



SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB
CLWB OGOFEYDD DEHEUDIR CYMRU



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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

9.00 a.m. the 5th of May 2012

to be held at the

MINERS' WELFARE HALL, ABERCRAF

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Other reports and documents

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.**

Notes:

SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB CLWB OGOFEYDD DEHEUDIR CYMRU

Notice of Annual General Meeting

The 2012 Annual General Meeting of the South Wales Caving Club (Clwb Ogofeydd Deheudir Cymru) will take place on Saturday the 5th of May commencing at 9.00 a.m., in the Miners' Welfare Hall, Abercraf.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence

2. Chairman's welcome and comments on 2011/2012

3. Minutes of the AGM of the 30th April 2011

Suggested Proposals:

- a) That the Minutes of the 2011 AGM be taken as read
- b) That, subject to any corrections, the Minutes of the 2011 AGM are signed as an accurate record.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes (not in this Agenda)

5. Officers' Reports to the 2012 AGM

- a) *Secretary*
- b) *Treasurer*
- c) *Warden*
- d) *Conservation Officer*
- e) *Training Officer*
- f) *Assistant Secretary*
- g) *Records Officer*
- h) *Fixed Aids Officer*
- i) *Equipment Officer*
- j) *Rescue Liaison Officer*
- k) *Communications
Officer*
- l) *Editor*

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. New Committee Post - SWCC ESTATE MANAGER

The committee request the ratification of its decision to create a co-opted position of 'Estates Manager'. Currently recurring co-options include the positions of Assistant Secretary, Fixed Aids Officer, Communications Officer and Newsheet Editor.

A description of the Estates Manager role is attached to this notice.

7. Auditor's Report to 2011 AGM

The confirmation of the auditors acceptance of the accounts for the year ending 2011 which was qualified in his report to the 2011 AGM.

8. Auditor's Report to 2012 AGM

Suggested Proposal:

That the Auditor's Report be accepted and the Club's thanks be recorded for his work during 2011/2012.

9. Subscriptions and Hut Fees for 2012/13

See recommendations in the Treasurer's report.

10. Policy Document

The annual ratification of the Policy Document. There have been no changes since last year.

11. Proposed Constitutional Amendments.

11.1 The following constitutional amendment is proposed by the committee.

7 c) Notice of, and the Agenda for, any General Meeting must be posted to all Members, in writing or by e-mail in a suitable electronic format, at least fourteen days before the date of the meeting. Notice of Constitutional Amendments and nominations for Honorary Life Members (and Trustees where a vacancy has arisen), signed by six Full Members, must be received by the Honorary Secretary at least six weeks before the Meeting, to be included in the Agenda. Nominations for the Office of President shall be signed by three Full Members and must be received by the Honorary Secretary at least six weeks before the Meeting, to be included in the Agenda. Nominations for Vice-Presidents may be received at the Annual General Meeting. Nomination of a Vice-President shall require one proposer and one seconder.

11.2 The following constitutional amendment is proposed by the committee.

7 d) At General Meetings, decisions on Constitution changes, appointments of Trustees and elections of Honorary Life Members may only be carried by two-thirds majority of Members present and voting. In all other cases decisions shall be carried by a simple majority of those present and voting. In each case the Chairman has a casting vote if required. The total number of votes shall not include the number of abstentions to a vote.

12. Proposed Honorary Member - Tony Baker.

Proposed by: F. Levett, P. Collings-Wells, Ian Alderman, Sue Goodhead, Hywel Davies, Janine Graham.

13. Election of Officers

13.1 President: Jem Rowland

Proposed by: C. Friend, A. Richardson, C. Vivian, A. Freem, L. Das Neves, R. Radcliffe.

13.2 Vice-Presidents: for which nominations are accepted from the floor. It is normal practice to nominate the Trustees as Vice-Presidents.

Officers:

13.3 Chairman

13.4 Secretary

13.5 Treasurer

13.6 Warden

13.7 Conservation Officer

13.8 Training Officer

13.9 Records Officer

13.10 Equipment Officer

13.11 Editor

13.12 Rescue Liaison Officer

13.13 Four ordinary Members

14. Appointment of Auditor

15. Any Other Business

16. Time and venue for the 2013 AGM

The Constitution requires that the AGM be held on the Saturday preceding the first Monday in May. This implies that the AGM will be held on Saturday 4th May 2013. The venue will be decided later.

SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB

CLWB OGOFEYDD DEHEUDIR CYMRU

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Miner's Welfare Hall, Abercraf, at 9.00 a.m. on Saturday the 30th of April 2011.

1. Apologies for absence

11/A1. A. Burrows, J. Burrows, L. Cardy, J. Carter, L. das Neves, S. Davies, L. Galpin, K. Groves, M. Groves, A. Hallihan, P. Hobson, L. Hawes, A. Lewingdon, E. Jones, G. Jones, J. Potts, C. Richardson, M. Teeuwissen.

There were 77 voting Members and 1 Provisional Member signed in – see archived sheets.

In the absence of the Secretary, it was agreed that C. Friend take the Minutes of the AGM.

2. The Chairman's welcome and comments on 2010/2011

11/A2. The Chairman thanked everyone and welcomed those present and went on to say:

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning and welcome to the 2011 AGM of the South Wales Caving Club. Thank you all for coming.

We have a lot to get through in today's meeting so I will be brief. When I stood here at this time last year I did not expect to be leaving the meeting as Chairman for a third year. It was reassuring to be elected again and I was flattered that the club wished me to continue in the role, even though my wife did not share other members' enthusiasm for this.

You will recall from my address last year that 2009/10 had been something of an awkward year for the SWCC committee, with some difficult issues to deal with. In contrast I expected 2010/11 to be an easy year for the committee, but in November the club was contacted by the current owners of the cottage and land at Y Grithig and we were offered the chance to buy the land that contains the entrance to Ogof Ffynnon Ddu. Clearly this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to secure ownership of, and access to, one of our most important cave entrances and one which has special significance for the club. However, the sum of money involved was considerable for a club with our limited resources and the decision was not one that could be taken lightly. You will recall that I wrote to the membership outlining the different options available and I am pleased to say that the response was overwhelmingly in support of the committee's view, that we should purchase the larger of the parcels of land on offer and in doing so secure ownership not just of the OFD 1 entrance but of Powell's Cave and Pant Canol as well. There is an item on today's agenda about the land

purchase so I need not dwell on the subject here, other than to say that, assuming all goes well with the completion of the purchase, I believe that this will come to be seen as a major landmark in the history of SWCC. We will have secured, in perpetuity, access to the cave and ensured its conservation, and in doing so will have made sure that future generations of members, and other cavers, can continue to enjoy this superb and important cave. I would like to thank the membership and the Trustees for their support of the committee's position on this issue. At this point I must also acknowledge the help and advice given to me, and to the committee, by our President, Fred Levett, and by newly-appointed Trustee Clark Friend on the land purchase. Their wisdom and expertise have been invaluable.

The land purchase has not been the only matter of importance to occupy the committee's minds this past year. Last year's AGM requested, for this year's meeting, a strategy for future work and improvements to the HQ. A sub-committee was formed to tackle this and the outcome of several long and involved meetings is the document that you have all received and which we will be discussing later. I must record thanks to all of those who took part in this; your work has given this meeting the opportunity to hold an informed discussion and to set a clear course for the future of the club's most valuable asset.

While on the subject of the HQ, since last year's working week members and visitors have, of course, been enjoying the benefits of the new boiler. The installation of this has brought to an end a long period of uncertainty and unreliability and I must thank all of those who put in so much hard work to ensure that it happened. This was a joint effort by a great number of people, not just those who do the physical work but those who make sure that the work goes on uninterrupted by giving up their time and effort to feed the workers. In particular, though, I must mention Brian Clipstone and Chris Grimmatt who stayed not just for working week but for the whole of the week after to work with the boiler engineer.

Aside from the boiler there have been other important HQ-related issues for the committee to deal with. Thanks to a fire safety risk assessment that was carried out by John Lister and Peter Collings-Wells some essential measures have been taken to improve the safety of members and visitors. Sadly we no longer live in a world where caving clubs can turn a 'blind eye' to things like fire safety legislation.

I'm pleased to say, though, that caving and digging goes on largely untrammelled by committee involvement. Last year's digging week was well attended and even the weather was on our side. While there were no major breakthroughs a lot of work was done at some of our most significant digging projects and at Twyn Tal-Draenan as well. And just last week another successful Easter trip to Cantabria returned, having done more caving in one week than ever before, a record that took some beating. Many of us are eagerly looking forward to another trip to the Vercors this summer, thanks to Fearless Leader Gary Vaughan,

and there has also been another successful provisional members' weekend and some well-supported training events.

I promised to be brief, so I'll just finish by thanking on your behalf this year's committee. Everyone has fulfilled their individual roles to a very high standard, but I must also say that it has been a real pleasure to chair meetings. Every issue has been dealt with in a thorough and considered manner and I have never once felt compelled to use the phrase 'calm down, dear'. I sincerely hope that whoever takes over as Chairman today has an equally good committee to work with. Thank you.

3. Minutes of the 1st May 2010 AGM

11/A3a. The Chairman invited the proposal that the minutes of the 2010 AGM might be taken as read. Proposed by A. Richardson and Seconded by B. Jopling.

Majority For, 0 Against, 1 Abstention – Carried

11/A3b. The Chairman then suggested that the minutes be signed as an accurate record with any identified corrections inserted. Proposed by B. Potts and Seconded by C. Pepper.

Majority For, 0 Against, 2 Abstentions - Carried

11/A3c. Corrections to the 2010 Minutes:

There were no corrections.

4. Matters arising from the 2010 AGM Minutes

11/A4. There were no matters arising.

5. Officers' Reports to the 2011 AGM

11/A5a. The Chairman checked that the Equipment Officer's report had been distributed. He then suggested that the reports be taken as read. Proposed by D. Edwards and Seconded by S. Moore.

Unanimous For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions - Carried

11/A5b. The motion was then put to take the Officers' Reports *en bloc*, with any questions would be directed to the individuals concerned. Proposed by B. Jopling and Seconded by C. Pepper.

Majority For, 1 Against, 0 Abstentions - Carried

Questions to Officers

11/A6. Secretary

P. Hallihan referred to the point raised in the report over whether the AGM Minutes could be sent out by eMail. He asked if '.... in writing...' could be interpreted to

include eMail. Debate followed whether this was Constitutional, as there are Members without eMail. R. Radcliff expressed the view that it was important that the AGM Minutes need proper notification. A. Richardson suggested that the incoming Committee look at all ways to reduce the postage bill. S. Moore then Proposed that “The ‘... in writing...’ wording of the Constitution can be interpreted to include eMail”, Seconded by J. Rowland.

Majority For, 2 Against, 3 Abstentions - Carried

11/A7. Treasurer

B. Jopling asked why no list of payments paid out to Members had been included in the Financial Summary of the accounts. The Treasurer replied that there had been none.

11/A8. Warden

There were no questions from the Members at the meeting.

11/A9. Conservation Officer

There were no questions from the Members at the meeting.

11/A10. Training Officer

There were no questions from the Members at the meeting.

10/A11. Assistant Secretary

There were no questions from the Members at the meeting.

11/A12. Records

There were no questions from the Members at the meeting.

11/A13 Fixed Aids

There were no questions from the Members at the meeting.

11/A14. Equipment Officer

B. Jopling asked about the disposal of out of date SRT rope. He argued that if we are concerned about fire safety in the cottages we should also be concerned about the life of SRT rope. P. Meredith replied that was the whole point of his report. There was general agreement over the proposal in the report.

G. Edwards pointed out that only £25 had been spent on equipment. There was then discussion over ‘disappearing’ items. P. Meredith said that he had adopted the view that these losses were inevitable and kit such as maillons could be treated as consumables.

In line with P. Meredith’s proposal, P. Hallihan suggested that the incoming Equipment Officer spends what is required to bring the rope stores up to specification.

Majority For, 0 Against, 2 Abstentions - Carried

11/A15. Rescue Liaison Officer

There were no questions from the Members at the meeting.

11/A16. Communications

There were no questions from the Members at the meeting.

11/A17. Editor

There were no questions from the Members at the meeting.

6. Auditor's Report

11/A18. K. Maddocks explained that he was unable to confirm the accounts because a statement from the bank had not been issued. A. Freem clarified that it was the Deposit Account that cannot be clarified until the statement arrived. K. Maddocks explained that he was happy to write that the accounts were in order subject to sight of the statement and that it was satisfactory.

It was Proposed by J. Lister and Seconded by P. Francis, that the Auditor's Report be accepted.

Majority For, 0 Against, 1 Abstentions - Carried

7. Subscriptions and Hut fees

11/A19. The Treasurer summarised his views and drew Members' attention to the problem that external forces control our expenses. He pointed out that we have no depreciation of equipment and everything is replaced when needed rather than on a budget. Replacement thus never comes into any financial planning, and indeed may never enter into it. He quoted rope and the boiler as an example and coping with this makes life difficult for any Treasurer. The Treasurer then drew Members' attention to his table and went on to say that there are some important decisions to be made. This generated considerable discussion

A. Dobson asked about the impact of the decisions on the Hut Strategy might affect the setting of income levels. We are making a decision on income before we know what we want the Cottages to be. The Treasurer agreed that there could be implications, but the income problem still existed irrespective of the decisions to be made.

B. Jopling then said that he was in the fortunate position of not having to stay at the Club, but we are clearly down on income. He then explained that many people travel to the Club and did not stay there, but simply used the caves. He suggested that we need to increase the numbers of person/nights as there are times when the Club is underused. P. Meredith pointed out that it was fuel costs that dictated what people did, not the cost of staying at the Club. This opinion was backed up by several Members during the discussion. K. Goodhead enquired about guidance for the maximum number of visitors to be booked in.

A. Maddocks summarised that there were two different points being discussed, the level of income and the use of the Cottages. The fees are cheap compared with other hostels. Several Members pointed out that other huts and camping grounds charged more. This generated discussion over the balance of visitors and the numbers of

Members. It was agreed that we should try to encourage more Members to use the Cottages. B. Jopling suggested as we had done previously, that we should lower fees and C. Friend countered and said that this would not generate increased income, which the Treasurer needed. It is outside costs that we are reacting to. The Chairman then explained what other clubs were charging for use of their huts. B. Potts backed this up as he organised weekends for another club. To stay elsewhere was more expensive than SWCC.

G. Vaughan observed that we have a boom and bust aspect to the usage of the cottages and we need to try to level this out. There was general agreement that Committee weekends are the busiest with slack weeks in between. E. Little and others handling keys backed this view.

D. Edwards and B. Clipstone summarised everything by reiterating that the fuel costs now dictate how frequently people come to the Club. The Hut Fees for staying in the cottages do not enter into the equation. B. Clipstone said for the DO it cannot be Hut Fees that is the deciding factor as they are exempt from them. It was clear that Hut Fees have to go up simply to pay for the gas and electricity that is used in running the cottages, irrespective of how many people are staying.

P. Hallihan first Proposed “that the AGM accept the minimum increases in the Treasure’s report” and was Seconded by P. Francis. He then raised the problem of the contribution of campers. The Treasurer stated that it was difficult because to claim the 50p reduction they cannot use the facilities, but this is impracticable. Therefore, the report recommends that all campers pay the same fee as those staying inside. There was no dissent from this view.

P. Dennis suggested that putting fees up versus losing visitors was a case of ‘who blinks first’. The Chairman said that he had obtained prices charged by other clubs and we were not expensive and that there was a reluctance to put up hut fees in other clubs. Several Members again expressed the opinion that, in comparison with other huts, the fees that SWCC charge are low and that other clubs are improving their facilities.

S. Moore then brought up the application of Hut Fees in ‘use of the cottages’ vs. bed-nights. This generated much discussion, but whilst some felt that the interpretation was wrong, in the end it was accepted that the long term interpretation would be difficult to enforce. It was accepted that the 24hr period started on arrival and ended on departure.

The Treasurer explained that the Hut Sheets have been very difficult to reconcile because there was no Duty Officer. The DO is vital in income generation for the Club. He indicated that there were at least 4 weekends when full payments have probably not been made. This generated substantial discussion over the DO system and its operation. B. Jopling, and G. Vaughan as the administrator of the system, both said that if the Membership does not sign up to it, the system cannot work. He stated that there are a large number of Members who do not do their duty and are not playing the game. C. Friend said that in the past DO were appointed a year in advance and that it was a responsibility to the Club that Members did the job. G. Vaughan confirmed that it is a duty, not a request that Members act as DO.

F. Levett then said that there had been some “mission creep” and whilst realising that everything is linked, we need to get back to the subject.

P. Hallihan reminded the AGM that a Proposal for the minimum increase was already tabled.

C. Garman indicated that we need to clarify the timings of the Hut Fees and then A. Dobson summarised what had happened in the past. Guest fees were double Members’ rates. This ratio is now changing. We are putting up Guest rates at a lower percentage than for Members.

A. Richardson then Proposed “The AGM adopts the higher of the recommendations in the Treasurer’s report” and was Seconded by P. Meredith.

The Chairman then said that we already had two proposals and asked P. Hallihan to repeat his Proposal. P. Hallihan indicated that, on a personal basis, increases in costs hit him as a family of four and Proposed “that the AGM accept the minimum fee increases in the Treasurer’s report” and was Seconded by P. Francis.

There was then debate as to how the two proposals be voted on.

G. Vaughan suggested that there be a simple show of hands, no vote.

B. Hall then asked have we agreed to increase the fees or not?

L. Williams then wanted discussion on the proper application of charging Hut Fees.

The Treasurer confirmed that proper application would have a positive effect. B.

Jopling then indicated that we should leave Hut Fees as they are, as we can afford not to increase them.

Further discussion led to the Proposal by B. Hall, “Does SWCC increase its Hut Fees?” and was Seconded by G. Vaughan.

Majority For, 5 Against, 7 Abstentions – Carried

There was then some discussion over how to cope with the two proposals and it was agreed to have a show of hands.

- a) The minimum option had 26 For,
- b) The market realistic option had 28 For.

There were 13 Abstentions.

G. Vaughan the pointed out that he had abstained as he was unhappy with both options and asked for the differential between the Members and Guest rates be re-established and Proposed “£3 for Members, £6 Guests and £5 for pre-booked student groups” and was seconded by S. Moore.

There was then more discussion over how to increase the fees. The Treasurer initiated further discussion on using whole figures, but expressed concerns over Guests at £6. He also suggested that we do need to encourage more Members to stay. Discussion was cut short by the Chairman saying that we need to consider Hut Fees irrespective of what transpires from the later Forward Strategy debate.

The G. Vaughan Proposal was then voted on:

25 For, 18 Against, 26 Abstentions – Carried

Further discussions followed and the Treasurer indicated that he had thought of introducing any rise in two stages, so that any impact may be evaluated. So 6 months later the Committee could make an informed decision. The Treasurer was going to

propose the lower recommendation with a review. He pointed out that once you get to the gravel track price changes still apply.

B. Jopling then expressed the view that he was against any price increase, but was content with a review. A Proposal was then made by the Treasurer and Seconded by B. Jopling that “The minimum fee increase be implemented to be reviewed in 6 months”. Because there already was a carried vote, this was deemed inappropriate. The Treasurer then agreed that we could review the Vaughan proposal and see if that generated sufficient change in the income. G. Vaughan agreed and M. Day Proposed “That the voted Hut Fees increase £3 Membes, £6 Non-members, be implemented in two stages” and was Seconded by J. Day.

29 For, 16 Against, 20 Abstentions – Carried

R. Radcliff then asked that special consideration be given to the Army. The Treasurer confirmed that they do have a special negotiated rate and this will not change at present.

D. Edwards then pointed out that a notice is needed to explain the 24 rule and the shower box needs better positioning and proper monitoring. The Treasurer responded that the shower box is sometimes not used and it is down to DOs. The fee for non-residents using the facilities is now £1 and this will be publicised. There was then much further discussion on the DO system and B. Jopling expressed the view that the point made earlier by C. Friend should be implemented. Emphasis needs to be given to the fact that it is duty of Members to act as the DO and Members need to be allocated a day if they will not choose one voluntarily. There was general agreement with this suggestion.

J. Wellbelove then indicated that more publicity was needed regarding what you are paying for in Hut Fees. The Chairman pointed out that we do rely upon the honesty of Members and that if you arrive on a Saturday morning to stay until Sunday night, you are in for two days. E. Little suggested that, rather than be coerced, people need to feel guilty if they cannot do their DO stint. She suggested two people be allocated a turn at duty officer for each weekend and that the onus is on a person to replace themselves if they cannot do it. G. Vaughan indicated that this was an excellent proposal and that we already have the concept of two sharing a weekend.

The Treasurer said that new Hut Sheets had been tested and that modifications would be made to the layout to help everyone. The Hut Sheets are also the record that would be used in case of fire so they need to be filled in properly. H. Meredith suggested that time of arrival is on the Hut Sheets. The Treasurer confirmed this.

C. Garman then indicated that it would be good if people could continue to request a particular weekend to take a turn at Duty Officer. G. Vaughan confirmed this and said that it was easiest for him to continue with that rather than to start allotting days to the whole club. It was suggested that if you had not done DO in the last two years you should be assigned a weekend but those who volunteered could choose their own weekend as with the current system. There was general agreement on this suggestion and the Chairman recorded that the AGM had given that indication.

Further discussion was then started by J. Brunsdon over the application of the 24 hr rule and where payments should be made for Members visiting the Club. T.

Lewingdon suggested a weekend fee but there was no support. This generated much discussion and it was agreed that Members visiting the Club and using the facilities pay £1. J. Lister stated that that is what he had always done.

G. Vaughan highlighted the fact that the name of the DO is recorded in the box.

Discussion then turned to the matter of Subscriptions.

The Treasurer then spoke to his recommendations. These were small in percentage terms. The Treasurer expressed concern about retired people and suggested they get a good deal. The discount remains, but it fell upon the Assistant Secretary to administer. P. Cardy got the clarification that joint retired Members was the usual 150% of the single subscription.

The Chairman then Proposed “that the AGM adopt the Treasurer’s recommended subscription increases” and was Seconded by P. Hallihan.

Majority For, 0 Against, 5 Abstentions – Carried

The Treasurer confirmed that PayPal was not yet applicable to subscriptions because of the difficulties in reconciling the data. The Assistant Secretary asked for clarification over the ‘early payment’ scheme and was assured that it was a strict cut off at 2 months.

8. Purchase of land at Y Grithig

11/A20. The Chairman asked the President to explain the current position. F. Levett went on to say that there were two aspects, the information regarding the present situation and a debate over part of the procedure on how we fund the purchase. There has been an agreement to purchase the portion of land including OFD I entrance. F. Levett said that progress has been rather pedestrian, but we are approaching draft contract position. A grant application was submitted to CCW and, if successful, we do not have to take it. A recommendation has gone forward within CCW that SWCC would be offered £5000. F. Levett then summarised possible sources of other funding on the basis that we will pay our solicitor’s fees. The Club could draw all the cost from the reserves, could seek donations from Members and could seek contributions from fund raising, e.g. from other caving clubs. F. Levett indicated that in his view the purchase will go through.

The Chairman then summarised the voluntary donation position, being very encouraging with offers in excess of £10, 000. None have been accepted yet until we have had the debate at this AGM.

B. Jopling enquired as to why the purchase was taking so long. T. Baker explained that we had instigated part of the delay because of the CCW grant process and that we had to await that decision. B. Jopling then asked what if we were gazumped? F. Levett emphasised that he was managing the process and if he felt that there was a problem we had a mechanism to buy the land now.

There was then considerable debate over where the payment should be seen to be coming from. D. Edwards asked that the money come out of the reserves. B. Jopling did not want the money to come from individuals on an anonymous basis, he

proposed that all of the money to come from the Club and any grant we get.

Donations can then be asked for other items at a later date.

The Chairman made it clear that any donations would be confidential and that there is no reason for individuals to feel ostracised. P. Collings-Wells then pointed out that, as previously, any donation is what people can afford and could be £10 or £1000.

There are also works to be done and things like styles etc will need installing, so a contribution need not be financial.

P. Francis stated that he was Chairman during the previous land purchase and that all donations had remained confidential and that it had worked well.

J. Harvey then asked what exactly are we buying and T. Baker and F. Levett clarified the position. We are purchasing the freehold of a section of land that includes the entrances to Ogof Ffynnon Ddu, Pant Canol and Powell's Cave and overlies much of the cave. The land adjoins that which SWCC already owns. However, the mineral rights are not included as they rest with a third party. The Chairman stated that he had good advice (from L. Mullen (nee Wilson) and D. Judson) that the mineral rights do not mean anything in this context. F. Levett said that he could explain the divorce of the mineral rights from the land, and this was another reason for some of the delay. Using the Coal Board as an example, J. Harvey expressed concern that someone could ask for a fee from us for using the cave. The Chairman said in the opinions he had been given this could not happen. C. Friend then reported that he had had a meeting with the purchaser of the other half of the property and their solicitor was not worried by the rather draconian mineral rights conditions, saying that it was a common feature of all deeds in the area. There had also been legislation that made the operation of some of the conditions very different.

A. Dobson pointed out that however the money is obtained it would be the Club that would be buying the property. B. Jopling insisted that some Members felt ostracised despite the reassurances and did not want to accept the donations.

K. Maddocks was clear in his mind that the Club had managed to inspire Members to get the promises of £10,000 and should accept these donations. Nobody can be embarrassed as nobody knows who has done what.

G. Vaughan then Proposed "that the monies should come from: grant support, then any voluntary donations from Members, then money-raising events, and backing everything using Club funds" and was Seconded by S. Moore. P. Francis stated that whilst he could not give very much on this occasion he did not feel guilty about it in any way. There was total agreement that a Member should not feel bad about being unable to afford to donate anything or only a small amount. There are plenty of ways of contributing to the Club without donating money.

The Records Officer then suggested that the duplicate books from the Peter Harvey collection could be sold off and the proceeds go into the fund. He also raised the possibility of selling the rare books as well, as they will deteriorate. This would be a suitable tribute to P. Harvey and a good use of the money. Several Members queried as to whether these were the wishes of P. Harvey and were we selling assets that we need not to. C. Friend argued that the books were given by P. Harvey as a resource for the Club and if we can avoid it they should not be sold. The Chairman confirmed that this was P. Harvey's intention.

B. Jopling Proposed “that the land purchase be funded through any grant and then Club funds. Should money be required for something later on, then the Club can ask for donations” and was Seconded by D. Edwards.

S. Moore suggested that G. Vaughan’s proposal be voted on first and pointed out that this was a priority list and proposing that as an amendment. A. Dobson again stated the Club will pay for the land however the money is raised.

G. Vaughan then said the problem was how to allocate the funding. The primary source of funding is any grant, next comes anonymous donations, thirdly any fund raising events and then underpinned by existing Club funds. B. Jopling did not accept this and G. Vaughan explained the priority of spending the money again.

J. Brunsdon asked what other clubs may get out of contributions? Might they expect preferential treatment, for example? T. Baker said that whilst there had been offers of money none have been followed up as yet.

G. Vaughan then explained that the amendment by S. Moore was that a priority was attached to the source of funds. B. Jopling continued expressing the view that he was still unhappy and wanted the Club to pay.

The Chairman then asked for a vote on the amendment to the Jopling proposal.

Majority For, 7 Against, 9 Abstentions – Carried

The Chairman then asked for a vote on the G. Vaughan proposal.

Majority For, 4 Against, 8 Abstentions – Carried

The meeting was thus agreed that the purchase will be funded through a CCW grant, then voluntary donations and then other sources backed by Club funds.

A. Richardson then asked about selling the valuable books. B. Jopling then Proposed “That the P. Harvey books not be sold off to purchase the land” and was Seconded by K. Maddocks. There was again discussion regarding what P. Harvey’s views were and there were clearly doubts in his mind as to how they were to be kept. The Chairman suggested that the fate of the books be a job for the Archive Sub-Committee. I. Miller argued we should keep the books as we can afford the land. Voting on the Proposal was:

Majority For, 0 Against, 11 Abstentions – Carried

9. HQ Strategy document

11/A21. The Chairman asked F. Levett to summarise the position. F. Levett explained how the small group had been set up and referred Members to the document that had been circulated and the proposals within it. He emphasised that this was the opportunity to decide what SWCC wants the HQ to be. There needed to be a debate about property and the support that it gives the Club.

P. Dobson pointed out that there was no Model 3.5, which would leave the Club where it was.

A. Freem pointed out that the Club moves all the time. What is intended by ‘leave it as it is’? The difference between ‘doing nothing to the present structure other than keeping it in the same condition’ and ‘working to stay on a plateau’ needed to be established. This links to who we want to attract to the Club.

The debate then attempted to focus on what sort of Club do we want?

G. Amabalino asked what groups do we want to come to the Club? If we have more guests we need a more robust DO system.

B. Clipstone said that there are two issues, what groups do we have at the Club dictates what we do to it in terms of improvements.

A short debate over the impact of the DO system was cut short by B. Clipstone, who pointed out that the DO system is irrelevant to the position we want the Club to be in with Members vs. guests.

D. Edwards stated that when the cottages started they were filthy and the Club had a terrific atmosphere, now it is clean(ish), subject to regulation, e.g. fire doors, it is sterile with no atmosphere. G. Vaughan said that we are a Club and we can go where we want to go. P. Quill said does everyone realise the consequences if we go one step too far, e.g. getting involved with building regulations. B. Clipstone stated that SWCC is a hostel, whether Members like it or not, and that comes with legal requirements. J. Lister pointed out that legal requirements are legal requirements and we cannot get out of them. G. Vaughan explained that money was not important, he came to the Club for its ethos, and how much of this would it cost to change the nature of the Club?

B. Jopling re-emphasised the debate is about what we want the Club to be. He then outlined several money-making routes with weekday users and more groups at weekends. How posh do we want the Club to be for Members?

There was general agreement that the balance between these things is important and that the 5star option was not what was wanted.

A. Dobson, warned that whilst we may want to go down a route of Members and their guests, we must not cut off visiting caving clubs.

G. Christian said that we should not be worried about the building inspectors. The Penwyllt Inn has been successfully refurbished with the help of the inspector. The current Club refurbishments are done to the best standards that we can manage, to understandings of what building regulations are. All new works look New until they have 'weathered' in, but the standard needs to be high.

B. Jopling said that he agreed with doing work to a high standard. He went on to say "Visiting clubs left the place spotless, after you lot have left the place is a mess".

P. Francis drew attention to the Constitution and the objects of the Club. He suggested that we have turned into a building club.

Discussion then went through the history of the Club. The property was there to support caving and as the Club grew it moved to the present premises.

The Chairman then asked for a proposal to be made

J. Day asked about the data collected from the survey. G. Vaughan said that he had collated the 22 responses but had neglected to bring the data. He said that the scores were Option 1 scored <1, Option 2 scored 4.5, Option 3 scored 8.5, Option 4 scored 4.5, Options 5 scored 0.

A. Maddocks said that Option 3 was the most attractive but it also gave a marker as to what needs to change. P. Hallihan then said that there are two distinct parts, first, who do we want in the Club and second, what have we to do to accommodate those

groups. He then Proposed “the club stays as it is, primarily for Members and guests and visiting caving clubs” and was Seconded by T. Lewingdon.

F. Levett summed up and said that if we want Members, their guests and visiting caving clubs, once we make the decision, certain things then can flow from it.

K. Goodhead said that over the last 5 years non-caving visitors, including the Army, amounted to approximately 15% of the income. This visitor usage is very variable and cannot be predicted. He said he would be happy to continue doing bookings, but needed to know the difference between the Army and a mid-week DoE group who do not use the main Club facilities. B. Jopling then asked do we accept, for example, a canoe club if we have to increase and improve the facilities to accommodate them? The answer is ‘no’, we do not need them. Equally, if a group camps they are not requiring extra facilities and so ‘yes’, they are accepted.

S. Moore said that we should accommodate clubs who require no more than we ourselves require.

A vote was then held on P. Hallihan’s motions which was:

Majority For, 0 Against, 4 Abstentions – Carried

The Club stays roughly as it is at present regarding visitors.

The Chairman then asked for a debate on what we want

B. Jopling thought that it had been covered last year, that WW proposals had to be costed and had to be brought forward to an AGM. This was erroneous, and the Cottage Sub-Group found this could not be done. F. Levett explained this situation.

K. Goodhead “Proposed to adopt Model 3 with the exception 5.1 bullet point 4 ‘Cavers only Hut’” and was Seconded by P. Hallihan.

D. Edwards indicated that there are things that need doing. B. Clipstone said the changes in No.4 are ending this year and so these new proposals take effect from next WW. B. Potts said that there are some actions that will improve the Club included in Option 3.

P. Francis expressed concern that we will only maintain the structure and not make wholesale changes as had been done to No.4. He said that he would be unhappy if this was to happen again.

S. Moore indicated that the expectations of people move forward and consequently the Club has to move forward. We cannot be rooted in the past yet appeal to new Members who have different values.

P. Collings-Wells urged that we move towards a vote on where we want to be in 5 years time. D. Edwards asked if the Working Group that produced the document is permanent. T. Baker replied that they were only briefed to produce the document for this AGM.

L. Williams then pointed out that a Working Group had been involved with a lot of time spent analysing the problem and had produced a readable document.

The proposal above, that “The AGM accepts Option 3 as the way forward” and was voted on:

Majority For, 0 Against, 8 Abstentions – Carried

10. Policy Document

11/A22. The Chairman introduced the Club Policy Document that has to be ratified each AGM. There have been no changes to it in the last year. Proposed by S. Mabbett and Seconded by F. Levett that it be ratified.

Unanimous For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions - Carried

F. Levett then pointed out that this document was very useful in assisting with the grant application to CCW.

11. Election of Officers

11/A23. President

There was only one nomination received for election as President:

Fred Levett

Proposed by: C. Friend, J. Brunsdon, R. Stuart, A. Richardson, G. Vaughan, C. Vivian

The result of a show of hands was:

Unanimous For, 0 No, 0 Abstentions

As a result of this **Fred Levett** was elected as President of SWCC.

11/A23. Vice Presidents

The 4 Trustees were proposed and seconded *en bloc*.

Les Hawes

John Lister

Alison Maddocks

Clark Friend

Proposed: A. Dobson

Seconded: A. Richardson

Majority For, 0 Against, 3 Abstentions – Elected

11/A24. Vice Presidents

The following were proposed:

M. Day

Proposed: D. Edwards

Seconded: G. Vaughan

Majority For, 0 Against, 1 Abstentions – Elected

J. Rowland

Proposed: G. Christian

Seconded: C. Friend

Majority For, 0 Against, 2 Abstentions – Elected

T. Baker then asked for nominations for the post of Chairman.

11/A25. Chairman

Paul Meredith

Proposed: S. Goodhead

Seconded: G. Vaughan

Elected

T. Baker then retained the Chair and asked for nominations for the following posts. In each case, only one nomination was received.

Claire Vivian

(Proposed: G. Vaughan Seconded: G. Edwards)

Jill Brunsten

(Proposed: A. Richardson Seconded: P. Francis)

The Chairman proposed that, with the agreement of the AGM, he would like to avoid a ballot. He asked that if Lel Davies would accept co-option as Assistant Secretary, the other four would go through. Lel Davies was happy with that arrangement.

12. Appointment of Auditor

11/A36. Ken Maddocks was proposed as Auditor by C. Pepper and Seconded by J. Rowland. **Majority For; 0 Against; 1 Abstentions – Carried**

13. Any Other Business

11/A37. New Members

G. Amabalino raised the problem of attracting new Members. He advocated closer links to the university clubs that visit and Proposed “that the Committee look into outreaching to university clubs with a view to recruiting new Members” and was Seconded by G. Edwards.

There was little discussion and the vote was

Majority For; 0 Against; 2 Abstentions – Carried

11/A38. Hut Cleaning

A. Richardson stated that hiring the professional cleaner has provided a good baseline for the cleanliness of the HQ, can we now consider extending this to the toilet facilities? J. Day clarified the duties of the cleaner and the Treasurer confirmed there was a cost implication £70/event. C. Friend then indicated that it would be cheaper to give a Member a free weekend to clean the toilets. This was met with objections. The Treasurer said that he could not state the hours that the cleaning event covered and J. Day indicated that she fits in around other duties. There was agreement we should try the extended cleaning duties.

11/A39. Sewage

G. Christian commented on the position of the day before when the Warden was discovered frantically attempting to rod an overflowing sewage system. He asked about creating a Septic Tank Maintenance Schedule. If we can provide him with the size of tank he would make up a pumping chart. B. Clipstone replied that the details were around.

11/A40. D. Dobson made an enquiry as to the health of Mary Hazelton’s dragon. The Records Officer reported that it was in good health.

11/A41. Hut Sheets

A. Freem had trialled new Hut Sheets and said that only 1% had filled them out completely. He requested that people fill them out properly. He asked if the ‘Task

List' was useful? G. Edwards said that it should be mandatory to fill them out. It was useful to the DOs and helped the overall management.

A. Freem then asked did it really work? It was emphasised that it is already the DOs job to persuade Members to do jobs in the HQ. There was agreement that the 'Jobs list' be left on as an aid.

11/A42. *Rattus norvegicus*

A. Richardson enquired as to the status of the *R. norvegicus* problem at the Club. The Warden replied that presently it was under control. There is a long term plan to eradicate them.

11/A43. Dogs

L. Williams asked about the construction of some kennels for dogs adjacent to the Washdown Area. The kennels would be supplied by the dog owners. This generated much discussion and B. Jopling stated that when he brought his dogs to the Club they stayed in his car. Particular concern was expressed over who was to keep the kennels cleaned out. There was also concern over the noise that four caged canines would make. L. Williams confirmed that the kennels would be built at no cost to the Club and Proposed "that the dog owners be allowed to construct 4 kennels at their own expense and kept clean" and was Seconded by J. Brunsdon:

9 For; 14 Against; Most Abstentions – Defeated

L. Williams then said that the dogs would be left running about.

R. Radcliff then asked for a show of hands on the suggestion that dogs not be allowed in the HQ at all. 11 Members indicated that they agreed with this view.

11/A44. Votes of Thanks

P. Collings-Wells proposed a vote of thanks to T. Baker for taking on the extra year as Chairman. T. Lister proposed a vote of thanks to L. das Neves for taking on the role of Secretary for the year.

14. Time and Venue for 2012 AGM

11/A45. The 2012 AGM will be held on Saturday the 5th of May. It was Proposed by T. Baker and Seconded by C. Friend, that it be at 9.00 a.m., at a venue to be advised (suggested to be at the Miners' Welfare, Abercraf). The Committee would confirm the venue at a later date.

Majority For; 3 Against; 0 Abstentions – Carried

11/A46. There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Clark Friend, 09/05/2011

Officers' Reports to the 2012 AGM

Secretary's report to the 2012 AGM

The year May 2011 to May 2012 has perhaps been more notable for events above ground than below. Above ground, the year was marked by the sad passing of John Hartwell a long standing member of the club. It was also with great sadness that we recorded the death of Bonnie Cottier a provisional member of the club. It is with particular sadness that I must also record the passing away of Jenny Peat after a long fight against cancer. The completion of the purchase of OFD 1 was concluded in this year and probably marks a first for British caving if not for world caving. A very wide spectrum of members have contributed to this endeavour in a wide range of fashions making the final conclusion of the purchase very much a success for every member of the club and the future of British Caving. The committee were swift to consider how a cave in the ownership of cavers should be managed and accordingly the long standing OFD 1 leader system has been replaced with a permit system not dissimilar to the CCW controlled entrances. This has in part resulted in a subtle relaxation of access conditions whilst at the same time ensuring continuity between the OFD system as a whole. In the context of landowner and cave manager, the club's committee has already been faced with a difficult question as to whether instructor training by the army warrants the description 'commercial caving'. Currently a six month trial is in progress. SWCC attended Hidden Earth in 2011 and the efforts of the contributing members were awarded with the prize for best club stand. Martin Groves was summoned to Buckingham Palace for an audience with the Queen together with other notorious explorers! OgoF Fest, Bonfire night and New Years Eve were all well attended and supported by members. The social side of the club appears to be as vibrant as ever. Below ground the club made its usual trip to northern Spain again at Easter this time attended by 11 members with ages ranging between 15 and 64. In August, SWCC members were to be found in the Vercors visiting such caves as the Trou Qui Souffle and Cuves des Sassenage. About 24 members in all turned out for this trip. Included in the events below ground (perhaps) was an unusual trip to explore the shafts and fissures of the Gorner Glacier in Switzerland. Led by Martin Groves a number of shafts were dropped in the order of eighty metres each with its own particular hazards which changed on a day by day basis! SWCC members formed a significant portion of a return trip to an old haunt that had attracted a number of SWCC expeditions in the mid 1980's. Tresvisio 2011 (in the Picos de Europa) produced some interesting leads to be followed up by the team in 2012. Other trips included a micro expedition to the Green Holes of Doolin. Digging continues to receive a good deal of support by the membership although undoubtedly the vast majority of this effort goes un-recorded in the club log book. The club log book for the year 2011- 2012 appears sparse I am afraid to say. Most of the caving related comments relate to problems with gates or fixed aids and the like. Very little is recorded by way of progress made in exploration which is perhaps symptomatic of where the club currently finds itself.

Gary Vaughan Hon Secretary 08.03.12

TREASURER'S REPORT 2011-12

The 2010-11 financial year contained a sequence of unique events that have tested the Club's finances. It closed with a modest , fragile increase in numerical wealth, sufficient , at least to offset some of the losses from depreciation and inflation. This was in spite of a level of financial activity larger than at any time in the Club's history and many important open-ended financial transactions that have increased the long term 'material wealth ' of the Club.

The purchase of OFD1

The cost of the OFD1 purchase was £20,000 plus legal and ongoing site management expenses. From the earliest stages in the process, it was clear that a figure in around £22,000 from unproven sources might be needed.

Underwriting of the donation funding from the Club accounts was agreed, but in the event, not required. The £18,900 raised through member and C.C.W. donations, plus the surplus raised by the OgoF Fest was sufficient for the purchase, legal, and land registration, plus the Club also got a great party into the bargain.

Ongoing land management costs , including the imminent purchase and installation of gates, stile and path construction , will also be funded through the remaining money, so that in spite of a huge increase in the Clubs property ownership, the acquisition and management of the OFD 1 land and the cave are will not impact on other financial demands on the Club's resources.

OgoF Fest

This remarkable celebration involved many hundreds of financial transactions. The initial financial uncertainty proved unfounded and the net surplus from this complex event was sufficient to cover both the costs of the event and the shortfall in funds required to cover the OFD1 costs.

Safety refurbishment and certifications within the HQ

It was inevitable that the upgrade of the HQ to make it fire, electricity and gas statutorily compliant was going to be costly. In the event all the required refurbishment, installations and certification were successfully funded and completed during the year.

Supporting active caving.

A higher level of Funding was allocated to replace aging caving tackle, support the bursary scheme to support a wide range of caving-related activities , and the funding of first print run of the new OFD 1 survey.

Managing and evaluating membership subscription and hut fee increases agreed at the 2011 AGM

Last year's relatively modest increases agreed at the AGM were criticised by some only for their small scale.

A number of members resigned during the year for reasons related to the recession and objections to the Duty Officer system , taking our membership to below 300 though there has also been a steady trickle of new members joining . The membership should however be concerned that a continuation of the fall in future years would be seriously damaging to club funds .

When the finances were reviewed in October, the committee agreed not to implement a further mid-year rise, sanctioned if considered necessary by last year's AGM, as the balance was looking quite even it would avoid the disruption and confusion caused by mid-year adjustments.

A small increase in income is evident on the account summary. Members and guest's nights increased and though is a partial support to decisions made last year, the Club has not recovered from the 2019-10 deficit.

Overall the treasurer believes that:-

Small increases in fees seem to have been accepted by the members and the wider caving community and the demand for places has shown a welcomed inelasticity to last year's increases.

The financial and social health of the Club is best addressed through increasing membership numbers and occupancy rates rather than massive fee increases.

Fuel- cost inflation

Electricity and gas are major expenditures for the Club and the waste should be obvious to any resident observing the ways the building is used on a typical weekend. There is an apparent lack of recognition from many of the cost impact of open doors and windows, 30 minute showers, lights left on all day etc. It may therefore be surprising that the accounts show a reduction in both gas and electricity costs from the last to this financial year. However, although the mild autumn and early winter allowed for a significant reduction in our bills, unfortunately the arrival of large bills for utilities just after the end of the financial year rebalanced the comparison with the previous year. It is sobering to conclude that a colder winter and the arrival of fuel bills a week earlier would have resulted in another year with an overall club account balance being in financial deficit.

I can only urge members, when resident, not to demand the heating they might expect at home, and also to support the Clubs finances and the global climate change mitigation with actions of simple energy management, encouraging our non-club visitors to do the same.

Working week.

The 2011 working week focus was to move existing renovation and developments particularly in cottage 4.towards completion. The agreed budget recognised a need for constraint and the working week impact on the club's finances was greatly reduced from previous years.

Taxation, insurance and banking and administration

The treasurer's work this year included some important tasks which will have a positive impact on the Club and the workload of future treasurers.

Negotiations with the Inland Revenue have resulted in their agreement that corporation tax returns will not be required in future years unless our circumstances change.

Protracted negotiations with insurance brokers led to an insurance policy that fully identified the nature of club use and risks. It is however hoped that the BCA will be negotiating a club insurance policy package with their insurers (Zurich) for future years, with reduced premiums.

The accounts administration with Barclays have been upgraded to online and telephone banking status, hugely reducing the workload for the treasurer and also facilitating prompt payments to creditors. The single signature system required for this, has been restored and a monitoring system involving two other signatories has been set up. There is intent to open a further savings account for Club funds to both secure them and earn some interest from our long-term assets. This should be one tasks for next year's treasurer's.

Other matters

Duty Officers

The Membership needs to be aware that the major income for the club passes through the hands of Duty Officers.

Many DO's are efficient when collecting and recording payments into the system. However a significant number of weekends this year can be summarised as financially dysfunctional due to patchy or no Duty Officer cover. The implications of this go far beyond finance but the treasurer has often found it necessary to estimate the nature of transactions either directly during more than wished for administrative visits to the HQ, or indirectly from incomplete hut sheets information.

Most visitors are honest and well meaning, but there have been incidents that may have involved actual removal of cash from the cash box and also unauthorised /unpaid /underpaid use of the accommodation. Associated losses over the year are likely to amount to a very significant 3 figure sum.

Communication and other costs

Members are being better informed than ever about the Club's activities and opportunities. Electronic communications are cheap and of very high quality, but to match them, paper communications with the same content and presentation quality are expensive to produce and post.

It must always be necessary to be equal to all members but it would help club finances enormously if those who can receive paperless information would actively opt to do so. The newsheet author will be delighted to add names to the growing list of members saving Club money by going paperless!

Committee expenses

There were no claims for travelling expenses submitted during the year.

Recommendations

1/ Subscriptions and Hut Fees

As indicated above, the treasurer believes that the future financial health of the club lies with increasing membership and increasing occupancy rates rather than huge increases in fees.

A further small rise in residential fees is not likely to be damaging. Club membership fee change is however a different matter and I suspect that further increases of what to some is a large single payment in financially strained times may have negative consequences on membership .

Although I am a supporter of ‘whole number ‘ payment and the £ 3/4/5 model of last year , whole number increases may have a disproportionate effect on raising occupancy numbers if imposed as one increase.

I propose two alternative models for consideration be the AGM . Both maintain membership fees as they are and either:

A/ Residence fees rise by £0.50 across the whole range and that, as with 2011, the committee is authorised to review and increase this by another £0.50 in October if proved necessary.

or:

B/ Residence fees rise by £1 across the whole range for the next Club year.

A	B	A/ Approx increase in income	B/ Approx increase in income
Members per night £3.50	Members per night £4.00	£750	£1500
Guests per night £ £5.50	Guests per night £6.00	£500	£1000
Students per night £4.50	Students per night £5.00	£150	£ 450
Notes			
<p>There should be no separate camping fee (as for 2011)It is worrying to note that last year’s increase of the shower/day changing room use £1.00 had no impact on income. In fact the takings dropped. I can only assume avoidance and lack of DOs is an issue here and the club needs to be more proactive in encouraging payment via duty officers (on issue of cave key and route card) plus better signs for collecting boxes.</p> <p>There was very little evidence on hut sheets of £1.00 payments by non-resident visiting members. There are collecting issues here and perhaps we just need to request that members pay the £1.00 as for shower use if there visit and make any use of the HQ facilities.</p>			

2/ Expenditure

Many of the purchases made in 2011-12 were long term and obligatory . Pressure to spend on the ‘It would be nice to have ‘ categories must be soberly considered next year if we are to build up reserves to self-fund future renovation work.

3/Savings

There needs to be discussion and clear agreement on the level and function of savings that the Club needs to maintain. The justification for maintaining savings while, at the same time considering the application for grants from outside bodies to support renovation, needs to be clear and precise.

Finally!

There is a real need for a supporting framework for the treasurer’s role. It should include a system for ‘buddying’ future post holders with potential and past treasurers as well as maintaining the transaction monitoring system set up this year. Hopefully the new role of estate manager will reduce some of the future treasurer’s work load in subsequent years.

As with my previous year in this post, I have found the support and advice of duty officers, past treasurers, account signatories, the membership secretary and other members of the committee invaluable in carrying out this varied and frequently onerous role. I would like to thank all those people for helping to ensure the financial well being of the Club throughout the financial year. .

South Wales Caving Club

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31st January 2012

	Note	<u>2012</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>
		£	£	£
<u>Income</u>				
Subscriptions		9,033		8,236
Donations		367		1,642
Hut Fees	(1)	14,453		12,758
Shower Boxes		295		312
Lockers		185		219
Interest		11		17
Sales	(2)	1,726		846
Social Events	(3)	1,015		411
Land Purchase Surplus	(11)	1,914		0
Grazing Land		592		592
Other Income	(4)	63		1,133
			29,654	26,166
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Headquarters	(5)	18,725		24,464
Secretarial (includes News Sheet)		1,155		1,843
Newsletter		3,072		0
Equipment	(6)	1,748		474
Items for Sale	(2)	1,823		1,132
Training		0		0
Library		733		111
British Caving Association	(7)	327		196
Expenditure from social fund	(3)	0		656
Taxation	(8)	0		4
Rescue	(9)	0		35
Other Expenditure	(4)	957		3,309
			28,541	32,224
<u>Surplus/(Deficit) for the year</u>			1,113	(6,058)

Balance Sheet at 31st January 2012

	Note	<u>2012</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>
		£	£	£
<u>Assets</u>				
Barclays Bank Current Account		35,511		10,172
Barclays Bank Deposit Accounts		10,633		35,621
Cash At Bank			46,144	45,793
BCA Insurance premiums due from members			2,958	2,733
<u>Liabilities</u>				
PIWH Memorial Fund	(10)		0	(537)
			49,102	47,989
<u>Club Funds</u>				
Club Funds at 1st February 2011			47,989	54,047
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year			1,113	(6,058)
			49,102	47,989
Club Funds at 31st January 2012			49,102	47,989

South Wales Caving Club**South Wales Caving Club****Notes to the Accounts****(1) Hut Fees**

Takings in the year may be broken down as follows:

		<u>Nights</u>		<u>Fees</u>
		<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
				£
	Club Members	1,816	1,603	4,873
	Guests	1,386	1,073	6,131
	Students/camping	533	714	2,042
	Children	170	62	252
	Army	385	311	1,155
		<u>4,290</u>	<u>3,763</u>	<u>14,453</u>
(2)	<u>Sales</u>			<u>2012</u>
				£
	Income			277
	Surveys			660
	Books			23
	Posters			89
	Mugs			28
	Batteries			649
	T-shirts and badges			<u>1,726</u>
	Expenditure			1,286
	T-Shirt printing			302
	Books			0
	Mugs			235
	OFD Surveys			<u>1,823</u>
(3)	<u>Social Events</u>			<u>2012</u>
				£
	Income			60
	Easter & Working week			(146)
	Ceilidh			671
	Bonfire Night			430
	New Year's Eve			<u>1,015</u>
	Expenditure			0
	Donation to Cave Rescue			0
	New Cooker			0
	Beer taps			<u>0</u>
				1,015
				1,097
	Social Events net surplus (deficit) in the year			<u>2,112</u>
	Social Events Fund balance brought forward			1,015
	Social Events Fund balance at 31st January 2009			<u>1,097</u>
(4)	<u>Other</u>			<u>2012</u>
				£
	Income			10
	Deposits for keys			-100
	OFD1 donations			153
	Sale of surplus materials and scrap			<u>63</u>

	Expenditure	Charity donation miners appeal	200
		Bank charge	13
		Stump legal fees	0
		Lock and Key access	89
		Other	0
		Bursary grant - S Amatt - 'Digging materials' licence etc.	371
		Bursary grant - I Alderman - 'Digging materials' storage costs	285
			<u>957</u>
(5)	<u>Headquarters</u>		<u>2012</u>
			£
	Costs	Gas	3,618
		Electric	1,776
		Telephone	256
		Repairs	9,072
		Equipment	0
		Cleaning	1,331
		Insurance	2,674
		<u>Net Expenditure</u>	<u>18,725</u>
(6)	<u>Equipment</u>		<u>2012</u>
			£
		Fixed Aids	338
		Leica distometer &/lamps	116
		Rope	895
		Tackle sacks/helmets	300
		Scaffolding, planks and clamps	100
			<u>1,748</u>
(7)	<u>British Caving Association</u>		<u>2012</u>
		Club Subscription	(75)
		Access Body Insurance	(50)
		Members Subscriptions/Insurance Paid	(3,029)
		Received from members for prior year	2,531
		Received from members for current year	71
		Debtor movement - money due from members	225
		Net surplus (deficit) for the year	<u>(327)</u>
(8)	<u>Taxation</u>		<u>2012</u>
		Tax on interest earned on cash	0
			<u>0</u>
(9)	<u>Rescue</u>		<u>2012</u>
		Rent received for No. 2 Powell Street	250
		Donations to rescue	(250)
			<u>0</u>
(10)	<u>PIWH Memorial Fund</u>		<u>2012</u>
		Balance of fund brought forward	537
		Donated to OFD1 Land Purchase	(537)
		Donations	
		Balance at end of year	<u>0</u>
(11)	<u>OFD1 Land Purchase</u>		

		<u>2012</u>
Costs	Land Purchase Price	20,000
	Solicitors' Fees	671
	Land Registry Fee	280
		<hr/> 20,951 <hr/>
Income	Donations	13,650
	Grant from CCW	5,000
	Balance of Peter Harvey Fund	537
	Ogof Fest Surplus	3,678
		<hr/> 22,865 <hr/>
	Fund for ongoing OFD1 land management	<hr/> 1,914 <hr/>

COTTAGE WARDENS REPORT

At the working week last year, work continued on the Drying room and the Changing room.

The Drying room was insulated and plaster-boarded and rails and hangers put up. The Changing room was tiled and various pipes boxed in and rails put up. All the Cottages were wired up for smoke alarms and a Fire Alarm panel fitted.

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 we had our electric's certified, we have been working towards this for a number of years, and with some extra work at the New Year we achieved it. Various items in the main kitchen have been replaced as the old ones have crumbled into dust. This year we will be trying to finish off the Changing room and the Drying room floors and finish rendering the new locker room wall. The old locker room will be divided into two rooms, Tackle and Archive. The track entering our property has lots of potholes and work hopefully will be done on it. Plus lots of other small jobs. And of course lots of painting.

Brian Clipstone. 19.03.12 Cottage Warden.

Conservation Officer's Report

This last year has seen the SWCC purchase the land surrounding the OFD I entrance thus securing the access and conservation of the whole cave. To enable future conservation work to be demonstrably successful a condition survey of OFD I will be undertaken over the next few months. In the same vein, in co-operation with the CCW, the management plan for DYO is nearing fruition and once complete, attention will turn to implementing a plan for OFD. I have continued to clean and lay conservation tape in OFD and DYO where needed. I have carried out some cleaning of calcite in the chamber containing the Columns and intend to return for some more work there. The amount of litter found within the cave remains extremely low. My thanks to all the members who continue to help in this task. I have attended various meetings on behalf of the SWCC with bodies such as the; Countryside Council for Wales, the Brecon Beacons National Park, the British Caving Association, the Cambrian Caving Council and the Dan yr Ogof Cave Advisory Committee. I have also recently met with the Coed Cymru and Glastir Woodlands Officer to investigate the possibilities of creating new woodland on our land. This is work in progress and has yet to bear fruit.

Bernie Woodley, March 2012.

Training Officer's Report

This year has become quite a good year on the training and meets front. We decided to create a regular meets programme which has been up and running for a few months now, with organised club caving activity running about once per fortnight. This has included trips to caves in the local area and away trips, and training events. I would like to thank everybody who has kindly volunteered their time to lead trips, and organise events as this programme can only happen with their help. If you haven't yet run a trip, now is the time to volunteer! We're now looking at expanding the programme to include some conservation projects and other targetted caving activities, so keep an eye on the club calendar. I'd like to thank Lizzy for organising the provisional members weekend in december, which was a great success, and Clare for everything she has done organising things. As ever if there are specific training events or trips that you would like to see, then make your feelings known.

Gareth Edwards, March 2012

Assistant Secretary's Report

Membership this year currently stands at 302. This includes 19 provisional members and 2 Junior Provisional's.

Subscriptions: I would like to thank all the members who manage to pay their subscriptions in the allotted time. It does make life a lot easier! Again, I must stress that every club member must be insured through the BCA. Even if you don't come to the club anymore. If you are a member then you have to pay. It is by no means our rules and it would be a lot easier to deal with just straight subscriptions! Towards the end of the year, I ask people if they want to change their status regarding insurance. This might be from 'Active Caver' to Non active caver or 'Non active caver to 'Active Caver'. If you do decide to change for whatever reason then please let me know before the end of November. I can then send off the details to the BCA. The club pays a lump

sum (for members who pay via SWCC) in January. The money is then collected from members along with their subscriptions in May. If you decide not to continue provisional membership or decide not to re join then you will still be asked to pay for the insurance so that the club doesn't end up out of pocket!! If anyone has a genuine problem with paying the full amount of their subscription on time for one reason or another, then they just need to contact me and something can be sorted out.

Les (Lel) Davies March 2012

Records Officers Report

Over the past year there have been the usual book purchases, as well as a number of donations of materials to the Library, including that of the late John Hartwell which was shipped to us from Australia. There has been the usual run of binding and maintenance of the existing collection. The Archive subcommittee met several times over the year to discuss the way forward. It is planned to divide the existing Locker room into an Archive store and the Club Tackle store, the work is scheduled to be carried out over working week. The lockers are to be moved to the room outside the drying room. The Photographic Archivist has already started work, the Document Archivist will be able to start once the Archive Store is built. There is the ongoing problem of members, mostly well known, who need to be reminded about returning borrowed items. Mary Hazelton's Dragon is as always safe and well in the fire safe, though there is a rumour that after many years of undisturbed slumber it has awakened and may well be seen in the near future. I am willing to stand again for the position of Records Officer.

R. Allan Richardson

Fixed Aids Officer's Report

The majority of the fixed aids have, once again, only required inspection this year, at the time of writing not all have been visited, but hopefully most will have by the AGM. Various cave locks have required fettling, this is obviously an on-going problem and the purchase of more rugged locks for OFD has been approved by the CCW. The door on Tunnel Top has seen attention from local members after a party of walkers were reported to have managed to open it without having a key.

A concern was raised about a copper ferrule on the Bolt Traverse and the possibility of bi-metallic corrosion, the ferrule has been removed and replaced with stainless steel rope grips, no corrosion was apparent. Several maillons have been replaced, at Fault Aven and Maypole Inlet.

The traverse line and maillons in Tunnel Top have been replaced, the handline now reaches the bottom of the calcite slope. The ropes on Low's 'chain' have also been replaced.

Thanks are due to Tony Seddon of Starless River for the donation of several pieces of kit used this year.

Dave Dobson 23/03/2012

SWCC Equipment Officers Report for 2012 AGM

At the 2011 AGM, it was agreed that the incoming equipment officer spend "what is required" to bring the rope store up to date. On examining the rope stores it was realised that, if we were to stick rigidly to the 5 year working life suggested by the rope manufacturers then all of the rope would need to be replaced immediately. This presented not only an immediate budget issue but also an ongoing one. If we were to replace all the rope in 2011, we would also need to budget for a full replacement cycle in 2016, 2021 etc. The replacement has been scheduled to take place over a 2 year cycle.

600m of rope was purchased in 2011 and been added to the stores with the retired rope going to various club projects including expeditions in Spain and Ireland as well as a number of local digging projects. A similar quantity of rope is planned for replacement in the summer of 2012 this will include replacing the shorter lengths (10m and 15m) which were missing completely from the inventory last year.

With lots of shiny new rope, a new signout form has been devised, allowing a better record to be kept of the usage and condition of ropes. Although not available at the time of writing this report, it is intended that an inspection will be carried out before the AGM and a rope condition report made available. If done annually, this could result in damaged or heavily used rope being recognised early, so spreading the cost of replacement and avoiding any potential rope failures.

A more detailed inspection of the stores revealed some hardware of unknown age and origin in the SRT kits as well as some in rather worrying condition. This has all been replaced.

Part of the incoming committee's brief was to ensure that the promotion of caving remained at or near the top of the priority list. With this in mind, it was recognised that the efforts of many members to introduce new cavers via the provisionals meetings were being undermined by a lack of suitable equipment. 6 new helmets and lights have been purchased and made available for beginners or new members. Although there has been an initial layout by the club, there is the potential for the money to be recovered via the selling of batteries for use in these lights.

First Aid kits for use on club organised beginner trips have also been purchased and are now in the stores.

We have also been fortunate to receive a number of donations of equipment. Some of this has been added to the stores, some is not suitable for club issue and a list of this will shortly be made available for club members to bid on.

Finally, with all this new rope and other equipment, we are outgrowing the tackle store under the stairs! Plans are in place for working week to move the tackle store into larger premises.

I am willing to stand again if re-elected. Piers Hallihan

Communications / Webmaster Officer's Report

Hi everyone. I have enjoyed working at keeping us all connected and informed this year via our website and email news. Notable events covered this year have included our purchase of land around OFD1 entrance, the OgoF Fest Party, the club trip to the Vercors, another successful beginner's and provisional's weekend. We have a popular and expanding Club meets list which can be seen on the Calendar. If you have just been on a great trip please do remember to send in a picture or two and a paragraph to share with everyone! Thanks to everyone who sends me trip reports, photographs, ideas and suggestions - anything from Club life

present and past to share around. We have a large and growing archive of Newsletters, photographs and recollections so get surfing and enjoy! But I'm thinking there must be loads more anecdotes, photos and memories that members have squirreled away in the "attic" - send them in now before the red wine gets to you! You will be glad to know that your dynamic Webmaster has finally embraced the video age and made a page to house member's videos from home and abroad. There are some really good ones there! If you have any good videos on YouTube or Vimeo, please do send me the link. I am especially looking for SRT videos and any from expeditions. To my mind, this on-line business is all very well, but the best kind of communication is often to be found around the fire in the Long Common Room or in the kitchen, or splashing along the OFD Mainstream or dangling around in Pant Mawr. So make sure you get enough of that in your life this year. And don't worry, there'll be no tweeting on my watch! Please let me know if there are any changes you would like to see on the website - it's your space! I'm happy to continue in my role this coming year if elected, and would also be happy to have an assistant who would like to learn the digital ropes for the future. See you around the fire sometime.
Peter Collings-Wells March 2012

Editor's Report

Another productive year - even if I say so myself - in the delivery of SWCC newsheets with the size of each quarterly issue now being around 10 pages. Content has included trip reports, rescue experiences, club issues and developments, social news including notifications of those matched, hatched and dispatched and general information considered to be of interest to our caving community.

Big "thank-yous" go out to all those who have contributed over the last year although it is noted that a large proportion of regular offerings are from a small percentage of the membership; I know for a fact there is much more activity on-going than I am made fully aware of for publication purposes. To eliminate the likelihood of the newsheet becoming a quarterly update on my husband's activities (should I be allowed to continue as Editor that is) please consider writing up your experiences and ideas and sharing them - the newsheet is as interesting as the membership cares to make it and without these contributions it would be a rather dry read.

I've tried to give the newsheet a certain style so it becomes a familiar, and hopefully, eagerly awaited publication. I have heeded feedback received and made amendments accordingly, for example minimising use of block colour to aid printing at home, ensured font format is appropriate, however, once again, with the sentiment in mind that presentation and content should be what the readership desires if there are suggestions on improvements to be made, regular features to be included, etc, please let the Editor (this one or the newly elected one if that is to be the case) know to ensure that the newsheet delivered to your inbox or doorstep is shaped as one you want.

And that leads to another point - with an expanding newsheet, which is good, the weightier package sent to your home address now costs more to print and post, which is bad; and with the added consequences of recent rising postage costs...very bad! Around 17% of the membership to date have agreed to receive the newsheet by email, 100% of the membership are able to access it on the SWCC website (providing they have access to a computer), but minimising costs and the draw on club finances are still a potential challenge to contend with. I have an appreciation of, and respect for, the reasons for and against imposed electronic receipt of the newsheet, which at first glance might seem the 'quick win' option, so if there are indications that the financial belt needs to be tightened I am happy to take on board the task to weigh up alternatives and to consult with members and committee to reach an agreeable solution.

Finally, as Editor, the annual newsletter is also my responsibility, although not a lot I can say about this at the moment as you are only just in receipt of my first attempt. Constructive comments will be gratefully received.

Krysia Groves, Editor
March 2012

SWCC ESTATE MANAGER

(1) To be the main day-to-day point of contact for externally supplied services to the Club Electricity, Gas, Sewage disposal. Administration of Club Insurance policies. Administration of waste disposal liaison with Powys CC.

n.b. (i) to include contract/price negotiations and make recommendations to the Committee
(ii) not to include payment of bills

(2) To be the main day-to-day point of contact with local landowners, properties, organisations, authorities Countryside Commission for Wales, SWCC land tenant(s), Brecknock Wildlife Trust, Other people adjacent to the headquarters (not including Tarmac / Hobbs), Penwyllt Water Users Association, National Park

(3) To manage maintenance and compliance within the headquarters. Maintain a list of maintenance and development items for the headquarters. Recommend to the Committee a budgeted list of tasks for the Working Week. Monitor and manage maintenance of the Club's land, boundaries and fences. Ensure that an annual gas safety check and certification is carried out. Ensure that an annual electricity safety check and certification is carried out. Ensure the continued safety of all Estate Infrastructure.

(4) To manage the Duty Officer instructions. Update the instructions as required. Issue updates as a document for use at the Club and to the SWCC Communications Officer. (not to include the management of the Duty Officer list)

(5) To develop a User Manual for the headquarters. Put together a file of information on running the headquarters and its services

SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB

CLWB OGOFEYDD DEHEUDIR CYMRU

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Miner's Welfare Hall, Abercraf, at 9.00 a.m. on Saturday the 5th of May 2012.

1. Apologies for absence

12/A1. A. Maddocks, K Maddocks, L. Hawes, J. Day, G Evans, P. Cardy, L. Cardy, H. Meredith, B. Buxton, N. Davies, A. Amatt, S. Amatt, A. Hallihan, S. Vaughan, K. Groves, M. Groves, L. Das Neves, C. Vivian, L. Williams, J. Hutchinson, C. Hutchinson.

There were 55 voting Members and 1 Provisional Member signed in – see archived sheets.

2. The Chairman's welcome and comments on 2011/2012

12/A2. The Chairman thanked everyone and welcomed those present and went on to say:

It is my great pleasure as your chairman to welcome you here this morning to the 2011 / 2012 SWCC AGM. AGMs are an important opportunity for any organisation to reflect on the year past and consider where they need, want or could be in the future. In the logical order of things, I would therefore like to begin with the reflection and in particular to pay tribute to, those club members who have sadly passed away this year.

John Hartwell, Bonnie Cottier and Jenny Peat.

All of us will have different memories of these people, some of them we will have known well, others hardly at all but I think a common quality that all of these people brought to the club is their positive, can do, attitude, their self reliance and their passion for the outdoors. We will miss them all.

The Chairman then requested one minute of silence.

I would now like to move us on to a brief review of 2011 / 2012 which I want to do in the context of the very clear mandate which the 2011 AGM gave us, namely to run and develop the club with a greater focus on, and encouragement of, matters speleological. The committee have used this mandate to underpin it's planning, running and development of the club within the necessarily wider framework of legal compliance, financial constraints, and other, sometimes conflicting, poorly defined and ever shifting requirements. The following is therefore offered as tangible evidence of delivery against that mandate:

The start of the year was dominated by the completion of the purchase of the land around the entrance to OFD1. This was a land mark purchase, not only for the club but also for British caving, and was successfully completed in June 2011 after much work by Fred Levett, Clark Friend and Tony Baker, to who I know we all extend our grateful thanks. We have sought to facilitate, and make easier, wider opportunities for participation in caving for all members. Specifically we have:

- Run a provisional members weekend for those new to caving and / or the club. This year's event was organised by Lizzy Das Neaves, was well attended and we had some very positive feedback.
- Ever mindful that those new to caving often struggled after their first introductory trips to make progress we have re-developed and publicised the monthly club meets programme, including trips outside of the Swansea Valley! Each meet has had a clearly identified person responsible for the arranging the trip and these have been publicised on the club web site and in the Newsheet.
- Run a 2 week club expo during August 2011 to France to explore the non Berger caves in the Vercour region.
- Run a 1 week club trip during April 2012 to the Cantabria area of Spain to explore some of Europe's finest caves.
- Reviewed and revised the access arrangements to OFD1.

We have sought to provide some real practical financial support to member's caving projects by introducing a bursary scheme. This is open to all full members for such activities and projects related, but not limited to: digging, diving, surveying, photography, scientific and indeed almost any other caving related activities. We have undertaken a critical review, and update, of the club's stock of caving equipment and made some significant investments. Specifically we have:

- Initiated a full rope replacement programme, including a more formal, inspection programme
- The club's stock of hangers replenished.
- The club SRT training kits have been replaced
- A stock of caving first aid kits, including tackle sacks, has been purchased
- A stock of new helmets and lights has been purchased for use by those wishing to try caving.

We supported Hidden Earth this year and entered a club stand. This initiative was led by Claire Vivien whose efforts were rewarded when we won best club

stand. We undertook to raise funds to support caving and the purchase of OFD by organising a big party in October 2011, aka Ogof Fest. This was one of the biggest parties held at SWCC for a quite a few years. Many members put in a huge effort into organising what turned out to be a very successful event, complete with pig roast, auction, a well stocked bar and a live band.

SWCC is very fortunate in owning one of the oldest, biggest and most atmospheric, caving headquarters in the country but ownership comes at a price. Our headquarters, love it as we all do, is, at one and the same time, both our biggest asset and our biggest liability. In line with the mandate from the 2011 AGM the club scaled back it's expenditure on the development of the cottages this year whilst continuing with on going maintenance and bringing the cottages into full statutory compliance with fire, electrical and gas regulations. Regrettably operational costs, which are largely outside of our control, have continued to rise steeply and we need to consider how best we want to meet that challenge to ensure that we don't live beyond our means. Among the many options to consider are: increased hut fees, improved debt collection, increasing utilisation or possible abandonment of some areas. Completion of the work in cottages 3 and 4 is scheduled for working week 2012. The ceiling in the lobby area (cottage 8) has been identified as being in need of serious attention but deferred until at least 2013 and of course the roof remains a constant, and very recent, worry every time we have a storm. Maybe, as with the boiler, it is time for us to take some bold steps. We remain, as ever, indebted to the cottage warden, the working week crew, local members and indeed all those who give so generously of their time and labour to maintain the cottages throughout the year. All of the above, and much more, has only been achieved by the time and effort put in by this years committee and many other members who have helped during the year. I would therefore like to thank all of them for their time, hard work and support during this year. I mentioned at the beginning that AGMs were an opportunity, not only to reflect on the past but also to look to the future and for an organisation to consider where they needed, wanted, or could be in the future? SWCC has a history, ethos and traditions of which it can be justifiably proud. However organisations that stand still are inevitably doomed to become extinct. I believe that our biggest need for the future is quite simple. To ensure that we do not stagnate and that we strike the right balance between a natural desire for the safe and the status quo, with the responsibility to ensure that the club continues to develop. This may mean some difficult decisions, particularly around how we make the best possible use of, our assets. To do this we need to continue to attract new members who are willing to contribute to the club, constantly re-evaluate what we offer and how we operate, and ensure that all committee posts are periodically refreshed to ensure a steady supply of new ideas and energy. In conclusion:

We made no new huge discoveries in 2011 / 2012 - which was obviously a disappointment - but our caving, exploration, and digging ethos remain strong which must give us hope for the future. As a club we remain, solvent, active and I believe, as I hope you do, that we can be proud of our achievements during 2011 / 2012 and be confident of our future. Thank you.

3. Minutes of the 30th April 2011 AGM

12/A3a. The Chairman invited the proposal that the minutes of the 2011 AGM might be taken as read. Proposed by P.Dobson and Seconded by A. Richardson.

Majority For, 0 Against, 1 Abstentions – Carried

12/A3b. The Chairman then invited the proposal that the minutes be signed as an accurate record with any identified corrections inserted. Proposed by Fred Levett and Seconded by P. Dobson.

Majority For, 0 Against, 1 Abstentions - Carried

12/A3c. Corrections to the 2011 Minutes:
There were no corrections.

4. Matters arising from the 2011 AGM Minutes

12/A4. There were no matters arising.

5. Officers' Reports to the 2012 AGM

12/A5. Questions to Officers

The Chairman invited questions to each officer's report.

Secretary..... J. Harvey enquired as to the process of registering the Club's ownership of Tunnel Top Entrance. G. Vaughan responded that there were no immediate plans to register our ownership but that Declarations were being collected to assist with the future registration of the Club's ownership.

Treasurer..... C. Pepper pointed out the error in date at the top of page 24 fifth line, 2019 should read 2009. A. Freem responded that this had been done on purpose to ensure that the report had been read fully.

Warden No Questions

Training Officer.... It was pointed out that 'Claire' was missing an 'I'.

Assistant Secretary.....No Questions

Records Officer..... No Questions

Fixed Aids Officer..... No Questions

Rescue Liaison Officer..... No Questions

Communications Officer.... No Questions

Editor..... No Questions

Conservation Officer..... No Questions

Equipment Officer.....A. Dobson pointed out that we need more short lengths of rope in the rope store in order to tackle shorter pitches.

12/A5a. The Chairman invited the proposal that the reports be taken as read. Proposed by T. Baker and Seconded by J. Lister.

Majority For, 0 Against, 2 Abstentions - Carried

12/A5b. The Chairman then invited the proposal to take the Officers' Reports *en bloc*. Proposed by F. Levett and Seconded by I. Williams.

Majority For, 0 Against, 2 Abstentions - Carried

6. New Committee Post - SWCC Estate Manager

12/A6. The Chairman outlined the need for the new post and gave details of the other co-opted positions which currently existed on the committee. In broad terms it was intended to divide the roles of Warden and Estates Manager into distinct areas.

B. Woodley pointed out that with respect to day to day contact with outside organisations that the CCW may possibly be outside of the role. E. Little affirmed that clarification was needed in this respect. F. Levett said that he thought it would be good for the Club to give the position a try. T. Baker asked if the committee had a person in mind. G. Vaughan pointed out that it would be down to next year's committee to carry out the co-option. K. Goodhead was worried by para. 3 and wanted the Warden's view. B. Clipstone said that there had always been a distinction between the Warden's role and say that work undertaken during Working Week. He thought it was a good idea to have a delegated person responsible for ensuring that things like gas and fire inspections were carried out. A. Freem pointed out that there was also a cross over with the Treasurers role. The Chairman re-assured the meeting that the role would need time to 'bed in'. What was needed from this forum was a ratification of the committee's decision to introduce the role. J Rowland

proposed that 'The AGM give the committee the option to co-opt an Estate Manager if they needed'. Seconded K. Goodhead.

Majority For, 0 Against, 1 Abstentions - Carried

7. Auditors Report to the 2011 AGM

12/A7. The Treasurer summarised the background to this item. In effect one bank statement had been missing at the date of the 2011 AGM but that this had now been received and Ken Maddocks had signed of the 2011 accounts.

8. Auditors Report to the 2012 AGM

12/A8. The Chairman read out the report from Ken Maddocks certifying that the accounts were acceptable. The Chairman invited the proposal that the Auditors Report be accepted and that the Club's thanks be recorded for the work done during 2011/2012. Proposed A. Richardson and Seconded I Williams.

Majority For, 0 Against, 1 Abstentions - Carried

9. Subscriptions and Hut Fees for 2012/13

12/A9. A. Freem suggested that there were two significant factors to be considered by the AGM. Last year hut fees were set by the AGM and the committee were afforded the option to review those fees in October if they saw fit. The Treasurer advised that as the books were balancing well in October 2011 it was felt that there was no change needed. He went on to point out that confusion over who should pay how much and for what service was a key element. He stated that we had lost around £200 in the last week alone because of confusion. This needed to be addressed. Shower fees and day visitor fees were down on last year. The Treasurer advocated that simplicity was needed. He went on to state that the notional surplus made this year was undone by a single utility bill received after the accounts had been closed. The Treasurer's recommendation was a 4, 5, 6 model.

J. Rowland asked what reciprocals pay. A Freem responded 'Members rates'. T. Baker pointed out that the student rate should be available to pre-booked student groups only. A. Freem agreed that bookings needed clear parameters. B. Jopling pointed out that foreign visitors had always traditional been offered Members rates and pointed out that the current proposal will be a change to the established protocol. A Freem questioned to what value the foreign cover concession was made. B. Clipstone stated that the established practice changed when visiting foreign cavers had more disposable income than many Members. T. Baker pointed out that visiting group sizes were now larger and he felt that

there was no longer a good reason to offer the concession. A. Dobson pointed out that compared with the cost of foreign travel, hut fees represented a very small element of a foreign cavers visit to our Club. V. Aho pointed out that as a foreign visitor she had been made to feel very welcome by the concession but that paying the full price would not have been an obstacle. P. Hobson stated that Kiwi clubs charged member rates to foreign visitors. F. Levett suggested that what was important was for visitors to be clear about what the fees were. A. Dobson pointed out that the differential advantage to Members was steadily decreasing. The Chairman brought the discussion to a conclusion. A. Freem proposed that hut fees for the coming year be set at £4 for Members, £5 for Students and £6 for Guests. Seconded A. Richardson.

Majority For, 0 Against, 2 Abstentions - Carried

A. Richardson proposed that the new rates did not apply until Monday evening 7th May. Seconded G. Edwards (who was also duty officer this weekend).

Majority For, 1 Against, 1 Abstentions - Carried

A. Freem continued. Per night or per 24 hour was another problem. He pointed out that basically the system required honesty and goodwill in order to work. The ethos of wanting to pay the correct hut fee was an important issue but it was becoming less prevalent. T. Baker pointed out that the rule had always been part of 24 hours. Once you put a sleeping bag on a bunk you are no longer a day visitor. C. Pepper pointed out that actually it costs more to cook than to sleep. He suggested that if somebody cooks they should pay full rate. H Lomas said there was a need for simplicity. A Freem pointed out that the current system simply does not work. B. Jopling pointed out that other clubs had abandoned day visitor rates. P. Francis pointed out that the Duty Officer can only work from the hut sheets and the information entered on them. P Hobson suggested having a different rate for people who stayed up to five hours. H. Lomas said that people should be encouraged to stay at the HQ and not vice versa. A Freem stated that ethos was the key and B. Stephens asked how should the Club solve that issue. A Freem retorted that the Club needed to become a community again.

The Chairman drew the discussion to a close. A Freem proposed that the Club adopt a system of one 'overnight' fee and one 'day' fee. Seconded by A. Richardson.

G. Vaughan suggested that the solution to this problem was not one best reached by fifty people in a matter of ten minutes or so. It may be best to look long and hard at how this problem can be solved. A Freem withdrew his proposal. C. Pepper proposed that next year's committee be instructed to

investigate the issues that had been discussed and come back to next year's AGM with proposals. Seconded by B. Jopling.

Majority For, 1 Against, 4 Abstentions – Carried

A. Freem continued on the subject of subscriptions. He proposed that they stay the same. P. Hobson asked if we could reduce subs by sending information out electronically. C. Friend pointed out that inflation does not stop at the cattle grid. B. Stevens pointed out that hut fees were up by 25% which was much more than inflation. C. Friend suggested that it was preferential to increase little and often rather than infrequently and in large increments. D. Edwards Seconded A. Freem's proposal that subscriptions stay the same. A. Freem confirmed that last year's fees were £38 for Member and £45 for Joint Member. He suggested that not increasing Membership fees would help to attract new Members and retain old ones.

Majority For, 2 Against, 1 Abstentions - Carried

10. Policy Document

12/A10. The Chairman pointed out that it was Club policy to review the Club Policy Document at each AGM. There had been no changes made to the Club Policy Document this year. T. Baker proposed that Club Policy Document be ratified by this year's AGM. Seconded J Lister.

Majority For, 0 Against, 2 Abstentions - Carried

11. Proposed Constitutional Amendments

12/A11.1. It was suggested that with respect to the suggested wording at 11.1 the two proposed amendments be taken separately. It was pointed out that there were two modifications, one in the first four lines concerning service of AGM notice by e-mail and a second concerning the number of nominations required for the position of President. C. Friend asked if the two parts could be taken separately. The Chairman invited discussion on the wording up to and including the fourth line of the proposed amendment. E. Little pointed out that e-mail does not always work. This view was echoed by S. Goodhead. C. Friend suggested that the agenda could be mirrored onto the website. PCW stated that there needed to be a hard copy agenda circulated to the Membership. C. Pepper pointed out that a large number of letters were lost each year by Royal Mail. J. Lister asked about the procedure for EGM's. B. Stephens stated that he thought the idea was a good idea. B. Jopling retorted that the Members didn't get much in hard copy in any rate. G. Vaughan clarified for the avoidance of doubt and concern that no Member would receive AGM notices by e-mail unless they positively requested to do so. Agenda by e-mail would run alongside agenda by

post and would not replace it. It would require an 'opt in' as opposed to an 'opt out'. K. Goodhead raised the matter of accepting newsheets electronically, would those signed up to that system automatically be registered for AGM notice by e-mail. G. Vaughan stated that the two were separate systems. Registration for AGM notice by e-mail would be a matter for the Club Secretary, registration for newsletters was a matter for the Club Newsheet Editor. G. Vaughan proposed that the wording of 11.1 up to and including the fourth line be adopted. Seconded T. Baker.

44 For, 2 Against, 8 Abstentions - Carried

The Chairman then invited discussion on the remainder of the wording of section 11.1. B. Jopling stated that he could not understand the reason for the amendment. He believed that if somebody was worth being President it would be a simple matter to gain six signatures. G. Vaughan pointed out that there was only one nomination for President this year. He believed that the situation where there was only one candidate for a post showed a general level of apathy within the Club. He stated that the reason why the amendment was put forward was to promote contest in Club elections.

P. Collings Wells stated that we should not lower our standards for the nomination of President. P. Hobson stated that the position was a special one. C. Friend stated that the planned reduction in proposers for President was a bad idea. D. Edwards pointed out that Peter Harvey was president for years and every year six signatures came up to propose him. G. Vaughan pointed out that most of the proposers came from the ranks of the committee who strived behind the scenes to enable a candidate each year. Six signatures did not necessarily represent the current level of popularity within the club. To a large extent it had become a custom that was followed from year to year. K. Goodhead suggested that a job description may bring about more candidates. G. Vaughan stated that the proposal had been designed to stimulate more candidates for the position of President and a healthy election each year. G. Vaughan proposed that the remainder of the wording of section 11.1 be adopted. Seconded K. Goodhead.

11 For, 25 Against, 10 Abstentions - Defeated

12/A11.2. The Chairman asked for discussion on the second proposed constitutional amendment. B. Radcliffe said that this amendment was a bad idea. Abstentions clearly counted as a vote against and should be counted as such. M. Day stated that this was not the case. Abstention meant not voting either way. T. Baker stated that he thought the proposal was a good thing as it would encourage people to exercise their vote. F. Levett stated that the committee had not helped matters by not including the existing wording with the proposal. He pointed out that what had not been pointed out so far in the

discussion was that the majority required to elect a president had been reduced from two thirds to a simple majority. The Chairman acknowledged that this was correct. F. Levett asked what exactly this proposal was getting at. B. Clipstone stated that there were two issues. The committee had also discussed the possibility of an election for President failing to collect two thirds majority. It had been felt that a failure to elect a president because of the need for two thirds of the vote would be un-helpful. F. Levett point out that there are in fact two issues in this amendment. B. Jopling proposed that the wording at 11.2 be rejected and that the committee reconsider the wording for next year's AGM if they so wish. Seconded by I Williams.

Majority For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions – Carried.

The discussion on constitutional amendments was concluded.

12. Proposed Honorary Member – Tony Baker

12/A12. F. Levett rose. Speaking in support of the proposal and without mentioning the many contributions that Tony had made to the Club over the years he went on to describe Tony's contribution to the role of Club Editor, Avid digger, past Chairman, and his management of the purchase of OFD 1. T. Baker left the room for the vote.

54 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstentions – Carried.

13. Election of Officers

12/A13.1. President

There was only one nomination received for election as President:

Jem Rowland

Proposed by: C. Friend, A. Richardson, C. Vivian, A. Freem, L. Das Neves, R. Radcliffe.

The result of a show of hands was:

Unanimous For, 0 No, 0 Abstentions

As a result of this Jem Rowland was elected as President of SWCC.

Jem rose to thank the Club. He stated that SWCC was a fantastic Club and that he was honoured to follow in the footsteps of such past Presidents as F.J.North, Aubrey Glennie, Peter Harvey and of course Fred Levett.

12/A13.2. Vice Presidents

The following were proposed:

M. Day

Proposed: D. Edwards

Seconded: T. Baker

Majority For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions – Elected

F. Levett

Proposed: J. Rowland Seconded: C. Friend

Majority For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions – Elected

The 4 Trustees were proposed and seconded *en bloc*.

Les Hawes

John Lister

Alison Maddocks

Clark Friend

Proposed: A. Dobson Seconded: V. Alkins

Majority For, 0 Against, 1 Abstentions – Elected

12/A13.3. Chairman

Paul Meredith

Proposed: K. Goodhead

Seconded: B. Clipstone

Elected

12/A13.4. Secretary

Gary Vaughan

Proposed: C. Pepper

Seconded: V. Alkins

Elected

12/A13.5. Treasurer

Andy Freem

Proposed: V. Alkins

Seconded: A. Richardson

Elected

12/A13.6. Warden

Brian Clipstone

Proposed: B. Jopling

Seconded: A. Freem

Elected

12/A13.7. Conservation Officer

Bernie Woodley

Proposed: A. Freem

Seconded: B. Clipstone

Elected

12/A13.8. Training Officer

Gareth Edwards

Proposed: B. Clipstone

Seconded: B. Jopling

Elected

12/A13.9. Records Officer

Allan Richardson

Proposed: C. Pepper

Seconded: P. Hobson

Elected

12/A13.10. Equipment Officer Piers Hallihan

Proposed: A. Dobson

Seconded: P Hobson

Elected

12/A13.11. Editor **Kryisia Groves**
Proposed: A. Richardson Seconded: J. Lister
Elected

12/A13.12. Cave Rescue Liaison Officer **P. Hobson**
Proposed: B. Clipstone Seconded: A. Richardson
Elected

12/A13.13. The Chairman then asked for nominations for Four Ordinary Members. Following the proposal of six candidates were proposed:

Claire Vivian
(Proposed: C. Friend Seconded: P. Hobson) Elected

Peter Collings-Wells
(Proposed: K. Goodhead Seconded: J. Lister) Elected

Annabel Hallihan
(Proposed: L. Davies Seconded: P. Collings-Wells)

Les Davies
(Proposed: C. Friend Seconded: K. Goodhead) Elected

Chris Grimmet
(Proposed: P. Collings-Wells Seconded: T. Baker) Elected

Dave Dobson
(Proposed: G. Vaughan Seconded: T. Lister)

14. Appointment of Auditor

12/A14. The Chairman informed the AGM that after many years of fulfilling the role Ken Maddocks had indicated that he would like a break. G. Vaughan proposed a vote of thanks for Ken's outstanding contribution to the Club. This was met with applause. C. Friend asked if the new auditor should be external. The Chairman indicated that the cost of hiring a professional would be in the order of £1000. A Freem pointed out the the role is 'honorary' and that there needs to be an understanding of the way in which caving Club's work. Janine Graham was proposed as Auditor by T. Baker and Seconded by C. Friend.

Majority For; 0 Against; 1 Abstentions – Carried

15. Any Other Business

12/A15.1. Mary Hazelton's Dragon

D. Dobson asked as to the health of Mary Hazelton's Dragon. F. Levett said that for the first time in many years the dragon had exercised its right to attend the AGM and it was duly displayed for all to see.

12/A15.2. Club Internet Access

B. Jopling asked if the Chairman could outline the situation with regards internet access at the Club. The Chairman replied that as a result of a recent committee decision there was now a broadband internet service available in the Library for connection of up to two PC's. F. Levett asked who may use it. The Chairman replied, 'Members'. He went on to explain that it was deliberately in the library so as not to annoy Members using the Long Common Room'. K. Goodhead asked if the Club should consider WIFI. A. Freem pointed out that the available service was not particularly good. The Club was on the end of a very long line. The Chairman went on to explain that the committee had been asked to consider WIFI at the Club but had felt that WIFI was not in keeping with the ethos of the Club. The committee had felt that a hard wire connection only available in the Library was a more appropriate option. B. Stevens said that he liked the Club being internet free. B. Jopling stated that a previous AGM had rejected the idea of internet access at the Club and that it had been inappropriate of the committee to act against that decision. There was confusion in the AGM as to whether a previous AGM had in fact rejected the idea of internet access. J. Rowland pointed out that there was a rule in place about electronic forms of entertainment at the HQ. P. Hobson pointed out that on occasions officers of the Club needed to do jobs at the HQ which were facilitated by internet access. T. Baker stated that the Club needed to be aware of social changes. K. Goodhead said that there was a need to attract new younger Members. It may be a choice between having people whose heads were buried in computer screens or not having any Members at all. B. Clipstone stated that the internet access in the Library was nothing to do with the Club and it cost the Club nothing. It was no different to the 3G internet access which already existed at the Club and which the Club were powerless to do anything about. P. Dobson stated that it would be silly to take away a facility which already existed. He also stated that as technology was moving so fast it would only be a very short space of time before the 3G network was very much better and internet access at the Club was freely available throughout the building.

B. Jopling made a formal proposal asking 'does the AGM approve of the installation of the internet by the Club'. Seconded P. Quill. B. Jopling went on to say that this did not include internet access by individuals, we can't stop individuals. G. Vaughan stated that to be clear, the Club had not arranged internet access to the Library. The committee had approved permission for a small user group to provide themselves with internet access in the Library. The

user group paid for it and the Club had no hand in it's installation. B. Jopling was upset that the committee had approved this application without consulting the Membership. The chairman returned to the proposal. G. Vaughan clarified the wording proposed was 'that the AGM approves the installation of internet at the Club.' B. Jopling corrected the Secretary, his proposal was 'that the AGM approves the installation of internet by the Club.' B. Jopling stated that we can't stop individuals accessing the internet by their smart phones and who would want to do that in any event. The final recorded wording of the proposal was agreed 'Does this meeting approve the installation of internet by the Club.'

18 For; 19 Against; 8 Abstentions – Dissatisfied

G. Vaughan asked the meeting what action it would like the incoming committee to take bearing in mind the previous vote. No suggestions were forthcoming. D. Edwards asked if internet access was currently available. It was confirmed that yes it was. A. Freem explained that it was finance neutral. It was similar to other user groups which existed in the Club such as those housed in cottage zero. T. Lewingdon asked who was responsible for the download of inappropriate material? It was stated that the Club had signed no contract.

D. Dobson confirmed that he was the current licensee. If anybody wanted to download porn they would be there for months. The Chairman stated that the committee had heard the view of the AGM and would take that view into consideration when looking at the issue of internet access.

12/A15.3. Land around OFD 1

P. Quill asked what was happening with the new land. B. Woodley replied that last year's committee had started to investigate a number of options but that it was very much under consideration. A. Freem suggested that working week could deal with some of the preliminary issues which had arisen. P. Francis suggested that the land could be coppiced to provide fuel.

12/A15.4. Key Issue and the Duty Officer System

D. Edwards suggested that there was an issue to do with the issuing of cave keys and that this was in turn linked to the Duty Officer system. E. Little stated that historically Club Members were allocated a day to be duty officer. P. Quill suggested that it simply needed one person to be on the case. F. Levett suggested that the Club needed to be forward looking. A new and radical system was needed. The system as we know it is finished. K. Goodhead stated that local Members were becoming increasingly relied upon. H. Lomas suggested that Members did not like dealing with the money. V. Aho suggested that if duty officer was compulsory for all Members who visited from

great distance may be dissuaded from attending the HQ or even may consider resigning Membership. I Williams recalled that in the distant past Members paid the treasurer directly. P. Francis stated that this had been a problem for forty years. We should simply raise the subs by £10 per head and then offer a £10 reduction for those who take a turn at D.O. C. Friend pointed out that the whole structure of society had changed. People now held different values to those of forty years ago. B. Stevens re-iterated that the system at present simply did not work. I. Williams pointed to an incident where he had been taking young scouts caving in OFD and had to wait 1.5 hours for somebody to arrive at the Club with a key. A Freem stated that different clubs raise funds through different processes. Craven for example raise funds through their winch meet. SWCC however were heavily dependent on retrieving money collected through the D.O. system. M. Day recalled that access to cave keys used to be through committee members. He believed that current communication on keys was not at all clear. P. Quill suggested having telephone numbers on the door of the HQ.

G. Edwards stated that basically there were two types of weekend, the first when there were lots of Members around and key access was not a problem. The second when there is hardly any Members around and key access is difficult. E. Little suggested that she was happy to have her telephone number on the door of the HQ.

B. Jopling pointed out that people did not want to sit at the Club on their own on quiet weekends. K. Goodhead stated that the D.O. was subject to different workloads on different weekends. E. Little stated that the D.O. system was an important system. T. Baker re-iterated that busy weekends were not a problem. The Club needed to resolve what happened to money and keys on quiet weekends. The Chairman drew the discussion to a close and asked for an informal show of hands as to whether the AGM felt that the banning of Club Members for failure to do D.O. was an appropriate enticement. There was a general show of hands against the banning of Members and the Chairman recorded that there was currently no appetite within the Club to use this level of enforcement in support of the D.O. system.

12/A15.5. Benches in Gents Showers

C. Friend asked when we were likely to see benches in gents showers. J. Lister advised that he was soon to bring some oak benches to the Club for that very purpose.

12/A15.6. Attracting New Members

J. White asked what was being done to attract new Members. The Chairman reported that the Club had a programme of Provisional Member weekends and a meets program under way. A. Freem also pointed out that outreaching to university clubs was something that the committee had also started to look into.

The Chairman asked for any confidential feelings of disengagement with the Club to be fed back to him.

P. Hobson stated that things had changed. People were now having parties away from the Club. P. Dobson stated that parties were often held jointly between several Members. B. Jopling stated that generally there were fewer people prepared to help out. He went on to propose a vote of thanks to the likes of Lel Davies and Iain Miller, Mick and Judy Day, Annie and Simon Amatt and Elsie Little who put in huge effort behind the scenes.

12/A15.7. Digging Week 2013

T. Baker pointed out that digging week this year was in the August bank holiday week.

12/A15.8. Working Week 2013

A. Richardson pointed out that working week this year was 3rd – 9th June.

12/A15.9. Votes of Thanks

D. Edwards proposed a vote of thanks to P. Meredith for his chairing of the meeting.

16. Time and Venue for 2013 AGM

12/A16. The 2013 AGM will be held on Saturday the 4th of May. It was Proposed by G. Vaughan and Seconded by A. Freem, that it be at 9.00 a.m., at a venue to be advised (suggested to be at the Miners' Welfare, Abercraf). The Committee would confirm the venue at a later date.

Majority For; 3 Against; 0 Abstentions – Carried

12/A16.1. There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Gary Vaughan, 18/05/2012