

British Mountaineering Council South West Area

Quarterly Regional Meeting

Date of Meeting: 29th April 2021, Zoom Video Call
Time of Meeting: 1900
Chair: Mark Kemball
Secretary: Alan Dovey

Minutes

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies:

Julian Wells
Helen Wilson

2. Minutes of 1/03/2021 Meeting

Link to BMC Site - <https://community.thebmc.co.uk/Event.aspx?id=4252>

3. Bovey Woods

Noted: 1. This area (sometimes known as Shaptor but which is a part of the woods) is becoming an area of concern for the Woodland Trust. The Area representative (David Rickwood) who has to date been supportive of the climbing community has reported that large groups, litter, climbing after dark is having an impact on wildlife. It is important to remember that there is a permissive path through the woods, this guarantees no right of access to any of the climbing areas.

Noted 2: The Trust is embarking on a major survey of focussing particularly on lichens and bat species. We are informed that this may take 12 to 18 months and that no action will be taken until this is completed, however all those visiting the area should look to the RAD for guidance and follow it scrupulously.

Noted 3: The BMC would be willing to provide signage should this help but the community needs to act responsibly if ongoing access is to be maintained. An article on UKC highlighting the problems has helped to reduce traffic.

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/modules/RAD/View.aspx?id=5659>

4. **Bonehill Rocks Parking Area**

Noted 1: The BMC has confirmed that it is contributing £1,000 to the parking area improvements.

5. **Wintours Leap: See Agenda for details**

a) Presentation

Tony Bird
Gloucestershire MC

b) Approvals

Noted 1 : There were two votes taken as per the proposals. Both were approved.

Noted 2: The meeting would like to express their thanks for this exemplary piece of work which is an excellent example of a local group consulting, gaining agreement and presenting a clear roadmap for the development of the area.

6. **Ansteys Cove**

Noted 1: Efforts continue to make contact with landowners. They are however still furloughed.

7. **Fairy Cave Quarry: See previous minutes**

Noted 1: The changes to the procedure for access will be entered into the RAD. With respect to creating safe belay stakes this is very challenging. Many of the trees are Ash and are suffering from the issue of 'dieback'. Stake placement may be possible but would require careful examination of the area and placement as the 'stable area' above the bedrock is often shallow.

Noted 2: Ian Butterworth is stepping down after many years of service in his role as Access Representative. We would all like to express our appreciation for his work. Many thanks and best wishes for the future.

8. **Youth Area Co-ordinators Report**

Noted 1: The BMC National Programme of creating Regional Development Squads has enabled the establishment of the SW squad. They are being trained by GB coaches and are receiving a series of online and practical sessions to help develop and prepare them for national competition. The top 4 competitors (based on results from YCS) who are 11-14yrs were offered a place in the squad.

Noted 2. The 2021 YCS is scheduled to take place in Sept-Nov, with the national finals planned for the end of Nov

Noted 3. Regional competition geographic restructure will see Somerset become part of the Cornwall, Devon and Dorset area.

Noted 4. Feedback from the 2019 junior outdoor climbing introduction weekend held at Bosigran was very positive. All junior participants are climbing indoors and out on a regular

basis. Thanks to all the volunteers who made it happen. It would be great to have something similar arranged in the future.

9. Any Other Business

i. Avon: Suspension Bridge Trust Buttress

Noted 1: The Trust has commissioned 'pinning blocks' which are intended to secure the limestone bed layers to the bedrock. The work is intended to take 12 weeks from May17th. Climbing will still be possible outside of working hours and at weekends.

ii. Cheddar Access Update

Noted 1: Many climbers have disregarded the agreements and Easter was particularly challenging. There is some acceptance that this year has been unusual with the closure of indoor walls however we should be aware that the landowner is not not happy with the situation.

iii. Dewerstons

Noted 1: Great care should be taken with the trees at Leviathan and Valour. They should be examined very carefully before use. The RAD should be updated and an advice issued that they should not be used.

10. Date of next meeting

19th July 2021. This is subject to confirmation of National Council meeting dates.