

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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LONDON & SOUTH EAST AREA MEETING MINUTES 8 February 2012

Attendance

Christian Lund	Chair
Robert Adams	BMC
Matthew Lodge	BMC
Daphne Pritchard	CC
Vic Odell	CC / FRCC / Rockhoppers
Ben Larby	Rockhoppers
Ben SImpins	Rockhoppers
Sam Johnson	BMC
Martin Dichie	BMC
John Town	AC
Alison Stockwell	AC
Graham Daniels	FRCC
Isabel Sanchez	LMC
Stephen Gandy	AC
Trevor Campbell Davis	LMC
Fred Daly	BMC
John Bird	BMC
Audrey Seguy	BMC
Nick Colton	Deputy CEO
[several others omitted from register]	

1. BMC Update

Nick Colton presented an update from the BMC, including the strategic planning round for funding from Sport England, the youth climbing series, and developments within the international committee (especially with regard to expedition funding being available.) An insurance update was presented, including a brief outline of helmet policy developments.

Access work was also highlighted, including a push on coastal paths and the focus on retaining access for climbing via coastal paths.

2. Discussion of Stanage

A well balanced discussion was had about the possibility of paying to safeguard access to Stanage. The meeting agreed that Stanage and access to it was clearly critical. Paying for it was an option, and the meeting felt that it was a good use of funds if necessary. However: the point was raised and agreed with that it isn't clear that this is in fact necessary;

it was thought that we had a good relationship with the RSPB at stange for example, and thus if the RSPB bid would succeed without our funding then we shouldn't necessarily contribute. The meeting wasn't particularly hardline about this point however: a reasonable balance of probabilities and a likely benefit were seen as enough. If we DID pay however, the meeting was very firm about this not being visible - there is a fear it would set a precedent and assign a value to a crag that would make it harder to acquire crags for access for little or no expenditure in the future.

In summary, the conclusions was that we'd pay for it

- as long as there was no auction involving risk to our contribution
- not on our own
- if we have to
- invisibly, as a non-publicly visible partner.

3. Discussion of the future of Harrisons' carpark, toilet block, and campsite

The meeting had a lively discussion about what would happen to Harrisons at the end of the lease of the carpark. The conclusions from the meeting are that

- the BMC is not involved in running a toilet block or a carpark, or funding it, and this should continue
- that the parking issues are not a huge problem - we'd be willing to pay
- the toilets are important to the environment at the crag.

The meeting decided that the BMC should approach the forestry commission and find out what their plans were.

4. Fixed gear/bolting/first ascensionist debate

After a short discussion, the meeting decided unanimously that

- some crags were important to the national interest and bolting policy should not be left to the local areas for these
- the opinion of the first ascensionists is important, but they do not have a veto - they cannot absolutely dictate the policy for the crag.

There were strong opinions about bolting, some firmly against - but we tried to avoid this discussion!

5. AOB

A question was raised about the hugely increased life insurance premiums for the policy through Summit Financial Services. Nobody knew anything about this: Nick took an action to look into it.

Thanks were given to the AC for hosting the meeting at their HQ, and it looks bright for the future of our area meetings to have such a venue available (and to foster improved ties between the Alpine Club and the BMC).