

**BMC North West Area Meeting
10th Sept 2019, Sedgley Park Rugby Club.
MINUTES**

Attendance – 14

BMC Officer in attendance – James McHaffie

Chair – Emily Pitts

Secretary – Paul Evans

Area Members:

Carl Spencer

Bill Beveridge

Andy Cairns

Steve Charles

George Wolstenholme

Jim Gregson

Sandy Gregson

Stuart Igoe

Eric Grindle

Roberta Spagnul

Observers: Alison Cairns (Peak area observer)

Apologies. Apologies reported to meeting:, Stuart Holmes, Mark Hounslea, Dave Robinson, Mark Garrod, Les Ainsworth

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

2. Minutes of last meeting (4th June 2019)

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

3. Matters arising.

3.1 Concerns had been raised at the previous meeting (under agenda item 5, NW events) that directors might need to give specific permission for BMC area events other than area meetings. Lucy Valerio had investigated this area after the meeting, and reported that the BMC's event approval process provides the necessary authority, since it is operated by officers reporting to the CEO, and the CEO has delegated authority from the board for event spend up to defined limits. Spend beyond these limits would require board authorisation.

3.2 The previous meeting had requested an analysis of NW area member numbers, including club vs individual numbers. This analysis has been done and Emily Pitts presented some pie charts and supporting tables giving a breakdown of the data.

Following this Jim Gregson asked whether we knew what % of clubs will pass on the recent increase in BMC affiliation fee. During discussion following it was pointed out that this is a very complex question due to the phased nature of the subs increase and the variable timing of when clubs set and subsequently collect their subs. It was suggested that the area could contact the clubs directly to ask what they are doing - Alison Cairns commented that this question might be better addressed via the clubs committee, as it is not specific to this area alone. Emily Pitts and Carl Spencer both

commented that even after the increase, the BMCs fees compared very favourably with those of other “high risk sport” national organisations.

4. It's your meeting / feedback

There was a round table discussion on results of previous surveys. This focussed on clubs and the difficulties some have attracting younger members, as they prefer meetups organised via social media. James McHaffie commented from his experience as BMC Youth and Equity officer. Activities aimed at U18s was identified as one possible focus for the area in 2020.

5. Area communications

Emily Pitts introduced Roberta Spagnul, who had volunteered to do some work for the area on area comms and social media. Again this generated some discussion, for example which platforms might we use. Paul Evans commented that it was possible to monitor response rates for emails and facebook posts, so we could track what worked and what did not, and adjust accordingly.

6. NW Events.

6.1 Wilton Fest had once again been a great success, with around 200 attendees through the day. Many thanks are due to Tim Greenhalgh for the excellent planning and preparation, and to all the organisations who supported us so generously.

6.2 On the topic of fells cleanups, Stuart Igoe reported that he and Dave Robinson were planning a cleanup on Winter Hill on Tuesday 1st October. Emily Pitts asked for details so that she could publicise on the NW area Facebook page. Paul Evans has H2O litter picking equipment he is happy to supply.

Emily Pitts said that we were starting to plan for 2020 events, anyone with proposals should get in touch.

7.1 Access Reports

Les Ainsworth provided a detailed access report, which Paul Evans summarised for the meeting. Relations with the Woodland Trust for Brownstones are progressing well. We can climb and keep the routes clean, but must also respect the wildlife and keep the area free of litter. Montcliffe situation unchanged, avoid routes 1-9 for the moment and descend on the right looking at the crag; please maintain good relations with the owner. Wilton 3 - the double height portakabin breached planning permission, and there is sharp debris from clay shooting; both issues taken up with the council. Hoghton access was for a shorter period this year due to late fledging. A cleanup will be needed. Investigation still needed at Cadshaw Qy re orange/red coating on some routes. Deeply Vale - a cleanup is badly needed. The meeting discussed whether this should be done in autumn, or whether it would be better to wait until spring 2020. Decision needed. Les has been in touch with Rochdale Planning Dept re Summit Quarry. It is being monitored to ensure that there is no illegal tipping; Les has also raised concerns around drainage. Les is trying to find who owns Winewall, an interesting quarry near Colne, so that he can formally seek access. At Warton Main Quarry there was just one new peregrine. At Warton Small Quarry Les has asked the parish council to consider making a small extension to the car park.

Les has now published the Lancashire Rock Update, which is available from Les and other local outlets. This contains details of new routes and amendments since the definitive guide, plus a fairly comprehensive first ascent list. Les would like to thank Phil Kelly for assistance with first ascent information. Les also asks any climbers who go to the Lancashire quarries to do their bit to keep the vegetation down.

7.2 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.

7.3 Hillwalking - a joint Yorkshire / Peak / Lancs hillwalk has been arranged for Sunday Sept 29th, meeting at Marsden railway station at 10AM. See <https://www.facebook.com/events/494824301100414/> for details. Steve Charles reported that he is still keen to organise hillwalking events with a focus on conservation, for example path repairs or hill cleanups.

7.4 Youth and Walls. Stuart Holmes was unable to attend but Carl Spencer reported the following - The local comps scene had been quiet over the summer, but lots had been happening in comps at national level, with NW sending plenty of entrants who had done well. The YCS will restart in Jan 2020. Jo Xiberras and Alfie Duckworth had done well at Arco.

8. Other local issues. Eric Grindle said that there was to be a second Nordic Walking event at Rivington on Sat 12th October. Eric will send details to Emily to publicise.

9. National Council - Carl Spencer reported that most effort at the last meeting and the next (Sept) meeting was focussed on strategy and ODG issues. After these areas are agreed, he was hoping that future NC meetings would revert to a more normal format.

10. Strategic Plan and ODG feedback

Paul Evans presented page 2 of the 2020 strategic plan summary document, giving the main themes and structure of the current draft plan. He urged all area members to read the plan and complete the survey. Comments raised included -

- The options provided for feedback are somewhat limited / simplistic
- There is risk of bias in interpretation of the survey
- The “vision” part of the strategy should have been completed and everything else aligned to it.

Paul Evans, Carl Spencer and Emily Pitts presented sections of the ODG combined report. Again members are urged to follow the provided links and review / comment on the proposals. In connection with the proposals for NC reform (R33), Stuart Igoe asked what would happen if the two NC reps for an area could not agree on how to vote on a given issue. Alison Cairns commented as an R33 working group member - this area is still under review, and a protocol for this scenario needs to be finalised.

11. Meeting days and locations 2020. Area meeting dates need to be synchronised with NC meeting dates, which are not quite ready for 2020 yet. To be addressed at next meeting.

12. AOB No items raised.

13. Talk by Andrew Suter - Rivington Conservation.