

BMC South West Area Gathering

Meeting held at "The Hawkins Arms, Zelah, Cornwall, Saturday 30th May 2015 starting at 7:00pm.

Present and Signed In:

Matthew Goater (Chair)	Mark Kemball (Acting Secretary)
Gareth Palmer (National Council)	Iain Peters
Tom Palmer	Chris Smart
Colin Knowles (National Council / Exec)	James Mann
Nicolas Pade	Pete Greening
Trevor Smith	Ryan Newman
Ed Miller	Jeremy Dyke
Jez Marks	Tim Stenning
Chris Stenning	Tom Hinchliffe

1. **Welcome and Apologies for Absence.** Matthew Goater welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from David Hillebrandt, Philip Wilson, Kevin Lowry, Martin Crocker and Alan Dovey.
2. **The Previous Meeting's Minutes** were reviewed, there was one correction to item 4 – it was Martin Crocker that convened the Avon Gorge Meeting.
3. **Feedback from the National Council:** Gareth Palmer reported back from the last National Council meeting which coincided with the AGM. Apparently, much beer was consumed! Trevor Smith gave feedback on the clubs' seminar. Colin Knowles reported that the BMC's membership continues to grow although the insurance income is dropping. He also reported that Sport England is concerned about the BMC's structure, and in particular the relationship between the National Council and Executive. There then followed some discussion of the BMC website, 8 people at the meeting had used the site. All of these felt that although it contains lots of very useful information, the site itself is poorly constructed and difficult to navigate. Colin agreed to report this back to the executive, and also explained that the site is in the process of upgrading. Tom Hinchliffe volunteered to be a test user for the developing site. Matthew asked how many people had received an email to announce the meeting – only 4! Colin is to follow this up.
4. **ClimbBristol Project:** Matthew and Colin reported on the project – the funding has now ended, but it has been a great success. It is proposed to hold two meetings per year to organise clean ups etc. Following its clean up, the North Face of Suspension Bridge Buttress has proved very popular with good climbing on (for the moment) unpolished natural limestone.
5. **Local Access Updates:**
 - a. Devil's Jump – this has recently changed ownership, there have been problems with the landowner caused by the access notes in the Rockfax guide, those in the Cheesewring guide are correct. – Jeremy Dyke is to talk to Rob Dyer and then try to arrange a meeting with the landowner.
 - b. Roche Rock – Gareth has been trying to contact the Tregothan Estate (landowner) but so far, they have not got back to him so the proposed crag clean up cannot go ahead. Pete Greening reported that there is a lot of rubbish and suggested anyone climbing there should take a bin bag and remove what they can (there are bins available in the village).

- c. Chair Ladder – the bird ban on part of the cliff has now been lifted as the choughs are now nesting elsewhere.
- 6. **Cornish Climbing and Walking Festival:** Iain Peters gave an update – places at £30 per head (accommodation, Saturday's and Sunday's breakfast and Saturday's evening meal) are now bookable via the BMC website. BMC Ambassador Calum Musket will attend – he will be giving a talk on Saturday evening and a Master Class on Sunday. There will also be a guided walk on Sunday, lead by a representative of the National Trust. Cornwall County Council have given £100 towards the event.
- 7. **Hill Walking Rep's report:** Trevor Smith said there was very little to report – the Hill Walking Working Party will be holding 2 meetings to decide policy, the next is in September. Trevor then asked if he could give feedback from the **Clubs' Committee** – He questioned those at the meeting about their attitudes to clubs and the BMC and reported that 2/3 of the BMC membership is now individual members and that although it had increased slightly over the last year, in general, club membership is going down. Most clubs' membership is in decline but there are some exceptions, notably those clubs who have been actively recruiting members either through climbing walls or social media.
- 8. **Mountain Rescue Procedures:** James Mann reported on his recent accident at the Dewerstone – a badly broken ankle on the descent route. The Dewerstone is 20 minutes or less walk from the road. It took more than 5 hours from phoning the emergency services to James arriving in hospital. This would seem to be a result of poor communication, coordination and decision making by the emergency services (see James' more detailed report). – Discussion followed as to what could be done to improve the situation. Issues raised included the emergency services wanting postcodes rather than OS grid references for the crag! Colin agreed to pass on the report to the BMC and ask them to take appropriate action to try to improve the situation.
- 9. **Area Briefing Notes:** These were read out by Matthew.
- 10. **Any Other Business:**
 - a. Marsland Accident – this was discussed and the meeting asked that our condolences should be passed on to Martin's family.
 - b. Compass Point – Iain reported that the right hand section is still in a very dangerous condition and should be avoided. We need to add a note to this effect on the R.A.D.
 - c. The inquest into Craig Harwood's death will be held in Truro on 15th June.
 - d. Culm abseil points – Iain and Mark Kemball have measured the size of slings required for Vicarage Cliff – action Mark / Iain to find out which type of chain or cable is best for the job, then order it. Also to measure up the size of sling required for Fay and Marsland.
 - e. Definitive guides – the question of the financing of definitive guides was raised – there seems to be some discussion going on within the CC as to whether they can continue to produce them. It was suggested that the BMC should support the production of definitive guides.
- 11. **Date and Venue of next meeting:** To be held in Plymouth either late August or early September, Trevor Smith volunteered to find a suitable pub venue.