

The Mountain Club

Plans to Improve the Membership Experience

What do Club members need to do?

1. Read this document, or at least the summary in the January 2018 newsletter.
2. Come to the Sun Inn on Thursday 1st February to give the committee feedback & ask questions about the changes
3. Vote online for the updated Club logo from 2nd until 15th February (and get a free t-shirt)

Why evolve?

The Mountain Club's administration systems and communication platforms have received little attention in recent years and have become outdated. Therefore the committee have embarked on a process of reviewing and updating the systems and platforms used by The Mountain Club, in order to improve the 'experience' of being a Club member. We have identified the following systems/platforms as requiring an update:

- a) Email and newsletter communications
- b) Social media
- c) Website
- d) Membership application/renewal process
- e) Payment procedures for membership and meets
- f) Data management

The committee have also reviewed how we portray The Mountain Club to external stakeholders (i.e. potential members) and considered necessary updates. This review identified the need to update our logo and the imagery we use to ensure consistent messaging across all media and communication platforms.

Together, this update of our administration systems, communication platforms and logo will ensure that membership of The Mountain Club remains appealing and valuable to all. The update will help us attract and retain the next generation of dedicated Mountain Club members.

1. Membership communications

In 2015, as the result of a committee task group, we began using MailChimp to produce a regular newsletter for club members. In 2016/17 the newsletter evolved to focus on upcoming events and to communicate discussions held at committee meetings, the latter aiming to familiarise members with how the committee functions and to encourage members to stand for committee roles. This was successful as we had many more members engage at the 2017 AGM and appointed several new committee members.

In 2018, in addition to producing the newsletter, we will transition to a new email platform enabling us to manage communications more effectively. Emails will come from a dedicated email account: example@themountainclub.org.uk.

2. Social Media

In 2017 we created a community Facebook Page for The Mountain Club which has improved our visibility to potential members searching for mountaineering clubs in Staffordshire. In 2017, the public Facebook Page was 'liked' by 178 people and we received 18 direct messages.

In late 2017 we opened an Instagram account, a picture-led social media platform, with the intention to communicate club activities to a broader audience. In 2018 we will increase our presence on this platform, so please send us photos that you are happy to share.

3. Website

Since our current website was created it has undergone incremental updates that, over time, have led to a website that is difficult to navigate. Therefore we intend to review the website in its entirety to improve its structure, navigability and content. We will use a modern theme and a stripped-back approach to direct visitors to the essential information (e.g. meets, hut, contact details, and how to join). This will shift the website's focus from providing an archive of club history to an essential resource for present and potential Mountain Club members. Despite this change in focus, the archived information and footage will remain accessible on the website given its importance.

The committee have begun redevelopment work on the website and plan to launch the new format in March, with an announcement to the membership and a call for feedback on the functionality and content.

4. Membership Application/Renewal Process

As part of our redevelopment of the website, we have introduced an online membership renewal facility for 2018. This replaces the existing paper form and provides a user-friendly way of renewing, thereby aiding membership retention. As an added benefit, member details are automatically added to a secure online database, reducing the administration workload on the committee. Initial feedback on this facility has proved extremely positive and we are investigating expanding this service to other membership categories in the future.

5. Payment Procedures

We have recently introduced a payment policy for meets to formalise the process of meet payments, in particular where advance payments are required. This ensures that meet organisers will not suffer any financial loss in the case of under-subscribed meets or non-attendances. As the Club can now accept online payments via PayPal, the committee aim to streamline the meet sign up and payment procedure over the coming year.

6. Data Management

The committee have recently reviewed the way we collect and store members' personal information to ensure we are compliant with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). You'll see that the 2018 membership form contains a statement on data protection to reflect this. As always, you are able to unsubscribe from our communications if you choose.

7. The Mountain Club's Logo

Prior to the 2017 AGM the committee discussed the growing need to digitise The Mountain Club's logo. The Club currently use a low resolution scan of a hand drawn emblem which cannot be applied to documents, our website or clothing in consistent quality. With modernisation on the agenda, we began to investigate the history of the logo and found that there was no consistent form or style.



Logo on an old Club t-shirt



Current logo



Plaque above the door of Bryn Hafod

The committee decided that the brass plaque at Bryn Hafod should be the primary reference for creating a digital club logo, as it is the most official and is likely to be the oldest emblem used to represent The Mountain Club. However as the committee reflected on both the completed and proposed updates to the Club's administration systems and communication platforms, we asked a design agency (using our personal network so that no costs were incurred by the club) to produce a modern interpretation of Bryn Hafod's brass plaque. This resulted in three possible new logos:

Option 1: a close match to Bryn Hafod's brass plaque;

Option 2: a 'mid-way point' logo; and

Option 3: a modern interpretation of Bryn Hafod's brass plaque.

Each logo has been created in a high-quality digital format and a monochrome version will also be available.



Option 1



Option 2



Option 3

Next Steps for Club Members

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2. Vote online for the updated Club logo from 2nd until 15th February (and get a free t-shirt)