

British Parachute Association

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Communications Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Tuesday 16 August 2011 at 1218

at the BPA Office, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester LE2 9TF

Present:	Adrian Bond	-	Communications Chairman
	Paul Applegate		
	Kieran Brady		
	Craig Poxon		
In attendance:	Tony Butler	-	Technical Officer
	Kirsty Kelly	-	Archant Dialogue
	John Page		
	Martin Shuttleworth	-	Secretary-General
Apologies for absence:	Liz Ashley		Editor, Skydive Magazine
	Alex Busby		
	John Hitchen	-	NCSO
	Phil Sumner	-	Archant Dialogue

Item Minute

33/11 Minutes

The Committee noted that the minutes (circulated) of the meeting held on Tuesday 21 June 2011 had already been approved by the Committee, ratified electronically by the Council and published on the BPA website <http://www.bpa.org.uk/minutes>

34/11 Matters arising

34.1 Unauthorised use of the BPA logo (minute 24.1)

The Committee noted that Edward Carroll BPA 116942 had removed the BPA logo from his website www.vegasextremeskydiving.com where he had previously used it without authorisation. His application form membership renewal had therefore now been processed.

Eddie Carroll had asked the Committee to consider authorising use of the BPA logo on websites such as his. However, the Committee pointed out that the BPA's policy on the use of its logo specified that for a parachute centre to display the BPA logo, it had to be affiliated to the BPA.

34.2 Golden tickets (minute 24.2)

The Chairman reported that Archant Dialogue had telephoned seven members who had received Golden Tickets in their April Mags (entitling them to a year's free membership) but who had not redeemed them. Two of the phone numbers had not connected. Where the calls had got through, various reasons for not using the Golden Ticket were given, all of which were personal to the individual. The Chairman reminded the Committee that, as previously agreed and publicised in an e-newsletter, any unused Golden Tickets would be raffled at the AGM 2012 (minute 39.1)

Action: Chairman

The phone numbers that had either not been correct or current highlighted the issue of incorrect or out-of-date information on the membership database. Kirsty Kelly said she would put a reminder in the Mag to ask members who changed their address, phone or e-mail during the year to let the BPA office know.

Action: Archant Dialogue (Kirsty Kelly)

The Committee also asked that a note to this effect be put on the renewal form and, if there was room, on the membership card.

Action: BPA Office

Craig Poxon said that when the new web-based database was up and running, members would themselves be able to check and update such details online.

34.3 Logs of Mag downloads (minute 24.3)

Kirsty Kelly said these would be provided by Phil Sumner for the next meeting. Craig Poxon asked that a breakdown by country should be included.

Action: Archant Dialogue (Phil Sumner)

35/11 Editorial Report

The Editorial Report had been circulated in advance.

35.1 August 2011 issue of Skydive the Mag

Advertising income had been marginally short of target, but Rob Crane (Advertising Sales, Archant Dialogue) had briefed Kirsty Kelly that August had been a tough month last year.

Weed Stoodley (Council Member) had commented on the article 'Satori Academy' on page 40. She had expressed concern that this had read like an advertorial for the team, and had also promoted tunnel training and an overseas drop zone. Kieran Brady said that in his view, the amount of coverage of tunnel training in the Mag was too much and he believed that this imbalance should be addressed. Craig Poxon said that it was arguably through tunnel training that this year's FS Nationals had seen their biggest turnout ever. He believed the balance of the article in the Mag had been correct. There followed a discussion in which the Committee agreed that wind tunnels could not be ignored. However, the amount of coverage they should receive in the Mag was a question of balance, on which the Editor would be asked to reflect.

Action: Editor

35.2 Complimentary Mag mailing list

Kieran Brady reported that he had passed his suggestions of variations to the current list to Liz Ashley (Editor). He believed number of addressees on the list could be reduced substantially. The Chairman asked Liz Ashley kindly to circulate the draft updated list to the Committee before the next meeting.

Action: Editor / Next meeting

35.3 Mag website

The Office asked that the front-page events section should be used to promote future events. Kirsty Kelly confirmed she would arrange this.

Action: Archant Dialogue

36/11 BPA e-Newsletter

Craig Poxon reported that the delivery rate of the last BPA e-Newsletter, in July 2011, had been 56%. It had unfortunately not been possible to put in place a custom domain in time, but he expected this to be available in time for the next e-Newsletter in September. He had been advised by the third-party mailing partner that the use of a custom domain might help to increase the delivery rate.

Craig Poxon added that the e-Newsletter was not now eliciting as many spontaneous replies from members as it had when it had first been introduced. Likewise, the number of unsubscribe requests had tailed off. This was as expected now that the BPA e-newsletter had become a regular feature. He said he would put a reminder on facebook and UKS for members to ensure they had notified the BPA Office of their current e-mail address.

Action: Craig Poxon

The Chairman, who was editing the BPA e-Newsletter, reported that the Committee had received a request on behalf of US-based 6 times World Champion Dan Brodsky-Chenfield to mention his forthcoming appearance on BBC radio 4's 'Midweek' programme on Wednesday 21 September 2011. This was agreed.

Action: Chairman

37/11 New BPA website and database

37.1 New BPA website

The new BPA website, constructed by Archant Dialogue, had gone live as planned on Monday 4 July 2011. It had received generally positive feedback from the membership. The Office had found it significantly easier to update than the former BPA website. There was, however, an issue with Archant Dialogue running the paid-for advertisements through a system called Adtech. One long-established advertiser, an Affiliated Centre, had declined to continue to advertise on the new BPA website because they said that the Adtech system prevented the Centre's own website, linked to its advertisement, from benefiting in the Google rankings. Two other advertisers on the old BPA website (where the advertisements had linked directly to the advertiser's own website, and not been routed via a third party such as Adtech) had to date declined to advertise on the new one. Kirsty Kelly agreed to ask Rob Crane (Advertising Sales, Archant Dialogue) to confirm the reasons why the other two banner advertisers on the old BPA website had decided not to continue to run their advertisements on the new site.

Action: Archant Dialogue

The loss of three out of five advertisers was likely to have a significant effect on advertising income for the BPA website, as no new advertisers had yet been secured. The matter would be considered further at the next meeting in the light of the position at that time.

Action: Next meeting

37.2 New BPA database

The Office outlined plans to work with Archant Dialogue on migration of the existing BPA membership database to the new web-based database constructed by Archant Dialogue. Once in place and working, it would enable trials to start of online renewals, etc. Staff in the BPA membership services section were coming up to their annual 'golden window' in the autumn (Oct/Nov) to familiarise themselves with, and to test and validate, the new database. After that, trials of online renewals could begin.

Kirsty Kelly confirmed that Phil Sumner (Web Developer, Archant Dialogue) planned to visit the BPA Office for one or two days in connection with implementation of the new online database.

Action: Archant Dialogue (Phil Sumner) / BPA Office

38/11 Communications Action Plan: 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012

38.1 Enhance media and public relations

The Chairman said that, before the end of the year, he hoped to arrange a visit to Archant Dialogue with a small group including the Chairman of Council and Secretary-General, to discuss PR, marketing and media issues with the objective of raising the profile of the spot and increasing membership.

Action: Chairman

38.2 Celebrate the BPA's 50th Anniversary 1961-2011

- The well-received series of five articles would continue in the Mag, looking at the history of British skydiving in each of the BPA's five decades to date. The October Mag would focus on the 1980s.

Action: Editor

- The Mag had kindly agreed to source an image that could be used for the silhouette of a skydiver to feature as the background to the honours board listing Chairmen of BPA Council since foundation.

Action: Mag / BPA Office

- The Chairman thanked Archant Dialogue for their help in designing vinyl banners for the BPA and Skydive the Mag for use at BPA events including the BPA 50 Boogie at Langar. The Committee agreed to offer these to Clubs & Centres at cost price of £30+VAT each, plus delivery. The Office would send out an e-mail.

Action: BPA Office

38.3 Run an online BPA membership survey in spring 2012

The survey would be drafted nearer the time.

Action: February 2012 meeting

38.4 Research costs and issues in building a digital archive of the BPA Mag and, possibly, BPA minutes

Craig Poxon reported that optical character recognition (OCR) did not work well in archiving colour photographs. This was a pity because about half of the archive would comprise images rather than text. The quality of older black and white images could, however, be assured. Craig Poxon said that one option might be to archive the earlier, black and white material now, and wait until technology had moved forward before archiving the material in colour. He noted that the most expensive quotation had included providing an individual scan of every page, and that these scans could be processed by OCR as a subsequent stage. Craig Poxon said he would continue to weigh up the options and report back to the next meeting.

Action: Craig Poxon

38.5 Action Plan Budget

Craig Poxon reported that a paper from Weed Stoodley about this year's Action Plan budget, was due to be tabled at tonight's meeting of the full Council.

39/11 AGM

39.1 Reebok Stadium, Bolton, Saturday 28 January 2012

The Chairman reported that the AGM Working Party had met this morning to progress plans for the BPA AGM to be held on Saturday 28 January 2012 at the Reebok Stadium, Bolton, Greater Manchester BL6 6SF. Alex Busby had been developing the afternoon seminar programme.

Exhibition space (3m x 3m) would be available price £125 + VAT, the income from which would be used to offset the venue hire charges. There was no shortage of exhibition space as the Premier Suite at the Reebok Stadium was a much larger room than we had ever used before (the AGM and the exhibition would be in the same room).

The menu was being finalised for the BPA 50th Anniversary Dinner in the evening. Tickets were expected to cost about £25 each. All living past Chairmen would be among those invited as the BPA's guests. The format would be that of a formal dinner with a celebratory feel, with the theme of 'Bond and his baddies' for those who wished to don fancy dress.

Staying with the evening entertainment, the Chairman reported on an entertainer and MC called Howard Wing whom the venue had suggested. The Chairman asked for feedback from committee members to a link to a video of Howard Wing in action that he would circulate, and if satisfactory, proposed to meet him to explain our requirements and make a booking.

Action: Chairman / All Committee

Casino tables would be available at £275 for 2 (last year: £400). Alex Busby had suggested a band to play at the after-dinner disco, and the Chairman had asked for a demo. A guitar player was available to play at the top table pre-dinner drinks reception.

39.2 Saturday 26 January 2013

The Chairman reported that he and the Office were continuing to liaise to secure the best possible deal with the Marriott Hotel, Leicester, on plans for the AGM on Saturday 26 January 2013. Selected drinks would cost £2.75 each, with 20% off the rest of the standard bar tariff. The contract was now being prepared for signature.

Action: Chairman / BPA Office

40/11 New RAeC website

Craig Poxon asked about our response to the Royal Aero Club's request for images and text about the BPA for use on the new RAeC website that was currently under construction. The Office said that this was in hand, with the kind assistance of the Mag in supplying the images.

Action: BPA Office

41/11 Promotional material for freshers' fairs

The Committee discussed supplying promotional material to freshers' fairs. The Office reported that last year at least 1,500 copies of the 'Freedom of the Skies' brochure had been sold, and that Peterlee Parachute Centre had purchased 1000 of the 'Try Skydiving' leaflets. The Committee agreed to publicise the price and availability of these items, and the tandem and solo jump promotional posters, to DZs and, through BCPA, to the university clubs. No postage would be payable on orders collected from the BPA Office.

Action: BPA Office

42/11 Dates of future meetings

At 1200 noon at the BPA Office, Glen Parva, Leicester, on Tuesdays 11 October & 6 December 2011.

The meeting closed at 1326.

Ratified electronically by the Council and published on 7 September 2011.