

Minutes of BMC Cymru South Wales Area Meeting

7.00pm, Wednesday 17 September 2014 at The Old Rectory Hotel, Llangattock.

Chair: Gareth Tucker

Number Present: not recorded

BMC Officer: Elfyn Jones

1. Welcome & apologies

Gareth welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave apologies for Andy Cummings, Matt Moore, Trevor Eugene Massiah, John Harwood, Martin Skinner, Goi Ashmore, Sara Davies, Roy Behenna, Paul Taylor, Sam Ridge (BBNP)

No further apologies were offered.

A point was raised by Martin Croker re commitment to consult with individuals? And better notice of meetings?

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 17th September 2014

Peter Sheppard read the minutes and these were accepted as a fair record of the previous meeting.

3. Actions from previous meeting

Range West – 77 climbers allowed in after Easter briefing, re more than 30 decision would be made on the day depending on staffing. No known turn-aways.

Briefing will be done by video, but available on more dates – still annual. Draft dates to be agreed, around 7-8 dates now including evenings – will be shared with other recreational users.

4. Matters arising not covered elsewhere

5. BMC Hill walking

New document prepared, will be a discussion item at the next national council. Area consultation should take place afterwards. Possibility for area hill walking co-ordinators.

Money from Sport England/Wales for development officers.

6. Gower Festival report

6th festival. Went pretty well, no negative comments. Quite a few non-locals, inquisitive for best places to climb – looking to come back. Wouldn't be surprised if Shipwreck Cove/Mermaid Wall got more traffic now.

People travelled from West Bromwich, Swindon, Oxford etc.

Around £50 raised, agreed to donate to ACT.

Agreement to do it again next year, proposed to tie in with the next area meeting.

Proposed 11-13 September (1st lunchtime low tide in September).

7. National council report

Lots of discussions about hill walking.

Access issues at Cheddar – issues with uninsured climbers where required, and climbers on the wrong part at the wrong time, crossing private land (shortcutting agreed route) etc.

Elfyn discussed regional development posts and helping climbers who start indoors to move outside safely.

BMC lost some funding after Sport England's telephone surveys.

Issues on Snowdon with the coroner re false paths. Elfyn outlined BMC position "BMC were concerned at recent comments made by the coroner regarding paths on Snowdon. BMC are

generally opposed to modifying paths in mountainous areas simply to make them safer, preferring improved education of the users and self reliance.
Membership fees will go up by £1.50 after not changing for 6 years. Discussion nationally re cost of living increases, but does this just lead to uncontrolled spending? Having to justify a rise every few years means costs can be reviewed. BMC have been absorbing insurance increases.
Bidders for new travel insurance underwriters being considered.
Make more publicity of the benefits, e.g. discounts rather than focus on the costs.
Full report will be attached to minutes.

8. Access report

Open access map review – new definitive maps becoming live, most of the BMC contested areas were included – mostly in North/Mid Wales.
Green paper – Welsh Govt keen to have new access legislation. Angling/Landowning bodies orchestrated in opposition. Minister reshuffled so now not sure what is happening. Lobbying work needed.
Tintern Quarry access – not sure on details as this is not in Wales area.

9. AOB

Martin – reporting retrobolting – Debbie Reynolds (Gower), Uncanny (Ogmore), Evil Ways, Witch's Tip crag (no bolting crag) now has bolts too.
Retro bolting MUST come to meetings, but BMC is a representative body, not a governing body. Condemn contraventions of the established policies. Education is needed, particularly into the benefits of trad climbing.
Will – particularly in relation to recent crack lead at Dinas.
Elfyn – Island off Tenby appears to have been bolted with the landowner's consent – against local bolting policies and without consultation with BMC area.
Will – Development officer in Wales would be a good idea
Gareth – appeal for more people to get involved, particularly standing in for meetings, and organising crag clean-ups etc.
South Wales Green Guide

10. Next meetings

Monday 1 Dec, Atlantic College (lecture from Calum Muskett)
Tue 3 Feb, Up and Under (discount shopping night)
22 May, Pembroke (tied in with range briefing/bank holiday)
12 September, Gower (Gower Festival)
Dec 2015, Spot climbing