



Some WBMC "Regulars" enjoying a summer-like October coach meet near Ambleside (left photo by Hilary Jones) & (right) another "regular" celebrating seeing the sunrise from the top of Mt Fuji a couple of days later with



some complete strangers who also fancied the 'crater rim' walk. Of 30 who reached Kusushi-jinja Shrine on top surprisingly only 6 wanted to walk an extra 1.5 hr to visit the true (3775m) summit to the W!

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This Newsletter was produced by John Edwards. Thanks to those members who contributed information or articles, especially Graeme Stanford, and to Nigel Tarr for checking it (though any errors in it are of course mine).

If you would like to write an article or spot something interesting about the mountains please get in touch

with John via jaejed@hotmail.com

Also check out our Wikipedia entry

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Bromwich_Mountaineering_Club

EDITOR'S CORNER:

It's that time of year again when things seem to come at you like a whirlwind. First the clocks go back before you know it you're being asked for a 'treat', with the threat of a nasty 'trick' lurking in the background. Almost immediately there are firework parties or displays to attend followed a few days later by poppy-wearing & sombre Remembrance. By then every shop & pub is reminding you they've got just what you want for Christmas - be it cards, gifts, chocolates or meals. And talking of meals WBMC is again doing it's bit to ensure you gain a bit of weight over the Festive period. There's the Curry Night in West Brom (24th Nov), a 3-course meal at Glossop (10th Dec), the free Member's Knees-up at The Red Lion (14th Dec) & a possible Sunday Carvery at Llangollen (7th Jan Mitch's Meet) where "The Corn Mill" have provisionally reserved 20 places for us in "The Rafter's" (which can take more if a larger party needs it). Not to worry, I'll be including details of the "5+2 diet" in the Jan/Feb Newsletter!

But seriously, everyone on the Committee would like to wish all our Members, Coach guests & Thursday night visitors a very merry Christmas and a very happy, healthy & prosperous New Year.

NOTICEBOARDPROGRAMME OF FUTURE EVENTS: ***** N.B Continued on page 13 *****COACH MEETS TO THE HILLS & MOUNTAINS:-Saturday 11th November – LlanberisSunday 10th December – The Black Peak: GlossopSaturday 7th January '24 – Mitch's Meet: LlangollenSunday 14th January 2024 – Ogwen

Reserve your seat with Nigel (07703 345729) and be guaranteed a great day on the hills.

*These leave W. Brom at 7am & usually**return around 9 – 9.30 pm giving ~7 hrs on the hills with linear walks often possible.**If you don't fancy a long walk why not come along for a social day out or a stroll through some beautiful villages?*INDOOR MEETS :-

Thursday 9th November – Members' Night: Illustrated Talk on at "Becoming a Fuji-san" by John Edwards at the Red Lion All Saints Way, W Brom (B71 1RH) 7.30pm start. There'll be a few other highlights from his recent 3 week trip to Japan too:- snow monkeys, Sumo wrestlers, shrines, big Buddhas, crowded trains (bullets & local) & beautiful locals, plus a guest appearance from Captain Cag, the richest rough sleeper on the streets of Tokyo!

Thursday 16th November – Members' Social 8.30pm at The Red LionTuesday 28th November – Indoor Climbing at "High Places" (Kidderminster Climbing Wall)Thursday 7th December – Members' Night with an Illustrated Talk on her recent trip to "The Pyrenees" by Hillary Jones. Red Lion All Saints Way, W Brom (B71 1RH) @ 7.30pmThursday 14th December – Members' Christmas Social 8.30pm at The Red LionThursday 11th January '24 – Members' Night with an Illustrated Talk at the Red Lion All Saints Way, W Brom (B71 1RH) 7.30pm start.Thursday 18th January – Members' Social 8.30pm at The Red LionTuesday 30th January – Indoor Climbing at "High Places" (Kidderminster Climbing Wall)

ADVANCE NOTICE: 21st March AGM 2024 @ The Red Lion All Saints Way, B71 1RH 7.30pm start. Please note in your diaries so you will be able to attend and help make this crucial meeting quorate.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS & SOCIAL NIGHTS AT THE RED LION (B71 1RH) :-

16th November, 14th December & 18th January Committee meetings start at 7.30pm & observers are welcome. Otherwise come along at ~ 8.30 pm for a drink & a chat or meal.

WEEKENDS & OTHER MEETS :-CURRY NIGHT IN WEST BROM - FRIDAY 24th NOVEMBER 7.00 FOR 7.30PM

Back to the Akash Balti (now licensed) at 385 High Street, West Bromwich, B70 9QW, next door to The Wheatsheaf where we used to meet. Nigel Tarr (07703 345729) is taking the bookings.

SKILLS WEEKEND @ the HUT SATURDAY 18th - SUNDAY 19th NOVEMBER

A chance to pick up some navigation skills from Geordie Hind so reserve your place by contacting him on 07505 364318. ***** SEE ADVERT LATER IN THE NEWSLETTER *****

SCOTTISH WINTER WEEK 2024 : SATURDAYS 10th - 17th FEBRUARY

Jonathan Howells has been in touch with Ben Nevis Hotel, Fort William and reserved some rooms for WBMC. In line with most things they've gone up a bit - but still excellent value at £42 per night BB & Evening meal (incl. use of gym, jacuzzi, pool & sauna) + £16 single room supplement if desired. The long range weather forecast is for lots of snow so to secure your place contact Jon on 07859 932389. One night's fee guarantees you a place.



SATURDAY 11th NOVEMBER COACH MEET - LLANBERIS**Depart:** 07: 00 – West Bromwich

Edward St Car Park B70 8NL

07: 20 – M54 Junction 2

Toilet stop: Corwen*Crib Goch, Crib y Ddysgl &***Drop offs:** Capel Curig (721582)*Yr Wyddfa*

Pen-y-Pass (647556)

by Aaron Robson

Llanberis (583598)

Pick ups: Llanberis Coach Park, near

Electric Mountain (583598)

Pen Y Gwryd (660558)

Required map: OS 1:25000 Outdoor Leisure 17: Snowdon / Y Wyddfa**Suggested Routes:** (But be prepared to cut short as daylength is quite short.)**FROM CAPEL CURIG Route 1 The Glyders and their Eastern Ridge** (~ 15km - 10 miles)

From Capel head west and follow the ridge to Gallt Yr Ogof (685586) and continue over Foel Goch (678582) and past Llyn Caseg-Fraith (670584). You should get a classic view of Tryfan's east face from here (made famous by Poucher). You can then ascend Glyder Fach (656583) followed by Glyder Fawr (642580). Descend south to Pen-y-Pass and walk down the road to the Pen Y Gwryd Hotel.

FROM PEN-Y-PASS Route 2 The classic « Snowdon Horseshoe » or « Just » Snowdon (~ 13km - 8 miles)

If you're ambitious ascend Snowdon (610544) via Y Lliwedd (624533 & 622533) and come back down over Crib Goch (624552). Or do Crib Goch first if you prefer scrambling uphill rather than downhill. However, the grade 1 scramble across the top had the same exposure whichever way you tackle it! This could be a hard day in the time available and should not be attempted in high winds. **A descent to Llanberis following the railway track is an alternative finish if you want to climb Snowdon and do half the Horseshoe.**

Route 3 Snowdon & Moel Cynghorion (~ 17km - 11 miles)

Ascend Snowdon via the P-Y-G or Miner's track. Then leave in a north west direction and descend the Snowdon Ranger path as far as Bwlch Cwm Brwynog (591558). A steep grassy climb then leads to the summit of Moel Cynghorion (587564) which (hopefully) gives fine views over the Menai Straights. Descend to Bwlch Maesgwm (573559) and then follow an easy path northwards to Llanberis coach park

Route 4 The Glyders and their Western Ridge (~ 17km - 11 miles)

From Pen-y-Pass climb Glyder Fawr (642580) and then drop down north west to climb shapely Y Garn (631596). Continue along the grassy plateau to Foel Goch (629612), Mynydd Perfedd (623619), Carnedd y Filiast (620628) and the rough summit of Elidir Fawr (612613) before dropping down to Llanberis and the coach park.

FROM LLANBERIS Route 5 The Nuttalls North West of Snowdon (~ 16km - 10 miles)

Climb to summit of Moel Eilio (556577), possibly visiting the Ceunant Mawr waterfall en route. Descend 400 ft and then ascend Foel Gron (560569) which has 2 tops the lower of which has the larger cairn. Follow the ridge south to Bwlch Maesgwm and then east to Moel Cynghorion. You could head north back to Llanberis or head south, then south east to pass right of Llyn D'ur Arddu and on to Llechog summit (606568). Then follow railway path north back to Llanberis.

There should be a 'Led Walk', possibly Route 3.

Fares: Members £23, Non members £26, Under 18's & Full time students £10

To Book Your Seat contact Nigel Tarr on 07703 345729

Should you cancel after the Wednesday prior to the coach date a £5.00 fee will be charged.

Failure to turn up without cancelling and the full coach fare will be expected from you.

SUNDAY 10th DECEMBER : THE DARK PEAK PLUS XMAS MEAL **BUT IT'S GLOSSOP - NOT Hayfield as on meet card!**

Depart: 07:00 –West Bromwich.

Edward St Car Park (B70 8NN)

07:20 –Penkridge (ST19 5AS)

Drop Offs: Lay By A628 SK 034 979
 Crowden SK 072 992
 Ironbower Rocks SK 111 999
 Glossop Town Centre (??????)

Pick up: Glossop Golf Club (SK 051939)

Required maps: OS 1:25000 Outdoor

Leisure Map No 1- The Dark Peak or

OS 1:50 000 Landranger 110 - Sheffield



Suggested Routes:

Above: Bleaklow Head (633m) on a good day

From Lay By A628: Route 1 - Cock Hill (6 miles / 10km 450m Ascent)

From the Lay By follow the A628 east to the track that drops to cross between the two reservoirs. Walk along the south side of Rhodeswood Reservoir then follow the Pennine Way up Clough Edge. As you reach the top of Clough Edge go south to the top of Cock Hill before continuing to the track north of Shire Hill. Traverse Shire Hill to its west side before making your way to the golf club. Look out for flying golf balls !

From Crowden: Route 2 - Bleaklow Head by Wildboar Clough (10 miles/16km 550m ascent)

From Crowden follow the A628 east until the B6105. Turn right and follow the B road until you have passed the Clay Pigeon Shoot. Follow tracks south to Rollick Stones and climb Wildboar Clough on to the vast plateau of Shining Clough Moss. Drop south to pick up the Pennine Way. Follow the Pennine Way, initially east then south over Bleaklow Head all the way to Old Woman (SK 090 934). Turn right and follow Doctor's Gate (route of a Roman Rd) east all the way to Shire Hill and around to the golf club.

From Ironbower Rocks: Route 3 - Bleaklow Head via Black Clough (10 miles & 520m ascent)

Cross the A628 and the River Etherow and follow the path south east to the bottom of Near Black Clough. Climb up the Clough all the way to Bleaklow Head (& The Kiss) ± for 'baggers' Bleaklow Hill (630m). Head south to Hern Stones, Higher Shelf Stones (621m) @ 089947. From the latter's trig point it's easy to visit a B29 Superfortress crash site (SK091949). Then around Crooked Clough to pick up Doctor's Gate and east to follow route 2 to the golf club. **Route 3 will be the Led Walk**

From Glossop: Route 4 - Glossop – Exploration of (As much or as little as you like!)

Coach Fares: Members £23, Non members £26, Under 18's & Full time students £10

To Book Your Seat contact Nigel Tarr on 07703 345729

Should you cancel after the Wednesday prior to the coach date a £5.00 fee will be charged.

Failure to turn up without cancelling and the full coach fare will be expected.

NB Jan Cox has organised a Christmas dinner at the golf club which is optional for coach passengers and details are given below. Please note that this has to be pre-booked with Jan separately and paid for in advance before the 26th November.

XMAS MEAL & BOOKING DETAILS

The Club has booked a post walk meal at Glosop Golf Club (SK13 7PU) east of the town. This has a nice selection of draught beer & we haggled so got 3 courses for £25. The menu is opposite & the Golf Club **need orders by 26th November at the latest**. So here is what you need to do :-

1. Decide what you want to eat
2. Pay £25 per meal to the Club account using the reference XM followed by your surname eg XMSanta (use your own name obviously!)
3. Email me secretary@wbmc.org with your food choices and confirm that you have paid. I will send a return email as receipt.
4. Book your coach seat with Nigel
5. Dust off the festive hats.

(Club bank details: Sort Code 08-92-99
Account No 65487846)

For those who prefer to pay with cash, Andy Brown or Nigel can collect this on the November coach (Saturday 11th November) or a Club night at the Red Lion. **But you still need to email me your food choices. REMEMBER THE DEADLINE IS 26TH NOVEMBER.**

REMEMBER THE DEADLINE IS 26TH NOVEMBER.

N.B. We think Creme burlee is a typo! Either that or it is a new mystery pudding!

**MITCH'S MEET : SUNDAY 7th JANUARY 2024 – LLANGOLLEN**

As in recent years this will be a car meet, with people aiming to arrive at the start by 10am.

A waterside pub «The Corn Mill», which has excellent reviews on Trip Advisor, will be doing Sunday roasts among other dishes & has agreed members can go back there after the walk for drinks & food. but would like to know numbers so if you are intending to come on the meet please let co-ordinator John Edwards know by 27th December via jaejed@hotmail.com or 07837198. For details of the venue, which see <https://www.brunningandprice.co.uk/cornmill/>

Meeting place : Llangollen Main Car Park (213420)

Suggested maps : OS 1:50 000 Landranger sheets 116 & 117 or 1:25 000 Explorer sheet 255

Suggested Routes :

Route 1. Leave the main car park and cross Llangollen Bridge (early 12thC). Then zigzag steeply up to Castell Dinas Bran with its ruins from the 13th C, ringed with iron age defences. Fantastic views.

Descend WNW to Pentrefelin Wharf, where barges carrying slate left for England. (7 km / 4 ½ miles)

Route 2. Cross the River Dee and head up the Horseshoe Pass to the ancient Pillar of Eliseg (203444).

Then climb up onto Maesyrychen Mountain and Moel y Gamelin. Head SW along Llantysilo Mountain as far as you feel like returning to Llangollen by the minor road that follows the north bank of the river Dee. (About 19 km / 12 miles)

Route 3. Drive to Horseshoe Pass & climb obvious track east to Cynr y Brain & the trig point (214497) at Sir Watkin's Tower (very much a ruin!). Descend SE to World's End & return to Llangollen over Eglwyseg Mountain (237457) or tracks and minor road at the foot of the towering limestone cliffs, one of which, Graig Arthur (224471), is supposed to be where Guinevere was taken after being kidnapped. (circa 14 km / 9 miles)

SUNDAY 14th JANUARY 2024: OGWEN & ERYRI**Depart :** 07: 00 –West Bromwich.

Edward St Car Park (B70 8NN)

07: 20 –Service Road M54 Junction 2

Drop offs : Pont Cyfyng (735572)

Capel Curig (721582)

Ogwen (656603)

Pick up : Ogwen 656603)

Capel Curig (721582)

Required map : OS 1:25000 Outdoor

Leisure Map No 17 Snowdon (or Yr Wyddfa as it is to be known from now)

Suggested Routes :**FROM PONT CYFYNG**

Route 1: Moel Siabod (9.5km / 6 miles) Follow the track to a disused quarry (717555) then continue to Lyn y Foel (713547) from where you can climb the SE ridge of Moel Siabod (Grade1 scramble of Dear Ddu) . From the summit (705546) descend via the NE ridge to GR 713565. Then continue through the forest to Plas y Brenin & the Capel Curig pick-up. <https://www.osola.org.uk/rides/OSHubMap.php?f=moel-siabod-via-daer-ddu.gpx&t=moel-siabod-via-daer-ddu.gpx>

FROM CAPEL CURIG

Route2 : Galt yr Ogof, Foel Goch & Tryfan (9km / 6miles) Head W & follow the ridge to Galt yr Ogoff (685586) & continue over Foel Goch (678582) to Llyn Caseg-Fraith (670584) and find a cairn at the col marking the Miners Track. Follow the track to Bwch Tryfan (662588) and ascend Tryfan (664594) via the South Ridge. Descend via the West gully to Ogwen. www.osola.org.uk/rides/OSHubMap.php?f=ogwen-route-2.gpx&t=ogwen-route-2.gpx

Route3 : The Glyders (13km / 8miles) Follow route 2 to Llyn Caseg-Fraith (670585), then climb to the summit of Glyder Fach (656583) Continue along the plateau to Glyder Fawr (642579) and descend to Llyn y Cwn (638584) . Then take path to right of the Devils Kitchen to Llyn Idwal back to Ogwen.

<https://www.osola.org.uk/rides/OSHubMap.php?f=ogwen-route-2.gpx&t=ogwen-route-2.gpx>

Route 4: Pen Llithrig y Wrach (13km / 8 miles 1200 m ascent) Leaving the coach at Capel Curig, the route takes footpaths North to steadily climb to the summit of Pen Llithrig y Wrach, then follow the tops to complete a clockwise circuit around Llyn Cowlyd Reservoir before returning to Capel Curig, with the option of a little scramble to the top of Y Pincin.

FROM A5 NEAR LLYN OGWEN

Route 5: North Ridge of Tryfan & Bristly Ridge (7km / 5miles) Follow the road to GR 663603 & tackle the N Ridge of Tryfan (a Grade 1 scramble). At the summit (664594) jump from Adam to Eve and back if you dare! (weather permitting) and then descend the South Ridge to Bwlch Tryfan (662588) and continue up the Bristly Ridge (another Grade 1 scramble) to the summit plateau of Glyder Fach (656583). A less exposed alternative is to climb the scree slope to the left of the ridge. Scramble over the Castell Y Gwynt (654582) and follow the plateau edge NW to the top of Y Gribin (651582) . Descend this fine ridge back to Ogwen. Short distance but maybe not in high winds

Route 6 : Y Garn (631596) ± Foel Goch (629612) from the 'Old A5' road (8km / 5 miles)

Route 7 : Easy walking up Cwm Idwal to the base of Devil's Kitchen (5km / 3miles)

Route 8 : Try some scrambling up the easy angled slabs of Little Tryfan

N.B. Winter gear should be worn & carried. Depending on the snow conditions, and ice axe & crampons may be required for these walks. Alternatively stay on lower slopes and off the tops THERE WILL BE A LED WALK DEPENDING ON CONDITIONS ON THE DAY.

Fares: Members £23, Non members £25, Under 18's & Full time students £10

To Book Your Seat contact Nigel Tarr on 07703 345729

Should you cancel after the Wednesday prior to the coach date a £10.00 fee will be charged.

Failure to turn up without cancelling and the full coach fare will be expected



Photo : Tryfan East Face by Daily Post Wales

THE LONG MYND HIKE 2023 from Graeme Stanford

Now that I'm slowly learning to walk again, I thought I'd make some notes while the pain is still fresh in my mind. The Longmynd Hike has been on my tick list for a decade, and I finally managed it at the weekend. Perhaps not strictly mountaineering but with almost 10,000 feet of ascent over fifty miles it certainly felt like mountain walking. West Bromwich Mountaineering Club won the team trophy in 1979 and our very own John Wagstaffe has won the novice trophy (1976) and the staff trophy (four times, 1979, 1980, 1981 & 1983) his fastest time being an amazing 08:47. It puts my 18:22 into stark perspective. Chris Dean and Tony Wallace achieved a brilliant 17:43 last year. I was originally teamed up with them, but my house move fell on the same day, so my entry was deferred to this year.

The event begins with registration at the school in Church Stretton. It's extremely well organised and you can sense the great atmosphere from the start. There is a random kit check system in place as competitors must all carry a specific list of kit. Hillwalkers will be familiar with the requirements (waterproofs, map and compass, emergency blanket, whistle, first aid kit, food and emergency food, warm layer etc). the most important item, given that the start time is 13:00 hours, is a good headtorch and enough batteries to cover 12 hours. GPS, OS maps app and similar technology is allowed but entrants 'must' have the correct maps, compass, and the ability to use them. Once registered there is plenty of free tea on offer and plenty of other folk to chat with before everyone must make their way



Massing at the start

An afternoon stroll in Shropshire!



to the start field near Caer Caradoc. Once there everyone is issued with an event tally card to be punched at all the checkpoints. At registration all entrants will have been issued with a wristband so they can also tag the monitors at checkpoints, and this gives an electronic trace of how you are doing, and friends and family can log in and see your progress. There are 17 checkpoints on the route, 8 of them have refreshments (biscuits, crisps, jellybeans and as much fluid as you can manage. During the night there's tea, coffee, and cuppa soup also.) there are 650 places to be had but this year only 480 people started the event.

With the crowd gathered in the field it's a little hectic at 13:00 when the shout "go" is heard and the mob starts pouring along the field, but the atmosphere is great. The proportion of repeat entrants is high, and the novices get plenty of encouragement. The pace slows a little as the path narrows but the crowd shakes itself out into some semblance of order by the time you get to the slog up Caer Caradoc. The first checkpoint, on the summit, settles the line out even more and by the time you are descending towards Lawley you will be moving at your own pace. You'll also be able to see the stream of people ahead. Lawley is one of three 'out and back' climbs so, as you're climbing, the faster people are coming down towards you. You'll hear many random 'keep going' and 'well done guys'

comments at these spots. Once Lawley is in the bag you must make your way to the summit of Pole Bank passing the first refreshment checkpoint, at High Park, on the way. Pole Bank is ten miles into the route and from there you descend to The Bridges Pub before climbing back up to the summit of Stiperstones. In the car park here, you pass the checkpoint that you will stop at on the return journey, 38 miles in, but for now you'll possibly be feeling relatively fresh.



Spectacular Stiperstones

Oooh! It's suddenly starting to get dark!



At this point sunset was approaching fast so I should add that there is a safety rule that entrants must be in groups of three, minimum, during hours of darkness. When it gets dark entrants not in a large enough group are held at the next checkpoint and 'grouped' with the next group through. Once you've been put with a group the organisers keep a close watch on it so all members of the group must be together at the next checkpoint. As I approached Bridges, I was slowly catching two chaps and we were moving at a similar pace, so I suggested we save ourselves the hassle and link up now if they didn't mind me tagging along. Purely by coincidence they were guys I'd met a few weeks earlier while doing a recce and were happy to have me along. From Stiperstones the route takes you five miles North to Earls Hill. By then it was full dark and headtorches were on. This is another 'out and back' and the village at the foot boasts the second of three pubs en-route where you are cheered along by the revellers. In this case you must pass the pub twice. There's no rule to stop you having a pint while you're there, but I knew that would be the end for me if I caved in. At the next checkpoint, Bank Farm at the 22-mile pint, we stopped for a short admin break. Food, tea, a change of socks, and some ibuprofen. Then it's on to Corndon Hill, 8 miles away passing a checkpoint at Shelve on the way. Corndon is a real mental milestone as it's 30 miles into the route, it's the only part of the route that is over the border in Wales, and once you leave it you really feel like you're 'on the way back'. Once off the hill there is a checkpoint at Woodgate Farm, and we had another admin break and sock change here. Looking back at Corndon Hill, once you're off it, is very atmospheric as you can see the trail of headtorch lights clearly descending and hear the echoing shouts of encouragement of the checkpoint team at the top.

From Corndon the next target is Black Radley hill. There is a choice of route here as, for most of the year, it is only accessible from one side due to being surrounded by private land. The landowner allows entrants to cross their land, on a specific route, on the weekend of the event only so you get no chance to recce this section. For that reason, we stuck to the road and saved ourselves any confusion in the dark. From Black Radley it's on to the checkpoint at Stiperstones car park and the final admin break and sock change. Before descending once more to, the now silent Bridges pub. Once past the pub we headed

for the tiny hamlet of Medlicott and then searched for the vague path through the heather at Medlicott cottage. If you can find it this takes you up to the last major checkpoint at Pole Cottage and the 42-mile point. Then it's South to the Minton Hill path and the descent to Minton village. There's a 'self-check-in' point here before heading to Little Stretton and crossing the main road.

From here the head game kicks in. If you were to turn left, it's a short walk back to Church Stretton. You're tired and sore and it's tempting as the event route requires a final check in at the top of Ragleth which is a very steep pull when you've already walked 47 miles. It would be crazy to waste the day and not try it though and I can report that, despite the horrible slog up the hill, the feeling of elation when you top out is amazing. There's still two miles to the end but you've done the hard stuff and it's a relatively easy two miles. We missed out on the sunrise as the sun came up while we were descending through the woods into the town. As you approach the end you relay get the impression that local people support the event as you get a "well done" from pretty much every passer by and dog-walker you meet. You are soon back at the school, handing over your tracker and tally card, and feeling dazed that it's actually over. The whole thing is topped off by breakfast of bacon, eggs, beans, and toast supplied free by the scouts. Before you leave you collect your completion certificate, and your tally card is returned to you.



Andy Pope, Paul Campbell & Graeme at the end A great event! A real physical and mental challenge that tests your fitness, navigational skills, personal admin, & mental endurance. You are helped with the challenges by the other entrants, the organisers, the support of the local people and the frequent checkpoints. It's extremely well organised and safe but I thoroughly recommend doing a recce, in chunks, of the whole route, especially as you have no control of who you are grouped up with, so you really need to be able to manage in the dark. I was fortunate in that the chaps I did it with had done the event numerous times, but they also knew I could manage as well as we'd met previously. I learned a lot doing the event but the biggest two tips I came away with were A. take a dehydrated meal along for halfway point. The checkpoints have hot water and it's a real morale boost. (it's not such a boost watching all the 'in the know' people tucking into their hot food while you're munching on your limp sandwich.) and B. only concentrate on the next checkpoint. Don't think about the overall distance but break it down into bite size pieces to win the head game. This year, of the 480 starters, only 369 completed the route within the 24 hour time limit.

At 57 I feel it was the toughest thing I've done and I'm glad to have ticked the box. Would I do it again? Yes... definitely.

(Ed: Next opportunity should be the 5th & 6th October 2024)

HUT NEWS

New Hut Sec Fred Hammonds reports he had a couple of good working days at the Hut in early October with Malcolm Vaughan, Bob (the Stilhl) Duncan & Mike Thompson. Mike brought with him the new electric cooker (that we obtained at a good price thanks to Andy Brown) and this is now all fitted and operational. Fred requests that 'Members please keep it clean and don't scour the numbers off when cleaning it! Also please remember to clean the glass on the fire daily.'

The 4 of them added / renovated the vermiculite insulation in the chimney and Bob did a great job with the chainsaw as they also collected a good amount of wood. Mike made repairs to the Store / Erection (*photo right, below the great aerial view of the Hut taken by Jonathan Howells - by drone or a geocaching tree climb I leave to find out?!)*

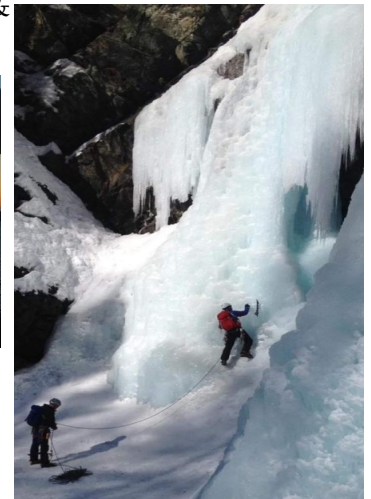
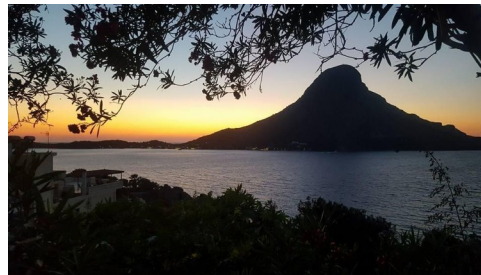
Since then he has had a message that the tumble dryer has seized up with a smell of burning so it is switched off & unusable. Folk will need to be patient until a new one installed, possibly around 9th November if all goes to plan.



THURSDAY NIGHT MEETS

The last Outdoor Meet of the season took place in September with Rob Allen leading a party of 16 on a walk in the Sandwell Valley, before returning to The Red Lion for refreshments.

The 5th October saw Ken Priest kick off the Indoor Meet season with a presentation on "WBMC European Climbing" which featured 4 countries in the Euros : 2 rock climbing & 2 ice climbing venues. These were Cogne in Italy, Rjukan in Norway, Kalymnos in Greece & Costa Blanca in Spain. Can you guess which 3 feature below? Many thanks to Rob & Ken.



EASYFUNDRAISING CONTINUES TO WORK WELL!

I was amazed when I logged onto the Easyfundraising site on 11th October to find that the Club has benefitted to the tune of £321.57 in the short time we have been on it. Top supporter is now **Darren Groutage** whose online purchases have resulted in £224.48 coming into the Club's coffers, although some of this might be revoked as a couple of donations are only provisional! **Fred Hammonds'** purchases via the site have now raised £48.95 for the Club and **Claire Hammonds** is in 3rd place on £26.33 with **John Edwards** not too far behind.

So you can see it works!! If you have not already done so, please go on line and register through the following link:- <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/wbmc/>

If you have already signed up it is most important not to forget to enter the website of the store / supplier / business via www.easyfundraising.co.uk to ensure the Club receives a percentage of the cost of your purchase for free. By all means have a look at the site (eg Booking.com or Tui) first but then come out and get onto it via www.easyfundraising.co.uk, otherwise it doesn't work. It only takes you an extra couple of seconds!!

MOEL SIABOD CAFE / CAFFI SIABOD in SNOWDONIA TO CLOSE

David Jones spotted on Facebook that The Moel Siabod Cafe in Capel Curig will cease to open from Monday 8th January 2024, due to “un-resolvable issues” which mean those who run it will not be renewing their Lease. Paul, Dorina & Gaby made the announcement “with deep regret & sadness”, saying “we know that 'The Siabod' will be very sorely missed & feel that to remove it from the Outdoor Community, which we feel very much a part of, has been the hardest part of us making this decision. We simply feel we must honour our self-respect & move on. We would like to give all of our customers & indeed many very good friends a very sincere & deep thank you for helping us to help you as best we could, there are simply too many great people amongst you to thank personally. It has been a truly memorable last 12 years making all the hard work exceptionally worthwhile”.

They will be seeking to secure alternative premises elsewhere in or around Snowdonia and would hope to accommodate their team Simona, Ady, Luca, Alan, Ellie & Emily in their plans for the future wherever possible. The cafe will be open as normal up to & including Sunday 7th January 2024 and if folk want updates on their plans, these will be posted on <https://www.facebook.com/MoelSiabodCafe>

**MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR 2024**

Membership fees for 2024 become due on the 1st Jan and should be paid by end of January if possible if you want to retain all the benefits. It was agreed at the 2023 AGM that our Club subscriptions for 2024 should increase by the same increment as the BMC fees. These have been increased by 7.5%, which the BMC say is below inflation.

Accordingly the 2024 WBMC fees will become:-

Adult £39 (this includes BMC membership worth £23.90 - but if you were not a member of the Club it would cost you £47.20 to enjoy BMC benefits as an individual)

Students pay their discounted BMC fee £19.75 (would be £28.35 if not a Club member)

11 to 18 year old Club members to just pay their discounted BMC fee £17.70

Under 11's membership of WBMC is Free

As a BMC member, you're covered for £10,000 of personal accident cover (aged 3 – 80) when climbing, hill walking and mountaineering, get discount on purchases at many outlets and access to the biggest outdoor magazine in the UK, “Summit” which is packed full of climbing, hill walking and mountaineering inspiration & skills. It also gives legal protection cover to your committee, without which several might refuse to serve.

The easiest way for many to pay these fees will be by Bank Transfer to the Club's CO-OP Bank account Acc No: 65487846 Sort Code: 08-92-99 Be sure to quote Reference “AM24UrName” (where UrName is your real name, abbreviated if necessary!)

You can also pay by cheque made payable to “WBMC” and send this to Mr Tony Emms, 28 Farmer Way, Tipton, DY4 0BE.

The Club recently received over £1,000 from HMRC thanks to the efforts made by Claire Hammonds & John Edwards to secure gift aid on the kind donations made by many members during 2022. Obviously, if you are in a position to be able to add a small amount as a donation on top of the ‘official’ membership fee this would be very helpful in a claim for gift aid that will be made in 2025. But that's looking ahead – in the meantime we hope you have a memorable Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year.

CATS MAY HAVE 9 LIVES BUT I'VE HAD 10 CLOSE SHAVES by John Edwards

During COVID lockdown I reflected on how lucky I'd been to do so many things in my life and it dawned on me how lucky I'd also been in so many life-threatening situations when I could easily have died or seriously injured myself! Here they are below - hopefully they might encourage one or two readers to write in with some of their own narrow escapes!

- I was cycling along Menlove Avenue in Liverpool on the bike I'd been bought a few months before for passing the 11-Plus, when a motorbike overtook the double decker bus behind me and cut in, clipping the end of my handlebars and knocking me off my bike. I fell (consciously leapt?) towards the pavement and the bus drove straight over my bike, completely wrecking it. The motorcyclist never stopped and, apart from the odd scratch, I was completely unhurt.
- When ship-spotting aged ~14 years I almost got beaten up by a gang in Birkenhead docks but was rescued by passing lorry driver who saw me, backed against a wall by about 8 other lads, & told me to 'hop in' to his cab. They'd gone when I passed the spot later on my way home.
- As a teenager ~16, I was camping in Wales and decided to push over a few rotting tree stumps in the woods behind. One had a jagged branch or root that whipped up across my inner thigh leaving a bleeding wound. A couple of inches to one side and it might have been an accidental castration!
- Aged 22, I was man-hauling a sledge on Coronation Island in the South Orkney Islands with 3 fellow "Fids", across the smooth surface of a glacier. Martin Pinder & I were out in front on skis, pulling on the traces to move the sledge with its 625 lb load forward. Suddenly the air was filled with fine powder snow and as we looked down we could see a huge black hole opening up under our skis. We had blown the lid of a hidden crevasse, but because we were on skis we got across without going down the hole. Fortunately our 2 mates behind were able to stop themselves – and the sledge – before they went down the gaping hole that was opening up in front of them. There had been no sign of any crevasses, the lid of 'ours' had been covered with, or was composed of, level wind-blown powder snow. The crevasse ended up being 3 – 4 foot wide and we couldn't see the bottom! We had previously talked about safety matters in our tent at night and had agreed the risk of the heavy sledge 'blowing the lid' of a large crevasse was greater than us, with our lighter weights spread out over the area of our skis. Accordingly we had decided that in crevassed terrain we would not clip our traces to our harnesses with a karabiner but just hand haul on them, so we could easily let go of them if the sledge did go down a hole. However, this also meant that if we went down a hole and the sledge stayed on the surface, as we were not clipped to it we'd be unlikely to be able to hold on and stop ourselves from falling to the bottom of any crevasse!
- On a snowy West Brom MC coach meet (Feb 1988) I'd parted from Van Greaves at the "Hole in the Wall" and continued along Striding Edge in eerily still conditions with the slopes dropping down into the mist on either side – wonderful! Later I was walking northwards from Helvellyn summit, still alone in deep snow & whiteout, making for White Side & Brown Cove when I suddenly saw a faint edge about 2 ft in front of me. I stopped, realising I was too far east and that it was the cornice with a huge drop beneath.
- 31st July 1990 I was doing the Mittenwalder Hohenweg ridgewalk when it started to rain & look thundery near the summit of the Brunnensteinspitze. I had an umbrella up to keep the previously scorching sun off and suddenly became alarmed as I heard a humming sound coming from the steel-spike tipped brolly. I quickly furled it and peeled off from the apex of the ridge, descending as fast as I could with rain falling & lightening flashing all around.
- October 2000 I think it was, descending from Ingleborough on a West Brom coach meet and I decided to cross Fell Beck, rather than take the longer route round below Gaping Gill. It was only 2 steps across, not very deep & I was wearing Yeti gaiters. However, as soon as I stepped in and put weight onto that foot it slipped / was swept from under me and I found myself sitting in the Beck being swept down towards the 322 ft drop into the underground cavern. Over one lot of rocks I went, picking up speed but noticed a pool with a rocky lip ahead. Jamming my boots firmly against this I was able to stand carefully and step out onto the bank, feeling rather foolish but relieved.
- In 2005 on my first attempt to reach the summit of Mt Elbrus I was again alone, Andy, Guy & Fred having turned back earlier. A descending party passed me and one of them said "Go for it; you'll have the summit to yourself" which made me feel a little uneasy. A few minutes later I found myself sliding down the slope to the right of me with the air full of snow - I'd triggered a small avalanche! Fortunately the slope ran out 100 – 150 ft below and I found myself on the surface in a heap of powder

snow somewhere between the West & East summits of the mountain. I climbed back up some way to retrieve my walking poles and then started to make the long descent back to the Pruitt Hut. Fortunately I caught up the descending party, who had a leader who knew the correct descent route. In the UK I had downloaded the co-ordinates for the safe route (that I had found online) into my GPS but for some reason it kept pointing me off into a crevassed region of a glacier off to my left. Back at the hut I made a mental note to always record the outward route in my GPS during the climb upward (not from a 3rd online party). That way you know it can be safely followed in reverse.

- Once, after I'd been geocaching for about 5 years I was parked up on a quiet minor road that crossed over the M 40, trying to solve a mystery cache based on the weird sign with crossing-over arrows that you see as you head north towards where it joins the M 42. I was looking at my GPS as I crossed the road back towards my car when I suddenly realised a car, engine drowned out by the noise of the motorway, was speeding towards & was almost upon me. It veered towards the RHS of the road & braked hard but that was the side I was walking to, so I had to leap into the air and use the bonnet as a sort of pommel horse to avoid being hit. Both the driver & I were very shocked and I quickly apologised for being a careless prat! Mind you I would not have been the first person to have been killed while intently geocaching (or just looking at a phone) - I remember reading about someone who fell through a high bridge where there was some missing planks because they were looking at the GPS and not where they were putting their feet. So I'm not the only stupid prat! ;-)
- In August 2014 I'd had an odd morning, feeling weirdly faint in bed and then again, when I went down to the kitchen for breakfast, I had to sit down and put my head between my knees I felt like I was going to faint. Later I drove over to a friend's house to drop something off and was driving back to Shirley when I suddenly got the same "I'm going to faint" feeling. Next thing I knew was a bang, which jolted me back to consciousness. I'd fainted at the wheel and veered across the road to hit another vehicle head on at, I'm guessing, a 30-40mph impact speed. My airbag had not gone off but the other driver's had. Never did find the cause of the bradycardia (pulse rate ~ 40) and nothing like this has ever happened since. Sadly it meant I missed a weekend in the Lakes where I hoped to climb Pillar Rock with Andy & instead I spent 24 hrs in hospital under observation & being interviewed several times by the police, who eventually decided not to bring any charges!

It can't just be me that's been that lucky!! Maybe others can learn from your mistakes or near misses if you care to write in with them!

VENICE HALF MARATHON Well done to 'old' WBMC



members Debbie & Steve Redding who had a great mid-October weekend in Venice running with friends in the "Midweek Social Runners". Makes a change from Clent & Snowdonia!



MORE FUTURE EVENTS: Note the dates – more details for some later!

AWAY DINNER WEEKEND Fri 15th / Sat 16th March 2024 at BRIERY WOOD COUNTRY HOUSE HOTEL, WINDERMERE. Prices below are PER ROOM

Friday Night (15th March) B&B Double/twin £149 Single £139 Triple £159

Saturday Night (16th) B&B incl Sat Dinner Double/twin £229 Single £189 Triple £269

Extra Nights B&B £129 As per usual tea/coffee and scones will be available on the Saturday afternoon. To reserve your place contact Nigel Tarr (07703 345729)

GOWER WEEKEND is 21st June Pete Poultney (07779 366905) will be co-ordinating

TORRIDON WEEK starts Sat 18th May Tony Emms (07793 008582) is organising.

TRAILFEST HALF MARATHON is 28th September (Pete P again) and don't forget

WBMC CURRY NIGHT AT THE AKASH BALTI - FRIDAY 24th NOVEMBER

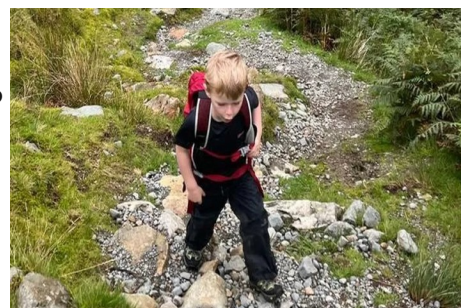
Contact Nigel Tarr (07703 345729) if you fancy a sociable curry at the, now licensed, Akash Balti at 385 High Street, West Bromwich, B70 9QW (near The Wheatsheaf where we used to meet)

GOING FOR THE COAST TO COAST RECORD ? SORRY YOU'RE TOO OLD!

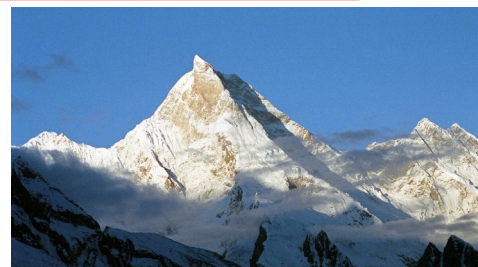
Maybe not every WBMC member will have heard that 5 year old Ollie Sainthouse from Sunderland, but he has probably become the youngest person to ever complete England's 192 mile (309 km) Coast to Coast walk, made famous by Wainwright. He did the walk to raise money for the Great North Air Ambulance, after seeing a helicopter rescue and wanting to help. Accompanied by his Dad, Ollie set off from St Bees on 18 August, planning to walk several hours a day and stay at various campsites and B&Bs along the route. The first few days were tough, due to 'Storm Betty' providing 95 kmh winds and lots of heavy rain but they finally made it to Robin Hood's Bay, the walk's end point, on 2nd Sept, just over 2 weeks later.



Ollie ended the walk having raised £2,000 for the air ambulance charity - much more than his original £500 goal. "He's been absolutely incredible, he's been so determined," said his father Paul. "'I've never had to prise him out of bed or anything. He's just wanted to crack on, he's so proud of himself, bless him. I thought it would be a struggle at the beginning with the terrible weather but he has proved me wrong." WBMC members too old to try for this record could still have a crack at the fastest time for the Coast to Coast – it's a ridiculous 39 hours and a few minutes by ultra-runner Damian Hall!

**ONE OF THE WORLD'S HIGHEST UNCLIMBED PEAKS CLIMBED LAST SUMMER**

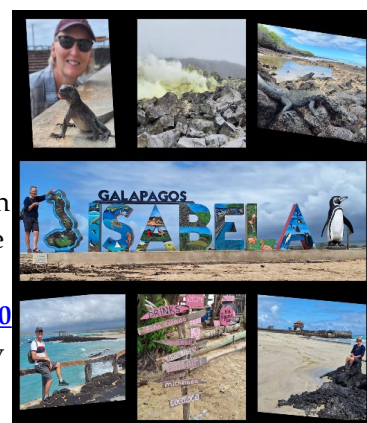
Simon Messner & Martin Sieberer made the first ascent of Yermanendu Kangri, a 7,163-metre peak next to Masherbrum in the Himalaya in early July. The two sent a summit text to Discover Karakoram Treks & Tours, their outfitter, notifying them of their success. Yermanendu Kangri was one of the highest unclimbed mountains on earth and Messner & Sieberer nearly abandoned their plans after waiting for three months to get their visas, but everything came together for a summer expedition.

**MORE FROM WENDY & STU**

In case there are some WBMC members who are not aware of it, Wendy Morris, our ex Membership Sec, & Stuart Shaw are travelling the world for a year (or so!) and after visiting many parts of the States, moved on to South America, then the Galapagos & recently swapped the Beaches of Rio for the Mountains and Laguna's of Patagonia. "It's a little bit colder but more exhilarating" Wendy says on <https://www.facebook.com/wendy.morris.58760>



You can live vicariously & follow their every (well almost!) move online. One day they gained a companion (they named her Sam) who followed them for 10 miles! Keep on having fun and sending the marvellous photos you two!!



TWO VERY IMPORTANT NOTICES FOR CLUB MEMBERS


West Bromwich Mountaineering Club
Skills Weekend
Friday 17th – Sunday 19th November 2023

Venue – WBMC Nant Gwynant Hut in Snowdonia

Aim: To equip club members and potential members with the skills, confidence and competence to walk in the British hills in non-winter conditions.

Course content:

- Clothing and equipment
- Navigation skills using map and compass
- Route planning
- Mountain Weather
- Mountain hazards and avoidance
- Dealing with Emergencies and Rescue Teams

So, if you would like to participate on the weekend, learn more and be independent on the mountains or just want further information please contact David (Geordie) Hind on either 07505364318 or geordiehind@gmail.com - prior to Sunday 12th November 2023.



The notice on the left is a reminder that, if you haven't got the skills you need to navigate and stay safe on the hills, there is an opportunity to put this right with Geordie Hind at the Hut in a few week's time (if places are still available!). I spotted the one on the right on a recent walk which took me through a mobile home park near Wixford. It contains some sound advice for all the men in the Club - or so my wife assures me! Needless to say, I still seem to be struggling to master the nuances of this new aspect of semasiology.

INSPIRATIONAL WANDERING WOMEN

The Spring Ramblers Magazine contained an article on female trailblazers entitled "**Wander Women**" and I thought I'd highlight some of these over the next 2 or 3 issues. Under the heading "**Hikers from History**" 5 ladies were featured. **Isobel Wylie Hutchison** (pictured) died in 1982 aged 93 having been an avid walker from childhood. A botanist, artist, film-maker & writer, she trekked solo across Iceland, Greenland & Alaska and wrote about the last trip in a book "*North to the Rime-Ringed Sun*" which is still available online. There was also **Emma (aka Grandma) Gatewood** (1887-1973) who was a mother of 11 children who escaped poverty & abuse to become the first woman to hike the 2,200 mile (3540 km) Appalachian Trail. Not only did she do this solo, she did it in baseball boots aged 67 in 1955. Ben Montgomery wrote about her life in "*Grandma Gatewood's Walk*". More famous was **Virginia Woolf** (1882-1941) - a member of the Bloomsbury Group & a famous writer. She had mental health problems at times and found that long walks on the South Downs helped her giving her "space to spread my mind out in" she wrote in 1926. Less well known was **Sarah Stoddart Hazlitt** (1774-1843) who escaped to Scotland from genteel Georgian England to obtain a divorce. To help deal with the turmoil she took to walking and roamed widely in the Southern Uplands between Edinburgh & Stirling. Her "*Journal of My Trip to Scotland*" was published posthumously in 1893. And one of the most travelled Brits ever was **Gertrude Benham** (1867-1938) who is the first recorded woman to have climbed Kilimanjaro. "Truda" is said to have walked 7 times around the world & her Tibetan walking boots can be seen in Plymouth at The Box Museum!



MINUTES WBMC COMMITTEE MEETING 14th September 2023 @The Red Lion 7.30pm

Present: Andy Brown, Claire Hammonds, Nigel Tarr, Dave Hellyar (Chair), Mike Smith, Fred Hammonds, Jan Cox, Darren Groutage, Mike Thompson

1. Apologies for Absence: Jon Howells, Geordie Hind, John Edwards, Rob Allen, Tony Emms

2. Acceptance of August Minutes proposed by Claire and seconded by Fred.

3. Matters Arising 1. Dave has a diagram of the land owned by the Club at Plas Gwynant

2. The payment codes need to be embedded and event organisers should remind participants.

3. Hut insurance paid. Liability for tree damage at the hut would be between the tree owner and Sandwell Council.

4. Officer updates Treasurer Club balance is £13,782.19p + £30,000 (ringfenced) as of 14/09/2023. No members have been added to the BMC list since Wendy's administration. HMRC have paid Gift Aid (thanks again to John E and Claire). Easyfundraising has raised about £160 so far.

Membership Secretary Absent. New members need to be registered with the BMC.

Newsletter Absent. Appeal for news items for the next newsletter.

Website/Publicity Tony, Darren, Jan, Geordie and Fred to continue to evaluate the new website.

Hut Secretary Between 2/8 and 1/9 the hut raised £816 over 128 bednights. A new electric cooker to a value of £430 was proposed by Fred and seconded by Jan and carried unanimously. The improved hut booking system whereby photos of the hut sheet are forwarded to Fred is going well. Vermiculite purchased and 3 of the 4 fire extinguishers and the fire blanket have been serviced.

Coach Secretary The Moelwyn coach was cancelled or it would have made a loss of £600. Discussion as to why this coach was poorly attended (10 booked on). No real answers although there was concern over cancelling a coach and hopefully this is a one off. The next trip is Ambleside

5. Meets Rob's Sandwell meet was well attended - attracted 16 people and the first indoor meet will be with Ken Priest on 5th October at 8.30. John E will entertain with his Japan trip in November meet.

6.AOB Need to discuss John's membership proposal at the next meet. Also Joe will return re website induction.

Meeting finished at 8.25 so that Joe Priest could lead a session on updating the new website due to launch in December.

Date of next meeting 12 October 2023 @ The Red Lion.

MINUTES OF WBMC COMMITTEE MEETING, held 12th October 2023 at The Red Lion.

Present @ 9:30 start : Andy Brown, Claire Hammonds, Nigel Tarr, Dave Hellyar (Chair), Mike Smith, Fred Hammonds, Jan Cox, Darren Groutage, Jon Howells, Geordie Hind, John Edwards

1. Apologies for Absence: Mike Thompson, Rob Allen, Tony Emms

2. Acceptance of September Minutes proposed by Andy and seconded by Mike S.

3. Matters Arising 1. Darren gave a resume of the website meeting with Joe in September. There are still some issues regarding adding items which will hopefully be solved soon so the site can go live for all.

4. Officer updates Treasurer Club balance is £13,807.85 + £30,000 (ringfenced + £105.54 interest) as of 12/10/2023.

Membership Secretary Absent. One prospective member on the Coach. A request that the membership forms can be downloaded, edited and electronically returned to Tony without all the associated membership documents.

Newsletter More Committee time needs to be spent on meets rather than the newsletter. Next edition out end of October.

Website/Publicity Darren, Jan, Geordie and Fred to continue to evaluate the new website.

Hut Secretary Thanks to Mike T for transporting the new cooker. New vermiculite added to the fire. Thanks to Bob Duncan for chopping wood. A new shelf has been fitted in the kitchen. Grass and weeds in the grounds have been contained. Between 17/9 and 11/10 there were 40 bed nights and £280 received. No issue with dogs at the hut so far.

Coach Secretary The Ambleside coach attracted 35 and made a loss of £90. There were some chaotic drop offs and folk need to research a stopping point, inform Gary at the morning break stop, come to the front of the coach with all their gear prior to their stop (so no need to go in the hold). Agreed that the coach will not go back to pick up sick, lost folk.

5 Meets Ken's indoor meet was well attended (21) and the next (Nov) meet will be hosted by John Edwards and Hilary has agreed to host the December meet. The draft 2024 meet card was issued (again) & will be finalised at the November meeting.

6 Membership criteria changes proposed by John Edwards. A working party (Darren, Mike S, Nigel, John, Fred, Geordie) was set up and will report back in the next meeting.

7 Meet card need to be published on the website and mailed out ASAP.

8 AOB Thanks to Bill Douglas for scanning the "First 50 Years" book. This will be added to the Club website in a non-editable format eventually. A copy of the hut lease needs to be added to OneDrive

Meeting finished at 8.30 so that Joe Priest, Darren, Jan & Fred could continue updating the new website due to launch in Dec.

Date of next meeting 16 December 2023 at 7pm at The Red Lion.

DO YOU KNOW THE WORLD'S HIGHEST UNCLIMBED MOUNTAIN?

It is widely claimed to be the 7,570m (24,840 ft) Gangkhar Puensum in Bhutan, near the border with China. Climbing of mountains higher than 6,000m has been prohibited in Bhutan since 1994.

DO YOU KNOW A GREAT PLACE TO STAY IN THE PYRENEES?

Lesley & Neil Easter's B&B "Soupiets" will be opening again from 10th December (weather permitting). Pete P, Chris D Graeme S & Ken P had a great stay their last year so if you fancy a bit of skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing or winter cycling have a look at their new page

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61551464807236> or phone +33 6 31 09 42 80