



BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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SOUTH WALES ORDINARY MEETING

Meeting held online
On Friday 22 May 2020

Minutes

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The chair opened the meeting. Apologies were received from Matt Woodfield and Will Kilner.

A quorum was present in accordance with Article 28.6.1 of the British Mountaineering Council's articles of association (the "Articles").

The minutes from the previous meeting held on 26 November 2019, a draft of which had been produced to the meeting were noted and no queries were raised.

2. BMC Response to Covid-19 and the exit strategy for hills and crags

- 2.1. Elfy Jones reported that the bottom line is "it's complicated!"
- 2.2. The legislation has more been stringent in Wales than England so far; easing of lockdown has not happened here and any travel to/from/within Wales is prohibited.
- 2.3. Regulations changed recently with no announcement to specifically outlaw exercise away from your "local area", but the Welsh Government have deliberately not specified what that is.
- 2.4. Expecting updates on 28 May; early indications are that it is likely to become a distance limit on exercise, but allowance to meet up outside the home.
- 2.5. There is lots of confusion between the Regulations, Government officials, and police officers!
- 2.6. Working with Outdoor Alliance on recovery plans.
- 2.7. Members questioned the influence we have regarding forms of exercise as the Welsh Government appear to be specifically allowing certain forms of exercise, possibly based on incorrect perception of risk and/or commercial considerations, which gave members cause for concern
- 2.8. Members raised questions around the scope of National Park closures – following identifying risk areas, BBNP have closed almost all CROW land, Snowdonia made some bizarre decisions. There are concerns that opening areas will open the floodgates, but Elfy pushing hard for exit strategy.
- 2.9. Dave Turnbull (BMC CEO) outlined that it is a daily rollercoaster for the BMC. There will be challenges from a financial perspective next year.
- 2.10. A question was asked about Quality Mountain Days with respect to Mountain Leader assessment; it was noted that Mountain Training (Cymru or England as appropriate) would be better-placed to answer concerns about qualifications.
- 2.11. Huw Jones followed up with some more detail on financial implications for the BMC.

3. Equity

- 3.1. Lynn Robinson (BMC President), standing in for James McHaffie (BMC Youth/Equity Officer) outlined the BMC's equity work split which is split into 5 areas.
- 3.2. The BMC has recently been assessed by Sport England, and achieved Intermediate Level of Equality in Sport.
- 3.3. Looking at implementing an action plan, had arranged walks for mental health, "Climbing for all" training for supporting disabilities, and a women in film festival.
- 3.4. Please look at the website and if anyone has any ideas or wants to get involved they would be very welcome.

4. June AGM considerations

- 4.1. Online voting company CES have emailed everyone today regarding the AGM, which will be virtual and slimmed down, covering procedural items only.
- 4.2. There are 3000 places available, so members will need to pre-register.
- 4.3. Members can still vote online via proxy if you can't/don't want to attend – so please engage!

5. Wales Access

- 5.1. New access volunteer for Gower – Stuart Burns – initial requirements will be to meet with National Trust's new warden regarding access and nesting birds.
- 5.2. There are potential issues at Wyndcliffe Quarry which is in Wales (but covered by the South West guidebook area) due to highway engineering works to stabilise the main road following previous landslips.
- 5.3. Members raised a question about Cefn Coed, where there has been no change.

6. Plynlimon Wind Turbine proposals

- 6.1. Huw Gilbert outlined concerns about the proposals for Lluest y Gwynt Wind Farm
- 6.2. Members raised points about Bronze Age cairns and other archaeological significances.
- 6.3. Elfyn pointed out objections must be based on points of fact not just because we don't like the idea.

7. Pembroke, Gower and South East Wales Access Reports

- 7.1. Pembroke – no major changes; new chough nests in Saddle Bay and also Gun Cliff – see updates on RAD. A check on a nest is needed at Morfa Bychan.
- 7.2. South East – Llandarcy has been fenced off, and appears to be a complete loss. Elfyn and Matt had previously met with a representative of the owners who was very keen to develop an agreement; however the new project manager has now confirmed the base of the cliff is sub-leased and planning permission for houses right up to the cliff base is in place.

8. National Council Report

- 8.1. Steve Quinton updated the meeting on what National Council is and what's been happening with governance reviews and BMC Cymru
- 8.2. Chris Stone introduced himself as Council-nominated Director and lead Director for membership engagement

8.3. Lynn Robinson noted that ODG was slower than wanted due to Covid-19 but a presentation on updates will take place at the AGM.

9. New guidebooks

9.1. Tim Hoddy outlined a new South Wales Rock guidebook is likely come out in October. It can be pre-ordered on Amazon, and the PDF samples looking good

9.2. A 2nd edition of Gower Rock is due soon

9.3. A “Gilwern” guide has been published by Great Western Rock, covering Gilwern “Main”, Gilwern East, and some crags in Llangattock and Clydach areas.

10. Any other business

10.1. A query had been raised regarding where the bolting policy is published. Following discussions by the Area Officers, Peter Sheppard, as Area Secretary, will condense the originally agreed policy and changes that have been voted on at Area Meetings since into one document and attach to minutes, and the consolidated document can be ratified at September meeting.

10.2. Condolences were expressed to the family of John Allen who was recently involved in a climbing accident.

10.3. The anniversary of Caradoc Jones becoming the first Welsh person to summit Everest would be happening tomorrow.

Results of the online poll:

1. Do you support the BMC raising opposition to the Lluest y Gwynt (Pumlumon) Wind Farm?



2. Have you been to an area meeting before?



3. Where are you at the moment?

