

# BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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## Minutes of the Peak Area Annual General Meeting Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2017 The Maynard, Grindleford

### Present:

Rob Greenwood (chair)	Becky Hammond (secretary)	Louise Hawson (access rep / Stanage Forum)
Lynn Robinson	Steve Clark	Dave Turnbull (BMC CEO)
Andy Reeve	Graham Parkes	John Graveling
Mike Waters	Mary Waters	Chris Radcliffe
Gill Radcliffe	Andy Cairns	Alison Cairns
Hazel Jones	Henry Folkard	Eleanor Roddick
Ed Douglas	John Horscroft	Tim Grice
Colin Nave (Tuesday)	Colin Densen (Tuesday)	Phil Cox
Julie Morrissy	Laura Myers	Gerry Myers
Dave Parry	Mike Cheque	Toby Wilson
Pete Tapping	Felicity Manning	Toby Manning
Ian Smith	Nick Longland	Martin Wragg
Paul Justin	Dan Hoyle	Neil Roden (FRCC)
Sharon Hancock	Toby Wright	James Jacobs (Peak Bolt Fund)
Pete Lancaster (Oread)	Spenser Gray (Oread)	Pam Storer (Oread)
Chris Moor	Peter Judd (Hill walking rep)	Jamie Sparkes
Ed Teale	Judith Brown	Michael Smith (Yorks. Ramblers)
Christina Richards	David Brown (Peak CC)	Jim Walton (Assoc. of Mountaineering Instructors)
Phil Cooper	Fran Hammond	Ted Rodgers
John Gresty	Gordon Riley	Linda McLeish (Castle MC)
Peter Hammond	John Bayliss (Peak CC)	Jean Thomas
David Pendlebury	Tina Wilkinson	Spencer Ramsey
James Scott (Chamois)	Brian Griffiths	Graham Richmond (Bowline CC)
Yvonne Alexander	Neil Foster	Clare Reading (FRCC)
Geoff Nichols (Castle MC)	Charles Skeavington	Simon Lee (UK Bouldering & BMC)
	<b>Total signed in = 81</b>	<b>Headcount = 105</b>

### 1. Apologies

Sue Smith (PDNPA)	Greg Bristol	Carl Bedson
Simon Jacques	Clarke Boulter	Ian Milward
Valerie Partington	Alan James	Rick Gibbon
Mark Warwicker	Glynnis Judd	Martin Kocsis
Mark Vallance	Andy Tickle	Adam Peels
John Coefield		

2. Minutes of previous AGM held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2016 – accepted as a true record

### 3. Chair's report

Rob Greenwood had not prepared a written report. In summary he said it had been a cracking year, with some “outrageous” meetings. The desired peaceful ending had not happened.

4. **Election of officers**

The election process was chaired by Steve Clark.

**The following positions were voted in *en bloc* unopposed:**

Chair – Rob Greenwood

Secretary – Becky Hammond

Hill Walking Representatives – Peter Judd and Austin Knott

The role of Clubs Committee representative is not due for re-election until 2019 and is still held by David Brown.

**National Council representatives:** Each BMC member present was permitted to vote for two out of the four candidates in a secret ballot. Votes cast were as follows:

Andy Reeve – 37; Mark McKenzie – 13; Alison Cairns – 54; David Brown – 49

Alison Cairns and David Brown were duly elected.

5. **Vote of thanks**

On behalf of the meeting, Rob Greenwood expressed his thanks to the team of volunteer Access Reps who are at the forefront of what BMC members think is important. Also the Area Youth Co-ordinators, the Hill Walking Reps, David Brown (National Council rep) and Dave Parry and John Coefield for producing the area newsletter.

6. **Dates of the 2018 meetings**

- 31<sup>st</sup> January
- 4<sup>th</sup> April
- 23<sup>rd</sup> May
- 5<sup>th</sup> September
- 21<sup>st</sup> November

all at the Maynard Arms, Grindleford, S32 2HE

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**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the BMC Peak Area  
Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2017  
The Maynard, Grindleford**

**Presentation and Q&A session with Sarah Fowler, Chief Executive of the Peak District National Park Authority.**

Sarah had been invited to the meeting to give a presentation about the PDNPA's ideas and plans for Stanage, including community and stakeholder involvement.

Sarah was accompanied by Simon Malcolm (Director of Commercial Development and Outreach).

She started first by giving an overview of the PDNPA, before discussing Stanage and then discussing the PDNPA wider strategy etc.

Stanage is 1 of 3 big estates owned by the PDNPA. Everyone can go and enjoy their own element doing different things. They are keen to work with partners and acknowledge their different roles.

The Stanage Management Plan vision and aims were developed with the Stanage Steering Group and Stanage Forum and adopted in 2015. They are now working to these aims and principles.

Investment is crucial to give certainty to the estate. Invested approx. £70k in 2015/16 and £40k in 2016/17. Money raised in Stanage is ringfenced for the estate.

Resources (people): main point of contact is Chris Bray. The ranger post is now 100% funded. There is also input from teams in cultural heritage, natural environment, outreach, etc...

### *Purposes of the National Park*

Care for landscape; Promote understanding and enjoyment; Community development.

### *Roles of the National Park*

Regulatory; Doing; Influencing.

*Strategy:* an infographic was used to explain the PDNPA strategy overall.

PDNPA provide core funding for Moors For The Future.

Thanks the BMC for Mend Our Mountains.

PDNPA is investing in opportunities to enjoy: horse riders, visitor centres, children's conservation work, guided walks. Not being elitist.

Investing in the community.

PDNPA management plan 2018-2023

- Partnership plan for the place
- Sets the vision & objectives to guide all future work
- A focus on areas together we can make a positive impact

The next 65 years:

- A national park for everyone
- Sustainable landscape improvements
- Thriving communities with a clear sense of place

The last 65 years have been about protecting and restoring. The next 65 years should be about enhancing.

### **Q&A session**

*Spencer Ramsey:* Does ringfencing money include car parking charges?

*Sarah Fowler (SF):* Yes

*Rob Greenwood:* please keep engaging with us. Expect a lot of constructive remarks from the meeting.

Stanage is "something else": it's the king of GB rock climbing in terms of logged ascents.

Who are you engaging with as regards the management plan?

*SF:* Stanage Steering Group (consultative body – 2 reps from BMC – meet quarterly); Stanage Forum (open to anyone, annual meeting). These are the formal ways of engaging.

*John Cook (climber & hill walker):* suggests that Chris Bray attends the BMC Peak Area meetings.

*Rob Greenwood:* clarified that the Eastern Moors Partnership and National Trust regularly attend meetings and have a good two-way relationship; e.g. EMP specifically came to discuss management plan and ask for ideas & opinions. Also good relationship with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust.

*Simon Malcolm:* there's a BMC volunteers meeting next month which will include Chris Bray – he will suggest that he attends the BMC Peak Area.

*John Gresty (climber & walker):* re "restoring" landscape: what era do you go back to?...

*Steve Clarke:* What's happening to the campsite?

*SF:* will be keeping it. Want it to remain competitive. It remains important.

*Lynn Robinson:* asked Louise Hawson and Adam Long (BMC reps on Stanage Steering Group) what is their perspective on how it's working?

*Adam Long:* the system works well, but the PDNPA brings in the SSG too late in the process: it isn't a true consultation – instead it is “this is what we're doing – have you any questions”. Compare to EMP or NT where BMC and other stakeholders are involved much earlier in the process, and we are specifically asked for ideas.  
*SF:* how did the management plan go?

*Adam Long:* the vision was okay. But the actual decisions weren't. It was similar to previous experiences: it varies with the staff, but is generally a *fait accompli*.

*Louise Hawson:* the management plan is online. The “actions” section expired in March 2017, although the visions are still current. It is difficult to contribute in a strategic way when there's no management plan in place.

*SF:* stated that the above feedback was helpful.

*Andy Reeve (climber):* following on from Adam Long – is there any possibility for discussion about the reintroduction of the Stanage Sticker? This was a good example of collaboration.

*SF:* the Stanage Sticker was valuable for sending out a message and generating income. Plans are now to have income, message and consistency across the park. They will not be reintroducing the Stanage Sticker.

*Andy Reeve:* that decision making wasn't collaborative.

*SF:* accept that statement regarding the process.

*Simon Malcolm:* The new structure will net approx. £40k for Stanage.

*Rob Greenwood:* the Stanage sticker was a collaborative project with ownership from the people who gave up their free time to sell it. It was then torn apart without consultation.

*Brian Griffiths:* can you confirm details regarding the annual parking ticket?

*SF:* yes – are removing the differential between residents and non-residents.

*Henry Folkard:* Stanage Forum over the last 20 years has been a rollercoaster. Stanage/North Lees estate was retained in NP ownership because members thought it was the “jewel in the crown”. Is it still seen as such, or is just another part? This inconsistency of approach makes it hard to work with the PDNPA.

*SF:* yes it is still a jewel. They want to give certainty in the context of budget cuts and receiving information late in the day about their budgets.

*Henry Folkard:* the answer has to be to reinvigorate the partnerships. NB mustn't under-state the NP's contribution to the repairs to Ringing Roger.

*SF:* agrees. She has picked up on feedback regarding consultation etc.

*Henry Folkard:* Northern Peak District is neglected.

*Becky Hammond:* why did they remove the dedicated estate manager for Stanage/North Lees?

*SF:* Chris Bray (Visitor Experience Manager) is main point of contact. Rebekah Newman was supported by many others. Chris now does that.

*Rob Greenwood:* Rebekah Newman and Bill Gordon were visible and obviously connected to Stanage.

*Toby Archer (climber):* Attended the last Stanage Forum. It's great to be talking about partnership. The mechanism is central. All the practical ideas that people came up with were too late: because the decisions were already made. These people see Stanage day to day. And the people who attended didn't have anything to do/follow up afterwards.

*SF:* The ranger is 100% for Stanage.

How can the NP help with communication out from Stanage Steering Group?

*Geoff Middleton:* Bill and Flo Gordon did a lot of unpaid work e.g. litter picking, scoping out wild-campers. Who will do that in future?

*SF:* the ranger will do it.

*Rob Greenwood:* summing up: there are issues with communications back and forth and a lack of collaboration. Invited Chris Bray to attend our meetings, and for the PDNPA to contribute to the area newsletter.

***The AGM followed this session, followed by the rest of the meeting.***

1. **Apologies** – as for the AGM
2. **Actions from the last meeting**
  - a. Obtain data about proportion of attendees who are hill walkers – *Becky has figures, needs to give to Peter Judd*
  - b. Circulate list of fixed gear replacements at Dovedale - *done*
  - c. Letter to the National Trust thanking them for assistance and co-operation at Dovedale – *in progress*
3. **BMC Organisational Review**

Ray Wigglesworth and John Roberts presented the report of the BMC Organisational Review Group (ORG).

#### **Presentation – brief notes**

ORG didn't just look at what Sport England wanted, but also at good governance in general.

Clarity of direction, strategy and policy.

Member survey report is now on BMC website.

Members respect the BMC & its achievements, but want it to modernise & represent their interests & all participants.

Focus Groups want more clarity and accountability from the BMC and its leadership.

Legal advice (statement 5.9): there are contradictory instructions in the M&AA regarding the responsibilities of National Council and the Executive (the current directors). National Council has too much legal responsibility: could be viewed in law as "shadow directors".

Vital that M&AA are changed.

Proposed new M&AA will be drafted by the legal firm & circulated in the new year, based on the 51 recommendations.

#### **Corporate structure**

Looked at all the various alternatives. Concluded that a company limited by guarantee (CLG) is the most practical, with charitable subsidiaries (3 existing and 3 proposed additional).

Wales – difficult to access specifically Welsh funding without a Welsh body.

#### **Governance**

Partners Assembly = interest parties (not commercial partners). A way of developing relationships with the BMC.

Reserved matters would have to be decided by the Members Assembly and then implemented by the Board.

See page 50 of the full report for examples of suggested reserved matters.

#### **Consultation following the ORG report**

Members Consultation Survey has been emailed out today (22/11/17). Deadline for completion is 22<sup>nd</sup> December.

#### **Question & answer / discussion**

JR = John Roberts, RW = Ray Wigglesworth

**Dave Turnbull** – this is an impressive piece of work that would have cost approx. £200,000. BMC resources are currently thinly spread. It's become increasingly difficult to run the BMC over the last few years. The ORG gives ideas of priorities. He gives his overall support with some fine tuning.

**Peter Judd (Peak area hill walking rep)** – echoes Dave Turnbull's comments. He sees that vision & direction should come from the bottom up. Will this be funnelled up via the Members Assembly or in parallel?  
**JR** – yes it would be via the Members Assembly, but has to be within the law i.e. Companies Act (directors are responsible). The MA would hold the Directors to account.

**Ed Douglas (Alpine Club)** – report is in-depth and impressive. Concerned about Area Committees losing votes on the Members Assembly. Concerned about the power of the Nominations Committee. Concerned about the balance of the Board as only 3 directors come from the membership.

**JR** – board has to be balanced between independent directors, Members Assembly and the Senior Leadership Team (the people who are running the organisation). Legally under the Companies Act the directors must have legal primacy. Trying to get the balance of power right as per the various codes of good governance.

**Jim Gregson (AC, FRCC, another smaller club, BMC 30\*)** – only speaking for himself.

Not sure that report has entirely addressed all the BMC 30's points. Primacy should lie with members. Democratic deficit in appointment of directors (same point at Ed Douglas). Staff should be on fixed term contracts. Does not address membership distortions as a result of people joining for the insurance.

**JR** – re directors, taking on board comments re balance of the board. Please feedback via the survey. Staff on fixed term contracts isn't modern good practice, and why get rid of someone who's doing a good job? Insurance could potentially be sold to non-members: this is a decision for the future.

Re the BMC 30 in general – received lots of information from them. It was taken on board and tried to address it. Some of it was good, but a lot that conflicted with the rest of the membership.

\*BMC 30: signatories to the Motion Of No Confidence resolution submitted to the 2017 BMC AGM.

**Martin Wragg (BMC Hon legal advisor)** – Directors have statutory duty to act in the best interest of members. So as described, the MA would be involved in setting policy and holding the directors to account.

**Rob Greenwood (Peak area chair)** – re the staff fixed term contracts – people would learn the ropes and become good at the job and then be required to leave.

**Brian Griffiths** – members should be agents of change, not victims of change. He feels it is the latter. Also, how would the BMC link into other organisations?

**JR** – BMC is a victim of not changing over time, and now has to do a big change. The “what” and “how” is being asked of the membership. ORG are recommending a review every 3 years to ensure iterative change rather than infrequent massive overhaul. Partner organisations could have tiered influence which determines representation on board and MA.

**Neil Foster** – re Recommendation 32 re patrons – statement is non-contentious. In FAQ it says the ORG recognises the vital role of patrons as supporters & champions – also not controversial. But also says “we are not recommending change any current patrons”. In view of recent behaviour, how can this stand?

**JR** – ORG have recommended a code of conduct be put in place & patrons should adhere to it.

**RW** – Need to define the role of a patron.

**Neil Foster** – doesn't feel that the survey responses actually justify/support the idea of increasing membership & increasing participation. Thinks that the sample is not representative.

**JR** – no reason to believe that survey isn't representative. Slightly weighted to older members. Members want to increase participation (share the love) conscientiously and with conservation in mind.

**Henry Folkard** – welcomes what report says about access. Need to add accessibility. Also, the health of the landscape in the future will be increasingly due to the people who use it: considerable thought needs to go into the vision.

**Ian Smith** – Members might be in favour of increasing participation in order to gain increasing independence from government, Sport England, etc.

**JR** – from the survey, the top way of increasing funding is from grants (with a balance).

**Louise Hawson (local access rep)** – Members Assembly should include access reps.

**JR** – access reps would be represented via specialists committees. Not currently an “Access committee” but perhaps there could be.

**Chris Moor (former National Council member etc)** – concerns again re democratic deficit on the board. Currently all National Council are elected by members. Previously power lay with the clubs – this has moved to local areas. Concerned that the elected Vice Presidents are being removed.  
**JR** – members assembly would be represented on the board. Vice President role is mentioned in the report, as a “deputy” rather than for succession.

**JR** – there are obviously concerns about the make-up of the board. This can be looked at.

**Michael Smith** – clarified that only 3 directors (the Senior Leadership Team) would be salaried – yes. What do the dotted vs solid lines on the chart mean?

**JR** – solid lines = delegated responsibilities with legal implications for the directors, so the directors would have to ratify some of their decisions.

**MS** – individual members have a short “life” in the BMC, whereas clubs have a long life. Feels that the clubs are being sidelined.

**JR** – Clubs specialist committee would be represented on the MA. Maintaining links with clubs and supporting them is important. JR challenges the assertion about membership turnover.

**Spencer Gray** – re Recommendation 6 – there is potential for policy to drift. Will this be linked to recommendation 19 (annual members survey)?

**JR** – yes.

**SG** – clarify re non-voting members

**JR** – such as under 18s who could join via climbing walls.

**John Horscroft (non-member)** – shares some of the reservations re democratic process. Area meeting seem to be a concern. Area meetings are crucial. What about a Volunteers Support Officer?

**Rob Greenwood** – area meetings are a difficult model to accommodate everything.

**Lynn Robinson (VP)** – What if someone feels they can't endorse all 51 recommendations?

**JR** – don't need to. But if you don't like something, please explain why. However some of them do link together and come as a package.

**RW** – if have really strong views, read the narrative (background/explanation) first and then challenge it so that the criticism is constructive.

**Kim Leyland** – What happens if the changes aren't approved?

**RW** – BMC would continue to operate contrary to the law & good governance and with confusing constitution. And the fact that it's been scrutinised makes that position worse.

**JR** – not just the BMC that would be affected – also Mountain Training, Association of British Climbing Walls etc who receive funding via BMC.

**Louise Hawson** – if not approved, there would be significant risk for National Council reps. There needs to be some sort of plan because that risk is unacceptable.

**James Jacobs** – it's being presented as “do or die”. Is that really it?

**JR** – financially would be a struggle, and personnel (paid/volunteers) likely to step down. Revised M&AA need 75% approval at AGM to be passed.

**David Brown (National Council rep)** – 3 organisations described under the umbrella – Mountain Heritage Trust, Land Management Trust and Access & Conservation Trust. They haven't been addressed.

**JR** – yes they need a major review too. There are significant consequences for them as charities.

**Steve Clark** – how do you envisage the AGM working in future?

**JR** – similar to now, plus online voting.

**Rob Greenwood** – please complete the feedback survey!

**RW** – Thank you everyone. You've been charming.

4. **Update from Peak Area Hill Walking Representatives**

See November 2017 edition of the Peak Area Newsletter

5. **Update from Area Youth Co-ordinators – see attached**

Written update provided (circulated by email and at the meeting)

6. **Access updates**

See November 2017 edition of the Peak Area Newsletter

7. **National Council Report**

Written report provided (circulated by email and at the meeting)

8. **Update from BMC Officer**

Cath Flitcroft (Access and Conservation Officer) explained that the access team is running low: Cath starts maternity leave very shortly, and her maternity cover will start a week later. Elfyn Jones has been unwell long term but hoping to return soon.

The Mend Our Mountains Campaign raised £114k. Mend Our Mountains 2 is being planned: this will be a year long campaign with a target of £1 million.

The Outdoor Survey ran for a year, with approximately 3500-4000 people in the sample. The report will be available on the BMC website in the next couple of weeks.

The All Party Parliamentary Hillwalking Group is looking at the funding of National Parks etc. The implications of Brexit in for agricultural funding, access, etc are still to be determined.

The World Youth Climbing Championships were recently held in China: Tara Hayes won silver and William Bosi won bronze in bouldering, and William also won silver in the combined (lead, boulder and speed) event).

9. **Peak Area Newsletter**

Items for the next newsletter should be sent to Dave and John by email [peakarea@gmail.com](mailto:peakarea@gmail.com)

10. **Any other business**

None

11. **Date, time and venue of the next meeting**

Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018, 7.30pm at The Maynard, Grindleford.

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Even after such a mammoth meeting, plenty of people still had energy for the quiz.

*Many thanks to the individuals and companies who generously donated quiz prizes.*

***Made By Scavenger, DMM, Wild Country, Five Ten, Alpkit, Rab.***

***Cordee, Rockfax, Vertebrate Publishing, Pete O'Donovan,***

***The Foundry Climbing Centre, The Climbing Works, Awesome Walls,***

***Beta Climbing Designs, Jagged Globe, Buffalo Systems, Outside,***

***Heason Events, The BMC, UK Bouldering, UKClimbing,***