

**BMC North West Area Meeting**  
**5 June 2017, The Black Dog, Belmont**

**MINUTES**

Attendance – 10

BMC Officer in attendance – Jo Rowbottom (JR)

Chair – Carl Spencer (CS)

Secretary – Andy Say (AS)

**Apologies.**

Richard Toon, Stuart Igoe, Les Ainsworth (LA), Mike Hounsley.

- 1. Minutes accepted.**
- 2. Matters arising from the minutes.**
- 3. Area Rep reports.**
  - a. Access and guidebooks.** LA had provided a written report. There was discussion about first ascent information in guidebooks and confusion over future BMC policy. Clarification needed. In the interim it was felt that LA should produce a New Routes/First Ascents leaflet for Wilton Fest and possible circulation with a reprinted guide. Agreed.
  - b. Clubs.** No report.
  - c. Youth.** Stuart Holmes reported that the area squad now had some strong competitors but we were lacking 'strength in depth'. With new initiatives however it was looking good for the future.

It was felt that BMC initiatives to engage with climbing wall users were lacking. One suggestion was that some of the courses currently offered by the BMC (e.g. 'Wall to Rock') could be offered as prizes.

The information with regard to changes to Development Squad selection was welcomed as a positive development. It was noted, however, that the number of competitions to be counted towards selection risked 'overload' on young climbers. It was felt that five would be better than ten.

Ian Vickers and Gill Peet are due to open a new bouldering wall in Bamber Bridge just south of Preston.

- 4. Troy Quarry clean up.** Tim Greenhalgh (TG) reported on the preparations for this. All in hand. He did state that this sort of work was taking up a lot of his time and he wished to relinquish his role as National Council rep. The meeting agreed to Andy Say taking on this role.

**Pex Hill Anchors.** Stuart Holmes gave a report on the current state at Pex Hill. There are environmental problems with glass and litter A 'Friends of Pex Hill' group are undertaking ongoing cleaning and liaison with United Utilities. UU are the quarry owners and are adamant

that climbers should not use fencing for belays but would be supportive of alternative solutions. Whilst there is the odd tree many of the routes that are trad leads have no anchors at the top. It was proposed that double glue-in bolt belay anchors be placed at the tops of c.20 routes and that wire strops be used to protect existing trees. The meeting agreed that this was a sensible proposal and agreed to take it to the BMC officers responsible for Access and Technical as well as to National Council. Les Ainsworth will also be involved in liaison.

AS suggested that it might be useful for the BMC's Land Management Group to look at the feasibility of tree planting on some sites like this and Wilton.

5. **Wilton Fest.** TG reported that all preparations were in place. There would be numerous supporting organisations present (e.g. Wild Country, CAC) and James McHaffie was to give a slide show. A variety of masterclasses were being arranged as were First Aid sessions. TG promised that the weather would be beautiful this year.
6. **National Council Issues.** CS and AS reported on the AGM and the subsequent NC meeting. The main issue at present would seem to be the organisational review and any changes that may be implemented to satisfy Sport England's governance requirements and the Companies Act. It was felt that the BMC needed to remain as a member led representative body rather than a 'top-down' governing body.
7. **Any other business.**
  1. It was suggested that attendance at AGM's, especially amongst younger more active climbers, might be improved if a weekend, mid-day meeting as normal be shifted to the evening. Meeting agreed to raise this at National Council.
  2. Airline restrictions on climbing equipment. They were extremely confusing and implemented in a haphazard way. Could the BMC do anything to help? It was suggested that an article in Summit might help clarify matters for members and that information might be provided by the BMC to support travelling climbers. First idea might be to write to BMC insurers asking whether climbers can claim for extra baggage check-in costs where an airport check-in desk does not follow IATA guidelines and implements their own made up on the spot policy. Particular examples being able/not able to carry ropes, harnesses & runners in hand-luggage.
  3. Changes to data regulations. Shortly new regulations would be implemented that would enable people to require that their personal data is not held offshore. This could impact on climbing wall registration systems (USA). Could the BMC offer a service?
  4. JR gave a resume of her work in the BMC office and in particular how she is engaging with minority groups to get them involved with hillwalking and climbing.

**Date of next meeting: Monday 11 September 2017; venue TBC.**

Minutes taken by Andy Say.