



Peak Area Meeting

Venue: Zoom

Time & Date: 7.30pm, Thursday 4th March 2021

Minutes

<https://community.thebmc.co.uk/Event.aspx?id=4251>

1. Welcome & Introduction – Andy Reeve

1.1. Apologies from Henry Folkard, Jean Thomas, Michelle Martin, Spenser Gray.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 4th November 2020

2.1. <https://community.thebmc.co.uk/Event.aspx?id=4251>

3. Peregrines & Ravens

Kim Leyland: There is a whole crag restriction at Ravensdale whilst Peregrines settle down, this should be reduced once they choose a few places. There are likely to be a few more restrictions in future but will keep us updated.

At Darlton Quarry there is access restriction whilst Mission Impossible filming is ongoing.

Ring ouzel monitoring should be possible even with social distancing restrictions. Hopefully there are enough existing volunteers who can go alone/in pairs so unlikely to need new volunteers, also due to pandemic restrictions it would not be possible to offer training to new volunteers.

Lynn Robinson: Quiz link in chat, prizes will be available

4. Access Update

Louise Hawson:

PDNPA asset disposals & Stannage

Peak District National Park own a number of assets. They are constantly under pressure to review those assets and how they are being managed and whether there is a need to sell them. This year there is a significant budget deficit. In part because the government gives a pitiful amount of money but also a large part of income comes from visitors/cycle hire which hasn't been possible in 2020. To deal with this the three Director level posts have been made redundant, and now nine heads of Service report directly to the chief exec. No plan to sell Stannage,



so far holding true to investment plan for Stanage. Stanage forum will review this. Lots of people trying to ensure Stanage remains in public hands and that investment plans are sufficient to maintain it. There will be an increase in volunteering opportunities.

Don't think the Peak District want to 'sell' Stanage so it will likely remain in public hands, but maybe a different owner i.e. National Trust. Hopefully this won't come to pass. Strictures in place to stop someone building on it.

There are a couple of Barn Owls at Stanage Barn.

Larch felling at Stanage Plantation:

Phytophthora disease affects Larch. There has been a lot of this disease in Redmires plantation so a lot of Larch has been removed there. It has now been found in Hollins Banks plantation. All the Larch in Hollins bank plantation needs taking out. This could be 50 % of the trees in that plantation – this is significant but needs to happen. This won't happen until next winter as work cannot be carried out during bird nesting. At times when removal is happening the bridleway will be closed. Probably require closure of part of Hollins Bank. Most of the felled wood will need removing. The plan at the moment is for natural regeneration but the more detailed plan for this is still to be decided.

Ash felling at Froggatt, Padley and Millers Dale

Ash die back felling continued. Mostly across National Trust areas, this will now stop as it is bird nesting season. After bird nesting significant amount of work still to do will be down in the white peak, believe there is more to come at Stoney. All over the country, particularly at lime stone crags worth remembering you can't see ash die back so a tree could be unstable without knowing. If climbing using an ash tree then triple check that tree is still appropriate to use.

Rob Greenwood: Starting to make a list of ash tree belay routes. If you are climbing locally and notice a tree please make a note on UKC or feed back to BMC access rep. Recurring theme so good to have a list.

Louise Hawson:

Midhope Track: Planning inquiry regarding the plastic matting placed there is now planned for July. Still pushing, trying to get them to remove it.

Moss Rake: At Moss Rake there are significant issue with access. There has been a lot of damage in the area to cars/locked gates. There is an alternative access to Moss Rake which is on the RAD (acronym for Regional Access Database). Access via the top of the quarry. Plenty of people using the area. Rad – Regional access database. Lots of access information for specific crags on there. Information on Rad filters onto UKC.

Swellands & Black Moss Reservoirs: Planning permission application from the Canals & Rivers trust. Want to put a track in for reservoir maintenance. There is more information in the newsletter. Anyone who knows the area might want to have a say. BMC not opposing it but



may lead to closure of small car park so worth being aware. BMC will be asking for an alternative car park to be installed.

Fire season - new BMC campaign

Dr Catherine Flitcroft: The BMC are updating their fire message, there will be a new message about disposable BBQ's. Worry that with restrictions easing people will take a BBQ out to the moors. Asking people to write to MPs asking for tougher enforcement of BBQ fires.

Update on national policy work: Trespass Bill, Agriculture Bill, Right to Roam campaign

Dr Catherine Flitcroft: National legislation, the agricultural bill = agricultural act recognises public access and gives funding. Now need to work on further legislation. Want to ensure payment for public goods ensures public access. Improving rights of way access. Police Powers Bill will change trespass laws, there may be unintended consequences to this but the home office have not released any details.

Lynn Robinson: Update on Wales. There is an access report going on in Wales. Wild camping may not be allowed without landowners consent.

5. Clubs Update

Paul Justin:

Clubs account for 25 % of BMC membership. There are 15 BMC affiliated clubs with roughly 900 club members in Peak area. Sadly in the past couple of months Barnsley mountaineering club and Beeston Hill and Mountain Club have closed down however two new clubs have applied for BMC affiliated membership: the Peaks & Pubs club and a Sheffield based club targeted at supporting under 18 trad leaders. Wishing both these clubs success.

Key initiative for BMC clubs group to provide structures for clubs to talk to each other and give them closer contact to BMC. Some areas piloting club forums on zoom. The first Peak Area clubs forum is on the 30th March.

6. Hillwalking Update

Peter Judd:

Mend our Mountains

Pleased to say there is progress to report, full notes about hillwalking and updates are in the newsletter. The Mend our Mountains funds were raised a long time ago. At Cut Gate water bars have been created but some repaired sections of path are still very muddy. If a path is muddy encouraged to walk on it as helps bed it down.

After Christmas contractors helicoptered in slabbing materials to the infamous bog of doom. There are now 3 areas of slabway in the worst areas of bog. Makes a huge difference to



crossing bog but also prevents people meandering about. Some slabbing seems to end prematurely. There are some bridges and redirected waterways so hopefully long lasting. North America still under construction.

Great Ridge between Hollins Cross and Back Tor. One of the most popular walking spots in the peaks. Work is ready to start (may already have). As a consequence they will close the path. Not normally a good thing. The path itself is not a right of way so people will be encouraged to use Barker Bank Bridleway whilst they work. This is to ensure safety whilst working on the path. Hopefully will be delivered by summer.

Podcasts – Wild Horizons BMC hill walking podcast, Peak district one from John Beatty.

BMC website has more information about group hillwalking and climbing on its website and how CV19 works.

Nationally elected councillor for hill walking position coming up.

Peak Area walk, hopeful it will be planned (again) soon

7. National Council Update

Since the last Peak Area Meeting in November the National Council has met on 8 occasions, all using Zoom; the shortest ~1 hour, the longest ~8 hrs.

Saturday 14 November 2020

The first “normal” Council Meeting for some time; a lot of Reports from all sorts of groups, the Strategy up-date in the light of Covid, and the Equity & Diversity Action Plan. In the light of recently released Board Minutes (over the last year), National Council completed a very detailed analysis of the workings of the Board: the highly critical Report has been sent to the Board and appears to have been received with good grace and has made a significant contribution to the Board’s action plan.

Wednesday 18 November 2020

A follow-up meeting dealing with left over business from the previous Saturday (mainly Area Reports).

Monday 23 November 2020

A joint Meeting with the Board to announce and discuss Dave Turnbull’s move from Chief Executive Officers to become Head of Access, Conservation & Environmental Sustainability: Dave was thanked for his 18 years as CEO which has seen some very dramatic changes in



the BMC. Thanks Dave. Paul Davis has been confirmed as Interim CEO and will sit on the Board until a permanent CEO is appointed.

Saturday 5 December 2020

The annual meeting when it is a real pleasure to be a National Councillor: a review of the work of the Specialist Committees and to marvel at the enormous amount of work that is done by hundreds of BMC volunteers on our behalf –Thank you. Following the Review of the Specialist Committees (about 17 of them!) the Committees have been split into two principal groups; Committees which are member focussed and will report to and liaise with National Council and those with a more corporate bias who will report to and liaise with the Board. The following member focussed committees were each allocated ~1/2hour in front of NC (and some Board Members) to go through their Annual Report, Terms of Reference and Future Programme:

Competition Climbing Performance Group -update

Training, Youth & Walls Committee -full review Indoor Climbing-way forward discussion
Access Management Group -full review

Hill Walking Group: full review

Clubs Committee: full review

Tuesday 12 January 2021

An internal Meeting of Council to discuss the (future) positions of Nationally Elected Councillors. It is intended to introduce these 4 positions at the 2021 AGM and will represent Mountaineering (all branches), Rock Climbing (all branches), Hillwalking, and Indoor Climbing (non-competitive). A very big departure to the structure of National Council.

Saturday 23 January 2021

Another chance to be thankful for the efforts of another tranche of volunteer committees: another thank you. A Board-National Council joint meeting to review some of the corporately focussed Committees; again each committee was allocated ~1/2hour in front of the Board (with National Council as Observers) to go through their Annual Report, Terms of Reference and Future Programme:

Guidebooks Committee -Summary of current position & options for the future

Committee for Wales: full review

Equity Steering Group: full review



Safeguarding Group: full review

Health and Safety Group: full review

Huts Group: full review

International Committee: full review

Land Management Group: full review

Technical: full Review

Unfortunately, the Board was not quorate and a (Board) Task and Finish Group is still pondering over the Board's formal acceptance of the Review of the Specialist Committees Report.

Thursday 18 February 2021

An internal NC Meeting to discuss a Review of the Role of the President.

Sunday 28 February 2021

Another internal NC Meeting to re-visit the decisions taken at the previous meeting to discuss the future Role of the President. Minutes have not been published for any of these meetings and therefore do not yet appear on the BMC Website.

Finances

Last year we thought with Covid we would take a big loss but due to furlough we have ended up with a slight surplus. Decision taken in December to have a neutral budget over 2 years. With no insurance sales it is becoming increasingly important that membership stays with us.

8. Area TORs update

Alison Cairns:

Comprehensive document with links to relevant articles on area page and facebook.

Members open forum meetings to allow all members who are interested to attend and discuss governance issues. Encourage anyone who is interested to attend. Next meeting is March 18th focused on upcoming AGM. Publicised on BMC website. There is also a dedicated mailing list.



AGM 2021 will also be online. A lot of business from the 2020 AGM was postponed so new processes being developed to cover this. What these new processes look like will be the focus of the March meeting.

Volunteer positions on new members council. Assuming it's approved at AGM, the national council will be renamed the members council and undergo restructuring. Comprehensive terms of reference which will hopefully allow it to function better. Currently recruiting for volunteers for new roles.

Christopher Sweetman: Volunteer roles have to devote 40 days which is 1/6 of the year. Not sure anyone has the time to devote to that sort of role.

9. Any Other Business

9.1. Peak District limestone bolting

Andy Reeve: Are these routes suitable candidates for retro bolting?

Rob Mirfin: The existing routes were turning to mud & moss so wanted people to climb. Wanted to try and make it more inviting so added a few bolts in. Bolts could be removed without much trace.

Graeme Hammond: Would it have been better to clean-up the routes prior to bolting?

Rob Mirfin: Did clean the routes but don't think it got any extra attention.

Rob Greenwood: Is the route a product of its era, depending on old pegs in which case its more natural to bolt but if not less cool. So opinion could be swayed depending on the route.

Simon Lee: Has done both routes, one didn't have trad gear but other did.

Rob Mirfin: Yes have to assess each route before bolting.

Neil Foster: Climbed as a trad route, memory is that it was quite well protected but not a good warm up. Did it 3-4 months ago having heard there were bolts. Not particularly concerned about bolts. Not the best climbing venue. Think adding bolts is a good thing but respect counter opinion.

Andy Reeve: Appears to be general pro feeling towards bolts in this specific case, likely will return to this issue in future.

9.2. Update on BMC Climate Project & sustainability



Dr Catherine Flitcroft: North & South Wales having specific meetings about it, would the peak area be interested in doing this? Decide on a date and we will advertise through BMC & facebook.

10. Date and venue of next meetings: 7pm, Thursday 29th April 2021

Until further notice meetings will be held online using zoom

This meeting was followed by a guest speaker: Calum Muskett.