



## **Peak Area Meeting**

**Venue:** Zoom

**Time & Date:** 7.30pm, Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020

### **Minutes**

#### **1. Welcome & Introduction**

*Andy Reeve (Chair):* Hello, welcome to our first online meeting. Ana, Louise & Peter are helping to host the meeting. We will try to keep muting people to prevent background noise. If you would like to make a point then you need to electronically raise your hand.

*Alison Cairns:* The electronic raised hand function is under the participants button, this opens a little pop up window, at the bottom you have 3 buttons, one is raise hand. The hosts can see that your hand is raised.

*Louise Hawson:* Some hands raised, but these were left up from a practice not an actual comment.

*Andy:* We have a pre recorded talk from Steve McClure, this will be available at the end via a link posted in the chat. There is a new BMC Peak Area e-mail address, [Peak.Area@thebmc.co.uk](mailto:Peak.Area@thebmc.co.uk) this e-mail address should be used to contact the chair (Andy). If you're not sure who to contact most of the reps contact details are in the digital newsletter available on the communities page: <https://community.thebmc.co.uk/Event.aspx?id=4210>

There will be some polls run throughout the meeting, we will do one at the start to help keep everyone engaged, one poll is to see whether you've ever attended a meeting before, the other to get a vague idea of where you are joining us from. (The polls were conducted online) We also have some free t-shirts to give away.

*Alison:* It has been pointed out (in the chat) that on a tablet the raised hand is under more, not participants. Someone else posted in the chat suggesting using the action buttons to attract attention for questions however as the gallery view is split across multiple screens its not possible for the hosts to see everyone that way.

##### **1.1 Remembrance of John Allen**

*Andy:* Many of you may have heard the sad news that John Allen passed away, Neil Foster has kindly agreed to say a few words in remembrance.



*Neil Foster:*

(I) Only had 30 minutes warning and it would take longer to summarise John Allens life. I wanted to provide a bit of background as people may not have heard of him. Bet you've heard of Joe brown, true of his generation that John Allen was someone of that standing, a figure of the importance of Joe Brown. A lot of shock amongst the climbers at this bizarre thing that happened on Monday night. What comes of that I can tell you a little about it as I happened to be there, I wasn't climbing with him but knew him well so when I rocked up at the crag and saw him there I thought 'oh great' as you knew you were going to have a good time, John was very entertaining. He's been a pioneer on gritstone. He was a child prodigy, when he burst onto the scene at 14/15 he was doing some of the hardest routes in the country. If you want to have a good time climbing in the peak district then go and do some John Allen routes. I once spent a whole summer rediscovering routes and going all over, time and time again I'd look up the routes after and discover it was a John Allen route. He was a glass half full person, a tremendous loss. I wondered whether to say anything about the circumstances but I will as it might make people think. You can't be definitive, what is clear is there was no gear failure, it appears to be human error. It's an accident that's happened before, it's happened on crags nearby. You cannot be too careful, its easy to become blasé you need to check the simple things. If you don't then there's severe consequences. Having seen this I will not only be checking my knot before climbing but also my mates. But I do suggest you go and do some John Allen routes because they are great. We've lost a really significant figure in our area.

*Andy:* Neil thank you so much for sharing that and sharing in a few minutes as much as you could about the measure of the man. Very touching to hear, thank you for offering that to us all. We will have a few moments to reflect on the contribution of John and those who knew him.

- Respectful Silence to remember John Allen

## **2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

*Andy:* Agenda is available on the BMC website, there have been a few minor changes but it should be possible to follow.

The last meeting was in January as the March meeting was cancelled. Any corrections to the minutes from January? - No one raised a hand.

## **3. BMC update**

### **3.1. BMC & COVID update**

*Andy:* Slight change to the agenda, we first have Lynn, who will give a brief overview of the BMC and covid.

*Lynn Robinson:* Heartfelt thanks to Neil and the words he just said, thank you Neil.

Hopefully you will all realise by now that the BMC AGM will be taking place virtually. When I first started booking it 6 months ago I didn't think this would happen. We've employed a company to conduct the online voting. The meeting will take place virtually so you can attend or you can vote by



proxy. Proxy votes can be directed or discretionary. If you can, give directed votes; votes indicating your preference. The Agenda will be shortened as its virtual. You will get an email about it. Watch out for it.

Apologies from Dave Turnbull who has sent a brief update from the BMC office, it is open but lots of staff working from home and some staff have been furloughed.

BMC funding is from memberships and insurance. Insurance has stopped. Board have been meeting and discussing what to do going forwards. Lynn chairs the national council which have been looking at what the Board needs to do. Also represents the BMC on the international body of sport climbing. Be aware that the Olympics have been postponed until 2021 and it has been confirmed that qualified climbers will remain qualified (they won't need to requalify). The wired guide to the Peak area is literally in its final week. We've been working really hard going through every page, look out for that. It's being printed in South Wales but don't know the time scale. Climbing blind is on to-night bbc4 should be a good watch.

Finally want to talk about volunteering. It's National volunteer week 1<sup>st</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> June. Look out for information on the website.

At this point Chris Stone played a video showing Lynn Robinson announcing Peter Judd had won the 2020 George Band Award. The George Band Award recognises people who have played significant role in the BMC's work over an extended period of time. For more details please see the BMC website: <https://thebmc.co.uk/bmc-volunteer-award-winners>

*Becky Hammond:* Just wanted to say this is wholly deserved and indicative of Peters incredible modesty that he didn't shout about it. It is very well deserved. You were an invaluable member of the team. I know you're incredibly modest so well done you deserve it.

*Andy:* I would just like to echo those congratulations. Thank you Lynn for filming that.

## **4. Access Update**

### **4.1. BMC Access Update**

*Rob Dyer:* Quick update based around what we're doing for the COVID-19 pandemic nationally.

I'm sure a lot of you will have been following along with this. Look on the BMC website for a number of relevant articles. There's an infographic. And an article on the lake district in particular and another article giving advice on minimising transmission when out and about. More articles to come. Travel now unlimited but trying to encourage people to stay local. Especially in the Peak where we can stay local and still have access to amazing areas. Promote hand hygiene after touching anything, pay & display machines/gates etc. No one was prepared for this so doing our best, information keeps being updated. Everyone is doing a great job.



#### **4.2. Stanage Access update**

*Louise:* There's a couple of things on Stanage. Asked Mark the warden from Stanage to say a few words as better to hear it direct.

*Mark (the Stanage warden):* Been asked to come on and give a quick update on Stanage, been a warden there for 2 years. Thank you to the climbers as was really noticeable how people observed lockdown. Car parks are now open across the NP. Including Hollin Bank Car Park, but toilets are still closed. Trying to restore the verges around Hollin Bank Car Park. Currently no restrictions on North Lees side of Stanage for Ring Ouzels, let Kim Leyland know if you do see anything. There were camper vans in the first few weeks of lockdown, been invited to the campsite where they're staying. A few camper vans have settled at surprise view, police trying to deal with that. Fire at Stanage today, someone left a campfire burning. If you see smoke call 999.

Brief update on the options appraisal. Thank you to anyone who participated in the online consultation. Just finishing up, results should be available soon. People are starting to climb and boulder again. Good to see the place being used, all about access/climbing walking.

*Louise:* That's brilliant. Thanks Mark – Any specific questions? Can't see any.

*Lynn:* A specific thank you for posting updates on the lockdown situation in the Peak on UKC.

*Louise:* Several regional access reps are posting updates on UKC, in particular regarding car parking. National Trust are opening gradually, worth checking their website if you're planning to use on of their car parks. Curbar Gap car park is still closed, they are trying to reopen it when safe to do so.

#### **4.3. Other local access**

*Henry Folkard:* Hello everybody, joining from phone. Echo what Mark said fire risk is extremely high, if you do see anything call the fire brigade at once. Also if out and about and come across a right of way that appears to be illegally blocked then please report to Henry and Louise. Have been some reports, not many. Lots of eyes/reports will indicate the scale of the problem.

Reports that climbers have been very well behaved in the Peak. There may have been problems at Harpur Hill. Most people there aren't climbers but Police getting involved so maybe give it a miss for a week or two. Also an incident at Bradwell dale. The climber involved had followed the guidance on the RAD database on access to the west side of the Dale, informed the landowner and parked correctly, so the issue was diffused. However the lady who owns land on the east side of the Dale does not welcome climbers and has a strong objection to bolts. Peregrines nesting, no restriction but be mindful.

If anyone has any experience in public enquiries, for next year/later in the year. Likely to be some public enquiries that the BMC get involved in. Buxton to matlock railway and the A628 Road. The BMC will be wanting to take part. If experienced/willing to volunteer then contact Louise/Henry.



National Trust is reviewing the High Peak Moors Vision and Plan. This will effect the way we can enjoy the countryside, consultation is paused.

*Graeme Hammond:* Question – Went to the downfall before restriction was publicised. Went back today and looked on UK climbing so didn't climb. Went to a buttress not in the restricted zone. Could see the nest and it was in a different location, does a different zone need restricting? Has photos.

*Henry:* Rob Dyer can report back and Kim Leyland can feed it into the raptor group. Thanks for that.

*Rob Dyer:* Any information would be great and helpful.

*Kim Leyland:* Nothing to add. Would be glad to see the information.

*Louise:* Think for the access side just one more thing. Lynn pointed out all the access updates should also be on the RAD so worth checking both. Also as an area access team we would like to thank the access team in the office for all their work on creating the policies and posting articles and updates on the website. It makes our work with local partners much easier.

*Andy:* To make sure we don't miss anyone, raising your hand is the best way to make a point. We miss things if they are in the chat. Good to use chat to make a general point but not for questions.

#### **4.4. Central policy stuff**

*Louise:* Ongoing climate project around peat moorland restoration. Still really important. Will be more information to come in future and opportunity for people to get engaged. We are also working on a new project to raise awareness about moorland wild fires and communicate messages to the public about use of barbecues, campfires etc. Look out for this in the future. (Post Covid).

### **5. A talk about the work of the Equity Steering Group**

*Andy:* Update on the equity steering group. Both Cressida and James are in the meeting.

*James McHaffie:* Needs to be a cohost to share his screen. Apologies if anyone's seen this talk.

Presentation on equality in climbing. Contact James for presentation/information

The Equity steering group was set up around 2007, Cressida is chair. There are 5 sub groups aiming to promote equality in sport.

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/equity-steering-group>

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/bmc-equality-for-sport>

*Hillary Laurenson:* Is Climbing for All just for Sheffield or wider?

*James:* The charity is based out of the foundry but climbing for all is a one day course. Covers things like lifting/raising a wheelchair.



*Andy:* If anyone was not local to Sheffield but interested in climbing for all then are they best getting in touch with James?

*James:* Womens Trad fest is a national event we can set up these course at national events. Keen to get the events rolled out.

*Andy:* No more questions. In the comments Cressida has placed a useful contact in the chat for anyone who wants more information.

## **6. Ring Ouzels**

*Kim Leyland:* There is one restriction on Stanage but otherwise most things clear. Thanks to Rob Dyer and any other BMC volunteers who have been out helping to locate nests before the crowds descended. Not too much to report on the ring ouzel front.

Kestrels in Quad Quarry at Curbar and Burbage South Quarries. Reports of nests at Topsail at Birchen Edge, they weren't ravens they were jackdaws. Did put up a sign but jackdaws ok. If out and about then keep an eye out.

*Rob:* Received an email about Kestrels nesting on Gargoyle Flake at Bamford. Wanted to make people aware as its very popular.

*Andy:* Just to clarify the good advice, the RAD is the regional access database. Can find it on the BMC website there's also an app. Lists all restrictions.

*Becky:* Ravensdale has been the source of controversy, what sort of restrictions are in place.

*Rob:* Has had a problem with e-mails but have emailed Joe Alsop to go back to previous restrictions of just peregrines. The restriction at Ravensdale is Solitaire rightwards. Waiting for confirmation.

*Andy:* Any other questions. No. Thanks very much to Kim and Rob.

## **7. Welcome to our new social media guru**

*Andy:* Massive gratitude to Vikki Hughes who has volunteered to be social media rep.

*Vikki Hughes:* At the moment we only have Facebook but might be twitter and instagram to come. Just trying to promote information. Feels like its just COVID at the moment but in future will be good for promoting information about events/volunteering. If you want to put up any information contact Vikki.

*Andy:* Thank you for volunteering.

## **8. Hillwalking Update**

*Peter Judd:* Some of you will remember that we had a mend our mountains project. The second the BMC ran. Aimed to raise money for footpath repair. Two projects in our area, one is Great Ridge, Lose Hill to Mam Tor. The other is the Cut Gate bridleway. Cut Gate bridleway was to be completed



alongside North America Farm bridleway, work on the latter did start then came to a natural end with the arrival of the bird nesting season. Work should start on cut gate after COVID/bird restrictions lifted. Fully funded so should be completed but delayed.

Great Ridge, £100,000 raised by mend our mountains. Wasn't enough to do all the work but National Park and Moors for the Future Partnership team are hopeful of a bid to get more funding. Most of the work will be slabbing. One of the most popular walks in the peaks. Work still held up. Two reasons, landowner permission, negotiating access. Also planning permission needed as it is a permissive path. Planning application went in but needed to be withdrawn due to technicalities. Will be resubmitted. We as an area would like to put in a letter of approval.

There will be an online poll on whether the members are minded to support the letter, this issue had already been voted on in support so this is not a formal vote but an indication. Invited to raise hand if any questions/comments - none. Poll launched

*Andy:* Forgot to add in an abstain option but just don't vote if you don't want to.

*Lynn:* Two votes from this house but logged into one device.

*Andy:* We are aware there are often multiple people as stated this is only for indicative purposes, as it happens I don't think it would sway the vote. Results - 100 % (35) voted in favour of supporting the planning application.

*Peter:* Sphagnum bogs are a huge sink of carbon, some of you will remember a volunteer day up above the Derwent valley and had great fun planting sphagnum. We would like to do something similar again. Some National Trust staff furloughed but indication that Moors for the Future Partnership could do another similar day in autumn. We proposed to open it up to the Mountain Training Association Regional Group as well as to BMC members. If its something you are interested in please give Peter an email. (Email on newsletter).

*Austin:* Congratulations to Peter on winning his award.

Pandemic scuppered plans of area hill walk. Its on the back burner but if interested send an email (on back of newsletter). More information will be released when it happens.

Been made aware of one or two locations where some rights of way were obstructed. Seems to be few and far between. If you do know of any obstructions then alert someone; parkwatch on ramblers website. Rob and Henry both mentioned, guidance has changed we urge people to continue being courteous. Further information on website. If walking through rights of way, properties/ farm yards/ homes then be respectful.

*Peter:* Thank you for the award, and thank you to all volunteers and everyone.

*Lynn:* Just to clarify there will be a little something about the award at the AGM, but in 2021 Peter +1 will be the guest of the AGM and receive an award.

## **9. National Council Update**

British Mountaineering Council, 177-179 Burton Road, Manchester M20 2BB  
Tel: 0161 445 6111; Email: [office@thebmc.co.uk](mailto:office@thebmc.co.uk)





*Andy:* Alison a National council rep has an update on national council and the ODG.

*Alison:* I will introduce myself, I am Alison Cairns, one of two Peak Area National Council representatives along with Dave Brown (also present). We attend various meetings throughout the year to represent members views to the Council and the Board, and report back on the what the Board is doing.

For this meeting I have condensed the National Council (NC) and Organisational Development Group (ODG) reports into very brief overviews - these can be found on the same page as the agenda and the newsletter at <https://community.thebmc.co.uk/Event.aspx?id=4210>. Within each overview are hyperlinks to the NC minutes and all relevant ODG documents so that anyone who wants more detailed information can follow the links.

National Council overview – we’ve been very busy over the last few months. Had last face to face meeting in December, then lots of virtual meetings since. NC is working to try and be more focused and have more regular meetings rather than wait for a few big meetings throughout the year. Issues are ongoing such as the practicalities of holding a virtual AGM and deciding what work was essential and what could be postponed. See documents for more details.

*Spenser:* Question about Club strategy questionnaire and lack of time to properly respond.

*Alison:* This comes under the ODG stuff so may be covered more there. A lot of things that have gone out for consultation have been overtaken by events. As Clubs rep David was asked if he could give more information – nothing to add. Detailed Clubs Strategy paper on the ODG website – review is ongoing and feedback is still very welcome.

## **10. ODG Update**

*Alison:* The Organisational Development Group was set up to implement and move forwards with the Organisational Review that was conducted. The timing of Covid has been particularly unfortunate because everyone was all full steam ahead on putting in place the vast majority of the work needed in time for this year’s AGM. Unfortunately now the AGM is virtual we have had to drastically reduce the agenda so now only issues that don't require a lot of debate and discussion are included, and many things have had to be postponed until 2021. Good news is a lot of work is still ongoing, and some work that was postponed will actually gain more time for consultation and feedback.

Work that is still ongoing includes the new Cymru (Welsh) Committee particularly looking at BMC governance in Wales, necessary now Wales has its own government. Also as above the Clubs Strategy Group looking at how the BMC relates to clubs – a very keen and energetic group, all feedback welcome. The National Council Reconstitution Group are working hard to improve the efficiency and communication of the council. A new sub-group has been set up to review all the BMC’s Specialist Committees and Working Groups, and the new Competition Climbing Performance Group is now up and running.





Well done and thank you to Chris Stone, who has been appointed as one of the three Council Nominated Directors on the Board, with specific responsibility for Membership Engagement. He has been primarily instrumental in pulling all the online Area meetings together, and has also produced an updated ODG Communications Plan. As well as a suite of videos about the ongoing work of the ODG.

Any questions?

*Lyn:* Thanks Alison just wanted to add, immediately prior to this meeting we had our ODG meeting. As president I have overview of the membership recommendations and that work is still ongoing. A huge change to ODG is the change to board. Huge successes. Club strategy is still live and being developed so please do input into it.

*Andy:* Thank you Alison.

### **11. Digital Guest speaker, T-Shirts & Newsletter**

*Andy:* The Peak Area newsletter is available <https://community.thebmc.co.uk/Event.aspx?id=4210> . PDF only for this edition. We've been told it's the most desired newsletter amongst all areas. It has contact info for all reps plus useful updates.

Big news on who has won the t-shirts. Well done Matt Collins and Pete Tapping. Email and we will send out the t-shirts.

Link posted in the chat to Pre rerecorded online speaker.

*Becky:* Thankyou to Andy and special thanks to Ana (as Ana taking minutes means Becky isn't!).

Thank you to Andy. And to various volunteers. Who have carried on doing amazing stuff.

*Andy:* It would have been an impossible task without help from the reps, particularly Alison, Peter & Louise. Will be great to continue virtual method maybe in line with actual meetings. Enjoy the talks and the t-shirts.

*Peter:* Thank you Andy for virtual chairing and well done on virtual chairing.

The date of the next meetings are the 2<sup>nd</sup> September & 4<sup>th</sup> November.