

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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Minutes of Midlands Area Meeting 7 February 2018 Old Edwardians' Sports Club, Solihull

Present: Andy Potter (Chair), John Edwards (Sec), Jane Thompson (BMC Clubs Officer), Roger Fanner (Solihull MC), Phil Simister (Solihull MC), Ashley Price (Solihull MC), Steve Wright (Solihull MC), Donna Mountford (Solihull MC), Ian Wyatt (Solihull MC), Pete Lubrano (Solihull MC), Clare Lubrano (Solihull MC), Andy Railton (Bowline Club), Suzie Imber (Bowline Club), Zoe Pickering (Bowline Club), Claudia Sarnier (Bowline Club), Michelle Aukland (Bowline Club), A. Root (Bowline Club), 'Pixie' (Bowline Club), David Jones (West Brom MC), Lesley Jones (West Brom MC), Andy Brown (West Brom MC), Richard Cooksey (West Brom MC), John Handley (Coventry MC), Richard Lloyd (Coventry MC), Rob Tipper (Yeti Club), Harry Wilson (Yeti Club), Luke Bowman (Ceunant MC), Richard Sealey (Wolverhampton MC), Paul Greenhow (MAM), Chris Elliott (MAM), Jeremy Stopford (Cave & Crag), Hazel Jonas (Fell & Rock CC), Phil Blatch (Lichfield MC), Hazel Lewis (Pinnacle Club), Sarah Atkins, Michael Blake, Matt Ramsey, Stuart Jamieson, Rebecca Husband, John Maunder, Dave McConn, Alison Horton, James Carter, Scott Haynes, Norman Wakeman & 2 others. **(47)**

1. Welcome and Apologies:

- a. **Welcome:** Andy Potter welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced himself as the new Chairman, saying he had volunteered to serve in the role for a year.
- b. **Apologies:** Apologies had been received from: Brian Smith, Richard Law (Access West), John Churcher (Climbing Walls) & Stuart Webb (MAM).

2. Minutes of the last Meeting: Correction: 4.3 should have read Bear Rock, not Bare Rock.

'The circulated minutes for the Midland Area AGM are accepted as accurate'.

Proposed: Phil Simister; Seconded: Michael Blake. Carried nem con.

'The circulated minutes for the November Midland Area meeting are accepted as accurate'.

Proposed: Phil Simister; Seconded: Roger Fanner. Carried nem con.

3. Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere: None.

4. Reports from Area Representatives:

4.1 Access East: Andy Railton said there was no further news on sale of Granitethorpe and that as far as he was aware no one was working on the Leicestershire Guide book at present. He said that the changes in the Leicestershire Waste Management Plan should not affect any climbing venues as the guidelines state that any tipping of waste into quarries must avoid disturbing leisure activities.

4.2 Access West: No report.

4.3 Climbing Walls: John Churcher had emailed to say Hereford's "The SEND" climbing wall had reopened as "Green Spider" and that the plans for the redevelopment of Bear Rock have been displayed around Warwick Uni. There was some dismay from the floor that Warwick University's wall (Bear Rock) had been redeveloped in a way that made the venue less attractive to many and the fact that responses to consultation appeared to have been ignored. It was noted that there was a rumour that climbing manager at Bear Rock had been sacked seemingly because he had raised reservations and objections.

4.4 Youth: No report.

4.5 Hill Walking: David Jones said the HWIG had not met since the last area meeting but members were due to meet with Dave Turnbull at the end of Feb. He was pleased to report that the year-long "Mend Our Mountains: Make One Million" campaign had already reached 6 figures thanks to the first 'Base Camp' phase targeting corporate donors. Phase 2: 'The Climb' will start in spring and will be the main drive, running over 6 months, to encourage the public at large and mountaineering clubs to donate.

4.6 Club Issues: Andy Potter said that most of the area reps felt the priority for the year

should be better engagement with Clubs. He asked people with any ideas to contact him. There was also the issue of helping Clubs deal with the latest GDPR data protection regs..

5. National Council:

5.1 Report from last meeting: Roger Fanner reported on the 13+ hours of meetings held in November. The morning was spent hearing and discussing the reports of the various sub committees and the afternoon debating ORG recommendations.

The Sunday morning session was the 'normal' National Council Meeting but the first hour was spent continuing the discussion of ORG. Sadly the search engine on the BMC website has been down for the last few weeks, although there is no indication that it is not working, so if members want to find details about particular issues they will have to use Google. He has uploaded a briefing paper to the Midland Area website.

Claudia Sarner said that the meeting in a fortnight contained agenda items relating to subscriptions; a discussion paper had been submitted to National Council in September 2017 posing thought and questions including should age concessions continue to age 21 rather than 18, should there be a special 'Senior' category for those over 75 with 'x' years of continuous previous BMC membership, should life membership be introduced, what should be the balance of contributions of clubs to individual members etc? She would be pleased to hear people's views. Andy Potter drew attention to the area briefing note of Jan 2018 which had been distributed and showed the range of activities the BMC had been engaged with since October 2017.

5.2 Matters for the next Council Meeting: There were no matters from the floor

6. BMC Organisational Review: Andy showed a slide of the ORG Jan 2018 Summary which showed approx 80% membership support and 75% of recommendations OK. However, around 25% needed revising so there had been a proposed change to the timeline. To allow the organisational review group time to meet its obligations the AGM would be on 16th June, not in April (although the venue in the Lakes had been reserved for both dates). There would also be an extra General Meeting in November to finally vote on the new Articles of Association. National Council still have to agree these changes and there was concern what effect this delay in adopting new Articles of Association might cause to Sport England funding.

In response to question from the floor Roger Fanner reported that a grant of £101,000 was paid last week by Sport England. This was 6 months behind normal and the total received was approx £100,000 down on the previous year. This had been met through efficiency savings and by not starting certain new initiatives. Richard Lloyd queried whether it was fair & reasonable for a body to withhold public money from groups in this way and wondered if a campaign of writing to our M.P.s might be helpful. Roger said that he hoped some form of acceptable wording on progress might be found at the June meeting to satisfy Sport England and so prevent further delays or loss of funding.

7. Any other Business, including News from HQ:

- Jane Thompson mentioned that there will be a charity fund raiser "Climbing For All" running 17 – 25 March to raise money to help disadvantaged groups get involved in climbing & mountaineering.
- There are to be 2 training events at venues across the country. Called 'Ready to Rock' these outdoor days will be held for adults and separately for under 18's
- There will be a 3rd training day for committee members which will be held in Gloucester. Full details on the BMC website.
- Claudia Sarner said there would be a BMC 'Clean Up' in the Avon Bridge area on Feb 18th to which all were welcome to help.

8. Date & location of next meeting:

The next meeting will be held at Old Edwardians Sports Club, Streetsbrook Road, Solihull, B90 3PE on Wed 7th April 2018. After the meeting there will be a talk by Emma Flaherty.

After refreshments Suzie Imber gave an interesting account of the methods used to accurately determine the number of Andean peaks over 5,000 and 6,000m based on

mathematical analysis of 1.9 billion data points derived from a Space Shuttle mission. She then described several of her expeditions, including her adventures when a small group of climbers attempted to climb 12 of these 6,000 m peaks in just 10 days. Amazingly several had Inca remains on the summits dating back 500 years or so.

Written by John Edwards