



WOLVERHAMPTON mountaineering club

CLUB RULES

Originally, the club had a very brief written constitution. Now that the club is much larger, the need has arisen for a more detailed set of written rules, to expand on the constitution. With more members, close communication is harder. The committee thought it would help new members (and some old ones) to have an easily accessible record of how the club operates.

MEMBERSHIP RULES

Every organisation needs new blood to thrive, but we also need to survive, and even mountaineers need to be safety conscious. We do not want members who are an excessive danger to themselves and others. Nor are we so keen on those with a short-term thrill-seeking bungee-jumping mentality. Because of its commitment, long duration and wide flung venues, mountaineering involves more "down time" than conventional sports, so we do want members who are sociable and good company.

It's hard to make snap judgements on prospective members, so, unlike the YHA, we don't have a sign-on-the-line, lets-have-your-money instant membership style. We do need a few rules to control the mad scramble to join such a wonderful outfit.

- 1) Membership of the club is open to anyone over the age of 18 years, who shares the club's objects, as defined in the constitution.
- 2) A Member of the club is any person who falls into either of the following two categories:
 - (i) Ordinary Member: Someone who has been elected to membership by the committee and paid the appropriate current subscription.
 - (ii) Honorary Member: Someone who has been elected as an honorary member by a general meeting, for outstanding service to the club. An honorary member has the same rights as an ordinary member, but is not obliged to pay subscriptions.
- 3) A Lapsed Member is anyone other than an honorary member, who has been a member, but has not paid the current subscription. A lapsed member is not a member, and has none of the rights of membership until their subscription is fully paid. Someone whose membership has lapsed for two years or more may be required to reapply for membership as a prospective member, at the committee's discretion.
- 4) A Prospective Member is anyone who is not yet a member, but has expressed a wish to become one, and has submitted a membership application form to the New Members' Secretary. A prospective member must be at least 18 years of age.
- 5) To qualify for membership, a prospective member must, after submitting an application form, attend at least three official outdoor meets (other than single day meets), or two of these and two other days on the crags/hills in the company of at least two members, within a 12 month period, or longer at the committee's discretion. If any member has comments to make about a prospective member, favourable or otherwise, these should be made ASAP to the New Members' Secretary who will take appropriate action before the application is placed before the committee.
- 6) After completing these requirements, a prospective member may then apply for membership by completing the application form, with the signatures of the proposer and seconder, who must both be members, and the proposer must have been on the crags/hills with the applicant. The completed form should then be submitted to the Committee via the New Members' Secretary. Election to membership is then at the discretion of the Committee.
- 7) A prospective member who is elected to membership will then become a member as soon as they have paid the appropriate subscription. New members joining part way through the year may be eligible to pay a reduced rate for their first part-year, at the discretion of the committee.
- 8) A prospective member who is unsuccessful in their application may, at the committee's discretion, continue to attend further club activities, and re-submit their application at a later date.
- 9) A member may have their membership terminated by the committee at any time, without notice or refund of subscriptions. Of course, the committee would not do so without very good reasons.

HUT RULES

We own Tal-y Braich, our club hut in North Wales, the best centre for mountain activities within easy reach of our homes. The hut is a valuable asset and deserves preservation. There is much demand for its use, and conflicts do occasionally arise. Financial factors make it desirable to hire the hut out to visiting parties. We like to take a broader view of climbing and visit huts in other areas, so we should be prepared to return the compliment. We need to strike a balance between demand for the hut from ourselves and from visiting parties. We also need to get along with the North Wales locals (our neighbours), and with the local authority – factors easily overlooked by members who were not around when the hut was acquired. We also need to get along with each other in an often crowded environment.

Many of these rules are a matter of common sense and consideration for others, but it's all too easy to take short cuts in a hectic out of the hut into the car off to the crags and back to the hut frenzy. The hut rules are a matter of looking after the hut, each other, and the locals.

- 1) Every new member is required to complete a checklist relating to Tal-y-Braich procedures with the Hut Warden within 3 months of joining. A hut key is available to a paid-up member who has completed this checklist, in exchange for a returnable deposit to be decided by the committee. A lost key may be replaced on payment of a further deposit. Replacement of a second lost key will be referred to the committee.
 - 2) When there is no WMC meet at Tal-y Braich, members may stay there at any time without booking, and take a maximum of three guests. Members are responsible for all aspects of their guests' behaviour. Members wishing to take more than three guests must contact the hut-booking secretary to request a booking. When there is a WMC meet at Tal-y Braich, members must ask the designated meet organiser whether there is likely to be space for guests. See also meets rule (3).
 - 3) With the committee's permission, other clubs and visiting parties are allowed to book Tal-y-Braich Cottage (not Byre). When a visiting club has "exclusive" use of the cottage, i.e. when they have booked ten places or more, WMC members and their guests must use the Byre, which will never be booked out. In this case, members may only enter the Cottage to turn the Byre water on/off, and to have access to the visitors' book. For non-exclusive outside bookings, members and their guests may use any free bed spaces in the Cottage.
- Members thinking of taking guests to Tal-y-Braich are advised to check the club website to see if the cottage is exclusively booked, in which case the Byre may well be overcrowded.
- 4) All hut users must enter their names in the visitors' book on arrival. The book in the Cottage serves as a visitors' book for the Byre as well.
 - 5) When leaving Tal-y-Braich at the end of your stay you must leave it clean and tidy. Whether you leave before or after others, you must do your share of the cleaning and tidying – do not leave it all to the last party to leave, as they will probably be in an even greater hurry to get away than you. If you are the last to leave, follow the closure instructions on the checklist on the door adjacent to the front door, which must be carried out. In the event of any problems, please refer to the Hut Operating Manual on the bookshelf to the right of the fireplace in the cottage lounge.
 - 6) Hut fees must be paid to the Treasurer as soon as possible. Do this using the envelopes provided in the Cottage living room. Pay with cash, or cheque made payable to "Wolverhampton Mountaineering Club." The current rates will be indicated in the front of the visitors' book. It is each member's responsibility to pay their fees and those of their guests, neither the treasurer nor anyone else should have to chase this up.
 - 7) Day fees are not charged, but voluntary contributions are welcomed. Camping and camper vans pay normal hut fees.
 - 8) The farmer's field at the front(opposite the cottage entrance) and side of the cottage is strictly out of bounds unless going to the rear of the cottage for access/camping or use of the gate, then keep to the path at the side of the Cottage.
 - 9) Strictly **no dogs allowed** at any time, except guide dogs for the blind. (This relates to the terms of our occupancy, a violation could mean we lose our right to use the hut).
 - 10) All gates leading onto the road must be closed/secured immediately after access/use. This is to prevent the farmer's livestock from straying. Doors to the buildings must be locked when departing. While it is pleasant to leave doors open in fine weather when people are present, be aware that sheep like to invade enclosed spaces, and can make a terrible mess, so use your common sense.
 - 11) **No smoking** inside any of the buildings.

- 12) Club members may, at the committee's discretion, make a "family booking" of the Cottage (not Byre). Children are welcome on such occasions. The member making the booking must be staying for the whole period, and other adults may also attend as guests. This is the only circumstance when children below 16 years old may use Tal-y-Braich. All such bookings are exclusive – other members and their guests must use the Byre. For family bookings on weekends (Fri/Sat nights), at least ten places must be booked and paid for (the usual minimum for an exclusive booking), regardless of how many are actually used. Family bookings may be made midweek without any minimum number, but will still be exclusive. Children will usually be charged at concessionary rates, to be fixed by the committee from time to time.
- 13) Other than on family bookings, young persons below the age of 18, but above the age of 16, may only stay at Tal-y-Braich in the company of a parent or legal guardian, or a club member who is acting "in loco parentis", and has the written consent of the parent/legal guardian. A consent form is available from the committee and on the website. The parent/guardian must show their consent by completing and signing this form, which must then be kept by the member acting in loco parentis, and produced on demand to any member. The consent is a matter agreed between the parent/guardian and the member acting in loco parentis. The Wolverhampton M.C. will under no circumstances make recommendations for, or approval of any person's suitability to act in loco parentis. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure such suitability. (See also meets rule 7).
- 14) No person is allowed to run courses or a business from Tal-y-Braich, or gain profit from its use or from the club's name. (This relates to the terms of our occupancy, a violation could mean we lose our right to use the hut).
- 15) Washing-up liquid, toilet rolls and other hut consumables are provided, and are usually stocked in plenty. The only product that is at all likely to run out is calor gas. If you do have to buy a new cylinder (for local stockists see cottage notice board), make a note on your hut fee envelope, enclose the receipt, and deduct the cost from your fees, or if the fees do not cover it, ask the treasurer for a refund. Do likewise for any other emergency supplies. Fuel for the fires is *not* provided, and visitors must bring their own.

MEETS RULES

The club's growth in recent years has caused increased demand for hut spaces, particularly on the popular New Year and August Bank holiday meets at Tal-y-Braich.

This high demand for bed spaces also extends to some outside bookings, where the need to pre-pay for spaces booked makes us reluctant to book large numbers of spaces with no guarantee that they will all be used.

The following regulations are intended to advise new members on the way meets are generally run, and to ensure that members and prospective members have priority on available spaces on meets with high demand.

- 1) Every official meet (one shown on the meets programme) will have a member designated as the meet organiser. Their role will be to allocate bed spaces on the meet, and attempt to co-ordinate transport arrangements. For weekend meets, this will usually be done the previous Tuesday evening. Members who wish to attend a meet but cannot make it on the Tuesday should ask the organiser beforehand, or arrange with a proxy.
- 2) Members and prospective members may attend official club meets subject to spaces being available. Members are also permitted to invite guests on club meets (normally up to a maximum of three), but members and prospective members have priority – see (3) below. Members are responsible for all aspects of their guests' behaviour.
- 3) For all outside hut meets, and for all Tal-y-Braich meets on bank holidays, members' guests may only attend when it is clear that the available bed-spaces have not been filled by members and prospective members. For this purpose, a deadline of 10.30 pm on the Tuesday evening prior to the meet will usually apply to weekend hut meets. Before the deadline, spaces will be allocated, at the meet organiser's discretion, on a first-come-first-served basis to members and prospective members. After the deadline, unfilled spaces can be allocated to guests, at the meet organiser's discretion.
- 4) These restrictions will not normally apply to other Tal-y-Braich meets or camping meets, where space is less restricted.
- 5) For some outside hut meets, special conditions may apply, these will be advised to members in advance.
- 6) Members organising their own unofficial meets may make arrangements to suit themselves.
- 7) No person below the age of 16 may attend any official club meet. A young person below the age of 18, but above 16, may only attend

an official meet if, in the case of hut meets, the hut rules do not prohibit under 18 year olds. In addition, the young person must be in the company of a parent or legal guardian, or a club member who is acting "in loco parentis", and has the written consent of the parent/legal guardian. A consent form is available from the committee and on the website. The consent must be shown by completing and signing this form, which must then be kept by the member acting in loco parentis, and produced on demand to any member. The consent is a matter agreed between the parent/guardian and the member acting in loco parentis. The Wolverhampton M.C. will under no circumstances make recommendations for, or approval of any person's suitability to act in loco parentis. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure such suitability. The form is the same one used for staying at Tal-y-Braich (see club hut rule 13), and one completion of it will cover both uses.

- 8) Members have certain responsibilities when attending meets, especially those in huts:
 - (i) Write your name in the hut visitors' book immediately you arrive.
 - (ii) Most huts have rules/regulations displayed on notice boards, walls, etc. Please familiarise yourself with them, and abide by them. For outside clubs' huts, we are there as their guests – please do not abuse their hospitality. Most hut rules are common sense and following them is a matter of general consideration for others, such as doing your share of the cleaning and tidying at the end of the visit. Remember that hut wardens are usually volunteers, and are not paid to tidy up after you.
 - (iii) Some huts will have their own peculiar rules. These will be dictated by special circumstances of a club or its hut – please abide by them even if they seem a little strange – they are usually made for good reasons.
 - (iv) The meet organiser will usually arrange to collect hut fees during the visit, but it is the member's responsibility to pay them. This must be done before the visit ends, preferably by cash, or failing that by cheque. Payment by plastic card is *not* possible as neither our meet organiser nor the hut will have the necessary equipment, and most climbing huts are situated in remote locations away from cash dispensing machines.
 - (v) If, for any reason, you fail to pay hut fees on time, you must rectify this **as soon as possible**. It is each member's responsibility to pay their fees and those of their guests; neither the meet organiser, the treasurer, nor anyone else should have to chase this up.