



Press Release

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For immediate release

## **A testing time for mountaineers**

### **Hill walkers and climbers frustrated by no change to 5 mile limit**

Mountaineering Scotland has welcomed the positive news about the progress Scotland has made in suppressing the Coronavirus, however many walkers and climbers are expressing frustration at the continued restriction in travel and that many rural car parks remain closed under Phase 2 of the exit from lockdown.

Mountaineering Scotland has almost 15,000 members who take part in hill walking, climbing and back-country skiing, and is a voice for those who enjoy recreation in Scotland's hills and mountains – and is concerned that whilst travel continues to be limited to a five-mile radius from home to take part in recreational outdoor activity, there appears to be more flexibility to travel for other reasons.

Mountaineering Scotland's CEO, Stuart Younie, said "We appreciate the very difficult decisions which the Scottish Government are having to make to manage what is still a very serious health emergency, and we welcome the way it has championed the health and wellbeing benefits of exercise and being outdoors throughout lockdown.

"While a lucky few who live within five miles or so of mountains have been able to restart their activities in Phase 1, that option remains closed to the vast majority, especially those living in the Central Belt. We wrote to the Minister for Public Health, Sport and Wellbeing asking them to consider some further relaxation of the travel restrictions in Phase 2, and we know many of our members will be disappointed this has not happened."

He said that the outdoor community had so far taken a very responsible approach to the COVID-19 crisis in refraining from their normal activities and have played their part in helping minimise the spread of the virus, but the concern now is that where people fail to understand the rationale for some aspects of the guidance they are less likely to respect it.

"It's difficult for our members – and other hill walkers and climbers – to put these activities, which are so important for their physical and mental wellbeing, on hold whilst travel is allowed for other purposes. We look forward to more positive news as we move into Phase 3, and hope walkers and climbers will continue to be safe and responsible over the coming weeks, until that time."

Guidance for hill walkers and climbers in Scotland during Phase 2 is available on the Mountaineering Scotland website: [www.mountaineering.scot/coronavirus](http://www.mountaineering.scot/coronavirus)

**Ends**

**Notes for editors:**

**Further information contact:**

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**About Mountaineering Scotland:**

- Mountaineering Scotland is the national representative organisation for hill walkers, climbers and ski-tourers in Scotland.
- Mountaineering Scotland provides training and information to mountain users to promote safety, self-reliance and the enjoyment of our mountain environment.
- The Mountaineering Scotland is a membership organisation with over 14,500 members and is 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 also runs the ClimbScotland initiative to encourage young people to participate in climbing and support their progression.
- Mountaineering Scotland is the national governing body for sport climbing. It offers pathways to climbing coaching, organises and promotes a range of regional and national climbing competitions, and manages the Scottish climbing and bouldering teams. It contributes to the management of the GB teams with the ultimate aim of seeing a Scottish athlete achieve a podium position in the Olympic Games.
- 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
- Website: [www.mountaineering.scot](http://www.mountaineering.scot)