



BMC Cymru - South Wales Area

Gower and South East Wales Bolt Policy

Background

Gower and South East Wales has a bolt policy agreed at a series of Open Meetings at WICC in 1999-2000, chaired by Wayne Gladwin (brave man) and minuted by Stuart Thompson.

Substantive changes to the policy text were voted on at the local BMC meeting on 23 July 2011.

Since the policy was originally devised, South Wales is now a fully constituted BMC Local Area.

The text below has been updated by the Area Secretary to reflect changes already voted upon, and the BMC structural change, and was presented as an accurate statement of existing policy at the September 2020 Area Meeting.

Policy overview

In the Gower and South East Wales guidebook, the bolting policy is listed separately for each crag, except for the sandstone, where it is noted at the start of the section.

The following aspects of the policy are more general.

Please keep to the policy, which reflects the wishes of local climbers.

1. Bolting will be defined as the placement of any 'drilled gear' assumed to be bolts.
2. De-bolting/smashing/spoiling of bolts is totally condemned.
3. New sports routes should avoid interfering with existing traditional routes.
4. Where (3) might occur, the first ascensionist of the traditional route should be consulted. It is left to the conscience of the leader to consult with the others on the first ascent.
5. The First Ascensionist should always be consulted when changing the style of an existing route, whatever the outcome of this consultation the matter should be discussed at the BMC Area Meeting, where a local consensus will be sought and actioned.
6. Replacement of worn placements with bolts should be on a 'point for point' basis and only at specified crags.
7. Bolting at crags discovered in the future should assume the following:
 - Natural Sandstone – No bolting
 - Gower – No bolting
 - Quarried Sandstone – Sports routes allowed
 - Quarried Limestone – Sports routes allowed

- Other rock types – Apply common sense, i.e. do not bolt up adequately protected cracks on natural limestone, for instance.
8. Bolts should be at least 8.8mm or staples and for sea-cliffs should always be BS316 stainless steel.
 9. All effort should be made to minimise visual impact of fixed gear.

Footnote

Those of you who have climbed on the fabulous South East Wales sandstone and other bolted crags will no doubt have thought about the time and expense that has gone into bolting and equipping. Put your hand in your pocket and make a donation the South East Wales Bolt Fund. Without it and your contributions, there will be no quality sports routes or quality bolts for you to fall on.

It would be a good idea to bring any future problems to the attention of the correct forum of discussion, namely the BMC South Wales Area meetings. Your input is vital and welcomed.

References

*Some of these links give specific information where numerous crag-specific actions have been agreed – particularly on Gower – subsequent to the publication of the 2003 guidebook. It should be noted that the status given for wide areas above is only a **default assumption for newly discovered crags until proposals are agreed** by the local climbing community.*

<https://swmc.org.uk/bolting-policy/>

<https://community.thebmc.co.uk/event.aspx?id=551>

<https://community.thebmc.co.uk/Event.aspx?id=2616>

<https://community.thebmc.co.uk/Event.aspx?id=2798>

<https://community.thebmc.co.uk/Event.aspx?id=2907>

<https://community.thebmc.co.uk/Event.aspx?id=3118>

<https://community.thebmc.co.uk/Event.aspx?id=3219>

Background information

<https://thebmc.co.uk/bolts-advice-guides>

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/bolts-in-south-wales-where-when-and-why>

[https://swmc.org.uk/wiki/Minutes of BMC South Wales Action Group Bolt Discussion - 17th April 2008](https://swmc.org.uk/wiki/Minutes_of_BMC_South_Wales_Action_Group_Bolt_Discussion_-_17th_April_2008)