

Minutes of - Lomond Mountaineering Club 2009 AGM

Stirling Castle Wed 25th November 2008 8pm

Meeting was deemed quorate with 15 or more members present (including committee).

Attendees:-

Lawrence Travers
Julian Hearne (c)
Iain Gilbert (c)
Richard Baynes (c)
Alasdair Farish (c)
Simeon Hall (c)
Matt Bridgestock (c)
Chris Husbands
Dave Wood
Martin Fitzsimmons
A. Thurston
Robin Whitworth
Julie Roberts
Helen Konkol
Helen Moore
Ian Cameron
Catherine Sibley
Kevin McGrath

Apologies were received from Russell Salisbury and Dave Fitzgerald.

1. Approval of Minutes from last AGM

No objections were raised to the minutes of the 2008 AGM and these were approved.

2. Elected Officers Reports

a Presidents Report

Richard advised that although the situation with the Hut was no better or worse than at this stage last year, we would need to hang on to get some clarity on the longer term intentions of the Onich Hotel regarding development of the site. At this time it is not deemed worth spending significant sums on the Hut.

Over the course of the year, the original membership secretary – Alex Hall – stepped down and was replaced by Dave Fitzgerald. Dave had struggled to find time to fulfil this role however and it was felt the lack of an effective membership secretary had contributed to numbers falling slightly over the course of the year. This was countered by the tremendous success of the new website in attracting both new members and potential members.

The recent Annual Dinner was deemed a success with both a good format (buffet / dance) and financially breaking even!

b Membership Secretaries Report (by Simeon Hall)

Simeon reported that we started the year with 48 members and in the course of the year gained 7 new members. Unfortunately there were 9 non-renewals but a total of 92 people signed up on the website which emphasises both its success and the need for an effective membership secretary and wider committee to ensure more people join the club and pay subscriptions. Current membership stands at 45.

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c Treasurer's Report

Simeon Hall reported on the accounts and at the current time we are running a surplus of £1,200 compared to 2008. This excludes a pending payment of MCoS Membership which is approx £600 but not due until 31st December. A net gain of £600 in the course of the year is a dramatic reversal on the trend of previous years and reflects both increased subscription and more regular use of the hut by visiting clubs as well as a small charge for club members.

d Hut Custodian's Report

Jules Hearne reported that the hut had achieved income of just over £1,100 during the year with expenditure of around £600. The surplus of over £400 was 12.5% up on last year and represented a ROC of 38%. Insurance has again been the biggest expense at £300 followed by a new water heater. A new microwave oven was also sourced during the year.

A £61 overpayment to Scottish & Southern energy was reported, comparing the electricity used to the £21 per month direct debit. It was noted that some years previously a credit had been received but rather than rely on the charity of SSE Jules agreed to investigate changing this monthly payment and / or arranging for a credit.

January to March have been the busiest months, but with no official bookings received for May to September. It was noted that club members have continued to use the hut regularly throughout the year. It was agreed to retain the existing arrangements whereby the whole hut is available one weekend a month and six places for a further weekend for other clubs to book.

A new carpet is needed for the hut (downstairs) and Robin Whitworth advised he may be able to donate one in the spring.

A stove, considered at last year's AGM was deemed not worth while, due to cost and likely benefit with the long term hut situation still uncertain.

Mattress covers were considered previously and rejected but it was proposed to look at these again to see if an acceptable compromise can be achieved.

e Meet Secretaries Report

Alasdair Farish reported that the monthly Hut trips through the winter have been loss making and not as well attended as they should be. The losses were modest however and this is not seen as an issue and a similar format should continue to be followed with 10-12 places per trip available.

Alistair will continue to coordinate the trips for the forthcoming winter season but indicated his intention to step down thereafter due to other commitments.

The summer trips started well with a Cairngorms 'high camp' but after this only an Arran trip took place and then interest in official club trips 'evaporated'.

It was commented that the Wednesday evening climbing session have been very well attended and despite the few official trips during the summer months, members had been active.

The next hut weekend the "The Cabin" – Edinburgh JMCS, near Newtonmore in 10 days time (4th/5th Dec).

f Web Coordinators Report

Matt Bridgestock has produced a complete report on the new website activity summarised below:-

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The website has seen a high level of usage with 42 club members signed up on the website - 40 fully paid up and 2 students / unwaged. There are a further 49 potential members and 70 people members of the Wednesday night climbing list.

We receive about 120 unique 'hits' every 3 days and we are reportedly the top of the list in google under "Glasgow Mountaineering Clubs". A third of members use the site at least weekly. We have referrals from other websites and it was agreed the website has been a tremendous success – thanks Matt!

It was restated that the principle of the website allowed potential members limited access only to the posted content, to sign up for Wed Eve climbing list and to contact the committee. Fully paid up members have access to other members' contact details and addresses and can post and edit content.

A three recipient limit on general e-mail was seen as problematic and it was agreed to modify this to allow the committee to e-mail every member.

Only 5 people had paid subscriptions online but this was seen to be an important option to retain for the future. Transaction charges from Google have risen from 60p to £1.20 per transaction. At present only 60p cost is transferred to the payee.

The e-mail addresses for potential women members had been underused and after a brief discussion it was agreed they would be dropped as unnecessary.

The history section of the website is in need of a more information and Matt advised that Robert Napier has agreed to provide the content for a comprehensive club history.

A list of books in the club library is to be provided and this was delegated to Catherine Sibley.

A suggestion was made to add committee names (but not contact details) to the "Membership Page" along with instructions on how to proceed in making contact and becoming a member.

The website set-up and hosting costs are some £84 as a recurring annual charge, although Matt advised this would be split in the coming year as he would use the same provider for some other non-LMC business, reducing this to £42.

Everyone is generally happy with the format, access and content of the website and it was felt no major changes are required. Continual administrative input and updating are needed, amounting to 3-4 hours work per month. Richard did voice the concern that more assistance would be useful to help us maintain the website in case of Matt's absence.

3 Subscriptions

MC of S changes

The MCofS is realigning their 'Subscription Year' to follow the financial year, i.e April to March. As a consequence a part payment for MCofS membership / insurance is required of £7.50 per member is required for the period end of December 2009 to April 2010. After this a subscription of £13 would be needed to cover the April 2010 – March 2011 period, payable by December 31st 2010.

There was some discussion as to whether the LMC should also re-align their year to match the MCofS, as opposed to Nov – Nov at present (essentially between AGM's).

Alternatively the club could 'bridge the gap' and simply pay the additional amount to the MCofS and retain the current club year. A proposal was made by Richard Baynes to do this (payment of $45 \times £7.50 = £337.50$), seconded by Iain Gilbert and carried by a majority.

Club subscriptions will be due as at present, following the AGM in November, and the club will pay MCofS membership subscriptions when required. It was noted that there are three

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monthly 'windows' to add members to the MCoFS list so people joining part way through a club year can be covered.

Subscription levels

It was commented that the increase the previous year (from £25 to £30) had contributed to the stabilising of the clubs finances, but that £30 stood out as expensive compared to other clubs and could be seen as a deterrent to potential members.

A proposal was made by Dave (Wood) and seconded by Catherine to reduce the subscription back to £25 for the coming year. This motion was carried by majority.

It was confirmed that the student / unwaged subscription should remain as half the full amount i.e £12.50 and further that a 'half year' membership subscription should be available - to new members only, joining part way through the year - also at £12.50.

New members

The importance of the Membership Secretary being available to meet potential new members at the Wednesday eve pub night was emphasised. It was felt we had missed some people over the course of the year partly due to the difficulties with Alex and Dave being available.

4. Organisation of Meets

Year Round Programme

Richard suggested that separate summer and winter meets secretaries could be established to try and invigorate the programme of summer meets. The problem in summer seemed to surround poorly attended pre-arranged weekend meets or them not taking place at all. Day meets by contrast were better attended and there was a lot of member activity arranging informal trips. It was commented that as we do not book huts in summer people wanted to retain flexibility on where they went to take advantage of the best weather etc.

It was agreed to arrange a series of summer meets, on the basis of a formal weekend meet each month with formal day meets with a 2 week separation. Dates for these would be set at the next committee meeting.

It was suggested that rather than a formal summer meets secretary, individual members could take on responsibility for organising a trip on a specific date and that this in itself would provide more enthusiasm! This was adopted in preference to a new post of summer meets secretary.

Conservation Work

The suggestion had been made by Rebecca that the club could commit to some conservation work (i.e one weekend) through the National Trust or John Muir Trust etc. No specific proposals were made but the general principle was adopted and it was agreed to ask Rebecca to explore the options.

5. Election of Officers

All positions were available for nomination. The post of Social Secretary has been removed, and the co-opted position of Webmaster will become a permanent position. In addition it was proposed to co-opt an assistant so we have more resource to manage the website.

a) President

Richard Baynes nominated by Helen Konkol and seconded by Matt Bridgestock.

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b) Secretary

Iain Gilbert nominated by Richard Baynes and seconded by Helen Konkol.

c) Treasurer

Simeon Hall nominated by Richard Baynes and seconded by Matt Bridgestock.

d) Hut Custodian

Jules Hearne nominated by Richard Baynes and seconded by Martin Fitzsimmons.

e) Meets Secretary

Alasdair Farish nominated by Richard Baynes and seconded by Helen Konkol.

f) Membership Secretary

Helen Moore nominated by Richard Baynes and seconded by Simeon Hall

g) Webmaster

Matt Bridgestock nominated by Richard Baynes and seconded by Iain Gilbert.

Martin Fitzsimmons was nominated by Richard Baynes to be co-opted to the committee as assistant web master (seconded by Helen Konkol)

6. Any Other Business

- In the absence of a Social Secretary most social events will be informally organised, however a formal talk has been arranged for Dave Gibson - Chief Officer of the MCofS – on 20th January. Richard commented that they would like to have Hebe Carus, access and conservation officer to give a talk but logistically it was proving difficult as she is based in Inverness.
- A new 'Decathlon' store is opening shortly and an approach has been made about hosting an advert for them on the website in exchange for a club discount. No objection was raised to this in principle and Matt has agreed to investigate further.
- T Shirts sales have been good and we have broken even. Some remain and are still for sale.
- The reciprocal agreement with the Peterborough Mountaineering Club for the hut in Bethesda has fallen through as it was voted down at their committee meeting. An alternative arrangement with the Cleveland MC is being investigated.
- It is customary to make a donation to a Scottish Mountain Rescue Team. Skye MRT was selected unanimously to receive £100 donation.
- Robin Whitworth proposed a vote of thanks to the current committee for a job well done!
- Next AGM – this is scheduled for Wed 24th November 2010