

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Peak Area Annual General Meeting Wednesday 16th November 2016 The Maynard, Grindleford

Present:

Rob Greenwood (chair)	Becky Hammond (secretary)	Simon Jacques
Chris Moor	Daniel Hoyle	Alan James (UKClimbing)
Neil Foster	Andrew Elliott	Mike Pike
Clare Reading (FRCC)	Graham Hoey	Jo Astill
Chris Hindley	Austin Knott	Philip Gwyther
Duncan Campbell	Alison Lancashire	Howard Lancashire
Jenny Wass	Fiona Jones	Robert Townsend (The Mountain Club, Stafford)
Martin Wass	Chris Taylor	Katy Coutts
Mike Cheque	Dave Parry	Toby Wilson
John Coefield	Ben Bransby	Ian Milward
Andy Janezko	Cameron Anderson	Michelle Cullimore-Pike
Danni Ning	Adam Brown	Rick Gibbon
Mark Warwicker	Christina Richards	Stephen Coughlan
Phil Robins	Graham Sutton	Ross Burnage (Buxton MC)
Ruth Bowring	Greg Bristol (Peak CC)	Valerie Partington
Steve Burns	David Coupe	Rob Adie (BMC staff)
Cath Flitcroft (BMC staff)	Kim Leyland	Peter Judd
Henry Folkard	Simon Lee	Charles Skeavington (Bassetlaw HMC)
Jaimella Espley	David Espley	Geoff Nichols (South Yorks Scouts)
Clarke Boulter	Nick Longland	Mark Vallance (Climbers Club)
Beth Walton	David Pendlebury	Linda McLeish (Castle MC)
Graeme Hammond	Pete Dalton	Simon Lee Michael Kent (Bassetlaw Hill & MC)
Jean Thomas	Dan Middleton (BMC staff)	Guy Van Greuning
Oliver Hill	Ted Rodgers	James Jacobs (Peak Bolt Fund)
John Cook	Spencer Ramsey	John Bayliss
David Brown	Total signed in = 76	Total headcount = 75 (?)

1. **Apologies**

Gary Gibson	Bill Irving	Claire Carter
Luke Barley	Natalia Pearce	Andy Tickle
Adge Last	Cath Lee	Chris Radcliffe
Dom Sellars	Lynn Robinson	Steve Clark
Phil Cooper	Rob Dyer	

2. **Minutes of previous AGM held on 22nd November 2015** – accepted as a true record

3. **Chair's report**

Rob Greenwood welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the meetings that had been held in the last year since his appointment as Chair.

January featured updates from Stanage and the Eastern Moors Partnership, courtesy of Rebekah Newman and Danny Udall, and celebration of the end of the successful Longstone Edge campaign – the BMC's longest

ever campaign. Martin Wass retired from his role as newsletter editor, and Bill Gordon (Stanage warden) regaled us with interesting stories, mostly not about Stanage.

April brought updates from the Women's Development Group, discussion about the National Trust's proposals for activities licensing, and the Mend Our Mountains campaign.

The June meeting at the Winking Man near Ramshaw wasn't so well attended, but we heard about the success of the Mend Our Mountains campaign, a softening on the NT's licensing proposals, and a valuable update from Jon Rowe of the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust.

September's meeting was dominated by the rebranding debate, but unlike many other areas we still found time to discuss other topics including further developments regarding the management of Stanage and the meeting was followed by a fantastic talk from Nigel Vardy.

4. **Election of officers**

The election process was chaired by Simon Lee

Post	Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by	Result
Chair	Rob Greenwood	Neil Foster	Spencer Ramsay	Voted in unopposed
Secretary	Becky Hammond	Henry Folkard	Christina Richards	Voted in unopposed
National Council representative 1	Rob Greenwood	Chris Moor	Peter Judd	Voted in unopposed
National Council representative 2	David Brown	Peter Hammond	Valerie Partington	Voted in unopposed
Area Youth Coordinator	Beth Walton	Becky Hammond	Rob Greenwood	Voted in unopposed
Clubs Committee representative	David Brown	Graeme Hammond	Kim Leyland	Voted in unopposed
Climbing Walls representative	Clarke Boulter	Alan James	Charles Skevington	Voted in unopposed
Hillwalking representative 1	Peter Judd	Henry Folkard	David Brown	Voted in unopposed
Hillwalking representative 2	Austin Knott	Peter Judd	Becky Hammond	Voted in unopposed

5. **Vote of thanks**

Rob Greenwood stressed that the appointment of representative isn't a stitch up, and that anyone with interests or expertise is welcome.

He expressed thanks to:

Everyone who attends the meetings and participates in the high-quality discussion and debate that we have Henry Folkard, who carries out his unpaid work as an access rep virtually full time. Access in the Peak would not be the same without his proactive approach.

All the access reps.

Martin Wass – who edited the Newsletter until January – and Simon Lee and John Coefield - who have taken it on since then.

David Brown, for his well-considered and well put thoughts at National Council.

Cath Lee and Peter Judd, our hillwalking reps who have done so much to raise the profile of hillwalking at our area meetings.

Bill Gordon (Stanage warden), Rebekah Newman (Stanage manager), Danny Udall (Eastern Moors Partnership) and John Rowe (Staffordshire Wildlife Trust): it has been great to have people to work with, who want to consult with us, come along to our meetings and value our opinions.

6. **Dates of the 2017 meetings**

- 8th February
- 5th April
- 7th June
- 13th September
- 22nd November

all at the Maynard Arms, Grindleford, S32 2HE

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the BMC Peak Area
Wednesday 22nd November 2016
The Maynard, Grindleford**

1. **Apologies** – as for the AGM

2. **Minutes of the last meeting**

There were two corrections required:

- Chris Radcliffe had sent his apologies to the secretary.
- Adge Last requested a sentence be added to the section on the Horseshoe quarry abseil proposal
“Adge asked those present if they were generally in favour or against the proposal - and the response was overwhelmingly positive”

3. **Actions from the last meeting**

None.

4. **Peak Bolt Fund update**

James Jacob gave an update on the recent reinvigoration of the Peak Bolt Fund. The PBF is for re-bolting of routes, not for new routes. The finances are now managed by a local activist (it was previously someone who has moved out of the area). They have brought together all the equipment (bolts, glue, drill) under one roof. There is going to be a push in 2017 to get more people involved, as until now most work has been done by Kristian Klemmow and Gary Gibson. It will start in the spring: there will be a workshop day run by Dan Middleton to train anyone new to bolting. Please see the website if you're interested or want to donate (<http://thepeakboltfund.blogspot.co.uk/>)

In response to a question, it was confirmed that the PBF's standard lower-off is two threadable ring bolts, and this will be used when re-bolting routes. Almost all the bolts are glue in bolts supplied by Bolt Products.

5. **Fixed equipment policy and the Peak Limestone Guidebooks**

Simon Lee explained that the Peak Area Fixed Equipment Policy had been written for the new limestone guidebooks, and agreed at this meeting that it should be printed in full in the guidebooks. It involved extensive effort and discussion over several meetings. However, when the Peak Limestone North guidebook was published, the policy was not included – there was a brief reference, but no specifics on how to find it online. Enquiries to the Chairman of the BMC Guidebooks Committee (Ian Carr) were met with an unsatisfactory explanation, but he has agreed that it will be printed in full in the Peak Limestone South. The Peak Limestone South guidebook is currently in draft form (having been delayed by the Lancashire guidebook). They need high quality photographs of people climbing on limestone routes – please contact Niall Grimes at niall@thebmc.co.uk

6. **Stanage-North Lees update**

Henry Folkard reported that due to a management reorganisation at the Peak District National Park Authority, significant changes are afoot in the management of the Stanage-North Lees estate. This follows a change in Chief Executive and the appointment of a Change Manager.

At the end of the year Rebekah Newman's role will be replaced by four or five people, who will include Stanage-North Lees as part of a wider range of responsibilities. The BMC and the Stanage Forum have not been given a specific person to contact.

Bill Gordon (warden) will be retiring next year and is already on reduced hours. Flo Gordon has already resigned from managing the campsite.

These changes are concerning and frustrating because after many years, finally two years ago, we reached a situation where we felt the estate was being well managed in an accountable way with partnership working between the management and stakeholder. Now this is under question again.

There are concerns the new arrangements will jeopardise proper integration of the way the many very different, and often conflicting, aspects of managing the Estate will be harmonised, and that seeking commercial opportunities will be seen as a primary focus. Climbing will be protected as it is covered by CRoW. However other activities such as hang gliding are not protected in the same way, and there are questions about the future of the campsite. Income from the estate may no longer be ring-fenced as it has been for the last couple of years. The future of the Stanage Sticker, carparks etc is all under question.

A good summary is available from the last Stanage Forum minutes
http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/821468/SFSG-Minutes-2016-11-03.pdf

Henry will continue to represent the BMC in discussions but is resigning from the Stanage Forum. John Horscroft intends to bide his time a little longer.

There were questions from the room about what people can do about it. Henry and John consider that we should wait and see what happens and review in six months. We will see the effects creeping in slowly and under the surface. We need to hold them to account.

The meeting agreed that Rebekah Newman and Bill Gordon have both done a fantastic job and that we wish to thank them both personally for this.

Action – Rob Greenwood to write to Rebekah and Bill, and copy the letter to the PDNPA Chief Executive Sarah Fowler

7. **Other access updates**

As previously reported, the Ring Ouzel survey showed stunning results. Climbers are the least common cause of nest disturbance. The number of nests in the Stanage and Burbage has increased from 18 in 2002 to 26 in 2016, despite being areas that are highly frequented by people.

Henry attended “Mending Our Ways: BMC Upland Path Conference” on 10th November: the focus was on path erosion in upland environments.

The contractor working on the Cutthroat path seems to be doing a good job.

Mountain bikers have proposals for Cutgate and there are new proposals for Chapelgate.

The Peak District has won an award for the quality of its footpaths.

8. **Area Youth Coordinator**

Beth Walton has been acting as the Area Youth Coordinator and has now been formally elected at the AGM.

She asked if anyone could help as belayers or judges at the Midlands and Peak Area rounds – they are currently very dependent on parents of the children that are climbing.

Round 1 - 28 January - Nottingham Climbing Centre
Round 2 - 25 February - Creation Climbing Centre, Birmingham
Round 3 - 25 March - Awesome Walls, Sheffield
Please contact Beth if you're interested.

9. **National Council Report**

David Brown reported that the September meeting followed the area meetings discussions about the re-branding proposals. Most other areas had only discussed the rebranding – the Peak had been unusual in having other topics on the agenda.

Re-branding - Most areas had negative about the idea of re-branding, and again the Peak had been unusual in having a mixture of views. The final vote was on the motion “National Council does not support full re-branding” and there were 11 votes in favour, 0 against and 8 abstentions.

Threshfield Quarry in North Yorkshire – Tarmac are unwilling to consider its use as a sport climbing venue as they’re concerned about the liability.

Yorkshire – concerns that proposals for mountain bikers to have increased access to footpaths/bridleways do not address the management of increasing access and the environmental implications, other path users, etc.

North East area have noted a spate of climbing accidents which appear to be associated with indoor climbers who are new to climbing outdoors.

North West area had held their first meeting since January specifically to discuss the re-branding.

Climbing as an Olympic Sport – National Council agreed to keep competition climbing in the UK under the umbrella of the BMC.

BMC finances - The BMC has a financial deficit for the first time in several years. Currently approximately 20% of expenditure is funded by Sport England, and this is expected to reduce by around 25-35% in the next 5-year funding round. Sport England money is spent on discretionary projects that could be stopped (i.e. not core BMC activity) and pays for the Equity Officer, Youth Officer, Clubs & Regional Development Officer and Hillwalking Officer.

The BMC has just advertised for a Commercial Partnership Manager to try and increase income from other sources.

David asked for people’s thoughts on how the BMC should deal with the deficit and expect reduction in funding. Comments included:

- We need to look carefully at what we’re doing (e.g. core/necessary vs desirable)
- How much would subscriptions need to increase to cover the shortfall?
- Club members who are members of more than one club can choose to reclaim the extra subs – how much money is this?
- A few years ago the BMC opted *not* to use the reserves that had built up, to save them for hard times. So we could dip into them now.
- Repeatedly dipping into the reserves would not be desirable.
- Subs have increased very little in recent years. A small increase year on year is a good idea.
- Increasing subs might jeopardise trying to attract younger members.
- Increasing subs would not jeopardise attracting younger members as it wouldn’t really be much in the scheme of things.
- Increasing subs would make it more expensive for people who are joining solely to buy insurance, and may therefore put them off both membership & insurance.
- There are currently individual, club, student and family memberships. Around one-third of people in the room thought it might be worth exploring the idea of having other categories.
- Have a special category for under 21’s (at present it is 18 for Youth Membership)
- Could offering Climbing Wall Insurance be another source of income? It isn’t currently provided.

Action – Becky to ask BMC office for figures regarding club subscriptions reclaims.

Action - Rob to put the idea of climbing wall insurance to National Council.

10. **Hillwalking Update**

Peter Judd thanked Cath Lee for sharing the role until now, and welcomed Austin Knott as her replacement.

Work has begun on path repairs on Ringing Roger that were funded by the Mend Our Mountains Campaign. 40 tons of stone has been lifted into place by helicopter and 3 weeks of ground works are about to begin.

The Hillwalking Working Group has a couple more meetings to go, and is preparing the strategy proposal to build on the work. There are concerns about the implications of the loss of income from Sport England.

Austin and Peter will be leading a walk on Kinder on Saturday 26th November.

11. **Update from BMC Officer**

Cath Flitcroft (Access and Conservation Officer) explained that the access team is running low: Cath starts maternity leave very shortly, and her maternity cover will start a week later. Elfyn Jones has been unwell long term but hoping to return soon.

The Mend Our Mountains Campaign raised £114k. Mend Our Mountains 2 is being planned: this will be a year long campaign with a target of £1 million.

The Outdoor Survey ran for a year, with approximately 3500-4000 people in the sample. The report will be available on the BMC website in the next couple of weeks.

The All Party Parliamentary Hillwalking Group is looking at the funding of National Parks etc. The implications of Brexit in for agricultural funding, access, etc are still to be determined.

The World Youth Climbing Championships were recently held in China: Tara Hayes won silver and William Bosi won bronze in bouldering, and William also won silver in the combined (lead, boulder and speed) event).

12. **Peak Area Newsletter**

Items for the next newsletter should be sent to Simon and John by 23rd January – email peakarea@gmail.com

13. **Any other business**

None

14. **Date, time and venue of the next meeting**

Wednesday 8th February 2017, 7.30pm at The Maynard, Grindleford.

After sarnies and chips, everyone enjoyed the Annual Quiz.
Thanks to Jon Fullwood and Simon Wilson who set some challenging questions.

Many thanks to the individuals and who generously donated quiz prizes. Thanks to their generosity everyone left with two prizes!

***Jo Royle Outdoor, Outside, Hitch N Hike,
Cordee, Rockfax, Vertebrate Publishing, Pete O'Donovan,
The Foundry Climbing Centre, The Climbing Works, Awesome Walls,
Heason Events, The BMC, UK Bouldering,
Beta Climbing Designs, DMM, Wild Country, Five Ten,
Made By Scavenger, Alpkit, and Rab.***

The BMC Peak Area team are:		
Chair	Rob Greenwood	robgreenwood@bmcvolunteers.org.uk
Secretary (<i>for meeting info, agenda items or any other issues</i>)	Becky Hammond	becky@bmcvolunteers.org.uk
National Council Representatives	Rob Greenwood	
	David Brown	jbthebandhouse@gmail.com
Area Youth Coordinator	Beth Walton	beth.megan.walton@outlook.com
Clubs Committee Representative	David Brown	
Climbing Walls Representative	Clarke Boulter	clarkeboulter@yahoo.co.uk
Hillwalking Representatives	Austin Knott	austinjknott@gmail.com
	Peter Judd	peak10roam-bmc@yahoo.co.uk
Newsletter editors (<i>newsletter contributions are always welcome!</i>)	Simon Lee & John Coefield	peakarea@gmail.com

Find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/bmcpeakarea

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