



**BCRA 2017 Field Meeting
Caves and Karst of the Gower Peninsula, Wales
19-21 May 2017**

Port Eynon, Gower, Wales

2nd Circular

The first British Cave Research Association field meeting for 2017 will be held at Port Eynon on the Gower Peninsula, South Wales. The meeting will comprise a full weekend of walks, during which there will be visits to several caves, and talks about the geology, geomorphology, archaeology and speleogenesis of the caves of Gower. Participants will also have the opportunity to undertake “hands on” cave research during the Sunday visit to Stout Hall Cave.

Port Eynon and Gower offer great scenery and in addition to BCRA members we extend an invitation to archaeologists, geomorphologists and Quaternary Scientists to join us for a spectacular weekend and magnificent Gower views.



Accommodation

As Port Eynon and the Gower are always popular in May a group booking has been made at the Port Eynon Youth Hostel for up to 20 people. The youth hostel is a restored and recently renovated lifeboat station on Port Eynon beach. Accommodation consists of one 2-bed, two 3-bed, and three 4-bed rooms, some with spectacular views over Port Eynon Bay (see <http://www.yha.org.uk/hostel/port-eynon>).



As we already have 10 bookings you are advised to contact us as soon as possible if you wish to stay at the hostel. The cost is £45 for Friday and Saturday night and £35 for Saturday only. The cost includes accommodation, participation at the BCRA activities, drinks reception at the village hall on Saturday evening and a copy of the forthcoming BCRA guide, Exploring the Caves and Karst of the Gower Peninsula.

Bookings for the hostel accommodation can be made via the BCRA event organisers up to 31st January 2017. The cost of accommodation must be paid in full at the time of booking. Payment may be made to the meeting secretary's account:

Prokopios K Trimmis
Lloyds Bank, Cheapside Branch
Sort code: 30-91-83
Account no.: 25151368

or by cheque. Please make cheque payable to Prokopios K Trimmis and post to:

Kostas Trimmis
PGR office 5th floor, SHARE
John Percival Building
Colum Drive, CF10 3EU
Cardiff University, Cardiff, Wales.
CF10 3EU

Please indicate any preference on roommates, otherwise rooms will be allocated randomly.

Cancellations: in the event of a cancellation before the 30th March, 50% of the amount paid will be reimbursed.

For those who wish to make their own accommodation arrangements there will be a charge of £7.50 for BCRA members and £10 for non-BCRA members. This will cover participation at the BCRA activities, drinks reception at the village hall on Saturday evening and a copy of the forthcoming BCRA guide, Exploring the Caves and Karst of the Gower Peninsula. This is payable on the day.

Getting to Port Eynon and the Youth Hostel

By car: travelling west along the M4: exit at J42, Swansea. Follow the brown tourist signs for Gower, then the A4118 for Port Eynon. Travelling east along the M4: exit at J47 and follow the signs for Gower, then South Gower. In Port Eynon, follow the road to the beach car park, then walk along the track signposted to the hostel. Parking is 200m from the hostel and is free of charge; a permit is available from reception.

The Youth Hostel is at:

OS Map: 159
OS Grid ref: SS468848
Longitude: -4.209829
Latitude: 51.541374

By bus: there is an hourly bus service from Swansea Bus Station to Port Eynon. If you are travelling by bus then please contact the meeting organisers, to arrange car sharing between sites.

Meeting, dinner and catering options

Port Eynon's legendary Ship Inn has been booked for dinner on Saturday 20th May. Bookings for the meal options will be taken at a later date. You can view the Ship's menu at https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Attraction_Review-g186466-d5917343-Reviews-SHIP_INN_PORT_Eynon_Gower-Swansea_Swansea_County_South_Wales_Wales.html

Delegates arriving on Friday need to make their own arrangements for dinner. For those staying at the youth hostel it has a fully equipped kitchen for preparing breakfast and a large dining room.

Please note for Saturday and Sunday you will need to bring a "lunch-pack" since we will have a lunch-break during the fieldtrip.

Draft Schedule

Times in the schedule are the times that each activity starts. Please allow time for travelling if you are not staying at the Youth Hostel.

The provisional timetable is:

Friday afternoon: 15.00 – onwards: Arrive at Port Eynon-

Late afternoon walk along beautiful cliffs to Common Cliif and Long Hole Cliff looking at some cliff face caves including Long Hole Cave.

16:30: Meet at Pilton Green, (B4247, Rhossili road). The walk will follow the footpath to the cliff top, via the Paviland Manor Farm Quarry cave site which is directly above the steep sided Foxhole Slade (Paviland Cave can't be entered due to adverse tides). Walk east to look at various unrecorded resurgences, and a number of archaeologically sensitive caves, including Rockrose and Long Hole. Return to Pilton Green via the Paviland Moraine. Those without cars could continue along the cliff path to Port Eynon after Long Hole Cave. This extension to the walk takes about an hour. Torch required for Long Hole Cave.

Saturday:

09.30-16.30: Bishopston Valley and Green Cwm. Geologist Dr Geraint Owen will join us to explain various features on route.

09:30: Meeting at Kittle Village with those that are not staying in the YH, parking opposite the Beaufort Arms on the B3446, South Gower Road from Port Eynon or Blackpill (address for SatNav: 18 Pennard Rd, Kittle, Swansea SA3 3JG). (This walk is mainly along a rock strewn stream bed.)

Walk to Barland's Quarry; look at its part quarried away fissure caves, cliff face stratigraphy and the first stream sink at the gritstone/limestone interface. Follow the streambed below the ford looking at active sinks. Between 2013 and 2015 winter floods washed away a section of streambed exposing an interesting sediment sequence and a number of ancient sinks. Continue to Daw Pit, and then along the dry limestone valley, considering the speleogenesis of various relict cave sections in the valley sides. Continue to Gulver Pit, Guzzle Hole, Long Ash Mine and the lower east and west risings. Return to Kittle via a short cut.

45 min Lunch Break (Please make sure that you have a lunch-pack)

14:00: meet at Park le Breos car park, signposted from The Gower Heritage Centre, Parkmill. (This walk is mainly on a gently inclined forestry road.) Walk through Green Cwm, passing the Giants Grave, an early Neolithic chambered tomb, to Llethryd Cwm and Tooth Cave, the site of Bronze Age burials. Visit Cat Hole Cave, home to hyenas, Gravettian and Creswellian hunters; and later a ritual site in both the Neolithic and Bronze Ages.

Discuss the archeological and ritual significance of these cwms; their ancient fault guided hydrology, cave formation, ice sheet retreat valley deepening, post glacial sedimentation; and the active systems flowing under the hillside, now resurging at The Well Head and Kitchen Well.

Return to the car park at approximately 16:30.

17.00-18.30: Ship Inn: dinner

18.30-20.30: Port Eynon Village Hall: wine reception and talks on different aspects of Gower's caves

Sunday:

10.00-14.00: Stout Hall Cave in the grounds of Stout Hall, (Carreg Adventure). On the B3446, South Gower Road from Port Eynon or Blackpill. Ample car parking on-site. Please bring your own lunch as there are no shops on site.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE GROUNDS ARE PRIVATE AND WE VISIT BY KIND PERMISSION OF THE OWNERS. ONLY THOSE WHO HAVE REGISTERED FOR THE MEETING CAN ENTER THE GROUNDS AND WE ARE NOT ABLE TO ACCEPT REGISTRATION ON THE DAY FOR THIS VISIT.

Stout Hall was once the home of the most prolific of the Victorian Gower cave excavators, Col Wood, who landscaped the grounds in the 1850's incorporating the cave as a grotto. Reputed to have originally been a 17th century smuggler's haunt complete with secret passages, the cave has never been completely explored. In 2014 a surface GPR survey of part of the grounds was followed in 2015 by a below ground examination. The results show that Stout Hall Cave could potentially be considered to be part of a cave complex, consisting of a number of shallow caves, sinks and surface channels. So far these features are known to extend beyond Stout Hall's grounds and under a number of adjoining fields.

As well as visiting the main cave a number of and below ground activities will be arranged to help improve the understanding of how and when this system formed.

This activity will finish early afternoon to allow time for return travel.

Registration:

If you wish to attend the meeting please email Kostas Trimmis at pktrimmis@gmail.com with the following information:

NAME:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

I AM HOPING TO ATTEND ON:

19TH MAY (afternoon walk)

20TH MAY

21ST MAY

I WOULD LIKE TO STAY AT THE YOUTH HOSTEL ON [DATES]

I WILL ARRANGE MY OWN ACCOMODATION

I DO / DO NOT PLAN TO ATTEND THE MEAL ON THE 20th

Please note that If you have already registered for the meeting via personal communication with K. Trimmis there is no need to do it again.

Equipment and Health and Safety

Since the meeting involves outdoor activities, sturdy walking boots and rain gear are advisable. A torch would be useful for Cat Hole Cave and Stout Hall. A helmet and light are essential for those wishing to explore Stout Hall Cave. (Note: some passages can be muddy)

Insurance

The standard BCA insurance scheme provides cover for most caving club and all BCRA members. Delegates not insured under the BCA scheme join field activities at their own risk.

Correspondence:

The meeting organisers are John Cooper from Swansea University and Kostas Trimmis from Cardiff University

For information about accommodation, catering, dinner, caving, talks contact: Kostas Trimmis at pktrimmis@gmail.com and 07532218903

For information about the Gower Peninsula and its caves contact: John Cooper at J.S.Cooper@swansea.ac.uk