

Minutes of BMC Gogledd Cymru AGM

Held at 7.00 pm, Wednesday 21 November 2018, at Padarn Hotel, Llanberis

1. Welcome Thanks and Apologies

The Chair, Tim Jepson, welcomed the members present and thanked all the volunteers who had filled the various roles for BMC Gogledd Cymru in 2017/18. He also thanked the venue for hosting the meeting.

Apologies received: Martin Doyle; Mike Rosser; Anthony Eccles.

Attendance list attached below the minutes.

2. Minutes of 2017 AGM

The Chair apologized for the lack of minutes from the 2017 AGM held at Plas y Brenin. For inexplicable reasons, the secretary at the time had failed to produce these, despite several requests.

3. Annual Report - Adroddiad Blynnyddol 2018

Chair's Report BMC Cymru (Gogledd)

My first year as Chair of BMC Cymru has been dominated by the BMC's Organisational Review and the opportunities which the review has presented for developing the BMC's work in Wales. Although I was unfortunately unable to chair two of last year's local area meetings, I did, as chair, make a presentation to a mid-Wales area meeting, attend a Ramblers Cymru networking event in Cardiff, participate in two meetings discussing the 'Way Forward in Wales', contribute to an Area Chairs phone conference and to the Manchester Open Forum, and act as our rep. at the last MTUK meeting. I also attended the Tremadog Festival, a drop-in session of the Prosiect Carneddau and the Gwyl Mynydda Ogwen, alongside much time spent emailing, lobbying, telephoning and discussing matters on behalf of BMC Cymru Gogledd

Not only has my first year as chair helped me establish a better understanding of the work of the BMC, it has also strengthened my belief in the value, complexity and subtlety of that work. Not much that the BMC does is simple and indeed many of the problems it faces require careful negotiation and compromise solutions which can become emotive and divisive, as exemplified by the Organisational Review.

I was therefore pleased that we managed to keep the OR discussion in Wales civil and purposeful and that the strong endorsement of the Organisational Review Group's recommendations at the Kendal AGM was a nationwide reflection of our discussions and vote in North Wales. However, I would also argue that in North Wales we lost out to some degree because we never really heard the dissenting viewpoint, a viewpoint supported by a minority of BMC members, but with principled arguments worthy of examination.

In light of the complexity of the BMC's work, I consider the North Wales region to be extremely lucky to be able to draw on the varied knowledge and experience of a tremendous range of experts amongst its members. I won't name names for fear of missing someone out, but in the fields of Mountain Rescue, Mountain Training, Equity, Governance, Environment, Access, National Parks, National Trust, Education, Climbing Walls, Expeditions, Competition, Equipment and more we have genuine world-leading practitioners and innovators on whom we can call for advice. This expertise potentially puts BMC Cymru Gogledd in an influential position in terms of driving future BMC policy developments in Manchester, but paradoxically its influence in Cardiff is currently constrained by not having a separate identity in Wales.

In the coming year, we have a one-off opportunity (supported, I believe, by the CEO, President and newly-appointed chair of the Board of Directors) to develop that identity in Wales as part of the implementation of the OR recommendations and we must not let that opportunity slip through our fingers. It is up to us!

That identity should lead to the ability to respond to devolved policy initiatives, a paid BMC officer with a clear responsibility for Welsh issues, an appropriate language policy and better links with other outdoor organisations in Wales, all sadly lacking currently. If BMC Cymru can become one of the key, respected and consulted outdoor organisations in Wales it will benefit not only those members resident in Wales, but all BMC members who visit Wales.

It is only by significantly developing the identity and influence of BMC Cymru in Wales that we can begin to deal effectively with the local issues, such as access, conservation, transport, waymarking etc. that many members understandably feel are at the heart of what the BMC should be doing.

One idea that I may decide to pursue in 2019 is to hold a couple of single-issues meetings, in addition to the five local area meetings. Potential topics for a single-issue meeting might be Micro-hydro schemes in Snowdonia, or The bolting of granite quarries in North Wales ...I would be happy to receive other suggestions. It has been a frustration for me during the last year to find that there is rarely time to discuss important issues in sufficient depth to reach any sort of conclusion. Single-issue meetings could allow that in-depth discussion between those with a genuine interest in the topic, and lead to a specific policy proposal to take to the next area meeting for endorsement

I have very much appreciated the contributions, formal and informal, of all the members and volunteers with whom I have had contact this year and I look forward to consolidating our relationships in 2019. But I would like to finish this 2018 report by thanking in particular Dan Lane, Anthony Eccles (our NC reps.) and Elfyn Jones (Access and Conservation Officer for Wales) without whose guidance and support I would have been totally lost this year.

Tim Jepson

National Council

The topics taking up the majority of discussion time at National Council meetings have all been related to the Organisational Review and its implementation. Of locally relevant issues, the approval to purchase Craig y Forwyn (if purchase proves the best way to ensure long-term access) was by far the most significant. Thanks go to Andy Boorman who stood in as the North Wales rep. at NC in April to successfully present the case for purchase of Craig y Forwyn.

Dan Lane & Anthony Eccles

Youth Development

Youth climbing in North Wales has gone from strength to strength in 2018. Four young climbers: Ruby Wood, Kieran Forrest, Jamie Jenkins and Finn Hayward (all previous North Wales Youth Climbing Academy members) have been in the GB development squad, competing at a number of international competitions.

The NWYCA continues to help develop high-performing young climbers, a number of whom are going to the GB squad selection in the near future.

Youth climbers from North Wales are also performing well outside. This year Finn Hayward has climbed sport 8a+ (also a number of 8a's) and 7c+/8a on boulders.

Youth trad climbing is also happening outside, with young climbers on-sighting up to E5.

The number of kids climbing at the walls is amazing, and with 6 year-olds climbing 6b indoors, the future looks bright.

The North Wales region should be proud of its young climbers.

Fraser Ball

Mountain Training UK

Unfortunately, this year I have only managed to attend half of the meetings but have kept a close liaison with MTUK and stakeholders in between times. The main issues arising out of meetings this year, that BMC members would have an interest in, are the completion of the Climbing Awards review which has been a lengthy process and has had some very relevant and valued input from a number of BMC members along the way so we should thank all those involved for their time and efforts. A key area for the BMC is that this review has introduced a new scheme of personal skills certificates similar to the previous Hill & Mountain Skills. This new Rock Skills scheme aims to engage with the growing indoor climbing participants and introduce them to the joys of climbing outdoors. It is a staged process from introduction; Intermediate and through to Learn to Lead (Trad & Sport). This can have a very direct and positive impact on membership demographic and an opportunity for BMC to also engage with a new audience as well as benefiting clubs and individual members. There were also some amendments to naming the awards, in order to make

things clearer for the general public, and the introduction of some entirely new climbing instructor and assistant awards.

Another interesting development is the re-igniting of the association's working group. There have been some very beneficial initiatives across our sister organisations in Scotland and Ireland and in the first meeting this year it was agreed that we could all work better together, thus reintroducing the small informal group that meets before and after the meetings to share developments and good practice.

Ross Worthington

Hill walking

1. There is potential funding available from Sport England to fund a new post, working in partnership with other interested organisations like the National Trust, to increase participation in hill walking.
2. The Mend our Mountains campaign has now reached over £550,000 in donations. The campaign is due to end in March 2019.
3. I am now not able to attend the Hill Walking Symposium (24/5 November, in Castleton); it would be good if someone from N Wales could take up one of the places still available.

Anthony Eccles

Mountain Training Cymru

No report

Climbing Walls

No report

4. Election of Volunteers/Officers

Area Chair – Tim Jepson

Proposed by Eluned Roberts, seconded by Pete Johnston.

Agreed unanimously. Abstention – Elfyn Jones (BMC Officer).

National Council Reps – Anthony Eccles and Dan Lane

Proposed by Andy Boorman, seconded by Ross Worthington.

Agreed unanimously. Abstention – Elfyn Jones (BMC Officer).

Clubs Committee Rep

No names put forward by BMC Gogledd but agreed that all Wales interests could be covered by Peter Salenieks (South Wales Clubs Rep) until a suitable person volunteered.

Climbing Wall Rep – John Ratcliffe

Proposed by Andy Newton, seconded by Mike Raine.

Agreed unanimously. Abstention – Elfyn Jones (BMC Officer).

Hill Walking Rep – Anthony Eccles

Proposed Kate Worthington, seconded John Cousins.

Agreed unanimously. Abstention – Elfyn Jones (BMC Officer).

Mountain Training UK Rep – Ross Worthington

Proposed by Mike Hendry, seconded by Kamala Sen.

Agreed unanimously. Abstention – Elfyn Jones (BMC Officer).

Mountain Training Wales Rep

BMC Cymru (Gogledd and De) has only one seat so it was unanimously agreed that BMC De Cymru (South) would fill this role. Matt Woodfield had been voted in at the South Wales AGM the previous night.

Access Reps:**North Wales Limestone – Andy Boorman**

Proposed by Ian Martin, seconded by Shirley Newton.

Clwyd Limestone-Tom Furey

Proposed by Eluned Roberts Seconded by Andy Newton.

Mid Wales – Dave Williams

Proposed by Dan Lane, seconded by Martin Wall.

All agreed unanimously. Abstention – Elfyn Jones (BMC Officer).

5. Meeting dates for 2019

Tuesday 22 January

Tuesday 12 March

Tuesday 4 June

Tuesday 3 September

Tuesday 19 November (Area AGM)

Venues and times to be decided.

Attendance:

Richard Bale, Geoff Bennett, Andy Boorman, Ruth Greenhall, Mike Hendry, Neal Hockley, Bev Hull, Tim Jepson, Pete Johnston, Gwyn Jones, Dan Lane, Pat Littlejohn (BMC Patron), Tom Livingstone, Steve Long, Ian Martin, Calum Muskett, Andy Newton, Shirley Newton, Chris Parkin, Gareth Pierce (BMC Chair), Mike Pyecroft, Mike Raine, Ron Rees Davies, Eluned Roberts, Jamie Rooke, Kamala Sen, Tarquin Shipley, Myfyr Tomos, Nigel Tuckley, Mark Walker, Martin Wall, Stephen Williams, Marion Wintringham, Kate Worthington, Ross Worthington, Mike? .

Elfyn Jones – BMC officer in attendance (did not vote).