

Joan JCG

Mendip Caving Group

Constitution
and
Rules

1966

MENDIP CAVING GROUP

Constitution and Rules, 1966.

PART 1: ADMINISTRATION

- 1 NAME The full name of the group is the MENDIP CAVING GROUP
- 2 OBJECT The object of the group is the furtherance of all aspects of speleology
- 3 MEMBERSHIP There are five classes of membership, as follows :
 - (a) FULL MEMBERS, i.e. people who have been probationary members for at least six months, who have completed a training trip (as defined by the committee), and who have been approved for full membership by a majority vote at a committee meeting.
 - (b) PROBATIONARY MEMBERS, i.e. people who have been proposed by two full members, who have attended at least one group meet where committee members were present, and who have been accepted as probationary members by a majority vote at a committee meeting.
 - (c) ASSOCIATE MEMBERS, i.e. either (i) former full members who are unable to play a full part in group activities, but who wish to continue their association with the Group. Their change of membership requires the approval of a majority vote at a committee meeting.
Or (ii) full or probationary members who have gone overseas for a period of at least six months. They shall have the status of associate members until their return to the U.K.
 - (d) HONORARY MEMBERS, i.e. people who have given exceptional service to the Group. Election to this class of membership requires a unanimous vote of the committee.
 - (e) MEMBERS' WIVES. On payment of the associate membership fee, the wives of full members may have the status of members while staying at the cottage. They may not vote or stand for election to the committee.
- 4 PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP. Use of the Group's cottage at reduced rates, use of group equipment and the library, free publications and advice of meets and activities. Full members may stand for election to the committee and vote at general meetings.

Associate members have similar privileges, except that they have no vote at general meetings, and not more than one at a time may hold office on the committee. Probationary members have the same privileges as associate members except that they may not stand for election to the committee.
- 5 EXPULSION FROM MEMBERSHIP Membership may be terminated by the decision of two-thirds of the committee (all being present). The member shall be notified of the intention to expel him, and he shall be given reasonable opportunity of attending the meeting and presenting his case. A full or associate member may appeal against the committee's decision to a general meeting called for this purpose by the secretary.

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6 SUBSCRIPTIONS are payable on January 1 each year. Members failing to pay by January 31 may have their membership terminated. Members joining after June 30 in any year shall pay reduced subscriptions at pro rata rates.

Annual rates: Full and probationary members over 18 years old - 21/-; Under 18 years old - 6/-; Associate members - 10/6; Members' wives (under rule 3 (e) - 10/6.

7 COMMITTEE. The Group's business shall be regulated by a committee of seven members. They will normally be elected at the annual general meeting to serve for a period of twelve months. If a post falls vacant during the year, a substitute officer may be co-opted for a period not exceeding six months, after which period an election must be held.

The honorary officers shall be: Secretary, treasurer, meet secretary, cottage warden, tacklemaster, editor and recorder.

8 COMMITTEE MEETINGS. Any officer may call a committee meeting. Four officers shall constitute a quorum. The decisions of the committee shall be binding on all members unless varied by a majority vote at a general meeting.

9 GENERAL MEETINGS (a) Shall be held: (1) In March (an annual general meeting); (2) In the Autumn (a half yearly meeting) (3) At other times if requested by either the secretary or 3 committee members or five full members (an extraordinary general meeting)

(b) Seven days notice in writing of a general meeting shall be given to all members by the secretary.

(c) The chairman of each meeting will be appointed by the committee.

(d) Nominations for office and proposals to change the Constitution and Rules shall reach the secretary at least fourteen days before the meeting.

(e) Votes at general meetings shall be counted by two tellers appointed at the meeting. Voting for officers shall be by secret ballot and the number of votes cast shall not be revealed.

(f) The committee may grant a postal vote to any member who applies in good time to the secretary.

10 FINANCE (a) The group's funds shall be placed in such account or accounts with banks or be otherwise invested, as the committee shall direct.

(b) The treasurer shall keep proper accounts and receipts of all transactions.

(c) The committee shall appoint three trustees, the signatures of two of whom, shall be required on all cheques and notices of withdrawal.

(d) Two auditors shall be elected at the annual general meeting to serve for a period of one year. They shall audit the books in time to report to the annual and half yearly meetings, and may conduct audits at such other times as they may deem necessary and report thereon to the committee.

(e) The trustees may require the authority of a majority vote of the committee before signing cheques etc for sums in excess of £5.

(f) A member may not hold more than £10 of group funds in the form of cash for more than seven days.

- 11 THE CONSTITUTION & RULES of the Group may be changed only if approved by at least four fifths of the members voting at a general meeting.
- 12 NEITHER the Mendip Caving Group, nor the committee of the Group, nor any member, can accept responsibility for any loss, damage, injury or death, arising from a Group activity howsoever caused. In particular members and guests stay at the cottage and camp and cave with the Group entirely at their own risk. Nor is responsibility accepted for loss of, or any damage to personal property. Members of the Group and guests are deemed to know of and accept without qualification, this rule.
- 13 THE COMMITTEE shall have full powers to deal with any matter that might arise that is not otherwise provided-for in the Constitution and Rules.

PART 2: CAVING

- 14 Only caving expeditions conducted in accordance with these rules may take place in the name of the Group.
- 15 The "Caving Code" of the Mendip Rescue Organisation shall be the basic level of safety to be observed at all times
- 16 Every party must have an experienced leader and an experienced end man.
- 17 The leader of a party must ensure that :
 - (a) Permission is properly obtained to cross any land or enter the cave.
 - (b) Every member of the party is properly equipped, i.e. has at least two different sources of lighting (other than candles), and is wearing boots, safety helmet and adequate clothing.
 - (c) Where tackle is to be used each member of the party has the use of a waist sling and whistle and can tie a bowline. All party members should know the standard whistle signals, i.e. 1 blast - stop/hold; 2 - hoist/Take in slack; 3 - lower.
 - (d) He must ensure that word is left with someone responsible who will instigate a rescue if the party becomes overdue.
 - (e) A first-aid kit and emergency food are carried by the party.

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PART 3: DIGGING

18 The leader of a dig must ensure that :

(a) The permission of the landowner is obtained and any necessary legal formalities are complied-with before the operation begins. Where working on a dig managed by another Group, their permission is also obtained.

(b) Caving rules 17 (a to e) are complied-with so far as is necessary in the interests of safety.

PART 4: CAMPING

19 A camp warden is to be appointed for each camping meet.

20 He is responsible for ensuring that :

(a) Permission to camp is obtained in advance

(b) The camp site is kept clean and tidy and basic hygiene is observed.

21 Before camping on a Group meet each member ~~of~~ guest must be adequately equipped with eating, sleeping and cooking facilities.

This edition of the Constitution and Rules was approved by a General Meeting held at the Group's Headquarters, Nordrach-on-Mendip, on March 26, 1966. A copy is supplied free to each member and further copies are obtainable from the Secretary, BRIAN MEE, 88 SEATON GARDENS, RUISLIP MANOR, MIDDLESEX, TELEPHONE 01-757-3485

