

Rules of the Wessex Cave Club

1. Aims

- 1.1. That the Club shall be called the Wessex Cave Club.
- 1.2. The objects of the Club shall be to promote the sport and science of caving and the conservation of caves by:
 - a. Initiating newcomers into the best traditions of the game.
 - b. Gating caves that are likely to be despoiled.
 - c. Publications.
 - d. Organising gatherings to explore, or excavate for, caves.
 - e. Arranging for members to visit caves in districts other than their own.
 - f. Erecting and maintaining huts where members can stay while cave hunting.
 - g. Maintaining gear for use by members.
 - h. Maintaining for the use by members a Library of books, literature and maps.

2. Committee

- 2.1. That the affairs of the Club shall be conducted by a Committee, which shall consist of a Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Gear Curator, Caving Secretary, Editor, Headquarters Warden, Headquarters Administration Officer, Sales Officer, IT Officer and two Ordinary Committee Members.
- 2.2. In the event of an Officer not being elected by the A.G.M., an Ordinary Committee Member may be elected to bring the Committee back up to its normal strength.
- 2.3. The Committee shall fill any casual vacancies.
- 2.4. These posts are honorary and must be filled by Full Members of the Club.
- 2.5. These Officers shall retire annually and be eligible for re-election.
- 2.6. The Committee may appoint any member of the Club, whether they be a Committee member or not, to carry out any duties that the Committee consider necessary.
- 2.7. Any Committee member whose continuing service on the Committee is deemed undesirable during the course of the Club year may be removed from the Committee by a unanimous vote of all other committee members.
- 2.8. The Honorary Secretary of any properly constituted group within the Club shall be eligible to attend a Committee Meeting in an ex-officio capacity and may nominate a substitute to attend any meeting which he cannot attend personally.
- 2.9. That the Committee shall have the right to refuse the use of Club possessions to members when they consider it desirable in the interest either of the Club or the member concerned, but the member concerned shall have the right of appeal to the Committee against this decision.
- 2.10. Committee Officers shall each provide a written report to the Annual General Meeting.

3. Membership

- 3.1. That the Club shall consist of Honorary Members and Ordinary Members who may be of either sex.
- 3.2. A membership card may be issued to any member.
- 3.3. Full members enjoy all the rights of membership including a vote. The classes of full membership shall be:
 - a. Single: paying a full subscription at the Standard Rate.
 - b. Joint: a couple each paying 75% of their individual rate, but receiving only one copy of the Journal between them.
 - c. Senior: any member of a reasonable number of years standing and of State Pensionable Age, who, on request to, and by approval of, the Committee, pays 40% of the Standard Rate.
 - d. Student: members in full-time education paying 50% of the Standard Rate.
 - e. Under 25: members under 25 years of age at the start of the clubs membership year, paying 50% of Standard Rate.
 - f. Honorary: Membership awarded by the Committee for exceptional services to the Club. Honorary members are not required to pay a subscription.
- 3.4. Junior Membership is available to persons under the age of 18 at the start of the Club year. These members must be accompanied by a parent or an adult in loco parentis who is a full member. It is assumed that the junior member will have access to club journals, use of tackle, keys and library via their parent or an adult in loco parentis, so there is no subscription for this class of membership. The benefits of membership are the use of the hut facilities and participation in club activities. Junior members do not have a vote. On attaining the age of 18 Junior Members automatically become Full Members but shall re-submit an application form, accepting the Club rules.

- 3.5. That the President, Vice-Presidents and Honorary Members shall be entitled to exercise all the privileges of the Ordinary Members, including rights to stand for office and for the Committee, and all voting rights. The President and Vice-Presidents shall retire annually and be eligible for re-election.
 - 3.6. That any person desiring to join the Club must be nominated by two Members and elected by the Committee.
 - 3.7. Any person whose membership is deemed to be undesirable by the Committee may have membership suspended by the Committee until, and not longer than, the next A.G.M., at which the member concerned shall have the Opportunity of being heard. A three-quarters majority of the members present at the A.G.M. may expel such members.
 - 3.8. That all members must comply with the Club's policy on insurance.
4. General Meetings
- 4.1. Annual General Meetings
 - a. The A.G.M. and Annual Dinner shall normally be held on the third Saturday in October.
 - b. The Club Year shall run from January 1st to December 31st.
 - c. That notices of motions for discussion at the Annual General Meeting shall be received by the Honorary Secretary no later than 30 days before the meeting. Such notices of motions must have the names of the proposers, and be circulated to the members at least seven days prior to the meeting.
 - d. The minutes of the A.G.M. shall be available in the Club library no later than 3 months after the meeting.
 - 4.2. Election of Officers
 - a. Any member standing for election to office or for membership of the Committee must be nominated by two members of the Club.
 - b. The election of the Committee shall normally be by ballot, and ballot papers must be returned by the Start of the Annual General Meeting.
 - c. Nominations for Officers and for membership of the Committee shall be received 30 days before the A.G.M. and ballot papers shall be sent out at least two weeks before the Meeting.
 - d. Any unfilled post may be filled by nomination and voting at the A.G.M.
 - 4.3. Extraordinary General Meetings
 - a. That an Extraordinary General Meeting may be called at any time by the Honorary Secretary when required to do so by the Committee, or in writing by ten members of the Club. Two weeks notice must in all cases be given.
 - b. Such a meeting may not pass a resolution, but by a simple majority of those present may draw up a resolution to be voted on by postal ballot within one month by the members of the Club.
 - 4.4. Declaration of Interest

Where a matter arises at an AGM, EGM or Committee Meeting which relates to an action by an external body, any Member of that meeting who is an executive member of that external body shall declare an interest, and that member shall not participate in any discussion in relation to that matter, or vote on that matter.
5. Finance
- 5.1. An Independent Examiner shall be appointed each year at the Annual General Meeting.
 - 5.2. Annual subscriptions:
 - a. Annual subscriptions shall be decided at the Annual General Meeting, and shall come into effect on January 1st
 - b. Any member whose subscription is unpaid by January 1st shall have their name removed from the List of Members, and they shall be sent a notice to this effect. Such members may attend the Annual General Meeting, but shall have no vote.
 - c. Such members may re-join the Club by paying the Standard Rate subscription, plus a surcharge to be decided by the Annual General Meeting, before December 31st, but need not submit any further application form. Thereafter the individual(s) concerned must submit a new application for membership of the Club.
 - d. New members joining at any time of the year shall pay a subscription calculated pro-rata quarterly.
 - 5.3. No part of the Club's funds shall at any time be distributed by gift, division or bonus in money, to or between any of its members.
 - 5.4. On dissolution, surplus funds shall be applied in or towards the advancement of science in the fields of Speleology, Archaeology or Geology, or any of them.

- 5.5. No person or Committee shall have the authority to pledge any future income of the Club unless it has been authorised by a general meeting of the Club.
- 5.6. The Club may operate electronic banking facilities which shall be controlled and accessed by the Treasurer and any other members appointed by resolution of the Committee.
- 5.7. That all withdrawals of money from any other accounts, held in the name of the Wessex Cave Club or on behalf of the membership of the Wessex Cave Club or part thereof, whether at a bank, building society or other financial institution, be subject to the requirements of two signatures. Recognised signatories shall be duly appointed officers of the Club or other members as the Committee shall appoint from time to time.
- 5.8. Charges for the use of Club facilities shall be regulated by the Committee.
- 5.9. That at each A.G.M. the Club shall decide on the sum of money to be placed for that year in the Hut Sinking Fund. This Fund is to be used only for major repairs, extensions, additions to or replacements of the Club Huts. The administration of the Fund is in the hands of the Committee.

6. Trustees

- 6.1. There shall be four Trustees of the Club.
- 6.2. The first Trustees shall be appointed by the Committee, and the freehold, leasehold, shares and other property of the Club shall be vested in them to do with as the Committee shall from time to time direct by resolution (of which an entry in the Minute Book shall be conclusive evidence).
- 6.3. The Trustees shall be indemnified against risk and expense out of the Club property.
- 6.4. The Trustees shall hold office until death, or resignation, or until removed from office by a resolution of a General Meeting of members who may for any reason which may seem sufficient to a majority of those present and voting at a General Meeting remove any Trustee or Trustees, from the office of Trustee.
- 6.5. If by reason of any such death, resignation or removal it shall appear necessary to the Committee that a new Trustee or Trustees should be appointed or if the Committee shall deem it expedient to appoint an additional Trustee or Trustees, the Committee shall by resolution nominate the person or persons to be appointed the new Trustee or Trustees. For the purpose of giving effect to such nominations the President is hereby nominated as the person to appoint new Trustees of the Club within the meaning of Section 36 of the Trustees Act 1925 and he shall by deed duly appoint the person or persons so nominated by the Committee as the new Trustee or Trustees of the Club and the provisions of the Trustees Act 1925 shall apply to any such appointment.
- 6.6. Any statement of fact in any deed of appointment shall be in favour of a person dealing bona-fide and for value with the Club, or the Committee, be conclusive evidence of the fact so stated.

7. Headquarters

- 7.1. That members using the Club Headquarters shall leave it in a clean and tidy condition.
- 7.2. Any member or his guest(s) wishing to make use of the facilities at the Wessex Cave Club Upper Pitts HQ. may do so for no more than 14 days in any 28 days, unless engaged in a recognised research project connected with speleology, and then only with the express permission of the Committee, who will set the fees for that period at a fair rate. The committee may refuse access to Upper Pitts to any person that is deemed to be abusing these rules. Any person so refused will have the right of appeal at a General Meeting if they so choose.
- 7.3. The Committee shall seek approval from an AGM or an EGM for any single project not including repairs or maintenance which changes the internal or external layout of Upper Pitts where the likely project expenditure exceeds an amount reviewed by the AGM annually.

8. Miscellaneous

- 8.1. That every person, whether a Member of the Club, member of an Affiliated Club, or non-member, making use of the services of a guide or guides, or taking part in any activity or expedition organised by the Club, or in which any member of the Club shall take part, shall do so at his or her own risk and that he or she, or his or her legal personal representative or assigns or dependents shall have no claim or right of action against the Club, or any member thereof, in respect of any damage, loss or injury (including death) sustained by whomsoever and howsoever caused notwithstanding any negligence of the guide or any members, or the body of members of the Club.
- 8.2. That no alteration to these Rules shall be made except at an A.G.M. or by special resolution passed at an E.G.M. called at the request of the Committee.
- 8.3. No member may represent the Wessex Cave Club without the permission of the committee.

Last updated by AGM 15th October 2022