

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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HARRISONS ROCKS MANAGEMENT GROUP (HRMG)

Minutes of the meeting held on October 14th 2009 at Evolution Climbing Wall,
Plumyfeather Farm, Lye Green at 19:00.

Present:	Tim Skinner	Chair
	Bob Moulton	BMC
	Geoff Pearson	BMC
	Steve Durkin	BMC
	Johanna Howell	Wealden DC
	Nigel Head	BMC
	Chris Tullis	Site Warden
	Martin Bryce	BMC
	Sarah Cullen	BMC
	Tim Daniells	BMC
	Jim Clarkson	Local Resident

Action

- 1 Welcome and Apologies**
TS welcomed Jim Clarkson to the group.
- 2 Minutes of the Last Meeting (19/05/09)**
These were agreed.
- 3 Matters Arising not covered in other items below**
- 3a Replacement for Sarah Butler** TS had contacted Sarah and she had suggested asking Jim Clarkson to join, which he had kindly agreed to do.
- 4 Future Ownership and Management Arrangements**
- 4a The Rocks** BM reported that the transfer of the freehold of the rocks from Sport England to the BMC had finally taken place. He also said that the BMC should contact the Forestry Commission about 2014, when it takes back the lease on the car park from Sport England. The BMC had appointed an Access Officer (Elfyn Jones) who would have some responsibility for our area and would be visiting. BMC was planning to set up a Land & Property Trust with a maintenance fund to run its crags. This had implications for plans by us to set up a Southern Sandstone trust.
- 4b The Car Park** CT said he had met someone doing an electrical survey who said the condition survey promised by Sport England had been done, but without speaking to CT. BM said Sport England should be told what we regarded as work needed. **BM**
- 4c The Campsite** TS had checked with Alan Brown at the BMC that the car park and campsite monies were being kept separate but had received no reply – he will try again. **TS**
- 5 Harrison's Rocks Work and Site Manager's Report**
- 5a Cement Work** Work still needed on Wailing Wall, Blackeye Wall, The Flakes, Archers Wall and Right Circle. **CT**
- 5b Resin Work** Work still needed in several areas. **TS**
- 5c Bolts** The bolts above Right Circle still need doing. **CT**

- 5d Woodland Management & Ground Erosion Work** TS reported that he and BM had met with Bill Renshaw, chair of the BMC Land and Property Group, for a site visit at the rocks. As a result of this it had been agreed that HRMG would arrange to have a fence put up along the lower boundary of our land, including a proper gate at the Forge Cottage end, under the large beech tree where there is currently a gap in the fence. It was also agreed by the group that this work should be done after the planned woodland management work. TS said a meeting was due at the weekend between TS, Malcolm McPherson, Graham Adcock and Tony Flint (a tree surgeon) from the SVG to discuss treework and formulate a plan for clearing trees from the slope below the rocks. After this a meeting will be arranged with the Wealden DC tree preservation officer. TS talked about the blanket tree preservation order that covers our land, having obtained a copy from Wealden DC. TD said TPOs could be reviewed and it was a statutory duty of the local authority. To the astonishment of several present, NH produced minutes of HRMG from 1983 and explained how it had come about. JH said tree preservation orders could be lifted. The group agreed that this was a last resort and that the preferred option was to work within the limits of the TPO if at all possible. **TS**
- 5e Car Park and Toilet** CT said the bins that had been burnt had now been replaced. BM said the cost should be borne by Sport England. CT said the cubicles had been repaired. TS said the light sensor was not working and that the hand washing machines were faulty. BM said under the management agreement now in place Sport England was responsible. Communications had to go through the BMC office from now on. CT said the trouble over the summer had died down and he had been called out to the car park and the rocks on a number of occasions. The group said that CT should keep a diary of his call-out incidents. JH said she had spoken to the police so they did know about it. TS was unsure what the police could do. The group agreed the problem had moved to/from Eridge rocks car park, and JH said it was also happening behind Frant church. The group again discussed putting a barrier in the driveway and closing it from dusk until dawn. This would be less work for CT than the call-outs. CT said signage was needed and TS will contact Guy Keating to arrange this. TS said the sign needed to say simply when the barrier was closed and opened. TS said the barrier should be put up as soon as possible. BM said that Sport England might pay, and the Forestry Commission needed to be consulted. TS said that he would contact Sport England, via the BMC head office, to find out about the invoice for the bins, to ask about the condition survey and to let them know about the proposals for a barrier on the driveway. TS will also send a formal request to the Forestry Commission regarding the barrier, although Steve McCarthy had not raised any objection when CT spoke to him about it. **CT/TS**
- 5f Signs** TS reported that Bill Renshaw wanted all the current signs replaced. The group agreed it wanted a minimum of signage. TD said he felt strongly about this and would email Dave Turnbull. BM will express the view of the group to the BMC. **TD/BM**
- 6 Health and Safety**
- 6a Notes of any Accidents in the Accident Book** There were no accidents to report.
- 6b Future Health and Safety Inspections** TS had sent the risk assessment to the BMC.

- 7 Financial Report**
- 7a HRMG Budget** TD pointed out that there was an error in the report – the ‘Balance As At 01 January’ figure for 2009 in the segregated Harrisons repair fund should actually be £22,119.54 (the 2008 ‘Balance As At 31 December’), which meant that the current total must be reduced slightly. TS will let Alan Brown know. **TS**
- 8 Stone Farm Rocks**
- 8a Woodland Management & Ground Erosion work** CT said a step was needed at the bottom of the descent gully right of Undercut Wall and BM said that some groundwork was needed around the small oak tree in the same area. The group discussed the use of coir matting, but a garage-sized space was needed to store it prior to use so it had not yet been bought. MB to send emails asking if someone has a suitable storage space. NH said he could store it but only for two months. TS suggested a weekend be allocated to do the work so the matting could be purchased. BM said Chris Gibson had volunteered to assist at Stone Farm. Chris was keen on doing some sort of revetment work under Front Face where the rock is very soft, so he should be involved. The group also discussed the need for machinery for the groundworks. MB will add the request for machinery and a quadbike to his email. TS suggested Saturday November 28th for the work. TD will ask Andy Joad, of Hollambys Farm, to store the matting. Volunteers are needed for November 28th at Stone Farm and possibly Sunday 29th, depending on the weather and progress on the 28th. The Sandstone Volunteers Group needs to be mobilised. **CT/MB**
- 8b Resin Work** TS reported that Steve Reed had done some resin work at the rocks. Steve agreed with Mike Vetterlein that the lower part of Front Face could not be repaired using resin. Steve also reported that there is a detached block at the top of Garden Wall Crack which could be dangerous – this will be removed on the 28th of November. **TS**
- 8c Signs** Nothing to report.
- 9 Charitable Trust**
- SD addressed the meeting, saying that the advice he had received implied that the process of setting up the trust would be complicated and expensive, which was different from the advice given previously by David Unwin. SD asked whether the body would be under the wing of the BMC Land & Property Trust or whether it would be started from scratch, as he had spoken with Dave Turnbull who had suggested the former. TD said the body was designed to be autonomous, rather than under someone else’s wing. The group concurred and SD will continue his research. **SD**
- 10 AOB**
- SC talked about a celebratory party to mark the transfer of ownership of the rocks. The group discussed finances and BM said that the BMC had agreed to underwrite a large portion of the costs on the understanding that a number of people involved over the years with Harrisons and HRMG would be given free tickets. SC had done some preliminary calculations of the costs and will contact the BMC. February 6th seemed to be the best date, at the High Rocks Inn. **SC**
- 11 Date of Next Meeting** The next meeting will be held at Evolution climbing wall on Tuesday January 19th 2010, at 19.00.