



## 2024 Annual General Meeting of the BHPA

Minutes of the meeting held on Saturday 24th February 2024 at Holywell Park Conference Centre, Loughborough, commencing at 11am.

These minutes are not to be taken as an accurate record without referring to the minutes of the Executive Council meeting at which they were approved.

### Present

Marc Asquith  
Martin Baxter  
Bill Bell  
Jenny Buck  
Ed Cunliffe  
Ian Currer  
Paul Dancey  
Martin Heywood  
Brett Janaway  
Angus Langford  
Michelle Lanman  
Angus Pinkerton  
Joe Schofield  
Mark Shaw  
Steve Young

### In attendance:

6 voting members of the Association

### Apologies:

Tom Prideaux-Brune

### ITEM 1: CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

BHPA Chair, Jenny Buck, welcomed everyone to the 32nd AGM. She informed those present that the meeting would be transmitted live over Facebook.

Jenny explained that there would be two parts to the meeting, the first being the formal agenda and the second awards and Officers Reports.

### ITEM 2: RESOLUTIONS

#### 2.1 Chair's Report

Jenny's report was included in the AGM pack.

Jenny asked Angus Langford to present his Treasurer's Report before votes were taken to receive the accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

#### 2.2 Finance Report

The accounts for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 report the first major loss in the Association's history. This was due to inflation rising to over 10%, with many of our costs rising more than this, our third party insurance costs increased by £88K to £554K. Exec anticipated much of the increase in costs coming out of covid and the hike in insurance premiums. It was decided to use some of the surplus built up in 2021 and 2022 to cushion the impact of rapidly increasing costs on subscriptions. As a consequence, overall revenues did not increase at the

same rate as costs and the Association made a loss of £68K.

In the current year costs have continued to rise and Exec have had to take action to bring the Association back to breakeven. Savings have been sought across the Association, we have reduced admin staff hours, and one of the Technical Team took up our offer of voluntary redundancy. We will make another loss this year but are on a more stable footing to be back in surplus next year without having to increase subscriptions by more than inflation.

We have a long standing policy of maintaining the real value of our reserves over the medium term and the financial pressures of the last year and the current year illustrate why this is important. Despite the losses with reserves of £653K the BHPA remains in good financial health.

Angus asked if there were any questions. Tim Pentreath asked which of the Technical Team had taken redundancy. Angus explained that Dave Thompson had, leaving at the end of December 2023.

Members voted unanimously in favour of approving the accounts and the resolution was carried.

#### 2.3 That five members be elected to the Executive Council from the following five candidates: M Asquith, S Blackburn, E Cunliffe, A Pinkerton & M Heywood.

Jenny explained that Tom Prideux-Brune had decided not to stand for re-election. She expressed her thanks to him.

As it was an un-contested election the chair dealt with this matter *en bloc*. All five candidates were unanimously elected.

Jenny welcomed Stuart Blackburn to the Executive Council.

#### **2.4 That Fortus Audit LLP be appointed as auditors and the Executive Council be authorised to fix their remuneration.**

Members voted unanimously in favour and the resolution was carried.

#### **2.5 That the amendment to the BHPA Articles of Association be approved.**

Marc Asquith explained that there was an error on the voting paper and that the proposal was not an amendment to the Articles of Association nor was it a Special Resolution. A motion had been passed in 1995 which conflicted with the Memorandum and Articles, and it was this motion which was proposed to be rescinded.

The vote approved that the resolution be rescinded with everyone in favour and only one vote against.

Marc Asquith explained that since the proposal had been listed as a Special Resolution which would have required a two-thirds majority he took the view that not only had the proposal to rescind been passed by a simple majority, it had also easily passed the two-thirds margin, it was therefore passed no matter what the status of the proposal.

### **ITEM 3: AWARDS**

2.1 BHPA Awards of Merit were awarded, in their absence, to Irene Carson and John Owen-Jones. Tim Pentreath, Simon Sykes, Stuart Short and Kevin Gay were present at the AGM to collect their merit awards in person.

2.2 The Wings Over a Cloud award for the best article in Skywings during 2023 was awarded to Gary Burchett for 'It's now or never, Gaz' printed in two parts in September and December's magazines. Unfortunately, Gary was unable to attend to collect the award.

2.3 The President's Trophy was awarded to Marc Asquith for continued service to the Association. The award was created in 1977 by sculptor Alan Franklin and is awarded each year for the longest cross country flight. If a longer distance than the previous year is not achieved it is instead awarded for services to the sport.

### **ITEM 4: OFFICERS' REPORTS**

#### **3.1 Insurance**

Martin Heywood reported that there is a degree of settlement in the insurance industry this year and we have been able to renew cover on all our activities with a small reduction in our premium. Schools and clubs are doing a consistent job of applying their minds to risk and reducing

the chances of an incident occurring.

Tom Hardie asked why we have a greater risk from member-to-member collisions, as mentioned in Martin's report. Martin explained that the number of claims in this area may not have increased, but the costs involved have. Angus Pinkerton pointed out that we are seeing the American mentality, members are more liable to make a claim. Awareness that others have had a pay-out gives an incentive to start the proceedings themselves.

Tom asked if this was unique to our Association, he was not aware of other Associations reporting the same problem. Marc Asquith replied that we were not unique.

Tim Pentreath asked what sort of claims were being made, and what was the value of the pay outs involved. Marc Asquith explained that this very much depended on the injuries involved and whether ability to work was affected.

#### **3.2 Sites**

3.2.1 Martin Baxter commented that as always, his report detailed what the sites database is for. It identifies a single point of contact for each site to aid with enquiries and notifications – it is NOT a National Sites Guide.

3.2.2 There have been a plethora of planning proposals to build wind farms in Scotland. Martin has updated his notes on wind turbines, this is available on request.

3.2.3 Last year Kernow Club were refused permission to fly two sites, situated in SSSIs, by the National Trust. They cited a requirement from Natural England to produce risk assessment and ensure that migration measures were in place. Fearing this may set a precedent we took legal action and challenged the requirement. We have not received any reports of other clubs having the same problem.

3.2.4 The site fund stands at £59K.

3.2.5 After many years the military have decided to mark our busiest sites on their charts. Further details will appear in the March edition of Skywings.

3.2.6 The BHPA has joined a coalition of organisations representing outdoor enthusiasts. The broad aim is to improve access to the outdoors. A document called 'Outdoors for All' has been produced and will be presented to MP's and Peers on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at Westminster, with the aim of convincing the next government to include it in their manifesto.

#### **3.3 Skywings**

Paul Dancey's report was included in the AGM pack.

Paul reported that costs continue to rise whilst advertising is still not back to pre-covid rates.

#### **3.4 Website**

3.4.1 Paul Dancey explained that a considerable amount of work has been going on behind the scenes to make the

website mobile friendly. The website was created many years ago and the additional features that have subsequently been added as bolt-on stand-alone programmes make this far from simple.

3.4.2 A new 'one day' online membership application form has been developed aimed at overseas pilots visiting the UK to fly or take part in competitions. It does not restrict the number of applications that can be made in any six month period and is only available to non UK residents.

3.4.3 The next challenge is the major changes to PCI requirements which come into force in March.

### **3.5 Competitions**

Bill Bell's report was included in the AGM pack. Bill expressed his thanks to all involved in competitions.

### **3.6 Admin**

The Admin report was included in the AGM pack.

### **3.7 FSC**

3.7.1 Angus Pinkerton reported that there had been one fatality recorded last year, the second lowest on record.

3.7.2 Dave Thompson left the Association in December 2023 and Angus expressed his thanks to Mark Shaw and Ian Currer for picking up his workload.

3.7.3 Charlie Richardson and Tony Smith have been invited to join the FSC Committee. Angus thanked all FSC members for giving up their time.

Tom Hardie asked if there were any power related incidents. Angus explained that there were none reported. We hear about fatalities but suspect there are other incidents occurring which are not reported.

Tom asked whether SDR incidents would come under our remit. Angus explained that they would be classed as microlights which is covered by the AAIB.

Steve Young asked why the accident stats were so high for France. Angus explained that there was no particular reason, last year Germany was high, essentially, we are looking at fairly small numbers.

### **3.8 Paramotor Liaison**

Ed Cunliffe's paramotor report was included in the AGM pack.

### **3.9 CIVL**

3.9.1 Brett Janaway reported that the next CIVL meeting is imminent and will be held in South Korea.

3.9.2 There is a new junior world championship to be held in Slovenia in 2024. We have a very strong team who will be entering.

3.9.3 The new generation 4 harnesses are coming under heavy criticism because of their poor back protection and the difficult exit from the harness in an emergency. The CIVL bureau have formed a working group to address many of the issues and are working towards releasing a CCC harness definition, which will demand a stricter criteria than the EN standard.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending. Jenny commented that in her first year as Chair she has learnt that although it's sometimes hard to see why things are done the way they are there is always a reason.

The meeting closed at 12.05pm.