

Minutes of Red Rope NC Meeting, 9 November 2019, London

Present: Jon M, Janet, Becky, Steve, John A, Damien, Don, Barbara, David S., Adrian, Humphrey (From part-way through item 1), Dermot & Helen (for part of the meeting)

Apologies: Dave D.

Items were not taken strictly in the order of the agenda. The September minutes were approved and there were no matters arising.

1. LMC Liaison

- Barbara & David attended the Cae Ysgubor Management Committee meeting at CY on 2 November, which was followed by a bonfire and fireworks display, courtesy of LMC. Roger Greenhaigh, who is also a Red Rope member & lives in North Wales, is now responsible for day-to-day oversight of the hut.
- The committee agreed to take back to their national committee a request for RR members to take guests to the huts. Most of those present were clearly in favour, with a couple reluctant.
- The agreement between RR & LMC is up for renewal in 2021. There is no expectation on either side that continuation of the arrangement would involve RR in an additional mandatory payment; rather, it will be about the way the agreement is working and what we are being offered.
- Red Rope members have contributed £535 towards the refurbishment of The Loft at Blea Tarn. This will be matched from national funds but the payment will not be made until the receipt by LMC of the first £1,000 has been confirmed. If a final email to the LMC treasurer elicits no response, Humphrey to contact the LMC chair.
- A weekend working party for RR members is scheduled for 28/29 March 2020. It is envisaged that this will be used to redecorate the hut, and a couple of LMC members will be on hand to supervise the work. Accommodation will be free.
- Still very little use of CY by individual RR members. Agreed that a mailing list of key holders would be useful. Barbara to set up.
- Only one regional bid has been made for a trip to CY next year. If a reminder to regions does not result in further bids, the two remaining weekends will be allocated to the June NC meeting and a training trip later in the year, to be organised by John.

Actions: Barbara to publicise the work weekend and send a reminder re. regional bookings; David to follow up payments; Barbara & Jon to deal with hut misuse issue.

2. Training

- The scrambling training at the recent CY trip was successful, and appreciated by members.
- More than 6 people have signed up for the winter skills training arranged with Lupine for the Scotland trip at the end of February; the ideal number is 6 but the group might be stretched to 8.
- Subject to availability it was agreed to hold a training trip at CY in late Summer/early Autumn 2020. John A. & Becky to propose dates.
- John drew attention to the heavily subsidised BMC courses at Plas y Brenin for £65 - small group training in navigation, scrambling or first aid.

- Costs of training for members to be subsidised by the club at rates used in the past. John to apply to the BMC for training grant(s).

Actions: John to take forward training initiatives, in consultation with Becky re. integration with trips.

3. Red Rope Mailing Lists

- The NC list was moved to RiseUp a few months ago and has worked ok apart from a 500 Kb restriction on message size. Agreed that messages bigger than this were rare (no need for the NC to exchange high quality photos!) and pointed out that Word to PDF conversions are much smaller if done with one of the free 'print to PDF' converters. All members of the list can post files in the RiseUp document store if necessary. Agreed to stick with RiseUp for this list until, say, the end of the year, before deciding whether to use it for other RR lists. Other providers, such as groups.io, allow larger messages but recommend setting a 500 Kb limit.
- Webcollect can be used to send important one-way notices to all members
- Agreed to close down the national discussion list, with a view to setting up a closed alternative. List members who are not current RR members to be informed and told that they can keep up with our activities via Facebook.

Action: Barbara, Janet & Dave D.

4. Use of WebCollect

- Membership payments have generally worked well, but option of cheque payments is confusing to members and a hassle for membership sec and treasurer. Members to be given more clarification on the way our direct debit system works and the option to pay by cheque to be removed.
- WebCollect successfully used for AGM bookings and Blea Tarn Appeal. More complicated for national and regional trips where payments go into different accounts and transport costs are sorted out on trip. Humphrey & Damien to trial use for the national Easter trip.

Action: Humphrey, Janet & Gill re. membership; Humphrey & Damien re. Easter trip

5. Trip Transport & Cancellations (AGM motions)

- Becky thinks the current policy on transport is fairly clear, but will provide some guidance for the website and Trip Organisers' Pack by the end of November .
- Current rule of 100% / 50% refund for cancellation 3/1 month(s) before trip to stand.
- Applications for refunds within final month, due to extenuating circumstances, to go to NC via secretary. Booking form to be amended to make this clear. Decisions to be made by sub-committee of Jon, Steve & Janet. Regions can make their own decisions, or refer to NC sub-committee if preferred.

Actions: Becky and Janet for changes to trip organiser's pack & booking form.

6. New Year Trip

- This has been cancelled due to number of cancellations, leaving only 4 bookings. London region complained at not being given advance notice. Agreed that although cancellation was probably right, members should in future be given a small window to sign up before such a decision was acted upon. London region to explore feasibility of trip and if enough takers will try to resurrect the booking and take responsibility for the trip.

Action: Becky, Don & John A.

7. Survey of Regions & Future of Red Rope

- Good response (9 regions) to David's survey with Sheffield & Scotland the only active regions not to respond. Responses were more positive than anticipated with most regions continuing to organise walks

and (some regions) social activities. But few organising trips and (probably) very few new members who weren't either former members or friends of members. So activities could become cliquey.

- Wide-ranging discussion on how to attract new members, what type of members to aim for, and whether RR activities should be more geared to older members, etc. The following suggestions emerged:
 - The national trips programme should be headlined, as people have a lot more options for walks.
 - Vary venues/lengths for national trips, eg cottages, YHAs and mid-week trips (already happening to some extent).
 - Socialism on the rise, so should be made more obvious, especially costs linked to income and collective organisation.
 - Trips to be moved to the front of the MiS
 - New members to be personally contacted, and useful to send them a regional information sheet, such as is done by Merseyside
 - Walks to be opened up to non-members
 - Use Facebook to publicise regional walks and national trips

Actions: Janet re. publicity materials & website; Jon re. MiS; David to contact regional reps re. possibility of opening up walks programme to non-members ' and to circulate Merseyside introduction, Everyone!

8. Approach to BMC re. two-tier membership

- David had received a comprehensive reply. Differential membership not on the cards in the short-term but the response spelled out the importance of liability insurance and emphasised the broader advantages of BMC membership. To be circulated to regions and a summary of important points to be included in the next Bulletin.

Action: David

Minute-taker: Barbara