

# **Membership feedback notes to accompany the proposed Constitution of the Mendip Caving Group, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with voting members other than its charity trustees**

## **Introduction**

This document summarises the feedback the working group has received from MCG members between 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and 26<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

Just two members have passed comments to the working group.

**Jeremy Gilson** wrote

*“It all makes good sense, and clearly a lot of hard work has gone into putting this all together. A big thank you to all involved as this will be beneficial to the membership for many years to come!”*

**Martin Rowe** made the following observations:

1. That, in accordance with the existing constitution the MCG must remain a charity.
2. With regard to reduced subscriptions (clause (9) (5) in the draft CIO constitution) Martin wrote

*“Two questions, about the old arrangement for reduced subs for overseas which is being removed, and the new arrangement for all students which is being introduced*

*The new constitution says*

***Members may request the charity trustees for a reduced-rate personal subscription:***

***(a) if they are a full-time student;***

***(b) if they are experiencing financial hardship.***

*The old said*

***Members may apply annually to the Committee for consideration of a reduced personal subscription in two circumstances:***

***(i) Members living overseas for at least 6 months a year,***

***(ii) Members experiencing financial hardship.***

*Why give every student (and student is not defined?) reduced fees? Some can be quite well off and not in hardship? Under the old rules if they were hard up, students could apply for reduction, so they were covered. Now every student gets a reduction? Yet someone living overseas who gets no benefits, not even a newsletter now, has to pay full subs?*

**The working groups response to Martin’s observations**

1. We have assured Martin that when converted to a CIO, the MCG will legally still be a charity.
2. With regard to the reduced subscriptions change, this small difference will now be discussed at the September 4<sup>th</sup> AGM. We would point out that whilst overseas members might make less use of our facilities, there may be extra postage and money handling costs associated with their membership. The BCA currently offers reduced subscription rates for *“full-time UK-based undergraduate students”*. As a student could apply under the ‘financial hardship’ sub-clause there is perhaps a case to be made out for removing the new ‘student’ sub-clause. Observe too that the sub clauses only give leave to apply to the trustees for a reduction, they do not state that a reduction will be automatically granted.

A further observation on the CIO constitution clause (9) (5) about subscriptions is that the detail about reduced fees during the year is now dealt with in the CIO ‘Rules’ rather than the CIO constitution itself.

Bill Chadwick MCG Secretary  
26<sup>th</sup> July 2021