



## BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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### Lakes Area - Ordinary Meeting

Meeting held at Kong Climbing Wall, Keswick  
On Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 at 19:30

#### MINUTES

**Present** - Carly Raines, Christian Dodsworth, Matthew Collantine, Judith Brown, Anne Salisbury, Mike Parsons, Ron Kenyon, Phil Swainson, Mary Volume, Dave Brown, Ron Kenyon

#### 1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

- Apologises - Ken Taylor, Anne Chevalier, Gavin Finch
- There being no elected Chair Mike Parsons put himself forward to act as chair for the meeting and was duly proposed, seconded and agreed upon.

#### 2. Minutes of meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024

- Matters arising outstanding
  - i. Frank Bennett was going to check re code of practice for events
    - 1. RK to check with FB
    - 2. Could look to follow up on this at future meetings
- Minutes approved

Action point - RK to check with FB

#### 3. Review of previous meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> April on Outdoor for All/Right to Roam

- Mike Parsons reviewed the meeting from his viewpoint
  - i. Paul Radcliff (New BMC CEO attended)
  - ii. Broad spectrum of opinions.
    - Mary Volume commented on points as follows -
      - . Majority of BMC members in survey wanted more access and meeting should have reflected that.
      - i. Right to roam in Scotland applies to the whole of the country but not all land in many places is appropriate.
      - ii. She felt one of the speakers looked to removing rights.
        - Christian Dodsworth commented as follows –
          - . There were 35 at the meeting
          - i. He highlighted underlying position in that the BMC had affiliated with 40 other organisations and was launching the campaign - felt the meeting should have focused on that.
        - Phil Swainson commented as follows -

- .He feels that the BMC has lost focus with affiliating with other organisations - against that that affiliation gives more political power.
- i.This is an important topic now – Labour had this topic in its proposals but now removed. Looking to give leverage for the future.
- ii.For the Lakes area access is not too much of an issue in the National Park but is an issue in other parts of Cumbria. Even tales of landowners using guns to warn walkers etc.
- Summary by Mike Parsons and other points -
  - .He feels that the meeting was useful to raise the issue of Right to Roam and Outdoor for All
  - i.He gave vote of thanks to Ken Taylor for organising the event
  - ii.Correlation of health and access - government wants a beneficial outcome with financial savings and health.
  - iii.However 35 people have 35 opinions.
  - iv.Underlying principle looking for greater access.
  - v.Can't get 100% access and look for Rights with Responsibility.
  - vi.Need clarity from BMC about campaign - but this is early days for the campaign.
  - vii.Approach is to go for the whole cake but may only get a few slices - time will tell.

#### 4. BMC National

- **Members' Council Report** - Dave Brown (BMC Council Member)

Since the last Lakes Area Meeting, in January, Members' Council has met on 5 occasions:

Wednesday 28 February 2024 -Extraordinary Budget Meeting by Zoom

Tuesday 19 March 2024 - Pre-meeting by Zoom

Saturday 6 April 2024 - Face-to-face Meeting and Equity and Diversity Event in the BMC Offices

Tuesday 16 April 2024 - Post-meeting by Zoom

Sunday 28 April 2024 - Extraordinary AGM Motions Meeting by Zoom

Important issues for information/discussion:

#### Financial Situation

The year-end accounts and the 2024 Budget was presented and discussed with Council in some detail at the end of February. With the Reserves at about the lower limit of our policy, a tough budget was proposed but Council persuaded the Board to two major concessions; retaining the Personal Accident Insurance for Individual Members and a lower target for the replenishment of the Reserves.

The 2023 Audit has continued and following further *forensic accounting* the Accounts are expected to be passed.

For greater detail please see the Chair of the Board, Roger Murray's Financial Statement:

[https://www.thebmc.co.uk/media/files/240426\\_Financial%20statement%20for%20Members\\_v1\\_1.pdf](https://www.thebmc.co.uk/media/files/240426_Financial%20statement%20for%20Members_v1_1.pdf)

#### Membership

Council are now reviewing Membership data on a quarterly basis: in recent months we have lost 150 Members per month: a cause for concern!

#### Member Resolutions at the AGM

Simon Lee has tried to garner support for two resolutions at the AGM; full financial disclosure of GB Climbing finances for 2022 and 2023 and the budget for 2024, and a proposal to make GB Climbing a separate company (as opposed to an in-house department, as at present). He used the on-line app change.org and the BMC have had great difficulty in identifying enough *signatures* as current Voting Members (0.5% of the Voting Membership, ~380). Never-the-less, Council viewed the support (>>>25 Members) as worthy of their consideration but was unanimous in NOT supporting either motion, and they will not be put to the AGM. Council's reasoning:

- It would be an unacceptable cost in staff and volunteer time to try and re-engineer the 2022 Accounts to provide the information required, and would not move the BMC forward;
- Council unanimously supports the GBC re-structuring proposals of the new CEO, Paul Radcliffe:  
[https://www.thebmc.co.uk/media/files/240526\\_GB%20Climbing%20-%20Proposal\\_v1.13.pdf](https://www.thebmc.co.uk/media/files/240526_GB%20Climbing%20-%20Proposal_v1.13.pdf)
- Holding a vote would significantly damage the BMC's reputation with partners and potentially further jeopardise the UKS funding, whatever the result;
- The legal and other set-up costs are unacceptable whilst the legal liability and reputational risks would remain with the BMC.

#### **BMC Voting Age**

Council are proposing that the BMC voting age is lowered from 18 to 16 years and want to promote youth representation throughout the BMC.

#### **Scafell Signage**

To be dealt with in a major topic on the Lakes Area Meeting Agenda.

Full Minutes for these meetings will be published on the BMC Website as soon as they have been approved by Council: <https://www.thebmc.co.uk/bmc-members-council-minutes>

#### **5. BMC Lakes Area positions**

- Chair - still looking for a Chair
- Secretary - Jessica Best offered to take on the position of Secretary and this was unanimously agreed
- Climbing Wall Representative - Christian Dodsworth offered to take on this position and this was unanimously agreed.
- Area Youth Representative - still vacant

#### **6. Discussion about signage etc re paths on Scafell Pike**

- The meeting was made aware of a discussion initiated, with the general public, by Wasdale MRT regarding a perceived need for action to try and reduce the frequency of incidents occurring on Scafell Pike in general and around Piers Ghyll in particular. It is understood that discussions are ongoing between the team, the NT and the LDNPA.
- It was considered appropriate for BMC Lakes to offer a view. The policy of the BMC is found within the 'Green guide for the uplands'. It says that the BMC does not support the use of cairns or other intrusive features....' and that new signs and post are generally not supported within the uplands unless there has been specific consultation and they have been designed sympathetically to sit within the local landscape'

- The matter was considered at a recent BMC Members Council when support was expressed for the policies in the Green Guide whilst recognising a need to support mountain rescue and be guided by them as to what might help in a particular circumstance.
- Ideas for Piers Gill
  - Issue of walkers being drawn down Piers Gill as looks like a path and awkward rocky elements to the right on the Corridor Route.
  - Ideas suggested of
    - Creating a wall or obstacle above way down to Piers Gill
    - Signage lower down the Gill, away from the main path, warning not to go down the Gill
- The BMC Lakes Area meeting, being aware that discussions were ongoing, had a discussion on this and aware of the national and UK position but also concerns about incidents in the Scafell Pike area. It felt that whilst they did not object in principle, they would welcome consultation on what might be the outcome of the discussions.
- Feeling of the meeting that it wants to support the Wasdale MRT on finding a solution but concerned about setting a precedent for many other similar locations around the UK.

#### **7. Access issues**

- Christian Dodsworth mentioned about report of peregrine falcon seen recently on Raven Crag, Langdale. This has been reported via Jon Fulwood to Natural England and being investigated.
- Anne Salisbury mentioned that there is now a charge to park at the first car park at Tilberthwaite. The second small car park, over the bridge, belongs to National Trust and no charge there.

#### **8. BMC Access Management Group**

- Ken Taylor no available to give report

#### **9. BMC Lakes Area Clubs**

- Anne Chevalier not available to give report

#### **10. BMC Lakes Area Newsletter**

- Newsletter put together by Ron Kenyon and Marjolein Thickett.
- Last Newsletter now on the BMC Community Site but notification of this to members not really done.
- Look to have notification of Agenda for meetings and Newsletter communicated to Lakes Members at the same time.

#### **11. BMC Youth Meet 2024**

- Now nearly 12 applications for the meet which is number required so not pushing for any more applications.

**12. Any Other Business**

- Mention of recent article in Westmorland Gazette of work done by BMC Volunteers helping Fix the Fells. Thanks to those involved and especially Steve Charles for coordinating this.

**13. Next Meeting**

- Thursday 25/07/2024
  - The Old Water View, Patterdale, CA11 0NW
  - BBQ first then meet later