



# DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

## Minutes of DCA Council Meeting

10am. 2nd November 2013, Monyash Village Hall

- Present:**
- |                   |                           |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Officers:</b>  | Chairman                  | Bob Dearman [BD]    |
|                   | Vice-Chairman             | Terry Jackson [TJ]  |
|                   | Secretary                 | Jenny Potts [JP]    |
|                   | Treasurer                 | Wayne Sheldon [WS]  |
|                   | Asst. Access Officer      | Karen Slatcher [KS] |
|                   | Legal & Insurance Officer | Peter Mellors [PM]  |
|                   | Newsletter Editor         | Paul Lydon [PL]     |
| <b>Club Reps:</b> | Masson C.G.               | Mark Gration [MG]   |
|                   | Orpheus C.C.              | Boyd Potts [BP]     |
|                   | PDMHS                     | Adam Russell [AR]   |

**Individual Members:** Alan Brentnall [AB], (Bob Dearman, Peter Mellors, Jenny Potts, Wayne Sheldon, K.Slatcher)

### 1. CHAIRMAN’S WELCOME; QUORUM:

- 1.1 BD welcomed members to his last stint as Chairman of a DCA Council Meeting. He said that he intended to stand down as Chairman at the DCA AGM in 2014.
- 1.2 Quorate: The meeting was quorate with 7 Officers present.

### 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies received from: N.Atkins (Training Officer), C.Broome (Asst. Sec. Planning Liaison), E.Cameron (Access Officer), Dan Hibberts (Proj Of), M.Milner (Cons. Off.), D.Webb (Masson C.G. & PDMHS), G.Marshment (BVT).)

### 3. TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING: (22 June. 2013, previously circulated).

*That the Minutes of the Council Meeting of 22nd. June 2013 be approved.*

Prop. K.Slatcher, Sec. W.Sheldon. *Agreed unanimously.*

### 4. MATTERS ARISING THEREFROM: (Note that some of these items may be covered in Officers’ Reports.)

- 4.1 4.5 **Arrange for DCA plaques to be fitted to shaft lids:** Ongoing - BD now has the plaque made for Nettle Pot. **ACTION: BD &DH**
- 4.2 4.11 **Review DCA Fixed Aids Policy in consultation with CNCC:** Ongoing. **ACTION: BD, JP**
- 4.3 4.12.b **Circulate advice on removal of gear from pre-rigged pitches:** Done - see Secs. Report, item 6.1.
- 4.4 5.4 **Circulate current list of members to DCA Officers:** Done.
- 4.5 6.3.b **Pindale Quarry caravan site proposal - send comments to Peak Park:** Done. Application withdrawn.
- 4.6 6.3.c **Masson Quarry sale - seek information on purchaser:** AR reported that the 42 acres were not sold. Local farmer does not appear interested, the quarry was not sold separately and dumping is not likely to be allowed. JP reported information from BMC, who were not interested in buying the quarry but believed it may be of interest to DWT but DCA and BMC would want to retain an interest. AR and JP would seek further information. **ACTION: JP, AR**
- 4.7 6.3.d **Waterfall Swallet sale - seek information on purchaser:** See PM’s report, item 6.6.
- 4.8 6.3.e **Hungerhill Swallet - proposal to re-direct road runoff - contact DCC:** D.Ottewell (Environment Agency) was chasing this and has met DCC but not heard anything back yet. JP would follow this up with DO and DW. **ACTION: JP, DW**
- 4.9 6.3.h **Magpie Mine / River Lathkill proposal - keep watch on progress:** J. Gunn had suggested setting up a meeting with PDMHS, Peak Park, landowners. Keep watch. **ACTION: KS, JP**
- 4.10 6.3.i **Paper pulp above Stoney Middleton Dale - contact Peak Park:** Due to be spread later in summer. JP would check up. **ACTION: JP**
- 4.11 6.4.b **Castleton Moor Shaft - new lid needed:** No progress - needs to be followed up. **ACTION: DH, BD**

- 4.12 6.4.d.ii **Level behind Bateman's Shaft - check safety of existing grill on shaft:** BD reported needs grill which will allow access to be bolted securely over shaft. NE wants this job done but is not an easy job to do. BD will check it out. **ACTION: BD, DH**
- 4.13 6.4.e **Devonshire Mine - reconstruct entrance and gate:** In Sec. Report, item 6.1.
- 4.14 6.4.f.i **Waterways Swallet - complete Cave Cons. Plan:** In Cons Off. Report, item 6.3.
- 4.15 6.4.f.ii **Sites in Manifold Valley - complete conservation/safety work:** In Cons Off. Report, item 6.3.
- 4.16 6.5.a **Christmas Swallet & Snelslow Swallet - draw up access agreement:** No progress so far. PM suggests that we should approach the tenant farmer but there is a need to satisfy the owner re. his liability. So PM suggests that the owner and the tenant farmer are sent a copy of the DCA Insurance Certificate but it would be better to leave this till next year when there will be a full year to run on the insurance. WS notes Snelslow needs bolting as fixed ladders were in place but need to be brought out. Agreed to defer discussion to the DCA AGM. JP will put this on the AGM agenda. **ACTION: JP**
- 4.17 6.6.a **Chatsworth site reports for Garden Path and Lathkill Head Upper Entrance:** In L&I Report, item 6.6.
- 4.18 6.6.d **Outlands Head Quarry cave - liaise over possible re-opening:** No progress. PM has heard from Ron Hammond that the quarry is now being used as a business site with plant and machinery so it may be difficult to arrange access. There is a possibility that a mineshaft outside quarry may link in and noted also there is a link to Bagshaw which may be the best approach. Agreed to leave this to investigation of the alternative routes in.
- 4.19 6.7.c **Appoint new Trainer for bolt installers. :** In hand. **ACTION: BD**
- 4.20 6.8.b **Cliffhanger 2013 report. :** BP will report later. JP notes the event was a great success, 23 helpers supported the DCA stand.

## 5. ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS:

**Club Members: Shropshire Scouts Caving Team** (BCA members). *Agreed unanimously.*

## 6. OFFICERS' REPORTS: (Where possible written reports will be tabled.)

### 6.1 Secretary: (Written Report tabled.)

- 6.1.a **UKcaving.** PL comments that he felt JP's use of UKcaving has been very useful and creates a good impression. PM notes how many cavers from outside the area get things wrong about the region.
- 6.1.b **Devonshire.** AR notes old top entrance to show cave is not secure although the shaft entrance has a grill on which is secure but could be used in an emergency. Old show cave entrance needs to be secured properly. AR will look at this when he does the other door frame fixing. **ACTION: AR**
- 6.1.c *That the Secretary's Report be accepted.* Prop. PL, Sec. TJ. *Agreed unanimously.*

### 6.2 Treasurer: (Written Report tabled.)

- 6.2.a **BCA Funding:** WS explains that we can get money from BCA for conservation & access expenses but we have to agree the funding first before doing the job. JP explained the thinking behind the Cambrian refusal to pay travel expenses. PM suggests that NT should be asked to pay for at least some of the work done in the Manifold Valley on their land. WS will contact MM about this. **ACTION: WS**
- 6.2.b **EN funding for 2014:** There should be funds available for SSSI monitoring next year. Note that WS will check with MM whether other projects planned and mentioned at UCF meeting are to be funded by EN. **ACTION: WS, MM**
- 6.2.c *That the Treasurer's Report be accepted.* Prop. PM, Sec. AR. *Agreed unanimously.*

### 6.3 Conservation Officer: (Apologies sent, written Report tabled.)

- 6.3.a **Stoney Middleton C.C.P.:** MM reported no further progress. The meeting expressed concern that this should now be published. DCA will publish with acknowledgements and with MC as author. JP will write to MC. **ACTION: JP**
- 6.3.b **Biodiversity** . JP explained the response required and MM had already made a suitable response. *That the Conservation Officer's Report be accepted.* Prop. P.Lydon, Sec. T.Jackson. *Agreed unanimously.*
- 6.3.c **Appendix on Cave Atmosphere Monitoring:** JP had sent out AB's notes about CO<sub>2</sub> meters but he had no response from clubs. It was felt that the situation was good at present so cavers were not so worried and clubs are not likely to be interested until there is another incident. KS noted that CO<sub>2</sub> was still high in Water Icicle CC and one recent visitor had had problems. BP noted there had been some reports from Mendip (which has similar aboveground conditions to Derbyshire) but the problem there had now cleared. JP thanked AB for providing a very comprehensive report.

***That Alan Brentnall's report on Cave Atmosphere Monitoring be accepted.***

Prop. P.Mellors, Sec. K.Slatcher. ***Agreed unanimously.***

**6.4 Projects Officer:**

6.4.a No written report provided. BD reported that DH was extremely busy running a company and was away from home a great deal so was difficult to get hold of.

6.4.b **Query Project Officer's function:** JP queried what we expected of the Projects Officer. Agreed this was the practical side of the Access Officer's function. The Projects Officer should be called on for advice and help and assist in organising work and providing specialist equipment.

**6.5.i Access Officer:** *(Written Report tabled.)*

6.5.i.a **Jug Holes gate:** AR notes that the bolt itself needs replacing with a new one or it may be the nut itself. Needs someone to try a selection of suitable bolts. PL and BP will try out a selection and PL will send BD some photos.

**ACTION: PL, BP**

6.5.i.b **Nickergrove:** Thanks to EC and OCC for sorting Nickergrove.

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

**6.5.ii Asst. Access Officer:** *(Written Report tabled.)*

6.5.ii.a **ABMM:** JP suggested regular user cards should be collected back from TG and DW - they could be issued with single user cards if required.

6.5.ii.b **Garden Path key:** BD is willing to continue to hold a key as it is easy for people to call for it and he can be informed if someone authorised wants it. BP offered to keep a key in the safe at OCC Cottage as well which could be passed to someone authorised.

6.5.ii.c ***That the Asst. Access Officer's Report be accepted.*** Prop. B.Potts, Sec. P.Lydon. ***Agreed unanimously.***

6.5.ii.d **Thanks:** JP thanked KS for her work. KS would put together instructions for next holder.

6.5.ii.e **Tideswell Rock Club:** They had requested a visit to ABMM; BD will organise a visit for them.

**6.6 Legal & Insurance Officer:** *(Written Report tabled.)*

6.6.a **Chatsworth Annual Checks list:** PM handed over to JP copies of the list of checks required to comply with Chatsworth agreements.

6.6.b **Lathkill Head Top Entrance:** PL noted he had filled in entries this year - thought entries might be out of sequence.

6.6.c **Eldon Hill Quarry:** Agreed that 2 BP bolts will be placed above the cave and also on the ledge outside Sidetrack Cave so that, in the event that the rope is interfered with at the top, the rope can still be pulled down and re-rigged to descend to the floor of the quarry.

**ACTION: BD**

PM will be checking the letter box this afternoon - notes it is to one side of the gate inside the wall.

6.6.d **Reyfad:** PM noted that he had been asked for advice on arrangements for access to Reyfad in Ireland. JP notes that she had noted in a SUI N/L that access arrangements for Reyfad were ongoing.

6.6.e **Waterfall Hole:** PM notes that National Trust could be approached to ask if an arrangement could be made with NT to allow parking if DCA agreed to put in a section of hard standing. PM will liaise with DW as to who should make the approach and to whom.

**ACTION: PM, DW**

6.6.f **Chatsworth Check List:** Checks are due by end of March so we should raise this at Council meeting immediately after the AGM to confirm that they had been done. BP and PL agreed that OCC would do Lathkill Head and Garden Path; PM will do Ashford Black Marble Mine.

**ACTION: BP, PL, PM**

6.6.g ***That the Legal & Insurance Officer's Report be accepted.***

Prop. W.Sheldon, Sec. T.Jackson. ***Agreed unanimously.***

**6.7 Equipment Officer:** *(Written Report tabled.)*

6.7.a **Cliff Cavern:** Work is now in hand.

6.7.b **Sidetrack Cave:** work agreed - see 6.6.c above.

6.7.c **Winnats Head Cave, Giants Filthy Five:** Work had been agreed some time ago so these are next on the list to do.

6.7.d **Manifold Valley:** One cave needs to be done - check with MM.

6.7.e **Peak Cavern, JH:** Two non Eco-anchor bolts need to be replaced in JH. Likely to be calls for other BP bolts to be placed in Peak Cavern but this will be a lengthy process and we need to know how many bolts are wanted for each area.

- 6.7.f **Equipment. Officer post:** BD said he would be willing to carry on as Equipment Officer for 2014.
- 6.7.g *That the Equipment Officer's Report be accepted.* Prop. B.Potts, Sec. K.Slatcher. *Agreed unanimously.*
- 6.8 Training Officer:** *(Apologies sent. Verbal report given to Secretary.)*
- 6.8.a JP reported on behalf of NA, who was at a BCA Training Committee Meeting today. NA was applying for BCA Training Grants for DCA workshops and was also applying for a BCA Training Grant on behalf of Chesterfield C.C.
- 6.9 Publications Officer/Newsletter Editor:**
- 6.9.a **Next Newsletter:** PL has some material. BP will do an article on Cliffhanger.
- 6.9.b **Future of DCA Newsletter:** PM queried whether DCA N/L in its present form should to continue. JP suggested that it was important that there was some publicity relating to DCA and its functions readily available in shops and other places throughout the Peak - maybe this could be in the form of a leaflet. Agreed to bring this issue to the AGM.
- 6.10 Asst. Sec. / Planning Liaison:**
- 6.10.a CB had advised JP that he had nothing to report.
- 7. BCA REPORTS AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE BCA COUNCIL MEETING ON 5TH. OCTOBER:**
- 7.1 Reports from BCA Council meeting 5 October:** *(Written report tabled.)*
- 7.1.a **BCA Conservation & Access Officer:** JP noted that a new Cons & Acc. Officer, Andrew Hinde, had been co-opted and he was already liaising with regional C&A officers.
- 7.1.b **BCA IT:** WS asked about the IT Working Party and the updating of the Try Caving website. JP and BP explained that there was a proposal that BCA should be able to contact all its individual members (both DIMs and CIMs) by email - this would require Club secretaries to provide email addresses for their members in addition to other information when the lists were produced for BCA insurance cards each year. The list of email addresses would be subject to Data Protection Legislation, used solely to provide basic information for BCA members and would not be sold on for commercial purposes.
- It had already been agreed that the Try Caving Website needed to be updated and this was in hand.
- 7.2 Reports from other BCA meetings.**
- 7.2.a **Equipment Committee:** BP will be attending a meeting on 10 Nov. as an observer for DCA and will report back to DCA. BD said he was in communication with Les Sykes and Glenn Jones regularly in connection with bolt installation and testing of BP bolts.
- 8. CONFIRM DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING:**
- 8.1 **2014 AGM changed to 1 March 2014, 10am at Monyash Village Hall.**
- 9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
- 9.1 **Cliffhanger:** BP noted this was a very good effort by DCA cavers and literally hundreds of children had visited the DCA stand and taken part in the activities. All the volunteers had done a great job.

The meeting closed at 2pm.

*J. Potts, Recorder*

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

- a. Item 6.1 Secretary's Report;
- b. Item 6.2 Treasurer's Report;
- c. Item 6.3 Conservation Officer's Report;
- d. Item 6.3.c Appendix: Notes on Cave Atmosphere Monitoring for the 02/11/13 DCA Meeting;
- e. Item 6.5.i Access Officer's Report;
- f. Item 6.5.ii Asst. Access Officer's Report;
- g. Item 6.6 Legal & Insurance Officer's Report;
- h. Item 6.7 Equipment Officer's Report;
- e. Item 7.1 BCA Reports & Matters Arising from the BCAAGM on 16th. June.

## DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION - REPORTS FOR 2 NOVEMBER 2013

### Item 6.1 - Secretary's Report

#### Communications

Since the June meeting I have emailed all members with the following items:

- News of the death of Ralph Johnson
- Thanks for help with Cliffhanger
- Details of DCA Training Courses
- BMC Petition re. Stanage Edge
- Devonshire Mine work updates
- News of theft of rope from a pitch
- Minutes of the June Council Meeting and Agenda for November Council Meeting
- Information Circulars 2013/3, May-July and 2013/4, July-October

I have posted the Minutes, Agenda, Training Course details and the two Information Circulars to Associate Members and those other members/contacts who do not have email access or who wish to receive printed paperwork - 22 by post each time.

I have also made use of *UKcaving.com* to keep cavers in general informed about Devonshire Mine work, theft of ropes, updates on bolting of Cliff Cavern, DCA involvement in Defra's plans for Bio-diversity Offsetting, the Pindale Caravan Site planning application and various other issues re. access to caves. Mel Milner and Terry Jackson have also been posting to keep cavers informed on DCA matters and we receive a positive response to this. Thanks also to Mel for maintaining the DCA website and posting relevant information there; it is noticeable that some queries and requests for sales publications are now reaching me via the website.

#### Devonshire Mine

I have spent much time communicating with the various people involved in the work on Devonshire Mine to keep everyone informed, answer queries from non-DCA members who don't check on UKcaving and to ensure that the PICA Secretary was kept up to date with progress. Thanks to Vin Machin for keeping all his PICA members informed. A formal Mines Inspection of Devonshire is due on 13th. November and this should help to clarify if any additional work is needed, over and above the work already identified to stabilise the surround to the gate, to enable the continued use of the site for instructed caving.

#### Sales of Caves of the Peak District

Sales had slowed down at the beginning of the year but are now starting to pick up again. The Treasurer is kept informed of progress.

*Jenny Potts,  
DCA Hon. Secretary,  
31/10/13*

### Item 6.2 - Treasurer's Report for 2nd November 2013 Council Meeting

Current funds up to the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2013 are:

Deposit a/c: £16,580.97  
 Current a/c: £604.53  
 Total: £17,185.50

There is a list of payments in and out of the accounts since the Council Meeting June 2013:

Payments in:		Payments out:	
Membership Fees:	£12.00	Conservation and Access Work:	£542.24
COPD Income:	£674.00	COPD Expenses:	£52.00
Bank Interest:	£32.22	General Admin:	£42.50
Conservation Plans:	£11.90	Newsletter / Publications Expenses:	£23.33
Handbook Sales:	£7.00	Cliffhanger 2013	£164.39
Cliffhanger 2013 Expenses (From BCA)	£164.39		
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>£901.51</b>		<b>£824.46</b>

## **Caves of the Peak District**

Sales of COPD have started trickling through again.

## **BCA Core Funding**

We haven't received the core funding for 2012 yet but the accounts have been finalised by the regional treasurers and payment should be made shortly.

## **Conservation and Access Work / Funding**

Paul Ibberson, the BCA Treasurer was putting the following to BCA Council regarding the claiming of travelling expenses for conservation and access work, this was for consideration:

*One other significant action outstanding has been the issue of travel expenses for volunteers on C&A work. This has been batted around between various interested parties, but remains a fairly vexed issue. Whilst we have a general consensus that we should try to ensure volunteers are not financially disadvantaged, I can only conclude that it is potentially a liability of such unknown magnitude that I feel unable to recommend anything other than providing for travel expenses to be allowable within the annual "self-certified" limit (currently £500). There is a slight problem in that some C&A travel has already been paid (or recommended to be paid) in excess of that level, but I take the view that this commitment should be honoured and a line drawn thereafter. I would, however, leave the option for any Regional Council which feels it has a specific, significant C&A volunteer travel situation to approach the Finance Committee with a project funding request as with normal RCC arrangements. There is no guarantee that further funding will be forthcoming, but at least this will give the possibility of support in line with the general aim. I will be asking that Council endorse this position.*

I'm not sure what the outcome of this proposal was. It's basically saying that we need to apply up front with a budget for projects and get it approved by the finance committee, prior to the work taking place. This can be done, the conservation and access team need to be aware of this and ensure any projects come through me, and we apply for funding prior to doing the work.

For the current financial year, 2013. We have spent £850.85 under the conservation and access banner. The year isn't over yet. £438.38 has been spent on Manifold Valley Conservation work, which is more than half of the current expenditure. I can only claim back £500 of this from BCA, as a big fuss has been made this year by other regional councils so we will show a loss next year on what we can claim back from BCA. On previous years, this would have been covered by the Natural England funding we received for SSSI Work, but funding was stopped for this year. The only thing we can say is that funds built up over the last eight years from previous SSSI work paid for by Natural England, will now cover the cost of this Manifold Work.

## **Additional Saving Account / Bonds**

I haven't managed to find time to visit any banks yet and follow up Boyd's advice but I'll aim to do it prior to the AGM.

## **DCA Subs for 2014**

As there is no increase in BCA insurance costs so BCA subs are staying the same for 2014, I'd suggest we keep DCA subs the same for 2014, i.e. £10 for a non BCA member or £7 if you are a BCA DIM.

*Wayne Sheldon  
DCA Hon. Treasurer  
23/10/13*

## **Item 6.3 - Conservation Officer's Report**

In the last few months, I have finished the Cave Conservation Plan (CCP) for Waterways Swallet which is now on the DCA web site. I have convened and chaired the latest UCF meeting in October, then distributed the minutes along with a copy of the Bagshawe Cavern CCP for comment. It was generally felt that the addition of some photos would enhance it, also adding information on the connection to the resurgence cave. (And maybe an updated survey or at least a copy of the survey from page 25 in Descent 205? Copyright would need to be established and permission to reproduce the survey.)

I have liaised with the National Trust and other organisations on various issues, received a list of folders and files on conservation held by Dave Webb and also the CCPs for JH and the White River Series. The JH CCP needs updating to reflect that it has since been connected to Peak/Speedwell and could also benefit from some photos. The WRS CCP is missing its photos of the features being monitored.

I have also received the Cave Works Form for Longcliffe Mine in the Castleton SSSI which will form part of the bid for funding next year.

It should have been noted early this year that several extra important sites in the Manifold Valley that NE agreed should be monitored haven't been and might have provided support for funding this year. Those sites are Limepits (West Ecton) Mine, T-Pot and St. Bertram's Cave.

Finally, I have recently submitted DCA's response to the Biodiversity Offsetting green paper, this was based largely on the excellent one from the CNCC.

*Melissa Milner,  
DCA Conservation Officer.*

**Appendix Re. Item 4.12.a of DCA Minutes for 22 June 2013**

**Notes on Cave Atmosphere Monitoring for the 02/11/13 DCA Meeting**

1. No problems with CO<sub>2</sub> have been reported so far this year.
2. Some sampling has taken place in various locations, specifically Nettle, Knotlow, Giant's, Bagshawe, Peak and Lathkill.
3. Where CO<sub>2</sub> has been a problem in the past (Nettle, Knotlow, Bagshawe), levels are around 1.5% - about 1% lower than last year, when problems were being reported.
4. The Nettle sampling trip was identical to last year's session, in an attempt to determine the efficiency of the new lid. Metering was done using Crewe's O<sub>2</sub> meter and DCRO's CO<sub>2</sub> meter.
5. I have received no requests to use DCA's meters from other cavers or clubs.
6. I have received very little response to the letter recommending the use of O<sub>2</sub> meters; presumably because conditions seem OK this year.
7. I now have two DCA meters.
8. DCA's Sperian PHD6 meter (O<sub>2</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>, LEL) which has some problems (quote for fixing deemed too expensive) but could possibly be used in conjunction with another meter.
9. DCA's Crowcon Gasman CO<sub>2</sub> meter seems to work OK, but has gone beyond the date where it should be recalibrated. Consequently, I tend to use it in conjunction with Crewe's O<sub>2</sub> meter so that readings can be verified.
10. Currently, the software which controls the calibration of the Crowcon meter doesn't work, and I am in contact with the manufacturers to sort this out. When this problem has been rectified, we will still need a bottle of sample CO<sub>2</sub> to enable calibration to take place.
11. As hinted in 4 above, DCRO have an identical Crowcon Gasman CO<sub>2</sub> meter, but they have similar calibration problems, and their meter is also calibration-date-expired. Once I sort out the software issue for DCA, I should be able to apply the same remedy for DCRO, and hopefully both organisations will be able to share the cost of calibration gas.

*Alan Brentnall  
29 Oct 2013*

**Item 6.5.i - Access Officer's Report**

**Apologies**

Deepest apologies for being unable to attend the meeting due to work commitments.

**Jug Holes gate inspection**

Having looked at the gate at the lower entrance for Jug Holes in the Matlock area we have found that you can still bolt the gate shut by bypassing the hole in the door and just using the bolt and chain fix the door to the wall. However this is only a temporary solution to the issue, it needs re-threading ASAP.

**Christmas Swallet & Snelslow Swallet**

After making two attempts to contact Steph, introducing myself and asking for the chance to meet to talk about the possibility of future access to both caves, I have received no correspondence back. This matter has now been given to other members of DCA to deal with!

**Nickergrove Mine**

After reports from Pete Knight CIC about a rock collapse in the last small climb down I, supported by members of the Orpheus C.C. Thursday night group, spent 2 nights working to remove the very large boulder and restore access to the full trip.

**Other Issues**

Other ongoing issues at Masson are being talked about on UKcaving Forum and the need for access talks in the future may well be high, depending on who the land is sold to and what they intend to use the land for.

I have had a lot of requests for caves in the P8 area to be talked about.

*Ewan Cameron  
DCA Access Officer  
31 Oct. 2013*

## **Item 6.5.ii - Assistant Access Officer's Report**

### **Ashford Black Marble Mine**

No Single Use cards have been issued since June and the Regular User system appears to be working well. All outstanding insurance documents have been chased up and all but one received - the person in question has been warned that they will lose access if they don't send a copy of their PL insurance.

A Regular User has come to light that was not on the list I was originally given and a copy of current insurance obtained. I have now updated the list of Regular Users and also issued an updated card.

There has been one new application for a Regular Use card from Colum Walsh of Twin Peaks Outdoor Activities and a card has been issued.

Two ex DCA Conservation Officers hold Regular Use cards for the mine - Tony Gibbs and Dave Webb - should these be collected back in?

### **Garden Path**

There have not been any applications to visit Garden Path since June, but a trip was undertaken on 4 August 2013 by myself and Paul Lydon to check the condition of the cave - nothing had changed in the previous twelve months.

Bob Dearman is currently the key holder for Garden Path - will/should he continue to do this after stepping down as DCA Chairman in Feb 2014?

### **Water Icicle Close Cavern, gated extensions**

After a very slow start to the year with one trip in January, there was a brief rush to book at the end of the year. A group was taken in in September, and two more groups are booked for November and December. Digging progresses slowly and sporadically at the bottom of the Elevator.

Results from samples taken from the cave in January 2011 are still not quite ready for publication as interpretation of the results has proved complicated.

### **My role within DCA**

After a great deal of deliberation, I have decided to step down from the Assistant Access Officer's position at the AGM in February. This is largely due to increased pressure at work, but also because I only ever intended to take on ABMM and Garden Path as a temporary measure and I will have been looking after them for two years in 2014.

I will continue as the contact for WICC for the time being at least until such time as the Conservation Plan is completed.

I will also continue to take minutes for the UCF meetings while Mel settles in, but will step back from that at the end of 2014.

*Karen Slatcher,  
24 October 2013*

## **Item 6.6 - Legal & Insurance Officer's Report**

### **Eldon Hill Quarry**

Some cavers have been unclear about the terms governing restoration of access to the Quarry, so I have submitted additional information for display on DCA's website (my thanks to MM for prompt attention to this). I have also responded to at least one email enquiry for more details. I propose to do periodic checks on the use being made of the logbook I have installed on site. I made one such visit in early August and am pleased to report a promising start. I feel I should make clear again that Chatsworth and their tenant do not want the site given wide publicity. Our monitoring is intended (a) to record the level of visiting and (b) to encourage cavers to log their efforts at exploring and digging for new finds.

### **Lathkill Upper Entrance**

A condition of Chatsworth's licence here is that all visitors fill in the logbook. The book and pens have now been placed inside a Daren drum hung from the frame in the hope they'll remain dry (my thanks to BD for this). In August the evidence suggested no one had made an entry in the logbook since October 2012!

### **Chatsworth Site Reports**

After welcome feedback from KS and BD I was finally able to complete reports due on the state of the Lathkill Upper & Garden Path Entrances and submit them to Chatsworth as required under the Licence terms. The reports rely on inspections being done each year, and responsibility for these inspections is a matter for Council to rule on. I have drawn up a checklist of items for annual inspection at each of the sites concerned.

### **Waterways Swallet Licence**

I note this continues to be renewed routinely at the end of September by Okeover Estate office. I recently brought the Licence terms to the notice of the Chairman of the Speleological Union of Ireland as a possible model for use at Reyfad Pot in County Fermanagh, but, although he seemed keen to pursue the matter, I don't know if the terms proved helpful to him.

## **National Trust & Waterfall Hole**

I see no reason why the National Trust's open access policy to caves and mines where there is no competing interest cannot be extended to Waterfall Hole. Liability at the site is now the Trust's concern, as I understand it, and not the farmer's, and parking appears to be the only real problem.

*Peter Mellors  
Legal & Insurance Officer*

## **Item 6.7 - Equipment Officer's Report**

As has been previously reported the BCA E&T Committee ordered 2000 anchors from Bolt Products with a specification that they should be manufactured in 316 stainless steel (SS). Also on the agenda at E&T was the potential failure mode of SS anchors through chloride stress corrosion. On inspecting the delivery note it appeared that 304 SS anchors had been dispatched although Jim Titt, the MD at Bolt Products assured E&T that it was just a typo. To confirm the grade of SS received, tests conducted on the batch to confirm the presence of molybdenum, a component of 316, showed negative results. For information, 304 SS is a grade not containing molybdenum used for most climbing applications except those liable to be affected by saline. Its resistance to chloride stress fracture is considerably less than 316SS. It is not known whether BP's supplier sent the wrong grade and BP acted in good faith or whether the confusion came from BP itself. In DCA's sphere of operations there are potential situations where high chloride concentrations are likely to occur. It is known that average soil concentrations are in the order of 50ppm, paper pulp concentrations are typically 130-140ppm and winter run off from roads can be very high. Also in the Peak District, fluoride in the same periodic group as chloride, is a feature of many vein cavities which carry drainage. From a safety point of view I found it unacceptable to use 304 SS anchors on our patch and informed E&T of the decision. A similar objection was lodged by CNCC.

Since then a small batch of 316 SS anchors has been dispatched by Bolt Products to E&T and its authenticity confirmed. These have now been distributed to the regions and DCA has received 50 of them. Hopefully this should carry us through until the problem of the 304 SS anchors is sorted out.

Henry Rockcliffe, one of DCA's trained anchor installers, has now been supplied with all necessary equipment, resin and anchors to re-bolt Cliff Cavern in Peak as soon as water levels permit access.

*Bob Dearman  
1/11/13*

## **Item 7.1 - Report from BCA Council Meeting, 5th. October**

*Note that these are only my own brief notes on those matters I felt were of particular relevance to DCA. The Minutes of the meeting, including all the reports, will be posted on the BCA website in due course.*

The meeting took place at the new venue in Pinvin, near Redditch and, as the BCA Secretary was not able to be present, I was asked to act as Recorder for the meeting.

### **BCA Conservation & Access Officer**

It was agreed to co-opt Andrew Hinde as BCA C&A Officer for the rest of the year. Andrew is CNCC's Conservation Officer and has worked with DCA in setting up SSSI monitoring on the Dales; he has also been involved in the re-opening of access to Fairy Cave in Weardale after many years of closure due to quarrying.

### **Commercial Caving**

The Secretary's report referred to the draft BCA leaflet for landowners on "Commercial Caving". There have been complications in some areas where landowners or access agreements refuse all access to what they class as "commercial cavers", irrespective of the type of caving or caving instruction taking place.

### **Treasurer**

There was some discussion on the BCA Budget for 2014, in particular payment of travel expenses for C&A work. Some regions do not pay this as a matter of principle; I stated that DCA did offer to pay travel expenses and would continue to do so. Also noted that, as there was no projected rise in insurance fees for 2014, all BCA subscriptions would remain as for 2013.

### **Equipment**

Noted that we were now attempting to obtain supplies of 316 SS BP bolts for use by regions; some were now available but more were needed a.s.a.p.

### **Training**

The T.O.'s report included the following statement:

*Much discussion time has been spent at Training Committee regarding the Duty of Care an award holder may have if they observe what they consider to be bad practice by other cavers whilst underground. Advice has been sought from Health and Safety Exec and based on that, a statement has been released to all award holders explaining that they do have a Duty of Care and as such they are obliged to make comment. Once they have done this they have discharged their Duty of Care.*

Noted that workshops are being planned for recreational cavers.

**IT Working Party**

The new and updated BCA website is already taking shape but it was noted that the “Try Caving” website badly needs a complete update. After discussion it was agreed that BCA would seek to institute email communications with its individual members as this was both cheaper and more efficient than the present system, though it was noted that there were some security and data protection issues to be overcome.

**CRoW Working Party**

As Convenor of the W.P. I explained what information is being collected on access and conservation in English regions and why. Noted that at present CRoW legislation does not apply to access to caves and the projected 2019 E.N. review will only cover mapping. Agreed that it may require a change in the law if, after all relevant information has been collected, BCA does decide to push for caves to be included.

**BCA AGM for 2014**

This will be at Dalesbridge in Yorkshire in mid-June and will follow a similar format to this year’s BCA/BCRA Party Weekend in Castleton: BCRA field trips on the Saturday, a slideshow/film presentation and BCA/BCRA Party on Saturday evening, followed by the BCA AGM on Sunday.

**Eurospeleo 2016**

BCA will be hosting the EuroSpeleo 2016 event, based in Yorkshire and planning for this is well in hand.

*Jenny Potts,  
DCA Rep. to BCA Council*