

British Mountaineering Council

South West Area

Quarterly Regional Meeting

Date of Meeting:	19th October 2021
Type of Meeting:	Zoom video call
Time of Meeting:	1900
Chair:	Mark Kemball
Secretary:	Alan Dovey

Minutes

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies: Terry Gifford

2. Approve meeting minutes

19th July 2021 - Link to BMC Site

<https://community.thebmc.co.uk/GetFile.ashx?did=3627>

Agreed: Approved

3. BMC Members' Council: progress and update

Noted 1: Formerly the National Council. See link to BMC site for further information on the structure and work of this group. It is intended to achieve a shift in emphasis from that of governance to representation of interest groups.

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/bmc-members-council>

South West Area Representatives:

Helen Wilson

Philip Wilson

At this point in 2022, Helen will have completed a three year term and a replacement will be required. Anyone interested should discuss the position with the Chair as soon as possible.

4. Anstey's Cove

Noted 1: Rob Dyer – Access & Conservation Officer (England) had received an email from the landowners.

Noted 2: On visiting the site, the 'groundworks' look to be stable and with growth during spring and summer has delivered a covering that aesthetically at least has done much to improve the overall 'view' of the area. Trees that had been affected were Ash which in common with experience throughout the UK have been subject to the problems of 'die back'. Despite the fact that many ash trees will be affected by this disease, any future tree felling can only happen in consultation with TCCT. If users identify trees which they think need felling, contact the local BMC access rep or BMC access officer rather than taking individual action.

Noted 3: The local Anstey's team have attempted to make contact with the Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust, as yet no response has been received. Efforts will continue.

Noted 4: The area has been very busy with the numbers of climbers seemingly much higher than in previous years.

Noted 5: Thanks to Victoria Roberts for organising a very successful beach clean with a great turnout. These events show that we (climbers) do our best to protect and preserve the greater environment in which we climb.

5. Wintour's Leap

Noted 1: 6 of the routes for re-equipping were completed in September. Work of this nature is carried out from Autumn onwards to avoid damage to sensitive flora and fauna in the summer. The work was mostly to lower grade (as in difficulty) and popular routes, many of which had very old bolts/pegs that had been cemented in place. The work looks to replace these as sensitively as possible whilst retaining best practice with respect to safety.

Noted 2: In terms of finance £1,800.00 has been raised of which £400.00 has been spent. Additional fundraising activity is planned focussing on the clubs that are active within the area and using Facebook as the medium which has proven to be very effective

Noted 3: In terms of operational processes there have been some minor issues but a vote of thanks was offered to the steering group who have worked so effectively.

Noted 4: There had been two accidents one of which required a formal rescue. This was as a result of two blocks being dislodged. Care should always be taken in this area.

6. Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) Consultation

Noted 1: The DNPA is proposing a range of changes to byelaws and are in the process of a public consultation process. See below a link to the BMC response.

<https://thebmc.co.uk/Handlers/DownloadHandler.ashx?id=2066>

Noted 2: That there were many strong feelings about these changes (many of which were not directly related to climbing specifically). It was stressed that should individuals wish to express their views effectively the advice was that this should be delivered directly to the DNPA consultation website link. (No link provided as consultation closed prior to Minutes production)

7. Tintagel Head

Noted 1: Two (non-local) climbers were informed that climbing had been banned at Tintagel Head. The reasons given were that a risk assessment had been undertaken by the site owners and that in the interests of public safety this was now forbidden. There had been no prior discussion or consultation with the BMC.

Noted 2: The BMC has expressed great concern at this approach and a formal letter has been drafted by the BMC Patrons, which when approved, will be sent to the CEO of English Heritage who are the owners. At this stage it was not appropriate to release the letter's contents as experience has shown it is usually more effective to discuss and come to an agreed position between the two parties before public statements are made. The BMC is seeking a meeting with English Heritage as soon as possible to seek a way forward.

8. Youth Climbing Series

Noted 1: The competition is run across 8 regions encompassing 32 venues. It has been Covid-affected with 25% less competitors than the previous year. The grand final is yet to take place and even confirming a venue is proving a challenge due to staffing requirements as well as managing and controlling the Covid measures.

Noted 2: For the competitors and parents there have been concerns re both the rules and the costs. With respect to the rules there was confusion with respect to a number of issues including, safety checks, isolation procedures, and the attendance rules for parents/guardians. The costs for the final are an issue with travel and accommodation in addition to the costs already incurred may be prohibitive in some instances.

Noted 3: The BMC is committed to the program at the National level with Zoe Spriggins in position as 'Competitions Program Manager'. A new commercial officer will be appointed next year and one of the focusses will be on obtaining sponsorship for the program. It is important to be aware that this will still present challenges as the preferred option for manufacturers/suppliers is to provide products as prizes rather than funding.

9. AOB

10. Date of next meeting

Noted 1: To be confirmed.