

The British Caving Association

# NEWSLETTER

## IT'S AGM TIME AGAIN!

The British Caving Association AGM will be taking place on the 11th June 2011 at the Baptist Church Hall, Alvechurch. The meeting will start at 10.30am and all BCA members are welcome to attend.

### Chairman's address

I wanted to use this opportunity to point out the useful work that BCA and its subsidiary organisations are doing.

Over the 18 months or so that I have been re-involved in British Caving politics, it has been brought to my notice that there are many ordinary British cavers who have no idea of how much work is done on their behalf by a number of dedicated people. Many, like myself, think it appropriate that we put something back into the activity that has given us so much pleasure and excitement over the years.

The work by these people adds tremendously to the advantage of British cavers but many have no idea what is done. The insurance scheme is an obvious advantage of which all active members of BCA benefit. In addition, there are many other things being worked on, on our behalf.

Access to many caves is through the regional bodies or other members of BCA and without them many areas of Britain could well be closed to cavers.

There is a continuous range of publications being produced both regularly such as Speleology and Caves and Karst Science but also occasional publications which are many and varied with more planned into the future. In conjunction with this a considerable amount of research goes on into equipment and techniques with appropriate publi-

cations being produced. The BCA bolting scheme and its associated publications is a part of this.

There are obviously many scientific projects being undertaken with awards being made for scientific research and expeditions via the Ghar Parau organisation. Much of this can be seen on BCA and BCRA websites.

Nobody is claiming that the existing British Caving Association management structure is perfect and so there are a number of things that are happening to streamline this into the future. It is hoped that many of these will make the British Caving Association more relevant and more obvious to ordinary British cavers. The aim is that membership categories will be further simplified.

As far as changes to the British Caving Association are concerned I would welcome any suggestions by anybody reading this Newsletter and they can email me direct at [BCA Chairman - chairman@british-caving.org.uk](mailto:BCA Chairman - chairman@british-caving.org.uk)

Finally, I should like to thank BCA Council and all the Officers of its associated constituent bodies for the enormous amount of work that is put in. It is my hope that in the future that we can make this more enjoyable and get as much fun out of caving bureaucracy as we get out of physically going caving.



## UK & Irish Qualification Parity

Until now BCA's Training qualifications have only been valid for caving within the United Kingdom.

However, thanks to some excellent co-operation between BCA's Training Officer, Graham Mollard, and his Irish counterpart, it is likely that the LCMLA award will soon be accepted in Southern Ireland, and BCA will accept SU1's equivalent for caving north of the border.

This is the first time our qualifications at LCMLA have been accepted by another sovereign nation and will allow our leaders to work legally in another country.

## Important Changes to the CIC Revalidation Regulations, 01 December 2010

A CIC award will run for 3 years as before but once it reaches its expiry date there will be **no longer be an additional 12-month revalidation window**. The certificate will be deemed to have 'expired' and the leader may no longer be technically qualified to work. This may invalidate their insurance.

Applications for CIC Revalidation Workshops should be made at least **6 weeks in advance or the application may be rejected**.

Anyone whose award has already lapsed and was intending to revalidate within the old 12<sup>th</sup> month period of grace should contact the Training Administrator. **However, as from 01/01/2012 the new regulations will become mandatory for all.**

### EQUALITY STATEMENT

The BCA will make its services available to all sections of sporting community, there will be no discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, creed, colour, occupation, religion or political opinion.

## Important Changes to the LCMLA Revalidation Regulations 01 November 2010

An LCMLA award will run for 5 years as before but once it reaches its expiry date there will be **no longer be an additional 12-month revalidation window**. The certificate will be deemed to have 'expired' and the leader may no longer be technically qualified to work. This may invalidate their insurance.

Anyone whose certificate expires will have to undertake a special Core Skills Reassessment and should contact the Training Administrator for details. However, as from **01/11/2010** leaders may revalidate up to **18 months before the expiry date** and will receive a reminder 18 months and 9 months in advance.

All revalidation workshop application forms will now be sent to the Training Administrator rather than the course director.

Applications should be made at least **6 weeks in advance or the application may be rejected**.

Anyone whose award has already lapsed and was intending to revalidate within the old 12<sup>th</sup> month period of grace should contact the Training Administrator. **However, as from 01/01/2012 the new regulations will become mandatory for all.**

### Media-Liaison Officer

BCA Council has appointed Chris Jewell to the new post of Media-Liaison Officer. Since taking on the role, Chris reports a healthy interest from the Media with an average of one phone call per week asking about caving-related stories. He has also set up a flickr group for cave photographers to make their work available to the

<b>Regional News &amp; Access Issues</b>
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<b>NORTH</b>
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<b>DERBYSHIRE</b>
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**Regional Council—Derbyshire Caving Association (DCA)**

Hon Secretary: Jenny Potts, 3 Greenway, Hulland Ward, Ashbourne, Derbyshire DE6 3FE  
Tel: 01335 370629

Email: [dca@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:dca@theDCA.org.uk)

Website: [www.theDCA.org.uk](http://www.theDCA.org.uk)

**WARNING!**

**Collapse and severe instability in Odin Mine - 'first hand line climb', 'stempled passage' and 'cartgate'**

DCA, in agreement with cavers that discovered the collapse, strongly recommend that no one enters Odin Mine until stabilisation works have been completed.

A collapse has occurred at the base of the first hand line climb, approximately 50 metres into the mine: The entire floor has disappeared into a crater approximately 2.5m x 1.5m in size, leaving a ragged drop of approximately ten metres straight down. The walls of this hole are a very unstable and continually falling in. The material has all landed right in front of the stempled passage that links to the Cartgate, and has also taken out the first two stone stemples, which are now somewhere in the pile. The passage itself is intact, but the heap of large deads, gravel and mud that now partially blocks it is very, very unstable, and is still moving.

Therefore, the stempled passage and, by implication the Cartgate and beyond are currently inaccessible and very dangerous.

For further information please contact Martyn Grayson, DCA projects officer on 0797 695 3089.

**Regional Council - Council of Northern Caving Clubs (CNCC)**

Hon Secretary: Les Sykes, 49 Manfield, Ashurst, Skelmersdale, Lancashire WN8 6SU

Tel/Fax: 01695 728673

Email: [les@speleoadventure.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:les@speleoadventure.wanadoo.co.uk)

**Access problems in the Yorkshire Dales area.**

There have been a number of incidents during the past year that have required a considerable amount of negotiation in order to maintain access for cavers. There are an increasing number of clubs, and in some cases individuals, who are not abiding by the negotiated access agreements. I am the first to agree that access arrangements can be onerous, and with the Countryside Rights of Way Act it sometimes appears unnecessary. However this is not the case, as cavers we have negotiated access to Fells that are private, or where other access constraints have been imposed, for example, conservation areas and nature reserves.

As member clubs of BCA we must abide by these negotiated agreements, if we do not there can be insurance implications; we also run the risk of affecting access for all cavers as the landholders and land managers will deem BCA as being unable to effectively manage the negotiated access for its member clubs. For certain areas we would like more access, however, this can only be negotiated when we can demonstrate that we do not currently have enough access. The most efficient method of demonstration is a full permit list. It is also important to remember to take the agreed route to the caves and follow any other requirements on the permit, for example, maximum numbers of cavers, no novice cavers etc. Access information

Below is a list of where access agreements are in force and who issues the permits for each area. The CNCC web site also has up to date access information, the requirements and a list of who to contact for access. The CNCC web site is the most accurate medium to use as it is updated as agreements change. Web site-[www.cncc.org.uk](http://www.cncc.org.uk)

Leck Fell  
Contact J. Sloane, 60 Sharoe Green  
Lane, Fulwood, Preston, PR2 8EE. [Email-  
jimbo@sagnet.co.uk](mailto:Email-jimbo@sagnet.co.uk)

Casterton Fell (Easegill etc.)  
Alan Speight, A. Speight, 8b Springfield, Bentham,  
Lancaster, LA2 7BA. Email- [alanmavis-  
speight@btinternet.com](mailto:alanmavis-speight@btinternet.com)

Birks Fell and Mongo Gill  
R. Halliwell, 23 Hull Road, Cottingham, East  
Yorkshire, HU16 4PN

Penyghent, Fountains Fell and Washfold Pot  
M. Hughes, 26 Wellcroft, Otley, Leeds, LS21 1JJ

Excalibur Pot  
M. Ewles, 31 Stephenson Close, Huntington,  
York, North Yorkshire, YO32 9GG. Email- [Speleo-  
matt@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Speleo-matt@hotmail.co.uk)

## FOREST OF DEAN

### Regional Contact - Forest of Dean Conservation and Access Group (FoDCAG)

Hon Secretary, John Hine, The Grottage, 2 Cullis  
Lane, Mile End, Coleford, Glos GL16 7QF  
Tel: 01594 833217  
Email: [mole@grottage.fsworld.co.uk](mailto:mole@grottage.fsworld.co.uk)

### White Nose Update

The temporary closure of Wigpool Iron Mine  
occurred when a dead bat was found with visible  
white fungal-type spots/ mould. The bat was  
removed, tested and found not to have WNS.  
Access to Wigpool has been restored.

### Newsletter Editor:

Mike Clayton  
37 Woodcroft Avenue, Tipton,  
West Midlands DY4 8AE

[newsletter@british-caving.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@british-caving.org.uk)

## MENDIP

### Regional Council - Council of Southern Caving Clubs (CSCC)

Hon Secretary, Hayley Clark, Hilltop House,  
Windwhistle Lane, West Grimstead, Salisbury  
Wiltshire, SP5 3RG. [secretary@cscc.org.uk](mailto:secretary@cscc.org.uk)

## WALES

### Regional Council - Cambrian Caving Council (CCC)

Hon Chairman: Bernie Woodley  
Email: [chair@cambriancavingcouncil.org.uk](mailto:chair@cambriancavingcouncil.org.uk)  
Website: [www.cambriancavingcouncil.org.uk](http://www.cambriancavingcouncil.org.uk)

### Ogof Nant Rhin

A party which visited the cave last Thursday  
reported it to be blocked by a collapse at the  
sharp corner just beyond the entrance crawl.  
PLEASE bear this in mind if you're considering a  
pull through trip. Thursday's group had planned to  
pull through but, fortunately, changed their minds  
at the last minute.

### New Cave Find at Ystradfellte

The knowledge of a well-decorated new find at  
Ystradfellte has spread rapidly against the land-  
owners' wishes.

Those few responsible cavers using the site with  
permission were working with the landowners and  
hoping to carry out proper scientific study and to  
arrange for a subsequent access agreement.

However, others have entered the site without  
permission, carried out criminal damage at the  
entrance, which matter is now in the hands of the  
police, and interfered with the landowners' privacy  
and water supply that originates in the cave.

The result is a complete ban on caving at the site

and that the cave will be firmly sealed closed. We thank the landowners for agreeing to do this in a manner that will not damage the cave so that it will be properly protected and we urge all cavers to respect the laws of property.

We only have access to underground sites with a landowners' permission and landowners may be re-assured that the Cambrian Caving Council, British Caving Association and the British Cave Research Association will always work with them in this matter.

### NAMHO 2011

The NAMHO conference this year will take place in Shropshire from the 29th July to the 1st August. The event is being held at Preston Montford Field Centre near Shrewsbury and will consist of lectures, seminars and trips to local mines.

For more details visit;

[www.namhoconference.org.uk/2011](http://www.namhoconference.org.uk/2011)

### BCA's Artificial Cave

BCA have recently been donated 10 sections of Artificial Cave that we can use to promote caving at shows and events around the country. In recent months the cave has been to both Hidden Earth and The Outdoor Show and seems to be proving a real hit.

The cave is housed in its own convenient trailer and, as well as being used at BCA events, BCA are keen to make the cave available for BCA Member Clubs and Organisations to use at their own events. For bookings and further information about borrowing BCA's cave, contact Nick Williams on [insurance.manager@british-caving.org.uk](mailto:insurance.manager@british-caving.org.uk), or for more information about purchasing a similar cave, please contact our sponsor Entre-Prises UK at <http://tinyurl.com/69oxgbq>.

### Forestry Commission Access Agreement

Mindful of the coalition Government's original intention to sell off chunks of Forestry Commission land, BCA's Conservation & Access team have embarked on the process of trying to negotiate a national access agreement with the Forestry Commission. It is envisaged that this will be similar to the agreement with the National Trust and, the plan would be that any land sold off would be sold subject to the agreed access rights. In time the Conservation & Access team hope to make similar formal agreements with all the major land-owning bodies in turn.

### Paper-Pulp Spreading in Derbyshire

An issue has arisen in Derbyshire recently where paper pulp is being spread over farmers' land to allegedly improve the soil. In limestone areas this has sometimes run straight through the ground and into our subterranean watercourses, affecting rakes, adits and caves. The DCA Conservation & Access team are currently liaising with Natural England and the Environment Agency and are hopeful of a positive outcome.

### BRITISH CAVING ASSOCIATION

The Old Methodist Chapel  
Great Hucklow  
Buxton  
SK17 8RG

[www.british-caving.org.uk](http://www.british-caving.org.uk)

## "Caves of the Peak District" by Iain Barker and John Beck

**Price £20.00**

**Published December 2010**

To order a copy of "Caves of the Peak District" direct from DCA, price is £21.60, including postage. Send your cheque, payable to DCA, to:

DCA Hon. Treasurer,  
3 Greenway,  
Hulland Ward,  
Ashbourne,  
Derbyshire. DE6 3FE.

"Caves of the Peak District" is also available from the following outlets:

Hitch 'n' Hike, Bamford  
Caving Supplies, Buxton  
The Bakewell Bookshop, Bakewell  
Peak District Mining Museum, Matlock Bath  
Scarthin Books, Cromford  
Mike Moore Books, [www.Moorebooks.co.uk](http://www.Moorebooks.co.uk)

Also now available for you to download for free from the DCA website, thanks to Tim Webber, is an Index to the complete volume of the new "Caves of the Peak District". This comes in two pdf formats:

**Cotp-index.pdf** prints out as 12 sides of A4.

**Cotp-index-print.pdf** prints out in the form of an A5 booklet, using 3 sheets of A4 paper.

### Your BCA officers:

Chairman	Andy Eavis
Secretary	Damian Weare
Treasurer	Dave Cooke
Membership Administrator	Glenn Jones
Legal & Insurance	David Judson
Conservation & Access	Elsie Little
Equipment & Techniques	Nick Williams
Publications & Information	Les Williams
Youth & Development	James Collings
Training Officer	Graham Mollard
Web Master	Les Williams

# HIDDEN EARTH 2011

Friday 23rd - Sunday 25th September

Monmouth Leisure Centre

[www.hidden-earth.org.uk](http://www.hidden-earth.org.uk)

Offers of lectures and presentations to:

Emma Porter  
[lectures@hidden-earth.org.uk](mailto:lectures@hidden-earth.org.uk)



## Euro-Speleo Forum 2016

Although still awaiting official approval from the European Speleological Federation for the UK to run this event, we understand we are likely to gain approval. Hopefully we will receive the official go-ahead soon.

Please note: The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the formal view of the British Caving Association.

## Constitutional Amendments Ballot

Back in July 2010 BCA carried out a Ballot of all its members with the aim of making some amendments to the Constitution. To be successful each proposal required at least 70% support from both Individual and Group members. In the event some 262 Individual and 23 Group members responded and after counting, BCA is pleased to confirm that each of the proposals was accepted.

The main change resulting for this is that BCA's AGM will now take place in June each year, rather than in March. Full results from the ballot are included in the Secretary's Report to the October Council Meeting, which can be downloaded from the Minutes section of the BCA website at

<http://tinyurl.com/3eoqs6t>



### **MESS 3**

For anyone not attending Hidden Earth this year, the third Middle East Speleology Symposium will be taking place in Beirut, Lebanon 23rd to 25th September.

[www.speleoclubduliban.com](http://www.speleoclubduliban.com)