

Minutes of Panda Bowmen Committee Meeting, 13th January 2025 at 8.00pm on Zoom

Present: Anthony, Rosemary, Phil, Sally, Duncan, Paul, Keith

Apologies: Mark (Tim Mahony had also sent his apologies, but Rosemary forgot to mention that)

The minutes of the meeting 14th October 2024 were proposed by Paul, seconded by Sally and agreed by all to be a true record of the meeting.

Matters arising

There were none.

Club insurance

Our insurance is up for renewal, Sally has been sent a quote. The insurance company is only open office hours, so Sally has emailed for information about changing contact details and increasing level of cover. She suggested to the committee that we provide a general figure for the amount, rather than specifying individual trophies. Our two most valuable trophies would cost around £6000 to replace, and we have other trophies, so we agreed to seek cover for £7500. Sally will look around if necessary to get the best quote.

Anthony asked about the value of other items in the containers. Sally reported insurance values of: container £3000; machinery, fixtures and contents (as part of container) £3250; portable sports kit and equipment £8750; cups and trophies £50. Anthony said he will look at the inventory taken last year, and put numbers against what we have, to assess if insurance cover is at the right level. He will only comment if it is a long way out.

The figure of £3000 seems to cover just one container; there is the possibility of us needing 2. Paul commented that last time, a container cost us about £6000.

Mandy had always recommended keeping £6000 in the bank for this purpose; if a container simply wears out, we can't claim on insurance for it.

We agreed to up container cover from £3000 to £6000.

Taster sessions, have-a-goes, beginners' courses

We have had a number of requests for taster sessions, so this year it would be worth running a bookable taster session with the option of moving on to the beginners' course. Possibly take payment for taster session as discount from course fee, to give people an incentive to continue. Start date no earlier than April – in recent years March has been very wet.

Easter is quite late this year (20th April).

Paul was aware of pressure on Anthony and Nick, as coaches, to run events; he asked where Nick is up to in his training. Anthony said that Nick still needs to attend 2 in-person sessions, but it is very hard to find them and the nearest he had found was in Loughborough! He is keeping an eye on AGB information.

Paul asked if we have enough people to fill a course; the answer was Yes, if everybody who had enquired then signed up for it. Generally, though, this does not happen.

Anthony suggested a taster session on 5th April, followed by a 5-week course 12th April - 10th May. On 17th May we will have our Pandamonium shoot, so we want the course finished before then. Anthony will confer with Nick about dates. If there is a lot of interest we could maybe run 2 courses.

Paul wondered about advertising in Jacob's school for a have-a-go session – maybe Years 7.8.9 in one group, Years 10-13 in another group; also, parents and teachers – but again he was concerned about availability of Anthony and Nick.

Anthony will relay all our comments to Nick and take it from there.

Wolfsbane website link

We had received a request from Chris Key to put a link to his business Wolfsbane Archery on to the Panda website. The committee were in favour of supporting a small business; a query was raised about the possibility of receiving a computer virus, but we were reassured by Duncan that this would not happen from a link which simply redirects the user elsewhere and does not download anything. We agreed to ask Mark to put the link on to our website.

70th Anniversary event

We need to start putting something together!

Rosemary had not had any response from club members when she asked for ideas or suggestions. We are looking at a fun-day shoot, inviting other clubs to join us. Basic ideas have been to shoot 70 arrows, and to shoot at darts face targets.

We could start at 10 o'clock and shoot the 70 arrows in the morning; this would take maybe 2.5 - 3 hours, leading to a lunch break. After lunch (or during, if people want) we could shoot at the darts faces for fun.

There was a lot of discussion about food!

Rosemary envisaged that we would be eating informally outside, rather than in the clubhouse. Duncan asked if the rugby club would do take out? Paul felt that Tony, the club steward, is very amenable and helpful, and would be able to cater what we ask for so long as he has all the information about dietary requirements (eg vegetarian), numbers of people etc in advance. Catering from the rugby club would be our easiest option (least work for Panda members), and also reliable. Catering vans (a suggestion from the AGM) are more of an unknown in terms of reliability and quality. We need to decide what sort of food we want to go for, and obtain a quote; Paul said that Tony had previously given him the figure of £5 a head.

There was discussion whether bacon/sausage sandwiches could be available before the start of the shoot – either included in the entry fee or paid for separately. This has the potential to bring in some extra money, but is also extra work and can result in a lot of leftover meat/bread. But it is common at archery events where archers may have to travel some distance and need an early start.

It was agreed that if Anthony sees Tony up at the club during the week, he will ask him about catering; if Anthony does not see Tony by the end of the week, then Paul will contact him by phone to ask for information about food.

Sally emphasised that we should keep the food as simple as possible.

Discussion returned to the format of the 70-arrow shoot. We agreed to shoot at 2 distances: 19 yards for juniors and 55 yards for adults. This reflects the fact that we were formed in 1955 and are now 70 years old. Hopefully everybody should be able to have a go at these distances.

Paul suggested that the publicity for the event could say something like “achievable distances to be announced on the day” to keep people guessing and indicate that it will not be a standard round!

Sally said she will ask Ellie if she will design a flyer for us; the work on this could be started now, with exact details to be filled in later.

Paul was confident that Deborah, in Quicks, would be willing to advertise our event on Facebook and elsewhere.

We need to think and work out how to use the darts face targets – scoring system, number of arrows etc. There would not be enough space for the traditional 2 teams of 2 per target.

Provision for disabled archers

Mark had received, and circulated to the committee, a request from a disabled archer (wheelchair user) asking if she could visit us to shoot.

Keith commented we have no facilities. Duncan said the clubhouse has disabled toilets, level access and car park. Sally added we must be accessible and make reasonable adjustments.

Anthony pointed out that the rugby club do not give us direct access to the clubhouse. Duncan queried if it is open Saturdays but not midweek – Anthony confirmed this is generally the case, Sally said our reasonable adjustment is that we are accessible at weekends.

Duncan said we must ensure archers understand that we only have a field to shoot on; robust wheelchairs do exist but not all archers would have one; it would be impractical to lay down planking on the field to support a wheelchair. Our short path of paving slabs is too narrow, has a broken slab and there is a hollow in that corner of the field. We could ask the rugby club to repair the path but it would be unlikely to be a priority.

Anthony commented that some years ago a girl did the beginners course; her mum was in a wheelchair and there were some weeks when she couldn't get onto the field.

Sally suggested asking AGB for help with upgrading facilities; Paul pointed out that they are not our facilities.

Disability is a big umbrella; we could accommodate most disabilities, just not wheelchairs.

Paul felt the issue is more the state of the field on the day; he wondered if it would be possible to put a weekly "state of the field" report on the website, as some golf clubs do for the state of their courses. This would notify everyone, not just disabled people. Sally felt that at present we should deal with enquiries on a case by case basis.

Duncan felt we should advise enquirers of the conditions at the club rather than say that we can't accommodate them; that way it is their decision. We don't want to cut people off.

Anthony suggested that on this occasion we use wording suggested by Paul in the email discussion about the request Mark had received, something along the lines of "Unfortunately we don't have an indoor venue and our outdoor field is closed due to the bad weather until further notice and therefore wouldn't be able to safely accommodate yourself at this time". We confirmed this, and Rosemary agreed to email Mark straight after the meeting to send him this information.

On a related theme, we need to have a policy for visitors. Most clubs say that if you produce your AGB membership card then you are welcome to visit and shoot with them.

If someone wants to visit several times/regularly, then they could become an associate member.

Keith said that most people expect to pay a target fee. Paul suggested £5 per visit, we all agreed with this. If a visitor makes as many as 6 visits in a year, they can be advised/given the opportunity to become an associate member. It would be up to the visiting archer to decide if that's what they want to do.

Pandamonium

Sally offered to sort the logistics of cake, food etc (but not organise the event).

Anthony offered to take responsibility for the organising; he will produce a booking form and have it put up on the Panda and YAA websites. He will also circulate it to last year's participants, Sally said she still has their email addresses. Duncan asked if the archers had given permission for this, Anthony thought that the booking form had covered use of addresses for sending future information. He will check.

Sally commented we can start to generate raffle prizes now!

(Dates were confirmed as 17th May for Pandamonium and 28th June for the 70th anniversary event.)

Indoor classification badges

Paul commented that most club members have achieved an indoor classification. Merlin are awaiting fresh stock of classification badges. Paul was unsure whether to buy just the few that would be needed immediately, or to buy enough to qualify for a bulk discount.

Anthony thought the discount only applied to 50+ badges of the same sort. Paul felt that as we only have just over 20 members, that would be excessive for our needs!
The Zoom session was about to run out, so Sally allocated Paul a budget of £100 for badges, saying we would use money from events, courses etc. and leaving Paul to decide how best to spend it.

Date of next meeting

This was agreed as Monday 24th February 2025 at 8.00pm on Zoom.