

Summary of the 38th Meeting of the BMC National Council

Date: Saturday 8 February 2014
Venue: Hayfield, Derbyshire

In attendance:

Voting members: Scott Titt (President), Mike Watson (Vice-President), John Simpson (Treasurer), Ray Wood (Cymru North), Will Kilner (Cymru South), Ted Rogers & Steve Scott (Lakes), Ralph Ranford (L&SE), Charles Gameson & Claudia Sarnier (Midlands), Alan Hinkes (North East), Nick Bond & Tim Greenhalgh (North West), Neil Foster & Simon Lee (Peak), Colin Knowles & Gareth Palmer (South West), Beverley Jowett & James Rowe (Yorkshire), Dave Turnbull (CEO). **Specialist Committee chairs:** David Brown (Clubs), Ian Walton (Competitions), Craig Harwood (Huts). **Observers & staff:** Martin Doyle (Plas y Brenin), Nick Colton & Kate Anwyl (BMC).

Summary:

1. Area news & reports: Several Areas reported improved attendance levels at their recent meetings (e.g. Midlands – 80, North West – 40, Lakes – 35), due in part to the re-introduction of area email notifications and a drive to provide guest speakers at meetings. Key items to report are as follows:

- The approval and adoption of the Lake District winter climbing 'green' guide (now available on the BMC website).
- Appointment of a new Midlands Area chair - Phil Simister.
- North East Area concerns over a proposed wind farm development near Back Bowden.
- Increased number of hill walkers attending the Yorkshire Area meeting.
- Preliminary discussions at North West Area about bolt belays on selected routes at Wilton 1.
- Climbing / walking festivals planned in several areas as part of the BMC 70th anniversary celebrations.

2. Finance & membership: The BMC is reporting a £52k deficit in 2013 and is currently forecasting a £100k deficit in 2014. Membership has increased slightly over the past 12 months but travel insurance sales have continued to reduce. Subscriptions have been held level since 1 Jan 2009 and will remain unchanged in 2014. The meeting agreed to amend the subscriptions increase (previously agreed at the November 2013 meeting) to a figure of £1.50 per adult member (individuals and clubs) and £1.00 for students / unwaged / u18s. This will go to the AGM on 26 April and subject to approval will come into effect on 1 January 2015.

3. Vice-President nominations: Rupert Davies attended the meeting as one of the Vice-President elects. National Council also agreed to the nomination of Mina Leslie-Wujastyk as a Vice-President.

4. Policy issues: The meeting agreed the following position statement on Dry Tooling:

'The BMC acknowledges that dry tooling has a place in British climbing. The suitability of individual sites for dry tooling should be considered on a case-by-case basis by the relevant BMC Area meeting. Dry tooling is not considered to be an acceptable practice on established rock climbs.'

In addition the meeting also agreed the wording of a BMC position statement on Drilled Equipment.

5. George Band Award: The George Band Award for 2014 is being awarded to John Innerdale for his exceptional voluntary contribution to the work of the Mountain Heritage Trust (MHT). The award will be given on the BMC AGM weekend.

6. Clubs: A discussion took place about the BMC's support for clubs and how this could be improved. The Clubs Committee will be investigating this further.

7. Hill walking: It was reported that a well-attended Hill Walkers 'Engagement Day' had taken place on 7 February in the Peak District and that this had raised a number of good ideas about how the BMC can develop its work for walkers. Further events will be held in other Areas during 2014.

8. Media: The BMC now has 45,000 Facebook followers and 17,000 on Twitter. BMCTV and the Ambassadors programme went live in November thanks to funding from Sport England. The BMC has produced a one-off magazine; Get into Climbing will go on sale in WHSmith in March 2014.