

MINUTES OF THE AUK BOARD MEETING HELD AT THE "METROPOLE HOTEL"
LLANDRINDOD WELLS ON 17TH NOVEMBER 2012

The meeting started at 09:33

DIRECTORS PRESENT: IH, PC, SG/KH, JH, LJ, PM, RP, PP, SS, AT, JW & MW.
There were no apologies for absence.

OBSERVERS PRESENT: Nigel Hall, Jackie Popland and Danial Webb

The Minutes were agreed as a true record (Proposed SG, Seconded LJ) and there were no matters arising.

DIRECTORS' REPORTS: PP advised having produced about 16,000 Brevet cards, mainly with minimum or low numbers. PC reported a quiet period with some incremental improvements. He is investigating using a more powerful server which will be needed to run an increasing workload, using the current one as a back-up. The likely additional cost will be about £800 annually. SG/KH reported prompt receipt of results from almost all organisers at the end of last season with all results updated punctually despite some outstanding paperwork. This timely trend has continued into the new season and the arrangements for organisers to return validated Brevet cards to riders at the end of an event is popular with both sides. New design badges are being well received whilst a new supply of Grimpeur badges with the existing design seem to be better quality. One particular organiser was mentioned at the meeting as being particularly late despite verbal assurances of co-operation and since PP and JH reported last minute requests from him, he will in future be restricted to Permanent events only.

MW gave the usual current breakdown of membership statistics showing a total of 5117 members. He had taken control of the renewal reminders following problems last year, though there was a small problem sending the data to Headleys, which did not add a significant delay. Deceased members advised to us are David Ledger, Andrew Clarke, Peter Doidge. Chris Bennett, Harry Kimberley, John Kempe and our previous Chairman, Rocco Richardson. Sonya Crawford and Andy Clarkson have recovered from cancer, while Dave Lewis is hospitalised awaiting treatment for his cancer. We offer these three our best wishes. He (MW) has also been investigating stickers with the new design and their pricing, and gave full details of the findings. It was agreed we should use them and they should be distributed free to riders by PP with blank Brevet cards. Detail design amendments were discussed and agreed. Car rear window stickers were also discussed and the designs distributed in the written report changed slightly. It was proposed by JW, seconded by PP that one be included free once with a mailing of *Arrivée*, which was agreed unanimously. Validation stickers, on the other hand, were felt to be inappropriate, largely because they did not offer acceptable proof of passage, but JW suggested an Avery Label template to print personalised labels for individual controls. ACTION: MW, PP

SS detailed the history of Headleys' regrettable late mailing of the recent issue of *Arrivée* due to a personnel change there and a poor handover of duties. It was mentioned that if seeking a replacement firm we should look for "Short run magazine printers" but that industry has a high casualty rate. MW suggested a firm local to him which he could badger in person if needed, but no decision to change was made. Maggie Lewis has resigned as Autumn *Arrivée* editor and SS will appeal as part of her verbal report to the AGM for a successor and place an ad for this vacancy and that of Press Secretary.

LJ had nothing to add to her annual report; PM again had experienced a slack period but agreed to mention the details of the contraction of his workload to the AGM. AT was pleasantly surprised to have very little extra work at the end of the season, but found a glitch in the results updates, now sorted by PC. RP managed to cope with his busy time in good time for all deadlines and thanked SS and AT for their extra work outside their core duties. He has been advised of an accident on an event which may generate an insurance claim, but until further details are available from the rider, has insufficient detail to take to the Broker.

LEL UPDATE: As this event approaches, the workload is increasing. The entry system is virtually finished and should be open for entries from 5th January. Once entered, riders will be able to access 'their' section to make all their choices and buy event clothing. Danial will offer 30 riders an option to enter in December to test the system and save £1,500 in PayPal costs. He is testing internet banner advertising on various forums costing £20 per day plus 50p per visit which is a cost-effective alternative to an ad in *Cycling Plus* costing £1,000. He enthused about its flexibility and has commissioned some professionally designed banners which he hopes will generate 1,200 visits. SS has arranged an article in the CTC Mag, *Cycle*, with Tim Wainwright supplying the images. This may be too late for the riders, but will hopefully motivate all the volunteers. The mailing list currently has 2200 members: the first mailshot was sent out in late October and two more are planned at each end of December. The Facebook page has 600 members and lively and appealing while Twitter will be more useful closer to the event.

A lot of effort has been spent on logistics and much money budgeted – commensurate with the size of the operation. Controls from Market Rasen northwards will have 75 beds & 100 blankets with an additional 500 of each to be ferried to controls as needed. This should give adequate capacity at reasonable cost but may be a challenge for the controllers. After the event these beds, blankets, towels & so on will be put in storage which will cost about £5,000 till 2017 but can be made available for other rides needing sleeping facilities. All controls have been booked except for Brampton where the original choice (William Howard School) has been agreed. Eskdalemuir may have building work in progress in July, but arrangements will have to be made as conditions at the time dictate.

There was a Controllers' meeting on Oct 13 when they busily familiarised themselves with setting up and dismantling the kit and discussing the arrangements. There are currently just under 180 potential volunteers but recruitment will be stepped up nearer the time when people can plan their schedules. JH has been busy riding much of the route which is almost finalised. Danial has been in contact with the County Councils and police in the areas covered by the route, discovering supreme indifference from them.

Roger Cortis reports there is a total of £2839 in various accounts and is not expecting to need more money before the entries pay their fees from the beginning of January. The amount of this fee has now been agreed at £219. Various forecast amounts have been revised with an overall expenditure increase of some £2000. The final projection, depending on rider numbers is anticipated to be somewhere between a surplus of £13,000 and a loss of £9,000. In view of all the efforts of the teams, a loss would be disappointing and the hope is that the work to make it AUK's flagship event will produce a positive legacy.

STRATEGIC PLAN: The plan is now on the website and has generated a lot of interest. Some good points have been made in the feedback and a PowerPoint presentation with Q&A session is planned before the AGM to update the members,

with a request to send any thoughts direct to AT. Analysis of all the feedback will take some time. During the following discussion JH's earlier events strategy was much praised and it was suggested that it be merged with AT's plan. Much of the discussion centred on the financial aspects, with comments that AUK had had sufficient funds to engage on such a strategy for some considerable time and the surplus had been the result of careful budgeting in the past. Although the planned expenditure is a ceiling figure, we need some flexibility in the spending and we probably need to spend some money on external professional services. Spending money wisely to maximise the return is regarded as paramount and giving funds to organisers for their events is particularly risky, as we want to assist the event, not subsidise it. Mindful of that, our assistance might be in publicising the event or helping with a website. Simply giving an organiser money up-front will encourage the wrong sort of organiser and we could well insist on a floor entry fee and specify minimum facilities. Equally all aspects of such assistance should be rigorously monitored, from the initial plan to final accounts.

HMRC (Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs) are suggesting to LJ that she should be using their on-line tax filing system as they are under the impression that we pay salaries, with an apparently limited and inflexible response to her protestations. IH suggested she contact Stuart Carrington at the AUK Reg Address who is an accountant and pretty au fait with such matters. There is likely to be a fee for professional services, but in line with earlier discussions, this was approved unanimously. ACTION: LJ

RECORDS RETENTION: SG/KH enquired what the time limits for retention of retention of old paper based financial records were, as they are taking up excessive space. PP advised her photocopier used for Brevet cards had a facility to scan documents securely outputting the data onto a memory stick or similar medium and offered to scan the records. This offer was gratefully accepted and it was mentioned in passing that there had been no need to consult the existing records in the past eight years. SS also mentioned that Francis was gradually scanning some extremely old results sheets and PP is to take over that task, too. ACTION: SG/KH, PP

BADGES: AT queried the pricing of badges which is likely to prove confusing with new medals and badges costing members £2.00 and £1.00 respectively while older stocks are priced at £2.50 and £2.00. As these items will soon be available on-line soon, the cost of each item must be clear. The suggestion to round the prices down was not well received as some badges would incur a loss. JW proposed the abolition of date bars, which was seconded by PP and agreed unanimously. As the director handling the greatest variety of medals and badges AT agreed to reformat the price list for these for the next Handbook. ACTION: AT

CONDUCT OF AGM: There was some concern at this meeting that Andy Wilkinson, the Guest of Honour at the Annual Dinner had not arrived as expected and some urgent attempts to contact him were made. It was informally agreed that although the Chairman should mention those members who had passed away during the year, the names of those who had recovered from serious illness would not be added. In this regard, Dave Lewis a long-standing member and organiser who was currently hospitalised, had requested that Dai Harris read a long letter from him to the AGM with details of the progress of his illness. This was considered to be too graphic for such an occasion and IH & PM will let Dai have a précis. IH also felt the written permission of his wife, Anne, should be obtained before publicising full details (now received.)

The vacancy for Press Secretary remains vacant. One likely candidate has been contacted, but is currently busy setting up his own firm and another has expressed some interest which will be followed up shortly. The problem of the late dispatch of Arrivé and the reason for it will be explained fully to the meeting with a strategy to regularise the position – probably an EGM coinciding with the next Board meeting in March.

JW suggested an informal meeting before the AGM to discuss the strategic plan to inform those present about the current thinking, receive suggestions and relieve the pressure on the actual meeting.

WEBSITE: The website sub-committee has not been very active. PC has started on a new website and has a sound basis, but really needs input on front end style and appearance. It was suggested we advertise for a web editor to manage the content with regular and frequent updates to maintain interest.

Danial has advised that a broker has offered the domain name “audax.co.uk” for £400 + VAT. The case for purchasing this was debated, and the result of the ensuing vote was that no-one was in favour, seven were against with a single abstention. (It should be mentioned as a result of the pre-meeting on-line discussion MW advised having purchased “www.audaxuk.info” and “www.audaxuk.org.uk” for a year at a total cost of £10.97.)

AOB: PP has data for Kieron to redesign the outsides of Brevet cards – the insides remaining unchanged. She wondered whether a new jersey design at the same time would be advantageous. A brief discussion followed to consider the costings and a budget of £1000 for both Brevets and jerseys was approved unanimously.
ACTION: PP

DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETINGS: Wednesday 6th March 2013 at 18:00 and 7th March from 09:00 to 15:30 in the Ibis Hotel, Birmingham.

The meeting closed at 13:44.