

BMC North West Area Meeting
4th June 2019, Sedgley Park Rugby Club.
MINUTES

Attendance – 27

BMC Officer in attendance – Lucy Valerio

Chair – Emily Pitts

Secretary – Paul Evans

Area Members:

Carl Spencer

Bill Beveridge

Andy Say

Les Ainsworth

Andy Cairns

Alex Dato

Dave Robinson

John McIntosh

Steve Charles

George Wolstenholme

Mark Rothwell

Jim Gregson

Steven Gregory

Tim Greenhalgh

Kurt Davies

Dominic Oughton

Helen Oughton

Bill Deakin

Misha Khan

Liam Brady

Observers: Alison Cairns (Peak area observer)

Non members -

David Lockhart

Barbara Deakin

Terence Brady

Apologies. Apologies reported to meeting: Stuart Igoe, Stuart Holmes, Mark Hounslea.

1. Welcome and introductions. Emily Pitts welcomed new attendees.

2. Minutes of last meeting (19th March 2019)

No comments had been received, and no issues were raised in the meeting, so the minutes were approved. It was confirmed that we would cover recent concerns raised around AGM proxy voting under the AGM agenda item.

3. Under the “It’s your meeting / feedback” & “area communications” agenda items, 2 items of news were presented. Paul Evans gave a summary of the BMC Organisational Values survey results (full report can be seen here - <http://community.thebmc.co.uk/GetFile.ashx?did=3042> - after this presentation, Les Ainsworth pointed out that any such surveys had a risk of survey bias. Emily Pitts

presented key items from the BMC Area Briefing Note

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/Handlers/DownloadHandler.ashx?id=1790>. Dominic Oughton commented that the latest Mend Our Mountains total was £724k as of earlier that day, and that 13 separate conservation projects were being funded, one in every national park. Jim Gregson asked what the best way of communicating with members was. It was noted that club members are probably best communicated with via their club. Andy Cairns asked whether the BMC NW area was communicating with NW based members of National Clubs (e.g. CC, Ramblers), and Paul Evans replied that it was not currently doing so, but that as an initial trial, he would explore the best way of doing this with the CC Membership Secretary (Andy Cairns). Paul Evans will seek information on the split of club members vs individual members in the NW area (counts only, no personal data) for the next meeting.

4. Agenda item 5 - NW Events.

Tim Greenhalgh gave a status report on Wiltonfest (scheduled for Saturday 31st August).

Activities will include masterclasses, a bouldering workshop, and an orienteering course for the little ones, not forgetting the barbecue. Exhibitors include Active Nation Chorley, Bolton Mountain Rescue, Boreal, Campcraft, Climbing Services Ltd, Climbers Against Cancer, Cockerel Books, Jane Jackson Sports Therapy, and the Woodland Trust.

Tim appealed for area members to help with serving beers and tea, plus helping to set up and tidy away afterwards. Les Ainsworth raised a concern that since the 2018 AoA changes, directors needed to give specific permission for such meetings. There are differing views on this question. PE to investigate and report back. Tim reported that he was intending to organise a crag cleanup at Lester Mill on 22nd June - he would publicise via the Facebook Lancs Rock Revival page. He is also considering a Wilton 2 cleanup in Aug prior to WiltonFest. Andy Say mentioned that he had heard of a cleanup being planned at Pex Hill which would involve thinning out some tree cover. He would advise a date when one is set.

On the topic of fells cleanups, Steve Charles presented a proposal for a "Hills2Oceans" cleanup around Pendle Hill on Sunday 1st Sept. Members should email Steve via Emily bmcnwchair@gmail.com if interested. Carl Spencer mentioned that for keeping some areas clear of litter, it might be helpful to liaise with other clubs who were significant users of these areas, e.g. fishing clubs.

6.1 Access Reports

Les Ainsworth gave the following access report - There were reports of fresh bullet marks in Wilton 2, he will investigate this with the gun club. In Wilton 3 he believes the gun club are planning a double height portakabin. At Brownstones we have positive noises but no actual progress from the Woodland Trust, Les will continue to follow up, with better parking and draining the pool being priorities. At Montcliffe, most of the quarry is open apart from the far LHS, Les is continuing to follow this up and asks climbers to maintain good relations with the owner. At Anglezarke there has been a rockfall on the LHS of coal measure crag, the leftmost 3 routes have been lost. At Denham there has been a cleanup and the rockfall cleared from the route Narrow Slab. At Hoghton we expect the birds to fledge late June, and the quarry will then be open until 25th August. Check RAD for latest news. Les reported that some of the routes at Cadshaw Qy are suffering from an orange coating, need to find out what it is to decide how best to deal with it. At Troy, more belay bolts have been installed and drainage improved. At Summit Quarry a tarmac path has been installed between Summit and Warland, any climbers encountering problems with the landowner are asked to get in touch. At Dean Royd, new climbs have been added on the right. We have given up trying to get access to Castle and Pudsey Qys. Noggarth now has 40-odd climbs (only had 3 in Lancs Rock).

6.2 Clubs - we do not have a clubs report or a clubs rep, Emily Pitts asked for anyone interested in the role to get in touch with her.

6.3 Hillwalking - Dave Robinson updated the meeting on the recent proposals to charge for Wild Camping. It seems these have now been dropped, at least for the time being. If any area members become aware that these proposals are being revived, Dave asked that they get in touch with BMC access officers immediately. Dave also presented a brief video on Moorland fire prevention which he had received through his work with the fire service. This was well received and there was a view that this needed wider distribution via the BMC. EP / PE to follow up. Dave emphasised that any member who spots any moorland fire should not assume that it has already been reported, but should contact the emergency services to ensure they are aware. Dave said that there was an organisation called Moorwatch which covers the South Pennine Moors, through Lancs into Yorkshire. Members should report any non fire incidents on the South Pennine Moors (e.g. ASBO, Scrambler bikes, fly tipping) to Moorwatch <http://www.moorwatch.co.uk/>

Tim Greenhalgh mentioned that he was going to a meeting on footpath issues with Bolton Council in August. Tim asked for any members who are aware of path / rights of way problems, blocked stiles etc. to let him know, ideally with photos and grid refs. Details via Emily on bmcnwchair@gmail.com

6.4 Youth and Walls. Stuart Holmes was unable to attend but reported the following - In the YCS grand finale, NW youth did well with podium places. There is no news to report on local walls.

7. Other local issues. Tim Greenhalgh asked whether there was any objection to a "like for like" replacement of the bolt on "Suspended in Cryonics". This is consistent with area policy and no objections were raised.

8. National Council - PE presented the "R33 update" document which summarises progress on National Council reconstitution and the associated ORG workstreams 7 (partnerships) and 8 (member engagement). Proposals on all 3 areas will be presented to National Council on 22nd June and the decisions taken at council are expected to be briefed to areas in the September round of area meetings.

9. AGM. The BMC report on the "normal business" of the AGM is here - <https://www.thebmc.co.uk/bmc-agm-2019-report>. Andy Say mentioned that there had been considerable debate on social media and elsewhere about concerns around Proxy Voting and related topics (e.g. NomComm processes). A further BMC article <https://www.thebmc.co.uk/bmc-agm-2019-reflections-and-the-future> had been published on the day of the meeting, which most members would not have read, acknowledging, and setting out proposals to address, the concerns. Lucy Valerio, the BMC's new governance and compliance officer, gave an overview of the issues raised, the steps being taken to address them, and the pros and cons of some of the options being considered. A governance working group has been set up to investigate in greater detail, and produce recommendations to address the concerns. Carl Spencer asked what had happened to the Memorandum of Understanding? Lucy replied that it was almost ready for signing and therefore implementation.

9. AOB item 1. Jim Gregson referred to a BMC Policy Review document produced in 1977. He raised concerns around membership engagement, and about the balance between recent organisational change and policy development. How, and how often, is policy reviewed? How is it communicated. Jim's concerns re levels of membership engagement will hopefully be addressed by the OGD Workstream 8 membership engagement report, which is shortly to be reviewed by National Council

and then expected to be communicated at the September meeting. Questions re policy are perhaps better addressed by the strategy review also carried out by ODG.

AOB Item 2. Andy Say said that he was hoping to do some tree planting in the near future, and would give details nearer the time in case members wished to be involved.

10. Talk by Dominic Oughton - North America Wall, El Capitan.