



CRAGGERS 2018 ANNUAL REPORT



Adventure for All

Annual Report 2018

Chair's report

The word of the year

This year Craggers will be celebrating two decades of providing adventure to socially excluded people.

Craggers as a named group was created after our successful Adventure Camp in 1999 when the participants expressed a desire to continue the adventure throughout the year; to gain skills, self confidence and to provide outdoor experiences for their children.

Most of our 2018 activities have been local; walking, including the epic South Downs Way, bivi trips, Bushcraft sessions and of course our Annual Adventure Camp. Funding, or rather, lack of, has meant that we have not been able to run our more ambitious trips to the mountains. Although we have made three trips to Dorset.

The Oxford English Dictionary Word of the Year is a word or expression that is judged to reflect the ethos, mood, or preoccupations of the passing year, and have lasting potential as a term of cultural significance. The word is 'Toxic'. How apt. Brexit, Populism, Identity politics, social division the list is a long one. The word certainly encompasses the day to day existence of many of our members and people attending our open events.

In 2018 it has felt as if our events have been offering temporary respite from the struggle to survive a decade of austerity. Poverty, debt and increasing levels of stress often lead to a deterioration of mental health, something which is becoming more and more evident in Brighton and Hove.

Deprived families will bear the brunt of weak pay and benefit cuts. This could mean an extra 1 million children living in poverty in the next five years according to The Resolution Foundation.

Poor people living in England are likely to die around ten years before rich according to research by Imperial College

Cuts in benefits and the shambolic roll out of Universal Credit have both contributed to homelessness. And the parlous state of the NHS has been unable to cope with the fall out.

Despite the gloom the year has seen remarkable achievements by our members; dedication and hard work from our volunteers and enthusiasm for the year ahead.


Happy Birthday Craggers

Our trip started on Saturday 26th May -2th June .We all was in the same train to our destination ,Dorset ,Tom's Field campsite.

For first day we just managed to get the campsite by bus and setting up our tent and do some shopping from city which was kindly offered by Becci and after relax for the rest of the evening.

For second and third day which the weather was wonderful,we had climbing and some training for us and our children.

The spectacular landscapes and especial view was enough to make the great times,just sit and have a look round .However we did mix it up all these beauties with some great knowledge about climbing.

Next day as was not suited for climbing we head down to the steam train  station which was great to find the right way with using map and navigation and pacing which we all managed to practice half a day lesson and then start walking..

One other day we had wild food recognition with Tony and Sha.We was lucky that we had a variety of different plants in that campsite.

In terms of what we did as learning ,me and Sha manage to make a good understanding of different kinds of knots ,although still we need more practice but now I feel more confident to do some jobs independently.

At the last Day of our camping which was Friday we had a great walking to Clifts,which was half by car and half by foot.

Kids enjoyed a lot especially when they start soaking in black muds on the beach.

In the way back we walked through the village which was one of my favourite ,we had a chat with villagers which was nice and fun.

Most night we had a funny symphony of sheep and fabulous dawn with birds singing.

This trip was combination of some sort of unexpected difficulties but wonderful experience.

Thank you Tony and Becci for making this happen for us.

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Bivi Workshop in the park 3rd. April 2019

Lots of enthusiasm from members old and new for this workshop.

After the Craggers meeting we went around to Tarner Park to go though some tarp (basha) and hammock set ups.

Top tips and useful knots.

Set up tarp first to keep everything underneath dry.

Hammock straps to be higher than tarp attachment.

Hank all cordage to prevent a rat's nest.

Make sure hammock and tarp do not touch ground when packing up.

You may want to use a loop alien on the tarp to create a V so that you can pass the hammock through.

Everything you need to know <http://theultimatehang.com/hammock-camping-101/>

Buy the book or watch the videos on you tube <https://www.youtube.com/user/hansenoutdoors>

The knots we used: Evenk hitch, round turn and two half hitches, marlin spike hitch, adjustable knot.

Other useful knots for bivis include: Bowline, clove hitch, truckers hitch and (better) truckies hitch.

Looking forward to biviing with you all soon.

South Downs Way Walk 28th. January 2018

Sixteen people debussed at Ditchling Beacon for the first BASS/SDW walk of the year.

Pent-up energy exploded and the children ran around before climbing to the highest point. Becci called everyone together (including the kids) to demonstrate how to orientate the map. And then it was off to hunt the trig point.

Stunning views came and went as fog swirled around us. It was cold and windy and my beard was soon covered in dew. By the time we reached Jack and Jill windmills it was starting to warm up and we were presented with a fantastic vista as we ate our lunch.

We walked down to Pyecombe (daffodils, crocuses and the fresh taste of three-cornered leeks) and crossed over the busy A23 to rejoin the South Downs Way.

By now it was really warm, the sun was out and we were soon at Saddlescome Farm, which just left us a last pull up the hill to Devil's Dyke.

Perfect timing. We could have a bowl of chips and a lime and soda before our bus back to Brighton arrived.

Our next SDW walk will be much shorter - Devil's Dyke to Upper Beeding TQ25861071 to TQ19940957 6.59km. - but it will be atmospheric as we walk along the Fulking scarp.

So, on 11th. February, take the 77 bus to Devils Dyke at 1022 from Churchill Square stop H.

The bivvies walk starting on 13th. February, will be from TQ19940957 to TQ13961209 8.15km where we will bivvy at Chanctonbury Ring.

From there we will walk to TQ11911228 2.28km.

On 13th. February, take the 2 bus to Upper Beeding at 1000 from Churchill Square stop C.

Follow the walk at the hug <http://maps.the-hug.net/> if you do not have your own map, print one from the hug website.

Safeguarding:

I attended the Safe Guarding Course early 2018 provided by Safety Net <https://www.safety-net.org.uk/> So as to provide protection amongst Children, Young People and Adults at risk from any abuse and neglect regardless of Age, Gender, Religion or Ethnicity

Safety-Net instructed Training, Advice and Guidance to tackle any matters that could arise and to follow good Safeguarding Policies and Procedures to keep vulnerable Persons safe from adults and children that might pose a risk within our voluntary and community organisation.

- Protecting Adults/Children and Young Person from abuse and maltreatment
- Preventing Harm to health and development
- Ensuring children grow up with safe and effective care

- Taking Action for all Persons to have the best outcome

Safety-Net has provided Safety Training since 1995 they are based on a programme called Protection Behaviour (PBs) to deliver the approach of **"Feeling Good, Feeling Safe"**

I spent the day at the Emmaus Centre with the Safety-Net Trainer in a friendly environment with a mixture of people from various organisations and schools even the Head from Windlesham School all bringing their own experiences and situations they would like to resolve with the best outcomes for everyone

Children and Adults in situations where they feel worried or unsafe even if its feeling Stressed, Bullied or Threatened or Prevent Abuse are welcome to speak to the Safety Lead. We All Have the right to Feel Safe All the Time and to also Speak to someone even if it feels awful or small. We all also have the responsibility and right to keep Children, Young People and Adults Safe..

Thank you

Sunshine and wildlife. SDW walk and Bivi 7th, 8th. July

We walked through clouds of white butterflies which fluttered around us in their thousands, animating the still, hot, air.

Gaining height from the Amberley water meadows was one of those walks where proper hydration was vital.

For some in the group it was a first time doing a walk and bivi so carrying enough water for two days was hard work. But it was a short walk and we arrived at the bivi site, a small deciduous wood, by mid afternoon.

We quickly set up camp and relaxed and began to tune into our new environment. Large, brown, butterflies danced through the trees and as they passed through leaf filtered sunshine they burst into colour. At the other side of the fence thirsty sheep drank from a water trough.

I had been watching the weather forecast for days and felt safe to dispense with my tarp, which meant I could gaze up through the canopy at the bright sky.

In the stillness I watched a fox walk by.

I had intended looking at the night sky from the comfort of my hammock but the gentle swaying rocked me to sleep well before it got dark.

We wanted an early start to be able to walk before it got too hot but we all slept too well.

Two of our group had been visited by a small deer during the night – a surprise for both parties.

The second day seemed to pass quickly as we walked through the cool of woodlands. At Graffham Down we encountered a group of butterfly watchers and a large variety of the object of their attention.

All too soon our walk from Amberley to Cocking was over. A bus journey took us through lovely villages to Chichester station and the train back to Brighton.

I am looking forward to the next walk which will see us finish the South Downs Way.

Outdoor Trade Show Report July 3rd. & 4th.

What a hectic couple of days. But more than worth it for Craggers.

Very early trains got us to Manchester and a bus took us to Event City. Checking in and receiving our credentials (after a bag search) went quickly and we were soon dashing round the 115 exhibitors representing 500 different brands.

We had a talk with Sarah at Gift your Gear who have given us a lot of kit in the past.

There were plenty of new brands and new products as well as established manufacturers and distributors. Two very long days of representing Craggers to the exhibitors resulted in us coming

away with trade deals (at least half the retail price) with the majority of them and promises to send us gear for free.

We did some of the paperwork there and lots more will be sent to us. When all that is finalised I will be bringing proposals to the meeting of what we should get.

Here is a list of the exhibitors with links to their websites.

<https://www.outdoortradeshow.com/exhibitor-list/>

We can look forward to some lovely new kit for the group.

The final mile

South Downs Way Walk and Bivi 23rd. to 25th. August 2018

It had been a long time coming but here it was; the end to our South Downs Way project.

The final part of the walk was different in several ways; it lasted for three days; it involved two bivis; we walked over a third of the route in one go and the distances were at least twice as great as any of our other walks.

Starting at Cocking, our previous end point, we were relieved that the rain stopped as soon as we stepped off the bus. And we were left with an ideal temperature for walking. It was to be our shortest day's walk – 11 miles.

The scenery was stunning for the whole walk with some fantastic 360 degree vistas from the tops of the hills. That first night we stopped in the grounds of Queen Elizabeth Country Park and just after setting up our bashes it started to rain but we were all snug and warm in our hammocks.

Day two, after some slight navigational embarrassment, started in a very civilised manner with beans on toast and the use of a proper toilet at the Queen Elizabeth Country Park café. We were also able to fill up our water bottles.

We dodged most of the rain until we arrived at Exton where a pub provided us with shelter and a chance to refill water bottles. We walked a couple of miles more and found a wood which was perfect for hammocking. We had to set up in heavy rain and it continues to rain all night. We walked 14 miles that day.

The final day, and we decided to walk as quickly as possible. We really picked up the pace – our youngest walker had just turned 8 and even though carrying a heavy pack he maintained an adult speed. We arrived in Winchester for lunch, after 11.5 miles of fast walking, foot sore but elated to have completed the SDW in style.

The walk was excellent training for trips to the Lake District and Scotland where we will be covering long distances carrying heavy loads over difficult terrain.

I am looking forward to Craggers taking on another big project like the SDW.

Walking into Winter

16th. December

Continuing our tradition of pre-Solstice walks, we all met up at Stanmer Park on a glorious morning.

It was the walk rather than the destination which counted; with that in mind we adults followed the kids as they dashed into the woods. Clambering over fallen trees; doing some winter twig identification, meeting a wide variety of dogs (and their owners) and revelling in the fun the children were having, the morning flashed by. All that was left was to have hot chocolate at the Stanmer Café.

It was so much fun that we decided to have a post Solstice New Year walk as well.

Craggers members on the podium

Brae, 11 and Carreg, 8, enrolled for the High Sports climbing competition in their respective age categories and entered the qualifiers in November. They climbed several boulder problems and several roped climbs.

Checking social media, a couple of weeks later they found that they would both be in the finals in December.

Family were in attendance to support the boys and one of their brothers, Buster, entered the all comers fun competition.

They all did incredibly well, against stiff competition, and the results?

Carreg came 3rd. in his group; Brae came 1st. in his group and Buster came first in the fun competition. A fantastic result! And they came away with stacks of prizes.



AMI CONFERENCE, AGM, CPD 11TH. – 13TH. JANUARY 2019

PART TWO: Weather

The weather workshop was run by Geoff Monk. Geoff has been fascinated with the weather for as long as he can remember, and after graduating in meteorology at the University of Reading in 1973, worked for the Met Office for 25 years. Periods in research were focused on improving weather forecasting, primarily local variations in rainfall and cloud, mostly due to the complex coastline of Britain and Ireland. He also did stints forecasting at several locations in the UK, and abroad in Gibraltar and the Falkland Islands. Concentrating on the mountains, he developed what became the Mountain Weather Information Service.

www.mwis.org.uk/

It was fascinating and I learnt a huge amount, which I hope to share with the group during the year.

AMI CONFERENCE, AGM, CPD 11TH. – 13TH. JANUARY 2019

PART ONE: AVALANCHE

It has been several years since I attended an Association of Mountaineering Instructors AGM and much has changed.

I will not go into all those changes, partly because they are boring and also because they are not relevant to non AMI members. I would like to share with you all the really excellent Continuing Professional Development workshops I attended.



As usual there was a great atmosphere at the venue; Glenmore Lodge, the National Outdoor Training Centre <https://www.glenmorelodge.org.uk/>.

The Centre is in a beautiful setting at the foot of the mighty Cairngorm mountains. After registration and room allocation on the Friday afternoon, there was a chance to renew acquaintances and do a little networking

Saturday. Breakfast at 0745 followed by risk assessments, safety and orientation. We joined our CPD groups at 0900. I was pleased to learn that my workshop was being run by Steve Long, who I have known for many years and is probably the best in his field. <http://www.safetysteve.co.uk/>.

I have done several courses on avalanche awareness, prediction and assessment and read many books on the subject. Indeed, I have taught Craggers members the 'skills' on our Scotland trips for the last twenty years.

I was quite surprised to learn that the emphasis has changed from the 'hard' sciencey skills (snow pack analysis etc.) to softer skills (such as avoiding heuristic traps). Of course, the hard skills are still vital to have but prior research is the thing.

After lunch we spent time honing our skills using avalanche transceivers. It was a day packed with information – far more to go into here. But if you would like to learn more from the workshop please look at this <https://d.pr/f/3jrzl9> and this <https://d.pr/f/4bE8zK>

AMI CONFERENCE, AGM, CPD 11TH. – 13TH. JANUARY 2019

PART Three: Equipment

This was a great opportunity to pick the brains of one of DMM's experts. <https://dmmclimbing.com/>

DMM have always been great supporters of Craggers and we have come to rely on the quality of their equipment and the value of their advice. The afternoon was spent testing kit (literally to destruction) on one of their rigs. We were also introduced to new equipment (before it goes on sale) and given the opportunity to ask lots of kit related questions, not all specifically about DMM equipment but about climbing kit in general. Many of the questions focussed on care, maintenance, reporting, record keeping and the longevity of various bits of equipment.

Bivi Workshop in the park 3rd. April 2019

Lots of enthusiasm from members old and new for this workshop.

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Bushcraft and Survival School 3rd Feb 2019

Reporting back on first Bushcraft and Survival School at Whitehawk Hill Community Food Project, Sunday 3rd February 2019.

Glorious sunshine, beautiful views to the southeast over the sea and a charming and rural-feeling community allotment. Tony, Becci, Brae, Carreg, Isobel, Richard, Rachel, Ralph and Fred made it up the hill. Rachel gave a tour of the plot, exploring the pond area, chickens (later the children found some eggs to take home) and compost loo - kids looked warily at the latter ;) We established some rules for respecting the plot and safety.

We started by identifying several plants Tony had collected on route. A new one for me was 'alexanders', similar to parsley and celery and yummy.

Next we went over safety when using knives and how to deal with a femur arterial wound.

We discussed definitions for Bushcraft and Survivalist and what is the priority in various emergency situations: fire, shelter, water.. Next, the contents of a survivalist kit and Becci's fascinating Tardis first aid kit. Finally, we found some wood and all practiced splitting a log and making a feather stick for lighting a fire quickly.

Richard's input into our learning today: a simple contraption using sticks and string to hold together securely bundles of kindling for carrying of hauling. Plus timber hitch and bowline knots, more of which I believe he has in store for us.

It's been a while since I've attended a Craggers session but left with the usual feeling of privilege to have been around 'the real thing', greatly empowered with new skills for looking after myself and others and re-inspired by the natural world. Thank you!

Today we climbed the direct route on milestone buttress grade V Diff 5 pitches. Hard bits cavern, chimney, and the hand traverse weather WINDY/COLD. 😞 😊 .

Tuesday/15/4/19

Today we climbed Idwal Slabs it was quite easy until the top where we had to free solo quarter of the mountain and then the only way to get down was to downclimb

weather WET grade Diff. 😊 😎 .

Wednesday/16/4/19

Today I did my first trad lead and it was a multi-pitch climb. It was also my dad's first trad

lead 25 years ago. Weather SUNNY



Thursday/17/4/19

Today my dad and I did a scramble named Crib Goch all the way up to mount Snowden and back down to the town on the way I found quite a lot of snow some of it went up to my waist

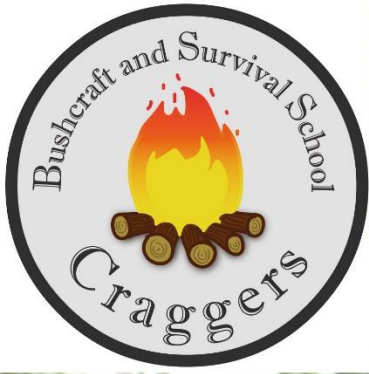
in it (I got very wet).



Friday/ 17/4/19

Today we did some sport climbing in HOT I repeat HOT sun





Science Festival

Natural history walk
Saturday 9 September.
ALL WELCOME.
10.30 start Turner Park



