

BMC South West Area Meeting

MINUTES

Meeting held at The Nova Scotia, Bristol, Saturday 25 November 2017 starting at 7:00pm.

Present and Signed in:

James Mann (Chair)	Mark Kemball (Secretary)
Helen Wilson (National Council)	Simon McCalla (ORG)
Fiona Sanders(ORG)	Annabel Tall (Avon MC)
Keith Sanders	Bob Peters
Will Hornby	Daisy Peters
Rob Seymour	Philip Wilson
Lillian Todd-Jones	Joe de Tisi
Terry Gifford	Ray Allwood
Trevor Smith (Hill Walking rep)	Ashley Leit
Colin Knowles	Richard Nadin
Iain Butterworth	Rick Swards (Wye valley access)
Frank Cannings	Mark Courtiour (Somerset access)
John Wilson	Dave Fisher
Dan Donovan	Libby Houston

1. Welcome and apologies for absence – James Mann welcomed everyone to the meeting, apologies were received from David Hillebrandt, Bill Sharpe, John Dixon, Freddie Naish, Iain Peters, Gareth Palmer, Martin Crocker and Simon Fletcher.
2. AGM election of volunteer officers – Rick Abbott (North Devon access rep), Jeremy Dyke (West Penwith access rep) and Dave Fisher (Clubs rep) are standing down. The meeting thanked them for their work. Will Hornby was elected as North Devon access rep (proposed by Frank Cannings, seconded by Rob Seymour) and Gareth Palmer as West Penwith access rep (proposed Richard Nadin, seconded Ian Butterworth) we have vacancies for a Clubs rep and a Climbing Wall rep. Below is a list of all the current volunteers:

Chair - James Mann
Secretary - Mark Kemball
National Committee – Gareth Palmer, Helen Wilson
Clubs Rep – vacant
Hill Walking Rep – Trevor Smith
Youth Co-ordinator – Freddie Naish
Climbing Wall Rep - vacant
Wye Valley Access – Rick Swards
Avon Access – Simon Fletcher
Somerset Access – Mark Courtiour (FCQ Ian Butterworth)
Portland Access – Neale Heanes
Swanage and Dorset Access – Martin Hallett
N Devon Access – Will Hornby
S Devon Access – Dave Henderson
West Penwith Access – Gareth Palmer

3. AGM Annual Review – James Mann summarised the past year:

The past year has been something of a turbulent one for the BMC and this has been reflected in the activities of our and other local areas. A great deal of volunteer time and efforts as well as local area meeting's time have been taken up with matters such as the name change, the MONC debacle and now the Organisational Review which will run on well into the new year and beyond. What then of your local area?

During the past year these activities and events have taken place in the South West Area:

- The Cuttings Crag Clean up.
 - Re-equipping of sport climbing venues in Dorset and Devon is still on-going.
 - Lundy was a really successful event.
 - Youth Climbing Series ran with many young climbers involved.
 - BMC International Meet at the Count House.
 - Winter Skills lecture in Plymouth.
 - Suspension Bridge Buttress gardening has been started and is continuing.
 - Rescue, sea-cliff safety and incidents has seen discussion, work is on-going.
4. Previous meeting's minutes and any matters arising – we did not have a copy of last year's AGM minutes, the minutes of the last area meeting were summarised and accepted as correct.
 5. BMC Representation on Mountain Training Boards – we had been asked to consider a paper recommending that the BMC reduce its voting members from 4 to 1 at Mountain Training England. As we had a very full agenda, the meeting felt it did not have sufficient time to properly consider this and requested that the National Council defer a decision on this so that it can be given proper consideration at the next area meeting.
 6. Organisational Review – Simon McCalla and Fiona Sanders (members of the BMC Independent Organisational Review Group) presented the group's report to the meeting, copies of the summary report were available. After the presentation, the meeting adjourned for informal discussion (and beer), then we had a 20 minute question and answer session. Following this, the meeting thanked Fiona and Simon for their presentation and asked that they pass on our thanks to the whole of the review group for all the hard work they have put in so far. James Mann urged everyone to complete the on-line survey on the review and to encourage friends to do likewise.
 7. BMC area briefing notes – we had not received a copy of the area briefing notes from head office!
 8. Feedback from National Council – the last National Council discussed the Organisational Review, the relationship with Mountain Training England, the proposed Thirlmere Zip Wire and possible trial introduction of composting toilets at some crags.
 9. Area Youth Co-ordinator's report – Freddie Naish was not able to attend the meeting, but had sent in a report which was read to the meeting:

Apologies for my absence. Unfortunately the YCS this year is proving difficult to nail down. As I predicted when I wrote a paper for the BMC at the start of the summer the YCS has grown to such an extent that it is now putting a huge burden on the very few climbing centres that are big enough to safely host the event. As a result this has meant that 2 of our 4 venues in the South West have said that they will not host the competition this year, a third venue have also not committed and are awaiting a response to their queries from the BMC head office. This means that as of yet only The Quay in Exeter have agreed to host the competition this year. Sadly The Barn, Dartrock and Rock&Rapid, whilst willing, are not big enough to

safely host the competition on the basis of pure numbers of competitors and spectators. I am working with Nick Colton and Becky McGovern at the office to try to find a resolution. I hope that we will have found one by the end of next week.

Elsewhere I have proposed to both the Training and Youth Committee and the Competitions Committee that the role of AYC be clearly split as it is my view that the role has been somewhat hijacked by the YCS. As a result I have proposed that the volunteer position of AYC revert to being more about organising youth meets indoors and out, climbing, hill walking, mountaineering that are focused on fun experiences and training opportunities rather than competition. The role of AYC (Comps) will deal with the youth competition side of things. To that end I would like to ask if anyone would like to volunteer to be AYC for the SW in the traditional sense in order to arrange youth meets and opportunities in and around the SW. Sadly I do not have the time available to do both the comps side of things and the outdoor side too. If no one at the meeting is able to volunteer for this role please do have a think about who you know that might take on this role to try to help develop the youth climbing scene in the SW.

(Note, since receiving this report, Red Point Bristol has agreed to hold one of the rounds.)

10. Access and any local issues.

- a. Hollcombe Quarries – Terry Gifford reported that plans for a holiday complex here are going ahead and it seems that they will be lost as a climbing venue. On a happier note, he also reported that three Ravens have successfully been raised at Fairy Cave Quarry with no need for climbing restrictions.
- b. Mark Courtiour reported on his work as warden at Cheddar (report attached).
- c. Rick Swards is planning a buddleia removal day at Wyndcliff Quarry and asked for volunteers to help (date to be arranged).
- d. Avon:
 - There has been a successful clean-up at Suspension Bridge Buttress, but more work is needed.
 - A clean-up at the base of Main Wall is planned for 18th February, to be organised by Colin Knowles, Simon Fletcher, Libby Houston and Barry Donovan. James Mann is to contact the main office to look into funding for tool hire.
 - Sea Walls – there is possible funding available from local instructors to replace the bolts above some of the first pitches here (often used for group instruction etc.). The meeting was happy for this to go ahead and it was suggested that the instructors should contact Dan Donovan to do the work.
 - The padlock on the gate above Sea Walls has been replaced, the code is on the RAD.

11. Coastguard Issues – It has become apparent that there is a gap in rescue potential in our area. In the event of an accident, the best advice is to dial 999 and ask for police / mountain rescue (this is contrary to the advice in guidebooks which say to call the coastguard and in fact there is no mountain rescue team in our area). The issue is clouded as the responsibility at government level seems to be split between three ministries: Health, Transport and The Home Office. At present, the BMC is trying to move forward, raising our concerns with the Mountaineering All Party Parliamentary Group and asking for the issue to be raised at the Mountain Rescue APPG. David Hillebrandt is collecting data on any accidents / rescues in our area.

12. Club issues – the data protection laws are changing, but this should have very little effect on the way clubs handle membership data.
13. Hill Walking issues – The “Mend Our Mountains: Make One Million” campaign was launched last weekend at Kendal. A weekend for Hill Walking Reps is being organised.
14. Any other business – none.
15. Date of next meeting – 27th January, The Quay, Exeter.