



NEWS

# BMC Cymru

## September 2014

IMPORTANT DATES

### Next Area Meetings

The BMC North Wales meeting will take place on Tuesday the 9th of September, 7.30pm at The Vaynol, Nant Peris

The BMC South Wales meeting will take place on Wednesday 17 September 2014, starting at 7pm

Venue: The Old Rectory Hotel,  
Llangattock, Crickhowell NP8  
1PH

There will be free food, both veggie and non-veggie and plenty of lively discussion. All are welcome.



Making the swing into the base of a climb beneath Wen Zawn

## Access and Conservation News

by Elfyn Jones

### The Ormes

Following concerns about the impact of new route development on the features of the SSSI on the Great Orme, which were expressed by the Country Park and Natural Resources Wales staff at the last BMC Cymru meeting, a site meeting is being arranged between conservation staff, the BMC and local climbers. This will look at a practical approach to how new routes and developments can proceed without climbers inadvertently breaking the law or creating a conservation issue. Any climbers that wants to attend please contact Elfyn as the dates have yet to be set. BMC are looking to produce a "Green Guide" to climbing at the Ormes this winter to explain the relationship between climbing and conservation on the Ormes.

### Penrhyn Mawr/The Range

This previous backwater area has seen extensive new route development in recent months. The area is open access land but is also managed by the RSPB as a bird reserve and is an SSSI. There are several colonies of sea-birds and at least six pairs of Choughs nesting along this section. Several areas of cliff tops are also the habitat for the incredibly rare South Stack or Spathulate Fleawort plant – an endemic flower that only grows on this section of coast – it is not

found anywhere else in the world. This has raised some very serious concerns for the RSPB but negotiations are underway to agree seasonal climbing restrictions on some of the routes. Another issue here – and to quote the RSPB, it's one that "*seriously undermines the historically good relations between climbers and the RSPB*" has been the adding of a considerable number of belay stakes without their consent – some of these stakes are highly visible and unsightly and placed right in the middle of some of the Fleawort sites. They also have concerns about any potential liability. So a plea for now – no more belay stakes here please. BMC will arrange for the worst stakes to be removed and for new more discreetly placed stakes to replace them and to have a process of having them annually checked by competent persons.

### Lochlyn - Ceredigion Coast

In the last couple of years local climbers have been developing these great little sea-cliff crags between Aberystwyth and Cardigan and over 200 new routes have been developed. However the land and coast here also has nesting sea-birds and there are some liability issues especially surrounding fixed belay stakes. The land is owned by the

National Trust and is also designated as an SSSI but discussions on an access agreement are well advanced and the NT are very positive and supportive about allowing climbing to continue on this section of coast.

### Wales Open Access Campaign

Last year the Welsh Government announced they wanted to review the laws allowing access to the coast, countryside and rivers of Wales with a view to "improving and increasing access to the Welsh Countryside". BMC have been very supportive of this aim and even had a very positive site meeting at Gogarth with the Minister responsible for this project. The Government had indicated that they would produce a "Green Paper" outlining their intentions for new laws before Easter but unfortunately it seems that due to unprecedented opposition from landowners and anglers and the lack of legislative time in this period of the Welsh Assembly, they are now not going to create new laws. However they have indicated that they committed to changes to the laws in this area and still want to see access to the countryside improved. They have indicated that they will produce a discussion Green Paper this autumn to look at how existing laws can be changed and simplified to make this happen. BMC understands that the Minister has taken on board the BMC's concerns that access to the coast and in particular access to sea-cliffs is not "as of right". BMC is looking forward to see the Green Paper being published and to get involved in the on-going debate to improve access to the coast and countryside of Wales for recreational users.

## Other News

### Snowdon - Is it broken?

Following various high profile comments by both the Coroner for North Wales and a press statement by Snowdonia National Park – one suggesting that so called "false" paths should be removed and the other that families and children should stay off the summits. The BMC responded by issuing a press release of its own suggesting that the current and historical approach of managing Snowdon by removing natural obstacles, placing waymarkers, tarmacking paths and constructing deflection walls and fences is not working, and may even be counter-productive, encouraging more unprepared visitors to attempt the walk to the summit. Members at previous BMC meetings had also expressed concerns at the appropriateness of some of the recent footpath repair works. The press release received extensive coverage on both local and national press,

including television and Radio 4. It's hoped that at the very least the issue can now be debated more openly and with more input from user groups to seek a longer term solution to the whole issue of how Snowdon is managed for visitors, including getting a long term plan for how footpath management, visitor information, safety messages, challenge events and car-parking are developed for the future.



*Heading up Snowdon for an early morning sunrise*

*Elfy Jones*

### Real 3 Peaks

*The Greatest Challenge of All: reconciling challenge events, the environment and more*

There are many BMC members who earn money from working in the outdoor environment. Be this running businesses or working in a freelance capacity as examples. They may get involved in the organising and staffing of events that perpetuate the ongoing surge of mountain and upland 'challenge events' including the (National) 3 Peaks Challenge, Yorkshire 3 Peaks, Ben Nevis and Snowdon climbs as well as many variations on the above, on foot and cycle.

Considering the very evident growing numbers of participants wanting to take part in such events, there are definitely growing issues for event organisers, providers, leaders and charities to consider when researching and developing itineraries for alternative or new challenge events: minimising negative impact in one aspect and maximising positive impact in another.



*Real 3 Peaks Challenge 2013*

As one example, consider the National 3 Peaks Challenge: what will become of these three popular peaks in the long run? How

should the current situation regarding increased human traffic, erosion, litter, increasing mountain safety awareness and consideration to the environment and local communities be managed, if at all, or by whom? As much as there is very evident positive work carried out by local wardens, charities, individuals and organisations to address small and large scale issues, how much are the mountains, their local communities and the environment coping?

If you are interested to discuss and hear more on this subject, make plans to attend the upcoming BMC Access Conference 'Challenge events in the uplands: managing the way ahead' on 9 October at the Rheged Centre:

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/challenge-events-three-peaks-mountain-marathon-conference>

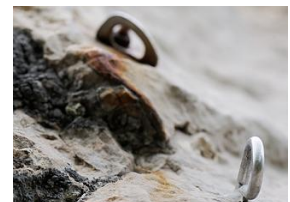
And the weekend before the BMC conference sees the 2nd year of the 'Real3Peaks Challenge: Cleanse & Conserve' awareness day on Saturday 4 October. The concept is to broadcast, share and demonstrate the very essential ethic of 'leaving no trace' as much as possible, when taking part in the 3 Peaks Challenge (as an example event) and when walking in the mountains generally. Watch out for information filtering out on social media, the press and through the Mountain Training Association. YOU can get involved...

*Kate Worthington*

### North Wales Bolt Fund

The NWBF currently has a big box of 12mm bolts from the BMC for re-equipping routes. For those already trained up, get out and do some re-equipping after work, for any others, get in touch for some training and learn how to help out.

As well as maintaining access, the NWBF gets generous expenses from the BMC for doing this work - this cash is used to sort out old fixed gear and help establish quality fixed gear on new routes.



Donations from sales of the Rockfax North Wales Climbs have now reached £1230.50  
**paypal:**

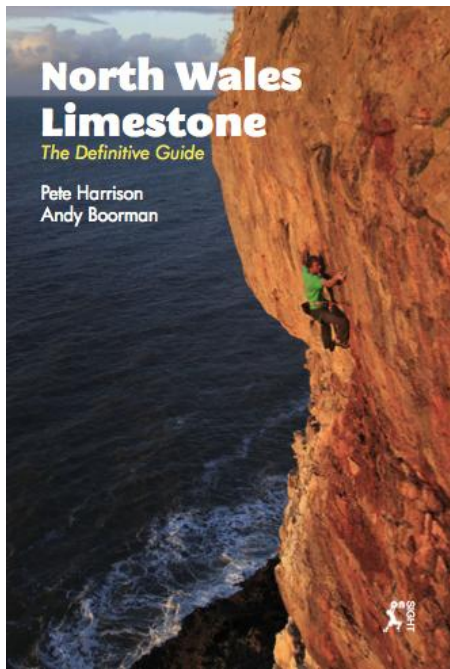
<http://northwalesboltfund.webs.com>

*Chris Parkin*



## Welsh Climbing Guidebooks

### North Wales Limestone



The new and definitive North Wales Limestone guidebook will be hitting shelves in the first week of September. This well researched and edited guidebook is a true tour de force by Pete Harrison and Andy Boorman, two major protagonists of the area. I'll leave the final word to Andy:

*"North Wales Limestone: thanks to all those who have helped make this project a reality!"*

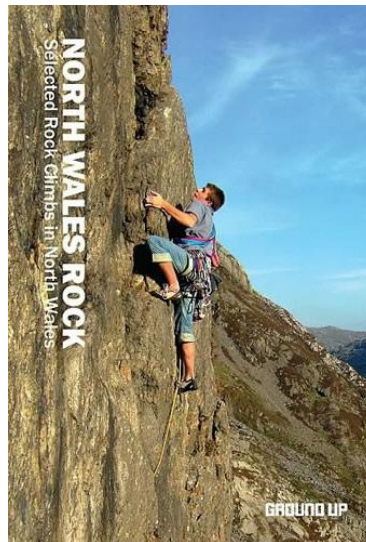
*"North Wales Limestone: The Definitive Guide covers all of the climbing along the North Wales A55 coastal corridor - from Benllech in the west to The Devil's Gorge (near Mold) in the east, including the popular Great and Little Ormes of Llandudno. The book details nearly 1000 sport routes and over 500 trad routes in this varied climbing area, including the nationally significant trad venue of Craig y Forwyn."*

*"This not-for-profit guidebook has been written by a team of local climbers who all share a keen interest in showcasing the North Wales limestone area with a much-needed definitive guide. All profits from sales will be donated to the bolt fund which has enabled the high proportion of routes in this area that rely on fixed equipment to be equipped with good quality fixed gear - The North Wales Bolt Fund. The book features inspiring action photos from leading climbing photographers, full-colour photo topos throughout, detailed route descriptions and approach maps, graded list, environmental and access information and*

*a historical section with contributions from many of the area's most prolific pioneers.*

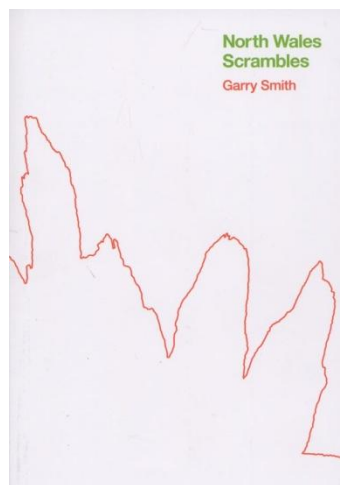
*"The book is available at all good climbing shops and via the BMC Shop (discount for Members). Get the App from Apple or Google."*

### North Wales Rock 3<sup>rd</sup> edition



North Wales Rock has received a re-vamp in its 3<sup>rd</sup> edition published this summer. The guidebook now has a better, tougher build quality as well as some new topos, action pics and updates.

### North Wales Scrambles

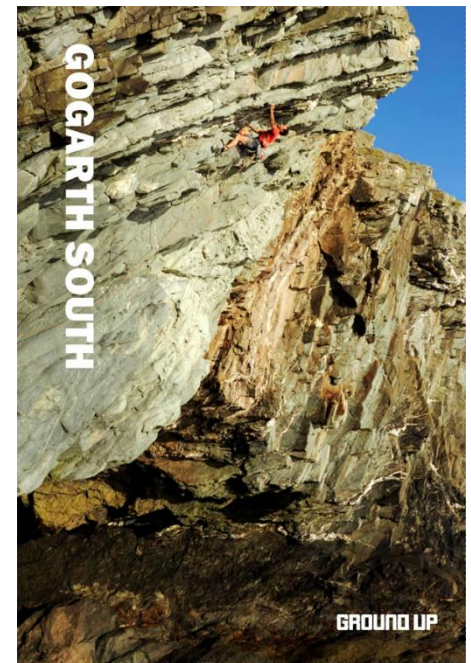


Garry Smith has produced a beautifully crafted guidebook to fifty of the best scrambles in North Wales. The scrambles are spread out across Snowdonia with a good spread of difficulties between grade 1 and grade 3+.

### Gogarth South

The long awaited Gogarth South guidebook is in the final furlong of production and is expected to be finished in Autumn 2014. This new guidebook will contain hundreds of new routes from South Stack to Rhoscolyn and

will inspire many people to visit the more esoteric classics lying beside the honey pot venues of Castell Helen and Rhoscolyn.



Calum Muskett

### Welsh Climbing Update

The fantastic early summer weather has yielded a fantastic crop of new routes and boulder problems across Wales. Despite the weather taking a bit of a nose dive towards the end of August it hasn't slowed down development on the sea cliffs.

On the repeats front Ryan Pasquil made short work of 'Diamond Dogs' 8c+ at the Diamond. This is only the second time that any of the harder routes have been repeated and is a truly fantastic effort from the lanky Lancastrian!

In Pembroke, Dan Mcmanus made a quick on-sight repeat of 'Point Blank' in Stennis Ford, mooting a down grade to E7 6b from its current grade of E8 6c.

News is also filtering in of Germany's Benno Wagner repeating many of the more esoteric and upside down routes found along the North Wales coastline. Highlights from the past few months include Night Stalker E8 6c, Ugly E7 6b, Ultra Violet Extreminator E7 6b and Deep Sea Spex E7 6b – chapeau!

The headline news from North Wales limestone is that Pete Robins has made the first ascent of 'The Pink Star' 8c+ down at the Diamond on the Little Orme. The route follows the full ramp and crack line that his previous route, 'The Pink Panther' joins at mid-height.

Down the road at Llandulas Chris Doyle made the first ascent of 'Raiders of the Dark Ark' 8b+ in the large cave. This line tackles some very technical territory with a host of knee bars and heel hooks.



*Chris Doyle attempting 'Raiders of the Dark Ark' 8b+ at Llandulas Cave prior to its first ascent ©Mike Doyle*

At Gogarth Twid Turner and Dai Lampard have climbed a significant new route on the right hand side of Main Cliff. 'Bass Hunter' E4 6a tackles some impressive territory with four new mainly independent pitches taking an almost mirror image line to 'The Rat Race'.

Nick Bullock and James Mchaffie made the first ascent of The Tumtum Tree E5 6a, which takes a counter diagonal to Magellan's wall.

The Dinowig slate quarries have seen new development of some lower grade trad and

sport routes in Australia and the Lost World. Grades range from 5c to 7a+ and up to E3 5c respectively.

Dave Evans has found unclimbed rock on Dinas Mot making short work of Gardening Club, an E5 6a slab, climbing up and left of the second pitch of Hardd. Would be repeaters should take note that there is little in the way of meaningful protection.

Down in South Wales at Dinas Rock Tom Randall has succeeded on his long term roof crack project which he's dubbed 'Dina Crac' E9 7a. It tackles an 80 degree overhanging roof which contains a V10 boulder problem and some difficult to place protection.



*Tom Randall grappling with the burly and bouldery 'Dina Crac' E9 7a at Dinas ©Kim Davies*

There's also been plenty of development on the boulders. Most significantly in the Barrel Cave of the Llanberis Pass Pete Robins nipped in to climb 'Ropes of Maui' 8B whilst Wiz Fineron, who had nearly succeeded on the line, was away in Europe.

There's also been plenty of development on the craglets around Fedw Fawr on Angelsey. First ascents included Mønster 8A, Battle of the Bilge 7C/+ and Not Your Problem 7B by Pete Robins. Andy Godber, Simon Panton and Gav Foster climbed a number of easier lines in the 6's and low 7's. Simon Panton has produced an on-line topo here:

<http://www.northwalesbouldering.com/upload/members/Fedw%20Fawr%20bouldering%20V6.pdf>

Dave Noden has been busy beaver away on old projects on the Little Orme and came away with the first ascent of the desperate one move wonder 'ManOrMouse' which he hasn't graded due to the size specific style of the problem.

Chris Doyle has succeeded on what he calls the final big link on Pill Box Wall with 'One for the Road', a sustained 8A+ or 8c route traverse. Finally above Pen y Gwryd Dan Turner made the first ascent of 'Tenzing' 8A/+ on the Mallory Boulder, a logical link up of two problems involving some new climbing.

*Calum Muskett*

***If you would like to make a contribution to any of the forthcoming BMC Wales Area newsletters then please send information and photo's across to the editor Calum Muskett by e-mailing:  
calum\_muskett@hotmail.co.uk***