



Peak Area Newsletter

Issue 10 February 2010

Welcome to the newest edition of the Peak Newsletter. As always, we're unbelievably grateful for contributions and feedback.

The BMC starts 2010 with a record number of members, having reached over 70,000 in December. Dave Turnbull, the CEO, spoke fine words about this achievement but the most significant fact, in our opinion, is that membership subscriptions now make up half of BMC income. Which helps keep the organisation focused (and honest) on what we, the members, believe is important. Which is why it is essential for us to keep the management informed of what we think. So (you can see where this is going)...

The next Peak Area meeting is on Wednesday, 17 February, starting at 19:30 at The Norfolk Arms, Ringinglow Road, 2 Ringinglow Village, Sheffield, S11 7TS.

Contents:

[Peak Area Meetings](#)

[The Peak Area Reps speak](#)

[Cliffhanger](#)

[Non-Mountain Rescues](#)

[Access Notes](#)

[The BMC takes on the Archers](#)

[Calendar](#)

If you're reading this from a printout, the hyperlinks won't show up (in some cases we do print them). To obtain an electronic version in which the hyperlinks will work, go to the BMC website (www.thebmc.co.uk). Members can have it emailed to them by contacting the BMC office: 0161 445 6111, office@thebmc.co.uk

Peak Area Meetings



By Trudi Materna (the Sec)

The last meeting at The Grouse in November was very well attended with 54 people (and 1 dog) joining us. This is a pretty good turn out.

BMC Peak Area Contacts:

Peak Area Chair, Matt Heason:

matt@heason.net

Secretary, Trudi Materna:

trudi.materna@btinternet.com

Peak Area Reps (your voice on the BMC National Council): Chris Moor & Neil Foster

<http://community.thebmc.co.uk>

Newsletter Editors (articles, comments, threats, etc.):

peakarea@gmail.com

Access Reps Co-ordinator, Henry Folkard:

01298 871 849



That meeting was the AGM as well as being an ordinary meeting, so the usual constitutional matters were addressed first of all.

The Chair and Secretary – Matt Heason and I – stepped down and were then voted back in. No one else fancied the jobs this time round, I guess?

Chris Moor was voted in for another term as the National Council Rep and Neil Foster filled the second spot.

David Brown from the Peak Climbing Club was elected as the Clubs Rep and there were no nominations for the Youth Rep post.

Matt, Chris and I will all be stepping down from our posts at the end of this year so if you are interested in getting more involved and want to know more about what these posts entail, contact me and I can provide more details.

The meeting itself was the usual Peak Area fare – access updates from our busy reps, Chris reporting back from the previous National Council meeting and an update from Niall Grimes on the progress with the BMC Guidebooks.

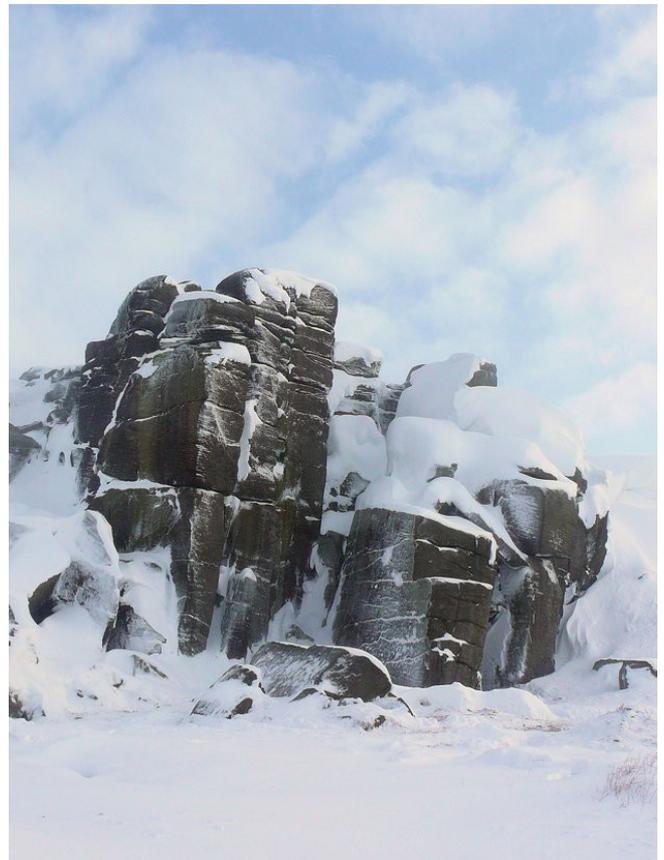
These and previous minutes are available on the BMC Communities website at:
<http://community.thebmc.co.uk/>

After the meeting, we had chips and sandwiches and Ben Heason and George Taylor presented what turned out to be a pretty tricky picture quiz. Personally, I felt quite pleased if I could name the country the photo was taken in, so kudos to those who could actually name the routes! When the pictures had been shown and the points tallied up it was time for the prizes. Well, what can I say? We have some very generous companies and individuals round here – what a haul – we ended up with about 40 prizes! I would like to personally thank the following people for their generous donations:

Alpkit, the BMC, Heason Events, Nick Smith at climbers.net, Outside, Rockfax, Simon Jacques, The Square and Vertebrate Publishing.

So, that was it for 2009 – an interesting year in the Peak Area.

The next meeting is on 17 February at The Norfolk Arms, at Ringinglow and it promises to be a lively affair, with discussion of the controversial plans for development at Staden Quarry. Come along and let us know what you think.



Proof the Sec does get out – above is 'A very snowy buttress at Stange End-Crow Chin', by Trudi Materna.



The Peak Area Rep bit



By Chris Moor & Neil Foster

Area Meetings are the base from which the BMC grows. It's where local action starts and ideas get kicked about - in a friendly way, of course. One of their purposes is to inform local climbers and walkers of developments in the various climbing, bouldering, hill walking, mountaineering and wider indoor and outdoor worlds.

They also act as a mouthpiece for the opinions of the locals in such matters as crag access, conservation issues, and national debates such as windfarms, land use and local road building schemes.

They're also increasingly the forum for getting local crag clean-up events started, organised and funded.

What happens at a meeting? The usual format of a meeting is to first run through the progress made since the last time everyone got together. Then comes feedback from the Area's [National Council](#) reps. After that the locally relevant debates start.

If anything needs to be taken to the National Council that is done via the relevant Reps. Anything that needs local action and organisation is usually sorted out there and then.

Then what? After that, the food arrives and the

BMC Communities website

The new BMC Community website community at <http://community.thebmc.co.uk> is up and running. Take a look!

entertainment begins. There are usually refreshments in the form of chips and butties. A guest speaker is often in attendance with slides of their latest derring-do adventure. It has been known for the BMC President himself to show up [Ed; I once saw him vigorously upbraided, in a Peak Area meeting, by someone who clearly didn't realise who Rab was or know of his reputation as a muscular debater... Rab, ever the gentleman, remained in his seat].

Who does what at Area level? These descriptions should give you a flavour of what is involved in taking up a post within the Area Meetings. The four people involved in these posts make a nice little team, and it's possible to have a real impact upon your area if you play it right.



thanks to Duncan Bourne again for donating this. Visit his website at www.duncanbourne.co.uk/



Area Chair Primary Tasks:

1. to ensure effective and efficient Area Meetings.
2. to act as a mover & shaker for volunteer activities within the Area.
3. to communicate with the other area volunteers on a regular and timely basis.
4. to get to know members of staff in the Manchester office.
5. to ask for help if you need it

Area Secretary Primary Tasks:

1. to take accurate notes of Area Meetings.
2. to follow the agreed timelines & actions in preparation for Area Meetings.
3. to support the Chair in the run up to the Area Meeting.
4. to be instrumental in publicising the Area Meetings to the wider world.
5. to ask for help if you need it.

National Council Representative (Two per area)

Primary Tasks:

1. to represent the views of the Area Meeting at National Council.
2. to report the decisions and debates within the National Council to Area Meetings.
3. to support the Chair and Secretary of the Area Meeting.

So, you're already a member of the BMC, why not think about taking that commitment to the next level?

“NON-MOUNTAIN RESCUES”

By Keith Montgomery

It is a reasonable assumption to make that all Mountain Rescue (MR) incidents occur in mountainous areas far from roads and in the middle of nowhere. Usually in the most awful weather! The first 3 weeks in 2010 proved this not to be the case.



Most MR teams have an agreement with the local ambulance service that they will turn out to assist them (for whatever reason) in adverse weather conditions or where an ambulance crew are unable to reach a casualty, perhaps near a road head. Typically we might be asked to assist, say, half a dozen times a year. However, when the snow fell in January local MR teams found themselves in unprecedented circumstances!

As an example, in the four weeks over Christmas and into the New Year, Glossop MRT were asked to assist ambulance crews on no less than 46 separate occasions! Mostly these incidents occurred because the ambulance couldn't get up side roads due to the fact that the heavy snow hadn't been cleared. Our job might be to ferry the ambulance crew to the casualty and then transport the crew and patient back to their ambulance.

The first incident we had was to help an ambulance crew get to a heart attack patient in a snow-covered estate. The patient was treated on site but, in this instance, it was decided to take the patient straight to hospital in the MR 4x4 as the roads were so bad.

The snow brings out the kids in people and it was no surprise to find ourselves being asked to assist in a sledging accident on a local golf course. A sledger had lost control, fallen off the sledge and had suffered a broken ankle – in 4 places as it happens.



Mountain Rescue Landrover (obviously)



Treatment was given on scene, the casualty loaded onto our MR stretcher and taken to a road head.

You never know what you're going to find on these assists so we were surprised to find ourselves transporting a women in the late (very late!) stages of labour to hospital. Even more surprising was the fact that we didn't quite make it to the maternity suite and she gave birth to a baby girl in the back of our MR vehicle on the hospital forecourt!

Many ambulances have been dug out and/or towed out of the snow and it never ceases to amaze me how efficient and capable a 110 Land Rover is in adverse weather conditions. Nothing defeated it - except of course when the fan belt came off and it overheated but we won't talk about that!

Most MR teams in the Peak District spent a huge amount of time assisting the ambulance service over the snowy period and it's something we are very happy to do. Without exception the patients, their families and the ambulance crews were all very appreciative of the time and effort we put in. The MR service is funded almost entirely on voluntary donations from the general public and this is our chance to say "thank you".

Rolling on from the news last issue about rescinded cuts to Search and Rescue Helicopter Bases

is the recent announcement that a consortium including the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) has been named as 'preferred bidder' for the £6bn contract to supply and operate UK rescue helicopters for up to 30 years, starting in 2012. The ageing Sea Kings operated by the Royal Navy and RAF will be replaced by Sikorsky S92 (a new aircraft derived from the US Blackhawk helicopter). The Maritime and Coastguard Agency, also covered by the contract, already use S92. The Sea King design is over 50 years old with some aircraft not much newer, so it's nice to know if you do need collecting off the hillside in the future , it will be by an aircraft younger than you. [If RBS own the helicopters and we own RBS, have we just bought our own rescue helicopters?]



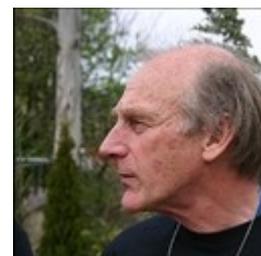
Left: MCA S92; Right: Royal Navy Sea King rescue helicopter (other rescue helicopters are available) [photos copyright MCA and MOD respectively].



Difficult to imagine those hazy days of summer but they are coming and so is Cliffhanger, for another great year; Bouldering, ice-cream, gizzits, demonstrations, ice-cream, maybe real snow again, the Bouldering World Cup and ice-cream. As a build up why not take a trip to ShAFF, 12-14 March?

Access Notes

By Henry Folkard



Dateline: 23 January 2010

Lots on Limestone for this newsletter. The only thing to report on Grit is that a meeting Adam and I had arranged with the National Trust, RSPB and Friends





of the Peak about the Eastern Moors got postponed because of snowdrifts: if we manage to rearrange it before the Area Meeting there will be an update then.

Come to the Area Meeting if you want to find out as much as we know about a proposal to site a water bottling plant at **Staden Moor, also known as Cowdale Quarry**. The BMC became aware of a nascent proposal before Christmas when the developers contacted Head Office. The anticipation then was that a planning proposal would go to High Peak Borough Council Planning Committee towards the end of February. High Peak Borough Council had, we were told at the Parish Meeting, requested an Environmental Impact Assessment. The natural assumption was that the planning application would not be determined until it had been received. It would take some weeks to prepare. However when the BMC checked with HPBC they said they continued to require comments on the proposal by 8 February, a deadline the BMC met. They said their intention then was to go to Committee on either 22 February or 22 March.

The quarry is, as you will know, an important 'trad' venue with the best limestone slab routes in the Peak – and some pretty good routes that are not slabs too. It is privately owned, and the BMC is grateful to the landowner for allowing access to climbing faces. The proposal, in its current form, additionally contains provision for some recreational facilities and a single storey building referred to as a climbing centre and changing room / café. It is not explicit on the matter of access for climbing.

The BMC and Buxton Mountaineering Club were represented at an extraordinary meeting of Kings Sterndale Parish Meeting on 22 January at which they explained what was known about the proposal, and those eligible to vote decided they would be objecting to the proposed development. Neither the Buxton Club nor the BMC voted for or against the proposal because, though we all lived in the same post code area, we were not parishioners and so were not eligible to vote. We agreed to take our own counsel – and we could take different approaches – once we have established all the facts with the

developers and our respective members have expressed their views.

We understand that CPRE / Friends of the Peak will be issuing a press release on their position during the week commencing 25 January. Something is likely to appear in the Buxton Advertiser too.

At **Horseshoe** the trial re-bolting of six or seven routes on the main wall has been completed. Feedback at the Area Meeting would be appreciated. There are no plans to do anything else on the Main Wall until we know what climbers think of what has been done so far. Work currently in hand on the slab routes – which are likely to be dirty at the moment and may have initial hangers removed until work has been completed – is not sponsored by the BMC.

At the time of going to press the BMC has just become aware of proposals for extensive development at Rock Mill Business Park in the Dale at **Stoney Middleton** (ie opposite Garage Buttress). According to the local press the proposal is to build between 10 and 20 houses, a new heritage centre and café, tourist accommodation and upmarket offices. We will tell you what more we have discovered at the Area Meeting.

If you have an interest in '**Green Lanes**' we can happily update you on what is going on in the Peak. Attempts to find a solution to the problems on the first 8 of the 23 red routes (Long Causeway, Chapel Gate, School Lane, Bradley Lane, Shatton Lane, Brough Lane, Moorlands Lane and Washgates) have met with some success. Work is to begin on the next tranche of 7, which will include the Roych and Pin Dale. Monitoring of illegal use on Ways where status has recently been clarified, e.g. Abney Moor and Silly Dale, shows a reduction of over 80%, and enforcement through the successful Operation Blackbrook is ongoing. A second warning under Section 59 of the Road Traffic Act means you could forfeit your vehicle. This is no idle threat, it's happened. The Operation Blackbrook meeting proposed for 12 January but cancelled has been rescheduled for 19:30 on 23 February at the National Park Headquarters, Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell. The second Public Inquiry on Marsh Green Lane was adjourned to the early summer, and the



Public Inquiry on Chertpit Lane/Leys Road adjourned until 15 and 16 February.

That's it for now. Please do not hesitate to ask at the Area Meeting or after it if there are any other access issues you want to know about; we can probably find out if we do not know the answer off hand.

The BMC's [Regional Access Database](#) (RAD) has up to date information on all crags in England and Wales. Otherwise access rep contact details are in the BMC Members Handbook and on the [BMC web site](#). Most access reps are at most Area Meetings if there are any points you want to raise with them, or you can always phone me on 01298 871 849 or the Regional Access Officer, Guy Keating, on 0161 438 3309 (guy@thebmc.co.uk).

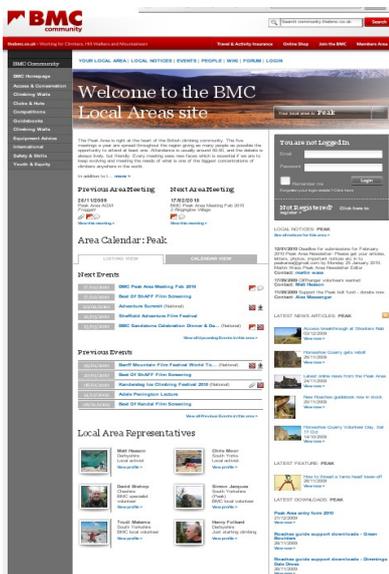
Whilst there is still plenty of room for improvement, the new Communities area is a big step and mostly in the right direction. It's easy to sign up, assuming one has an email address, and there is plenty of scope for volunteering, reading notices, agendas of area meetings etc. At the moment it is a bit lonely with not many contributors, and there are a lot of competing Blogs and noticeboards out there. So the BMC is going to have to work hard to differentiate itself and draw in not just members but potential members too.

One for the conspiracy theorists; has anyone else noticed that the Peak Area seems to have shrunk hugely? Below is the current map on the Communities website:

The BMC Community Site

by Our Correspondant

The new [BMC Communities website](#) is now open. So how good is it? There has been considerable comment about the, frankly, cack-handed (being left-handed and from Yorkshire I can get away with that), way the BMC website presents itself. I have some sympathy for those who develop the BMC site; it's hard to combine so many elements and get it right all the time.



and this is what used to be there:

I think we should be told...





Calendar

There is a comprehensive calendar on the BMC website; this one covers stuff of mainly Peak Area interest. If you have an item for inclusion contact us at peakarea@gmail.com. The Newsletter is published a week before the Peak Area meetings.

February

17 **Peak Area meeting**, Norfolk Arms, Ringinglow.

March

12-14 [ShAFF](#), Sheffield.

20 [Climbing Works International Festival](#), Sheffield.

April

14 **Peak Area meeting**, Grouse Inn TBC.

16-18 **BMC AGM** weekend, in conjunction with the South Wales Mountaineering Club. Venue is the Worm's Head Hotel, Rhossili, Gower peninsula.

May

6 [BMC Rock Climbing Masterclass](#), Nottingham.

9-16 [BMC International Sea Cliff Climbing Meet](#), Cornwall (a great opportunity to try somethin new and make new friends).

June

9 **Peak Area meeting**, Ramshaw TBC.

26-27 [British Bouldering Championships](#), Sheffield.

July

3-4 [Cliffhanger](#) (including Bouldering World Cup), Sheffield.

September

15 **Peak Area meeting**, Glossop TBC.

November

24 **Peak Area meeting AGM**, TBC.