

# **BMC AREA MEETING REPORT: Mon 5 September 2016**

## **FOR SUBMISSION TO NATIONAL COUNCIL**

### **AREA: YORKSHIRE**

1. **Location & Attendance:** Wheatley Arms, Ben Rhydding, Ilkley. 36 attendees
2. **BMC staff & Executive member(s) present:** Dave Turnbull
3. **New postholder(s) & Situations Vacant:** No Climbing Wall or Youth Outdoors Representatives.
4. **Key issues discussed:**

**BMC Rebranding proposal.** Please see bullet points below.

**Spofforth Pinnacles.** Farmer has been asking climbers to leave. Private land with RoW across it.

**Caley.** Now very overgrown with Himalayan Balsam, ferns etc. Anyone willing to do so is encouraged to cut these down. Leeds City Council has only 2 part time wardens to look after the whole estate & so any help with this would be welcome.

**Snowden Crag.** No parking available in immediate vicinity but alternatives available.

**Kilnsey Crag.** Inconsiderate parking by climbers.

**Blue Scar.** Climbers don't know how to contact landowner re access permit & some issues re lack of response. Suggestion to email & phrase email to indicate that sender will assume permission unless a reply to the contrary is received.

**Threshfield Quarry.** Please see bullet points below.

**Hill Walking.** Ingleborough walk attended by 3 people & Area Hill Walking Rep. Saw the Mend our Mountains funded work to the Swine Tail path.

**Yorkshire Dales National Park.** Noted that the YDNP increased in size by nearly 25% wef 1 August.

**Increased access to public paths for cyclists.** Please see bullet points below.

#### **Bullet points for highlighting to the National Council:**

- **Rebrand proposal.**

Overall concern re lack of communication with members.

Some support for the rebrand but general view that 'BMC' is a strong brand & doesn't need to change.

Several views that 'Climb Britain' is not attractive to hill walkers

Votes re the specific questions as follows:-

**Remain as BMC – no rebrand – 8 votes**

**Full rebrand to Climb Britain – 11 votes**

**Stay as BMC & find other use for Climb Britain – 35 votes**

**Other name options – 5 votes**

Attendees able to vote for as few/many of the options as they wished. Please see pages 2 & 3 re comments made.

- **Threshfield Quarry.** Plans to develop climbing here have now come to a stop. Quarry owners concerned re the perceived risk & their responsibility for the safety of the walls of the quarry. Rob Dyer trying to contact someone at Tarmac's Head Office to discuss.
- **Increased access to public paths for cyclists.** Concern expressed that the BMC had supported a letter from British Cycling to Liz Truss re increased access to public paths for cyclists. Please see link - <https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/campaigning/article/20160706-campaigning-news-Open-up-countryside-paths-for-people-on-bikes-say-outdoor-groups-0>

Completed by: Deirdre Collier. 6 September 2016.

## **BMC Yorkshire Area Meeting 5 September 2016.**

### **Discussion of Rebranding proposal – Comments made**

Lack of specific objectives against which to measure success of proposal.

Many comments re the lack of consultation with members including some specific feedback from those whose clubs had consulted their members.

One respondent's club (national with a lot of members) had consulted its members & virtually none were in favour of the rebrand.

Observation that Mountaineering Scotland had asked its members first re its rebrand & received few objections – felt to be because the members had had the opportunity to comment. In the case of the BMC's rebrand proposal it was seen as having gone through Exec Committee & NC & the members haven't had the opportunity to comment.

Query re may/may not go to AGM – Dave Turnbull clarified that it may not go to the AGM as NC may have thrown it out by then.

Specific comment re the role of Areas, Area NC Reps & NC in facilitating consultation with members.

A few comments re hill walkers not identifying with the word 'climb'.

One comments from a young man who said he'd just finished school to say that he doesn't agree with the prevailing opinion of a disconnect with the BMC for young people.

? financial justification for rebrand.

Several comments that the BMC is a strong brand & doesn't need to change.

Concern that rebrand was presented as a done deal.

Losing the word 'mountaineering' is a bad thing.

Several comments that Climb Britain is a great strap line

Don't like name or understand the logic. Seems climbing focussed. (This from someone who is a climber & hill walker)

The issue re non members isn't with the name rather how to persuade indoor climbers that they need to join a climbing/mountaineering organisation.

Climb Britain not attractive to hill walkers & won't attract them.

Climb Britain logo looks very weak compared to the strong BMC logo.

The most important goals of the BMC should be to conserve & protect the outdoors/mountains & secure access to mountains & crags. In this context not sure about the focus on attracting indoor climbers – they are sometimes indoors/gym type of people. (This from someone who is a climber & hill walkers & uses indoor walls). However can see the desire to reinvent & be more modern & so despite reservations would probably accept rebrand.

New name could appeal to a wider audience but hate the font.

Three opinions that the way the rebrand has been handled has not been good but that the proposal is a good one. One of the three said it's time for a change & to just go for it.

One comment re the use of a verb – climb – rather than a noun eg climbing – comparison with other sporting bodies.

One comment that a lot of members are entering climbing via bouldering walls. It is desirable to be able to reach them from an educational perspective.

BMC has a strong image & does much good work.

The name BMC is a strong one with gravitas & more influential in discussions with landowners, official bodies etc

Branding is very important but needs to be very specific. If Climb Britain & its variants were adopted the names would need to be used under the BMC umbrella. The name BMC has gravitas.

BMC has changed a lot in its 70 years & while not saying it needs to change it is timely to look at profile, demography & branding. However it was wrong to keep rebrand details secret for the various commercial reasons. If there had been prior consultation there would have been a much different response. Ambivalent re Climb Britain name. Happy with logo. Does what it say on the tin.

Rebrand needed – Olympics, more climbers via indoor walls, possible reductions in Sport England grant to BMC, growing sport etc. If BMC does nothing there is a serious risk of becoming less relevant & less influential. Wrong to stay stationary & not move on. Happy to put trust in elected & appointed officials. Can't put everything to plebiscite.

Don't mind Climb Britain. Walked up Pen Y Ghent today & saw several families who will feel they had 'climbed' it.

Main feedback from one respondent's club was consultation problem. Is the BMC getting dragged into the fashion of rebranding? Stick with what we've got. Likes logo & perhaps that could be used for some specific promotion.