



Cymru South Wales Area Meeting

Venue: GH022 (Great Hall- Ground Floor to the left), Swansea University Bay
Campus Fabian Way, Swansea, SA1 8EN

Date: Sunday, February 11th 2018 at 730 pm (Food from 7pm)

Minutes

12 present

*If anything to be discussed on this agenda gives rise to a conflict of interest for anyone,
please declare it at the start of the meeting.*

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

1.1. Apologies – Gai Ashmore, Roy Thomas, Alan Rosier, Andy Sharp, Eben Muse, Martin Sweeney, Matt Everett, Matt Dix

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 November 2017

2.1. Proposed as stands by Ollie Burrows (OB); Seconded by Will Kilner (WK)

3. Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere

3.1. Penallta Clean Up Meeting; Pete Shepard (PSh): 3rd March is the proposed date although currently liaising with Country Park to coordinate it with the Spring Clean Cymru weekend. Elfyn Jones (EJ) asked if any BMC help was required – it will be promoted on the BMC website once details are brought out definitively. PSh- The last event was 10 years ago as part of the Keep Wales Tidy campaign.

4. BMC Organisational Review

4.1. WK - A new timeline is available on the BMC website. This will be implemented after feedback from areas and an addendum to the existing report taking on board the feedback received but it is currently not ready yet. It has been put back to allow for sufficient consultation.

4.2. WK- Some has been done in time for the AGM and there will be another meeting in November to “tidy it up” and present a Yes or No structure to the board of directors.

Peter Salienks (PS): “A vote to accept principles?” – When do areas and individuals get an opportunity to comment on specifics and enable controversial recommendations to be removed.

EJ/WK – This can happen but after the Apr review is completed and the ORG has done reporting on it's findings. The BMC will need to implement it in their own way, the report is not a binding contract of any kind.

PS – “Is there then going to be membership consultation?” EJ – Executive committee agreed to put to National council to then discuss and recommend it at Area meetings in April. WK- The longer it goes on the less the BMC can function which is causing huge issues for the organisation.

4.3. The Way Forward

4.3.1. WK presented a summary of, a meeting held on Jan 19th 2018 involving a few key past and present volunteer post-holders from N, S

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and mid-Wales to discuss an all-Wales response to the ORG report, especially recommendation 25 (This was available online prior to the meeting).

4.3.2. OB proposed a vote to support the recommendation of the BMC ORG report and subsequent summary statement used in the N.Wales area meet to ensure clarity and unison from Wales as a whole toward the ORG report. The summary read as such:

“BMC Cymru calls upon the BMC to create a presence, and identity, within Wales to better represent the interests of its members to Welsh Government, and the wider outdoor sector in Wales. [Recommendation 25] – OB: It was not voted on as it was felt not enough time had passed since it was proposed at the N.Wales meeting however the general feeling of the room was that of support and that it would be supported in a later vote by the S.Wales area.

“The S. Wales area of BMC Cymru believes that before any meaningful decision can be made about Wales becoming a ‘subsidiary’ of the BMC, a wide-ranging cost-benefit analysis must be completed. Furthermore, that cost-benefit analysis must cover not only the costs and benefits in terms of money, time and effort, but equally importantly, the costs and benefits of influence that a subsidiary could exert over policies, made in Wales, which impact on climbers and mountaineers both living in, and visiting, Wales. [Summary statement used in N.Wales are meeting to coincide with views expressed in S.Wales] – OB: It was not voted on as it was felt not enough time had passed since it was proposed at the N.Wales meeting however the general feeling of the room was that of support and that it would be supported in a later vote by the S.Wales area.

Steve Quintin (SQ): “Will there be a “normal” people summary on how this review will affect them?”

WK: Primacy by the board of directors must be done to ensure the organisation is legal and functions effectively moving forward and to attract and encourage more engagement across the country.

WK gave a brief history of what has happened prior to the ORG regarding Wales’ own identity.

PS: “Why weren’t clubs invited to the “Way Forward” meeting? Clubs and areas were not engaged and need to be involved. OB/WK/EJ: It needed to be started small scale to have something tangible to cascade out to areas and members. It was noted that the “way forward” is just a collection of notes from the meeting and in no way representative of the thoughts of any area in particular and rather a generation of ideas. Matthew Woodfield (MW) (who did not attend aforementioned meeting) described it as a kick starter group. EJ: This situation is reflective of the Wales situation as there is no BMC Officer to coordinate meetings of this kind or gather appropriate thoughts and opinions. If clubs were invited theoretically all members of the BMC would have had to be asked to attend which was not plausible for what the meeting was envisioned to achieve. PS: This is accepted but must be done in conjunction with clubs in future. OB: It was done to ensure information was cascaded



in a coherent manner and with the purpose of improving the Welsh credibility in the BMC, not creating a situation of lots of voices with no outcomes.

5. Reports from Area Representatives:

5.1. Access

5.1.1. Bacon Hole – Raised by Simon Rawlinson; This is an area that has been previously bolted; subsequently banned and now open to bouldering only. Reasoning for ban unclear. MW clarified that it is a site of key glacial sedimentary deposits and endangered bird and bat species and a woolly mammoth tusk. Currently only bouldering as sport routes would come onto the nesting bird area of the wall. This will be reviewed if birds change their nesting habits although they stick to historic sites and therefore will depend on climbers sticking to agreements and behaving appropriately. MW/EJ have met with the new warden who is not rushing into matters and is trying to get a bigger picture before making any changes to current policies. Any action will follow the idea that climbers wait until the birds have been away long enough, it is brought to the area meeting and the ban will be reviewed.

5.1.2. Trial Wall – Currently been retrobolted as a sport venue, is this something people are comfortable with. Does it impose upon the access restrictions in place currently. This will be left until a policy is reviewed in the April meeting.

5.2. Clubs

5.2.1. PS brought a paper raised by the South West Area written by Dr. David Hillebrandt regarding coordination between emergency services and essential services such as mountain rescue and coast guard. It proposes climber education via notices in key areas (Rhossili car park / Bosherton / Ogmere/ Boulders/ Swansea etc) to encourage a better knowledge of procedure for all climbers- despite it being available in all sea cliff guide books. All present thought information via a BMC online article or UKC article would be beneficial. MW thought an awareness segment at the current Gower or BMC festival would be appropriate and help alleviate any issues.

5.3. Climbing Walls

5.3.1. Rock UK launched the New café and have developed the reception area as part of their Phase 1 improvement plan.

5.4. Hill Walking – PS is to use the job description available on the BMC website to promote within the clubs.

5.5. Youth

5.5.1. YCS Round 2 and 3 – Volunteers wanted. They do not require experience of competitions but must be able to competently belay.

5.5.2. Simon Rawlinson is to step down as Youth Coordinator. EJ and all present thanked him for his tireless work. WK suggested 2 people replace him as a youth participation officer and a competition coordinator.

6. National Council:



6.1. Report from previous meeting – The National Council discussed the ORG report

6.1.1. Mountain Training England – Currently the BMC have 4 seats on the MTE. It was voted unanimously that this be reduced (12 votes)

7. Matters to take to next meeting

7.1.1. Quality of bolting in South Wales and a sustainable future.

7.1.1.1. This is to be an agenda item for the proceeding meeting on Tues April 17th in Boulders. See links below for history and agreements already in place. EJ raised the point that if accepted practise by the BMC is followed liability is covered (provided you are a BMC member).

7.1.1.2. OB raised this as a point for discussion from a previous meetings actions (April 2017) Are bolts in South Wales appropriate and sustainable. The point was made by WK that a number of bolts are now being put in that are not sustainable and will cause future problems. OB asked for examples that Dan Middleton could visit and report back to the next meeting about his findings and opinion. Those present gave suggestions of: Trial Wall area of Rhossili, Sheepbone Wall, Dyffryn, Gilwern, Navigation, and Tirpentwys. If Dan cannot get to these crags images from those present can be used instead.

7.1.1.3. OB-The next meeting (Apr 17) will have Dan Middleton along post-crag inspection to discuss his findings and suggest any improvements if appropriate.

1. Gower Bolt Discussion
(https://swmc.org.uk/wiki/Minutes_of_BMC_South_Wales_Action_Group_Bolt_Discussion_-_17th_April_2008)
2. Notes from the 2011 Gower Meeting
(<http://community.thebmc.co.uk/Event.aspx?id=551>)
3. South Wales Bolting Policy
(https://swcw.org.uk/wiki/Crag_Maintenance)

OB: This is not set up as a witch hunt or to scaremonger it is to ensure bolting in South Wales is done safely and sustainably and not to necessarily create a strict list of rules but more a best practise policy that will encourage and educate climbers on what to look for and if bolting what to aspire to.

8. Wales Area Updates – PS: Notes with minutes in future. OB: All relevant notes were present on the BMC website prior to the meeting.

9. AOB

9.1. Access Rep for A470 (Inland Regions) – Bethan Frugneigt voted in unanimously as the new A470 rep. MW to inform her and raise any issues in the next meeting.

9.2. Gower Festival – 7-9th September



- 9.3. University Fees – G.Hawksworth** raised a price increase in the November meeting. PS: They were not paying for a full compliment of members and so when all were named their fees went up accordingly, hence the price increase.
- 9.4. OB** would like to offer Eric Jones and his wife the warmest of thanks for all their years service to the Welsh climbing community with their café at Tremadog as they retire and pass on the business to a new owner Gareth and his wife.
- 9.5. Tremadog Festival** Sat 21st April 2018. A brilliant event to help clean up, climb and get prizes at!
- 9.6. Liability of Stakes at Boiler Slab (EJ)** MW: No one uses them and are easy to remove if necessary.
- 9.7. Range West Briefing (EJ):** A lot of use last year and to continue to promote this. 2018 dates are now on the BMC website.
- 9.8. Taffs Well West (EJ):** Continued access issue. Climbers must acknowledge that if seen climbing may be asked to leave.
- 9.9. Mowing Word (SQ):** Access ban on the section between Diedre Sud and New Morning is back in force.
- 9.10. Cymru Newsletter (EJ)** Good to get a joint newsletter out via EJ. Can get a group to contribute. WK: Peak area have a great one with colour printed versions. It would be good to get a Pan-Wales voice quarterly. MW: It would be a good way to tie the areas together.
- 9.11. Pen-y-Fan Access (PS)** Potential damage in unsuitable conditions. EJ: There is a good awareness and so people are getting “told off” for poor conservation behaviour.

10. Date and venue of next meeting

Tues Apr 17 2018 - Boulders Climbing Wall 730pm

Fri 25 May 2018 - Manobier YHA 7pm

Fri 7 Sept 2018 - Gower Festival (Venue TBC)

Tues 20 Nov 2018 - Up and Under Cardiff 7pm