

The Fell and Rock Climbing Club of the English Lake District Limited

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Meeting held at 3.30pm on Saturday 4 November 2023 at the Castle Green Hotel,
Kendal**

1. Chairman's Opening Comments

John Holden (President) welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the 2023 AGM. 102 members were attending in the room so the meeting was quorate. He reminded everyone to speak through the chair, be respectful of each other even if we disagree, to put mobile phones to silent, and to sign one of the attendance sheets.

It was recommended that members may attend the AGM remotely on Zoom and votes cast electronically would count as if present in the room. 34 members attended by Zoom.

Proposed by Mike Lynch, seconded by Wendy Dodds, all were in favour

A motion was put forwards that a rule change be made to allow Zoom attendees to be counted as present without a dedicated motion.

Proposed by Wendy Stirrup, seconded by Ron Kenyon. All were in favour.

This will be brought back to the 2024 AGM.

John advised the meeting that it would be recorded. He also asked for patience in light of slight delays with the administration of the Zoom meeting. A minor amendment to the agenda was pointed out in that the role of Webmaster was missing from the list of officers, this should be added and was currently vacant.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from the following members:

Gerard Hurst, Anne Salisbury, Brian Walker, Sue Walker, Tony Nelson, Godfrey Metcalfe, Nigel Ratcliffe, Martin Tetley, Kathryn Tetley, Keith Woodhouse, Peter Hutchinson, Dave Hyslop, Stuart Firth, Val Hennelly, Dave Dixon, Alison Read, Trevor Langhorne, Keith Wadsworth, Paul Belliss, Louis Haigh, Stuart Bradley, Maggie Crane, Alan Rowland, Anne Daykin, Ken Daykin, Richard Coatsworth, Brian Griffiths, Andrew Duxbury, Mark Gration, Ian Dixon, Peter Simcock, Robin Costello, Hazel Costello, Paddy Feely, Ian Craven, Gail Craven, Dan Morgan, Steve Woollard, Leslie Shore, Liz Hutchinson, Ian Durkacz, Kate Durkacz, Paddy O'Neill, Elspeth Smith, Rod Valentine, Lynn Valentine, Keith Wright, Helen Elliot, Phil Elliot, Sue Wales, Chris Wales, Susan Marvell, Chris Thickett, Lis Cook, Malcolm Rowe, Diana Woodman, Chris Radcliffe, Marilyn Banks, Dave Rhodes, Rachel Vernelle, Vic Odell, Michelle Hart, Alan Hinkes, Suzanne Strawther, David Henchcliffe, Nigel Hooker, Bernie Bradbury, Al Phizacklea, Humph Johnson, Claire Hughes, Tim Cresswell

3. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 5 November 2022

There were no comments on the minutes. The meeting was asked to vote on the minutes as a true and correct record of the meeting.

Proposed by Janet Ashworth, seconded by John Pulford, all were in favour

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of that AGM

There were no matters arising.

5. Election of Officers and Committee Members

Vice Presidents

The Committee proposed that Brenda Fullard and Janet Ashworth be elected to the posts of Vice-President.

Maureen Linton-Lee said that Brenda Fullard has done so much for the Club, is always ready to help and she has every confidence in her as a Vice President.

Proposed by Steve Lunt, seconded by Maureen Linton-Lee, all were in favour

The President declared Brenda Fullard as Vice President.

Mark Scott said that Janet Ashworth had been a very active Club member for many years. Wendy Stirrup said she was a long-standing member, attending many varied meets representing the Club, very helpful as a committee member and on working parties.

Proposed by Mark Scott, seconded by Wendy Stirrup, all were in favour

The President declared Janet Ashworth as Vice President.

On behalf of the Club the President thanked Andrew Paul and Stephen Reid for their work over the last two years as Vice Presidents. Andrew is moving on to another role. He also thanked Mark Gear who is retiring as Warden of Waters Cottage; and Richard Tait who is retiring as Warden of Brackenclose. He thanked them for their hard efforts and hoped that they enjoy a well earned retirement.

Membership Secretary:

The Committee proposed that Jane Hodgson be elected to the post of Membership Secretary.

Proposed by Wendy Dodds, seconded by Tony Walker, all were in favour

The President declared Jane Hodgson as Membership Secretary.

Guidebook Secretary:

The Committee proposed that Andrew Paul be elected to the post of Guidebook Secretary. Ron Kenyon (Acting GB Secretary) said that he had great pleasure in proposing Andrew for this post, and Steve Scott added that with Andrew's work on the Brackenclose re-build project and the website, he was well qualified with the skills this role requires.

Proposed by Ron Kenyon, seconded by Steve Scott, one abstention and the rest were in favour

The President declared Andrew Paul as Guidebook Secretary.

Brackenclose Hut Warden:

The Committee proposed that Paul Littlechild be elected to the post of Hut Warden. Andy Cairns said he would do an excellent job and Sue Preston-Jones said she had known Paul for 30 years.

Proposed by Andy Cairns, seconded by Sue Preston-Jones, all were in favour

The President declared Paul Littlechild as Brackenclose Hut Warden.

Waters Cottage Hut Warden:

The Committee proposed that Alan Strachan be elected to the post of Hut Warden. Mark Scott said he'd met Alan in 2006, he'd been Assistant Warden at Brackenclose, Warden at Raw Head and also had held other officer roles on the Committee.

Proposed by Mark Scott, seconded by Les Meer, all were in favour

The President declared Alan Strachan as Waters Cottage Hut Warden.

Officers

The Committee proposed that the following officers, being eligible for re-election, be elected:

President

John Holden

Vice-President

Wendy Dodds

Treasurer

Martyn Hodgson

Secretary

Beatrice Haigh

Meets Secretary

Hazel Jonas

Huts Secretary

Nick Harris

Chronicler

Simon Jefferies

Compliance Officer

Geoff Lyons

Dinner Secretary

John Pulford

Joint Journal Editors

Tony Walker/Jim Sutcliffe

Archivist/Librarian

Deborah Walsh

Hut Wardens

Beetham Cottage

Humphrey Johnson

Birkness

Jackie Brindle

Raw Head

Peter Farnell

Karn House

Graeme Ralph

Salving House

Andrew Duxbury

Proposed by Hatty Harris, seconded by Ron Kenyon, all were in favour

Ron extended his thanks to the Committee for their work.

The post of Webmaster is currently vacant.

The posts below are not Committee officers as defined by Rule 4 and are elected by the Committee, not by the AGM. They are given for information.

Younger Members Co-ordinator

Nina Stirrup

Safeguarding Adults at Risk

Amanda Halliwell

Safeguarding Named Person

Katherine Telford

Guide Books Editor

Steve Scott

Guide Books Photos Editor	David Simmonite
Guide Books Photo Diagram Editor	Al Davies
Guidebook Database Governor	David Lomas
Climbing Content Website Co-ordinator	Ken Daykin
Obituarist	VACANT
Oral Archivist	Lis Cook
Assistant Treasurer	Ron Kenyon
ENews Compiler	Paul Hudson
Digital Handbook Editor	Chris Wright
Membership Recruitment Support	Steve Woollard
Membership Database Administrator	Les Meer

Special thanks were given to Philip Powell who had recently stepped back from co-ordinating eNews.

Elective Members of the Committee

Elective Members have a key role on Committee and the sub-committees. They are often drafted in to assist on working parties and other activities. The President thanked the retiring Elective Members Sue Wales, Stuart Webb, Ian Bradley and Sue Vaughan for the tremendous amount of work done over the last three years.

The Committee proposed that the following Elective Members, being eligible for re-election, be elected: Mark Baron, Paul Hudson, Adrian David Lomas, Helen Lagoe, Anne Daykin, Nick Wharton, and Chris Wright. Special thanks were given to Chris Wright who was administering the Zoom meeting.

Proposed by Tony Walker, seconded by Jane Hodgson, all were in favour

New Elective Members of the Committee

The Committee proposed the following as new Elective Members of the Committee: Ros de Fraine, Simon Willis, Nikki Hamerton, and Paul Lucas.

The President asked the proposed new Elective Members to stand.

Proposed by Ian Bradley, seconded by Helen Lagoe (on Zoom), all were in favour

6. Reports of Officers except Treasurer

The President pointed out that there was one minor amendment to make in Appendix 3 (Officer Reports) under the report of the Guidebooks Secretary, paragraph two should read "thanks to Deborah Walsh ..." (not Marsh as was written).

In respect of the Huts Secretary's report, a point arose regarding a view that the unisex WCs at Brackenclose were unpopular, and whether any research had been undertaken on this hut model. Nick Harris (Hut Secretary) responded none per-se but the model was based on comments from members and a survey on various proposals. Nick would discuss with the member at a later date.

With reference to the Archivist's report, Deborah Walsh gave a brief update on the situation surrounding the Club's library which had been moved from the Armit. The main body of the library will be stored in Kendal and around 250 of the rarer and more valuable books are with the Mountain Heritage Trust. This is a temporary measure and it is hoped a permanent home will be found over the next few months. Members suggested other locations, being the County Records Office and the Museum of

Lakeland Life. Deborah responded that the Records Office would not take the library and the Museum was closed for the foreseeable future.

In respect of the Membership Secretary's report, there was a lengthy debate around the Committee's decision not to print the Club Handbook, but to have the information made available to members digitally. It was noted that the post of Handbook Editor had been vacant since last year's AGM and no-one had volunteered to do the job.

Jane Hodgson (Membership Secretary) advised the meeting that there was a digital electronic Handbook containing all the non-sensitive information (Rules, Bye-laws, Officers, Past Officers, KC information etc) available in flipbook format on the members' section of the website. All sensitive information (members' personal details including home address, email address and phone number) was held on a secure database administered by Les Meer. The new Infoodle system would be rolled out shortly and all members would receive information on how it works. Those members of the Club with no computer or who aren't comfortable with the technology will all be contacted and assisted on an individual basis. The President commented that a lot of background work had been undertaken to identify these members as the Committee was concerned about disenfranchising them, and there will be an identified point of contact for non-digital members to provide help. The President proposed that members accept the move to the electronic version of the Handbook, but this was met with further questions and discussion.

A number of members spoke against the digitisation of the Handbook, and a show of hands in the room demonstrated the majority of attendees preferred a printed version. The following points were raised against:

- Other clubs continue to print their handbooks in entirety (including members' personal information).
- What legal advice has the Club taken?
- It was hard to believe that the Club would have to recall all the handbooks distributed if one member withdrew their consent for information to be printed.
- It was felt that the General Data Protection Regulations were not to be slavishly followed by the Club as they applied to major organisations.
- The FRCC is a Club, not an association, and the Handbook links members together.
- There is no computer access in the hills so accessing the digital version would be difficult.
- The Handbook is a valuable addition to one's bookshelf, gives a sense of belonging, is easy to read through and to look someone up.
- The Handbook is the first place to look for the Rules and to see new members.

The responses from officers and members to these points and others were as follows:

- The advice had come from the BMC, who act on behalf of all the affiliated clubs regarding the GDP Regulations¹ and the Committee is confident it is correct.
- Other factors to consider are financial and environmental costs:
 - Financial cost - last year's Handbook cost around £5.5k to produce and distribute. This money could be put to very good use elsewhere, eg towards improvements in the huts. Martyn Hodgson (Treasurer) did not want to increase the subscription this year and gave a breakdown

¹ The GDP Regulations are implemented in the UK under the Data Protection Act 2018

of what the current subscription goes towards. He established that the Club's finances were in the red and costs relating to essentials like insurance, the BMC or rates etc can not be cut, but it can cut costs through the production of the digital Handbook.

- Environmental costs – the meeting was reminded that at the 2020 AGM the Club accepted there is a climate and ecological emergency, and a paper version can not be argued as an environmentally sound decision when digital is available.
- The new Infoodle system's access to the digital Handbook has advantages in that information will be current and not out of date, it can be downloaded easily, and has a good search facility.
- Copies of the printed Handbook had been seen in second hand book shops with members' personal details there for all to see. (Several members spoke about destroying their printed addresses on received mail)
- Prefer a paper copy but can see the environmental arguments.
- The Club should trust the Committee to ensure non-digital members are included.

Suggestions were made as to the following:

- Reduce size to lower the cost and link with other Club publications.
- One household, one hard copy.
- Members could look on line for other members' details, but as they were less likely to read the Rules etc, it was suggested that a hard copy of this part of the Handbook was printed and distributed to each new member.
- Print the Handbook every two/three years to reduce cost.
- Happy to pay extra to receive a hard copy and an increased subscription was suggested.

The President stressed that although the Handbook is a very popular publication, times move on and the GDP Regulations are in law. He asked the meeting if members wanted their officers to act outside the law. One member queried whether members even had the right to vote on a matter that is in law. The President accepted that subscriptions could be increased to cover the cost, but that is not the main point which rests with the GDP Regulations. The President also reiterated the environmental argument against the printed version referring to the 2020 AGM resolution on the climate emergency.

The President then asked the meeting to accept the Membership Secretary's report on the proviso that officers reconsider the Handbook situation over the next few months and to look at every possibility to come up with an equitable solution.

This was proposed by John Holden, seconded by Max Biden, there were three abstentions and the majority was in favour of this approach.

All other officer reports were accepted.

Proposed by Ron Kenyon, seconded by Chris Paul, all were in favour

7. Treasurer's Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 30 June 2023 (see Appendices 4a and 4b)

Martyn Hodgson (Treasurer) was congratulated on his report. Questions were raised to which Martyn responded:

- Had the £45k deficit from the Brackenclose rebuild been in this year's account then it would have broken even.
- The Club now has a big programme of hut repairs and must factor in £50k per year to be spent on the huts, the costs of which must be covered.
- The Armitt are to pay for the removal of the Club's library, and the outstanding monies of £1.5k will only be paid to the Armitt when this has been done.
- The seemingly low fuel bill for Birkness was accounted for due to the Club receiving credits from British Gas as it had been paying excess amounts since early 2022. Brackenclose had been on the wrong electricity rate which will be resolved at the year end.
- The Club has increased its hut fees, with spouse/partner fee aligned with the Kindred Club fee. Aspirants pay the guest fee as they generally move towards membership relatively quickly. It was commented that the hut fees are very reasonable compared with other accommodation in the Lakes.

The President asked for a vote on the Treasurer's report.

Proposed by John Coates, seconded by Alan Strachan, all were in favour
The Treasurer's report was accepted.

The President asked for the acceptance of the accounts for the year ending 30 June 2023

Proposed by Wendy Dodds, seconded by Ron Kenyon, all were in favour
The accounts were accepted. Thanks were given to the Treasurer and there was applause for Martyn.

8. Election of Auditors

RF Miller and Co were proposed by Maureen Linton-Lee, seconded by Chris Kenyon, all were in favour

9. Audit Requirements

To comply with the requirements of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, without incurring the expense of a full professional audit, it is necessary to pass a motion worded: "The AGM votes to pass a motion allowing the Society not to undertake a full professional audit for the year ended 30 June 2024."

Proposed by Martin Carr, seconded by Ron Kenyon, all were in favour

10. Proposed Club Meets 2024

There were no questions about the meets list. The President said that Hazel Jonas (Meets Secretary) had done a fantastic job, and it was further commented that it was an inventive list which should encourage new members to lead meets. There was applause for Hazel.

Proposed by Chris Paul, seconded by Sue Burkinshaw, all in favour
The President declared the meets list as accepted.

11. Rule Change

The Committee proposed the rule change subject to FCA approval.

Rule change 11.2 deletes this rule.

Through this rule, if the first subscription of a member is not paid within three months of the date of his election, his proposer is liable for the amount due. The Club is asking people to propose aspirants who they may have only met once or twice at Welcome meets. The possibility of being responsible for their first year's subscription is a deterrent to act as a proposer.

Proposed by Jane Hodgson, seconded by Les Meer, all were in favour
The Rule change will be forwarded to the FCA for acceptance.

12. Any Other Business

There was a query from a member regarding the discrepancy between the timing of the subscription notice and the direct debit requirement for two weeks' advance notice. The President responded that this would be resolved this year.

13. Vote of Thanks to the Committee

The President asked Wendy Stirrup to give a vote of thanks to the committee. She said:

"If you look at the top table you will see three new faces. That is in addition to several other officer changes set against a backdrop of rising inflation and fuel prices. These factors will have presented many challenges for the committee. Looking at Club activities, club life is most evident through Facebook posts and Chronicle reports of the varied and extensive meets programme. There are also WhatsApp messages from day meets and, more recently, pictures and videos of welcome meets posted live on an Instagram account during the weekend. It is great to see new members keen to get involved.

The guidebook centenary meet in Coniston brought together many long standing members who have contributed to the Club over many decades. Celebrations were supported by journal articles, launch of new Dow guide and the archive display in the Ruskin Museum.

Meanwhile, the officer reports indicate this has been a year of admin changes, many of which are not obvious to us, but contribute to the efficient running of the Club. Examples include role based emails, Google workspaces, Xero accounting, Infodile for membership. This is just a snapshot of some of the activities that have been taking place over the last 12 months.

Why mention them? Well - to make this happen committee members and officers have given up varying amounts of their time and expertise to help run our Club. These members are working hard for our benefit, and that of future generations. They deserve our thanks and I ask you to join me in showing our appreciation."

There was a round of applause.

The President closed the meeting.

DRAFT