



Mend Our Mountains action
on the Great Ridge.
Photo: Peter Judd.

PEAK AREA NEWSLETTER



April 2021
peak.area@thebmc.co.uk

Rocking Chair

Andy Reeve



Overall, despite a few minor infractions being whinged about online, I'd say that climbers and hill walkers have been pretty careful and responsible throughout the pandemic (I'm tempted to add 'so far' here, not because I expect this behaviour to change but to ward off any risk of jinxing the onset of the nth wave).

Paradoxically, despite many people curtailing their outdoor recreation or staying away from the honeypots of the Peak, the number of emerging access issues has really spiked. In my view, this is a consequence of the unfortunate

combination of increased visitor numbers due to limited indoor activities, some poor behaviour (not by you guys, obvs), landowners being more acutely aware of the proximity of other people (as we all are), and some venues which are usually backwaters seeing more visitors than ever before as people try to maintain social distance. As a result, the access reps have got plenty on their plates – check inside the newsletter for updates and attend the meeting for the full lowdown.

I'm not convinced that much can be done about many of these factors at present, but perhaps be particularly heedful of the impact that noise or poor parking can have where access arrangements are unofficial.

With that in mind, I hope you get out and enjoy this weather we're having!

Next meeting: Thursday 29 April, 7.30 p.m.
The Internet. Register **HERE**.

Access News: General

Henry Folkard

It is a pity that further periods of furlough loom for the BMC staff who achieve so much of direct benefit for BMC members. A robust future for the BMC can only be achieved if the way it is perceived by its members, and potential members, is that its prime concerns are of direct relevance to their interests and values. Looking in from the sidelines it is all too easy to get the impression the focus of the organisation is more about governance than activity. It isn't! Paul Davies (Interim CEO) and I have had a long chat about this – something for us all to air our views on at a future meeting perhaps? In the meantime, below are some of the things that have been occupying the access team.

One thing access reps in the Peak are trying to do is put together a position paper on **rewilding** – a term to avoid as almost everyone understands it to mean something different. There are significant changes looming in the way the countryside is managed, whether driven by matters of principle, global warming, legislation, staffing levels, finance or anything else. Our position at the moment is that rewilding has to be about more than either doing nothing or just planting trees. It has to be about biodiversity, landscape and access too (besides a lot of other things). On access, you have to think about how people get to and enjoy the countryside from the start, and reflect it in future plans from the outset. We hope to get this message across to landowners before they draw up their proposals. It's too late if you wait till after they have decided what they are going to do. So, hopefully, when we have got our thoughts together, we will be able to have a discussion

at a real Peak Area meeting, and everyone can have their say, before we produce any final document to share with key landowners and policy makers in the Peak.

Perhaps the major access issue affecting us all in the Peak is **parking**. There are ever more restrictions, yellow lines, pay and display machines – and mayhem: Curbar Gap, Snake Summit, Chew, Horseshoe, Burbage and Stanage, Edale, Hathersage, for example. Some of these measures are said to be only of a temporary nature. We will have to wait and see. It is certainly true too that many parishes in the Peak are heartily sick and tired of inconvenience caused to their daily lives by parking pressures, and tired of it all with good cause. So where does any solution lie, when there is an apparent lack of any practical strategic approach, no local authority has any money to actually do anything, and there is adverse impact on the landscape? The answer is certainly not just making more car parks, even if you could, which you can't anyhow because you would never get planning permission – and rightly so. Perhaps we should challenge the assumption that traffic, and fast-moving traffic at that, should always have absolute priority, even in a national park. Would it ease things, at very little cost, if people could park much more where they wanted, but the traffic would be regulated by 20 mph speed limits and no overtaking, for reasons of pedestrian safety? What do you think? Is that a rubbish idea or not? We all know shoving the problem down the road with more yellow lines, fines or pay and display does nothing for anyone, for the landscape or local communities – so why do authorities persist in the proliferation of just such measures?

On the climbing front, we have current access problems at **Blackwell Halt** and **Bradley Quarry**, where landowners have said they do not want any climbing to take place. As the newsletter goes to press



Chew reservoirs and Alderman's Hill.
Photo: John Coe field.

various site meetings and discussions are taking place in an effort to resolve these issues, but at the end of the day if a crag is on private land that is not dedicated for open access, and the landowner does not want anyone to go there, there is nothing anyone can do about it because the basis of our legal framework is to protect the (self) interests of property owners. That's why access reps keep going on about not upsetting anyone in the first place with bad behaviour or inconsiderate parking.

At **Rivelin**, the woods beneath the edge are for sale but not the actual edge itself. It transpires the ownership of the crag is not established. The BMC has written to Sheffield City Council to suggest they use powers that may be available to them to acquire the edge and dedicate it for open access for the benefit of the wider community, while the BMC, or a local climbing club, would adopt it and look after it to save any recurrent maintenance costs. There have also been rumblings of discontent at **Turning Stone Edge** and at

Anston Stones. If anyone knows more, please let access reps know.

There has been another incident at **Dove Holes**. Some climbers videoed themselves doing an ascent of *The Bat*, and I think replacing some bolts. This was probably within the terms of our agreement, and I don't suppose any adverse reaction was anticipated, but lots of people in addition to the intended audience look at social media, and this reaped negative, even hostile, comment from the local community, which in turn rebounded on the National Trust. Whatever one thinks about the justification or otherwise for that, it has not helped, and will not help us in any subsequent negotiations we have with the Trust.

A nice sunny day, by sheer good luck, saw Rob Dyer, Peter and me on **Cut Gate**, where we met the contractors putting the finishing touches to their **Mend Our Mountains** work, and they have done a very good job. They have been constrained by limits on funding and by limits on when they could work (caused both by weather

and by the estate whose land Cut Gate crosses), but where they have had to make difficult decisions they seem to have prioritised the key areas even if it left some stretches ideally needing another few slabs or whatever at either end. There were lots of mountain bikers out that day; parking at King's Tree became impossible (not when we arrived) and there were barbeques where there are very definitely not supposed to be barbeques – quite a microcosm of all that is going on in the countryside, which happily the BMC is actually doing something about it.

We looked at the green plastic matting too, about which the public inquiry is scheduled in July. It has never been fit for purpose, and has always been badly laid, but it is breaking up more and more and leaving little bits of plastic all over the moor as it is degraded by UV light. Where vegetation has grown through it is certainly not typical of the ericaceous communities for which the moorland is designated – not a happy spectacle.

At **Horseshoe**, plugs of maiden pink (*Dianthus deltoides*) have been planted in three different locations. This pink is known from only two remaining sites in the Peak now, so establishing new locations from plants grown from the seed of the surviving population will be a significant step, if it thrives.

Keith Warrender, the guy who knows more about the **Kinder Mass Trespass** than anyone else, is publishing a new book, *Forbidden Kinder*, in April 2022. It is a more detailed account, 90 years on, of the events of 1932 that has yet been published, and which will examine all aspects of the trespass as well as what the future may hold. The BMC has been asked to provide a 500-word piece on what Kinder means for its members, for walkers and naturalists as well as for climbers. Would anyone like to draft something? If you do, please let me know.

Cath has been busy representing the BMC's views on the **Police Powers Bill**,

working with the Ramblers, the Open Spaces Society and British Cycling. The next stage in the parliamentary process is scheduled for just after the deadline for newsletter contributions.

Area-Specific Updates

Stanage

Louise Hawson

The Peak District National Park Authority's Programmes and Resources Committee will be considering the final proposal for investment in the built assets on the Stanage North Lees estate at their meeting on 30 April. These are the proposals that grew out of the Options Appraisal that was put out for consultation last year. If you would like to review and comment on the proposals, they will be published in the public papers for the meeting: click [HERE](#).

The proposal doesn't include the land or ecology on the estate. A separate funding strategy is being pursued for this, including a new Peak District National Park Foundation initiative called 'Run for the Birds'. Starting on the national park's birthday on 17 April, people are invited to run, hike or stroll over 70 days until 25 June – choosing the distance that is right for them. Money raised will fund woodland restructuring and tree planting on the Stanage North Lees estate. More information [HERE](#).

New proposals around management of the car parks owned by the national park authority will also be considered on 30 April. As central government funding for national parks falls, income from car parks is increasingly important to fund work on estates, including Stanage. At the time of writing, we don't know the detail of the proposals, but in general we should be prepared to see charges increase over time, and new charges at some sites that are currently free of charge.

Northern Peak
Mark Warwicker

The Dovestone/Chew Valley parking problem seems here to stay and parking wardens are regularly seen issuing tickets all across the area. Following the imposition of the double yellow lines from Greenfield up to Saddleworth Moor Summit, it's simply moved the parking problem into Greenfield village. So, probably safer, but causing even more congestion and annoyance.

A sign has appeared at John Henry Quarry in Tintwistle, erected by the 'Friends of Holybank Quarry', instructing 'No climbing on the quarry walls'. This is being investigated both with Tintwistle Parish Council and Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, who are also involved. Meanwhile, it's on Open Access Land, so don't let the sign stop you visiting. (Don't all rush at once ...)

Reporting rural crime (including wildlife crimes)

Both Derbyshire and South Yorkshire police have stepped up the visibility and resourcing of their Rural Crimes teams recently, with a focus on addressing off-roading, raptor persecution, rural theft/damage to property, hunting and parking offences (particularly where these cause an obstruction).

If you witness a crime take place, you can report it by calling 101, or the Crimestoppers/NFU rural crime reporting line on 0800 783 0137. All forces also have online reporting forms on their websites. In Derbyshire, you can contact the rural crimes team via Facebook:

www.facebook.com/ruralcrimeteam

None of these are emergency contact numbers – if a crime is in progress, you should call 999.

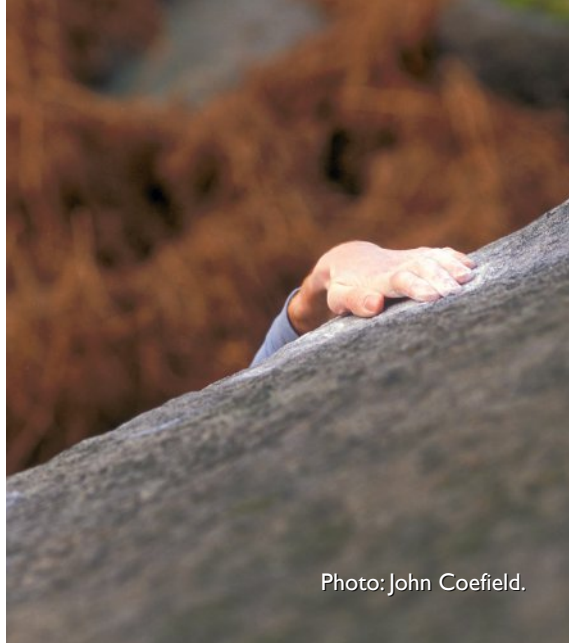


Photo: John Coefield.

*Emerge from hibernation.
saving daylight hours,
Warm rays of sunlight,
Elixir. Bluebell flowers.*

*We watch a barn owl dive
for life
both reawaken rusty limbs.*

*Friends. Nose to rock, face to face.
Reacquaintance; where's my grace?*

*Exploring esoterica. Not suffered human
touch.
Goodness me!*

*Blasphemy
that crack
felt rather butch!*

- Andy Reeve



Dave Parry on *Truffle*,
Burbage South.
Photo: John Coe field.

Climbing News & Gossip

Dave Parry

The format I usually adopt for these write-ups, which you are no doubt as tired of as I am, is to start with some lengthy moan about the unrelentingly poor British weather. However, no such luck this time, as we've actually been blessed with relatively dry, sunny and cool conditions of late, perfect for gritstone, and good for limestone for those happy to let the best and most settled gritstone conditions of the year pass them by. And what's more, this year we're not all under house arrest so we can actually get out and enjoy it! Amazing.

Coupled with the climbing walls being closed this seems to have created a buzz of new development activity in the Peak. There has been far too much stuff happening to even scratch the surface here, so I have had to be very selective about what I'm going to write up. But for anyone who feels their

contributions have been unfairly overlooked, please rest assured that this IS a popularity contest, it IS about who you know not what you know, and I AM disrespecting you personally by omission.

Big repeats up first, and it seems *The Boss* at Yarncliffe, one of the contenders for the hardest problem on grit, is becoming something of a trade route for those capable of climbing Font 8b+. Recent repeats from Jim Pope, James Noble, Billy Rydal and Nathan Philips (not in that order), at least. However there seems to have been some issue regarding different sequences and use and improvement of a fragile spike in the roof. I'll not go into details except to once again make a general plea to everyone to be careful when brushing holds, and make sure things are 100 per cent dry, because once holds deteriorate it's usually a one-way street. *Voyager* at Burbage also sports a key hold which is now much worse than before, for example.

While we're talking about Yarncliffe, *The Boss* first ascensionist Ned Feehally reports that he's done another problem on

that same roof, a Font 7c+ from the jug flake of *Stonemason* climbing out to the lip of *The Boss* to finish up this, with stuff on the ramp obviously being out of play. Back down in the quarry he's also done *THEM!* from a sitter at 7c+ avoiding good holds around the left of the arête, named *TetanUS!*

Another notable Ned contribution is a sit-start to *Roy's Problem*, which you may know as the hemmed-in one-mover up the hill from *Brass Monkeys* and below *Nightsalt*. This sitter weighs in at around Font 8a+ and is called *The Ireland*. Another one which is potentially very fragile if the rock is less than 100 per cent dry, so again please show restraint if it's not primo nick.

One of the aforementioned repeats of *The Boss* comes from bantamweight powerhouse Jim Pope (apparently repeating *The Boss* in under an hour!!!! OMG FFS), who has been fairly prolific of late adding some good harder problems to the Peak, often in pretty worked-out locations, which just goes to show how much stuff there still is to do if you come at old locations with fresh eyes. Some or fewer of Jim's highlights include the obvious project direct up from *Hare Today Gone Tomorrow* at Howshaw Tor. The new line is called *Bloodhound* and given Font 8b, although word on the street is this is very height dependent and giants may find it slightly easier. It's worth pointing out you'll need a few pads for this to deal with the clatter potential. Also up at Howshaw, Ned, along with repeating *Bloodhound*, has done a new groove/prow thing from a crouching start on bad holds, involving a knee bar at Font 7c+.

Jim Pope's also contributed a few new things at Burbage South, including *Echo Chamber* (Font 7c+, low start under *Captain Invincible* arête), *Jim's Bulge* (Font 8a, slopey sit-start above the quarries) and *Truffle* (Font 8a, low start on a boulder directly down the hill from *Parthian Shot/The Knock*).

These all seem quality additions, although once again a couple of repeats of *Truffle* from members of the taller community (and it is a community) confirm that membership of that particular demographic is doing them no harm at all on that problem. Also from Jim is *Gorrillas in the Mist* (Font 8a), a very nice-looking line on a boulder just below *Tower Face/Fina* area at Stanage. Also, a new Font 7c line a way to the left of *The Sausage King of Meersbrook* at Gardom's turned out to be, and is, *Ripe for the Picking*.

On the limestone now and further impressive deeds from young things, this time courtesy of Molly Thompson-Smith, who went to Crag X and did three 7c+s in a session: *The Pinch Sit-Start*, *Jason's Problem* and *The Hulk*. 'Good session' you're thinking, but not THAT newsworthy? OK how's about this: she flashed *The Hulk*. Read that back to yourself and let it sink in. This immediately places it as one of the most impressive bouldering sessions on Peak limestone by any British woman, if not the entire country. This means I will have to complete the paragraph in the only way I know befitting of the achievement: [Sid Waddell voice] WHEN ALEXANDER OF MACEDONIA WAS 33, HE CRIED SALT TEARS BECAUSE THERE WERE NO MORE WORLDS TO CONQUER ... MOLLY THOMPSON-SMITH IS ONLY 23.

It's a tough gig trying to follow that up so I'm going to mix things up totally with some new stuff from out west, by lead figurine connoisseur and sartorial agitator Matt Thompson. *Pirate Error* is a new E3 5c right of *Cragster* in John Henry Quarry. *Summon the Cracken* is another new E3 5c on Cracken Edge, taking the steep line via a crack right of *Cratos*. And at Broadbottom Quarry *Broadside* is a – you guessed it – E3 5c up the steep sidewall right of *Elder Wall*. These all look like complete choss but the advantage of me slagging them off based



Evie Bellingall seconding the first ascent of *Happy Daze* at Chasecliffe.
Photo: Marc Bellingall.

on no actual evidence is if you go there to do them you'll almost certainly find them to be more pleasant than expected. You're most welcome.

No Peak Area report would be complete without a contribution from wordplay supremo Jon Fullwood, this time we have a traverse at Burbage South, starting in *Definitive 5.12* and going right along the lip of *Sitting Duck* to finish around the arete on the back wall, eliminating the plinth block. This is about Font 7b and called *Quack Pipe*. Jon has also done a low right-left break traverse on the long boulder below the Pebble at Stanage, called *Vibin' in the Ritz Car* (Font 7a+).

From the south Peak we have some prize bangers from southern esotericist Marc Bellingall. At Black Rocks Marc has added an E5 6a left of *Hot Dog Sniffer*. The new route has harder moves but does have some gear (I believe in a crack to the side you can reach from the line). It's called *Wurst Side Story* – genius name. Also hot on the heels of the recent Bradley bouldering

development Marc has added an E3 5c to Bradley Quarry named *The Butterfly Effect*. This takes the arête right of *Tarpian* on its right side. Has some gear but could possibly be done as a highball. And over at Chasecliffe, *Happy Daze* (E1 5b) takes a direct line up the centre of the buttress above *Lazy Groove*.

Finally, at Rivelin the surprisingly overlooked arête left of *Boffwidth* has been done at Font 6b+ by Ed Gow-Smith. This is sort of the first bit of natural rock up and right of last quarried bay containing *Happy Campus* etc. The potential fall from this is an issue, as if you bounce off the none-too-generous landing area you'll go for miles and probably end up in the reservoir. So a tied-down spotter was used, giving *Lifeline*.

Get in touch

Send your Peak area news, gossip or article ideas to me at: peakarea@gmail.com



Millstone Edge and the Derwent Valley.
Photo: John Coe field.

Peak District turns 70

Austin Knott

The Peak District National Park reached its 70th anniversary on 17 April 2021 – happy anniversary!

It was set up in 1951 following the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949. It's fair to say there were numerous attempts before this to set up national parks, but a renewed impetus came in post-war Britain as the new Labour government set up the Committee on National Parks in 1945, chaired by Sir Arthur Hobhouse. His report in 1947 suggested setting up 12 national parks and the Town and Country Planning Act of the same year set up a land-use planning system which included national parks.

The statutory purposes of national parks are:

- to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the national parks, and,
- to promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the parks.

Since 1949 there have been various reviews of national parks and they've each faced various challenges. In the last dozen or so years there has been a severe financial challenge in the face of austerity, and budgets for each of the national parks have been slashed. This has prompted them to become more commercial, a move that critics might challenge as being in conflict with the statutory purposes.

In 2019, the most recent report, known as the Glover Review, was published, but to date, like many of the previous reports there appears to have been no significant move to action its recommendations. However, if nothing else, the last year has proven how people have valued green spaces and, for us, the Peak District in particular. Let's hope that post-pandemic, there's new impetus to protect and support our national parks.

As a footnote, three other national parks will also celebrate their 70th anniversaries this year: Lake District (9 May), Snowdonia (18 October) and Dartmoor (30 October).



Mend Our Mountains
action on the Great Ridge.
Photo: Peter Judd.

Hill Walking News

Peter Judd, Austin Knott & Vikki Hughes

Area hill walk resurrected!

Fancy a walk? Those with long memories will recall that last year we planned an area hill walk from Hayfield. Of course this was scuppered by restrictions resulting from the pandemic. With restrictions having eased somewhat, we're very pleased to say that this walk will now take place on Sunday 6 June. We intend to have a fun and enjoyable stroll and you can be assured of a warm and supportive welcome!

Our planned route starts and finishes in Hayfield, going up on to Kinder Scout, passing the Downfall, visiting Burnt Hill and returning to Hayfield via Lantern Pike. It's about 13 miles long (21 kilometres) and mostly uses established paths and tracks, although it is a little rough and eroded in places with a little boggy ground too and there may be some minor streams to cross. BMC event guidelines, revised for the pandemic, call for pre-booking of places,

so, if you'd like to come (and we hope you will) simply email area hill walking rep.

Austin Knott

(austin@walkthemoorlands.co.uk) in good time. He will then allocate a place and send you arrival instructions etc. I'm afraid we will not be able to accommodate people who do not book in advance. If you simply want to know more, without committing yourself, then please email your questions to Austin.

Mend Our Mountains

It's good to be able to report yet more positive progress with both of our Peak District Mend Our Mountains funded projects.

At the end of last month Henry and Peter joined BMC Access Officer Rob Dyer for a wander along Cut Gate (from the Slippery Stones end) to inspect the latest progress with repairs to the work largely completed over the winter. We were pleased to note some of the minor issues Peter had spotted on previous visits had

mostly now been resolved, the muddy stretch just below Howden Edge being much improved by top dressing, for example. All of us agreed that the work had been done in sympathy with the surroundings and to a good standard – this atmospheric route has not lost its character.

Moors for the Future, the project managers, tell us that there are still a few minor issues to resolve but these might have to wait until the end of bird ground-nesting restrictions (31 July).

Henry has written more about our visit, including a mention of the dreaded green plastic matting track. See pages 3 and 4.

Turning to the other MOM project, Great Ridge, Vikki and Peter went up on to the ridge in late March to see and photograph the helicopter stone lift taking place and were entertained by some impressive precision flying. The helicopter was in action for a couple of days, lifting stone flags and pitching stone up on to the ridge, all along the section to be repaired. The continuing good weather since has hopefully allowed the work, which begins from the Back Tor end, to make good progress. Anyone heading that way should keep in mind that diversions are in place directing people away from the concessionary path on the ridge top itself down on to the right of way that runs a little lower down on the southern flank. For your own safety please comply with the notices – the contractor aims to restrict access for as short a time as possible.

Respect the Wild

Have you seen the BMC's new Wild Camping and Van Camping codes produced by the BMC's access officers and recently launched under the #RespectTheWild hashtag? www.thebmc.co.uk/respect-the-wild-camping-vanning

These timely reminders of best practice

when spending the night in the outdoors are well worth a look. Some of your area reps contributed to the creation of these through their involvement with the national Hill Walking Group. Do point your friends toward these, especially those just starting out, who may benefit from these pointers. There's a nice short video too.

Kinder Scout: Wild Horizons!

Wild Horizons, the BMC's new podcast series focusing on upland landscapes and hosted by the BMC's podcast master Niall Grimes, is well worth a listen. While the first five episodes have focused on other parts of Britain, there is a new episode just released talking about our very own Kinder Scout! As we go to press this particular episode is not yet listed on the BMC website's Wild Horizons news page (www.thebmc.co.uk/wild-horizons--the-new-hillwalking-podcast-from-the-bmc), however it is available on the podcast streaming services the BMC uses (Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Amazon Music etc.), just search for 'Wild Horizons - the BMC hillwalking podcast'. Please do have a listen, you might even recognise the interviewee who speaks about Kinder!

Peak Area Meetings: 2021

29 April, 7.30 p.m., The Internet.
Register **HERE**. Followed by Not Just in it
for the View (details below).

Not Just in it for the View

After the meeting on 29 April, which will feature no more than 90 seconds on ORG shenanigans, Jesse Dufton will talk about what motivates him in climbing, how he came to think that leading the Old Man of Hoy without being able to see was a good idea and something to have a go at, and what he will set his sights on as we emerge from lockdown.

Forthcoming Events

<http://community.thebmc.co.uk/peak>

Peak Area Hill Walk

6 June, Hayfield

A great day out, visiting Kinder and Lantern Pike. For more information and to book a place (essential), please email:
austin@walkthemoorlands.co.uk

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, many events have been cancelled or postponed. For the latest information on forthcoming events in the Peak Area, please keep an eye on the BMC's community pages.

BMC Peak Area Contacts

Peak Area Chair: Andy Reeve.
peak.area@thebmc.co.uk
Secretary: Ana Wass.
bmcpeakareasec@gmail.com

Peak Area Reps (your voice on the BMC National Council):
David Brown and Alison Cairns.

Access Reps Co-ordinators:
Henry Folkard and Louise Hawson.
henry.folkard@bmcvolunteers.org.uk
louise.hawson@gmail.com

Peak Area Hill Walking Reps:
Peter Judd, Austin Knott and Vikki Hughes.
Peak10roam-bmc@yahoo.co.uk
austin@walkthemoorlands.co.uk
vikkihughes@btinternet.com

Peak Area Newsletter Editorial:
Dave Parry and John Coefield.
peakarea@gmail.com

The British Mountaineering Council (BMC) is the representative body that exists to protect the freedoms and promote the interests of climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers, including ski-mountaineers. Find out more: www.thebmc.co.uk/bmc-governance