

BMC South Wales area meeting 31st Jan 2013, Dynamic Rock, Swansea

Attendance: 18

Introduction.

Gareth introduced himself and the access rep, Matt Woodfield, and gave the following apologies: Elfyn Jones (BMC), John Harwood, Goi Ashmore, Dan Harris, Sarah Davies, Loveday Allen and Stuart Llewelyn

Access Updates

Range West is now open all year long, but you still need to attend a briefing. Next briefing 29th March. Use it or lose it.

Part of the Three Cliffs area is set to become an SSSI. This should not affect climbing access. Implications for bolting of Odin's Cave are not yet clear.

Llangattock bolting is due to be discussed at a future meeting in that area. Martin Crocker has produced many new trad routes and is producing an update to the guide expected April 2013. The Llangattock meeting will be after this

MCofS funding

Gareth immediately declared a conflict of interest in this topic (he works with wind turbines) and took no further part in the discussion.

The BMC has proposed passing funds to the McofS for landscape and access work, part of which would be allocated to fund opposition to windfarms. The meeting was asked to give a view. Three of the apologies had given an option on the proposal in advance – one for, one against, one with concerns who would write to the BMC independently. There were several comments from members present, all in opposition to the proposal. There was general concern that the BMC seems to be taking a strong position on windfarms without the clear support of the membership. The McofS position on windfarms was seen as very radical. A vote was taken on the question of whether the BMC should pass funds to the McofS to be spent as outlined in the McofS application for financial support. There were 16 against, none in favour with one abstention.

BMC fixed equipment position statement

Copies of the 1992 and 2013 statements were distributed for discussion. Letters from John Harwood and Goi Ashmore were read out. John is against local groups over-riding BMC policy. Goi supports the new policy. Several points were raised including: 'if people have a view they should attend the regional meetings, they are not just about bolting'; 'it is good to have a protocol in place for bolting but there is no point if people just ignore it'. There was general support for the new position statement.

Specific bolting requests

Gareth raised the case of 'Little Miss Lover' at Foxhole. This is now a fully bolted and very popular sport crag with just one partial 'trad' route remaining in the upper half of the crag. It is currently

protected by one old peg and there is no top-out, so a rope needs to be pre-placed. The only way to reach the route is via one of the existing sport routes. At the last area meeting there was a vote in favour of bolting it subject to consultation with the first ascentionist. The first ascentionist (Martin Crocker) has been asked for his view on adding a bolt and lower off and has replied that he does not want retrobolting on any of his routes. There was some discussion and the strong view was that Martin should not have a veto on the decision. The local active climbers cannot see any logic in not equipping this route in the same way as the other routes on the crag. A vote was taken on the question should the route be properly equipped: in favour 12, against 0, abstain 5. This decision will be taken to the next BMC National Council meeting to confirm that this procedure ties in with the BMC position statement and if so bolting will go ahead without the agreement of the first ascentionist. The meeting agreed that this decision was reasonable and was within the spirit of the position statement on fixed gear.

Pobbles Quarry (this was raised under AOB but fits in this section).

This is an easy slabby quarry close to Southgate. Bolting was discussed via the wiki and there was general agreement and it should have been taken to this meeting for a decision. In the interim someone has bolted two lines and one other line has been drilled but not bolted. It was agreed that these actions were not in the spirit of the new local policy and that it would have been better to wait. Roy Thomas will contact the bolter to pass on the views expressed in this meeting. Danny McCarroll proposed formally that the site be bolted to provide a training ground for beginners and that was supported by a vote with 12 for, 1 against and 2 abstentions. Roy Thomas has warned that the quality of rock will need to be checked and Danny agreed to do that.

Call for volunteers

Gareth may need a stand-in if he cannot attend meetings of the National Council. We also need a secretary to take notes etc at meetings. Crag clean-ups were discussed. There was disagreement about the need for any work at Watch House crag. Abbey Buttre is an option but there was no volunteer to take charge. If anyone wishes to volunteer for any of these roles please contact Gareth.

AOB

Email from Stu Llewellyn - The s wales bolt fund has a new website with a few free topos and a paypal donate button www.southwalesboltfund.co.uk

Gwyn Evans said that Gary Lewis has supplied some topos for ice climbing at Craig y Llyn. They are on sale at Dynamic Rock for £2. Thanks Gary.

Access to Pant Quarry has not been agreed. It is a working quarry and access is not likely to be granted. However the owners intend to stop working in about ten years and are happy to discuss leaving it in a suitable condition for climbing at that time. Given the very high quality of the climbing there it is worth pursuing.

DMcC