

MENDIP CAVING GROUP

England & Wales · Charity number 1197325

Details

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2022-01-04

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

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Charterhouse-On-Mendip
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Website <https://www.mendipcavinggroup.org.uk>

Activities

Objects: FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC, THE FURTHERANCE OF ALL ASPECTS OF THE EXPLORATION, SCIENTIFIC STUDY AND CONSERVATION OF CAVES AND RELATED FEATURES.

Activities: The object of the MCG is the benefit of the public, the furtherance of all aspects of the exploration, scientific study and conservation of caves and related features. We introduce members of the public to caving and provide or loan accommodation and equipment for them to do so. We are based in the Mendip Hills area of Somerset. CIO 1197325 is taking over from charity 270088 during 2022.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Amateur Sport, Environment/conservation/heritage
- **Who:** Children/young People, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£17,764	£16,412	-	-
2023-12-31	£14,532	£13,739	-	-
2022-12-31	£13,186	£12,773	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
BRIAN SNELL		2022-01-04
Benjamin Cooper		2022-01-04
Daniel Matthews		2024-04-05
Edward Ford		2025-08-21
JONATHAN ROBERTS		2022-01-04
Jason Kirby		2022-01-04
Kay Matthews		2024-04-05
Michael Ormond		2025-04-05
Richard Mark Edwards		2022-01-04
TIMOTHY FRANCIS		2022-01-04
Thomas HARRISON		2022-01-04
William Chadwick		2022-01-04

MENDIP CAVING GROUP

England & Wales - Charity number 1197325

Accounts

MCG Trustee Reports 2024

Please find herein the reports of the various club officers for the period April 2024 to April 2025, unless otherwise stated.

This is our third year operating as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation or CIO – ‘Mendip Caving Group’ - charity number 1197325.

Secretary's report

Bill Chadwick writes:

Last year we celebrated the 70th anniversary of the founding of the MCG. The trustees assisted by Linda Milne and Jane Baldwin organised a most successful celebratory formal dinner in the Wookey Hole show cave complex with around 90 members, ex members and their partners in attendance. Having personally recorded everyone's menu choices, I was relieved that no one complained they got the wrong food! To further commemorate the 70th anniversary, Tom Harrison produced a 70th anniversary Journal.

Membership is currently around 120, about the same as 2024. We now have one junior member, making use our recent work on the under 18's part of the constitution.

We hold our routine trustee meetings about once every two months or so, on weekday evenings, using Microsoft Teams (from a free provision for not-for-profit groups). Our meetings cover formal business such as membership transfers etc. as well as pressing cottage and equipment issues, investments and finance monitoring and so on. The minutes of our meetings are posted on the member's area of our web site for all to see.

We are very nearly done transferring the assets from the old MCG charity to the new MCG Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). The transfer of the cottage to the CIO at the Land Registry has been completed. Long term member Steve Porter has been instrumental in getting this transfer done for us and is still working on the removal of some redundant restrictions on the registration – many thanks Steve. Ben Cooper has completed the transfer of all our investments to the CIO. There are just one or two bank accounts left bound to the old charity. Our Treasurer Tom Harrison is currently setting up new bank accounts in the name of the CIO. When that is done, we should be able to close the old charity.

This year we have had some trouble filling all the trustee posts. We have though been assisted by some very helpful delegates: - Ed Ford for Tackle Master and Mike Moxon and Joan Goddard for Librarian.

During the year, Matty Dredge resigned as Tackle Master due to some issues with fellow members. I would urge that all members treat the officers of the MCG with kindness and respect. We are all volunteers trying to do our best for the members.

Kay Matthews appointed Editor in 2024, has produced two great issues of MCG News.

Jason Kirby continues to work hard to keep the cottage running smoothly. Some repairs to the rear dormer woodwork have been completed with help from Brian Snell. A very productive cottage work weekend was held in the autumn – many thanks to all who attended to help.

Mark Edwards has yet again been busy recruiting several new members and we have made up some new Full members. Mark's efforts in this area are most important in maintaining the youth and vigour of the MCG – thankyou Mark.

Ed Ford our delegate Tackle Master, has made a great start getting to grips with manging our caving equipment. He has measured and relabelled all the ropes.

Many thanks to Tom Harrison for his hard work on our accounts and the examiners Steve Porter and Linda Milne for their checking of them.

During the year, we have had several great socials and meals organised by Dan Matthews, Kat Rosier, Ed Ford and others, including a memorable Christmas dinner held by candlelight during a power cut caused by storm Darragh.

We have recently been gifted a considerable amount of personal caving gear by retiring cavers etc. This has been auctioned to raise funds for MCG and Mendip Cave Rescue. This has been a great way for younger/newer members to acquire gear for a very modest outlay.

We have been without a Librarian this year, but I would like to thank Joan Goddard and Mike Moxon for working hard to keep the library in a good order.

Finally, I would like to give notice that if elected for 2025-2026, I will have served as Secretary for eight years. I am happy to continue for this year, but to be honest 9 years will probably be enough.

Treasurer's report

Tom Harrison writes:

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 2024

V3 March 2025

Summary

2024 brought a surplus of funds of £1,352. We still have a large cash balance in the various accounts which we are looking to invest, to continue to secure the long-term future of the group.

Member bed nights increased again this year to a 10 year high of 403 nights, while guest group numbers also rose to 233. There is a chart on page 4 that shows member and guest bed nights. While, apart from the Covid years, member bed nights are fairly stable, guest bed nights seem to fluctuate year on year.

Day use fees (counted from the shower donations box) have fallen slightly. If you are making a day use donation, there is now an option to do this via the Sumup card reader.

Income from interest on the cash holdings is up on last year.

Member numbers for 2024 were down slightly but with the small increase to £40 for 2024 full member subs, the total subs income rose last year. Member numbers at renewal for 2025 are also down slightly from 2024 but this is typical, as some don't renew at year end, then new members join during the year.

The group made £709 from the 70th Dinner, which was a huge success. The costs of the event were reduced by a few hundred pounds with 2 very generous individuals contributions towards them.

Expenditure was generally lower last year once the one-off cost of the 70th Dinner is removed from the totals. Electric and Gas costs fell, as well as a smaller amount spent on general maintenance.

Telephone & Internet costs were renegotiated, so the cost for those services reduced.

As well as producing the 70th Anniversary publication, I've also been working on a website refresh which should be ready to go soon. This will add some more functionality, including separate individual logons to make the site more secure, improved forms to help with admin, and possibly a new member's forum.

I have also created an Instagram page for the MCG. Most University Caving Groups and other caving clubs have Instagram pages, so these can be a good way to publicise the MCG to find potential new members and to advertise the facilities of the hut for potential guest groups to use.

Finally, with the finances in a healthy state, I would recommend that membership fees and bed night fees to be held for the remainder of 2025 and for the membership renewals for 2026.

Tom Harrison

MCG Treasurer

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
Member Bed Nights	277	322	358	356	370	394	226	246	241	351	403	
Guest Bed Night	234	416	390	277	345	285	122	101	342	197	233	
Member Bed Night Donat	£ 977	£ 1,125	£ 1,261	£ 1,780	£ 1,815	£ 1,970	£ 1,128	£ 1,230	£ 1,205	£ 1,755	£ 1,935	
Guest Hut Night Donation	£ 2,121	£ 2,489	£ 2,170	£ 1,941	£ 2,190	£ 1,713	£ 588	£ 604	£ 2,241	£ 1,478	£ 1,747	
Day Use Donation	£ 163	£ 207	£ 121	£ 169	£ 136	£ 99	£ 7	£ 84	£ 89	£ 192	£ 129	
Member Subs	£ 3,320	£ 3,089	£ 2,895	£ 3,735	£ 3,935	£ 4,117	£ 4,137	£ 4,139	£ 3,794	£ 4,030	£ 3,787	
Member Numbers	124	117	111	124	127	134	133	135	126	120	113	
Income	£ 14,412	£ 12,989	£ 13,099	£ 12,295	£ 15,265	£ 13,048	£ 36,539	£ 24,474	£ 13,186	£ 14,532	£ 17,764	
Expenses	£ 12,055	£ 12,822	£ 11,406	£ 16,178	£ 14,376	£ 11,942	£ 23,369	£ 18,184	£ 12,773	£ 13,739	£ 16,412	
Difference	£ 2,357	£ 167	£ 1,693	£ (3,883)	£ 889	£ 1,106	£ 13,170	£ 6,290	£ 413	£ 793	£ 1,352	
Income - Post Subs and Grants Adjustment				£ 10,871	£ 12,765	£ 13,048	£ 9,048	£ 10,084	£ 12,807	£ 14,763	£ 17,277	
(= receipts for the year - all subs and BCA received that year + subs and BCA that was actually for that year)												

MENDIP CAVING GROUP

CIO: 1197325

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2024

Year to

Year to

Notes

31.12.2024

31.12.2023

(see next page)

INCOME ACCOUNT

TOTAL INCOME

£ 17,764 £ 14,532

Total Cottage Income:

£ 3,877 £ 3,913 -1%

Member Bed Nights

A 1,935 1,724 12%

Guest Bed Nights

B 1,748 1,393 25%

Day Use

C 129 192 -33%

Deposits 2025 and Bed Nights 2023

24 335 -93%

Cottage Donations

- -

EV Charge

10 -

Other Cottage Income

31 270 -89%

Total General Income:

£ 11,990 £ 8,699 38%

Subscriptions

D 4,274 4,185 2%

Subscriptions (With Annual Adjustment)

3,787 4,030 -6%

Shop & Social

E 538 447 20%

Donations

184 258 -29%

Dividend Income

F 685 683 0%

Interest

469 377 24%

Newsletter

142 7

Christmas Dinner

486 530 -8%

70th Dinner		5,031	1,012	
Kit Loan	G	182	300	-39%
Other General Income		-	899	
Total Restricted Income:		£ 1,897	£ 1,920	-1%
BCA	H	1,897	1,920	-1%
Other	I	-	-	

EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

TOTAL EXPENDITURE		£ 16,412	£ 13,739	
Total Cottage Expenditure:		£ 7,476	£ 9,533	-22%
Insurance	J	1,460	1,401	4%
Electricity		535	696	-23%
Gas		1,387	1,860	-25%
Rates		1,000	1,078	-7%
Water		528	490	8%
Refuse		1,066	821	30%
Maintenance	K	1,145	2,658	-57%
Improvements		-		
Telephone & Internet Access	L	337	500	-33%
SumUp Fee	M	18	28	-35%

Total General Expenditure:		£	7,174	£	2,457	192%
Caving Equipment	N		-		124	-100%
CCC Permits & BCA Membership			85		149	-43%
Library & Membership Admin/Postage	O		226		280	-19%
Newsletter Printing & Postage	P		422			
Website			341			
Christmas Dinner			353		467	-24%
70th Dinner			5,334			
Other Expenditure			413		1,436	-71%
Total Restricted Expenditure:		£	1,762	£	1,749	1%
BCA	Q		1,762		1,749	1%

General Surplus / (Deficit)

Cash funds as of end:	31.12.2023:	£	34,624	31.12.2022 :	£	36,830
Income			17,764			14,532
Expenditure			16,412			13,739
Surplus / (Deficit)			1,352			793
Transferred to Investments						(3,000)
Cash funds reserve at end of:	31.12.2024:	£	35,976	31.12.2023 :	£	34,624

BALANCE SHEET**Total Cash Assets:** £ 35,975

		<i>Restricted</i>
Assets:	Unrestricted	(See Liabilities)
Total	£ 34,663	£ 1,312
HSBC Community Account	£ 23,183	£ 1,312
HSBC Savings Account	£ 2,591	£ -
Santander Account	£ -	£ -
CCLA COIF (Cottage)	£ 8,599	£ -
Petty Cash	£ 256	£ -
Due from Card Payments (SumUp)	£ 34	£ -

Other monetary assets

Henderson Global Care

Henderson Global Equity

M&G Charifund Income

Premier Monthly Income

Rathbone Income Fund

SVS Brown Shipley

COIF Deposit Custodian Trustees

Assets retained for the charity's own use**R**

Cottage- Building £ 475,000

Cottage- Contents £ 92,500

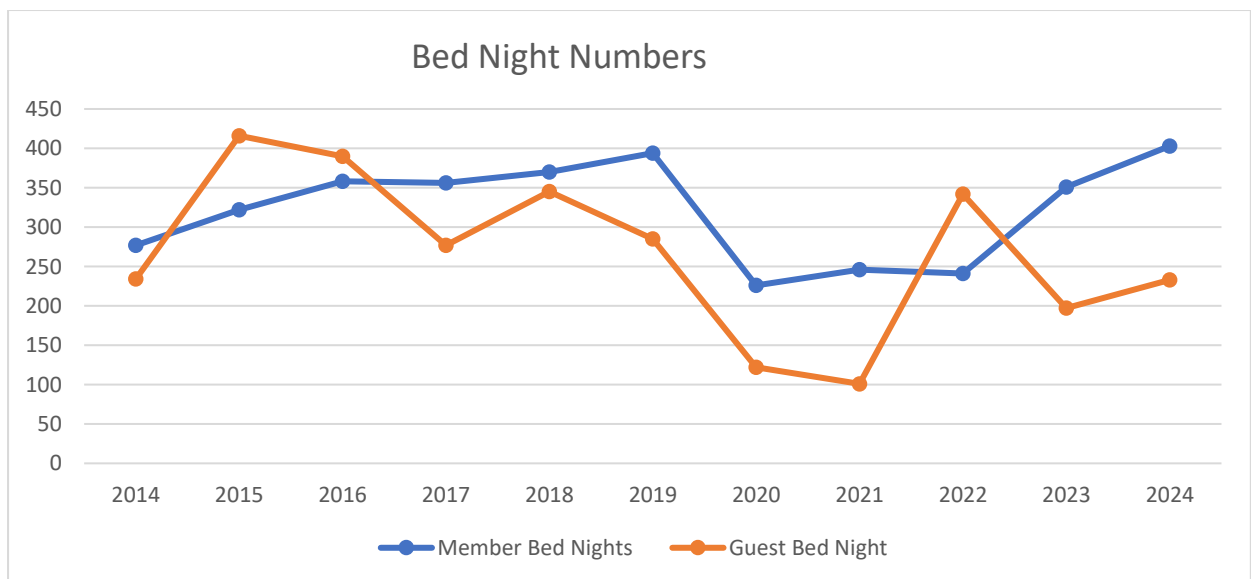
Liabilities**S**

BCA Membership Subscriptions Held in MCG Accounts/Cash: £ 1,336

Notes

Income

A & B -

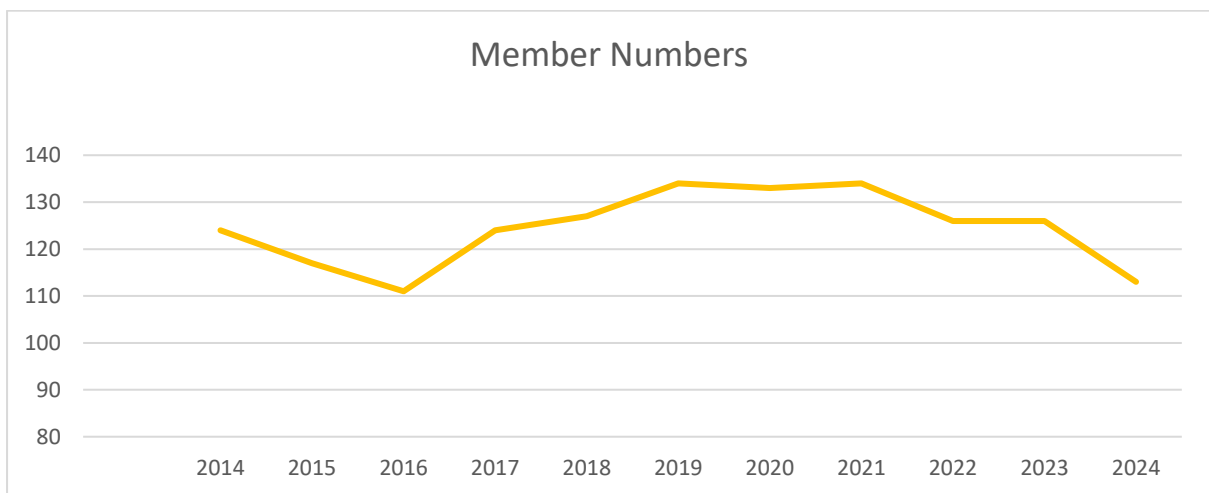


C – Day use donations are those collected from cash in the shower donation’s box and donations entered on the card payment machine as such.

Please don’t forget to pay your fee should you use the cottage but not stay!

D - Subscriptions for membership are mostly received in December and January, therefore the annual accounts to year end, do not accurately reflect the amount collected for the ‘year’s’ memberships.

This adjusted figure looks purely at 2024’s membership subs against those received to March 2025 for 2025.



E – Any cash or card donations received at the member’s weekend social events. The figure also includes MCG 70th T-Shirts sold at approximately cost price.

F – Interest received on our cash deposits and dividend income received from the Investments / “other monetary assets.”

G – Includes deposits for kit use (refundable for against membership fee).

H – BCA membership subs collected by the MCG.

I – Any other income received for a restricted purpose.

Expenditure

J – Cottage and Cottage contents insurance.

K – Maintenance and improvement related costs include items such as fire alarm/extinguisher maintenance, fixes, and equipment upgrades.

See also - Cottage Warden's report.

L – Includes Telephone and Internet Provider costs as well as Website and Virus protection costs.

M – Card Machine Transaction Fee

N – Caving Equipment

See also – Tackle Warden Report

O – Books and Postage and other costs for membership cards and renewals

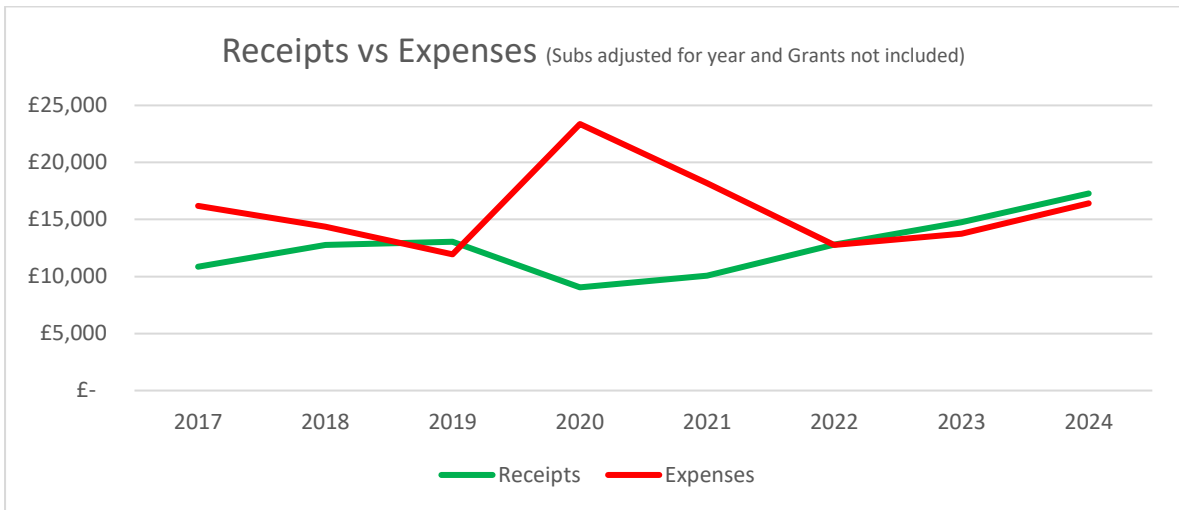
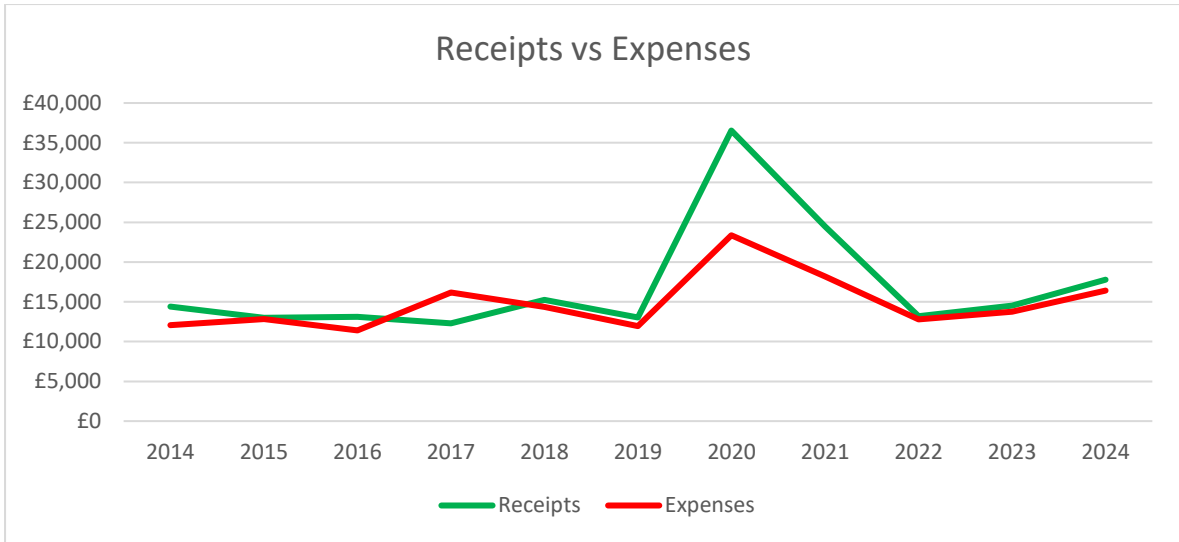
P –. Costs for Newsletter printing and postage for newsletter exchange. 70th Publication and MCG News

Q – Payment for individual BCA memberships.

R – Estimated building and contents replacement costs, as well as value of land.

Needs professional assessment for accurate assessment.

S – Money currently held in MCG accounts owed to BCA for 2024 memberships. (Paid to BCA in 2025)



Investment report

This report covers the calendar year 2024.

Ben Cooper writes (on the 22nd June, after our 2025 AGM on 5th April):

Custodian Trustees Report 2025 for year ending 31st December 2024 v0.1

Ben Cooper

Investments achieved a net growth of 5.2% between 1st January and 31st December 2024.

Investment Valuation and historic comparison

	31/12/2017	31/12/2018	31/12/2019	31/12/2020	31/12/2021	31/12/2022	31/12/2023	30/12/2024
Henderson Gbl Equity	£4,522.86	£4,157.18	£4,815.52	£4,858.32	£5,525.65	£5,691.67	£6,005.86	£6,365.33
Henderson UK Resp...	£6,311.40	£5,592.09	£7,120.08	£6,619.49	£7,507.57	£7,094.46	£7,981.65	£8,261.09
M&G Charifund Inc	£20,548.32	£17,813.22	£20,773.60	£17,169.51	£19,466.54			

M&G Charifund Acc						£18,382.55	£19,049.74	£20,765.89
Premier (Credit Suisse)	£8,149.46	£6,511.95	£7,782.73	£5,577.43	£5,895.03	£6,036.94	£9,172.98	£9,643.91
Rathbone Income Fund	£5,107.01	£4,635.29	£5,314.36	£4,873.99	£5,865.70	£5,855.74	£6,004.62	£5,892.35
SVS Brown- Shipley	£2,767.03	£2,520.22	£2,961.63	£3,317.77	£3,754.34	£3,064.09	£3,793.44	£3,802.57
Total funds	£47,406.08	£41,229.95	£48,767.92	£42,416.51	£48,014.83	£46,125.45	£52,008.29	£54,731.14
COIF	£5,675.63	£5,701.42	£5,733.88	£5,748.96	£5,749.48	£5,805.75	£6,060.17	£6,370.67
Total investmen t value	£53,081.71	£46,931.37	£54,501.80	£48,150.39	£53,764.31	£51,931.20	£58,068.46	£61,101.81

Unit Prices and historic comparison

Investment	Unit Price 31/12/2023	Unit Price 31/12/2024	Unit Price Growth
Henderson Global Equity ...	£0.6816	£0.7011	2.9%
Henderson UK Responsible ...	£1.3380	£1.3330	-0.4%
M&G Charifund Accumulation	£299.9676	£326.9910	9.0%
Premier (CS) Monthly Income Fund	£1.7920	£1.8840	5.1%
Rathbone Income Fund	£9.4619	£9.2850	-1.9%
SVS Brown Shipley*	£3.5321	£3.5406	0.2%
TOTAL Investments	£52,008.220	£54,731.144	5.2%

Investment Analysis

Investment	Valuation				Realised Income ²	Re-investment ³	Yield ⁴	Performance ⁵		
	31/12/2023	30/12/2024							£	%
Henderson Global Equity Income Fund E	£6,005.86	£6,365.33		6.0%		£189.43	3.2%	£6,365.33	£359.47	6%
Henderson UK Responsible Income E Inc	£7,981.65	£8,261.09		3.5%		£316.58	4.0%	£8,261.09	£279.44	4%
M&G Charifund Accumulation	£19,049.74	£20,765.89		9.0%		£0.00	0.0%	£20,765.89	£1,716.15	9%
Premier Miton	£9,172.98	£9,643.91		5.1%	£402.64		4.4%	£10,046.55	£873.57	10%
Rathbone Institutional Income Fund	£6,004.62	£5,892.35		-1.9%	£282.02		4.7%	£6,174.37	£169.75	3%

SVS Brown Shipley	£3,793.44	£3,802.57		0.2%	£0.00		0.0%	£3,802.57	£9.13	0%
TOTAL Funds	£52,008.29	£54,731.14	£0.00	5.2%	£684.66	£506.01	2.3%	£55,415.80	£3,407.51	6.6%
COIF	£6,060.17	£6,370.67		5.1%		£310.50	5.1%	£6,370.67	£310.50	5%
TOTAL Investments	£58,068.46	£61,101.81		5.2%	£684.66	£816.51	2.6%		£3,718.01	6.4%

1. Valuation Growth is simply the valuation of the current holding compared to last years, including any increased stock holding.
2. Realised Income is the income received into the Group's current account; effectively withdrawals from the investment funds.
3. Re-investment is the income re-invested in the investment funds. The re-investment amount is already included in Valuation.
4. Yield is the income as a percentage of the invested value (i.e. the value at the start of the year)
5. Performance is overall gain, taking into account the capital growth and income (i.e. compared to the start of the year).

Tackle Master

Ed Ford writes:

1) All ropes have been relabelled with the following information:

- Unique serial number
- Date rope went into service
- Rope type
- Rope Length (re-measured to closest meter)

Information is additionally marked on both ends of the rope. If anyone wants any longer rope's please contact me as there is quite a bit in the ex-cupboard.

2) I've created an equipment register located "currently" in the library; this will be moved to tackle store eventually. All equipment such as over suits, ladders, belts, bags, etc... will get recorded for a comprehensive list of what we have.

3) There is a plan to update the key and notice board in the tackle store to make it more clear which caves need paperwork filling out prior to heading down.

4) We have been donated a load of maillons which I've added to the store to help with rigging. There is also a spanner for these with an emergency whistle. Please return these to tackle store after they've been used!

5) I have recently procured for MCG, an MLCMAC key for Craig-a-FFynnon and the Ogof Cnwc "dry" entrance into Daren Cilau.

Please contact myself if any equipment gets lost or broken and make a log of it in the remarks section of the tackle log.

Cottage Warden

Jason Kirby writes:

Jason Kirby

It's been an astonishingly difficult year this year and last, for me on a personal level. But I'm very pleased, that when asked, all club members have chipped in and done their best to support the club. I'm immensely grateful for the help we have received.

Me and Brian successfully repaired and replaced the cladding on the side of the Dormer on the Six room window. There is still more work to be done around this area though. I was very grateful for Brian's help.

The maintenance weekend was a huge success. Loads of work done by our regular cavers and Club weekend visitors. It's very heartwarming to see everyone mucking in and just getting on with it.

It's still early days regarding the club ordering kiln dried wood to see if it is economical and financially viable for us to continue. I would like to get winter out the way and see just how much we have used and offset it against the cost of gas. I'll work closely with Tom later in the year to ascertain whether this indeed has saved the club money or not.

I am looking at replacing the toilet in the hallway. Is the second one next to the changing room that will be coming in around September this year when? Hopefully I'll have some free time to get it done it will be very similar to the one that I installed in the new toilet and shower. That toilet has been an irritation to me for many years and I'll be glad to get it changed.

Outstanding maintenance jobs currently on the books are repairing or replacing some of the barge boards. The guttering is barely hanging on. This work will need to be done in the summer months. I will be putting a shout out closer to the time for volunteers to help. I have purchased a new tap to replace the one in the kitchen as its annoying squeal has driven me mad over the last year. I'm sure this will be appreciated by all members when done.

There have been a few niggles regarding stock for the toilets and cleaning products. A lack of communication from members. I do have an email address and would really appreciate if our members could be a little bit more by sending me emails of supply needs prior to my visits rather than telling me when I get there or leaving notes on the whiteboard. That is not very helpful as the supplier is local to me and it means that we'll have to wait another month before we can get the necessary materials to the hut. If I receive an email, I generally reply quite quickly and can order the materials before my next visit to the caving hut, keeping productivity and efficiency to the max. So please people if something's missing or has run out. Just let me know in good time. It's the little things that help.

I'm pleased to say that the work carried out on the driveway has been a huge success. I am truly happy that work has worked well, but it is really important that we all check the drains to make sure they are free from mud and debris to maintain the driveway and keep it functioning correctly. If you have 5 minutes, lift them and clean them out. It doesn't take long, and it is hugely beneficial to the building and the grounds.

In the summer this year I will be carrying out major Legionella prevention work. Changing the TRV in the showers and rotating shower heads on a regular basis. This is something that I will need help with from all members. This isn't just to protect the club but benefits you and your health and well-being. Legionella is a bacterial disease that when passing through a shower head becomes airborne and can be inhaled. It can sit dormant for many years or but can potentially kill you. As we are a commercial building we must follow water treatment protocols. It's a project I've been working on to get the hut up to speed for some time now, but unfortunately, I look after many large buildings and small dwellings with a maximum of a thousand people benefiting from the work I do. So, I don't have that much spare time. But once everything has been implemented, it will be the responsibility of everybody to maintain the showers and keep them safe for all. It's a simple case of changing shower heads. TRV (thermal mixing valve) maintenance will be left to myself. For those that don't know what it is or where it is located, it's just above the door in the main shower. I believe we only have the one in the building, so it won't be too much of a drama for me to keep on top of it, however. Pasteurizing the hot water cylinder on a regular basis is recommended and this is something I'll have to work out a regime for.

On a compliance note, we now have four fire wardens registered at the hut and further training will be given to those that have just completed their fire warden training. This will be arranged for the summer. I would like to thank those volunteers personally. Mark Edwards Mike Moxon and Ed Ford for taking the time on doing the course and helping out at the hut. Really appreciate your efforts guys.

A huge thanks to all our members that have helped out over the year - it is massively appreciated and makes a huge difference.

I am currently happy to continue my role unless anybody else would like to take over and have a go

Jason Kirby MCG Cottage Warden, trustee,

Social Secretary

Dan Matthews writes:

It's been an interesting year with some fun events and parties. I would like to say a big thank you to Kat for helping out and stepping in when I'm not around. The highlights of the year being Halloween and the very challenging but brilliant Christmas dinner. The fact that we had no electricity added to the enjoyment and considering we had no oven. thanks to the help of Mary next door, we managed to pull it off.

I'm happy to stand again. But if someone else wants to have ago I'm happy to pass it on.

Caving Secretary

Mark Edwards writes:

2025 Annual Report MCG Caving Secretary This year has seen plenty of caving, the club weekends and Tuesday evenings have been well attended. New members have gained in experience and progressed to organizing and leading their own trips a number have become full members.

We have had caving away trips one to Yorkshire organized by Tom Harrison, where we tackled Gaping Gill, Bull Pot of the Witches and Sunset Hole.

October saw us at South Wales Caving Hut exploring the wonders of OFD, November, North Wales visiting Cwmorthin slate mine and the Mona to Parys Mountain through trip both of those organized by Kat Rosier thank you Kat. A contingent also attended Hidden Earth.

John Crowsley put on his ever-popular cave training course over the December club weekend.

MCG members have continued their exploits in Templeton, Grebe Swallet, Cutlers and Halloween also Stainsby's Shaft.

In Stainsby's, the excavation of Possible Passage has continued throughout 2024. Beyond the 3m pot with the small, temporary ladder in place, the dig now extends along a roomy crawl to a dry mud and rock blockage after about 8m. In several places mining timbers have been found in the floor, an indication that Possible Passage lies, in parts, immediately above the roof of the 18 Fathom Level of the 19th century mine. Hopes for a breakthrough were high in the Summer but we have been thwarted by several roof collapses, a lack of manpower and a spoil removal task that lengthens with every trip. The team have been encouraged by a little bit of GoPro footage taken by gently rotating the camera around a hole in the floor at the end. But rather than following this hole the diggers have opened up a route over the top of a large boulder. Plenty of open passage of indeterminate size can be seen ahead but hard graft will be needed to gain access. And yet the strong, cold, outwards draft remains as enticing as ever. Regular diggers: Peat Bennett, Hannah Blunt, Bill Chadwick, Ben Cooper, Martin Cross, Tim Francis, Ed Ford, Tom Harrison, Keith Knight, Mike Moxon, Mike Ormond, Brian Snell and others.

So there it is another fun packed caving year!

Editor

Kay Matthews writes:

Since I filled Dan's role in April 2024, there have been two MCG News editions produced in June 2024 and January 2025. The June edition was huge as it included a backlog of articles from when there was no formal magazine for a while. The January edition was much shorter, and I expect this will be the usual number of pages produced in the future, depending on what happens and what people send in.

I'd like to say a huge thank you to the previous editors who created the News templates and styles. I've had help and guidance from members who have proof-read and helped with the tech: mainly Bill, Tim, Joan and Tom. It's been a team effort. I've just moved some pictures about haphazardly and added some colours!

The main thank you goes to members who have produced articles, updates, digging reports, photographs and trip reports. The MCG has a wealth of talented writers and photographers. The News gets distributed to other clubs, and to places like Descent, so if you would like to be seen and read about in the caving world, here is your chance!

In terms of trip reports, I usually pick a few to show a variety of caves and experiences, peoples' first times in a cave, interesting caves, and lesser-known caves being visited. I'm happy to not include these in the future if people would prefer reports to be kept private. Trip reports are a relatively new feature and don't need to go in the News. Please let me know your views (and I'll ask you before I include anything). I tend to get information from what you've sent in, what is on the MCG FB site, if there is anything in the paper logbook and on the MCG website.

I am happy to continue in this role for as long as it suits my lifestyle (currently self-employed). Due to the easy access of information already shared online, instant messaging, and available technology, the role is relatively simple compared to even a few years ago.

If you are thinking that you would like to take on the role, please speak up and put yourself forward! I'm completely happy to hand the role over to someone else who is keen with fresh ideas!

Please send any ideas, feedback, articles, reports and pictures to me by email. The next edition will be June 2025.

It would be good to have a few more articles if anyone fancies writing one? It could be of anything cave-related....

Kay Matthews

14th March 2025

Librarian

This post has been vacant for 2023/2024 though Joan Goddard and Mike Moxon have been looking after the library.

Joan Goddard writes:

During the year I have endeavoured to keep members informed about library matters via the newsletter.

We are looking forward to receiving the third and final volume of Peter Burr's book on the Mines and Minerals of the Mendip Hills (Charterhouse & Green Ore areas) and I continue to try and fill gaps in our 'other clubs' publications.

A new shelf has been fitted above the window, which has freed-up some space on the books shelves. Bill and I have started looking through club administration files to identify any duplicates which are already filed elsewhere.

I'm pleased to see that more members are borrowing books - that's what the Library is there for!

Mike Moxon records that we have been gifted several books and surveys by Jeremy Gilson and Chris Binding. Some for the library and some for auction to club members.

MENDIP CAVING GROUP

England & Wales - Charity number 1197325

Accounts

MCG Officer's Reports 2024

Please find herein the reports of the various club officers for the period April 2023 to April 2024, unless otherwise stated.

This is our second year operating as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation or CIO – 'Mendip Caving Group' - charity number 1197325.

Secretary's report

Bill Chadwick writes:

This year we are celebrating the 70th anniversary of the founding of the MCG. The trustees assisted by Linda Milne and Jane Baldwin have been very busy planning what should be a great celebratory event – a formal dinner to be held in the Wookey Hole show cave complex. So far, we have 90 people booked to attend.

We hold our routine trustee meetings about once every two months on weekday evenings, using Microsoft Teams (from a free provision for not-for-profit groups). Our meetings cover formal business such as membership transfers etc. as well as pressing cottage and equipment issues, the 70th celebrations, investments and finance monitoring and so on. The minutes of our meetings are posted on the member's area of our web site for all to see.

Formal News Letters and Bulletins have continued to be a bit sparse this year. I suspect that this is in part to do with the modern way in which most club news is disseminated, near instantaneously, using social media and email.

Membership is currently around 110, a bit down on 2023. Some of the loss is down to newer members not continuing to cave but also some older members retiring from the scene.

We are very nearly done transferring the assets from the old MCG charity to the new MCG Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). The Land Registry have been taking simply ages to complete the transfer of the cottage from the named trustees of the old charity to the CIO itself. It has not yet completed as I write in late February. Long term member Steve Porter has been instrumental in trying to get this pushed through for us – many thanks Steve. Ben Cooper has been battling hard against the bureaucracy of our investment companies to get the investments transferred to the CIO. I believe his work is now mostly done.

Jason Kirby continues to work hard to keep the cottage running smoothly.

Mark Edwards has yet again been busy recruiting several new members and we have made up some new Full members. Mark's efforts in this area are most important in maintaining the youth and vigour of the MCG – thankyou Mark.

Matty Dredge, new to the role, has made a great start getting to grips with manging our caving equipment and joining in with our trustee meetings.

Many thanks to Tom Harrison for his hard work on our accounts and the examiners Steve Porter and Linda Milne for their checking of them.

During the year, we have had several great socials and meals organised by Jackie Murch and others, including another of the now famous, MCG Christmas dinners.

We have been without a Librarian this year but I would like to thank Joan Goddard and Mike Moxon for working hard to keep the library in a good order.

Finally, I would like to give notice that if elected for 2024-2025, I will have served as Secretary for seven years. In 2023 I stated that I did not propose to stand for election as Secretary for 2024-2025. However, following my recent retirement, I do have a bit more spare time and am prepared to stand again for another year. The MCG does though need a change of officers from time to time to keep things fresh and up to date.

Treasurer's report

Tom Harrison writes:

DRAFT TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 2023

V1 March 2024

Summary

This is a draft report for 2023 as the accounts have only recently been sent to Steve Porter to Examine.

2023 brought a surplus of £793, although this was only £231 when the subs for 2024 are removed and subs for 2023 paid in in 2022 are included. Cash in the banks accounts fell as a transfer of £3000 was made into investments. We are hoping to further reduce the money held in bank accounts, however the process has been very slow.

Member bed nights increased by nearly 100 which is very positive, however guest group income was unexpectedly down by 25%, although some of this is accounted for with deposits paid in 2022. Day use fees (counted from the shower donations box) have doubled since introducing the day use fee, and may actually be higher as cottage donations (money placed in the kitchen donations box) may include some day fees!

Income from the MCG Investments and interest on savings has also helped but is down on last year as I believe more of the income has been reinvested.

Insurance for 2023 increased 5% and electricity and gas costs rose by 48% although this figure is slightly misleading as the delivery of Calor gas is irregular and the amounts delivered are different. We received a Calor Gas delivery at a unit price of 0.9900 April 2023 and this is up 25% since the previous smaller delivery in February 2022. This does help to highlight the cost increases for the MCG (and everyone) and why the membership fee rise was voted for at the last AGM.

We spent a little more on maintenance and improvements and some small caving equipment purchases. These included upgrading the electrics outside, and the costs for the much-improved driveway.

I believe that by increasing Membership fees last year, the extra ~£500 will help to prevent a deficit this year. I would also suggest that provided the higher bed night usage continues, that fees can remain the same for 2025, as we hopefully benefit from more stable costs.

Tom Harrison

MCG Treasurer

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Member Bed Nights	296	277	322	358	356	370	394	226	246	241	351
Guest Bed Night	612	234	416	390	277	345	285	122	101	342	197
Member Bed Night Donat	£ 984	£ 977	£ 1,125	£ 1,261	£ 1,780	£ 1,815	£ 1,970	£ 1,128	£ 1,230	£ 1,205	£ 1,755
Guest Hut Night Donation	£ 3,377	£ 2,121	£ 2,489	£ 2,170	£ 1,941	£ 2,190	£ 1,713	£ 588	£ 604	£ 2,241	£ 1,478
Day Use Donation	£ 271	£ 163	£ 207	£ 121	£ 169	£ 136	£ 99	£ 7	£ 84	£ 89	£ 192
Member Subs	£ 3,480	£ 3,320	£ 3,089	£ 2,895	£ 3,735	£ 3,935	£ 4,117	£ 4,137	£ 4,139	£ 3,794	£ 3,767
Member Numbers	132	124	117	111	124	127	134	133	135	126	126
Income	£ 13,616	£ 14,412	£ 12,989	£ 13,099	£ 12,295	£ 15,265	£ 13,048	£ 36,539	£ 24,474	£ 13,186	£ 14,532
Expenses	£ 8,811	£ 12,055	£ 12,822	£ 11,406	£ 16,178	£ 14,376	£ 11,942	£ 23,369	£ 18,184	£ 12,773	£ 13,739
Difference	£ 4,805	£ 2,357	£ 167	£ 1,693	£ (3,883)	£ 889	£ 1,106	£ 13,170	£ 6,290	£ 413	£ 793
Income - Post Subs and Grants Adjustment					£ 10,871	£ 12,765	£ 13,048	£ 9,048	£ 10,084	£ 12,807	£ 13,971
(= receipts for the year - all subs and BCA received that year + subs and BCA that was actually for that year)											

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2023

Year to

Year to

Notes

31.12.2023

31.12.2022

INCOME ACCOUNT

(see next page)

Member Bed Nights

A

1,724

1,200

44%

Guest Bed Nights	B	1,393	1,851	-25%
Day Use	C	192	89	116%
Deposits 2024 and Bed Nights 2022	D	335	239	
Cottage Donations	E	-	-	
Other Cottage Income	F	270	45	505%
Total Cottage Income:		£ 3,913	£ 3,424	14%
Subscriptions	G	4,185	4,021	4%
Shop & Social	H	447	118	279%
Donations	I	258	188	37%
Interest / Dividend Income	J	1,061	1,446	-27%
Other General Income	K	2,748	2,169	27%
Total General Income:		£ 8,699	£ 7,942	10%
BCA	L	1,920	1,820	5%
Other	M	-	-	
Total Restricted Income:		£ 1,920	£ 1,820	5%
EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT				
Insurance	N	1,401	1,336	5%
Electricity & Gas	O	2,556	1,725	48%
Rates, Water & Refuse	P	2,408	2,656	-9%
Maintenance & Improvements	Q	2,658	1,881	41%
Telephone & Internet	R	482	609	-21%
Other Cottage Expenses	S	28	15	92%
Total Cottage Expenditure:		£ 9,534	£ 8,222	16%
Caving Equipment	T	124	-	#DIV/0!
CCC Permits & BCA Membership	U	149	118	27%
Library & Membership Admin/Postage	V	280	219	28%
Newsletter Printing & Postage	W		244	-100%
Other Expenditure	X	1,904	2,302	-17%
Total General Expenditure:		£ 2,457	£ 2,883	-15%
BCA	Y	1,749	1,668	5%

Total Restricted Expenditure:		£ 1,749	£ 1,668	5%
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General Surplus / (Deficit)

Cash funds end as of:	31.12.2022 :	£ 36,831	£ -	£ 36,418
Income		14,532	13,186	13,186
Expenditure		13,739	12,773	12,773
Surplus / (Deficit)		793	413	413
£3000 Transferred to Investments		(3,000)		
Cash funds reserve @ end of:	31.12.2023 :	£ 34,623	£ 413	£ 36,831

BALANCE SHEET

Assets:	Unrestricted	Restricted (See Liabilities)
HSBC Community Account	£ 22,433	£ 1,177
HSBC Savings Account	£ 2,541	£ -
Santander Account	£ 21	£ -
CCLA COIF (Cottage)	£ 8,180	£ -
Petty Cash	£ 255	
Due from Card Payments (SumUp)	£ 15	
Total	£ 33,446	£ 1,177
	Total Cash Assets:	£ 34,623

Other monetary assets

Henderson Global Care ...
Henderson Global Equity...
M&G Charifund Income
Premier Monthly Income
Rathbone Income Fund
SVS Brown Shipley
COIF Deposit Custodian Trustees

Assets retained for the charity's own use

Cottage- Building	£ 475,000
Cottage- Contents	£ 92,500

Liabilities

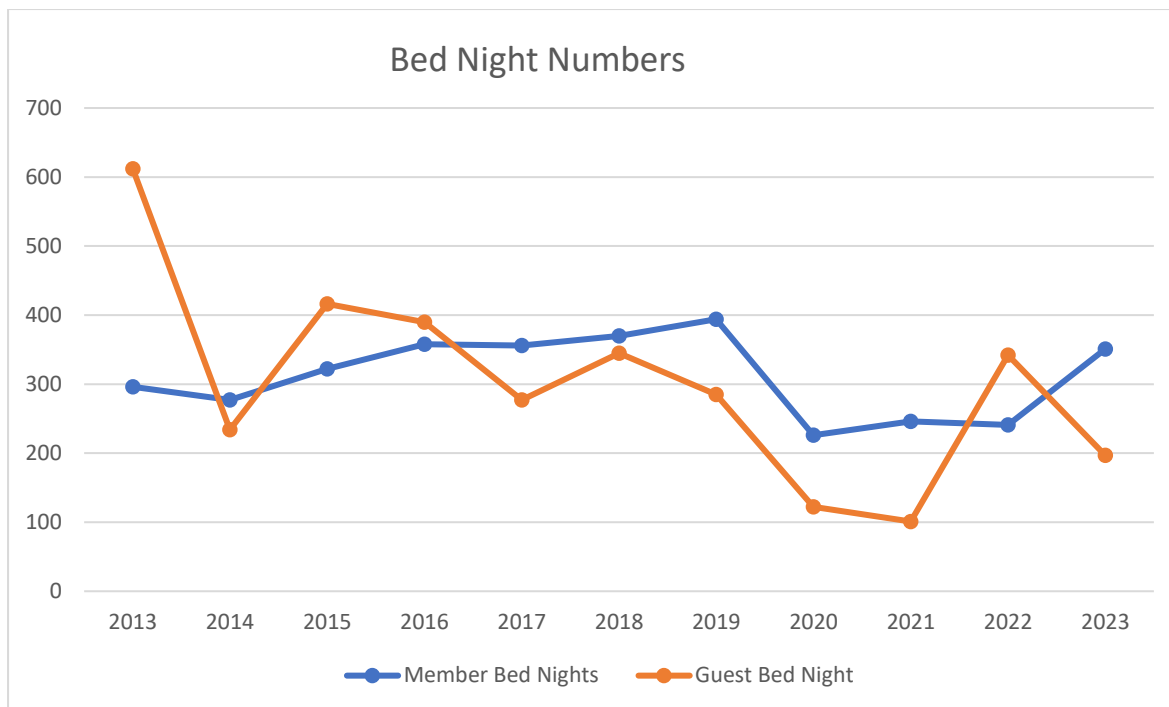
BCA Membership Subscriptions Held in MCG Accounts/Cash:	£ 1,177
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Notes

Income

A – Member's Bed Nights are up by 90.

B – Guest use has fallen to just under 200 nights. We've had quite a few nights, but some of the bigger groups have only stayed for a single night, where in the past they might have stayed 2/3 nights.



C – Day use donations are those collected from cash in the shower donation’s box and donations entered on the card payment machine as such. These have double since with made the day use fee mandatory.

Please don't forget to pay your fee should you use the cottage but not stay!

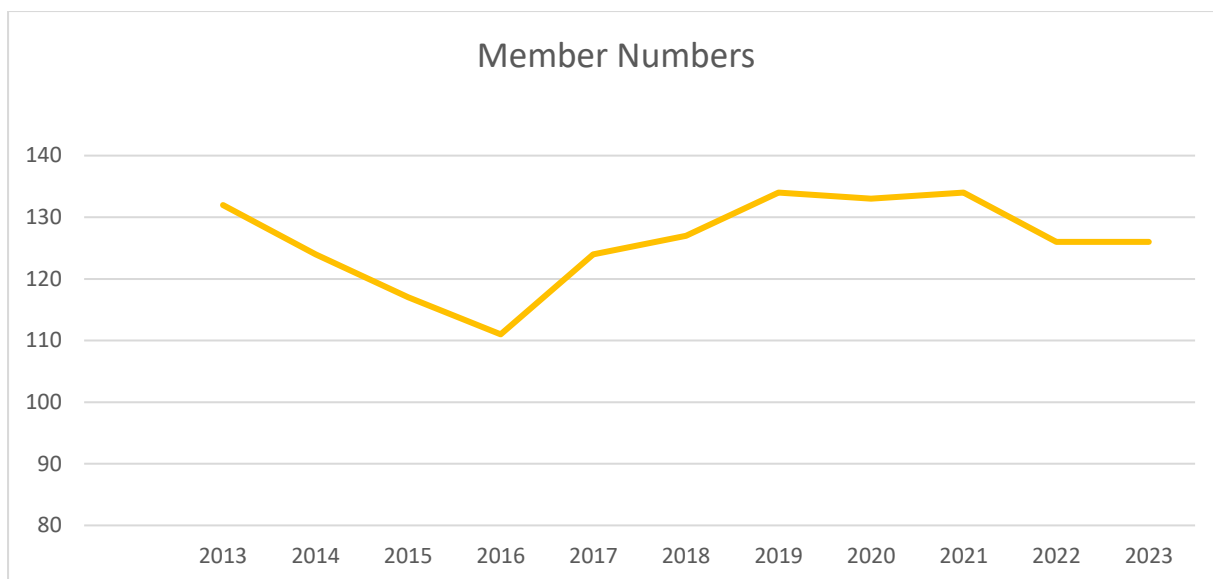
D – Includes £215 for bed nights in 2022 which were paid for in 2023 and £120 for deposits for stays this year.

E – Any donations received designated for Cottage use only. Does not include grant money. There are currently £3152.44 of cash funds designated specifically for cottage use.

F – Includes Key Fob deposits £69 and EV Charger use £0. The current charge for charging is 35p per kWh. Usage can be determined by checking the meters inside the porch and recording a before and after figure.

G – Subscriptions for membership are mostly received in December and January, therefore the annual accounts to year end, do not accurately reflect the amount collected for the ‘year’s’ memberships.

Total subs received for 2022 membership was £3766.99. We received £3794 for 2021 membership subs. The number of members stayed the same!



H – Any cash or card donations received at the member’s weekend social events. The figure also includes MCG 70th T-Shirts sold at approximately cost price.

I – Any other cash or card donations received. This includes cash put in the Kitchen donations box and therefore may have increased due to day fee charge.

J – Interest received on our cash deposits (£377) and dividend income (£683) received from the Investments / “other monetary assets.”

K – Includes deposits for kit use £300 (refundable for against membership fee), and cash for attendance of the 70th, the AGM and Christmas dinner.

L – BCA membership subs collected by the MCG.

M – Any other income received for a restricted purpose.

Expenditure

N – Cottage and Cottage contents insurance.

O – Electricity costs - £695.

Gas costs - £1859.

P – Water – 2023 - £490 2022 - £459 2021 - £412

Refuse - 2023 - £821 2022 - £725 2021 - £758

Business Rates – 2023 - £1078. 2022 - £1471 2021 - £332.57 – Business Rates relief for Covid ended in 2021

Q – Maintenance and improvement related costs include items such as fire alarm/extinguisher maintenance, fixes, and equipment upgrades.

Specific improvement costs – Drive - £874

Fire Alarm System & Extinguishers - £644

Electric Sockets, Lights Door - £959

See also - Cottage Warden's report.

R – Includes Telephone and Internet Provider costs as well as Website and Virus protection costs.

S – Card Machine Costs - £28.02

T – Caving Equipment – Rope related

See also – Tackle Warden Report

U – MCG club membership/access body charge & CCC annual and 14 day permits.

V – Books and Postage and other costs for membership cards and renewals.

W – Costs for Newsletter printing and postage for newsletter exchange.

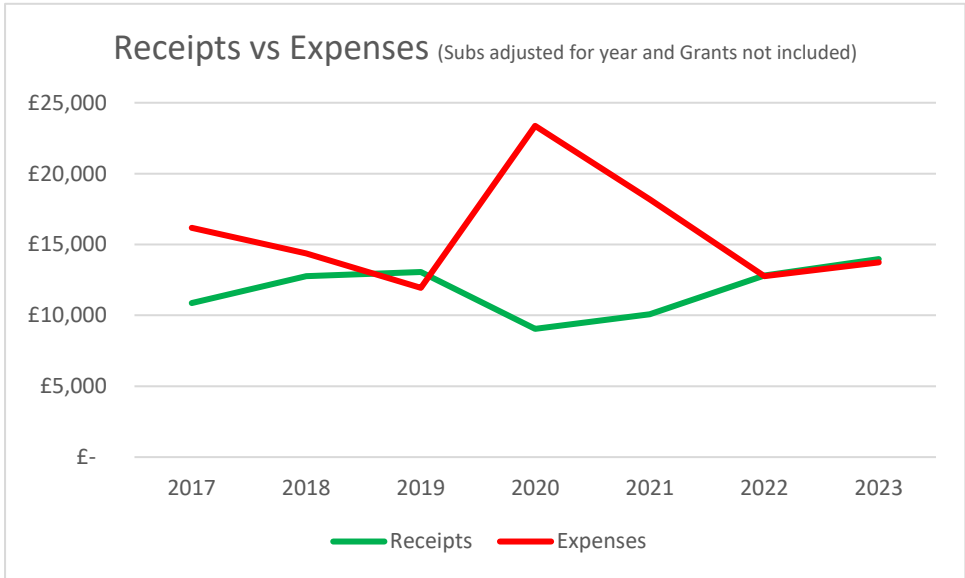
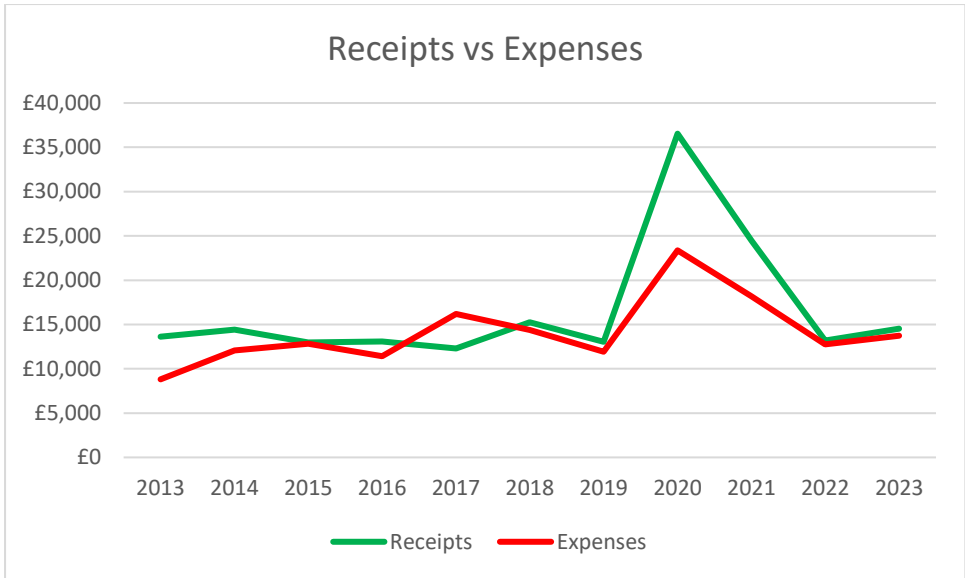
X – Includes costs for AGM/Christmas dinner.

Y – Payment for individual BCA memberships.

AA – Estimated building and contents replacement costs, as well as value of land.

Needs professional assessment for accurate assessment.

AB – Money currently held in MCG accounts owed to BCA for 2023 memberships. (Paid to BCA in Feb 2024)



Investment report

This report covers the calendar year 2023. Ben Cooper writes:

Custodian Trustees Report 2024 for year ending 31st December 2023 v1.0 Ben Cooper

Investments achieved a net growth of 5.9% between 1st January and 31st December 2023. Work has completed to move the investments from the holding of the Custodian Trustees into the CIO.

Investment Valuation and historic comparison

	31/12/2016	31/12/2017	31/12/2018	31/12/2019	31/12/2020	31/12/2021	31/12/2022	31/12/2023
Henderson Gbl Equity	£5,731.31	£4,522.86	£4,157.18	£4,815.52	£4,858.32	£5,525.65	£5,691.67	£6,005.86
Henderson UK Resp...	£4,104.29	£6,311.40	£5,592.09	£7,120.08	£6,619.49	£7,507.57	£7,094.46	£7,981.65
M&G Charifund Inc	£19,206.60	£20,548.32	£17,813.22	£20,773.60	£17,169.51	£19,466.54	£0.00	£0.00
M&G Charifund Acc							£18,382.55	£19,049.74
Premier (Credit Suisse)	£7,685.25	£8,149.46	£6,511.95	£7,782.73	£5,577.43	£5,895.03	£6,036.94	£9,172.98
Rathbone Income Fund	£4,756.34	£5,107.01	£4,635.29	£5,314.36	£4,873.99	£5,865.70	£5,855.74	£6,004.62
SVS Brown-Shipley	£2,489.94	£2,767.03	£2,520.22	£2,961.63	£3,317.77	£3,754.34	£3,064.09	£3,793.44
Total funds	£43,973.73	£47,406.08	£41,229.95	£48,767.92	£42,416.51	£48,014.83	£46,125.45	£52,008.29
COIF	£5,662.42	£5,675.63	£5,701.42	£5,733.88	£5,748.96	£5,749.48	£5,805.75	£5,805.75
Total investment value	£49,636.15	£53,081.71	£46,931.37	£54,501.80	£48,150.39	£53,764.31	£51,931.20	£57,814.04

Unit Prices and historic comparison

Investment	Unit Price 31/12/2022	Unit Price 31/12/2023	Unit Price Growth
Henderson Global Equity ...	£0.6680	£0.6816	2.0%
Henderson UK Responsible ...	£1.2390	£1.3380	8.0%
M&G Charifund Accumlation	£289.4616	£299.9676	3.6%
Premier (CS) Monthly Income Fund	£1.7350	£1.7920	3.3%
Rathbone Income Fund	£9.2273	£9.4619	2.5%
SVS Brown Shipley*	£2.8530	£3.5321	23.8%
TOTAL Investments	£46,086.22	£52,008.282	12.8%

Investment Analysis

Investment	Valuation				Realised Income ²	Re- investment ³	Yield ⁴	Performance ⁵		
	31/12/2022	31/12/2023	Investment or Withdrawal	Growth ¹				Value	Gain	Gain- %
Henderson Global Equity...	£5,691.67	£6,005.86		5.5%		£194.21	3.4%	£6,005.86	£314.19	6%
Henderson UK Responsible ...	£7,094.46	£7,981.65		12.5%		£304.62	4.3%	£7,981.65	£887.19	13%
M&G Charifund Acc	£18,382.55	£19,049.74		3.6%		£997.53	5.4%	£19,049.74	£667.19	4%
Premier Monthly Income	£6,036.94	£9,172.98	£3,000.00	1.5%	£375.18		6.2%	£9,548.16	£511.22	8%
Rathbone Income Fund	£5,855.74	£6,004.62		2.5%	£278.15		4.8%	£6,282.77	£427.03	7%
SVS Brown Shipley (Solus)	£3,064.09	£3,793.44		23.8%			0.0%	£3,793.44	£729.35	24%
TOTAL Funds	£46,125.45	£52,008.29	£3,000.00	5.9%	£653.33	£1,496.36	4.7%	£52,661.62	£3,536.17	7.7%
COIF	£5,805.75	£5,805.75		0.0%		£0.00	0.0%	£5,805.75	£0.00	0%
TOTAL Investments	£5,691.67	£6,005.86		5.5%		£194.21	3.4%	£6,005.86	£314.19	6%

1. Valuation Growth is simply the valuation of the current holding compared to last years, including any increased stock holding.
2. Realised Income is the income received into the Group's current account; effectively withdrawals from the investment funds.

3. Re-investment is the income re-invested in the investment funds. The re-investment amount is already included in Valuation.
4. Yield is the income as a percentage of the invested value (i.e. the value at the start of the year)
5. Performance is overall gain, taking into account the capital growth and income (i.e. compared to the start of the year).

Tackle Master

Matty Dredge writes:

This has been my first year as the MCG Tackle Master and I was hesitant to take on the position given my limited time with the club but everyone has been so nice, it has not been a problem. Although I have limited experience caving, coming from a climbing background and as a qualified Rock-Climbing Instructor, it has given me the tools to carry out my duties.

I have started work on the Tackle Store with the intention of clearing out damaged/worn out/out of date gear, replacing with new to ensure that members are never wanting of anything to maximise their trips. This includes renewing tags, purchasing new tackle bags, improving identification and looking to work towards acquiring a budget to fully equip the Tackle Store for any eventuality.

I'm very keen for feedback from members, not only due to my lack of experience caving, but also because I want to ensure that everyone gets what they want from their Tackle store. Please, do tell me if you find anything worn, damaged, or lacking identification. I don't need to know who, how or why, don't tell the treasurer but I almost don't care if stuff is damaged, I just want to know so that I can sort it out. I'm contactable at tackle@mendipcavinggroup.org.uk or on Facebook.

I would like to continue as Tackle Master as I feel I have plenty left to give in the position and have plenty of work left to do.

Cottage Warden

Jason Kirby writes:

It's been another amazing year seeing so much activity again at the cottage and really good socials on club weekends.

Cottage work is as always ongoing. The best improvement made last summer, with the help of Brian, Keith, Bill, myself and others, was installing drains to try and resolve the car park flooding problem. I believe it's been a fantastic success. Some slight maintenance issues where pipes were run have hopefully been resolved.

Regarding the internals, the trustees made the decision to remove the old, failing key lock from the front door so it can be opened with a fob only (with two locking points though). This work was carried out by myself and although we've had some issues with the actual door, the locking system seems to be working as predicted. Which brings me on to another point. The front door although it's

been a part of our club for many years, is I believe getting to the end of its life and a replacement will soon be needed.

On the outside of the cottage there are some areas that need immediate attention when the weather is better. Some work will be carried out this summer, at the rear of the building. There should be no inconvenience to anyone while the work is being done. We simply need to replace some fascia boards and soffits.

There is some concern regarding the render on the right side of the building which is showing signs of delamination at a few locations and some cracks. I will be monitoring the situation and we'll act accordingly if the need arises. We will consult with a specialist and I will update members as necessary. Remedial work would likely be expensive but may present an opportunity to improve the insulation of the building.

It would appear that the wood stove has proven to be very effective at keeping the cottage warm in the winter months. However, that does pose a slight dilemma - that is our log stock or should I say lack off it. The club will have to decide whether to purchase logs or keep relying on generous but unpredictable donations. We might set up a regular delivery, say two times a year, though the price may vary a lot. Or do we simply suggest folk bring their own supply of logs when they come to stay in the winter?

I'm please to say that members on the whole, have looked after the cottage and very little in the way of repair work has been needed, so thank you to all the members from me.

I'm happy if anyone else would like to have a go at looking after MCG's cottage but if not I'm happy to re-stand as cottage warden.

Social Secretary

Jackie Murch writes:

We held the April 2023 AGM dinner at the Castle of Comfort which was good value for money and everyone enjoyed their evening albeit a little snug! we sold out of raffle tickets in record time and had some good prizes. We all ventured back to the hut to listen and watch a presentation by Russ Porter and Cye about the cave dig in Cye's garden on Worlebury hill, Weston. We were also given some interesting dig finds to look at and hold.

We were lucky enough to hold two barbecues in June and July and was great to be able to sit out and enjoy the evening. In September we had a good old favourite cottage pie followed by Michael Perryman showing us his film he's made about GB. We were also treated to cheese straws made by Joan whilst watching the film.

In November it was suggested we held a Halloween theme evening. Kat and Ed brought some games along; blowing ducks around an assault course in a paddling pool on the kitchen floor was hilarious! Cavers are really competitive! It was good to see so many people making an effort with their fancy dress outfits. We ate Mexican chilli with all the trimmings and then boogied the night away to Slinky Dan's Disco.

The Christmas party was as successful as usual along with lots of fancy dress, games and Dan's disco. Best outfit winners were Charlotte and Alan with their unique take on Tansbatman/woman and Robin! Callum also won a prize for his snowman outfit as it must have been uncomfortable wearing that for most of the night. And of course, the gift giving/thieving game with lots of swapping!

Kat and Ed hosted the January weekend with a selection of delicious Thai dishes which went down very well. They are currently honeymooning in Thailand as i write this so hopefully they will host another Thai evening with new foods they have experienced on their trip. February we had a curry evening and then an Italian menu in March.

It has been a great year for socials on the members' weekends and having others make suggestions, bringing games and offering to make the meals has been a great help. Anyone who has any ideas for future socials please let me know as happy to accommodate.

We are all (approx. 100 of us) looking forward to the 70th Anniversary dinner at Wookey Hotel and many more to come.

Jackie Murch - Social Secretary

Caving Secretary

Mark Edwards writes:

2024 Caving Secretary Report

Well the last year has continued to be reasonably busy caving wise on Tuesday evenings and club weekends. There is still a healthy interest in people wanting to try caving with us ,over fifty people this year, with around nine new probationary members joining the club.

There was a mini Cave Fest organized by Dan Mathews at Easter based at MCG which was most enjoyable. There were also a number of trips to the further reaches of Darren Cilau lead by Kay Mathews.

Recently there was a well-attended club weekend trip to Portland, on the Saturday two parties did a combination of Blacknor Hole abseil into, roundtrip and abseil out along with the relatively newly discovered Persil rift avoiding abseil in and Hopeless Hole avoiding abseil out a fine trip.

On Sunday there was a trip to various Grove caves in the rain.

Digging activity has concentrated in Upper Flood upon opening up a connection between West Passage and the further reaches of Neverland. The idea being to bypass all of the highly decorated passage and re-obtain access to the far end of the cave. Led by Ben Cooper, eleven digging trips were undertaken in 2023 with progress being slow but steady. Efforts at Link Two were abandoned when it became clear that a connection here would not even bypass Curtain Climb. So it's now a single minded focus upon Link Three with longer drills and more determination. There is a draft and a small stream coming out of the dig face which is assumed to come from the floor of The Blind Pit. Ten to fifteen meters to go.

In Stainsby's / Blackmoor Possible Passage, a natural bit of cave at the end of Stainsby's, has been the focus of the Group's digging efforts in 2023. Or certainly in the winter months when it's a far more attractive proposition than Upper Flood. Ten trips have delivered significant progress at the end of a mud filled descending passage. 54 man days were achieved with party sizes varying between three and thirteen people, not accounting for SRT practice trips and passing cavers. The winch is now fully operational and spoil removal switched to a 'bag in bucket' approach rather than muddy buckets alone. The air in the dig always remains fresh and hopes are still high despite the hard work in dragging out the spoil.

Hidden Earth saw a showing of the video of Tom breaking through in the possible passage area of Stainsby's in the digging round up lecture.

There was also a showing of a most excellent film of GB made by our very own Micheal Perryman and Nick Thorne.

Editor

Dan Matthews writes:

It's been a busy year and I've tried to keep newsletters coming as much as possible.

There's not a great deal to report as everything is accounted for in the newsletter.

I will continue in the roll if required but would like to pass it on if someone with more skills would be willing to fill the roll.

Daniel Matthews

Librarian

This post has been vacant for 2023/2024 though Joan Goddard and Mike Moxon have been looking after the library.

Joan Goddard writes:

LIBRARY – Joan Goddard & Mike Moxon

In the absence of an elected Recorder/Librarian and with the Committee's agreement, Mike Moxon and I have been trying to keep the library in some sort of order - which includes updating the book and journals catalogues, and where possible filling in any gaps in our holdings.

Some of the older newsletters/journals have been "bound" using spine bars and most of the boxes are being re-labelled. Shelves to the left as you enter the library contain the publications of Mendip clubs in roughly alphabetical order, followed by other UK clubs.

As well as sourcing missing issues of other club publications, Mike is hoping to rationalise the book collection when more shelving is available. A number of books have been donated to the library during the last couple of years by older or ex-members and others. If any members would like to suggest new books they would like to see in the library, please let one of us know and we will forward the request to the Treasurer.

Full Members can borrow items from the library but please record details in the **LIBRARY LOANS BOOK** on the central unit and sign them back in again when you return them. Try not to keep them out for too long (3 months max.) as others may be waiting to read them, and please don't leave them lying around in the lounge area as they get tatty!

Probationary members can use the library while at the cottage if a Full Member has given them access, but they cannot borrow items to take away.

Finally, we believe that a couple of books and maps are missing so will people please look at home to see if they have any MCG items tucked away; most of the books have an MCG sticker on the spine so should be easily identifiable on a bookcase or shelf. The maps, with hanging strips attached, are of the Charterhouse area and are likely to be rolled.

MENDIP CAVING GROUP

England & Wales - Charity number 1197325

Accounts

MCG Officer's Reports 2023

Finally, our AGM schedule is back to normal after the Covid19 pandemic.

Please find herein the reports of the various club officers for the period April 2022 to April 2023, unless otherwise stated.

This is our first year operating as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation or CIO – 'Mendip Caving Group' - charity number 1197325.

Secretary's report

Bill Chadwick writes:

Please accept our apologies for the recent infrequency of the publication of MCG News. We elected a new Editor at our April 2022 AGM but his personal circumstances then changed, leaving him no time to work on a Newsletter. I produced Newsletter 388 in October myself. I would also like to record that 2022 has seen the publication of Tim Francis' excellent '**Blackmoor Valley from the Log book**' as MCG Occasional Publication No. 7. We are still in need of an Editor for 2023-2024.

The MCG did of course lose income from bed night fees etc. during the pandemic, but that was more than made up for by government grants, so that the MCG is still in a comfortable financial position. I am pleased to report that guest bed night fees are back up again, from both Scout and University groups and others too. We have increased the guest bed night fee to £7.50, to match other Mendip providers. Due to rising costs, the time has now come though, when we must consider raising our membership fees and other charges, for members.

Jason Kirby continues to work hard to keep the cottage running smoothly. Many thanks to all the folk who helped at the work weekend in October.

Mark Edwards has been busy with several new members and we have made up some new Full members. Mark's efforts in this area are most important in maintaining the youth and vigour of the MCG – thankyou Mark.

Dan Matthews has been minding the tackle in its new location in the shed. Operation from the shed seems to be going well.

Many thanks to Tom Harrison for his hard work on our accounts and the examiners Peat Bennet and Linda Milne for their checking of them. For 2023-2024, we need a new volunteer to replace Peat.

During the year, we have had several great socials and meals organised by Jackie Murch, including another of the now famous, MCG Christmas dinners. Chris Barrington's outdoor bat talk, accompanied by our resident bats, made the most of a rare warm summer's night at Nordrach.

After several years as a trustee of the MCG, Dave Lossl is not standing for re-election this year. Dave has made numerous contributions to the life of MCG over recent years, including the regeneration of our website, which we thank him for wholeheartedly. As a consequence, we are in need of a new Recorder / Librarian for 2023-2024. I would also like to thank Joan Goddard and Mike Moxon for working hard to help keep the library in a good shape.

Sadly, as I write, we have yet to complete the transfer of the cottage to our new Charitable Incorporated Organisation – the transfer is still being processed by the Land Registry. Many thanks

to Steve Porter for all his hard work on the cottage transfer. Ben Cooper has been working extremely hard on transferring our investments to the CIO. This has involved a huge amount of correspondence with the institutions involved. As I write, some but not all of the transfers have been completed.

We have done the work requested by the last AGM, to provide a draft of a revised constitution that would provide for the admission of under 18s as members of the MCG.

We hold regular, on-line, trustee's meetings to deal with the management of MCG affairs. Having both the named role trustee positions as well as some custodian trustees, has helped keep our meetings quorate. So thank you to Ben Cooper, Time Francis and Brian Snell for their help with our decision making.

2024 will be the 70th anniversary of the formation of MCG. To celebrate the 50th and 60th anniversaries we held large formal dinners. We should discuss what to do about our 70th, or perhaps 75th anniversary, during this year's AGM.

Finally, I would like to give notice that if elected for 2023-2024, I will have served as Secretary for six years. I do not propose to stand for election as Secretary for 2024-2025.

Treasurer's report

This report covers the calendar year 2022.

Tom Harrison writes:

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 2022

April 2023

Summary

This is a confirmed report for 2022, after the accounts have been examined by Pete Bennet and Linda Milne.

2022 brought a small surplus of £412, however, as the accounts close on 31st December this figure includes £1006 received from members for payment of the BCA membership.

Member bed nights have remained flat during 2022 and would probably have been lower than 2021 if there hadn't been a lockdown between January and April of that year.

Positively, guest bed nights have tripled as groups return. In August 2022, we raised the bed night fee for guests from £6 to £7.50 to cover some of our increased costs and to bring them into line with other comparable facilities. This does not seem to have affected the numbers booking.

Income from the MCG Investments has also helped prevent a significant deficit.

We haven't received a bill from Calor yet, (usually we receive a delivery in March) and electricity costs have been stable from less cottage use and government energy bill support. We have also stopped receiving the rate relief from Mendip District Council, so we can expect all these costs to rise in 2023. We spent a lot less on maintenance and improvements than in the previous few years and made no caving equipment purchases, further helping to keep our expenditure lower.

Therefore, after several years of keeping membership fees static, it may be time to consider a small increase in both subs and bed night fees, to ensure we do not start running at a deficit. I will look to produce and provide a proposal for this in the coming months.

Tom Harrison

MCG Treasurer

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Member Bed Nights	296	277	322	358	356	370	394	226	246	241
Guest Bed Night	612	234	416	390	277	345	285	122	101	342
Member Bed Night Donat	£ 984	£ 977	£ 1,125	£ 1,261	£ 1,780	£ 1,815	£ 1,970	£ 1,128	£ 1,230	£ 1,205.00
Guest Hut Night Donation	£ 3,377	£ 2,121	£ 2,489	£ 2,170	£ 1,941	£ 2,190	£ 1,713	£ 588	£ 604	£ 2,241
Day Use Donation	£ 271	£ 163	£ 207	£ 121	£ 169	£ 136	£ 99	£ 7	£ 84	£ 89.00
Member Subs	£ 3,480	£ 3,320	£ 3,089	£ 2,895	£ 3,735	£ 3,935	£ 4,117	£ 4,137	£ 4,139	£ 3,794
Member Numbers	132	124	117	111	124	127	134	133	135	126
Income	£ 13,616	£ 14,412	£ 12,989	£ 13,099	£ 12,295	£ 15,265	£ 13,048	£ 36,539	£ 24,474	£ 13,186
Expenses	£ 8,811	£ 12,055	£ 12,822	£ 11,406	£ 16,178	£ 14,376	£ 11,942	£ 23,369	£ 18,184	£ 12,773
Difference	£ 4,805	£ 2,357	£ 167	£ 1,693	£ (3,883)	£ 889	£ 1,106	£ 13,170	£ 6,290	£ 413
Income - Post Subs and Grants Adjustment					£ 10,871	£ 12,765	£ 13,048	£ 9,048	£ 10,084	£ 12,807
(= receipts for the year - all subs and BCA received that year + subs and BCA that was actually for that year)										

MENDIP CAVING GROUP

CIO: 1197325

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2022

Year to

Year to

Notes (see
next page)

31.12.2022

31.12.2021

INCOME ACCOUNT

Member Bed Nights	A	1,200	1,230	-2%
Guest Bed Nights	B	1,851	604	206%
Day Use	C	89	84	6%
Deposits 2023 and Bed Nights 2021	D	239	233	
Cottage Donations	E	-	-	
Other Cottage Income	F	45	107	-58%
Total Cottage Income:		£ 3,424	£ 2,258	52%

Subscriptions	G	4,021	3,529	14%
Shop & Social	H	118	170	-31%
Donations	I	188	185	2%
Interest / Dividend Income	J	1,446	1,215	19%
Other General Income	K	2,169	15,607	-86%
Total General Income:		£ 7,942	£ 20,704	-62%

BCA	L	1,820	1,512	20%
Other	M	-	-	
Total Restricted Income:		£ 1,820	£ 1,512	20%

EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

Insurance	N	1,336	1,274	5%
Electricity & Gas	O	1,725	1,711	1%
Rates, Water & Refuse	P	2,656	1,503	77%
Maintenance & Improvements	Q	1,881	8,583	-78%
Telephone & Internet	R	609	686	-11%
Other Cottage Expenses	S	15	91	-84%
Total Cottage Expenditure:		£ 8,222	£ 13,848	-41%

Caving Equipment	T	-	459	-100%
CCC Permits & BCA Membership	U	118	206	-43%
Library & Membership Admin/Postage	V	219	328	-33%
Newsletter Printing & Postage	W	244	270	-10%
Other Expenditure	X	2,302	1,465	57%
Total General Expenditure:		£ 2,883	£ 2,729	6%

BCA	Y	1,668	1,607	4%
Total Restricted Expenditure:		£ 1,668	£ 1,607	4%

C – Day use donations are those collected from cash in the shower donation’s box and donations entered on the card payment machine as such. Not much change from last year.

If you are coming to use the cottage but do not stay the night, please consider a donation of a couple quid which helps to cover the ever increasing, lighting, heating, water, business rates and other ongoing cottage costs.

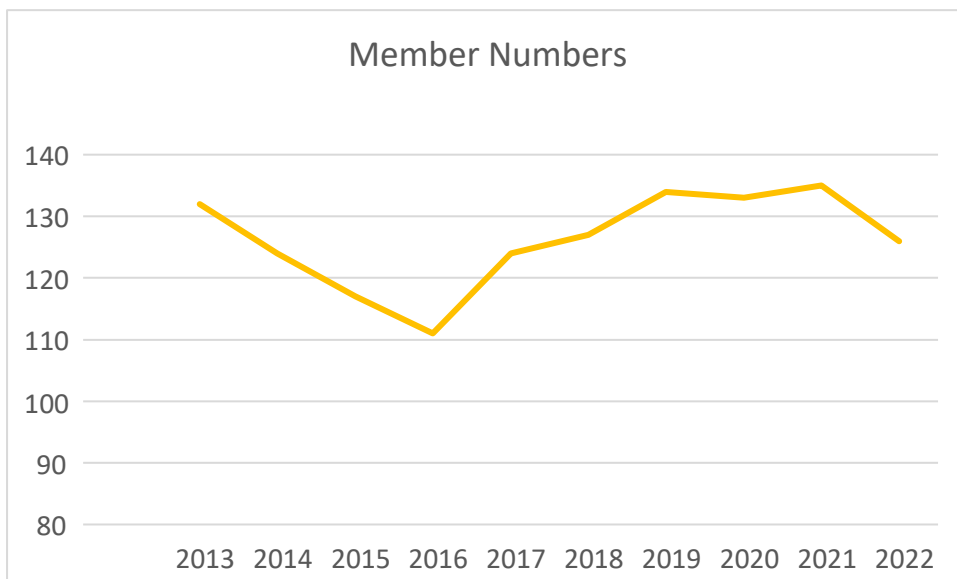
D – Includes £179 for bed nights in 2021 which were paid for in 2022 and £60 for deposits for stays in 2023.

E – Any donations received designated for Cottage use only. Does not include grant money. There are currently £2,310.98 of cash funds designated specifically for cottage use.

F – Includes Key Fob deposits and EV Charger. The current charge for charging is 35p per kWh. Usage can be determined by checking the meters inside the porch and recording a before and after figure.

G – Subscriptions for membership are mostly received in December and January, therefore the annual accounts to year end, do not accurately reflect the amount collected for the ‘year’s’ memberships.

Total subs received for 2022 membership was £3794. We received £4,138.50 for 2021 membership subs.



H – Any cash or card donations received at the member’s weekend social events.

I – Any other cash or card donations received.

J – Interest received on our cash deposits (£123) and dividend income received from the Investments / “other monetary assets.”

K – Includes deposits for kit use £280 (refundable for new members), and cash for attendance of the AGM and/or Christmas dinners. AGM/Christmas dinner income should equal AGM/Christmas Dinner costs.

L – BCA membership subs collected by the MCG.

M – Any other income received for a restricted purpose.

Expenditure

N – Cottage and Cottage contents insurance.

O – Electricity costs - £403. Claimed a refund of £75 for lack of power for a number of days following a storm. £1396 for Gas.

P – Water – 2022 - £459 2021 - £412

Refuse - 2022 - £725 2021 - £758

Business Rates – 2022 - £1471 2021 £332.57 – Business Rates relief for Covid ended in 2021

Q – Maintenance and improvement related costs include items such as fire alarm/extinguisher maintenance, fixes, and equipment upgrades.

Specific improvement costs – Replacement Safe & Library Table

Materials £425 Fire Alarm System & Extinguishers - **£1223** See

Cottage Warden's report.

R – Includes Telephone and Internet Provider costs as well as Website and Virus protection costs. Reduced from 2021 with a cheaper deal on internet found.

S – Card Machine Costs - £14.56

T – Caving Equipment – N/A

U – MCG club membership/access body charge & CCC annual and 14 day permits.

V – Books and Postage and other costs for membership cards and renewals.

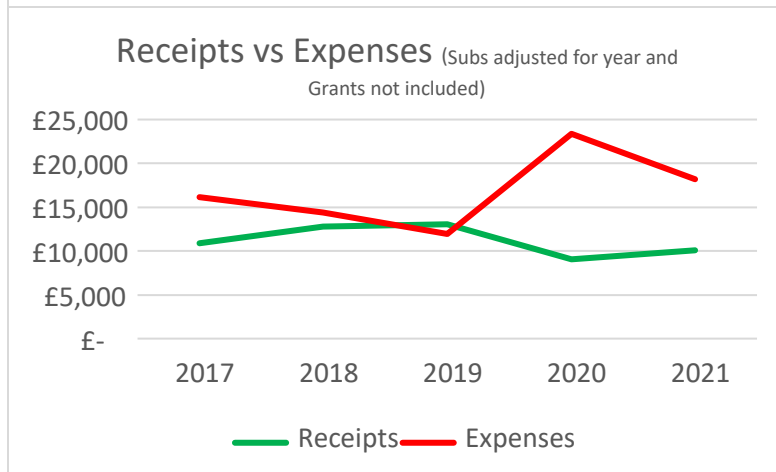
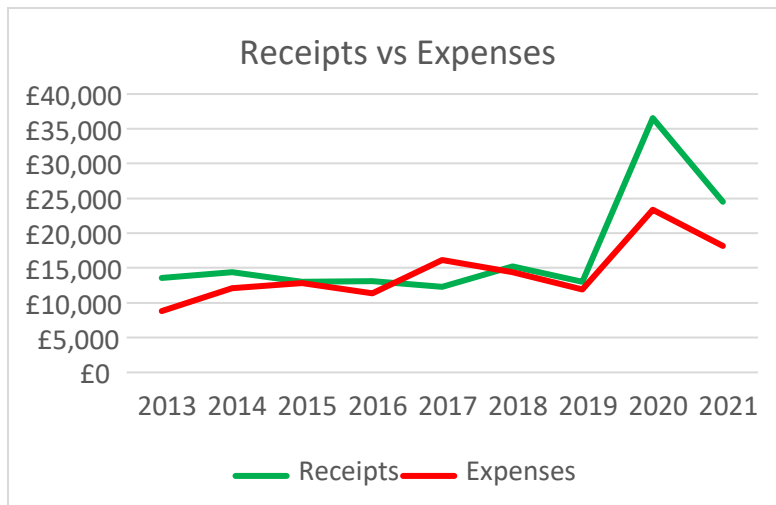
W – Costs for Newsletter printing and postage for newsletter exchange. (1 Newsletter & 1 Occ Pub). Includes £663 for costs towards transfer from Charity to CIO.

X – Includes costs for AGM/Christmas dinner.

Y – Payment for individual BCA memberships.

AA – Estimated building and contents replacement costs, as well as value of land. Needs professional assessment for accurate assessment.

AB – Money currently held in MCG accounts owed to BCA for 2023 memberships. (Paid to BCA in Feb 2023)



Investment report

This report covers the calendar year 2022. Ben Cooper writes:

Custodian Trustees Report 2023 for year ending 31st December 2022 v1.0

Ben Cooper

Investments held up well despite some market uncertainty, with a net fall of 4%. Work has been underway to move the investments from the holding of the Custodian Trustees into the CIO. As of 31st December 2022, one fund (M&G Charrifund) had completed the transfer and is now owned by the CIO. As part of the transfer, the Trustees requested the fund to be converted from Income units to accumulation units, which happened at the end of the year just after the final dividend payment. The remaining funds are on track to be moved to the CIO during the first half of 2023.

Investment Valuation and historic comparison

	31/12/2015	31/12/2016	31/12/2017	31/12/2018	31/12/2019	31/12/2020	31/12/2021	31/12/2022
Henderson Gbl Equity	£3,366.79	£5,731.31	£4,522.86	£4,157.18	£4,815.52	£4,858.32	£5,525.65	£5,652.44
Henderson UK Resp...	£5,483.02	£4,104.29	£6,311.40	£5,592.09	£7,120.08	£6,619.49	£7,507.57	£7,094.46
M&G Charifund Inc	£17,936.31	£19,206.60	£20,548.32	£17,813.22	£20,773.60	£17,169.51	£19,466.54	£0.00
M&G Charifund Acc								£18,382.55
Premier (Credit Suisse)	£7,473.13	£7,685.25	£8,149.46	£6,511.95	£7,782.73	£5,577.43	£5,895.03	£6,036.94
Rathbone Income Fund	£4,419.74	£4,756.34	£5,107.01	£4,635.29	£5,314.36	£4,873.99	£5,865.70	£5,855.74
SVS Brown-Shipley	£2,244.32	£2,489.94	£2,767.03	£2,520.22	£2,961.63	£3,317.77	£3,754.34	£3,064.09
Total funds	£40,923.31	£43,973.73	£47,406.08	£41,229.95	£48,767.92	£42,416.51	£48,014.83	£46,086.22
COIF	£5,638.41	£5,662.42	£5,675.63	£5,701.42	£5,733.88	£5,748.96	£5,749.48	£5,749.48
Total investment value	£46,561.72	£49,636.15	£53,081.71	£46,931.37	£54,501.80	£48,150.39	£53,764.31	£51,835.70

Unit Prices and historic comparison

Investment	Unit Price 31/12/2020	Unit Price 31/12/2021	Unit Price Growth
Henderson Global Equity ...	£0.6712	£0.6680	-0.5%
Henderson UK Responsible ...	£1.3700	£1.2390	-9.6%
M&G Charifund Income	£15.5620		
M&G Charifund Accumulation		£289.4616	
Premier (CS) Monthly Income Fund	£1.5480	£1.7350	12.1%
Rathbone Income Fund	£9.6706	£9.2273	-4.6%
SVS Brown Shipley*	£3.4957	£2.8530	-18.4%
TOTAL Investments	£48,014.83	£46,086.22	-4.0%

Investment Analysis

Investment	Valuation			Realised Income ²	Re- investment ³	Yield ⁴	Performance ⁵		
	31/12/2021	31/12/2022	Growth ¹				Value	Gain	Gain-%
Henderson Global Equity...	£5,525.65	£5,652.44	2.3%		£185.15	3.4%	£5,652.44	£126.79	2%
Henderson UK Responsible ...	£7,507.57	£7,094.46	-5.5%		£307.21	4.1%	£7,094.46	£-413.11	-6%
M&G Charifund Income	£19,466.54	£0.00	-5.6%	£1,038.24		5.3%	£1,038.24	£-45.75	0%
Premier Monthly Income		£18,382.55							
Premier Monthly Acc	£5,895.03	£6,036.94	2.4%	£265.47		4.5%	£6,302.41	£407.38	7%
Rathbone Income Fund	£5,865.70	£5,855.74	-0.2%		£256.42	4.4%	£5,855.74	£-9.96	0%
SVS Brown Shipley (Solus)	£3,754.34	£3,064.09	-18.4%	£7.46		0.2%	£3,071.55	£-682.79	-18%

TOTAL Funds	£48,014.83	£46,086.22	-4.0%	£1,311.17	£748.78	4.3%	£29,014.84	-£617.44	-1.3%
COIF	£5,749.48	£5,749.48	0.0%		£0.00	0.0%	£5,749.48	£0.00	0%
TOTAL Investments	£53,764.31	£51,835.70	-3.6%	£1,311.17	£748.78			-£617.44	-1.1%

1. Valuation Growth is simply the valuation of the current holding compared to last years, including any increased stock holding.
2. Realised Income is the income received into the Group's current account; effectively withdrawals from the investment funds.
3. Re-investment is the income re-invested in the investment funds. The re-investment amount is already included in Valuation.
4. Yield is the income as a percentage of the invested value (i.e. the value at the start of the year)
5. Performance is overall gain, taking into account the capital growth and income (i.e. compared to the start of the year).

Tackle Master

Dan Matthews writes:

Not much has happened this year. No new purchases. Gear log is working well to keep up with checks on gear. It has been brought to my attention that the labels have come off some of the ropes this is in hand to be sorted. One of the I+ over-suits has gone missing if you happen to find one that you don't recognise it could be the clubs.

I'm happy to stand again as tackle master or if someone wants to take on the position I will stand for

Editor.

Thanks

Daniel Matthews.

Cottage Warden

Jason Kirby writes:

I would like to start with an introduction for the benefit of newer members, my name is Jason Cardwell Kirby I'm the hut Warden my role is to facilitate the smooth running of the MCG premises, and deliver reactive repairs to the cottage, a job I enjoy and take very seriously.

I have a big thank you to all members for considerably using less gas and taking full advantage of the log fire to cut back on running costs. Gas consumption has dramatically reduced and although we are at the mercy of the gas companies, we have at least held back the next big bill.

Projects completed this year include upgraded lighting outside and new Electric points by the washdown area.

Cottage work weekend was a major success again mostly by new members, thank you to all that attended.

I'm very pleased people are making a good effort to clean the cottage after using it. I would like to remind all members this is a critical part of being a member of MCG as we don't employ cleaners, so it's down to all members to keep the hut in the best condition possible. A large part of our income comes from cottage bookings from clubs and organized groups. If the hut is in a poor state on their arrival, they are less likely to come back.

There are some **outstanding jobs** that I need to address:

After many years of use our front door Yale lock is in a poor state. So, I have proposed to the trustees that we fit a second magnetic lock meaning we can do away with keys so that members will only need a fob to enter the hut. I am in communication with a company named M3 Security who will, when I have the time, fit and upgrade the entry system at the front door. My decision

for this upgrade is due to my experiences over the past few years. We have had quite a lot of instances where the door has not been locked after everyone has gone home leaving the hut vulnerable, I believe this will eliminate that problem as when the door is shut it is locked. We will also save the cost of cutting around 200 new keys which would be very expensive.

I have one small point for people to consider when you're all at the hut and in a rush to get digging, caving or going out. Please consider the people that are still in the hut and keep doors closed to save heat losses. This not only makes sense for keeping costs down, but will help the environment as well and keep the hut more comfortable for those left behind.

As we are all aware the car park is still a problem and my previous project proposals have stalled for various reasons. It is still at the forefront of my mind to resolve this issue, but with rising costs it is unlikely we will be able to continue with this project any time soon.

What I now need is guaranteed volunteers to dig trenches for perforated drain pipes and soakaways to be installed. Bear in mind this is hard and compacted ground and the use of a digger would be a central part of this plus three different aggregate grades to be laid on top.

However, in the meantime, a smaller project may be achievable. A trench should be dug across the gate and a perforated pipe be sunk to deflect the flow of water from the road away from our entrance to a French drain. This can be achieved with a small team of dedicated diggers and greatly reduced cost. So, if you are as keen as me to fix this problem, please let me know thank you.

One last thing, cleaning supplies. As I am not at the hut all the time, it is difficult for me to do stock takes on how much is left. It would be really helpful if people would email a list to me so I can order items in time and bring them to the hut. I have seen a list on the whiteboard. This is an impractical way of communication as I need to be there to see it. So simply email me and I will order and make the journey to drop stuff off.

Many thanks for your time.

Social Secretary

Jackie Murch writes:

We've had some well attended social events during this year's members' weekends.

In May we had a Mexican themed evening with Chilli and all the trimmings, a delayed weekend in June due to Queens party; a grand BBQ party in the garden, lovely summer weather and a good time. July we attended the Wessex challenge, very entertaining and MCG competed. Aug we held another BBQ in the glorious weather and a fantastic bat talk and presentation by Chris Barrington, plus appearance from our in-house bats!

August some of us went on a visit to Crickhowell for Cavefest and September we held a fun filled Oktoberfest. Our Christmas dinner was another great success and good to see everyone helping out with peeling all those veg; thanks to everyone that helped to make it a great evening.

We had a spring themed social in March, variety of sausages and different mashes.

Quizzes: Love them or loathe them! I usually do a short quiz for people to get engaged and there's usually a theme i.e. spring themed in March and we all tried to wear something yellow

Any one is welcome to organise a Saturday social or if you don't want to arrange, suggestions are always welcome.

I try to keep the cost as low as possible. The events are advertised on facebook and yahoo groups and it's always useful to have an idea of who's coming so that I can cater for everyone.

This year our AGM dinner is being held at the Castle Of Comfort – after dinner speech by Kye and Russ on the discovery of a cave on Kye's land.

Caving Secretary

Mark Edwards writes:

Annual Report - Caving Secretary 2023

There continues to be a healthy interest in new people wanting to try caving with MCG. Tuesday evening caving continues to be reasonably popular. It can be awkward logistically However, when it is just me as the experienced caver, so any established members who want to come along are more than welcome.

Club weekends continue to be reasonably well attended with various sport caving trips and digging activities and usually a communal meal on Saturday evening.

I aim to do a reasonable sport caving trip on the Saturday and maybe a beginner's trip on the Sunday, I would be more than happy if anyone else was willing to lead an occasional trip on a club weekend.

Some of us have visited OFD in South Wales a few times, and there was also a trip to the Sorbus caving area in Southern Spain in May facilitated by one of our members David Vidal, who is sadly now moving back to Spain.

Many thanks to John Crowsley who put on a free caving course for members, which was very informative and well received by those who took part.

An MCG contingent went to and organized Cavefest in Wales in September which was very enjoyable.

On the digging front operations have resumed at Fern Mine and another entrance for Pearl mine has been found on Sandford Hill.

Very little has happened in Upper Flood as attention has been directed towards Stainsby's, fourteen trips have been undertaken, much spoil hauled and stacked and the winch has been firmly secured. At present the focus is on a gently descending crawl full of orange mud and small rocks and occasional large chunks of stalagmite, clearly water washed, the air seems fresh, hopes are high!

Editor

The editor position has been vacant since the summer of 2022.

Librarian

Dave Lossl writes:

Librarian AGM report 2023

After 11 years as a committee member, I am resigning. The prime reason is that a bad infection of Lymes disease has had long term effects, and I am no longer doing a reasonable Librarian role. I would urge all members to think about taking on a committee role at some time. Without members volunteering the club could not function, and the reality is that the very low membership fees we pay are on the basis that we all contribute throughout the year in voluntary tasks – from cleaning the cottage to being on the committee.

Many members have put in years of committee service, so if you haven't been on the committee yet, you really do need to consider how you can help, even if it's for a 1 year stint. COVID was a challenging time, and the committee performed amazingly well. The change of Charitable status was also a major accomplishment. The next year should seem like a breeze by comparison.

You may think you are not a "committee person", but all we need is a little of your time and your help in keeping the club running efficiently. Meetings are online now, so it really is straightforward. I would like to thank everyone in the club for sharing so many great adventures and friendships, and I look forward to many more caving and digging trips.

David Lossl