

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL
HARRISON'S ROCKS MANAGEMENT GROUP (HRMG)
Monday 8th October 2018

Minutes

Present

Sarah Cullen (Chair)
Tim Skinner
Bob Moulton
Rik Payne
Daimon Beail
Emma Harrington
Adrian Paisey
Mark Brewster
Michael Phelan

Welcome & Apologies

SC Welcomed the group and in particular Michael Phelan who has been co-opted onto the group. Apologies were received from Rob Dyer and Kate Harris

Minutes of the Meeting on 14/05/2018

BM will send out risk assessment for HRMG views

BM will update RD on the RAD

RD was going to write instructors re. good practise, we're not sure if this has been done yet
RD and BM to carry out cement survey at Harrison's in the new year

AP commented that Laurence from Bowles had mentioned that there is a frequency required by law that bolts should be tested and will ask Laurence to expand on this.

Action BM/RD/AP

Matters Arising not covered below

Rik's talked about his suggestion that the chair of the HRMG should be a paper member of the LMG – Bob has written to Martin Wragg and will discuss this with him.

Action BM

Terms of reference HRMG

The group had some discussion on Terms of Reference; RP referred to the fact that the National Council (under whatever name it will have at the time) will be reviewing the terms of reference of all the BMC's committee's and associated groups later this year. BM has given this some thoughts in anticipation of this review for both HRMG and the Sandstone Open Meeting and he had shared these with SC, AP and Graham Adcock, and

more recently with both RD and Martin Wragg in case questions were raised at the LMG open meeting. BM hoped that these would be taken into account in the National Council. The group agreed that the Terms of Reference needs to be reviewed and updated.

Harrison's Rocks Work Report

- a) **Cement Work.** No cement work has been carried out – rope groove needs attention near Deadwood Crack. SC to ask Frank Shannon if he will do it.

Action SC/AP

- b) **Resin Work**

SC reported that she made a list with Steve Jackson of the resin work that needs doing. Working at Heights – RD has drawn up a draft method statement. We will need one or two more people who can be trained to help with the resin work. The understanding of the group is that once the method statement is finalised (it will need to be considered by the LMG) it needs to be read and understood, and the advice followed, then the work can go ahead. Clarification needs to be sought from the BMC as to whether or not the 'qualified' volunteers will be required to be approved and/or trained by the BMC or whether that is something we can do locally. The group thanked to RD for taking the time to draw up the draft method statement.

Action SC/RD

- c) **Anchors**

DB has reviewed the bolts that need placing and has produced a report to show what needs to be looked at. Ejector - needs clearing at the top, perhaps change the position so that soil doesn't collect and cover it up. Mantlepiece – there's no bolt there at the moment – the trees are quite far back. Blue Peter – needs a bolt and there is a space for a bolt, there are only tiny trees in that area – the original anchor was a tree stump and that's now gone. Quarterdome – two bolts need to be placed, there is a sapling at the back but it's not ideal, and the back bolt on Giant's Staircase is currently being used at the wrong angle. Pigtail slabs – ideal for beginner groups and to avoid rope grooves caused by long rigging ropes from further back. Wailing Wall back bolt needs to be replaced where it was popped out. Right Under Your Nose – needs a bolt. Forget-Me-Not needs to be replaced, these are very old and have suffered erosion of the rock around them. Spider Wall - needs a bolt on the lower ledge to prevent rope groove damage on the edge. Pull Over – we'll have a look. Unclimbed Wall – remove old set. Old set needs to be cored out and re-filled, smoothly so as not to create any sharp edges which could potentially snag a rigging rope from the new bolt further back. Solstice – currently there is no bolt, and the back bolt on Zig-Zag is being used. The area between Crucifix Wall and Birch Tree Wall – DB is in the process of clearing this area at the top to make it more accessible and will eventually propose putting in some bolts here as well. MB will have a look at these. Two Toed Sloth – tricky to bolt for the beginner route. SC will meet with DB and have a look at this.

There was some discussion on the number of anchor placements that have been suggested and whether we should be educating newcomers to the 'sandstone way'

rather than simply making it too easy, although the group generally agreed that spreading the routes out and encouraging people to climb along the crag helps alleviate the problems of too much traffic and subsequent erosion in certain areas.

MB would like to have a look at some of the suggested new anchor areas before they go ahead.

Action DB/SC/MB

d) Ground Erosion Maintenance & Woodland Management

The area to be cut this year is below Sliding Corner and will be done w/c 5th November. MB to check which trees we want to keep. SC reported that the silver birch at the top of The Sewer will be removed at the same time as it's hanging over a path and could become dangerous. SC also reported that we are getting quotes to remove 'The' fallen fir tree as it has now been dead for some time. RD has obtained some advice from John Coe who is a professional member of the Arboricultural Association on who to approach for the sensitive removal of the tree, given that potentially it could damage the rock. The tree surgeon who we have already approached suggested taking in some machinery to winch the tree to prevent damage to the rocks, but unfortunately the new neighbours do not want to allow vehicular access through their field. When SC contacted the neighbours they said that they have contacted the BMC to tell them that they will be removing a gate, however we are not certain to which gate they are referring (there are three in that area, and one of the gates belongs to us for the Emergency Services to gain access). SC to ask RD for copy of the letter from the neighbour to ascertain which gate they mean.

MB has identified some trees blackthorn, hawthorn, sweet chestnut, native, good for insect life or bird life, not growing tall, single stems. TS has a few saplings at home that we can plant. Sweet Chestnut can be coppiced and then we have a good supply of wood for revetment and path works. MB will forward the names of the suggested trees to the group. Saplings may get swamped by bracken, so MB suggested buying larger young trees. MB will look into costing.

Action MB/TS

e) Signs & Code of Conduct

DB noted that toothbrushes are still being used by boulderers using a clipstick. MP noted that boulderers don't feel that they are part of the BMC climbing fraternity, but more to bouldering groups, for example indoor bouldering wall groups, so to reach these climbers it would be worth contacting the indoor bouldering walls. Getting leaflets out to the walls and a discussion on social media took place as well. It was suggested that social media is perhaps a better way of getting messages out to younger people rather than by email, as younger people don't seem to open their emails as much as older people.

f) Isolated Buttress Access

Nothing much to report on the Isolated Buttress as this had been discussed at the 'special' open meeting at Bowles the day before, with the LMG. We are waiting for the LMG's final decision after their tele-conference meeting on Tuesday evening.

6) Health & Safety

- a) Any reports to the BMC
Nothing to report

7) Financial Report (Harrison's)

Utility charge – BM will query with Alan

Action BM

8) Stone Farm Rocks

a) Woodland Management & Ground Erosion Work

Michael Phelan requested a woodland management plan, erosion needs a plan with photographs and some back-up information. MP will draw up a report. A consent will need to be obtained from Natural England for any work that we want to do as it's an SSSI. MP reported that there is a lot of holly that is taking over. BM suggested a site meeting with English Nature so we can discuss what needs doing. BM noted that Ian Nettleton suggested asking another MSc student from Portsmouth to study resin work and the group agreed that they'd like to ask him to look into this. [Subsequently BM asked for confirmation of the points made by LMG members at the site meeting and he understands that these will be discussed at the LMG meeting next month.]

Action MP/SC/BM

b) Resin Work

Resin work is being carried out by MP and Theo Parr.

c) Signs

Eventually we will change the location of the sign and we have asked the BMC to come up with a new sign with new graphics

Action RD

d) Anchors

Tree stumps – RD had said that we will ask permission to put in bolts in place of the tree stumps, which are rotting and will soon no longer be any good for belays.

Action as for a) above

9) AOB

AP talked about group use and suggested surveying percentage of use by groups and individuals to ascertain usage of the rocks. The group will have some thought about this and we will discuss again at the January meeting and perhaps ask the SVG to get involved. AP will take the lead.

Action AP

Still issues with groups not using mats, this needs to be communicated more.
Rik Payne announced that he will be moving away in the near future and the group would like to thank him for all the assistance he has given us on the HRMG particularly with discussions regarding the Isolated Buttress

10) Date and Venue for the next Meeting

The next meeting will be on 14th January at the Crown, 7pm, food will be served at 6:30pm promptly.