

Access Issues

Jan 2022

Les Ainsworth

Wilton One

Because of work I could not manage to get to the tree planting at Wilton One, but six volunteers came along and all the trees that the BMC provided were planted above Grey and Red Walls. There was quite a lot of rock to be dug out, so we shall now just have to wait and see how the new tree fare.

At the other end of Wilton One, especially at the Allotment there are still several self-seeded small trees and saplings close to the foot of the rock. For any climbers who want to help out with keeping our crags in good condition, please take a bow saw and spend an hour or so removing this growth from the area immediately below the rock in Wilton One.

Egerton

Egerton is a great quarry, but visitors tend to focus just on the area between **Red Wall** and **Cherry Bomb**. This is a great pity, because since Lincs Rock (2016) a lot of good climbing has become overgrown. This process has then been exacerbated by a lack of traffic and the longer that the routes are left in their current condition, the harder it is going to be to restore them.

Recent work by a handful of volunteers has made a great improvement to the right-hand side of Grooved Walls and the routes on the Lower Tier of the Empty Quarter (i.e. right of **Forgotten Roof**), which are both now well worth a visit. This shows what can be done, but there are still some areas urgently in need of some TLC. Therefore, I would like to ask for some volunteers to spend a couple of hours restoring Egerton by going over there and doing any of the following:

Grooved Walls: Removing vegetation and some saplings from the left-hand side (i.e. up to **Vlad**).

Amphitheatre Area: There has been a significant rockfall on **Spindrift**, so could someone check it out to assess whether it is still viable, but take care, it still appears that there is some doubtful rock.

Wood Buttress: Much of this buttress could benefit from a good brushing and there is some digging to be done on the ledges right of **Wednesday Corner**.

Silverdale Sea Cliffs

I am pleased to be able to report that there is now climbing access to all but one buttress on the coast immediately north of Silverdale.

This sport climbing area has been well bolted by Andy Hyslop and friends and it provides some pleasant varied climbing.

Climbers wishing to visit should obtain a Costa Silverdale guide by Andy Hyslop, which is available as a downloadable pdf. The most appropriate parking is probably just short of the beach, close to the Silverdale Hotel. The access arrangements are very straightforward and are:

1. Currently there is no climbing on la Republica.
2. No new bolts are to be added without agreement from the land owners.
3. Park sensitively and don't leave any litter.

Climbers should also be careful to monitor the tides, which can come in very quickly and catch out many visitors.

This year I am trying to improve the parking at two crags and to focus the restrictions for nesting birds at two other locations. I will keep local climbers informed of any progress.

As usual, I am afraid that I am disappointed to note that so few climbers are being proactive in caring for the crags and climbs within the North West. The stats are obvious; if every climber in our area spent just a couple of hours every two or three years we could easily maintain most of our routes and climbing areas in pristine condition, but still the vast majority just leave it to others. Indeed, if when we each came across a bit of new growth on a route we spent just a few seconds removing it before it took hold, there would be virtually no need for more extensive cleaning.

So I am saying to all of you that if you come across a climb that is becoming overgrown, don't just move to another route, but come back and clean it. Similarly, if there is a bit of litter at the crag or brambles on the path, do something about it. That way we can all benefit from a much better climbing environment and, perhaps more to the point, those few dedicated climbers who do more than their bit in maintaining our climbing, can spend more of their time climbing.