

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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Members' Council

Approved minutes of the Members' Council meeting held by way of Zoom on Saturday 17 July 2021 at 9.30 am.

In attendance:

Voting Members	Andy Syme	AS	President	
	Steve Quinton	SQ	Cymru South Wales	
	Fiona Sanders	FS	Lakes (& CND)	
	Chris Stone	CSt	London & SE	
	Robert Dufton	RD	London & SE	From item 11
	David Jones	DJ	Midlands (& Huts Group Observer)	
	Claudia Sarner	CSa	Midlands	
	Bill Beveridge	BB	North West	
	Carl Spencer	CSp	North West	
	David Brown	DB	Peak	
	Alison Cairns	AC	Peak	
	Helen Wilson	HW	South West	
	Philip Wilson	PW	South West	
	Mick Green	MG	Yorkshire	
	Peter Salenieks	PS	Clubs Committee	
	Rab Carrington	RC	Competition Climbing Performance Group	
	Abbi Blakey	AB	Training, Youth & Walls Committee	
	Aaron Hodgson	AH	Nationally Elected Councillor for Mountaineers	
	Steve Clark	SC	Nationally Elected Councillor for Rock Climbers	
Observers	Jonathan White	JW	Nominated Director (Clubs)	
	Paul Davies	PD	Chief Executive	
	Peter Judd	PJ	Hill Walking Group	
	Roger Murray	RM	Specialist Committee Review	
	John Cousins	JC	Mountain Training	
Others	Dan Middleton	DM	BMC Officer responsible for Climbing Walls	For Vision Event and Item 10
	Tony Ryan	TR	Minute taker	

* denotes supporting paper(s) circulated prior to meeting

Item	Topic and Main Aspects Considered	Decision / Action	Who	When
	Rock Climbing Vision Event			
	The Council discussed the 'vision' for rock climbing. See addendum at end of paper.			
1	Welcome & apologies for absence			
1.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including Abbi Blakey, attending her first Council meeting as the Specialist Councillor representing the Training, Youth & Walls Committee. Dan Middleton, the BMC officer responsible for climbing walls was attending for the Rock Climbing Vision Event element of meeting, as well as for item 10.			
1.2	Apologies for absence were received from: Oli Lewis, Stuart Holmes, Tarquin Shipley, Rose Gare-Simmons, and Andy Tickle. Robert Dufton apologised for being unable to attend the morning session of the meeting.			
2	Note Conflicts of Interest			
2.1	CSt declared a conflict for item 9 a) DP Election Result.			
3	Urgent issues for AOB			
3.1	Three items were already on the agenda: Beacon Hill (item 11); November agenda (item 12); NEC appointments (item 13).			
3.2	There were no requests for additional AOB items.			
4	Update on Grassroots competitions			
4.1	Already discussed on 5 Jul item 10.2 (See Minutes)			
5	Minutes of previous meeting and outstanding Actions*			

Item	Topic and Main Aspects Considered	Decision / Action	Who	When
5.1	8 June 2021			
5.1.1	The Chair advised that the actions from the meeting had been added to the Teamwork Project as Tasks and reviewed at the meeting on 5 July.			
5.1.2	The minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2021 were approved.	Publish 8 June 2021 minutes on BMC website	ASAP	TR
5.2	5 July 2021			
5.2.1	The minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2021 were approved.	Publish 5 July 2021 minutes on BMC website	ASAP	TR
5.2.2	The Chair advised that the actions from the meeting had been added to the Teamwork Project as Tasks for review at this meeting. The actions were reviewed and status updated.			
6	IG report on Area and National Reporting to Council			
6.1	No paper had been provided, so the Chair proposed that the item be deferred to the next meeting on 3 August, but MG advised that the processes for this agenda item had been built into item 7 (IG Improved Council engagement/participation), so there was no need to defer.			
7	IG Improved Council engagement/participation including:			
	• Council Skills Survey*			
7.1	MG advised that this is one of series of papers dealing with how Council wants to organise itself. In particular, it's about how Councillors want to be involved in the running and organisation of Council.			
7.2	Council had already agreed to establish the Implementation Group (IG), develop a two-year rolling Council agenda, and set up a Knowledge Base. The Councillor Skills survey has been produced, but not all Councillors have completed it. CSt will contact them and request that they do so.	Contact Councillors yet to complete skills survey	CSt	ASAP
7.3	When all voting members have completed the survey, CSt will share a summary.	Share survey summary with Council	CSt	ASAP
7.4	To complete the formation of the IG, Council now needs to allocate other IG tasks, and Councillor skills and interests need to be aligned to the running of Council and the delivery of its ToR in respect of membership engagement and working collaboratively with the Board.			

Item	Topic and Main Aspects Considered	Decision / Action	Who	When
7.5	The meeting discussed the need for flexibility in the way Councillors are involved in the running of Council, noting that the availability of Councillors wasn't constant. The survey provides a snapshot, and ideally needs to be updateable or reviewed periodically.	Consider survey update / review process	CSt	ASAP
7.6	The meeting also discussed the specific issue of Area Representative vacancies, and how such vacancies might be centrally co-ordinated and promoted, to enable Council to reach out beyond Area Meeting attendees for candidates. It was agreed that the IG would consider and recommend a role description and a communications plan, noting that the Area AGMs will take place in late October, and promotion of vacancies should be communicated well in advance of the meetings.	Produce role description and comms plan for Area Representative vacancies	MG, HW	ASAP
7.7	It was also agreed that the IG would develop an induction process for new Councillors.	Develop induction process for new Councillors	MG, HW	ASAP
7.8	In response to a suggestion in the paper of the need for a Council Zoom account, or appropriate access to an existing account, it was agreed that a dedicated account was not necessary, but that some kind of booking system needed to be established, so that Councillors know when the account used for Council meetings (areas@thebmc.co.uk) is available to use. It was agreed that the office would consider the best method for doing this.	Create booking system for Councillors for Zoom account	PDa, TR	ASAP
7.9	The Chair noted that approval of the paper submitted for this agenda item had been requested; a vote would be conducted later in the meeting under item 23b).			
8	Code of Practice Review			
8.1	No paper had been provided, so the Chair proposed that the agenda item be deferred until the next Council meeting on 3 August.	Include Code of Practice Review on 3 August meeting agenda	AS	ASAP
9	Council Business:			
	a) DP election result			
	b) Councillor contact list			
9.1	a) DP election result			
9.1.1	The Chair reported that CSt had received 15 votes in favour of his election as Deputy to the President, and congratulated him on his election to the role.	CSt elected Deputy to the President		
9.2	b) Councillor Contact List			

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9.2.1	The Chair reported that most Councillors had now completed the contact list document on Teamwork, and advised those yet to do so that the document is available for them to add the information they wish to share, to enable easier communication between Councillors.	Add contact info to list if not already done so	All	ASAP
10	Vision Event team identification & update for next 2 Council meetings: a) Indoor Climbing b) Mountaineering			
10.1	a) Indoor Climbing*			
10.1.1	The Chair asked whether Council was happy with the proposal set out in the paper produced by PDa, which is to use the visioning session at the November Council meeting to run a facilitated session that seeks to answer two basic questions: 1. What is the very best version of indoor climbing in 2035? 2. What is our worst case or 'nightmare' vision of indoor climbing in 2035?			
10.1.2	The meeting confirmed it was happy with the proposal, and for PDa to develop the session for the Council meeting on 13 November.	Develop facilitated session on indoor climbing for 13 November Council meeting	PDa	
10.2	b) Mountaineering			
10.2.1	The Chair noted that we also need to consider the Mountaineering Vision Event, and asked if anyone was interested in helping to run that event along with AH as NEC for Mountaineers.			
10.2.2	SC offered his support, and JW advised that the International Committee is very interested on the Vision Event. The Chair said that the Mountain Heritage Trust had also expressed interest.	Provide AH with contact info for International Committee chair	AS	ASAP
10.2.3	MG asked whether there was anyone we would like to co-opt for the event, and referenced the fact that Dan McKinlay had been invited to be involved with the Indoor Climbing event.			
10.2.4	PDa observed that the Vision Events won't be the only opportunity for stakeholders, partners and others to contribute to these visions.			
11	Area Reports			
11.1	Cymru North Wales			
11.1.1	No representative in attendance at the meeting, and no report provided.			

Item	Topic and Main Aspects Considered	Decision / Action	Who	When
11.2	Cymru South Wales*			
11.2.1	SQ reported that there was nothing major to highlight to Council, but that the meeting had covered a number of local access issues, as well as national policy-related access issues, with attendance at the meeting of Elfyn Jones, the access & conservation officer, and Eben Muse, the policy & campaigns officer. PS had provided information about Find Your Adventure, a new BMC campaign to help people connect with friendly climbing and walking clubs in their area.			
11.3	Lakes			
11.3.1	FS reported that attendance was down; the meeting had coincided with England's Euro semi final game.			
11.3.2	The Area had produced a response to Lake District National Park Authority's management plan for 2020-2025, which had been signed by Dave Turnbull as BMC Head of Access, Conservation and Environmental Sustainability.			
11.3.3	A representative from Friends of the Lake District gave a presentation on their campaigning on parking and transport issues.			
11.3.4	The meeting also debated the installation of lower-offs on Upper Heron Crag, and decided it would go against the principles adopted by the Area.			
11.4	London & South East			
11.4.1	CSt reported that the meeting had been good despite low attendance.			
11.4.2	Caroline Worboys had given a board report.			
11.4.3	Conversations with Sussex Wildlife Trust about re-opening Eridge Green are ongoing.			
11.4.4	The campsite at Birchden Wood (Harrison's Rocks) is still closed, and Forestry England is running a survey; we hope that the campsite will be opened soon.			
11.4.5	There's a new page on BMC website bringing together all the Southern Sandstone information which had previously been published in a number of different locations - https://www.thebmc.co.uk/southern-sandstone . There is a concern, as with other BMC webpages about maintaining this page's visibility once it drops off the homepage.			

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11.4.6	The format of Area Meetings was discussed, the general consensus being a 50/50 split of online and in-person meetings. The Area is very keen to host hybrid meetings, and intends to do so for the October 2021 meeting, if possible.			
11.4.7	A member commented on an issue relating to the use of MSO (Membership Services Online) by club volunteers; this has been passed to clubs officer Jane Thompson.			
11.5	Midlands*			
11.5.1	DJ reported that only 7 members attended the meeting, and there is a feeling that emails sent from the office are not being received by members. It is also felt that the need to register for online Area Meetings by Eventbrite is an additional barrier which may be deterring some members from attending. When Area Secretaries were able to email members directly, attendance had been much higher than it currently is.			
11.5.2	There was a discussion about what might be causing mass emails sent to members using Mailchimp to not reach recipients and ways to solve this problem.			
11.5.3	It was agreed that PDa would investigate, with relevant BMC staff, the causes of non-receipt of these types of email, and possible solutions to the problem.	Investigate non-receipt of mass emails sent via Mailchimp	PDa	ASAP
11.5.4	PDa would also look at the BMC's data protection policies, to consider what can be done within these policies to improve email communications, and if the policies are too restrictive, consider whether they can be changed whilst adhering to data protection regulations.	Consider email processes and policies, to ensure receipt of emails by members	PDa	ASAP
11.5.5	With respect to the current format of emails, it was agreed that TR would circulate a template to Area Reps for feedback on how the design of the template might be improved to provide clearer direction to information such as meeting agendas and minutes.	Send Mailchimp template for Area Meeting email invitations to Area Reps for feedback	TR	ASAP
11.5.6	The need to use Eventbrite for Area Meeting registration would also be evaluated.	Evaluate the need to use Eventbrite for Area Meeting registration	PDa	ASAP
11.5.7	An update on the access issue at Beacon Hill was also provided to the Area Meeting.			
11.6	North East			
11.6.1	JW reported that circumstances had dictated the cancellation of the original plan to hold a hybrid meeting, both online and at Newcastle Climbing Centre, and that this probably impacted on attendance.			

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11.6.2	A number of club reps attended, so the meeting had a club focus. There was also discussion of climbing competitions, and positive feedback to the plans for national events.			
11.6.3	No candidates for area vacancies came forward, and this is a concern. It was agreed that the Implementation Group along with Volunteers T&F Group would consider a strategy for recruiting area volunteers.	Consider strategy for recruiting area volunteers	MG, HW, CSt	ASAP
11.7	North West			
11.7.1	CSp reported that the meeting had not been well attended, possibly due to a combination of factors which might include shifting the meeting from its regular Monday evening slot.			
11.7.2	It was a productive meeting essentially between members of the committee, and included discussions on access, and updates on the clubs strategy and BMC finances.			
11.7.3	It was noted that funding for the annual Wilton Festival had been withdrawn as part of the budget review process, and the volunteer organisers were now struggling to bring elements of the event together without this financial support.			
11.8	Peak			
11.8.1	AC reported low attendance of the meeting (maximum 20), and that this has been a trend for the past 18 months.			
11.8.2	It was acknowledged that we need to find an effective way to find out why members don't attend Area Meetings. The Chair asked whether we could look at surveying members, since reports suggested that emails weren't getting through.	Consider effective methods for surveying members about Area Meeting attendance	PDa	ASAP
11.8.3	The new clubs rep had provided an update on the Find Your Adventure campaign; the meeting felt it would be good to share this more widely.	Consider wider sharing of Find Your Adventure with other Areas	JW, PS	ASAP
11.8.4	A hill walking update was provided, including information on the completion of the two Mend Our Mountains projects in the Area, and a conservation day planned for September.			
11.8.5	The access and conservation update included information on the increasing cost and scope of pay and display car parking at Stanage. It was agreed that Area Reps would email TR with information on access and conservation issues covered at the meetings, so that we can publish them in a Facebook post.	Email access and conservation issues for Facebook post compilation	Area Reps	ASAP
11.8.6	PDr provided the Area Meeting with an update on general BMC matters.			

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11.9	South West			
11.9.1	The Area had not yet meet; meeting scheduled for 19 July.			
11.10	Yorkshire			
11.10.1	The Area had not yet meet; meeting scheduled for 28 July.			
12	Constituency Reports			
12.1	SC and AH advised that they had nothing to add at this time.			
13	Partner Reports			
13.1	Mountain Training*			
13.1.1	Report submitted, detailing in particular the effects of the two main lockdown periods on course delivery and registrations.			
13.2	Plas y Brenin (Mountain Training Trust)			
13.2.1	No report submitted, and no representative in attendance.			
13.3	Association of British Climbing Walls			
13.3.3	No report submitted, and no representative in attendance.			
13.4	AB offered a report from NICAS as a funded partner.			
14	Volunteer Steering Group*			
14.1	The Chair noted that Council had agreed that it wanted to include a Councillor in the steering group being set up by volunteers officer Jane Thompson to oversee the development and implementation of the volunteering strategy.			
14.1.1	CSt advised that, as per the comment he had posted on Teamwork, the Volunteer Recommendations Implementation Task & Finish Group had decided, recognising that a lot of work has already gone into the volunteer strategy work, that it would be better to hold off setting up a separate steering group and instead take stock of where this work is currently up to, identify where the gaps are and where there is potential for improvement, and act on recommendations coming from that process.			

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14.1.2	CSt proposed adoption of the Investors in Volunteers framework, and adding that to the remit of the Task & Finish Group (T&FG). There were no objections from Council to this proposal.	Add Investors in Volunteers framework to T&FG remit	CSt	ASAP
14.1.3	Although we don't need to appoint a Councillor to the steering group at this time, if anyone is interested in joining the T&FG, they are welcome to contact the group.			
14.1.4	FS suggested that the T&F Group should look at including members/Partners who have experience of IMPLEMENTING such changes.	Look for additional members with implementation experience	CSt	ASAP
15	Member Code of Conduct Task & Finish Group			
15.1	The Member Code of Conduct T&F Group ToRs were not published on Teamwork.	Upload paper and add to 3 Aug agenda	AS	ASAP
16	AGM Participation			
16.1	There was extensive discussion on the 'Strawman' and RC's additional comments paper. It was broadly felt that a BMC Weekend, including the AGM, would be a good way to celebrate the BMC and increase AGM attendance.			
16.1.1	Council felt an event like this would need significant planning and so should be targeted for 2023. A T&F Group was agreed comprising: AS, AB, CSt, HW, SC, RM, Aim is to develop a proposal by Sept 2021 in order to feed into BMC Budgets etc.	Create T&F Group Area in Teamwork for use by Group	AS	ASAP
16.1.2	The Council did not have the resources to also develop an event for 2022 and it was agreed that while the 2023 T&F Group might be able to provide some guidance/assistance organisation of the 2022 AGM should remain with the Staff as previously.	Inform Board of Council Decision and ask for funding	AS	ASAP
17	Youth Volunteer Proposal			
17.1	The Council discussed the proposal and while they were broadly supportive there were a number of concerns about how this could align impact Areas and what the pathway is after attending the events. CSt agreed to provide further details on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How TYW Committee can have a key role. • How Areas can be appropriately involved. • How the role integrates into the wider BMC, clubs, membership, Areas etc. 	CSt to provide further details to next meeting	CSt	3 Aug

Item	Topic and Main Aspects Considered	Decision / Action	Who	When
		Add to 3 Aug agenda	AS	ASAP
18	Interim report of the 'Role of President' Task & Finish Group			
18.1	The report was discussed and the direction of travel broadly supported. AS discussed the issues that Roger Fanner was having with continuing the role and the Council were in agreement that his continuing as Chair was highly desirable. The intent is to provide recommendations/options and recommendations on other necessary changes; CNDs, DPs etc etc. It was envisaged that developing a fully 'worked through' and consulted change for 2022 AGM was unlikely.	Inform T&F Group	AS	ASAP
18.2	DB expressed concern that the Group was taking so long to provide any proposal. RD stated that various constraints had delayed progress but they now intend to deliver in Oct as per TORs.			
19	Partners' Assembly ToR & outcomes update			
19.1	FS explained that Partners Assembly would not be providing a Specialist Councillor, and were recommending that this role is revamped to be for a Funded Partner instead.	Implementation Group to confirm if change of focus requires ToR Changes	HW/MG	Nov 21
20	MoU Update – agree composition of, and timeline for, Task & Finish Group?			
20.1	It was agreed that the MoU would not be updated before the President Role T&F had reported and any changes could be identified.	Include discussion of November meeting agenda on 3 rd MC agenda	AS	ASAP
21	Board Report Substantive Discussion Points			
21.1	There were no substantive discussion points raised on 5 th July.			
22	Board Reporting			
22.1	There was discussion about how the new report worked. The merged report was broadly welcomed, though there remains work to ensure the 'right things are included' as per the current task with CNDs & PDa. There was discussion about who 'owns' the report.			

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22.1.1	AS confirmed that report is created by CEO and Chair. The CNDs' role is to highlight or expand on areas of Council interest and are the final step in the chain (i.e. the CND comments are not subject to veto by CEO or Chair). This is in line with MOU para 28:	Continue with current format and evolve over time.	PDa, PD, CS, FS, PS	Ongoing
22.1.2	<i>The CNDs will explain relevant decisions of the Board to the Council; particularly where the Board and Council's views do not concur or the CNDs have not voted in line with the Council's views.</i> RD left the meeting at this point.	Provide feedback to CNDs on further changes they think are necessary	All	Ongoing
23	Votes / Agreements			
23.1	a) Item 6 (5 Jul) - Council Meetings			
23.1.1	1. AGREEMENT - Council Meetings - In relation to the ratio of Physical to Virtual Council Meetings Remain all Zoom Meetings	Move to 3P + 1V Move to 2P + 2V Return to all Physical Meetings Abstain	5 12 3 2	
23.1.2	2. AGREEMENT - In relation to Council Joint Meetings and Council having option to run one meeting as a joint event with Area Volunteers	I agree Council should run a single joint event with Area Volunteers I do not agree Abstain	16 1 5	
23.2	b) Item 7 - IG Improved Council engagement/participation			
23.2.1	1. AGREEMENT - In relation to the Council Organisation Paper I/We	Approve the paper, subject to any changes agreed at the meeting Abstain Do not approve the paper	15 7 0	
23.3	c) Item 17 - Youth Volunteer Proposal			
23.3.1	1. AGREEMENT - In relation to Youth Representatives I/We	Agree in Principal but need further details clarified.	11	

Item	Topic and Main Aspects Considered	Decision / Action	Who	When
		Abstain	5	
		Do not agree the proposal	2	
		Agree to the proposal, subject to any recommendations within the meeting	4	
23.4	d) Item 15 - Member Code of Conduct T&F Group			
23.4.1	Postponed until 3 Aug			
23.5	e) Item 19 - MOU			
23.5.1	1. AGREEMENT - In relation to the MOU I	Recommend the MOU review is not required at this time	17	
		Abstain	5	
		Agree MOU should be amended now	0	
24	Specialist Committee and other partner engagement			
24.1	Postponed until 3 Aug.	Add to 3 Aug agenda	AS	ASAP
25	Rose Gare-Simmons: NNAS Board role			
25.1	AS stated that R G-S had a potential opportunity to become a member of NNAS Board. It was agreed by Council that other than declaring any Conflict of Interest where appropriate at Council there were no reasons she could not pursue this option further.			
26	November meeting items			
26.1	Mountain Heritage Trust			
26.1.1	Postponed until 3 Aug.	Add to 3 Aug agenda	AS	ASAP
26.2	Specialist Committee reports			
26.2.1	Postponed until 3 Aug.	Add to 3 Aug agenda	AS	ASAP
27	Date of next meetings			

Item	Topic and Main Aspects Considered	Decision / Action	Who	When
	Follow-up – 3 Aug Pre-meet – 2 Nov 3 rd MC – 13 Nov Manchester Follow-up – 7 Dec			

Summary of actions:

See [2nd MC Outstanding Actions](#)

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

Signed  _____ Date 06/8/21 _____
Andy Syme, Chair

Rock Climbing Vision Event (Minutes Addendum)

9:30-11:30am July 17th 2021

This Members' Council led work aimed to form a more detailed shared vision of the future of rock climbing, alongside the BMC strategic plan; with similar aims in the other three areas of hill walking, indoor climbing and mountaineering. A shared vision of what we would prefer the BMC work on rock climbing to look like medium term, including building on strengths and dealing with challenges, will help us better implement the strategic plan, and suggest adjustments if necessary, to achieve continued success.

The meeting explored this shared vision by seeking to examine: what our vision is in more detail and the current success, of where we might like the BMC vision to change medium term, and to look at what are the challenges are in that and what major pitfalls we face if we fail to address these properly.

The morning started with an introduction to the rock-climbing vision event and its documents by Steve Clark, the Rock Climbing Vision Event lead. Steve Quinton as a working group member then gave a case study of what current BMC success can look like alongside future risks: access gains in Pembroke.

After a short period of discussion and questions Council split into 4 break-out rooms, discussing where each sub-group felt:

- What are the main areas of the current BMC rock climbing vision and what should we be celebrating most in that?
- In what main areas could we improve the BMC vision for rock climbing in the coming years?
- What are the biggest potential pitfalls in the BMC vision area for rock climbing in the coming years?

A volunteer summarised the group discussion and reported that back to the meeting. Following this there was further discussion and questions before the section of the meeting closed.

The working group will now take the information from the meeting in the context of the latest strategic plan and discuss this with Specialist Committee chairs and produce a summary planning document with next steps building on strengths and identifying weaknesses and any gaps. If necessary it will make recommendations to adjustment to the BMC strategic plan.

The rock climbing vision working group is: Steve Clark (NEC Rock Climbing), Aaron Hodgson (NEC Mountaineering); Claudia Sarner (Midlands rep); Mick Green (Yorkshire rep) and Steve Quinton (South Wales rep); with liaison from Paul Davies (BMC CEO).