

North of Tyne Mountain Rescue Team Application Information Pack

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in joining North of Tyne Mountain Rescue Team. We hope that you find this document useful in deciding whether you have the interest, skills, attitude and commitment required to be part of our emergency service team, or not.



To join our Team we expect all applicants to be, at the very least, experienced hill walkers who are competent at navigating and looking after themselves in all weather conditions, day or night. We provide a professional service and must be sure new members have the training and competence before becoming involved in callouts. We provide the additional training to bring people up to the standards necessary.

The Team provides training in its operational procedures for search and rescue, the equipment used for searches and rescues, casualty care (advanced first-aid), casualty transportation,

mental health, radio communications and winter mountaineering. Even if you have some skills in these areas, you need to learn what equipment we use, how we use it and become part of our Team. Training continues throughout team membership to maintain skills and teamwork, continuing professional development. Training takes place on at least one evening (normally the first Wednesday of every month) and one weekend day per month (the third Sunday of every month), and two weekends a year, usually in September and February.

Applicants will also be required to live in our operational area – Tyne and Wear and Northumberland – and be able to attend incidents at short notice. We understand that work commitments can take people out of the area from time to time, but members must live in the area at least 50% of the time.

The Team also provides safety cover for several outdoor events to raise money and awareness. Trainees are also expected to help with some of these and this can take another day a month. When someone becomes a full Team member, the time commitment increases again with time spent on callouts, which are typically 35 a year (though few team members attend all).



Callouts themselves do not just involve searching for lost walkers/bikers or rescuing injured climbers, but also looking for people with mental health issues, those with suicidal urges and lost children near urban areas and in open spaces such as parks. These latter incidents are not so glamorous, but provide vital services to our community.

Injured people in remote locations are often rescued by helicopter, having called in their positions by mobile phone. For a casualty, this is the best way to be rescued. However, helicopters are restricted to where and when they can fly, and there are only a few of them. The Team becomes involved when the weather is bad or there is no helicopter available. As a result, we are often out when it is raining, foggy and/or dark. Team members are trained to work with helicopters and can be deployed in this way, though we are rarely retrieved by them.

Once full team members are comfortable with the operations of the Team, they can train to be dog handlers, casualty carers, rope rescue leaders, blue-lights drivers, off-road drivers, search group leaders, find site managers, incident controllers and/or team leaders. We ask that all members aspire to become 'Casualty Carers' and undertake additional medical team training because ultimately, Mountain Rescue is mobilised when someone calls 999 and the public's expectation is that those responding will be able to help medically.



In addition to operational training and ongoing callouts, it is also desirable for trainees and members to show a commitment towards team management. The team may be run by a committee, but there's always a lot to do, from administration to equipment checks, social media, public relations, finances, conducting necessary research etc, so we also look for individuals who are willing and able to help manage the charity.

Team members do not receive any expenses from the team. The team provides a team jacket, trousers and helmet to full team members. All other expenses including other clothing, boots and travel costs fall on the team member. Given the size of our callout area, transport costs can be several hundred pounds per year. While being a trainee there is no need to buy anything in addition to normal mountaineering equipment, which you should already have.

The main reason people drop out of training, or in the first year of operations, is the time commitment and impact of this on their family. This is especially true of those with young children.

Becoming a member of the Team is a big undertaking, taking up significant time that would be otherwise spent being with family or friends or doing leisure activities. Occasionally Team members will have to deal with some traumatic circumstances, which they will likely find disturbing. We provide support at these times. It is, however incredibly rewarding for the right people and our work is greatly valued by the Police and Ambulance services, the lost people we find, the casualties we treat and the unfortunate families of those whose bodies we recover.

We have tried to paint a realistic picture of what is involved. If you think you have the skills we need and can make the time commitment, read on...



The Application Process

1. Applicant completes and returns the Team Application Form via the website within the timescales outlined for that year. Successful new trainees start their training in September. For 2022, the first training weekend for trainees is 10th - 11th September and you must be available for these dates.
2. The Training Group reviews applications against the Team Member Specification, which varies from year to year to meet the Team's needs.
3. There is an online or face to face briefing for prospective trainees in June.
4. Applicants may be invited to a 30-minute online interview with 2-3 Team Officers.

5. Applicants are then invited to a Hill Skills Assessment Day usually in July, designed to assess the applicant's motivation to join the Team, their capability regarding hill skills and navigation, fitness level and their likely fit within the Team.
6. Successful applicants are notified and invited to start 12 months of training to satisfy the requirements of Full Team membership. Everyone must pass an Enhanced DBS check once accepted onto the training programme. Regular reviews (at 3, 6 and 9 months) of competence, motivation and commitment will take place and feedback on progress will be made available.
7. Subject to high attendance at training, suitable progress in learning the necessary skills, suitable applicants are considered for Full Team Membership by the Training Group and agreed by the Team Committee 12 months after training starts. Everyone must sign a declaration, which must be signed annually going forward. They will be put on the callout register and are then expected to attend a high percentage of callouts.
8. If the necessary progress hasn't been made by 12 months, a further 6 months to reach the required standards may be granted in special/extenuating circumstances.

Team Background

The Team was first formed back in the 1970s as a North of Tyne Local Education Authority Team in response to an increase in the number of incidents occurring on the hills and fells of Northumbria as outdoor activities such as climbing and hill walking grew in popularity.



It became the 'North of Tyne Search & Rescue Team' (NOTSRT) in the early 80s and more recently became the 'North of Tyne Mountain Rescue Team'. The role of the team has changed over the years to meet the community's needs and will continue to change.

The Team

Today, North of Tyne Mountain Rescue Team is still a purely voluntary organisation with over 40 full team members and a number of trainees. Within the team are four dog handlers, who, in addition to responding to our callouts, work on incidents throughout the country for other teams.

A highly professional service can only be achieved through the commitment each team member (and trainee) makes to continuous training in accordance with the guidance of MREW and our team policies. Many Team members also have specialist skills such as dog handling, casualty care, response driving and rope rescue.

The Team is a registered charity affiliated to Mountain Rescue England and Wales (MREW). Senior team members are on various MREW committees and the regional team organisation NESRA. Operational control is down to Incident Controllers. The running of the team is carried out by the Committee, whose officer holders are elected annually by members. The Team Leader and Deputy Team Leader are Incident Controllers and are usually elected for three years.

The team is notified of incidents by local primary emergency services – Northumbria Police, North East Ambulance Service, Northumberland Fire and Rescue Services and Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service. We work alongside and advise these services in our areas of expertise.

There are two mountain rescue teams in the Northumbria Police area, our Team and Northumberland National Park Mountain Rescue Team. The two teams work very closely together under the "Northumberland Mountain Rescue Service" banner. The duty controller can be from either team and on callouts members from either team can be deployed together. The two teams use very similar operating procedures, very similar equipment and train together, but maintain their individual character and fund raise separately.

The Team can also be called on to assist other Mountain Rescue Teams throughout North East, Cumbria and the Scottish Borders.



The Team can be mobilised by any of the main emergency services to incidents including:

- **Mountain Search and/or Rescue** – for missing/injured walkers, fell runners, mountain bikers and other outdoor enthusiasts, in summer and winter, day or night.
- **Non-Mountain Search** – for high risk, vulnerable people missing from home in rural and urban areas.
- **Non-Mountain Rescue** – in ‘difficult to access’ areas, often involving roped access, for body recovery etc.
- **Resilience** – response to severe weather events including snow bound motorists, flooding events and any major incident requiring first-aid experience, rescue services or a self-contained, trusted workforce.

The Team costs around £40,000 per year to run and is funded solely by charitable donations, as we receive no government funding. Ongoing costs cover rescue and first-aid equipment, training, PPE, maintenance and replacement of equipment and vehicles, fuel for team vehicles and insurance. Team Members and Trainee Members must devote time to fundraising, community engagement through schools, Scouts and Guides and liaison meetings with other emergency services.

The team does not currently have a permanent base. We are completely mobile as we have a very large area to cover. We have two vehicles based at West Denton Fire Station, a Land Rover and a Mercedes control van. Both vehicles are 4WD, fully equipped with all we need to respond to incidents and can act as ambulances.



Trainee Team Member Specification

All applicants to the Team are expected to demonstrate **ALL** the requirements listed under **Essential** below. The **Desirable/Welcomed** column lists skills that we can use, but are in no way a prerequisite.

	Essential	Desirable/ Welcomed	Assessment
Skills	<p>Navigation – Fully competent in the use of navigation tools (GPS based devices and map and compass) and techniques (e.g. aiming off, pacing) to safely move around in the hills in all weather conditions.</p> <p>Head for Heights – able to work near cliff edges, with appropriate safety precautions.</p> <p>Self-sufficiency – Able to look after oneself for prolonged periods of time, in mountainous terrain, in adverse weather, during day or night.</p> <p>First Aid – current qualification to demonstrate basic awareness of concepts. A 16 hour Outdoor First Aid qualification is ideal.</p> <p>Safety Awareness – of yourself and those around you.</p> <p>Fitness – able to be out all day, carry equipment and stretchers.</p> <p>IT/Administration/Wider Skills – ability to handle</p>	<p>Able to use advanced navigation techniques including micro-navigation.</p> <p>National Certificates such as Mountain Leader.</p> <p>Some rope work and climbing experience. Aerial access experience.</p> <p>Paramedic training, medical training.</p> <p>Safety training in the work environment.</p> <p>Skills to support the running of the</p>	<p>Assessment Day.</p> <p>Assessment Day.</p> <p>Assessment Day.</p> <p>Copy of certificate/s.</p> <p>Assessment Day.</p> <p>Assessment Day.</p> <p>Application Form.</p>

	Essential	Desirable/ Welcomed	Assessment
	information online, e.g. effective handling of emails, training documents, attend online training sessions. It is essential to engage with/respond to team emails and requests in a timely manner.	charity – e.g. admin, PR, media, more specialist fundraising skills like bid writing, equipment maintenance etc.	
Attitude	<p>Teamwork – Able to work effectively as part of a team in a demanding and stressful environment.</p> <p>Realism - Acknowledgement that at times you will be in very stressful circumstances.</p> <p>Leadership – able to step up to take control in small groups, while recognising your own limitations.</p> <p>Approachability – Able to remain calm and approachable in all situations – whether in stressful callout situations, or as the ‘face’ of the Team during fundraising events, or providing encouragement to</p>	<p>Military training, emergency service training, team sports. Work environment involving teams.</p> <p>Stress management training, mental health training, experience of stress and knowing the effects.</p> <p>Management experience</p>	<p>Assessment Day. During the training year.</p> <p>Assessment Day. During the training year.</p> <p>Assessment Day. During the training year.</p> <p>Assessment Day.</p>

	Essential	Desirable/ Welcomed	Assessment
	participants at sporting events.		
Experience	Hill Walking Experience – Demonstrate experience of hillwalking in summer and winter conditions.	Demonstrate experience of scrambling, rock climbing and/or mountaineering. Night navigation experience.	Application Form. Interview. Assessment Day.
Equipment	Equipment and Clothing – Possess (and use appropriately) good quality clothing and equipment suitable for prolonged periods in a variety of environments in summer and winter weather conditions.		Assessment Day.
Other	<p>Transport – Full driving licence and access to a vehicle for callout purposes.</p> <p>Age – be at least 18 years old.</p> <p>Likely to pass an Enhanced DBS check.</p> <p>A sense of humour!</p>	<p>Off-road driving experience. Response driving training.</p> <p>Already passed an Enhanced DBS.</p>	<p>Application Form.</p> <p>Application Form.</p> <p>Application Form.</p> <p>In the pub!</p>

We hope this information pack helps you to decide whether to apply or not. Please only progress if you are seriously committed to operating as a full team member, attending a high percentage of training annually, along with callouts, event cover and fundraising events. The commitment involved in being a full team member is significant, as is the investment from the team to train new members.

To apply, please click the below link to our application form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdviAjlyXbLNWJbmz3Gx8nUt3uFPbCyUQkL0iE_ZhQxFjg-yA/viewform?usp=sf_link

If you have any questions, please see www.notmrt.org.uk or contact secretary@notmrt.org.uk.

Thank you!