

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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Minutes of Midlands Area Meeting 21st October 2021 7.30pm start ONLINE VIA ZOOM

Present: Andy Potter (Chair & Bowline CC), Rosi Yule (Surbiton and Kingston MC), Ian Wyatt (Clubs Rep, Solihull MC), Claudia Sarnier (Bowline CC), Andy Harper (Bowline CC), Paul Davies, Rob Bishopp, Tim Weller, Jo, Mel Evans, David Jones (HillWalking rep, West Bromich MC), Paul Davies (CEO), Roy Denney, Rebecca Broadley, Roger Fanner

Max 15, of whom 14 were present for 100% of the meeting. As far as can be ascertained this included 5 female attendees & 0 BAME.

- 1. Welcome and Apologies:** Andy Potter welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Richard Law and Phil Simister.
- 2. Minutes of the previous meeting:** It was commented by several present that EventBrite was troublesome for signing up to area meetings. It was suggested it would be better to just be able to join Zoom directly.
- 3. Clubs Update (Ian Wyatt)** – Find Your Adventure initiative to drive up membership in clubs. 18 Clubs are signed up including local clubs and national clubs. Webinars delivered to clubs about attracting members. Free training opportunities for clubs have been circulated (general clubs training about diversity). Local area clubs meeting held as a hybrid meeting, first part was webinar for all clubs, second part was in breakout rooms for individual areas. Quite poorly attend unfortunately. Next network meeting will be a local meeting, also national meeting coming up in November.

David commented on Ian's sterling work for clubs and highlighted the good info for clubs at the recent workshop. David suggested Find Your Adventure needs to be pushed more, particularly in the Midlands. Ian is sending out the information to clubs. Roy commented on diversity and the need to ensure that the focus continues to broaden diversity. Suggestion from David about having a talk on diversity to the area meeting. Ian responded picking up that some clubs have found membership has lacked diversity and they want to address this. Self-assessment checklist is available from BMC website to help clubs consider this as part of help for clubs with membership on the 'clubs are open' website.

- 4. Hillwalking Update (David Jones)** – Hillwalking newsletter contents discussed including survey, Dartmoor, diversity. Quick mention on Mend-our-mountains, discussion between BMC and Cotswold to get funding for Mend-our-mountains 3. Finding our way podcasts also highlighted.
- 5. Access Update (Andy Harper)** – East area crags clean-ups earlier in the year seem to have led to lower level of litter observed now. Cademan Woods tidier than it's ever been. Whitwick parish council are trying to sell their part of the woods. No reports of any issues at Cademan.

Beacon Hill open again, trying to get clarity on whether it will be closed again next year (awaiting results from this year's "experiment" with the closure of Jewels hill). Possible gate code to be shared with climbers to access crags during closures. Rosie contacted local councillor who applied pressure to the park, Andy Harper also did this, this seems to be an effective tool. Suggestion of contacting Natural England directly to discuss climbing and managing access so people and nature can benefit without restricting one of the other entirely.

Possibility of developing Morley Quarry although not considered a significant climbing venue. Roy shared that climbing is on the agenda for Charnwood area and looking at potential use of retired quarry, talking to quarry owners about final take from quarries being done a

'traditional' way to leave more climbable rock. Rosi did a litter pick at Markfield Quarry (Hill Hole Quarry).

Andy gave update on plans for video Forest Rock.

6. **Youth updated (Claudia Sarner)** – There has been a proposal that perhaps we should have a youth panel as a way to get young people's opinions and voices within the BMC (suggested age range 16 - 27 year-olds although including young ages is being considered). Possibly that this youth panel might work better as a 'sector wide' group i.e. including young people through other bodies such as association of indoor climbing walls.

There has been some confusion within the BMC regarding the role of Area Youth Co-ordinators. Possible solution is 'Youth Event Co-ordinator' role for people organising structured youth climbing/hillwalking events within the BMC. This means that for the Midlands area we may have access to more help for running youth events in the area. Alongside this will be Youth Climbing Series co-ordinators who specifically assist with the running of the BMC Youth Climbing Series. The areas can still have their youth rep on the committee to work with people in the other youth related roles. Claudia also highlighted the Youth Climbing Series is running this year, albeit later than planned. Noted that the competition regions are different from the BMC areas (despite some similar naming).

7. **Members Council (David/Claudia)** – Governance work is mostly done and members council are getting back to putting ideas to the board for core matters that need attention. The next members council meeting is 12th/14th November and will be an in-person meeting.

A survey has gone out to area members about the format of area meetings. Voting was very much in favour of supporting 50/50 split of physical/virtual meetings within a year. 92% voted in favour of a structured programme of area meetings for the year.

Paul Davies highlighted Mend-our-mountains 3, membership growing and insurance up, all staff back off furlough but taking time to catchup. Sport England funding submission is in progress with focus on Hillwalking, Indoor Climbing and general participation (diversity). New commercial officer starting in December.

8. **Chair's report (Andy Potter)** – Difficult year but good to move beyond governance discussion. Andy highlighted work done by committee members during meeting. Looking forward to a future with better meetings with greater member engagement.
9. **Election of Area Officers** – The election of area of officers was held in accordance with the area terms of reference. The results of the election were:
- a. **Chair** – *Vacant (no volunteers)*
 - b. **Secretary** – Rebecca Broadley
 - c. **Club's rep** – Ian Wyatt (2 out of 3 years so no election required)
 - d. **Youth rep** – Claudia Sarner
 - e. **Hillwalking rep** – David Jones
 - f. **Member's council rep 1** – Claudia Sarner
 - g. **Member's council rep 2** – David Jones
 - h. **Area access east** – Andy Harper
 - i. **Area access west** – Richard Law

10. **AOB:**

Andy Potter (Chair) – Andy offered to facilitate meetings until new chair is found. New committee to have social meet around Christmas time.

Andy Potter (Chair) – Highlighted the proposal for a more structured approach to timing of area meetings.