

SEEKER

Don't let
Autumn
box you in

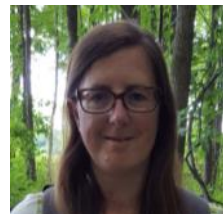
Piratemania
Devon Mega
CITO Weekend

Autumn 2017

#33



The 2017 Committee



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Sharant
GAGB Chair



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ukcachemag
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border caz
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Cover: KT Series, Cheshire Nr [GC3RNZo](#) Courtesy of Sharon Reid

Above: Ham Wall, Somerset, [GC57AoC](#) Courtesy of Sharon Reid



The Geocaching Association of Great Britain (GAGB) is the leading UK Geocaching body, recognised by and acting on behalf of geocachers. The Association was established in 2003 to provide a national organisation that represented geocaching, and to serve as a UK point of contact for geocachers, landowners, the media and others with an interest in geocaching. Find us online at www.gagb.org.uk.

Contributions to Seeker are welcome; please contact editor@gagb.org.uk. The Association is unable, at the present time, to pay for submissions. Copyright in all such contributions will revert to the author on publication of the subsequent issue. Pictures are published on a single-use, non-exclusive UK editorial rights basis, under which copyright remains with the photographer.

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SEEKER 33

In this issue...

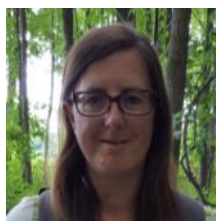
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Chair's Message

Sharon Reid

Sharant

GAGB Chair, 2017



This is the last issue of Seeker from the current committee and contains our annual reports explaining what we have achieved this past year, as well as information on our upcoming elections on page 21. It's important that our members get involved in the elections - whether to vote, nominate or stand for the role of one of the eight committee member posts or Chair. If you have something to say or do, please get involved! Nominations open on Monday 23rd October.

Whether or not you stand for election, I do encourage you to help us do what you want us to do, in whichever way you can - perhaps finding new GLAD agreements, sending us Seeker articles, or hosting a roving event or a CITO – the GAGB is for you, make it what you want!

In this issue there is a summary of this year's summer Mega events, our best ever annual GAGB CITO weekend, and the launching of our Photo Competition. We also have an article on winter caching as well as one on the differences between souvenirs and badges. We have also launched our third UK National Parks geocoins (note the plural!), Dartmoor, produced in association with Geocache Land.

Members' Discounts...

CICERONE

20% Discount

Cicerone Press are pleased to offer GAGB members a **discount of 20%** on all Cicerone titles purchased online at www.cicerone.co.uk

All members need to do to claim the discount is to add the voucher code 'GAGB' on the shopping basket page of the Cicerone website.



15% Discount

Cotswold Outdoor offer GAGB members a **15% discount**. More detail and the discount code are available from the Members' Chat section of the GAGB forums.



10% Discount

Pulse72Geocaching are happy to offer GAGB members a **10% discount** on their wide range of geocaching products — see www.pulse72geocaching.co.uk.

The relevant discount code is available from the Members' Chat section of the GAGB



10% Discount

GeocacheKit are pleased to be able to offer all GAGB members a **10% discount** on all items on the website www.geocachekit.co.uk. Including geocoins, trackables, readymade caches and much more.

The discount code is available from the Members' Chat section of the GAGB forums.



5% Discount

Base of Tree geocaching supplies are happy to offer GAGB members a **5% discount** on all geocaching supplies

Visit their website for details, and obtain the relevant code from the Members' Chat section of the GAGB forums. www.baseoftree.com



5% Discount

Geocache Land are happy to offer GAGB members a **5% discount** on their wide range of geocaching products — see www.geocacheland.com

The relevant code is available from the



5% Discount

www.ukgeocachers.co.uk

UK Geocachers are happy to offer GAGB members a **5% discount** on their products. In order to obtain your discount, you need to email UKgeocachers and set up an account, so that the discount is applied to each order.



5% Discount

NE GEOCACHING SUPPLIES are happy to offer GAGB members a **5% discount** on their wide range of geocaching products — see www.negeocachingsupplies.co.uk.

The relevant discount code is available from the Members' Chat section of the GAGB forums.



5% Discount

Geotees: For geocoins, travel bugs, caches and more. We can also have your own coins or tags made for you to your design. Please visit us at www.geotees.co.uk where GAGB members enjoy a **5% discount**. To get your discount, open an account, then PM or email me (Mongoose39uk) through the GAGB website before you place your order. This only needs to be done once, the discount will then be applied to all future orders.

PIRATEMANIA

...the **TEN** letters of the pirate alphabet?

I, L, R and the seven C's

Sharon Reid (Sharant) returns home and brings several hundred pirates, too!

Piratemanía was held in the South-West this year - very close to my home village in Somerset at Petruth Paddocks campsite in Cheddar. The home of Cheddar Gorge and Cheddar cheese.

It was the biggest ever attendance with over 800 pirates signing the log and 501 attended logs on the Mega cache page and there were 175 ships in the Port Of Cheddar camping.

Rain held off until the late afternoon so time to find lots of caches and a new series was placed for the Mega.

As it got darker everyone crammed into the marquee out of the rain but all the pirates still had a great evening, and a long raffle!

The next day we all travelled to the gorge for a flash mob tribute to Karen Thorn (Angelica) who we sadly lost earlier this year.

Expect Piratemanía back next year somewhere on the North Yorks Moors.

GAGB Photo Competition

Cache with a View



The GAGB are running a photo competition to find the best view from a cache in UK!

All GAGB members are encouraged to

submit a worthy snap showcasing a fantastic view from a UK cache. **You can submit up to 5 photos between November 1st 2017 and March 31st 2018.**

The winning photo will be used as the header image on our website, social media channels and emails. There will also be other prizes, including for runners up and highly commended entries. All remaining entries will be submitted into a prize draw.

The GAGB committee will judge the photos in April 2018 to decide the definitive winner.

So, browse your libraries or take a new photo for the chance to win some great prizes and have your photo displayed on the GAGB's website and social media channels for the next few years!

Submit your photos by emailing them as an attachment to photos@gagb.org.uk

See below for details about [entering the competition](#). Please ensure you read the [Guidelines](#) and [Terms and Conditions](#) provided.

Prizes*

First Place Prize:

- New official GAGB header image (website, forum, Twitter, Facebook, emails, Seeker, and so on!).
- Choose, either a GAGB geocoin that is in stock in April - or a GAGB Store Credit - £15

Second Place Prize:

- GAGB Store Credit - £10
- Extra entry into the prize draw!

Third Place Prize:

- GAGB Store Credit - £5
- Extra entry into the prize draw!

Highly Commended (up to 10 entries):

- GAGB Store Credit - £3
- Extra entry into the prize draw!

All Entries will be Entered into prize draw, with the winners of 2nd to 10th place getting an EXTRA entry!

Entry

Send your photo(s) to photos@gagb.org.uk, using the subject line 'GAGB Photo Competition'.

Please attach your photo(s) to the email. We would be grateful if you could name each one e.g. "View Towards Snowdon". You can do this by renaming the photo on your computer before you upload it as an attachment.

Please include the following information for each photo:

- Number the photo and repeat the name of the photo file. For example, "Photo 1: View Towards Snowdon.JPG".
- State the GC code of the nearest cache.
- Describe the photo briefly (optional, but desired).

Please also include the following information in your email:

- Your GAGB username.
- Your caching name.
- Best way to contact you (either email or phone. If phone, please provide us with your phone number).

Competition Guidelines

1. Keep to the theme: 'Cache with a View'
2. Photos do not have to be new. Both old and new photos are welcome.
3. They do not have to be seasonal – i.e. feel free to submit a summer photo, even though the competition runs over winter.
4. Make sure that your photo is high resolution, i.e. a minimum of 300dpi.
5. Please ensure that your photo is landscape or square. Landscape is preferred.
6. Your photo must be taken within the British Isles, as it's the area GAGB covers.
7. We will accept and equally judge any photo. However, a landscape might be more suited for a header image.
8. Having said this, don't feel restricted by the theme. Photos could show a far-reaching view or a landscape but, as long as there's something to look at, it's a view. So you can submit photos of interesting sights, buildings and monuments as well. Think outside the box, come up with other ideas beyond these!
9. Please try to ensure that photos are taken as close to a cache as possible, and please share the GC code with us.
10. Please ensure that the content of the photo is family-friendly, and not inappropriate in any way.
11. You can edit your photo and/or apply filters if you want but this is not obligatory.
12. Enhanced photo images (e.g. with illustration embedded) are permitted.



Terms and Conditions

1. Photos can be submitted between November 1st 2017 and March 31st 2018.
2. You must be a GAGB member at the time of submitting your photo(s).
3. Each member can submit up to five photos. You do not have to submit all your photos at once.
4. Each member can win no more than one prize, i.e. if they submit multiple photos and several do well, they will not win a prize for each successful photo - their highest-ranking photo will be selected..
5. The photo submitted must be your own. Image checks will be performed to ensure that photos are not taken from online sources, and submitters accept all liability for use of copyrighted material.
6. By submitting a photo to the competition, you assure us that you have the legal right to licence GAGB to use your image.
7. You give the GAGB the right to use your image(s) on our website, social media channels (e.g. Instagram) and Seeker at any point in time. This is irrespective of your placing in the competition.
8. The GAGB will always fully credit all photos at time of use.
9. All photos remain the property of the photographer, and the GAGB will not claim ownership of any photo.
10. The photographer remains responsible for all content in the photo.
11. You assure the GAGB that any people in the image have given their permission for the photo to be submitted. The photographer, not the GAGB, will be held accountable for any possible complaints based on your decisions as photographer.
12. Photos will be judged anonymously. Judges' decisions are final.
13. Those holding office on the 2017/18 GAGB Executive Committee (elected in November 2017) cannot win any prizes in this competition.
14. Founders, Supporter Members, and past GAGB Executive Committee members (2003-17) are permitted and encouraged to submit photos as part of the competition and win a prize.
15. By submitting a photo, you fully agree to these terms and conditions and agree to follow the guidelines of the competition.

Good luck!

* Please note that prizes are subject to change, although this is not anticipated.

A MEGA-tastic time in Devon

*Ant Reid (Sharant)
has another encounter
with a geo-campsite
and explores the
road network*

Monday

I'm well known for being not exactly keen on tents, but every year I find I can't argue with the benefits of camping on site during Mega week, and Devon in 2017 was no different.

Check-in on Monday was simple - we were given a spot next to those we wanted to be near, and we put up our tent on a soft and flat bit of grass. The view was pretty good - trees, fields, and a few hundred geocachers!

A good start by the Devon team.

Tuesday

With an offsite event every day, and with Devon being such an LARGE county, we had to plan well. Tuesday was at Haytor - a great location up on Dartmoor. We played Queen on the way there and grabbed a picnic on Bovey Tracey, signed the log book, said 'hello' to an otter, and then chose to struggle our way around a now-archived series towards Bag Tor - we encountered a lot of bracken and our

large party split and reformed and re-split many times! We all met up at a letterbox cache (it's Dartmoor, they started here, so that was good!) and consumed our picnic, with a great view in front of us. After this was the earthcache on Haytor and then - well, we have this bookmark list of the favourite caches of other, more famous, cachers sitting on our GPS

unit, and one was nearby, so we went and experienced the fantastic **Haytor Down** series - a great walk, with varied terrain, interesting hides, and several great views - fab! When we got back to the Mega site it was too late for the event in the Marquee, but we enjoyed the on-site bar!



Wednesday

Off to the other side of the planet today as we headed off to the War Horse farm, accompanied by REM. We had a walk around the farm and encountered many animals, much mud, and the George Foreman Appreciation Society - a mysterious group of Cow Whispering geocachers that appeared out of the drizzle to save our more nervous team members at just the right time. Besides meeting many cachers, lots of mud, and a couple of Church Micros, we bagged over twenty caches that day - my

only regret is walking straight past the pub, but good job we did - we were due back at the Mega site for the evening event, and we still had to go down an interesting array of Devonian roads!

Back in the Marquee a few GAGB experts showcased what we do and then provided materials to make several types of caches. We all jumped into the activities, gluing, cutting, stuffing, and enjoying our time making caches out of sticks and grass and also gluing googly eyes on stones! I hope we have a Makers' Madness event next year too!





Thursday

Off to the beach! What a windy day! North Devon is only a 2,000 miles away from South Devon, but with Erasure from the '90s on our side the time soon passed and we rolled onto the SSSI to discover sand blasting in progress, as the Atlantic wind turned the beach into an impromptu facial scrub. Most of the party sheltered in the cabin while I googled the nearest Fish & Chip Shop and put in a major order of food! Given the unusual weather we decided to explore North Devon in a more general sense... and went off to Lynton.

Some went down, some went up, some found mysteries, some found a really old cache, three saw the Valley of the Rocks, and all had a fabulous Cream Tea! We didn't make it back in time for the evening Talent Show, sad to say, but we did have a great time.

Friday

Sharon headed down to the local seaside for the day's morning event in Beer, and managed to visit quite a few local interesting caches as well. There was a lot of time between events on this day, making for a nice, relaxed opportunity to enjoy the

local area. So Ant drove off to Plymouth, took a ferry to Cornwall (why? Don't ask), and found himself at a nearby NT property. He was accompanied by two ladies and once again gave a lift to Andy Bell & Vince Clarke, and the five(!) of us completely failed to find a unique church micro wherigo on Dartmoor. When we got back to the campsite we did find a large amount of ukuleles in the marquee that night, which sounded fun too, but Ant took more interest in the Ales that he hadn't tried yet.



Mega Day

Some folk think a Mega event is 'just' one day - it's so much more. Many hundreds of people swarmed all over the college and played with inventive lab caches, perused stalls, donated to GAGB (thank you!) and also did a spot of geocaching! It was a very sociable occasion - such fun making new friends and losing children for minutes at a time! The event had a cake with a GC code on it, the Golden Ammo Can was handed over, and before you knew it, it was

all over! Just memories of good weather and a great time, with shades of frantic yellow-T-shirted folk sorting out problems and keeping their smiles on.

That evening was a Big Band and the Geocaching Awards - both performed to a large audience and accompanied by a nice bar. You can see the award results elsewhere in this edition of Seeker, and thanks go to Simply Paul for making that happen.

It was a great Mega - unarguably the best British mega ever to be held south of 51° - and well worth all the effort that the Mega team put into it. We enjoyed it - and if you attended, I hope you did too.

Next year's Mega is also a week-long series of events, held at Newby Hall, Ripon in Yorkshire, and I hope to see you there. Start planning now...

There were 1,811 personal attendees (from 981 'attended' logs) at Devon this year - fantastic! Since that's more people from less logs than 2016's event, that suggests more families attended in 2017, and that's a great trend for geocaching's biggest event in the British Isles.

GAGB were very proud to be co-sponsors of the Devon Mega - did you see our logo on the Supporters' Packs? - and Seeker was proud of our very first printed edition, which went inside those supporters packs. Make sure you buy next year's supporters' pack early - they are well worth getting your hands on with unique items and fun local produce.

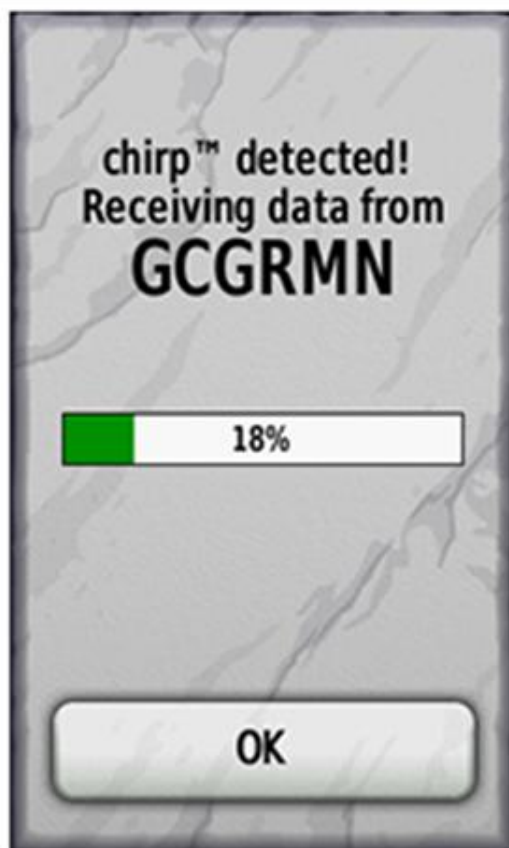
Congratulations, and thanks go to the Devon Mega Committee!

Chirp Caches

Graham Haddock (Graham the Grey) discusses a different way of revealing the final co-ordinates for caches.

Chirp caches are a special type of cache they are often of the Mystery or Multi type and require you to have a CHIRP enabled GPS device or Phone. And you are now going "HUH!?"

Right, in simple terms these Chirp caches transmit a sound wave at a specific frequency (similar to sonar) and often only have a short range of roughly 10 meters. When your GPS or phone has chirp turned on and is in range of a Chirp it flashes up a message on-screen to tell you there is a chirp device nearby. It then asks you if you want to get the data from it - this usually displays the final coordinates for the cache and often a hint, which you can then navigate to.



Chirp Caches are a Garmin technology but there are other similar types out there. You can find ones that use Wi-Fi, some are an NFC (contactless) device that only works a fraction of an inch away, and there's even a short range radio transmitter cache!

To find out more about finding CHIRP caches, if you have a Garmin device head over to their website, and if you have an Android phone (with ANT+ technology), put your nerd hat on and dive into the forums for hints and suggestions.



GAGB National Park Geocoins

The third of the GAGB National Park geocoins features Dartmoor, to celebrate the UK annual roving Mega event being held in Devon this year. The image on the coin is the Great Staple Tor on Dartmoor. The standard

antique gold coins are available to purchase for £14 on our online shop, along with our **limited edition antique bronze version** at just £18 while stocks last. Other GAGB merchandise is also available, & we accept cards, bank transfer or PayPal.

Visit www.gagb.org.uk/prestashop/



GAGB Snowdonia National Park Geocoin **£14.00**

GAGB Dartmoor National Park Geocoin **£14.00/£18.00**

GAGB Large Green Cache Label **£1.00**

GAGB Medium/ Small Green Cache Label **£2.50** for 5 or **60p** each

6 GAGB Pencils **£1.00**

www.gagb.org.uk/prestashop



NGAs

The British and Irish National Geocaching Awards

And the winner is...

The British and Irish National Geocaching Awards were held at the Devon Annual Mega on August 5th 2017. Congratulations to all those nominated and of course the winners.

1. The GAGB Award for Best British Mega Event (2008-16)

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

2015 Essex Annual Mega

2. The Bucks, Beds & Herts cachers Award for Best Non-Mega Event of 2016

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

GC64QN2 2016 New Year Cream Tea Event

3. The Dixie_gooner Award for Best Recurring Event Series

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

A Wild (West) Christmas



4. The JP's GeoDesigns Award for World's Most Desirable Cache (Global Guest Category)

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

GC1BEg1 International Space Station: The only orbital Geocache

5. The Geocaching Junkie Award for Special Caching Achievement

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

Washknight, the blogging blind cacher

6. Geocaching Fun Facebook Group Award for Scotland's Best Cache

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

GCFo Scotland's First

7. The Craig Award for Northern Ireland's Best Cache sponsored by Sgtzara

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

GCPCPX The Giant's Causeway Earthcache

8. The GAGB Award for The Best Offshore Island Cache

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

GC347RC The Spar Cave, Skye Earthcache

9. The "Diolch for the Cache" Award for Wales' Best Cache, sponsored by DJ:CD

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

GCYoNo Summit or Submit

10. The No Kid Gang Award for England's Best Cache

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

GC2MoAF The British Library

11. The Gnome Games Award for Best New Geocoin of 2016

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

Scotty Duck 2016 coin

12. The South Derbyshire Award for Best Promotional Item (non-coin)

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

Yorkshire Mega 2018 Mugs

13. The Geocache Land Award for Best Geo-Traveller Mission

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

Doug the Geodog

14. The Diells Award for Best Log of 2016

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

Alliebaille found
Spring (Dragon) flying

15. The Bryntirion Award for Best Church Micro Series Cache

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

Church Micro 666-Devils Dyke DD1

16. The 2018 Winter Geolympix Award for Best Accessible Cache (T1, with Wheelchair Attribute)

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

GCM8ZK "The Hotspot" (Devon

17. The AllCachedUp Award for Best New Cache of 2016

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

GC6V1Q8 Life's a Beach #19—
Plymouth (DM17)

18. The Sidetracked Series Award for Best New Cache Series of 2016 (either national or loop/cluster)

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

Life's a Beach
(National series managed by heartradio) &
Lifeboat Station
(National series managed by Flexburyites)

19. The Geocaching Gloucestershire Award for Best Best Multi Cache

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

GC2MoAF The British Library

20. The Oh My Aching Back! Award for Best New Extreme Cache of 2016

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

C6FBEK Below Above: The Lost Geocacher

21. The Podcache Show Award for the Geocaching Blogger or Vlogger of the Year 2016

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

GeoPaul on YouTube

22. The Geocache Land Award for Newbie/s of the Year

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

ChudleighTraveller



23. The Billy Twigger Award for Geocaching Family of the Year

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

The Cooke Family

24. The Devon UK Mega 2017 Award for Geocacher/s of the Year

☆☆☆ Won by ☆☆☆

Sir PhilPamAndRob

25. The Thank You Award, given in recognition of their contribution to the game we love by a cacher sadly no longer with us.

Several names were suggested, but one stood out for frequency and the reasons given for suggesting them. People said:

[He deserves to be recognised] for his efforts in voluntarily reviewing geocaches in South West England, even towards the end of his life.

His contribution to caching in the UK is notable, both as a committed and enthusiastic reviewer, but also as a regular cacher. He brought a lot of passion to both roles. His 'Reverse Geocache' was a special highlight, and he set a lovely series down from Weston Super Mare to West Bay on the south coast. He was always quick to maintain his caches too.

I'd like to nominate [this person] for the Thank You award. He started caching in 2008, after his retirement from Westland helicopters, and became a reviewer in 2012. He used that position, with his extensive knowledge and experience, to add a lot to the British and Irish reviewing team.

[This person] deserves a public 'Thanks' for his reviewing work, and also for setting caches near his home in Somerset. As a keen photographer [he] always took great pictures. Towards the end of his life he auctioned off his geocoin collection, raising £150 for the Air Ambulance. That was typical of the man; thinking of others.

Despite being ill, [this cacher] attended the annual Reviewer gathering in 2014, which happened to be in Devon. He stepped-down from reviewing in August, without fan-fair, attended a final cache meet in September, and passed away in early October. Gone but not forgotten, his legacy and our memories of him live on.

Thank You,

Lindinis aka Earnie B - Ernie Barrow



Congratulations to all the winners. Thanks again to all those who voted, nominated, suggested categories & sponsored these awards. Not everyone can win, but taking part really is the thing.

Finally, huge thanks to Paul Bevan & my glamorous assistant Sarah Eagle for all their hard work on the awards. Without you they couldn't & wouldn't have happened.

In September every year the GAGB holds a special weekend event to encourage as many CITO's as possible. The record high was in 2016 just pipping 2014.

GAGB CITO Weekend

Cutting, Clearing & Cleaning

Let's look at some stats about our #GAGB2017 Annual CITO Weekend:

274 attended logs across 21 events – we estimate that over 500 individual people came along. The events were each smaller than in previous years but there were more than triple the amount events to choose from to attend (after last year's seven).

This makes this weekend our most successful GAGB Annual Weekend yet! Thanks especially to all of you for organising, as well as attending and supporting - you did a great job at each event.

Hopefully we can make our 2018 Annual Weekend even BIGGER with more CITO's on the map - you're all welcome to organise one and you'll have GAGB's full support!

Saturday 23rd September:

GAGB 2017 :Norton Common CITO by rollerron

GAGB 2017: CITO in Rye Harbour by GCHaribo

GAGB 2017: Warnham Nature Reserve CITO II by Flookfinders

GAGB 2017: Wades Clough Clean up by Walkerway1

GAGB 2017 : Roborough Rock CITO Event by GeoOldham

GAGB 2017: Portsmouth CITO Week Event - Hilsea by explorer_olway

GAGB 2017: Toton Tidy Up by Guiding Nutter

GAGB 2017: CITO ~ Holyrood Park by ZeDoc

GAGB 2017: Hucclecote Meadows Pond Restoration by Razorfishy

GAGB 2017: Picking on the Prom by The Odysians

GAGB 2017: CITO Mouldon Hill Swindon (10am) by GeoGough

Gentleshaw Common (GC6MJWV) By Sharant

By combining the GAGB Annual CITO with the Groundspeak Souvenir, we got a great turnout for our CITO – some new folk, some regulars, and all eager to destroy!

Hayley – the ranger from Staffordshire Wildlife Trust – picked a different spot from last year and gave us our new objective for the day – focus on the invasive trees—the common is not a natural habitat if we're to help the wildlife stay here then we need to keep the trees out! We could also do litter picking if we wanted, so, with about 20 we divided into Sawers, Loppers, and Pickers, and spread out across the landscape. The occasional shout of 'Iain– Paint!' rang out as tree-killer paint was called for, as we felled invasive oaks and birch and cleared the path.

It was great to see how last year's area now looks far more like a common—next year we'll be able to see the impact of this year's work, too!

Many of us retired to the event at the nearby pub and had a good drink or meal. Well done, everyone.



Photo Warnham Nature Reserve by (Flookfinders)



Photo Roborough Rock by (GeoOldham)



Photo Gentleshaw Common by (Sharant)

Photo Hucclecote Meadows Pond by (Razorfishy)



Sunday 24th September:

GAGB 2017: The LEC - Any Old Iron! by The League of Extraordinary Cachers

GAGB 2017: Moira Canal Spruce Up by Moira Crackers

GAGB 2017: Gentleshaw Common by sharant

GAGB 2017: Tania's Wood CITO by Maple Leaf & Judith

GAGB 2017: CITO - FREEDOM From Trash by GeoLovesGreen

GAGB 2017 CITO - Ribble Estuary Litter Pick by Ribble Rivers Trust & Keep Britain Tidy

GAGB 2017 - Going South-Caldecote Lake South by Norfolk12 Hosts are Mr and Mrs Minion

GAGB 2017 Litter pick in Beck Mason's Wood by Woodmen2

Saturday 30th September:

GAGB 2017: All washed up by LizMar2010

Sunday 1st October:

GAGB 2017 -at Stone Pit Field for a CITO Event by Norfolk12



Photo Mouldon Hill by (GeoGough)



Photo LEC—Any Old Iron by (terrapintim)



Photo Tania's Wood by (Maple Leaf)

Souvenirs and Badges

In July & August those of us who use geocaching.com will have seen both souvenirs and badges come our way – what are they, what is the difference, and how do we earn them?

What are they?

A **souvenir** is an official and automatic memorial to some achievement you've earned – this is usually to do with a place or a time. As soon as you have logged a cache in Dublin, for example, you'll immediately earn its souvenir on your souvenir page (near your profile). Or if you had logged a geo cache as 'found' or an event as 'attended' on August 19th, you'll have earned the one for 'International Geocaching Day'. These automatically happen, no energy needed, just find the right cache at the right time or place and get the 'memory' added to your profile's souvenir page.

A **badge** is similar, but these come from our community, not from HQ, and are not automatic. There's something more personal about a badge, to me, but there's also a bit of work for you to be able to show your badges on your profile. Sometimes a cache owner places a challenging series – maybe it's a long walk, or has

hard puzzles, or perhaps is in difficult terrain (like underground!). They sometimes offer us a badge for our profile page to commemorate the achievement, and if so they will offer you some web code (html) that you copy and paste into your profile. One example of this is the Sidetracked series. Often they are animated (GIF) files, so they look fancy on your profile page. Sometimes they break – they are totally dependent on the community, after all, and if the cache owner does something wrong or when a change happens they can fail. But still, they are pretty cool.

Badge generators do exist – people have written code to go through your logging record and generate the code to build a big profile page – this could be achievements like number of high terrain or high altitude caches, or number of 'states' with a country, all sorts of statistics and awards. Project GC has a pretty good example of this.

How do I offer people a badge?

Create an image first – make it relatively small – and post it to your cache or event gallery. This will give you a weblink to the image itself. Now you need to offer cachers some sample code so they can put it on their profile – find a cache page that explains this well and simply steal their code! The best caches will show the code in a different font, and in a box to make it clear what folks should do – assume they know nothing. Some people host the badge on different sites, such as photobucket, but this can be quite fragile – if the hosting site moves or changes their terms and conditions, your badges break.

Progress badges – once placed on your profile they automatically track your progress. According to our own profile, Sharon and I are a 'Vicar' and an 'engineer' - cool!

How do I display a badge on my profile?

Do this from a proper PC & browser – don't try this on a phone unless you like to increase the difficulty level!

Single badges: The cache should offer you some sample code. Copy this code, then open up your profile and edit it – you will see an area to paste your text. When you save you can preview the page.

Badge Generators: go to Project-gc.com and you can get a comprehensive set of stats and badges. You can hide or show what you want and generate a simple weblink to put in your own profile, and it'll always show your recent statistics.

More details: Note that many badges include link on your profile that allows people to go to a different website to find out more. For example the Church Micro badges navigate through to a site that has lots of statistics and details on who has reached which level and earned which badge.

Winter is coming...

Now there are a number of cachers out there when it comes to the winter months when it gets cold and wet they prefer to stay indoors rather than getting out caching but this is my light hearted reasons why caching in the winter is better.. *By Graham Haddock (Grahamthegray)*

1 Nettles.. Everone's favourite - their Latin name is *Urtica dioica* (I can remember this as nettles' urt!). But in the autumn they die back and by the winter any left sting less. As well - that reduction in ground foliage makes some caches easier to find!

2 Brambles, like the above they tend to die back over the winter making it easier and less shin-tearing.

3 Rain... ok not the best for caching in but with waterproofs you can stay dry and for urban caching the wet means more likely people are rushing around in the rain to get out of it, so it's easier not to get noticed when people have their hoods up! Also, just generally there are less muggles hanging around in parks and so on.

4 Cattle.. now these bovine terrors at some point during the cold months tend to go inside (the girls go inside barns, but where the boys doesn't bear thinking about. This is all because the grass doesn't grow for them too much and boggy fields are not always good for them

5 The leaves have come off! While this can be a disadvantage for ground level caches - an added level of camo - it does mean looking in hedges and up trees is much easier!



6 Ice. Now OK more cold frosty mornings - problem right? Wrong! Where there was once a swathe of mud, we now have frozen ground and nice, hard stuff to walk on!

7 Cold weather... means you can wear long sleeves and gloves to retrieve caches and not look strange - which tbh you do when in the summer you wear all sorts of stuff to ward off brambles, hawthorn and nettles...

8 Cold weather 2 ...now the weather's gone cold those biting insects tend to die out... and not everyone is a friend of a wasp.

So if you are heading out this winter you need to be prepared - especially if you are heading into the hills. Don't forget to tell people where you are going first, and always wear layers, take a waterproof coat in your bag, along with a drink and a whistle. Watch the weather forecast, stay safe this winter, and go out and find some caches!

(Note from Editor - Winter caching in towns is fab, too! Muggles just don't care what you are doing, and far more chance of pub-sign than in the snowy wastes of the British countryside!)

9 Dark Nights? Bad? You say how is this any good well? Well OK, give me a sec.. OK that means you can head out at a reasonable time to do night caches and not end up in bed at 2 in the morning - sorted!

10 You have more pockets, you know... "what?" you say...? Think on this - caching in the heat you want to wear a t-shirt, you don't want to carry a backpack so your back gets sweaty. - that all means less space for kit - you go light and carry a pen. Aha but in the winter you have extra pockets for spare pens, tweezers, spare log sheets, string, phone, GPS unit, a flask of coffee, secateurs, a ladder, rappelling equipment and a first aid kit!

Reminder—GAGB Committee Elections

A reminder about the forthcoming GAGB committee elections.

All GAGB members prior to 1st October 2017 are eligible, and encouraged, to participate (stand, nominate or vote). There shall be two elections, first for the position of Chair and then for the eight Committee Member posts. Nominations may be made in the relevant thread in the GAGB forum during the advertised nomination period. Each nomination must be seconded and accepted by the nominee within that same period in order to be valid. Nominee manifestos will then be posted in the GAGB forums and on the ballot so you may read about why each candidate is standing for election and the skills they would bring to the Committee if elected.

The dates are:

Chair Elections

Nominations for Chair open: Mon 23rd Oct 2017

Close of nominations for Chair: Thurs 26th Oct 2017

Election for Chair: Friday 3rd – Mon 6th Nov 2017

Committee Elections

Nominations for Committee open: Thurs 9th Nov 2017

Close of nominations for Committee: Mon 13th Nov 2017

Election of Committee: Tues 21st– Sun 26th Nov 2017

Where nominations exceed vacancies, election shall be by ballot and will be run by Michael Malvick (Ladybug Kids), who is returning as our Independent Returning Officer for the 8th year. Mike is a Volunteer Reviewer for Groundspeak, reviewing caches for Alaska and Hawaii and Territories of the United States, as well as

Greece as GeoawareUSA4 . He has also in the past reviewed EarthCaches in the UK. SurveyMonkey.com will again generate the ballot. This streamlines ballot counting and adds a layer of confidentiality between the Returning Officer and those who vote. You will be sent an e-mail with a unique link to the ballot, so please make sure your e-mail address on the GAGB forum (UserCP) is current. Ladybug Kids will make an announcement in the GAGB forums after the e-mails have gone out so you can check your spam filter, etc., in case you don't receive the link to the ballot. He may also send reminder and announcement emails which may be sent from his personal email, so please look out for the following email addresses. ladybugs@geocachealaska.org via surveymonkey.com Ladybugs@ geocachealaska.org. Please also visit the GAGB forums to keep up to date with all the election news and monitor the GAGB Facebook page and Twitter for updates and announcements.

Secretary Report

Prepared by Ant Reid (*Sharant*)

At the time of writing, there have been eight committee meetings held in the 2016/17 term of office, all online: Dec, Jan, Mar, Apr, May, Jul, Sep, Oct. This year's meetings have been a roughly equal mix of practical topics (getting rotas organised for events, getting and approving coin designs, and suchlike) with long-term plans (or dreams). The members of the committee this year were, with attendance of meetings shown:

Sharon Reid (Sharant) - Chair (8)

Ant Reid (Sharant) (8)

Arthur Griffiths (Griff Grof) (4)

Adam Redshaw (ukcachemag) (6)

Kim Leonard (Leonards193) (7)

Abigail Hamilton-Thompson (Abiherts) (2)

Adam McCredie (Skippy and Pingu) (4)

Caz Turver (border caz) (7)

Graham Haddock (Grahamthegray) (8)

Between meetings, we have discussions in the GAGB Committee Forum and any decisions made there are then recorded in the minutes of the next online meeting.

Contact with the public:

The GAGB have a telephone number & an email address where members of the public or geocachers can contact us. From 1st November 2017 to the time of writing (mid Oct) we have received the following:

Telephone enquiries (GAGB number) 17 (up from 10)

Email enquiries 95 (up from 82)

Of these, they have been categorised as:

Landowner: Complaints 5

Landowners: Requests for help 5

New or renewal of agreements: 7

Media enquiries 12

General enquiry: Existing geocacher 2

General enquiry: New geocacher 13

Public: Found 'stray' geocache 2

Public: School / Business enquiry 3

Membership: 7

Seeker: 4

Shop: 3

Events: 10

Commercial proposals: 11

Time wasters/spam: 27

Other 1

Key GAGB Statistics:

Membership numbers (For Oct 2016-Sep 2017):

Membership +224 new members

Total Membership: 2,378 active members.

Facebook Page: +1,510 likes, with 1475 followers

GAGB Needs your Help

GAGB is only ever what we make of it – and we can do so much more if we want to – GAGB needs our help – so please take a look through these potential jobs and if you fancy any of them. Please let us know, and please consider standing for election.

Committee Roles

There are two main roles on the committee: **Treasurer** and **Secretary**. They have definite job tasks, like keeping the accounts in order and making sure that meetings, decisions, and promised actions are documented (circulating minutes, chasing actions, finding out who is having trouble). Besides these two roles, we currently like to have the following 'fun' jobs – they seem to us to be important, and the 2018 committee can change or evolve them however is wanted:

Public-Facing Roles

GLAD Enquiries – respond to enquiries from our voicemail and email systems from people who have found a cache on their land, and help to resolve the dispute. This is perhaps the most rewarding of our jobs, as by having GAGB deal with the issue, we avoid the landowner involving the police, the newspapers, or taking things into their own hands. It's an important and varied role and you get to talk to all sorts of people.

General Enquiries – Our front-line communication with the public, your role would be to listen to voicemails or read and respond to queries that are not land-owners. This could be a cache that had been found by a dog, or a new geocacher confused about what to do, or the media (where we find someone to put them in touch with). For example last year Country File, Radio 2, Border TV, and others have asked for contacts and we've put them in touch with geocachers in the right area. It can be an exciting role for a friendly communicator.

Social Media – a role for a good communicator, using twitter, facebook, instagram and our website to talk to – interact with – our members on a regular basis.

Seeker Editor – a key role, this person both writes articles for Seeker and commissions them from other people. Words, photos, interesting subjects – or coming up with questions to ask – that's the focus of the Seeker Editor. With four deadlines to meet per year (but not a fixed number of pages to have!) it's as much of a job as you want, but be organised with deadlines, and be able to write well. Good desktop publishing skills are not a must but would be nice. Most of Seeker is the editor – but we do find the editor a friend to handle layout and digital publishing, so you are not alone!

Back-Office Roles

GLAD Database Manager – review the database of land-owner agreements, spot problems, create digital maps, and document any new agreements or changes that come in. It also involves coordinating with the Groundspeak wiki and reviewers, too – some simple html skills are needed to edit and create the agreements but in the main it's a job for someone who is organised and likes things to be ordered, sorted, and clear.

Webmaster – If you know PHP, HTML5, Mail Chimp or vBulletin (or are eager to learn), this is the job for you. Someone else can write the actual words, but the webmaster's job is to make sure they display properly, fix any technical issues, and continually tweak the site to make it ever better. Don't worry if you don't know the languages or products - there will be someone who does.

Shop Manager – managing stock, sending out orders, and leading the effort to make sure we get new stock on time, this is our key fund-raising role. While no money is involved in managing the shop, it is important to get the orders correct and promptly sent out. It's not a big job, rest assured – with between 3-7 orders a month this won't be sweeping you off your feet!

New Members Admin – a shared role that is usually held by several people, this is where we catch spammers and fakes! Both Facebook and the website have new member requests and responding to them promptly is important. It's a nice & simple daily 'add-on' role to have.

Sponsorship – We also reach out to external companies to get discounts for our members, freebies to help fund-raising, and sell advertising spots on our website or in Seeker. If you have a good head for talking to big organisations, come join us and help out with that!

Other things we like to do

Roving Events are well-liked, talking to and listening to cachers all over the country is important to us - what do we do, what do we need to do, what do cachers want us to do - there's a role there for a good communicator to chat to cachers and report back to the committee. You can also sell some of our merchandise :-)

Fundraising happens at larger events, and it's good to have a presence there to run our map game, sell some of our merchandise, and explain what we do. We can discuss new ideas and see how well they go down, and support the events themselves with extra publicity and any organisational support they need.

In Summary

You'll notice that we have eleven roles - more roles than the eight places on the committee! Our Chair will pick up tasks that no-one else can handle, and we usually seek help from non-committee members for any roles where we just lack the skills. Also, with some jobs we double-up, for example recently the GLAD Manager has also handled enquiries, but that's just because he was willing to do so – Editor, Secretary, or Social Media could easily have the skills to do that too.

Besides which, we make the GAGB what we want to make it – within the purpose of the association. We'll invent new roles and combine roles however the new committee wants! We have online meetings, usually one per month, and communicate between meetings using the forum and messenger.

If you'd to help then please get in touch, if you'd like to take on a role please do stand, and if you think this is all the wrong thing to do then also please stand for election and help us to get it right!

Annual Reports

Caz Turver

The first thing that had to be done was to receive the current accounts from the preceding Treasurer and familiarise myself with them before bringing them up to date. Then it was necessary to visit the nearest large town that still has a branch of the bank that we use, together with the Chairman, in order to update signatories etc on the bank account.

Obviously, keeping the accounts up to date is an ongoing task so that I can report on the state of our finances at each Committee meeting and produce the annual accounts for publishing on the forum every spring at the end of our financial year.



In February I attended the GAGB roving event held by fellow committee member Adam in Stratford and at the end of April I attended the Mega event at the Hop Farm in Kent, where we raised £300. In May I was at the GAGB roving event at Dearnford Lake in Shropshire. I was also able to attend the Piratemia Mega event in Cheddar, at which we raised £204, and the Annual UK Mega event in Devon where we took £1,237 in cash. Obviously this wasn't all profit as there was the cost of the merchandise being sold – mainly geocoins, and of the prizes being given out.

Prior to these last two events, the Committee had agreed to my suggestion that we needed a card machine to take payments and I had sourced one via our Bank. There were

It's that time of year again, where the committee report back on what they've done over the past year.

quite a few hoops to jump through, paperwork to be completed etc to comply with all the necessary formalities, and this involved a lot of time on the telephone!

The shop that we have on our website generates some sales and we have also received a few small donations from members.

Members may wonder what we do with the money that we raise. Firstly they go to offset the charges we incur for the GAGB contact telephone number and for the hosting of our website, then we use it to help and support geocaching activities. This year, for example, we have helped Kent Mega and sponsored the Devon Mega and the National Geocaching Awards.

Adam Redshaw

I have found this to be a difficult year and have not had anywhere near there time to spend on Gagb matters.

Having part some of the committee meetings I don't feel as engaged as I should have been which has caused extra work for the rest of the team.

This includes preparing and circulation of minutes, as I had failed to do them within agreed timescales.

Regrettably I have been distracted and not had chance to deal with the various enquiries the GAGB received.

On a positive note I hosted a good event in Stratford that had started to build links between GAGB and the Youth Hostel



Chair's Report Sharon Reid

This was my second year as GAGB Chair, my fourth on the committee. My main aims this year were to promote the GAGB in the geocaching community - making more geocachers aware of the GAGB and spreading the word on what we do. I wanted the GAGB to be more involved with the UK Mega events and I helped during the Mega week and the GAGB hosted a talk during the week, leading the Maker Madness event.



I talked about the work of the GAGB and then helped geocachers to build a variety of different geocaches, which they could take home or donate to us (or both). The GAGB also sponsored this years Devon UK Annual Mega and collaborated with the Supporters Packs—creating our first-ever printed copy of Seeker.

It is important to meet our members, explain what the GAGB does and to promote Geocaching we also had three GAGB roving events – to chat with you, listen to you, and explain to all geocachers what it is we do. One in February at Stratford-upon-Avon hosted by Adam Redshaw, another in April at Malham, Yorkshire and for

the second year at Whitchurch, Shropshire in May. For the larger UK events I attended the Devon Wales Mega and our map game raised an outstanding amount - £421 in just one day. THANK YOU to everyone who helped and visited our stall. I also represented the GAGB at the Yorkshire Xmas Fayre, Kent Mega & Piratemia. Abi & Kim took our map game to the Caledonian Cachefest.

GAGB needs to increase our presence, be more relevant and promote Geocaching more. Arthur and Graham have done a brilliant job on social media & the web, which is vital as members move away from the forums and use social media much more.

Annual Reports — continued

Association. This could well be the start of a new style of event for the community.

Looking forward are now exploring options of an event that may combine an AGM along with talks and workshops.

With my business interests in Geocaching I am personally a member of the outdoor Industries Association and have started networking to raise the profile of my magazine and the GAGB.

Going forward I hope to re-stand and should I be lucky enough to be re-elected aim to progress the links I have been making to see an AGM arranged. It is anticipated this will be in April 2018.

Ant Reid

I've been "Oddjob" on GAGB this year – I'm only on the committee to make up the numbers, and basically took on for any jobs that weren't being



done by others who, for a variety of reasons personal and professional couldn't give their time.

GLAD Manager – there are two halves to this job, and I feel I was better at the public-facing half, responding to land owner enquiries and cache owner requests. I did set up a couple of new agreements that 'fell into my lap' and I did work with Graham to tidy up the database visually, and renewal the annual renewals. The Database side of the job really does need someone with a tidy mind who is happy to reach out to councils, trusts, and commissions to get agreements negotiated, mapped, and catalogued.

General Enquiries – I have responded rapidly to complaints and queries, routed requests from media organisations (such as Radio 2 – which Adam R took – and Border TV – who I sent to the Caledonian festival folk to handle). I've also helped

new geocachers needing help, and taken advice from kind members who suggested changes to our website.

I was very happy to get the Follow the Arrow website onto GAGB's site – Thanks go to Chris and Paul for agreeing that was a good idea and saying yes.

I also helped out with **Seeker** - stepping in where articles weren't getting written, and then taking over the Spring/Summer edition – and the special edition for Devon Supporters, when Abi wasn't well.

Minutes: I've also stepped in for Adam R when he had trouble with writing up the minutes.

And I've been fund-raising and answering queries on the stalls at Kent, Pirateman, and the Devon Mega, in and around organising some roving events (eg May in Shropshire) caching with the family, of course.

Basically – happy to help in whatever is needed, but if anyone out there feels they could make a good show of doing

any one of our roles well and on a more full-time basis, I'd be really happy to give you some pointers and help you.

Graham Haddock

In the last year as part of the GAGB I have spent my time setting up new



member's access to the GAGB forums as well as deal with some logging in issues and password resets and updating member's details. Apart from that worked to put the new login box on the homepage of the website, as well as maintaining website content, adding some new GAGB branding log books onto the site.

Also have been involved in the coin design for the Devon Mega, writing a couple of pieces for seeker magazine, posting to the Instagram feed and also the GAGB profile graphic for the CITO weekend. You may have seen me at the GAGB Dearnford lake event or at the Gnome Games on the GAGB stand as well as a number of other local events.

I was involved and managed our new geocoin design our Dartmoor National Park geocoin the third in our series. Our shop has also got a lot more popular this year, and thanks go to Kim for keeping up with responsibilities there.

It was important to continue with Seeker and the landowner agreements (GLAD) and we produced three Seekers. This year Abi was the editor but has struggled and myself and Ant have produced most of the Seekers this year.

The GAGB has been involved with several media enquiries this year such as the Simon Mayo Drivetime show on Radio 2 and Border TV who visited the Caledonian Cachefest,

Our events calendar continues to be the most visited part of our website, and was automated this year, using GSAK it is updated twice a week with all the UK events and all Megas worldwide. We have included the Follow the Arrow website onto our GAGB website to stop this helpful resource. from vanishing.

Our GAGB CITO weekend in September was a fantastic success this year, the most successful yet with 274 attended logs across 21 events, more than double on last years success. I organised a CITO cutting back small trees on a SSSI on Cannock Chase maintained by the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust to encourage the natural common vegetation such as heather & gorse.

I hope to be able to continue as Chair next year and I would like to encourage our members to get more involved with the GAGB.

Annual Reports — continued

Arthur Griffiths



I have really enjoyed my second year on the GAGB committee. As joint-webmaster, I've continued to tweak and update pages on the website. I was also involved in the recent transferral of the Follow the Arrow website from Chris Dale to the GAGB, which is now live under a sub-domain. I helped add Graham's new login function to the GAGB homepage, enabling members to log in without visiting the forum first. In September, I resumed work on the new homepage with Graham and Sharon. Overall, this year has been about continuity, not change, for the GAGB website.

I continued to post and interact with members on social media as much as possible. The number of likes on our posts has increased. Interaction on Twitter seems to have decreased a little. We used Instagram less this year, but I hope the GAGB will continue to use it in future.

I proposed the idea of a GAGB photo competition, and developed it to include a theme, guidelines and T&Cs. I hope members get involved and submit some photos; I wish all entrants the best of luck in the competition.

I regret that I was unable to host a GAGB

event this year. I was organising a roving event for June, but this fell through due to complications with obtaining permission from the council. I hope that my other contributions make up for this. In my manifesto, I called for the committee to be divided into sub-groups, each overseeing different projects and elements of the GAGB. The idea behind this was to make decision making between meetings more effective and efficient, with only a small group of people focussed on specific things to discuss and develop. I am glad that this was implemented early on, but I am also disappointed that these sub-groups seemed to break down as the year went by, returning to committee-wide discussion right from the drawing board. I hope that sub-groups, reporting to the whole committee for feedback and final decisions, will be considered again in future.

Unfortunately, my time on the committee is now coming to an end. It has been a pleasure and an honour to serve for two years. I would like to thank Sharon, who has been a fantastic Chair, and all my fellow committee members, from both terms. The GAGB plays such a crucial role – so much goes on behind the scenes. I wish the GAGB and future committees every success.

Kim Leonard



This year, I have enjoyed being the shop manager and looking after the day to day running of the GAGB online shop.

Attending the first Caledonian Cache Fest in Peebles in May with Abi and my daughter Sammy was great fun and good exposure for us, it was a well organised and popular event.

Having two stalls at the Devon Mega was good too (one being able to take card payments) and the map game was busy as usual. I look forward to seeing which new items we can develop for the shop over the coming 12 months and would be happy to remain in this role on the committee.

Adam McCreadie



In my first year on the GAGB committee I have set myself the onerous task of developing relationships with various companies and other organisations with a view to expanding awareness of the GAGB and Geocaching into the wider world and trying to secure

sponsorship as funds, donations or discounts. Needless to say that this hasn't been easy! In my day job I work for a large company so I know how many speculative emails just get binned straight away from potential suppliers or partners so I have been having to be relentlessly persistent in trying to make contact. There have been some responses but nothing of particular note!

It hasn't helped much that during the year my work life has been incredibly busy so my time and energy have been at a premium leaving me with less enthusiasm for what I need to do to support the GAGB team. I haven't lost the desire to get out and find Tupperware though and a lot of weekends have been spent out and about with the family exploring different parts of the country. I've been to all the Megas this year but I've not been able to help with the stand much due to having to travel so far as all 3 Megas have been 'down south'!

I'm also on the organising team for the Gnome Games which has been quite busy but at least GAGB were guaranteed representation at the Games.

Thank you to all the committee for helping to keep the GAGB going this year.