



BMC South Wales area AGM and area meeting

21 November 2017, Up and Under, Cowbridge Road, Cardiff

MINUTES

Attendance: 24

BMC officer in attendance: Elfyn Jones, access and conservation officer for Wales.

**South Wales AGM**

1. Welcome and apologies: Will Kilner (WK) welcomed all to the inaugural AGM for South Wales as an area of the BMC. Apologies received from John Jones, Jenifer Green, Liz Collyer, Goi Ashmore, Julian James, Stuart McDowell, Kate Worthington.

2. Chair's report

WK gave an overview of the past 12 months, highlighting the recent opportunities to feed in to the organisational review process. Vote of thanks to South Wales volunteers over the past year for the new routing and re-gearing that has taken place and for the area representatives and access reps for all of their work.

3. Election of officers

Chair – Olly Burrows (OB) agreed to stand for chair. Active climber and member of both the AC and CC. Olly told the meeting that he has personally benefitted from expedition grants and support of the BMC and wants to be able to contribute. WK proposed. Matt Woodfield (MW) seconded. Elected unopposed. OB thanked WK for his work as acting chair.

National Council reps – Steve Quinton has agreed to stand. WK proposed, MW seconded, elected unopposed. WK continues to serve on NC.

Access reps – Gower – MW agreed to continue, Pembroke – SQ has agreed to continue, Inland – vacant.

Area youth co-ordinator – Simon Rawlinson proposed by WK, seconded by OB, meeting voted a show of support for SR to continue his good work in the role.

Clubs rep – Peter Salenieks (PS)– WK proposed, Martin Skinner seconded, elected unopposed. PS has produced a report on clubs issues to be circulated with the minutes.

Climbing wall rep – vacant.

Hill Walking rep – vacant.

Secretary – Martin Sweeney, WK proposed, PS seconded, elected unopposed.

4. Meeting dates

TBC following discussions by new area team

## Ordinary meeting

### 1. Welcome and apologies

WK continued to chair the meeting and offered an overview of the agenda.

### 2. Minutes of the previous meeting

PS proposed as a true record, agreed.

Actions from the last meeting – Penallta clean-up still ongoing with further info tbc.

National trust licensing scheme – EJ updated meeting that they seem to have backtracked but will still be looking to licence large scale events.

Sustainable bolting policy – WK advised that this was posted on Facebook forums for discussion as agreed. Meeting agreed to defer this discussion for a later meeting when time allows in 2018. EJ suggested inviting Dan Middleton, BMC's technical officer.

### 3. BMC Organisational Review (moved to end of the agenda)

Fiona Sanders (FS) and Tim Strong (TS) gave a presentation on the work of the organisational review group and the proposals made Questions and comments following the presentation:

MW – Thanks for the time and hard work spent on the review, obviously a great deal of thought and detail involved.

John Harwood – Could BMC committees make use of online participation? FS – staff are already looking into this possibility. A recommendation was for a digital strategy to enable volunteers to participate without needing to travel. May be relevant to local areas also.

Nick Trew (NT) – Proposals make sense to me, getting members involved must be a good thing.

PS – How would the new structure enable us to detect shortcomings in governance in the future? FS – The new structure would require an annual review of the overall vision, the board would be subject to annual review, nominations committee required to review skills and experience of directors. The board would also require a succession plan. 3 yearly review of the articles of association which would be extended to subsidiary arms of the organisation (e.g. the Access and Conservation Trust).

WK – Sport England is a bit of a red herring, compliance is about good legal governance, not just about Sport England.

FS – The review looked at a range of governance documents, so still aimed at practicing good governance regardless of SE requirements. Recommended that grant funding continues to be for non-core activities.

PS – If membership packages are reviewed, there may be issues over whether people could attend events within clubs (insurance and membership status).

EJ – Increasingly Welsh Government is turning to other bodies for advice and negotiation rather than the BMC.

MW – What would be the roles, responsibilities and remit for a Welsh sub group?

TS – For some funding streams there may be a requirement to have a Welsh subsidiary.

WK – There may be issues beyond funding in terms of representation of all people within Wales and potentially more support for Wales within the BMC. Need to seek member feedback on the area of Welsh identity within the organisation.

FS – We felt there was a need for a focus on Wales. Not yet clear how, but feel we need to serve Wales better.

EJ – Sport Wales is mirroring the essence of the Sport England approach to funding, so without governance improvements, unlikely to be able to access SW funding either.

PS – Feedback received to date from clubs has been that people want to feel involved in a greater whole.

EJ – There are devolution issues in terms of dealing with Welsh bodies. Not suggesting devolving the BMC in Wales but having a separate Welsh identity within the BMC as a whole.

FS – A number of other bodies are looking at having a separate Welsh identity for similar reasons.

MW – overall seems to iron out the difficulties that have come up over recent years.

FS asked for all members to feed in their thoughts via the online survey.

WK asked for the meeting's views on the Board of Directors having 'primacy' over the Members' Assembly.

MW – Clarifying that the board would take a lead from the assembly.

PS – Traditionally tensions between NC and exec have been at the root of some issues. Should the members assembly be given more 'teeth'?

TS – That's the reason for reserved matters, president being on the nominations committee among other areas.

FS – Communications policy would also look at how issues between the 2 could be resolved.

WK asked for thoughts on the suggestion of engagement and representation specifically of indoor climbers.

NT – I've been climbing indoors around 15 years, not seen much of the BMC being pushed. If young people are going there it's a good place to be, it's a must. Don't think the BMC has an alternative but to engage with walls. People will move outdoors anyway and won't then engage with the BMC.

George Hawksworth (GH) – I got into indoor climbing to get into the outdoors via university club rather than the BMC. Bridging the gap is a good idea, not everyone gets the chance to go outside or join a club.

MW – would be good to educate people at an early stage how to behave outdoors, find out information on crag access etc.

PS – Great to recognise indoor climbing but also need to recognise hill walkers. The definition should also include ice climbers.

FS – the definition used is the BMC definition which includes mountaineering as a separate area.

Chris Shorrock (CS) – We've seen a growth in the profile of trail running through competitions.

TS – Biggest issue raised through the consultation was still access and conservation. The Sport England definition gives 2m active participants in mountaineering, but most not members.

MSk – Why recognise indoor climbing as a sport in its own right when so few people participate exclusively in it?

FS – aiming to influence the practice of indoor climbers who move outdoors.

MSk – indoor climbing doesn't need resourcing, it's a commercial activity.

TS – Refer to earlier comment about not knowing how to start climbing outdoors.

WK asked for a show of hands on the specific point of the Board of Directors having 'Primacy' over the Members' Assembly. Meeting generally in favour subject to checks and balances to ensure member wishes are not overridden by board.

#### 4. Access and conservation

EJ updates the meeting – Pembrokeshire review meeting has just taken place. The last year has largely gone well with largest numbers attending range west briefings yet. 2018 briefing dates are now on the BMC site. There were 3 infringements of the nesting ban last year, 2 of those at Green Bridge. There have been some issues of people wild camping or sleeping in vans in car parks in the area. MOD security will take issue with this so all climbers encouraged to use local campsites etc instead.

Gower – Meeting tomorrow with National Trust with discussion around Trial Wall. Any updates will be notified via RAD and area meetings as usual. There was an issue with Coastwatch volunteers apparently trying to move climbers on from the area, they have now been instructed not to do so.

Taffs Well West – Climbers have recently been asked to leave the venue. EJ is making enquiries with the quarry manager at the moment.

Welsh Government access consultation. 16,000 responses were received to the consultation. Now awaiting white paper with next steps.

#### 5. National Council update

**Organisational review** – to be discussed following presentation

**BMC representation on the Mountain Training England board.** MTE have proposed reducing this from 3 votes to 1. PS asked whether cutting the number would still enable consultation with the other mountain training boards – BMC continues to have representation on the other boards. WK gave an overview of the history of BMC representation on the MTE board at the time when the Mountain Leader qualification was first developed. PS offered view that BMC can still have a voice provided that representative attends meetings. Little strong opinion from the meeting on this matter.

**Mend Our Mountains 2** – This campaign has now had a low key launch with major launch and publicity in spring time. Website has been set up for the campaign.

**Commercial partners** – Cotswold Outdoor, Snow+Rock and Montane have been confirmed as commercial partners for the BMC nationally. Discussion invited.

MW thanked Up and Under for their continued support in hosting BMC meetings and providing local expertise in outdoor clothing and equipment. Peter Sheppard (PSH) added that the store has expertise not available in all national chains. General agreement and support for the work of independent retailers within the meeting. Chris Shorrocks of Up and Under thanked the meeting for the support and stressed that money spent in independents stays in the local area and that they are able to respond to customer demand in stocking low volume items and unusual kit.

EJ said that valid points had been raised and were under consideration within the BMC with the potential for local area involvement with independent retailers.

**6. Wales area update**

With a new area team in place now plans will be made to get together with North Wales reps.

**7. Clubs**

Report by PS attached to the minutes. Feedback from clubs and contact with PS would be valuable to help two-way communication between the clubs and the BMC.

**8. Youth**

No update at present.

**9. Hill walking**

No update at present.

**10. Climbing**

Only current issues discussed at access and conservation.

**11. AOB**

George Hawsworth of Cardiff Uni MC raised a query about uni MC insurance rates being raised recently. PS agreed to discuss further and ensure George could discuss with the correct person within BMC. **(Action)**

**12. Date of next meeting**

TBC

Agenda item	Action	Who by	Progress
2	Penallta Cleanup	Pete Sheppard	Ongoing
2	Sustainable bolting policy to be tabled for 2018 area meeting	Olly Burrows	
11	Cardiff uni subs and insurance to be looked into	Peter Salenieks	

Links to the Organisational review report can be found here.

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/whats-the-future-of-the-bmc-report-launch-kendal-mountain-festival>

## **Report from the Clubs' Committee Representative to the Inaugural South Wales Area AGM**

I was co-opted to Clubs' Committee so that the newly formed Cymru South Wales Area could be represented in the period leading up to its inaugural Annual General Meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> November, attending all the Clubs' Committee and area meetings during this period. In addition, I agreed to provide a point of contact for clubs in the Cymru North Wales Area, whilst efforts continued to appoint a representative. This helped to give me a national perspective.

As you will see from the attached Terms of Reference for Clubs' Committee, area representatives play a key role in promoting two-way communication between clubs in their area and the British Mountaineering Council. This principally takes place via the point of contact at each Welsh club, who in turn liaise with their committee and members. In addition, student clubs have their own national representatives and I have worked with them to keep Welsh student clubs informed.

Face-to-face contact is important and I met members of several clubs at the area meetings, as well as the Pembrokeshire Climbing Festival (May 2017) and the Clubs' First Aid Training Course in Snowdonia (September 2017).

There have been plenty of developments within the BMC that will affect Welsh clubs, including the Independent Organisational Review and the forthcoming General Data Protection Regulation. I have kept clubs in touch.

We must also play our part within Wales and I am delighted with the way in which clubs and their members responded to the Future Landscapes Wales and subsequent consultations. The BMC articulated a position and all the Clubs' Committee reps supported us by encouraging their clubs to have a voice, as this affects everyone who enjoys the Welsh landscape.

## Pembrokeshire Climbing Festival (May 2017)

