

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

177-179 Burton Road
Manchester M20 2BB
www.thebmc.co.uk

Tel: 0161 445 6111
Fax: 0161 445 4500
Email: office@thebmc.co.uk

Notes from the Meeting of the BMC Peak Area Wednesday 14th September 2016 The Maynard Arms, Grindleford

Present:

Rob Greenwood (chair)	Pete Tapping	David Goddard
Becky Hammond (secretary)	Jaimella Espley	Mike Pinder
David Brown (National Council rep)	Christne Renouf	Sean Orchard
Ed Douglas (Alpine Club)	Graeme Hammond	Colin Nave
Andy Tickle (Derbyshire Pennine Club)	Adge Last	Geoff Milburn (Climbers Club)
Rupert Davies (BMC Vice-President)	Andy Green	Spencer Ramsey
Emma Flaherty (BMC Vice-President)	Doug Hobbs	Cooper Hobbs (<i>non-member?</i>)
Charles Bailey (<i>non-member</i>)	Phil Cooper	Matt Bird (<i>non-member</i>)
Michael Kent (Bassetlaw Hill & Mountain Club)	Penny Orr	Dob Sellers
Charles Skeavington (Bassetlaw Hill & Mountain Club)	Brian McAlindon	Jenny Brown
Greg Bristol (Peak Climbing Club)	John Gresty	Clare Reading (FRCC)
Henry Folkard (access rep)	Rab Carrington	Neil Foster
Rehan Siddiqui (BMC President)	Andy Elliott	Christina Richards
Phil Robins (Climbers Club)	Daniel Hoyle	Simon Lee (UK Bouldering)
Danny Udall (Easter Moors Partnership) (<i>non-member</i>)	Kim Leyland	John Coefield
Luke Barley (National Trust) (<i>non-member</i>)	Hannah Kippax	Andy Banks
Howard Jones	Dave Hollinger	Ed Chard
Cath Lee (hillwalking rep)	Lisa Mariott	Glynis Judd
Peter Judd (hillwalking rep)	Mark McKenzie	Austin Knott
Dan Middleton (BMC staff)	Ian Whitehouse	Nigel Vardy
Stephen Jones (Clogwyn MC)	Tina Wilkinson	Duncan Campbell
Chris Eade	Rob Adie (BMC staff)	John Bayliss
Mitch (no surname!)	Rick Gibbon	Mark Warwicker
Clare Sansbury (?)	Will Furness	Wendy Ferguson
John Barnard (Eagle Ski Club)	Sue England	Sean Jennings
Michael Smith (YRC)	Tim Grice	Elwyn Summers
Ross Burnage (Buxton MC)	Valerie Partington	Steve Barns
Louise Hawson (access rep)	Charlotte Wibey	Total present = 93
		Total signed in = 84

1. Apologies

Steve Clark	Lynn Robinson	Claire Carter
Stephen Coughlan	Geoff Nichols	Mike Rhodes
Peter Hammond	Jane Phoenix	Linda McLeish (Castle MC)
Alan James (UKC)	Alex Ekins	

2. Actions from the last meeting

None

3. Rebranding

Dave Turnbull and Rehan Siddiqui gave their presentation summarising what led up to suggestion to re-brand the BMC and the discussions and logic that preceded the unanimous vote of approval in the National Council in June 2016. This had been followed by a generally hostile response. They explained that it was not a done deal, and that they were here to consult and listen to the membership. Everything had been done in good faith, but some things had been wrong.

There was a different approach to that taken by the Mountaineering Council of Scotland, who consulted members from the outset prior to changing name.

Lessons that have been learned:

- The membership want to be involved
- People care about the BMC and the name (previously the consistent message had been that the name is old-fashioned)
- There is concern about how the sport is developing, and there have been some wrong impressions

Background: There was a chance offer of funding to look at marketing and branding: funding was agreed in November 2015 & the project started in December 2015. It did not start as a project to change the organisation's name: they thought it might propose a new logo. However in the course of the project it became apparent that the name is a problem: the project was extended and additional funding provided via Sport England. The proposed new name was sounded out with a lot of people, including the Hillwalking Working Group & Association of British Climbing Walls. They felt it had support.

The re-naming exercise is not linked to the Olympics. The International Olympic Committee's decision was unexpected. However the timing of the BMC's announcement was hurried as they felt that they needed to do it before the Olympic announcement.

100% of the consultancy cost was paid Sport England, there were no strings attached and no obligation to take up the suggestions.

If re-branded, the formal name would continue to be the British Mountaineering Council and the core work of the BMC would remain unchanged.

The consultation process prior to the announcement included:

Background research and literature review.

One to one discussions with a sample of BMC people including staff & volunteers.

Meeting with BMC staff.

Meetings with interest groups (e.g. Hillwalking Working Group, Women's Development Group)

Visits to climbing walls.

An ongoing process of taking soundings.

The feedback was positive and they thought they were on the right track.

Current timetable

September 2016 – consultation meetings with areas

17th September – National Council review & decide way forward

3rd December – option for further discussion at National Council

April 2017 – option for discussion at AGM.

Why rebrand?

- BMC not well understood / seen as irrelevant by new climbers / hillwalkers / boulderers.
- "Council" seen as an outdated term.
- The name can be a barrier to attracting new members
- To develop commercial & sponsorship potential (Sport England funding is likely to reduce in the next few years)

What binds our diverse membership?

Hillwalkers ----- Climbers & mountaineers

Indoor climbers ----- Outdoor climbers & walkers

Trying to avoid niche descriptions.

We all climb stuff.

Hillwalkers & indoor climbers feel that "British Mountaineering Council" doesn't sound relevant.

There was acknowledgement that the current logo is very strong, but it's one of a series of logos that the BMC have had.

After the presentation, the floor was opened to discussion. The following is a summary of the points raised, with responses from Dave or Rehan where appropriate.

Paul Mitchell: Not convinced by CB name, thinks it's naff. Key questions are "what is the ethos of the BMC?" and "which name best reflects this"? Feels CB doesn't reflect this.

RS: we're trying to find something that reflects this, but it's difficult.

Christina Richards: sees good motivation in the rebrand, but need to be careful to choose something that won't date. Feels CB will look dated in 10-15 years' time.

Doug Hobbs: agrees with Christina. AA, RAC etc. are established names that are still recognised even though we don't use the full name.

Howard Jones (Inominata MC): Sees where the name comes from, but the immediate association is with roped climbing and not going for a walk. Spoken to hillwalkers who don't feel it represents them.

DT: this is a common theme.

Colin Nave: club member, does all activities represented by the BMC. It's clear that the name needs to work for all activities but doesn't feel that CB achieves this. Who will the authorities look to for advice for anything other than "climbing"? The name CB doesn't *appear* to represent ski mountaineers etc. (but then neither does BMC).

Tim Grice: Does the Royal Mail belong to the Queen? No, but we know what it does. If naming the BMC from scratch today, we wouldn't call it the BMC. But he doesn't think there's anything wrong with it because it's a familiar brand. Need to look at branding (not name) and marketing.

RS: Is the name familiar to new people?

Geoff Milburn: Baffled! Doesn't like "climb" or "mountaineering". Doesn't like "British" or "Britain" because the organisation doesn't represent the whole of Britain any more, only England & Wales.

DT: BMC formed 1944, MCofS established 1972 but BMC didn't change name. BMC still represents Britain for international purposes e.g. competitions. He discussed with the CEO & President of the MCofS and they were happy with the idea of the BMC keeping "Britain" in the name CB.

Rob Greenwood (BMC Peak Area Chair): The word "mountaineering" is irrelevant to indoor climbers, and means nothing to hillwalkers. "Climb" is a difficult one word summary of all the activities the BMC represents.

Mike Pinder (Former Peak Area Chair): "Climb" is a past participle: it isn't *active*.

All consultation has been at a high level but without the general membership. If the membership had come up with/chosen CB this process would be easier.

RS: accepted this criticism (a repeat of what had been said in the presentation).

Rab Carrington (ex-President of BMC): He was consulted, but agrees with Mike Pinder's criticism of the consultation process. He's always seen himself as *climbing* mountains even when in big mountains that don't involve rock climbing. Feels "Climb" connects with a lot of people coming to the sport through indoor walls etc.

Cath Lee (Peak Area representative on the BMC Hillwalking Working Group): Was consulted by the consultants. She wants the membership to grow and the BMC to become stronger. The current name is a barrier to this: her hillwalking friends don't see it as relevant. She only joined as it was compulsory for her Mountain Leader qualification, and then discovered what a great organisation it is. She wasn't keen on CB initially but it's grown on her. Her hillwalking friends agree that CB sounds like it represents them better. In summary, she supports the name.

Henry Folkard (BMC Honorary Member and current Peak Area Access Representative): what do young people think? There aren't many here. BMC members are united by an approach to life, the culture, etc., *not* "Climb". The name/acronym "BMC" is recognised even by people who don't know what it means. Suggests change to "British Mountaineering and Climbing" which would keep the acronym but make the overall name more inclusive.

Simon Lee: It would be useful to have a subsidiary organisation just for indoor climbers, and CB could be a good name for this.

John Gresty: fully agrees with Simon Lee re: competitions. BMC carries more weight with landowners etc. Therefore prefers option 3.

Michael Kent (Bassetlaw Hill & Mountain Club): Would vote for option 3. Should aim CB at young members. He felt that as a member of the BMC he lost something when the rebrand was announced.

Nigel Vardy: Been through several rebrands in organisations. It's not about right or wrong, it's about perception. Need to remember the perception of people *outside* the organisation, not just ourselves inside it. *Ask the outsiders!* – what do they think, what are their ideas?

Mike Delafield (Past President of the International Federation of Sport Climbing): Doesn't care if BMC wants to change name, but does care about being conned. He thinks it's all about competition climbing, sponsorship, etc. (despite what DT said in the presentation).

Several people said "hear hear" and tried to applaud.

DT: strenuously stated that this is not the case.

Matt Bird: During the presentation, DT mentioned the £1 million reduction in funding from Sport England. Does DT think that keeping the name BMC will impair the ability to find sponsorship & other income?

RS: we need to increase income & membership, regardless of the brand.

Greg Bristol (Peak Climbing Club): The current BMC logo is very strong, but the proposed CB logo is not as good (gets lost in the mishmash of other red white & blue British sport logos & names). Have they looked at strengthening the current brand?

Alex Messenger (Head of Marketing & Communications at the BMC): Rebranding was trying to look from the outside in. The "BMC" acronym doesn't say anything. "Climb Britain" jumps a hurdle of initial recognition (what will people Google search for after seeing someone wearing a t-shirt?). The AA, RAC, etc. have massive marketing budgets to keep their brand recognised even though the name doesn't tell you much.

Ian Whitehouse: If rebranding, why aren't you proposing to change the official name/articles? Says it only costs £20 at Companies House.

DT: yes, could do this but it isn't the model that other similar organisations have chosen e.g. British Canoeing.

Ian Whitehouse: Ambivalent re- the name. The logo is awful.

No-one joins the BMC to get into climbing, hillwalking etc: they join after starting the activity. The BMC logo is already familiar to people e.g. through the "check your knot" signs at climbing walls. The key is that people see the logo.

John Coefield: have you considered starting the whole rebranding process again?

RS: that's what's happening now. However, there aren't any additional funds for it.

Brian McAlinden (Climbing Works Manager): There is lots of passion about this subject, which is good. Lots of people come through climbing walls and don't know about the BMC. Things such as competitions, insurance for holidays, etc. are what lead people towards taking out BMC membership. What is the strategy over the next four years as regards attracting new members? Climbing as an Olympic sport in 2020 *will* change things. The rebranding announcement came out too quickly, with no warning. Communications was a big issue.

Michael Smith: The BMC name has gravitas. Climb Britain has a catchiness that may appeal to subgroups and he suggests use this for subgroups.

The logo (i.e. a mountain) doesn't have a lot to do with indoor wall climbing.

Adge Last: the BMC can be rebranded without changing the name.

Jenny Brown: What are the cost implications for the next phase of rollout for rebranding?

DT: £50-60k for the next 2 years, depending on when the website is done (which needs doing anyway). Paper literature will just be phased out. There will be some additional promotional costs to external organisations.

Following the discussion the meeting was then asked to indicate which of the options they preferred and individuals could "vote" for more than one option:

Option 1 - Stay as BMC (no rebrand)	13
-------------------------------------	----

Option 2 - Full rebrand to Climb Britain	22
Option 3 - Stay as BMC and find another use for Climb Britain	39
Option 4 - Other name options	42
Total 'votes' cast (Meeting attendees only)	116

After the "vote" there was some brief further discussion:

Neil Foster (former BMC Peak Area Chair): Yes, there was inadequate consultation. But we do elect our National Council representatives. The bit that fell down was that maybe National Council didn't quiz it and understand the implications sufficiently. But we shouldn't let this undermine the processes. The online outrage has been unfortunate and distasteful. The BMC is staffed (paid & volunteers) by people who care about access and all the other values of the BMC: this won't change.

Resounding applause from the room

Mike Pinder (former BMC Peak Area Chair): thinks it's fantastic that there has been admission of a mistake.

DT: this is a blip! We'll get over this. The core work of the BMC continues!

Written submissions that were sent prior to the meeting are available in Appendix 2.

4. **Olympic climbing – implications & next steps**

Rob Adey (BMC Competitions Officer) explained that climbing will be included in the 2020 Olympics: there will be one competition (made up of lead climbing, speed climbing & bouldering) for one medal. There will be 20 male and 20 female competitors worldwide. The selection, scoring, rules etc have not yet been determined: more information will come from the IFSC in February.

The BMC are starting discussions with UK Sport, who only fund Olympic sports. Elite teams in climbing don't currently receive any funding (because Sport England only fund mass participation): hopefully this will change.

There won't be a GB "climbing team" – it will be individuals. The British Olympic Association are the British team. GB will do well if we have one or two qualifying athletes.

Will the BMC join the Olympic association? It works differently in different countries: the BMC are meeting the BOA soon.

5. **Horseshoe Quarry group abseil proposal**

Adge Last presented a proposal from the Associations of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres to install up to 5 abseil stations in an area of Horseshoe Quarry that is not used for climbing. This would be an alternative to Millers Dale bridge (which is busy, and not related to rock climbing). The benefits would include reduced pressure on natural crags for abseiling, integrating abseiling into the world of climbing, environmental education, and a dedicated area not in competition with other users. It would require some rock stabilisation work. Potential issues include parking & access, getting too busy, and thus conflict with use by climbers? There have been discussions about developing the next layby up the road to accommodate 2 minibuses with footpath access to the quarry, and a code of conduct (maximum 2 minibuses, and weekdays only). The installation would be funded by outdoor centres, the Alpkit Foundation and Friends of Thornbridge.

Concern was expressed about parking & access, and whether the code of practice would be adhered to – particularly outdoor centres from out of the area. The restrictions at Millers Dale are adhered to because the licensing system is checked by the PDNPA. There was also concern about bringing inexperienced people into the quarry, which isn't intrinsically safe, and potentially lead to them climbing the easier looser routes.

There was a question about wheelchair/disabled access – this would have to be discussed with the landowner, but disabled access is available at Millers Dale.

Would there be a revenue stream? No.

6. **Stanage, PDNPA and the Stanage Forum**

Henry Folkard drew attention to the BMC's contribution towards the management of Stanage North Lees since the Stanage Forum was launched in the year 2000, and some of the benefits this had brought for BMC members, whilst expressing serious concern over the impact of an impending re-organisation by the National Park Authority.

7. **Access updates**

The Sheffield Moors Partnership consists of several organisations that own & manage various moorlands to the west of Sheffield, including Gardoms, Longshaw, Eastern Moors, Blackamoor & Stanage-North Lees. They introduced a management plan in 2013 to introduce a joined up approach. Louise Hawson explained that there had been a meeting today to review how to take this forward. Amongst other topics this included parking (cost, location, etc), camping (tents, laybys, wildcamping & bivvying, bye-laws & toleration). If you have any views, please talk to Louise Hawson or Henry Folkard.

8. **National Council report**

See appendix 2.

9. **Update from Peak Area Hill Walking Representatives**

The Mend our Mountains campaign was very successful: £17,000 has been offered to the PDNPA for footpath and erosion repairs on Ringing Roger. Mike Rhodes (PDNPA Access & Rights of Way officer) was impressed by the amount raised. Groundworks will take place in October/November, with 40 tons of gritstone being lifted up from Edale.

10. **Update from BMC officers**

Nothing extra beyond what had already been discussed.

11. **Area meetings in the Western Peak**

The attendance pattern at the area meetings is that attendance grows whilst we're at the Maynard and then reduces when we go west. Other areas tend to stick to the same meeting venue. Rob asked people to think about this for discussion at the next meeting.

There was a comment that the Winking Man is a bit isolated, and that we should look at where people may be travelling from.

12. **Peak Area Newsletter**

Items for the next newsletter should be sent by 1st November – email peakarea@gmail.com.

We need volunteers to distribute copies to the climbing walls in Manchester, Nottingham and Derby: please email if you can help.

10. **Any other business**

The Ring Ouzel surveys have been published and are available at <http://www.visit-eastern-moors.org.uk/wildlife/ring-ouzels.html>

11. **Date, time and venue of the next meeting**

Wednesday 16th November at The Maynard Arms, Grindleford, S32 2HE.

This meeting will include the Annual General Meeting, and will be followed by the famous annual quiz.

AS ALWAYS:

- Chair of the Peak Area is Rob Greenwood – robgreenwood@bmcvolunteers.org.uk
- Access issues/access volunteer work please contact Henry Folkard – henry.folkard@bmcvolunteers.org.uk
- With regard to the meetings, agenda items or any other issues please contact Becky Hammond, Peak Area Secretary – becky@bmcvolunteers.org.uk
- Check out the Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/bmcpeakarea> and 'like' us if you can
- Articles for the newsletter are always welcome: please send them to peakarea@gmail.com

BMC rebranding: Written Submissions to the Peak Area

Summary of written submissions from Peak Area Clubs (full submissions available):

Linda McLeish (President of Castle Mountaineering Club): Club's general concern at re-branding to Climb Britain –“Mountaineering to us means essentially any activity in a mountain environment” and welcome the BMC's recent focus on widening its appeal to hill walkers.

Nigel Briggs (Secretary of Oread Mountaineering Club): A fully composed letter which is strongly against re-branding. They have a serious concern that some of the BMC's functions are better served if they are uninfluenced any commercial liaison. Climb Britain does not have a sufficient link with mountaineering and they have concerns about the position of Clubs within the BMC and the mechanisms for policy making in general.

Summary of written submissions from Peak Area Members (full submissions available):

Lynn Robinson (former Secretary of BMC Peak Area) & Steve Clark (Peak Area Guidebook writer): happy to use CB for competitions and recruitment but prefer to continue using BMC for access negotiations etc.

Geoff Nichols: a long detailed list of 8 questions, some with postulated answers. Some query the likely success/consequences of rebranding and other query the relationship with Sport England and their funding. Suggests British Mountaineering and Climbing; BMC.

Chris Milne, Nottingham: A long submission firmly against re-branding. Appreciates that 'BMC' is not completely satisfactory and would like a name that tell me what the organisation is. Thinks that Mountaineering is an essential element of the name: “do not throw the baby out with the bathwater”.

David Coupe: Firmly against re-branding (in general) and wants the BMC to forget all about it.

Ben Crouch: Firmly against re-branding. Feels that the BMC already has a fantastic reputation globally (“a bit like the RGS or BBC”) but Climb Britain could be used for some sub-groups. “I think the work you do is excellent especially with conservation/access rights”.

Simon de Haas: Wants re-branding to go ahead. Thinks that “Climb Britain is better targeted at new members than the BMC which is only a known brand if you are already a climber”.

BMC – National Council Meeting Summary Saturday 18 June 2016 at Plas y Brenin, Capel Curig

A half-day meeting but there was a lot of discussion on a wide range of topics. Most relevant issues:

- **Mend Our Mountains Campaign:** The success of this innovative fund raising has been well received by the National Parks/National Trust/Government and the media in general. Approximately 50% of the target was donated by non-members and it was suggested that we examine how we can engage more with these supporters as well as our own members who donated.
- **“Last Word”:** Ken Wilson, BMC Honorary Member and one of the most influential voices in British climbing has passed away.
- **Area Reports/Issues –**
 - **Yorkshire:** the acquisition of Crookrise has now been agreed – the BMC’s offer has been accepted in preference to a bid from an adjacent landowner. Apparently, the performance of the *Mend Our Mountains* campaign was a significant factor in the acceptance of the BMC bid.
 - **Cymru Wales (North):** There is widespread concern about the impact of proposed hydroelectric schemes which are going through the planning system: the sheer number of schemes under consideration is causing serious concern to environmental bodies, including the BMC, who want to assess the environmental impact of individual schemes and make representations or even mount a campaign of opposition. In the first instance the (BMC) Land Management Group will contact the National Trust at a very high level.
Visiting climbers to Tremadoc should be prepared for potential changes to parking, etc., due to Eric Jones retirement and the likely sale of the café and bunkhouse.
- **Treasurer’s Report:** Finances are still on target to make a small surplus. Increased membership and travel insurance sales have been more-or-less offset by a donation to Climbers With Cancer and a reduction in magazine income.
- **Chief Executive Officer’s Report:** Dave Turnbull reported that we are continuing to prepare our bid for Sport England funding for 2017-21 (representing ~20-25% of BMC income). SE’s 2017-21 strategy is “Towards an Active Nation” and has a major focus on inactive and young people.

The Public Relations Press Officer is leaving and it was agreed that, as an interim measure, a PR Agency should be employed.

The Burton Road Offices will be undergoing refurbishment from July to end of September.

- **BMC Strategic Plan (Review):** The Executive proposed up-dates for 2016-20 were accepted.
- **BMC Vision and Mission Statements:** to be finalised after consideration of re-branding.
- **2020 Olympics:** The IOC Executive Board has agreed to support the inclusion of Sport Climbing in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics (now confirmed by the full meeting of the IOC).

The BMC are taking some initial actions to deal with the impact and opportunity. President Rehan Siddiqui made a commitment that the BMC’s core work would not suffer as a result climbing getting in to the Olympics. The BMC will be applying for additional funding from UK Sport for Olympic related activities.

- **Commercial Development and Proposed Re-branding:** Dave Turnbull gave a short presentation describing the background and the Executive Council’s proposal. After a (surprisingly?) short discussion, National Council voted almost unanimously (including both Peak Area Representatives) to proceed with proposed re-branding to *Climb Britain*. NC agreed to respect commercial confidentiality until commercially sensitive procedures were complete and the membership as a whole could be informed.

The full Minutes can be downloaded from the BMC Web-site:

https://www.thebmc.co.uk/downloads/The%20BMC/bmc_organisation