

## Area Secretary Role and Responsibilities

### Area Secretary Role Description

Welcome to the BMC's network of area volunteers. The BMC has been built by and depends on volunteers like you. Members, staff and other volunteers hugely appreciate your contribution of time, knowledge and enthusiasm as a Secretary of one of the 10 BMC areas. Thank you for your interest in volunteering for this role on behalf of the organisation and the climbing and walking community.

#### What does an Area Secretary do?

The BMC represents over 80,000 members as well as many other climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers in England and Wales, split into 10 geographical areas. Each area has two elected officers, a chair and a secretary and numerous elected representatives including two volunteers who sit on National Council, access reps, club reps and hill walking reps. Every member of the BMC is assigned to an area which is usually based on their location and within that area they are eligible to vote on issues or at elections that take place at the area meetings. Each area holds 4 to 5 area meetings a year which act as a hub and a forum for local members to come together to discuss matters of local and national importance and have their say on the running and governance of the BMC.

As an Area Secretary you play a vital part in ensuring the smooth running of the area and the area meetings that take place. Working with the Area Chair you will need to agree a schedule of meetings in accordance with the date ranges provided by the office. Many meetings are now being held online however for face-to-face meetings you will need to book a suitable venue that is fully accessible. You may also need to arrange food for the meeting and organise a guest speaker.

Prior to the meeting you will need to produce the agenda (in discussion with the Chair) and send to the BMC office (Tony Ryan) for posting on the BMC Local Areas site at least 2 weeks before the meeting date. You should also liaise with Jon Chittenden (Online Marketing Co-ordinator) to publicise the meeting agenda to members of the area in the email newsletter that is sent out approximately 10 days before each meeting. Each area has a Facebook page and this should also be used to publicise the meeting as well as online forums such as UKC and other ways that are effective for your area members. You will need to work with the BMC office to arrange the circulation of reports / discussion papers to support agenda items. These will be posted on the Local Areas website but you may wish to distribute them further through the email sent to members and on Facebook.

During the meeting you will need to ensure everyone has signed in so the attendance is recorded, count votes and support the Chair to ensure the meeting runs to time and items are not missed. You will also need to write meeting minutes (note form – not detailed) and send them to the BMC office (Tony Ryan) for posting on the BMC Local Areas site within 14 days of the meeting having taken place. In addition, you will need to help ensure that meeting action points are followed up and deal with any necessary administration and correspondence between meetings.

As an Area Officer you will play a key role in developing engagement within the area and promoting equity and fair representation. It is important all meetings, events and communications take place in an inclusive manner. You should actively seek to increase engagement within your area and should consider ways in which this could be achieved which could include using your area's Facebook page, holding single topic Zoom meetings or social / networking events.

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The position of Area Secretary is voted on by members during the elections at the Area AGM. Where a vacancy arises outside of the AGM a secretary may be co-opted in accordance with Article 28 in the Articles of Association.

### What can you expect from the BMC?

- Officer support to help you fulfil your role as well as advice on complex or difficult issues which can range from advice by phone/email to attendance at meetings.
- The BMC is committed to ensuring that all people have an equal opportunity to participate in climbing, hill walking and/or mountaineering at all levels and in all roles. Our full Equity Statement can be found [here](#).
- Travel expenses – the BMC will reimburse travel expenses for any meetings.
- You will be added to the BMC collaboration platform enabling you to communicate with other area officers and representatives.

### What does the BMC expect from you?

As an Area Secretary, you will be representing the BMC to members, other climbers and walkers and external organisations. This means that it is important that you:

- Are a member of the BMC with your designated area the one in which you are standing to be secretary.
- Are passionate about climbing and/or walking and/or mountaineering.
- Behave in a respectful manner at all times, remembering that you are representing the BMC membership as well as the wider walking and climbing community (rather than just yourself as an individual) in the public domain. This includes posting on social media and internet forums in a BMC capacity.
- Keep well informed about area activities to develop appropriate and engaging meeting agendas.
- Ensuring good time-keeping to enable appropriate discussion on all agenda items.
- Ensure meetings take place with an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere.
- Can take appropriate minutes during the meeting that capture the main points and that are non-biased.
- Be an advocate for the BMC. With regards to this it is helpful to develop some understanding of the BMC's specialist work areas, finances and structure.
- Be aware of the BMC procedures and constitutional requirements related to Area Meetings (ref: Article 28 – Area Meetings).
- Be able to represent members' views in a fair and balanced manner at local, regional and national level.
- Ability to work collaboratively with other volunteers.
- If you have a conflict of interest whilst representing the BMC in any aspect of your voluntary role, declare it to a BMC staff members ASAP.

### Benefits of volunteering for the BMC

- Contributing to the BMC's work representing climbers and walkers in the UK
- Becoming part of a community of committed volunteers, giving back to the mountaineering community
- Further opportunities to get involved with the BMC's work.
- An opportunity to develop your skills and learn new skills.

### Appendix 1: useful resources for BMC Area Secretary's

## Area Secretary Role and Responsibilities

- [Articles of Association](#)
- [Volunteering Handbook](#)
- [Guidance on Volunteer Responsibilities](#)
- [BMC's Organisational Structure](#)
- [Volunteer Expense Claim Form](#)

### Appendix 2: Expenses claims

- Area Secretaries can claim for travel expenses (mileage/public transport costs/parking fees etc) incurred whilst carrying out their role using the BMC's standard volunteer expenses claim form.
- Claims can also be made for venue hire and food provided at the meeting within the area budget provided.

### Staff Contact

The main staff contact for this role is Tony Ryan (Publications & Local Areas Coordinator)  
[tony@thebmc.co.uk](mailto:tony@thebmc.co.uk).