



The 69th Annual General Meeting of the University of London Mountaineering Club (ULGMC) was held at 6.30pm on Friday 19th April 2019 at Plas y Brenin, Snowdonia.

1. Opening (presented by Secretary)

Stephan Tietz (President) in the chair (and covering Secretary); Heather Rumble (interim Secretary) taking minutes

a. Apologies for absence

Ian Ross (Treasurer), Sue Darling, Jill Bennett, Mike Bennett, Janet Hellen, Trevor Hellen, Liz Parkinson, Mike Parkinson, Jeff Batten, Margaret Batten, Pauline Owens, Stephen Olivant, Angie Hsu, Mike Hale, Mel Owen, Seb Rowlands, Samantha Gilbert, Mark Russell, Julie Russell, Neil Brindley, Dave Wray, Willie Butler, Rachael Mott, Andy Charalambolous, Elena del Pozo

b. Proxy votes received

- Nominate the chair (Stephan Tietz): Mike Hale, Stephen Olivant, Mark Russell, Julie Russell (4 in total)
- Nominate another attendee (and full member of ULGMC): None (0)
- Gave choices via online vote return: David Wray (1)

c. *Adoption of the draft agenda for 2019 AGM

Minutes were not circulated in advance and Mike Esten noted that this is in violation of the constitution. Stephan Tietz apologised for this failure of the committee and asked if the AGM will consider to proceed:

Proposed: Frances Mott; Seconded: Jeremy Wright. Accepted by consent.

d. *Adoption of the minutes from 2018 AGM

- Minutes were not adopted because they had not been printed for the AGM.

ACTION: Committee to circulate and present to 2020 AGM.

e. Matters arising from 2018 AGM:

i. Scrutinise accounts for 2012-2017 & write to Mike Warden

See Finance.

ii. Compile list of Honorary & life members

Heather Rumble had not been in contact with Jill Bennett to compile a list of Honorary members. Rollover.

ACTION: Heather Rumble to present to 2020 AGM.

iii. Appeal to ULMC to help with Caseg

Heather Rumble had not included an appeal to ULMC/ULGMC to help with Caseg. Rollover.

ACTION: Heather Rumble to present to 2020 AGM.

2. President's report

President has focussed on four areas:

- Revisiting governance of club, particularly ensure the AGM works for members
- Engage the next generation of climbers, particularly ULMC
- Deal with increasing cost of BMC affiliation
- Support Fallcliffe, so it becomes a more welcoming and enjoyable hut

We have made some progress across the board, but have also seen some setbacks even though the last AGM is only 6 months ago.

On the note of AGM, I proposed to move the date to coincide with Easter. We will see how the evening and the weekend develops, but I am cautiously optimistic. We have similar attendance to last year and attendees are a more representative crosscut of our membership. So, I am hopeful that we can build on this if we have a year to plan the next AGM.



This obviously also means that we have had a very mild success in engaging the next generation of climbers even though ULMC attendance on this meet is not as large as I had hoped. But we are moving in the right direction.

At this point I would like to read from our constitution: "The objects of the club shall be the promotion and encouragement of all branches of mountaineering, hillwalking and climbing, especially among its members and students and graduates of the University of London." You know that we have already started to direct support in this direction using the Expedition and Training Fund. We also received a proposal with regards to membership fees which would help younger members who (fresh out of University) try to continue climbing will also struggle with their first Council Tax bill.

Now, when I said that I would like to deal with the increasing cost of BMC affiliation, I didn't expect the whopper of announcement for the 2020 affiliation costs. A 30% increase! Well, for now we will have to swallow this bitter pill I fear I am so far not aware of a true alternative either.

Finally, I know that the trustees have been working hard on a plan for Fallcliffe. I will try and stay in touch with them and will keep an eye on the clubs finances to see if we can give some financial support in the future, but I am also looking for volunteers who would consider helping with more direct fundraising including applying for grants.

3. Finances

Stephan Tietz (President) presented as Ian Ross (Treasurer) not able to attend.

a. Report on membership numbers and profile

Membership numbers, since 2014: 180 – 181 – 173 – 180 and 174 at the end of last year. So, the total has been quite stable while at the same time the proportion of people born after 1980 has increased from 10% to 25%.

However, for 2019 we currently have 148 people signed up. We normally get another 10 members renewing/joining throughout the year, which would still cause a shortfall of 16. This includes both very longstanding members not renewing as well as a members who joined within the last 5 years. I can't make out a systematic pattern.

b. (Re)presentation of scrutinised accounts for 2014-2017

Stephan Tietz provided update on actions from 2018 AGM:

- Accounts for 2014-2015 not scrutinised as paperwork was not received from Mike Warden, was chased 5+ times via telephone and email, letter not yet written
- Accounts for 2016-2017 scrutinised by Mark Stitson, who believes they are in order
- Accounts for 2014-2017 have not changed and have not been printed for AGM to see, though they have been seen at previous AGM's and have not changed.

c. *Adoption of scrutinised accounts for 2014-2017

Adoption of accounts was discussed:

- AGM requested that committee attempts to do some scrutiny of accounts for 2014-2015

ACTION: Stephan Tietz to provide Mark Stitson with copies of bank statements and receipts for 2014-2015 to attempt scrutiny of accounts for 2014-2015.

- AGM did not want to adopt accounts without sight (even though they had not changed)

ACTION: Committee to circulate accounts for 2014-2017 and present to 2020 AGM.

d. Presentation of accounts for 2018

Stephan Tietz summarised accounts for 2018:

- 2018 income and expenditure almost identical to 2017. No AGM dinners for ULMC, increased Training and Expedition Fund and changed printer for membership cards so committee expenses were less
- Small surplus of £33



- Increase in members paying by Direct Debit, which is collected in November which can be seen under “prepaid subscriptions” under liabilities. Finally, started using BMC funding for webpage and wrote cheque for committee expenses, so we are getting these liabilities off the books

Mike Esten pointed out that the accounts do not make it clear enough that a substantial portion of the membership fee goes straight to the BMC and proposed that in future, BMC contributions are separated out as a separate income stream.

ACTION: Treasurer (Ian Ross) to adopt changes for 2020 accounts.

e. *Adoption of accounts for 2018

The scrutineer (Mark Stitson) confirmed that the accounts for 2018 are in order. Adoption of accounts was put to vote.

11 members were for, 0 were against, 0 abstained (proxy vote not possible). The accounts were adopted.

f. Presentation of forecast for 2019

The forecast shows a larger deficit than previous years. This is driven by the slight drop and membership numbers and will likely be nearer to c£200 at the end of the year. However, the club is likely to see a larger deficit over the coming years unless we decrease our expenditure and/or increase our income. The main increase in expenditure has been the rise of BMC club membership and the introduction of the Training and Expedition fund (of £400/year since 2017).

So far the club has run an annual surplus and/or only a small deficit due to one-off income boosts (e.g. c£100 in donations in 2018) or unexpectedly reduced expenditure (e.g. c£100 savings from late renewals which reduced our affiliation costs with BMC in 2018 and c£50 savings as ULGMC committee did not uptake the AGM dinner invite in 2017-2018). This is reflected in the forecast for 2019 which predicts a shortfall of c£385 which would reduce the clubs assets to c£5200.

Our assets are large enough (a previous AGM agreed that two years of BMC subs should be held in reserve), so the committee have no immediate concern, but now is a good time to start addressing the balance between income and expenditure.

g. *Membership subscription rates for 2020

Stephan Tietz gave an overview of previous years membership subscription rates:

- Last raise in 2014 to cover increase in BMC membership
- BMC membership was raised again in 2018 but ULGMC rates were kept the same. The income shortfall of c£160 was covered by the club’s annual surplus.
- Stephan Tietz announced that the BMC club membership will now rise by £6/head (£20.25 normal, £15 students). He stated that there is currently no alternative to our BMC affiliation which provides members of the club with liability insurance (in particular club officers), give access to climbing huts across the UK, support the BMC’s important access and conservation work as giving other perks like retail discounts and Summit magazine.

Stephan Tietz said that the committee backs a number of changes to the membership fees to try to reduce the impact of the raise on younger members and raise revenue, whilst still being able to afford BMC membership:

- The committee proposes to equalise joint and single memberships further by increasing the single membership to £6, plus BMC, and joint/family membership to £10 (= £5/head), plus BMC. Currently, joint/family membership is £3.25/head to the club while single memberships contribute £5.75. But, the club saves less than £2 per family due to printing and sending only one membership card. This change would raise an additional income of c£130 (or c£90 if we see a further drop in membership numbers).
- Robbie Pineda has suggested to introduce a discount for members who are younger than 30 years (at the beginning of the membership year). The committee agreed and proposed a 30% discount



membership rate of £2, plus BMC.

This would minimise the rate increase for this age group and help recent graduates (which is in line with the club's constitutional objective). This will likely reduce the club's income by c£50.

- Mark Stitson has proposed that the committee should be authorised to raise subs in line with BMC raises in future, without putting this to an AGM, especially given the recent situation with the BMC. This would allow the club to react swiftly to changes.

The overarching aim is that the membership fee clearly splits into a club contribution and BMC affiliation cost. In combination these proposals would make the club contribution £2 for under 30s, £6 for single membership and £10 for joint membership. The additional BMC affiliation fee for 2020 will £20.25 per head and the club will pass on any discounts the BMC applies (e.g. non-UK residents and late renewals).

Stephan Tietz asked the floor for comments in relation to the proposed changes:

- Mike Esten commented that we have recently set our fee in relation to the BMC when we should decide what income we need to achieve our goals, set our member rate based on this, and then add the BMC. There was general approval around the room.
- Mike Esten also pointed out that the club has discussed the merits (or otherwise) of BMC membership before but had concluded that there was no real way out of paying it.
- Mike Esten also asked if this would be a deterrent for younger members. Mark Stitson replied that our fee is lower than ULMC's currently is. Sam Hardman pointed out that ULMC do have subsidised trips, but she suspected (as an ex ULMC member) that a larger deterrent is in the fact that ULGMC trips are not as organised for groups.
- Mark Stitson also pointed out that individual BMC members get 50% off their first years subs, but club members do not.
- Sam Hardman thought a discount for under 30s could be discriminatory if newly graduated students are the target.
- Heather Rumble asked if under 30s could be too large a group and put the club into a financially difficult position.
- Frances Mott made an alternative proposal to accommodate younger members and recent graduates. She proposed to introduce a reduced rate of £2 p/a, plus BMC, for the first two years of membership.
- Stephan Tietz acknowledged the concerns and agreed the alternative proposal to be more suitable. He agreed to put the alternative proposal to put the vote and encouraged the AGM to vote against the original proposal.

Robbie Pineda's proposal that the membership fee is decreased to £2 p/a, plus BMC, for under 25's was put to the vote:

0 members were for, 13 were against, 3 abstained (including proxy votes). The proposal was rejected.

Frances Mott's proposal to introduce a reduced rate of £2 p/a, plus BMC, for the first two years of membership was put to the vote:

9 members were for, 2 were against, 0 abstained (proxy vote not possible). The proposal was accepted.

Committee's proposal to raise single membership to £6, plus BMC, and joint membership to £10, plus BMC, was put to the vote:

16 members were for, 0 were against, 0 abstained (including proxy votes). The proposal was accepted.

Mark Stitson's proposal that the committee should be authorised to raise subs in line with BMC raises in future, without putting this to an AGM, was put to the vote:

16 members were for, 0 were against, 0 abstained (including proxy votes). The proposal was accepted.

Mike Esten commented that the club should not absorb rises in BMC membership fees and that members contributions to the BMC should be clearer on application forms and the membership cards. Stephan Tietz agreed.

ACTION: Committee to action.



Mike Esten proposed that we write to the BMC as a club, outlining the large proportional cost of BMC affiliation and our concern that it will reduce the number of people able to join mountaineering clubs.

Mark Stitson seconded. Accepted by consent.

ACTION: Committee to action by 2020 AGM.

h. *Authorisation of expenditure for 2020

Stephan Tietz recommended the following expenditure in 2020:

- Committee expenses such as printing and postage of membership cards, other documents (e.g. newsletter archive). Costs incurred from banking and using GoCardless to process Direct Debits. It is usually in the order of £50-£150
- Expedition and Training Fund for 2020. This costs £200-400
- AGM dinner for ULMC committee in 2020. This usually costs around £50

Heather Rumble proposed; Frances Mott seconded. Accepted by consent.

Stephan Tietz and Mark Stitson asked the AGM to review our donations. He proposed to keep donations to mountain rescue organisations but to stop donating to the Snowdonia Society and Friends of the Lake District. The AGM discussed the proposal:

- Keith Mott explained that these had historically been a good way of keeping up to date with local issues, but was perhaps not needed now due to the internet.
- Heather Rumble expressed that she felt uncomfortable donating to these two groups considering that they lobby on political issues that may not represent all our members.

Carol Bristow proposed; Mike Esten seconded. Accepted by consent.

4. Programme for 2019 & 2020

Graham Cunningham (Meets Secretary) presented.

a. Meets report & planning

Graham stated that there was no meets list yet for 2020, as it is quite early given the date of the AGM.

Graham stated that the meets list was getting quite formulaic and urged members to run meets to a wider range of places around the country. He suggested that the club is lacking personalised meets and also shorter notice ad-hoc meets, but stated the importance of these to a club.

b. *Date of 2020 AGM

Stephan Tietz stated that although numbers had not grown since moving the AGM, we have a much more diverse attendance and feedback has generally been positive (e.g. longer weekend). We therefore propose to continue the trial run of having the AGM during the Easter Snowdonia meet on Friday, 10th April 2020. Stephan Tietz put this to the vote.

16 members were for, 0 were against and 1 abstained (including proxy votes). The proposal was accepted.

5. Other reports

a. Trustees/hut wardens for Caseg Fraith and Fallcliffe

Phil Tarr reported that income was down by about 50% for both huts, but that it was unclear why. There is not a particular type of booking that has reduced noticeably.

Mark Stitson reported that Fallcliffe is operating at a profit, but not enough to undertake the maintenance it needs. A second loan from Caseg has been proposed to improve the bathroom area. There are also potential plans to modify the bathroom area in Caseg.

Trefor Owen enquired about the lease to Caseg from the National Trust. Phil Tarr replied that the lease has some time until it needs to be renewed, but that the hut committee are aware of the issue and are working on it.



6. Elections

a. *Club officers

Stephan Tietz stated that we have not received nominations to fill vacant Secretary role or to challenge incumbents. We therefore ask the AGM to confirm the committee “on block” by acclamation. The current committee are:

- President: Stephan Tietz
- Vice-President: Mike Hale (until Oct 2019 as his constitutional term ends)
- Secretary: vacant
- Treasurer and Membership Secretary: Ian Ross
- Meets Secretary: Graham Cunningham

14 members voted for, 0 against, 0 abstained (including proxy votes). The proposal was accepted.

b. *Committee members without portfolio

Stephan Tietz stated that there are currently no committee members without portfolio. We have not received nominations to fill the four posts. If anyone steps forward, then we will put an affirmative vote at the next AGM.

c. *Scrutineer of ULGMC accounts

Mark Stitson is currently scrutineer and agreed to continue in this role.

Keith Mott proposed; Mike Esten seconded. The proposal was accepted by consent.

d. *ULMC representative

Francis Hardy has taken over from Robert Hardy as the ULMC representative for ULGMC. Stephan Tietz proposes that he continue if he agrees.

Mike Esten seconded. The proposal was accepted by consent.

7. Any other business

a. Constitutional changes

Mark Stitson proposed an amendment to the constitution, because it currently states that children wishing to be members should be children of couples. Mark pointed out that this is discriminatory against single parents.

Elanor Mott seconded. The proposal was accepted by consent.

ACTION: Committee to action by 2020 AGM

b. 70th club anniversary (2020) and anniversaries of huts (2021)

Stephan Tietz highlighted that these anniversaries are coming up and asked for volunteers to organise.

c. Thank yous

Sue Esten thanked the committee and attendees of the AGM for their contributions.

**** means a decision was required by the AGM***