

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL
HARRISON'S ROCKS MANAGEMENT GROUP (HRMG)
Monday 17th November 2019

Minutes

Present

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

- 1) Welcome & Apologies**
- 2) Minutes of the Meeting on 13th May 2019**
All ok
- 3) Matters Arising not covered below**
Nothing arising
- 4) Harrison's Rocks Work Report**
- a) and b) Cement and Resin work**

SC reported that there is some cement work required to the right of Tame Variant. She and RD will have a look at this on their site visit tomorrow. BM reported that Graham Adcock has said that he will do the resin work when he retires in the spring. SC to liaise with GA to see how to move forward with this and if he has anyone in mind to help him. SC to ask him if he will be able to do the cement work as well, if any needs to be done, although BM thought that it would be better to have separate people/teams doing the two types of work. DB will compile a spreadsheet of outstanding resin work and SC will give him the list she has so far. AP will ask Gwain, SC to ask Frank to find out if either would be interested in helping with this work.

Action SC, DB, AP, RD

b) Anchors

DB reported that 45 anchors had been placed this year and that this year's work plan for anchor placement is complete. Further work needs doing and DB will distribute a list to HRMG. AP offered to cement in any holes that are left as this will look better than the resin. The group thanked DB for the work he and EH had done on the anchors.

Anchor testing needs to be done next year. DB asked if we could do sections each year rather than doing it all in one hit which, particularly for Harrison's would make the job easier.

DB would also like to make a note of how many of each type of bolt we have. The group looked at examples of the different types of anchors that we've placed over the years. There could be insurance implications if we don't do the testing within a reasonable time, which is currently thought by the BMC to be about 3 years but this could be amended, particularly to allow for doing the bolt testing on a sectional basis. The need to have a minimum net weight for the two people on the end of the rope was also discussed. MP said he'd be happy to carry out the testing at Stone Farm and to document it.

RD made it clear that from an insurance point of view it was important to have the testing regime documented and that this could allow for a variation in the frequency of testing. DB, EH, AP, TS and MP agreed to get involved with the BMC to produce formal protocol as to procedures on anchors and testing.

Action DB, EH, AP, TS, MP

c) Ground Erosion Maintenance & Woodland Management

SC reported on quotes and the group agreed the work doesn't need to be done until January or February. RD will have a look at the area tomorrow and see what he thinks. SC offered to get some more quotes in if required. The group agreed to go with Reuben's quote.

MB said he will be planting some new small trees this year and that he would look into using tubes to stop the bracken killing off the saplings.

Bracken is a bit of a problem; it can kill new trees and also it has grown over the fence again, although there is little we can do to control it. RD advised that spraying was no longer an option. SC suggested that the fence should be looked at when the Himalyan Balsam is strimmed along with the path strimming in the spring and in the autumn next year.

Action SC, MB

d) Signs & Code of Conduct

SC reported that she's almost run out of code of conduct leaflets. They are held at Chimera.

A draft sign for Harrison's had been sent round to the group and approved, and RD said he will get them printed.

DB noted that Weir Wood was spelt wrong on the Stone Farm sign and RD noted it for the next print.

MB volunteered to put the new signs up

Action MB, RD

e) Isolated Buttress Access

The architect has done his drawings and the planning application has been submitted to Wealden District Council. We are waiting for the application to be put on the WDC website, which will tell us the date for objections to be made, which if they are, will be displayed on the website.

5) Health & Safety

Since the last meeting, Sam Taylor, a local 19-year-old had had an accident whilst soloing on Unclimbed Wall. The final hold broke when he pulled up on it with both hands and he landed on the ground below causing significant damage to his feet and also some damage to his spine. Three members of the HRMG were present.

It was agreed that we should make clear two or three paths to allow for evacuation from certain points along the Rocks down to the lower path. In this case the evacuation was made down the path below the Isolated Buttress, and the accuracy of the line for this path on the map needed to be checked before the new signs were made up. RD said that he would check this on his site visit the following day. There should also be a dialogue with the Rescue services to see what information they needed to know from us, particularly as regards to the Air Ambulance landing, as in this case the helicopter pilot almost gave up.

RD reported that he records incidents for Land Management Group and there's also a separate BMC reporting system for the general public to use.

AP reported a near miss on West Wall due to poor belaying. RD asked AP to send in a report on the matter.

Action AP, SC, RD

6) Financial Report (Harrison's)

BM will do this from information provided by Alan Brown once a year on a single page when we have all the costs in and therefore it will be easier to understand.

Action BM

7) Stone Farm Rocks

a) Woodland Management & Ground Erosion Work

MP is limited for time over the next few months and so doesn't want to commit to too much other than the tree felling and getting some volunteers out to tidy up. He said that there's not a great deal of work to do at the moment. He'd like to do the tree work in February and the following clear up as a BMC work day. Before that he will think about the trees and make a plan prior to getting quotes and beginning work. Beyond March MP will have more time to continue. MP reported that the revetment repair, below Curling Crack, had been done, although it is yet to be filled in, and it seems to be naturally doing so. Nothing urgent at Stone Farm. Tree stumps have been removed.

Action MP, DB

b) Resin Work

Resin work will resume in spring.

Action MP

c) Signs

One more sign to go up – MP will do this on the next work day.

Action MP

d) Anchors

See 7a, DB will have look at placing anchors in place of the removed Tree Stumps in March

Action DB

8) Area meeting venue and 'mini' one day climbing / walking festival

CS has provided a draft paper on a Southern Sandstone Festival that he would like to hold in September next year. He wants to make it a festival, promote code of conduct and talking about specific sandstone issues, getting more people engaged. CS's proposal that a working group be set up was agreed with SC being the HRMG member for the group. The group decided that Saturday would be the best day given that they can dip in and dip out of activities and they can stay for a drink in the evening.

The group agreed to support the event, and would ideally like to centre it around Harrison's, as a BMC owned crag rather than Bowles, with a barrel of Harveys beer, although the details of the day can be decided later. Meanwhile SC would check the availability of the room at Bowles. It was agreed that the we should separate the

Open Meeting from the BMC area meetings in some way, although one could follow immediately after the other, although it was thought that many might want to attend both meetings

Action CS

9) AOB

Campaign re. code of conduct – RD talked about a changing behaviours conference that the BMC held recently which was useful. He said that he would arrange some filming, social media clips for key issues in two stages and would use existing material early next year to start the campaign. We would then be looking for some local ‘hero’s’, who are well known and active on Southern Sandstone, to star in the films. He would need a strong local input for both stages, particularly the latter as he wouldn’t have time to get involved in the detail.

SC asked the group to please make sure that they let her know in plenty of time if they are unable to make it to a meeting in future as four members of the group sent their apologies after the agenda had been sent out for the October meeting (postponed until this day).

Forestry Commission ‘Stakeholder’ meeting

SC reported that there will be a Forestry Commission update meeting tomorrow regarding the car park to which all of the HRMG had been invited. She and RD will be attending.

Car Park

SC reported that the Forestry Commission (FC) have decided to close the car park during the winter months from 5pm in the evenings until 7am in the mornings. This will help to control anti-social behaviour after dark in the car park. The group asked for clarification on exact dates for winter months and whether there are any plans for closure during the rest of the year. SC to bring it up at the FC meeting tomorrow.

Action SC

10) Date and Venue for the next Meeting

The next meeting will be on 20th January 2020 at the Boarshead, 7pm, food will be served at 6:30pm promptly.