

Mountain Training England Trustee recruitment 2024 Information pack



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1. INTRODUCTION

Thank you so much for your interest in Mountain Training England, and we hope you will consider becoming one of our trustees. 2024 sees us celebrating 60 years of Mountain training – we have come a long way since we were created to:

“...develop and operate schemes for training, assessing and accrediting those engaged in leading, instructing, coaching and supervising others in safe hill, mountain, moorland and countryside walking, mountaineering and rock climbing and indoor climbing and other associated activities.”

We have a strong and stable staff team who implement these aims as well as a large group of around 150 providers who deliver our qualification scheme and skills courses across England and Wales. In 2023, we registered over 6600 new candidates for qualification and skills schemes, an 8.2% increase over the previous year. The number of female candidates passing a qualification assessment rose by 9%, which is a positive development.

Time in the mountains - climbing, walking, exploring has been a foundational part of my life, it has provided me with an income and a sense of purpose in being able to help others. So, when the opportunity to give something back arose, I applied to become a Director (Trustee) of Mountain Training England. It's a chance to help support the infrastructure and development of mountaineering in the UK and a great way to know you've been a part of helping other people to get into the hills & mountains.

Kelvyn James, Director.

We have a current strategic plan which we would encourage you to read and see how we are trying to increase diversity in outdoor leaders, as well as encouraging new walkers and climbers through our skills schemes. We believe that our strategy is bearing fruit and creating more representative leaders who can activate and educate all those who wish to experience their potential in the hills, crags and climbing walls of England. It's particularly pleasing to see the growth in female leadership, rising to 35% of all our qualified leaders.

Our recent Impact Report has shown that there has been a significant shift in the use of the outdoors post-pandemic by diverse groups and communities; a copy of the summary report can be found [here](#).

We are fortunate enough to have a strong and sustainable financial model that means we have been able to withstand the pressures brought about by the recent pandemic and financial downturn. Our most recent accounts (2023) can be found on the Companies House website.

We have a strong and diverse Board of seven Trustees (four female, three male), and are looking to recruit an extra Trustee to take the Board to 8 people. Additionally, we are looking for someone to succeed our current Treasurer who is reaching the maximum term of six years in office and must stand down.

We hope the information in this pack will help you decide to apply and join us in leading this organisation into the next decade and to benefit those seeking to become the next generation of instructors, coaches and participants in climbing and walking in the mountains hills and lowland areas, not just in England but across the UK and Ireland.

Pete Stacey
Chair MTE.



*I was asked by the British Mountaineering Council (BMC) to be their representative on the MTE board to represent the views and interests of the BMC but also to add to the already wide range of skills and experience on the board. I come from an environmental background, but I also have involvement in Mountain Training Course delivery, and I was delighted to join a gender balanced board. In terms of what I gain from being a board member is a wider understanding of the role and function of Mountain Training England and an opportunity to influence on the issues that matter to me.
Sharon Kennedy, MTE Director.*

2. What is Mountain Training?

What does Mountain Training England do?

We are the awarding body for qualifications in walking, climbing and mountaineering leadership in England. We also administer two personal skills schemes, one for walking and one for climbing.

Our Ethos <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PzqVFu7N-RA&t=3s>

Our Vision

To promote a diverse and active outdoor society, supported by inspirational leaders, instructors and coaches.

Our Mission

To inspire, enable and develop people in walking, climbing and mountaineering through the provision of nationally and internationally recognised skills training and leadership qualifications.

To achieve this Mountain Training England:

- Administers 10 qualifications: <https://www.mountain-training.org/qualifications> and two skills training schemes <https://www.mountain-training.org/personal-skills>
- Quality assures the delivery of our courses.
- Provides induction and training for our course providers.
- Regularly reviews all of our schemes.
- Collaborates on the shared objectives of the national Mountain Training organisations.
- Liaises with stakeholders and partners in order to be most effective.
- Develops guidance with partners to support the whole UK outdoor sector.

How is Mountain Training England organised?

Mountain Training England is a Company Limited by Guarantee and a registered Charity. Mountain Training England consists of a council of representatives of elected member organisations. The members support the board of Trustees and act as a consultation body. They have the authority to elect Trustees. The responsibilities of the Trustees include setting the budget and organisational strategy, overseeing its implementation by the staff and running the company.

The Trustees are supported by an executive officer who in turn is supported by a staff complement.



What will my role be?

To attend Board and Council members' meetings and oversee the running of the business. The Trustees of MTE are responsible for setting the strategy and budget, overseeing the management of the operational side of the business and ensuring the safe running of the company by implementing good governance.

The ability to think strategically and creatively, to exercise independent judgement and a willingness to speak your mind are some of the key attributes we are looking for.

This post is non-salaried. Trustees' travel and reasonable expenses are reimbursed.

What level of commitment is required?

You will be expected to attend four Board meetings and three meetings of the Council per year. Board meetings are held in person and online. Two out of three Council meetings are held online. We try to get everyone together once a year, although any in person meetings can be held blended/ online.

Trustees must be willing to communicate with other members of the board and the executive staff outside of those meetings from time to time. Trustees also participate in sub-committees and special project groups such as the finance sub-committee, the screening committee and scheme review groups.

Please see the section on Time Commitment for more detail.

What about diversity?

We are committed to achieving a diverse Board and welcome applications from members of currently under-representative groups (such as women, black and minority ethnic communities and/or candidates who consider themselves to have a disability).

For more detailed information about Mountain Training England, <https://www.mountain-training.org/about/structure-and-governance/mountain-training-england>

Although my 'day job' is not in the outdoor sector, I have always loved the outdoors and spend much of my spare time either walking locally or in the mountains. I enjoyed my personal journey through Hill & Moorland Leader and Mountain Leader qualifications, but I was very aware that the sector was not as diverse as it should be and that things needed to change. So, when I saw the advert for a Director for MTE, I looked at the skills that I could bring from my 'day job' and realised that I could both add value and make a difference. Three years later, I'm Vice Chair and thoroughly enjoying the experience. I know you will too.
Sue Manns Hoffman – MTE Vice Chair

3. HONORARY TREASURER ROLE DESCRIPTION

The Honorary Treasurer is a key voluntary post within Mountain Training England and the wider network of related mountaineering organisations. As a member of the Board of Trustees, the Treasurer shares the responsibility for overseeing the management of the organisation and implementing the strategic objectives of its members.

The Treasurer has an oversight role over all aspects of financial management, working closely with other members of the Board of Trustees to safeguard the organisation financially. They act as an informed reference point for the Chair and other Trustees.

Although it is the Treasurer's responsibility to ensure proper financial records and procedures are maintained, much of this work is delegated to the Finance and Audit Subcommittee and paid staff.

Our annual statement of accounts can be seen at Companies House.

Role of Mountain Training England Treasurer

- The Treasurer oversees the financial matters of Mountain Training England in line with good practice and in accordance with the governing document and legal requirements of the Charities and Companies Acts and reports both quarterly to the Board and also to the Members at three Council meetings per year about the financial health of the organisation.
- The Treasurer ensures that effective financial measures, controls and procedures are in place.
- The Treasurer takes the lead on the formulation of policies for finances, reserves and investments.

Specific Responsibilities

- To oversee/verify and present budgets, accounts, management accounts and financial statements to the Board and Members after discussion with the Finance Committee.
- To ensure that appropriate accounting procedures and controls are in place.
- To ensure that full and accurate accounts and records are kept.
- In conjunction with the Executive Officer maintain sound financial management of MTE's resources, ensuring expenditure is in line with the charity's objects.
- To ensure compliance with relevant legislation e.g. Companies and Charity legislation and contractual agreements with external agencies such as funders and statutory bodies

- Chairing the Finance and Audit Committee in line with its terms of reference and reporting back to the Board.
- Present the annual statement of accounts to the Members at the Annual General Meeting.
- To liaise with designated staff about financial matters
- Advising on the financial implications of MTE's strategic and operational plan.
- Liaising with the independent examiner to ensure that the annual accounts are compliant with the current Charities Statement of Recommended Practice.
- Ensure any recommendations of the independent examiner are implemented
- Contribute to the fundraising strategy of the organisation.
- Advise on reserves policy and investment policy
- Ensure that there is no conflict between any investment held and the aims and objects of MTE or partner organisations
- Ensure that MTE has sufficient liquidity to meet its future commitments.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL SKILLS, QUALIFICATIONS EXPERIENCE	DESIRABLE
considerable experience as a treasurer of similar sized organisations	Some outdoor experience of walking, rock climbing or mountaineering.
or experience of controlling a budget in a small-to-medium-sized (SME) organisation/business	have an interest in the development of the Mountain Training awards
Financial accounting and reporting experience	Experience of working with charity or educational body accounts
Recognised accountancy qualification e.g. ICAEW, ACCA, CIPFA, CIMA, AAT etc	Knowledge of Charity SORP
	Experience in promoting Equity/Inclusion

Other Desirable Attributes

- Seven principles of public life (Nolan's): selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership
- Commitment to the organisation
- Willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- Strategic vision
- Good, independent judgement
- Ability to think creatively
- Willingness to speak your mind



- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of Trustees
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- The skills to analyse proposals and examine their financial consequences

Commitment

As Treasurer you will chair the Finance & Audit Committee, which meets quarterly. You will also be expected to attend four Board meetings and three Members' Council meetings per year.

Occasional attendance at MTUKI Council meetings and Finance Planning Group meetings is required.

Term

Trustees serve for a maximum of three years and are re-elected annually at the Annual General Meeting. At the end of the first three-year term of office Trustees are eligible for re-election for one further term of three years. From time to time the positions of Treasurer, Vice-Chair and Chair become subject to renewal. The Trustees nominate these positions from the Board and the Council votes to approve them at the AGM.

Expenses

Reasonable travel, parking and subsistence expenses are paid to Trustees, in line with MTE expenses policy.

4. ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES SECTOR TRUSTEE ROLE DESCRIPTION

Non-executive Trustee with experience/understanding of the Adventure Activities Sector.

Mountain Training England (MTE) is looking for the right person to join a Board of eight Trustees. The Trustees share the responsibility for overseeing the management of the organisation and implementing the strategic objectives of its members.

Who are we looking for?

We seek a person who has an excellent knowledge of the wider mountaineering, climbing and hillwalking sector, and experience of the Mountain Training qualifications, and who can contribute to the Board's work in developing and implementing national strategy to support competent leadership and participation in these activities.

Applications are open to anyone who believes they fit the requirements in the person specification.

Role Description

The role of the Board is to set the strategic direction of the organisation, to oversee the implementation of that strategy and to ensure that the organisation is governed to the highest standards.

Trustees' Roles & Responsibilities

- Set the values of MTE with a clear vision and mission statement
- Set the strategy of MTE
- Oversee the work of the management team
- Risk management & monitoring of internal controls
- Finance planning and monitoring
- Policy framework
- Governance

Additional Responsibilities

As well as the above collective duties, you will be expected to use your skills and experience to advise the Board and the Member organisations. For example, this may involve producing papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues and providing advice and guidance.

Commitments

The Board of Mountain Training England meets four times a year. There are a further three meetings of Members per year. See separate document explaining the time commitments.

Trustees also participate in sub-committees and special project groups such as the Finance sub-committee, the Screening committee and Award Review groups.

Trustees serve for a term of three years and are re-elected annually at the Annual General Meeting. At the end of the first three-year term of office Trustees are eligible for re-election for one further term of three years. From time to time the positions of Treasurer, Vice-Chair and Chair become subject to renewal. Applications are invited and the Members appoint at the Annual General Meeting.

Trustees' Liability insurance

MTE carries insurance for Trustees' liability.

PERSON SPECIFICATION – NON-EXECUTIVE TRUSTEE WITH EXPERIENCE/UNDERSTANDING OF THE ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES SECTOR

As a member of our Board you will share the responsibility for overseeing the management of the organisation and the implementation of MTE's strategic objectives.

Essential skills/experience	Desirable skills/experience
A good knowledge of Mountain Training's processes and ethos.	Experience of not-for-profit or/and commercial organisations within the adventure activities sector.
Strong personal background in walking, climbing and mountaineering	Experience of governance of charities and voluntary sector organisations, especially as a Trustee.
At least one Mountain Training qualification	Governance experience of collaborative partnership working with other organisations.
Good working knowledge of operations in the adventure activities sector.	Understanding of equity, diversity and inclusion
Experience of delivery of Mountain Training schemes.	

Desirable Attributes

- Seven principles of public life (Nolan's): selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership
- Sports governance experience
- Strategic vision
- Good, independent judgement
- Ability to think creatively
- Willingness to speak your mind
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team

5. SUMMARY OF TIME COMMITMENT

The time commitment expected of MTE Trustees is described below.

Type of work	Description	Time commitment
Board meetings	Attend 4 Board meetings per year. Meetings are held on weekdays. Board meetings usually last 4-5 hours. Two meetings per year are held in person with remote attendance possible for one of them – the October meeting is a residential 2 day meeting.	20 - 25 hours per year plus preparation time
Council meetings	Attend 1 of 3 Council meeting per year. These meetings are held mid-week. Meetings last 4 hours. Two meetings per year are held in person with remote attendance possible.	4 hours per year plus prep time
The rows below describe further voluntary commitments accepted by Trustees depending on their availability and expertise.		
Board committee <i>Nominations committee</i>	MTE convenes a nominations committee consisting of two Trustees and one or two member representatives. This process is done by email/Zoom.	One round of recruitment = screening, shortlisting, interviewing approx. 16 hours (2 days)
Board committee <i>Finance committee</i>	The Treasurer and one other Trustee sit on the Finance Committee, which meets online.	8 hours per year plus prep time
Board committee <i>Screening Committee</i>	One Trustee, one Council member, two independent members, the Development Officer and the Training Officer comprise this group. The process is coordinated by the Development Officer and communication is by email.	Review applications 4 times per year, make recommendations. 6 hours per year

MTE representation on MTUKI Council	The Chair and one other Trustee attend as voting member representatives of Mountain Training UK & Ireland. The Executive Officer attends as an advisor. This is a shared role; the Chair attends most MTUKI meetings and the other voting place is shared among the other Trustees.	3 meetings per year – 4 hours per meeting All MTUKI meetings are possible to attend online. One meeting per year is planned as a face to face meeting, and this is run as a blended meeting.
Finance planning group	The Treasurer, Chair and Executive Officer attend meetings of the Finance Planning Group, which is a sub-committee of Mountain Training UK & Ireland. This group meets once a year, usually on a MTUKI Council meeting date.	1 day
Funding Screening Committee	Two Trustees and the Governance & Equity Officer form this group. The process is coordinated by the Governance & Equity Officer and communication is by email.	Review applications 4 times per year, accept recommendations. 4 hours per year
Working groups	Qualifications review working groups convene during the initial phase of the process. Contribution includes email correspondence and face to face meetings.	<6-8 days over two years

Length of tenure

Trustees serve for a maximum of three years and are re-elected annually at the Annual General Meeting. MTE Articles allow Trustees to stand for re-election for a further period of up to 3 years. From time to time the positions of treasurer, vice-chair and chair become subject to renewal. Applications are invited and the members appoint at the Annual General Meeting.

6. A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MOUNTAIN TRAINING ENGLAND BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Overall purpose

The purpose of this code of conduct is to provide Trustees with clear guidelines as to the expected standard of behaviour, responsibilities and good practice in fulfilling their obligations to Mountain Training England.

Role of Trustees

MTE provides Trustees with guidance outlining their specific role and responsibilities. In fulfilling their general roles and responsibilities Trustees must:

- act in the best interests of MTE at all times, taking professional advice where necessary.
- contribute to the work of the Board in order for MTE to fulfil its objects, as defined in the Memorandum of Association and in legislation.
- recognise that their role is a collective one and be aware that any task or function delegated to an individual Trustee or Board committee does not relieve the other members of the Board of the responsibility for that task or function. This concept of collective responsibility constitutes your fiduciary duty under company law.
- support and assist the executive staff, where appropriate.

Eligibility to serve

A Trustee must not be disqualified from acting as such and must provide a fit and proper person declaration at the time of appointment.

Conflicts of interest

The Board has a legal obligation to act in the best interests of Mountain Training England, and in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles, and to avoid situations where there may be a potential, real or perceived, conflict of interest.

Upon appointment, and thereafter annually, Trustees are required to complete a declaration of interest form. This document must be updated when a material change occurs. A register of interests will be maintained. Declaration of interests is a standing item on all meeting agendas and Trustees are expected to declare any interests that arise in response to each meeting agenda.

Standards of conduct

Trustees are required to adhere to the highest standards of conduct in the performance of their duties. This code of conduct respects and endorses the seven principles of public life promulgated by the Nolan Committee and all Trustees are expected to perform their duties in accordance with them. The seven principles are: **Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, Leadership**

In addition, MTE requires Trustees to perform their duties in accordance with the vision, mission and values of the organisation. Trustees are encouraged to:

- value the opinions and perspectives of colleagues, even when these differ from one another
- treat MTE's staff with respect and in accordance with the policies laid out in the staff handbook.
- be mindful of conduct which could be deemed to be unfair or discriminatory
- conduct themselves in a manner which reflects positively on MTE at all times.

Meetings

Trustees have a responsibility to attend four meetings of the Board and three meetings of the Council per year. When this is not possible they should submit an apology to the Executive Officer in advance of the meeting. Trustees are expected to attend for the duration of each meeting.

Non-attendance of three consecutive Board meetings will result in the Trustee being deemed to have resigned their position, unless the grounds for absence are regarded as satisfactory by the Board.

Formal minutes are taken at each meeting. Minutes are confidential to the Board and the Executive Officer. Minutes signed by the Chair are deemed evidence of decisions taken by the Board.

Confidentiality

All Trustees are required to respect the confidentiality of the information they are exposed to as a result of their membership of the board of MTE. All Trustees, when dealing with sensitive and confidential issues, are required to act with discretion and care in the performance of their role.

Ceasing to be a Trustee of MTE

Trustees must continue to comply with the qualifications required to hold a Board position throughout their period of tenure, as defined in the Fit and Proper Person declaration. Any changes that would render them ineligible to serve must be forwarded to the Chair.

Trustees may resign their office ahead of their three-year tenure by writing to the Chair and the Executive Officer.

The confidentiality requirements referred to above continue to apply after the Trustee leaves office.

7. MTE BOARD DIVERSITY STATEMENT

MTE recognises the value of diversity in the makeup of its Board of Trustees. We acknowledge that increasing diversity, including skills, expertise, gender, race, disability, sex, religion or belief, age, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity as well as culture, personality, life and work experience will benefit our work for the following reasons:

- A diverse Board contains a broader mix of skills, experience, knowledge and backgrounds, which should provide greater perspective in discussion and decision making. It should also enhance the Board's resilience and increase flexibility in its approach to new challenges.
- A Board representing a demographical cross-section of contemporary society has the potential to bring fresh, new ideas in and prevent leadership stagnating.
- A more diverse range of Trustees helps to ensure that MTE is fair and open in all our interactions with our stakeholders in pursuit of our charitable aims, for example in seeking opinion, delivering services and facilitating training.
- A diverse board can increase public confidence and accountability.

Our approach to diversity

- We have made sure that our Articles of Association set out the limitations on terms of service. Trustees may serve a maximum of six years and are re-elected annually by the Council at AGM. This facilitates a regular turnover of personnel while ensuring adequate continuity and sufficient ongoing experience and familiarity of the business.
- We have a recruitment policy and a standard procedure for the recruitment of new Trustees.
- We appoint a Nominations Committee which oversees all recruitment processes.
- We make sure that all new Trustees are thoroughly inducted into the ethos and working practices of our organisation.
- All Trustee appointments are based on merit and according to need, with the skills required identified in advance.
- We work hard to place and share our job adverts in appropriate places where they are more likely to be seen by the people we want to attract. We also spend time on the wording of the job advert, the job description and person specification to make them appealing to a wide range of people.
- We have an out-of-pocket expenses policy to facilitate travel to and from meetings.

8. HOW TO APPLY AND APPLICATION TIMETABLE

Please send your CV together with a letter/personal statement giving your reasons for wishing to become a Trustee of Mountain Training England to: cath@mountain-training.org

- Applications are welcomed after **2 September 2024**.
- A webinar for interested applicants will be held on the evening of **Tuesday 1st October at 7pm**. For anyone interested in attending, please contact cath@mountain-training.org and you will be emailed the joining details.
- The closing date for applications is **6 October 2024**
- Interviews (online) will held as follows:
- **Treasurer role** – Evening of **14 October 2024**
- **Adventure sector role** – Evening of **15 October 2024**
- MTE Council to receive details of successful candidates and accept nominations – **23 October 2024**.
- Induction to role and organisation – **November/December 2024**.
- Successful candidates to attend first Board meeting in **January 2025**.

If you have any questions about the roles and would like to talk to one of the Trustees, please email us via our governance officer cath@mountain-training.org who will arrange for a call back to you.