



ESC Membership Development Sub Committee – Report to Committee November 2021

The Membership Development Sub Committee (MDSC) was first convened in February 2021 at the request of the main committee to support and develop the wider interests of the club membership.

Its constituent members draw together various relevant roles:

- Vice President - Declan Phelan as chair - to coordinate and liaise across various other sub committees and working groups.
- Youth and Diversity Working group lead - Emily Taylor - not to take over the work of the Youth and Diversity working group, but useful to set its work within a committee with closely related objectives.
- Safeguarding lead - Rya Tibawi - not to take over any of the work or responsibility of the ESC Safeguarding lead but simply to give safeguarding a greater voice in the development of members interests.
- UK Events Coordinator - Nick Donohue - UK Events coordinator - hopefully, this subcommittee will be able to support this role and help develop a “regionalisation strategy” where feasible.
- Membership Secretary - Andrew Kydd - The intention would not be to take over any of the work or responsibility of the Membership Secretary but to support the role, and to hear any useful feedback from members as they join or leave the club.
- Development Awards - Paul Karas - to draw on experience from Developments Awards and Youth & Diversity.
- General Committee member - Shanthi Ravichandran - to add another voice and ideas on how the club might adapt and develop members interests

The subcommittee conducts much of its work by e mail but has met formally by Zoom on 01/02/21; 22/03/21; and 17/05/21.

Terms of Reference (TOR) – one of the first tasks of the MDSC was to draft its own TOR, which were presented and approved at the Ad-Hoc Committee meeting 19th April 2021. These TOR defined the main purpose of the MDSC as “to support and develop the wider interests of the club membership, alongside the core aims of the club in supporting and developing safe ski touring”.

In discharging its responsibilities, the sub-committee will:

- “Support and develop the wider interests of the club membership, by promoting strategies intending to cover: the social side of the Club (UK events, regional activities, lectures etc.); youth and diversity; safeguarding; and strategies to promote active membership participation in club activities, organisation, and management (e.g., through the adoption of “Regionalisation” strategy).”
- “Implement the Club’s strategy and priorities, identifying key actions that will be delivered over the next 12-18 months and budget requirements for discussion and approval at the Club Committee meeting in June each year.

Club Governance – although the club prides itself on its history of harmonious relations between members, it was felt that there was a gap in club governance and a need for a more transparent statement of club values and process. As part of a general review of club governance, the MDSC proposed a club Code of Conduct to lay out club values and expectations of behaviour, and alongside this a Dispute resolution process for addressing issues of dispute or complaint within the club.

- Code of conduct – a small working group (Shanthi Ravichandran, Rya Tibawi, Paul Karas, and Mike Hendry) produced a draft Code of Conduct as a positive statement of values and behaviour. This Code of conduct was approved and adopted at Committee meeting 12/06/21
- Dispute resolution process
A draft Dispute resolution process was drawn up based on Mountaineering Scotland’s paper “Natural Justice within Clubs Dealing with Unacceptable Behaviour”. This was discussed and modified via the MDSC and presented as a working draft to June Committee meeting 12/06/21. Several modifications were suggested mainly to strengthen the emphasis on informal dispute resolution in the first instance and a redrafted Dispute Resolution Process was brought to Committee 12/10/21 and approved and adopted.

Associate Member category - day-to-day membership management is out with the TOR of the MDSC and will be covered in the separate Membership Secretary’s report. With the creation of the Associate membership category there had been some concern about whether the unaffiliated associate members could continue to attend club social events. These issues were clarified by the Membership Secretary with clear procedure drawn up to welcome Associate Members but to confirm explanation and acceptance of the limitations of insurance.

Youth and Diversity – The Youth and Diversity Working group has been active with several initiatives and outcomes detailed elsewhere in Youth and Diversity working group reports June 21 and October 21, but including:

- Young Members (<35years) focus Group 15/03/21 – Topics discussed included generating ideas for lower cost touring options, how we might structure training to help younger members up-skill and how we might improve our communications
- Women’s focus group looking at how we might increase female participation in ski touring; 29/03/21 - The group discussed topics such as barriers to female participation in the sport, how we might make our offerings more appealing to females and how we might encourage more females to step up to becoming leaders
- Tselane Mead’s ESC webinar 4/03/21 “Diversity and Inclusion in Mountain Sports” was well received and thought provoking for the club.

Some of these issues were further discussed by the MDSC with some issues emerged that are generic across the club, including how best to involve new members into the club and get them signed up for their first tour. This led to a suggestion of setting up a “new members meet” (potentially a series of regional based meets) to also be attended by established members to assist integration into the club.

Development awards – have been identified as a key strategy in attracting and engaging younger members in the club. Unfortunately, most of the Development awards 2020 could not proceed due to Covid restrictions but awards will roll over into 2021/2022 with a fresh tranche of awards this year.

UK events – attempts to rejuvenate UK events and to promote member-to-member events through a regionalisation strategy have been considerably thwarted by Covid restrictions, uncertainty and hesitancy. Despite this there has been attempts to return to member-to-member UK events, with several offerings for MTB meets and a proposed member led evening of talks in Glossop.

Several initiatives have been proposed by Nick Donohue as UK events coordinator and these ideas have been discussed and further developed via the MDSC and fed into his updates to Committee 18/04/21 and 30/10/21

The potential in the cross over between UK based training and social events was noted. Recent documentations from the insurers suggesting an expanded definition of the term 'club meet' has prompted the need to draw up some simple risk management advice for UK events, including M2M events posted on Club notice boards. It was suggested that a small working group might develop simple, bare-bones guidance that would encourage safe practice, but not stifle activity.

Other ideas that have emerged are weekend meets for those involved in running the Club and for new members, and the 'zooming' of all physical Club lectures, following on from the success of the Zoom recordings of the Club's winter and spring lectures.

Development of the website to facilitate local member to member contact through a search function and a single calendar of events have been suggested as priorities once the Drupal migration is completed and the new IT team is bedded in.

(Declan Phelan – as Membership Development Sub Committee Chair)