



BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

177-179 Burton Road
Manchester M20 2BB
www.thebmc.co.uk

Tel: 0161 445 6111
Fax: 0161 445 4500
Email: office@thebmc.co.uk

Lakes Area - Ordinary Meeting

Meeting held at Lyon Equipment Offices - Tebay - near Junction 38 on M6
On Wednesday 17th January 2024 at 19:30

MINUTES

Present - Frank Bennett (Chair), David Brown, James Bumby, Ray Cassidy, Anne Chevalier, Dave Ferguson, Robin Illingworth, Ron Kenyon, Rich Lambert, Mike Parsons, Phil Swainson, Ken Taylor

1. Frank Bennett was adopted as chair for the meeting and welcomed all to the meeting.

Apologies for Absence : Cressida Allwood, Christian Dodsworth, Martyn Hurn, Ric Outhwaite, Anne Salisbury, Fiona & Keith Sanders, Marjolein Thickett, Mary Volume

2. **Minutes of previous meeting held on 18th October 2023**

Available on the BMC Community website - Minutes agreed
Matters Arising from AGM -

- Balance of £631 in Lakes Area funds has been transferred to a new account with the Skipton Building Society in Penrith. Signatories - Ron Kenyon and James Bumby
- Issue regarding distribution of details of minutes etc affect by GDPR and data protection affecting this distribution - this is covered in report by Dave Brown and Members' Council Representative.

3. **BMC National**

Members' Council Report by Dave Brown

Since the last Lakes Area Meeting (and AGM) in October, Members' Council has met on 3 occasions:

Tuesday 14 November 2023 Pre-meeting by Zoom

Saturday 2 December 2023 Council Meeting 11 by Zoom

Fortunately, a rare occasion when Council was poorly attended and not even quorate: some Agenda items were deferred, and the meeting closed early!

Tuesday 19 December 2023 Post-meeting by Zoom

Financial Situation

The year-end accounts are progressing slowly, partly due to the complexity of analysing the GB Climbing over-spend and associated Government grants income. The lack of clarity on the likely year-end situation has prevented the Board from setting the 2024 Budget but, with the Reserves at about the lower limit of our policy, it is clear that it will be a tough budget.

Council have expressed concern over the situation and have recommended that the Board make a very serious assessment of the value of contracting a *forensic accountant* to investigate the problem. An Extraordinary Council Meeting will be held as soon as the figures are available.

Membership

Council continue to be concerned at the slow increase in overall Membership back to pre-Covid levels. Subscriptions are an absolutely vital component of our income and, hopefully, Membership numbers will be discussed in greater depth at the next Council Meeting.

Board-Council-Staff Relationships

It is clear that there have been tensions between the Board, Council and Staff, probably due to the GB Climbing situation, the departure of the CEO, etc. Irrespective, a group is now looking into the issue and a confidential survey of all effected people has been carried out: we await the outcome.

Staff and Board Appointments

Council continues to maintain pressure on the Board and Nominations Committee (NomCom) to quickly appoint replacements for critical Staff and volunteer positions. The Deputy President (Peak Area Representative, Sean Milner) is a member of NomCom.

2 Independent Board Members come to the end of their term in the next few months.

Attempt to Purchase Sirhowy Crag

Council fully endorsed the attempt to purchase Sirhowy Crag in South Wales. Unfortunately, it was unsuccessful in the end but has led to consideration of our land acquisition policy and the framework of our land holding trusts and companies.

Area Communications

Following comments at the last Lakes Area AGM/Meeting, the current policy of not allowing Areas to directly contact Area Members by E-mail (due to a perceived conflict with GDPR) is to be reviewed.

Full Minutes for these meetings will be published on the BMC Website as soon as they have been approved by Council: <https://www.thebmc.co.uk/bmc-members-council-minutes>

Following points noted –

- Prolonged discussion about a local email group
 - Look to have informal communications sent known members and clubs.
- Highlight need to promote availability of Summit magazine to especially club members who only get one magazine per annum - this should be the shop window of what the BMC is doing. Either hard copy or digital copy but somehow get the message out.

Dave Brown is the sole National Council Representative for the Lakes Area. THERE ARE TWO POSTS AVAILABLE AND WOULD APPRECIATE SOMEONE ELSE STEPPING UP AS A REPRESENTATIVE.

**Any points from members for the National Council can be directed to Dave Brown -
- email - jbthebandhouse@gmail.com**

The following gives details of the role of the National Council

Extract from the ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION
OF
BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL 18 May 2022

19. ROLE OF THE COUNCIL

19.1. The role of the Council shall include:

- 19.1.1. to consult with and constructively challenge the Board, and to hold the Board to account on behalf of the Members;
- 19.1.2. being consulted upon decisions by the Board, and/or making determinations, in relation to membership, as applicable, and pursuant to Articles 9 and 10;
- 19.1.3. providing an intermediary forum between the Board and the Members ensuring effective communications between the Board and the Members;
- 19.1.4. representing the interests of the Members to the Board;
- 19.1.5. to consider, and if thought fit, propose resolutions to the Voting Members at a General Meeting or AGM pursuant to Article 11.8.2;
- 19.1.6. being consulted upon or providing agreement to, as the case may be, in regard to the Reserved Matters;

4. **BMC Lakes Area - positions vacant -**

- Chair
 - Sadly no one has come forward to take on the position of Chair.
 - Towards the end of the meeting Mike Parson indicated that with reluctance he would take on the position of Chair provided that someone else sorted out the meeting venues etc.
 - This was agreed unanimously for Mike Parson to become Chair accordingly
 - **Needless to say if anyone else comes forward he would be willing to stand down in their place as he has enough other things to do !!!**
- Secretary
 - There were two possibilities mentioned and these are to be followed up !
- Climbing Wall Representative
 - Still vacant
- Area Youth Representative
 - Still vacant
- Hill Walking Representative
 - Following helpful guidelines from Peter Judd. Ken Taylor said he would be willing to take up this position and this was unanimously agreed

5. **Access Issues**

- **Area issues**
 - Elterwater Quarry Application
 - New application put forward by Burlingtons for use of the quarry as tourist attraction.
 - Similar to last application
 - Main concern remains the same with the access road and related road infrastructure
 - Individuals can make appropriate comments to LDNPA accordingly.

- **Climbing Restrictions for 2024**
 - James Bumby will be attending the Climbing Restriction discussions for 2024 as normal.
- **BMC Action on Right to Roam etc**
 - Group of 30 organisations, including BMC, Ramblers, Mountain Training, National Trust, British Orienteering, etc , lobbying with document - OUTSIDE FOR ALL - to be launched on 6th March.
 - Not at stage yet for BMC members to lobby MPs.
 - **Note email just sent out by BMC to lobby MP's - 15/02/2024**

6. **BMC Access Management Group** Ken Taylor

- **Glover Report** - produced in September 2019.
 - Seem putting on hold awaiting response from DEFRA.
 - Proposal for new designation of “National Landscape” rather than AONB
 - Government not done much meaningful regarding Glover Report

7. **Report on BMC Lakes Area Clubs** Anne Chevalier

- Anne has contacted 13 clubs around the area including those with huts in the area
- Varying ways of accessing clubs
- Many members perceive nothing from the BMC
- Remember Club members get BMC 3rd party insurance cover which can be extremely useful
- Most (non-club) members join for insurance - Austrian Alpine Club (UK) have 12000/15000 members.
- Issues raised
 - Members of **Keswick MC** and **Yorkshire Ramblers** raised issue of -
 - **Difficulties of parking in the Lakes**, especially following Covid and flood of more people into the lakes
 - Undesirable parking
 - Lack of parking at High Lodore for Shepherds Crag
 - Comments -
 - Big issue around the Lakes - Mike Parsons often raises issue in connection with the Ullswater Valley
 - Balance of more car parks and better/more used public transport system.
 - Parking for Shepherds issue -
 - Can't magic up another parking place
 - Parking available at Borrowdale Hotel for relatively cheap £5
 - Other parking at Mary Mount and below Gowder (limited)
 - Can also use a bus or launch
 - A full answer would be welcome by the Access Rep - Ron Kenyon !!
 - **Rucksack Club** raised the following –
 - **Road along west side of Thirlmere**
 - We understand there are no various actions being taken on the west side road

- Seems
 - The lakeside path is now available to be used.
 - Horses can use the road
 - No bike access along there yet – but seems like cycle way planned away from the base of Rough Crag
 - No car access along the road planned
- **Comment** - Feeling of the meeting was beneficial not to have access along the road for cars and retain as quieter area for walking and cycles as well as prams and wheelchairs.

- **Concern about charity / mass events**

- Concerns with marked trails with plastic etc markers.
- Related issue of more vehicles and people in the area
- There seems to be more and more in the Lake District - “wearing” out the Lakes - especially in the Patterdale and Staveley areas
- There are authorised and good organiser but not always

Action point - Frank Bennett to looking into the issue code of practice and check with suppliers of equipment such as Running Imp.

- **Concern about pollution in Windermere.**

- Suggestion that the BMC should support petition / register of concern to stop disaster building up !
- This was unanimously agreed

Action point - James Bumby to register support about concerns on behalf of the BMC Lakes Area

8. BMC Lakes Area Newsletter

- Newsletter produced by Ron Kenyon with help from Marjolein Thicket
- Available on BMC website
- Collected news from various locations
- Highlighted need for people to take on the various “Positions Vacant”
- Also piece flagging up what the BMC does.
- Concern it will not go to everyone in the area
- Looking to include a piece about one or two clubs each issue
- Also details about any changes etc at climbing walls
- New articles etc welcome by Ron Kenyon - deadline for next newsletter at end of February (as RK away in March) - email ron@jaggedlakes.plus.com

9. BMC Youth Meet - 2024

- Lakes Youth Meet set up for the weekend of 5/7th July 2024
- Meeting held recently by organisers - Ron Kenyon, Simon Willis and Mark Walker
- Open to young climbers between 12 and 17.
- Must have climbed before (including led) either indoors and / or outdoors
- Further details available from Ron Kenyon - email ron@jaggedlakes.plus.com

10. Any Other Business

- **Wainwrights without a car**
 - Ron Kenyon commented on article in Summit
 - Looking to push idea of using public transport
 - Possible book being published on this later this year.

- Comment by Phil Swainson that Cheap / Free public transport is probably cheaper than building new roads

11. **Date, time and location of next Lakes Area Meeting**

There was some discussion regards the meetings and format of the meetings with following points

–

- Concern at the loss of funding for meetings. The Lakes Area has a small fund (£631) which can be used to tide us over till better times (hopefully)
- Need of good venue but low cost
- Look to having a speaking and debate at meetings
 - Suggested topic of Access Focus and Right to Roam with people from various organisations e.g. BMC, CLA, NT ??

Action Point - Team to look into idea of debate round Right to Roam etc

- **Dates for the future**
 - Wednesday 17th April 2024 - Special Meeting at Kendal Wall - regarding Right to Roam - details to follow
 - Thursday - 2nd May 2024 - Lake Area Meeting
 - Kong Climbing Wall, Keswick at 7.00pm (not 7.30pm)
 - Still to fix dates -
 - July - Patterdale - Barbeque
 - October - Kendal