



BMC South Wales Area Meeting
Up and Under, Cowbridge Road, Cardiff
Tuesday 3rd February

Acting Chair: Will Kilner

Number Present: 16

BMC Officer: None

1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies from Andy Cummings, Goi Ashmore, Peter Blackburn & Si Rawlinson.
Will welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Up and Under for providing the venue for the meeting.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were read by those present and accepted as a true and accurate record. Will recapped the discussions from that meeting for the benefit of those who had not been present.

3. Actions from the previous meeting

- a. New belay stakes at Llangattock remains an ongoing project as negotiations continue with all relevant parties. There may be a crag cleanup scheduled for Llangattock in April, members to be informed of full details by usual channels when this is finalised.
- b. Request to National Council on the promotion on the benefits of OECs
It was felt that the situation was complicated due to the transfer of funding from LEAs to schools, and that it was not as simple as the closure of an LEA centre meaning fewer opportunities for young people to access outdoor recreation.
- c. There was no further information provided by BBNPA regarding the ACT grant, but that application has been withdrawn for the time being in any case due to a separate application to Natural Resources Wales being turned down.
- d. Content for the newsletter is still needed; members were asked to send any relevant info to Calum Muskett or to Will Kilner.

4. Matters Arising - none

5. National Council Report

The clubs workshop programme has been launched, with some workshops taking place in South Wales. Details, including how to book, are on the BMC website.

BMC seminar on training other club members will take place at Plas y Brenin, costing around £60 for a 2 day event, fully catered. Again details are on the BMC website.

The BMC's Hillwalking document now has a working group looking at updating and revising it.

Will highlighted BMCTV, available through the BMC website, as a great resource with good technical videos and information available.

The latest Fundamentals and climbing masterclass dates are now on the website

The AGM will take place on 25/4/14 at Plas y Brenin.

6. Access and Conservation Briefing

- A. Jackie Thomas, Volunteer Co-ordinator with BBNPA briefed the meeting on volunteer opportunities within the National Park. Volunteers are needed for footpath maintenance, grass cutting, hedge laying and assisting the National Park wardens. As there are only 10 wardens for the Park, having volunteers involved helps to free up staff time. Volunteers need to be in reasonable fitness, enthusiastic and reliable. Ideally they should be able to commit to 10 days per year, as they will receive free training in every aspect of the role. This can include first aid and navigation. Volunteers also receive a car parking pass, some discounts and the benefit of helping to give back to the National Park.

Jackie also stressed the importance of reporting any issues with paths to the NPA so they can be dealt with, even if people do not have the time to volunteer. Leaflets and application forms are available from Jackie.

Tony Greenacre, path volunteer also addressed the meeting. He said that a volunteer day usually lasts from 10-2. He has learnt a lot, is about to attend a first aid course and hopes to attend other courses on ecology.

Alan Ward suggested that future ACT applications by the NPA could be tied to a specific programme of path maintenance using the volunteers.

Alan asked if the National Park Ambassador Scheme is still running. Yes, this is for any business in the National Park to improve their knowledge of the park so they can share it with visitors. There are 3 training days involved and businesses involved are mentioned on the NPA website.

- B. There is a proposal for a crag clean up at Taffs Well. Luke Maggs is looking into this and information will be distributed when this is arranged.
- C. Matt Woodfield informed the meeting that the National Trust have bought the car park at Rhosilli. They will have a more visible presence, and given the Trust's aim to promote outdoor activities on their land, should be a good sign for the future.

MW told the meeting that there are some concerns re a recently developed bouldering venue near Neath, regarding parking and access. Ownership is unclear, but there was a proposal to seek a formal access agreement. The meeting agreed that those involved in developing the area would be asked to provide information about the most considerate place to park and how to access the venue responsibly. MW will action this.

MW informed the meeting that Watch House Slab is becoming very eroded at ground level, damage appears to be caused by climbers accessing the venue. The situation could be improved by steps and a walkway. Meeting agreed that MW will contact the National Trust, owners of the land, to see if they would consent to this work. An application to ACT may be needed.

- D. Will informed the meeting of a proposed power line from Hirwaun to Ebbw Vale, then continuing to Abergavenny via Clydach Gorge and Usk Valley. It was noted that this is likely to be visually intrusive. Any comments regarding this should be sent to Elfyn so an agreed BMC position can be sent to the planners.
- E. Range West briefing dates for 2015 have been agreed. There will be 8 briefings, including during the next area meeting / Pembroke meet. Briefings can potentially also be arranged for individual clubs to widen access.
- F. Llyne Brianne bouldering – there are still some issues with this, but the situation may be moving forwards.

7. Positions Available

Will outlined the committee positions available and asked for expressions of interest. Help was requested with organising the meeting at Pembroke.

8. AOB - none

9. Next meetings

23/5/2015, Pembroke, tied in with range briefing.

12/9/2015, Gower Festival

| Agenda Item | Action | Owner | Progress |
|-------------|--|-------|----------|
| 3a | Pursue outcome for stakes at Llangattock | WK | |
| 3d | Newsletter content still needed | All | |
| 6d | Enquire with NT if steps could be put in at Watch House Slab | MW | |
| 6e | Comments regarding proposed powerlines in BBNPA | All | |