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### **OutdoorLads 2022 Annual General Meeting**

**Date: Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022**

(Due to 19<sup>th</sup> September now being a Bank Holiday for the Queen's funeral the charity commission accepted moving to this new date with shorter notice than is usually required.)

**Location: Online via Zoom**

**The Meeting Opened at 19.05**

**Attended: Total Users 203**

## **Board & Staff Attendance**

### **Board Members**

Matt Tennant (MT) Chair

Danny McKeown-Henshall (DMH) Vice Chair

Steven Allan (SA)

Danny Ballantyne (DB)

Fergus Brunning (FB)

Simon Hawthorn (SH)

Dave Banks (DB2)

Joey Payne (JP)

### **Co-opted Members (elected to Trustees during meeting)**

Emma Green (EG)

Richard Overton (RO)

### **Staff Members**

Liam Russell (also Charity Secretary)(LR)

Dan Byrnes (DB3)

Yvonne Goldsmith-Rybka (YGR)

### **Apologies**

Niels Pederson (NP) Treasurer & Gavin Bridge

**AGM/22/01 Welcome & Housekeeping**

Current Chair Matt Tennant (MT) opened the meeting a few minutes late as he, and a few members, were having technical issues joining the meeting. He began the slide presentation celebrating 2022 which has seen a big achievement as OutdoorLads was successful in gaining corporate sponsorship from The North Face - featuring us in a campaign which has been great publicity for the charity.

MT outlined the aims of the meeting:

1. Discharge our legal obligations
2. Celebrate what we have achieved
3. Understand the challenges we have
4. Give confidence for the future
5. Inspire members to volunteer and get involved

MT also talked through the agenda for the meeting and explained the online format and voting/Q&A protocol.

**Business & Governance Part 1****AGM/22/02 VOTE: Approval of 2021 AGM Minutes**

There were no questions relating to the 2021 AGM draft minutes and no motions were received.

Proposer: Neil Sharp

Seconder: Glenn O\_?\_\_

For: 165

Against: 3

Abstain: 38

(NB Figures have been adjusted to include proxy votes and also to allow for any people who voted twice.)

Approved.

**AGM/22/03 Financials Overview to 31 March 2022**

Treasurer Niels Pederson was not available for the AGM therefore MT & Dave Banks (DB2) presented this section. Financially it has been a good year for OutdoorLads with surplus income of £46k after depreciation but this figure does include £11k of furlough, £16k of donations, £14k of cancellations and almost no website spend – without which we would have seen a loss. Therefore, although it has been a fairly positive year there are concerns going forward we are not covering all of our costs.

**AGM/22/04 Current Financial Year**

DB2 stated that the current financial year looks set to make a profit also with a strong paid event occupancy of 97%. He did however talk about rising inflation and

the increased cost of living for everyone. Operational overheads will increase, however as free reserves will exceed the target we may be able to look at assisting members as well as using them for capital use.

Question: Why did income drop from 2019 to now?

Answer: 2019 was our last 'normal' year and we cancelled two years paid events (2020/2021) due to COVID, only really receiving membership income in that time thus the lower income.

Question: How can we make a profit next year?

Answer: Costs to run the organisation are being carefully considered with our strategy and more corporate sponsorship sought.

(Any Questions not answered live will be included in the Q&A Appendix)

**AGM/22/05 VOTE: Approval of Accounts for the year 2021 – 2022**

For: 192

Against: 1

Abstain: 24

Approved. Thanks to NP, LR and YGR.

**Year In Review/ Charity Performance Over Last 12 Month**

**AGM/22/06 Events & Leaders**

Presented by Danny Ballantyne (DB) & Dave Banks (DB2)

Overall events are now performing better than financial year ending March 2020, with members trying more types of events also.

DB said that although we currently have 341 leaders, only 55% of those were active over the last year, and worryingly 46% of ALL events were run by only 27 leaders which isn't sustainable and could lead them to burnout.

Special thanks were given to these leaders, with a plea for more members to step up and volunteer.

Question: Have we surveyed non-active leaders?

Answer: We do need to work on this and gain their feedback as to what we can do to help put events on.

Question: Do we need to better engage and support leaders?

Answer: Yes we need to look at if we are making it difficult to become a leader and run events, we will listen to the feedback to change and evolve.

## **AGM/22/07 Members**

Presented by Joey Payne (JP)

A membership overview shows annually we are still attracting new paid members, however we are losing an almost equal amount and have hit a plateau. The main reason for not renewing has been 'not enough events in my area.' Also 70% of members visiting the website are not actually going on any events that are often oversubscribed with last minute cancellations.

Regionally the South East is the most active region, the North West has most new members joining, whilst Welsh membership remains low. Walks and climbing attract most new members.

Again JP reinforced we need members to get involved by becoming a leader and plug the gaps in your area.

Question: How can we cover all these areas?

Answer: We will do more in the future with a programme for new joiners at BIG events.

Question: How do we know new sign ups are not BOTS?

Answer: We send a validation email that invalidates the account if it isn't clicked.

Question: Do we have a blog?

Answer: This is something in discussion to use influencers and more relevant content from members in a natural and organic way.

Question: Could a space on each event be reserved for new members?

Answer: This is an interesting idea and we will ask the board and regional coordinators to look at.

## **AGM/22/08 Organisation Update**

Presented by Dave Banks (DB2)

Website Hosting & Support Update – our supplier Microserve were bought out by Investis and it became clear that OutdoorLads no longer fitted their revised corporate model. A refund was obtained for support not provided.

Following a tender process and with the help of consultant Richard Reid (thanks were given to member Richard for all his support on this) Adaptive were selected as our new supplier with the migration to their new software in September 2022. Drupal 9 upgrades and mandatory security patches to ensure the stability of the site are the immediate focus.

In terms of the wider organisational update improved and more reliable data are now going to the accountants for year end accounting. Also member engagement by platforms was compared by region with Scotland showing the best engagement.

Question: Do we email new members that haven't booked onto any events with the buddies policy?

Answer: Again will take away this idea to work on.

Question: How many new members use their free coupons?

Answer: They are well used and this is not an issue.

### **AGM/22/09 Absent Friends**

Remembering Rob & John – two members of our community that we sadly lost this year.

John Stewart was a previous trustee and popular member. It was, in fact, John's suggestion we apply to change our VAT status for which we will be forever grateful, having received a substantial rebate as a result. He and his husband Neil made a very generous donation to the charity and requested it be put to use in leadership development at the heart of the organisation. There has been a huge outpouring of love for this very missed member.

Ex trustee Neil Sharpe was given speaking rights to remember Rob Dawson, a huge part of our family he cannot believe is no longer with us - having been taken away far too young and too soon. Neil remembered past events they had been on together and raised a G&T to toast an absent friend.

*Five minute interval*

### **AGM/22/10 Strategy Presentation to Members**

Presented by MT with Richard Overton (RO), Fergus Brunning (FB), Danny McKeown-Henshall (DMH), Joey Payne (JP), Simon Hawthorne (SH), Emma Green (EG)

Richard Overton began by discussing our journey so far and why we need to look at the long term role of the organisation in order to keep it sustainable and to grow membership. From listening and engaging with members our Vision, Mission and Values remain the same with three main objectives to focus on:

Members We will make our organisation more inviting, diverse and inclusive.

Events We will do more of what we do best – delivering great events

Organisation We will be an inclusive and well-run organisation, run by us for us

And as JP pointed out – our Articles of Association remain the same.

MT summarised: Following consultation sessions with members and our member survey there is a pretty equal 50/50 split in terms of the direction we should be moving in - with around half our members believing OutdoorLads should be more inclusive of the whole LGBTQ+ communities, and the other half against this idea and wanting to remain as we are. With no clear front runner this makes it difficult to clearly move forward - and therefore we are attempting to keep both sides happy: by introducing pilot events in partnership with other LGBTQ+ organisations alongside our current event programme. In other words, the

future of OutdoorLads is in the hands of our members as if these events prove successful we can introduce more of them and let the organisation naturally evolve.

SH & EG closed this section by discussing an OutdoorLads rebrand over the coming year with many believing our name is now outdated and should reflect more who/what we want to represent moving forward.

Question: Are we going to actively promote OutdoorLads to the wider LGBTQ+ community?

Answer: Yes we will, but our existing event programme will still go ahead as normal. We will try partnerships and pilot events alongside this, to work out the best strategy moving forward.

Question: Given the 50/50 split in opinion re this expansion, can the board reassure members they will act on their behalf?

Answer: This split is the reason there is such a delicate balance between remaining the same and expanding to the wider community. More consultation is needed to keep everyone happy and this will direct our strategy.

Question: A promise was made in June that a deciding vote would be given, why is this not an option now?

Answer: As mentioned we revised this following the consultation and survey results as we recognise the split in opinions and we didn't want a 'Brexit' type of situation. We are trying to find a natural balance and members can vote with their feet by supporting the type of events they feel best suit our future. There will be no vote today but we hope we have addressed your concerns.

Question: Have we got the capacity for this new vision?

Answer: We don't know but we will look to engage with the wider community for their support working alongside OutdoorLads.

Question: When gay bars became more inclusive it pushed a lot of gay men out. Why is it so bad to be exclusively for gay men?

Answer: Our articles of association say we don't discriminate and we should cater to this. This is a very different scenario and we do not see that happening or feel we are in danger of alienating our 'core base' - this is just a natural progression of the fantastic job we do of spreading positive mental wellbeing to a wider spectrum. Why can't we continue to exist and expand through partnering and it be a positive thing - without it being at detriment to either?

Question: Have the board looked at how we can be more inclusive?

Answer: Obviously we want more variety and more members and this shouldn't just be based around gender, but race and religion also.

Question: So are we going to change the name?

Answer: Yes we are looking at a rebrand as we are in a place we feel our name is now a bit dated. We will form a group of members to work on this with us.

**Business & Governance Part 2****AGM/22/11 VOTE: Trustee Appointment Election**

Following short introductions from each of the prospective trustees (their manifestos can be found in the documentation for this years AGM) votes were taken with results as follows:

**Chris Keivit**

For: 143

Against: 24

Abstain: 28

**Emma Green**

For: 140

Against: 38

Abstain: 22

**Fergus Brunning**

For: 136

Against: 37

Abstain: 22

**Richard Overton**

For: 182

Against: 9

Abstain: 9

**William Llorel-Antoine**

For: 101

Against: 70

Abstain: 28

MT explained that WLA had put himself forward for the position of Chair should he be successfully voted onto the Board as a Trustee. The role was advertised both internally and externally, and WLA has now been through the interview process - the Board will make the final decision re new roles in October.

**AGM/22/12 Thank You's**

MT thanks all volunteers that make OutdoorLads what it is. Special thanks are given to Nick Read, our technical advisor on events & leader standards, and to Richard Reid, our technical advisor to the website and its move. Linten's Stephen & Dan are also thanked as they were responsible for setting up and maintaining our first website.

Thanks are given to new leaders, new members and long-standing members.



**AGM/22/13 Leader Awards**

A huge thank you to regional co-ordinators, organisers, event leaders and everyone who supports OutdoorLads in delivering our much loved event programme.

A slide is shown with all the leader nominations for this year as there were so many!

With the final awards going to Stephen Turner, Tim Hooson, Andy Hewlett, Gavin Blackman, James Watson and Aaron Moran.

And a special award to the BIG Events 'First-Timers' and Camp Leaders Will Allaway, Stephen Clifford, Chris Keivit, Richard Overton and Andy Renault.

At this point DMH jumps in to thank Matt – as this will be his last AGM and Board Meeting as Chair. MT got us through a global pandemic helping steer the charity through COVID and all the challenges that brought. Mark House shares a photo album to celebrate memorable events with MT and his 'retirement!'

MT thanks all, special mentions going to Dave Lawrence & Peter Walter, and the volunteers at the heart making this wonderful organisation what it is – and how his role as Chair had been an honour and a privilege.

Final note from MT: OutdoorLads will fail if we think it is up to someone else to sort it out. Please step up to the plate and be the change that you want us to be.

Trustees and staff do not have the resource to do everything – if you have concerns about the future of the organisation, join us on this journey as what we look like tomorrow and in the future is ultimately up to you.

**AGM/22/14 Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

**The Meeting Closed at 22.30**