



# DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

Open Council Meeting, 28th. June 2014, Monyash Village Hall

## MINUTES

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Officers:</b>	Vice Chairman	Terry Jackson [TJ]	(Ind.)
		Secretary	Jenny Potts [JP]	(Ind. & OCC)
		Treasurer	Wayne Sheldon [WS]	(Ind. & TSG)
		Legal & Insurance Off.	Pete Mellors [PM]	(Ind. Hon. Member)
		Newsletter Editor	Mike Higgins [MH]	(Ind.)
	<b>Clubs:</b>	Masson C. G.	Mark Gration [MG]	
		Orpheus C. C.	Boyd Potts [BP]	
		P.D.M.H.S.	Adam Russell [AR]	
	<b>Individuals:</b>	Alan Brentnall. (+ Mike Higgins, Terry Jackson, Pete Mellors, Jenny Potts, Wayne Sheldon)		

### 1. Chairman's Welcome: Establish Quorum.

- 1.1 Vice Chairman Terry Jackson, who would be chairing the meeting in the absence of a Chairman, welcomed members.
- 1.2 The meeting was quorate with 4 officers present in addition to the Vice Chairman.

### 2. Apologies for absence:

Officers: Conservation Officer, Mel Milner [MM]; Projects Officer, Pete Knight [PK]; Access Officer, Ewan Cameron [EC]; Training Officer, Nigel Atkins [NA]; Equipment Officer, Bob Dearman [BD]; Cave Registry Secretary, John Beck [JB].  
 Club Members: Shropshire Scouts Caving Team, Idris Williams; PDMHS (Adam Russell will be a late arrival).  
 Ind. Member: Karen Slatcher.

### 3. To Approve Minutes of the previous Council Meeting: (1 March 2014, previously circulated).

*That the Minutes of the Council Meeting of 1st. March be approved.* Prop. W.Sheldon, Sec. B.Potts.  
**Agreed unanimously.**

### 4. Matters Arising therefrom

#### From AGM on 1 March 2014

- 4.1 **Treasurer: Organise a new bank account for DCA to run in parallel with the existing RBS one:** See 6.2, Treasurer's Report.
- 4.2 **Legal & Insurance Officer: Go ahead with draft DCA booklet on Liability:** See 6.6, Legal & Insurance Officer's Report.

#### From Council Meeting on 1 March 2014

- 4.3 **Arrange for DCA plaques to be fitted to shaft lids:** See 6.4, Projects Officer's report.
- 4.4 **Review DCA Fixed Aids Policy:** Ongoing. **ACTION: BD, JP**
- 4.5 **Masson Quarry sale - continue to seek information on purchaser:** Ongoing - not yet sold.
- 4.6 **Hungerhill Swallet - proposal to re-direct road runoff:** Ongoing. **ACTION: DW, DO**
- 4.7 **Magpie Mine / River Lathkill proposal - keep watch on progress:** Ongoing. **ACTION: MM**
- 4.8 **Castleton Moor Shaft - new lid needed:** Confirmed no permission needed from EH. **ACTION PK & Co.**
- 4.9 **Level behind Bateman's Shaft - needs new access grill on shaft:** See 6.4, Projects Officer's report.
- 4.10 **Access to Christmas Swallet & Snelslow Swallet:** Ongoing. **ACTION: EC**
- 4.11 **Appoint new Trainer for bolt installers:** See 6.7, Equipment Officer's Report.
- 4.12 **Devonshire, old show cave entrance needs to be secured properly:** Ongoing. Mine is now for sale.
- 4.13 **BCA Funding, WS to contact MM about National Trust possibly funding work in Manifold:** WS has discussed this with MM who will try for alternative funding if required on a site by site basis. **ACTION: MM, WS**
- 4.14 **NE funding for 2014, WS to liaise with MM on projects which could be funded by NE:** See 6.3, Conservation Officer's report.
- 4.15 **Stoney Middleton C.C.P., JP to follow up progress with MC:** JP reported 1st. draft is ready for printing.
- 4.16 **Jug Holes gate, arrange for new bolt to be installed as needed:** Sorted. See 6.4, Projects Officer's report.
- 4.17 **Waterfall Hole, liaise with appropriate authority to arrange for parking for cavers:** PM reported re. investigation by NT on who owns the lane - 1st. contact not replying so will follow up whether lane is public highway. Idea is to get parking layby with hard core if possible. **ACTION: PM**
- 4.18 **Chatsworth Check List, complete checks on ABMM, Lathkill Head and Garden Path:** Completed OK.
- 4.19 **Pleasley Vale Railway Cutting Pot - Check re conflict with bats:** (See 6.6, Legal & Insurance Officer's report.)

- 4.20 **DCA Chairman Needed: (JP to put out request for nomination or volunteer.):** No response yet to JP's query.

***That DCA Co-opts. Terry Jackson as Chairman until the next AGM.*** Prop. J.Potts, Sec. P.Mellors.  
***Agreed unanimously.***

Agreed to try to find a Vice Chairman.

- 4.21 **Purchase a GasAlertClip O<sub>2</sub> meter:** *(Written report tabled on Cave Atmosphere monitoring.)*

AB reported that a meter has been bought. A problem is that the alarm level is set too high for our needs and we seem unable to change this. Noted that some very high readings have been reported recently in Knotlow & Water Icicle and also Nettle, confirmed by meter. AB is keeping the records going so this can be followed up in due course.

- 4.22 **Identify unwanted old bolt placements & draw up policy for "Exploration bolts":** Ongoing. **ACTION: BD**

## 5. Election of New Members:

**Club Members: Speleo-Vacchus Caving Club** (BCA member) Accepted unanimously.

**Individual Member: Ewan Cameron.** Prop. J.Potts, Sec. W.Sheldon. Accepted unanimously.

## 6. Officers' Reports: *(Where possible written reports will be tabled.)*

### 6.1 Secretary: *(Written report tabled.)*

- 6.1.a **Caves of the Peak District:** JP noted order for box of 20 CoPD arrived yesterday.

6.1.b ***That the Secretary's report be accepted.*** Prop. A.Brentnall, Sec. P.Mellors. ***Agreed unanimously.***

### 6.2 Treasurer: *(Written report tabled.)*

- 6.2.a **New DCA Bank:** PM queried which alternative bank WS favoured of those he had listed. WS favoured Lloyds as allowing a 2nd. "signature" for online payment. BP confirms Lloyds does allow internet banking and uses a 2nd. person to authorise payments. Lloyds appeared to be the best choice but WS needs to check further. He will get everything ready for the signing of a new bank mandate by the next meeting.

6.2.b ***That the Treasurer's report be accepted.*** Prop. M.Gration, Sec. P.Mellors. ***Agreed unanimously.***

- 6.2.c ***That an SGM be called on 1 November to approve the election of T.Jackson as Chairman and approve setting up the new bank account and the signatories to that account.***

Prop. B.Potts, sec. A.Brentnall. ***Agreed unanimously.***

JP would issue a call for the SGM to be held immediately before the Council Meeting of 1st. Nov.

AR arrived at this point.

### 6.3 Conservation Officer: *(Written report tabled.)*

- 6.3.a **Grant agreement with NE for 2014:** WS noted that we now have the £3k grant agreement from NE. Details were reported by WS.

6.3.b ***That the Conservation Officers's report be accepted.*** Prop. M.Gration, Sec. P.Mellors. ***Agreed unanimously.***

- 6.3.c **Progress on Odin Mine:** Understood to be ongoing with NT. AR reported nothing had been heard through PDMHS. PM suggested it needs head to head negotiation with person in charge of NT risk management but AR suggested it might be gated with key held by NT and cavers having to prove they are insured through BCA.

**ACTION: AR**

### 6.4 Projects Officer: *(Written report tabled.)*

- 6.4.a **Credit Crunch/Castleton Moor shaft:** JP reported that advice was that no permission was needed from EH.

6.4.b **Consent for work on EH sites:** AR suggested he could contact the local EH person to get consents for work needing to be done. Suggest AR contacts PK to let him know this. **ACTION: AR, PK**

- 6.4.c **Keys for DCA materials Container:** PK has a key taken over from BD. Agreed the Secretary and PK should maintain a list of contact details of current keyholders JP will check with DW. Agreed that, if needed, PK can get more keys cut but we must have a list of existing holders. Noted that PK must be informed if any material is delivered to or taken from the container.

6.4.d ***That the Projects Officers's report be accepted.*** Prop. M.Gration, Sec. A.Russell. ***Agreed unanimously.***

### 6.5 Access Officer: *(Written report sent after the meeting to be added to reports list.)*

- 6.5.a JP reported EC had sent apologies and would send a report for meeting but nothing had arrived so far.

6.5.b **Snelslow Swallet & Christmas Pot:** PM had suggested approaching Dan Abrahams to speak to the owner. Position unknown at the time of the meeting. PM would liaise with EC.

**ACTION: EC, PM**

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

- 6.6.a **Document “Caving, Land Managers and Liability”:** PM introduced his draft. TJ notes need to clarify (4th. bullet point) what is being charged for to enable land managers to be clear on their liability. AR suggested adding to list of relevant legislation “Ancient Monuments Act 1979”. PM noted suggestions. PM noted that the land manager is not liable under CRoW legislation for anyone taking part in activities accepted under CRoW.

Agreed we now need to print copies of the Leaflet. PM stated cost for 100 is £125; for 200 would be £188. Copies would be issued to clubs, would be on the DCA website for downloading and printed copies would be available to hand out to appropriate farmers & landowners and for issuing to cavers.

**That PM orders a print run of 200 copies.** Prop. J.Potts, Sec. M.Gration. **Agreed unanimously.**

- 6.6.b **That the Legal & Insurance Officers’s report be accepted.** Prop. B.Potts, Sec. M.Gration. **Agreed unanimously.**

- 6.6.c **PleasleyVale Railway Cuttings Pot:** PM noted that Jim Alder offered to help out with advice to local bat group.

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

- 6.7.a **Bolting Trainer:** BP notes that BD has not mentioned appointing a new Bolting Trainer. DCA needs a new Trainer to be approved as we only have the one at present. **ACTION: BD**

- 6.7.b **That the Equipment Officers’s report be accepted.** Prop. B.Potts, Sec. A.Brentnall. **Agreed unanimously.**

- 6.7.c **Rowter Hole:** WS has had query from M.Richardson about putting BP bolts in Rowter Hole and has referred him to BD.

- 6.7.d **Snake Mine:** Jules Barratt (a DCA approved installer) has inspected the new bolts installed in Snake Mine and, although they are not BP bolts installed by DCA, in his opinion they appear to be sound and installed appropriately. Noted that the installers are liable for monitoring them and their maintenance and this should be made clear to them. PM suggested that DCA could perhaps test the installed bolts and then adopt them - suggest that the Equipment Officer should be asked about this; JP would contact BD. **ACTION: JP, BD**

**6.8 Training Officer:** *(Written report tabled.)*

- 6.8.a NA had sent apologies and had produced list of caver training events for next few months in lieu of a formal report.

- 6.8.b **That the Training Officers’s report be accepted.** Prop. J.Potts, Sec. A.Russell. **Agreed unanimously.**

- 6.8.c **Cliffhanger 2014:** - BP reported on the event. Ladder & Line and DCA cave had been set up and were very busy all weekend. There were a total of 19 different people helping during the weekend. JP had answered lots of enquiries about caving for individuals or for children. BP noted we owed special thanks to Nigel Atkins & Colum Walsh who supplied insurance cover as qualified instructors. Noted that this year another site in Millhouses Park had to be used as the crucial “rigging trees” had been chopped down on our old site.

**6.9 Newsletter Editor:** *(Written report tabled.)*

- 6.9.a **That the Newsletter Editor’s report be accepted.** Prop. J.Potts, Sec. B.Potts. **Agreed unanimously.**

- 6.9.b **Costings:** JP noted rise in cost of printing as we had colour on the front page, the most recent previous rise in the cover price (to £1.50) had been in 2000 so it would not be unreasonable to raise it this year.

**That the cover price of the Newsletter be set at £2.00 per copy.**

Prop. J.Potts, Sec. A.Brentnall. **Agreed unanimously.**

Note that we can also use colour on back cover for same price and MH intended to introduce this with the next issue.

**6.10 Asst. Sec. / Planning Liaison:**

- 6.10.a No apologies sent and no report. JP not heard from him but notes he is involved in fundraising for Chernobyl Children Charity. She would contact CB to see if he wished to continue in the post as it was felt to be useful to have someone monitoring planning applications for possible effects on caves.

**6.11 Cave Registry Business:** *(Written documents tabled.)*

- 6.11.a **“Cave/Mine Online Guide”; “Cave Registry Data Archive”:** WS introduced the two documents. Noted that some regional bodies have an on-line access guide and DCA has only printed guide which available to download from DCA website. Suggested we don’t need to have cave descriptions on line as we have CoPD printed but we do need access details on line. JP suggests any cave bolted by DCA could also have a rigging topo referenced as downloadable from DCA website. WS emphasised that he is working closely with John Beck, the DCA Cave Registry Secretary, and noted JB has used the Registry records as the basis for printing CoPD - this will not change. WS is willing to start ball rolling and will seek for volunteers from clubs to help - he noted that we need a specification for input and JP agreed to email the CoPD index and the guidelines used for the CRoW investigation to WS.

**That Wayne Sheldon be given the go-ahead to implement the Registry/Online Guide project.**

Prop. J.Potts, Sec. M.Gration. **Agreed unanimously.**

7. BCA Reports and matters arising from BCA meetings:

**7.1 Reports from BCA AGM on 15th. June:** (*Written report tabled.*)

7.1.a JP explained why it had become necessary to investigate the legal position of caves under CRoW; this related to the current perception by NE and Defra legal people that caves are not included because they are not "open air". She noted that caving has been recognised and accepted in the past by regional and national Sports Councils and Government as an "Outdoor Pursuit" and a "Sport Using Natural Facilities" for the purpose of grant aid. Some regions appeared to be concerned that the introduction of access to caves under CRoW would undermine their attempts at conservation; other regions felt that conservation issues could and should be taken into account under CRoW by using SSSI and SAM legislation to protect and control access to especially vulnerable and fragile sites.

JP felt it was particularly important that DCA be represented at the forthcoming BCA Conservation & Access Group Meeting and was disappointed that, although she had been confirmed by the BCA AGM as the BCA CRoW Working Group Convenor, the meeting had been set for a date when she was abroad. She felt it was important that DCA conservation and legal interests were represented because of issues which might arise if access under CRoW were extended to caves.

7.1.b ***That P.Mellors (DCA Legal & Insurance Officer) and M.Milner (DCA Conservation Officer) be appointed to represent DCA at the BCA Conservation & Access Group Meeting on 16 Aug.***  
Prop. J.Potts, Sec. M.Gration. ***Agreed unanimously.***

**7.2 Reports from other BCA meetings:**

7.2.a None.

**8. Confirm Date and Venue of next meeting:**

8.1 **2014 Council: 1 November 2014**, 10am at Monyash Village Hall.

8.1.a This was already booked. Noted that this will be preceded by an SGM with the purposes of Electing a Chairman for DCA and formally agreeing the signatories for the DCA bank accounts.

8.2 **2015 AGM: 28 February 2015**, 10am at Monyash Village Hall.

8.2.a This was already booked.

**9. Any Other Business:**

None.

There being no other business the meeting finished at 1.49pm

*J.E.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 6.4 Projects Officer's Report;
- e. Item 6.5 Access Officer's Report (not received until after the meeting);
- f. Item 6.6 Legal & Insurance Officer's Report;
- g. Item 6.7 Equipment Officer's Report;
- h. Item 6.8 Training Officer's Report;
- i. Item 6.9 Newsletter Editor's Report;
- j. Item 6.11 Cave Registry Business documents: "Cave/Mine Online Guide"; "Cave Registry Data Archive"
- k. Item 7.1 Report from BCA AGM;
- l. Item 4.21 Notes on Cave Atmosphere Monitoring for the 28/06/14 DCA Meeting

# OFFICERS' REPORTS FOR DCA COUNCIL MEETING 28 JUNE 2014

## Item 6.1 - Secretary's Report

### Communications:

Since the AGM on 1st. March I have issued by email and by post to those for whom I have no email address:

DCA AGM Minutes plus Annual Report and Accounts,  
DCA Council Minutes for 1 March 2014,  
Information Circulars 2014/2, (March 2014) and 2014/3 (April-June 2014),  
DCA Caver Training Information April to June 2014 and update,  
BCA/BCRA Party Weekend information,  
Agenda for DCA Council Meeting On 28 June 2014.

All of these are on the DCA website.

I have also issued the following advice notes by email:

Note about BDH Containers,  
Notification of the CRoW Working Party Report to the BCA AGM (on the BCA website).

I also posted out DCA Newsletter No. 134 - many thanks to Mike Higgins for an excellent issue - and have also delivered this to various shops around the area for sale.

We have also sold a number of copies of the various Cave Conservation Audits to Derbyshire County Council Libraries and to shops and individuals. I deal with these sales and also sales of Caves of the Peak District, keeping the Treasurer informed of progress.

Thanks to all the officers and members who supply information which, in turn, enables me to keep you informed.

*Jenny Potts, Hon. Sec.*

## Item 6.2 - Treasurers Report

Current funds up to the 21<sup>st</sup> June 2014 are:

Deposit a/c: £17,926.01  
Current a/c: £178.69  
Total: £18,107.70

There is a list of payments in and out of the accounts since 01<sup>st</sup> January 2014:

Payments in:		Payments out:	
Membership Fees:	£359.00	Conservation and Access Work:	£455.12
COPD Income:	£346.00	General Admin:	£293.78
Bank Interest:	£17.59	Newsletter / Publications Expenses:	£306.77
Training	£30.00	Cave Conservation Plan	£20.38
Handbook Sales:	£7.00	Equipment	£198.90
Donations	£26.00	Training	£170.00
		Conservation Officer Float	£200.00
Totals:	£785.59		£1644.95

### Caves of the Peak District:

Sales of COPD are still trickling through.

### BCA Core Funding:

I submitted the accounts to BCA on the 31<sup>st</sup> March. Provisional we are down to get £1053.50 from BCA for core funding in 2013. This should be finalised by the end of June.

### Bank Accounts:

We currently bank with the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS); our branch is the Derby, Allestree branch. Jenny got a letter in November 2013 saying that our branch is reverting back to a Williams & Glyns bank so our accounts will change to this bank as well. The bank was convenient for Jenny but it isn't convenient for me. It's a nightmare to change addresses, and they still have Jenny down as the main addressee but we have changed this twice.

We have four signatures attached to the accounts but only two of these are currently officers, myself and Jenny Potts. Dave Webb and Bob Dearman are no longer officers so these need removing from the account and we need to add two more to the account. This is another major faff!

RBS have caused us nothing but problems for us recently. Also, the current RBS system does not allow electronic banking to work with a 2nd. authorised signatory - everything is done at my direction with no-one else involved - unlike having a 2nd. signature on a cheque.

I have been looking at other banks / building societies, with a view to DCA changing banks, as I feel this is a perfect opportunity to do it. A report is attached, which we can discuss at the meeting.

*Wayne Sheldon  
DCA Hon. Treasurer  
23/06/14*

### **Item 6.3 - Conservation Officers Report**

The last few months have again been very busy! Apologies, but I won't be at the meeting as I have conservation type things to do. (Materials to get on Saturday, entrance works on Sunday.)

Continued the NT cave monitoring program for the Manifold & Hamps valleys. Checked most of the caves including taking photos of all the entrances and creating monitoring forms for them all. Just got Coope and Oldpark Hills to do now.

Continued liaising with various organisations; NE (Dan), the EA (Dave), PDMHS (Adam), DCA (Jenny, Pete & Wayne), Alan (Wharf) and the NT (Paul) on various issues. A number of these have now been deal with. (Wharf, Jugholes, Mouldridge.)

I have continued entrance works in the Manifold & Hamps valleys. 13 out of 17 sites have now been completed, of the remaining ones (Wetton Road Swallet, Plughole, Project Pot, Bent Chisel Pot, a site near Ladyside Pot, Weag's Bridge Resurgence and Sparrowlee Sink), 4 will take less than an hours work to finish each one. (None of these sites are on NT land.)

I could do with another 3 lengths of 1.5m galvanised angle for two sites and 3 grilles (1 small one and 2 1m x 1m ones) to place over 3 sites from the DCA container. See appendix 1 for an example of works on one entrance. We are recycling metalwork from thrown away gates in the bed of the River Hamps to assist in these jobs where possible. We are also recycling manhole covers where they have been replaced by grilles on other sites.

Where a cave is a swallet (ie:- the water sinks), has a through route for the water and would benefit from an increased flow (eg:- Riverside), we have replaced manhole covers with grilles. This has had a massive effect with some of the caves being cleared of much silt. (Think Gautries!)

Some of the caves however tend to get filled with silt and gravel, especially in the Hamps, which carries a lot of silt and gravel in flood conditions, in which case we use manhole covers instead. *Swallet Management, I call it!*

Submitted a list of projects/expenses with costings to Dan of NE on 17/6/2014 to allow him to raise a P.O. for the £3k of grant aid we have been promised. As part of this I included travel/labour expenses for monitoring several sites for NE. These sites are:- Fox Hole Cave, Oxclose Mine, Limepits Mine, T-Pot, St. Bertram's Cave (done) and Robin's Shaft Mine. I have also re-monitored the inside of Darfar Ridge Cave and produced photos of monitored features. All good in there at the moment. The first two caves listed above have been requested specifically by NE, so I need to organise those to be done.

There is also a small apparently hand-picked old mine on Wetton Hill which I am about to survey and photograph with a view to getting access preserved if appropriate. I will ask the NT to part-fund this work if it goes ahead.

I have also updated the DCA web site as necessary in my role as DCA webmeister!

As a footnote, it would appear that there was a lot that Dave Webb did 'behind the scenes' so to speak when he was Conservation Officer and this role has involved a lot more work than I originally thought. But now I have Ewan C, Pete K and Adam R helping out as well, as we get the jobs out of the way, the workload for everybody should drop off considerably.

So thanks to them for their efforts and for the funding by DCA and NE to help enable the projects to be carried out. It is much appreciated.

**Mel Milner.**  
**DCA Conservation Officer, June 2014.**

*(Note that Mel's report to the meeting also included an Appendix containing coloured photos illustrating works to be finished off.)*

### **Item 6.4 - Projects Officer's Report**

Since taking the role of PO on at the DCA AGM the following jobs have now been undertaken:

- Container visit log created and contents audit completed (With help from Dave Webb).
- A database of past and future volunteers has been created and will be updated as more people become involved.
- A public request for volunteer support for projects and for project managers via UKCaving and the DCA Newsletter. This was met with a promising response.
- A spread sheet matrix for ongoing and completed jobs has been created with Mel Milner to record the status of work and useful information about bolt sizes, people involved etc...

Projects and where they stand:

- Jugholes Gate – Completed thanks to Nigel Cooper of UKC and for the record, a M16 x 2.0 80mm bolt was needed.
- Batemans – This was intended to be completed now as all the materials and manufacturing was in place thanks to coordinator Ian Webb. Back to the drawing board with a gate idea now and there is no progress. I cannot visit Bob's contact in Tideswell due to workload right now and Ian lives in Lincolnshire. Would Bob be able to assist in this project?
- Credit Crunch / Castleton Moor shaft – After a meeting on site with volunteer Gordon Wordsworth a plan was made for capping this shaft with the lid at Bob's house. Having tried to contact EH for the go ahead on this I've not received any response. I'd be happy if someone (Mel) could provide me with a contact for the area if known or even better, advise if there would be any permission needed at all, seeing as it has already got to the gate made stage and the collar is already constructed.
- Faucett Rake Shafts – A project to descend, record survey and cap all the shafts in the area is in its formative stages. There has been much interest in this area from cavers and it is an important job. Sadly, as above, I've had no response from EH.
- Offers of help have been extended for the Devonshire Gate but are not required at this stage.

Update 9/6/14 – Ashley Hiscox informs me that the Owl Hole bolt has been fixed/replaced.

**Personal note**

I will be unable to give the role as much attention as I have so far for the next few months. My workload is high and I work away a lot. I will try to continue pushing emails about and getting volunteers to run things but might not be able to get on the ground for anything until late summer.

Is it a worthwhile discussion to consider a second or 'assistant' projects officer post? It's a hell of a lot of work and I can't see me getting half of it done solo.

The current state of projects can be found on the Google Docs spread

**Pete Knight,  
Projects Officer**

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

*(Received by email after the meeting.)*

- 1) **Christmas Swallet** cave area:  
NE have been contacted by email a number of times and we are moving towards meetings with the land owner. PM will be asked to attend.
- 2) **Ball Eye Mine:**  
On hold until we get point 1) sorted but will then be the top priority.
- 3) **Ashford Black Marble Mine:**  
Received a number of user cards back for ABMM as well as insurance updates from holders.
- 4) **Waterfall Swallet car park:**  
Work still holding until local rangers sort date and work force. PM is dealing with this.
- 5) Massive apology for not attending and lack of time to work for DCA but am working away most of the three summer months. Work will be taken back up in September.

**Ewan Cameron  
Access Officer**

**Item 6.6 - L&I Officer's Report**

**Caving & Liability Booklet**

The draft of this is ready to go to press, subject to Council's approval. The text has been through the hands of two solicitors – Linda Wilson and Martin Wragg – for them to comment and point out any glaring errors. Linda helped with advice on the content of BCRA's publication on Underground Britain: Legal + Insurance Issues, while Martin Wragg has contributed to the BMC's guide on Climbing & Occupiers' Liability. The intention is to distribute the booklet among those owners and occupiers who appear most anxious about their liability or who use liability as grounds for refusing access. Some DCA members may also find it of interest – mostly, as some wag confided to me, the insomniacs among us! The objective of the booklet is defined in the Introductory and Concluding Notes; it should also serve to enlighten some owners about DCA and its role in the region.

**Eldon Hill Quarry**

I recently replaced the logbook with a drier version and took steps to ensure the new one stays dry. The book I removed records visits made between July 2013 and May of this year – 15 visits in all (excluding those unable to be recorded because of the state the book got into), divided fairly evenly between trips in Sidetrack and Convenience Caves. A request to open a dig on pasture land close to the northeast lip of the Quarry was turned down by the tenant farmer who feared for his lambs. He may relent if approached later in the year (*my* opinion, not his, I should stress).

**Pleasley Vale Rail Cutting Pot**

The entrance gate was vandalised recently but repaired soon after by DCA's onsite key-holder, Mark Bennett. Notts Wildlife Trust are still considering whether to insist on a formal written access agreement with us despite over twenty years without one. Jim Alder has agreed to advise us, if needed, on ways in which DCA can most usefully assist the local bat group and at the same time prevent caver access from being unnecessarily eroded.

**Caving & Open Access Land**

It seems likely that if caving were to be accepted as "open-air recreation" under suggested amendments to the CRoW 2000 Act, then cavers would no longer need permission to make routine trips to sites on Open Access land. I believe gates and lids would still be required on mine entrances (and possibly on particularly vulnerable caves) but secured with a Derbyshire key and not a padlock, the object being to ensure cavers have "free" access but not at the cost of public safety or the risk of damage to scientific interest by non-cavers. Digging, of course, would continue to require prior permission. I don't imagine the public would be any keener to venture below ground than they are now. By and large I don't think much would change in our region in any case, as the majority of our caves are not on Open Access land and no owner, as far as I am aware, would be out of pocket.

**Peter Mellors  
Legal & Insurance Officer**

## Item 6.7 - Equipment Officer's Report

Over the last year nineteen new Bolt Product anchors have been placed in the upstream pitches of Winnats Head, seven in the climb up to Joint Effort in Cliff Cavern and eight in Pilkington's Cavern both in Speedwell. Also an Eco anchor on the Y-hang lower off from the Upper Series back into the Crabwalk in Giants was reported as showing signs of excess movement and has been replaced. The abseil bolts for the descent to Sidetrack cave have received attention and a new Y-hang has been installed along with a rebelay anchor over the edge of the quarry face. Requests by persons in commercial outdoor education for further bolting along the Upper Series traverse towards Garlands Pot in Giants have been rejected on the grounds that they are not necessary for competent cavers and that this is an area of the cave unsuitable for novices and instructed groups. Also a request for replacement of the Boss Aven bolts has also been rejected on similar grounds and conservation concerns.

Additional to myself we now have seven accredited anchor installers namely Jules Barratt, Sam Townsend, Glen Sankey, Hannah Moulton, Tim Webber, Tom Smith and Henry Rockliff. I need to train up a small team to deal with anchor installation in the Dove/Manifold/Lathkill areas and a couple of competent Orpheus members have been suggested.

The next proposed project is to replace the dangerously corroded spits on the Filthy Five pitches in Giants but, as you can imagine, this will be a difficult and time consuming job given the inherent difficulties in passing St.Valentine's sump. I have been given the go ahead by the BCA E&T Committee to purchase a Pelicase for the Hilti drill to ensure its safe passage in the wet conditions which will be encountered.

I would like to bring it to the attention of DCA members that a considerable effort has been needed to install the anchors mentioned in paragraph 1. All but the replaced Giants and Sidetrack anchors have been in relatively remote areas and multiple trips have been needed. To comply with DCA, but not BCA E&T policy, a return trip has been necessary to Hydrajaws test all anchors to confirm that the resin mix is correct and that they conform to the EN 959 proof test.

Thanks are due to all the involved anchor installers particularly Jules, Sam and Henry and also to the many other cavers, too numerous to mention here, who helped them with the considerable logistical problems on the trips.

**Bob Dearman**  
**DCA Equipment Officer**

## Item 6.8 - Training Officer's Report

### Specialist SRT Rigging & Rescue Workshop:

Sunday, July 6th. - places available

Sunday, October 19th. - places available

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. £30 per person.

### Caving Club Training Officers Workshop:

Sunday, July 13th. - Derbyshire - £15 per person.

Many clubs already have a C.T.O. to whom it usually falls to organise and supervise training for newly joined novice cavers. This is **THE** workshop for 'training the Trainers'. This event is open to training officers anywhere in the UK.

### SRT Introduction Workshop:

Sunday, September 28th. - places available - £15 per person

Sunday, October 26th. - places available - £15 per person

### DCA Try Caving Day:

Sunday, July 27th. - places available - £12 per person

### SRT Master Class:

Sunday, June 29th. - Derbyshire - £40 per person - **SOLD OUT**

Sunday, August 10th. - Derbyshire - £40 per person - places available

An ideal way to ensure that your SRT is not only safe but also effective. During this trip we will also look at rigging and self rescue techniques.

### Dry Stone Walling Workshop:

Date TBA - Derbyshire - contact us for details

### BCA Cave Leader Training (LC/MLA)

Level 1 Thursday & Friday, July 10th. & 11th. - Derbyshire - cave

Level 1 Saturday, July 12th. - Derbyshire - mines day

Level 1 Wednesday & Thursday, August 6th. & 7th. - Derbyshire - cave

Level 1 Friday, August 8th. - Derbyshire - mines day

Level 2 Thursday & Friday, July 3rd. & 4th. - Derbyshire - cave

Level 2 Thursday & Friday, September 11th. & 12th. - Derbyshire - cave

## **BCA Cave Instructor Training (CIC):**

Thursday & Friday, July 2nd. & 3rd. (part 1)

Thursday & Friday, October 16th. & 17th. (part 2)

**Please call or email for further details on any of the above workshops and courses.**

***Nigel Atkins, DCA Training Officer***

***T: 01283 210666 M: 07831 449919***

***nigel@pennineorganisation.com***

***www.cavertraining.co.uk***

## **Item 6.9 - Newsletter Editor/Publications Officer's Report**

Issue No 134 of The Derbyshire Caver was completed at the end of April 2014 and printed and distributed shortly afterwards. This was the first issue since Winter 2012/2013. Changes have been made to the appearance of the newsletter - the yellow cover pages have been replaced by white with a colour photograph on the cover and the font has been standardised throughout. I have sent a copy to Chris Howes at Descent in the hope that they will publish a review.

The next issue will be published around mid-October as the Autumn 2014 edition. I already have one illustrated article and the promise of 2 more; I have ideas for other articles and arms may be twisted accordingly. The intention is to get back to 4 issues per year in 2015.

From the first 2015 issue the aim is to have a colour photograph (or photographs) on the back cover in place of the list of DCA Officers - this will not add to the production costs. The intention is to hold a photographic competition with the winning entry printed on the back. If there is sufficient interest then there may be 2 or 3 photos in different categories. This will be publicised in the next issue and also via the internet on ukCaving and Adit Now.

***Mike Higgins, DCA Newsletter Editor/Publications Officer  
June 2014***

## **Item 7.1 - Report on BCA AGM, 15th. June 2014**

I acted as DCA's representative at the BCA AGM on 15 June at Dalesbridge, Yorkshire. (Boyd Potts, a DCA Trustee was also present representing Orpheus C. C.) The meeting was very well attended and a number of people present, including those from other regions, made it clear they had made a special effort to come so they could discuss the CRoW Working Party Report and the issues arising. It was generally a friendly and positive meeting with detailed reports from BCA Officers which were well received on the whole. There was a heated and lengthy discussion on the CRoW Report and the proposal relating to it put by Bob Mehew - this was taken ahead of its place on the agenda because of its perceived importance.

As Convenor of BCA's CRoW Working Group, I had sent out the CRoW Report plus its Appendix and Bob Mehew's proposal on 13 May, as far ahead as I possibly could before the BCA AGM (5 weeks in advance) to the members of the Working Group and also to BCA Secretary, Chairman and Conservation & Access Officer, regional secretaries, BCRA, NAMHO, regional conservation & access officers, to all other people who had contacted me to express an interest. I also flagged up on UKcaving the existence of the report and its wide circulation and the fact that it would shortly be on the BCA website - the BCA Secretary put it on the BCA website later the same day and confirmed on UKcaving that he had done so.

In compiling the Report I had some information from contributors to the database project to refer to, though their input was not complete. (Mel Milner, Terry Jackson and Stuart Anderson have been working on the Peak District section.) I had researched the prior involvement of NCA in 1998 when the CRoW legislation was in its early drafts and was surprised to realize the amount of work which had been done on this with the approval of the NCA Conservation & Access Committee and NCA Council and was puzzled as to how this had become, in effect, suppressed by later statements by certain BCA Officers. I also became acutely aware of the various conflicting statements and anomalies in legal advice issued in documents and emails from NE and others; Bob Mehew undertook to look into this aspect and produced the Appendix (THE POSSIBLE APPLICATION OF CROW TO CAVING) to my Report.

Because we had been offered a chance of a pro bono opinion from an eminent QC on the legal position of caves in relation to CRoW, Individual BCA Member Bob Mehew, made a formal proposal linked to the Report asking that BCA sought a definitive legal opinion. However, circumstances overtook us and a window of opportunity became available for the barrister which meant the brief had to reach her by 17th. June at the latest - after the AGM would have been too late to prepare the brief, so three of us as individuals: Bob and Tim Allen (with a few contributions from me) prepared the brief and sent it to the QC as individuals. This work was completed at Dalesbridge on the Saturday immediately prior to the AGM on Sunday so that it could be sent by courier on Monday; the results will be made available to BCA in due course.

The BCA Chairman had received communications from some BCA members indicating that they thought there had not been sufficient time to discuss the CRoW Report; he was concerned that Bob's proposal had not been advertised 12 weeks in advance on the BCA Agenda and was considering whether it was correct to take the proposal. There was an overwhelming feeling from the floor that those present did wish to discuss the issue and the CRoW Working Group Report and a lively discussion took place. There was general agreement that we did feel that CRoW legislation should apply to access to caves but that there were important conservation issues which would need to be addressed. Bob's proposal was not seconded and he agreed to withdraw it in favour of an agreement that the CRoW Working Group would continue its work within the overall direction of the BCA Conservation & Access Committee. The CRoW Working Group Report was accepted unanimously.

BCA Council appointed me Convenor of the CRoW Working Group for 2014 and I hope to work closely with Andrew Hinde, the newly elected BCA Conservation & Access Officer, and the C&A Committee. In my view the C&A Committee should have been the place for this work to be done originally but at the BCA AGM in June 2013 we had no BCA Conservation & Access Officer in post,

the C&A Committee had not met since 2009 and no new C&A officer was appointed at the AGM. Andrew Hinde was co-opted to the post in October 2013 and I had kept him informed of the Group's work since then.

Boyd Potts, DCA Trustee and Orpheus C. C. member has been elected as a Club Representative to BCA Council to serve for the next 2 years.

I feel it is important that the CRoW Working Party continues work to complete the database which will indicate the overlap between caves on CRoW access land, those which are SSSIs or SAMs or deserving of special conservation measures, and those where there is currently a restrictive access arrangement. Even if the legal opinion we have sought is positive in saying that caves are covered by the CRoW legislation, it will be some time before this can come into force and we should use the time to ensure that we are prepared and that we have put in place proper measures to protect sites which are particularly special or fragile.

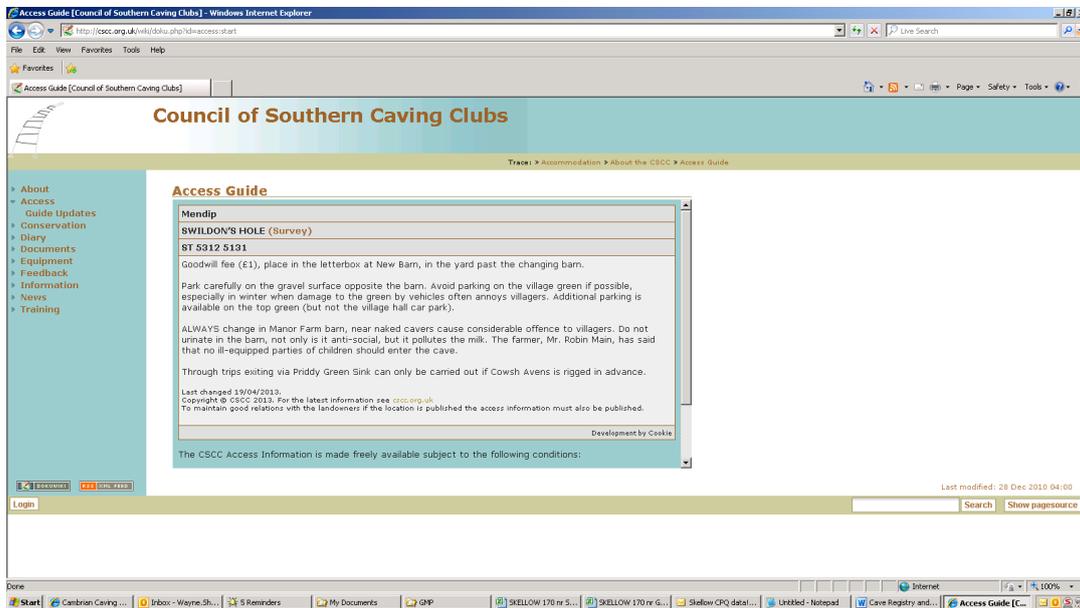
The BCA Conservation & Access Officer has convened a meeting of the BCA C&A Committee for 18th. August, by which time we hope to have received the QC's opinion. Unfortunately I shall be abroad on that date and I feel it is particularly important that DCA is represented at the meeting.

**Jenny Potts,  
DCA Rep. to BCA AGM**

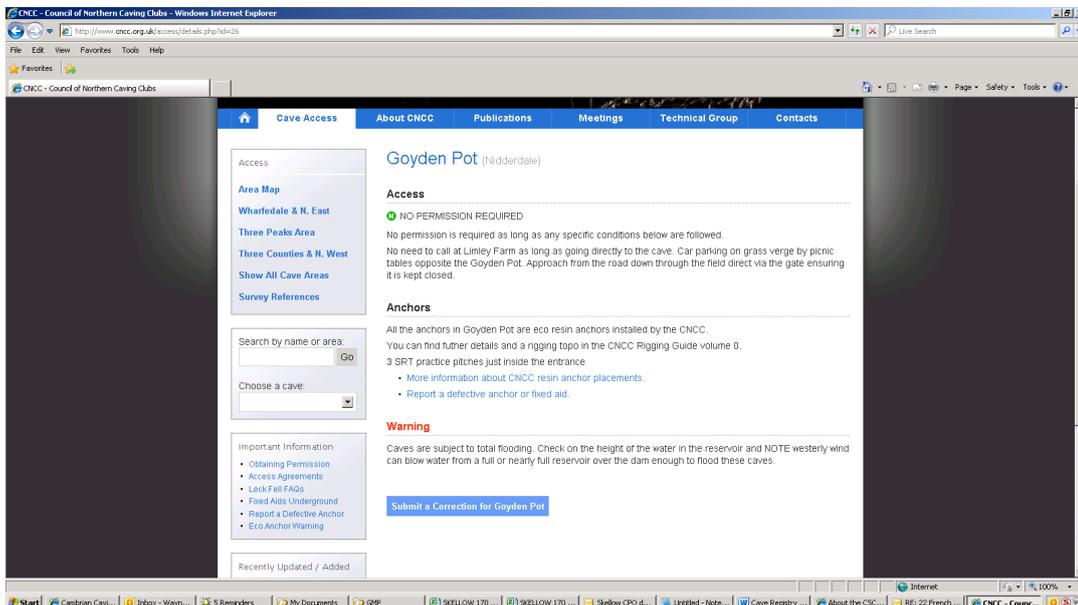
## Item 6.12 - Cave Registry Business

### 1. Cave / Mine Online Guide

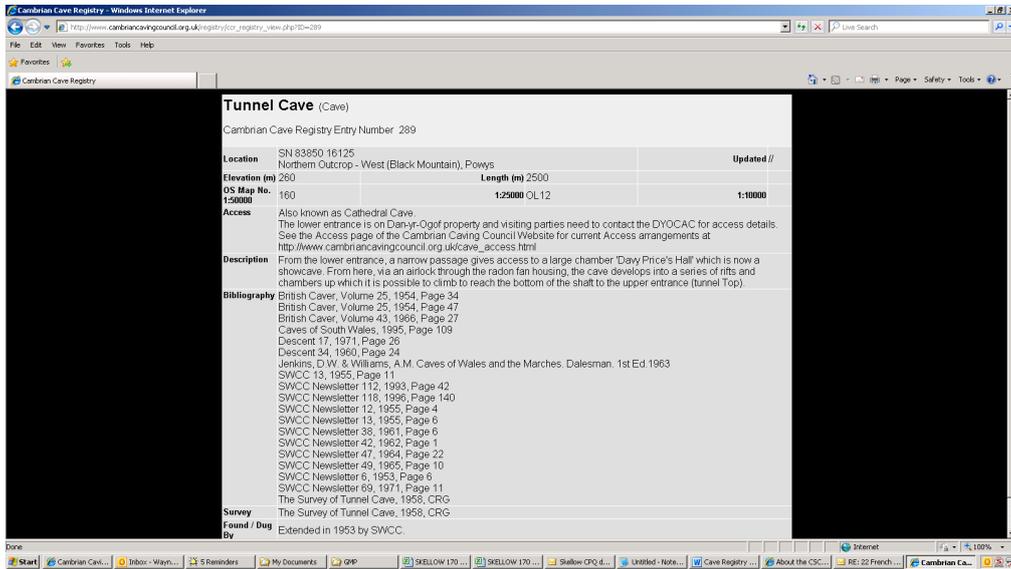
David Cooke produced "A tour of the UK Registries in 2008, document is available for viewing at this meeting. This was openly encourage regions and clubs in publishing registries on line. Several regions have online access information, within a searchable database. There are some examples below:



### Council of Southern Caving Clubs Access Guide



### Council of Northern Caving Clubs Access Guide



**Cambrian Caving Council Cave Registry / Access Guide**

Devon & Cornwall Underground Council have an online guide but this is currently down for maintainance.

Derbyshire Caving Association is currently the only area that doesn't have this resource available for cavers. The current published access guide is very useful but only applies to a limited number of caves / mines; its content is limited.

John Beck currently maintains the Derbyshire Cave Registry as a database and he is able to export data from the database to a spreadsheet format. He has exported: Name, Catchment, Grid Reference, Grade, Altitude, Access Details.

I propose that we split up the spreadsheet into catchment areas, there must be a number of interested parties (volunteers) to collate access information and update grid references, levels, grades etc about the sites in that catchment. At certain periods, the information is collated into one master document. John Beck can import data from the spreadsheet back into the registry database, thus updating the information in the cave registry. Once the master is complete and we have the basis for an online access guide. We can look at the technology available to get this data online in a searchable database format, and how we go about updating it going forward.

You could ask, why don't we put the Derbyshire Cave Registry Database that John Beck maintains online? This database also contains descriptions, the basis for COPD book that we published a couple of years ago. We still have nearly 900 copies of this book available for sale so ideally need to sell these copies first.

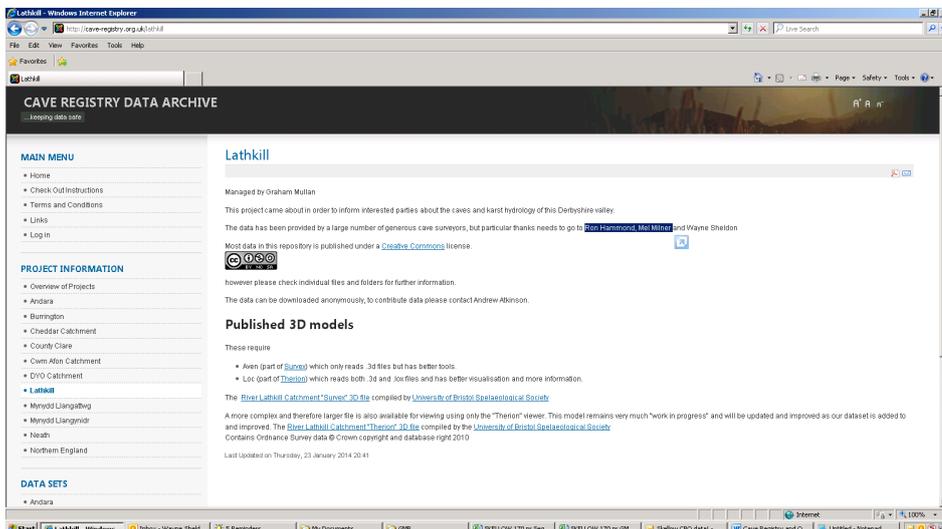
**2. Cave Registry Data Archive**

The sport of caving has had, from its start, a close relationship with science. As a result, a vast amount of data has been collected. Unfortunately, once the report or survey for which the data was needed has been produced, much of the raw data has been discarded or lost. To most cavers the most obvious loss is of survey data. Most caves in Britain, of any reasonable size, have been surveyed to a reasonable standard. However, when extensions are made, the lack of original data makes it very difficult to amend the survey. Modern 3D tools also require more data than a centre line survey, much of which has been collected but, again, not kept. Scientific data, invaluable for comparison with modern conditions has often suffered the same fate.

**Aims**

To hold an archive of spelæological data for the use of the UK caving community and to encourage the open sharing of data, to add value. Additional Benefits that it's a useful resource for clubs to ease the burden of managing datasets and entry point for data, supporting initiatives like the cave registries.

The site can be found at: <http://cave-registry.org.uk/> This archive has been designed and built by Andrew Atkinson and Wookey, and they are administrators on the site.



During the winter, Graham Mullan, assisted by Ron Hammond, Mel Milner and myself compiled a 3D survey model of the Lathkill Catchment area using the existing data. This has been stored on this website under its own project header so this can be amended / added to over time. I am currently adding survey notes that John Beck has scanned for caves / mines in this catchment area. I am also scanning the survey notes that we have borrowed from Bill Whitehouse / Clive Westlake; these will be added to the site as well.

This website is a very useful resource and DCA need to encourage clubs / individuals that are involved with exploration / surveying of Derbyshire Caves and Mines to use this site as an archive survey data. This will bring us inline with other caving regions who currently use it.

**Wayne Sheldon**

### **Item 4.21 - Notes on Cave Atmosphere Monitoring**

- 1. Reported problems with CO<sub>2</sub>:** Recently (June 2014) I have received reports from Orpheus members about poor air in both Knotlow and Water Icicle, and from Crewe members (Knotlow again). I followed this up by taking some measurements over the weekend 21-22/06 and found readings of 18.7% and 17.7% O<sub>2</sub> against a surface measurement of 20.9% at Knotlow, and readings of 18.1% and 18.7% O<sub>2</sub> against a surface measurement of 20.9% at Lathkill Head Upper Entrance – I haven't had the opportunity to measure the air quality at Water Icicle yet. These O<sub>2</sub> readings almost certainly represent CO<sub>2</sub> levels between 2% and 3% which will be noticeable and may well cause some cavers problems with their breathing.
2. Prior to this recent exercise, I took some measurements in Nettle Pot in May, and found that the CO<sub>2</sub> was quite high, but as the readings (O<sub>2</sub> and CO<sub>2</sub> in this case) indicated CO<sub>2</sub> levels just over 1%, no problems were experienced by any of the cavers.
3. Other monitoring has taken place in Jugholes and Waterways Swallet, but no high CO<sub>2</sub> levels have been detected.
4. I have received no requests to use any of the DCA meters.
5. Since the last meeting, I have obtained, on DCA's behalf, the O<sub>2</sub> meter which was discussed and agreed (GasAlertClip Extreme) and this is proving very useful. The meter automatically calibrates itself when turned on.
6. Regarding DCA's Crowcon Gasman CO<sub>2</sub> meter, as I indicated at the last meeting, this is identical to DCRO's CO<sub>2</sub> meter, and I have managed to negotiate a free calibration of the DCA meter from DCRO's supplier (Able Safety, Chesterfield). They have also provided me with training so that I can now calibrate this device (and DCRO's) myself.

**Alan Brentnall**  
**22 June**