

In answer to the action point:

The frequency of inspection for an area will depend on its complexity and usage zone. This should take account of the nature and extent of use of the site. The rock faces at Leigh Woods are to be considered the most complex within the National Trust's Bristol portfolio. This is both in terms of the scale of the rock faces and nature conservation. It is believed that failure of rock faces in the Avon Gorge and Nightingale Valley would pose the highest impact from a health and safety point of view and as such this is where the greatest investment in terms of surveys, scaling and vegetation removal lies.

All the falls have occurred from the rock face that runs diagonally up from the old towpath (River Avon Trail) up to the edge of the plateau 100m above. This is the only area where the National Trust ownership comes right down to the towpath; elsewhere the eastern boundary of the site is the old Portishead railway line. At the site of a rock fall is the railway tunnel. The railway was reopened in c. 2000 to carry freight from Royal Portbury docks at the mouth of the Avon.

In addition to the rope access inspections the upper Block House rock face has in the past been laser scanned bi-annually with the aim of detecting rock mass movement in the area adjacent to the extensive 2005 landslide area. From 2020 we decided we could get the same information from measuring between points to assess any movement in the places we would normally scan. The ground conditions on the upper Block House rock face are potentially similar to the landslide area of 2005, and as such, additional investigation and monitoring of this area is advantageous particularly as the tunnel portal which runs beneath this rock face is part of the railway.

Currently the process we follow is that a contractor carries out 5 days of roped access works in Autumn to do an initial assessment of the rock faces. If the team felt that we needed a second opinion on a certain element, then they will let the National Trust know and we will instruct an experienced geological engineer to come and offer further advice. The contractors will:

- Supply a 5-person inspection team, 3 roped access workers and 2 ground workers
- Carry out 5 days of inspections to areas specified by the National Trust to include Nightingale Valley, the area above the Block House and the main rock face.
- As part of the inspection, any loose material and invasive vegetation will be removed
- A report will be made of the finding of the report, this will include before and after photographs and recommendations for any further work

The current works carried out are what the National Trust considers to be appropriate for the current use of the site. These are for our own risk management purposes and Network Rail, we understand, undertakes their own checks but with no direct involvement with the National Trust. I am unaware if they have asked the National Trust to undertake works at any point based on their own checks.

Regarding the statement of common ground, there are Heads of Terms that have been sent regarding various access agreements which we are currently reviewing and we continue to have conversations with MetroWest regarding the installation and ongoing expense for the checks, maintenance and replacement of the proposed new catch fences that are part of the DCO application.