

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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LONDON & SOUTH EAST AREA MEETING

Meeting held at The Devereux, 20 Devereux Court, Temple, London WC2R 3JJ
On Thursday 10th November 2016 at 7.00pm.

Minutes

1. Welcome and apologies for absence – None – Attendance numbers 47

Chaired Rik Payne (RP) Minutes taken by Lisa Payne (LP)
BMC Representatives Nick Kurth (NK) & (SM) Simon McCalla

2. Minutes of previous meeting held on 1st September

Minutes were ratified. RP & LP confirmed that these are on the BMC Community site.

3. Reports from Area Representatives

3.1 Clubs – Sherry Macliver reported on the work the Clubs committee is doing, namely The Clubs seminar held during the AGM weekend is going to be replaced with roadshow workshops, starting in March across the UK including a SE region specific training event for new club officers helping with the bureaucracy of running a BMC affiliated club.

Proposal for National Council that affiliation for climbing clubs associated with climbing walls should be made easier

Proposal that the minimum number of members required for a club to affiliate should be reduced to say 10.

Sherry will have more feedback at the next area meeting with regards to 'engaging with Clubs'

3.2 Youth – Our area has 4 AYC's who do a valuable job and are very busy people. We do however have an issue getting feedback for our members, which many of the other areas also find.

Reports from Jon & Tanya – YSC continues to grow in the London & SE and took home the regional trophy from Ratho.

New walls and facilities are being explored to expand into new areas in the SE including The Reach and an event in Brighton.

RP mentioned that the Reach had asked for any volunteers to register interest for belaying & judging.

3.3 Hill walking – Our new Rep Chris Stone (CS) introduced himself and asked if any hillwalkers present had any issues to speak to him. He wants to promote hillwalking and understand how well Hillwalking is represented by the BMC and be the voice for the London & SE area.

Plans involve a Facebook page specifically for Hillwalking, a survey to members and a means to share regional/access/conservational information with the area members.

4. National Council (NC)

4.1 Report from last meeting. RP covered the following points.

- Rebranding discussion – RP reported that Rehan Siddiqui acknowledged that in hindsight the BMC should have consulted more widely on the rebranding issue. National Council's decision to proceed had been taken with the best of intentions and no blame could be attached to the volunteers involved.
- RP also noted that all feedback had been positive so no alarm bells rang in terms of the general concept of re-branding.
- PR also noted from NC that there was general support for keeping 'Climb Britain' as a tool for a marketing mechanism or campaign. Also the BMC's current logo might also benefit from freshening up as it's generally been refreshed every 10 years.
- RP reported on the CEO report specifically the area of clarifying the roles of National Council, Executive Committee and Office to ensure the divisions of responsibility and remit are transparent and clearly understood by all. This had also been echoed by Emma Flaherty who stressed the importance of good governance.
- NK confirmed that this issue of roles & remit and governance has been looked at by the BMC for a while and needs to be sorted out. They are looking at a matrix to help understand who accountable, tie down who does what and generally enhance things. He also noted that the same due diligence would be required by any private/commercial/charitable body would be required when it comes to funding.
- Tony Williams feels that this is a bigger problem than is being reported and that having been involved with the BMC in the past can you then really see the problems.

4.2 Matters arising from the report – see AOB

4.3 Matters for the next meeting – See AOB

5. Any Other Business

5.1 Vic Odell (VO) raised an issue/concern about BMC governance at the last meeting which is now carried over to this meeting. He's concerned that there is a lack of governance at the BMC and the recent re-branding though not underhand was an error in judgement.

Why were areas not aware of the re-branding prior to the (NC) meeting? RP covered the issue of protecting ULR's etc. from dubious parties trying to buy these up.

Area members should be able to instruct their Area Chairs/Secretaries on their views on topics that would be discussed at the (NC) meetings and not after. He feels members have not been able to voice their opinion on matters in advance of (NC) meetings.

He proposed that the (NC) agenda should be available for the area meetings that are held prior to the (NC) so that the views of the members can be feedback to the (NC) immediately and not after the fact.

PR mentioned that this had been discussed at a previous (NC) meeting and agreed that as Chair and Secretary we are working for our members and therefore should be a better position to report on the views of the region.

(VO) Also wanted to know what came out of the meeting with the BMC & Patrons?

(NK) Mentioned that some of the current patrons probably don't place the same emphasis on climbing walls, sport climbing and competitions as they do the more traditional aspects of the BMC's work.

(VO) Asked if the BMC therefore had the wrong mix of patrons?

(NK) Said that we need to clearly understand the role of patrons and what it is they do.

(NK) also added that a number of items including IFSC/UIA, sport climbing & competition climbing were discussed at the meeting with the Patrons, not just the issue of rebranding.

The following action and queries were proposed to take to N.C. by (VO) and seconded by (TW) with 1 abstention and carried by the majority in the room.

“To have an agenda for N.C. Meetings prior to the area meetings so that area chair’s can report on this and get immediate feedback to take to NC with the area’s views”

“Members want to know what the role of the patrons is.”

“Governance, where the responsibilities lie and the accountability of the Executive”

5.2 The question was asked about whether the (NC) agenda and minutes were on the website and where. RP confirmed that they were and LP confirmed where to find the Area specific agenda’s and minutes.

5.3 Chris from SCC asked whether there was scope to take the Area meetings to a wider area.

As the London & SE is such a large area makes it almost impossible for people to make weekday evening meetings in London. Could they be held in other locations throughout the year?

RP confirmed that this had been discussed at length in the past and it was felt that to ensure continuity of attendance the meetings should in general be held in the same part of the region and that the previous Chair & Secretary had trialled this in the past to very poor attendance levels.

RP suggested that could clubs within an area of the wider region join together to send a representative of their clubs to each meeting?

Also discussed was whether the current London & SE region was too large and should it be split to better represent and reach the wider area?

5.4 Southern Sandstone Volunteers Group (SVG) are looking for volunteers for their weekend of access & clearing work held on 26th & 27th November this year.

LP confirmed that a link to this was on the London & SE area Facebook page and asked if volunteers could inform the SVG of attendance numbers.

LP also confirmed that the minutes from the Sandstone Open Meeting held on 23rd October could be found on the BMC London & SE area community site.

RP mentioned the discussions about the Isolated Buttress and that the trial period would be continued for a further year. Strong views both for and against a bridge being installed had been expressed.

5.5 RP and NK reported on the Mend our Mountains campaign and work has begun at two of the eight projects.

The Mend our Mountains campaign has been nominated by readers of The Great Outdoors magazine, so please remember to vote for this campaign.

- **Date and location of next Area Meeting**

January 26th 2017 7pm - The Devereux, WC2R 3JJ
Guest Speaker Heather Geluk - ‘The People You Meet Along the Way’

Following the meeting, there was an excellent presentation from Calum Musket