



## **Bolton Mountain Rescue Team**

Annual General Meeting of the new Bolton Mountain Rescue CIO Charity 2023  
Christ Church Hall, Heaton, Chorley New Rd, Bolton BL1 5AH

20:00Hrs Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024

### **PRESENT**

Operational Team: A Forsyth, A Greenough, A Allmark, A Underwood, A Keyworth, B Hutchinson, C Lomas (Chair), D Woodman, D Morrow, D Conn, D Cook, D Blakeley, G Wilde, G Seddon, G Leigh, J Brocklehurst, J Dickinson, J Jacyk, M Scott, M Banks (Treasurer), M Morris, M Wakerley, M Marsh, N Farmer, N Booth, N Yakas, P Brain, P Copley, P Horner, R Schweizer, R Royce, R Allen, S McKay, S James, S Fletcher, T Ridings, T Dawson, W Platt

Support Group: A Manning, B Carr, C Berry, G Gregory, M Claydon

### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

C Greenhalgh, G Clarke, K Kilshaw, M Masheter, N Sturgess, P Hartley, R Howard, S Shevlin, S Martindale

**CIRCULATION** All members & D4H.

### **3. MINUTES OF 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Approved on the proposal of M Banks, seconded by D Woodman.

### **MATTERS ARISING**

None

### **ANNUAL REPORTS**

#### **4. Chair's Report – as presented by Chris Lomas**

At last year's AGM I reflected on a busy 12 months for the team when we'd been glad to be back together in person and had spent much of the year getting our organisation "into shape". We had also come together to develop a strategy and made some baby-steps towards our goals for the team in 2028.

In the last year we have built on those foundations of a well-organised team to take bigger steps towards our objectives. Our new governance structure is now embedded with operational and support team matters well-managed by the respective leadership teams. It has been great to see Chris and Bryan take to these roles so seamlessly, and the changes they have both introduced to delegate more work has been welcome as we look to focus increasingly on our members' wellbeing. This has also allowed a slight reduction in the number of trustee meetings and a clearer focus on strategic and governance matters.

One key area of focus this year has been risk management and significant progress has been made on the identification and mitigation of both organisational and operational risks. We have been mindful of recent examples where risk has not been managed appropriately with sometimes

catastrophic impact for individuals and organisations, so it's right that we learn from others and continue to focus on this in the coming year.

Other areas of focus this year from our strategy have included the introduction of an annual budget process. This has allowed us to forward-plan our expenditure and delegate the ability to authorise payments to budget holders within their budgets, reducing administrative burden and time at meetings. We have also worked on a skills matrix for trustees which will allow us to identify areas for training and recruitment in the future. And our work on diversity will shortly roll out to the team in the form of a benchmarking exercise.

Our new officers have each made significant progress in their areas of responsibility. Wellbeing has been a new area of focus for us this year and the team have made a big impact, much of which is unseen in the background supporting team members through difficult times. They have also led on improving the team's ability to respond to incidents with a mental health aspect which I'm sure will become increasingly common. This was further supported by the visit to Fleetwood Lifeboat and lecture from the Police on suicide prevention as we look to build more partnerships with other organisations.

Our other officers have equally had a productive year with progress made on multiple fronts. Negotiations with NNAS regarding our lease are ongoing to secure our medium-term future at Ladybridge Hall while we assess our options for long-term base security. Our digital estate also continues to develop and is increasingly essential to our operations as a team. Good work on upgrades, resilience, licensing, testing and security all goes on without anyone noticing, which is the definition of a job well done and is much appreciated.

We have had great success with fundraising this year and in addition to the funds raised by the support group through collection tins and events, a number of grant applications have been successful which will help to maintain healthy reserves even after we have invested in our ambitions for the future. Our social media presence continues to grow including across a broader range of channels to attract new audiences. This engagement with the public is essential to our ability to raise funds and raise awareness of the work we do and the messages we want to send out. We've also focussed on more traditional media this year with articles in the press supplementing our social media work. And we've started a digital newsletter to our regular supporters which recognises their support and helps to bring them closer to what we do. We hope this will value their contribution and help to grow the number of people who give regularly to us.

Looking forward to the year ahead, we've already started well. We will shortly receive a report on our options for a long-term base and put in place the plans to help us deliver on that. We will be further developing our online presence including a new website to reflect the modern team we are today and encourage people to join and support us.

On our capability we have committed significant funds this year for equipment across both the operational and support teams to standardise the kit we use and the image we portray. The operational team will also be developing their capability with dedicated search and medical teams.

Whilst we have done an excellent job of reaching out to our community with lectures both at our base and other venues, this continues to be uncoordinated as we seek an Education Officer. This remains an area of focus along with the recruitment of a team Secretary.

Thanks for your ongoing support. We have much to be proud of, and much to look forward to!

## **5. Team Leader's Report – presented by Deputy Team Leader Mike Marsh on behalf of Team Leader Chris Greenhalgh**

I can't believe it has been a year already. I took over from Steve Fletcher as Team Leader this time last year which was a tough act to follow, and it took a few months to settle in to the new role. I would like to thank him for a good handover and his advice and support throughout the year. The 'I'm going to write things down' objective throughout his tenure assisted with a smooth transition. Thanks also to Mike, who stepped up to the Deputy Team Leader role, this transition was also a smooth one and his ongoing advice and support has been welcome and much appreciated.

Well done to the four new ATLs elected to post last year, you all had a lot to take on, learning new systems and procedures, along with preparing to take calls from the emergency services and manage incidents. Thanks to Steve, Mike and Paul for your assistance with this training, along with the outgoing ATLs who continued to provide mentoring and support for some time after the AGM.

The first few months of my tenure were very busy, the number of meetings, emails, phone calls and messages, and the amount of admin was at times overwhelming. I quickly realised that even when the team callouts are low, the TL is always busy. To help reduce the workload, I introduced a Duty Leader system which rotates around the seven elected Leaders; this enabled the day-to-day running of the team to be managed by a different leader each week. This seems to be working well and has now been adopted. Also, each of the Leaders has taken on additional responsibilities to further share out the workload; these include driver management, D4H, attending Lancashire and Greater Manchester Emergency service meetings, SRC coordination, stores/equipment, rope team lead, recruitment and SAR-H.

My thanks also go to all those who hold additional positions within the team, meaning a commitment above and beyond that of an operational or Support Group member. A number of roles are particularly time consuming and relentless including the training officer and treasurer to name just two. Please try to support all these members where you can and help make their job as easy as possible. Another mention needs to go to Christine in her new role as our Wellbeing Officer. She has done a great job, along with Jane and Andy in contacting and staying in touch with all our members who may need support. We have had a lot of members requiring time out for various reasons over the past year and it is very important we look out for and support each other.

We currently have a membership of 65 including operational, non-operational and Support Group. A number of members have left during the last year and we welcomed Becky Smith who transferred to us from Western Beacons. During our initial chat we realised, not only did we go to the same secondary school, we were in the same year. It was my pleasure to welcome another young member to our team. We have also seen the return of Mark Scott and Mike Wakerley to the team, we all knew they couldn't stay away for long. Mark, our new team pilot, was enticed back by a Tigers Clough incident near his house which he was actually available for, and Mike was finally worn down and talked around by an anonymous team member, thanks Becky.

A special mention should go to Bob Hutchinson, who stepped down from operational duties after his 80th Birthday following 44 years service. His well worded letter to the team was read out following training on the 10th January. Although Geoff still calls him a newbie, this is a long time in anyone's books and worthy of recognition. In an attempt to boost his morale, I mentioned recently he joined the team 7 days before I was born, it didn't work. Bob wishes to continue to support the team in any way he can and continue as our President, which gets my full support.

We are currently going through a quiet spell; this may be impacted by the weather or the HART team and Fire Service attending similar incident types. Maybe the safety messages are spreading through the education work by other agencies and ourselves and via social media, meaning people are becoming safer and more aware of the dangers in the outdoors. Nevertheless we are continuing to attend emergency service meetings to maintain and build on the links we have with other agencies and improve their awareness of our capabilities.

One thing that doesn't change is the professionalism and teamwork continually demonstrated when our services are called upon. The feedback we continue to receive from our casualties or their relatives and from partner agencies is a credit to the hard work and dedication of this team of volunteers. We received over £250 in donations following the recent rescue of Ryan's new best friend Buzz the puppy, and a very nice email from the casualty on the New years Day incident in Harwood.

It continues to be an honour and a privilege to serve as part of this team's leadership and I look forward to what the next year will bring.

## **6. Treasurer's Report & Presentation of the Annual Accounts – as presented by Martin Banks**

In 2024 we have seen an ongoing development of our risk management and governance of the Team, these are welcome but a challenging to the way we have managed both operation and administratively.

Financially during 2023 we are still feeling the impact of cost increases across many aspects of our expenditure. Although our overall expenditure is down. The cost of running the team is increasing, Energy, vehicle fuel, aging land rovers, insurance and IT costs are all upward trends.

During 2023 we have received £73,593 in income and our reported total expenditure for 2023 was £34,777. Including the depreciation charge against our Tangible Assets of £19,748 our total costs in 2023 were £54,525. During 2023 we have had £38,816 more income than expenditure. When we deduct a depreciation charge, we had £19,068 more income than expenditure.

The Team operates a Financial Reserves policy, reviewed bi-annually in April and October, which is currently set at £50,000. I expect this will increase further to mirror expected expenditure during 2024.

Our 2023 Account are available, there are no concerns identified, or noted, by the accountant regarding the Accounts. We entered in to 2024 in a good financial position.

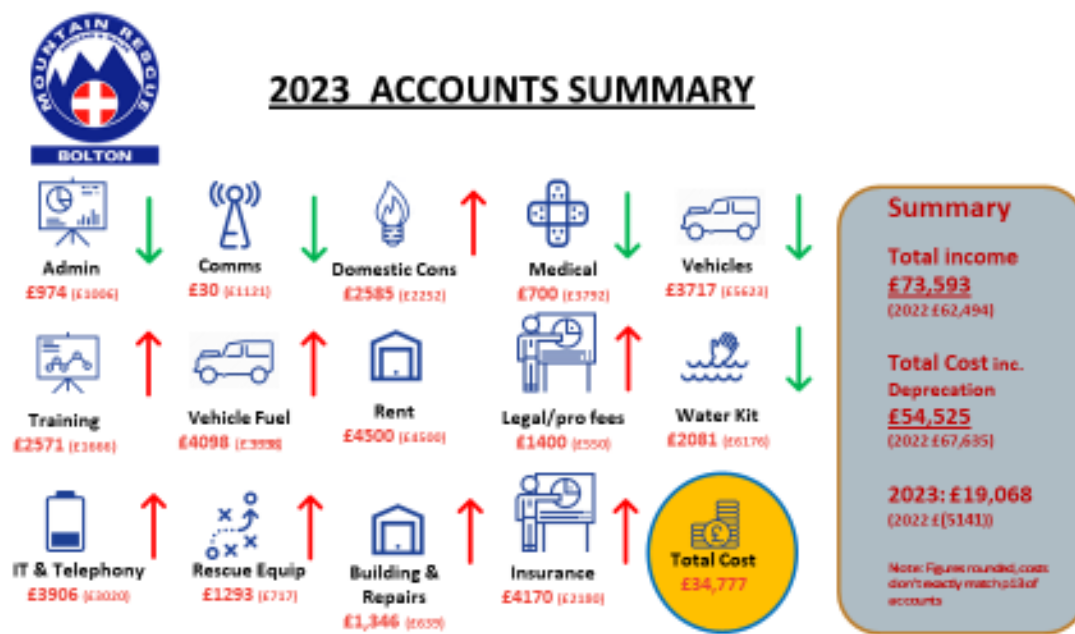
2024 the year ahead ...

Looking forward I see that our costs relating to Insurance and our aging Landrover fleet will be notable and once our tenancy and base review has concluded I expect to see significant expenditure to support the ongoing development of our bases in 2024.

To support forward planning we have developed some robust budgeting / forecasting which provides more autonomy to budget holders, yet gives Trustees better visibility of where we expect to spend money during 2024. Our budget process indicates an in year potential spend of around £60,000.

We are actively developing and digitising the way the accounts are managed, on line banking, electronic expenses and digitised accounts will be a feature, and a learning curve for me this year.

Fundraising and Marketing, through lectured and online presence during 2023 have been notably visible, it is often hard to translate that in to income but I consider these activities to be crucial to supporting the team profile and funding, and encourage all members to support these activities as they can.



## 8. ELECTIONS and APPOINTMENTS:

C Lomas clarified the voting procedure for the elections. Statements were made by nominees and seconders and questions put by the members.

Position	Nominee	Outcome
Assistant Team Leader	R Allen	Elected
	A Allmark	Elected
	P Brain	Elected
	T Dawson	Elected
	A Keyworth	Elected
Treasurer	M Banks	Elected
Trustee	C Greenhalgh	Elected
	D Morrow	Elected
	M Marsh	Elected
<b>Appointments:</b>		
President	R S Hutchinson	Appointed
Vice President	F Hulton	Appointed

## **10. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS**

HML Davies Limited were appointed as the auditors for a further year.

## **11. AWARDS**

### **Long Service Awards**

10 Years Service certificate awarded to P Horner and M Wakerley

R Hutchinson was also presented a commemorative gift as he stepped down from the Operational Team after 44 years service.

### **Howard Hill Tankard**

The Howard Hill Memorial Tankard is presented to the person or persons, not necessarily team members, who have made an outstanding contribution to the work of the team. Past winners in the room have been Mike Marsh, Diane Blakeley, Steve Fletcher, Gillian Gregory, Martin Banks, Alistair Greenough, Nigel Booth, Steve James, Bob Hutchinson, Geoff Seddon and Gill Leigh.

Howard was Team Leader from March 1983 to March 1989; he died in June 1990. The tankard has been awarded almost annually since then.

Tonight's recipient has made a significant contribution to the team over a sustained period in a number of roles. People in the room will have some idea of the amount of work that goes into being an Assistant Team Leader. Very few people in the room will know of the endless hard work that goes into the Secretary role; and this person has held both roles simultaneously, making an outstanding contribution to the team. Also a party leader, search manager and Chair of MPSRO, Paul Brain is very deserving of our thanks, and to receive the Howard Hill Memorial Trophy.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21:30.