

BMC Cymru Mid Wales Area Meeting
18th April 2018 at 7.30. White Lion, Machynlleth

MINUTES

1. Welcome: From the Chairman Huw Gilbert

2. Apologies: Mark Bramich, Don Sargeant, Jane Lloyd-Francis, Terry Taylor, Myfyr Tomos.

3. In Attendance: Huw Gilbert (Mid-Wales Working Group Chairman), Dave Williams (BMC Access Volunteer), Elfyn Jones (BMC Access Officer), Tim Jepson (North-Wales Group Chairman), Dafydd Wyn Morgan, Steve Culverhouse, Doug Kerr, Dick Yorke, Peter Cooper

4. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes:

New wall across the approach path to Upper Craig y Merched: Elfyn Jones and Dave Williams have now visited the site. As it currently stands the wall has fallen down again anyway.

5. BMC Update:

a) BMC Organisational Review – Proposals from the Implementation Group:
Tim Jepson presented the proposals of the Implementation Group. These included Stage 1 and Stage 2 recommendations. Stage 1 recommendations are required to be voted on at the BMC AGM on 16th June 2018. Summarised, these recommendations are:

- i) Amend the articles of the BMC to meet legal compliance.
- ii) Introduce electronic voting from the 2019 AGM onwards.
- iii) Increase the number of people required to raise a resolution from 25 to 100.
- iv) Implement changes required to meet Sport England governance criteria.

Each of these four items were discussed during the meeting and no particular disagreement was raised against any of them.

Stage 2 recommendations are open to review and are required to be voted on at the 2019 AGM.

b) BMC Organisational Review – References to Welsh Matters: Tim Jepson once again took the lead and explained how ‘Recommendation 25’ of the Organisational Review states ‘The BMC should consider a clearly defined subgroup, or....a wholly-owned subsidiary for effective delivery of the BMC’s operations and support in and for Wales’.

The meeting discussed this and concluded that in reflection of the differing political landscapes between England and Wales Recommendation 25 should certainly be carried out. Without this and the implementation of subsequent recommendations then the BMC faces a very real risk of becoming irrelevant within Wales.

c) Possible BMC Acquisition of Craig y Forwyn: An opportunity has arisen for the BMC to either lease or buy Craig y Forwyn. Access for climbing on this large limestone crag near the North Wales coast has been denied for decades. Elfyn Jones along with other participants at the meeting praised the quality of the climbing to be found on this crag. Elfyn Jones expanded on the history of the crag and the circumstances leading up to the current opportunity. A figure of £20K was mentioned as purchase price for the crag. The matter was discussed and all present agreed that acquisition was worth pursuing.

d) Update on Welsh Government Review on Designated Landscapes and National Parks: Elfyn Jones informed the meeting that the Welsh Government had received a considerable number of responses to its consultation paper and are still working through this information. The Welsh Government has already however issued a statement saying that there will be no change in the status or designation of National Parks.

e) New Regional Access Database (RAD) App: Elfyn Jones informed the meeting about the new RAD App.

f) Tremfest 2018: Elfyn Jones re-informed the meeting about Tremfest on 21st April. A plea was made for volunteers.

6. Access and Local Issues:

a) Cambrian Mountains Initiative: Dafydd Wyn Morgan informed the meeting of the work of the Cambrian Mountains Initiative. Amongst the aims of the initiative are the preservation and promotion where appropriate of the

landscape, culture and rural economy of the Cambrian Mountains. They are currently pursuing the possibility of becoming the UK's first 'Natural Park' (there are already many hundreds throughout Europe). Dafydd also informed the meeting that there are now five newly named walking routes leading to the summit of Pumlumon which it is hoped will attract more visitors to the area and provide a sustainable boost to the local economy.

Elfyn Jones contributed with the fact that the BMC's Landscape Policy may be of interest or assistance to the work of the Cambrian Mountains Initiative. Huw Gilbert added that we should all be alive to the possibility of potentially detrimental changes to the landscape of such a vulnerable area outside as it is of either National Park or AONB designation. Where concerns may arise the BMC local area meeting is a useful place to raise them.

b) Raptors in the Rhinogydd: Dave Williams is attending a meeting with National Resources Wales (NRW) on 16th May 2018 to talk about concerns that NRW have over climbers disturbing nesting raptors in the Rhinogydd. Of particular concern are ground nesting Merlins. Dave Williams explained that no complaint or accusation has been made about climbers and it's just that both parties want to establish just what the threat might be (if any) and to avoid any problems in the future.

c) Access to Craig y Merched: Although the issue of the new wall blocking the path to Upper Craig y Merched is still formally unresolved a route through it is currently available. More problematic is an access disagreement that has developed lower down the valley. As explained by Dave Williams a disagreement has arisen between the Snowdonia National Park Authority and the farmer at Blaen Cwm Mynach. As such the 'traditional' and once 'permissive' approach walk is no longer allowed. A new and permitted approach is described on the RAD pages and on UKC. Through a joint effort BMC access volunteers and Coed Cadw (on whose land the main crag sits) are to carry out limited vegetation clearance and place way marker posts to aid the new walk in.

d) Mid-Wales Fixed Gear Policy – Doug Kerr raised the suggestion that the next meeting should include a debate to establish a Fixed Gear Policy in Mid-Wales. Huw Gilbert is to include this in the agenda for the next meeting.

7. Any Other Business:

a) Huw Gilbert wished a vote of thanks to be recorded for the work of Tim Jespon in studying and coming to present on the recommendations of the Organisational Review Implementation Group. Huw Gilbert also wished to record a vote of thanks to Dave Williams for his considerable work as a Local Access Volunteer.

b) Huw Gilbert noted his view that it was important that members vote at the BMC AGM on 16th June. Proxy and postal votes can be used.

c) As has become tradition at the Mid-Wales meeting a collection jar was sent round for the North Wales Bolt Fund. A total of £32 pound was raised.

8. Next Meeting: No date was decided. Pending the outcome of the BMC AGM a date for the next Mid-Wales Working Group Meeting will be issued.