

Chairman's Report to the AGM October 2019

(For the year 2018 to 2019)

Whilst some traditional YET activities have progressed well, there has been a frustrating lack of progress in taking forward the 2017 to 2019 Business Plan due to the loss of members because of the pressures of work in their respective careers, who had volunteered to take the lead in various initiatives. Particularly affected is development of an Operational Committee, an ambassador scheme and, to a lesser extent, social media. Further, Fee Bellemy has had to resign as a Trustee for the same reason; we much appreciate the contribution she made to the YET and her earlier willingness to take the lead for the Operational Committee's development. However, to look on the brighter side, I have the following observations.

YET's working funds (Unrestricted Funds) are considered by the Trustees to be satisfactory, albeit, compared to last year, income and expenditure decreased, the latter by a markedly smaller amount than the former. Whilst donations, and consequently Gift Aid, were lower than last year, evaluation against conformity to BS8848 activity made a small increased surplus. The cost of administering the charity remained constant. We have now established an on-line fundraising portal, although this has yet to yield any income.

Following the success of the YET display stand at RGS' Explore 2018, we will again run a stand at this year's event. It will be manned largely by our younger members under the guidance of Will Close-Ash. Based on the experience gained last year, the YET team is currently redesigning and updating the stand's display material.

After an earlier fall in evaluation clients, particularly among commercial venture providers – largely because many of them elected to self-evaluate – as anticipated in last year's report the number of participants has reached a steady state in the region of some 10 to 12. Twelve evaluations were completed this year in a range of sizes of organisations from commercial to individual venture providers. Two Canadian based companies continue to call on our service. We also appear attractive to newer organisations which need confidence in their capability to negotiate the expectations of BS8848.

This year 16 grant-in-aid awards, to a total value of £5,650, were made to the benefit of 23 individuals. These included two Joint Awards involving six candidates and one Group Award involving four. Five recipients had challenging medical or social circumstances. Expedition destinations included among others: Spain, Tanzania, Peru, Borneo, Azerbaijan, Ecuador, South Africa and India. The expeditions undertaken by grant recipients included in the main those run by major providers, but also included a small number of self organised, independent groups. The Group Award went to a peer group team undertaking a kayak and research expedition in the Balkans (see www.kayakdrina.co.uk/previous-expeditions). Encouragingly, we have started to receive expedition reports from the above, and these are being uploaded to the YET web-site in short order. Although a Group Award was made this year, we are currently refining the criteria for such an application. There was no call on the YET expedition mentoring service this year.

As to Forums, it is our intention to hold them alternatively between a northern and a southern location. The next one is provisionally planned for March 2020 in Newcastle on a Saturday; it will focus on risk management.

The Trust continues to be represented on the relevant British Standards Institute Committee. During the past year it has been an active member of The Outdoor Council and is encouraging fellow members to recognise the importance of expeditions within outdoor pursuits and education. It has also retained its membership of the Sports Council in case it might prove useful. YET has, since its foundation, had a close association with the RGS, and continues to collaborate when possible. It is also involved in several ways in long, drawn-out discussions about the future of AALA.

Our biggest challenge remains finding volunteers who can find time within busy careers to provide assistance to current leaders, or, indeed, take the lead themselves. Thus, can I ask you all to consider this possibility, or should you know someone who might be interested, ask them to contact YET. Meanwhile, please note in your diary that in 2020 the Council will meet on 28th April and 6th October.

WMN Cross
(Chairman, YET)

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