

# Pwll Du Cave Management Group

**Minutes of the general meeting held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at 8.00pm on line via Zoom.**

## **Present**

|                      |                                             |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Sue Mabbett (SM)     | Secretary                                   |
| Clive Owen (CO)      | Treasurer / UBSS                            |
| Ali Garman (AG)      | Fixed Aids Officer / Draenen Diggers        |
| Barry Hill (BH)      | Hereford CC                                 |
| Steve King (SK)      | Shepton Mallet CC                           |
| Frank Tulley (FT)    | Wessex Cave Club                            |
| James Waite (JW)     | South Wales CC                              |
| Katie Lloyd          | Gagendor CC                                 |
| Chris Densham        | OUCC & trustee                              |
| Stuart France (SF)   | Conservation & Access Officer, Caving Wales |
| Christina Byrne (CB) | Natural Resources Wales                     |
| Les Williams (LW)    | Chair (joined meeting ~8.25pm)              |
| Chris Seal (CS)      | Chelsea SS (joined meeting ~8.30pm)         |

## **1. Apologies**

Rich Smith Survey Officer / BEC, Nick De Gare Pitt Brynmawr CC, Chris Howes Morgannwg CC, Rich Hill Gagendor, John Sheehy Gwent CC, Isaac Neale Conservation Officer / Aberystwyth CC.  
Chris Seal apologised that he would be late.

*Les Williams had not joined the meeting, FT attempted to contact him without success, at 8.10pm the meeting agreed to proceed with CD as Chair, until LW joined the meeting.*

## **2. Approval Minutes from Last General Meeting**

### **2a. Approval of Minutes from last general meeting held 26<sup>th</sup> Nov 2025**

The minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting, with all corrections sent to SM completed.

SM noted in attendance list, she had left Morgannwg against her name, however Huw Jones was the Morgannwg rep at the meeting in November, the Morgannwg by SM requires deletion. No further corrections were identified.

CD asked someone to propose and second these minutes with the correction, FT proposed, AG seconded, they were approved with 3 abstentions for those not present at the last meeting and none against. These minutes are approved.

SM will visit LW to obtain signature on those minutes confirming they are a true record.

### **2b. Matters Arising from the Minutes NOT Covered Elsewhere in the Agenda**

None.

### 3. Officers Reports

#### 3a. Secretary

SM circulated her report prior to the meeting, this is copied below.

##### Secretary's Report to PDCMG Meeting – Jun 2026

Since our last meeting I wrote up the minutes and circulated these minutes along with the approved minutes of the June 2025 meeting to PDCMG member and associates. These minutes were also sent to the land owner by email and as paper copies. I also reassured the landowner about action we had taken about cavers crossing land below Lamb House (the former Lamb & Fox pub) Excerpt of e-mail below:

*In Nov 2025 we did discuss the issue of cavers crossing land past old quarries below Lamb House, where no public footpath exists. There were a number caving club representatives at the meeting, and all were disappointed to hear of this issue.*

*At the meeting it was noted Balance Shaft cave and Siambur Ddu cave were in this area, and possibly cavers were visiting these caves. After the meeting one of the local cavers contacted me to say he had seen a posting on Facebook that someone had visited both these caves. The other option are cavers taking short cut back from the open access area.*

*Any way the PDCMG members caving clubs and student caving clubs are all reminding everyone to follow agreed access routes and not to cross land where no footpath exists.*

Immediately after our last meeting, I worked with Les to circulate a letter requesting donations from PDCMG Clubs to cover legal expenses generated from preparing to set up a company limited by guarantee to replace our current access agreement, I would like to thank those PDCMG Clubs who have made a donation to PDCMG to cover the expenses.

In late Nov 2025, Isaac (Conservation Officer) reported that James Waite had found the padlock was missing from the entrance gate. As Dan Thorne is in Japan, Rich Hill kindly obtained the 'padlock card' from Dan's house and sent it by registered mail to me. Unfortunately, the Post Office failed to deliver within 24 hours as promised. After 3 days I took a key to the locksmiths who were able to reverse engineer a new padlock for us. James Waite and other Cardiff University cavers kindly put the padlock back on the entrance. This new padlock cost just over £100, a significant cost for PDCMG. This cost is to be expected for this type of padlock with restricted key cutting and robust to outdoor use. The card eventually turned up 2 weeks later!

On actions from the last meeting:

Immediately after the last meeting I updated the Constitution to remove the track changes present in version on the website, unfortunately I forgot to send to Richard, I have now sent to Richard but he is currently on holiday.

The Conservation Policy approved in June 2014, is available on the Draenen website, [pdcmg.org](http://pdcmg.org), which I did tell Isaac about. Unfortunately, I cannot find this version on the secretary files sent to me by the previous secretary, so the current version is held on website and maybe held electronically by a previously conservation officer. This means Isaac will have to amend the one on the website.

At last meeting we agreed to add a photo or map to the website outlining where the Open Access land is and where no public access is permitted. Stuart France sent me a photo and Chris Seal sent a map but both had the second entrance marked which we agreed should not be on any map or photo we place on the website, as per our access agreement we do not permit access via this entrance, so we do not wish to advertise its presence. Apologies I still need work on this action.

Sue Mabbett

17 June 2026

The following comments were raised on the report.

CD asked for clarification on people crossing land below Lamb House, he said there was a footpath at the side of pub. SM clarified the people were seen cutting across underneath Lamb House back towards the parking area where there is not footpath, it was suspected these people were cutting back from open access land to the outdoor centre area where people parked. Huw Jones had also found Facebook reports on trips to Balance Shaft

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cave and Siambur Ddu cave. In summary, people were seen in the old quarry area where there is no footpath. These details clarified the issue for CD.

SF commented there was an action on him from last meeting to send a photo to SM. SM confirmed she had received the photo as detailed in her report, unfortunately it included site of second entrance. At the last meeting we agreed not to include details of other entrances on any photo or map. SM had not replied to SF, for which she apologised. SM still needs to send a suitable photo or map to Rich Smith to put up on the website.

SM repeated her thanks to JW for his help in replacing the missing padlock. The constitution has been amended to remove track changes, but only just sent to RS. SM also commented she needs to follow up with Isaac to review the Conservation Policy.

CD asked about donations to PDCMG, SM suggested we discussed this under the Treasurer's report. This was agreed.

### 3b. Treasurer

CO had issued a report before the meeting as below:

#### PDCMG Treasurer's Report to the General Meeting 17 June 2026

There have been seven transactions on the account since the last meeting. Here is a summary:

| Date        | Description              | Paid in | Paid out | Balance |
|-------------|--------------------------|---------|----------|---------|
| 26 Nov 2025 | Balance carried forward  |         |          | £618.19 |
| 18 Dec 2025 | Cwmbran Caving Club      | 50.00   |          | £668.19 |
| 22 Dec 2025 | Sue Mabbett (lock)       |         | 104.46   | £563.73 |
| 12 Jan 2026 | Shepton Mallet CC        | 50.00   |          | £613.73 |
| 15 Jan 2026 | Bristol Exploration Club | 75.00   |          | £688.73 |
| 20 Jan 2026 | Morgannwg CC             | 65.00   |          | £753.73 |
| 22 Jan 2026 | UBSS                     | 50.00   |          | £803.73 |
| 9 Feb 2026  | Chelsea SS               | 50.00   |          | £853.73 |

The 22 Dec debit of £104.46 was for a new padlock for Ogof Draenen after the previous one went missing in Nov 2025.

The credits are all club responses to the letter of 15 Dec 2025 requesting donations towards legal costs. They total £340.

The balance in the account currently stands at £853.73.

As I have mentioned before, the Group has no regular income and donations are therefore very welcome. The easiest way to pay in to the PDCMG account is by bank transfer. The account details are:

Pwll Du Cave Management Group  
52-21-07  
36707473



Clive Owen  
Treasurer

CD commented there is an entry for new padlock discussed above. CD noted that following the letter sent out requesting a donation we had received £340 in donations. SM asked if she should send reminders. This was agreed. CD said he would arrange for OUCC to send a donation.

SF asked what financial commitments, falling in the next 12 months, were there for the group? SM commented costs for next year were not known but potential costs include new padlocks and new keys, conservation materials. At the moment there are no legal expenses planned for the work on setting up the company limited by guarantee, as we have not restarted that project yet.

SF asked what the current financial state of the group was? SM replied the group's current finances are reported in the Treasurer's report.

SF asked what monies were spent on legal costs to date? SM said this was reported in the minutes of last meeting; the costs to date were £900.

SF asked further about the paying back of loans made to the group by CO and SM? CO replied to this query that he was never planning to ask for that money now or in the future. SF asked again what we were planning to do to recoup the money spent by CO and SM? SM commented, neither CO or herself wanted the money back it was therefore not a loan. However, LW and others had felt strongly individual members should not be spending their own money to fund the PDCMG, the group agreed, and therefore donations were requested to cover this cost. On completion of this discussion CD thanked SF for raising the point about money spent by SM and CO. It was agreed to send out repeat requests to those Clubs who had not donated yet.

At this point LW joined the meeting. LW commented Wessex would make a donation, FT confirmed he had received the letter so he will now follow up with the Wessex.

### **ACTIONS**

SM to resend the letter to PDCMG member clubs who have not donated so far.

### **3c. Permit Secretary**

SM has not heard from Dan Thorne (DT) so there was no report from DT. SM asked KL if she knew when DT would back in the UK. KL reported DT is teaching in a school in Japan. KL reported he would probably be back after the end of term, estimated to be end of June / July. SM knows he returned to UK in July 2025.

SM is concerned we have not had any trip data reported for the last few meetings. SM asked if JW was willing to go and collect the log book as he was regular visitor to Draenen. SM would then collate the data in these log books. SM would also ask DT for any data he is holding that has not yet been reported.

This data would then be circulated as an addition to these minutes.

### **ACTIONS**

JW to collect log book from Draenen and give to SM.

SM will ask DT for any data he holds.

SM to collate data in to a report.

SM to send the report to the landowner and append to these minutes.

### **3d. Conservation Officer**

IN had hoped to attend the meeting but had to send apologies at the last minute. There was no report from IN.

SM had looked at the Conservation Policy on the website, it contained links to fixed aids, entrance policy, etc but these links no longer worked. SM will work with IN to progress any updates to the Conservation Policy, SM also noted that CB had previously offered help in reviewing the policy as well, which CB confirmed.

SM noted CS had now joined the meeting.

### **ACTIONS**

SM to work with IN to review and update as appropriate.

### **3e. Survey Secretary (and Web Officer)**

RS sent apologies, he sent his report to SM. SM circulated the report before the meeting, it is copied below:

#### **PDCMG Survey Officer / Web Officer Report June 2026**

I don't have anything of particular interest to report with respect to the survey data or the website.

I haven't managed to make any time for surveying recently. I am still expecting some donations of survey data but nothing to publish yet.

I haven't made any updates to the website beyond the usual minor admin. As ever, contributions are welcome.

Rich Smith

Survey Officer / Web Officer

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### **3f Fixed Aids Officer**

AG reported we are up to date with fixed aid inspection as JW completed the inspection the day following the last meeting. AG noted JW completed the inspection of the fixed aids without the spreadsheet with details of previous inspection, and that JW identified the same issues as the previous inspection, this was reassuring. The next inspection is due in November 2026. At this time following our current regime new ropes are required. AG needs to complete some investigation into the latest recommendations for the replacement of ropes and the best practice for the new ropes. Potentially we need to purchase 70m of 11mm static rope and a couple of new stainless MRs. At a previous meeting SF reported Caving Wales would cover cost of new ropes, on application for money. SF confirmed Caving Wales will cover cost of the new rope and MRs, for which AG thanked Caving Wales.

### **3g Webmaster Report**

RS webmaster report is included in the Survey Secretary report see above. There were no further comments or queries on this.

## **4. Submissions for Adoption of Additional Cave Entrances**

No submissions on any new entrances.

## **5. Applications for membership**

SM had received no requests or applications from caving clubs for membership of PDCMG.

## **6. Applications to become key holders**

SM had received no applications to be permanent key holders.

There was a bit of confusion with Aberystwth CC, they wanted their own key, SM reported back to DT they were already members and should have a key somewhere. This has now been resolved.

## **7. AOB**

LW went around those present. Those present had no AOB except SM as below.

SM noted in the body of text of the last meeting was agreement to progress with a company limited by guarantee. There was no action associated with this, so SM had not contacted the landowner or taken any action to progress.

### **ACTION**

SM will contact PCL landowner about potentially progressing with updated access agreement via company limited by guarantee.

## **8. Date of Next Meeting**

After short discussion it was agreed the next meeting will be on line (via Zoom) on: -  
Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2026, 8.00pm.

Thanks were made to FT for providing Zoom meeting invite for the PDCMG meeting. LW thanked CD for taking role of chair until he turned up.

Meeting closed at 8.41pm

DRAFT