

## **BMC South West Area Meeting**

Minutes of the meeting held at The Quay Climbing Centre, Exeter on Saturday 17 January 2015.

### Present and Signed In.

Matt Goater (Chair)	Gareth Palmer (S.W. National Council rep.)
Colin Knowles (S.W. National Council rep.)	Mark Kemball (Acting Secretary)
Scott Titt (BMC President)	Simon Woodster
Pete Saunders	Alison Dorey
Tim Reynolds	Bob Watson
Andrew Mc Leod	Ed Drewitt
Mike Demenis	Luke Sutton
Jayne Bullbeck	Keiha Dhruev
Iain Peters	James Mann
Nick Pade	Pete Merrick
R Cartwright	Ian Jones
Nick Stephens	Henry Kimester
Mal Dickson	

### **Ed Drewitt illustrated talk**

Before starting the main meeting, we were given an illustrated talk on "Urban Peregrines" by Ed Drewitt – climbers from the ClimbBristol project have been assisting in his research by helping ring Peregrines in the Avon Gorge. Luke Sutton is planning to do similar work on Peregrines on the cliffs of Devon and Cornwall; at the end of the talk he asked anyone who would like to become involved to give him their contact details.

#### **1. Welcome**

Matt Goater welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Ed for his lecture.

#### **2. AGM**

Before the main meeting, we held the area AGM – see separate minutes.

#### **3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes were reviewed for accuracy and signed off.

#### **4. Q & A on BMC membership benefits for under 18s**

This had been put on the agenda, following a request. There were no under 18s at the meeting and so no questions! The chair briefly summarised some of the benefits of BMC membership.

#### **5. Dry Tooling**

This was put on the agenda following an incident of dry tooling at Hound Tor, which had been reported on UKC.

The SW Area notes the BMC's position statement on dry tooling:

"The BMC acknowledges that dry tooling has a place in British climbing. The suitability of individual sites for dry tooling should be considered on a case-by-case basis by the relevant BMC Area Meeting. Dry tooling is not considered to be an acceptable practice on established rock climbs."

The Area confirms that to date no site in the South West has been proposed as suitable for dry tooling, and condemns the recently reported dry tooling incident at Hound Tor.

The above was voted and passed with one abstention and no votes against.

It was then pointed out that at least two climbing walls in the area (the Quay and the Life Centre) have facilities for practicing dry tooling and that climbers there are likely to want to practice outside. A request was made that the BMC produce a "Responsible Dry Tooling" poster for display at those walls.

**6. Devon and Cornwall Fixed Gear Policy**

The paper produced on fixed gear and discussed at length in previous meetings was accepted by the meeting with two abstentions and no votes against. There was one amendment – the final sentence – "Also, what are people's views on fixed lower-offs at Chudleigh and Dewerstone?" was removed! There was some discussion on the issue, in particular the abseil point at the top of Leviathan. James Mann has placed a sling and maillon here on a number of occasions, but they have been removed. The top pitch is at present totally overgrown and the tree used as the abseil anchor is becoming unstable. Nick Pade volunteered to investigate if cleaning the top pitch is feasible, and to co-ordinate this and any other clean-up work with Jay Jackson who agreed to be South Devon access rep.

Following the acceptance of the policy, it was requested that we ask the BMC for suitable anchor chains for use at Vicarage cliff and other suitable venues. Some discussion followed as to whether we should be using multiple anchor points. Scott Titt pointed out that the chains provided are of the appropriate strength, and that it is up to individual climbers to assess the safety of the rock around which they are placed.

**7. ClimbBristol update**

Colin Knowles reported that ClimbBristol continues to go from strength to strength. There has been scrub removal on the north face of Suspension Bridge Buttress and the work continues. There has been political success with the Downs Committee accepting all of the group's proposals for the gorge – it's now a matter of finding the finance to implement them. The access situation for Unknown Wall was discussed. Unfortunately, bids to obtain further funding for the group have been unsuccessful, so from the end of March, Martin Crocker will no longer be employed as project co-ordinator and the project will be run entirely by volunteers. A party is planned to celebrate three successful years.

**8. Cornish Festival update**

Iain Peters reported that the Count House is booked for 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> June, the BMC are giving a grant of £500 towards the event, places will have to be pre-booked at a cost of £30 per person, this will include accommodation and breakfast Saturday and Sunday and an evening meal on Saturday.

**9. Hill Walking Rep's report** Trevor Smith was unable to attend the meeting but had confirmed by email to Gareth Palmer that he was happy to be nominated as Hill Walking Rep. He has been in communication with Carey Davies regarding the Hill Walking Strategy discussion document.

**10. Area Briefing Note**

Matt Goater summarised the key activities of the BMC from November 2014 – January 2015.

**11. Any Other Business**

- Matt asked for a show of hands – how many people had been emailed by the BMC informing them of this meeting? About 1/3 of those present had received an email. Scott pointed out that the BMC could only email members if they had an up to date email address – if we had not received an email, we should contact the BMC with our membership number and our current email address.
- Roche Rock – Gareth reported that he is now in contact with the Lord Falmouth Estate regarding the clean-up; he will let people know via the area and 4 Points Facebook page once a date has been fixed.
- New Wall? Gareth reported that he had been contacted by the Chair of Cornwall County Council regarding the possible construction of a “Olympic Standard” climbing wall in Cornwall.
- Avon clean-up day – Colin invited everyone who’d like to be involved to a scrub clearance day at the base of Avon Gorge – date to be announced.

**12. Next Meeting**

To be held at the Nova Scotia Inn, Bristol at the end of March (date to be decided).

Post-meeting addendum – the next meeting will be held on Thursday 23 April, starting at 7.00pm, at the Nova Scotia Inn, Bristol.