

British Mountaineering Council: Volunteer Role description

Nationally Elected Councillor for Hill Walking

Are you passionate about the interests of hill walkers? Do you want to volunteer for the BMC to share your knowledge and experience whilst working with some great people?

The BMC is looking for a volunteer with energy, commitment and great communication skills to be the new Nationally Elected Councillor for Hill Walking. This is an exciting time for the BMC as it seeks to expand the voice of its members throughout the organisation and this role offers the chance to give something back and be at the forefront of improving grassroots representation.

You would sit on the Members' Council (the Council) and help the Council to deliver its objectives. You would have specific responsibility to provide a national focus for the interests of BMC members who are hill walkers, to complement the more local focus of Area Representatives. This is a new position so the successful applicant will need to spend an initial period working with experienced councillors and liaising with the BMC Office to understand *how* to interact with members on a national basis as well as via the usual club or local area route. It is expected that you would make extensive use of social media and virtual meetings for these interactions, and expertise in these areas is essential.

This is a non-executive, voluntary role. Travel, accommodation and food will be reimbursed as per the BMC Volunteer Expenses Policy. In line with our Equality & Diversity Policy, the BMC is keen to achieve a more diverse Council and encourages applications from under-represented groups. The BMC cannot function without volunteers and the commitment from Council members is recognised with 20% discount at Cotswold, other beneficial deals, and invitations to social events.

- **Start Date:** 16 May 2021
- **Tenure:** 3 years, with the possibility of a further three years.
- **Volunteer Commitment:** The full extent of the commitment is up to the individual volunteer and will vary according to their personal circumstances. As with many volunteer roles, volunteers often find that the more they put in, the more they get out, and there is always the opportunity to get further involved.
 - **Minimum voluntary requirement:** Around 290 hours or 40 days equivalent a year:
 - Attend Council meetings (typically 4 to 5 per year, held countrywide or online, usually on Saturdays – 7 hours for the meeting, 3 hours pre-reading for each meeting)
 - Participate in additional online meetings to engage with members, discuss Council business and in year one to develop the role (average 3 hours per month)
 - Sit on the Hill Walking Committee (meets approximately 5 times per year)
 - Liaise with other relevant Specialist Committees / staff / other key parties and read additional material relevant to Council business (average 3 hours per week)
 - Meet a variety of hill walking members face-to-face at events at least once a quarter (4 days)
 - **Additional voluntary options:** Attend a wider variety of events, participate in extra committee work
- **Requirements:** Must be a voting member of the BMC of at least 12 months' standing at the time of appointment
- **Closing date: Tuesday 30th March 2021**

Background

Members' views are currently gathered through the BMC local area structure and via BMC affiliated clubs, then represented to the Board through the National Council. However, the BMC Organisational Review in 2017 concluded that many members don't have a voice as there is no effective mechanism to ensure their views are heard.

The BMC is therefore re-structuring the National Council into a new Members' Council (the Council), to be effective immediately following the AGM in May 2021. A key part of the Council is a new category of member representative, the Nationally Elected Councillor (NEC), who will sit alongside existing representation from both local areas and clubs.

Up to four NECs will work to represent members' views in specific areas of interest identified and agreed by the Council, depending on the BMC's strategic objectives and needs at the time. For the 2021 AGM, National Council has decided to fill all four NEC roles, to represent members in each of the key participation activities of rock climbing, hill walking, mountaineering and indoor climbing. NECs will be champions for their activities and work with Councillors and other volunteers to ensure that the BMC remains the representative body for Mountaineering in its broadest sense.

In addition, two further new roles have been created on Council to represent the hugely important member constituencies of Mountain Training and BMC affiliated Clubs.

Role description

All councillors are first and foremost members of Council and are expected to work collectively to achieve the Council's objectives, in line with and in support of the BMC's strategy. The general responsibilities to achieve this are given in, 'A Brief Introduction to the BMC Members' Council'. The successful candidate will spend the first year in office working with other experienced Council members and BMC staff to develop this new role from a concept into a fully functional position. After development, it is expected that the NEC for hill walkers will have the following specific responsibilities:

- Be a strong voice and champion for hill walkers in the BMC
- Engage with hill walking members to promote the role and encourage dialogue. This could include:
 - Reaching out to members, either individuals or clubs (both traditional and virtual), via social media
 - Attending and/or being involved in organising BMC festivals, hill walking meets and local area meetings/events
 - Liaising with the BMC Marketing Communications team to utilise their expertise e.g. with surveys and questionnaires, to help understand and engage with members
- Work with the other NECs and constituency councillors, directors, and BMC staff to help the Council in decisions on how to improve membership engagement nationally
- Liaise regularly with area hill walking representatives and sit on the BMC Hill Walking Committee
- Engage with the wider hill walking community on an informal basis to understand their views and concerns, and to promote the BMC to potential new members, to help towards the BMC's strategic aim to increase its representation of the UK hillwalking community
- Liaise with BMC office to support the development of quality hill walking output within the wider BMC media
- Work with like-minded councillors to arrange an annual Members' Council event focused on hill walking

Skills & personal qualities

- Creative individual prepared to experiment, discover and learn from experience in order to both develop this role and facilitate wider improvement in the BMC's interactions with members
- Active hill walker with a passion for the outdoors and awareness of current issues facing hill walking in the UK
- Ideally with experience of, or able to demonstrate understanding of, acting as an advocate for groups or organisations
- Experience in the use of different communication platforms, including social media
- Team player with the ability to network & engage effectively with people from a wide variety of backgrounds.

Appointment

This is an elected position, voted for by the BMC membership. Election and appointment of the successful volunteer will be at the AGM on Saturday 15 May 2021 and they will start their duties on Sunday 16 May at the inaugural meeting of the new Members' Council, the day after the AGM.

To apply, please:

- 1) Write a 500-word statement about your interest, relevant experience and motivation for the role
- 2) Complete the appropriate Nominations form for the volunteer role you wish to apply for. These are also found at www.thebmc.co.uk/agm-volunteers.
- 3) Attach both the statement and completed nominations form to a covering email and email your application to agm@thebmc.co.uk.

Your application will be acknowledged within 2 business days of receipt. If you have any questions about the application process itself, or would like more information on the role, please contact agm@thebmc.co.uk with your query.

Audio presentation

Since the 2021 BMC AGM will be virtual as a result of Covid-19, all voting will take place electronically. While your application is being validated for correct membership details, you will be contacted by a BMC volunteer to ask you to record a short audio presentation to both introduce yourself and answer some pre-recorded Q&A (max 15 mins, though may be shorter depending on the number of applicants). Further details will be provided after 30 March 2021.

The audio recording and your 500-word statement will be uploaded to the BMC website by 29th April. It will also be advertised on the BMC FaceBook page, Twitter feed and other relevant social media to ensure the widest possible reach to BMC members ahead of voting at the AGM.

Selection will be by election at the BMC AGM on Saturday 15 May 2021, which will be held online. You should aim to attend this, and the Council meeting (also online) on the following day.

PLEASE NOTE: An election for this role will only take place if the new Members' Council is first approved by member vote at the AGM.

Closing date is Tuesday 30th March 2021