

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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Minutes of The Peak Area Meeting Wednesday 15th April 2015, The Maynard, Grindleford

Present:

Neil Foster (Chair)	Stephen Jones (Clogwyn MC/MTA)
Lynn Robinson (Secretary)	Bunny McCullough
Dave Turnbull (BMC)	Tim Grice
Carey Davies (BMC)	Andrew Elliott
Simon Lee (National Council rep)	Ross Burnage
Rob Greenwood (National Council rep)	Frag Last
Adam Long (Access Rep)	Dave Parry
Louise Hawson (Access Rep)	Caroline Fanshawe
Mark Warwicker (Access Rep)	Kym West
Peter Judd (Peak Area Hillwalking Rep)	Simon Cundy
Martin Wass (Newsletter Editor)	Chris Gale
Rebekah Newman (PDNPA)	Ian Couldwell
Sue Smith (PDNPA)	Hamish Forbes
Mark Vallance	Phil Robins
Alan James (UK Climbing)	Richard Wheeldon
John Cook (Castle Mountaineers)	Graeme Hammond (Peak Climbing Club)
Rebecca Hammond (Peak Climbing Club)	Pete Tapping
David Brown (Peak Climbing Club)	Kevin Noon
Jamie Kelly	Chris FitzHugh
James Pierce	Ian Morton
Simon Jacques	Chris Moor
Clare Reading (FRCC)	Sue Lewis
Steve Clark	Linda McLeish (Castle MC)
Rick Gibbon (Rucksack Club)	David Pendlebury (Castle MC / CC)
Robert Townsend (The Mountain Club, Stafford)	David Horsted
Charlie Gobbett	Philip Hetherington
Fiona Jones	Glynis Judd
Tim Waterhouse	Margi Bryant
Bill Irving	Colin Nave
Terry Abraham	Sue Abraham
Andy Tickle	
61 people signed in	72 people present

1. Apologies:

Stephen Coughlan
Cath Lee
Gillian Radcliffe

Chris Radcliffe
Martin Kocsis
Gary Gibson

Mike Smith
Neil Roden
Geoff Nichols

Neil welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially to people who were attending for the first time. It was great to see so many new faces. Neil introduced key people to the meeting, including Dave Turnbull, CEO of the BMC, Carey Davies, BMC Hill Walking Officer, Sue Smith and Rebekah Newman from the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) and several Peak Area access representatives.

2. Actions from the last meeting (held on 28.01.15)

None.

3. What do hill walkers want from the BMC?

Dave Turnbull and Carey Davies presented: "BMC: The Natural Home for Hill Walkers" (copy attached). This gave the strategic plan for the next four-years with the overarching aim to make "the BMC the natural home for hill walkers".

Dave started with commending the Peak Area newsletter and saw it as an excellent resource for the area. He asked people present at the meeting –

- Do you see yourself as a hill walker? – half answered yes
- Do you see yourself as only a hill walker? – a quarter answered yes.

After the presentation the floor was opened for questions and comments:

Access Representatives – training and how they carry out their role in relation to hill walking. The volume of work has increased for access reps and is due to 'landscape' issues as much as specific climbing issues. Andy Tickle said that because of the shared concerns between hill walkers and rock climbers, he is happy to help with any orientation of new access reps.

Cyclists – Dave said there were no plans for the near future for the BMC to include cyclists as one of their representative groups. The BMC represents hill walkers and climbers.

Ramblers Association - The BMC represents people who mountaineer and walk in the uplands landscape whereas the Ramblers Association mainly represents people who walk in the lowlands. There are good communication links and working relationships between the Ramblers Association and the BMC.

4. Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA)

Rebekah Newman, from the PDNPA, who looks after the North Lees estate, explained that the PDNPA has decided to keep the management and ownership of Stanage (and the campsite), and to invest in it for the future. The Stanage Forum is currently updating the **Stanage Management Plan**, building on the 2001 plan ensuring a mix of access and conservation is covered in the Plan.

Rebekah explained that there are financial constraints and how these will be addressed and funded will be outlined in the management plan.

She also talked about the **campsite** and that a planning application for four camping pods is going to a planning committee tomorrow. The pods are wooden shelters and the idea behind them is that they can be used in winter and by overseas visitors who may not have tents. The aim is to increase income over the winter. There are also plans for two new showers, including a family shower, and a lock-up area for bicycles.

The PDNPA has introduced a **car parking sticker** scheme. For a contribution of £15 / year the sticker entitles the owner to a discount at the campsite and free parking at PDNPA Stanage car parks. The money will be used to maintain footpaths / car parks etc. They are available at Outside, at the campsite and the BMC website. Rebekah plans to feedback exactly what the money has been spent on in a years time. Publicity material had been produced, and it was highlighted that on the posters etc, it needs to state that the money from the stickers will ring-fenced to be spent on the North Lees Estate. It was suggested that the stickers could be sold at climbing walls.

Q: What is happening with the bracken at Stanage?

A: The idea behind spraying to remove bracken was to see if bracken reduction encouraged the growth of more dwarf plants. However, there are no current plans for more bracken control. There was a concern that if the bracken was allowed to grow back, then this could increase the incidence of Lyme's Disease.

Q: The car parking sticker is a good idea, but what is the PDNPA going to do about badly parked cars?

A: PDNPA staff will be in the area at least one Saturday and one Sunday per month asking people to move their cars into the car parks.

It was highlighted that if people were visiting the area they may not be aware of when the gate is locked at night, so this may discourage people from parking there.

Sue Smith, Access Officer and Right of Way Access Officer from the PDNPA explained to the meeting about the Peak District Local Access Forum (LAF), of which Henry is a member. For more information go to: www.peakdistrict.gov.uk (or issues can be raised via Henry). The Forum is currently looking at the issue of fencing as a barrier to access and affecting the view of the landscape. It is also responsible for access points to CRoW land (and negotiating new access points). The Forum also produces a newsletter, of which Sue brought several copies to the meeting.

The Forum has worked with the Thornbridge Centre to produce a T-shirt, £1 of each sale is spent on access issues.

There is an access 'wish list' of areas of work that needs to be carried out, for example, stile repairs, suggestions for alternative access points, etc. This is maintained by Sue. She also deals with the Green Lanes (ie any lane that may carry vehicles). She is happy for anyone to contact her with access issues at: sue.smith@peakdistrict.gov.uk (or talk to Henry, Mark Warwicker or Adam Long).

It was asked if there was going to be a review of the open access legislation. There is nothing planned, but there is a plan to review maps to update them.

5. Access Updates

Please read the newsletter for details of all the current access issues.

In summary Henry Folkard commented on:

Stanage – the next Steering Group will focus on access issues. Any ideas for input, then contact Henry.

Burbage – Refreshing the Management Plan – what do people want included: what should NOT be done, as well as what should be done.

Dark Peak Nature Improvement Area – this work has been completed and a report is available for anyone who would like to see a copy.

6. National Council Update

Simon Lee has included a report in the newsletter. Simon emphasised that the National Council is the policy making body of the BMC and issues can be raised there, via our two representatives, Simon and Rob Greenwood.

7. Peak Area Newsletter

All contributions are welcome. Please send them directly to Martin Wass, editor at:

peakarea@gmail.com

The deadline is always two-weeks prior to the next meeting – the next deadline being the **20th May**.

8. Any Other Business

Green Guide to Group Practice – Rob Dyer is producing a guide and would like some photos of crags at the crag – illustrating either good or bad practice. Email photos to: robd@thebmc.co.uk

9. Date, time and venue of the next meeting

Wednesday 3rd June, 8pm at The Winking Man Pub, Buxton Road, Upper Hulme, Staffordshire ST13 8UH

Peter and Cath, our two hill-walking representatives, plan to lead a guided walk around The Roaches area ending at The Don Whillans Memorial Hut for tea and cake prior to the meeting – watch this space for more details.

Many thanks to everyone who attended, especially those hillwalkers for whom it was their first meeting. Hope to see you all again soon.

After supper Terry Abraham was interviewed by Carey and gave a fascinating insight into why and how he got into filmmaking, describing himself as a wild camper first and foremost, that got into photography and film-making. He also showed us clips of his films, which were just wonderful and very inspiring – thank you Terry.

AS ALWAYS:

- Chair of the Peak Area is Neil Foster – neil.foster@bmcvolunteers.org.uk
- Access issues/access volunteer work please contact Henry Folkard – henry.folkard@bmcvolunteers.org.uk
- With regard to the meetings, agenda items or any other issues please contact Lynn Robinson, Peak Area Secretary – lynn.robinson@bmcvolunteers.org.uk
- Check out the Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/bmcpeakarea> and 'like' us if you can.
- Any items / articles welcome for the newsletter – peakarea@gmail.com