

WILLIAM PENGELLY CAVE STUDIES TRUST



Newsletter

Number 142
September 2025

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<https://pengellytrust.org>

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Issue 142
September 2025

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The William Pengelly Cave Studies Trust is registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) number 259303. The registered address for the Trust is

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ISSN 0309-9180

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All articles, notes, comments, reviews and news items are most welcome and should be sent to the Newsletter Editor. Authors are responsible for the contents of their articles which do not necessarily reflect the policies of the William Pengelly Cave Studies Trust.

This Newsletter is published online in pdf format on <https://pengellytrust.org/> where copies can be downloaded

Front cover: New viewing platform outside Reeds Cave; photo by John Wilmot
Back cover: Early days of the Museum; photos by Antony Sutcliffe

At its foundation in the early 1960s the Pengelly Centre was a singular innovation, focusing on cave studies and conservation rather than being another caving club. Progress in renovating the site was slow (and hindered by a chronic shortage of money) and the Trust, as we know it today, was still some time in the future. There were aspirations for other similar Centres elsewhere in the UK, but these never happened. But what the Trust did have was very extensive and wide-ranging links across the caving world and across relevant academic disciplines.

Being in Devon carried both advantages and disadvantages. Though not in a major UK caving region, the Centre and Trust in the early days did manage to get a lot of local support and to be seen as a significant environmental organisation. The remnants of that position are today reflected in the Trust's continuing involvement with the British Caving Association and its constituent bodies, as reported on pages 14-15, and the extent of its local contacts as seen in the development of the garden (see pages 16-17).

The danger always has been that the Trust and its Centre would be identified only with Devon and that users of the Centre and the Trust's contacts would be largely Devon-based. It is very tempting to be seen as just another tourist attraction in a region that is heavily committed to promoting tourism. So it is something of a relief to see that we have continued to have a significant presence with BCA (and particularly in the area of conservation) and that some new areas of research are beginning to open up. At the same time we have re-established contact with the Dartmoor National Park and with Kents Cavern, thus reinstating links that go back to the 1960s.

It is clear that we need to do more than this. In the past we have run symposia and lecture programmes locally and elsewhere in the UK and we have linked with museums and other organisations such as Creswell Crags. We hope that the new website will help to give us more prominence (see page 7) but we need to recruit more volunteers to help with these types of development.

Hence the pleas on pages 7 and 9. A very large number of people have contributed to the development of the Trust and Centre, but new recruitments are essential to their future.

Would you consider joining us?

John Wilmut

The Annual Meeting, 7th June 2025



The constitution of the Trust as a CIO does not provide for a conventional annual general meeting of members. We have, however, retained an annual meeting as an opportunity for Friends of the Trust to meet and for reports of Trust activities and accounts to be available for comment. The 2025 annual meeting was held at the Centre on 7th June and the Council presented an annual report and accounts for 2024.

Secretary's Report

The past year has been relatively successful. Bookings have remained stable supporting our income and ability to run the centre at Higher Kiln Quarry. Visits and education talks continue to provide a beneficial input into the community. School visits have almost ceased to exist primarily due to official constraints now imposed on teaching staff and Health & Safety rules for school trips.

Summer Walks along with the evening Bat Walks were very successful. Much credit must be given to the Trust volunteers who supported these events during the month of August. Plans are already in place

for these to continue in 2025. Concerns are still expressed over the continual degrading of the timbers for the boardwalk and remedial work is to take place once finances are organised.

Sadly we lost Professor Patrick Boylan, president of the William Pengelly Cave Studies Trust and a



long standing member, to illness leaving that position vacant for a while. Fortunately we were able to approach Professor Andrew Chamberlain, another long standing Trust member, who agreed to take on that role. Patrick Boylan's wife generously donated a considerable proportion of his personal book collection to the Trust's library at Buckfastleigh

The "Friends" programme associated with our change from a limited company in guarantee to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation still has not produced the results that we wished for. It does cause some concern for the future operation of the Trust along with people available to organise visits, walks and maintain the Centre.

The museum continues to look very presentable and there have been many favourable comments received from our visitors. We continue to provide a travelling display to other locations and events to promote the Trust and its activities whenever possible.

The Centre buildings, while in excellent condition continue to need regular improvements along with maintenance. Often problems are not properly reported to the management and this does have a knock-on effect to the next group using the Centre. The bio-mass central heating system continues to cause some issues with blockages due to damp wood pellets and general material breakdown clogging the fuel feed supply.

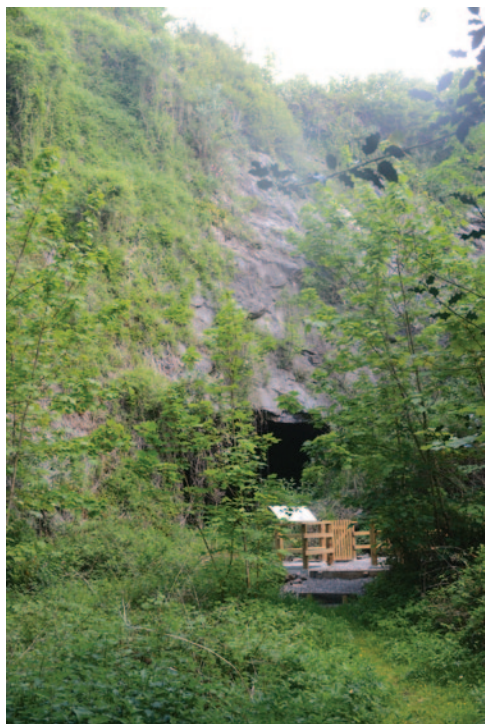
During 2024 concerns were expressed about the Trust website not coming up to the mark or providing accurate information. Plans were made and tenders requested to bring the site up to date and in a more user friendly format for 2025; much of this work was undertaken by John Wilmut



Regular Higher Kiln Quarry Management Committee meetings with Devon Wildlife Trust have resumed and things are now back onto a more stable footing after the shut-down during Covid problems.

The Trustees of the William Pengelly Cave Studies Trust have, under the chairmanship of Dave Warne, continued to meet regularly four times a year. The use of on-line meeting facilities, a left over from Covid, still continue to work for those who live too far away or unable to attend on the day to participate. We have this year met all our obligations under the Trust's Articles of Association and Charity Law.

While the Trust still remains one of the constituted bodies of the British Caving Association (BCA), it is felt that we need to have a more proactive role in its affairs and maintain contact with other organisations within BCA. Meetings are held on-line thus removing the need for expensive travel.



Richard Vooght, the Trust librarian, continues cataloguing and reappraising the ever-expanding contents through exchanges and donations. All material is housed in the library at the Centre, Higher Kiln Quarry and available to interested parties. Richard also manages the access to the caves of Buckfastleigh and supervises the approval of Reeds cave leaders. In addition to those duties, he looks after access to other important Devon caves on behalf of the Trust.

Sheila Phillips looks after the education and co-ordinates the many requests for talks, guided walks and visits.

John Wilmut's has produced regular newsletters which were circulated to friends of the Trust, exchanged

with other caving and karst organisations, some abroad. He also creates attractive leaflets along with hand bills for distribution.

I would like to thank all those who quietly help behind the scenes in all manner of ways sometimes not very glamorous although often essential to the smooth running of the Trust.

Alan Finch. Hon. Sec.

Accounts

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE	2024	2023
	£	£
Incoming Resources		
Subscriptions	431	413
Donations and Grants	337	782
Accommodation Charges	7,079	10,338
Day Visitors	2,173	2,568
Sundry Sales	721	614
Interest Received	186	123
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	<u>10,720</u>	<u>14,838</u>
Resources Expended		
Direct Charitable Expenditure	4,937	10,190
Management and Administration	8,028	2,201
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	<u>12,965</u>	<u>12,391</u>
RETAINED PROFITS (LOSS) FOR THE YEAR	(2,245)	2,447
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD	40,161	37,714
BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD	<u>38,217</u>	<u>40,161</u>

All amounts relate to continuing activities.

BALANCE SHEET	2024		2023	
	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS				
Tangible Fixed Assets		12		12
CURRENT ASSETS				
Cash at Bank -				
Centre (Devon) Account	13,814		16,705	
General Fund	6,431		5,671	
Shawbrook Bank Bond	17,917		17,785	
	<u>38,217</u>		<u>40,161</u>	
NET CURRENT ASSETS		38,217		40,161
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>38,217</u>		<u>40,161</u>
FUNDS (unrestricted)		<u>38,217</u>		<u>40,161</u>

David Jean, Hon Treasurer

From the Trust Council

New Council member

We are pleased to welcome Skip Greenwood as a member of the Council. Skip has been part of the volunteer guide group for the summer walks for the last 2-3 years and made a major contribution this year to both day and bat walks, when we were short of guides. He has a background in caving and works locally as a science teacher. He is shown here leading one of the bat walks in August.



Managing the Centre

Much of the Council meeting at the end of August was devoted to discussions about the Centre, its facilities and its management. A number of issues prompted this debate.

- There was concern that the CEC (Centre Executive Committee) had not been meeting and that there was therefore a backlog of maintenance work and a lack of supervision of work that had been done, such as the building of the new steps into the quarry (see the report on page 9).
- There was a need to review the suitability of the Trust library accommodation (see the report on pages 10-11).
- There was concern that some aspects of the Centre accommodation were in a poor state and that there was an ongoing need for a regular cleaning programme (see page 8).

At the same time there was disappointment that the Friends scheme had not taken off as had been hoped and a concern that the Trust needed to expand its external contacts. Several steps would therefore be taken.

- A draft revised terms of reference for the CEC would be generated for discussion before the December Council meeting.
- A complete inventory of the accommodation at the Centre would be undertaken, to identify and prioritise improvements that were needed.
- Council members would take steps to identify and follow up external contacts and report on these (see reports on pages 14-15).

Website improvements

We reported in the last issue that there had been some difficulties with developing a new website for the Trust. Following the discussion of this in the Council approaches were made to three local web designers, leading to a contract with Dave Hallett of Tavistock (<https://davehallett.net/>) which has resulted in a new site, still on the same address at <https://pengellytrust.org/>

The new site still has some work to be done on it; it was more important to have the site up and running as quickly as possible rather than that everything should be complete. The finished features include full descriptions of the Trust and its work, details of the Centre, its facilities and how it can be accessed, with a calendar that identifies all activities in which the Trust is involved. We aim to shortly have publications available for purchase and we expect to eventually have the whole library catalogue searchable via the site. News of forthcoming events and activities are available and the site was an important route through which potential visitors could make bookings for the summer guided walks.



We need a new website manager. Can you help?

I am grateful to Dave Hallett for the work that he did on the site and for continuing to provide support as we get used to managing it. For the moment I am acting as site manager but this is not a commitment that I wish to continue indefinitely.

John Wilmut

INTERESTED IN JOINING THE COUNCIL?

The Council is looking to expand its membership and to develop its range of experience and expertise. If you'd be interested or would like more information, contact the secretary, Alan Finch at alan@alanfinch.net

Cave Studies Centre developments

Quarry fencing and top field

In 2024 we had to replace damaged fencing in front of Joint Mitnor Cave and it is now clear that some other quarry fencing is in need of replacement. Some temporary improvements were made this summer but a more complete inspection and repair programme is needed - this is a matter for discussion with the Devon Wildlife Trust.

Although we are not responsible for the use of the field above the quarry, this is part of the SSSI and we do not want to risk any pollutants leaching into the caves below. For a short period during the summer there were some campers in the field, made accessible because the gate was not locked. The Devon Wildlife Trust is responsible for the field and has now prevented easy access by locking the gate.

Incidentally, this area is one of the best positions for seeing bats when we hold the summer walks. This year large numbers of Greater Horseshoe bats flew through the trees which border the field and were clearly visible from close to the gate.

Looking after the Centre buildings

Alarms

One visiting group clearly had problems with the Centre alarms and solved it by disconnecting cables, doing quite a lot of damage in the process. Dave Warne spent a considerable amount of time repairing the system and, in the process, updating all the key codes.

Cleaning

While almost all visiting groups do a good job cleaning the Centre before they leave, there is an ongoing need for occasional in-depth cleaning. It has been difficult to find a cleaner able to work on an occasional basis and a number of volunteers spent a lot of time preparing the Centre for public use during the guided walks.

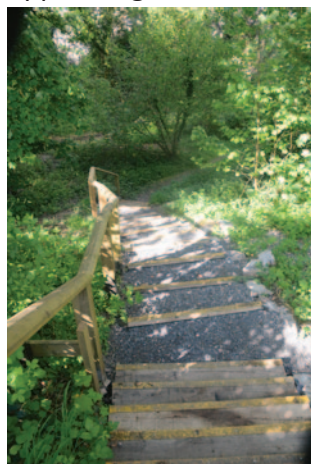
Drying Room

It is essential that visiting groups can use the drying room, especially during poor weather or after caving. Unfortunately the room has also been used as a dump for broken furniture and unwanted equipment. There has been a clear-up but more is needed.

Boardwalk and steps replacement

For some long time we have been reporting the disappointing deterioration of the boardwalk which was patched up yet again this summer. However, some significant progress has been made with the replacement of the wooden platform at Reeds Cave with a gravel surface and new railings.

Less successful has been the replacement of the steps down from the car park. They are of good quality but are sufficiently uneven in height and depth to be dangerous to use (though we managed to avoid problems during the 2025 walks). Some changes will be made before the summer season 2026.



But the platform in front of Rift Cave is also in need of repair. For the time being it will be possible to use some of the good timber rescued from the Reeds platform, although a large amount of rotten material from there and from the old steps has been disposed of.

Lights

There have been improvements in the lighting in Joint Mitnor Cave but more remains to be done. In the longer term we expect to replace the large and ancient piece of cast iron pavement furniture with a more modern and much smaller lighting console.

An email after a guided walk

I just wanted to say a massive thank you for the knowledge and exploration of your area. My Dad was born in Buckfastleigh and now my dad works in the area as well as my mum who I attended with yesterday. I never knew all the valuable work that was going on so close to where I spent so much of my childhood . I just loved the passion of the guides - it showed through. My mum has walked up the church steps and to the church and then down the other end a hundred times and she had no idea all the history etc there. Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming and sharing all your knowledge.

We still need helpers

We need help:

- with publicity for our events, activities and publications.
- to expand the range of events that we run outside the Centre.
- with guiding at the Centre
- with the website - we need a web manager (we can provide training).

The Trust library

The Pengelly Trust library is located at the Centre at Higher Kiln Quarry and receives publications from across Britain and overseas.

Librarian Richard Vooght has been involved in a long and demanding re-cataloguing of the collections and we published a first part of this catalogue in Newsletter 136 (September 2022). The new website is designed to include a searchable library catalogue once this work is completed.

However, it is clear that the library is rapidly running out of space and Richard, Andrew Chamberlain and John Wilmut met there in July to consider the options available. As a result of this they produced a report which was discussed at the last Council meeting. The gist of this report is that

- the material held in the library is of 3 types: archived material presented to the Trust by former members, books and journals
- some of this material may be of marginal relevance to the Trust's work
- some of this material almost certainly duplicates holdings in other libraries, notably those held by BCRA and UBSS
- the present library location is in a part of the Centre originally designed as accommodation and office space with rooms that are too small for easy access
- there is no space for a library user to work.



It would be possible to annex further space close to the present library but only at the expense of other Centre facilities. It would be possible to move the library elsewhere: it could, for example, be housed on the top floor of the museum in a space currently used by small study groups and for meetings.

It was agreed by the Council that, until cataloguing has been completed it is hard to predict the space needed by the library. So, for the time

being, cataloguing would be done in the present space to which some temporary shelving would be added. Decisions about what to keep and what to dispose of could follow, when a decision about where the library should be housed could be taken.

Since that discussion, Richard has catalogued the collection of books donated to the Trust from the late Patrick Boylan's personal library (described in Newsletter 141). There are over 300 items in that collection and this is only a fraction of the total holding of books in the library, many of which have yet to be unpacked from their boxed storage, ready for cataloguing. He has already identified some duplicate material and that will doubtless increase in volume.

At the same time, the current map chest storage will be replaced by a more economical way of keeping maps and surveys and some photographic material will be digitised.

New in the library

I picked up a few items that from the library desk. One, about bats, is reviewed on page 21 but there were also two issues (Vol 83, nos 06 and 07) of NSS News, the monthly magazine from the USA, and Vol 67, nos 4-6 of the Chelsea Spelæological Society Newsletter. A couple of things caught my eye.

Many years ago, when a member of CSS, I stayed a number of times at the Old Daren Sunday School close to Whitewalls, now the CSS HQ on the Llangattock escarpment. To be truthful, it was a slum. So I'm pleased to see that it's now owned by CSS and has been extensively renovated for use by CSS members and their families.

The NSS News is a demanding read but does reflect the wide scope of caving activity in the USA and by US cavers. One item dealt with the opening up of a recent extension to Mammoth Cave in Kentucky. The passage, once known and then lost, is called Georges Path and is nearly 800 ft long in a cave of total length of 426 miles, so this is not a major extension. But the history is interesting and certainly merits 4 pages of NSS News and a celebration.



John Wilmut

Visiting the Centre in 2025

Summer guided walks programme

In the last issue we reported the success of the 2024 guided walks programme where we held August day walks on 10 days (2 walks per day) and bat walks on 7 evenings. The demand for the bat walks was especially high with several fully booked.



In 2025 we offered a similar number of day walks, with two walks on each of the Wednesdays and Thursdays starting on 30th July; this made for 20 walks in all with up to 30 visitors per walk. We increased the number of bat walks with one evening walk on each of the same Wednesdays and Thursdays, making 10 walks in all, limited to 20 visitors per walk.

As before, we invited advance bookings on Eventbrite and we circulated advertising posters and leaflets over a rather wider area than in 2024 and also advertised the walks online. The walk fees were kept at the same level as in 2024. Guiding in 2025 was shared between 8 volunteers and we're grateful for their continuing support and commitment.

- Bookings were made for a total of 285 people, either paying in advance through Eventbrite (89%) or paying on the door. Although we can't be sure how visitors accessed the Eventbrite pre-booking system, the evidence suggests that most linked to it via the Trust website.
- The day walks operated at 27% capacity, while the bat walks were at 65% capacity. These figures were significantly lower than in 2024 when the percentages were 44% and 86% respectively.



- For the day walks 74% of those who came were adults and 26% were children. For the bat walks 67% were adults and 33% children.
- There was an increase in bat walk take-up as the month progressed, but no clear trend in day walk bookings.
- The income (including desk sales and donations) was £1930 compared with £2300 in 2024. The reasons for this reduction aren't clear.
- The clear success was the very large numbers of Greater Horseshoe and Pipistrelle bats seen on the bat walks.

A detailed report has been discussed by the Council but, as yet, no decisions have been made about the walks pattern for 2026.



Photos by John Brodribb & John Wilmut. Far left: Guided walk outside Joint Mitnor Cave; left: inside the entrance to Reeds Cave; above: starting a bat walk; right: bats flying overhead during the walk

Individual and group visits

Sheila Phillips continues to manage individual and group visits to the Centre. Those requesting these are very varied and she arranges programmes to suit their needs or specialisms. Recent visits have been from a U3A geology group, a number of groups of scouts, local nature and history groups and a WI group. There is scope for more visits like this. If you want to discuss a visit please contact Sheila (details inside the back cover). Visits are invariably tailored to the needs of individual groups.

WI group outside the museum. Photo by John Brodribb



BCA, DCUC, and access and conservation

The BCA (British Caving Association) is leading the representation of the sport of caving in the UK, similar to other sports federations. The Pengelly Trust was a founding representative of BCA (then called the National Caving Association) at its inception in 1970. This means that the Trust has as much influence on the BCA Council as the regional caving bodies, and the specialist caving organisations such as the British Cave Research Association. One of the regional caving bodies is DCUC (the Devon and Cornwall Underground Council) which manages issues of access, conservation, and training in Devon and Cornwall. Thus it does what the Pengelly Trust does for the caves in Higher Kiln Quarry, but obviously on a broader scale.

Richard Vooght represents the Trust on the BCA Council, with David Jean attending (as the DCUC's delegate if Richard is not available). The Council generally meets by Zoom every other month. He also represents the Trust on the BCA Access & Conservation Working Group which generally meets (also by Zoom) four times a year.

The Pengelly Trust is strongly represented on DCUC. Dave Warne is its chairman, Richard is the secretary and equipment officer, and David Jean represented DCUC on the BCA Council. DCUC generally meets four times a year at the Trust Centre. Richard has provided the information here.

Recent developments on access and conservation

The group has agreed to support the final stage of the pipework needed to maintain access to Limley Mine in Nidderdale which has been blocked for 110 years. This is associated with the caves of Nidderdale where the Black Sheep Diggers have done immense work in extending the Nidderdale cave systems.

The Council of Southern Caving Clubs' Conservation & Access officer has finally reached the an access agreement with Longleat Estates, subject to ratification at the CSCC general meeting. The agreement will cover Reservoir Hole, Spider Hole and Gough's Cave.

Funding is being sought to cover the conservation costs incurred in taping Slaughter Stream Cave (Long Round Trip) and Redhouse Lane Swallet in the Forest of Dean.

Recent developments from DCUC

The Afton Red Rift gate is being refurbished. John Boulton will reuse the original gate, but has replaced the frame. The gate has been totally re-installed.

DSS has repaired the Baker's Pit fence with a repair that will be sufficient for a few years.

At Radford, PCG removed the fence from the entrance chamber (pictures below).

Richard Vooght reinstalled the pull-through at Wheal Fanny with the help of Rick Stewart and a couple of PCG members.

Training for both SRT and Rigging is about to be organised by Olly Rees. For more details please get in touch with the DCUC Training Officer via <https://dcuc.org.uk/contact/>



Recent BCA activity

BCA has made its final submission to hold the 2029 International Speleological Congress in the UK (last held here in 1977).

The Forest of Dean is becoming its own Caving Regional body, subject to a formal vote at Council.

The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Access is taking a close interest in caving and the work of BCA, focusing especially on access rights.

From January 2026 the cost of BCA Membership will rise to: Caving Member £32, Non-caving £10, Student £12, with U18s free.



From a report by Sheila Phillips

Origins

During our early days at the Centre there was a rather badly overgrown area between the museum and the lamprophyre dyke which was used as a camping area while the accommodation was being developed. Then, about 25 years ago, Charlie Bird developed the area for Princes Trust Teams, many of whom came from inner city areas with little knowledge of the natural environment. Fruit bushes were planted, wildflower beds created, a pond dug and a bug hotel constructed. But this garden area deteriorated when Princes Trust Teams' visits ceased.

Revival

Local councillors were aware of the garden and suggested it should be revived with a £1,500 'Green Spaces ' grant, and become part of the Buckfastleigh Wildlife Garden Scheme. The rejuvenation was carried out by a team of Military Veterans under the leadership of a local horticulturalist.

Garden features

In its present state the garden includes fruit bushes, wildflower beds with pollen-rich species, bug hotels, a hedgehog hide, tree boundaries planted with native saplings donated by the Woodland Trust, a bed of Deptford Pinks (a red listed species), 16 posts topped with resin rubbing plaques depicting local plants and insects together with extinct animal species which once lived here, a camp fire circle and pathways surfaced with wood chips.

Who's it for?

It's for any site visitor to explore. Art notebooks and crayons are provided for children wishing to use the rubbing plaques. Beaver Scouts who are taking their Naturalist badge can use it as can Explorer Scouts studying, in conjunction with a Devon Wildlife Trust bat survey, for an Environmental Award.



Green Spaces at the Centre

Links to other site features

The garden can be seen as an integral part of the whole Higher Kiln Quarry site. Evening- flowering plants provide food for moths which are part of the Greater Horseshoe bat food chain. Extinct animals, the fossil remains of which are found in Joint Mitnor Cave, are depicted on the rubbing plaques. Many of the wildflowers are species specific to alkaline soil derived from the Devonian limestone in which the caves are found. Features of the garden link to information in the museum and on boards around the Centre about local climate change over time, and the consequent changes in flora and fauna.



Photos by John Brodribb, Sheila Phillips and John Wilmut.
Opposite: top - wildflower bed in front of the lamprophyre dyke;
bottom - local visits programme 2025. This page, clockwise from
top - rubbing plaque post; bat rubbing plaque; hot/cold climate
magnetic board in the museum; Ipswichian landscape board

Long Distance Walking on South Dartmoor

As a trustee of the Pengelly Centre I sometimes feel like something of an imposter, being neither a qualified geologist nor a caver. This said, I am fascinated by the geology of the area and have enjoyed exploring Reed's Cave, seeing the cave decorations and meeting the 'Little Man' face to face. I've taken groups in to show them the interior of Joint Mitnor many times, but the caves for which the Centre was founded have never been my primary reason for visiting Pengelly. I have spent two decades bringing groups to the area, either as a science teacher running field studies, or with trail-running, hiking, and climbing groups that I am involved with. This summer I took my son to walk the Two Moors Way, which passes just north of the Centre. With the new 100-mile South Hams Way long distance walking route having just been launched, which also passes within a stone's throw of the Centre, to me it seems the ideal base for groups who want to explore these trails, so I'm writing this in the hope of encouraging groups of walkers to get out exploring these trails and hopefully to make use of the Centre's accommodation.

My brother Tom and Nephew Josh live locally, and met us in Buckfast to walk with me and my son Gib for the first day of our expedition. Leaving their car near the Centre, they jumped in with us and I drove to Ivybridge to the start of the trail and we followed a green lane out of Ivybridge and onto Ugborough Moor, climbing steadily as Plymouth Sound and the coast gradually rose into view behind us. The view of the South Hams coastline was spectacular and looking along the coast it was easy to imagine how signal beacons would have carried the news of the Spanish Armada along that coast a few centuries ago.

We stopped to explore Sharp Tor amid a wayfaring herd of cattle and scrambled to the top to spy out as much as we could of the next four miles across the south moor towards the clapper bridge at Buckland Ford. The bleakness of the moor was regularly punctuated by a forgotten





industrial legacy of mine workings, tinnerns' huts and the looming spoil tip of Red Lake china clay works alongside prehistoric stone rows and barrows.

The weather was kind to us; it rained briefly twice, and after thirteen miles we dropped down from the moor into the village of Scorrilton, only to discover we were an hour

too early for the Tradesman's to be open. Instead we went for a well-deserved drink in the Abbey Inn just below the Pengelly Centre, then bade farewell to Tom and Josh, who were heading home, while Gib and I made our way back up to Scorrilton for a pub dinner.

Dartmoor is the only place in England where hikers enjoy right to camp in the upland country of the moors, and Gib and I had planned to make our way back up onto the moor that night. Instead a chance encounter with a local farmer in Scorrilton led to him offering up a flat field within a stone's throw of the pub, which, tired as our legs were, we were only too happy to take him up on.

By eight the following morning we were packed and on our way, stopping for coffee, ice cream, stocking up with cheese for lunch, and a chat with the shopkeeper in Holne. Half an hour after leaving the village, Horseshoe Falls on the Dart provided a good spot for a

morning wash before beginning the 250m climb up onto Aish Tor and Dr Blackall's Drive. By the time we stopped for an early lunch, a mile north of Ponsworthy, we'd seen a total of four people - Dartmoor seemed empty despite the sunny weather.

The next four miles took us up along the exposed ridge of Hamel Down, with views east over Widecombe towards the distant coast and west



back across the moor towards the hills we'd descended the previous evening. The ridge was spectacular, dropping us down into the ancient settlement of Grimspound, from where we opted for a mile's detour to pass the isolated Warren House Inn, where despite the sunshine, a fire, which has supposedly been burning continuously since 1845, was smouldering in the grate.



From the Inn we followed the Two Moors Way over Chagford Common before dropping off the official route once again to detour around the edge of Fernworthy reservoir. Gib had brought us both a freeze-dried Christmas dinner as a gift, which had been hanging around in amongst our hiking gear since the previous Christmas. So that July evening we feasted on rehydrated turkey, sprouts and roast potatoes, which to both of our surprise, turned out to be surprisingly good.



The following morning we packed up and headed up onto the north moor, stopping to explore Froggymead stone circle and the eerie ruins of Teignhead farm, filling our water bottle where the river Teign rises.

A hard few hour's march over the North moor, mostly following intermittent sheep tracks and ancient 'peat passes' and occasionally beating our own trail, took us up onto Hangingstone Hill, where the military were out on training manoeuvres, although thankfully no red flags were flying.

We were now at a little over 600m and at the highest point of our route, having by now headed west from the official Two Moors Way in favour of following the ridges and tors of the northern moor and dropping down into Okehampton to take a train back down to Ivybridge. The final few miles by streams and waterfalls through ancient oak woodlands were stunning, as was the train journey along the Exe and Teign estuaries and Dawlish coast.

Trust publications

Publications of the Trust may be obtained either from **Alan Finch** at 'Zennor', **Throwleigh Road, South Zeal, Okehampton, Devon EX20 2QA**. Telephone **01837 840259**. Some will shortly be available to order online at <https://pengellytrust.org/> or can be purchased from the Centre bookstall.

Here is a list of the books, booklets and leaflets available.

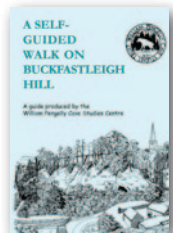
The first 4 publications can only be purchased at the Centre bookstall since the cost of postage now greatly exceeds their cover price.

Prices of the four books are available to order by post or online and the prices include postage and packing.

A Self-Guided Walk on Buckfastleigh Hill

John Wilmot, David Jean and Sheila Phillips (2004)

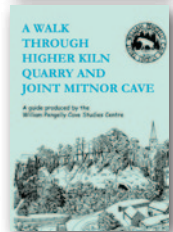
This is one of two guides for use at the Centre and it describes a self-guided route that starts at the Centre and introduces the walker to the principal features, structure and geology of the hill and its caves. It is well illustrated, has a map and is a good summary of the more detailed information in other Trust publications and in the Centre museum. £0-50



A Walk through Higher Kiln Quarry and Joint Mitnor Cave

John Wilmot, David Jean and Sheila Phillips (2004)

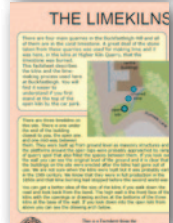
This is the second of two guides for use at the Centre. Over 12 pages it provides a summary of the principal features that visitors see in the guided walk through the quarry, in the bone cave and in the museum. It forms a companion guide to the self-guided walk, limekilns and geological garden publications. £0-50



The Limekilns

Wilfred Joint and John Wilmot (2005)

This is a 4-page supplement to the information boards at the Centre. There are four main quarries in Buckfastleigh Hill and all are in the coral limestone. Much of the stone taken from these quarries was burned for making lime in the kilns at Higher Kiln Quarry. This factsheet describes the kilns and the traditional lime-making process that was used at Buckfastleigh. £0-50

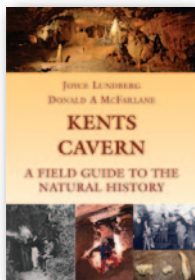


The Geological Garden

Bob Symes, Sheila Phillips and John Wilmot (2007)

This is another supplementary 4-page leaflet. In the courtyard of the Centre there is a group of rocks from the local area, set out as a geological garden. They give some idea of the range of rocks that visitors see on and close to Dartmoor. The leaflet gives detailed information about the rocks and where they came from. £0-50



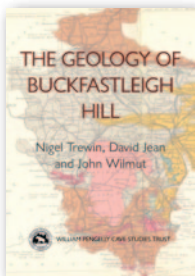


Kents Cavern: A Field Guide to the Natural History

Joyce Lundberg and Donald A McFarlane (2008)

Over more than 150 years researchers at Kents Cavern have discovered a sequence of deposits that cover a half-million year history, making this cave one of the most important cave sites in the world. Here the authors show how the cave first formed and developed and they describe the excavations by William Pengelly. The Guide then takes the visitor on a tour of the show cave. At each stop the authors describe the evidence on which our understanding of its development is built.

£4-50

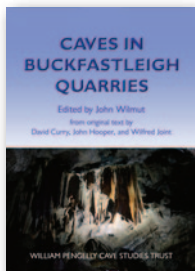


The Geology of Buckfastleigh Hill

Nigel Trewin, David Jean and John Wilmut (2007)

The origins of Buckfastleigh Hill go back 350 million years and its story embraces tropical seas, volcanoes, coral reefs and the building of a massive mountain chain. Caves in the hill's limestone provide evidence of ice age erosion and of warm periods when lion, elephant, hippopotamus and other animals roamed the Dart valley. This illustrated booklet provides a detailed description of the geological history of the hill.

£3-50

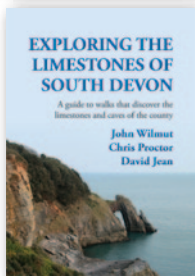


Caves in Buckfastleigh Quarries

Edited by John Wilmut (2012)

This booklet has been produced by the Trust as an updated and extended replacement for two of its earlier publications. It includes descriptions of the history, geology and exploration of the caves that will be of interest to anyone who has visited the area and particularly for those who have seen some of the caves at the Centre.

£5-00



Exploring the Limestones of South Devon

John Wilmut, Chris Proctor and David Jean (2014)

Created when Britain lay south of the equator, Devon's limestones are as exciting and interesting as any rocks in Britain, as are the caves which have been formed by the action of water over thousands of years.

Research in the last two centuries has yielded much information about our past climates and about the people, animals and plants that once inhabited this area. The walks are described in great detail and the book can be used to combine the walks in ways to suit the walker.

£7-00

Digital articles from back numbers of **STUDIES IN SPELEOLOGY** or from this **NEWSLETTER** are available. Please contact the librarian to enquire about copies.

The William Pengelly Cave Studies Trust and Centre:



The William Pengelly Cave Studies Trust is a charity, originating in 1962, when Higher Kiln Quarry at Buckfastleigh became the site of a cave studies centre. The quarry contains several caves including Joint Mitnor Cave where there are the remains of animals dating from the warm period between the last two ice ages. The organisation is named after William Pengelly, a local man who, in the mid-19th century, excavated local cave sites including Brixham Cave and Kents Cavern at Torquay.

He was responsible for establishing excavation methods and records that became a model for all modern archaeology.

Joint Mitnor Cave was first entered just before WW2 when bones were found and identified as the fossil remains of animals that had once been present in this location. The cave was excavated in the 1940s and 50s but a large part of the deposit was left in place and this can be viewed by visitors. The picture shows a tooth from a juvenile straight tusked elephant and bones from bison and red deer. Other species include hippopotamus, lion, hyena, wolf, and bear.



Other caves at the Cave Studies Centre are closed to visitors either because of their fragility or because they are used by hibernating bats.

There are other local caves that are used for recreational purposes.

What we do

Research

The Trust supports a range of research in areas such as cave water percolation, cave spiders, palaeontology and bat studies.

Education

The Trust provides information about cave studies through visits, lecture programmes, publications and displays in the Centre museum.

Conservation

The management of the quarry and caves is consistent with good cave conservation practice.

what we do and how you can visit us

How you can visit the Centre

Group visits

We welcome visits from student groups, children and special interest organisations. These can be at any time of year although visits to the caves are not possible from mid-autumn until mid-spring. Your visit can be tailored to your specific needs. To arrange, please contact **Sheila Phillips** on **01752 775195** or email danehurst@tiscali.co.uk

Specialist visits

These are visits from those individuals expressing interest in the Trust's work. Please contact **Sheila Phillips**, details above.

By joining public day walks

Held during July-August, widely advertised and lasting for a couple of hours including a cave visit; see the website <https://pengellytrust.org> for dates and times of the walks

By joining a public bat walk

Held on July-August evenings, these are an opportunity to see bats and hear the ways in which they use echolocation to navigate and catch insects. As above: see the website <https://pengellytrust.org>

Residential visits

We can accommodate just over 20 people. These visits are especially suitable for groups interested in environmental activities. Book or enquire on <https://pengellytrust.org> or to **David Jean** on **01752 700259**

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EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF THE MUSEUM

Photos by Antony Sutcliffe

Above and right:
Securing the structure of the
barn and pouring concrete for
the floor, 1963



Left: Bill Maxwell working on
the drainage

Right: an early committee
meeting, held in the museum in
about 1967-8

