Recruitment Information Pack

2026

Thank you for requesting further information, we're glad you're thinking about joining us.

If you have read through the website or followed our online social media, you will have gained an impression of how the team operates and what is involved in being a Wasdale Mountain Rescue Team volunteer. If you like what you have seen and believe you have the necessary skills and qualities we are looking for, then read on to find out more about the process.

Our Background

Wasdale Mountain Rescue Team has been assisting people in the western fells for over 50 years. It is one of twelve teams in the Lake District Search and Rescue Association. The operational team consists of about 40 unpaid volunteers, responding to over 150 callouts per year and rescuing people who are injured or lost in our area each year. The Team provides a rescue service to the public 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, whatever the weather.

Team Mission *To save lives and relieve distress, primarily in upland and mountainous areas.*

Team Values *Proud to be professional volunteers, working as a team, to help others.*

We are a registered charity and dependent on donations from the public. It costs over £90,000 per year to maintain our team, allow enabling the provision our valuable service in the Wasdale and Eskdale valleys.



We welcome new members to the Team each year. Our team is constantly evolving and adapting to the increase and variety of callouts. We are looking for people to join us each year, bringing in to our team your qualities and enthusiasm. We aim to start a group of probationers at the same time so that you can learn, encourage each other and progress through your training together. Forming new friendships and supporting each other through the process as you integrate with the rest of the team.

What is the Recruitment Process?

You have already made the first step to joining our team and should be able to fulfil our basic requirements to continue, as shown on the website. The next step is to fill in our application form and return it to recruitment@wmrt.org.uk.

Application Form



The form is designed for us to assess your relevant skills, experience and potential to commit to our team. Please answer it honestly and seek guidance from us on any questions you are unsure of. There are no formal qualifications needed; however, we want you to be self-sufficient and confident moving in mountainous terrain in all conditions. You will also need good navigation skills with working knowledge of using a map and compass. There is no mandatory requirement to be an experienced climber or mountaineer, but familiarity with climbing rope work and equipment would be beneficial. As would any other qualifications or courses you believe could be useful. The team can introduce and teach you basic climbing and rope/crag skills if needed. There is no urgency to send us your application until the announced period of October, this may allow you some time to gain more evidence or experience for your answers. However, if you are confident that you can fill it in already, please return it to us and we will process it and update you.



Interview

This is an opportunity for us to meet in person. It will be a relaxed, informal interview where we will further discuss your previous experience and skills. You

can expect to be asked basic questions about our local area, hillwalking and navigation skills, and possibly to demonstrate setting a compass bearing or tying a basic knot if you have declared familiarity with ropes. We may also be interested in your motivations and expectations of joining our team. Please do not be daunted by this, we are not aiming to try and catch people out, nor do we expect everybody to know the answers to all our questions. We will use the interview to form our general opinion on your skills and knowledge and if it is suitable to progress you on to the next stage.

Hill Assessment

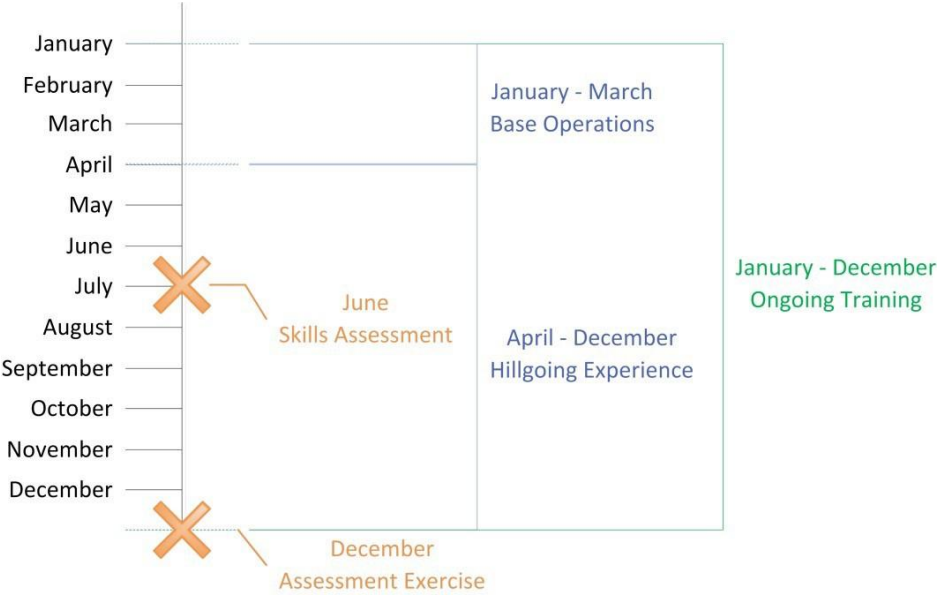


Again, this part of the process is not designed to be overly ambitious, but to allow us to visually and physically assess your suitability for joining the team. It is intended to replicate our average callout on the hill.

- Can you communicate effectively with team members?
- Can you use basic map and navigation skills to take us along a defined route? Can you identify main summits and set a compass bearing?
- Are you adequately dressed and equipped for the conditions?
- Can you move comfortably for 2-4 hours carrying your kit up to one of our fell summits? We by no means expect people to be moving fast or to be super-fit. As a general base-level you should be able to walk up and down our main and busiest fell – Scafell Pike – without requiring extended or frequent periods of rest.
- Do you have confidence in the climbing/rope systems and equipment? We will set up a very basic and safe rope system outside our base, fit you with a harness and ask simply for you to lean back and demonstrate that you are comfortable being attached to rope systems. it will be set on a safe gradient grass slope on the boulder training area outside our base.

What will happen if I become a Probationary Member?

After successfully passing all stages, and a vote being carried out by the team in support, you will be invited to join as a probationary member and start your 12-month probation. As a new member you will be attending regular training, ensuring you gain the skills and expertise to respond to a variety of callouts. You will have to demonstrate you are achieving set standards and are upholding our team values. You can expect the following.



Training Commitments

The team attend training every Monday evening and the occasional weekend day. Certain sessions will be specifically for probationary members, and you will be expected to attend as many of these as possible.

First 3 Months



You will be assigned a mentor, and a competency folder which will be used to track your progress through the Team's Core Skills.

The first 3 months will be spent attending base for training and callouts to learn core skills and the base/control room standard operating procedures.

After 3 months, pending a recommendation from your Mentor, you will be allowed to join the team on the hill for callouts in the company of a Full Team Member.

6 Month Hill Assessment

An assessment of the skills you have gained so far. It will be like your initial Hill Assessment but with your new skills and capabilities being integrated. Upon successful completion you will be issued with the team red, and badged, layers of clothing.

Final Assessment Exercise

The team will be involved in a basic scenario where the probationary members will be expected to work as a team, using their skills and training to resolve the situation. It will involve all elements from the initial base callout – to locating and dealing with the casualty using whatever required skills may be needed and in moving the casualty to a place where we can conclude the callout.



Points for Consideration



- Membership of WMRT is not something to be considered lightly. The emergency services we work with and the public we encounter expect a professional standard of service. The team is held in high regard and maintaining this reputation requires the full effort of its members.
- Joining the team represents a very large commitment indeed. We train regularly and attend many callouts, especially during our busy periods. These occur at any time of the day or night, and we are on call 24 hrs. a day, 365 days a year, whatever the weather. The team does not operate a rota system but expect a minimum attendance percentage throughout the year. It will cost you time and money; you will be exposed to inconvenience, get wet, cold, tired and find yourself in high pressure situations. Your safety and that of others will depend on your personal skills and ability to work as part of a team.
- All new team members are required to undertake a 12-month probation during which they are expected to demonstrate a high level of commitment and enthusiasm whilst working well as part of our team. Beginning this process does not guarantee that you will be accepted as a Full Team Member after 12 months. The decision can be made to extend your probation period or to remove you from the process upon recommendation by your mentor and the team committee. Special exemptions for reducing the probationary time can be made for current or previous Full Team Members who wish to apply.

Full Team Member Opportunities



Upon finishing your 12-month probation, a team vote will be held to decide if you have demonstrated everything required to gain your place as a Full Team Member. As such, you will be given more responsibility and freedom on the hill and be eligible to vote in team decisions as well as applying for further specialisations and courses.

The learning certainly won't be over, but you should feel confident that you have earnt your place on the team, and that your time and effort has been valued. By now you would have attended many callouts and feel settled and included in the team atmosphere, having felt the satisfaction of helping people in the local area you will be much more familiar with. No callout will ever be identical, and the team will always be encountering new situations. There are plenty of opportunities for you to put yourself forward and enhance your skillset and input to the team, including (not a complete list):

- Helicopter training
- Crag/rope related courses
- Swift Water Rescue Technician
- Blue Light Driver training
- Search Dog Handler
- Team Leader
- Boat Team
- Casualty Care qualifications
- Kit Inspection courses
- Winter Skills courses



Final Words

Mountain Rescue can be hard work in difficult conditions, exposing its members to stressful situations. However, the satisfaction and fulfilment that can be found by helping people in need and being part of such a valuable, unique and interesting team is the reason that it is such a big part of our members lives. The Team is made of committed, caring, compassionate and friendly members. You will undoubtedly make new valued friends.

Hopefully you now have a much more informed view of what joining our team involves. If you are still happy with what you have read and believe you are suitable, we would love to receive your application.

More information on the training syllabus can be found on the link provided on the website. Please contact us with any queries you have or return your completed application form.

We look forward to meeting you.

Recommended Reading

Even the most experienced hillwalker or mountaineer can benefit from refreshing their memory on basic skills from time to time. We fully believe that it is possible for motivated individuals to improve their knowledge and competency with study and practise, we encourage it. If you think you would benefit from further self-study and practise to give you the best chance in all elements of the recruitment process, we recommend one of these or similar:

- Hillwalking: the official handbook of the Mountain Leader and Walking Group Leader Schemes by Steven Long
- Mountaincraft And Leadership by Eric Langmuir
- Ultimate Navigation Manual by Lyle Brotherton
- Navigation in the Mountains by Carlo Forte
- Winter Skills: Essential Walking and Climbing techniques by Andy Cunningham



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