



2025 Annual General Meeting of the BHPA

Minutes of the meeting held on Saturday 1st March 2025 at 8 Merus Court, Meridian Park, Leicester LE19 1RJ, 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
Jenny Buck
Ed Cunliffe
Ian Currer
Paul Dancey
Martin Heywood
Angus Langford
Michelle Lanman
Angus Pinkerton
Joe Schofield
Mark Shaw
Steve Young

In attendance:

8 voting members of the Association

GoTo meeting link:

7 voting members of the Association

Apologies:

Bill Bell
Stuart Blackburn
Brett Janaway

ITEM 1: CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

BHPA Chair, Jenny Buck, welcomed everyone to the 33rd AGM. She encouraged those attending remotely, via the GoTo meeting link, to submit any questions they had in the chat box.

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 31st March 2024.

2.2 Finance Report

The financial accounts for the year ending 31st March 2024 reported a loss of £55K, following a £69K loss in 2023. This was primarily due to a £90K rise in insurance premiums and high inflation caused by the situation in Ukraine. However, cost saving measures implemented by Exec, along with a reduction in insurance expenses, are expected to lead to a return to profitability in 2025.

We have a long standing policy of maintaining the real

value of our reserves over the medium term. The financial pressures of the last two years highlight the importance of this approach. The surpluses of 2021 and 2022 enabled us to plan for and absorb the losses of 2023 and 2024 without resorting to steep subscription increases or radical staffing reductions.

Angus mentioned that he is always available to address any queries from members.

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

2.3 That six members be elected to the Executive Council from the following six candidates: M Asquith, M Baxter, B Bell, J Buck, P Dancey & A Langford.

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

2.4 That the agendas of Exec and FSC meetings be made available to BHPA members before the relevant meeting.

The voting was 23 in favour and 57 against. The resolution was not passed.

2.5 That the minutes of Exec and FSC meetings be made available to BHPA members within 7 days of the relevant meeting.

The voting was 20 in favour and 62 against. The resolution was not passed.

2.6 That decisions at Exec and FSC meetings be taken by majority vote of members of each committee.

The voting was 25 in favour and 55 against. The resolution was not passed.

2.7 That auditors be appointed and the Executive Council be authorised to fix their remuneration.

Angus Langford commented that a tender process is currently underway, which could lead to a change in auditors for the upcoming year.

Members voted in favour and the resolution was carried.

ITEM 3: AWARDS

2.1 BHPA Awards of Merit were awarded, in their absence, to Karl Austberger, Mick Roche, Oliver Moffat and Charles Norwood.

Chris Haynes, Mark Bignell and members of the Paragliding Junior Team, (Tom Frances, Joshua Sanderson, Kanan Thakar, Aaron Hall and Jacob Aubrey) were present at the AGM to receive their merit awards in person. Unfortunately, Brett Janaway, Jacob Butterworth and Dylan Mansley from the junior team were unable to attend.

2.2 The Wings Over a Cloud award for the best article in Skywings during 2024, selected by Mike Hibbitt, was presented to Ben Ashman for his article 'Balado or Bust' published in two parts in the September and November's issues. Ben was able to attend and receive the award in person.

2.3 The President's Trophy was awarded to Jeremy Soper.

Jenny expressed her thanks to everyone involved in producing and submitting citations for the award winners.

ITEM 4: OFFICERS' REPORTS

3.1 Insurance

Martin Heywood reported that we have had a small but manageable rise in the premium for our liability cover. We negotiated a reduction in the premium of around £30,000 for the years 2024 and 2025. We have secured a three year deal for 2025, - 2027 deal which will see our premiums rise in 2026 but then fix for 2026 and 2027. This is the first time we have been offered a long-term deal and is due in main to our claims history looking reasonably good at present.

Martin thanked all those that had approached him over the last year with questions regarding coverage and risk.

3.2 Sites

Martin Baxter highlighted 3 main topics from his AGM report.

3.2.1 Sites database – details of our busiest sites are now

provided to the military so they can be highlighted on military charts. Negotiations are ongoing with a view to provide something similar to the CAA to assist with drone deconfliction

3.2.2 Sites trust fund – the fund currently stands at £60k. Clubs and schools are invited to apply for grants to assist with site purchases.

3.2.3 Aside from Airspace and EC there are 2 major threats to our sites:

1. The Green Agenda / Net Zero has led to a tsunami of proposed windfarms, solar farms and power lines, particularly in Scotland.
2. Flora and Fauna – Natural England restrictions at SSSI's have thus far affected 3 clubs. Where negotiations fail, they have little option but to disown the site and leave the control of the sites to the landowners.

3.3 Skywings

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

Paul reported that while inflation has stabilised this year, and advertising income has begun to improve, it unfortunately continues to be outweighed by the increase in operating costs.

3.4 Website

3.4.1 Paul Dancey reported that the new mobile friendly website went live over the summer of 2024, and appears to have been well received.

3.4.2 Work continues on the new European incident reporting system (FIDA), with the implementation date still to be confirmed. An interface has been developed to safeguard the 24 years' worth of incident report data we have available on our website whilst allowing integration with the new system.

3.4.3 The online membership renewal facility now contains the option for members to make donations to the Trust Fund should they wish to.

Bill Morris asked if consideration had been given to moving from a physical magazine to online only. Paul commented that this is always under review although at present the paper copy is proving more popular.

3.5 Competitions

In Bill Bell's absence Jenny highlighted the main areas of his report.

3.5.1 The 2 PPG World Records achieved - Distance round a closed circuit without landing established by Dan Jones and a height gain for a 2-place electric paramotor established by Hugo and Ross Turner.

3.5.2 Thanks to Barney Townsend and his team for a fantastic job at the Paramotor Endurance World Championships.

3.5.3 Thanks to Oliver Moffat for his work with the HG Panel and welcome to Neil Atkinson who will take over as

Chair.

3.5.4 Richard Meek will stand as Chair for the PG Comps replacing Charles Norwood who has done a sterling job.

Jenny thanked the many volunteers that make it possible to run and participate in Hang Gliding, Paragliding, Paramotor and Accuracy competitions.

3.6 Admin

3.6.1 Marc Asquith expressed his thanks to Mark Woodhams for his re-design of the BHPA logo. Mark developed the BHGA logo in 1974 and the previous BHPA logo. The update was more of an evolution than a complete design, reflecting the changes we've gone through over the past 30 years.

3.6.2 This year has seen the office cost-saving measures, and improvements in membership services, with significant progress made in renewing membership processes and document management.

3.6.3 Marc expressed his thanks to the office staff for their hard work and commitment during the last year.

3.7 FSC

3.7.1 Angus Pinkerton shared that the online Pilot and Pilot (Power) exams have been running for a year. Analysing the results during this time has helped us identify questions that pose the greatest challenges for candidates. Adjustments have been made where it became clear that the wording of certain questions was unintentionally confusing.

3.7.2 The Pilot Development Program for new CP's will soon be re-launched. The PG and HG Foundation booklets put forward practical experience and suggested knowledge areas to assist 'red streamer' pilots during their first 10 hours or so of flying in the club environment.

3.7.3 Clarification has been issued regarding our definition of XC flying. Pilots with CP (Novice) qualifications are limited to 'local flights', flying further afield requires the knowledge and experience gained through achieving Pilot level.

3.7.4 Charlie Richardson and Tony Smith have been appointed to FSC by the BHPA Exec, they bring with them many years of hang gliding, towing and aero towing experience.

3.7.5 Angus thanked the Technical Team who regularly go above and beyond any reasonable expectation of their work and commitment, and to all volunteers who work on, and with, the FSC and its panels.

Joshua Sanderson enquired whether a CP rated pilot could fly XC if supervised by a Coach. Angus confirmed that this is possible, as long as the supervisor is a Senior Coach, pilot is properly briefed, and the flight is recorded in advance.

3.8 Paramotor Liaison

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

3.9 DE&I Report

Stuart Blackburn's report was included in the AGM pack.

In Stuart's absence Jenny thanked Rhian Ebrey for her involvement in producing "Soar – a girls' paragliding road trip", and re-iterated Stuart's request for volunteers to assist with the DE&I campaign.

3.10 CIVL

Brett Janaway's CIVL report was included in the AGM pack.

The Chair expressed her gratitude to everyone for attending and also thanked Dave Harvey for his proposals. She extended her appreciation to the schools, clubs, members, volunteers and staff who contribute to the Association.

The meeting closed at 12.10pm.