

# BMC Cymru

## August 2013

IMPORTANT DATES

## Access and Conservation News

by Elfyn Jones

### Bwlch Y Moch

Continuing issues of so called "wild" camping and litter at the base of the crag have led to more complaints from neighbours inc. Eric Jones, so BMC has reluctantly placed two new signs stating no overnight parking or camping.

### Pandy Quarry, Glyn Ceiriog

A long standing and historical access issue. Apparently the previous land owner (a retired solicitor who had liability concerns) has passed away and the site is in the hands of executors. Will follow up on this during the winter.

### Great Orme West Shore Crags

Country Park staff and the National Resource Wales conservation officer explained the real importance of those crags for conservation – arguably the most important crags in terms of botany along the whole North Wales limestone coast with many nationally scarce or rare plants on them. Agreed that climbing routes on these venues should not be developed or promoted.

### Diamond

Following a site meeting to test the disturbance of nesting birds with RSPB and NRW staff it was agreed that the annual restrictions on the Diamond could be eased slightly and subject to an annual site visit to check on the status of nesting birds by either a BMC officer or a competent "bird" person....the restriction may be lifted early in subsequent years if the birds finish nesting early.

### Craig Forwyn

Possible changes to land ownership on the "wings" being investigated.

### Ty Newydd/Craig Dyserth

Some tightening of access restrictions due to concerns that climbers operating here near to dusk could disrupt the roosting pheasants. Will try to follow up to see if these restrictions are really necessary but reality is that this crag is very much on private land and access could be withdrawn if we don't comply.

### Rhoscolyn

Awaiting meeting with a land agent working on behalf of the family trust who own the land.

### Penrhyn Mawr/Range

A number of new belay stakes in place here and old rotting ones removed .....please do not add any more without consulting first as we have agreement in place with RSPB regarding maintenance and inspections. There are also nesting choughs on some climbing areas and a very rare plant the South Stack Fleawort (that grows very close to the tops of some routes) which is the only known site in the world for this plant.

### ...and finally

Thanks to everyone for respecting the extended climbing restrictions due to nesting birds being very late this year...this was a last minute and unexpected development and the co-operation of climbers was highly valued by conservation bodies all over Wales.

### Next Area Meetings

The BMC South Wales meeting will take place on Tuesday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September, 7.30pm, at Boulders Climbing Centre, Cardiff

The BMC North Wales meeting will take place on Wednesday the 4<sup>th</sup> of September, 8.30pm, at The RSPB Café, South Stack, Holyhead

The BMC Mid Wales meeting will take place on Thursday the 5<sup>th</sup> of September, 7.30pm, at The White Lion, Machynlleth

There will be free food, both veggie and non-vegie and plenty of lively discussion. All are welcome and there are some key points to vote on.

## Possible New Welsh Government Legislation

A major breaking news item is that Welsh Government will soon be announcing a radical and major review of all access laws in Wales (inc. Rights of Way and CROW Act) with the intention of easing restrictions on access, increasing access to the countryside and coast and making it easier for the people of Wales and visitors to enjoy the countryside for informal recreation. This is a huge step and potentially the biggest news in access in Wales since the creation of National Parks in the 1950s. As a result much of my time for the next 6 months will be very much committed to this process and to helping guide the new legislation through to fruition.

## Welsh Government Consultations

Lots of major consultations from Welsh Government being responded to inc. a Consultation on the future of protected landscapes (National Parks and AONB'S), sustainable land use, Active Travel Bill, etc.

## Planning Issues etc Glynrhonwy

No new developments notified....unless members have more information? Need guidance from members on a BMC response.....can only issue an objection based on strict planning criteria...simply stating that BMC objects as its members don't want to see the scheme build is not sufficient, it has to be based on actual impact on landscape, access or conservation and then only on those aspects that BMC as a mountaineering body has an interest in. Will follow up and have updates before the meetings.

## Small Hydro Schemes

A number of mini hydro-schemes being built in the Park – Watkin Path, Cwm Caseg, Ogwen, Anafon, Llanberis Pass, etc. many are very small scale with little impact but may have a cumulative impact. What are members feelings? Should BMC get involved?

## Cairns

National Park wardens have been surveying and seen a huge proliferation of cairns along the main ridges, e.g. over 50 between summit Glyder Fach and Llyn y Cwn. These can be destructive to the ground vegetation, montane heath and create erosion as rocks and stones are dug from the ground. Obviously built by hill-walkers and in wake of furore over stone markers on main paths on Snowdon. what should be done?

# Other News

## Bumper Summer of Climbing in Wales

The great summer weather this year has contributed to one of the most productive years of both new routes and repeats in Wales since the 1980s and we're not even in September yet!

Early this year, the Eg Chicama, at Treaddur Bay, saw repeats from Hazel Findlay and James Mchaffie. Just recently it has also seen a repeat from the talented French climber Caroline Ciavaldini who also made the first female ascent of Chupacabra, E8, in Huntsmans Leap.

Alex Megos established perhaps the hardest 'bloc' style boulder problem in Wales on a brief visit. The new line, dubbed, 'Das Pumpenhausen Test Piece', was graded Font 8B and ascends an impressive roof at Porth Ysgo.

The mountains crags have also seen a huge amount of activity. 'The Indian Face' on Clogwyn du'r Arddu saw three repeats in the space of three days. James Mchaffie, on a fantastic run of form, repeated both 'Rare Lichen' and 'Gribin Wall Climb', both E9 6c at Ogwen.



Several significant new routes were also climbed in the mountains. Pete Robins and James Mchaffie made the first ascent of 'Tropic of Cancer', E7 7a, on Dinas Mot. Ioan Doyle climbed a superb left hand finish to the 'Ogwen Crack' at E7 6c and I added a new E8 6c to Glyder Fach Main Cliff which I named 'Sentinel'.

On the on-sight front many E6s and 7s have been repeated. Of special mention should be James Mchaffie's on-sight attempt of 'Margins of the Mind', E8 6c. After a tremendous amount of determination James came within a whisker of the on-sight and made a casual repeat a few days later after an abseil inspection. Routes that have received on-sight ascents include 'Authentic Desire', 'Shaft of a Dead Man', 'It'll be Alright on the Night' and 'Heart of Stone'. Emma

Twyford also made a determined effort to make possibly the first female on-sight of 'Pretty Girls Make Graves', a sustained E6 6b in the Llanberis Pass.



With the eagerly anticipated arrival of the new North Wales Limestone guide the Great and Little Orme have seen a huge revival in popularity, no doubt mainly due to the re-bolting efforts of a small team of activists.

Pete Robins has made the first ascent of several outstanding new routes. 'Dark Energy' 8c+ in Pigeon's Cave, climbs an outrageously large roof by a baffling sequence of compression moves. The nearby 'Pump up the Jam', 8c, also climbed by Pete is a short and very boulder proposition. Pete has also just extended the DWS 'The Heel Hook Look' to make the first ascent of a new 8a+ called 'The Tide is High'.

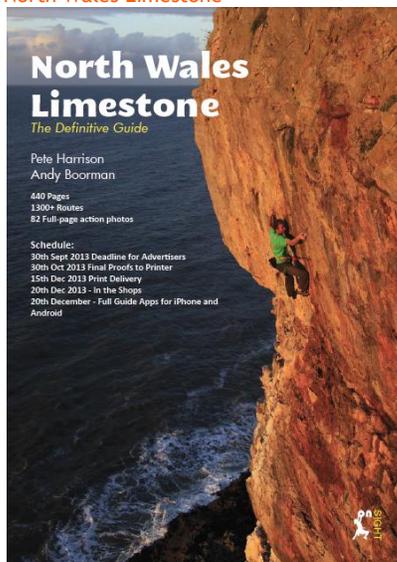
Not to be overshadowed by Pete's efforts, Ben Bransby climbed the obvious superb extension to 'The Brute' to create 'The Beast', at 8c+ and undoubtedly one of the finest sport routes in the country.

Other notable ascents include Chris Doyle finally succeeding in his long term project down at Pigeons Cave which became 'Speckled Jim' at 8b. Alex Barrows also made the long awaited 2<sup>nd</sup> ascent of 'Pilgrimage' in Parisella's Cave suggesting a route grade of 8c+.

With the good weather set to continue a little longer it'll be interesting to see what other developments there will be in Welsh rock climbing by the end of the year.

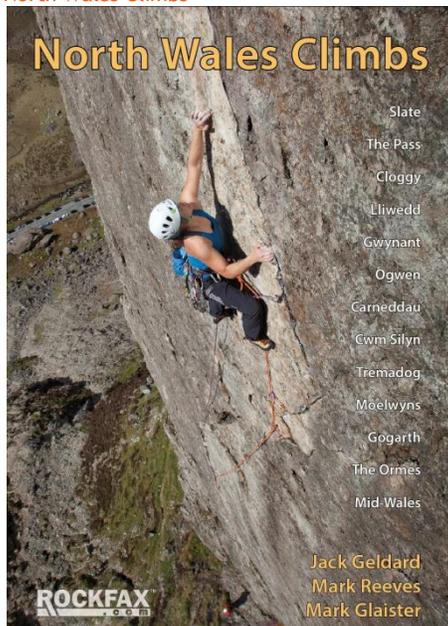
Calum Muskett

## Guidebooks North Wales Limestone



Pete Harrison and Andy Boorman's definitive North Wales Limestone guide is nearing completion and estimated to be out in shops by December 2013. Profits from the guide will be generously donated to the North Wales Bolt Fund and sample pages suggest that this guidebook will be a brilliant testimonial to the areas included.

## North Wales Climbs



Rockfax are bringing out a new select guide to North Wales due to be published in Autumn 2013.

The book will cover all the major mountain crags from the Llanberis Pass, to Cloggy; and from Ogwen to the Carneddau. It will also include the Llanberis Slate quarries, Tremadog, the Moelwyns, the Gwynant Valley, Mid-Wales, Gogarth and the Ormes of Llandudno.

£1 will be donated from each of the first 1500 guidebooks sold to the North Wales bolt fund

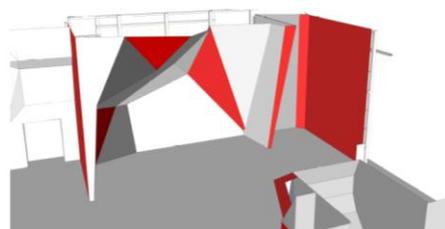
### North Wales Bolt Fund Appeal for Inspectors:

The recent debate on North Wales Guide books stimulated support for the NWBF and several Paypal donations were received - keep them coming!

<http://northwalesboltfund.webs.com>

Chris Parkin

### Indy Climbing Wall



The Indy climbing wall over in Llanfair PG, Anglesey is seeing a major refurb and is due to re-open on Saturday the 31<sup>st</sup> of August.

Jon Ratcliffe gave us the following info on developments: *"The big steep and underused lead wall is being replaced with a modern, more user friendly structure. The shop is being rebuilt bigger, brighter and dust free. A new carpet topped continuous matting system is being fitted throughout the bouldering area, the resin wall will be refurbished, there's a circuit board up, new additions to the central boulder, several 'fins' extending from the perimeter walls to create useful instructional spaces and more route space including a big slab. The centre will also be receiving a*

*complete redecoration throughout the building."*

### Gower

A proposal has been put forward by Adrian Berry and others via an UKC article to create several new sports routes in Rhosili Bay. This created a bit of consternation for the National Trust who own the site as they had not been consulted and were concerned at the scale of the developments. The BMC local access rep (Matt Woodfield) is now in negotiations with the NT to resolve the issue and the outcome appears positive. This raised another question as the article on UKC was effectively a plea for funds to equip these yet to be climbed or created routes and to date has raised nearly £2000.

### Fixed Equipment Continued

The debate about whether the BMC should have an 'official position' on the processes followed by local activists when re-equipping, retro-bolting or new routing continues. The South Wales Outreach Group dealt with the issue a few years back by holding an open meeting where consultation and decision-making processes were agreed. But there is still dissention among a vocal few, and obviously other area groups haven't signed up to this.

There is therefore still pressure on the National Council to formulate an official position and this will be debated at the September meeting to be held in Pembrokeshire.

Tom Hutton

### Dry Tooling

Following the controversial destruction of The Works dry tooling facility in the Lakes, the BMC have produced a draft paper available to be discussed in the September area meeting before going to a vote in the national council meeting. Check it out on the BMC website