

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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LONDON & SOUTH EAST AREA MEETING

Meeting held in the Trevelyan Room, YHA St Pancras,, London
on Wednesday 8 March 2020 at 7.00pm.

Minutes

1. Welcome and apologies for absence - Attendance numbers 17 (women 9, men 8)

Chaired Chris Stone (CS) Minutes taken by Robert Dufton (RD)
Apologies – Sherry Macliver, Fabrizio Scaglione

CS welcomed everyone to the meeting, and in particular first time attenders. CS welcomed Lynn Robinson, BMC President (LR) and Rob Bishop, BMC's Partnerships Officer (RB). CS invited members to introduce themselves. CS explained that the meeting was being held at the YHA for the first time. The YHA was one of the BMC's partner organisations. RB would talk about them later.

2. Minutes of previous meeting held on 21 November 2019

The minutes of the meeting on 21 November 2019 were approved. A member asked about the plan to hold a future area meeting to be hosted by the Ski Club of Great Britain. RD explained that this was still being discussed. The minutes were approved. 8 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstained. CS explained that the minutes of the AGM which had taken place on the same evening as the last area meeting would be considered at the next AGM later in 2020.

3. Matters arising

CS said that he had fed back to National Council the need for more notice and information in advance for area elections. There were no other matters arising which were not on the agenda.

4. Co-opting Area Representatives

CS stated that since the AGM two people had offered to stand for election as area representatives. He asked if there were any other people present who were interested in standing for the roles listed on the agenda. There were none. The following members were duly co-opted as area representatives:

Clubs Rep – Tim Crocker (12 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions)

Hillwalking Rep – Fabrizio Scaglione (12 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions)

5. Report back from National Council

CS outline the following matters which had or were being considered by National Council

- 5.1. The annual presentation and report by each specialist committee.
- 5.2. The climate change project to be launched at ShAFF, including the opportunity for people who purchased BMC insurance and other supporters to donate £25 to pay for sphagnum moss replanting in the Peak District in partnership with Moors for the Future.
- 5.3. A complaint was received following the election of Council Nominated Directors to the Board at the last NC meeting. Following an investigation by the Senior Independent Director the complaint was upheld and it was decided the election would be re-run at the next NC meeting.
- 5.4. The management of competitions would become an independent department (Climbing Competitions Performance Group) within the BMC and branded as GB Climbing as at present.
- 5.5. The proposal to reconstitute National Council which would become the Members' Council. It was proposed that the 10 areas would still have 2 reps per area but only one vote. There would be two

nationally elected councillors reflecting priority themes agreed by National Council of Membership Engagement and Hill Walking.

6. Organisational Development Group

CS updated members on the current work including: a paper concerning BMC Cymru which would go to the Board and the National Council before wider circulation to members; the final report of the competitions working group; and the start of the review of specialist groups.

CS drew attention to the following items which were being progressed by ODG under the chairmanship of Fiona Sanders. These were draft proposals which were being developed and/or out for consultation. CS encouraged all members to look at the ODG (odg.thebmc.co.uk) section of the website and respond to consultations (odg@thebmc.co.uk).

6.1. New terms of reference for Specialist Committees Working Group

6.2. Updates to the Articles of association

6.3. The Strategic Plan 2020 -2024

6.4. The internal delegation to establish the competition climbing department already mentioned

6.5. The reconstitution of National Council

6.6. The clubs strategy. CS highlighted this. Draft high level objectives for BMC in relation to clubs were proposed. The strategy took account of the increasing number of informal climbing groups, eg run through social media, where participants did not wish to establish a traditional club. CS encouraged club members and in particular club members who were also on the committee of their club(s) to look at the proposed strategy and to respond to the consultation.

6.7. The changes to BMC Cymru. CS highlighted this. At present the BMC is not recognised by the Welsh Assembly. The proposal was to make governance and resourcing changes which would lead to a strong presence for the BMC in Wales, with possible gains in terms of access to policy makers and funding opportunities, including for Welsh language. It the first instance a BMC Cymru Committee will be formed as a sub-committee of the Board.

7. Southern Sandstone Festival 2020

CS reported that a Southern Sandstone Festival would take place on Saturday 12 September. Its objectives were membership engagement, celebration of the two BMC owned crags in the southern area and the many volunteers involved with their management. CS thanked everyone who had volunteered to help run the festival.

8. Reports from Area Representatives

8.1 Clubs No update. Two events were taking place for club members. An outdoor first aid course and a training day for club committee members.

8.2 Hillwalking

CS reported that the Hills 2 Oceans campaign would continue in 2020.

CS reported that another hill walking symposium would be held on 14 and 15 March 2020 in Ambleside.

CS highlighted a campaign by the Ramblers to map currently unmapped historic rights of way to ensure they are added to the definitive map by 2026 so they are not be lost.

8.3 Youth- CS reported that the final regional heat in the Youth Climbing Series would take place on 25 March 2020. The national finals would be held in Sheffield over 25-26 April 2020. He wished all young competitors from the London and SE area well. Mike Bishop (MB) asked about whether more could be done to promote youth mountaineering. LR said that the BMC Youth & Equalities Officer promoted climbing for young people but not specifically mountaineering. Rob Bishop said that the BMC collaborated with the Scouts and the DoE awards which provided opportunities for young teenagers, but there was more to be done.

9. Area "Noticeboard"

CS drew attention to many events being held in the area or nationally over the coming months. [These are not listed as subsequent to the meeting the Covid-19 situation as caused many of these to be postponed.] CS referred to a webinar for members on Thursday 2 April 2020 at 18.30 about proposed changes to the Articles.

10. AOB

BMC Partnership working

RB gave a short presentation. He introduced himself and his previous employment background. He spoke about the partnership working undertaken by the BMC with a range of organisations outside the climbing and mountaineering sector, eg the YHA. This was now a developing part of the BMC and supporting achieved its aims.

Volunteer Recognition

LR encouraged members to nominate people who volunteered for BMC to receive one of the three main BMC volunteer recognition awards or honorary membership. The award winner will be announced at the President's dinner the night before the AGM. The process to nominate was straightforward and the application can be found online.

12. Dates of 2020 Area Meetings

RD outlined the new approach for area meetings. We intended to hold them in different venues with specific themes, and like this evening's meeting, often in partnership with another organisation.:

Thursday 21 May (House of Lords, on theme of Access and Conservation)

Saturday 12 September (as part of a Southern Sandstone festival)

Tuesday 27 October 2020 (future AGM and area meeting in partnership with Ski Club of Great Britain tbc)

A raffle was held with the ticket drawn by Lynn Robinson. The prize was a copy of the Southern Sandstone climbing guide generously donated by Rockfax. The raffle was won by Ellen Clancy.

After the formal part of the meeting CS introduced Lynn Robinson, President of the BMC who gave a presentation "The BMC and Me" about her background and experience in the outdoors and climbing, how she had first got to know the BMC when she was president of her university climbing club and since then she had undertaken a range of voluntary activities within the BMC, in the Peak area, in guidebook production and editing and now in national leadership roles. LR gave a summary of the range of work carried out by the BMC. Members asked many questions and then warmly showed their appreciation for her presentation.

Minutes written by Robert Dufton