

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF**  
**RED ROPE SOCIALIST WALKING AND CLIMBING CLUB**  
**HATHERSAGE, DERBYSHIRE 30<sup>th</sup> September 2012**

**PRESENT: 24** members

Jonathan Bridge, Dave Doody, Colin Knowles, Chris Drinkwater, Don Kinnibrugh, Sherry Macliver, Dave Symmonds, Barbara Segal, Steve Wright, Olya Bowers, Gill Cox, Adrian Jones, Arthur Bowling, Andy Bateman, Jan Lancaster, Julian Noble, John Marsden, Ann Silber, P Kossowski, Humphrey Southall, Nigel Green, Debbie Singer, Eva Hughes, Janet Saunders, Heather Morris, Pauline Appleton, Hugh Wallis

**APOLOGIES:** John Dickie, Becky Bates, Dave Gefferies, Gerry Matthews

1. Colin Knowles nominated as Chair. Colin confirmed that the meeting was not quorate.
2. Adrian Jones – minute taker
3. Running order of the meeting was accepted.
4. Apologies were received and accepted

**1 MINUTES OF THE 2011 AGM**

Circulated extensively and posted on Web site. Accepted unanimously.

**2 AGM 2012 MATTERS ARISING**

No matters arising

**3. OFFICERS REPORTS:**

**a Membership. Steve Wright**

Currently 302 members, band distribution roughly unchanged over the year.

Tasks have been routine notification of new joiners to the regional contacts; monthly listing of all existing and lapsed members to regional contact; monthly update to Treasurer for BMC and MCoS returns; update of membership database to IT and MIS. One specific action has been to encourage members with email to join the EMIS list; 51% are now receiving the MIS by email. Efforts in this direction will continue, hopefully so all with an email address will be persuaded to take MIS by email.

The meeting thanks Steve for his work.

**b. Administration Treasurer. Sherry**

Sherry circulated copies of the accounts. These were accepted by the meeting.

Total income for the year ended July 2012 was £8556, up on last year overall mainly due to income from the trip treasurer and a £350 grant from the BMC (membership fees slightly down on last year). Total expenditure £6832, down on last year. There is just over £200 in the action fund. The £10,000 payment to the LMC has left just a small residual balance in the hut fund of £247.

AGM 2011 broke even financially

*Other concerns*

The cost of producing and posting the paper MIS still a concern, and largely avoidable if as many as possible are persuaded to take MIS by email to reduce postage/printing costs.

The regions have been disappointing in producing their annual accounts again this year. These were requested in writing in July along with the AGM notifications; so far very few regions have provided accounts.

Overall, the RR club finances are good, and there is no need to review membership charges.

The NC thanked Sherry for her work

**c. National Trips Secretary. Rebecca Bates**

2012 has seen 4 successful week long trips: 2 weeks of Scottish winter mountaineering, Easter in Crianlarich and early summer on Skye. All trips had low cancellation rates. Crianlarich was promoted as a public transport friendly trip but cars dominated. The week long August bank holiday trip planned for the Lakes was cancelled due to lack of bookings. This was surprising as the trip was popular last year.

For 2013 there is planned:

A repeat of 2 Scottish winter mountaineering trips. Organisers are Nick Kempe for January to CIC hut, and Pravin Patel for February to Lagangarbh; and Arran in May, Dermot McKibbin is organising this trip for 22 people. The use of public transport will be promoted for this trip. No trip has been booked for Easter owing to clashes with regional trips and have not yet planned a bank holiday weekend at Blea Tarn.

Trip charges will remain the same up to the 2013 AGM but a multiplier will be applied for overnight charges where accommodation is £10 or above. It is recommended that regional trip organisers also consider adopting this policy.

Rebecca is happy to continue with the role of Trips Secretary into 2012.

**d. National Trips Treasurer. John Dickie**

Trips across the year made a small surplus (February CIC made + £81.63, February Feshiebridge made + £170.25, April Crianlarich lost 199.74 (due to one place being unfilled and low banding), June Skye made + £350.90, NC June lost £114.89 due to empty beds. August Bowderstone lost £210 due to its cancellation.

Learning lessons from this year, in setting up 3 monthly liaison meetings between trip treasurer, trip organisers and national trips secretary to check on take-up levels and take appropriate action if levels are low (i.e. reduce or cancel booking).

Statement balance as at 27/8/12 was £1,158 with all deposits for 2013 paid for (and £700 in cheques were paid in on 1 September 2012). Balance one year previous was £2,864 - the reduction reflects the £1,000 NC transferred from national trips account to national admin account.

**e. IT Officer. Dave Doody**

Work has continued this year with ongoing routine maintenance of the website, keeping contacts up to date on the website list, and posting NC meeting minutes.

**f. Ramblers and Campaigns. Don Kinnibrugh**

The Club's main objectives in relation to The Ramblers (to which we are affiliated) are 'to maintain Red Rope's profile within the Association' and 'to encourage participation in national and regional access campaigns.' This is to support and work of those within the The Ramblers who are wanting a return to its traditional campaigning role as defender of the rights of way network and of access to the countryside.

**Ramblers General Council ('AGM'), Leicester University 21st/22<sup>nd</sup> April 2012**

Three Red Rope members attended this event. A Red Rope stall, well stocked with leaflets and past bulletins, attracted a lot of interest and enquiries from attendees as usual. In the debates, Red Rope proposed a motion criticising the Ramblers Board's decision to enter, as a 'membership benefit', a commercial partnership with BUPA Healthcare, and calling for this not to be renewed. The decision had already caused many complaints from groups within the association and from individuals who saw it as undermining the NHS. The Red Rope motion was passed by a substantial majority.

**Regional meeting of Ramblers SE Area Reps.**

Red Rope was also represented at this meeting to 'sound out' their new policies, especially in response to declining membership. Their four policy priorities are to reverse their decline in membership, to increase charitable income, improve Access and Rights of Way and to promote walking to new audiences.

**Campaigns**

The second objective referred to above – 'to encourage participation in regional and national access campaigns' – remains difficult, as The Ramblers at national level have in recent years done little in the way of organising campaigns in which members can participate. Protests and days of action have taken place, but at local level and mainly on local issues like local authority cuts to rights of way teams. However, one current national access issue on which campaigning events will hopefully be organised is the Government's proposed changes to the management of National Trails (ie long-distance paths like the Pennine Way or the Coast-to-Coast). There is general agreement that these will do long-term damage to the English network of 13 LDPs, and the Ramblers are campaigning for an alternative set of proposals.

#### **g. BMC. Chris Drinkwater**

Receives, and sends on, various matters from the BMC over the year.

Sherry attended the BMC clubs seminar in October 2011, in Mid Wales. The BMC gave guidance on membership management and legal issues.

The BMC are running several training courses over the coming year, including First Aid, Written Skills, Navigation, and Expedition Planning. Chris will circulate a list - these are also shown on their website.

A hill waling officer is being appointed this year, it may be of interest to RR members.

#### **h. Training.**

This important NC position is vacant following Mike Hargarden standing down this year. No nominations received to date to fill it.

The meeting requested that the NC review the Training officer's role, and it was suggested that a job description be publicised to inform and encourage anyone interested. NC to action.

#### **i. MIS. Mark Wallis**

No report received from Mark Wallis. But MIS editions came out regularly over the year by email and hard copy and on time. MIS is now on the website

#### **j. Bulletin. David Symonds**

The next Bulletin will be delivered in February. Copy by late January is required, preferably earlier and would welcome submissions on the theme of foreign walking/climbing experiences, also some photos of this current AGM. A summary of the NC committee minutes will continue to be put into the bulletin.

The approximate cost of a Bulletin is £1 each, but reviewing cheaper printing going forward.

#### **k. Publicity Officer - Janet Saunders**

Having stepped down from publicity in September last year, and post being vacant 6 months, Janet volunteered to take the role on again in March 2012.

#### **Publicity Material**

We now have a large colourful heavy duty poster designed by Dave Symonds. It was used at the Ramblers AGM. There is a version available as a smaller poster for regions to add their own contact details and print themselves. Funding is not available for printing these, but regions can use the design and have their own printed. We still have a supply of flyers with words about Red Rope, as sent to new members and used at the Ramblers conference, Steve Wright has some of these for regions to take away. In June Janet put up a Red Rope display at Lockerbrook. It consists of Dave Symonds' excellent poster plus some other material from recent bulletins. Also some publicity leaflets in the rack next to the display.

#### **Web Funding**

Applied for a Web Development Grant from the BMC this year and we were awarded around £350 towards this.

#### **Regional Groups Publicity**

Steve Wright and Janet discussed regional publicity early this year and phoned all the regions to ask about publicity needs. In brief, word-of-mouth seems to be the only truly effective medium in use at present. Flyers in libraries in West Midlands generated a few new members, flyers in gear shops in Bristol didn't, but Bristol continues to grow its numbers. The NC is keen to encourage and help regions to improve their publicity.

We need to consider our overall strategy for recruitment. Retaining members and getting them to recommend us to friends is still important – but I think we must also focus this year on improving our online presence – and having local web-pages to draw new people in. We would like members to discuss ideas for regional publicity at this AGM.

A publicity/recruitment 'ideas' meeting followed the AGM, see minutes attached.

**k. Hut Officer. Dave Fisher written report**

Progress at Beddgelert is now well advanced, and the roof in place. Fitting out will progress over the winter. A detailed hut progress report, with photos, is attached.

Take up of the use of Lancashire MC facilities at Blea Tarn is slow if any. The availability of the Blea Tarn hut was brought again to the meetings attention. Booking forms are on the website. Barbara Segal is now the booker

**l. Gear Co-ordinator.**

Adrian O'Connor. No report, gear was safe.

**m Archivist.**

Andy Bateman continues to store the archive until a new archivist is found.

**o. Web Review Team. Colin Knowles, Ann Sibler**

The RR Bristol web design team have all but completed the new website design. The basic layout was illustrated to the meeting. A technical team is now required to develop this and the next task is to recruit a professional team to translate the template model into a useable website. This will go ahead this year and will require funding. The web team will advise the NC what this will be for approval.

**THE MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ACCEPTED THE ABOVE REPORTS AND GAVE THEIR THANKS FOR ALL THE HARD WORK DONE BY ALL OFFICERS.**

**2 NOMINATIONS FOR NATIONAL COMMITTEE**

All standing officers were re-elected by the meeting. Janet resumes her post as Publicity Officer, Jan Lancaster offered assistance to Janet.

No nominations were received for the post of Training Officer or for the Archivist, so these are left vacant; (Andy Bateman agreed to retain the archive for safekeeping until a new archivist is found)

**3. MOTIONS TO THE 2012 AGM**

**Motion No 1.**

NC motion on distributing the MIS by email.

Proposed by Barbara Segal, seconded Jan Lancaster

The club

1. recognises the substantial cost of printing and posting the MIS, and the cost in members' time of carrying out the mailing every two months.
2. acknowledges that instructions in the MIS for signing up to email delivery have not resulted in a significant increase in the number of members doing so.

The club therefore resolves that:

- 1) starting in January 2013, the default method for circulation of the MIS will be via the email delivery list.

- 2) prior to moving to this default, all current members who receive their MIS by post will be informed of the change in writing, in a letter included with their printed MIS.
- 3) members will also be provided with clear instructions for opting out of the email delivery.
- 4) any members who do not have access to email, or have other reasons for receiving a printed copy of the MIS, will need to inform the MIS editor. (MIS Editor will need to advise the Membership Secretary so that the Members Database contains the correct information).

Subject to this motion being passed, it is also proposed that the Monthly Information Sheet will normally only be issued in hard copy form and posted four times a year – in January, April, July and October each year.

Amendment (Steve Wright) – item 1, to be April 2013, not January 2013. Agreed.

### **THE MOTION WAS CARRIED: all in favour**

An explanatory note on the technical issues involved, and a draft of what will be sent out to members is attached

### **Motion No 2.**

#### **Non-Members on Trips, Day-Walks and Other Activities**

(introduced at a late stage, there was not sufficient time to publish it in advance of the meeting.)

For some years the National Committee has been concerned about non-members who come on trips, walks and climbs many times without joining the club. More worryingly, there appears to be a small but significant number of ex-members who continue to participate in Red Rope events and activities as if they were members. Clearly we want to encourage as many people as possible to come on our events, but we would like them to join the club after a reasonable number of times “trying us out”. Moreover, non- and ex- members should not receive the same benefits as full members.

Furthermore, the BMC has drawn attention to its associate clubs that the insurance cover it provides clubs is based on the participants being members of the club or occasional visitors. Their insurance provider regards occasional as not more than 2 or 3 events.

Consequently, the National Committee is proposing a number of measures to make being a member more advantageous than not:-

*(Note: The term ‘current member’ used in the following clauses means an individual whose membership does not expire until after the last date of a trip, or, for day walks, is valid on that day.)*

- 1) National training sessions are only open to current members;
- 2) National trips will give priority to current members. Non-members may apply to join a trip on the understanding that they will be placed on a waiting list and only be accepted six weeks prior to the trip’s start date provided there are spare spaces;
- 3) Regional trips should also give priority to current members. However in this case the region may decide on how many weeks before a trip the application can be accepted;
- 4) National and regional trips will charge non-members at the E-band rate applicable to the trip (taking account of any multiplier) + 50%.
- 5) To ensure adequate insurance cover, non-members may only go on two trips before they must join the club;
- 6) All event leaders and organisers (regional and national) must be current members;
- 7) For regional day walks and climbs, non-members may participate free of charge for the first two events to allow them to find out about the club and its events. After that they must be encouraged to become members. As part of this encouragement, we recommend that they should

be required to contribute, towards the region's expenses, at least £3 but not more than £5, for each subsequent event.

Regions should note that their club liability insurance cover may be affected if a non-member continues to participate after their first two events and may need to make their own arrangements for insurance cover.

**THE MOTION WAS CARRIED: all in favour**

**The AGM meeting closed at 12.30.pm. It was followed by an informal publicity/recruitment 'ideas' meeting, to discuss ways of retaining/increasing Red Rope membership. see minutes attached.**

## **An explanatory note on the technical issues involved with EMIS.**

Dear «FORENAME»

We are constantly striving to minimise the cost of administering Red Rope to ensure that we can keep membership and trip fees as low as possible and that you get value-for-money from your membership. One of our over-riding costs is that of sending the Monthly Information Sheets by post, especially with the recent increase in postal charges. Clearly sending as many MIS's by email as possible would save the club a significant amount of money each year. Not only that but those taking the MIS by email receive one every month, whereas those by post are only sent every other month.

It appears that you receive our MIS by post although you have recorded an email address with us. Would you be prepared to help you club by changing this to receive MIS by email? If so, you need only send a blank email to [RedRopeMISDeliveries-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:RedRopeMISDeliveries-subscribe@yahogroups.com). This will initiate the process to enable me to validate your subscription and change your MIS delivery method. There is no risk of you missing an MIS.

Thank you in anticipation for your co-operation and I hope you continue to enjoy your membership of Red Rope.

Yours

### **Email Distribution of the Monthly Information Sheet**

the main and default method of distribution of the Monthly Information Sheets will be email. This letter is therefore aimed at all members who have an email address but currently receive printed copies of the MIS; to explain how the email list works; describe the process for adding you to the list, and find out if there is any reason why email delivery will be problematic for you.

#### **How does the list work?**

The MIS distribution list is a closed email list provided by a Group membership under Yahoo.co.uk, to which only Red Rope members are subscribed. It is quite separate from the national discussion list and used only for sending out the MIS.

Each month subscribers receive a single email with the MIS as an attachment, which can be saved to your own computer and/or printed out if you wish. You do not need to have a Yahoo account – the MIS can be sent to any personal email address you choose.

#### **What is proposed?**

After the March 2013 issue we shall not be having MISs printed professionally. This will save the club a lot of money in printing and postage costs, and will save our members in Sheffield the work involved in sending out hundreds of copies each year.

If you have an email address on file but are not yet receiving MIS by email you will be invited to join the Yahoo Group. Then if they have not accepted this invitation by the end of March and have not arranged to have a photo-copied version (see next section) you will be added directly to the Yahoo Group. You will then only receive MIS by email.

#### **What if email delivery will cause difficulties for me?**

If an emailed copy will be problematic for you, you should contact the membership secretary to arrange for a photocopied version before the end of March 2013. However we hope that the vast majority of members will be willing to move to email delivery.

#### **What do I need to do now?**

Members will need to be added to the email list individually, so we would really appreciate it if you could subscribe to the email list yourself, if you are not already a member, by sending a blank email now to –

[RedRopeMISDeliveries-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:RedRopeMISDeliveries-subscribe@yahogroups.com)

During February, all members with email addresses but not yet receiving MIS by email will be invited to join the Yahoo Group by a method initiated by a club official – details of how this will work for you are shown on the next page.

If you have not joined by the end of March and have not arranged to have a photocopied version you will be added to the Yahoo Group automatically.

In either case, **please can you ensure that the club has the correct email address** to which you would like your MIS to be sent (your currently stored address will have appeared on your most recent membership renewal letter). In the event of queries or difficulties, the membership secretary, Steve Wright, can be contacted at: [membership@redrope.org.uk](mailto:membership@redrope.org.uk).

**What if I decide at a later date that I no longer want to receive the MIS by email?**

Once you have been added to the list you will receive confirmation by email. This email will contain instructions for opting out of the list.

**Invitation To Join Yahoo MIS Group - Initiated By Club Official**

# Hut Liaison Officer's Report to Annual General Meeting

September 2012 D.A. Fisher

## Introduction

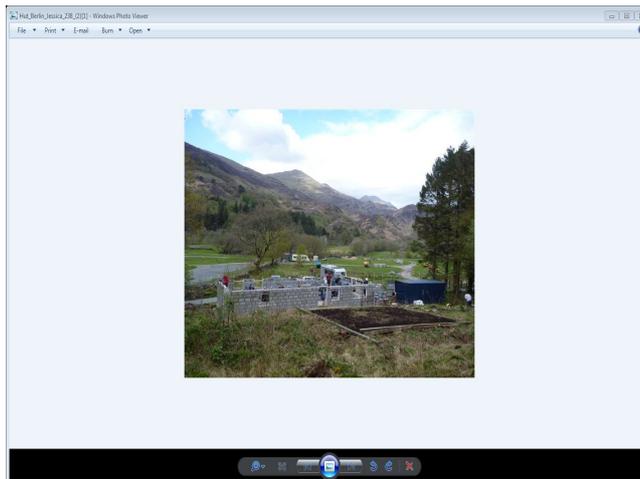
During the last year a meeting took place between representatives of the Lancashire Mountaineering Club (LMC) and Red Rope (RR) to discuss the shared hut arrangement existing between the two parties. Key aspects of discussion were the on-going progress at the Cae Ysgubor (Bethgellert) hut development, and general issues relating to use of the huts at Blae Tarn (Lake District), and the Tyndrum caravan (Scotland.) Subsequent to the meeting a report was submitted by the Hut Liaison Officer to the Red Rope National Committee in June 2012. As would be expected, further progression has been achieved toward completion of the Bethgellert hut, and will be outlined within this current report.

## Progress at Bethgellert

To appreciate the development that has taken place in recent months it is perhaps useful to briefly summarise what had been achieved and reported in the June report:

- \* external cavity walls erected to level of the tops of first floor window and door frames.
- \* initial placement of steel roofing beams.
- \* partial completion of internal walls.
- \* significant amount of site preparation and landscaping undertaken.

**Figure 1** gives a general impression of the state of development at the time of the last report.



**Figure 1. Bethgellert Hut Progress as at June 2012.**

The aims stated at that time for further work were: installation of wooden rafters for the first floor; laying of temporary flooring to enable construction of supporting walls for steel girders; commencement of work entailed with construction of the roof; achievement of a fully sealed structure by year's end.

**Figures 2, 3 and 4** give an indication of the further progress that has been achieved over the Summer of 2012 and up until the end of August 2012 (date of receipt of photographs).



**Figure 2. External View of Hut as at August 2012.**



**Figure 3. View of Internal Structure and Roof Detail as at August 2012.**



**Figure 4. View of Internal Structure and First Floor Construction Detail.**

It is evident that the external walls have now been completed up to the level of the eaves and ridges on all parts of the building structure. Roofing timbers have been installed on the two storey section. The single storey section is ready to accept roofing timbers. The steel supporting beams are now fully in place, and the internal walls are at an advanced state of completion (obviously awaiting finishing and decoration at a later date.) The first construction of the first floor also appears to be well advanced. In all it looks as though the stated aim of achieving a fully sealed structure in this current year is achievable.

**Publicity Discussion AGM - September 2012**  
**Summary - Good ideas to implement – publicity and NC as a whole**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Facebook group – We really have to do this folks! Perhaps we should advertise for someone (does not have to be, but could be a younger member?) to set it up? Perhaps get some tips from Bristol about how they manage theirs?        | Action NC discuss   |
| Keep an eye on ‘Branding’ for a national feel to all our leaflets and online presence   | Publicity   |
| Darsham Woodcraft could maybe host some permanent publicity   | Action publicity?   |
| Ensure a supply of latest bulletins is sent to Lockerbrook and keep in touch about supply of leaflets   | Action publicity?   |
| Publicity CD of posters and good ideas – send copies out to regions   | Action publicity  |
| Sort out the Manchester blog (someone look after it or take it down, it’s so old! – it could at least have an updated section referring people to the main web-site nb. We could re-use the copy for a Manchester regional web page?) | Action Manchester?  |
| Family friendly trips – NC to ensure there are some in the pipeline?  | Action National Trips? But needs a family person to organise or initiate? |
| NC to play a role in Fostering New or floundering regions   | Membership and Publicity officers action?                                 |
| Should the NC discuss having a ‘younger members’ meet event?  | Action NC discuss   |

Below I have tried to capture all the points in a bit more detail, as raised in the discussion.  
 Janet Saunders

**How we use online social media - From PeteKos:**

Examples from

- the Rucksack MC - have Web Forum / Facebook Group / Emails
- And the Innominata MC - have the same

The Facebook group in particular has revolutionised involvement and participation and communication, plus a new sense of community.

**Website based forum and email**\_ - these are used for more confidential discussions, trip-booking, discussion and committee matters

**Facebook**

The Facebook Group is used for:

<sup>35</sup>/<sub>17</sub> Regular communication – spontaneous events (trips, parties, socials)

<sup>35</sup>/<sub>17</sub> Banter – hilarity!

<sup>35</sup>/<sub>17</sub> Photo-sharing!

<sup>35</sup>/<sub>17</sub> Sense of community!

Suggestion – Co-opt a younger member to set this up and moderate it (accept friends etc)

## **General Discussion From the Group**

### **1) Where do we get our members from?**

Do we use Left-wing publications? – e.g. Morning Star carries an occasional advert – we don't know how – this may have been set up by Jan Lancaster some years ago

Leaflets – Olya found this drew lots of response in Newcastle, Bristol found it not much use

Remove Barriers to membership – e.g. it must be very easy to Join

e.g. Julian as a regional contact suggested that sending membership form out with an email in response to an enquiry made it more likely that people would use the form – Make it Easy for them

Posters at climbing walls could emphasise our nurturing and skill-sharing aspect, our outdoor emphasis and that we welcome novices (NB. This only applies when you have climbers in the region, Janet)

London's yahoo group gets enquiries

Bristol Red Rope – have had a joint event with Stroud Labour party

### **2) Age**

This is seen as a barrier to using the networking and word of mouth method we have relied on so much. Our friends are also old – this will limit our activities and the range we cover as time goes on.

We could try a section for younger people, a meet-up with younger members group – but some people felt this would be wrong and against our ethos

### **3) Methods and resources**

Leaflets and their design

- Jules said he thought regions knew best about their own regions
- Barbara said she felt the 'National' perspective had been lost and there was a need for national branding
- Andy said 'regionalism' could be divisive

Regional vs national?

NB. Janet's view – regional activities and emphasis tend to be very different, to do with where they are based, what members want to do, climbing/walking members, facilities and transport links in the region, distances between members, to name a few factors, even though the club ethos as a whole is the same.

National branding is a good idea though for consistency across website / Facebook?/ leaflets

Woodcraft links – Pauline mentioned the facility at Darsham could also host an exhibition and we should make links with them

We should plan family friendly trips

For sharing ideas – we need a CD of stuff to send out to regions, easier than hosting it on a file system with a password – probably good to have both

### **4) How can NC help regions?**

Steve – role could be to help foster regions in areas with few members?

Also discussed the national mailing list – which was an open list

Also reminded people there was a way of reaching all regions via: [regionalcontacts@redrope.org.uk](mailto:regionalcontacts@redrope.org.uk)

### **5) Welcoming Culture**

We should emphasise the nurturing culture of the club, it is special

Be explicit about us and our ethos

Make it clear you can go on other regions trips