

Accommodation Subcommittee teleconference

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2008, 6pm

Present: Tony Clarke, Chas Tanner, John Cocks, Al Walker, Richard Knott, Ian Rogers and Ollie Clifton

Apologies: Richard Wesley

Action points in **bold blue**

1. A “sustainable” huts network

The points raised by the recent Conveners meeting on 16 August, and its focus on the Strategic Plan review, were discussed. Both John and Chas outlined the Huts review in 2002 which focused on developing policy and a management framework for the huts network. It was noted that the 2002 review involved a large group of people, including sections, and involved consultation via The Climber mag.

It was agreed that any review of the sustainability of the huts network needs to come up with several options, and make recommendations based on what the different scenarios look like. Several more philosophical points were raised at this point:

- hut management approach – individual vs network focus – from the 2002 review the network approach was strongly agreed upon.
- Could huts which are less well used be shed and reduce the burden on the Club?
- What kind of hut do we need? Basic and structurally sound has been the basis in the past.
- Finances – what level of depreciation funding can the huts network meet? Currently we are able to meet annual maintenance costs, and approx half of the annual depreciation target. Should all hut development projects be funded externally? If we were to adopt this policy, would the size and scope of hut development projects need to change?

Tony agreed to start the ball rolling with this sustainability review by circulating a number of the headings that we need to collect information on. Collectively we can then start adding information, or identifying gaps where we need additional information.

2 Homer Hut

Al Walker updated the committee on some of the issues at Homer recently.

- There has been increased casual usage of Homer this winter, and this trend is likely to continue.
- The main negatives that seem to have arisen are fee compliance, and petty theft.

Some of the logistics of locking the hut, and putting a bookings system in place were discussed. Al made the point that most people plan a trip to Homer well in advance, and hence should be able to plan ahead to book a place in the hut. DOC assistance was also discussed, especially in comparison to the other hut agreement we have in place at Mt Cook, Westland and Aspiring. If DOC Southland were able to assist with hut checks, fee

collection, and possibly even a door code and bookings system, that would be a great assistance.

Al and Ollie to progress this by developing a draft proposal for how Homer should be managed.

3. CCM directive to increase income / reduce costs by \$5,000.

Ollie updated the committee on discussions with DOC Westland on fee compliance at Pioneer and Centennial huts. DOC have been concerned with the amount of staff time they are spending on chasing non-payment of fees. In discussion with the visitor centre manager at Franz, we have agreed that we need to focus on gathering contact information before people head into the hills. Helicopter companies are a crucial part of this, hence DOC will negotiate with these companies to gather the info we need, in return for the radio service they require.

4. Unwin Update

Fundraising – Ian has been making a number of individual approaches. **Tony and Ollie are working on a proposal to put to construction companies for the project this summer. Meridian Energy are another possibility that should be pursued.**

5. Huts marketing progress

Both Wilderness magazine and FMC bulletin have been approached to run regular advertisements in exchange for ad space in The Climber. **Ollie to contact Richard Wesley re the hut info sheets that Richard had started to develop. Ian has spoken to a local reporter in Timaru re doing a feature on Unwin.**

6. Huts WOF's

Nothing specific to update on this project. **Richard Knott to do some work on the template for Ruapehu Hut.**

7. Pioneer expansion DoC proposal.

Ollie is currently preparing a proposal for DOC Westland.

Meeting closed 7.30pm