



CRAAGGERS

Adventure for all

Annual Report 2012



Supported by



Registered Charity Number: 1117364

► **Since 1999** Craggers has demonstrated that adventure can be enjoyed by all.

We have endeavoured to promote social inclusion in all our activities. We recognise that exclusion from adventurous activities is not just suffered by the groups who are traditionally discriminated against, whom we welcome, but also by people who are normally overlooked.

We encourage the participation of unemployed people or those on a low income who could not afford the equipment and instruction normally associated with the activities we undertake. Many of our members are single parents with very young children and we can enable them all to experience the adventure together.

By joining Craggers you join a rich mix of people with a range of life experiences, backgrounds, circumstances and perspectives. It is a mutually supportive group where social inclusion is integral to all we do and it builds a sense of responsibility, respect, understanding and valuing the individual.

Our project, over the last 13 years, has been using an innovative approach to reach and help develop the life chances of people in Sussex.

Growing out of a local unemployed families project we saw that there was a need within the community for people to be provided with the resources and motivation to change their own lives and at the same time improve their physical and mental health. As an organisation run entirely by unpaid volunteers, many of whom have experienced the same problems as our participants, we feel that we are uniquely qualified to help bring about positive change within the community.

Our focus from the start has been on families, seeing them as being the base for any wider social improvement. We believe that cohesive, self motivated families will drive greater community feelings of inclusion and empowerment. The families we work with are generally seen as being “hard to reach” and would certainly not normally seek

out the activities we provide. However, word of mouth recommendations have led to our main initial contact with our participants, the week long Adventure Camp, being massively oversubscribed.

Many of the problems within our community are interlinked and we feel that we have addressed several of them through our project and have achieved quite startling changes within a relatively short time.

Our Adventure Camps may only be a 45 minute drive away but for many of our families it is an alien environment but one in which something positive can grow. A real feeling of being in it all together develops with everyone helping to do the cooking, cleaning, chopping wood etc. Everyone starts to look out for each other and sees to it that the children are safe. Barriers are broken down and for some people it may be their first experience of living as an equal with people of a different colour, ethnicity, religion, ability etc.

The food we eat at camp is really healthy and importantly, very tasty, with the intention of showing that good nutrition is within everyone's reach. The adventurous activities are seen as exciting fun, not 'boring' PE but can be the base for an active lifestyle. Both these things, particularly if encountered at an early age, can help combat obesity. Pushing out of personal comfort zones, on a climb or abseiling, promotes confidence and self esteem. Our participants develop self reliance as well as being able to work as part of a team. Caring for the environment is encouraged (not trashing things, picking up litter etc.) with the intention of this being continued when they get home.

People enthused by the experience of camp often go on to take part in other activities we provide or to become volunteers. All our feedback suggests that we make a huge positive and permanent effect on peoples' lives. With some long term unemployed people having the confidence and motivation to re enter the world of work and others pursuing a career in the outdoors.

Join us and see.

► Chair's Report 2012



2012 has certainly been one of our most exciting and dynamic years and it has given us a firm base from which to launch a fantastic programme for 2013.

But before I tell you about what we did last year I think we need to put our achievements into context so that we can see what a remarkable job Craggers has managed to do.

It is nothing new and no one has been particularly surprised that the poor have been demonised by governments and the tabloids for years. But the virulence of the attacks over the last couple of years has been quite shocking. After all it is the financial attacks on the least well off in our society which has paid for the tax cuts for the rich. Is there no gratitude?

Here in Brighton and Hove we suffer from a unique set of economic factors including housing costs which are similar to London but without the wages or the employment opportunities of the capital. These factors put a huge burden on the inhabitants of our city.

Cuts in benefits combined with increasing rents mean that more and more families are finding themselves homeless. There are hundreds

of empty properties in Brighton but the new, Draconian, squatting laws ensure that these properties continue to deteriorate rather than being used to house people in need.

Twenty percent VAT on food and increased fuel costs mean that parents are faced with invidious choices. All the available choices invariably lead to adverse effects on the mental and physical health of parents and children alike. The days of school being a fall-back to provide for the wellbeing of children are long gone. The ever increasing, above inflation, transport costs are making people even more insular and making it uneconomic for people to travel to supermarkets in search of bargains. So what are the chances of disposable income being used to pay for healthy outdoor activities? A rhetorical question I'm afraid as the known long term benefits of these activities must take second place to the immediacy of providing food, heat and shelter.

Set against this backdrop the value of our group becomes all the more evident. We always talk about inclusivity and how what we provide increases self confidence, self esteem and promotes a healthy life style. But what I hope is highlighted in this report is how much fun it all is

and how it just may be possible that our activities nudge people into positivity.

An overview of 2012

The first significant trip of the Craggers year is our winter expedition to Scotland. It was a larger than usual group of intrepid members which ventured into the arctic fastness of the Cairngorms and despite initial fears that there would be insufficient snow had a very rewarding time. The report of this trip includes training, walking and spending a night in a snowhole. It was a great way to kick off the year and set the tone for the various expeditions to the pointy and watery parts of our island. We also did more training – both internal and external – than ever, with members gaining various National Governing Body (NGB) qualifications.

Our Adventure Camp was run at capacity again. It is always sad not to be able to take every one who applies but it is even more important to provide a high quality experience for all who attend. Judging by the feedback included in this report we are certainly achieving that.

Volunteering has really taken off in 2012 with more people offering their expertise as instructors, trustees and committee members.

Our new web site is now kept bang up to date with all the latest information of meetings, expeditions and regular events. It also looks fantastic.

Monthly walks, accessible to all, for members and non members alike, allow for continuity to be maintained.

Summit, the most widely read mountaineering magazine in the UK, published a two page article about Craggers (reproduced over the page) and we have had some fantastic responses from people who have read it.



Every three weeks Brighton Unemployed Centre Families Project hosts a Craggers meeting. The meetings take place in the main area/cafe in the morning so is seen by everyone who uses the Centre. Everyone is welcome to come along and it is where all new members have to come to join the group. Living up to the ethos of Craggers, every member has an equal say in how the group is run and what activities take place. The meetings can be quite lively.

Enthused by their experiences of outdoor adventure as children in Craggers, two of our young members became volunteers and are now enrolled at Plumpton College to pursue a career as instructors.

After a hiatus during the summer, our ever popular climbing wall is due to be up and running again in the New Year.

None of this would have been possible without the tireless work of our volunteers and the support we have had from our funders, BMC and particularly Tudor Trust who with their three year funding have enabled us to plan realistically and provide the support which has allowed people to realise their potential.

2013 – The possibilities are endless. Come and join us.

► Accounts April 1st 2012 – March 31st 2013

Outgoing funds	2012-2013	2011-2012
Vol costs	103.40	
Activity and operational costs	4,956.27	4,567.55
Office and premises (including money to petty cash)	448.11	507.19
Equipment	1,886.24	807.20
Volunteer training	1,305.98	779.00
Publicity		119.56
Insurance		146.45
Misc.	150.00	12.00
Memberships	692.00	231.48
Venue Costs	1,020.00	1,020.00
Total	10,562.00	8,190.43

Incoming Funds	2012-2013	2011-2012
Grants	13,660.00	11,010.00
Membership fees	160.00	374.30
Interest	9.63	5.86
Fundraising		25.00
Wall fees		
Activity fees		1,069.50
Donations	1,386.23	40.00
Total	15,215.86	12,524.66

Restricted reserves: £4,562.38
Committed reserves: £3,722.40
General free reserves: £1,700.23



Sport for all.



Many people that traditionally weren't involved in climbing and hill walking are now discovering the outdoor life. Tony Hemingway of Brighton charity Craggers, looks at progress made, and how his organisation contributes.

Diversity

It's four in the morning and horizontal, wind-driven rain is making progress difficult. I can hardly believe this is August in the Ashdown Forest, agreeable stamping ground of Winnie the Pooh. I imagine Pooh and his friends are hunkered down in their cosy burrows.

An unusually violent gust has convinced me to leave my warm sleeping bag to see if any tents have been flattened or people are in need of help. Hunched against the dreadful weather, I realise I'm not out here alone; six or seven other headtorches are bobbing around the field. This makes me smile. People are out in the downpour to help their fellow campers, all of whom were strangers yesterday. It seems we are already a family.

This adventure camp was our biggest ever: 55 people, ranging in age from five weeks old to their mid 60s. 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.

What has the BMC done?

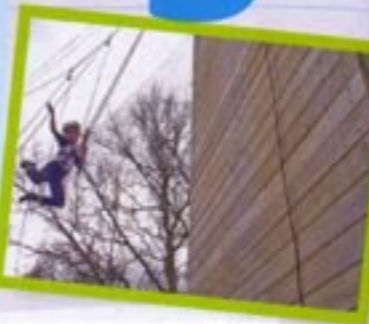
Soon after the formation of our club in 1999, I attended a BMC equity conference in Edale. I came away feeling the BMC really wanted to do something to address the issue of equality in our sport but didn't know how to go about it. So what has the BMC done in the last 13 years? And why should it do anything at all?

One group whose needs have been addressed successfully are the young. My son has been taking part in the BMC Youth Climbing Series for the last few years and it is a really positive example of what can be done. The atmosphere is always encouraging. The high proportion of girls taking part goes to show how climbing has changed from the male-dominated pursuit it once was.

My only misgiving is that

the rare black or Asian face seen at events illustrates that, at the youth level, participation is still very much a white affair – and a middle-class one at that. The BMC have picked up on this and has run a couple of symposia on the issue and supported Muntaz Khan in setting up a walking group in Bradford.

It's a similar story with the issue of disability. The BMC has promoted awareness and has, with its booklet *Climbing For All: Disability Awareness in Rock Climbing*, given us something to focus on. Gay clubs have featured in *Summit* in the past and the free child-protection training offered by the BMC complements its first-class child-protection policy. One possible exception is social exclusion.



What more can be done?

As our representative body, I think the BMC has done almost as much as can be expected. Apart from raising and reporting on equity issues, what the BMC can do best is encourage its affiliated clubs to go out and make a difference themselves. Inclusion can be very rewarding for clubs in so many ways. Diversity can strengthen and enhance a club's activity. Our own experience of embracing and encouraging diversity has led us to become a far more vibrant, thriving and satisfying group than we could have ever imagined.

"Our experience of embracing and encouraging diversity has led us to become



A new millennium

Back in September 1999 when the Unemployed Climbers' Club – or Craggers – was born, the world was looking forward to the dawn of the new millennium. Two years on from the general election some still believed the New Labour project could usher in an era of greater fairness.

Thirteen years later, that prospect has long since evaporated. The huge gap between rich and poor has widened even further. We have seen childhood obesity become a national crisis.

Sporting opportunities for children have become more limited as cash-strapped schools sell off their playing fields to rapacious property developers.

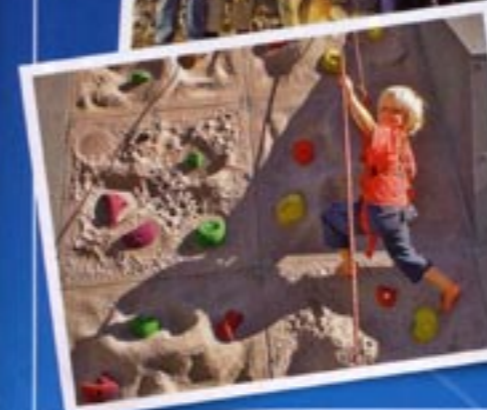
The financial crisis and cuts to council budgets have forced many local authorities to close their outdoor pursuits centres, removing almost the last chance for disadvantaged children to experience outdoor adventure. And in the risk-averse, litigation-happy society we now live in, what activities there are have lost any trace of adventure.

So why do people in our photos look so happy?

Our answer would be that climbing, kayaking and our other activities not only give people a buzz they also increase confidence and self-esteem, promote health and a healthy lifestyle, and encourage cooperation, motivation, leadership and responsibility. And, of course, scaring yourself on a climb is so much fun.

But barriers to participation, such as the high costs of instruction, specialist equipment and transport to suitable venues, exclude many. Craggers removes these barriers by providing free instruction and transport, lending the necessary equipment and providing a safe and welcoming environment.

I am proud to be a minority – white, male, adult – within our club. It proves we are doing something right.



"Participation is still very much a white affair – and a middle-class one at that."

THE CRAGGERS EXPERIENCE

"As a single mother with four children, going away with Craggers is almost like respite care. I feel like part of a community and my kids are totally different when they're in an outdoor environment." – JENNY

"I'd been unemployed for several years when I first got involved with Craggers. They put me through ML, SPA, CWA and first aid courses. I now work at a climbing wall in London and volunteer on many of the Craggers trips. It's changed my life." – ANDREW

"I'm single parent to two boys, aged seven and two. We've been members of Craggers for over a year. This was our first time at camp. My sons and I had a wonderful time, enjoying the fantastic opportunity to take part in so many different outdoor activities. I cannot recommend Craggers and all its organisers enough. Everyone had a wonderful and memorable holiday. My relationship with my son has improved as a result of it." – BECKY

a far more vibrant, thriving and satisfying group."

ESSENTIAL FACTS CRAGGERS

What is Craggers?

A registered charity, run entirely by unpaid volunteers, who receive in-house training and go on to obtain national governing body qualifications. The skills pool we can draw from is huge. We even have our own climbing wall. Originally built on the side of a house (with support from DR Climbing Walls and Bendoretel) it's now been rebuilt in a squash court in partnership with another local charity, Adventure Unlimited.

What do we do?

Our first activities were adventure camps based in the Ashdown Forest and climbing on local sandstone outcrops. The camps are still much-anticipated. We take socially-excluded families, usually up to 45 people, on the week-long trip where they live as one big family and learn outdoor skills. Everyone participates in the cooking and other essential tasks as well as climbing, abseiling, the zip wire, kayaking and more. We also run climbing trips across the UK and have recently introduced the Craggers Proficiency Certificate: a way of assessing achievement for group members.

Who joins?

Our membership ranges from under four years old to over 50, and this widens further on events. Just over half our membership is female. We remain flexible in our approach to disability and tailor activities accordingly.

Where does the money come from?

The National Lottery, Sport Relief and Children in Need. Manufacturers and distributors have also given us support by donating seconds. We've held jumble sales and sponsored climbs. Our unpaid volunteers mean that we use funding very effectively; any offers of kit, money or sponsorship would be very welcome!

THANKS TO

Thanks to South Downs Climbers and Brighton Explorers Club who have provided us with volunteer instructors and helped with the development of the climbing wall, and to our climbing wall partners Adventure Unlimited. Find out more at www.craggers.org

BMC member Tony Hemingway has combined working with socially excluded people for the last 30 years with his love of the outdoors. He is also a member of AM, BAML, MTA, BCJ, ICL and PRCL. He set up Craggers in 1999. He has just taken up skydiving.

CWA Assessment, 4th & 6th January

I did my CWA (Climbing Wall Award) assessment this week on Wednesday and Friday evenings. The CWA is the nationally-recognised qualification for working as a supervisor/instructor in an indoor climbing wall. I originally did the training back in the Summer of '09, so I've had quite a big gap - I've been meaning to do the assessment for a while now, but it took some time to get it together.

I did the assessment with the same person I did the training with - Keith Fleming of Mountain Activities, who is our most local provider for this sort of thing.

Without really planning it greatly, I have been gaining extra experience in the intervening period - running the Craggers sessions at the wall, but also working for Adventure Unlimited, working at Westway in London and at the little boulder wall in Lewes. I remember when I did the training one of the main things that Keith said was that I should get more experience working in different places and different sorts of climbing walls.

In the run up to the assessment I was beginning to regret having booked it for the 4th of January - the big gap of holidays and being away over Christmas and New Year made it hard to get myself together quickly in time for the assessment. I had to tidy up and sort out my logbook (the CWA is a logbook award - so all your experience has to be recorded in a logbook for the assessor to look at) and 2 or 3 days before the assessment Keith sent me a homework paper to do as well. So I was quite stressed in the day or two before the assessment. However when I actually got to the K2 wall in Crawley for the first day of the assessment, it was actually quite relaxed and Keith did a lot to put us at our ease.

It was only the second time I'd been to K2 - I made a special trip a couple of days before just to familiarise myself with the place. It turned out, due to someone dropping out there were only 3 of us on the assessment, which required some swapping round and Keith borrowing one of the wall staff to make

up the numbers. First we just had a quick assessment of our personal climbing skills and then our personal leading/lead belaying skills. Then we moved on to teaching knots, teaching belaying and ground anchors. We all had a go at teaching something to the other two. Then we went over to the boulder wall to talk about coaching technique - what would I do if there was a climber who was hanging off overhanging routes and was unable to reach the higher holds? How could I coach that person or give them exercises to do to help them with their problem? How could I do that low to the ground on the boulder wall and then again how could I transfer that to the main wall?

We talked through and were questioned on some other aspects of the wall - e.g. what safety briefing would we give for the use of the autobelay machine?

The assessment also involved quite a lot of opportunities for learning and I picked up quite a few tips and tricks while being assessed.

On Friday we went to the Adur Centre in Shoreham where Keith had borrowed a couple of kids for us to work with. First we went through our homework questions and then we moved on to doing warm up activities and games. So we all had a go running a warm up game. Then we had a go swapping round teaching the kids bell-ringer belaying. Then we had a go teaching the kids 'proper' belaying.

At the end Keith told me I'd passed which was great.

Having passed this, there's now a bolt-on abseil unit that I can choose to do, which I've done the training for, which assesses the running of abseils and belaying from above.

So thank you everyone for paying for my assessment and I hope the skills I've gained will be useful to Craggers in the future.

– Andrew

▶ Scotland Trip 2012



Winter Skills Training

I log roll down the 40 degree snow slope, firm, double handed grip on the ice axe head. Four, five rolls - my feet are grabbed and thrown violently up and round turning the roll into a wobbly Catherine wheel. Make star shape to stabilise. Hurling down slope head first on my back; semi sit up and reach out to place pick tip in snow; low angle, don't want it ripped from my grasp. Let gravity pivot my legs down hill. Now on my front; pull out pick and get it under my body then jab it into snow; force adze into shoulder; exert bruising force on ice axe, shaft under chest; spike covered by left hand, by hip, prevents possible evisceration; head turned away from axe, right ear in the snow, bum in air, legs apart, knees bent to keep feet up. And I stop.

It is the first day in the snow and I am teaching the group ice axe arrests. We have spent the last few hours in the lee of the north side of the Fiacaille ridge and the group is cold and tired. On the crest of the ridge someone is trying to make a Brocken spectre. We climb up for lunch in the sun. The 70+ mph winds have been slamming super cooled water droplets into the rocks growing fantastic crystalline structures of

rime ice which capture the light and play with it. Autonomous sculpture. We eat and glory in winter's beauty.

In the afternoon we move around the slopes in crampons. John Wayne gait avoids snagging crampons on clothing and being pitched down the slope and smashed on the rocks below. Strange new names for the various techniques; French, flat footing, American, hybrid, front pointing. We cut steps and we climb. We build snow anchors and we abseil off the edge. We glissade and we are exhilarated.

– Tony



Snow Holing

On the Craggers Scotland trip in the February half term 2012, we went snow holing. I and two other teens (Phin and Dan) were planning on sharing one snow hole and the three adults to share a different one.

We went up on Friday. We took a bus to the bottom of the ski run where we checked the forecast and got poo pots (a plastic container with dog poo bags in). We then started to walk; we walked the long way round because it was much nicer walk. The path was well marked so it was easy going until we got to the ptarmigan café which they boast is the highest in the UK. We had a rest there and a bit to eat.

Then we set off following a ski run. When we got the top of the ski run the visibility had taken a turn for the worse, so we had to take a bearing but there was some confusion about how to take a bearing but in the end we all agreed on a bearing and set off.

We knew we were less than 100m from the place we were going to which was called Jenny's Grave, when all of a sudden the wind died down and the clouds lifted and the sun came out which meant we had an amazing view.

We then found a steep slope which was the beginning of Jenny's Grave and we ran down to where all the snow holes were and we looked for the best one and me, Phin and Dan found a huge snow hole with a hole in the top and an igloo attached.

We then had a few sandwiches and got to work improving it by covering the hole in the roof and blocking off the igloo. After that we noticed the roof had started dripping so we put more

of a slope so the drips would run off. Then we started to make our beds and that's when I found out that Phin had forgotten to bring a bivvy so only one Dan had a bivvy bag, this meant our sleeping bags got wet because of the melting snow.

We messed around and slid down the steep slope where the snow holes were, we then had dinner which was noodles and sauce for me and Phin then Dan used our water for his pot noodles. We went into the snow holes and read for a bit before trying to get to sleep. Then in the morning we stayed in bed for as long as we could, until we were very hungry then we got up and made breakfast in the snow hole. Although some of the people were unsure if we should cook in the snow holes I convinced them it would be fine. So Phin had noodles because he didn't want to wash up and me and Dan had Oats

So Simple for breakfast.

We put all our wet stuff in dry bags and packed up. We then worked out the bearing because we knew what it was on the way here. We started the walk, the wind was very strong and we had to be careful that it didn't knock us

over. We walked further down to the Ptarmigan station. Then some of the group wanted to go up Cairngorm so most of us went up and a few stayed at the station with the bags, when we got back we all walked down to the bus stop and got a bus to the youth hostel.

– C. Hemingway





My Week in Scotland

Ice Axe arrests

We all got ready and left the hostel early in the morning while it was still dark. We walked and climbed for over an hour into the Cairngorm mountains, in the cold morning light, to a good spot for training in winter skills. It was a bright and sunny day, the snow capped mountains were beautiful and we had an amazing view of the peaks. When we got to a suitable spot, Tony demonstrated various mountain skills including ice axe arrests. We then each practised the skills he had shown us, first we rolled down the icy incline and practiced the ice axe arrest in which we used the axe to stop our roll so we didn't slide to the bottom and hit the craggy rocks below. Once we felt confident doing this we got another member of the group to spin us around as we slid down the hill. This made the ice axe arrest harder as you quickly became disoriented while falling. We did this so that if we fell in the mountains we would be able to stop the fall safely. We also learnt how to safely carry our ice axes using the straps attached so we wouldn't drop or lose them which could be fatal to us or other climbers. By practising these skills

I realised just how dangerous ice climbing can be if you are not fully prepared or equipped.

Avalanche receivers at the lake

We got a bus to Glenmore Forest Park, where there is a large lake. It was a cold but sunny day with good visibility. The Lake had a sheet of ice partial covering one end, and there were blocks of ice pushed up onto the shore, we couldn't understand how they had got there. Some of the group walked out onto the frozen lake. At that time the ice started to make a very loud creaking noise and the whole sheet of ice began lifting and moving towards the shore, It was the wind pushing the water underneath the ice which lifted it up and it slid under the ice blocks lifting them out of the lake, the whole process must have moved the ice and those stood on it at least a foot closer to the shore. The wind and noise died away and the lake was still again.

We walked around the lake and it seemed like a good place to practise using the avalanche receivers. Avalanche receivers are used to find people who have been caught in an avalanche, both receivers are turned on before walking in snow, if someone is caught in an avalanche

another receiver can be used to locate the missing person, by tracking the signal using a beeping tone or a digital display if further away. To practise using them, two of the group walked off into the woods and hid an avalanche receiver, one by one rest of the group practised locating the receiver, and this was surprisingly hard but good fun.

Mountain lake eruption

One day four of us went up into the mountains to do some ice climbing, on the way up to the climbing site we found a frozen lake, we could clearly see how at some point in the recent past an avalanche had fallen into the lake from the mountains above, the pressure of the falling snow and ice had caused huge blocks of ice to be thrown out of the lake, like an eruption, some of these blocks were bigger than a car and now stood at least 50 feet away from the shore line, it was an amazing sight – one I shall remember for the rest of my life. I would have loved to witness this natural phenomenon, maybe if I spend enough time in the mountains I will.

Snow holing

Snow holing was another experience I will never forget, it was like sleeping in a coffin made of snow, the site where we stayed was even called Jenny's Grave! We walked to the site which is often used for snow holing as the snow lies deeply there. When we got there there were several snow holes already made so we split into two groups and each claimed a hole for the night. We brought a saw and two shovels so that we could improve the existing snow holes. We

sawed off a layer of pure ice that was dripping on our sleeping areas and rucksacks; we also shovelled out snow so that the entryway to the hole was easier to slide into. After dinner we all went to the toilet, this is important as once you have taken off all your kit you don't want to put it all back on as it can take 20 minutes in the freezing cold. We then took our kit off and tried to get comfortable for the night, it was very dark and quiet. I'm glad we had our head torches! It was extremely cold, I hardly slept all that night, As I lay there in the dark, It felt like it was minus 30, but I'm sure it wasn't. After an uncomfortable night I watched the sun rise from inside the snow hole and was glad the sleepless night was over. We all got up tired and hungry, we struggled to put on our kit, and my fingers were so cold I couldn't grip anything and our shoelaces were frozen to our boots, I'm not sure how I managed it. We were glad to have some hot porridge after such a cold night, it tasted like the best meal I have ever eaten.

– Danny



Lead Climbing Training at Shoreham, 24th February

It is when you are fumbling to clip the rope into the quickdraw, while all the strength is leached from your arms, that the difference between top roping and lead climbing really becomes apparent.

Emma, Dan and Ross need experience of lead climbing to be able to do the Climbing Wall Award (CWA) and were also keen to learn for its own sake. For Buster, who was assisting with the teaching, it was the last chance to practice before his competition the next day.

We started out with a talk through of techniques and explained the differences between top and lead climbing, both for the climber and the belayer. It is important to clip the quickdraw the right way and learn to do it efficiently, from a comfortable position. We talked about looking for and using rests and what to do at the top of the climb.

Everyone climbed a route trying to use the techniques they had learned. Without the security of having a rope above you, fear of falling can creep in, this makes you grip onto the holds tighter resulting in fatigue – the dreaded pump.

The next exercise was designed to reduce the fear of falling – by falling. Although this all seems counter intuitive, it is only when you realise that falling does not actually hurt that you can start to lead climb with confidence.

The session lasted the whole afternoon (we had the wall to ourselves – which was great) and it seemed to go very well. Now people just need to practice.



▶ Dorset Climbing Trip, April 2012



Matilda and I had such an amazing time with you on our trip to Dorset!

She loved being outdoors so much, I loved the thrill of the climbing! Such a gorgeous place too, one of my favourites! I loved the diversity amongst the group, ages, abilities. Really enjoyed hanging out with the teens in the group too, don't know many in that age group.

All in all a brilliant trip, and a MASSIVE huge THANK YOU to Craggers for organising and fundraising.

Amy xxx



Thanks for organising a gorgeous trip (if you could do the laundry too that would be ideal...) We had a truly fantastic time in a lovely place in the world with great company. Carys said her best bit was climbing and Tara's favourite part was playing super heroes. My best bit was being out and about with you all and watching the lamb races, although a close second was hearing Brae say "this is the most amazing view I have ever seen" having climbed very high up a cliff!

Looking forward to seeing you again at the Friday wall sessions or a Sunday walk, but going to be at the allotment lots during the rest of month, gardening fever time. All welcome for a cook out and camp fire for a bit of urban nature escape most Friday evenings.

Helen x

Wales Intensive and CPD, 30th April – 5th May

Folded uncomfortably into the front seats of Dan's van, the eight hour journey to north Wales seemed even longer than usual.

We had two objectives; Buster and Dan were to learn the basics of multi-pitch trad climbing and I would attend a CPD workshop.

The rain clouds, which had threatened us throughout the trip, failed to materialise and we were able to pitch our tents in the dry. The downpour started during the night and continued throughout Tuesday making it an easy decision to go and do our shopping.

Wednesday was a lot more promising and an

early start got us to the Idwall Slabs before the hordes. We jumped on Hope, the classic of the crag, a three star V Diff (Very Difficult). By the time we had kitted up several groups from Plas y Brenin arrived. And, after exchanging greetings and briefly chatting with six of the instructors I knew, we were off.



Made glassy smooth by the passage of thousands of climbers, the friction was further diminished by the water, which, after the previous days deluge, continued to flow down the rock. This was my first trad climb of the year and as there would be no opportunity to place protection until I was at least 15 metres up the climb, I took extra care.

I soon began to relax and the long first pitch was soon over. I built a high belay and brought Buster up. When he arrived I got him to build a belay himself and then bring up Dan.

We continued like this for some time and when I was satisfied with their gear placements Dan and Buster took turns at the sharp end.

At the end of the route we decided that we still had time to do some more climbing.

Conveniently, towering above us was a route called Lazarus. A much shorter multi-pitch and a grade harder at Severe. This was great fun and only left the long climb and walk down and back to the van. A great start to the climbing week.

The next day, after an abortive search for climbs in a rarely frequented (and as we discovered, with good reason) area we decided to head to the Milestone Buttress on the west flank of mighty Tryfan. We had a great time and finished up with an abseil down Little Gully/Waterfall.

Friday was the day we had to split up.

As part of its commitment to maintaining high standards AMI requires its members to engage in Continuing Professional Development (CPD). These workshops provide CPD credits. So I was off to Plas y Brenin to meet the people I would be doing the workshop with. Meanwhile

Dan and Buster had decided that they would tackle a classic climb on the East Face of Tryfan.

I was back at Milestone and spent the day going through various techniques for teaching climbing. The first half of the day concentrated on climbing in parallel and after lunch we went through various techniques of climbing alongside a client while giving them instruction. These workshops are a great way to keep up with best practice within the industry.

Buster and Dan soon decided that the low cloud and poor visibility meant that their climb would not be safe so they decided to go for a scramble instead. They ended up on the summit of Tryfan and both succeeded in doing the notorious jump between the twin obelisks of Adam and Eve and thus conferring upon themselves the freedom of the mountain.

All in all a very successful trip. All that remained was the journey back. Groan.

Wilderness First Responder Refresher, 18th – 20th May

I have spent several nights in a tent already this year but this was to be my first time out in the forest, alone and under a basha rather than in a tent.

I had found my bivi spot sooner than expected and with the Earth's tilted axis spinning us towards the solstice and stretching the daylight hours, I had plenty of time to set up.

I slung my basha between two young beech trees. The spring growth of foliage was a vibrant green, accentuated by the low sun; the soft leaves without blemish. I had positioned myself between a couple of badger sets and spent hours, prone in my sleeping bag, alert for activity. But my alertness is obviously no match for that of the badgers. Or maybe it was the delicate aroma of my boil in the bag curry which kept them out of sight.

Anyway my Mr. Brock vigil was not a success, I didn't see any badgers. But I do love nights out in the forest alone, listening to all the interesting sounds of largely unidentified nature. The more I learn, the more my ignorance taunts me.

I slept really well. All that oxygen is better than sleeping pills.

After breakfast and the usual morning rituals, a half hour walk got me to the venue, Alfriston Youth Hostel.

It is hard to believe that three years have passed since I did my Wilderness First Responder. It is an 86 hour course with a home paper. The two day refresher is an intensive 13 hours a day. I guess it is meant to put you under stress and see if you can handle complicated medical scenarios.

At the end of the day I wandered off and found an even better place to bivi, on the fringes of Friston forest.

The walk along the Cuckmere River for day two was lovely and only slightly marred by the realisation that this was assessment/exam day.

All went well and I got quite a good pass and a shiny new card for my wallet.

As always a very big thank you to Joe and Amy of Muir Walker Medics Co op for the excellent course.

And I mustn't forget to mention the formidable acting skills of the people who took on the roles of casualties.

CWA Abseil Assessment, 30th May

I just did my CWA (Climbing Wall Award) abseil assessment on Wednesday at K2 Climbing Wall in Crawley with Keith Fleming of Mountain Activities. Firstly, I passed, so that's good. Secondly, thank you to Craggers to paying for it.

The abseil assessment is a bolt-on unit for those who have already got the CWA qualification and it qualifies you to run top-roping and abseiling activities on artificial structures (such as the abseil tower we regularly use at Blacklands Farm in the summer).

The abseil set-up they have at K2 is pretty unique so luckily Keith gave me and the other guys on the assessment some time to familiarise ourselves with it before having to abseil people off it. It might be a fun thing to go and do as an activity with Craggers sometime if that is possible, because I haven't seen anything else like it elsewhere. You have to climb up a section of wall and then you enter a small doorway in the side of the wall about 20 feet up in the air. Then you disappear inside the climbing wall somewhere and shut the door. Inside the wall, you are in a small passageway, which then leads onto another section of climbing wall hidden inside the main structure of the wall. You climb this and you are in another section of corridor with another door, which opens alarmingly out into space. At this point you are right at the top of the 12 metre high overhanging wall, with a pretty challenging abseil ahead of you.

This would be a great activity for older children - it feels more adventurous and more challenging than a standard abseil tower, especially as after you disappear inside the wall you have no idea what to expect!

Anyway - as a consequence of this unusual set-up, the assessment was challenging in some ways I hadn't anticipated - I had prepared for various things which didn't come up but had no way of preparing for thinking through the logistics of how you would manage a group through this interesting adventure.

However, it all went OK in the end - I slightly made a muddle of my problem-solving/rescue attempt, where your abseiling client pretends to get stuck on the way down with their hair stuck in the abseil device or something and you have to sort it out. The other guy on the course was pretty heavy and the attachment point for the safety line I had him on was awkwardly high and far out, which made it quite difficult to lock it off without letting the rope slither through. But apart from that it went pretty much OK, and I think Keith had a point when he told us his reasons for choosing this venue for the assessment, that if you can cope with running an abseil here then you can cope with running an abseil anywhere!

– Andrew

North Wales, June 2012

On the 12th of June 2012 I, Dan and Tony went to Wales on the train, we went to consolidate what I had learnt on the previous trip.

On the previous trip I learnt to do trad leading, and I lead a few of the famous routes that I had heard of before I went. On the consolidation trip I lead 2 pitches and Dan lead the other one on Dives/Better Things HS4b. I had heard people talk about the 3rd pitch on dives/better which I led. One of my favourite climbs was Grooved Arête which goes almost to the top of Tryfan where

Dan lead 4 pitches and I lead 6, I enjoyed the 7th pitch called Knight's slab because some people go along and up and others go up and then along (the same as how a knight moves in chess). On the last two days there was very heavy rain which was not very nice as we had to pack up in the rain.

– Buster

Blacklands Farm Volunteer Training, July 2012

For Craggers providing fun and adventure is central to everything we do. What people might not be aware of is the extensive training volunteers receive to ensure that what we do is not just exciting but safe too.

Volunteer training focussing on various skills takes place throughout the year. The July training is specifically for volunteers who will be running sessions at the Annual Adventure Camp and as such it makes sense to do it at Blackland Farm.

We camped for two nights which allowed us almost three days for training, enough time to cover what would be required. Even if the volunteers have run sessions before we require them to attend this training to ensure that procedures are refreshed, skills are topped up, and current best practice is emphasised.

There were five sessions over the three days; Abseil and Zip Wire, where volunteers learned how to set up the equipment, how to operate the

equipment, keeping themselves safe, managing participants safely and effectively, taking the equipment down and what to do if things go wrong (prevention, rescue etc.).

Rock climbing, where volunteers learn how to choose suitable climbs, set up and use the equipment correctly, how to manage groups safely and how to deal with any problems. Tree activities, volunteers are shown how to select the most suitable areas to set up and run the various types of games in the trees including stirruping, prussiking, caving ladders, climbing etc.

Rescue and problem solving; volunteers are given the opportunity to use the abseil tower to learn and practice skills which can be used in real life situations on rock and ice climbs, including multi pitch routes, to rescue themselves or others. This is always exciting, if rather uncomfortable when it is your turn to simulate a casualty.

It was a very successful session and people went away with various new and reinforced skills to benefit both Craggers and to make their own climbing exploits safer.



▶ Blacklands Farm Adventure Camp, August 2012

The Adventure Camp just seems to go from strength to strength and remains as fresh and exciting as it did at its inception at the end of the last century.

This freshness is due both to the energy brought to the event by new participants and new volunteers and the new activities we seem to introduce each year.

The 2012 Camp was notable for several reasons. It will always be the diverse mix of people and their interactions which make the Camp a success but this year I think the well trained and cohesive group of volunteers working on the

activities and those doing the less glamorous but vital work behind the scenes made the Camp work so well.

The funding from the Tudor Trust enabled us to purchase a camping kitchen which made catering for up to 50 people very much easier.

I could go on about all the things we did but I think I will leave it to the enthusiastic feedback we received from the families who attended to tell the story.

What did you achieve on this trip?

“Quality time with family, a break from city life and much more”
 “A holiday. A safe, fun place for my boy to go wild”



What have been the highlights of this trip for you and/or your children?

“Sitting in a field with a stormy sky overhead, alone, with glimpses of sunshine”

“All the activities have been really fun and well organised. The people on the camp formed a lovely group, cooperation, new friends, learning new skills, seeing the children playing together”

“Carving a wooden aeroplane. The crate challenge. The night walk for my son and managing to walk on his own in the dark even though he was scared.”

“Climbing, abseiling... activities, night walk, zip wire, trampolining, kayaking, having fun with other children”

“All the children had a brilliant time. He learnt stuff, experienced very good things and has grown in the process”

Have you experienced any difficulties? If so what were they?

“No not really, a bit of rain and I kept losing socks!”

Have you tried anything new on this trip? If so would you like to try it again?

“Wood crafting/cooking communally outdoors”

“Zip wiring, cooking together, tent sleepovers. Did some things that we loved and would like to do all of it again. Learned lots from other people.”

“Everything was new! We loved them!”

“My child has moved some personal boundaries and experienced growth”



“It’s been brilliant. Everyone has been really friendly and it’s made really easy to join in. I really appreciate the way the instructors go out of their way to make it possible for the really little ones (and their mums) to join in with the activities. My 3 year old and I did the crate challenge, abseiling, zip wire and archery together because everyone’s attitude is that anything is possible - which rubs off on the kids, so one of the bigger kids (from the other team) helped her go through the tunnels, which she was too scared to do on her own, then she felt confident enough to do it on her own. Really well organised - thanks”

Wowo Camp, September 2012

It had been raining for the entire week and was still pouring down when we set off on the bus for an early autumn weekend camp. I definitely looked like a towny, pitching a borrowed tent in the dark by the light of the torch on my phone, but at least the rain had stopped and, by morning, it was bright, sunny and warm as we had breakfast and set off on an adventure walk through the woods.

There was a double rope across the river, the top one arguably a bit too slack to be any use, but by putting your weight forwards to keep it taut and sliding your hands and feet one at a time along the ropes you could sidle across to the other bank. At Craggers Camp there’s no such word as “can’t”!

I did it by myself the first time and then my 3 year old wanted a go. We shuffled across together and got to the other side dry and with a huge sense of achievement – which meant we had to do it another couple of dozen times.

All the other kids wanted to try and soon everyone was taking turns to shuffle across. All of a sudden my 7-year-old, who was crossing the river via the stepping stones while my daughter and I went by rope yet again, announced that he’d fallen in the river. Distracted, I looked up, taking my weight off the loose top rope and immediately swinging feet over head.

“Mummy?” she said, head down, gamely clinging on with both hands, feet still resting on what, until recently, had been the bottom rope.

Since I didn’t fancy a soaking, I clamped my legs round her and swung her down so her feet somehow landed on the shore in an inelegant, but dry, heap. It’s good to learn not to panic when dangling upside down over a river.

We learnt to find fresh hazelnuts and use the gate latch to break them open, found edible wild mushrooms and learnt which ones to avoid, climbed trees and learned to identify a few.



By the end of the weekend my kids were happily exploring the woods independently with all the other kids at the camp, running wild in the falling leaves. We went home with a healthy glow under the mud – much better than a weekend in town.

– Jo

▶ Portland Climbing Trip, Autumn 2012



It was a beautiful sunny day and five of us and a dog set off from Brighton to Portland.

I was particularly excited as I'm fairly new to climbing and as a new member of Craggers this was my first trip so I was also a bit nervous.

We arrived at what seemed at first rather a strange camp site but as the week went on we grew to love it. It did have a touch of Deliverance crossed with Father Ted but if you like original 60s wallpaper and fittings and retro egg cups and have a penchant for caravans then it was definitely a grower.

Although we decided to forgo the creepy shower block in case we got murdered....

We unpacked, and after a lovely vegan meal we cosied up round the fire reading climbing books and learning about knots.

The next day we got up early and headed off to the west side of the arctic, no I mean island but it may have well been the arctic! It was

freezing cold, and very windy. I had six layers on and a huge hat. But as we battled along the cliffs it was so beautiful that it made it worth it. It was definitely a "blowing the cobwebs out" day. The descent to the beach was quite tricky; we climbed down by hand sometimes with the aid of a huge in-situ rope. We had to pass our bags down and Suki the dog.

Tony skilled us up with some Bushcraft knowledge and we saw some sea kale, samphire, sorrel and mint. also, there was an amazing type of lime stone called flow stone, which looked like candle wax dripping down the cliffs... by the time we had got to the



bottom it had started raining , which made it hard going under foot, quite treacherous, also most of the belay points were in the sea!

So after sheltering for our lunch we decided to go to the east side of the island, to an area called the cuttings. Which in comparison, was like Spain in the winter- warm, sunny, sheltered and lovely.

We set about finding some routes, sizing them up. The quarry walls were steep and seemed quite meanly graded. They said 2+ which should have been easy but they were very polished. Even more experienced people found them tricky. We got a few climbs in each and as the night drew in we went home looking out to sea at the beautiful sunset, happy from our blustery walk and then finding a calmer place to climb. Excited about the week's climbing that was ahead for us.

The next day we were joined by Jo and her two little monkeys, Spike, seven and Billie, three who brought much fun and smiles. Both kids climbed throughout the week and it was lovely to see their confidence and ability grow as the week progressed.

For most of the week it was great weather but when it tipped it down we had well deserved rests, visiting the amazing sculpture park in an old quarry that Kate found, walking on the beach and perusing Portland's charity shops including the amusingly named feral cat shop...

I had only attempted lead climbing / belaying a few times and did not feel very confident about it, but with a bit of a kindly pep talk from the group I got over my fear and started on a few easy ones. also once they shown me how to lead belay properly I was shadowed by Dan and belayed Danny, sixteen, who was an absolute star. He took a bad fall on the first go which was great (sort of!!) because I realised I could save him! Despite being pumped full of adrenaline and shaking, he got straight back to it and completed the climb. He also showed excellent leading skills and was very helpful. In fact everyone was very



helpful and i felt very welcome and safe.

I've wanted to go on a climbing expedition for a while now but without Craggers could never have afforded it or had the courage.

Today I went to the climbing centre and led a long 4 that before the Portland holiday I was unable to do, but today managed it and felt so happy I've bounced around all day!! This is definitely a good way to beat the winter gloom.

Thanks very much everybody & a huge thank you to Dan Fogg who organised the trip.

- Ellie



Wild Park Winter Warmer

At 11am on Christmas Eve a small group of us went for a walk in the Wild Park.

For me Wild Park is one of the most outstanding (and often overlooked) beauty spots in Brighton. It is really accessible and is Brighton's largest local nature reserve. There is always something worth seeing there, from the great views of the city to the varied animal and plant life that live there. The Wild Park is an important area of "species rich chalk grassland" – a unique habitat which supports much endangered flora and fauna. At certain times of the year you will see sheep grazing in the Wild Park, the sheep are grazed there to help to encourage the chalk grassland, which is in danger of being lost if the hawthorn scrub continues to spread unchecked as it has in the past.

I walked up through the woods with my dog to meet with the others at the Hollingdean car-park entrance. As I walked I was glad that I had wrapped up warm, it was a grey and windy day, though thankfully not raining. We meet up at the car-park and walked along the brow of the hill, exposed to the wind. This area is a favourite for local dog walkers so even on a windy winter

day there were a few other smiley faces up on the hill. We walked to the dew pond which is a little more sheltered and chatted while the dog enjoyed chasing the local Rooks and the kids played in the amazing multi-branched tree which couldn't have been designed better for climbing.

After a while we headed down into the trees and wandered through the muddy woods occasionally stopping to chat to other walkers. We skirted around the top of the northern part of the 'bowl' which makes up the Wild Park and came out onto the more exposed north east side of the park which has great views of the Wild Park below. We then followed the woodland path around which brings you down to Lewes Rd. By this point it had begun to rain lightly so we decided to slowly make our way back to my house just a bit further up the Lewes Rd.

When we got back to my house we had lots of hot tea and crumpets.

It was a lovely walk, and especially good to get away from the Christmas preparations, if only for a few hours. Sometimes in the winter on grey rainy days I find it can be hard to motivate myself to leave the house, but I always feel so much better for getting out especially if it's with friends!



► Learning Outside the Classroom and Saving the World



In Craggers we talk about how our activities improve the mental and physical health of our participants, both adults and children. But apart from mentioning that a beneficial effect on our participants has a knock on positive effect on their local community, we tend not to talk about the wider implications of immersion in the outdoor environment.

In the last twenty years people have begun to realise that disconnection from the natural environment can have adverse effects to the extent that we now talk about Nature Deficit Disorder. Nature programmes on TV and the popularity of Bushcraft as exemplified by a portly man in green have made us realise how much we have lost in terms of experiences, forgotten skills and knowledge.

In an attempt to ameliorate the nature deficit in their children, parents have been enrolling their children in forest schools, various types of learning outside the classroom (LOtC), bushcraft, adventure learning, outdoor therapy, etc.

The kids benefitting from these activities tend, in general, to be the children of environmentally aware, middle class, parents with the resources

to pay for and transport their kids to these programmes. There are also enlightened schools which still determinedly run outdoor education residentials but they are few in number and with cuts to council budgets the short sighted temptation to sell off their centres is becoming irresistible, as is the ready cash on offer for schools prepared to sell playing fields and other outside spaces.

There seems to be a general acknowledgement that lack of activity and poor diet is making us fat and we bandy figures about to justify the importance of what Craggers does in these annual reports and in our grant applications. Despite that I think we need to bang on about the fact that, amongst others, the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges says that by 2030 our children will be obese (48% of men and 43% of women).

One of the latest buzzwords, particularly in relation to children is Wellbeing. I think it is a great concept and it is being used in a context which encompasses many different aspects of wellbeing. The 2009 Report from the New Economics Foundation 'National Accounts of

Wellbeing', identifies five activities which may help to increase wellbeing. They are:

- ▶ Connect ...
With people around you
- ▶ Be active...
Go for a walk or a run
- ▶ Take notice...
Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful
- ▶ Keep learning...
Try something new...
Rediscover an old interest
- ▶ Give...
Do something nice for a friend or stranger.

These are all activities that we encourage in everything we do but especially at our Adventure Camps where we have the opportunity to reach families whose daily concerns are not something as nebulous as 'wellbeing' but rather survival. And I don't mean of the Bear Grylls variety but rather the struggle to feed, clothe and provide shelter for the family.

We often stress the physical benefits and general 'wellbeing' derived from the activities such as rock climbing and kayaking which we provide. What we have not emphasised is that our participants engage in 'real learning'. Apart from natural history (flora, fauna, habitats etc.) they tackle physics and chemistry through, for instance, various types of fire lighting and water purification, engineering and architecture while designing and constructing structures/shelters from natural materials and arts and crafts by making practical and decorative items. Unlike Forest Schools where participants often gain a deep knowledge of one particular area, we take people to the wild parts of the UK where they can take part in learning of a wider nature. During our winter expeditions to Scotland participants learn about landforms and how they affect deposition and accumulation of snow; vital knowledge to avoid avalanches. They become quite obsessed with meteorology and learn about the extremely complex weather systems which combine to make winter climbing such an exciting proposition. In the summer geology makes itself manifest in the various properties of different types of rock and how they will determine tactics

for climbing various routes and the relative safety of the rock. It is really easy to enthuse people about the origins of the mountains. Water based activities are often dependent on predicting the consequences of heavy rainfall and effects of tidal changes.

I would like us to take it as read then, that what we do is of great value to our participants. But we can't stop there; we have a planet to save.

You may have heard about the Triple Crunch, the three fold elements of which seem destined to create a global crisis of such an extent that humans and many other living species may not survive. The three are: the current economic crash; the emerging environmental catastrophe and Peak-Oil (where oil supplies fail to keep up with demand).

Yesterday (as I write this) Oxfam reported that the net income of the richest 100 billionaires in 2012 (£150bn) would be enough to make extreme poverty history four times over. That people in "extreme poverty" lived on less than 78p a day. That the richest 1% had increased their incomes by 60% in the past 20 years, with the financial crisis accelerating rather than slowing the process. Those in the 1% have been estimated to use as much as 10,000 times more carbon than the average US citizen.

It is not in the short term interest of the 1% to save the planet, in fact it is, to a great extent their depredations which have caused many of the environmental problems in the first place. Not to mention wars, divisiveness and conflict.

So it is up to us. The good news though is that we are the 99%.

First though we must learn to connect with our planet. We are unlikely to save something we don't care about or that feels alien to us. We have been encouraged to isolate and insulate ourselves from nature and view it as something other and a danger we must protect ourselves from. Learning about and with nature is the best way to dispel fear, inculcate respect and take on what has been called Stewardship for the planet. Ignorance is not bliss, it is merely ignorance.

I grew up in a semi rural environment and spent a great deal of my time immersing myself in

nature just because it seemed like a completely normal thing to do and I didn't think much about it. It was only as an adult that I started to learn more, mainly through reading. But it was only when I started working as a mountain walking guide, leading foreigners around the wild places of our island, that I really started to learn. The prompt was having people asking me what this plant or that bird was or how the landscape was formed. It was then that I made what was for me a profound discovery. I learned that as soon as I could name a particular plant or bird, I would see it everywhere. It was as if taxonomy had literally opened my eyes and let me see things I had not noticed before. But that was not enough, I then wanted to know, in the case of a plant, can I eat it? Can it be used medicinally? Does it have any other properties? And with an animal, is it native? What does it eat?

So learning outside the classroom should not be determined by age, being struck by the wonder of nature can happen at any time. I was eager to pass on the little I knew to my children and they in turn would delight in telling everyone they met what things were and getting them to smell flowers and herbs or commanding "Taste this" to wary adults.

When we realise that all of nature can be a joyous learning environment and that there are so many things to discover, then walking to the crag for a climb or down to the river to kayak is no longer a trudge but an adventure in itself. And when we have reached this stage, surely wanting to protect it is just a short step away.

On all our trips we encourage our participants not to leave litter and to clear up other people's litter. We can use this as a springboard to put things into context and talk about how trash is not just unsightly but that it can injure or kill wildlife. When we have this base of personal experience it becomes easier to contemplate the far more serious environmental damage done by trash (in



the form of chemicals) thrown into the rivers or buried in the earth.

We can see all around us the depredations on the countryside as a result of inappropriate forestry plantations, hedgerows being ripped out etc. but there are also more nuanced arguments such as the sighting of windfarms in areas of outstanding natural beauty. It is a complex argument balancing the need for sustainable power with the damage done to wildlife and the local environment as well as aesthetic considerations and the fact that the windfarms are incredibly expensive and run by multinationals.

There are many positive achievements gained by the 'environmentalist lobby' but it is worth noting that ordinary people can make their views heard and can stop some of the worst damage. When, last year, there was the proposal to sell off the forests the idea seemed to spark the collective consciousness and produced an atavistic urge to protect the forests and the proposals were defeated.

Craggers will continue to help people to learn and pass on their learning to others. Our hope is that connecting with the planet will result in us ensuring that our species does not destroy it.



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

Membership No. 910487

is affiliated to the British
Mountaineering Council for the year
2013

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



Dave Turnbull

Dave Turnbull
Chief Executive Officer

