Mountain Training England
Chair recruitment 2026/27
Information pack



Mountain Training England

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Contents

1. Introduction 3
2. What is Mountain Training? 5
3. Role description: Chair 7
4. Summary of time commitment 10
5. A code of conduct for Mountain Training England Board of Trustees 11
6. Mountain Training England Board Diversity Statement 13
7. How to apply and application timetable 14

1. Introduction

Thank you very much for your interest in Mountain Training England, and we hope you will apply to be our next Chair. Mountain Training England was created in 1964 and for 62 years we have remained committed to our mission 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 expert staff team who implement these aims as well as a large group of around 150 providers who deliver our qualifications and skills courses across England and Wales. In 2025, we registered over 5,200 new candidates for our qualifications and skills courses. We proactively measure and promote diversity, equity and inclusivity. The number of female candidates passing a qualification assessment accounted for 33% of all candidates gaining qualifications; in the case of the new Bouldering Wall Instructor, female candidates represented 56% of all candidates passing their assessment.

"I joined the MTE Board to share my leadership expertise in a way that helps me give something back to the outdoors sector I spend so much of my free time enjoying. In return, the role gives me an opportunity to learn and increase my experience working at board level. Both the Board and operational team at MTE are so friendly - I'm really enjoying working alongside such a passionate and motivated team."
Rebecca Smith, Trustee

Our Strategic Development Plan (here) includes our approaches to diversity in outdoor leadership, as well as encouraging new walkers and climbers through our skills courses. 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. We have developed various initiatives following our 2025 Disability Survey, which highlighted not only the value of the outdoors to people with neurodivergence and various disabilities, but also the areas for improvement in the provision of leadership qualifications.

Since we published our 2023 Impact Report (here) showing a significant shift in the use of the outdoors post-pandemic, we have seen the consequences of growth in the numbers of

people who venture outdoors with limited mountain know-how. The rise in call-out rates to Mountain Rescue is one aspect among others, and we recently commissioned research to help us understand current trends and ensure we can provide what is needed to help people today to safely and responsibly enjoy hill walking and climbing. This research will be shared with our Council Members, who are representatives of fifteen national outdoors, education and development organisations.

We have a strong and diverse Board of Trustees (three female, six male) including representatives from the outdoor sector as well as independent trustees. Our Chair, Pete Stacey, will step down from the Board in 2027 after seven years in role, and we would like to recruit a new Chair to lead the Board. There are other changes on the horizon, following a review financed by Sport England and covering the network of Mountain Training organisations in England and Wales and the BMC. The review's final recommendations and outcomes will become known in early 2027. It seems likely that the new Chair of MTE will need to be ready to lead us through changes in the overall structure of our sector and pursue potentially new ways to meet candidates' and providers' needs all whilst maintaining the high quality standards we are known for.

MTE is fortunate enough to have a sustainable financial model and strong balance sheet that means we have been able to withstand the various pressures of pandemic, financial downturn, and inflation. Our recent accounts (2025) can be found on the Companies House website and further information on the Charity Commission website. You will find the terms *Trustee* and *Director* used interchangeably in this recruitment information pack.

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, not just in England but across the UK and Ireland.

Hilary Watchman
Vice-Chair, MTE



"I joined MTE to contribute my experience of elite sport, coaching and accountancy to an organisation with an important role in developing people to flourish on the crags, coast, hills and mountains. I was particularly attracted by the opportunity to help shape its future direction, challenge thinking and ensure it continues to evolve and remain relevant."
Johnathan Akinyemi, Trustee

2. What is Mountain Training?

We are the awarding body for qualifications in walking, climbing and mountaineering leadership in England. We also administer six personal skills courses for walking and rock climbing. For more detailed information about Mountain Training England, https://www.mountain-training.org/about/structure-and-governance/mountain-training-england

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 six skills courses: 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 our schemes.
- Collaborates on the shared objectives of the national Mountain Training organisations.

- Liaises with stakeholders and partners to be most effective.
- Develops guidance with partners to support the whole UK outdoor sector.

Please review our Strategic Development Plan for 2026-2030 here

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 Board and a Council of elected member organisations. The Council 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, ensuring good governance, and overseeing the Executive Officer's implementation of the strategy and overall running of the company.

The Executive Officer supports the Board and is in turn supported by a team of staff based at Siabod Cottage in Capel Curig.

What will my role be?
As Chair, you will be expected to attend and lead Board and Council meetings and oversee the running of the business. You will lead and support the Trustees of MTE in setting the strategy and budget, overseeing the management of the company and ensuring its safe running through effective governance.

Particularly in the period of change envisaged following the Sport England review, some of the key attributes we are looking for include: strategic mindset and creative thinking; demonstrably effective leadership; independent judgement; and clear and compelling communication.

This post is non-salaried. All Board members' travel and reasonable expenses are reimbursed.

What level of commitment is required?
You will be expected to lead four Board meetings and three meetings of the Council per year. Board meetings are held in person and/or 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.

The Chair must be willing to communicate with other members of the Board and the executive staff outside of those meetings as needed. Trustees also participate in sub-committees and special project groups such as the finance sub-committee, the screening committee or 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 those who might not consider themselves mainstream candidates, for example, through their cognitive perspective, professional experience, life experience, age, gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or those with an untypical background but who have the necessary transferable skills. Currently we have a gender balance of 33% female board representation.

For more information about how we have addressed equity, diversity and inclusivity, please follow this link - https://www.mountain-training.org/help/resources/blog/equity-diversity-and-inclusivity-actions-2014-2024/

3. Role description: Chair

The Chair leads the Board, facilitates strategic decision-making, supports individual director contribution, and ensures sound governance of the organisation.

Responsibilities

The Chair has the same responsibilities as other Directors of MTE, and in addition, it is their responsibility to:

1. Chair MTE meetings of Directors and stakeholders and provide leadership. Lead Board discussions of strategic proposals brought by the Executive Officer, to review, debate, challenge and seek consensus or alignment on strategy.
2. Set the agenda for Board meetings in conjunction with the Executive Officer EO. The agenda should take account of the issues and the concerns of all Directors and should be forward-looking and focused on strategic matters.
3. Take the lead in succession planning for Board of Directors. Oversee the recruitment of new Directors, ensuring that representation on the Board and the stakeholder members meets the requirements of the Articles of Association and the Code for Sports Governance. Ensure a properly constructed induction programme for new Directors.

4. Undertake a skills audit to identify and fill skills gaps and meet the development needs of the Board as a whole, with a view to enhancing its overall effectiveness as a team. Take the lead in identifying and meeting the development needs of individual Directors.

5. Represent MTE at events and meetings or delegate specific responsibilities for representation

6. Take the lead in recruiting to the role of Executive Officer and ensure that a proper induction takes place. Work closely with the Executive Officer and conduct an annual performance review.

An effective Chair

- Ensures the organisation pursues its objects as defined in the Memorandum of Association.
- Safeguards and promotes the good name and values of the organisation.
- Upholds the statutory duties of a UK Company Director and a UK Charity Trustee and promotes high standards of governance.
- Sets the agenda and tone of Director and stakeholder discussions to promote constructive debate and effective decision-making.
- Fosters accountability, collaboration and effective communication.
- Ensures clear structure and accountability for sub-committees.
- Liaises with the Executive Officer to ensure effective implementation of decisions.

Essential skills and experience

1. Excellent leadership skills, including those required to chair meetings and facilitate discussion between people with differing needs and opinions.
2. Likely to have had 3-5+ years in a senior management/leadership role.
3. Excellent communication skills, including written and verbal, with individuals and large groups.
4. An ability to quickly understand the organisation and its context including experience of the qualifications and their delivery.
5. An in-depth understanding, supported by personal experience, of the breadth and scope of the outdoor industry, for example but not limited to, the use of the outdoors for personal development, outdoor education, well-being, adventure, field studies, voluntary/youth organisations, skills delivery and the provision of adventurous activities for recreational purposes.
6. A strategic mindset and a diplomatic, persuasive approach to negotiating and finding solutions.

Desirable skills and experience

1. Previous Board experience and skills developed within a charity, private company or public benefit sector organisation.
2. Experience of leading change or transformation projects with multiple stakeholders.
3. Understanding of governance for charities and companies limited by guarantee.
4. Experience working with an Executive Officer or General Manager and their staff team.

Values and personal attributes

1. Personal integrity and strong ethical awareness in decision-making.
2. Supportive and challenging in equal measure. Adept at asking questions. A proactive listener. Comfortable engaging in constructive debate.
3. Open to fresh ideas, whilst able to focus on what is relevant and lead a discussion to achieve a goal.
4. Dynamic and organised approach to working with stakeholders on collaboration and transformation.
5. A commitment to seeing MTE successfully meet the needs of current and future candidates and providers, and fully meet its objects defined in the Memorandum of Association.

4. Summary of time commitment

The time commitment expected of the MTE Chair is indicated below.

Type of work	Description	Time commitment
Board meetings	Lead four Board meetings per year. Meetings are held on weekdays. Board meetings usually last 4-5 hours. At least one meeting per year is held in person, which is usually a residential 2-day meeting.	20 - 25 hours per year plus preparation time
Strategy days	As needed, usually adjacent to a Board meeting.	Four or more hours plus preparation time
MTE Council meetings	Attend three Council meeting per year. These meetings are held mid-week. Meetings last four hours. One meeting per year is held in person with remote attendance possible.	Four hours per meeting plus preparation time
MT Chairs	Attend online ad hoc meetings to discuss issues of common interest	One-hour meetings approximately every two months
MTUKI Council & AGM	Attend meetings to discuss and vote on structural and governance matters for Mountain Training organisations across UK and Ireland.	Three per year, of which two online (four hours) and one in-person (overnight Wales or Scotland).
MTT AGM	Chair can allocate the voting mandate to any director. MTE is a founder stakeholder of the Mountain Training Trust.	Once per year. Two hours plus preparation time.
Sport England Review Chairs Project Group	Subject to the outcomes of the review, there is likely to be a need for Chairs to coordinate the implementation of any proposed changes. The Chairs of MTUKI, MTE, MTC, BMC plus MTS and MTBI are all involved.	Currently monthly while review is ongoing
Executive Officer contact	Weekly informal updates, broad supervision, plus an annual appraisal.	Weekly

Contact with Treasurer and Board Members	Routine calls to update, discuss current issues and concerns.	As necessary
Director recruitment	Chair liaises with the Nominations Committee	As necessary

Length of tenure
As with all Trustees, the Chair serves for a maximum of two terms each of three years. Nominations are made and the members appoint at the Annual General Meeting.

5. 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 about 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 up to 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 approved 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 Vice-Chair.

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

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

6. Mountain Training England 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.

7. How to apply and application timetable

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

- Applications are welcomed after **16 November 2026**
- The closing date for applications is **28 December 2026**
- Interviews (online) will be held during the period **25 January – 12 February 2027**
- Successful applicant to attend a Board meeting as an Observer **23 February 2027**
- Induction to the organisation and familiarisation

- Approval by Council at MTE AGM **9th June 2027**; official appointment into role

If you have any questions about the roles and would like to talk to one of the Trustees or the Chair, please email chair.england@mountain-training.org who will arrange for a call back to you.