



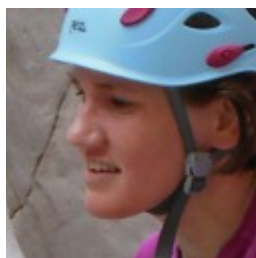
Peak Area Newsletter

January 2016

The next Peak Area Meeting is on Wednesday, 20 January, starting at 1930, at the Maynard, Main Road, Grindleford, Derbyshire S32 2HE.

The Sec speaks

By Becky Hammond



Lynn Robinson is a persuasive woman, and it was hard to resist her when she asked if I'd consider taking on the Secretary role. But the deed is done, and now I have to try and do as good a job as she did! Lynn gave an excellent handover, but it's only the the run-up to the January Area Meeting that I've really started to get an idea of just how much goes on in the area.

As Rob has said, for now we would like to concentrate on what the Peak Area does best: access, debate and discussion. It would be good to improve participation from some of the under-represented groups (e.g. students and

indoor climbers) as time goes on.

If there is anything else you think the Peak Area should be doing, please let us know.

Our hill walking representatives, Cath Lee and Peter Judd, organised an excellent walk on 28 November around Combs Moss – an area that it seems many of us who went hadn't explored before: I plan to return in better weather. The wind and rain reduced the opportunities for talking, but we still managed to have a good chat. Hopefully a few of those who came will also want to come to the Area Meeting: it would be great to see some new faces.

I'm looking forward to hearing Bill Gordon talk about Stanage at the Area Meeting on 20 January. See you there!

If you're reading this from a printout, the hyperlinks won't show up (in some cases we do print them). To obtain an electronic version in which the hyperlinks will work, go to the BMC website (www.thebmc.co.uk). Members can have it emailed to them by contacting the BMC office: 0161 445 6111, office@thebmc.co.uk

Contributions to the Newsletter are welcome at any time; the Deadline for the next Newsletter is 30 March - send to peakarea@gmail.com



Dates for the next meetings:

Wed 20 January - 1930 - Maynard. Speaker: Bill Gordon (Stanage warden).

Wed 13 April - 1930 - Maynard. Speaker: Claire Carter (Operation Moffat film and talk).

Wed 8 June - 2000 - Winking Man.

Late August/early September date TBC – Glossop.

Wed 16 Nov - 1930 - Maynard (AGM).

many hot topics we have had would not have been the same were it not for them. As such, Becky and I have a high set of standards to live up to, but it's a challenge that we are willing to accept.

In the short term we very much hope to keep things moving in the same direction, by concentrating on the core issues of access, debate, and discussion. Whether you're attending a meeting for the very first time or haven't missed one in years, whether you're a keen climber or an occasional hill walker, each meeting should have something that is of interest and relevance

We very much look forward to being a part of that. Here's to a great new year!

Rob

The Chair talks

By Rob Greenwood



It was a great honour to be voted in as Chair at December's AGM. The Peak Area is undoubtedly one of the most active and vibrant areas throughout the UK and in terms of attendance, it's average is almost double that of any other area - a testament to the great care people feel towards the local area.

Over the past four years we have had the privilege of a superb Chair and Sec - Neil Foster and Lynn Robinson - who have really made the meetings what they are today; the interest of the discussion, the liveliness of the debate, and the

The 2016 AGM weekend is taking place at YHA Castleton (Losehill Hall, Hope Valley, Derbyshire, S33 8WB) from Friday night (15 April 2016) through to Sunday (17 April 2016).

The BMC has booked the entire venue for the weekend so BMC members have sole use of all the available facilities.

Book your accommodation and food via the BMC office (0161 445 6111) for a weekend full of social get-togethers, walking and climbing activities and a few meetings!



Access Notes

By Henry Folkard

Dateline: 5 January 2016



The last Area Meeting does not seem to have been that long ago, and it seems to have done nothing but rain since – except on one memorable day when, for the first time in the 71 winters I have known, I had to cut the grass in late December. Something is clearly different in our climate!

Access wise a lot is about to happen in 2016, but not a great deal actually has yet.

A few of us are meeting Danny Udall just before the Area Meeting to begin to talk through what we feel about the future management of **Burbage, Houndkirk and Hathersage Moors – including Millstone**. So if there are any points you think are relevant and should be included in the BMC's contribution to a new Management Plan please say so at the meeting. There are in fact a whole load of issues about grazing, fences, new access routes, provision for mountain bikes, land and habitat management, birch clearance at Millstone, fencing and belay points and so on.

There has been a recent exchange of papers regarding ring ouzels in the Burbage Valley. A sense seemed to be being conveyed in a paper on which the BMC had not been consulted that the major issue concerning survival of ring ouzels was disturbance from climbers. The BMC

responded that we had a perfectly effective method for agreeing any nesting restrictions that might be necessary, and that as a result no nests had been lost as a direct result of disturbance from climbers. There was no need to take any additional measures. The BMC pointed out that numbers returning to breed each Spring had more to do with how many birds were shot on migration than anything to do with climbers. Likewise predation had been proven to be the major reason for nest loss – again nothing to do with climbers. Thereafter people and dog disturbance tended to be concentrated in parts of the Valley frequented by ring ouzels where there were no climbers, like Burbage Brook. Over and above all that there were major issues over

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Contribute £15 and you will be helping fund access improvements, ring ouzel conservation, woodland management works and appropriate interpretation. As a thank-you you will receive a sticker to display in your car for 12 months free parking at Stanage-North Lees car parks, plus a discount at the campsite. All money raised from the stickers will be used directly in the management of Stanage-North Lees.

For more information
www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/stickupforstanage



habitat management, in which alternative grazing regimes were significant, and where a major conifer plantation, now removed, has robbed ring ouzels of prime feeding and breeding habitat. Ring ouzels do not get along with conifer plantations, and if, as can be observed, favoured feeding locations are on roadside bunds outside the Valley, it suggests that feeding habitat within the Valley is not all it might be.

Danny will stay around for the first part of the meeting, so if anyone has any questions they would rather ask him direct there will be an opportunity. The same is true for **Eastern Moors**, as the first Management Plan for them is about to become time expired and we will need to offer some comments from the BMC for the next one.

Local Peak newspapers have had a lot about a proposed deer cull on Eastern Moors. The red deer, which are wild animals, descendants of stock that escaped from Chatsworth, are welcome on Eastern Moors and there is no

Please send articles, letters, photos, notices and so forth, to peakarea@gmail.com All topics considered, the only requirement is that it is relevant to the mountaineers, walkers and climbers in the Peak Area. Summit magazine is the place for the national stuff. Any length up to 600 words; if you want to go longer, best to call us first. **We particularly welcome material from clubs.** Deadline for material is two weeks before the meeting.

routine culling programme. Numbers are reviewed after the rut count each year and decisions made thereafter. In 2014 the rut count was 262 or 263. Experience has shown that if numbers get much above 160 – 200 collateral problems begin to occur concerning the health of the herd, potential increase in incidence of Lyme disease and TB, impact on conservation, native tree survival and grazing strategies, risk of road traffic accidents and, not least, strong representation from residents of Curbar, Calver, Froggatt, Grindleford and Dore whose ornamental shrubs, trees and allotments have become favoured feeding areas.

On a wider compass there is also increased pressure from increasing numbers of roe deer which currently are more in the Rivelin area, but on the move towards Eastern Moors. Since there are no natural controls on deer numbers the aim is simply to preserve a sustainable balance for mammals within the landscape.

Danny will also be able to bring us up to date on proposals for better public representation on the **Sheffield Moors Partnership**, and on the vexed topic of re-wilding – a catch-all term by which different people understand very different things.

The question of tree encroachment at **Gardoms** has been raised again, and remains difficult to resolve by negotiation. Nonetheless some subtle improvements have been effected over time.



Rebekah Newman, the Property Manager for **Stanage North Lees**, will also be around to bring us up to date on what is happening there, and more generally within the National Park post the Autumn Statement.

The BMC has been asked to help erect the new Stanage Pole – a 22-foot larch trunk that is already prepared. Hope Valley Cement Works are designing and making a bespoke metal collar into which the new pole can be slotted – by us. Rebekah is about to talk to Adam about how to do it, though at the time of writing this will be news to Adam. Suffice it to say there will be a request for volunteers to help, under Adam's watchful eye, on what will be a high profile public event on 17 April – with the possibility of a dress rehearsal without the public a week or two before.

There are changes afoot for the **Stanage Forum Steering Group** with a change of Chairman, and perhaps adoption of new emphases in its work. Some of that may be resolved before the Area Meeting, but has not been so resolved at the time of writing.

There will also be updates on proposed access improvements, how Stand Up For Stanage income is being spent, and on the Heritage Lottery Fund bid. I think it is now generally known that Mary Bagley will be leaving the National Park Authority, and we all owe her a huge vote of thanks for her really positive contribution towards the future well-being of

Stanage – so **Thank You Mary**. A different, rather than a replacement position, is being created but no appointment has yet been made.

Rebekah will have Ours to Care For Stickers for 2016 with her, and a credit / debit card reader. The 2016 donation has been held at £15. She will also have some very good value ring ouzel T-shirts and mugs for £10 and £5 respectively.

One report states that National Parks generally suffered a 35% to 40% cut in the period 2010 to 2015, and other income losses had also been experienced eg from grants and bank interest. One response has been for all ten National Park Authorities to create a new company, National Parks Partnerships Ltd, that will identify commercial opportunities. Do you think this is what National Parks were set up to do? No details are yet available to my knowledge, but this is certainly a space for the BMC as well as the Peak Area to watch with very great care.

Further north access issues principally around **Standing Stones** seem to be moving towards a solution. The signs which say Private Land are not actually illegal, so we may find other signs saying Open Access Land to make it clear that is what it is. A new access point has been agreed, or more or less agreed, from a large formal lay-by a little way east of the current approach, and when this is confirmed the RAD database will be changed to give a new preferred approach, from the lay-by via Rimmon Cottage. A formal access



point will be installed. It may look a little incongruous as the fence is down anyhow, but at least it will make a point.

The landowners' take on it all is that since the Dove Stones Reserve was created they have had to contend with many more dog-related problems, and people behaving badly, because there is an impression their land, as well as the Reserve land, is public property, and therefore fair game for being trashed. Make of that what you will: suffice it to say we have picked up no reports of any problems from the RSPB who run the Reserve. All we do know is that 2015 was successful in terms of breeding birds on the Reserve largely because of quicker than anticipated payback from moorland restoration work which has improved breeding habitats.

Elsewhere in the Dark Peak the ever spreading track across very wet moorland between **Chapelgate and Brown Knoll** is scheduled to be slabbed. Slabs have been a significant bone of contention in the past, and for some they certainly remain singularly unwelcome in the landscape. However in this instance our mountain walking reps agree that in landscape

terms, as well as enjoyable walking terms, they offer on balance the best solution to a difficult issue, and I certainly agree. The proof of the pudding is in the eating as the stretch from Brown Knoll to Edale Cross amply demonstrates.

The Public Inquiry on **Longstone Edge East** is scheduled from 19 January for three days, held at Aldern House, starting at 1000. The BMC will be there and we have notified the Inspector we wish to reserve our right to speak, subject to his / her discretion, should we need to. Having had an extensive briefing before Christmas from the Senior Minerals Planner it may transpire that our presence could prove very necessary. We shall be prepared to contribute our views. I can give an update at the Area Meeting since the Inquiry will be under way at that time.

Whilst talking to Senior Minerals Planners we touched upon the question of access to **Topley Pike Quarry**, and again any update on that can be given at the Area Meeting.

Lets hope it stops raining!

The BMC's Regional Access Database (RAD) has up to date information on all crags in England and Wales. Otherwise access rep contact details are on the [BMC web site](#). Access reps attend most Area Meetings if there are any points you want to raise with them, or you can phone Henry Folkard on 01298 871 849 or the BMC office on 0161 445 6111 (office@thebmc.co.uk).



Hill Walking in The Peak Area

By Cath Lee

Joint BMC Peak Area Hill Walking Representative



November Hill Walking Day

Despite an atrocious weather forecast, 21 enthusiastic hill walkers turned out to join BMC Peak Area volunteers on a walk around Combs Moss in the Dark Peak on Saturday 28 November. The forecasters didn't get it wrong on this occasion, but despite the rain and strong winds everyone agreed that it had been a great day up in the hills. On arriving back safely in the village of Combs at the end of the walk, the lovely open fire in the Beehive Inn lured everyone in and a good time was had enjoying a drink and a chat. You can read the full report of the day on the BMC's website. (www.thebmc.co.uk/battling-wind-and-bringing-walkers-together?s=4)

Future BMC Hill Walking Events in the Peak Area

From comments made on our November hill walking day, it would appear that there is a strong appetite for further Peak Area walks. The BMC's AGM and Annual Gathering, which this year will be taking place in Castleton (16 – 17 April), could be an excellent opportunity for the wonderful climbing and hill walking opportunities within the Peak District National Park to be showcased. With this in mind, we are

hoping to organise a couple of guided hill walks during that weekend. If anyone would be interested in helping to organise or to lead these events, then please contact Peter Judd (contact details on page 8) or attend the Peak Area meeting on 20 January when the events are to be discussed.

Another opportunity to enjoy a day in the hills, and at the same time support a national BMC campaign that is to be launched in the spring, would be for us to organise a hill walking/litter picking day. The BMC's Mountain Magpie initiative aims to clean up the growing problem of litter on Britain's most popular hills and mountains. If you would be interested in getting involved, either as a leader/organiser or as a participant, or if you have a suggestion for a good hill in the Peak District to tackle, then please get in touch with Peter or me.

BMC Hill Walking Working Group

Peter and Cath who represent the Peak Area on the BMC's National Hill Walking Working Group both feel that good progress continues to be made in making membership of the BMC relevant to hill walkers as well as climbers. Work over the coming months is likely to focus upon:

Working more closely with the BMC's Access and Conservation Trust on hill walking issues;



Involvement with the forthcoming BMC campaigns – ‘Mend our Mountains’ & Mountain Magpie’;

Input into a national review of BMC member benefits;

Consultation with members on what they want from the BMC;

A number of frustrations remain, most notably the lack of up to date member email addresses in the BMC’s national database making it difficult to communicate effectively with members.

Cumbria floods

Although we have been fortunate in the Peak Area not to experience the severity of flooding that has been experienced further north, I’m sure that all of us who enjoy walking in areas such as the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales have been upset by the devastating effect on local communities up there of the torrential rain and flooding.

If you would like to help to support those communities, then why not get involved with ‘The Grand Day Out in Cumbria’ (www.granddayoutcumbria.org.uk) which is a county-wide fund-raising day on Saturday 16 January. There will be fell walks /sports /music /eating /drinking and all sorts of fun things to raise funds for the Cumbria Community Foundation Flood Appeal, Mountain Rescue and other voluntary rescue services who are so important during the floods.

Litter left on our hills and mountains is a constant irritant for most hill users. Matt LeVoi, BMC Lake District hill walking rep. and local mountain activities leader, came up with an innovative plan to encourage more hill users to do something about this by launching his **#MountainMagpie** twitter hashtag campaign. The idea is that hill users are not only encouraged to pick up and carry off any litter they find on the hill but also to take a photo of the offending material and post it on Twitter accompanied by the hashtag **#MountainMagpie** thereby promoting such behaviour to other hill users amongst their followers (and perhaps even shaming one or two litter depositors along the way too). The BMC has decided to adopt this campaign and give it a major re-launch in the spring.

BMC Peak Area Contacts:

Peak Area Chair, Rob Greenwood:

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Secretary, Becky Hammond:

becky@bmcvolunteers.org.uk

Peak Area Reps (your voice on the BMC National Council): <http://community.thebmc.co.uk/peak>

Access Reps Co-ordinator, Henry Folkard:

henry.folkard@bmcvolunteers.org.uk

Peak Area Hill walking Reps:

Peter Judd: Peak10roam-bmc@yahoo.co.uk

Cath Lee: Cath.lee@peakwalking.com