



SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB
CLWB OGOFYDD DEHEUDIR CYMRU



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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2017

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NOTICE

Please take note that the 2017 Annual General Meeting of the South Wales Caving Club (Clwb Ogofeydd Deheudir Cymru) will take place on Saturday the 29th of April commencing at 9.00 a.m., in the Miners' Welfare Hall, Abercraf.

It should be noted that whilst all Club Members may attend the AGM, **only** Full Members, Honorary Members and both parties of a Joint Membership are entitled to vote. All **voting** participants are requested kindly to sign in at the start of the meeting.

REQUEST HARD COPY OF THIS DOCUMENT IN WRITING
FROM..... The Secretary, South Wales Caving Club, 419
Wimborne Road East, Ferndown, Dorset. BH22 9LZ

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Chairman's Welcome and Comments on 2016/17**
- 3. Minutes of the AGM of the 30TH April 2016**
Suggested Proposals:
 - (i) That the Minutes of the 2016 AGM be taken as read.
 - (ii) That, subject to any corrections, the Minutes of the 2016 AGM are signed as an accurate record
- 4. Matters Arising from the Minutes (not in this Agenda)**
- 5. Officers' Reports to the 2017 AGM**

Elected Officers:

- a) Secretary
- b) Treasurer
- c) Editor
- d) Records Officer
- e) Equipment Officer
- f) Cave Rescue Liaison Officer
- g) Warden
- h) Conservation Officer
- i) Training Officer
- j) Estate Manager

Other Reports:

- k) Assistant Secretary
- l) Communications Officer
- m) Fixed Aids Officer

Suggested Proposals:

- a) That the Officers' Reports be taken as read, and that the Officers answer any questions from the Meeting
- b) That the Officers' Reports be accepted *en bloc*

- 6. Auditor's Report**

Suggested Proposal:

That the Auditor's Report be accepted and the Club's thanks be recorded for his work during 2016/2017.

7. Subscriptions and Hut Fees

See recommendations in the Treasurer’s Report.

8. Nomination of John Lister as Honorary Life Member

A nomination has been received proposing that John Lister becomes a life time honorary member of The South Wales Caving Club. The proposal is made by Sam Moore, John Harvey, Jem Rowland, Fred Levett, Phil Buckberry and Chris Grimmett. A further 68 members have asked to be associated with this proposal. The following is a short statement from Sam Moore in support of the nomination.

‘I am privileged to be one of the Proposers for this motion to elect John Lister as an Honorary Life Member of the Club. The extent of that privilege is evident from the fact that over a quarter of the eligible membership has specifically asked to be associated with the proposal. I am not able to attend the AGM and I have therefore asked Gary to take the unusual step of including a short statement from me with the notice for the AGM. I have known John for more than 40 years. For all of that period he has devoted much of his enormous energy and skills to caving and to the Club, in ways which are too numerous to list in detail. Here, though, are just a few: Originally, he was a dedicated digger and the go-to man for specialist rock-breaking advice. Following on from that, he was responsible for the regularisation of the storage of unstable substances, which has been of enormous assistance in the extension and discovery of caves all over South Wales.

From there, his skills developed in more constructive if less dramatic ways. Roofing, groundworks and foul drainage have been prominent within his areas of expertise and very few people have contributed more time to the maintenance of the HQ, whether at Working Weeks or when he just happened to be there.

Most recently, for a mere 20 years or so, he has been one of the Club's elder statesmen. As a Trustee he has worked behind the scenes in ways that are not always visible, but which have contributed greatly to maintaining the Club in an enviable position as a respected local force.

John is now standing down from the role of Trustee and it is appropriate to recognise the enormous amount of work that he has done for the Club over many years. I commend this proposal to the AGM.

9. Nomination of Club Trustees

Immediately before the 2017 AGM three trustees are in post. These are Alison Maddocks, Clark Friend and John Lister. By letter dated 29th November 2016 John Lister has tendered his resignation as a club trustee effective at the 2017 AGM. This leaves the club with two Trustees in post. It is the aspiration of the committee that two new trustees will be selected and appointed as a result of the 2017 AGM bringing the total number to four, the maximum number allowed under the club constitution.

Four nominations have been received proposing members of the club for election as Trustees of The South Wales Caving Club. The four nominations are as follows.....

Haley Meredith proposed by Harvey Lomas, Gary Vaughan, Piers Hallihan David Dobson, Tim Lewingdon, and Allan Richardson.

Lisa Williams proposed by Harvey Lomas, Gary Vaughan, Piers Hallihan, Sam Moore, Brian Clipstone, and Allan Richardson.

Julian Carter proposed by John Lister, Toby Dryden, Simon Amatt, Anne Amatt, Sally Harvey and Brian Jopling.

Ali Garman proposed by John Lister, Toby Dryden, Simon Amatt, Anne Amatt, Sally Harvey and Brian Jopling.

10. Proposed Constitutional Amendments

The following amendments are put forward by the committee.....

5. SUBSCRIPTIONS

- a) All Subscription rates and Entrance Fees are to be determined by the AGM.
- b) Annual Subscriptions shall be payable on the 1st September. The AGM may elect to implement an early subscription fee payment incentive scheme for the following year. Any member who is more than two months in arrears of payment shall be deemed to have let their membership lapse.
- c) A person applying for Provisional Membership shall pay a fee to be set each year at the AGM. This payment covers Provisional Membership for a period of up to twelve months.
- d) Persons admitted to Full, Junior or Joint Full Membership shall pay an Entrance Fee but are not liable to pay an Annual Subscription until the 1st September following their admission.

11. Election of Officers

11.1 President: nominations for the following candidates, listed in alphabetical order, have been received:

Jem Rowland

Proposed by: Fred Levett, Paul Quill, Tony Baker, Peter Francis, Antonia Freem and Claire Vivian.

11.2 Vice-Presidents: for which nominations are accepted from the floor.

11.3 Officers:

- a) Chairman
- b) Secretary
- c) Treasurer
- d) Editor
- e) Records Officer
- f) Equipment Officer
- g) Cave Rescue Liaison Officer
- h) Warden
- i) Conservation Officer
- j) Training Officer
- k) Estate Manager

11.4 Four ordinary members: for which nominations are accepted from the floor.

12. Appointment of Auditor

13. Club Rules

The Club Rules have been amended by the committee over the past twelve months as is set out and provided for by the constitution. The constitution further suggests that the AGM ratify and or consider changes made to the Club Rules. A copy of the current Club Rules is included in the AGM documentation.

14. Policy Document

The Club Policy has been amended by the committee over the past twelve months as is set out and provided for by the constitution. The constitution requires that the AGM ratify changes made to the Club Policy. A copy of the current Club Policy is included in the AGM documentation.

15. Report on SWCC Land Options

The SWCC Committee was asked by the 2016 Annual General Meeting to report back with options for the future use of land now owned by the Club.

16. Any Other Business

17. Time and Venue for the 2018 AGM

The Constitution requires that the AGM be held on the Saturday proceeding the first Monday in May. This implies that the AGM will be held on Saturday 5th May 2018. The venue will be decided later.

SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB

CLWB OGOFYDD DEHEUDIR CYMRU

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Miners' Welfare Hall, Abercraf at 9.00 a.m. on Saturday the 30th April 2016.

1. Apologies for absence

16/A1. John and Tess Lister, Denise and Tony Knibbs, James Meredith, Les Davies, Judy Day, Peter Collins-Wells, Marijke Teeuwissen, Annie Hallihan, Jen and Ash Burrows, John and Chris Hutchinson, Claire Vivian, John Roe, Kevin Diffey, Rhys and Mandie Williams. Tim and Andrea Lewingdon.

There were 51 voting Members signed in – see archived sheets.

The Chairman concluded the apologies for absence by asking for those attending to stand and observe a minute's silence to reflect on those members who have passed away during this last year.

The meeting observed one minute of silence.

2. The Chairman's welcome and comments on 2015/2016

16/A2. The Chairman thanked everyone and welcomed those present and went on to say..... This year has seen the streamlining of the governance of the club. The committee has worked with a policy of discussing issues via email with the meetings often being simply a formal session in which these decisions are ratified. Likewise subcommittees have been created where interested members can take time to go away and properly consider issues, thereby making proposals for ratification by the clubs elected committee or the AGM. This has led to committee meetings being reduced to less than two hours and therefore hopefully a more attractive commitment for anyone considering a formal role within the club. Hidden Earth was well attended by club members and our stand did very well. The Huff was a great success as was the new OFD survey and I'm sure it went a long way in promoting the image of our club. Exploration continues with various local digs and diving continuing but the fabulous news was the discovery of Ogof Marros. I'm sure everyone here will wish the explorers the best of luck and hope the club can offer support where and when needed.

After a long drawn out process the OFD survey was finally published and has been a great success. I would like to formally thank everyone on behalf of the club who took part in the process of getting this map surveyed, drawn, proofed and published. Hopefully we can make it obsolete before it sells out. So please get in there and start pushing our cave.

Membership is something that has concerned me a great deal over the past year. I think it is time we seriously looked at ways to attract new members, particularly more local and younger members. I feel we need to show the general public the positive aspects of caving. We need to people to

understand that it is a team sport and that by offering one of the few true opportunities for exploration it is a unique and very special pastime. And finally, I hope you all have a wonderful anniversary celebration this weekend and I hope to see you all again at the 75th or 80th celebrations.

3. Minutes of the 3rd May 2015 AGM

16/A3a. The Chairman invited the proposal that the minutes of the 2015 AGM might be taken as read.

Proposed by Peter Hobson

Seconded by Allan Richardson.

Majority in favour 0 Against 0 Abstention Carried

16/A3b. The Chairman then invited the proposal that the minutes, subject to any corrections, be signed as an accurate record.

Proposed by Peter Hobson

Seconded by David Dobson

Majority in favour 0 Against 0 Abstentions Carried

There were no corrections offered for the 2015 AGM minutes.

4. Matters arising from the 2015 AGM Minutes

There were no matters arising from the 2015 AGM minutes

5. Officers' Reports to the 2014 AGM

16/A5. The Chairman invited the proposal that the reports be taken as read.

Proposed by Piers Hallihan

Seconded by Leigh

Davies.

Majority in favour 0 Against 0 Abstentions Carried

Questions to Officers

The Chairman then invited questions to each officer's report.

16/A5a. Secretary

Sam Moore asked for clarification about the Cnewr Estate Hydro Electric scheme planning application. GV explained that an application had been made for a scheme which included an abstraction point about 70m upstream of the current PWUA abstraction point. He had spoken to Cnewr who were not holding out much hope that the scheme was financially viable and the scheme is unlikely to proceed. It had been left that if the scheme was to proceed that Cnewr would consult with SWCC over future abstraction arrangements.

The Secretary was asked what the current situation was with respect to the closure of the quarry. GV advised that the club was still very much waiting to hear with respect to timescales and plans.

Brian Jopling asked if Lafarge were aware of the current access arrangements and could those be clarified. GV explained that Lafarge were fully aware of the current access arrangements which were to unlock the gates on a Friday tea time and to lock the gates on Sunday (or Monday in the case of a Bank Holiday) tea time.

16/A5b. Treasurer – no questions.

16/A5c. Editor – no questions.

16/A5d. Records Officer – no questions.

16/A5e. Equipment Officer – no questions.

16/A5f. Cave Rescue Liaison – no questions.

16/A5g. Warden – no questions.

16/A5g. Conservation - No questions.

16/A5i. Training - No questions.

16/A5j. Fixed Aids – no questions.

16/A5k Communications Officer – No Questions

16/A5l Assistant Secretary - No questions

16/A5m Estate Manager

16/A5n. The Chairman then invited the proposal to accept the Officers' Reports *en bloc*.

Proposed Pete Hobson

Seconded Piers Hallihan

Majority in favour

0 Against

2 Abstentions

Carried

6. Auditor's Report to the 2015 AGM

16/A6. The chairman asked for a proposer for the suggested motion in the Agenda

Motion

That the auditor's report be accepted and the Club's thanks be recorded for her work during 2014/15.

Proposed Pete Hobson

Seconded Sam Moore

Majority in favour

0 Against

2 Abstentions

Carried

There were no matters arising from the 2014/15 Auditor's Report.

7. Subscriptions and Hut Fees

16/A7 The Treasurer said that he recommended no increase in subscriptions or hut fees. The club had a large positive bank balance and he felt there was a need to attract new young members.

Motion

That there is no increase in the subscriptions or hut fees this year.

Proposed Fred Levett

Seconded

Paul

Meredith

Majority in favour

0 Against

2 Abstentions

Carried

Piers Hallihan pointed out that the motion was not to increase. He felt it would be good to reduce visitor rates.

Motion

That the club reduces hut fees for guests.

Proposed Piers Hallihan

Seconded

Bob

Radcliffe

9 in favour

34 Against

6 Abstentions

Defeated

8. Nomination of Peter Cardy as Lifetime Honorary Member

16/A8 Brian Jopling explained that Peter was very instrumental in getting new members caving back in the day. He had contributed to the club in many ways such as the cave gates and the refurbishment of the HQ kitchen. He had served on the club committee in a variety of posts including Chairman. He had been instrumental in starting Working Week.

The secretary read out the written proposal to the meeting.

Proposed: B. Jopling, Paul Quill, Fred Levett, Tony Baker, Allan Richardson Jem Rowland.

The vote was taken by secret ballot and verified by the Secretary and Chairman who confirmed that in excess of the required two thirds present and voting had voted in favour of the motion. The proposal was therefore carried and Peter Cardy was now a full Honorary Member of South Wales Caving Club.

Peter was invited back into the room to general applause. B. Jopling stated that there was a party planned for the end of August to celebrate Pete being a member of the club for fifty years.

9. Election of Officers

16/A14 (i) President

GV pointed out that concerns had been put to him that nomination and seconding was not an election. When there was only one candidate it had been custom and practice to accept the candidate without a formal vote. GV asked what the floor wished to do. Sam Moore suggested that some posts were mandatory. GV requested a formal proposal. Fred Levett stated that there was a certain expediency to the past practice but that there was a risk. He stated that there should exist some sort of mechanism for any member to require that there be a vote. Keith Goodhead stated that at the same time we should address the situation of a solitary candidate being unsuccessful. Fred Levett suggested this be put to the Governance sub-committee.

Motion

That for this year, in the event of only one candidate for an ordinary officer post the candidate is deemed to be elected by default.

Proposed Tony Baker.

Seconded Clark Friend

32 in favour 1 Against 6 Abstentions Carried

Tony Baker stated that when he first joined the club each post was contended quite vigorously. He stated that the club needs to look into the problem. Harvey Lomas stated that the club was not alone in suffering from this problem.

There was 1 nominations for President:-

Jem Rowland

Proposed: Fred Levett, Tony Baker, Chris Grimmett, Clark Friend, David Mullin and Chloe Francis.

The vote was taken by secret ballot and verified by the Secretary and Chairman who confirmed that in excess of the required two thirds present and voting had voted in favour of the motion. The proposal was therefore carried and Jem Rowland was elected President of South Wales Caving Club.

Jem spoke briefly and said what an honour it was to be holding the post again this year.

He stated that the club has worked well over the past year. The structure of sub committees had been working well. He stressed that the club still needed to attract new members.

16/A14 (ii) Vice Presidents

The three Trustees were proposed en bloc.

Alison Maddocks

Clark Friend

John Lister

Proposed Andy Dobson Seconded Brian Jopling **Elected unanimously**

Mick Day

Proposed D. Dobson Seconded Allan Richardson **Elected unanimously**

Fred Levett

Proposed J. Rowland Seconded Kieth Goodhead **Elected unanimously**

16/A14 (iii) Officers of the Club

Chairman

Piers Hallihan

Proposed B. Jopling Seconded L. Davies **Elected**

Pete Hobson

Proposed Simon Amatt Seconded A. Richardson

Fred Levett proposed a vote of thanks to Pete Hobson for all of his good work over the past two years as Chairman.

Secretary

Gary Vaughan

Proposed P. Hobson Seconded T. Baker **Elected**

Treasurer

Harvey Lomas

Proposed P. Francis Seconded V. Alkins **Elected**

Editor

No nominations

Post not filled.

Pete Francis proposed a vote of thanks to Chloe for her hard work over the past year. Chloe Francis stated that she was happy to continue to help out as best should could before leaving for New Zealand.

Records Officer

Allan Richardson

Proposed H. Lomas Seconded P. Hobson **Elected**

Equipment Officer

Iain Miller

Proposed B. Jopling Seconded V. Alkins **Elected**

Cave Rescue Liaison Officer

Vince Allkins

Proposed P. Hallihan Seconded B. Jopling **Elected**

Warden **Brian Clipstone**
Proposed Graham Christian Seconded A. Dobson **Elected**

Conservation Officer **Dave Dobson**
Proposed Allan Richardson Seconded B. Woodley **Elected**

Pete Hobson
Proposed B. Jopling Seconded A. Dobson

Training Officer **Pete Hobson**
Proposed P. Hallihan Seconded G. Vaughan **Elected**

Estate Manager **Chris Grimmett**
Proposed B. Jopling Seconded V. Alkins **Elected**

16/A14 (iv) Ordinary Members

The Chairman invited nominations for four ordinary members:-

Tim Lewington
Proposed P. Hallihan Seconded P. Meredith **Elected**

Martin Hoff
Proposed C. Michel Seconded T. Baker **Elected**

Leigh Davies
Proposed L. Williams Seconded P. Hallihan **Elected**

Bernie Woodyly
Proposed P. Hallihan Seconded V. Alkins **Elected**

15. Appointment of Auditor

16/A15 Patrick Hall was proposed as Auditor.

Proposed B. Jopling Seconded K. Goodhead.

All in favour with treasurer abstaining from vote.

16. Policy Document

16/A16 F. Levett explained the rationale behind the re-working of the document. The document is drafted as an outward looking document. K. Goodhead had noticed significant changes and in particular the term 'Not for Profit' caving. He stated that a lot of people come into caving through guided groups. He was worried about the antithesis of the term. B. Stevens stated that profit making organisations were not excluded but simply not treated preferentially. B. Radcliffe stated that he thought the document was well thought out and spot on. K. Goodhead stated that he was most concerned about clause 7. Paul Meredith pointed out the value of the Policy Document in teasing out debate such as the one in progress. A. Richardson stated that he thought the club was losing business by excluding such profit making groups. B. Jopling stated that he did not wish to see profit making

organisations using the cave. J. Rowland stated that the club needed to have a clear policy on commercial caving.

P. Francis was concerned about losing army camping at the club. P. Hobson reminisced about New Zealand and the detriment caused by the gradual power exchange from club cavers to commercial cavers. Fred Levett stated that the document had been carefully written so as not to exclude anyone.

Motion

That we accept the document as it stands and ask the committee to look at the term 'not for profit'. Proposed Paul Meredith. Seconded Allan Richardson

36 in favour 0 Against 1 Abstention Carried

B. Jopling proposed a vote of thanks to Fred Levett for his hard work.

17. Any Other Business

16/A17 Vote of thanks to Lel Davies

Lisa Williams proposed a vote of thanks to Lel for all of her hard work over the years.

15/A18 Folk Party

Harvey Lomas stated that there would be a Folk Party the July committee weekend and he hoped that members would support the event.

15/A19 Duty Officers

Harvey Lomas stated that the Duty Officer Raffle would be drawn at the 70th Anniversary Dinner. B. Jopling stated that the club was deserted on some weekends and this was not conducive to encouraging new members to be DO. We needed more consistent use of the cottage. G. Christian was aware of the clash between trips out of the region. These needed to be scheduled well. Lisa pointed out that P.Hobson was now in an excellent position with respect to organising club events.

Motion

That the committee enforce Rule 1.

Proposed Keith Goodhead

Seconded Paul Quill

6 in favour 15 Against 18 Abstention Defeated.

Clark Friend then stated that it would be appropriate to make the complimentary motion that the club drop rule 1. There was no seconder for this motion.

Piers Hallihan stated that the club does need to consider how new members are inducted into the club. There are a lot of new members but not very many engage actively with the club for example on committee weekends.

Motion

That the committee be instructed to bring a proposal to the next AGM with respect to the enforcement or application of Rule 1.

Proposed Sam Moore

Seconded Paul Quill

36 in favour 1 Against 4 Abstention Carried.

B. Jopling stated that if a sub-committee was appointed to look at the issue that the committee strives to populate the sub-committee with younger members.

15/A20 Lawn Mower

Pat Hall stated that the club had paid to mow the lawn in the past.

Motion

That the club buys a suitable lawnmower.

Proposed Sam Moore

Seconded Paul Quill

28 in favour 0 Against 10 Abstention Carried.

15/A21 The Club Estate

B. Jopling asked as to the status of the grazing licence. GV explained that the committee's current thinking was to aim to have the land maintained at zero cost to the club. In return for grazing it was hoped to obtain enhancement to the land in terms of walls and fences. Alison Maddocks stated that funds were potentially available if the land is registered for use as certain type of use. A holding number is needed. H. Jopling stated that fire risk needed to be taken into consideration.

B. Jopling asked to what purpose some of the club land was owned. P. Francis stated that any land over the cave needed to be kept to control risk to the cave. Clark Friend stated that a potential 'new' landowner breaking into the cave could potentially own a considerable portion of the cave.

Motion

That the committee be instructed to look into all options for the land that the club owns and report to the 2017 AGM.

Proposed B. Jopling

Seconded Piers Hallihan

27 in favour 7 Against 11 Abstention Carried.

15/A22 Mary Hazelton's dragon

David Dobson inquired about the whereabouts and wellbeing of Mary Hazelton's dragon. Allan Richardson pointed out that the officers report had recorded that it was safe and well.

15/A23 The Septic Tank

Graham Christian asked after the health of the septic tank and how often the septic tank was being emptied. The Warden advised that it had been emptied at least three times this year. G. Christian wished to draw to the attention of the club that items such as wet wipes had been found in the septic tank. If the tank was not maintained we could get an overflow into the soakaway which would require a considerable amount of work. This message needs to be circulated to people using the HQ. Only toilet paper and things that you have eaten are to go into the toilet.

15/A24 WiFi at the club

Paul Meredith asked if the situation with respect to WiFi could be regularised. Harvey Lomas stated that the club chip and pin operated through WiFi. He did not know about any private WiFi available at the club. H. Meredith suggested that if the club was seeking to attract younger members WiFi could be an asset. A. Maddocks stated that it is only two days to be away for and that it shouldn't be needed.

Motion

That the club makes adequate WiFi freely available to its members and guests.

Proposed G. Vaughan

Seconded V. Alkins

32 in favour 1 Against 5 Abstention Carried.

G.Vaughan stated that in stating in the motion that the wifi was to to be freely available he meant at zero cost to the users.

G. Vaughan was concerned about the ethos of the club. There was a rule about the use of electronic equipment to the annoyance of members. David Dobson stated that it should be possible to design dead zones within the coverage. C. Michel stated that the long term health risks of WiFi were not yet known and the club should be cautious.

Motion

That the committee seeks to ensure that with respect to the introduction of WiFi that the ethos of the club is maintained as best as it can be,

Proposed G. Vaughan

Seconded K. Goodhead

Unanimous in favour 0 Against 0 Abstention Carried.

15/A25 PWUA

B. Jopling asked as to the situation with respect to PWUA. GV stated that the PWUA had been taken back under control again. A borehole was being looked into and a report should come to fruition in the coming year.

15/A22 Date and time of AGM 2017

Proposal "The 2017 AGM will be held at 9.a.m. on Saturday 29th April at a venue to be decided (probably the Miners' Welfare Hall, Abercraf).

Proposed G. Vaughan

Seconded P. Hobson

Majority in favour 3 Against 1 Abstention Carried.

15/A23 There being no other business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 11.52am

G. Vaughan

16 May 2016

Officers' Reports to the 2017 AGM

Secretary's Report

The year from May 2016 to April 2017 has been a busy year for me. There are a considerable number of duties that fall under the SWCC Secretary role and as such I have not always been able to devote as much time as I would have liked to particular matters. If there has been a matter that anyone feels has been passed over or not given the full attention that it deserves then I offer my apologies here and ask that consideration is given to what at times is a hectic workload. There exists a small band of 'Christmas Elves' who silently and helpfully assist me in certain chores. There is the helping Elf who sorts all of the trip tickets into neat elastic banded bundles. There is another helping Elf who helps me with typing stuff up. There are other helpful Elves who e-mail me and telephone me with all sorts of helpful news in order that I am as up to speed with events as I can hope to be. I would like to offer a big THANK YOU to all of these helpful souls and let them know that their kind assistance is seldom acknowledged but very much appreciated. And so moving on to the business of the club and in no particular order of priority

Sad Losses in the Last Twelve Months

The year 2016/17 has on the basis of total numbers thankfully not been as bad as the previous year for Member mortality. The two exceptions however are the sad loss of Tony Knibbs and John Lister. I am extremely glad that I knew Tony and caved with him. He was a fine fellow and I enjoyed his company very much. My everlasting memory of John will be a trip to Waterfall Series in OFD 1 with my two boys Josh and Ben and his reaction to the heavily 'marmited' sandwiches that they shared with him. The club has lost two fine members this year and the club is diminished for that loss. As with all SWCC members and past members who have departed from this earth in the past twelve months, I trust that they will live on ever in the memories of Club Members.

70th Anniversary Dinner

This event unfolded as planned the evening after the last AGM. By all accounts it was an evening that was thoroughly enjoyed. It has not escaped my notice that there is no formal club event planned for the AGM weekend this year. The 70th Anniversary was a very special event that required a considerable level of organisation. Many clubs have an annual dinner. SWCC has traditionally had less formal annual events interspersed from time to time with more formal dinners. In my view a

break this year is good and I think the club should take stock of what it would like to see in terms of formal annual social events.

Organisational Structure

The practice of referring difficult matters out to sub groups and committees has continued to function well over the past twelve months. Several of the sub groups are well established and functioning to a level where the frequency of referral has demanded an acronym. The GSC or Governance Sub-Committee is an example as is the FAWP or Fixed Aids Working Party. The time is fast approaching where in my view the club will need to ask itself if the executive decision making committee needs to be populated in the way that the current constitution demands. A sleeker executive committee populated by a good cross section of members could be easier to appoint at an AGM with perhaps greater competition for a smaller number of posts.

Rule 1

The 2016 AGM directed the committee to look into the matter of Rule 1. There is no specific agenda item in this year's AGM for discussion of Rule 1 but there is a wider reaching item for ratification of the Club Rules. One of the rule changes that the committee has made in the past twelve months is the deletion or removal of Rule 1 which as most members will know specified that it was a 'duty' of members who used the HQ to take a turn as DO. The SWCC committee has taken the decision to remove rule 1 as a result of guidance from a sub group known un-surprisingly as the Rule One Working Group (ROWG). Considerable effort was made by the ROWG to understand the feelings of the club and the membership towards Rule 1 and the role of Duty Officer. Without wishing to over simplify the work of the ROWG the key findings can be summarised by stating that Rule 1 was perceived to be potentially a punitive approach to producing duty officers..... A rule being a mechanism for ensuring compliance which implies some form of retribution if the rule is not complied with. To my knowledge Rule 1 has never been enforced by punitive action and in effect has functioned more as a form of moral persuasion. In effect SWCC would not expel a member for not being a duty officer but it would very much like to encourage members to take up the role. The ROWG concluded that what the club needs is incentive rather than threats. The aspiration to have an effective duty officer system therefore rightly belongs as an aspirational policy within the club Policy Document rather than a rule within the Club Rules. See the revised Club Policy also appended to this document.

The Duty Officer System

This system still continues to bump along. Discussion on the way forward for this system was very much at the heart of the GOWG discussion. I think it is important for me as Club Secretary to state for the record and make clear here that by the abolition of Rule 1 it is not intended that the Duty Officer system should become defunct, far from it in fact. The committee has resolved to enshrine the Duty Officer system with club policy and to seek to enhance the efficacy of the system by several initiatives. The ROWG has been asked to continue its work in this respect and to advise on processes and procedures for improving the Duty Officer system.

The Roof Project

This project has made progress over the past twelve months but perhaps not as much progress as some would have liked to see. There is no formal agenda item for The Roof Project and that in itself is regrettable. My report to the AGM would conclude that the way in which the club is to set about administering the roof replacement project is not clearly agreed. Further discussion is required. Project management needs to be established with clear objectives and remit. Perhaps most importantly the club needs contribution from members with skill, experience and most importantly enthusiasm for project fund raising.

Child Protection Procedures.....

The committee has resolved over recent months that the club lacked certain elements with respect to Child Protection Procedures. Procedures are quite distinct from Policies. The Club's stated policy on Child Protection is set out in the existing Policy Document. No amendment has been made to Club Policy with respect to Child Protection in the past twelve months. Over the past twelve months the Committee has reviewed its procedures with respect to Junior Members. To improve upon the club's legal position in this respect a series of procedures and guidelines have been introduced which fall in line with certain national procedures. A club Rule has been amended. The club now has a Child Protection Contact (CPC). All matters of concern with respect to child protection should be reported to the CPC.

Gary Vaughan, March 2017

Treasurer's Report

This year has seen a steady stream of income from various sources, mainly subscriptions and hut fees. Hut fees are slightly up on last year . Subscriptions were slightly down because last year included the BCA insurance premiums, this year is shown separately, even so there is a small fall in income from subscriptions.

There was also increase in donations reaching £2284

Expenditure: An increase in HQ operations was due mainly to the flooring of the shower block and corridor, in 2015/2016 nothing was spent on publications however this year we did spend,£3,355.

The club spent £920 more on equipment than last year and more on electricity because of an actual meter reading by our supplier .

we have changed our gas supplier from Aventi to Calor they have quoted a much lower rate than Avanti Gas.

The re-roofing project will dominate Club finances in the coming years and expenditure must reflect this, however essential maintenance and keeping 1 to 10 Powell in good order should not be neglected .

I do not propose an increase in subscriptions (our subscription are very high in comparison to other clubs)

Also hut fees for the foreseeable future I do not propose any increase, the present fees seen about right.

Paypal: This is being used more and more especially by groups. If it can save somebody going to the bank (if you can find one) and wait in a queue with sometimes over a thousand pound then it is worth having.

The accounts was been a team effort, but mainly by C Grimmit who has worked had to bring these accounts together.

Subscriptions:	Individual Full	£47
	Joint Full	£71
	Junior Full	£24
	Retired Full	£32
	Joint retired full	£47
	Provisional Full (flat rate)	£10
	Entrance fee	£10 (Conversion to full)
	Early Payment discount	-£5

Harvey Lomas Treasurer

March 2017

Supporting Notes to the Treasurer's Report 1.

Committee Recommendations on Subscription Rates

Under the Constitution, the AGM sets all Subscription rates, but there are many variants and specific rates have not always been explicitly addressed at the actual meeting. The Committee is therefore proposing that the AGM agrees to the adoption of a set of standard ratios and flat rate amounts, to be rounded up to the nearest pound where appropriate. The recommended ratios are set out below, based on the undiscounted individual Full Member subscription and are the ones which have been informally applied for several years. These ratios would remain in force until changed by a future AGM.

Individual Full Member subscription	100%	
Recommended to be £47 for 2017/18		
Joint Full Member subscription	150%	Recommended to be
£71 (rounded)		
Junior Full Member subscription	50%	Recommended
to be £24 (rounded)		
Retired Full Member subscription	67%	Recommended
to be £32 (rounded)		
Joint Retired Full Member subscription	100%	Recommended
to be £47		
Provisional Member (all classes)	Flat rate	Recommended
to be £10		
Entrance Fee (conversion to Full Member)	Flat rate	Recommended
to be £10		
Early Payment discount (see Constitutional Amendment)		Recommended
to be £5 in all cases.		

There has been no definition of the eligibility criteria to qualify to pay Retired Member subscription rates. The Committee proposes the following, which again represents current practice.

Retired Full Membership subscription rates are available to those who have reached the age at which they would qualify for a UK State Pension, whether or not they are actually in receipt of such a pension. Joint Retired Full Membership rates are available where one or both of existing Joint Members meet that age qualification.

Supporting Notes to the Treasurer’s Report 2.

Treasurer’s Assistants Comments on 2016/17

The surplus of just over £10,000 was in the expected range when compared to previous years. Income from Hut Fees was slightly up whereas Subscriptions appeared to be slightly down, although this was only an artefact of when they were collected. The Club’s Utility costs remained about constant year on year, HQ Maintenance was well down but HQ Operations costs were higher. The near absence of any legal bills provided a big positive although this was countered to some extent by having two publications during the year.

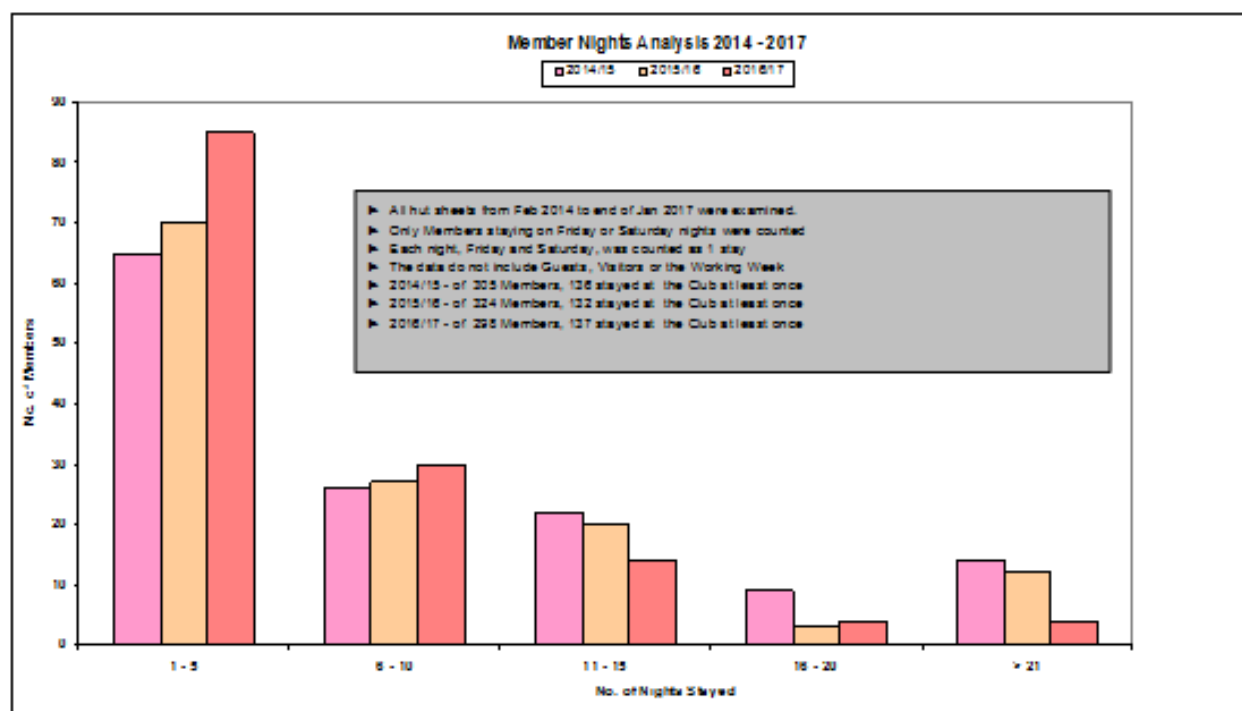
The many ways by which Hut Fees may now be paid (and increasingly not paid) has required a rethink in the way that HQ income is tracked and recorded, with more changes still to come.

Chris Grimmett

Supporting Notes to the Treasurer’s Report 3.

Active Membership Data (see chart below)

Allan Richardson has repeated his Member nights analysis, started in 2014/15 and which is shown below in graphical form. The overall pattern of Club use by Members shows an emerging trend towards shorter stays. In 2016/17, the ratio of Members to other HQ users did not vary outside its usual range with 36% of hut fees being contributed from SWCC and 64% from Reciprocal Members, Guests, Visitors, and Students.



South Wales Caving Club**Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31st January 2017**

		<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>
		£	£
<u>Income</u>	<i>Note</i>		
BCA	1	0	0
Committee Expenses	3	399	0
Donations	4	2,539	780
Equipment	6	300	0
Estate	7	367	594
Gas	9	120	0
HQ Maintenance	10	132	120
HQ Operations	11	661	890
Hut Fees	12	19,402	18,544
Insurance	13	233	556
Interest	14	5	5
Library	17	0	43
Merchandise	18	2,516	2,652
Miscellaneous	19	3,345	243
Social Events	22	0	2,188
Subscriptions	23	10,487	13,496
Water	25	0	1,028
		<u>40,505</u>	<u>41,139</u>
<u>Expenditure</u>	<i>Note</i>		
BCA	26	150	2,620
Committee Expenses	28	1,280	428
Electricity	30	2,377	2,073
Equipment	31	1,250	330
Estate	32	0	593
Finance Charges	33	40	6
Gas	34	3,663	3,487
HQ Maintenance	35	4,126	6,290
HQ Operations	36	3,327	1,662
Hut Fees	37	14	0
Insurance	38	3,191	3,077
IT	40	257	0
Legal	41	612	4,069
Library	42	583	135
Merchandise	43	1,501	2,512
Miscellaneous	44	3,839	1,281
Publications	45	2,922	0
Roof	46	433	0
Social Events	47	0	1,317
Water	50	845	145
		<u>30,409</u>	<u>30,026</u>
<u>Surplus/(Deficit)</u>		<u>10,096</u>	<u>11,112</u>

South Wales Caving Club

Notes to the Accounts (Income and Expenditure)

Vote

- 1 -
- 3 Returned payments unable to be credited to a bank account (balanced by expenditure)
- 4 All Donations and some party surpluses were allocated to the Roof Fund
- 6 Cave gate funding from NRW
- 7 The Stump and Cottage No.2 leases
- 9 Rebate on tank rental from a previous supplier
- 10 Rebate on an item returned as wrongly ordered (balanced by expenditure)
- 11 Keys, Lockers, Shower boxes and Telephone
- 12 See Table HQ Usage Data 2012-2017
- 13 Insurance premium repayments for The Stump from Swindon CC and Wealden CMS
- 14 Interest from Deposit Account
- 17 Library books
- 18 Batteries, Books, Buffs, Mugs, Posters, Surveys and Shirts/Badges
- 19 Income mostly from 70th Anniversary dinner
- 22 Income from social events. Any year on year comparison is skewed by 70th Anniversary Dinner income
- 23 Subscriptions income now back to a typical value following changes to the membership year
- 25 -

Note

- 26 BCA insurances and Club membership
- 28 AGM, postage and stationery. Includes returned payments unable to be credited to a bank account (balanced by income)
- 30 Electricity supply. The large increase is due to a long-term undercharge resulting from a string of (under)estimated readings
- 31 Equipment, cave maintenance and expenditure on caving bursaries
- 32 -
- 33 Finance charges incurred for transactions by PayPal
- 34 LPG supply and tank rental costs
- 35 Equipment, repairs and Working Week materials/services
- 36 Cleaning Materials, Cleaning Services, safety checks, grass cutting, Keys, Refuse collection and Telephone
- 37 Rebates on overpaid Hut Fees
- 38 Insurance for 1-10 Powell Street, The Penwyll Inn and Wern House
- 40 New cost centre for 2016/17 for Information Technology - website, computers, software and hardware
- 41 Legal work associated with land ownership by SWCC
- 42 Books, binding of journals and subscriptions to caving periodicals
- 43 Batteries, Books, Buffs, Mugs, Posters, Surveys and Shirts/Badges
- 44 Expenditure mostly from 70th Anniversary dinner
- 45 Two New sletters in the Club year 2016/17
- 46 New cost centre for 2016/17 for replacement of the HQ roof
- 47 Costs of social events. Any year on year comparison is skewed by 70th Anniversary Dinner expenditure
- 50 PWUA subscription, effluent charges and water supply expenditure

Balance Sheet at 31st January 2017

		<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>
		£	£
<u>Current Assets</u>			
	<i>Note</i>		
Barclays Bank Current Account	51	83,234	73,506
Barclays Bank Deposit Account	52	10,659	10,654
Barclays Bank Subs. Account	53	0	47
PayPal Account	54	0	0
Roof Account	55	3,924	0
Owings	56	483	0
Accrued Income	57	64	285
Total Current Assets		<u>98,365</u>	<u>84,492</u>
<u>Current Liabilities</u>			
Corporation Tax	58	0	0
Accrued Expenses	59	4,292	516
Total Current Liabilities	60	4,292	516
<u>Net Current Assets</u>		<u>94,073</u>	<u>83,976</u>
<u>Financed By</u>			
Balance b/f at 1st February 2016	61	83,976	72,864
Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year	62	10,096	11,112
Balance at 31st January 2017		<u>94,073</u>	<u>83,976</u>

Notes to the Accounts (Balance Sheet)*Note*

51 -

52 -

53 Subscription Account balance transferred to Current Account on 31/01/17

54 PayPal Account balance transferred to Current Account on 31/01/17

55 New account to hold the Roof Fund. Donations in 2016/17 were £3924

56 Debtors @ 31/01/17. Outstanding Hut Fees and/or Merchandise payments on the owings sheets

57 North Wales mines trip accommodation deposit

58 -

59 Creditors @ 31/01/17. North Wales mines trip accommodation pre-payments and the Roof Fund

60 -

61 -

62 -

HQ USAGE DATA 2012 - 2017												
		2016/17		2015/16		2014/15		2013/14		2012/13		
Members	Fees	£6,710	1358	£6,614	1325	£6,755	1356	£8,584	1723	£5,613	1778	
Reciprocal	Fees	£1,720	376	£2,105	424	£1,815	363	<i>Included in Members</i>		<i>Included in Members</i>		
Guests	Fees	£5,206	718	£4,707	586	£5,520	825	£6,634	1120	£5,716	1139	
Students	Fees	£5,156	750	£4,396	692	£5,653	905	£5,088	942	£3,707	743	
Children	Fees	£242	102	£303	115	£545	209	£342	133	£320	162	
Day	Fees	£354	0									
Totals	Fees	£19,388	3304	£18,125	3142	£20,288	3658	£20,647	3918	£15,356	3822	
Members	Fees	36%	44%	36%	42%	33%	37%	42%	44%	37%	47%	
Visitors	Fees	64%	56%	62%	54%	64%	57%	57%	53%	61%	49%	

Editor's Report

No written report submitted in advance of publication of these notes.

Records Officer's Report

The past year has seen the usual acquisition of books and journals, both by exchange and purchase. Binding of the existing runs of bound journals has also continued. One journal run I have been unable to complete is the CDG, we are missing a number of their very early journals ie before No 20, if anyone is able to donate any of the missing copies, please get in contact.

The project to install a large flat screen TV in the small common Room went ahead, when Andy and Antonia Freem kindly donated a screen. This facility was put to good use at the recent Cave Surveying Training weekend at the club.

We are awaiting the installation of a Fibre Connection to the Internet, until then it is still very slow to access online information.

The Archiving project is on going and I wish to thank all those who have assisted in some way, but in particular Sue Goodhead and Jem Rowland for the hard work they are putting into this project.

I am happy to stand for the position of Records Officer again.

Equipment Officer's Report

No written report submitted in advance of publication of these notes.

Cave Rescue Liaison Officer's Report

No written report submitted in advance of publication of these notes.

Warden's Report

At the working week last year, we concentrated on doing lots of small jobs that have been on the list for a number of years.

The porch roof to No.8 was rebuilt and re-slatted, as rot was found in some of the timbers, also the bargeboards were replaced with plastic. Some more work was done on the roof, to seal around the chimneys and replace broken slates.

A door was added to the ladies toilet and a new toilet and cistern fitted to trap 1. The last of the picnic benches was renovated and the Pit cover rotten wood replaced. Work was done on the bottom water tank up the hill to make it waterproof.

Various other small jobs were completed, plus as usual lots of painting jobs.

I would like to thank all those who turned up and worked including the Soup Dragons, without the support of the willing helpers we could not do as much as we do.

During the year vinyl flooring in the changing room passage and porch toilets were lain down, also various inside porch doors were replaced because of the water damage that has occurred. Also the main front door has finally broken all of its hinges and will be replaced with a steel door.

This year we will finish off fitting the myson heater in the kitchen, and continue doing other small jobs that have been on the to do list for a number of years.

The track entering our property has lots of potholes and work hopefully will be done on it. And of course lots of painting.

Brian Clipstone.
Cottage Warden.

14.03.17

Conservation Officer's Report

A considerable amount of re-taping, formation cleaning and removal of boot prints has been achieved this year (thanks go especially to Andy & Brian, yes the survey team are currently the conservation team!). A new pump-up garden sprayer has been acquired and proved to be very effective in formation and wall cleaning, take a look and see if you can tell where the splashed mud now isn't!

Sadly there have been several incidents as well, mud throwing and graffiti continue to be a sporadic problem, many hours have been spent repairing the damage, catching the culprits is as elusive as ever, hopefully education will help.

Dave Dobson, March 2017

Training Officer's Report

When I took on this role a year ago, I initially started by trying to ask the membership what training they required. I also approached several members of the club to see if they were willing to pass on their specialist skills to members. This endeavour produced very little in the way of results in terms of training other than allowing me to be able to send someone in the right direction if they needed help.

In July I set up an SRT ropes course in our barn and let it be known that it was available for training if anyone was interested. However what soon became apparent is that there is little interest in training unless someone is new to the sport and considering heading off on one of the Club's expeditions and that when this occurs, the expedition organisers tend to take on the responsibility for training participants themselves. This of course is all very natural when a team leader will be responsible for those joining the trip and needs to ensure the competence of those involved and therefore the following question arises: does the club need a training officer?

As things stand, the role of the training officer seems to have become one of having the knowledge to give advice to members needing training rather than personally arranging said training and as such the officer needs to know what is happening in the club and who is doing what, where and when. So please, if you need training or you are wanting company/help in a project of any kind that will pass on skills to our membership then please pass on this information to me or whoever else takes on the role in the future

Cheers,

Peter Hobson

Estate Manager's Report

HQ

The state of the HQ remains generally good, with the exception of the outer doors. One was replaced as planned and it became necessary to replace another one. The Committee has agreed an HQ Maintenance budget to a value similar to that of previous years.

Utilities

Electricity The existing contract with *Scottish and Southern Electricity* was renewed. It has been established with *Western Power Distribution* that the HQ has little extra power available for more electrical appliances and that an upgrade would involve a substantial cost to the Club.

LPG The contract with *Avanti Gas*, by then past its expiry date, was cancelled and a new one taken out with *Calor Gas*. The estimated changeover date is April/May 2017. This will give the Club a significant reduction in the price for its gas. The annual Gas Safe check and boiler service was carried out.

Water There were no issues regarding the water supply.

Sewage The arrangement with *Siddell Environmental* continues and is working satisfactorily although over the course of one year, the cost increased by 14%.

Insurance

The Club insurance was renewed with *Taylor Francis* and the same insurers for a premium very close to that charged the previous year. The Club continues to insure both parts of The Stump on behalf of the lessees and they are both charged for their proportion of the premium. Swindon CC has not responded to requests for payment of its contribution.

Land

There was no response to the tender document for grazing on the Club's land and there would appear to be little interest in this. As a result, the walling and fencing repairs are still outstanding: SWCC continues to explore options. The issue of selling some of the Club's land was considered and a recommendation made not to go down that route (*see separate reply to 2016 AGM item*).

In response to a Member question, the Committee considered options for management of trees on the land immediately around the HQ. A

sub-group looked at this and made some recommendations. There was no progress with management of the section of Club land lying between OFD1 entrance and the road.

Waste and Recycling

Waste collection dropped to a frequency of 3-weekly during the year; this is a strategy by *Powys County Council* to force users towards recycling. A meeting with a representative from Powys was held, at which waste handling options were examined. It is clear that the Club will need to work towards improved recycling practices and that some changes will be necessary. The Club now has a contact for reporting fly tipping

Licensing

The number of social events at the Club is now set to exceed the limits imposed by Temporary Events Notices for the sale of alcohol. The Club has applied for a Premises Licence which will solve the problem.

The Year Ahead

- The issue of grazing rights/tenancy on SWCC land remains ongoing
- The Club is due to have its electrical certification carried out
- The Duty Officer Manual will require a few changes after the AGM
- The 2017 Working Week plans include no major projects and will follow last year's pattern of minor improvements and maintenance. A replacement oven in the main kitchen is in the schedule. A sizeable proportion of the budget will be used to extend the heavy duty Altro flooring to the No.7 corridor, the No.8 lobby area and the Small Common Room
- The use of The Stump by Swindon CC requires a review
- There are plans for removal of some trees, planting of others and also planting of some hedging
- An action plan is needed for disposal of rubbish sorted for recycling
- There is further work on reviewing and updating the Club's risk assessments

Chris Grimmett

23/03/17

Assistant Secretary's Report

I must start this report by expressing thanks to Lel Davies, from whom I took over in July, for all the hard work which she put into the role over more years than she would probably wish to recall. I suspect that few members are likely to appreciate just how much she did for the Club over all that time, in a job that with the advent of BCA membership became much more substantial than the one for which she originally signed up. I am not able to be present at the AGM, but I suggest that it would be entirely appropriate for the meeting to record a formal vote of thanks to Lel.

I would also like to thank Andy and Antonia Freem and, particularly, Claire Vivian, for helping to keep me busy. For many of our Provisional and newly-joining Full members, they are the (very) acceptable face of SWCC, always willing to help out with trips and generally smooth out any early difficulties. The 'try caving' Provisional member weekends that they have run have been enormously successful, with 10 or so new members joining after each of the last two events. Thanks also to all the other members who go out of their way to be nice to newcomers.

This year, we offered all members who paid their subscription within the discount period the 'opportunity' to pay the full amount instead on the understanding that the extra amount would go to the roof fund. I'm delighted to be able to report that this raised £765.02 for the roof. (Don't ask about the 2p – quote 'so you can identify the payment' unquote). The BACS subscription payment system is now working well and the majority of members paid online this year, several of them specifically stating that it was much easier than they expected.

On a related note, the Committee is proposing an amendment to the Constitution that could change the period for which an early payment discount is available for subscriptions. I'll put my hand up here as the instigator– it's always seemed strange to me that I could get an early payment discount by paying up to 30 days after subscriptions are due, which seems to me to be 'late' on normal definitions. The recommendation to the AGM is that the discount should continue to be available but only for payments received before the 1st September due date. This would also help future Assistant Secretaries by spreading their workload, which is fairly intensive in September and October.

On behalf of the Committee, and with help from Chris Grimmett and Martin Hoff, I have spent some time this year looking at the possibility of offering a Life Membership subscription. With considerable disappointment we have concluded that we just cannot see a way of making it work at a cost and in a way which would be attractive to members but which did not expose the club to too much risk. The difficulties arise mainly around the BCA subscription, which for the club represents a real outgoing expenditure which is outside our control and which it is not difficult to imagine could increase very substantially over 20 years or more. Although it would of course be possible to offer a Life Membership subscription only for the SWCC element this would negate the 'file and forget' benefits for the member and for the club, since BCA subscriptions would still have to be collected separately. It remains something which I would like to pursue if circumstances change, but it is not currently a practical proposition.

.....and finally, a few membership statistics. As at 31 December 2016 we had 296 members, of whom 272 were Full members and 24 were Provisional members. Of the Full members, 11 were Honorary members. We had 86 Joint members. It is difficult to make a precise year-on-year comparison but membership totals remain broadly stable, with perhaps a nett decrease of 1 or 2 members overall once subsequent late payers are taken into account. Numbers have increased slightly since then.

Sam Moore

10/03/2017

Communications Officer's Report

The long established SWCC website moved to a new format on a modern platform for 2017. The new platform is significantly easier to maintain and the transition process allowed for a common design philosophy throughout the site, hopefully you like it. The new site is also 'mobile by design' so should be better if accessed from phones, tablets etc. Not all of the material from the old site has been ported across, some because I have not had time yet and some because it is of historic interest only. The old site has been archived and is still directly accessible, so this material is not lost, and where appropriate links from the new site to the old have been put in place. Special thanks must go to Duncan Hornby for his efforts in two of the more difficult parts of the old site to move across, the face wall and the club calendar.

12 eNews have been published since the last AGM (as of 3-2017 24 Feb.) along with 3 Secretarial Ramblings (till Dec 2016). In addition, there have been a number of individual emails on specific topics sent to the membership as a whole. Hopefully these have kept the membership informed and engaged with the club.

The SWCC blog is continuing to get a fair number of posts, and these are all of a high quality with plenty of pictures, I believe this is an excellent advert for the club and a great way to attract new members. Since the 1st of May 2016 there have been 17 posts, which is slightly down on last year, but the real concern is that all these posts come from a very small pool of people, with Duncan and Claire being responsible for 15 of the 17 between them. It is a very real worry that this could fade away if it does not receive wider support.

The SWCC Facebook page is the club's public facing presence on Facebook and is used for making club announcements to members and the caving community in general. Currently (24 march) there are 288 followers, these are people whose FB is automatically updated with any club posts, though many posts are actually seen by far more as they are forwarded on. 53% of our followers are under 44 while 79% are under 54, so it seems to be reaching a younger demographic.

The SWCC Facebook group continues to be a vibrant community of 144, run independently of the committee by club members for members and friends of the club.

Club Newsletter 132 (70th Anniversary edition) was produced in April 2016 as Chloe's last publication before handing over the Editorship to Amanda. Brian has completed a new index that covers Newsletters 100-132, meaning that all SWCC newsletters are now fully indexed.

Fixed Aids Officer's Report

This year has seen no major projects requiring large numbers of people, yet I still seem to have been on 16 caving trips where some sort of fixed aids related activity has taken place since the last AGM. Probably as many trips have been to inspect and record the condition or nature of various sites as to do any practical work, and almost as much time again seems to have spent in consideration and management of gates, keys and padlocks.

As recently advertised, the bolting provision at the pitch on the upper route to The Columns has been upgraded. This was somewhere I had never been before and I wondered just how many people actually had. In light of which, there was a valid question to be asked about why to bother rebolting something that sees minimal traffic and where a straightforward alternative route is available to gain access to exactly the same place. If nothing else, this goes some way to explain why nobody had been bothered enough to do anything about the rebolting of this pitch for all this time.

While the bolting was completed months ago, the process of getting it bolted – and I'm not talking about drilling holes or fitting bolts – was perhaps more complicated than it needed to be. The request for it to be rebolted had specifically mentioned the use of resin anchors which, this being the current approved standard of the British Caving Association, seems entirely natural.

The notable point about the process of using resin anchors is that on installation via the Cambrian-authorized, trained installer, records are kept at Cambrian and also BCA levels as this extract from the BCA Anchor Policy 2013 specifies:-

6. Record keeping and reporting

Regional Councils shall establish a procedure for recording the details of designated anchor placement, including at least:-

- *The location of the designated anchor;*
- *Who placed it;*
- *When it was placed;*
- *The type of designated anchor; and;*

- *Batch and/or serial numbers of the designated anchor and resin. Records shall be kept by the Regional Council and a copy shall be given to the E&T Committee.*

While there was an enthusiastic willingness (for someone else to put in the work) to embrace modern bolting techniques, there was also some vocal opposition to the companion piece of BCA inspection policy, which begins as follows:-

7. Inspection of designated anchors and reporting of defects

Cavers using anchors shall be responsible for checking each anchor prior to use on each and every occasion.

Designated anchors placed under this scheme shall not be subjected to regular periodic inspection.

Ultimately it was the questionable perception of SWCC being excluded by this process which dictated that the resin anchors at The Columns pitch be adopted as SWCC maintained Fixed Aids and made subject to the SWCC maintained Fixed Aids inspection regime, even though this is strictly unnecessary under the BCA policy. Such are the compromises involved in accommodating the spirit of the times.

Of course, nobody who was so vociferously worried about that aspect of the project then used their inclusion to come and lend a hand on any of the seven or eight trips which followed to examine, bolt, rig, re-rig, tidy up, document and de-rig the pitch. In the case of this specific example, it was at least eventually agreed by the SWCC Committee that anchors which are only openly accessible on five days a year should not be expected to be subject to the same frequency of inspection as others in the cave which are used all year round.

If there is a question about the information reporting and recording chain for new resin anchors that stay locked behind a gate almost all year round and which almost nobody ever wants to use, that same question applies in a rather more meaningful way to other resin anchors already installed within Ogof Ffynnon Ddu. Members may well wonder why the same vocal objections have failed to arise about the Cambrian\BCA-recorded resin anchors on the pitches at The Nave, which have now been there for something like three years and yet which somehow do not feature on the list of SWCC maintained Fixed Aids. As don't other resin anchors which have been installed elsewhere within Ogof Ffynnon Ddu.

As a guide to the road that the installation – and selective adoption as official maintained Fixed Aids – of further resin anchors inevitably takes us down, conversation in the changing room before one trip to work on the Columns pitch led to an exchange where saying where we were going produced a reply from other cavers along the lines of “*Excellent, the next thing you need to do is rebolt all of the Swamp Creek traverse and pitch with resin anchors...*”

It will only become more difficult to argue that, if it is acceptable to provide a resin anchored traverse and pitch rigging arrangement which are fully up to modern expectations yet almost never accessible to cavers at The Columns pitch, that there then shouldn't also be similarly featured resin anchor facilities provided elsewhere within the cave. The specifics of exactly which sites require this sort of attention will remain up for negotiation but the principle will already have been established.

SWCC can be said to stand at something of a crossroads regarding its philosophy on the installation and management of Fixed Aids, one which we should expect to differ from that encountered elsewhere due to the complex nature of the Ogof Ffynnon Ddu system. In predominantly vertical cave systems, where cavers would already expect to be using ropes and harnesses and where progression through the cave may otherwise be halted, the provision of Fixed Aids at every potentially suitable point may well be taken for expected. In a predominantly horizontal system like Ogof Ffynnon Ddu, where alternative route options are often available and where a number of locations are approachable by the deliberate selection of a more sporting or challenging access route, different arrangements may well apply such as making the effort to take and use the appropriate equipment to assist or secure other members of the party. It remains the case that there is no strict obligation on SWCC to provide effort-free access to any site within the cave and that this especially applies to those sites to which access is readily available by another route.

Auditor's Report

I have examined the books of account and bank statements of the South Wales Caving Club. In my opinion the financial statements present a true and fair view of the transactions of the Club for the year ending 31st January 2017, and of the cash assets at that date.

Patrick Hall, 18th April 2017

Appendix 1 – Item 10 – Proposed Constitutional Amendment - Supporting Notes.

Proposed new wording: (deletions in strikethrough, insertions in red, change agreed at Feb meeting in blue)

5. SUBSCRIPTIONS

- a) All Subscription rates and Entrance Fees are to be determined by the AGM.
- b) Annual Subscriptions shall be payable on the 1st Sept**ember**. The AGM may elect to implement an early subscription fee payment incentive scheme for the following year ~~which shall apply for a period of 30 days after the day when Subscriptions are payable~~. Any member who is more than two months in arrears of payment shall be deemed to have let their membership lapse.
- c) A person applying for Provisional Membership shall pay a fee to be set each year at the AGM. This payment covers Provisional ~~m~~Membership **for a period of up to twelve months**. ~~until acceptance as a Full or Junior Member.~~
- d) Persons admitted to Full, Junior or Joint Full Membership shall pay an Entrance Fee but are not liable to pay an Annual Subscription until the ~~AGM~~ **1st September following their admission.**

Explanation

The modification to (b) does not change the right of the AGM to determine the period during which any early payment incentive should apply. It is the Committee's recommendation that the early payment incentive should be continued for 2017/18 but that it should apply only to subscriptions received before the due date of 1st September. This would help to smooth the workload involved in processing subscription renewals.

The modifications to (c) recognise that it has been the practice for the Committee to agree to extend the duration of Provisional Membership beyond the normal 12 months in some circumstances. When this occurs, an additional Provisional Membership fee becomes payable.

The modifications to (d) correct an oversight and follow from the decision to move the start of the subscription year to 1st September.

Appendix 2 - SWCC Club Rules as at April 2017

SUPPORTING THE CLUB

1. The former 'Rule 1' has been deleted.
2. No Member may purport to represent the view or opinion of the Club on any matter without prior authorisation from the Committee.
3. No Member shall make available to any non-Member or organisation the contents of the Club membership list without the prior permission of the Committee.

STAYING AT THE HQ

4. Members may stay at the HQ, together with up to two Guests, without prior notice. Members who wish to bring more than two Guests must apply to the Secretary or Assistant Secretary for permission. Any person under the age of 18 (including junior members) must be accompanied by a parent or adult in loco parentis when staying at the cottages or attending club activities. No Guest may stay at the HQ more than 4 times in any period of 12 months without the prior permission of the Committee. Provisional Members may bring partners and their children but no other Guests. No Member or Guest shall stay at the HQ for more than 15 nights in any 30 without prior written permission from the Secretary.
5. Visitors or parties of Visitors who wish to stay at the HQ must apply to the Secretary or Assistant Secretary for permission. A booking fee may be charged. Visitors must be over 16 years old unless accompanied by a parent.
6. Men and women may sleep at the HQ in the designated quarters only. The rear bedrooms in Cottages No. 7, 8, 9 and 10 are reserved for Members and their Guests unless express permission of the Duty Officer has been given.
7. Family Quarters (Cottage No. 5) are reserved for Members, Provisional Members and Visitors accompanied by children under

16 years old and for Joint Members where space permits. Children under 16 years old should eat and sleep in Cottage No. 5 only.

8. Everybody arriving at the Club premises, including campers and day Visitors, shall complete the hut register and the appropriate fees must be paid to the Duty Officer before leaving.
9. Wet and/or dirty caving gear must not be taken into or worn in the hostel section of the HQ.
10. All users of the HQ shall make every reasonable effort to keep and leave the place clean and tidy. All perishable foods must be removed from the HQ before leaving.
11. There shall be no undue noise between midnight and 6.00 a.m., unless as the result of a pre-advertised function approved by the Committee. Radios etc. shall not be used to the annoyance of others at any time.
12. Animals must not be brought into the sleeping, cooking or dining areas under any circumstances. Animals may only be brought into the two Common Rooms in cottages 8 and 9 and only providing that no one present objects. Animals shall not be fed within the main HQ building. Animals upon SWCC property shall be under direct supervision at all times.
13. Explosive materials, charged diving cylinders and guns must not be brought into Club property without the written permission of the Committee.
14. It is prohibited to smoke anywhere in the Club premises.
15. Notices regarding the management of the HQ must be complied with.

BREACH OF RULES

16. Any person who does not comply with the above Rules may be banned from Club property for a period fixed by the Committee.

Appendix 3 - SWCC Policy Document as at April 2017

1. PURPOSE

This Policy Document has been prepared for the benefit of the Committee, Club Members and outside bodies to:

- Formally record the Club's policies, thoughts and position on a variety of issues.
- Give direction, focus and some continuity to the Club's plans and ambitions.
- Give some clarification and consistency to the Club's views.

The Committee is required to maintain this Policy Document. Amendments to the Policy Document are subject to ratification by a general meeting of the Club.

The Club asks Members to respect the contents of this policy document in all matters of Club business.

2. MANAGEMENT OF THE CLUB

It is the policy of SWCC to:

- Ensure that, whilst the Club is managed in accordance with the Club Constitution and Rules, and run by a committee elected annually at the AGM, that as many Members as possible, including the Trustees, President and Vice-Presidents, have the opportunity to contribute to, and are involved in, the decision making process wherever possible.
- Regularly review, and if necessary amend, the Club Rules, practices, methods of working etc. to be in line with current regulations and good practice whilst at the same time seeking to preserve the essential character of the Club.
- Endeavour for general meetings to be transacted in a transparent, inclusive, friendly and good natured manner and in accordance with constitutional requirements.
- Ensure that voting and decision making follow good practice and recognise the need for secret ballots as deemed necessary by the Chairman of the meeting.
- Respect the right of members to abstain from voting at meetings and be counted as 'present but not voting'
- Encourage members to take an active role in the management of the club. The Club recognises that it is good practice to encourage a healthy turnover

in the membership of the committee so as to introduce new views and ideas while also providing a measure of stability."

- Ensure effective administration of the club's premises and the continuing ethos of the club by encouraging members to support and contribute to the duty officer system.

3. FINANCIAL POLICIES

It is the policy of SWCC to manage its finances in a planned, prudent and professional manner in accordance with the provisions set out in the Club constitution and sufficient to ensure the continuing financial viability of the Club and its assets.

It is the policy of SWCC to set procedures for financial management. These are to audit its accounts on an annual basis, to keep financial records in an electronic format, and require the elected Treasurer to manage the finances in accordance with the Constitution, Rules and this document.

4. EXTERNAL RELATIONS

It is the policy of SWCC:

- To be a respected voice in matters speleological.
- To ensure that persons representing the club do so with proper mandate.
- To be considered by cavers as a welcoming base for caving in South Wales.
- To provide basic good value accommodation for: Members, guests of Members and visitors including, but not limited to, members of other caving clubs and societies.
- To support the wider community where practical and maintain friendly relations with its neighbours.
- To be a responsible landlord and landowner.
- To support and promote the safe, and responsible, enjoyment of the outdoor and underground environment through the voluntary ethos of club based caving and other 'not for profit' organisations which are open to all who have the necessary interest and initiative.
- To recognise that 'commercial' caving has a part to play in introducing some, especially young, people to caving, and also in providing some aspects of specialist training.
- That In the particular case of sensitive caves, SWCC believes that access for 'commercial' caving should be restricted to occasions when a clear and definable benefit to the wider caving community can be demonstrated.

5. INTERNAL RELATIONS

It is the policy of SWCC to:

- Respect the opinions of all Members.
- Accept no liability for losses incurred by Members.

6. MEMBERSHIP

It is the policy of SWCC to:

- Encourage application for Provisional Membership from anyone, subject to any constraints on the total number of Members as may be necessary from time to time.
- Ensure that the Full Membership application procedure is understood by all and efficiently carried out.

7. CONSERVATION AND ACCESS

It is the policy of SWCC to:

- Support the British Caving Association (BCA) Cave Conservation Policy.
- Seek to maintain and improve reasonable access to all caves, for all bone-fide club cavers and 'not for profit' organisations commensurate with the need to preserve subterranean flora, fauna and other special features.
- Help protect and maintain the cave environment for the benefit of future generations.
- Restrict commercially orientated or 'for profit' caving activity to such areas as are appropriate for commercial caving

8. LIBRARY

It is the policy of SWCC to maintain, and develop, in a cost effective manner, its library of speleologically related material and to provide reasonable access for Members to that library, commensurate with the need to safeguard the material and ensure that it is kept in good order.

9. PUBLICATIONS

It is the policy of SWCC to:

- Publicise and record its activities and achievements in appropriate media.
- Exchange copies of its publications with other caving clubs.
- Offer for sale copies of posters, surveys etc. as available from time to time.

10. CLUB PROPERTY

It is the policy of SWCC to maintain and/or improve all property that it owns in accordance with current legislation and local planning requirements, and in a manner which befits the use and setting of that property but which retains the essential character and ethos of the Club.

It is the policy of SWCC to plan and approve all works to Club property through open and transparent processes which include proper consultation with all relevant authorities.

11. CAVE EXPLORATION

It is the policy of SWCC to:

- Support cave discovery, exploration and surveying activities.
- Respect active digs currently being undertaken by other cavers.

12. CAVE RESCUE

It is the policy of SWCC to support the provision of an efficient cave rescue organisation.

13. FIXED AIDS

It is the policy of SWCC to maintain a number of approved Fixed Aids within certain caves as defined, and in accordance with the limitations specified, on a prominently displayed notice in the Club HQ at 1-10 Powell Street.

It is the policy of SWCC to approve Fixed Aids where such aids:

- produce a significant increase in caver safety and/or
- produce a significant reduction in wear and tear by virtue of removing the need repeatedly to install and remove temporary aids and/or
- produce a significant improvement in terms of cave conservation.

It is the policy of SWCC to discourage un-approved fixed aids which conflict with the interests of cave conservation.

It is the policy of SWCC to ensure that the procedures and processes for approving new Fixed Aids are based upon proper consultation with relevant authorities and are transacted in an open and transparent manner.

It is the policy of SWCC to ensure that all approved Fixed Aids are installed in a safe manner and that a proper regime is operated for their regular inspection and maintenance.

14. TRAINING

It is the policy of SWCC to:

- Encourage and, where possible, assist Members to develop their interest and expertise in caving and related matters.
- Encourage Members to cave safely.

15. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

It is the policy of SWCC to:

- Value individual and cultural diversity.
- Be committed to the goal of treating all people as equal, irrespective of colour, ethnic origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, age, beliefs or disability.
- Be pro-active in discouraging behaviour that may be considered discriminatory.
- Ensure that its policy with respect to equal opportunities and discrimination extends to all aspects of the Club's activities including those of landowner and cave access management

16. CARE OF YOUNG PERSONS

It is the policy of SWCC to:

- Recognise its duty of care to children and young persons (under 18), as laid out in the relevant legislation.
- Recognise that the relevant legislation includes sexual, emotional and physical abuse as well as neglect.
- Take all allegations of child abuse seriously and to respond to such allegations promptly.

17. PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

It is the policy of SWCC to ensure Members recognise that caving, mine exploration and diving are activities with a risk of personal injury or death. Participants in such activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement. Through its association with the BCA, SWCC recognises that correct training is one way of minimising such risks and provides opportunities for training (see 14 above). The above statement informs Members of those risks

Secretaries Notes to Policy Changes May 2016 to April 2017

The following is intended to outline a short background of the changes made to the Club Policy over the past twelve months.

Change 1. Arises from an initiative to set out in clear and concise terms the club's policy towards Commercial Caving. Alterations were voted on and accepted by the committee on 6th November 2016 following recommendations made by a small working group headed by Paul Meredith. The alterations made particularly affect the last two bullet points of section 4 and a corresponding removal of a bullet point from section 7.

Change 2. Arises from concerns over voting procedure at AGM's. Alterations were voted on and accepted by the committee on 6th November 2016 following recommendations made by the Governance Sub-Committee headed up by the Club President, Jem Rowland. The alterations made particularly affect section 2.

Change 3. Arises from concerns over the length of time that some officers have remained in post in the Committee. Alterations were voted on and accepted by the committee on 3rd December 2016 following recommendations made by the Governance Sub-Committee headed up by the Club President, Jem Rowland. The alterations made particularly affect section 2.

Change 4. Arises from the removal of Rule 1 from the club rules as described above in my report to the AGM. Alterations were voted on and accepted by the committee on 18th March 2017 following recommendations made by the Rule One Working Group. The alterations made particularly applies to the final bullet point of section 2.

Appendix 4 - SWCC LAND OPTIONS

The SWCC Committee was asked by the 2016 Annual General Meeting to report back with options for the future use of land now owned by the Club

South Wales Caving Club purchased land around the HQ, the funds for which were met partly by donations and partly by a grant from the Countryside Commission for Wales (CCW). The grant was made subject to details contained in two documents:-

- *CCW Offer Of Grant*
- *CCW Conditions Governing The Provisions Of Financial Assistance Towards The Purchase Of Land*

A grant of 50% towards the total purchase cost was made. Since then, CCW has ceased to exist and it has been assumed here that all agreements with CCW have been transferred to the replacement body, National Resources for Wales (NRW). Some key points, abridged from the originals are discussed here. Abridgements are marked The full documents are available on file. Under the conditions applied, SWCC may neither do as it wishes with the land nor dispose of it in any way it likes.

Firstly, the grant was given for 'purposes':-

*The Countryside Council for Wales hereby offer a grant for the purpose stated
To secure the sympathetic management of Geological Conservation Review Site*

Secondly, SWCC was also charged with managing the land:-

*A management plan will be prepared
The plan will be reviewed at least every 5 years*

Thirdly, CCW required that the type of land usage was maintained:-

*..... traditional rights and practices on the land should be allowed to continue in the manner they were practised under the previous ownership
.....*

Fourthly, CCW covered the question of any income from the land:-

Arrangements for utilising income arising from the grant on the principle that –

- *It first be applied for purposes of managing the reserve*
- *CCW shall receive a share of any balance in proportion to the amount paid by them towards the purchase*

Lastly, CCW covered the question of selling off the land:-

In the event of the grantee proposing to dispose of any asset for which funds have been provided, it shall offer CCW first option to purchase Should CCW not wish to purchase it shall be entitled to receive a share of the proceeds of the sale equivalent to the part of the current valuation

If the Club wished to sell the land or part of the land, it could do so as specified by approaching NRW in the first instance and then looking elsewhere if necessary. It is unlikely that NRW would wish to exercise its option to purchase. Such a sale would be, broadly, cost neutral as the sale income would balance the refund to NRW.

The Club would be responsible for legal fees associated with the sale and would also fall liable to pay NRW any proportion of its refund where the final selling price was below the valuation made by an independent valuer. The Club has been advised not to sell any premium parts of the land on their own, thus effectively devaluing the retained portions.

SWCC has already had to refuse an approach from an interested party which wished to make significant changes to the land use as this would have fallen outside the NRW conditions. Realistically, any option to lease, rent or assign usage of the land to a third party is going to be limited to grazing or something very similar.

The SWCC Committee has concluded that for the time being, the way forward is not to try and sell any land but to seek the best licence or tenancy arrangement that can be negotiated. Investigation of these options is well under way, working on a basis of sacrificing income for transfer of responsibility for maintenance onto the licensee/tenant.

Chris Grimmett

SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB

CLWB OGOFEYDD DEHEUDIR CYMRU

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Miners' Welfare Hall, Abercraf at 9.00 a.m. on Saturday 29th April 2017.

1. Apologies for Absence

17/A1. Dave Mullin, Tess Lister, Denise Knibbs, Sam Moore, James Meredith, Ben and Susan Stevens, Paul Tarrant, Les Davies, Annie Hallihan, Tim and Andrea Lewingdon, Leigh and Amanda Davies, Andy and Dave Dobson, Barbara Hall, Elaine Hall, James Meredith, Pete Hobson, Lesley Cardy, Sue Mabbett, Annie Peskett, Angie Peacock, Aaron Judd.

There were 48 voting Members signed in – see archived sheets.

The Chairman concluded the apologies for absence by asking for those attending to stand and observe a minute's silence to reflect on those Members who have passed away during this last year.

The meeting observed one minute of silence.

2. The Chairman's Welcome and Comments on 2016/2017

17/A2. The Chairman thanked all for attending the 2017 AGM and went on to say that the AGM also marked the end of The Club's 70th Anniversary year. He addressed the meeting as follows; 'We began with the 70th Anniversary party weekend which was simultaneously a review of our collective achievements (both notable and notorious) and a statement of intent for the future of the Club. It saw old Members revisiting the Club and meeting new ones, video presentations documenting the Club's history and premiering footage of the latest finds, a wealth of old stories and the launch of the Roof Prospectus, part of the plan to secure the future of our headquarters building as a place for new stories to be written.

The full table of youngsters at the dinner and the remarkable amount of under 16s caving in various groups the following morning proved beyond doubt that the long-term future of the Club is worth such an investment.

Moving on through the year, SWCC has again been busy outside the Swansea Valley. Club trips to strange and exotic places have included England, Scotland and North Wales. Further afield we had the Club expedition to Spain and our Members have supported other expeditions all over the world.

Closer to home, the battle to claim ownership of the Club's Premier Dig continues. A spectacular effort sees the Ogof Marros team appearing to be in the lead at the moment but I'm sure Messrs. Baker and Alderman are just lulling them into a false sense of security and will announce the discovery of caverns measureless to man in the near future.

On a wider scale, SWCC continues to be an important part of the caving community. We had a strong presence at the EuroSpeleo Conference with SWCC Members claiming a number of prizes and honourable mentions – I think this is the first big Club event since EuroSpeleo so it's a good time to congratulate all of those winners, especially Andy and Antonia whose fantastic film work over the last few years saw them rewarded with the prestigious Giles Barker Award. The second week of Euro Speleo saw SWCC hosting delegates from a number of countries as they came to explore some of the best caving the UK has to offer. Our Members have supported yet more documentaries underground for national TV, showcasing caving to a much wider audience.

With a keen eye on the future, special thanks has to go to Claire Vivian and her team of helpers who ran yet another successful Provisionals weekend. Claire has also been very active in organising and encouraging mid-week caving, not just in the Swansea Valley but anywhere within an evening's range.

The Sub-Committee approach continues to work well and has been supported by the use of e-mail discussion and online polls to further reduce the length of Committee meetings. The idea of having an Indian meal booked for 9.00 p.m. on a Committee night would have been laughable only a few years ago.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who has worked hard this year to keep the Club strong and prosperous. The Committee who work much harder than some people would have you believe, the Working Week team who keep the water running in the taps while doing their best to prevent it from running down the walls and every Member, past and present, that has made our 70th year a special one and helped to build the foundations of the next 70.

I'll finish off with a plea. The response to the "Rule 1" questionnaire showed that Members of all ages have an interest in how the Club is run. The sub-Committee system does two things – it shortens the Committee meetings considerably, making a Committee post a much less daunting thing than in previous years, and it means that people who want to have more of an input on a specific subject but don't feel able to take on a Committee post can get involved.

I've been doing my bit to keep the average age of the Committee down but, since I'm now the wrong side of 40 I really do need some help. As we look to the future, I'd ask younger Members to consider stepping forward, either to a Committee post or to share your views and skills on a sub-Committee and help ensure the future of this Club.'

3. Minutes of the 30th April 2016 AGM

17/A3a. The Chairman invited the proposal that the minutes of the 2016 AGM might be taken as read.

Proposed by Jem Rowland

Seconded by Allan Richardson

Majority in favour 0 Against 1 Abstention Carried

17/A3b. The Chairman then invited the proposal that the minutes, subject to any corrections, be signed as an accurate record.

Proposed by Jem Rowland

Seconded by Tony Baker

Majority in favour 0 Against 1 Abstention Carried

S. Goodhead asked for the spelling of Peter Collings-Wells and Bernie Woodley to be corrected.

4. Matters arising from the 2016 AGM Minutes

17/A4. C. Friend asked after the Cnewr hydro scheme. A. Richardson stated that the scheme had been dropped.

Club 70th Anniversary. It was also recorded that the previous Assistant Secretary had not been paid for certain items which had knocked on to the current year.

B. Radcliffe asked why more money was not in the deposit account. H. Lomas stated that this was in hand.

17/A5c. Editor

– no questions.

17/A5d. Records Officer

A. Richardson reported that Mary Hazelton's dragon was very happy in its hiding place deep inside the labyrinth of the Club archives.

17/A5e. Equipment Officer

G. Christian enquired if any replacements had been made in the previous year. I. Miller reported that some new rope had been purchased for use on the approaching expedition.

P. Meredith asked if there had been any reports or comments with respect to the recently purchased lamps. I. Miller responded that there had been no negative comments and most seemed happy with them.

17/A5f. Cave Rescue Liaison Officer

V. Allkins reported that it had been a quiet year.

17/A5g. Warden

– no questions.

17/A5h. Conservation Officer

A. Richardson reported that the effect of the effort made by the new conservation 'Team' was quite noticeable. T. Baker reported that the election of a single Dobson had been a shrewd move.

17/A5i. Training Officer

The Chairman stated that in his view the Club continued to need a Training Officer.

17/A5j. Estate Manager

P. Meredith enquired on progress as to SWCC becoming a licenced premises. C. Grimmett reported that things were progressing and that there had been no objections from Powys CC.

17/A5k. Assistant Secretary

No questions

17/A5m. Communications Officer

No questions

17/A5n. Fixed Aids Officer

No questions. P. Craddy enquired as to the Club's attitude towards resin bonded anchors. V. Allkins advised that the resin bonded anchors were the responsibility of BCA rather than SWCC. The AGM was advised that resin bonded anchors are installed by BCA and not by SWCC.

17/A5p. The Chairman then invited the proposal to accept the Officers' Reports *en bloc*.

Proposed Brian Clipstone

Seconded Graham Christian

Majority in favour 0 Against 1 Abstention Carried

6. Auditor's Report to the 2017 AGM

17/A6. The Chairman asked for a proposer for the suggested motion in the Agenda

Motion

That the Auditor's report be accepted and the Club's thanks be recorded for his work during 2016/17.

Proposed Keith Goodhead

Seconded Brian Clipstone

Majority in favour 0 Against 1 Abstention Carried

There were no matters arising from the 2016/17 Auditor's Report.

7. Subscriptions and Hut Fees

17/A7. The Treasurer advised that the Club had well over £90,000 accumulated funds. The Club hut fees were at the expensive end of the scale compared with other huts. He recommended no increase in subscriptions or hut fees. J. Carter stated that he supported the Treasurer's recommendations.

Motion That all fees remain the same as last year.

Proposed Graham Christian

Seconded Claire Vivian

Majority in favour 1 Against 2 Abstentions Carried

8. Nomination of John Lister as Lifetime Honorary Member

17/A8. Jem Rowland spoke to the floor. Apart from the six nominations another seventy people had asked to be associated with the nomination. Sadly the meeting was unable to elect John as an Honorary Member as had recently passed away. John had done much for the Club over the years and had served as a Club Trustee. Jem Rowland stated that as a gesture of the strength of support that the Club would have had for the nomination he would like the meeting to hold a vote to record the support within the meeting for the nomination had John survived to the day.

The vote was taken by show of hands.

Unanimous in favour 0 Against 0 Abstentions

9. Nomination of Club Trustees

17/A9 The Chairman stated that the Club currently had two Trustees. The intention was to select two new Trustees. There were four candidates. F. Levett explained that there would be two rounds of voting, a first round to select the two candidates with the most support. A second round would be a single vote for each of the two candidates with the most support and would require a two thirds majority of those present and voting to be selected.

ROUND 1. The AGM was invited to vote for its preferred candidates for the position of Trustee. The vote was taken by secret ballot and verified by the Secretary and Chairman who confirmed that the two candidates with the most support were.....

Alistair Garman

Julian Carter

ROUND 2.1. The AGM was invited to vote for the appointment of Alistair Garman as a Trustee of The South Wales Caving Club.

The vote was taken by secret ballot and verified by the Secretary and Chairman who confirmed that in excess of the required two thirds present and voting had voted in favour of the motion. The proposal was therefore carried and it was reported to the meeting that Alistair Garman had been elected a Trustee of The South Wales Caving Club.

ROUND 2.2. The AGM was invited to vote for the appointment of Julian Carter as a Trustee of The South Wales Caving Club.

The vote was taken by secret ballot and verified by the Secretary and Chairman who confirmed that in excess of the required two thirds present and voting had voted in favour of the motion. The proposal was therefore carried and it was reported to the meeting that Julian Carter had been elected a Trustee of The South Wales Caving Club.

P. Francis stated that he would like the Committee to look into ways in which an 'App' could be used in future voting.

Both J. Carter and A. Garman stated that they were deeply honoured to have been selected.

10. Proposed Constitutional Amendment

17/A10. G. Vaughan drew the attention of the meeting to the supporting notes in the AGM booklet. K. Goodhead asked if future AGMs would be asked if they wanted to implement an early payment incentive. The Chairman stated that the existing scheme was an incentive for paying a little bit late. He confirmed that the choice would be open to future AGMs.

Motion

That the meeting accepts the constitutional amendment as outlined in the AGM Agenda and Reports.

Proposed Tony Baker

Seconded Keith Goodhead

Majority in favour

2 Against

0 Abstentions

Carried

11. Election of Officers

17/A11. (i) President

There was 1 nomination for President:-

Jem Rowland

Proposed: Fred Levett, Paul Quill, Tony Baker, Peter Francis, Antonia Freem, Claire Vivian.

An open vote was taken by show of hands and verified by the Secretary and Chairman who confirmed that in excess of the required two thirds present and voting had voted in favour of the motion. The proposal was therefore carried and Jem Rowland was elected President of The South Wales Caving Club.

Jem spoke briefly and said that it was now the fourth time that he had stood in front of the AGM and said what an honour it was to be holding the post of President.

He stated that the Club has worked well over the past year. The structure of sub-Committees had been working well.

17/A11. (ii) Vice-Presidents

	Fred Levett		
Proposed Jem Rowland		Seconded Vince Allkins	
Unanimous in favour	0 Against	0 Abstentions	Elected

The four Trustees were proposed *en bloc*.

	Alison Maddocks		
	Clark Friend		
	Alistair Garman		
	Julian Carter		
Proposed Tony Baker		Seconded Keith Goodhead	
Majority in favour	0 Against	2 Abstentions	Elected

	Mick Day		
Proposed Jem Rowland		Seconded Allan Richardson	
Majority in favour	0 Against	3 Abstentions	Elected

17/A11. (iii) Officers of the Club

Chairman

Proposed Allan Richardson

Piers Hallihan

Seconded Tony Baker

Majority in favour 0 Against 0 Abstentions Elected

Secretary

Proposed Brian Clipstone

Gary Vaughan

Seconded Andy Freem

Majority in favour 0 Against 2 Abstentions Elected

Treasurer

Proposed Paul Meredith

Chris Grimmett

Seconded Allan Richardson

Majority in favour 0 Against 3 Abstentions Elected

J. Rowland proposed a vote of thanks to the outgoing Treasurer Harvey Lomas.

Editor

No nominations

Post not filled

Records Officer

Proposed Harvey Lomas

Allan Richardson

Seconded Graham Christian

Majority in favour 0 Against 7 Abstentions Elected

Equipment Officer

Proposed Paul Meredith

Iain Miller

Seconded Allan Richardson

Majority in favour 0 Against 2 Abstentions Elected

Cave Rescue Liaison Officer

Proposed Brian Clipstone

Vince Allkins

Seconded Peter Dennis

Majority in favour 0 Against 3 Abstentions Elected

Warden

Proposed Harvey Lomas

Brian Clipstone

Seconded Graham Christian

Majority in favour 0 Against 5 Abstentions Elected

Conservation Officer

Proposed Allan Richardson

Dave Dobson

Seconded Brian Clipstone

Majority in favour 0 Against 2 Abstentions Elected

Training Officer

Proposed Allan Richardson

Jill Brunson

Seconded Vince Allkins

Majority in favour 0 Against 1 Abstention Elected

Estate Manager

Harvey Lomas

Proposed Andy Freem

Majority in favour

1 Against

Seconded Allan Richardson

2 Abstentions

Elected

17/A11 (iv) Ordinary Members

The Chairman invited nominations for four ordinary Members:-

Paul Craddy

Proposed Martin Hoff

Majority in favour

0 Against

Seconded Tony Baker

4 Abstentions

Elected

Tim Lewingdon

Proposed Jill Brunsdon

Majority in favour

0 Against

Seconded Peter Francis

4 Abstentions

Elected

Leigh Davies

Proposed The Chairman

Majority in favour

0 Against

Seconded Ali Garman

11 Abstentions

Elected

Chris Taylor

Proposed Claire Vivian

Majority in favour

2 Against

Seconded Jill Brunsdon

8 Abstentions

Elected

12. Appointment of Auditor

17/A12 The Chairman reported that the current Auditor was standing down. Janine Davies was proposed as Auditor.

Proposed The Chairman

Majority in favour

0 Against

Seconded Graham Christian.

3 Abstentions

Elected

13. Club Rules

17/A13. The Chairman explained that the Club rules were published in the AGM booklet for everybody to study. K. Goodhead suggested that the sub heading 'supporting the Club' was a misnomer.

Motion: That the Club rules be renumbered due to the removal of Rule One.

Proposed Clark Friend

2 in favour

26 Against

20 Abstentions

Seconded Alison Maddocks

Defeated

H. Meredith pointed out a discrepancy between Rule 5 and the safeguarding procedures. B. Hall asked if we were distinguishing between Visitors from other Clubs or Guests of Members. F. Levett stressed that the Club must not be left in the position of being responsible. The current rules seemed to allow for a Visitor of sixteen years of age to visit without a parent. B. Hall pointed out that Clubs enjoying reciprocal rights may reasonably expect the same rights and privileges as Club Members with respect to under 18s. B. Potts pointed out that some reciprocal Clubs and introduced procedures to the effect that under 18s had to be accompanied on trips to other Clubs. T. Baker suggested the current rules were a little vague. It was suggested that the Committee be instructed to consider all rules appertaining to reciprocal rights and under 18 Guests by B. Hall and T. Baker.

P. Dennis then asked what the position was with respect to bringing explosive materials onto Club property such as charged diving cylinders etc.

K. Diffey then asked what the position was with respect to assistance dogs for the visually impaired entering the dining room.

The Chairman stated that there were now a large number of questions outstanding to do with Club rules.

Motion: That the AGM ratifies the Club rules.

Proposed Gary Vaughan

Seconded The Chairman

3 In favour

40 Against

5 Abstentions

Defeated

14. Policy Document

17/A14. The Chairman explained that there was a supporting document in the AGM Agenda and Reports booklet which tried to explain the changes and the background to the changes. G. Vaughan conceded that his approach was forward looking and he felt that if anyone had an issue with the current Club policy the burden fell to that person to draw to light the issue. With respect to the additional supporting notes in the booklet the Chairman of the GSC had been wrongly attributed to Jem Rowland. It was clarified that the existing Chairman of the GSC was Fred Levett.

Motion: That the AGM ratifies the Policy Document as included in the AGM Agenda and Reports.

Proposed Gary Vaughan

Seconded Brian Clipstone

Majority in favour

1 Against

0 Abstentions

Carried

15. Report on Land Options

17/A15. The Chairman explained that the document had been prepared for consumption by this AGM and asked for any comments and questions. No comments or questions were forthcoming and there were no motions suggested.

16. Any Other Business

17/A16a. sub-Committees

B. Hall suggested that there was no mechanism to record the workings of sub-Committees. He suggested that the practice needed to be looked into. The appointment of Sub-Committees was not transparent. J. Rowland stressed that the sub-Committees acted only as advisory bodies to the main Club Committee. None of the sub-Committees had any executive powers. T. Baker stated that during his tenure as Chairman the nature of some Club business had made meetings lengthy and complicated and that he fully understood the need and advantage of using sub-Committees to reduce meeting lengths. Having stated that he went on to say that he appreciated B. Hall's point with respect to the transparency and the need for openness.

Motion

That the Committee investigates and implements best practice procedures for the appointment and reporting of sub-Committees.

Proposed Gary Vaughan

Seconded Bob Hall

Majority in favour

1 Against

2 Abstentions

Carried

17/A16b. Membership List

B. Hall suggested that membership lists were not freely available to Members on a regular basis. Historically it was published with the Club newsletter on an annual basis. He requested that the Club membership list be circulated to Club Members in some form or another. He did not particularly mind how it was done. He would simply like access to an up to date membership list. The point to be made was that the list should not have to be requested. B. Hall was happy for the Committee to take on board the comments and act accordingly. There was further discussion about data protection.

17/A16c. DVD of 70th Anniversary

A. Freem spoke to the AGM with regards to the filming of the 70th Anniversary which had now been placed on a DVD. Twenty five copies were available. There was not an intention to sell them on an ongoing basis. The price was £5.00 with proceeds going to the Roof Fund. The new film showing the Dan-yr-Ogof system, *The Beautiful Adventure* was also available on DVD format. These were also available for sale at £5.00. There would be a showing that night in the Long Common Room.

17/A16d. Fly Tipping

P. Quill asked if the Club had any plans to deal with fly tipping. Fly tipping had occurred at Powell's Cave and it would not be long before it occurred in the quarry. C. Grimmett stated that the Club had been in discussion with Powys CC. Unfortunately Powys CC had no facilities for processing trade waste. The disposal of waste from the Club was a difficult problem. The Committee was aware of the problem and was looking into all options. Powys CC was aware of the fly tipping problem on Club land and might look into it. SWCC Committee was currently looking at the issue of fly tipping. J. Carter reported that there was a fly tipping hotline number. B. Hall also reported that there were fly tipping pages on social media.

17/A16e. Hot Air Mine

C. Friend reported that the connection of OFD III with Hot Air Mine was an imminent possibility. He urged that the Club needed to consider what its stance was towards this development.

17/A16f. Roof Fund

The Chairman asked if anyone would speak with regards to the Roof Fund. P. Meredith reported that the Club now had proper engineering drawings and was in a position to obtain quotes. Jem Rowland asked whether there were properly costed proposals for the roof. It was confirmed that there are now engineering drawings. The Club was also in a position to make a pre-planning application to Brecon Beacons National Park.

17. Date and time of AGM 2018

17/A17.

Motion The 2018 AGM will be held at 9.00 a.m. on Saturday 5th May at a venue to be agreed later. (probably the Miners' Welfare Hall, Abercraf).

Proposed Tony Baker

Seconded Clark Friend

Majority in favour

1 Against

1 Abstention

Carried

17/A18. There being no other business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 12.12 p.m.