

HRMG Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on October 19th 2016 at The Crown Inn, Groombridge

Present:	Sarah Cullen	Chair
	Tim Skinner	BMC
	Adrian Paisey	BMC
	Bob Moulton	BMC
	Daimon Beail	BMC
	Emma Harrington	BMC
	Mark Brewster	BMC

Bolt testing Stone Farm and Harrison's due 2019

Action

1 Welcome and Apologies

Rob Dyer couldn't make it to the meeting but did offer to be available by telephone – unfortunately there was no signal at the pub.

2 Minutes of the Last Meeting (17/05/2015)

No comments

3 Matters Arising not covered in other items below

None to report

4 Harrison's Rocks Work Reports

4a Cement Work

BM/TS

TS reported on Greg Balding's report and said that it contains some useful information. He reported that the longer you make the anchors the better; the diameter is significant in terms of strength. He recommends a product plus an accelerator that soaks in. Needs to be applied and then left for a while before putting in the anchor.

BM said that we ought to have another cement inspection, to note any loose cement/cement work that needs to be done and to ask the BMC as to how often this should be done. although the group felt that there's nothing urgent at the moment.

AP reported that Loz is doing some bolting at Bowles under the governing body, LOLER (HSE they are bound by) – he's going to do a

test. Adrian will work with him and share any information that is useful.

4b Resin Work

SC reported that Steve Jackson (who has been doing the resin work for us, along with Martin at Stone Farm) that he will continue to do the resin work through the autumn and get an early start on it in the spring. He said that there are two routes on the Isolated boulder left to do and two non urgent routes remaining at Harrisons from the original list.

AP noted that the traverse on the Buttress needs some work.

4c Anchors

**SC/DB/
MB/AP**

AP reported that there is an old anchor on Squat Tower that he saw someone abseiling off creating a strain on the bolt at an awkward angle that provided an upward pull; SC said that this anchor is used for a very easy beginner's route, so she will check it.

TS said that he had cut off the old bolt on Bow Window. MB suggested cutting a circle of metal to cover the old 'stubbs'. Grants Wall area – several anchors here should come out and new ones put in further back. TS still unsure on a perfect method to remove old bolts. 'Coring' was discussed, and then covering over afterwards. MB said he would look to see if he had some suitable drill bits. AP offered to do it this weekend. TS suggested they do the unclimbed wall bolt.

DM suggested we can buy an angle grinder for this purpose once MB has tried it.

DB will do an action plan once AP reports back from meeting with Loz regarding methods for placing anchors.

SC talked about the problem that has arisen on Two Toed Sloth now the tree branch has been removed. The new anchor is perfectly placed for the climb, however a variation of this climb is used by beginners and she has seen photographs of inappropriate setups for the easy version, causing damage to the rock. TS and DB said that they will meet with SC to discuss a good position for a new anchor to alleviate this problem.

4d Woodland Management and Ground Erosion Work

SC talked about quote for tree work in compartment E and AP suggested that we get at least another quote. **SC**

BM pointed out that area of compartment E on map has a blank area next to it which should be cut as well. SC said she will ask the tree surgeons if they will cut this area at the same time as the area next to it, in November.

The group talked about replanting some nice, slow growing trees to fill the gaps where blank areas (now looking sparse) have arisen as a result of the tree felling. BM suggests spraying the bracken and perhaps doing some re-planting. TS thinks August is the right time to do it. SC will find someone to come and do this, along with keeping on top of the Himalayan Balsam removal. There are also small sycamores growing close to the rocks that need to be dealt with soon.

SC has a quote (£360) to replace the steps opposite Grants Crack, as the existing ones are old and the gully will eventually wash away. Hopefully this will be done soon.

4e Signs and Code of Conduct

BM/SC

The new signs final draft is now done. Update on Code of Conduct – BM reported that BMC have literature called Bouldering Sense, and that we should adopt these points and manipulate it to apply to sandstone bouldering. The following points were discussed:-

Brushing – discussion on Boulderer's v Climbers and wording for Bouldering Sense – Use only a soft cloth very gently – no toothbrushes or boulder brushes. BM said he will see what climbers think at the Open Meeting at the weekend – SC to follow up with Bowles.

4f Isolated Buttress

SC/MB

AP reported that people are using all sorts of combinations of set-ups. Bolts are being abused. Concerned for shock load on the bolts. AP thinks there is a problem.

The rock on the traverse access to the Buttress is eroding and needs some significant repair work.

SC proposed that a bridge should be implemented to prevent further damage to the rock and she also had concerns about safety. She felt that limited access to the Buttress was an elitist attitude amongst a minority of climbers and would prefer to see an inclusive attitude to provide access to climbers for climbing.

MB expressed that he would like to maintain the sense of adventure that he has historically enjoyed at the rocks, to allow people to continue to make a judgment on their own safety, and would prefer to not implement a bridge.

SC said that although that the majority of people at the Sandstone Open meeting were in favour of not having a bridge, those attending are the minority of climbers who are prepared to do the solo. She has spent this year asking climbers in general what they think about a bridge and said that the majority were in favour.

There were strong opinions for and against the bridge amongst the group. After a long discussion the group agreed that any data that we have collected on the current access arrangement may be skewed as Frank Shannon, a dedicated local climber attends the rocks every weekend and provides rope access for other climbers, making it easy for them to use the buttress; it was agreed that if access and on-hand guidance was not provided we would have a more accurate picture on what the majority of climbers would do.

The group agreed to continue to monitor the situation until this time next year. Signage will be placed adjacent to the access point on the Buttress to re-iterate that bolts are for top roping only and that the traverse method that is currently being used has been deemed unsafe by the BMC. MB will draft this. SC will talk to FS and ask him not to leave his access rope when he is not climbing on the buttress for the monitoring period so that we can more accurately assess the situation and provide a amenable solution.

5 Health and Safety

5a Reports of any Accidents

There were no accidents to report.

6 Financial Report

HRMG Budget

Nothing much to report - there are still items on the accounts that can be removed, for example all references to the Car Park and Soft Rock.

7 Stone Farm Rocks

7a Woodland Management & Ground Erosion work

SC

The fence at the entrance to the rocks needs replacing and it was agreed that a post and rail fence will be placed here as it's such a lovely view across the valley. SC to get some quotes.

7b Resin Work

See 4b.

7c **Signs**
As above

7d **Anchors**
As above

8 **AOB**

There was a BMC Land Management Group meeting coming up, which BM thought that he would be unlikely to be going and if so he would submit a report. BM also reported that he was a trustee of the BMC Land and Property Trust, which had been set up so that the BMC could own Harrison's. The BMC were now proposing to expand the remit of the trust and to transfer some money from a bequest to the BMC to enable it to buy a new crag should the need arise, and also that BM would no longer be a trustee. BM had no objection to this provided that he or a replacement from the Sandstone area continued to be on the LMG.

9 **Date of Next Meeting**
Wednesday 11th January 2017