

ENGLAND REGIONAL TALENT SQUADS

(including Welsh and Northern Ireland athletes)
Part of the GB Climbing Pathway

The England Regional Development Squad will engage with and support athletes in developing their performance standards and styles through the key areas of technical, tactical, physical, psychological, nutrition and lifestyle, whilst maintaining GB Climbing core values of Health, Performance and Respect.

Regional Talent Squads

The England Regional Talent Squads will be the first step on the evolved talent pathway, and the starting point for any athlete with aspirations to be a member of the GB Climbing team. The regional pathway coaches will work holistically with athletes and their home coaches to foster a creative learning environment to develop the foundations to express their own individuality and prepare young climbers ready to thrive as they navigate their youth competition climbing journey.

The development of a tailored 'Individual Athlete Development Plan' (IADP) lead by the Regional Pathway Coaches, in collaboration with home coach's (an athlete's personal coach), will help shape the athlete experiences for all on the regional talent squad programme. Exposure to and experience of the different disciplines, competition standards and styles will support those athletes in the Regional Talent Squads to develop their potential through coaching and climbing with peers of a similar or higher standard. Athletes will develop a broad range of technical skills through wide-ranging practice and domestic competition experiences, supported by a functional athletic base, alongside a safety competence in each discipline.

The Regional Talent Squad is the first opportunity for aspiring athletes to know what it will take to be a competition climber. If selected onto a regional talent squad, the more an athlete and their personal coach engage the more they will benefit from the experiences. The aim will be to have multiple selection points throughout the year, in 2023 the ambition is to have two.

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Aim of the Regional Talent Squads

- Athletes will experience creative sessions where athletes are encouraged to ask purposeful questions, embrace new ideas and have high engagement with the sessions.
- There will be varied opportunities to engage with the coaches in a fun and supportive environment where athletes can make mistakes, experiment and learn.
- Coaches will work in collaboration with Home Coaches
- Athletes, parents and home coaches will learn how supporting health and wellbeing can support their climbing and vice versa.
- Athletes will develop their own Individual Athlete Development Plan (IADP) and develop skills in goal setting, planning and preparing for competitions.
- Athletes will have high support, so that they can thrive in a competition or challenging climbing experience, take the learnings from it and deliver personal best performances.
- Athletes will understand their own building blocks of what makes a successful performance for them.
- Athletes and parents will be introduced to a performance culture.

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How we do it

Provide meaningful group and individual development opportunities for selected athletes by creating a training, development and competitive environments that are supportive, fun and holistic, with athlete health and well-being core to everything we do.

- Athlete training events will take place in age and stage appropriate groups with other athletes from a similar geographical area.
- Squad sessions will likely be either an evening session and/or 3 hours long/half day weekend sessions, approximately once per month, depending on the athletes age and/or stage, and which training group within the region is a best match for them.
- The Pathway Coach for the geographical area will lead in the arrangements of the sessions and training groups.
- The Pathway Coach will also support and help develop each individual athlete development plan (IADP) in collaboration with home coaches and parents.
- The regions will be determined by the squad athlete's locations. As an initial guide they may be the South, Central East and Central West of England.

Costs of the Regional Talent Squad

- Squad kit (1 Tee Shirt and 1 Hoodie) approx. cost of £30
- £275.00 plus own travel costs
- Additional cost of attending selection events as part of the selection processes to the talent squad and domestic competitions.

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Expectations of Athletes

As a member of the Regional Talent Squad athletes are expected to:

- Develop their Individual Athlete Development Plan (IADP) with Pathway coaches outlining preparation, planning and goals.
- Attend all trainings, unless absence is previously agreed with coach.
- Cooperate fully with others involved in the sport such as coaches, technical officials, team managers, medics and representatives of the governing body in the best interests of the yourself and other athletes.
- Be prepared push themselves and make mistakes, remembering that 'failure' is part of the learning process.
- Role model athlete behavior and be an example to other aspiring climbers and athletes around the world.

Expectations of Parents

Parents of a member of the Regional Talent Squad are expected to:

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every athlete, coach, technical official, GB Climbing Staff and others involved in climbing and treat everyone equally.
- Cooperate fully with others involved in the sport such as coaches, technical officials, team managers, medics and representatives of the governing body in the best interests of the yourself and other athletes and parents.
- Consistently promote positive aspects of the sport such as fair play and never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited or age-inappropriate substances.
- Assist in creating an inclusive environment in which everybody can participate and be supported.

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2023 Selection Overview

All 2022 GB National Development Squad (GBNDS) athletes will be invited to join the England Regional Talent Squads if they live in England, Wales or Northern Ireland.

Athletes not part of the GBNDS 2022 will follow the following selection process;

Stage 1;

- Nomination form sent to England Talent Manager by the deadline specified in the selection framework by Home Coach.
- Athletes meet the Regional Pathway Coach and take part in a trial Regional Talent Squad session.
- Through a feedback and review conversation with the athlete and home coach after the trial squad session, a collaborative decision is reached as to whether the athlete is showing readiness to attend a regional benchmarking event at that time, or if a later event would be more suitable.
- If it is agreed the athlete is ready to attend, an invitation will be issued to take part. There will be 2 benchmarking events in 2023, linked to England Development Squad training camps (Dates TBC).
- Regional Benchmarking events will be a climbing event where the standard of the athletes can be benchmarked against the current age and stage standards.
- Completion of an initial goal setting and 'roadmap' plan (part of IADP) for the following 12-18mths.

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Stage 2;

The following will then be considered by the selection panel meeting in making selection decisions;

- Performance standard achieved at the Regional Benchmarking event.
- Coach observations recorded at the selection event.
- Whether athlete is part of a UK Sport named athlete program

2024 Selection Overview

All athletes will follow the following selection process;

Stage 1;

- Application form sent to England Talent Manager by the deadline specified in the selection framework.
- Athletes meet the Regional Pathway Coach and take part in a trial Regional Talent Squad session.
- Through a feedback and review conversation with the athlete and home coach after the trial squad session, a collaborative decision is reached as to whether the athlete is showing readiness to attend a Regional Benchmarking event at that time, or if a later event would be more suitable.
- If it is agreed the athlete is ready to attend, an invitation will be issued to take part. There will be 2 benchmarking events in 2024 (TBC).
- Regional Benchmarking events will be a climbing event where the standard of the athletes can be benchmarked against the current standards.
- Completion of an initial goal setting and 'roadmap' plan (part of IADP) for the following 12-18mths.

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Timeframes:

The selection process and frameworks are under review, and being developed against the new 2023 pathway, therefore information given in this overview maybe subject to change as final approval is sought in November 2022.

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Eligibility Criteria

The athletes eligible for selection in 2023 will be born in the following years:

2023 age category	Youth D	Youth C		Youth B		Youth A		Junior	
Year of birth	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Age	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19

The athletes eligible for selection in 2024 will be born in the following years:

2024 age category	Youth D	Youth C		Youth B		Youth A		Junior	
Year of birth	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Age	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19

- Athletes must hold a UK passport.
- Athletes will be a current member of the British Mountaineering Council.
- Athletes will have no outstanding arrears with GB Climbing and/or the BMC.
Athletes must live in England, Wales or Northern Ireland