



BMC Wales

April 2016

IMPORTANT DATES

Notes from the Chair

by Kate Worthington

Since the last area meetings in North, South and Mid Wales we've had some 'winter' at last, although it's been sporadic and generally mild (with a few colder snaps each month). Sadly, South Wales' first BMC Hill Walking Day on Pen y Fan was cancelled due to severe weather on 6 February. This day would have been the first of its kind being organised by volunteer Hill Walking Reps. Please support any future re-scheduling. In January, Owen Samuels and Simon Frost put up yet another new route in Snowdonia, on Crib Goch's north west face (One Last Fix VI, 7) and conditions were good for skiing in Cwm Lloer, for example, with deep, soft snow and low winds for a time. You had to catch it when you could, it seems. And Libby Peter reported ribbons of hard snow remaining on the Trinity Face, Snowdon as late as 15 March, with the help of some cold overnight temperatures.

And is it Spring, now? Now we turn our attention back to the crags and thawing conditions to shake off the winter layers,

axes and endless stunning images and reports from BMC members enjoying decent conditions Scotland and the Alps. It's time to come 'home', now (and on to the next adventure...)

Since January, there have also been further developments made in a number of key areas within the BMC's current audit journey. Presentations have been made to the Executive Committee and discussions have ensued on the direction of the organisation, the experience of its members. Who is really in control of strategy and decisions on where money is spent or how processes are carried out? Who does the BMC need to reach out to with open arms, or indeed should it be 'reaching out' for new, more diverse members? Does 'more members' mean more positive engagement at Local Area meets or at volunteer level? Does 'more members' mean better representation and support for lobbying government at key points in policy making – where the outcome of these strategic decisions can affect us ALL (BMC members or not).

Next Area Meetings

The BMC South Wales meeting will take place on Saturday the 28th of May, 7.30pm, at The Speculation Inn, Hundleton

The BMC North Wales meeting will take place on Wednesday the 6th of April, 7.30pm, at Plas y Brenin, Capel Curig

The BMC Mid Wales area meeting will take place on Monday the 25th of April, 7.00pm, at Wiff Waff Bar, Aberystwyth

Be sure to check the BMC Local Areas website for updates on forthcoming meetings

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

How are current members connecting with the organisation, if at all? Is this via their local mountaineering club or climbing wall, Local Area meets, a quarterly membership magazine, the BMC website or 'liking' a Facebook page?

These general observations have followed me in my recent contact with other members, attendance at Local Area meetings, National Council, the Women's Development Group workshops and keeping abreast of how people relate to the BMC 'on the ground'. Do you think the BMC and BMC Cymru represents YOU and the obvious interest and passion you have within your chosen sports and activities, that you believe the BMC is representative of? If so, how do they do this well? And if it's not done well enough...how do we affect change on this process? Come along to your next Local Area meet to hear of updates and thoughts from other members – and give them yours. You are valued and needed.

TremFest 2016

TremFest is your opportunity to care for one of the best crags in Wales, to have a great time, drink free beer and win some brilliant prizes. The 2016 event will take place over the weekend of 7-8 May.



The aim of the event is to get climbers involved in giving Craig Bwlch y Moch, the BMC owned and managed crag at Tremadog a bit of a spring clean. This involves cleaning overgrown routes, re-building paths, cutting back vegetation and so on.

It is a festival, so it's not all work. Camping is free if you're staying for the weekend and helping out. We'll provide some free beer (until it runs out - so bring your own as well) and entertainment, and as at previous TremFests we are running a free prize draw with loads of great gear generously donated by manufacturers and retailers.

The event starts on Saturday morning (time to be confirmed) – just look for the BMC marquee, where you can sign in to get a task and collect your free prize draw ticket, which also entitles you to a free beer.

<http://community.thebmc.co.uk/Event.aspx?id=3646>

Women's International Climbing Meet

It's back after a 32-year long hiatus! North Wales welcomes the Women's International Climbing Meet 2016, brought to you by the Pinnacle Club and the BMC.

Over 80 women from the UK and beyond will be brought to North Wales for a week of trad climbing at the Pinnacle Club / BMC Women's International Climbing Meet 2016. The event will be a celebration of women's climbing and an opportunity to share experiences, learn from each other, get psyched and have fun – whatever grade you climb!



When: 12-19 June 2016.

Where: Ynys Ettws, the Climbers' Club hut in the heart of the Llanberis Pass.

What: Climbing every day (weather permitting!), all meals provided, films, talks, goodies and a big party on the Saturday night.

Cost: £150 for the week; £50 for the weekend to include accommodation, all meals and all the goodies/entertainment.

To apply to join the meet for the full week, to climb with our overseas guests and with other UK climbers, you'll need to be an experienced woman trad climber, with your own gear, able to lead at least HS, with a knowledge of trad climbing in North Wales.

To apply to join the meet for the weekend, to climb and be a part of the final celebrations, you'll need to be a woman trad climber, with your own gear, able to lead competently at your chosen grade.

The closing date for applications is 10 April 2016. To apply, download and complete the form (link below) and email it back to us (details on the form). Make sure you read the information for UK hosts below, which explains exactly how the meet will work.

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/womens-international-climbing-meet-2016>

Mountain Training UK

Mountain Training UK are reviewing their climbing qualifications with a consultation out now. The review and changes should have been decided upon by this Autumn.

<http://www.mountain-training.org/latest-news/climbing-awards-review-survey>

Punk in the Gym

Legendary 80s North Wales climber Andy Pollitt has just had his autobiography published. It's racy, funny, well written and probably best not shown to young children – feminists – or anybody easily offended...

<http://v-publishing.co.uk/books/categories/biographies/punk-in-the-gym.html>

Save the Conwy



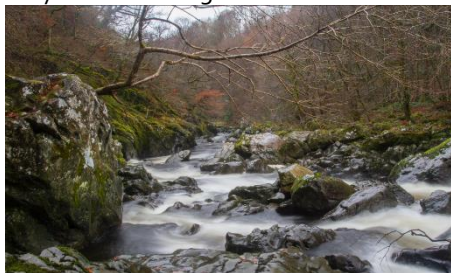
REFUSED!!!

You may have seen the news by now, that after a dedicated effort from local campaigners, supported by the 6,311 of you who signed the petition, the Snowdonia National Park Authority made the right decision and refused permission for multinational energy giant RWE to build a hydro scheme on the River Conwy.

After last week's meeting the refusal notice has now been formally issued and the River Conwy is safe from the developers - THANK YOU!

This is a huge relief to all who care about the special places that we know and love. It is a huge success story for National Parks and the role they play in protecting special places from those who see our natural resources as something to be exploited in damaging and disruptive ways.

The whole process stands as a warning to all of us who care - National Parks and other special places are under attack. We all need to be vigilant and continue to scrutinise those who are elected to govern these institutions and make sure that they understand how important these special places are and how easily they can be damaged.



One organisation that has been instrumental in the success of this campaign is the Snowdonia Society. They have been protecting and celebrating the Snowdonia National Park since 1967 and without them I don't think we would have succeeded.

Please have a look at they work they do and consider becoming a member to help them keep fighting the good fight for another 50 years.

<http://snowdonia-society.org.uk/mission/>

So our warmest thanks to you and congratulations for your part in saving the River Conwy!

Save the Conwy with help from our friends are continuing to fight for the river by working towards the refusal of any abstraction licences and gathering evidence in preparation for any future planning applications.

We still need your support so visit us at: <http://savetheconwy.com>

Or follow on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/savetheconwy/>

Or if twitter is your thing: <https://twitter.com/savetheconwy>

Or if you like pictures: <https://www.instagram.com/savetheconwy/>

Thanks again

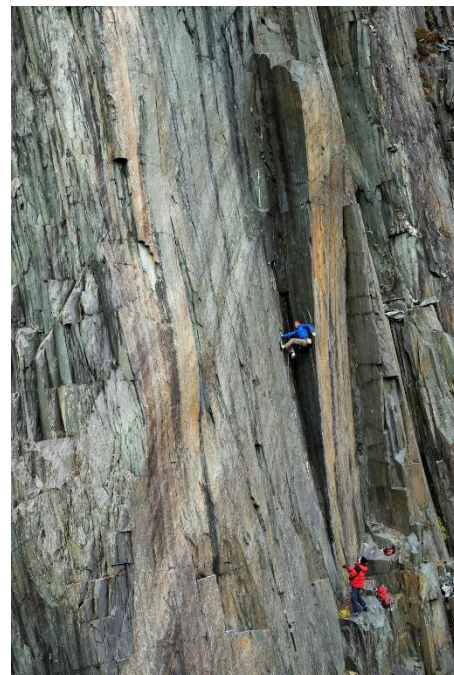
Chris & all the team at Save the Conwy

North Wales Bolt Fund

Glyn Hudson has been re-equipping some routes in Quarries and he has discovered some interesting - knackered bolts.

The Wall Within in the Lost Word is now rebolted and few other bad bolts have been replaced here and there.

The pictures show some bad stuff - one that is sticking out must have been placed wrong or hole too big as this type of bolt would need loads of loading (as with railway slab/wall - centre use etc.)



The routes on Quarryman Wall are currently mid-way through being re-bolted

Bolt fund has now purchased 2 x Dewalt battery grinders for cutting off old bolts - thanks to help from North Wales Limestone Guide book contributions and a very generous personal donation from one North Wales Climber - known locally as the 'Axle Attack its only 6c' man.

More help is needed to tidy up both coastal crags and the Slate quarries.

NWBF has also been active supporting Mid-Wales activists who have been busy doing some re-equipping at Llyn Brianne.

Chris Parkin

Snowdonia Society

Watkin Path set to benefit from pledge by RAW Adventures and Snowdonia Society.

1% for the Planet? Or 1% for Snowdon, perhaps – the mountain that works hard for Wales at work, rest and play. But more like 3% is the figure RAW Adventures donates to support the Snowdonia Society's work from sales of their 'Climb Snowdon' days.

RAW Adventures guide a lot of people up Snowdon. Each year they donate £1 for each of those people to the Snowdonia Society. This donation goes

to the Society's work on Snowdon and the surrounding area.

RAW Adventures' funding means the Snowdonia Society can organise more volunteer workdays on the mountain, clearing litter and maintaining paths to reduce erosion, damage and flooding.

Against this background of working together for Snowdon, these two organisations have decided to channel resources into desperately needed footpath work and pledge this year's support to the BMC crowdfunding campaign: Mend our Mountains.



This pledge, worth hundreds of pounds, is our way of supporting much needed path repairs on a mountain that receives a high volume of footfall, including our own feet! No amount of responsible group management and education will make us float above the path we're on.

Mend our Mountains has been in the news a lot since its launch in mid-March. Snowdonia has skin in this game, with the top section of the Watkin Path identified as one of the hotspots to benefit from upland path repair work.

Always a sensitive subject, people will ask whether better paths will simply encourage more pressure on this most popular of mountains. We asked BMC about this and were reassured by the answers we got:

"...design and specification for the pathwork would be agreed with the BMC before we fund it...All the work would comply with the standards agreed previously by the Upland Footpath Trust... the "path" is now in reality several paths – with considerable scarring and gullying across the south face...Many walkers are taking the direct line down the face from the summit, creating new paths and further erosion

on an area that should be of considerable botanical and conservation interest but which is being trampled by walkers spreading out to avoid eroded gullies and landslides."

RAW Adventures and the Snowdonia Society are pleased to pledge their financial support - maybe you can think of a way to support Mend Our Mountains?

John Harold

LLAMFF



The dust has settled on LLAMFF 2016 and we wanted to say a MASSIVE thank you. It was successful beyond anything we could have hoped. We sold out of our speakers like Kenton Cool and Leo Houlding. We showed an amazing mix of films including a range of premiers and Welsh language. We broke ground by highlighting barriers to adventure for everyone and supported young local adventurers like Tom Livingstone and Ash Dykes.

We raised money for Climbers Against Cancer, Llanberis Mountain Rescue and are looking to support some other local projects. We showcased the BMC Women in Adventure films managing to show them all in one amazing evening. Our sponsors realised value by selling products through local retailers and in restaurants and bars, it was a sell out. We couldn't have wished for any more.

However, more work is to be done. We have lessons learnt and look forward to applying them to 2017. The dates will be 3 - 5 March so book the time now. If you'd like to be involved, please email info@llamff.co.uk and we'll make a note for later in the year. We'll be focusing on inclusion for families and inspiring the next generation to adventure. Like us on Facebook and follow on Twitter to get the latest information.

We are excited. The Llanberis Mountain Film Festival is Wales' ONLY adventure

festival. Get on board. Get excited. Our next festival is going to be LEGENDARY.

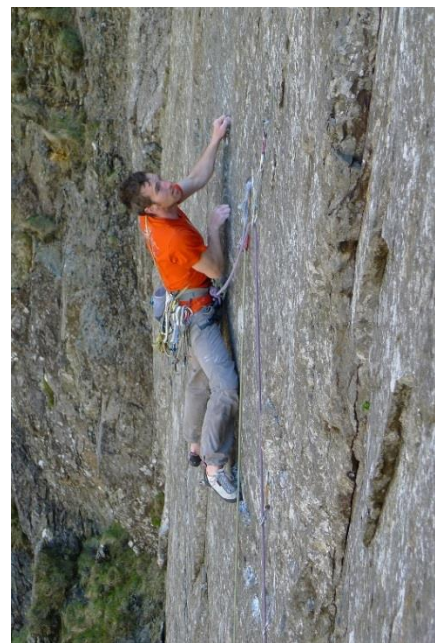
The Director Team

Climbing News

The North Wales rock scene has been surprisingly on the new route front this year and that has mostly been down to one man – James 'Caff' McHaffie. Earlier in the year he made the first ascent of the impressively steep and strenuous 'Gravity Wave' which went at E8 6c on the Chicama wall of Trearddur Bay. With reasonable protection and steep 'sport' style climbing it has already seen repeats from Alex Mason and Pete Robins as well as a very impressive flash ascent by Emma Twyford.

In the last week of March Caff also managed to make the first ascent of 'Track of the Shadow' and E7 6c on Carreg Wastad which takes the arête left of 'Shadow Wall' before tracking through 'Zangorilla'. Over at Tremadog Caff also managed the first ascent of the often looked at wall left of 'Sheer Resist'. Dubbed 'Ivy Flame' and graded at E7/8 6c this new addition is possibly Tremadog's toughest offering with bold and difficult climbing reliant on a couple of old and poor pegs.

With Spring coming fast, it's only a matter of time for the Welsh climbing scene to get going – finger's crossed for a dry Spring and Summer!



James McHaffie doing his stuff on Cloggy

5x60/Outdoor Partnership North Wales Schools Bouldering Competition

February and March sees the annual North Wales Schools Bouldering competitions return for the sixth year. North Gwynedd schools competed at the Beacon Climbing Wall on the 10th February with Ysgol Friars winning all categories. South Gwynedd competition was held 'Y Graig' Wall in Harlech on the 11th February and saw Ysgol Tywyn and Ardudwy go through in girls year 7/8 and Boys year 7/8 respectively. Ysgol y Moelwyn and Ardudwy went through in the Girls years 9/10/11 and Boys years 9/10/11 respectively. The Anglesey Final was held at the Indy on the 24th February and saw Amlwch win boys years 7/8 and Ysgol David Hughes win all other categories. The Final was held at the Indy on the 9th March. Ysgol friars took all the categories except the Boys 9/10/11, which went to Ysgol David Hughes.

Thanks must go out to the Indy, Beacon and Harlech walls for putting on great contests. The events are completely staffed by volunteers, so many thanks to all who helped and especially the Fast track / Centre assistants at PYB who gave up some time to help. Also thanks to the North Wales Youth Climbing Academy for being ambassadors for the days.

In total over 216 young people competed. It is hoped Conwy and Denbighshire will join us next year.

Access Notes

Eglwyseg Escarpment (Clwyd Limestone)

- No seasonal restrictions in place at Trevor Rocks this year (Peregrines not nested here for several years)
- Craig Arthur – check the approach signs and marker posts – the peregrines may have moved to a different location and the restricted area is slightly different to what is stated in the new guidebook.
- Independence Quarry – seasonal restrictions apply to the whole venue.

Ruthin Castle Quarry

- The landowner has stated that while he is not opposed to climbing on this cliff he cannot give permission for climbing and does not want the venue promoted. The advice for now is to be aware of the landowner's position and if approached to be polite. His concerns are mainly around the fear of liability but meetings are being arranged to alleviate his concerns.

Craig Bwlch y Moch

- The dangerous blocks on pitch one of One Step in the Clouds have now been removed (surprisingly and scarily easily).

Some loose rock remains and the approach path to Vector Buttress and beyond involves some scrambling over fresh loose rocks.

Craig Pen Trwyn, Great Orme

- Seasonal (holiday) restrictions apply here. No climbing above the Marine Drive (apart from Parisella's Cave area) until after 6pm on bank holiday weekends and during the period July 15th to Sept 8th. Climbers were reported climbing on Mayfair wall over Easter – this will jeopardise wider access here.

Pembrokeshire

- There were reports of climbers climbing within a restricted area on Range East – again please check the on-site notices and the leaflet at the car parks for the latest information.
- Next Range West briefing are :
1/4/16: Thursday evening 18:00;
26/5/16: Thursday evening 18:00;
28/5/16: Saturday (Whitsun BH weekend) 10:00;
23/07/16: Saturday 10:00.
If you were briefed in 2015, your pass will only be valid until 28/5/16 and will need to attend a 2016 briefing if you want to access Range West after that date.