

South Wales **Outdoor Activity Providers Group**

Minutes of Fourth Group Meeting 14th November, 2011 at Up and Under, Cardiff at 6.30pm

In Attendance

Adrian Herald – Adrenaline Buzz	Kim Jones – Mountain Bike Tours
Adrian Thomas - ADE	Lee Garbett – Quest Adventures
Andy Cummings – Manzoku	Lee Lewis – Cardiff & Vale College
Andy Meek – Storey Arms OEC	Mark Hamilton – Atlantic College
Ben Carter – Up and Under	Mark Soanes – Call of the Wild
Ben Scholes – Rhondda Cynon Taff	Matt Rees – Dolygaer OEC
Bill Beynon – Trinity St. David's University	Matt Woodfield – Freelance
Carl Durham – Black Mountain Activities	Peter Blackburn – Plas Pencelli OEC
Cheri-Lee Birch – Fairbridge De Cymru	Richard Carpenter – Pendine OEC
Chris Allen – City & County of Swansea	Richard Morley – Bridgend College
Chris Jex – Pembrokeshire Adventure Centre	Richie Hamilton – Atlantic College
Chris Shorrock – Up and Under	Riki Phillips – Mynydd Outdoor Adventure
Cilla Withers – Plas Pencelli OEC	Robert Edwards – LTTO Merthyr CC
Dave Thomas – Call of the Wild	Sean Taylor – Hereford Council
Gareth James – Up and Under	Seb Thomas – Adventure Beyond
Gary Evans – Hawk Associates	Simon Ferguson – Pendine OEC
Gethin Williams – Pendine OEC	Simon Neenan – Atlantic College
Gez Richards – BBNPA	Steffan Davies – Sbri Cymru
Helen Pye – BBNPA	Steve Bird – World Horizons
Iain Scott – Soldier Development Wing	Steve Porter – Breakout Adventure
Ieuan Starks – School Camp Ltd.	Tim Hindle – Tirabad RET
James Trigg – Up and Under	Tom Hadfield – Visit Wales
Jeff Calligan – Mountain & River Activities	Tom Partridge – RCT Miskin Project
Jethro Moore – Adventure Beyond	Tony Rees – Gower Activity Centre
Joe Waters – Robert Jeffrey Centre	Will Kilner – South Wales MLTA
Juliet Parker-Smith – Trewern OEC	

1. Welcome

The meeting was opened by Andy Meek, SWOAPG Chairman, thanking everyone for attending. The chairman thanked Up and Under for hosting the meeting.

2. Apologies

Chris Pierce – Woodlands OEC	Paul Donovan – Escape Routes
David Windebank – Coleg Gwent Usk	Paul Jackson – Gateway Baptist Church
Graham Harvey – Trinity St. David's University	Rae Hardy – Longtown OEC
John Cliffe – AALS	Roger Lee – Hampshire OEC
Kevin Jackson – Kilvrough OEC	Russ Sinclair – Pegasus Fitness & Adventure
Lee Cave – Longtown OEC	Steve Rayner – Scout Association
Nick Fitzgerald – Robert Jeffrey Centre	Steve Rees – Pivot Point Photography
Nigel Flude – Links College	Wyn Thomas – Princes Trust Carmarthenshire
Paul Dann – FCW	

2. Update on Membership and SWOAPG Progress

Gary presented the following summary.

SWOAPG Membership

Level 1 Members – 12

Level 2 Members – 69

Level 3 Members – 81

Associate Members – 8

Observers – 17

Total Joined – 198

Not Joined Yet – 11

Actions from April Meeting

1. Remaining Providers to Join
We will continue to work to get all local Providers on-board and will bring in new members as we are approached by them or become aware of them. Considerable work has been undertaken on this by the Coordinator with help from Steering Groups members, as can be seen in the increase in member numbers since April.
2. Complete SWOAPG Terms of Reference
This document was distributed to all SWOAPG Members with the Agenda for this meeting.
3. Dinas Access Issues
We will be discussing this later in the meeting and will continue to take it forward.
4. Llangattock Access
We have now received the draft agreement and maps and Gary is waiting for BBNPA to make some initial changes before circulating the document for comment.
5. Run further Code of Conduct Training Sessions
More sessions have been run since April and will continue through 2012 for new and outstanding members
6. Website Development
A meeting has taken place to agree the content of the Website and a specification is being put together. Gary apologised for not being able to complete this in the time available but that it would be a priority going forward.
7. Include Environmental Charter in SWOAPG
Jethro Moore is leading on this and will discuss it later in the meeting.
8. Establish Club Membership Category
This was agreed at the April meeting, but no clubs have asked for membership. Any clubs interested in joining should be put in touch with the Coordinator
9. Arrange Fourth Meeting
We're having it !

10. Provide Coasteering Training in May
Successful workshop delivered by Jet, Tony, Seb and Gary
11. Provide Environmental Workshop in June
Organised by Helen Pye from BBNPA, this was very informative and enjoyable and can be recommended to members for a future Workshop
12. Undertake Sychryd Pools Inspection
Inspection completed, but a hold up in getting this set up as a download from the website for a nominal fee has prevented it being released yet.
13. Issue Coordinator Tender for October
Complete. Gary appointed as Coordinator for another year. Gary explained that he would not be looking to continue in the role from October 2012 and encouraged anyone interested in the role to get involved now to get up to speed in preparation for applying for the role
14. Seek further SWOAPG Funding
Some success here, more information coming later on the agenda.
15. Distribute Coasteering Research Dissertation
Complete, Dissertation circulated to all members
16. Finalise Reservoirs Access arrangements for Canoeing & Kayaking
Ongoing, will be covered later on the Agenda
17. Complete Mines and Tunnels Inspection Scheme 2011
Inspection complete and report has been issued to 38 members. Still waiting for 4 interested organisations to pay.
18. Involvement in Mellte Access & Survey
A small group of SWOAPG members led a Gorge Walk in July in the Mellte for BBNPA and FCW and to map the main usage of the site. The Environmental survey will take place in early 2012, using the maps made in July as a basis to determine which areas to focus on. This will lead to Code and Guidelines for use of the Mellte.
19. Update Sychryd Code of Conduct Map and produce Guidelines
Completed and maps available at the end of the meeting. A link to the map and guidelines will be made available to those not at the meeting and hard copy maps will be available for those that want them.
20. Provide guidance on how to respond to change to Licensing arrangements
A Guidance document was sent to all members following the April meeting, from which individual organisations could choose a course of action based on their own preferred outcome.
21. Find a solution for Sychryd Gorge Roots Climb
Ongoing. It is likely that some kind of 'fixed aid' will need to be fitted here.

Key SWOAPG Actions Since April 2011

- **Distribution of Alerts and Relevant Information**
All Alerts are now being forwarded by SWOAPG as soon as they are received and information being sent out when requested is considered for suitability and then sent via the appropriate Level lists.
- **Group Membership**
A large amount of time has been put in to this. Gary thanked the members of the Steering Group for helping with this task.
- **Steering Group Meetings**
The Steering Group met again twice, with an additional Emergency Meeting to discuss the National Trust Access issue.
- **Wales Activity Tourism Organisation (WATO) Representation**
Our representation to WATO has continued, working collaboratively with Punch Maughan, Director of BBT, to represent our South Wales (and Brecon Beacons) area.
- **Funding for SWOAPG for Future**
We are funded by WATO and Collabora8 via BBT until April 2012, but have been working on secured funding beyond that.
- **Reservoirs Access for Canoeing and Kayaking**
We have been working with Gez Richards, the BBNPA SPLASH Officer, to launch a Pilot Programme of access to Welsh Water Reservoirs. This matter will come up later on the Agenda.
- **Dinas Changing Screens Completion**
Screens were installed after the design had been agreed. These lasted well for some time, but eventually succumbed to the theft of the wooden outer panels. These have now been replaced and fitted more securely
- **Clydach Tunnels Access response to Railway Paths Ltd.**
Longtown OEC were approached by a representative of Railway Paths Ltd. whilst using the Clydach Tunnels and were told that they and all other users would have to register with Railway Paths and provide proof of competence and insurance. Longtown contacted the SWOAPG Coordinator who then contacted Railway Paths on behalf of all SWOAPG Members and explained that all users are signed up to the Mines and Tunnels Scheme as well as, in the main, being AALS licensed. Railway Paths seemed satisfied with this and no further concern has been expressed.
- **Attendance at Meetings :**
 - Sharon Birch attended a BBNPA Tourism Strategy Conference on 10/5
 - Mark Soanes attended a BBNPA Wellbeing Tourism Conference for SWOAPG on 13/5
 - Gary Evans, Jeff Calligan and Mark Soanes attended Sustainable Tourism Partnership meetings for SWOAPG on 13/7 & 12/10
 - Gary Evans gave a presentation to BBT members on 28/6

- Gary Evans and Tom Partridge attended a meeting with Swansea County Council re: Caswell on 7/9
- Gary Evans attended a South East Wales Tourism Partnership Meeting on 20/10
- Ben Scholes and Gary Evans attended the BBNPA Tilburg Event at Garwnant on 2/11 & 3/11
- Gary Evans attended a WASAG meeting on 7/11
- Members helped with 3 Splash clean-ups & undertook work for BBNPA/FCW
- Andy Meek and Jeff Calligan attended an IOL Wales Meeting on 7/10
- Juliet Parker Smith and Tom Partridge attended a meeting with CCC and FCW for Caves Mines Access Framework

Planned SWOAPG Actions

- **Remaining Providers to Join**
The SWOAPG Steering Group will have a final push to get the remaining 14 organisations to join.
- **Reservoirs Access Pilot Launch**
Assuming current objections by Welsh Water can be overcome, this pilot scheme should launch early next year.
- **Mines and Tunnels Inspection and Administration**
The remaining organisations still to pay will be contacted again in the coming weeks.
- **Mellte Survey for Gorge Walking**
We will remain closely involved throughout and will keep all SWOAPG members informed.
- **Code of Conduct 2012 Launch**
The new maps and guidance notes will be made available to all SWOAPG members who are signed up to the Concordat.
- **Climbing Workshop – December**
Tom Partridge is coordinating and an invitation will be sent out this week
- **Resolve National Trust Access Issue**
SWOAPG Steering Group members will meet with the National Trust on Gower next week and will report back to all members following that
- **Agree Access arrangements with Swansea CC for Caswell**
This will be moved forward once we know the outcome of the National Trust meeting
- **Memorandum of Understanding with BBNPA for future support**
With Collabor8 funding coming to an end early next year and uncertainty about the 'fit' with the Rural Alliances project, SWOAPG will be meeting BBNPA on December 1st to look at setting up a Memorandum of Understanding around the way BBNPA can support SWOAPG in the future.

- Agree ongoing relationship between SWOAPG and IOL Wales
To avoid overlap of workstreams and duplication of effort, SWOAPG will be working with IOL Wales representatives to agree how the two organisations can work in harmony.
- Introduce Late Booking System
It is likely that this means of accommodating Late Bookers and Small Groups for activity provision will be incorporated into the SWOAPG Website, as efforts to get support for this from Tourism Partnerships unfortunately failed to materialise.

4. Digital Marketing - Tom Hadfield, Regional Digital Strategist, SE Wales, Visit Wales

Tom gave a PowerPoint presentation to explain the Digital Tourism Business Framework Programme. Points made by Tom during the presentation were :

- The project is applicable to Convergence areas only and so excludes Powys, Cardiff, Vale of Glamorgan, and Newport.
- One third of bookings are likely to be through the use of mobile phone browsing in 2012 and people are booking more online than ever.
- The project will offer ICT Diagnostics and Assessments and will increase the knowledge that is out there for a better equipped tourism industry
- The aim is to present visitors to Wales with more information about what we can offer
- 1250 Diagnostics are available, with the first 750 fully subsidized. These include one day with a consultant and cover software, hardware, e-commerce, social media, etc.
- There is an eligibility criteria – e.g. AALS Licensed.
- Leaflets are available online, as are application forms
- There are also opportunities for funding for :
 - up to £15,000 for Feasibility Studies for business case development,
 - £150,000 for 'Innovative Pilots' for new technologies
 - £200,000 for 'Digital Communities' for building physical networks
- Examples of projects are smartphone applications, virtual reality projects, QR Codes, 2D Barcodes, etc. There has been less interest so far in Community Projects

Question : How would a group like ours benefit, as we are diverse geographically and some members are based in non-convergence areas ?

Answer : If you base your application on Convergence area delivery locations, this may overcome the problem.

Question : Is there a minimum spend for the project ?

Answer : We are putting together a 'Quick Access Fund' of £5-6K to help move smaller projects forward more quickly.

5. WATO and BBT Items

5a. Funding Items

We have secure funds to contract a Coordinator for SWOAPG until September 2013, though it is rather thin in the final year. This has been possible so far through Collabor8 (via BBNPA), WATO and South West Wales Tourism Partnership (SWWTP) funding. SWWTP have provided an intent to continue funding for 2012 to 2013 and there is a proposal in with WATO for funding for 2012 to 2015, though this has only just gone forward for consideration by Visit Wales. Collabor8 will end in March and the Rural Alliances project may not be a useable source of funding.

5b Tourism Roadmap

Working with BBT, we will be producing a Roadmap of Tourism related organisations in Wales, as it has become increasingly complex. This will be forward to SWOAPG members once complete.

5c IWA Conference on ‘Re-thinking Environmental Management in Wales’

The SWOAPG Coordinator attended the conference for WATO and produced a report on the day. It was primarily an initial consultation on the proposed setting up of a new Environmental organisation for Wales to replace the Environment Agency (EA), CCW and FCW. It was clear that EA and CCW were in favour, whilst FCW was not. Outdoor Activity provision and Tourism had not been considered within the discussions to this point, and we were able to make the point that they needed to be considered during the consultation and implementation phases.

5d WATO Paper for Wales Outdoor Recreation Network

WATO has been undertaking work to propose an Outdoor Recreation Network for Wales. This is being undertaken now for two reasons – firstly, following a presentation from the Northern Ireland Countryside Access and Activities Network (CAAN) where they have successfully implemented a National Network. Secondly, the amalgamation of FCW, CCW and EA into ‘Living Wales’, provides a catalyst to re-build networks and relationships. So far, a Draft Paper has been written for submission to the Welsh Government and this is currently with the WATO Committee members for comment. WATO recognises that it presently has only a National Tourism remit and the need for a wider Outdoor Activity and Outdoor Recreation remit would increase funding opportunities, improve lobbying capability and reduce duplication of effort.

6. Environmental Charter – Progress

Jethro Moore explained that he has now completed the first draft of the SWOAPG Environmental Charter, taking into account the comments made following distribution of the old Brecon Beacons National Park Environmental Charter. This Draft will be sent out for comment in the next few days.

Jethro felt that two elements of the old Charter may no longer be necessary in the new one :

- Access is now being handled separately by SWOAPG
- Safety is not in the remit of such a document, as this is handled in other ways

It was also recommended that the previous document mentioned the BBNP a lot and that the new one should focus on ‘South Wales’ Area’

The aim going forward will be to build future SWOAPG workshops around the new Environmental Charter, once approved.

The meeting was asked whether SWOAPG members should be asked to 'sign-up' to the Environmental Charter, as organisations did for the BBNP one, or whether it should just be a guidance document. The meeting felt that all providers should be committed to working in an Environmentally sensitive and sustainable way and that therefore, all organisations would have no problem with signing up to the Charter. It was also pointed out that many organisations used to sign-up with pride and use the Logo for the Charter on their Website and material.

The meeting voted on the matter and it was Unanimously agreed that on completion and approval of the document, all members would be asked to sign-up to it in order to use it in their materials.

7. Guest Speaker – Chris Shorrocks, Up and Under

Chris gave a presentation on Up and Under. He explained that the company was set up in 1977 as a Caving Lamp and Wellie Hire business and has come on somewhat since then, opening their 2nd shop 3 years ago. As a business, they have changed their perspective from caving and climbing, adding first watersports and more recently bushcraft, fell running, etc.

Up and Under aim to provide a relaxed, friendly and helpful atmosphere. All staff have to be active in the outdoors and are there to help and advise.

Chris showed a Video of the Watersports shop and explained that they are seeking to be specialists in Sea Kayaking, aiming to be a Centre of Excellence and having a large demo fleet of boats. The location in Ely allows for putting on demo events and the offer was made to use the facility for access to the water. Just get in contact. The Welsh Canoe and Kayak show will be held there in 2012.

It has been a challenging year for Up and Under, having moved to the SAP system for IT infrastructure. Whilst it is extremely powerful, it has been harder to get what was wanted from it. It does allow for more efficient in ordering, enabling Up and Under to be swifter in providing service and competitive in pricing. The new pricing structure has resulted in lower Contract prices.

The biggest hindrance in the last couple of years has been supply of product. Manufacturers are not taking any risks of supply and some manufacturers have been closed down. An example of changes is that Lowe Alpine pulled out completely from the clothing market. Up and Under tried increasing stock to compensate, but it was too hard to judge what buyers actually wanted, as needs changed over time.

The new Website is working well, but the B2B Logon systems has been the bane of everybody's lives. It was demo'd working and once right certainly is a useful way of getting tailored prices for each organisation, based on their login. There is still further development planned for the new website.

Chris then demonstrated a number of new products and equipment developments.

8. Gorge Walking at Dinas

8a. FCW – Changing Screens & Work in Progress

Helen Pye, BBNPA presented this section as Paul Dann, FCW had been unable to make the meeting. A number of pieces of work have been underway at Dinas and the surrounding area :

- As mentioned earlier, the Changing Screens have been re-instated and built more securely. It would be unlikely that FCW would be able to replace them again if they are vandalised in future.
- Improvements to steps at Sgwd yr Eira (North side) are planned next year
- The steps down to Loonies from the upper path have been removed with help from SWOAPG members, as these were a tripping hazard. Work is planned to build new steps here and help from SWOAPG will be gratefully received, Date to be advised.
- The Bridge at Loonies Leap will be resurfaced once the steps work is complete
- The new metal bridge between Loonies and Dinas has been resurfaced
- The Elidir Trail in the Waterfalls area will receive attention next year. This will be done in a partnership between BBNPA and Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council early next year
- The footpath from the Angel to Sgwd Gladwys will be improved next year
- The upper Gunpowder works track has been improved and there are plans to improve the section from Loonies and Dinas
- The improvement works for Cwm Porth Toilets is still to be finalised
- Visitor Counters have been installed at Dinas and work is being undertaken to differentiate between Cars and Minibuses. Further on work is planned for Thursday 17th November and help from a Provider with a minibus would be appreciated.

Any concerns relating to footpaths or signs in the area can be made direct to Helen at Helen.Pye@breconbeacons.org

The Mellte survey will require a careful approach to maintain access to the site for Gorge Walking. It won't be as easy as the Sychryd Gorge Code of Conduct, as it is so much bigger and more remote. We can avoid damaging the site for now by avoiding ropework on waterfalls and trees along the Upper Mellte.

Using the mapping from the July visit, surveyors will environmentally survey the key areas. It was asked how much of the site was owned by FCW and after some mathematical adjustments to the response, FCW own around 75%.

It may be necessary to produce a safety statement for the site along the lines of the Porth Yr Ogof one, due to the remoteness of the site and the number of incidents every year that require Mountain Rescue assistance. SWOAPG will be fully involved in producing such a document.

8b. Litter Issues and Voluntary Code – Dinas Access Guidelines

Helen explained that she has received concerns from the Pontneddfechan community regarding parking and litter issues.

Gary explained that the Access Guidelines had been circulated following the April meeting and for a while things had improved. In fact, Juliet had even suggested sending a note out thanking people for keeping on top of the Litter problem. However, the good work fizzled out and litter and parking have deteriorated through the summer.

It was felt that many operators are trying hard to minimise car parking issues by ensuring car sharing and some providers carry bin bags to litter pick at the end of their sessions. However a large number of providers are still not pulling their weight.

The meeting was asked for ideas to improve the situation. Ideas were :

- Often organisations receive this information via their Head of Centre, Owner or Manager, but it isn't necessarily cascaded to all Instructors. It was suggested that Twitter and Facebook could be used to reach delivery staff
- Remind all SWOAPG members of the Guidelines. It seems people need reminding. Ask them to cascade the guidelines to all staff
- Look for Volunteers to be at Dinas on the busiest days of the year to get buy-in from Instructors in a helpful and friendly way
- Arrange Clean-ups
- Encourage all Instructors and Organisations to carry bin-bags and protective gloves with them at all times and to get in the habit of using them after every session. If we all did it, we wouldn't need to pick very much litter up
- Add Parking, Litter etc. to the Risk Assessments for the site for all Organisations – Business Owners, Managers and Technical Advisors to take ownership of this
- All to act as role models and encourage people regarding parking and litter whenever on site

It was mentioned that the path down to the changing screens is getting muddy. It was felt that we need to get our act together a bit before asking for further assistance from FCW.

8c. Main Wall Abseiling

This item follows on from concerns from some members regarding groups using the Dinas Main Face for Abseiling whilst other groups were working on the slabs below. Gary explained that we used to have an unofficial agreement not to use the Main Face whilst other groups were working below. Not only is there a danger of dropping equipment (which has happened a few times), but the instability of the gully above the descent route is a real cause for concern. Some very significant blocks have fallen from there and there is a risk of an Abseiler dislodging blocks at the start of their abseil.

The meeting was asked if they could agree to this principle and the response was in favour.

8d. Proposals for Village Hall

The project to build a café and improved toilet facilities at the village hall looks to be going ahead. More information will be provided when it is known. Arrangements for using the village Hall car park do seem to keep changing, but may settle once the new project goes forward.

9. Canoeing Access

Gary explained that members of the SWOAPG Steering Group have been working with Gez Richards at BBNPA and representatives of Welsh Water to put in place a Pilot scheme to use Reservoirs for Canoeing/Kayaking with Groups. This was originally as a response to the lack of progress with improving access to rivers for Canoeing. Welsh Water expressed a desire to have BBNPA act as administrator for such a project and so Gez Richards from BBNPA has taken a lead in moving this forward.

Gez stated that the Reservoirs are Pontsticill/Pentwyn, Llwyn-onn, Usk and Crai. Welsh Water have found it easier for many years to do nothing with their sites. There now seem to be two factions – those who know that Welsh Government want improved access to water and those diehards who don't. It could be that the diehards win the day and we'll get nowhere, but this project could still be achieved if we keep pushing forward.

The project was ready to launch until Welsh Water arrived with late safety objections for Llwn-onn and Gez had to ask the SWOAPG Coordinator to respond in writing stating that the scheme would not work without the planned 5 sites. The ball is back in Welsh Water's court. However, Gez only has 4 months left on his project.

Other items from Gez :

- River Clean-up – 25 people helped on the Wye two weeks ago and it was a really good session. 80 bags of rubbish and all sorts of larger items were collected, pretty much all of which was non Canoeing related.
- Splash Project ending – it would be good if someone could continue to organise river clean-ups in future.
- Canoe Trail – Usk Reservoir to Pontypool was the original goal, but this failed to materialise because of numerous blockages. Instead we have the Beacons Water Trail for occasional paddlers and families. Leaflets are available for the trail, unfortunately those brought to the meeting by Gez all being the Welsh version !
- Splash funding for the Roots Climb improvement at the Sychryd may be available

10. SWOAPG Proposed Training and Workshops

Tom Partridge took the meeting through the plans for the upcoming SWOAPG Climbing Workshop on Wednesday 7th December at the Summit Centre. Invitations will come out this week and the day will consist of 4 short workshops :

1. Coaching & Climbing Development – Simon Rawlinson
2. Environmental Awareness – Luke Maggs (CCW)
3. Child Protection & Safeguarding Awareness – Adrian Herald
4. Climbing Revisited – Common Group Issues – Matt Woodfield & Tom Partridge

Costs will be to cover Administration and Venue costs only.

There have been 3 excellent SWOAPG Workshops so far and these have been a great way to share experience and knowledge. To plan for 2012, it would be a great help if all SWOAPG members would have a think about what they would like us to deliver. An e-mail asking for ideas will go out in the next few weeks.

11. National Trust Proposal for changes to Access arrangements on Gower for all Activities on their land.

11a. Background

Gary explained the background to this concerning issue for Activity Providers. National Trust Gower had made contact with SWOAPG to seek views on proposed Licensing for Outdoor Activities, initially for Rhosilli/Llangenith and later to other National Trust sites. This License could include the National Trust Ambassador scheme which promotes exclusivity for each site.

Some surfing providers had been approached before we were contacted, but fortunately no commitments had been made yet.

11b. Action Taken

Action taken so far had been to get as many surf providers as possible to join SWOAPG and to call Steering Group members to an Emergency meeting to discuss. From this, a delegation of Steering Group members, plus Paul Donovan for IOL Wales, Bill Beynon and Tony Rees will be meeting the National Trust on 23rd November. Additionally, discussions with Swansea County Council in relation to Caswell were put on hold.

11c. Plan for Meeting on 23rd November

To find out exactly what the National Trust are aiming to achieve and what has caused them to want to do this. Then to make our points and ensure they understand the implications. Our key principle is to prevent an exclusivity arrangement and to ensure continued access for all.

11d. Member Input

The meeting was asked to make comments and suggestions or to ask any questions. The following points were made ;

- Matt Rees explained that United Utilities had been charging for access to it's land for Outdoor Activities in the North West of England for some years. However, these fees were waived for educational groups.
- Elsie Little stated that the BCA had brokered a National Agreement with the National Trust where the presumption was that access would be allowed. This could have relevance in the upcoming discussions
- Juliet Parker Smith made the point that a number of the stated aims of the National Trust in relation to education would be in conflict with what is being proposed.

12. SWOAPG Steering Group Process and Election

The Chairman explained that we are at the stage of needing to elect a Steering Group for the coming year and that the existing Steering Group had considered the matter and come up with some key principles to go forward with. With such a lot going on, Steering Group members would need to be willing to get involved, as the Steering Group was not a 'talking shop'. Steffan Davies would be standing down this year due to work commitments and we would be adding one more place to the Steering Group to bring the total to 12 people.

Proposed Principles

1. Steering Group (SG) Members serve 2 years if they wish to
2. At least 2 places are made available each year for new SG Members
3. SG Size between 10 and 12, including Coordinator
4. Coordinator automatically has an SG position, but can't be Chairman
5. Chairman elected from within SG and serves 2 years
6. New SG nominations to be provided before each November meeting and then voted on at the meeting

The Chairman asked the meeting to ratify these principles and it was put to a vote. All were in favour.

The following nominees were received before the meeting and the Chairman asked each to say a few words about themselves to help the meeting decide who to vote for for the two available places. Juliet Parker Smith spoke on behalf of Jamie Ellson who was not at the meeting.

Nominations

- Andy Cummings, Manzoku
- Robert Edwards, LTTO Merthyr BIW
- Jamie Ellson, Freelance
- Adrian Herald, Adrenaline Buzz
- Tony Rees, Antur & Gower Activity Centres

Voting was undertaken using a paper voting slip system and the two people with the most votes were Andy Cummings and Tony Rees who were welcomed to the Steering Group.

The Steering Group for Nov 2011 to Nov 2012 will be :

Andy Cummings - Manzoku
Andy Meek, Chairman – Storey Arms
Carl Durham – Black Mountain Activities
Gary Evans, Coordinator – Hawk Associates
Jeff Calligan – Mountain and River Activities
Jethro Moore – Adventure Beyond
Jon Everington/Richard Hill – Glasbury House OEC
Juliet Parker Smith – Trewern OEC
Mark Soanes – Call of the Wild
Matt Woodfield – Freelance
Tom Partridge – Rhondda Cynon Taff Miskin Project
Tony Rees – Gower Activity Centres & Antur

13. SWOAPG Steering Group Priorities for 2012 – input from members

The meeting was asked by the Chairman what they felt the priorities were for the Steering Group to focus on for 2012. The following were suggested :

- Take a look at www.icoast.co.uk before the next meeting
- The arrangements at Caswell are important as well as those with the National Trust.
- Licensing is still an important issue to keep members informed on

14. Any Other Business

Point 1 : Jeff Calligan explained that the Landowner of Bwa Maen at the Sychryd will allow climbing left of Bwa Maen, but not where the ivy was. It was also suggested that CCW would not be pleased to find bolts on the geological feature there. Additionally, Jeff reminded the meeting that Providers should not take Groups onto the private land on the opposite side of the Sychryd opposite the Changing Screens, as the landowner is unhappy about it.

Point 2 : A question was asked about what is planned for the 'Roots Climb' in the upper Sychryd. Gary explained that we may fit a fixed ladder there. We will keep members informed.

15. Meeting Close

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending, thanked Up and Under for the venue and the guest speakers. He reminded everyone that the next Full Meeting will be in April and closed the meeting.

