

BMC Cymru

November 2014

NEWS

IMPORTANT DATES

Access and Conservation News

by Elfyn Jones

Craig Y Forwyn- Llanddulas

The excellent new guide book has rightly shown how good the climbing is on this essentially banned crag. The guidebook has meant a lot of people have visited the crag this autumn. Please ensure that all access instructions regarding parking and vegetation clearance are strictly adhered to. There is no agreement to clear vegetation from anywhere on this crag except the extreme left hand side of the cliff (this includes ivy and invasive species only). There is no agreement in place to climb on the right hand section and the new owners have not agreed to allow climbing on their land, contrary to popular belief. The owner of Plas Newydd continues to clearly state that climbing is not allowed on the central section (Great Wall etc.).

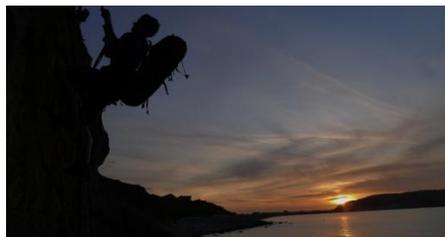
Ceredigion Coast

A number of new routes have been developed along this coast in the last two years (over 250 routes!). However as there is very little tradition or history of climbing here the landowners (National Trust) and NRW as the conservation body are concerned that climbing will impact on nesting birds and breeding seals within the SSSI. They have provisionally requested that no climbing occurs on a substantial area of coast from March 1st until the end of October. BMC are

not satisfied that such a draconian restriction is required and site meetings have been agreed to look at the detail and reduce both the extent and duration of any agreed restrictions. We are optimistic that a good agreement will be reached that both protects the wildlife and conservation interest while minimising the areas and duration of any necessary restrictions.

Ormes new routing meeting

Following concerns from NRW conservation officers that new route developments on the Ormes and elsewhere on North Wales limestone may be having an impact on the conservation features present on the SSSI, a meeting was held between BMC, NRW and the main developers of new routes on the Ormes.



NRW have asked that all new routes be discussed with them prior to any bolting or

Next Area Meetings

The BMC Mid Wales area meeting will take place on Wednesday the 26th of November, 7pm at the White Lion Hotel, Machynlleth SY20 8DN. Calum Muskett will be giving a talk about climbing from the crags of Wales to the big walls of the Alps and Yosemite.

The BMC Wales AGM will take place on Saturday the 29th of November, 6.00pm at The Beacon Climbing Centre, Caernarfon LL55 2BD. British Mountain Guide Tim Neill will be giving a talk about alpine climbing from the Alps to the spires of Patagonia.

The BMC South Wales area meeting will take place on Monday the 1st of December, 7.30pm at UWC Atlantic College, St Donat's CF61 1WF. Calum Muskett will be giving a talk about climbing from the crags of Wales to the big walls of the Alps and Yosemite.

development. BMC is not fully happy with that situation as we feel that this is quite a laborious process and could inhibit the freedoms and traditions of developing new routes within SSSI's and set precedents for elsewhere. At the moment the NRW conservation officer is happy to reply to requests for new routes and come out to site visits before any new routes are developed but BMC would prefer an area based agreement rather than route by route.

Climbers are reminded however that any vegetation removal or rock modification (including drilling bolts) could be a breach of the SSSI regulations and lead to legal action against the climber by NRW.

Winter Climbing Info service



This project launched last year will again be active from Dec 1st, enabling climbers to get up to date live ground conditions temperature information from Cwm Idwal. The project aims to give climbers valuable information so that they are better able to make a decision on the condition of winter routes in Cwm Idwal and Cwm Cneifion which follow lines up cliffs containing rare and fragile protected plants. This winter, National Resource Wales are also hoping to install a similar monitor at the base of Clogwyn Du in Cwm Cneifion in addition to the sensor at the base of the Devil's Kitchen cliffs. The information can be seen at <https://www.thebmc.co.uk/idwal>

Snowdon Summit Paths

SNP have consulted formally on a proposal to divert the current existing lines of definitive paths (as marked on the maps) to match the actual lines of the paths on the ground. This includes the upper part of the Watkin path and the upper part of the Snowdon Ranger path as it leaves the Llanberis path.

SNP have also formally responded to the coroner for North Wales following the well-publicised direction given by the Coroner for the Park to take action to close off so called "false paths" to prevent inexperienced and badly prepared walkers from getting lost and into danger. The Park have given a robust response stating that this would not be desirable and BMC have supported the Park's

response and will be discussing the matter separately with the coroner in due course.

Watkin Path/Gladstone Slab

The National Trust informed the BMC that the paint has since been washed off and that the graffiti is no longer visible, but I've not had the opportunity to get there to verify this. It would be interesting if there is any long term environmental or visual damage.

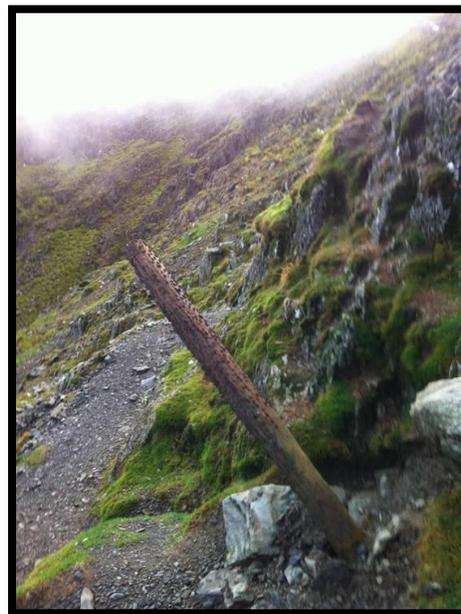
Cwm Glas (Snowdon) Hydro

As can be clearly seen from the road, work has started on this project in the Llanberis Pass. Walkers and climbers have reported that they have encountered difficulties gaining access to Cwm Glas – with people being turned away by the contractors. The site also appears to very messy and unsightly. These concerns have been raised with Snowdonia National Park who have sent officials to the site and informed the developers of the concerns. The land is open access land, is not subject to any closure orders and the public have right of access under CROW Act which has been confirmed by SNP.

Other News

The Snowdon Penny Post - Should it Stay or Should it Go?

Snowdonia National Park Warden for Snowdon - Helen Pye (@wardeneryri) – will be hosting a live Twitter debate on the future of the recently toppled penny post on Snowdon PyG track. The debate will take place between 8-9pm on Wednesday the 26th of November. To join the light-hearted debate use the hashtag #pennypost.



The PYG track penny post

It's believed that the penny post (one of two on that section of path) originate from some old fencing posts used for erosion control work in the 1980-90s. The options are to re-set the post in place or to remove the post from the mountain. We'd love to hear what you think on the subject.

In the coming year the National Park aims to move towards a partnership led approach to the management of the mountain with more opportunities for users and stakeholders to feed in on issues and solutions such as this one. Helen is currently working up a proposal for a new Partnership Management Plan for Snowdon. The plan is in draft form at present and will be discussed with partners and stakeholders early in the new year with the aim of holding a workshop later in the year. Here's a few details from the proposal as it stands:

"The Snowdon Partnership will be the proactive core group that implements and drives a movement to transform Snowdon into an internationally recognised exemplar of best practice in balancing conservation, access and the rural economy whilst providing a first class visitor experience. A Core Partnership Group made up of representatives from organisations actively engaged at ground level in the management of the mountain will develop and implement the Partnership Management Plan. The process will involve actively engaging stakeholders and users through open workshops. The Partnership will then shift their focus to implementing and monitoring the action based work-plan. Fundamental to this will also be the development of a user forum which will enable stakeholders to regularly engage and influence decisions. This model of management planning has been developed from best practice examples across the UK and hails an exciting shift in the approach to the management of Snowdon".

For more information or to discuss further please contact Helen Pye – Snowdon Area Warden: Helen.pye@eryri-npa.gov.uk

MTUK report:

The main item from a recent meeting of the Board, which may be of interest to some BMC Cymru members, is that a scoping group is being set up to establish the terms of reference for a review of the Rock Climbing Awards - so watch this space to ensure that you get your say in the re-shaping of and possible addition to the existing awards - CWA, SPA and MIA etc. The Mountain Training Boards wish to ensure that all interested parties are consulted and will be seeking opinion from the BMC, NICAS, NIBAS, the Military, award holders

and providers, outdoor education centres, advisors and activity providers etc, etc.

Andy Boorman

North Wales Bolt Fund

The Beacon and Indy Winter Bouldering Aggregates are now up and running, sponsored by V12 & DMM. All entrance fees been donated to the NWBF. This year the Beacon is also introducing a lead aggregate so get involved and support the NWBF whilst you climb.

Rockfax has completed its £1500 contribution to the NWBF from sales of its North Wales Climbs and has committed to continue contributing £1 from all on-line sales.

We still need help with BMC inspections on Upper Pen Trwyn!

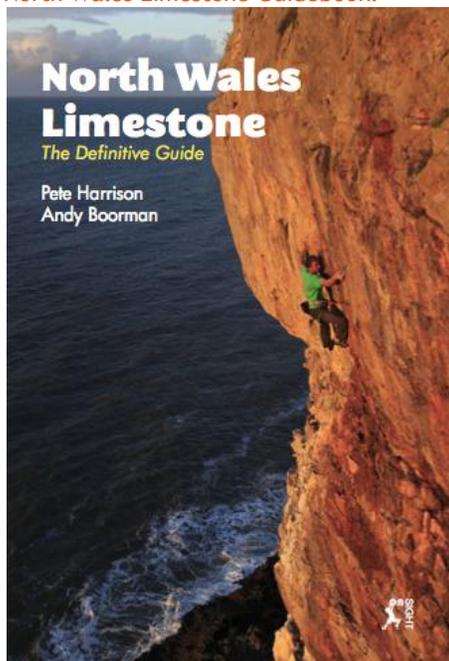


PayPal:

<http://northwalesboltfund.webs.com>

Chris Parkin

North Wales Limestone Guidebook:



The book is selling well - thanks to all for your support - please arrange for a copy in your Christmas stocking if you've not got one yet - remember, all profits will go to the North

Wales Bolt fund, thus ensuring our routes and lower-offs are maintained in tip-top condition. The App is available on Apple devices and by the time you read this the Google version will also be available. Now that you all know where the routes are it would be good to get those trained to inspect Pen Trwyn lower-offs back on the case. Please contact Andy Boorman or Chris Parkin for advice.

The photo topos are showing plenty of blank rock on some crags - before you consider any new routing please check with Elfyn.

Elfyn will be working with local conservation bodies to produce a Green Guide to North Wales Limestone.

Andy Boorman

Welsh Sports Association

The Welsh Sports Association administers the Sports Council for Wales Overseas Expeditions grants. This year, due to a very late confirmation by SCW that a grant would be forthcoming, only four teams were eligible for consideration. Two of these involved climbing.

A nine member team, of which four were eligible for SCW support, visited the Djangart Range on the Kyrgyzstan-China border and came away with 10 new peaks in this beautiful alpine area. Heights of these peaks ranged from 4,500m to 5,200m, and were climbed by routes from PD to D+.

Liam Fleming and Olly Sanders made a dual-discipline trip to Greenland. Here, they made a committing kayak journey around the southernmost tip of the island, Cape Farewell, stopping off to climb two new rock routes. A report can be seen at: <https://www.thebmc.co.uk/british-pair-kayak-and-climb-in-greenlands-cape-farewell-region>

It is currently unclear whether a grant will be available next year, but details, including eligibility and how to apply, will be found at <http://www.welshsports.org.uk/OverseasEditionGrants.asp>

Lindsay Griffin

Welsh Climbing Update

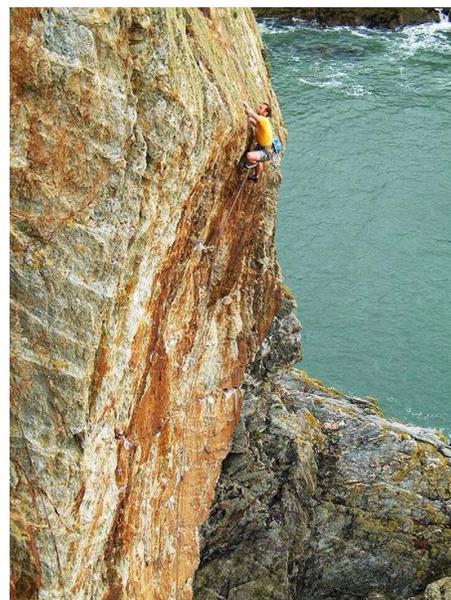
Following on from a busy summer season on the crags in Wales, the autumn weather has proved to be a bit of a mixed bag. A few evergreen climbers have, however, taken advantage of small weather windows to climb new routes.

Chief among these has been Alex Mason who climbed two fine new routes on the sea cliffs

of Gogarth and Rhoscolyn. First on the list was 'Smear Campaign' which went down at E8 6b with James Mchaffie. This interesting route takes some big moves on slick rock with a hefty run out near the top.

Alex then made the first ascent of 'Gimble in the Wabe' which takes an independent finish up from Magellan's Wall at Rhoscolyn with some strenuous climbing. This E7 6b was swiftly repeated by Oli Grounsell and Tom Livingstone.

Over on the Diamond, Pete Robins extended the Steve Mayers classic 'The Sting' to create a real stamina fest 8a+ now dubbed 'Sting in the Tale'. This 30m route was described by Pete to be 'a three star classic' and should see plenty of attention in the future.



Alex Mason making the first ascent of 'Gimble in the Wabe' E7 6b © Jemma Powell

In the Dinorwig quarries Twll Mawr has seen a revival in popularity. Mark Dicken finally got round to climbing a new route he'd been eyeing up for the last ten years and the resulting 'Antiquarian', a four pitch E4/5 6a was an interesting adventure with some good climbing and atmospheric positions and should clean up well with repeat ascents.

Mark later returned with Ben Ryle to climb the right hand corner in its entirety at E5 6a, whilst Calum Muskett returned to climb the more logical and direct version of the Antiquarian, taking some quite bold and insecure climbing, with Jeremy Leong.



Jeremy Leong on the first ascent of 'Antiquarian Direct' E5 6a

Ian Lloyd-Jones continues his new route campaign with a stream of new routes at Penmaenbach quarry. 'Happy Slap' seems to be the best new addition at around 6c. Ian also made the first ascent of a new 7a+ called SiCo4 at Fedw Fawr to surely terminate the new route potential of this crag!

Finally and not to be forgotten is James Pearson's outstanding flash ascent of Charlie Woodburn's 'Something's Burning' in Pembroke. This is the first time an Eg has ever been climbed in such fine style and a truly incredible achievement! On the same

trip Yuji Hiriyama also repeated the steep testpiece that is 'The Big Issue' Eg 6c on the neighbouring cliffs.

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