

**Minutes of South Wales Area Meeting 21/11/2013**

Aber Rocks Bouldering Wall, Abergavenny

Present: 17

Chair: Gareth Tucker

BMC Officer: Carey Davis

**1. Welcome and Introduction**

A brief welcome was given by Gareth.

**2. Apologies**

Go Ashmore, Roy Thomas, Nik Goile

**3. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted.

**4. Actions from the last meeting**

The vote on Gravesend bolting was postponed until the next meeting, as the agreed extra information had not yet been uploaded to the Wiki for scrutiny.

**5. BMC Hillwalking Officer's Introduction**

Carey described the post of Hillwalking Officer, a post funded by Sport England and intended to address the perceived bias of the BMC towards climbers through better awareness of mountain safety, access, and conservation issues. It was noted that the role is still under definition, but that Carey aims to increase hillwalker participation in the BMC.

Clarification was sought on whether coastal walking is included in the remit, and it is.

A Brecon Beacons National Park officer present (Sam Ridge) suggested a linkup with the recently created footpath maintenance volunteer group.

It was noted at this point that a local BMC Facebook page would be useful for promoting meetings and events. Jess Spate volunteered to look into BMC policy on this.

## **6. Mini Mountain Festival Proposal**

A mini festival with evening talks and films and guided walks was suggested by Will Kilner and Carey for April 2014, the time identified as a good gap in the Brecon Beacons National Park calendar. Theatr Brycheiniog was suggested as a venue. 'Brec-Fest' was suggested as a name.

There was some discussion of combining this with the Gower Climbing Festival, but the meeting was not 100% certain this would be held in 2014. A list of volunteers was taken, to take the idea further.

## **7. BMC Cymru Wales AGM, area setup, voting issues, etc**

Gareth gave an outline of BMC structure at national level, and announced that he will be stepping down as National Council Rep. Will Kilner is to be formally voted in as replacement on Saturday. Gareth will continue to chair the local area meetings.

Gareth will prepare a document setting out pros and cons of South Wales becoming an independent BMC area for discussion in future meetings.

Feedback from the last national Council was given:

The BMC is to adopt the dry tooling statement discussed at the last meeting. The bolting policy statement amendment put forward by the South West area, also discussed last meeting, is to be re-worded by that group before being taken any further.

## **8 Llangattock**

It was also noted that:

- Sections away from the main Llangattock cliffs are not under discussion
- Martin Crocker has climbed about 100 trad routes on the cliff. John Hardwood said that this left little space for new sport routes without retrobolting, and this may not have been known when the bolting proposal was made
- The area is an SSSI and one of the few venues remaining dominated by trad
- Llangattock is of wider interest, to climbers outside the immediate S Wales area

It was eventually agreed that if a bolting proposal at Llangattock is carried forward a meeting should be held, neutrally chaired and open to climbers from other areas, to discuss the future of the crag.

A motion was put by Will, suggesting that the removable stakes should be replaced with 5 permanent BMC stakes, which are already reserved for South Wales use. This was carried unanimously. The placement will be discussed further and no action taken at this time.

Gareth will ask Roy if he still intends to carry forward the bolting proposal.

Will will get in touch with stakeholder outdoor groups.

## **9. Access**

### **9.1 Wales Access Legislation Review- next steps**

Ceri introduced the proposed new legislation on moving Wales towards Scottish-style access arrangements and related strong opposition from landowners and anglers.

The BMC was asked to provide more detailed information on the proposed changes, including guidance on how to make individual views heard.

It was noted that this is not solely a Welsh issue, as climbers and walkers from other parts of the UK come to Wales to undertake outdoor activities.

### **9.2 Access changes to Pembroke (Range West)**

It was related that Range West access numbers are to be restricted to a total of 30 across all activities (surfing, climbing, etc) rather than 30 per activity, but that there had never been more than a total of 30 recorded. The new limit will not apply on briefing days.

### **9.3 Tirpentwys / Tyle y Coch / Sirhowy**

No concrete information was given yet, but it was related that Elfyn is still working on an access arrangement to cover all three of these crags and is hopeful.

## **11. Bolting Proposals**

There were no new bolting proposals.

## **12. AOB**

Al Rosier related large amounts of mess being left on Ogmore by fishermen.

A date of Saturday 1 Feb was set for a Llanbradach cleanup. Anyone wishing to volunteer should contact Jess Spate.

A question was raised about the possibility of more belay stakes in Pembrokeshire. Gareth will contact the appropriate people, as unexploded ordnance mean the stakes should be placed by a local expert.

### **13. Date and location of next meeting**

Dynamic Rock (Swansea) was suggested, in the last week in January.

Concerns were raised about publicising meetings. Gareth will inquire into email list revival.

To volunteer to get involved locally or for more information please contact

Gareth Tucker: [Tuckergd@hotmail.com](mailto:Tuckergd@hotmail.com)

or

Elfyn Jones: [elfyn@thebmc.co.uk](mailto:elfyn@thebmc.co.uk)

To get involved with the Llanbradach cleanup contact

Jess Spate: [spatejess@gmail.com](mailto:spatejess@gmail.com)

To get involved in the Mini Mountain Festival contact

Will Kilner: [willkilner@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:willkilner@hotmail.co.uk)

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Jess Spate 211113