

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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Minutes of Midlands Area Meeting 8 June 2016 Old Edwardians' Sports Club, Solihull

Present: Phil Simister (Chair), John Edwards (Sec), John Churcher (SolihullMC), Phil Leng (SolihullMC), Helen Leng (SolihullMC), Harry Leng (SolihullMC), Ashley Price (SolihullMC), Mark Hodson (SolihullMC), S. Hodson (SolihullMC), Lou Twist (SolihullMC), Tony Hayward (SolihullMC), Ian Wyatt (SolihullMC), Edward Shaw (SolihullMC), Madge Harries (SolihullMC), David Jones (WestBromMC), Nick Piotrowski (WestBromMC), Andy Railton (Bowline Club), Michelle Aukland (Bowline Club), Richard Law (WrekinMC), Richard Greaves (CeunantMC), Richard Sanford (CeunantMC), Juliette Edwards (CeunantMC), Richard Lloyd (Coventry MC), Michael Reynolds (MAM), Brian Smith (BMC Director), Jane Thompson (BMC Clubs & Partnerships Officer), Al Thompson, Stuart Jamieson, Rebecca Husband, Marc Lloyd, Anna Phillips, Mike Jones, Ruth Currell, Richard Twilton, Sue Bell, Phil Authers, Michael Blake, Mina Leslie-Wujastyk (ex BMC Vice President) **(38)**

1. **Welcome and Apologies:**

- a. **Welcome:** Phil Simister welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- b. **Apologies:** Apologies had been received from: Claudia Sarner (Bowline Club), Roger Fanner (Solihull MC), Iain Blanch (ctte Youth Rep).

2. **Minutes of the last Meeting:** The circulated minutes were accepted as accurate

3. **Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere:** None

4. **Reports:**

4.1 **Access East:** Andy Railton said he had contacted the Hinckley & Bosworth District Council who manage the Markfield Quarry (Hole Hill Nature Reserve) re access to the site & the BMC Access Rep (Rob Dyer) is going to speak to their representative. Unfortunately Andy's first contact wasn't very positive, stating that the council's position is that "They don't want untrained climbers climbing in the nature reserve....". He has circulated the East Midlands Crag List with Access Details to local climbers for checking.

4.2 **Access West:** Richard Law said there was nothing to report.

4.3 **Climbing Walls:** John Churcher had nothing to report.

4.4 **Youth:** Iain Blanch, who hoped to arrive late, never arrived so there was no report.

4.5 **Hill Walking:** David Jones was pleased to report that the "Mend our Mountains" campaign had reached its £100,000 target and beyond. He and others had attended the BMC Novice Members weekend which was really successful. A Winter Skills weekend is now being planned.

4.6 **Club Issues:** Phil reported that Charlotte Potter had moved to Southampton so was no longer able to carry on as Clubs' Rep but that Michelle Aukland was now able to resume this role that she filled in 2014/5.

5. **National Council:**

5.1 **Report from last meeting:** Roger Fanner had attended the Council Meeting & the AGM at Castleton and had produced a 2 side summary which was circulated to those attended. Some of the matters included were also touched on by Jane Thompson later in the meeting.

5.2 **Matters for the next Council Meeting:** None

6. Any Other Business. News from HQ:

- Jane Thompson mentioned that the BMC offices at Didsbury are to be refurbished as the open-plan space cannot accommodate all necessary meetings so communication during July may be difficult.
- A start has been made on the bid to be submitted to Sport England for the next 4 years of funding which is due to start next April. She mentioned that they already have funding from this body for 'research support' and that several consultants are looking at what the BMC does and how this might be improved, including branding and maybe a more user-friendly name,
- Sport climbing is one of just 5 new sports, all of which have potential to engage young people, which are being put forward for inclusion at the 2020 Olympic Games. Even if this bid is successful, there is no guarantee it would be included in post-Tokyo Olympics, however.
- Jane mentioned that 2 active groups at the moment are the Women's Development Group which is trying to increase female participation in climbing, hill walking & mountaineering, which falls off when girls reach around 18 years old, and in the BMC. Also the Satellite Clubs Programme to make lots of different sports more accessible to young people in their home area, eg a school within a mile or two of this as opposed to a 'hub' club 5 or 6 miles away which possibly meets in a pub. The DoE Award scheme in schools is one that links well to mountaineering clubs and some of these might want to help young people to get more experience.
- Nick Piotrowski said that as a result of his two sons being on DoE schemes, he had managed to get invited into several local schools to give talks about the possibilities for scheme participants to progress further with local clubs.
- Brian Smith, the only Independent Director of the BMC, confirmed that this is currently a time of great possibilities for the BMC.
- **Quarries:** Rob Dyer had emailed that, at last, there are encouraging signs of progress at Threshfield with Tarmac. The BMC has an agreement in principle for initial development of the section of the quarry which is separate to the huge main hole as this is the easier of the two to work with from the company's point of view. The plan is for a handful of trusted local bolters to abseil down some lines to see if the rock is suitable up close, as opposed to from the ground, which is all that has been possible so far. Tarmac have been provided with details of the insurance policy the BMC hold which covers members for 3rd party liability and once they get to go ahead from their legal team, the climbers will be able get in there and if they like what they find, potentially bolt a couple of lines.
- The booklet on how climbers could access BMC resources to open up access of quarries they might discover suggested by Roger Fanner is still very much on the 'to do list'.
- **Date & location of next meeting:** The next meeting will be held at Old Edwardians Sports Club, Streetsbrook Road, Solihull, B90 3PE on Wed 7th September 2016. After the meeting there will be a talk by George Cave on expedition planning using GoogleEarth.

Following the meeting, refreshments were taken and the attendees listened intrigued while Mina Leslie-Wujastyk gave a thought-provoking explanation as to how yoga, meditation, falling off and feeling tired had all helped her to 'find her edge' – a term she first heard in yoga – in climbing. She stresses that managing expectations and energy meant that 'one's edge' could vary from day to day or hour to hour and that 'just enjoying the fight' could be as useful a tool in succeeding on a climb as power-screaming. After some excellent photos she showed the 10 minute BMC video of her battling with Godzilla at Waterval Boven which well illustrated her quote from Dave MacLeod "Failing is allowed; failing to try is inexcusable."

Written by John Edwards