



The Mountaineering Council Of Scotland Annual Report 2006 - 2007

President's Overview - John Mackenzie

The past twelve months will definitely go down as a year of great change for the MCofS. With our newly-appointed Senior Officer acting as a new broom, figuratively speaking, our secretariat has been revamped with some new staff appointed and the adoption of more efficient working practices to assist both members and staff alike. Perhaps most significantly, all this has led to better liaison with clubs and individual members.

Since the AGM in 2006, a huge amount of work has gone into redrafting the 'Mem and Arts' to the effect that the Special General Meeting in February passed the resolution that the Council should proceed to incorporation. The effect of this will be that, as a limited company, we are less liable for individual prosecution, which is a big plus for the Office Bearers and also enhances the likelihood of attracting grant aid in future. None of this would have been possible without the herculean toil of Office Bearers, Executive members and certain club members who took the time and trouble to

get it all right. I would like to thank in particular Mary Webster for co-ordinating it all, Richard Shirreffs and Alan Grosset, who fine-tuned it all from a legal perspective, and David Gibson who made sure that the proverbial rabbit was pulled out of the right hat. Thanks are due, too, to all those who sent in letters and e-mails with constructive comments.

My term of office is almost up. It's been quite a bumpy ride at times and hugely fun at others. I certainly wish the President-elect, Chris Townsend, the best of luck and if he has the constructive and supportive help that I have enjoyed then he'll have few problems. Chris is a well-known and highly respected figure who will make an admirable President.

I think the MCofS is lucky to have such a dedicated staff and equally lucky to have the calibre of volunteer that enlist to the Executive or are co-opted onto the committees. However much we change on the surface our basic ethos remains the same - a democratically elected organisation

that strives to do what its members want.

Perhaps the most obvious of our endeavours is access and its corollary, conservation. The threats, both perceived and real, are more testing than they were a decade ago. Access per se is, despite pockets of resistance, now accepted. However, the challenges of poorly sited wind farms and proposed mega-pylons are very much on the agenda and will require a united front of our members and those of similar organisations to stand up and be counted. Interesting years lie ahead when we will either see more sensitive planning controls or a despoliation of considerable parts of our countryside. This is not a time to be sitting back, hoping someone else will do the work for us, but to be pro-active and lobby both the politicians and the planning departments. The MCofS has a sound position statement on renewables that is not against well-sited wind farms or other types of renewable energy, but is against hugely invasive wind factories that are totally antipathetic to the small scale of the

Highlands or upland scenery. It's all a matter of scale and genuine need as compared to what could be seen as the unacceptable face of capitalism.

The other major challenge continues to be the safety and training aspects of mountaineering, tragically brought into focus this winter. Our courses and training, so admirably run by Roger Wild, are second-to-none but the need for all would-be winter mountaineers to have the basic 'passport' of navigational and ice axe skills and safe use of crampons never lessens despite intermittent winters. Winter climbing is an apprenticeship and is not an instant skill and I hope that our courses continue to attract those most in need, particularly, but not exclusively, the young and the young at heart.

So, there we are. It has been a privilege to be the President and I hope to continue in the background as part of the A&C committee. Thanks again for all your support, friendship and tolerance over the last four years.

Honorary Secretary's Final Report - Nick Halls

It has been a busy year, during which much has come to fruition. The Executive continued to implement recommendations arising from *sportscotlands* 'Modern Sport Audit' (2004) and the subsequent consultant's report 'Structural Review and Office Functions' (2005).

The first draft of the Memorandum and Articles of Association (M&A) presented at the 2006 AGM was rejected. Clubs asked for further opportunities to consult on the detail of the M&A and a working party (WP) was appointed to undertake the task of revision.

Meetings with clubs to consult on the M&A were held in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Perth during November, and were well attended. The feedback was taken on board by the WP. At a Special General Meeting on 17th February 2007 the M&A were finally approved, with some amendments, but it became evident that reservations still remain about democratic control and voting and also openness and accountability within the new company. These concerns will be addressed.

During 2006 there was a major overhaul of the administrative structure. David Gibson, a former member of the Executive, was appointed in July to the post of Senior Officer (SO) with a remit to take responsibility for the administration, and to

work with the new Membership Services Committee both in raising the profile of the MCofS and improving communications with the membership. The post of National Officer became redundant and Kevin Howett moved to the job of Development Officer for our sport.

Two part-time appointments were made: Denise Logan, a qualified accountant, as book keeper and Jane Anderson as membership administrator. Ade Robinson remains in post, undertaking reception and admin tasks. Pet Thomas, who had served the MCofS as administrative assistant with great dedication for six years, decided to move on. I would like to pay special tribute to Pet for her work on behalf of the MCofS, which would not be where it is today without her contribution.

In order to improve coherency and reinforce accountability, it was decided to restructure committees supporting the Executive. The reports of the various committees, old and new, can be found below.

The Finance & Administration Committee was stood down, with various functions being transferred to the new Membership Service Committee and its former administrative responsibilities being assumed by the SO.

All committees report to the full Executive through the minutes of meetings, and the SO reports directly to the Executive on administrative matters. The new structure requires four Vice Presidents each to chair a committee, in accordance with the Articles of Association. The Office Bearers and Executive remain responsible for developing policy and practice, and employees are responsible for ensuring execution and delivery, with the assistance of volunteers. All Office Bearers and employees report to the Executive, and employees are accountable to an Office Bearer. On incorporation Office Bearers will become Directors and continue to be responsible for committees and discrete areas of work.

Work on the new MCofS website is well advanced and it will provide 'one door' access to all information relating to Scottish mountaineering. I would like to pay tribute to Duncan Gray, who developed our original website on an entirely voluntary basis from its inception. He recently retired from his 'day job' and I hope he will continue to assist the MCofS.

When the MCofS begins operation as a company, the office of Honorary Secretary will be extinguished, with the responsibilities being taken on by the Company Secretary and other Directors,

with the day-to-day communications directed to the Senior Officer.

I would like to thank all the people who have contributed to the work of the MCofS during my period as Hon. Secretary. They are far too numerous for me to identify individually, but to each and every one of them I owe a debt of gratitude, for keeping me informed, taking on work that should have been mine, holding the fort during my extended absences and making good my inadequacies. I would, however, especially like to pay tribute to Kevin Howett who has supported me throughout my tenure with information and wise counsel and whose unflagging commitment to the MCofS is worthy of great respect.

Only by holding office for such a long period can one gain an understanding of the range of work undertaken and its ramifications. It is hardly surprising that members have little idea of all the MCofS tries to do on their behalf and that a host of volunteers and their thousands of hours of unpaid work support the tiny staff of seven people. I have been continually amazed by the commitment, professional approach and quality of work of volunteers and employees alike, and I can say with confidence that the membership is being very well served.

Senior Officer's Report - David Gibson



It is nine months since I joined the MCoFS as an employee. Time goes quickly and the first priority was to ensure that the secretariat functioned effectively and that we were able to respond promptly to enquiries from members. This has been achieved by a combination of the positive attitude and professionalism of our part-time staff, and technology - a new telephone system and networked PCs.

Most communication with the office is by e-mail. We receive over 1,500 e-mails a month and we aim to respond to these efficiently. We also use e-mail on an *ad hoc* basis to communicate with club secretaries when news and events make it worthwhile. We are aware of the benefits that e-mail communication with individual members may bring, and the planned introduction of a new membership database during 2007 is a step towards implementation.

The June AGM will see significant changes to the new Board and the Executive, with various Office Bearers standing down and a number of vacancies on the Executive due to retirements. The post of Honorary Secretary is no more and it is difficult to envisage the MCoFS without Nick Halls having a position of influence. I know I speak for many members when expressing the hope that Nick will continue in some such capacity in future.

And so to the future. One thing is certain - looking forward must not mean that we lose sight of what has gone before. The MCoFS is unique. It has developed because it has delivered on behalf of its members - by representing their interests and providing tangible benefits. Traditions and culture are essential to

a membership organisation and, therefore, any future strategy has to build on our core values. With nearly 10,000 members, the Council speaks for those who go to the hills, or who wish to support the work of the Council's volunteers and staff through their membership.

The work of the Council is complex. A glance at *The Scottish Mountaineer* demonstrates the variety of activities in which the MCoFS is involved. The magazine presents those activities logically, as well as providing an entertaining and interesting medium for members and non-members alike.

The MCoFS reaches a wider audience than its members. We have an extremely popular website, developed over many years and now with over 1,000 pages of information. The website receives more than 15,000 visits each month. While we are busy developing and 'populating' a new website at the moment, the existing site will be retained as an archive for the foreseeable future.

Our members often have differing aims. For example, we aim to conserve the landscape yet, at the same time, we wish to enjoy it. The conclusion of the debate over incorporation showed that we may have differences of opinion, but they will be heard, taken into consideration and where agreed by the majority of members, implemented through the democratic process. Always remember that the MCoFS is a democracy - it's your Council, and you can make your views known: in the magazine, on the website, at meetings, direct to our volunteer Office Bearers or to our staff. Or by volunteering.

Membership Services - Brenda Clough

As a result of revision of the structure of MCoFS in anticipation of incorporation a new committee was formed to handle membership services and I was appointed to the chair. I am assisted in my new role by a number of excellent members and volunteers who are as enthusiastic as I am to improve our services both to members and the wider community of mountaineers. We have met only twice since September so we are still finding our feet but are ably supported by David Gibson and Kevin Howett.

The remit of the new committee is still to be fully agreed, but essentially it is responsible for providing services to members, promotion, publicity, fund raising, communications and participation. It receives reports from the Huts Working Group, approves applications for membership from clubs and also oversees the development of the new website and the new membership database.

Although the incorporation of the organisation has involved much soul searching and debate, one of the positive aspects has been the realisation that, as an organisation, we do not communicate with and listen sufficiently to our members as regards what they want. The open meetings with

clubs and individual members held over the autumn made that very clear, so one of my intentions in chairing the new committee is to improve communication and, over the next year, to undertake further research to find out what you want from us as your representative organisation.

In the same way that we need to reflect the views and requirements of our members we are equally aware that there are many more mountaineers, hill walkers, climbers and ski mountaineers out there who are not members but support our aims, and one of our objectives is to persuade them to join us.

One of the important ways we communicate with both members and non-members is through *The Scottish Mountaineer*, but this does not increase our wider media profile and we have begun this year to put together an improved communications strategy, which will ensure that we always have someone available to comment on issues that affect mountaineers.

Funding is essential for any organisation and one of the important roles of the new committee is to identify ways of raising money to support our aims and services whether through grant aid, sponsorship, donations or legacies.

Honorary Treasurer's Report - Derek Edge

We are presenting the unaudited Income and Expenditure Account for the eleven months ending 28 February 2007. Due to staff and volunteer holidays we were unable to finish the year-end accounts in time for the magazine deadline. The accounts for the full year will be available on the website prior to the AGM. For those with no access to the website please contact the office for a copy.

The total income is £192,600 for the eleven months, roughly in line with the previous year, with a fall in grants offset by an increase in membership fees.

The total expenditure for the year is also roughly in line with the previous year. An unfilled A&C officer post for most of the year led to a fall in staff salaries, offset by an increase in consultancy fees following the appointment of the Senior Officer and also other professional fees.

The Council gratefully acknowledges the grants received during the year from *sportsScotland* for the mountain safety budget and general admin support, and Scottish Natural Heritage and the Scottish Mountaineering Trust for funding access and conservation work. In addition, we acknowledge the generous offer made by the British Mountaineering Council of a grant of £k 20, spread over the next two years, to support the work of the A&C committee and its officer. We also acknowledge the donation from the Mill Cottage Trust towards mountain safety, and also other donations from members.

The surplus for the past two years will be utilised as we expect to finalise two major IT projects in the coming year, i.e. the re-development of the website and the UKIT database project. We also now have a full time A&C Officer and a Senior Officer.

I would like to thank all the office staff for their help during the past year.

Huts Working Group - John Leftley

The working group continues to maintain a general overview of issues related to hut management and to liaise closely with the BMC Huts Group. The fifth MCoFS mountain huts seminar was held in November 2006 and the major topic was fire safety. Detailed reports on the three national huts will be presented in a future edition of the magazine.



Sports Development - Kevin Howett

This year has been a very successful one for Scottish climbing and has seen our strategies and the implementation of policies come to fruition in a number of areas: the opening of significant new walls; excellent national and international results achieved in competitions; greater involvement of the MCofS in the administration of the youth competition in Scotland, so raising our profile with Scottish children; greater involvement within the British team, with one of our area youth co-ordinators acting as Team Scotland coach; a very successful (in qualitative terms) REALrock series.

We have now started to develop a new strategy for sports development outlining player pathways and aiming for a more joined-up process in the way we tackle development. This coincides with *sportscotland* issuing its

'Reaching Higher' strategy, developing its previous 'Sport21' strategy, a Commonwealth & Olympic Games funding consultation and its potential impacts on our sports funding, and possible changes to child protection legislation being taken forward by 'Children 1st', all of which we have been involved in, whilst Nick Halls attends the Scottish Executive's Cross Party Sports Group meetings.

With a good network of indoor facilities now available, the future of the 'National Centre' at Ratho now secure, a development strategy being produced, an increase in the number of schools engaging in outdoor activities through the 'Active Schools' programme, and changes to government priorities, all this requires MCofS to take a lead role in the future.

Development Reports - Kevin Howett

As a result of staff restructuring, my post changed part way through the year. My time is now split between editing *The Scottish Mountaineer*, member services and sports development. In the past year I attended on behalf of MCofS 'Children 1st' and *sportscotland* seminars on child protection to help finalise our own policy, as well as an 'Active Schools Network' seminar and a conference on Scottish sports development, where I presented a 'Tartan Triumphs' session about climbing development.

Climbing Walls

I represented the committee in the development of various projects during the year: Aberdeen Transition Extreme Wall (opening April 2007), Aviemore Extreme Dream (opened July 2006), Gairloch High School wall (a new wall to replace an ancient one), Stirling Forthbank Sports Village (a small wall project), Clydebank Sports Centre (a small wall project that's tall!) and Perth YMCA (an ongoing project that has recently been rejuvenated).

At Ratho, Susan Jensen has represented MCofS on the Liaison Group, whilst I have given advice about the new bouldering facility and gained agreement for support for the BRYCS Teams.

Coaching in Climbing

After a year of debate the Mountaineering Co-ordination Group agreed to set up a 'National Source Group' to investigate coaching in our sport. With representation from MCofS, BMC, MCoF, and the Mountain Leader Training Boards, along with experts from various fields giving advice including Dave Binny and Dave MacLeod, this group will meet throughout 2007 and report in 2008.

Expedition Grants

sportscotland, which funds these awards, recently indicated that grants may be given for 'sports development' in any context that MCofS feels appropriate. The committee decided to broaden the range of trips it supports and so for the first time supported a 'semi-led' trip by a school group (Glasgow Academy). Other subsidised trips were 'Alpine' rock in the Miya Nala region of Himachal Pradesh and the Scottish Lobuje expedition.

International Event

The BMC/MCS International Winter Meet was again held at Glenmore Lodge in February, attended by 40+ climbers from around the world and hosted by a similar number of British climbers.

Youth Development

REALrock (an introduction to climbing outdoors for those competent indoors) was again held across Scotland, filling a particular gap in the progression of young climbers' experience. Particular thanks have to go to a dedicated range of volunteers who held the sessions for us including Steve Bate, Fred Belcher, Martin McCallum, John McDonald, Neil McGeachy (AYC), Ruairidh MacKenzie (AYC), Andy Munro, John Orr, Davy Virdee and Gary Wardrope.

For the period of this report only half of the BRYCS event (indoor competitions) has been completed; round three and the final (at Ratho) are still to come. The closure of Ratho over the past year left a distinct gap in youth development in the central belt. Consequently, the numbers competing in the BRYCS for Scotland South were lower than expected. We did, however, hold round two at the McLaren Leisure Centre in Callander for the first time, which created some extra local interest. Our thanks go to the staff there for all their help and support in hosting the competition. In contrast, Scotland North entries were the highest ever at nearly 60, due in no small part to the endeavours of Ruairidh MacKenzie at Inverness and to the opening of the new Aviemore wall and the exceptional support and coaching from Scott Muir.

The British team trials were held in Leeds by the BMC and the young Scots climbers selected were: Natalie Berry, Pete Johnston and Robert Mackenzie (full team members); Ross Kirkland and Jonathan Stocking (aspirant team members). Ruairidh MacKenzie (our area youth co-ordinator) also took on the role of 'Scotland Team Training co-ordinator'.

International results for youth climbers bettered last year's with Natalie Berry gaining a podium 3rd place in the European Championships, 4th in the World Youth Championships and Robert MacKenzie gained 16th place at the WYC.

Visually Impaired Course

This year's course at Glenmore Lodge was administered by volunteer Norma Davidson and supported by the Scottish Mountaineering Trust. It was featured on the BBCI 'Landward' programme.



Access and Conservation - Beryl Leatherland

The highlight of our year was the appointment of Hebe Carus to the post of A&C Officer after 14 months without an officer in place. Committee members had previously rallied round to deliver our work programme, so Hebe's arrival was very welcome. We have secured funding for the post for two years, but need to acquire further funds to ensure continuing employment thereafter. A&C operates entirely on external grants and to date no subscription income has been used in funding the work of the committee or our officer.

Access

The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code (SOAC) may well be in place but there are still many instances of unsatisfactory situations. We have helped members to resolve cases involving infringements of the legislation by supporting their approaches to local authority access officers, although there is perhaps a lack of enthusiasm on the part of local authorities to become involved in enforcement issues. MCofS members are encouraged to complete the online review forms produced by Eleanor MacGregor of SNH who is monitoring the implementation of the Act and Code. Some of the committee have become members of their Local Access Forum (LAF) and we continue to view recruitment to LAFs as a priority.

The Hillphones scheme is well used and Dougal Roy

reports that it will continue, possibly in a slightly different form, in the stag stalking season in 2007. Dougal also represents us on the Angus Glens and Forest Edge groups and is currently participating in discussions with partner organisations to progress our long-term aim of developing a web-based access database, but funding continues to be a major hurdle.

Access to hills that involves crossing railway lines was addressed formally at a recent National Access Forum (NAF) meeting with Network Rail at which Hebe represented the MCofS. The definition of wild camping in the SOAC is causing local problems to such an extent that the NAF set up a separate sub-group to address this and I am a member. The MCofS guidance leaflet on wild camping has been used by all parties as a reference point for good practice.

Without an officer, and with insufficient volunteer time, we were unable to run our own access symposium this year, but I contributed a workshop at the annual LAF symposium organised by the Ramblers and Sustrans and it was gratifying to see many of our members there. Later this year, Hebe will contribute to this event.

We were invited by the Forestry Commission Scotland to participate in scoping exercises and discussions concerning reforestation and alignment of paths to enable good access to hills in some areas of Scotland. Mike Newbury and Dougal Roy undertook site visits, which resulted in significant improvements in Glenn a'Cholais (South Ballachulish) and agreements on the lines to paths to Grey Heights and the NE ridge of Ben More (Crianlarich).

Conservation

The most significant event has been the public enquiry on the proposed Beauldy-Denny transmission line. The MCofS is represented by Chris Townsend in the B-D Landscape Group, along with partners from the John Muir Trust, the Scottish Wild Land Group, the NTS, the Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland and the Ramblers Association. At the time of writing the inquiry is progressing steadily and the case against the line appears strong, but there is a long way to go yet. The final outcome will depend absolutely on the judgement of the Reporter. The Landscape Group has acquired the services of a committed solicitor on an expenses-only basis and we have appealed with some success for donations to fund the efforts of the group, but still more funds are needed.

The MCofS is a member of the Perthshire Alliance for the Real Cairngorms (PARC) and this year supported John Swinney's bill to have the Perthshire hills in the Atholl area and upper Glen Shee included in the Cairngorms National Park. I prepared our evidence and was a witness at the Environment and Rural Development Committee. Unfortunately, despite our efforts and that of other

environmental groups, the bill was narrowly defeated by 5 votes to 4 at the committee stage. This issue will inevitably be revisited at the quinquennial review of the National Park around September 2008.

The Henry Hindmarch Access and Conservation Trust contributed to funding representation on Skye windfarms and the Beauldy-Denny inquiries and is consequently much depleted. If you are able to make a donation, please do so!

We have contributed to various consultations originating from the Scottish Executive and others. Most of our responses are put on the website. Occasionally the MCofS is a named consultee and in these cases we always respond; in other cases we feel it is inappropriate to respond as the issue is not relevant to our work or member interests. In other instances we are involved in responses prepared by LINK partners. It is our intention to widen our activities and influence in these areas by engaging the membership more widely and actively.

The consultations we have responded to over the year include the Western Isles Interconnector draft proposals, Snaring in Scotland, SPP6 Draft Document (via

LINK), Enjoying the Outdoors (via LINK), Scotland's Futures, Loch Katrine woodlands paths scoping study, review of Permanent Development Orders, Glenfinglas road construction, draft Guidance for Core Path Plan Local Inquiry, and we have objected to the Muailheabhail and Lochluichart windfarm proposals.

The A&C Committee has become the MCofS's largest, mostly through co-option. We always have a need, however, for additional local contacts throughout Scotland and even more volunteers would be welcome. Special mention must be made of a Carolyn Anyan who, along with Mike Newbury, has been diligently archiving and filing for us and the office in general.

Finally, after four years as a Vice President and chairing the A&C Committee, I will stand down at the forthcoming AGM. I feel very privileged to have worked with the committee over the years and thank them all for their support, tenacity and sheer hard work. I shall continue in a co-opted capacity to support the work of both the committee and Hebe and contribute via participation with LINK and representation on the NTS Council.

Upland Path Trust - Nick Halls, trustee

The Upland Footpath Trust (UPT) is a charity co-founded by the MCofS, BMC, Ramblers Association and the Outdoor Industries Association. The original title of British Upland Footpath Trust was changed to UPT in 2005.

The founding principles of UPT are being reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the current circumstances, particularly the emergence of coastal paths, long distance paths, off-road cycling and also the outcome of legislation. The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, which extends access rights to cyclists and horse riders, and the Disability Discrimination Act 2006 both encourage more heavily engineered and intrusive path work. Focus on the core path network in Scotland, mostly involving lowland paths, is also encouraging path building techniques that are antithetical to UPT principles if applied in upland areas.

Nick Halls, Mike Newbury and Hebe Carus attended a meeting of the Upland Path Advisory Group (UPAG) which, under the *aegis* of SNH, brings together all organisations concerned with upland paths in Scotland. Concern was reiterated about lack of path maintenance and the continuation of dependence on over-engineered, expensive capital works designed to last without maintenance, which are often intrusive and out of keeping with the landscape. UPAG continues to recommend dedicated revenue budgets to fund ongoing maintenance and pre-emptive action to reduce the need for expensive capital works to restore avoidable landscape scars.

It remains imperative for the MCofS to remain engaged with path work issues and it should continue to support UPT. The MCofS draft Corporate Plan will contain a strategic commitment to path work.

Representation on Other Organisations

In addition to instances described above, during the year members and others have represented the A&C committee on the following: Access and Conservation Trust; Deer Commission for Scotland Round Table; Local Access Fora (Argyll and Bute; Fife; Loch Lomond & Trossachs NP); Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park Board; Montane Scrub Advisory Group; National Access Forum; National Trust for Scotland; Nevis Partnership; Perthshire Alliance for the Real Cairngorms (PARC); Scottish Environment LINK (Landscape Task Force; MoD Scottish Liaison Committee); SNH/NGO Round Table; Traprain Law Advisory Group.

Mountain Safety

- Mary Webster

Mountain safety and skills acquisition complement each other. Our mountain safety aim is to help mountaineers to remain self-reliant and adopt safe practices as they seek wider adventure on the hills.

Courses, Seminars, Events and Resources

As a first step the four navigation courses (with 12 participants per course) in the autumn were appreciated. Three fully subscribed weekend winter skills courses and five avalanche awareness courses introduced a more serious progression. The university students' autumn weekend seminar attracted 64 students and, together with the safety talks to over 70% of university clubs, covers an enthusiasm for adventure with practical reminders of the skills and techniques required. In early March an additional winter seminar for students took place to enhance awareness of winter conditions and associated skills. We are indebted to the Catherine Smith Memorial Trust for funding to subsidise this seminar.

The public Tiso winter experience lectures and Clachaig Inn lectures continue to be well received. These provide an overview of the joys of mountaineering with serious comments on the skills and equipment required. In the aftermath of unfortunate incidents over the winter a series of radio, television and press releases highlighted the need for a progressive approach to adventure and an awareness of conditions.

An Alpine Essentials DVD was produced jointly with the BMC and this, together with the *Winter Essentials* DVD and *Water Hazards* (now in DVD form), provides a valuable resource. The avalanche *aide memoire* card continues to be promoted and distributed. The *Emergency Procedure* card has been completed and is being distributed.

Our sincere thanks are due to our Mountain Safety Adviser (MSA), Roger Wild, for his hard work in organising our very successful events. I also appreciate the time and expertise given by all the members of the Mountain Safety Committee and together we enable the MCofS to promote safe practices on the Scottish mountains.

The Scottish Mountain Safety Forum

The Scottish Mountain Safety Forum with its broad membership continues to contribute valuable input to mountain safety issues on which it advises the Scottish Executive. The sub-group set up to investigate the comprehensive weather forecast for outdoor users in Scotland sent its proposals to the Scottish Executive last year. There have been some discussions and at the time of writing we await a further response.

Representation on Other Mountaineering Organisations

We continue to maintain close links with Mountain Leader Training Scotland. Committee members and the MSA liaise with and represent MCofS on other organisations including: Mountain Leader Training UK, the Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland, the Snow and Avalanche Foundation of Scotland, the British Association of Mountain Guides, the Association of Mountaineering Instructors and the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority.

Abridged Minutes of a Special General Meeting



of the Mountaineering Council of Scotland held on 17th February 2007 at Dewar's Centre, Perth

Representing the Executive: J. Mackenzie (chair), D. Edge, D. Gibson (Sen. Officer), B. Linington, M. Webster.

Clubs represented: Aberdeen MC, Cairngorm Club, Carn Dearg MC, Ceres HWC, Crochallan MC, Edinburgh JMCS, Ferranti MC, Fife MC, Forfar & District HWC, Forth Valley MC, Glenrothes HWC, Grampian Club, Ladies Scottish CC, Scottish MC, XXL HWC.

Others present: In addition to the voting representative of each club (above), 28 club and individual members were present (including members of the Executive). IMs each had 1 vote.

Apologies:

Executive: N. Halls, S. Jensen, B. Leatherland, J. Leftley, J. Riches, R. Spencer.

Members: 21 clubs and 4 individuals had tendered apologies.

Agenda item 1: 'What we have done'

Mary Webster recapitulated the events over the last few years that had led to the present position and answered various questions.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of Memorandum & Articles of Association

No comment or proposals for amendment to the Memorandum of Association had been received. The version considered was that published on 20th January 2007. A minor typing error in 3.9 was noted. MW indicated that these 'typos' would be corrected in the final version, as would certain numbering discrepancies in the Articles.

Proposed amendments to the Articles of Association were discussed.

5.3 (i) To read:

The consideration of and taking of decisions on any duly notified proposals for the adoption of any new Policies or the amendment or revocation of any existing Policies.

(Proposer, the Cairngorm Club)

8.3 To add at the end:

Any Policy of the Company may be amended or revoked by an equivalent process of consultation and approval.

(Proposer, the Cairngorm Club)

The Executive supported these proposals. Since there were no comments or questions, these two items were put to the vote together and carried unanimously.

5.11 To replace second paragraph with:

Each Club Member shall have a number of votes determined by the number of its active members listed on that Member Club's last return, rendered in compliance with Article 2.3: under 12 members -2 votes; 12 to 30 members -5 votes; 31 to 60 members -10 votes; 61 to 120 members -20 votes; 121 to 240 members -30 votes; over 240 members -40 votes; these votes may only be cast by nominated representatives of the Member Club.

(Proposer, the Cairngorm Club)

The Executive supported this proposal. It had been made in order to give the smaller clubs a voice. Various points and questions were raised. The Executive responded by stating its position that the whole issue of voting would be reviewed once incorporation had been completed.

There was a general debate about the merits of an alternative version of 5.11. This did not receive majority support so the original version of the proposed amendment to 5.11 (above) was put to the vote. This amendment was carried by a substantial majority.

8.6 To add at the end:

The Board will be responsible to ensure that the Company's records include a clear audit trail for all discussion of and decisions on all matters of importance to the Company and its members.

(Proposer, the Cairngorm Club)

The Executive said that improved administrative procedures were already being developed.

After discussion, the proposal was defeated by a large majority.

It was noted that administrative procedures for tracking important decisions such as new policies and policy changes should be implemented, subject to agreement by the Executive.

Agenda Item 3: Proposal to turn the MCofS into an incorporated Company with no share capital, and limited by Guarantee

This proposal was carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 4: Adoption of a Child Protection Policy

The draft dated 28th September 2006 was the version considered. After some discussion the CPP was put to the vote and adopted unanimously.

Conclusion

The chairman thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting.

The Mountaineering Council of Scotland

Draft Accounts 2006 - 2007



Draft income and expenditure account for the eleven months ending 28 February 2007

2006 Audited Year		2007 Draft 11 months
Income		
73,833	Affiliation fees - Clubs	76,277
56,904	Individual members	58,052
1,235	Associates	1,066
2,290	Donations	1,973
1,483	Interest	2,064
28,000	Grants <i>sportscotland</i>	36,000
5,000	Scottish Mountaineering Trust	6,000
12,570	Scottish Natural Heritage	3,875
10,000	The BMC	0
355	Sales & courses	4,733
(165)	Less cost of sales	(1,745)
18	Royalties	42
845	Rents	594
6,192	Miscellaneous	3,722
198,560		192,653
Expenditure		
2,000	Expedition awards (<i>sport scotland</i> grant)	2,000
7,806	Officers' expenses	6,717
7,040	Committee expenses	4,997
4,688	Telephone	1,135
2,751	Postage	2,740
8,717	Scottish Mountaineer	7,038
5,274	Printing, stationary and computer expenses	8,779
2,484	Annual general meeting expenses	7,652
1,449	Heat and light	956
74,073	Officers' salaries, pensions and employers NIC	51,257
200	Mountain essay competition	200
1,514	Subscriptions	1,555
7,665	Rent and insurance	8,776
26,591	Civil liability insurance	22,613
5,551	Copier costs	5,603
1,751	Office expenses	1,015
1,808	Visually impaired courses	0
1,825	Professional fees	19,425
163,187		152,458
35,373	Excess of income over expenditure for the period	40,195

Mill Cottage Trust

Draft income and expenditure account for the eleven months ending 28 February 2007

2006 Audited Year		2007 Draft 11 months
Income		
7,798	Booking Fees	7,460
156	Interest	182
7,954		7,642
Expenditure		
2,639	Repairs, maintenance and cleaning	959
575	Heat and Light	1,206
700	Honararia	800
343	Insurance	344
0	Donation to MCofS - Safety & training	5,000
4,257		8,309
3,697	Excess of Expenditure over Income for the period	(667)
Shown as:		
9,508	Opening Bank Balance	13,205
3,697	Excess of Expenditure over Income for the period	(667)
13,205		12,538

Draft balance sheet as at 28 February 2007

31 Mar 06 Audited		28 Feb 07 Draft
Current assets		
95,798	Bank	129,872
1,050	Stock	1,050
13,746	Prepaid charges	11,944
110,594		142,866
23,144	Accrued charges	11,524
87,450		131,342
Capital and funds		
General reserve		
28,986	Balance at 1 April	64,359
35,373	Excess of income over expenditure for the period	40,195
64,359		104,554
Henry Hindmarch Access and Conservation Fund		
4,362	Balance at 1 April	4,137
5	Income - donation	0
(230)	Expenditure during the year	(1,500)
4,137		2,637
Legacy - James Hewitt Bequest		
10,000	Balance at 1 April	8,275
(1,725)	Expenditure during the year	0
8,275		8,275
Mountain Safety Budget		
10,679	Balance at Period End - 28 February 2007	15,876
87,450		131,342

Mountain Safety Budget

Draft income and expenditure account for the eleven months ending 28 February 2007

	2007	2007 Draft 11 months
Balance brought forward - 1 April 2006		10,679
Grant from <i>sportscotland</i>		40,000
		50,679
Mountain Safety Adviser		
Salary, Pension & Employers NIC	(24,780)	
Expenses	(2,147)	(26,927)
Donation - Mill Cottage Trust		5,000
Lectures and Courses		
Navigation, winter safety, avalanche and first aid		(950)
Avalanche DVD		
Net income		2,580
Alpine DVD		
Net costs		(2,625)
Avalanche cards		
Net income		663
Establishment costs		
Copier	(1,868)	
Postage	(913)	
Telephone	(379)	
Rent and rates	(2,924)	
Computer equipment	(3,000)	
Administration	(3,460)	
		(12,544)
Balance as at 28 February 2007		15,876