



MOUNTAIN TRAINING TRUST

CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

CANDIDATE BRIEF

CHAIR, THE MOUNTAIN TRAINING TRUST

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chair of the Mountain Training Trust. I hope that you find this information pack useful in supporting your decision to apply for this role.

The Mountain Training Trust is an exceptional educational charity responsible for running a wide range of learning programmes for individuals, businesses and organisations. We are best known for running Plas y Brenin (PYB) in the heart of the Snowdonia National Park, a centre of sporting excellence and one of the UK's leading providers of qualifications and skills-based courses. PYB has been at the forefront of outdoor leadership, training and exploration for over 65 years. We are proud that we have been its custodian since 1997 when we were successful in winning the contract to manage PYB on behalf of Sport England. Since then, we have built a unique reputation for providing world-class instruction. Our iconic location means the Trust can run a year-round programme of skill development, training and assessment in a range of outdoor sports including walking, climbing, mountaineering, paddle sports and mountain biking.

Our current chair, Sara Mogel OBE will retire later this year after 6 years' distinguished service in the role. We now seek a new chair of trustees to succeed her and lead the organisation through our next phase of development, building on our success and fulfilling our ambitions. If you believe you have the vision, experience and expertise to help and you share our core values, we want to hear from you.

To arrange an informal conversation with a member of our recruitment panel please email sandie.mcbennett@mountaintrainingtrust.org.

Thank you again for considering the Mountain Training Trust. We look forward to hearing from you.

Peter Rowley OBE
Trustee and Senior Independent Director



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ABOUT US

The Mountain Training Trust is an educational charity and company limited by guarantee founded by the British Mountaineering Council, Mountain Training UK&I and Mountain Training England. We operate and safeguard PYB, the UK's home of true adventure. It's the place for everyone to come and discover outdoor sports, improve their performance and have great adventures across a range of activities in a safe environment.

Founded in 1955, PYB is one of Sport England's three National Sports Centres (NSCs) (along with Bisham Abbey and Lilleshall) and is part of the UK's National Outdoor Centre network including Glenmore Lodge (Scotland), Tollymore (Ireland) and Plas Menai (Wales). We have operated it on Sport England's behalf since 1997.

The NSCs are recognised nationally, and increasingly internationally, as examples of best practice for the combination of community activity and world class training environments. They contribute positively to Sport England's reputation across the sport and leisure sector. The NSCs regularly host a diverse range of partners and stakeholders to share best practice and innovation, demonstrating the wider asset value across the sport and leisure sector.

At PYB we offer more than 100 courses to suit all abilities and interests, ranging from school groups and families to friends and individuals from complete beginners to enthusiasts looking to gain the qualifications they need to work in the outdoor sector. We're one of the most recognised centres for training and developing outdoor instructors, who go on to work in the UK and all over the world.

We sit at the heart of the outdoor sector, working with organisations that span education, people development, membership and the wider commercial sector. In a typical year unaffected by Covid, we engage with more than 10,000 unique paying visitors. We attract customers from all over the world and our coaches train people in a variety of locations outside of North Wales. We are keen to support the local economy and we use local suppliers as much as possible.

Our Chief Executive describes our role here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9TCxMOMdR4&feature=youtu.be>

To find out a little more, please visit:

<https://www.pyb.co.uk/about-plas-y-brenin/>

WHAT WE DO

Our core activity is the provision of a range of instructional services in outdoor based activities. Training and skills development is at the heart of our work, which is captured annually in the form of a 'Sport Development Plan'. This Plan, approved by Sport England, documents how we will:

- Facilitate development of coaching and instruction in outdoor pursuits/adventure sports, particularly for strategic functions, such as high-level coaching and instructor training.
- Facilitate development of expertise, standards of operation and new forms of delivery in the outdoor pursuits/adventure sports sector.
- Facilitate wider participation in outdoor pursuits/adventure sports, particularly among low participation groups, through innovative forms of delivery and programme development.
- Optimise the use of PYB throughout the year ensuring value for money and affordable training opportunities.
- Promote the quality and variety of the natural environment that makes PYB a uniquely iconic setting for a national centre.

As an educational charity, we train those who train or support others in outdoor activities and do so in a way that reinforces the safety of all those concerned, but we also give many people safe access to adventure and to outdoor sport. Our charitable objects state that our education and training is in skills "for the conduct of safe walking, running, canoeing, climbing, orienteering, mountaineering, skiing, mountain biking and other recreational activities generally practised in the outdoors or in sea, hill, cliff and mountain environments and for the conduct of safe activity in the outdoors or in sea, hill, cliff and mountain environments".

We aim to 'get people active in the outdoors'.

As well as our main board we have three committees: for Audit, Risk and Finance; Governance and Nominations; and Capital Projects. We also have a board for our wholly owned subsidiary company Mountain Training Limited which has some members from Mountain Training Trust and some independent directors.

Like many charities we are moving from being supported by public funding to being self-sustaining. This is a major challenge especially with the additional complications of managing through the pandemic. We have made some good headway in, for example, growing the work we do to train people who work in outdoor environments to keep safe and updating some of our facilities such as the climbing wall. We have also grown both our adventure offer and our hospitality offer.

RESPONSIBILITIES AS A TRUSTEE

The Chair will fulfil all the duties and responsibilities of a Trustee. Our job description of a Trustee is provided as Appendix 1.

RESPONSIBILITIES AS A CHAIR

The full description of the Chair is provided as Appendix 2. In summary, the Chair's role is three-fold:

Providing leadership for the board as it fulfils its governance duties and responsibilities to the Mountain Training Trust:

- setting vision, values, mission, strategy and high-level policy in accordance with charity and company regulations
- monitoring performance against established targets
- securing financial stability
- safeguarding reputation and values
- ensuring all organisational activities comply with regulations and the law, and with our articles of association, supporting governance documents, procedures and policies
- reviewing major risks and making provisions to respond appropriately
- organising and leading board development activities such as self-assessments
- leading all activity around meetings
- acting as a spokesperson for the Mountain Training Trust

Board leadership

- building the board: leading trustee recruitment, induction and succession planning
- developing governance effectiveness
- overseeing the work of committees
- communicating board decisions
- directing board policy-making and strategic objectives
- co-ordinating board management of the Chief Executive, fulfilling employer and management responsibilities, overseeing role definition, selection, training, assessment and discipline
- representing the board on appointment and disciplinary panels, especially those for the Chief Executive

Relationship with Chief Executive:

- setting the board's agenda so that meetings are well planned and supporting information is accurate, relevant and timely to facilitate effective decision-making
- leading assessment of the Chief Executive, providing feedback, support and personal development opportunities
- co-ordinating board management of the Chief Executive, fulfilling employer and management responsibilities, overseeing role definition, selection, training, assessment and discipline
- provide leadership, support and guidance to the Chief Executive to ensure the organisation is run in accordance with board decisions
- working with the staff, trustees and others and resolve conflicts to protect the Mountain Training Trust's reputation and preserve morale
- ensure regular contact with the Chief Executive to maintain an open, supportive relationship and, where necessary, provide challenge.

THE PERSONAL QUALITIES WE SEEK

- Commitment to our work, vision and values
- Comprehensive understanding of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship and the required time commitments
- Sound, independent judgement
- Impartiality, fairness and confidentiality
- Willingness to speak his or her mind with respect for other opinions
- Tact and diplomacy
- Willingness to learn new skills
- Strategic vision and creative thinking
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

EXPERIENCE

- Previous Chairing experience (preferred)
- Previous leadership position in an organisation of similar size and complexity
- Experience as a charity trustee
- Previous experience of working in a multi-stakeholder environment
- Experience of operating in a complex policy and organisational landscape
- Specific experience in one or of the following sectors would be desirable, although not essential as other skills sets are welcome:
 - Hospitality/Leisure/Tourism Management
 - Human Resource Management
 - Financial Management
 - The funding environment of the not-for-profit sector
 - Business Transformation
 - Outdoor Sports

APPOINTMENT

This is a voluntary role that is not remunerated but reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

The initial term of appointment, in accordance with our governing document, is 3 years with the possibility thereafter of a second term of 3 years.

It is anticipated that the new Chair's first meeting will be the meeting of our September 2022 board meeting, by which date it is anticipated that a comprehensive induction will have been provided.



TIME COMMITMENT

The postholder will need to be available for a minimum of four board meetings a year, together with two board development days, committee and subsidiary company meetings (which meets between two and four times a year), attending a number of functions and regular contact with the Chief Executive. The time commitment is not spread evenly throughout the year, but on average, the role requires two days per month.

During the pandemic most meetings have been conducted virtually via Microsoft Teams. As we emerge from the pandemic, meetings at PYB have started to resume, subject to Government guidelines and directions. It seems likely that a hybrid of face-to-face and virtual meetings will continue. If meetings are held at PYB accommodation is provided before and after meetings.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply, please submit the following information:

- Cover letter highlighting relevant experience, skills and competencies you could bring to the Board
- Up to date curriculum vitae
- Details of current commitments

You should also include the contact details of two referees (who will only be contacted if selected as the preferred candidate).

Applications should be marked 'Private and Confidential' and sent by email to our Board Secretary, Sandie McBennett (sandie.mcbennett@mountaintrainingtrust.org)

The closing date is midnight on 30th April 2022. Discussions with shortlisted candidates will be held in May & June 2022.

For a confidential discussion about this role, please contact Sandie McBennett, Board Secretary who will arrange a discussion with a member of the recruitment panel.

Tel: 07778 451886

Email: sandie.mcbennett@mountaintrainingtrust.org



APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Trustee Role Description

1. The Role of the Board of Directors of MTT

1.1 The Board of Directors are the trustees of the charity MTT, as defined by law. They are the people responsible for controlling the administration and management of the charity. The role of the Board of Directors is to receive assets from donors, safeguard them and apply them for the charitable purposes set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association of MTT (its governing document). The Board of Directors must act as a group and not as individuals.

Responsibilities

2. Statutory Duties

2.1 To act as a non-executive Director of the charity and act in the best interests of the organisation alone and for the benefit of its beneficiaries and with honesty and good faith.

2.2 To ensure that the obligations and responsibilities of MTT, as determined by its Memorandum and Articles of Association are fully, promptly and properly performed and to ensure that the charity complies with all relevant laws.

2.3 To ensure that MTT pursues its charitable objects as defined in its Articles of Association and applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of those objects.

2.4 To use such personal and professional skills, together with such contacts, experience and judgement as they may possess, with integrity and independence to optimise both the short and long-term performance of MTT and to seek professional advice where appropriate.

2.5 To give strategic direction to the charity and play a full part in enabling the Board of Directors to arrive at balanced and objective decisions in the performance of its agreed role and functions in relation to MTT.

2.6 To make decisions for the benefit of MTT alone and not for personal or professional gain.

2.7 To safeguard the charity and its reputation.

2.8 To ensure financial stability and make sure company accounts are a true and fair view of business finance and all reporting requirements to Companies House and the Charity Commission are timely and accurate.

3. Strategic Leadership

3.1 Support and challenge the Chair, CEO and management team to drive and deliver MTT's activities to meet its charitable objects.

3.2 Provide a strategic perspective, champion change and challenge the status quo to ensure MTT takes a long-term view for its long term growth and sustainability.

3.3 Monitor, challenge and evaluate the performance of the strategic plan in meeting agreed goals and objectives.

3.4 Advocate MTT's aims, ensuring that the necessary human and financial resources are in place to successfully deliver them.

4. Governance

4.1 Work collaboratively with, and support the Chair, the CE and the management team.

4.2 Contribute fully to Board discussions, take collective responsibility for Board decisions and represent the collective Board view to external stakeholders and audiences.

4.3 Maintain confidentiality, as appropriate and when requested by the Chair, and agreed by Board consensus.

4.4 Be fully conversant and compliant with MTT's conflicts of interest policy, declaring any interests as soon as these become apparent.

4.5 Ensure integrity of management and financial information and that financial controls and systems of risk management are robust and defensible.

5. External relations

5.1 Build and maintain constructive relationships with key stakeholders including funding agencies, founding members, key professional and trade bodies.

5.2 Be an ambassador for MTT at external functions, meetings and events, when appropriate.

6. Personal obligations

6.1 Be an active advocate of MTT, its policies, objectives and its values of consistency, openness and honesty.

6.2 Understand and comply at all times with the legal and other responsibilities of being a Board Director.

6.3 Adhere to the rules and regulations regarding gifts and hospitality.

6.4 Seek continually to develop and refresh knowledge and skills to ensure any contribution to the Board remains informed and relevant.

6.5 Ensure that s/he fully understands and keeps up to date with:

- The business of MTT;
- The services delivered at Plas y Brenin, the National Outdoor Centre, as well as offsite activity;
- The performance against the Sport England national centre contract and other significant contracts and grant requirements;
- The external factors that affect MTT and its aspirations.

7. Time commitment and responsibilities

7.1 Attend all meetings of the Board of Directors called during the year, including the Annual General Meeting and other general meetings.

7.2 Allow time for preparation and follow up from meetings and any ad hoc response to Board related activities.

7.3 As the reasonable need arises, offer time to the business of MTT that relate to their respective skill sets.

8. Term of office

8.1 Board Directors will be appointed for a three year term, up to a maximum of two terms. Reappointment at the end of the first term is conditional on successfully undergoing a formal appraisal.

Person specification: MTT Board Director

General skills & qualities required by all Mountain Training Trust Board Directors

Key skills, experience and qualifications:

- Experience as a Company Director (commercial, charity, voluntary sector), trustee, partner, or in an appropriate senior management position, or active within in a sport or governing body.
- Strategy development.
- Leading organisational transformation and change.
- Knowledge and experience of the outdoor sports sector.
- An understanding of the changing environment in which the National Outdoor Centre operates.
- Commercial/business experience.
- Financial experience and understanding.
- Building and maintaining relationships with diverse groups, internal and external stakeholders.
- A strong, vibrant and diverse network.
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of a Non-Executive Director.
- Behavioural competencies and qualities:
- Ability to establish strong and positive working relationships with other Board members, Chair and executive team.
- Enthusiastic and positive commitment to the mission, objectives and values of Mountain Training Trust as an organisation.
- Results and performance-driven.
- Confident and independent thinker able to challenge facts and assumptions in a constructive and positive manner.
- Willingness to listen to alternative views and take direction and advice from other Board members and Chair, and other key stakeholders.
- Strong interpersonal skills: active listening and communication skills – able to engage, influence, persuade and inspire people at all levels.
- Able to communicate clearly and confidently in Board meetings and bigger forums.
- High self-awareness – understanding of personal strengths and weaknesses.
- Drive and commitment to improve personal knowledge and personal performance.
- Strong personal integrity – does not compromise on ethical or legal matters.
- Strong intellect and ability to quickly grasp and distil complicated issues, identify the areas for decision making.
- Willingness to embrace change and able to provide innovative thinking and solutions. Includes being open-minded and able to see the national picture for adventure sport.
- Able to make decisions objectively, based on understanding of facts and different perspectives.

Chair of MTT Board

1. The role of the Chair

1.1 The Chair will provide leadership primarily to the Board Trustees of MTT but also to act as guide, support and mentor to the Chief Executive (CEO). The Chair is the functioning figure head for the organisation and is key to setting the tone and culture as well as vision and strategic direction. The Chair is pivotal to creating the conditions for overall Board and individual Trustee effectiveness, both inside and outside the Boardroom. The Chair is ultimately responsible for ensuring the Board has the right composition, skills, level of knowledge and understanding, learning and renewal to be able to fulfil its duties. It is the Chair's role to lead the Board team.

2. Responsibilities

2.1 In addition to the responsibilities of the Chair as a Trustee of MTT, it is the responsibility of the Chair to:

- (a) Provide leadership to the Board and, in conjunction with the CEO, set its agenda;
- (b) Take the lead in succession planning for the Board of Trustees. Oversee the recruitment of new Board Directors, ensuring that Board composition meets the requirements of the Articles of Association, and that an appropriate skills audit is undertaken to identify and fill skills gaps in the Board of Trustees;
- (c) Take the lead in providing a properly constructed induction programme for new Trustees;
- (d) Take the lead in identifying and meeting the development needs of individual Trustees. It is the responsibility of the Chair to address the development needs of the Board as a whole with a view to enhancing its overall effectiveness as a team;
- (e) Ensure that the performance of individual Trustee and of the Board as a whole and its committees is evaluated from time to time as appropriate, undertaking annual appraisals with individual Trustees. Ensure that Trustees who are not performing effectively are supported to improve performance or, where necessary, are removed from office, in line with the provisions outlined in MTT's Articles of Association;
- (f) Encourage active engagement by all Trustees in meetings;
- (g) Connect with Board members between meetings and update them on any relevant developments and/or foster teamwork;
- (h) Take the lead in recruiting to the role of CEO and ensure that a proper induction takes place.
- (i) Act as line manager to the CEO, undertaking appraisals with the CEO and provide support, advice and, where appropriate, challenge to the CEO, while respecting executive responsibility;
- (j) Ensure that the Board of Trustees receives accurate, timely and clear information, in particular about the organisation's performance, to enable it to take sound decisions, monitor effectively and provide advice to promote the success of MTT;
- (k) Manage meetings of the Board to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for discussion of complex or contentious issues. In conjunction with the CEO set the agenda for meetings. The agenda should take full account of the issues and the concerns of all Trustees and should be forward looking and concentrate on strategic matters; and
- (l) Facilitate change and address any areas of conflict within the Board and within the organisation, liaising with the CEO to achieve this.

2.2 Anyone undertaking this role needs to recognise that it requires a serious time commitment.

3. Person specification: Chair of MTT Board

3.1 In addition to the areas described in the Board Trustees personal specification, the Chair should:

Uphold the highest standards of integrity and probity;

- Set the agenda, style and tone of Board discussions to promote effective decision-making and constructive debate;
- Promote effective relationships and open communication, both inside and outside the Boardroom, between Trustees and staff;
- Build an effective and complementary Board, initiating change and planning succession in Board appointments, subject to Board approval;
- Promote the highest standards of governance;
- Ensure a clear structure for, and the effective running of, Board committees;
- Ensure effective implementation of Board decisions;
- Provide coherent leadership of the organisation, including representing the organisation;
- Ensure the organisation pursues its objects as defined in the Memorandum and Articles of Association; and
- Safeguard the good name and values of the organisation.



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