

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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Minutes of Midlands Area Meeting Wednesday 9 September 2015 Old Edwardians' Sports Club, Solihull

Present: Phil Simister (Chair), John Edwards (Sec), John Churcher (SolihullMC), Holly Jones (SolihullMC), Robert Trezise (SolihullMC), Ash Price (SolihullMC), Roger Fanner (SolihullMC), Alex Taylor (SolihullMC), Michael Reynolds (SolihullMC & M.A.M.), Nick Piotrowski (WestBromMC), David Jones (WestBromMC), Andy Brown (WestBromMC), Michelle Aukland (Bowline Club), Andy Railton (Bowline Club), John Duckett (CoventryMC), John Handley (CoventryMC), Justin Somanathan (CoventryMC), Charlotte Potter (CoventryUniMC), Geoff Taylor (MercianMC), Julie Taylor (MercianMC), Vicki Cox (MercianMC), Steward Moody (MercianMC), John Ripley (WarwickCC) Jan Gill (WarwickCC), Roy Donnelly (Bham Saltley Hillwalking Club), Kevin Dean (Bham Saltley Hillwalking Club), Phil Mullington (Fell & RockCC), Hazel Jonas (Fell & RockCC), Jane Thompson (BMC), Anna Seale, George MacIntyre, Amanda Pickard, Kerry Elford, Rebecca Hudson (?), John Kidner, Stuart Jamieson, Sam Cooke, Steve Johnson, A. Jones, **(39)**

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), Charles Gameson, Brian Smith, Claudia Sarner,

2. **Minutes of the last Meeting:** The circulated minutes were agreed as accurate (proposed: Roger Fanner, seconded: Charlotte Potter).

3. **Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere:** None.

4. Reports:

4.1 Access East: Andy Railton reported no apparent changes to regional access issues since last report. The Leicester Quarries Group had effectively completed its remit in 2014 & had managed to ensure that the future planning guidance for Quarries in Leicestershire included a requirement for the Quarry owners to take into consideration recreational use of the quarry at the end of quarrying operations. The plan now is to draw up a hit list of venues that are key climbing venues in the East Mids area, where there could be access issues in the future. A circular will be sent to the Chairs of the East Mids clubs to ensure tactful approach to prevent loss of access. The update of East Mids Climbing Venue database is continuing slowly & will eventually be passed onto the BMC for inclusion in their Regional Access Database. Andy is planning to visit all the venues, make notes, take photos etc so this might interest the Leicestershire Guide Book team.

4.2 Access West: Richard Law had emailed 'nothing to report'.

4.3 Climbing Walls: John Churcher, fresh from the West flank of the Eiger, said he had nothing to report but drew attention to the "Real Rock" show at The Crescent Theatre on Oct 9th.

4.4 Youth: Ian Blanch, nursing multiple injuries, had sent apology. No report.

4.5 Hill Walking: David Jones said the working party's next meeting would be on Monday night but he recapped the progress made at last meeting on 13th April, which was summarised in Midland Area minutes of 15 June.

4.6. Club Issues: Michelle Aukland reported on a "Chairman's Conclave" she had chaired just before the Area Meeting which focussed on what could be done to increase inter-club relations for mutual benefit. She pointed out there are 40 clubs in the Midland Area plus around 6,000 individual BMC members. The Chairmen of only 4 groups had attended although whether this indicated lack of interest or an inability to communicate effectively with the clubs was unclear. It had been agreed to try to see if a day long climbing & walking festival of clubs at somewhere like Horseshoe might be possible, maybe with Sheffield or Peak Region being involved. The possibility of a joint international expedition to climb a 'big' peak had also been discussed.

5. National Council:

5.1 Report from last meeting: Roger Fanner had produced a 2-side summary of the National Council Meeting on 13th June and copies of this were available to members on their seats. He held up a copy of the official minutes of the Council Meeting but couldn't divulge these as they were confidential, although the BMC do put a 'summary' on the website. He asked whether the meeting felt, as he did, that the full minutes should be made available to everyone. It would be more democratic and would cost nothing, unlike the summary which someone is paid to produce. There seemed to be general agreement that this would be better.

5.2 Matters for the next meeting:

- Can minutes be made available or do people like Roger & others have to produce summaries?
- BMC's views on the possibility of a festival-type event in the Peak.

6. Any Other Business:

- Andy Brown mentioned that places were still available on the WBMC Coach to Keswick on Saturday (12th) and any person could book a seat to enable them to have a cheap day out climbing or walking in the mountains.
- Phil Simister reminded clubs that if they had any events that needed advertising the main club contact should send an email to Michelle Aukland as the Clubs Rep (they already have her email address from recent emails) & she will disseminate it to the other 40 Midlands clubs.
- John Handley asked if anyone knew whether the Third Party Insurance that comes as (an expensive) part of BMC membership had ever paid out on a claim. Nobody was able to say! Phil Simister took the issue as an action to ask HQ

7. Date & location of next meeting:

- Wed 25th November 2015 at Old Edwardians Sports Club, Solihull
- Speaker will be Calum Muskett – the 21 year old alpinist based in North Wales who has a raft of new routes to his name up to E8 and who made the 6th ascent (in 27 years) of Johnny Dawes' terrifying classic Indian Face E9 6c in 2013.

Following the meeting seconds of refreshments were taken and the attendees enjoyed an idiosyncratic talk by Niall Grimes (BMC Guidebook Co-ordinator) to a backdrop of varied images from Ireland, interspersed with some of his writings and short films. They also discovered that, despite what it says on his tongue-in-cheek BMC profile page, he has not topped-out on Everest!