

Dry Tooling Information Sheet

Dry tooling is a form of training for climbers, which involves using ice axes on standard climbing walls. The sport is growing fast across Europe, and there are now two small dry tooling sites in Scotland. However, there are currently no dry tooling sites in England, and Blackpool is about to become the first place in England to address this growing need. We believe that this new training ground will be offering the most extensive dry tooling opportunities in Britain. The realistic outdoor environment that The Towers in Blackpool has to offer will provide a unique and unrivalled dry tooling experience.

Gaz Parry, British Lead Climbing Champion for the previous two years, said 'Introducing this new type of climbing to The Towers is a great idea. There is nowhere else like it in the country that provides a training ground, open to the elements. Dry Tooling is hugely popular in Europe and it's about time we followed in their footsteps to provide similar sorts of training facilities.'

Ian Fenton, an International Mountain Leader who also holds the Mountain Instructor Certificate, and is Blackpool Leisure Services Technical Advisor, initially came up with the idea of using the Towers for Dry Tooling. He said 'the first time I saw the facilities I thought they would be perfect for Dry Tooling. Working a lot in Europe, I have seen Dry Tooling grow in popularity over there and I think it is something that we are missing out on.'

Dry tooling will take place on the south tower during our normal opening hours. The North Tower will continue to be available for lead climbing and top roping during these times. The Towers operate with a fully qualified SPA Instructor who is there to provide advice and ensure that the facilities operate to a high standard.

A launch event was held on Monday 17th November, with Gaz Parry officially opening the site and performing the first dry tooling climb. Guests included representatives from the BMC, MLTUK, Plas y Brenin and local mountaineering club members. The facilities are open to the public for dry tooling from Saturday 22nd November.

Initial route setting for the Dry Tooling routes was carried out on Sunday 16th November, with Ian Fenton and Gaz Parry providing advice and tips to our climbing staff.



Useful Facts

Towers opening hours

Monday/ Tuesday/ Thursday/ Friday
Saturday/ Sunday

6pm – 9pm
11am – 5pm

Dry Tooling hours

Monday/ Thursday
Saturday

Sunday

6.30pm – 8.30pm
12.00pm – 2.00pm
2.30pm – 4.30pm
1.00pm – 3.00pm
3.00pm – 5.00pm

How much will it cost to use the dry tooling facilities?

£10 per person for up to 2 hours of climbing. We can cater for a minimum of 2 people and a maximum of 9 people in each 2 hour slot. The price includes hire of the ice axes, helmets and leashes. You will need to bring full protective clothing and gloves.

How can I book?

Simply call the booking office on **01253 478176** between 9am – 4pm or The Towers on 01253 349749 during the opening hours above.

What else do I need to know?

You will need to complete a climbing induction to use the facilities. A 10 minute briefing session is included in the price and 2hour time slot.

For more information?

Go to www.blackpool.gov.uk and search 'climbing'