

Welcome to this collection of Red Rope officers' reports prior to the 2020 online AGM starting at 5pm on Saturday, October 3. The reports are compiled in this way every year, allowing members to read them and then ask questions at the meeting. This year we would like you to email questions to individual officers by September 20, copying in the National Secretary, so we can save time on the day. Addresses follow each report and there is a list of all officers' addresses at the end of this document. They can also be found under 'Contact Us' on the RR website homepage at redrope.org.uk.

We aim to keep the meeting to not much more than an hour and would therefore appreciate it if motions which are not urgent could be delayed until the proposed April 2021 AGM which should (fingers crossed!) take place in the usual way.

We hope you will attend this year's online AGM partly so we can pass the motion to make the club's financial year the same as the calendar year, our membership year and the BMC's financial year - at the moment the club's financial year runs from July 1. The constitution requires these changes to be made by a quorate meeting with a two-thirds majority of those members present, so it's a high bar. We need your help! The constitution can be seen under 'Members' on the club's website homepage.

BW, David Symonds, RR Nat. Sec., on behalf of the National Committee

CONSTITUTIONAL MOTION FROM NATIONAL COMMITTEE: Change of Club Financial Year

Article 6 of the Red Rope Constitution, stating the start of the club's financial year, should be revised by replacing 'July' by 'January' in the first sentence to read, 'The Club's financial year and accounts shall run for a period of twelve months from January 1.'

Article 4a, stating when AGMs must be held, should be revised by replacing 'December 25' with 'June 30' to read, 'An Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held not later than June 30 each year.'

Why is this motion important?

Two years ago we standardised our membership subscriptions, so they always run from January to December. The club's main income comes almost entirely from subscriptions. The end of our financial year has always been June 30. Having a financial year which is very different from the membership year makes little sense for accounting. It also means that our end of year balance (i.e. at the end of June) is misleading. This motion simply makes our financial year match the membership year.

Why bring this motion now?

The date of the AGM needs to be modified now to bring it in line with the modified financial year, although it also has the advantage of allowing us to hold an AGM in April, rather than waiting until September 2021.

RR National Secretary/Bulletin Editor reports for the on-line AGM, 3 Oct 2020

I booked the room in Birmingham for the February NC meeting and produced an agenda with notes and officers' reports. I designed and edited the spring (Feb.) 2020 paper bulletin and organised the stuffing and posting by Merseyside Red Ropers.

In April 2020 I produced the on-line only, lockdown bulletin with 18 sides, including a selection of 11 sides from 1979 to 1984 black and white bulletins. It seemed a good time to look back at the early years of the club. The bulletin depends on members' contributions so please send lots of interesting stuff! It's obviously difficult at the moment with much activity suspended but it could be treated as an opportunity to reminisce or think ahead.

I produced the agenda for the NC Meeting of 6 June 2020 which was conducted via Zoom. The 11 attendees agreed that the 2020 AGM would also be held via Zoom on Saturday, 3 October. Only essential business would be covered, with all materials circulated to members in advance. Members were to be encouraged to defer any non-urgent motions or discussion of broader issues until the proposed AGM in April 2021. The meeting could therefore be kept quite brief, hopefully not much more than an hour.

It was also agreed that the provisional booking in Hathersage for the weekend of 23 to 25 April 2021 would go ahead, subject to the possibility of cancellation or postponement in the event of government restrictions due to Covid-19. I contacted the St Michael's Centre in Hathersage and they confirmed that they would be flexible with the booking. This will hopefully be our 2021 AGM weekend.

I raised the possibility of automatic renewal of membership at the NC meeting to ensure greater continuity and save work for the Membership Secretary. It was agreed that the practicalities of this should be investigated.

My plan was to step down from being Nat. Sec. in October 2021, when I would have been in post for 3 years. In the circumstances I would be happy to remain in post until April 2022 if necessary, when we should be able to hold a normal AGM, if we haven't previously. I think we need to plan a procedure for the election of a successor - or small group of successors, as in the past with the 'triumvirate'.

I was one of 3 Red Ropers who were the first group to stay at Cae Ysgubor, the LMC hut in Beddgelert, since the lockdown started in March. (See redrope.org.uk > activities > club hut for details of how to book the hut.) Hopefully weekends and longer stays will soon become increasingly possible at all huts.

The NC appreciates that members have not had the same opportunities as the club normally offers and are grateful for your loyalty. Most of our income through membership fees goes to pay for the third party insurance and other benefits we get from being affiliated to the BMC, so we have not been in a position to suspend or reduce our membership charges.

It would be great if everyone could contribute to literally (!) getting the club back on its feet again a.s.a.p., whilst observing the government's admittedly often somewhat ambiguous guidelines.

David Symonds, August 2020

**The BMC's latest guidance re Covid-19, produced August 28, is available at www.thebmc.co.uk/covid19-restarting-club-meets*

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Bulletin editor	Bulletin@redrope.org.uk

Red Rope: National Admin Treasurer's Report and Annual Accounts 2019-20

Notes:

- 1) It seems strange to be presenting a fairly normal set of accounts at a time when the Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted most of the club's activities, but two-thirds of the year covered here was before the pandemic much affected us; most members now renew in January or February; and these administrative accounts are not concerned with trip activity. More than half our expenditure from our subscription income is on our affiliations, to the BMC, Mountaineering Scotland, the Ramblers and the Open Spaces Society – who have carried on needing to pay their staff.
- 2) There is now a fundamental limitation in that membership, and therefore subscriptions, now run for years starting on the 1st of January, while the financial years covered by these accounts run from 1st of July. Subscriptions are credited to the financial year in which they were received. One consequence of this mismatch of years is that we need to have a substantial sum in the bank at the end of each financial year, as we still have to provide the services members have paid for over the second half of the membership year, during which there is little income.
- 3) The accounts below, covering all transactions up to the end of June, show we do have a substantial balance, £15,364. This is in some ways misleadingly low, as the bank account also holds three other funds in addition to the national admin account:

	£
Funds held on behalf of Sheffield Region:	460.90
Action Fund	2,000.52
Hut Fund	145.67

There has been no expenditure from any of these funds. The actual balance in the bank account on 30th June was £ 22,853.33, although that dropped to £18,013.58 on July 9th when our BMC annual affiliation payment, sent in April, finally cleared.

- 4) The accounts include the two previous years for comparison. In 2018-19 we agreed two major donations, £1,000 to the BMC Mend Our Mountains and £1,000 to the Lancashire MC Blea Tarn appeal. LMC did not pay our cheque in until December, by when our members had donated another £571.74 to Blea Tarn, on the basis that this would be matched from national funds. We therefore "owe" LMC another £1,143, but they currently advise that "refurbishment of the Loft has stalled", so this is on hold.
- 5) The admin account also currently holds £719.74 in booking payments from the 2020 Easter Trip, the experiment in trip booking via WebCollect, cancelled due to Covid. The actual amount they paid, which we should presumably refund, was £730.80, the difference being the WebCollect and GoCardless fees.

Humphrey Southall
August 2020
treasurer@redrope.org.uk

RED ROPE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS: 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
INCOME			
Membership	10,152.66	9,389.98	8,629.98
Regions	200.00		200.00
AGM	706.40	813.00	911.40
Hut	49.00	79.00	
Tee Shirts	42.50	50.00	
Donation (Rambl Hols.)	20.00		70.00
Blea Tarn Appeal			571.74
Natl. Easter trip			719.74
TOTAL INCOME	11,170.56	10,331.98	11,102.86
EXPENDITURE			
Affiliations	4,570.50	4,791.60	5,614.30
Publications:			
Bulletin - printing	852.00	784.40	766.50
Bulletin - postage+sta.	464.39	524.97	561.14
MIS post + stationery	0.00	25.46	2.40
Publicity	0.00	223.89	120.63
	1,316.39	1,558.72	1,450.67
National Committee:			
Travel	655.56	600.45	481.95
Accommodation	122.00		72.00
Admin (incl postage)	69.48	46.20	20.00
	847.04	646.65	573.95
Other			
Website	50.99	29.99	
Mem. Admin.	379.02	722.00	360.80
AGM	988.62	914.15	1,305.79
Hut (Misc)	59.98	258.95	
Training		220.00	220.00
Regional Support	200.00	55.00	
Mem. Refund	1,311.18		
T-Shirts printing	66.83		
Transfer to trips a/c	350.00		
Donation (Mending our Mtns, Blea Tarn)		2,000.00	
	3,406.62	4,200.09	1,886.59
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	10,140.55	11,197.06	9,525.51
INCOME LESS EXPENDITURE	1,030.01	-865.08	1,577.35
OPENING BALANCE	13,621.75	14,651.76	13,786.68
CLOSING BALANCE	14,651.76	13,786.68	15,364.03

Red Rope AGM 2020: Lancashire Mountaineering Club Liaison Report

Red Rope continues to benefit from our association with LMC, giving us preferential access to their two huts – Cae Ysgubor in Beddgelert and The Loft at Blea Tarn in the Langdales.

Relationship between the two clubs

Relationships between RR and LMC have strengthened over the past year, partly due to Red Rope's fund-raising campaign to help with the costs of refurbishing The Loft and the excellent response to our call for Red Rope members to join a maintenance weekend at Cae Ysgubor (currently postponed due to Covid-19). David Symonds & Barbara Segal attended the annual Cae Ysgubor management committee meeting in October, and other RR members have got to know LMC members personally through their stays at the huts.

Our members raised around £500 for the Blea Tarn campaign, which last year's AGM agreed to match from national funds. Although plans for this work have been drawn up, LMC is currently awaiting further negotiations with the National Trust, who own the building, in order to proceed. The excellent response from Cae Ysgubor key-holders to the call for working party volunteers meant that we didn't need to call on members beyond this group.

Improved access to the huts for Red Rope

Individual Red Rope members are now free to stay at the huts at times reserved for 'LMC members and guests' (normally the school holiday periods) and may now take guests to the huts, though this is currently limited to one guest per Red Rope member.

Red Rope stays at the huts

In 2019 we used all three of our allocated weekend bookings - for a Manchester trip, a national trip and the June national committee meeting (open to all members). Priority for these weekends is given to regional groups but demand from regions has fallen off, with only one such trip in 2019 and only two booked for 2020. Note that regional requests for bookings should normally be made in the autumn preceding the year of the trip.

At the end of 2019 there were 34 Red Rope members with individual keys to Cae Ysgubor and by the end of the year we had used 54 of our allocated 200 bed nights. This is similar to the number used the previous year, and in both cases the majority of nights used were by members extending group trips. So very few members, including key-holders, are taking advantage of the opportunity to use the huts for personal trips. This seems a wasted opportunity as both huts are in excellent locations, costs are low, and in terms of comfort and facilities Cae Ysgubor is one of the best huts in Snowdonia.

Current situation

Due to the virus both huts were closed to groups in early March. However, key holders may now book Cae Ysgubor for long weekends (Thursday to Sunday). Restrictions apply and each dormitory is for the use of a single household or 'bubble'. Any member may book The Loft, which has a single dorm, for their household or bubble. Bookings must be made in advance and availability can be checked on the calendar on the LMC website. Details have been sent to all CY key-holders.

Barbara Segal, August 2020

LMC Hut Liaison / Booking Sec	bednight@redrope.org.uk
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RR Publicity Officer's report

This year has been quiet from a publicity point of view. There has been no point advertising since lockdown with most regions struggling to stay connected and walk programs only just beginning again.

National Facebook site (Red Rope Walking and Climbing Club)

Our Facebook site has also been quiet with not much going on to share online. After some NC discussions I have got the go-ahead to set up a private group within Facebook just for Red Rope members who already use Facebook, so we can more easily connect with each other, but have not had much time to get this going – it will be a September project.

Business Cards, Leaflets, Posters and banners

We still have lots of Red Rope flyers and 'business cards', (which are handy to give to friends) and the information A5 leaflets.

Website

- I am responsible for ensuring the website pages are kept up to date and editing the more complex content pages.
- Dave Doody does the day to day posting onto the Site of PDF forms and MIS.
- Bronwen Reid (Coventry and Warwickshire) helps out with the more technical items that Dave and myself cannot deal with, which is invaluable help.

An experiment with Meetup

Before the COVID-19 crisis I ran an experiment with Cov and Warwickshire group, using the 'Meetup' platform to advertise our region and a short walks program where Meetup guests were invited. We very quickly attracted 87 interested people and quick take-up of 6 places on our first walk! However this was in March and we had to cancel the whole program due to COVID. I have suspended our subscription for now, but I think it is well worth considering in future if a region wants to gain new members. I can offer advice to anyone wanting to use it in future.

There has been so little to do this year that I am happy to continue as Publicity Officer for another year – but I could do with help, perhaps someone who would like to take it on in future.

Janet Saunders

Publicity officer	publicity@redrope.org.uk
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Red Rope BMC rep.

The BMC AGM was held online. I was working so could not attend. Obviously they are key to the guidance on huts reopening. It is worth members checking the BMC website frequently for the latest advice on starting walking and climbing again. They are due to give an interpretation of the latest government guidelines by the end of August. There is also a free online copy of Summit magazine on their website. Unfortunately they have been going through some ructions which have led to resignations; for more info see Gareth Pierce's statement of August 24 on their website. On a more positive note the BMC did publish a number of excellent posts, including informative videos, over the lockdown.

Malcolm Donne

BMC Rep	BMC@redrope.org.uk
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AGM 2020 National Trips report

2020: A wonderful week at Ivy Cottage near Fort William followed by lockdown.

All bookings were refunded and hut deposits transferred to 2021 dates so nothing lost but much missed.

Huts are following BMC advice on re-opening [Covid-19 and reopening huts](#) so have restricted or no access at the moment.

An NC sub-group will consider any changes that need to be made to our shared transport, meals and sleeping arrangements and guidelines will be circulated in October.

Plans for 2021 more to follow.

February 20th to 27th 17 bed lodge at Badaguish Outdoor Centre. These lodges re-opened in early July and will be a reassuring relaunch of our trips programme as the bedrooms sleep 1 to 4.

<https://badaguishoutdoorcentre.org/accommodation-lodges-glamping-aviemore/holiday-lodges-aviemore-cairngorms/>

April 1st to 5th Lowstern Hut, Clapham

<https://www.yrc.org.uk/venues/lowstern/>

April 23rd to 25th St Michaels Education centre, Hathersage

<https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/visiting/planning-your-visit/ambassador-centres/st-michaels-environmental-education-centre>

May 29th to June 5th Muir Cottage, Braemar.

<https://www.cairngormclub.org.uk/muircottage/muircottage.htm>

June 6th to 11th Ronnan Cottage, Gairloch

<https://www.ladiesscottishclimbingclub.org/huts/ronnan-cottage/>

July/August Camping trip tbc

October 3rd to 10th High House, Seathwaite

<http://highhouseborrowdale.co.uk/>

Details of organisers are in the MIS though the number of places on each trip may change depending on health and safety restrictions. Hoping to see lots of you soon.

Becky Bates

National Trips Hut-booker	nationaltrips@redrope.org.uk
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National Trips Treasurer's report

Account stands at £2290 (20th August) all refunds for cancelled trips having been paid back to members. No activity on the account for the past 2 months and little or none in the foreseeable future.

Adrian Jones

National Trips Treasurer	triptreasurer@redrope.org.uk
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Membership Secretary's Report

We currently have 283 members, 6 having joined during Lockdown. Another 3 will join once their payment has been processed. This is encouraging especially as our activities have been so limited.

I have circulated lists to all the regions asking for the email addresses for the regional contacts but not necessarily getting through to the reps. I would appreciate knowing who the reps are for all the regions so I can email them directly.

I would like to get the renewal information for next year out at the beginning of November, so we don't have the last-minute scramble of last year. I would appreciate someone wording this letter to say that even though members may not have not been able to go on walks their membership has been appreciated and that they have helped to swell our coffers, as well as the BMC and Mountaineering for Scotland who are by far the main beneficiaries.

Gill Platt, 29 August 2020

Current Membership by Region and Band

Region	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Bristol and West	1	11	5	2	3	22
Coventry and Warwickshire	1		2		1	4
Cumbria				1		1
East Anglia	4	5	3	2		14
Leicester and Nottingham		6	8	2	3	19
London	9	11	13	17	12	62
Manchester	2	6	5	7	3	23
Merseyside	7	17	12	10	0	46
North East	3	1	4	1	1	10
Scotland	6	4	10	11	5	36
Sheffield	7	3	6	2	5	23
West Midlands	3	5	4	5	2	19
West Yorkshire	1		1			2
Total	44	69	73	60	35	281

There are 2 members from Manchester on bands 1 and 5 whose payments are being processed, plus one from Scotland on band 2 and one from London on band 1 who are both in the same position.

Membership Secretary

membership@redrope.org.uk

Red Rope National Committee member's generic RR addresses

We are all volunteers. We do our best but you may have to wait a few days for a response!

National Secretary	secretary@redrope.org.uk	
Assistant National Secretary	secretary@redrope.org.uk	
National Treasurer	treasurer@redrope.org.uk	
Membership Secretary	membership@redrope.org.uk	
National Trips Hut-booker	nationaltrips@redrope.org.uk	
Trips treasurer	triptreasurer@redrope.org.uk	
Training officer	training@redrope.org.uk	
LMC Hut Liaison / Booking Sec	bednight@redrope.org.uk	
Publicity officer	publicity@redrope.org.uk	
IT Officer	it@redrope.org.uk	
MIS editor	MIS@redrope.org.uk	
Bulletin editor	Bulletin@redrope.org.uk	
BMC Rep	BMC@redrope.org.uk	
Ramblers Rep	Ramblers@redrope.org.uk	

