



BMC AREA TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The BMC is the representative body for the sport and recreation of climbing, mountaineering and hill walking (including ski-mountaineering, ice climbing, paraclimbing and indoor climbing). Areas, and Area meetings in particular, are run by volunteers and provide an opportunity for Members to discuss issues and influence decisions affecting climbers and walkers locally and nationally; and to get involved in the work of the BMC.
- 1.2. These Terms of Reference, together with Article 30 of the Articles of Association¹ (the Articles), set out how Areas and Area Meetings are to be governed. Any defined terms used are defined in the Articles or within these Terms of Reference.
- 1.3. The appendices to this document provide guidance and operational information only. They are not considered part of the Terms of Reference with respect to changes and approval and may be updated by Area Officers and BMC staff as appropriate without following the approval process at paragraph 11.
- 1.4. The intent of these Terms of Reference is to provide a framework within which Area Officers are free to operate their local meetings and Area engagements as they, and the Area Members, deem most appropriate.

2. AREAS

- 2.1. Subject to the powers of the Council to form, vary or disband any Area, the Areas shall be: North Wales/Cymru North; South Wales/Cymru South; the Lake District; North West; London and South East; North East; the Peak District; the Midlands; South West; and Yorkshire, or such alternative Areas as the Council shall from time to time decide.
- 2.2. The Areas are broadly based on unitary areas of England and Wales, but some unitary areas are split based on historic climbing practices (e.g. Sheffield is in Peak Area while the remainder of South Yorkshire is in Yorkshire Area). See [Appendix C](#) for Map of Areas.
- 2.3. Members in England are assigned to a geographic area based on their registered address postcode, or as set out under Article 30.3.1(b).
- 2.4. Members in Wales are self selecting on their alignment with the Cymru North or Cymru South Area.

3. OFFICERS AND REPRESENTATIVES

- 3.1. Each Area shall ensure that it facilitates elections of Area Officers, Area Representatives and any other Area roles as set out in Article 30.4.4(a). The role descriptions of these roles are at [Appendix A](#) and will be updated as necessary.
- 3.2. In addition, each Area may appoint any Member from the Area, who is willing and able, to a role which the Area believes is necessary, subject to the role responsibilities and any limitations being agreed by the relevant member of staff and related specialist committee (where appropriate).

¹ This refers to the draft V0.9 of the 2021 Articles. If the change to Article 30 is not approved at 2021 AGM then this document will not be extant or will need amending to reflect the version of Article 30 approved by members.

4. AREA MEETINGS

- 4.1. Area Meetings shall be convened for the purposes set out in Article 30.2.
- 4.2. Area Officers may invite organisations or individuals to speak at Area Meetings.
- 4.3. Area Officers may use whatever social media and other channels they deem appropriate and effective to facilitate discussion of local issues, such use to be conducted in accordance with applicable BMC policies.
- 4.4. Guidance is available at [Appendix B](#).

5. AREA MEETINGS ATTENDANCE

- 5.1. Attendance at Area Meetings is open to Members and non-Members.
- 5.2. Members may only vote at the Area Meeting for the Area in which they reside, or as set out in Article 30.3.1(b). Members attending another Area Meeting should inform the Area Officers on arrival of their attendance.
- 5.3. Each Affiliated Club or Associate Member (as defined in the Articles) shall be entitled to nominate a representative to attend any Area Meeting. Area Officers are encouraged to identify their local clubs involved in Mountaineering (as defined in the Articles) and ask them to send such a representative, even if the club is not affiliated or an Associate Member.
- 5.4. BMC volunteers and members of staff may attend Area Meetings to support Area Officers. The Board shall be entitled to attend all Area Meetings or be represented by someone nominated by them. Such person shall be entitled to speak at any such meeting but shall not be entitled to vote, unless they are also Area Members.

6. CONDUCT OF AREA MEETINGS

- 6.1. Each Area Meeting shall be subject to such rules for the conduct and procedure of meetings as set out in these Terms of Reference and the Council shall be the arbiter in any dispute concerning any matter relating to an Area or Area Meeting.
- 6.2. Area Meetings shall be either "**Ordinary Area Meetings**" or an "**Area AGM**". Not less than seven days' notice, specifying the time and date of the Area Meetings shall be given to all Area Members and the Council. Notices may be published by the BMC via its website.
- 6.3. Each Area shall hold an Area AGM at least once in every calendar year not later than fifteen months after the last preceding Area AGM and shall hold not less than four Area Meetings in every calendar year.
- 6.4. Subject to compliance with these Terms of Reference, Area Officers shall be entitled to convene "outreach" meetings at such locations within an Area as they deem appropriate to facilitate discussion of local issues and, so far as is applicable, such outreach meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of these Terms of Reference.
- 6.5. Area Officers are encouraged to hold Area Meetings in accessible venues, and to take into consideration guidance in [Appendix B](#).
- 6.6. Area Officers shall determine in relation to each Area Meeting the means of attendance and participation, including whether the persons entitled to attend and participate in the Area Meeting shall be enabled to do so:
 - 6.6.1. by physical meeting;
 - 6.6.2. by means of electronic facility or facilities;



6.6.3. by means of a hybrid meeting of physical and attendance via electronic facility; and/or

6.6.4. by simultaneous attendance and participation at a satellite meeting place or places.

6.7. The final draft agenda for each Area Meeting prepared by the Area Officers must be submitted to the BMC office not less than 15 Clear Days (as defined in Article 1.1) before the meeting.

6.8. The Board, Council or the BMC office shall notify the Area Officers of any items to be added to an Area Meeting agenda not less than 21 Clear Days before the meeting. Papers for such items will be provided in good time and, where necessary, made available to Members on the BMC's website.

7. PROCEEDINGS AT AREA MEETINGS

7.1. The quorum for any Area Meeting shall be not less than five Area Members present in person or by means of electronic facility or facilities.

7.2. Any Area Meeting convened as set out in 6.6 above, shall be duly constituted and its proceedings valid if the Area Chair (or if they are absent from the meeting in question, the person chairing the meeting) is satisfied that adequate facilities are available throughout the meeting to ensure that all those attending the meeting by all means (including the means of an electronic facility or facilities) are able to:

7.2.1. participate in the business for which the meeting has been convened;

7.2.2. hear all persons who speak at the meeting; and

7.2.3. be heard by all other persons attending and participating in the meeting.

7.3. Each Area Member present shall have one vote. For the avoidance of doubt, any representative of an Associate Member, Members of other Areas, or any non-Member in attendance shall not be entitled to vote.

7.4. Area Members are not entitled to appoint another person as their proxy to attend or vote on their behalf.

7.5. Area Officers, after consulting the attendees, have sole discretion in deciding the most suitable way for Area Members to vote on matters at Area Meetings.

7.6. Areas may make any reasonable request to the BMC to provide or procure electronic facilities such as surveys or voting for use by Area Members in order to maximise engagement of Area Members and/or to garner their views on a particular matter. The results may, at the Area Chair's absolute discretion, and subject to validation of the identity and qualification of the Area Member concerned, be accepted as equivalent to attending an Area Meeting in person.

7.7. The Area Chair shall preside as chair at every Area Meeting, or if the Area Chair shall not be present within fifteen minutes after the time appointed for holding the meeting, or is unable to preside, the Area Secretary shall chair the meeting. If the Area Secretary is unable or unwilling to chair such meeting, then the Area Members present shall select an Area Member to chair the meeting.

7.8. To ensure Area Meetings are effective, those in attendance will be expected to adhere to the following:

7.9. show respect by listening to what others have to say and keeping an open mind;

7.10. try to be concise and avoid monologues;

7.11. contribute positively to discussions;



- 7.12. draw attention to any potential conflicts of interest that may arise in the meeting;
- 7.13. observe the authority of the chair of the meeting, raising points and matters for discussion through the chair;
- 7.14. agree that any decision reached by a simple majority, must be accepted although a formal request to the chair of the meeting can be made to record a differing opinion;
- 7.15. challenge ideas not individuals or their opinions;
- 7.16. do not use inflammatory language or behaviour of any kind.

8. MINUTES AND REPORTS

- 8.1. The proceedings of each Area Meeting shall be recorded in minutes of the Area Meeting. The Area Secretary shall provide a copy of the minutes to the BMC office as soon as is reasonably practicable, and in any event within 21 days of the date of the meeting.
- 8.2. The BMC office shall ensure that the minutes of Area Meetings are published on the BMC's website in a timely manner.
- 8.3. At the Area AGM the chair of the meeting shall present a report on the activities carried on in that Area since the last preceding Area AGM and a copy of that report shall be made available to the Board within 21 days of the date of the meeting, to an address provided for that purpose.

9. REGULATIONS

- 9.1. An Area Meeting shall not be entitled to assume any of the powers and duties of the Board, the Council or to commit the BMC to any policy or action save to the extent (if any) that it be so authorised from time to time by the Board, by the BMC in General Meeting, or by the Council to the extent that it is authorised to do so.

10. ADMINISTRATION

- 10.1. Within the confines of the defined Purpose, and any financial constraints, an Area is free to run a meeting as they feel is most appropriate to gain the maximum participation and engagement of their Area Members. Guidance on the planning and conduct of Area Meetings is available at [Appendix B](#).
- 10.2. Financial support - An annual budget is allocated by the BMC Office, to support the cost of meeting room bookings, food and speaker costs. Expenses can be claimed using the form available at <https://www.thebmc.co.uk/volunteers>.

11. REVIEW AND CHANGES

- 11.1. These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed by the Board and the Council at least every 3 years.
- 11.2. Any changes to these Terms of Reference shall be agreed by 3 separate 'bodies':
 - 11.2.1. not less than 75% of the Area Officers, who should provide evidence of agreement from their Area Members
 - 11.2.2. the Council; and
 - 11.2.3. the Board.
- 11.3. In the event that changes cannot be agreed by all 3 bodies, the Members shall agree the changes through a special resolution at the next scheduled AGM.

Appendix A - Area Officers & Post Holders; Role Descriptions and Guidance

A. 1 Area Chair

The Area Chair is an extremely important position within the BMC. Together with the Area Secretary it is the Area Chair who makes the Area 'tick'. He or she will need to work closely with other volunteers in the Area and should liaise with BMC office staff to ensure the Area receives suitable support.

A.1.1 What is expected of the Area Chair?

The main roles of the Area Chair are to:

- be an advocate for the BMC. With regard 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 30 – Areas);
- be able to represent members' views in a fair and balanced manner at local, regional and national level in support of Area Representatives as necessary;
- ideally have some experience in chairing meetings;
- keep well informed about Area activities and meeting agendas;
- be unbiased, impartial and diplomatic; to get the best out of others; and
- be able to 'keep the peace' during times of disagreement or unrest.

A.1.2 Specific responsibilities of the Area Chair

- dealing with Area administration in a timely manner i.e. agreeing agendas, briefing papers, minutes and responding to correspondence;
- producing a report of Area activity for inclusion in the BMC Annual Report;
- welcoming newcomers to Area Meetings and making any necessary introductions;
- listening to different points of view and summarising the key aspects of discussions;
- ensuring that Area Meetings run smoothly; the Area Chair should be 'fair but firm' – people should be allowed to speak but repetition and time wasting should be minimized;
- developing consensus and determining when votes are required on agenda items;
- taking a lead on difficult or contentious issues; and
- ensuring good time-keeping to enable appropriate discussion on all agenda items.

A.1.3 Role Description



A. 2 Area Secretary

The Area Secretary is another very important role within the Area. Secretaries should be good communicators who are well organised and reliable.

A.2.1 Specific responsibilities of the Secretary

The main roles of the Area Secretary are to:

- arrange the meeting venues in accordance with the agreed schedule;
- work with the BMC office to publicise and promote Area Meetings;
- produce agendas (in discussion with the Chair) and send them to the BMC office (Tony Ryan) for posting on the BMC Local Areas site at least 15 clear days before the meeting date;
- arrange the circulation of reports / discussion papers to support agenda items;
- provide an attendance sheet for meeting attendees to sign – see [B.7](#) for a template;
- 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 21 days of the meeting having taken place;
- help ensure that meeting action points are followed up; and

- deal with any necessary administration and correspondence between meetings.

A.2.2 Role Description



A. 3 Area Representatives on Council

Each Area may (and is encouraged to) elect 2 Councillors to sit as their Area Representatives on the Members' Council (whose role is defined in Article 19). This means that some of the duties can be shared between them, however this will require them to work closely together to decide who is doing what at any given time.

The Council procedures are defined in Article 18 and the Council Terms of Reference. The main responsibilities of all councillors are covered in section 1 of the role descriptions document (see link in A.3.2).

A.3.1 Guidance for Areas Representatives on National Council:

Different Areas have different ways of working, but in general Area Representatives are expected to:

- attend as many of the regular Area meetings as possible (typically 4-5 per year);
- engage with local Members at Area meetings to encourage representation of their views;
- consult with their Area on local issues to report to the Members' Council. These could include:
 - local issues which could have wider interest/impact e.g. access problems at a nationally significant crag; problems with a locally run youth competition which could be affecting other Areas
 - local issues which aren't of national interest but with which the Area needs assistance from the Members' Council or one of the Specialist Committees
- report to Area Members on all relevant Members' Council/Board activities - this may be as a verbal or written report as requested by the Area;
- in advance of the meetings liaise with the Area Chair & Secretary about any information or papers from the Members' Council or Board that need to be communicated to the Area Members, so that these can be added to the meeting agenda, and they can familiarise themselves with the material;
- when required present such information/papers to Members at the meeting, answer questions (or undertake to find out the answers) and gather any feedback as necessary; and
- after each Area meeting provide a written report to Members' Council summarising relevant issues and feedback.

A.3.2 Role Description

Link will be inserted to the role description and associated Members' Council documents once they go live following approval at the 2021 AGM.

A. 4 Access Representatives

Voluntary Access Representatives are well established within the BMC and they play a vital role in our work with landowners and conservation bodies.

A.4.1 Guidance for Areas:

- It is up to each BMC Area to decide upon how many Access Representatives are required and which geographical areas they cover.
- Access Representatives are appointed and re-appointed at Area AGMs; there is no time limit for how long an Access Representative may serve. Experience has shown that continuity in this role can be a good thing.
- It is important that Access Representatives attend Area Meetings whenever possible; local access issues are the main point of debate at many Area Meetings.

A.4.2 The role of the Access Representative is to:

- Liaise with landowners, conservation bodies, National Park Authorities and others to maintain and improve access for climbers and walkers.
- Work closely with the BMC Access & Conservation staff and members of the Access, Conservation & Environment Group (ACEG).
- Negotiate and review any seasonal restrictions (e.g. nesting birds).
- Provide information for Summit magazine, the Regional Access Database (RAD) and the wider outdoor media.
- Attend site meetings as appropriate and identify any site information needs (e.g. signage).

A.4.3 Role Description



Access Rep Role
Description.docx

A. 5 Area Clubs Co-ordinator

The BMC Clubs Committee provides a forum for the discussion of all matters of concern to BMC Affiliated Clubs and each Area can appoint a representative to the committee. Area Representatives on the Clubs Committee are appointed annually at Area AGMs and all should have relevant experience of club organisation.

A.5.1 The role of the Clubs Co-ordination is to:

- build relationships with local clubs in their area;
- advise clubs on meeting their development goals and link them with the support they need;
- facilitate links and information sharing between clubs;
- connect clubs with opportunities to involve themselves with local and national initiatives;
- gather club thoughts & opinions, and identify club needs to influence BMC Strategy; and
- act as a visible point of contact and representative for clubs in their area.

A.5.2 Role description

This role description is currently being updated and will be inserted in due course once approved.

A. 6 Area Youth Reps/Area Youth Co-ordinators

These volunteers support and / or co-ordinate the BMC's work with young people across England and Wales.

A.6.1 The role of the Youth Reps and AYC's is to:

- organise and support BMC local events for young people, e.g. regional rounds of the BMC Youth Climbing Series;
- consult with the BMC Office on child protection issues and pass on any specific concerns to the responsible BMC Officer; be familiar with the BMC Child Protection Policy and attend necessary training courses as specified by the BMC; and
- report to the Area Meeting and/or inform Area Officers about youth related activities and events.

Volunteers in these roles should be experienced climbers, hill walkers or mountaineers with experience of working with young people. Volunteers are invited to participate in the BMC Training & Youth Committee and are required to complete a DBS check.

A.6.2 Role Description

The role descriptions for these roles are currently being updated and will be inserted in due course once approved.

A.7 Climbing Walls Representative

BMC Areas may choose to appoint a Climbing Wall Representative to liaise with climbing walls and wall users and to refer any relevant issues to the Area. Amongst other things, the Climbing Walls Representative can take responsibility for ensuring the display of BMC literature at climbing walls.

A.7.1 The role of the Climbing Wall Representative is to:

- promote membership of the BMC to those who participate in indoor climbing;
- provide and encourage the display of appropriate BMC literature (e.g health & safety notices, skills & techniques and product recall information) at climbing centres either by delivering printed materials or sending documents electronically;
- liaising with the BMC office to obtain appropriate literature and information on current campaigns;
- provide and encourage the display of literature promoting local Area Meetings provided by Area Chair or Secretary;
- act as a focus for users of indoor climbing centers in the area, helping them to find the right BMC staff or volunteers to assist them with their concerns or requests;
- communicate developments coming from the BMC Training, Youth & Walls Committee back to the area and relay opinions on priorities and issues from the area back to the Training, Youth & Walls Committee; and
- support the work of Area Youth Coordinators in relation to events held at local indoor climbing centres.

A.7.2 Role description

This role description is currently being updated and will be inserted in due course once approved.

A.8 Locally appointed Roles

In line with Article 30.4.4. b) and [3.2](#) in the Terms of Reference, Areas may appoint Area Members to additional roles that are deemed necessary locally. Where Areas wish to appoint such an individual they should clearly define a role description and agree that role description with the BMC office.

Note: The intent of gaining CEO approval is twofold:

1. To ensure that the BMC Office are aware of the role and individual from a PR and operational perspective.
2. To allow the CEO and Council to assess whether the role would be beneficial being adopted across other Areas.

A.8.1 Current locally appointed roles

Area Social Media Rep



Appendix B – Planning Guidance

B.1 Planning & running Area Meetings

The timing and business of Area Meetings is closely linked with Council meetings. Council meets at least four times a year and the Area Meetings should take place 2-3 weeks prior to the Council meetings, to allow Areas to discuss Council agenda items.

As a rule of thumb the following approach to organising Area Meetings is suggested:

- Find a venue (e.g. pub function/meeting room) with a suitable capacity. The venue should be free from interruptions and distractions, and accessible to all members. Some Areas like to hold their meetings at different locations throughout the year.
- Agree meeting dates / times through discussion at Area Meetings. Plan on having four Area Meetings per year. Schedule your meetings for 1-3 weeks before the Council meeting dates.
- Allow c.3 hours (total) per meeting to include 30 minutes set-up / arrival time, a 1-2 hour meeting and 15-30 minutes for food.
- Arrange food (chips / simple buffet); the BMC will cover reasonable costs.
- Arrange a speaker / presentation when possible, e.g. a local club talking about a recent trip, a luminary talking about their climbing life or hillwalking experiences (see [B.4.3](#)).
- Each Area holds an Annual General Meeting (usually the last meeting of the calendar year) at which elections for the Chair, Secretary, Council Representatives and other post holders and representatives takes place.

B.2 Suggested timeline for Chair & Secretary:

- Once a year: decide on dates and book venue(s). Your end of year Area AGM is probably the best meeting at which to decide dates for the following year. Set your Area Meeting dates for 2-3 weeks before the Council meeting dates, to allow for discussion of Council issues and reporting back to National Council.
- Notify the BMC office (Tony Ryan) of your meeting dates for the year ahead, so that they can be added to the [BMC Local Areas site](#).
- 3 months before meeting: identify speaker and advise office if the presence of a specific member of BMC staff (see [B.3](#)) is requested.
- 2 months before: re-confirm room booking and determine facilities required (e.g. projector, extension leads). Determine how / when the venue, food and speaker expenses are to be paid.
- 1 month before: produce agenda, and send to the BMC office (Tony Ryan), who will post it on the BMC Local Areas site and publicise the meeting with support from the office; see [B.5](#) for a sample agenda.
- Hold meeting. Keep a record of meeting attendees – see [B.7](#) for an attendance record template.
- Claim back legitimate meeting expenses from the BMC (note: Areas are free to decide precisely how they allocate their annual meeting budget).
- Within 21 days of Area Meeting: write up meeting minutes (note form) and send to the BMC office (Tony Ryan), who will post them on the BMC Local Areas site. See [B.6](#) for a meeting minutes template or refer to the BMC website.

B.3 BMC staff support & attendance

There is a commitment from the BMC Office to send a relevant member of staff to all Area Meetings. If a particular Officer (e.g. one of the A&C Officers) is requested to attend a particular meeting the office will endeavour to facilitate this. It should be noted that despite our best efforts, there may be occasions when it is not possible to identify an Officer to attend an Area Meeting.

The BMC Office will also support the promotion of Area Meetings via the BMC website, the monthly email newsletter and area-specific bulk emails in consultation with Area Secretaries (see 2.6 b. Promotion & publicity).

B. 4 Practical considerations for meetings

B.4.1 Meeting venues and locations

Venues should be accessible (i.e. good public transport and parking, disabled access), big enough, quiet and free of interruptions. Projectors are increasingly used and useful, and can be provided by the BMC office if they are not available at the venue. Provide good quality complimentary food (e.g. chips and sandwiches); the BMC local area meetings budget will cover reasonable food costs. Using locations with good public transport supports members in reducing their carbon footprint; holding meetings in places only accessible by car could disenfranchise younger members.

Examples of locations currently used are pub function rooms, climbing walls, sports club facilities, youth hostels and outdoor shops. Please consider that some people might be put off by a pub environment, and trying an alternative venue may open the meeting up to a wider audience; likewise using a climbing wall may put off people who don't usually frequent them.

Some areas like to hold their meetings at different locations throughout the year, while others tend to use one venue/location. Moving or rotating location can help if well advertised, and if to a location with large numbers of BMC members and good public transport, but also risks "turning off" existing attendees. Change location with care, on a trial basis, and be prepared to switch back. Alternating the days on which meetings take place can benefit members who have a regular commitment on a certain day.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, all BMC meetings (including Area Meetings) took place online using Zoom. Whilst this was done through necessity there are many advantages to retaining the use of virtual meetings including but not limited to; making them more accessible by eliminating traveling times and distance, less intimidating to newcomers and more environmentally friendly. It is appreciated thought that they don't however provide a suitable replacement for the social element experienced at a face-to-face meeting. Area Officers need to consider which type of meetings they would like to run that best suits the needs of their area. Further guidance can be found in [B.4.12](#).

B.4.2 Catering & room preparation

If you are providing food at the meeting advise the venue of your budget and aim for a 50/50 meat and vegetarian split. If you are offering entertainment, make sure your speaker has everything they need (laptop, projector, screen, speakers) well in advance. Do not assume that the venue will provide everything.

B.4.3 Guest speakers

Invite local activists with unusual / extensive experience, national figures from hill walking or climbing, or reps from groups we need to work with for access (e.g. RSPB, National Trust). Also reach out to our partner organisations for speakers. Aim to get a mix of different "topic" speakers who will widen the existing demographic base (e.g. women and hill walkers).

If no speaker can be arranged, it may be possible to hold a BMC TV screening; contact the BMC office to discuss this.

B.4.4 Voting

Area Officers will need to ensure that voting is seen to be fair and appropriate.

Area Officers must be aware that people may attend with multiple roles with different voting rights; such as being an Area Member and a member of staff or a representative of an Associate Member. In such cases it may be sensible to ensure both yourselves and the person is clear that they are voting as an Area Member and for themselves, NOT on behalf of an organisation. This could be done through a general statement to the meeting or with a private discussion with the individuals involved.

B.4.5 Promotion & publicity

There are several ways in which Area Meetings can be advertised. The office can support the promotion of meetings more effectively if you provide meeting information in good time. It is up to the Area Officers (Secretary & Chair), with support from the office, to arrange the necessary publicity. Generally speaking, the more vocal and visible you are, the more people will turn up for meetings. To advertise your meeting:

- The [BMC Community site](#) lists area meetings as individual events and is able to host meeting-related documents such as agendas, minutes and other papers.

- Please provide meeting information, including supporting documents (agenda, minutes of the previous meeting, discussion papers, etc.), to Tony Ryan (tony@thebmc.co.uk) for inclusion on the site; it can then be used to populate other platforms such as social media and email newsletters.
- The site can also be used to list and promote other BMC events organised by area volunteers such as festivals, hill walks and crag clean-ups.
- If you want to add content yourself, you will need to have a profile on the site, which you can create by becoming a registered user. Additionally, the office will need to give your profile permission to add content and upload documents. Contact Tony Ryan to obtain permission, and for advice on using the Local Areas site.
- Use the [Local Areas Forum on UKClimbing](#), and the [UKC Event Diary](#). One month before each meeting, the BMC office (Tony Ryan) will start a thread on the Local Areas Forum (name changed from BMC Areas Forum in January 2014) if one does not already exist, and upload meeting details to the UKC Event Diary. Utilise other relevant internet forums, such as the ['get involved: access, environment, BMC' forum](#) on UKBouldering.com and any with a specific regional focus.
- The office will use the BMC monthly email newsletter – see [April 2013 newsletter](#) for illustration – to publicise all upcoming Area Meetings. The newsletter is sent to all members for whom we have an email address (unless they have unsubscribed from it). The more information provided about the meeting on the BMC Local Areas site the better, as the newsletter article about [upcoming Area Meetings](#) will link to this information.
- Information for the next round of area meetings will also be publicised in each issue of Summit magazine.
- If you publish one, include information about the meeting time / date / venue / agenda / discussion topics in your own Area Newsletter. Send your newsletter to the office (Tony Ryan) and we will add it to the website; example: [Peak Area newsletter \(Feb 2013\)](#)
- The office will send an email to all members in a specific area 7-10 days before that area's next meeting, to publicise the date, venue and details of the meeting. It will be the responsibility of the Area officials to advise Tony Ryan of any specific information to be included in the email e.g. notification of key agenda items, speakers / entertainment, availability of food etc.
- If you have a particularly hot topic up for debate, ask the office to run this as a news story on the BMC website.
- Consider distributing a promotional poster to be put up in local climbing walls, etc. Blank 'Support your local area' posters, on which you can write meeting information, have been printed by the office for this purpose.
- Each area has been provided with their own Facebook Page, this should be used to promote area meetings as well as other activities taking place in the area and articles that will be of interest to members. It is up to the area officers who manages this and can be a combination of multiple people. The office will need to provide individuals with the appropriate permissions to post messages.
- In the days running up to a meeting, the office will tweet it on https://twitter.com/team_BMC

B.4.6 Digital engagement

Engagement with the wider (and especially younger) community is a key activity going forward. The BMC membership is biased towards older members. We need more young people to go to area meetings and engage in area activities. If elected area volunteers do not understand and regularly use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Messenger etc. they need to get a volunteer who does, and who can help the area be more visible on these channels. Areas should consider designating a 'social media co-ordinator' for this role, who might also be the area news contact (see 4.10. News circulation below). As a minimum, have an area Facebook page. Engage with key influencers in the area, as they can often help topics to "go viral".

All BMC areas have a Facebook page. If you need to give someone admin permissions to your page, please contact the BMC office; the office can also help you to maintain your page.

B.4.7 Meeting openness and inclusivity

Give a friendly welcome to new faces. Actively encourage non-BMC members to attend (as they often convert). Give good balance to all interest groups, including hill walkers, and encourage female attendees. For areas which do not have a hill walking rep, contact local hill walking groups to try to get



one – in fact, more than one helps to spread the load. Ensure that work done by volunteers in each area is mentioned in area meetings, with specific reports where appropriate.

Try to put some BMC branding up in the meeting room and encourage key volunteers to wear BMC branded clothing so that they are easily identifiable. If your meeting is not in an obvious location ask if you can put some signage up on the main entrance door, desk or bar making it obvious where it is. An A4 printed sign with a BMC logo and directions should suffice. If possible try to have someone available to greet newcomers and fill them in on how the meeting will work, as well as answer any questions.

B.4.8 Engagement with clubs and climbing walls

Strengthen links between local areas and clubs; identify all your local clubs, and ask local clubs to always send a rep. This should be part of the area clubs co-ordinator role. If your area contains club huts which would be convenient for, and are large enough for, an area meeting, consider asking clubs if they wish to host a meeting – a summer barbecue meet, for example. Areas need to consider how to engage with national clubs who have members in their region, perhaps through National Clubs reps on the clubs committee.

University clubs and local walls are a good feeder. Reach out to local university and further education hill walking and climbing clubs. Help to facilitate transition from student club to established club for students staying in the area after graduation; or from student club to individual membership.

B.4.9 Data Protection

Recent changes due to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) have meant that Area Chairs and Secretaries can no longer hold lists of email contacts for their area. All communications from area officers to area members via email are currently routed through BMC head office. These changes have caused frustration at areas, and imposed extra workload at head office, although one benefit of this change is that they now go to all area members.

In addition to sending regular area-specific emails to all members, head office also manages lists of 'engaged' members who have provided their email contact information via the online sign-up for local area emails, which can be used to send communications on behalf of area officers. To sign up, go to <http://bit.ly/bmc-areas>

Social media channels which do not require area volunteers to know individual contact details (local Facebook groups, Twitter etc.) can still be used by area volunteers.

B.4.10 News circulation

BMC head office needs to ensure that news (whether centrally originated or fed in from areas) is effectively communicated to local area members; local area reps need to be on the alert for BMC news, monitor committees etc. and make sure relevant news is fed to the centre for onward transmission to members, and effectively communicated at area meetings. Centrally originated news needs to cover core BMC activities including specialist committees, and relevant work by partners. Areas should consider designating a 'news contact' for their area (perhaps combined with social media role from [B.4.6](#) Digital engagement above).

B.4.11 Live streaming

Live streaming of area meetings has been mentioned, but at present we do not feel there is sufficient demand or interest to make this worthwhile for regular meetings. It may be worth considering for particular "hot topic" meetings, where there are more members interested than could fit in the usual venue. Live streaming of the "open forum" was used in the run-up to the 2018 AGM, so BMC head office can provide advice if this is contemplated.

B.4.12 Virtual Meetings

The use of web conferencing software (e.g. Zoom etc) has been implemented during the pandemic. Area Officers wishing to hold virtual meetings should speak to the office for further guidance and may find the following points useful when planning and running the meeting.

- As part of the opening introduction ensure all participants are aware of how to use the 'raise hand' and 'chat' function. Area Chairs should indicate their preferred communication method.

- Area Officers should if necessary, enlist the help of additional volunteers to help manage the questions being posted on the chat and bringing in participants who raise their hand.
- Meeting should be kept to around 90 minutes and the anticipated duration of the meeting should be included on the agenda and participants informed at the start. There may be other tasks for operating the meeting which it would be beneficial to share out between officers and reps.
- At the start, ask participants to change their display name to match their real name to aid with minute taking.
- Ensure anyone not speaking is muted. It may be helpful to have a volunteer monitoring this and muting participants who forget to mute themselves.
- Ensure all documents relating to the meeting are made available on the event listing on Communities prior to the meeting. It is also possible to share files during the meeting using the chat box.
- Ensure anyone presenting who is showing a document is a co-host so they can share their own screen and have control over it.
- Ensuring if a camera feed is put on spotlight it is removed once the person has stopped speaking.
- When sharing your screen ensure the document / presentation is full screen and where possible test in advance to make sure what you are sharing is readable to participants.
- Be mindful that it is likely there will be an increased number of participants joining who have not been to an area meeting before so it is important to add context to the meeting to ensure that new participants are not intimidated by a group of people who know each other.
- Officers may wish to consider using breakout room to allow discussions to take places in small group, but this should be used with caution to ensure, new participants in particular, are not intimidated or excluded.
- Where possible, try to include more interactive elements to the meeting.

The use of hybrid meetings is being considered and further guidance will be produced once a decision has been made following a review of their feasibility.

B.4.13 Cross-area communications

As well as communications within an area, chairs, secretaries and other area volunteers should also consider “horizontal” communication between areas where there are topics of common interest, opportunities to share best practice, methodologies, resources, guest speaker recommendations etc. Area Council reps are well placed to advise here, since reports from all areas are tabled at Members’ Council meetings.

B.4.14 Engagement beyond area meetings

Area meetings are very important, but should be seen as a key, but not the only, route for engaging with the wider area hill walking, climbing and mountaineering community. Areas need to find the most appropriate ways to most effectively engage with all members in their area, not just meeting attendees. Especially we need to engage with the people who are active in areas, but who don’t go to meetings. We need all area members to feel informed, valued and consulted.

B. 5 Sample Agenda



Template area AGM
agenda.docx



Template area
ordinary meeting age

B. 6 Sample Minutes



Template area AGM
minutes.docx



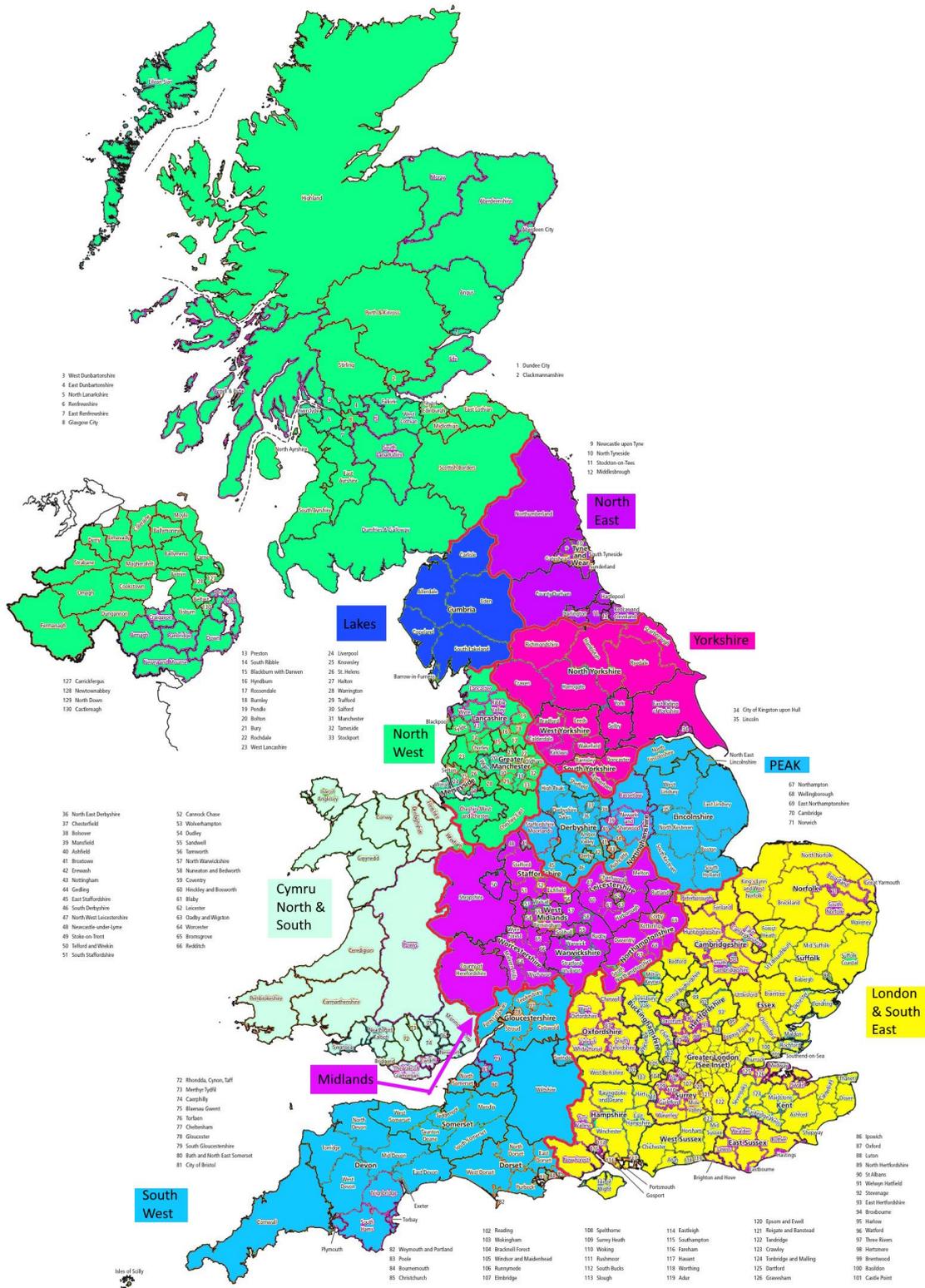
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B. 7 Attendance Record Template



Template area
attendance record.do

Appendix C – Areas Map



Appendix D – Change Log

