

Summary of the 44th meeting of National Council

Date: Saturday 13 June 2015

Venue: Malham Field Studies Centre, Yorkshire

In attendance:

Voting members: Rehan Siddiqui (President); Rupert Davies (Vice-President); Nick Kurth (Vice-President); John Simpson (Honorary Treasurer); Jim Kelly (Cymru North Wales); Ted Rogers & Peter Sterling (Lakes); Lisa Payne & Rik Payne (London & South East); Roger Fanner & Phil Simister (Midlands); Mark Anstiss & Alan Hinkes (North East); Nick Bond (North West) Rob Greenwood & Simon Lee (Peak); Colin Knowles & Gareth Palmer (South West); and Dave Turnbull (CEO).

Specialist Committee chairs: Dave Musgrove (Access Management Group); and Fiona Sanders (Clubs Committee).

Observers & staff: Brian Smith (Independent Director); Nick Colton (Deputy CEO); and Tony Ryan (Publications Co-ordinator).

Summary:

1. Introduction: Rehan Siddiqui chaired the meeting, his first as president, and welcomed new attendees Lisa and Rik Payne, and Mark Anstiss. Rehan spoke about his vision for the BMC, which would be one of inclusivity, noting the diverse range of activities undertaken by members.

2. Area reports: North Wales reported on another successful annual TremFest event, and that we were working with other bodies on a co-ordinated response to hydro-electric scheme developments in Snowdonia. The South West reported on preparations for the Cornish Climbing & Walking Festival, to be held in July. The Peak reported that the new guidebook, Peak Limestone North, had been very well received; Jon Rowe from Staffordshire Wildlife Trust attended the June meeting to report on work undertaken at the Roaches. The Lakes reported that two hill walking reps had been elected, and that bolting had commenced at Tilberthwaite Quarry, to create a sport climbing venue. Yorkshire reported on a successful crag clean-up at Caley, with permission from the city council for further work; proposals from various groups on the recreational use of Threshfield Quarry are up for consideration. The North East reported on plans for the area climbing and walking festival in July and the Peel Crag restoration event in September. The North West reported on discussions on an area policy for replacement of fixed gear and lower-offs. London & South East reported on the election of new chair and secretary at the June meeting.

3. Finance: John Simpson reported that membership has increased by 4.5% since the beginning of the year (as of May 2015). Travel insurance for North America was discussed; Rehan Siddiqui advised that a working group had been established to review BMC insurance..

4. Strategy & operation: Dave Turnbull reported on the staff restructuring process, which had been taking place since late April.

5. Governance and policy: The roles of National Council and the Executive were discussed, and it was agreed that it was important to clarify roles and responsibilities, for operational purposes and for reasons of accountability. It was agreed that the Access Management Group would consider the issue of bracken encroachment, and whether it was appropriate to develop a policy.

6. Hill walking: Brian Smith reported that the Hill Walking Working Group would welcome more support from the areas in terms of additional reps.

7. Quarries: A discussion paper on quarries as future climbing venues was considered, with recommendations for a fuller report to be provided for the September meeting.

8. Mountain Heritage Trust: MHT chair Jeff Ford gave a strategic update on the work of the trust.

9. AGM 2016: There was a discussion on combining the 2016 AGM with a youth event, such as the final of the BMC Youth Climbing series. It was agreed that the 2016 AGM would be held in the Peak District.

Dave Turnbull, August 2015