

**BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL**  
**HARRISON'S ROCKS MANAGEMENT GROUP (HRMG)**  
**Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019**

**Minutes**

**Present**

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

**1) Welcome & Apologies**

SC welcomed Chris Stone to the meeting, CS has taken Rik's place on the HRMG. CS is the chair of the London and South East Area and also a member of the BMC's National Council.

**2) Minutes of the Meeting on 08/10/2018**

No comments were made on the previous minutes.

**3) Matters Arising not covered below**

CS said he can help with a survey to assess numbers using the rocks. AP to liaise with CS.

Rik Payne had previously suggested that the chair of the HRMG should be a paper member of the Land Management Group (LMG). BM said that he has raised this with the LMG and it will be looked at as part of the BMC's review of the terms of reference of its committees.

CS asked if any terms of reference exist for HRMG. BM had a draft version written in 2005, and would send a copy to CS and will copy it to all HRMG members. There was some discussion on Terms of Reference and how the BMC would do the review. It was understood that HRMG would have an input on this.

**Action AP/CS**

#### **4) Harrison's Rocks Work Report**

##### **a) Cement Work**

SC said that there is little point asking 'non-qualified' people to carry out work 'at height' as it cannot yet be done under the terms of the working at height method statement which has not yet been approved, although it is in its final draft form. SC had spoken to RD who had said that four or five local 'experts' can be 'qualified' by HRMG to work within the terms of the method statement for working at height and if other people need to be trained or replace them, they can be taught by the current local 'qualified' volunteers. SC asked the group for final feedback on the Working at Height Method Statement and would do likewise with Steve Jackson will give approval of the document to RD subject to any amendments within one week.

**Action**

All/SC

##### **b) Resin Work**

As above (4a)

##### **c) Anchors**

DB said that he hopes to put in the new anchors (proposed at the last meeting) in March. MB is unsure about a couple of the proposed areas for new anchors and will have a look and report back to DB. The old anchor on Unclimbed Wall is still hanging out and needs removing – TS, DB, EH & MB will drill out the old bolt and 'cap' it off to leave a flush finish and would replace the back-up anchor above Wailing Wall, if necessary before the bridge is in place.

**Action TS, DB, EH & MB**

##### **d) Ground Erosion Maintenance & Woodland Management**

SC reported that the tree felling work had been carried out below Sliding Corner in November and that there was good turnout of volunteers on the following weekend. A short discussion was had re the footpath running up to Long Layback and it was decided to keep this path blocked as people are using the nearer (to the north end) one.

SC has asked Lukas to quote for taking off the bracken and repairing the fence where necessary.

TS has planted four trees (hazel, field maple and a couple of sweet chestnuts) and will let us know where they are.

MB will let us know prices for the other trees that he has suggested and will be planting this year.

AP said that there is a dead tree at the top of Eyelet. SC will seek advice from a tree expert on what to do with it.

SC reported that the Silver Birch has been removed from the top of The Sewer and that we are waiting on a method statement to remove the Fallen Tree; this will need to be done with great care so as not to damage the rock. BM will inform the LMG about the proposed removal of the tree. DB raised the question of whether we should tell people in advance that we were taking down the tree as it has been a significant landmark for some time. It was established that this had been included in the report to the October Open Meeting and AP would make sure that this was in the minutes for the meeting

**Action TS/MB/SC/BM/AP**

**e) Signs & Code of Conduct**

Stone Farm sign will become a template for Harrison's Rocks

**f) Isolated Buttress Access**

A pre-application for a bridge has been sent in to Wealden by RD and he will let us know just as soon as he hears anything back. Meanwhile BM thought it should be on the WDC website.

**Action RD**

**5) Health & Safety**

**a) Any reports to the BMC**

AP reported that an ambulance had been called as someone had fallen off North Boulder but didn't have any further information.

**6) Financial Report (Harrison's)**

There were no comments on the financial report.

**7) Stone Farm Rocks**

**a) Woodland Management & Ground Erosion Work**

MP has been working with BM on a management plan for Stone Farm Rocks. The group had a short discussion on placement of the new sign and it was agreed that it should be placed in good view near the Inaccessible Boulder. Tree stumps – Natural England (NE) were happy for us to go ahead on the removal of the rotten tree stumps following a site meeting with BM and MP. They had a positive site meeting and BM is confident that we will only need Consents for things like chopping down trees, removing the tree stumps and bringing the boulders up from the foot of the slope, which could affect wildlife habitats. Revetment work needs repairing. Ongoing revetment work will need to be carried out which NE are happy for us to do. Hippo buttress tree cover – NE are aware of the problem and HRMG thought that a felling licence would not be required - MP to check with Malcolm McPherson. NE will be coming back to us on this and also use of their logo on the sign. Ongoing maintenance – there's a rotten holly tree that needs to be dealt

with and again we are waiting on permission to do this. Path maintenance is ongoing. Resin work – NE are in favour of resin work so we can carry on with this. MP reported his idea of creating composting areas – fern and leaves etc., over a couple of seasons to enrich the soil when making revetments. No new rope damage has been seen and the crag is becoming increasingly popular with boulderers. Car parking on the bend of the road is seeing a lot of litter. SC suggested that climbers are made aware of the litter problem and DB will put out an article about it asking climbers to clean up the litter there if they see it. MP reported that the litter problem at the crag itself has improved. Fence and boundary – our fence has effectively become redundant because the neighbours have put up a high deer fence around their land for wine growing. The group discussed marking the boundary at the top of the rocks on the west side as it is not currently represented – MP will put a stake in the ground.

4D who operate out of Blackland Farm are running a DofE gold course and want to do some environmental conservation work. They've asked if they can do anything at Stone Farm. MP has received a risk assessment and copy of their own insurance and will prepare a list of voluntary work for them to do.

Anchors to replace the tree stumps will be looked at once the stumps are removed - to be included when asking for NE Consent. BM said that he would send MP a copy of the Consent that was given for the work to be done early in 2018. MP said that he would need some funding only for chain saw work and for a wood chipping machine to put some wood chips on the ground.

#### **Action MP/BM**

##### **b) Resin Work**

The ground level resin work carried out by MP and Theo Parr looks good and has stabilised the rock well.

##### **c) Signs**

There was a discussion on chalk usage and how it shouldn't be used and marks left on the rock. Chalk has become even more of a problem than it was in the past because not only does it become fashionable to use a lot of chalk, particularly with boulderers, but there is the additional problem that it is also fashionable to brush the layers of chalk off the holds with a harsh boulder brush.

It was agreed that more emphasis should be put on chalk as well as brush use on the sign and less emphasis on 'no trad gear', although it was felt that this should still be on the sign as new incoming climbers may not already know that it is a 'no-trad' environment.

DB will send SC new photographs to replace a couple of those on the draft and SC will then send them with the new ideas to RD for the changes to the draft sign. We know that NE want to have their logo on our sign but are waiting to hear from

them if they want any changes made to our proposed wording. The group thought that NE's logo on the sign along with notification that the crag is classified as SSSI should be a priority to maintain the good relationship that BM and MP have built with them.

**Action DB/SC/RD**

**d) Anchors**

The only anchors discussed for Stone Farm were those that will hopefully replace the tree stumps that will be removed (see 7a above). MP to inform relevant members of HRMG when the stumps have been removed.

**Action MP**

**9) AOB**

CS said that he thinks that the HRMG minutes are not being put on the BMC website. He will investigate and make sure that they get put on there – SC to send him previous minutes for uploading.

DB raised an issue about what will happen with SVG email data in line with GDPR and AP suggested that Graham Adcock emails the people on his list and asks volunteers if they want to be part of a new list that can perhaps be held by the BMC. DB was concerned that Graham's list could get lost if it is not held more publicly. AP will speak to Graham about whether the BMC can copy the list and make it GDPR compliant with GA continuing to use his list.

SC to talk to the Boarshead as a potential alternative venue with good wifi to reduce journeys for RD

CS suggested combining L&SE meeting with the Open Meeting which the group thought was a good idea.

**Action SC/AP/DB**

**10) Date and Venue for the next Meeting**

The next meeting will be at [to be decided – either the Crown or the Boarshead], on 20<sup>th</sup> May at 7pm, food will be served at 6:30pm promptly.

**Action SC**