

SEEKER

Caching on Dartmoor
Culture Coasting
Mega Event in Krakow
GAGB Guidelines

What are your caching
challenges this year?

Winter 2017/18

#34



The 2018 Committee



Sharon Reid
Sharant
GAGB Chair



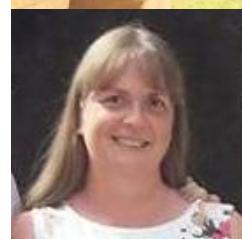
Caz Turver
border caz
Treasurer



Graham Haddock
GrahamtheGray
Secretary/
Webmaster (joint)



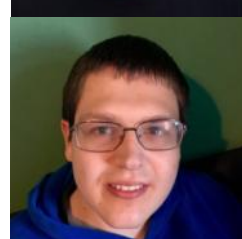
Arthur Griffiths
Griff Grof
Social Media/
Webmaster (joint)



Kim Leonard
Leonards193
Online Shop
Manager



Ant Reid
Sharant
Editor/GLAD
Manager (joint)



Dominic Murray
geocaching wamble
GLAD Manager
(joint)



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Publicity



*Cover: Hugh Seat, Cumbria, [GC1E6NH](#) Courtesy of Greg Smith (meltediceburg)
Above: Leadhills, South Larnarkshire, [GC4VT50](#) Courtesy of Ian Ledger (Nohope)*



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 34

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Chair's Message

Sharon Reid

Sharant

GAGB Chair, 2018



Welcome to 2018. A New Year and a new challenge. Are you trying to complete any geocaching challenges this year? Such as the Jasmer challenge, filling in your calendar, keeping up a streak or completing your D/T grid? Or perhaps something else?

Have you had a lot of snow recently? Enjoy the challenge of finding caches even more buried under snow, maybe leaving a set of footprints leading to a FTF or are you waiting until the weather gets warmer?

We also introduce our new GAGB committee, which started on 1st December 2017. Don't forget you can meet the GAGB committee at our 8th GAGB roving event ([GC7H8XA](#)) at Coventry on Sunday February 18th or our 9th GAGB roving event ([GC7HAYM](#)) at Kentisbeare, Devon on 24th March, I hope to see you there.

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.

Become a GAGB Friend

We are inviting GAGB members to give us some help! There are several different ways you can help the GAGB. We get questions from the public, Scouts, Guides and schools on how to help them start geocaching, and it would be great to have a network of geocachers from around the country who are willing to help 'newbies' in your area.

Sometimes we need help with our media enquiries (e.g. from Countryfile) relevant to your area and members to represent the GAGB at various events and on social media—that could be fun! By becoming a GAGB Friend, you will form part of a new membership tier. GAGB is a member-led organisation and, by becoming a Friend, you'll gain a taste of what it's like to run an organisation—so a great opportunity there, too.

There is no long-term commitment and you can help us for as long or a little as you want. Email friends@gagb.org.uk if you would like to help the GAGB and become part of our team.

To read more about GAGB Friends, look further inside this edition of Seeker for an in-depth explanation and a profile of **GAGB Friend** GCHaribo!

GAGB.org.uk

News Round-up

New GAGB Committee

In November we had an election for the eight GAGB Committee places and a ballot was sent to all our members. Thanks to LadybugKids for running a smooth election and thanks to all our members that voted. Well done to Border Caz, Griff Grof, Leonards193, AntReid, Dr Evil, UKCacheMag, Geocaching Womble and GrahamtheGray for being elected. Thanks to Abiherts and GCHaribo for standing for the GAGB Committee.

Our roles for the 2017/2018 term are:

Chair - Sharon - Sharant (Sharon Reid)

Treasurer- Border Caz (Caz Turver)

Secretary - GrahamthGray (Graham Haddock)

GLAD Manager - geocaching womble (Dominic Murray)

GLAD PR - Sharant (Ant Reid) and liaise with Reviewers and Groundspeak

Seeker Editor - Sharant (Ant Reid)

Webmaster - GrahamtheGray (Graham Haddock)

Webmaster - Griff Grof (Arthur Griffiths)

Social Media - Griff Grof (Arthur Griffiths)

Social Media - geocaching womble (Dominic Murray)

Online Shop Manager - Leonards193 (Kim Leonard)

Public Relations - UKCacheMag (Adam Redshaw)

Unfortunately, due to a change in circumstances, Paul (Dr Evil) recently chose to resign from the committee. We wish him all the best and hope that he will consider standing again in future

Social Media

Takeover!

If you have twitter, watch out for when our twitter feed is taken over by **GAGB Friend** GCHaribo! 'Tune in' on Tuesday at 8-9pm to join in. GCHaribo will also post regularly on our Facebook Group '[GAGB - UK & Ireland caching news](#)'.



8th GAGB Roving event

The GAGB's eighth roving event has been published: [GC7H8XA](#) on Sunday 18th February in Coventry.

There will be a session to learn about making geocaches. This event is therefore perfect for newbies and people who don't know much about caching... so be sure to bring along any muggle friends that are interested!

We are also organising an event in Kentisbeare, Devon [GC7HAYM](#) on Saturday 24th March.

GAGB Clothing

We will be launching some new products to buy from our GAGB shop. Watch out for our new t-shirts and hoodies, you will be able to add your own trackable code and your geocaching name. They will be available very soon from our online shop gagb.org.uk/prestashop.

Culture Coasting ...

Culture Coasting is something you'll start to see in Kent and Sussex in the next year.

They've got in touch with GAGB seeking advice on how to connect art and GPS technology - how to get it right! Ant has taken a look into what Culture Coasting is, and why geocachers might be interested.

But is it Art?

While out caching how often have you found a geocache near to a piece of art - not a memorial or a place marker, but an imaginative 'something' that an artist has created just 'because'...? I've often seen such things - a nano on an anchor

nowhere near the sea, for example, or the statues on Crosby beach - and I've often wondered about how to better link public art work and geocaching. Culture Coasting is along these lines - with the added bonus of a digital element to the artwork. You don't just find the art, you experience it on several levels

with GPS tracking and an online space for the piece, too. In my mind what elevates 'art' to be 'culture' is a deeper level of understanding about the piece - it's not just a pretty something, but we can appreciate it better, and be proud of it, if we understand it.

Image: On Fulsam Rock on the Margate foreshore. Photography by Thierry Bal .

But is it Geocaching?

Time will tell. The organisers are very eager for geocachers to get involved from the ground up - think a 'series' connecting the locations and helping people find and understand them. The more people that want to find these, then the more successful the project will be. GAGB are giving some advice, and we're quite aware that there's bound to be a 'cause' element in this somewhere that we shouldn't be promoting directly, but if we can help them to get the geocaching done right then this can be a great asset for cachers in the south-east.

This initiative may or may not result in new geocaches listed on our favourite geocaching website, but if the project can learn from us about what works and doesn't work, then people will have a better experience when they do look for and find these geo-physical-digital experiences...

Can you help?

Do you live in the area - ideally around the Turner Contemporary (Margate)? Are you the sort of person who really understands and appreciates art? And are you the sort of cache owner who takes pride in the caches you place? If all three of these are 'ticks' for you, please get in touch with us and become a 'GAGB Friend' - and offer to help us help the project to 'get it right'. Contact Ant (editor@gagb.org.uk) for more details on this initiative.

Further Information:

<https://culturecoasting.org/>

<https://www.turnercontemporary.org/>

GAGB Photo Competition

Cache with a View



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



TROT Trails

It has come to our notice that sections of a couple of cache trails in the South East of England had unwittingly been placed in locations that have been identified as being part of the T.R.O.T. trail system. These are trails on private land and not accessible to the general public. An explanation of these will be given later – however it needs to be explained what ‘unwittingly placed’ meant. TROT trails are practically unheard of and it was only due to me (the author of this article – deepdiggingmole) who had heard of them discovering that the cache trail I was following wandered onto a TROT trail. I realized that the mistake had been made, but it was an easy one to make – there are TROT trail signs and these could be mistaken for public footpath signs or another sort of bridle path sign. The cache trails were good lengthy walks with the majority of the trails following PFs or roads (as most do) and it was only sections which took in between 2 to 4 caches that encroached onto the TROT trails. Suffice to say the COs were advised. All were eventually relocated, though we won’t go into the length of time that took or the hassle it involved, but removal from private land was completed.

What are TROT Trails? Recently, GAGB Member Tim Mathews (deepdiggingmole) encountered a peculiar problem when following some geocaching trails. They seemed to wander onto private land, but were signposted as TROT trails. What on earth are they, and are they even public rights of way? Tim dug deeper, and explains about them more.

Now to explain TROT trails – the easiest way to do this will be to take an extract from the [TROT website](#)

TROT which stands for ‘Toll Rides Off-road Trust’ is a charitable trust dedicated to providing members with an extensive national network of horse riding and carriage driving routes on privately owned land.



Through our dedicated band of local agents, we work with landowners to establish and maintain interesting and well-kept off-road rides where our members can enjoy riding and driving safely and legally.

TROT administers the Forestry Commission's riding permit scheme for horse riding in forests in Southern England.

Farm routes are generally on privately-owned farmland or woodland. They may include short sections of bridleway or byway but there will be minimal roadwork and, best of all, there are generally no other users! This helps our members to enjoy a safer riding experience.

Forestry routes may contain bridleways and byways but TROT membership opens up a wonderful network of riding trails, helping to keep members away from the busier public areas of the forests.

near vicinity but they are separate and it is quite easy to wander off on to a TROT trail if you miss where the public footpath goes (if you don't know the difference !!) - It is very unlikely that a TROT trail and a Public Footpath end up on the same 'track' as the purpose of the TROT trail is that they are away from other users such as walkers.

There are over 50 TROT trails which in total stretch over several hundred miles – these are located

in 6 regions - South West, South East, East Anglia, Wales, West Midlands and East Midlands and though a map of these trails are not given on their site the locations are and will read something like :-

*"Farm route (6.68 miles)
The route is approx. seven miles long, split between wide grass headlands around arable fields, tracks through Chestnut Platts and headlands around Organic Apple Orchard"*

So through this organisation sections of track and trail have been designated for their use with the permission of the landowner – these trails are identified with their signage which can be seen just the same as any footpath sign at the

ends of the trails as well as along the way. They are easily identifiable with an image of a couple of horses and TROT written thereon (see below)

However, these trails are for their use only – every member pays for the privilege of using the trails much like a toll road on the motorways, and depending on the length or the location the toll fee can be different. Quite often the TROT trails do run alongside public footpaths or in the



It must be stressed that the trails are on private land and only TROT members have access – anyone seen on the trails by TROT members or indeed the landowner will be told they are trespassing – if this happens to be cachers who are asked what they are doing that may jeopardise that caching trail and will give geocaching a bad name.

To date it seems that only two trails have been identified as having come into contact with geocaching trails – it may be possible that there are other caching trails that have inadvertently encroached on TROT trails and either no one has noticed or due to lack of knowledge no one realizes – or, to date, cachers have not come across the landowners or TROT members and so the issue hasn't been identified.

Going forward – The GAGB and cachers are working together to try and work with the TROT organisation to get access to their trail maps which will assist reviewers when submissions for caches are put forward. At the time of this article being written access to these maps



have only been given to paying members of TROT causing an issue with clarification.

However, if any cacher does discover that a trail they are on is in fact on a TROT trail they should notify the CO immediately advising that the walk goes onto private land and if there are any caches involved on that stretch they should be re-located ASAP. Failure to do so will only encourage other cachers to trespass. Please feel free to also inform GAGB (glad@gagb.org.uk), as we can help a CO and a reviewer understand the issue by explaining the situation.

A note from our GLAD manager: Please remember to always ask for permission before placing a cache anyway. A public footpath is a 'right of way', it's not public land, someone owns it. If the cache owners in question had asked for permission then the TROT issue would never have come up! Unless there's a special GLAD agreement in place that says otherwise, always ask the land owner or manager. When you submit the cache listing you tick a box that says you have permission, anyway!

The Constitution of the GAGB

Only about 15% of our members bother to vote, we haven't had a contested election for Chair in many years, and there are so many geocachers out there that don't know what we do or think we're irrelevant. In this article, Ant takes a hard look approach to our constitution, and looks at whether changing that can improve GAGB.

What's wrong?

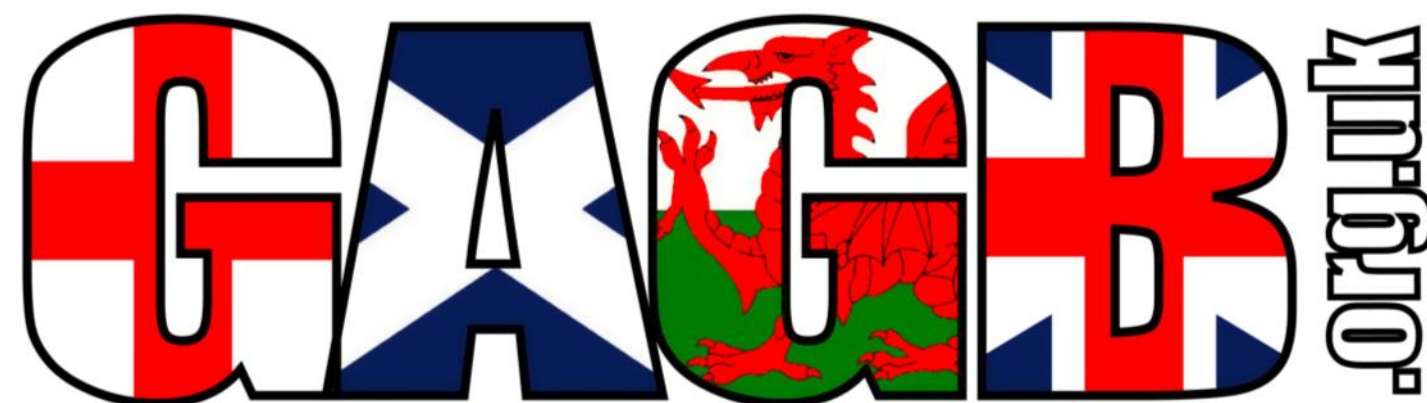
The constitution causes several areas of friction. It's up to members whether to change anything, so we asked members their opinion on certain aspects of the GAGB constitution in our survey in December.

Northern Ireland

Firstly, it causes friction with geocachers who live on the island of Ireland that our title is GAGB, yet our constitution (and thus our Facebook page) include Northern Ireland! Any change to the constitution should try to sort that out – in a friendly and helpful manner but with the aim to reduce friction and confusion. I think we should ask what the folk in Northern Ireland want – we shouldn't

claim them if we're not wanted and we shouldn't neglect them if we are wanted! Either way, let's sort it out.

I suppose we should also talk about those areas that are not in the UK but are part of the British Isles– the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands.



The Geocaching Association of Great Britain

Elections

The annual elections mean that the whole association's committee could be "kicked out" every year. As the assets of the association grow – and they have grown since 2013! – we need a bit more protection for the association. I've heard several ideas – such as longer terms for the Chair, or for the committee members themselves; perhaps a trustee arrangement (a set of long-term trustees who need to approve major spending by the committee); a different electoral system that encourages new folk to stand, all sorts of electoral ideas. Given the way

elections have (or indeed haven't) gone since 2013, I personally don't think this is the key change. However, I do think there is merit in the following 'tinkering' – what do you think?

- Chair elections for a 3-year term. In our survey, just 37% of you thought this was a good idea.
- Half the committee elected for 2-year terms every year (half in, half out). Only 33% of you thought this was a good idea
- Continue to allow the committee to 'evict' lazy committee members but make it two months/60 days. I'd add a line about a formal warning needing

to be sent by the Chair after 6 weeks – thus a half-month notice. We can't have people block the work of the committee and be 'carried along', when all it takes is joining in the discussions and voting!

It's worth noting that 35% of you thought we shouldn't make any changes at all. If I can't help you to change your mind about that then there will be no change – so I ask you to keep an eye on Seeker and the Facebook group, the forums, consider the merits of the changes, but also allow me to benefit from your thinking!

Events

Currently the GAGB hold roving events under a 'technicality' interpretation of



our objectives - #2 allows us to help all geocachers to enjoy the activity, and

#5 allows us to provide assistance. This isn't clear enough to allow GAGB to take any kind of organising or support role in many of the major events (such

as the Mega Events), and has limited the scope of some of the dreams of committee members – for example I don't think we can risk GAGB funds on away weekends at hostels. I can't see any way for us to formally help a team to organise the Annual Mega Event (not that anyone has asked, but beyond some fund raising and sponsorship, I don't think we'd be allowed to do it), and we can't take the lead with odd new ideas about geocaching without falling foul of this. I'd like to add an 'object' to encourage us to try out new ways of geocaching using GAGB resources (not necessarily financial), and to another object to specifically allow us to get involved in supporting events that have interesting or significant interest to GAGB members. The wording needs to be 'vague' enough to allow the committee discretion, and the committee need to be accountable to members (maybe via votes over certain thresholds of resources).



Membership

Let's find a better way of defining who in the membership can vote - logging into the forums once every 3 years is not a good measure in 2018! Why do we have a 'current member' category anyway? Since we don't charge for membership there should be no definition of 'inactive', should there? Having a measure of current (active) members is a good thing when I discuss commercial arrangements (Seeker circulation for advertising, for example, and to legitimise us during GLAD negotiations), and we can measure that via Seeker email lists and survey responses, but why can't we change the constitution around how we define members' voting rights? This would minimise the problems we face every Autumn where a) a dozen or so people complain that they didn't know they needed to join or re-join and yet b) only about 15% of our members vote anyway! I'm starting to think that perhaps we need to define 'active' for people who are standing for election, but perhaps we

don't need the same strict rules for people who are voting?

I'm out of line with many of you here. In our survey, 72% of you thought that 'inactive' members should not be able to vote. If I'm right and you are all wrong then I've got a lot of arguing ahead of me here! So I'll focus on a better way of defining 'inactive' and see if that gets your support. Deal?

A Formal Meeting

Several people have told me that we need an AGM – in fact as an association we need to be careful about this because we don't have the legal structure that makes this immediately sensible - any meeting would have no power in the constitution, and in fact might disenfranchise members who cannot attend. I think we can trial having an annual event of some kind, but I propose we don't add a requirement to have a formal AGM in

~~Annual
General
Meeting~~



our constitution at this time. I think we'd even need a change in the constitution to even do that, as I can't see any clause that allows us to spend funds on holding a membership meeting. Upstairs room at a pub, anyone?

However, in our survey, only 15% thought we should NOT hold an AGM, and 32% said it should be added to the constitution, so we all need to think about this one.

Other Ideas?

Should the chair have been a committee member previously? If so, for a minimum period of time (a day? A month? A year?). Should the secretary or treasurer be directly elected (87-88% of you said no to that question!). Should we have a different voting system (89% of you said no). What other changes should we consider? Maybe we need a weekend 'retreat' for people interested in making changes to the constitution so we can draft changes... but GAGB can't organise it! Um...

Anyway, if you have any comments about these ideas, or any other ideas,

please make them known somehow. In the survey about half of you said 'whatever' about this question, so I know this'll only interest some of you. But if you are interested, let's talk! Ant

Further Information:

The GAGB Constitution was last modified in May, 2013. It can only be modified by a two-thirds majority of members who vote. This article is designed to be provocative and does not necessarily reflect the actual thinking of anyone. These are just ideas, and over the course of 2018 Seeker will continue to formulate these ideas into a proper set of proposals, which can be voted on by the membership in Nov/Dec 2018. All members (regardless of lapsed or current, or when you joined) will be eligible to vote in constitutional matters, unless formally resigned prior to the vote. If you have an opinion on these changes and would like to see it appear in Seeker, please get in touch with us.

For further discussion, why not head over to the GAGB Facebook group, our forums, or contact Ant directly at editor@gagb.org.uk.

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 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



Caching on Dartmoor In the Snow

By Isaac Ogden (heartradio)

Due to various reasons - climate change, greenhouse gases, rising temperatures, sea level change, politics, modern music, whatever you want to blame it on (though I think the meteorological factors have more to do with it) – we don't get much snow any more. Particularly this far south, in Devon. So when it does arrive, it's quite exciting. We've had quite a bit (by our standards anyway) recently, and I've had the chance to go out caching in it, so I thought I'd share my experience, just in case you didn't get the chance to yourselves...



*Image: Scorhill Stone Circle, on route
to my snowy FTF on GC7DHXJ*

My first snowy caching adventure of the winter was a couple of weeks ago when I visited a familiar area, on the scent of an FTF. I was surprised at how much snow there was when I got out of the 'cachemobile'. It was a half-mile walk to GZ, but as per usual on Dartmoor there were amazing views to be seen, and the Scorhill Stone

Circle to admire along the way, complete with a snowy dusting! The cache I was visiting ([GC7DHXJ](#)) was part of a new series spread across the moor, based on the Famous Five Books.

One day I hope to complete the series but it may take some time! The cache was soon found (in the stereotypical

Dartmoor hiding place) once I arrived, and I was pleased to find a blank log too – the early start was worth it. After finding it I headed down to the nearby river to take photos, then on my way back I spotted another cacher at GZ, narrowly beaten to FTF. Had a chat and that was my snowy adventure done for the day.



Image: A bug's (or any other small animal that walks around at ground level) eye view on the Roos Tor Ramble

Then, a week or so later - more snow! It's "snow" joke, we really got it again – just like that old buses analogy where you wait ages then two come at once! This time, after seeing some photos on the local caching [Facebook group Dartmoor Geocaching](#), I decided to do the newest of Dartmoor Dave's loops – Roos Tor Ramble ([GC7EXKH](#)). It's a 4.5

mile walk around some open moorland on the west side of the moor. This day of caching proved much more of a challenge for a couple of reasons.


1. Firstly, because it had snowed, it was extremely cold. My handwriting in the logbooks made it look like I was back in primary school as I

struggled to hold my pen steady in the nearest we get to Arctic weather!

2. Also, my padded waterproof trousers made my legs uncomfortably warm, though they did come in useful when I tripped and fell down a slope!



Image: Near GC7DHXJ is a great example of a typical Dartmoor clapper bridge – this however has to be one of the most scenic.



Nevertheless, I had a great walk, it gradually warmed up which was good for my fingers, but the snow melted away by the end of the day. Remarkably my phone was not complaining about the weather for once and was working perfectly, I find caches using [Cachly](#). All the coordinates were spot on and the caches were hidden to be found, so a few hours later I summited Roos Tor, and from there it was all downhill back to the car. It turned out I was following one of my caching buddies around the loop, and we got to our cars at roughly the same time, so we headed off to a nearby café for refreshment to celebrate a successful day's caching!

RAF 100

*The RAF in 100 years old this year,
and various local RAF groups have been
in touch to ask for help in setting up
geocaching series to commemorate this.
Do you want to get involved?*

What is "RAF100"?

The world's first dedicated air force was created on April 1, 1918, when the Army and Navy air corps were merged into an independent arm of government - with its own ministry and so on. It started with 23,000 aircraft and - together with the WRAF - provided vital services to both the war effort and the recovery in Europe after the armistice. RAF100 celebrates the century of flying events, expertise, leadership, and achievements of the RAF, and seeks to inspire a future generation of flyers - civil and military - to even greater heights.

What's this got to do with geocachers?

Several local groups related to the RAF100 and other WW1 commemorative projects have asked GAGB for help - they'd like to use geocaching to mark key locations of local places of historic interest or to celebrate local heroes, and they know they need to do this right. This includes Northern Ireland and several locations around England. Since we all like a good geocache - and I'd hope all of us love being taken to special places or told stories behind certain geocaches - imagine how disappointing it would be if the cache itself is something that, let's just say

'could be better' if we'd been able to help.

How can I help?

If you know your area well and want to help with this project, and want to advise your local RAF100 or other similar groups on how to go about placing geocaches in our area, please consider becoming a 'GAGB friend' and get in touch with us - we can reach out to the groups that want help, or we can help connect you with groups that don't even know yet what they want! The

idea here is to see some caches placed that commemorate something local - if you can help to steer them away from 'campaigns' and 'causes' and towards location and history, then I think everyone will appreciate the help that you provide.

These groups would like our help:

The RAF 100 website:

<https://www.raf.mod.uk/raf100/>

The Coalville (Leicestershire)

Famous 50 Heroes project:

<https://theheroproject.org.uk/>



GAGB Friends

We're trying out a new thing – GAGB Friends. To get you going, here's a profile of one of our first GAGB Friends – Harri Boorman (GCHarribo). At just over 600 caches found and a presence on Youtube, Harri has a friendly face and a can-do approach that'll go far!

GAGB Friends is a new initiative led by Dominic Murray and is aimed at involving our members directly in the activities of the GAGB. The main areas of being a Friend are:

- Local point of contact: I bet you already help cachers old and new learn about aspects of geocaching. The GAGB Friends is a network of people like you to share ideas and get the right answers easily and reliably.
- A GAGB Friends private Facebook group: Let us and other GAGB Friends know about problems or ideas – for example you can easily give us regular feedback from events, about what we should be doing. Help us to listen to geocachers.
- Let people know about new things: Whether from GC HQ, other organisations and listing sites, from GAGB, or elsewhere, the Friends can become a recognised source of 'new news'. We don't have to just rely on the Facebook random newsfeed or rumours at events – we can find out the latest geocaching news as a group and share that in our area. For example, making cachers aware of new land agreements locally or new legislation regarding our pastime.
- Cache In Trash Out (CITO) events: GAGB like to encourage this activity all through the year and especially in September, when we have our CITO weekend. Through this group we can share good ideas about how to arrange one and how to encourage geocachers to hold them throughout the UK.
- Seeker: When someone tells you a good story, or praises a local cache, or has something to say about any topic – let's share it more widely. Friends can channel that enthusiasm into Seeker articles to share with all GAGB members.
- We're trying out GAGB Friends to help make GAGB more useful and meaningful to local geocachers and to help get members more directly involved in what GAGB is and what we achieve. We hope that this will help the community and increase awareness of and engagement with GAGB. If you are interested in becoming a GAGB Friend please don't hesitate to message the committee and express your interest by emailing friends@gagb.org.uk.

Hi Harri - What's your haunt?

South east England

Are you a cache owner as well as a cacher?

Yes – I've got 50 caches I look after

Which cache are you proudest of owning (live or archived)?

My pier cache as you have to climb on the structure of the pier.

What do you think of events?

Love them! I've been to 23, and even hosted 4, as well as the CITO's.

GPS or phone cacher?

Phone cacher, so I can do videos for my YouTube channel

When you cache on your phone, what's your preferred app?

Cachly

How do you find out about really great caches to go get?

I ask on Facebook or on my YouTube channel

How far and fast would you go for a FTF?

I go roughly 15 miles and go pretty fast

Tell us about a memorable DNF?

There were some lovely views along the way to the DNF so it was still worth it!

What's your most memorable 'milestone' cache?

My 250th - it was my first earthcache and it was about earthquakes!

Do you have a current geocaching project

Yep - I'm trying to find a cache every day in a year. So far I've managed 175 out of 366 days, so it's going to take me a while!

What do you think of the more strange cache types?

I think it's a nice to have a mix – something to make us think to get or find a cache with a special icon.

Power trails or that one special cache?

I prefer power trails as I usually go with other cachers & it's more fun.

How far out of the way would you go for a special cache?

I went to London to get the virtual reward in Trafalgar Square, so pretty far.

Mega Family Trip to Krakow

By David Airey (DJ:CD)

All caching adventures start with some form of planning. The amount of planning that goes into the trip depends on the desired outcome. For us (the DJ:CD family) the trip that requires the most planning is one that centres on a Mega Event. This is for a multitude of reasons, but at the heart of it is the need to ensure my wife (a sunshine only cacher) and 2 children (4 year old daughter enjoys caching to an extent and 2 year old son who just enjoys being outside regardless of activity) have as enjoyable time as me.

For me, the important things when travelling abroad for caching are to find as many different icons as possible and to find any caches that have been included in Groundspeak's [Geocache of the Week blog](#). Plus of course finding any highly favoured caches (not always a perfect guide because of the age of caches but a good starting point nevertheless).

In 2017 we went to GeoNord ([GC6gXKT](#)) and whilst a fun time was had by all, we stayed too far away from the Mega venue so spent too long in the car and not enough time enjoying ourselves, caching or

otherwise. The money saved on cheaper accommodation just went on petrol, so this was a planning failure on my part, but we live and learn.

Fast forward to December and it was time to choose our family Mega for

2018. We needed to select a country where we hadn't cached previously (for stats purposes!), a country not too far away (so most likely European) and somewhere with affordable accommodation close to the Mega

venue. Geocaching Party 2018 ([GC7DDXg](#)) near Krakow in Poland fitted the bill. Plus this Mega is during the summer holidays so it was ideal for all (I'd never keep the geokids out of school for caching anyway).

On 31st October 2017 I logged a will attend and by that evening the flights and accommodation had been booked (does anyone else get carried away like this?) Flights were booked from our local airport direct to Krakow, plus we were fortunate that the timings were good.

Accommodation was booked at the same time having learnt from my GeoNord failings. Helped by the fact the price was too good to not book immediately and that it was directly over the road from the Mega venue in Nowa Huta!

Now that the flights and accommodation were booked for August 2018 I thought that was the end of thinking about Poland until at least mid-2018.

However back in mid-July 2017 I had hosted an event at Helsinki airport ([GC74B7E](#)) the day before the [Porvoo Mega](#) and the attendance certainly took me by surprise. I had imagined it would be more of a car boot style event (standing around by someone's car having some polite geo-chat) thinking that there would only be myself and a couple of others. Imagine my surprise when over 30 cachers turned up (taking

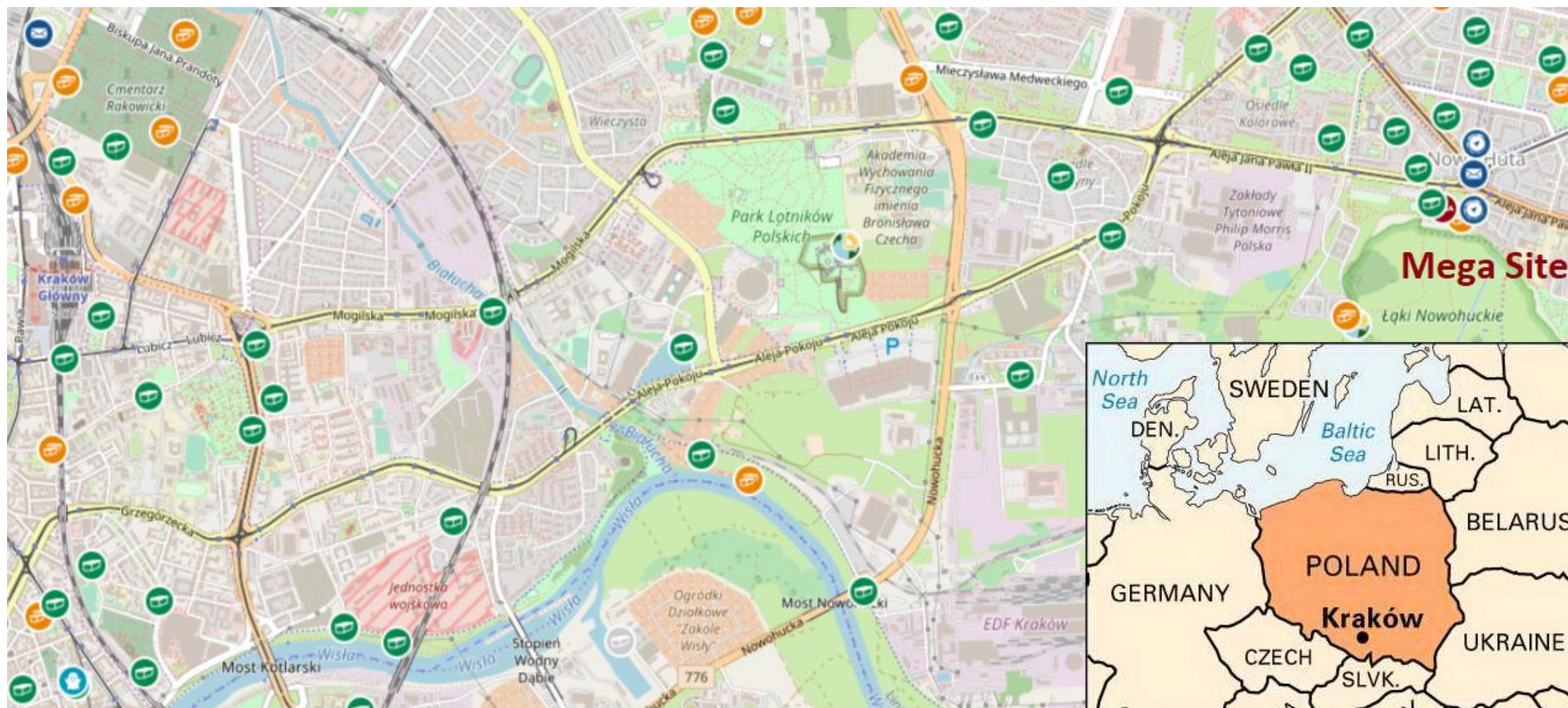
into account their +1's there were about 50 of us). One of the many attendees at this event was Wiesia.K. As the Friends League was at the centre of Groundspeak's 2017 summer campaign a majority of attendees sent me a friend request, including Wiesia.K. Of course, I politely accepted all the requests I received.

When I logged my will attend on the Krakow Mega I checked for friends logs and noticed that Wiesia.K had logged a will attend. Perfectly normal for a Polish geocacher to log a Will Attend on a Polish Mega. Then on 1st November (the day after my will attend log and

booking flights and accommodation) Wiesia.K messaged me to say that she had seen my log and was pleased I would be attending the Mega in Poland with my family and that she was part of the Mega committee. One conversation led to another and she very kindly offered to send me some information on Krakow to help with my planning. The conversation then diverted to talking about my family and less so about Krakow so imagine my surprise when the package arrived from Poland, containing a post card wishing me well, an information guide on Krakow (in English) and a street map of Krakow. The postage was equivalent to £3 (or so I am informed) but the monetary value is irrelevant, it's the fact that someone has taken the time to help a fellow geocacher that is important here.

I feel now that I should be championing this Mega from the UK and if Wiesia.K's goodwill gesture is anything to go by, us cachers are in for a treat in Krakow!

The Geocaching Party 2018 is from August 24-26th, 2018, in the Nowa Huta district of Krakow. It has inherited Mega status as a recurring large event, with 448 'attended' logs in 2017.



Souvenirs for Everything?

When we cache in Ireland we get new souvenirs. If we cache on certain days, we get souvenirs. But sometimes we go to a new country and we get nothing. Why? Following on from last year's Introduction to Souvenirs and Badges on the geocaching site, Ant explores some of the oddities around Geocaching HQ's approach to souvenirs.

Who Cares?

The word 'souvenir' comes from a French word, meaning 'memory' - it's a tangible way of remembering something that is worth remembering.

Geocaching HQ offers souvenirs for a few locations, dates, and events to help us remember where we've been and what we've done. Put like this, of course we care! I have a lot of souvenirs, and as I cache in a team (with Sharon & the kids) it's nice to see the one from Leinster that is 'mine' - I remember well walking in the dark and drizzle out of Dublin airport and down that busy road. I also remember my very first one (101010 - I got that in a pub car park in Dudley by simply doing a search on the app!). These are 'memories', so let's not be too cynical about them, eh?

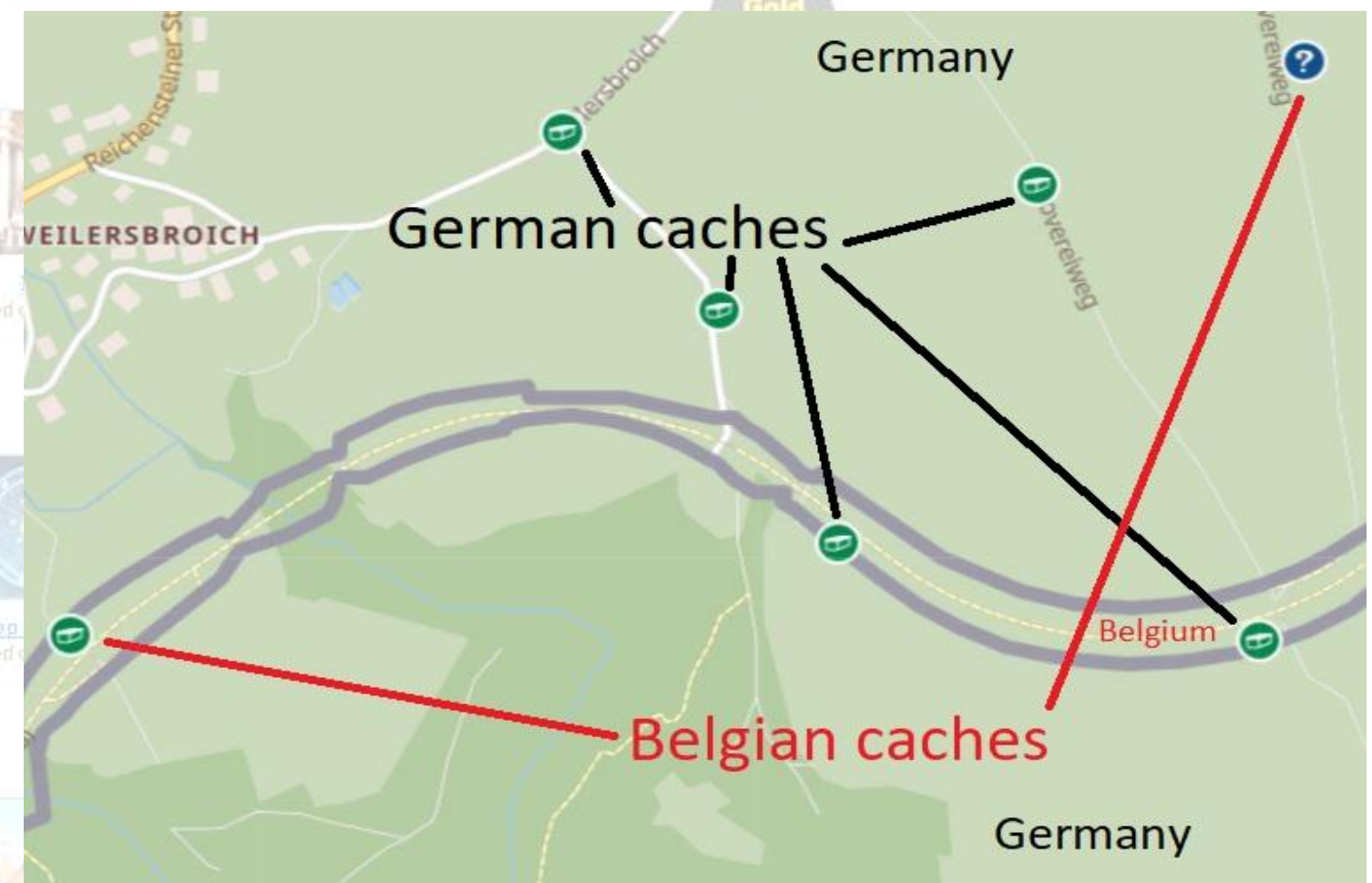
Geopolitical Oddities

Especially when it comes to islands, Geocaching HQ tend to follow their own whims regarding borders. We know that Northern Ireland is 'in' Ireland, from a geographical perspective, so you'll be earning an Irish souvenir there regardless of who 'administers' the land, not the UK souvenir. Similarly for the various Channel Islands, of course the isle of Man, and Gibraltar, regardless of their rather complex legal status - so someone who has not cached in the UK will NOT get a UK souvenir for visiting these places (no matter which tax break they are shopping for, LOL!). Odd.

It gets stranger...

Visit China and you'll get a souvenir. But not if you only cache in Macau - that's a different 'country' and you don't earn the 'China' souvenir unless you cross the bridge and cache outside the Macau province. The same is true for Hong Kong and Taiwan - four 'countries', but the souvenir is only awarded for what Geocaching HQ call 'China' itself. Let's propose a debate in the UN... not! And let's gloss over the status of Tibet, eh?

Or take a look at the borders between Belgium and both the Netherlands and Germany. Geocaching HQ clearly likes to ignore some international treaties but when it comes to Belgium they clearly know when to give in - there's a Belgian cycle track (the Vennbahn) between Aachen & Luxembourg and its caches keep switching between countries purely based on the Versailles Treaty of 1919!



Regions within Countries

Remember I mentioned Irish souvenirs? It's even odder than that... When you cache in Ireland, don't go looking for your souvenir under the letter 'I' (or 'E') because there isn't a country souvenir, only the five provinces (Ulster, Munster, etc). Then there's Germany, where you get two souvenirs for your first cache - one for Germany as a country, and then one for the state that you are in (Look under 'D' for Deutschland, and then look for your state - in my case 'Hessen'). The US is like Ireland and has no country souvenir, just 52 'state' souvenirs (huh? 50 states, but 52 souvenirs?), but Canada is like Germany with both (it's like a 2-for-1 deal if you walk across the Niagara Falls). I think it's no coincidence that Signal has visited both countries for special 'day' souvenirs recently, and the country souvenirs appeared. Australia might be next, as it has no country souvenir yet, but you can collect 8 regional ones. That's a heck of a lot of driving, though.



Why not everywhere?

Souvenirs are special - if every single town, county, region, and country had a souvenir, and every day had one, they'd lose their value (See [August, 2013](#) for details). We can complain about the idiosyncratic way in which some places do and don't have them, or why borders are

ignored sometimes and not others, and we can ask for new souvenirs, but at the end of the day they are meant to be simple 'memories' of a select few places (or times) that Geocaching HQ want us to remember.



Want a new one? Try posting in the Geocaching Forums. HQ used to have a voting system to get new ones, but that got rather out of hand rather quickly, so now it's based more on what they consider to be a good idea. And don't worry - when a new one comes out (as with Argentina recently), if you previously cached there you'll get the souvenir right away. Finger's crossed for Signal visiting the USA in July and leaving a country souvenir behind for me!

Have you seen any other really odd country/souvenir situations? Let us know on our Social media channels.

References:

Geocaching HQ's current list of souvenirs: <https://www.geocaching.com/help/index.php?pg=kb.chapter&id=89&pgid=792>

Seeker's article on Souvenirs vs badges: <https://gagb.org.uk/uploads/Seeker/seeker33.pdf#page=18>

Caching equipment reviews

Back in the day, Seeker used to publish tech articles – reviews of new hardware related to geocaching. Since taking over as editor, Ant's done a few software reviews, but folks have nudged him that perhaps it's time to bring back good-old equipment reviews? So, let's. Happily, Dominic Murray (Geocaching Womble) had the same idea, and here he takes a look at the Survival Watch.

I'd like to take a moment to say hello to those who don't know me. I'm Dominic Murray (Geocaching Womble), and GLAD Manager for GAGB for 2018.

The Survival Watch takes standard watch batteries and is incredibly good at keeping time. It will also survive most weather conditions with ease. (This is incredibly useful whilst out caching.) The Strap is made from Paracord and will fit most size wrists easily. In addition, the strap also



contains a Thermometer for checking temperature -this feature is most useful in winter whilst out caching (ed note – or for when I next go caching in Arizona, perhaps!).

The watch houses a built-in whistle, so if you become injured whilst out caching in a remote area you could help the rescue services locate you slightly more easily. The Whistle itself is a blow whistle without a ball and has a reasonable range. There is a built-in compass on the strap to keep you on track and prevent you from becoming lost easily. (This is always a useful

backup if your GPS fails).

Finally, there is a built-in firelighter at the base of the strap. To active it, you unclip the strap and turn it around, then light an ignition spark by striking the sharp part of the strap against the side of the middle section.

You then light a long cotton wool bud from the spark. After which, ignite a stick from the long bud into the fire, making sure that you are wearing thick gloves at all times! I have found it to be

a useful tool for caching when on a camping trip , especially when lighting a stove. The striking part of the strap also doubles as a mini saw (when removed from the centre of the strap) to cut small sticks whilst camping. The only real flaw with this is that the paint of the actual watch may chip whilst outside however this is not a significant problem. I've used this watch extensively and it is extremely versatile and incredibly rugged. It will survive a lot of punishment and is a good survival tool. I would highly recommend getting one.

Suitability for caching 5 out of 5

The EMAX Outdoor Survival Watch Bracelet with Compass, Flint Fire Starter, Paracord, Thermometer, and Whistle is available from Amazon and Hanging by a Fred, and several other retailers.

Editor's note: this is a personal review. GAGB have no commercial interests in these reviews, we do not receive any compensation in any way, and we ask our reviewers to assure us of the same.

If you have any suggestions or opinions on this or any other topic, please feel welcome to discuss via our social media channels or contact us gagbcontact@gagb.org.uk. If you have a product that you'd like to review for Seeker, get in touch with editor@gagb.org.uk.



Data from 2016-17. Includes England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Correct as of December 2017.

GAGB Guidelines

*What makes a good cache, or cacher?
Where is a good place to hide a cache?
What should new cachers know before they head out? GAGB have guidelines about this. We've recently made some minor updates, so now is a good time to point them out and see if we can all agree – no matter what Groundspeak 'rules' are, or what other listing sites of landowners say is allowed – what are "our" guidelines, as GAGB members,*

Why do we have GAGB Guidelines?

Every listing site has guidelines, which vary based on the whims and interests of the site. Some guidelines have no relevance for us in the UK, some are clearly aimed at commercial interests, and some miss out some useful guidelines that GAGB members have suggested over the years. There's a lot of overlap – a combination of common sense and experience will lead most reasonable people to the same place, after all. GAGB's guidelines don't guarantee that your

cache will be published – in fact many geocaches clearly don't follow our idea of a good location or sensible cache, so ignoring our guidelines might well get you published. What we're saying is that these guidelines are advice if you want the finders of your cache to have a good experience.

- [Our guidelines are listed on our website here.](#)

These are not a new thing – GAGB have promoted good guidelines for many years! The current committee have made a few minor edits, but mostly we'd like everyone to know about them whether new or old – they're easy to understand, easy to find, and if you meet a new cacher thinking about placing their own caches, please send them our way!

General guidelines – what makes a good geocache?

We've got 8 basic aspects of a good cache. These are all uncontroversial, but so many cachers clearly ignore

them! Things like asking for permission, labelling the cache, and maintaining the cache are probably the most 'broken' guidelines we have! Making the cache nice when found (family-safe and no perishables) are also a couple of guidelines that I think we'd all like to see followed more (I've found cigarettes, sweets, undesirable gooey messes, and other odd items. Seems like common sense, but lets write these down so others who care, know).

Special Locations

Our guidelines then list 11 types of locations where you need to think twice and perhaps not place geocaches.

Some are because of the fragility of the location – SSSIs and National parks are special locations and unless there is a special agreement in place, please just think about somewhere else – many National Parks and various wildlife trusts and special locations do have wide-ranging agreements, so just look up the agreement in the GLAD part of our website to see if you can follow their

regs, but otherwise, think twice before trying to convince a listing site to list a geocache there!

Religious grounds (and similar) are a special sort of location. Be aware that geocachers furtively hunting through Yew hedges or behind gravestones can be quite off-putting to worshippers or mourners. Check with the person managing the land to find a suitable location, or place the cache nearby. Most listing sites will ask for specific evidence of permission, because these sites are so sensitive.

Security and the safety of the public play a big part in this section, too. About eight years ago the MOD came to view geocaching as a game too far, and restricted geocaches near their land. The same goes for Railway land, airports, prisons, even schools and playgrounds, because even if you are innocent, how do the public know that? Steer clear of sensitive sites, that's what we're saying.

We've also got a good section on urban caching – which came in after the [Wetherby Incident of 2011](#). Basically, tell the nearest locals about

the cache and give us geocachers a really (very) clear hint so we can make a quick find! This can be true of rural caches too – and don't just ask the landowner, think about telling the person who overlooks your cache so they know what's going on. Many of us find it hard to bring up geocaching with strangers – if that's you, then come find a committee member at one of our events and ask for a stack of our GAGB Business Cards. These really help people to understand that what we do is an innocent but organised game, and not just a suspicious and furtive activity!

The Environment

Finally, we've got a few sections on how to help make sure your finders don't harm the landscape or themselves! Think about bird nesting, badger sets, fragile plants, and so on. Consider seasonally disabling your cache if it's a great place but just too darn close to some lovely nesting sites or icy cliffs! And especially around water - think about how some people might fall in or endanger themselves without realising where you've taken them – if it's a potentially dangerous place, but you go ahead anyway, then

say so on your listing page and mark the terrain and attributes accordingly.

What did you change then?

In Jan 2018 we've adjusted just a few of these guidelines.

- Added an extra link to Groundspeak's own hiding guidelines
- Schools, National Parks, MOD, and Water guidelines added
- Do not impede Emergency Services or harm the environment

Further Information:

GAGB also have a "[Code of Conduct](#)". We're looking at this to see what we can do to make it resonate more with geocachers – since "code of conduct" sounds very grand and official, but also not particularly friendly and therefore not very practical or useful. Can we get the essence of it into something new? Can we keep the important bits and make it work? Why not help us to get it right?

For further discussion, why not head over to the GAGB Facebook group, our forums, or contact our GLAD manager at GLAD@gagb.org.uk

Piratemania 11 ([GC7FWD6](#))



Place the date in your ship's log. Piratemania 11 Mega event has been published and will be held at Dalby Forest near Pickering, North Yorkshire on Saturday 28th July. And straight before the Mega. It's a Forestry Commission site and they have permission to put caches out in the forest with the rangers and wardens of the forest. It is a fantastic location and there is a treetops Go Ape and also Stargazing at the visitor centre. All pitches are provided with electric on site and are available now to book at piratemania.org/store/. There will be prizes for the best dressed pirates and best decorated ship in port, Adam's cinema in the marquee, a Friday night BBQ and a flashmob on the Sunday.

10th Anniversary UK

Mega—Yorkshire ([GC7ABCC](#))



The UK Annual Mega event this year is at Newby Hall & Gardens, near Ripon, North

Yorkshire on Saturday 4th August. There will also be a week of fantastic side events from Monday 30th July to Monday 6th August, watch this space they will be published soon. Camping will be held on the camping field at Newby Hall from Monday 30th July to Monday 6th August. This is a large field away from public areas. All pitches will be provided with electric hookups and there will be plenty of high quality toilet, shower and washing facilities for campers who stay on site with us. Visit megashop2018.org.uk to book your camping pitch.