

BCA Newsletter

Number 19 - January 2015

This newsletter was originally only published as a web page but has been re-created as this PDF in July 2019.

Party Weekend & Annual General Meeting

It is now confirmed that this year's BCA Party Weekend and associated AGM will be held over the weekend of 12-14 June at Dean Field Studies Centre, Parkend near Lydney in the Forest of Dean. This will be combined with the British Cave Rescue Council's Conference, which itself will also be a celebration of Gloucester Cave Rescue Group's 50th anniversary and is certain to be another unmissable weekend.

Friday evening will provide an opportunity for everybody to get together and then on Saturday, for those involved with the Rescue Conference there will be a series of rescue-related workshops and presentations based in and around the Dean Field Studies Centre. For those who wish to go caving, the Forest of Dean boasts the 10th longest cave in the UK in Wet Sink (Slaughter Stream Cave) at nearly 14km in length as well as other sites such as Redhouse Lane Swallet, Big Sink and Miss Grace's Lane Cave. There are also a multitude of Iron Mines.

In the evening, coaches will take the participants on a short drive across the Forest to Clearwell Caves for an evening underground in the show mine complex where there will be a display and rolling slide presentation to view. The bar will already be there and will be set up for a mini Beer, Cider and Whisky festival. A local band will provide the music and hot food will be served. At the end of the evening the coaches will return to DFSC and the bar will re-open.

The BCA AGM will be held on Sunday morning, while the rescue teams take part in a rescue scenario at the Old Ham Mine complex.

Full details will soon be available both here and on the BCRC website. Information relating specifically to the AGM is already available.

We are very grateful to BCRC for agreeing to change the date of their conference to allow us to hold the planned joint event whilst avoiding significant clashes with other key events. We are also aware that the joint organisers, Gloucester Cave Rescue Group and Midland Cave Rescue Organisation, had to go to great lengths to accommodate this change of date and we are especially grateful to them.

E-mail Address Plea

BCA's webmaster, Dave Cooke, is developing a system to allow members to update their personal details online. This is currently being tested and should go live during 2015.

We very much want to communicate with as many of our members as possible by e-mail and have asked clubs to obtain their members' permission to provide e-mail addresses as part of the membership renewal process. We now have e-mail addresses for about 45% of our members and intend to use those addresses to distribute newsletters and other information directly. Please ask your club to add your e-mail address to our database as part of the 2015 membership renewal.

We also want to be confident that as many postal and e-mail addresses as possible are up to date and, with the annual renewal now in progress, this is the time for individual members to make sure that the details held by their Club are current. If the Officer responsible for the club's membership renewal could also make a final check to ensure that the form submitted includes the most up-to-date information, we should have a very happy Membership Administrator.

Public-Liability Insurance Renewal

Insurance Manager, Nick Williams, with assistance from Pete Mellors of DCA, has put in a serious amount of work to renew our liability insurance.

Unlike the situation at earlier renewals, we had several firms chasing our business and following correspondence, we eventually ended up with offers from three different companies.

It's a nice change to find that cavers are now seen as good business in the insurance world and we used this to our advantage and now have a much better deal for cavers as a result. Our new policy is provided by Perkins Slade. Some of the advantages include:

- Slight price advantage;
- Per-head pricing model which will better protect us against future changes in membership numbers;
- Easy and low-cost increase in the limit of indemnity should we decide that £5m is no longer sufficient;
- Marginally improved cover, including Directors and Officers' cover which provides better protection for libel/slander and financial mismanagement;
- Better alignment with the BCA scheme for professional cavers which is already provided by Perkins Slade;
- No-cost inclusion of landowner/occupier's indemnity for clubs/Access Controlling Bodies with significant land lease/ownership;
- Easy availability of a property policy for clubs with huts;
- Better backup/support to Members in respect of queries and information about the policy.

Other improvements in the policy are:

- Significantly lower excess than the previous policy;
- Better cover for pollution incidents.

It is worth noting that it became pretty clear early in the discussions that the work done in 2003/2004 to establish the BCA as one-member, one-vote organisation with a clear identification of each individual member helped immensely with our credibility when it came to negotiating with the insurers. Furthermore, work done on training by the Cave Diving Group and the Explosives User Group figured highly in the insurers' perceptions of caving as an acceptable risk.

Full details of the new policy and an updated Q & A sheet will appear on the Public-Liability pages as soon as possible.

The CRoW Poll

The results of the CRoW Poll were made available here shortly after the poll closed. The CRoW Poll was carried out following, as closely as possible, the instructions from the October BCA Council Meeting. Making it happen was largely the responsibility of BCA Secretary, Damian Weare.

A number of options were explored including: dealing with everything in house; using an outside company for external postage, but dealing with the returns internally; or passing the whole poll to an external organisation to process on our behalf.

In the end the latter was chosen because the additional cost was relatively small, but brought significant benefits in terms of transparency and reduced demands on our limited number of volunteers. We have yet to receive an invoice for the poll, but it is expected to be under £4,500 or below 75p per member. This is slightly above the figure quoted in the letter that accompanied the poll because of a higher-than-anticipated percentage of return. This is, of course, a good thing.

All members, both Individual and Group were polled, with the only exception being a small number of Associate Members, who constitutionally do not have voting rights. The deadline of 18 December was the latest possible to ensure results were available in sufficient time for this meeting; the Christmas/New Year period obviously made this rather sooner than would have been the case at a different time of year. Documentation was intended to be sent out according to the Electoral Reform Services' suggestion of the appropriate balance between giving members time to reply before the deadline and giving them too much time so that they put off replying and forget or lose their voting papers. In practice this was delayed by a couple of days as ERS refused to accept a chunk of our membership data due to inaccuracies in the addresses provided by Clubs. Most still had nearly 3 weeks to reply from receipt, although of course overseas addresses were virtually guaranteed to miss any deadline.

We were offered the option of members voting online by ERS but this attracted a flat fee of £600, regardless of how many adopted this method. Given the cost of return postage, this needed about 1,500 people to vote by this method to be cost effective. It was felt this could not be guaranteed and we, therefore, elected to "play safe".

Lessons learned

This was the first time BCA have conducted a poll such as this and despite valiant attempts by our Secretary, Damian Weare, to set it up as efficiently as possible there were problems which he brought to the attention of the January Council meeting and discusses below.

1) The resolution from the October meeting, while apparently clear at the time, did leave a number of unclear issues for Executive to decide, including exactly who should have a vote, what to do about multiple votes to one person, and how the votes should be counted. All of these became controversial during the voting process and, while it is quite properly the role of Executive to act on behalf of Council outside meetings, more generally Council may like to reflect on how decisions made off-the-cuff at meetings are not necessarily the best thought through.

2) The addresses we hold for our membership are often not sufficiently accurate for effective use. I ended up spending about 15 hours tidying up the data into a format that was eventually acceptable to the Electoral Reform Services. Many of the issues seemed very petty to me. For example, the inclusion of a space after a postcode was unacceptable, as was having anything addressed to anyone other than a named individual (so Club names could not be used as the first line of the address), all missing postcodes had to be manually looked up, unacceptable characters had to be altered, split Irish postcodes and towns had to be rejoined e.g. Dublin 18, ... the list goes on and on. Any address that did not meet the criteria would not be sent a voting paper.

Once this was sorted, there was also the issue of us holding the wrong addresses. Of course this is quite likely given that we liaise with the majority of our membership via their Club. Of all the enquiries I received, the majority were down to the Club not passing on an address change. However, a substantial number we are down to one of:

- the member not telling their club about their change of address;
- the club taking the money off their member(s) for BCA membership, but never actually passing this on to us!!
- Direct Members giving us their old address themselves!!

Of the fifty or so queries I received about "missing" voting papers, I only know of three people (2 at the same address) whose papers were posted to the correct address, but who did not receive them.

3) There are large numbers (>100 I suspect) of duplicate members in our membership lists ... basically people who pay and join two, three or even four times ... usually as CIMs through different Clubs, but sometimes also as a DIM and then subsequently as a CIM. Sometimes we have the same address from each of their Clubs, sometimes we have different addresses. One member joined four times through the same club in the same year! I elected to send these people only one voting paper.

Chairman's Thoughts

Following the meeting of the BCA Conservation & Access Committee in August BCA Chairman, Andy Eavis, met with representatives of Natural England and DEFRA to informally discuss their interpretation of CRoW in respect of caving. With the discussion at that meeting in mind, and following the results of the recent poll, he shares some personal thoughts with us:

As Chairman I have thought long and hard over the attitude I should adopt to recent results of the CROW poll. It's tempting to think that a comparatively small majority in favour of CROW applying to caves is the worst possible outcome of the poll. However, there is an entirely different way of looking at it:

If CROW does apply to caves, potentially cavers will have a much bigger say in how access and conservation are controlled. That could be very good for caves and cavers providing it is organised and administered very well. That is our challenge, and that is coupled with the challenge that if we are going to fit in with our membership's wishes (or within the majority of our membership's wishes), we have to get 70% of our individual members and 70% of group members in favour of changing the Constitution. So, as I see it, BCA council has to put forward a robust proposal for improving access and conservation with CROW applying to caves. If we can do that and convince our individual members and club members that is the situation, I think we can improve the whole position with cave conservation and access.

In the right circumstances it must be correct for caves to be administered by people who love, understand and use the fantastic resource of caves in Britain.

The debate on CROW has thrown up several interesting issues. One has been the British institutional and public attitude towards caving and I have realised that if we want to convince the general public, political figures etc that caving is a worthwhile occupation, we still have a lot of work to do.

We must be mindful that what we often consider as reasonable risks and enjoyable undertakings are often interpreted by the general public as being completely ridiculous. We should be mindful of public perception if we want to be successful in lifting the negative attitude towards caves and caving.

The Way Forward

We now know that there is a majority in favour of BCA campaigning for CRoW to apply to going underground. At the January meeting, BCA Council discussed how to take this forward.

The paperwork accompanying the voting papers made clear that in this situation we will now:

- continue our dialogue with DEFRA, NE and NRW, including seeking advice on successfully limiting access to our most fragile sites or to sites which might represent a danger to the public;
- consult with landowners and open communication with the Countryside Land and Business Association;
- seek further legal opinion to support our case;
- liaise with other like-minded organisations, such as the BMC and the BCU;
- continue to explore ways to effectively protect our more fragile sites;
- seek to change Section 4.6 of our Constitution at the June 2015 Annual General Meeting;
- work with Regional Councils, affected landowners and Access-Controlling Bodies to ease the transition;
- lobby MPs and other persons of influence to push for CRoW to apply to going underground.

After much discussion the meeting decided that any decision regarding immediate action on the bullet points should be left in the hands of the Executive aided by such persons as they should decide to co-opt to assist them.

Cave Registry Data Archive

Andrew Atkinson administers the archive on behalf of the Cave Surveying Group. The aim of the project is to hold an archive of speleological data for the use of the UK caving community and to encourage the sharing of data.

The cave data is held in the form of files and directories that can be easily downloaded and used on a home computer. The purpose of the Cave Registry is to back-up and share these files among anyone who is interested so that data can be improved and updated more efficiently than is currently the case.

A large addition to the archive has recently come from the Forest of Dean and Paul Taylor has shared his reasons for uploading it.

"After the discovery of Wet Sink (Slaughter Stream Cave) in 1990/91 and soon afterwards the nearby Redhouse Lane Swallet surveys of both these locations were produced and it was realised that to be able to show them in direct relationship to one another was essential.

This started a major surveying project involving the Slaughter Catchment Area but as other sites, such as Big Sink, Miss Grace's Lane Cave and Woolaston Woods Cave have been discovered the area of coverage has been expanded. It soon became apparent that there was lots of other survey data from past work available and it would be good to incorporate it. This led to the "Forest Master Survey Project" where over the years in excess of 100km of survey data has been brought together to provide a fantastic insight into both the natural and mined world within the Forest of Dean.

In 2012 I was approached by Wookey and Andrew Atkinson who suggested that all of this data should be placed in the National Survey Archive / Repository. It took another hefty prod from them at last year's Hidden Earth to move it forward and I've now discovered that (as with many things one puts off) it required much less effort than I'd feared and advice and guidance was available at every step. This has resulted in the establishment of two Repositories; one for the Forest of Dean and one for the Cotswolds, although the latter has yet to have data added to it.

A vast amount of the Forest of Dean "Raw Data" is now stored within the repository, with even the survey note books scanned and deposited, and that the data is now safely stored in a second location is a great weight off my shoulders. It is of course a work in progress and will continue to develop as more information is added. I am very grateful to everybody who has supplied survey data over the years and if you have any Forest of Dean or Cotswold related survey data and would like it added to the respective repositories then please send it to me. Full credit will be given.

Also, if you have survey data from other locations I would encourage you to look at the repository for those areas and get your data recorded within them. It isn't difficult and, with the best will in the world, our own personal storage is limited and I am well aware that when some of those involved with the Forest surveying have died, data ended up being dumped because those clearing things up did not realise what they were dealing with. Once it's gone, it's gone and it takes a lot of work to replace it - as I know from personal experience."

CNCC Access Changes

A lot has been happening recently in the CNCC area, so we have asked Matt Ewles, the CNCC Secretary, to provide us with an update which includes all the recent access changes.

It's been a year of change for the CNCC; with a number of new faces having become involved since March 2014, and more expected over the coming months. There have also been a number of excellent conservation projects, training courses, and improvements to access and communications.

We can now enjoy a new CNCC access agreement for the caves of Ingleborough Estate, including Gaping Gill, Newby Moss and The Allotment, which allows permits to be issued by email at much shorter notice, and also to any BCA insured club or caver.

For full details of all of this news see our December newsletter. I would encourage everyone to read it.

Something that was announced just after the newsletter had been finalised was that we can now enjoy access to Fountains Fell without any permits or closed seasons - just a courtesy call with the landowner. This includes famous caves such as Gingling Hole and Hammer Pot (as well as Echo and Strangle Pot for those of strong nerve and slim belly). Initiatives to improve access elsewhere are ongoing, and of course the 'Yes' vote in the BCA CRoW referendum may, in time, mean more access changes in our region.

It can sometimes be hard to stay up to date with the most recent access details; therefore the details for access to most of the major northern caves are kept continually up to date on our website. This means details can be easily checked ahead of any planned trip or permit application. While you're there, keep an eye on the recent news on the homepage or via Facebook or our Twitter feed. If you would like to get more involved with the CNCC, details on the ways you can do this are in our newsletter.

Training Grants

Whilst the best known function of the Training Committee, chaired by Training Officer Nigel Ball, is to administer the two BCA Award schemes, they are also keen to publicise the availability of recreational caver training grants who form the bulk of our membership.

There is an administrative process which is much less onerous than it sounds. There is an application form which should be completed in advance of the planned training and forwarded to the Training Officer. The Training Officer will then indicate to the applicant what his recommendation to the Training Committee will be.

The principles under which grants can be made are:

- No funding for events leading to qualifications in the commercial sector;
- Funding is not generally available for capital equipment;
- Maximum grant aid will generally not exceed 1/3 of the overall cost of the training. Where overall costs do not exceed £100 the full cost may be granted. The committee reserves the right to 100% fund BCA organised events;
- The Training Committee reserves the right to monitor the quality of the training;
- Payment of grant will not be made until a satisfactory report of the event has been received from the promoters;
- The Training Committee may offer "pump priming" of events which can then become self-financing;
- The Training Committee may support minority interests;
- Grant will not normally be made for the training of Cave Rescue Team members in rescue techniques

After completion of the event a report should be sent to the Training Officer. This report must be received within one month of the notified date of the event. If this report is not received on time, the grant will be cancelled and the funds reallocated. If the Training Officer is satisfied with the report, payment will be authorised. Applicants are encouraged to publish these reports in the Caving Press.

Financial Support is also offered to assist the training of leaders in the Voluntary Youth Sector:

BCA has allocated funding to provide assistance which includes a refund of the registration fee on completion of Level 1 training and a grant of £50 on completion of either an LCMLA award at either Level 1 or 2.

Gouffre Berger Book

As a result of the production and publication of Gouffre Berger – L'esprit d'équipe substantial donations have been made to the Ghar Parau Foundation and Association Nicola – and there may be more to come.

Most readers will be aware that the GPF is a UK charity funding UK caving expeditions with the emphasis on exploration through the awarding of grants. The Association Nicola is a French charity which, following two fatalities

in the Gouffre Berger in 1996, developed a through-rock communication system to try and ensure cavers deep within the Berger system do not enter hazardous areas and become trapped by floodwater when surface conditions deteriorate. Under constant development, the communication system is now used extensively by volunteer cave rescue teams and expeditions all over the world.

The book was launched at Hidden Earth this year where the main authors, Mark Wright and Robbie Shone, were on hand to sign copies.

Mark and Robbie, with considerable support from Chris Blakeley and a small group of dedicated assistants, undertook seven visits to the Gouffre Berger photographing their way down the caves many deep pitches and through its vast underground caverns and deep lakes. The book provides past visitors with an excellent showcase of its most significant features and will hopefully inspire future visits to this magnificent cave system. It provides a history of the cave's exploration together with valuable information for those planning a visit. It features chapters by eminent geologist Tony Waltham, Graham Naylor, inventor of the Nicola communication system and Jean Lavigne, one of the cave's original explorers and who, in 1956 with Fernand Petzl, led the first international explorers to its terminal sump at -1,122m.

Mark Wright has provided us with an update:

Since the formal launch of Gouffre Berger - L'esprit d'équipe at the Hidden Earth conference in September, the project has been able to make further donations to those announced during the closing ceremony of the conference.

Through the [online pre-order system](#) which went live on the 4 September, we were lucky to have all publishing and printing costs covered by the 14 September and at the closing ceremony of Hidden Earth, confirmed orders/sales allowed £3k to be donated to Association Nicola and £9k to the Ghar Parau Foundation.

The project also made a £100 donation towards the [cave rescue operations in Peru](#) involving the Spanish cavers.

With the help of a number of re-sellers around the world, who have been kind enough to make what is effectively zero profit to support the project, books have been shipped and then re-shipped to every continent.

Following discussions with [Association Nicola](#) about additional funding from the project, they were confident that the £3k donation already made should provide sufficient funds for the current prototype Mk3 to be finalised. In view of that an additional £2.5k has been donated to the GPF and there is likely to be another £500 within the next week or so.

Of course I'm going to tell you all what a fantastic book it is and you should get on-line straight away and buy a copy. Instead, read the excellent review in [Descent 241](#).

We will be holding an auction later in the year via <http://www.gouffreberger.org> for a copy of a limited edition sleeved copy of the book signed by Jean Cadoux, Louis Potie, Jean and Abelle Lavigne and other remaining members of the original exploration team. A lot of interest has already been expressed in getting hold of this copy and we are hopeful it will raise a four-figure sum to support the work of the GPF and Association Nicola.

There are around 300 copies left from an original print run of 1,490 so there is plenty more opportunity for further donations.

Many thanks to all those who have supported the project.

Anchor Testing in Wales

BCA's Rope Tester, Bob Mehew, has, on behalf of the Equipment and Techniques Committee, also been testing anchors placed in different rocks and locations. He reports on recent tests in Wales.

Like buses, it was a coincidence that anchor testing has been conducted in both South and North Wales. The work in South Wales came about because BCA's Equipment and Techniques Committee have previously discussed testing

anchors in various limestone beds across the UK and more recently testing a new resin. An offer by Vince Allkins to use the Penwyllt Quarry behind the SWCC hut was accepted and over the weekend of 29-30 November some 40 Bolt Product anchors were placed and tested by Vince and myself. A report is available on the website. The main objectives of the work was to demonstrate that a new choice of resin was suitable and also to see how the rock behaved while extracting of the anchors and whether the resin could stand up to wet conditions. The adequacy of the anchor is based on a criterion that 95% of the anchors tested should require a force to extract them in the axial mode in excess of 15kN. In the event the measured value was 29kN, better than previous test results using both the DMM Eco and Bolt Product anchors.

The results also indicated that the mode of failure is quite complex, involving an initial rupture of the metal-resin bond followed by the anchor twisting out of the resin. This points to a significant safety feature in that if the resin-metal bond does fail, there remains significant strength caused by the mechanical interface which would have to also be overcome for the anchor to catastrophically fail. But one embarrassing observation was that between the two of us, we failed to properly clean one hole which resulted in a fairly low peak force of 10kN being required to extract the anchor. This error is unlikely to occur underground where, since the anchor locations are out over the pitch, only one person at a time is likely to be working on them, hence the error of assuming the other person had cleaned the hole is less likely to occur.

Another observation was that the degree of spalling of the surface around the anchors on extraction was sufficient to make around 50% of the locations not reusable. This potentially will become a significant point in a century or so when the anchors will have to be replaced. The committee will have to consider this observation and work is already in hand to see if other extraction methods might reduce the problem to manageable levels.

The work is not quite complete since we have yet to test the resin in flooded holes to confirm it can withstand wet conditions. The permission of the South Wales Caving Club to use the Penwyllt quarry for testing these and other anchors is gratefully acknowledged.

[Previous work in 2013](#) had indicated that some of the anchors used in North Wales slate mines were perhaps not really up to the job. So a proposal was made to the Equipment and Techniques Committee for a grant to support an investigation into several anchor types which have been used in North Wales slate mines. After some discussion, the committee agreed to fund test beds in 4 different slate beds using Collinox, Goujon and Bolt Product anchors. In addition, Simon Wilson donated a set of IC anchors for testing. So Gethin Thomas placed 76 anchors in December, helped in part by Dena Proctor. Two sets were placed in the Cwmorthin mine in the Back Vein and the Stripey Bed Vein. Another set was placed in Cambrian mine and the fourth set was placed in Braich Goch mine near Corris. The BCA anchor puller was used to do the work and, because there is a large amount of gear, a moderate number of people were prevailed upon to help take the kit in a wheelbarrow into each mine. Thanks go to Dave Tyson, Stephen Skillbeck, Richard "Rusty" Bale, Simon Wilson, Dena Proctor, Chris Mitchell, Sam Benson, Jim Bradley, Mark Waite, Pete Rigby, Dave Grimmes and not least to Gethin Thomas as well as his wheelbarrow for organising and leading them.

The raw data and videos of the extraction of the anchors can be found on [Gethin's website](#). Work is in progress on interpreting the data. Provisional results suggest that the order of performance was IC best followed by Bolt Products, Collinox and Goujon last. This appears to reflect the 'embedment' depth; that is the depth which the anchors reach into the rock. However there was wide variation in the peak extraction forces reflecting variable quality of rock. One point which is up for debate is whether the spacing between anchors should be much larger in slate than the usual guide of twice the depth. A small number of the extractions were accompanied by extensive exfoliation (tens of centimeters) of the cleaved slate. Although more detailed statistical tests will have to be conducted to confirm it, there did not appear to be a significant difference between anchors placed in slab or pillar faces, nor in orientations with respect to the cleavage plane.

Cave Access Update

Titan (Derbyshire)

Access to the Titan Entrance Shaft has been suspended. The middle section of the shaft is lined with heavy duty glass fibre rings, and six of these, along with their associated steel fittings, are showing signs of severe deformation and are highly likely to fail, at any time. Updates will be posted at <http://www.peakspeedwell.info>.

Ogof Ffynnon Ddu (South Wales)

Gary Vaughan is now the permit secretary, otherwise access arrangements are unchanged. See the [SWCC website](#) for details.

Ingleborough Estate Caves (Yorkshire Dales)

A new access agreement for caves on the Ingleborough Estate allows permits to be issued by email at much shorter notice, and also to any BCA insured club or caver. See the [CNCC website](#) for details.

Fountains Fell Caves (Yorkshire Dales)

Access to Fountains Fell is now available without any permits or closed seasons: Just a courtesy call with the landowner. This includes famous caves such as Gingling Hole and Hammer Pot. See the [CNCC website](#) for details.

Giants Hole (Derbyshire)

It was reported on 24 November that there had been a serious collapse affecting the junction of the track to Peakshill Farm (for Giants Hole) with the B6061 road. It seems the collapse (believed to be into a shaft on Fawcett Rake) at the edge of the bend in the track has partly undermined the road and the Sparrowpit to Winnats Head road was reported closed to general through traffic until March 2015.

It appears that it is still possible to drive along the road at present to reach Eldon Quarry, Oxlow Farm, etc. and even the track to Peakshill farm may be negotiable with care.

Eyam Dale House Cave (Derbyshire)

John Beck has met up with the new owner of Eyam Dale House and reports that he seems a nice guy, and is happy for the present access arrangement to continue. John holds the key at Glebe Cottage.

The only change is that he would like an email when a group is coming so that he knows that the people milling about in the lower car park are cavers and not intruders - fair enough. Groups should contact John at least a day in advance (which they normally do anyway to make sure he will be around) and John will let him know. Any queries, please contact [DCA](#) for further information.

01/02/15 - Please note that access has been temporarily suspended. Details of new arrangements will be on the [DCA website](#) soon.

Eldon Quarry Caves (Derbyshire)

A replacement box has been fitted and this time it has been bolted to the gate into the quarry instead of to the wall. The box is identical to the previous one and contains a new survey, logbook and pens. The key is on a chain again but you have to lift the letterbox flap to reach it and the gate must be re-locked after the box has been accessed.

It is also reported that, at the farmer's insistence, the gate is now secured by a combination padlock (Code available from [DCA](#)) as he has had trouble with off-roaders and wants cavers to report any unauthorised/suspicious visitors to him without delay (Maurice Gregory on 07778 750878).

Please remember that no cavers' vehicles are allowed through the gate but you are welcome to park in the lane as long as you don't cause an obstruction. Any damage or problems with the new box or lock should be reported promptly to DCA.