



Press Release

5 April 2017

For immediate release

Enjoy the mountains safely this Easter

Mountaineering Scotland and Scottish Mountain Rescue join forces on spring safety advice for hill walkers

Hill walkers and mountaineers are being warned they shouldn't get too carried away by the joys of spring – in case they have to get carried off!

Mountaineering Scotland and Scottish Mountain Rescue have joined forces to alert hill goers to the hazards that hang around even after warmth returns to the hills.

With the Easter break already here for some, and just around the corner for others, many more people are looking forward to spending time in the mountains.

Conditions are generally good, with a milder than normal winter meaning many paths are already clear of the winter's snow.

But mountaineering experts are reminding people that winter is still capable of biting well into spring.

Icy snow, sudden changes in weather, and general fitness can all spell trouble.

Heather Morning, Mountain Safety Adviser with Mountaineering Scotland, said: "What snow is still about in the mountains can vary from being quite sugary and easy to kick steps in, to being hard and icy and an absolute death trap if you don't have crampons and an ice axe. And the same patch of snow can change in consistency as conditions change through the day; a patch can be hard and icy in the morning but softer in the afternoon."

She added: "The weather can catch you out at this time of year too. A day that tempts people down to shorts and a tee-shirt can very easily change to blizzard conditions. Substantial falls of snow can happen right up until May."

Useful information on conditions in the mountains can be gained from the Scottish Avalanche Information Service blogs. The avalanche forecasts have ended for this winter, but the service will continue to monitor weather and snow conditions leading up to and during the Easter holidays. Mountain information will continue to be provided on the SAIS blogs for this period, available at www.sais.gov.uk

Kev Mitchell, vice chair of Scottish Mountain Rescue, added: “A lot of people will have had a break over the winter and have been eager to get back into the mountains, and they should think about taking it easy for the first couple of trips, to get back into the swing of things and get fitness levels back up.”

He said: “It’s great to see so many people so keen to get out into the mountains and enjoy themselves – we’re just the same – but if you’re a beginner or have been away from it for a couple of months, a little caution always pays dividends.”

In case an accident does happen, and help is needed, the number to call for help is the same as anywhere – 999 – and the caller should ask for Police, then Mountain Rescue. More information on what to do in an emergency can be found on the Mountaineering Scotland website at <https://www.mountaineering.scot/safety-and-skills/essential-skills/mountain-rescue/calling-for-help>

Ends

Notes for editors:

Image: Mountaineering Scotland’s Heather Morning on Sgurr Dhomhnuill in Ardgour
[http://www.mountaineering.scot/assets/contentfiles/media-upload/sgurr_donald_nov16_\(8\).JPG](http://www.mountaineering.scot/assets/contentfiles/media-upload/sgurr_donald_nov16_(8).JPG)

Further information contact:

Heather Morning, Mountain Safety Adviser for Mountaineering Scotland, on 01479 861241 or heather@mountaineering.scot

Neil Reid, Communications Officer for Mountaineering Scotland, on 01738 493941 or 07788871803 or neil@mountaineering.scot

Andy Rockall, General Manager, Scottish Mountain Rescue, on 01479 861 370 or info@scottishmountainrescue.org

About Scottish Mountain Rescue

- Mountain Rescue in Scotland is carried out by around 1,000 highly skilled volunteers organised in local rescue teams that cover the whole of the country. There are in addition 3 police and 1 RAF team.
- Mountain Rescue is free at the point of demand and available any time, any day, any weather across Scotland. Funding relies heavily on donations from the public without which the service could not exist.
- Scottish Mountain Rescue, the organisation itself a registered charity, is the representative body working nationally in Scotland to support Mountain Rescue Teams. We represent 23 of the 27 volunteer civilian teams in Scotland.

- Our work includes national fundraising, organisation and delivery of national training courses and events, provision of insurance and supply of equipment, liaising with Police Scotland and Scottish Government and international rescue organisations and co-ordinating good practice.
- More information from www.scottishmountainrescue.org

About Mountaineering Scotland:

- Mountaineering Scotland is the only recognised representative organisation for hill walkers, climbers and ski-tourers who live in Scotland or who enjoy Scotland's mountains.
- Mountaineering Scotland provides training and information to mountain users to promote safety, self-reliance and the enjoyment of our mountain environment.
- The MCofS is a membership organisation with over 13,000 members representing hill walkers, climbers and mountaineers, funded through a combination of membership subscriptions, non-governmental grants and investment from sportscotland, which supports public initiatives and services in mountain safety, mountain training and the development and promotion of mountaineering activities.
- Mountaineering Scotland also acts for 75,000 members of the BMC or British Mountaineering Council on matters related to Landscape and Access in Scotland.
- Mountaineering Scotland landscape and access work is supported financially by the Scottish Mountaineering Trust and the BMC
- Mountaineering Scotland is the new name for the Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCofS), which acts to represent, support and promote Scottish mountaineering.
- Mountaineering Council of Scotland remains the registered company name.
- The MCofS is a not for profit company limited by guarantee and incorporated in Scotland. Company number SC322717.
- Mountaineering Scotland, The Granary, West Mill Street, Perth PH1 5QP