

Mid Cornwall Beacon and Repeater Group

Minutes of the AGM held on Sunday 15th October 2023 at 2pm

At Lanivet "All for One" Hall, Lanivet, Bodmin, PL30 5HG

Members present

Lisa Willis **2E0PXI**, Keith Holland **G3MCD**, Nick Camp **G7KFQ**, Jean Camp, Mike Bundy **G4WVD**,

Rich Willis **2E0TGK**, Luke Penny **M6YEN**, John Birkbeck **G3IGV**, Maurice Richards **G3WKF**

Andrew Ellis **M1DNS**, Peter Taylor **G8BCG**, Martin Perrett **G8LCE**, Paul Andrews **G6MNJ**,

Terry Maguire **2E0XTM**, Mike Porter **G4OKS**, Keith Bonney **G0KTD**, Andrew Green **M1AEG**,

Chris Pascoe **MOTIK**.

Non-member present: Rachel Andrews G6MNI (XYL of G6MNJ), Lin Bonney (XYL of G0KTD)

The Secretary, Paul Andrews **G6MNJ** opened the meeting at 2pm by welcoming all present. He then followed the AGM agenda as laid down in the Constitution. There were no amendments to the previous minutes and the membership voted in favour of their validity.

1. Apologies for Absence received from:

Richard Benton **G4WKW**, Ron Roomes **G0RQL**, John Newman **G0VDU**, Roger Gregory **G4OCO**, Kevin Francks **M0BFB**, Callum Macleod **G5XDX**

2. Report from the Chair by Lisa Willis 2E0PXI

I start my report by honouring the memory of our long-standing president, Bryan Pearce, G8GOR who sadly passed away - we all miss him greatly.

Could I ask that we all take a minute to reflect of the memory of Bryan.

It has been a very busy year for the team, with many of the team being involved in some way or another, from the clearance of a storm damaged building and continued ground maintenance, to the installation of many new beacons and antennas to our big install of the solar array.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication and hard work of the committee members and a few other people.

I feel I should mention just how difficult it has been this year within our committee, sadly as you know we lost a very valued member, our president Bryan Pearce G8GOR, we also had our P.R.O, John Brookes M0HJO, step away early in our year due to family illness and increased commitment, then as many of you know, himself and four other members of his family were involved in an accident, of which they are still recovering from.

We were then shocked to hear the news of our beacon keeper Nick Camp G7KFQ, who sadly was diagnosed with cancer, he then went on to have several complications and spent months in hospital, we are pleased to have

Him back in the fold now that he has made significant recovery.

Our very own Treasurer and deputy chair, Keith Holland G3MCD, has also had a very long spell of hospitalisation and walked a very long road to recovery.

We have a couple of other members who are also very poorly and some have family members who are needing medical intervention, all in all, its been difficult year for us all.

This is where you can help, if you feel you can assist in any way with the group, or want to join the wonderful team, please do consider approaching one of us.

Finally from me, I would like to say how much I have enjoyed being part of this great team and its been a pleasure to have been chair.

So a huge thanks to everyone who voted this time last year to enable me to have served the community in this way

3. Secretaries Report by Paul Andrews G6MNJ

A. As this is my first year in the post I have had a lot of learning to do of my duties so I will start by apologising for things that I may have missed or not reported today. It is a steep learning curve and our previous Secretary John GOVDU has big boots that I am trying to fill!

B. It is customary at this point to thank those who continue to support our group to ensure our services remain and can be relied upon. There are so many people that provide these from keeping the site clear of weeds, reading the news, climbing the mast, keeping beacons and repeaters functioning and of course keeping a close eye on our finances. You all know who you are and I thank you for everything you do for the group. You too can help by setting up a standing order for your Subs, which are just £20 a year. Keith G3MCD has a number of standing order forms for those you wish to set this up – I have!

C. Just revisiting the people who have helped a number of these have faced quite serious health issues this year, and deserve an extra special thank you form us all. (Clap)

D. MCBARG attended the Holsworthy Rally last November and the CRAC Rally in Truro in July, where we were presented with a cheque for £156 by Callum, G5XDX on behalf of ROC members. Thank you.

E. I wrote and published a newsletter earlier this year bringing our membership up to date with our new beacons etc. Ideally we need to be thinking of writing the next one what with the repeater site improvements and solar system installation.

F. A number of big improvements to the site have been seen over the past year or so including upgrade of the beacons led by Nik G7KFQ and Peter G8BCG . Peter has also negotiated a bursary fund for the group to have installed a solar system to help provide the electricity to run these services – more on that later, improvements have been made with the 2m Repeater GB3NC to speed up RX/TX switching to better support Echolink. No doubt the repeater and beacon repeater NOV holders will elaborate on their services for us later in the meeting.

G. Solar System - GB3MCB Sustainable Beacon Project. After a call from Peter G8BCG I found myself working closely with him, Kevin MOBFB and Alan G3XPY on the design and planning of a system that would best suit MCBARG needs. The Radio Society of Great Britain had been very generous with their support allowing us to install the system we had specified. That system comprises of twelve 410W solar panels, which for those without their calculators today is a theoretical 4,920Watts in full sun. These feed a 3.7Kw inverter which does not require prior permission from the electricity grid management and so would not delay the installation 3 months or more. As feed in rates were very low at the time of installation and the cost of employing a MCS qualified installer added many thousands to the cost it was decided to do this ourselves. Alan's background and previous employment came in extremely useful here as he knew how we should proceed towards a safe and professional installation. In addition to this we employed a local qualified electrician to bring the entire site electrical systems up to current regulations and most importantly issue us a safety certificate. I know by now some of you might have wondered why we over specified the output from the panels. Well as we had sufficient funds to also buy 10Kwh of storage batteries these needed charging during the day so they could run the site overnight. By having the more powerful panel array meant the power levels were much higher as the sun rose and set compared to say panels just making 3,700W. So even on the overcast days and shorter winter days we get as much power from the Sun as we can. Does it work? Absolutely! The inverter is connected to a Raspberry Pi running Home Assistant, which keeps minute-by-minute data of the system performance. Since installation the system has generated approx. 1300kWh of power of which 900kWh has been used to keep the site running. It is expected the excess power will fall, as the days get shorter. The system went live June 4th and we have seen average of 16kWh generation each by the solar system. The entire site requires 14kWh a day of which 66% is used by the beacons so mission accomplished.

4. Treasurer's Report by Keith Holland G3MCD

Our financial year ran from 1st October 2022 to 30th September 2023.

On 1st October 2022 we brought forward a cash balance of £4,353.51 at Lloyds Bank and a cash balance of £974.94 In our PayPal account.

Income this Financial Year:

We received a grant of £11,224.59 from the RSGB Legacy Fund towards installing a Solar Power System at our site. This came into operation at the end of May and has already reduced this year's electricity bill by £500

During the year we received £355 in membership subscriptions by cash and cheques, £371.20 via Bank Transfers and £1009.51 via PayPal.

We attended two rallies (Truro and Holsworthy) and received £716 from the sales of donated items on EBay. Sale of site scrap metal raised £35.10

We received a £156 donation from the members of Radio Operators Cornwall

and donations totalling £72 from G6MNJ, G8LCE and MOBFB to "SMARTY"

Our Total Income for this financial year was £13,939.40

Expenditure this Financial Year:

Our biggest expenditure was £11,006.91 on the Solar System installation.

This reduced our electricity costs for the final four months of the year and total payments to "Octopus Energy" this year came to £1452.89

Hire of the hall for two AGMs was £82 and the cost of Giff Gaff and SMARTY Internet services to the site was £150. (We switched to SMARTY because it gives better performance at a cost of £120 pa.)

Our insurance via the RSGB was £48 and our RSGB Affiliation Fee was £61

The site licence ground rent paid to Imerys was £10.

Ofcom licences for the three new beacons cost £50

Website hosting and annual registration fees were £92.34

Repairs, maintenance and updates were £452.06 (of which £325 was donated by G3XPY and M0BFB to DATV updates) . PayPal Fees were £38.40 . Once again many of the expenses this year such as Echolink, ATV streaming costs, telephone monitoring charges and car mileage were paid for personally by members and no expenses claimed. Thank you to all who donated in this way.

Our Total Expenditure was £13,443.60

Balance carried forward to the new financial year on 1st October 2023:

Annual Income (£13,939.40) less Expenditure (£13,443.60) came to £495.80 Adding back the PayPal and Bank balances brought forward on the

1st October 2022 (£5328.45) gives a total balance of £5824.25

This agrees with the sum of the cash held at Lloyds Bank = £5015.14

Plus the balance in our PayPal account on 1st October 2023 = £809.11

Total Balance carried forward to the new financial year = £5,824.25

Reserves: We are reserving £2000 for the projected annual cost of mast and equipment maintenance and £500 for insurance excess on any claim.

Audit of Accounts: The accounts for the year ending 30th September 2023 have been audited and approved by Alan Moore, ACIB MIBA, Honorary Auditor.

5. Review of GB3NC and GB3HB by Mike Bundy G4WVD, Repeater keeper and NoV holder

Mike said the repeaters had both run reliably with only issues with the CUL logic system which provided the 1750Hz tone burst access and the repeaters various beeps and tones. Plain carrier access was not allowed and thus sub audible tones would have to be used if the CUL logic was to be

removed. It was discussed that maybe this was the time to do away with the logic as there was no mandatory requirement for it. Discussions to be held on this in the coming months. Mike also registered his thanks to all of the Solar team.

6. The DATV Repeater GB3NQ

Kevin Francks, **MOBFB** was unable to be at the AGM so Paul, **G6MNJ** gave the following report:-

Our Digital Amateur TV repeating is working well and is regularly used especially Tuesday evenings our activity night where we often see 8 plus amateurs accessing the repeater including one ham in Ireland!

We opened the repeater up to the Internet since last year – it can be viewed either by the British Amateur TV group or our GB3NQ.co.uk websites.

In addition to that it also accepts an Internet stream in, so those who want to try out Amateur TV they can do this with their pc/laptop or even mobile phone!

The repeater produces a digital TV RF output on 1.3Ghz and has RF inputs on 2m, 70cm and 23cm. Coverage is surprisingly really good around Cornwall almost certainly helped by the nature of the error correcting nature of digital TV.

Whilst NQ is a repeater its users consider it an on-going project as we embrace the ever-evolving nature of technologies both at home and on the repeater. These updates serve us well as a great learning opportunity.

As I understand we have one of the best repeaters in the UK, offering 1080 HD picture quality and multiple ways to access it. So a vote of thanks to those who keep it running, and use it.

New users always welcome.

7. The Beacon Keeper's Report by Nick Camp G7KFQ

The beacons had all run well this year with very little down time. Nick intends to replace the 4 meter antenna and 70 cm beacon antenna and also replace the coax to the 6 meter beacon antenna. his will be done in the summer subject to the mast being certified with a new fall arrester.

Also to earthing the new beacons coax needs to be attended to.

After a short break we then continued to the Election of the new committee:

As per the Constitution, Andrew Ellis, M1DNS who was not standing for office, then announced the ending of the old committee and the voting of the new President and the new Chair.

The post of President was proposed to be Maurice Richards G3WKF and the room unanimously voted him to be the new President of MCBARG.

Lisa Willis 2EOPXI and Paul Andrews G6MNJ had been proposed as **Chair** and so a secret ballot was held and the outcome was Lisa Willis won, as the new Chair, then ran the rest of the meeting.

Election of Vice Chair and Treasurer

Keith Holland G3MCD was proposed for these posts, and the room unanimously voted for him.

Election of Secretary:

There were no proposals at this point in the meeting, but Paul Andrews **G6MNJ** offered to continue to be Secretary, and the majority of the room voted for him.

Election of Deputy Treasurer

Mike Bundy G4WVD was proposed for this post, and the majority of the room voted for him.

Election of Committee Member (Beacon Keeper)

Nick Camp G7KFQ was proposed for this post, and the majority of the room voted for him.

Election of Committee Member and PRO

Luke Penny M6YEN was proposed for this post, and the majority of the room voted for him.

Election of Committee Member

Keith Bonney G0KTD was proposed for this post, and the majority of the room voted for him.

Election of Committee Member

Lee Paston M7LRP was proposed for this post, and the majority of the room voted for him.

Election of Committee Member

Kevin Francks M0BFB was proposed for this post, and the majority of the room voted for him.

Election of Committee Member

Rich Willis 2E0TGK was proposed for this post, and the majority of the room voted for him.

Election of Committee Member

Chris Pascoe M0TIK was proposed for this post, and the majority of the room voted for him.

Election of Auditor

Alan Moore was re-elected as Auditor. The majority of the room voted for him.

Membership Subscription

Currently £20 pa – some discussion was had to reducing this back to its previous level as the savings were being made re electricity bills however it was pointed out thousands of pounds needed to be made to make the mast safe and this money had to come from somewhere.

Approval of Trustees

The current trustees are Keith **G3MCD**, Mike **G4WVD** and Paul **G6MNJ**

A vote was taken to approve the trustees

The majority of the room voted for them.

Under “Any other business” several matters were raised:

1. It was proposed that members paying their membership by PayPal should pay £21 so as to include the fees incurred and MCBARG receives the full annual fee. It was agreed the committee would discuss this.

Lisa thanked everyone for coming and the meeting closed just before 4pm