

News from the Committee – October 2017

We are delighted that Amy Curtis, Tommi Grover and Matthew Owen have joined the BOK Committee, and thank Caroline Potter and Christian Saxtoff for their hard work as they leave. Members have been very busy lately with two Committees and the AGM all held within six weeks.

Our September Committee departed from the usual format and we spent the whole evening initiating a strategic review of the Klub's governance. Sport England and British Orienteering are keen that clubs should have a clear understanding of what they are doing well and what aspects of their management could be improved. We spent some time completing an online tool as well as considering our budget for 2017/2018 in advance of the AGM.

Two areas that we are constantly looking to improve are: the use of our ever-willing volunteer workforce, and our marketing strategy. Nearly everyone would like more events and we have had some innovative suggestions such as winter night street score events to consider, but we must try to ensure that we don't overstretch individual's willingness to help. We currently group our events into a series of leagues, but the names, classification, and days on which these events are held have varied and this makes them hard to market coherently – a problem we hope to address over the next couple of years.

Thanks largely to the past two BOK Blast events, Klub finances are currently healthy, but we expect to make a loss during the next twelve months and must manage our future finances cautiously. A particular problem is trying to match the number of maps we print to the number of runners who come to events. Depending upon their size and the number printed, maps cost between 60p and £1.20 per map, so it is expensive to the club if we have a lot of unused maps after an event. Equally we are aware that people dislike handing in their maps for recycling to late arrivals. For this reason we are very keen that as many entrants as possible should pre-register so that we can better estimate the print run. In line with the policy of many other clubs, we are introducing a small surcharge for entry-on-the-Day at our Regional events, and will see if this helps us to better match map numbers to entrants.

Unlike many of the commercial event organizers, making a profit is not our prime aim when we organize an event, but we need to make enough money to fund our ongoing costs, provide training, and support our juniors. Our budget review showed that it is considerably more expensive for us to stage events in our premier areas such as the Forest of Dean and that these events are typically less profitable to the club than some of the events held locally to Bath and Bristol. This is because officials' expenses, toilet charges and land fees are all higher in remote locations. Another perhaps surprising finding was just how important the summer orienteering season has become to us. Well over half of our participants ran in events held between early May and mid-July. A big change from a few years ago.

The provisional minutes for our recent Annual General Meeting are available in the Members Only section of the BOK website.

Chris Johnson
BOK Secretary