

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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LONDON & SOUTH EAST AREA MEETING

Meeting held at The Devereux, 20 Devereux Court, Temple, London WC2R 3JJ
on Thursday 26th November 2015 at 7.00pm.

Minutes

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Chaired Rik Payne (RP)
Minutes taken by Lisa Payne (LP)
BMC Representatives Nick Kurth (NK) Brian Smith (BS) Niall Grimes

2. Minutes of previous meeting held on 3rd September 2015

Copies were available on the night and attendees asked to review, no issues were raised.

3 Discussion on Area Representatives

3.1 Clubs – Tony Williams (TW)

- TW raised again the issue of the massive loss our area feels of the post of RDO (Regional Development officer) for the London & SE area. The work Liz Holley put into bridging the gap between clubs and the BMC will be sorely missed and the clubs within our area feel this issue still needs to be addressed.
- Tony highlighted some of the issues raised from The Sport England survey into “Getting active outdoors”, namely how best to retain membership numbers amongst clubs, the message being making your club look “fun” through social media and having a good foundation of training for new members.
- He also proposed a motion to the members to agree the following statement to be put forward at the next National Council meeting in December. “The London and South East Area believes that the healthy development of mountaineering in this country benefits from healthy clubs and that the BMC should become more active in its support of clubs and should listen carefully to the issues being raised by the BMC Clubs Committee”. This was seconded by Vic Odell and carried by a majority of votes from the members present.
- BS confirmed that feedback from the Clubs Committee strategy paper will be forthcoming. NK advised that the strategy paper is important to the BMC to support clubs and this would be reviewed at the next National Council meeting.
- Lastly TW suggested asking a Sports England representative to give a talk at a future Area Meeting; this was strongly supported by BS & NK.

- Nancy, the chair of the MMC requested that Club Chairs need to have more support in terms of training for new members. In her view London clubs seem to have a higher turnover of members which results in issues of a lack of established members being on hand to help newer climbers make the step to climbing outdoors.
- RP explained that the issue of a RDO for the L&SE area had been discussed with the BMC Office. (see section 4.1)

3.2 Youth – Reports from Juan Avendano for the North and Tanya Sage for the South

- North – Alongside coaches from Craggy Island they have been delivering the Regional Academies, 3 of 4 completed so far with most of the 24 children invited attending.
Venues for the YCS are expected to be confirmed within the next few weeks. This year's first Blokfest saw the highest number of U18's registered for the competition, over 200 in the country.
- South – Entrants into the YCS competition have increased from 94 in 2010 to 213 in 2015. Given the increase in numbers this year they will be taking a London South and a London North team to Ratho.
The London & SE region has won the YCS Grand final team event for the last 6 years.
Many of the youth climbers who started with the YCS have gone on to make the GB Climbing Team.
Venues and dates for the 2016 YCS are set and are published on the BMC website.
These YCS events are entirely reliant on volunteers so anyone keen to help would be welcomed

3.3 Hill Walking – Paul Burgess one of our regions reps attended the last Hill Walking Group meeting and raised the following points resulting from that meeting.

- Hill Walking needs better representation in the BMC Magazine.
- A rough show of hands indicated that from the members at this meeting there was roughly a 60/40 split of predominately Climbers versus Hill Walkers. BS reported that from a survey undertaken 2 years ago of all the BMC members found that 62% of members said Hill Walking was their number 1 activity.
- This prompted a discussion centring on how best to promote Hill walking to members in our region. From this discussion the idea of a "Virtual Club" using social media to link people together was put forward to take to the next Hill Walking discussion group.
- The issue of having "Mountaineering" in the name of the organisation was raised as a possible reason for putting off potential Hill Walkers from joining the BMC. BS mentioned that this was under discussion.

3.4 Climbing Walls – Nothing of note

4. National Council

4.1 Report from last meeting

- The issues some members have regarding BMC emails going into spam folders was raised. Tony Ryan was going to investigate.
- A member asked about access to the National Council Minutes. RP explained that the unratified minutes would be available on line shortly after the meetings and then any changes to the minutes would be made once ratification took place at the next meeting. NK confirmed that the minutes were available online.

- RP report that he had had a discussion with Dave Turnbull and Nick Colton at and after the last National Council meeting. It was explained that the change in the roles of two RDO's has come about due to changes in the emphasis in the funding from Sport England; RP explained Liz Holley's role was funded by Sport England. An argument was made that one of the two roles (Equity Officer or Youth Officer) should be based in London, but that the roles had been advertised as based in Manchester!

4.2 Matters arising from the report

- See section 3.1 on Clubs report

4.3 Matters for the next meeting

- Need for more support for Clubs within the region

5. Any Other Business

5.1 SVG (Sandstone Volunteers Group) highlights from the Open Meet

- Isolated Buttress – At the last meeting a member raised the issue of how the decision was taken to destroy and remove the unsafe boulder above the gully of Isolated Buttress. After investigation by the BMC office and consultation by RP and Tim Skinner and Sarah Cullen from HRMG it was reported that although the decision was taken swiftly reasonable consideration and consultation had taken place. Further to the removal of the unstable block it was agreed that allowing climbers to use their own methods at their own risk was the best solution to the issue of access.
- Work on cement bonding is being undertaken in conjunction with the University of Portsmouth.
- Harrisons Rocks - The use of disposable BBQ's and campfires is strictly banned in any areas of the site with the exception of the communal Fire Pit.
- The next Sandstone Open Meet is 15th May 2016

6. Date and location of next Area Meeting

February 3rd 2016

The Devereux, WC2R 3JJ

Guest Speaker Shirin Shabestari – Persian Pursuits

Following the meeting, there was an excellent presentation by Jon Griffith, Alpinist and Photographer.