

## **Masson Caving Group Committee Mtg – 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

### **Derby – 7:00pm arrival for 7:15pm start**

**Present** – Jim Borrington (Chair), Ade Pedley, Larry Blanchard, Fatima Oliveira, Mark Gration via telephone link, Sean Caley.

**Apologies** – Rob Stiffin, Nigel Berry.

(Unfortunately Sean had to leave the meeting)

**Welcome – New Committee Members** – Fatima Oliveira, Larry Blanchard

**Minutes of Committee Mtg – 10<sup>th</sup> September 2019** were accepted as a true record – Proposed: Mark Gration. Seconded: Ade Pedley

**Matters arising and actions from the last Committee Meeting** – See separate ‘January 2020 Actions List’.

## **Officers Reports**

**Chairman** – Mark Gration

Mark welcomed Larry and Fatima to the committee and thanked them for taking on their roles. He reinforced the responsibilities within the team and asked members to please stick to their own reports, leaving others to concentrate on their own areas.

**General Secretary** – Jim Borrington

Correspondence circulated to the club since the 2019 SGM on the dates shown as follows:

- Derbyshire Caver 152 – Larry B – 28/11/2019
- Masson Caving Group - Minutes of SGM held at the Miners Standard, Winstar on the 23rd November 2019 – 29/11/2019
- Masson Website - British Caving Association (BCA) Newsletter – 04/12/2019
- Masson Caving Group - Constitution, Working Practices and Rules – 04/12/2019
- ELDON HOLE – WARNING – Pete Knight via Mike Higgins, DCA – 10/12/2019
- SNELSLow SWALLET ACCESS - Pete Knight via Mike Higgins, DCA – 14/12/2019
- Masson CG - Derbyshire Cave Rescue - Thank You Letter - December 2019 – 18/12/2019
- Agenda - Masson Caving Group - Committee Meeting - Tuesday 14th January 2020 - 7:00pm for a 7:15pm start - at Derby – 02/01/2020

Publications received: Cave and Karst Science Vol 46 No 3 December 2019 – 10/12/2019

An Indemnity form has been devised for members to use where required and is available upon request. It was devised for Snake Mine but in the end the trip did not go ahead. This indemnity form is not intended for use by others or as a replacement for caves where there are already procedures in place; for example members going into Peak Cavern will need to

complete the Indemnity form provided by them, which is normally arranged with the Peak Cavern key holder.

The 2020 AGM has been arranged for Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2020, 5.30pm for food at 6.00pm and a 7pm start, at the Miners Standard, Winster.

A request had been made at the last Committee Meeting to ascertain support for a 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event. Approximately 15 members had expressed an interest in attending such an event and current arrangements are considered below in these minutes.

### **Membership Secretary – Jim Borrington**

Membership - A brief overview of the current membership situation was presented at the meeting. The renewal process is currently ongoing; renewal notices were mailed out on the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and to the date of the meeting 30 members had renewed with 2 resignations - Mike Smith and Alan Keen.

We are pleased to welcome 12 new members to the club: Sean and James Caley, Andrew Hassall, Daniel Holme, Peter Ward, Fabian Ehlers and Samantha Murfin, Ben Shannon, Ahmed Elhami, Leon Zablocki, Ian Mateer and Ollie Woodward.

Membership Form Changes - There have been minor amendments to the Prospective Membership forms amended to reflect BCA Policy. The forms are now in an editable pdf format. The Associate Membership form has been updated to reflect BCA and MCG Policy.

### **Training and Conservation Officer – Larry Blanchard**

[Please see attached report.](#)

Some discussion took place around introducing cave surveying skills to the club. Larry and Fatima were keen to attend a DCA / BCA Cave Surveying course and then pass skills gained onto club members. In his report Larry had requested consideration of assisting himself and Fatima with funding for their proposed attendance on the surveying course. Larry has been unable to ascertain costs involved from Nigel Atkins, so could not update the committee with an idea of costs involved. The club has funded training to some extent in the past, usually where group activities are involved; e.g. helping with costs towards hiring a suitable venue for SRT training. It was usual for club members to fund their own training when attending courses provided by Nigel Atkins whose costs were not considered unreasonable. Larry agreed to update the committee concerning surveying course costs.

### **Treasurer – Robin Stiffin**

Rob was unable to attend the meeting since he is currently working away, so Jim presented an overview on his behalf.

The club accounts currently show a balance of £8279.89 although this will increase since there are a number of members still to renew membership. The club is committed to spend approximately £1200 on BCA membership, new equipment etc. so far this year, which leaves approximately £7000.

The club's liabilities (Gear Replacement, Expedition Fund and BCA Policy Excess) amount to £6500, so whilst there are limited funds available, this year's budget has already been mostly accounted for.

Rob had also arranged to amend the list of signatories for the Club and include Mark Gration (as discussed at the SGM) and to remove Chris Wilson. The signatories for the Club will be Rob Stiffin, Mark Gration and Jim Borrington.

(Unfortunately Mark had to leave the meeting)

**Newsletter Editor** – Post vacant - [No Report](#).

Larry was keen to promote a Newsletter and had produced a suggested format for a Newsletter (see attached doc – newsletter notes). However the suggested Newsletter content was dependent on existing committee members contributing which simply meant more workload on existing committee members. It was explained at the meeting that content had always been an issue for Masson CG and unless members contributed then a format would probably not survive. It was agreed after much debate the suggested format would be tried but maybe only produced twice a year. A suggested date for the first Newsletter may be March 2020, so details to Larry by the end of February 2020.

**Meets Secretary** – Ade Pedley

A fairly active programme has developed this year. Many Thanks to Larry, Paul, Adrian, Robin, Fatima and Vicky.

Adrian has been working with Larry to come up with an acceptable Meets List format. The club had previously adopted a format which included more 'arrangements' details e.g. time and location of meeting place etc., than that currently being circulated. After much discussion an acceptable solution could not be agreed upon.

**Web Master / Facebook Coordinator** – Larry Blanchard

[Please see attached report](#).

Larry was keen to get the website updated.

Details with respect to a website upgrade are included in Larry's Website report. After some discussion it was agreed the proposal would be trialled for a year. This constituted spending £51 (£3 per month for 12 months + a yearly £15 fee for the dotcom address). The main advantages of adopting this approach are adverts would disappear from the website along with personal information. Members would also be able to use a Masson mail address if they wished.

A members only section had been suggested as a way forward for the website but Larry did not consider that much could be gained so this was not pursued further.

Larry also raised the issue of promotion of caving clubs generally and it was agreed to pursue this with the DCA.

**Equipment Officer** – Mark Gration

Recent purchases: 40 + (4 large hms) krabs - now marked up with ten colours to be split between Mark and Ade. A harness, 3 belts and a Petzl Stop bobbin to replace aging

equipment. Total cost £455. An updated equipment list for the website will be provided once the krabs are split.

On the horizon - 110 m rope to scrap by the end of this year so a decision will need to be made to decide when to purchase some new.

Larry has been provided with the club SRT kit, a couple of ropes and some krabs for training events.

A considerable time was spent discussing the purchase of club equipment, and Larry requested an inventory of items and costs.

**Welfare Officer – Ade Pedley** – No Welfare issues to report at this time. We now have two Young Family Members.

**Ordinary Members – Fatima Oliviera** – Reported on arrangements for the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event as follows.

The event is being organised by Paul Chandler, and Fatima who outlined proposals. Three dates were suggested at the end of January / beginning of February at 3 locations, The Fishpond Hotel, Matlock Bath, at the Duke William, Starkholmes and at The Gate Inn, Tansley.

Larry and Ade raised issues including: lack of camping facilities, a winter date when options for pre-event activities may be limited, and weather may restrict attendance. It was suggested maybe The Robin Hood PH, Carlswark Cottages, or the Derbyshire Pennine Club may be a more appropriate location with an April or May date.

Fatima to discuss further with Paul.

### **Specific Items –**

**Associate Member – Upgrade to Full Member:** Marie Naylor, Chas Hall, Nigel Berry, Larry Blanchard, and Sean Caley were formerly approved as Full Individual Members of Masson Caving Group.

**New Young Family Member:** James Caley was formerly approved as a Young Family Member of Masson Caving Group.

**Constitution/Working Practices and Rules – various issues:** There are various inconsistencies within the documents. Due to time restraints these issues were not discussed.

**Associate Membership Application Form Update:** Dealt with in the Membership Secretary's Report above.

**U18's attending Club Trips as Prospective Members (possibility of allowing Associate Members to bring their children along):** Due to time constraints this topic was only briefly discussed.

It was believed that MCG Policy has in the past dictated that only Full Masson Members may bring their Young Family Members on Club Trips. As Larry pointed out it would appear that

this is not how the club constitution may be interpreted and Associate Members may be allowed to bring their children along as Prospective Members of the club. BCA Insurance would not be an issue since U18's are covered in any event. This was not resolved at the meeting and the club may now be operating two different policies with respect to this issue.

**Website Upgrade:** Dealt with in the Webmasters Report above.

**Young Family Members Booklet / Application Form – Update:** Due to time restraints this issue was not discussed. Legislation has moved on since the booklet was first developed and some updates may be required. The committee agreed to deal with this by e-mail at a future date.

**Meets:** This topic had already been covered in the Meets Secretary's Report above.

**Social Meets Arrangements / Social Secretary:** Members have been aware for some time that Masson CG is not active socially as a result of various issues (age profile, geographic location, suitable venue, lack of organisation). Consequently Larry had suggested creation of a Social Secretary Post and social meets.

The club already has Committee posts available for members to become involved in club activities, and there are few takers. Most of the existing Committee already carry out two roles for the club, and achieving attendance at club meetings can prove difficult. Consequently it was not considered worthwhile recommending additional Officer roles to the Club Committee at this time.

A social event had already taken place for members in the Derby / Nottingham area.

**AGM 2020:** Previously covered in the General Secretary's Report above.

**40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Arrangements:** Dealt with in the Ordinary Members Report above.

**AoB Item:** One issue was raised concerning the responsibility of Club Members towards Prospective Members they agree may attend Club Trips. The BCA Insurance Policy requires Club Members to supervise Prospective Members attending trips. This should be made clear on the MCG Prospective Membership Forms. Larry pointed out that trip leaders make the final decisions on Prospective Members. This item was not discussed further due to time restraints.

**Date and Location of Next Committee Meeting** – to be arranged for late April / early May.