



Lakes Area Newsletter - July 2021

What a summer !!! - or a summer like no other !!

Away from the crowds in the valley there seems to have been much happening on the crags and fells



Dreaming of White Horses on Great Mell Fell

NEXT LAKES AREA MEETING - 7th July 2021

The next meeting of the BMC Lakes area will be a Zoom Meeting on Wednesday 7th July 2021 at 7.30pm - come along and have your say !!

You must register beforehand which can be done via the Area section of the BMC website

<https://community.thebmc.co.uk/Event.aspx?id=4285>

THE GREAT LAKES INVASION !!

There will no doubt be discussion about the influx of visitors; visitor behaviour and other aspects of this time.



Lakes Area Newsletter - July 2021

NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE LAKE DISTRICT

This shared Partnership's Management Plan explains how the Lake District National Park Partnership (a collective of 25 Partner organisations) will work together and with a wider network of people, to undertake ambitious actions to look after the English Lake District. The actions will help to continuously improve this special place and work to address key challenges facing the Lake District.

This is a joint Management Plan for the Lake District. This consultation draft is the result of a shared endeavour by Partnership members to engage and prepare this draft Plan over the past 18 months with a wide group of people and organisations.

The Plan contains key information and sets out our approach as a Partnership to looking after and caring for the Lake District, its residents, businesses, visitors, and environment. We will continue to develop the actions and seek the resources to deliver this Plan over the coming years.

There has been extensive engagement in preparing this draft which was out for public consultation which closed at noon on Wednesday 23 June. Because of the deadline comments were garnered from the officers of the BMC Lakes Area and submitted.

We will be discussing this at the Area Meeting where we hope Douglas Chalmers, from the Friends of the Lake District, will add their comments.

UPPER HERON CRAG - LANGSTRATH

There have been issues of the belays for the routes at Upper Heron Crag in Borrowdale. There is a belay point well above the top of the crag but it is necessary to fight through bilberries and vegetation to gain it. It is recommended to place a belay rope in place at the top, before climbing on the crag.

Various options have been put forward leading up to placing bolt belays. There are various bolted belays in the Lakes as follows –

- Training crags such as Steel Knotts Bluff, Gowbarrow Crag and Thornhow Crag – used by centres for novice instruction.
- Top of Sergeant Crag Slabs – this was put in place at the insistence of the landowner (National Trust) to safeguard the vegetation and stop the creation of a path down the side of the crag.

Natural belays and sometimes chains have long been the accepted ways of belaying in the Lakes. Elsewhere, especially, on the continent and USA, bolted belays are accepted practice and needless to

Lakes Area Newsletter - July 2021

say are usual for sports routes. Bolted belays usually make the belaying quicker, simpler and safer and give an option to abseil from that point. For many rock climbers, especially in the mountains, it is a mixture of climbing and adventure whilst for others they want convenience – and this leads to a range of opinions. Remember the mountain crag experience is special – we need to look after it!!

On some crags a bolted belay would help greatly, not just from a convenience point of view but also from aspects of safety and also ecologically – where does Upper Heron Crag fit into that !

The following questions link with this debate:

- how much of a faff is it to put the rope in place and use them?
- how is the rope got down to the top of the crag - by climbing and back up again presumably?
- what is the situation with regards the vegetation and would removal of vegetation (if allowed by NT) solve the problem?
- what about proper galvanised chains (two per belay station) from the top belay point and no bolts?
- or bolted belays for the routes - giving protection to the vegetation and easier access to belay stations?



The Question (??) - Upper Heron Crag



Lakes Area Newsletter - July 2021

BENEFITS OF NETWORKING IN THE CLIMBING FRATERNITY

Two recent incidents highlighted the usefulness of networking and contacting the local BMC Access Reps.

REMOVAL OF BLOCK ON THE FANG, SWINDALE

The block at the top of pitch 1 of the Fang has been trundled. After a report about it seeming unsound three climbers went to check it out and found it unsafe and duly managed to safely trundle the block. They also cleaned up the ledge, where the block had been, for future climbers. Thanks to those climbers and helping to stop what could have been a terrible accident.



The block now lying at the base of the crag!

NESTING BIRDS OF FALCON CRAG - BORROWDALE

As we all know there are bird restrictions on various crags around the Lake District. Falcon Crags (Upper and Lower) have had restrictions for many years. It was thought that the ravens on the lower crag had fledged and it was acceptable to climb on the right side of the Lower Crag. A report came back from members of the Carlisle Mountaineering Club that there was a nest in the centre of the crag and some agitated peregrines above. This was reported to English Nature and investigated to find that the peregrines were on the Upper Crag (since fledged) and Kestrels on the Lower Crag and restriction re-imposed.



Lakes Area Newsletter - July 2021

Needless to say, when on the fells or crags please keep your eyes open for issues such as loose blocks, bird nests or whatever and let the local BMC Access Rep know of these.

NEW CRAGS INFORMATION ON FRCC WEBSITE

The FRCC has also produced a collection of pdf's of newly developed crags around the Lake District. The following are on the FRCC website:

Langdale

- Thrang Crag – Chapel Stile (P17)
- Scout Crag – High Upper Crag – Salmon Leap area (P 41)
- Stile Crag – New Dungeon Gill
- Pike How – below Harrison Stickle (P128)
- Birk Knott Crag – Blea Water

Ennerdale

- Raven Crag, Ennerdale – down and left of Pillar Rock (P 203)

Eastern Crags

- Castle Crag – Wythburn
- Lockdown Crag – near Standing Crag (P124)
- Kirkstone Buttress – Kirkstone Pass
- Upper Kirkstone Buttress – Kilnshaw Chimney – Kirkstone Pass
- Pets Bridge Crag – Kirkstone Pass
- Piot Crag – Mardale
- Dunmail Raise Crag

These are, in the main, crags developed since the last definitive guidebooks. They are free to be downloaded and are on the website - www.frcc.co.uk - in the Climbing section. More no doubt will be added as and when crags are developed.



Lakes Area Newsletter - July 2021

ENJOY THE LAKES – AND STAY SAFE

The pandemic has produced a strange mix of access situations and pressures on the area and the facilities and services. Keep in mind that the Lake District is likely to be very busy and plan any trips keeping this in mind. Do your bit to help look after the area and also “Stay Safe !”

Ron Kenyon - BMC Lakes Area Secretary



A view from the summit of Great Dodd