

Board Meeting – Approved Minutes

4pm, Thurs 6th November 2025 – The Granary and online via Zoom

Directors: Anne Butler (President); Alistair Todd (Vice Chair); Ilona Turnbull; Fiona Bennett; Andrew Tait; Stephen Johnson; Andrew Walker; Pete Crane; Brendan Hughes, Hugo Allan,

CEO & Company Secretary: Stuart Younie.

Observers: Sarah Birrell (sportscotland); Fiona Kerr, Helen Gestwicki

1. Welcome and Apologies

In person: AB, SY, ATait, AW, ATodd, SB, HG, HA

Online: IT, PC, FK, BH, SJ

Apologies: None

2. Declaration of Interests

PC- Newly elected Trustee of MBA, 1st meeting clashes with MScot AGM.

3. Draft Minutes of the Full Board meeting of 14th August 2025

Approved with no amendments.

4. Actions and matters arising not tabled elsewhere in the agenda.

- GDPR training – not actioned, SY suggested linking in with IT and Cyber Security policy review.
- Collaboration between Mountain Safety and ClimbScotland is being progressed.
- Reserve's policy - confirmed 6 months operating costs to be used in calculation.

5. Call for AOCB

None

6. CEO & Operational report

- Staffing
 - CS started – resulting in a full staff compliment.
 - Successful away day in September at Firbrush Outdoor centre- focus on website and pathways discussions. Next one booked for March.
- HR review- discussions ongoing- SY keen to proceed with an audit.

- Recent Mountain Safety Group meeting plus meeting with Minister for Drug and Alcohol policy and Sport, Maree Todd around strategy and campaign.
- Pathways project is proceeding and Lesley McKenna proposed by SportsScotland to support.
- Membership numbers strong.
- ClimbScotland competition attendance numbers and quality of events have been really good.
- Access and Environment
 - Glen Lyon access issues are ongoing.
 - SY and CD attended SNP conference.
 - Slow progress on Radical Road.
 - 2 windfarm objections have been submitted.
 - PC also reported growing objections against power lines.
 - Cairngorm Mountain proposed access changes were discussed.
- SY attended CEO forum meeting and request for Scottish government funding uplift is now submitted.

6.1 Membership and Communications

HG was in attendance to provide an update on from her area:

- Staff team now complete with MM, CD and CS. Gaps have been challenging but SSA have helped and all working well now.
- Membership numbers boosted after Covid and have hovered around 16,000 since then. Individuals have shrunk and Clubs have grown. Main reasons fed back are financial.
- Communications have evolved in 2025 including TikTok, female focus, more videos.
- 2026 aims to align with MScot strategy, new website, commercial content.
- Reducing magazines from 4 to 2 annually has really helped capacity.
- AW highlighted the pivotal nature of HGs role.
- SY acknowledged that maintaining membership through so many changes has been challenging.
- BH noted Mountain Safety strategy will need to relate as another communication strategy

6.2 Membership Strategy update

- Next steps will be retention and target groups.
- Recent report from CS to be circulated and any comments or ideas welcome.

6.3 Website Business Case

- A business case paper was shared.
- Old one is 9 years old, outdated, hard to work with and does not reflect current organisation and strategies.

- BH noted the opportunity to tie in with Mountain Safety strategy platform.
- Discussion around whether brand should be refreshed at same point.
- Website being AI readable is now an essential element.
- Discussion around budget and opportunities for partner contributions.
- Agreement to proceed with scoping in more detail

Action: HG and SY to progress scoping and include at next meeting

7.0 Finance Report

7.1 Financial Report Q2 2025/26

- Net income £67,603 better than budget mostly due to reduced staffing and strong membership
- Direct/Activity costs are better than budget, mostly due to academy programme.
- Reserves policy and position now clarified giving a surplus reserves figure of £12,417

7.2 Funding support AMMH refurbishment project

- Other 2 national huts have had investment, and refurb is badly needed. Minimum request £10k as a loan.
- Other co-owner, BMC, have committed funds and SY would work with them on an agreement and terms.
- Agreement to give £10k loan but to be reviewed again nearer year end.

8.0 Governance

8.1 AGM - Update

- Good numbers currently registered.
- Hut group will meet after AGM.
- Directors present all happy to present areas of annual report.

Action - Name badges requested for directors

8.2 Policies and Procedures Review Schedule status report

8.2.1 Approval of updated Financial Procedures

- Approved

8.2.1 Approval of updated Child and Adult wellbeing policies

- Further details on retention and destruction and the implementation in clubs requested.

Action: Clarify retention timeframes, clarify destructions and ask Children 1st to advise further

- Agreed in principle subject to above actions

9.0 Standing Agenda Items

9.1 Risk Register

- SY reported that FRAG had reviewed the Finance area and made the following changes:
 - Added risk around only 2 income streams.
 - Moved SS funding level to green.
 - Risk from inflation downgraded to green.
 - New risks regarding Health and Safety compliance and limited income streams.

Action: SY to follow up Memorandum of Understanding with OATS

9.2 Health & Safety

9.2.1 Incidents and near misses

- No incidents reported.

9.3 Child & Adult Wellbeing

- One situation from a climbing wall shared for awareness.
- Note of thanks from a club regarding support that has been given and policies that were in place and very useful when required.

AOB

- Antidoping requirements – **Action:** February agenda

10.0 Future meetings 2025

- 29th Nov AGM
- 11th Dec Board & Staff Christmas social

Minutes Approved 26/02/25

