

Craven Mountaineering Club

Committee Meeting 226- 17 March 2023 – Held on Zoom

MINUTES and POST-MEETING COMMENTS at the end.

8 participants: Steve Webb, Ian Daws, Andy Barton, James Crawshaw, David Canning, Dick Winslow, Michael Faulkner, Jon Lury.

Purpose of Meeting: To discuss the future CMC objectives and how to achieve them (In response to the slow decline of the CMC in recent years and following the AGM of 07 March 2023 at which there was general agreement from members that we should try to revitalise the CMC).

Ian and Steve had gathered questions from several other members and presented 4 powerpoint slides (see attached). **Post meeting:** ID created a 5th powerpoint slide “Summary of CMC way forward” (see attached). JL and ID discussed further details offline which are incorporated below.

1. **Purpose of CMC** is to maintain an active community that supports member’s pursuit of their mountaineering interests. All present agreed on this.

2. **Objectives of CMC:**
 - a. To give members access to calendar of committee run social and active events. All present agreed on this.
 - b. To give members access to inclusive member-proposed meets & clear guidance on how to propose/coordinate meets. All present agreed on this.
 - c. To give members access to a training **framework is framework the right word, should we say “a list of suggestions for training methods”?** from basic mountain to technical skills from qualified providers. All present agreed that we want to encourage less experienced people to join the club and give them some help and guidance about how to get experience and skills.
 - d. To support the BMC. All present agreed that BMC affiliation is desirable.
 - e. To attract new members. We need more members in order to make the club sustainable and make meets better attended (the current 48 members is too low). All agreed on this.

3. Next Steps towards achieving objectives:

	Objective / Problem to be solved	ACTIONS
1	Need for clear objectives.	
	Needed so that the Cttee and members know what we stand for and what members are voting for, and to encourage members to participate and new members to join.	Draft Objectives are above – All: we need final approval on the draft objectives. Then to communicate simplified list of final objectives to members.
2	Elect new Chairperson.	
	We need a new Chairperson in order to push through changes and new strategy. Must be given the power to delegate tasks. But the CMC must still be democratic.	Elect or appoint a new Chair ASAP. Get Volunteers. All Last year Roy resigned as chair and SteveB (vice chair) became acting chair for the year. The constitution https://www.cravenmc.co.uk/constitution/ is not very

		specific, but we maybe do not need an election if an existing cttee member becomes acting chair. All: comments?
3	Restructuring of the Committee.	
3.1	Remove the feeling that the cttee is putting members off participating or volunteering to coordinate meets. There is a danger that for all of us it is easier to go climbing with non-CMC friends rather than go on a CMC meet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Get BMC advice RE Liability and DOC requirements and is a club meet organised w/i 24h covered by the BMC insurance. (JL is waiting for their answer). b. Create environment which is welcoming, friendly, inclusive and supportive of members proposing meets. All: This is covered in other sections, but basically increased communication, social media, promotion of meets, social meets. c. Cttee members to try to join CMC meets as much as possible to encourage members to participate. All d. Create expectation that Cttee is less involved. This is covered 4, 5, 6 and 7. Get members to propose meets. Increased communication to spread good vibes and motivation. e. If necessary, Change club constitution and Cttee role descriptions. See below.
3.2	Remove the feeling that the cttee/bureaucracy is putting people off joining the CMC.	<p>As for 3.2.b – create environment which is welcoming / inclusive / supportive of new members. De-mystify or remove the bureaucracy. All: Comments? This is covered in other sections. Make joining as easy as possible. Does it need any changes? All: who volunteers to review the joining form and joining process? AndyB: please post the joining form onto the website (I couldnt find it).</p>
3.3	Define what meets are proposed by cttee and what meets are proposed by members.	All: Do we need a policy/guidance document and who volunteers to draft it? I might be able to have a crack at it because it overlaps with a lot of the BMC/DoC stuff.
3.4	Define new Cttee structure including Cttee roles and what can be delegated to members. Decrease the workload of the Cttee and decrease the number of Cttee members?	JL to review current cttee roles, draft a proposal and circulate to cttee for review.
4	Increase motivation of members	
	Current atmosphere of CMC is too stuffy or too “official”/Cttee-driven.	As for 3 – create environment which is welcoming / inclusive / supportive of members. Reduce role of cttee if possible. Increase motivation and “good vibes”. Create expectation that members will “drive” meets.

	Are less experienced members scared off?	As for 7. Understand DOC/liability responsibilities, then define CMC policy on less experienced members, then communicate it to members,. JL to get BMC advice then circulate a draft for review.
	Have mixture of Cttee scheduled and member-proposed meets and socials in calendar.	As for 3.3.
	Keep social media up to date and attractive. "shop window".	AB/SW have put schedule of meets onto website and FB. DW and MF to add Hut/multi-day meets. David to take over communication. Cttee and members to give meet details, meet reports and pictures to David.
	"buddy" system proposed by AB.	AB is organising for Cttee members to each take a group of 5/6 members and call them to encourage them to participate.
5	Encourage/Remove barriers to members coordinating meets.	
	Understand responsibilities of Duty of Care (DOC) and liability.	JL waiting for BMC response.
	Definition of a meet (only relevant because of BMC Combined Liability Insurance (CLI, aka 3rdparty liability insurance) for prospective members).	JL waiting for BMC response.
	Create expectation by members that they coordinate or propose meets.	As for 3.
	Remove feeling that Cttee is a barrier	As for 3.
	CMC primary activities of Walking / climbing / mountaineering are covered by BMC CLI – members are insured both on club meets and as an individual. For Secondary activities (e.g. cycling, mountain biking, canoeing, kayaking, caving, potholing) club members are covered for these activities but in the context of club meets only. https://www.howdengroup.com/uk-en/british-mountaineering-council/documents	JL to circulate a summary, and website links, to all members. All:
	Hut meets/Multiday meets. The future of hut meets is evolving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. DW and others are working on several hut meets. b. Recent multi day meets organised on WA have used different accommodation rather than the traditional club huts. 	<p>Actions are underway.</p> <p>No action needed.</p>

6	Increase the number of CMC members and attract younger members.	
	Increase social media presence (website and FB).	David is planning a communication strategy. Timeframe cannot be set until club overall strategy is clear.
	Keep social media up to date and interesting "shop window". Including future meets and reports/pictures of past meets.	ALL: as above, but make AndyB and David aware of anything which needs to be promoted via the CMC website or FB.
	Create a schedule of CMC meets.	For Cttee-proposed meets AB and SW have created a schedule and posted it on website and FB. For Member-proposed meets – as for 3 and 4 (encourage members to go for it and remove obstacles).
7	Supporting less experienced members:	We are not qualified instructors, so how do we help other members to gain experience?
	BMC advice on DOC / Liability. https://www.howdengroup.com/uk-en/british-mountaineering-council/documents	Jon waiting for response from BMC. Jon to forward links about BMC training for club Cttees and members. The BMC website https://www.thebmc.co.uk/qualifications-explained says "Individual BMC members, and members of a BMC affiliated club, are covered by the BMC Combined Liability insurance. Such insurance is designed for recreational walkers and climbers, who may sometimes share their knowledge with less experienced mountain users." Also https://www.thebmc.co.uk/faqs/all/Clubs#faq-65 : "Do I need to be qualified to teach people climbing in a club?: Definitely not. BMC clubs have always operated with more experienced members providing guidance to those less experienced. Some clubs do organise meet days for novices to provide concentrated training, whereas in other clubs this sharing of guidance happens on a more ad-hoc basis." And "Am I insured to teach people climbing?: The BMC Combined Liability insurance is designed to support more experienced members of clubs passing on the benefits of their knowledge and experience to novice or less experienced club members. It covers members when undertaking the "normal club activities" of hill walking, climbing and mountaineering. For example this would cover a club member walking in the Lakes and helping other club members with their map reading. It would also cover club members leading a novice training meet. The cover does not extend to situations where payment is received, as that would be viewed as acting as a professional."
	Define club policy about minimum skills for	All: comments? Maybe our joining form already

	participation in meets (e.g. for a climbing meet - must be able to belay safely?), or not?	covers this? If needed, who volunteers to review/draft this?
	Make a list of training providers to recommend to members (e.g. climbing wall belay courses).	All: comments? If needed, who volunteers to draft this?
	Make it a CMC policy that members are expected/encouraged to share experience with less experienced members?	All: comments? If needed, we can roll this out as part of our general increased communication. We could also put a statement on the website/FB.
	Investigate feasibility of training by qualified people e.g. red cross, MIC/MIA instructors, BMC.	Details of BMC training resources are at https://www.thebmc.co.uk/essential-club-know-how All: comments? For the BMC JL can forward the link to members. All: For other training providers, any volunteers to f/u?
8	BMC affiliation	BMC affiliation is desirable but not essential.
	Main benefits are: "Combined Liability Insurance (CLI)" aka 3 rd party liability insurance; gear shop discounts; BMC good works such as crag access. See https://www.thebmc.co.uk/how-to-affiliate-register-club-with-bmc	Need to remind membership of these. JL to communicate to members when the BMC respond about the CLI and DoC.
	The only downsides I can think of are i) cost to members (~23 p.a.);	Now that I have located the BMC advice about CLI that I pasted above, I think the issues about CLI and associated bureaucracy are mostly resolved and will hopefully stop being a hindrance. The key thing is to have this knowledge so that we don't slip back into confusion and can answer members' questions.. All: comments?
	ii) workload of annual BMC membership renewals and payments, plus new members during the year (JL: the workload is not too onerous);	
	iii) does the bureaucracy caused by BMC affiliation and the insurance issues become too confusing and become a hindrance?	
9	Timescale for changes.	
	Most Cttee members thought the changes would require several months. "an evolution, not a revolution". DC suggested up to 2 years for a total embedding/change of mindset. ID felt that the changes could be made very quickly.	I think perhaps the perceived difference of opinions here is about how long it will take for the procedural changes to be made (which can be done reasonably quickly), and the time for changes/new mindset to "embed" and become the new normal (which will take longer). All: aim to implement procedural changes and f/u on actions listed above ASAP, then monitor the timeframe and we must review at cttee meetings.
	Date for CMC F2F/EGM meeting.	All agreed that we need to finalise our objectives and Strategy before we set a date for the members F2F/EGM meeting. JL: to update members with progress and condensed minutes of AGM.

POST-MEETING COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM ANDY BARTON, STEVE WEBB, STEVE BOY, IAN DAWS AND DAVID COLLIER.

From: Andy Barton <andypbarton@hotmail.com> Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2023 11:37 AM

Hi all, yes I agree it was gruelling and I'm sure we didn't achieve the outcome at the meeting we were hoping for. Thank you very much for your attempts to summarise this in the minutes Jon, I do have a load of comments but hope that they are not viewed as criticisms but constructive. I also want us to take a deep breath and relax, I believe that the club has already started to move forward and cut through the bureaucracy that encumbered committees in former years.

Right! To the matter in hand so these comments relate to the Draft list of objectives/strategy (minutes of cttee mtng 17Mar2023 so you'll need them to hand.

I hadn't seen the meeting purpose as stated and underlined. I agree that there has been a steady fall in CMC membership in recent years and perhaps "revitalise" is the right word, but I saw the main purpose was to reengage the existing membership in addition to growing the membership.

Item 1. I agree with the Purpose of CMC.

Item 2. a. ...to give members access to social and active events , I didn't mean to use the term "committee run".

b. ...Okay

c. ...We already signpost training following any shortcomings highlighted on the prospective application form. I believe that this in itself can put prospective members off and while I don't think framework is the correct term I feel that a set of course referrals available on the website that I could provide the link to would be great. It would need regular review which is what I do should a prospect be short on skills.

e. While I do agree that 48 members seems too low, if they all engaged in activities with the club it would seem plenty. So long as we have enough to cover the club costs.

Item 3. Objectives (Actions)

1. With the concise Purpose in 1 above do we need anything more?

2. Don't like the phrase 'push through changes'. The chair should at the most 'guide the new strategy' or 'direct...We would not need to go to the membership if the chair comes from within the current elected committee would we?

3. 1.The reason that it is 'easier to go climbing with a mate' is that the set day and times or venues don't suit them. Also there is no incentive for them to post on WhatsApp and then there's the issue of 'Guests' on meets if their mate is not in the CMC.

a. Relevant for prospects

b. Yes

c. Let's get Buddying

3. 2. Do we need changes. Buddying. Here's the Joining Form <https://www.cravenmc.co.uk/apply-to-join>

4. The club isn't too stuffy, in fact I have received quite a few positive comments relating to what's going on via the WhatsApp, it's the committee that's too stuffy. Being a committee member should not be a burden which we are in danger of doing as you'll agree Jon. There is an expectation amongst members that the committee will create all the meets which we need to change.

5. Less experienced members need a BUDDY.

PS Dave C (Media photos link <https://www.cravenmc.co.uk/wp-admin/upload.php>)

Let's not scare off members with too much bumf re insurance and definitions, it is for the committee to ensure that these activities, should they take place as part of a club meet are covered.

6. Okay

7. 'Offer or Provide Experience' Training is a term I would try to avoid.

We don't specify a minimum level of competence or experience on the application form.

8. The £23 is refunded to many members with dual club status, for others then how much of a downside is it?

The BMC CLI is only confusing to those who bother to try and find out I guess so I agree.

9. I think much of this can be done right now and does not need an EGM or indeed two years.

Phew, that's it folks. Please don't chuck me out of the club, I really enjoy being part of a great group of guys 'in the main 😊

Andy

From: Steve Boy <steve.boy@live.com> Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2023 3:19 PM

Hi All,

Quite a long one from me - please don't feel everyone has to give the same amount of feedback/repeat sentiments. I felt it was important to give a full view from the Chair.

Thanks to those who were on the meeting. It seems like we made a good start, maybe with a few stumbles but hey - first meeting of a new group and an exciting task on our hands, a few stumbles are ok.

Also (and yes I really mean this) totally happy for feedback from you all as to my “chairing” - feel free to email/call me any time. I definitely see my role as steering/nudging/facilitating/teasing things out, rather than dictating or forcing my own vision. If I’m straying from my quest, please tell me.

I the summary Ian/David put together feels like a good representation of views from around the club that have been buzzing round the last few weeks, and longer for the committee.

2A I agree with Andy that removing the word committee will foster a more crowd-sourced-from within the club feeling. Who knows - maybe next years programme will come from a non cttee member.

2C As a club I believe we should be promoting training (fine not using the word training) beyond just being aware of shortfalls on people’s application forms, I know there’s worry about us taking to much responsibility but it really doesn’t have to be that complicated. An easy to access ref section of the website with links/local companies (maybe with some discounts, like we get at the walls) and pointing to relevant articles is fine.

2E I think we all agree on the need for balancing catering to current members/attracting new ones. However I feel a club like ours’ place in the community should keep a high level objective of ALWAYS increasing the membership, though spreading the good climbing vibes.

3.1 I’m happy with the objectives, and the couple of small tweaks that’ve been suggested. They’re a great starting block - remember we can always evolve them.

3.2 Yes - just to be clear I would like to step down as soon as possible in reality, however at a suitable time, and fine for that to be lead by the committee/our progress. I think with the team and input we have now this shouldn’t effect things, and I don’t want to jump ship.

3.3

3.3.1 Action B really is the core one of this for me - along with Ian’s recent comments about how simply getting people together is the best way. I think that’s totally right! And we’ve seen it build buzz in the club pretty remarkably given the short time I’d say.

3.3.2 I don’t think we need to make joining any ‘easier’, my joining process was certainly in line with what I’d expected.

3.3.3 I’ve been thinking this over, and think it’d be helpful (at some stage) to define the ‘admin’ side of committee roles (the vital, day to day forms, compliance, safeguarding and PROGRAMMES) and then the more holistic stuff (being at meets/socials, generally promoting the buzz, being available for new members to chat through stuff) - I think this point will feed into that.

3.3.4 I think a little piece of work on the above will be useful for this point too.

4 Sorry to disagree Andy but I feel the club can be a little stuffy at times. There’s no denying our main demographic is older white male, and whilst I am NOT suggesting we need to actively force that to change, I believe our place in the community is to be OPEN to that changing/evolving. Again, I believe we can pretty easily strike balance between serving current members but I’d like us to keep one eye on making sure we’ve always got the interests of hypothetical new members in our sights.

I like the idea of a buddy system - when I joined I knew that'd be the best way to progress my climbing and I collared Rob/Dave Wynn for the task. I was fine doing this myself but it's be great for us to actually make this part of our culture.

5 We need to change our own thoughts on this insurance stuff:

We are a club that is affiliated, therefore we should make the latest BMC relevant info easily accessible to all our members.

We should be doing this with a view of making members MORE confident getting out.

6 Yep - as above this should be in our general ethos. Not forced, but represented.

7 As I've said before we do need to foster this in the club. I'd like to think that the increase in engagement and getting people together more face to face (re Ian's comments and as we've already seen at the socials) this will happen naturally. MAYBE we could add in some buddying for new members - it would have been helpful for me when I joined had I not perhaps met the guys I did and collared them. I'd say most experienced climbers in the club don't mind being collared by the right sort of mentoree - but maybe need a little push (call for mentors or similar) to initiate this.

8 Agree with your comments Jon.

9 Let's be kind to ourselves, and let this play out a little more. I can sense we're keen to evoke progress to the members but we're making good steps and doing quality work i think.

That's all from me folks.

From: iandaws@btinternet.com <iandaws@btinternet.com> Sent: Sunday, March 26, 2023 2:14 PM

Morning all, I'm just catching up on admin so firstly a couple of apologies. I'm an unlikely for the next Zoom committee meeting as will be in Chx, but please include me on the Zoom invite just incase. Also apologies for the relatively unstructured .ppt at the last meet. It was a bit unfinished and really was meant as a discussion rather than presentation document, hopefully I think the summary produced afterwards is clearer.

So on the basis I'm not at the committee meeting I'd like the following to represent my views on that summary which can broadly be read across the JonL's objectives;

Purpose; Think we all fundamentally agree on the club's purpose...which is good and we can move on whilst keeping that as a reference.

Benefit to Member; Generally all agree however there are differences of opinions on the amount of training we should offer. I'm absolutely of the view we should have some sort of network of

providers both for novices and people who wish to try different facets of our common interest. I've spoken to a couple of non-club mates who are qualified and are active with clubs on similar things. Likewise one is an non-local MRT member and their team provide general awareness to interested groups in things like rescue protocol/first aid etc...i.e. applicable to us all and we should all be refreshed on.

How do we achieve;

Structure committee; I still believe this should be done sooner rather than later and crucially reflect how we wish to operate going forward. I note this view is not that of the majority.

Update membership collateral; I think JonL's mail out about insurance is a great start on this, we may need to add on duty of care etc as part of website/meets guidance refresh.

Support committee run events; I think AndyB's published calendar of events is great and forms the backbone of the club. We all need to support these and I do think SteveW's "climber running walking meets" approach is a great example to us all. These are the prime face to face opportunities we get to motivate all to how we want to operate and are a far better medium than the "phone a friend" approach.

Provide clear guidelines on promoting events; I'm happy to have a crack at this after easter by building on the existing walking guidelines, possibly with JonL to factor in the BMC aspect?

Create training framework with providers; Reading some of the emails flying about there are differing views on this. I'm in favour of SteveP's suggestion for basic belaying skills at a wall, and would like the club to at least signpost skills development for those who wish it e.g. winter skills. This should be coupled with the meets guidelines so training and experience opportunities can knit together. I'd also like us to have access to basic emergency skill sets refreshment. I'm happy to work something up along with someone else after easter.

Update social media/website; think we all agree and DavidC's got this in hand.

My only other comment is in support of AndyB's comment about membership numbers. We should aim to have an inclusive active club of the 50 odd current members first. If we get the product right the membership will naturally grow through word of mouth and we can adapt accordingly.

BR

Ian

Steve Webb: 27March 2023:

Here are my (belated – please accept my apologies) comments to the minutes of the CMC committee meeting held on 17 March

1 Purpose of CMC

I have to disagree with everyone else (it appears). Whilst we are Craven Mountaineering Club and should remain so, I believe our purpose is to "maintain an active community that supports members' pursuit of their mountaineering, climbing and walking interests".

Whilst there is strong overlap, I believe each are distinct and (more importantly) I think that many members do not regard that they go 'mountaineering'. This will likely be especially true for new members.

2 Objectives of CMC

We have not agreed why we're defining objectives, who they are for and where they would be published. Surely, they are to guide us and any member who asks. I certainly don't think they should be on application forms or hugely prominent on the website.

I wrote and provided Ian/Dave with the slide 4 in the Powerpoint deck – 'Committee Objectives. When I wrote this I was trying to capture what were the functional objectives that I thought were necessary for us, as a committee, to meet the needs of the club and to steer it in the way that we thought appropriate. At the meeting I pointed out that I perhaps should have added a 7th bullet covering new member recruitment and welcoming. This doesn't mean that a separate committee member is needed for each function (and I didn't cover secretary and finance roles), but each function needs to be addressed. I still believe what I wrote to be true (although you can re-word however you like).

al think we should avoid the term 'committee-run' – that's what we're trying to get away from.

cl don't think 'framework' is the right word. If we're defining objectives then we should state something like 'To help members identify suitable training.....'

Note: UWFRA is based in Grassington. They had a 2-day course this last weekend run by an external trainer. The course was 'recognised' course, so is probably more than many would want, or need (and more costly). I have asked a UWFRA member for details should we want to explore further, plus less complex courses are likely available this way too. To discuss at some point.

eThe number of 48 seems too low for long-term sustainability (there will always be a percentage who are less actively involved for a variety of reasons) especially if there were to be a period of attrition. However, we should get too hung up on it.

3 Actions

3.1 I think this is covered above in (2)

3.2 Talk with members, talk with members, talk with members and then talk some more! Andy's 'Buddy' idea would support this.

3.3 I believe we need a BASIC meet programme/calendar and then encourage the membership (see point immediately above).

3.4 Lets find a better way than these interminable emails!!

4. Members will do what they want to do and what is attractive to them. If the committee is too stuffy or too bureaucratic they will either ignore it or leave the club. We need to do the relevant stuff, or its pointless (for everyone). See 3.2 above!

6. Generally OK

7. We shouldn't try to define everything. Sometimes there is more value in the omission (I think there's a Shakespeare quote here somewhere!)

We should not be mandating that members should share their experience. We should publish BMC stuff on the website (by linking) and encourage members to read it. If they don't we cannot be held responsible for their lack of self-interest. The insurance summary is valuable as it's a benefit that members enjoy. However, it should link to the full BMC texts.

9 The timescale to START doing things differently can be quite short. However, it will take time to diffuse throughout CMC. We're talking about culture change here!

Right, I think that's me done and besides, I'm beginning to lose the will to live! ☹

P.S We need a better discussion forum than these emails – it's like having a group discussion using morse code.

From: David Collier <colliermail11@gmail.com> Sent: Saturday, April 1, 2023 11:29 AM

Hi Jon

I'm going to miss this I'm afraid. I will be on the road traveling back from France for the best part of Monday. I can do Tuesday though it may change as my brother is seriously ill and what happens over the next few days may change my availability.

There are a few issues in the list above but the one that stands out for me is the issue of "Training" item 2C. I tend to think of a club as an enabling environment but biased towards a modern dating website. I am only being slightly flippant using this analogy because we should not remove the responsibility from the individual to the organisation. There are real and serious issues in doing that. Climbing is much more diverse these days. we all have preferences, walls, sport, trad, multi-pitch, cascade, Scottish winter, expedition, ski mountaineering etc. A club should allow members to find kindred spirits in whatever aspect of climbing they wish to participate and they will do this by being in a shared mountaineering/climbing environment and via shared social activities including non-mountaineering sports for example mountain biking, running etc. It should allow less experienced members to extend their experience and training can help bridge knowledge/experience gaps but the decision to partner with someone should rest with the individuals not with the courses they have done. If you are the senior partner then you have to decide if your partner for this trip has the necessary skills and any deficiencies can be managed. The junior partner should be actively involved in any discussions about the teams limitations and understand and agree where these lie. This requires trust and open communications. Safety is as much about attitude as it is about skill set. Once a club starts guaranteeing the capability of its members and if you have entry requirements and tests and training then that is what you are doing then you are in potentially deep trouble and as a committee member you could find yourself in court. For me a good club should enforce the ethos of personal responsibility, mutual respect between members of all skill levels and an environment where personal worries and limitations can be expressed openly.

I hope this does not sound too heavy. Much of this is comes from current discourses around avalanche safety and communication failure is now seen as a major contribution to incidents. I realise it is far removed from holding a rope at an indoor climbing wall but not as much as it may first seem.

I hope this helps

regards to all

Dave

END