



---

## Annual report 2022

### Report from the Board

MTUKI is entirely dependent on its members and advisers for its success – we are all mutually dependent on each other. I encourage you to read this report, reflect on the content, and consider how it may help shape our future strategies.

We all thought that 2022 was the year for re-establishing normal operations post-covid, but as it turned out, it was for establishing new norms. As a Board we continued to meet remotely, with one rather than three face-to-face full Council meetings. My first meeting as Chair coincided with a brief return to the old normal, with a face-to-face meeting in Northern Ireland. Those of us who made it to Tollymore welcomed the opportunities to meet formally as well as informally, and to enjoy the great hospitality provided. These events always remind me of what a privilege it is to be involved with the MTUKI, working alongside unbelievably committed and skilled staff, providers, members, partners, volunteers and, albeit slightly remotely, our candidates.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Dan Downes, who chaired his last meeting in March 2022, and also to acknowledge that we were without a Treasurer throughout the year – placing additional stress on the staff team.

Financially we have survived the turbulence of the last few years and ended 2022 in a reasonable position. This has given us the platform to develop and grow our products to seek a more robust and sustainable future. We will aim for our core-business to become fully self-sustaining, including opportunities for research and development.

As climbing – particularly indoor competitive climbing – is increasingly seen as a mainstream activity, I am delighted that the coaching awards have continued to develop, and appear to be well received. Being coached is becoming an increasingly common expectation of newcomers to climbing.

We have a working group of staff and volunteers reviewing our working practices and providing creative solutions in relation to environment and sustainability. Course moderation visits have always been a fundamental aspect of our quality-assurance process, but are expensive in terms of time, money, effort, and carbon-footprint. Ultimately decisions must be made on a cost: benefit analysis, and quality assurance – in the form of course moderation - remains absolutely fundamental to the success of our schemes.

If you haven't yet read Your Movement Matters, please do so. It will be used to inform future strategy, and ultimately to measure our success in delivering for a more diverse outdoor community.



As you read this annual report you will be struck by the range, volume and diversity of the work undertaken. The Board and I thank our Chief Executive, John Cousins, and his dedicated team of staff and volunteers for their exceptional work in unusual times during 2022.

Adge Last, Chair, on behalf of the Board



## Finance report

After several years of uncertainty, thankfully 2022 was a relatively quiet year for the finances. A cautious budget was set, based on 2019 figures i.e. pre Covid, as adjusted for inflation. This anticipated an operating deficit of £125,524 with an overall deficit of £80,274 (considering Sport England grant of £45,250) with reserves reducing to £179,196, from £259,470 at the start of the year. As the year progressed it became apparent that people were keen to get back to the outdoors and MT schemes showed true resilience during an increasingly challenging global financial climate

In February Russia invaded Ukraine and this caused ripples in stock exchanges across the world and inflation rose to a high of 10.7% in November, putting increasing pressures on our candidates' disposable income, slowing sales of publications, MTA membership renewals and increasing overhead costs.

Despite all these challenges income came in just above budget and overheads were tightly controlled, the end of the year resulted in a near breakeven with a small overall deficit of £6,768.

### **Income**

Income for the year was 1% above our budget, coming in at £467,613 and much improved on the previous year (2021 £385,289). With grants from Sport England totalling £45,250 (2021 £64,300) this meant our effective income was £512,863.

Direct registration income from MTUKI schemes, at £33,782, (2021 £30,014) was 7% lower than budgeted £36,481. It is encouraging to see these numbers in the very specialist MTUKI qualifications continuing to grow, all be it at a slower than anticipated rate.

Income from subscriptions and registrations from national Mountain Training organisations was more in line with expectations and we finished the year with £52,748 (2021 £36,902), slightly up on our budgeted figure of £50,502. Sport England's grant of £45,250 was a vital element of our income and we thank them for their support.

Income from the Mountain Training Association's membership was on budget as membership numbers recovery slowed, being 4% up on the previous year (2021 up 25%). Publication sales recovered slightly to £53,948 (2021 £37,349) but were still only 91% of budgeted figure.

### **Expenditure**

Expenditure in the year was tightly managed and totalled £519,632 (2021 £426,721) This was more than 11% less than budgeted and was due to reductions in budgeted salary spending, reduced direct costs and reduced office costs as our blended office continued. Finally, it is good to be able to report an overall small deficit for the year and to note that there has also been a good start to 2023, which we hope will continue.

Annette Greenwood, Finance Manager



## Executive Team’s report

### Sport England

We secured our grant funding from Sport England for the period of April 2022 to March 2027, in our joint bid through the BMC, along with Mountain Training England, the Association of British Climbing Walls, and the National Indoor Climbing Award Schemes. These funds have been allocated to support digital resources and workforce development:

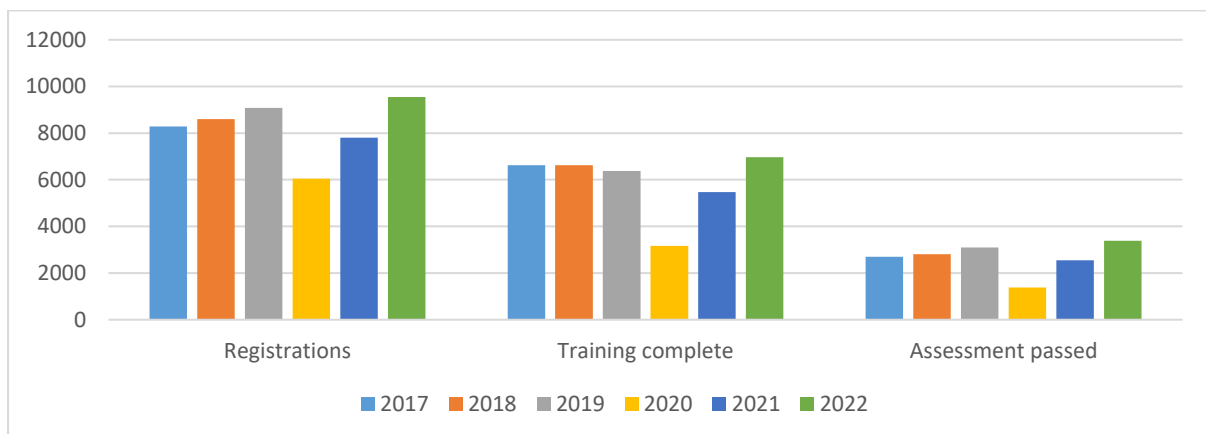
**Digital resources:** We employed a full time Digital Engagement Coordinator in September, Huw Jordan Tatlock, who will develop our digital strategy and create resources that will support our providers, candidates, association members, and the public alike. Huw has already started working on a project with NICAS, updated some of our digital resources, created digital content from the Women in Mountain Training Conference, and captured some new photos at the Mountain Training Association Conference. A draft digital strategy for Mountain Training was shared with executive officers for comment and will steer Huw’s work, which may well open up new income streams for Mountain Training in the future.

**Workforce development:** The Customer Service Team has continued to help providers and candidates with the day-to-day queries and assist the Associations with memberships and AGMs. The team has seen a changeover of staff; Vicky Jones and Corinna Parry left Mountain Training and were replaced by Rich Snaith and Megan Griffin. Kath Thomas also amended her hours and now works two days a week on Quality Assurance for MTE. We recruited Fran Jones as a replacement.

Other funds will be utilised to support the development of the Coaching Scheme and in particular the Performance Coach, as well as reviewing the Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor pathway.

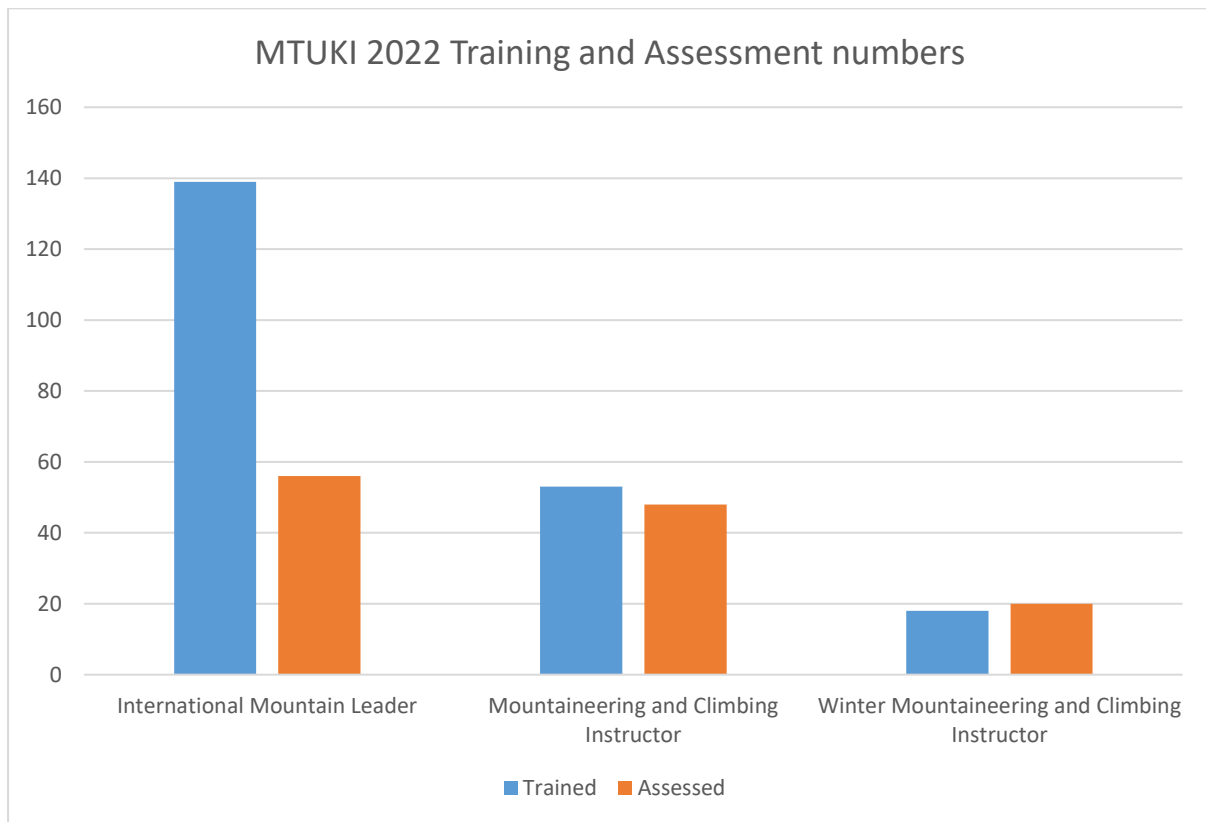
### The training pathway

Overall, 2022 has been a great success, with registration and course attendance not just bouncing back from Covid, but returning to pre-pandemic rates of growth (with 2022 exceeding 2019 figures) across all our schemes and all Mountain Training organisations:





After considerable Covid and Brexit disruption, 2022 started with an effective winter season for both the Winter Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor and International Mountain Leader schemes. Resulting in sixteen newly qualified Winter Mountaineering and Climbing Instructors, a further thirty-two people have passed the winter element of the International Mountain Leader scheme. Many of this latter group benefitted from an MTUKI 'reasonable adjustment' that allowed them this winter to take IML winter assessment before the normal initial summer assessment. A decision was made at the end of the year to extend this adjustment for 2023.

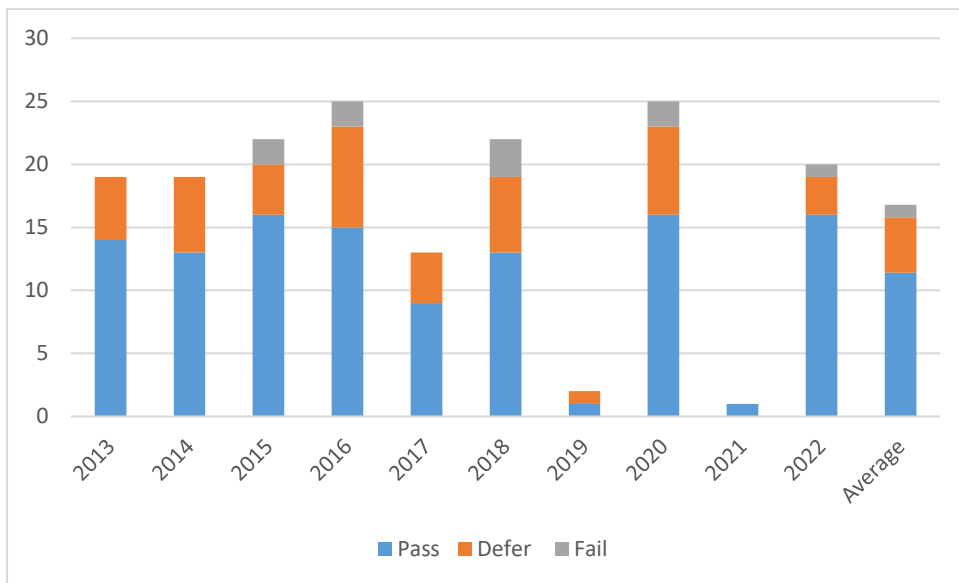


These two schemes are delivered by two providers: Glenmore Lodge and Plas y Brenin; and both are to be commended for their resilience and adaptability over the last two winters. There has been endless rescheduling, re-booking, alternate venues, non-residential adaptations, and staffing challenges as well as the more familiar problem of the fickle nature of winter itself. The latest cohort of Winter Mountaineering and Climbing Instructors and International Mountain Leaders are the essence of what we rely on these national centres for, and it is so very welcome to see these numbers return.

Pass rates of 80% and 94% for Winter Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor and International Mountain Leader respectively are well above our averages and are to be celebrated. Let's hope it encourages more candidates to come forward.



At the MTUKI Council meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> March there were initial discussions about the climate emergency and the development of a sustainability policy. The question was then asked whether the uncertainty of recent winters was influencing the number of candidates coming through our schemes? Below is a summary of the last ten years of Winter Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor assessment:



Whilst 2019 saw widespread cancellations due to conditions; and 2021 due to Covid, 2022 was the best pass rate in the last ten years and saw above average candidate numbers. There is an overall decline in the number of registration and training places of c. 30% but what is less clear is whether this is impacting the number of passes. Arguably there were more speculative candidates 5-10 years ago than now, where the training numbers more closely mirror those completing. It is therefore a challenge to know what the precise number of candidates will be in the next couple of years. What is clear is that there is a workforce shortage and that highly qualified individuals can charge a premium for their work so we should expect demand for these qualifications to at least maintain current levels.

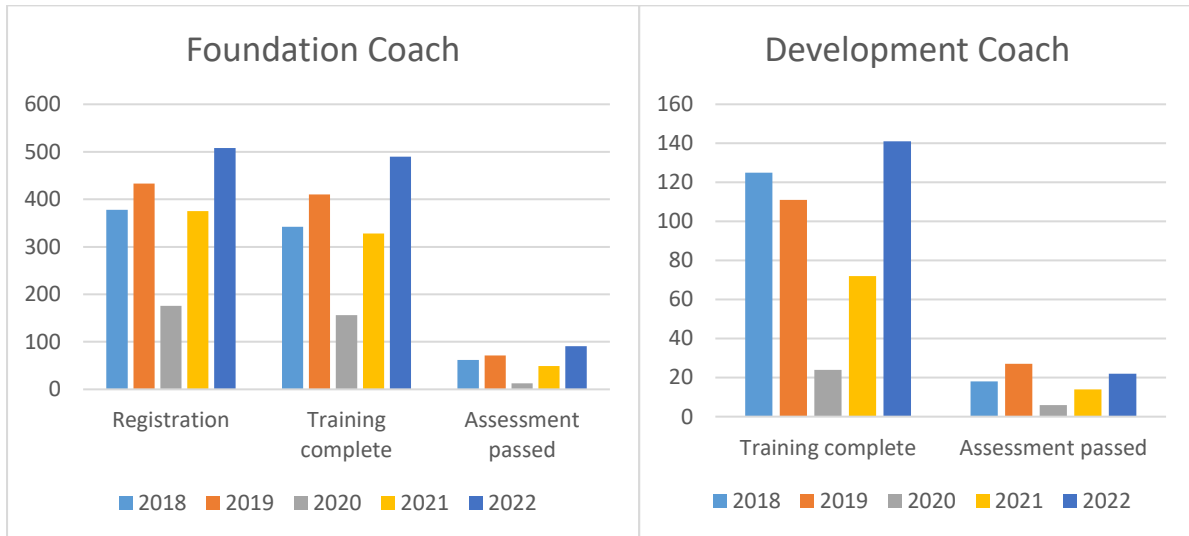
The MCI Pathway Review got underway in January 2022 with several meetings of the working group and a survey in August 2022, which attracted 242 respondents including MCI qualified instructors (43%) as well as trainees and potential candidates.

An end of year MCI round up took place in November 2022. Five-year aggregated statistics (2018-2022) demonstrate a first-time pass rate of 45% and a completion rate of those who have been assessed of 79%. We were delighted to see 100% success rate for all those who were reassessed.

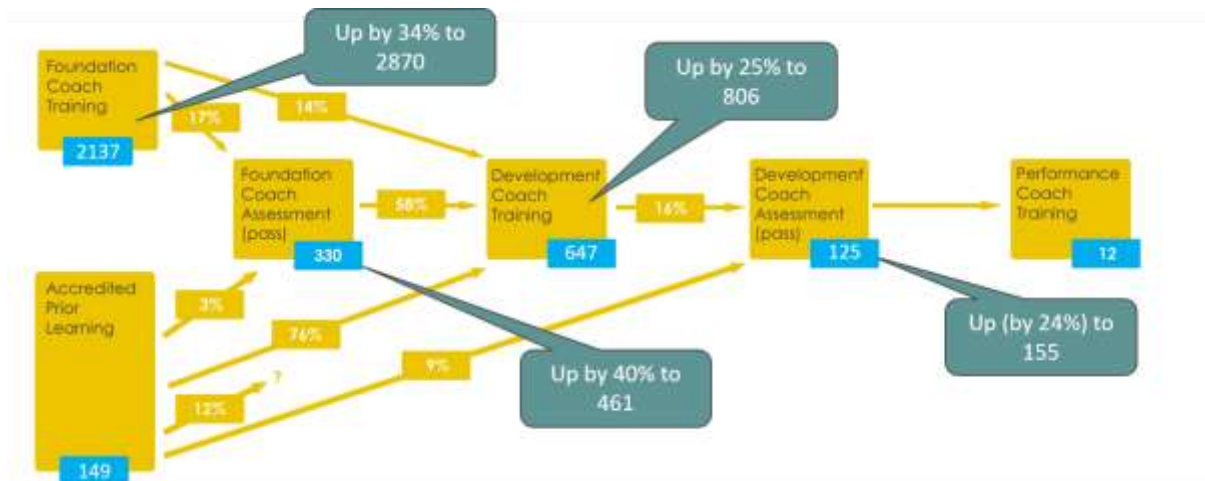
Improving the first-time pass rate remains an ongoing priority. Tracking and exploring the reasons for deferrals continues with this information being collated and shared with the Providers, the AMI mentoring team and the MCI Review Working Group.



The Coaching scheme has continued to grow in participation, reputation, and content:



Notably, 96% of people who register, go on to complete the training. Given that it is a single registration for both Foundation and Development, the overall percentage will be higher, and the diagram below shows the flow through the pathway. Teal callouts show the 2022 figures and growth, compared to the 2020 figures in turquoise:



Accredited Prior Learning (APL) is an important mechanism, especially at the launch of the “new” scheme, to enable direct entry for experienced existing coaches. With only three requests for APL in 2022 (three people received exemption from Foundation Coach training; nobody received exemption from Development Coach training) it is good to see the majority of upcoming coaches now flowing through the training pathway, as planned.



Through the autumn, a volunteer working group (providing expert external input) continued to develop the “Mental Skills Training” pathway and content. This is a prerequisite training module for the Performance Coach qualification, and a rapidly evolving area of the syllabus. This will complete the scheme pathway in 2023.

The Coaching Provider Conference took place at BMC offices 7th Dec 2022. This was an opportunity to host the event online and invite external guests from the funded partners for the first hour. For those who are interested, a 1hr presentation of “The Coaching Landscape” is available here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOdv8\\_MDY-Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOdv8_MDY-Y) and the slides are available on request.

Coaching scheme moderation was lacking in 2022, with many courses being run in-house (and published online too late to visit), so we have agreed to adopt the MTE model and task key, experienced, providers to moderate others, in a mutually beneficial (more akin to mentoring) role.

Mountain Training completed our Walking Schemes Review with the updating of all our walking leadership qualifications and the launch of a new one. The Camping Leader launched on 1st March 2022, replacing the Expedition Skills Module. This new qualification is more accessible and flexible, with the training being delivered online – a first for Mountain Training. We also introduced the new Mountain Training leadership model and competencies to all these qualifications which align with similar models across the sector. This model defines leadership in a broader and clearer context than before and is more inclusive in its approach.

#### Sustainable delivery

2022 marked a return to financial stability as our registration and course fee income returned to pre-Covid levels. We have budgeted ourselves carefully and successfully through the pandemic and beyond, due to the great skills of our finance team.

On environmental sustainability our work practices have been transformed since the pandemic. Digital communications have allowed us to cut staff travel down drastically, yet hold more meetings online, than was ever possible before. We have extended this to much of our training and presentations which are often delivered online also.

The Associations Collaboration Working Group has been able to source more sustainable membership cards, which at nearly 10,000 cards a year has a significant impact.

#### Supporting diversity

Early in the year we published a joint report on the demographics of adventure activity participation with many organisations across our sector called ‘Your Movement Matters’. The partners had commissioned Leeds Beckett University to undertake the research on our behalf to provide insight on why some groups found it more difficult to access these activities than others. Much useful data and insight was gleaned to inform all our participation strategies. See: <https://www.mountain->





[training.org/latest-news/your-movement-matters---the-results](https://www.mountain-training.org/latest-news/your-movement-matters---the-results). One example is the generational change in participation being experienced in Black and Asian communities.

Welcoming the reports, all eight partners agreed to use the findings to support the development and implementation of evidence-based diversity and inclusion strategies, the impact of which will be felt across the sector.

This has been a bumper year for female participation in Mountain Training, with numerous events and growing participation numbers. For example, 35% of Development Coach candidates are female.

To increase diversity and inclusion further we need a more diverse provider workforce. We have published national guidance on leading qualifications: <https://www.mountain-training.org/about/who-can-lead-instruct-or-coach> This major piece of work has been developed in collaboration with other sector NGB's and describes a common wider 'person specification' approach to establishing the competence to lead. We hope this will, over time, lead to a broader pool of talent being recruited across the sector.

#### Promoting our mission

We have worked closely with the BMC and Plas y Brenin to present a hill walking strategy and manifesto to Sport England. By their own measures hill walking is the fastest growing single activity in the UK with 3.58 million regular participants; and one that we feel needs greater support to ensure it is pursued safely and sustainably.

After selling 55,000 copies, a third revised edition of Rock Climbing was published. Author Libby Peter reviewed and updated all chapters, with new illustrations and new photos throughout the book. The content was also restructured to better reflect the popular pathway many climbers take, beginning indoors before transitioning to rock outdoors. Several staff, course directors and technical experts contributed their time and expertise to the development of the content, and it remains the official handbook of Mountain Training's climbing schemes.

MTA membership increased by c.10% (from 7655 to 8440 an increase of 785) over the course of 2022. However, membership was at 5748 in January of 2021 so there has been an overall increase of approximately 47%, in the last 2 years.

MTA held their Biennial Conference at the Field Studies Council's Blencathra Centre in November, with 84 attendees and feedback was consistently positive. We also presented our first ever volunteer awards at the conference, with awards for accessibility, wellbeing and the environment, as well as for regional volunteers with MTA.

The MTA members' survey was completed by 784 members, around 10% of the total membership, and the framework for the MTA strategy and future work-streams, has been built around the responses.



The Associations Collaboration Working Group has been engaged in putting together The Professional Mountaineer, but the associations have worked together on insurance (especially in assisting BMG on finding a new provider).

We continue to reach out to and support new partners and community groups to engage with Mountain Training as well as reach reciprocal arrangements with commercial organisations to reach new audiences. This has allowed us to consult widely and gather feedback from numerous diverse voices across the sector on a range of changes and proposals. New or closer relationships have been forged with a range of diverse partners including NNAS, HARVEY Maps, All The Elements, Everybody Outdoors, The Outdoor Partnership and Climb2Recovery.

To assist in the promotion of our mission and to improve communication with partners, we launched the quarterly Partnership newsletter in June 2022 and continue to add contacts and subscribers to this in order to better disseminate information.

#### Work ahead

We now look forward to 2023 and the development of a new indoor bouldering instructor qualification, responding to a strong demand from the sector. We also want to review the effectiveness of our assistant schemes and skills courses.

Moderation visits were not a priority in 2022. Being conscious of keeping both carbon and staff costs low, alternative methods of staying informed and in touch were employed. Course reports are frequently followed-up by email and/or phone calls to discuss any unusual conditions, venues, results, or issues, plus the sharing of any notable course comments provides a useful alternative. However, moderation remains an important strand of quality assurance that will be increased in 2023/24 as far as resources allow. This will include the adoption of more-experienced coaching scheme providers to moderate others, in more of a mentoring role.

We have plans to update our website in late 2023 and increase our digital resource offer, including with regard to our mentoring programme. Some of these resources could become income generating from a wider audience.

We will continue to work with our partners to deliver our EDI strategy and promote safeguarding throughout our sector.

Finally, but very importantly, we want to promote our members and qualification holders to the public, through partners such as the Mountaineering Councils while supporting club and community group activity.

Footnote – this year's report has been compiled in JC's absence, building on his report of the winter. It is testament to his leadership and management style, that the staff are all well-informed and autonomous enough to be able to report on strategic achievements at any time.



Mountain Training UK & Ireland 2022 Member Organisation representatives	
Mountain Training Board of Ireland	Dawson Stelfox, Joan Mulloy, Trevor Fisher, Jane Carney (Training Officer)
Mountain Training Cymru	Anne Vowles, Andy Newton, Simon Patton (Executive Officer)
Mountain Training England	Pete Stacey, Tony Halliwell, Sue Manns, Sharon Kennedy, Guy Jarvis (Executive Officer)
Mountain Training Scotland	Pamela Lomoro, Ross Cadie, George McEwan (Executive Officer)
BMC	Fiona Saunders
BMC Cymru	Neal Hockley
Mountaineering Ireland	Dave Ayton
Mountaineering Scotland	Stuart Younie
Association of Mountaineering Instructors	Phil Baker, Rob Pugh, Sandy Patterson
British Association of International Mountain Leaders	Steve Davies
British Association of Mountain Guides	James Thacker
Glenmore Lodge	Ian Sherrington
Plas y Brenin	Helen Barnard
Tollymore	Kieran O'Hara
MTUKI Directors/ Trustees	
Chair	Dan Downes/ Adge Last
Director	Emily Thompson
Director	Lucy Vincent
Director	Stephen Saddler
Staff	
Chief Executive	John Cousins



Finance Manager	Annette Greenwood
Media and IT Development Officer	Nicola Jasieniecka-Evans
Digital Engagement Coordinator	Huw Jordan Tatlock
Operations and Commercial Manager	Becky Jeffrey
Governance and Equity Officer	Cath Luke
MTA Membership Strategy and Communications Officer	Mike Riley
MTA Development Officer	Belinda Buckingham
Customer Service Team	Laura Griffith Rich Snaith Megan Griffin Fran Jones Sue Gathercole
Our representatives	
MTT Board	Stephen Saddler
BMC National Council, Partners Assembly & Funded Partners	John Cousins/ Guy Jarvis
SRA Outdoor Pursuits Division	Jon Garside
Snow and Avalanche Foundation of Scotland	George McEwan
British Association of Mountain Guides Board of Directors (observer)	John Cousins
Association of British Climbing Walls	Guy Jarvis
Adventure UK & Adventure Activity Industry Advisory Committee	John Cousins
BMC and MTT safety Committees	John Cousins
BMC Safeguarding and Equity steering groups	Cath Luke
Funded Partners Equity Diversity & Inclusion Group	Guy Jarvis, Cath Luke