

BKFA COMMITTEE MEETING

3rd June 2008

Conducted via Skype Conference Link

Members of the Committee present:

Chairman Jon Caton
Treasurer Jerry Swift
Secretary Ernest Barton
Delegate Arthur Dibble

Minutes and Matters Arising:

Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

Agenda:

Safety of Large Kites
Future of the BKFA
Eddy MacGrath Challenge

Involving Traders in the BKFA
Our Constitution
Member Clubs – leaving BKFA

Safety of Large Kites:

No safety documents were available for massive kites and no testimony from experts in this field.

Jerry Swift said he had suggested that Andrew Beattie prepare guidelines on Safety Procedures for large inflatable kites, which the BKFA's Webmaster Peter Bindon would render in a PDF format, but apparently Andrew had not done it yet. Andrew had also been asked to note the background to his accident earlier this year.

It was noted that the Eddy MacGrath challenge for innovation had been won by Karl Longbottom.

Then after some discussion it was decided to discuss the situation of Member Clubs leaving us as it seemed a priority.

Member Clubs

It was felt we had wasted a year in discussions on the need for the BKFA and for a long time made very slow progress but in the last few months progress had become clear.

We are now members of CCPR and the Royal Aero Club. CCPR was a useful contact giving access to DEFRA and Sport England.

As far as our membership now stood, it was thought MKF, NEKF, STACK and Solent were content to continue in membership but White Horse Kite Fliers now held the key to the future of BKFA. The WHKF Committee were meeting on Sunday and among other things would vote whether to remain as Members of the BKFA.

Arthur Dibble reiterated his opinion that all the background stuff the BKFA do is excellent, but there was no general direction and no contact with ordinary kite fliers. He also said that few members seemed to realise that a BKFA organisation was needed in the current climate of complex local and countrywide legislation.

He said he had battered on the door for months but could stir no interest from the WHKF kitefliers.

Jerry made the point that if White Horse voted to leave we were no longer viable and according to the BKFA Constitution we would have to wind up the whole organisation. There would be no chance of attracting new members once White Horse had withdrawn.

He urged White Horse to keep an open mind, because from an earlier conversation with Jon it had seemed their minds were already made up.

Arthur assured everyone that White Horse had not made any pre-meeting decision.

What to do about our image?

The average kite flier sees no advantage in joining and has no interest in supporting the BKFA.

Jerry asked for suggestions on how to raise our popularity among the Committee Members of kite clubs because from what we knew already he felt that targeting individual members would not make any difference.

It was felt that most Club Officers did not see the need for nor understand what BKFA is trying to achieve.

The original idea of a single countrywide insurance for BKFA members that was valid at all meetings had so far been impossible to negotiate at a reasonable cost. At the moment we only have an offer of £500 premium for insurance to cover the Club Officers against libel, slander etc. and there had been no progress with a general insurance policy from Perkins Slade.

We still had the opportunity to persuade other kite clubs to join but there was no point in doing this until White Horse had made their decision.

It was pointed out that MKF are using AXA Insurance and White Horse had a good deal from Zurich and both had been offering a cheaper deal than Perkins Slade. However Zurich did not cover individual fliers for events that the club were not participating in.

Website

Things were missing on the website. We had another meeting with CCPR in March 2007 but this and several other things were still missing from the website. There were difficulties getting access to it and problems with updates.

A key issue was that about a dozen entries were missing from the Forum including at least one from Brighton Kite Fliers. It was not clear why the hosting service had not delivered these to a club officer for action and they could not now be located.

It was decided that a WEB log in was required for Ernest to carry out his duties as Secretary. A user Guide and Password were needed so that small alterations could be made.

Arthur asked if the RSS link was working. Some of us, less familiar with computing, asked "What's it supposed to do."

Arthur explained that it sends clubs and members an automatic email indicating that changes and updates have been made on the site.

Although it was easy to get the software to create these notifications, it was thought everyone then needed to buy the software to access them. *Jon Caton should check with Peter Bindon.*

There was some further discussion as to whether we had this on the website already, what it was supposed to happen and whether we really needed it.

In relation to getting to the Club Officers it seemed a good idea but ordinary kite fliers should also be aware of new things happening and would need to be informed by the clubs.

The website is there to look through but not much evident unless you access it. It is also fairly low key lacking eye appeal or even photographs.

We discussed advertising in National Magazines but this was not thought to be economically rewarding for the outlay involved.

Jon said that the problem of having a BKFA Stand at Kite Festivals was that it needed to be manned for an entire day and so the member would not be able to fly their own kites.

However since we only really need to target the Club Officers and some of the members it seems we need to find and talk with them, not provide leaflets and explanations for the general public.

Extended Contact Scheme

Do we want to get in touch with Foreign Clubs?

What do we do with invitations that come our way?

Do we send them our details?

The problem was that several foreign peer organisations do not exist any more. For example Le Cerf Volant Club de France does not operate as a general nexus for local clubs now and there is no new body that does.

It was suggested that Ernest should send a few brief words to people operating kite organisations around the planet and offer them a link on our own website if they wanted such contacts in the UK. We need to be a conduit for these contacts and general intercommunication between British and foreign clubs.

Ernest explained he had never been sent a Mailing List and had not received any of the supposed BKFA material from John Dobson. Neither emails nor telephone calls had produced any answer.

Arthur suggested that we should have a whole set of active website links to big Foreign Festivals like Cervia.

Subsequently the Whitehorse fliers have voted to stay in the BKFA for one more year to see how it develops.

No formal contacts have been established with Festivals abroad but we now have contact from a Festival in Taipei. This was sent us on spec wanting kite teams to go there in September.