

1st Council Meeting of the British Kite Flying Association

Cokethorpe School, Witney, Oxfordshire

Sunday 17th October 2004

Council Members

Jerry Swift
Mark Bowlas
Doug Richardson
John Dobson
Alan Outram
Simon Hennessey
Roger Turton
Bernie Gooch
Jill Ferrer
Howard Mullen
Michael Lowe
Neil Harvey
Phil Scarfe
Pete Dawson
Andy Phelps

Club
Midlands Kite Fliers
Lyme Park Kite Fliers
Midlands Kite Fliers
North East Kite Flyers
Brighton Kite Flyers
ELF (Energized Lunatic Fringe)
Thorpe Kite Flyers
Thorpe Kite Fliers
Great Ouse Kite Fliers
Great Ouse Kite Fliers
Solent Kite Flyers
White Horse Kite Flyers
White Horse Kite Flyers
STACK
STACK

Also in attendance

Brian and Mary Bowlas
Linda Richardson
David Webster
Derek Kuhn
Bryn and Lesley Baggaley
Carolyn Swift
Martin Dawson
Jim and Julie White

Club
Midlands Kite Fliers, LVKF, AKA
Midlands Kite Fliers, LVKF, AKA, NEKF
Solent Kite Flyers
Midlands Kite Fliers and kite workshops
Midlands Kite Fliers
Midlands Kite Fliers, WHKF, BKF, NEKF
White Horse Kite Flyers
Midlands Kite Fliers

Election of chair for the meeting (Agenda item 1)

Two Council Members were identified to chair the meeting, Simon Hennessey and Mark Bowlas. Council voted 13 to 2 in favour of Mark Bowlas.

Current position with respect to UK kite clubs

Jerry Swift outlined the current position with respect to the clubs he has been able to identify. The breakdown is:

- 17 in favour of the formation of and supportive of the BKFA
- 5 against
- 11 wished to 'wait and see'

- 7 had expressed no view

The full breakdown will be made available on the BKFA website.

Noted that Wessex Kite Group have amalgamated with Solent Kite Fliers. Also noted that Region 13 of the American Kite Association (overseas) had not been consulted.

Agenda item 2

The meeting must first consider two alternative propositions.

- 1) *That all clubs who have attended the meeting should vote on the propositions to this meeting, irrespective of whether at this stage they have committed to membership of BKFA or*
- 2) *That only those clubs that have committed to membership of BKFA can vote on the propositions before the meeting*

Council debated the propositions, which were then put to a vote of all Council members present. Although Brighton and ELF have not had membership ratified by their AGMs (the position for most clubs), it was decided that they should be involved in the vote. 13 in favour of proposition one, 3 against. With proposition one accepted, no vote was taken on proposition two.

Agenda item 3

Identification of Council Members voting on resolutions

[Note to agenda] For the purposes of this meeting it is recommended that the Constitution as it stands be accepted with the exception noted below. It is also suggested that the draft split on numbers voting on behalf of each club is accepted. It is an area that appears to have broad agreement. Each club or organisation should bring a count of its members so that its voting rights may be agreed. With the agreement of the meeting, it is proposed that the constitutional clause requiring affiliated clubs to be formally constituted is waived for the time being. With the combination of this item and item 2, the list of those voting and any proxies they hold will be identified.

Council debated this proposition with the debate made more complex by the position of Brighton Kite Fliers. It was noted that most clubs must have membership ratified and that if this fails, it is conceivable that the future of BKFA would have to be reconsidered. Thus, this vote is against the present situation, not an unknown and unpredictable future. A vote was taken – unanimous in favour of the arrangements identified in the constitution.

Agenda item 4

Nominations and election of the Committee

[Note to agenda] It is recommended that nominations are only accepted from those clubs and organisations that are committed to making BKFA work. It is also recommended that the current draft constitution is used as the basis for the creation of the committee. The view of the meeting will be sought as to whether, on completion of the election, the meeting should adjourn to allow the committee time to elect a

Chairman who can then preside over the rest of the meeting, or whether this should be deferred to the first committee meeting.

Council debated the make up of the Committee, particularly as some clubs might not ratify membership and others would it is hoped, seek to join. It was agreed that if the Committee was constituted on the basis of representation of all clubs present at this first Council meeting, this would give some flexibility should some clubs not ratify (as Committee members would have to resign) whilst clubs joining could either be co-opted or would wait until the next Council meeting.

Nominations were sought and voted in unanimously. The new Committee agreed that Mark Bowlas should continue to chair the meeting, pending the selection of Officers and a Chairman later in the afternoon.

Agenda item 5

The Council is invited to debate the role of the BKFA. Documents on the website, previously circulated and on the KSGB bulletin board have discussed this. It is intended that this debate should lead to a draft resolution that Council members can vote on. Council may wish to appoint a sub committee to flesh this out.

Council members identified a number of priorities in debate. These were voted upon as issues where Council thought they required priority action. It was agreed that all those present (not just Council members) should indicate where they thought the priorities lie.

Code of practice for safe flying	24
Risk assessment	19
Identity for BKFA, mission statement, presence at festivals, banners, use of old logo	18
Work on insurance, whether provided direct or as a service identifying sources and seeking discount rates for clubs	13
Constitutional issue of informally constituted organisations (e.g. KSGB, BBC) and how we enable them to join BKFA, possibility of a section for the kite trade and another for unaffiliated members	11
Media contacts to tackle adverse publicity	7
Seeking funding from sponsorship or grant making bodies such as the lottery	6
Run a BKFA festival	0

Council then debated some of the issues around these priorities.

On independent members: Phil Scarfe noted that AKA have 5,000 individual members but that most are also members of local clubs. He did not believe allowing individual membership posed a risk to the clubs. Simon Hennessey noted that joining a national body would not stop him joining a club but maintained that if that body provided insurance this would be a potential drain on clubs.

On insurance: Bryn Baggaley suggested that the Committee look into insurance but that they do not offer individual policies, rather that it is offered via local clubs. Simon Hennessey said that he had made enquiries of Brighton's insurers and that they might countenance a block policy.

On cost: Andy Phelps noted that cost would be an issue for many clubs. He suggested that all communication should be by email with letter the exception, to keep costs down. Jerry Swift said his ideal would be that there was no charge to the clubs, and that with sponsorship in the future this might be possible. Jerry Swift was mandated to do one last mail shot, stressing that email addresses are needed for communication to continue.

On media issues: Simon Hennessey noted the recent case of the 'kiteflier' who fell to his death from the cliffs whilst 'flying'. On investigation of the facts with the coroner it turned out the man was walking his dog, trying to fly his child's kite and walked backwards, falling over the dog before falling to his death.

Jill Ferrer noted that BKFA should adopt a proactive stance on such issues. She noted that it was a bit much that The Times could feature a photograph of a French kite festival, but not one this side of the Channel.

Andy Phelps questioned whether media handling was the responsibility of the Committee collectively or whether there would be a specific appointment. Council required the Committee to appoint a Media Officer.

Andy Phelps also noted the need to get feedback from around the country on kite related issues. A lot of misinformation needs to be corrected.

Jerry Swift noted that as kite stories were seldom 'immediate' news, BKFA do have an opportunity to get in and correct the story. Simon Hennessey noted the need for local input to a national response whenever possible.

Brian Bowlas asked that BKFA notify all other national organisations of the formation of BKFA. Noted that AKA deadline is 29 October. Jerry Swift mandated to get copy to AKA and other organisations.

Agenda item 6

Risk assessment

Jerry Swift outlined the work MKF have done. It was suggested that this be posted on the MKF website. Agreed that a meeting would be arranged of the Committee plus any other interested parties to review the work done and to develop a BKFA version. In particular input would be sought from PKSF, BBC and our kitesurfing colleagues.

Agenda items 7 and 8

Creation of a code of practice and public representation for BKFA

It was agreed both these items had been covered in the priorities identified by Council and that there were forward actions of these issues.

Agenda item 9

Role of the committee and limits of their authority

It was agreed that the Committee could not make policy and that it could not change the constitution. Simon Hennessey suggested that there would be a need to look again at policy in six months time to consider, in the light of the work done, whether the policies were appropriate. It was recognised that this would require a Council meeting.

Andy Phelps questioned whether circumstance could be foreseen where the Committee would have to go back for Council or even club approval.

Simon Hennessey responded that the Council represented the clubs and that the Committee represented the Council. He suggested that clubs could therefore trust the Committee to act in their best interests. This notion met with unanimous approval.

Andy Phelps suggested that it should be part of the constitution that the Council can define in advance what the limits of authority are of the Committee. Jim White questioned whether financial limits should be imposed on the Committee. General agreement that this might become necessary but that as currently BKFA has no assets this is not yet an issue. Phil Scarfe suggested that it was reasonable to assume that the Committee is composed of normally 'sane' individuals and that a degree of trust is therefore reasonable.

Agenda item 10

Ratification of proposed fees

The present fee proposal is £25 per voting Council member. The vote was unanimously in favour.

Agenda item 11

AOB

Council required the Committee to work with KSGB to seek to bring them on-board with BKFA. A solution must be found to the contradiction within the constitution, which was never intended to exclude KSGB and others in a similar position.

Andy Phelps suggested that future Council meetings should be as near to the end of the season as possible, possibly with a further meeting at the beginning of the next season. It was agreed both should be open meetings with all kitefliers invited but with Council members voting on resolutions as set out in the constitution.

He further suggested some open meetings through the season, again open to all kitefliers, possibly aligned with the larger festivals, subject to agreement from their organisers. Sunderland, Bristol, Bedford and Portsmouth were identified as possibilities. Council supported this proposal and agreed that the meetings should be 'conversations' not conventions.

The meeting then adjourned for the Committee to hold its first meeting and elect its officers.