

# BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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## Minutes of Midlands Area Meeting 4 November 2020 7.30pm start ONLINE VIA ZOOM

**Present:** Andy Potter (Chair), John Edwards (Sec), Claudia Sarner (Area Rep), David Jones (Area Rep), Ian Wyatt (Clubs Rep), Andy Harper (Access East), Andy Railton (Access West), Lyn Robinson (BMC President), Phil Simister (SolihullMC), John Handley (CoventryMC), Roger Fanner (SolihullMC), Dave Holland (WolverhamptonMC), Hazel Lewis (Pinnacle Club), Stuart Webb (MAM), Tim Weller (Halesowen), Tamsin Mayberry, Charlotte Whitmore, Roy Denney, Tony Griffin, Pauline Burton, Janet Campbell, Rosi Yule.

**Max 22, of whom 19 were present for 100% of the meeting. As far as can be ascertained this included 8 female attendees & 0 BAME.**

**1. Welcome and Apologies:** Andy Potter welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Mike Beaumont & Richard Law.

**2. AGM Part of meeting:** 6 committee positions and 2 national council representatives were elected. When there was no volunteer for the position of Secretary, Claudia Sarner asked John Edwards, who was stepping down having served the maximum 6 year term, to say a little about what the post entailed. This he did but there were still no volunteers and Andy Potter said they would have to co-opt someone for the next meeting.

**3. Minutes of the last Meeting:** Agreed. One spelling mistake was noted.

**4. Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere:** None

### **5. Reports from Area Representatives:**

**5.1 Access East:** Andy Harper reported a big drop in traffic at Cademan Woods and the litter problem had been sorted, so the local landowners are now happier. Hangingstone Quarry had been cleaned up during the summer and Markfield Quarry was now being used more. Forest Rock was busy but there had been no complaints.

**5.2 Access West:** No report

**5.3 Youth:** Claudia S said that basically nothing had happened with the 2020 Youth Climbing Series because of lockdown. Nothing had been finalised for 2021 but they had in mind 2 bouldering centres and 2 climbing walls.

She said that lots of outdoor centres were struggling and the BMC had started a campaign to try to save them. She mentioned there is an easy-to-use template letter on the BMC website which she urged people to use to highlight the problem to their M.P.

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/save-outdoor-centres-write-mp-bmc>

She also mentioned that digital BMC membership was now available at just £1 per month for under 27's and suggested this could be an ideal Christmas present for some. Email [arun@thebmc.co.uk](mailto:arun@thebmc.co.uk)

**5.4 Hill Walking:** David Jones said there had been an online meeting for reps on 20<sup>th</sup> October at which they discussed 'role description' ie what they should be doing, ORG conservation opportunities and links with other organisations and user recreation groups. There are still parts of the hill-walking Strategic Plan to discuss and complete but there is no time-frame as yet for this.

There has been talk of organising another outdoor event for next year.

**5.5. Club Issues:** Ian Wyatt reported that the 1<sup>st</sup> Midlands Clubs Forum (also the first in any BMC area) took place on 19<sup>th</sup> October via Zoom. There was a modest attendance and only 3 out of 29 clubs in the area had attendees (Bromsgrove, West Brom & ). Hazel Lewis said that she was a member of a national club (Pinnacle Club) and didn't think they had an invite. Roy Denney said the same. Both put their emails up on 'chat' so they should be included in future. Future Forum's should also perhaps be put on the Midlands area Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/BMCMidlandsArea>

Ian said that the BMC Clubs Committee had had a meeting the day after the Forum and discussed strategy, including how does one define a 'club'? He and Dave J are also on the Clubs & Huts Core Group and put updates on the website. The Clubs strategy 2020 – 2024 includes closer working with

clubs through the regional club groups.

**5.6. Climbing Issues:** [P]  
[SEP] None reported

#### **6.1 Reports from National Councillors:**

Claudia was pleased to report that Cath Flitcroft had been nominated for TGO's 'Extra Mile' Award, for her work on Access policy. She is the BMC's link into government.

The 'No More Barbeques' campaign has also been nominated for their Campaign of the Year.

Members should vote to help them hopefully win the awards.

She mentioned that there will be a live Q&A session on the new lockdown restrictions at 1.30pm tomorrow on Facebook (now viewable as an online video at:

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/live-the-bmc-answer-your-questions> and

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=280133073004480&ref=search>

Dave gave updates on the current position with Directors and nomination committee matters. Also an update on ORG matters. Stuart Webb said that from what he had read it seemed the BMC was in turmoil with Directors resigning frequently and he hoped that it had all settled down again. Lyn said that things were now stable and there was unity going forward. There was an internal evaluation every year and an external one every 4 years and, as a result of various directors resigning, they had asked Sport England for advice and as a result an external review, funded by Sport England, will start tomorrow. She said the BMC are committed to getting a more diverse Board of Directors with 3 observers and Rosi Yule as a co-opted Director because of her financial expertise, and that National Council are supporting the Board's vision of a way forward. Tony Griffin asked about the qualifications and competences of the external evaluators.

**6.2 Matters for the next Council Meeting:** There were no matters from the floor.

#### **7. Discussion of the Mission Statement for 2021:**

A slide showing the Mission Statement was shown. Lyn said this was her 4<sup>th</sup> area meeting and each one had different views on it. Roy Denney thought that 'Clubs' should be inserted along with 'staff, volunteers & partners' Ian Wyatt noted that activities mentioned were rather brief and didn't include things like skiing, mountain biking, fell-running and others.. Andy thought these were secondary and not primary activities and Roy suggested adding 'and other kindred outdoor pursuits' would be an improvement.

#### **8. Any other Business:**

- Tim Weller said that Cath F had told him that the BMC would be setting up a 'Sustainable Travel Working Group' next year and asked if the Climate Project could be added to the next agenda as he wanted to discuss how we can all walk, climb etc in ways to lessen our impact on climate and see what BMC members views are on 10 important questions.
- Lyn reminded people that they were taking nominations for the BMC Volunteer and other awards and that the closing date was 26<sup>th</sup> March next year.
- She also pointed out that the "Make Your Winter Count" skills lecture would be online this year. The meeting then ended at 9.30pm

#### **9. Date & location of next meeting:**

Almost certainly the next area meeting will be held using Zoom again on Wednesday 4??????

Written by John Edwards