

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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LONDON & SOUTH EAST AND MIDLANDS AREAS JOINT MEETING

Meeting held online
on Thursday 30 June 2022

Minutes

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Chaired Chris Stone (CS) Minutes taken by Robert Dufton (RD)

Apologies – Fabrizio Scaliogne

CS welcomed everyone to the meeting which was attended by 21 members virtually, 60% of the members were from Midlands, 40% LSE. CS introduced Will Green, Area Club Coordinator and Tanya Sage, Area Youth Climbing Series Coordinator.

David Jones introduced himself as a Midlands rep on Members Council, as was Claudia Sarner. DJ introduced Andy Potter (Acting area chair) and Ian Wyatt Midlands Area Club Coordinator.

CS welcomed two BMC staff: Jane Thompson (JT) who is also a Midlands member and the BMC's Clubs, Huts and Volunteer Development Officer and Cath Flitcroft, Access and Conservation Officer (Policy) and BMC board member: Caroline Warboys (Senior Independent non-executive director) (CW).

2. Matters arising from previous area meetings

None.

3. Minutes of previous meetings held on 21 April 2022

The minutes of the previous LSE meeting on 21 April 2022 were approved (subject to the correction pointed out by Sherry MacIver (SM) that the meeting had been held on 21 April not 19 April.

No minutes were available from the last Midlands area meeting held on 21 April 2022.

4. Area Reps update

4.1 Access Midlands

Andy Potter reported on this on behalf of Richard Law (Access West) and Andy Harper (Access East). There were some new access arrangements outlined on RAD for Beacon Hill with updated telephone numbers to call local rangers for an access code.

The owner of Carreg-y-Byg had also decided no longer to allow climbing at the crag. The RAD was up-to-date.

4.2 Access LSE: Southern Sandstone

CS reported on behalf of the Harrison's Rocks Management Group. An open meeting was held on 12 June. As previously reported the wire-swaging has been removed from Harrison's Rocks, Stone Farm and Bulls Hollow. All anchors are being reviewed and tested. Some have had to be removed and work is underway to reinstate the anchors following further testing. Until this is completed, some routes do not have two anchors and should be avoided. Information on how to set up a belay equalising the two bolts is available on the Southern Sandstone Climbs website .

Harrison's car park is open 08.00-22.00. There is no update on the use of the campsite which is owned by Forestry England.

English Nature has agreed to some shellac work to be done to Eridge Rocks and so after this is carried out sections of it will be open again for climbing. There are however new sections where climbing will not be allowed. These sections must not be climbed on, failure to comply could result in access being lost to the crag entirely.

The next open meeting for Sandstone users will be held on 23 June 2023 at the Isolated Buttress.

CS posted minutes of the recent open meeting in the chat.

CS referred to the BMC funding of £250-£1,000 for small access/conservation projects. Closing date 8 July 2022.

4.3 Youth

Claudia Sarner (CIS) reported on youth activity.

London hosted Junior British Bouldering Championship in May 2022. Finals were live-streamed and are still available on the BMC website.

Youth climbing series: registration is open 1-31 July for young climbers born 2005-2014.

Subsidised training for younger climbers (U.18) wishing to learn how to coach. The programme is running 9 and 10 July at the Depot, Sheffield. The cost is highly subsidised.

Subsidised youth trad meets happening in July in Snowdonia and in October in Northumberland, these are aimed at young people who already climb with basic skills.

Subsidised courses for families who live in rented accommodation and who receive income support.

Individual BMC membership for young people (under 27) currently costs only £1.55 per month.

BMC University club training seminar on safety and good practice will run on 1-2 October 2022. Up to two reps from their club may attend. Some knowledge may have been lost through Covid and university clubs normally have a high turnover. Please encourage anyone you know whose club could benefit to attend.

Resource for schools published (either for schools with a traverse wall or an interested teacher) called "School Activity Cards". BMC has published info on how to supervise sessions and activities which will encourage climbing. There are links to the curriculum. Resource can be downloaded free of charge from the BMC site.

BMC Youth and Equity Officer James McHaffie will be leaving the BMC.

Request for volunteers to help with youth climbing competitions. Roles include Belayer, Judge, admin support and scoring.

Thanks to all volunteers to who supported the Junior British Bouldering Championships.

4.4 Hillwalking

DJ reported on recent Members' Council Vision Event on Hillwalking. DJ provided a summary of the discussions at the event including how hillwalking is defined, what is the BMC's scope in relation to hillwalking, and current issues in hillwalking in relation to the BMC's plans and priorities for hillwalking, across a wide range of themes: access, conservation, climate change, participation.

Mariella Sullivan has been appointed to a new role with in the BMC as the Hillwalking and Volunteers Co-ordinator.

CS reported that Dartmoor National Park Authority is reconsidering its bylaws on wild-camping. The NPA is intending to continue its support for wild-camping. A local landowner is campaigning against.

Rob Dyer the Access rep for England will be leaving the BMC.

Youth Hostel Association is seeking volunteers from the BMC to lead walks departing from youth hostels during its forthcoming Festival of Walking.

4.5 Clubs

Will Green LSE outlined his introductory conversations in contacting clubs. The key areas of interest were:

- Club contacts
- Upskilling novices
- Committee member training
- Interclub networking
- Ethical and sustainable banking
- Best practice advice

17 and 18 September 2022 intro weekend with a guide at Swanage. Open to 12 people (all fully booked). Will give opportunity for these club members to meet members in other clubs.

WG has been in contact with Jane Thompson as BMC Clubs Officer and will also be joining the BMC Clubs Committee.

Ian, Midlands Area Club Coordinator, spoke about inter-club contacts and the recent Midlands area club reps meeting which was held in May 2022. Reported on BMC AGM. Two clubs present had found reduced attendance at meets although with no loss of membership. Also discussion of succession planning for officers. First anniversary of "Find Your Adventure" webinar. Number of clubs represented was good, including some national clubs. Good presentations by clubs about how they'd used FYA toolkit.

5. Presentation by Dr Cath Flitcroft: BMC Climate Change work

CS introduced Cath, BMC Access and Conservation Officer (Policy).

CF outlined BMC's commitment to the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework and what the BMC was doing in its office and operations. Use of offsetting to address reduction in GHG emissions by 2030 and then net-zero by 2040. Direct purchasing accounts for 96% of emissions.

Advice to members about what actions they can take is being promoted via the Sustainable Steps campaign.

The biggest part of the work is the Climate Project. BMC is working with Moors for the Future and is inviting purchasers of BMC Insurance to make a voluntary payment to the MftF initiative.

BMC will be reviewing messaging about travel and also how much travel advertising is placed in Summit.

November 2022 conference on climate change. Online with morning sessions taking place across the week on different themes.

RD asked about what counted as "Office" activity under the CAF: did it include volunteers impact. CF explained that it covered all expenditure in reimbursing volunteers. The BMC was not yet including attendance by members or other participants at BMC events. Ian suggested that basing calculation on volunteers expenses would understate activity. CF outlined how assessment provided for estimates but over time BMC was becoming more accurate in its recording.

Ian asked about good advice for clubs. CF referred to "club matters", draft guidance for sports clubs.

CIS spoke about the need to change behaviours. Discussion followed about car ownership, lift sharing, and need for better public transport.

CS thanked CF for attending the meeting.

6 Board and AGM update

CS introduced CW and thanked her for attending the meeting.

CW reported on the AGM held on 18/05/22. 680 members voted.

Members' Council Vision events had been held on mountaineering, climbing and hill-walking over the past 9 months.

Access and conservation work led by Dave Turnbull presented to 18 June 2022 board meeting.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion review led by board member Jonny Dry. Board agreed that BMC would employ a new staff member to lead on EDI and recruit a new chair of the Equity Steering Group.

Increasingly the work of the board is about planning forward.

International Federation for Sport Climbing has asked BMC and GB Climbing to host a World Cup event at Ratho. The AGMs of the EUMA and UIAA would also be held in the UK.

The BMC, working with Mountain Training England, Mountain Training UK and Ireland and with Plas y Brenin are planning on making a joint approach to Sport England which will emphasise the mass participation in our sports, the training and education requirements and the risks associated with a failing to support this hugely important sector.

Joelie Chisholm had recently joined BMC as new CFO.

Sport England funding: BMC was working with ABC and other partners on how to deliver programmes.

Update from Health and Safety committee about safeguarding. BMC will be recruiting a full-time member of staff to lead on safeguarding.

7 Members Council update

CS outlined discussions at recent Members' Council meeting. The main item was the recent vision event on hillwalking

8. Area Volunteer vacancies

Midlands Area has vacancies for chair and secretary. Alex Brown (AB) had indicated his interest in standing as chair. DJ said the role of Secretary was also important. Training was available.

AB introduced himself and his experience in volunteering. He and his family were keen outdoor enthusiasts and members of the BMC. AB is a member of the Coventry Mountaineering Club. Professionally AB is a detective in the police.

AB was familiar with the role and had discussed it with the past chair.

The Midlands voting members agreed to co-op Alex Brown as chair of the Midlands area.

LSE had a vacancy for an additional hillwalking rep.

9. Date of next Area Meetings

LSE: Thursday 20 October hybrid (at the Alpine Club)
Midlands: tbc