# Community Interest Statement

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## Contents

# Introduction

**This document sets out the community that GearLog Community Interest Company (GCIC) benefits and how it benefits them. The information in this document is provided to satisfy the Community Interest Statement which is required to incorporate a Community Interest Community in the UK.**

It is well acknowledged and widely accepted that taking part in adventure sports outdoors (e.g. rock climbing, kayaking or caving) has a number of mental, physical and social benefits. However, adventure sports carry an element of risk which is mitigated through:

1. Safety equipment which is properly inspected and managed
2. Personal skill, accreditation and experience
3. Guidance and supervision by certified individuals such as instructors or activity leaders

Without these three protections in place the benefits of adventure sports are dwarfed by the potential consequences of an accident. GCIC exists to address the first of these protections (safety equipment management).

The GearLog platform was created to ensure that individual participants in an adventure sport or those providing expert guidance to lesser skilled individuals have access to a high quality, free system for managing the inspection of safety critical equipment. We believe that a high quality system like GearLog makes it more likely that equipment is inspected (whether that is a legal need or not) and that those inspections are carried out more efficiently and more effectively leading to saved time and effort for organisations involved (who themselves may well have education, charitable or CIC status).

**Why are we now choosing to form a CIC?** To date GearLog has been developed and run as a philanthropic gesture from the profits of the founder's technology consultancy. GearLog as a brand was launched with very modest aims and has been a runaway success. It has become very obvious that to secure the platform for the future for its user base, develop all the insightful suggestions we have received and grow further the user base a more formal model is now needed. The UK Community Interest Company (CIC) model provides exactly that. GCIC will take forward the philanthropic mission envisaged for the GearLog platform.

In the rest of this document we explain:

- Why the inspection of safety equipment in adventure sports is essential.
- The sports we cover.
- What communities are involved in the provision of or participation in these sports and would thus benefit from GearLog.
- What the benefits to the user community are
- Why GearLog is also available free to profit-making organisations.

## Why Inspect?

Let's illustrate this simply by example:

> *In rock climbing ropes are generally used in a variety of ways to prevent ground falls. If the integrity of the rope is compromised the entire safety system put in place for the climber is compromised. A well-managed and well caught fall during a rock climb, whilst scary, is also exhilarating, a chance for personal growth and a sign of limits being pushed – just some of the benefits of adventure sports. A fall however well managed and however well caught on a rope that breaks will lead to injury, disability or even death. These risks must be managed for the benefits to be obtained. There are many more elements than the rope in climbing that must also be inspected and maintained and many sports other than rock climbing where these same principles apply.*

Many of the users of GearLog are individuals, clubs, community groups, schools, centres with charitable or CIC status themselves and so on. For some sports in some contexts inspection is a legal requirement but a change of context or a change of sport may mean it is not.

For example, an individual going rock climbing with a friend has no legal requirement to check their equipment whereas an activity centre with a community focus running climbing sessions must follow the stipulations of the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA). This is simply one example from one sport but in both cases the consequence of the incident to the participant is the same. Individuals and organisations should not inspect just because they have to under law (or for insurance provision) - they should inspect because it is the obvious and right thing to do. GearLog exists to make that as easy and as accessible as possible, thus removing those barriers.

## What Sports do we cover?

GearLog has been designed from the ground up to be flexible and adaptable and can easily be configured to handle equipment for any sport. GearLog was initially piloted on rock climbing in volunteer run clubs but now covers:

1. Climbing (indoors at the gym, and outdoors on rock)
2. Bouldering
3. Mountaineering and ice climbing
4. Paddling (kayaking, canoeing and other water sports)
5. Scuba
6. Mountain and confined space rescue by specialist volunteer teams
7. Air sports (BASE jumping, parachuting, paragliding, hang gliding etc)
8. Skiing and snowboarding
9. Caving
10. High access work *
11. Arborist work *

*The reader may well note that the last two are business users and we address this point in the final section of this document.*

## What communities are involved?

Within each of the sports listed in the previous section (items 1-9) we have a number of communities:

1. Individuals taking part in the sport for their own pleasure on their own or with friends and without money or liability being involved.
2. Organisations helping individuals to participate in the sport where money may change hands (however nominal the fee in some cases) and liability is almost certainly involved
3. Clubs operated on a membership basis, run by volunteers and often affiliated to a national body to access information, skills and insurance
4. Educational institutions such as schools and higher education colleges
5. Scout groups
6. Youth and community groups with a full or partial focus on outdoors sports
7. Guides and instructors operating as self-employed contractors either with their own clients or under contract to larger organisations
8. Rescue teams who operate on a voluntary basis and use their skills and specialist equipment to assist injured (or even killed) participants
9. Police, fire and ambulance teams operating on a similar basis to the rescue teams but within the structure of their respective forces.
10. Outward bound and activity centres who provide experiences and structured training to participants
11. Charitable organisations operating adventure sports activities to achieve their own unique missions and charters.

Although the GearLog platform is UK hosted (and where GCIC will be incorporated) it has also built a solid user base in the US, Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

GearLog is a cloud-based system available at https://gearlog.org and needs no specialised equipment to run it. Any modern web browser on any laptop, desktop or phone can access GearLog. In addition, there are iOS and Android apps that synch their data with the cloud so that, however a user chooses to access GearLog, all of their data is in one place.

## What are the benefits that GearLog provides to the community?

We describe the benefits by grouping the community into three categories:
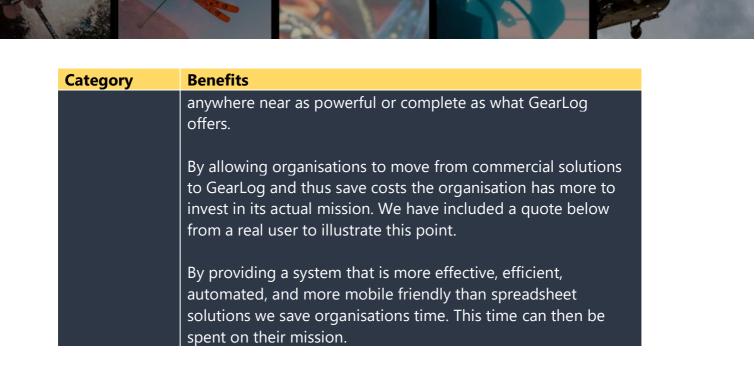
- Individuals
- Non-profit or community interest organisations
- Unrestricted profit-making organisations

In this section we tackle the first two groups and address the third group in the last section of this document

Ultimately, in all cases, we are striving to save lives and reduce injuries which are due to preventable equipment failures. Our mission is to democratise access to high quality systems so that, of all the barriers to outdoors participation, software is not one of them!

GearLog is 100% free (for all of its features) without adverts, subscriptions pay walls or any other barriers to all of its users whether they make a profit or not.

| Category | Benefits |
| --- | --- |
| Individuals | Cost is a huge barrier for this group. Some individuals do nothing, some have ad hoc processes, some create spreadsheet systems. None of these approaches are anywhere near as powerful as what GearLog offers.<br><br>By using GearLog individuals are guided and trained in how an effective inspection regime looks and operates. In this way we are increasing awareness, competence and expectation when it comes to equipment management.<br><br>In the cases where an individual is prompted by GearLog to inspect their equipment and spots an issue they have potentially avoided injury or death for themselves or a friend. |
| Non-Profit or community interest | These organisations know their liability and the regulations placed upon them. They are generally very strong on the need to inspect. For them the primary issue is cost and thus access to a world class equipment management platform without needing to pay is a big benefit. Some organisations create spreadsheet systems, some adapt specialised industry systems (e.g. papertrail.io) to their needs. None of these approaches are |

| Category | Benefits |
|---|---|
| | anywhere near as powerful or complete as what GearLog offers.<br><br>By allowing organisations to move from commercial solutions to GearLog and thus save costs the organisation has more to invest in its actual mission. We have included a quote below from a real user to illustrate this point.<br><br>By providing a system that is more effective, efficient, automated, and more mobile friendly than spreadsheet solutions we save organisations time. This time can then be spent on their mission. |

66 As a charitable outdoor centre using this free system has enabled us to fulfil our legal duties, organise our equipment and save £70 a month that alternatives wanted to charge us. That's £800 a year or £8,000 over the 10 year lifespan of gear. That's enabled us to swap worn Gri Gris for new Rigs. It's working well for us and using NFC tags we can locate gear on smartphones no expensive readers needed. Best of all is the quick replies to both questions and improvement suggestions!

— Peter Dennet, Hindleap Warren Outdoor Centre

## Why GearLog is also available free to profit making organisations.

Since its creation we have been unapologetic about making GearLog available for free to companies who then use it as part of their profit-making enterprise. There are four reasons why we have made this slightly unorthodox choice:

1. Some of these organisations have highly experienced and advanced users and their comments and suggestions radically improve the platform. This trickles down into better features for all the other users. Simply put, they get a great platform for free and we get valuable intelligence from them.
2. We simply don't care if users make money or not. All we care about is removing software costs and software quality as barriers to great inspection regimes. As well as high access teams and arborists many of our commercial users are individual contractors such as guides and outdoors instructors operating often for the love of what they do with very low margins. It is a pleasure and a privilege to help such people out.
3. We believe (from requests we have received) that some users of the free system will pay professional services fees (for example data migration, support and training). This provides an excellent revenue opportunity for GCIC to plough back into running the free instance of the platform, developing it further and promoting it.
4. We believe (from requests we have received) that some organisations prefer to pay for the product. This is so that they can self-host it, place their own branding on it or meet specific security accreditations. These users may well learn about the product for free and decide to move to a private licensed installation when that suits them. This provides an excellent opportunity for GCIC to generate revenue from software sales that can (after costs) be re-invested in the mission of the company.