

# BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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## Minutes of The Peak Area Meeting Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2019, The Maynard, Grindleford

### Present:

Rob Greenwood (Chair)	Becky Hammond (Secretary)	Gary Gibson
Andy Woodford	Andy Tickle (Derbyshire Pennine Club / BMC AMG)	Paul Beslop(?)
Dave Turnbull (BMC CEO)	Lynn Robinson (BMC President)	Pete Tapping
Sean Jennings (Castle MC)	Robert Townsend (The Mountain Club, Stafford)	Frag Last
Alistair Boyd	Henry Folkard (Area Access rep)	Amy Ryall
Spencer Ramsey	Jennifer Raffle (lives in NW area)	Vikki Hughes
Rik Payne	David Brown (Area NC rep / Clubs rep)	Steve Clark
Mike Cheque	Austin Knott (Area Hillwalking rep)	Rachel Briggs
Kim Leyland	Peter Judd (Area Hillwalking rep)	Elaine Winton
Alison Cairns (Area NC rep)	Andy Cairns (lives in NW area)	

### Non-members in attendance

None

*29 people signed in*

#### 1. Apologies:

Valerie Partington, Mark Warwicker, Simon Lee, Lisa Payne, Kevni Noon, Emma Holland, Mark McKenzie, Tomo Thomson.

#### 2. Minutes of the last meeting

Agreed as correct.

#### 3. Actions from previous meetings

- Millsom memorial plaque* – removal of the plaque has essentially been agreed, but the PDNPA haven't yet done so.
- Running Hill Pits notice to clarify access* – Sue Smith at PDNPA has not responded to Henry's enquiries about this. However there haven't been any further reports of problems accessing the land.

#### 4. Hillwalking update

- Area Hillwalk Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September* a tour of three counties starting from Marsden at 10am taking in Pule Hill, Redbrook Reservoir (Peak District), Standedge, White Hill (Lancashire) and back to Marsden (West Yorkshire).
- Real 3 Peaks clean-ups* being supported by BMC H2O campaign. Both will be on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October: Great Ridge (meet at Castleton visitor centre at 9am) and The Roaches (meet at 9.30am).
- BMC Hillwalking situation nationally.* Peter Judd explained that the Hillwalking Working Group have reached the conclusion that there is no realistic prospect of progress with the Hillwalking Strategy, largely because it is being overtaken by the new BMC Strategy. As chair of the HWWG, Peter wrote to the Board and asked whether they wanted to close the HWWG down; put it in suspension until such time that there is a will to make more progress; or give them specific tasks to do and clearly identify some resources to help carry those tasks out. The board replied opting for the latter option.

Peter's main points were: that the Strategic Plan for Hillwalking is not dead, but it's not worth pretending it's simply going to be implemented as written now; that the deficit in hill walking support identified 5 or 6 years ago that led to the setting of hill walking development as a key strategic aim last time (and the recruitment of the first hill walking officer and the creation of the SP4HW itself) has not been overcome yet, despite instances of commendable progress in trying circumstances; and that what matters now is how further

development in hill walking support is contained within the new vision and strategy. Peter felt that there were some encouraging things in Themes 2 and 3 of the draft 2020-24 strategic plan.

Peter proposed a motion to be taken to National Council. The purpose would be to ask National Council to hold the Board to account formally. It was also noted that it would be useful for Access Management Group (who are responsible for Theme 2 of the strategic plan).

#### Proposed motion from Peak Area to National Council

*That BMC Peak Area welcomes the significant and meaningful improvements that have occurred in righting the imbalance in representation and effort given to hill walking within the BMC's work that was identified 5 or 6 years ago and which led to hill walking being given prominence in the last strategic plan.*

*However Peak Area hopes that National Council will agree that righting that imbalance remains a 'work in progress' and not yet 'job done'.*

*Peak Area welcomes and strongly supports the explicit references to hill walkers' interests evident within the current draft of the 2020-24 strategic plan, in particular those apparent in themes 2 and 3.*

*We hope that National Council will join us in urging that the board and senior officers ensure that future work-plans and resource allocation arising out of this new strategic plan properly embrace the hill walking aspects of these themes and do so in a proportion that reflects the very significant share of our membership who presently identify hill walking as their primary activity (ORG member survey reported 33% cite it as their main activity).*

28 in favour, 0 against, 1 abstention

#### **5. BMC Climate Emergency Declaration**

Louise Hawson explained that this is an example of an initiative that has been pushed forward and made more prominent by an Area Meeting (Lakes Area).

Cath Flitcroft and the Sustainability Working Group have drafted a declaration which will be taken to the next National Council meeting. It will include acceptance of climate change science and necessary actions.

There was discussion about the challenges: times and locations of Area Meetings, for example.

Anyone with interest in working on it locally, or has expertise to help nationally, is invited to put themselves forward.

The BMC Office will be plastic-free by November. Travel insurance will have the option to support a climate change project. The BMC Shop is sourcing ethical products.

#### **6. BMC Strategic Plan 2020-2024**

Dave Turnbull explained that they are aiming for a user-friendly document that will actually be used rather than just sitting on a shelf.

There has already been a good response to the members' survey with 1500 responses so far.

Sustainability is coming up as a recurring theme.

In his presentation, Dave mentioned that the plan could be tweaked year by year. Becky Hammond asked for confirmation that this would not mean that original aims would get derailed by new events.

The strategic plan will mean changes to the budgeting process, so that budgets match the plan.

Steve Clark commented that "Heritage" needs adding to the plan.

The full document includes measures for each theme. Peter Judd asked how these would be used or reported. Dave said that these would be via the National Council, Board or AGM, but it hasn't yet been fully discussed.

Peter said that he had been reassured by the contents of the draft strategic plan, which had allayed some of his fears, and he encouraged people to read the full detailed document.

#### **7. Organisational Development Group update**

A summary document had been circulated. Some of the 8 workstreams are almost complete. Alison Cairns explained that the ODG need general feedback – are things about right, is anything wrong? Everything is on the website [odg.thebmc.co.uk](http://odg.thebmc.co.uk)

Comments needed before Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September, before it goes to the Board on 25<sup>th</sup> September and then it will start to be implemented. Although there is still work going on about some of the details. The BMC's Articles of Association will be amended, with Terms of Reference, to reflect the new models.

## **8. Access**

Also see updates in the Peak Area Newsletter <https://www.thebmc.co.uk/peak-area-newsletter-september-2019>

- a. *Stanage Forum open meeting* Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October, Hathersage Methodist Church Hall 2pm – all encouraged to attend. Also North Lees Hall and the Cruck Barn will be open on 21<sup>st</sup> September as part of Heritage Open Days.
- b. *Stanage Options Appraisal* is being conducted by a consultancy on behalf of PDNPA, specifically in relation to the built assets on the estate. The estate spans from Long Causeway to Popular End, and down to the campsite. Buildings are in disrepair. Countryside Stewardship payments go to the farmer. The options appraisal may be discussed at the Open Forum. There will be a consultation process that is open to the public, and it's really important that we feed in to this.
- c. *Millstone* the Eastern Moors Partnership are considering new stakes at the top of the crag, and the fence needs renewing. There is some debate about where the fence should be e.g. possibly further back from the crag.
- d. *Black Rock* – see newsletter. Forest Enterprise (aka the Forestry Commission) are trying to charge groups for using Black Rocks as a scrambling / weaselling location.
- e. *The National Trust Active Outdoor Providers Scheme* is in final draft. It will replace the old licensing scheme. See <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/outdoor-activity-providers>
- f. *Ash Dieback in Dovedale* - The woods in Dovedale are made up of around 80% ash trees and the current estimate is that 6 out of 7 ash trees will die as a result of ash dieback. Many trees will be left to die where they are, but trees that pose a risk to the public (e.g. near footpaths) will be felled. The National Trust may need to close the dale to the public for part of October to enable this. Henry Folkard has requested that they leave it open at weekends. Most timber will be left on site. There will be some replanting with native species. No ash trees are immune but some seem to be more resistant than others. See <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ilam-park-dovedale-and-the-white-peak/features/tackling-ash-dieback-in-dovedale> for latest info from the NT.
- g. *Beavers in Burbage Valley* – There is to be a feasibility study into the possibility of introducing Beavers to Burbage Valley to help with flooding. If it happens, it would take place in 4-5 years time. Henry has pointed out that the current pattern of recreational use needs to be taken into account in the feasibility study.

## **9. National Council report**

David Brown provided a written summary of the last NC meeting.

There is the possibility of an alternative membership package for indoor climbers / a digital-only package / youth membership. There was some discussion about the possible purpose / merits of this. Thought to be unhelpful to conflate “digital-only” with “youth” memberships which are not necessarily mutually-exclusive. Consensus was that it was not possible for the meeting to express a view or support without knowing more detail.

## **10. Clubs**

David Brown is our rep on the BMC Clubs Committee. They have asked to be a standing item on area meeting agendas, but there was nothing specific to discuss.

David will be standing down from the Clubs committee in November as he has reached the end of his term. His replacement needs to be nominated by a club within the Peak area. David will contact relevant clubs to invite nominations.

## **11. Peak Area Newsletter**

September 2019 edition available at Newsletter <https://www.thebmc.co.uk/peak-area-newsletter-september-2019>

Please email articles and photos to [peakarea@gmail.com](mailto:peakarea@gmail.com).

Deadline for contributions is usually a couple of weeks before the next meeting.

## **12. Any other business**

Rob Greenwood and Becky Hammond have indicated their intention to step down from being Chair and Secretary at the AGM in November. Henry Folkard expressed his thanks to them for their four years in the role. This was supported by Lynn Robinson, who had brought them each a BMC t-shirt and mug. Lynn reiterated the importance of volunteers to the work of the BMC.

**13. Date, time and venue of the next meeting**

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 7.30pm. This meeting will include the AGM and annual quiz.

[Post-meeting note: This was originally planned to be held at the Maynard – but due to the closure of the Maynard in October the venue has changed to the Norfolk Arms at Ringinglow.]

## BMC Peak Area Meeting 12<sup>th</sup> June 2019 – National Council update

This is an unusual report as we haven't had a National Council meeting since February i.e. before the last Area meeting. However things have still been happening over in BMCland and we thought it worth giving a brief update on that.

### 1. BMC AGM

A few of you will have been at the AGM at the end of March, this year held locally in Buxton, but for those of you who weren't here's a quick summary:

- a. 2019 Volunteer Awards presentation on the Saturday night
- b. A constructive Open Forum discussion on the BMC's vision, mission & core values
- c. Annual reports from the President & CEO, including an introduction to the BMC's latest environmental campaign Hills2Oceans
- d. Treasurer's report including the rationale behind the proposed subs increase (helped by the presence of a representative from BMC's insurance broker Howden to give more insight into the insurance claim which has largely necessitated this increase)
- e. Ratification of the election to the Board of Directors of the Chair (Gareth Pierce), and a new National Council appointed Director to replace Rik Payne (Fiona Sanders), plus the elections of three new Nominated Director positions (Huw Jones – Accounting & Finance, Jonathan White - Clubs and Jonny Dry – Fundraising & Grants)
- f. After some debate the increase in membership subscriptions was approved.

### 2. Governance Working Group

This has been set up following the AGM, to address some issues arising from it including future AGM processes & communications, member engagement through voting, and Nominations Committee membership & processes. This to run alongside the work of the new Governance & Compliance Officer, Lucy Valerio, and the Nominations Committee review of existing Board member skills and roles.

### 3. Values & Strategy

- a. Values Workshop & Survey – defining the key values underpinning the BMC's work is an important part of producing the new five year Strategy. Some initial suggestions were fine-tuned at the pre-AGM open forum session, and these were then used as the basis of a membership survey sent out in May. Using the results of this, currently the main ones identified are Community, Sustainability, Adventure & Heritage, along with two more possibilities encompassing education/skills and excellence/performance. A proposal will be presented to National Council for discussion at the next meeting.
- b. Five year Strategic Plan (2020-25) – this was further developed at a full day meeting held last month, attended by most of the Board. Again a summary of their output will go to the next National Council meeting.

#### 4. ODG

Good progress has been made in most of the Workstreams including:

- a. WS1 Strategy – see above
- b. WS2 Ops & Finance – work ongoing on a new digital membership package and the formation of a Digital Strategy workgroup
- c. WS4 Corporate Structure – Rab Carrington is leading a Competitions workgroup looking into possible options for future structures, and a discussion paper on the BMC in Wales was presented to both Welsh Area meetings in the past week. Another group is being set up to start looking into the Charitable Subsidiaries.
- d. WS6 Policy – current Olympics position paper has been published on the website, and the policy on growth, participation and diversity is now being developed as part of the overall strategy.
- e. WS5 Governance (National Council Reconstitution), WS7 Partners & WS8 Membership Engagement – it has been recognised that these three areas are so linked that they are best considered together. Papers on all three will therefore be presented at the next National Council meeting.
- f. WS5 Governance (Specialist Committee Review) – on hold awaiting a lead for the workgroup.

The next National Council meeting is on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, and as you might gather from the above I predict it's going to be a marathon – at the very least we will be looking at issues arising from the AGM, proposals re Values & Strategy and papers from the ODG workstreams on top of the usual standing agenda items! The aim is to put together summarised versions of all these to be issued to members for feedback in time for the September area meetings.

Further information on the issues above can be found on either main BMC website (look in the 'BMC Organisation' category) or on the ODG site [odg.thebmc.co.uk](http://odg.thebmc.co.uk).

Alison Cairns & David Brown (National Council Peak Area Representatives)