

Conservation & Access Report - CSCC Meeting 11th November 2022

Please find below the Conservation & Access Officer's Report. This covers the period since the last meeting on 15th August 2022.

Singing River Mine



A meeting has been held with the new landowner and a simplified access arrangement has been agreed. A new lid needs to be manufactured and fitted before the agreement can commence. Measurements have been taken and quotations are being invited. The outline agreement is:-

- 1) Access will be controlled by CSCC
- 2) The access procedure will be:-
 - a) Access by prior booking only
 - b) Booking by emailing CandA@csc.org.uk giving at least 48 hours notice
 - c) Booking email to provide primary contact, party size and confirm at least 1 person is BCA member.
 - d) C&A Officer will check the cave is available (one trip at a time) and enter the booking on a calendar shared with the Landowner.
 - e) 24 hours before the trip, the C&A Officer will contact the primary contact to confirm the booking is still ok and arrange collection and return of the key.
 - f) The entrance gate must be kept closed at all times, including while the party is in the mine.
 - g) Trips can only take place between 9:00am and 9:30pm.
 - h) Cars should be parked in the village centre and not on Folly Lane.
 - i) No changing in the garden or the adjoining lane.
 - j) A trespass fee of £2 per head should be deposited in the collection tin by the entrance.
 - k) Please only belay from the points built into the gate. Do not use nearby trees, fence posts etc.
 - l) Please be quiet whilst in the garden and comply with any requests made by the landowners and their family.
- 3) CSCC will replace the existing lid (as the current one is unsafe and has no secure belay points) and maintain it whilst the access agreement is in place.

4) The operation of the access agreement will be reviewed after the first 12 months to ensure it is satisfying both parties.

Swildon's Changing Barn

A professional report was commissioned to scope the work required to replace the floor in the Swildon's changing barn. As a result, the material budget has increased to £2000.

Longleat

No progress has been made since the meeting in June. Apparently, the staff at Longleat have been too busy covering illnesses and the seasonal increase in visitors. It is hoped the issue will move forward in the next month.

Holly Bush Shaft

An enquiry for access details for Holly Bush shaft (Shipham) was received from Gloucester Speleological Society. Mark Ireland, the last person to dig there, was contacted but could not provide any information. A land registry search has been completed and the land owners identified. Letters will be sent to them shortly.

Waterwheel Swallet

A CSCC Key was requested and has been delivered to the Charterhouse Centre staff.

Stoke Lane Swallet

Subsequent to the theft of the new lid installed at Stoke Lane, the lid frame has now been removed and the entrance generally tidied up. It is hoped that the frame can be used at Singing River Mine.

CHECC

Arrangements have been made to accommodate the CHECC event at the end of November. This includes loaning them a large number of CSCC Keys, negotiating pre-payments for Eastwater and Swildons Hole, agreeing special permit and key arrangements with Charthouse Caving Company, etc. Hopefully they will have an enjoyable time on Mendip.

Fairy Cave Quarry

An attempt was made to break the car park padlock at Fairy Cave Quarry. Dave King very kindly fitted a replacement.

Ubley Warren Pot

Following an inspection by Tim Francis (MCG), Ubley Warren Pot is now open again for visits and has the standard CSCC Padlock.

Rose Cottage

A complaint has been received from the Rose Cottage landowners concerning cavers not using the agreed access route to the cave and instead climbing over the cottage gates. They have warned that access to the cave will be denied if this occurs again.

Wookey Hole Cave

An access agreement for "Dry Cavers" has been submitted to the Wookey Hole cave management team. If accepted, this will provide a way for cavers to arrange trips to the recent finds beyond chamber 20. This includes "Land of Hope and Glory" and the dry route to Wookey 24. It is hoped that the agreement will be up and running for the beginning of the new year.

Future Priorities

In the coming months I will be concentrating on the following priorities:-

- 1) Continue negotiations with Longleat.
- 2) Progress the items listed in the report.
- 3) Collect the Pressure Washers from the previous C&A Officer and arrange a cleaning session in conjunction with CCC Ltd in GB Bat Passage.
- 4) Progress access arrangements for Home Close.

If anyone has anything else they would like progressing then please let me know.

Wayne Starsmore
C&A Officer
CSCC