

## **The Mountaineering Council of Scotland, Annual Report 2001/2002**

### **President's Overview - John Donohoe**

Out of the foot and mouth (FMD) crisis came some clear lessons: Some farmers and landowners would use any pretext to deny access unreasonably; some private owners were more open-minded and flexible than some of the landholding environmental agencies; the value of outdoor recreation to the Scottish economy dwarfs that of livestock farming; and mountaineers can and will behave responsibly. It also showed the danger that the Draft Access Bill represented and helped to galvanise a massive public response. The Scottish Executive has acknowledged this and removed the worst aspects in the Bill presented to the Scottish Parliament. It is still far from ideal and Mike Dales is still actively engaged in influencing the bill.

We also dealt with the proposals for National Parks for Loch Lomond and the Cairngorms, with the latter sadly watered down, at the behest of the same influences that brought the funicular railway to this precious, fragile landscape. It is not hard to see the reasons for the suspicion that Highlanders have for outside influences, but the mountains need to be cherished for all of us, whether our forebears managed to hang on by shore and glen, or were forced to the cities or furth of Scotland, immigrants and emigrants both. The Nevis Working Group shows what local people and national groups working together to common purpose can achieve.

Bob Sharp and Fran Potheary have carried out vital work on safety and training issues. Bob has indicated that he wishes to step down from the Vice President's role to concentrate on rescue activities, while Fran has left us to develop other interests. They will be a hard act to follow.

We are continuing to develop closer relations with the other Mountaineering Councils and the Training Boards with the setting up of an Access and Conservation Trust and the Mountain Services Limited Liability Partnership, as mentioned elsewhere in this report. Establishing structures that meet everyone's needs is difficult and time consuming, but I am sure there can be benefits for all. Our priority must be to free up our office administrator, Pet, and the other hard pressed Perth staff as well as improving services to members. I hope that we can celebrate the International Year of Mountains by working to develop benefits for mountaineers and mountains rather than managing crises.

In all of this the website has proved invaluable in keeping members informed, and much thanks is due to our webmaster, Duncan Gray, who works tirelessly to keep the site up to date; his efforts during the FMD crisis were heroic.

Thankfully, my term is up and I can now plan to get out on a hill occasionally. It has been a great privilege to work with the staff, the Executive Committee, and other volunteers whose hard work and commitment on behalf of Scottish mountains and mountaineers on committees, working parties, and local groups has been inspirational. I wish you all continuing success in the future. Sin e. Slan agus beannacht.

### **Honorary Secretary's Report - Nick Halls**

The Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer, National Officer (NO), Administrative Officer, and the Finance & Administration Sub-committee strive to improve the administration of the Council. Organisation of the office is now better, filing more effective, and internal communications improved. Creating a financial reserve remains difficult, and efforts are being made to securing additional funding.

Improving services to members remains a priority. Expansion of the website has greatly facilitated contact with members. The NO prepared four issues of *The Scottish Mountaineer* during the year and plans exist to increase the number of pages, enhance the quality and increase the number of issues.

The Council has developed its role as a responsible authority on all aspects of mountain access and conservation, as detailed elsewhere in this report. Lines of communication with the Scottish Executive and Parliament have been strengthened, thereby improving the Council's representative functions. The increased opportunities to represent the membership have prompted a reconsideration of the Council's manner of operation so as to improve democracy and accountability. Suggestions for change, made during an Executive 'brainstorming' meeting in December 2001, are being followed up.

The resignation of the Mountain Safety Advisor stimulated a review of the employment policy of the Council and attention is being paid to fair and equitable employment procedures.

### **Honorary Treasurer's Report - John Millar**

The unaudited Income and Expenditure account for the year ended 31 March 2002 shows a surplus of £1,617. Total income increased by £8,181, attributable mainly to the increase in individual members' affiliation fees. These have increased by 38.4% from last year, of which 6.5% relate to increase in fees, the remainder being from new members. Club affiliation fees showed a small increase of £341, reflecting a reduction in the number of member clubs.

Total expenditure increased by £6,059 with £4,543 relating to rent and insurance, reflecting the fact that the office rent was for a full year as against six months last year. Officers' expenses increased by £1,856 reflecting increased travel associated with establishing the Mountain Services Limited Partnership

Our contribution to the production and distribution of *The Scottish Mountaineer* amounted to £7,862, or approximately £1 per member, the remainder of the cost being met by advertising.

On behalf of the Council, I thank the trustees of Mill Cottage for their donation of £4,000 towards our safety and training activities. The Council acknowledges the generous grant aid from *sportscotland*, Scottish Natural Heritage, the Scottish Mountaineering Trust and Walking Wild as detailed in the accounts. Thanks are due also to the many individual members who made donations that increased by £699 compared to last year.

Personally, I would like to thank our full time employees, Kevin, Mike, Fran and Pet, the numerous volunteers who have assisted in the office, the members of the Finance & Administration Committee, and Alastair Sutherland CA for acting as Honorary Auditor.

### **National Officer's Review - Kevin Howett**

Apart from the day-to-day supervision of the MCoFS office, co-ordination of the voluntary committees and representation on UK forums, my work on sports development has included the following:

#### ***Information Service***

The most important form of communication to the membership and beyond has been *The Scottish Mountaineer*. With Pro-sports Promotions Ltd, who publish the magazine for us and who secure the all-important advertising revenue, we continue to increase its size and quality, and we are indebted to them for supporting us with this project. I also need to thank all those members who have freely contributed stories and photos to the magazine. These have allowed

us to expand the type of article that makes it very much your magazine and, I hope, allows it to become the definitive title for walking and climbing in Scotland. Please keep contributing.

The range of information sheets continues to grow, including this year, *A Visitors Guide to Winter Climbing in Scotland*, a series of three sheets describing health hazards in Scotland's hills, and a *Winter Climbing Code*.

I also advised the SMC Guidebook Committee on priorities and wording for access, conservation and safety information in the forthcoming new series of 'Rock and Ice' guides.

### ***Expeditions***

During the past year MCofS supported the following trips, which were all successful:

*SMC Greenland* (various SMC Members, headed by Colwyn M. Jones)

*Scottish Cordillera Blanca* (Jason Currie & Guy Robertson)

*Winter Lofoten* (Pete Benson & Guy Robertson)

*Ama Dablam* (Jules Cartwright & Rich Cross)

### ***Youth Development***

The British Regional Youth Competition Series did not take place last winter and is rescheduled for this autumn. MCofS supported a successful application by Toby Philp for grant funding from his local council for training, and by Sadie Renwick for a Sports Lottery Talented Athlete Award. We also supported an application by Dave Macleod, one of Scotland's leading young climbers, for a sports bursary award from Glasgow Sports Council and University, which allowed him to travel abroad for climbing experience. Toby competed in the Youth Final of the Festival of Climbing in Birmingham and was placed a good 15<sup>th</sup>.

The annual Climbfest competitions final was held at Inverness wall with prizes donated by MCofS. The Highlanders fared well with local Robert Mackenzie beating a strong field from the Southern Scotland Region to win the 10-12 year old category.

### ***Climbing Walls***

Building work on the National Centre at Ratho continues. Another exciting development has been the Ice Factory project at the old Alcan site at Kinlochleven. MCofS agreed to support it as a Regional Centre of Excellence, with the ice section being regarded as of national importance. Inverness Climb Caledonia continues to grow with user figures very high and the Kids Club being over-subscribed. We have also been involved in the design of a wall for Perth, due for completion sometime in 2003.

The Climbing Walls Policy has been updated and will be put to the AGM for approval.

### **The BMC Year - Dave Turnbull, Chief Officer**

2001 was a period of sustained growth for the BMC and there were several major developments and changes during the year.

The Council continued to focus on its core activities, particularly access and conservation, training, technical and international affairs. A new enterprise, Mountain Services Limited Liability Partnership (MSLLP), was established at the end of 2001 to look after membership services, insurance, publications and registrations, not only for BMC members but also in due course for the other home nation Mountaineering Councils and Training Boards. The BMC AGM resolved to set up "a new structure in Wales to represent climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers within a co-ordinated UK framework".

There have been a number of staff changes: Dave Turnbull, BMC Access & Conservation Officer since 1996, was appointed as the new BMC Chief Officer and Andy

MacNae was appointed Chief Executive of MSLLP. Roger Payne took up a new position as UIAA Director of Sport and Development at the end of 2001 after more than 12 years of dedicated service to the BMC.

Foot & Mouth Disease had a severe impact on BMC activities and members throughout 2001. In early March the International Meet, hosted by the BMC and the MCofS at Glenmore Lodge, was curtailed by the immediate land closures.

2001 also saw the establishment of an Access and Conservation Trust to raise money for worthy projects throughout the UK. This joint BMC/MCofS/MCofI venture received its first £3,000 donation from the Outdoor Industries Association and was officially launched at the Festival of Climbing by the Rt. Hon. Alun Michael MP, Minister of State for Rural Affairs.

The National Mountaineering Exhibition based at Rheged, Cumbria, was formally opened in July 2001 by the Prime Minister. At the three day Festival of Climbing at the NIA, Birmingham, an audience of 6,000 people enjoyed a mix of competition climbing, lectures, workshops and a well attended voluntary leader conference.

## **ACCESS AND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**

### **Overview - Mike Dales, Access & Conservation Officer**

This report highlights the more significant issues dealt with over the past 12 months.

#### *Access*

The main issue during the past year has been the drafting of new legislation for access to the Scottish countryside. The MCofS has been at the centre of this process and has worked with other organisations in Scottish Environment LINK, Scottish Countryside Access Network and the Scottish Sports Association to achieve fair and workable laws. After the publication of the draft Land Reform Bill in February 2001, the MCofS organised a series of roadshows in June to inform mountaineers of the threat posed by this version of the Bill. The draft Bill was so widely condemned that it managed to generate an unprecedented 3,587 responses to the Scottish Executive, of which about 85% were in favour of greater access.

Since then Mike Dales and John Donohoe have met with various MSP's, including Deputy First Minister Jim Wallace. In addition, we have met with members of every political party in the Scottish Parliament, and conveyed the views and fears that are being felt by mountaineers. Our Access Symposium in November helped us to gather grassroots views, as well as providing an opportunity to report to the membership.

The Land Reform Bill (As Introduced) was published in late November and, to the relief of many hillgoers, without the draconian clauses about criminalisation and land closures that had been in the earlier draft. Since then we have twice submitted written evidence giving our views on this Bill to the relevant Scottish Parliamentary Committees, and backed this up with numerous meetings with MSP's. We are now working with partner organisations to prepare suggested amendments to the Bill as it progresses through the next stage of the Parliamentary process.

The summer of 2001 saw the MCofS involved in dealing with the access problems thrown up by the FMD crisis. John Donohoe represented the MCofS on the 'Comeback Code' group.

The Hillphones scheme, which the MCofS operates in conjunction with SNH and the participating estates, expanded to cover 12 areas in the 2001 stag stalking season.

### ***Planning Issues***

The MCoFS campaign against the proliferation of telecommunications masts had some success in 2001, when their permitted development rights status was removed in July. Masts have now been brought fully within the planning system.

We are building relations and co-operating much more closely with Forest Enterprise. In particular, we are presently working with them on access issues relating to Ben Venue, Ben Ledi and proposed developments at nearby Stank Glen.

### ***Consultations***

During the last year we responded to the following consultation exercises.

1. Draft Land Reform Bill
2. Land Reform Bill (As Introduced) – 2 submissions
3. Nevis Strategy
4. Law of the Foreshore and Seabed in Scotland
5. Natural Heritage Zones
6. Cairngorms National Park
7. Strathyre Holiday Cabin Proposals
8. Permitted Development Rights
9. Stirling Biodiversity Action Plan

In addition, the committee is currently working on a response to the Wester Ross National Scenic Area Management Strategy.

### **The Nevis Working Group - John Donohoe**

Kevin Howett and John Donohoe attended meetings of this committee of local and national groups involved in the future of Ben and Glen Nevis. A wide ranging strategy for the future management of the area was agreed by all and launched by Rhona Brankin, Deputy Minister for Environment and Rural development in November. A charitable partnership has been established and the Council has accepted an invitation to join.

### **British Upland Footpath Trust - Nick Halls, MCoFS Trustee**

BUFT Trustees were heavily involved in consultation on access legislation and National Parks. Support from the outdoor trades sector was undermined by the FMD outbreak and a decline in tourism. Dave Turnbull, who had taken over responsibility for BUFT affairs, subsequently became Chief Officer of the BMC. Unfortunately, therefore, BUFT affairs have not received the attention they deserve.

Margaret Thomas endeavoured to attract funding from the UK heritage agencies to support the Upland Path Information Service, (UPIN). However, despite the support of Bob Grant of SNH, other heritage agencies did not agree UPIN to be the best means of maintaining a UK network of information on upland pathwork issues.

SNH created a Scottish Upland Path Advisory Group. Mike Newbury, Mike Dales and Nick Halls attended meetings to maintain the profile of upland path as attention and funding is currently being focused on lowland path networks around towns. Mike Newbury and Mike Dales serve on the Access Strategy sub-group, where the interests of the Council's members can best be served.

In Argyll and the Highlands, hill paths are recognised as parts of the national path network and recreational infrastructure. The importance of hill paths is being increasingly recognised as the new interim national park authorities begin to grapple with recreational management and developing the rural economy.

## **SAFETY & TRAINING**

### **Overview - Bob Sharp**

Since taking over as Chair of this committee I have been impressed with the level of commitment shown by members and the extraordinary amount of work undertaken by the Mountain Safety Advisor (MSA), Fran Pothecary. Over the period up to Christmas, Fran was involved in numerous projects including the water hazards video, navigation courses, safety weekends for students, 'Boots' mountain awareness day and talks/seminars. She left in December having served both the MCofS and Scottish Mountain Safety Forum (SMSF) on safety and related matters for over three years. She continues to work part time with Kate Ross to complete the water hazards video. At the time of writing, the remit of the MSA is being revised, along with the overall time commitment (an increase from 0.5 to 0.7 FTE). The Scottish Executive is very impressed with the volume of work undertaken with so few resources. This lays a good foundation for proposing an increase in funds to undertake the work that has to be done. My own research on mountain safety over the past 12 months shows there is much to do to reduce the number of avoidable accidents in the Scottish mountains, and a need to consider how safety messages can be better targeted. A key task of the new MSA will be to examine ways to cascade information, advice and good practice so that many more people benefit; more time needs to be invested in strategies and resources that help the majority. The Advisor must also assume a high profile and actively promote MCofS safety policies within the mountaineering fraternity in Scotland and the UK.

Finally, I am led to the conclusion that the separate roles of the SMSF and the Safety & Training Committee need to be re-examined. The degree of overlap between these two bodies, coupled with the increasing pressure placed on all volunteers, suggests there may be some logic in combining the two. I hope this is a matter that the new Advisor will address, in consultation with others.

### **Scottish Mountain Leader Training Board - Andy Cloquet**

Your representatives on the Board, Kate Ross, Nick Halls and myself, have contributed to the continuing promotion of the UKMTB's 'Walking Group Leaders Award' that was launched late last year.

We have also been involved in decisions over the new UK trading company (MSLLP), which will centralise commercial business on behalf of the home nation boards and mountaineering councils.

The board has put in place an updated forward plan and will be presenting a workshop and seminar for single pitch award trainers and assessors.

### **United Kingdom Mountain Training Board - Kate Ross**

This year our secretary, John Cousins, became a full-time employee of the board. We also appointed a part-time administrative assistant, Sue Doyle. During the year the board became a limited company and acquired charitable status. We have commissioned books to support the training schemes and the first one, on summer hill walking, should be available later in this year.

### **Scottish Mountain Safety Forum - Kate Ross**

The past year has been very busy with the production of a safety video, *Water Hazards in the Mountains*. This shows the danger of rising water levels, planning and advice on how to avoid problems, and methods of crossing when it is unavoidable. The video was launched by HRH Prince Andrew in Inverness on 30 April and will be for sale at cost from MCofS.

## **HUTS**

### **Huts Working Group - John Leftley**

The group continues to maintain a watching brief on all aspects of hut management, such as health and safety regulations, and on environmental issues. Information is distributed to all Scottish hut custodians via an occasional newsletter. Negotiations with the BMC regarding the establishment of a formal trust agreement for the MacIntyre Hut, which have been ongoing for several years, may soon be brought to a satisfactory conclusion. HWG continues to work closely with the BMC's Huts Co-ordination Advisory Panel (HCAP).

### **Alex MacIntyre Memorial Hut - Tom Webster**

Because of the outbreak of FMD, the hut was closed from 4 to 19 March 01 but the total annual income was only slightly down.

Current maintenance projects include lining the walls of the WC area to reduce condensation and a complete modernisation of the kitchen. The hut closed at the beginning of May to allow the work to be carried out.

The bookings secretary, Brent Eggo, who has done the job for 17 years, has resigned. His successor is Arthur Howarth, one of the panel of voluntary wardens.

### **Glenbrittle War Memorial Hut - Tom Webster**

The main use continues to be in spring and summer and April and May were fully booked. Because of FMD, bookings were cancelled with a consequent loss of over £2,000.

To comply with fire safety regulations, the original celotex ceilings and walls are to be replaced with plasterboard. Wiring will be checked and some sound-proofing installed. The cost is estimated at £20,000 and the work will be carried out in August 2002, when the hut will close. The hut fees will be raised in order to recoup the cost.

### **Mill Cottage - Vaughan Hammond**

Despite FMD occupancy was 1,300 bed nights, comparable to previous years. The trustees were able to make a grant award of £4,000 for mountain safety and training work by the MCoFS.

A large stone built barbecue was constructed and plans for a memorial to Bill Bell were further developed and this will be sited centrally to the front of the building.

## The Mountaineering Council of Scotland

### Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 31 March 2002

<u>2001</u>		<u>2002</u>
£		£
	<b>INCOME</b>	
39,002	Affiliation Fees    Clubs	39,343
21,092	Individual Members	29,191
620	Associates	775
1,938	Donations	2,637
1,403	Interest (net)	675
10,000	Grants <i>sportscotland</i>	10,000
15,048	Scottish Mountaineering Trust	11,700
12,484	Scottish Natural Heritage	14,154
6,145	Sales	6,289
(4,956)	LESS Cost of Sales	(5,224)
397	First Aid Course	1,317
656	Rents	889
0	Royalties	319
274	Miscellaneous	119
<u>104,103</u>		<u>112,184</u>
	<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
2,000	Expedition Awards ( <i>sportscotland</i> grant)	2,000
3,719	Officers' Expenses	5,575
2,591	Committee Expenses	2,261
2,345	Telephone	2,833
3,345	Postage	3,444
7,314	<i>The Scottish Mountaineer</i>	7,862
2,496	Printing, Stationery and Computer Expenses	2,973
2,892	Annual General Meeting Expenses	3,120
635	Heat and Light	(133)
60,495	Officers' Salaries, Pensions and Employer's NIC	60,036
150	Mountain Essay Competition	304
1,142	Subscriptions	1,101
4,444	Rent and Insurance	8,987
8,800	Civil Liability Insurance	8,265
3,559	Copier Costs	4,080
2,581	Office Expenses	951
0	Huts Directory including postage	2,342
0	LESS Advertisement Income	<u>1,434</u>
<u>108,508</u>		<u>114,567</u>
(4,405)		(2,383)
<u>4,000</u>	Mill Cottage Trustees' Donation for Safety & Training	<u>4,000</u>
(405)		1,617

## The Mountaineering Council of Scotland

### Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2002

<u>2001</u>		<u>2002</u>
£		£
	<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>	
42,747	Bank	45,394
2,039	Stock	3,839
<u>3,671</u>	Prepaid Charges	<u>2,056</u>
<u>48,457</u>		<u>51,289</u>
	<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	
4,774	Accrued Charges	9,707
<u>6,700</u>	Grants in Advance	<u>2,000</u>
<u>11,474</u>		<u>11,707</u>
<u>36,983</u>		<u>39,582</u>
	<b>CAPITAL &amp; FUNDS</b>	
	<u>General Fund</u>	
8,388	Balance at 1 April 2001	7,983
<u>(405)</u>	Excess of Income over Expenditure for Year	<u>1,617</u>
<u>7,983</u>		<u>9,600</u>
	<u>Henry Hindmarsh Access and Conservation Fund</u>	
6,715	Balance at 1 April 2001	5,295
<u>260</u>	Donations	<u>200</u>
6,975		5,495
<u>1,680</u>	Expenditure (International Year of the Mountain)	<u>809</u>
<u>5,295</u>		<u>4,686</u>
	<u>Legacy</u>	
<u>13,274</u>	James Hewitt Bequest	<u>13,274</u>
	<u>Mountain Safety Budget</u>	
3,681	Balance b/f at 1 April 2001	0
6,750	Reserve for Water Hazards Video at 1 April 2002	10,431
<u>0</u>	Surplus for Year	<u>1,591</u>
<u>10,431</u>		<u>12,022</u>
<u>36,983</u>		<u>39,582</u>

## Mountain Safety Budget

### Income and Expenditure Account for Year Ended 31 March 2002

	£	£	£
<b>INCOME</b>			
<i>sportscotland</i> grant			<u>22,000</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Mountain Safety Advisor - Salaries & Employer's NIC (includes £2,400 to NO for Deputising January-March)			9,654
--- Superannuation			449
--- Expenses			<u>1,841</u>
			11,944
Committee Expenses			839
Clerical Assistance			2,000
Purchase of Computer			1,140
<u>Navigation Course</u>			
Fees income		1,800	
Expenses			
--- Printing Costs	336		
--- Hall Rent	79		
--- Tutors' Fees and Expenses	1,097		
--- Maps	<u>241</u>	<u>1,753</u>	(47)
Avalanche Course			682
<u>Winter Safety</u>			
Income		510	
Expenses			
--- Posters	145		
Fees and Expenses	1,406		
Venue Expenses	<u>235</u>	<u>1,786</u>	1,276
<u>Administration</u>			
Additional support			518
Copier			260
Telephone			320
Postage			412
Rent			850
Staff recruitment			<u>176</u>
			<u>20,370</u>
			1,630
<u>Water Hazards Video</u>			
<i>sportscotland</i> grant			9,000
UKMTB			2,000
Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme			<u>667</u>
			11,667
Filming Fees		10,583	
Expenses		<u>1,123</u>	<u>11,706</u>
			<u>(39)</u>
Surplus for Year			1,591

## The Mill Cottage Trust

### Income and Expenditure Account for Year Ended 31 March 2002

<u>2001</u>		<u>2002</u>
£	INCOME	£
5,547	Booking Fees	7,603
<u>115</u>	Interest	<u>92</u>
<u>5,662</u>		<u>7,695</u>
	EXPENDITURE	
864	Repairs	1,527
974	Heat and Light	899
600	Honoraria	625
191	Insurance	218
4,000	Donation to MCoS Safety and Training	4,000
<u>254</u>	Postage and Advertising	<u>0</u>
<u>6,883</u>		<u>7,269</u>
<u>(1,221)</u>	Excess of Income over Expenditure for Year	<u>426</u>
	Shown as:	
6,028	Opening Balance	4,807
<u>(1,221)</u>	Surplus for Year	<u>426</u>
<u>4,807</u>	Closing Bank Balance	<u>5,233</u>