

**Minutes of the BMC Lakes Area Meeting
held on Wednesday 3 June 2015
at the CC Hut, Grange, Borrowdale**

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

Mike Parsons welcomed everybody. Apologies were received from Carey Davies, Ron Kenyon, James Bumby, Anne Salisbury and Dan Robinson. Mike welcomed Matt Le Voi and Andrew Bisset, who were appointed to share the duties of Lakes Hill Walking Representatives.

2. Access updates and news

James BumbyR gave his report via email :-

Not too much to report on the access front since our last meeting.

- 1 Ron has updated on the crack (crevasse!) at Castle Rock. It is still growing according to Dave Bodecott's measurements. Report on the FRCC website. Does anyone know if there is still a sign on the access gate? If not let me know and I'll get a new one written and posted.
- 2 I will also put an update onto RAD. Bird nesting restrictions are now well in place. No breaches as far as I'm aware. Thanks to all for their support.
- 3 We are still trying to get a response from The Crown Estates about the no climbing signs at Birkrigg Common Quarry near Ulverston. Rob Dyer and I have recently sent them a more formal letter in an attempt to open up a dialogue following no success with emails and phone calls.
- 4 We should by now have some new signs up about the nesting restrictions at Chapel Head and a new one to follow at Humphrey Head.
- 5 The National Trust is hoping to do some descaling of loose rock by hand in Cathedral Quarry. No date set. Folk need to be aware of more reported rockfalls here this year: A block came out of the cave arete, to the left of Night of the Hot Pies. Last week some large blocks (fridge sized) were dislodged by "tourists" scrambling on loose blocks in the quarry floor near to the step that links the levels. Luke Barley, the National Trust Ranger, has done some stabilisation work here and feels in his opinion that it is now safe again. Again I will try to get an update onto RAD.

NOTE: It was reported from the floor that the sign at Castle Rock is no longer there.

3. National Council report

Ted Rogers gave a brief summary from the last National Council meeting. That meeting was itself only brief as it took place on the day of the AGM.

- 1 The Midlands Area expressed an interest in paraclimbing.
- 2 North East drew everybody's attention to their Festival of Climbing in Northumberland on 4th July.

- 3 Wales reported a massive interest at their Range West briefing (200 attendees).
- 4 Huts Committee are looking for a volunteer to be on committee.
- 5 'This Girl Can' Campaign is going well.
- 6 Sport England has been asking questions about BMC governance. How does the relationship between National Council and National Executive work. Comments from the floor are thus summed up: we must make sure that the tail doesn't end up wagging the dog! National Council must be in control of the direction of the BMC (i.e. as set out by the policies) leaving the Executive to deliver (execute) and manage the day-to-day operations involved in that execution.
- 7 Mike Parsons reported that he had attended the AGM and also the Clubs Symposium presented by Kelvyn James which he found extremely interesting and informative. The Clubs event is currently biannual; we need it to be supported to persuade the BMC to fund it annually.

4. Bolt Fund update

- 1 Dan Robinson (via email) has recruited and trained two people to assist with Bolting. Tilberthwaite is currently being bolted. The meeting voted that the quarry be bolted safely as a sport climbing venue which must include lower-offs. (1 abstention)
- 2 Steve Scott brought to the attention of the meeting that, as guidebooks document where lower offs are, they should be in good condition, be solid and also not damage the environment. It was agreed that the area needs a volunteer to co-ordinate this. **AP** It was envisaged that climbers could email the co-ordinator when they come across lower-offs stating what condition they are in. Dan could then be advised if there was a need for replacement.

5. Clubs

- 1 Fiona Silberbach reported for the Clubs Committee. She outlined that their current task is to determine why do people join clubs and what do clubs want from the BMC. There are 4 key questions to be answered. **AP**
1. What is your perception of BMC clubs?
 2. How do you see clubs developing?
 3. If you are a member of a club what is the main advantages to you?
 4. What can the BMC do for your club & what can your club do for the BMC?
- It was suggested that the BMC mailing list be used. Polly Sullivan confirmed she would ask Tony Ryan.
- 2 The overall aim of the BMC is to increase participation and longevity of mountaineering. Support including financial is available for clubs but the BMC needs to know what is needed.
- 3 Kelvyn James reported that the 'adopt a crag' has yielded virtually no response from an email sent out. Yorkshire has had a very good response so he is looking to use that as a model for how it can work in the Lakes.

6. Environmental and Landscape issues

- 1 Ron Kenyon (via email): Lakes Festival for 2016. Ron Kenyon has agreed to co-ordinate. To be held in the Duddon Valley and will coincide with the new Duddon Guidebook.
- 2 Bracken is on the next National Council meeting agenda. Meanwhile it was suggested that anybody going to a crag that might be affected by bracken should use a stick to hack the bracken and trampled down as much as possible. Two crags were highlighted as being affected: Great End Crag and Lower Falcon Crag. It was noted that other areas are not experiencing the same problem as the Lakes with bracken.

NB. United Utilities are currently planting trees in an attempt to increase water catchment and quality. They are also installing stock proof fencing near streams to increase water quality. It is known that one farmer has been paid compensation to 'not' graze areas of planted trees. All of these actions increase the level of bracken. United Utilities own 8% of the Lake District.

7. Hill Walking Representative and hill walking issues

It was agreed to split the tasks of the job of Hill Walking Rep between the Matt LeVoi and Andrew Bisset on the basis of the job description provided by Carey Davies rather than to divide the job geographically. They each gave a brief resume of their skills.

8. AOB

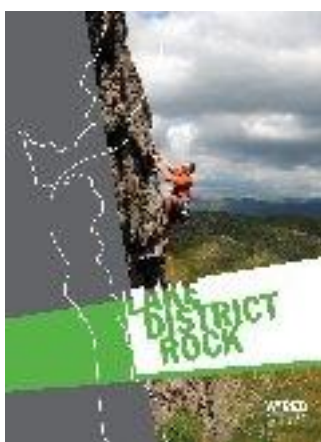
- 1 A question from the floor asked why the Lakes did not have a Regional Development Officer or, like Wales, an Access and Conservation Officer. There followed a very lengthy discussion. Some facts that appear to be overlooked by the BMC:
 - The Lake District National Park is the largest National Park in England 885 square miles. In the UK only the Cairngorms is larger.
 - The area has the 10 highest mountains in England.
 - If you count the number of hills and mountains in terms of 'Wainwrights' there are 214.
 - Most of the land is in private ownership with the National Trust owning 25%, United Utilities 8% and the LDNPA 3.9%.
 - It is being nominated for World Heritage Status.
 - 50% of the park is uncultivated and has statutory open access with 3,500 km of rights of way.
 - With 7 Lake District guides advertised on the BMC site its anybody's guess how many crags there are.
 - The Lakes has 15.5 million annual visitors that equates to more than 22.65 million tourist days.

The BMC is actively encouraging more people to come to the Lakes. Discussion around what a funded member of staff might become involved in led to a very heavy list. Apart from assisting the volunteers in the Lakes area on such issues as access and conservation, bird restrictions, bolting and winter ethics there is also liaison with other organisations on

such issues as: footpath repair and maintenance; freedom to roam; the impact of visitor pressure; renewables in the uplands; intrusive developments; ecological rewilding; social exclusion; the future of rescue services; littering; national park cutbacks; challenge events; wild camping; parking and charging; public transport; blocked access routes; and controversial developments affecting the mountainside which may include the dumping of nuclear waste, wind farms and zip wires.

It was unanimously felt that there is a need for The Lakes to have a funded post. The National Council reps were instructed to bring this matter up at the next National Council meeting. **AP**

- 2 The new guide book Lake District Rock will be in the shops from 20th June.



- 3 There is to be a memorial art exhibition of the work of Tom Price at Keswick Museum and Art Gallery 12th November – 6th February 2016. See www.keswickmuseum.org.uk for more details. Tom was BMC President from 1982 to 1985.
- 4 Joy Hodgkiss is selling her husband's library of mountaineering books. Joy has been emailed for a spreadsheet listing the publications, for circulation.
- 5 Wainwright: A Love Letter to the Lakeland Fells exhibition at Keswick Museum and Art Gallery 23rd May- 8th November 2015: as above for further details.
- 6 Matt Le Voi is actively involved in an anti-litter campaign and gave a brief presentation- see **#MountainMagpie** campaign below.

9. Date of next meeting

Thursday 10th September 2015, at Penrith Leisure Centre.

The New #MountainMagpie Anti-Litter Campaign

As the popularity of hill walking in the UK continues to increase, there will undoubtedly be an increased impact on the environment. One impact that gets a lot of people is littering. It has been discussed at length about the effect challenge events such as the National 3 Peaks Challenge is having on the upland environment when it comes to littering, and although it is easier to prove, these challengers are not the only culprits. Regardless of who is causing the litter, we feel three major things need to happen:



- 1. People need to stop purposely littering the hillside:**
This will be the hardest of these three points to achieve, as it will require a major mass change in human behaviour, which will be out of the control of any mountain-related littering campaign.
- 2. Increased education:**
The education of the impact of littering, the biodegrading period of items and providing an insight into how easily people can help clean up the hills.
- 3. More people need to help combat this problem:**
By spreading the education, and more importantly, bringing down litter they see – just one piece at a time is all we need.

So where does #MountainMagpie come into this?

The primary aims of #MountainMagpie is to help achieve points 2 and 3 outlined above. Social media is a huge part of today's society, and most people are connected through at least one of the three major platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) so it is an obvious way to get a great amount of 'reach', for free. This hashtag campaign will allow people to share their litter findings across the platform they use. An individual can also get idea of the collective movement they are part of by simply clicking on the #mountainmagpie hashtag, as every status, photo or comment with this hashtag will be displayed. The beauty of using a hashtag scheme, and not creating an actual face to the initiative (i.e. Facebook Page or group, Twitter user) is that no management is required. The only requirement is that individuals involved in the initiative use it on a regular basis on order to keep it in people's minds.

Even in it's first two weeks of creation the initiative has been heralded by many organisations and individuals alike, with people already picking up bits of litter and using the hashtag.

Short, Medium & Long Term aims of the Initiative

Short: Increase the awareness of the campaign on all platforms, which will in turn start to achieve points 2 and 3.

Medium: A small amount of merchandise such as a car window sticker or a lunch box sticker (a lunch box is the ideal rubbish vestibule!) to spread the word of the initiative away from the social media platforms.

To have someone like the BMC, and or National Trust adopt this campaign and help take it to a higher level of interactivity.

Long: Attain funding and permission for signage to raise awareness of littering issues, help to educate and also spread the word of the #mountainmagpie. A simple sign, in a very obvious location at the bottom of major routes (eg Seathwaite Farm, Achintee, Glenridding, Wasdale, Pen Y Pass etc) with clear information on it such as:

- The current issue of littering on the hills.
- How people can prevent having a negative impact – bringing own litter down, emptying pockets they will actively be using on the day to prevent accidental littering etc.
- How people can have a positive impact – aim to bring down one bit of litter each.
- Education – the banana skin is the ideal example; many people don't realise how long it takes to disappear. A simple table of information for key items that are discarded in the hills to provide the knowledge to each individual.
- How can they help spread the word – provide information on the #mountainmagpie initiative.