

Minutes of IBSC Committee meeting 12th September 2019
Beaufort Hotel

Present

Al Todd
Blair Duncan
Adam Archibald
David Jones
David Findlay
Chris Holmes
Rose Norman
Jan Sznajd
Monika Pietsch

Apologies

Mike Cawthorne
Duncan Brown
Alan Bird
Simon Grey

Minutes of last meeting

Approved

Matters arising

Discuss involvement with Trees for Life/similar organisation at next Committee meeting

Agenda

Committee and roles 2019-20

Al Todd – President
Mike Cawthorne – Vice President
Adam Archibald – Secretary. This will include liaising with trip organisers to ensure arrangements are in place
Blair Duncan – Treasurer; and Web Master for the time being
(Al Bird may be in a position to become Web Master in the medium term)
David Finlay – Equipment Secretary
Duncan Brown nominated by those present as Social Convener, including social media
Rose Norman – Membership Secretary
David Jones – Training Officer, i.e. responsible for coordinating the delivery of training for members
Website Design Committee

- Blair Duncan
- Monika Pietsch
- David Jones
- Gordon Pearson

Ordinary Committee members:

- Jan Sznajd

- Chris Holmes
- David Finlay will ask Zoe Anderson whether she would like to join the Committee **[ACTION DF]**

We will seek further Committee membership at the AGM.

AT will re-circulate amended document regarding Committee roles **[ACTION AT]**

Per trip, there will be a Committee member who organises and is responsible for the trip, including booking it and liaising with the venue. In addition, there should be a second Committee member who commits to going on the trip.

Club email addresses

Email address for each of the following roles. Among other benefits, this will allow handover of roles from old to new.

Committee members with email addresses:

- President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Membership
- Equipment (BD/AB will reassign to DF)

BD will email the relevant people with details of how to action **[ACTION BD]**

*Subsequent idea AA: Blair, could we have a single email address for the committee which automatically forwards the mail to all current Committee members? Would be useful for us in staying in touch with each other. Not to be shared more widely. **[Suggested action BD]***

Club address

AA happy for this to be his: The White House, Abriachan, Inverness, IV3 8LB

Bank statements will continue to come to BD's address

Club affiliation

For this year the club will remain with Snowsport Scotland. Overall cost per member is very low providing insurance, shop discounts and for anyone downhill skiing a 10% discount at ski centres. The fee has been paid. Subject to approval at the AGM the Committee recommend that in 2020 the club instead affiliates to Mountaineering Scotland. The Committee recognised the organisation is far more closely aligned to club member activities, it is the principal protector of Scotland's mountains, it offers free or otherwise heavily discounted training to affiliated clubs and their members and owns two huts which are available for member clubs to book. Additionally club and member insurance is provided, discounts can be obtained on hut bookings abroad and the usual retailer discounts are on offer. For anyone already an individual member of Mountaineering Scotland, club membership results in a 50% reduction in membership cost. Provided members are in agreement we will meet MS in the spring to take membership forward. AT will check with Mountaineering Scotland re when the changeover would need to happen from their point of view.

[ACTION AT]

Club hut

The new Committee are acutely aware that the proposed construction of a club hut on Aonach Mor is of considerable interest to members and yet there has so far been no tangible progress. Rather than debate the merits of hut design or the future road map to get the hut built, instead the discussion therefore focussed on the merits of a hut in the proposed location and whether a hut was still wanted by members.

The Committee voiced a number of different concerns:

- The Highlands are already well served with easily booked huts and multiple other accommodation options.
- The location limits mountain activities principally to the Back Corries and perhaps the Grey Corries but club members would want a variety of ski locations in order to take advantage of fickle winter weather and snow distribution.
- Many club members and other users would have difficulty leaving work early enough to reach Nevis Range in time to make the last gondola which is generally between 4.30 – 4.45. For anyone arriving after gondola closure the location would mean a long difficult and potentially hazardous approach, winter or summer.
- Hut access would largely be dependent on a working gondola. Both planned and unplanned maintenance as well as high winds would all effectively prevent access.
- Due to the necessity of using the gondola to access the hut it would mean the cost of staying would be significantly higher than almost any other club hut.
- Not all club members are sufficiently competent to ski in from above the Braveheart whilst the longer approach via the Great Glen chair route doesn't always hold snow.
- Due to the long approach, carrying in anything other than basics would be awkward putting off potential club and non club users.
- It was assumed the majority of use would be in the winter. Indeed SNH have already reportedly expressed concern about potential damage to the immediately adjacent SSSI from non winter hut users.
- Difficulty in finding hut committee volunteers was mentioned. Of the original committee, 3 have now resigned. Doubt was expressed that the club have the membership resource to take the hut proposal any further.

AT provided the Committee with a breakdown of the costs, income and issues involved in the running of two well known club huts whose hut custodians had helpfully provided detailed information. Using these figures suggested that for the IBSC to cover hut running costs in the Back Corries would require circa 300-400 bed nights per annum. This was similar to average usage of the two existing huts, both of which are well established and located in easy drive to locations and which benefit from year round use. It was noted that in a poor winter season where usage might only reach 50% of budget then it would wipe out the current annual club surplus. A succession of poor seasons would expose the club to significant financial risk. Both hut custodians mentioned in their submissions the difficulty in getting volunteer work parties and also finding tradespeople to carry out essential testing and maintenance.

When asked to vote, the Committee were unanimous in deciding to recommend to members that constructing a hut in the Back Corries should not be taken any further by the IBSC.

AT then asked the Committee to consider the alternative option of developing a club hut in a different more accessible location. This was discussed but the conclusion was that whilst access may no longer be an issue the club would still be left with issues regarding liability; the amount of time volunteer members would need to dedicate to getting the hut built and then, once built responsibility would need to be taken for its ongoing management & control. The Committee were therefore against this as an alternative.

A suggestion was then made that the club could explore the possibility of offering to hut share with another club which would reduce financial exposure and which would provide a far easier way of establishing a club hut. This was positively received and subject to members' approval may be taken forward. **[ACTION AT]**

In reaching their recommendation the Committee recognised the very considerable work which has already gone into the club hut by particular club members. Of especial note was the vision and initial and ongoing efforts of Donald Morris to get the proposal off the ground. Similarly thanks are to be extended to Nicky Jackson and Angus Armstrong, both of whom have invested a large amount of their own professional time and expertise into the project. **[ACTION AT to contact hut committee group]**

Wind turbine: Simon Grey has intimated that he would be interested in a possible purchase. Proceeds to be shared with SYHA as per pre-existing arrangement. **[ACTION AT to speak to Donald]**

New website

Work on track in order to formulate the required spec for Alan Bird. It was noted that Gordon Pearson is keen to have an input. **[ACTION Web Design Committee]**

Current website

2019-20 membership renewals are being processed via the website.

Secretary requires to be able to send emails to the club membership **[ACTION BD in conjunction with AA]**

DJ, AT and AA happy to receive some website training from BD **[ACTION BD to liaise/arrange]**

AT will discuss with Alan Bird re timing of when new website features will be available. One proposal is that aspects of the new website could be prioritised so as to be functional early, running alongside the existing website and linked-to from the existing website, e.g. payment for trips. **[ACTION AT]**

While website is being developed, we can make more use of the Facebook group. **[ACTION DB]**

Facebook group admins to be adjusted to current Committee members and not previous Committee members **[ACTION CH]**

MP will set up Strava club page for IBSC. **[ACTION MP]**

Finances update

IBSC bank account balance on 26th June 2019: £8,448.04

Spreadsheet balance is £8,448.04 for 2018-19

DF and AT will review the spreadsheet of accounts. **[ACTION DF & AT]**

BD will make a presentation at the AGM re club finances, including year-on-year overview. **[ACTION BD]**

We will survey membership at and following AGM regarding what club financial surplus should be spent on, e.g. training, equipment (e.g. safety equipment such as Garmin satellite devices, ice axes, crampons.)

Rental equipment available in Inverness? Worth discussing with Craigdon. **[ACTION DF]**

Receipts should be issued and given to Treasurer for every item of expenditure.

Annual membership cost: keep it at £25 this year. Re 2020-21 we will revisit this in Spring 2020.

AGM/Season Opener

We will keep these as a combined evening.

This will be **Thu 14th November**.

Speakers: Hamish Frost may be available. AT will also approach Di Gilbert. Guest speakers at future club social

nights was discussed. **[ACTION AT]**

Venue (DB to explore options and report back to Committee. Capacity approx. 60-80. Projector and screen required. Bar is essential, *preferably with local beers on offer e.g. Cromarty*. Ideally in town.) The Beaufort function room looked good and a provisional quote of £110 was given to AI as the committee left, with a promise that Cromarty beer could be made available.

[ACTION DB in liaison with AT who has discussed with Beaufort Hotel.]

Committee will have further email correspondence re schedule of the evening **[ACTION AT - and discuss at next Committee meeting]**

Scotland Programme 2019-2020, with person to investigate NOW which weekend dates are available

- Strawberry Cottage – **[DJ]**
- Garrygualach at west end of Loch Garry, 200m altitude. Good access to Kintail and Quoich mountains (Simon Grey) – **[AT]**
- Muir of Inverie or Mar Lodge, or The Cabins (Braemar) – **[AT]**
- NTS: bunkhouse in Torridon <https://www.nts.org.uk/Holidays/Accommodation/Mol-Mor-Torridon/> – **[AA]**
- NTS: bunkhouse in Glen Shiel <https://www.nts.org.uk/Holidays/Accommodation/Kintail-Outdoor-Centre-Kintail-and-Morvich/> – **[AA]**
- Inver Croft (Achnasheen) – **[AT]**
- Glenuaig Lodge (accessed from Strathcarron) – **[DF]**
- Ossian SYHA – **[DB]**
- Corroul Estate – **[JS]**
- CIC trip – **[AT]**
- Mill Cottage (Glen Feshie) – **[DJ]**
- Aberfeldy/Killin: Glen Lyon, Ben Lawers, Beinn a'Ghlo, etc. – **[JS/MP]**
- Igloo trip, e.g. combined with Eagle Ski Club (?)
- Traverse of Mullardoch (with a camp) **(AT)**

Day trips: lots of options. Non-Committee members will be invited to lead
Introductory/training days for members

International Programme 2019-2020

Romania **(Mike & Duncan)**

Norway **(AI)**

When advertising trips, poor weather/non-snowy plan Bs should be suggested on the website with regard to each trip so potential participants can see in advance.

Important for trip leaders to contact participants in advance re plan Bs if it looks as though the conditions are suboptimal.

Training

The new Sidecountry and Backcountry ski leader's course being initially run by Glenmore Lodge looks ideal for club members wishing to formally lead a group but who perhaps don't currently feel confident or sufficiently

qualified.

Club could pay for some members to attend. **[ACTION DJ to investigate]**

A number of those present expressed the view that spending on members' training should be a priority for the Club. **[ACTION DJ]**

Next Committee meeting

Thu 26th Sept, Jan and Monika's, 12 Union Rd. **[AA to email Committee]**