

Minutes of the BHPA Accuracy Panel General Meeting

Held at 19.30 on 29th January 2026

1	Attendees	
1.1	Panel – Mark Bignell (Chairman), William Lawrence (Vice Chairman), Andy Webster (Secretary), Sue Britnell (Treasurer), Cherry McMahon (Media & PR), Arthur Bentley (Classic Rep), Dave Crowhurst (Classic Squad Manager), Colin Jones (Sites), Liz Lawrence (Rules)	
1.2	BHPA Members – Myrianthe Ewington, Ed Cunliffe, Hanna Statham, John Lawrence, Tina Carlson, Tom Ewington, Katie Sykes, Dexter Bond, Jess Coghlan, Kyle Tripp, Andy Shaw.	
2	Chairman’s address	
2.1	Mark Bignell reported that accuracy had been in decline in the UK for the last 30 years, as with some other countries, and it is hard to recover the situation. The Accuracy Panel is the link between accuracy pilots and the BHPA / Royal Aeroclub.	
2.2	The BAPA provides a practical missing link to training, clubs and schools, and is best place to increase pilot numbers. The panel can do admin related stuff. There has been too much finger pointing and use of the code of conduct, and Mark Bignell suggested MAGA – ‘Make Accuracy Great Again’.	
3	Presentation slides	
3.1	Mark Bignell talked through the presentation slides, starting with an introduction of panel members, and confirming that the panel’s main responsibilities are organizing the national championships and coordinating the national team.	
3.2	The panel effectiveness survey revealed that the panel is knowledgeable but lacks imagination and personnel, and needs more engagement with BHPA members. Mark Bignell defended the panel's commitment and energy. The panel aims to resolve disharmony, attract new members, improve communication, and promote the sport, particularly targeting low airtime pilots and youth. The panel has produced the promotional brochure, created more social media posts, and has a sites officer.	
3.3	Mark Bignell also highlighted the importance of collaboration, competition promotion, and managing limited funds due to rising costs. Mark Bignell encouraged volunteers to join the panel and mentioned available positions; Paragliding Squad Manager and Paragliding Representative.	
3.4	Regarding goals, Mark Bignell wants the UK to be in the top ten of the WPRS, and have a successful coaching system with the BAPA best placed for coaching. The sport needs to attract more youth and female pilots, and find new sites. The BAC series has increased the number of competitions in the UK, and along with the nationals there are now five Cat 2 competitions.	
3.5	Mark Bignell drew attention to the last slide that had links to the website, Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn.	
4	Comments from the Floor	
4.1	John Lawrence said; “I would like to thank all members of the panel for their hard work and dedication to the sport over the last 12 months. I would however, particularly like to thank William Lawrence as Squad Manager for the work he has done and I have to say I am appalled at how he has been	

	treated and I find that unacceptable. I don't think the BAC is the only way to go."	
5	Proposal 1 - To allocate a team leader before the selection cut-off date.	
5.1	This will be discussed by the panel.	Panel
6	Proposal 2 - To have a selection of team shirts created before selection and available in all sizes to avoid delays or ordering issues. Names to be added to the T-shirts later or not at all.	
6.1	Dave Crowhurst advised this will create budget issues, and the panel will look at it.	Panel
7	Proposal 3 - Select the team based on WPRS.	
7.1	It was agreed that a working group consisting of Tom Ewington, Dexter Bond, Mark Bignell and William Lawrence will create a proposal to be voted on by the panel. The working group would have to review the possibility of unintended consequences. Mark Bignell also suggested raising the bar on eligibility to the UK team, referencing recent changes to the Cat 1 Section 7C rules on team composition. Tom Ewington stated that he wanted to keep the proposal to the WPRS only, and not cloud it with other eligibility issues. DC agreed with this. Andy Shaw advised that the WPRS offers a more up to date picture on pilot's performance as Tom Ewington is currently ahead of him in the WPRS whereas the selection league has Andy Shaw at the top, and Andy Shaw considers Tom Ewington to be currently the top pilot in the country. Myrianthe Ewington pointed out that the WPRS positions in her original proposal are now out of date as it had Andy Shaw at the top of the WPRS. Also now is a good time to change the selection process as it has minimal impact on the current positions.	TE, DB, MB, WL
7.2	Regarding eligibility, Jess Coghlan queried what would that mean for women who don't always hit the target all the time or are new. Would that mean women won't always make the team? Sue Britnell advised that the selection process had previously allowed pilots with less ability to benefit the experience of being in the team.	
7.3	DC queried would WPRS selection go against pilots who don't have the resources to go to overseas competitions as there are limits on panel funding. Andy Shaw felt that the panel should be supporting dedicated pilots rather than spreading resources too thin to accommodate everyone. Andy Shaw advised that he had always been able to raise sponsorship, and pilots need to be committed for sponsors to invest in them. Mark Bignell advised that 2/3rds of the panel budget goes on Cat 1 expenditure, and he would rather select four pilots for the team and spend the savings on team kit. ME felt it was essential that pilots got support for overseas competitions as the experience was essential for improving pilot performance. Andy Shaw stated that overseas squad training was essential and he supported multiple events. William Lawrence noted that changing to the WPRS for selection will kill off the current squad role, and it would have to be updated to make it relevant in the 21st century.	
7.4	William Lawrence advised that the selection process for the October 2026 Euros's in Romania could not be changed as we are well into the 12 month selection period. This could also apply to the February 2027 Worlds in Thailand as the selection process has also started given the 3 month cut-off period prior to the championships. It was noted that there won't be a 12 month selection period if the selection process changes to the WPRS	

	system, but the 3 month cut-off should still be applicable. William Lawrence advised that the 3 month cut-off period allowed pilots to prepare for a championships, however, this could go against pilot's whose performance was still peaking. Because of the Thailand situation, Mark Bignell advised that he wanted the working group to meet the first week in February to progress the WPRS proposal.	
8	Communications	
8.1	Mark Bignell noted that the BAPA / BAC allowed pilots to meet, but better communication was required with the panel and judges.	
9	Coaching	
9.1	Liz Lawrence advised that there was a need to balance both the type of coaching that happens in competitions and coaching in lower pressure training situations. Coaching can (and does) happen in competitions but coaching in non-competition settings has a different and valuable function which must not be lost. Andy Shaw advised that there will be three days of training before BAC competitions. Mark Bignell advised that the coaching system he is developing will need BHPA FSC approval, and having coaches at various clubs could lead to higher participation in the sport. Andy Shaw advised that we need professional coaches who accept that there can be divisions in a team, citing Slovenia as an example of a divided team that performs well.	
10	BAC	
10.1	Andy Shaw agreed with JL that the BAC is not the only way, but people needed to get off their backsides and organise something. Sue Britnell advised that she is a dedicated pilot, but has been made to feel unwelcome at Green Dragons, and for that reason she will not go to Green Dragons. Andy Shaw stated that Sue Britnell was the only person to complain about BAC events in a feedback survey, and should look closer to home. Mark Bignell advised that was why coaches are required at other clubs, but hopes personal stuff will fall away. Tom Ewington stated that the BAC is for everyone, and everyone is welcome, and it will have a positive impact. Jess Coghlan said that it is quite intimidating being a new pilot at a competition, and she was more comfortable sharing her feelings with other new pilots. Andy Shaw felt that coaches would address this problem.	
11	UK Team	
11.1	Sue Britnell advised that she had been blanked by certain members of the UK Team in Turkey, and felt that she had to step back. Hanna Statham stated that this should not be happening, and Sue Britnell was a good member of the team who had grown into the sport. At the end of the day we are the UK team and need to work as a team for the team to go forward. William Lawrence advised that he did not want this to blow up, but Tom Ewington felt that a conversation was needed on this matter. Cherry McMahon felt that grievances should not be aired in public, and people need to work together to create solutions. Tom Ewington appreciated that some people will not get on and you can not force relationships, and there is one person that he won't get on with.	
12	General Meeting format	
12.1	AW advised that the General Meeting referred to in the Operating Procedures was for discussion of an issue that a BHPA member felt had	

	not been resolved by the panel, and BHPA members would have a vote on the matter. Today's meeting did not fall into this category. Liz Lawrence advised that if you want to get involved in making decisions you should join the panel, and the panel will vote on the proposals. Mark Bignell advised people to message him if they want to join the panel.	