

# BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

## Lakes Area Minutes

Area Meeting - Wednesday – 5<sup>th</sup> June 2019 – 7.30pm  
LAKE DISTRICT CLIMBING CENTRE - KENDAL

**Present** – per signing in sheet – 33 people

Chair: Mike Parsons, supported by Fiona Sanders and Ron Kenyon ( sec).

1. **Apologies for absence.** Andre Bisset , Stu Smith, Alan Hinkes, Stephen Reid, Dave Bodecott, Marian Parsons
2. **Welcome**

- o **Introduction of newly appointed officers** - Pete Glasper & Ged Campion (Clubs Representatives), Ken Taylor (Countryside Management Adviser) and Ric Outhwaite (West Cumbria Access Representative and Planning Adviser)
- o **...and to special visitors** - Lynn Robinson, Mathew Bradbury, Cath Flitcroft and Richard Leafe)  
picture - l/ r Mike Parsons, Lakes chair, Dr Cath Flitcroft BMC access and conservation officer, Mathew Bradbury (BMC Independent Director and CEO of Nene Park Trust) Richard Leafe (CEO – LDNPA and BMC member) Fiona Sanders, (BMC director and lakes NC rep) BMC President Lynn Robinson. (The banner is a new litter collection bag for the newly launched BMC scheme, sequel to 'Mend our Mountains') called '[Hills to Oceans](#)' H2O is the clever logo/acronym.



2. **Minutes of the previous meeting**
  - o Agreed
3. **Matters arising from those minutes not included in the Agenda**
  - o None
4. **Lake District National Park and Local Plan**
  - o Mike Parsons - outlined a new strategic direction to look at all Lake District issues.
    - Dave Turnbull, BMC CEO, has established a quarterly skype call with Richard Leafe
    - At local level, newly recruited BMC volunteers, Ken Taylor and Ric Outhwaite, are helping our oversight using their countryside management and planning skills.
    - Looking to have early influence on LDNPA proposals rather than simply reacting to news as currently.

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Richard Leafe, CEO LDNPA, gave us an overview of his work

*NB We have tried to report the views of Richard Leafe, CEO LDNPA as clearly as possible, but without comment or overviews other than specific comments or questions raised during the meeting. His views will be the subject of future debates, discussions and possible challenges.*

- Reminded us that the fact that the Lake District was the birthplace of the UK outdoor and climbing movement, and of poets and artists (Wordsworth, Ruskin etc), was important in the successful World Heritage Status bid.
- He works with the 25 bodies which comprise the [Lake District Partnership](#) to work for a sustainable and prosperous Park for business, locals and visitors. ( NB Fiona Sanders will be an observer at the next meeting of the [Lake District Partnership](#) with a view to a BMC person being elected. There is currently no outdoor activity group as a member of this org')
- Has on park agenda climate issues and biodiversity and has measured its CO2 emissions and working to improve this.
- Transport is a contentious area but looking for less dependency on cars and use other modes of transport. A short discussion followed on future of transport, driverless e-cars etc.
- He explained how the 'Wild Camping' permit idea has arisen and agreed that anything of this nature would in future be brought to the BMC. He agreed to consult with us the BMC for any future issues arising. see BMC review of this <https://www.thebmc.co.uk/wild-camping-backlash>
  1. Proposal was made by Will Harris (Wild Camping) but came surprisingly via Michael Gove (Defra minister. ) Explanation of concept:
    - a. Name "UK Wild Camping" was a misnomer. The objective was to shift camping experience away from car based campsites but not to full wild camping.
    - b. Looking to go back to nature on less formal campsites in woods etc under private control with regulation but able to book a pitch.
    - c. The need for appropriate skills and behaviour for responsible wild camping was acknowledged – there are people whose behaviour is not appropriate to the fells and teaching skills is needed.
  2. Ken Taylor mentioned
    - a. Organisation "[Nearly wild camping](#)" - which is a similar established idea with cost of £20 per year to join.
    - b. He was concerned about the support of Michael Gove –but suggested why not look to making wild camping legal – as in Scotland. RL indicated this would be a huge task with need to open up all access legislation and felt this idea was a halfway house and a way to develop skills.
- Ken Taylor asked the question as to whether the Lakes are 'full' ie are we at capacity – especially with concern at predicted increase of 5% visitor numbers which would grow to 40m at the end of the Local Plan stage (15 years).
- Richard Leafe's response indicated there had been a 15% increase from 2009 to 2017 (with 19m visitors) and 2018 looks similar, so have numbers plateaued.
  1. He presently believes 'more people is good' – but important to get them out of their cars. There is a relatively high level of outdoor activity by those coming to the Lakes compared to other areas. He explained that in government terms we are not full; it is just that at certain times it feels like we are full.
  2. Issue is moving about the Lakes and looking to move people to other modes of transport.
    - a. 2018 was a bad year with issues of Northern Rail problems affecting the rail link to Windermere which appears to have had an effect on car usage with relatively more using the car to access the Lakes.
    - b. Need to improve the infrastructure of the area:-

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1. Looking for more dedicated off-road cycleways;
  2. Buses and steamers timings have to be linked;
  3. Need for better broadband to enable future transport systems to function e.g. driverless e-cars etc;
  4. Improve systems for electric cars.
  5. Develop idea of driverless pods e.g. from train station to Bowness and Seatoller to Seathwaite.
  6. There was mention of the bike bus – some take bikes but need more
  7. Look for electric bike hire stations around the Lakes to help with hills etc.
- c. Anne Salisbury commented that Northern Rail only take two bikes in a train which greatly limits that route.
- Action – BMC and LDNP to be requested to lobby government in relation to new rail franchises having luggage/bike carrying facilities.**
- d. Nick Wharton commented that it is not possible for public transport to go everywhere – RL commented that we still need cars but when looking at congestion there are peak periods at weekends and bank holidays when the weather is good – but nothing like getting into Birmingham etc.
- Ric Outhwaite asked what the ‘capacity’ of the Lakes is or means. RL replied that he considers that the Lakes are full when you can’t get a booking on Booking.Com at Bowness and around. He says there are only a few times when it is “Full”. Look to come in winter. Some commented to avoid the Lakes at Bank Holidays and Weekends – especially in good weather!
    1. There was a very brief comment around Park Planning Policy – and the need to identify and focus on ‘Local Service Centres’ to help development of affordable housing, whilst not ignoring other areas to ensure they remain viable communities. .
    2. Ric O - indicated that one of the several BMC interests focuses on the ability to enjoy the tranquillity of the Lakes and some (lots of) areas need protection to retain this.
    3. RL commented re Whinlatter with need to enhance dark skies, accommodation, more cycle ways, increase activity and soften “the edges” round the conifers. However – problem regarding access – hence suggestion of cable car to link there and avoid need to go through Braithwaite
    4. Issue of zip wires at Glenridding/ Thirlmere was raised. RL indicated that there was a demand and a system is put in place in North Wales which has helped Bethesda, but there are obvious concerns about such a development in the fells of the Lakes. Also Bethesda is not in a National park. RL accepted that Thirlmere was not the place (due he says to aircraft flying by). He feels Honister is alright and this helps to support the Slate Mine as a commercial viability of itself besides being a tourist attraction.
    5. RL responded re question of why we want more people in Lakes – indicating concern in more older visitor numbers. Need to get more younger people as well as urban dwellers – and explore new ideas for new people
  - Nick Wharton highlighted need to get more rock climbers into the Lakes
  - o Mathew Bradbury prompted question of how the BMC can support and be involved with LDNPA
    - RL highlighted how they felt that the “Mend the Mountains’ campaign had been excellent – helping to raise issue accordingly as well as helping with funding.
    - As mentioned RL is in quarterly contact with Dave Turnbull
    - Looking to have someone from BMC Lakes area on the Lake District Partnership group – Fiona Sanders is attending as observer tomorrow and then looking to join the group.

Addendum: We are looking at the possibility of supporting a BMC person being elected to the LDNPA in the annual elections, through DEFRA, in 2020.

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### 5. Environmental and Landscape issues.

#### o Climate Crisis Emergency –

- Motion proposed by member Nigel Jenkins who spoke on the proposal per paper produced.
- Dr Cath Flitcroft, BMC Access and conservation officer - policy, stated that the motion was strongly welcomed by herself and she would like to build on Nigel's wording. She outlined the actions already in progress: she also commented on proposal from BMC perspective –
  1. The BMC Sustainable Group was established 4/5 years ago at SHAFT. Article by Kevin Anderson with underlying suggestion of "Never fly again"
  2. BMC will be carbon neutral and plastic free by end of year 2020?
  3. BMC Insurance offers: difficult to do worthwhile carbon footprint offset on travel insurance, however there are 2 donation schemes at present for members to opt into.
    1. Contributions to 'Moors to the Future' – in the Peak District
      1. Richard Leafe mentioned LDNPA involved in restoring peat bogs in the Lakes !
    2. Looking at International Projects – possibly in Nepal
      - 1.
  4. New BMC campaign launched "Hills2Oceans" campaign to reduce plastics by 80% with more litter picks planned.
  5. BMC is a member of both the '[Climate Coalition](#)' – ( a mass lobby will be held at Westminster on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2019). and [Fit for the Future](#) – a coalition of organisations, (many of them commercial) helping to build a more sustainable future.
  6. John Holden commented about issue of offsetting our carbon. He stated that changes by each of us as individuals was necessary. We can't expect to keep the same lifestyles if we are to succeed. He personally does not travel by air and is considering buying an electric car.
  7. John Porter ( current AC president) indicated that the Alpine Club has commissioned a group to look at best sustainability practises for international expeditions. When this report becomes available, then AC expedition grant aiding would require compliance with these best practises.
- Other comments –
  1. RL indicated BMC should encourage electric cars and bus transport.
  2. Ken Taylor reminded us of issue of energy supply shortfall predicted in 2020/22
  3. Annette Smith – suggested BMC (& Clubs) should promote idea of car sharing for climbing and even meetings like this one. Also special buses to different places. will encourage and facilitate more usage by the young (and old) who don't have vehicles. Also ride sharing for these BMC meetings. Chair asked how many had travelled here alone and in own vehicle, maybe 50%.
  4. Cath Flitcroft – looking at organising BMC Footpath Conference later in year – said was purposely selecting a location which was both accessible by public transport and then within walking distance.

Proposal then put to the floor as follows –

**"This group agrees that the (already existing) BMC Sustainable Working Group should produce a Climate Crisis Motion, in line with Nigel Jenkin's paper, (with Nigel and Cath working with that working group) and that motion goes forward the BMC National Council for 22nd June meeting".**  
The motion was agreed unanimously, 100% with no abstentions.

### 6. BMC March 2019 AGM update;

#### o Fiona Sanders reported on the BMC AGM

- The BMC subs increase and the changes in Articles of Association were passed.

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- Some issues have been raised on forums and the responses to these are detailed on the BMC Community Website – e.g. Nominated Director role and Proxy Votes. see link
- Lynn Robinson – commented that Fiona had been appointed as BMC National Council Director

### 7. BMC National Council and ODG Report.

- o Again Fiona reported re ODG as follows –
  - Governance issues  
Four papers are to be presented at National Council prior to coming to areas in September:
    1. Membership engagement - ensuring all our different types of members are able to engage in the BMC governance
    2. Partnerships - how we can improve how we work effectively with our partners
    3. Clubs - how we support and partner with clubs to deliver the BMC strategy
    4. National Council reconstitution - how we make this more representative of the range of members and enable it to keep the board to account on behalf of us the members
    5. Other work continues on developing the BMC strategy and deliver on the culture, leadership and management of the organisation

Key points from NC meeting.

- Colin Knowles appointment; there had been issues between [International Federation of Sports Climbing \(IFSC\)](#) and [UIAA](#).
- Colin is now the secretary general of IFSC Europe—read [more about this here](#) Note - this is not a BMC appointment, and no cost on BMC therefore. Colin was nominated for the post as a volunteer and was elected by the IFSC board.
- National Council did support increase in BMC subs but wants more information, in future, to make future decisions.

### Access updates and news

- o James Bumby reported mainly on bird nesting restriction issues
  - More information now available about nesting so able to monitor according with ability to remove and impose restrictions if possible/necessary.
    1. New restriction at Nab Scar above Thirlmere
    2. Taken off restriction for Brantrake Crag
    3. Checked at Sadgill Wall – but no restriction necessary
    4. Successful nesting at Chapel Head Scar.
  - Steve Scott raised the issue of the RAD not working via the website (but works well via the app.) **Cath F to raise issue with Rob Dyer.**
  - Ron Kenyon reported on following -
  - Road closure update on west side of Thirlmere. Closure still at north end of road due to tree clearance. Had been given indication by United Utilities that road to be opened by June (2019) !
  - Closure of part of car park below Car Park Crag (Borrowdale) – due to rock fall above car park – the right-hand section has just been closed, this week. NT looking to extend left-hand section and retain number of spaces – but will have effect of reducing the number of car parking spaces for some time.
- o Castle Rock
  - Large rock fall in November. Routes have since been climbed including Overhanging Bastion. Area right of rock fall appears solid but still much debris in the rockfall area. Climbers should be wary and assess situation themselves.
- o Crag Maintenance and safety issues.



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- BMC Lakes Area access reps and volunteers had been recent separate meeting regarding issue of cleaning and maintaining crags - this matter is to be brought forward to the Sept meeting.

### 8. Clubs report by our newly appointed (elected?) .

- Pete Glasper (who works with Lakes Area clubs)
- .... and Ged Campion (liaising with clubs who have a hut in Lakes)
  - They have tried to make contact with the various clubs in the area and those with huts in the area – but had little response so far, there is a concern this is because of only having one contact for the club. They would appreciate communication from the clubs in order to have a dialogue and hopefully help member clubs accordingly.
  - They are willing to go to committee meetings of clubs.

**Action – will members/officials of Cumbria/lake district clubs link in with Pete/Ged accordingly.**

### 9. Hill Walking Representative and Hill Walking Issues

- Stu Smith - apologies for absence but sent report to Chair.
- [Here is the link](#) to the first ever hill walking symposium which Stu attended, which was organised by Peter Judd.
- Carey Davies (BMC Hill Walking development officer) will be leaving the BMC shortly. He has accepted the position of Editor of The Great Outdoors magazine ( he was asst editor prior to joining BMC). Lynn Robinson said the BMC is not looking at replacement at the present time until the future strategy is in place.
- There has been positive comments about the influence of “Mend the Mountains” campaign and we, Lakes Region wish to thank and congratulate Carey for this work and would like to see it continuing.

### 10. Cumbria Bolt Fund

- Proposal for retro-bolting routes
  - Steve Scott commented on proposal for retro bolting some routes in the Lakes. Paper is on social media – BMC Community Page and BMC Lakes area Facebook and welcome comment [for final decision/agreement at September meeting.](#)
- Maintenance of abseil points in Lakes
  - Matter of abseil points under consideration and further report at September meeting.

### 11. Youth and training

- Ali Wood reported on Youth Series with Final at Sheffield.
  - New format but more kids entered with increasingly high levels of ability–
    1. 8 year olds – leading F7a
    2. 16 year olds – leading F8a
  - .... so good for talent spotting
- She also commented on need for some events taking 7+ age kids outdoors – rather than waiting till age 12

**Action – take this to NC for a request to the board to take further action, maybe involving James McHaffie re this.**

- Ron Kenyon reported on the BMC Youth Meet (age 12 – 17) on weekend of 6<sup>th</sup> July – 17 youngsters now signed up with good number of adults to help.

### 12. Idea of BMC Lakes Outdoor Fest in 2020

- Ron Kenyon suggested idea of a BMC sponsored event in the Lakes next year.
- Agreed Duddon Valley – suitable location.
- May seemed most favourable – however need to avoid “Big Mountain Weekend” and “Keswick Mountain Festival
- Volunteers asked to contact him accordingly

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**13. Any Other Business. - None**

**Meeting closed 9.30pm**

**Next Meeting - Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2019 – Kong Climbing Centre – Keswick**

