

10th Full Meeting – 3rd November 2014. Up & Under, Cardiff

In Attendance

Will Kilner - Freelance
Jet Moore - Adventure Beyond
Gemma Starks - School Camp Ltd
David Hassard - Maesylade Centre
Richard Dunn - Force Development Training
Centre (Royal Air Force)
Dave Thomas-Call of the Wild
Hugh Murray - Porthcawl Surf School
Juliet Parker-Smith - Trewern

Simon Neenan - Atlantic College
Gary Evans-Hawk Associates
Richie Hamilton - The Adventure Alternative
Mike Smith - Black Mountain Activities
Tom Hempenstall - Black Mountain Activities
Hayden Davies - Black Mountain Activities

Kevin T Hannam-Bowen-Freelance
Lee Garbett-Quest Adventures
Lisa Boore-Freelance
Mark Soanes-Call of the Wild
Gareth Reid - Outdoor Leadership Centre
(Royal Navy)
Matt Woodfield - SWOAPG
Tom Partridge - Atlantic College
Jamie Rose - Swansea Young Peoples
Service
Paul Dann-NRW
Rich Hill - Glasbury House OEC
Nick Winder - Tirabad RET
Martin Sweeney - Freelance
Laura McCartney - Freelance
Judith Harvey-BBNPA

1. Welcome:

Nick Winder opened the meeting as temporary SWOAPG Chairman, thanking everyone for attending. The chairman thanked Up and Under for hosting the meeting and providing the excellent refreshments.

1.1. Apologies:

Rachel Alle- Rock UK
Chris Evans
David Windebank
Fred Wright

Carl Durham
Nick Fitzgerald
Andy Cummings
Tony Rees

Gavin Clifford
Geoff Hayden
Andy Cummings

2. Introduction to SWOAPG and Update:

2.1 - Gary Evans proposed a vote of thanks to Tom Partridge who has now stepped down from the SWOAPG Coordinator role. As previous coordinator Gary said he appreciated the time, effort and dedication required to make this group a success. Matt Woodfield then introduced himself as the new Coordinator.

2.2 - Rich Hill gave an update on reservoirs access, the passport scheme is going well (please remember to purchase and display yours) but negotiations for Llwyn-On and Cray reservoirs are not going anywhere at the moment and are unlikely to in the foreseeable future.

Nick Winder informed us that there have been some positive moves in gaining access to Llyn Brienne in the future. We'll continue to work with stakeholders and keep members informed of any progress.

2.3 - MW reminded everyone that the private land on the southern side of the Syhryd Gorge is outside of the concordat and the landowner has requested that we not use their land for any reason.

2.4 - Tom's Tunnel in the Clydach Gorge is now open after works to make it safe we carried out by Sustrans who manage the land. They would like feedback from members on how access to the tunnel could be improved for groups. If you have any feedback please send it to gwyn.smith@sustrans.org.uk.

2.5 - Membership of the group currently stands at 254, including observers and clubs.

2.6 - The litter pick at Dinas Rock had a small turn out but it was reassuring to see that there was very little rubbish in the area from providers. Thanks must go to everyone who is clearing up after their group and those who go a step further and clean up the site before they leave - keep up the good work!

3. Rules and References

MW noted that the concordat for the waterfalls area is due for its 2 yearly review and asked members if they had anything that they wanted added, removed or changed. If any changes are made then these will be sent to members after the review.

4. Visit Wales Accreditation System:

Visit Wales will be asking providers to self certify their quality accreditation (eg AALS) via an online system if they wish to be listed on the VW website. Access to the new system should be available in early January, with the window closing at the end of February to be listed for 2015.

5. Group Funding:

TP gave a brief overview of the group's funding over the last few years. We received sums of money from different government funded groups such as the now extinct Regional Tourism Partnerships. Some mirror funding is available from the new bodies replacing these. Some funding comes from Visit Wales through WATO, but this will be changing in April. The overall message is that money is not being given away like it used to be.

MW confirmed that we have enough funding in the bank to cover our costs until Sept 2016, but funding the group from that point looks challenging. GE noted that the group has always resisted introducing membership fees and that this would be a last resort.

Members were asked if they have any funding suggestions, any idea can be sent to the coordinator.

Both Pembroke and Snowdonia groups are constituted bodies, this allows them to handle their own money and provide expert services that help fund their groups. The membership was asked the question in principal of, if the need arose, would they support us becoming a constituted body.

The majority voted For, no one voted against.

6. Future Meetings:

GE explained that when the group was set up in 2010, it needed lots of input from its members about what it should be doing and how it should work. The group is now established and less contact is needed with the membership at full meetings. We have other ways of contact with members via email, social media, workshops, etc. It was proposed that we change the terms of reference of the group to have a single full meeting each year (an AGM) rather than the current two full meetings.

The majority voted For, no one voted against.

It was noted that emergency or special meetings could be called if required at other times.

The question was raised asking if this single meeting would be more of an event. If funding and attendance are both acceptable we could go down this route, similar to the conference at the Liberty Stadium in 2012.

7. Environmental Charter

Members were asked where they wanted us to go with the environmental charter:

Training and keeping it's momentum were mentioned.

Paul Dann (NRW) noted the positive message our clean ups give the community.

With regard little at Dinas the subject of bins in the car park was noted to be too expensive, but if we encourage people to take their little home, all do our bit to keep the place clean and educate our groups to do the same then it will stay tidy.

PD stated that NRW would collect bags if providers organised their own little picks, just give him a ring. It was agreed that a good way forward with this issue was for individual providers to organise a little pick (in any area), then to invite other members to join via the group. If you'd like to run one in your area get in touch with the coordinator and he'll help make it happen.

Members were also asked if they were happy with the idea of an all Wales environmental charter that would be both a selling point and possible funding opportunity for us. JPS noted that our charter had taken a lot of effort to make it suit our local area and we should not lose that. More information is required before we could agree anything, SG will discuss this at their next meeting.

8. Steering Group Nominations and Co-ordinator Position:

NW updated the members present on the 3 spaces available within the steering group.

MW thanked to **Andy Meek** for all his hard work over the last four years as a valuable steering group member and previous Chairman.

Top Partridge was proposed by GE, there were no other proposals. Nominations were opened up to the floor and Garath Reed (Royal Navy) put himself forward. This left once space still vacant so no vote was required. Following the meeting 1 member asked about a position on the steering group, they will be seconded into the SG until they can be officially voted in at next years AGM.

9. Focus for Next Year:

Members were asked what they wanted the group to focus on in 2015, the reply was workshops including coasteering and environmental.

10. AOB:

Nothing raised

Full Meeting Close:

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and Up & Under for the great food, drink and venue.

The next full meeting will be in November 2015.

This meeting and the ongoing development and support for the SWOAPG is made possible by funding from:

