

# **Ibex Mountain & Hillwalking Club**

## **Annual General Meeting**

**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

**Upstairs Room, Rugby Tavern, Great James Street, WC1N 3ES**

**Committee Members present:** Susan Watts (President), Clive Sinnott (Weekend Co-ordinator)  
Mags Ruttle (Weekend Planner), Cathy Calow (Day walks), David Watts (Webmaster), Peter Ramell (Secretary)

**Apologies Received:** Patrick Tehan (Treasurer), Viv Palmer (Secretary), Karen Ward (Membership Secretary)

**Other members present:** Catriona Mitchell, Janette Lee, Hazel Williams, Jim Nevill, Viv Nevill, Damaris Steele,  
Patricia White, Tor Alloway, Maggie Maloney, Chris Phillips, Jackie Van Buren, Jonathon Sisman, George Hall

**Apologies Received:** Stephen Jones, Judith Barnes, Jan O'Brien, Phinella Henderson.

### **1. Welcome and approval of 2024 AGM minutes**

Susan Watts welcomed all to the 2025 AGM.

The minutes of the 2024 AGM were agreed.

### **2. Reports from the committee**

Committee members gave their reports.

#### **President (Susan Watts)**

Welcome Everyone! It is good to be back at the Rugby Tavern in this beautiful art deco styled room.

It is hard to believe that nearly a year ago we were celebrating Ibex's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the AGM away in the Peak District and I took on the role of President again. We have been busy on the Committee implementing things discussed at last year's AGM and extra items. As requested we completed an evaluation on BMC Club membership – looking at other insurance options and the benefits to club members. We concluded that the Ibex Mountain and Hill Walking Club should continue its affiliation with the BMC and this was reported in the September newsletter.

We hope you like our new improved newsletter which David will expand on.

We have increased the clubs social media presence with regular Facebook posts, on national walking Facebook groups thanks to David. All events are posted on the Ibex Facebook group (Cathy, Clive and myself) with reports of the events also posted by members. An Instagram account has been formed – if you are on Instagram please follow Ibex Walkers!

As usual, we offered a wide range of activities in 2025, including

1/ Our traditional weekends away to:

Yorkshire – Ribbleshead

Peak District – Edale and Bretton

Lake District – Rydal Hall, Ambleside

Wales – Brecon Beacons and Rhayader

Coastal areas - Pembrokeshire, Exmoor, and camping in Devon

Northumberland – a return to Mounthooly in the College Valley last visited in 2016 – with an extension to walk the Berwickshire coast path over 4 days – very successful!

With two more trips left – Shropshire next month and our traditional Pre-Christmas weekend – in North Wales this year (there are still places left to book particularly on the Pre-Christmas weekend) – our 2025 program is drawing to a close. Weekend attendance has been down this year with 3 weekends not reaching breakeven resulting in losses of £278 and one weekend cancellation Early May BH (no loss thanks to Weekend Planner and Coordinator flagging problem). This was due in part to a large group in Scotland in May!

2/ Several Scottish weeks – winter in Banavie, trips in May to Grantown-on-Spey (walking the Speyside way) and the Corbett Completion week in Kinlochewe – with 28 attendees – was definitely the Ibex event of the year!

3/ September Alps week trip – Hiking in the Aosta valley – very successful.

4/ A variety of monthly day walks in the Southeast.

5/ We mixed up the club night programme with the introduction of summer walks along the Thames Starting at a pub by a bridge for a meal, walking to another bridge and finishing with a drink in another pub! Very successful and we will repeat next year. The tube strike deterred attendance at the photo competition club night in September but people voted electronically and generated a great calendar for 2026 – I have some for sale and the cost is £15.

Special announcements – Congratulations to David and myself on our Corbett Completion!

Unfortunately, we had a major incident this May – a fall resulting in a helicopter rescue – those members present dealt with the incident quickly and appropriately taking care of the casualty and calling Mountain rescue.

With no further ado, I will hand over to the rest of the Committee to deliver their respective reports....

#### **Weekend coordinator (Clive Sinnott)**

In 2024 we had 13 weekend events across England and Wales with 190 attendees

So far in 2025 there have been 9 weekend events with 120 attendees. There are a further 3 events with an expected 40-45 attendees. So overall the 2025 weekend attendance will be around 160, lower than 2024 by about 15%

Two weekends early in the year made a slight loss (c £300) due to under attendance and consequent application of the £35/night cost cap for attendees.

The first May BH weekend was deferred, at short notice, due to insufficient bookings. Thanks to Mags we were able to defer the booking rather than have cancellation fees.

Additionally there were 4 week long events in 2025 including a new Alpine walking week in September.

2026 - Looking to 2026 we have 13 weekend events with up to 200 places and we would be delighted to receive additional weekend organiser volunteers.

To complete events for the first half of 2026 I would be very happy to sign up 3 organisers for Easter and the 2 May weekends.

We still need volunteers for 50% of 2026 events - email [weekends@ibexhillwalkingclub.org.uk](mailto:weekends@ibexhillwalkingclub.org.uk) if can help.

Google calendar - All planned Ibex walking events (2025 & 2026) are now on the public calendar [weekends@ibexhillwalkingclub.org.uk](mailto:weekends@ibexhillwalkingclub.org.uk). Email this account if you need instruction to link to this calendar.

Facebook events - Weekends and Day walks are now being posted to Ibex's Facebook .

### **Weekend planner (Mags Ruttle)**

Mags presented the 2026 programme, as attached.

The weekends for 2026 were all booked and deposits paid to secure the dates. A number of new places have been booked and locations which the club hasn't been to for a number of years to provide more variety for members.

Two, one week trips to Scotland have been booked, one in February and one in October. We are also planning another Alpine trip for early September, please email Clive Sinnott, Weekend Coordinator at [weekends@ibexhillwalkingclub.org.uk](mailto:weekends@ibexhillwalkingclub.org.uk) if you are interested in this event.

For 2027, we plan to book some BMC hut accommodation which we are able to do as part of our membership and they provide good value on accommodation costs.

If members have any other suggestions for accommodation, please let me know.

### **Day Walks (Cathy Calow)**

We have run day walks most months over the last year. They have been generally well attended with around 12 on many of the walks. We have only had to cancel one walk, because of Storm Amy.

Day walks are important in being a good way for new members to get to know people. They are also useful in providing opportunity for people to develop their navigation and route planning skills.

I will send out an email shortly asking for volunteers to lead day walks next year. So far, three walks have been arranged (in Essex Kent, and the South Downs).

### **Membership Secretary (Karen Ward) (Report read by Susan Watts)**

#### **Membership Numbers**

In 2025 we experienced a decrease in membership from the previous year. Most of this was natural attrition with those whose activity levels with the Club had reduced to unsustainable levels for them to renew, either for health or childrearing reasons.

#### Full Members

31 December 2024: 97 members

25 October 2025: 74 members

Initially there were concerns that the £7pa increase on the BMC element of our annual membership fee (due to their insurance premiums, which protect Ibex, and their own internal cost rises) was the reason for the drop. The Membership Secretary looked into alternative public liability insurance for our type of activities and found that the BMC insurer did offer continuing good value for us.

We have had 5 new members and these have found us through the website. The gender split, for those of you interested, is 60% women and 40% men.

We have also had a stable 10-13 prospective members for most of the year. Conversion rates have remained fairly low but slightly better for those prospectives that attended a weekend rather than only a day walk but it is too early to draw any conclusions from that.

Less than 50% of the membership appear to participate regularly in any events and it would be good to understand why that is (see Membership Survey below). However, it is promising that the October weekend had 5 new/prospective members and it would be good to build on that.

### **Ibex Values**

Over the year the Membership Secretary received feedback from a few members which suggested that we may need to strengthen our club values to ensure the club remains a friendly and inclusive club. Through Committee discussion, we now have a set of Values for Ibex, that the Committee believe acts as a good framework for the values and behaviours that Ibex stands for and members should expect of each other. The Values are on the Website, within the 'Join Ibex' section. If you experience actions or behaviours that don't seem to meet the values you can relay this to the Membership Secretary in the first instance.

### **Membership Survey**

A Membership Survey was launched today! Your feedback is very important to us. We want an active and thriving Club. We need to know what you like and don't like. Your views will be listened to and acted upon. It may take time to make changes and improvements but the Club is for all of us to enjoy and the Committee will therefore be responsive to members feedback. As an added incentive, the names of all those that send in a completed survey will be added into a prize draw and the winner will receive a £25 Cotswolds voucher!

*In response to a question about the Values, SW said they would be launched shortly, and members informed.*

### **Webmaster (David Watts)**

The website has now been operational for nearly 2 years.

The WebCollect part of the website has seemed to be more stable this year – there were a few inconsistencies seen in 2024, but hardly any issues have been brought to my attention this year.

This year we've done a few new things to help with the Google ranking of the Ibex website.

I introduced a Google Business Profile for Ibex which is linked to the website. We've had 16 reviews so far and this has definitely helped with the rankings.

All the weekend write-ups have been added to the website as blogs – helps with Google recognising that content is changing on the website.

I have added two photos to the homepage, a recent trip photo and a photo from the 2025. These are changed each month.

Google search rankings have improved since the beginning of the year:

London walking clubs: 1<sup>st</sup> page

London hiking clubs: 4<sup>th</sup> page

London walking groups: 2<sup>nd</sup> page

London hiking groups: 3<sup>rd</sup> page

Google Analytics: June, July, August had around 120 new visitors each month.

But not many of these visits are converting to prospective members.

Are there any comments or suggestions for the website?

*In response to a question as to why people wanting to book for a weekend had to contact the organiser, DW and SW said that this was because weekends had a reserve list.*

It was agreed that weekend organisers should remind people to book via WebConnect if they have requested a place but not booked.

### Newsletter (David Watts)

This year I have used a free version of CANVA to generate the newsletter.

Easy to use.

Easy to insert photos.

Free version gives us enough for an effective newsletter.

I have had several comments from people saying that they like the format.

Going forward the plan is continue using CANVA.

Going forward, I would like to see more input from members, e.g. write-ups from holidays, just to add some extra content.

Are there any comments or suggestions on the newsletter?

### Treasurer (Patrick Tehan, read by Susan Watts)

1. Apologies for being unable to attend the AGM in person, I made a travel commitment before the AGM date was decided.

#### **2. Auditor Statement**

The 2024 accounts were audited by Stephen Jones, who has kindly agreed to be nominated as auditor for the 2025 accounts.

#### **3. Interim Financial Summary (as of September 2025)**

- **Surplus:** A small surplus of **£271** is currently reported. This is expected to decrease before year-end due to further administrative expenses such as AGM costs.
- **Reserves:** The Club's net assets stand at **£7.8k**, however when we analyse this the actual available cash is **£2.8k** as we have paid venue deposits of **£4.9k**.
- Based on the breakdown below, the net reserves are considered sufficient to maintain the continuing operations of the club.

#### **4. Net Assets Breakdown**

Category	Amount	Notes
Venue Deposits (2025 & 2026 bookings)	£4,990	Covers future bookings;
Cash Holdings (Metro & PayPal)	£4,737	
Less: Member Deposit Refund Contingency	(£1,929)	Potential refunds in case of weekend cancellations
<b>Free Cash Available</b>	<b>£2,808</b>	Remaining funds for additional venue payments and club expenses

## 5. Financial Outlook

The Club remains in a stable financial position. The current reserves provide adequate coverage for planned activities and contingencies, including potential cancellations due to extreme weather or other emergencies.

**Secretary** (Viv Palmer, read by Susan Watts)

The committee has met 6 times during the year. Major items of discussion have been improved website ranking and visibility on social media, new format for the newsletter, and improved club nights.

## 3. Auditor's Report

"I have reviewed the financial statements for the **Ibex Mountaineering Club** for the year ended 31 December 2024. In my opinion these statements have been properly prepared and give a true and fair view of the state of the club's finances as at 31 December 2024." **Stephen Jones**

As part of the audit, I have also reviewed the underlying calculations and spreadsheets. I accept and am happy to stand as auditor for the year ending 31 December 2025. **Stephen Jones**

## 4. Resolutions

### **(i) Retain Annual Membership Fee of £42.00**

Proposer: Susan Watts

Seconder: Patrick Tehan

Ibex thinks:

- The BMC has raised its annual fee for associated club members to £30.74 from January 2025, which is an increase of £1.41 which is in line with RPI (4.8%).
- Despite the BMC increase, there will still be a £11 buffer on receipts to the Club with a £42 membership fee.

Ibex will:

- Seek to retain the annual membership fee of £42.

**The resolution was passed unanimously.**

### **(ii) Raise the weekend P.P.P.N cap to £40**

Proposer: Margaret Ruttie

Seconder: Clive Sinnott

Ibex thinks:

- With rising costs of accommodation and decreasing weekend attendance, the current £35 cap exposes Ibex to financial risk.
- The proposed higher cap level is not intended to become the normal cost of the weekend as most weekends will continue to come in below this figure, but it will help weekends reach breakeven point

where applications are low.

Ibex will:

- Seek to increase the current cap to £40

**The resolution was passed unanimously.**

In further discussion, it was noted that the number of attendees at weekends had fallen by 15%, and membership by 30%. Only about a half of members attended weekends. Day walk numbers were holding up.

### **(iii) Change Constitution 4.2 Subscriptions**

Proposer: Susan Watts

Seconder: David Watts

Ibex thinks:

- The BMC renewal period is from 1st January to 31st March - any member who was a member in the previous year will continue to receive the combined liability insurance benefit whilst renewal is completed.
- Members are encouraged to renew at the earliest opportunity. After 31st March lapsed Members can renew at any time at the yearly membership rate.

Ibex will:

- Replace Current Clause 4.2 with New Clause:
- Current Clause: "The Subscription is due on 1st January and any person who has not paid by 1st March shall cease to be a member".
- New Clause: "The Subscription is due on 1st January with a renewal period until 31st March. After this date membership expires.

**The resolution was passed unanimously.**

### **(iv) Change Constitution 5.9 Club Committee**

Proposer: Karen Ward

Seconder: Clive Sinnott

Ibex thinks:

- Clause 5.9 of the current Constitution needs to be changed to set out a fairer, clearer conduct procedure that protects the confidentiality of any members who may have a complaint raised against them by other members.

Ibex will:

- Replace Current Clause 5.9 with new Clause:
- Current Clause: "The Club committee has the right to refuse, or not to renew membership of a person, or to expel a member who, in their opinion, acts against the interests of the Club, subject to

an appeal at a General Meeting. The Club Committee shall have the power to direct that such a member loses membership rights until such general Meeting is held. At such meeting, the person shall be allowed to offer an explanation of his/her conduct verbally or in writing. The decision of the Club Committee may be ratified by a simple majority of the members present at such Meeting and if the vote is in favour of expulsion, the member shall immediately cease to be a member of the club.”

▪ New Clause: “The Club Committee will have the ultimate right to suspend, refuse, or not to renew membership of persons or to expel any members who fail to meet the values of the Club. A sub-committee, accountable to the Committee, will manage a process for reviewing and making recommendations to Committee on all cases of conduct not meeting the values of the Club, where a complaint has been raised. They will look objectively at all the evidence. The complainant and subject of the complaint will each discuss their case, in confidence, with the sub-committee throughout the review process and the subject of the complaint will have a final right to appeal with the full Committee, if suspension or termination is recommended. The review process by sub-committee and Club Committee shall be closed to the wider membership in the interests of confidentiality and privacy of the members involved. If, at the end of the process, the Committee decide to suspend or terminate membership, this will take immediate effect.”

In discussion of the proposed resolution, Tor Alloway commented that the proposed revised procedure, being restricted just to the committee, offered less protection to the person concerned than the current one. Also, the composition of the sub committee should be set out in the Constitution. CS and SW said that the revised procedure was proposed to be kept within the committee on grounds of confidentiality and privacy of the members concerned. The subcommittee would be set up by the Membership Secretary to comprise the Membership Secretary, one other committee member, and one other Club member: the precise composition would depend on the nature of the allegation. If the resolution was passed, these plans would be communicated to all Club members, along with the Values.

**The resolution was passed, with 16 votes for, 1 against and 1 abstention.**

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## **5. Elections of Committee Members**

The following nominations had been received:

<b>Position</b>	<b>Nominee(s)</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Seconder</b>
President			
Treasurer	Patrick Tehan	Vivienne Nevill	George Hall
Secretary	Peter Ramell	Susan Watts	David Watts
Weekend Coordinator (2026)	Clive Sinott	Catriona Mitchell	Jo-Lorraine Johnson-Zammit
Weekend Planner (2027)	Margaret Ruttle	Vivienne Nevill	Stephen Jones
Membership Secretary	June Thorpe	Jacqui Van Bueren	Hazel Williams
Newsletter Editor	Phinella Henderson	Hazel Williams	Jacqui Van Bueren
Day walks	Cathy Calow	Jo-Lorraine Johnson-Zammit	Catriona Mitchell
Webmaster	David Watts	Stephen Jones	Jo-Lorraine Johnson-Zammit
General Committee member	Viv Palmer	George Hall	Vivienne Nevill

All positions above were unanimously elected.

SW said she was standing down as President. There were no nominations for President, and it was therefore agreed that the President would be appointed by the newly-elected committee.

Thanks were expressed to people leaving the committee and, particularly, to Susan for standing in as President for this last year.

Stephen Jones was proposed and seconded as Auditor (for year end 31 Dec. 25).

David Watts was proposed and seconded as Vice President.

## **6. General discussion**

Chris Phillips asked about the proposed Club values. CS said that they had been drawn up after examination of the values of other similar organisations, particularly the BMC. They were under eight headings, on topics such as Adventure, and Honesty and Integrity. They would be sent to Club members.

## **7. Any other business**

1. There was discussion of the major incident on the Ibex week in Scotland in May, which had resulted in a helicopter rescue. Important points were:

- the members present knew what to do, including making sure the casualty did not move; holding the wound together; and calling Mountain Rescue
- they had phones and maps and were able to give an accurate map reference

- it was important to call for help when needed. As a general point people could sometimes be too reticent about asking for help.

It was agreed that it would be good to have some first aid training at a Club night soon.

2. There was discussion of the fall in membership numbers and what could be done to reverse it:

- the membership survey now launched could provide some ideas
- we might want to have in mind that younger people might prefer relatively informal arrangements for activities such as walking
- images could also be important and it would be useful if the photos we show are clearly of purposeful walking. We would though need to be bear in mind that some members might not want to have ~~cautious~~ about putting any of their photos shared on Facebook or other social media, and that instructions should reflect this, to respect their concerns. [Subsequently: the final instructions for weekends have been updated accordingly.]
- the format of the 'new members' club night in February might be considered further.
- the experience of another organization in attracting new members suggested that a 'taster programme', and some form of mentoring scheme, could be useful

The meeting closed about 6.15pm