



**11<sup>th</sup> Full Meeting – 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2015**  
**Garwnant Visitor Centre**

**In Attendance**

Bob Keep – Caerphilly CBC (BK)	Mark Soanes – Call of the Wild (MS)
Jet Moore – Adventure Beyond (JM)	Judith Harvey – BBNPA
Gary Mapletott – The Bushcraft Academy	David Hassard – Maesylade
Rich Hill	Emyr Rees – Atlantic College
Alad Davies – Expeditions Wales	Tom Partridge – Atlantic College (TP)
Zoe Anthony – Miskin	Fred Wright- Interactivities
Cheri-lee Birch – Miskin (CB)	Simon Fenton – Gower Adventures
Chris Evans – Waterfall Ways	Gary Evans – Hawk Adventures (HA)
Lisa Boore – Parkwood Outdoor	Dan Thorne – Woodlands
Gerwyn James – MOD	Riki Phillips – Mynydd Outdoor Adventure
Rhys Pinner – URDD	Richard Doyle – Ynys Hywel
Neil McMullen – Blue Ocean Activities	Gavin Clifford – Antur Ltd
Eoghan Powell – Carreg Adventure	Cilla Withers – Plas Pencelli
Lee Garbit – Quest (LG)	Laura Thomas – BBT
Nick Winder – Tirabad	Paul Dann – NRW
Matt Woodfield – SWOAPG (MW)	

**1. Welcome:**

Mark Soanes opened the meeting as temporary SWOAPG Chairman, thanking everyone for attending and NRW for allowing us to use the Garwnant visitor centre.

**Apologies:**

Ade Thomas	Chris Peirce	David Windebank
Will Kilner	Steffan Davies	Dave Phillips
Juliet Parker Smith	Stuart Martin	Paul Donovan
Geoff Haydn	Matt Rees	Owen Hayward
Kevin Walker	Mike Smith	
Andy Lamb	Graham Harvey	

**2. Introduction to SWOAPG and Update:**

Membership stands at 227, with 57% signed up to the Environmental Charter.  
A reminder was given from the coordinator about the land for sale at Dinas and the decision not to look at purchasing.

A new Wales Wide Environmental Charter is in the pipeline, its development will only be on use if it is backed by large bodies and funders who can help make it a success from a training and marketing perspective. We will update you as this develops.

### **3. Rules and References**

The changes to the concordat's enforcement policy were voted in by members after a description was given by Paul Dann (NRW) of the changes and the success we have had with them this season.

### **4. The History of Dinas**

A short presentation was given by Ruth Coulthard from BBNPA on the Dinas area and its long and interesting past. For more information on the history of this popular venue then contact the coordinator to book on to the History of Dinas workshop on February 19<sup>th</sup>.

For more information on the restoration works planned for the gunpowder works at Dinas then email [Ruth.Coulthard@beacons-npa.gov.uk](mailto:Ruth.Coulthard@beacons-npa.gov.uk) for the newsletter.

A copy of her presentation can be found [Here](#).

### **5. Welsh Language in the Outdoors:**

Bethan Jones, coordinator at menter brycheiniog a maesyfed, gave a short talk on developing the use of Welsh in outdoor delivery, following on from a project in North Wales which has been a real success.

A copy of her presentation and the report can be found [Here](#).

If you are interested in getting involved with training or employing a local Welsh speaker then you can contact Bethan on [bethan.jones1@powys.gov.uk](mailto:bethan.jones1@powys.gov.uk).

TP asked them for support in translating document for us, they agreed.

Rhys Pinner from URDD offered his support to providers in respect to Welsh language. He can be contacted on [rhyspinner@urdd.org](mailto:rhyspinner@urdd.org).

### **6. Group Funding:**

The Coordinator gave an update on the group's financial position, which is favorable for the next 2 years. We have a small income from some project work for the Beacons and Carmarthenshire, as well as support from VW through WATO.

### **7. Welsh Government Access review and update:**

5600 responses were received by Welsh Government on the green paper, they are all being reviewed and a summary document is due out in December. SWOAPG did not put a collective response in as member views vary across the sector, but around half of the members attending said that they had put in their own response.

## **8. Workshops 2015-16:**

Thanks to funding from Visit Wales we are running a series of workshops and code of conduct training sessions over winter and spring. The Dark Skies workshop and Mellte run through that have already run have been a success, the Bushcraft Environment, History of Dinas, Geology and code of conduct sessions are following over the next few months. To book on contact the coordinator, for more information see the website.

## **9. Access to Tunnels:**

An update on the Rhonda Tunnel was given by Zoe Anthony (Miskin). The tunnel group are looking for funding, local partners to work with and see an end game of charging for use of the tunnel to make the project sustainable.

As part of this project Sustrans have received money to review all other tunnel usage in South Wales, with the aim of creating more access. Thank you to those that did feedback to them any tunnels that you use. If you have not yet done this please contact [gwyn.smith@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:gwyn.smith@sustrans.org.uk) with where you use and if you can, number people taken, its value to your organisation, the jobs it supports etc. as this all helps to build an evidence base for future secured access.

## **10. Focus for Coming Year:**

Suggestions from the floor where requested for any focus members would like to see for the coming year.

10.1 GE mentioned the upcoming Year of Adventure in Wales which we should all be focused on. Some members have not been receiving industry newsletter on this however.

**AP – MW to send out info on YoA to all L2&3 members**

10.2 BK requested a coasteering workshop. NCC are the best people to coordinate and run this.

**AP – MW to pass on request to local NCC rep – Tony Rees**

10.3 LG suggested a joint training day with local MRTs in the waterfalls area.

**AP – LG to contact MRTs and coordinate an event. MW to support and communicate with group.**

10.4 JM said we need to be more on the ball with access. Suggested an access subgroup that could deal with issues as they arise in the area.

**AP – MW to invite appropriate members to join the access subgroup**

10.5 CB requested Disability Training. External bodies are best placed to deliver this.

**AP – BK to coordinate a disability training event. MW to support and communicate with group.**

TP finished the discussions with a comment on how the group seems to have forgotten its original spirit and has become too reliant on its coordinator. He reminded people to share training opportunities, spreading the costs for all involved.

## **11. Steering Group Nominations:**

No Steering Group Members stood down, although some were happy to if needed. One name was suggested from the floor and as we have no constitutional limit on the size of the steering group they were accepted on. The new SG member is Simon Neelan from Atlantic College

## **12. AOB**

12.1 A new “no canoeing” sign has appeared on the river Taff by the Greggs put in. NRW have no knowledge of this. Canoe Wales are about to employ an access officer.

12.2 TP passed on a message from the NRW staff at Garwnant – if visiting with groups please contact the visitor centre in advance, they'd like to book people in so that they know how much the site is used for groups and will be able to advise on any planned works or closures.

Contact Aled Hopkins (Education, Learning and Sector Skills Team)

Mobile: 077483 36629 Email: [aled.hopkins@naturalresourceswales.gov.UK](mailto:aled.hopkins@naturalresourceswales.gov.UK)

12.3 CB highlighted the issues of overcrowding when climbing at Dinas Rock. It was suggested that speaking to other instructors will solve this issue as we should all be willing to share this resource. If staff on the ground are not helpful or friendly, then contact the organisation they work for as this is not acceptable. Organisations represented at the AGM agreed with this approach.

12.4 GE proposed a vote of thanks to John Cliff who is stepping down as the Senior inspector for AALS in Wales after being in post since the start of licensing. John has been a real asset to the area and he will be missed. The role has now been taken on by Owen Hayward from North Wales - [ohayward@aals.org.uk](mailto:ohayward@aals.org.uk).

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The next full meeting will be in October or November 2016.

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