

The Mountaineering Council of Scotland

Strategic Plan 2013-17

The Strategic Plan details how the organisation will represent, support and promote Scottish mountaineering during the period from April 2013 to March 2017. It includes statements which define the organisation's key aims and outcomes and is supported by annual operational plans and budgets.

Introduction

1.1. The Strategic Plan 2013-17, which includes the operational plan and budget for 2013-14 and related appendices, details how the MCoFS will represent, support and promote Scottish mountaineering during the period from April 2013 to March 2017. Sections 2 to 5 of this Commentary set out our strategic aims and priorities. Key actions, targets, financial and other assumptions are detailed in the accompanying documents.

1.2. Mountaineering is a range of activities including hill walking, indoor and outdoor climbing, ski-touring, and high altitude mountaineering. Unlike many sports, age and access to specialist facilities are not necessarily barriers to active and rewarding participation.

1.3. Mountaineering activities offer people of all abilities interest, exercise, challenge, reward and a sense of personal achievement in what for many becomes a passion for life.

1.4. The Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCoFS) was founded in 1970 and incorporated as a company limited by guarantee in 2007. It is the only recognised national representative organisation for mountaineering in Scotland, and is the national governing body for competition climbing, known internationally as sport climbing.

1.5. By the end of 2012, membership in all categories had grown to 11,300, an increase of 11% over the prior strategic plan period; individual members grew by 78% to 4768 whilst membership in clubs declined by 6%. The number of clubs remained static at 135; clubs are organised by an estimated 700 volunteers, with the majority of clubs open to all.

1.6. The Scottish Household Survey Culture and Sport Module 2007 found that hill walking was the ninth most popular activity with 5% of the population regularly participating; approximately 1% stated they climbed indoors and outdoors on a regular basis, suggesting that scope exists for further development of membership.

1.7. The MCoFS Board identifies strategic aims through a combination of: a) research with our members; by reference to b) the MCoFS' role as the national representative body for mountaineering and c) the MCoFS' role as the national governing body for sport climbing.

1.8. Prior to the approval of this strategic plan the Board completed strategic reviews of landscape and access (2011) and mountain safety (2012) activities. The Board is committed to undertaking periodic reviews of key activities, with the aim of ensuring continued relevance to our strategic aims, and effective alignment of resources with priorities.

2.0 Representing Scottish Mountaineering

2.1. We will seek to influence policy in accordance with our strategic aims by acting as the 'Voice of Scottish Mountaineering' with the Scottish Government and its agencies, and with other relevant organisations.

2.2. We will improve public understanding and awareness of our strategic aims and seek to positively influence mountaineers to join the MCoFS, through effective communications employing a range of media.

2.3. We will work to achieve our goal to ensure that major developments do not encroach on the most significant mountain areas. We recognise that other parts of Scotland also have high scenic and recreational value and where appropriate, we will work with other bodies with the aim of limiting intrusive developments in these areas.

2.4. We will seek to uphold mountaineers' statutory right of access in accordance with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code through appropriate interventions with Local Authorities and the National Parks, and through communication with other relevant groups, agencies and organisations.

3.0 Supporting Scottish Mountaineering

3.1. We will promote self-reliance in mountaineering activity; our work in this area is informed by the Mountain Safety Strategy which was approved by the Board in November 2012.

3.2. We will promote a public understanding that mountaineering is a healthy activity made sufficiently safe through self-reliance and knowledge-based risk assessment.

3.3. We will develop capacity within MCoFS clubs, both to raise awareness of the need for self-reliance and to benefit members through sharing of skills and experience.

3.4. We will advise government with the aim of ensuring that policy development proceeds with an accurate understanding of mountain safety issues.

3.5. We will support the maintenance and development of publicly-funded mountain safety information and rescue services.

4.0 Promoting Scottish Mountaineering

4.1. We will seek to inspire and encourage people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to enjoy mountaineering activities responsibly, through our educational programmes and provision of relevant information concerning mountain safety, access and conservation.

4.2. We will support our club network, and work with clubs which wish to grow, providing focused support with the aim of assisting them to build their membership.

4.3. We will provide specific development support to kids' clubs, schools and youth organisations with the aim of encouraging the interest and responsible participation of young people in mountaineering activities.

4.4. We will work with Mountain Training Scotland to promote awareness of national awards and training programmes, with the aim of building capacity in clubs, and encouraging individuals to register, and complete awards.

4.5. We will work with UK mountaineering organisations to develop the performance coaching in climbing awards; we will coordinate the development and delivery of a related series of FUNDamentals of climbing coaching workshops with the aim of providing a sustainable Scottish coaching network.

4.6. We will develop the coaching and volunteer infrastructure which supports our sport development activities, including the implementation of comprehensive child protection measures.

4.7. We will organise and promote a range of regional and national climbing competitions, with the aim of attracting and motivating young climbers to participate in the sport, and which form the basis for personal coaching and performance improvement.

4.8. We will manage the Scottish climbing and bouldering teams, and contribute to the management of the GB teams, with the ultimate aim of seeing a Scottish athlete achieve a podium position in the Olympic Games.

4.9. We aim to ensure, that everyone who wants to, has an equal chance to participate in and contribute to the aspects of mountaineering that interest them and that no one is discriminated against unfairly for any reason.

5.0 Corporate Development

5.1. The Board will continue to assess its requirements for the skills and experience required to achieve its strategic aims, in order to ensure effective governance and management of the company during the period of this plan and beyond.

5.2. We will undertake a review of MCoFS office facilities including accommodation, IT and communications during 2013-14 to ensure that the company provides a secure and efficient working environment for staff and volunteers covering the period of the plan and beyond.

5.3. During the lifetime of the strategic plan we will undertake a comprehensive review of policies and procedures to ensure compliance with current legislation, and that risks to the organisation are identified, assessed and managed.

5.4. We will review financial procedures with the aim of seeking continuous improvement in planning, controls and reporting.

Further Information

Members are invited to contact David Gibson, CEO, with any specific questions concerning the strategic plan. Contact David [by email](#) or call 01738-493942.