

BMC South West Area Gathering

Meeting held at “The Nova Scotia Hotel”, Bristol Thursday 27th November 2014, starting at 7:00pm.

Present and Signed In:

Matthew Goater (Chair)
Gareth Palmer (National Council)
Hazel Finlay (BMC ambassador)
Alice Fuller
Ian Butterworth
Dave Fisher
Tim Burrow
Dan Donovan
Peter Gardner
Paul Twomey
Richard Nadin
Rick Seward
Tim Meeham

Mark Kemball (Acting Secretary)
Dave Turnbull (BMC C.E.O.)
Martin Crocker (project officer ClimbBristol)
Pete Saunders
Iain Shone
Simon Fletcher
Tom Palmer
Gordon Jenkin
Tim Good
Jon Bentley
Jamie MacLeod
Evan Hall
Harry Fox

Before starting on the main business of the meeting, we were given an illustrated lecture by BMC ambassador Hazel Findlay on her life and travels as a professional climber.

1. **Welcome and Apologies for absence.** Matthew Goater welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Hazel for her interesting and entertaining lecture. Apologies for absence were accepted from Iain Peters, Libby Houston, Colin Knowles, Peter Greening and Trevor Smith.
2. **The Previous Meetings Minutes** were reviewed for accuracy and completeness and signed off.
3. **Ratification of ClimbBristol Project for 2015 onwards:** Martin Crocker summarised the ClimbBristol project progress report (available on the BMC website local area documents for this meeting). The most important progress has been with networking establishing good relations with the local landowners and council – ClimbBristol has been recognised and endorsed as a stakeholder by the Downs Committee (which own and manage the north side of Avon Gorge). Assistant Mayor, councillor Simon Cook is championing ClimbBristol. On behalf of the BMC, ClimbBristol has applied for to the European Green Capital Fund for £50k to carry out some of the more urgent pedestrian safety improvements, and separately for funding to continue the project. A show of hands gave unanimous support for the continuation of the ClimbBristol project.
4. **Cornish Climbing Festival 2015:** Iain Peters and Gareth Palmer have been making plans for next year’s festival – Gareth gave a short progress report – to be held 26th – 28th June 2015 at The Count House, Bosigran, estimated cost £25 per person, to include food and accommodation. Action – Iain and Gareth to finalise details before the next BMC meeting.
5. **Clean Up Day at Roche Rock:** Following reports of large amounts of litter (not climbing related) at Roche Rock, a clean-up day has been proposed. Action – Gareth Palmer to liaise with the local council and fix a date for early next year, then publicise this via the BMC community website, UKC and other social media.

6. **Cheddar Bolt Moratorium and Bolts on Lion Rock:** Following the breaking of the no-bolting moratorium by an individual, who has been asked by representatives of the SW BMC community to apologise for the action to the Cheddar authorities but has not done so, there was lengthy discussion as to what action the community should take bearing in mind that the 5 year moratorium is coming to an end, and that we should re-open negotiations with the Cheddar authorities. Two proposals were made:
- a) We remove the hangers from the bolts for the duration of the moratorium (proposed by Gordon Jenkin who also volunteered to remove the hangers) votes -7.
 - b) Having condemned their placement, we should let the status quo remain, and leave them in place (proposed by Martin Crocker) votes – 12.
 - c) Absentions – 4.

Accordingly, the meeting agreed to leave the bolts in place.

Martin also reported that the Cheddar authorities want the bolting moratorium to remain in place until there is a request from the BMC area committee. Action - Gordon / Martin are to prepare a proposal, based on Martin's 2009 suggestions to bring to the next Bristol meeting.

While on the subject of bolts, Gordon Jenkin said that there is a quarry in the Snuff Mills area (at present designated bolt free) which would make a good sport climbing venue. Action – Gordon to prepare a proposal for the next Bristol meeting.

7. **Report of Swanage Outreach Meeting:** Matthew Goater summarised the outcomes of the outreach meeting (held 26th September) chaired by Marti Hallett
- a) Following anger from local residents regarding the over use of Dancing Ledge by commercial groups, the landowner (National Trust) is planning to implement a licence scheme for commercial users (for whom there will be a cost), this will not affect free access by the general public.
 - b) The purpose of the meeting was to decide on the proposal to re-bolt "Fuel My Fire" following arguments from both sides, it was agreed that this route should be the one exception to the bolting agreement and was not a precedent for other routes outside the bolting agreement. The proposal to re-bolt the route was carried 10 votes to 3.
 - c) AOB – there was a discussion of possible winter working days, re-staking cliff top belays and crag clear ups.
8. **Summary of Devon and Cornwall Fixed Gear Policy:** Mark Kemball briefly summarised the proposed policy (this can be found on the BMC's local area pages with the details for the 5/9/14 meeting). Pete Saunders (who had written the South Devon Limestone section and is the guidebook author for that area) proposed a minor alteration to the "Moonshot Buttress" area – the proposal will be voted on at the next area meeting in Exeter. Martin Crocker raised the possibility of using stainless steel pegs on the coastal cliffs, Dave Turnbull said that Jim Titt had investigated the possibility of manufacturing them, but had concluded it was not commercially viable.
9. **Area Briefing Note:** Matthew Goater summarised the briefing notes from the BMC.
10. **BMC Angle Grinder:** We cannot locate it – it is suggested we write it off.
11. **Any Other Business:**

- a) We have a vacancy for a Hill Walking Representative to represent the South West at BMC meetings.
 - b) There is a BMC Winter Skills Lecture at the University of Bristol Friday 4th December.
 - c) Ian (Butterworth / Shone/ Good?) reported on local access issues:
 - 1. Goblin Combe – following the recent accident, (when the rescuers had to break down the gate) the owner has stated that he wants no further climbing. The recommendation is to continue climbing, but leave if asked to (watch this space).
 - 2. Fairy Cove Quarry – there has been no change of ownership the access agreement will continue.
 - 3. Holcombe Quarries – the application to construct holiday villages has been given the go-ahead.
 - 4. Sandford Quarry – the owners want large groups to register at the ski centre.
 - d) Rick Seward (Wye Valley Rep) reported that the owner of Tintern Quarry does not wish people to climb (amber on the RAD) – you may be asked to leave.
 - e) The area needs a Clubs Committee Rep to attend some BMC meetings. Dave Fisher volunteered.
12. **Next Meeting:** Saturday 17 January 2015 at the Quay Climbing Centre, Exeter.