

BMC Hut Seminar 2015

Increasing income – Dan Middleton

Two case studies were used to stimulate discussion regarding ways to increase hut income. Case studies used real huts but with some fictional information to drive discussion points. The main ideas produced are described.

A general note was made that increasing mid-week bookings can be the key to increasing hut income. Potential mid-week customers are either educational/instructional groups wanting sole use or small parties looking for a short notice booking of an individual room rather than an entire hut. This may require some changes where possible to the accommodation layout, and flexibility built in to the booking procedure.

Case Study 1

Accommodation – Use more flexibly, with option to book one of 2 rooms separately mid-week to appeal to smaller parties, or keep one room for members and rent the other out at weekends.

Facilities – No shower at present, important to upgrade to provide this. Wifi subject to availability/

Booking – Provide a key-code lock instead of posting keys, set up instant payment and bookings with online availability checking. Review U18 policy to allow school groups and family bookings. Replace key deposit with a damage deposit for groups. Open up bookings to individual BMC members as well as Clubs.

Pricing – Undertake market research to benchmark pricing. Raise price for external bookings and increase at weekends (cheaper mid-week to incentivise mid-week bookings).

Payment – Open up payment options including PayPal etc.

Marketing – Newsletters to previous users, social media e.g. Facebook page.

Occupancy – Target mid-week bookings by opening up last minute bookings for individuals and ensuring accommodation meets needs of groups.

Case Study 2


Accommodation – Look at segregating rooms and services to allow separate areas to be booked for groups, individuals etc. Consider franchising out the warden service, possibly commercialise with meals, courses, events.

Facilities - Wifi, look at providing a classroom/seminar room to appeal to courses/groups.


Pricing – Remove deposit, but include security deposit for group use.

Booking – Remove minimum stay requirement, allow booking in smaller units than 10 spaces (allow individual hostel style bookings when wardened). Enable users to check availability, book and pay online.

Marketing – Target instructors, schools directly and use website and social media to build individual bookings.

<p>Case Study 1</p> <p>Description of property</p> <p>Stone built hut in a mountain location. Private parking 300m walk from hut.</p>	
Accommodation	15 beds in 2 rooms
Facilities	Communal dining/lounge room. Well-equipped kitchen, hot water and M/F toilets.
Who can book?	Club members, guests and BMC Affiliated Club members. No U18's except Club member's children accompanied by a parent.
Charges (per person/night)	£4/£7 per night per person (member/non-member)
Booking by room?	No, block booking only, but negotiable.
Deposit?	£20
Booking method	By email. 12 weeks notice required for outside group bookings.
Payment	Bank transfer or cheque
Marketing	Club website, BMC Hut list
Access	Keys posted upon receipt of full payment
Occupancy*	13% (Weekend 40% Weekdays 3%)
Finances*	Hut runs at a small loss each year. Club reserves are running low.
Club	50 embers, regional

*Occupancy and Financial information is fictional and illustrative, chosen to stimulate and drive discussion and ideas at the workshop.

<p>Case Study 2</p> <p>Description of property</p> <p>Large hut for hire, parking for 20 vehicles. Well placed for mountaineering, kayaking, climbing etc.</p>	
<p>Accommodation</p>	<p>Up to 46 beds are available for hire by groups. There are dormitories for three, four, six and eight in bunk beds</p>
<p>Facilities</p>	<p>Male and female washrooms with shower, washbasins and WC. Disabled-access toilet and shower downstairs. Large, well-equipped kitchen, dining room, common room, drying room and boot room.</p>
<p>Who can book?</p>	<p>Members, BMC affiliated club members, CHA & HF groups, Education Authorities and other groups involved in outdoor pursuits</p>
<p>Charges (per person/night)</p>	<p>£10 per night per person</p>
<p>Booking by room?</p>	<p>No. Minimum group size of 10, minimum stay of 2 nights.</p>
<p>Deposit?</p>	<p>£50</p>
<p>Booking method</p>	<p>By email or phone.</p>
<p>Payment</p>	<p>Bank transfer or cheque</p>
<p>Marketing</p>	<p>Club website, BMC Hut list</p>
<p>Occupancy*</p>	<p>18% (Weekends 25% Weekdays 15%)</p>
<p>Finances*</p>	<p>Hut breaks even. Club has a ring fenced bequest of £25k to refurbish the hut.</p>
<p>Club</p>	<p>200 members, national but mainly NW England and Yorkshire</p>