



DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

Minutes of DCA Council Meeting, 31st. Oct. 2009, Monyash Village Hall

Present:	Officers:	Bob Dearman [BD]	Chairman (Eldon P.C. & Ind. Memb)
		Terry Jackson [TJ]	Vice-Chairman (Ind. Memb.)
		Jenny Potts [JP]	Secretary/Treasurer (Orpheus C.C. & Ind. Mem.)
		Peter Mellors [PM]	Legal & Insurance Officer (Ind. Memb.)
		Martyn Grayson [MG]	Projects Officer
		Nigel Atkins [NA]	Training Officer
	Club Reps.:	Masson C.G.	Paul Chandler [PC]
		Orpheus C.C.	Boyd Potts [BP]
	Ind. Membs.:	Bob Dearman, Terry Jackson, Peter Mellors, Jenny Potts,	

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / ESTABLISH QUORUM:

- 1.1 **Apologies received from:** David Webb (Conservation Officer), Christine Wilson (Asst. Cons. Off.), Iain Barker (Access Officer), Jules Barrett (Equipment Officer), Paul Lydon (N/L Editor), Chris Broome (Asst. Sec. Planning Liaison); Ind. Membs.: Karen Slatcher, Dave Wall;
- 1.2 The meeting was quorate with 4 Officers present.

2. APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING: (13 June 2009: circulated previously and on DCA website.) That the Minutes be accepted as a correct record. Prop. B.Potts, Sec. T.Jackson. **Agreed unanimously.**

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

- 3.1.a 3.1 **Sheffield Cliffhanger 2009:** PC's written report was tabled. The problems of cost in obtaining and transporting the "SpeleoOlympics" from Mendip were noted and it was suggested that DCA might produce its own version of this for use in the region for similar events in the future. JP had received a positive response to her enquiry about possible funding from BCA for this. It was agreed that DCA should look into building its own "cave system/obstacle course" for use at events.
- 3.1.b **Sheffield Cliffhanger 2010:** Noted that DCA had been invited to put on a stand for this event and we had also received an approach about the **Peak District Outdoor Activities Festival (PDOAF) 2010**, due to take place in April and May. DCA Training Officer, NA, was already in touch with the organisers of PDOAF 2010 and was willing to help with Sheffield Cliffhanger 2010; Dennis Jump [DJ] and PC had also offered to help. **ACTION: NA.**
MG, BD and DJ had offered to organise the building of a DCA "cave system/obstacle course". JP would circulate members to ask for other volunteer helpers. **ACTION: MG, BD, DJ, JP.**
- 3.2 4.1 **Sales of Manifold/Hamps publication:** JP had approached outlets in the Manifold Valley (NT shops and Information Centres) without success. Other possible outlets were suggested and JP would investigate these. **ACTION: JP.**
- 3.3 6.1.c & 6.4.a **Caves of the Peak District:** John Beck was understood to have a possible interested publisher.
- 3.4 4.6 & 6.1.d **DCA Handbook:** TJ had completed the first draft of the Access section of the book and handed out copies to be proof read and checked for any additional information to go in. Noted that in the Rigging section, the new JH backup bolt on Bitch Pitch is a 10mm spit which would be left in place so this should be noted on the topo. There were a few more topos to be added and JP would liaise with PL on this. **ACTION: PL, JP.**
- 3.5 6.6.c **JH Bitch Pitch stabilisation:** MG and helpers had completed the job with advice from DCRO. The meeting thanked MG for all his work and an excellent job done. Noted that it would not be possible to drill for an Eco-anchor in the confined rift so the 10mm spit in place as a backup at the head of the pitch would be retained but would be checked regularly by DCA Bolt Installers.

4. ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS:

No applications received.

5. OFFICERS' REPORTS:

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

- 5.1.i **Mandale Problem:** CW had phoned to report that, having checked, the situation did not appear to be as bad as at first reported.
- 5.1.ii **£200 donation to Eyam Parish Council:** JP had sent the donation to Eyam Parish Council agreed at the previous meeting to assist with the cost of fencing Delph Top Sink.
- 5.1.iii **Individual Member Subscriptions for 2010:** JP amended the proposal in her report to read:
That DCA Individual Member subscriptions remain unchanged for 2010, i.e. £10.00 for non-BCA members and £7.00 for Direct Individual Members of BCA.
That the Secretary/Treasurer's Report be accepted. Prop. T.Jackson, Sec. P.Mellors. **Agreed unanimously.**

5.2.a CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT: (DW had sent apologies but submitted a written report.)

- 5.2.a.i **Thanks to Christine Wilson:** DW has expressed his thanks to Christine Wilson for her support while he was temporarily out of action following his operation.

- 5.2.a.ii **Underground Conservation Forum:** BD reported on the UCF meeting held on 27th. October. A major point of discussion had been the problem of the dumped paper pulp, which might possibly be linked to rises in CO₂ in caves..
Paper Pulp dumping: Noted that the Environment Agency permitted dumping outside the area of the SSSI but the effects are appearing in Peak Cavern, in the Castleton SSSI. The main dump site is above a levelled out rake. Liaison meetings between EA, Natural England and Peak Park Authority have been reinstated and a meeting is due on 16th. November. Noted that the dumping of paper pulp does not need planning consent and it is being widely used on farms in the Peak District; farmers are giving permission for the dumping as it is believed to improve the soil. TJ noted that there are now strict regulations re. disposal of waste on farms. BD queried whether this dumping, which has been going on for at least 10 years, may be responsible for the rise in CO₂ in caves which has become apparent during this time. JP noted that a Mendip caver had given a talk at Hidden Earth on similar problems with CO₂ experienced on Mendip - she would pass on contact details to BD and MG so they could check whether there was dumping of paper pulp in the affected area. **ACTION: JP.**
- Other substances dumped:** BD noted that sewage sludge from water treatment plants, which was known to be high in iron, was also being dumped. It was felt that it could be useful to have an independent analysis of the two substances being dumped and DCA could pay for this. BD will progress this. **ACTION: BD.**
- 5.2.a.iii **Report from Ralph Johnson:** RJ had reported to JP on improvements to the "Bridge" on the way to Giants; current low CO₂ levels in Giants, Hillocks, Knotlow & Water Icicle; no problem found in Hillocks Entrance Chamber after earlier reports; repairs to the fence at Water Icicle. JP had thanked RJ and Steve Knox for their work.
- 5.2.a.iv **Hubberdale Shaft dumping:** RJ had reported dumping in Hubberdale Shafts and this was being investigated.
That the Conservation Officer's Report be accepted. Prop. N. Atkins, Sec. P. Mellors. **Agreed unanimously.**
- 5.2.b ASSISTANT CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT: (CW had sent apologies but submitted a written report.)**
- 5.2.b.i **Jug Holes:** PICA mines inspection report indicates PICA are monitoring the situation at Jug Holes.
- 5.2.b.ii **Knotlow:** MG noted that no-one had reported to him of the need for any work in Knotlow until it appeared in CW's report. He would check on this. **ACTION: MG.**
- 5.2.b.iii **P8 bolts:** MG noted that expansion bolts had been placed in P8 for a rescue but hangers have now been placed on them, giving the impression that they are permanent fixtures. MG and NA would investigate. The meeting recommended that the bolts should be removed altogether if they were not needed. **ACTION: MG, NA.**
- 5.2.b.iv **Monitoring CO₂ levels:** Monitoring of CO₂ levels would continue in Bagshaw while pollution is likely.
That the Assistant Conservation Officer's Report be accepted. Prop. T. Jackson, Sec. P. Chandler. **Agreed unanimously.**
- 5.3 PROJECTS OFFICER'S REPORT: (Verbal report given.)**
- 5.3.i **J.H.:** MG explained the work done at J.H. to stabilise the top of Bitch Pitch and re-establish a route to the pitch head. Girders had been placed at the take-off point and angle iron had been bolted to the walls further back in the passage to create a traverse to the pitch head. As far as possible loose material had been sent down the pitch and out of harm's way but the area needs to be treated with respect. (See also 3.5 above.)
- 5.3.ii **P8 Bolts:** (See 5.2.b.iii above.) MG would check these with a view to removing them.
- 5.3.iii **Giants Pull-Thro':** One of the two Eco-anchor bolts needed to be checked. Noted that the existing bolts had been used for the Y-hang whereas, ideally, if we had been starting from scratch the bolts would have been placed higher to put the ring in a better position.
- 5.3.iv **SSSI Monitoring in the Castleton area:** MG will take this on.
- 5.3.v **Carleswark Big Dig:** It had been reported that Big Dig needed checking and MG would do this.
- 5.3.vi **Knotlow:** MG would liaise with CW to find out what work is required in Knotlow.
- 5.3.vii **Eldon Hole:** It had been reported that a sheep had fallen into the Hole - a few rocks had been placed on the carcass to stop people treading in it and it would probably be best left to rot down; MG would check.
That the Projects Officer's Report be accepted. Prop. N. Atkins, Sec. T. Jackson. **Agreed unanimously.**
- 5.4 ACCESS OFFICER'S REPORT: (Not present and no written report supplied.)**
- 5.4.i **Holme Bank Chert Mine:** PC mentioned problems encountered re. damage to locks and unauthorised entry. PM would check the site with IB. **ACTION: PM, IB.**
- 5.5 LEGAL AND INSURANCE OFFICER'S REPORT: (Written report tabled.)**
- 5.5.i **Ashford Black Marble Mine tape damage:** PC reported that the conservation tape had been trampled and needed to be renewed. PM would check on this with IB. Most of the visiting parties were instructed groups so JP would contact PICA to remind them of the reasons for the presence of the tape. **ACTION: PM, IB, JP.**
- 5.5.ii **Insurance Indemnity Limit:** It was agreed that we would prefer that the limit remain at £2 million. However, if there was sufficient pressure from other bodies to raise this to £5 million, we would go with this. PM would report this view to the coming meeting of BCA Conservation and Legal & Insurance representatives.
- 5.5.iii **Okeover Estate:** Access to Waterways Swallet continues as before and we have sent our £10 p/a licence fee. However, the Estate has not yet completed the paperwork.
That the Legal & Insurance Officer's Report be accepted. Prop. N. Atkins, Sec. T. Jackson. **Agreed unanimously.**
- 5.6 EQUIPMENT OFFICER'S REPORT: (JB had sent apologies but submitted a written report.)**
- 5.6.i **Winnats Head Cave:** The downstream section of the cave has now been rigged with Eco anchors. The detailed description of the rigging given in JB's report would be repeated in the next Information Circular and on the DCA website. **ACTION: JP.**
- 5.6.ii **Appearance of plate hangers in Giants Hole:** NA reported that two plate hangers had appeared on the right hand wall at the top of Garlands Pitch in Giants. These were felt to be unnecessary as the pitch already had a full complement of Eco-anchors. The

plate hangers were believed to have been placed for the benefit of an instructed group and this needed to be checked out with PICA. (See also 5.2.b.iii above.)

ACTION: JB, NA, JP.

That the Equipment Officer's Report be accepted. Prop. T.Jackson, Sec. M.Grayson. *Agreed unanimously.*

5.7 TRAINING OFFICER'S REPORT: (Verbal report given.)

NA said he would forward a written report later.

- 5.7.i **Changes in BCA Training systems:** There have been some changes to BCA's leader/instructor training systems and a coaching day would be needed for which a cavers workshop would be used.
- 5.7.ii **BCA Schemes:** NA expressed concern that there may be a possible attempt to "water down" BCA training schemes. He was against this and would ensure that we are kept informed.
- 5.7.iii **Misuse of "belay belts":** The Training Committee had expressed concern at the misuse of belay belts to safeguard ladder and line climbs where a harness should be used. Where the use of suitable belts is acceptable, e.g. on traverses or climbs, the belts should be referred to as "security belts".
- 5.7.iv **Club Training Schemes:** NA would be re-launching Club Training Schemes.

That the Training Officer's Report be accepted. Prop. B.Potts, Sec. P.Chandler. *Agreed unanimously.*

5.8 PUBLICATIONS OFFICER'S REPORT:

Paul Lydon was not present and had sent no report.

5.9 ASSISTANT SECRETARY PLANNING LIAISON: (Apologies sent but no report.)

- 5.9.i **Bird & New Venture Mines:** JP had recently reported to CB that she had received an enquiry from a quarry company representative about the proximity of Bird and New venture Mines to a quarry face. CB reported no application for an extension of quarrying near these mines had been received but he would now look out for this to appear.

6. REPORT FROM BCA COUNCIL MEETINGS FOR JUNE AND OCTOBER:

- 6.1 **Representation:** JP had been present as DCA representative and BP had been present as Orpheus C.C. representative at both recent BCA Council meetings. They agreed that there was now a very positive feel to the organisation with a keen and committed Secretary. The new Chairman, Andy Eavis, had now taken over from Mick Day, who had served for many years and had steered NCA through the changes which created BCA.
- 6.2 **BCA Subscriptions for 2010:** As far as was known it was likely that there would be no major rise insurance premiums for next year; hence BCA had agreed that all subscriptions for clubs and individual members would remain at the 2009 level for 2010.
- 6.3 **BCA funding for the British Caving Library:** BCA had agreed to a five-year forward plan by which it part-funded the British Caving Library; BCRA would also continue to part-fund the Library and to manage it on behalf of cavers.
- 6.4 **BCA Legal & Insurance setup:** JP raised the question of whether BCA actually needed a Legal & Insurance Officer. It appeared that at present the functions of this post were being carried out by other BCA Officers. The present incumbent was due to stand down in 2010 after three years in office so perhaps the matter could be raised at the next BCA Council Meeting in January 2010 when the BCA AGM agenda would be finalised.

ACTION: JP.

7. DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING:

Confirmed that the next Meeting would be the 2010 AGM on Saturday, 13 February 2010, starting at 10am at Monyash Village Hall.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- 8.1. **Election of Officers at the 2010 AGM:** Agreed that, in addition to the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Vice-Chairman, the following officers would be elected at the AGM:
Conservation Officer, Assistant Conservation Officer, Projects Officer, Access Officer, Legal & Insurance Officer, Equipment Officer, Training Officer, Newsletter Editor / Publications Officer, Assistant Secretary Planning Liaison, Cave Registry Secretary.
JP would notify members in the next Information Circular and nominations would be welcome in advance of the AGM.
- 8.2 **DCA Handbook, "The Peak District Access & Rigging Guide":** TJ reminded members that the first draft of the access section was now being checked and he needed to know a.s.a.p. if there were any changes or additions to be made. Agreed that there should be an entry for Long Rake Mine, Youlgreave to state: **"This mine is part of a working site on private land and there is no agreed access."**
- 8.3 **Giants Hole payment installation:** R.Johnson had reported that the landowner had installed a new protected "money box" for payment of trespass fees, which it was hoped would prevent thefts. The money slot needed a cover to prevent the contents getting wet.
- 8.4 **Cascade Cavern:** PC reported that the lid needs attention to secure it.
- 8.5 **Godfrey Hole, Wirksworth:** PC reported that the site was of interest to archeologists and that visitors should first check with Andrew Chamberlain of Sheffield University and also with the British Caving Library.
- 8.6 **Paper Pulp analysis:** BD suggested that Stuart King of the Environment Agency may be able to provide an analysis of the substance. He would check.

ACTION: JP.

ACTION: ALL.

ACTION: MG.

ACTION: MG.

ACTION: BD.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 14.49.

*J.Potts
Recorder*

APPENDED TO THESE MINUTES AND FORMING PART OF THEM IS THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT:

Officers' Reports to the DCA Council Meeting, 31 October 2009:

- a. Item 3.1 - Report on DCA's involvement in Cliffhanger 2009, Sheffield - 11/12 July 2009.
- b. Item 5.1 - Secretary/Treasurer's Report
- c. Item 5.2.a - Conservation Officer's Report
- d. Item 5.2.b - Asst. Conservation Officer's Report
- e. Item 5.5 - Legal & Insurance Officer's Report
- f. Item 5.6 - Equipment Officer's Report

Item 3.1 - REPORT ON DCA'S INVOLVEMENT IN CLIFFHANGER 2009, SHEFFIELD - 11/12 JULY 2009

Saturday: 11 July.

In attendance: Paul Chandler*.

Fortunately with this being an 'outdoors event' the weather stayed fine all day. The DCA Information Stand tent was erected, with invaluable help from a number of young, but competent volunteers from "Cliffhanger" event crew. Inside the DCA Stand tent, a large table displayed a varied selection of leaflets on both caving (BCA 'So, You Want To Go Caving' & 'Try Caving', also DCA Information sheets), local mine exploration, et al, plus a large survey of the 'Peak - Speedwell - JH - Titan' system was also laid out. Also displayed in the stand tent, were a few (A4 size) colour pictures of local mines, plus one of 'Titan Shaft!', some cartoon caver posters and a large DCA Contacts sheet containing details of local caving clubs in the Peak District and surrounding areas. Unfortunately, the remainder of the grass plot allocated to the DCA was rather conspicuous by its 'blank look', the 'Star attraction' of the DCA Stand in 2008, namely the "Speleo-Olympics" Obstacle Course, was absent, due to insufficient volunteer support!

Despite the thousands of people visiting "Cliffhanger" on the Saturday, visitors to the DCA Stand were few and far between!

Sunday: 12 July.

In attendance: Paul Chandler, Nigel Atkins, Dennis Jump, Ann Soulsby, Robin Stiffin, Martin Grayson, (Dr) David Ross & Larry Blanchard.

What a difference a day makes! Eight of us in attendance today, and in addition to the DCA Information Stand tent (plus BCA display panels, set up both inside & outside the tent), one of the adjacent large trees, was rigged for Single Rope Technique (SRT) demonstrations and Ladder climbing for members of the public, under supervision of a qualified instructor. Martin had also brought along his 'Cave Diving' equipment for display. Once again, we were very fortunate with the weather, with only a very short, light shower.

The 'ladder climbing' was extremely popular from opening to closing time, with over 100 children, some 'tiny tots' (interestingly no adults!), climbing to the top of the ladder and then being lowered down in a pre-fitted harness. If DCA participates in this event in 2010, two 'ladder climbing' rigs would be preferable. During the course of the day, there were a small number of visitors to the Information display tent.

One of the visitors to the stand tent, was an employee of 'Hayfisher Productions', a film company, who were making a video production of the "Cliffhanger" event for possible broadcasting on Sky television! There was a possibility of the DCA Stand appearing on the production, but in the event no filming took place on our stand!

My thanks to Nigel, Dennis, Ann, Robin, Martin, David and Larry (most of those present, belonged either to Masson Caving Group or TSG or both, two local caving clubs). Also thanks to some friends of Martin & Larry for their invaluable assistance, dismantling the DCA Stand on the Sunday. Finally, thanks to Peak District Mining Museum (PDMHS) for loan of display table, Goodluck Mine Preservation Club supplying barrier rope and last but not least, Jenny Potts (DCA).

*Note: With the 'Speleo-Olympics' Obstacle Course being advertised in "Cliffhanger" programme, Matt Heason (Event organiser) had requested a DCA presence on the Saturday, to answer queries regarding its none appearance, hence my attendance.

*Paul Chandler (Masson Caving Group)
DCA Stand Co-ordinator.*

Item 5.1 - SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT

Communications

In July I emailed out to members the Minutes of Council Meeting, 13 June 2009 and this was also posted on the website.

In October I posted out:

to all members: Information Circular 2009/3, June/Oct. 2009
Copy of "Caves & Karst of the Peak District"
Leaflet re. Starless River Mobile Caving Shop
Leaflet re. British Caving Library

plus, to those without internet access: Council Meeting Minutes of 13 June 2009
Agenda for Council Meeting 31 October 2009

I emailed these last two items plus the Information Circular to all those with internet access.

I have also emailed out a few special information items to members and placed some items on UKcaving. I also email Minutes and Information Circulars to DCRO, Descent magazine, Natural England, BCA Newsletter Editor, and post Information Circulars only to the Peak National Park Authority and the 4 Offices of Sport England which cover East Midlands, North West, West Midlands and Eastern Regions.

Thanks to all who take the trouble to keep me informed of progress on various fronts so that I can contact appropriate officers if need be and keep members informed.

Membership

I sent out reminders and final reminders to the Club members who had not paid their BCA subscription and to the Individual Members who had not paid their DCA subscription. One club, Rolls Royce Caving Club, has still not paid and has been dropped from DCA membership.

3 Individual Members have allowed their membership to lapse and one has promised to pay when he has finished moving house so I'll keep on his case.

Membership now stands at: Clubs: 30
Individuals: 49, incl. 2 Honorary Members, + one promised to pay!
Associates: 14

Finances

There have been no major payments into our accounts since the June Council Meeting other than around £80 in Individual Members subscriptions and two publications sold. We have received less than £20 interest on our Deposit Account in the last 6 months, despite maintaining a balance of around £9,000.

Major payments out since June are:

£102.48	conservation work in Moorfurlong Mine
£100.00	copies of "Caves & Karst of the Peak District"
£133.05	expenses re. Cliffhanger 2009
£200.00	to Eyam P. C. re. Eyam Delph Swallet,
£198.29	reconstruction of JH Bitch Pitch takeoff
£200.00	Approx. officers' expenses.

We should have a Cave Discovery Fund application on its way, which will be considered after 1st. March next year. The forms sent out earlier this year have not yet been returned but may yet be in time for March 2010.

Current funds are:	Deposit a/c	£ 8823.03
	Current a/c	<u>£ 206.82</u>
	Total	<u>£ 9029.85</u>

This amount includes £932.59 in the Cave Conservation Emergency Fund and £486.77 in the Cave Discovery Fund.

We have not, so far, been required to call upon the £5000 approved at the June meeting to fund the publication of "Caves of the Peak District".

Individual Member subscriptions for 2010

Re. Individual Member subscriptions for 2010, I propose:

That DCA Individual Member subscriptions remain unchanged for 2010, i.e. £10.00 for non-BCA members and £7.00 for Direct Individual Members of BCA.

Jenny Potts, 30/10/09

Item 5.2.a - CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT June 12 2009 to October 31 2009

1. Paper Pulp

The paper pulp and reservoir filtrate "soil improvement" mixture was reported to have been given planning permission to be spread on land on Moss Rake and Shuttle Rake near Bradwell. Due to the proximity to Bagshawe cavern and likelihood of pollution to the streamway via the underground lead veins and conduits I reported the matter to the various authorities and Bob Dearman, who was able to transmit concerns to other Eldon PC Members who are frequent users of the cave. Any adverse effects on the water quality should be reported immediately.

The reaction of all parties was very positive, but although the practice was condemned we were unable to stop the existing stockpile of material from being spread. We were assured that the utmost care will be taken and a thorough review of the practice of spreading in karst drainage areas undertaken at a Cave Liaison meeting planned for early November.

The subject is also on the agenda of the October 27th UCF meeting.

2. Delph Top Sink.

Work to make the area around the collapsed sink hole safe has now been completed and the public footpath diverted away from the hole. DCA has contributed £200 towards the work

3. Devonshire Wall.

The boundary wall has now been repaired thanks to Mike Pilling of PICA.

4. SSSI Cave Conservation Monitoring.

A Meeting called by Jo Poll took place on June 30th at which it was decided to re-launch the scheme in accordance with the government requirement to completely review all sites every 6-7 years. It was decided to make a start by focussing on Masson Hill SSSI which is lacking in detail for certain sites.

5. Upland Caves Network.

This project has been launched to improve communication between cavers and other users of the underground environment – especially archaeologists. It is an offshoot of the BCRA and the first meeting was in June 2009. I am now on the list of those invited and will have an input at meetings and workshops; the next one is scheduled for November 2009. I have pointed out that the aims and structure of the Network is very similar to our own Underground Conservation Forum, the difference being that the UCN is draws its delegates from a national base, although many are based in Yorkshire.

6. British Caving Library, Glutton Bridge.

I have recently made several visits to the new library and helped by Jenny, Janet Nash (BCA Librarian) and Mary Wilde I have been able to scan a number of important old photographs which I plan to commit to disc for DCA archives before they were sent to the BGS at Keyworth for storage in an ideal atmosphere. A similar amount of scanning was undertaken by PDMHS of important mining records and photographs and resources will be pooled.

7. Thanks.

I am grateful to **Chris Wilson**, who has recently taken over as Assistant Conservation Officer, for her invaluable help and enthusiasm during my recent spell in hospital and recovery. Chris has also attended several meetings on my behalf.

Dave Webb, October 2009

Item 5.2.b - ASSISTANT CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT

Antler and bone found 19th August in Giants Hole

Permission was granted from Steve Baldacchi of Peakshill Farm for their removal and the bones were taken to Andrew Chamberlain, Sheffield University Archaeologist, for further examination. The bone is a metatarsal of prehistoric breed of horse (Exmoorish) and quote A. Chamberlain: '...could be an indicator of archaeological antiquity... the red deer antler is likely to be an old specimen, as there are few (if any) red deer in the Castleton region today'.

Since then other bones have been found and I will take them to Andrew soon.

LCMLA panel meeting 16th September

Christine went to the meeting for Dave Webb to increase the trainers/assessors' awareness of the Monitoring scheme and other conservation issues.

'Conservation' is already in the training/assessment syllabus of the Level One Local Cave leader Award and Mines Module. A positive response was received and a suggestion made that 'conservation' could be the main theme for the next assessors workshop in Derbyshire. A training session on bats from a specialist was taken up enthusiastically.

Jim Alder is liaising with Dave Baines to organize sessions between December 2009 to March 2010.

The next Panel workshops (for your interest) are dated:

16 January 10	Vin Machin	venue T.B.confirmed
18 May 10	Jez Parr	Edale YHA
Sept./ Oct 10	Daryl Godfrey	venue T.B.C.

LCMLA cave monitoring talk 26th September

As a result of the panel meeting above one trainer/assessor asked me to give a presentation on the monitoring scheme to some level 2 revalidation candidates. Feed back was positive and many on the revalidation had not heard about the 'Peak District Cave Conservation Monitoring' scheme or website until then. My thanks goes to Dave Webb for lending me his 'Hidden Earth' presentation for this talk.

PICA mines inspection 12th Oct: Jugholes, Mouldridge, Merlins and Knotlow.

Chris Wilson went down these systems with Dave Carlisle (mines inspector) and Adam Evans (PICA member) on 12th and 13th October. Dave will be writing an official report but just to let you know, here are the following findings:-

1. Jugholes top entrance to lower series is safe. The last 'dog leg' climb down to the adit entrance (i.e. between 4th water cavern and 5th water cavern has an unsupported but stuck-fast block that needs to be monitored for further movement. He suggests (esp. for PICA groups) that on climbing up/down this area that the northern most end/adit end descent/ascent hole is used. It is more awkward/steeper but safer especially for novices/young cavers.
2. Mouldridge no change from the previous report although the climb up over the 'deads' wall up to Dave Baines's 'banana' climb is getting a lot of traffic.
3. Merlins. No change. We removed a loose block in nearish the entrance, by depression in floor, which people were using as a hand hold.
4. Knotlow. Hanging roof above second pitch no movement. (straw stal/column unbroken). Roof support below and beyond second pitch erected by D.Webb and co. good. Climb down before bung and water fall pitch needs work to support boulder/rock pile. Needs 2 x 3-4 inch channel girders, extra packing and cementing...and volunteers!

Bagshaw Air / CO2 Monitoring started 19th October

On 15th Oct, it was suggested by R. Johnson and Alan Bretnell (cc to J.Barrett and P. Baker) that Bagshaw needed regular readings taken over a few weeks to get a true picture of CO2 levels in the mine/cave. A CCPC O2 meter belonging to Ralph Johnson was lent to Christine Wilson. Monitoring commenced on the 19th October and daily from then on taking readings in the following places: in the coe, at the 'no entry' chamber at the bottom of the steps and at the top of the pitch in the Dungeon. Less frequent readings (at least once a week) will also be taken from the Cave of Worms, 'Gate' and Hippodrome.

Christine Wilson, October 2009

Item 5.5 - LEGAL & INSURANCE OFFICER'S REPORT

Ashford Black Marble Mine

The 3 year agreement we have with Chatsworth for access to the Mine expired at the end of September. The Licence is in process of being renewed till October 2012. Terms will remain the same: DCA indemnifies Chatsworth and processes all applications to enter the Mine; all visitors to have PL insurance cover and abide by the access procedures in force at the time of their visit; emergencies and/or damage to be reported as soon as possible to DCA. DCRO to note that a key is kept at Bakewell police station for emergency use.

Waterways Swallet

Our annual agreement for access here expired at the end of September and Okeover Estate have agreed to renew it for a further year. Their terms remain unchanged: DCA indemnifies Okeover and its tenant farmer and agrees to maintain a stock proof fence around the entrance; all visitors to be BCA-affiliated members or guests and to be either competent cavers or under supervision; visitors to understand they enter at their own risk; parking to be only in designated area.

Joint Projects with Natural England

I have advised Jo Poll (and Chris Wilson) regarding the way our liability insurance cover applies to persons going underground on project work and to the production of reports based on project work done underground.

BCA Liability Policy & Sum Insured

Last month I advised DCUC on their approach to specific landowners regarding access and liability insurance. I am waiting to hear if their problems arose out of perceived omissions in the National Scheme or rejection of £2M as an adequate indemnity limit.

Peter Mellors, October 2009

Item 5.6 - EQUIPMENT OFFICER'S REPORT

Winnats Head Cave – Downstream Pitches

The Downstream pitches in Winnats Head Cave are now equipped with eco anchors. Immediately after The Sewer is a short 'up' pitch with a couple of rebelay which is permanently rigged with fixed ropes. These fixed ropes are attached to Spits. Arriving at the top of this pitch a short crawl leads to cascading water and the start of the three Downstream pitches. The following equipment is required:

Pitch 1 Rope: 35m

Rigging: 6 eco anchors, 3 tapes, 1 bolt and hanger for 8mm Spit

Notes: Easy traverse to pitch-head. Descend past two deviations (second one from 8mm Spit) to rebelay and the floor.

Pitch 2 Rope: 30m

Rigging: 3 eco anchors, 1 tape

Notes: Easy traverse to pitch-head. Descend past a deviation to floor.

Pitch 3 Rope: 30m

Rigging: 4 eco anchors, 1 tape

Notes: Traverse to pitch-head. Descend past a deviation to floor.

A good trip but those boulder chokes need care and the downstream pitches are wet so best avoided if it's very wet!

New Anchor Installers

Three new anchor installers have been selected and will be trained under the BCA scheme during the autumn.

Anchor Records

DCA anchor records are up-to-date.

Jules Barrett, October 2009