

BMC North West Area Meeting
19th Mar 2019, Sedgley Park Rugby Club.
MINUTES

Attendance – 18

BMC Officer in attendance – Jon Garside

Chair – Emily Pitts

Secretary – Paul Evans

Area Members:

Bill Beveridge

Andy Cairns

Wendy Stirrup

John McIntosh

Steve Charles

James Pounder

George Wolstenholme

Graham Wilson

Paul Kielty

Stuart Igoe

Simon Duczak

Stuart Holmes

2 attendees did not sign in...

Observers: Lynn Robinson

Apologies. Apologies reported to meeting: Carl Spencer, Andy Say, John Roberts, Mark Garrod, Dave Robinson, Tim Greenhalgh, Mark Hounslea, Dom Hartin.

1. Welcome and introductions. Emily Pitts welcomed new attendees and introduced the NW area reps team. She outlined 2 vacancies we have yet to fill (clubs and comms / social media) and asked anyone interested to contact her.

2. Minutes of last meeting (29th January 2019)

No comments had been received, and no issues were raised in the meeting, so the minutes were approved.

3. Open forum - there was a wide ranging discussion on how to improve the meeting, including boosting numbers attending. Discussion included locations for the meeting (whether to keep the same or vary). Also some suggestions for changing the night of the week. Feedback on this location is generally positive, but locations in South Manchester / Warrington / Preston could also be tried. Emily asked how people had heard of the meeting. 3 via Facebook, 8 by email from the BMC and 1 from the BMC website. Other suggestions included giving notice further in advance, combining meetings with other events (e.g move the Sept meeting to combine with WiltonFest, organise a short training course alongside a meeting), and setting up car share facilities.

Action: EP & PE to consider all the above in proposing locations, dates & formats for the coming months.

4. Area Rep Reports / Current Local Issues / NW Events

a. Access & conservation . No significant access issues at Lancs or Cheshire crags. One pair of climbers had been involved in some argument with a single birdwatcher at a Lancs crag. No specific action needed. There was a suggestion that smaller less formal crag cleanups could also be carried out in addition to the larger more organised ones scheduled for 2019. Suggestions for additional crag cleanups were Cadshaw Qy, Wilton 1, Craig y Longridge and Warton Pinnacle and Upper, where there had recently been some tree clearance, as a result of which branches may need clearing from routes.

TG was not able to attend the meet, but reported that planning for the 2019 Wilton fest was proceeding to plan. There was a suggestion that we schedule a walk to coincide with WiltonFest - lots of good walking areas on Winter Hill.

Lynn Robinson reported that the next product from the “Wired” guidebook collective will be a guide to Northern England, where there will be a significant section on Lancashire climbing authored by Les Ainsworth.

b. Clubs. An area clubs rep is still required.

c. Youth & Climbing Walls. SH reported that the new format of YCS is working very well, with attendance slightly raised. No particular issues at North West walls, we are well served by climbing walls in the NW and 2 more walls are scheduled to open. There was a proposal to combine a future NW area meet with a regular younger climbers meet night (e.g. at MCC) so as to build links with younger indoor climbers.

d. Hillwalking. Following 2 area members volunteering to get involved as Hillwalking reps around the time of the last meeting, Paul had met Dave R and Mark G for a walk and discussion on how the area should approach Hillwalking. A further area member (Steve C) had since volunteered to get involved, so the NW area now has a well resourced hillwalking team. Fundamentally we can consider Hillwalking in 3 areas, Access, Conservation and Participation. A necessary foundation for all 3 areas is a list of the Hillwalking areas in the NW area, and an understanding of who the landowners and key contacts are. Several useful suggestions re key contacts were made by Stuart Igoe. Jon G pointed out that work on participation can coordinate with the BMC Equity Steering group.

On the topic of Hillwalking conservation, members may have seen a recent email from Cath Flitcroft, Access and Conservation officer at the BMC, about the new BMC “Hills to Oceans” campaign for cleaning up hills and preventing plastic pollution in oceans. This will be launched at SHAFF - see link here -

<https://shaff.co.uk/shaff19/the-bmc-mountain-campaign-celebration> . We should consider whether there are areas on the NW fells which would benefit from such a cleanup.

5. National Council. BB reported that no particular issues had arisen at the the Feb National Council meeting which required area members attention other than the subs rise which will be covered under the AGM item below. There were no specific issues on which area votes or input were needed for the upcoming March meeting.

6. AGM - LR & PE gave a brief summary of the 3 main topics to be voted on at the AGM -

- the vote on further changes to the articles arising from the ORG / ODG work,
- the election of new directors
- the £6 increase in subs

Members were reminded that they should all have received email or paper proxy voting forms from the ERS - anyone who has not should contact the BMC. All members are urged to vote, either in person or via proxy.

7. AOB

No items of AOB noted.

8. Paul Evans gave a presentation on walking the Cape Wrath trail.