



## THE MOUNTAIN CLUB STAFFORD COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2017  
Time: 7:30pm until 9:30pm  
Venue: Red Lion pub in Dinas Mawddwy (postcode SY20 9JA)

### MINUTES

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#### 1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Chair Robert Townsend opened the 2017 AGM

Minutes from the 2016 Annual General Meeting were accepted as an accurate record. Proposed by Stephanie Palmer and seconded by Mike Reynolds.

#### 2. OFFICERS' REPORT

##### Chair

Robert Townsend began by thanking the committee for their work in 2016-2017. We have organised a good range of activities, the club is in a strong financial position and our hut Bryn Hafod is in excellent condition thanks to members' efforts at work meets. This year has seen the club begin to offer training courses, run by qualified and experienced instructors, in attempt to develop the skill base of our membership. It has been great to see so many people supporting the club this year, continued with good attendance at the AGM tonight.

##### Membership secretary

The Mountain Club currently has 77 members; almost half (36) of which have joined within the last three years. In the past year alone 12 new have joined the club. We failed to retain four members since last year: one adult and three children. We predicted that the club is likely to reach 80 members in 2017-18. The age range of club members is very positive for future longevity, given the roughly even split of younger and more mature members. Currently the average age of club members is 42, compared to many British clubs which typically have an average age of 45-60.

Paul Hyland delivered the update for membership secretary since Laura Millard is currently on maternity leave. The chair thanked Laura for her passion and dedication in the role and acknowledged her effort to recruit new members. The attendees agreed. Robert also thanked Paul for taking on the role as Laura became a Mother.

##### Hut Booking Secretary

Becky Owens presented an overview of hut booking statistics for the year. Income from hut bookings in 2016-2017 was £3,623. We have taken 12 weekend bookings from other clubs and have held 3 work meets and 3 crag cleans ourselves. The feedback from visiting groups has been very good. Usage by the Mountain Club has increased as we have started using the hut for hosting training courses too.

The Chair thanked Becky Owens for her contribution to the club and diligence in the role of Hut Booking Secretary, given that Becky will be standing down this year.

##### Hut Warden

Nick Owens opened by thanking to everyone who took part in work meets this year. Some of the wet crag cleans also became work meets which offered additional time for hut maintenance. This year we have fitted water filters, replaced kitchen shelving and re-painted

areas of the hut. The fire extinguishers have been replaced and we have also carried out maintenance work on the fence and bridge outside the hut. Over the coming year we intend to clear out the generator hut and also hope to upgrade the fireplace, installing a stove. The suggestion to upgrade the fireplace has been somewhat controversial, however it is a sensible step forward as we are currently spending a lot on coal to heat Bryn Hafod, so installing a more efficient stove makes a lot of sense and will make the hut warmer. Please continue to attend work meets, there will be another arranged for the Autumn.

The Chair thanked Nick and the members for attending work meets to maintain Bryn Hafod.

### **Meets Secretary**

Joel Harman recounted personal highlights of the meets list this year including the North Wales winter meet, bouldering in Font, a walking meet at the Rhyd Du hut (with thanks to Richard Linney for organising). Our meets have now diversified into training, including First Aid and Alpine Skills which took place earlier today as part of the AGM weekend, and our social meets included the Banff Mountain Film Festival. Moving forward we would like to increase the website promotion of our meets list and continue to encourage club members to arrange meets. Thank you to everyone who organized meets over the past year and also to those attending our meets.

The Chair encouraged club members to organise a meet and share their favourite place with the club. He reiterated that there is no financial risk to the individual and that promotion is also straight forward with the committee offering support.

### **Secretary**

Stephanie Palmer stated that committee administration continued to run smoothly since making changes during the last year. This year we have been conscious of the need to increase committee communication and engagement with club members; hopefully the fact there is competition for committee roles this year is a sign this has been successful. However there is still more we can do. I have taken over production of the monthly newsletter and added a section called 'committee matters' describing decisions made and items for next month's agenda. If reelected I intend to raise the public profile of the club further, including articles in local papers. It is great to see the club in such a strong position.

### **Ordinary members**

Mike Reynolds: Leading on training; We are pleased to have offered several training courses this year based on questionnaire responses from members including First Aid, Rope Management, and an Improve Your Leading course. There was an Alpine Skills course today and there will be a further First Aid course tomorrow. Despite these being requested by members we sometimes struggle with attendance so it would be helpful to obtain feedback on barriers to attendance such as pricing/notice/location etc.

Nigel Harris: Leading on walking and winter meets; the BMC are keen to support walkers within the club and I feel it is important for us to maintain diversity in our meets list. I had been producing the newsletters as well, before handing over to Stephanie.

Mick Collins: I do not have a specific role although I am able to offer representation for the older club members and voicing their intentions. The club is in a strong position with good contributions from the committee plus other members, who share their personal strengths and skills with the club. The future looks very positive and the club is moving forward.

Ordinary Member Kirsty Higgs sends her apologies. No further questions or comments were raised by the attendees.

## **3. PRESENTATION OF CLUB FINANCES 2016-17**

David Stevenson provided copies of the club accounts. We have had a very good year in

terms of finance, with a net £3,000 addition. This was due to hut bookings being healthy and the fact that we haven't spent a great deal; there have been no major works on the hut and no major events such as the anniversary event that we held last year. Council tax has increased but we still get a 100% rebate. The income from membership, less the membership payment to the BMC, was £1,500.

Slides depicting the sources of income and expenditure were shown. Stephanie Palmer noted that in 2016-2017 bookings from Bryn Hafod have provided 51% of the club's income so this is an important revenue stream for the club and needs to stay strong over the coming years.

Nigel Harris asked if we can apply for grants such as lottery funding, to which Robert Townsend replied that we can get specific grants but as our finances are healthy unlikely to get general grants.

Nigel Harris asked why the electricity bill for Bryn Hafod was so big and enquired whether we have considered switching supplier. It was discussed that it was discussed that this is probably due to the immersion heater and electric showers, especially with groups staying. ***Nick Owens to investigate options to switch electricity supplier and to investigate appliance usages.***

#### **4. PROPOSALS FOR 2017-18**

The Chair outlined proposals for the coming year. Prior to this AGM we released a membership survey which we plan to run annually, to track members' satisfaction with the club. To keep the club moving forward we propose to:

- 1) Improve the quality of communications on club activities.
  - i) We propose to begin using more professional tool (similar to the newsletter format) for updates.
  - ii) We will add information on what the committee has been discussing at monthly meetings to the website.
- 2) Review the overall image of the club to ensure we are well positioned for continued success in the future. This will include a review of the website design and structure, the club's logo and the provision of club clothing/merchandise. The committee will seek views of club members on these matters with a thorough engagement process.
- 3) At Bryn Hafod, we proposed to investigate the installation of a multi-burner stove which may include altering the existing fireplace. We will also look into replacing the back door, soffits and fascia.
- 4) We propose to continue to offer member's the opportunity to develop their skills by organizing training courses.

There were no questions or comments raised by attendees on these proposals.

#### **5. ELECTION OF 2017-18 COMMITTEE OFFICERS**

The Chair observed that this year the engagement with elections had been very positive, with several members expressing interest in joining the committee for the first time. Those positions with single nominations were elected first:

**Chair** Robert Townsend elected for a third term.

**Treasurer** David Stephenson elected continuing a long term since 2001. There have been no additional nominations for this role in recent years.

**Secretary** Stephanie Palmer elected for a third term.

**Hut Warden** Nick Owens was elected for a third term.

**Hut Bookings Secretary** Becky Owens stood down from the role. Paul Hyland was elected to take on this role for 2017-18.

**Membership Secretary** Laura Millard stood down from the role. Kirsty Higgs was elected to take on this role for 2017-18.

Voting then commenced for the following roles:

**Meets Secretary** Nick Manasseh and Joel Harman stood, Nick Manasseh was elected.

**Ordinary Members** Nigel Harris, Mick Collins, Michael Reynolds, Joel Harman, Harry Gould and David Metcalf stood for the role. Mick Collins, Michael Reynolds, Joel Harman and Harry Gould were elected.

The Chair thanked outgoing members of the committee again for their contribution and welcomed new committee members to the team.

## 6. **REFRESHMENT BREAK**

## 7. **PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION**

The Chair outlined a proposed change to the constitution, regarding an amendment to paragraph 4 on candidate requirements. *See the AGM presentation slides.*

Harry Gould enquired why prospective membership must be arranged (including a £10 fee) prior to an interested person attending a club meet. It was discussed that this was due to insurance cover and also to ensure there was genuine interest in the club. Harry Gould suggested that if a fee was being charged the club should be able to lend equipment to prospective members, although other members felt this would be complicated due to the need to register and regularly check club-owned equipment. **Action: Committee to discuss whether the club should invest in club equipment.**

Further proposals to amend the club logo have been recalled and replaced with a proposal to review the The Mountain Club's brand position and how we advertise the club to gain new and retain members. The aim is to achieve consistency across all communication channels, increase membership and improve member satisfaction. This will include but is not limited to: the website, club merchandise, the club logo, posters, and use of social media.

## 8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Joel Harman reminded members that the [public Facebook page](#) is for club communications to everyone: the membership and the public. Photographs and discussions between members should take place on the [Members' Facebook Group](#). If any members want to post on the public page please message the administrators (committee) who will post information or photos on behalf of the club.

## 9. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 9:25pm.