

# WELCOME TO MOUNTAIN TRAINING ENGLAND.

WE ARE THE NATIONAL TRAINING AND AWARDING BODY FOR WALKING, CLIMBING AND MOUNTAINEERING IN ENGLAND. IN THIS DOCUMENT WE LAY OUT OUR STRATEGIC PLANS FOR THE PERIOD OF 2021 TO 2025.

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YOU ARE NOT IN THE MOUNTAINS.
THE MOUNTAINS ARE IN YOU.

JOHN MUIR

# LEAD. INSPIRE.

## **OUR VISION**

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 courses.

## **OUR ETHOS**

Our values define how we approach our work. These values influence what we are trying to achieve and how we expect our qualification holders to operate.

# **WE BELIEVE IN:**

#### THE POWER OF INSPIRATION

Inspiring people to enjoy walking, climbing and mountaineering with confidence and skill.

#### SAFE PRACTICE

The safe practice of walking, climbing and mountaineering. We issue guidance on good practice and provide training and qualifications for participants, instructors, leaders and coaches.

#### **OUALITY TRAINING**

High quality training and assessment delivered by experienced and supportive practitioners.

#### **SELF-RELIANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY**

Developing independent walkers, climbers and mountaineers who practise and encourage sustainable and sympathetic use of the outdoors by all users.

#### INCLUSION

Supporting equal access to our sport for people from all backgrounds.

We also believe that all people have the potential to develop leadership skills.

#### TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Good leadership is about more than decision making and technical skill; it is also about supporting and developing individuals.

SUCCESS IS NOT COUNTED BY HOW HIGH YOU HAVE CLIMBED BUT BY HOW MANY PEOPLE YOU BROUGHT WITH YOU.

WILL ROSE

# WHO WE ARE

In 1964 The Mountain Leader Training Board (MLTB) was set up by the British Mountaineering Council (BMC) and the Central Council for Physical Recreation (CCPR) to provide nationally recognised schemes of training and assessment for leaders of groups participating in mountain and hill walking. In 2003 the name of the organisation was changed to Mountain Leader Training England (MLTE) and in 2012 the name was again changed to Mountain Training England.

Mountain Training England (MTE) is owned and directed by its Council of Members who are drawn from a wide range of stakeholder organisations based in in England (see Appendix 5). A Board of Directors is charged with the operational management of MTE by the Members. The Board comprises a group of volunteer Non-Executive Directors and a BMC Nominated Director. A staff team led by the Executive Officer manages the day-to-day business of the organisation.

# WHAT WE DO

We currently train and accredit leaders and instructors through eight qualification schemes:

- Lowland Leader
- Hill and Moorland Leader
- Mountain Leader
- Rock Climbing Instructor
- Rock Climbing Development Instructor
- Indoor Climbing Assistant
- Climbing Wall Instructor
- Climbing Wall Development Instructor

The schemes are recognised by the Department for Education and the Adventure Activity Licensing Authority and are regulated by Ofqual. Currently the Board approves around 150 providers to deliver these schemes. Since 1964 MTE has registered over 186,000 candidates on all its schemes.

We also administer six skills training courses throughout England:

- Hill Skills
- Mountain Skills
- Rock skills Introduction
- Rock Skills Intermediate
- Rock Skills Learn to Lead Sport
- Rock Skills Learn to Lead Trad

## In addition to administering these schemes MTE also has the following roles:

- Close co-operation with Mountain Training UK&I and other national Mountain Training organisations
- Quality control and networking of approved providers
- Providing support for candidates undertaking the schemes
- Further developing qualification holders through the Mountain Training Association
- Providing advice and guidance outside Mountain Training's own formal qualifications structure
- Working closely with the BMC in matters relating to formal and informal mountain training
- Liaison with other organisations to further our aims and offer advice.

# OUR PURPOSE

We enable people from all backgrounds to be active on the hills, crags and climbing walls of the UK. We support a wide sector of professional and voluntary leaders who introduce and inspire millions of participants to exercise safely in these challenging environments. In these times it is ever more important that people should be able to gain the skills and confidence to pursue their own adventures, connect with nature, and enhance their physical and mental wellbeing.



# MOUNTAIN TRAINING UK AND IRELAND AND 'UK PROJECTS'

We work very closely with Mountain Training UK&I and the other national Mountain Training organisations. These bodies promote themselves to the outside world under the single brand name 'Mountain Training'. The following strategies have been developed in coordination with Mountain Training UK&I in particular and many of the projects will be shared with MTUK&I and other national Mountain Training organisations.

# MOUNTAIN TRAINING AND THE BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

MTE has a long-standing relationship with the BMC as its awarding body partner (along with MTC and MTUK&I). As part of this role it contributes to the development of the BMC's strategy, through representation on its Members' Council. MTE is also represented at the BMC's Equity Steering Group, the Training, Youth and Walls Committee, Safeguarding Group, Funded Partners Group and Partners' Assembly.





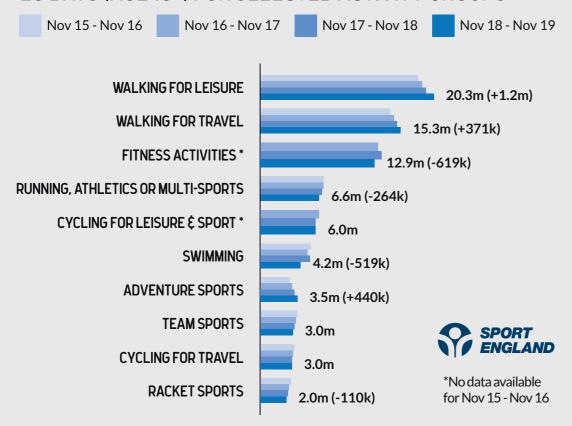
# RECOVERY AND RENEWAL: MOVING ON FROM COVID 19

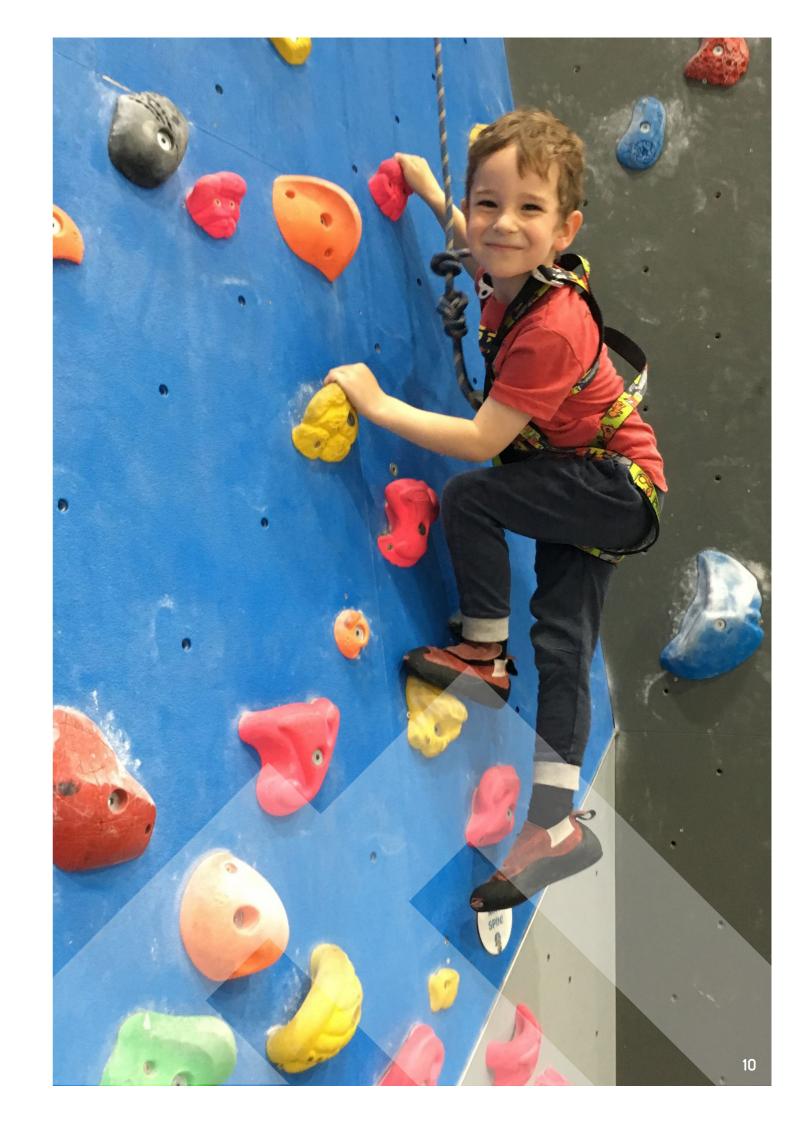
Prior to the Covid pandemic there had been a strong and sustained shift in sporting and recreational participation reported by Sport England. Traditional facilitated sports were declining while walking and adventure sports continued to grow strongly as more people sought their own adventures at all levels. MTE was seeing a steady increase in candidate registrations and qualifications awarded, servicing a healthy adventure sports sector.

'The overall growth in numbers continue to be driven by strong upward trends in walking and adventure sports (a category which includes hill and mountain walking, climbing and orienteering)'. - Active Lives report Nov'19, Sport England.

# **ACTIVITY GROUPS**

# TAKEN PART AT LEAST TWICE IN THE LAST 28 DAYS (AGE 18+) FOR SELECTED ACTIVITY GROUPS





# THE EFFECTS OF COVID 19

Covid 19 has had a huge impact on MTE and the whole adventure sports sector. This impact has created a reduction in leadership candidates as the sector retreated. There have been both opportunities and challenges presented by the pandemic:

- Climbing walls and outdoor centres have both been severely impacted by the restrictions. This may reduce the demand for qualified instructors until the sector can rebuild itself fully.
- Ongoing restrictions and the state of the economy will likely impact people's disposable income and their participation in our schemes. These effects could be felt for some time.
- The post-lockdown recoveries demonstrated the resilience of our provider franchise network.
   Amongst our providers the most agile have recovered the quickest, while more institutional providers have struggled. There will be winners and losers, accelerating a long-term trend toward more agile, customer focussed delivery.
- There has been an upsurge in participation in the UK outdoors, post lockdown. This has introduced a new wave of 'staycation' participants who have less

- knowledge and experience of the outdoors with all the challenges and opportunities that this presents.
- Covid lockdowns have highlighted the positive benefits of exercise and connecting with nature for both physical and mental health. There is a challenge regarding lower participation by ethnic minorities and the need to help them to access the outdoors with confidence.
- Lockdowns demonstrated the efficacy of online communication and training. For reasons of financial efficiency, inclusive access, educational efficacy and environmental impact, MTE needs to embrace digital delivery more fully in the future.
- The lockdowns demonstrated the effectiveness of partnership working with the rapid sharing of information and guidance development through wider digital networks. Many of our future strategic objectives will be best achieved through such close partnerships.

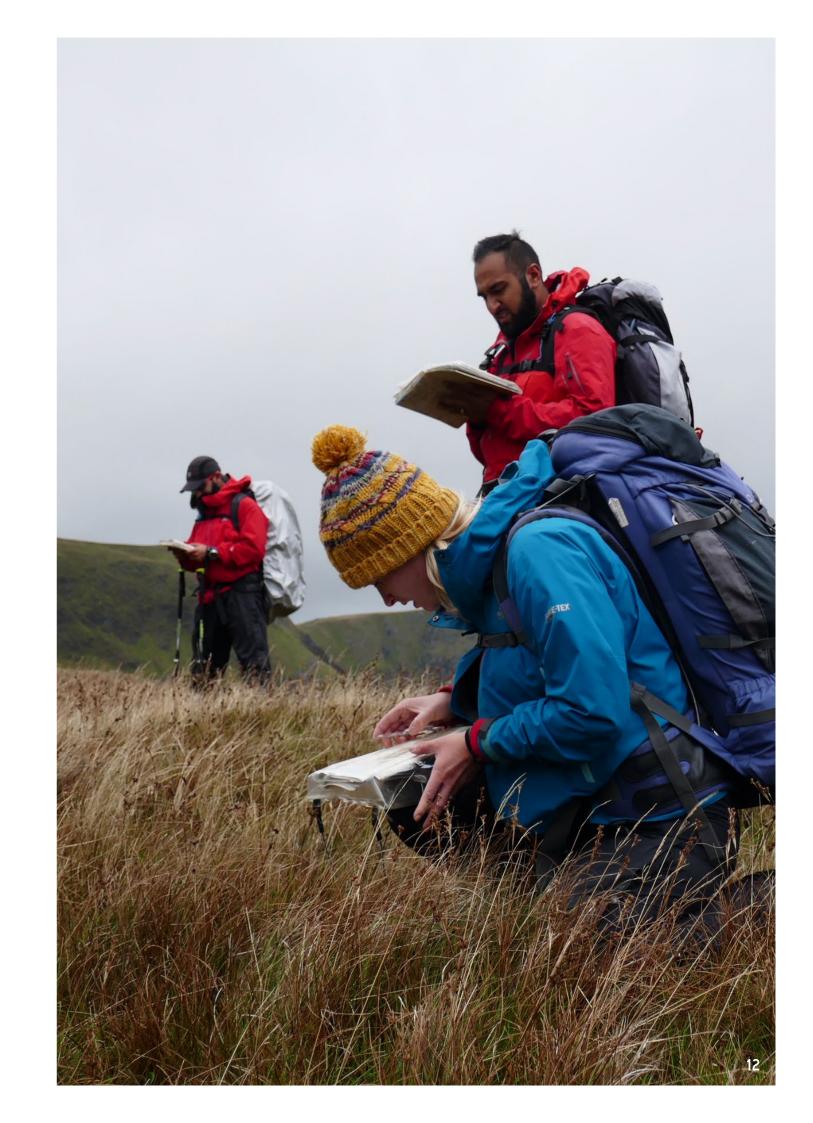
# **CURRENT CHALLENGES**

- With only 66% of our normal registrations (Appendix 4) and 50% of our normal course attendance in 2020, our finances have suffered into 2021. We have used our reserves to manage through this period so far, and we will stabilise our business model to establish sustainable financial security.
- A third of our qualifications are awarded to women, however only about 4% of our qualifications are awarded to people from ethnic minorities. We want to be more proactive to achieve greater inclusion in the participation and delivery of our schemes.
- We will continue to build the participation pyramid at its base by increasing access to skills courses, especially for youth, and encouraging their delivery by the voluntary sector.

- We want to further develop and support pathways into our schemes with activator organisations. By working through partnerships we can increase our reach and vicarious impact.
- We want to minimise the environmental impact of our activities by improving education, adjusting our practices and reducing our carbon footprint.

Our strategy for 2021 to 2025 will address these challenges and opportunities.

To do this we will prioritise five key areas: Pathways, Quality, Sustainability, Diversity and Promotion.



# MTE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2021-25:

**RECOVERY AND RENEWAL** 



# 1. THE TRAINING PATHWAY

Improving access to and through our schemes and making sure that our training and qualifications serve the needs of the sector.

We will...

#### A. REVIEW OUR SCHEMES

Ensuring our schemes and pathways remain 'fit for purpose' (Appendix 1).

- 1. Walking Schemes Review complete the implementation of the review's recommendations; including leadership and decision making content and Expedition Skills Module review.
- 2. Climbing schemes update review the Indoor Climbing Assistant to consider an Outdoor Climbing Assistant; review the Rock Climbing Development Instructor to Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor pathway.
- 3. Making skills courses more accessible for youth and adults and those currently under-represented.

# B. DELIVER ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Educating participants in the sustainable use of the outdoors.

- 1. Develop national guidance and an education campaign with partners.
- 2. Develop resources with partners

# C. COMMISSION INSIGHT AND RESEARCH

Establishing who engages with our schemes and why. What do we know about the barriers to participation?

- 1. Commission and collate ethnic origin/gender participation data analysis and research.
- 2. Learn from candidates and qualification holders through the MTA survey.
- 3. Establish post-Covid reach and impact on the public with an impact survey.

#### **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- Complete the implementation of the Walking Schemes Review.
- Complete ICA and RCDI review.
- Increase adult skills course attendance by 100% by 2025.
- Establish a national environmental campaign with partners.
- Publish participation demographics research in 2021.

# 2. QUALITY PROVISION

Maintaining the high-quality reputation of our qualifications, though good governance and quality assurance. Reputation = confidence = value.

We will...

#### A. MAINTAIN GOOD GOVERNANCE

1. Complying with the Code for Sports Governance tier 2b.

#### **B. FOCUS ON THE CUSTOMER**

Using customer feedback to understand who, and how, people experience and use our training and qualification pathways.

- 1. Customer feedback surveys.
- 2. MTA survey.

# C. SUPPORT AND DEVELOP OUR WORKFORCE

Developing provider training in:

- 1. Inclusion (shared with partners)
- 2. Coaching skills supporting candidates.
- 3. Teaching and assessing skills (including leadership competencies)

#### D. DEVELOP DIGITAL RESOURCES

Capitalising on recent Covid practice and advances to improve access to training through blended learning:

1. Develop online training for providers and course staff.

- 2. Develop online resources and guidance for candidates.
- 3. Enhance curation and presentation of digital resources.

#### E. ENHANCE CANDIDATE SUPPORT

Supporting the candidate's journey from training to assessment.

- 1. Provide wider mentoring support for candidates between training and assessment, utilising digital platforms.
- 2. Develop guidance to support post training action plans for the consolidation period, signposting support through the MTA

- Continue to meet Tier 2b Code requirements.
- Establish regular programme of F2F and online 'provider skills' CPD workshops.
- Update our website to better curate digital resources for providers and staff.
- Support 200 mentored candidates per year by 2025.



# 3. SUSTAINABLE DELIVERY

Maintaining the resilience of the organisation and its aims in a turbulent world.

We will..

# A.ESTABLISH POST-COVID FINANCIAL STABILITY

We will consider the financial impact of all strategic decisions to provide assurance that future activities are sustainable and that the finances of MTE are prudently managed, including reviewing our post Covid-19 business model and fee structures.

- 1. Review our provider fee model.
- 2. Implement our reserves and investment policies.
- 3. Develop 3-5 year budgets.

# B. SUSTAIN ORGANISATIONAL RESILIENCE

- 1. Undertake an annual review of internal training needs.
- 2. Maintain and review our risk register.
- 3. Develop contingency planning.

# C. DEVELOP COMMERCIAL INCOME STREAMS

Seeking opportunities to develop services and resources to diversify our income using our brand recognition for quality assured training.

Implement commercial strategy to exploit:

- 1. Internal markets existing candidates and participants.
- 2. External markets organisations and individuals within our sector who are not Mountain Training candidates.
- 3. Commercial partnerships with organisations.

#### D. SUSTAIN SPORT ENGLAND FUNDING

Develop common ground between our strategic aims and the "Big Issues" for the next Sport England strategy.

1. Continue to liaise with the BMC Funded Partners and Partners' Assembly on joint projects.

- 2. Foster and support partnerships with sector organisations utilising the Partners Liaison Officer.
- 3. Explore funding to support greater equity, digital development, mass market education and youth skills engagement.

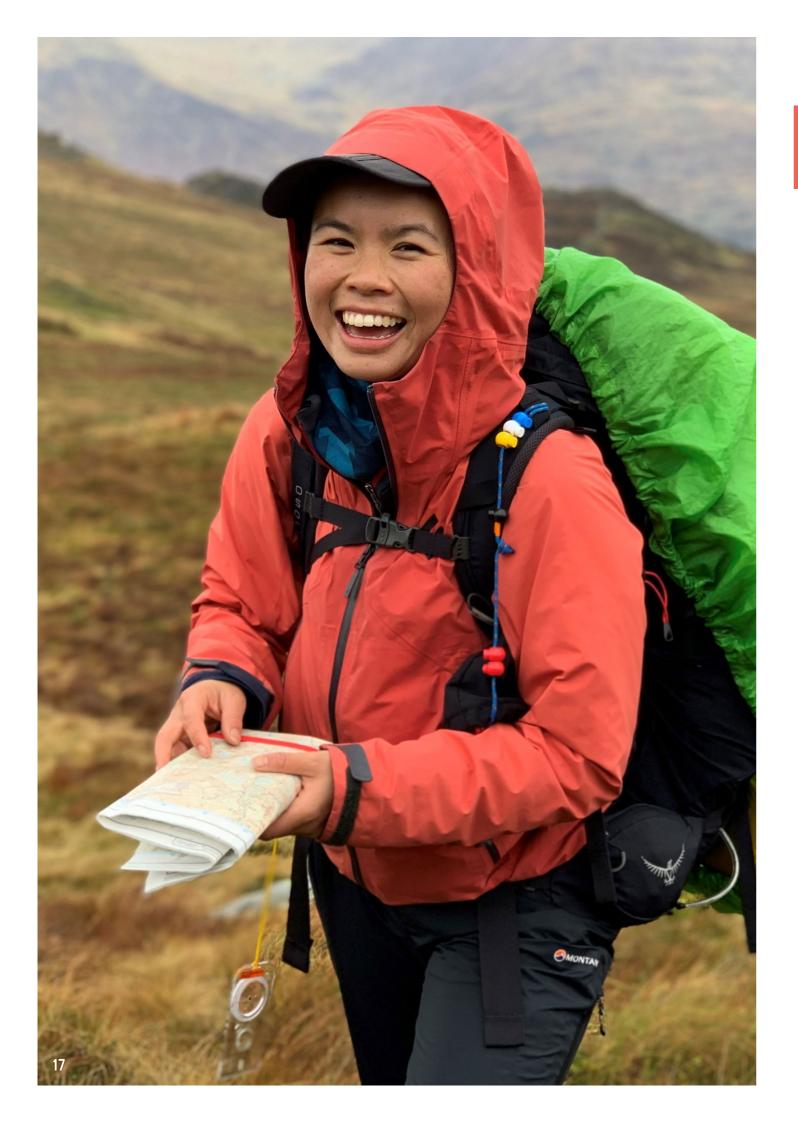
#### E. ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE

Reducing the carbon footprint of Board members, staff, providers, and candidates alike through:

- 1. Digital meetings, workshops and presentations.
- 2. Developing and promoting an Environmental Code and guidance with partners.

- Create a balanced business model that incorporates differentiated provider fees.
- Create £15k per annum in additional commercial income (5% of 2019 income).
- Create three new pathways into our schemes with partner organisations.
- Reduce carbon footprint of the organisation through 25% reduced travel from 2019 levels.





# 4. SUPPORTING DIVERSITY

We are committed to improving the diversity of leadership and participation in our activities by educating our workforce and improving pathways.

We will...

# A. ENGAGE ETHNIC MINORITIES CREATING REAL INCLUSION

A sense of belonging in our sector for ethnic minorities.

- 1. Develop and implement ethnic diversity strategy (Appendix 2)
- 2. Establish Skills and Training Fund for ethnic minorities.
- 3. Investigate the creation of a foundation with partner organisations, to attract and disburse funds to community groups.
- 4. We will realise our commitment to the Sporting Equals charter: Capture, Commit, Celebrate.

## B. ENCOURAGE FEMALE PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP

Improving gender equality across the schemes and supporting women leaders.

1. Develop and implement Mountain Training gender equality strategy (Appendix 2).

#### C. DELIVER PROVIDER EDUCATION

Creating a more inclusive entry system.

- 1. Instigate targeted Tutor/Course Director mentoring scheme for under-represented groups.
- 2. Engage and encourage the voluntary sector to deliver skills courses.
- 3. Introduce inclusion training for providers.

# D. GROW YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN OUR SCHEMES

Engage further with schools and the voluntary sector to provide skills training for young people.

- 1. Engage with existing stakeholders and partner organisations to deliver skills courses and signpost development pathways.
- 2. Explore other partnerships with wider partners.

# E. SUPPORT DISABILITY ACCESS THROUGH OUR SCHEMES

Develop our research and insight, and educate the workforce to support those with additional needs.

- 1. Support the Climbing for All publication and develop a Walking for All publication with Adventure for All.
- 2. Conduct a candidate survey on disability.
- 3. Work with partner organisations to promote our schemes to people with disabilities.
- 4. Provide financial support and reasonable adjustments for candidates and participants with a disability to access our schemes.

- Increase annual skills course attendance of ethnic groups by 50% on 2019 figures.
- Increase qualified leaders from ethnic groups per annum by 25% on 2019 figures.
- Increase qualified women leaders per annum by 10% from 2019 numbers.
- Support and mentor 20 candidates from diverse under-represented groups towards qualification and/or staffing MTE courses.
- Increase U18 skills course attendance per annum by 200% from 2019 numbers.



# 5. PROMOTING OUR MISSION

Promoting our pathways, qualifications and training, and their wide-ranging impact to government and the public.

We will..

#### A.EXPLAIN OUR IMPACT

Explain our agency over participation in our sector.

- 1. Develop a 'manifesto' with funded partners.
- 2. Conduct post-Covid impact survey and publish report.

#### **B. SEEK NEW AUDIENCES**

Find opportunities to reach new audiences, such as post-lockdown participants, who might benefit from our skills and experience.

- 1. Links with partners such as AdventureSmart to signpost to resources and training for the general public.
- 2. Seek new partners to promote our schemes to their members/participants.
- 3. Develop projects with partner organisations to promote our association members.

#### C. USE THE OLYMPICS

Strategy to capitalise on the media attention in climbing.

1. Develop an Olympics marketing plan with funded partners.

#### D. MARKET OUR SKILLS COURSES

For adults and youth. Two very different markets requiring different communications, pathways and partnerships.

- 1. Develop pathways with partners to signpost or incorporate skills courses.
- 2. Develop campaigns with partners to support recreational participation with different language, messaging and approach.

#### E. PROMOTE HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Promote the benefits of walking, climbing and mountaineering on the physical and mental health of the nation.

- 1. Support Mountains of the Mind campaign and Black Dog Outdoors.
- 2. Engage with national press and partner channels.
- 3. Utilise ambassadors and influencers:
  Using ambassadors and influencers to reach beyond our base.

- Complete post-Covid impact survey in 2023.
- Establish three new partnership projects promoting our schemes and leaders.
- Create 'Get Climbing' campaign with the BMC and partners in 2021.
- Create 'Get Walking' campaign with the BMC and partners from 2022.
- Support Black Dog Outdoors
   with growing skills course delivery.
- Establish four active ambassadors/influencers by 2023.



# **PARTNERSHIPS** THE WAY FORWARD

MTE works with partner organisations in order to achieve its strategic aims. Our Member organisations sit on our Council and advise us on our strategic work, helping us to ensure that our schemes are fit for purpose. (See Appendix 5.)

Increasingly, we are also working at an operational level on joint projects with wider partners. It is often more effective, cost efficient and mutually beneficial to work in this way. Some partnerships have been longstanding, but the pandemic has accelerated online collaboration with a wider range of stakeholders. It is now a key strategy for MTE to pursue partnerships that increase our reach, broaden pathways into our schemes and achieve our educational aims. Some examples of current partnership working are described here.



#### SPORT ENGLAND - GRANT FUNDING

Sport England funds some of MTE's work through the BMC. This grant funding is essential to support our development work which includes reviewing and updating our schemes, training our providers, establishing inclusion projects and bursaries, as well as creating training resources and guidance. We work closely with Sport England though the BMC's Funded Partners Group, to develop our ideas and gain research insights.

#### **BMC PARTNERS' ASSEMBLY** - SECTOR COLLABORATION

The Partners' Assembly brings together sector organisations to work on joint projects in areas of mutual interest. As an example, the Assembly has commissioned Leeds Becket University to research the demographics of participation in walking and climbing. This research is being funded by Mountain Training England and Mountain Training UK & I, The BMC, The Ramblers, The Outdoor Industries Association, Plas y Brenin, The Association of British Climbing Walls, NICAS, and The Camping and Caravanning Club.

#### Dofe NORTH - LOWLAND LEADER PROVIDERSHIP

In 2016 the DofE North office approached MTE with a view to upgrading the training of its volunteer leaders. The result of this was that the DofE North organisation was inducted into becoming a provider for the Lowland Leader scheme. It was then able to deliver this scheme, fully quality assured by MTE, to its own network of volunteers. As a result, within a couple of years, the number of Lowland Leader qualifications issued by MTE nearly doubled.

#### TEN TORS - HILL SKILLS PATHWAY

The Ten Tors Challenge on Dartmoor is undertaken by 2,400 young people in 400 teams, organised each year by the Army. Training for the event falls to volunteer leaders. MTE has liaised with the Ten Tors Committee and supported the annual event with advice for

these leaders. After consultation on our Hill Skills scheme we made changes to the delivery model and as a result the Committee has recommended that it be undertaken as a training pathway for participants. The first Ten Tors leaders have now become providers of this scheme.

#### **PLAS Y BRENIN** - TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

The MTE office is based on the Plas y Brenin site in Capel Curig. As the National Outdoor Centre PYB is instrumental in researching and developing good practice, as well as providing leadership for the outdoor sector. MTE has worked closely with the centre for many years, being able to benefit from the huge experience of its instructional team across a range of sector disciplines and their National Governing Bodies. Most recently PYB staff have contributed towards Mountain Training's Walking Scheme Review, provider training, equity projects and resource development.

#### MOUNTAINS FOR THE MIND -SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH

In 2019 MTE teamed up with Trail Magazine to support its Mountains for the Mind campaign, promoting the benefit of the outdoors for better mental health. A prescient move, this campaign is supported by the mental health charity Mind and it helped thousands of people through the pandemic. With 14,000 members online the campaign promotes free guided hill walks with Black Dog Outdoors who deploy Mountain Training qualified leaders on each

#### ADVENTURESMART UK - SAFETY **EDUCATION FOR THE PUBLIC**

MTE contributed to the development of Adventure Smart UK, having grown from a Welsh initiative. We strongly support its essential message and advice to the public, centred on basic safety preparation when approaching the outdoors. This has become even more relevant during pandemic times as thousands of new participants venture into the hills, rivers and sea for the first time.





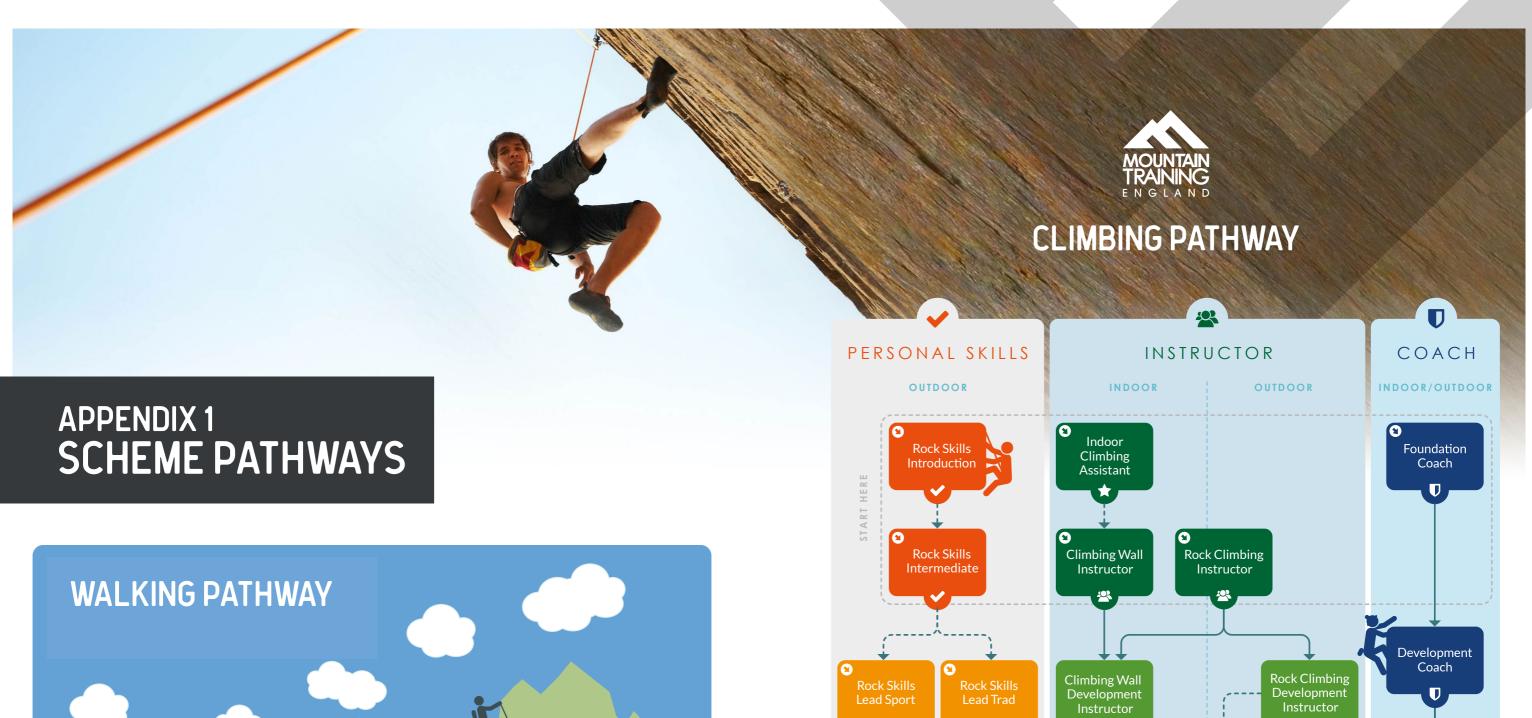














| Performance Coach | Winter | Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor | Performance Coach | Qualification | Progression | Recommended | Progression | Progr

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# **APPENDIX 2 GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY 2021-25**

#### **PURPOSE**

To use the medium of walking and climbing activities to facilitate positive social change for women. To empower women to join the walking and climbing community.

#### GOALS

### SKILLS VALUE CONNECTIONS **LEADERSHIP & KNOWLEDGE E VISIBILITY É ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIC** INTENT

- **01** Understand the lived experiences of women that are barriers to participation in the advenure acitives sector.
- **02** Empower and support women to participate in walking and climbing activities at all levels.
- **03** Create opportunities to enable women to acquire skills that enable them to be independent walkers and climbers.
- **04** Support the development of current and future women leaders.

**01** Welcome a new generation of women leaders and instructors in the adventure

activities sector.

- **02** Positively influence the development of women to deliver Mountain Training's skills schemes and qualifications.
- 03 Educate our providers and staff in equity, diversity and inclusion.
- **04** Maintain diversity in the leadership at Director/Trustee level of Mountain Training.

- **01** Promote our work specifically to women.
- **02** Promote the lifestyle and wellbeing benefits of participation in adventure activities specifically to women.
- 03 Advance equality and diversity within the sector through communications and campaigns.
- **04** Support and empower women ambassadors.
- 05 Celebrate the successes of women in the sector.

- 01 Build entry routes into MT schemes through funding, collaborative projects and events.
- **02** Partner with key stakeholders to maximise reach and impact.
- 03 Connect with key media influencers.

# **APPENDIX 2 ETHNIC DIVERSITY STRATEGY 2021-25**

#### **PURPOSE**

To use the power of walking and climbing activities to facilitate positive social change for people from ethnically diverse backgrounds. To empower people from ethnically diverse backgrounds to join the walking and climbing community.

### GOALS



- people from ethnically diverse backgrounds that are barriers to participation in the adventure activities sector.
- **02** Empower and support people from ethnically diverse backgrounds to participate in walking and climbing activities at all levels.
- 03 Create opportunities to enable people from ethnically diverse backgrounds to acquire skills that enable them to be independent walkers and climbers.

- cohorts of leaders and instructors who are from ethnically diverse backgrounds into the adventure activities sector.
- 02 Positively influence the development of people from ethnically diverse backgrounds to deliver MTE's skills schemes and qualifications.
- 03 Educate our providers and staff in equity, diversity and inclusion.
- **04** Build more diversity into MTE's Board of Directors.

- understanding of our work among people from ethnically diverse backgrounds to enable access to opportunities.
- 02 Promote the lifestyle and wellbeing benefits of participation in adventure activities with people from ethnically diverse backgrounds.
- 03 Advance equality and diversity within the sector through communications and campaigns.
- **04** Support and empower ambassadors.

- schemes through funding, collaborative projects and events.
- 02 Engage directly with people from ethnically diverse backgrounds. Actively and purposefully include people from ethnically diverse backgrounds in consultations
- 03 Partner with key stakeholders to maximise reach and impact.
- 04 Connect with kev media influencers.

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