

# CRAAGGERS

Adventure for the socially excluded in Brighton and Hove



## Annual Report 2010



Registered Charity Number: 1117364



# Accounts for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 - 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010

<b>INCOMING</b>	
Grants	£11 500
Fees	£279.59
Bank Interest	£5.39
<b>Total</b>	<b>£11 784.98</b>

<b>OUTGOING</b>	
Subscriptions	£560.75
Accommodation	£156
Transport	£593.35
Training	£1685.80
Equipment	£3198.25
Utilities and office	£833.61
Venue costs	£1200
Publicity and postage	£575.11
Insurance	£94.90
Activity and operational costs	£1194.35
Volunteer Costs	£3150.21
Misc	£13.98
<b>Total</b>	<b>£13 256.31</b>

<b>General Free Reserves</b>	<b>£689.39</b>
<b>Committed Reserves</b>	<b>£431.17</b>
<b>Restricted Reserves</b>	<b>£1051.88</b>



# Secretary's Report



## **The Future and the Past**

The Annual Report is, of course, a time for reflection and this year at the start of our second decade of operation probably more than usual.

We are in the ideal position to build on our experience gained over the last ten years and apply it to challenges ahead.

Looking around at the way the poorer sections of our community are being forced to accept a much greater share of the burden of global economic collapse, just goes to emphasise how we are needed now, more than ever.

As rents increase but benefits are cut, as people try to come to terms with fuel poverty and the increase in prices of bus fares, postage stamps and many other things that all of us use, leading a healthy lifestyle is perhaps low down on many peoples list of priorities.

And yet looking at the statistics it is poorer people who really need the services we can provide. Previous reports have emphasised the need for an active lifestyle for mental and physical health and the successes we have had in introducing people to nutritious diets at our Adventure Camps.

Statistics for childhood obesity are often quoted but it was put into context for me the other day when someone working in a deprived area of London mentioned that, yes, 1 in 3 children are overweight or obese but what these figures don't show is that this is just an average and that with poor people it is half the children who are obese while in richer areas it is 1 in 4.

## **Doing more with less**

So back to reflections again. Even though conditions for the poorest in society seem intractable and are getting worse, we can look back to our experience since the end of the

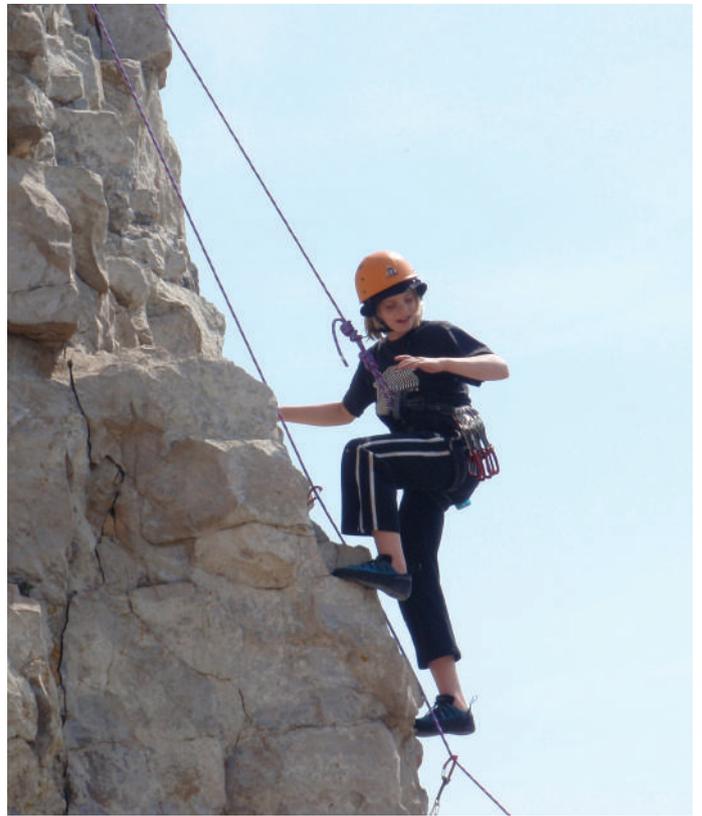
last century and realise that we can make a difference.

As the amount of money available for charities (and statutory bodies) diminishes we will probably have to do more with less but this is a challenge we are up for.

So, read the report and see what fantastic things we have done in the last year. We have given families and individuals the inspiration to pursue adventurous activities.

We have encouraged people who have attended our Adventure Camps to join the group and in some cases become volunteers or trustees.

Craggers is stronger than ever and has an even greater determination to provide **Adventure for All**.



# Mountaineering in Scotland, February 2010



For the Craggers Scottish winter trip of February 2010 we went to the Loch Morlich youth hostel outside of Aviemore in the Cairngorms National Park, where we have been before but not for at least 3 years, I think. So it was a welcome return to the Cairngorms after a couple of winters in the Lochaber area. As last year we travelled on the sleeper train there and back. The best way to travel - leave London in the evening and wake up in the Highlands.

The whole of Britain was having an exceptionally cold and snowy winter, so the sometimes rather forlorn Cairngorm ski resort was in full swing and walking out on the hill, it was a new experience having to keep an eye out to avoid the snowboarders and skiers zooming towards you.

Our trip was a mix of walking and climbing and we had reasonably good weather (for Scotland in the winter!) for the week. It was brilliant

having lots of snow - you could see it metres deep on the bus ride to the ski centre car park.

On the first day (Thursday 4th) after arriving and unpacking, we just had a little walk up the valley to the Ryvothan Bothy and back. The next day we walked up into Coire an Snechda (one of the 'Northern Coires' of Cairngorm - bowl shaped valleys with steep back walls famous for their climbing) to see what the snow conditions were like. It was very windy with low visibility so we just did some avalanche tests in the snow and came back.

On the 6th I went for a walk by myself - I didn't go very far or do anything very ambitious, but it was an interesting different experience being by myself. It was very quiet. I had only myself to rely on for navigation, thus making it good practice I hope, but it also made me more cautious - if you fall over a cliff and you're by yourself it's going to be a while before anyone finds you. I walked up to a minor summit, but



finding myself in cloud and very low visibility, I backed off and headed back.

On Sunday 7th we went for a big walk from the ski centre up the ridge of Fiacall Coire Cas to the summit of Cairngorm with its fantastically frozen weather station growing giant horizontal icicles and then along around the edge of the coires and back down the ridge. There was very low visibility in cloud up on the top, so we were navigating with map and compass and walking on bearings. At one point I couldn't see the cliff edge of the coire rim even when I was about a foot away from it. I was walking along using my walking pole to poke into the ground ahead of me to make sure there was some ground, when at one point the pole didn't hit anything and I realised I was standing on the edge. It would certainly be very easy to walk off the edge in the cloud.

The next day we were back in the northern coires climbing. We climbed 'The Runnel', (a grade II winter climb) in Coire an t-Snechda. We came back down the goat track - which in these conditions was a steep snow slope. I was very slow coming down but then charged off when we were back on the flat and led everyone the wrong way out of the Coire, up the side of Fiacall Coire Cas on to very weird slippery frozen ground, that had us all sliding about. This totally scuppered our chances of getting the last bus and it was dark when we finally got to the ski centre car park and managed to hitch a ride back to the hostel.

On the Tuesday we went for a walk from the hostel through the woods and through the Chalmain gap (a dramatic chasm of rock which a main path passes through), which was all full

of snow, radically altering its appearance - it wasn't very deep! We went up Lurcher's Crag with ice axes and crampons - it had that same weird ice covered in powder snow that we encountered on the side of Fiacall Coire Cas. We turned back at approx 1000m and headed back by the same route because Spanna wasn't feeling too good.

Climbing again on the 10th and I seconded Red Gully (grade II/III). The III means it has some ice in it - my first real bit of ice climbing - which was great. But I remember thinking as I was climbing it that there's no way I would ever have led it without a rope above me though! Back down Fiacall Coire Cas.

On our last day we walked up the ridge from the lower ski car park. We walked up on to the summit plateau. We were aiming to find a little valley called Jenny's Grave to practice some snow skills. We never found it! Despite using bearings and pacings and leap-frogging and the whole gamut of navigational techniques, we wandered around in a disorienting world of white cloud and white snow, never quite sure exactly where we were. Eventually we gave up and dropped out of the cloud by the ski centre and walked back along the ski slopes. It was a weird transition from up on the summit plateau, where you could easily imagine you were in Antarctica - very solitary, isolated feeling and disorientating to the busy ski slopes, with their shops and cafe and car park at the bottom.

It was a pretty good tally for a mere week in the Highlands, where often you can lose half the days to bad weather. I went out and did something every day, and amazingly I didn't even knacker myself by not having any rest days!

– Andrew

# Climbing in Dorset, April 2010



free due to having the same name as the Famous Finley's Café.

Some of the climbs seemed extremely challenging but there were different levels for climbers of little or lots of experience. The views were stunning and magical along that coastline and even greater on the cliff ledges high above the aqua blue sea. Almost everyone had a go and the kids made it look easy as they scaled the Dorset cliffs. Where else would we be able to do activities

Off we went to Famous Five country with lashings and lashings of vegan ginger beer. We left Timmy behind and brought our faithful but not quite so obedient pussy cat – Lucy.

We stayed at a lovely little camp site where we could walk across a couple of fields to the coast and find some great climbing spots. The campsite facilities were perfect. There were toilets and showers that were very clean and a washing machine and drying area. There was also a small shop that sold the basics.

It was a great time of year, the weather was sunny and windy and the new born lambs were frolicking in the fields. Everyone enjoyed the country walks and exploring the Jurassic coast as well as the terrific climbing opportunities.

From dawn to dusk the kids were out playing, climbing, exploring caves and generally having a jolly good time in the great outdoors. Back at the camp site in the evening the games continued with the kids playing tag and hide and seek until everyone fell into their sleeping bags for a sound nights sleep.

On one of the days we did a trip to the stunning Lulworth Cove where the kids got treated to an ice cream and Finley managed to get two for

like this at such a low cost and with great people – only Craggers.

When we visited Corfe village before our return we discovered that not only did it look like Famous Five territory but Enid Blyton herself had a holiday home in the area so we can assume that many of her books were based there.



# Blackland Farm Adventure Camp, August 2010



It is four in the morning and the wind driven rain makes walking difficult. The last violent gust of wind convinced me that I needed to leave my nice warm sleeping bag and check if any of the other tents have been flattened or if I need to give assistance. I can hardly believe that this is August and we are in the Ashdown Forest, home of Winnie the Pooh. I bet Pooh bear and his friends are hunkered down in their cosy holes.

I realise that I'm not out here alone; other head torches are bouncing unsteady beams of light around the field. And I smile. These people are out in this downpour to help people who were strangers yesterday. They are taking a middle of the night soaking to help people who are in many ways very different to themselves. We are already a family.

This years Adventure Camp was our biggest ever, fifty five people ranging in age from five weeks old to mid sixties. The families and individuals were also from a wide range of colour, size, ability and sexuality. And despite it raining for the whole week we had a great time.

So, for those of you who didn't make it to Camp this year, what did you miss? Well the normal focal point of the trip, climbing on the sandstone rocks at Stone Farm rock s, did not happen because of the poor weather but what proved to be just as popular was climbing in the trees. The leaf canopy provided a relatively dry environment in which people could practice both lead climbing and top roping in the trees, as well as stirruping (which is climbing relatively branchless trees using slings for upward progress. We also did prussiking up ropes. This is a useful mountaineering technique which can get you our of some tricky situations.

We had the regular abseil and zip wire sessions along with kayaking, archery, swimming, tunnels, indoor climbing and a couple of treasure hunts – our teams won the Blackland Farm treasure hunt. This year we had a couple of Bushcraft sessions where people learned how to use tools safely and then made various craft items. We had walks, wide games and wild food hunts.

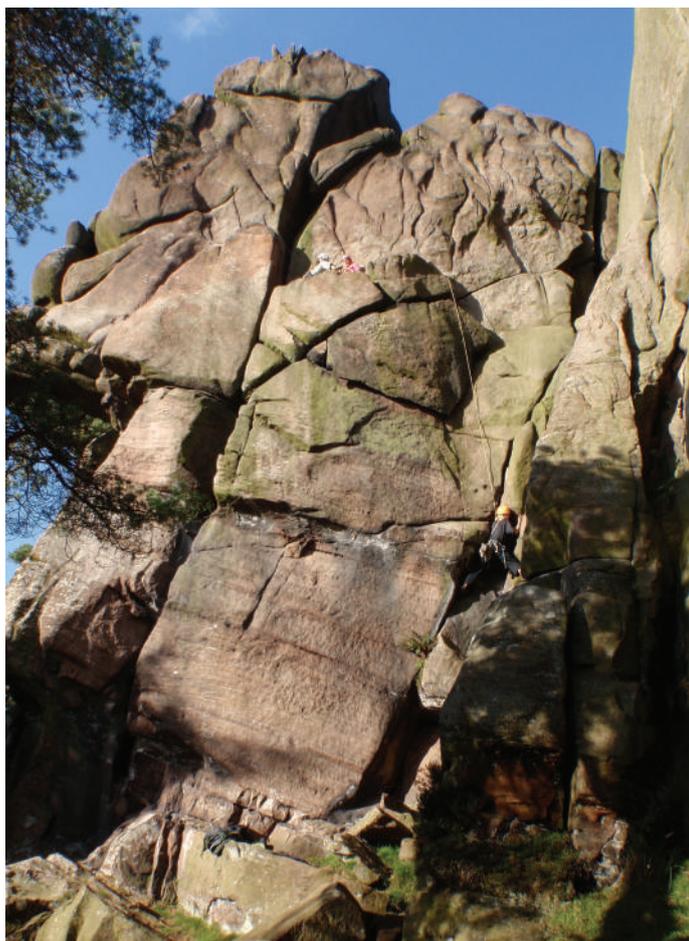
Who would have thought you could have so much fun in the rain.

So we all left the site as a very muddy but happy family

– Tony



# Climbing at the Roaches, October 2010

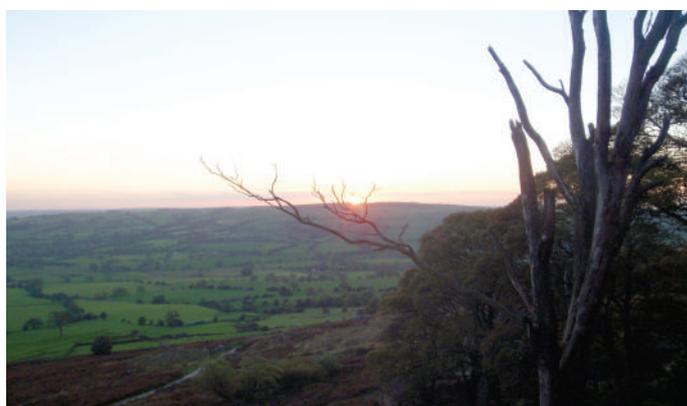
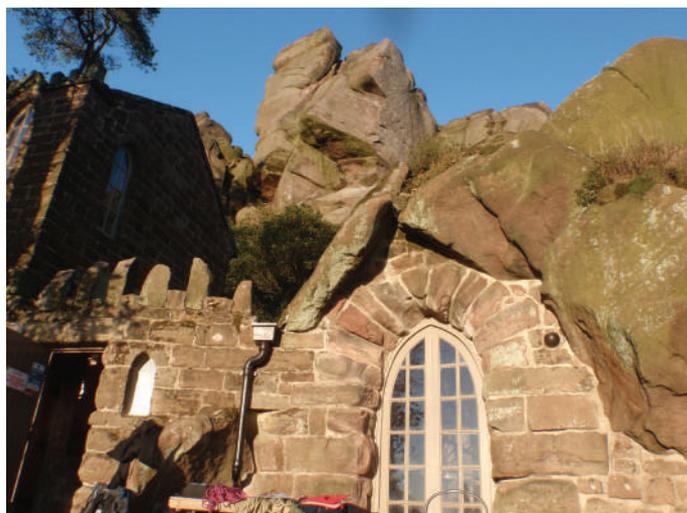


The gritstone edges of the Peak District all have their own distinct character. It was the first time I had been to the Roaches and it has character to spare. Autumn really suits the Roaches, the low sun brings out the stunning colour of the rocks, which in turn complement the glorious display of the trees as their leaves put on a final show.

Mist rolls across the valley, creeps up the rocks and wreathes the tops in tattered coils.

We stayed in the Don Whillans memorial hut, a building which is embraced by and seems to be growing out of the evening rosy rock. A Staffordshire Petra.

Don Whillans, often in partnership with Joe Brown, was one of the great climbing pioneers of the '50s and '60s putting up some of the best routes behind the hut. We had the place to ourselves and made the most of it.



We had great weather all the time we were there and the two minute walk to the crag meant that we got lots of climbs in.

He had quite a few walks and were treated to fantastic views from the tops.

I think we are all looking forward to a return.



# Wye Valley, October 2010



When asked the question, “What are you and the family doing for the half term break?”. I answered, “Going camping in Wales with a climbing group called Craggers”. Most of them responded “Are you mad, it’s freezing!”, or words similar to that. Even I was thinking, maybe they’re right, I must be mad camping with small kids at the end of October, but I can honestly say, it was the best half term holiday me and my family ever had.

There were about 11 of us in the group in total, with various ages, the youngest being 3 months and we had different experiences to bring to the group.

We stayed at the Hollybush Inn, which is situated between the Black Mountains and the river Wye. We were camping in the natural woodlands right next to the river, which was magical. It was a picture postcard setting.

On the first 2 days, we went canoeing which my kids of 4 and 9 years had never done before. Trying to hide my fear of falling in the river, we all set off in canoes. The surroundings were amazing. There was nothing around us, except the colours, sounds and beauty of nature. Not only was the canoeing thrilling and exciting but being really surrounded and submerged in nature’s wildlife was glorious and a huge relief

to be away from the city life.

We also went climbing and walking in the Forest of Dean and close by around the Wye Valley. Which again was beautiful.

The community we created was warm and cosy. We had big blazing fires at night. When at the camp, the children would be exploring the woods, skimming pebbles on the river and visiting the pig who lived up the small hill from us. I felt confident they were safe, and they appeared

happy to be free from the restrictions of the city.

The Wye Valley trip with Craggers was a wonderful experience for my family and without this group I don’t think we would have experienced such a holiday.

When asked how was your holiday, I was so proud and pleased to say, it was the best holiday we’ve had in a long time.

– Debbie





This is to certify that,  
**Unemployed climbers Club (Craggers)**

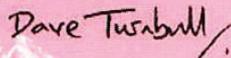
Membership No. 910487

is affiliated to the British  
Mountaineering Council for the year  
2010

The British Mountaineering Council is the representative body that exists to protect the freedoms and promote the interests of climbers, hillwalkers and mountaineers, including ski-mountaineers.

By continuing membership to the BMC Unemployed climbers Club (Craggers) is supporting:

- ◆ The BMC's vital Access and Conservation work throughout England and Wales
- ◆ Supporting the BMC's work in representing climbers and hill walkers interests to the government
- ◆ Helping to ensure that the BMC can continue developing its safety, training and technical work and services

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Dave Turnbull'.

Dave Turnbull  
Chief Executive Officer

