



BMC North West Area

Online (Zoom) meeting
Monday 18th May 2020 19:30

Slides - on BMC Communities site

Recorded

New to Zoom?

Considerate - mute yourself

Bear with us - give us feedback

Timekeeping - speakers keep to time

Questions - in chat box

Not a SPAG test

Problem - message in chat



Welcome

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Minutes of previous meeting
3. Matters arising not covered elsewhere
4. Equity Steering Group – report
5. BMC's response to COVID-19, status re access, and coming out of lockdown
6. Reports from area representatives
 - Access
 - Clubs
 - Hill Walking
 - Youth & Walls
 - Social media and comms
7. NW Events calendar 2020 – latest on Wilton Fest.
8. Report from most recent National Council
9. BMC (virtual) AGM, incl proxy voting
10. Any other business



Agenda Items 2 - 4

2. Minutes of previous meeting

3. Matters arising not covered elsewhere

4. Equity Steering Group – report

James McHaffie & Cressida Allwood



Agenda Item 5: BMC's response to COVID-19

Status re access, and coming out of lockdown

The BMC and other organisations have published much recent advice on returning to climbing and hillwalking

England

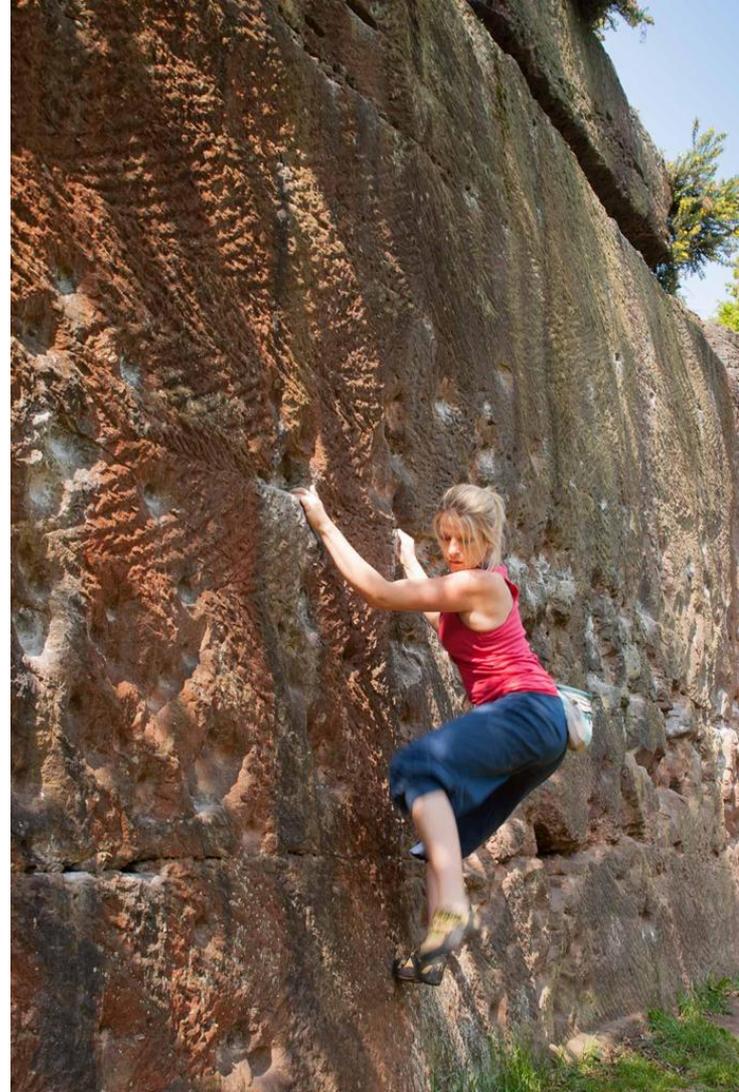
Wales

Lake District

Mountain Rescue Teams

Lancashire & Cheshire Craggs: Les and Mark - Access rep reports

No issues reported in the North West - thanks to members for being respectful and considerate



In all cases the emphasis is on **compliance with the law**,
with recommendations to **keep yourself and others safe**,
to **avoid “honeypots”** and **stay local**,
not to assume MRTs will operate as normal,
and to **respect** the sensitivities of
local communities.



Agenda Item 6

Area Reps

The volunteers who make the magic happen

**Access
Hounstlea
Clubs**

Les Ainsworth & Mark

Dominic Oughton

Hill Walking

Steve Charles & Dave Robinson

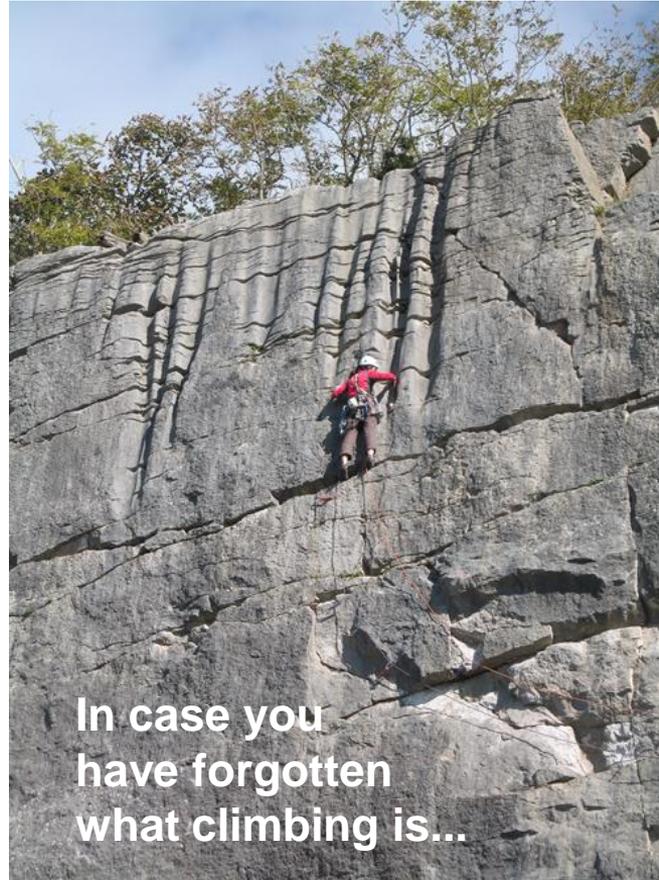
Youth & Walls

Stuart Holmes

Social media & comms

Roberta Spagnul

Access - Lincs



In case you
have forgotten
what climbing is...

Personal Thoughts on Climbing Access

Les Ainsworth

The comments in this set of slides are my personal suggestions. They are presented as a starting point for making your own personal decisions. Therefore, it is essential that you think ahead and then apply them with consideration to the situations that you actually encounter. Most importantly, comply fully with the Government guidance that is current at the time.

Keep safe

les.ainsworth@synergy-ergs.com

Thoughts as a Risk Analyst

- ❑ The greatest risk is from airborne contamination
- ❑ Direct contamination is a lower risk, but is still significant
- ❑ Contamination from someone who has been in lockdown is lower, but it is still NOT zero

Things to consider

Comply with Government Guidance

- ❑ Where to go
 - ❑ Consider smaller, less busy locations and avoid honeypot sites
 - ❑ Avoid crags where there is a current access problem
 - ❑ Avoid crags where locals could be concerned about parking
 - ❑ Plan an alternative in case your proposed crag is crowded
- ❑ Getting there
 - ❑ Do not leave home if you have any symptoms
 - ❑ Avoid public transport
 - ❑ Stay in your car until there are no pedestrians close by
- ❑ Reaching crag
 - ❑ Maintain social distance on approach
 - ❑ Leave any personal gear at least 3m from others

Main principles

Comply with Government Guidance

- ❑ Keep yourself safe
 - ❑ Maintain 2m distance
 - ❑ Bring hand sanitiser and use it
- ❑ Keep others safe
 - ❑ Keep clear of others
 - ❑ Do not linger in areas in heavy use by non-climbers
- ❑ Maintain good relations with locals
 - ❑ Do not hang around parking area
 - ❑ Maintain a low profile
 - ❑ If there are problems with locals, do not argue with them, but let me know as soon as possible

Parking Guidance at Lancs Crags

- ❑ Jumbles: Park as for Ousels and walk in
- ❑ Stronstrey Bank: Park at dam at end of Anglezarke Reservoir and walk in. Possible bird nesting on Cannine Crawl.
- ❑ Pinfold: No more than two cars

Avoid the Following Crag

- ❑ Avoid because of outstanding access issues
 - ❑ Withnell Qy
 - ❑ Shore Qy
 - ❑ Pudsey Qy
 - ❑ Castle Qy

- ❑ Avoid because of potential to upset locals
 - ❑ Hall Stones
 - ❑ Craig Y Longridge
 - ❑ Witches Qy

Crag Activities

Listed in order of risk

1. Crag cleaning
 - ❑ Relatively easy to maintain distance if cleaning paths or abseiling to clean a route. Individual visits possible
2. Top-roping
 - ❑ Self belay with a shunt **OR**
Belay at top sufficiently well back **OR**
Belayer at bottom must keep at least 2m to one side of line of rope
3. Leading
 - ❑ Absolutely no multi pitch routes
 - ❑ Avoid traverses, loose or unprotected climbs
 - ❑ Belayer must stand at least 2m to one side of line of rope
 - ❑ Lead climber to use their own gear and to remove it all whilst being lowered down
 - ❑ Avoid putting rope in mouth before clipping

Post Lockdown Route Deterioration

The good spring weather and lack of traffic will have substantially increased the amount of vegetation on many climbs, at the foot of routes and on approach paths.

So I would like to ask the vast majority of Lancs climbers who leave crag maintenance to others, to do their bit to keep our crags vegetation free. Just put some secateurs or thick gloves in your sac and spend a few minutes removing brambles or nettles before starting to climb. Committing to cleaning a couple of routes on an abseil would be even better.

AND NOTE THAT

You can clean our crags on your own, so no social distancing

BMC

The BMC conference call with Access Reps today was in effect a survey of how well access arrangements were working. The answer was generally positive, but it could have been done just as well by a few short phone calls with the access reps.

As a Human Reliability Consultant I am amazed that the BMC have not produced a risk assessment and mitigation strategy for safe climbing whilst maintaining social distancing. This was a situation that cried out for such an approach to add credibility to any position adopted by the BMC.

Guidebooks

Work on the following **Wired** guides is proceeding well -

- ❑ Peak Gritstone – about to go to printers.
- ❑ Northern Rock: To include Lancashire, Yorkshire, North York Moors and Northumberland. No publication date yet. Lancs routes selected, most of the text done and photo topos have been marked up. There is still a need for action photos for Northern Rock.
- ❑ Lake District Sport Climbing: About to go to the printers. Includes Warton Main Qy and Barrow Scout Cove.

Cheshire Crag Access

No particular issues:

Main Cheshire crags (Helsby, Pex Hill) open access land.

The same issues of compliance with law and BMC guidelines apply in Cheshire as everywhere else.

Other News:

Mark continues to work on:

- Access to new bouldering areas in a Runcorn public park
- Calming down shared use issues at Pex Hill
- “Chipping away” at getting permission for climbing at Aviary Wall, a small crag in a public park in St Helens



Clubs

**A big welcome to Dominic Oughton
who has taken up the role of
BMC NW area Clubs Coordinator**



ROCKAROUNDTHEWORLD

It's a climber's life



[articles](#) / [showcase](#) / [posts](#)

CATEGORIES

- Austria
- BeNeLux
- Campervan Stopover
- Canada
- Eastern Europe
 - Bulgaria
 - Croatia
 - Hungary
 - Romania



THE RUINS

be co-opted) BMC NW
Area
Club Coordinator

Dominic Oughton



What's it all about???

Organisation Development Group

Our Goal

The BMC and Clubs work in partnership to promote our shared mission & values and support a thriving club community

Objective 1

The BMC actively seeks the views of clubs and promotes opportunities for clubs to contribute to national and local initiatives

Objective 2

The BMC facilitates inter-club networks, encourages sharing of good practice and promotes collaboration between clubs

Objective 3

The BMC focuses its resources to provide targeted, relevant support to address key priorities to ensure the health of clubs

Objective 4

The BMC recognises and engages with the broad range of clubs and volunteer groups that facilitate participation in mountain sports

Some Issues for guidance and/or collaboration –

Any more???

- How do Clubs cope in the ongoing C19 crisis (issues around guidance on huts & meets etc, financial impacts...)
- **‘Can I start climbing and hill walking again?’** - how will this feed through into Club activities in due course?
- Sharing ideas for keeping in touch with members and arranging ‘online / virtual’ engagement during social distancing
- Child protection guidance for clubs (including use of huts) and implications of opening membership to U18s
- BMC insurance implications for Club members organising events eg ‘introduction to ###’ for inexperienced members or guests?

Picking up point 3...



The Rucksack Club

Get out there...

The Rucksack Club HOME **STAY IN THERE!** ABOUT GALLERY HUTS JOIN

Stay in there!

To keep you entertained and engaged during these strange times, you could do worse than to browse some virtual meet videos, classic journal items, "On the hill with..." and more.

Either click the links below or use the menu at the top of the page:

- [Virtual Meet Gallery](#)
- [On the hill with...](#)
- [Classic RC Journal Articles](#)
- [Member's Tales](#)

To see what is coming up, click here for [Forthcoming events](#)

These lists are constantly being added to and will build into an impressive library to help you...

-  **North America Wall on El Cap - Rucksack Club Virtual Meet - E1**
The story of a five-day ascent of NAW on El Cap, Yosemite, as told in The Rucksack Club's first virtual slideshow
-  **There and back Again - Scottish Odyssey - Rucksack Club Virtual Meet - E2**
Joe Fisher and Andy Barlass make a Scottish Odyssey to Cape Wrath, taking in two of the country's most iconic
-  **The Infinite Spur, Alaska - Rucksack Club Virtual Meets E3**
An account of Expedition Experiences by Will Harris, illustrated by an ascent of The Infinite Spur on Mt Foraker in
-  **WainWrights, Headpointing, Alpine 4,000ers and Carnmore - Rucksack Club Virtual Meets E4**
Four Rucksack Club members share stories covering the breadth of our activities, from hard trad to iconic Lakela
-  **Frendo Spur - Rucksack Club Virtual Indoor Meets E5**
Three "once-a-year weekend warriors" go to Chamonix to attempt The Frendo Spur - Plenty of banter and humor
-  **Never Again Bike Tour of Ladakh - Rucksack Club Virtual Meets E6**
Andy Stewart and Debbie Whitaker share their 1,000 mile bike adventure, a long way off the beaten track in Lada



Hill Walking Conservation Projects

Holcombe Moor, Moss Planting

23 March: Cancelled, to be rearranged

Arranged with local National Trust ranger

No moss available from MftF

Became Hydrological project

12 people signed up



Snowdonia weekend projects

with National Trust

18/19 April: CANCELLED

22/23 August - ????????



Hillwalking

Hillwalking in accordance with BMC guidelines is now possible, but arranged / club walks or groups working on conservation projects are some time off yet.

Do we want to continue to run events as an area?

Or would we rather support clubs to run events and meets and to promote them?



Youth and Walls

Youth Comps: on hold

Any timescales / considerations for resuming??

Walls: Association of British Climbing Walls have been publishing regular updates on their response to COVID-19.

<https://www.abcwalls.co.uk/news/coronavirus-updates-and-weekly-news/>

ABC devising framework for safe re-opening which they intend to agree with government.

<https://www.abcwalls.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Beyond-Coronavirus-update-3-07May20.pdf>

Social Media & Area Communications

- Scheduling - Thinking Ahead
- Engaging Members
- Promoting Events
- Analysing Data

BMC NW Facebook analytics – Work in progress – May update



Changes to
engagement
over time

**Most
popular
posts**

**Clicks,
likes,
shares,
comment
s**

Demographics
: location,
gender and
age group

**Difference
pre- versus
during
lockdown?**



**Recommendation
s
to inform and
plan
our future
social media
engagement**

**Quarterly
analysis**

**Type of
post:
photos,
videos,
links**



Final Agenda Items

7. NW Events calendar 2020 – latest on Wilton Fest - TG

- Still planning to go ahead
- Status
- Help needed - what and when?

8. Report from most recent National Council

- What was discussed at most recent meeting - links to further detail. CS & BB
- Planned topics for next meeting, including any particular topics where members input is sought.

9. BMC (virtual) AGM, incl proxy voting

- What is the plan for the “virtual” AGM
- What topics will be covered? What will be missing?
- Where and when can interested members get more detail?
- How will voting work?



10. Any other business

Steve McClure video link

<https://youtu.be/2G5l5H2Lt7w>

Prize Draw

Thanks

How was it?

Please pop comments in chat:

What went well?

What could be better?

What was missing that you'd like to see?

Images: courtesy of Paul Evans unless otherwise specified

Slide 1 - sunset over the chem works from Helsby

Slide 3 - cleaning loose rock from the top of Mandarin, at Hoghton Qy

Slide 4 - Stronstrey Bank Qy above White Coppice, north of Winter Hill

Slide 5 - Pex Hill

Slide 6 - Stock image: Unsplash

Slide 8 - Trowbarrow, Assegai Wall - Les Ainsworth

Slide 19 - Pex

Slide 21 - Provided by Steve Charles

Slide 22 - Blackstone Edge

Slide 23 - Stock image: Unsplash

Slide 25 - Pete Chadwick on Yuppie's Arete, Helsby

Resources

12th May: England

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/can-i-start-climbing-and-hill-walking-again>

15th May: England <https://www.thebmc.co.uk/do-you-need-to-change-the-way-that-you-climb-and-walk-with-covid19>

Recovery plan for climbing and hillwalking

<https://thebmc.co.uk/bmc-launches-covid19-recovery-plan-for-climbing--hill-walking>

Wales

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/can-i-go-climbing-and-hill-walking-in-wales>

Lake District

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/can-i-travel-to-the-lake-district-to-climb-or-walk>

Mountain Rescue Teams

<https://www.mountain.rescue.org.uk/stay-safe-be-adventure-smart/coronavirus-covid-19>

National Council & Organisational Development Group 'At-a-Glance' Update

<https://community.thebmc.co.uk/Event.aspx?id=4210>

ODG: <https://odg.thebmc.co.uk/hc/en-gb>