



British Mountaineering Council SOUTHWEST AREA

Quarterly Regional Meeting

Date, Time & Type of Meeting: 19th July 2021 @ 7pm via Zoom
Chair: Mark Kemball, Secretary: Alan Dovey & Minutes: Philip Wilson

Attendees: Mark Kemball Helen Wilson (Members Council Rep), Philip Wilson (Members Council Rep), Pete Salenieks (Board, MC & Clubs Chair), Tony Bird (Walking Rep), Marti Hallett (Portland Access Rep), Julio Franco (Wye Valley Rep), Reg Lander, Trevor Smith, Colin Knowles, Tim Reynolds, Roger Habgood, Dan Donovan, Barry Donovan, Nigel Barry & Jamie Evans.

Minutes

1. **Welcome Introductions & Apologies for Absence:** Apologies for absence was received from Charlotte Rivers, Alan Dovey (Sec) & Paul Davies (BMC CEO). Mark Kemball also apologised as the meeting started 5 minutes late due to technical set up issues with Zoom. Thanks to Chris Stone for helping us to sort this out remotely at very short notice.
2. **Minutes:** The previous meeting minutes (29th April 2021) were signed off as present and correct.
3. **Actions: Previous Meeting:** None were raised or debated.
4. **Matters Arising Not Covered Elsewhere:** Mark Kemball reported progress with Bovey Woods (access agreement set up) & Bonehill Rocks Parking Area (The BMC has confirmed that it is contributing £1,000 to the parking area improvements, work going ahead).
5. **BMC Members Council Report:** Helen Wilson reported relevant issues from the first Members Council meeting held by Zoom on the 17th July 2021 since re-organisation as follows: This was the first meeting chaired by Andy Syme (BMC President). A detailed in-depth Symposium focused on Rock Climbing was held in the morning. It is the intention of Council to hold these in-depth symposiums on relevant topics at each meeting. The next one will focus on Indoor Climbing. Helen added that the new council already seems to have a more inclusive feel to it within its new structure, elected members and partners. There was also a debate about whether youth climbing should sit with local areas or centrally as the two do not now match up and may not in the future as it expands.
6. **BMC Board Meeting Report:** Pete Salenieks reported the sad news that Gareth Pierce the last board chair passed away, while out walking with his club in Snowdonia. Members passed on their heartfelt condolences to all his family, his friends and recent work colleagues within the BMC. Travel insurance & membership income is down due to Covid, new membership packages are being launched to address this. The BMC is having to significantly dip into its financial reserves to accommodate this. A rise in membership rates is probable for next year. Pete also reported that some staff are also still on flexible furlough. He added on behalf of Paul Davies that Ski Mountaineering is to debut at Milano Cortina 2026. He added the inclusion of ski mountaineering as an additional sport specifically for this edition of the Olympic Winter Games was unanimously approved by the IOC Session. He wished Shauna Coxley good luck in her Olympic bid.

SW Local Area Issues

7. **South Devon Fixed Gear Progress / Update (Ansteys Cove):** Mark Kemball reported that he had not received any progress update on these issues, so assumed it was on track.
8. **Wintours Leap Re-Equipping Fixed Gear Project & Ban y Gor Access Updates:** Julio Franco (Wye valley Rep) reported that progress is being made with bank account set up which delayed initial progress with the Wintours Leap Project. Confusion remains at Ban y Gor with regards to access following the ending of the bird ban season, he is involving Rob Dyer in this.
9. **Cheddar:** Nothing new received.
10. **Isle Of Wight:** A report that 2 climbers were stopped accessing Skeleton Ridge climbing via the regular 35 year old generic access route caused concern. Other climbers have had no problems. It is important that this does not affect existing BMC member access.
11. **Dartmoor:** Irresponsible party camping on Dartmoor continues by members of the public. There is also concern that this affects sensitive archeologically important sites. Tony Bird (Hill Walking Rep) is to attend a meeting on the 29th July 2021 with Dartmoor parks who are addressing this problem. He will report back after this. It is important that this does not affect existing BMC member access.
12. **Portland:** Marti Hallett (Portland Access Rep) reported a recent incident with birders blaming climbers for parking & access transgressions. There has been an issue with bad a van parking by a non-climber. No climbing was logged on the UKC Database for the dates involved so this was not climbers. This was confirmed by Alan James and relayed to the complainants by email.
13. **New Trespassing Law:** Points 8, 10, 11, 12 and possibly 14 raised wider concerns and strong opinions regarding forthcoming legislation for tackling unauthorised encampments. This will make it a criminal offence to reside on any public or private land in vehicles without permission from the landowner, leading to 3.5k fines and or 3 months in prison for offenders. A good simple summary of this can be found here: [New trespassing laws will mean £2,500 fines or 3 months in prison for being on land without owner's permission | Lancashire Evening Post \(lep.co.uk\)](https://www.lep.co.uk/news/new-trespassing-laws-will-mean-2500-fines-or-3-months-in-prison-for-being-on-land-without-owner-s-permission-1-1211111). Although the Home Office has said that the law will not impact occasional campers, ramblers or hikers, some have raised concerns that new powers could impact on the public's ability to freely access land for leisure purposes being denied by landowners. It remains important that the BMC publicises its position on this and keep a watching brief.
14. **Clubs 'A Campaign to Drive Membership' Presentation:** Pete Salenieks (Board, MC & Clubs Chair) gave a well received 15 minute presentation on behalf of Charlotte Rivers who could not attend the meeting, regarding this BMC initiative to each and increase membership using social media and emails.
15. **Reports from Area Representatives:**
 - 15.1 Access Issues (Covered by points 7 to 12)
 - 15.2 Youth (No report)
 - 15.3 Climbing Walls (No report)
 - 15.4 Hill Walking (Covered by points 11)
 - 15.5 Clubs (Covered by point 14)
16. **Any Other Business:** Mark Kemball reported that the 'The Culm Coast and Baggy Point' guide is now out and available to purchase from the Climbers Club web site. A discussion of when we could move to face to face and / or hybrid meetings was also triggered by point 17.

17. **Date, Time & Location (next area meeting):** Not decided yet, this will be in October prior to the main Members Council Meeting on the 13th November 2021. There are also two interim meetings currently scheduled for the 2nd & 13th November 2021.