

### **Holme Bank Chert Mine**

There is a recurring problem here of locks being vandalised at the emergency quarry exit. If it continues and the lock cannot be made more vandal-proof, I think consideration should be given to walling up this point and obliterating it as a way in or out of the Mine. I have spoken with Dave Carlisle who has no objection but I have not raised it yet with PICA. The final say, of course, rests with the tenant who may want to refer it to Chatsworth as owner.

### **Lathkill Agreements**

The Licences granting access to Lathkill Upper and Garden Path entrances have been renewed by Chatsworth for a further three years. Bob Dearman kindly supplied data to enable me to submit maintenance reports for both sites.

### **Eldon Hill Quarry**

I have obtained permission from the tenant farmer for DCA to conduct a full survey of the Quarry and its caves. Hopefully this will lead to improved relations between farmer and cavers, and enable a longer term access arrangement to be negotiated.

### **Waterfall Swallet**

I am currently working with Mark Noble to try and clarify the access situation. Mark claims to know the family who own the site and thinks the notices have been put up to stop the obstruction to neighbouring farmland caused by thoughtless parking by visitors.

*Peter Mellors, Legal & Insurance Officer*

## Item 8 - BCA Reports

### 8.1 BCA Council 24 March:

BCA Chairman Andy Eavis was not able to chair this meeting as he was in hospital so his place was taken by Mick Day. This was a lengthy meeting and a number of important points were dealt with.

**1. The BCA Operations Manual:** In relation to the working of special committees, it had previously been agreed that experts co-opted to the committees would be able to vote as well as regional council and constituent body representatives. This is relevant because of the makeup of the Training Committee and also the Equipment & Techniques Committee. The matter was raised again by CSCC and the previous agreement re. voting on special committees was confirmed and clarified.

**2. Equipment & Techniques.** There was a lengthy discussion on the fallout from the E&T meeting of 17th. March, after which the CNCC rep. to the Committee had resigned and also resigned as rep. to BCA Council and the DCA rep. to the Committee also resigned. The matter at issue was CSCC's non-acceptance of the IPTD relating to the placing of P-bolts – they insisted that there should be no requirement for installers of bolts for ladder use to be competent at SRT rigging. The Committee Convenor, Nick William, reported that he had attempted to arbitrate on this matter but had been unsuccessful and offered his resignation. By a majority vote and after lengthy discussion, his resignation was not accepted. BCA Council itself does not have the power to direct any regional council to act in a certain way and cannot itself arbitrate. The discussion is given virtually verbatim in the Minutes, which are on the BCA website for you to read (still listed as "DRAFT" though they have now been accepted) and I would urge you to do so. It is worth noting the comment made by the former BCA Training Officer, Graham Mullan:

*One thing here seems worrying. Some people do not seem to understand that modern rigging for ladder and lifeline is the same as for SRT. There are times when handlines and assisted handlines are appropriate rigged in a different way, but ladder & lifeline should follow the same approach as a well-rigged SRT pitch.*

**3. Conservation.** Following my comments to the DCA AGM about the BCA Conservation Officer's lack of contact with the regions or written reports to BCA Council, she was not present at this BCA meeting but had sent a report to the Secretary, which was not available in advance but which he read out at the meeting. I raised DCA's concerns and they were noted.

### 8.2 BCA AGM 9 June:

I attended this meeting as DCA rep. together with Bob Dearman (as Eldon P.C. rep.). This was a relatively short and efficient meeting with all Officers' reports being accepted – including a written report submitted beforehand by the Conservation Officer. A large section of the BCA Manual of Operations is now accepted so that we have a clear idea of how BCA should operate in practical terms, something which was never quite clear in the days of NCA.

The draft Minutes of this meeting should be on the BCA website soon but the Officers' Reports to the meeting are on the BCA website already – worth reading to see what BCA is actually doing on your behalf.

*Jenny Potts  
DCA Rep. to BCA Council and AGM*