

# News from the Rescue Benevolent Fund

We've simplified our application process so it's easier to ask for help when you need it...

Rescue Benevolent Fund chairman **Neil Woodhead** updates us on developments making it easier to apply for benevolence or to find support to aid wellbeing.

It was fabulous to attend the Mountain Rescue England and Wales conference in September where we were able to speak to team members about what the Rescue Benevolent Fund is all about and what services we can offer. But it was also disappointing to hear from a couple of team members that they had been put off seeking our assistance because of the application process. That was really difficult for us to hear, but we were so glad that those team members felt able to share this view with us. To meet our objectives we do need to have a robust application process that stands up to scrutiny and ensures that we are fair to all. That said, it hasn't really changed since we were formed over a decade ago. We

immediately took action and have made some significant changes to the application form and supporting documents to make them less formal, shorter and easier to complete. Please do take a look at the Resources section on our website — you can find it at [rescuebenevolent.fund/resources](https://rescuebenevolent.fund/resources) — where our shorter and snappier 'How to Apply' document and application form are freely available to download. We also understand much better now how difficult it can be for team members to ask for help. We really don't want anyone to be put off from applying in their hour of need. We all happily head out to help those in need on the hills and mountains, or down in the caves and

mines — but we're often very slow to seek help ourselves and the smallest hurdle can mean we turn away from seeking the help we really need. I really want to stress that I don't want anyone to be put off from asking for our support because there's a form to complete and it feels too much. The easiest option is perhaps not to complete the form and not seek our help — but that is most probably the wrong option. So if you need our help, please ask someone to help you and to complete the form for you — anyone can fill it in on your behalf. We've kept it as short as we can and essentially we just want you to tell us, in your own words, as much as you can about why you are turning to the Rescue Benevolent

Fund and what sort of support you are looking for.

On a different note, I'm delighted that our partnership with Togetherall continues to be seen as a very valuable service to assist us all with our wellbeing. If you haven't heard about this then let me explain. Togetherall is a safe, online community where people support each other anonymously to improve mental health and wellbeing. Operational team members from mountain and cave rescue teams in England and Wales can register for free and start talking, finding the support they need, when they need it, 24/7. They can also access a raft of online resources such as articles, courses and NHS-approved wellbeing assessments. The site is monitored by professional clinicians and 'wall guides'.

In the last magazine, we heard how my fellow trustee Shirley, together with Emily Bromiley from Togetherall, led a very moving session at the conference. Building on that we had the pleasure of

Emily leading an online awareness session in October where she talked about their service and how team members can access it. Whilst we had a good number of team members attend we wanted to make sure that everyone can access this, so a video of Emily's session is now available for you all to access on our website at [tinyurl.com/4rt2jjjk](https://tinyurl.com/4rt2jjjk). It's also uploaded to Moodle, in a folder dedicated to the Rescue Benevolent Fund. Please do share this with everyone in your team and help us to spread the message about the service.

Finally from me, a quick thank you to Jon White and everyone involved in the MREW Wellbeing group. We always have at least one — sometimes three — benevolent fund trustees attend their meetings to support their work and see how we can be part of it. It's great collaboration and good to receive their positive feedback on the service we provide to the mountain and cave rescue community. 🙏

**togetherall**  
Mental health support online,  
**anonymous & 24/7.**

At Togetherall you can speak to someone who understands what you're going through,  
**anytime & anywhere.**



**AS A MOUNTAIN OR CAVE RESCUE TEAM MEMBER YOU CAN ACCESS TOGETHERALL FREE OF CHARGE**

The Togetherall digital mental health and wellbeing support service is a completely anonymous community where you can express yourself freely and openly. Professionally trained Wall Guides and clinical professionals monitor the community to ensure the safety and anonymity of all members. Once you're registered and logged in, there's a range of activities that allow you to work through what's troubling you. **Share your thoughts** with other community members, gain support and advice or offer YOUR valuable support to someone else who needs it. **Access a wealth of useful resources** and join self-guided support courses covering the key topics which affect all our lives. Or take **clinically-approved self-assessments** to help you understand more about yourself. 🙏

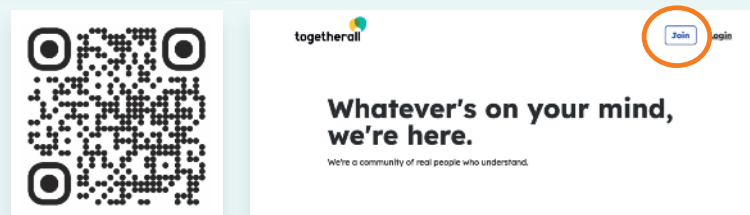
**See left for instructions on how to register**

**Rescue Benevolent Fund**

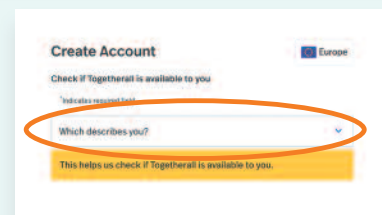
PARTNERING TO DELIVER PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING SUPPORT TO MOUNTAIN AND CAVE RESCUE TEAM MEMBERS



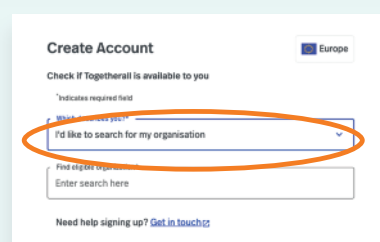
**1** Go to **togetherall.com** or scan QR code. Click 'Join'



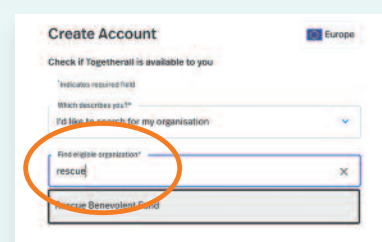
**2** To create account Select 'Which describes you?'



**3** Select 'I'd like to search for my organisation'



**4** Enter 'rescue' to find Rescue Benevolent Fund



**5** Enter email. Create profile name. Enter details. Click 'Submit details'

Start exploring...

