

**BMC North West Area Meeting**  
**11th November 2019 @ 19:30, Sedgley Park Rugby Club**

**This meeting dealt with both the area AGM, and the normal area meeting business.**

**At the request of BMC HQ, separate minutes have been prepared for**

- **The AGM (which will be approved at the next AGM).**
- **The normal area meeting business (which will be approved at the next normal meeting)**

**These minutes are for the “normal area meeting” portion of the meeting.**

**MINUTES**

Attendance – 16 (14M: 2F)

BMC Officer in attendance – Rob Dyer (RD)

Chair – Emily Pitts; Secretary – Paul Evans

Area Members –

Les Ainsworth (LA)

Emily Pitts (EP)

Paul Evans (PE)

Tim Greenhalgh (TG)

Robin Mueller (RM)

Stuart Igoe (SI)

Carl Spencer (CS)

Jim Gregson (JG)

Matthew Jones (MJ)

Christian Clail (CC)

Roberta Spagnul (RS)

Shaun Stephens (SS)

Stephen Charles (SC)

Stuart Holmes (SH)

Eric Grindle (EG) - joined meeting after AGM business concluded.

**1. Apologies.** Apologies reported to meeting: Mark Hounslea, Dave Robinson.

**3. Minutes of the last (Sept 19) meeting.**

Accepted as an accurate record.

**4. Matters arising from the minutes**

None noted.

**5. Area Rep reports.**

**a. Access - Lancs**

LA, RD and Dave Cronshaw had a constructive meet with W3 gun club. BMC has withdrawn our complaint to Local Authority. All local climbers should report to BMC or police, ideally with photos of car reg., if they find “unofficial” shooting (no red flags) in the Wiltons. TG will repaint belay stakes above W3.

Brownstones. Good relations with Woodland Trust. Warden has said he will lower the pond level. We have been promised better parking and approach route - TBC, will be notified via RAD.

Cleanups planned next year for Hoghton (possibly in winter?), Deeply Vale (check there are no Kestrels) and Cadshaw Quarry. All done via BMC, EP can help with forms. May also be some path work at Egerton.

There may be scope to enlarge the car park at Warton Small. Lakes climbers are proposing to replace worn bolts on Warton main sports climbs - this would be like for like replacement and is consistent with area policy.

Development has continued at Noggarth with some bolt lower offs being placed.

We are monitoring Summit Quarry - the landowner has widened the track to the N, local authority have told him tipping would be prohibited. The pool area at the RH (S) end seems to be growing, concerns re drainage, LA investigating with local authority rep.

## **b. Access - Cheshire**

MJ and CC updated the meeting on recent work at Pex Hill - Pete Trywn, coordinating with local climbers via the "Friends of Pex Hill" facebook group, had obtained permission to remove trees above Lady Jane Wall. This had made the routes below much cleaner. The local climbers continue to do work to keep this important Cheshire venue in good condition.

## **c. Hillwalking**

SC reported that he had been on the joint Peak / Lancs / Yorkshire hillwalk in Sept. The weather had put most people off, but a good precedent for combined area walks had been set. Other recent events had been sphagnum moss planting on Bleaklow,

SC has been investigating other conservation events in the NW and surrounding areas, which might be of interest to BMC members. He reported that there is moorland restoration work going on above Dovestones reservoir in the Chew Valley, by UU / RSPB.

The national trust in Snowdonia are also very keen to recruit BMC volunteers for work on hills and mountains, possibly offering discounted bunkhouse accommodation at weekends. Some dates that have been suggested are 18/19 April, 20/21 June and 22/23 August.

SC will continue to investigate and will need assistance publicising these events.

SI mentioned that Pendle Hill have a large amount of lottery funding which obliges them to involve volunteers. SC said that when they had been contacted earlier in the year they had not seemed keen to receive BMC volunteer help.

**d. Youth.** SH said that planning for 2020 comps was in place, with 4 rounds planned, 2 bouldering and 2 lead climbing. The grand final is scheduled for April. SH felt that Zoe Spriggins, Amy and Becky were putting lots of work into comps, and things were running much better. Up to 100 competitors are expected from the NW. There were also plans for BMC Youth Meets, involving James McHaffie, in 2020.

**e. Walls.** SH reported that 3-4 more walls were scheduled for development in the NW area, with 1 very large wall in planning. The Depot at Manchester is being enlarged, new centres are planned for Oldham and Blackburn.

**f. Communications.** RS reported that considerable effort was going into reviewing area comms, including production of a 2020 events calendar, comms calendars, reviewing the potential for newsletters and looking at alternative meeting locations and formats to reach new member groups. There was considerable discussion on comms and news. This meeting is largely attended by activists and active volunteers, and there is considerable enthusiasm for involving the wider area community.

## **6. 2020 area meetings**

Next meeting: Wednesday 11 March 2020 – an “outreach” event at Manchester Climbing Centre, involving a James McHaffie talk and the MCC-based “climbing clan”.

Further 2020 Meetings:

- Mid May (Tues 19th or Thurs 21st?) Wilton quarries (Wilton Arms wet weather option).
- Tues 8<sup>th</sup> Sept - Merseyside area
- Thurs 29 Oct (or possibly delay 1 week to avoid half term hols)

## **7. National Council**

CS reported that the current workload peak for National Council, caused by the work required to complete the ORG / ODG initiatives on BMC reform, continues and is expected to last for most of 2020. After this things will hopefully become quieter.

The September 2019 meeting was another marathon session from 09:30 to 18:30, with detailed review of a number of papers on NC reconstitution, partnerships etc .

CS stated that the BMC is proposing to trial for an 18 month period a discounted membership for younger members between 18-27, a demographic we currently do not have enough of. There is some concern over areas of conflict with ABC passport schemes. This will be one factor addressed during the trial, along with the impact on normal student club memberships.

## **8. AOB**

No items of AOB were raised, the meeting concluded at 9.30 pm