

# 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 70<sup>th</sup> 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 70<sup>th</sup> 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 Donation	£	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%
<b>Total Cottage Income:</b>		<b>£ 3,913</b>	<b>£ 3,424</b>	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%
<b>Total General Income:</b>		<b>£ 8,699</b>	<b>£ 7,942</b>	10%
BCA	L	1,920	1,820	5%
Other	M	-	-	
<b>Total Retsricted Income:</b>		<b>£ 1,920</b>	<b>£ 1,820</b>	5%
<b>EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT</b>				
Insurance	N	1,401	1,336	5%
Electricity & Gas	O	2,556	1,725	48%
Rates, Water & Refuse	P	2,408	2,656	-9%
Maintainance & Improvements	Q	2,658	1,881	41%
Telephone & Internet	R	482	609	-21%
Other Cottage Expenses	S	28	15	92%
<b>Total Cottage Expenditure:</b>		<b>£ 9,534</b>	<b>£ 8,222</b>	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%
<b>Total General Expenditure:</b>		<b>£ 2,457</b>	<b>£ 2,883</b>	-15%
BCA	Y	1,749	1,668	5%

<b>Total Restricted Expenditure:</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>1,749</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>1,668</b>	5%
--------------------------------------	----------	--------------	----------	--------------	----

### General Surplus / (Deficit)

Cash funds end as of:	<b>31.12.2022 :</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>36,831</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>£</b>	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:	<b>31.12.2023 :</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>34,623</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>£</b>	36,831

### BALANCE SHEET

<b>Assets:</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Restricted (See Liabilities)</b>
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	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 33,446</b>	<b>£ 1,177</b>
	<b>Total Cash Assets:</b>	<b>£ 34,623</b>

### 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	<b>£ 475,000</b>
Cottage- Contents	<b>£ 92,500</b>

### Liabilities

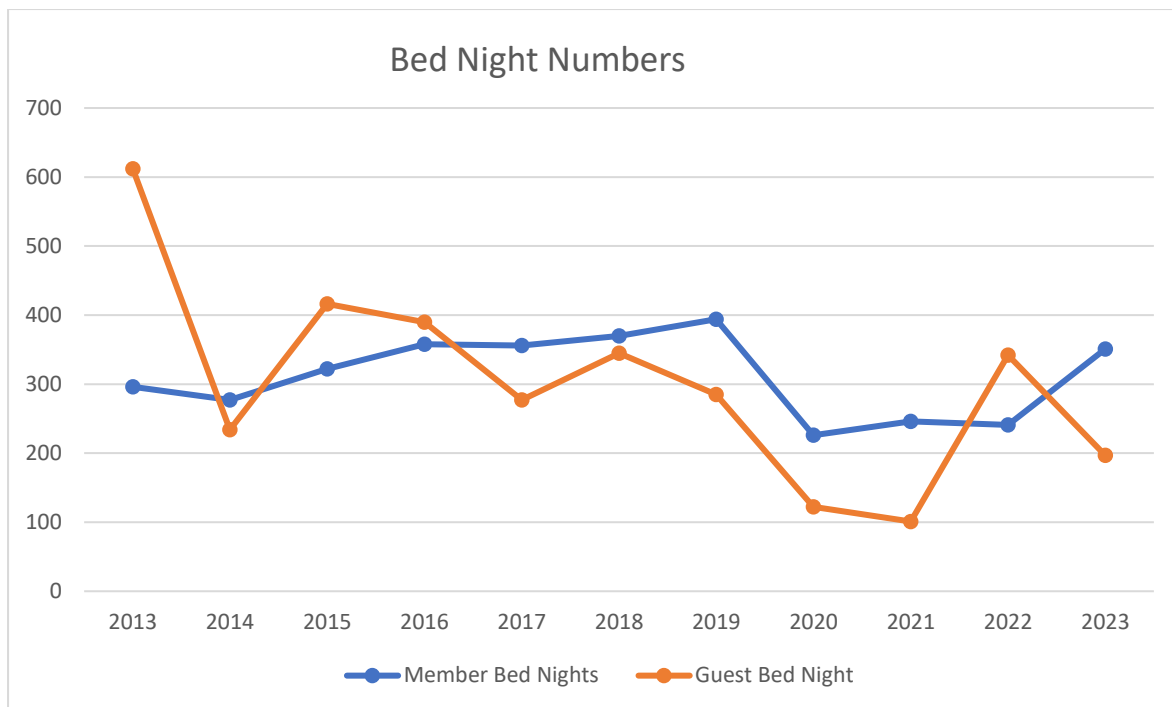
BCA Membership Subscriptions Held in MCG Accounts/Cash:	<b>£ 1,177</b>
---	----------------

## 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!*

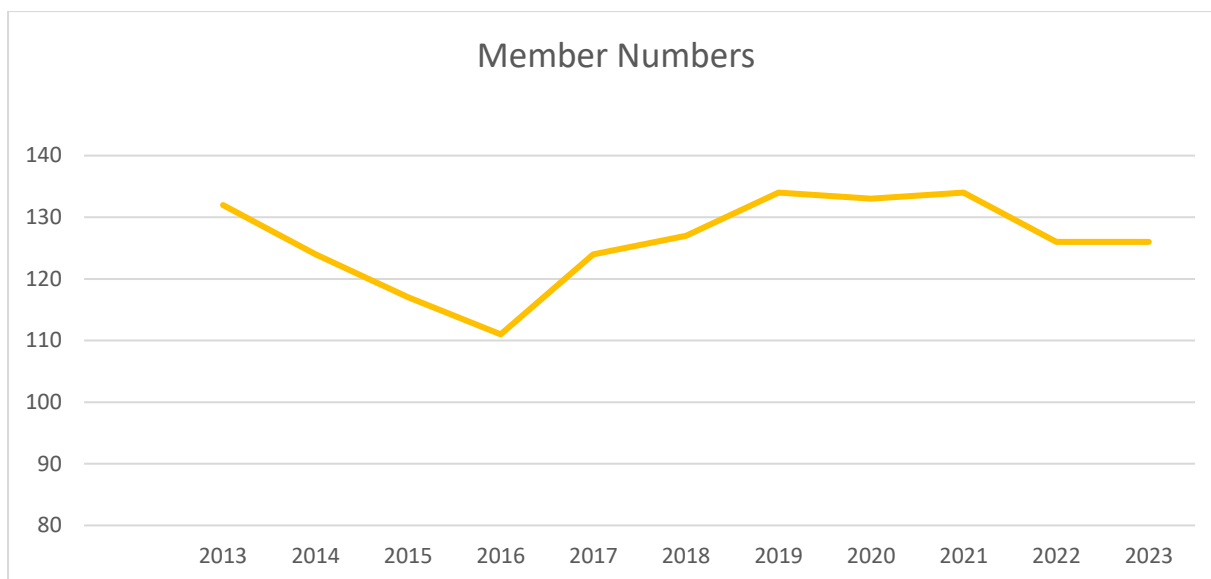
**D** – Includes £215 for bed nights in 2022 which were paid for in 2023 and £120 for deposits for stays this year.

**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 70<sup>th</sup> 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 70<sup>th</sup>, 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.

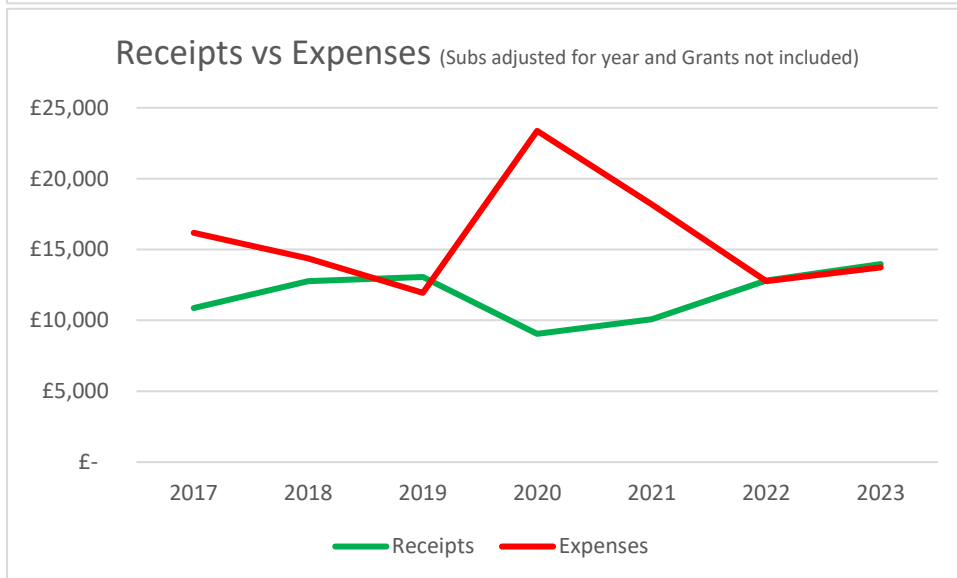
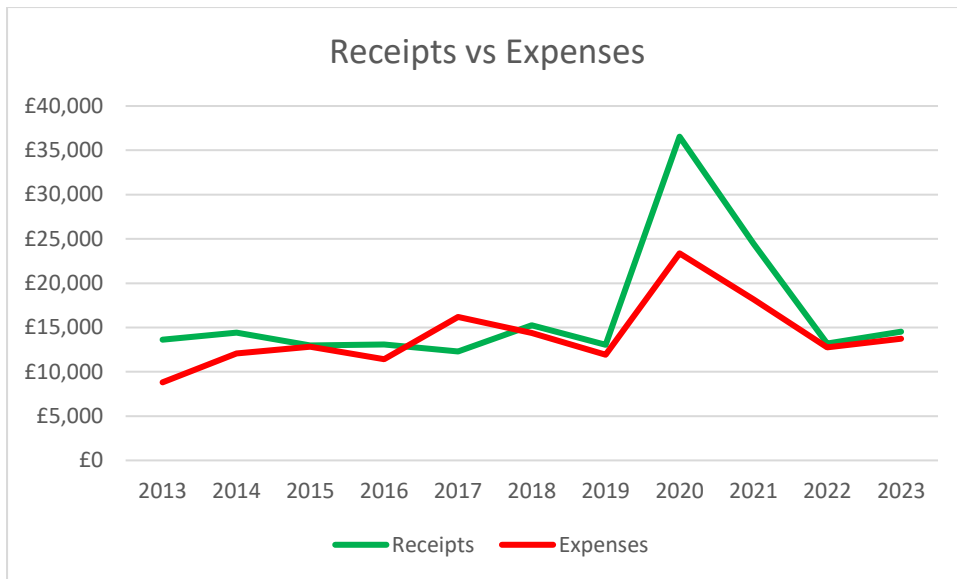
**X** – Includes costs for AGM/Christmas dinner.

**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 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 v1.0 Ben Cooper***

Investments achieved a net growth of 5.9% between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 31<sup>st</sup> 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	<b>£6,005.86</b>
Henderson UK Resp...	£4,104.29	£6,311.40	£5,592.09	£7,120.08	£6,619.49	£7,507.57	£7,094.46	<b>£7,981.65</b>
M&G Charifund Inc	£19,206.60	£20,548.32	£17,813.22	£20,773.60	£17,169.51	£19,466.54	£0.00	<b>£0.00</b>
M&G Charifund Acc							£18,382.55	<b>£19,049.74</b>
Premier (Credit Suisse)	£7,685.25	£8,149.46	£6,511.95	£7,782.73	£5,577.43	£5,895.03	£6,036.94	<b>£9,172.98</b>
Rathbone Income Fund	£4,756.34	£5,107.01	£4,635.29	£5,314.36	£4,873.99	£5,865.70	£5,855.74	<b>£6,004.62</b>
SVS Brown-Shipley	£2,489.94	£2,767.03	£2,520.22	£2,961.63	£3,317.77	£3,754.34	£3,064.09	<b>£3,793.44</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>£43,973.73</b>	<b>£47,406.08</b>	<b>£41,229.95</b>	<b>£48,767.92</b>	<b>£42,416.51</b>	<b>£48,014.83</b>	<b>£46,125.45</b>	<b>£52,008.29</b>
COIF	£5,662.42	£5,675.63	£5,701.42	£5,733.88	£5,748.96	£5,749.48	£5,805.75	<b>£5,805.75</b>
<b>Total investment value</b>	<b>£49,636.15</b>	<b>£53,081.71</b>	<b>£46,931.37</b>	<b>£54,501.80</b>	<b>£48,150.39</b>	<b>£53,764.31</b>	<b>£51,931.20</b>	<b>£57,814.04</b>

## 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%
<b>TOTAL Investments</b>	<b>£46,086.22</b>	<b>£52,008.282</b>	<b>12.8%</b>

## Investment Analysis

Investment	Valuation				Realised Income <sup>2</sup>	Re- investment <sup>3</sup>	Yield <sup>4</sup>	Performance <sup>5</sup>		
	31/12/2022	31/12/2023	Investment or Withdrawal	Growth <sup>1</sup>				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%
<b>TOTAL Funds</b>	<b>£46,125.45</b>	<b>£52,008.29</b>	<b>£3,000.00</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>£653.33</b>	<b>£1,496.36</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>£52,661.62</b>	<b>£3,536.17</b>	<b>7.7%</b>
COIF	£5,805.75	£5,805.75		0.0%		£0.00	0.0%	£5,805.75	£0.00	0%
<b>TOTAL Investments</b>	<b>£5,691.67</b>	<b>£6,005.86</b>		<b>5.5%</b>		<b>£194.21</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>£6,005.86</b>	<b>£314.19</b>	<b>6%</b>

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](mailto: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 70<sup>th</sup> 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.

Theres 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.