

BMC Midlands Area Minutes – 6th February 2013

Wolf Mountain, Wolverhampton

Attendance: 11

Apologies: Stewart Moody (Clubs Rep) who has his Club Committee meeting tonight.

1 Minutes of last meeting agreed as accurate.

2 Matters arising

Llanymenech Quarry Access: Organised groups wishing to use 'Cul de Sac' quarry wall are asked to please contact the local activity centre "Red Ridge Centre" first to avoid overcrowding. Tel (01938) 810821.

3 Drilled Equipment Policy

The proposed revised BMC Position Statement on Drilled Equipment was new to some members present. Discussion highlighted the following:

- The increased prominence of the importance of access, environmental, and nature conservations is an improvement on the previous version.
- Some discussion on "...consider... the aspirations of current and *future* generations of climbers." It is impossible to predict the aspirations of future climbers, so is this the correct wording? However, the consideration is important and the idea understood.
- The paragraph on dry tooling is necessary but mixed opinions where or whether it should be in this document.
- The statement was considered generally appropriate and useful.

4 Access West

Nothing to report.

5 Access East

Leicestershire Quarries Project - Proposal to Heritage Lottery Fund has been submitted, aiming to secure significant funds toward the project from 2016 to 2021.

Is there a lesson to learn? (National Trust's failure to secure ownership of Lea Quarry North at Wenlock Edge for recreational use due to a local renewable energy firm being given a lease on the quarry)

The story

The quarrying stopped a few years back and National Trust were interested in getting the quarries for their use for recreation (walking, bird watching, horse riding, etc).

They already own a lot of Wenlock Edge and the quarries would have given them the possibility for a large car park and visitor centre. They consulted locally with what to do with the quarries and expected that they could get up to 100,000 visitors a year.

<http://wenlockedgenationaltrust.blogspot.co.uk/2010/08/wenlock-edge-info.html>

This came to a halt when they realised a local renewable energy firm had been given a lease on the quarry and had raised retrospective planning permission for some building works they had done. <http://www.edgerenewables.com/home/>

<http://www.shropshirestar.com/news/environment/2012/08/23/national-trust-reveals-plans-for-wenlock-edge-nature-park/>

Despite petitions and public meetings the planners agreed that the new business could stay. The quarry firm then had nothing left to sell (give?) to the National Trust.

The NT spent more than two years working up their plans, hiring consultants and a project manager and then having nothing to show for it.

The lesson

In negotiation for the Leics Quarries we need to be sure that there is nobody else who could come in with a different offer and take them out from under us. We need to act now!

Please can members be reminded to keep their "ear to the ground" re. plans in their local areas and get involved.

6 Climbing Walls

All the usual competitions going on, including the BMC **Leading Ladder**. Only two rounds left: 16th Feb – 3rd Mar (Redpoint), 2nd – 17th March (The Tower). See <http://thebmc.co.uk/bmc-leading-ladder-2012> for details.

Event: The **Big Rock** Youth Academy is holding an **open training session** on **Saturday 2nd March**. All **experienced** climbers **aged between 7 and 16** are invited to join in. The session will be **free of charge** (including free entry to Big Rock) and participants will have access to all the climbing areas in the centre under the supervision of Big Rock's instructors and coaches. The event aims to give young climbers an idea of how far they can push their climbing ability and grade. All young climbers must be accompanied by parent or guardian, and the accompanying adults are invited to attend our presentation unveiling new opportunities for promising youth climbers.

7 Youth

No report

8 Clubs – News from the BMC Clubs Committee

Club Development

We produced guidance on methods of payment and collection of subs, on recruitment and retention of members. We created a Clubs FAQ page on the website and contributed to improving the functionality of the BMC website.

Will Wykes conducted a survey of the needs of Hillwalking clubs. The imminent appointment of a Hillwalking Development Officer will support this area of our activity. A student forum has been established on the website and two student representatives have been co-opted to the committee.

Training

Fiona Saunders organised a successful programme of Advanced Skills Training that was delivered in Scotland, the Lakes and the Peak District. A weekend workshop on good practice for club members who offer training to novice climbers and walkers took place at Plas y Brenin.

Work in Progress

We are developing guidance on Good Governance, and Data Protection responsibilities and are working to improve the accuracy of BMC membership data. A follow-up survey of affiliated clubs is nearly complete.

Change of Midlands Clubs Rep: Phil Wilkinson replaces Stewart Moody. Thanks to Stewart for his hard work.

9 Next Meeting

Thurs 30th May 2013

7.30pm

Venue: Birmingham

Further 2013 meetings: Tues 10th September
 Wed 27th November

The meeting was followed by Dan and his super duper gear destruction machine. We looked at the forces needed to break karabiners, nuts and slings (old/worn/damaged v. new), generating some lively discussion.