

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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Minutes of Midlands Area Meeting 28 Jan 2015 Old Edwardians' Sports Club, Solihull

Present: Phil Simister (Chair), John Edwards (Sec), John Churcher (SolihullMC), Margaret Harries (SolihullMC), Ian Wyatt (SolihullMC), Pete Lubrano (SolihullMC), Clare Lubrano (SolihullMC), Dave Pendleton (SolihullMC), Jules Fearon (SolihullMC), Sean Chu (SolihullMC), John Bridgewater (SolihullMC), Rob Bridgewater (SolihullMC), B. Moulson (SolihullMC), Su Downes (SolihullMC), S. Coward (SolihullMC), T. Metherell (SolihullMC), Nick Piotrowski (WestBromMC), David Jones (WestBromMC), Carol Franklin (WestBromMC), Robert Franklin (WestBromMC), Michelle Aukland (Bowline Club), Claudia Sarnar (Bowline Club), Andy Railton (Bowline Club), Andy Potter (Bowline Club), Terrie-Anne Yardley (Yeti Club), Frederick Yardley (Yeti Club), Harry Wilson (Yeti Club), Judy Wilson (Yeti Club), Rob Tipper (Yeti Club), Dan Tipper (Yeti Club), Janet Saunders (Red RopeCC), Adrian Jones (Red RopeCC), Charles Gameson (HWWG Rep - CG), Sue Manns (MAM / MTA Regional Co-ordinator), Sue Bell (RNRMMC), David Williams (WolverhamptonMC), Steve Jonas (CC), Hazel Jonas (CC), Roy Donnelly (Saltley Hill Walkers), Mick Fowler (BMC), Dave Turnbull (BMC), Mark White, Mike Burrow, Danny Barden, Rosi Yule, Steve Johnson, Phil Authers, Josh Papworth, Tim Davies, Pete Muswell, Dave Evans, Rob Butterworth, Colin Gandrai, Vasia Osipowicz + 1 **(55)**

1. Welcome and Apologies:

- a. **Welcome:** Phil Simister welcomed everyone to the area meeting.
- b. **Apologies:** Apologies had been received from: Iain Blanch (ctte Youth Rep), Richard Law (cttee Access West Rep), Phil Mullington (FRCC), Roger Fanner, Brian Smith & Rob Trezise

2. Minutes of the last Meeting:

The circulated minutes were agreed as accurate (proposed: Charles Gameson, seconded: John Edwards).

3. Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere:

Phil Simister reported there was more movement on the Leicestershire guidebook and that Ian Wyatt (project manager) was available to answer questions on it after the meeting.

4. Reports:

- a. **Access West:** Richard Law had sent an apology. No report.
- b. **Access East:** Michelle Aukland had been elected at the AGM but since then Andy Railton had volunteered to take on this role, allowing Michelle to concentrate on her other role as Clubs rep.
 - That this change be ratified Proposed: Ian Wyatt Seconded: Michelle Aukland. Agreed nem con.
 - Andy reported that it looked as though access might have been lost to one small Leicestershire quarry.
- c. **Climbing Walls:** John Churcher said he had nothing to report.
- d. **Youth:** Ian Blanch had sent apology. Claudia Sarna reported that the first of the 3 rounds of the youth competition was happening today and that Iain's own Midlands Competition would be held at Creation Climbing Wall this coming weekend.
- e. **Hill Walking:** Charles Gameson reported that the first meeting of the working group had taken place in Manchester on 22nd January. It was intended to run for at least 2 years and there were 5 people from the

Midlands region on it. David Jones stated that group had 3 overall objectives:-

- 1) Meet the needs of BMC hill walking members
- 2) Attract new hill walking members to the BMC
- 3) Position the BMC as a leading authority on hill walking.

Some initial priorities had been identified as:-

- Increasing the walking content of Summit magazine to an as yet to be agreed 'quota' and having covers depicting walking as well as climbing.
- Area Meetings to be required to have a hill walking agenda point to allow current contentious hill walking issues being promoted and debated.
- A promotional campaign with a strong social media strategy and bold message such as 'BMC – the natural home for hill walkers' is required.
- A hill walking 'mini-site', with routes, weather information, transport info etc for the UK's 'big' mountains would be a good idea.

5. National Council:

Copies of the BMC briefing note, summarising some of the key activities for the period Nov 2014 – Jan 2015, and a summary, prepared by Roger Fanner, of the National Council meeting held on 6th December were available on member's seats. Charles Gameson reported that Roger had got support for the Leicestershire Guide to be put on the agenda for 2015 and that the issue of quarries was brought up and discussed at the meeting.

6. Any Other Business:

- Dave Turnbull reported that a new BMC travel Insurance scheme backed by Lloyds was launched 3 weeks ago, as a result of some problems with the previous scheme underwritten by A.C.E. The new one was similar to that of the Austrian Alpine Club.
- He highlighted the 3 main objectives of the Strategic Plan for 2015-19 as Hill-walking, Young people & Membership, the target for the latter being a 3% per year increase. A survey of existing BMC members had revealed that 61% are primarily hill walkers, 75% climb sometimes, 73% climb indoors and 12½% are purely walkers, indicating where potential recruitment might come from.
- He revealed that 20% of BMC income is now via Sport England, who base their funding largely on phone surveys of the UK population. These surprisingly suggested that climbing & hill-walking were less popular during the last 2 years than previously, and as a result £95,000 had been lost to the BMC.

7. Date & location of next meeting:

- Wed 3rd June 2015 at Old Eds. Solihull
- Speaker would be the prolific, and sometimes controversial, new route setter Gary Gibson (www.sportsclimbs.co.uk)

Following the meeting & refreshments the attendees enjoyed an excellent talk by Mick Fowler of some of the problems and delights of climbing in the Indian Himalaya accompanied by great images from his trip to Hagshu (6,515m) in 2014 where he & Paul Ramsden were unexpectedly forced to switch from the north face route to the NE face at the last minute. Several people were able to buy copies of his books.

Written by John Edwards