

Bolt replacement proposal for Avon. Jan 2011.

1. Scope:

This proposal has three parts:

1.1. Like for like replacement of existing bolt runners, replacement and rationalisation of bolt belays in the New Quarry. Leading to possible upgrade of specific routes.

1.2. Replacing belay bolts on Main Wall on a like for like basis.

1.3. Installation of one to three bolt belays on the North Face of Suspension Bridge Buttress.

2. Location:

New Quarry, Main Wall, SBB

3. New Quarry:

Most of the lower off in the NQ are in a poor state, and many (excepting Martin Crockers eco bolts placed circa 1992) of the bolt runners are poor – many being 8mm caving bolts. This proposal aims to upgrade all the existing bolted lower offs and to rationalise them if necessary within the constraints of the quality of the rock and with the knowledge that many lower offs were shared for reasons of economy – in reality this may mean adding several new lower offs for routes such as ‘Night of the comic dead’ and ‘Van Diemens Land’.

Upgrading: The work in the NQ also has the potential to upgrade some routes slightly ie: adding limited numbers of new fixed gear to make routes safer, alter lines to avoid loose rock, compensate for the change in height of the quarry floor etc. Martin to his credit has already done a lot of research into this as part of his guidebook work. The idea would not be to create wholesale new sports routes, the quality of the rock in many areas does not allow for the creation of a ‘popular sports crag’ in the modern idiom. I also want to maintain the safe but runout feel of many of the routes.

4. Main Wall

A number of bolted or semi bolted belays exist. These bolts were placed for convenience or to back up existing quarry spikes. I propose removing existing bolts on the following and replacing with new: The Mal/Caprice, Kranz belay 1, Central Wall, Malpractice/Think Pink, Depravity.

Several other belays exist which I don't propose to replace unless others make an overwhelming case for it: Peryl - better to do the route in one long pitch and miss the mid height belay. Dawn Walk belay 2 - can use wires here.

5. Suspension Bridge Buttress, North Face:

Currently - and with no sign of change, nearly all routes on the buttress are obliged to retreat from one of three lower offs. Following the clearance of the North Face (thanks to the Bridge Trustees) in 2009, Steve Findlay and I climbed a number of new routes there and others have repeated some of the original routes. While it is never likely to be a popular venue, it is clearer than it has been for possibly 30 years and a number of worthwhile routes exist (by local standards). Prior to the clearing work there had been a number of mature trees on the upper ledges, which allowed easy retreat from the top of the routes. These were all felled and the stumps poisoned. Traversing off to SBB arête on one side is possible as is a traverse off into the gully on the Left. As vegetation grows back rapidly onto the upper ledges these are becoming increasingly painful and time consuming exercises. There is one fixed belay - rope around a tree stump suspended over a corner - this will inevitably rot and collapse in a few years time.

I therefore propose adding bolted belay stations above the cave on the Left - would serve routes from 'Builders of the new age' to 'The drain' and one high above the right hand side to serve the remaining routes, there may also be a case for a third located centrally above the Drain.

I have consulted with various locals and also Martin Crocker. I would intend that if MCs proposals - currently with the BMC, are accepted, then this work would form part of Martins regeneration project, otherwise it can stand alone.