

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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Minutes of The Peak Area Meeting Wednesday 7th June 2017, The Maynard, Grindleford

Present:

Rob Greenwood (Chair)	Becky Hammond (secretary)	Neil Foster
Simon Cundy	Andy Elliott	Kim West
Colin Nave	Clare Reading (FRCC)	Rab Carrington
Valerie Partington	Steve Burns	Dominic Lee
Steve McClure	Mark Warwicker	Rick Gibbon
Carl Bedson	Ted Rodgers	Lynn Robinson
Howard Jones	Steve Clark	Daniel Hoyle
Alan Smith (Buxton MC)	Adrian Walker (Buxton MC)	Saffra Wright (Buxton MC)
Graeme Hammond (Peak CC)	Jon Fullwood	Simon Lee (BMC, UK Boulderling)
John Cook	Peter Judd	Mark McKenzie
Austin Knott (Hillwalking rep)	David Brown (National Council rep)	Spencer Ramsey
Peter Illingworth	Katherine Stokes	Ross Burnage
Tim Grice	Ed Chard	Mark Doyle
Cameron Anderson	Mike Cheque	Dave Garnett
Mick Hill	Pete Tapping	Gary Gibson
Luke Barley (National Trust)	Henry Folkard (Access rep)	John Coefield
Dave Parry	Ben Bransby	Adam Long
Chris Fry (PDNPA)	Richard Wheeldon	Andy Cairns
Alison Cairns	Dave Turnbull (BMC)	Phil Cox
Lara Myers	Gerry Myers	Steven Coughlan
Howard Jones	Mike Batty	Chris Hindley

63 people signed in

93 people present

1. Apologies:

Ian Milward, Jamie Sparkes, Greg Bristol (Peak CC), Matt Heason, Spenser Gray (Oread), Andy Tickle Geoff Nichols (Castle MC), Claire Carter, Clarke Boulter, Zoe Spriggens, Dave Williams, Alan James (UKC), Clair Wilson

2. Minutes of the last meeting

Agreed as correct.

3. Actions from the previous meetings

- a. Inspect the bolts at Aldery Cliff: Dan Middledton has inspected the bolts and removed them.

4. Update from Peak Area Hill Walking Representatives (Peter Judd & Austin Knott)

Henry Folkard, Carey Davies and Peter Judd attended the Spirit of Kinder day celebrating 35 years since the National Trust acquired Kinder.

Leaving the EU will result in legislative changes that could affect the future of upland areas. There are concerns about this and the BMC needs to pay attention.

116 people attending the "Pick & Play" event that was organised by Peak Mountaineering with some support from the BMC. 140kg of rubbish was collected from around Millstone, Lawrencefield & Burbage.

The Hillwalking Strategy Implementation Group is being set up. Peter Judd will be part of the group, as an Area Hillwalking Rep.

Moors for the Future are organising a walk for BMC members on Bleaklow on 27th June (evening) to show how their work has made an impact.

Austin Knott will be leading a walk from Buxton on Sunday 6th August, taking in Burbage and Axe Edges.

Lynn Robinson is now a BMC Vice President

Lynn Robinson was introduced to the room as our newest Vice President, since the BMC AGM in April.

5. Aldery Cliff

A briefing paper had been circulated prior to the meeting. There were three things to consider: fixed anchors for topping out of routes; vegetation/replanting; and descent paths.

Ross Burnage of the Buxton MC (a local club that try to keep an eye on Aldery) explained that their consensus was that bolts set and unpleasant precedent. However this was not a unanimous opinion. They accepted that some routes may now be unclimbable.

Various points were raised around the room:

- Topping out is part of the crag experience, as it is at most limestone crags
- Bolts make it good for a beginners crag, especially with the precarious nature of some of the top outs and slippery intermediate ledges. It's a good introductory crag for multipitch limestone
- It isn't a multipitch crag
- Bolts encourage top roping, which would not be good as the crag is already polished.

Clarification was sought on what Buxton MC's responsibilities are. Ross explained that it' an informal involvement. They tidy up the crag every couple of years. They have had less input since an official groundsman took on the grass cutting.

Further comments:

- No action required for descent path
- Solutions can be different for different routes and involve some pragmatism.
- Descent is nasty – current thin wire hawser is useless.
- Stakes preferred for belays where possible.
- Would we be discussing the idea of bolting, if bolts hadn't already been placed? No.
- We are where we are – natural belay options (trees) have gone.
- All topouts can be protected with trees now, but pre-placed rope/sling may be required to protect the final section.
- Mitre Cracks top section is now adventurous and a bit overgrown but this would improve with traffic. May need re-grading.
- We should trust Buxton MC to make a judgement.

Ross Burnage said that they appreciated the confidence, but would like a steer. Graham Bridgend said that Buxton MC would undertake to make ways to the top of each route.

At the end of the discussion it was agreed almost unanimously that Buxton MC should take the lead on establishing appropriate options for each route, and report back to the Peak Area Meeting.

There was a request that on-site signage should be very explicit about contacting the BMC before undertaking any work.

6. Horseshoe Quarry rebolting project

A briefing paper had been circulated prior to the meeting. This described the background to the project to re-bolt the routes on BMC-owned sections of Horseshoe, and the specification which had been used to obtain quotes for carrying out the work.

There was some discussion about the merits of re-bolting like-for-like versus adding more bolts. Concerns were expressed about maintaining the style/character of routes where this involves some "spiciness" higher up the route due to spaced bolts. Concerns were also expressed about ensuring that the first three bolts of a route are placed to prevent a ground fall. These two concerns can both be addressed, and appeared to be the consensus of the discussion.

7. Other Access updates

Stanage

Parking payment at Plantation is not currently being enforced.

Responsibility for the estate is now shared by Chris Bray and four other people. Bill Gordon will be leaving soon.

Alport Advisory Group met last week. Conifer plantations in the Alport valley will be cleared.

Prior to the meeting Henry et al had a good conversation with Luke Barley from the National Trust about access, approaches, and gardening relating to the Peak Limestone South area.

Peregrines are still active at Ravenstones, but there haven't been any nesting at Hen Cloud this year.

It's been a good year for **Ring Ouzels** on the Eastern Moors, and they were also seen at the Roaches.

Traffic wardens are issuing **parking tickets at the Roaches**: all cars must be parked in the marked bays.

8. Organisational review

Rab Carrington updated the meeting on the background and current progress. The organisational review was recommended by National Council in February 2017. The membership of the group has been chosen by the independent chair. The members are Fiona Sanders, Rebecca Ting, John Roberts, Paul Caddy, Simon McCalla, Matthew Bradbury, Rab Carrington and the independent chair is Ray Wigglesworth QC.

There is a lot of information to gather and review before they make their recommendations in October/November. This will include gathering the views of the membership via a survey emailed to current and former members, and eight focus groups for more in-depth discussion. They will also look at the structures in place in other organisations.

The recommendations will be put to local area meetings, then go to National Council and finally to the AGM.

In response to a question, Rab clarified that the remit is to recommend a governance structure for the purpose of looking after the interests of the BMC's members.

Henry Folkard requested that Access Reps be included in the focus groups, as access work is highly valued and how Access Reps relate to head office, climbing & walking etc is important.

Rab explained that survey results will be balanced by demographic, clubs, etc. The survey is key.

9. National Council report

The last National Council was largely taken up with the organisational review.

Following Rehan Siddiqui's resignation, Nick Kurth is Acting President until next April's AGM. A nominations committee is being set up.

10. National Council rep for Peak Area

Rob Greenwood explained that he wished to step down from being National Council rep. Anyone interested in the role should speak to Rob or David Brown about what's involved.

11. Update from BMC Officers – Simon Lee & Dave Turnbull

Simon had taken on board feedback from the area meetings about the ideas for a commercial partnership and presented a proposal to National Council which was agreed unanimously. He is now starting discussions with organisations.

Dave explained that the last few months had been difficult but we had got through it pretty well. It was very disappointing that Rehan Siddiqui had resigned as president.

Sport England funding (approx. 20% of BMC's income) is on hold as a result of the fallout from the motion of no confidence. There is a potential deficit if Sport England don't continue to provide funding.

There was a question about the expected timescale before we see the benefit from Simon's work. Simon explained that the BMC may have to draw on financial reserves for a while. Simon is looking at income in the short term (less than 1 year) and longer term, which would need to be a bigger project if Sport England withdraw their funding.

Dave explained that other sources of funding are in the pipeline but he could not discuss any further for the time being.

12. Peak Area Newsletter

People were asked to note the latest edition of the newsletter. Many thanks to Dave Parry and John Coefield for this latest edition. As always contribution and photographs welcome. Please send to: peakarea@gmail.com.

13. Any other business

A card was circulated for Rehan Siddiqui.

The Peak Bolt Fund has had a resurgence this year, and are replacing gear this year. There are around 12 people involved, and Dan Middleton ran a bolting workshop for them.

14. Date, time and venue of the next meeting

Wednesday 13th September 2017, 7.30pm at The Maynard Arms, Grindleford, S32 2HE

After the break Andy Reeve gave a talk about climbing on the remote Scottish island of Foula, and in Patagonia.