

Red Rope Annual General Meeting

Saturday, 5 April, 4pm on Zoom

1. Introduction by the Chair, John Dickie, and naming of persons taking minutes
2. Approval of the minutes from 2024 AGM, held on 13 April 2024
3. Matters arising from the minutes
4. Statement by the Club's Treasurer and questions (circulated).
5. Reports from officers and regions (circulated)
6. Election of officers
7. Constitutional amendments, policy resolutions and other resolutions.
(Abstentions were not recorded.)
8. A.O.B. and provisional date for next AGM: 28 March 2026

1. David Symonds and National Secretary Pete Watson took the minutes. At this stage we were not quorate but it was agreed to continue in the hope that more members would join by the time the motions were discussed.
2. The 2024 AGM minutes were approved.
3. There were no matters arising from the minutes.
4. The statement by Humphrey Southall, the Club's Treasurer, was accepted with thanks from Pete Watson. David Symonds pointed out that the figure for the 2 annual bulletins represented both printing and postage costs, which were roughly equal.
5. The reports from officers and regions were accepted with thanks.
6. All officers were re-elected unopposed. Pete Watson had made it clear that many officers had been in post for several years and would be happy to step aside. Malcolm Donne had expressed interest in taking over as liaison officer with the Lancashire Mountaineering Club, regarding our hut sharing arrangement. Our BMC rep., Peter Billington, had said that there was a vacancy as BMC Clubs Committee rep, and he was willing to stand if there were no takers. Matilda Simon expressed an interest in the role. A few other positions, like training officer, remain vacant. Rebecca Bates said that the Trips sub-group could help with that.

7. Humphrey Southall began an explanation of his motion but the Chair stepped in saying that when it came to discussing motions it was essential to be quorate and asked attendees to take some time out to contact their regional email lists, or phone around, to encourage others to join the meeting. This was successful and the meeting became quorate.

Humphrey Southall, RR National Treasurer's motion, supported by the NC

"This AGM agrees that the membership charges for 2026, and for subsequent years until further notice, shall be as follows" :

<i>Current</i>	<i>from 2026</i>
<i>Band 1: £13.50</i>	<i>£15</i>
<i>Band 2: £21</i>	<i>£23</i>
<i>Band 3: £31</i>	<i>£34</i>
<i>Band 4: £44</i>	<i>£48</i>
<i>Band 5: £55</i>	<i>£60</i>

Humphrey stated that as a response to a significant increase in membership charges for the BMC and MC (British Mountaineering Council and Mountaineering Scotland) in response to increased insurance costs, it had been necessary to increase Red Rope's membership charges. 68% of RR's membership income goes on affiliation charges to the organisations above. However, this was the first increase since 2019 and was just less than the rise in inflation since then.

In recent years Red Rope had saved a total of about £6,000 through holding Zoom meetings, as opposed to in person meetings, and by about a third of the membership taking the bulletin online. The club also has reserves of about £20,000. This meant that we could afford to subsidise the new charges, at least for the foreseeable future. He concluded by saying that the revised charges averaged an increase of 9.62% and maintain the long-term rule that Band 5 is four times Band 1.

David Symonds pointed out that this motion and the following one by Richard Bennett, supported by Red Rope Scotland, clashed in that Richard's proposed a new banding structure, different charges and new criteria for assessing your band. Therefore, if Humphrey's motion was passed there would be no point in discussing Richard's motion.

The Chair then decided that Richard's should be heard before a vote on either motion could be taken.

Richard Bennett's Banding Motion, supported by Red Rope Scotland

In introducing the motion, Richard focused on housing costs, which were likely to be the most significant factor affecting members' disposable income and should therefore be taken into consideration when drawing up a banding scheme. He'd looked at Scottish trips and concluded that a change along these lines wouldn't affect income to any large extent and thought the same would be true of the club as a whole. He proposed the following scale of charges:

Band	Max. equivalised income per month	Subs	Overnight	Mileage @ current fuel price
A	£500.00	£5	£5	£0.02
B	£800.00	£15	£10	£0.04
C	£1,400.00	£22.50	£15	£0.06
D	£2,000.00	£30	£23	£0.092
E	£2,800.00	£45	£27.50	£0.11
F	Over £2,800.00	£60	£35	£0.14

While generally sympathetic to the motion, the subsequent discussion raised the issue of different household compositions and concerns about its complexity. It was also suggested that we ought to be able to trust members to evaluate their own financial situations and choose a band accordingly.

Richard's motion was rejected, with 9 votes in favour, 15 against.

Humphrey's motion was passed by a sizeable majority.

(More information about all the motions can be found in Bulletin RR 49 - the spring 2025 edition - at www.redrope.org.uk under the 'Newsletter' heading.)

Richard Bennett's Transport Motion, supported by Red Rope Scotland:

This AGM notes that:

The decision taken at the 2024 AGM to cap transport charges at Band 3 was based on anecdotal evidence about a local problem.

Application of the rules can penalise those who have to use public transport because a lift is not available in a designated trip car.

The current rules discriminate against members who live far from regional centres, e.g. there are Scottish members living more than 150 miles from Edinburgh or Glasgow.

Some members live in regions which cannot, or do not, organise many trips; they are discriminated against when joining other groups trips if Policy C11 is applied.

When members travel independently it can lead to inefficient use of cars or shortage of designated trip vehicles.

This AGM calls on the national committee to provide the data showing that higher band members were disproportionately travelling independently before the charges were capped and have not done so since, i.e. percentage of members travelling independently in each band.

This AGM resolves that:

Participants in a trip, excluding those travelling independently, will share the transport costs (reimbursement of car providers and public transport), irrespective of the distance travelled but adjusted by band. However, any member who travels to or from the venue by bus in if this reduces the number of trip vehicles required will not be charged.

A simple points-based system could be used, e.g. Band 1, one point, Band 5, five points.

For example considering the Scotland group trip to Coruisk in July 2024:

Band	No. of participants	Points
2	1	2
3	3	9
4	4	16
5	2	10
Total		37

Transport costs were trains and ferries £469, designated trip cars £207, total £676. The deficit of £253 on transport was offset by a surplus on accommodation.

Using the same cross-subsidy, cost per point $\text{£}423/37 = \text{£}11.43$

Band-2 members pay $2 \times \text{£}11.43 = \text{£}22.86$, Band-5 $5 \times \text{£}11.43 = \text{£}57.15$

Actual payments under the existing system (except that 3 members travelling from England were not subjected to policy C11) varied from £36.25 to £67.41.

Mover: Richard Bennett - Seconder: Mickey McDiarmid

In Favour Of the motion: 4 Against the motion : 16 Motion not passed

Motion on Transport Charges 2 The cap on transport charges at Band 3 is not in accordance with the Socialist ethos of the club and will be removed. When trip participants have to use public transport because a place is not available in a designated trip car reasonable fares will be reimbursed, and they will be charged mileage as though they had a lift. When all trip participants must make a journey by public transport (e.g. ferries) all fares will be reimbursed and they will pay banded trip charges for the journey.

Mover: Richard Bennett, Seconder: Mickey McDiarmid

In favour of the motion: 10 Against the motion: 13 Motion not passed

John Dickie and Pete Watson both thanked Richard for his contribution to the AGM.

Club Membership cards

The following motion was received after the deadline, but the AGM had no objection to taking the motion.

Motion from London RR AGM

This London AGM calls on the National Committee to end the production and posting of club membership cards as there are no longer any circumstances where members need to present them and the postage costs must be several hundred pounds each year.

We propose emailing membership cards instead.

Mover: Dermot McKibbin, Seconder: Joanna Weller

In favour of the motion: 24 Against the motion: 0 Motion carried

8. AOB and provisional date for next AGM - March 28th 2026

Hugh Wallis spoke on the importance of the Gathering (13th-15th June) as a club event and encouraged members to book asap.

Apologies were received from Peter Walker, Isla Cameron, Eve Cina, Janey Hewitt, Peter Billington, Gill Platt and Peter Connolly.

Attendees: Pete Watson, John Dickie, David Symonds, Humphrey Southall, Matilda Simon, Richard Bennett, Jon Marsden, Barbara Segal, Janet Saunders, Anthony Haywood, Aslihan, Sarah Bates, Rebecca Bates, Hugh Wallis, Mickey McDiarmid, Maia Forrester, Caroline Weinberger, Joanna Clark, Gill Cox, Dermot McKibbin, Pete Clark, Jane Miller, Steve and Sue Wright, Claire Marris, Ross Hendry, Nigel Green, Heather Morris, Aileen Somerset, Angela Brown, Mark Ryle, Pauline Cummins, Uta Praekelt, Damien Connor, Stuart Bloom, Mary Wilkins, Helen Murrell. **TOTAL: 37**

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