

# Aylesbury Climbing Club

News



Issue 129 October 2017

## Recent News



The slide show on Monday evening, 2<sup>nd</sup> October, was dominated by trips to the Dolomites. Clearly, it was the 'must do' venue for 2017! But as Val reminded us it is not just a recent phenomenon.

Paul Turton and Adam Gough both showed their photos of the September trip. Peter Anderson covered the holiday he and his sons, Chris and William, had there earlier in the year. He also reminded us of military history of via ferrata, and the inhumane conditions that the young soldiers had had to endure, or not ... many succumbed to the cold and avalanches. On a brighter note and nearer to home, he also included a few stunning photos of butterflies at a local nature reserve.

Val took us back in time half a century to the era of hemp ropes and body belays, showing her father's photos of her parents' trip to the Dolomites in 1956, in which they travelled there by motorbike and camped.

Bob Lee showed photos of a 'roadtrip' that he and Pam did along the 'Scotland West Coast 500'. It is good to be reminded of the stunning scenery that we have here in the UK. Follow that ...

## Chiltern Chase

The Chase was reinstated this year - well done Moira (Domican) - and attended by a full field of competitors. In pleasant weather conditions on Sunday morning, 1<sup>st</sup> October, six walkers and five runners completed the route. Vince was first to finish and received the trophy. Emma was the first lady home.



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## Meets

When?	Where?
10-12 Nov 2017	Grange Farm Barn, Hubberholme. N Yorks SD 930 781
8-10 Dec 2017	Dalehead Bunkhouse, Peaks SK 101 843
19-20 January 2018	Clwt-y-Bel, Deiniolen, N.Wales SH 593 630
23-24 February 2018	High Moss, Seathwaite, Duddon Valley, Lakes SD 237 967
16-17 March 2018	Fallcliffe Cottage, Hathersage, Peaks SK 240 792
27-28 April 2018	Count House, Bosigran, Cornwall SW 422 366
18-19 May 2018	Pen Ceunant Uchaf, Llanberis SH 581591
2-9 June 2018	Hartfield House, Applecross, Scotland NG 721 467
20-21 July 2018	Caseg Fraith, Ogwen Valley, North Wales SH 684 601
10-12 August 2018	TBC, but provisionally Meadow Falls Campsite, Ingleton SD686734
14-16 September 2018	George Starkey Hut, Patterdale NY394160
12-14 October 2018	Bwlch y Moch, Tremadog SH576405
23-25 November 2018	Little Langdale Cottage, Lakes NY316030
7-9 December 2018	Homestead Bunkhouse, Bamford SK207836

## Social Events

When?	Where?
20 November 2017	AGM – Aylesbury Squash Club
16 December	Christmas Dinner – Seven Stars - Dinton

# last meets

## Camping Meet Llanberis, Snowdonia. 18-20 August



Moira Domican, Graham Field, Vince Slade, Nick Reed, Geoff Bowles, Adam Gough, Adam Craig, Matt Jewell.

On Friday, Graham, Vince and Moira climbed at Craig y Tonnau - very interesting grippy rock, worth the walk in which was described as a 10 minute approach in the book but turned into an hour long walk through a tropical rainforest with an interesting river crossing!!

On Saturday they woke to pretty dismal rain, after a late breakfast at Pete's Eats they drove to Holyhead mountain and had a fantastic day's climbing in the sunshine. Beef stew at the campsite for dinner and electric guitar music courtesy of Adam Craig. Sunday, Moira, Vince, Graham, Adam Craig and Matt the boy climbed Flying Buttress.

## The Birks Hostel, nr Seathwaite, Cumbria. 15-17 September

Peter, Debbie, Chris and William Anderson, Val Lum, James Evett, Kay and Barry Wright, Richard Lodge, Fiona Broadbent, Richard Andrews, Jenny Walker, Jo Alford, Paul Turton, Mark Bonham, Diccon Proctor, Graham Field, Nick Lovell, John Wilson, Mel, Maryke and Raymond Gosliga, Peter Collins. Unfortunately Jacs Collins was not well and had to miss her birthday meet ☹

Our first visit to this hut proved popular; good accommodation and easy walking from the hut.

The 'early bird' Andersons (Pete, Chris and Wizz) arrived on Thursday staying at Grassmere YHA; they climbed Middle Fell Buttress, and on the Friday picked off four Wainrights near Mungrisedale - the only dry part of the Lakes! Others arrived during the day and did local walks all of which involved getting wet. It helps the lovely mosses and lichens to grow.



The weather on the Saturday was better. A large party did a circular walk via Seathwaite, involving a pub stop to match up moisture levels inside and out. Graham and Diccon were more adventurous and attempted a scramble on Little Blake Rigg, only to abandon it due to the weather. A feeling of déjà vu for Graham, who had to abandon a scramble on Great Blake Rigg a decade earlier in similar weather conditions. [note to Meet Sec to rebook hut in 2027!] Mark walked up the Old Man of Coniston and met Jo, Paul, Mel, Raymond and Jenny who went up Dow Crag.

On the Sunday, in better weather, a group of eight climbed at Long Scar; where Wizz did his first trad lead. ☺ More walking to the Old Man. Richard A, Fiona and Peter C, met Val, James and Richard L by the reservoir and again near the summit of the Old Man. As usual, James was on a mission! Jo, Paul, Mel and Jenny went up onto Crinkle Crag, including a scramble.

# next meets

## Grange Farm Barn, Hubberholme 10-12 November

A new venue for the club. Located centrally in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, the building was formerly the stables and coach-house for Grange Farm. Buckden Pike is accessible from the hut.

Near to the hut, it is more scrambling than climbing country, (e.g. Strains Gill - a grade 2 3 star scramble), but for those wanting more action head south to Kinsey Crag - mostly higher grade sport climbing (although there are a



few Grade 3 and Grade 5 climbs) and there are also some very good trad lines.

Other climbing venues include Crookrise, nice gritstone (an oxymoron!?) crag, a little south of Hubberholme, which is now owned by BMC. Good for sunny winter days. Also Giggleswick Quarry west of bunkhouse which has low-lying short single pitch limestone routes but it could be greasy in November.

### Dalehead Bunkhouse, Peaks - 8-10 December

A return to this venue in the heart of the Dales. Plenty for walkers and climbers, and even some caving options for wet weather! There are hundreds of steps to descend in Blue John Cave, a boat trip in Speedwell Cavern or a Christmas Concert in Peak Cavern aka The Devil's Arse [that's what it says on the [website](#) – Ed.]



Mam Tor is easily accessible and affords good ridge walking. There is also a scramble to the summit, or if

conditions permit, some winter routes. For climbers head to Winnats Pass (restricted access) (both trad and bolted, and few winter routes including Matterhorn Ridge!) Cave Dale at Castleton (mostly trad) or Pin Dale Quarry bolted routes Grades 5 & 6), are other local venues, or maybe a

### Clwt-y-Bel, Deiniolen, N.Wales 19-21 January 2018

This hut gives us access to the north-west corner of Snowdonia – an area that we don't often visit. This is in the heart of the slate climbing 'craggs' – a bit challenging in winter conditions. For those preferring something more reassuring, there is easier grade climbing on rhyolite at Carnedd Y Filiast (Mods through to Severes).

For walkers, there are the usual Snowdonia summits, albeit accessed from the north, or for a change of scenery, easy access to Anglesey which is often blessed by better weather if the Snowdonia summits are clagged in.

Alternatively for a good walk/easy scramble, e.g. full/part of Glyders ridge North to South if you can arrange cars, or winter scramble on Gryn Las ridge leading to Crib y Ddysgl, or Y Gribin on Snowdon. At Deiniolen we are in between Ogwen and Llanberis so can easily access either valley. If the conditions are right for easy winter routes for novices, from Llanberis pass - Parsley Fern Gully in Upper Cryn Las, or Trinity Gullies on Snowdon, or from Ogwen - easy gullies on Y Garn, Cwm Lloer or Nameless Cwm, or mixed



For the full, unedited accounts of the meets, ACC members can access copies of the log book entries on the ACC Yahoo site.

Walkers up for a big challenge and an early start could do the 3 peak challenge although with short days, take headtorches!

Sources:

<http://www.yorkshirenet.co.uk/stayat/grangefarm/>  
<https://www.ukclimbing.com/logbook/crag.php?id=608>  
Diccon

bit of bouldering at The Woolpacks, Kinder. What's not to like!



Sources:

<https://www.groupaccommodation.com/properties/dale-head-bunkhouse-edale-valley-derbyshire-peak-district/youth>  
<https://www.ukclimbing.com/>

on N ridge of Tryfan. For anyone wanting to do ice climbing - best see Diccon!!



Sources:

<http://shrewsburymc.com/club-hut/>  
<https://www.ukclimbing.com/>  
Diccon

## Matterhorn – what's it like?

Following on from the articles of our Matterhorn ascent in the last issue, here are a few tips if you ever decide to have a go yourself.

The big question is what is it actually like to climb? I did lots of research beforehand to get a feel of the technical difficulty (see links) but here's my shortcut version.

Grade: alpine grade is AD and it's long. To equate it to UK grades it's got long stretches of both grade 2 and grade 3 scrambling, two pitches of roped climbing (Lower and Upper Moseley Slabs) which feel like D-VD, well protected with bolts but done in big boots, and sections of jugging up in situ ropes mostly in crampons. You're moving together for 90% of the ascent.

Length: 1200m(!). For the average ACC climber it's technically doable but it's very long and exposed. It's about the equivalent of doing eight Bastow Buttress Variant scrambles in a row on the east face of Tryfan, or twice the distance of Tower Ridge on the Ben Nevis. Then you've got to come down the same way so picture downclimbing twice the length of Tower Ridge at altitude. Coming down takes as long as going up, something we're not used to in the UK where there's generally an easy walk off.



Timing: the guides with quick clients ascend it in 4-5 hours, Adam and I did it in 5.5 (and we knew 90% of the route), any longer than 7 and you'll be benighted. Realistically you've got to be back at the hut by 2.30-3pm to stand any chance of getting the last cable car to Zermatt.

Exposure: not as bad as I imagined because for long periods you are just to the left of the ridge so it feels more like a face climb than a narrow arête. Gets spicy at the shoulder and looking down from the icefield!

In situ ropes: most notably where the ridge steepens between the shoulder and summit icefield.

In situ protection: well bolted for the two Moseley Slab sections so you don't need any trad pro. Plenty of metal stanchions on other steep sections where you move together and protect each other by looping a coil over these. Tangles are inevitable because parties are moving up down on these bits simultaneously. Smile and hope they don't understand UK slang/swearwords, or hope that they do!!!

So what can you do to prepare – some aerobic fitness work, lots of scrambling and easy grade mountain routes where you move together - MOD/DIFF, and experience of climbing both rock and ice/snow in crampons. If you can go up and down Tryfan twice in one day via a 2/3 scramble route you're getting close to readiness!

Hut vs bivvy: staying in Hornli hut is expensive but practical, £120 for no sleep grates a bit but hey ho. Bivvying near the hut is banned and frowned upon, although some do, also cold/uncomfy/more gear to carry.



Walk back to town after summiting: just don't do it! Unless like us you have no other choice because you're heading home the next day. 3-4 hours of steep after full-on day is not funny. Stay in hut on way back too – costly trip but civilised, otherwise you've got to be super quick to get to summit and back in 10-11 hrs and leg it the 1.5 hrs to cable car at Schwarzsee before it shuts at 4.30pm, and that's on top of 5am start.

Acclimatise well: ESSENTIAL!! Go for minimum of two weeks and spend first week progressing to 4000m, then do the Matterhorn in the second week, weather allowing. I just about felt ok on our first attempt on Friday of first week but definitely acclimatised by the start of the second week.

Make an early dash for it: bit controversial this one as protocol dictates that all the various guides leave hut at 4.30 followed by all the plebs at 5-5.30 – far too late for

major alpine route. The system is set up so the guides can get their clients to summit and back to cable car in time meaning everyone else is doomed. It's rumoured some sneaky ones get up super early and creep out of hut by 4am – apparently the door is unlocked and there's no one to stop you leaving...

Getting round argy bargy: with 60 other people on same route so there's no getting away from it so pack your best sense of humour!!!

Loose rock – what do you expect, it's a mountain route - wear your lid at all times and pray it's got someone else's name on it.

Guided vs unguided: hmm, let me see, a minimum of £1,250 for a swiss guide for one day inc hut /cable car fees, or a 5-6 day guided acclimatisation/preparation programme and ascent is £2,200-£3,000. Bear in mind the guides will turn you back at the Solvay Hut (approx. half-way) if they think you're not quick enough – so a lot of dosh and a lot of disappointment for no summit and a certain souring of entente cordiale. Reasonably experienced unguided climber - £200 for 1 night in hut and cable car both ways. Stingy Brit - £0, long walk

in/out, cold bivvy at start and probably a sleepover in Solvay on way back (frowned upon as usually emergency only hut but we met some Poles doing it this way on the cheap).

For the gearheads: light 30-40L sack, 2L water, 8-12 cereal bars, l/w w/proofs, 30m rope, 4-6 q-d, ab kit/prussiks, 2 slings, helmet, harness, and a large slice of the finest luck!

LINKS:

<http://dmmclimbing.com/knowledge/climbing-matterhorn/>

<http://www.summitpost.org/matterhorn-monte-cervino/150235>

<http://www.summitpost.org/my-experience-on-the-matterhorn/450263>

<http://www.exnetsystems.co.uk/climbing/hridge01.htm>

[http://alpincenter-](http://alpincenter-zermatt.ch/UserFiles/files/Matterhorn%20ascent%202015.pdf)

[zermatt.ch/UserFiles/files/Matterhorn%20ascent%202015.pdf](http://alpincenter-zermatt.ch/UserFiles/files/Matterhorn%20ascent%202015.pdf)

UKC Forums!

*Diccon Proctor*

## committee news

### 29 August 2017

Adam to check with the BMC about the 'guest' definition in relation to non-members who only attend the annual Family Meets. There was some discussion about whether to arrange a talk on one of the meets by a mountain rescue team. Graham to make contact and investigate opportunities for a winter meet. Moira to promote the Chiltern Chase nearer the time.

Moira and Graham reported on hut bookings. All but one of the 2018 bookings are complete. Joanne (unable to attend) had sent a summary of the accounts. All OK, but noted that the club has substantial hut deposits. Adam reported that membership continues to increase through the summer. There was positive feedback on shorter more frequent newsletters. Richard is targeting the next the edition for October, in which he will include an article about committee roles. Moira continues to be active on Facebook, which has definitely helped to promote events and improve attendance.

The committee discussed annual subscriptions and concluded unanimously to recommend a £30 membership, with no joining fee. The lack of joining fee will be dependent on members renewing promptly after the AGM.

The frequency for visiting Skye was discussed – every 2 or 3 years? Members to be asked for their views at the AGM.

Moira and Mike have agreed to do another calendar but we need to ensure people submit photos – there are plenty of potential contributors. Moira will promote on social media.

### 27 September 2017

This meeting was principally about the arrangements for the AGM.

# meet the committee

In the last couple of weeks you should have received a call for nominations paper. Nominations are always welcomed for committee roles. It is good to get new fresh ideas into the committee. So whilst several committee members are prepared to stand for re-election, this does not prevent others from being nominated and seconded. If more than one person is nominated for any role, there will be a vote at the AGM.

For various reasons committee members stand down from time to time – usually because they have done the job for a few years and feel it appropriate for another club member to volunteer. In addition to the committee roles defined in the constitution [Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, Meets Secretary, and Newsletter Editor], it also notes that two further members shall be elected. The committee also has the power to co-opt other members. Currently there are eight people on the committee. What do we all do?



**Paul - The Chairman** has a 'hand on the tiller' role. He ensures that the club is heading in the right direction, addressing current issues and generally ensuring the committee members have the support they need to fulfil their roles.

**Richard - The Newsletter Editor**, yes you guessed it, prepares the newsletters. Being IT competent helps, but the main requirement is an ability to find out what is happening and persuade members to send items to include in newsletters.

**Val - Secretary** issues agendas and minutes of committee meetings, but their main work is the preparation for the AGM; although the process to follow is well documented.

**Social Media** has evolved in recent years. Currently there is no specific committee role, but the website, Yahoo and Facebook are covered by various members of the committee. The main requirement for this role, is to find and promote interesting angles to the things which happen in the club.

**Adam - Membership Secretary** is the point of contact for those wanting to join the club. Also they do the membership renewals at the AGM. They also liaise with the BMC, advising them each quarter of the number of current ACC members.

**Moir and Graham - Meets Secretaries** book the huts up to two years in advance and then administer the booking-in nights and coordinate transport, arrange keys etc for the huts they have booked. The system we have used successfully for a few years is to have two meets secretaries; one books for the next year, while the other administers the meets in the current year for the meets they booked the previous year.

**Joanne - Treasurer** keeps tabs on the income (subs, meets fees) and expenditure (the main cost is hut deposits; also the running expenses of the club). Forward planning is important as we need to book huts and pay deposits up to two years in advance.

**Jenny - Social Secretary** organises the annual events (Christmas Dinner, food at AGM and slide shows), and other events such as summer BBQs.

**Aylesbury Climbing Club News**

Issue 128 August 2017

**News**

The Matterhorn

**Meets**

When?	Where?
18-20 August 2017	Camping Ahead, Wye Valley
22-24 September 2017	The Brigs, Southwicks
13-15 Oct 2017	Downstone Camp, Devon
10-12 Nov 2017	Strang, Humber
8-10 Dec 2017	Caundish, North Devon, Pade
19-20 January 2018	Clive + Bob, Chesham, N. Wales
24-26 February 2018	High Moor, Southwicks, Cloddon Valley, Lakes
16-17 March 2018	Falcliffe Cottage, Hathersage, Pade
27-28 April 2018	Coast House, Bodgrian, Cornwall
18-19 May 2018	Pen Leuanant Lloch, Llanberis
8-9 June 2018	Highfield House, Highfield, Lancashire
20-21 July 2018	Craig Ynion, Clwyd Valley, North Wales

**Social Events**

When?	Where?
1 October 2017	Childrens Club
2 October 2017	Slide Show - Aylesbury
September 2017	AGM - Aylesbury Squash Club
18 December	Christmas Dinner - Seven Stars - Devon

Affiliated to the British Mountaineering Council

If you would be interested in helping with the running of your club,, please speak to any committee member to find out more. It is good to have one of two people on the committee without specific roles, who can take on ad hoc work.

Richard Andrews

# Caption Competition



Photo taken during a recent via ferrata trip to the Dolomites.



No appropriate captions for this one so let's just say enjoying a well deserved beer.

Please send (printable!) caption suggestions to [trandrews@gmail.com](mailto:trandrews@gmail.com) for forwarding to the new newsletter editor

## Recycling on Meets

Generally we are pretty good now at recycling on meets. Please remember, if you brought it with you and it is recyclable, take it home, or recycle locally. Thank You.



## Newsletter Contributions

All contributions for the newsletters: articles, or other contributions what would (or even might!) interest members are welcome. Please email to Richard at: [trandrews@gmail.com](mailto:trandrews@gmail.com)

The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual authors and do not represent the views or ethos of the editor, the committee or the Aylesbury Climbing Club as a whole.

## Kit

If you need to stock up on kit, remember that several shops offer discounts to members. The Climbers Shop at Stoney Stratford, Cotswold Outdoor and Fox's of Amersham all offer discounts to members when using the appropriate codes.

## Local Climbing Walls

Various members of the club climb at local walls. On Thursday evenings a regular group can be found at Oxford Brookes. On Friday lunchtimes a group meets at Reading. Finally at Big Rock at Milton Keynes on the last Friday evening in the month there is a 'Climb and Curry' Evening. Climbing from 7ish before retiring to the [Purple Mango](#) at around 9pm. Please contact Alex if you wish to join us.

Committee Members	Committee post	Phone
Chairman	Paul Turton	01844 238518
President	Jenny Walker	01296 713269
Secretary	Val Lum	01844 345727
Treasurer	Joanne Lock	07855 900295
Meets 2017	Moira Domican	07887 750 500
Meets 2018	Graham Field	07826 233559
Membership	Adam Craig	07860 553984
Communications	Richard Andrews	01494 526645
Social	Jenny Walker	01296 713269

For up-to-date information on spontaneous and planned events, photos, discussions, daytrip arrangements and club visit [Yahoo!](#), [Facebook](#) and the [website](#)

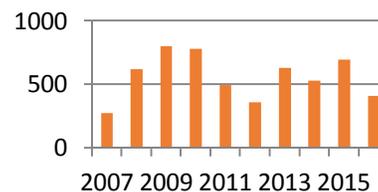


## From the Editor's Desk

I have enjoyed doing the newsletters over the last three years, but I feel it is time for me to vacate the Editor's desk and pass on the opportunity to find the nuggets of club news, articles, snippets of wisdom (hopefully), gossip(!) and information about recent and upcoming meets.

At one time, well before my tenure, the newsletter was THE medium for written communication in the club. It is good that it remains one of the media for club communications. But to keep it going in this 'ten second soundbite' era of social media, requires contributions from club members to make for interesting newsletters.

ACC was one of the pioneering clubs in the use of social media - our Yahoo site has been in use for 11 years. It is still well used, but as the graph below shows the number of posts each year is gradually declining.



Conversely our Facebook group has shown increased activity in the last few years and just in the last couple of months we have set up a Facebook page. If you have a Facebook account, please 'like' the page. This helps to promote the page in internet searches. But please also keep reading the newsletter and contributing to it. Thank you all.

Richard