

## **SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB**

### **POLICY DOCUMENT**

#### **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 and publish this Policy Document. Amendments to the Policy Document are subject to ratification by an Annual 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 practical .
- Regularly review, and if necessary amend, this Policy, 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 to conduct all meetings and Club business 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 the day to day running of the HQ. .

#### **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.
- To encourage Members who are planning digging and new exploration to consult landowners / regulatory authorities and to seek appropriate permissions.
- To work with partner organisations to the best of its ability and to be considered as a valued contributor to those partnerships

#### 5. INTERNAL RELATIONS

It is the policy of SWCC to:

- Respect the lawful opinions of all Members and protect their right to express them in all club forums.
- 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 promote scientific research, 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.
- Promote scientific study and research in caves and cave entrances.

## 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. SWCC shall publish notices of these Approved Fixed Aids to assist and inform cavers as to any limitations which may apply.

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 the installation of un-approved fixed aids.

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 AND DISCRIMINATION

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.

## 18.DATA PROTECTION

It is the policy of SWCC to:

- Comply with its legal obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation.
- Collect and use data in a fair and lawful way and, as far as is practicably possible, maintain the data up to date.
- Hold and transmit the data in appropriately secure ways.
- Use the data only in order to meet its legitimate operational needs and/or to fulfill legal requirements.
- Maintain a list of Members' address and contact details (subject to their individual consent) which is made available to all Members for their legitimate personal use only.
- Ensure that the rights of Members in respect of the data that it holds can be exercised.