



Cyfarfod - BMC Cymru North/Gogledd - Meeting Beacon Climbing Centre

19 November 2019

Minutes - Cofnodion

1. Croeso/Welcome

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the area meeting, following the AGM
27 members present, including Tim Jepson TJ (Chair); Elfyn Jones EJ (BMC's A&C Officer for Wales)

2. Secretary – Ysgrifennydd

Neal Hockley offered to take notes

3. Apologies - Ymddiheuriadau

John Cousins; Mark Walker; Simon Patton; Stephen Hobdell; Chris Parkin; Mike Rosser; Kate Worthington; Dan Lane

4. Minutes/Cofnodion (Pen y Pass, 3/9/19)

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted without objection

Matters Arising

The only matter arising was a short report on the BMC's 'Changing Behaviours' conference, attended by TJ, EJ, John Cousins, Dan Lane and Mike Raine, during which many aspects of 'Caring for the Places we Love' were shared with colleagues from companion organisations such as National Parks, National Trust, The Ramblers, Natural Resources Wales and Natural England. There were interesting insights into the problems and solutions surrounding issues such as Upland Ecology, Wild Fires, Human Waste, Camping/Van Camping, Footpath Erosion, 'Nudging' Behaviour, and Codes of Conduct.

In many respects, it is considered to be the occasional user, and one-off events, which cause greater problems than committed, frequent hill-users. For example, disposable BBQ's are the cause of most wild-fires, and a poorly-planned fell race can create a new footpath in a day. However, experienced hill-users are much easier to access with information and advice, and therefore have a vital role to play in influencing others' behaviour in upland areas.

5. Items for AOB - Itemau am UFA

There were no additional agenda items

6. Chair's Business – Busnes Cadeirydd (TJ)

Transport around Yr Wyddfa

EJ reported that consultants had not yet been commissioned to produce a study/report on parking/traffic issues around Yr Wyddfa, as part of the Snowdon Partnership Plan. Once appointed, the consultants should be invited to attend a local area meeting in order that members can express their opinions and concerns.

Litter on Yr Wyddfa

Mary-Kate Jones, the Project Manager of the Snowdonia Society, has contacted RAW Adventures in order to obtain information about litter on Snowdon. It was suggested that Mary-Kate be invited to a future meeting to

discuss this and other issues of mutual interest to BMC Cymru and the Snowdonia Society.

Painted Stones – Ordnance Survey

TJ had been made aware of advice posted on the Ordnance Survey website suggesting that children should turn a walk into an adventure by decorating stones and leaving them in nature for others to find! TJ told the meeting that the advice had now been removed, but on checking after the meeting this does not appear to be the case. Here is the link:

<https://getoutside.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/guides/10-ways-to-turn-a-family-walk-into-an-adventure/>

Footpath repair weekend

Steve Charles, Access Rep. for the North-West area, wants to organise a footpath maintenance weekend meet for his area members. If Steve's numbers are low, TJ has agreed to advertise the weekend as a joint meet with N. Wales members.

Local Area Surveys

The Manchester Office now has in place the opportunity to conduct simple surveys of area members, should area chairs wish to consult a wider membership than attend meetings.

BMC Volunteer Awards – nominations x3

TJ reminded members of the need to nominate individuals for the three annual BMC volunteering awards. N Wales has recently had members gaining awards in all three categories. No names were put forward at the meeting, but could be submitted to the Chair before the deadline of 31 March 2020.

Local Festival/Event applications

The Guidance Notes for the running of festivals is being updated. Areas wishing to hold a festival in 2020 need to submit an application for consideration in the New Year.

7. Winter Ground Conditions Reports

Andy Newton asked for an update on the arrangements for the SNPA's winter ground conditions reports for winter 2019/20. His concern followed incidents of confusing, misleading reports in January. EJ and Anne Vowles had attended a MountainSafe meeting, at the SNPA's offices, in September when reporting had been discussed. TJ had also spoken to Steve Jones, BMC member, who has been contracted by the SNPA to write the reports this winter. Steve emphasised that he is not an employee of the Park and is not in a position to unilaterally alter the terms of his contract.

Changes to the template on which reports are submitted have been agreed.

EJ pointed out that the Park's Warden service has been cut right back and currently does not include individuals with extensive mountaineering experience.

The meeting asked EJ to take three questions to the next meeting with the Park.

- Could the days on which reports are written be flexible enough to take account of changes in weather and conditions?
- Could the reports be more prominently located on the Park's website?
- If there is any information about how many times reports are accessed on the website?

The Snowdon Live Weather Service will continue to show temperature over winter, but the anemometer has been dismantled to avoid freezing up.

The BMC air/turf temperature gauges in Cwm Idwal are working.

8. Access and Conservation - Mynediad a Chadwraeth (EJ)

EJ's report on Access and Conservation in Wales had previously been published on the BMC Community website. Comment was invited on each area of the report:

* Great Orme, Pigeon Cave: - 3 seal pups; Now reopened. Country Park is very happy with climbers' compliance.

* Carneddau Landscape Heritage Fund Project: - The BMC have now signed a memorandum of understanding with this project in order to continue our involvement. However signing a MoU does not imply agreement with all aspects of the proposals.

* Welsh Government Access Reform: - The expectation is for the proposals to become law early in 2021. The

process is currently being managed by a Steering Group which will convene three 'Expert' groups to examine the detail. The BMC has to apply to be involved in these Expert groups. Those groups concerned with CRoW land, the coast and path designation will be especially important to BMC interest. Being a member of an Expert group will involve a lot of voluntary work, amounting to writing the legislation! The BMC needs to build an alliance with other outdoor recreation groups to ensure that a consistent 'expert' message is presented. There will be considerable organised opposition from landowning and angling organisations, although access to water will be dealt with through a separate process.

9. **Reps. Reports – Adroddiadau**

Reps. reports were adequately covered in the Annual Report and elsewhere on the agenda.

10. **BMC Strategic Plan – Cynllun Strategol 2018-2020 + ODG Update**

These items were included on the agenda at the request of the Manchester Office, but the relevant paperwork was received only 7 hours before the start of the meeting, with no time for consideration.

11. **BMC Cymru - Y Ffordd Ymlaen - The Way Forward for the BMC in Wales**

Neal Hockley was asked to summarise the options for the future of the BMC in Wales that have emerged from the all-Wales group discussions, and been presented in the paper he has produced for National Council and the BMC Board.

The options are:

- The Status Quo
- A BMC Sub-group/Committee for Wales
- BMC Cymru becomes a wholly owned BMC subsidiary
- BMC Cymru becomes a limited company, closely linked to the BMC
- BMC Cymru becomes an independent, legally-separate organisation

Time restricted discussion, but Andy Newton succinctly summed up the options something like this:

“The first, second and third options wouldn't achieve the objective of effectively increasing the influence of the BMC in Wales, and the last option won't be acceptable to the Board or BMC members. That only leaves the 'Limited Company' option!

TJ expressed concern about the timetable for consultation with members if a recommendation from the options paper is to be ready for the BMC AGM in June

12. **Any Other Business - Unrhyw Fusnes Arall**

None

13. **Date of future meetings:**

Mis Fawrth 17 March 2020 Local Area
Mis Mai 26 May Local Area
Mis Mehefin 13 June (BMC AGM at Plas y Brenin)
Mis Medi 1 September Local Area
Mis Tachwedd 3 November Local Area + Local AGM