



BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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NORTH EAST AREA ORDINARY MEETING

Hybrid meeting: Brinkburn St. Brewery (NE6 1NW) / Zoom
on 16th June, 19:00

Minutes

Attendance (21)

NE Area Committee (7). Peter McCreedy (Chair), Simon Litchfield (Secretary), Jon Punshon (Members' Council), Adrian Wilson (Clubs), Chris Bullock (Youth & Competitions), Steve Blake (Access North), Mike Conlon (Access South). **NE Area Members (13).** Jonathan White, Colin Crofthouse, Graham Harkness, John Given, Claire James, Cliff Robson, Victoria*, John*, Pete*, plus four†. **Guest (1).** Steve McClure

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Peter McCreedy opened his inaugural local area meeting as Chair by introducing his role within the NE area and provided a little bit about himself and his mountaineering background.

Apologies were received from Mark Goodings, Liz King (Walking Rep) and Alan Hinkes.

2. Quorum

There was 17 people in attendance at the start of the meeting, so it was noted that a quorum was present in accordance with Article 7.1 of the Area Terms of Reference.

- 2.1. A quick poll was taken by the Chair on how members had learnt about the meeting: only one person had come because of the BMC email notification, the remainder were through the local area Facebook page.
- 2.2. It was discussed, however, that email should continue for those without Facebook and this communication vignette should be fed back to the central admin of the BMC for consideration.

Action: Chair to discuss local area communication and engagement with BMC.

3. Minutes from the previous meeting (joint with Lakes area) held on 27th April 2022

The previous local area meeting held on 27th April was hosted, chaired and minutes produced by the Lakes area.

* Denotes where full names or area members were not provided (3 at this meeting)

† Names were not recorded due to late arrival.

3.1. The key point from the previous meeting was the co-option of Peter McCreedy as the Chair and Jon Punshon as Members' Council representative for the NE area.

3.2. A vote of thanks is minuted to the Lakes area for their support during this transition.

4. Actions from previous meeting (joint with Lakes area) held on 27th April 2022

The NE area would conduct its own meetings going forwards. **Action complete.**

5. Matters arising not covered elsewhere

There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere.

6. Introduction of the new committee & vision for future meetings

6.1. The Chair introduced the reorganised committee, with each member introducing themselves and their role, and what the BMC does for the NE area, including: reducing access barriers to all BMC activities; sustainability, representation; hillwalking; organising youth competitions and meets; and shaping policy and is the voice at governmental level.

6.2. The Chair explained that the reorganised committee had met informally on 28th March to discuss ways to reinvigorate engagement and participation in the local area, ideas discussed were: less formality – more focus on members' input rather than labelling the procedural elements of meetings; consideration of more interesting venue – although cost may present a challenge; seek a wider variety of guest speakers to appeal to a wider audience.

6.3. The Chair then challenged the local area members about how we can work for them (crag clean ups, etc): the BMC can drive initiatives and we welcome member driven initiatives. Likewise, how do we push comms and engage better? Feedback received from Steve McClure: "Facebook is dead... long live Instagram!"

7. Update on local issues

7.1. Access North - Steve Blake (SB).

The aftermath of Storm Arwen continued to present access and conservation challenges - significant paperwork was required (4 months) to permit volunteers to clear wood for Scottish Woodland at Killoe Out. The aspiration remained for Killoe Out to be cleared over the summer, however, professional teams would likely be required to undertake the clearance so it would take time.

SB reported that a central Northumberland quarry that had been offered up for purchase. The BMC offered £1k in support, but the quarry may not be worth it.

7.2. Jon Punshon asked about anchors at Killoe Out. SB responded that there are still enough anchors, albeit fewer than before - the work there is being undertaken by climbers, who were taking such things into consideration.

7.3. Access Central.

No further progress has been made on negotiating access. However, the current situation is that most of the bolts are in place.

7.4. Access South – Mike Conlon (MC)

MC reported that during Covid landowners were reticent to engage in access negotiation. More recently they have been reengaging post Covid, particularly with regards to: Parking at Clemmitts, and Danby.

Storm Arwen damage is reported at Peak Scar - this too will take time to clear.

7.5. Competitions – Chris Bullock (CB).

CB reported that on Saturday 18th June a national competition is being held in NE area with 60 entrants expected. Specific thanks was minuted to the sponsors: Griptonite and Beyond Hope – both had provided boxes of prizes.

CB also thanked for the minutes the local walls for their forthcoming support - seven North East walls have volunteered for future five rounds.

7.6. Youth - Chris Bullock (CB).

The Northumberland Youth Climbing Meet – supported by DMM- has been arranged for 20 participants 29th – 30th October at Wooler Youth Hostel. The first meet which involved James McCaffie was a huge success and has been taken as the template.

- 7.7. SB asked about conversion rates of local area youth climbers advancing to higher levels of competition. CB listed an impressive number of individuals who have achieved impressive feats nationally and internationally, but highlighted that there are still gaps in the progression system that need to be closed between walls and the Youth Climbing Series (YCS) and between YCS and the BMC.

7.8. Clubs – Adrian Wilson (AW)

Jonathan White – the recent serving BMC Clubs Director - reported that the BMC has been supporting club growth, with the 'Club Recruitment Campaign' - currently the most successful campaign by the BMC.

An example of the work undertaken by the BMC, has been the support of student clubs who have been affected by Covid. Further support has been given e.g. including: 10 webinars organised over the last year on topics such as diversity and direct debit and guidance on Covid meets and huts.

It was emphasised that that BMC must see diversity of members as a means of strength. The broad background of climbers means that there is a lot of knowledge shared. An example shared was BMC 'Subject Matter Expertise' representation at Coroners inquests. The BMC must continue to build diversity.

- 7.9. CB enquired how many clubs have a 'youth section'. The response in the room indicated that this is demographic that the local area could grow.

8. Members' Council – Jon Punshon (JP)

JP gave an update on the role of Members' Council, the work that it performs and the fact that there remained a vacant position for the NE area.

- 8.1. To address to Members' Council vacancy the Chair proposed Jonathan White for the role, however, for fairness the members' present were also given the opportunity to volunteer but none were forthcoming. A vote, therefore, was conducted of those present for Jonathan White to become the second local area representative to the Members' Council. The vote was unanimously in favour and therefore his appointment agreed.

Action: Secretary to notify BMC (Tony Ryan) of appointment of Jonathan White.

9. Any Other Business

Nil notified pre to or at the meeting.

10. Date of next meeting

The time and venue of the next meeting would be confirmed in due course.

Item	Action	Involving	Target date
2.2	Chair to discuss local area communication and engagement with BMC HQ.	Chair	Before next meeting
8.1	Secretary to notify BMC (Tony Ryan) of appointment of Jonathan White.	Secretary	Before next meeting

Simon Litchfield, Secretary
4 July 2022

The above is accepted as an accurate record of the meeting:

Signed  14 September 2022

P M S McCreedy, Chair