

Applicable to indoor Not So Trad club meets only

Introduction

This policy outlines the procedures and guidelines for prospective members of Not So Trad LGBTQ+ Climbers (NST). A 'prospective member' is an individual who has expressed a desire to join the club. They may also be called an aspirant, novice, provisional, or probationary member.

This policy applies only to individuals joining the club on indoor meets. Due to the additional risks inherent to outdoor climbing, individuals wishing to participate in NST outdoor meets must have adequate insurance.

NST is a BMC affiliated climbing club. An important benefit of BMC affiliation is protection for the club and its members against legal liability under civil law while undertaking activities recognised by the BMC. Although this policy provides for a three-month grace period for prospective members to decide if they wish to become a member, NST encourages anyone interested in joining the club to become a fully-paid member to benefit from BMC club membership at the earliest opportunity.

NST promotes safe and responsible climbing while fostering a welcoming community for LGBTQ+ climbers, and their friends. This policy seeks to support these goals by providing clear procedures and guidelines for both members and prospective members, in respect of the conditions for prospective membership.

Eligibility

Prospective membership is open to individuals who:

- Are 18 or over
- Have an interest in climbing and mountaineering, and climb at any ability
- Recognise that climbing and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death
- Treat all members with respect and support an inclusive environment
- Have completed an online registration form, so the club knows their personal details, how to keep in touch with them, and who to contact in an emergency
- Have not previously been a prospective member (where an individual has been a prospective member, they must become a fully-paid member before participating in any club activities).

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Grace Period

NST encourages anyone interested in joining the club to become a fully-paid member to benefit from BMC club membership and have access to our members' portal at the earliest opportunity.

However, a three-month grace period is offered to prospective members, during which they may participate in climbing activities while on official indoor club meets. They will receive the same BMC Clubs Combined Liability Insurance cover as all other BMC Club Members during the grace period.

- Prospective members must complete NST's online registration form. This is an essential requirement of prospective membership and ensures the club has the prospective member's personal, contact and emergency contact details.
- The three-month grace period begins from the date the registration form is completed. The timestamp from the completed online form will serve as the club's record of the start of the grace period, from which the end of the three-month grace period will be calculated.
- The prospective members list will be shared with points of contact for weekly indoor meets via the NST Points of Contact WhatsApp group, and updated as required.
- Individuals may only be a prospective member once. Should a prospective member decide not to become a full member at the end of their grace period and subsequently wish to become a member, they must register and pay the club membership fee before they may participate in club activities.

During the grace period

This policy supports a welcoming and inclusive approach to club membership. The grace period offers prospective members an opportunity to meet our members on indoor meets, learn more about NST and decide if they want to become full members, whilst benefiting from Combined Liability Insurance coverage for club activities.

This policy also supports a smooth transition for prospective members into our club, fostering an environment of safety, respect, and camaraderie. If prospective members have any questions or concerns, please contact the membership secretary in the first instance. For reference, see the club's Code of Conduct available on the webpages.

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During the grace period, we encourage prospective members to:

- Introduce themselves to the point of contact or trip leader
- Share their climbing ability/experience and aspirations
- Share any concerns they may have
- Talk to and build rapport with as many members as possible
- Don't be afraid to ask questions, especially if they are new to climbing.
- Join members for post-climbing drinks if they are available.

Becoming a member

- If a prospective member intends to become a full member, they must pay the membership fee before the three-month grace period expires. They should notify the membership secretary or treasurer when payment has been made, so this can be checked and the membership process completed.
- If a prospective member's grace period expires, they will not have liability cover and must not participate in club activities until the membership fee has been paid, received and the member's details added to the BMC MSO portal.

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For reference only

BMC CLUBS GUIDANCE: FAQs

2.1 What about new club members or prospective club members, do they get cover? Relevant to: BMC affiliated clubs & club members

New members are insured from the day they pay membership to the club, provided that the club clearly records the date of payment (e.g. by using a receipt book) and sends the data through to the BMC in a timely manner.

A 'prospective' club member, who may not have paid for club membership, will be receive benefit through the BMC's Combined Liability Insurance policy when engaging in a club's activities*, for a maximum trial membership period of three months (the three-month grace-period), providing that the club has a record of that person's details. To continue to receive the benefit beyond the three-month trial membership, that person must appear on the club's next declaration with the appropriate subscription paid to the BMC. See Q2.2 for more details on the grace-period. The 'prospective member' cover is referenced in the Confirmation of Liability Cover in the BMC Insurance Centre.

2.2 What is the 'three-month grace period'? Relevant to: BMC affiliated clubs

From the point that an individual makes their first practical contact with the club, such as when they join up with members to climb at the wall or attend an outdoor meet, the prospective member will have a three-month grace period where they will receive the same Combined Liability Insurance cover as all other BMC Club Members* while on official club meets. The club must ensure that it holds personal contact details of the prospective member to evidence their contact with the club - this is usually via a club registration form. Dates when a prospective member attends meets should also be recorded by the club. The new/prospective member will not benefit from CLI cover outside of official club meets during the grace period. [* excluding cover if undertaking Secondary Activities] Before the three-month period ends the prospective member will need to become a BMC Club Member, and the club will need to pay the relevant subscription fee to the BMC. The individual will then continue to have access to the Combined Liability Insurance cover plus they will have access to all other BMC Club Member benefits. At this point the CLI will extend to all mountaineering activities the individual participates in, not just official club meets. This does not mean that the prospective member must become a full member of the club at the same time if they have not yet met the entry requirements for the club, but the club must register and pay for their club membership of the BMC to maintain Combined Liability Insurance cover. If the individual does not become a BMC Club

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Member at the end of the grace period they will be classed as a non-member and will not have access to the Combined Liability Insurance cover.

2.8 What are the risks of allowing non-members on to club meets? Relevant to: BMC affiliated clubs For example..... On a club meet the meet organiser allocates a prospective member or a guest to climb with an existing club member. The prospective member (or guest) dislodges a rock which lands on the club member (the belayer) breaking their arm. The club member is unable to work for several weeks, and being self-employed suffers a significant loss of income. The club member chooses to claim against the prospective member (guest) for damages.

- If the prospective member is within their three-month grace-period then the BMC Combined Liability Insurance policy will protect the prospective member with potential payout to the club member.
- If the prospective member is out of the grace-period and the club has not registered them with the BMC and paid the relevant membership fee or it is a guest who caused the incident, then the BMC policy will not protect the prospective member / guest and therefore wouldn't pay out to the club member. The club member could then be left in financial difficulties, and might choose to take action against the committee of the club if it was felt that it had failed in its duty of care towards the members of the club by allowing an individual on to a club meet with no liability insurance cover.